

E-PETITION TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

Petition to Address the Worsening Crisis in Permanent Residence Processing Delays

TO THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA AND THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED:

WHEREAS:

- Thousands of Permanent Residence (PR) applicants are experiencing extreme delays in security screening, with many cases exceeding 30-40 months — far beyond published service standards;
- As of November 30, 2025, according to official IRCC statistics [1], Canada's immigration system holds **2,130,700 total applications**, with **1,005,800 (47%) in backlog** exceeding service standards — more than double IRCC's stated 20% target;
- For Permanent Residence applications specifically, **the majority are delayed**: of 941,600 total PR applications, only 426,600 (45%) are within service standards while **515,000 (55%) are in backlog** [1];
- **THE CRISIS IS WORSENING, NOT IMPROVING**: IRCC's own historical data [1] shows that Provincial Nominee Program (Express Entry) backlogs **reached the 20% target by mid-2023**, proving the system can work — yet by November 2025 the backlog has **climbed to 53%**, with government projections showing it will reach **56% by January 2026** — a complete system collapse in just 18 months;
- Despite government initiatives to improve security screening automation [2], the backlog has not only failed to improve but has **worsened dramatically**, demonstrating failure of promised reforms;
- These extreme delays — often **30-40 months or more** beyond published service standards — cause severe and documented harm to applicants and their families, including: **prolonged family separation** (parents unable to reunite with children, spouses living apart for years), **mental health crises** from years of uncertainty with no end date or communication, **loss of legal status and work authorization** leaving families unable to support themselves, **denial of healthcare access** under provincial health systems, **lost career opportunities** and professional stagnation, and **catastrophic financial burdens** including \$130,000-\$200,000 in excess international education costs for families with children, mounting legal fees, and inability to sponsor family members [3];
- Current processing times of "months, even years" beyond service standards violate applicants' rights to timely administrative decisions as established in Canadian administrative law, and create a **discriminatory two-tier immigration system** where certain applicants — disproportionately from specific countries of origin — face indefinite delays while others from different backgrounds are processed within normal timeframes [4];
- Applicants have no access to transparent information about their cases, no meaningful recourse when service standards are violated by 300-500%, and no compensation for the financial and emotional harm caused by government failures that have been documented but not addressed [5];

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, residents of Canada, call upon the Government of Canada and the House of Commons to implement a comprehensive three-pillar solution:

PILLAR 1: IMMEDIATE CRISIS RESOLUTION

1. Immediately Address the Backlog Crisis: Allocate emergency resources to immediately begin addressing the 515,000 PR applications in backlog,

prioritizing cases that have completed CSIS screening and have been delayed beyond service standards. The government achieved a 20% backlog level in 2023, proving the system CAN work with proper resources—yet allowed it to deteriorate to 55% in just 18 months. Immediate action is needed to reverse this worsening trend;

2. Immediately Expedite Low-Risk Cases That Have Completed CSIS Screening: For applicants who have successfully completed CSIS security screening and whose CBSA security screening has exceeded published service standards, immediately expedite final processing to completion within 30 days, recognizing that the primary national security concerns have already been addressed and further delays are unjustifiable;

PILLAR 2: SYSTEMIC JUSTICE & TRANSPARENCY

3. Ensure Equal Treatment Regardless of Country of Origin: Immediately end discriminatory processing practices by conducting an independent audit of security screening processing times by country of origin, implementing corrective measures within 90 days to eliminate identified disparities, and publishing quarterly reports to Parliament on processing times broken down by applicant nationality to ensure ongoing accountability;

4. Provide Transparency and Communication: Require IRCC, CSIS, and CBSA to provide proactive case updates every 90 days, including which agency is processing the file, what stage the case is at, and estimated completion timelines;

5. Create Independent Oversight: Establish an independent immigration ombudsperson with authority to investigate IRCC processing delays and compel responses to applicant complaints; and create an independent oversight body for CBSA immigration security screening (equivalent to NSIRA's oversight of CSIS) with authority to investigate delays, compel agencies to explain processing failures, and order expedited processing for cases with demonstrated hardship;

6. Implement Interim Relief Measures: For applicants waiting beyond 200% of service standards, immediately grant: (a) open work permits valid until final decision, (b) ability to sponsor immediate family members, and (c) temporary status documents to prevent life disruption;

PILLAR 3: ENFORCEMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

7. Establish Parliamentary Oversight with Consequences: Require the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada to appear before the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration quarterly to answer specific questions on: (a) security screening backlogs and why they continue to worsen despite promised reforms, (b) processing time disparities by country of origin with plans to eliminate discrimination, (c) resource allocation and why automation investments have failed to improve outcomes; and mandate that if backlog levels exceed 30% or processing disparities by country are not reduced by 50% within 12 months, the Minister must table an emergency action plan with dedicated funding to Parliament for approval;

8. Establish Mandatory Service Standards with Consequences: Implement enforceable service standards with automatic escalation and ministerial review for any case exceeding service standards by more than 100%.

CONCLUSION

This comprehensive three-pillar solution addresses a worsening crisis that is documented in the government's own official data and independent oversight reports. The evidence is undeniable:

The system is collapsing: IRCC's own statistics show permanent residence backlogs have deteriorated from the 20% target achieved in 2023 to 55% in November 2025, with projections reaching 56% by January 2026 — proving the system CAN work but is currently failing due to inadequate resources and accountability.

Discrimination is documented: Official NSIRA investigations, Auditor General reports, and Federal Court cases confirm that applicants from certain countries face discriminatory delays, with security screening criteria found "not justifiable on security grounds" and processing disparities documented across seven of eight PR programs.

Families are suffering with no recourse: Applicants endure 30-40+ month delays causing family separation, mental health crises, and financial losses of \$130,000-\$200,000, yet have no access to transparent case information, no independent ombudsman to investigate delays, and no compensation for documented harm.

Promised reforms have failed: Despite government automation initiatives and repeated commitments to improve security screening, backlogs have worsened dramatically, demonstrating that voluntary measures are insufficient and enforceable standards with consequences are required.

The three-pillar solution presented in this petition — immediate crisis resolution, systemic justice and transparency, and enforcement with accountability — provides Parliament with a comprehensive, evidence-based roadmap to restore fairness, dignity, and Canada's international reputation as a nation that values timely, equitable, and humane immigration processing.

We call on Parliament to act immediately. Thousands of families cannot wait another year while the crisis worsens.

REFERENCES

[1] Canada. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. "Understanding IRCC's application inventories." Government of Canada, November 30, 2025.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/reports-statistics/statistics-open-data/immigration-stats/application-inventory.html>

[2] Canada Border Services Agency. "Departmental Plan 2023-2024: Security Screening Programs." Government of Canada, 2023.

<https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/agency-agence/reports-rapports/rpp/2023-2024/intro-eng.html>

[3] Documented impacts of processing delays based on applicant cases and immigration legal practice.

[4] Discrimination in immigration security screening is documented in multiple official government reports: NSIRA Investigation (2022), NSIRA Annual Report 2024, Auditor General Report (October 2023), Federal Court Jurisprudence, and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Section 15 - Equality Rights).

See: <https://nsira-ossnr.gc.ca/en/investigations/investigation-summaries/allegations-against-csis-immigration-refugees-and-citizenship-canada-the-canada-border-services-agency-and-public-safety-canada-in-relation-to-their-role-in-processing-immigration-applications/>

[5] The lack of transparency, recourse, and compensation for immigration processing delays is documented in official government sources including CSIS policies, Information Commissioner reports, Parliamentary committee records, and Federal Court cases.