



Citizenship and
Immigration Canada

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Immigration Canada



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***Building a Fast, Flexible and
Responsive Immigration System:
The Role of Foreign Credential
Recognition***



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Canada 



Outline

- **The Canadian demographic context and labour market barriers for immigrants**
- **Foreign credential recognition in Canada – roles and responsibilities**
- ***The Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications***
- **The Foreign Credentials Referral Office – information products, tools and initiatives**
- **The Path Forward**





The Canadian Labour Market Needs Skilled Workers

- Immigration inflow is a crucial source of population growth and is a critical source of skilled labour in Canada.
- Current projections estimate that within the next 10 years, immigration will contribute to **all** net force labour growth in Canada
- It is critical to **eliminate barriers to labour market integration** for immigrants, including foreign credential recognition (FCR)



Attracting and retaining the best talent to address future and existing labour market shortages is critical to Canada's economic success.

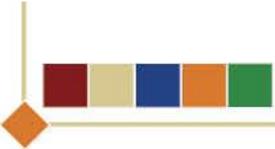




Modernization of Canada's Immigration System

- Economic Action Plan 2012 announced that CIC will be transforming its suite of economic programs to create a “just in time” system that recruits people with the right skills to meet Canada’s labour market needs, fast tracks their immigration, and gets them working in a period of months
- Over the coming months, CIC will be changing how skilled workers are selected; strengthening existing immigration programs; introducing a new stream for skilled trades people; and, continuing to make progress on foreign credential recognition





Enhancing Canada's economic immigration programs

Supporting Labour Market Demand

Refinements to Selection Criteria and Programming

- ✓ **Modernizing the Federal Skilled Worker (FSW) selection points grid** to focus on the highest quality human capital by prioritizing younger immigrants with better language skills and more Canadian experience
- ✓ **Introducing a Mandatory Educational Credential Assessment** that would require FSW applicants to have their foreign educational credentials assessed and verified as part of the FSW selection process
- ✓ **Introducing a Federal Skilled Trades Program** that would facilitate the immigration of skilled tradespersons through selection criteria that is more geared towards these industries





Other enhancements to economic immigration programs

Supporting Labour Market Demand *Strengthening Existing Programming*

- ✓ **Modifying the Canadian Experience Class (CEC)** to reduce the work experience requirement so that eligible temporary workers with in-demand skills can more quickly become permanent residents
- ✓ **Strengthening the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)** through the introduction of mandatory language testing for semi- and low-skilled professions to help facilitate their success in the Canadian labour market
- ✓ **Better Aligning the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP)** with labour market demand and ensuring that businesses look to the domestic labour force before accessing the TFWP





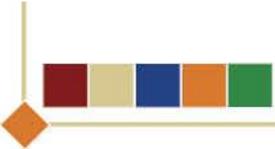
The Expression of Interest Model – A Key Component of Modernization

- CIC is developing an **Expression of Interest** (EOI) approach for Canada's immigration system which is informed by the New Zealand and Australian EOI experiences, and in consultation with provinces, territories and employers

EOI is a two-stage process that manages applications by pre-screening candidates and enables the active selection of applicants whose experience best aligns with Canada's economic and immigration priorities

- **The development and implementation of an EOI system could improve control, efficiency and flexibility of Canada's immigration system**
 - Controlling and reducing the number of applications Canada is required to process would prevent the build-up of application backlogs
 - An exclusively online system, with a rules-based ranking mechanism, would increase the degree of automation involved in the immigration program





Educational Credential Assessment

- In early 2013, **Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP) Principal Applicants** will be required to submit an educational credential assessment with their application that authenticates their international credentials and determines their equivalency to Canadian educational standards
- FSWP Principal Applicants will be directed towards assessment organizations that have been designated by CIC to assess and authenticate international credentials
- Under the education factor of the FSWP points grid, CIC will then award points according to how an applicant's foreign educational credential equates to a **completed** credential in Canada.
- Mandatory **educational credential assessment will help manage potential immigrants' expectations** about their educational credential(s) value in Canada, allowing them to make informed choices about immigration and Canadian career paths
- FSWP applicants seeking employment in regulated occupations will still need to complete registration and licensure processes in their intended occupation, which may include: language testing; internships; Canadian work experience; and, additional training and competency exams





Foreign Credential Recognition – Why is it an Issue?

