

Annual Report 2022

Rights and
Responsibilities
Awareness
Initiative

MAY 2023

Edited by: Luisa Garcia



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1 - RRAI Vision, Mission, Objectives and Pillars

RRAI Vision

Ensure that all community members are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities as residents of Canada.

RRAI Mission

Spread the awareness of rights and responsibilities in the community through:

- Online webinars;
- In-person workshops (depending on Covid-19 restrictions);
- Written materials in several languages; and,
- Online information and videos, in several languages.

RRAI Objectives

- Through community consultations, identify the topics that need to be covered to support community members;
- Plan, coordinate, and mobilize resources for the awareness campaigns;
- Conduct awareness campaigns to increase knowledge in the community; and,
- Collect and analyze feedback to assess organizational impact and make adjustments accordingly.

RRAI Pillars

- Community: working towards a better and stronger community.
- Education: legal, financial, and cultural awareness.
- Diversity: our services are open for all, everyone is welcome.
- Justice: public education is one step closer to justice.

2 - Remarks from the Chair

I am grateful to our presenters and our funders who have allowed us to carry out our mission of providing information sessions on legal, financial, and social issues. As you will see in this report, the number of persons attending our sessions increased substantially in 2022, and we expect this trend to continue in 2023.

Canada increased the number of immigrants entering our country to an all-time high of over 430,000, and another 465,000 will be coming in 2023. The need for our services will continue to increase as newcomers transition to their new homes and adapt to our society.



Research carried out in London (see section 5) has shown that newcomers are experiencing legal issues at a high rate. RRAI will continue in 2023 to provide them with the information they need to succeed.

I want to thank our Board of Directors and our Executive Director, Hetham Karky, for their contributions to our success in 2022.

Best regards,

Doug Ferguson

3 - Executive Director Thanks

I am writing those words as RRAI enters its third year, I am looking to what our team has done, and I feel the positive impact of their hard work in the community.

During the past years, RRAI provided well-needed educational sessions based on the needs of the greater London community; those sessions helped many people and made their life easier by providing them with well-trusted information from professional sources free of charge.



RRAI provided services to newcomers, seniors, students, refugees, temporary residents, and more, which reflects RRAI's pillars: Community, Education, Diversity, and Justice. This would not be possible without the outstanding efforts of RRAI team and volunteers.

I am hereby expressing my personal thanks and gratitude to all RRAI team including the RRAI Board of Directors, RRAI Advisory Committee, volunteers, and the presenters who believed in RRAI mission and values to help the community to be better and more welcoming for everyone.

I am also grateful for all kinds of support we've received from the community institutions and from businesses and individuals who have supported RRAI.

All the best,

Hetham Karky

4 - RRAI Activities in 2022

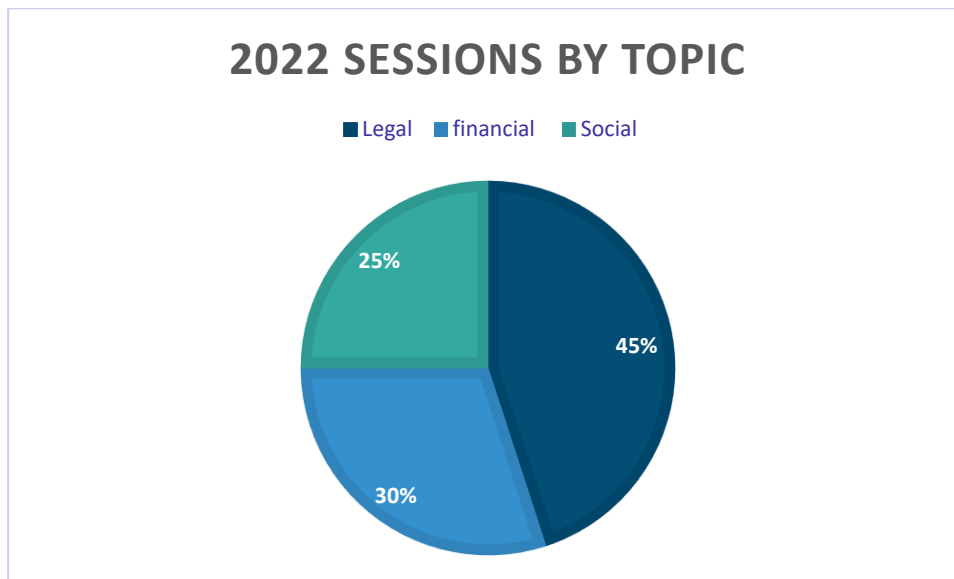
4-1 Awareness Sessions

Between January and December 2022, RRAI conducted 19 awareness sessions that presented different legal financial and cultural topics.

The sessions were online webinars and carried out virtually on the Zoom platform and were streamed in different social media platforms. The sessions were promoted in advance on social media and through community partners.

