



Daily Bread Food Bank

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release: March 26, 2005

Skilled, educated immigrants rely on food banks to survive in Toronto Lives and economy suffer by government inaction

TORONTO – Too many talented immigrants are being forced to rely upon food banks to survive according to preliminary results of the 2005 Annual Survey of people who rely upon food banks. According to the survey results released today **91 per cent of immigrants are not working in their field** of work despite the fact that **60 per cent have a university level education or trade certification**—compared to **36 per cent of Canadian born** survey respondents. The recently completed survey conducted one-on-one interviews with approximately 1,500 people who were at food banks because their households struggle with hunger. Results have been tabulated for 820 people—including 373 immigrants. The 2005 survey confirms recent trends including the 2004 Annual Survey results that almost half of people relying upon food banks were born outside Canada.

"The province of Ontario has a strong and compelling case to get more federal funds to help integrate these newcomers into the Canadian economy," said Sue Cox, executive director of the Daily Bread Food Bank. "Both levels of government must start to do more than mouth the right words. **A dramatic decrease—at least 10 per cent**—in people relying upon food banks is possible—and quickly—if the Premier and Prime Minister direct their governments to take concerted action on this problem. The alternative is that they may find that their stronghold of support in Toronto has disappeared. Food banks reflect the diversity of Toronto."

"The Minister of Immigration, who is from Toronto, has declined an opportunity to speak to volunteers sorting donated food this weekend and indicate how the federal government is helping settle immigrants. The Minister, who is the political minister responsible for Ontario, was quoted as saying on Thursday that the federal government did not need to spend more in Ontario 'because there is less need.' This survey shows that there is a tremendous need—in his hometown and in an area for which he is directly responsible. We regret his decision to stay away. Our diverse group of volunteers deserves to know how their political representatives plan to help the lives of their friends, relatives and peers—and the long-term health of the Canadian economy."

"I would advise the Premier of Ontario and his Minister of Finance though that any new federal money to help improve the lives of immigrants **must** be used for this purpose. They have both highlighted this issue and their integrity depends upon using new funds to improve lives of immigrants—**not for deficit reduction** or other priorities that fail to directly address this specific problem. A recent report by the province and announcements of funding indicates they understand the problem but lack the funds to create the real change needed for a stronger Ontario."

Daily Bread conducted the 2005 survey of people relying upon with the co-operation of partners across the GTA including **North York Harvest Food Bank, York Region Food Network** and the **Social Assistance in the New Economy Project at the University of Toronto**.

Where to Donate

It is easy to donate to help give all people using food banks a new beginning. Donation **bins** are found in all local **Loblaws** stores, **fire halls, real Canadian Superstores** and even at some international food stores. Financial donations to Daily Bread can be made online at dailybread.ca or www.givegroceries.com. If donors prefer, they can also donate using their VISA card by calling **416-203-0050** or cheques may be mailed to: **Daily Bread Food Bank, 191 New Toronto Street, Toronto, ON, M8V 2E7**

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A complete and detailed report on the issues related to immigrants using food banks is available at www.dailybread.ca under "Education" then "Publications".

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