Evaluation of the Foreign Credentials Referral Office (FCRO)

Evaluation Division

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List of acronoyms

ACCC	Association of Canadian Community Colleges
CIC	Citizenship and Immigration Canada
CIIP	Canadian Immigrant Integration Program
FCR	Foreign credential recognition
FCRO	Foreign Credentials Referral Office
FCRP	Foreign Credential Recognition Program
FINP	Federal Internship for Newcomers Program
FOSS	Field Operations Support System
FQR	Foreign qualification recognition
HRSDC	Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
IEHPI	Internationally Educated Health Professionals Initiative
IPMB	Integration Program Management Branch
IQN	International Qualifications Network
ISO	Immigrant Serving Organization
ITI	Internationally-trained individual
NOC	National Occupation Classification
OOI	Overseas Orientation Initiatives
SC	Service Canada
SPP	Strategic and Program Policy
TOSG	Tracking of Overseas Orientation Session Graduates

Executive summary

Purpose of the Evaluation

This report presents the findings from the evaluation of the Foreign Credentials Referral Office (FCRO) that was carried out from February 2012 to September 2012. The evaluation was conducted in fulfillment of requirements under the *Financial Administration Act*[1] and theTreasury Board Secretariat (TBS) *Policy on Evaluation*.

The FCRO

The Foreign Credentials Referral Office (FCRO), launched in May 2007 as part of the Federal Government's commitment to facilitate the assessment and recognition of foreign credentials, is housed within Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

The Office provides internationally-trained individuals (ITIs)[2] with the information, path-finding and referral services they need in Canada and overseas to help them succeed in the Canadian labour market. The ultimate goal of the FCRO is that ITIs are employed, in a timely manner, in positions commensurate with their skills and experience.

Initial funding for the FCRO of $13.7M over five years and $2.8M ongoing was provided through the 2007 Federal Budget. In Budget 2009, additional funding of $31.75M over five years and $6M ongoing was allocated through *Canada's Economic Action Plan* (EAP) to support the development and implementation of the *Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications*.

Methodology

The scope of the evaluation covered the period from the FCRO's inception in May 2007 to September 2012. The evaluation was designed to address the issues of relevance and performance, in keeping with the requirements of the 2009 *Directive on the Evaluation Function*, as well as design and implementation questions.

This evaluation included seven lines of evidence, including both qualitative and quantitative methods, drawing from both primary and secondary data sources:

1) a review of documents and secondary sources;

2) an administrative and financial data analysis;

3) an analysis of the data from the Tracking of Overseas Orientation Session Graduates (TOSG);

4) Interviews;

5) focus groups with internationally-trained individuals;

6) a survey of immigrant serving organizations; and

7) a survey of internationally-trained individuals.

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[1] The *Financial Administration Act* requires departments to review, every five years, each on-going program of grants and contributions for which it is responsible.
[2] Internationally-trained individuals are individuals that have received a post-secondary education or training outside Canada, with one or more of their qualifications/credentials coming from outside Canada.

Limitations

Although the evaluation contained a balance of qualitative and quantitative lines of evidence, there were five notable limitations that should be considered when reading this report:

- For some FCRO tools/resources, the absence of targets for clients served and the inability to track the number of unique clients limited the ability to assess the reach of the FCRO.

- The evaluation relied on Immigrant Serving Organizations[3] (ISOs) to recruit participants for the focus groups, which may have resulted in selection bias.

- Given that the size of the population of ITIs eligible to respond to the ITI survey is not known, it is not possible to definitively attribute a confidence level to the findings.

- It was not feasible to post the ITI survey on websites other than those operated by the federal government.

- While both ISOs and ITIs were asked similar questions, comparisons between the result of the ISO survey and those of the ITI survey should not be made.

Mitigation strategies were used to address the limitations. These strategies, along with the triangulation of multiple lines of evidence, were considered sufficient to ensure evaluation findings can be used with confidence.

Evaluation findings

The main findings associated with each of the evaluation issues of relevance and performance are presented below.

Relevance

- There is a continued need to facilitate the recognition of foreign credentials, driven by the continuing challenges faced by internationally-trained individuals and the complexity of the foreign credential recognition (FCR) process.

- The FCRO is well aligned with CIC's strategic outcome related to newcomer integration and the Government-wide prioritizing of economic immigration as a means to sustain Canada's economic growth.

- Both the Federal government and the Provincial/Territorial (P/T) governments have complementary roles in the recognition of foreign credentials, with the federal government playing a facilitative and coordinating role and P/Ts, through regulatory bodies, having responsibility for licensing/credentialing. That said, some interviewees pointed out that there is the potential for overlap in the operationalization of these roles, particularly with respect to the dissemination of FCR information.

- The FCRO was created as a Branch with a degree of flexibility in conducting its activities. Since then, it has undergone changes to its structure and areas of focus and has evolved, which has resulted in some overlap in programming with the Integration Branch.

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[3] Immigrant Serving Organizations are also known as Service Provider Organizations (SPO).

Performance

- The FCRO has been effective in reaching stakeholder groups with its tools through outreach and promotional activities and in engaging them, to some extent, in FCR-related activities through initiatives such as the International Qualifications Network (IQN).

- There is some evidence that the FCRO has, to some extent, equipped ISOs in assisting ITIs, but there is limited evidence of the FCRO's impact on employers and regulatory bodies.

- The FCRO's lead in the overseas/pre-arrival component of the Pan-Canadian Foreign Qualification Recognition Framework and its work with P/Ts and federal partners to build awareness and consensus around Framework implementation are viewed as appropriate. However, stakeholders perceive a continued lack of coordination and communication among federal partners (namely, between FCRO and the Foreign Credential Recognition Program (FCRP)).

- ITIs use FCRO tools and services to varying degrees, depending upon the nature of the tool and its intended audience. While ITIs who have been reached by the FCRO consider the tools and services useful, information gaps remain (e.g., information on available jobs).

- There is some evidence that the FCRO is effective in helping individuals in obtaining information on the FCR process while still overseas.

- There is some evidence that the FCRO has been effective in assisting ITIs in becoming well-prepared for employment that fits with their skills and experience; however, barriers to employment persist, including obtaining Canadian work experience, access to networks, and the discounting of foreign experience by employers.

- Since its initial year of operation, the FCRO has shifted some of its human resources to support policy work, while the bulk of FCRO-related expenditures are associated with Grants and Contributions (Gs&Cs) projects dedicated to providing ITIs in Canada and Overseas with FCR information and services, most notably, the Canadian Immigrant Integration Program (CIIP).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The evaluation evidence presented in this report supports the following conclusions and recommendations.

Conclusion 1: There is a continuing need for the Federal Government to be involved in FCR programming. While FCR is largely the domain of provincial/territorial governments, the federal government has a role to play in enabling the development of coordinated Pan-Canadian approaches to FCR.

The Government of Canada has identified immigration as a priority and, in particular, the need for a faster, more flexible and responsive immigration system that will better meet Canada's labour market needs.

The evaluation found that there is a continued need for initiatives to facilitate FCR for ITIs, both in Canada and overseas. This need is driven by the complexity of the current FCR process in Canada and the continuing challenges faced by ITIs in having their foreign credentials recognized by employers and/or regulatory bodies. The complexity in Canada's FCR process stems from a number of factors, including the large number of entities involved in recognizing foreign

credentials, varying FCR standards and requirements across different jurisdictions, and challenges in finding consistent information on the process to have foreign credentials recognized in Canada.

While the responsibility for licensing and regulating professions and trades falls within P/T jurisdiction, the federal government has a legislative authority to "*work in cooperation with the provinces to secure better recognition of the foreign credentials of permanent residents and their more rapid integration into society*"[4]; as such, there is a need for both orders of government to work together. According to interview evidence, one of the important roles that can be played by the federal government is addressing the need for consistent, tailored, occupation- and province-specific labour market information available online. This would assist ITIs with making accurately informed immigration and employment decisions and provide them with realistic expectations.

Conclusion 2: The FCRO has developed an expertise in foreign credential recognition that is important for the government's efforts to make the immigration system more responsive to the needs of the labour market. Given the changes to the immigration system to further address labour market needs, the FCRO will continue to play a crucial role in the Pan-Canadian framework in addressing ITIs' labour market integration.

CIC, through the FCRO, has contributed to the implementation of the Pan-Canadian Framework and is one of three federal government departments identified to support Framework implementation. The FCRO has also taken on a role in providing expertise on the assessment of foreign education qualifications as the department introduces changes to the point system under the Federal Skilled Worker Program. The FCRO's focus on economic immigrants and its positioning within CIC have allowed it to take a holistic and focused approach to helping economic immigrants integrate into the Canadian labour market by providing ITIs with information to assist them in the FCR process, including the ability to do so while still overseas.

Given that the evaluation found evidence of opportunities for improving the coordination of activities with the rest of CIC and depending upon the degree to which the FCRO is further integrated into the Strategic and Program Policy Sector, it is important to ensure that the relationships it has built with ITIs, partners and stakeholders and its expertise in FCR programming, including efforts to provide information and referral services, continue to be fully exploited.

> **Recommendation 1:** CIC should develop a communication strategy to reconfirm with stakeholders and partners the department's mandate with respect to foreign credential recognition for economic immigrants and how it will continue to deliver on its commitments under the Pan-Canadian Framework.

Conclusion 3: The FCRO has invested significant resources to provide ITIs with information and services; however, relatively less effort has been spent to better equip some stakeholders, namely regulatory bodies and employers, to assist ITIs in transitioning into the labour market.

The evaluation found that the FCRO has focused significant effort on providing ITIs with tools and information to assist them with the FCR process and encourage them to start the process while still overseas. While information gaps remain and the reach of the various products and services varies, FCRO tools are considered useful among those they have reached.

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[4] *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, (S.C. 2001, c. 27).

While providing information directly to ITIs has been the focus of the FCRO's efforts, it is also responsible for equipping stakeholders (defined as ISOs, regulatory bodies and employers) with the tools they need to assist ITIs in transitioning into the labour market. The evaluation found that the FCRO has been effective in promoting its tools, products and FCR-related information to most stakeholders. It has also been effective in engaging ISOs in FCR-related activities; however, more engagement is needed with employers and regulatory bodies as these stakeholders play critical roles in the credential recognition process and in enabling ITIs to access employment, roles which will likely become even more important given the planned changes to the immigration system.

Recommendation 2: CIC should assess its priorities with respect to FCR activities to ensure adequate emphasis and resources are focused on stakeholder engagement. This should also include further analysis regarding the mix of tools and resources, and programming offered both in-Canada and overseas that facilitate the FCR process.

Conclusion 4: There is confusion among stakeholders regarding the types of funding available through the FCRO and HRSDC's FCRP.

There is confusion among stakeholders regarding the focus of funding available through the FCRO and HRSDC's FCRP. While the roles of each federal government partner in FCR are, on paper, clear and distinct, in practice there is potential for overlap in terms of federal funding provided to stakeholders for the development of similar FCR products/tools to support ITIs and stakeholders. It is possible that projects funded through the FCRP could also be funded by the FCRO and vice versa. The evidence suggests that funding coordination could be improved, particularly with respect to how the two organizations share information on the projects they fund. Improved collaboration and communication between CIC and HRSDC could reduce the potential for overlap in terms of the projects they fund, bring further clarity for stakeholders, and make better use of the overall funding envelope.

Recommendation 3: CIC should work with HRSDC to better coordinate their approaches to FCR-related grants and contributions funding in order to ensure the most appropriate use of available funds.

Evaluation of the Foreign Credentials Referral Office - management response

Recommendation	Response and Content	Action Item and Deliverables	Accountability	Completion Date
1. CIC should develop a communication strategy to reconfirm with stakeholders and partners the department's mandate with respect to foreign credential recognition for economic immigrants and how it will continue to deliver on its commitments under the Pan-Canadian Framework.	The department agrees with this recommendation and the implementation of this recommendation is already underway. Responsibility for Foreign Credential Recognition (FCR) at the federal level is divided amongst three programs targeting the labour market integration of internationally trained individuals (ITIs). Citizenship and Immigration Canada's (CIC) Foreign Credentials Referral Office (FCRO) focuses on providing ITIs with FCR information, path-finding and referral services; Human Resources and Skills Development Canada's (HRSDC) Foreign Credential Recognition Program (FCRP) is a systemic labour market intervention designed to supports initiatives that improve assessment and recognition processes for employment in Canada; and Health Canada's Internationally Educated Health Professional Initiative (IEHPI) promotes the consistent assessment, training and integration of international health professionals into the labour market. Given the shared responsibility of FCR, as well as changes to the immigration system to better align immigrant selection with labour market demands, there is an opportunity for the Government of Canada to better coordinate its efforts to improve FCR processes and be strategically aligned towards a common goal/vision for FCR in Canada to support a modernized immigration system. CIC is currently developing a coordinated federal strategy for FCR to achieve this integrated vision. As part of the strategy, a coordinated approach to determining policy and project priorities is being developed along with a communications plan. CIC will continue to work in collaboration with HRSDC and Health Canada to advance the FCR agenda.	CIC is currently developing the Federal Strategy and Action Plan on FCR. One of the components of the Action Plan is to ensure coordinated communication among the three departments (CIC, HRSDC and Health Canada) and consistent messaging particularly for announcements. This integrated strategy and action plan will have a communications component and will require consultation and collaboration with the other federal partners. Within the strategy, processes will be put in place, or enhanced, to ensure that communications are clearer, and stakeholders' and clients' understanding of each program is improved It will also emphasize that improved FCR processes will continue to be an important component to enhance labour market growth. In addition, the merger of FCRO and Integration Branch will also provide an opportunity to clarify CIC's role on FCR and how it is part of the immigration pre-arrival, settlement, integration continuum.	Policy Sector (FCRO/Integration) (lead) CIC's Communications Branch Consultation with HRSDC, Health Canada	March 31, 2013