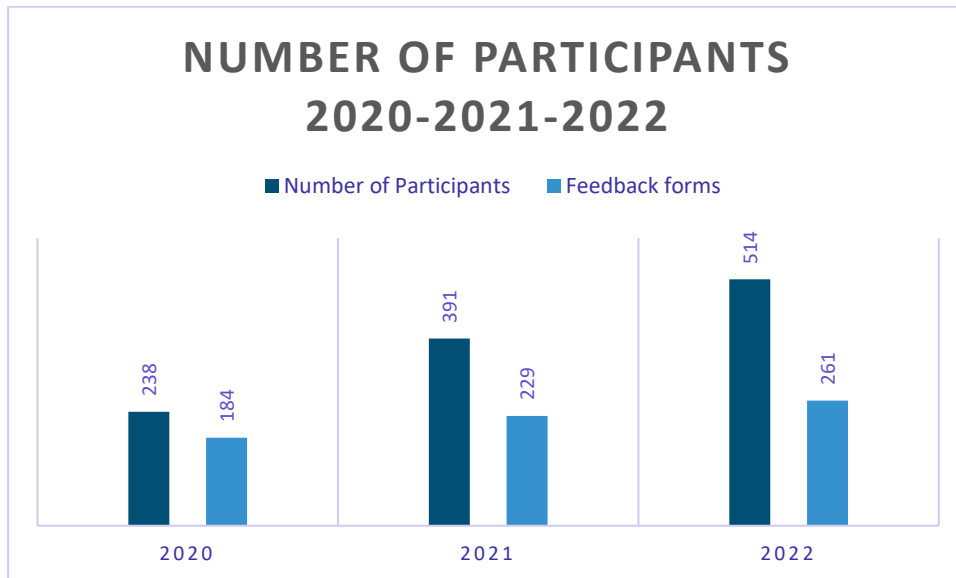
45% of RRAI sessions in 2022 covered Legal topics, 30% covered financial topics, and 25% covered social or cultural topics. Please see Figure 1.

Figure 1: 2022 Sessions by Topic



The number of participants increased by 76% compared to 2021; in 2021, 391 individuals attended RRAI awareness sessions (Figure 2). In 2022, this number increased to 514 individuals; this is a clear indication of RRAI's positive progress to its mission.

Figure 2: Number of participants between 2020 and 2021



The number of participants in each session were between 20 and 65, depending on the topic and the time of the session. This shows the need for conducting a comprehensive study indicating which type of information and topics are needed in the community. Please see Figure 3.

RRAI asked the participants to fill out a feedback form after each session to help measure RRAI's performance in each session, aid in developing better methods for conducting RRAI's services, suggest new topics, and evaluate the quality of given information. All feedback about sessions can be seen in Figure 4.

