

RCCAO emphasizes importance of immigration to construction sector

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TORONTO — The Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO) has issued a statement in response to recently announced federal reforms to immigration, saying it supports the important role immigration plays in bolstering Ontario's construction industry.

Immigrants account for 23 per cent of all general contractors and builders, stated RCCAO executive director Nadia Todorova, and helps to meet rising demand for skilled trades across the province. Over 100,000 construction workers are expected to retire over the next decade.

The RCCAO was responding to an Oct. 24 announcement by the federal government that it will reduce the projected number of new permanent residents from 485,000 to 395,000 in 2025, with further cuts to 380,000 in 2026 and 365,000 in 2027.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Immigration Minister Mark Miller said 40 per cent of all new permanent residents will come from those temporary residents who are already in Canada.

There will also be a reduction in temporary residents to less than five per cent of the general population. Canada plans to welcome 445,901 temporary residents by 2025, with a reduction to 445,662 in 2026.

While the federal government's goal to transition more workers currently in Canada to permanent residency is encouraging, stated Todorova, the allocations for targeted programs like the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP) should be "protected and expanded to ensure that effective pathways remain available."

Additionally, says the RCCAO, successful initiatives like the pilot program for out-of-status construction workers in the GTA should be made permanent and expanded to retain essential construction workers already contributing to Ontario's economy.

"We also support measures to re-evaluate National Occupation Classification codes to better align federal immigration programs with long-term labour market needs, particularly in key sectors like the skilled trades," said Todorova.

“The RCCAO urges a balanced approach to immigration policy that strengthens effective programs like OINP through enhanced federal-provincial collaboration, builds on successful initiatives, and supports Ontario’s economic future through strategic workforce planning.”