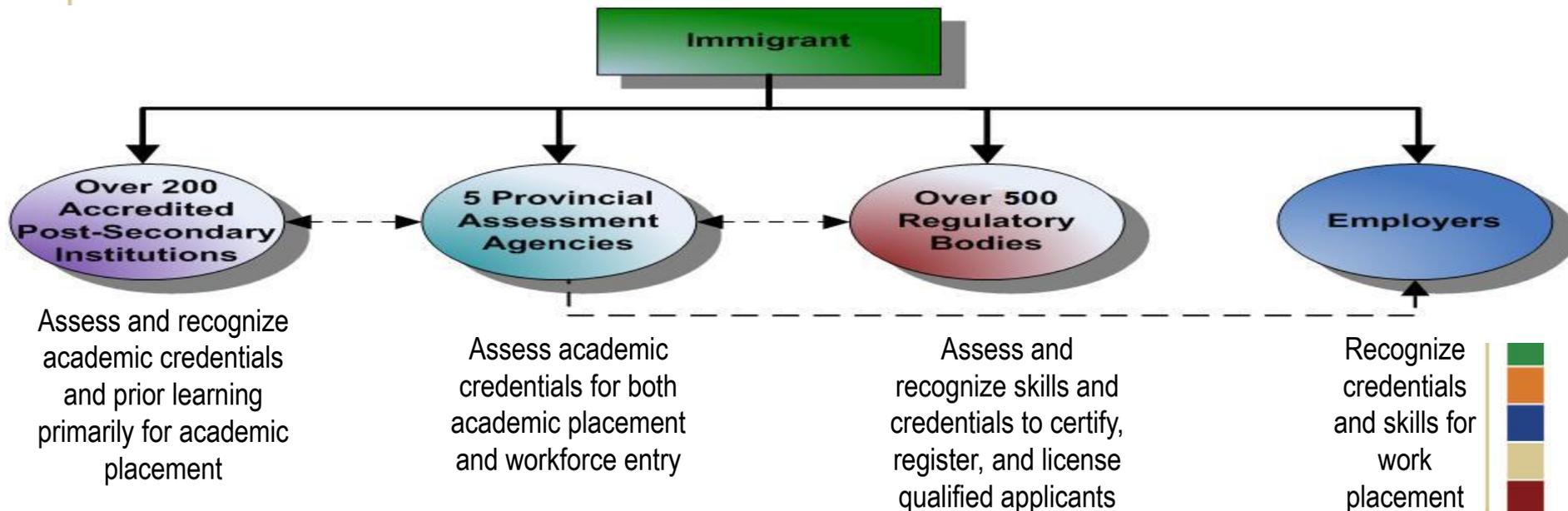
- **Immigrants face many challenges when trying to enter the labour market**
 - Discounted international credentials
 - Lack of Canadian work experience
 - Language proficiency
 - Lack of knowledge regarding Canadian society and culture
- Research shows: **one year of international experience is worth only one-third of Canadian experience**, and foreign education is worth about 70% of a Canadian credential

Foreign credential recognition is the process of verifying that education and job experience obtained in another country is equivalent to the standards established for Canadian professionals and tradespersons.



Who is Responsible for Foreign Credential Recognition?

- The provinces and territories are responsible for credential recognition for **regulated occupations**, which they have delegated to regulatory bodies
 - Nearly **500** professional regulatory authorities, five provincial credential assessment agencies and hundreds of educational institutions
 - **Employers** are responsible for non-regulated occupations and determine whether qualifications, training or experience are appropriate





The Federal Role

The Government of Canada provides strategic leadership to foster the development of common approaches to FCR through three federal departments

CIC

Foreign Credentials Referral Office

- Provides **information, path-finding and referral services** to internationally-trained individuals online, overseas and through Service Canada.

Client-Focused

HRSDC

Foreign Credential Recognition Program

- Supports initiatives that **improve assessment and recognition processes** for employment in Canada.

Systemic Change

Health Canada

Internationally Educated Health Professionals Initiative

- Supports programs that promote a **consistent integration of international health professionals** into the labour market.

Increased supply of health professionals



Supporting Streamlined Foreign Credential Recognition Processes

- The *Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment Recognition of Foreign Qualifications* is a public commitment by federal/provincial/territorial governments to improve FCR processes in 14 target occupations
- Regulatory bodies and stakeholders are meeting the Framework's commitment to timely service in the first eight target occupations; the remaining six target occupations will have similar processes in place by the end of 2012
- Federal, provincial and territorial are currently evaluating the impact of the Framework to gain a collective understanding of issues and challenges, to inform future investment and to identify the next set of target occupations, likely to focus on Skilled Trades

Target Occupations	
By December 31, 2010	By December 31, 2012
Architects	Dentists
Engineers	Engineering Technicians
Financial Auditors and Accountants	Licensed Practical Nurses
Medical Laboratory Technologists	Medical Radiation Technologists
Occupational Therapists	Physicians
Pharmacists	Teachers (K-12)
Physiotherapists	
Registered Nurses	



The Foreign Credentials Referral Office provides key information and supports

- Established in 2007, the Foreign Credentials Referral Office (FCRO) is mandated to actively guide, monitor and facilitate the implementation of FCR processes in Canada by:
 - Providing **information, path-finding and referral services** to internationally trained individuals in **Canada and overseas**;
 - Assisting prospective immigrants to **prepare for integration into the Canadian labour market**; and
 - Working closely with federal partners, provinces and territories, immigrant serving organizations, employers, regulatory bodies and other stakeholders to improve the **FCR processes in Canada and overseas** while respecting jurisdictions.

