



Fulfilling the Promise: Integrating Immigrant Skills into the Canadian Economy

by

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and

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Summary

Vision

The Maytree Foundation envisages a system in which Canada values and benefits from the skills, training, education and experience of skilled immigrants by expediting labour market entry in their field of expertise.

Context

We all benefit when immigrants put their specialized skills to work in the Canadian labour market. The economy is bolstered, skill shortages are alleviated and immigrant families thrive in their new country. The difficulties immigrants face in entering their specialized fields in Canada have been well documented in other studies. This paper focusses on practical solutions.

An environmental scan conducted by the Maytree Foundation identifies a variety of projects and programs across the country that are or have been in place to assist skilled immigrants to enter the Canadian labour market. Some of these initiatives are excellent, notably in Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba, and should be used as models for more systemic implementation. However, many are ad hoc pilots, short-term initiatives or are focussed only on some occupations in very few locations. While there are promising examples of multistakeholder collaborations, all too often key players are not at the table, and there appears to have been little, to date, in the way of formal program evaluation.

Canada's population is aging, its fertility rates are decreasing and its training systems are not producing the numbers of skilled workers needed for the labour force. By the year 2011, it is estimated that 100 percent of Canada's net labour force growth will depend on immigration. The Conference Board of Canada recently concluded that between \$4 and \$6 billion is lost to the Canadian economy each year as a result of unrecognized qualifications, and that immigrants are among those who experience the most serious problems in achieving recognition of their learning. Attracting and integrating skilled immigrants into Canada's labour market have taken on new urgency.

Proposed Approach

To achieve its vision, Maytree proposes that solutions be designed as part of an overall system instead of the current ad hoc approach. Incentives should be put into place so that all players collaborate in the design, delivery and evaluation of effective programs and services. Rather than making skilled immigrants 'start from scratch,' the system would value and recognize their qualifications, focussing on ways to fill quickly any identified gaps.

The system would be supported by sustainable, practical programs and services that respect jurisdictional responsibilities and allow for local or occupational variations. To increase the likelihood and speed of labour market entry in one's specialized field, opportunities would be available to begin assessing qualifications and filling gaps while overseas. Programs and services should be transparent and accessible, expediting labour market entry without compromising public interest or safety. They should build on best practices and existing infrastructure, and incorporate new technology.

System Components

The paper proposes a 'systems approach' to facilitate the labour market entry of skilled immigrants in their field of expertise. The system would be composed of the following fundamental components:

- a. Incentives for all stakeholders to collaborate in designing, delivering and evaluating programs and services, and for skilled immigrants to access them.
- b. Access by skilled immigrants to:
 - Information
 - Assessment services
 - Expert advice
 - Bridging programs to fill identified gaps.
- c. A leadership council to foster collaboration, identify priorities and linkages, and communicate results.

The system components are interdependent. The right mix and quality of programs and services will not exist without collaboration from relevant stakeholders. Full collaboration is unlikely to be achieved without incentives. A leadership council can both foster collaboration and provide oversight to the system as a whole.

Access by skilled immigrants to accurate, up-to-date information is essential to make immigration decisions and pursue employment in their specialized field. Assessment services will ascertain how their qualifications compare to their Canadian counterparts, and the specific gaps skilled immigrants need to fill. Expert advice and access to relevant bridging programs can expedite the filling of those gaps, whether academic, language, technical skills or knowledge of Canadian workplace practices.

Proposed Initiatives

Information, Assessment and Expert Advice

An *internet portal* is proposed to ensure skilled immigrants have access – both overseas and in Canada – to relevant, current, up-to-date information and tools to facilitate their decision-making and labour market entry.

Enhanced collaboration in *academic credential assessments* is proposed to achieve Canada-wide coverage, customized services and opportunities to begin overseas.

A network of *labour market counsellors* in educational institutions and specialized community agencies is proposed to provide advice, where needed, in bridging to employment. For some regulated occupations, acknowledged subject matter experts would supervise formal *individual learning plans*.

A formal *mentorship* program is proposed to match Canadian practitioners with skilled immigrants from the same occupation, with opportunities to begin overseas through the internet portal. One-on-one or group coaching would help skilled immigrants navigate the system and gain valuable contacts, exposure and opportunities.

Integrated Bridging Programs to fill Identified Gaps

Colleges and universities would be encouraged to offer *individual academic courses* to fill identified gaps, without requiring a person to take a full diploma or degree program.

Reorientation and expansion of the Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC) program are proposed so that *language assessment and training* are relevant to the workplace.

It is proposed that opportunities be made available for skilled immigrants to upgrade their *technical skills* based on the results of competency-based assessments.

It is proposed that courses, co-op placements and mentorship relationships provide opportunities for skilled immigrants to gain knowledge of *Canadian workplace practices*.

It is proposed that bridging programs be *integrated* where feasible.

Regulatory Reviews

In the licensed professions, it is proposed that regulators be encouraged to *review regulatory requirements*, including Canadian experience, to ensure that standards and practices for internationally trained professionals are relevant, fair and comparable to Canadian-trained, and that aggregate results are reported.

Incentives for Stakeholder Participation and Collaboration

It is proposed that specific *incentives* be put in place to stimulate participation and collaboration by employers, educational institutions, regulators, credential assessment services, professional associations, community-based training and settlement agencies, and skilled immigrants.

Leadership and Accountability

A *leadership council* is proposed. The council would provide an ongoing, multistakeholder venue to ‘champion,’ provide advice, identify priorities, foster collaboration and report on results of the system.

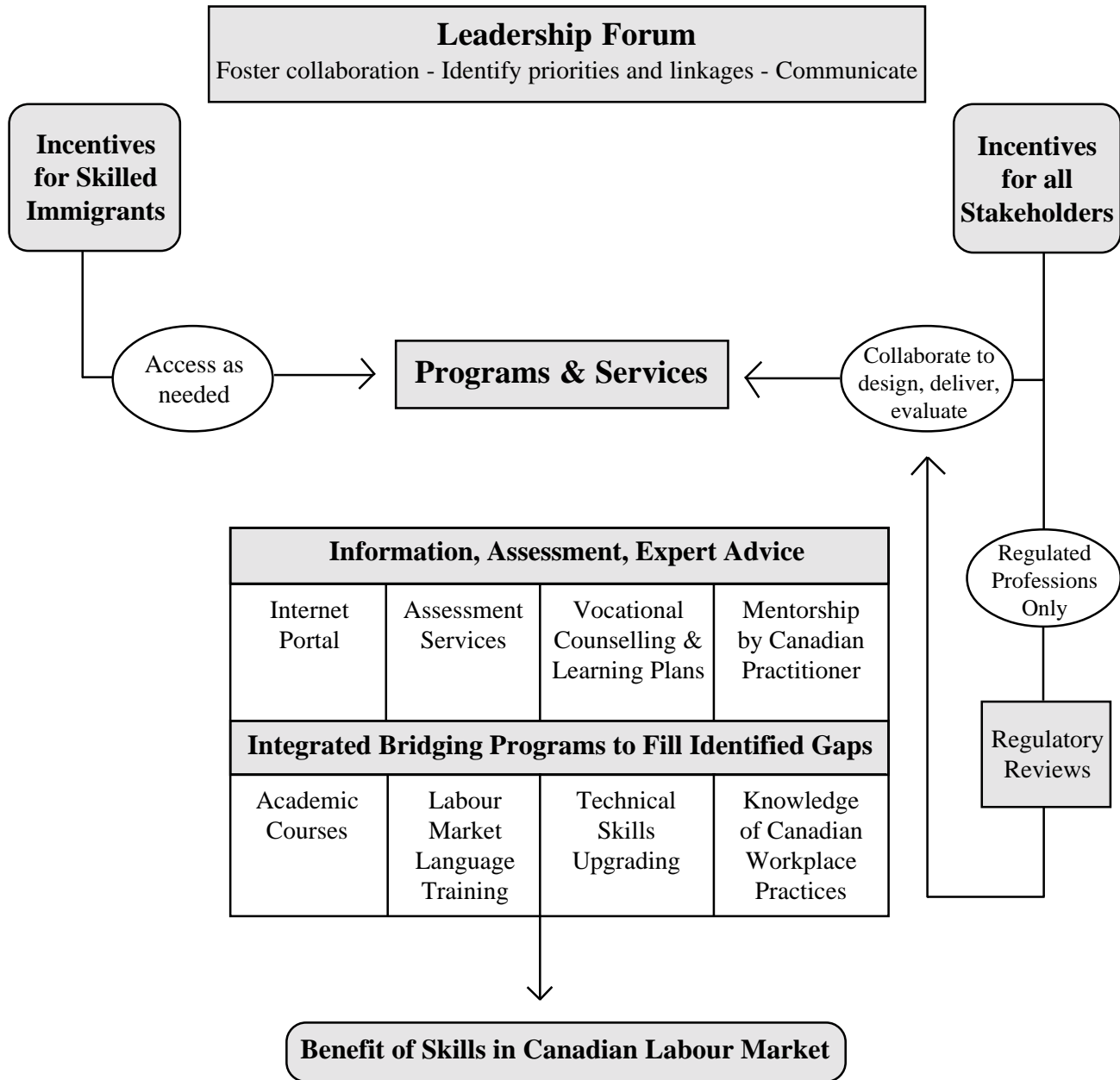
Conclusion

The Maytree Foundation believes the desired system is achievable. As with all change, however, there will be many challenges in moving from concept to reality. Success will depend on buy-in and commitment from the affected parties.

Given the urgent need for immigrant skills in Canada’s economy, it would be ideal for the system as a whole to be implemented immediately. Staged implementation, however, is more practical and viable. As each proposed initiative is implemented, tangible benefits will be achieved, and the synergies of the systems approach will be realized. This paper identifies stakeholders who potentially could take the lead for pursuing each proposal, and others to be involved in the collaboration.

The Maytree Foundation hopes that this document will be a catalyst for discussion and action.

Systems Approach to Facilitate Labour Market Entry for Highly Skilled Immigrants



The Maytree Foundation

The Maytree Foundation is a private charitable foundation established in 1982, that is committed to the reduction of poverty in Canada, particularly among newcomers who are recognized as among the more vulnerable members of society. One of the key objectives of the Refugee and Immigrant Program of The Maytree Foundation is to reduce barriers and improve conditions for immigrants to Canada – in particular, their access to suitable employment. In recent years, Maytree has worked to develop solutions to this issue in three ways: investing in innovative programs and projects around access to professions and trades and the organizational capacity of community based organizations that work on the issue; developing an analysis of the barriers to access to professions and trades; and acting as a facilitator to bring together key stakeholders to find solutions to various parts of the issue.

