



## March 5-6, 2019 Meeting: National Immigration Centre

# Winning the Immigration Conversation

March 5-6, 2019

Metropolitan Hotel Vancouver

645 Howe Street  
Vancouver, BC V6C 2Y9

[conferenceboard.ca/nic](http://conferenceboard.ca/nic)

[@ImmigrationCBoC](https://twitter.com/ImmigrationCBoC)

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### Objectives:

- Assess the drivers of anti-immigrant sentiment in Canada and abroad.
  - Explore the state of Canadian public opinion towards immigration.
  - Understand how immigration affects the Canadian economy.
  - Discuss how Canada can maintain strong public support for immigration.
  - Learn about British Columbia's latest immigration policy developments.
  - Shape the Conference Board's immigration research agenda for 2019.
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### Day One: March 5, 2019

8:00 a.m.

**Breakfast**

8:45 a.m.

**Welcoming Remarks by The Conference Board of Canada**

*Kareem El-Assal, Senior Research Associate, Immigration*

*Sara Rose Taylor, Research Associate, Immigration*

*Jo-Leen Folz, Administrative and Meetings Coordinator, Economics*

9:00 a.m.

**Session 1: The View from BC**

BC has long been one of Canada's most attractive destinations for immigrants. But it now faces far more competition for immigrants for reasons such as the success of the Provincial Nominee Program in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. A provincial official is invited to highlight BC's efforts to improve the competitiveness of its immigration system. Business and settlement sector speakers will also share their thoughts on how the province is faring on the immigration front.

*Moderator: Marina Sedai, Immigration & Citizenship Lawyer, Sedai Law Office*

*Christine Little, Assistant Deputy Minister, BC Ministry of Jobs, Trade & Technology*

*Queenie Choo, CEO, S.U.C.C.E.S.S.*

*Stephanie Hollingshead, CEO, HR Tech Group*

10:15 a.m.

**Networking Break**

10:45 a.m.

**Session 2: What Drives Populism?**

Anti-immigrant populism has grown in recent years. Drivers include economic and cultural anxiety and status-loss fears. While Canada has largely been able to maintain public support for immigration, populism has also proven to be an effective political tool here at home. Speakers will evaluate populism's main drivers and what Canada needs to do to maintain public support for immigration.

*Moderator: Daniel Hiebert, Professor of Geography, University of British Columbia  
Bridgitte Anderson, General Manager, Edelman Vancouver  
Antje Ellermann, Associate Professor of Political Science, UBC  
Steven Weldon, Associate Professor of Political Science, Simon Fraser University*

12:00 p.m.

**Networking Luncheon**

1:00 p.m.

**Session 3: How do Canadians Feel About Immigration?**

Public opinion on immigration is complex. Canadians generally view immigration in a positive light, but report concerns about higher immigration levels, asylum claims, and temporary foreign workers. Speakers will explore the latest public opinion data and discuss how it could guide immigration stakeholders.

*Moderator: Kareem El-Assal, The Conference Board of Canada  
Douglas Todd, Journalist, Vancouver Sun  
Rima Wilkes, Professor, Political Sociology, UBC  
Brian Vatne, Director, Immigration Policy, BC Ministry of Jobs, Trade & Technology*

2:15 p.m.

**Refreshment Break**

2:30 p.m.

**Session 4: How does Immigration Affect the Economy?**

One of the major drivers of anti-immigrant populism is economic anxiety. However, research suggests immigration does not have a major economic impact which may disappoint proponents and detractors of immigration alike. Speakers will help us make sense of the literature and discuss how it should inform immigration policymaking in light of Canada's demographic challenges, the impacts of technological change on jobs, and concerns about real estate unaffordability.

*Moderator: Shamira Madhany, Managing Director, World Education Services  
David Green, Professor and Director, Vancouver School of Economics, UBC  
Matt de Vlieger, Director General, Strategic Policy & Planning, IRCC  
Andrey Pavlov, Professor of Finance, SFU*

3:45 p.m.

**Session 5: #ImmigrationMatters**

IRCC recently launched a public campaign entitled #ImmigrationMatters to help raise public awareness on immigration. This session will explore the rationale behind the campaign, how it has been operationalized, and the desired outcomes.

*David Hickey, Director General, Communications Branch, IRCC*

**5:00 p.m. Day One Adjourns and Free Time**

**6:30 - 8:30 p.m. National Immigration Centre Members' Dinner**

Members of the Centre are invited to join us for dinner in downtown Vancouver.

*Glowbal  
590 W Georgia Street, Vancouver, V6E 1A3  
604-602-0835*

## **Day Two: March 6, 2019**

**8:00 a.m. Breakfast**

**8:45 a.m. Session 6: Building Public Support at the Local Level**

To end day one, we learned about IRCC's efforts to build public awareness on the value of immigration. To open day two, we will hear about grass roots efforts of stakeholders looking to shore up public support for immigration in their communities. What can other communities learn from their efforts?

*Moderator: Sara Rose Taylor, The Conference Board of Canada  
Chris Friesen, Director, Settlement Services, Immigrant Services Society of BC  
Patrick MacKenzie, CEO, Immigrant Employment Council of BC  
Baldwin Wong, Senior Social Planner, Immigration Partnership, City of Vancouver*

**10:00 a.m. Refreshment Break**

**10:15 a.m. Session 7: Shaping the Conference Board's 2019 Research Agenda**

The Conference Board is looking to incorporate more feedback from National Immigration Centre members to inform the direction of its immigration research. In this facilitated session, attendees are invited to engage in small roundtable discussions on key issues they would like the Conference Board to cover in its research and will then be asked to share their suggestions with the rest of the group.

*Kareem El-Assal, Senior Research Associate, Immigration  
Sara Rose Taylor, The Conference Board of Canada*

**11:30 a.m. Closing Remarks and Meeting Adjournment**

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## **Join us at the Canadian Immigration Summit 2019!**

The Conference Board's 5<sup>th</sup> annual Canadian Immigration Summit is taking place in Ottawa on May 8-9, 2019. Join over 400 people from government, immigrant-serving organizations, academia, immigration law and consulting, business, and education: [www.conferenceboard.ca/immigration](http://www.conferenceboard.ca/immigration)

Contact us to sign up:

- [folz@conferenceboard.ca](mailto:folz@conferenceboard.ca)
- [elassal@conferenceboard.ca](mailto:elassal@conferenceboard.ca)