Reception House Waterloo Region

Reception House Waterloo Region is a community-based organization that works with Government Assisted Refugees (GARs).

Our programs and services assist refugees throughout their settlement and integration process, enabling them to lead health and productive lives in their new community.

The services we provide includes:

- Housing Support
- Community Integration & Support
- Community Navigation
- Health and Mental Health Support
- Youth Support & Youth Activities
- Employment Connections

Funded by: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Financé par : Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada

Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs

The Charitable Sector has suffered greatly because of COVID 19, and in many cases, continued to deliver services – both face-to-face, as well as virtual – that was our operational standard. We became by default, an essential service and our staff became essential workers.

Issues Faced/Questions Posed:

- What do we do to support newcomers during this critical phase?
- What does Virtual Service mean?
- How do you support Virtual Service, when many families do not have either Internet Access or the technology to receive VS?
- How can you train families to receive all types of VS when they do not know how to operate a computer and how do you train someone to use a system in a virtual setting?
- Where will the funds come from to change our delivery methodology to online/virtual? And how much will it cost?
- How do we recoup the fundraising $$ lost to COVID?
- How do we pivot volunteers from face-to-face work (which is one of the reasons they became involved) to VS?

Youth Related Issues

Two sets of youth who have experienced unique issues:

- Youth > than 1 year residency
- Youth < than one year residency

Stress at Home – Mental health issues.

Educational Issues – homework/school work on one computer for one child, if there are other children/members of the family that need technology as well.

RHWR continues to explore activities for youth that can be conducted virtually beyond Homework Club. This outreach includes connecting with potential volunteers and community members who may be interested in providing specialized sessions for youth.

Financial Impact

Fund Raising $$ not Realized	Expenses on technology, including a new phone system	Expenses on PPE	Cash and In kind Donations / Not budgeted / Expected
$45,000	$70,000	$6,000	$55,000

Due to the COVID 19 lockdown, fewer services have been available; and therefore, referrals that would normally support settlement have been more limited in scope and essential services that people required have been the priority or only option available (health care, food banks, financial, legal)

In Closing

As Governments consider how best to respond to COVID 19 and its impact on a critical sector of the economy, they must think of the following:

- The Charitable Sector is a key part of the economy and should be treated as such.
- Although not having the same VOICE as the small and medium sized business community, the sector should always be part of the equation when Governments think of a response to an economic crisis. An effort must be made to consult with the sector directly through organizations like:
  - OCASI
  - ONN
  - Imagine Canada
  - Other organizations that support the charitable and not for profit sector

Thank You!

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The Canadian Dream Postponed

Near-term recovery in immigration levels is unlikely

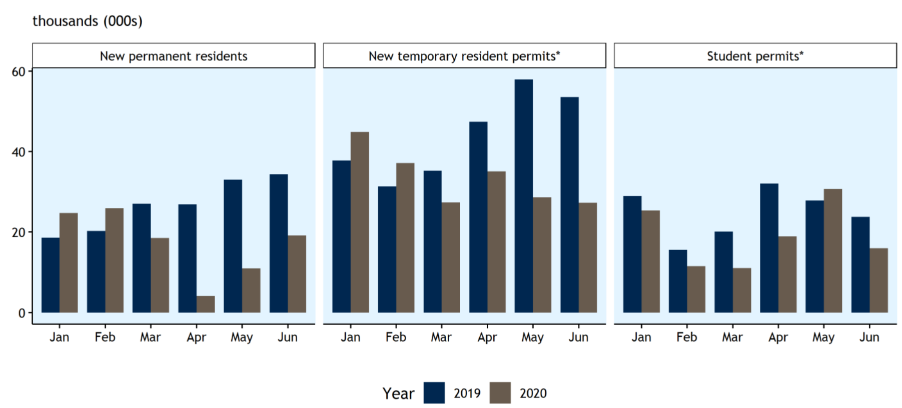
August 20, 2020

Given widespread border closures, lockdowns and the economic upheaval caused by COVID-19, it comes as no surprise that the pandemic has slowed immigration to Canada. New data underscore the extent of the impact, and suggest the slowdown could last for many months. Even under our most optimistic scenario, we expect that, of the 341,000 new permanent residents Canada was targeting this year, only 70% will be granted permanent residency. The reduced flow threatens to, at least temporarily, derail what's been a major source of economic growth for Canada in recent years.

