

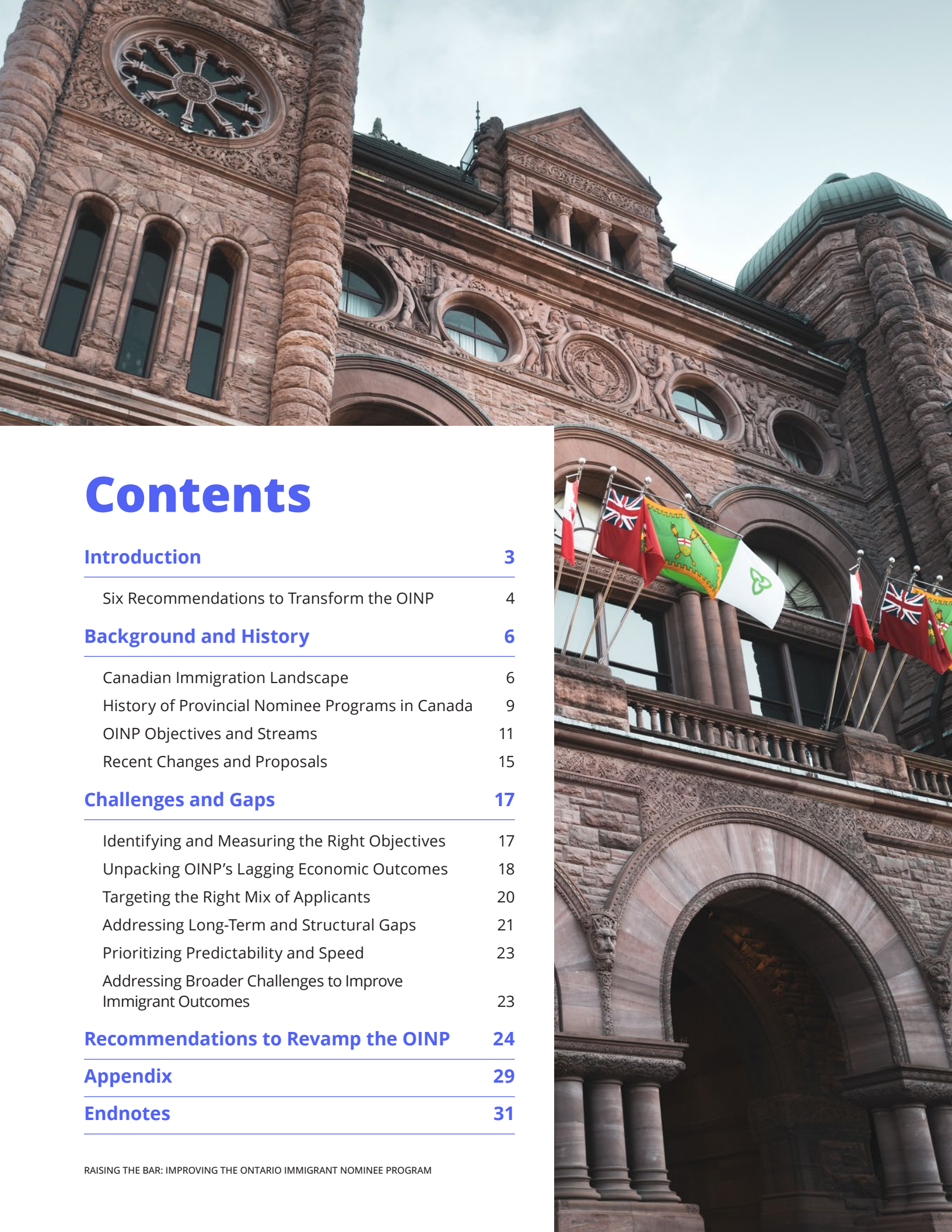


TORONTO
REGION
BOARD OF TRADE

Raising the Bar

Improving the Ontario Immigrant
Nominee Program

FEBRUARY 2026



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Introduction

Talent is now one of the most decisive factors shaping Ontario’s economic competitiveness, business growth, and long-term prosperity.

As global competition for skills intensifies and demographic pressures tighten labour supply, immigration has become an indispensable driver of productivity and innovation. The Toronto Region Board of Trade has long advocated for strong economic immigration to help employers access talent and sustain growth, including calling for urgent action in our [‘Unlocking Talent’](#) report in 2022, and supporting employers through our [‘Workforce Leading Practice Guides’](#) in 2023. Today, however, the challenge is not simply attracting more people, but ensuring immigration policy delivers better economic outcomes by design. The Board is undertaking this work because the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program plays a key role in determining who comes to the province, how well they succeed, and how effectively immigration supports competitiveness, productivity, and rising living standards. Getting the OINP right is critical to Ontario’s economic future. This report sets out how the program can be strengthened to meet that responsibility.

Canada’s immigration system has been regarded as a model of effective immigration policy. Often dubbed the ‘immigration nation’, Canada has enjoyed a long period of relatively high levels of immigration accompanied by strong public support. In recent years, however, the integrity of the system and its outcomes have come under increasing

scrutiny, placing immigration policy at the forefront of policy discussions and debates.

The federal government, through Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), forms the backbone of Canada’s immigration system by setting national targets, granting permanent residency, managing the Express Entry system, and funding settlement services, among other responsibilities. Provinces and territories also play a major role, using provincial nominee programs to nominate candidates based on regional needs and to support language training and credential recognition. As provincial nominee programs have grown in size and now account for a substantial share of economic immigration, they represent a critical component of the immigration policy conversation.

After nearly two decades of operation, the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP) is at an inflection point. While it has delivered stronger economic outcomes than other provincial nominee programs, it faces persistent challenges. The program’s objectives are broad and lack rigorous metrics and evaluation frameworks to assess its effectiveness. Moreover, OINP applicants’ earnings have lagged top performing economic streams and have lost ground relative to others. The program’s selection mix is not well aligned with the province’s long-term needs, often prioritizing labour shortages over addressing structural gaps. Its appeal for prospective immigrants is further undermined by policy unpredictability and lengthy processing times.



Six Recommendations to Modernize the OINP

In light of these challenges, Ontario's recently proposed redesign of the OINP provides an opportunity for meaningful reform. In its redesign of the program, we recommend the province commit to the following:

1 REDEFINE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The OINP currently has too many broadly defined objectives. Some may not be best addressed through immigration policy, and some may conflict with other stated objectives. The program should establish new objectives that shift the program's focus toward improving Ontario's long-term economic competitiveness. This means **reorienting the program toward high-skilled immigration streams**. Any occupation focus areas should be grounded in strong evidence of structural, specific, and high value labour market needs, such as nurses and physicians in the health care sector or nuclear engineers, rather than short-term economic fluctuations.

2 TRACK OUTCOMES

The absence of objective metrics has made it difficult to assess whether the program is meeting

its stated goals. The **OINP must track and report economic outcomes on an annual basis** to assess performance, including earnings and stream-specific metrics that best reflect the objectives of each stream. This will enable rigorous assessment of whether the streams are meeting their goals and inform timely recalibration.

3 RAISE THE TALENT BAR

Earning outcomes for PNP applicants in Ontario lag behind those in the Canadian Experience Class federal program and have lost their advantage relative to the Federal Skilled Worker Program. This is partly due to differences in the human capital profile of applicants. Going forward, the **program must refine the provincial selection criteria to place greater emphasis on human capital factors**, including pre-admission earnings and higher language proficiency requirements.



4 INTRODUCE NEW HIGH-SKILLED TALENT STREAMS

The OINP can be redesigned to address notable gaps in the existing immigration system for high-skilled talent. Skilled executives and exceptional talent, in particular, can be significant catalysts for economic growth, but are currently disadvantaged in the current point-based system due to age related criteria. **The province should move quickly to introduce the recently proposed immigration streams for exceptional talent, entrepreneurship, health care, as well as a stream for experienced managers and executives.**

5 IMPROVE PREDICTABILITY AND SPEED

To be an effective public policy tool for attracting talent, the OINP has to be more reliable and predictable for potential applicants. Lengthy processing times and discretionary powers granted to return applications add significant strain and uncertainty on businesses and applicants.

The OINP must adopt program practices to **improve predictability and speed, including early communications of program priorities, a regular cadence of draws, and explicit service standards for processing times.** The province should also consider phasing out recent changes granting the program broad discretion to return applications.

