




GUIDE

# **Newcomer's guide to Canada's Provinces and Territories**

 arrive guides

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# Introduction to Canada's provinces and territories

Canada is one of the most popular countries to immigrate to in the world. Over 300,000 people choose to move to Canada to become permanent residents each year. Many of these newcomers choose to settle in some of Canada's largest cities, such as Toronto, Vancouver, or Montreal, as they are known for being multicultural centres where newcomers thrive. However, there are so many other welcoming areas in Canada that have a lower international profile, but equally high opportunities for career, lifestyle, and financial success for newcomers.

For newcomers moving to Canada, opportunity exists in every corner of this large and diverse country. As the second-largest country in the world, newcomers may feel overwhelmed researching Canada's many cities and towns in each province and territory to find the perfect spot to settle. This guide to Canada's provinces and territories will feature accessible and useful content highlighting each of Canada's ten provinces and three territories.

## **This guide has two main objectives:**

- To familiarize newcomers with all of Canada's provinces and territories;
- To provide an overview of culture, career, and lifestyle information on each province and territory to assist newcomers who are deciding where to settle in Canada.

## **This guide is divided into regional sections, with province-specific information on:**

- Population, geography, and climate
- Culture and language;
- Provincial immigration programs and career search tools and tips;
- and, Additional resources for newcomers in each province

## **Canada's ten provinces and three territories covered in this guide:**

[Ontario](#)

[Quebec](#)

[British Columbia](#)

[Alberta](#)

[Saskatchewan](#)

[Manitoba](#)

[Nova Scotia](#)

[New Brunswick](#)

[Newfoundland and Labrador](#)

[Prince Edward Island](#)

[Northwest Territories](#)

[Nunavut Territory](#)

[Yukon Territory](#)



## **Acknowledgement of First Nations in Canada**

In the land known today as Canada, a multitude of Indigenous groups have lived for thousands of years, long before the first European settlers arrived. European settlers were once newcomers to this area and relied on the First Nations groups for assistance to survive and thrive on these lands. From coast to coast, we acknowledge the ancestral and unceded territory of all the Inuit, Métis, and First Nations people that continue to call this land home.

Arrive acknowledges that we are situated on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples, and we are on Treaty 13 territory. We would like to thank the First Nations for allowing us to live and work on their land.

RBC has a long history of working with Indigenous peoples and communities. We will continue to strive for reconciliation, prosperity and inclusion for Indigenous peoples, through our commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #92 for corporate Canada.

You can learn more about Indigenous culture and history, about the lasting legacy of Residential Schools and how newcomers can support Truth and Reconciliation on the Arrive blog.



# Central Canada: Ontario and Quebec



## Central Canada basics

Central Canada is a region made up of Canada's two most populated provinces, Ontario and Quebec. Though Ontario and Quebec are located in the eastern half of the country, they are considered central because they are home to some of the biggest population, economic, and political hubs of Canada. The St. Lawrence River in Quebec and the Great Lakes in Ontario fulfill the important water and hydropower needs of this region, in addition to being iconic in Canadian history as routes which European explorers took to settle in the prosperous and beautiful lands of Central Canada.

## Major centres in Quebec and Ontario

Many newcomers are attracted to the cities of Central Canada because of their higher populations and multicultural newcomer communities. Here are some of the largest cities in Central Canada:

- **Toronto:** Ontario's capital and Canada's largest city with over 6 million living in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).
- **Montreal:** Quebec's largest city at 4 million, and the city with most English-speaking residents in Quebec.
- **Ottawa-Gatineau:** Canada's capital Ottawa is located on the border of Ontario, just across the river from Gatineau in Quebec. Almost 1 million residents live in the capital region.
- **Quebec City:** Historic Quebec City, located on the St. Lawrence River, is located primarily French-speaking and home to over 700,000 residents.
- **Hamilton:** This Ontario city is located close to Toronto on Lake Ontario. It is home to over 750,000 residents.
- **Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo:** These three Ontario cities to the northwest of Toronto sit side-by-side and have a combined population of over 500,000.



"I currently live in Toronto for work. There are a great number of employment opportunities in Toronto because of the larger size of the city and its position as the economic capital of Canada. Because of this, it is comparatively easier to find employment in Toronto than in other places in Canada."

— Jacob, Toronto resident, moved to Canada in September 2005.



## Climate

Quebec and Ontario are known for their hot and humid summers, where temperatures often climb over 30 degrees Celsius in the months between June and September. Temperatures drop significantly in the winter months, hovering between 0 and -30 degrees Celsius. Quebec and Ontario also generally receive a large amount of snow. Northern regions of Quebec and Ontario are generally colder for a longer period of time throughout the year, but most of the population lives in the southern regions of these provinces.

## Cultural snapshot for newcomers

The lands of Ontario and Quebec were first occupied by several First Nations groups who thrived in the area due to its many lakes, rivers, and diverse plants and wildlife. When European settlers came to this area, they created British and French colonies splitting the area into French “Lower Canada” downstream of the St. Lawrence River and British “Upper Canada” upstream. These colonies became present-day French-speaking Quebec, and Ontario, respectively, and the capital of Canada was selected to be in the city right on the border between them, Ottawa.



## Ontario

The province of Ontario is the political and economic centre of Canada, in addition to being the most populous province in the country. Ontario’s many metropolitan centres, such as Toronto or Ottawa, provide world-class levels of job opportunity, innovation, diversity, dining, entertainment, and more.

Ontario is also home to the most newcomers out of any province. Toronto is one of the most multicultural urban areas in the world, according to its own municipal government; you can find this multiculturalism in practice in the cultural neighbourhoods of the GTA such as Chinatown, Koreatown, Greektown, India Bazaar, and Little Italy (and so much more). Each area has a rich history, residents from all over the world, and some of the best food and entertainment the city

## Ontario (cont'd)

has to offer. Many municipalities in the GTA, including the City of Toronto, Mississauga, Brampton, and more, have newcomer populations of at least 50 per cent.

English is the primary language spoken across Ontario, but there is a sizable French-speaking population, and many other languages are commonly spoken in the province. The GTA has over 160 distinct languages spoken, including Cantonese, Mandarin, Tagalog, Italian, German, Polish, Spanish, and Farsi.