Recommendation	Response and Content	Action Item and Deliverables	Accountability	Completion Date
	The strategy will provide an opportunity for CIC to reconfirm its mandate with respect to providing subject matter expertise on FCR information and services to individuals and stakeholders, especially through overseas pre-arrival supports as part of the department's role in supporting the commitments made in the Pan-Canadian Framework.			
2. CIC should assess its priorities with respect to FCR activities to ensure adequate emphasis and resources are focused on stakeholder engagement. This should also include further analysis regarding the mix of tools and resources, and programming offered both in-Canada and overseas that facilitate the FCR process.	The department agrees with this recommendation. As CIC continues to refine its policy and operational priorities in the context of the evolving changes to the immigration system, particular emphasis will be given to working with key stakeholders such as regulatory bodies and employers to streamline and coordinate FCR domestic products and services with overseas programs within the current fiscal environment to support Canada's economic needs.	CIC works closely with federal partners, provinces and territories, immigrant serving organizations, employers, regulatory bodies and other stakeholders to improve the FCR processes in Canada and overseas. As part of the Federal Strategy and Action Plan on FCR, CIC will explore ways to expand outreach to its stakeholders in order to support faster integration of immigrants into the labour market at levels commensurate with skills and experience. Through the Strategy, CIC will foster greater awareness of FCR tool and services available to stakeholders as well as continuing to expand partnerships with them on ways to move as much of the FCR licensing process overseas as is appropriate and practical. Additionally, CIC will strive to enhance domestic FCR services within its broader suite of settlement and integration programs to improve supports to ITIs already in Canada while complementing pre-arrival offerings. CIC will also enhance its supports for employers to facilitate hiring and retaining ITIs. Activities will include working with employers to use overseas programs and platforms to link newcomers to employers including helping employers' access immigrants in skilled trades. CIC will also leverage the Department's Stakeholder and Employer Engagement Strategies and tools (e.g,. new stakeholder database) to ensure coordinated approaches for engagement and outreach on FCR with other department priorities (i.e., EOI).	Policy Sector (FCRO/Integration) IPMB (responsible for procurement and delivery of G&C programs at the national and international level) IIR (responsible for CIC's Stakeholder and Employer Engagement Strategies and, co-lead on stakeholder database) Communications (responsible for Communications and Outreach; and, co-lead on stakeholder database)	Summer 2013

Recommendation	Response and Content	Action Item and Deliverables	Accountability	Completion Date
		These efforts for in Canada and overseas will require enhanced collaboration between responsible Policy and Operational branches to ensure the appropriate allocation of departmental Vote 5 funds.		
3. CIC should work with HRSDC to better coordinate their approaches to FCR-related grants and contributions funding in order to ensure the most appropriate use of available funds.	The department agrees with this recommendation. Information sharing for FCR-related project proposals currently exists between CIC, HRSDC and Health Canada for grants and contribution funding. Regular trilateral Director General meetings provide an opportunity for ongoing policy updates and to share FCR project proposals. However, to maximize the efficiency of federal investments for FCR, it is necessary to develop a more systematic governance approach within CIC and with partner departments for how grants and contribution funding for FCR-related projects is allocated.	CIC will explore ways through the Federal Strategy and Action Plan on FCR to better coordinate funding of complementary projects with partner departments for a greater delineation between overseas and domestic projects. This would also be complemented by clear communications activities coordinated with stakeholder outreach on the types of funding available for FCR projects. The Action Plan will propose a coordinated policy and funding process to ensure horizontal linkages are made between projects and ensure value for money efficiencies. Responsible Policy and Operational branches within CIC will also collaborate to ensure more effective engagement with the other Federal partners.	Policy Sector (FCRO/Integration) (lead) CIC's Integration Program Management Branch (IPMB) and CIC's Finance branch. Consultation with HRSDC and Health Canada	Fall 2013

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the Evaluation

This report presents the findings from the evaluation of the Foreign Credentials Referral Office (FCRO) that was carried out from February 2012 to September 2012. The evaluation was conducted in fulfillment of requirements under the *Financial Administration Act*[5] and the TBS *Policy on Evaluation*.

This evaluation report is structured as follows:

Section 1.0 presents a descriptive profile of the FCRO and its clients;
Section 2.0 presents the evaluation methodology;
Section 3.0 presents the findings organized by evaluation theme; and
Section 4.0 presents the evaluation conclusions and recommendations.

The report also includes a supplemental document containing technical appendices that are referenced throughout the report.

1.2. FCRO profile

1.2.1. FCR in Canada

Foreign credential recognition (FCR) is defined as the process of verifying the equivalency of the post-secondary education, training and job experience obtained in another country against the standards and requirements established in Canada in the same occupation or sector[6]. It includes both regulated and non-regulated occupations.

Individuals who have been educated or trained outside Canada and who wish to work in a regulated profession or occupation (i.e. jobs that require a license or registration, such as doctors, lawyers or tradespeople) need to apply to a regulatory body or apprenticeship authority to have their foreign credentials recognized. Currently, there are close to 500 regulatory bodies across Canada governing approximately 55 professions and 13 apprenticeship authorities governing approximately 50 trades. There are also over 200 apprenticeable (skilled) trades. These regulatory bodies and authorities have been delegated the authority, by a provincial/territorial (P/T) government, to assess foreign qualifications.[7]

Individuals who work in non-regulated occupations (approximately 80 per cent of Canadian workers)[8] do not need a formal assessment; however, when applying to work in Canada, employers may assess their credentials, work experience and competencies as part of the hiring process. In some cases, an employer may request that an individual have their education credentials assessed by an assessment agency. In Canada, there are five recognized credential

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[5] The *Financial Administration Act* requires departments to review, every five years, each on-going program of grants and contributions for which it is responsible.
[6] *Summative evaluation of the Foreign Credential Recognition Program*, HRSDC, April 2010.
[7] Government of Canada, *Working in Canada*, retrieved from: www.workingincanada.gc.ca/content_pieces-eng.do?cid=723
[8] Ibid.

assessment agencies and numerous post-secondary and vocational institutions that provide this service.[9]

1.2.2. The FCRO

The Foreign Credentials Referral Office (FCRO), launched in May 2007 as part of the Federal Government's commitment to facilitate the assessment and recognition of foreign credentials, is housed within Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC).

The Office provides internationally-trained individuals (ITIs)[10] with the information, path-finding and referral services they need in Canada and overseas to help them succeed in the Canadian labour market. The ultimate goal of the FCRO is that ITIs are employed, in a timely manner, in positions commensurate with their skills and experience. A logic model for the FCRO is presented in the Technical Appendices.

CIC, through the FCRO, is a federal partner, along with Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) and Health Canada (HC), in the development and implementation of a common approach to FCR known as the *Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications*. The Framework is a consensus-based commitment from federal and P/T governments to work together to improve FCR in Canada. The Framework "articulates a joint vision for governments to take concerted action to improve the integration of immigrants and other ITIs into the Canadian labour market"[11]. In support of the *Framework*, CIC is responsible for:

- developing and implementing pre-arrival services for Federal Skilled Workers and Provincial Nominees to provide them with accurate and timely information relevant to the assessment of their credentials as early as possible in the immigration process;

- investing in projects and services overseas that provide tools and information to assist newcomers in starting the credential assessment process prior to arrival in Canada;

- developing a web-based platform to support partners and stakeholders through the establishment of a Pan-Canadian Information centre;

- working with employers in Canada to develop information products and services to increase receptiveness regarding the recruitment, retention and integration of ITIs; and

- working with P/Ts and federal partners to build awareness and consensus around Framework implementation.

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[9] Forum of Labour Ministers, *A Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications, Progress Report,* November 2009 to December 2010.
[10] Internationally-trained individuals are individuals that have received a post-secondary education or training outside Canada, with one or more of their qualifications/credentials coming from outside Canada.
[11] Forum of Labour Market Ministers (2009), *A Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications.*

1.2.3. FCRO organizational structure

When first created, the FCRO was housed in CIC's Operations Sector. In 2010, as a result of a Departmental re-organization, the FCRO moved to the Strategic and Program Policy Sector (SPP). This change was made in light of the FCRO's largely coordination and policy development focus[12]. In the 2010/11 fiscal year, a policy development division was added to the FCRO.

Additional changes occurred early in 2011 when the Department continued to centralize its Grants and Contributions (Gs&Cs) processing into the Integration Program Management Branch (IPMB). This change resulted in the transfer of several FCRO staff who worked directly on the FCRO Gs&Cs to IPMB.

Following a further reorganization which took effect in April 2012, the activities of the Service Delivery division were redistributed to the DGO. The FCRO is now divided into three divisions responsible for different lines of business associated with the outcomes of the Office. The separate divisions and their primary responsibilities are summarized in Table 1-1.

Table 1-1: FCRO divisions and responsibilities

Division	Broad responsibilities
Director General's Office (DGO)	- Provides strategic advice, coordination and administrative support to the Director General in support of FCRO operations - Works with Immigration Branch in co-leading the development and implementation of a strategy to link pre-arrival foreign credential assessment with the immigration system (Educational Credentials Assessment or ECA) - Leads and coordinates the FIN Program on behalf of the Government of Canada - Responsible for the Federal Public Service Mentoring Pilot
Partnerships and Collaboration	- Development of communication tools to assist stakeholders with the FCR process - Fostering partnerships and collaboration amongst FCR stakeholders - Coordinates marketing activities
Policy	- Established within the FCRO in 2010/11 - Supports the implementation of the Pan Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications via the Foreign Qualification Recognition Working Group - Engages with partners within the Government of Canada, Provinces/Territories, and Stakeholders to advance efforts to improve foreign credential recognition and labour market integration of newcomers in Canada. - Coordinates horizontal policy activities for the FCRO including international work/efforts

Source: FCRO

1.2.4. FCRO partners and key stakeholders

In carrying out its mandate, the FCRO works closely with its partners at the federal and provincial government levels and stakeholders including employers, credential assessment agencies, regulatory bodies, post-secondary institutions and immigrant serving organizations (ISOs).

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[12] FCRO 2011/12 Business Plan (April 2011).

Partners

Federal and P/T Partners: The FCRO works with HRSDC and Health Canada as well as P/T governments on the development and implementation of the *Pan-Canadian Framework* to enhance FCR processes across Canada so that ITIs can enter into the labour market in a timely manner.

HRSDC is the lead federal department on the implementation of the *Pan-Canadian Framework*. It is also responsible for the Foreign Credential Recognition Program (FCRP) that is designed to develop and strengthen Canada's FCR capacity by providing strategic financial support to P/Ts and stakeholders to develop tools, systems and processes for assessing and recognizing foreign credentials in targeted occupations and sectors.

Health Canada is involved in the *Pan-Canadian Framework* through its Internationally-Educated Health Professionals Initiative (IEHPI) that works with P/Ts, health regulatory authorities, post-secondary institutions and professional associations to increase access to assessment and training programs to facilitate the integration of internationally-educated health professionals into the Canadian health workforce.

P/T governments have a key responsibility in FCR as they have jurisdictional responsibility for the assessment and recognition of foreign credentials delegated in legislation to regulatory bodies and apprenticeship bodies.

Key stakeholders

Regulatory bodies and assessment agencies: The FCRO works closely with regulatory bodies and assessment agencies to support initiatives that aim to provide ITIs with opportunities to start the credential or educational assessment process overseas.

Immigrant Serving Organizations (ISOs)[13]: ISOs are the primary venue for in person settlement services, pre-employment services, language training and counseling. Since the first six months after arrival in Canada are considered critical for immigrants to obtain appropriate employment, the FCRO engages ISOs in providing early and local interventions in the FCR process. The FCRO also provides ISOs with tools to assist them in serving their clients.

Post-Secondary Education Institutions: A number of post-secondary education institutions, through agreements with the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC), provide pre-arrival guidance to participants in the Canadian Immigrant Integration Program (CIIP)[14] on education and training needs (e.g., courses to enhance knowledge and skills); credential assessment; occupation-specific language programs; bridging programs; and linkages to employers.

Employers: The FCRO highlights the benefits and economic incentives of hiring ITIs by providing employers with tools and resources to help them hire, retain, integrate and promote ITIs in their workplace.

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[13] Immigrant Serving Organizations are also known as Service Provider Organizations (SPO).
[14] A description of the CIIP is included in the Technical Appendices.

1.2.5. FCRO services and products

Table 1-2 provides an overview of FCRO-related products and services.

Table 1-2:   FCRO-related services and products

Name	Description[15]
In-person and telephone assistance	Service Canada provides in person and dedicated telephone services on behalf of the FCRO in Canada, by responding to client inquiries regarding FCR, providing FCR information and/or referrals to organizations such as regulatory bodies or assessment agencies.
FCRO website	A dedicated website (www.credentials.gc.ca/) that provides information, path-finding and referral services on foreign credential recognition. The website has information for newcomers and employers on the Canadian labour market and licensure requirements, and a suite of tools to help newcomers navigate FCR processes.
Planning to Work in Canada? An Essential Workbook for Newcomers	This workbook provides information for ITIs who are considering moving to Canada or who have recently arrived. Information is provided on living in Canada, improving language skills, finding a job and credential recognition. Versions specifically designed for individuals immigrating to Manitoba or British Columbia are also available.
The Employer's Roadmap to Hiring and Retaining Internationally Trained Workers	This step-by-step online guide for employers in small- to medium-size enterprises provides information, tools and resources for the successful recruitment, assessment, integration and retention of internationally-trained workers.
Occupation Fact Sheets	These are short documents with facts about occupations and sectors in Canada, and requirements about pre-arrival processes, certification and finding a job. The fact sheets were created in partnership with Canadian sector councils and national professional organizations. As of 2011 there were 29 fact sheets available.
The International Qualifications Network (IQN)	The IQN is a website (launched in December 2011) (www.credentials.gc.ca/) that enables registered subject-matter partners and stakeholders who work in the field of FCR to: showcase initiatives and events; network with others who have similar goals; build knowledge on FCR; and provide feedback on others' initiatives.
The Federal Internship for Newcomers (FIN) Program	This program is designed to offer skilled newcomers to Canada the opportunity to gain work experience through temporary internships. Originally a Government of Canada internship program, the program expanded in 2012/13 to also include temporary and/or permanent placements with private sector employers.[16]
The Federal Public Service Mentoring Pilot	The pilot links public servants with newcomers in their communities to help them gain insight into their professions in Canada and build professional networks.
Contribution Agreements	CIC funds projects to improve pre-arrival information on foreign credential recognition and the Canadian labour market as well as other support services to assist potential immigrants before they arrive in Canada. The most significant agreement in terms of dollar value is with the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) for the management of the Canadian Immigrant Integration Program (CIIP). Through offices in China, India, the Philippines and the UK, the CIIP aims to help Federal Skilled Workers (FSWs) and Provincial Nominees as well as their spouses and working age dependants to prepare for labour market integration in Canada while completing the final stages of the immigration process in their countries of origin. The delegation of authority for Gs&Cs lies with CIC's IPMB, which negotiates and manages all contribution agreements.

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[15] Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2012). Foreign Credentials Referral Office. www.credentials.gc.ca/.
[16] Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2012). Federal Internship for Newcomers (FIN) Program – Discussion of Exit Survey Results. PowerPoint Presentation.