6 UPGRADE ONTARIO'S NEWCOMER SUPPORT SYSTEM

Immigrants in Ontario continue to face lagging economic outcomes due to challenges including language proficiency, lack of Canadian work experience, and credential recognition. To address these challenges, immigration supports and services provided or supported by the province must be held to a high standard to ensure that they are enabling immigrants to establish themselves and secure employment that reflects their abilities. The province must evaluate the existing suite of wrap-around services and supports to assess their effectiveness, identify gaps, and **refine programs to support the integration of new immigrants into the economy.**

Attracting and retaining top talent in Ontario requires a coherent, multi-faceted policy environment—one that combines tax competitiveness, housing affordability, competitive compensation, and clear pathways for career growth. Immigration policy does not operate in isolation within this ecosystem but should be a critical enabler of Ontario's broader growth strategy and a key source of competitive advantage in the global talent marketplace. As the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program approaches its 20th anniversary in 2027, now is the right moment to re-examine its objectives and design to ensure it is aligned with today's economic realities and the province's long-term talent needs.



Background and History

Canadian Immigration Landscape

There are several streams for individuals from abroad to immigrate to Canada. Permanent residency (PR) status – the legal status on the path to Canadian citizenship – is primarily offered through three main categories: economic class, family class, and refugee and protected persons class. Out of the 380,000 permanent residents Canada aims to welcome in 2026, 63% are expected to be through the economic class, 22% through family, 13% through refugees and protected persons, and another 2% through humanitarian and compassionate and other categories.¹ Each category serves a distinct purpose, with the economic class specifically designed to select immigrants based on their potential contribution to the Canadian economy.

Another major category in the federal government's immigration plans is Temporary Residents. Accounting for another 385,000 arrivals into Canada in 2026, this group includes temporary workers coming through the International Mobility Program, the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, as well as international students.²

Since 2023, the federal government has faced growing criticism over record-high inflows of immigration and temporary residents into Canada. Economists, policy experts, and other commentators have raised concerns that the combination of rapid population growth and low levels of investment has strained housing supply and affordability, the health care system, and other essential services, contributing to a decline in living standards. In 2024, Canada welcomed a record 483,000 new permanent immigrants, up from 260,000 in 2014.³ Temporary residents, including students and foreign workers, also saw dramatic growth, doubling from 1.4 million in Q2 of 2022 to 2.8 million in Q2 of 2024.⁴

In 2024, Canada welcomed a record 483,000 new permanent immigrants.

Table 1: Overview of Immigration Categories

TEMPORARY RESIDENTS			
CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	2025 LEVELS	2026 LEVELS
Workers	Foreign nationals authorized to work in Canada	367,750	230,000
<i>International Mobility Program</i>	<i>Allows companies to hire temporary foreign workers without submitting a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA)</i>	<i>285,750</i>	<i>170,000</i>
<i>Temporary Foreign Workers</i>	<i>Allows companies to hire temporary foreign workers to fill labour shortages but requires an LMIA to demonstrate need</i>	<i>82,000</i>	<i>60,000</i>
Students	International students authorized to study in Canada	305,900	155,000
Total Temporary Residents (2025/2026 plans)		673,650	385,000
PERMANENT RESIDENTS			
CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	2025 LEVELS	2026 LEVELS
Economic	Immigrants selected for their skills, work experience, and ability to contribute to Canada's economy	232,150	239,800
Family	Immigrants sponsored by close relatives in Canada, primarily spouses, partners, children, parents, and grandparents.	94,500	84,000
Refugees and Protected Persons	Individuals resettled from abroad or recognized in Canada as needing protection due to persecution, conflict, or human rights violations.	58,350	49,300
Total Humanitarian & Compassionate and Other	Individuals granted permanent residence on humanitarian and compassionate grounds or through public policy measures outside the main refugee program.	10,000	6,900
Total Permanent Residents (2025/2026 plans)		395,000	380,000

Source: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) 2025-2027 Immigration Levels Plan; 2026-2028 Immigration Levels Plan.

In response, the federal government acted to curtail both permanent immigration and temporary resident levels. IRCC reduced permanent resident targets for 2025 from 500,000, as initially planned, to 395,000⁵, and the latest Immigration Levels Plan sets a target of 380,000 annually for the next three years.⁶ Additional limits were introduced for temporary residents to ensure that they make up no more than 5% of Canada’s population by the end of 2027. To this end, IRCC reduced the number of student permit applications it would process by 35% in 2024 and by a further 10% in 2025.⁷ However, actual applications have fallen short of these caps as demand for studying in Canada has fallen since the policy changes were announced. As a result, Canada experienced its largest population decline on record in the third quarter of 2025, driven primarily by a reduction in non-permanent residents, including international students.⁸

PERMANENT RESIDENT TARGETS

2025 | INITIAL

500,000

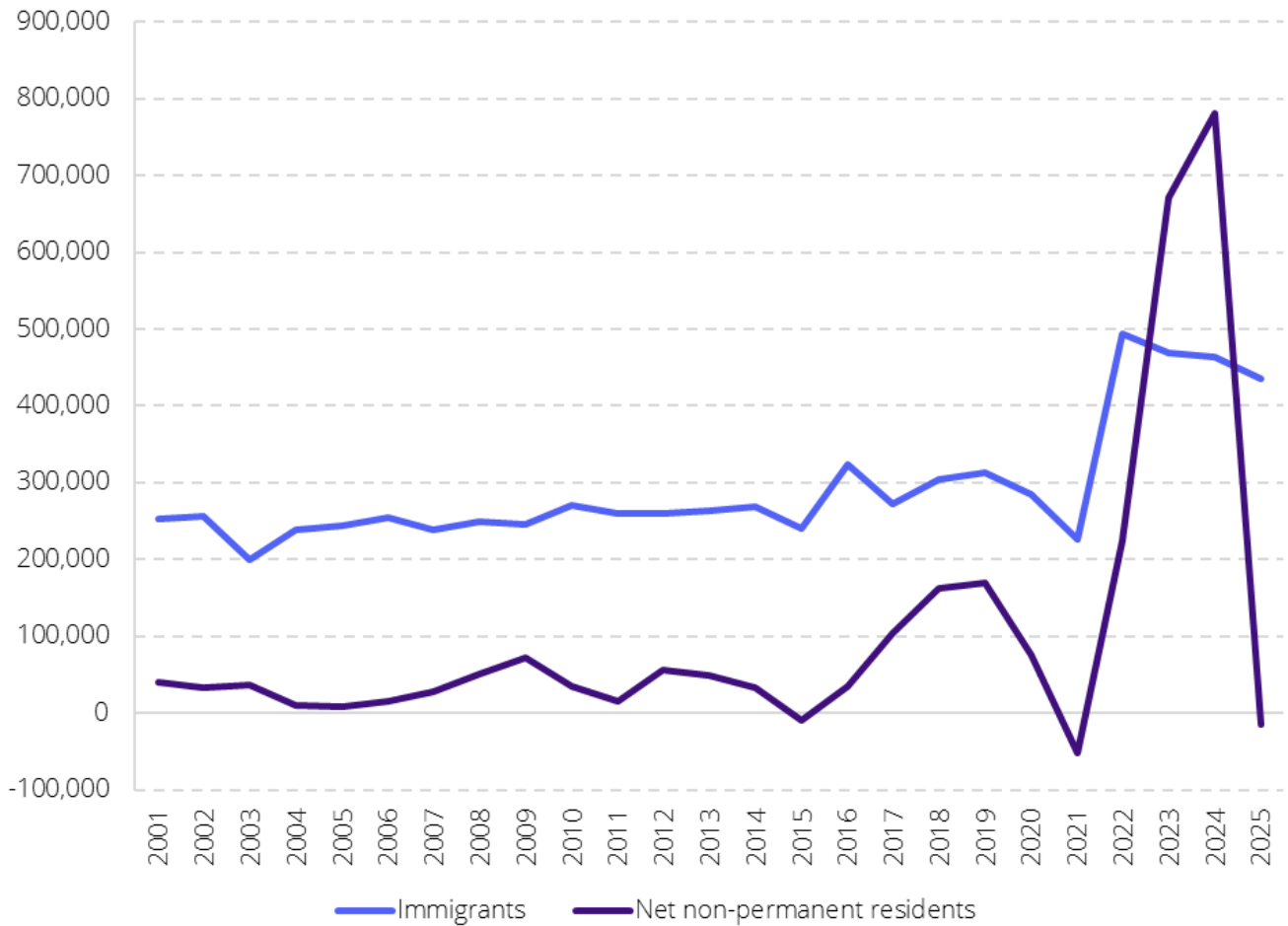
2025 | REVISED

395,000

2026

380,000

Figure 1: Annual Growth, Immigrants and Non-permanent Residents, Canada, 2001 - 2025



Note: Estimates are based on changes seen from July 1 in the previous year to June 30 for the year reported. The number of immigrants is final up to 2023/2024 and preliminary for 2024/2025. A non-permanent resident refers to a person from another country with a usual place of residence in Canada and who has a work or study permit or who has claimed refugee status (asylum claimant, protected person or member of related groups).

