

# For The New Government of Ontario

## Integrating Immigrant Skills into the Ontario Economy

### A Ten Point Plan

As a private business, charitable foundation and publishing organization, we aim to identify new ideas in the public interest. Issues of settlement have long been the mandate of The Maytree Foundation. Immigrants make important contributions to our economy, culture and civic life. They establish businesses, create jobs, stimulate the economy by increasing demand for consumer products and fill labour market needs. More importantly as future citizens who have chosen Canada, they stand with the rest of us in the task of building a great country. But, with six of ten immigrants making a downwardly mobile shift into careers other than the one they were trained for, we are clearly not leveraging the real potential of immigration.

This document, Integrating Immigrant Skills into the Ontario Economy, presents ten ideas developed by Naomi Alboim, a respected commentator on immigration policies, for The Maytree Foundation. It presents in a concise manner an action agenda for the new provincial government of Ontario. Each idea has merit on its own. However, implemented in its entirety, the plan has the promise of creating meaningful and lasting change for immigrants and Ontarians. Although written specifically for the new government of Ontario, the plan is also applicable to jurisdictions across Canada.

It is time for our public policies to catch up with the ‘on-the-ground’ realities of immigrants. It is time for our politicians to go beyond promises to meaningful action with the implementation of practical and effective initiatives. We appreciate Ms. Alboim’s insight and clarity and recommend the document as an action plan for the new government of Ontario.



R. Alan Broadbent, Chair, The Maytree Foundation  
and Executive Publisher, Ideas That Matter

*Mei taught high school science in China for eight years. Her husband Chung has a three-year diploma in computer programming and an MBA from post secondary institutions in China. They are living in Toronto after recently immigrating to Canada. Neither one can find work in their fields.*

*With many teachers reaching retirement age, Ontario is experiencing a shortage of teachers that is expected to continue through 2009. Ontario is also predicting an increased demand for skilled individuals in business/ finance/ administration occupations.*

The best solution for Mei and Chung— and the best solution for Ontario — is to put the skills of these two immigrants to work in the occupations for which they have trained overseas. Unfortunately, there are many obstacles to prevent that from happening. Concerted action is required by governments, employers, educators, professional licensing bodies, and community leaders to help Mei and Chung — and thousands like them — enter the Ontario workforce in their field of expertise.

This document focuses on the potential leadership role of the Ontario government. It sets out a Ten Point Plan of concrete initiatives the government should take so Ontario can benefit from the wealth of immigrant skills and experience.

# Why do we Need a Plan?

Canada's population is aging, its fertility rates are decreasing and its training systems are not producing the numbers of skilled workers needed for the labour force. We are already experiencing labour force shortages in a number of occupations. By the year 2011, it is estimated that 100 percent of Canada's net labour force growth will depend on immigration. Attracting and integrating skilled immigrants into Canada's labour market have taken on new urgency.

While it is true that Ontario has been attracting significant numbers of immigrants every year (33,641 in 2002), the majority of whom are highly educated (61% of those destined to Toronto in 2002 had post secondary education), the statistics show that there is an increasing level of unemployment, underemployment and poverty rates among recent immigrants as compared with previous cohorts despite the increasing education levels of the current immigrant pool.

Skilled immigrants attempting to enter the labour market in their occupations face hurdles such as lack

of information, inadequate assessment and recognition of qualifications achieved abroad, lack of upgrading opportunities, lack of occupational specific language training, and lack of opportunities to gain Canadian work experience.

There are some excellent initiatives underway to address these barriers, including bridging programs funded by the Ontario government. However, many are ad hoc, time-limited projects and serve only a limited number of people in a limited number of occupations and locations. A systemic approach is needed involving all stakeholders and all levels of government working together.

This Ten Point Plan identifies the action the Ontario provincial government should take to demonstrate leadership in fulfilling the implicit promise Canada has made to immigrants choosing to make this country their home, and allowing immigrants to fulfill the promise they bring with them to Canada.

## I Create an Ontario internet portal to information for skilled immigrants

*Mei did not know before coming to Canada that she would need a teaching licence in order to practise her profession in Ontario. She and Chung waited two years for their immigration papers. With proper information, Mei could have used that time to learn about the licensing requirements for her profession. Both Mei and Chung could have had some of their qualifications assessed before immigrating and could have researched labour market opportunities in different cities.*

Skilled immigrants like Mei and Chung often lack information to make informed choices about where and how to practice their occupation in Ontario. Many internet sites of potential interest to immigrants exist, but none are comprehensive, user-friendly, guided paths for potential immigrants and recent arrivals seeking the full range of information required to make informed choices.

