

# Canada Received 50,380 Asylum Claims In 2017

## Average Of 50 Interceptions Of Irregular Migrants Through Quebec Border In January This Year

OTTAWA: Canada received a total of 50,380 asylum claims in 2017, according to the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Irregular Migration. Of these claims, 20,593 (41 per cent) were made by irregular migrants.

In January 2018, in-Canada asylum claims reached approximately 3,965. Of these claims, 1,517 were made by irregular migrants and 96 per cent were made by asylum seekers who crossed the border between ports of entry in Quebec.

Members of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Irregular Migration came together during the weekend to report on their respective progress and

challenges in addressing irregular migration. Federal Minister and Task Force Chair, Marc Garneau emphasized that the ongoing response to the increase in asylum seekers has truly been a whole-of-government effort. Many federal departments, agencies, and provinces have been involved, and the leadership shown by all had permitted an efficient response to a fluid situation.

Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship (IRCC), Ahmed Hussen, said that flows of irregular migrants crossing the border in Lacolle, Quebec, have remained steady in 2018 with an average of 50 interceptions per day in January.



He said his department continued to examine volumes to identify any possible changing patterns with irregular migrants especially for those nationalities for which Temporary Protected Status in the US will soon expire. A high number of work per-

mits also continued to be delivered to regular and irregular migrants across Canada within the 30-day service standard; 97 per cent of work permit applications submitted by irregular migrants have been approved and only around 3 per cent have been refused.

More than 11,100 work permits were issued to irregular migrants who entered in Quebec since April 1, 2017. An additional 1,343 work permit applications have been approved for irregular migrants who entered Canada outside of Quebec.

Hussen said the mobile processing unit at Lacolle that was used from November 7, 2017, to February 9, 2018, processed 720 asylum claims. He said the units would be deployed at other border points across Canada if needed. Pic: Asylum seekers approach RCMP officers while crossing the Canadian border in Champlain, N.Y. The Canadian Press/Ryan Remiorz. - CP

# Report Calls For Ways To Retain Immigrants In Atlantic Canada

FREDERICTON: A new report says if Atlantic Canada wants to solve its economic and demographic problems, it must become more than a stopover for immigrants.

The report entitled "The People Imperative" was released Wednesday at a one-day summit on immigration and revitalization in Fredericton. The report has been prepared by the Public Policy Forum, an Ottawa-based think tank with ties to business and government.

It says increasing immigration won't work for Atlantic Canada unless people choose to stay. Right now the region has the lowest immigration retention rates in the country.

Nova Scotia has a five-year immigrant retention rate between 2011-2015 of 72 per cent, while Newfoundland and Labrador is at 56 per cent, New Brunswick is at 52 per cent, and P.E.I. is at just 18 per cent. No province outside Atlantic Canada has a retention rate below 80 per cent.

Atlantic Canada needs to boost immigration and retention if it is to combat the demographic challenge of an aging population.

Frank McKenna, deputy chair of TD Bank group, former premier and Canadian ambassador

to the United States, said it's a challenge when you see population numbers dropping in parts of the region.

"We have a time bomb going off in that our population is not just declining, but it's aging as well. On average our population is eight years older than that of Alberta. And that means that we face higher health care costs per

capita," he said. McKenna said more must be done to attract and retain immigrants, and that includes providing more services such as language training, and getting more employers involved.

"New immigrants want to be with their fellow citizens in terms of the food they eat, the God they worship, the culture they respect, and we don't have a lot of those

tracks laid down," he said.

Nearly two-thirds of all immigrants to Canada in 2013-2017 arrived in one of the three largest centres, while the Atlantic region received 4.6 per cent of immigrants. Still, McKenna said the federally sponsored Atlantic Immigration Pilot program is working, but may need more resources. The Atlantic region is also

losing many of its young people who are moving in search of better jobs and better pay. The report says the region has a lot of positive aspects that need to be promoted, including quality of life. It said retaining more international students for the region would be a huge win, and governments should proactively recruit entrepreneurs to Atlantic Canada. - CP

## Consultations On Anti-Racism Strategy

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it's a problem if you only study all the time, but don't have actions," Singh told reporters in French. "We want the government to act."

Wednesday marked the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which the United Nations decreed in 1966 should fall every year on March 21, the anniversary of a deadly crackdown on an anti-apartheid rally in South Africa in 1960.

A survey released by the Association of Canadian Studies to coincide with the day suggests concerns remain about racism in the country.

About half of respondents in an online web panel said they believed racism was a serious problem in their province. The results suggest respondents who have more contact with different minority communities tended to have more favourable views towards those communities \_ a finding especially true for younger respondents, said Jack Jedwab, the association's president.

The survey also offers insight into how non-Indigenous Canadians view their role in efforts to foster reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and accept responsibility for the historic injustices.

Asked whether "all Canadians" should share responsibility for past wrongs like the residential school system, 48.5 per cent of respondents said they either somewhat or strongly agreed with the premise \_ similar levels to last year. Just over half of respondents expressed interest in having a dialogue with Indigenous Peoples about reconciliation. - CP



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