

## Annex D: Breakdown and description of current immigration programs

Here is the breakdown of the mix of immigration programs in the 2013 Levels Plan:

- About 62 per cent of the immigrants who come to Canada are in the economic class.
- About 27 per cent are in the family class.
- The rest are mostly refugees and others admitted for humanitarian and compassionate reasons.

The economic category includes the principal applicants (the person on the application whose skills and qualifications we assess) and their spouse/partner and dependants. Principal applicants make up around 40 per cent of the economic category, while spouses/partners and dependants are around 60 per cent.

### Economic

#### *Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP)*

The Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP) chooses immigrants based on their ability to succeed economically in Canada.

If they meet eligibility requirements, we assess applicants against selection criteria, also known as the “points grid.” Applicants can earn up to 100 points and the current pass mark is 67. Points are awarded for:

- official language abilities;
- age;
- education;
- work experience,
- employment already arranged in Canada; and
- adaptability.

These traits help us choose newcomers who are flexible and adaptable enough to find success in Canada’s labour market.

After a 10-month pause on accepting new applications while we revised the FSW Program, changes to selection criteria took effect on May 4, 2013. The FSWP points grid was improved based on a large body of research which has consistently shown that language proficiency and youth are two of the most important factors for an immigrant’s success.

The changes also put in place a new requirement for an Educational Credential Assessment (ECA) of foreign educational credentials, so that points awarded reflect the foreign credential’s true value in Canada. Also, applicants can now earn more points for a spouse’s language ability and Canadian work experience.

Since November 2008, CIC has worked to better align the processing of FSW applications with Canada's labour market needs, and to address the backlog of applications in the program. The intake of new FSW applications has been managed by special processing priorities since 2008. This will support a much faster and more flexible program in the coming years.

### *Federal Skilled Trades Program (FSTP)*

To address Canada's growing demand for certain skilled tradespeople, CIC launched a new Federal Skilled Trades Program on January 2, 2013. This new permanent residence program is geared towards the kind of workers who are likely to apply as the selection criteria puts more emphasis on practical experience rather than formal education.

The program uses a streamlined pass/fail model based on four criteria. Applicants must:

- meet a basic language requirement (as language ability strongly affects the degree of immigrant success, and for health and safety reasons);
- have a qualifying job offer OR a Provincial/Territorial certificate of qualification in a skilled trade (to show that the person meets the requirements to be employed in Canada);
- have two years of work experience as a qualified skilled tradesperson in the last five years (to show that their work experience, which is key to being employed in the skilled trades, is recent and relevant); and
- satisfy the employment requirements in the National Occupational Classification for their skilled trade (to show that the person meets the general requirements to be employed in Canada).

CIC is accepting up to 3,000 applications in this program each year. The current cap year is valid from May 4, 2013 to April 30, 2014.

### *Quebec Skilled Workers and Business Immigrants selected by Quebec*

Under the *Canada-Quebec Accord*, Quebec sets its own levels and chooses its own skilled workers and business immigrants. Selection criteria for both are similar to those of the federal programs. The Government of Canada has authority for overall levels-setting as well as for the final admissibility of immigrants into Canada.

### *Provincial and Nominee Program (PNP)*

The Provincial Nominee Program supports the Government of Canada's goal that immigration support job creation, growth and long-term prosperity across all regions of Canada. It allows provincial and territorial governments to nominate immigrants for permanent residence who will meet local economic and regional labour market needs, and who intend to settle in that province or territory.

Provincial and territorial governments assess the skills, education and work experience of applicants to make sure that nominees can contribute to the economy of the nominating province or territory. Currently, there are PN agreements in place for all provinces and

territories except Nunavut, and Quebec (which manages its own immigration programs based on the *Canada-Quebec Accord*). In total, there are more than 60 separate streams offered under the PN programs across Canada.

Some streams require applicants to already have job offers from Canadian employers. Some help temporary foreign workers (at all skill levels) and international students become permanent residents, while others aim to attract business persons and entrepreneurs.

