



Federal Election 2021 Candidate Survey Results

Immigration is important to community and economic development. Ahead of the September 2021 Federal Election, the Immigration Partnership asked all election candidates in Waterloo Region to share their responses to four questions of importance on immigration. The follow responses were received from candidates.

If you have any questions about the survey contact:
ImmigrationPartnership@regionofwaterloo.ca.

Candidate question

At the time for the 2016 Census, immigrants accounted for 22.6% of the population. Immigrants have helped to build up communities like Waterloo Region for generations by working in essential roles that fuel our economy, caring for others and creating a strong and dynamic community through arts, culture, volunteering, philanthropy and more. Every immigrant's journey is different and some face consistent challenges to settling, working, and developing a strong sense of belonging. What is your party's position on immigration and if elected, how will you support immigrants to succeed?

Cambridge

Michele Braniff (Green Party)

Canada needs immigration to maintain a skilled workforce during these times of declining Canadian birthrate. We are a nation which thrives on diversity and new Canadians enhance our culture, deepen the quality of our interaction and raise the quality of our art, cuisine, academia and markets. As a Green Party MP, I would introduce policy change to provide national accreditation standards for foreign trained professionals and ensure that the licensing is made clear to potential immigrants before they come to Canada. We need a robust national system to evaluate credentials and to expedite that process. I would ensure increased federal funding for ESL and FSL training and work with the provinces and municipalities to improve integration programs. We need to replace the current unregulated immigration consulting industry with a fair, legal, accessible system. We also need to improve the pathway to citizenship for International students and temporary foreign workers. In addition, Canada needs to advocate for the inclusion of Environmental Refugee internationally and ensure that this category is recognized in Canada. When I was an employment advisor, I had the opportunity to facilitate entrepreneur workshops for New Canadians seeking self-employment and have had discussions about many about barriers to employment. I am also aware of the immense wealth of human potential of New Canadians. My family doctor has an arduous story stretching into almost two decades for her accreditation as a foreign-trained physician!

Lorne Bruce (New Democratic Party)

We need a compassionate, fair immigration system and we know that Canada is stronger when we keep families together and help newcomers contribute to our communities. Justin Trudeau talked a good game on immigration, but his policies are keeping families apart and leaving newcomers and refugees behind. Newcomers to Canada are still more likely to work in lower-paid jobs and struggle to find work in their fields. We're going to focus on policies that work for everyone by:

- Keeping families together through faster family reunification that includes grandparents
- Helping immigrants contribute to the economy by improving foreign credential recognition
- Doing our fair share to welcome refugees fleeing violence and persecution

Immigrants help build a strong workforce all across the country. When we stop putting rich corporations over people, we can have an economy that works for everyone.

Maggie Segounis (The People's Party of Canada)

The People's Party of Canada believes in sustainable immigration, our focus is prioritizing Canada's economic interests. Other parties support an unreasonable increase of the annual immigration intake and are using immigration as a political tool to gain votes. Our goal is to keep our Canadian identity in tact while also keeping our country prosperous. This can be done by being more selective in the immigration process. We want to accept a larger proportion of economic immigrants with the right skills. Currently, only 26% of immigrants in Canada have the right skills or qualifications to fulfill our economic needs. We can change this by conducting face-

to-face interviews and assessments with every candidate making sure that their ethics line up to our Canadian values and societal norms. It is not only important to us that new Canadians coming here have the opportunity to be successful but it is also important to ensure that our Canadian identity does not diminish.

Kitchener-Conestoga

Tim Louis (Liberal Party of Canada)

As Liberals, we understand that Canada is strong not in spite of our differences, but because of our difference. We know immigration is important for economic growth and have worked to increase immigration levels, reduce wait times, and build a fairer system. Many people leave their families behind to build a better future, in hopes that they can be re-united in Canada. A re-elected Liberal government will: - Reduce processing times that have been impacted by COVID-19 to under 12 months. - Introduce electronic applications for family reunification. - Implement a program to issue visas to spouses and children abroad while they wait for the processing of their permanent residency application, so that families can be together sooner. We also know that permanent residents are deeply committed members of our communities. They work hard, start new businesses, pay taxes, raise their families, and do so in hope that they will one day be full citizens. Becoming a citizen allows new immigrants to fully participate in Canadian society. It should not be subject to a user fee. That's why we will also make the application process free for permanent residents who have fulfilled the requirements needed to obtain it.