Source: Statistics Canada; Table 17-10-0008-01.

History of Provincial Nominee Programs in Canada

Although immigration policy is jointly governed by the federal and provincial governments, provinces did not play a significant role until the 1970s.⁹ Quebec took the lead in 1971, with the first of four immigration agreements with the federal government.¹⁰ Under the final accord, signed in 1991, Quebec obtained the authority to select all economic immigrants to the province.¹¹ Other provinces and territories followed, establishing arrangements to 1) distribute immigrants beyond major cities (including Toronto), and 2) address local labour market needs, often targeting short-term or lower-skilled occupations.¹² Manitoba was next, establishing its immigration agreement and implementing its Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) in 1998.

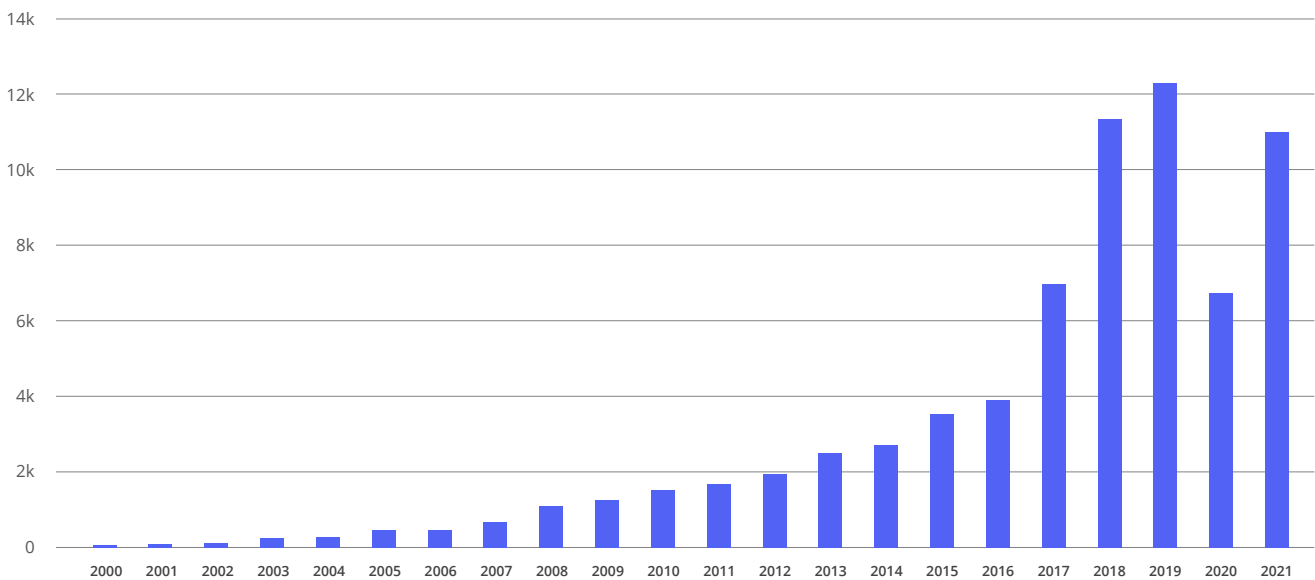
From 1998 onward, each province and territory signed its own agreement with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (now IRCC), introducing PNPs for economic immigrants.¹³ This meant that, within the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, each province designed its own programs, including dedicated streams and selection criteria.¹⁴

Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program History

Known since 2015 as the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program, Ontario’s immigration program dates back to 2005. That year, Ontario was the last province to sign a PNP agreement, with the program officially launching in 2007.¹⁵ Even before the introduction of PNPs, Ontario was a popular destination for new immigrants; in 2002, 60% of all new immigrants settled in the province.¹⁶ By 2025, this share had declined to 44%, partly due to the growth of PNPs in other provinces.

The number of immigrants coming to Ontario through the OINP (or other PNP programs) rose steadily, with the growth accelerating after 2016 as the federal government increased PNP allocations to Ontario. This growth coincided with the introduction of the federal Express Entry system in 2015 and Ontario’s ability to nominate candidates through these streams. During this period, the program also expanded across several non-Express Entry streams.

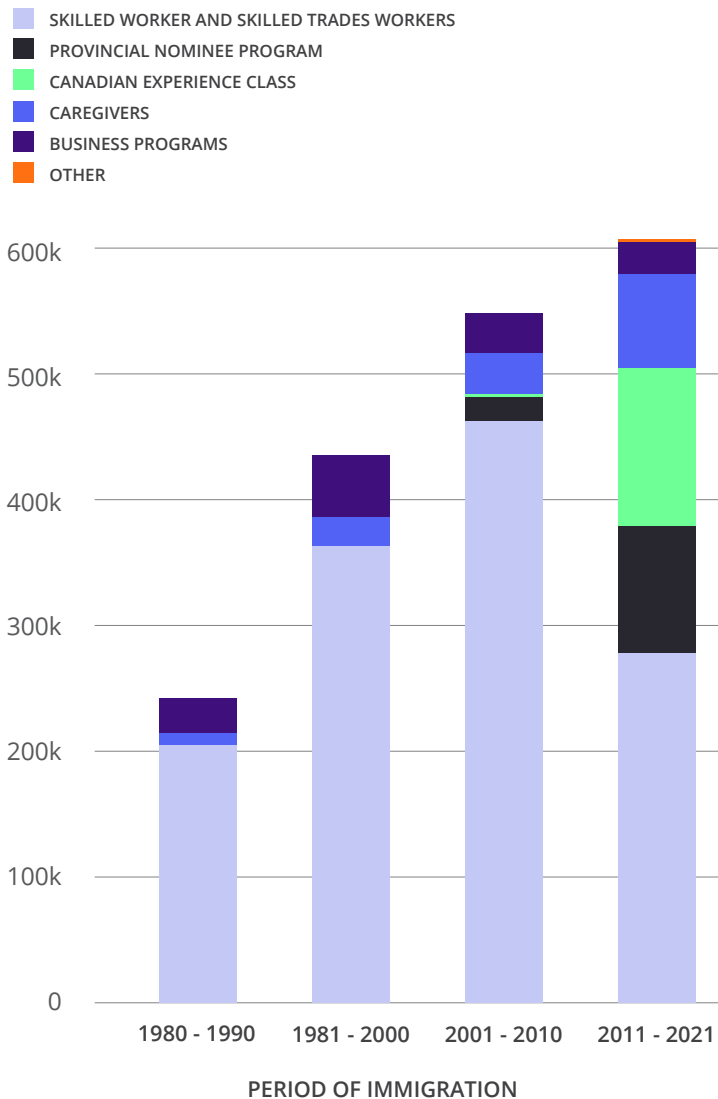
Figure 2: New Provincial Nominee Program Immigrants to Ontario, 2000 – 2021



Source: Statistics Canada, Longitudinal Immigration Database.

Despite its growth over the past decade, the OINP represents a relatively small share of Ontario’s total immigration. In 2023, OINP nominees accounted for only 21% of Ontario’s new economic immigrants; estimates for other provinces ranged from 42% in British Columbia to 93% for Saskatchewan.¹⁷ This partly reflects Ontario’s longstanding appeal as an immigrant destination through a variety of immigration streams, including, increasingly, the Canadian Experience Class. In 2023, Ontario still received 27% of all provincial nominee allocations nationwide.¹⁸ In other provinces, PNPs play a more prominent role in attracting skilled workers and supporting population growth.

Figure 3: Economic Immigrants in Ontario by Admission Category, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada, Table 98-10-0318-01; TRBOT analysis.





OINP Objectives and Streams

The OINP’s current objective is to identify and nominate individuals for permanent residence who possess the skills and experience needed to support Ontario’s labour market and economy. In a recent evaluation, the office of the Auditor General of Ontario identified six objectives of the program:

- Select economic immigrants who will establish themselves in Ontario;
- Help address Ontario’s labour market needs;
- Improve Ontario employers’ competitiveness by helping them to access international talent;
- Support business attraction and job-creation in the province;
- Help spread the benefits of immigration to all parts of the province; and
- Support francophone immigration to Ontario.

