



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

# **Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities**

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HUMA • NUMBER 011 • 1st SESSION • 42nd PARLIAMENT

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**EVIDENCE**

**Wednesday, May 11, 2016**

—  
**Chair**

**Mr. Bryan May**



## Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities

Wednesday, May 11, 2016

•(1615)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. Bryan May (Cambridge, Lib.)):** I call the meeting to order.

We have a couple of people we're still waiting on, but we're going to move forward.

Unfortunately, we are going to be interrupted with votes this afternoon.

We're going to hear from all the witnesses today, and then we'll get into some questions. Hopefully we'll have a few minutes at the very end to quickly discuss some committee business regarding whether we should be requesting this study to be televised, given its importance, its scope, and how much is involved in it. This is a request that has come to us. We won't make that decision today; we wanted to put that to the committee to discuss.

Welcome to our witnesses, some of whom I've had the pleasure of listening to in the past and some who are new.

First, from the Department of Employment and Social Development, we have Paul Thompson, senior assistant deputy minister, skills and employment branch. From Industry Canada, we have Janet Goulding, director general, temporary foreign worker program, skills and employment branch. Also joining us today from the Department of Citizenship and Immigration are Dave Manicom, associate assistant deputy minister, strategic and program policy, and Robert Judge, director, temporary resident policy and program division, immigration branch, strategic and program policy.

I understand you have worked out who's going to be speaking first. I believe it's Mr. Thompson.

Mr. Thompson, we are going to try to keep it to 10 minutes. Hopefully we will have some time after both presentations for some questions.

Without further ado, we go to you, sir.

[Translation]

**Mr. Paul Thompson (Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Skills and Employment Branch, Department of Employment and Social Development):** Thank you.

Mr. Chair and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about the temporary foreign worker program and its place in the Canadian labour market.

[English]

I have a slide deck that I'm not going to present but rather circulate to members of the committee for their information to assist with the review of the program. There are elements of it that do relate to my remarks.

It's important to note at the outset that the TFW program is not the only avenue through which temporary foreign workers can enter the country. They can also enter through the international mobility program, which my colleague David will be speaking to. Unlike the TFW program, it does not require a labour market test. That's the key differentiation between the two streams.

With respect to volumes, the international mobility program accounted for about 70% of the foreign workers who entered Canada, with the TFW program representing the other 30%. That's to give you a relative sense of the volumes.

[Translation]

The temporary foreign worker program is intended to be used by employers as a last and limited resort to fill their acute labour shortages on a temporary basis.

[English]

It is a relatively small program; these workers make up less than 0.5% of the country's 19-million-strong labour force.

A key part of the program is the labour market impact assessment, or what we call the LMIA. Employers must apply for an LMIA before they can be granted the right to hire a temporary foreign worker. This test considers, among other things, if an employer has made reasonable efforts to recruit Canadians and if the jobs are offered at an appropriate wage, and it ensures that hiring a temporary foreign worker does not negatively affect an ongoing labour market dispute at the place of employment. It also considers regional labour market conditions.

I'd like to turn to the streams of the TFW program. There are four streams through which employers can request a labour market impact assessment in order to hire temporary foreign workers. They are the high-wage stream, the low-wage stream, primary agriculture, and last, a stream that's dedicated to support permanent residency under the express entry process managed by IRCC. Each stream has its own set of requirements to which employers must adhere.

Starting with the high-wage stream, requests from employers above the provincial or territorial median wage mean that the employers must submit a transition plan that outlines the specific recruitment and training activities they need to make to transition to a Canadian workforce.

Requests from employers who are offering a wage below the median wage are managed under the low-wage stream, specifically in recognition of the fact that workers in this stream are more vulnerable. The employers must provide a set of unique worker protection measures, including an employer-employee contract, transportation costs to and from their home country, health insurance, and affordable accommodation.

[Translation]

In order to ensure that employers do not develop a business model that relies too heavily on foreign labour, the program has a cap on the percentage of low wage temporary foreign workers that can be part of an employer's workforce. The cap currently sits at 20%.

[English]

The program also bars employers from applying for foreign workers in the lowest-skill, lowest-wage occupations of the accommodation and food services sector and retail trade sectors when the regional unemployment rate is above 6%.

