Nova Scotia
Office of Immigration
Annual Report 2015
The year 2015 was extremely busy and productive for the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration. I’m pleased to present our first Annual Report, highlighting the progress we’ve made in the last year.

Immigration is a top priority for Nova Scotia, because it has to be. We have an aging population and persistent challenges with outmigration.

At the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration, we’re facing those challenges head on. We’re strengthening our Provincial Nominee Program, maximizing federal opportunities and being quick and innovative.

We’re also encouraging Nova Scotians to create more welcoming communities and reach out to newcomers. Last summer and fall, it was wonderful to hear Nova Scotians expressing a strong desire to advance immigration at our “Community Conversations” and first-ever Immigration Summit. Since then, we’ve witnessed many examples of individual and community leadership.

Please also take a look at the highlights on pages 4 + 5 of this report to see the new levels we’ve set in terms of attraction and retention and the changes we’ve made to strengthen our Provincial Nominee Program.

We’ve gained considerable ground in 2015, but I’m most proud of our response to the Syrian refugee crisis. Canada’s commitment to resettle 25,000 refugees called for an unprecedented local effort. Our provincial response was led by the Office of Immigration, the Emergency Management Office (EMO) and the Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS), with the help of the YMCA, 211 and other key partners. People and communities, across the province, also stepped up to donate goods, volunteer time, explore private sponsorship and welcome our new residents. I’ve never been prouder of our province and its people.

In 2016, let’s keep going.
Let’s keep advancing immigration.
We can do it together.

Lena Metlege Diab
Minister of Immigration
Highlights of a Remarkable Year

We’ve welcomed more newcomers to Nova Scotia, strengthened our Provincial Nominee Program, connected communities, and championed diversity.

Here’s what we’ve accomplished:

3,403 people immigrated to Nova Scotia. That’s the highest number in 10 years!

Retention also increased, with 74 per cent* of the people that immigrated to Nova Scotia between 2008 and 2013 still living in the province.

Our provincial nominations doubled from 700 to 1,350.

We filled our initial allocation (1,050 nominations) by mid-year and successfully negotiated additional spots (an extra 300 nominations).
We were the first province in Canada to take advantage of Express Entry, launching not one, but two Express Entry streams.

We engaged hundreds of Nova Scotians in meaningful conversation about the immigration system and the future of our province.

We responded to the Syrian refugee crisis by offering to settle up to 1,500 people and coordinating a provincial response.

We delivered outstanding settlement services across the province with the help of the Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia, the YMCA, and other key partners.

We launched a new online application system for our Provincial Nominee Program as well as a new French website.

Our business team helped employers use the immigration system to fill their workforce gaps.

And we promoted Nova Scotia as an attractive immigration destination at five international/domestic recruitment shows.

*Source: Statistics Canada*
RETI NGI NG IN TERN ATI ONAL GRADUATES

We’re fortunate to have thousands of international students attending our post-secondary institutions each year.

We need to keep more of these bright, talented, young people in Nova Scotia after graduation, so they can contribute to our economy and build lives here. In March 2015, we added a second Express Entry stream to our provincial program to make it easier for international graduates to gain permanent residency. Some big employers, like IBM and Grant Thornton, had let us know that their international employees were not being drawn from the federal Express Entry pools, so we designed a second Express Entry specifically for international graduates who had at least one year of experience working for a Nova Scotia employer. When Nova Scotia Experience: Express Entry launched, it was the first stream of its kind in Canada.

