

Dear friends of the Canadian Hispanic Congress,
Welcome to Fall 2025 and for some of us to a new academic year!
Your support and attention is important to us. Thank you!
Warmly,
Monique Forster
President
Canadian Hispanic Congress

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Deadly legionnaires' outbreak in Ontario.



According to CBC News, Ontario officials have declared a Legionnaires' disease outbreak in London, Ontario, as active again after a sudden resurgence of new cases. Twenty-five confirmed cases were identified, leading public health authorities to re-declare the outbreak. Investigations point to a cooling tower system at a local food processing facility as the likely source of contamination, states a report from CBC News.

Health officials warn that the disease can be life-threatening, especially for older adults, smokers, or those with compromised immune systems. Symptoms include high fever, cough, muscle pain, and shortness of breath. While it can be treated effectively with antibiotics, the outbreak highlights the ongoing risks tied to environmental water systems in industrial and residential areas.

Legionnaires' disease is a severe form of pneumonia caused by the Legionella bacterium, which spreads through inhalation of contaminated water droplets. These often originate from cooling towers, hot tubs, or poorly maintained plumbing systems. The Middlesex-London Health Unit has intensified inspections and is overseeing remediation efforts at affected facilities to prevent further transmission.

Residents and businesses are being urged to follow safety advisories, conduct water system maintenance, and stay alert for symptoms. The outbreak underscores the importance of preventive infrastructure checks to safeguard community health.



Canada removes 25% tariffs on some U.S. goods to ease trade tensions.

A report from the Globe and Mail says that the Canadian government has announced that it will remove 25% tariffs on approximately \$21 billion worth of U.S. goods beginning September 1. These tariffs, initially imposed in retaliation to U.S. trade policies, covered a wide variety of products including orange juice, wine, household appliances, and consumer goods. The move is aimed at easing trade tensions and fostering greater cooperation under the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

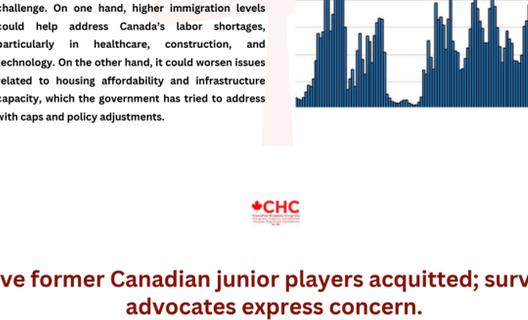


Although the decision has been praised by some industry leaders and consumer advocates, it has sparked debate among domestic producers who worry about increased competition. Critics argue that lowering tariffs may harm Canadian businesses in sectors like agriculture and manufacturing, while others contend that the change is necessary to avoid escalating disputes with Washington, especially with looming threats of additional tariffs from the U.S.

Economists note that while tariffs on steel, aluminum, and auto parts remain intact, this partial rollback reflects a strategic compromise. By easing pressure in non-critical areas, Canada hopes to strengthen its negotiating position and maintain stable supply chains. For Canadian households, the immediate impact will likely be lower prices on certain imports, a welcome relief amid ongoing cost-of-living concerns. However, the long-term effects will depend heavily on how the U.S. responds and whether broader trade disputes can be resolved in the coming months.



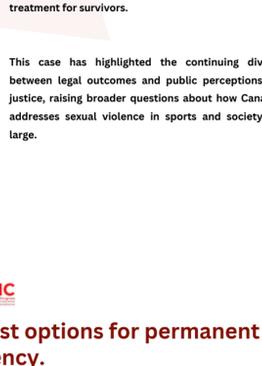
Population growth stalls amid tighter immigration policies.



For the first time in years, Canada's population growth has nearly come to a standstill. According to Statistics Canada, from January to April 2025, the population increased by only 20,107 people, marking a 0.0% growth rate. Analysts attribute this slowdown primarily to the federal government's new immigration measures, which include stricter limits on international students, temporary foreign workers, and other short-term residency categories, according to a report from Economic Times Online.

