

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Survey of Canadian and U.S. Employers Finds Cross-Border Mobility Under USMCA/CUSMA Increasingly Unpredictable

*CERC, PNWER, and WERC call for modernization of Chapter 16 of USMCA/CUSMA as joint survey finds inconsistent border adjudication — not the underlying legal and governing framework — is employers' primary challenge*

TORONTO — The Canadian Employee Relocation Council (CERC), the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER), and WERC (formerly known as Worldwide ERC) today released the findings of a joint employer survey examining how Chapter 16 of the Canada–United States–Mexico Agreement (USMCA/CUSMA) — the provision governing temporary entry for business persons — is functioning in practice. The survey, conducted in June 2026 among 46 employers with cross-border operations, finds that while the legal and governing framework that enables temporary cross-border movement of employees remains intact, its administration has grown markedly less predictable over the past two years, with the sharpest deterioration reported by employers on the U.S. side of the border.

Among the findings: 70% of surveyed employers move talent across the Canada–U.S. border under B-1, L-1, or TN visas, and 28% of those employers report projects delayed or cancelled because of border issues. Respondents ranked inconsistent adjudication of applications — not the rules themselves — as the single greatest challenge employees face at the port of entry, with 53% rating it challenging or worse. Nearly half of respondents (48%) say service on entry to the United States has deteriorated over the past 24 months, compared with 16% for entry to Canada. Separately, 44% of respondents have employees in occupations the TN/USMCA Professionals list does not currently cover, underscoring the need to modernize a list of eligible professions that has seen minimal updates over the last three decades since the NAFTA Agreement, which preceded the USMCA/CUSMA, came into effect.

The three organizations are jointly calling on the Governments of Canada and the United States to address the key issues negatively impacting employers and their workforces through the ongoing USMCA/CUSMA review and/or through separate concurrent actions. Actions recommended for the Governments to implement include modernizing the Professionals List in Appendix 2, investing in officer training and consistent adjudication practices, scaling trusted-employer and pre-clearance pathways, extending eligibility consistency to permanent residents, and accelerating the digitization of visa and work-permit systems across all three countries.

*“These findings make clear that while the rules of USMCA/CUSMA haven’t changed, the way they’re being applied has — and employers are feeling the consequences. Modernizing Chapter 16 and restoring predictability at the border is essential to protecting North America’s integrated economy and the millions of jobs that depend on seamless talent mobility.”*

— **Stephen Cryne, President and CEO, CERC**

*“Talent mobility, both domestically and across international borders, fuels industries’ ability to drive growth, operating scale/efficiency, and business progress. Policies that facilitate such mobility are essential to economic growth via support for local businesses, workforces, and communities. This has been particularly true with the movement of talent between the United States and Canada since the USMCA/CUSMA’s temporary mobility provisions were implemented.”*

— **Anupam Singhal, President and CEO, WERC**

**About CERC:** The Canadian Employee Relocation Council (CERC) is Canada’s leading authority on workforce mobility, representing many of the country’s largest employers on domestic and cross-border talent movement. Through research, advocacy, and industry collaboration, CERC advances policies and best practices that enable employers to move people where their skills are needed.

**About PNWER:** The Pacific NorthWest Economic Region is a statutory, non-partisan public/private partnership fostering economic growth and cross-border collaboration among Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and the Yukon and Northwest Territories. [pnwer.org](http://pnwer.org)

**About WERC:** WERC is the trade association for the global talent mobility industry, supporting via education, connections, and advocacy on behalf of the 5,000+ individuals and 2,750 enterprises responsible for the movement of workers for work purposes. [talenteverywhere.org](http://talenteverywhere.org)

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