In 2015, we also:
- announced our plans to add a Business stream for international graduates to our provincial program, becoming a national leader in that area;
- visited every university and community college campus in Nova Scotia to share information on immigration opportunities; and
- hosted a town hall–style Twitter chat on retaining international graduates in March 2015, which caused our #MakeNSHome hashtag to trend across Canada.
Halifax Chamber @halifaxchamber
The ivory report challenged NS to double its rate of international student retention to 10% - do you think it's possible?
#makeNShome

NS Immigration @nsimmigration
@halifaxchamber Young immigrants need jobs to stay. We need to keep working together to create opportunities
#makeNShome

Demetrius Ferguson @dferg_6
How many NS businesses hire international students right out of university?
#makeNShome

Taylor Quinn @taylorquinn92
#NovaScotia companies have a choice, fill a role or hire youth who bring #intl view to make a real impact #makeNShome @NS_ERDT @nsgov #dal

Kanika Anand @kani1988
I would love to stay in NS if I get a full time job here. People are very welcoming in Wolfville and they are helpful #makeNShome

Sasha Sears @SashaDSears
Are there plans to create entrepreneur stream for int'l students? We are missing out on starts b/c they don't fit current mold #makeNShome

NS Immigration @nsimmigration
@SashaDSears @BeatButton We are working on developing a business stream that suits Nova Scotia. Stay tuned! #makeNShome
Five years ago, Manchester-native Nicola Barker was leasing and managing The Flower Pot, a tiny pub in Bedford, just outside Northampton, after 18 years of working in the hospitality industry.

Today, she lives an ocean away on Canada’s Atlantic coast, working as a human relations manager for HB Studios, an independent video game developer nestled in the traditional fishing community of Lunenburg.

And the long-time big city resident is pleasantly surprised to be enjoying the peace and quiet of the picturesque community of 2,300 people, which is a designated UNESCO World Heritage site.

“I’m a city person but I love the quiet,” says Nicola, who moved here in 2011 when her partner, Alan Bunker, was offered a good career opportunity. “It’s a very safe environment where I can walk my dog at 10 p.m. at night. I like that I can be at the beach within half an hour of finishing work.”

I’m a city person but I love the quiet

She has added sea kayaking and hiking to her lifestyle since settling as a permanent resident in Canada, as well as weekly visits to the local farmers’ market.

But while Nicola, who has lived in London and throughout the United Kingdom, enjoys the relaxed atmosphere, she also likes that Lunenburg is only an hour’s drive away from Halifax and one of her favourite cities.

“Halifax is not so big that you feel you’re going to be swallowed up by it, and you feel safe. It has all the amenities of a city without feeling like a city.”
The couple had visited Canada before they moved here but had not actually travelled to Nova Scotia. Still they did plenty of online research before they took the plunge—something she highly recommends.

“You need to do as much research as possible and do more than you think you need,” says Nicola, adding it’s important to have a point person to help guide you through the process and paperwork once you decide to immigrate.

In her human relations role with HB Studios, which has 80 employees from around the globe, Nicola now finds herself helping employees through the same process she went through. She points to great public schools and health care as reasons to consider Nova Scotia, and some of the best restaurants in the province and a strong sense of community, as reasons to choose Lunenburg.

“I love the community feel to Lunenburg,” says Nicola. “I like that people look after each other and look out for each other.”
Welcoming Communities

We all have a role to play in welcoming newcomers. In 2015, it was great to see people talking positively about immigration and taking action in their own communities.

Community Conversations on Immigration

In the summer of 2015, we facilitated eight Community Conversations on Immigration in different parts of the province. Our plan was simple: we wanted to bring newcomers, settlement workers, employers, and municipal leaders together to identify areas of strength and challenge, and commit to working together.

We held conversations in Amherst, Grand Pré, Bridgewater, Clare, Sydney, New Glasgow and Halifax (2).

Then, people across the province started taking action. An employer on the South Shore began teaching other employers about our Provincial Nominee Program, and three participants in Pictou created a Welcoming Centre in their local library.

Immigration Summit

To build upon the success of our Community Conversations, we held an Immigration Summit at historic Pier 21 in October 2015. More than 200 people attended the daylong conference, including newcomers, international students, settlement workers, employers, municipal officials, and representatives from universities, professional associations, and cultural groups.

Minister Lena Metlege Diab opened the summit, with Wadih Fares and Colin Dodds, co-chairs of the Premier’s Immigration Advisory Council, offering advice and encouragement during the opening session. We also presented the results from our Community Conversations, hosted table conversations, and challenged everybody to keep pushing ahead.

