



Citizenship and
Immigration Canada

Citoyenneté et
Immigration Canada



Canada 

C&I-419-07-01

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Cat. no.: Ci51-99/2001

ISBN 0-662-65430-7

Available in alternate formats upon request.



Canada's immigration history is rich and diverse. Since Confederation, nearly 15 million people from around the world have emigrated to our country. These newcomers help shape the values and ideals of Canadian citizenship. They are a vital force in building and sustaining a stronger nation. Canada welcomes them.

BUILDING A STRONGER CANADA

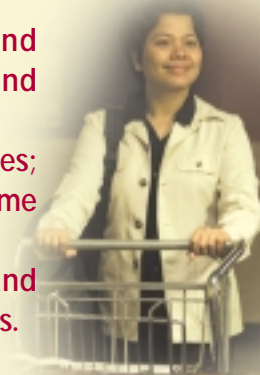
Since 1867, Canada's immigration programs have helped build a community of citizens respected throughout the world. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) was established in 1994 to link immigration services with citizenship registration, to promote the unique ideals all Canadians share and to help build a stronger Canada.

The Department

- admits immigrants, foreign students, visitors and temporary workers who enhance Canada's social and economic growth;
- resettles, protects and provides a safe haven for refugees;
- helps newcomers adapt to Canadian society and become Canadian citizens; and
- manages access to Canada to protect the security and health of Canadians and the integrity of Canadian laws.

OUR EMPLOYEES

Every day, CIC employees work with people from diverse cultures. They strive to serve them fairly, efficiently and with integrity. Our clients can expect impartial, unbiased and professional treatment, as well as clarity and accountability in decision making.



CITIZENSHIP

Canadians are a proud and privileged people who share common values and the ideals of Canadian citizenship. CIC promotes this awareness of Canadian citizenship and of its rights and responsibilities. It manages the application process and guides applicants through the steps to becoming Canadian citizens. CIC staff process citizenship applications, requests for proof of citizenship and searches of citizenship records.

A Community of Citizens

Each year, approximately 160,000 immigrants (about 85 percent of all immigrants who come to Canada) take an oath of citizenship at ceremonies across the country. The oath is a personal commitment to accept the responsibilities and privileges of Canadian citizenship.

The *Citizenship Act*

The *Citizenship Act* outlines the conditions for Canadian citizenship. They include at least three years of permanent residence in Canada, the absence of a criminal record, knowledge of Canada and of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and the ability to communicate in either English or French. Most children born in Canada and all those born abroad to a Canadian automatically receive Canadian citizenship.



IMMIGRATION

Immigration stimulates Canada's growth, prosperity and cultural diversity. It reunites families and offers protection to refugees. Immigration staff overseas and across Canada review applications and ensure that each new applicant meets various criteria for admission, including medical, criminal and security checks.

Planning Our Future

The Government of Canada, in consultation with the provinces, the territories and key stakeholders, establishes an annual range for the number of immigrants who will be admitted into Canada. In the past 10 years, Canada has welcomed, on average, 221,000 immigrants and refugees a year.

Canada benefits from the talents, experience and energy of immigrants, whether they are skilled workers, business people, refugees, relatives of Canadian citizens and residents, foreign students, temporary workers or others. All stimulate economic growth and enrich Canada's social and cultural life.

Workers Strengthen Our Economy

CIC recognizes the benefits of attracting highly skilled workers. Nearly 58 percent of Canada's immigrants are skilled workers and business immigrants who may fill shortages in our labour market or invest in our economy. The participation of all immigrants in the labour market contributes to Canada's economic growth.

CIC works to attract specialized temporary workers to Canada through programs for software development professionals and spouses of highly skilled workers. In 2000, CIC officers abroad and in Canada issued more than 200,000 employment authorizations to temporary workers and more than 132,000 immigrant visas to skilled workers and business people.





Bringing Families Together

Reuniting families is an important part of our work. Our immigration program allows Canadians to sponsor close family members, including spouses, fiancés, dependent children, parents and grandparents.

Helping Refugees

Canada is respected internationally for its humanitarian efforts. Our history is one of helping refugees and people in need of protection and assistance.