The FCRO also provides contribution funding to third parties to deliver key services and tools to ITIs overseas which include: *online self-assessment modules, mentoring initiatives and employer recruitment of ITIs*





Preparation and Pre-Arrival Supports – In-Person Services

- FCRO-funded overseas services are delivered by the **Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC)** through the **Canadian Immigrant Integration Program (CIIP)**.
 - Available to Federal Skilled Workers, Provincial Nominees, spouses and dependents in China, India, the Philippines and the United Kingdom with itinerant services available in up to 25 neighbouring countries
 - Offers group and individual counselling services, access to information and research resources and direct connections with organizations that can offer support in overseas and in Canada
 - Many CIIP graduates **successfully integrate** into the Canadian labour market. The CIIP pilot evaluation (November 2010) found that 60% of participants were employed in their field or related occupation. Of those working, 93% were doing so within the first six months of arrival





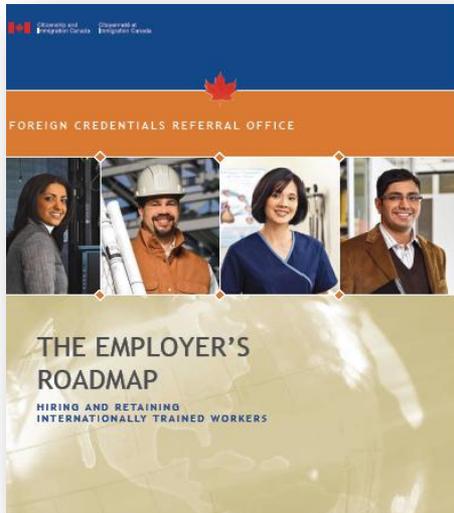
Employers play a key role in the integration of ITIs



- Employers are ultimately responsible for **recognizing and accepting** foreign qualifications
- CIC is working to **better understand employers' challenges**, their workforce planning, hiring and recruitment practices and how they intersect with the immigration system
- **Employer engagement** will help to ensure that Canada's immigration plans align with its current and projected labour market needs.



FCRO provides supports to employers and stakeholders



- **The Employers' Roadmap**
 - A step-by-step online guide for small to medium sized enterprises interested in hiring internationally trained individuals.
 - Provides information, tools and resources, for the successful recruitment, assessment and integration and retention of new Canadians.



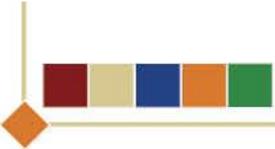
- **International Qualifications Network Website**
 - A collaborative new web site where employers, immigrant-serving organizations and regulatory bodies **exchange information** on innovative foreign credential assessment and recognition practices in Canada and abroad.
 - Organizations can capitalize on the expertise of others.



Supporting Workforce Participation

- **The Federal Internship for Newcomers Program (FINP)** provides newcomers with the opportunity to gain Canadian work experience within the federal government and improve integration into the Canadian labour market.
 - Newcomers gain valuable Canadian work experience through paid internships with 21 federal departments/agencies and select private sector partners
 - Since 2010, FINP has placed over 135 interns in scientific, administrative and policy positions
- **The Federal Public Service Mentoring Pilot** was launched in 2011 – linking public servants with newcomers in Ottawa, Toronto and Calgary to develop professional networks and gain insight into Canadian workplace culture
 - In its first year, 30 mentor matches were made; goal is to increase mentor pairings and participation from other government departments





The Path Forward for the FCRO

- Implement **educational credential assessment** for immigration selection purposes overseas to support faster labour market integration in Canada
- Continue implementation of the ***Pan-Canadian Framework*** and identify the next set of target occupations for 2013
- Create stronger linkages with the **employer community** to raise awareness of the benefits of hiring and retaining ITIs and develop supporting information products and tools to facilitate their integration into the Canadian workforce

The integration of ITIs into the Canadian labour market requires ongoing collaboration between all levels of government, regulatory bodies, employers and immigrant-serving organizations