Tourists to Canada often come to Ontario for iconic Canadian landmarks such as the CN Tower in Toronto, the breathtaking Niagara Falls, and the Great Lakes. You do not have to travel far outside of Ontario's metropolitan areas to find great hikes, lakes, ski hills, and other quiet natural spaces.

## Quebec

Quebec is culturally distinct from other provinces in Canada as the only primarily French-speaking province. The Francophones of Quebec are proud of their French heritage and language and wish to preserve French Canadian tradition in Canada, a primarily English-speaking country. The province's flag features four fleur-de-lis on a deep royal blue background — symbolic of ties to old French royalty and showcasing the province's attachment to French culture. About half the province's population is bilingual, speaking both of Canada's official languages, French and English.



Quebec's cities are known for their rich European-influenced culture, historic sites, and welcoming attitude towards diversity. Quebec City's iconic Old Quebec is a UNESCO World Heritage site with cobblestone streets and fortified walls around a charming, artistic neighbourhood. The population of Quebec City speaks mostly French. The city of Montreal is also primarily French-speaking; however, it is also home to many speakers of English and various other languages. Montreal is known for its progressive views and cosmopolitan energy.



“Many folks enjoy Quebec for the French language, European flair, and more liberal views.”

— Chantal, Montreal resident.

Quebec is very welcoming to newcomers, inviting between 30,000 to 50,000 newcomers to its metropolitan areas and smaller towns each year.



## Moving and working in Central Canada

Ontario and Quebec are popular places to immigrate to in Canada, so there are many skills-based and employer-need based provincial nominee programs (PNPs) to help bring skilled newcomers to these provinces quickly.

To find in-depth information on all the steps of provincial immigration, see our article on how to apply for PNPs.

You can learn about the various streams and eligibility criteria for Ontario's PNP in our article on the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program.

### Ontario's growing sectors

These are the fields of employment expecting the most employment increase in Ontario, as of February 2020:

- **Education, law, commerce, and government services**
- **Sales and service**
- **Natural and applied science Business, finance, and administration Trades, transportation, and equipment operation**
- **Management**
- **Health**

You can use the Ontario jobs and employment platform to find jobs in your desired region.



### 5 tips for finding employment in Quebec

1. **Work on your French:** Individuals seeking work in Quebec will gain a large advantage in their job search by speaking French either partially or fluently.
2. **Use the Quebec labour market search tool:** The province provides a labour market search tool to provide information to relevant jobs in your field. This tool includes explanations of job duties, salaries, qualifications, and regional demand for over 500 professions in the province.
3. **Explore student resources:** Post-secondary institutions in Quebec often have programs designed to match their students with a job in Quebec. Ask your school's advisory department for more information. The province also provides a student job search tool.
4. **Read Quebec's job search guide:** Quebec's job search guide provides many more basic and advanced job search tips specific to the province.
5. **Build a professional network in Quebec:** Many job opportunities are never posted on the visible job market, with employers instead filling the spot through personal connections. Reaching out to friends and family in Quebec, or digitally connecting with Quebec professionals through LinkedIn, is a good way to get your foot in the door.

## Additional resources for newcomers

### Ontario

- [YMCA/YWCA of Ontario](#)
- [A.C.C.E.S. Accessible Community Counselling and Employment Services](#)
- [Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services](#)
- [Community Family Services of Ontario](#)
- [COSTI Immigrant Services](#)
- [Pro Bono Law Ontario/Services Juridiques Pro Bono de L'Ontario](#)
- [EarlyON Newcomer Childhood Education Centres](#)
- [Toronto Community & Culture Centre](#)
- [Newcomer Women's Services Toronto](#)

### Quebec

- [Quebec-Immigration](#)
- [YMCA/YWCA of Quebec](#)
- [YES Montreal](#)
- [Ami Quebec - list of cultural and ethnic communities](#)
- [South Asian Women's Community Centre Montreal](#)
- [Association Quebec-France](#)
- [Centre multiethnique de Quebec](#)
- [Centre international des femmes de Quebec](#)
- [Salvation Army Immigrant and Refugee Services](#)

**Tip:** Calling the phone number 211 or visiting Quebec's 211 website or Ontario's 211 website can give you immediate access to newcomer resources in over 200 languages.

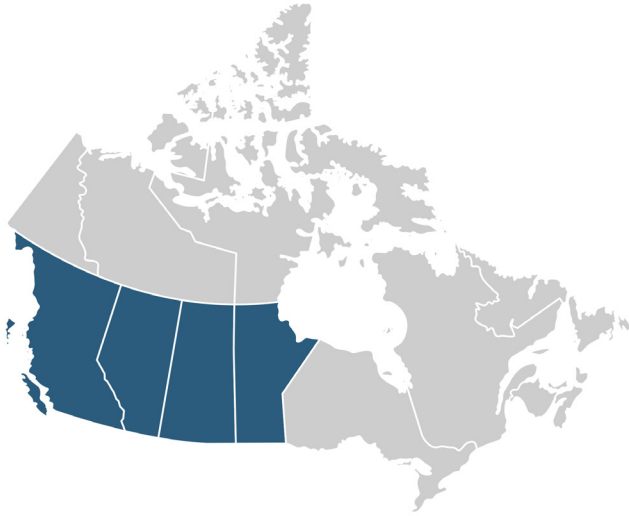


“Toronto has great resources for families with young kids. Families have free access to the Toronto Public Library, which has an incredible selection of books and movies in many languages. Kids can stay active by registering in the affordable Toronto sports and recreation programs, or spending the afternoon at one of Toronto's many parks and playgrounds. In the summer, water parks and wading pools across the city are a great place to cool off. In the winter, Toronto sets up free outdoor skating rinks, with skating equipment available for rent.”

— Clemence, Toronto resident, moved to Canada in 2012.

See our provincial spotlights on Ontario and Quebec for more information.

