

## Letter of Transmission

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March 26, 2022

Sean Simon Andrew Fraser  
the Minister of Immigration  
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada  
235 Queen St #005, Ottawa, ON K1A 0H5

Hello Minister Fraser,

This is a report on recommendations to speed up the processing of FSW-inland applications.

Thank you for your encouragement and cooperation with me in proposing research on this topic.

In the report, the characteristics of the FSW-inland population are described in detail before starting to research the problem and purpose. Besides analyzing the 183 questionnaires, various notices and public reports issued by the IRCC are considered, which supports the conclusion that is drawn after fully collecting and researching relevant data.

Thank you for reading this report and please feel free to contact me through my email at [carol20@student.ubc.ca](mailto:carol20@student.ubc.ca) if you have any questions. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

*Carol Li*

Carol Li

# Recommendations of Expediting FSW-inland applications

for  
Sean Simon Andrew Fraser  
the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship  
Ottawa, ON

by  
Carol Li  
Student ENGL 301

March 26, 2022

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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### **Abstract**

The recommendation of expediting the FSW-inland applications is based on the current backlog data published by IRCC and some suggestions from applicants.

The processing time is related to all aspects of applicants' life, including studying, working, and life in Canada. The extension of the waiting period has caused more inconvenience to many FSW applicants in Canada. According to the results of the questionnaire, this report summarizes four reasons and puts forward some feasible solutions to them. The measurements are as follows:

- separating inland and outland applicants who fall under the FSW category and prioritizing inland ones.
- reviewing the cases in chronological order.
- necessary staffing changes and increasing employment.
- improving outdated processing systems.

## **1 Introduction**

### **A. Background on FSW-inland applicants**

Federal Skilled Worker (FSW) is a category of Express Entry, and “this program is for skilled workers with foreign work experience who want to immigrate to Canada permanently” (IRCC). Although it is foreign work experience category, many applicants are in Canada. So, we called these applicants “FSW-inland”.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020, the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has reduced staff at the office and transitioned into the mode of working from home. The shortage of financial support and staff leads to massive application backlogs and delays, especially the application of the Federal Skill Worker (FSW) category. According to data received from IRCC, Canada had a backlog of 1.84 million immigration applications as of mid-March 2022, including 453,265 permanent residence applications where about 42,000 FSW applicants fall under (Kareem E.A. & Shelby T.). “A recent memo from IRCC indicated that the processing time for FSW applications was 20.5 months as of November 2021. This is expected to increase in 2022 to a whopping 36 months (Lauren B.).”

In comparison, the processing time of some categories has been speeding up, such as the Canadian Experience Class (CEC) and IRCC explains that those applicants are working in Canada so they should be prioritized. The current average processing time for the CEC is about 8 months(Kareem E.A.). However, many applicants who fall under the category of FSW are also staying in Canada, working hard to contribute to the recovery of the Canadian economy. The situation of FSW applicants and the lengthy waiting period have significantly affected thousands of lives in Canada.

**B. Purpose of this report**

It is hoped that through this report, IRCC can understand the plight of applicants in the long waiting period, and adopt various means to speed up the processing of FSW-inland.

**C. Method of Inquiry**

One hundred and eighty-three applicants of FSW-inland responded to a short survey designed to analyze the impact of FSW-inland application delays on them, the problems encountered when contacting IRCC, and provide some solutions for improving the speed of FSW-inland application based on this. In addition, the data was also collected through reading the IRCC official website and relevant news reports to assess the current delay in the processing of FSW-inland applications and the feasibility of increasing the speed.

**D. Statement of the problem**

IRCC asserted that the huge delay was resulted from the pandemic and is prioritizing those applicants who are working in Canada so the CEC applicants, vulnerable Afghans, and parents sponsorship applicants are selected and prioritized (Claire MacLean, Azra Alagic). This situation put FSW applicants who are also working in Canada into a dilemma as they feel stuck in limbo and left out. It keeps families apart, makes applicants lose jobs, and forces them to be paralyzed in their lives seeing no future. If IRCC could give attention to this fact, and reconsiders policies to solve this problem, we can help restore the credibility of government departments and enable these applicants to start a new life in Canada.

