

5. International Experience Canada

Table of Contents

5. International Experience Canada.....	1
5.1 From the US.....	1
5.2 Working Holiday.....	3
5.3 International Co-Op.....	3
5.4 Young Professionals.....	4
In Short.....	4

Canada is recruiting for immigrants.

Canada is turning away immigrants.

Both are true, sometimes even for the same person at the same time. We have to recruit, to keep our population from shrinking. In the past, Canada has had to take in about 700,00 new people a year. That’s about 1.75% of the total population. The 2025/6 targets are for around 380,000 permanent residents.

This chapter is about Canada’s program to provide “young people with opportunities to gain international work experience, learn about different cultures, and build professional networks across borders”. In other words, it’s about *recruiting*.

5.1 From the US

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/work-canada/iec.html>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/work-canada/iec/eligibility.html>

The US is a preferred source for immigrants, but for some reason they didn’t do as most countries do, and sign a bilateral *youth mobility agreement* with Canada. I speculate that was to keep us from recruiting their best students.

To deal with countries without youth mobility agreements, Recognized Organizations (RO) were created, and therefor get used for US citizens. It always was something of a kluge: it works, but you need to be extra patient.

The ROs in turn deal with a number of US organizations, so-called Designated Referral Partners

Some of these are, in no particular order:

Organization	Key Features
InterExchange	Work anywhere in Canada, support services in Toronto and Vancouver – Working Holiday. Targets the US https://www.interexchange.org/
JENZA (SWAP)	RO Nomination programs, job placement assistance – Working Holiday– Young Professionals https://jenza.com/experiences/working-holidays/work-canada-ro/

Organization	Key Features	
Stepwest	Resort-focused jobs (ski resorts, hospitality) – Working Holiday– Young Professionals	https://www.stepwest.com/
GO International	Personal support, job placement – Working Holiday	https://gointernational.ca/
A-Way to Work	Specialized in rural/agricultural placements – Working Holiday– Young Professionals	https://awaytowork.ca/
IAESTE, International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience	Technical and professional opportunities, – Working Holiday– Young Professionals– International Co-op	https://iaeste.org/
Languages Canada International	Combines language learning with work experience – Working Holiday	https://www.languagescanada.ca/en/
Internship Network	Working Holidays and International Co-op	https://internship-network.org/
INTERNeX International Exchange	Working Holiday– Young Professionals	https://internexworld.com/
AIESEC (Association for the International Exchange of Students in Economics and Commerce)	Primarily for international students in economics and commerce, – Employer-specific work permit	https://www.aiesec.ca/
		https://www.ciee.org/about/blog/update-ciee-internship-programs
Academic Internship Council (AIC)	Focuses on academic internships – Employer-specific work permit	https://www.myscholarhq.com/academic-internship-council-2025/
		https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLhMUu40QU8Mwi1uG8fNltBUOoxMhFIRlb
Mennonite Central Committee of Canada / International Volunteer Exchange Program	Employer-specific work permit	https://mcc.org/get-involved/volunteer/ivep

Organization
(MCC/IVEP)

Key Features

The country quotas typically get filled to between 90% and 95%. Most ROs see a fill rate between 85% and 95%.

Resources, in General

These are about steps common to all three of the programs below.

- [IEC Documents Checklist 2026: What You Need to Apply](#)
- <https://dfimmigration.ca/how-to-immigrate-to-canada/iec-work-permit/>
- <https://www.matkowsky.ca/iec-international-experience-canada>
- <https://borderslawfirm.com/corporate-immigration/work-permits/international-experience-canada/>
- <https://hmdavocats.com/canadian-work-permit-lawyer/international-experience-canada-iec/>

5.2 Working Holiday

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/work-canada/iec.html>

International Experience Canada (IEC) has three program for gaining Canadian experience, starting with “Working Holidays”.

This is aimed at young professionals to work and travel. It allows for up to two years or temporary work with Canadian employers, and combines a work permit with a visa.

Time working in this program counts towards Canadian experience. It used to add points toward express entry as well, but now only the experience itself counts.

Resources

- Moving2canada has a lovely (56-page!) guide on working holidays, *Moving to Canada through IEC’s Working Holidays program*, <https://moving2canada.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Checklist-IEC-WH-9.pdf>
A shorter checklist from them, *Working Holiday Canada: Your Ultimate Guide to work permits*, the work-permit part is <https://moving2canada.com/immigration/iec/working-holiday-visa-in-canada/>
- Pvtistes has guides on working holidays, in both French and English, at <https://pvtistes.net/> The name comes from the French acronym for Working-Holiday visas, PVT.

Sections

- [About the program](#)
- [Who can apply](#)
- [How your family members can come to Canada](#)
- [Using a recognized organization](#)
- [Create your IEC profile and get your invitation to apply](#)
- [Submit your work permit application](#)
- [After you apply](#)
- [Prepare for arrival](#)
- [Start working in Canada](#)

5.3 International Co-Op

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/study-canada/work/intern.html>

If you are in a program that requires you to do co-op or intern terms, you can do them in Canada under this program.

International co-op is for students who are enrolled in a program that requires all the students complete a work placement. The work can be in Canada if the school and employer agree.

You will need the permission of your school and employer, and once again, you will have to apply through a “recognized organization”.

As with other student visas, work done under a study permit doesn’t count toward “Canadian experience”. However if the school is Canadian, like the University of Waterloo, all the work terms *do* count toward Canadian experience.

5.4 Young Professionals

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/work-canada/iec.html>

This is for people looking to get Canadian experience, by getting a job here. The job you’re offered must count toward your “professional development”, and fall into one of these training categories:

Category	Description	Examples
0	Management occupations	Advertising, marketing and public relations managers Financial managers
1	Occupations that usually require a university degree	Financial advisors Software engineers
2	Occupations that usually require <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a college diploma • apprenticeship training of 2 or more years, or • supervisory occupations 	Computer network and web technicians Medical laboratory technologists
3	Occupations that usually require <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a college diploma • apprenticeship training of less than 2 years, or • more than 6 months of on-the-job training 	Bakers Dental assistants and dental laboratory assistants

For the precise occupations, <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/find-national-occupation-code.html> has a search function

For the eligibility rules, see <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/work-canada/iec/eligibility.html>

Time working in this program counts towards Canadian experience. It used to add points toward express entry as well, but now only the experience counts.

This is a live document. These links will change. Always refer to the government pages for current rules. And please file an issue at <https://codeberg.org/tokugawa-behr/Fleeing-to-Canada/issues> so I'll know what needs updating.

In Short

Canada has bilateral agreements to allow Canadians to work elsewhere, and people from those countries to work here. It's popular, so have a look and see if you fit a part of this recruiting scheme.