# Western Canada: British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba



## Western Canada basics

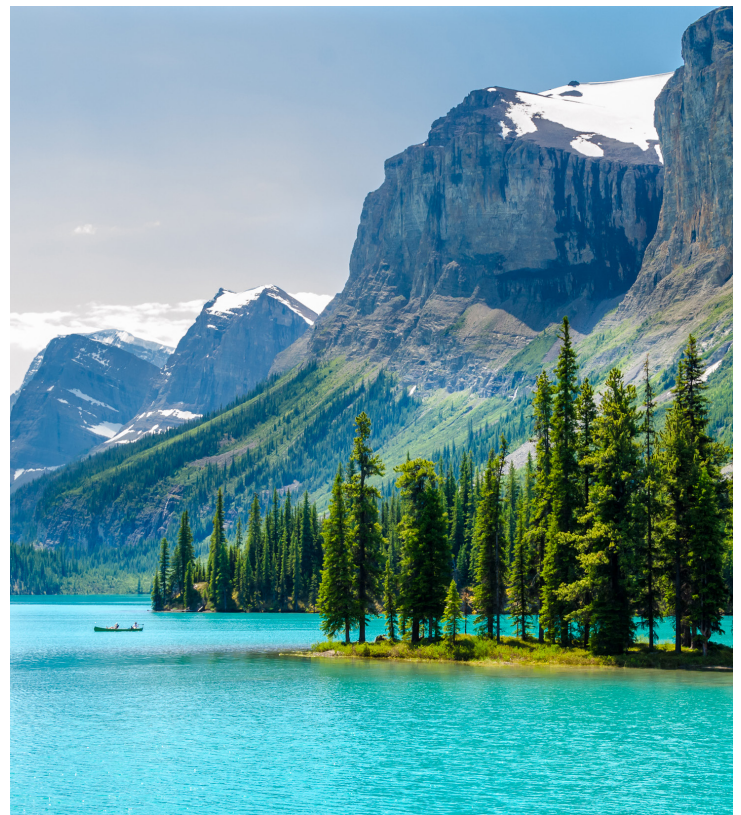
Western Canada refers to a large expanse of four provinces across the southwest of the country: British Columbia on the Pacific Coast, bordered by Alberta along the Rocky Mountains, and further east the prairie provinces of Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

Western Canada is varied in its landscape and geography. British Columbia has a long coastline and many islands in the Pacific Ocean, with extensive fisheries and port traffic to Asia. British Columbia and Alberta are also famous for their lofty peaks and world-class ski hills. The Great Plains spread through the centre of Canada take up much of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, creating flat, fertile grasslands that produce much of the world's grain and other essential agricultural crops.

## Climate

Interior regions of Canada experience cold, snowy winters with temperatures occasionally dropping below -30 degrees Celsius from cool continental winds. Northern areas tend to have longer, colder winters, which is why many population centres in Canada tend to be located in the southern regions of most provinces. Winters on the coast of British Columbia in cities like Vancouver and Victoria are more temperate due to the coastal influence, usually not dropping below 0 degrees Celsius, but receiving plenty of winter rain.

In contrast, summers get very warm in most of these regions; clear skies in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Alberta make for very sunny days and summer temperatures reaching 20-30 degrees Celsius. Again, the coastline of British Columbia is temperate and experiences more coolness and precipitation from coastal breezes.





## Cultural snapshot for newcomers

Each province of Western Canada has been home for thousands of years to First Nations inhabitants, whose cultural presence continues to form an important pillar of Canadian culture today. Western Canada is known for a slightly slower, more relaxed pace of life than busy Ontario and Quebec. Whether you enjoy large bustling cities or tranquil, wide-open spaces, you will find a taste of everything in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

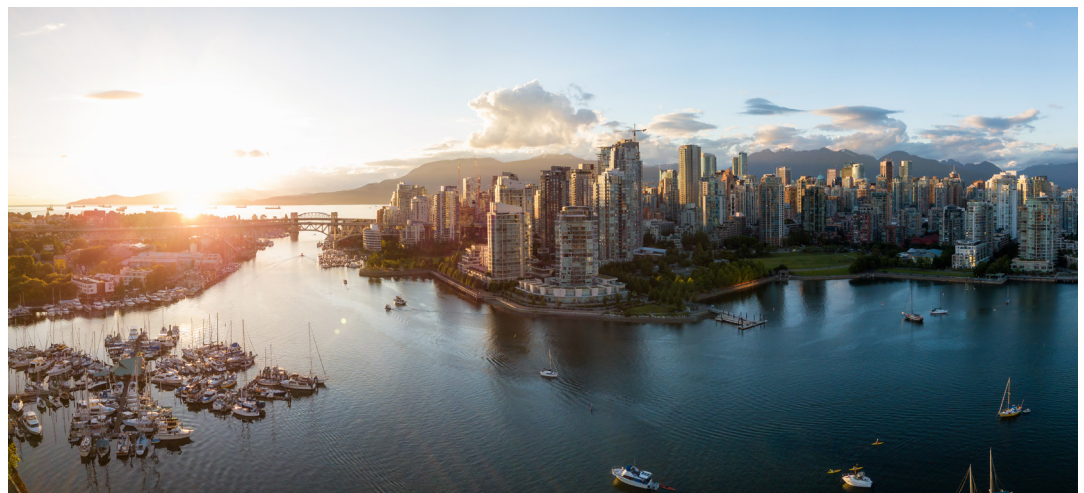


### British Columbia

British Columbia (BC) is a unique mix of relaxed “West Coast” vibes, multicultural metropolitan centres, and pride for its beautiful natural features, like the high snow-capped Rockies or long, sandy surfing beaches on Vancouver Island.

BC is the third most populous province after Ontario and Quebec, with a large portion of its residents living in the Lower Mainland, a region on the southwest coastline, which includes the coastal city of Vancouver and surrounding municipalities. The Lower Mainland is one of the most multicultural areas in Canada, attracting many newcomers from all over the world with its cultural diversity, career opportunities, and enjoyable temperate climate. The populations of Vancouver, Burnaby, West Vancouver, Coquitlam, Richmond, and Surrey in the Lower Mainland are made up of at least 50 per cent newcomers from all over the world, according to a Stats Canada report on ethnocultural diversity. The most common countries of origin of newcomers in British Columbia, according to the 2016 Census, are largely Asian countries:

1. China
2. India
3. Philippines
4. Iran
5. South Korea



## Alberta

The province of Alberta is well-known throughout the world for its productive oil sands, and many of its communities are born out of this wealthy industry. Beyond this, Alberta's two major cities Edmonton and Calgary are multicultural hubs where most newcomers tend to settle in the province. The province hosts large newcomer communities from the Philippines, India, the United Kingdom, China, and many more.

Alberta's stunning national parks, such as Banff National Park and Jasper National Park, bring visitors from all over the world to hike, sightsee, and ski in the towering mountains of the province. Alberta also has a strong western rodeo and ranching culture, with the city of Calgary hosting the annual Calgary Stampede, the world's largest rodeo and western festival that attracts over one million visitors each year.



