

General Questions About Express Entry

1. What is Express Entry and how does it work?

Express Entry is a new way of managing applications in a number of existing economic immigration programs:

- Federal Skilled Worker Program,
- Federal Skilled Trades Program, and
- Canadian Experience Class.

Provinces and territories will also be able to recruit candidates from the Express Entry pool for a portion of the Provincial Nominee Programs (PNPs) in order to meet local labour market needs.

Through Express Entry, people who meet the criteria for one of these programs will be placed into a pool of candidates. The Government of Canada, provincial and territorial governments, and Canadian employers will be able to select people from this pool.

Employers in Canada must first make every effort to try and find a Canadian or permanent resident to fill vacant job opportunities. Eligible employers who cannot find a Canadian or permanent resident for a permanent job will be able to consider candidates from the pool who meet their needs.

Express Entry and the Government of Canada's Job Bank will let eligible employers in Canada and skilled foreign nationals connect with one another more easily, making integration faster once immigrants arrive in Canada.

Candidates with the highest scores in the pool will be issued an Invitation to Apply (ITA).

Candidates will be awarded points for:

- a job offer and/or
- a provincial/territorial nomination and/or
- Skills and experience – factors that contribute to success in Canada.

Note: The Province of Quebec does not use Express Entry. They select their own skilled workers. See Quebec-selected skilled workers to find out more.

2. How will the Express Entry system benefit Canada?

The Government of Canada is reforming its economic immigration system to ensure that Canada's economic and labour market needs are met.

Express Entry is a key part of this. Its goal is to make the system faster and more flexible. It will improve how Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) accepts and processes applications, which will mean:

- faster and more efficient processing; and
- A better ability to respond to Canada's labour market.

Under Express Entry, we will only accept applications from people we have invited to immigrate to Canada under certain economic immigration programs. This will prevent the growth of backlogs by ensuring that only the candidates who are most likely to succeed—not simply the first to submit their application—are able to apply to immigrate to Canada.

Most applicants who are invited to apply under the Express Entry system will see their electronic permanent residence applications processed within six months or less. This reduction in wait times will make it possible for Canada to keep pace with peer countries, attract the best skilled immigrants, and get them working and contributing to the Canadian economy faster.

3. When will the Express Entry system be launched?

The Express Entry system will launch in January 2015.

4. Which immigration programs will be covered under the Express Entry system?

The Express Entry system will apply to the following Canadian economic immigration programs:

- Federal Skilled Worker Program,
- Federal Skilled Trades Program, and
- Canadian Experience Class.

Provinces and territories will also be able to recruit candidates from the Express Entry system for a portion of the PNPs in order to meet local labour market needs.

5. Will Express Entry change immigration program requirements?

No. Express Entry will not change immigration program requirements. Express Entry is not a new program. It is a new way for CIC to manage the intake of economic immigration applications online.

6. Will there be a cap on the number of candidates admitted to the Express Entry pool?

There is no limit to the number of people who may enter the Express Entry pool. We expect this to result in a range of candidates with a greater variety of skills and experience from which employers, provinces and territories can select to meet their needs. However, we will base the number of candidates who get an ITA for permanent residence on the Annual Immigration Levels Plan. The Levels Plan will still set out the broad admission ranges for the immigration programs that are part of Express Entry.

Express Entry will create an inventory of high-quality candidates who employers in Canada will be able to consider when they cannot find Canadians or permanent residents to fill job vacancies.

Under Express Entry, labour market demand, in the form of a job offer supported by a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) or a nomination by a province or territory will provide candidates with enough additional points and be ranked high enough to be invited to apply at the next eligible draw of candidates. Draws will be made from the Express Entry pool on a regular basis, and instructions for each draw will be posted on our website. Note that all job offers will be subject to Employment and Social Development Canada's (ESDC's) LMIA requirements in place at that time.

Employers and potential candidates will also benefit from faster processing. CIC's goal is a six-month or less processing time from the day we receive a complete application for permanent residence to the day a final decision is made.

Note: The Province of Quebec does not use Express Entry. They select their own skilled workers. See Quebec-selected skilled workers to find out more.

7. What will happen to permanent residence applications you receive before the launch of Express Entry?

Applications received by CIC before the launch of Express Entry will be processed according to the rules in place at that time.