[Translation]

It is important to note that irrespective of the stream, employers must advertise positions and pay their workers the prevailing wage rate for the occupation in their region. This ensures that jobs are attractive to Canadians, and limits the possibility of wage suppression.

[English]

The third stream, primary agriculture, includes positions related to on-farm primary agriculture, such as general farm workers, nursery and greenhouse workers, feedlot workers, and harvesting labourers. The stream includes the seasonal agricultural worker program, which is managed through international agreements with Mexico and a number of Caribbean countries to meet the temporary needs of seasonal agricultural producers.

I will turn to some changes in the program and its evolution.

The program has been subject to a number of changes over the last few years in limiting employer reliance on TFWs and strengthening the compliance regime to ensure employers are respecting program requirements. These changes have included a more rigorous LMIA process, a cap on low-wage temporary foreign workers that an employer can hire, a new transition plan requirement for high-wage employers, a \$1,000 non-refundable fee to reflect the cost of the program, and lastly, a new inspection process to help mitigate risk of possible program abuse.

• (1620)

Turning to some of the facts and figures, in recent years, due to the reforms and evolving economic conditions, there's been a steady decrease in employers' use of the TFW program. Since 2012, when there were almost 200,000 temporary foreign worker positions approved, the volumes have fallen to just over 90,000 approved

positions in 2015. This 90,000 figure, as I mentioned, amounts to a little under 0.5% of the 19 million Canadians in the labour force.

Declining usage by employers can be seen across the different streams of the program. Since 2012, the high-wage positions have fallen by about 65% and the low-wage positions by about 85%.

In 2015, about 22,000 positions were approved in the high-wage stream, about 15,000 in the low-wage stream, and about 53,000 in the primary agriculture stream.

[Translation]

The department is also undertaking work on a range of different issues in parallel to the review including: improving alignment with the department's other programs, including employment insurance and skills and training programs that target under-represented groups; making better use of labour market information in the process; as well as better use of TFWP data to inform labour market policy and programs.

[English]

In conclusion, I would like to thank the committee for undertaking this review, and we very much look forward to its recommendations.

I will turn to my colleague David for his comments on the international mobility program.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Thompson.

We're going to Mr. Manicom, please, for 10 minutes.

**Mr. David Manicom (Associate Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic and Program Policy, Department of Citizenship and Immigration):** Thank you.

[Translation]

Mr. Chair and committee members, my name is David Manicom and I am the associate deputy minister for strategic and program policy at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

[English]

The Immigration Act and regulations set out the framework under which foreign nationals are authorized to work in Canada. The act establishes when work permits or labour market impact assessments are required. Immigration officers, however, issue all work permits under both streams, except those issued by CBSA officials, which are primarily to U.S. nationals crossing the land border.

These immigration officers assess if the applicant has met the eligibility requirements, is qualified to perform the work and genuinely intends to do so, and is admissible to Canada with regard to health and security risks.

[Translation]

My department is responsible for the design of the international mobility program, which, as my colleague has said, is a collection of programs that authorize foreign nationals to work temporarily in Canada without requiring a labour market test, for a variety of economic, social and cultural reasons.

[English]

The international mobility program is made up of many components. I'll mention a couple of the largest ones.

Our single largest program is international experience Canada, under which young Canadians are given the opportunity to travel and work abroad in countries with which Canada has negotiated bilateral agreements. These agreements provide the same opportunities for young Canadians and are often called youth mobility programs. In 2015 close to 50,000 work permits were issued to international experience Canada participants.

The second example is the post-graduation work permit program, which gives open work permits to international students who have completed their degrees but who wish to remain in Canada to work for a period of up to three years to reinforce their learning or often to transition to permanent resident status in Canada.

As the number of international students in Canada has grown, so has the number of work permits. Nearly 35,000 were issued in 2015. At any given time, roughly one in four holders of a valid work permit in Canada is a post-grad. This program provides opportunities for students to qualify for permanent residence in Canada and is a major attraction in bringing foreign students to our schools, which generates \$8 billion worth of economic activity in this country each year.

Canada also provides open work permits to the spouses of skilled temporary workers. Doing so helps many companies recruit the best and the brightest if their spouses can come here and work.

