



## CERC 2018: THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Surely 2018 will be remembered as the year of great disruption. A point driven home by keynote speaker Jim Harris at our national conference in September, when he highlighted the level of technical and social change that is shaping our workplaces and how we collaborate.

On a global scale we saw massive privacy breaches, which prompted many organizations to seriously undertake initiatives to strengthen the protection of personal data, a fact not lost on many CERC members, who implemented measures to ensure compliance with the new GDPR.

A significant draw on the Canadian economy was the on-again, off-again pipeline project which mauled the Alberta economy and impacted many CERC members in western Canada and beyond.

We also saw the rise of anti-immigration sentiment taking hold in many regions of the world. Increased trade tensions and tariffs rattled stock markets. Fake news, reports of hacked elections, and ongoing tensions in Europe over Brexit only added to the disruption.

To sum it up in one word – *Disruption*.

On a positive note, a trade agreement was finally reached between Canada, the US and Mexico. Look closely at the name of the agreement and the word trade is noticeably absent. While the Canada US Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) agreement fell short of Canada's expectations, it was better than tearing up the agreement, a serious threat on the part of the US president

In 2018, Canada worked hard to keep the global trade model afloat. The CETA Joint Committee met for the first time in Montreal in September to begin implementation. On December 31, the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) between Canada and 10 other countries in the Asia Pacific region came into force.

Immigration, more open mobility and enhanced trade are vitally important to the Canadian economy and benefit CERC members and the relocation industry. The Canadian government has shown it is committed to those goals.

With the generous support and outstanding contributions from scores of volunteers, a committed board of directors and a small but dedicated staff, CERC has made progress towards our goals over the past year.

Financially the organization is in a sound position and recorded a modest surplus of \$6,506 for the fiscal year ending May 31, 2018.

CERC has strived to meet its strategic objectives in the past year and highlights are outlined in the following summary.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

In January 2018, the CERC board of directors met over two days to review the organization's strategic direction. Building on the results of the December 2017 membership survey (89% of corporate members agree that CERC's mission is relevant) the board confirmed CERC's vision and mission.

Vision statement: *"We are the force of change in employee mobility."*

Mission statement: *"We work to impact the systems, policies and processes that enable employers to move the right people effectively and efficiently."*

To achieve those goals the board approved the following:

- To remain relevant in an environment that is rapidly evolving;
- To grow CERC membership base and increase corporate conference attendance; and,
- To grow CERC as a thought leadership organization using a self-funding model of impartial/independent research.

## RESEARCH

A major accomplishment was the completion of the [2018 Interprovincial Mobility Survey](#) conducted in partnership with Ipsos Public Research and funded by our external partners. This survey of over 1,100 Canadian employees found overall appetite for relocation to another province or city within their current province has increased compared to the previous iteration of the interprovincial mobility survey in 2014.

In December, Ontario's Seneca College's School of Leadership and Human Resources (SLHR) announced a partnership with CERC to conduct an applied [research project on global mobility risk management practices](#). This project will commence in January 2019 and will assist employers in meeting compliance obligations relating to global mobility. The project is made possible by combined funding of \$50,000 from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, the Ontario Centres of Excellence and EuRA. IBM Canada will provide the research team access to IBM's Artificial Intelligence and data analytics capabilities.

## GOVERNMENT ADVOCACY

As a member of the NAFTA Consultation Group much of our activity focused on providing recommendations to the Canadian negotiators to improve cross border mobility as part of the renegotiations. We also consulted extensively with the Canadian government in presenting recommendations to improve the Global Talent Stream pilot program under the Temporary Foreign Worker Program.

In December, CERC participated in the Global Forum for Migration and Development in Morocco at which the Global Compact for Migration was signed. The findings of CERC's [Global Mobility Survey](#) were presented and discussed during this three-day meeting.

## EDUCATION

Further enhancements were made to CERC's Professional Development program, thanks to our education committee. The program is now open to non-members and is available through the Ontario community college network.