Provinces/Territories

8. How will provinces and territories use the Express Entry system?

Provinces and territories will be able to nominate a certain number of foreign nationals through the Express Entry system to meet their local immigration and labour market needs. If an applicant gets a nomination from a province or territory, they will be given enough additional points to be invited to apply for permanent residence at the next eligible draw of candidates.

Just as they manage their own Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) now, provinces and territories will set the criteria they use to nominate Express Entry candidates.

Express Entry candidates may either:

- enter the pool first, and then be nominated by a province or territory; or
- Be nominated by a province or territory, and then complete an online Express Entry profile.

Note: All prospective candidates (whether PNP applicants or not) must meet the criteria of **at least one** of the federal immigration programs managed through Express Entry in order to enter the pool, and must submit their application online.

Provinces and territories will also continue to be able to make nominations under their regular (“base”) PNPs outside of Express Entry via a paper application process.

Note: The Province of Quebec does not use Express Entry. They select their own skilled workers. See Quebec-selected skilled workers to find out more.

9. What is the process for potential candidates who want to use both a Provincial Nominee Program and Express Entry?

There are two ways to do this. A person can:

- apply to the PNP first, get a nomination and then fill out an Express Entry profile; or
- Fill out the Express Entry profile first. Provinces and territories can then search the Express Entry pool and ask a candidate to apply for their PNP. When the candidate gets a nomination certificate, they will update their Express Entry profile.

In either case, once a person updates their Express Entry profile to show they have a provincial or territorial nomination certificate, they will be given enough additional points to be invited to apply at the next eligible draw of candidates.

Employers

10. How will the Express Entry system benefit employers in Canada?

Express Entry will give employers more recruitment options and help them better respond to labour shortages where there are no available Canadian citizens or permanent residents.

Other benefits:

- Eligible employers in Canada will have a direct role in recruiting economic immigrants.
- Express Entry candidates with a job offer supported by a Labour Market Impact Assessment or provincial/territorial nomination will be given enough additional points to be invited to apply at the next eligible draw of candidates.
- Job Bank will provide an opportunity for eligible employers in Canada and Express Entry candidates to connect. Later in 2015, Job Bank will “match” eligible employers with Express Entry candidates who meet their job description when there are no Canadians or permanent residents available to do the job.
- There will be no LMIA fee for permanent residence applications.
- In 80% The majority of cases, permanent residence applications will be processed in six months or less receive

Note: The Province of Quebec does not use Express Entry. They select their own skilled workers. See Quebec-selected skilled workers to find out more.

11. Have employers in Canada already been consulted on Express Entry?

Yes. Starting in fall 2012, Citizenship and Immigration (CIC) held consultations with employers in Canada on building a fast and flexible immigration system.

CIC is working closely with provincial/territorial partners and ESDC to hold information sessions across the country to prepare employers for Express Entry.

National associations and provincial and local chambers of commerce have helped us identify relevant employers.

Participants represent key industries and stakeholders across Canada, such as the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters (CME), Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) and Canadian Chamber of Commerce.

Note: The Province of Quebec does not use Express Entry. They select their own skilled workers. See Quebec-selected skilled workers to find out more.

12. How will employers in Canada use the Express Entry system?

Employers in Canada must first make every effort to try and find a Canadian or permanent resident to fill vacant job opportunities. Eligible employers who cannot find a Canadian or permanent resident for a permanent job will be able to consider candidates from the pool who meet their needs.

Employers can access candidates:

- through their current recruiting and hiring practices, including private sector job boards; or

- Through Job Bank later in 2015. Job Bank will help match candidates with eligible employers in Canada and jobs based on their skills, knowledge and experience.

In some cases employers can also work with provinces and territories through the respective nominee programs.

Jobs offered to Express Entry candidates will be subject to the Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) requirements in place at that time. Those who get a job offer supported by an LMIA will quickly be given an Invitation to Apply (ITA) for permanent residence.

Note: An ITA does **not** guarantee that a candidate will be granted permanent residence. Candidates still have to meet eligibility and admissibility requirements under Canada's immigration law (*Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*).

Note: The Province of Quebec does not use Express Entry. They select their own skilled workers. See Quebec-selected skilled workers to find out more.

13. Will there be a list of eligible occupations for Express Entry?

No. Express Entry will not include an eligible occupation list or occupation caps at the time of launch.

