

# 8. Express Entry

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There isn't really a "slow entry" any more. Express entry is the normal way to apply to become a permanent resident (PR).

Express entry is a replacement for an older, slower, process. In order to increase immigration, it was introduced in 2015, and created a streamlined system based on points for skills, family considerations and job offers.

When everything is working well, express entry takes about six months and results in you being granted permanent residence. It's rarely that quick, but the old version took years. In most cases, you will need one of the immigration consultants I mentioned in section 1.9 or a lawyer from 1.10.

### 8.1 Introduction

Canada has both a low birth rate and an aging population, so it's particularly open to skilled workers joining the workforce (and tax rolls). We're therefore looking for people with language skills, work experience, education, and drive.

Demographics drives express entry, but it has been derailed by happenstance, or by a US president doing something surpassingly stupid. Fortunately, demographics will win out in the end: the Canadian population dropped for the first time in 2025, causing muted consternation

### 8.2 Many Paths, one Destination

There are numerous paths making up part of express entry, notably

- Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP)
- Canadian Experience Class (CEC)
- Federal Skilled Trades Program (FSTP)

In parallel to Express Entry itself, there are also mechanisms for immigration to specific provinces. These are qualifying mechanisms for express entry, with different options.

- Provincial Nominee Programs (PNP) and

- Quebec Skilled Worker Program (QSWP) if you wish to reside in Quebec.

Most use a system called the Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS). It is a points-based system that we use to assess and score your profile and rank it in the express entry pool. It's used to assess your:

- skills
- education
- language ability
- work experience

and any other factors.

There is a calculator for your "CRS score" at <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/express-entry/check-score.html>

This is a table of some of the factors, excerpted from <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/express-entry/check-score/crs-criteria.html>

### Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) criteria

Factor name	Description	Points with a spouse	Points without
Age	Ages 20 to 29 have the highest scores	100	110
Education	Secondary diploma (high school graduation)	28	30
	One-year degree, diploma or certificate from a university, college, trade or technical school, or other institute	84	90
	Two-year program at a university, college, trade or technical school, or other institute	91	98
	Bachelor's degree OR a three or more year program at a university, college, trade or technical school, or other institute	112	120
	Master's degree, or professional degree needed to practice in a licensed profession, eg medicine,	126	135
	Doctoral level university degree (Ph.D.)	140	150
Languages proficiency	For each of reading, writing, speaking and listening	32	34
Canadian work experience	None or less than a year	0	0
	1 year	35	40
	2 years	46	53
	3 years	56	64
	4 years	63	72
	5 years or more	70	80
Skill Transferability			

lity factors

With good/strong official languages proficiency and a post-secondary degree	50	50
With Canadian work experience and a post-secondary degree	50	50
With good/strong official languages proficiency and foreign work experience	50	50
With Canadian work experience and foreign work experience	50	50
Certificate of qualification		
With good/strong official languages proficiency and a certificate of qualification	50	50
Additional points		
Brother or sister living in Canada (18 years or older, citizen or permanent resident)	15	15
French language skills	50	50
Post-secondary education in Canada	30	30
Provincial or territorial nomination	600	600

Each program is limited to a certain number of applicants who are above a particular score, and individuals to be invited are drawn randomly from the applicants who qualify. Draws are every 2-3 weeks. And yes, you get fewer points if you're married. Whoopie.

### Training, Education, Experience, and Responsibilities (TEER)

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/find-national-occupation-code.html>

The occupations you can apply for include:

General	Medical/allied professionals	Scientists
accountant	dentist	agriculturist (or agronomist)
architect	dietitian	animal breeder
computer systems analyst	medical laboratory technologist	animal scientist
disaster relief insurance claims adjuster	nutritionist	apiculturist
economist	occupational therapist	astronomer
engineer	pharmacist	biochemist
forester	physician (teaching or research only)	biologist (or plant pathologist)
graphic designer	physiotherapist/physical therapist	chemist
hotel manager	psychologist	dairy scientist
industrial designer	recreational therapist	entomologist
interior designer	registered nurse	epidemiologist
land surveyor	veterinarian	geneticist
landscape architect		geologist
lawyer (or notary in the province of Quebec)		geochemist
librarian		geophysicist
management consultant		horticulturist
mathematician (or statistician and actuary)		meteorologist

General	Medical/allied professionals	Scientists
range manager or range conservationist		pharmacologist
research assistant (working in a post-secondary institution)		physicist (or oceanographer)
scientific technician or technologist		plant breeder
social worker		poultry scientist
silviculturist (or forestry specialist)		soil scientist
technical publications writer		zoologist
urban planner (or geographer)		
vocational counsellor		

These break down into yet another code, a 4-digit “NOC code”, for individual jobs titles.

