



A Maytree idea

Canada's Changing Immigration Policies: What Employers Need to Know

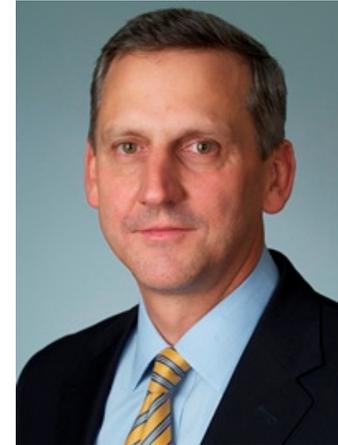
December 5, 2012 – 12-1 pm

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Agenda

1. Introduction by **Kirk Dudtschak**
Senior Vice-President, Strategy and
Human Resources, Canadian Banking,
RBC
2. Presentation by **Naomi Alboim**
Senior Fellow and Adjunct Professor,
School of Policy Studies, Queen's
University and Maytree Senior Fellow
3. Question & Answer Period



Introduction

- Two-time winner of Canada's Best Employer for New Canadians award
- Three-time winner of Canada's Best Diversity Employer
- Mentoring in several cities across Canada
- Offering internships through Career Bridge
- RBC Foundation supporting programs to connect SMEs with immigrant talent in Calgary, Halifax and Toronto

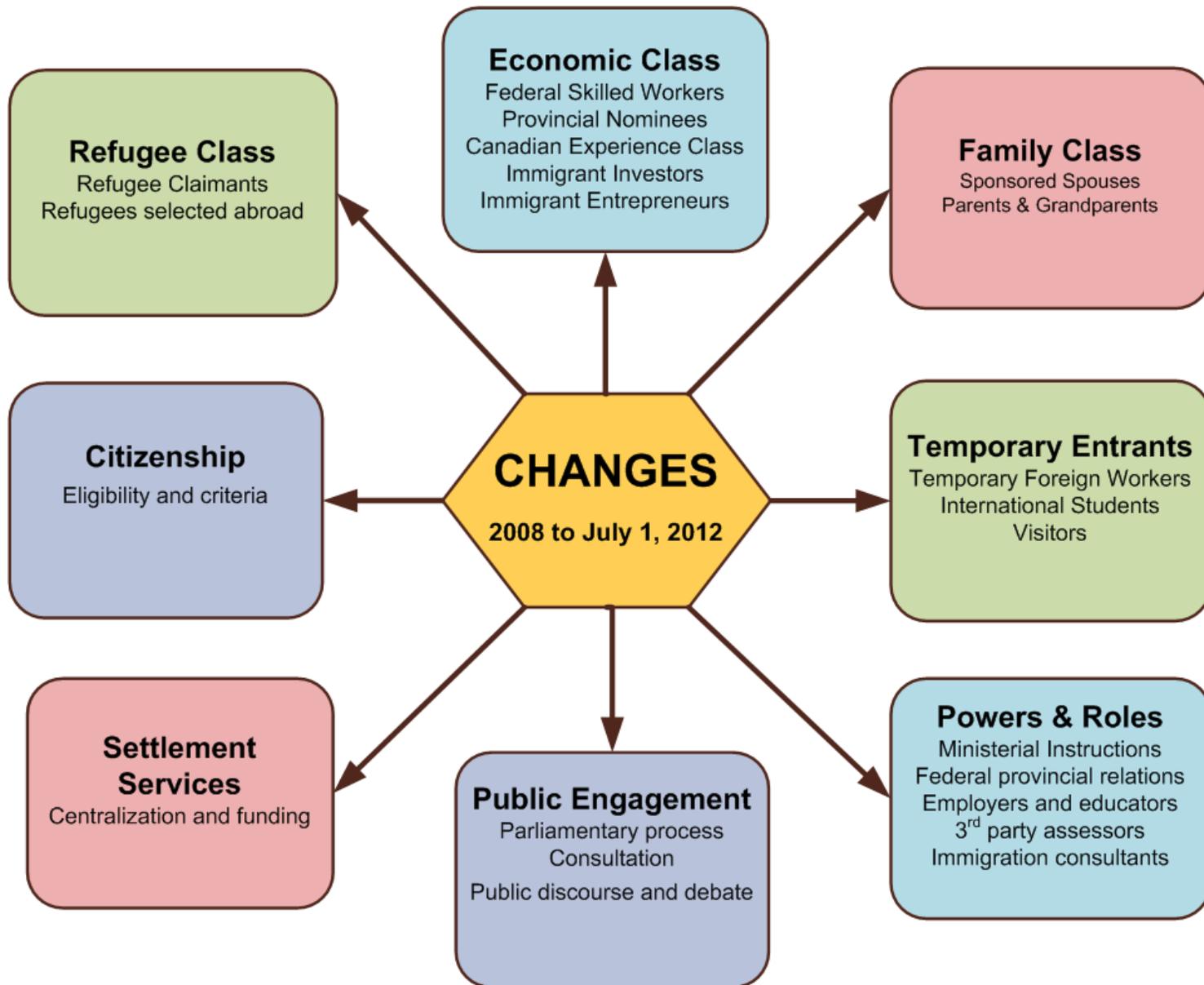


Overview of presentation

1. Pace and scope of change
2. Policy and program changes
3. Implications and questions for employers

Pace and scope of change

- Period of unprecedented change in federal immigration policies from 2008 to mid-2012 with no signs of stopping
- Changes affect:
 - Every aspect of immigration policy and programs
 - Process for immigration reform
 - Powers and roles of players
 - Discourse on immigration
- Potential individual and cumulative impact is shaping the future of Canada



