
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Attorney General
and Minister responsible for Multiculturalism

INCREASED FUNDING PROMOTES RACIAL UNDERSTANDING

VANCOUVER – Government will provide approximately \$1 million in federal funding provincewide for anti-racism and multicultural initiatives that support welcoming communities for newcomers, Attorney General and Minister responsible for Multiculturalism Wally Oppal announced today.

British Columbia welcomed 17 per cent of all new immigrants to Canada in 2005. The Province is committed to strategies that prevent incidents of racism and that encourage welcoming communities that appreciate the social and economic benefits of cultural diversity.

“Our government will continue to work to combat racism and promote diversity and cultural understanding and respect,” said Oppal. “The number of new immigrants to B.C. continues to grow, which in turn, presents ever-changing social and economic opportunities for British Columbia.”

The increase in budget is the result of a new partnership between the Ministry of Attorney General and Citizenship and Immigration Canada, aimed at achieving objectives outlined in Canada’s Action Plan Against Racism and the BC Anti-Racism and Multiculturalism Program (BCAMP). The initiative focuses on working with provincial partners and community organizations to foster a welcoming environment for newcomers to Canada.

The Province currently provides \$500,000 provincewide annually through BCAMP to support activities that prevent and eliminate racism by enhancing community understanding of multiculturalism and cultural diversity. For example, the ministry supports projects that increase public awareness of cross-cultural understanding, leading to the reduction of views, behaviours and practices that are racist and/or discriminatory. It also supports effective responses and actions by individuals, organizations and governments to combat racism and build safer communities. These steps help to ensure all citizens can fully and freely participate in the economic, social and political life of the province.

“Our ministry is committed to partnering with the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada to achieve these objectives through the BC Anti-Racism and Multicultural Program and other initiatives,” said Oppal.

The 2006 federal annual report to Parliament on immigration notes that in 2005 British Columbia replaced Quebec as the second most popular destination, after Ontario, for immigrants to Canada. B.C. received 44,700 immigrants in 2005, an increase of 7,712 immigrants from 2004.

1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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