To be eligible to enter the pool, Express Entry candidates must have skilled work experience in a National Occupational Code (NOC) 0, A or B occupation. Jobs offered to candidates in the pool must be in one of these categories.

Job offers are also subject to the LMIA requirements in place at that time.

Candidates must also meet the minimum language requirements of one of these federal economic immigration programs:

- Federal Skilled Worker Program
- Federal Skilled Trades Program
- Canadian Experience Class

14. Will employers in Canada be able to access the Express Entry pool directly?

Employers will be able to access candidates in the pool through Job Bank. Job Bank and Express Entry will let eligible employers in Canada and eligible skilled foreign nationals connect with one another more easily.

Express Entry candidates will need to register with Job Bank if they do not already have a Canadian job offer or a provincial/territorial nomination. This will give them the opportunity to view jobs available with employers in Canada and to begin promoting themselves to employers, recruiters, private sector job boards, etc.

Later in 2015, Job Bank will “match” eligible employers with Express Entry candidates who meet their job description when there are no Canadians or permanent residents available to do the job.

Employers will also be able to direct candidates they find on their own to use Express Entry.

Note: The Province of Quebec does not use Express Entry. They select their own skilled workers. See Quebec-selected skilled workers to find out more.

15. Can an employer who currently employs a temporary foreign worker (TFW) use express Entry to support their application for permanent residence?

Yes. As long as the TFW is in Canada working under a positive Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA), you can offer them a permanent job to support their application for permanent residence. Your TFW would have to create an Express Entry profile and include their job offer information. A job offer supported by an LMIA will give a candidate enough additional points and be ranked high enough to be invited to apply at the next eligible draw of candidates.

If you are considering permanently hiring a TFW and you do not have a positive LMIA for the job, you will first need to make every effort to try and find a Canadian or permanent resident to fill the job opportunity. You will need to meet LMIA requirements, including posting your job ad on Employment and Social Development Canada's (ESDC) Job Bank in addition to advertising in two other places. If you have done this and have been unsuccessful in filling your job opportunity, you can apply for an LMIA for the TFW through Service Canada. The TFW would then have to create an Express Entry profile, meet the minimum criteria and include their job offer information so they get enough additional points and be ranked high enough to be invited to apply at the next eligible draw of candidates.

16. Can an Express Entry candidate come to Canada and start working before they get their permanent residence visa?

Express Entry candidates cannot usually come to Canada to work until they have their permanent resident visa. In some cases, candidates will already be in Canada with a temporary work permit.

Employers who need a worker to start before the permanent resident visa is processed, can apply for a “dual intent” Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA). Note that in this type of situation, an employer will need to pay the LMIA processing fee. A “dual intent” LMIA means a person can come to Canada as a temporary foreign worker (TFW) first and work while they wait for a decision on their permanent residence application. In this case, a candidate must still apply for a work permit and meet the requirements for TFWs.

Express Entry candidates who have a job offer and have been invited to apply **will not** automatically be given a temporary work permit or temporary resident visa.

17. Will candidates with job offers be given priority?

A job offer supported by a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) will give a candidate enough additional points to be invited to apply at the next eligible draw of candidates. Potential candidates who have a valid job offer or provincial/territorial nomination when they complete their Express Entry profile will not need to register with Job Bank.

Labour Market Impact Assessments

18. Where can I find more information on Labour Market Impact Assessments (LMIAs)?

You can find more information on the LMIA process.

19. Will an employer need a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) to hire an Express Entry candidate?

In most cases, employers will need an LMIA from ESDC. An employer may use an existing LMIA to hire their temporary foreign worker permanently.

Job Bank

20. How is Job Bank being modernized?

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) recently modernized Job Bank, which has resulted in:

- an improved online user experience;
- upgrades to the site's security features to match industry standards; and
- More up-to-date labour market information so that users can make better and more informed career decisions.

The enhanced Job Bank website also provides employers with information on human resources management services and Job Match. This will help employers to:

- hire Canadians and permanent residents for available jobs; or
- View matches of eligible foreign job seekers in the Express Entry pool if no Canadians or permanent residents are available.

Job Match, available through Job Bank, is an example of how the Government of Canada is finding ways to better utilize technology to connect employers with Canadians and eligible Express Entry candidates who have in-demand skills and training.

Visit Job Bank for more information.

