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MIGRANT DECISION-MAKING IN PANDEMIC TIMES

Canada's Appeal to Prospective Immigrants in the Face of COVID-19

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Our Mission

We help people learn, work, and thrive in new places. We help society recognize the value of people’s education and experience.
Canada’s Appeal to Prospective Immigrants Amid COVID-19

How was intent and interest in immigrating to Canada changing in the face of COVID-19?

- Survey distributed to 480,000 individuals in April, June, and August 2020
- 27,000+ valid responses

Profile of Respondents

Gender

- 49% Female
- 51% Male

Age

- 36% 35-44
- 57% 25-34
- 5% 45-54
- 2% 18-24

Country of Citizenship

- India: 46%
- Nigeria: 17%
- Philippines: 5%
- Pakistan: 4%
- Lebanon: 2%
- Bangladesh: 2%
- Other: 25%
Increasing Interest in Immigrating

The percentage of respondents who are “more interested” in immigrating to Canada has grown from 38% in April to 46% in August.

How has COVID-19 influenced your interest in immigrating to Canada?

- **I am less interested in immigrating to Canada**:
  - April: 5%
  - June: 6%
  - August: 6%

- **No impact on my interest in immigrating to Canada**:
  - April: 57%
  - June: 50%
  - August: 48%

- **I am more interested in immigrating to Canada**:
  - April: 38%
  - June: 45%
  - August: 46%
Increasingly Unlikely to Consider Delaying

Plans to delay immigrating peaked in June at **32%**. By August, only **12%** of respondents were considering delaying.

- Those unlikely to delay immigration had drastically increased from April (**35%**) to August (**62%**).
- The number considering immigrating to another country has increased slightly from **7%** to **12%**.
Economic Recession Has Little Impact

A recession in Canada would have **no impact** on immigration plans for **almost half** of respondents.

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**To what degree would an economic recession in Canada or your home country affect your interest in immigrating to Canada?**

**Economic Recession in Canada**

- April: 34% More Interested, 49% No Impact, 22% Less interested
- June: 31% More Interested, 49% No Impact, 20% Less interested
- August: 31% More Interested, 49% No Impact, 19% Less interested

**Economic Recession In My Home Country**

- April: 50% More Interested, 48% No Impact, 50% Less interested
- June: 32% More Interested, 48% No Impact, 32% Less interested
- August: 17% More Interested, 20% No Impact, 19% Less interested
Poor Jobs Outlook has Little Impact

For almost half of the respondents (48%), a **decrease in jobs** in their sector/occupation in Canada would have **no impact** on immigration plans.
Canada’s Economic Future Depends on Immigrant Talent

“Immigration is essential to getting us through the pandemic, but also to our short-term economic recovery and our long-term economic growth.”

– The Honourable Marco E. L. Mendicino, P.C., M.P., Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship

25%

Immigrants make up a quarter of Canada’s workforce.

1M

Immigration is expected to account for 100% of labour force growth in the coming years.

Nearly one million immigrants arrived in the last three years.

Sources: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC); Statistics Canada; Conference Board of Canada: Can’t Go it Alone: Immigration Is Key to Canada’s Growth Strategy
Immigrants still want to come to Canada, but what happens when they arrive?
Underemployment Rampant

WES research: **less than half** (47.2%) of skilled immigrants working in the same sector as they were pre-migration

**Almost half** (47%) of immigrants with health education from abroad are unemployed or underutilized (StatCan)

Canada forgoes an estimated **$50B in GDP** due to the immigrant wage gap: underemployment contributes to 40% of the gap (RBC)
Global Competition for Talent

Q: When will Canada’s underutilization of immigrants’ skill begin to impact the country’s attractiveness to potential migrants?

Most Attractive OECD Countries for Potential Migrants

- Australia
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- New Zealand
- Canada
- Ireland
- United States

Source: OECD/Bertelsmann Stiftung, Migration Policy Debates, May 2019
THANK YOU

Need more information? Visit: wes.org/ca/research