This work has yielded significant learnings and a grounded understanding of the complexities and challenges that are inherent in this issue. In response, The Maytree Foundation undertook to identify solutions that redress the systemic nature of the problem. To this end, we have partnered with Naomi Alboim and her team of policy consultants to engage in the development of policy alternatives that will offer tangible, practical and doable solutions. We believe that this effort has produced an innovative approach to labour market access for immigrants that is truly integrated and collaborative.

The Maytree Foundation would like to extend its warmest appreciation and acknowledgement to Naomi Alboim and her team for their dedicated contribution to this project. We believe that their experience and knowledge around the issue and of the stakeholders involved have been integral to the depth and scope of the solutions provided in this paper.

As a private foundation, Maytree sees its ongoing role in this work as continuing to provide innovative and strategic ideas, with the hope that new ways of thinking can help all stakeholders move beyond the current challenges and find enduring solutions.

Introduction

We all benefit when immigrants put their specialized skills to work in the Canadian labour market. The Canadian economy is strengthened by the influx of needed skills, while immigrant families thrive in their new country and contribute to the social economic fabric of life in Canada. Difficulties that immigrant professionals and other skilled immigrants encounter in entering their field of expertise in Canada are well documented [Brouwer 1999]. Such difficulties result in delays and nonrecognition or underutilization of education and experience gained outside of Canada.

Rather than elaborating on the barriers, this paper focusses on practical solutions in the context of a ‘systems approach.’ Specifically, the paper:

- Identifies the elements of an integrated system to facilitate labour market entry.
- Proposes specific programmatic initiatives that embody the systems approach.
- Recommends steps for getting started.

The paper starts from the premise that, ideally, a comprehensive integrated system would be in place to facilitate entry of skilled immigrants to the Canadian labour market in their field of expertise. Starting overseas, prospective immigrants would have clear, accurate information about the Canadian labour market and the specific requirements for entry in their occupation. They would have access to self-assessment tools and opportunities to fill gaps in qualifications (if any) while overseas, with the rest completed once in Canada. The requirements to enter their occupation would be comparable to their Canadian counterparts. Upgrading would be customized to fill identified gaps. Opportunities for exposure to the Canadian workplace would be readily available. Governments, educational institutions, regulators, professional bodies, community organizations and employers would work together to ensure that the process from immigration decision to entry in one’s specialized field is transparent, smooth and efficient.

The Maytree Foundation envisages a system in which Canada values and benefits from the skills, training, education and experience of skilled immigrants by expediting labour market entry in their field of expertise. The multiplicity of players and complex jurisdictional roles present special challenges in achieving a truly integrated system. It is nonetheless useful to identify the key components of such a system and steps to achieve it. The initiatives proposed in this paper can be viewed as building blocks for improved labour market entry or, more ambitiously, as the beginning of an integrated system.

As with any systemic change, these proposals will be challenging to achieve. Implementation will depend on a consensus among stakeholders about the urgent need for workable solutions and the merits of the systems approach. The Maytree Foundation hopes that this document will be a catalyst for discussion and action for the benefit of Canada, relevant organizations and the immigrants who come here with their specialized skills, training and aspirations.

Context

Within today's global economy, skilled immigrants have become a sought-after resource. The need to attract and retain immigrant skills is a growing factor in shaping government priorities and policies. Across borders there is heightened competition for high levels of immigrant skills to improve economic performance and strength.

Canada's ability to remain competitive in the global economy will depend on how effective it is in developing, attracting and maintaining the skills required for a knowledge-based economy. As skilled immigrants are increasingly in competitive demand, it is imperative that Canada find ways to employ effectively their skills in the Canadian market.

Skilled labour shortages

Skilled labour shortages in Canada are now well recognized as a serious deterrent to industry growth and global competitiveness. According to a recent survey of small and medium-sized enterprises by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, two-thirds of the firms that hired during the last year stated that their firm's *long-term growth* is harmed by a lack of labour with the right skills. This finding was consistent across provinces, industries and all types of firms. This same survey found that 46 percent of the enterprises responding had difficulties finding qualified labour to meet their staffing needs in 2000. Among small and medium-sized enterprises, the unfilled job rate is 4.7 percent, which conservatively represents 250,000 to 300,000 vacant jobs out of approximately one million in Canada [Bruce 2001].

Similarly, within the manufacturing and exporting sector, the shortage of skilled labour has been cited as a significant barrier to expansion. In the *Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters' Management Issues Survey 2001-2003*, 28 percent of respondents identified the lack of qualified personnel as a constraining factor affecting measurable performance improvement. Likewise, with reference to deteriorating business conditions, 29 percent expected a further deterioration in the availability of skilled personnel. Available skilled labour was cited by 74.6 percent of respondents as a factor for investment location (third most common response after corporate taxes and transportation costs) [CME 2001].

The specifics of labour market conditions vary across sectors, occupations and levels of education. Although efforts are made to develop specific projections, the capacity to do so with accuracy remains speculative and not reliable. There are, however, trends that provide indicators of where critical skills shortages will be found. According to Human Resources Development Canada, approximately 80 percent of new job openings to 2004 are expected to be in the service sector of the economy, primarily in business services, health, accommodation and food services, and personal services industries. The remaining 20 percent of new job creation will be in the goods sector of the economy, mainly construction and manufacturing [Citizenship and Immigration 2001]. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business reports that 59.3 percent of small and medium-sized enterprises in construction and 54.3 percent in manufacturing are concerned with labour shortages [Bruce 2001]. Within the manufacturing sector, although companies have indicated that the skills shortage has lessened in 2001, they have reported significant difficulties in finding and keeping personnel with specialized skills, with engineering topping the list (37 percent), followed by manufacturing management (32 percent), design (24 percent) and machining (21 percent) [CME 2000].

Labour shortages in Canada, for the most part, are also skills shortages. That is, the majority of new jobs being created and those employment opportunities made available through labour force attrition require high levels of skills and knowledge. Slightly more than 70 percent of new jobs created are expected to be in occupations requiring at least some postsecondary training. Occupations requiring postsecondary training are expected to grow at above-average rates (2 percent), while those requiring high school or less are expected to grow at below-average rates (1.2 percent and 0.9 percent, respectively) [HRDC 2000].

Immigration is not the only solution to Canada's labour market problems, but it is a vitally important piece, especially in light of the demographics discussed below.

Demographics

Demographic realities of the Canadian workforce are a key factor shaping current and future labour market needs. It is expected that new job openings to 2004 will be derived in part from economic growth (40 percent), and the remainder (60 percent) from normal attrition in the workforce – retirement and death [HRDC 2000]. The high level of attrition reflects the average age of the workforce and the overall ageing of the Canadian population. With respect to labour market forecasting, the ageing population is coupled with a low fertility rate, further intensifying the impact on the future labour market. Consequently, policy-makers are looking increasingly to immigration to enhance the resource base for the Canadian labour force as well as overall population growth. Based on current trends, net immigration could account for Canada's entire population growth by

the year 2030 [HRDC 2001]. The Honourable Jane Stewart, federal Minister of Human Resources Development, stated in November 2001 that: “Today, 70 percent of the net new entrants to the labour force are immigrants and... by 2011 it is virtually going to be 100 percent. We could be short a million people” [Toulin 2001].

Immigration as part of the solution

Politicians and policy-makers are not alone in looking to immigration as part of the solution to labour market shortages. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business has recommended that the immigration system be used more effectively as a key source of skilled labour, and that the immigration process be streamlined for foreign skilled workers [Bruce 2001]. Immigration historically has been an important tool for economic development and a key factor in the growth of Canada’s labour force. From 1991 to 1996, net immigration (measured to account for both landed immigrant and temporary resident populations) provided 71 percent of Canada’s labour force growth [HRDC 2001].

Table 1 illustrates immigration levels by class.

The overall rate of university graduates among *all* categories of immigrants, including refugees, family class and economic immigrants is substantially higher than that for the Canadian-born in the same age group. Thirty-six percent of all immigrant men and 31 percent of immigrant women have a university degree, compared to 18 percent of Canadian-born men and 20 percent of Canadian-born women.¹ Within the economic class, or skilled workers category, approximately 72 percent of the principal applicants have at least one university degree. When dependants 15 years of age or over are averaged into this figure, the rate is still 59.6 percent.²

Today, Canada is experiencing its highest level of immigration from economic immigrants/skilled workers, with close to 70 percent of immigrants falling under that category. The expectation, on the part of the individuals and Canada, is that economic immigrants will be able to contribute almost immediately to the economy. Historically, this has happened to a certain extent. Economic principal applicants have obtained average earnings equivalent to, or greater than, the average earnings of the Canadian-born as soon as one year after arrival. However, the experience of immigrants who landed in the 1990s contrasts sharply with this history. These immigrants, particularly those who were selected for their skills and higher levels of education, have experienced significantly lower initial earnings than Canadian-born residents and previous cohorts of immigrants. Recent immigrants now have lower rates of employment, which have declined substantially between 1986 and 1996 [HRDC 2001].

Barriers to labour market participation

Unemployment and underemployment of skilled immigrants mean that Canada is not benefiting from their skills and experience, and skilled immigrants are not gaining effective access to the labour market. The barriers to appropriate labour market participation have been extensively documented [Brouwer 1999]. Key among these barriers is the nonrecognition of international credentials and experience by Canadian employers, regulators and educational institutions. Barriers can include the lack of information overseas and in Canada; requirements for ‘Canadian experience;’ lack of labour market language training; lack of consistent, transparent and accessible assessment practices for occupational or academic credentials; and lack of customized upgrading and support.

The Conference Board of Canada recently released a study on the impact of nonrecognition on Canada’s economy. The conclusion from this study is that if the problem of nonrecognition were eliminated, “it would give Canadians an additional \$4.1 billion to \$5.9 billion in income annually” [Bloom and Grant 2001]. While the study focussed on nonrecognition of learning generally in Canada, it did find that immigrants are among those who experience the most serious problems in having their learning recognized. Indeed, more than 340,000 Canadians have nonrecognized international credentials. The study also found there is a lack of employer confidence in international educational qualifications, and that all types of international learning rank lower than Canadian learning even when this learning is supported by a credential document and the Canadian learning is not. Nonrecognition of qualifications has a direct impact on access to employment that is appropriate to the skills, knowledge and experience an individual offers.

