

## SYMPOSIUM

organized in the framework of the annual conference 'Pathways  
to Prosperity'

November 15, 2017

# Developing Immigrants' Literacy and Essential Skills

## Background



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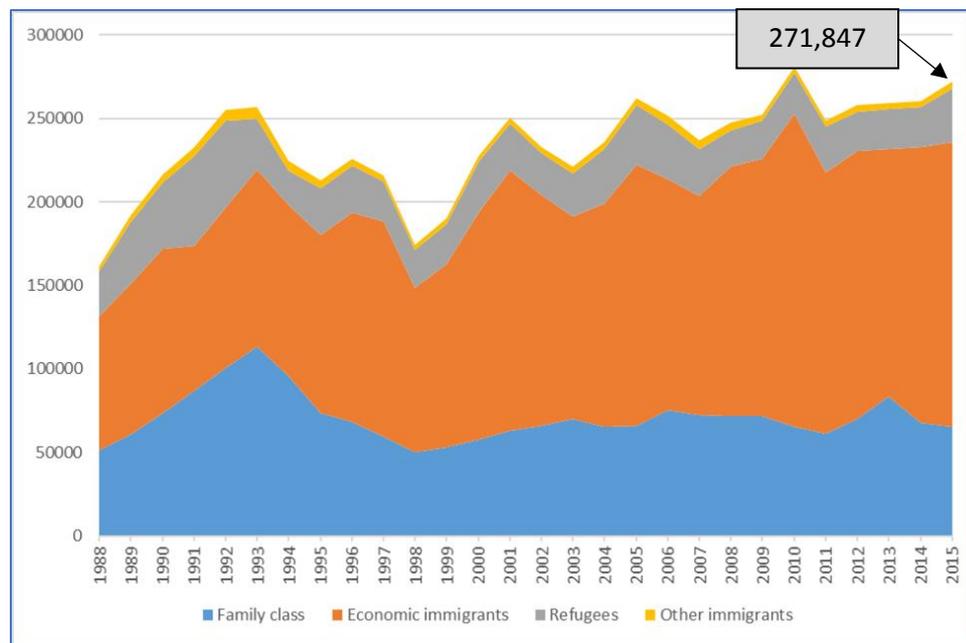
# Canada is a nation of immigrants

- Around 250,000 immigrants per year.
  - It was recently announced that the immigration target would be 310,000 in 2018, 330,000 in 2019 et 340,000 in 2020.
- Proportion of Canada's population which is foreign born: 21.9%.
  - Sixth highest amount among all the OECD countries (behind Luxembourg, Switzerland, Australia, Israel and New Zealand).
  - Highest since 1921, where it was around 22.3%.
- Since 2000, immigration has been the main driving force behind population growth.
  - If current trends continue, by 2031, immigration could account for 80% of the net population growth and
  - Foreign born individuals will represent 28% of Canada's total population.

# Immigration: A key element of Canadian economic policies

- Cause: population aging leading to a shortage of labour
- Main objective of Canada's immigration policies: maximize the contributions of economic migrants.
  - Proportion of economic migrants increased from 50% in 1988 to 63% in 2015.

Permanent residents by category (Canada)



Source : Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2012a, 2017a).

# Main determinants of immigrant success in the labour market

- **Training:**

- Bégin, Goyette and Riddell (2010) find that immigrants who hold a master's degree or doctorate earn 17% more than immigrants who have 13 years of schooling or less.
- Bastien, Bélanger and Ledent (2010) show that the probability of obtaining a skilled job is 30% higher if the immigrant holds a master's degree or a doctorate.

- **Knowledge of English or French:**

- Bégin, Goyette and Riddell (2010) find that economic immigrants who have a strong understanding of one of the two official languages earn up to 39% more than other economic immigrants.
- Bastien, Bélanger and Ledent (2010) find that fluency in English or French increases the probability of finding a skilled job by 50% for immigrants outside Quebec, while fluency in English doubles the chances of finding a skilled job in Quebec.

# The selection criteria for economic migrants reflect the importance of these factors

## Selection grid for qualified workers (Maximum number of points)

	2003 <sup>a</sup>		2017 <sup>b</sup>	
	Canada	Quebec	Canada	Quebec
Schooling	25	11	25	26
Assured employment	15	15	10	10
Work experience	21	10	15	8
Adaptability			10	
Age	10	10	12	16
Knowledge of English (French) for Canada (Quebec)	16	18	24	16
Knowledge of French (English) for Canada (Quebec)	8	6	4	6
Spouse's schooling	5	5		17
Family or friend in Canada (Quebec)	5			8
Children				8
Financial autonomy				1
<b>Total (without spouse/with spouse)</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>99/116</b>
<b>Pass (without spouse/with spouse)</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>50/59</b>

Weight goes from 20% of the passing score to 50%.

Weight goes from 21% of the passing score to 36%.

<sup>a</sup>Source: DeVoretz and Pivninko (2008).  
<sup>b</sup>Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2016) and Immigration, diversity and inclusion Quebec (2017).

- **Schooling:** 1/3 of the passing score for Canada and more than half for Quebec.
- **Language :** 40% of the passing score for Canada and Quebec.

# Nevertheless, many immigrants are poorly educated and speak neither English nor French

- According to the 2011 Census,
  - more than 1,230,000 immigrants have not completed a high school education; and
  - approximately 440,000 immigrants speak neither English nor French.
- Refugees (about 32,115 new arrivals in 2015) form a special category :
  - on average, they are poorly educated; and
  - many of them can be considered illiterate.

# In this context, governments invest significantly in literacy and essential skills programs to facilitate immigrant integration

- For example,
  - *Citizenship and Immigration Canada* will invest \$1.2 billion in newcomer settlement and integration in 2017-18.
  - approximately 30% of which is in the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program.

**It is thus important to measure the return on these investments.**

# Actions interculturelles

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