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## **Canada – Government's 2016 Immigration Levels Plan Released**

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*Note: The KPMG International member firm in the United States does not offer immigration services.*

## **flash Alert**

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On March 8, 2016, Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada ("IRCC") released details on the federal government's 2016 Immigration Levels Plan.<sup>1</sup> The Plan illustrates the Liberal government's commitment to welcome more newcomers to Canada.

### **Why This Matters**

There are several important effects on employers and the foreign workers they are bringing into/sending to Canada of the government's various plans. For example:

- Foreign workers who are selected from the Express Entry Pool and submit a complete application for permanent residence may be eligible for an Open Bridging Work Permit (to extend Work Permit status).
- The use of the Provincial Nominee Program for both provincial nominee certificates and "enhanced" certificate is a valuable alternative for employers who wish to ensure the continuity of employment of their foreign workers and the predictability of the issuance of the Permanent Resident status.
- Employers will have to be sensitive to managing the expectations of their foreign workers who understand that Express Entry means fast processing. Expedious processing only occurs *after* the selection of applicants, and it is expected that fewer applicants will be selected.

### **Key Points of Government's Plan**

- Canada will admit between 280,000 and 305,000 new permanent residents in 2016 – the target number is 300,000;
- Significant shift in policy toward family reunification, including spouse, partner, and children – increase in applications intake from Parents and Grandparents Class, but no increase in the visa issuance to this Class;
- Decrease in Federal Economic Programs targets, simply meaning that Canada will accept approximately fewer "economic" immigrants under the Canadian Experience Class, Federal Skilled Workers, and Federal Skilled Trades programs;
- Number of Provincial Nominees for 2016 remains virtually unchanged – a portion of the Provincial Nominees will go through the Express Entry system – and the 'Enhanced' nomination certificates provide a bonus 600 points in the ranking system;
- Restoration of the maximum age for dependent children to 22 years of age from 19; and
- Removal of the conditional grant for permanent residence to Family Class spouses.

## Future Policy Initiatives

The government of Canada has announced that it intends to undertake a coast-to-coast review of the Foreign Worker Program by the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration.

Employers will have an opportunity to provide input as the current rules with respect to Labour Market Impact Assessment are, in some circumstances, extremely demanding with significant penalties for non-compliance.

### *Footnote:*

1 See the March 8, 2016 government of Canada news release:

<http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=1038729> .

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For more details, see "[Canada's 2016 Immigration Levels Plan & New Initiatives: A Corporate Perspective](#)," in *e-Alert* (2016/03), published by the KPMG International member firm in Canada.

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