

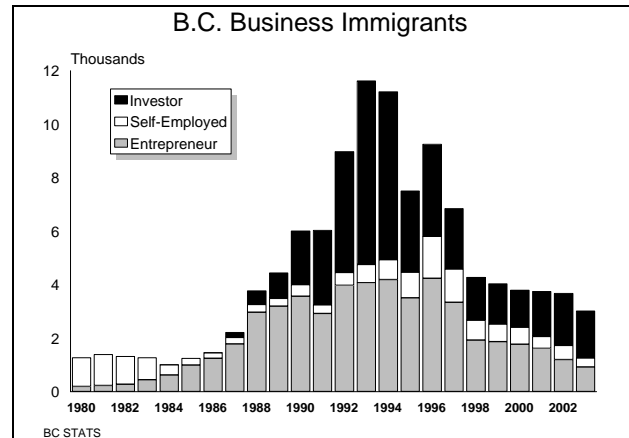
SPECIAL FEATURE: BUSINESS IMMIGRANTS TO BRITISH COLUMBIA

One of the major objectives of the business immigration program is to stimulate economic growth in Canada by attracting experienced business people and investment capital. Business immigrants can be divided into three main classes, namely, the Entrepreneur Class, the Investor Class and the Self-employed Class. Entrepreneur immigrants are admitted under the condition that they will establish or purchase a substantial business in Canada and thereby create or maintain jobs for Canadian citizens. Investor immigrants, on the other hand, commit a fixed sum of money to invest in some economic activities in Canada that are recognized by the government authorities. Self-employed immigrants are those who must have experience in cultural activities, athletics or farm management with the intention and ability to work for themselves in Canada in their relevant field.

B.C. has always been one of the most favoured province for business immigrants, especially those in the Investor Class. The province has been able to attract a much higher proportion of immigrants in the business classes compared to all other classes of immigrants coming to Canada. Since the inception of the Investor Immigration Program in 1986, approximately 91,000 investor immigrants (and their dependents) arrived in Canada by the end of 2003. Of those, nearly half (47%) reported B.C. as their intended province of destination. Also, over the same period, there were about 174,000 entrepreneur immigrants and 46,000 self-employed immigrants who arrived in Canada, and B.C.'s share was 28 and 23 per cent, respectively.

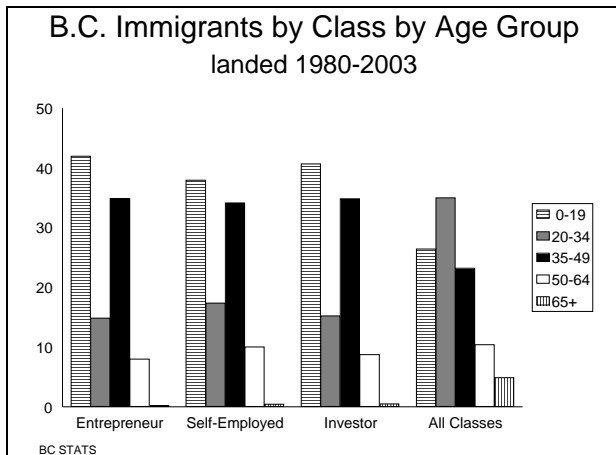
The number of business immigrants coming to Canada and B.C. has shown a declining trend in recent years. The highest influx of business immigrants was seen around the early and mid ninety's and started to taper off after 1997. At the same time, the overall immigrant landings

in B.C. have also been showing a declining trend in recent years. Also, the share of business immigrants in the total B.C. landings had dropped sharply during the mid ninety's. This was largely a result of the reduction in business and other immigrants coming from Hong Kong after its political transition in 1997.

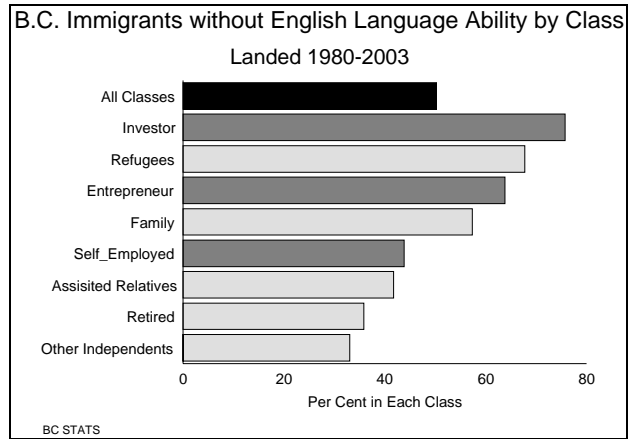


Most business immigrants arrived from Asia. During the 1980-2003 period, the proportion of B.C. business immigrants who came from Asia was 85 per cent in the entrepreneur program, 97 in the investor program and 50 per cent in the self-employed program. Until recent years, Hong Kong had been the top source of the overall business immigrants coming to the province. During this 24 year study period, Hong Kong accounted for 37 per cent of all the entrepreneur immigrants, 34 per cent of all investor immigrants, and 15 per cent of all self-employed immigrants to B.C. Since the mid-1990's, Taiwan was the leading source of business immigrants in the Investor Class but lost its leading position to Mainland China starting in year 2000. However, Taiwan has been the top source country of self-employed immigrants to B.C. over the last decade. South Korea has become the top source country of entrepreneur immigrants over the last five years.

A relatively higher proportion of the principal applicants and their spouses who arrived under the business immigration program were middle aged (aged 35-49). This is due to the fact that they were selected primarily on the basis of business skills and experience as well as net worth. Most of them were also expected to develop some business activities in Canada. Hence, it is less likely that they were in either very young or old age groups. For the same reasons, business immigrants were more likely to come as family units with teenaged children. Compared to the overall immigrant landings to B.C., business immigrants were more likely to have dependent children in the 10-19 age group.



As a result of the high proportion of business immigrants who came from non-English speaking countries, many of the business immigrants were not able to communicate in English at the time of their landing. While the principle applicants of business immigrants tended to be more capable in the English language due to the selection criteria as discussed above, their spouses and accompanying children were less likely to possess sufficient English language ability. Over the period from 1980 to 2003, the proportion of immigrants who possessed no English language ability was 64 per cent for the entrepreneur immigrants, 76 per cent for the investor immigrants, 44 per cent for the self-employed immigrants and 50 per cent for the overall immigrants.



Unlike skilled worker classes of immigrants who were admitted based heavily on their education level, business immigrants were chosen based on business experiences and the amount of capital they possessed. Hence, the overall education qualification of business immigrants tended to be lower than that of the overall landings which have been dominated by the skilled worker classes. Among the three business classes, self-employed immigrants tended to possess a relatively higher education qualification than those in the investor or entrepreneur classes. Over the study period (1980-2003), a relatively higher proportion of the self-employed immigrants possessed a post graduate degree and a lower proportion possessed only secondary or less education at arrival to B.C.

