

# June 2014



Local Immigration  
Partnership



Led by:

SOCIAL PLANNING & CHILDREN'S SERVICES DEPARTMENT

150 N. Christina Street  
Sarnia, ON N7T 8H3  
Telephone: 519-344-2057  
Toll Free: 1-800-387-2882  
Fax: 519-344-2025

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## CELEBRATING DIVERSITY:



*Measuring  
the Impacts of the  
**Multicultural Village**  
at Sarnia Artwalk*



## Acknowledgements

We would sincerely like to thank:

- Sarnia Artwalk for hosting and organizing the TD Multicultural Village and ensuring its success at their annual weekend event.
- All the participants - food vendors, cultural groups and entertainers - without whom the Village would not have been a success.
- All those who visited the TD Multicultural Village, in particular those whose comments and thoughts contributed to the writing of this report.
- TD Bank for generously sponsoring the Multicultural Village for a second year in a row and recognizing the importance of showcasing and celebrating the community's cultural diversity.



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### Written by:

Jeneane Fast, *Social Researcher, Sarnia-Lambton LIP*

### Contributors:

Stephanie Ferrera, *Project Coordinator, Sarnia-Lambton LIP*

Amy Davis, *Supervisor of Social Planning, County of Lambton*



Special thanks to  
5 year old Leila  
Barlow, survey  
distributor and  
social researcher-  
in-training.  
Pictured here with  
Amy Davis.

## Introduction

Sarnia Artwalk is an arts and culture festival that welcomes tens of thousands of visitors to the city annually. Every June, the streets of downtown are lined with hundreds of artists, crafts people, food vendors, and live performances; all celebrating the development of Sarnia's culture district. This year marked the festival's twelfth and the second to include the TD Multicultural Village.

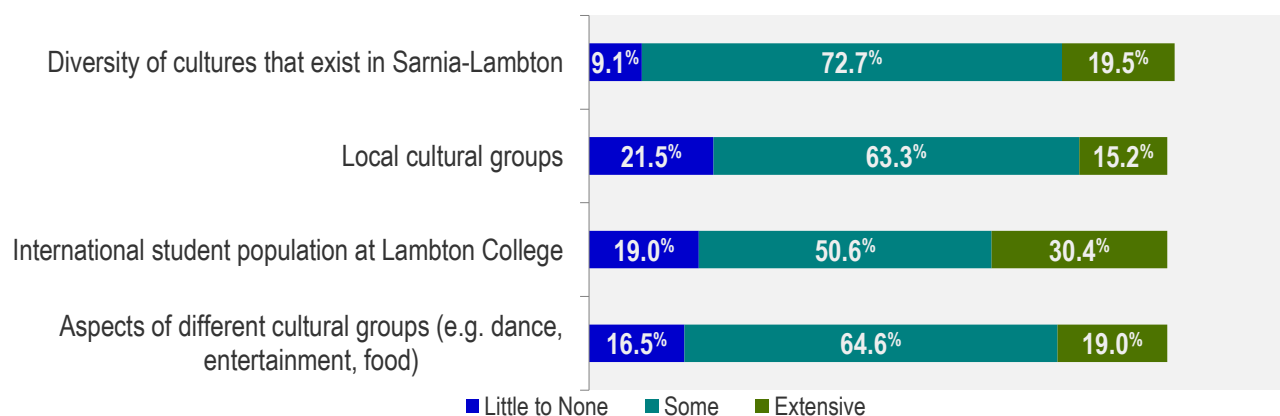
The purpose of the Multicultural Village, generously sponsored by TD Bank, is to provide opportunities to both celebrate and learn about the community's growing cultural diversity; a key recommendation of the Sarnia-Lambton LIP Settlement Strategy.<sup>1</sup> This year, local groups from the First Nations, Chinese, Indian, Latino and Greek communities were on hand to share their culture through entertainment, food and a variety of displays. Lambton College also participated in the Village this year. The College's International Education Department showcased the Nigerian, Indian, Brazilian and Chinese cultures in their international student population through dance, flag face painting and a poetry contest. In addition, the College's Social Service Worker Program, through their International Community Development course, sold handmade jewelry and crafts in support of Rayjon Share Care, a non-government organization that provides support in Haiti.