“We’re doing a good job,” Wadih told the crowd at the end of the summit, “but we need to do more. We have this momentum, let’s leverage [it].”
“It’s a bit humbling,” says Carol Logan, director of human resources for the Prince George Hotel, about receiving the 2016 Employer Award for Refugee Employment. The award, given in partnership by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and Hire Immigrants Ottawa, recognizes employers that make a significant contribution to supporting the integration of refugees.

“We don’t think of ourselves as doing anything special,” she continues. “We’re just being human.”

Established in 1986, the Prince George has a long history of hiring immigrants and refugee clients of the Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS), who nominated the hotel for the award. They were also one of the first companies in Halifax to offer on-the-job skills training, including English, to newcomer employees.

“When we recruit, we look for the right person for the job,” says Logan. “We’re looking for someone with the right attitude first, because we can teach skills, we can’t teach attitude.”

Immigrant and refugee employees often have that right attitude, which includes being loyal and hardworking, taking their job seriously, being reliable, and taking great pride in the work they do.

As Logan explains, the new recruit has access to a translator or English teacher all day long on the job, which allows them to focus on learning the language in a real-life context. But it may be what the Prince George does for newcomers off the job that is the real reason they won the award.

Logan and her team have met newcomers at the airport; set up living accommodations for them with goods donated by the staff; filled their fridges; helped them with their
paperwork; and more. She says the team doesn’t make a big deal about these things, but doing them has made a big difference for the hotel. They’ve been able to regularly fill job openings and build a healthy, diverse workplace.

Her advice to other employers is to be open minded, engaged, and to build relationships with organizations that can support them through the process. Language, she says, is not a barrier, and helping employees learn English is an investment that pays off.
The Refugee Effort

We—like all Canadians—were eager to help those displaced by the humanitarian crisis in Syria.

Coordinated Response

When the federal government announced its plans to resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees by March 2016, we committed to welcome up to 1,500 people through government and private sponsorship.

We also:

- donated $50,000 to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to support the international humanitarian effort (UNHRC);
- led the organization of an operational planning group using the Provincial Coordination Centre and the expertise of the Emergency Management Office, in partnership with ISANS, the YMCA, the Red Cross, and many others;
- convened a cross-government working group to prepare provincial services and programs, such as education, labour, and health;
- worked with community groups, municipalities, Sponsorship Agreement Holders, and universities to support private sponsorship efforts;
- engaged the 211 phone service to coordinate offers of support from Nova Scotians; and
- established a Refugee Donations Drop-off Centre in Halifax.
Public Support

People and communities across the province also stepped up.

More than 5,500 people visited our Refugee Donations Centre in Bayers Lake in December and January, donating thousands of items to the refugee effort; and approximately 130 groups started exploring private sponsorship.

Settlement

Our settlement partners also rose to the challenge. Organizations like the Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS) and the YMCA embraced our new residents, ensuring smooth arrivals and transitions.

What’s next?

With more than 1,000 Syrian refugees now living in Nova Scotia, the refugee effort has moved into its second phase.

In the weeks and months ahead, we’re going to stay focused on helping our new residents learn English, find jobs, join communities, and make connections.

We all have a role to play.

Let’s keep going.
Syria’s civil war is the worst humanitarian crisis of our time, forcing millions of people to flee their homes—many with only the clothes on their backs.

That was the case for 33-year-old Ammar Turkmani, who arrived in Nova Scotia in February 2016 along with his wife, five young children, and 17 other Syrian refugee families.

"Everybody was so nice," he says through an interpreter. "That was the big surprise when we arrived here. We could see the smiles on all the faces. They didn’t even know us! And then we started smiling back."

Ammar says it helped that he and the other families—all government-sponsored refugees were settled close to each other in Halifax’s Armdale neighbourhood, but they’re not just keeping to themselves.

Despite landing in the middle of winter, the first thing Ammar and his fellow refugees noticed was the warmth of the welcome they received.

They’ve invited their Canadian neighbours over to taste Syrian cooking, and, in turn, have been invited to the neighbours to try Canadian cuisine. "The food is different, but we’re adapting," says Ammar.