Figure 3: Number of participants and feedback forms of each session in 2022

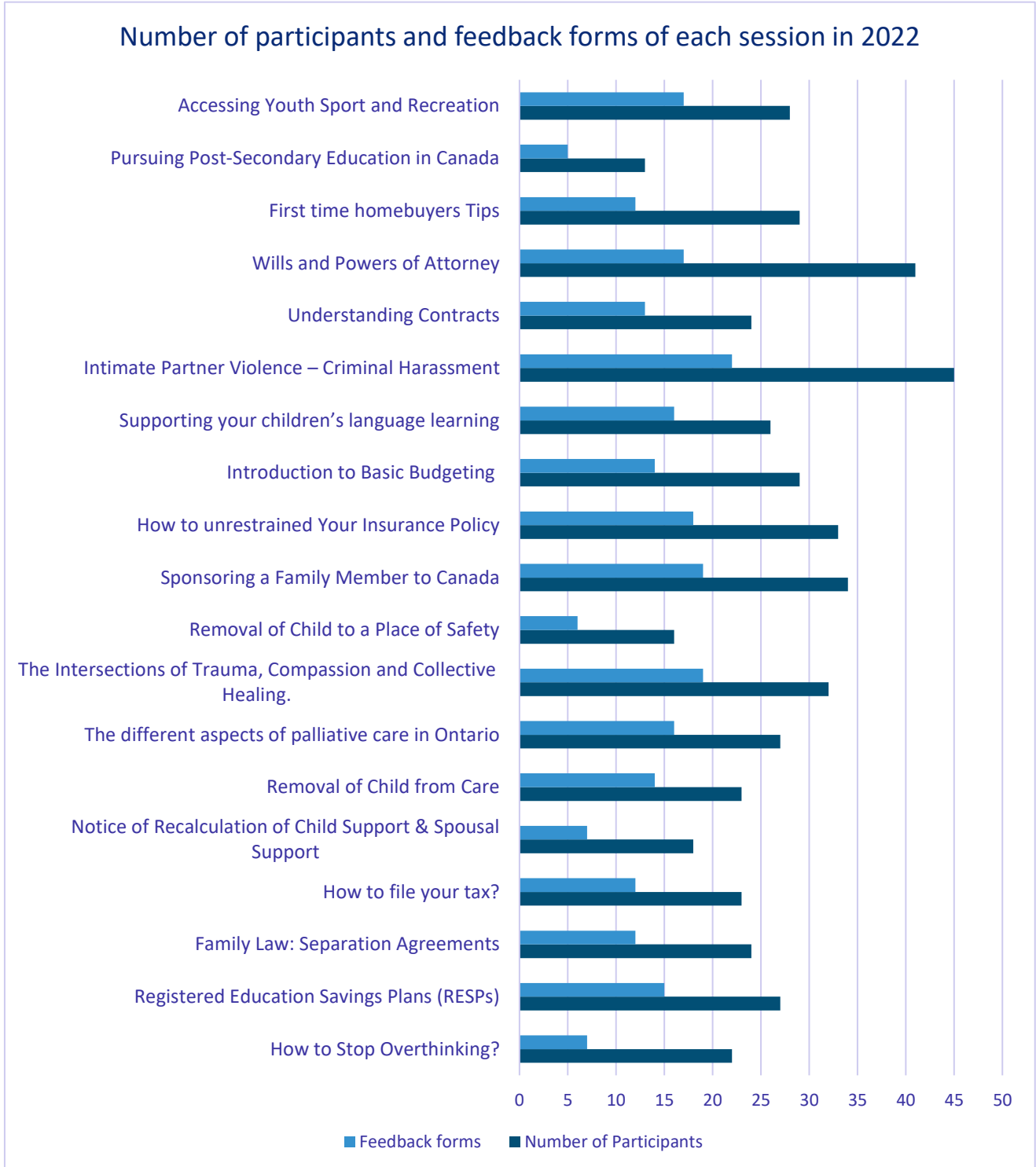


Figure 4: Feedback from 2022 participants

	Workshop topic	Number of Participants	Feedback	Workshop materials	Knowledge increased	Recommending this workshop	Considering attending	Overall satisfied
1	How to Stop Overthinking?	22	7	8.85	8.42	9.42	9.42	9.42
2	Registered Education Savings Plans (RESPs)	27	15	9.2	9.26	9.06	9.26	9.2
3	Family Law: Separation Agreements	24	12	9.00	9.17	9.27	9.18	9.17
4	How to file your tax?	23	12	9.25	9.25	8.83	9.00	9.08
5	Notice of Recalculation of Child Support & Spousal Support	18	7	9.14	9.43	9.43	9.14	9.29
6	Removal of Child from Care	23	14	8.79	9.14	9.00	8.79	9.29
7	The different aspects of palliative care in Ontario	27	16	8.86	8.93	9.21	9.21	8.86
8	The Intersections of Trauma, Compassion and Collective Healing.	32	19	9.11	9.26	9.58	9.58	9.37
9	Removal of Child to a Place of Safety	16	6	9.17	9.33	9.00	9.33	9.67
10	Sponsoring a Family Member to Canada	34	19	8.94	9.00	9.53	9.00	9.05
11	How to unrestrained Your Insurance Policy	33	18	8.83	8.94	9.00	9.17	8.94
12	Introduction to Basic Budgeting	29	14	8.86	9.43	9.57	9.62	9.64
13	Supporting your children's language learning	26	16	8.60	9.33	9.33	9.33	9.47
14	Intimate Partner Violence Criminal Harassment	45	22	8.91	9.32	9.45	9.14	9.09
15	Understanding Contracts	24	13	8.77	9.23	9.54	9.15	9.23
16	Wills and Powers of Attorney	41	17	8.76	9.12	9.76	9.65	9.18
17	First time homebuyers Tips	29	12	8.83	9.17	9.33	9.17	9.33
18	Pursuing Post-Secondary Education in Canada	13	5	8.60	9.20	9.40	9.40	9.20
19	Accessing Youth Sport and Recreation	28	17	8.65	9.18	9.41	9.29	9.18
	TOTAL	514	261	8.90	9.16	9.32	9.25	9.24

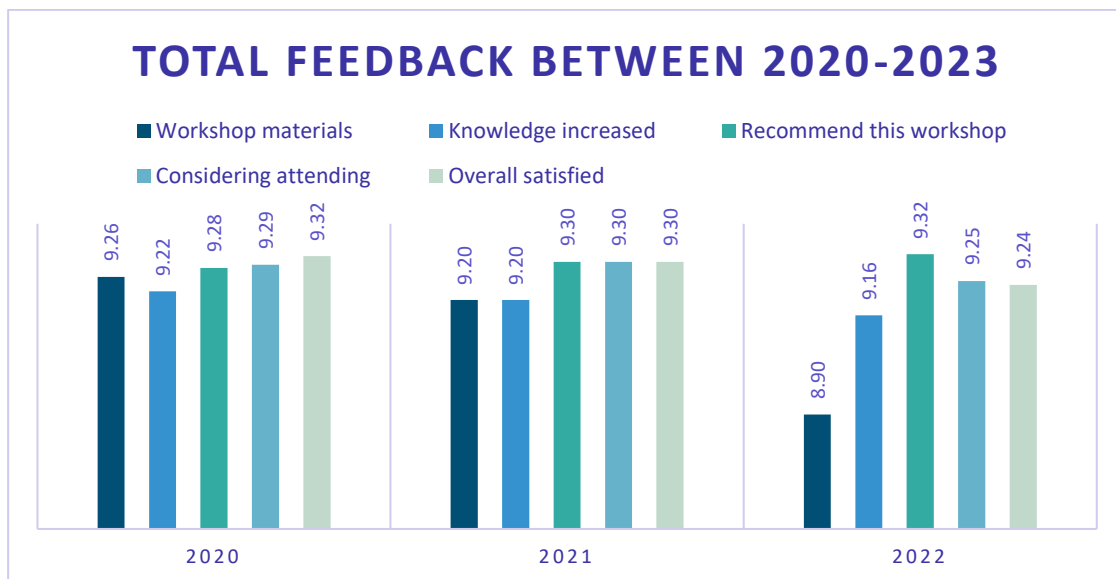
4-2 Feedback from Participants in RRAI Sessions