**"Alberta is very welcoming to newcomers — I can attest to that. There are great newcomer centres and lots to do, such as visiting West Edmonton Mall, the largest shopping mall in North America. There are also great opportunities for kids, such as getting registered in sports teams."**

— Alexandria, Edmonton resident. Moved to Canada in 2013.

## Saskatchewan

The province of Saskatchewan lies at the heart of Canada, a prairie province whose identity is rooted in traditional farming practices and welcoming hospitality. Also known as the "Land of the Living Skies," clear and sunny Saskatchewan has plenty of expansive farmland where the friendly and hardworking culture of this province takes its roots.



**"We are a friendly and hospitable group of people in Saskatchewan. Even in the city, there is a rural community feel; friendliness on every corner, people always willing to assist, and always eager to learn about new cultures."**

— Krista, Saskatoon resident

As farming practices have become more efficient over the years, Saskatchewan residents have begun to move to the larger cities of Saskatoon and Regina, which become more diverse each year as newcomers continue to make Saskatchewan their new home. Fans of American-style football will find themselves right at home in Saskatchewan as the province's residents are passionate about their Canadian Football League team, the Saskatchewan Roughriders. Members of "Rider Nation" deck themselves out in white and green, sing loudly, and sometimes wear watermelons as helmets to show their pride for their favourite team.





## **Manitoba**

As the home of the influential Hudson's Bay Company and the Canadian Fur Trade, Manitoba's deep history goes back farther than some other Canadian provinces. The province is home to a large population of Métis; a group descended from Aboriginal women and French and Scottish fur traders, who have a distinct culture that is recognized in the Canadian constitution. Exploration runs deep in the culture of Manitoba, which is known as the 'Land of 100,000 Lakes' as well as being home to the polar bear capital of the world, Churchill.

Newcomer communities continue to influence the cultural profile of Manitoba, especially in its culture-rich capital of Winnipeg. Cultural events such as the Manitoba Filipino Street Festival are a welcoming and fun introduction to the culture of Manitoba. Winnipeg is home to many other distinctly Manitoban cultural experiences, such as the world-famous Royal Winnipeg Ballet, and the Canadian Human Rights Museum.

## **Moving and working in Western Canada**

All of the provinces in Western Canada have specific provincial nomination programs (PNPs) to accelerate the immigration process for newcomers with skills that are in high demand. PNPs have various streams to accommodate the province's own needs and newcomers of various skill and experience levels. PNPs specifically for entrepreneurs are also common in Western provinces. Learn about how to apply for PNPs in Canada.

There are many job opportunities across various fields in Western Canada. See our job market guide for newcomers to kickstart your career search in Canada.

## **In-demand professions of British Columbia**

The B.C. Labour Market Outlook recommends referring to these designated high opportunity occupations when first considering your career options as a newcomer in British Columbia. There are separate lists of high opportunity occupations depending on your educational background and skills.

Refer to page 20-26 in WorkBC's B.C. Good Jobs Report for a full list of high opportunity occupations projected for the next ten years.

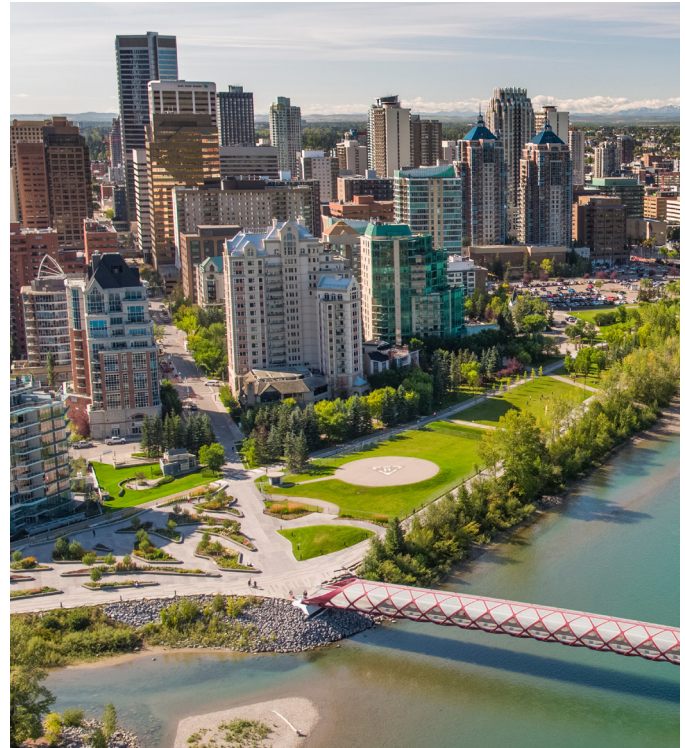
### **In-demand professions of Alberta**

The province of Alberta actively welcomes professionally trained newcomers, and projects labour shortages in the following fields over the next ten years:

- 1. Administrative assistants, receptionists, and general office support**
- 2. Accounting technicians and bookkeepers**
- 3. Administrative officers**
- 4. Early childhood educators and assistants**
- 5. Transport truck drivers**
- 6. Homebuilding and renovation managers**

Alberta's Occupational Outlook (published every two years by the Government of Alberta), projects severe shortages in some health occupations in the near future:

- 1. Anesthesiologists**
- 2. Rural and remote healthcare workers**



### **In demand professions in Saskatchewan**

The province provides the Saskatchewan Detailed Occupational Outlook for the next four years. The outlook states that these positions will have the most available opportunities between now and 2023:

- **Managers in agriculture**
- **Retail and wholesale managers**
- **Transport truck drivers**
- **Retail salespersons**
- **Janitors, caretakers, and building superintendents**
- **Registered nurses**
- **Administrative officers**
- **Nurse aides and orderlies**
- **Elementary school teachers**

See the full Occupational Outlook for more information and to look up specific careers.