A provincial portal could provide the architecture necessary to link together existing sites and provide the connective tissue in a logical way. Information could include :

- community profiles of cities throughout Ontario
- labour market information

- provincial occupational licensing requirements
- preliminary self-assessment tools to determine whether these requirements are likely to be met
- how to get qualifications formally assessed
- how to connect with organizations providing counseling services
- how to connect with someone practicing the same occupation in Canada who is willing to act as an on-line mentor
- where to get upgrading courses
- how to connect with potential employers

Ideally, this provincial site would then be linked to a pan-Canadian site supported by the federal government.

**2****Improve collaboration on the assessment of academic credentials to increase employer confidence**

*Mei and Chung invested \$400 to have their academic credentials assessed but employers and educational institutions will still not recognize their education (and both their occupations are in demand.)*

The Conference Board of Canada recently concluded that between \$4 and \$6 billion is lost to the Canadian economy each year as a result of unrecognized qualifications, and that immigrants are among those who experience the most serious problems in achieving recognition of their learning.

The problem may not be that there aren't enough services to assess international academic credentials but rather that there are too many! Most post-secondary institutions, many regulatory bodies, World Education Services (the provincially mandated assessment service), and others conduct their own assessments of foreign credentials.

Such a Balkanized system leads to a waste of resources, as the wheel of assessed qualifications is often re-invented, in forms that differ to varying degrees.

Further, the outcomes of assessments depend on who conducts the assessment and for what purpose. Few assessment providers furnish an assessment for all possible purposes (education, employment, licensure), and there is little portability among them.

Given the plethora of providers of academic credential assessments for different purposes, there is little wonder that a lack of recognition of foreign credentials persists, particularly among employers. Because existing assessment procedures are inconsistent and diffuse, the value of the evaluations in terms of their final use for employers is diminished.

In order to address this issue, the provincial government could provide support and incentives for the various assessment providers to work with World

Education Services to:

- adopt common standards for assessment
- develop a common updated data bank of university and college programs abroad to determine Canadian equivalencies
- conduct joint missions to new source countries of immigration to assess their university and college programs
- develop collaborative mechanisms for mutual recognition and portability of assessments across sectors and jurisdictions
- develop outreach initiatives to employers to raise their awareness of credential assessment services
- develop customized services for different end-users (educational institutions, regulatory bodies, employers): verification of bona fides of international institutions, degrees, and documents; training of in-house assessors; full-service assessments to determine Canadian equivalencies
- offer assessment services to individuals before they immigrate and to any immigrant already in Canada

This would result in academic credential assessments that are more consistent, credible, and portable, and therefore more likely to be recognized and accepted by end-users, while increasing the efficiency with which the assessments are carried out. Improvements would thus be realized on both the demand and supply sides of the equation. Ideally this model could be adopted across the country to allow for easier mobility of internationally educated immigrants across provincial boundaries.

**3****Provide incentives for educational institutions and licensing bodies to develop competency based assessment tools**

*With the difficulties Mei and Chung are having in getting recognition for their academic credentials, they wish there was some way they could “show” employers and regulators that they are competent in their fields.*

Many immigrants come to this country with skills and years of experience that are undervalued or completely discounted by potential employers because the employers have no way of assessing what the immigrants are capable of doing. Some community colleges and a few universities across the country have developed “Prior Learning Assessment tools” for students wishing to get credit or advanced standing for what they have learned outside the traditional school system. Some regulatory bodies have developed clinical

exams to assess candidates for licensure.

Putting this expertise together to develop tools that can fairly assess people’s skills and competencies in real, simulated or virtual ways would also be helpful for immigrants in determining gaps that need to be addressed in upgrading programs rather than requiring them to start their practical training all over again.

The development of these tests is costly and would benefit from a collaborative sectoral approach coordinated and supported by the provincial government.