## Public Survey

To better gauge the impact of the TD Multicultural Village, the Sarnia-Lambton LIP created and distributed a survey to the public as they exited the Village to measure their understanding of local cultural diversity both before and after their visit. A total of 79 individuals completed the survey.

### Prior Knowledge of Cultural Diversity in Sarnia-Lambton

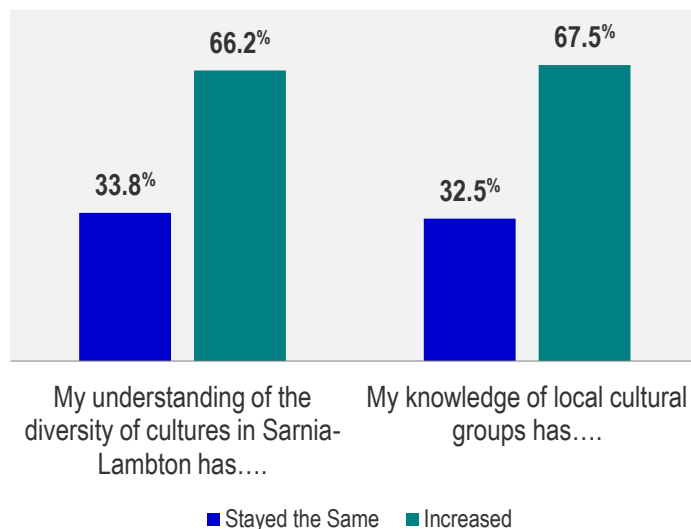
When asked about their familiarity with certain elements of the community's cultural diversity, the majority of respondents rated themselves as having some knowledge.



<sup>1</sup> **Strategy 11.2:** Continue to encourage current (and organize more) multicultural events in in order to promote public awareness of immigrant and newcomer experiences. LIP Settlement Strategy can be found here: <http://www.liveinlambton.ca/newcomers/settlement/LIP/Documents/summary.pdf>

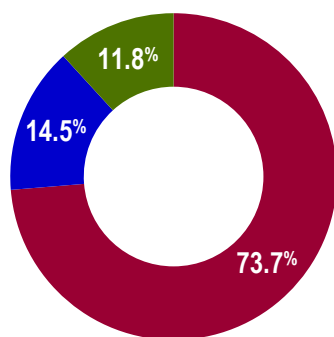
## Impact of Visiting the TD Multicultural Village

Respondents were asked what impact their visit to the Village had on their knowledge of Sarnia-Lambton's cultural diversity and local cultural groups. Over 66% stated that their knowledge had increased in both areas.



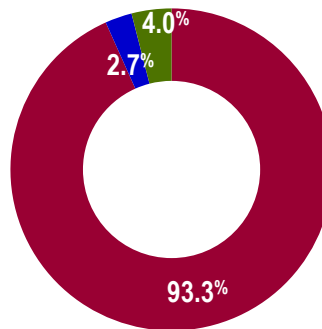
Before visiting the Village, over 30% of respondents rated their familiarity with the international student population as extensive. However, almost 75% still agreed that their knowledge of the cultural backgrounds of international students had increased since their visit. Furthermore, over 93% of respondents felt that they learned something new during their visit to the TD Multicultural Village. Thus, even though between 15-30% of respondents felt they had extensive knowledge of Sarnia-Lambton's cultural diversity, a visit to the Village resulted in new knowledge for almost everyone.