21. How does Job Bank work with Express Entry?

Job Bank and Express Entry let eligible employers in Canada and eligible skilled foreign nationals connect with one another more easily. Every effort must be made by the employer to first try and find a Canadian or permanent resident to fill their job vacancy before a skilled immigrant can be considered.

In most cases, employers wishing to hire a foreign national must register with Employment and Social Development Canada's (ESDC) Job Bank and post their employment ad for a minimum of 30 days (as well as meet other advertising requirements). If a Canadian or permanent resident is not found, employers can extend their job ad and broaden their candidate search to include foreign workers. If a qualified foreign national is found, the employer can then apply for a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA). The employer must apply for an LMIA in order to hire the foreign candidate.

ESDC will assess all LMIA applications. In many cases, employers will need a positive LMIA to make a qualifying job offer to a foreign national under Express Entry.

Should the Express Entry candidate choose to apply to a job opportunity, the recipient employer will then be required to go through their usual interview or assessment process? If the employer finds that the Express Entry candidate meets their needs, and they are eligible to hire a foreign national, they can offer them a job.

Employers with a positive LMIA will then provide this information along with a job offer letter to the candidate to include in their Express Entry profile. This is so they can more quickly be offered an Invitation to Apply (ITA) for permanent residence in the next eligible draw.

Eligible employers can be matched later in 2015 with qualified candidates in the Express Entry pool.

Through Job Bank, Express Entry candidates will be able to explore jobs and, later in 2015, they will be able to sign up with Job Match to view jobs that match their skill set and qualifications.

22. How does an employer in Canada get matched with Express Entry candidates in Job Bank?

Later in 2015, Job Bank will start to make matches between eligible employers in Canada and eligible Express Entry candidates if the employer's job has been advertised to Canadians for one month or longer.

Employers will continue to be matched to Canadian and permanent resident Job Seeker profiles while their job is advertised on Job Bank. Matches will be made based on an employer's job listing and a candidate's skills, knowledge and experience. To be matched, candidates must be eligible through Express Entry.

23. Are Express Entry candidate profiles in Job Bank matched to more than one employer?

Later in 2015, when Job Match for Express Entry candidates is in place, an eligible Express Entry candidate could be matched to more than one employer if the candidate's skill set matches the needs of more than one job description. This could be the case for any Job Seeker profile in Job Bank.

Employer Liaison Network

24. What is the Employer Liaison Network?

The Employer Liaison Network (ELN) will help employers navigate the Express Entry system. It will provide employers with useful and up-to-date information on permanent economic immigration programs and policies related to Express Entry. Its goal is to increase employer awareness and use of the Express Entry system, as well as to facilitate matches between employers in Canada (outside of Quebec) and skilled labour overseas. The ELN will not address case-specific enquiries or work permit issues. Its focus is on the permanent resident streams (i.e. not temporary resident streams).

Note: The Province of Quebec does not use Express Entry. They select their own skilled workers. See Quebec-selected skilled workers to find out more.

25. When will the Employer Liaison Network (ELN) launch and where can employers access or meet with ELN staff?

It is anticipated that the ELN will be in place in early 2015. We will have more details on this site later in 2014.

26. Will there be any cost for employers to use the Employer Liaison Network (ELN)?

No. The ELN will help employers understand the Express Entry system and work to increase the employer's part in recruiting and selecting permanent residents.

Potential Immigrants

27. How will I use the Express Entry system?

First, you will express your interest in immigrating to Canada by creating an online Express Entry profile. You will give us information about your skills, work experience, language ability, education, and other details that contribute to success in Canada.

If you meet the criteria, you will be put into the Express Entry pool of candidates, which is a group of people that we can draw from to fill immigration spaces.

At the launch of Express Entry, you will need to create a Job Seeker Account with Job Bank if you do not already have a Canadian job offer or a provincial/territorial nomination. This will give you the opportunity to view jobs available with Canadian employers. It is important for Express Entry candidates to promote themselves to potential employers/recruiters and use private sector job boards and other resources to learn about jobs available in Canada.

Note: Candidates who create a Job Seeker Account with Job Bank between January 1 and January 25 will need to return to their Job Seeker Account after January 26 to create their profile. After January 26, candidates will be able to create their Job Seeker Account and profile without delay.

To qualify for the Express Entry pool, you must meet the criteria of at least one of three federal economic immigration programs:

- Federal Skilled Worker Program,
- Federal Skilled Trades Program, and
- Canadian Experience Class.