**E. Scope of this inquiry**

To assess the viability of the proposed program, five survey areas covered the following: IRCC's process for reviewing immigration cases; average time for IRCC staff to review cases; length of

time applicants waited for a response from IRCC customer service; satisfaction with the current application system and suggestions for improvement ; The impact of current processing delays on applicants.

## **2 Collected Data**

### **A. Surveys completed by applicants**

In order to determine the current situation of FSW-inland applicants, a ten-question questionnaire, including 10 multiple-choice questions was made. Social media platforms were used to spread the questionnaire.

There were 183 responses in total, highlighting four themes: a. Waiting time after application; b. the IRCC's response time during the waiting period; c. the impact of the long waiting period on applicants' life; d. applicant's attitude towards the current application system.

#### **a. Waiting time**

According to the first question: How many months has your application been processed since you received an Acknowledgement of Receipt (AOR)? (as of February 2022)

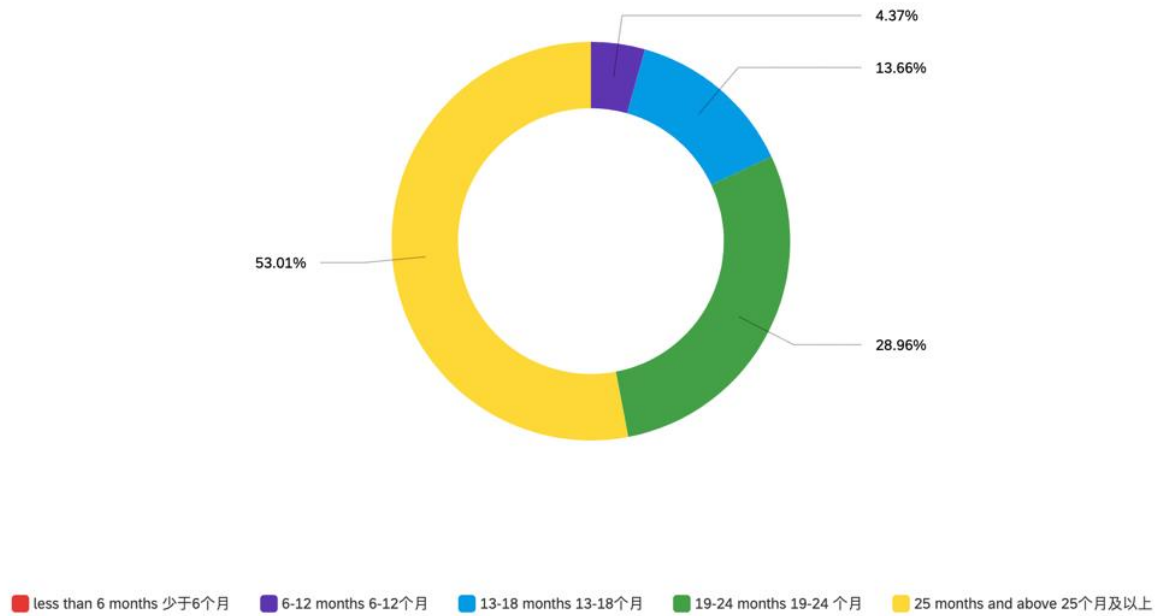


Figure 1: Waiting time for FSW-inland applicants

No one's waiting period is less than 6 months, and only 4.37% of applicants have waited for 6 - 12 months. In comparison, applicants that have waited for 13 – 18 months account for 13.66%, applicants who have waited 19 – 24 months are 28.96%, and more than half of applicants have waited 25 months or more.

From the data above, it's easy to understand that most FSW-inland applicants have waited for a long time, and this timeline is almost in sync with Covid, so we can say that since the Covid epidemic started, the processing of the FSW category has been suspended and has not yet fully started.



