



Community and Health Services Department  
Office of the Commissioner

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of Regional Council

FROM: Adelina Urbanski, Commissioner of Community and Health Services

DATE: April 21, 2011

RE: **Release of “Just the Facts About Your Community – Projections on the Diversity of Residents Living in York Region from 2006 to 2031”**

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Please find attached a new fact sheet produced as part of the “Just the Facts about Your Community” series. This “*Just the Facts about Your Community – Projections on the Diversity of Residents Living in York Region from 2006 to 2031*”, was produced by the Community and Health Services Department with input from the York Region Consortium and the Community Reference Group, and with the support of York Region’s Planning and Development Services Department.

The York Region Consortium is a group of community agencies and organizations which uses Statistics Canada data to identify and better understand social and economic trends within York Region. The Consortium includes York Region, the United Way of York Region, the York Regional Police, the York Region District School Board and the York Region Catholic School Board. Its Community Reference Group (CRG) includes selected organizations that have access to a broad range of partner agencies and organizations. The CRG is jointly chaired by Newmarket Mayor Tony Van Bynen and Daniele Zanotti, CEO of the United Way of York Region.

Census data as well as forecast models developed by York Region’s Planning and Development Services Department have been used to project how York Region’s population will change by 2031 in terms of immigration, ethnicity and visible minority status. These projections are similar to a recent Statistics Canada study on the changing diversity of the Canadian population between 2006 and 2031.

This new fact sheet will be widely distributed to local municipalities, community organizations, federal and provincial government offices, the business community and the general public for information and for use in decision-making and planning. It will also be posted online at [www.york.ca/yrcsd](http://www.york.ca/yrcsd) and will be made available in the three most commonly spoken non-official languages in the Region (i.e. Chinese, Russian and Farsi). The fact sheet can also be made available in other languages on an as-needed basis.

For more information, please contact Cordelia Abankwa-Harris, Managing Director, Strategic Service Integration and Policy Branch, Community and Health Services Department, at 905-830-4444, Extension 2150.

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Adelina Urbanski  
Commissioner of Community and Health Services

CA/kn

Attachment

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# JUST THE FACTS

## ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY

### Projections on the Diversity of Residents Living in York Region from 2006 to 2031



## Introduction

In March 2010, Statistics Canada released a study entitled "Projections of the Diversity of the Canadian Population: 2006 to 2031." The study projects a significant increase in the diversity of Canada's population over the next two decades. Regardless of future immigration levels, diversity will grow among the Canadian-born population and the country's social fabric will continue to change in terms of the population's visible minority, ethnic origin and religious status.

Like most of Canada, the face of York Region is changing and significant increases in diversity will occur over the next two decades. The proportion of people in York Region who were not born in Canada is projected to increase from 43% in 2006 to 55% in 2031. Visible minorities in York Region (both Canadian and foreign born) are projected to increase from 37% in 2006 to 62% by 2031. The ethnic origin of York Region's residents is projected to shift due to the significant increase in immigrants from the southern and eastern regions of Asia (38% in 2006 versus 55% projected for 2031).



Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census;  
York Region Planning and Development  
Services Department

April 21, 2011

[www.york.ca/yrscd](http://www.york.ca/yrscd)

  
**York Region**

## Ethnic Origin<sup>1</sup>

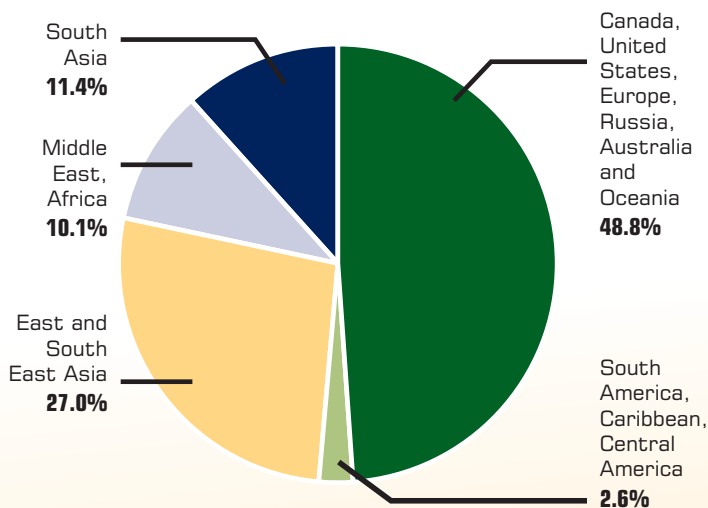
- In the 2006 Census, 271,195 or 31% of York Region residents reported multiple ethnic origins, while 616,150 or 69% of residents identified themselves as having a single ethnic origin. The top five single ethnic origins identified (from 204 ethnic groups) were Chinese, Italian, East Indian, Canadian and English.
- For the purposes of this fact sheet, the single ethnic origin responses were grouped into five world regions<sup>2</sup> (see pie chart below).