Job-specific but labour market impact assessment-exempt work permits are provided for intercompany transfers as well as to support commitments to labour mobility under free trade agreements such as NAFTA.

Finally, there are a very large number of labour market test exemptions for special sectors. These include entertainers, professional athletes, medical researchers, religious workers, and so forth.

In all, nearly 180,000 unique work permits were authorized under the international mobility program in 2015. As Mr. Thompson mentioned, this represents about two-thirds or more of all temporary foreign workers coming into the country.

● (1625)

[Translation]

In providing these opportunities for foreign nationals to work temporarily in Canada, the international mobility program helps attract skilled workers and international students to Canada. It

secures opportunities for Canadians to work abroad in various countries and creates a pool of potential permanent residents to Canada. Work permits issued under the international mobility program do not target specific labour market shortages. They address broader economic and cultural interests. The international mobility program has experienced strong growth in the last few years. It has gone from a rough equivalency with the temporary foreign worker program in 2009 to more than double that program's activity level in 2015. Much of the growth has occurred in those streams where an actual job offer is not required, such as post-graduation work permits and the international experience program. As my colleague, Mr. Thompson, has pointed out, foreign nationals with valid work permits still represent a very small percentage of the 19 million strong Canadian workforce.

[English]

Several pathways exist for temporary residents to apply to stay in Canada as economic permanent residents. We often see references to the desirability of such programs. In fact, they already exist in large number. These include the Canadian experience class, the federal skilled worker program, and the various provincial nominee programs across Canada.

Transitions from temporary to permanent status have increased fivefold since 2005. International mobility program participants accounted for the majority of these. About 30,000 principal applicants in immigration applications who became permanent residents were here as temporary foreign workers last year, so while it is true that not every person who would like to stay in Canada is eligible to do so, temporary resident programs provide an important source of permanent residents for Canada.

[Translation]

In issuing work permits to foreign nationals, the government has an obligation to protect these foreign workers from exploitation once they have been approved to work here. That is why, along with Employment and Social Development Canada, my department has recently implemented reforms to ensure greater compliance by employers of foreign workers with applicable employment standards and requirements. Employers have always been obligated to abide by provincial/territorial legislation, but these reforms give the federal government a greater role in inspecting employers of foreign nationals, and imposing sanctions of our own in cases of non-compliance.

[English]

In conclusion, there are important links between Canada's immigration program and the temporary foreign worker program that this committee is reviewing.

As I mentioned, temporary foreign workers are an important source of permanent residents. Many of these people need employment as part of their integration into Canadian society. We would certainly like Canadian employers, who might otherwise be inclined to pursue a temporary foreign worker, to consider all of these new Canadians for difficult-to-fill positions. An excellent example of this approach is an initiative spearheaded by the New Canadians' Centre of Excellence that is placing 125 Syrian refugees into agricultural jobs in the Leamington, Ontario, area, with strong community support for their accommodation and orientation. We believe this approach benefits the employer, the recent immigrants, and Canada in general.

As I said, temporary work permit holders provide Canada with residents of impressively varied skill levels who become permanent residents.

•(1630)

[Translation]

I want to thank the committee for this opportunity to appear before its members. On behalf of my department, we look forward to reading your report and receiving your recommendations as they pertain to us.

I would be pleased to address any questions committee members might have.

Thank you very much.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much to all of you.

We'll get right into the questions. Mr. Warawa is first.

**Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC):** Chair, just considering that the bells are going to be starting very quickly, I think it would be nice if we had at least the first round. I wanted to share my time with Mr. Richards. Can I suggest that we do four minutes each for the first round, so it would be two and two, so that once the bells start ringing, everybody will have a chance. Is that okay?

**The Chair:** Yes, absolutely.

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Perhaps you'd stop me at two minutes.

**The Chair:** Yes, I will.

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** I want to thank the witnesses for being here.

My questions are in relation to the live-in caregiver program.

Some changes were made, I believe, about two or three years ago. In my constituency, I have a 70-something-year-old woman who is taking care of her son who has a disability, and rather than have him institutionalized, she's taking care of him because she loves him and does not want him institutionalized. She needs help in doing that, and gets somebody in to help her take care of her son. It shows dignity and care for him. However, every time she has to do that or it's turned down because that person didn't comply, she has to pay an application fee again. Why are we charging them time after time? Why not just one time?