### Resources

- How to Choose the Right NOC Code for Express Entry, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qF57PySWlj4> (from moving2canada.com)

## 8.3 Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSWP)

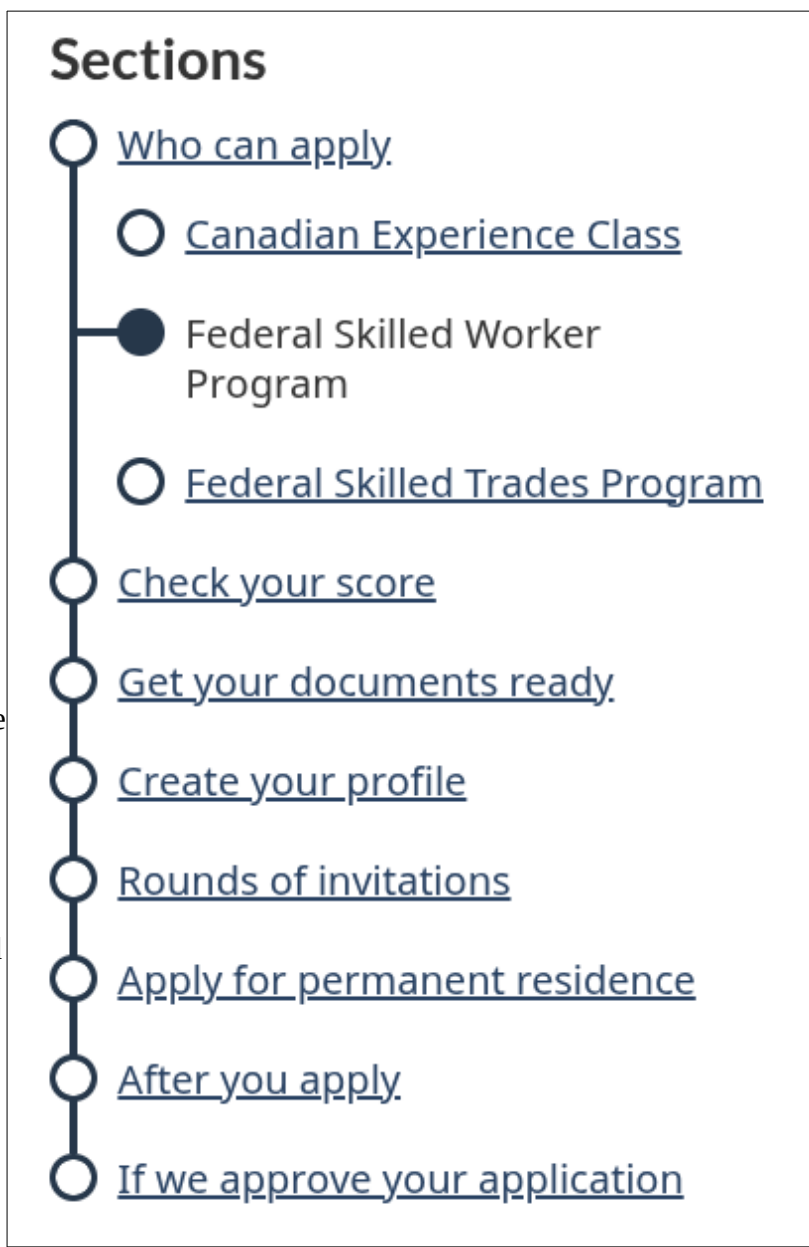
<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/express-entry/who-can-apply/federal-skilled-workers.html>

This as a program to get people who have done an apprenticeship or gone through college or university.

It aims at getting people with working experience in particular categories to apply. The categories are those mentioned in the TEER table above.

Your experience needs to be appropriate to the area you’re applying to, although it can be in a former job.

It formerly included points for having a job offer. That was removed, but immigration hopes to restore it, and add points for having required licenses, hopefully in 2026.



The points used in this program are different from the pools above but the minimum is published: you need 67 points in this particular scheme on the web page above.

In this and all the programs below, one of the common roadblocks is employers' lack of resources to verify foreign educational credentials and work experience,

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15562948.2022.2133201>

For college and universities, get a transcript, or perhaps have a certified transcript sent directly to the prospective employer. For proof of employment, your offer letter, pay stubs W-2 or 1099 tax forms should suffice. If you're not sure about that, you can ask the employer for an official letter to verify your employment.

In any case, collect recommendations on LinkedIn that align with the jobs that you want to emphasize. This is a particularly easy way for an employer to gain confidence about you.

## **8.4 Canadian Experience Class (CEC)**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/express-entry/who-can-apply/canadian-experience-class.html>

This is the program for anyone who has experience working in Canada.