### **Manitoba**

The Manitoba Labour Market Occupational Forecast projects almost 170,000 new job opportunities in many sectors between 2018 and 2024. Some of the most in-demand positions will be in the sectors of:

- **Management**
- **Business, Finance, and Administration**
- **Natural and applied sciences and related occupations**
- **Health occupations**
- **Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services**

## Additional resources for newcomers

### British Columbia

- [Newcomers' Guide to BC](#)
- [S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Foundation](#)
- [Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia](#)
- [WorkBC Employment Centres](#)
- [Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC \(AMSSA\)](#)
- [Vancouver Island Immigrant Welcome Centre](#)

### Alberta

- [City of Edmonton Newcomer's Guide](#)
- [Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers](#)
- [City of Calgary Newcomer's Guide](#)
- [Calgary Catholic Immigration Society](#)
- [Calgary Immigrant Women's Association](#)
- [Lethbridge Services for Newcomers and Immigrants \(Lethbridge, AB\)](#)
- [The Edmonton Philippine International Centre \(EPI\)](#)

### Saskatchewan

- [Estevan Southeast Newcomer Services](#)
- [Humboldt Regional Newcomer Centre](#)
- [Lloydminster Regional Newcomer Gateway](#)
- [Moose Jaw Newcomer Welcome Centre](#)
- [Battlefords Immigration Resource Centre](#)
- [Regina Newcomer Welcome Centre](#)
- [Prince Albert Regional Newcomer Centre](#)
- [Saskatoon Newcomer Information Centre](#)
- [Swift Current Southwest Newcomer Welcome Centre](#)
- [Tisdale Northeast Newcomer Services](#)
- [Yorkton Newcomer Welcome Centre](#)

### Manitoba

- [Immigrant Centre of Manitoba](#)
- [Live and Learn Manitoba](#)
- [Manitoba Start \(employment opportunities\)](#)
- [New Journey Housing](#)
- [Immigrant Guide for Women](#)
- [Newcomer's Guide to Winnipeg](#)

See our provincial spotlights on British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba for more information.

# Atlantic Canada: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Prince Edward Island



## Atlantic Canada basics

Atlantic Canada describes the four easternmost provinces of Canada: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Prince Edward Island. This grouping of provinces has a distinct character due to their similarities as small, coastal provinces with long histories of First Nations, Celtic and Gaelic, and French Acadian cultural influence.

Newfoundland and Labrador is the largest and northernmost province in this region, made up of the island of Newfoundland and the mainland section of

Labrador. Sometimes, Newfoundland and Labrador is dropped from this grouping, and the three remaining southeastern provinces are called “The Maritimes.” New Brunswick and Nova Scotia border the large Bay of Fundy, neighboured by the smallest province, Prince Edward Island.

As the eastern sea gateway to the rest of Canada, newcomers historically travelled through Atlantic Canada, and frequently settled there. Today, the four provinces of this region typically have smaller populations than other provinces in Canada, due to their smaller geographical areas. A total of 2.5 million people live in the four provinces of Atlantic Canada.

## Populous cities of Atlantic Canada

The cities of Atlantic Canada are diverse communities with their roots in First Nations groups as well as historical immigration and settlement, and are known for their marine cultures and some of the best seafood in the world. Here are some of the most popular cities in which newcomers choose to settle in Atlantic Canada:

- **Halifax:** As the capital of Nova Scotia, Halifax is the largest city in Atlantic Canada at almost half a million people, with a strong multicultural history.
- **St. John's:** This capital of Newfoundland and Labrador has nearly 200,000 residents.
- **Moncton:** A bilingual city of French and English in New Brunswick with over 100,000 residents.
- **Saint John:** The oldest incorporated city in Canada, located in New Brunswick, with 60,000 residents.
- **Fredericton:** The capital city of New Brunswick, less populous than other cities at 60,000 residents.
- **Charlottetown:** The charming capital of small Prince Edward Island has just over 50,000 residents, about one-third of the island's population.





## **Climate**

The climate of the Atlantic provinces is a temperate marine climate, influenced by proximity to the Atlantic Ocean. Summer temperatures are usually between 15 and 25 degrees Celsius, with interior regions being hotter and coastal areas being slightly cooler in the summers. Winters can be quite cold and often rainy; 0 to -15 degrees Celsius is an average winter temperature, and the northern regions of Newfoundland and Labrador can become much colder. Spring and fall are well-defined seasons in Atlantic Canada, with cool temperatures and ample precipitation.

## **Cultural snapshot for newcomers**

The Atlantic provinces share many similarities, with the first being that they comprise the home of the Indigenous Mi'kmaq people, who still live predominantly in the Atlantic region. As the initial landing point for Vikings and European explorers, the Atlantic provinces are culturally significant to North America as a land where settlers and First Nations came into contact for the first time.

French Acadian settlers, Celtic and Gaelic settlers, and British settlers all landed here and influenced the birth of the four Atlantic provinces, which are still welcome lands for newcomers to this day. In modern times, the Atlantic provinces are known for their access to the sea and world-class production of seafood, as well as a general friendliness and accepting attitude towards visitors and new residents.

## **Newfoundland and Labrador**

Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are known best for their distinct dialects and friendly hospitality. With English, Irish, French, and Indigenous roots, Newfoundland and Labrador has developed into a province with the most separate English-language dialects in the world, with many witty, sometimes silly-sounding phrases that can sometimes be difficult to understand. The famous friendliness of this province is illustrated in the musical “Come From Away,” based on the real-life story of Newfoundland’s incredible hospitality to international travellers during 9/11. To this day, residents of the province continue to welcome newcomers, who are also sometimes called “Come From Aways”; just one of many funny turns-of-phrases used by locals of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The culture of Newfoundland and Labrador has also grown from its northern marine environment. Iceberg viewing and whale watching are spectacular ways to view nature in action, onshore or by boat, in Newfoundland and Labrador. Fishing is an important part of the culture in Newfoundland and Labrador, whether for commercial purposes, sport, or just to spend time outdoors.

## Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia's diversity has been a part of its cultural character since European explorers first set foot in the province centuries ago. Nova Scotia is famous for being the first entry point to Canada throughout the twentieth century at Pier 21 in Halifax. Today, the city of Halifax is known for its cultural diversity and lively maritime spirit. The site of the old Pier 21 is now home to the Canadian Museum of Immigration, a series of exhibits dedicated to telling the stories of newcomers throughout the years and celebrating Canada's fundamental diversity.

Fishing has been important to every culture that has made this land home, from the indigenous Mi'kmaq to the settlers of the seventeenth century to today. Now, Nova Scotia's fishing industry is famous for its lobster, scallops, snow crabs, shrimp, halibut, and much more. Seafood lovers will enjoy Nova Scotia's celebration of fresh catches, and can even embark upon the Nova Scotia Lobster Trail to sample Nova Scotia's favourite dish, lobster dinner.



