

Strategic Foresight Exercise: Exploring Possible Futures for Immigration to Canada

To be used with: Sutter, A., & Esses, V. M. (2026). P2P strategic foresight toolkit. A practical scenario planning activity on immigration. *Pathways to Prosperity Partnership*. <https://p2pcanada.ca/library/p2p-strategic-foresight-toolkit-a-practical-scenario-planning-activity-on-immigration/>

Introduction

- In today's activity, you will take part in a **strategic foresight exercise**. Foresight is a way of thinking that prepares us for more than one possible future.
- Working together in your group, you will explore how immigration to Canada might look 10-15 years from now.
- The goal is not to predict, but to explore several plausible futures.
- Your insights will help identify challenges, opportunities, and strategies to prepare for multiple futures.

Logistics

- You will have 3 hours, including a 10-minute break, for the full activity.
- Everyone in the group should take part – each voice matters.
- Assign two roles:
 - Timekeeper: Keeps the group on schedule.
 - Recorder: Writes ideas on the sheets.
- Remember: There are no wrong futures – only unexplored ones!

What You Will Do

You will move through **five steps**:

1. Identify key change drivers shaping the future of immigration to Canada (25 minutes)
2. Select the two most important and uncertain ones (30 minutes)
3. Use them to create a 2×2 scenario matrix (10 minutes)
4. Describe four possible futures (40 minutes)
5. Discuss challenges, opportunities, and strategies (50 minutes)

Sheet 1 – Change Drivers Worksheet

Group Contact Name: _____ Group Contact Email: _____



Sheet 1 – Change Drivers Worksheet

Step 1: Identify Change Drivers

Step 2A: Discuss the Change Drivers

Step 2B: Vote on the Most Impactful and Uncertain Change Drivers

A change driver is a large-scale force – social, economic, technological, environmental, or political – that shapes how systems evolve over time. Use **short, neutral phrases** (e.g., 'public attitudes toward immigration' rather than 'increasingly negative attitudes toward immigration'). Ensure your change drivers are **broad** and **distinct**.

Time horizon: 10-15 years ahead

Change Driver	Voting: Most Impactful (Red Dots)	Voting: Most Uncertain (Blue Dots)	Change Driver	Voting: Most Impactful (Red Dots)	Voting: Most Uncertain (Blue Dots)
Demographic changes in Canada					
Labour market needs					
Public attitudes toward immigration					
Pace of adoption of AI and emerging technologies					
Integrity of the information ecosystem					

Sheet 2 – Scenario Matrix



Sheet 2 – Scenario Matrix Worksheet

- Label the axes and the endpoints
- Build your four scenarios

Scenario 1:

Scenario 2:

Scenario 3:

Scenario 4:

Group Contact Name: _____

Group Contact Email: _____



BREAK

BACK IN 10 MINUTES

Sheet 3 – Implications Worksheet

Group Contact Name: _____ Group Contact Email: _____



Sheet 3 – Implications Worksheet

For each of your four possible futures, discuss what challenges and opportunities might arise for the immigration system in Canada and for those who work to support it. Summarize your key insights below.

List here the two change drivers you used to develop your four scenarios

1. _____

2. _____

Scenario Title	Challenges	Opportunities

Preparing for the Future

What strategies or approaches might be especially valuable in preparing for multiple futures?

Next Steps

- Please make sure all worksheets are complete, easy to read, and fully labelled
- The facilitator will collect these and the results may be summarized for further use

Please cite as:

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