If you have a year's Canadian work experience in the last three years, you qualify. You don't have to be an apprentice, attended college, or graduated university. You do have to fall into one of the [skilled jobs](#) mentioned above.

If you are a physician, there is a new category for you, starting in 2026.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/medical-doctors.html>

If you did go to a Canadian high school, college or university, you get points for that. Similarly, if you complete a college or university program elsewhere, that also pays some points.

### **Resources**

- Immigration pages on the medical category, <https://iccimmigration.ca/new-express-entry-category-for-physicians-with-canadian-work-experience-pr-pathway-explained-2026-update/>
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/medical-doctors.html>

## 8.5 Federal Skilled Trades Program (FSTP)

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/express-entry/who-can-apply/federal-skilled-trades.html>

If you're a member of one of the skilled trades, there is a program for that, much like the "skilled worker" program. Typically it means you apprenticed in

- construction
- transportation
- manufacturing or other industrial work, or
- natural resources and agriculture.

You need two years experience in your trade in the five years before you apply.

In this program you will need either

- a certificate from a Canadian province saying that your qualifications are valid in Canada, or
- a job offer to work in your trade.

Like the skilled trades program, you get extra points for attending college or university, and a Canadian high school.

## 8.6 Provincial Nominee Programs (PNP)

A province can also nominate you for one of the three express entry processes. I'll look at the Ontario program as an example, but all the provinces and the northwest territories have programs, each with a certain quota for candidates.

<https://settlement.org/ontario/immigration-citizenship/immigrating-to-ontario/immigration-categories/what-is-opportunities-ontario-provincial-nominee-program-pnp>

This is specifically for people with job offers, replacing the previous scheme where offers were part of the qualifying points scheme for regular express entry.

You can qualify if you fall into one of these three streams

- Foreign Worker stream, if you a skilled foreign worker with a job offer in Ontario, or if you're a physician.
- International Student stream, for recent graduates with a job offer, and, most importantly,
- In-Demand Skills stream

The latter is for people in a list of occupations described in [in-demand skills](#). These include everything from home care workers to railroad track maintenance workers.

These streams do not require apprenticeship or a degree.

## 8.7 Quebec Skilled Worker Program (QSWP)

<https://www.quebec.ca/en/immigration/permanent/choose-quebec>

Quebec has a similar program, “Choosing to immigrate to Québec”. It is oriented toward skilled workers, who have both conversational french and want to live in Quebec

There is a different program, *Express Entry for French-speaking skilled workers* who wish to work *elsewhere* in Canada, that is managed as part of express entry.

- <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/campaigns/francophone-immigration-outside-quebec.html>
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/rural-franco-pilots/franco-immigration.html>

## 8.8 Other Resources

- A video suggesting that if your work permit is running out, apply for Permanent Residency <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TQCzY7MvXTg>
- Ontario guide on immigrating, <https://settlement.org/> (previously mentioned)
- canadavisa.com has a calculator for how many express point you have, <https://www.canadavisa.com/canadian-immigration-visas.html>
- Rural Community Immigration Pilot (RCIP) and the Francophone Community Immigration Pilot (FCIP) are new permanent-resident programs for persons wishing to live in rural ares and for francophones wishing to live outside of Quebec. <https://moving2canada.com/features/rcip-fcip-work-permit-pdi-update>
- <https://allhod.com/canada-immigration/express-entry/>
- <https://www.bordersolutionslaw.com/canadian-immigration/express-entry/>

## 8.9 Changes for 2026

A new category was added, for “**Physicians with Canadian Work Experience**”

<https://moving2canada.com/news-and-features/news/immigration/new-express-entry-stream-plus-5000-pnp-spots-for-international-doctors/>

Note that is for folks the medical societies have already approved, so it’s sort of limited. If you’ve done this job, you’re eligible for residency.

For **US H-1B visa holders**, an escape hatch. The US is now charging a \$100,000 supplemental fee for applying for an H-1B visa, payable by the employer. Anyone needing in a new visa or extending an old one is charged this prohibitive fee. Canada is proposing to recreate a program from last year, to let those people come to Canada instead. As of April, 2026, we are awaiting a final announcement.

- <https://moving2canada.com/features/canada-h1b-work-permit-how-to-prepare/>

Also being emphasized are

- **pilots, aircraft mechanics or inspectors**, and
- candidates for the **Canadian Forces** in roles such as doctors, nurses and pilots.

This is a live document. These links will change. Always refer to the government pages for current rules. And please file an issue at <https://codeberg.org/tokugawa-behr/Fleeing-to-Canada/issues> if anything is wrong so I'll know to update it.

## **In Short**

This is the most normal, but one of the busisest ways to become a permanent resident, and eventually a citizen. And you can get started on it as soon as you arrive in Canada.