- In 2006, the largest ethnic origin group came from the world region of Canada, United States, Europe, Russia, Australia and Oceania with a population of 300,729 (49%). This was followed by East and South East Asia with 166,632 (27%) and South Asia with 70,436 (11%). At the current high growth rates for York Region, residents from the latter two world regions are forecasted to increase to 345,808 (34%) and 211,997 (21%) respectively, by 2031.
- The forecast predicts that the number of residents of every single ethnic origin group will increase by 2031, but that growth rates will vary significantly (see map on page 3). For example, even though residents identifying a single ethnic origin from Canada, United States, Europe, Russia, Australia and Oceania are expected to increase from 300,729 in 2006 to 326,467 in 2031, this group has the lowest growth rate and is projected to decrease from 49% to 32% of the single ethnic origin population in York Region.

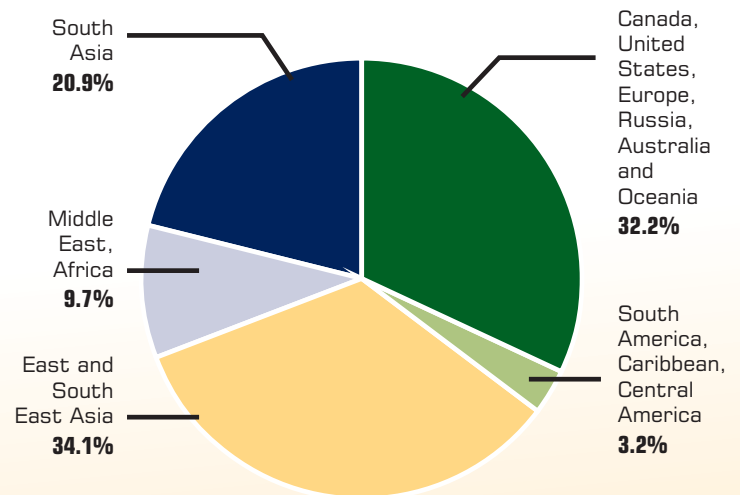
## York Region Projected Ethnic Change

**Proportion of York Region Population with Single Ethnic Origin by World Region (2006)**



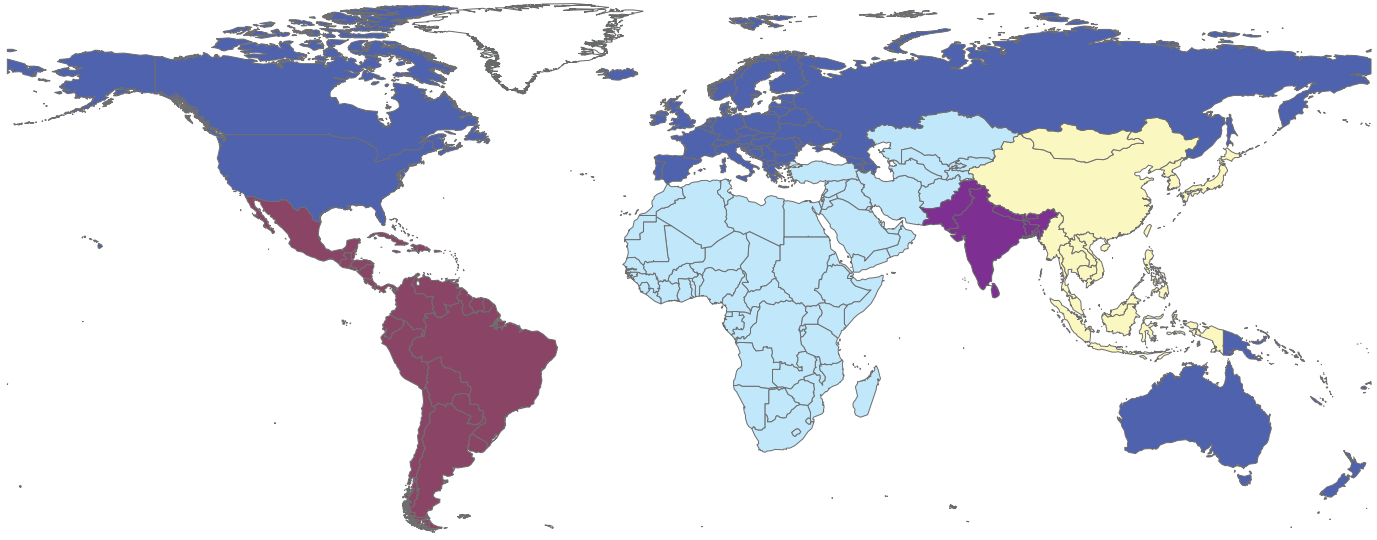
Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

