

# Hiring Skilled New Immigrants:

## Tools for Prince George Employers

This resource kit contains information for local employers about hiring new immigrants. Its goal is to support you, improve our community and help our economy by better understanding other cultures. This kit supports other resources that are already available to employers about interviewing, hiring and working with new immigrants. The enclosed **"KNOW: Orientation, Retention, and Promotion: A Guide for Building Welcoming and Inclusive Workplaces for New Immigrant Workers"** document compiled by Surrey's DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society is an award-winning resource on the steps an employer can take to integrate and retain a new immigrant hire. These combined resources highlight the value of hiring immigrants and give you the tools for working towards the success of your company and the future of our society.

**The importance of hiring new immigrants** has been recognized by the provincial government through the BC Labour Outlook and BC Jobs Plan; the federal government through The Employer's Roadmap; the BC Human Resources Management Association through Hiring and Retaining New Immigrants: A Cultural Competence Toolkit; and countless employers across the country. ■



*"In Prince George and elsewhere in BC, immigrants will play an increasingly vital role in our economic future. Labour market forecasts show that one-third of job openings over the next decade will need to be filled by workers from outside British Columbia. Training and hiring new Canadians in communities across BC is an investment in our future prosperity and the quality of life throughout our Province."*

**Pat Bell,**

*Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation  
MLA Prince George – Mackenzie*



## IMMIGRANT & MULTICULTURAL SERVICES SOCIETY



This project is made possible through funding from the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia.

In partnership with:



**Approximately 78%** of job openings over the ten-year period from 2010 to 2020 are expected to require some post-secondary education and training or a university degree. Of recent immigrants, defined as those who arrived between 2001-2006, 51% have a degree, twice that of the Canadian born labour force.

**Did You Know?**

Source: Adapted from BC Labour Market Outlook 2011 and 2006 census



# Business Case for hiring **new immigrants:**

**Surveys into the business impact** of diversity found overwhelming agreement that a diverse workforce improves corporate culture, recruitment of new employees, and client relations. All of these factors have been correlated with reduced costs and improved profitability.

Source: Adapted from Hiring and Retaining Skilled Immigrants: A Cultural Competence Toolkit

**Canadian companies must respond** to worldwide demands and source international talent who have knowledge of global markets. As immigration to Canada increases, skilled immigrants also reflect the diversity of local markets – as more immigrants enter your local city, hiring new immigrants will help your business connect with that community.

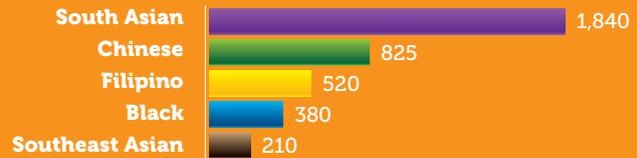
Source: www.HireImmigrants.ca

**In BC, the number of new labour market entrants** (those who leave the education system and enter the labour market for the first time) is expected to decline steadily throughout 2010 to 2020. This reflects the demographic shift to an older population. Over this outlook period, the demand for workers is expected to outgrow the available supply by 61,500 workers. In other words, from 2010 - 2020, growth in the supply of workers will not keep up with the growth in demand for workers. ■

Source: BC Labour Market Outlook 2011

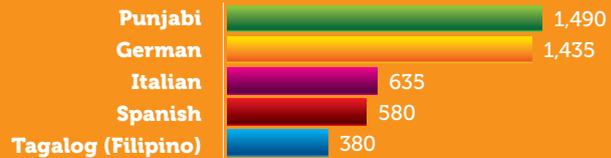
## Local Demographics

### Visible minority populations in Prince George:



Source: 2006 Census

### Top five non-official languages spoken in Prince George:



Source: 2006 Census

These statistics demonstrate a large invisible immigrant population in Prince George.

### Fastest growing minority populations in Prince George:

Source: IMSS



East Indian



Chinese



Filipino

*"Prince George's business community has always done what it takes to deliver the goods and services needed by their customers. We are moving into another growth phase in our economy but this one is different from any other. This wave coincides with an employment market that is shrinking due to baby boom retirements and competition from Alberta. We have to wake up and embrace new immigrants in order to grow with this new market. Prince George's quality of life is a well kept secret and it is time to boast about that so the world will choose our city to sustain our economy and lifestyle."*

**Garth Frizzell,**  
Business Owner,  
City Councillor



**Did You Know?**

*"BC's future prosperity and global competitiveness depends on how well we are able to integrate immigrants. Businesses that are positioned to attract and retain skilled immigrants will emerge as the front-runners in the changing economy."*

**Kelly Pollack,**  
Immigrant Employment  
Council of BC

*"Over the past decade, immigration has been a consistent contributor to population growth in the Prince George region, and immigrant attraction and retention will continue to be important for growth in the labour force and the economy. **New Canadians** are an asset to employers and to the economy overall; many immigrants come to Canada with a diverse set of skills and experience and an eagerness to embrace new opportunities, which brings a unique vibrancy to any workplace."*

