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

How Ontario's New Law Seeks to Empower Immigrant Job Seekers

Ontario is prepared to prohibit employers from mandating Canadian work experience, potentially easing access for newly arrived foreigners. Although Canada admits a substantial number of immigrants, challenges persist for newcomers seeking jobs aligned with their education.

The country's immigration system tends to disadvantage certain immigrants who struggle to secure relevant job opportunities and often end up in low-wage, precarious positions. In response, Ontario introduced Bill 149 in November 2023, aiming to eliminate the requirement for Canadian work experience in job postings within the province. While seen as a positive step for skilled immigrants, proving discrimination in hiring remains challenging.

The law, currently advancing through Ontario's legislature, is expected to pass, but it doesn't address the opacity of hiring practices. Despite the potential benefits, the law may not eliminate discrimination, as soft skills and cultural fit continue to play a significant role in hiring decisions. The legislation is part of broader employment-rule changes, responding to labor shortages in various sectors, including medicine and engineering.

The hope is that the law, if successful, will set a precedent for other provinces, fostering inclusivity for newcomers in the Canadian workforce. However, eliminating overt discrimination is only the first step to eradicating all forms of bias against immigrants in the labor sector.



Canada Joins Global Effort to Simplify Document Certification Process

Canada has joined an international agreement, along with 125 other countries, aimed at simplifying and expediting the process of document certification. Effective immediately, Canadians seeking to certify documents for international use are expected to experience a faster and more cost-effective process.

Canada's participation in the 1961 Apostille Convention is set to streamline document certification for use in the 125 signatory countries. The convention allows Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Quebec to independently certify documents used by Canadians abroad, encompassing official government documents, financial records, school transcripts, and legal documents, among others.

Once certified, documents can be used in any member country of the Apostille Convention without the need for repeated certifications. The new system replaces the previous process, which required Canadians to submit documents to GAC by mail, with a turnaround time of 30 to 45 business days, and then present those certified documents to the consulate or embassy of the destination country.

The changes are expected to be particularly beneficial for individuals, families, and businesses, offering a faster, simpler, and more affordable certification process. The move is part of broader efforts to address the issue of document verification and is seen as a significant improvement in streamlining the process for Canadians working or residing abroad.



Government of Canada Invests in Rural Automotive Manufacturer for EV Sector Growth

The Government of Canada is backing the expansion of a rural automotive parts manufacturer to enhance the development of the electric vehicle (EV) sector in southern Ontario. With its skilled workforce and extensive expertise, meaning an important hub for automotive innovation, the government is dedicated to assisting manufacturers in adopting new processes and domestically-made products, fostering local supply chains and generating quality employment opportunities.

Minister Filomena Tassi, has announced a \$2 million investment in Amino North America Corp. Amino will expand its facility and introduce a cutting-edge automotive parts manufacturing line to meet the rising demands of automotive clients. This new line, aims to support Amino in diversifying its Canadian-made automotive products, including battery compartments tailored for the EV market.



The project is anticipated to create and sustain 45 jobs while contributing to the growth of the auto sector in the London area and the development of the EV cluster. Meanwhile, the commitment of the Government of Canada remains steadfast in expanding the EV supply chain by aiding workers and manufacturers in adopting technologies that enhance production capabilities, create jobs, and align with zero-emissions targets.

Federal Funding of \$86 Million Targets Health Worker Shortage in Canada

The Canadian federal government has revealed an investment of \$86 million in health professional accreditation to tackle the nationwide labor shortage in the healthcare sector. Randy Boissonnault, the federal employment minister, emphasized the importance of the Foreign Credential Recognition Program in providing accessible pathways for internationally educated health professionals to contribute to the healthcare system, ultimately strengthening it and boosting the economy. The allocated funds will be distributed to organizations across the country to expedite the training and recognition process for healthcare workers with international credentials.

Boissonnault anticipates that the investment will facilitate job opportunities for 6,600 individuals in the sector, addressing a portion of the 90,000 job vacancies prevalent across Canada.



This announcement builds upon the commitment made by the Canadian government, along with provinces and territories, during the October 2023 health ministers' meeting to take tangible steps in addressing challenges within Canada's health workforce. The focus is on reducing the time required for internationally educated health professionals to enter the workforce.

Governments of Canada and British Columbia Collaborate to Boost High-Speed Internet with \$600,000 Investment



Ensuring that every Canadian, regardless of their location, has access to dependable and affordable high-speed Internet is a shared goal of the governments of Canada and British Columbia. Taking a step towards this objective, the Minister of Rural Economic Development, along with the British Columbia's Minister of Citizens' Services, have highlighted a funding allocation exceeding \$600,000 from both federal and provincial sources. This funding supports two CityWest projects aiming to provide high-speed Internet access to over 140 households.

This financial support stems from an existing agreement between the federal and British Columbia governments, which was initially announced in March 2022. Under this historic partnership, an investment of up to \$830 million is committed to connecting households in all remaining rural, remote, and Indigenous communities across the province to high-speed Internet.