This new reality underscores the delicate balancing act the government faces—trying to address housing and affordability while ensuring Canada remains a destination for skilled workers and international talent. The debate is expected to intensify as the country prepares for its long-term immigration targets.

The policies were designed to reduce pressure on Canada's strained housing market and public services. In cities like Toronto and Vancouver, skyrocketing rents and limited housing availability have created public demand for tighter controls on migration. Supporters argue that capping the number of newcomers is necessary to ensure sustainable growth and to give infrastructure time to catch up.



However, critics warn that the policy could have serious economic consequences. Canada's labor force growth has long been driven by immigration, and industries such as healthcare, construction, and technology rely heavily on foreign talent. Employers are concerned that reduced immigration will exacerbate labor shortages, slow economic growth, and hinder Canada's global competitiveness.



Canada projected to surpass immigration target in 2025.



Despite recent concerns over tighter immigration rules, which resulted in a drop in the first quarter of 2025, Immigration News Canada predicts that Canada will surpass its 2025 immigration target, originally set at 395,000 permanent residents. Current application trends suggest that the country could welcome even more newcomers than anticipated, reflecting strong international demand to live and work in Canada.

Observers note that how Canada manages this balance will be crucial. Exceeding the target could strengthen the economy and demographic growth, but it also risks fueling political debates about the pace of immigration. As the numbers climb, policymakers will face pressure to ensure that growth is sustainable and that newcomers are successfully integrated into Canadian communities.

Experts point out that while restrictions on temporary visas and student permits have slowed short-term growth, permanent residency programs remain robust. Skilled workers, family reunification applicants, and humanitarian migrants continue to make up the bulk of arrivals. Canada's reputation as a safe, diverse, and economically stable nation continues to draw applicants from around the world.



This projection is both an opportunity and a challenge. On one hand, higher immigration levels could help address Canada's labor shortages, particularly in healthcare, construction, and technology. On the other hand, it could worsen issues related to housing affordability and infrastructure capacity, which the government has tried to address with caps and policy adjustments.



Five former Canadian junior players acquitted; survivor advocates express concern.



In a high-profile trial that has drawn international attention, five former Canadian Junior hockey players were acquitted of sexual assault charges stemming from an alleged 2018 incident in London, Ontario. The judge ruled that the evidence presented—particularly testimony from the complainant—did not meet the legal threshold for conviction, leading to a not guilty verdict, reports Global News.

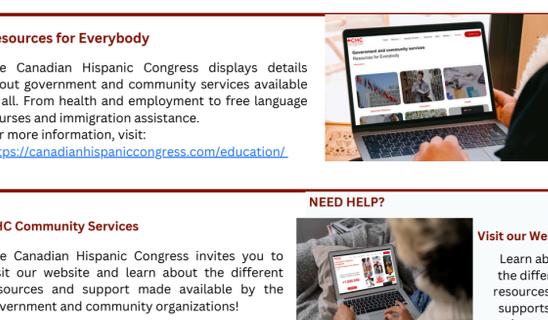
The verdict comes as Hockey Canada has been under intense scrutiny and pressure to reform its governance, policies, and culture. In response to public backlash, advocacy groups are urging policymakers and sports organizations to strengthen measures that protect athletes and ensure fair treatment for survivors.

While the acquittal was welcomed by defense teams and supporters of the players, the outcome has triggered deep concern among survivor advocates and women's rights groups. Critics argue that the ruling may discourage survivors of sexual assault, especially in the sports community, from coming forward. They fear this case reinforces a broader culture of silence and impunity within Canadian hockey, a sport already grappling with systemic issues of misconduct and lack of accountability.

This case has highlighted the continuing divide between legal outcomes and public perceptions of justice, raising broader questions about how Canada addresses sexual violence in sports and society at large.



Canada expands English test options for permanent residency.



Canada's Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has officially expanded the range of English language tests accepted for permanent residency applicants. Starting this year, the TOEFL Essentials test will be recognized alongside the IELTS and CELPIP exams. This decision is seen as a significant step toward making immigration more accessible and affordable, particularly for international students and skilled workers who are often required to provide proof of English proficiency, as reported by Immigration News Canada.