**Tara Bogh,**  
Initiatives Prince George

*"Terry (originally from Dublin) is a great asset to our team bringing knowledge, laughter, and a work ethic bar none which is a good example for the summer students. Terry's world experience helps him connect with visitors and when they learn that he chooses to live here they feel welcomed and more at ease."*

**Sherry Powney,**  
Tourism Prince George



# Welcome PG

Welcoming and Inclusive Communities  
and Workplaces Program

1270 2nd Avenue • Prince George, BC • V2L 3B3 | Phone: 250.562.2900 or 1.877.562.2977 | [www.welcomepg.ca](http://www.welcomepg.ca)

Questions  
left unanswered?  
**Call Us.**

**More Resources** on the benefits of hiring **new Canadians**, including successful integration and culture, can be found at:

[www.getintheknow.ca/project-resources](http://www.getintheknow.ca/project-resources) | [www.hireimmigrants.ca](http://www.hireimmigrants.ca)  
[www.iecbc.ca](http://www.iecbc.ca) | [www.credentials.gc.ca/employers/roadmap/index.asp](http://www.credentials.gc.ca/employers/roadmap/index.asp)  
[www.centralalberta.ab.ca/imagedit/CAEP\\_EmToolbox\\_final\\_low.pdf](http://www.centralalberta.ab.ca/imagedit/CAEP_EmToolbox_final_low.pdf)

# Canadian Immigration: **Visas**

**Immigration laws are continually changing** as the government is taking steps to grow our economy while mitigating the risk of the upcoming labour shortage. In other words, immigration laws are changing to make it easier for employers to hire workers to meet the demand. Stay up to date on immigration changes at: [www.cic.gc.ca/english/departement/media/index.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/departement/media/index.asp)

Knowing some basic information on Canadian visas will help employers better understand who can be hired and who cannot. Below is a quick reference, for more detailed information refer to the Canadian Immigration website at [www.cic.gc.ca/english/index.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/index.asp). If you have a specific question about visas or immigration please contact the Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society of Prince George.

**A person must have a SIN card to legally work in Canada,** but not all SIN cards entitle a person to work (i.e. students). If you are unsure about a SIN number, ask to see a newcomer's papers which will tell you what kind of visa they have and if they can work. There is more information on SIN numbers here:  
[www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/sin/employers/expiry.shtml](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/sin/employers/expiry.shtml)

## **Permanent Residents:**

Permanent Residents are legally entitled to work in Canada and can enter through the Federal Skilled Worker Program, Provincial Nominee Program, or Family Sponsorship Program.

## **Federal Skilled Worker:**

Individuals can get a Skilled Worker Visa from the government if they meet certain education and experience requirements, allowing them to come to Canada and apply for work across varying fields. For more information go to  
[www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/skilled/index.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/skilled/index.asp)

## **Provincial Nominee Program:**

Most provinces have a Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) which helps employers to recruit qualified foreign workers to fill labour shortages and meet future demand needs. To apply under that program, the employer and the foreign worker must submit a joint application to the provincial government. Once nominated by the province, the worker will be allowed to apply for Permanent Resident status through Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) under the fast-tracked Provincial Nominee stream. For more information on BC PNP please go to  
[www.welcomebc.ca/wbc/immigration/come/work/about/index.page](http://www.welcomebc.ca/wbc/immigration/come/work/about/index.page)

## **Work Permits:**

### **Temporary Foreign Worker:**

- In order to offer a job to someone outside the country, an employer must get a Labour Market Opinion (LMO) approval by Service Canada to show that the position could not be filled locally.
- Individuals can only apply for a work permit if they have a job offer. A work permit is valid for the length of time for which the employment is offered; anywhere from 90 days to 3 years, as long as the individual's passport does not expire in that time.
- A work permit is generally issued on the basis of an intention to work in a specific position for a specific employer. Individuals would need a new LMO and work permit if changing employers.

### **Post Graduate Work Permit:**

If international students have completed a degree at a Canadian university and meet certain requirements, they could qualify for a Post Graduate Work permit. This allows them to work in a variety of fields for up to as long as they studied in Canada, for a maximum of three years.

### **Foreign Students:**

Foreign students studying in Canada do not need a work permit to work at the campus of the institution at which they are studying, but they cannot work anywhere else. ■



*"Leading businesses in BC will have fully developed strategies for incorporating skilled immigrants in order to expand into new markets, drive innovation and connect with an increasingly diverse customer base. Hiring immigrants is simply a bottom-line benefit."*

**Kelly Pollack**, Immigrant Employment Council of BC

**China = 1 Billion Consumers.**

Can you talk to them?  
Hire someone who can.

Source: [www.HireImmigrants.ca](http://www.HireImmigrants.ca)

## Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society (IMSS):

The Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society of Prince George is a non-profit organization that has been serving new immigrants since 1974. IMSS supports the settlement and integration of newcomers and their families in the community – ensuring stability for both newcomers and employers.