**The Chair:** Excuse me, before you answer the question—you just got in there—I do have to ask for unanimous consent that we stay for this first round.

**Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill—Keewatinook Aski, NDP):** I want to clarify. It's not that I don't support this proposal, but would the idea be to come back and continue with the rounds of questioning?

**The Chair:** I don't think that would be in the cards, given that we have, I believe, two more votes. I might be wrong in that regard, but I believe there are two more votes, with about half an hour in between.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** Well, I'll support this. I am concerned about what that means in terms of lack of access to the officials. This is the first meeting; it's very important.

**The Chair:** I don't disagree.

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. David Manicom:** I'll speak briefly to the changes that were made in 2014, and Mr. Thompson might speak to your question about actual applications.

The changes that were made were primarily to the permanent resident access route for caregivers. We ended the old live-in caregiver program and replaced it with two new programs with no live-in requirement. Effectively, what we've done is eliminated the live-in requirement for caregivers who wish to become permanent residents of Canada. The previous program required not only the work but also stipulated where the person lived and slept, and that was the main element of the program that was changed by the previous government with regard to the permanent resident program.

On the temporary program side, I'll ask Mr. Thompson to speak.

**Mr. Paul Thompson:** With respect to the fee, there is a fee for an individual requesting a caregiver. That's a fee for the employer to give the labour market impact assessment. If the worker doesn't show up or the worker changes, that's still a valid LMIA for the employer in question.

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** That's exactly two minutes. Good job.

Mr. Richards.

**Mr. Blake Richards (Banff—Airdrie, CPC):** So many questions, so little time, but we'll get what we can.

I'll start—and probably finish, given the time—with a couple of questions that I think are very relevant for folks in my riding. I'll ask them both and I'll let you respond.

The first one is this. As we are all aware, with the review in February, I think it was, the Liberal government announced this one-time reprieve for those who are applying for seasonal workers for up to 180 days. I've heard many times from people in my constituency that because of the length of time it's taking to get an LMIA, three or four months, and based on when it was announced, that wouldn't allow anybody to be able to hire for that busy summer season in the areas where a need for those seasonal workers is occurring. I wonder if you could give us some indications as to whether there would be a way for the LMIA process to be speeded up so that it actually could be applicable to get someone, rather than just words from the Liberal government. That would be the first question.

The second one is with regard to the unemployment rate. There's a 6% cap on when low-wage workers can be used, and that currently is at 20% and moving to the 10%, of course. In my region I've got Banff and Canmore. They're very tourism-based economies. They form about 20% or 25% of their overall region. I know this has been put in place in other places in the past, but is there a way that this can be broken down where you have very localized economies?

Theirs is very different from the Alberta economy. There are many places in Alberta that are struggling right now, but theirs, being tourism-based, is doing quite well, and they're having trouble finding workers in their area.

I'm wondering if there's a way—and I know it's been done in the past in other areas—to break those regions down a little further so that people can access the program in areas where their unemployment rate is very different from the rate in the rest of their region.

• (1635)

**The Chair:** Fortunately, he's left you about 10 seconds.

**Mr. Paul Thompson:** The exemption for employers seeking seasonal workers was implemented February 19, and all the applications since that date have been processed with this exemption in place for, as you said, 180-day seasons. That was a modification of a provision in place the previous year, which was 120-day permits. That has been in place. There are efforts continuously to try to improve the processing times on these, and there is an improved trend line in that regard.

We use the Statistics Canada economic regions for looking at local unemployment rates.

**The Chair:** We do have to move on. Thank you.

Mr. Robillard, please.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yves Robillard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Most of the work permits issued under the temporary foreign workers program require that the individual work for a specific

employer. My first question is the following. What is the reason for this requirement?

Secondly, in view of this restriction, can you tell us more about how this affects the ability of temporary foreign workers to take action if their job is unsatisfactory or if the employer does not comply with labour standards? What recourse do temporary foreign workers have?

**Mr. Paul Thompson:** Your question is twofold.

First, I would say that when we do a labour market impact assessment, we look at a specific position with a specific employer. We consider whether there is a labour shortage in this sector. We look specifically at that position. That is why we look at a specific offer of employment from a specific employer.

As to the process relating to workers' rights, there are certain avenues for reporting worker abuse.