**Table 1
Immigration by Class: 2000 and Planned for 2001-2002³**

Class	2000	2001 plan	2002 plan	Average %
Family class immigrants	60,426	57,000-61,000	59,800-63,700	31.3
Economic immigrants	133,201	123,000-136,700	123,000-136,700	66.8
Other immigrants*	3,244	4,200	4,200	1.9
Total immigrants	196,871	187,000-204,600	187,000-204,600	100
Total refugees	26,708 (+3,258**)	22,100-29,300	23,000-30,400	
Total immigrants and refugees	226,837	200,000-225,000	210,000-235,000	

* Includes live-in caregivers, provincial nominees and ‘Special Categories.’

** Kosovar refugees

Environmental scan

As a companion document, Maytree has prepared an *Environmental Scan: Existing Practices and Future Directions in Access to Professions and Trades*. The environmental scan catalogues many solutions that have been tried or proposed across Canada and in some other jurisdictions. The volume of initiatives and ideas underscores the importance and urgency of improving labour market access for skilled immigrants. Some of these initiatives are excellent, notably in Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba, and should be used as models for more systemic implementation. However, they do not appear to be widely known, widely accessible or to have been the subject yet of formal evaluation. Notwithstanding the existence of emerging, promising practices, they do not yet stitch together as an accessible and integrated system.

The initiatives and ideas documented in the environmental scan show that interventions are ad hoc and not part of a systematic approach. Many are project-based as opposed to ongoing programs. Few opportunities for access to information, assessment or bridging are available overseas. While some interventions involve collaboration among multiple stakeholders, significant stakeholders are absent from debate and action.

The environmental scan is available as a ‘living document’ on The Maytree Foundation website at www.maytree.com. Information on initiatives, programs and practices can be forwarded to the website and will be incorporated on an ongoing basis into the document.

Government commitment

There is an economic imperative to increase the skills supply in Canada, yet an existing supply of skills and experience is not being recognized in a meaningful way and from which the Canadian economy is not benefiting. Over the course of the last two decades, governments in Canada have developed their understanding of the issue as well as their interest and commitment to find solutions. In the 2001 *Speech from the Throne*, the federal government made the following promise:

Immigrants have enriched Canada with their ideas and talents. The Government will take steps to help Canada attract the skilled workers it needs. It will also work in co-operation with the provinces and territories to secure better recognition of the foreign credentials of new Canadians and their more rapid integration into society. The Government will re-introduce changes to immigration legislation to streamline and improve the immigration system.

This statement reflects the understanding that solutions to this issue must involve cooperative efforts between governments. The challenges of recognizing the skills, knowledge and experience of immigrants, and their effective integration into the labour market, are steeped in systemic barriers. Therefore solutions also must be grounded in systemic approaches.

Scope: ‘Skilled Immigrants’

This paper proposes solutions for labour market entry by skilled immigrants. Most solutions apply to all skilled immigrants, whether or not they are in regulated professions. A few are tailored to the regulated professions in which candidates have the additional step of obtaining licensure.

The paper does not specifically address the skilled trades. Trades involve different approaches, solutions and players that were not possible to examine within the scope of this project. Canada’s need for skilled tradespersons is evident, and further work needs to be done on solutions tailored to that group. Many solutions (e.g., labour market language training) would benefit all skilled immigrants including those in the trades.

Methodology

In March 2001, the Maytree Foundation established a project team to recommend practical solutions and strategies to facilitate labour market entry of skilled immigrants in their field of expertise. The team was composed of Maytree staff and three public policy consultants (see Appendix 1 – Project Team).

The project team conducted the environmental scan described above and spoke to experts to hear and test ideas. This exchange took place through one-on-one interviews, group meetings and presentations at conferences. Groups that participated included immigrants, colleges, universities, regulators, service providers, employers and governments (see Appendix 2 – Participants).

With the benefit of the helpful input and feedback from the dialogues and environmental scan, the project team prepared this paper to stimulate further discussion and action.

Why a Systems Approach?

The main attraction of a systems approach is having all stakeholders working together to find and implement solutions. Only with multistakeholder participation and collaboration can we ensure the right mix and quality of programs, services and practices to expedite the labour market entry of

skilled immigrants to Canada. While there have been promising examples of multistakeholder cooperation, important players all too often are not at the table. Although jurisdictional challenges are considerable, multilateral collaboration is a worthwhile pursuit that can be accomplished while respecting jurisdictional roles. A system featuring incentives for all stakeholders – including skilled immigrants, employers, educational institutions, regulators, professional associations, academic credential assessment providers, community-based training and settlement agencies, and governments – represents a marked difference from the status quo.

A systems approach has many advantages over the current scenario of ad hoc initiatives. When solutions are designed as part of an overall system, they are focussed on common goals and priorities, while adapting to local and occupational exigencies. The different parts of the system reinforce each other for maximum impact. Stakeholders will see the part they play within the system. Skilled immigrants will see Canada's commitment to putting their specialized skills to work in the economy, and the services in place to help make that happen.

Currently, skilled immigrants may find they have to 'start from scratch' in order to practise in their specialized field in Canada. This process can be discouraging, costly, time consuming and may result in Canada never benefiting from needed skills. The proposed systems approach assumes there are points of commonality with Canadian qualifications. The focus of the system is to identify quickly the commonalities and any gaps, and ensure supports are in place for the skilled immigrant to quickly fill those gaps. Accurate, up-front system information will help create realistic expectations and map out concrete plans to identify and fill gaps. Opportunities to begin overseas will help expedite the path to the Canadian labour market.

Finally, a systems approach provides opportunities for leadership and accountability that an ad hoc approach could never achieve. In a system, leaders can work together to create common goals and priorities, promote collaboration, design practical solutions that build on existing practices and structures, and report on results.

Guiding Principles

Maytree proposes the following principles to guide the development of solutions:

- The ultimate goal is a comprehensive, sustainable system to facilitate labour market entry.
- From considering whether to immigrate to entry in one's specialized field, the process should be transparent, smooth and efficient.

- There should be opportunities to begin the assessment and filling of gaps while overseas.
- System components should work together in an integrated way, with room for variation in how they are achieved, to recognize local or occupational priorities or needs.
- There should be respect for and involvement of the jurisdictional roles of all participants: individual immigrants, employers, educational institutions, professional associations, community service providers, regulatory bodies and governments.
- Success depends on clear accountabilities, identified leadership roles and a spirit of collaboration.
- Policies, programs and procedures should be accessible, fair and transparent. They should not compromise public interest or safety. They should build on best practices and existing infrastructure. They should be practical and able to be implemented relatively quickly and cost-effectively.
- The focus should be on identifying commonalities and filling gaps in skills, knowledge or experience. Skilled immigrants should not be required to ‘start from scratch’ or to ‘go through hoops’ not expected of their Canadian-born counterparts.
- New technology should be employed to support interventions within Canada and overseas.

System Components

The Maytree Foundation proposes a systems approach to facilitate labour market entry for skilled immigrants in their field of expertise. The hallmarks of the system would be the following components:

- a. Incentives for all stakeholders to collaborate in designing, delivering and evaluating programs and services.
- b. Access by skilled immigrants to programs and services that provide:
 - information on labour market, occupational requirements and available programs
 - assessment services to identify qualifications and any gaps to be filled
 - expert advice from Canadian practitioners
 - bridging programs to fill the identified gaps.

- c. A leadership council to foster collaboration, identify priorities and linkages, and communicate results.

a. Stakeholder Collaboration and Incentives

The multiple jurisdictions and players involved in the varied aspects of labour market access for skilled immigrants make collaboration essential. Initiatives to facilitate labour market access can provide results on their own, but would be more effective with the benefits of a collaborative, integrated systems approach. Just as skilled immigrants need to identify and fill gaps in their qualifications, so must the other participants identify and fill gaps in the ability of their processes and practices to facilitate labour market entry. Working together within and across sectors will help to achieve more widespread results.

The following is an example of where collaboration has been in place to positive effect. In licensed professions, regulators determine entry requirements. Educational institutions determine course content in the subject areas of the professions. While respecting each other's autonomy, many regulators and educational institutions work collaboratively to ensure there is a correlation between the courses and the regulatory requirements. Where such collaboration is not in place, there is the risk of skilled immigrants enrolling in a course to fill a gap in their education, only to find they have not met the requirements of the licensing body and are unable to practise their profession in Canada.

Another positive example of cooperation is the many co-op programs in place as a result of partnerships between employers and community colleges. Co-op programs have provided opportunities for students to put their learning into practice, for employers to find longer term recruits, and for the seamless transition from school to work.

While there are instances of multistakeholder collaboration, it is rare to have all the players at the table. The growing recognition of the economic imperatives, however, is resulting in an increased willingness in Canada to work on collaborative solutions to attract and retain skilled immigrants. The chart below lists the key participants and briefly describes their areas of responsibility. It is important to remember that within each category of participant are numerous subcategories – i.e., government departments, individual colleges and universities, regulators for each profession and a wide array of employers. The sheer number and variety of players and the lack of authorized leaders and spokespersons make system-wide collaboration a challenge.

b. Access to Programs and Services

Skilled immigrants need to access information, a credible assessment of their qualifications and gaps according to Canadian standards, and opportunities to quickly fill identified gaps. Some also would benefit from expert advice from Canadian practitioners within their specialized occupation. This section briefly describes the importance of ensuring the required programs and services are available.

Jurisdictional roles

The *federal government* has the lead responsibility for immigration (with provinces, notably Quebec, also having a role) and funds immigrant settlement programs. The federal government also has a lead in human resources development and multiculturalism and is itself the country's largest employer.

Provincial governments provide labour market training, deliver immigrant settlement programs and enact legislation governing regulated professions. They are also large employers.

Municipal governments in immigrant receiving destinations have an interest in social and economic integration, and are themselves large employers.

Employers are responsible for recruitment, hiring and on-the-job training. Many provide co-op work placements in partnership with educational institutions.

Colleges and universities provide educational courses, counselling and advice to their students, and may arrange co-op work placements with employers.

Academic credential assessment services provide comparisons between foreign academic credentials and their equivalents in Canadian institutions.