The total number of participants who attended the sessions were 514. The participants provided 261 feedback forms with the following results:

- 89% of participants indicated that the workshop materials provided were appropriate and helpful.
- 91.6 % of participants indicated that their knowledge increased as a result of participating in the sessions.
- 93.2% of participants indicated that they would recommend the sessions to other newcomers.
- 92.5% of participants who provided feedback indicated that they would consider attending another workshop organized by RRAI.
- 92.4 % of participants stated that “Overall, I was very satisfied with today’s workshop.”

The total feedback for 2020-2022 is presented in Figure 5, this graph illustrates RRAI’s ability to maintain roughly the same level of satisfaction among the years from 2020-2022.

Figure 5: total feedback between 2020-2023



5 - The Impact of RRAI Awareness Sessions

RRAI seeks to understand the challenges newcomers are faced with and is determined to use its resources effectively to provide solutions. As the most multicultural country in the world, it is no surprise that many barriers exist for new Canadians. Newcomers are likely to experience culture shock and are unlikely to reach out if barriers are present; RRAI expects that by investing more resources into providing proper information and guidance to newcomers, these barriers can diminish in the long term.

London is Ontario's fastest-growing CMA (Statistics Canada, 2022). As a result of this rapid population growth, a regional housing crisis has emerged, resulting in bad faith evictions and inordinate rent hikes forcing tenants into precarious housing. Marginalized populations, including newcomers and low-income individuals, face heightened risk of homelessness due to lack of awareness and understanding of their rights under the Residential Tenancies Act. These issues are becoming more common as illustrated through consistent media coverage (CBC London, London Free Press, CTV News London, 2022).

Language barriers, lack of understanding of the Canadian legal system, distrust due to traumatic experiences with legal systems and representatives in other countries, as well as a lack of community networks, make newcomers and immigrants particularly vulnerable to manipulation and mistreatment. A recent study funded by Department of Justice Canada identified the crucial factors contributing to the serious legal problems faced by immigrants in London and area: "Unfamiliarity with Canadian Law and their rights: A common factor reported as contributing to immigrants' serious legal problems was being unaware and unfamiliar with Canadian law and of their rights in Canada, which made them more vulnerable to manipulation and mistreatment by landlords, work managers (e.g. may not receive a fair salary), or work managers" (Sutter & Essess, 2021. P.28).

Sutter and Essess (2021) found that immigrants residing in London were experiencing serious legal problems in immigration, housing, family issues and relationship breakdowns, employment and problems obtaining government assistance/service. The researchers concluded that government and community organizations needed to take several steps to address the legal challenges faced by immigrants in London:

- Investing more funding in information for newcomers, specifically more information about Canadian law and Immigrants' rights, as well as Canadian customs and norms in central domains (e.g. housing, employment)
- Delivering information in multiple languages.

-
- Immigrants need to know that help is available and where they can access it/get more information and assistance if need arises.
 - Sharing detailed information with frontline workers serving newcomers, on the services that are available.

This recommendation is precisely the work that RRAI has been undertaking in the newcomers' community in London. The same outcome was confirmed through a survey conducted in collaboration between RRAI and Western University in 2022 as well as feedback from RRAI sessions.

The study shows that our sessions are a direct response to the real needs of people in each of the program areas. RRAI is presently the only organization in London and the area that provides legal information awareness sessions in multiple languages for newcomers and immigrants.

6 - Sessions Presenters

RRAI would like to express thanks to the following presenters:

- Reem Anani
- Daniel Barreiras
- Megan Deslippe
- Greg Parrack
- Sue Millar
- Ann Bayly-Bruneel
- Elina Ashford
- Ravinder Singh
- Kelly Wang
- Tracey Jackson
- Doug Ferguson
- Gladys Lapeyre
- Mac Ross

7 - RRAI 2022 Survey to address the gap in legal financial and cultural information among RRAI clients

7-1 Introduction

Community-Engaged Learning at Western and RRAI conducted this survey in April 2022 to identify the topics that need to be covered in the RRAI services. The project will help RRAI to identify the categories and the topics in legal, financial, and cultural issues that are needed in the community and identify the gaps in information in the community and help RRAI to fill them.