Key Points

- Canada added 34,000 permanent residents in the second quarter, down 67% from the same period in 2019
- The number of temporary work permits that came into effect was down around 50% in the quarter; permits for the agriculture sector were a bright spot
- Just over 10,000 new study permits were processed, down from 107,000 a year earlier
- New visa applications were down 80%, indicating the slowdown could be lengthy
- June saw signs of recovery

Canadian immigration slowed after travel restrictions came into effect



Sources: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, RBC Economics

*Temporary residents and student permits issued reflect the month that the permit became effective

Data available until June 2020

After a two-month drought, some green shoots in June

Canada experienced a broad-based decline in immigration in the April-June period, as would-be newcomers eyeing temporary work, study opportunities, or the chance to build a new life here saw their plans upended by the pandemic. Permanent-resident arrivals plunged to 34,000 in the quarter from 94,000 a year earlier—a 67% drop. June saw a partial recovery, although permanent immigration in the month was still down 44% from June 2019, reflecting

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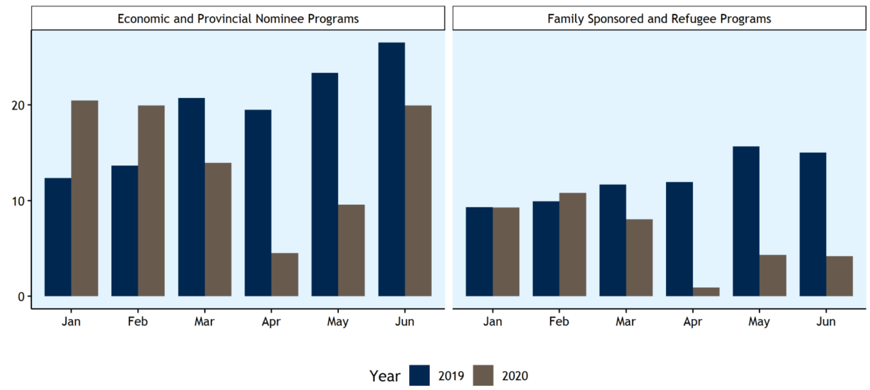
the fact that travel into Canada remains restricted to those who have a permanent resident visa dated on or before March 18.

Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) approved 24,000 new permanent residents from April to June. Given that arrivals into Canada at international airports in June totaled about 4,000 people, it's clear most of those people were already physically in Canada. Until more travel restrictions are lifted, we expect to see much lower levels of new permanent residents even as processing times improve. At the current pace, we expect only 70% of the originally planned 341,000 new permanent residents at the end of the year.

So-called economic immigration has recovered faster

thousands (000s) of new permanent resident arrivals



Sources: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, RBC Economics
Data available until June 2020

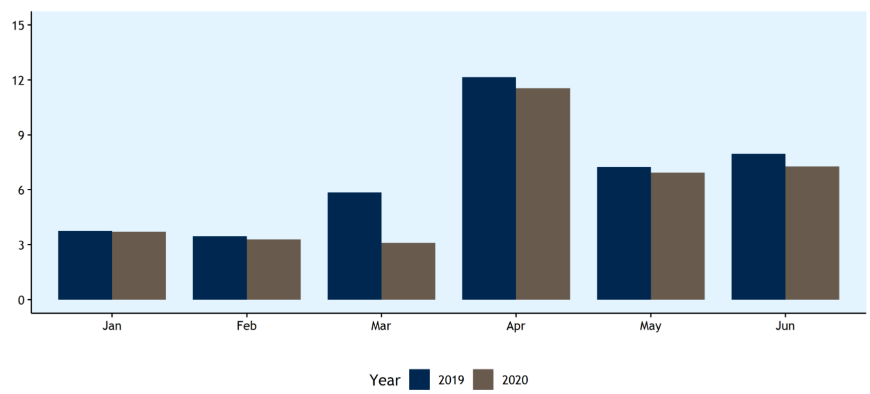
Canada was able to staff farms and greenhouses

When border restrictions were first implemented, the agriculture sector's access to critical seasonal labour was a major concern. With some effort and financial assistance to producers, Canada was able to maintain the flow of temporary foreign agriculture workers at near-2019 levels, despite their requirement to self-isolate for two weeks upon arrival.

For other temporary foreign worker categories (such as live-in caregivers), permit approvals remained well off year-earlier levels. While demand for these workers doesn't match the highs of seasonal agricultural work, many of these workers are employed in healthcare, particularly in caring for the elderly. Given the demands COVID-19 has placed on Canada's healthcare sector, especially in long-term care facilities, the need for workers has never been greater, and any slowdown is likely to add to existing strains.