In licensed professions, *regulators* establish standards of entry, decide how an applicant's competencies will be assessed, and determine whether an individual is qualified for entry into the profession and licensure.

Community-based *immigrant settlement agencies* provide English and French language training, orientation, information and referral services to newcomers, while specialized *training agencies* provide labour market orientation and training.

Professional associations provide services and representation for members of their profession. *Immigrant professional associations* advocate on behalf of immigrant professionals.

Later in this paper, specific program initiatives are proposed, which individually would make a concrete difference in meeting one or more of the above needs, and collectively build an integrated system. Many initiatives previously have been proposed, been under active consideration, or implemented in whole or in part in various sectors or communities, but not as part of a broader system. For each program, it is recommended that there be a designated lead, with collaboration among other parties as appropriate.

While every attempt has been made to identify solutions that are practical, doable and cost-effective, the amount of work required for design and implementation should not be underestimated, even when expanding or building upon existing programs.

Information

It is critically important for skilled immigrants to have clear, accurate, current information on the Canadian labour market, entry requirements for their occupation and Canadian upgrading programs, especially while overseas. First and foremost, this information allows informed decisions about whether and where in Canada to immigrate. Second, it helps to create realistic expectations and avoid unpleasant surprises upon arrival. Finally, the sooner an individual knows what is required, the sooner he or she can begin the assessment process and start addressing the identified gaps, reducing time, energy and money for all involved and facilitating successful labour market entry.

Assessment Services

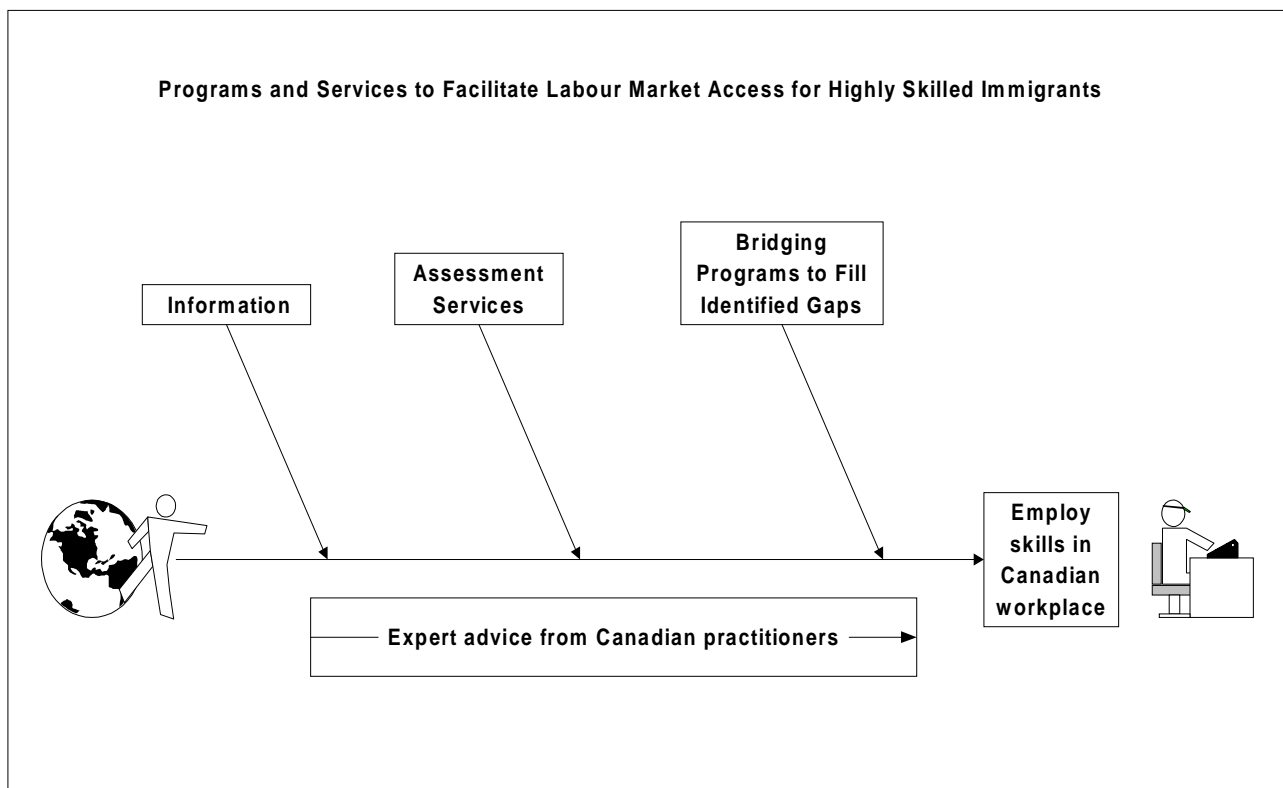
Assessment of academic credentials, language skills, technical occupational skills and knowledge of Canadian workplace practices should begin as soon as possible, ideally with some self-assessment overseas. Assessment criteria should be directly relevant to the nature of the work. Assessment should be as focussed as possible to identify equivalencies and gaps. If a person is not fully qualified, the assessment process should communicate clearly the specific gaps, so a plan can be developed to fill them. Where possible, assessment of skills and experience should be based on demonstrated skills as opposed to paper credentials (competency-based assessment).

Expert Advice

Advice from a Canadian practitioner or expert in an immigrant’s specialized field can make a significant contribution to expediting labour market entry. Starting overseas through online coaching, Canadian mentors can help a skilled immigrant to navigate the system and gain valuable contacts, exposure and opportunities. Experts also can assist in providing labour market counselling and supervising individual learning plans. For some skilled immigrants, expert advice will not be needed; for others, it can be a vitally important service.

Bridging Programs

Once an individual’s specific gaps are identified, he or she should have ready access to programs targeted to fill them. Gap-oriented ‘bridging’ programs should be available to complete a required academic credential, upgrade language skills, gain a missing occupational skill or obtain knowledge of Canadian workplace practices.



Starting While Overseas

Different people could access programs and services at different stages. Some may obtain relevant information, engage in assessment and begin filling gaps all while overseas. Others may not even enter the system until they have been in Canada for awhile. The more that can begin overseas, the better for early and successful labour market entry. It should not, however, be a requirement to do so, as that would constitute a new barrier and potentially deter professional and skilled immigrants from coming to Canada.

Given the increased ‘internationalization’ of Canadian educational institutions, it is possible to take courses offered by Canadian institutions either online or on campuses in the immigrant’s home country. This opportunity offers the added advantage of obtaining a Canadian credit which is more readily recognized in Canada.

Overseas opportunities make sense with planned immigration, as opposed to the refugee situation in which there is an urgent need to leave the home country. In the normal course, there is a waiting period between deciding to immigrate and the actual move to Canada. There can be several advantages to using this time period to begin to identify – and perhaps begin to fill – gaps between one’s qualifications and Canadian requirements. First, it can be beneficial to embark upon this investigation while still in familiar surroundings and with one’s network of contacts and supports. Second, it can help immigrants to ‘take charge’ of their future instead of passively waiting for their departure to Canada. Finally, it can shorten the time to enter a specialized field in the new country.

c. Leadership Council

A system is needed to meet Canada’s economic imperatives, and a leadership structure is needed to achieve a system. Because of the diversity of participants and jurisdictions, no one entity can ‘own’ the system. That makes the establishment of a leadership council dependent on the commitment from leaders within the stakeholder communities. A multistakeholder leadership council could work to ensure the system is designed, implemented, monitored, evaluated and continuously improved. The council could foster and model the collaborative approach needed to make the system a success, while respecting each other’s jurisdictional responsibilities. (See more detailed discussion of the leadership council later in this paper.)

How the Components Work Together

Each part of the system has been conceived to complement the other components so together they can maximize effectiveness and results. Assessment services on their own will not be effective without bridging programs to fill gaps identified in the assessment process. Bridging programs will

be most effective if they are preceded by assessment services to identify the specific gaps that need bridging, and if they have been developed with input from employers and regulators who ultimately make decisions about licensure or employment. Access to current, accurate information will help skilled immigrants to find out about assessment services and bridging programs, and to link up with a Canadian mentor or advisor, all of which can quicken the path to labour market entry. Incentives will help to achieve the collaboration and participation required for the right mix of programs and services, and for skilled immigrants to access them. A leadership council will foster the collaborative approach, provide an accountability mechanism and nurture the system as a whole. Finally, a well-formed, functional and transparent system will help Canada to attract and retain needed skills for its economy.

Information, Assessment and Expert Advice

This section of the paper proposes four programmatic initiatives to meet the system needs for skilled immigrants to have access to information, assessment services and advice from Canadian practitioners in their field of expertise:

1. Internet portal
2. Assessment services
3. Labour market counselling and learning plans
4. Mentorship by Canadian practitioners.

Internet Portal

background/context

Considerable information of relevance to skilled immigrants already exists in a multitude of websites, brochures and fact sheets. Without a common point of entry, however, information can be difficult and time consuming to obtain. The powers of the internet have not been harnessed to provide this group with the full range of information necessary to make informed decisions, online assessment tools, education and training opportunities, or ways to share ideas and practices.

description of proposed initiative

An internet portal would provide a single point of access to current, accurate and relevant information. No matter where an immigrant first looks – to a Visa office, immigration consultant, lawyer, licensing body – ideally he or she would be directed to the portal. The portal would provide

access to as much information as possible to enable skilled immigrants to ready themselves for the Canadian labour market (starting overseas), creating realistic expectations and helping with decision-making.

General information would include how to immigrate to Canada, the state of the labour market in Canada and in regions across the country, along with profiles of Canadian communities. Among other things, this information will help skilled immigrants to know what parts of the country present opportunities for persons in their field and may encourage settlement in parts of the country beyond the more frequent destinations of Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal. Provinces and municipalities could provide information on the site to help meet their recruitment needs.

Links to employers and employer organizations would provide information about employer expectations and needs. Links to provincial regulators would make available information about specific requirements and assessment processes in licensed professions. Links to educational institutions would advise about courses available online, overseas and in Canada for upgrading opportunities, including course content and locations. Links to community-based agencies would provide information about labour market counselling and settlement services, including those targeted to particular ethnic or language groups.