We resettle more than 7,300 government-assisted refugees annually. In addition, many Canadians volunteer to assist victims of persecution and violence through the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program. CIC also assists refugees who arrive in Canada unexpectedly.

The Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB), an independent, quasi-judicial tribunal, hears every claim and offers a fair and independent assessment. Every year, the IRB grants refugee status to at least 13,000 refugees, who may then apply for permanent residence.

Settling Newcomers

Newcomers face tremendous challenges when moving to a foreign land. CIC's settlement programs help newcomers integrate into Canadian society. We work with provincial governments, other organizations and volunteers to help immigrants and refugees adapt to life in their new communities. Our programs help them become productive members of Canadian society.

- **The Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program** funds organizations to provide services such as reception, orientation, interpretation, counselling and job search.



- **The Host Program** matches new arrivals with Canadian volunteers, who offer friendship and introduce them to services in their community.
- **The Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada Program** provides basic language instruction to adult immigrants to help them integrate successfully.

Welcoming Visitors

Canada welcomes nearly 49 million foreign travellers each year. These visitors explore our country, visit their families and participate in business and trade. They enrich Canada's economic, social and cultural life.

Most of Canada's guests require a passport for entry; others require a visitor visa. In 2000, CIC visa officers abroad issued approximately 570,000 visitor visas.



They Learn, We Learn

Each year, more than 100,000 foreign students arrive in Canada to attend our schools, colleges and universities. During their stay, foreign students promote international understanding and build important cultural and trade relations between Canada and the rest of the world. CIC gives priority to processing their applications quickly.

Managing Access to Canada



We must ensure a balance between the desire to welcome newcomers to Canada and the obligation to protect Canadian society. We must not allow criminals, terrorists and other inadmissible people to enter or stay in Canada.

CIC's immigration programs enforce this important principle by intercepting people with false travel documents, performing investigations, conducting hearings through the IRB, and detaining and removing people. Approximately 8,700 people are removed from Canada every year.

International Cooperation

Our issues are global. Our agenda is international. Whether we are talking about refugee movements, human smuggling or general migration issues, CIC works internationally to deliver programs that meet Canada's needs.

Employees

CIC's 4,760 employees are proud of their work and the services they offer in national, regional and local offices across Canada and abroad.

Working in a complex global environment, we serve diverse clients and focus on building and sustaining a stronger Canada.

Offices Abroad

Our visa officers work at locations around the world. Assisted by 255 Canada-based and 1,105 local employees at 88 Canadian embassies, high commissions and consulates, CIC staff

- process applications for immigration, refugee resettlement, visitor visas, student and temporary worker authorizations, and returning resident permits; and
- perform liaison and immigration control activities.



Offices in Canada

Within Canada, CIC processes applications through mail-in services at the following centralized case processing centres:

- Vegreville, Alberta, processes in-Canada applications for permanent residence and temporary visa extensions;
- Mississauga, Ontario, specializes in family sponsorships; and
- Sydney, Nova Scotia, processes citizenship applications.

For more complex cases, CIC has a network of regional and local offices that handle admissions at ports of entry, enforcement, settlement, citizenship and refugee sponsorship, as well as other operational activities.

Our staff at national headquarters are responsible for legislation, policy and program development, and management, research and corporate services.

Extending Our Partnerships

Partnerships are important in delivering our services. We work closely with other federal departments, provincial and territorial governments, municipalities, police, research and educational institutions, the private and voluntary sectors and international organizations.

Partnerships with Provinces

Most provinces have signed immigration agreements that give them control over various immigration and settlement services.

The responsibility for immigration matters is shared by the federal and provincial governments.

Agreements between the Government of Canada and several provinces clarify how the responsibilities are to be shared.



Information

For additional information on Citizenship and Immigration Canada, contact us.

Internet

www.cic.gc.ca

Telephone

If you are in Canada, contact the CIC Call Centre.

- In Montréal, Quebec
(514) 496-1010
- In Toronto, Ontario
(416) 973-4444
- In Vancouver, British Columbia
(604) 666-2171
- Elsewhere in Canada
1 (888) 242-2100
- TTY: 1 (888) 576-8502
(hours of service: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Eastern time)



If you are outside Canada, contact the Canadian embassy, high commission or consulate responsible for your region.

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