Prior to the proposed redesign announced in December 2025, the OINP offered eight streams, available through either the Expression of Interest system or the Express Entry system. These include (Appendix for additional details):

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) STREAMS¹⁹

The OINP can nominate workers, including those on existing work or study permits, to apply for permanent residency based on an assessment of their ability to meet Ontario’s labour or economic

needs. Eligible applicants include individuals with active job offers as well as recent masters or PhDs from eligible Ontario universities.

Employer Job offers

- Foreign Worker stream
- International Student stream
- In-Demand Skills stream

Post-graduate degree

- Masters Graduate stream
- PhD Graduate stream

EXPRESS ENTRY STREAMS

The OINP can use federal Express Entry immigration streams to nominate individuals to apply for permanent residency. Nominees receive 600 points towards their Express Entry application, essentially guaranteeing an invitation to apply for a PR. The streams include:

- Human Capital Priorities Stream
- Skilled Trades Stream
- French-Speaking Skilled Worker Stream

Note: The OINP previously offered an entrepreneur stream which was formally closed in November 2024. This stream aimed to attract individuals looking to start a new business or buy an existing business in Ontario.²⁰

IRCC sets an annual nomination limit for Ontario, and the province selects candidates through either the provincial Expression of Interest (EOI) system or the federal Express Entry system.

HOW IT WORKS

The Canada-Ontario Immigrant Agreement outlines the responsibilities of both the provincial and federal governments in managing the OINP. The program is administered by Ontario's Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD), which works collaboratively with IRCC to bring in new immigrants. IRCC sets an annual nomination limit for Ontario, and the province selects candidates through either the provincial Expression of Interest (EOI) system or the federal Express Entry system. Once nominated, the candidate can apply for PR with IRCC, which assesses admissibility and ultimately issues the visa.

Intake Process

Expression of Interest (EOI): Applicants register with Ontario's EOI system where the province scores candidates using an established OINP rubric (job offer, education, geographic location, etc.) and invites top-ranked candidates to apply.

Express Entry: Applicants first create a profile in the federal Express Entry pool. Ontario reviews this pool and issues 'notifications of interest' to candidates who meet provincial criteria. The selected candidates are then invited to submit an application to the OINP.

OINP Draws

Throughout the year, OINP conducts 'draws' to invite candidates from either the EOI system or federal Express Entry pool to apply for nomination. Draws can be (a) *general*, where top-ranked candidates are invited based on their total score, or (b) *targeted*, where invitations are restricted to candidates with specific attributes such as priority occupations, regional locations, or French-language proficiency. Targeted draws often have lower score requirements than general draws. The frequency and focus of these draws vary year-over-year, depending on the province's remaining allocation and evolving labour market priorities.



Growth in OINP nominations since 2019

Total OINP nominations grew more than 150%, from approximately 8,500 in 2019 to 21,500 in 2024. While most streams at least doubled in size, growth was concentrated in Masters Graduates, Express Entry Human Capital Priorities, and Express Entry Skilled Trades, each adding at least 3,000 nominations from 2019 to 2024. Between 2019 and 2024, nominations were evenly split between Expression of Interest and Express Entry streams. The Human Capital Priorities, Masters Graduate, and Skilled Trades streams accounted for the largest share, together representing 65% of OINP allocations since 2019.

OINP allocations were temporarily affected by the federal government’s reduction to immigration targets. In 2025, Ontario’s provincial nomination allocation was halved to 10,750. All new draws came from the Employer Job Offer streams, with the Express Entry streams not being used at all in 2025. Total PNP allocations across Canada fell from 110,000 in 2024 to 55,000 in 2025, but are set to rebound to 91,500 for 2026, signaling renewed emphasis on provincial nominations.²¹ OINP’s allocation is expected to return to near previous levels.

While most streams at least doubled in size, growth was concentrated in Masters Graduates, Express Entry Human Capital Priorities, and Express Entry Skilled Trades.

Table 2: Number of OINP Nominees by Stream and Category, 2019 - 2024

STREAM/CATEGORY	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	TOTAL (2019 - 2024)	% OF TOTAL (2019 - 2024)	5-YEAR ABSOLUTE CHANGE (2019 - 2024)
Expression of Interest										
Masters Graduate	805	405	1,202	1,480	5,407	3,810		13,109	18%	3,005
Employer Job Offer: Foreign Worker	1,195	1,558	1,705	885	1,122	2,731		9,196	13%	1,536
Employer Job Offer: International Student	1,347	1,732	1,240	771	856	3,283		9,229	13%	1,936
Employer Job Offer: In Demand Skills	60	608	540	159	443	408		2,218	3%	348
PhD Graduate	234	251	212	303	422	446		1,868	3%	212
Entrepreneur	0	1	1	3	3	91		99	0%	91
Expression of Interest Subtotal	4,641	4,555	4,900	3,601	8,253	10,769		36,719	50%	6,128
Express Entry										
Express Entry Human Capital Priorities	2,710	1,996	3,513	2,370	4,985	6,330		21,904	30%	3,620
Express Entry Skilled Trades	639	1,106	177	3,196	3,017	4,101		12,236	17%	3,462
Express Entry French Speaking Skilled Worker	401	397	410	583	251	300		2,342	3%	-101
Express Entry Subtotal	3,750	3,499	4,100	6,149	8,253	10,731		36,482	50%	6,981
Grand Total (Actual Nominations)	8,391	8,054	9,000	9,750	16,506	21,500		73,201	100%	13,109
Ontario Nomination Allocation Limit (Alloc.)	7,350	8,050	9,000	9,750	16,500	21,500	10,750	72,150	-	14,150

Source: Adapted based on data from the Auditor General with additional information for 2024 allocations.

Table 3: OINP’s Policy Objective Targets and Results, 2022 – 2024

POLICY OBJECTIVE	2022			2023			2024
	TARGET (% of allocation)	ACTUAL (%)	RESULT	TARGET (% of allocation)	ACTUAL (%)	RESULT	TARGET (% of allocation)
Francophone	5	6.6	✓	7	1.8	✗	3
Technology	20	23	✓	20	33	✓	15
Skilled Trades	20 or above	40	✓	30 or above	28	✗	30 or above
Health Care	10	n/a*	n/a	10	12	✓	10
Regional Immigration**	50	51	✓	50	48	✗	50

* The Ministry did not report on its policy objective targets for health care in 2022. ** Percentage of employer job offer nominations outside of the GTA.

Source: Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, *Performance Audit – Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program*.

Results and Outcomes

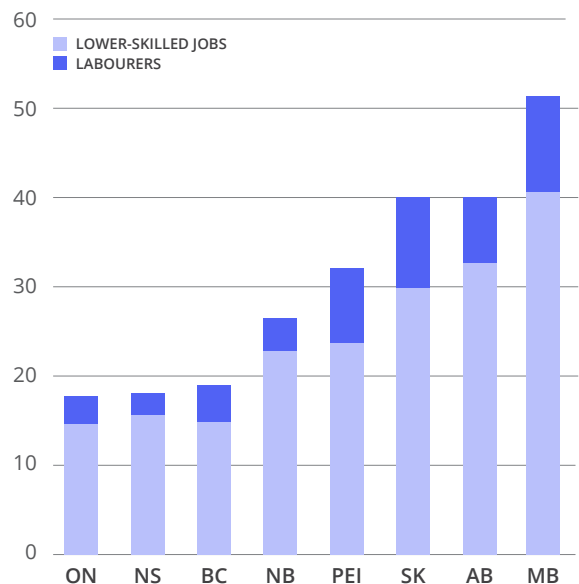
The OINP, like other provincial nominee programs, was designed to give Ontario input into the mix of workers that immigrate to the province, aligning arrivals to local labour market needs. The program has grown in size and established itself as a popular pathway for immigration to Ontario. Since 2019, the OINP has consistently hit its nomination limit, despite nearly tripling in size. This signals, particularly for the job offer streams, that they are meeting specific workforce demands in the province.

The program has allowed Ontario to use immigration to advance a range of policy objectives, including sector specific workforce needs, supporting francophone immigration, and promoting the regional distribution of immigrants beyond the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) (*Table 3*). With respect to regional immigration, the share of nominees with job offers outside the GTA has steadily increased, from 32% in 2019 to 48% in 2023.²²

Historically, earnings for OINP principal applicants (main applicants for permanent residence versus spouse or dependents) have been higher than for PNP applicants in other provinces. Among the cohort of PNP applicants arriving between 2010 and 2014, Ontario reported average earnings of \$70,600 five to six years after immigration, slightly above Alberta and BC and significantly higher than other provinces and territories.²³ Selection characteristics (such as level of education, pre-landing Canadian work experience, etc.) explain some of these differences. Indeed, data from the 2021 census suggests that Ontario had the smallest share of PNP principal applicants in lower-skilled occupations (typically requiring a high school diploma or job-specific training) and labourer positions (having no educational requirements and usually providing on-the-job training) occupations.²⁴

With respect to regional immigration, the share of nominees with job offers outside the GTA has steadily increased, from 32% in 2019 to 48% in 2023.