1.2.6. Resources

Initial funding for the FCRO of $13.7M over five years and $2.8M ongoing was provided through the 2007 Federal Budget. In Budget 2009, additional funding of $31.75M over five years and $6M ongoing was allocated through *Canada's Economic Action Plan (EAP) to support the development and implementation of the Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications* (see Table 1-3).

Table 1-3:   FCRO budget ($)

Funding Source	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11 and on-going	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Budget 2007								
Operating Expenditures (Vote 1)*	2.7M	2.6M	2.8M	2.8M	2.8M	2.8M	2.8M	2.8M

Funding Source	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15 and on-going
Budget 2009								
Operating Expenditures (Vote 1)			4.5M	3.25M	3.0M	3.0M	3.0M	3.0M
Grants and Contributions (Vote 5)			3.0M	3.0M	3.0M**	3.0M	3.0M	3.0M
Total Funding (Budget	**2.7M**	**2.6M**	**10.3M**	**9.05M**	**8.8M**	**8.8M**	**8.8M**	**8.8M**

*Vote 1 expenditures include accommodation reserve.
**As of 2011/12, Vote 5 funding is managed by the Integration Program Management Branch.
Source: Grants and Contributions Financial Management Division, CIC.

1.3. Client profile

FCRO's main clients are ITIs. These individuals represent a substantial subset of permanent residents immigrating to Canada each year. For this profile, ITIs were defined as permanent residents with a university degree (bachelor, master or doctorate level), non-university diploma or trade certificate obtained abroad, aged 15 years or older.

Between 2007 and 2011, Canada received between 222,787 and 266,798 permanent residents per year, the majority of which, in any given year, were economic immigrants (either principal applicants or spouses and dependants), followed by family class immigrants, refugees, and other immigrants (Table 1-4).

Table 1-4:   Number (and %) of permanent residents by immigration category and year

Landing category	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011	
Family class	63,141	28%	62,378	27%	62,437	26%	58,119	22%	54,221	23%
Economic immigrants - principal applicants	46,710	21%	53,132	23%	55,338	23%	68,558	26%	57,454	24%
Economic immigrants - spouses and dependants	75,430	34%	85,394	37%	87,094	37%	107,995	40%	89,773	38%
Refugees	27,196	12%	21,403	9%	22,369	9%	24,031	9%	27,041	12%
Other immigrants	10,309	5%	9,709	4%	9,625	4%	8,089	3%	7,495	3%
Grand Total	**222,787**	**100%**	**232,017**	**100%**	**236,864**	**100%**	**266,798**	**100%**	**235,984**	**100%**

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Permanent Residents Data Cube (FCRO) 2007-2011

Table 1-5 and the highlights below present a demographic profile of the FCRO client base. This subset of ITIs accounts for 45% to 49% of the total number of permanent residents for any given year between 2007 and 2011.

- Many ITIs (between 65% and 74% in any given year) belonged to the economic immigrant landing category. Smaller numbers belonged to the family class (between 18% and 26%), and refugee (between 3% and 5%).

- The most common source areas for ITIs were Asia and the Pacific, accounting for between 45% and 51% in any given year. The next most common source areas were Africa and the Middle East (between 19% and 21%).

- Many ITIs (between 47% and 49% in any given year) held Bachelor's degrees. Roughly one fifth (between 18% and 20%) held Master's degrees and another one fifth held a non-university diploma (between 19% and 20%).

- Slightly over half of ITIs (between 52% and 53%) were female.

- Many ITIs (between 65% and 67%) spoke English only. The second most common language ability was speaking both French and English (between 15% and 17%), followed by speaking neither of the two languages (between 12% and 13%). For any given year under analysis, 5% to 6% of ITIs spoke only French.

- The majority of ITIs (73% to 76%) were between 25 to 44 years of age. The second most common age category was 45 to 64 years of age, representing between 16% and 17%.

Table 1-5: Number (and %) of ITIs[17] by demographic variable and year

Landing Category	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011	
Family class	26,192	26%	27,946	25%	28,194	25%	26,312	20%	19,418	18%
Economic immigrants - principal applicants	41,664	41%	47,434	43%	48,253	43%	60,856	47%	48,493	46%
Economic immigrants - spouses and dependants	24,047	24%	27,668	25%	27,695	25%	35,368	27%	28,924	28%
Refugees	5,019	5%	3,703	3%	4,065	4%	4,549	3%	5,181	5%
Other immigrants	3,617	4%	3,509	3%	3,599	3%	3,110	2%	3,020	3%
Source Area (Country of last permanent residence - CLPR)										
Africa and the Middle East	18,924	19%	20,744	19%	22,621	20%	27,890	21%	22,391	21%
Asia and Pacific	47,243	47%	52,418	48%	50,771	45%	64,169	49%	53,643	51%
Europe and the United King	20,219	20%	21,717	20%	22,691	20%	22,460	17%	15,790	15%
United States	4,531	5%	5,062	20%	4,379	4%	3,937	3%	3,268	3%
South and Central America	9,597	10%	10,299	9%	11,336	10%	11,730	9%	9,937	9%
Education Level										
Trade certificate	9,742	10%	10,698	10%	11,626	10%	12,047	9%	9,921	9%
Non-university diploma	18,921	19%	21,247	19%	22,018	20%	24,423	19%	20,235	19%
Bachelor degree	49,013	49%	52,319	47%	53,568	48%	62,805	48%	51,503	49%
Master degree	19,001	19%	21,687	20%	20,534	18%	26,096	20%	19,942	19%
Doctorate	3,863	4%	4,309	4%	4,060	4%	4,826	4%	3,435	3%
Language Ability										
English	65,173	65%	73,471	67%	72,970	65%	86,171	66%	70,266	67%
French	5,591	6%	5,754	5%	5,924	5%	7,406	6%	5,218	5%
Both French and English	16,663	17%	17,465	16%	19,535	17%	20,579	16%	15,983	15%
Neither French nor English	13,113	13%	13,570	12%	13,377	12%	16,041	12%	13,569	13%
Gender										
Female	52,009	52%	58,225	53%	58,550	52%	68,034	52%	54,444	52%
Male	48,529	48%	52,035	47%	53,256	48%	62,163	48%	50,591	48%
Age Group										
15 to 24 years of age	6,930	7%	7,202	7%	7,455	7%	7,237	6%	5,217	5%
25 to 44 years of age	75,032	75%	81,678	74%	82,149	73%	99,106	76%	80,155	76%
45 to 64 years of age	16,079	16%	18,415	17%	18,985	17%	20,681	16%	16,572	16%
65 years of age or more	2,499	2%	2,965	3%	3,217	3%	3,173	2%	3,092	3%
Grand Total	**100,540**	**100%**	**110,260**	**100%**	**111,806**	**100%**	**130,197**	**100%**	**105,036**	**100%**

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Permanent Residents Data Cube (FCRO) 2007-2011

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding

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[17] ITIs are defined as permanent residents with a trade certificate or university degree obtained abroad, aged 15 years or older.

2. Methodology

2.1. Evaluation approach, issues and questions

The Terms of Reference for this evaluation, including an evaluation matrix, were approved by CIC's Departmental Evaluation Committee in March 2011. During the development of the terms of reference, the program logic model was reviewed and clarified with program staff, in alignment with the theory-based approach[18] used for this evaluation.

The evaluation was designed to address the issues of relevance and performance, in keeping with the requirements of the 2009 *Directive on the Evaluation Function*, as well as design and implementation questions. The list of evaluation questions is presented in Table 2-1. The evaluation matrix can be found in the Technical Appendices.

Table 2-1: Evaluation questions

Issue: Relevance

1) Is there a continued need for initiatives to facilitate the recognition of foreign credentials process for internationally-trained individuals (ITIs)?

2) To what extent are the roles of the Federal Government and the P/Ts on Foreign Credential Recognition (FCR) complementary? Is there any duplication?

3) Is the FCRO consistent with the objectives and priorities of CIC and the Government of Canada? Does the FCRO complement other federal (CIC and OGD) programs supporting ITI integration?

Issue: Design and implementation

4) Does the FCRO have management and governance structures and accountabilities in place? Are they appropriate?

5) Has the FCRO been delivered as initially designed? How has the Office evolved and is evolving?

6) How effective are FCRO tools and mechanisms to reach clients and stakeholders and promote FCR related information and services?

7) To what extent has the FCRO facilitated the engagement of stakeholders in FCR-related activities?

8) To what extent are FCR policy development and program delivery coordinated and seamless among federal partners? What is the FCRO's contribution to ensuring coordination among federal partners? Is this contribution appropriate?

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[18] A theory-based approach is one in which the selection of program features to evaluate is determined by an explicit conceptualization of the program in terms of a theory which attempts to explain how the program produces the desired effects (Fitz-Gibbon and Morris, 1996).

Issue: Performance

9) To what extent do ITIs overseas and in-Canada receive timely, accurate and useful FCR information and orientation through the FCRO?

10) How has the FCRO contributed to ITIs understanding and beginning the credentials assessment and recognition process, where feasible overseas?

11) To what extent has the FCRO better equipped stakeholders overseas and in Canada to assist ITIs in transitioning into the labour market?

12) To what extent has the FCRO assisted ITIs in becoming well-prepared for employment that fits their skills and experiences in a timely manner?

13) To what extent have ITIs been provided with clear pathways to access job opportunities related to their skills and experience? How has the FCRO contributed to the facilitation of these pathways?

14) To what extent is the FCRO program design and delivery model economical, efficient and effective? Are there alternative approaches that could be adopted in Canada and overseas that would be more efficient and effective?

15) Are there unintended effects resulting from the FCRO (positive or negative)?

2.2. Evaluation scope

The scope of the evaluation covered the period from the FCRO's inception in May 2007 to September 2012. Data collection activities encompass all of the FCRO's activities, outputs and outcomes; however, it should be noted that information regarding the Canadian Immigrant Integration Program (CIIP) was mostly collected during an evaluation of CIC's Overseas Orientation Initiatives (OOI), completed in 2012. Given that the timeframe for the OOI evaluation was similar to that of the FCRO evaluation, it was felt that most of the information collected through the OOI evaluation was current and did not need to be updated[19]. As well, at the time of this evaluation, discussions were underway to consolidate the FCRO and the Integration Branch. While this change was not completed at the time of the evaluation, discussions were underway, and as a result, information with respect to this potential change was included in the evaluation.

2.3. Data collection methods and analysis

This evaluation included multiple lines of evidence, including both qualitative and quantitative methods, drawing from both primary and secondary data sources. Given the number of different stakeholders groups involved in foreign credential recognition, the size of each of these stakeholder groups and their geographic locations, a number of different methods (i.e., surveys, interviews and focus groups) were required. Each data collection method is described below.

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[19] Statistics on participation rates for the CIIP were updated as part of this evaluation.

2.3.1. Review of documents and secondary sources

Key documents reviewed as part of this evaluation, and used to assess program relevance, design and implementation, and performance, included the following:

- Program documents, including the FCRO Business Plan (2011/12), the Performance Measurement Strategy (PMS) (May 2011), The Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Credentials (2009) and Progress Report (2011); Treasury Board Submissions, project description sheets and group work plans;

- Reports from previous evaluations and research studies (e.g. CIIP pilot evaluation (2010), HRSDC's Foreign Credential Recognition Program evaluation (2010), evaluation of CIC's Overseas Orientation Initiatives (2012), public opinion research exploring awareness and perception of foreign credential recognition (2011), Report of the Standing Committee on CIC for Improving Foreign Credential Recognition (2009), Report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (2012)).

- Results from FCRO surveys, including surveys of regulatory bodies and employers (2010); and the Federal Internship for Newcomers Program survey of interns, participant exit surveys and stakeholder feedback sessions (2012).

2.3.2. Administrative and financial data analysis

Three sources of administrative and financial data were reviewed and analyzed to assess program performance and also to develop the profile of FCRO clients:

- Program data such as web and call statistics from the FCRO and Service Canada;

- CIC immigrant profile data (CIC's Field Operations Support System (FOSS) database); and,

- FCRO budget and associated financial information.

Wherever possible, the administrative and financial data were analyzed year-over-year, in order to identify trends and patterns significant to the evaluation questions. As with the document review, the pertinent data were captured electronically in an indicator-specific template.

2.3.3. Analysis of Tracking of Overseas Orientation Session Graduates (TOSG) data

The Tracking of Overseas Orientation Session Graduates (TOSG) is a CIC survey distributed to CIIP graduates at three months, one year, and three years after landing in Canada, in order to gain an understanding of their FCR experience, including their employment outcomes and integration into Canada.

Results from TOSG were used and integrated into the evaluation to assess program performance. An extract of the database, which is updated on a regular basis, was taken in August 2012. This extract included TOSG data for 567 CIIP graduates who had been in Canada within the past 3 months[20].

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[20] Insufficient information was available on individuals who had landed in Canada after 1 year and as a result, information from this group was not included in the analysis. In addition, no results had yet been received for the 3 year survey.

2.3.4. Interviews

Key informant interviews were used to gather in-depth qualitative information on issues related to relevance, design and implementation, and performance.

An interviewee list was developed in consultation with the FCRO. In total, 55 interviews were completed with respondents having various levels of involvement with the FCRO, using a semi-structured interview guide tailored to respondent type. See Table 2-2 for a breakdown of the number of interviews conducted with each type.

Table 2-2: Key informant interviews completed by type

Respondent Type	Number completed
CIC and FCRO representatives	10
Other federal government department (OGD) partners	4
P/T level respondents including those from government and non-government organizations	7
Key stakeholders including regulatory bodies, Immigrant Serving Organizations (ISOs), sector councils, educational institution, assessment agencies, academics	34
Total	**55**

Interviews were conducted in person or via telephone and each interview took approximately one hour to complete. Interviewees were provided the option of English or French for their interview. The interview guides used in this evaluation can be found in the Technical Appendices.

The evaluation used the following scale for reporting qualitative evidence from the interviews.

Scale for the presentation of interview results

All	Findings reflect the views and opinions of 100% of the interviewees.
Majority/Most	Findings reflect the views and opinions of at least 75% but less than 100% of interviewees.
Many	Findings reflect the views and opinions of at least 50% but less than 75% of interviewees.
Some	Findings reflect the views and opinions of at least 25% but less than 50% of interviewees.
A few	Findings reflect the views and opinions of at least two respondents but less than 25% of interviewees.