A gym coach and physiotherapist in Syria, Ammar is looking forward to returning to that profession in Nova Scotia. For now, he’s taking English lessons and getting used to his new home city. His children all love going to school and are already learning English, and Ammar says his wife is enjoying the more laid-back, Nova Scotian atmosphere, too. "I told her,“
the people here are nice, you can be more relaxed. You can feel at home.”

One of the things Ammar likes best about Halifax is all the trees, but one kind of tree seems absent.
“I don’t see a lot of fruit trees. Every house in Syria has a garden where we grow our own food and have fruit trees. I wish someday to get a house where I can plant peaches, apricots, and lots of things.”

He also had a great time at this year’s Scotiabank Blue Nose Marathon, where he cheered on the runners from the finish line. He’s planning on being a participant next year.

Ammar stresses that he and all the Syrian families are grateful to be welcomed to Canada and Nova Scotia. He says they want to contribute to this country and are ready to give back in any way they can.

And they already are. When the devastating fire hit Fort McMurray this year, Ammar and all the families pooled what money they could and raised $500 among them to give to the Canadian Red Cross. “It was a small bit,” says Ammar, “after all, this is money the government gave to us to live on. We took some money out of our own food budgets. But we wanted to give. They were suffering. We know what it is to suffer. We are the same.”
Provincial Nominee Program

We strengthened our Provincial Nominee Program in 2015 by maximizing opportunities, being quick and innovative, and designing streams that suit our labour market needs.

Here’s what our system looks like today.

Immigration is a shared federal-provincial responsibility.

Immigration to Canada is administered through the federal government’s Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and regulated through the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (2001).

There are four different categories of immigration to Canada: the Economic Class, the Family Class, the Protected Persons Class, and other (Fig. 1).

Nova Scotia Provincial Nominee Program

Our provincial program, the Nova Scotia Nominee Program (NSNP), gives highly skilled candidates five ways to be nominated for permanent residency. It falls under the federal Economic Class category.

Each year, our province works with private, public, academic, and non-governmental organizations to identify, attract, and nominate foreign nationals who are interested in coming here and contributing to our economy.

The number of immigrants that we can accept through our provincial program is capped by the federal government on an annual basis.

IRCC determines the number of people we can nominate. They also have the final say on all immigration decisions.

We started 2015 with 1,050 (individual) nominations for our provincial program, up from 700 in 2014.

By mid-year, however, we had filled those spots, so we went back to the federal government and successfully negotiated an extra 300 spots.
Immigration Pathways

Economic Class
- High Skilled Economic
  - Federal Skilled Trades
  - Canadian Experience Class
  - Federal Skilled Worker
- Business Immigrant (includes Start-up Visa)
- Provincial Nominee Programs
  - Skilled Worker
  - Nova Scotia Demand: Express Entry
  - Nova Scotia Experience: Express Entry
- Caregivers
- Entrepreneur
- International Graduate Entrepreneur

Family Class
- Spouses, Partners & Children
- Other Relatives
- Parents & Grandparents (Super-visa)

Protected Persons Class
- Refugees
  - Government Assisted
  - Privately Sponsored
  - Visa Office Referred
- Protected Persons in Canada & Dependents Abroad

Other
- Humanitarian & Compassionate

Figure 1: Immigration Pathways
Key Trends

More Immigrants Coming to Canada

The federal government accepted 271,820 immigrants in 2015 (see Table 1). This trend cuts across the system, with both the number of Economic Immigrants and Non-economic Immigrants coming to Canada increasing in recent years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Immigrants to Canada 2011-2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>248,730</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: 2015 Immigration to Canada by Federal Class</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ECONOMIC CLASS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Experience Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caregiver Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial/Territorial Nominees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled Trades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled Workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NON-ECONOMIC CLASS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
More Immigrants Choosing Nova Scotia

More people are also immigrating to Nova Scotia year over year.

In 2015, 3,403 immigrants came to our province, up from 2,668 (Table 3) in 2014 and 2,527 in 2013.

