

Immigration – 2023 Year in Review



FEDERAL

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jan 23: The federal government announced that Canada met its target of accepting 4.4% of French-speaking immigrants outside Québec in 2022. Among the more than 16,300 new immigrants that settled in Francophone minority communities across the country since 2006, just over 2,800 reside somewhere in Canada other than Québec.

Apr 6: Effective today, international graduates with a recently expired or expiring post-graduation work permit (PGWP) can remain working in Canada for up to 18 additional months while seeking a new permit.

Apr 15: The federal government ended [online surveying](#) on the immigration system and its larger role in the country's economic and social system, as well as what can be done to integrate newcomers into Canada more effectively.

May 26: The federal government implemented new measures to speed up the process of unifying accepted immigrants in Canada with their family members outside the country, including faster temporary resident visa (TRV) for spousal applicants, new processing tools for TRV spousal applicants, a new open work permit for spousal and family class applicants and open work permit extensions for holders of open work permits expiring between August 1 and December 31, 2023.

Jun 15: The federal government expanded for 2 years the Francophone Mobility Program under which Canadian employers may make job offers to eligible candidates with moderate command of French for all National Occupation Classification jobs other than in primary agriculture. Previously, the Program was open only to highly skilled French-speaking temporary foreign workers.

Jul 5: Exercising new authority under immigration laws, the federal government announced that it's issuing Express Entry invitations to apply for permanent residency to 1,000 health workers, including doctors, nurses, dentists, optometrists and physiotherapists.

Jun 27: A new immigration measure temporarily (for 3 years) removes the limit on how long a study program for which temporary foreign workers can enroll without a study permit can last. Previously, foreign workers wanting to also study in a program lasting more than 6 months had to get a separate study permit.

Aug 8: Under the newly launched [Recognized Employer Pilot](#) (REP) of the Temporary

Foreign Worker Program, recognized employers with a demonstrated history of compliance will be able to qualify for Labour Market Impact Assessments that remain valid for up to 36 months, along with access to a simplified application process to hire additional workers. The first phase of REP begins in September 2023 for primary agriculture employers; all other eligible employers can apply in January.

Action Point: The 10 things employers [must know about hiring temporary foreign workers](#)

Sep 18: Newly effective changes to the Canada Express Entry program allow for category-based selection inviting candidates with specific work experience or French language skills to apply for permanent residence. The first round of invitations just went out targeting transport occupations, including experienced truck drivers, pilots and aircraft assembly workers.

Action Point: The 10 things employers [must know about hiring temporary foreign workers](#)

Oct 26: The federal government extended Temporary Foreign Worker Program relief measures designed to ease the labour shortage that were initially announced in April 2022 through August 30, 2024, including: i. letting employers in 7 key sectors to hire up to 30% of their workers through the TFW Program for positions under the provincial median hourly wage; ii. keeping the maximum duration for such positions at up to 2 years; and iii. adjusting the Labour Market Impact Assessment validity period maximum from 18 to 12 months.

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Oct 31: The federal government published a [report](#) recommending long-term measures for strengthening the Canadian immigration system, including development of a new Francophone Immigration Policy and integrating housing, healthcare and infrastructure planning into the process of setting immigration levels.

ALBERTA

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jan 18: Changes to the Alberta Advantage Immigration Program (AAIP) will allow immediate relatives of immigrant workers in high-demand sectors who've already been accepted and settled in the province to gain entry via the Express Entry stream.

Feb 23: The province secured big increases to its immigration allotments over the next 3 years. After just 6,500 allowances in 2022, the Alberta Advantage Immigration Program will be allowed to issue 9,750 nominations in 2023, 10,140 nominations in 2024 and 10,849 nominations in 2025.

Mar 17: The new provincial budget provides \$23.8 million for grants to organizations to help immigrants settle in Alberta, including: i. Supports for Newcomer Integration grants for settlement and language services; and ii. Settlement Integration and Language Projects grants for system improvements and capacity building projects.

Apr 3: Changes to Alberta's Advantage Immigration Program will make it easier for in-demand workers and entrepreneurs to become permanent residents, including lowering of the Rural Entrepreneur Stream investment threshold to \$100,000 and eliminating the requirement for a letter from a settlement agency under the Rural Renewal Stream.

Jul 26: The Premier issued a mandate letter ordering the Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism to step up efforts to ensure auto-credentialing of Canadian and foreign workers from outside Alberta that have met standards equivalent to those of

the province and streamline immigration processes to meet healthcare staffing challenges, particularly in rural areas.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

May 23: BC announced plans to more than quadruple funding for settlement services under the BC Settlement and Integration Services Program (BCSIS) from \$6 million to \$25.6 million per year.

Jul 26: BC and the federal government gave a new \$7 million grant to the nonprofit organization Immigrant Employment Council of BC (IEC-BC) to support projects to make it easier for skilled immigrants to find good jobs in the province and employers to fill crucial positions for which labour is in short supply.

Nov 8: Royal Assent for [Bill 38](#) making it easier for foreign trained professionals in 29 different trades to ply their trade in BC by eliminating redundant language testing, setting caps for maximum processing times, requiring credential assessment information to be published online and establishing a new government agency to promote faster and more efficient credentialing.

MANITOBA

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jan 25: Following a strategy that has worked for other provinces, Manitoba is planning to send a delegation to the Philippines to recruit qualified internationally educated nurses (IENs). **Prime target:** IENs who've completed an internationally recognized English language test and have at least 2 years of experience working in hospital or long-term care settings.