2.3.5. Focus groups with Internationally-trained Individuals (ITIs)

Focus groups were conducted with ITIs to gather qualitative information on program performance, with an emphasis on experiences with navigating the FCR process in Canada, and, as applicable, ITIs' awareness and use of FCRO services and tools. The ITI focus groups were

also used to gather in-depth qualitative information to inform development of the ITI survey (described in section 2.3.7)[21].

Twelve focus groups of 2 hours in length were conducted with ITIs in Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa and Halifax, involving a total of 108 participants (see Table 2-3). Participants were recruited with the assistance of ISOs, seeking a mix of genders, country of origin, occupations, and stage in the FCR process.

Table 2-3: ITI focus groups participation by city

	City	Total Participants
1	Toronto	15
2	Halifax	19
3	Winnipeg	19
4	Calgary	22
5	Vancouver	19
6	Ottawa	14
	Total	**108**

Note: One of the focus groups in Ottawa was conducted in French and the other in English. The other cities did not recruit French-speaking participants.

The focus group moderator's guide can be found in the Technical Appendices.

2.3.6. Survey of Immigrant Serving Organizations (ISOs)

A survey of Immigrant Serving Organizations (ISOs) was conducted in order to obtain information on program relevance and performance, particularly with respect to the key challenges faced by ITIs in obtaining FCR information, gaps in support and/or services for FCR, and, as applicable, the reach and effectiveness of the FCRO tools and services.

A total of 309 ISOs across Canada (identified by CIC and through other sources such as settlement.org and immigrant.net) were contacted and invited by email to complete the survey online. The email invitation included information about the survey and a URL link to access it. While efforts were made to ensure the list of organizations focused on those that provided employment-related services, an initial pre-screening question was included in the survey so that only ISOs that provide employment, training, or career services were eligible to continue.

Of the 309 ISOs originally contacted 107 completed the survey, resulting in a 35% response rate. Only 10 organizations were screened out of the survey.

A copy of the survey instrument, which was developed in consultation with CIC and pre-tested prior to launch, is available in the Technical Appendices.

2.3.7. Survey of ITIs

A survey of ITIs was conducted to gather information on program performance, focusing on the experience of ITIs throughout the FCR process, challenges encountered, the need for initiatives to facilitate the foreign credentials recognition process, and the awareness and usefulness of tools and services provided by the FCRO. The survey targeted ITIs in general (not strictly users of

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[21] Prior knowledge of the FCRO and/or FCRO-developed tools was not a pre-requisite for participation in the focus groups, as the evaluation sought to determine the various approaches for achieving FCR, with or without knowledge of the FCRO.

FCRO products or services) so that comparisons could be made between those that have used FCRO tools/resources and those that have not. The survey instrument was developed by CIC in consultation with program representatives and is presented in the Technical Appendices.

As respondents were not pre-identified[22], the survey was classified as public opinion research and was developed and managed by CIC R&E internally and administered online. Before being launched, the survey was pretested with ITIs focus group participants who had agreed to pre-test the survey.

Links to the survey were posted in both English and French on the following sites:

- CIC's website on the "Working in Canada" page[23]

- FCRO's website (on every page)[24];

- HRSDC's Working in Canada website on the "About Us" page under "Government of Canada"[25] as well as in pages providing reports on specific occupations;

- HRSDC's website on FCR[26]; and,

- Service Canada's pages on "Finding a Job"[27] and "Having your credentials recognized[28].

In addition to links placed on these websites, the survey was also promoted regularly via Twitter[29] and on CIC's "What's New at CIC" Widget[30] which allowed for the link to be incorporated on other websites.[31]

The survey was open between August 28, 2012 and September 24, 2012. As the survey was open to anyone accessing these websites, in order to target ITIs, the first question on the survey was used to filter respondents.[32] In total, 2,162 respondents accessed the survey with 590 (27%) completing it to the end and submitting it, 1,205 opening it and/or completing it partially (56%) and 367 (17%) being filtered out as ineligible.[33] A detailed profile of survey respondents can be found in the Technical Appendices.

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[22] It was not possible to identify individuals that use FCRO tools/services (i.e., except for the CIIP, client lists do not exist).

[23] www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomers/work/index.asp

[24] credentials.gc.ca

[25] www.workingincanada.gc.ca/content_pieces-eng.do?cid=983

[26] www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/credential_recognition/

[27] www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/lifeevents/job.shtml,

[28] www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/lifeevents/credentials.shtml

[29] In total the link to the survey was tweeted 7 times (once every 2-3 days) in both English and French on CIC's Twitter page (@CitImmCanada) and was retweeted 78 times on various sites including HRSDC's Working in Canada Twitter pages (@workingincanada, @travailaucanada) as well as other non-government Twitter pages. The tweet was added as a favourite 21 times.

[30] www.cic.gc.ca/english/widget/index.asp

[31] To date it is not possible to track how many sites have incorporated the CIC Widget.

[32] In order to proceed with the survey, respondents were required to select that they were 1. Born outside of Canada, 2. Were educated or trained outside of Canada (receiving post-secondary education or having work experience outside of Canada, 3. Have immigrated or are seeking to immigrate to Canada, and 4. Intend to work/are working in Canada. If respondents did not meet all of these criteria the survey was terminated.

[33] Although the incomplete category includes many respondents that opened the survey and dropped out immediately, it also includes respondents who accessed the survey and completed it partially (i.e., those that did not make it to the end and submit their responses). As a result the response rate for some questions was higher than 590.

2.4. Limitations

The evaluation contained a balance of qualitative and quantitative lines of evidence. These lines of evidence had some limitations, which are described below, along with some mitigation strategies. These strategies, along with the triangulation of multiple lines of evidence, were considered sufficient to ensure evaluation findings can be used with confidence.

For some FCRO tools/resources, the absence of targets for clients served and the inability to track the number of unique clients limited the ability to assess the reach of the FCRO.

- The FCRO does not have a means of tracking unique clients who use its products or services (apart from TOSG for CIIP), nor does it have articulated performance targets (apart from CIIP which has annual participant targets for each location).

The evaluation relied on ISOs to recruit participants for the focus groups, which may have resulted in selection bias.

- In order to mitigate this potential bias, ISOs were given a set of criteria to assist them in recruiting participants for the focus groups. In addition, individuals recruited for the focus groups were not required to know about the products and services offered by the FCRO in order to participate.

Given that the size of the population of ITIs eligible to respond to the ITI survey is not known, it is not possible to definitively attribute a confidence level to the findings.

- Using the number of FCRO and SC website visits in 2011/12 as a guide, responses to the survey, based on 590 respondents, would provide a margin of error of +/-4%, 19 times out of 20, which is acceptable for the purposes of this evaluation. The margin of error however would increase in those instances where information was provided for a sub-group of respondents (e.g., those in regulated vs. non-regulated occupations) and results in these cases should therefore be used with caution.

It was not possible to post the ITI survey on websites other than those operated by the federal government.

- When planning the ITI survey, the intent was to post the survey on a number of sites where ITIs may seek information on the FCR process, however, this was not feasible and the survey was only posted on federal government websites. In order to mitigate for the fact that only individuals who accessed government sites could answer the survey, individuals were asked to also identify other sources of FCR information they used.

While both ISOs and ITIs were asked similar questions, comparisons between the result of the ISO survey and those of the ITI survey should not be made.

- While both surveys sought to obtain information on the degree to which ITIs have the information they need to start the FCR process and prepare for employment, the respondent groups are substantially different. As part of the ISO survey, individuals were asked to provide their perception of the experiences of ITIs challenges, while the ITI survey asked the individuals directly. That said, since ISOs may deal with a sub-set of ITIs, differences may in fact be appropriate.

3. Findings

This section presents the findings of the evaluation, organized by the three evaluation themes of relevance, design and implementation, and performance.

3.1. Relevance

3.1.1. Continued need

> **Finding**: There is a continued need to facilitate the recognition of foreign credentials, driven by the continuing challenges faced by internationally-trained individuals and the complexity of the FCR process.

Current demographic trends indicate that newcomers will play an increasingly important role in the Canadian labour market, driven by factors such as the impending retirement of a large number of baby boomers and the limited number of new workers who are coming from domestic sources.[34] Ensuring these individuals can enter into the labour market in a timely manner is important to ensuring they can fulfill their potential.

A number of factors have been found to influence a newcomer's ability to successfully settle and integrate into Canadian society, one of which is the recognition of foreign credentials. Research based on three waves (at six months, two years and four years after landing in Canada) of the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada found that a lack of Canadian work experience, foreign credential recognition and lack of official language capacity were among the most serious employment-related problems reported by newcomers throughout their initial 4 years in Canada[35]. At a macro level, while difficult to quantify, it has been estimated that the annual cost of underutilizing the skills of newcomers is $2.4 billion (1996 dollars).[36]

FCR challenges faced by ITIs

The evaluation found that ITIs face a number of challenges in having their foreign credentials recognized. The document review, focus groups and surveys conducted as part of this evaluation, all identified the following:

- The high financial cost associated with having qualifications/credentials recognized;

- The length of the credential recognition process and understanding the steps for a particular occupation;

- Not knowing who to contact to have credentials/qualification recognized;

- Access to accurate FCR and labour market information (by occupation and P/T) in order to inform decisions, especially while overseas;

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[34] Kustec, Stan, *The role of migrant labour supply in the Canadian labour market,* Citizenship and Immigration Canada, June 2012.

[35] Xue, Li, *Portrait of an Integration Process, Difficulties encountered and resources relied on for newcomers in their first 4 years in Canada,* Citizenship and Immigration Canada, June 2007.

[36] Reitz, Jeffrey G. *Immigrant Skill Utilization in the Canadian Labour Market: Implications of Human Capital Research,* Journal of International Migration and Integration, 2(3) 2001, pp. 347-378.

- Obtaining Canadian work experience, particularly in situations where work experience is required in order to obtain or maintain professional designation;

- Lack of a professional network, which, for those in non-regulated occupations, can be used as a reference for potential employers; and

- Lack of employer awareness of foreign credential equivalencies in Canada.

The complexity of the FCR process

Canada's FCR process remains highly complex due to:

- the large number of entities involved in the FCR process;

- assessment processes that may not be sufficiently flexible to allow immigrants to demonstrate their qualifications;

- a lack of capacity among regulatory authorities to address the complexities of the process; and

- differences between standards and requirements across provinces/territories[37].

Most individuals interviewed for this evaluation identified the need for improving the FCR process with systemic changes such as having P/Ts and regulatory bodies harmonize regulation processes. Some interviewees from FCRO, CIC and P/Ts did note that FCR issues have moved more to the front of regulatory bodies' agendas; however, their primary focus remains maintaining existing standards, which in turn may impede efforts to make the FCR process more open to ITIs.

Another commonly cited challenge (by focus group participants, in documentation, and by interviewees) was the disconnect between the current immigration points system and P/T and regulatory body requirements for licensure in regulated professions (i.e. points awarded for education and experience on the immigration application do not necessarily translate to credentials being recognized by employers or regulatory authorities). The majority of participants in the focus groups agreed on the importance of shifting the focus of FCR initiatives to align with the immigration application process so that they know as early as possible whether or not their credentials are likely to be recognized in Canada.

Compounding the issue further, employers who hire ITIs for non-regulated occupations must verify education and work experience at their own discretion. The results from a 2010 survey of employers[38] (n=534) reveals that assessing certification and licensure, assessing language, and assessing work experience posed the biggest challenges to employers, with, in each case, about one in 4 respondents qualifying these as challenging. Overall, the survey found that 45% of employers felt the challenges they faced in their efforts to hire ITIs, was, at least to some extent, lessening their willingness to hire ITIs. Overall, 65% of respondents to the survey indicated that their company's workforce in Canada does not contain any ITIs.

Accordingly, many interviewees across all groups indicated there is a continued need to work on employers' awareness and services designed to support them in assessing international credentials and the process for hiring ITIs.

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[37] Forum of Labour Market Ministers (2009), *A Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications.*
[38] Foreign Credentials Referral Office,(2010), *Benchmark Survey of Employers.*

3.1.2. Alignment of FCRO with CIC and government-wide objectives and priorities

> **Finding**: The FCRO is well aligned with CIC's strategic outcome related to newcomer integration and the Government-wide prioritizing of economic immigration as a means to sustain Canada's economic growth.

Alignment with CIC objectives

The intended ultimate outcome of the FCRO is that "TTIs are employed in positions commensurate with their skills and experience, in a timely manner, in order to better integrate into Canadian society." This outcome is aligned with CIC's Strategic Outcome 3 (SO3) that seeks to ensure that "newcomers and citizens participate to their full potential in fostering an integrated society" and the settlement program activity that supports the integration of newcomers through the provision of information/orientation and labour market access services, among others.[39]

The importance of FCR within CIC is also confirmed in the Department's *Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration*. In the 2012 edition of the report, the department acknowledged "the critical importance of validating credentials for immigrants to work in their areas of expertise".[40]

Correspondingly, most interviewees (CIC, FCRO, and OGDs) mentioned FCRO's alignment with CIC priorities vis-à-vis its focus on economic and labour market integration and pre-arrival services.

Alignment with government-wide objectives

All interviewees from the FCRO, CIC and OGDs agreed that the FCRO is aligned with the Government of Canada's focus on the economy and meeting labour market demands through immigration that was also corroborated with evidence from the document review. For example, the federal government identified FCR as an important aspect of labour market integration and provided funding to address this issue in both its 2007 and 2009 Budgets. More recently, Prime Minister Harper's 2012 speech at the World Economic Forum[41] made clear that addressing economic and labour market needs will be the central goal of Canada's immigration efforts. Furthermore, Budget 2012 highlights Canada's priority for economic immigration and making the process "truly fast and flexible in a way that will sustain Canada's economic growth":

> "Since 2006, the Government has pursued much-needed reforms to focus Canada's immigration system on fuelling economic prosperity for Canada. The Government has placed top priority on attracting immigrants who have the skills and experience our economy needs. The Government is committed to making our immigration system truly fast and flexible in a way that will sustain Canada's economic growth... The Economic Action Plan 2012 will...move to an increasingly fast and flexible immigration system where priority focus is on meeting Canada's labour market needs."[42]

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[39] Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Program Activity Architecture 2011.

[40] Citizenship and immigration Canada, *Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration,* 2012, p.7.

[41] Davos, Switzerland, January 2012

[42] Government of Canada. (2012). Budget 2012. Retrieved on October 2, 2012 from: www.budget.gc.ca/2012/plan/chap3-3-eng.html.

