



## SKILLED LABOUR SHORTAGES AND INTERNATIONALLY TRAINED TALENT

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OTTAWA BUSINESS  
GROWTH SURVEY INSIGHTS

## SKILLED LABOUR IS A GROWING CONCERN FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

The 2019 Ottawa Business Growth Survey reveals that overall business confidence is steady from last year but that access to skilled labour continues to worsen.

- **49%** of businesses<sup>1</sup> say they plan to recruit new employees in the next 12 months (a 5% increase over 2018, and the highest proportion since reporting began in 2015)
- **44%** of businesses reported that access to skilled workers had worsened in the last year (as compared to 34% in 2018 and 25% in 2017 who felt that access to skilled workers had worsened in the previous two years)
- **20%** of those surveyed reported that a skilled workforce – talent acquisition/retention would be the top issue for Ottawa businesses over the next five years (51% ranked this as one of the top 3 issues; 71% as one of the top 5 issues)

## OTTAWA HAS A HIGHLY TRAINED, TALENTED IMMIGRANT POPULATION

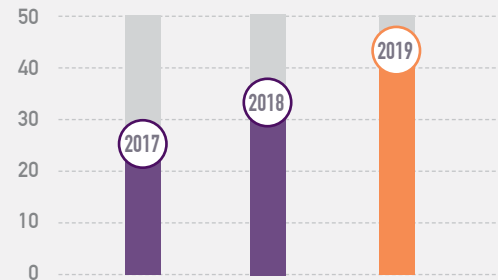
Ottawa's population continues to grow faster than that of Ontario or Canada largely because of immigration.<sup>2</sup>

- Between 2011 and 2016, almost 37,890 new immigrants<sup>3</sup> arrived in the Ottawa-Gatineau region making the immigrant population approximately 255,800,<sup>4</sup> a quarter of the total population
- Immigrants in Ottawa are typically more educated than immigrants who settle in other cities, with over 20% having graduate degrees (as compared to a maximum of 14% of those settling in other Canadian cities)<sup>5</sup>

However, not all this talent is being leveraged to help our city grow.

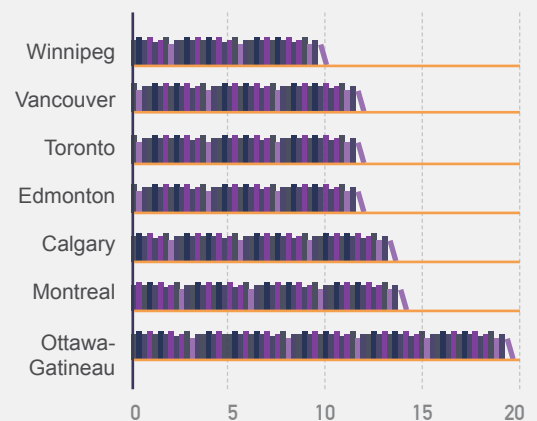
- According to the 2016 Census, Ottawa's immigrant labour pool has a lower participation rate in the labour force compared to non-immigrants (as of 2016, the immigrant participation rate was 63.3% versus 69.4% for non-immigrants)<sup>6</sup>

### CONCERNS ABOUT ACCESS TO SKILLED WORKERS WORSENING



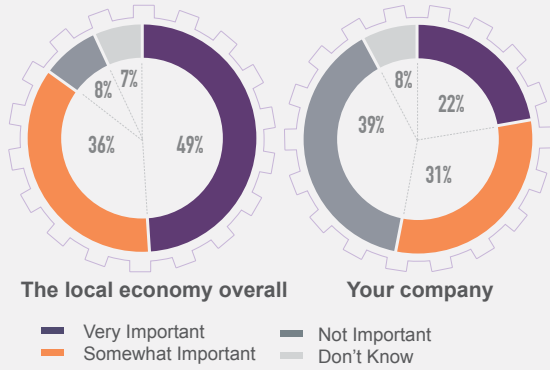
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### PROPORTION OF IMMIGRANTS WITH EDUCATION BEYOND BACHELOR LEVEL, CENSUS 2016



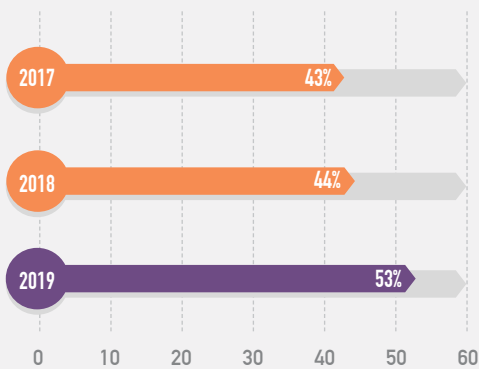
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### BUSINESS PERCEPTIONS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF IMMIGRANTS AS A SOURCE OF SKILLED LABOUR



In 2019, 85% of businesses think that immigrants are an important source of skills for the local economy.

### BUSINESS PERCEPTIONS OF IMPORTANCE OF SKILLED IMMIGRANTS TO OWN COMPANY INCREASING OVER TIME



53% of businesses think that immigrants are an important source of skills for their own company.

### MANY BUSINESSES RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF IMMIGRANT TALENT

While Ottawa businesses consistently recognise that immigrants are an important source of skilled labour for the local economy, they are less likely to report that immigrants are as important a source for their own companies.<sup>7</sup>

- In 2019, 53% of Ottawa businesses reported that immigrants are an important source of labour and skills for their own company
- In 2019, 85% of businesses felt that immigrants are an important source of skilled labour to the local economy

### INCREASINGLY OTTAWA BUSINESSES ARE SEEING THE IMPORTANCE OF IMMIGRANT LABOUR FOR THEIR OWN COMPANY

More businesses perceived immigrants as important to their company and reported hiring immigrants this year.

- Over the past three years, the proportion of Ottawa businesses reporting that immigrants are an important source of labour for the local economy has remained steady at about 80%
- In 2019, there was almost a 10% rise in the proportion reporting that immigrants are an important labour pool for their own companies as compared to the two previous years
- The number of businesses that reported hiring immigrants over the past year has increased slightly to 54% from the 51% that was reported in the previous two years

1. All references to businesses refer to the 776 employer respondents who completed the 2019 Ottawa Business Growth Survey.  
 2. <https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/get-know-your-city/statistics-and-economic-profile/statistics/ottawas-population>.  
 3. In this report we use "immigrants" to refer to permanent residents and foreign-born Canadians.  
 4. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/immigration-housing-indigenous-census-ottawa-1.4370857>  
 5. Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population.  
 6. <https://ottawaemploymenthub.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/IMMIGRANT-POPULATION-SPOTLIGHT.pdf>.  
 7. For the third year the 2019 Ottawa Business Growth Survey included questions about immigrant skills and labour, and hiring practices and perceptions related to immigrants.



There is a key opportunity for Ottawa businesses to hire immigrant talent to help address their skilled worker needs. More and more businesses are seeing the potential and recognizing the importance of this internationally trained talent pool to their organizations. Are you?

Find out about tools and services available to help businesses leverage this talent.

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**Are you ready to tap into Ottawa's immigrant talent?  
Contact us to find out how!**

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