Figure 4: Skill Level Distribution of PNP Principal Applicants, immigrants admitted 1 to 5 years before the 2021 Census



Source: Picot, Stick, and Hou, *The Occupational Outcomes of Provincial Nominees*; Statistics Canada 2021 Census of Population; TRBOT Analysis.

In December 2025, the province proposed extensive changes to the OINP, aiming to simplify and consolidate eight streams into four streams.

Recent Changes and Proposals

In 2025, the province introduced a series of changes and proposed reforms to the OINP, including:

OPERATIONAL REFORMS

New Employer Portal

A new digital platform that shifts the Employer Job Offers streams from an applicant-led to an employer-led process, replacing the paper-based system. Under the new system, employers are required to initiate the application process by submitting their business information and job details in the portal before applicants can register an Expression of Interest.²⁵

Authority to Return Applications

The OINP now has broad discretion to return applications before a nomination is issued with a refund of the associated fees. The province also expanded the list of considerations that could be used to return applications (including nomination allocations, availability or cost of housing, compliance, or enforcement concerns). The stated objective of this change is to enable the program to meet current needs of the labour market.²⁶

In-Person Interview Authorization

The OINP may now require in-person interviews for both employers and foreign national applicants to address credibility and authenticity concerns.

Suspension of the Express Entry Skilled Trades Stream

In November 2025, the OINP suspended the Express Entry Skilled Trades Stream and returned all active applications due to vulnerability to systemic misrepresentation and/or fraud.²⁷ An estimated 2,600 applications were returned and the announcement sparked two days of protests outside of Queen's Park.²⁸

PROPOSED OINP REDESIGN

In December 2025, the province proposed extensive changes to the OINP, aiming to simplify and consolidate eight streams into four streams, implemented in two phases.²⁹

Phase 1

Consolidation of Employer Job Offer Streams

The first phase would eliminate the two existing post-graduate streams and replace the three Employer Job Offer streams (see the Appendix for additional details) with a singular stream. The stream would operate under two distinct tracks: one for TEER 0-3 occupations (skilled roles requiring advanced education, training, or experience) and another for TEER 4-5 occupations (lower-skilled roles requiring minimal formal education or experience).

TEER 0-3 track:

The skilled worker track will prioritize highly skilled candidates already in Canada. Applicants will be required to meet the following criteria:

- Job offer wage must meet or exceed the occupation's minimum wage (with exceptions for graduates from eligible Ontario institutions)
- Sufficient work experience (one of the following)
 - a) At least six months of Ontario work experience in the same occupation with the employer issuing the job offer, or
 - b) At least two years of experience in the job offer occupation within the last 5 years, or
 - c) Valid professional license and good standing.
- Post-secondary credential or at least six months of Ontario work experience in the job offer occupation with the job offer employer.

TEER 4-5 track:

The TEER 4-5 track will prioritize occupations facing labour shortages. Applicants will be required to meet the following criteria:

- Minimum language requirement
- At least nine months of work experience in the job offer occupation with the employer issuing the job offer
- Additional consideration for construction workers, where union support can be used to validate work experience in place of a job offer
- Additional consideration for applicants that meet specific employer needs based on region, occupation, or other criteria

Phase 2

Introduction of New Streams

The province also proposes replacing ineffective Express Entry streams with three new streams:

Priority Health Care Stream

Pathway for highly-skilled health care professionals designed to address the demand in regulated health care occupations across Ontario. Proposed features include:

- No job offer requirement for applicants registered with a professional regulatory body
- Potential eligibility for recent graduates who are close to securing their license or registration with a professional body

Entrepreneur Stream

Pathway for entrepreneurs targeted to individuals looking to invest in Ontario and create new jobs and economic growth. The stream is aimed at individuals that have either:

- Started and continue to operate a business in Ontario; or
- Purchased and operate a business in Ontario

Exceptional Talent Stream

A pathway for individuals with unique and demonstrated achievements in their field. Eligible fields may include academia, innovation, science, and technology, among other potential considerations. Candidate assessment would involve:

- Clear demonstration of talent/expertise through awards, international recognitions, publications, or other accomplishments
- Qualitative assessment of the candidate's potential economic, social, or cultural impact for Ontario





Challenges and Gaps

Despite its moderate success, OINP — like Canada's broader immigration system — faces increased scrutiny. An assessment of the program today makes it clear that reform is needed. A reimagined program would better position the program and its nominees to help improve the living standards of Ontarians and strengthen its contribution to Ontario's economic growth.

However, meaningful reform of the OINP requires a reassessment of the program as it exists today, beginning with fundamental questions about its core objectives and how success should be measured. There is growing concern that Canada's immigration programs are not well-positioned to improve living standards for Canadians. The OINP has an opportunity to address these challenges and to reinvent itself as a program that contributes more effectively to Ontario's economic competitiveness.

Identifying and Measuring the Right Objectives

Currently, it is unclear whether the OINP is successfully meeting its objectives. The program's six stated objectives are not assessed through specific metrics by MLITSD. As noted in the Auditor General of Ontario's report, the ministry evaluates only the allocation of nominations relative to the target amount and share for each policy objective.

A deeper assessment of whether these objectives are being met based on the profile of nominees over time is largely absent.

OINP Objectives³⁰

- Select economic immigrants who will establish themselves in Ontario
- Help address Ontario's labour market needs
- Improve Ontario employers' competitiveness by helping them to access international talent
- Support business attraction and job-creation in the province
- Help spread the benefits of immigration to all parts of the province
- Support francophone immigration to Ontario

More fundamentally, there is a broader question of whether the right type and number of objectives are being targeted. The current framework is overloaded with broadly defined objectives, making it difficult to assess performance or determine whether intended outcomes are being achieved. In general, the more objectives a program has, the harder it is to meet any single one effectively.

Even if each OINP stream has a specific objective, the program may not be effective in meeting them. For example, the policy goal of regionalization (promoting migration and economic growth outside of major

Since 2010, earnings for PNP immigrants one to two years after admission have been approximately \$15,000 lower than for CEC immigrants (in 2020 dollars).



cities) has had limited success. Of immigrants who received their PR in 2016, 74% were living in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) as of 2021. Retention rates in the GTA in 2021 were 83%, compared with under 70% in other economic regions, and below 50% in some cases. Without additional policy tools and initiatives, it is difficult to promote or enforce settlement outside of the GTA when individuals are free to choose where to live based on careers or personal preference.

Similarly, there is no clear evidence that the program effectively addresses short-term labour market gaps. Some objectives may even conflict with others. For instance, efforts to spread immigration to different parts of the province could mean selecting fewer immigrants who are most likely to succeed and contribute to broader economic growth, while prioritizing short-term labour market needs may come at the expense of selecting higher-skilled candidates.

Stakeholders interviewed about the program also noted considerable overlap between the applicants targeted through the OINP and through federal immigration streams. A recurring theme in these discussions was the need for a clearer and more distinct division of roles between levels of government, along with greater clarity of what each program is intended to achieve.