[*English*]

There's a tip line in place, and we have put in place very rigorous inspection processes for the workplace to look at the situation across the board. There's a high volume of inspections, and as of December 2015, very serious penalties have been put in place, with fines that can go up to \$1 million per employer for reports of abuse or non-compliance with the provisions of the program. Those are a few points that would happen.

**The Chair:** That is two minutes, sir.

Monsieur Long.

**Mr. Wayne Long (Saint John—Rothesay, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the presenters.

I apologize in advance for cutting you short.

I live in Saint John, New Brunswick, and represent Saint John—Rothesay. I worked in Charlotte County in the aquaculture and fisheries industry for 15 years.

I think it's important as a committee that we get this right and take as wide a range of opinion as we can. I think it's no secret that the comments by the MP from New Brunswick Southwest about paying “whities” to stay home while brownies worked was a very controversial comment in my riding.

I have many questions, but I think I'll focus on Economic and Social Development Canada stats that show there were 3,390 leads given about non-compliance with the TFW program since April of 2014. That has only led to 340 inspections, roughly 10% of the total tips. Could that low rate of investigation have anything to do with the \$4.5 million cut to programs involved in monitoring TFW during the last government?

• (1640)

**The Chair:** You have about 40 seconds, please.

**Mr. Paul Thompson:** I would say the capacity in the program has been augmented significantly, which is one of the main reasons for the imposition of the higher fee. The \$1,000 fee has gone into supporting a more rigorous process. That's both the front-end review of the applications as well as the compliance regime, with a target of one in four employers for inspections as we're moving into this new regime.

Janet, do you want to add anything in terms of the—

**The Chair:** Very briefly.

**Ms. Janet Goulding (Director General, Governance, Policy Coordination and Planning, Department of Industry):** Yes, I would just add that I think clients' resources have been beefed up. Also, every tip that comes into the tip line is reviewed, and appropriate action is taken. They're all screened and triaged, then appropriate action is taken.

**The Chair:** Ms. Ashton, please.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** Thank you.

First, I want to express my concern that in a study as important as this one, we are getting very little time with you. I hope as a committee we can find some way to redress that. We all know that the temporary foreign worker program has been a source of much scandal as well as shame over the way temporary foreign workers have been treated in our country.

I want to begin with asking you, as officials, if you could perhaps add to a statement that we understand Minister Mihychuk made on April 18 about her intention to end the temporary foreign worker program. Would you have any information on that statement, which was made in a public speech?

**Mr. Paul Thompson:** I can't speak for the minister. The minister has a strong interest, as she has stated many times, in finding Canadians first for all the available jobs. I know she also is very interested in hearing the results of the review of this committee to guide the work going forward.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** That is great to hear. I'm wondering, though, how that statement is in line with the fact that on February 19 changes were made to allow for seasonal exemptions for temporary foreign workers, particularly in fish plants out east. I'm not sure how that logic is tied in to those two statements. I'm wondering how many temporary foreign workers have been approved in 2016, and certainly in that February and March window.

**Mr. Paul Thompson:** Just to clarify, are you asking how many have been approved under that special exemption?

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** Yes.

**Mr. Paul Thompson:** In the range of 600 TFWs have been processed, which is up.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** That is a significant number and certainly doesn't truly fall in line with the statement about getting rid of the program.

I will move on to ask another question, and it's about on-site inspections.

What was made clear to us is that despite concerns around the lack of inspections, an Order Paper question we placed a few months ago

revealed that the department had only made eight on-site inspections between 2013 and 2015.

Compliance with the regulatory framework to protect workers from abuse has not been a priority, as we've seen in the previous government, and we'd certainly like to hear what the plan is on your front.

Of course, we're thinking about instances of abuse that have taken place, including that of Mexican worker Ivan Guerrero, who drowned in May of 2014 after having posted a video describing the abuse he was facing in his workplace.

I did hear Mr. Manicom speak of the recent changes and commitments to on-site inspections. Eight seems like a pretty appalling number in a two-year window, so I'm wondering what the plan is, going forward.