The project shows the importance of RRAI work and how it differs from the settlement agencies' basic information sessions.

All data were collected anonymously and neither the researchers nor anyone else will be able to identify the research participant. Special thanks to Western University students who helped in conducting this survey:

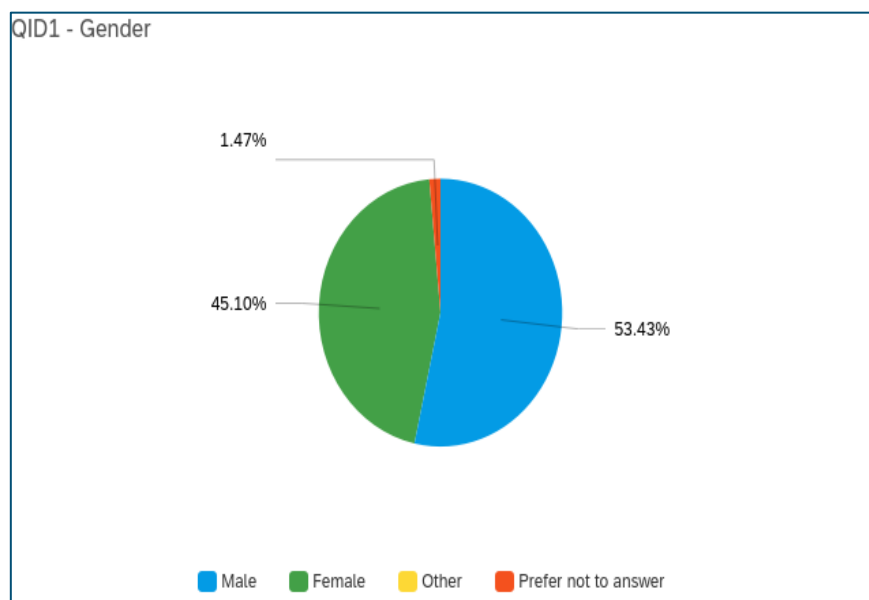
- Maleeha Kamran Siddiqui
- Claire Marshall
- Ava Corinne Crossett
- Jesse Jici Tian
- Bruce Anthony

7-2 Survey responses

A total of 204 people participated in the study. The following graphs illustrate the demographics of the participants.

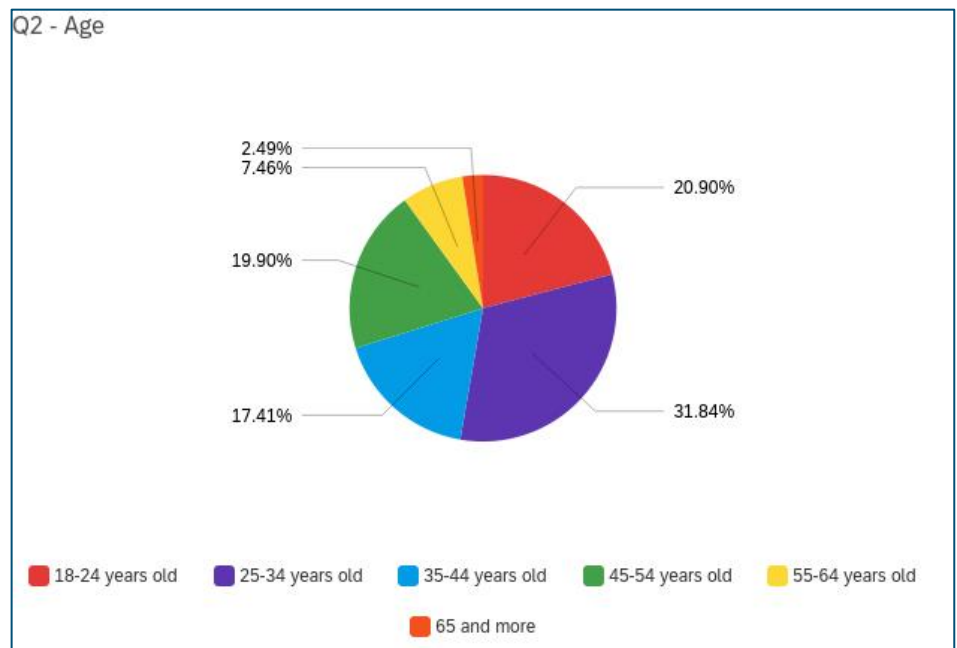
Gender of participants: 53.43% of the study participants were males while 45.1% were females.