3.1.3. Roles of the federal government and P/Ts in FCR

> **Finding**: Both the Federal government and the P/T governments have complementary roles in the recognition of foreign credentials, with the federal government playing a facilitative and coordinating role and P/Ts, through regulatory bodies, having responsibility for licensing/credentialing. That said, some interviewees pointed out that there is the potential for overlap in the operationalization of these roles, particularly with respect to the dissemination of FCR information.

P/T and federal government roles in FCR

Provincial and Territorial governments have jurisdiction over the regulation of skilled trades and most licensed professions. In many cases, this responsibility has been delegated by legislation to professional regulatory authorities. In the provinces of Ontario, Manitoba and Nova Scotia *Fair Access* legislation has been introduced to oversee the registration practices of these authorities[43].

The Federal government role in FCR, as defined in the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, is "to work in cooperation with the provinces to secure better recognition of the foreign credentials of permanent residents and their more rapid integration into society"[44]. This role has been further defined as providing "strategic leadership to foster the development of a consistent nationwide approach to recognizing foreign credentials"[45], and "as facilitator, reference point, and convener of stakeholders"[46].

From the perspective of interviewees, representatives from CIC and the FCRO agreed that the federal government has leadership and oversight responsibilities for FCR, consistent with the roles defined in the documentation. Specific examples cited by these respondents included coordination among P/T jurisdictions, encouraging a consistent and streamlined pan-Canadian approach, and providing funding and support to stakeholders working in FCR. All P/T interviewees also mentioned that the FCRO played an appropriate role as a repository of information from P/Ts to ensure there is no duplication in the information disseminated by the various jurisdictions, and as a repository of best practices. Also of note was that many of the P/T respondents also cited that the pre-arrival provision of FCR/FQR information overseas was a natural fit with CIC's role.

Potential overlap in P/T and federal programs and services

Interviewees from CIC, including the FCRO, agreed that efforts were being made to reduce the potential for duplication, and the Pan-Canadian Framework was cited frequently as contributing to improving coordination between the Federal and P/T levels of government. Nevertheless, all key informant groups pointed to some degree of overlap pertaining to the contribution of various levels and bodies of government who work in the field of FCR.

Many P/T interviewees indicated that while they currently viewed the roles of the federal and P/T governments as complementary, they felt there was *potential* for overlap. Stakeholder respondents and the few OGDs that addressed this question agreed. The most relevant area of

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[43] Forum of Labour Market Ministers, *Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications* (2009) and *Pan-Canadian Framework Progress Report* (2011).

[44] *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (2001), 3(1)(j).

[45] Report of the Auditor General of Canada (2009), *Selecting Foreign Workers Under the Immigration Program*.

[46] Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration (November 2009), *Recognizing Success: A Report On Improving Foreign Credential Recognition*.

potential overlap, given the role of the FCRO, was with respect to the provision of information or tools. Some of the P/T websites were seen as providing similar types of information as federal sites, such as generic information about working in Canada versus a particular province, and the provision of employer-targeted information on how to recruit ITIs.

Furthermore, a few P/T interviewees were critical of the FCRO's role in the current movements toward linking FCR with immigration selection. These interviewees identified potential problems related to the announcement that education credentials will in the future be assessed by designated organizations as part of the immigration application process, fearing this may lead new immigrants to falsely assume they will in fact be able to work in their profession once in Canada.

3.2. Design and implementation

3.2.1. FCRO's role within CIC

> **Finding**: The FCRO was created as a Branch with a degree of flexibility in conducting its activities. Since then, it has undergone changes to its structure and areas of focus and has evolved, which has resulted in some overlap in programming with the Integration Branch.

When the FCRO was created in 2007 it was located as a Branch within CIC[47]. Since it was first established, the FCRO has undergone changes in its structure and areas of focus, most notably its move from the Operations Sector to the Strategic and Program Policy Sector and the transfer of the management of Gs&Cs to IPMB. As well, at the time of the evaluation, discussions were underway regarding the potential consolidation of the FCRO and the Integration Branch.

There is some evidence that over time, some duplication in programming with the Integration Branch has occurred. In particular, the Evaluation of CIC's Overseas Orientation Initiatives (2012) found that the overseas orientation offered by CIIP in the Philippines was offered to the same clientele already being served by other CIC services. As well, the FCRO's Working in Canada workbook duplicates some of the information found in CIC's Welcome to Canada workbook. While references are made to the Welcome to Canada workbook in the Working in Canada workbook, the two documents overlap in the information provided on certain topics. Further, a review of grants and contributions (vote 5) spending for CIC programs under the Settlement envelope found some evidence of overlap with the FCRO in terms of activities that help recently-arrived immigrants in the provision of information, orientation support, and activities to access the labour market (e.g., bridging programs).

While many interviewees within CIC characterized the FCRO as a small, innovative office that was both nimble and adaptable to change, some non-FCRO CIC interviewees expressed concern that the FCRO is too isolated from the rest of the department and felt that the FCRO should be better integrated within CIC to complement other CIC programs, such as around overseas orientation, selection and pre-arrival assessments of educational credentials. These interviewees

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[47] In Budget 2006, the Federal Government indicated it would "move forward on the commitment to expedite foreign assessment and recognition processes through a new foreign credential recognition agency". After consultations with the provinces and territories, the agency name was subsequently changed to the Foreign Credentials Referral Office in order to respect provincial/territorial jurisdiction and to better reflect the functions that it would perform. When launched in 2007, the FCRO was "situated within CIC", with strong partnership links with HRSDC and Service Canada.

noted there are several branches that are working on issues that would merit a more global and integrated approach, but collaboration is not always seen on these issues and the flow of information is not always timely. It was suggested that the FCRO could benefit from tighter linkages with other branches within the department to ensure that pre-arrival, settlement and citizenship services are considered in the overall immigration continuum. Almost all interviewees from CIC, including the FCRO, agreed that the future program direction for the FCRO should focus on the overseas/pre-arrival FCR efforts and linking FCR with immigration selection. The FCRO was seen as being in a position to leverage their existing relationships with regulatory bodies, educational institutions and employers to facilitate these initiatives.

3.3. Performance

3.3.1. FCRO impact on stakeholders

The FCRO fosters relationships with stakeholders (ISOs, regulatory bodies, assessment agencies and employers) in order to better equip them with the necessary resources to assist ITIs in transitioning into the labour market.

Fostering relationships with stakeholders

> **Finding**: The FCRO has been effective in reaching stakeholder groups with its tools through outreach and promotional activities and in engaging them, to some extent, in FCR-related activities through initiatives such as the International Qualifications Network (IQN).

Findings from the document review, interviews and the ISO Survey provided examples of ways in which stakeholder engagement has been enhanced by the FCRO. In the absence of targets and/or quantitative indicators such as agreements or formal joint activities with stakeholders, it was not possible to fully assess the extent to which the FCRO has facilitated the engagement of stakeholders in FCR-related activities.

One of the methods used by the FCRO to reach stakeholders is through awareness and promotional activities. In 2009/10 and 2010/11, the FCRO attended 22 separate conferences, which involved 8,820 employers, 300 academics, and 4,220 newcomers.[48] Key conferences included The Canadian Chamber of Commerce Annual General Meeting, Canada's Top 100 employers Summit, Metropolis, and six Internationally Educated Professionals conferences. At many of these events, a representative of the FCRO participated on panel discussions or other speaking opportunities. In all cases, the FCRO had a kiosk to provide information to conference delegates that included their Occupational Fact Sheets, the 2009/10 Progress Report, the Employer's Roadmap and an FCRO brochure-specifically tailored to newcomers.[49] Furthermore, in 2010 the FCRO sent a mail-out of all their products to Immigrant Serving Organizations throughout Canada (approximately 400 ISOs), which resulted in requests for more than 24,000 materials.

Additional evidence supporting the extent to which FCRO has been successful in reaching stakeholders was obtained from the ISO survey. Results from the survey indicated that 94% of ISOs surveyed were aware of at least one FCRO product or tool. Specifically, as shown in Figure

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[48] FCRO (2011), *Summary of Marketing Events*.
[49] FCRO (n.d.), Memorandum to the Minister, *Update of FCRO Results*.

3-1, 78% of ISOs knew about the FCRO website, 72% were aware of the Planning to Work in Canada Workbook, and 67% were aware of the Occupational Fact Sheets (n=97).

Figure 3-1: ISO awareness of products/tools developed by the FCRO
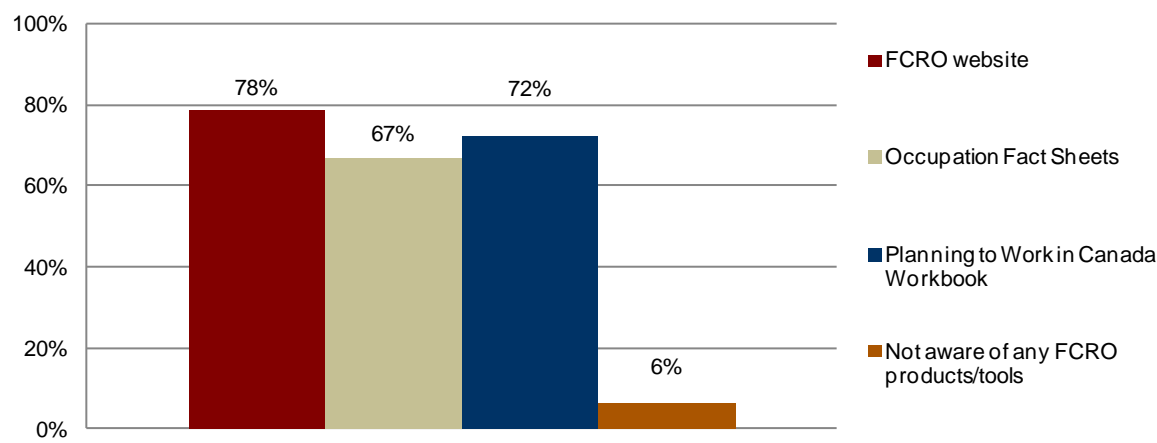
Source: Survey of ISOs, n=97

The results of the ISO survey were largely corroborated by ISO interviewees, most of whom explicitly mentioned that FCRO tools and mechanisms were effective in reaching them. Some interviewees from FCRO and CIC suggested, however, that the FCRO should focus on better marketing and promotion of its products and services, whether by exploring creative ways to reach stakeholders or by approaching the marketing of tools and mechanisms in a more systematic manner.

According to interviewees, the process of developing tools such as the Occupational Fact Sheets, and the Employer and Sector Roadmaps tools have fostered collaboration and support engagement across organizations. For example, employer and sector roadmaps are often developed collaboratively with sector associations and organizations to ensure that information presented is consistent and accurate across multiple stakeholders.

In addition to the development of tools, the International Qualifications Network (IQN), a website[50] launched in December 2011 and designed for stakeholders to share innovative FCR practices is a key component of the FCRO's stakeholder engagement activities. Prior to its launch, the site was tested and an initial 111 contributions were posted in order to pre-populate the site. As such, at the time of launch, the site already had 198 members and over 33,000 visits. Although it is early to assess performance, results to date appear positive – in just under nine months since it launched, the website has increased its membership by 127 (or 65%), visits by more than 1.5 million, and contributions by 66 (or 59%) (see Table 3-1).

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[50] www.credentials-competences.gc.ca

Table 3-1: IQN performance metrics as of August 28, 2012

Activity	Pre-launch total (Dec. 6, 2011)***	Current total (Aug. 28, 2012)	Growth
Contributions*	111	177	66
Visits by members **	18,886	30,037	11,151
Visits by visitors***	33,172	1,573,025	1,539,853
New members	198	325	127

*A contribution is information input by an IQN member. A contribution may take the form as either an initiative or an event posted on the community event calendar. Only IQN members can input one or more contributions.
** Users who are "members" of the IQN but do not login are counted as a "visitor." IQN Administrators also navigate the website multiple times every day, either logged in or not, which is recorded as "visits."
***The IQN was launched in December 2011 after a series of development consultation sessions in the summer and fall of 2011. These sessions account for the pre-launch totals evident for each of the activities categorized in the exhibit.
Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, IQN Metrics

Equipping stakeholders to assist ITIs

> **Finding:** There is some evidence that the FCRO has, to some extent, equipped ISOs in assisting ITIs, but there is limited evidence of the FCRO's impact on employers and regulatory bodies.

Results from the ISO survey indicate that 68% of ISOs surveyed felt that FCRO products and tools equipped them, at least to some extent, in assisting ITIs to understand and undertake the credentials/qualifications recognition process (n=89). In terms of usefulness in helping clients find a job that matches or is related to their skills/qualifications, the FCRO products and tools were found to be useful, at least to some extent, by 47% of the ISOs (n=89). Further, ISOs reported that the following FCRO products and tools were either *useful to some degree or very useful* to their organization in assisting clients:

- 80% of those who used the FCRO website (n=76);

- 89% of those who used the Occupational Fact Sheets (n=66); and,

- 84% of those who used the Planning to Work in Canada workbook (n=70).

Through the CIIP, the FCRO has developed partnerships with stakeholders involved in immigrant integration. Many of these partnerships were formed during the pilot phase of the CIIP initiative (2007 to 2010) and continue to the present-day. In total, 53 partnerships have been formed to date (see Table 3-2).

Table 3-2:   CIIP partnerships

Partnership type	Description	#	%
College Focal Point Partners (FPPs)	Provide pre-arrival online advice and information to CIIP clients and make onward referrals to similar organizations within the same province when required.	11	21
Immigrant-servicing agency FPPs	Provide pre-arrival online advising and information to CIIP clients and make onward referrals to similar organizations within the same province when required.	10	19
Credential-assessment agencies	Provide preliminary online equivalencies and/or formal assessments for CIIP clients overseas.	3	6
Sector councils	Pilot pre-arrival online workshops, proctor emerit examinations, tools and resources to CIIP clients. They also provide labour-market information and counselling to clients.	2	4
Regulatory bodies	Proctor overseas examinations through CIIP offices and provide webinars on credential recognition and certification in Canada.	2	4
Resource Centres for Regulated Occupations	Provide support and guidance to clients in regulated occupations and clarify the licensure pathway.	3	6
Provincial and territorial governments	Provide up-to-date information on the labour-market trends in their respective provinces, develop new material for the PN sessions and supply slides for CIIP sessions.	10	19
Employer FPPs	CIIP refers all job-ready FSW clients to two organizations: Skills International and Career Edge. These two organizations, in turn, connect CIIP clients to employers across Canada.	2	4
Total		**53**	**100%**

Source: Canadian Immigrant Integration Program Quarterly Statistical Report, October 1, 2010 to September 30, 2012.