“

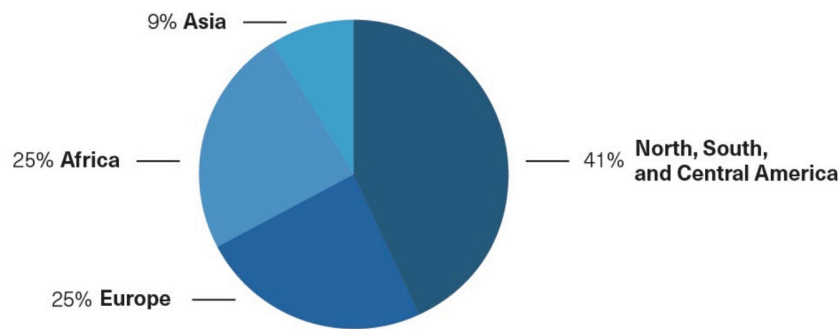
“We have so much to explore in Nova Scotia, from beaches, trails, towns, and counties, to food, culture, and much more. I like to drive around to explore different places and spend up to a few days there, depending on the location. People in Nova Scotia appreciate a good work-life balance, so there is plenty of time to explore.”

— Ricky, Halifax resident. Moved to Canada 2014.

## New Brunswick

New Brunswick is the only officially bilingual province in Canada, with many residents and newcomers speaking both English and French. In a report from the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, it was found that French-speaking newcomers to New Brunswick come from all different parts of the world:

### Places of origin of French-speaking newcomers in New Brunswick



French settlers first came to New Brunswick in the early 1600s, led by the famous explorer, Samuel de Champlain. The descendants of these settlers became the Acadians, a French-speaking group that has developed its own distinct culture between their French heritage and the new land of the Maritimes.

New Brunswick is also famous for its incredible fishing and seafood, due to its proximity to the Atlantic Ocean. Try your hand at lake or ocean fishing in the province for a new experience, or to catch your dinner. Don't miss the town of Shediac – also known as the lobster capital of the world.

## Prince Edward Island

The residents of PEI, similar to the other Atlantic provinces, have a reputation for being extremely welcoming and friendly to folks from across the world. The province's unofficial mascot is a potato – one of PEI's most lucrative crops – named Friendly the Spud.



“When you walk down the street in Prince Edward Island, it is likely that people you don't know will smile and say, “Hi!” to you. Don't be scared; it is a part of the local culture to be nice and welcoming.”

— Li Yuan, Charlottetown resident. Moved to Canada in 2006.



### **Prince Edward Island (cont'd)**

Prince Edward Island is famous for its beautiful pastoral countryside and red sand beaches. Charming farmhouses stand out over rolling green hills and farmland, and no matter where you are in PEI, you are never more than 30 kilometres from the seaside. Many iconic red-and-white lighthouses can also be found along the shores of PEI – many of which have now been converted into museums or historical landmarks for the public to visit.

PEI is also home to one of the most beloved literary characters in Canada, Anne of Green Gables. Green Gables Heritage Place is a provincial treasure dedicated to the legacy of author L.M. Montgomery and the history and beauty of Prince Edward Island.



### **Moving and working in Atlantic Canada**

Provinces in Atlantic Canada depend on their newcomers to bring an international perspective and necessary skills that improve their economies. While historically, the strongest sectors in these provinces have been resource-based in fishing, forestry, and oil and gas production, Atlantic Canada now has very strong tech and aerospace sectors. These provinces are looking forward to growing their service, business, and finance sectors as well as continuing growth in information technology.

Provincial nominee programs (PNPs) are a common way that newcomers can immigrate to Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. There is also the option of the Atlantic Immigration Pilot (AIP), created to stimulate immigration to these areas. The AIP is a partnership between the Government of Canada and the four Atlantic provinces (Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island) to fill jobs that cannot be filled locally. You must have a job offer from an eligible employer to apply for the AIP.

### **The Newfoundland and Labrador job market**

Typically, around 50 per cent of newcomers to Newfoundland and Labrador take jobs in highly skilled occupations in the areas of social science, education, and government service; healthcare; natural and applied sciences; and management.



### **The Newfoundland and Labrador job market (cont'd)**

Occupations within these growing sectors will make up 91.1 per cent of new job openings to the end of 2020:

- **Healthcare**
- **Processing, manufacturing, and utilities**  
**Sales and service occupations**
- **Management**

Many resource-based positions of various skill levels in Newfoundland and Labrador are seasonal, which means employment rates can fluctuate throughout the year in resource sectors. However, the average number of weeks worked per year in Newfoundland and Labrador is increasing.

**Tip:** See Newfoundland and Labrador's immigration guides, Immigration 101 and Working and Staying in Atlantic Canada: An International Student's Guide, for other immigration programs and employment information.

### **The Nova Scotia job market**

Full-time employment had seen a decline during the COVID-19 pandemic, but is slowly recovering. In July 2021, 372,700 individuals had full-time jobs. Nova Scotia's service, health care and social assistance, construction, manufacturing, transportation/warehousing, and professional, scientific, and technical services sectors are growing rapidly. For more specific regional career information, see the Nova Scotia Immigration regional job market scans.

Full-time employment growth is expected in different sectors across all five regions of Nova Scotia. Each region's fastest-growing sectors will offer high job opportunities for newcomers.

### **The New Brunswick job market**

New Brunswick's Employment Outlook Agency, NBJobs, projects over 120,000 job openings to be created between 2018 and 2027. Potential opportunities are expected to be available at every level of education and skill, according to the New Brunswick Labour Market Outlook 2018-2027. NBJobs also provides a free job search website for positions within New Brunswick based on the field of work and region.

### **The PEI job market**

As a smaller province, PEI does not release job outlooks, but you can use Canada's online job trend analysis, which provides estimates of job availability, wage, and educational requirements based on position and region. Test out the tool by searching your current and/or ideal occupations and province or city in Canada to gain insight on current career prospects.

The PEI Association for Newcomers offers career counselling services to newcomers, as well as a variety of programs and services to support you in finding a career in PEI.