Provinces and territories will also be able to recruit candidates from the Express Entry pool through their Provincial Nominee Programs (PNP) to meet local labour market needs.

You will be given a score by the Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS). Your score will be based on the information you gave in your Express Entry profile and will be used to determine your rank within the pool. Note that your score will change only when you update your profile information. How your score ranks will depend on the scores of other candidates in the pool and will change regularly as people are added and removed from the pool.

Candidates with the highest scores in the pool will be issued an Invitation to Apply (ITA). Candidates will be awarded points for:

- a job offer;
- a provincial/territorial nomination; and

- Skills and experience factors that contribute to success in Canada.

Note: Entry into the Express Entry pool does **not** guarantee you will get an ITA for permanent residence. Even if you receive an ITA, you still have to meet eligibility and admissibility requirements under Canada's immigration law (*Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*).

If you get an ITA, you will have 60 days to submit an online application for permanent residence in one of the immigration programs listed above. Your ITA will tell you which program you are eligible to apply for.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) will process most applications (completed applications that include all the supporting documents needed) in six months or less.

Note: The Province of Quebec does not use Express Entry. They select their own skilled workers. See Quebec-selected skilled workers to find out more.

28. How will the Express Entry system benefit potential candidates?

Express Entry will offer many benefits, including:

- faster processing times: we expect to process most applications %in six months or less, from the time we get a complete application for permanent residence to a final decision; and
- An easier way to get a job offer from an eligible employer in Canada before you arrive in Canada: the Government of Canada's enhanced Job Bank will let eligible employers in Canada and skilled foreign nationals connect with one another more easily, making economic integration faster once immigrants arrive in Canada.

Note: The Province of Quebec does not use Express Entry. They select their own skilled workers. See Quebec-selected skilled workers to find out more.

29. Do I need to hire an immigration consultant or lawyer?

No. You do not need to hire an immigration consultant or lawyer to use the Express Entry system or any other CIC immigration program, to complete an Express Entry profile, or to complete an application for permanent residence.

30. I am currently waiting for my application for permanent residence to be processed in the Federal Skilled Worker Program. Can I submit an Express Entry profile?

You may submit a new Express Entry profile, but it is not necessary. However, we will not refund any processing fees paid related to your original application. Your existing application will be processed based on the rules in place at the time you applied.

If you choose to create an Express Entry profile and are invited to apply, you will be required to submit a new application for permanent residence and the associated processing fees.

Express Entry Profile

31. Is there a fee to submit an Express Entry profile?

There is no fee to submit an Express Entry profile. Language tests and Educational Credential Assessments (if you want to be eligible for the Federal Skilled Worker Program or if you completed your education outside Canada and want to get points toward your Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) score) are completed by third party organizations for a fee.

If you are invited to apply for permanent residence and submit an application, you will have to pay the current application processing fee. If you then decide to become a permanent resident, you will also have to pay the Right of Permanent Residence Fee for yourself and any dependants or family members if applicable.

32. When does a candidate's profile expire?

Express Entry profiles will be valid for one year from the date a candidate submits a profile to CIC. If a candidate does not get an Invitation to Apply (ITA) for permanent residence after 12 months and they still want to come to Canada as a skilled immigrant, they will need to complete and submit a new profile. Candidates will have 60 days to resubmit their existing Express Entry profile through MyCIC. They will need to update and validate the information, and if they still meet minimum entry criteria, they will receive a new Express Entry Profile Number. If they do not resubmit their profile within 60 days, they will have to complete a new profile.

Express Entry Pool

33. Do I need a job offer to get into the Express Entry pool?

If you meet the criteria of one of the economic immigration programs subject to Express Entry, you will be accepted into the Express Entry pool. A job offer supported by a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) from an employer in Canada is a significant asset, but not a requirement.

Note: The Province of Quebec does not use Express Entry. They select their own skilled workers. See Quebec-selected skilled workers to find out more.

34. If I am in the Express Entry pool, could I be eligible for more than one program?

It is possible for you to get into the pool and be eligible for more than one immigration program. In that case, your profile would be tagged by the system to make sure it is considered for any relevant draws. If you get an Invitation to Apply (ITA), the system will tell you which immigration program you are being invited to apply to.

