



## Canadian Hispanic Congress Vol. 7 | August 2023

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***Celebrating the 40th anniversary of  
the Canadian Hispanic Congress***

# Wildfires Impact Canada's Tourism Sector as Travellers Cancel Summer Plans

Wildfires and smoke in Canada have severely impacted the tourism industry, resulting in a significant decline in travel this summer. Both domestic and international visitors are canceling their trips, leading to business closures, and exacerbating the challenges faced by the sector. Businesses in northern Ontario, such as outdoor activity providers and tours, have been particularly affected. This situation adds to other challenges such as high gasoline prices and border delays.

Canada's travel and tourism sector was expected to fully recover from the pandemic this year, but the country's Minister of Emergency Preparedness warned that 2023 could become the worst year on record for wildfires. Currently, there are more than 1,000 active fires across the country, with over 43,000 square kilometers burned this year. The fires have also affected other provinces, such as Nova Scotia and Quebec, where larger-than-usual fires have resulted in evacuations and the closure of outdoor activities in various regions.



British Columbia, June 2023.

In addition to impacting tourism, the wildfires have necessitated the rescheduling of events and conferences. For example, an Indigenous tourism conference in Saskatchewan had to be postponed due to fires in the region. The cancellations and restrictions caused by the fires have had a significant impact on the Indigenous tourism industry, which contributes billions of dollars to the Canadian economy.

In the face of climate change, the tourism industry must adapt and confront its effects. Summer tourism having already suffered, fall tourism is also at risk. Adaptation, emissions reduction, and effective communication strategies are crucial for the industry's recovery in the face of these challenges. For more information visit: <https://globalnews.ca/news/9757273/wildfires-tourism-impact-canada/>



Ottawa, June 2023.



Toronto, Ontario, June 2023.

# Teen Vaping Crisis in Canada Requires Urgent Action

Teen vaping rates in Canada are at one of the highest levels in the world, with nearly one in four older high school students reporting vaping in the past month. Although the overall percentage of students who have tried vaping has slightly decreased, rates remain high among older age groups, with approximately 41 percent of students in grades 10 to 12 having experimented with e-cigarettes. Flavored vapes, particularly fruit flavors, are popular among young vapers. The lack of government action and the availability of flavored e-cigarettes are contributing factors to the high rates of youth vaping.

While cigarette smoking rates are declining, nicotine use through vaping is rising among Canadian youth. Health experts and advocates are urging the federal government to ban flavored e-cigarettes as a crucial step in reducing youth vaping rates. Some provinces have already implemented their own restrictions. The vaping industry continues to expand, with new devices like discrete disposable e-cigarettes contributing to the surge in youth vaping. Immediate action is needed from the federal government to protect Canadian youth and address this public health concern. For more information visit: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/health/canada-teen-vaping-survey-e-cigarettes-1.6845408>



## The Implications of Google and Meta Blocking Canadian News: Bill C-18



Google and Meta have announced that they will block access to Canadian news in Canada, which has sparked a debate about the Online News Law (Bill C-18). This legislation aims to address the dominance of major tech companies in the digital advertising market and ensure compensation for news publishers. It requires Google, Meta, and other platforms to negotiate agreements and pay for sharing news content. However, Google's decision to remove Canadian news from its search engine and Google News Showcase program, as well as Meta's decision to ban news on Facebook and Instagram, have significant consequences. It restricts access to reliable news for Canadian users and raises concerns about revenue losses and possible media closures.

The actions of Google and Meta raise questions about fair compensation for news publishers and the dominance of tech giants in the digital advertising market. While Bill C-18 seeks to address these concerns, the response from Google and Meta poses challenges for the availability and reliability of news information in Canada. Ongoing discussions and collaborative solutions are needed for the future of the news industry and the pursuit of a more equitable digital landscape.

For more information visit:

<https://www.thestar.com/politics/federal/2023/06/22/meta-to-end-news-sharing-on-facebook-and-instagram-for-canadians.html>

# Canada's Population Soars to New Heights in 2022



According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Canada experienced an unprecedented population growth in 2022, reaching a historic high of 39,566,248 people at the beginning of 2023. This growth of 1,050,110 individuals in a single year marks the first time that the Canadian population has grown by over a million in one year. International migration accounted for 95.9% of the total growth, making Canada the global leader in population growth among G7 countries.

With a growth rate of 2.7% in 2022, Canada surpassed all other OECD countries and, if the trend continues, it could potentially double its population in just 26 years. This increase is mainly attributed to immigration and non-permanent residents, with a record number of 437,180 immigrants and a net increase of 607,782 non-permanent residents in 2022.