## Additional resources for newcomers

### Newfoundland and Labrador

- [Association for New Canadians \(ANC\)](#)
- [Multicultural Women's Organization of Newfoundland and Labrador \(MWONL\)](#)
- [Chinese Association of Newfoundland and Labrador](#)
- [L'Association communautaire francophone de Saint-Jean](#)
- [Friends of India Association](#)
- [Philippine-Newfoundland Organization](#)

### Nova Scotia

- [Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia](#)
- [Newcomer's Guide to Halifax](#)
- [Working and Staying in Atlantic Canada: An International Student's Guide](#)
- [YMCA and YWCA Nova Scotia](#)
- [Immigration francophone Nouvelle-Écosse \(French\)](#)

### New Brunswick

- [Orientation Guide for newcomers to New Brunswick](#)
- [New Brunswick Multicultural Council](#)
- [Newcomer's Guide to Employment in Moncton](#)
- [Saint John Multicultural and Newcomers Resource Centre](#)
- [Saint John YMCA/YWCA](#)
- [Greater Moncton Chinese Cultural Association](#)

### Prince Edward Island

- [Prince Edward Island Association for Newcomers \(PEIANC\)](#)
- [Guide to Arriving at the Airport](#)
- [in Prince Edward Island](#)
- [La Coopérative d'intégration francophone de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard](#)
- [Newcomer's Guide to Prince Edward Island](#)

See our provincial spotlights on Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island for more information.



# Northern Canada: The Northwest Territories, Yukon, and Nunavut



## Northern Canada basics

The northern half of Canada comprises three large territories: The Northwest Territories, Nunavut Territory, and Yukon Territory. The Canadian territories differ from provinces in their governance: provinces have their own constitutional power, while territories are governed directly by the federal government.

Some newcomers move to the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, or Yukon for access to incredible wilderness. Large wildlife like polar bears and buffalo roam freely in expansive national parks, untouched rivers and

waterfalls, and sharp mountain peaks. Camping, hiking, and canoeing are a few of the ways folks with adventurous spirits can take advantage of this special land.

The three Canadian territories are less densely populated than the provinces of the south; each of the large territories is home to roughly 40,000 people—a lower population than many southern Canadian cities. The fairly cold climate of the territories is one reason fewer people settle in the North. Northern winters are long and drop below -30 degrees Celsius often. However, if newcomers are prepared with the right outdoor gear, these temperatures can be a manageable adjustment. Newcomers may be surprised to hear that in some areas of the territories, such as in the Northwest Territories, summers can be hot and sunny, reaching up to 30 degrees Celsius.

Summer days can be long in high northern areas; the midnight sun occurs around the summer solstice when daylight hours last well over 18 hours. Above the Arctic Circle, the sun will not set at all until winter. The flip side of those long summer days is that winter nights can be equally long, and quite cold and dark. The long winter nights are the perfect time to catch the Northern Lights, the fantastic light-show phenomena in the sky that occurs in much of Northern Canada.

The major cities of the North include Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories, Whitehorse in Yukon, and Iqaluit in Nunavut. All of these cities are accessible by international flights through Canadian flight hub cities like Vancouver, Calgary, and Montreal. In Yukon and the Northwest Territories, cars can be used between communities. Nunavut's communities are more remote, and so outside of Iqaluit, small planes are used to travel in between towns. The North has slightly higher costs of living than other places in Canada, due to transport costs of flying goods and food up to more remote communities. Typically wages are also slightly higher in the North to make up for this difference.

## Cultural snapshot for newcomers

The territories are defined by their strong connections to traditional First Nations cultures, as well as their welcoming attitudes towards new cultures as the cities of the Canadian North become more modern and cosmopolitan. The towns of the North are growing beyond their roots in resource extraction to become small, yet internationally-minded cities that welcome new residents and tourists alike.



### The Northwest Territories

As in much of the North, the First Nations culture is a significant presence in the Northwest Territories. Nine of the territories' eleven official languages are Indigenous languages of multiple First Nations groups who have lived on these lands for thousands of years, with the additional two languages being English and French. The vibrant cultures of the Dene, Inuvialuit, and Métis peoples coexist with newcomers from all over the world in the Northwest Territories.

About half of NWT's population lives in its capital of Yellowknife, around 20,000 people. Yellowknife is often described as a small city with a big-city feel, meaning that it has most of the amenities of a bigger city with a much smaller population. Most festivals in the NWT, such as the music festival Folk on the Rocks or the Snow King Winter Festival, occur in Yellowknife.

### Nunavut

As the majority of Nunavut's small population is Inuit, the Inuit culture is very strong in the territory and differs slightly between each small community. Traditional Inuit arts and crafts are one of the territory's largest industries, including stone carvings, weavings, and prints. The elders of the Inuit community, highly valued for their wisdom, teach the traditional arts to their younger generations, along with music, dance, and story. Nunavut has three official languages: Inuktitut (the family of Inuit languages), English, and French. Inuktitut is the most common mother tongue, but many residents also speak English. Few other languages are spoken widely in Nunavut.

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“I moved to Iqaluit from Manitoba for an amazing professional opportunity, and fell in love with the amazing Inuit culture, food, language, and warmth of the people here.”

— Catherine, Iqaluit resident.



## Yukon

Almost 25,000 people live in the capital of Yukon, Whitehorse. Whitehorse is the largest city in northern Canada, and most newcomers choose to settle here when moving to Yukon. Whitehorse is the only city in northern Canada with a public transportation system.

The Yukon First Nations peoples have a strong cultural presence in the North through vibrant art such as traditional carvings, skilled weavings, and paintings, as well as dancing and drumming at cultural festivals like the Adaka summer festival. About 25 per cent of Yukon's population is First Nations.

The echoes of the 19th century Yukon Gold Rush can be found in the communities and railways built during this time, as well as in the Yukon residents' bold sense of adventure. You can explore Yukon's history through its nature, or simply appreciate the beautiful North for its peaceful and clean natural wonders. Hike Miles Canyon or visit the historical sites of MacBride Museum or the S.S. Klondike to relive the adventure of the 19th century Gold Rush.

## Moving and working in Northern Canada

Processing times to immigrate to Canada's territories can often be shorter than other provinces with high application volumes. See our article on applying for PNPs for a walkthrough of the full process.

### The Northwest Territories job market

NWT is home to almost 4,000 newcomers, which makes up about 9 per cent of its population. Most newcomers move to the capital, Yellowknife, but others may choose a more remote location depending on job opportunities in mining, oil, or forestry.