Given these considerations, a reformed OINP requires a rethink of the program's objectives

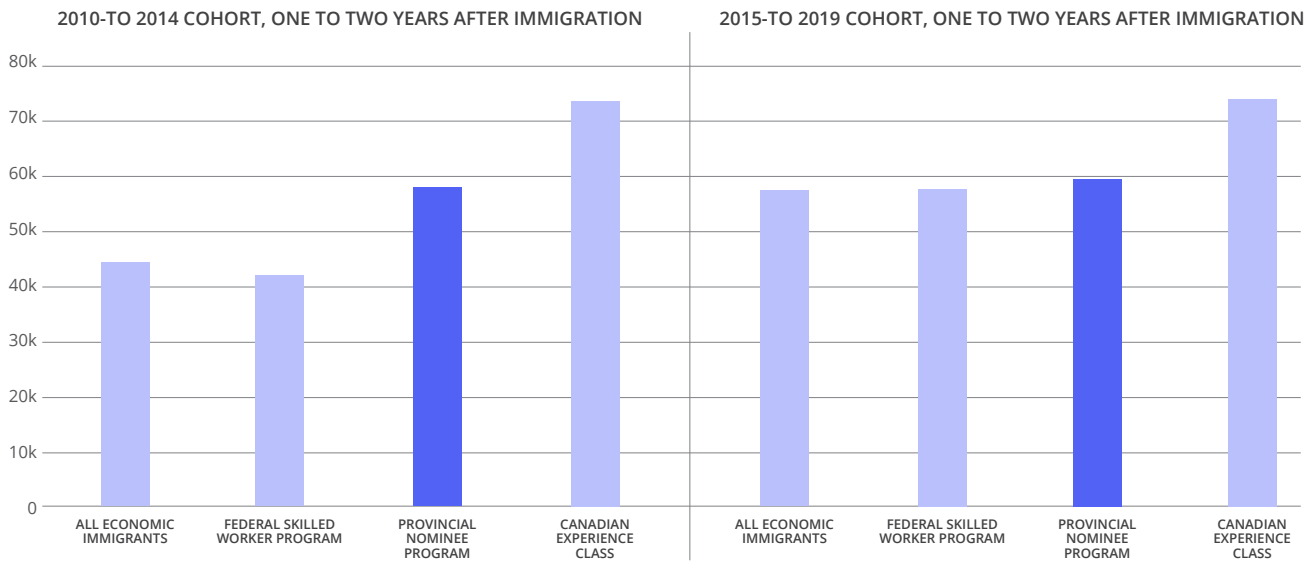
grounded in its potential effectiveness, the supports needed to achieve them, and a clearer distinction between the roles of the federal immigration streams and the OINP.

Unpacking OINP's Lagging Economic Outcomes

Data on post admission earnings indicate that PNP principal applicants whose initial province of residence is Ontario (a group likely dominated by OINP nominees) have weaker earnings outcomes than immigrants entering through the federal Canadian Experience Class (CEC) (**Figure 5**). Since 2010, earnings for PNP immigrants one to two years after admission have been approximately \$15,000 lower than for CEC immigrants (in 2020 dollars). This gap persists despite PNP applicants accounting for a smaller share of Ontario's economic immigrants than the CEC (17% vs 21% for those that immigrated between 2011 and 2021³¹).

For the 2010-2015 cohort, the earnings gap widened further five to six years after admission. While the 2010-to-2014 cohort initially enjoyed an earnings premium relative to the Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP), this advantage has since disappeared. Among the 2015-to-2019 cohort, PNP principal applicants had earnings similar to the wider pool of economic immigrants arriving in Ontario.

Figure 5: Average Annual Earnings for Principal Applicants, Economic Class of Immigration, Initial Residence in Ontario, One to Two Years after Immigration, 2020 dollars



Source: Picot, Crossman, and Hou, *Provincial Nominee Program: Recent trends and provincial differences in earnings outcomes*; Statistics Canada 2021 Census of Population; TRBOT Analysis.

Differences in the outcomes across immigration streams can be partly explained by socioeconomic factors such as source region, age, pre-landing Canadian work and study experience, and province-specific economic conditions. Another important set of factors relates to differences in the human capital profile of immigrants, that is the quality of talent coming through these streams.

Immigrants admitted through the FSWP and CEC are selected via the Express Entry pool, which ranks candidates using their Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) score and their relative standing within the pool. Only a portion of OINP candidates come through the Express Entry system, while the EOI candidates are assessed on a separate OINP scoring grid.

The CRS is a point-based system designed to select candidates with strong expected earnings and economic contributions, including factors such as age, level of education, language proficiency, and

work experience. As a result, the FSWP and CEC streams tend, on average, to select candidates with higher human capital levels than the OINP. Indeed, even among Express Entry-linked immigrants, CRS scores for those arriving through the FSWP and CEC streams between 2015 and 2019 were higher than those of PNP immigrants across Canada.³²

In 2024, the lowest-ranked candidate invited through the CEC had a score of at least 500.³³ By contrast, Ontario’s 2024 OINP Express Entry draws frequently selected candidates with CRS scores below 500.³⁴

Discussions with immigration experts also suggest that applicants who don’t believe they can meet the criteria and standards of the FSWP and CEC look to the PNP programs for PR opportunities. As noted earlier, the 600 points given to Express Entry PNP nominees effectively guarantee a PR invitation, enabling the admission of candidates who would otherwise be less competitive based on CRS human capital factors alone.

Recent research suggests that targeting specific short-term labour needs may not be an effective means to address workforce needs as newcomers create new demands and ‘shortages’ in other areas of the economy.

Targeting the Right Mix of Applicants

OINP immigrants, though to a lesser degree than other provinces, are more likely to be employed in lower-skilled or labourer occupations than CEC immigrants across Canada.³⁵ Among recent OINP entrants (immigrants admitted one to five years before 2021), 14.6% were employed in lower-skilled occupations and 3% were working as labourers.

An additional 22.3% of Ontario’s principal applicants were in technical and skilled trades – or level B – occupations. While many of these roles meet critical needs for employers, some are at the lower end of the wage distribution. Food service supervisors (1,369), transport truck drivers (775), bakers (614), administrative assistants (594), and cooks (506) — occupations which pay lower than the median wage in Ontario — rank among the top 25 occupations represented among nominations through OINP between 2019 and 2023.³⁶

In 2024, Ontario expanded eligibility for its in-demand skills stream by adding 34 new occupations for roles outside of the GTA, all of which require only a high-school degree or equivalent.³⁷ This stream, focused mostly on roles deemed in-demand by the province, targets a variety of TEER category 4 and 5 occupations. Despite it being a minor component of the program (the stream had 408 out of a total of 21,500 nominations in 2024) its focus on TEER 4 and 5 occupations indicates a willingness to use immigration to help fill lower-wage, lower-skilled vacancies.

The temptation to address short-term needs was the impetus behind the federal government’s category-based selection process, introduced in

2023 to target specific labour market gaps, often focused on lower-skilled occupations.³⁸ However, recent research suggests that targeting specific short-term labour needs may not be an effective means to address workforce needs as newcomers create new demands and ‘shortages’ in other areas of the economy.³⁹ This suggests that plugging holes in the economy should not be the core focus for immigration policy. Moreover, lower-skilled workers are also much more vulnerable to economic downturns, putting their economic well-being at risk.⁴⁰ It is also unclear whether or not government is able to accurately predict time-limited shortages and if immigration — given the timelines required for selection, admission, and credential recognition— can meet these needs in a timely fashion.

The Auditor General’s report on OINP recommended that nominations should better align with job vacancies in Ontario. While some vacancies do reflect long-term structural hiring challenges, such as with health care, many occupations with high vacancies at the time of the analysis were lower-skilled, low-wage roles that are more susceptible to fluctuating demand. For example, vacancies for cooks and transport truck drivers (two high vacancy occupations identified in the Auditor’s report) declined substantially between Q4 2023 and Q1 2025, by 23% and 41%, respectively.⁴¹

The same survey also indicates that many of these roles require no minimum level of education or at most a high school degree (or equivalent). This raises a critical question: are these the right types of occupations for immigration policy to target in order to meet the province’s economic needs?



Addressing Long-Term and Structural Gaps

The critical question then is which profile of workers the OINP should target and how the program should be designed to reflect that focus. Experts and practitioners have observed considerable overlap in the type of immigrants brought in through the OINP and the federal government streams. Existing gaps and shortfalls in the system provide an avenue for OINP to address notable challenges within the broader ecosystem while meeting its provincial economic objectives.

Facing its own economic competitiveness challenges, Ontario's immigration system must help fuel the province's growth prospects. A competitive economy would place an emphasis on investment in technologies in lieu of sustaining low-wage occupations, while investing in people and businesses that would drive growth. In its December 2025 proposed redesign of the OINP, Ontario has introduced promising new immigration streams that could meet this broader objective.

Four specific focus areas for the OINP going forward should include:

EXCEPTIONAL TALENT STREAM

Ontario should aim to attract the best and brightest to live and work in the province. The newly proposed 'exceptional talent' stream is well positioned to accomplish exactly that. Currently, the profile of exceptional talent doesn't always fit the structure and criteria set forth in the existing immigration system. The O-1 Visa in the US provides a useful model: it targets individuals with extraordinary abilities in areas such as the sciences, arts, education, business, or athletics.⁴² It is characterized by its focus on elite talent across a broad swath of fields and offers fast tracked premium processing within 15 business days. Too often, talent of this caliber falls through the cracks in the existing system. Ontario's 'exceptional talent' stream should build on this agile approach by offering a direct pathway to permanent residency, enabling Ontario to attract and retain elite global talent.