Feb 14: The Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program issued 6,367 nominations in 2022, the most in any single year since the Program began in 1998. Top occupations: transport truck drivers, food-service supervisors, food-counter attendants, cooks and industrial butchers and meat cutters.

Mar 9: Manitoba will be getting 9,500 Provincial Nominee Program allotments in 2023, 3,175 more than it got in 2022. That's a year-over-year increase of 50%.

Mar 10: New regulations eliminate the requirement that internationally educated physicians in specific membership classes pass the Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Exam Part 1 (MCCQE1) before registering and practicing in Manitoba. **Result:** Foreign doctors will be able to start working in the province sooner.

NEW BRUNSWICK

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Apr 3: The federal government increased New Brunswick's immigration allocation for 2023 by 67% to 5,500 places. Further increases are expected for 2024 and 2025 allocations.

Jun 2: New Brunswick announced a new 5-year initiative to provide financial support to internationally educated nurses while they await official recognition of their credentials and approval to practice in the province. The program will cover the costs of competency assessments, Bridging Program Tuition and other expenses.

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Feb 27: The government sent a special delegation to the UK to recruit physicians and other healthcare professionals to the province where they are desperately needed.

Apr 26: The federal government doubled Newfoundland's yearly immigration allotment from 1,500 to 3,050. That's a total of 6,700 newcomers per year when you add in the families of nominees.

NOVA SCOTIA

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sep 22: Nova Scotia expanded the International Graduates in Demand stream of its Provincial Nominee Program to include paramedics and pharmacy technicians. Under the stream, international students who graduate from a public or private post-secondary institution in the province [may apply](#) for a work permit and permanent residency in Canada before starting work.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Feb 20: The GNWT joined a program that helps Canadian employers connect with and hire skilled refugees overseas. Cost of recruiting an employee through the Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot is between \$5,000 and \$10,000, including visa, relocation and temporary accommodation on arrival. Other jurisdictions in the Pilot include BC, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Ontario, PEI and Yukon.

Aug 14: According to a [new government report](#), the Northwest Territories achieved many of its goals in boosting immigration levels from 2018 to 2022. Highlights: 363 approved Employer Driven Stream nominations, overall applications increased from 61 to 142 and applications approved rose from 28 to 105 over the same period.

ONTARIO

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mar 18: With skilled labour in short support, Ontario announced that the federal government is doubling the number of economic immigrants the province can select in 2025 to over 18,000.

Jul 11: Ontario is investing \$2.6 million in 4 projects to provide free training to over 300 immigrants, including displaced Ukrainians and Afghans, and help them find good jobs with local employers. The projects will be delivered in Ottawa, Toronto, Hamilton and online.

Sep 18: Public [surveying](#) ends on what, if anything, Ontario should do to improve its process of recognizing the credentials of workers with foreign training, certification in a skill or a professional degree who want to ply their trade in the province.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jun 8: PEI published a new 5-year Francophone Immigration [Strategic Action Plan](#) to lure French-speaking immigrants to the province and assimilate them once they arrive.

Jun 14: With nurses in short supply, PEI will now reimburse nurses for test fees in passing an English language proficiency test necessary to meet College of Registered Nurses and Midwives of Prince Edward Island (CRNMPEI) or College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Prince Edward Island (CLPNPEI) language proficiency requirements.

QUÉBEC

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jan 27: Québec government ministers completed a mission to Senegal and the Ivory Coast attempting to attract French-speaking students, graduates and foreign workers willing to emigrate to the province and work in key sectors where labour is in short supply.

Aug 24: Quebec is investing \$675,000 in a program to enable parents who don't speak French to entrust their children to drop-in daycare centers across the province that offer or are located near facilities offering French language courses.

Sep 26: Québec has asked the Commission of Labour Market Partners for an opinion on how the closed TFWP work permit has affected the province's labour market and how to improve better working and living conditions of temporary foreign workers.

Action Point: 10 things you need to know if you hire [temporary foreign workers](#)

Dec 11: Employers may now use the Ministry of Immigration, Francisation and Integration's new electronic transmission of applications (TED) service to validate job offers from the Regular Skilled Worker Program (PRTQ) and applications from the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (PTET). Implementation of the TED will enable employers to benefit from the denominalized labour market impact assessment (LMIA) in recruiting abroad.

SASKATCHEWAN

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jan 26: The Advisory Committee on Francophone Affairs released its report on how to increase the number of French-speaking immigrants to Saskatchewan. One of its recommendations: Establish a specific target for French speakers as part of the province's larger immigration program.

Mar 14: The federal government agreed to increase Saskatchewan's Immigrant Nominee Program allocation by 42% above 2022 levels over the next 3 years including 18,000 in 2023. Saskatchewan now will also have sole authority to assess a candidate's ability to economically establish and intent to reside in the province.

Nov 1: Foreign workers with permits in 279 intermediate and lower-skilled trades will soon be able to apply for permanent residency under the Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program. Currently, the Existing Work Permit Stream is available only to high-skilled occupations and trades.

Nov 30: Saskatchewan announced that it has secured another 100 nominations for its Immigrant Nominee Program, bringing total nominations for 2023 to a record high of 7,350. This is in addition to the 6,000 immigrants that enter the province each year through federal streams.

YUKON TERRITORY

LAWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mar 16: The federal government increased Yukon Nominee Program (YNP) allocations for 2023 from 300 to 430. Last year, the Yukon utilized its full annual allocation of 300 spaces for just the second time since the YNP was established in 2007.

Nov 23: Yukon announced that the federal government increased its Nominee Program 2023 allocations by 150 for a total allocation of 580 for the year. The latest boost comes after its 2023 base allocation was increased from 300 to 400 last March.