Despite the ongoing efforts to facilitate the engagement of stakeholders, there was some evidence from interviewees of potential for further engagement with some groups. Although many interviewees agreed that the FCRO's unique role includes bringing stakeholders together to address common issues/achieve common goals, some interviewees (experts, P/Ts, and regulatory bodies) mentioned the need for engaging employers and a broader reach to regulatory bodies at the P/T level. Engagement with employers early on was viewed as crucial in providing ITIs with a clear link to employment opportunities. A 2010 study found that "[a] considerable number of employers said they were uncertain about what assistance the Government of Canada could offer to their company or industry sector specifically related to the foreign credential recognition process, nor did they generally believe any such help is required."[51] With regard to regulatory bodies, among those who responded to an FCRO survey in 2010 (n=140), 31% had never heard of the FCRO.[52] Since that time the FCRO has funded a number of projects to assist regulatory bodies in providing services to ITIs, mostly overseas and has also engaged with regulatory bodies through the Canadian National Network Association of Regulators and has undertaken activities such as connecting with employers through national associations such as the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. In the absence of any specific targets related to stakeholder engagement, it is difficult to assess to what extent the FCRO has achieved its objectives.

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[51] HRSDC (2011), *Exploring Awareness and Perception of Foreign Credential Recognition*
[52] Foreign Credentials Referral Office (2010), *Benchmark Survey of Regulatory Bodies.*

3.3.2. FCRO impact on partners

The FCRO engages OGD and P/T government partners in ensuring FCR efforts in Canada and overseas are coordinated and seamless.

FCRO's role in the Pan-Canadian Framework

> **Finding**: The FCRO's lead in the overseas/pre-arrival component of the Pan-Canadian FQR Framework and its work with P/Ts and federal partners to build awareness and consensus around Framework implementation are viewed as appropriate. However, stakeholders perceive a continued lack of coordination and communication among federal partners (namely, between FCRO and FCRP).

Coordination among federal partners is outlined in the *Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition Foreign Qualifications*. The FCRO plays a key role in the implementation of the Framework by leading on overseas/pre-arrival supports through the provision of labour market information and assessment tools, online and in person, and working with P/Ts and federal partners to build awareness of and consensus around Framework implementation. The FCRO also co-chairs the Communication and Consultations task team with Ontario, and is a member of the Metrics and Reporting task team, both of which were created through the Framework. The FCRO participates in a monthly tri-lateral Director General Forum which coordinates policy and program activities between key federal departments on FCR (CIC, HRSDC, and Health Canada).

Of the interviewees who could comment on FCRO's contribution to the Pan-Canadian Framework, some felt FCRO has played an important role and is supporting coordination, while a few felt they could play a stronger role by having more control over funding and improving communication among the federal partners.

Coordination among federal government partners

Despite the fact that the federal government produces an annual progress report describing the specific activities of each of the federal partners in FCR, interviewees from P/Ts, regulatory bodies, sector councils and associations held the perception that the federal departments work on many of the same issues, may fund similar types of projects, and are perceived with little differentiation. Specifically, some interviewees from these respondent groups perceive FCRO and FCRP[53] to be funding similar types of projects, and many stakeholders interviewed were explicit that they did not understand the difference in the work that the FCRP undertakes and funds versus the FCRO. A few interviewees admitted that they would seek project funding from both, with the hope that one would approve the proposal. Similarly, many of the OGD interviewees felt they understood the FCRO's role and felt it is appropriate, but thought that the division between the FCRO and FCRP (and to a lesser extent HC's IEHPI) was not always clear (especially in terms of who would fund which project).

An analysis of FCRO-funded projects found that funding provided to regulatory bodies, national associations and sector councils (e.g. for General Accountants, Engineers, Nurses, Information Communication Technologists) was intended for overseas/pre-arrival advancements in FCR, which is in alignment with the responsibilities of the FCRO under the *Pan-Canadian Framework*.

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[53] The FCRP, administered by HRSDC, is designed to develop and strengthen Canada's FCR capacity by providing strategic financial support to P/Ts and stakeholders to develop tools, systems and processes for assessing and recognizing foreign credentials in targeted occupations and sectors.

The confusion in the division of roles between the FCRO and FCRP has persisted for many years, as the FCRP Evaluation (April 2010) recommended, "*Better document the division of roles and responsibilities between the FCRP and the Foreign Credentials Referral Office. Specifically, there are opportunities for greater clarity regarding roles and responsibilities in the areas of partnership development, engagement of stakeholders, and enhanced national foreign credential recognition coordination, including exchanging best practices.*"[54] The management response therein agreed with the recommendation, yet noted they view the FCRP and the FCRO as "mutually-reinforcing programs that support the Government of Canada's efforts to strengthen FCR processes across the country."

Although the actions taken from the FCRP evaluation included a Letter of Understanding between the FCRP and FCRO stating shared interests and agreement to work together; commitment to hold regular meetings to minimize duplication; and a FCRP/FCRO joint Memorandum to Cabinet (Sept. 15, 2009) reiterating and confirming roles and responsibilities between CIC and HRSDC, based on the comments received from some interviewees, as noted above, confusion in roles and responsibilities remains.

3.3.3. FCRO impacts on ITIs

Use and usefulness of FCRO tools and services

As indicated in the logic model, FCRO tools and services are expected to provide ITIs with timely, accurate and useful FCR information and an understanding of the FCR process. In order to assess the impact of the FCRO on ITIs, the evaluation examined both the use and usefulness of FCRO tools and services. Both are integral elements required to assess impact – if tools and services are effective but only used by a small proportion of individuals that would benefit from them then the impact of the FCRO on ITIs is limited. Similarly, if ineffective tools and services are used by many ITIs, then impact is reduced.

> **Finding**: ITIs use FCRO tools and services to varying degrees, depending upon the nature of the tool and its intended audience. While ITIs who have been reached by the FCRO consider the tools and services useful, information gaps remain (e.g., information on available jobs).

Use of FCRO tools and services

Both qualitative and quantitative evidence pieced together from a variety of sources (i.e., web statistics, CIIP statistics, ITI survey and ITI focus groups) were used to arrive at an approximate measure of use for the major FCRO products and services (see Table 3-3).

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[54] HRSDC (2010) *Summative Evaluation of the Foreign Credentials Recognition Program (FCRP)*. Retrieved from: www.rhdcc-hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/publications_resources/evaluation/2010/sp_948_04_10e/page00.shtml

Table 3-3:   Estimated use of FCRO products/services

FCRO product/service	Average use per year*
FCRO Website	515,817 visits
FCR-related telephone calls (via Service Canada)	2,938 calls
In-person services (via Service Canada)	26,837 visits
CIIP	4,680 clients
FINP	55 clients
Occupation Fact Sheets	34,455 downloads
Newcomers Workbook	25,632 downloads
Employers Roadmap	12,353 downloads

* Due to the availability for different products/services, different years of analysis were used to calculate use. For the FCRO Website, FCR-related telephone calls, and In-person services, data was used from 2007/08 until 2012/13 (only the 1st two quarters). For CIIP, data was used from October 2010 – September 2012. For FINP, an average was taken for the years 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12. For the Occupation Fact Sheets, Newcomers Workbook and Employers Roadmap, data were obtained for 2010/11 and 2011/12.
Source: FCRO Stats Summary, 2010/11 and 2011/12; Service Canada Web Statistics, CIIP Report on Statistics: October 2010 - September 2012, FINP statistics.

Assessing reach is important for understanding the overall impact of the FCRO; however, several services such as the CIIP and FINP are targeted to certain segments of ITIs and not all ITIs may actually need to use FCRO's tools, products or services. For example, for the two years in which client data are available for the entire fiscal years (2010/11 and 2011/12) the ACCC exceeded its targets set out in the contribution agreement with CIC (additional statistics are available in the Technical Appendices).

With respect to participation and overall reach of the CIIP, between October 2010 and June 2012, 12% of the entire eligible population of FSWs and PNs in India, China and the Philippines (7,222 unique clients) had participated in the CIIP. As presented in Table 3-4, there was substantial variation between countries, with a far greater proportion participating in CIIP in the Philippines (16%) compared to China (6%) or India (5%)[55].

Table 3-4:   Approximate percentage of eligible immigrants (FSWs and PNs) that participated in CIIP (2010 to 2012)

| Country of Last Permanent Residence | Percent of CIIP eligible clients | | | |
	2010*	2011	2012**	Total
China	7%	10%	10%	**9%**
India	7%	10%	12%	**10%**
Philippines	15%	16%	17%	**16%**
Total	**10%**	**12%**	**13%**	**12%**

* 2010 includes only October to December inclusive.

** 2012 includes data to the end of June

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[55] The United Kingdom was not included in this analysis as service delivery only began in 2011. As well, its delivery model differs from the other countries in that it serves a large proportion of foreign workers living in the UK or the Middle East (making it difficult to determine the number of eligible participants).

With respect to the website and telephone services and tools, it is not possible to know how many visits/downloads originate from unique users nor the proportion of users who are ITIs (as opposed to stakeholders or government users that may also use the website or download the tools). Overall, evidence indicates that the reach of FCRO products and services varies considerably depending on the tool or resource. Similar information on the relative use of the various tools was found through the survey of ITIs, most notably:

- When asked about the specific resources they had accessed to help them prepare to find work, the most commonly reported by ITIs were the CIC website (65%), the FCRO website (30%), FCRO Planning to work in Canada Workbook and Service Canada's website page related to FCR (29% each);

- FCRO's Occupation Fact Sheets and printed pamphlets were used by 12% and 4% of ITIs, respectively;

- Service Canada locations or the call centre were used by 14% of respondents and the CIC call centre was used by 13%;

- The CIIP and the FIN Program, were used by 10% and 4% of respondents respectively;

- More than half of respondents (57%) reported using at least one FCRO tool or service (n=859);

- Respondents who were already in Canada were significantly more likely to have reported using at least one FCRO tool or service (57% versus 43% for those outside Canada) (n=474);

While results from the TOSG survey only correspond to those clients that have completed CIIP, they are largely consistent with the results from the ITI survey. In descending order, the Workbook was used by 42% of respondents, the FCRO website was used by 25%, Service Canada in-person services were used by 23%, the Occupational Fact Sheets were used by 13%, the pamphlets were used by 9%, Service Canada phone services were used by 6% and other tools and mechanisms were used by 5% (n=567).

Regarding the use of FCRO tools, statistically significant differences were observed between regulated and non-regulated occupations. For example, in the ITI survey, respondents in regulated occupations were more likely to have consulted the FCRO website (25%) and occupational fact sheets (9%), as compared to 15% and 3% for those in non-regulated occupations. Similarly, in the TOSG survey, statistically significant differences were observed for the same two tools/resources: for the FCRO website and fact sheets 66% and 69% of CIIP graduates in regulated professions compared to 55% and 56% respectively, for those in non-regulated professions. In the ITI survey, there were also statistically significant differences observed between those who were overseas compared to those in Canada for use of the FCRO website (22% versus 14%), CIC website (65% versus 47%), Service Canada website on FCR (18% versus 26%) and using none of these resources (26% versus 40%).

Usefulness of FCRO tools and services

In order to assess the impact of the specific FCRO tools, ITIs were asked four questions regarding:

- The type of information they were seeking to find through this tool;

- the ease of use of this tool;

- the usefulness of the specific tool; and

- the extent that they found what they were looking for.

Information sought

Overall, ITI survey respondents used the various tools provided by the FCRO for multiple purposes. That said, the CIC website and the *Planning to Work in Canada?* workbook were used most often in order to obtain general information about how to find work in Canada (74% and 77% of respondents respectively), while the FCRO and Service Canada websites and the occupational fact sheets were used most often to obtain information on how to get foreign credentials/qualifications assessed or recognized (80%, 72% and 62% respectively) (see Figure 3-2).

Figure 3-2: Types of information respondents were looking for in the FCR tools
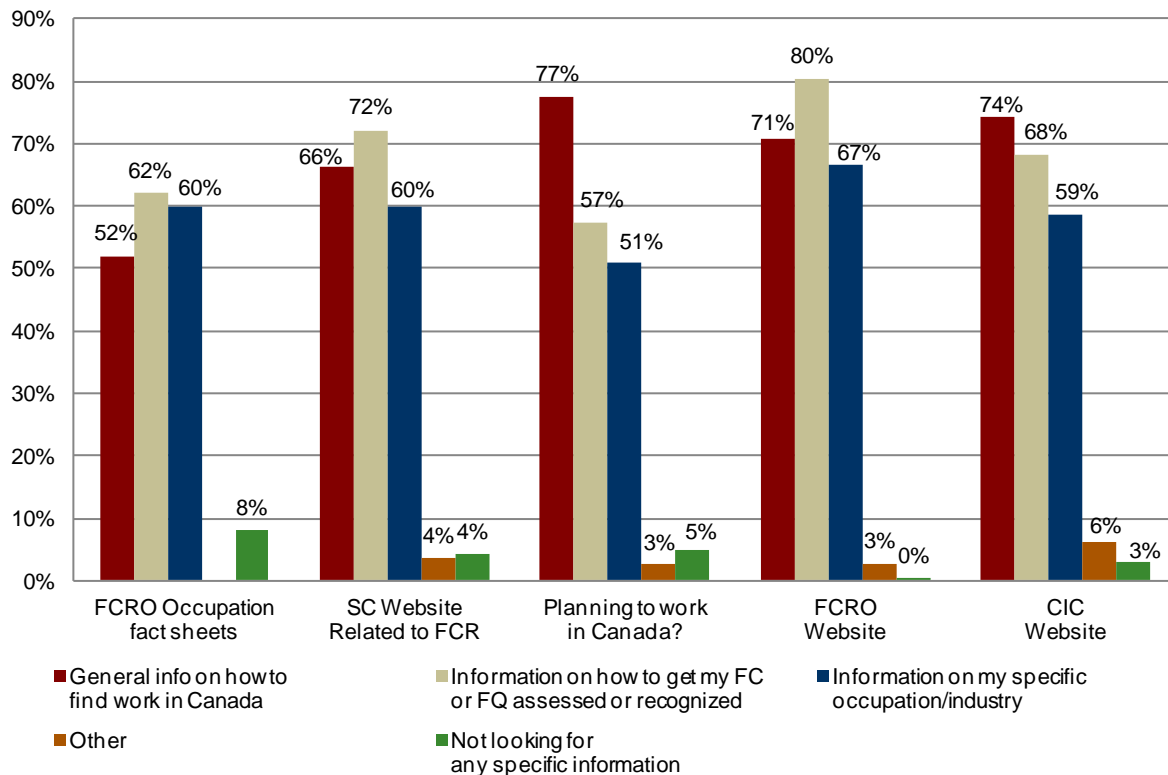
Source: Survey of ITIs (n=13-515)

There were no statistically significant differences in the reasons given for using different tools between ITIs in regulated and non-regulated occupations or between those who were in Canada versus those who were not.