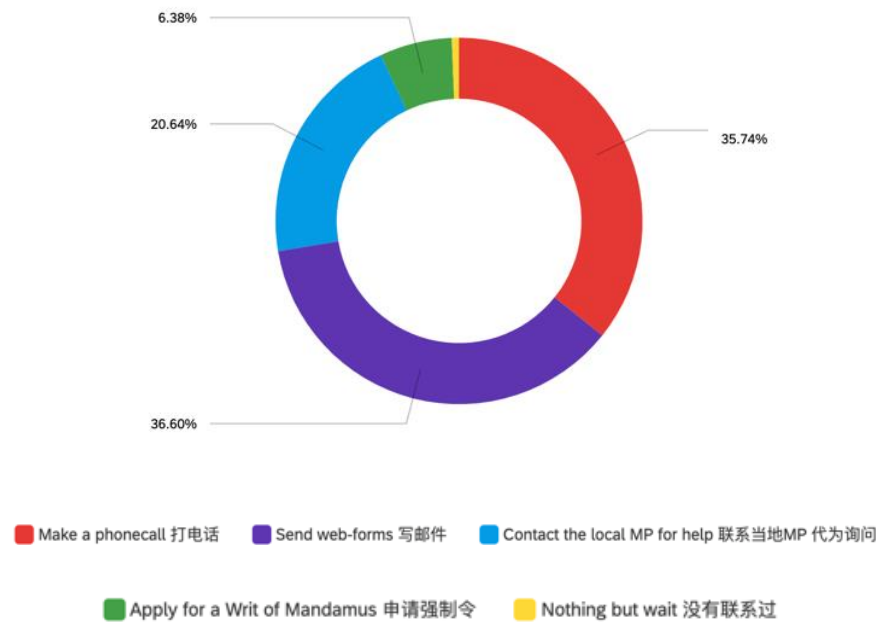
**b. The convenience of contacting IRCC**

Figure 2: Ways to try to contact IRCC

Figure two demonstrates that 99% of applicants attempted to contact IRCC using multiple methods: phone calls and emails are the most common. Questions 3 – 5 demonstrate the ineffectiveness of both methods.

Question 3 is “When you call IRCC to inquire about the progress of your application, how many times do you dial to access it?” From the figure below we can see that nearly 50% of the applicants need to make more than 9 phone calls to get through, and only less than 1% of the applicants can be connected in 1 or 2 times phone calls.