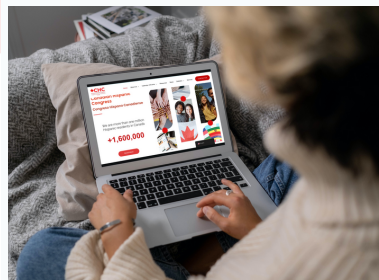


These initiatives contribute to the Government of Canada's broader efforts to achieve 98% high-speed Internet coverage for Canadians by 2026, with a goal of reaching 100% by 2030. The ongoing commitment involves strategic investments in infrastructure to foster resilient, competitive, and cohesive communities throughout Canada.

CHC Community Services

The Canadian Hispanic Congress invites you to visit our website and learn about the different resources and support made available by the government and community organizations!

NEED HELP?



Visit our Webpage

Learn about the different resources and supports for the entire family.

Canada's New Funding to Enhance Justice Access for Indigenous and Racialized Communities



Ensuring justice accessibility is a core value in Canada's legal system. Therefore, the Government of Canada is committed to dismantling systemic barriers by providing equitable access to legal services, particularly for marginalized groups like racialized communities.

Minister of Justice and Executive Director of Mediate BC, announced a project funding of \$922,866 to improve justice access for Indigenous and racialized communities in British Columbia. The funding supports Mediate BC "Navigating Collaborative Decision-Making in Child Welfare" project, focusing on creating multilingual legal resources and offering support to families navigating the child welfare system.



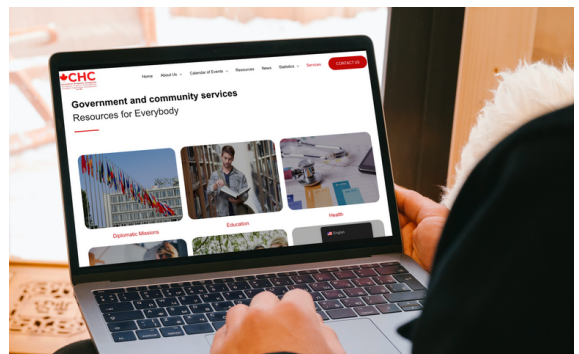
This initiative, funded by Justice Canada, aims to enhance outcomes for children and youth in the justice system while addressing barriers faced by Indigenous and racialized families in child protection processes. Mediate BC, a non profit organization, plays a crucial role in providing professional services and collaborative decision-making processes to communities across British Columbia, many located on ancestral lands of Indigenous peoples.

Resources for Everybody

The Canadian Hispanic Congress displays details about government and community services available to all. From health and employment to free language courses and immigration assistance.

For more information, visit:

<https://canadianhispaniccongress.com/education/>



Message from the president

Dear friend of the Canadian Hispanic Congress,

Canada's housing market has become one of the most unaffordable in the world, prompting the federal government to introduce legislation banning foreigners without permanent residency, from buying homes in Canada. Keeping an election promise of the Trudeau government, a new law came into effect on January 1, which seeks to dissuade investors that homes should be for families and should not be seen as investments or commodities. Housing should be owned by individuals and families residing in Canada and not by investors or corporations.

In recent years, the skyrocketing cost of housing in Canada has attracted speculators, foreign investors, and corporations. The cities most affected are Toronto, Vancouver, and surrounding areas. The existence of a significant number of underutilised or unoccupied housing units happens as house prices have risen so much higher than the average Canadian family can afford.

This new measure, created to limit who can own a house in Canada, has been met with little enthusiasm from critics who insist that it is unclear whether it will have any impact on Canada's housing market. Just 11 days before the ban came into effect, the government announced some exemptions to the regulation, including for international students who have been in the country for at least five years, refugee claimants and people with temporary work permits.

Many claim that similar measures adopted in New Zealand since 2018, have not had the expected effect. According to a BBC report, house prices, adjusted for inflation continue to rise in New Zealand.

While foreign investment has undoubtedly been an important factor, we must bear in mind that there are several factors that have influenced and brought us to the current crisis. Many are calling programs to attract more immigrants to Canada hasty, suggesting that we must examine our plans more closely prior to increasing immigration targets. This, to ensure that we have in place an adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of residents already in Canada and the expectations and needs of new immigrants to Canada.

Some maintain that a chronic lack of skilled labour and corresponding shortage of construction workers justifies the need to bring about solutions through accelerated immigration programs. Many opine that the current problem, at least in part has resulted from Canada's political regulation of housing construction. Critics also argue for the need to lower the number of international students Canada welcomes. This to avoid worsening the housing shortage in Canada. Some are also concerned that the housing crisis has also resulted in reduced purchases of furniture, cars, etc., as this is also having a negative effect on the economy.

The most affected by the housing shortage and high-cost crisis appear to be younger adults in Canada, whose worries and anxiety affect their present and future. This demographic has been overwhelmed and forced to rethink their short- and long-term plans.

Monique Forster, President
Canadian Hispanic Congress



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