

UNDERSTANDING Canada's IMMIGRATION SYSTEM



Canada's immigration system is a world leader and provides many opportunities for those who would like to come here.

Every year, millions of people from around the world come to Canada to visit, work, or study temporarily. In addition, more than 300,000 people are approved to make Canada their permanent home each year under three broad categories – economic immigration, family reunification and humanitarian considerations.

That doesn't mean that Canada offers a free pass to anyone. Whether you've got Temporary Protected Status or no status in the United States, or are coming from any particular region of the world, there is a strict process in place. You might think that once you're in, you're in, but that's just not the case.

To be able to remain in Canada, there are several important steps you must successfully proceed through in our immigration system.

When you enter Canada irregularly outside an official port of entry, you are intercepted and arrested by the police.



You then face a rigorous process to determine whether or not you have a legitimate refugee claim according to Canadian and international law. This includes complete security and background checks.

There are no guarantees that you will be able to stay in Canada. If it is determined that you are not in need of Canada's protection, the process to remove you from Canada is initiated.

There are, however, many legitimate ways to come to Canada to visit, study, work, or live.

Economic and family immigration programs

Most people who successfully apply for permanent residence are chosen through Canada's economic immigration programs:

- **Express Entry:** The first step for most economic immigrants is to submit a profile under Express Entry. In the profile, the person receives ranking points based on their language ability, education, skills and experience. Every two weeks, the candidates with the most points are invited to apply for permanent residence.
- **Provincial Nominee Program:** Provinces (except Quebec) nominate the immigrants they would like, based on criteria they set that address their own needs.
- **Quebec-Selected Skilled Workers:** The Province of Quebec selects its own skilled workers.



- **Start-up Visa Program:** Entrepreneurs with business ideas and the support of Canadian investors can become permanent residents and launch their business here.
- **Caregiver Program:** Individuals who have gained experience working in Canada providing in-home care to children, or people with high medical needs, can apply for permanent residence.

Through the Family Class, Canadian citizens and permanent residents can sponsor loved ones to join them in Canada. This includes spouses and common-law partners, dependent children, parents and grandparents.

Refugee resettlement

Canada also has a proud humanitarian tradition. This tradition includes resettling refugees from abroad, and an in-Canada asylum system for those with a well-founded fear of persecution, torture, or death. While eligible asylum claimants can live in Canada while they wait for their claim to be decided, a rejected claim means that they are expected to leave Canada – or they will be removed.

Opportunities for living in Canada on a temporary basis

In addition to the opportunities to apply for permanent residence, there are also many avenues to come to Canada on a temporary basis as a tourist, worker, or student.

Canada has one of most generous programs in the world for international students. Our excellent academic institutions currently host more than 400,000 international students. While studying here, most students can gain work experience and, upon graduation, can continue to work in Canada for up to three years. With experience studying and working in Canada, many students apply to immigrate permanently.

Temporary workers are also welcomed each year through Canada's work permit programs. Like students, thousands of workers gain the experience they need in Canada to then apply for permanent residence. Opportunities to work temporarily in Canada include:

- **Temporary Foreign Worker Program:** Employers who haven't been able to find Canadians or Canadian permanent residents for the jobs they have available can get permission to hire workers from other countries for nearly any type of job.
- **International Mobility Program:** Some people can be hired by employers without needing permission due to the benefits they will bring to Canada. This includes researchers, certain business people and professionals, workers with specialized knowledge being transferred by their employer to Canada, and others.
- **International Experience Canada:** Young people from countries that Canada has agreements with can apply to come to Canada for a working holiday, an internship, or an experience as a young professional.

Come to Canada – the right way

Immigration has played a major role in Canada's history and development as a country. With the variety of opportunities that people from abroad have to come to Canada, immigration will continue to be a vital part of the growth of Canadian society and the Canadian economy.

The best way to be welcomed by Canada is to apply through one of our established immigration programs. Attempting to enter Canada irregularly at a location other than a port of entry, gives no guarantee that you will be able to stay in Canada.

For more information, visit Canada.ca/asylum