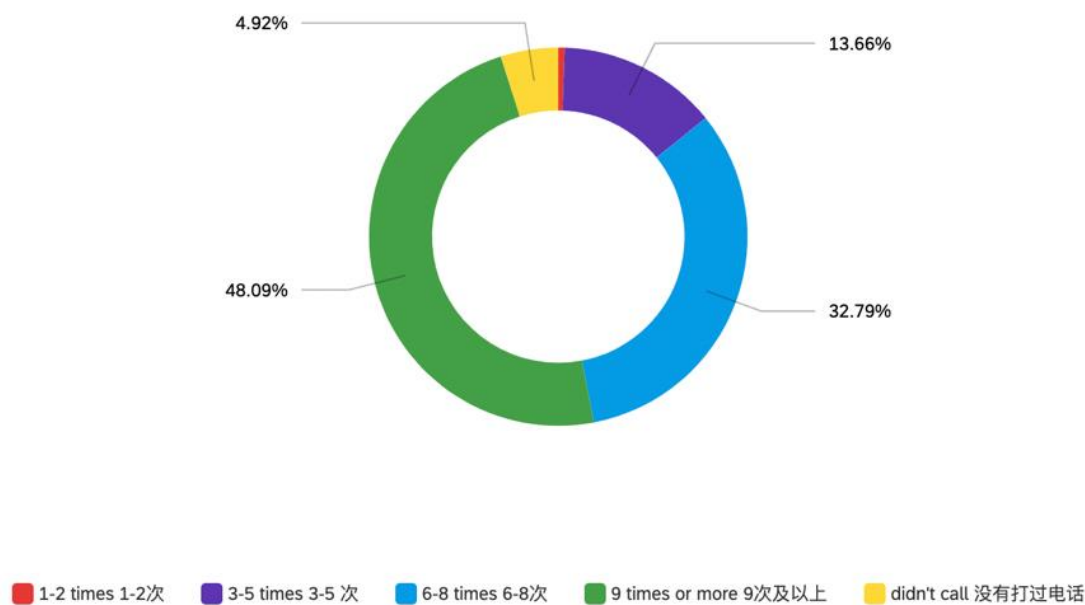


Figure 3: Number of calls to be made by the access liaison

But, being connected doesn't mean that you get the chance to talk to the operator. In fact, you still need to wait for someone to pick up your phone. And this waiting period we can get from the figure below. Less than 30 min accounts for only 4.37%, which means that's almost impossible. About 23% of applicants need to wait 30-60 min, and over 75% of applicants wait 60–120 min even more than 120 min.

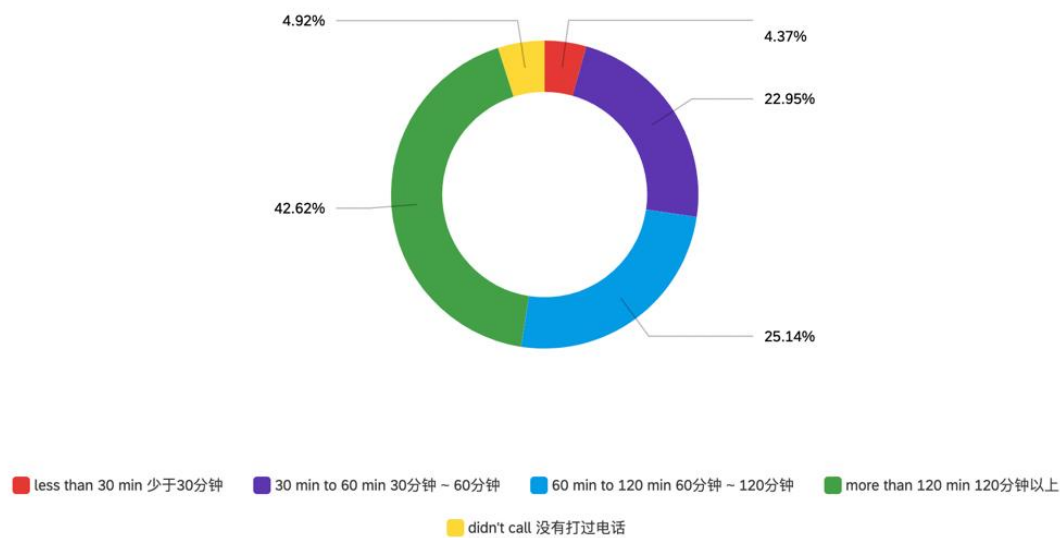


Figure 4: The waiting time for the access liaison

From the above data and analysis, we can tell that contacting IRCC is not an easy task. Applicants need to make multiple calls and wait 1-2 hours each time to ask questions about their cases.