**Proportion of York Region Population with Single Ethnic Origin by World Region (2031)**



Source: York Region Planning and Development Services Department

## Projected Changes of York Region Population with Single Ethnic Origin by Region\* (2006 to 2031)



### LEGEND

|            |                                                              |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dark Blue  | Canada, United States, Europe, Russia, Australia and Oceania |
| Maroon     | South America, Caribbean, Central America                    |
| Yellow     | East & South East Asia                                       |
| Light Blue | Middle East, Africa                                          |
| Purple     | South Asia                                                   |
| White      | No Data                                                      |

| Growth Rate | Projected Increase in Population |
|-------------|----------------------------------|
| 9%          | 25,738                           |
| 106%        | 16,886                           |
| 108%        | 179,176                          |
| 57%         | 35,768                           |
| 201%        | 141,561                          |

**York Region Geomatics**

Produced by  
Geomatics  
Planning and Development Services Department  
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Source: York Region Planning and Development Services Department

\*Note: The 204 ethnic origins identified by York Region residents in the 2006 Census were grouped into the five world regions.



## York Region in Comparison

According to Statistics Canada, by 2031, the vast majority (96%) of people belonging to a visible minority group are expected to live in one of 33 Census Metropolitan Areas. People who are visible minorities are projected to comprise 63% of the population in Toronto, 59% in Vancouver and 31% in Montreal.

York Region's own projections predict that people who are visible minorities will comprise 62% of York Region's population by 2031. We anticipate that York Region may have one of the highest increases in racial diversity in Canada between 2006 and 2031.

## Did You Know?

In the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), immigrants make up a growing part of the total population. In 1986, 35% of the GTA's population were immigrants. By 2006, this figure had increased to 44% (approximately 2,400,000 people).

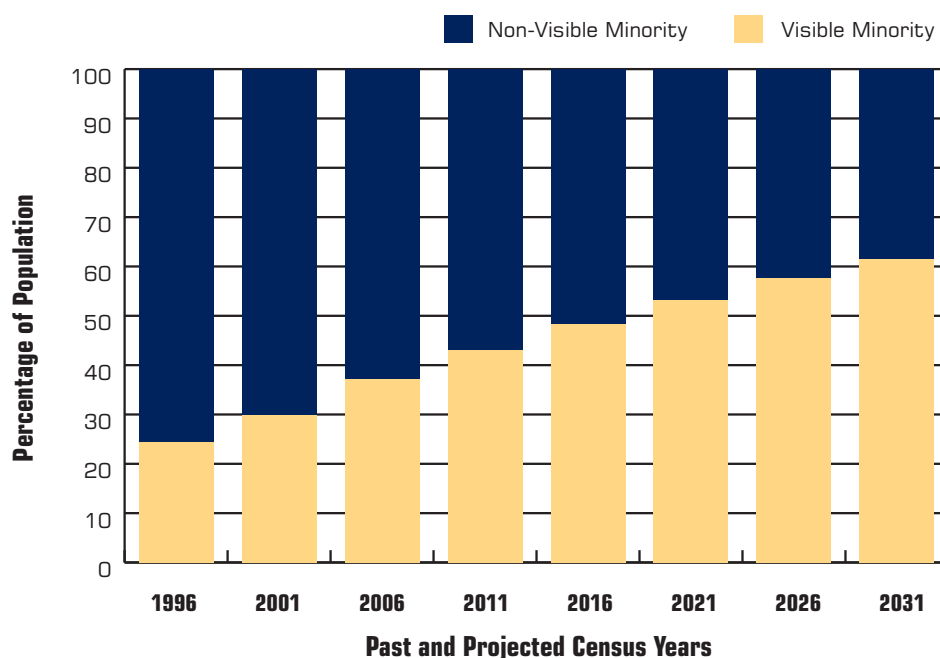
Source: Statistics Canada, 1986 and 2006 Census



