

Canadian Immigration Update

Workforce planning, compliance, and permanent residence strategy in a more selective environment

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Why this matters now

- Canada moved toward more controlled and targeted immigration levels.
- Temporary resident arrivals reduced, while permanent resident admissions are stabilizing.
- Economic immigration remains central where it supports labour market needs.
- Employers should expect more focus on documentation, planning, and compliance.

2026 temporary target

385,000 new temporary resident arrivals

PR admissions

380,000 annual admissions from 2026 to 2028



Key immigration trends for employers

What companies should be planning around

More selectivity

Employment, language, Canadian experience, and provincial priorities are increasingly important.

Earlier planning

Immigration strategy should start before offers, transfers, or expiry deadlines.

Higher scrutiny

Employer-supported categories need stronger evidence and clearer business rationale.

Compliance exposure

Role, wage, duty, location, and reporting changes can trigger immigration risk.

Takeaway: immigration should be treated as a workforce planning and risk management issue, not only a filing process.

Temporary work permit strategy

Choose the pathway before the file is urgent

Identify the best-fit pathway before hiring or transferring talent.
Consider LMIA-based and LMIA-exempt options where appropriate.
Assess role, duties, wage, work location, and employer structure.
Build a stronger evidentiary record for higher-scrutiny categories.



Employer compliance risk

Obligations continue after the work permit is issued

Common change triggers

Job title, duties, wages, work location, employer entity.

Core controls

Record retention, pre-change immigration review, expiry tracking, and alignment between filing and actual role.

Business impact

Compliance gaps may affect inspections, future filings, employee continuity, and client delivery.



Permanent residence pathways

Integrate PR planning into workforce retention strategy



Express Entry

Points-driven and competitive

PNP

Provincial labour market alignment

Provincial nominee programs and regional strategy

Where PNPs help

May be critical where Express Entry scores are not competitive.

What varies

Requirements differ by province, stream, occupation, wage, location, and employer support.

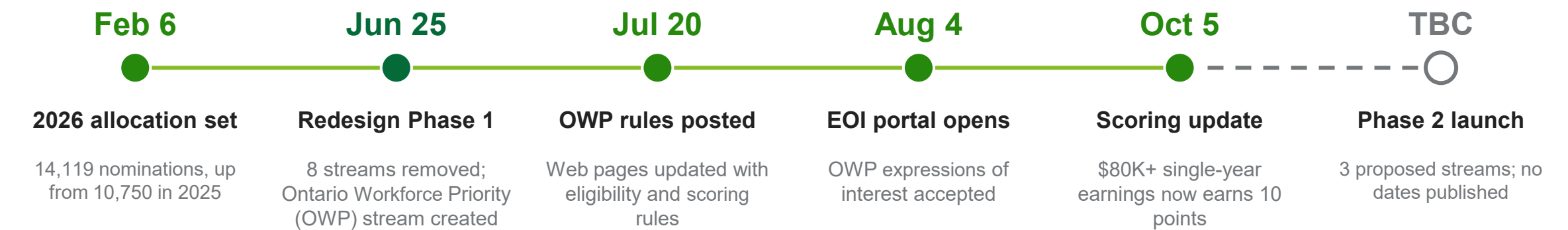
Why timing matters

Quotas, targeted occupations, and invitation patterns can shift.

Takeaway: do not wait until a work permit is close to expiry to assess PNP viability. Provincial fit should be reviewed early for key talent.

Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP): Key Changes in 2026

Phase 1 (OWP stream) is live; Phase 2 streams are proposed, with timing to be confirmed | Current as of October 09, 2026



Phase 1 (in effect)

- OWP replaces former streams, incl. the 3 Employer Job Offer streams
- 3 pathways: TEER 0–3, TEER 4–5, self-employed physicians
- Higher language and education benchmarks

Phase 2 (proposed)

- Priority healthcare stream
- Entrepreneur stream
- Exceptional talent stream
- Timing TBC; no rules or dates published

What it means

- Employer must initiate via the employer portal before the candidate registers an EOI
- Pre-change applications assessed under the rules in place at filing
- No OWP invitation rounds published yet

Potential Express Entry reforms

A simpler system with a sharper focus on economic outcomes

01



ONE PROGRAM

- Merge FSW, CEC and FST
- Common entry requirements
 - **Education:** Canadian High School, or equivalent (with ECA)
 - **Official Language:** CLB/NCLC 6 for all TEERs and language areas
 - **Work Experience:** 1 year of cumulative work experience, in one or more TEER 0-3 NOCs in the last 3 years for both Canadian and other work experience

02



NEW CRS FOCUS

- Prioritize core human capital factors
- Reward high-wage work or job offers, including TR Earnings history in Canada
- Reduce selected bonus (such as studying in Canada and siblings in Canada) and spousal points

03



CANADIAN LICENSURE

- Recognize Red Seal certification
- Credit Canadian apprenticeships
- Prioritize practice-ready professionals

EXPECTED
DIRECTION

Simpler eligibility →

Stronger economic
focus

→ Category-based selection remains

Anticipated impacts of potential changes

A broader eligible pool, simpler administration and greater emphasis on candidates with high economic potential

01



BROADER ELIGIBLE POOL

More flexibility to address diverse economic needs, including trades and French-speaking candidates.

02



SIMPLER ADMINISTRATION

Clearer entry requirements for candidates and fewer criteria for officers to assess.

03



STRONGER ECONOMIC FOCUS

Greater selection of candidates with high earning potential and easily verified factors.

LIKELY PROFILE OF FUTURE INVITEES

BETTER

Language skills

HIGHER

Education levels

AT LEAST 1 YEAR

Canadian experience in a high-wage occupation

CATEGORY-BASED SELECTION REMAINS

Continued flexibility to respond to labour shortages and support Francophone minority communities. Changes may **enhance outcomes of category-based selection** by ensuring that within a category, candidates with highest economic potential are prioritized.

What Comes Next — Signals of a "Controlled Increase"

With the immigration system recalibrated, Canada's government is signaling a cautious but deliberate pivot back toward growth — with tangible policy signals already in motion for employers to watch.

Three Tangible IRCC Signals for Employers

1

Express Entry Job Offer Points Returning (End of 2026)

IRCC has confirmed that points for job offers in Express Entry will be reinstated by end of 2026 — restoring a key employer-driven lever for attracting permanent resident candidates.

2

Legislative Amendments Report Due Late 2026 / Early 2027

IRCC will release a report outlining the path forward for legislative amendments to the immigration system — expected late 2026 or early 2027 — which will shape program design for years ahead.

3

Francophone Immigration Remains a Sustained Priority

Attracting French-language speakers outside Québec will continue to be a strong and consistent federal focus — with dedicated streams and targets unlikely to be reduced regardless of broader policy shifts.

Key Policy Signal — September 2026

“

With the immigration system recalibrated, a *"controlled increase"* in immigration is on the horizon — the key question is timing.

— Prime Minister Mark Carney

Employer action plan

Practical next steps to reduce risk and improve continuity

Audit population

Map foreign workers, expiry dates, permit categories, and work locations.

Identify sponsorship needs

Flag open work permit holders or expiring permits that may require employer support.

Review role changes

Check whether title, duties, wages, location, affect status.

Assess PR pathways

Prioritize key talent for Express Entry, PNP, or other PR planning.

Train stakeholders

Equip HR, recruitment, mobility, and business leaders to spot immigration triggers.

In a more selective immigration environment, early planning is the strongest risk management tool.

Thank you!

For any questions, please contact

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