Table 3: Total Nova Scotia Landings by Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2,136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2,339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2,527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2,668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>3,403</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: 2015 Immigrants Landing by Province/Territory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province/Territory</th>
<th>Immigrants Landing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yukon</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nunavut</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Territories</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>35,729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>47,187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>12,518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>14,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>103,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>48,952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>2,578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>3,403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>1,190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newfoundland and Labrador</td>
<td>1,122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Who Are Nova Scotia’s Nominees?

The following tables describe those nominees that have arrived as permanent residents from 2011 to 2015 and includes their source country, age, languages spoken, occupation, and where they settled in Nova Scotia. These numbers also include the spouses and children of the principal applicant.

Source Country

We receive immigration applications from all over the world.

The Philippines was the most common country of origin for immigrants coming to Nova Scotia between 2011 and 2015. The United Kingdom, India, and China were other major source countries.

The number of immigrants we receive from the Philippines has substantially increased over the last five years, appearing as the number one source country for the past three years (Table 5).

Age

Most immigrants that arrived in Nova Scotia between 2011 and 2015 fell into the 30 to 44 age range (Table 6).

Languages

Just over 72 per cent of the people that immigrated Nova Scotia between 2011 and 2015 reported the ability to speak English (see Table 7). The number of French-only speaking immigrants was less than 1 per cent, but 661 immigrants could speak both French and English, putting the percentage with French-language ability at 5 per cent. This percentage was higher in 2011 (7.4 per cent) then it was in 2015 (3.6 per cent).

All principal applicants to the Nova Scotia Nominee Program must have the ability to speak one or both of Canada’s official languages: English and/or French.
Table 7: Official Language Spoken

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>1,549</td>
<td>1,657</td>
<td>1,792</td>
<td>1,942</td>
<td>2,492</td>
<td>9,432</td>
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<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both French &amp; English</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>597</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>777</td>
<td>2,969</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,136</td>
<td>2,339</td>
<td>2,527</td>
<td>2,668</td>
<td>3,403</td>
<td>13,073</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Occupation

The immigrants that landed in Nova Scotia in 2015 came to the province with diverse work experiences (Table 8).

Table 8: Occupations of Immigrants Landing in 2015

- Unique to Processing, Manufacturing & Utilities
- Unique to Primary Industry
- Trades, Transport & Equipment Operators
- Sales & Service
- Art, Culture, & Sport
- Social Science, Education, Government, & Religion
- Health
- Natural & Applied Sciences
- Business, Finance and Administration
- Management Occupations
Where They Settled

The majority of immigrants that come to Nova Scotia settle in urban areas. This trend is not unique to Nova Scotia and can be seen throughout Canada (Table 9).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Halifax</td>
<td>1,588</td>
<td>1,755</td>
<td>1,947</td>
<td>2,066</td>
<td>2,730</td>
<td>10,086</td>
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<td>Cape Breton</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>98</td>
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<td>Colchester</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>81</td>
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<td>Kings</td>
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<td>105</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>363</td>
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<td>Lunenburg</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>76</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>Inverness</td>
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<td>Shelburne</td>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2,339</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,527</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,668</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,403</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,073</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students and Other Temporary Residents

The majority of our temporary residents are international students, followed by workers entering the province through the federal government’s Temporary Foreign Worker Program (Table 10).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study Permit Holders</td>
<td>8,425</td>
<td>9,185</td>
<td>9,206</td>
<td>9,393</td>
<td>10,602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Resident Permit Holders</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Permit Holders</td>
<td>5,762</td>
<td>6,413</td>
<td>6,712</td>
<td>6,222</td>
<td>6,015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IRCC Temporary Residents Q12016 data

The number of international students attending our schools (e.g. high schools, post-secondary institutions, language schools, and private career colleges) has increased by almost 27 per cent over the last five years, with the majority of international students coming from China (Table 11).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source countries for International Students in 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China, People’s Republic of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea, Republic of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahama Islands, The</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom and Colonies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contact us
We look forward to hearing from you.

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