## Visible Minorities<sup>3</sup>

- In 2006, there were 329,955 residents who were visible minorities (both Canadian and foreign born) living in York Region out of a total population of 892,712, comprising 37% of our total population. Three out of 10 residents who are visible minorities in York Region are Canadian born.
- The three largest groups of residents who are visible minorities in York Region are Chinese (138,575), South Asian (80,595) and West Asian (20,860).
- York Region has the fourth largest proportion of residents who are visible minorities in Canada after Peel Region (50%), Toronto (47%) and Vancouver (42%).
- Between 1996 and 2006, the proportion of residents who were visible minorities in York Region grew from 24% to 37% of the total population. This is equivalent to a 9% average annual growth rate between 1996 and 2006, versus 2% for non-visible minorities and 4% for the overall population.
- Assuming that past growth rates continue, the number of residents in York Region who are visible minorities is projected to reach 884,410 by 2031. The proportion of visible minorities is projected to increase to 62% by 2031 or just over three out of every five York Region residents (see chart below).

**Proportion of Total York Region Population by Visible Minority Status**

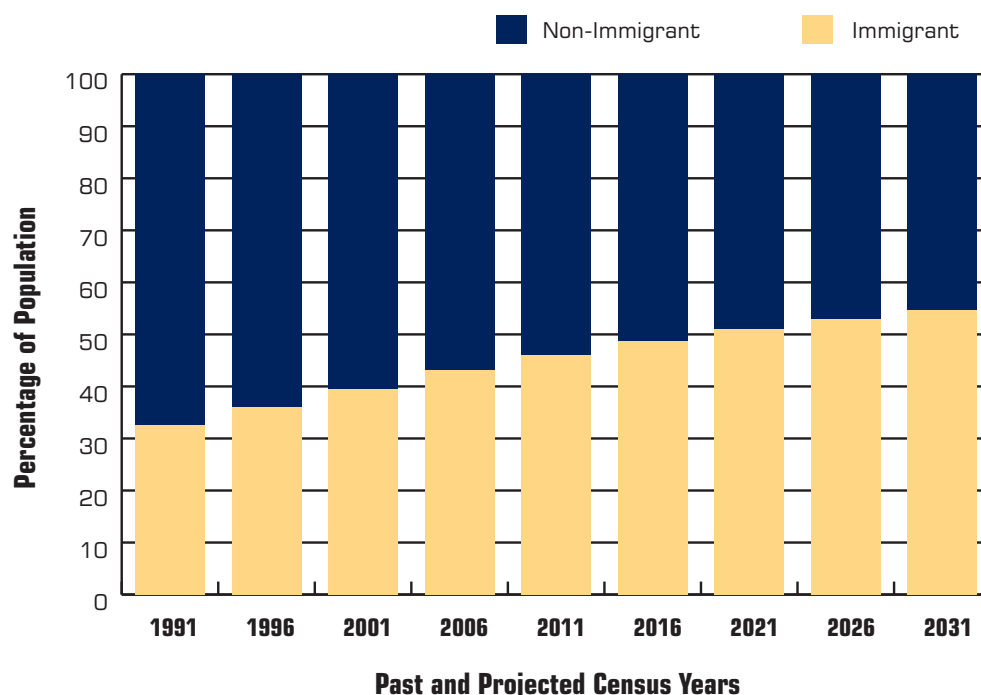


Source: Statistics Canada, 1996, 2001 and 2006 Censuses;  
York Region Planning and Development Services Department, Projections 2011-2031

## Immigrant Population<sup>4</sup>

- Immigration is the primary source of population growth for Canada, particularly in urban areas. As a result, this trend towards increasing diversity is expected to continue.
- Between 1991 and 2006, the proportion of York Region residents who were immigrants increased steadily from 32% in 1991 to 43% in 2006, surpassed only by Peel Region (49%) and Toronto (50%) in the GTA. This trend has been consistent since 1986.
- The proportion of York Region's residents who are immigrants is forecasted to increase steadily and reach 55% by 2031 (see chart on page 5) from the 2006 Census level of 43%.

