



Canadian Association of
Professional Immigration Consultants

L'Association Canadienne des
Conseillers Professionnels en Immigration

CAPIC's Submission on 2024 Consultations on Economic Priorities for Category-based Selection in Express Entry

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The Canadian Association of Professional Immigration Consultants (CAPIC) is pleased to submit a submission on the matter of [2024 consultations on economic priorities for category-based selection in Express Entry](#) in lieu of filling out the online questionnaire available on the website of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). CAPIC believes that a submission inclusive of analysis based on our members' input and relevant research allows for a more robust response.

The structure of the Submission follows the sequence of the questions in the questionnaire except for **Q18**, which is provided in the paragraph below.

CAPIC authorizes IRCC to publish this written Submission with full attribution in its subsequent reports. All CAPIC submissions are available on the [Advocacy](#) web page of the CAPIC website.

Background

1. About CAPIC

Qs 1 to 5 – Participant's information

CAPIC is a not-for-profit organization, the professional association representing the interests of Canadian immigration and citizenship consultants. The organization advocates for competency, ethical conduct, and consumer protection in the immigration consulting industry. CAPIC's mission is to lead, connect, protect, and develop the profession, serving the best interests of its nearly 5,000 members who are immigration and citizenship consultants including RCICs and RISIAs. It is the only association recognized by the Government of Canada as the voice of Canadian immigration and citizenship consultants.

CAPIC is a major stakeholder consulting with federal and provincial governments and their respective departments on legislation, regulation, policy, and program improvements and changes. As a member-driven organization, CAPIC's membership is limited to authorized representatives who are Canadian citizens or permanent residents. Its headquarters are in Toronto, Ontario, and its staff

members are across Canadian provinces and territories, serving members residing both in and outside of Canada. CAPIC is a bilingual organization and serves its members in both English and French.

2. Economic priorities and possible categories

Qs 6 and 7 – The level of support to use category-based selection in Express Entry to address the following economic priorities

CAPIC supports the use of this approach to address structural (long-term) labour market shortages if its favourable results are supported by well-founded research and studies. CAPIC remains neutral concerning using it to address emerging labour needs and supporting economic growth through Francophone immigration outside Quebec.

The reason for the above, in general, is because of the nature of the objective of this approach to admitting permanent residents who are expected to stay permanently, and permanent economic immigration is not set for admission of temporary residents who “must leave Canada by the end of the period authorized for their stay” pursuant to subsection 29(2) of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, SC 2001, c. 27 (IRPA).

The emerging labour needs may or may not be a trend reflecting the demand of the Canadian labour market. It needs to be analyzed to see whether such needs are temporary or represent a long-term projection. If the former, other temporary approaches may be more appropriate to be adopted to address it. Using a means to admit permanent residents to address short-term labour market needs may bring unintended consequences, e.g., a low retention rate in permanent residents among particular occupations, where high expectations on employment outlook may end up with low employment satisfaction. If the latter, the means may be adopted according to the findings of appropriate research.

The goal of economic growth through Francophone immigration outside Quebec is a goal that can only be achieved through the close collaboration between parties involved including all three levels of governments, communities, local employers, and landed Francophone immigrants. It requires tremendous contribution from receiving regions and communities and dedication and perseverance from the landed Francophone immigrants.

CAPIC reviewed the Policy on Francophone Immigration, the Francophone Immigration Support Program, the Action Plan for Official Languages 2023–2028: Protection-Promotion-Collaboration, and the Welcoming Francophone Communities initiative. The first three are policies and the last one is the list of 14 Francophone-receiving communities across Canada. After an analysis of the policies and the communities, CAPIC has two concerns: (i) Would the cost be too

high and (ii) what are the mechanisms in place to retain the recruited Francophone immigrants?

Based on the immigration targets set out in the [2023 IRCC Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration](#) and the budget in Pillar 1: Francophone Immigration, the Action Plan for Official Languages 2023–2028 (Action Plan 2023-2028: Francophone Immigration: Protection-Promotion-Collaboration), we compiled the table below to get a big picture of the cost.

	Admission number by calculation (base: Economic Class)		Projected cost for this initiative
	Low	High	
2024 (6%)	1,500	1,830	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Francophone immigration policy: \$13.4 million • Targeted expansion of promotion and recruitment support: \$18.5 million • Corridor for the selection and retention of French teachers in Canada: \$16.3 million • A strengthened integration pathway: \$50 million • A Centre for Innovation in Francophone Immigration, including a new grant-and-contribution program in support of Francophone immigration: \$25 million • Francophone lens integrated into economic immigration programs - improved selection mechanisms for Francophone and bilingual immigrants: \$3.5 million • Helping newcomers learn English and/or French: \$10.5 million
2025 (7%)	1,855	2,282	
2026 (8%)	1,855	2,282	

Total	5,210	6,394	\$ 137.2 million
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Note: We assume that the plans for 2027 and 2028 are the same as those of 2026 to project the total number for a five-year period. They would be 8,920 for the low and 10,958 for the high.

