

Express Entry glossary

70+ IRCC terms and acronyms in plain English, from your profile to your PR card.

Checked against official sources on October 6, 2026 Interactive version: nclcfrench.com/express-entry-glossary

QUICK ANSWER

In Express Entry, an ITA (invitation to apply) means IRCC has invited you to apply for permanent residence; you then have 60 days to submit. An AOR (acknowledgement of receipt) confirms IRCC has received your application. A COPR (Confirmation of Permanent Residence) is the document you get when you are approved, and the eCOPR is its electronic version. Your rank in the pool comes from your CRS score: check yours with the [CRS calculator](#).

IN THIS GUIDE

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Programs and your Express Entry profile | 2 Scores, language tests and credentials |
| 3 Draws and the invitation (ITA) | 4 Application and processing: AOR, BIL, ADR, PPR |
| 5 Landing and after: COPR, PR card, PRTD, SIN | 6 French-language terms: francophone draws, Mobilité Francophone, FCIP |

Programs and your Express Entry profile

The words you meet when you check your eligibility and build your profile.

IRCC

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

The federal department that runs Express Entry, work permits and citizenship. Its official pages are on canada.ca.

Express Entry

IRCC's online system for managing applications for three federal economic programs (FSW, CEC, FST) and part of the Provincial Nominee Program. It is a selection system, not a program in itself.

FSW

Federal Skilled Worker Program

For skilled workers with foreign work experience. You must pass a 67-point selection grid before you can enter the pool: test yours with the [FSW points calculator](#).

CEC

Canadian Experience Class

For people with skilled work experience in Canada. The language minimum depends on the TEER of your job.

FST

Federal Skilled Trades Program

For qualified tradespeople with a job offer or a Canadian certificate of qualification in their trade.

PNP <i>Provincial Nominee Program</i>	Provinces and territories nominate people who fit their local needs. Some streams are linked to Express Entry and some favour French speakers: see French-speaking PNP streams .
Profile	Your online form in the Express Entry system describing your age, education, work, language and family. You have 60 days to complete and submit it once you start.
Pool	The group of eligible candidates waiting to be invited. A profile expires after 12 months in the pool if you are not invited.
NOC <i>National Occupational Classification</i>	Canada's list of occupations, each with a 5-digit code. Your job duties, not your job title, decide which NOC code fits.
TEER <i>Training, Education, Experience and Responsibilities</i>	The skill-level category of a NOC code, from TEER 0 (management) to TEER 5. Express Entry counts work in TEER 0 to 3.
PA <i>Principal applicant</i>	The person whose profile is scored and invited. A couple can compare both ways and choose who is the PA.
Accompanying spouse	A spouse or common-law partner who will immigrate with you. Their education, language and Canadian work can add a few CRS points.
Common-law partner	Someone you have lived with in a conjugal relationship for at least one continuous year. IRCC treats them like a spouse.
Dependent child	A child who can be included on your application as a family member. IRCC sets age and dependency conditions, so check them on canada.ca .

■ Scores, language tests and credentials

What sets your rank: CRS, CLB and NCLC, the tests IRCC accepts, and your education assessment.

CRS <i>Comprehensive Ranking System</i>	The points system (out of 1,200) that ranks everyone in the pool. Check yours with the CRS calculator .
Core human capital	The CRS points for your age, education, official languages and Canadian work experience.
Skill transferability	Extra CRS points for combinations, such as strong language plus a degree, or foreign plus Canadian work experience.
Additional points	CRS points outside the core factors, such as a provincial nomination, strong French, a sibling in Canada or Canadian study. Job offer points were removed on 25 March 2025.
CLB <i>Canadian Language Benchmarks</i>	Canada's 12-level scale for English. IRCC converts your IELTS, CELPIP or PTE Core scores to CLB levels.
NCLC <i>Niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens</i>	The French equivalent of CLB. IRCC converts TCF Canada and TEF Canada scores to NCLC: use the NCLC score converter .