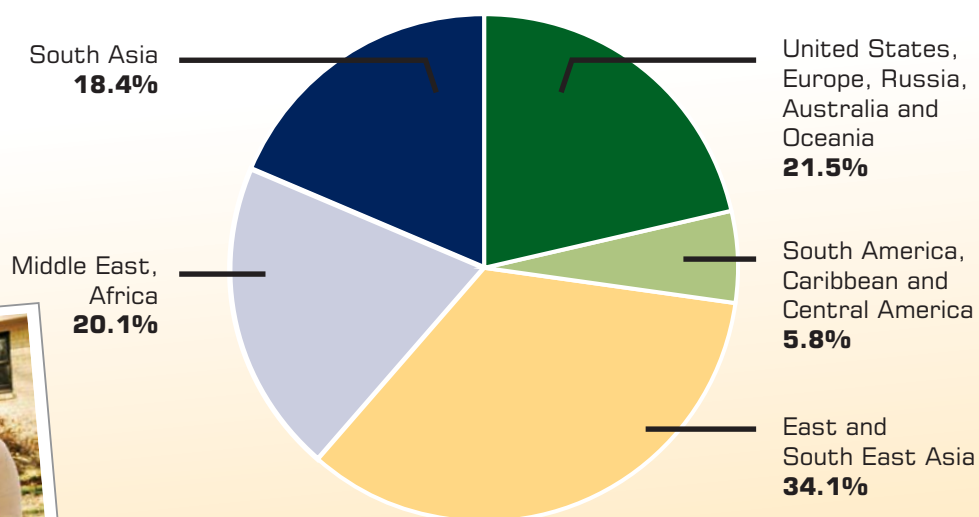
## Proportion of Total York Region Population by Immigrant Status



Source: Statistics Canada, 1991, 1996, 2001 and 2006 Censuses;  
York Region Planning and Development Services Department, Projections 2011-2031

- According to the 2006 Census, over half of York Region's recent immigrants<sup>5</sup> were born in Asia (52%), while those born in the United States, Europe, Russia, Australia and Oceania accounted for 22% of recent immigrants (see pie chart below). Similarly, the 2001 Census reported that the majority of recent immigrants were born in Asia. This contrasts with earlier decades, such as those following the Second World War when most immigrants came from European Countries.

## York Region Recent Immigrants by Place of Birth



Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

## Methodology and Results of the Diversity Projections Studies

The recent study prepared by Statistics Canada entitled “Projections of the Diversity of the Canadian Population: 2006 to 2031” uses a sophisticated demographic forecasting model called Demosim to produce diversity projections out to 2031 for various Census Metropolitan Areas (CMA), including the Toronto CMA (of which York Region is a part).

The York Region Planning and Development Services Department conducted an exercise to forecast the changing ethno-cultural demographics in York Region from 2006 to 2031. Estimated future proportions of York Region’s 2031 population were determined based on the initial size of the particular group in 2006, and the historical growth rate of that group since 1996, using the York Region Population Forecast Model.

A comparison of the two studies revealed a strong alignment in the final results, providing a strong reference for the accuracy of the in-house projections created by York Region.

### Did You Know?

People who identified themselves as Chinese represented 16% of all residents living in York Region in 2006. This is the highest proportion of Chinese people in all of Ontario. In addition, York Region had the third highest proportion (9%) of people who identified themselves as South Asians in Ontario, after Peel Region (24%) and Toronto (12%).<sup>6</sup>

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census



# What Does This Mean?

Like many urban areas in Canada, York Region is a fast growing ethno-cultural mosaic of communities with origins and cultures from across the globe.

The ethnic origin of York Region's residents is projected to shift due to the significant increase in immigrants from the southern and eastern regions of Asia (38% in 2006 versus 55% projected for 2031). Although the forecast predicts that every single ethnic origin group will increase in total population by 2031, the single ethnic origin group of Canada, United States, Europe, Russia, Australia and Oceania is projected to decrease from 49% to 32%. Likewise, the immigrant population of York Region is projected to grow from 43% of the total population in 2006 to 55% by 2031. Ethnic diversity will be influenced, not only by immigration trends, but also by the children and grandchildren of immigrants of York Region's residents as our population grows over the next two decades.