Comprehensive Ranking System

35. What is the Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) and how does it work?

The CRS is the new system we will use to assess and score Express Entry candidates. It has been created based on extensive research on the best predictors of economic success for newcomers to Canada.

The CRS will include factors such as:

- skills;
- work experience;
- language ability;
- education; and
- Other factors that we know help immigrants prosper once in Canada.

Using the information provided in the candidate's profile, the CRS will set the candidate's score and rank within the Express Entry pool at any given time. Note that a candidate's rank will change regularly, while their score will only change when they update their profile information.

Candidates with the highest scores in the pool will be issued an Invitation to Apply (ITA). Candidates will be awarded points for:

- a job offer;
- a provincial/territorial nomination; and
- Skills and experience factors that contribute to success in Canada.

Invitation to Apply

36. How does a candidate get an Invitation to Apply (ITA) for permanent residence?

Candidates in the pool will be issued an ITA for permanent residence when they:

- have a job offer supported by an Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) from an employer in Canada; or
- have a nomination from a province or territory that has an immigration nominee program; or
- Is one of the highest-ranked candidates who qualify for one of the three federal programs under Express Entry?

Note: An ITA does not guarantee a person will be approved for permanent residence. They still have to meet admissibility requirements under Canada's immigration law (*Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*).

37. Do I need a job offer to get an Invitation to Apply (ITA)?

A qualifying job offer from an employer in Canada is a significant asset but not a requirement. Candidates can also obtain enough points to receive an ITA based on how high their score is on the Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) or if they get a provincial or

territorial nomination. Provinces and territories will be able to recruit candidates from the Express Entry pool through their PNPs to meet local labour market needs.

Note: The Province of Quebec does not use Express Entry. They select their own skilled workers. See Quebec-selected skilled workers to find out more.

38. How long is an Invitation to Apply (ITA) valid for?

Candidates who get an ITA will have 60 days to submit a complete electronic application for permanent residence. Extensions will not be granted.

Processing Times

39. How will Express Entry result in faster processing times?

Under Express Entry, we will only accept applications from people we have invited to come to Canada. This will prevent the growth of backlogs by ensuring that only the candidates who are most likely to succeed economically – not simply the first to submit their application – are able to apply to immigrate to Canada.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) plans to process the majority of complete electronic applications (those that include all the required supporting documents) within six months or less.

Together, these will do away with multi-year waits for a final decision on permanent residence and result in faster processing times.

40. When does the six-month processing timeline begin and end?

The six months begins once Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) confirms that a person has submitted a complete electronic application for permanent residence through the online system. It ends when a final decision is made.

In some cases, processing can be delayed, such as when an applicant needs extra time to complete their medical assessments.

The six month processing time does not include time outside the control of CIC, for example, the time it takes for an employer to obtain an LMIA, or a potential candidate to receive a provincial/territorial nomination or to arrive in Canada and land as a permanent resident.

Note: The six month processing time is for permanent residence applications under the Express Entry system. Applications received before Express Entry will be processed based on the rules in place at the time the application was received.

Language Testing and Educational Credential Assessments (ECAs)

41. How does Express Entry use the information from language tests or an Education Credential Assessment (ECA)?

The Express Entry system uses the information in a number of different ways.

When you fill out your profile, the ECA is used (where applicable) to see if you meet the criteria to get into the Express Entry pool.

Before candidates can enter the Express Entry pool, all candidates' profiles are awarded points through the Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) based on their language scores and educational attainment from a Canadian institution or educational credential from a foreign institution that has been validated through an ECA report completed by an organization designated by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC).

Note: If you are hoping to apply to the Federal Skilled Worker Program, you must have an ECA. If you are hoping to apply to the Federal Skilled Trades Program or Canadian Experience Class, an ECA is optional, but it may help you earn more points for education on the CRS and improve your chances of being drawn from the pool.

42. Do I need to get an Education Credential Assessment (ECA)?

An ECA is required for candidates in the Express Entry pool who wish to be considered for draws related to the Federal Skilled Worker Program, unless they were educated in Canada.

For candidates who are hoping to apply to the Federal Skilled Trades Program or Canadian Experience Class, an ECA is optional but may increase the points they receive on the CRS and improve their chances of being drawn from the pool.

43. Does an Education Credential Assessment (ECA) mean that an applicant's professional credentials have been recognized to get a license in a regulated profession?