Over 1,200 people have taken the first level of the program since its introduction. Today there are 173 Canadian Employee Relocation Professional (CERP) graduates and 122 Canadian Global Mobility Professional (CGMP) graduates.

The annual conference in Montreal in September was a great success with 273 attendees and scored high marks for education and networking. Keynote speaker Jim Harris received rave reviews for his enlightening presentation about disruption in our workplaces. Congratulations and many thanks to our conference planning committee for producing another great event.

The 'Relo 101' (introduction to relocation) program was again presented in a three-part series of webinars earlier this year, and at the national conference in Montreal. The program serves to educate those who are new to our industry and encourages enrolment in the professional development programs.

Seven webinars were presented throughout the year, on timely and relevant topics.

Our regional groups were very active presenting seminars and networking opportunities to members across Canada on subjects ranging from immigration compliance to Canada's economic outlook.

We hosted immigration symposia in Vancouver, Toronto and Calgary, providing members with opportunities to share their view directly with government policy makers as the new immigration programs were refined.

## COMMUNICATIONS

CERC continued to communicate the important message about the economic value of immigration and mobility across a wide range of media, including presentations at industry conferences in Canada and internationally.

Over the year we expanded our online presence to build awareness using social media channels such as Twitter and LinkedIn Groups, and launched a mobile friendly version of the website.

## COLLABORATION

Throughout 2018 we continued to collaborate with our partners which included the Global Forum for Migration and Development; The Society for Human Resources Management (formerly the Council For Global Migration); The Canadian Council of Human Resources Associations; The European Relocation Association (EuRA); WorldwideERC and The American Society of Employers to promote our common goals.

A key initiative for business at a global level is to continue to call for policy changes that will create more open and transparent policy frameworks to facilitate the movement of talent on a global scale, which is becoming increasingly difficult as many regions are developing protectionist approaches to trade and migration.

In 2018, CERC presented at nine industry and HR related conferences within Canada and internationally. These presentations provided an opportunity to reinforce the importance of employee mobility and to share results of CERC's extensive research on mobility.

## A LOOK AHEAD

Looking to the year ahead, the uncertainty about the Canada / US trade agreement is clearer than it was at this time last year. That said, the new agreement is still subject to US Congressional approval and with the ongoing political discourse, anything can yet happen.

At home, Canada is experiencing the tightest labour market in decades with an unemployment rate of 5.6 per cent. The term 'war for talent' is certainly back in the media, with companies around the globe looking to attract the brightest and the best. With a progressive economic immigration program, Canada does have a competitive advantage in this area. Canadian housing markets seem to have stabilized and forecasts for the year look positive. Taken together these factors should deliver benefits to the relocation industry.

We also have a federal election that is scheduled to take place on or before October 21, 2019.

Early in 2019 CERC's new SocialLink will be launched. The new mobile based platform will provide members with a whole new way to collaborate and network- key ways in which to tackle disruption. SocialLink, available exclusively for CERC members, will also be used to support the new Subject Matter Expert (SME) program scheduled for a February launch.

In addition to regional events and webinars, CERC will be hosting immigration symposia in Calgary, Vancouver and Toronto early in 2019, providing members with an opportunity to share their views with immigration officials. The highlight of the year of course will be our national conference in Niagara Falls ON, September 15 – 17.

Major projects in 2019 include our joint research project on global mobility risk management practices in partnership with Seneca College. We'll also conduct the bi-annual Employee Relocation Benefits Survey, with results expected late spring. Continuing improvements to the professional development program and outreach to industry sectors in promoting the program's value are also planned for the year.

I would like to conclude by extending a special thank you to our volunteers and partners for their valuable support, to the Board members for their guidance, and to our very dedicated talented staff that seamlessly make things happen.

A great way to support CERC is to help grow our membership base by encouraging your colleagues and clients to consider joining a great organization.

I hope you'll consider actively participating in moving CERC even further towards achieving our goals.

From all of us at CERC, our very best wishes for a healthy and prosperous 2019.

Stephen Cryne,

President and CEO

CERC