

Structures of governance and the role of Canada's federal government in immigration and settlement

Executive Summary

by

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There have been many changes to the way in which migration to Canada is regulated and managed in the period 2000 - 2020. The purpose of this report is to outline the responsibilities of Canada's federal government over immigration and settlement with a focus on the structures and organization of its various policies and programs. In doing so, we provide an overview of federal legislation that governs immigration and settlement in Canada. We also highlight the ministries and offices responsible for immigration and settlement.

In particular, the report details the pathways to permanent residence to Canada: the economic streams, family class sponsorship, and the humanitarian and compassionate streams. It also provides an account of the growing and diverse temporary migration programs, such as the *Global Talent Stream* and *International Mobility Program*. Lastly, the report gives an overview of the various services provided to newcomers, including pre-arrival and settlement programs.

To map the federal government's role in immigration and settlement, we conducted a scan of the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's (IRCC) [webpage](#). After reviewing the webpage, we conducted a search of the online catalogues at the Library of Parliament and Carleton University Library using the keywords "federal government immigration policy." As the research process unfolded more specific keyword searches were undertaken to collect further information about particular immigration programs and legislation.

Some tendencies that characterize current immigration directions are/include:

- Responsibility for immigration and settlement is increasingly decentralized. Provinces have taken on greater roles, but cities and local regional governments are also important players;
- Other private actors have become more prominent in migration governance including corporations, employers, and accreditation bodies;
- There has been a rapid expansion of employer-driven temporary worker programs;
- There is a growth in "two-step immigration" whereby a select number of temporary residents (e.g., international students and skilled workers with temporary work permits) can apply to be considered for permanent residence (thus the "two-step" process), whereas others (specifically temporary workers in low-skill jobs such as seasonal agricultural workers) are not eligible to do so.

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