### *Canadian Experience Class (CEC)*

Research shows that those with Canadian education and/or work experience have far better outcomes in the labour market. The Canadian Experience Class was created in 2008 to help these people transition to permanent residence.

To streamline the program, CIC recently reduced the work experience requirement from 24 months to 12 months, and standardized the eligibility requirements for international student graduates and temporary foreign workers.

### *Business Immigrants*

The goal of the federal business program – for investors, entrepreneurs and self-employed people – is to spur innovation, bring investment to Canada, and bring in people with a proven track record in business who will take risks and create new businesses.

To reduce the backlog in this program, in June 2011 CIC put a pause on applications to the Entrepreneur Program, and in June 2012, a pause on new applications to the Immigrant Investor Program. This will help us process applications already in the queue while we work on improvements to the program.

In April 2013, CIC introduced the new Start-Up Visa pilot program, which is the first of its kind in the world. It is designed to attract dynamic entrepreneurs and link them with Canadian private sector organizations that have experience working with and investing in start-ups. This will help build companies that will compete globally and create Canadian jobs.

### *Live-in Caregivers*

The Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP) brings qualified temporary foreign workers into Canada to care for a child, senior, or person with a disability when there is a shortage of Canadians or permanent residents to fill these positions.

The LCP was created in 1992 as a temporary work program. Now, people who meet certain criteria within four years of arriving in Canada may apply for permanent residence for themselves, their spouse/partner and eligible dependants.

The number of applications for permanent residence we accept is directly tied to the number of live-in caregivers who first come as temporary workers (i.e. as we accept more temporary applicants, there will be more applications for permanent residence).

At the end of 2011, CIC began issuing open work permits to those who have met the criteria and applied for permanent residence. This means they will not be tied to one employer and can find work elsewhere while waiting for their applications to be processed.

## Family

### *Spouses, Partners and Children*

Canadian citizens or permanent residents over the age of 18 may sponsor their immediate family members to be permanent residents in Canada. To do so, they must sign a sponsorship agreement of three years (for spouses/partners and dependent children) or 10 years (for parents and grandparents).

### *Parents and Grandparents*

Canada is one of the few countries that have a family reunification program for parents and grandparents.

In November 2011, CIC launched the *Action Plan for Faster Family Reunification* to address the growing backlog of applications in this program. This plan included:

- increasing the number of people accept per year;
- launching the Super Visa to give non-Canadian parents and grandparents extended visits to Canada;
- consulting Canadians on how to redesign the program; and
- putting a temporary pause on new applications while we process those already in the backlog.

The second phase of the Action Plan for Faster Family Reunification was unveiled, including:

- maintaining high levels of admissions;
- making the Super Visa permanent;
- new qualifying criteria for sponsorship, including increasing financial criteria for sponsors to ensure that they have the means to support the parents or grandparents they sponsor; and
- the annual acceptance of 5,000 applications.

CIC will begin accepting a limited number of new sponsorship applications on January 2, 2014. . In the meantime, we continue to reduce the backlog of applications, which would have reached 250,000 by 2015 with a 15-year wait time, had no action been taken.

### Refugee and Humanitarian Class (refugees, asylum claimants, and those admitted on humanitarian and compassionate grounds)

Around 11 per cent of immigrants to Canada arrive under the refugee and humanitarian class.

Canada has two major refugee categories:

- resettled refugees, either

- sponsored from abroad by the Government and referred by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, or
- sponsored by private organizations; and
- those who make a refugee claim from within Canada.

There are also categories to address exceptional humanitarian situations.

Canada has a long-standing humanitarian tradition of resettling refugees in Canada for whom there is no other durable or lasting solution (i.e., they cannot return home and they cannot stay where they are). In addition, Canada is legally obligated to consider refugee claims made from within Canada.

CIC has made changes to the in-Canada refugee system since both the *Balanced Refugee Reform Act* and the *Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act* received Royal Assent in 2011 and 2012, respectively.

As a result of these changes, refugee claims made in Canada are being decided more quickly, which means that those who are truly in need will get our protection faster. Likewise, those who do not need our protection will be removed from Canada faster.