**4****Review post secondary funding formulas and the statutory framework so educational institutions are encouraged to provide bridging programs as part of their “mainstream” services**

*Mei and Chung cannot afford to attend school full time, nor can they find suitable programs available on a part-time basis. They have met others in their situation who require similar types of upgrading to fill gaps: occupation-specific language training, courses on the Canadian context for the practice of their occupation, and gaining exposure to Canadian workplaces. They wish educational institutions would offer programs that covered those areas without being required to retake their entire degrees.*

*Mei eventually learns about a one-year pilot program for internationally trained teachers that is accredited by the College. The program is divided in sequences so candidates can work part-time. The program provides day care and student loans. However, it is fully subscribed and no new applicants are being considered.*

Once immigrants have had their academic credentials, as well as their occupational and language skills assessed against the requirements for the practice of their occupation in Ontario, some gaps may be identified that must be addressed. Rather than requiring all internationally trained immigrants to start their training all over again, Ontario has developed a series of pilot bridge training projects to fill identified gaps.

While they are all different, most of these bridging projects contain some common elements: occupation-specific terminology and communication training, information on the Canadian context for the practice of the occupation, a workplace practicum to refresh or upgrade skills, along with counseling and other supports for the participants.

The bridging projects are in the process of being

evaluated, but the results to date have been very encouraging. The issue is that the projects serve a very few individuals in a few occupations in a few locations, are time limited in nature, and may not be sustainable as stand-alone initiatives.

These ad hoc projects need to be expanded into mainstream programs offered in our community colleges and universities across the province where numbers of immigrants warrant them. In that way, immigrant practitioners can take advantage of existing courses if required to fill particular gaps; existing resources and infrastructure in the educational institutions can be used; professional networks can be developed and tapped into, while still benefiting from the immigrant-specific supports that may be necessary.

Community colleges and universities in Ontario are primarily geared towards the delivery of courses leading to certificates, diplomas and degrees. While continuing education courses are offered by most institutions, they are generally not seen as the primary func-

tion of these institutions and therefore are not treated or perceived in the same way as those leading to a certificate, diploma or degree.

A new category of mainstreamed courses (like the bridging projects) should be developed, geared to the growing population of people needing only a few courses to fill the gaps that they have in order to enter, re-enter, or grow in the practice of their occupation in Ontario. Requiring people to enroll in a full degree or diploma program, when all they may need is far less, is a waste of time and resources for everyone.

The province should review the legislation, regulations, and funding formulae governing post secondary institutions to give them the flexibility necessary to develop non-degree programs to fill gaps. To ensure these reforms will foster programs that will facilitate licensure and labour market participation, they should be developed in collaboration with regulatory bodies and employers.

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### **Work with the Federal government to expand student loan programs**

*Chung is accepted into a community college program to upgrade his computer and business skills. He then learns he is not eligible for a student loan because he is not taking a full degree or diploma program. With neither spouse working and with a small child to provide for, Chung feels he cannot afford to take the upgrading program which would help him obtain work in his field.*

Currently students are eligible for student loans only if they are enrolled in courses of study leading to a certificate, diploma or degree in a recognized educational institution. Permanent Residents are eligible only after they have been in Canada for 12 months. While there are some provisions for part time students, they are not substantive enough to make this a feasible option for most adult learners.

Skilled immigrants are a very safe, low risk population group for an expanded loan program. If loans could be made available to them as soon as possible after they arrive in Ontario, they could pay for the individual courses they need in order to fill the gaps they have for labour market entry into their occupa-

tions. This would make bridge training sustainable from the institutions' perspective, and feasible for skilled immigrants to take advantage of.

The province could work closely with the federal government to change the federal legislation governing the Canada Student Loan program with regard to the one year waiting period, the part time provisions and the course of study, as well as making the necessary changes to its own Ontario Student Award Program.

These changes should be made not just for immigrants, but for anyone requiring some gap-filling for labour market purposes.

**6****Fund labour market language training to be delivered by employers and educational institutions.**

*Chung enrolls in basic ESL classes as soon as he arrives but that does not help him with the technical language required for his occupation.*

*Mei has good English language skills but also lacks the technical language for her profession. They know they will not be attractive to employers without fluency in the technical language but have no idea how to obtain it.*

Many immigrants may have the practical skills necessary to practice an occupation but lack the occupation specific terminology and communication skills necessary to interact with co-workers, employers and clients. Current language training programs tend to be very basic in nature and are not oriented to participation in the labour market. Developing language assessment tools that evaluate the individual's ability

to practice his/her occupation would be far more effective than using some tests currently in use which were developed for totally other purposes. Similarly the provincial government could provide incentives for the development and delivery of sector specific language training programs in collaboration with employers, regulatory bodies and educational institutions.