### More Familiarity with Int'l Student Pop.



■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ N/A

### Learned Something New

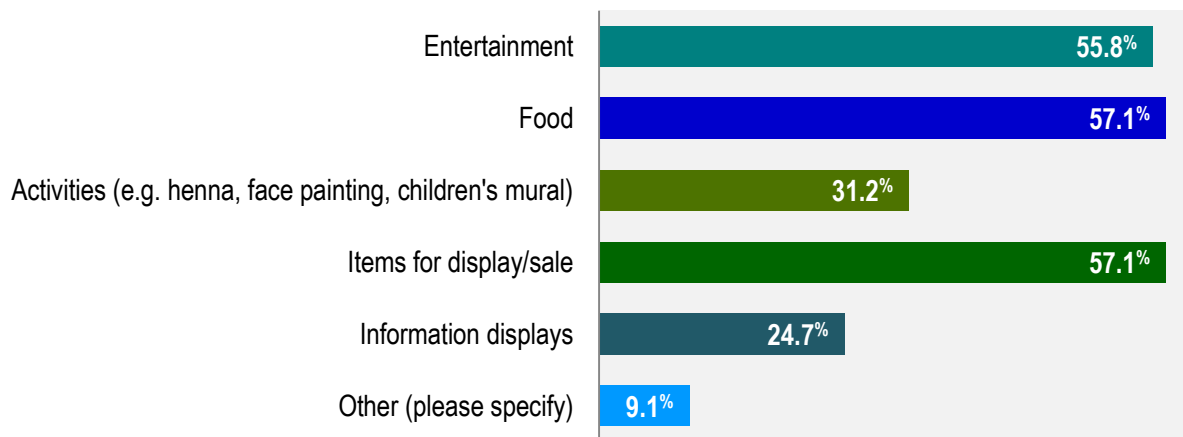


■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ N/A



## Enjoyment of the TD Multicultural Village

When asked about what they enjoyed about the Village, responses were evenly spread between entertainment, food and sale and display items. Under 'Other', respondents included having their names written in Chinese and the TD Children's Mural.



Respondents also included positive comments about the Village:

- *This is a GREAT component of the event and I look forward to seeing it grow in subsequent years.*
- *Wonderful to experience! Thank you.*
- *Inclusion of cultural village is a great idea!*
- *It is always nice to see other cultures, crafts, arts.*
- *Tried souvlaki for the first time! Delicious.*
- *It was so good, can't suggest any improvement today.*

## Suggestions for Improvement

Respondents provided some suggestions on how to improve the TD Multicultural Village in the coming years. The most common response was to expand it by including more food booths, a larger variety of cultures (e.g. Dutch and German), and more information about the different cultures (e.g. history of ancestral art). Other suggestions included having a place to sit down and eat and a more visible list of the entertainment schedule.



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## Vendor Survey



Lambton College booth, selling handcrafted items to support Rayjon Share Care

A survey also went out to the cultural groups and organizations that participated in the TD Multicultural Village either by selling food, providing entertainment or setting up a display/information booth. These included:

- Sitara Indian Cuisine
- Sarnia Greekfest
- Lambton Chinese Canadian Association
- Catholic Hispanic Community of Sarnia-Lambton
- Lambton College
- Sarnia Hindu Society
- Salsa on the Move
- Native Friendship Centre

There was a 75% response rate to this survey and 100% of the respondents **agreed** with the following statements:

1. Participating in the TD Multicultural Village helped to increase awareness of their culture to the Sarnia Lambton community.
2. Participating in the TD Multicultural Village was an effective way to promote their business and/or organization.
3. The TD Multicultural Village was an effective way to promote diversity, cultural sensitivity, and inclusivity within our community.

Respondents provided additional positive comments:

- *The location was great! We liked being near the stage as we had performances. The organizers did a wonderful job answering questions before and during the event.*
- *It was another great experience. We will be back next year!!*
- *Overall we had a very good experience at Artwalk. Our sales were steady and our neighbours were just wonderful. Communication was very good and the coordinator was a very good problem solver.*

Similar to the public survey, vendors suggested that the Village be expanded for next year. They also made improvement recommendations that included smaller booth space and earlier target dates for finalizing the information for vendors.



## Conclusion

The survey results show that the TD Multicultural Village achieved its goal of celebrating and raising awareness of Sarnia-Lambton's cultural diversity. Those that visited the Village felt that their knowledge of diversity increased. Similarly, the cultural groups that participated in the Village felt that it provided a good venue by which to share their culture with the community and promote diversity and inclusivity in Sarnia-Lambton. The Multicultural Village, made possible through the generosity of TD Bank, clearly made impacts on the community's efforts to embrace cultural diversity. This solidifies the need to continue to incorporate multiculturalism within Sarnia Artwalk, one of the area's most successful and longstanding annual festivals.



Sarnia Hindu Society entertainers