First official language	The language (English or French) in which you score highest and declare first. It carries most of your language points.
Second official language	Your other official language. A result of NCLC or CLB 5 or more in it can add CRS points.
TCF Canada <i>Test de connaissance du français pour le Canada</i>	A French test by France Éducation internationale accepted by IRCC. Listening and reading are scored out of 699, writing and speaking out of 20.
TEF Canada <i>Test d'évaluation de français pour le Canada</i>	A French test by CCI Paris Île-de-France accepted by IRCC. For Express Entry you enter the "Équivalence ancien score" column.
Équivalence ancien score	The TEF Canada column IRCC uses for Express Entry (listening /360, reading /300, writing and speaking /450). IRCC says entering the "Score / 699" column instead can lead to refusal.
IELTS General Training	The IELTS version IRCC accepts for Express Entry. IELTS Academic and IELTS One Skill Retake are not accepted.
CELP-IP-General <i>Canadian English Language Proficiency Index Program</i>	An English test IRCC accepts for Express Entry. Only the General version counts.
PTE Core <i>Pearson Test of English Core</i>	The Pearson English test IRCC accepts for Express Entry.
Test validity	Language results must be less than 2 years old when you submit your profile and again when you submit your PR application.
ECA <i>Educational Credential Assessment</i>	A report confirming your foreign degree is valid and equal to a Canadian one. It must be less than 5 years old: see the ECA checklist .
Designated organization	A body IRCC approves to issue ECAs, such as WES, ICAS, IQAS, CES (University of Toronto) or ICES. Doctors and pharmacists use their professional body.
Proof of funds	Evidence that you have enough money to settle in Canada, required for FSW and FST unless an exception applies. Check the amount with the proof of funds calculator .

Draws and the invitation (ITA)

How IRCC picks candidates from the pool, and what an invitation means.

Draw <i>Round of invitations</i>	IRCC invites a set number of candidates from the pool at a given time. Follow every round on the Express Entry draw tracker .
ITA <i>Invitation to apply</i>	IRCC's invitation to apply for permanent residence. It is valid for 60 days: use the after-ITA checklist to plan them.
Cut-off score	The lowest CRS score invited in a draw. Anyone at or above it, and eligible for that round, gets an ITA (subject to the tie-breaking rule).

Tie-breaking rule	If several candidates have the cut-off score, IRCC invites those who submitted their profile earliest, by date and time.
General draw	A round open to candidates eligible for any of the three Express Entry programs.
Program-specific draw	A round limited to one program, for example the Provincial Nominee Program or the Canadian Experience Class.
Category-based selection	Rounds for candidates with a skill IRCC targets, such as French, healthcare or trades. Check which you fit with the category checker .
Enhanced nomination	A provincial nomination issued through Express Entry. It adds 600 CRS points.
Base nomination	A provincial nomination outside Express Entry. You then apply to IRCC for PR outside the Express Entry system, and it adds no CRS points.
EOI <i>Expression of interest</i>	A profile some provinces ask you to submit before they invite you to apply for a nomination.

Application and processing: AOR, BIL, ADR, PPR

The acronyms you see after you submit. Some are official, some are forum shorthand: both are explained.

eAPR <i>Electronic application for permanent residence</i>	Forum shorthand for the online PR application you complete after your ITA. See the Express Entry document checklist .
AOR <i>Acknowledgement of receipt</i>	The message in your account confirming IRCC has received your application. It is not an approval.
BIL <i>Biometrics instruction letter</i>	The letter asking you to give your fingerprints and photo. You have 30 days from the letter date to do it.
Biometrics	Your fingerprints and a digital photo, given at a visa application centre or other collection point. The fee is per person, with a family maximum.
Medical exam	A health exam done by an IRCC panel physician. The results are valid for 12 months.
Panel physician	A doctor approved by IRCC to do immigration medical exams. Your own doctor cannot do it.
PCC <i>Police clearance certificate</i>	A police certificate from each country where you lived for long enough. See the police certificates guide .
LOE <i>Letter of explanation</i>	A short letter you add to explain a gap, a missing document or anything unusual. Use the letter of explanation template .
Reference letter	An employer letter proving your duties, hours and pay for each job you claim. Use the reference letter template .
RPRF <i>Right of permanent residence fee</i>	A fee paid before PR is granted by you and your accompanying spouse or partner, on top of the processing fee. Check the current amount on IRCC's fee list.

