

Canadian Immigration Summit

May 25 – 27, 2021



Agenda

Day 1 / May 25, 2021

12:45 p.m. [Welcome and Keynote](#)

The COVID Cohort and Immigration in Economic Recovery

Iain Reeve, Associate Director, The Conference Board of Canada

The government's decision to maintain high immigration levels during and after the pandemic shows how important immigration is for Canada's short- and long-term economic interests. The "COVID cohort" of immigrants will also face unique employment challenges in a pandemic and post-pandemic economy. What will this period in our immigration history teach us about the economic integration of newcomers?

1:45 p.m. [Break](#)

2:00 p.m. [Concurrent Session A1](#)

Measuring Immigrant Economic Integration: The Statistics Canada Immigration Database

Moderator:

Iain Reeve, Associate Director, The Conference Board of Canada

Speakers:

Tristan Cayn, Statistics Canada

Michael Haan, University of Western Ontario

Yoko Yoshida, University of Western Ontario

Statistics Canada's Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) helps us understand the economic integration, earnings, and career trajectories of newcomers. This session shows how the database can help us better understand the economic trajectory of immigrants. It then describes some of the research that has used it.

2:00 p.m. [Concurrent Session A2](#)

Providing Settlement Services During a Pandemic

Moderator:

Marco Campana, Owner, Immigrant & Refugee-Serving Organization Digital & Communications Consultant

Speakers:

Manjeet Dhiman, ACCES

Chris Friesen, Immigrant Services Society of BC, ISSBC

Julie-Ann Vincent, ISANS

The settlement sector adapted to COVID-19 public health restrictions by moving much of its services online. This session investigates what we've learned from moving to virtual delivery, the impact it's had on newcomers, and what lessons we can carry into the future of settlement.

3:00 p.m. [Break](#)

3:30 p.m. [Concurrent Session B1](#)

Welcoming Refugees During and After the Pandemic

Moderator:

Kathryn Dennler, Research Associate, The Conference Board of Canada

Speakers:

Rema Jamous Imseis, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Francisco Rico-Martinez, FCJ refugee Center

Saleem Spindari, MOSAIC

Border closures and travel restrictions designed to protect public health during the COVID-19 pandemic have created additional barriers for people traveling for the purposes of seeking refugee protection. In this session, speakers examine how refugee travel and the welcoming of refugees has been affected by the pandemic, both in Canada and around the world.

Agenda

Day 1 / May 25, 2021 (cont'd)

3:30 p.m. [Concurrent Session B2](#)

Ensuring No-one Is Left Behind-the Critical Role of Employers in Hiring and Retaining Newcomers

Moderator:

Shamira Madhany, Managing Director, and Deputy Executive Director, World Education Services

Speakers:

Lisa Beckwick, Director of Organizational & People Development, St Joseph's Care Group

Joel Richardson, Vice President Public Relations, Cooke Aquaculture

Manu Varma, Principal Strategist and Head of Community for Bettr.me

The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected a number of employment sectors, amplifying the existing problem of un- and under employment of immigrants and refugees in Canada. This new reality necessitates, more than ever, the need for a collaborative approach among employers, policy makers and practitioners to ensure that immigrants and refugees are not left behind as we rebuild our economy. Join our interactive workshop with employers discussing what's needed now to successfully integrate immigrants and refugees into the labour market.

Day 2 / May 26, 2021

11:30 a.m. [Welcome and Plenary Panel](#)

Building Back Stronger with Robust Immigration Policy and Programs

Moderator:

Victoria Esses, Director, Centre for Research on Migration and Ethnic Relations, University of Western Ontario

Speakers:

Natalya Brown, Associate Professor, Nipissing University

Aurelie Lacassagne, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Laurentian University

Audrey Macklin, Professor, University of Toronto

Jean McRae, CEO, Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria

What has the pandemic revealed about Canada's immigration system? A team of researchers and settlement sector representatives from the Pathways to Prosperity Partnership came together to find out. Members of the team will discuss their analysis and recommendations for addressing gaps and shortfalls.

12:30 p.m. [Break](#)

12:45 p.m. [Keynote](#)

Keynote with Minister Marco Mendicino **Minister Marco Mendicino**

The Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship will speak about Budget 2021's investments into the modernization and digitization of our immigration system. The Government of Canada intends to draw even more talented, highly skilled people to Canada, including international students. Investments made in Budget 2021 will support an immigration system that is easier to navigate, and more efficient in welcoming the dynamic new Canadians who add to Canada's strength.

1:45 p.m. [Break](#)

2:00 p.m. [Concurrent Session C1](#)

Regionalization and the 2021-2023 Levels Plan

Moderator:

Yilmaz Dinc, Senior Research Associate, The Conference Board of Canada

Speakers:

Charles Cirtwill, Founding President and CEO of Northern Policy Institute

David Crawford, Managing Partner, Fragomen

Melissa Kelly, Research Fellow, Canada Excellence Research Chair (CERC), Ryerson University

Cosmina Morariu, Director, Fragomen

Michelle Nguyen, Researcher, Ryerson University

COVID-19 has caused a setback in the efforts to attract and retain immigrants in rural and small communities. The provinces that have traditionally admitted the most immigrants were less affected by the drop in admissions compared to others. Given the federal government's goal of welcoming over 1 million immigrants over the next three years, how do we ensure that immigrants settle and remain all across Canada, including smaller cities and communities?