Kitchener South Hespeler

Suresh Arangath (New Democratic Party)

Immigration made Canada stronger by welcoming new talent and energy from around the world to build our communities and boost our economy. I am a first-generation immigrant and was supported and welcomed by the people of Canada and the community where I landed first. Although I could not get the job suitable to my education and experience, I was fortunate enough to get into the workforce very early which helped me to support my family. All through these years I have worked hard so that I could take care of my family needs and am a very proud father and a husband. My family and myself are thankful to Canada for giving us the opportunities like those who have always lived here. I have firsthand experience about the issues faced by the new Canadians and have the willingness to find suitable solutions. I will support those who are not fortunate enough to enjoy the freedom and other rights we take for granted as a Canadian citizen and those that are waiting to come to Canada or to be with their loved ones. Our immigration system should be accountable to Canadians and rooted in the values of fairness, respect, and dignity. We believe in a Canada where newcomers can rely on a fair process and find success when they arrive – and where no one is separated from their loved ones for years because of backlogs. New Democrats will end the unfair cap on applications to sponsor parents and grandparents and take on the backlogs that are keeping families apart. New Democrats believe that if someone is good enough to come and work here, then there should be a path for

them to stay permanently. We will work with the provinces to address gaps in settlement services and improve foreign credentials recognition. New Democrats will protect newcomers by taking on unscrupulous immigration consultants, ensuring that the industry is regulated by the government.

Gabe Rose (Green Party)

A Green government will make sure that all migrants are supported in achieving their hopes and ambitions as new Canadians.

- Work with professional associations to create a robust system for evaluating the education and training credentials of immigrants against Canadian standards, with the goal of expediting accreditation and expanding professional opportunities for immigrants.
- Lead a national discussion to define the term “environmental refugee,” advocate for its inclusion as a refugee category in Canada and accept an appropriate share of the world’s environmental refugees into Canada.
- Allocate much greater funding for training in official languages (ESL and FSL) for new immigrants through earmarked transfers to the provinces for primary and secondary public school and free night school programs.
- Support multicultural communities by assisting cultural organizations to obtain charitable status.
- Eliminate the Temporary Foreign Workers Program and address labour shortages by increasing immigration, working with employers to establish paths to permanent residency.
- Establish a program to process the estimated 200,000 people living in Canada without official status, providing a pathway to permanent residency for those who qualify.
- Reintroduce legislation to establish a Civilian Complaints and Review Commission for the Canada Border Services Agency.
- Terminate Canada’s Safe Third Country Agreement with the United States.
- Regulate the immigration consulting industry to ensure universally fair, legal and accessible services to help people navigate the immigration system.
- Increase penalties for immigration consultants convicted of human smuggling and devote more resources to investigation and enforcement.
- Speed up family reunification, especially reuniting children with their parents.
- Increase funding of multicultural associations providing immigrant support programs including language programs.

Waterloo

Jonathan Cassels (New Democratic Party)

I believe that our immigration system should be accountable to Canadians and rooted in the values of fairness, respect, and dignity. My NDP colleagues and I know that immigrants strengthen our country, and we will always stand against those who would use fear of our neighbours to divide us. A New Democrat government will make sure that our immigration policies and levels

meet Canada's labour force needs and recognize people's experiences, contributions, and ties to Canada. We will work with the provinces to address gaps in settlement services and improve foreign credentials recognition. We believe that in Canada, family reunification should be a priority. New Democrats will end the unfair cap on applications to sponsor parents and grandparents, and take on the backlogs that are keeping families apart. Under the Liberals the backlog of immigration applications for the family members of refugees nearly doubled by 2021 – meaning that people will have to wait years to be reunited with loved ones. We need all kinds of workers in Canada. Throughout the pandemic, we depended on workers who came here from other countries to work in agriculture, caregiving and more. New Democrats believe that if someone is good enough to come and work here, then there should be a path for them to stay permanently. New Democrats will protect newcomers by taking on unscrupulous immigration consultants by regulating the industry. And we'll treat caregivers brought to Canada with respect and dignity, providing them with status and allowing them to reunite with their families without delay. Canada also has a vital role to play in resettling people forced out of their homes by conflict, persecution and disasters. A New Democrat government will fix the system to get rid of the backlog, and work with Canadians to resettle refugees in our communities, ensuring they are given the support they need to build successful lives and new homes here in Canada.

Meghan Shannon (Conservative Party of Canada)

Immigrants are an important part of our community and our economy. One of the biggest challenges I hear about from immigrants in our community is having their qualifications from their country of origin recognized in Canada so they can get to work in a sector of our economy that desperately needs more highly skilled and qualified workers. The Conservative Party of Canada will strike a Credential Recognition Task Force to develop new strategies for executing credential recognition faster and more efficiently. One of the ways they will look to do this is by allowing applicants to pre-qualify their Canadian credential equivalencies before arriving in Canada. A Conservative Government will also look for ways to create pathways to permanence for foreign workers and students who establish themselves in Canada and decide to stay in Canada after their work or study term ends. these kinds of innovations are necessary to ensure Canada is able to fill the skills gap that currently exists, to keep our economy running on all cylinders, and to make Canada the best place in the world to live for all citizens, whether they have been here for a few weeks or several generations.