Ontario should aim to attract the best and brightest to live and work in the province. The newly proposed 'exceptional talent' stream is well positioned to accomplish exactly that.

A dedicated, provincially controlled health care stream would enable Ontario to build its workforce pipeline – targeting professions and regions with the greatest demand and coordinating with regulatory bodies so internationally trained professionals move through credential recognition efficiently and can transition into practice without delay.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP STREAM

Lagging business sector productivity and the need for home-grown scale-up and anchor companies remain persistent challenges for Canada and Ontario. Real GDP per person in Ontario has seen effectively no growth since 2018 and investment per worker remains stagnant.⁴³ A more vibrant startup ecosystem and greater opportunities for entrepreneurs is a must-have for Ontario. However, current paths for immigration provide limited support to attracting entrepreneurial talent. Ontario's OINP entrepreneurship stream was eliminated in 2024 after facing significant challenges, including lengthy processing times and stringent requirements. Nominations often took anywhere from two to four years, with 18 to 20 months devoted solely for due diligence.⁴⁴ The Auditor General's 2024 annual report noted that only eight nominations were made at the time, out of 91 identified in OINP's 2024 updates.⁴⁵ The revival of a dedicated OINP entrepreneurship stream is a positive step, providing a provincial pathway to attract entrepreneurs and investments into Ontario.

The Start-Up Visa (SUV) program, once the federal government's primary business immigration pathway, suffered a similar fate. Plagued by a growing backlog and persistent concerns about program integrity, it was suspended at the end of 2025, with a replacement program expected later in 2026. With an average processing time of 52 months, the program became effectively unusable for its intended applicants.

HEALTH CARE STREAM

Ontario's health care system faces deep, structural labour shortages. Demand for nurses, primary-care

physicians, and other health care professions will continue to rise as the population ages. A dedicated, provincially controlled health care stream would enable Ontario to build its workforce pipeline – targeting professions and regions with the greatest demand and coordinating with regulatory bodies so internationally trained professionals move through credential recognition efficiently and can transition into practice without delay.

EXPERIENCED MANAGERS AND EXECUTIVES STREAM

Mid- and senior-level talent is a missing component of the proposed OINP changes. Immigration can be a key avenue for this segment of talent. Canadian graduates are the envy of the world, but the country often lacks experienced middle- and upper-management professionals needed to scale businesses. For example, Canadian firms face structural shortages of local marketing and sales executives and frequently need to look abroad to attract talent for these roles.⁴⁶ The Toronto Region Board of Trade's research on the life sciences sector in Ontario revealed a real need for experienced c-suite executives and repeat entrepreneurs that can guide high-potential firms through key milestones.⁴⁷

However, the age factor in the Express Entry scoring system disadvantages many qualified candidates. For example, a 40-year-old single applicant receives only 50 out of a maximum of 110 points, compared with 77 points for a 35-year-old. For experienced professionals, the time required to build deep, in-demand expertise becomes a liability under the current scoring system, effectively penalizing human capital accumulation rather than rewarding it.

Many newcomers also experience overqualification or underemployment, often being in roles below their skills levels. Addressing the form and mix of immigration coming through OINP is insufficient; it is equally critical to provide the supports necessary for newcomers to succeed.



Prioritizing Predictability and Speed

When picking the areas of focus, predictability is also key. The program's priorities are not always known in advance, making it difficult for potential immigration candidates to navigate. When evaluating their chances for immigration and whether to apply and through what stream, immigrants are often guided by previous draws to determine how they will rank amongst the pool of candidates. Recent changes by the Ontario government have reduced predictability by granting the province broad discretion to return applications based on their assessed needs, allocation limits, and internal program considerations. This uncertainty makes it more difficult for applicants to confidently pursue specific streams, ultimately undermining the program's long-term effectiveness. Prior to the pandemic, the Express Entry system was lauded for its predictable and steady draws. While recent changes have impacted its reputation, the OINP would benefit from emulating its previous standards within its own structure.

Addressing Broader Challenges to Improve Immigrant Outcomes

Immigrants in Ontario continue to face significant challenges that impact their economic outcomes. Immigrant wages, unemployment levels, and participation in the labour market continue to lag non-immigrants.⁴⁸ Many newcomers also experience overqualification or underemployment, often being in roles below their skills levels. Addressing the form and mix of immigration coming through OINP is insufficient; it is equally critical to provide the supports necessary for newcomers to succeed. This includes improving employer recognition of foreign credentials, expediting credential accreditation for regulated occupations, enabling recognition of credentials across provinces, offering high quality language training, supporting early Canadian experience in immigrants' chosen field of work, and supporting the adoption of skills-based hiring by employers.⁴⁹ Given the strong connection between language fluency and outcomes, federal government cuts to language training puts new immigrants at further risk of falling behind.



Recommendations to Revamp the OINP

1. Redefine goals and objectives

Currently, the OINP lacks a well-defined and measurable set of objectives to drive its focus and effectiveness. The province should establish new goals and objectives that reposition the OINP to improving Ontario's long-term economic competitiveness and standard of living. The program should be reoriented to prioritize high-skilled immigration, with individual streams designed around specific objectives and accompanied by metrics to measure success. In practice, this would mean prioritizing the TEER 0-3 track of the proposed Employer Job Offer Stream and the new streams targeting highly skilled professionals.

While middle- and lower-skilled occupations can be considered, immigration policy may not be the most effective tool to address these needs sustainably. Wherever possible, these gaps should be first addressed through domestic interventions, including upskilling and reskilling, changes to hiring practices (particularly an emphasis on skills-based hiring), improved credential recognition (including across provinces), and encouraging technology adoption. When middle-skilled occupations are prioritized within the OINP, selection should be grounded in evidence of structural labour market needs (such as in health care or other regulated occupations) rather than driven by short-term fluctuations. Instead of using individual streams or draws to target specific occupations, bonus points can be awarded in areas identified by timely labour market information as experiencing persistent or worsening shortages – for example, nuclear engineers and reactor technicians needed for planned SMR and refurbishment projects and specialized technicians in the clean energy supply chain.

Federal government role:

- Set overarching national immigration objectives and ensure the OINP (and other PNP programs) are complementary to the federal mandate.
- Provide stable and predictable multi-year PNP allocations to enable provinces to plan and operate their immigration streams effectively and without disruption.
- Lead on system-wide interventions that complement immigration policy, including improved credential recognition across provinces, investments in upskilling and reskilling programs, and incentivizing technology adoption.

2. Track outcomes

Track and report outcomes for new immigrants annually, assessing economic outcomes such as earnings to evaluate the program’s contribution to Ontario’s long-term economic prosperity. In addition, the province should also track outcomes that best reflect the goals and objectives of the individual streams. The entrepreneurship program, for example, could track indicators such as business survival rate, business revenue, jobs created, and capital invested (including follow-on investment). The province should also establish mechanisms to recalibrate programs or sunset streams that consistently underperform against these benchmarks.

At the same time, immigration cannot be viewed as a solitary tool to achieve policy objectives. System outcomes must be viewed as a shared responsibility across other ministries, such as the Ministry of Economic Development Job Creation and Trade and the Ministry of Health (in the case of regulated health professions), and other levels of government.

The province should also establish mechanisms to recalibrate programs or sunset streams that consistently underperform against these benchmarks.

Federal government role:

- Leverage existing federal data assets, including the Census and the Longitudinal Immigration Database, to support more regular and policy-relevant reporting on immigrant economic outcomes.
- Use an objective assessment of outcomes as a signal of performance and support the expansion of the program if successful.

3. Raise the talent bar

Ensure that the provincial selection criteria of candidates reflect a far greater emphasis on human capital factors and requirements. While these may vary for the newly proposed streams (potentially including some qualitative factors and de-emphasizing age), the criteria should reflect factors that best position potential candidates for settling and thriving in Ontario and contributing to Ontario’s long-term economic growth. The streamlined Employer Job Offer stream, in particular, could align more closely with core CRS factors used to score Express Entry candidates, while also incorporating additional predictors of long-term immigrant outcomes, as recommended by C.D. Howe Institute:

- Pre-admission earnings
- Higher language requirements
- Field of study

Federal government role:

- Potentially updating the CRS across federal streams to reflect pre-admission earnings, higher language benchmarks, field of study, and elevated CRS cut-offs.
- Work with provincial counterparts to better understand which admission factors are good predictors of long-term economic outcomes.