The agricultural temporary foreign worker pipeline largely remained open

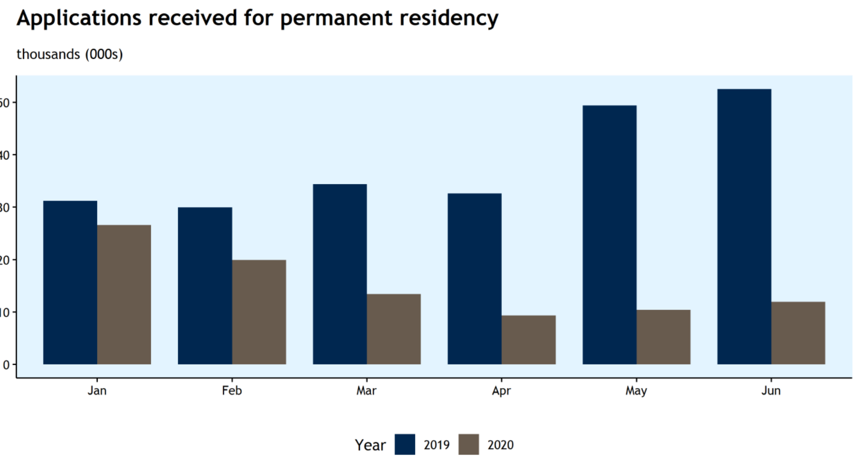
thousands (000s) of workers



Sources: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, RBC Economics
Data available until June 2020

A robust recovery is unlikely in the near term

Data on new permanent resident applications gives us pause for the fall and winter. Visa-application centers remain closed in many countries, limiting the ability of prospective immigrants to even apply. Furthermore, the painful consequences of the pandemic, which include health concerns, increased demands on family caregivers and job losses, are likely to combine to make people less likely to seek to immigrate at the current time. That helps explain why new permanent-residency applications to Canada were down 80% in the second quarter.



Sources: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, RBC Economics
Data available until June 2020

Time from application to approval can take anywhere from one to two years in normal times, meaning Canada may not feel the full effects of COVID-19 on immigration until after 2020. Doubling down on programs that encourage immigrants already here temporarily—like students and TFWs—to remain permanently might be Canada's best bet to keep the flow of immigrants high.

Of the 24,000 new permanent residents this quarter, around 58% had been TFWs, students, or in the International Mobility Program. Typically only about 20% of new permanent residents come from such temporary permit holders.

Why It All Matters

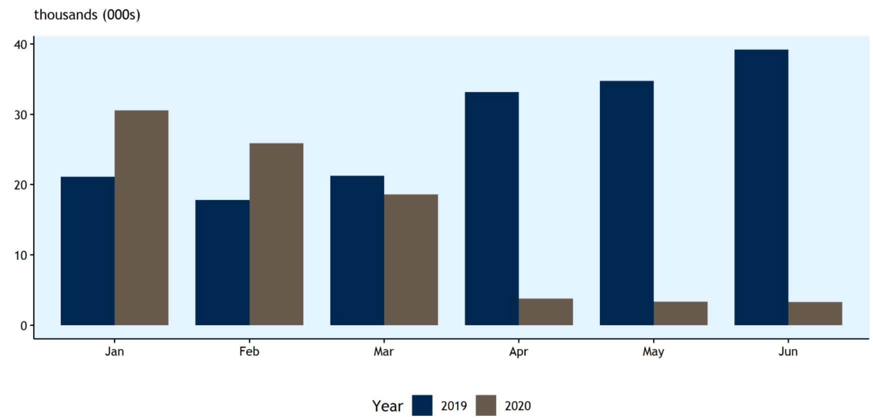
Even as Canada focuses its energy to confront the realities of COVID-19, the demographic challenges of the next decade remain. High levels of immigration are required to support:

- Canada's rapidly aging population (especially the costs of eldercare);
- the growth of Canada's cities (disruptions may reverberate through housing and rental markets);
- Canada's post-secondary institutions (which lean heavily on international students to fund operations)
- innovation (by drawing on the world's best talent);
- the goal of building a diverse, inclusive Canada

The return of students remains an open question

As we head into the fall, there isn't much clarity on the number of international students that will arrive to start the semester. The number of new study permits that were finalized in the second quarter was worrisomely low: only about 10% of the normal volume was processed compared to the same time period last year. Since July and August are historically the busiest months for new study visas, it remains to be seen whether processing rates can recover. The introduction of the two-stage approval process, which lets some students begin their studies in their home countries online without first entering Canada, may provide a buffer to colleges' and universities' tuition receipts until a more normalized process is in place. However, if these low numbers reflect also a steep decline in new applications – something similar to the 63% drop in temporary resident visa applications across all categories in June – then colleges, universities and the towns that house them may be in for a difficult year, financially. While disruptions to all types of immigration will prove costly, the pain caused by the failure of students to arrive is particularly acute and not something that can be made up easily in years to come. It may prove to truly be a lost year.

Number of new study permit applications processed has plummeted since March



Sources: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, RBC Economics

Data available until June 2020