**7****Provide incentives to employers, employer associations, and labour to become more active in the integration of immigrant skills.**

*Chung hears through the grapevine that two large employers are hiring people with his skills. He applies to both.*

*The first employer is unfamiliar with the university Chung attended and does not want to take a chance on someone without experience in the Canadian workplace. Chung does not get that job.*

*The second employer has confidence in the assessment firm that evaluated Chung's academic credentials. That employer hires Chung on a 6-month contract so he can gain Canadian experience and demonstrate his skills.*

Employers are the primary beneficiaries of the skills that immigrants bring to Canada. Employers and labour are concerned about the aging of the workforce, looming skill shortages, and the gap between the numbers being trained and labour market needs.

Yet employers have generally not been actively involved in facilitating the entry of immigrants into the labour force. They have had difficulty assessing education and skills obtained outside Canada and can be reluctant to "take a chance" on someone without Canadian experience.

The province could reach out to employers and

labour to involve them more actively in a variety of ways:

- Providing support for an employer/labour led public awareness initiative to champion the labour market integration of immigrants as one way (along with others) of responding to labour market needs
- Developing supports and incentives for employers/labour to participate in work experience programs (eg.internships, job shadowing) to give immigrants that all important "Canadian work experience"
- Developing supports and incentives for employ-

ers/labour to participate in mentorship programs, linking Canadian and immigrant practitioners in the same occupation

- Developing supports and incentives for employers/labour to provide sector specific language training

The Government of Ontario as the largest employer in the province could lead by example by developing its own internship and mentorship initiatives in collaboration with its unions.

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## **Sustain the collaborative efforts of Ontario self-regulated professions to improve access for international candidates.**

*Fortunately, the regulatory body that Mei applies to has a policy of identifying a candidate's gaps in writing and arranging a personal interview to discuss what is required. Mei takes advantage of the personal interview which she finds very helpful to know the steps she needs to take to obtain her licence.*

Many immigrants who come to Canada wish to continue to work in an occupation for which they were trained overseas but which requires licensure or professional designation in Ontario. The responsibility for determining standards for entry to practice and whether individuals meet those standards is delegated from the province to a series of regulatory bodies.

In Ontario, a group of regulatory bodies have begun to work together to improve access by international candidates to self-regulating professions in this province while maintaining standards for public safety. The provincial government has provided funding to support the work of this group in the collection of promising practices, the development of guiding principles and practical resources for regulators.

It will be important for the government to maintain

the momentum and ensure the sustainability of these initiatives by:

- Collaborating with the regulatory bodies to ensure that their legislation, regulations, policies and practices allow them to incorporate the principles identified by regulators to improve access for internationally trained candidates
- Supporting an ongoing mechanism for collaborative work by the regulatory bodies
- Collaborating with the regulatory bodies to develop strong accountability, reporting and appeal mechanisms
- Ensuring that provincial appointments to the governing bodies of the regulatory bodies include internationally trained licensed practitioners.

## Support local initiatives to integrate immigrant skills.

*Toronto, the city in which Mei and Chung live, received approximately 112,000 immigrants from all over the world in 2002. Employment services and programs funded by all levels of government and the United Way exist but there seems to be little coordination among them. It is difficult for Mei and Chung to find what they need and there are gaps in service.*

Immigrants live and work primarily in cities. It is at the local level that services, supports, training, and jobs exist. For there to be a seamless systemic approach to labour market integration for immigrants, all the various stakeholders (employers, educational institutions, regulators, community agencies, immigrant organizations, governments) need to collaborate and work together at the local level.

A “bottom up” approach that leverages existing capacity and creates new capacity within and between stakeholders is what is needed.

In Toronto, the Toronto City Summit Alliance recommended that the Toronto Region Immigrant

Employment Council be established as a multi-stakeholder body to address labour market entry issues of immigrants in that region. The Council had its first meeting in September.

The province has been invited to be an active participant in the Council and should demonstrate leadership by continuing to support the Council’s initiatives which are expected to result in enhanced programs and employment opportunities for skilled immigrants.

The province could also work with other major cities of immigrant settlement in the province to facilitate the development of similar councils there.

## Initiate multi-lateral discussions to create 5-party agreements on the labour market integration of immigrants.

*The city of Toronto, in which Mei and Chung live, plays a significant role in the delivery of programs and services that immigrants access, yet it has no say in the determination of immigration policy and receives no federal funds for the costs of municipal services provided to immigrants. The province of Ontario, which receives 58% of all immigrants to Canada, does not have an immigration agreement with the federal government.*

Cities have not been invited to immigration planning tables, even though the vast majority of immigrants settle in cities.