4. Introduce new high-skilled talent streams

OINP’s newly proposed high-skilled talent streams are well positioned to address existing gaps in the system and should be implemented. The province should also consider introducing a new stream for experienced managers and executives.

EXCEPTIONAL TALENT STREAM

Canada currently lacks a dedicated immigration pathway for individuals with extraordinary talent whose profiles fall outside traditional point-based systems or employer-driven models. High-impact individuals who generate outsized contributions to local economies (including athletes, performers, founders, and world-class researchers) may not score highly on conventional metrics like education, age, or work experience. An Exceptional Talent Stream would target individuals with demonstrated exceptional abilities across a variety of fields such as technology, sciences, entertainment, arts and culture, and sports.

Considerations

- Traditional scoring criteria may not be appropriate for this stream and should be deemphasized in favour of evidence of exceptional ability
- The stream should allow applicants to demonstrate ability across multiple dimensions to capture talent from a diverse range of fields
- Verification should leverage endorsements

from recognized peer groups, expert bodies or other credible institutions with expertise in the applicant’s domain

- Agility is essential for attracting high-caliber talent. The stream could adopt a temporary-to-permanent structure, allowing individuals to enter quickly on a temporary visa and transition to permanent residency after meeting defined criteria.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP STREAM

Although the previous OINP entrepreneurship stream had its flaws, Ontario’s need for entrepreneurial talent has never been higher. Reintroducing a revamped and redesigned entrepreneurship stream could play a critical role in helping Ontario meet its economic growth and competitiveness objectives. The new stream should address the design-related challenges that plagued the previous OINP entrepreneurship stream and the federal Start-Up program.

Considerations

- Traditional scoring criteria may not be appropriate for this stream and should be deemphasized in favour of criteria that maximize chances for entrepreneurial success (previous entrepreneurial experience) and investment commitments
- Lower the threshold for net worth and investment and eliminate other high entry barriers that previously deterred applicants
- Provide ecosystem systems support (including business advisory and regulatory support) to entrepreneurs to help facilitate growth and success



HEALTH CARE STREAM

Ontario should introduce a dedicated, provincially administered immigration stream to build workforce capacity across the province’s health care system. This stream would address deep, structural labour market challenges for health care professionals that are only expected to intensify over time. Given its jurisdiction over health care delivery and established relationships with regulatory bodies, the province is uniquely positioned to align intake with system needs and accelerate pathways to licensure and practice. Through a targeted health care stream, Ontario can help deploy internationally trained medical professionals and improve access to care across the province.

Considerations

- To maintain policy coherence, the province should reassess policies that work against the success of this stream, including a new policy that restricts many new internationally trained physicians from the first round of resident matching without having completed two years of high school in Ontario.
- Excessive costs and lengthy processing times for professional licensing continue to impede the successful integration of internationally trained medical professionals into Ontario’s health care system. Focused coordination and collaborative efforts across the ecosystem are required to ensure that new immigrants arriving through this stream can transition into practice without unnecessary delay.

EXPERIENCED MANAGERS & EXECUTIVES STREAM

In addition to the three newly proposed streams, the OINP should consider introducing a dedicated stream for middle- and upper-level management. Experienced managers and c-suite executives are critical for helping scale companies and are often difficult to source from Canada’s relatively small market. Despite bringing years of experience and deep expertise, candidates are also often penalized for their age through the existing immigration scoring system.

Considerations

- Prioritize demonstrated managerial and leadership experience
- Assess the potential for this stream through dedicated consultations with Ontario-based businesses and detailed labour market data.

Federal government role

- Coordinate with Ontario to ensure alignment across federal and provincial immigration streams and avoid duplication.
- Support the measurement and reporting of economic outcomes for individual streams using federal government data assets such as the census and the Longitudinal Immigration Database.



5. Improve predictability and speed

Improve the predictability of OINP draws by communicating program priorities well in advance and establishing a regular cadence of draws. The province should also adopt explicit service standards for processing times and invest in the appropriate training and technological tools (including AI applications) to help meet those standards. Recent changes granting the province broad discretion to return applications should be phased out, as they undermine the program's transparency, fairness, and predictability. Instead, significant program changes should be made occasionally, based on data-driven assessments of the program.

Federal government role:

- Provide stable and predictable multi-year PNP allocations to enable provinces to improve predictability and speed.
- Collaborate with Ontario on program adjustments and ensure that federal and provincial changes are coordinated and predictable across the system.

6. Upgrade Ontario's Newcomer Support System

The success of the immigration system depends not only on the selection process, but also on immigrants' ability to establish themselves and secure employment that reflects their abilities. To best position new immigrants for success, the province should reassess the suite of additional wrap around services and supports it provides or funds. This includes an evaluation of existing programs, identification of potential gaps, and establishment of metrics to help assess the impact of these programs. These include support towards:

- High-quality language training
- Improved credential recognition by employers
- Adoption of skills-based hiring approaches
- Expediting credential accreditation for regulated occupations
- Mentorship and building local professional networks
- Supporting early Canadian experience

Federal government role:

- Fund and expand settlement services delivered through federally funded service provider organizations (SPOs), in coordination with provincial supports.
- Lead national coordination on credential recognition by working with provincial regulators, professional bodies, and employers to improve timelines and harmonizing standards across provinces.

OINP Immigration Streams

1. EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) STREAMS

Employer Job offers

- Foreign Worker stream
 - Target: Workers with job offers in skilled occupations.
 - Requirements: Full-time and permanent job offer in a TEER 0,1,2, or 3 category (see note below for details) occupation. The role must occur primarily in Ontario and pay at least the median wage level for that occupation in the region the worker is employed.
- International Student stream:
 - Target: Recent international student graduates with job offers in skilled occupations.
 - Requirements: Full-time and permanent job offer in a TEER 0,1,2, or 3 category occupation. The role must occur primarily in Ontario and pay at least the low wage level for that occupation in the region the worker is employed. The individual must be a graduate of an eligible Canadian educational institution, with either a university degree, college, certificate, or diploma.
- In-Demand Skills stream:
 - Target: Foreign workers with job offers in specific in-demand occupations (agriculture, construction, etc.).
 - Requirements: Full-time and permanent job offer in specific TEER category 4 or 5 occupation deemed critical by Ontario. The role must occur primarily in Ontario and pay at least the median wage level for that occupation in the region the worker is employed. The individual must have at least 9 months of cumulative full-time work experience in the occupation of interest in Ontario.

Post-graduate degree

- Master's Graduate stream
 - Target: International graduates with a masters degree from an eligible Ontario university.
 - Requirements: The individual must have lived in Ontario for at least one year in the past two years before applying. Applicants do not require a job offer to apply.
- PhD Graduate stream
 - Target: International graduates with a PhD degree from an eligible Ontario university.
 - Requirements: The individual must have lived in Ontario for at least one year in the past two years before applying. Applicants do not require a job offer to apply.

2. EXPRESS ENTRY STREAMS

The OINP can leverage federal express entry immigration streams to nominate individuals to apply for permanent residency. Nominees received 600 points towards their express entry application, essentially guaranteeing them an invitation to apply for a PR.

Human Capital Priorities Stream

- Target: Individuals that qualify under either the Federal Skilled Worker Program OR the Canadian Experience Class. The OINP 'draws' candidates from these two pools, based on the assessed needs of the regional economy (ex: tech occupations such as data scientists or software engineers or health occupations such as optometrists or nurse practitioners)
- Requirements: Applicants are required to meet the individual stream requirements for work experience and have a Canadian bachelor's, master's or PhD degree or international equivalent.

Skilled Trades Stream

- Target: Foreign workers with demonstrated experience in key skilled trades occupations.
- Requirements: Applicants are required to have at least one year of cumulative paid full-time work experience in eligible occupations.

French-Speaking Skilled Worker Stream

- Target: Foreign workers with demonstrably high capabilities in both English and French and qualification under either the Federal Skilled Worker Program OR the Canadian Experience Class.
- Requirements: Applicants are required to meet the individual stream requirements for work experience and have a Canadian bachelor's, master's or PhD degree or international equivalent.

Note: Statistics Canada uses Training, Education, Experience and Responsibility (TEER) codes to classify occupations.

TEER Code	Description
TEER 0	Management occupations
TEER 1	Usually requires a university degree
TEER 2	Requires a college diploma or apprenticeship training of 2+ years, or supervisory occupations
TEER 3	Requires a college diploma or apprenticeship training of <2 years, or more than 6 months on-the-job training
TEER 4	Requires a high school diploma or several weeks of on-the-job training
TEER 5	Short work demonstration and no formal education

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