It shows the cost is high. The 14 receiving communities, other than Hamilton, Southwest Central and Sudbury in Ontario, Calgary in Alberta, and Prince George in British Columbia, have a rather modest population and thus their support and integration capacity would be limited. CAPIC has concerns about the retention capacity of these small remote communities and believes measures/programs would have to be in place to support retention for French newcomers.

Q8 - Alternative economic priorities in 2025 for EE category-based selection

CAPIC submits that the Canadian Occupational Projection System ([COPS](#)) developed by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), a suite of models produced to project labour demand and identify labour shortages, is a reliable reference when reviewing the EE category-based selection. It also applies to alternative economic priorities in 2025 and the years to come.

Qs 9 to 10 – Addressing structural (long-term) labour market shortages

For **Q9**, CAPIC’s feedback and observations are as follows:

First, CAPIC recommends using the projection of labour shortages in the long term in COPS as a barometer to set up the occupations for the EE category-based selection in 2025.

Second, CAPIC would like to bring one thing to IRCC’s attention. While the STEM occupations identified to be in shortage for the period of 2022 to 2031 in COPS correspond to those in the eligible STEM occupations for category-based selection, our members brought forth a concern: Some local labour markets show an oversupply of STEM immigrants. The result is that some of them join the rank of unemployed or have not been able to obtain employment in their field. Due to the limited time before the deadline for this Submission, which does not afford CAPIC time for research on this phenomenon, we are not able to explain the disparity; however, it was felt this anomaly was worth noting.

Third, while healthcare professionals are in demand, credential recognition for foreign-trained healthcare professionals is running behind. CAPIC does not support a lower threshold to fast-track credential recognition for these workers,

as it concerns the health and life of Canadians in their care. However, CAPIC believes there should be an intergovernmental collaboration to develop certain programs to gain sufficient Canadian standards or obtain credential recognition in their profession in a timely manner.

For **Q9a**, CAPIC suggests focusing on a mix of skilled workers already in Canada and outside Canada with Canadian work experience or education as a selection factor. The distribution of invitations extended to the ones in or outside Canada is not necessarily to be even.

First, this approach may ease the pressure on the permanent resident admission for foreign nationals in Canada. In 2023, the number of temporary residents was close to 2.5 million. This year, IRCC announced a [cap](#) on new international students. Starting 2024, the admission of international students and foreign workers will be part of the IRCC annual report to Parliament. IRCC aims to [reduce](#) the admission of temporary residents over the next three years. The number and measures taken show the pressure on the permanent resident admission for foreign nationals in Canada.

Second, expanding pathways to permanent residence for international students and temporary foreign workers through the EE is among the commitments in the IRCC Minister [mandate letter](#). Temporary residents who are students and workers not only have legal status but also contribute to the Canadian economy and communities. If they are EE candidates and still do not have a pathway to permanent residence, it generally means that they do not have a Comprehensive Ranking System score high enough to be invited to apply.

Third, inviting skilled workers who reside outside Canada but whom already have Canadian work experience or education is necessary because it clearly separates the line between temporary and permanent residence. It may help reduce the overstay of some temporary residents, which has been an issue plaguing the integrity of the Canadian immigration system. This has become a concern given the recent changes in post-graduation work permit eligibility and reduced paths for students. Those who have been educated and worked inside Canada and who subsequently leave would have enhanced opportunities for an ITA via Express Entry. This approach shows the value of Canadian work experience or education while also sending a clear message to temporary residents that their lawful departure from Canada may aid their chance of moving to Canada permanently.

To answer **Q9b**, the reason for the above suggestion, CAPIC selects “education and/or work experience in Canada” and “recognizing the contributions made by those already in Canada” on the list as the top reasons. We regard the length of Canadian education and work experience, especially the latter, as contributing

factors for integration. Such factors and life experience go hand in hand. Again, physical presence in Canada at the time of ITA issuance is not required.

Because paragraph 10.3(1) (h.2) of IRPA does not restrict the establishment of categories to occupations, CAPIC has further explored the potential categories.

CAPIC considers that the combination of foreign and Canadian work experience could be a favourable factor for establishment in Canada. If a foreign worker has at least five years of combined qualified foreign and Canadian work experience, likely, they are experienced workers in their field. If they have been working in Canada full time or in equivalent with authorization for at least two years in qualified occupations, their steady employment in Canada suffices to be an indicator to show that they are an asset to the Canadian workforce. This would largely assist them in their integration and thus their permanent stay is highly likely.