Agenda

Day 2 / May 26, 2021 (cont'd)

2:00 p.m. Concurrent Session C2

Navigating the Immigration System During COVID-19

Moderator:

Iain Reeve, Associate Director, The Conference Board of Canada

Speakers:

Warren Create, Lawyer & Head of Immigration
Perley-Robertson, Hill & McDougall

Mark Holthe, Founder, Holthe Immigration Law and
Chief Inspirational Officer at The Canadian
Immigration Institute

Kamaljit K. Lehal, Lehal Law Corporation

What unique challenges have potential immigrants faced while navigating the immigration system during COVID? What adaptations have been necessary to ensure fair and timely access to immigration decisions? What lessons from this period can we take forward to design a fairer more efficient immigration system?

3:00 p.m. Break

3:30 p.m. Concurrent Session D1

Immigration System Responses During the Pandemic: Global Perspectives

Moderator:

Kathryn Dennler, Research Associate, The Conference Board of Canada

Speakers:

Diala Ayman, Policy and Communications officer, LERRN

Muzna Dureid, Policy Analyst and Humanitarian
Practitioner, LERRN

Julia Gelatt, Senior Policy Analyst, Co-Coordinator of MPI's Internship Program & Senior Policy Analyst, Migration Policy Institute

Lorenzo Piccoli, Research Fellow for the Migration Policy Centre (MPC), University of Neuchâte

This session examines the unique set of challenges that immigrants and would-be immigrants face as a result of COVID-19, as well as the public policy and civil society responses developed to address these challenges. The panel will include presentation of an international dataset, as well as an in-depth look at responses in the US, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and Syria.

3:30 p.m. Concurrent Session D2

Francophone Minority Communities and Economic Recovery

Moderator:

Dorra Gdoura, Assistant Director of the Adult Career Transition Centre at La Cité

Speakers:

Roukya Abdi-Aden, Manager, National Coordination, RDEE Canada

Alphonse Ahola, Executive Director, FRAP

Edith Luc, Associate partner and collaborator in leadership development programs, La Cité

Yves Saint-Germain, Director, Language Policy and Francophone Communities, IRCC

Immigration has emerged as a priority for francophone communities looking to grow their populations and expand their economies. This session investigates how attracting immigrants to francophone communities and helping them find work or start businesses will evolve in the post-pandemic period.

Day 3 / May 27, 2021

12:45 p.m. Welcome and Plenary Panel

Bold Ideas for Canada's Immigration Future

Moderator:

Irfhan Rawji, Founder & Executive Chair, MobSquad

Speakers:

Adrienne Clarkson, Former Governor General

Lisa Lalonde, CEO, Century Initiative

Dan Rees, Group Head, Scotiabank

Would a substantial increase in the number of immigrants fundamentally transform Canada's place in the world? How would it affect our economy, our businesses, and our society? These panelists will help us imagine an ambitious future for Canadian immigration.

1:45 p.m. Break

2:00 p.m. Concurrent Session E1

Intercultural Competencies and the Middle Manager: The Role of Middle Managers in Creating a Brave and Inclusive Teams

Moderator:

Iain Reeve, Associate Director, The Conference Board of Canada

Speakers:

Adwoa Buahene, CEO, TIREC

Melissa Magder, Advisor of Strategic Initiatives, Office of Culture and Inclusion, Region of Peel

Sabina Michael, Associate Director, Intercultural Skills Lab, Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto

The future economic success of Canada will rely on our ability to fully engage the highly talented, skilled workforce that is available in the country. However, many of the current workforce development solutions demand that immigrants develop their intercultural competency to "fit in" and to integrate. But is the onus of integration only on the immigrant? This panel discussion will focus on the role that middle managers play in creating brave work cultures of respect and inclusion, where diversity of thought is valued and rewarded. The panelists will share research and strategies to help managers support diverse talent to contribute fully, learn openly from one another and reach new levels of performance individually and as a team.

Agenda

Day 3 / May 27, 2021 (cont'd)

2:00 p.m. [Concurrent Session E2](#)

Immigrants in Essential Work

Moderator:

Yilmaz Dinc, Senior Research Associate,
The Conference Board of Canada

Speakers:

Joan Atlin, Director, Strategy, Policy, and Research,
World Education Services

Jonathon Braun, Migrant Workers Centre BC
Jenna Hennebry, Associate Dean, School of
International Policy and Governance (SIPG), Wilfrid
Laurier University

Naomi Lightman, Assistant Professor, University
of Calgary

COVID-19 has highlighted the importance of essential work to the Canadian economy. Much of this work is performed by immigrant workers—both permanent and temporary. In this session, learn more about and discuss: the contributions immigrant workers have made to the agricultural and health care sectors, how the pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities and issues facing immigrant workers, and how we should move forward. How do our immigration system and workplaces need to change and adapt to better support immigrant workers?

3:00 p.m. [Break](#)

3:30 p.m. [Plenary Panel](#)

Hiring Newcomers During and After the Pandemic

Moderator:

Veronica Rossini, Director of Marketing and
Communications, Tent

Speakers:

Stephanie Braid, Director of Inclusion & Diversity, KPMG

Emma Flynn, Immigration Manager, J.D. Irving Limited

Devon Moir, Talent Acquisition Partner, McCain Foods

Laura Soria, Senior Director, CIBC

Employers are increasingly including newcomers as part of their efforts to meet their skill and labour needs. How have employers adjusted their approaches during the pandemic, and what lessons will they carry forward?

4:30 p.m. [Closing Remarks](#)