Ease of use

Regarding the ease of use of FCRO tools, overall, ITI survey respondents rated them as easy to follow or navigate through. The *Planning to Work in Canada?* Workbook was rated as easiest to use with 81% rating easy or very easy to use (n=150). The Occupational Fact sheets were rated the lowest for ease of use but were still considered easy to use given that 71% of respondents said they were easy or very easy to use (n=45).

Usefulness

In terms of usefulness of the FCRO tools, 69% of respondents who had used the CIC website rated the resource as useful or very useful (n=490). In addition, two thirds (66%) of respondents found the workbook useful or very useful (n=145), 63% found the SC website page useful or very useful (n=155), 62% found the FCRO website useful or very useful (n=236), and 58% found the occupational fact sheets useful or very useful (n=43).

Of the ITI survey respondents who had used FCRO services, more than half of those who had used specific services to help them prepare to find work in their chosen field of work rated them as useful or very useful:

- 59% of respondents indicated the Service Canada office or call centre was useful or very useful (n=82);

- 56% indicated that the Citizenship and Immigration Canada call centre was useful or very useful (n=73); and

- 56% of respondents reported the CIIP program was useful or very useful (n=57).

Success in finding sought-after information

A little less than half of the ITI respondents who had used FCRO tools had found most of the information they were looking for. The Occupational Fact Sheets received the highest ratings where 16% of respondents indicated they had found all the information they were looking for (n=44) (Figure 3-3) (n=247).

Figure 3-3: ITI ratings of finding what they were looking for

Category	I did not find anything that I was looking for	I found a little bit of what I was looking for	I found most of what I was looking for	I found everything I was looking for	I don't know
CIC Website	5%	46%	39%	8%	3%
FCRO Website	9%	44%	34%	9%	5%
Planning to work in Canada?	5%	47%	39%	6%	3%
SC Website Related to FCR	4%	47%	38%	8%	3%
FCRO Occupation fact sheets	5%	48%	32%	16%	
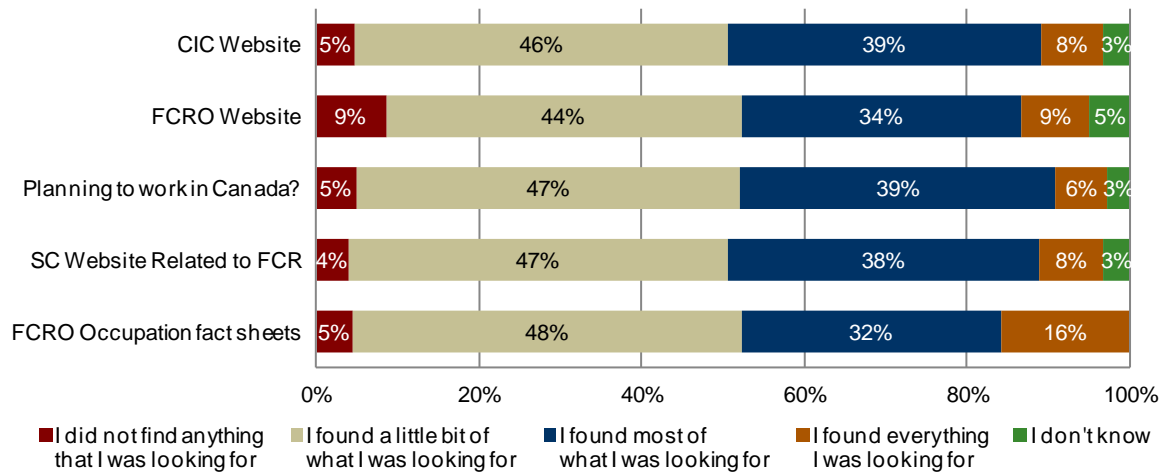
Source: Survey of ITIs (n=13-495)

Interviewees from regulatory bodies and ISOs generally agreed that FCRO tools were effective and contributed to ITIs' understanding of the FCR process. Most interviewees from regulatory bodies and many from ISOs who could comment felt that the FCRO was succeeding in increasing ITIs' level of understanding of the FCR process.

Remaining gaps in information

When all ITI survey respondents were asked if they had been able to find all of the resources, tools and supports they needed to help them prepare to find work, 39% indicated they required more information (n=594). There were no significant differences in these percentages between ITIs in regulated and non-regulated occupations. ITIs who were not yet in Canada were slightly more likely to indicate they needed additional tools and resources (47% compared to 36%, n=203). Further, those ITIs who were still residing outside Canada when they responded to the survey were more likely to indicate they still had questions or did not understand how to prepare to find work in Canada (32% of respondents outside Canada indicated they still had many questions or did not know at all how to prepare compared to 17% of those in Canada, n=474). Those ITIs who had used tools and services were significantly less likely to report not understanding how to prepare themselves to work in Canada: 6% of respondents who had used at least one FCRO tool or service and 7% of respondents who had used no FCRO tool or service and at least one other tool or service indicated they did not understand compared to 20% of those who had not used any tools or services (n=538).

When asked to specify, the ITIs surveyed identified the following types of additional information needed:

- detailed information for specific occupations (13%);
- information on job vacancies (11%);
- information on how to find a job (10%);
- information to help them understanding the process of getting credentials and education assessed (9%);

- how to apply to immigrate/apply for a work permit (8%),

- how to get assistance from a support/contact resource to answer questions (6%);

- where to get an assessment or list of assessment agencies (5%) and

- where to get a list of employers (5%) (n=151).

Extent to which ITIs begin the FCR process while overseas

Finding: There is some evidence that the FCRO is effective in helping individuals in obtaining information on the FCR process while still overseas.

One of the key objectives of the FCRO is to provide information to ITIs to enable them to begin the FCR process as early as possible, and to the extent possible, while still overseas. For the purposes of this evaluation, the process begins when an individuals starts to look for information on the FCR process.

From the ITI survey, most (68%) who reported being in a regulated profession indicated they had found out they would need to get their credentials recognized at the time they were deciding whether or not to immigrate to Canada (n=278). About one in five (20%) of ITIs in regulated occupations, however, reported they found out they would have to go through a credentialing process after arriving to Canada (n=278).

Although many of the surveyed ITIs (55%) in regulated occupations had not yet started the licensing process at the time of the survey (n=331), those who had used at least one FCRO tool or service were more likely to have already started the process at the time of the survey (59% had started the process), compared to respondents who had used at least one tool or service other than FCRO (44%). Both of these groups were more likely to have started the process than respondents who had not used any tools or services (33%). Of those who had started the process, 74% reported they had begun the licensing process while still overseas (n=148). This finding is consistent with data from the TOSG survey where, of those who sought to have their professional qualifications recognized, the majority (59%) had started the process[56].

Of the interviewees from regulatory bodies who had information about changes in the proportion of individuals who start the assessment process overseas versus in Canada, most noticed that a larger proportion of applicants were starting the process overseas. While none of the regulatory body interviewees directly attributed the increase in the proportion of applicants who started the process overseas to the FCRO, a few of the ISO interviewees felt the CIIP to be particularly useful in increasing the proportion of individuals who start the assessment process overseas.

3.3.4. Effectiveness of the FCRO in assisting ITIs in becoming well-prepared for employment and providing them with clear pathways to access job opportunities

The outcomes related to employment and pathways are intermediate outcomes on the logic model. This means that the activities of the FCRO have less direct influence on the achievement of these outcomes and, by corollary, achievement in these areas are less attributable to the activities of the FCRO.

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[56] The TOSG survey did not define what is meant by "starting the process".

Preparation for Employment

For the FCRO, becoming "well-prepared" for employment entails the following factors (without guaranteeing employment):

- ITIs have undertaken their credentials recognition process (i.e., know to what degree their foreign education, training and work experience will be accepted in Canada by employers and/or regulatory bodies) and are thus adequately prepared to enter the labour market;

- ITIs can work at the same occupational level as before coming to Canada;

- If ITIs are not working at the same occupational level, they are in a related occupation.[57]

> **Finding**: There is some evidence that the FCRO has been effective in assisting ITIs in becoming well-prepared for employment that fits with their skills and experience; however, barriers to employment persist, including obtaining Canadian work experience, access to networks, and the discounting of foreign experience by employers.

ITIs surveyed were asked to identify, from a list of steps, which ones they had taken to prepare themselves to find work in Canada (n=1112). The majority (83%) of ITIs had taken at least one step. The three most commonly reported steps[58] were:

- Looking for information on the types of jobs available in Canada that matched their skill/experience (72%);

- Reviewing their skills and experience in order to understand what types of jobs they are qualified to do in Canada (56%); and

- Looking for information on the proper Canadian name for the job they will be seeking in Canada (52%).

There were statistically significant differences among respondents who had used at least one FCRO product or service, those who had used other products and services and those who had not used any products or services (n=859). In general, respondents who had used at least one FCRO product or service were more likely to report having taken steps to prepare to find work, followed by those using at least one other product or service (Figure 3-4).

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[57] FCRO (2011) *Performance Measurement Strategy.*
[58] Findings did not differ significantly between respondents in regulated vs. non-regulated occupations.

Figure 3-4: Steps taken to find work in Canada by use of products/services

Had my education qualifications assessed by an agency
- Used at least one FCRO product/service: 28%
- Used no FCRO product/service and at least one other product/service: 21%
- Used neither: 17%

Had my work documents translated into Eng/Fr to facilitate the assessment of my qualifications
- Used at least one FCRO product/service: 49%
- Used no FCRO product/service and at least one other product/service: 36%
- Used neither: 38%

Reviewed my skills and experience to understand the types of jobs I qualify for in Canada
- Used at least one FCRO product/service: 75%
- Used no FCRO product/service and at least one other product/service: 60%
- Used neither: 51%

Contacted potential employers in Canada
- Used at least one FCRO product/service: 41%
- Used no FCRO product/service and at least one other product/service: 32%
- Used neither: 22%

Researched potential employers in Canada
- Used at least one FCRO product/service: 64%
- Used no FCRO product/service and at least one other product/service: 45%
- Used neither: 40%

Looked for proper Canadian name of job
- Used at least one FCRO product/service: 70%
- Used no FCRO product/service and at least one other product/service: 59%
- Used neither: 40%

Looked for information on types of jobs
- Used at least one FCRO product/service: 92%
- Used no FCRO product/service and at least one other product/service: 84%
- Used neither: 72%

Legend:
- Used at least one FCRO product/service
- Used no FCRO product/service and at least one other product/service
- Used neither

Source: Survey of ITIs (n=923)

Based on the focus groups with ITIs, there is some evidence to indicate that the FCRO could improve its activities in support of ITIs preparedness for employment. It was evident that some of the focus group participants who worked in similar occupations that had used FCRO products or services had not completed the process sooner than those who had not accessed FCRO products or services. Further, ITIs that had found employment that either matched or was related to their occupation, or were well-prepared for employment had, for the most part, not used FCRO products or services. Those who had found employment or were well-prepared and had used FCRO services or products did not attribute these outcomes to the FCRO. Most ITIs agreed that they understand the FCR process and what needs to be done to secure employment but listed a series of barriers to employment that cannot be resolved through the provision of information, such as lack of Canadian work experience and the length and cost of licensure.

As an example, one nurse attended the CIIP sessions and used the FCRO website. While the CIIP provided helpful information regarding nursing in Canada, the FCR process was too costly to undertake. As a result, she was employed as a continuing care assistant. The nurse's success in finding related employment was attributed to the support received from the ISO. In fact, most ITIs cited ISOs as the main source of information for employment and pathways, while some ITIs received help from regulatory bodies specific to their desired occupations/training.

Clear pathways to employment

Pathways to employment refers to the steps taken by individuals seeking to have their credentials put to use in the Canadian labour market, starting from preparation and pre-arrival supports to assessment, to one of three levels of recognition: those whose credentials are recognized but who might need further support (e.g. internships, mentoring, language training, etc.) to access employment in their field, those who may qualify with supplemental professional training or bridge-to-licensure programs, and those who fall too far short to practice the occupation in question, but who might be directed into related occupations with less stringent requirements (see Figure 3-5).

Figure 3-5: Pathways to employment
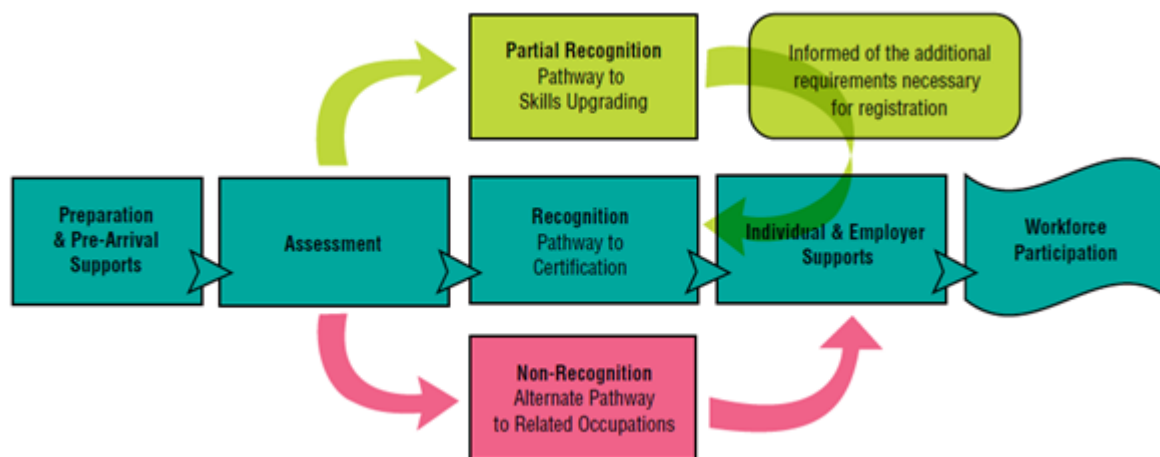
Source: Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications, Forum of Labour Market Ministers, 2009.

