

# FORGING A NEW PATH IN NORTH AMERICAN TRADE AND IMMIGRATION

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- There are similarities between the Canadian and American immigration systems.
- At the same time, there are important differences.
- The Trump Presidency has had an impact on Canadian immigration and the movement of people between Canada and the United States.
- The USMCA is not - or will not be - the major cause of change.
- The biggest impact comes from US immigration decisions already taken and the general prevalence of uncertainty.

## OVERVIEW

- ▶ Core questions relating to the movement of people:
- ▶ How many people should be admitted?
- ▶ Where from?
- ▶ What for?
- ▶ And with what conditions?

# IMMIGRATION AND MIGRATION

- ▶ Both countries have sizeable immigrant populations. And these populations will increase.
- ▶ Both countries have different visa types and different policies dealing with different categories of migrant.
- ▶ Both have three main categories of permanent immigrant – family class; economic class; refugee/asylum seekers.
- ▶ Both also deal with the movement of people who do not intend to reside permanently
- ▶ Some of the movement of people between Canada and the US for temporary work is covered by NAFTA.

## U.S. AND CANADA: SIMILARITIES

- ▶ Canada places more emphasis on the economic class of immigrant compared to the United States which has placed the main emphasis on family reunification.
- ▶ Canada uses a points system to select economic class of migrants.
- ▶ Donald Trump has called for the introduction of a points system (merit based system) in the US.

## DIFFERENCES

## ▶ Canadian Government and Canadians

Immigration Category	2018	2019	2020	2021
ECONOMIC	177,500	191,600	195,800	202,300
FAMILY	86,000	88,500	91,000	91,000
REFUGEE AND PROTECTED PERSONS	43,000	46,500	49,700	51,700
HUMANITARIAN	3,500	4,250	4,500	5,000
TOTAL	310,000	330,800	341,000	350,000

# DIFFERENCES

- ▶ Need to be careful not to overstate the differences.
- ▶ Public opinion polls in both the US and Canada tend to show support for immigration in principle but opposition to specific types of immigration or the consequences of immigration.
- ▶ Recent opinion polls indicate that a growing percentage of Canadian respondents want to see a reduction in immigration.
- ▶ People's Party of Canada
- ▶ Quebec

DIFFERENCES?

- ▶ One of Trump's earliest and loudest demands was for a renegotiation of NAFTA.
- ▶ NAFTA allows for some temporary movement of workers between the participating states.
- ▶ USMCA did not fundamentally change the TN visa.
- ▶ The list of professions covered was not revised.

FROM NAFTA TO USMCA



- ▶ The most significant change is not the USMCA. It is the uncertainty that the Trump presidency introduces to the movement of people and goods across US borders.
- ▶ In the context of the Trump Presidency, there is perhaps greater license for Customs and Border Protection officers to increase scrutiny of this form of cross border movement.
- ▶ Immigration lawyers and business leaders provide anecdotal evidence of increased border delays and the impact that this is having on business decisions.

## THE TRUMP EFFECT

- ▶ Donald Trump's immigration policies have had an impact on Canada.
- ▶ The reduction in the annual cap on refugees and the attempted removal of temporary protected status from selected countries' citizens has been partly responsible for a marked increase in asylum claims in Canada.
- ▶ There were 23,500 claims in 2016 and over 55,000 in 2018.

## THE TRUMP EFFECT 2

- ▶ Safe Third Country Agreement.
- ▶ In the context of the Trump presidency there has been a significant increase in border crossings away from official POEs.
- ▶ In turn this increased pressure on Canadian asylum processing.
- ▶ There have also been positive effects for Canada.
- ▶ More Americans now seek to move to Canada.
- ▶ More international students are now studying in Canada.

## THE TRUMP EFFECT 3

- ▶ Immigration is a politically-charged issue in the United States.
- ▶ It is possible to identify some of the same debates, issues and tensions surrounding immigration in Canada.
- ▶ But immigration (and opposition to immigration) has not reached the same intensity in Canada as it has in the US.
- ▶ With respect to immigration and migration, the biggest change of the Trump presidency is not the negotiation of the USMCA but increased uncertainty and changes made as a result of other immigration decisions.

## CONCLUSIONS