



GMS Flash Alert

Immigration Edition

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Canada - Invites 27,332 Candidates to Apply for Permanent Residence

On February 13, 2021, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) invited 27,332 individuals, via Canada's Express Entry System, who qualified under the Canadian Experience Class (CEC) category, to apply for permanent residence in Canada.¹

The CEC category offers a major pathway to permanent residence (PR) status for individuals who have worked in Canada. Successful CEC candidates have gained at least one year of skilled, full-time work experience in Canada within the last three years and have passed an English or French language test. Those who receive an invitation have 90 calendar days to submit their complete permanent residence applications through the online Express Entry portal.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Canada is determined to attract and retain skilled immigrants as it confronts the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and seeks to boost its economic recovery. The draw of over 25,000 candidates follows Canada's recent commitment to welcome 401,000 immigrants in 2021, 411,000 in 2022, and 421,000 in 2023 through its 2021-2023 Immigration Levels Plan.² The recent draw suggests that IRCC is aiming to issue as many invitations as it can at the beginning of 2021 to allow applicants to complete their permanent residence landings this year, giving Canada a greater chance to achieve its ambitious immigration targets.

IRCC has taken a positive step to prioritize offering permanent residence to CEC candidates, 90 percent of whom are already in Canada and will not have to face the same barriers as overseas applicants, who are significantly impacted by COVID-19-related travel restrictions.³ Those invited to apply for permanent residence who are not currently in Canada can expect to travel to Canada once travel restrictions are lifted.

Context

The recent draw was unprecedented given the high number of candidates who received an invitation to apply. The previous record for most invitations issued through the Express Entry system was 5,000 in one day.⁴ In addition, this unique Express Entry invitation round only required candidates to have a Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) score of

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at least 75 – the lowest CRS requirement ever. This suggests that virtually every Express Entry candidate that met the eligibility criteria of the CEC program was selected.

KPMG NOTE

Key Considerations for Employers and Express Entry Candidates

- The recent draw indicates that Canada will take more aggressive measures to achieve its immigration targets. As such, eligible individuals, particularly those in Canada, should aim to enter the pool of candidates as soon as possible to potentially benefit from future draws.
- Given the massive number of invitations received in the last draw, IRCC authorities may face significant resourcing challenges when processing applications. Applicants should seek assistance to help ensure their applications are properly prepared, reviewed, and submitted to avoid delays or prevent applications from being returned as incomplete.
- Canadian employers seeking to transition their foreign workforce to permanent residence status should make sure appropriate communication, policies, and processes are introduced to take advantage of Canada's ambitious immigration plans.
- Foreign nationals outside of Canada, and those who are in Canada but have not worked in Canada for a full year, should be advised that they will not benefit from the latest draw. However, they may have opportunities to qualify in the long-term and should continue to monitor IRCC's evolving measures.
- Planning ahead continues to be extremely important. Candidates who are outside of Canada may wish to explore temporary work permit options in order to move to Canada in the short-term and then subsequently apply for permanent residence status later on.
- Immigration processing trends remain uncertain due to COVID-19. Temporary foreign workers who are in Canada should continue to maintain their temporary residence status while they wait for permanent residence.

The timing and parameters of Express Entry draws in 2021 have been much more unpredictable than previous years. Foreign nationals who have concerns about their permanent residence applications and next steps are encouraged to contact their employers, their immigration advisers, or KPMG Law LLP (see the Contact Us section for further information).

FOOTNOTES:

1 See February 13, 2021 News Release "Thousands of skilled workers in Canada invited to stay permanently" at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/notices/skilled-workers-in-canada.html> .

2 See October 30, 2020 News Release "Government of Canada announces plan to support economic recovery through immigration" at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2020/10/government-of-canada-announces-plan-to-support-economic-recovery-through-immigration.html> .

3 See February 13, 2021 News Release "Thousands of skilled workers in Canada invited to stay permanently" at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/notices/skilled-workers-in-canada.html> .

4 See "Ministerial Instructions respecting invitations to apply for permanent residence under the Express Entry system" at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/mandate/policies-operational-instructions-agreements/ministerial-instructions/express-entry-rounds.html> .

Contact us

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local GMS or People Services professional* or one of the following professionals with the KPMG International member firm in Canada]:



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