



## **Premiers discuss building a more prosperous and safer Canada**

**HUNTSVILLE, July 23, 2025** – Canada’s Premiers concluded their annual summer meeting with a focus on building a stronger Canada by reducing barriers to internal trade and labour mobility, strengthening Canada’s immigration system, improving health outcomes and community safety, and taking action to keep violent offenders off the street. This is in addition to yesterday’s discussions about wildfires and emergency management, building Canada and Canada-U.S. relations and international trade.

### **Internal Trade and Labour Mobility**

Premiers are taking a collaborative approach to fostering a more open and prosperous economy by improving internal trade and labour mobility and expanding Canadian markets. Provinces and territories have taken collective and individual action by:

- introducing internal trade legislation;
- reviewing and removing Party-specific exceptions under the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA);
- concluding negotiations to add a chapter on financial services to the CFTA;
- expanding opportunities for direct-to-consumer (DTC) alcohol sales;
- advancing mutual recognition; and,
- improving labour mobility.

Premiers reiterated their commitment to unlock multilateral, economy-wide mutual recognition and labour mobility, while respecting Québec’s specificity. Premiers look forward to a comprehensive Mutual Recognition Agreement covering all goods, in alignment with the Committee on Internal Trade discussions, with implementation by December 2025.

Premiers also noted the vital role of tailored, responsive provincial and territorial workforce and skills training programming that is supported through Labour Market Transfer Agreements (LMTAs) with the federal government. Additional LMTA funding is critically needed to support Canadian workers in need of employment assistance and retraining services, and to support the country’s response to the unjustified U.S. tariffs.

In order to strengthen and expand market diversification, Premiers committed to their respective governments undertaking at least one trade mission to another province or territory in the coming year. These missions will strengthen pan-Canadian supply chains and foster more trade and investment across Canada.

### **Immigration**

Immigration benefits Canada on many levels, positively shaping our communities and economy. Provinces and territories are best positioned to understand their local labour market needs and call on the federal government to support their respective priorities.

Premiers emphasized their authority over immigration levels planning, and highlighted that the Provincial and Territorial Nominee Program (PTNP) is critically important for economic growth and meeting the regional labour market needs across the country. Premiers call on the federal

government to reinstate PTNP allocations, which were reduced by 50 per cent, and increase their share of total economic immigration in the Immigration Levels Plan. They also urged the federal government to engage meaningfully with provinces and territories regarding international student policy and to ensure postgraduate work permit eligibility is based on local labour market needs. Premiers agreed to work together to use their authority under section 95 of the Constitution including to issue work permits. Since 1991, under the Canada-Québec Accord relating to immigration and temporary admission of immigrants, Québec fully assumes sole responsibility for establishing immigration levels, and for the selection, francization and integration of immigrants. Québec will continue to make additional demands regarding immigration powers in a bilateral way to the federal government.

Canada continues to receive a significant number of asylum claims. As people needing protection must be welcomed with dignity, Premiers support federal, provincial and territorial collaboration to address pressures in the asylum system, including welcoming responsibilities, and identifying the required federal supports and funding for important public services provided by provinces, territories, and communities. They also call on the federal government to accelerate the processing of asylum claims and to ensure that accepted asylum seekers can fully participate in society. Premiers acknowledge the intent of Bill C-2 to better manage Canada's asylum system but expect to be meaningfully engaged on any changes to asylum seekers policy.

Additionally, Premiers discussed the impact of reduced federal funding for settlement services and language training and called on the federal government to do its part to support successful integration for all newcomers.

## **Health**

Provinces and territories continue to take action to improve health outcomes for Canadians. This includes actively exploring avenues to improve access to medications and collaborative efforts to help enhance labour mobility for health professionals looking to work in and across the country. Provinces and territories will work with their respective regulators of health professions and will continue, when appropriate, to implement measures for the recognition of competencies in accordance with their own protection requirements in order to further facilitate labour mobility for health professionals. Premiers also emphasized the importance of enhancing the Canada Health Transfer (CHT) and its escalator.

## **Public Safety**

Premiers discussed the federal government's commitment to bail reform and collaboration to address the issue of repeat and violent offending with legislative and law enforcement measures as well as efforts on a range of interconnected issues, including poverty, homelessness, addiction, trauma, and mental health. Premiers called for the federal government to amend the Criminal Code in a continued effort to ensure meaningful bail reform and work with provinces and territories to measure the impact of these changes. Premiers also reaffirmed the need to review risk assessment for sentencing and post-incarceration release of repeat sex offenders and individuals charged with intimate partner violence and gender-based violence crimes.

Premiers discussed the efforts all governments are making to address organized crime and border and port security, including targeting drug trafficking, money laundering, illegal migration, and the cross-border flow of firearms and illegal drugs, including fentanyl and its precursors, and the importance of continuing these efforts to protect Canadians. They call on the federal government to provide increased federal resources and personnel to border security to combat organized crime and enhance public safety. This must include increased federal resources and personnel dedicated to port security, sufficient to target any exploitable security gaps at seaports on Canada's coasts. Premiers recognized the need for further action to combat vehicle

theft, and are committed to working with all partners to develop effective strategies to disrupt this, including through the work of provincial and territorial transportation ministers who are working to bring improvements to the Interprovincial Records Exchange system by Spring 2026 to address VIN fraud. Premiers urge the federal government to provide a clear and immediate decision on the future of RCMP contract policing, along with greater transparency regarding the transformation of the RCMP's federal policing program.

### **Prince Edward Island's Premier Lantz to Chair the Council of the Federation**

On August 1, 2025, Prince Edward Island (PEI) Premier Rob Lantz will assume the Chair of the Council of the Federation. PEI will host the next summer meeting of Canada's Premiers on July 21-23, 2026.

- 30 -

#### **For more information:**

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