Although the main thrust of the portal is ensuring comprehensive, up-to-date information and referral services, additional features could be included, taking advantage of advances in internet technology. The portal would contain or link to online tools for preliminary self-assessments, whether language or occupational. Although self-assessment tools would not be binding on employers or regulators, they would be designed in collaboration with them to ensure a realistic self-assessment for the immigrant of his or her equivalencies and gaps. Through the portal, skilled immigrants could link up with a Canadian mentor for online coaching and advice, starting when the immigrant is overseas.

Finally, the proposed Leadership Council could ensure the portal contains a description of the overall system and its achievements. Communicating that a system is in place could help to attract skilled immigrants by demonstrating Canada's commitment to facilitating labour market entry in their specialized field.

roles and accountabilities

The internet portal could be funded by a federal department and administered by a national organization, preferably one already seen as a leader in linking organizations and making effective use of internet technology.

A multistakeholder steering committee would be essential to oversee the design and implementation of the portal, and to participate in ongoing evaluation and recommendations to maintain its viability and usefulness as a tool to facilitate labour market entry of skilled immigrants.

Relevant organizations would be responsible for keeping their linked sites current and preferably in comparable formats.

rationale/strengths

The value of a portal is providing a single point of access to accurate, reliable, integrated information and online tools. The portal would assist skilled immigrants at all stages – from when they are considering whether and where to immigrate until they are employed in their field in the Canadian labour market. Through internet technology, it would be available world wide.

challenges

Challenges include funding, continuous updating to keep the information current and accurate, and addressing potential language and cultural barriers.

Assessment Services

background/context

Skilled immigrants need services to assess their qualifications, recognize their equivalencies to Canadian standards and identify gaps in relation to academic credentials, language skills, technical occupational skills and knowledge of Canadian workplace practices, all of which are prerequisites to labour market entry in their field.

The initiative proposed in this section focusses on academic credential assessment because of the widespread need for certification of academic equivalencies whether pursuing further education, licensure or employment. However, assessment of all areas of qualification is needed in order to know one's equivalencies and gaps. (See later discussion of LINC language program for language assessment and training. See also later discussion on developing competency-based assessment tools as part of regulatory reviews.)

In Canada, there are several 'stand-alone' provincially mandated academic credential assessment services.⁴ These organizations and a few private services vary considerably in their

nature, operation and funding structures. Community colleges and universities often conduct their own assessments, as do large regulators. Employers generally do not have the capacity to conduct their own assessments.

With the variety of organizations conducting academic assessments, there are opportunities for collaboration to avoid duplication, meet service standards and ensure the demand for assessment services is being met. If the different assessment providers agreed to recognize each other's assessments, provided common standards were met, that agreement could go a long way to increasing the credibility of assessments by the end-users – i.e., regulators, educational institutions and employers. Collaboration, however, can be challenging given the natural competition among providers.

The Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC) is a national clearinghouse and referral service that supports the recognition and portability of educational and occupational qualifications. CICIC has developed Standards of Practice for bias-free assessment that it promotes to assessment services and regulators. CICIC in collaboration with the Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services of Canada has produced “General Guiding Principles for Good Practice in Credential Assessment” which outlines 36 principles for the assessment of international credentials. Not all assessment services are currently part of the Alliance.

description of proposed initiative

Existing academic credential assessment agencies would collaborate with each other in the following ways:

- Enter service agreements to provide assessments in parts of Canada where assessments are currently not available.
- Build on the common standards for credential assessment established by the quality assurance framework of the Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services of Canada
- Provide reciprocity to each other's assessments where the standards are met.
- Undertake joint missions overseas to immigrant-producing countries to assess educational programs and share the results.

Assessment agencies also would collaborate with their clients to provide different packages of services depending on the client's needs:

- ‘Training on assessment practices’ for educational institutions, large regulators or others with an in-house assessment capacity.

- ‘Authentication’ services for those with in-house capacity. Organizations may need assurances about the *bona fides* of a university, degree or document, but prefer to compare the courses taken to Canadian equivalencies on their own.
- ‘Full service package’ for employers and for small regulators with no in-house assessment capacity – i.e., authentication and comparison.

The objective would be for immigrants to have credible, transportable certification of their academic credential equivalencies that would be recognized by employers, regulators and educational institutions.

roles and accountabilities

CICIC and the Alliance would foster collaboration among the various service providers, assisted by government funding incentives. Individual assessment service providers would participate in the collaborations.

End-users of academic credential assessments – employers, regulators and educational institutions – would provide input into the types and level of assessment services that would meet their needs and expectations.

rationale/strengths

Increased collaboration among assessment providers would increase the credibility of academic assessments and provide wider access to a service essential to removing a recognized and pervasive barrier to employment. A collaborative approach can better meet differing client needs.

challenges

It will be a challenge to foster collaboration among agencies competing for the same clients. If the client base grows, both overseas and in Canada, collaborations are more likely. If clients had access to loan programs to pay for such services, the client base would be expected to increase. (See later discussion on Stakeholder Incentives.)

Labour Market Counselling and Learning Plans

background/context

Counselling can be an important connector between assessment and bridging programs. Counselling can provide assistance in interpreting assessment results and identifying the best bridging programs to fill the identified gaps. When it comes to personal counselling, however, one size does not fit all.

Some skilled immigrants, especially in the regulated professions, could benefit from a formal learning plan supervised by a subject-matter expert at an educational institution. A learning plan involves the identification of learning goals, measures to fulfil the goals and evaluation of outcomes. In some professions, regulators have a role in developing learning plans. In others, the responsibility for developing and supervising the implementation of a formal learning plan is delegated to subject matter experts approved by the regulatory bodies. In others, regulators have no involvement in learning plans. Formal learning plans are generally not used for nonregulated occupations.

Other skilled immigrants may need or prefer more general labour market orientation and counselling from an educational institution or from a community organization associated with their ethnic or language group. Labour market counselling typically involves career planning, labour market orientation and obtaining information about occupational upgrading courses or language training. Although skilled immigrants would be expected to favour services from educational institutions, specialized agencies could provide counselling to those who prefer a community-based setting.

Still others may prefer a formal mentorship relationship with a Canadian practitioner who can serve as an advocate and coach. (See later section on Mentorship by Canadian Practitioners.)

Finally, some skilled immigrants may not need expert advice provided they have access to the relevant information.

description of proposed initiative

It is proposed that a network of labour market counsellors in educational institutions and specialized community-based training agencies be available to assist skilled immigrants.

In community-based training agencies, labour market counsellors also would help with informal learning plans.

In educational institutions, recognized subject matter experts would help develop and monitor formal learning plans to fill identified gaps in regulated professions. The experts would be individuals recognized by regulators to develop and supervise learning plans acceptable to the body ultimately determining a person's qualifications to practise his or her profession in Canada.

roles and accountabilities

Specialized community-based training agencies would provide labour market counselling and informal learning plans, although the expectation is that skilled immigrants will tend to go to educational institutions, commensurate with their educational achievement and the availability of courses that may be recommended as part of counselling.

Educational institutions would provide labour market counselling and, in regulated professions, supervise formal learning plans.

Regulators would approve subject matter experts to supervise formal learning plans in their professions. Subject matter experts could be recruited from employers, educational institutions or professional associations.

Settlement agencies would refer skilled immigrants to the organizations providing labour market counselling. Supports would be provided through existing government funding mechanisms.

rationale/strengths

The approach is practical as it employs the existing infrastructure of educational institutions and community agencies. It respects the fact that not all skilled immigrants want or need labour market counselling or learning plans, and accommodates those who do. Learning plans provide a systematic way to ensure identified gaps are filled and provide important linkages between skilled immigrants and Canadian practitioners.

challenges

It will be a challenge for community agencies and educational institutions to identify and provide specialized training for labour market counsellors/subject matter experts, and to expand their operations as necessary. Any requirement for fees to be paid by skilled immigrants for the assistance of subject matter experts would need to be considered carefully so as not to create a barrier to labour market entry, although loans for this purpose could be made available.

Mentorship by Canadian Practitioners

background/context

There are a number of projects across the country that link skilled immigrants with Canadian practitioners in their occupation. Although programs are structured in different ways, in essence the Canadian practitioner serves as a ‘mentor’ to the skilled immigrant, helping navigate the system and obtain information, contacts and exposure (including job shadowing) that would be difficult to acquire on one’s own. Although there is little in the way of formal evaluation, anecdotally this approach seems to be important in bridging to employment in a specialized field.

The single most important factor for a successful ‘match’ appears to be connection with a person from the same occupation or specialized field.

Rather than depending on the availability of mentorship projects or ad hoc programs, the ability to connect with a Canadian practitioner should be available in a systematic way. Through the internet portal described above, access to a Canadian practitioner could begin online while overseas.

The Host Program funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada matches resident Canadians with new immigrants, to help them adjust to life in Canada. Volunteer hosts become guides for new immigrants in the community. There may be potential to expand this program, albeit with different organizations involved, to bring in new networks of mentors to be matched with immigrants from the same occupation.

description of proposed initiative

A formal program would be established to recruit, train and match Canadian-trained practitioners with skilled immigrants trying to enter the same occupation in Canada. The Canadian practitioner would provide one-on-one (or group) coaching and advice, and share professional networks. The mentorship relationship can begin online through the internet portal while the skilled immigrant is overseas. It is proposed that this be a national, federally funded program.

roles and accountabilities

Professional associations, educational institutions and employers would be good sources of practitioners to serve as volunteer mentors.

Regulators would advise whether mentors from their professions are members of good standing.

Canadian practitioners, including skilled immigrants who are now practising in their field, would serve as mentors.

Government would provide funding for recruitment, training, orientation, matching and supervision of mentors. Funding would be allocated to a variety of delivery bodies, including community agencies and professional associations.

Funding would be provided within an accountability framework. Government would report on overall results.

The development of the mentorship program should be informed by an evaluation of Ontario mentorship initiatives.

rationale/strengths

Matching can help labour market integration by providing a newcomer with focused advice as well as contacts, opportunities and exposure to the Canadian workplace that are difficult to obtain on one's own. Mentorship programs have the added benefit of promoting cross-cultural communication and volunteerism.

Mentors within the system gain a new appreciation of the enormous talent pool of skilled immigrants and the barriers to entering their specialized field. Mentors can become internal agents for change. By encouraging their employees to be mentors, employers would gain increased access to potential recruits.

Group mentoring provides opportunities for skilled immigrants to meet, share their experiences and help each other form study groups.

challenges

The success of a mentorship relationship depends on the 'chemistry' between the two parties. It will be a challenge to put in place an effective matching procedure and identify a sufficient pool of mentors with the requisite skills, qualifications and commitment.