The capital city of Yellowknife holds the most job openings in the Northwest Territories, according to recent labour market outlooks. Annually, Yellowknife is projected to have about 975 job openings. The regions of Beaufort Delta, Dehcho, Sahtu, South Slave, and Tłıchǫ each project between 80 and 300 openings per year.



**Tip:** Use the Northwest Territories job search tool to find detailed information on all NWT occupations and outlooks.

## Nunavut job market

The largest employer in the territory is the Government of Nunavut. Typically a diploma or degree in business administration, finance, or a related discipline is required. See more information on in-demand career options in Nunavut on the Government of Nunavut website.

## Yukon job market

Most of the jobs available in Yukon are located in the city of Whitehorse. Many locals work in public administration with the Government of Yukon, plus there are many resource-based and service positions available based on your skills and region of Yukon. Yukon's most up-to-date job board and job search tool is the Yukon Work Information Network (YuWIN). Download the essential workbook for newcomers created by the Governments of Canada and Yukon for more in-depth employment information.

## Additional resources for newcomers

### The Northwest Territories

- [NWT Literacy Council](#)
- [The Fédération Franco-Ténoise \(FFT\)](#)
- [Conseil de développement économique des Territoires du Nord-Ouest \(CDETNO\)](#)
- [Aurora College](#)
- [GNWT Careers](#)

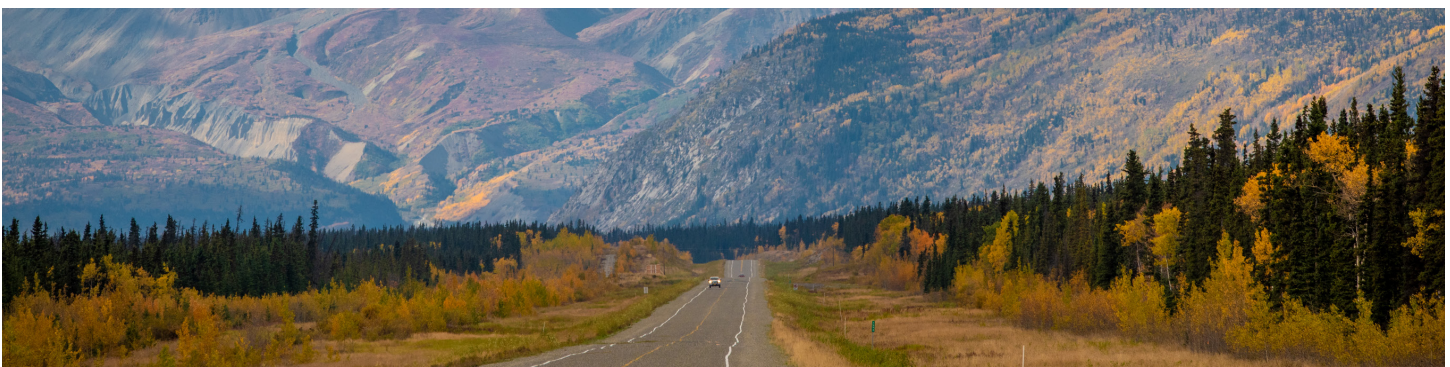
### Nunavut

- [Carrefour Nunavut Guide for Newcomers](#)
- [Nunavut Public Library Services](#)
- [Service Canada Iqaluit](#)

### Yukon

- [Multicultural Centre of the Yukon](#)
- [Direction Yukon](#)
- [L'Association franco-yukonnaise](#)
- [Yukon Internationally Educated Health Professionals](#)
- [Yukon Public Library](#)

See our spotlights on the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Yukon for more information.



# Key Takeaways



## **Each Canadian province and territory has a distinct culture and way of life**

It's easy to group all Canadians together through familiar stereotypes such as "all Canadians are extremely polite," or "all Canadians play ice hockey," but there is so much more to witness in Canada. This guide has highlighted the unique features of each province and territory newcomers might be interested in, from the diversity of Toronto to the red sand beaches of Prince Edward Island, and beyond.

## **Newcomers can find opportunities to thrive in life and career in every province and territory of Canada**

Moving to Canada may be one of the biggest decisions of your life. It can also be one of the best decisions if you take the time to thoroughly research which area of Canada will be the best fit for you based on your career and lifestyle preferences. If you love the ocean and seafood, you may be happiest in one of the Atlantic provinces, or British Columbia. If you are a farmer by trade, you may find the most job opportunities in the prairie provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. Canada has something for all newcomers, as well as an appreciation for the enthusiasm and hard work newcomers bring to their lives here.

## **Wherever you choose to settle in Canada, you will have plenty of newcomer resources and support**

In this guide, we have provided provincial newcomer resources for every province and territory. Here are a few resources you can access anywhere in Canada:

- **LINC - Free language courses from the government of Canada in English and**
- **French YMCA/YWCA - Fitness and community programming**
- **Public libraries - Free books, internet, and social programs**
- **Canada Connects programs - pair with a volunteer to learn about Canada**

**Tip:** Calling the phone number 211 or visiting each province's 211 website will give you access to social resources across the country in over 200 languages.



## **There are unique career options in every province and territory, and career support is available for newcomers**

The Canadian Job Bank is a tool that newcomers can use to explore and compare jobs all over Canada. You can use this tool to match your skills to many open positions in Canada and receive daily email updates of the latest jobs in your desired region. The Job Bank also offers an online job trend analysis with estimates of job availability, wage, and educational requirements based on position and region.

Download the newcomer's guide to the Canadian job market for in-depth job market information across various fields and regions.



### **Canadian climate varies across provinces and territories, and within them**

Be prepared for the weather in your region with appropriate gear. In coastal regions, get equipped for high precipitation levels by purchasing light and adaptable rain gear like rain jackets, umbrellas, and waterproof boots or shoes. If you plan to live in an interior or northern region, consider investing in a quality winter coat (around \$150-200 CAD) to stay warm in the colder months. In northern regions, parkas, or extremely warm jackets worn by locals, can run up to \$1000 CAD. Find current weather forecasts across the country from Environment Canada.

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Remember this Alfred Wainwright quote: “There’s no such thing as bad weather, only unsuitable clothing.” Canadians rarely let cold weather stop them from enjoying the outdoors, as long as they are layered up in warm clothing.



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