The move aligns with Canada's broader goal of attracting global talent and addressing labor shortages across various sectors. At the same time, officials emphasized that high language standards will remain in place, ensuring newcomers are prepared to integrate successfully into Canadian society.

By adding TOEFL Essentials, Canada is providing more flexibility and reducing costs for applicants, as the test is priced lower than some of the existing options and can be completed online. Immigration experts have noted that this change could particularly benefit candidates from countries where IELTS test centers are limited or difficult to access.



Canada condemns Hong Kong's arrest warrants for activists abroad.

The Canadian government has strongly condemned Hong Kong's recent decision to issue international arrest warrants for 19 pro-democracy activists, several of whom hold Canadian citizenship. Ottawa described the move as an act of "transatlantic repression", arguing that it violates international human rights norms and directly threatens the freedom and safety of Canadians abroad, according to CBC News.



Global Affairs Canada issued a statement reaffirming its commitment to supporting civil liberties and calling on Beijing to respect the autonomy of individuals who have sought refuge outside Hong Kong. Officials have emphasized that Canada would continue to defend democracy, freedom of expression, and the rule of law on the international stage.

Human rights organizations praised Canada for taking a firm stance but also urged the government to back its words with concrete actions, such as offering additional protections for activists and applying sanctions on officials responsible for the crackdown.

The incident has reignited tensions between Canada and China, already strained by past diplomatic disputes involving trade restrictions and high-profile detentions. Analysts suggest that Canada's condemnation could provoke further retaliation from Beijing, potentially impacting economic relations and international cooperation.

The situation underscores Canada's increasingly complex role in global geopolitics, as it seeks to balance economic interests with its longstanding commitment to human rights and democratic values.

Canada's military operation in Latvia extended by three years, Carney says.



The extension comes at a critical time, as tensions remain high in Eastern Europe following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022. NATO allies have praised Canada's leadership role in the region, viewing it as a strong demonstration of solidarity and deterrence.

Prime Minister Mark Carney has announced that Canada will extend its military presence in Latvia for an additional three years, with the mission now scheduled to run until 2029. The deployment is part of NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence, where Canadian troops lead a multinational battlegroup designed to deter potential aggression from Russia. Reported by The Globe and Mail.

Carney emphasized that Canada's commitment is not just military but also diplomatic and economic, forming part of a broader strategy to secure European stability while strengthening transatlantic ties. This decision signals Canada's willingness to play a central role in international security and reinforces its reputation as a reliable NATO partner.

Canada's mission, known as Operation Reassurance, currently includes about 2,200 soldiers with plans to expand to 2,600. The deployment features mechanized infantry, tactical helicopters, air defense systems, and advanced radar capabilities. It is regarded as one of Canada's largest overseas military commitments since the Afghanistan mission.

Wildfire smoke's impact on health.



Medical professionals stress that the risks are not limited to immediate symptoms like coughing, throat irritation, and difficulty breathing. Long-term studies suggest that consistent exposure increases the risk of heart attacks, strokes, and premature death. Children and seniors are particularly at risk.

CBC News reported that Canada continues to face one of its worst wildfire seasons on record, and the health impacts of smoke exposure are increasingly alarming. Health experts are warning that long-term exposure to wildfire smoke is associated not only with respiratory issues like asthma and chronic bronchitis but also with cardiovascular problems and metabolic conditions such as diabetes.

In 2025, more than 4,000 active wildfires have been reported across the country, forcing thousands of evacuations and severely degrading air quality in multiple provinces. Cities such as Vancouver, Saskatoon, and Winnipeg have recorded some of the highest global air pollution levels during peak fire events, impacting both vulnerable groups and the general population.

Public health agencies recommend reducing outdoor activities during smoky conditions, wearing protective masks when necessary, and using air purifiers indoors. While wildfire management remains a national challenge, experts agree that climate change will make such events more frequent and severe, making smoke-related health issues an urgent public policy concern.



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