



NEWS RELEASE

Government of Canada consults Canadians on economic immigration priorities

Ottawa, March 16, 2010 – As the economic recovery gains momentum, Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney today launched consultations to identify Canada’s new and emerging labour market needs and how immigration can best respond to them.

The Government of Canada is seeking the views of Canadians on how to help lead Canada to full economic recovery from the global recession. These consultations will look at worker shortages in trades and professions across Canada as well as the factors that affect an immigrant’s ability to succeed in Canada’s work force.

The consultations will help develop instructions to immigration officers on which economic immigration applications are eligible for processing. As part of the Action Plan for Faster Immigration, the first set of instructions was issued in November 2008 as a tool to keep the backlog of applications from growing, to reduce wait times for new applications and to better match new economic applicants to Canada’s labour market needs.

“The Action Plan for Faster Immigration is designed to make immigration more responsive to Canada’s economic conditions. When these conditions change, the instructions are meant to change too,” said Minister Kenney. “The first set of instructions has had a significant impact, but our research shows it is time to revise them to make sure they continue to meet their goals.”

Before the Action Plan for Faster Immigration was introduced, the backlog in the federal skilled worker category stood at more than 600,000 applicants, and that number has gone down by almost 40 per cent. People applying now to the federal skilled worker program can expect to receive a decision within one year compared to six years under the old system.

The consultations will be held with national and regional stakeholders, provinces and territories and the general public between now and April 16, 2010.