ADR <i>Additional document request</i>	Forum shorthand for IRCC asking you for more documents or information. Answer by the deadline in the message.
PFL <i>Procedural fairness letter</i>	A letter telling you IRCC has concerns that could lead to refusal, giving you a chance to respond. Take it seriously and answer fully.
Misrepresentation	Giving false or misleading information or documents, even on someone else's advice. It can lead to refusal and a ban of at least 5 years.
GCMS <i>Global Case Management System</i>	IRCC's internal case system. "GCMS notes" are the officer notes on your file, which you can request through an access to information and privacy (ATIP) request.
BOWP <i>Bridging open work permit</i>	An open work permit that can let some applicants already working in Canada keep working while their PR application is processed.
PPR <i>Passport request</i>	Forum shorthand for IRCC's request for your passport (or passport details) near the end of processing. It usually means a decision is close, but it is not a guarantee.

Landing and after: COPR, PR card, PRTD, SIN

The documents and steps once you are approved.

COPR <i>Confirmation of Permanent Residence</i>	The document issued when your PR is approved, with your photo and details. Check it against your passport: IRCC cannot extend it, so land before it expires.
eCOPR <i>Electronic Confirmation of Permanent Residence</i>	The electronic COPR uploaded to your PR portal account after you confirm you are in Canada. It can take up to a few weeks.
PR visa <i>Permanent resident visa</i>	A visa placed in your passport with the COPR, only if your country of citizenship needs one to travel to Canada.
PR portal <i>Permanent Residence Portal</i>	The portal where applicants inside Canada confirm their PR online. Do not create your own account: IRCC creates it for you.
Landing	The moment you become a permanent resident, when an officer confirms your COPR at the border or through the PR portal.
POE <i>Port of entry</i>	An airport or land border where you enter Canada and present your COPR.
CBSA <i>Canada Border Services Agency</i>	The agency whose officers check your documents and finalise your landing at the port of entry.
PR card <i>Permanent resident card</i>	The card that proves your status when you return to Canada by commercial transport. The first one is free if you send your photo and address within 180 days of landing.
PRTD <i>Permanent resident travel document</i>	A travel document for permanent residents abroad without a valid PR card, so they can return to Canada by plane, train, bus or boat.
Residency obligation	To keep PR status you must be physically present in Canada for at least 730 days in the last five years. The days do not need to be in a row.

SIN <i>Social Insurance Number</i>	The 9-digit number from Service Canada you need to work and access benefits. Apply with your COPR or eCOPR, first item on the PR landing checklist .
Physical presence (citizenship)	To apply for citizenship you need at least 1,095 days in Canada in the last five years: count yours with the citizenship calculator .

French-language terms: francophone draws, Mobilité Francophone, FCIP

The words that matter if you plan to use French to immigrate.

French-language category	Category-based draws for candidates with NCLC 7 or higher in all four French skills. See every round on the French draw tracker .
French bonus points	Additional CRS points for NCLC 7 or higher in all four French skills: 25 points, or 50 if you also have CLB 5 or higher in all four English skills.
NCLC 7	The French level that opens French-category draws and bonus points. Find out where you stand with the free French level check .
Mobilité Francophone <i>Francophone Mobility Program</i>	An LMIA-exempt work permit for French speakers with a job outside Quebec. It needs NCLC 5 in speaking and listening: see the Mobilité Francophone checklist .
C16	The LMIA exemption code employers use in the Employer Portal for Mobilité Francophone.
LMIA <i>Labour Market Impact Assessment</i>	A document from Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) allowing an employer to hire a foreign worker. Some programs, like C16, are exempt.
Employer Portal	IRCC's online portal where employers submit LMIA-exempt job offers and pay the compliance fee.
FCIP <i>Francophone Community Immigration Pilot</i>	A PR pilot for French speakers with a job offer from a designated employer in one of six Francophone minority communities outside Quebec. It asks for NCLC 5 in all four skills.
CSQ <i>Certificat de sélection du Québec</i>	Quebec's selection certificate. Quebec chooses its own economic immigrants, so it does not use Express Entry.

Official term or forum shorthand?

IRCC's own messages use full phrases like "acknowledgement of receipt" or "request for additional documents". Shorthand such as eAPR, ADR and PPR comes from applicant forums. When you search or ask IRCC through the webform, use the official wording.

Is your French at NCLC 7?

Strong French can add up to 50 CRS points and opens French-speaker draws. Find your level free in 10 questions, then take a full TCF or TEF mock test.

Check my French level free



Scan to open

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