It could be more difficult to find potential mentors in the nonregulated professions in the absence of professional associations.

Integrated Bridging Programs

background/context

Once a skilled immigrant is equipped with the necessary information and expert advice, and has had an assessment of the commonalities with and gaps between his or her qualifications and the requirements for Canadian practice, the remaining task is to quickly fill those gaps. This task can be facilitated through the availability of programs that help to ‘bridge the gap,’ without requiring the individual to start from scratch.

Without access to targeted ‘bridging programs,’ labour market entry in one’s specialized field is a remote prospect at best. Some very promising bridging programs currently exist on an ad hoc basis in some communities for some occupations as opposed to in a systematic way. To date, there is little in the way of evaluation to assess the impact and sustainability of the programs.

The types of bridging an individual will need depends on the nature and number of gaps that have been identified. Generally, there is a need for programs to bridge gaps in the following categories:

- a. academic courses to complete requirements for full recognition of an academic credential
- b. language training programs geared to labour market participation
- c. opportunities to upgrade technical skills through courses or on-the-job training
- d. opportunities to gain knowledge of Canadian workplace practices.

courses to complete academic credential

When international academic credentials are assessed, it may be determined that the international degree does not comply entirely with the required Canadian equivalent. In such cases, the academic credential is not fully recognized. Requiring a skilled immigrant to enrol in a full degree or diploma granting program is unwarranted if the gap could be filled through taking one or more specific courses. Requiring the full program would be costly to the immigrant and the economy through delayed labour market entry, and to the taxpayers who subsidize postsecondary education.

labour market language training

Federally funded language training programs, which are universally available to all adult immigrants, do not focus on labour market preparation or occupation-specific language. Although

there are individual projects in some communities in some sectors, there is no systematic way to provide skilled immigrants with the specific language skills they need in the labour market to practise in their occupation.

technical skills upgrading

Following a competency-based assessment, a skilled immigrant may learn of a gap in one or more technical skills required to practise in his or her specialized field. There are various ways to obtain the necessary upgrading. It could be accomplished through enrolling in a course, especially one with a practical component or co-op opportunity. It also could be accomplished through a paid or unpaid internship with a Canadian practitioner that includes on-site employer training.

knowledge of Canadian workplace practices

A skilled immigrant may have all the academic credentials, language skills and technical skills required to practise in his or her occupation. What may be lacking, however, is sufficient knowledge of Canadian workplace practices. Examples of Canadian workplace practices relevant to one's occupation include codes of ethics, Canadian legislated requirements, knowledge of employment standards and occupational health and safety legislation, confidentiality expectations, organizational structures, and protocols for communication with colleagues and individuals receiving one's services.

This knowledge is different from the 'Canadian experience' which can be obtained only through having worked in Canada and has been identified as a significant barrier to labour market entry. Experience in a Canadian workplace, whether through a co-op placement or internship program, is just one way to provide knowledge of Canadian workplace practices. Courses and mentorship programs also can be effective.

Two specific initiatives are proposed for bridging programs to fill identified gaps. One is to establish a general start-up funding program to ensure that bridging programs are available to meet community needs whether it be for academic, language, technical upgrading or knowledge of Canadian workplace practices. The other is to reorient the federal Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program.

Start-Up Funding for Bridging Programs

background/context

Access to assessment services will be of limited benefit if programs are not available to bridge identified gaps. Some immigrants may need bridging in just one area, such as completion of an academic credential. An integrated approach to bridging would be especially beneficial, however, for immigrants who need to fill gaps in more than one area, such as language and technical skills upgrading.

description of proposed initiative

Start-up funding would be available to delivery organizations to develop sustainable programs to fill language, academic, technical skills and Canadian practice gaps. Programs would be expected to be sustainable through fees after they are up and running.

Requirements for funding would include multistakeholder participation and a formal evaluation. Applicants would be encouraged to integrate bridging programs where possible – e.g., occupational language training together with upgrading of technical skills or knowledge of Canadian workplace practices.

For academic bridging, educational institutions would be encouraged to provide individual courses to fill identified gaps, without requiring students to start from scratch or take a full diploma or degree program where they need only a subset of the courses. Given the internationalization of Canadian colleges and universities, overseas facilities and online capability, educational institutions would be encouraged to provide opportunities for students to begin while overseas.

Employers could play an important role by providing workplace opportunities in which skilled immigrants could upgrade their technical skills or learn about workplace practices, either on their own or in partnership with educational institutions through expanded co-op experiences.

roles and accountabilities

Canadian colleges and universities would provide access to courses to fill identified gaps, without requiring a full diploma and degree-granting program. Some courses would be available overseas, online or through distance learning. Educational institutions could specialize in particular occupations.

Employers would provide workplace opportunities, and contribute to labour market language training.

Sector councils may want to work with educational institutions to provide bridging programs for technical upgrading in their sector – e.g., Information Technology Association of Canada and provincial hospital associations.

In regulated professions, regulators would need to work with other stakeholders to ensure that bridging programs are in keeping with requirements to practice the profession.

Federal and provincial governments both have potential funding roles. Funding and delivery options would need to be explored.

rationale/strengths

The rationale for this proposal is to ensure that once an assessment has identified an individual's gaps in qualifications, bridging programs are available to fill them. The funding criteria will help further system objectives such as sustainability, multistakeholder participation and program evaluation. A start-up funding program provides the flexibility to engender programs that are innovative and that respond to specific local or occupational needs.

challenges

It will be a challenge to ensure that a full range of effective, sustainable bridging programs is available. Under current funding mechanisms, it will be a challenge for some colleges and universities to offer access to gap-oriented courses instead of requiring full degree/diploma granting programs.

Funding and delivery options will have to be carefully assessed, being sensitive to areas of federal and provincial jurisdiction and to existing funding or bridging programs.

Reorientation of Federal LINC Program

background/context

The federal Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program provides basic language instruction to adult newcomers in English or French. Funded by Citizenship and

Immigration Canada, LINC provides a network of public and private assessors and training providers, including school boards, colleges, universities, community-based agencies, private individuals and organizations.

LINC is intended to facilitate the social, cultural and economic integration of immigrants/refugees into Canada. LINC curricula include information that helps newcomers become oriented to the Canadian way of life, but there is currently little emphasis on ‘economic integration.’ The lack of focus on the Canadian labour market generally, and intended occupations or sectors specifically, may be in part because labour market integration falls within the purview of a separate department (Human Resources Development Canada).

description of proposed initiative

It is proposed that the LINC Language Program be reoriented and expanded as follows:

- Self-assessment: Language self-assessment tools would be developed to be utilized overseas or in Canada, and verified by LINC providers.
- Higher benchmarks: Immigrants would have an opportunity to achieve and demonstrate higher levels of ability for speaking, reading and writing, which could make them more attractive to potential employers.
- General orientation to Canadian labour market: Assessment and training would focus on the language skills relevant to the workplace – e.g., résumé writing and workplace communications.
- Occupation-specific assessment and training: Where numbers allow, skilled immigrants would be provided with occupation-specific language training, ideally integrated with technical upgrading in their occupation.
- Incentives to educational institutions and others to deliver labour market and occupation-specific services.

roles and accountabilities

Citizenship and Immigration Canada would have the lead in expanding and reorienting LINC as the department already has responsibility for this program. Human Resources Development Canada would need to be closely involved because of the labour market orientation.

Because skilled immigrants often need to take academic or technical skills upgrading at a college or university, it would make sense for these institutions to be the primary delivery agents of labour-focussed language training and to integrate programs to the extent possible.

Professional associations, regulators and employers will need to participate in the development of occupation-specific benchmarks, assessment and training.

Sectoral councils, with some funding support, may be interested in assisting in the development and design of sector-specific language training.

rationale/strengths

The strength of this proposal is in relating language assessment and training to workplace requirements, and doing so by building on existing infrastructure.

challenges

This proposal represents a departure from the separation of immigration and labour-market functions in federal programming, and will therefore require significant interdepartmental collaboration. Unlike general labour market language training, occupation-specific language training will be difficult to achieve in communities where a critical mass of immigrants from a particular occupation does not exist. Integration of language with other bridging programs or integrating multiple occupations in one language class may be necessary to achieve the critical mass. The administration and funding mechanisms of LINC may need to be reviewed to ensure incentives for organizations to deliver the reoriented services.

Regulatory Reviews

Note: This initiative applies to regulated professions only.

background/context

Self-regulated professions fall within the purview of autonomous regulating bodies established under provincial legislation. Regulators establish standards of entry, decide how an applicant's competencies will be assessed, and determine whether an individual is qualified for licensure and entry into the profession. While standards and accountabilities are built into the legislation, there are generally no specific provisions on how to address professionals whose skills and qualifications were obtained in other countries.

Regulators themselves need to take the lead in any reviews of regulatory practices or requirements to ensure accountability for their legislative mandates and transparency to persons seeking licensure. Collaborative efforts among regulators would help to make this task less onerous, saving time and resources. In some cases, individual efforts make sense, but wherever possible they should be multiprovince, multiprofession or multisector.

As part of the Social Union Framework Agreement (1999), all governments (except Quebec) committed to comply with the Labour Mobility Chapter of the 1994 Agreement on Internal Trade by July 1, 2001. The Chapter obligates jurisdictions to give appropriate recognition to the training, skills, experience and education of workers from other jurisdictions within Canada and to make necessary accommodations in their licensing and registration requirements. This work can be built upon for labour market access to professions by skilled immigrants.

Regulators set the standards for entry to their professions. They also determine how to assess whether the standards have been met. Reviewing standards and assessment practices for immigrant professionals would help to ensure that requirements and processes are fair, reasonable and transparent. Some regulators, for example, are considering a move to competency-based assessments that focus on demonstrated knowledge and skills as opposed to credentials. However, a significant investment in time and resources is required to develop and implement competency-based assessment techniques. Again, a collaborative approach could help to avoid regulatory bodies having to ‘reinvent the wheel.’

Regulators have articulated their mandate as ensuring “everyone with a licence is qualified to practise the profession.” The proposals that follow try to ensure that “everyone who is qualified to practise the profession can obtain a licence” so that Canada’s economy can benefit from the pool of talent and skills.

description of proposed initiative

A group of regulator ‘champions’ would:

- Develop principles that regulators could use to assess practices and requirements to ensure relevancy to the practice of the profession, fairness and comparability to the Canadian-trained.
- Develop common standards that should be adhered to in assessment of international credentials – e.g., requirement for detailed feedback on where an individual’s gaps lie.