CAPIC also suggests considering an entrepreneurial experience-based selection, which is based on the manager-owner experience of EE candidates. The operational capacity of the [two business immigration classes](#) has been largely shrunk since April 30, 2024. The intake of the Self-Employed Person is paused until the end of 2026. A cap is placed on the number of start-ups to support by the Start-up Visa designated organizations. However, entrepreneurial skills are critical to economic growth. Creating a pathway for EE candidates who are foreign entrepreneurs may be a contributing factor to the Canadian economy.

Q10 – The level of need for category-based selection in EE to address the labour needs in teacher and childhood educator occupations

Concerning teachers, in the 2021 National Occupational Classification (2021 NOC), 16 NOCs are classified as [teacher](#) occupations.

Q10b listed six such occupations:

- NOC 41221 - Elementary school and kindergarten teachers,
- NOC 43100 - Elementary and secondary school teacher assistants,
- NOC 41220 – Secondary school teacher,
- NOC 42202 - Early childhood educators and assistants,
- NOC 41320 - Educational counsellors, and
- NOC 42203 - Instructors of persons with disabilities.

CAPIC again reviewed the COPS and found the last two occupations are expected to be in shortage from 2022 to 203.

CAPIC also examined the projected cumulative job openings and job seekers over the period of 2022-2031 from the COPS for NOC 41221, 43100, 42202, and Job Bank labour market information for NOC 41220, which are as follows:

NOC	Projected job opening	Projected job seekers
41221	121,100	105,700
43100	35,300	31,600
42202	108,800	91,500
41220	52,100	47,800
Note: The NOCs in NOC 2016 correspond to the above 2021 NOCs.		

The conclusion drawn by ESDC is that job seekers are expected to be available to fill them. CAPIC agrees with ESDC's expertise in projections on the Canadian labour market. Therefore, the gaps between the projected job opening and job seekers for the occupations of child educators listed in the table above can be well addressed by domestic supplies.

In short, EE occupation-based selection may apply the two identified teacher occupations expected in shortage by the COPS.

3. Supporting economic growth through Francophone immigration outside Quebec

Q11 has some overlap with Qs 6 and 7. Please refer to CAPIC's feedback on Qs 6 and 7 for supporting economic growth through Francophone immigration outside Quebec.

CAPIC considers the test results that show a minimum score of 7 in all 4 language abilities on the Niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens is greatly needed. In addition, for Francophones to be successfully established outside Quebec, knowledge of the English language level is also necessary.

4. Addressing emerging labour needs

This section addresses **Qs 12 to 15**.

It needs to be prudent to consider using EE category-based selection to address emerging labour needs before the nature of such needs has been identified as structural through adequate research.

Immigration is planned forward-looking for three years. The COPS explores the labour market outlook from 2022 to 2031. The occupations that are expected to experience labour shortage for the period of 2022 to 2031 are identified in the COPS. Unless emerging labour needs that are not identified in COPS are new to the Canadian labour market, e.g., an emerging field that requires a new skill set, COPS is a reliable source to measure if a shortage is structural or frictional/cyclical. This applies to the occupations in the sectors identified in **Q12**.

Qs 13 and 14 are about addressing emerging labour needs. If such needs are structural, CAPIC suggests the same approach recommended for the answer to Q9.

For **Q15**, CAPIC would like to bring one concern brought up by members to IRCC's attention: Generally, post-graduation work permit holders are paid lower than the prevailing market wages, which can cause difficulty for Canadian youth in finding employment.

5. Feedback on the survey process

This section addresses **Qs 16 to 17**.

As a professional association, other ways to engage CAPIC can be through other means, i.e., virtual and in-person meetings, emails, consultative sessions, and submissions, often instead of a survey. That is why CAPIC submits a submission in lieu of completing the online survey.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and analysis in the background section, CAPIC recommends creating two category-base selections for temporary residents with a suggested framework of standards for IRCC's consideration:

1. Qualified work experience category:
 - Stream A - Foreign and Canadian work experience category: A combination of at least five-year work experience for which a minimum of two-year must be Canadian work experience in the past 10 years.
 - Stream B – Entrepreneurial work experience category: At least five years of entrepreneurial work experience as an owner-manager with at least 51% ownership in their business in the past ten years. The applicant must have been actively running the business. The business must be successful with a workforce of at least 10 full-time or equivalent employees in addition to the applicant. The employees

cannot be the applicant's immediate and extended family members, nor can they hold 10% or more of the shares of the business.

2. International graduate category:

- Stream A – Master and doctorate graduates with Canadian work experience: This is for international students who obtained a Canadian master's or Ph.D. degree with at least one year of Canadian work experience in the past five years.
- Stream B – International graduates with Canadian work experience: This is for current or past post-graduation work permit holders who have three years of work experience in the past five years. At least two years of work experience must be Canadian work experience.

Conclusion

CAPIC thanks IRCC for the opportunity to provide input on the category-based EE selection.

CAPIC is a recognized leader and voice in the Canadian immigration consulting sector. We are willing and able to assist IRCC in bringing forth effective solutions to current and potential immigration issues.

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