Figure 6: Gender of Participants



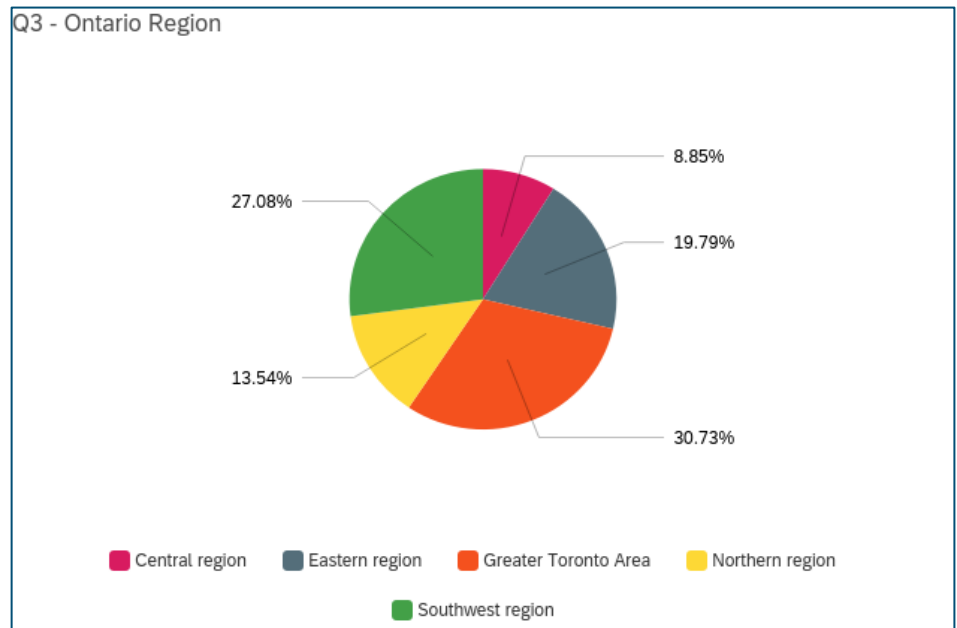
Age of participants: the greatest percentage of participants range between 25 and 34 years old.

Figure 7: Age of Participants



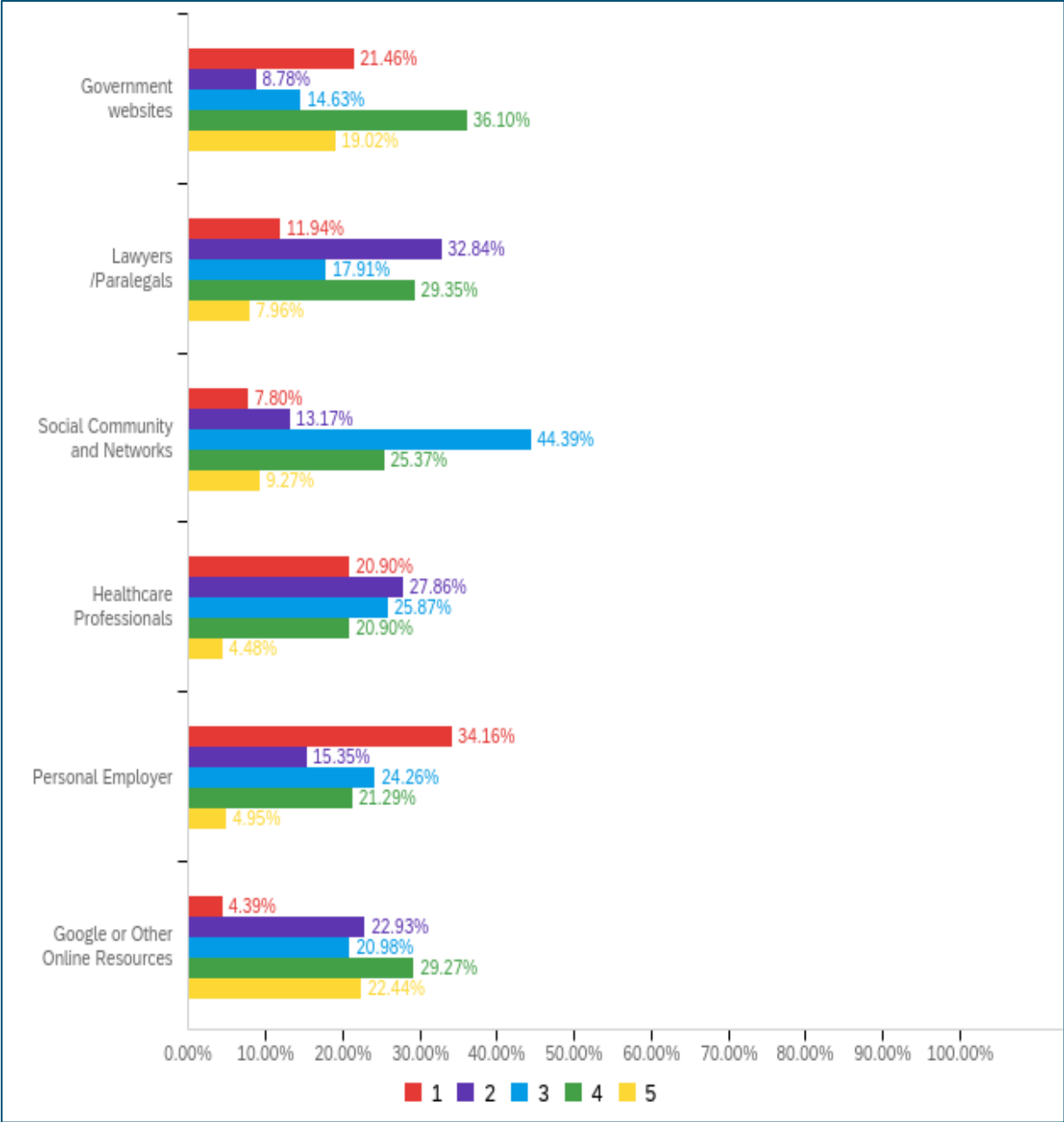
Ontario Region of participants: the greatest percentage of participants reside in the Greater Toronto Area.