c. The impact of the long waiting period

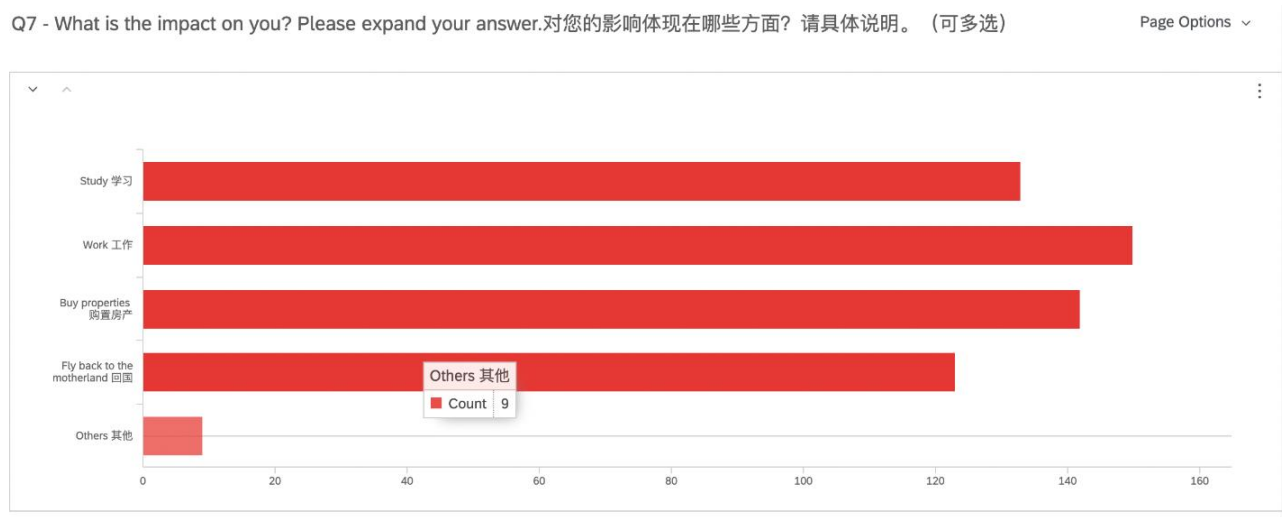


Figure 5: The impact of the long waiting period

According to the 557 answers, about a quarter said that the prolonged waiting time has a negative impact on the purchase of real estate and settling in Canada. A half think that it has also made it difficult for them to find a job or their studying at school, and 123 people said that it makes it difficult for them to return to their motherland. Besides, someone may also encounter the problem of extending their visas or replacing them with new ones, which is again caused by the long waiting period given by IRCC.

#### d. Satisfaction with the current application system

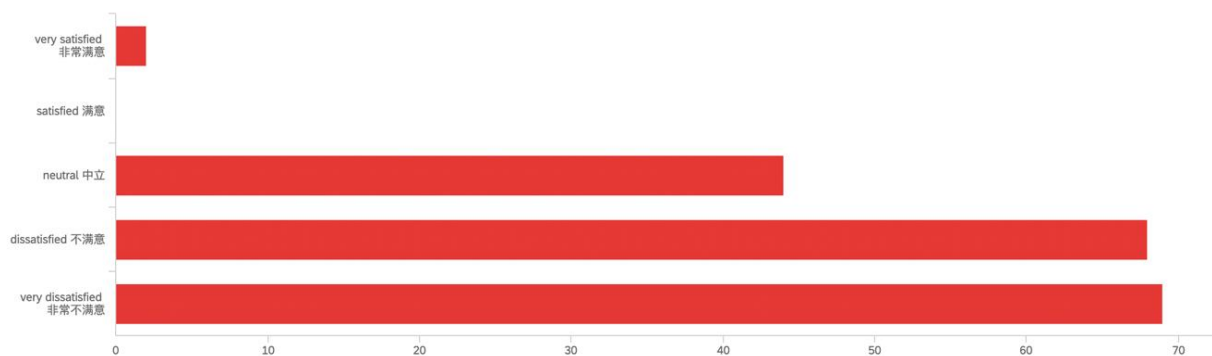


Figure 6: Satisfaction with the current application system

Regarding the applicant's satisfaction survey on the existing application system, only two were satisfied, and the remaining 137 participants were all dissatisfied. The current system is not very satisfactory in the minds of applicants.

### B. Improvement measures

Based on the feedback from the questionnaire, the following four measures are proposed:

#### a. Refinement classification

Separate and prioritize FSW-inland applications. According to the questionnaire, a total of 137 FSW-inland applicants participated, so we can infer that conclude that many FSW applicants are in Canada. They are working very hard to help this country recover from the pandemic, and some of them are facing difficulties in life, because of the long waiting period. Therefore, this paper recommends reconsidering the classification of FSW, according to whether the applicant is in Canada, and dividing the category into FSW-inland and FSW-outland, so that the impact of Covid on FSW-inland applicants can be excluded, and the applicant's situation in Canada will be given priority during the process.

**b. Review in chronological order**

According to the data published by IRCC, the FSW applicants who have been waiting for more than 25 months are 33% (15,000 divided by 45,000). However, the number coming from my questionnaire is around 53%, far higher than the official result. It proves that the current processing logic is not based on chronological order, which caused many applicants to wait too long. Therefore, it is more reasonable to conduct processing in chronological order.

