

Transcript of “Alberta Next” Immigration Survey introductory video

Our next topic is Alberta taking more control of the immigration system to counter Ottawa’s open border policies, which are driving up the cost of living and are not aligned with the needs of Alberta’s economy. In just over 100 years, Alberta's population has grown from a few hundred thousand farmers, ranchers and First Nations peoples to a province of over 5 million, with one of the most prosperous economies in the world. This great success story would not have been possible without new Albertans moving here from all over the world. That is why Alberta has always welcomed newcomers looking to contribute to our province's economic success and unique culture. And we always will. However, as all Canadians intuitively understand, the number of newcomers entering the country each year needs to be sustainable, and everyone wanting to come should be committed to upholding the Canadian values of hard work, love of freedom and peaceful coexistence. Sadly, Justin Trudeau’s liberals upended Canada’s immigration system for over a decade by instituting an open-borders policy that permitted millions to enter Canada, often without any sort of proper vetting, job prospects or needed employment skills. The results have been disastrous. Housing prices have skyrocketed. Unemployment keeps increasing as immigration outpaces job growth. And sadly, many of the divisions and disputes that plague other countries have begun making their way into ours. Further, Ottawa has ignored the request of Alberta and other provinces to cut refugee claimants and student visas, while instead focusing on a much smaller and targeted number of economic migrants able to contribute to Canada's economy. So what can Alberta do about the situation? Quite a bit. Actually. You see, under the Constitution, immigration is a shared area of responsibility between the federal and provincial governments, which makes sense. Essentially, the federal government gets to decide who they let into Canada, but it's up to the provinces to provide the vast majority of the social programs that newcomers need. So obviously, we should have a say about who is coming here. If Alberta isn't satisfied with the number or kind of newcomers moving to our province, we may have the option to withhold provincial social programs to any non-citizen or non-permanent-resident who does not have an Alberta-approved immigration status. This would likely encourage more sustainable numbers of immigration overall, while supporting the entry of newcomers that can contribute to our provincial economy. If Alberta went this direction, Ottawa could decide to fight Alberta on this issue in the courts, and there would be some additional costs in taking a more hands-on approach to immigration. However, much, if not all of that cost could be offset in corresponding savings to our social programs. So, should Alberta take more control of the immigration system in this way or continue with the status quo? And how can our province convince Ottawa to act more responsibly with their immigration policies in the future?