**Mr. Paul Thompson:** There's been a considerable increase in the capacity for inspections. I'm informed that we have about 85 inspectors on staff who are now doing inspections across the country, so—

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** Do you have any numbers as to how many—

**Mr. Paul Thompson:** It is safe to say that the rate of inspections is increasing, as that capacity—

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** Perhaps you could share that number in terms of the last seven months.

Finally, just quickly, in terms of the live-in caregiver program, the Minister of Immigration previously tabled a private member's bill in the last Parliament that would centralize the hiring of caregivers in smaller numbers of specialized agencies.

We have heard concerns that recruitment agencies for caregivers are a source of abuse for the workers. We think of the stories of Kristina Torres and Teta Bayan, stories that were quite compelling. I am wondering if the Department of Immigration has met with civil society representatives, advocates for live-in caregivers, or others to deal with this matter.

**The Chair:** You have about 30 seconds.

• (1645)

**Mr. David Manicom:** I understand that the minister has had some meetings with caregiver agencies, but officials have not at this point, so I can't comment further on that issue. I would just like to point out that there no longer is a live-in caregiver program.

**Ms. Niki Ashton:** If you could provide any written information on this current program and the interest in giving recruitment agencies more power, it would be much appreciated.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Member of Parliament Sangha, you have four minutes, please.

**Mr. Ramesh Sangha (Brampton Centre, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to all the witnesses who are here today. Thank you very much for taking the time to come here.



I am from Brampton Centre. Brampton is an area where we get international students. Humber College, Sheridan College, and other colleges are full of international students. Once they have completed their courses, they go under the CEC class for permanent residence.

They have many problems. There are many obstacles in between gaining temporary work experience and applying for permanent residence. Those are generally.... Earlier it was that your trade is not in the right line, or you can't apply in that trade, or you don't have the proper number of hours, and there were many other obstacles.

Mr. Manicom, my question is for you. Could you explain to me how we can remove those obstacles to give maximum benefit to the people who are putting in their money, effort, and everything else after coming here? They spend their time—their youth, their better days—and their money on the schools and colleges with the idea of having permanent residence here, but later they have to face obstacles. How can we get rid of those obstacles?

**Mr. David Manicom:** It is quite challenging to answer that question. I am not sure which specific obstacles you would be referring to. The number of international students who become permanent residents every year in Canada is rising steadily, and we will certainly want to encourage it to do so. Canada has about the most generous post-graduate work permit program in the world for international students.

That said, access to permanent residence in our economic classes is highly competitive. Our express entry system is designed to benefit those who have the highest skills, the highest language standards, and so forth. That is the way it is designed to work. International students are benefiting from it in very large numbers, and we hope that will continue. Our minister has asked the department to look at measures to further increase the access of international students to permanent residence.

As for more specific obstacles, we would have to have a more granular discussion about what exactly is meant, but the program is certainly designed to facilitate permanent residence for international students.

**Mr. Ramesh Sangha:** I feel that, number one, when they apply for the category under which they have gained education, sometimes

their application is turned back. They are told that their trade is not eligible to apply. That obstacle is there—

**Mr. David Manicom:** I would have to see individual cases, sir, but certainly the approval rate in express entry for international students who apply is very high. We would have to look at explicit cases to see whether an error has been made or whether the individual is indeed not eligible.

**Mr. Ramesh Sangha:** Okay.

Another thing is, when these people apply for permanent residence, do they still have to get a labour market opinion, or not? Is that still required for them?

**Mr. David Manicom:** It depends on which program they are applying under. Under many provincial nominee programs, there is no such requirement. Under the express entry system, a labour market opinion-approved job offer gives you additional points, so it is helpful. It is not a requirement, and an increasing percentage of those who qualify under express entry do not have a labour market opinion-supported job offer.

The system is designed to benefit those with the labour market attachment, but many qualify without it. It is a points-based system, and you do get more points for an LMIA job offer.

**The Chair:** We'll cut it there, Mr. Sangha. You had a couple of seconds left, but not nearly enough time to legitimately ask a question.

I really do apologize. We have to hustle.

We have a few seconds before we have to run, and I want to take that time to thank you for coming. I agree with Ms. Ashton that this was not nearly enough time to have a full discussion on this issue, and I think we'll have a conversation at a different time and possibly bring you back, if you would be available to do that.

Thank you, everybody, for your accommodation. We have to move, so thank you very much.

The meeting is adjourned.

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