

Express Entry 2015 Year End Wrap Up



Express Entry will turn 1 years old in a few weeks. Express Entry is Citizenship and Immigration Canada's (CIC) new application management system for Canadian economic immigration programs including Federal Skilled Worker and Federal Skilled Trades Programs and Canadian Experience Class and some Provincial Nomination Programs (Quebec is not included in Express Entry).

Dubbed an 'Employer driven immigration program' and launched in January 2015 the program was supposed to streamline the process of bringing economic immigrants to Canada in response to the needs of Canadian employers. Economic immigrants seeking to relocate to Canada now find themselves almost exclusively limited to Express Entry as the process for application and immigration.

Heading into 2015 the Canadian government had indicated a target of between 172,000 and 186,000 economic immigrants for the year (62%-65.5% of immigration totals), a number consistent with past years.

How Express Entry Works

Under Express Entry qualified immigrants are granted 'Invitations to Apply' (ITAs) based on CRS points (Comprehensive Ranking System). CRS is based on "Human Capital" points (age, marital status, education, Language skills, work experience, connection to Canada) and points obtained from a job offer or successful Provincial Nomination. The maximum CRS score would be 1200 (600 from human capital and 600 from the job offer or PNP).

Potential immigrants can apply into the Express Entry applicant pool with or without a job offer from a Canadian employer. Intermittently over the course of the year CIC holds a 'draw' where a certain number of "Invitations" are granted based on points, the number of points and the number of immigrants invited varying from draw to draw. Once a potential immigrant receives an invitation that candidate can accept the offer and then has 60 days to send the required documents supporting the application (proof of age, education, language skills, experience, citizenship, health, background and so on). If a candidate satisfies

CIC they are granted entry to Canada and can become a permanent resident. This process can take as little as a few weeks or more commonly several months.

Although a job offer is not required having a job offer will guarantee a qualified applicant an Invitation.

Express Entry 2015 Results

Over the course of the year the Canadian government held 23 'draws' where immigrants who were in the Express Entry pool were issued ITAs to immigrate. In 2015 a total of 31,018 invitations were extended. Not all of these ITAs were or will be successful as each is subject to rigorous review. Reports estimate that only between 6000-9000 of these applications have been approved and only a handful of successful applicants have received their VISA or Permanent Residence status. At mid-year 85% of those who received an ITA were already in Canada at the time of their application, meaning that the majority were foreign temporary workers already in Canada. By yearend 25% of all invitations were given to Candidates who listed Canada as their current location.

4 things Employers should know to get started recruiting International Talent with Express Entry

1. **How To Recruiting Potential Immigrants:** Organizations can post a job in the Canadian Job – Canadian Job Bank or recruit talent directly from abroad. However, it is important that your organization understand the criteria a potential employee will have to meet.
2. **Required Candidate Qualification:** Any employee you seek to recruit must be able to demonstrate
 1. A match for the NOC (National Occupation Codes) of the job you are posting, as they will need to supply proof they have the required experience and qualifications
 2. Sufficient language skills (completion of language testing), Express Entry requires skilled professional workers to meet high standards of education, experience, and language scores. Skilled Trades workers do not require the same language levels but are held to high standards of qualifications.
 3. Education credentials assessment equivalent
 4. Candidates will also be evaluated for health and undergo a criminal background check
3. **Organization's Requirements:**
 1. As part of the LMIA (Labour Market Impact Assessment) your organization will be required to post the job publicly in several locations for 28 days to demonstrate you first tried to find a Canadian employee willing and able to do the job. If you find an international candidate who is not an exact match for the job posting but whom you wish to hire you may have to amend the job posting and post the job again (for example, your job posting asked for 5 years experience and the International candidate you selected has only 4, this means you may need to repost the job advertising 4 years experience).
 2. The job wage must be equivalent to the median salary for the job in your region (to determine this you can head to the Job Bank and look at the data)
 3. The job posted must be a full-time position for at least 12 months in duration (a full time 'permanent' job). Express Entry is not the portal

for temporary foreign workers although it may be possible to apply for a Dual Intent LMIA for a foreign temporary worker where in you inform CIC that the intent is to convert the foreign temporary worker into a permanent worker (this does not mean you are sponsoring and must keep this candidate on the books forever).

4. **Planning and Patience:** Express Entry may be faster than the old system (which frequently required 12-14 months) in that the process should take less than 6 months and as little as 2-3 months (when the system is operating smoothly). This far the system works best if you are planning for 1-2 quarters in the future.

To remain competitive and fill in gaps in the Canadian labour market many organizations are going to need to consider hiring a new immigrant or a potential immigrant. Learning more about Express Entry should be on your agenda for 2016.