Figure 8: Ontario Region of Participants



The results showed that most respondents seek out information regarding legal matters through Google and other online resources (68.43%). The chronological frequency of the use of the rest of the resources is as follows: government websites (64.14%), social, community and networks (63.04%), lawyers and paralegals (57.60%), healthcare professionals (51.90%) and their employer (49.35%).

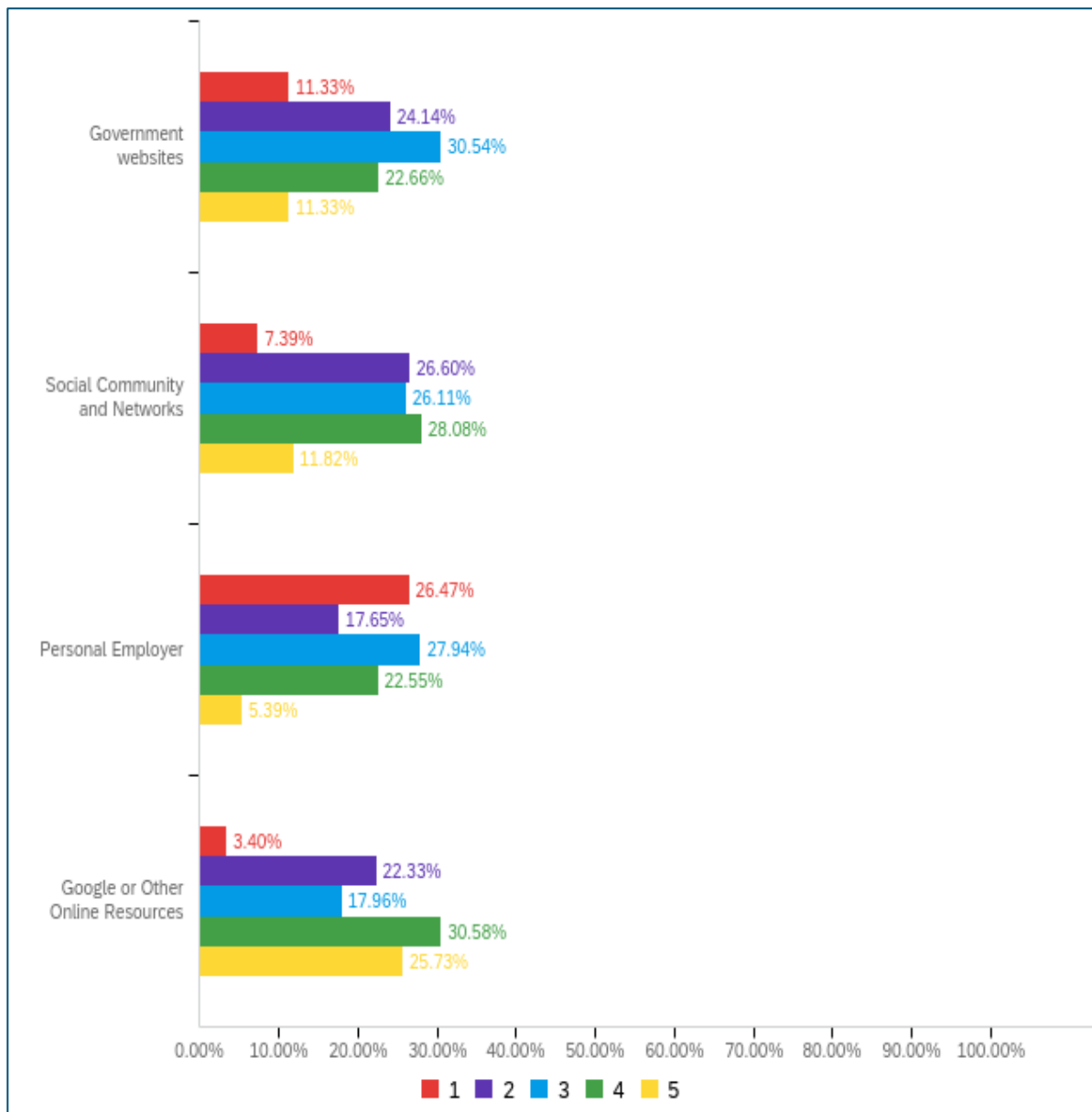
Figure 9: Information sources regarding legal matters



The results shows that when looking for information regarding financial matters, most respondents use Google or other online resources (70.54%) when seeking this information. The average likelihood of the use of the other presented resources is social, community and networks (61.88%), government websites (59.60%), and employers (52.32%).