Significant progress has been made in simplifying the immigration application process through digitization and automation, enabling the processing of approximately 4.8 million applications by November, twice as many as the previous year. Additionally, improvements have been made to study permits, work permits, and visitor visas processes.

This record population growth showcases Canada's commitment to immigration and its ability to leverage it as a driver of economic growth. However, careful planning is important to address challenges related to the growing demand for housing, infrastructure, and service delivery, while ensuring successful integration of immigrants and the well-being of all Canadian citizens.

For more information visit: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/canada-population-40-million-1.6878211>

## Fostering Unity and Support: Addressing Divisions Among Migrant Workers in Rural Canada

The presence of divisions and competition among migrant workers from different cultural backgrounds in Canada's agricultural sector is a concerning issue. These divisions are reinforced through the Temporary Agricultural Workers Program and employer practices, which can lead to hostile situations. Closing the gap between workers of different backgrounds is necessary, and providing the option of permanent residency can offer job security. Overcoming language barriers and creating spaces for social interaction can foster unity.

The Neighbourhood Organization has established an office in Simcoe, Ontario, to support the migrant worker community. Through this initiative, workers can connect, access support services, and participate in social activities. Working in collaboration with employers, the aim is to ensure the well-being of the workers and promote a supportive environment.

Addressing divisions and competition among migrant workers in rural areas of Canada requires efforts from program administrators, employers, and community organizations. By promoting unity, creating inclusive spaces, and prioritizing worker well-being, a more supportive and equitable environment can be achieved. The goal is to build a stronger and more inclusive agricultural sector in Canada through these initiatives and collective commitment.

For more information visit: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/hamilton/migrant-worker-systemic-divide-1.6888199>



# Message from the president



Dear friend of the Canadian Hispanic Congress,

If you come upon people dancing on the streets, colourful costumes, delicious Latin treats, a Latin dance party, free Latin dance lessons, art exhibits, Latin artists, and performers, both local and international... you have come upon one of the many Latin festivals in Canada, that have become synonymous with summer fun, celebrations of diversity, inclusivity, and community building at its best.

Throughout the Summer, visitors to the many exciting Latin festivals around the country are transported to the enchanting world of Latin music, Latin culture, and a world of diversity in Latin cuisine. Perhaps taking some inspiration from cultural celebrations such as Miami's "Calle Ocho" festival, similar and yet unique such events have been born in Canada, with the goal of bringing together the 1.6 million Spanish-speaking Canadians and all other Canadians. Here are just a few examples of the many free celebrations found throughout Canada every year.

For the past 11 years the Pan-American Food & Music Festival has brought together Canadians from across the country to Dundas Square in Toronto. Executive Director Daniel Garcia Herreros, founded the festival in 2012 and along with Festival Chair Francisco Alvarez and their dedicated team of volunteers and supporters, have delivered an exceptional event that over the years has brought us over 2200 performers, both local and international, gastronomic delights created by 154 chefs from around the world and over 250,000 visitors to the City of Toronto.

Also a must for Latin music and culture lovers, is the Mississauga Latin Festival, founded 15 years ago by Executive Director Isabel Cuellar, who along with her dedicated team, produces this spectacular festival of Latin music and culture which brings together many diverse cultures, facilitating integration and closer ties between Canada's diverse communities.

The Vaughan Latin Festival's Founder and CEO Gina Balseca-Aguirre and Co-Founder and President Jason Szymanski along with their terrific team of volunteers have created a vibrant full day celebration of Latin culture, Latin music, wonderful foods representing a diversity of culinary tastes, lively performances to engaging activities for children, along with a wide range of vendors and exhibitors.

Each year, since 2005, the TLN Media Group has been bringing us Salsa in St Clair, taking over midtown Toronto and transforming it into a salsa party, featuring an international calibre lineup of performers, non-stop dancing in the streets and a variety of Latin cuisine offerings. A celebration of Latin culture that attracts hundreds of thousands of salsa lovers from near and far.

In addition to the many well established Latin festivals, we welcome new ones, such as the Oakville Latino Festival which attracted 7000 Canadians per day in 2022, to the Bronte Heritage Waterfront Park, during its debut year of celebration of all things Latin.

Spanish speakers and Latin culture lovers alike look forward each year to these wonderful celebrations of diversity within the Latin culture.

Did you attend some of these celebrations of Latin culture, music, art, and fellowship? Share your experiences and a photo with us. Write to us at [president@canadianhispaniccongress.com](mailto:president@canadianhispaniccongress.com)

Wishing you a wonderful rest of the Summer.

Monique Forster

President

Canadian Hispanic Congress

To sign up for our newsletter please email us at: [membership@canadianhispaniccongress.com](mailto:membership@canadianhispaniccongress.com)

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