**c. Recruit more staff**

Recruiting more trial staff is also one of the ways to speed up the trial. In March 2021, in order to speed up the processing of the family reunification immigration category, IRCC recruited 62 staff as reinforcements (Shelby T.). The current delay of FSW cases is too long, and IRCC is advised to adjust its focus, deploy additional staff to handle FSW cases, and hire more staff to handle updates and respond to requests for information.

**d. Optimize the application system**

Regarding the applicant's satisfaction survey on the existing application system, it is not difficult to see that the main dissatisfaction is concentrated in “The operation is complex and difficult to apply and query” and “Incomplete information and slow update of the individual application process”, with 38.75% and 47.29% respectively, as shown in the figure below. It is suggested that the technology could be improved, and its operations digitized while giving applicants more access to see how their cases are being handled.

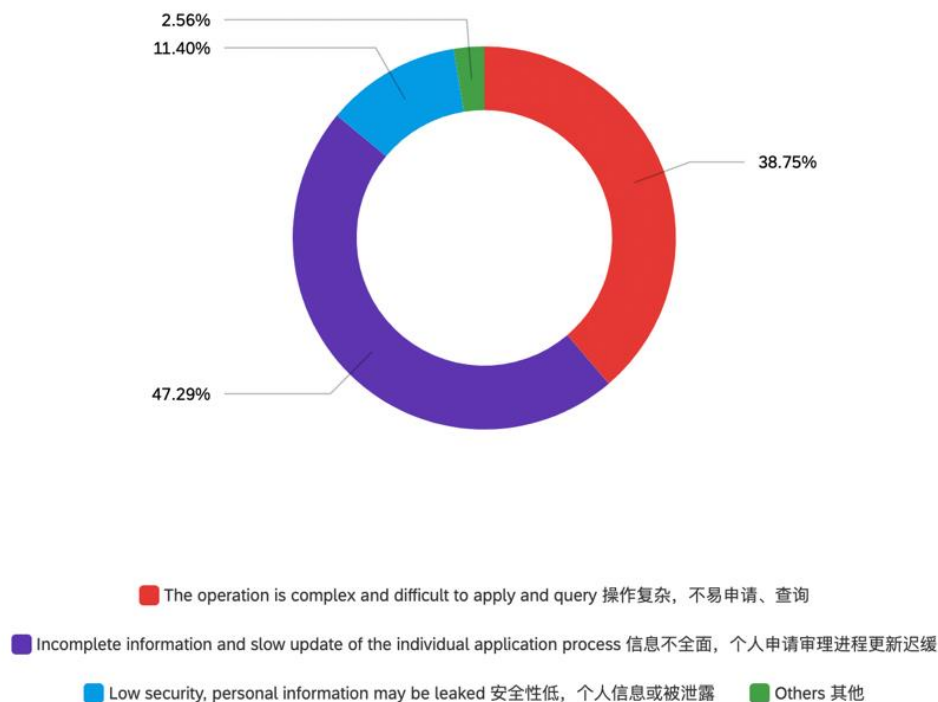


Figure 7: Upgradable directions for existing systems

### 3 Conclusion

#### A. Summary and interpretation of findings

The primary data collected via the survey demonstrates the significance of the backlog of cases in the FSW category and suggests 4 areas ready for improvements: 1) shortening the wait times, 2) improving communications between applicants and agents, 3) decreasing negative impacts on applicants (financial, social, educational) and 4) upgrading technology.

#### B. Future recommendations

According to the above survey and analysis results, the delay can be improved by three complementary phases: 1) separating inland and outland applicants who fall under the FSW

category and prioritizing inland ones, 2) review in chronological order, 3) necessary staffing changes and increasing employment, 4) improving outdated processing technologies.

### Appendix

I am an undergraduate student at UBC engaged in a technical writing project. The purpose of this survey is to obtain primary data for analysis and investigation that aims to provide recommendations for expediting FSW-inland applications. The final formal report will be addressed to Sean Simon Andrew Fraser, the Minister of Immigration.

