

MIGRATION PATHWAYS

Canada/Guatemala Temporary Guest Worker Program (TGWP)

Overview

The Canada/Guatemala Temporary Guest Worker Program (TGWP) was created in 2003 to bring Guatemalan agricultural workers to Canada. It was originally regulated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) rather than by a bilateral agreement between the two countries. Since 2010, the program has fallen under Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP), and recruitment of Guatemalans has been facilitated by Canadian provincial governments and the Guatemalan organization Amigo Laboral.

Why was it started?

The program was started to allow Guatemalans to work temporarily in Canada's agriculture sector, which suffers from huge skills shortages.

How does it work?

Agricultural employers use recruitment intermediaries such as Amigo Laboral (Guatemala) and Fondation des Entreprises en Recrutement de Main-d'Oeuvre Agricole Étrangère (FERME) (Quebec) to select and assign workers. It works in four phases: (1) employers indicate their need for workers and submit a recruitment plan; (2) applicants are recruited, evaluated, provided consular services (a Canadian visa) and medical exams, given a pre-departure orientation about security and finances, and assisted at the airport; (3) guest workers arrive and are integrated into the labor force in Canada; and (4) guest workers return to Guatemala. Phase 2 takes about eight weeks.



Country of Destination
CANADA

Country of Origin
GUATEMALA

Skill
AGRICULTURE (🇸🇰)

Skill Level
LOW

Timeline
2003–ONGOING

Beneficiaries
9,825 AS OF 2018

Countries all around the world utilize migration pathways to train and bring over workers with needed skills. The CGD Migration Pathways database documents these pathways to promote innovation in this space. To explore the database, visit GSP.cgdev.org.

In addition to being admissible into Canada, workers must participate in the recruitment process and comply with employers' requirements. Employers must receive a Labor Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) and lay out clear requirements for workers.

What impact has it had?

The program has been a success for employers and workers. In 2005, the Guatemalan government opened a Consulate General in Montreal, in order to monitor the well-being of Guatemalan temporary workers. Only a limited number of labor complaints have been lodged since its inception.

Further readings

Gesualdi-Fecteau, Dalia, Andréanne Thibault, Nan Schivone, Caroline Dufour, Sarah Gouin, Nina Monjean, and Éloïse Moses. 2017. "Who, how and how much? Recruitment of Guatemalan migrant workers to Quebec." On the Move Partnership. <https://www.onthemovepartnership.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/who-how-howmuch-Report-sm.pdf>

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