Ontario is the only province without a Labour Market Development Agreement with the federal government. Nor does it have an immigration agreement with Canada.

In addition to these vertical silos, there is little horizontal collaboration between departments at any single level of government.

This results in a lack of policy and program coordination, some duplication, and gaps that go unfilled.

It is therefore time to design a “Made in Ontario” approach to tri-level multilateral agreements by developing a five cornered agreement that includes the following parties:

The two primary federal departments involved in this issue:

1. Citizenship and Immigration Canada
2. Human Resources Development Canada

The two primary provincial ministries:

3. Citizenship
4. Training, Colleges and Universities;

and

5. Major cities of immigrant settlement

These agreements should focus on labour market integration of immigrants as a first step to more broadly defined multilateral relationships.



# Accountability

In order to succeed, the implementation of this plan by the provincial government must be accompanied by a strong accountability framework with clear and measurable outcome indicators to assess progress.

Within this framework, each stakeholder group (whether educational institutions or regulatory bodies, employers or community agencies, levels of government or immigrants themselves) must :

- be clear about their individual and collective roles
- have the tools they need to participate and collaborate in this endeavour
- report on steps taken and results achieved

Elements of this Accountability framework could include:

1. The publication of a Multi-Year Plan Of Action for Ontario which clearly identifies :

- Transparent stakeholder consultation processes
- Specific actions to be taken by each relevant ministry of government
- Goals, performance indicators and timetables for each action
- Involvement of stakeholders and other levels of government in implementing the plan.

2. The publication of an Annual Report Card for Ontario which identifies input, output and outcome measures (both qualitative and quantitative)

for all actions identified in the Multi-Year Plan of Action. For example:

- Each regulatory body could identify annually, the number of applications received from internationally trained professionals, the number successfully licensed, and the measures put in place to improve access;
- Each community college could identify the bridging programs put in place, the number of students successfully completing the programs, the employment outcomes of graduates of these programs;
- The provincial government could report on the policy, regulatory, program and funding changes made to improve access to the labour market for skilled immigrants, the number of permanent residents accessing student loans during the first year of their arrival to Canada, the number of licensed immigrant professionals appointed to the governing boards of occupational regulatory bodies;
- Employers could report on the number of mentorships, internships and work placement opportunities they provided to skilled immigrants and the resulting long term employment impacts.

3. Ongoing evaluations of each program initiative to identify its effectiveness and possible improvements.

**The time has come for strong leadership and action from the Ontario provincial government to maximize the contribution of skilled immigrants to Ontario's economy for everyone's benefit!**

## If the plan were implemented... what could it be like for Mei and Chung?

Mei and Chung are Chinese professionals considering immigrating to Canada. Mei is a teacher and Chung has a degree in computer programming and an MBA. They don't have any close friends or family in Canada but have heard that it is a good place to raise their young child and to make better lives for themselves.

They make an inquiry at the Canadian visa office and are directed to a web site for their research. On the web site, they find a user-friendly guided tour that leads them through a series of pages that helps them identify the questions they should be asking and provides them with some of the tools to find out the answers.

They learn what the selection criteria are to immigrate to Canada as skilled workers. They do a self-assessment test and find that they meet the basic criteria but that the processing time could take more than a year. They are encouraged to do as much as they can to prepare for their immigration while still in their home country.

They find out about the cities across Canada that have significant Chinese speaking populations. They learn about labour market conditions in a variety of cities, and where there are demands for their skills. They link to the sites of the few cities they are interested in pursuing and find out more about the housing, educational and cultural opportunities, and ethnic service organizations there.

Once they have decided that they would like to live in Ontario, they find out that Mei will have to be licensed before she can obtain work as a teacher. By linking to the site of the provincial regulatory body, Mei discovers the requirements that she will have to meet and learns that her academic credentials will have to be assessed. Mei does the on-line assessment and finds that her language skills are not quite strong enough and that she will have to write a qualifying exam which is only held at certain times of the year.

Both Mei and Chung send their academic credentials to be assessed by World Education Services, and they discover that their university degrees obtained in China have been assessed as comparable to Canadian

degrees. They are issued certificates from World Education Services attesting to this equivalency which will be recognized in Canada by educational institutions, regulatory bodies and employers.

However, this alone will not be enough for Mei to be certified to practice in Canada or for Chung to get employment in the financial industry.