- Develop standards for aggregate, statistical reporting of results: how many internationally-trained professionals applied for licensure, how many were licensed, how long the process took, how many were not successful and delineated by source country.
- Develop tools for competency-based assessment.
- Prepare a ‘regulators’ environmental scan’ of best practices in assessing and licensing practices in relation to international candidates.

roles and accountabilities

Champions from within the regulator community could start the process to develop principles, standards and tools. Initially, this process could be undertaken in one or more provinces and then expanded nationally.

Interested provinces and employers could play a pivotal role in soliciting regulator interest. Educational institutions and immigrant professional organizations could provide input to the reviews.

rationale/strengths

This proposed initiative respects the jurisdiction of regulators. Positive initiatives have been undertaken already by some regulators who could act as champions. Any new standards that emerge from the reviews would come from the regulators themselves, as opposed to being externally imposed.

The review of licensing requirements and assessment practices could result in the removal of barriers without lowering standards or putting public safety at risk and in increased recognition of the qualifications and expertise of immigrant candidates.

New reporting practices that emerge will provide increased transparency and accountability. The reports could be posted on the internet portal and would help skilled immigrant professionals to make informed choices regarding where to settle in Canada.

This proposal also provides the benefits and efficiencies that come from working collaboratively on issues in common across professions.

challenges

The large number of regulated professions and governance at the provincial level make this a difficult initiative to launch and fully implement. Beginning with some provincial level reviews before moving to a national approach would increase the chances of success.

Stakeholder Incentives

Programs and services to facilitate labour market entry will be helpful only if skilled immigrants can access them. The effectiveness of programs and services depends on collaborative efforts by multiple stakeholders to review, design, deliver, evaluate and implement systemic change. A key component of the proposed systems approach is the establishment of incentives for immigrant access and stakeholder collaboration to achieve mutually beneficial goals. It will be a challenge to develop customized incentives, in a cost-effective way, for the many participants who achieve the intended goals.

incentives for skilled immigrants

The programs and services described above will support skilled immigrants by helping to facilitate access to the Canadian labour market. This section looks at how individual supports, such as loans, could be available for immigrants to avail themselves of programs and services, where necessary.

Studies have shown that skilled immigrants who come to Canada and take a low-level job to survive are less likely to enter their specialized field [Goldberg 2000]. For the benefit of the immigrants and the economy, a loan program that allows people to take the time necessary to upgrade their qualifications at the outset appears to be a worthwhile investment. Highly-skilled immigrants represent a good risk, and may just need a bit of a ‘boost’ before they become gainfully employed in their occupation and are able to pay back their loan.

Loan programs would allow skilled immigrants who are short on funds to engage in the necessary assessment and upgrading so they can enter their field and contribute to the Canadian economy as soon as possible. The following three potential approaches are not mutually exclusive:

Immigrant transportation loan program: One possibility is to expand the immigrant transportation loan program. Currently, immigrants are eligible for loans to assist them in the transportation costs to immigrate to Canada. These loans are administered by Citizenship and Immigration Canada and

have a very successful rate of repayment. This program could be expanded to provide eligibility for loans to pay for the cost of assessment, bridging programs, licensing and examination fees, purchase of equipment and other start-up costs.

Student loan eligibility: Another possibility is to amend student loan and bursary criteria to provide eligibility for loans and bursaries for individual courses that may be taken on a part-time basis as opposed to a full-time degree or diploma-granting program. This option would be available to all part-time adult learners, not just immigrants.

Government guarantor: A third option is for immigrants to access loans for upgrading and start-up activities from a financial institution, with government acting as guarantor of last resort. This guarantor may be necessary, as recent immigrants are less likely than their Canadian counterparts to have established a Canadian credit rating or to have built up assets in Canada to secure loans without a guarantor.

incentives for regulators

Many regulators are small and do not have the resources to conduct regulatory reviews on their own. Though many are willing, they require assistance, tools and support. Competency-based assessment in particular is difficult, time consuming and resource intensive. While a collaborative approach will help, additional supports are required.

One approach would be to provide funding for regulators to retain consultants. An alternative would be to establish a team of consultants available to help regulators in all aspects of regulatory reviews, such as developing competency-based assessments, designing occupation-specific language tests, constructing internet-based exams, creating a database of best practices, and providing support and coordination for multiparty initiatives.

This approach respects the jurisdiction of regulators to determine assessment practices for their professions, but provides the benefit of expert assistance and tools.

incentives for educational institutions

Educational institutions that wish to launch bridging programs will have the prospect of seed money and an increased fee base once the program is in place. Program delivery funding will be available to take on delivery of the reoriented LINC program. Additional changes may be necessary to funding formulas or bargaining agent agreements for educational institutions to expand their

counselling services and supervise formal learning plans for skilled immigrants, and to allow students to enrol in single courses as opposed to full degree/diploma programs.

incentives for employers

Engaging employers in designing and implementing solutions is vitally important as they are the ultimate gateway to the labour market. Challenges include the sheer number and diversity of employers, and the lack of identified spokespersons.

With some incentives, employer organizations could participate in the development and delivery of labour market oriented language training programs, provide input to regulatory reviews and participate in the leadership council. Broad-based employer associations (e.g., the Canadian Federation of Independent Business and Chambers of Commerce) and sector councils could take the lead in an awareness strategy aimed at advising employers of the benefits of tapping into the skills of skilled immigrants, and of providing opportunities in their workplaces.

Individual employers could benefit from incentives like funding or tax credit programs, to encourage them to identify Canadian practitioners who can serve as mentors, and to provide co-op placements and other workplace bridging opportunities for skilled immigrants to gain occupational skills and knowledge of Canadian workplace practices. Employers may have a built-in incentive to participate in mentorship programs. By encouraging their employees to be mentors, employers would gain increased access to potential recruits.

All levels of government would be expected to show leadership as large employers by providing bridging opportunities in their own workplaces.

incentives for community-based training and settlement agencies

In order for skilled immigrants to access the system, they need to know about it. They also may need expert advice or counselling to help them navigate the system. The existence of community-based training and settlement agencies across Canada provides a ready source of information and referral, as well as some community-based labour market counselling. Community-based agencies also could provide valuable input to system initiatives and participate in the leadership council.

Current funding of nonprofit organizations is unlikely to be sufficient to support the assumption of new responsibilities. Some funding incentives would be required, with the

understanding that the service delivery role would be modest – as skilled immigrants are expected to prefer seeking services from educational institutions ahead of community-based agencies.

Government funding assistance could be made available for the training of labour market counsellors in specialized community-based agencies, and participation of selected training and settlement agencies on the leadership council.

incentives for academic credential assessment services

Organizations providing academic credential assessment services are often in competition with each other for the same clientele. The best incentive to a collaborative approach would be an increase in clientele, which could occur as an indirect result of loans to skilled immigrants who would then have the funds to pay assessment fees.

Links to academic credential assessment services on the internet portal could also increase clientele as greater numbers of candidates learn about assessment services in Canada and how to access them.

incentives for professional associations

The role of professional associations is to support their members and advocate on their behalf. Immigrant professional associations advocate on behalf of immigrant candidates to facilitate entry into the profession.

Professional associations could apply for funding to be deliverers of the mentorship program without the need for additional supports or incentives.

In some professions, there is a requirement for ongoing professional development. Individual mentors could be offered a professional development credit, which could serve as an incentive for their participation in the mentorship program.

Funding incentives could be considered to encourage ‘mainstream’ professional associations to work with immigrant professional associations to create structures that focus on the needs of immigrants within their profession.

With some funding assistance, immigrant professional associations could help their members network with each other for mutual support, set up group study rooms and participate in the leadership council. The Department of Canadian Heritage is a potential funder to assist immigrant professional associations.

incentives for governments

The economic imperative of attracting and retaining skilled immigrants is proving to be a strong incentive for governments to work on solutions in light of projected skill shortages and demographics. (See Context section earlier in the paper.) Recent throne speeches and program initiatives from all levels of government indicate the importance being placed on this area. Governments in Canada, however, face special challenges in achieving greater collaboration among their own departments and among the different jurisdictions.

Leadership Council

Each of the program initiatives described earlier has merit on its own. However, when looked at as an interrelated whole, great synergies can be achieved. A few examples: The internet portal can facilitate access to bridging programs and online linkages to Canadian practitioners. LINC labour market language training can be integrated with occupational bridging programs at educational institutions. Regulatory reviews can result in revisions to requirements and how they are assessed, which then can inform the content of educational and occupational bridging programs.

A leadership council is a tangible way of bringing players together to provide the vision and leadership required to nurture the creation and continuation of a viable system. The council can identify linkages and provide guidance so that programs complement each other for the greatest impact. The council can monitor the system as a whole, communicate its successes and recommend improvements.

Perhaps the most important and challenging function of a leadership council is to foster collaboration among the multiple stakeholders. Collaboration is especially challenging when considering the sheer number of occupations, professional bodies, regulators, colleges and universities, and employers; the division of jurisdictional roles and responsibilities; the lack of clearly defined national spokespersons; scarce resources; competition; potential conflicts of interest; and lack of structures for interaction.

Further, collaboration will depend on the parties seeing themselves as working toward a common goal of facilitating labour market entry so Canada's economy can benefit from their specialized skills. Not all educational institutions or regulators, for example, see this as their role.

Fortunately, there are encouraging multistakeholder collaborations in place already, and a leadership council can play an important role in modelling and fostering even more. The economic climate itself could provide an incentive to collaborate for many participants.

Although a leadership council would not be responsible for delivering the proposed programs or services, it would be valuable to have the designated lead organization for each initiative as a member of the council.

The council would benefit from the results of program evaluations of bridging programs, and statistical reports from regulatory reviews, to recommend additional accountability mechanisms, measure success and point the way for further developments.

description of proposed leadership council

A multiparty council would be created, including the ‘lead hands’ for each proposed initiative and other participants. The mandate would be to play a ‘champion’ role for the overall system and to foster collaboration. The council also could have some decision-making or funding responsibilities in selected areas.