No. Getting an ECA for immigration does not mean that your work experience and professional credentials are automatically recognized in Canada to get a license in a regulated profession. If you work in a regulated profession, you must still go through the process of getting your license in the province or territory that you plan on settling in. Regulatory authorities determine an applicant's readiness for licensure by assessing and recognizing "qualifications," which may include an assessment of education, experience/competencies and language proficiency, in addition to other requirements. Applicants intending to work in a regulated profession should contact the regulatory authority in the province where they plan to live to find out more about how to obtain licensure.

44. What organizations can complete an Education Credential Assessment (ECA) or language test?

CIC has selected three organizations that can assess any foreign educational credential:

- Comparative Education Service: University of Toronto School of Continuing Studies;
- International Credential Assessment Service of Canada; and
- World Education Services, Canada.

If you are applying:

- as a **specialist physician (NOC 3111) or general practitioner/family physician (NOC 3112)**, the Medical Council of Canada **must** do an ECA for **your primary medical diploma**;
- As a **pharmacist (NOC 3131)**, the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada **must** do your ECA.

Note: ECAs done by the two professional bodies designated by CIC (Medical Council of Canada and Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada) are used by CIC for immigration purposes and are recognized by the profession's regulatory authorities as one component of

their overall licensure process. Please contact the regulatory authority in the province where you plan to live for more information on the licensure process.

For any other occupation, check the websites of the other CIC-designated organizations or contact them directly to find out which one best suit your needs. Consider the following:

- Some designated organizations partner with certain regulatory bodies or large employers. That means that the ECA you obtain for your application to CIC might also help you later on.
- Check with each designated organization to find out what other organizations recognize their assessments.

Learn more about Educational Credential Assessments.

45. How much does an Education Credential Assessment (ECA) cost?

The cost of an ECA and the length of time to get one vary. Find out more on the websites of the designated organizations.

46. When will I have to submit my language test results and/or Education Credential Assessment (ECA)?

When you create your Express Entry profile, you will have to include the test identifier and results score of your language test. If you completed your education outside Canada, you will also have to show what your (ECA) report lists as the equivalent Canadian education. You must also include the report's reference number (sometimes known as the "CIC number"). We will verify the information you gave us with the testing/assessment organizations if you are invited to apply for permanent residence.

You should also update your profile any time you receive updated language test scores or ECA results.

Note: If you are hoping to apply to the Federal Skilled Worker Program, you must have an ECA that indicates that your foreign educational credentials are equivalent to a completed Canadian credential. If you are hoping to apply to the Federal Skilled Trades Program or Canadian Experience Class, an ECA is optional, but it may help you earn more points for the education component on the Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) and improve your chances of being drawn from the pool

If you get an ITA, we may ask for more information about your results as we process your application for permanent residence.

Note: When you apply for permanent residence, your language tests and/or ECAs will be validated with the organization that issued them. If you give false information at any point in the process, you could be:

- found **inadmissible** to Canada for misrepresentation; and
- **Barred for five years** from applying for permanent resident status.

47. How long are language test and Education Credential Assessment (ECA) results valid for?

Language test results are valid for 2 years. They must be valid at the time an application for permanent residence under Express Entry is submitted.

ECAs are valid for 5 years and must also be valid at the time an application for permanent residence under Express Entry is submitted.

Foreign Credential Recognition

48. I work in a regulated/licensed profession. Where can I get information on how to get licensed in Canada?

Each province and territory is responsible for licensing regulated professions and trades through regulatory bodies and apprenticeship authorities. However, there may be different requirements for licensing depending on where you live. Also, some professions are not regulated in every province.

Learn more about the credential recognition process.

Employers may choose to make a job offer to a prospective immigrant for a related occupation while they work toward getting licensed.

Note: If you work in a regulated profession, you must go through the process of getting your license in the province or territory that you plan on settling in. An Education Credential Assessment (ECA) or an Invitation to Apply (ITA) does not mean that your work experience and professional credentials are automatically recognized in Canada.

If you plan to work in an occupation that is regulated in Canada, you should contact the regulatory authority in the province or territory where you plan to live as soon as possible. They can give you information about the process for being licensed.

49. How will Express Entry improve the pathway for newcomers wanting to work in a regulated occupation?

As part of the reforms being made by the Government of Canada to its economic immigration system, improvements to foreign credential recognition (FCR) and the way credentials are recognized are being prioritized.