They both have adequate English language skills for basic conversation, but not enough to practice their occupations. The web site provides them with information about a Canadian community college that provides English language courses in their city in China with a labour market focus and they both register for these courses. They both pass and obtain a credit from a Canadian community college which will be recognized in Canada.

They are intrigued to find that the web site is linked to an on-line mentorship program that matches prospective immigrants to practicing professionals in Canada. Both Mei and Chung sign up and are matched with volunteers who can tell them more about what it will be like to practice their occupations in Canada.

They establish a friendship online and learn not just about the similarities and differences of their work practices, but also about life in their respective countries. Both Mei and Chung are delighted to have made Canadian friends and are eager to continue the relationship when they arrive in Canada.

Chung's mentor tells him that he'll be happy to have Chung shadow him at work when he first arrives and that his employer has expressed interest in providing an on site opportunity to test Chung's computer skills and perhaps even an internship opportunity for him when he arrives. Chung's mentor also tells him that his employer is part of a consortium of employers that offers government-funded occupation-specific language training on site after work hours and that Chung could attend those sessions if he is interested.

The web site also links Mei and Chung to the immigrant settlement agencies with Chinese language capacity in their preferred city and they begin an on-

line conversation with a settlement counsellor there about what to expect in the first few months after arrival regarding housing, education for their child, healthcare, weather conditions, and the costs of goods and services.

Mei realizes that she will need to focus on getting licensed as soon as she arrives in Canada and through the web site, finds out about a bridging program for people like her that is offered by the university in the city where they intend to settle. The bridging program provides an integrated approach to the upgrading she needs: english communication skills for the classroom, a course on the Canadian context for the teaching profession, preparation for the qualifying exams and a work practicum in a school. The course also provides counseling, and she will be eligible for a student loan to help pay for her tuition, books and living expenses. She is excited about beginning the program and is timing their arrival to Canada so that she can enroll in the program shortly after they arrive.

Mei and Chung's application for immigration to Canada is approved and after their security and medical checks are completed, they are ready to start their new lives in Canada. They have done their homework, and have taken advantage of the opportunities provided to them for information, assessment, advice and upgrading. They understand better what is awaiting them in Canada, have more realistic expectations, and have taken the initiative to begin their integration process before they even arrive in Canada.

Mei and Chung arrive in Toronto and put their plan in action. They go to the settlement agency and meet with a counselor who provides them with their immediate orientation needs. They contact the Chinese community centre in their neighbourhood and begin to meet other young families.

Chung contacts his mentor who invites him to his workplace the following week where he is welcomed to begin the occupation specific language training offered there. A month later, after his language skills have improved, Chung is given the opportunity to demonstrate his computer skills and he is offered a six month internship where he can begin to use both his financial and computer skills in a Canadian environment. Chung feels that he is on his way!

Mei is accepted into the bridging program for teachers and is delighted that she is eligible for a student loan. The funds from her loan, Chung's internship stipend, the minimal savings they have brought with them, and the earnings from the part-time job she has found make her feel that she and Chung can manage financially while she is in the bridging program. The moral support that she gets from her mentor and from the staff at the university's bridging program makes her confident that she and Chung have made the right decision to come to Canada.

**This scenario does not have to be a fantasy. It can become a reality to everyone's benefit with commitment, leadership and good will.**

# Integrating Immigrant Skills into the Ontario Economy

## A Ten Point Plan

- 1 Create an Ontario internet portal to information for skilled immigrants
- 2 Improve collaboration on the assessment of academic credentials to increase employer confidence
- 3 Provide incentives for educational institutions and licensing bodies to develop competency based assessment tools
- 4 Review post-secondary funding formulas and the statutory framework so educational institutions are encouraged to provide bridging programs as part of their “mainstream” services
- 5 Work with the Federal government to expand student loan programs
- 6 Fund labour market language training to be delivered by employers and educational institutions.
- 7 Provide incentives to employers, employer associations, and labour to become more active in the integration of immigrant skills.
- 8 Sustain the collaborative efforts of Ontario self-regulated professions to improve access for international candidates.
- 9 Support local initiatives to integrate immigrant skills.
- 10 Initiate multi-lateral discussions to create 5-party agreements on the labour market integration of immigrants.

This report was prepared for The Maytree Foundation by Naomi Alboim. Naomi Alboim is currently a fellow and adjunct professor at the School of Policy Studies at Queen's University, and is an active public policy consultant.