Overall federal directions

- Tighter requirements for permanent entry of all classes
- Facilitation of temporary entry as foreign worker or international student
- More opportunities to transition to permanent residence for some temporary entrants
- Tougher rules for citizenship
- Changing powers and roles: more centralization and more role for third parties

Mix of policy/program changes

- Some seem positive (e.g. new selection criteria for FSW, new trades program)
- Others problematic (e.g. increase in low-skilled temporary workers)
- Many too early to tell, policy and implementation details unknown, will need close monitoring and evaluation
- Some evidence based (e.g. language requirement for PNPs)
- No evidence for others (e.g. harder citizenship requirements)
- Others seem counter to evidence (e.g. less than prevailing wage for temporary foreign workers)

Topics for today

- **Economic immigrants**
 - New selection criteria for all streams (FSW, PNP, Business Class)
 - Federal Skilled Trades program
 - Expression of Interest model
- **Temporary entrants and transition to permanent residence (CEC)**
 - Temporary Foreign Workers
 - International Students
- **Changing roles**
 - Employers
 - Assessors
 - Regulators
 - Post secondary institutions

Federal Skilled Workers

Changes Proposed

- Rigorous minimum language standard
- 3rd party assessment of academic credentials
- More points for younger age
- AEO/LMO process for job offers
- Separate stream for trades
- Expression of Interest model (downstream)

- Moratorium on new applications until regulations in force

Potential concerns

- Harder to qualify but possibly better short term results
- Emphasis on language, education and age are supported by evaluation – but nuances important
- Language standards will change source countries without consideration of second-generation success and other objectives
- 3rd party assessment of education credentials will bring objectivity but raise expectations. Eliminates those with no equivalent to completed Canadian credential. Regulated occupations still problematic.

...potential concerns

- Youth is a predictor of success. But young will compete with other new entrants. Applicants over 47 are at prime of careers and their children can be current or future contributors.
- Processing of LMOs/AEOs will need to be quick enough to be effective
- New trades stream good idea but one year employment offer/certificate of qualification, voluntary/compulsory trades, employer roles, CLB level, all potentially problematic.

Expression of Interest model

- New Zealand model: two step application process adapted by Australia
- Initially for FSW, potentially beyond (all economic class? PNP? TFW?)
- Pre-screened pool available for review by FPT governments, employers
- If not invited to apply within time period, application returned
- Intake management tool: no backlogs
- Many operational questions

Provincial Nominee Programs

Changes Implemented

- Imposition of caps
- Language requirement for low and semi skilled

Changes Proposed

- Focus on economic objectives (no students or family)

Potential issues

- Language requirement is a first step towards national standards
- Imposition of caps (pending redesign?) has strained federal-provincial relations: provinces demanding more: impact on levels
- Unclear re relationship to EOI system
- Removal of occupational list, effective trades stream, and effective EOI could reduce need for PNPs

Business Class

Changes Proposed:

- Immigrant Investor Program:
 - Switch to “high value global investors” with active involvement. Risks transferred to individuals.
- Immigrant Entrepreneur program:
 - Potential 5 year pilot on “start-up visa” for limited numbers (2,750) over limited period following consultation
- Moratorium on new applications until new programs designed

Temporary Foreign Workers

- Collection of programs
- Demand driven: no targets, caps
- Significant increase in entries overall: domestic worker and resource implications
- Accelerated LMOs: 15% less than prevailing wage will result in more TFWs, could depress wages
- Significant increase in Low Skilled Pilot despite evidence. No legal transition to permanent residence unless PNP
- Little enforcement of new protections: complaint based
- Four year limit for workers, but not for employers
- High end TFWs will be able to transition to PR after one year instead of two

Canadian Experience Class

- Easier transition for some TFWs and international students is welcome. But two-step immigration should not become the norm.
 - Better to enter with full rights, access to services, and on track for citizenship
 - Increased CEC numbers means fewer PRs from other groups
- Efforts to attract and retain highly educated students have had some limited success. Access to work permits is draw for some. Supports and services are necessary.
- New regulations to authorize host institutions, require students to be in school, and limit access to work permits to bona fide students during and after graduation

Changing powers and roles

1. Increased Ministerial power and decreased role of Parliament (Ministerial Instructions, Budget and Omnibus Bills)
2. More centralization of power, decision making and settlement service delivery to Federal government from Provinces
3. Increased role for third parties: employers, educational institutions, assessors in selection process, with no concomitant responsibility for settlement or certification

Implications and questions for employers

- **Increased language standards:**
 - different source countries; still need occupation-specific and soft communication skills. Don't forget family members and other classes.
- **Credential assessment pre-application:**
 - Will employers accept assessment for employment purposes?
- **Trade stream:**
 - Accept certification? Offer apprenticeship towards licensure?
- **EOI:**
 - Role of individual employers, sector councils
- **PNP:**
 - Future directions?

.. questions and implications for employers

TFW:

- Review underway
- LMO process
- Monitoring and enforcement
- Supports and services
- Four year maximum?

Employer recruitment options

- Recruit employed, unemployed, under-employed, under-represented in Canada (citizens, immigrants of all classes) through assistance of IECs, ISOs and other NGOs or placement organizations
- Recruit international students (3 year open work permits)
- Review training, wages, working conditions, mobility assistance, infrastructure and technology investment possibilities
- Recruit permanent residents through AEO/LMOs, EOI, Trades stream, PNP (possibly through CIIP)
- Recruit TFWs from abroad

Conclusion

- Huge changes in play
- Implementation details will be key
- Monitoring and evaluation will be necessary to do mid course corrections as required
- Immigration essential to the country's economic, social and cultural future
- Effective immigrant labour market integration is key for employers, immigrants, their families, and society at large
- Working together will be necessary to make this happen

Question & Answer Period

Please type your questions in the Questions box in the centre of your screen.