Both findings for the legal and financial resource component of the survey indicate that most respondents rely on Google and other online resources for information on these issues.

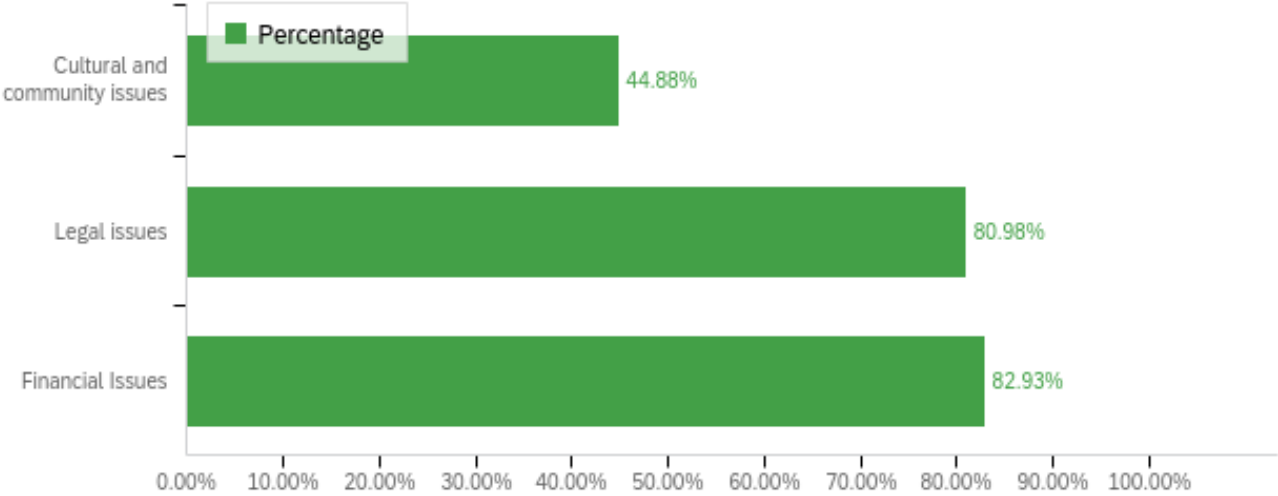
Figure 10: Information sources regarding financial matters



In the study, 81% of respondents indicated they need more information on legal issues, 83% indicated their need for more financial information, while 45% indicate the need for cultural and community issues.

Figure 11: Areas where information is most needed

Where do you feel you need more information to assist your life?



RRAI planned its 2022 and 2023 sessions based on the results of this survey.

8 - RRAI Supporters

RRAI is grateful for the strong support we have received in the London community on both individual and institutional levels.

RRAI is honored to express our great thanks and appreciation to all supporters.



Ministry of the Solicitor General



Westminster College Foundation



Miggsie Fund - Lawson Foundation



London Police Service



London Community Foundation



City of London



Pillar Nonprofit Network



Community Legal Services at Western Law



Neighbourhood Legal Services



Employment Solutions

9 - RRAI Board of Directors



Douglas D. Ferguson (Chair)

- Barrister and Solicitor

Greggory “Mac” Ross (Vice-Chair)

- Assistant Professor, Kinesiology, Western University

Khamwatie Savage (Treasurer)

- Accounting Specialist

Luisa Garcia (Secretary)

- Documentation Editor

Rafet Sayegh

- Business Owner

Prabh S. Gill

- Human Rights Activist

S. Michael Lynk

- Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, Western University

Steve Hillier

- London City Councillor

Tony Cuzzocrea

- President of Planmar Financial Corp

Lama Abdullh

- Student

Hetham Abu Karky (Executive Director)

- Licensed Paralegal

10 - RRAI Advisory Committee

The RRAI Advisory Committee is a diversified committee of community facilitators representing different ethnicities and cultural backgrounds.

Members of the Advisory Committee play a vital role in connecting RRAI with local communities, promoting RRAI activities, and establishing connections with their community organizations. They are ensuring that information about RRAI activities is distributed among their communities, as well as providing RRAI with feedback on their communities' needs and quality of RRAI activities.

Indigenous Community

Chesney Sickles-Jarvis

Francophone Community

Manon Guillemette

Latino Community

Luisa Garcia

Black Community

Sofiat Ajibowu

Indian Community

Yamini Parashar

Asian community

Mona Lei

Middle Eastern Community

Omar Mohamed

LGTBQA Community

Onyinye Enuoyibo

11- Support RRAI

The Rights and Responsibilities Awareness Initiative (RRAI) is a nonprofit, charitable organization. RRAI benefits greatly from financial and in-kind donations from businesses and individuals that believe in the importance of our mission.

Charity Registration Number: 724956479 RR 0001

Business and Corporate Support

To learn how your business can support RRAI please contact Hetham Karky, Executive Director by calling 226-700-7632.

Donate Online

Donate securely online with your credit card through **RRAI website** www.rrlondon.ca, and you can receive a charitable receipt immediately by email. You can give a one-time donation or a monthly donation.