Increased collaboration with provinces and territories, regulatory authorities, and professional bodies is resulting in the development of steps to make their license and assessment tools accessible to potential immigrants before they come to Canada, giving immigrants a head start on the recognition of their qualifications.

Through an Education Credential Assessment (ECA), a potential Express Entry candidate's foreign educational credentials are authenticated and assessed against Canadian standards. This allows applicants to have a better sense of how their education fits into the Canadian labour market and helps them make more informed choices about immigration and Canadian career paths. There are currently five organizations designated by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) to deliver ECA services for immigration purposes, including two professional bodies (Medical Council of Canada and the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada). Work is being done to add more organizations and professional bodies to the list of those designated to provide ECA services.

Note: If you are hoping to apply to the Federal Skilled Worker Program, you must have an ECA that indicates that your foreign educational credentials are equivalent to a completed Canadian credential. If you are hoping to apply to the Federal Skilled Trades Program or Canadian Experience Class, an ECA is optional, but it may let you earn more points for the education component on the Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) and improve your chances of being drawn from the pool.

All ECAs included in an Express Entry profile will be validated with the issuing organization when an application for permanent residence is submitted for processing.

Fraud

50. Is there a risk of fraud from applicants or employers?

The Government of Canada takes program integrity very seriously.

We expect applicants to be truthful in their self-declared Express Entry profile and Application for Permanent Residence. During processing, an immigration officer will review and validate all information. Anyone who has provided false information could be found inadmissible for misrepresentation and could be barred for five years from applying for permanent resident status. This includes applications completed by immigration consultants and lawyers.

For more information on fraud related to the Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA), please refer to Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC).

51. Can employers and potential candidates use recruiters and immigration consultants or Lawyers?

An employer or potential candidate may choose to use a recruiter, immigration consultant or lawyer when using the Express Entry system, but it is not required.

Note: Only some people can charge a fee or receive any other type of payment to represent an immigrant or advise on a Canadian immigration proceeding or application. These are:

- lawyers and paralegals who are members in good standing of a Canadian provincial or territorial law society;
- notaries who are members in good standing of the Chambre des notaires du Québec; and
- Immigration consultants who are members in good standing of the Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council.

These people are called “authorized” representatives.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) will not deal with representatives who are not members of one of the above groups and who charge for their services.

Budget funding and Legislation

52. What funding is in place to support the implementation of Express Entry?

Economic Action Plan 2014 committed \$14 million over two years and \$4.7 million ongoing to implement the Express Entry system.

Additionally, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) received funding for two key components for employer participation in the Express Entry system:

- Job Match/Job Bank will receive \$11.8 million over 2 years and \$3.3 million ongoing to enhance the job match service; and
- The Labour Market Opinion (LMO) (now Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA)) process also received funding of \$11 million over 2 years and \$3.5 million

ongoing to enhance and strengthen the LMO process, including improved processing times for certain applications.

53. What legislative provisions support Express Entry?

Foundational legislation to create the Express Entry application management system was introduced in Bill C-4 (*Economic Action Plan 2013 Act, No. 2*) and received Royal Assent in December 2013.

These amendments added a new division to the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (IRPA), which established a pre-application stage as the first step in immigrating to Canada under certain economic programs. In addition, this division includes broad provisions outlining the Express Entry process, the required information-sharing measures, as well as measures enabling a role for third parties (provinces, territories and employers) under this new system.

As a result of ongoing policy development and work with provinces and territories to design and implement the Express Entry system, further legislative amendments were introduced as part of Bill C-31 (*Economic Action Plan 2014 Act, No. 1*). Bill C-31 solidified the existing legislative framework and enabled certain technical and operational requirements in advance of the January 2015 launch date.

Key changes included in these amendments will:

- require that claims made at the time an Express Entry profile is submitted continue to be true at the time Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) receives an application for permanent residence;
- ensure that third party determinations, such as language test results or Education Credential Assessments (ECA), can be required at Express Entry submission stage;
- require that information from Express Entry candidates be provided **electronically***, including their application for permanent residence; and
- Enable the Express Entry system to be applied to the Provincial Nomination Program (PNP) in order to encourage provincial and territorial use.

* The only exemption to mandatory online applications for Express Entry will be for people with mental or physical disabilities that prevent them from applying electronically. These individuals may contact CIC to request a paper application kit and guide.