Initial functions could include:

- Promote the systems approach
- Foster collaboration
- Determine research agenda
- Identify evaluation priorities
- Create a national program to recognize excellence
- Communicate among all participants.

rationale/strengths

A leadership council can be seen as the ‘glue’ that keeps the system together. It will foster the necessary collaboration; identify linkages to ensure that programs are effective and complementary; and keep track of and communicate results for greater accountability.

As the leadership council itself will be composed of multiple stakeholders, it can set the example for multiparty collaboration. The proposed council would provide needed leadership while respecting jurisdictions and autonomies.

challenges

It will be a challenge to design the composition, mandate and reporting structure of the leadership council in light of the numerous and varied players and jurisdictions.

A national leadership council is proposed to look at the system as a whole. However, provincial/territorial or sector structures also may be required. The challenge will be to keep the leadership council manageable so it supports the system without becoming a cumbersome bureaucracy.

Moving Ahead – Recommended First Steps

The Maytree Foundation has taken the initiative to produce this paper and the companion compendium of existing projects, programs and proposals. The intent is to stimulate discussion and action. The systems approach can become a reality only if many other players agree to its potential and if leaders emerge to guide its development and ensure its continuance.

On the expectation that progress will be incremental and staged, the following are recommended first steps for action, subject to the agreement of the participants (see Appendix 3 – Potential Roles and Responsibilities). For some recommendations, potential leads have been identified. For others, where the appropriate lead is less clear, leads have not been identified and participants are encouraged to take the initiative to convene initial meetings.

Internet Portal

1. The Co-Chairs of the Federal-Provincial Territorial Working Group on Access to Professions and Trades convene a multistakeholder steering group to identify requirements, implementation strategies and funding sources for an internet portal to provide access to information, and tools to aid decision-making and labour market entry of skilled immigrants.

The internet portal would include:

- a. General information on immigration, labour market and Canadian communities.
- b. Links to information from relevant internet sites.
- c. Access to online tools – e.g., courses, mentorship and preliminary self-assessments.
- d. Updates on system improvements.

Participants: Federal (CIC) and Provincial Co-Chairs of Access to Professions and Trades Working Group (lead), Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC), immigrant organizations, employer organizations, colleges, universities, community organizations, professional bodies, regulators, the Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services, federal government, provincial governments, municipal governments.

Collaboration in Academic Assessments

2. Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services of Canada lead discussions with assessment providers and client groups on collaborative approaches to academic credential assessment.

Ideas to pursue include:

- a. Agreements for unserved areas.
- b. Common assessment standards.
- c. Reciprocity in recognizing each other's assessments.
- d. Joint missions to study international education programs.
- e. Specialized services for clients who conduct in-house assessments.

Participants: Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC) (lead), the Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services, immigrant organizations, employer organizations, colleges, universities, regulators.

Labour Market Counselling and Learning Plans

3. Stakeholder meetings be convened to develop proposals for labour market counselling services and learning plans to fill identified gaps in the qualifications of skilled immigrants.

Ideas to pursue include:

- a. Specialized community-based training agencies: labour market counselling and development of informal learning plans.
- b. Colleges and universities: labour market counselling and, in regulated professions, formal learning plans supervised by experts recognized by the relevant licensing bodies.
- c. Community-based settlement organizations: information and referral to the above services.

Participants: Human Resources Development Canada, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, provinces, immigrant professional organizations, community-based training and settlement agencies, colleges, universities, regulators.

Mentorship by Canadian Practitioners

4. Citizenship and Immigration Canada/Canadian Heritage work with stakeholders to create a formal, national mentorship program to link Canadian practitioners with skilled immigrants in their fields.

Ideas to pursue include:

- a. Recruitment, screening and training of mentors.
- b. Processes to match mentors with skilled immigrants.
- c. An online mentorship component beginning overseas through the internet portal described above.
- d. Funding, delivery, accountability and evaluation mechanisms.

Participants: Citizenship and Immigration Canada/Canadian Heritage (lead), immigrant organizations, employer organizations, colleges, universities, professional bodies, immigrant professional organizations, regulators, settlement agencies.

Start-up Funding for Sustainable Bridging Programs

5. Multistakeholder discussions be convened to identify program criteria and funding/delivery/evaluation mechanisms for a program to provide start-up funding for bridging programs that help skilled immigrants fill gaps in academic credentials, language skills, technical skills and knowledge of Canadian workplace practices.

Funded programs would be expected to:

- a. Sustain themselves through fees after start-up funding.
- b. Include multistakeholder participation.
- c. Integrate program areas where possible (e.g., language and technical skills).
- d. Conduct formal program evaluations.

Participants: Human Resources Development Canada, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, provinces, colleges, universities, immigrant organizations, employer organizations, immigrant professional associations, regulators, community-based training and settlement agencies.

Reorientation of LINC Language Program

6. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) works with Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and stakeholders to reorient and expand the Language Instruction for Newcomers (LINC) program.

Proposed changes:

- a. Develop language self-assessment tools, verified by LINC providers or benchmark organizations.
- b. Higher language benchmarks to attract potential employers.

- c. Assess and train on language relevant to the workplace.
- d. Assess and train on language of the relevant occupation.

Participants: Citizenship and Immigration Canada (lead), Human Resources Development Canada, immigrants, employers, colleges, universities, community-based training and settlement agencies, professional bodies, regulators, provinces, benchmark organizations.

Regulatory Reviews

- 7. Interested provinces convene initial meetings of groups of regulators interested in working together to develop principles for reviewing assessment practices and requirements for internationally trained professionals. Following the initial meeting, this exercise will be led by the regulators.

Ideas to pursue include:

- a. Principles for assessing relevancy, fairness and comparability of requirements.
- b. Standards for assessing international qualifications.
- c. Standards for disclosing statistical/aggregate results.
- d. Tools for competency-based assessment.
- e. Compiling best practices in relation to assessment and licensure of international candidates.

Participants: ‘Champion’ provincial regulators (lead). *Potential consultees:* Other regulatory bodies, provincial and national associations of regulators, immigrant organizations, employer organizations, colleges, universities, professional bodies, immigrant professional associations, Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC), the Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services, provinces.

Leadership Council

- 8. Meetings be convened to develop the mandate, composition and selection process for a leadership council.

Initial functions of the leadership council could include:

- a. Promote the system approach.
- b. Foster collaboration.
- c. Determine research agenda.

- d. Identify evaluation priorities.
- e. Create a national program to recognize excellence.
- f. Communication.

Participants: Federal (Human Resources Development Canada) and provincial co-chairs of secretariat to Forum of Labour Market Ministers, and federal (Citizenship and Immigration Canada) and provincial co-chairs of Access to Professions and Trades Working Group (lead). *Potential consultees:* Canadian Heritage, immigrant organizations, employer organizations, colleges, universities, community-based training and settlement agencies, professional bodies, immigrant professional associations, regulators, Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC), the Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services, municipal governments, Metropolis Centres of Excellence.

Incentives for All Participants

- 9. In each process described in recommendations 1 through 8, participants identify the supports and incentives needed to participate and collaborate. Options to pursue include:
 - a. Consulting assistance and tools for regulators to conduct regulatory reviews.
 - b. Strategic funding to enable organizations to participate in systemic change.
- 10. Citizenship and Immigration Canada/Human Resources Development Canada develop options for loan programs for skilled immigrants for upgrading and start-up. Options to pursue include:
 - a. Expansion of immigrant transportation loan program.
 - b. Loan guarantees.
 - c. Eligibility for student loans.

Participants: Citizenship and Immigration Canada/Human Resources Development Canada (lead), provinces, colleges, universities, immigrant organizations, immigrant professional organizations.

Compendium of Activities and Ideas

- 11. The Maytree Foundation make available on the internet its *Environmental Scan: Existing Practices and Future Directions in Access to Professions and Trades*. Invite stakeholders to suggest additions, updates and improvements so the document becomes a vital and always relevant resource tool.

Endnotes

1. Statistics Canada. Based on 1996 data.
2. Statistics Canada. Based on 1997 data.
3. Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Facts and Figures 1999; News Release 2001-01. Ottawa.
4. Provincially-mandated service providers include: Academic Credentials Assessment Service – Manitoba (ACAS); International Credential Evaluation Service (ICES); World Education Services – Canada (WES); International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS); and Québec – *Service des équivalences d'études* (Sde).

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Appendix 1

Project Team

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Appendix 2

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Conference Presentations and Discussions

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), National Settlement Conference, Kingston, June 2001.
Maytree Conference, Session on "Facilitating Labour Market Entry," October 2001.
Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition Conference, Halifax, October 2001.
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCAS) Conference, October 2001.
Policy Research Network, Ottawa, December, 2001
Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) Sounding Board Meeting, Ottawa, December 2001.
"Ready, Set, Go" Conference, Applied Research Branch of Human Resources Development Canada, Ottawa, January 2002.

Appendix 3

Potential Roles & Responsibilities	<i>Immigrants</i>	<i>Regulators</i>	<i>Colleges</i>	<i>Universities</i>	<i>Employers and Associations</i>	<i>Non-government Orgs.</i>	<i>Professional Bodies</i>	<i>Federal Government</i>	<i>Provincial/Terr. Gov't</i>	<i>Municipal Gov't</i>
1. Internet Portal	Access	Info	Info	Info	Info	Info	Oversee Info	Fund Info	Info	Info
2. Collaborations in Academic Credential Assessment	Access	Advice Access	Advice Access	Advice Access	Access	Lead	-	Fund Access	Fund Access	Access
3. Counselling and Learning Plans	Access	Recognize experts	Deliver	Deliver	-	Deliver	Participate	Fund	Fund	-
4. Mentorship Program	Access	Confirm good standing	Participate	Participate	Deliver Participate	Deliver	Deliver	Fund Lead	Participate	Participate
5. Bridging Programs (Start-Up Funding)	Access	Advice	Deliver	Deliver	Participate	Deliver	Participate	Fund	Fund	Participate
6. Reorientation of LINC	Access	Advice	Deliver	Deliver	Participate	Deliver	Participate	Fund Lead	Advice	-
7. Regulatory Reviews	Access	Lead	Advice	Advice	Advice	Advice	-	-	Fund Support	-
8. Incentives for all Participants	Beneficiary	Beneficiary	Beneficiary	Beneficiary	Beneficiary	Beneficiary	Beneficiary	Provider	Provider	Potential Beneficiary
9. Leadership Council	Participate	Participate	Participate	Participate	Participate	Participate	Participate	Fund Participate	Participate	Participate