Together with the reports available from the IRCC website, the data I gather from this survey will serve the ultimate purpose of providing recommendations for expediting FSW-inland applications. The survey contains 10 multiple-choice questions, and it should take about 3 minutes of your time. Your responses are voluntary and anonymous. Thank you, I appreciate your generous participation in my survey.

您好，我是一名 UBC 的学生，正在参与一个技术写作项目。本次调查的目的是获取初步数据，以便进行分析和调查，为推动 FSW 申请审理提供建议。最终正式报告将提交给移民部长肖恩·西蒙·安德鲁·弗雷泽。

这项调查包含 10 道选择题，大约需要 3 分钟的时间。您的回答是自愿和匿名的，非常感谢您参与我的调查。

1. How many months has your application been processed since you received an Acknowledgement of Receipt (AOR)? (as of February 2022)

从申请 AOR 后，你的申请审理时间有多少个月？（截至 2022 年 2 月）

A less than 6 months 少于 6 个月

B 6-12 months 6-12 个月

C 13-18 months 13-18 个月



D 19-24 months 19-24 个月

E 25 months and above 25 个月及以上

2. During this period, what methods did you try to contact IRCC to ask for updates?

在此期间，你尝试了哪些方法联系 IRCC 询问审理相关信息？

A Make a phonecall 打电话

B Send webforms 发 Webform

C Contact the local MP for help 联系当地 MP 代为询问

D. Apply for a Writ of Mandamus 申请强制令

E Nothing but wait 没有联系过

3. When you call IRCC to inquire about the progress of your application, how many times do you dial to access it?

当你打电话给 IRCC 询问个人申请进度时，平均拨打几次电话才能接入？

A 1-2 times 1-2 次

B 3-5 times 3-5 次

C 6-8 times 6-8 次

D 9 times or more 9 次及以上

E didn't call 没有打过电话

4. After the phone is connected, how long does it take on average to connect to an operator?

电话接通后，平均要等待多长时间才能连线到接线员？

A less than 30min 少于 30 分钟

B 30min to 60min 30 分钟 ~ 60 分钟

C 60min to 120min 60 分钟 ~ 120 分钟

D more than 120min 120 分钟以上

E didn't call 没有打过电话

5. How long will you wait to get a response after sending a web form?

当你给 IRCC 发 Webform 咨询后，大概多久会收到回复？

A within 3 days 3 天内

B 4-7 days 4-7 天

C 8-14 days 8-14 天

D 15 days and above 15 天及以上

E Never sent a webform 没有发过邮件

6. The long waiting time has what level of negative impact on your study, work, and life?

目前申请等待时间延长，对你学习、工作、生活的影响：

A Extremely negative impact 非常消极的影响

B Somewhat negative impact 轻微消极的影响

C Neither positive nor negative impact 没有影响

D Somewhat positive impact 轻微积极的影响

E Extremely positive impact 非常积极的影响

7. What is the impact on you? Please expand your answer.

对您的影响体现在哪些方面？

A Study 学习

B Work 工作

C Buy properties 购置房产

D Fly back to the motherland 回国

E Others 其他

8. Are you satisfied with the current application system?

您对目前的申请系统是否满意?

A very satisfied 非常满意

B satisfied 满意

C neutral 中立

D dissatisfied 不满意

E very dissatisfied 非常不满意

9. What aspects of the current application system are you satisfied with?

您对目前的申请系统的哪些方面表示满意?

A The operation is simple and easy to apply and query 操作简便, 易于申请、查询

B The information is comprehensive and the process of individual application hearing is clear  
信息全面, 个人申请审理进程清晰

C High security and complete protection of personal information 安全性高, 个人信息保护完好

D Others 其他

10. What aspects of the current application system are you dissatisfied with?

您对目前的申请系统的哪些方面表示不满意?

A The operation is complex and difficult to apply and query 操作复杂, 不易申请、查询

B Incomplete information and slow update of the individual application process 信息不全面，

个人申请审理进程更新迟缓

C Low security, personal information may be leaked 安全性低，个人信息或被泄露

D Others 其他

Link: [https://ubc.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_50lfmYnhChimbvE](https://ubc.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_50lfmYnhChimbvE)

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