As York Region continues to grow and diversify, there will continue to be changes in the community's social fabric. It is important that all residents are understood, included and appropriately supported in services, programs and businesses. For example, the Diversity and Cultural Resources Bureau of York Regional Police is actively engaged in building strong partnerships with the various religious and ethnic communities and organizations in York Region. The goal is to ensure that the needs and concerns of all our communities are met by actively promoting inclusivity and acceptance.



## Did You Know?

The population having a non-Christian religion in the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area is expected to increase from 21% in 2006 to 31% of the total population by 2031.

The proportion with a Christian religion is expected to decline from 62% in 2006 to less than 50% by 2031.

Source: Statistics Canada, Projections of the Diversity of the Canadian Population, 2006 - 2031

There are opportunities to proactively plan for a more inclusive community where longer term and newcomer residents feel fully engaged. Current initiatives that positively respond to the increasing diversity of the York Region community include:

1. The Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) initiative, led by The Regional Municipality of York in collaboration with the Community Partnership Council (CPC), which is working to develop a made-in-York Immigration Settlement Strategy. The Strategy's aim is to create a welcoming and inclusive community for all residents and promote the economic, cultural, social and political integration of immigrants.
2. Initiatives such as the five York Region Welcome Centres which provide a range of support services to recent immigrants to help them integrate and settle in their communities.
3. York Region's Community and Health Services Multi-Year Plan which identifies key areas of outreach and support. This will help address the needs of our complex Region and promote social inclusion regardless of age, ethno-cultural background, gender or socio-economic status.

There are also opportunities for the various sectors of our community to harness the benefits that come with increasing diversity. Given globalization, business success and competitiveness are increasingly linked to the ability to use the skills, experiences and other assets (such as languages, cultural understandings) that a diverse community offers. A diverse workforce has the potential to not only understand and better serve diverse clients, but to also enhance competitiveness both locally and internationally.

This fact sheet aims to provide residents, employers and service providers with an overview on how our Region continues to change now and in the future. There will be an even greater need to enhance services and supports such as accessible information and services, programs to promote successful labour market integration, affordable housing and public transit. This will assist us to achieve the goal of ensuring that all of York Region's residents stay engaged in our community and economy, and continue to enjoy a high quality of life.



<sup>1</sup> "Ethnic Origin" as defined by Statistics Canada refers to the ethnic or cultural origins of the respondent's ancestors.

<sup>2</sup> The five world regions are:

"Canada, the United States, Europe, Russia, Australia and Oceania". "Australia and Oceania" includes, among others, Australia, New Zealand and Central and South Pacific Islands.

"East and South East Asia" which includes, among others, China, Japan, Korea and the Philippines.

"Middle East, Africa" which includes, among others, Afghanistan, Egypt, Iran, and Israel.

"South Asia" which includes, among others, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

"South America, Caribbean and Central America."

<sup>3</sup> "Visible Minorities" are defined by the Employment Equity Act as 'persons, other than Aboriginal persons, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.'

<sup>4</sup> "Immigrant Population" are persons who are, or have ever been, landed immigrants in Canada. A landed immigrant is a person who has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Some immigrants have resided in Canada for a number of years, while others are recent arrivals. Most immigrants are born outside Canada, but a small number were born in Canada. Includes immigrants who landed in Canada prior to Census Day, May 16, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> "Recent Immigrants" in this data product are immigrants who landed in Canada between 2001 and 2006.

<sup>6</sup> The text box provides commentary on the visible minority status of all residents in York Region. This is different from the data on residents that provided single ethnic origin responses (on p. 2) as this group represented 69% of all residents living in York Region in 2006.

**Produced by The Regional Municipality of York Community and Health Services Department with the support of the York Region Social Data Strategy Consortium and Community Reference Group**

### **York Region's Community Social Data Strategy Consortium**



### **York Region's Community Reference Group**

Aurora Chamber of Commerce, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of York, Catholic Community Services of York Region, Central Local Health Integration Network, Human Services Planning Board, The Regional Municipality of York, Town of Markham Planning & Urban Design Department, Richmond Hill Chamber of Commerce, United Way of York Region, Vaughan Chamber of Commerce, York Catholic District School Board, York Region District School Board, York Regional Police, Workforce Planning Board of York Region & Bradford West Gwillimbury

To view this document as well as other socio-economic information about York Region's residents, please visit York Region's Community Social Data website:

**[www.york.ca/yrscsd](http://www.york.ca/yrscsd)**