### IMSS can help employers:

- Find potential employees;
- Contact international references (emailing, translating);
- Have international degrees evaluated in Canada;
- Create skill assessment interview techniques;
- Answer questions about culture and integration;
- Answer questions about immigration statuses;
- Family Settlement Services.

1270 2nd Avenue • Phone: 250.562.2900 ■

“When I arrived in Canada from Jordan I was surprised that the people around me would look at me and smile. In my culture smiling without reason is considered rude and very suspicious behaviour. However, after 10 months in Canada I found myself adapting to Canadian culture by smiling like everyone else. I went back home for a visit and was walking in the mall smiling at people, but instead of them smiling back I ended up getting myself in big trouble. People thought I was crazy!”

**Sam Batarseh**, Chamber of Commerce



## Help candidates meet their licensing requirements:

If a job is regulated, workers must take exams and gain Canadian work experience to be licensed. However, many have trouble getting the work experience because they aren't licensed. Consider recruiting candidates at a lower level until their licensing requirements are met. For example, hire an engineer who obtained his or her credentials in another country at a lower rank and pay scale within the field of engineering. When the employee becomes a certified engineer, you will have the engineer you were looking for and the employee will have a job in his or her profession. ■

## Culture:

Skilled immigrants have valuable experiences and skills that help organizations reach their full potential. However, cultural differences among employees can lead to misunderstandings. Culture impacts how people manage relationships, perceive hierarchy and gender roles, communicate, express emotion, resolve conflict, as well as work productively. These cultural dimensions exist in any multicultural setting, so employers need to understand these differences in order to pick up on cues to better interview candidates and manage employees.

**Source:** Adapted from Hire Immigrants Intercultural Competence website

Learn more about cultural traits >>

### Did You Know?

#### According to new research

by the Royal Bank of Canada, the economic cost of underutilizing highly-skilled immigrants is \$30.7-billion, or 2.1 percent of the country's GDP.

**Source:** Adapted from the Globe and Mail research article released from Royal Bank of Canada

Most cultural differences can be easily solved with awareness and communication; **it is the employers' role to clearly communicate expectations to new hires.**

Cultural Trait	In Some Cultures...	Achieving Cultural Balance
<b>Time</b>	Some cultures value time differently and may not understand the importance of arriving early or being late in Canadian workplaces	Communicate interview and workplace punctuality clearly, and clarify the consequences of a meeting delay or deadlines not being met
<b>Handshake</b>	A soft handshake for many cultures is a sign of respect and subordination, and a firm handshake can symbolize aggression	Be understanding if receiving a soft handshake. It is not a reflection of skills, only of cultural norms
<b>Eye contact</b>	Some cultures will look at the floor rather than in someone's eye as a sign of respect	Be understanding of this in an interview — once in the workplace, simply explain that respect in Canada means looking a person in the eye
<b>Personal Space</b>	Some cultures have less awareness of Canadian appropriate personal space	Explain the importance of personal space and how an "arms length rule" is what is normally comfortable for Canadians
<b>Smiling</b>	Some cultures believe that a smile will show that they are not taking the work seriously	Explain to your employee that smiling is a way of building good working relationships
<b>Language</b>	Accents and word pronunciation may be difficult to understand or sound similar to other words; Canadian idioms, slang, acronyms or abbreviations may also cause misunderstandings	Speak slowly, clearly, and ask open ended questions to determine understanding — if you ask yes or no questions you will get a yes or no answer (even if the question is misunderstood)
<b>Personal Life</b>	Some cultures won't mix socializing with work, and some must first establish a personal relationship before they can work well with their coworkers	Communicate gently to the individual that a working relationship does not need to be based on a personal relationship, but also understand if seemingly inappropriate personal questions are asked
<b>Taking Credit</b>	Many cultures discourage bragging and will, out of respect, make their accomplishments seem less important	In an interview, ask direct questions about specific duties, tasks, and outcomes of past work experience; make it clear that being honest about good work is appreciated in Canada
<b>Personal Opinions</b>	Some cultures do not allow subordinates to offer opinions, ask questions, or offer suggestions about their work, and expect only that they do the task assigned	Encourage people to give suggestions and support this effort when they do
<b>Saying No or Disagreement</b>	From a fear of seeming rude, some cultures will not say no, even if the task is not possible; instead they may say "that will be very difficult" which means "no" in their culture	Communicate clearly that honesty is not only a benefit but is necessary — particularly when saying no relates to a safety concern ■

**This toolkit was made possible** by contributions from Welcome PG's Resource Kit Advisory Committee and its stakeholder partners the Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society, Initiatives Prince George and the Chamber of Commerce of Prince George. Welcome PG is also grateful to Surrey's DIVERSEcity Community Resources Society for granting permission to reproduce and distribute their WICWP resource "KNOW: Orientation, Retention, and Promotion: A Guide for Building Welcoming and Inclusive Workplaces for New Immigrant Workers."

## IMMIGRANT & MULTICULTURAL SERVICES SOCIETY

