Express Entry for Economic Immigrants Is On It's Way



Historically Canada's immigration policies have been driven by the composition of the immigrants who sought to immigrate to Canada. Basically individuals decided they wanted to immigrate to Canada, applied under available programs and were assigned points based on specific criterion. When an immigrant had enough points, based on Human Capital factors such as age, education, years of experience, language skills, work skills and more, he/she was granted acceptance. Existing programs under which a foreign individual could apply to immigrate included:

Federal skilled workers

- Federal Skilled Trades Program
- Quebec-selected skilled workers
- Canadian Experience Class
- Start-up visa
- Self-employed Persons Program
- Family sponsorship
- Provincial nominees
- Live-in caregivers
- Refugees
- And the recently closed Federal Immigrants Investor and Entrepreneurs program

In addition to these programs individuals could apply to visit, study or work in Canada on a temporary program. Those seeking to work in Canada temporarily could still obtain a Temporary Work Visa and/or apply under the Temporary Foreign Worker program.

Over the years attempts were made by the government to award points to some immigrants based on skills and experience gaps in the Canadian market. The hope was that when an immigrant was accepted and subsequently arrived that immigrant could find those employers which whom their background and skills matched and seek to obtain a job from that employer organization.

Express Entry Driven By Employer Needs

Launching in January 2015 the Canadian government will be introducing a new immigration program that seeks to entice foreign workers to immigrate permanently to Canada based on meeting the needs of Canadian employers. This is a transformation in

the way in which immigration will be driven to Canada by putting some of the power in the hands of Canadian employers. This program, called the 'Express Entry Program' allows Canadian employers to recruit foreign workers who wish to immigrate to Canada permanently and offer them a job. With a job offer in hand qualified individuals (who must still meet Visa requirements) will have their permanent residency application 'expressed' allowing them to immigrate much more quickly so they can begin working and meeting the needs of a Canadian employer.

Unlike the Foreign Temporary Worker Program, which did seek to be responsive to the needs of employers on at least a temporary basis, this program does not bring workers in on a temporary basis. Instead it focuses on those foreign workers who plan on staying permanently and contributing to the Canadian economy on an ongoing basis.

Express entry will apply to 4 economic categories of immigration: The Federal Skilled Workers Program (FSWP), The Federal Skilled Trades Program (FSTP) and the Canadian Experience Class (CEC). Additionally Provinces and Territories can identify additional Provincial Nominees for the Provincial Nominees Program (PNP's) over and above their overall jurisdiction limit.

To be eligible to hire a foreign worker under the Express Entry program employers will still need to demonstrate that they cannot find a Canadian to fill the role. The exact details are not yet solidified but similar to the LMA (labour market assessment) it appears that employers will have to demonstrate the need by advertising a job for 1 month (28 days) prior to recruiting/hiring a qualified foreign worker.

Under this option foreign individuals can make themselves available to employers by completing an online Express Entry Profile where they will provide information about their skills, work experience, language skills, education and other details. Candidates are then ranked within the pool and the highest ranking candidates are invited to apply for PR (permanent residency). If a high-ranking individual does not have a job offer he/she must register with the Government of Canada's job bank to be matched with an employer.

What Does This Mean to The Canadian Employer?

The Express Entry program is designed to put the Canadian employer in the drivers seat with respect to economic immigration opportunities. If an employer can demonstrate that a job is available and cannot be filled by a Canadian the organization can look through the database of individuals who have 'expressed interest' and been ranked high and potentially have access to these individuals much more quickly than in the past.

Additionally, if an employer identifies a potential foreign worker this individual could register online for the Express Entry program and if this individual ranked high their entry to Canada would be processed quickly. This would enable employers to fill roles with qualified foreign workers who would be able to become permanent residents in Canada very quickly.

In response to the creation of Express Entry organizations such as Skills International are working with employers to help them find and match pre qualified foreign workers who are serious about immigrating to Canada.

For organizations with gaps in their workforce this new program will be worth understanding beginning in January 2015.