The FCRO's products and services are largely focused on the first step in the process, "preparation and pre-arrival supports". That said, there is some evidence to indicate that the FIN Program and the CIIP provide assistance in clearing pathways to employment as defined in the "individual and employer supports" step[59]. The FIN Program is designed to provide newcomers to Canada the opportunity to gain Canadian work experience through temporary internship programs within the federal government. The program has been successful in placing 29 interns in 2009 (during the pilot phase), 65 interns in 2010 and 71 in 2011.[60] The results from the FIN Program survey were encouraging; 97% of participants had found employment within a year of their participation in FIN. The majority (58%) found employment within 3 months of the end of their internship. 25% found employment within 4 to 6 months, 8% within 7 to 9 months, 6% within 10 to 12 months, and 3% within more than a year.

According to the TOSG survey, most CIIP graduates agreed or strongly agreed that the tools and services helped with their understanding of the credential process (80%), employment options (74%) and the provision of clear pathways to job opportunities (63%) (n=567).

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[59] Individual and employer supports are products or services that may assist to integrate internationally trained professionals into the Canadian labour market

[60] Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2011). *Building Canada's Prosperity: Government of Canada Progress Report 2010: Foreign Credential Recognition*, p. 17; Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2012). *Strengthening Canada's Economy: Government of Canada Progress Report 2011 on Foreign Credential Recognition*, p. 11.

Most interviewees from regulatory bodies and ISOs who spoke on the subject felt the FCRO had provided clear pathways to job opportunities for ITIs (e.g. via the online bridging program and the IQN website).

On the other hand, among ITI focus group participants, there was a lack of evidence to suggest that the FCRO contributed to or facilitated clear pathways to job opportunities related to their skills and experience.

While the FCRO helped provide clear pathways to some extent through the CIIP and FIN Program, the ITI survey revealed that respondents continue to face barriers to accessing job opportunities. ITI survey respondents were asked to what extent they felt four common barriers affected their access to job opportunities. Canadian work experience and a lack of contacts with people who work in their chosen field were felt by the majority of respondents, with 72% and 70% either agreeing or strongly agreeing that they had experienced difficulties respectively (n=522). The other two challenges, namely limited job opportunities in their chosen field and language barriers, did not affect respondents to the same degree (41% and 19% respectively). There were no significant differences in barriers reported by respondents in regulated compared to non-regulated occupations.

When asked if they faced any other barriers in Canada 35% reported that they did (n=521). Of those ITIs who provided more detailed information (n=164), nearly a quarter (23%) identified the discounting of foreign experience and/or unwillingness of employers to hire foreign nationals. This was followed by problems with the FCR process (14%), work restrictions on visas or work permits (8%), and difficulties finding useful information (6%). All other responses besides "other" (indicated by 20%) were indicated by fewer than 5% of respondents.

3.4. Efficiency and economy

> **Finding**: Since its initial year of operation, the FCRO has shifted some of its human resources to support policy work, while the bulk of FCRO-related expenditures are associated with Gs&Cs projects dedicated to providing ITIs in Canada and Overseas with FCR information and services, most notably, the CIIP.

The evaluation utilized an operational efficiency approach to assess how well the FCRO has used it resources to produce its outputs.[61] A review of the financial information for the FCRO reveals that, while over the five-year period (2007/08 – 2011/12), the FCRO had a budget of $33.45M and spent $33.6M, the mix of Vote 1 and Vote 5 expenditures did not completely align with its original TB authorities (Table 3-5).

Table 3-5:   FCRO-related expenditures ($) 2007/08 to 2011/12

	Vote 1			Vote 5			Total		
Year	TB Authority	Actuals	Variance	TB Authority	Actuals	Variance	TB Authority	Actuals	Variance
2007/08	2.70M	2.10M	0.60M	-	-	-	2.70M	2.10M	0.60M
2008/09	2.60M	1.70M	0.90M	-	-	-	2.60M	1.70M	0.90M
2009/10	7.30M	5.90M	1.40M	3.00M	1.00M	2.00M	10.30M	6.90M	3.40M
2010/11	6.05M	5.60M	0.45M	3.00M	6.00M	(3.00M)	9.05M	11.60M	(2.55M)
2011/12	5.80M	4.20M	1.60M	3.00M	7.10M	(4.10M)	8.80M	11.30M	(2.50M)
5-Year Total	**24.45M**	**19.50M**	**4.95M**	**9.00M**	**14.10M**	**(5.10M)**	**33.45M**	**33.60M**	**(0.15M)**

Source: Grants and Contributions Funding Management Division, CIC.

In terms of trends in funding over time, the financial data reveals that Vote 1 (O&M and salary dollars) funding totals for FCRO increased substantially midway through the funding history of the Office. Specifically, whereas FCRO spent roughly $1.5 million of Vote 1 funds for 2007/08 and 2008/09, it spent over $3.2 million each year afterwards, due to the introduction of a policy division in the FCRO in 2010/11 and significant increases in spending on FCRO activities by other Branches[62]. These expenditures were in alignment with the original TB authorities.

Vote 5 (Gs&Cs) funding in the amount of $3 million annually was authorized starting in Year 3 (2009/10). Vote 5 actual spending ranged from a low of $1.0 million in 2009/10 to a high of $7.1 million in 2011/12. Reallocations from the Settlement Program were used to cover the Vote 5 expenditures above the TB authorities in both 2010/11 and 2011/12.

Increases in FTE levels have corresponded to the increases in financial resources dedicated to the FCRO. Whereas there have been increases in staff in all divisions since 2007/08, the most significant change has come in the addition of the Policy Division (see Table 3-6). That said, the transfer of the management of Gs&Cs in 2011 resulted in the transfer of 2 FTEs from the FCRO to the IPMB.

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[61] As per TB guidelines, operational efficiency is concerned with how inputs are being used and converted into outputs that support the achievement of expected outcomes. Operational efficiency is contrasted to allocative efficiency which looks at whether resources consumed were reasonable for the outcomes achieved in light of context, priorities and/or alternatives.

[62] Other Branches involved in FCRO activities included the Information Management and Technologies Branch, who were involved in the development of the TOSG survey and Corporate Services.

Table 3-6:   Number of FTEs by FCRO division

FCRO Division	2007/08		2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12	
Director General Office	5	33%	4	18%	15	52%	10	24%	12	34%
Service Delivery*	5	33%	9	38%	5	17%	9	22%	6	16%
Partnership and Collaboration	5	33%	10	44%	9	31%	10	25%	8	22%
Policy	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	30%	10	27%
Total	**15**	**100%**	**23**	**100%**	**29**	**100%**	**40**	**100%**	**35**	**100%**

* In January 2012, the activities of the Service Delivery Division w ere redistributed to the Director General's Office.
Source: SAP data, CIC Finance Branch.
Note: Data for 2007/08, the first year of FCRO operations, is estimated based on available information. Due to rounding, totals do not alw ays sum to 100%.

In terms of financial resources, based on the figures presented in Table 3-7, Service Delivery became a priority in 2008/09 and has continued to increase over time. In 2010/11 and 2011/12 the majority of the funding went to Vote 5 (Gs & Cs) for Service Delivery.

Table 3-7:   FCRO-related expenditures 2007/08 to 2011/12 by expense category

FCRO Division	2007/08		2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12	
Vote:	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	5
Director General Office	1.6M 76%	-	500K 30%	-	1.6M 23%	-	900K 8%	-	1.2M 11%	-
Service Delivery	-	-	500K 27%	-	1.6M 24%	1.0M 15%	1.0M 8%	6.0M 51%	500K 4%	7.1M 63%
Partnership and Collaboration	-	-	500K 29%	-	1.1M 23%	-	900K 8%	-	800K 7%	-
Policy	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.0M 8%	-	800K 7%	-
Other branches	500K 24%	-	200K 14%	-	1.5M 22%	-	1.8M 16%	-	1.0M 8%	-
Total	**2.1M**		**1.7M**		**6.9M**		**11.6M**		**11.4M**	

Source: SAP data, CIC Finance Branch.
Note: Due to rounding, totals do not alw ays sum perfectly

The evaluation also sought to confirm the extent to which Vote 5 spending on contributions was aligned with the FCRO's mandate and activity areas (as per the logic model).[63] As presented in Table 3-8, there is alignment for all Vote 5 funding. This analysis also indicates that the bulk (80%) of the value of contributions between 2009/10 and 2012/13 was allocated to projects that "Provide ITIs in Canada and Overseas with FCR information and services", while only 12% was allocated to projects aimed at providing stakeholders with a platform to assess credentials overseas. Of the 80% in funding allocated to projects providing information and services for ITIs, a significant amount was allocated to the CIIP. In 2010/11, the CIIP accounted for 59% of all contribution spending linked to the FCRO, 36% of all FCRO actual spending and 30% of all spending by FCRO and related branches.

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[63] It is important to note that these 5 outcomes identified in the logic model are not only supported through Gs&Cs funding but internally through Vote 1 resources. For example, effort to achieve the 5th outcome is fully resourced through FTE contributions and Vote 1 funding.

Table 3-8:   FCRO project list according to logic model activity areas, 2009/10 to 2012/13

Logic model activity area	# of projects	Value of Gs&Cs for activity area	% of total
(1) Provide ITIs in Canada and Overseas with FCR information and services	8	$16,932,900	80%
(2) Provide stakeholders and partners with a platform to inform and assess ITIs overseas	6	$2,523,934	12%
(3) Foster and strengthen relationships with partners and stakeholders to inform/facilitate their FCR activities	3	$1,567,735	7%
(4) Work with federal/provincial/territorial and international partners	1	$215,726	1%
(5) Ensure coordination among federal partners to leverage capacity to achieve better ITI labour market integration	0	$0	0%
TOTAL	**18**	**$21,240,295**	**100%**

4. Conclusions and recommendations

The evaluation evidence presented in this report supports the following conclusions and recommendations.

Conclusion 1: There is a continuing need for the Federal Government to be involved in FCR programming. While FCR is largely the domain of provincial/territorial governments, the federal government has a role to play in enabling the development of coordinated Pan-Canadian approaches to FCR.

The Government of Canada has identified immigration as a priority and, in particular, the need for a faster, more flexible and responsive immigration system that will better meet Canada's labour market needs.

The evaluation found that there is a continued need for initiatives to facilitate FCR for ITIs, both in Canada and overseas. This need is driven by the complexity of the current FCR process in Canada and the continuing challenges faced by ITIs in having their foreign credentials recognized by employers and/or regulatory bodies. The complexity in Canada's FCR process stems from a number of factors, including the large number of entities involved in recognizing foreign credentials, varying FCR standards and requirements across different jurisdictions, and challenges in finding consistent information on the process to have foreign credentials recognized in Canada.

While the responsibility for licensing and regulating professions and trades falls within P/T jurisdiction, the federal government has a legislative authority to "*work in cooperation with the provinces to secure better recognition of the foreign credentials of permanent residents and their more rapid integration into society*"[64]; as such, there is a need for both orders of government to work together. According to interview evidence, one of the important roles that can be played by the federal government is addressing the need for consistent, tailored, occupation- and province-specific labour market information available online. This would assist ITIs with making accurately informed immigration and employment decisions and provide them with realistic expectations.

Conclusion 2: The FCRO has developed an expertise in foreign credential recognition that is important for the government's efforts to make the immigration system more responsive to the needs of the labour market. Given the changes to the immigration system to further address labour market needs, the FCRO will continue to play a crucial role in the Pan-Canadian framework in addressing ITIs' labour market integration.

CIC, through the FCRO, has contributed to the implementation of the Pan-Canadian Framework and is one of three federal government departments identified to support Framework implementation. The FCRO has also taken on a role in providing expertise on the assessment of foreign education qualifications as the department introduces changes to the point system under the Federal Skilled Worker Program. The FCRO's focus on economic immigrants and its positioning within CIC have allowed it to take a holistic and focused approach to helping economic immigrants integrate into the Canadian labour market by providing ITIs with information to assist them in the FCR process, including the ability to do so while still overseas.

Given that the evaluation found evidence of opportunities for improving the coordination of activities with the rest of CIC and depending upon the degree to which the FCRO is further integrated into the Strategic and Program Policy Sector, it is important to ensure that the

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[64] *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, (S.C. 2001, c. 27).

relationships it has built with ITIs, partners and stakeholders and its expertise in FCR programming, including efforts to provide information and referral services, continue to be fully exploited.

Recommendation 1: CIC should develop a communication strategy to reconfirm with stakeholders and partners the department's mandate with respect to foreign credential recognition for economic immigrants and how it will continue to deliver on its commitments under the Pan-Canadian Framework.

Conclusion 3: The FCRO has invested significant resources to provide ITIs with information and services; however, relatively less effort has been spent to better equip some stakeholders, namely regulatory bodies and employers, to assist ITIs in transitioning into the labour market.

The evaluation found that the FCRO has focused significant effort on providing ITIs with tools and information to assist them with the FCR process and encourage them to start the process while still overseas. While information gaps remain and the reach of the various products and services varies, FCRO tools are considered useful among those they have reached.

While providing information directly to ITIs has been the focus of the FCRO's efforts, it is also responsible for equipping stakeholders (defined as ISOs, regulatory bodies and employers) with the tools they need to assist ITIs in transitioning into the labour market. The evaluation found that the FCRO has been effective in promoting its tools, products and FCR-related information to most stakeholders. It has also been effective in engaging ISOs in FCR-related activities; however, more engagement is needed with employers and regulatory bodies as these stakeholders play critical roles in the credential recognition process and in enabling ITIs to access employment, roles which will likely become even more important given the planned changes to the immigration system.

Recommendation 2: CIC should assess its priorities with respect to FCR activities to ensure adequate emphasis and resources are focused on stakeholder engagement. This should also include further analysis regarding the mix of tools and resources, and programming offered both in-Canada and overseas that facilitate the FCR process.

Conclusion 4: There is confusion among stakeholders regarding the types of funding available through the FCRO and HRSDC's FCRP.

There is confusion among stakeholders regarding the focus of funding available through the FCRO and HRSDC's FCRP. While the roles of each federal government partner in FCR are, on paper, clear and distinct, in practice there is potential for overlap in terms of federal funding provided to stakeholders for the development of similar FCR products/tools to support ITIs and stakeholders. It is possible that projects funded through the FCRP could also be funded by the FCRO and vice versa. The evidence suggests that funding coordination could be improved, particularly with respect to how the two organizations share information on the projects they fund. Improved collaboration and communication between CIC and HRSDC could reduce the potential for overlap in terms of the projects they fund, bring further clarity for stakeholders, and make better use of the overall funding envelope.

Recommendation 3: CIC should work with HRSDC to better coordinate their approaches to FCR-related grants and contributions funding in order to ensure the most appropriate use of available funds.