

Special Feature: Immigrants to British Columbia under the Provincial Nominee Program—Strategic Occupations

Since 2001, British Columbia has operated the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) in partnership with the federal government. B.C.'s PNP is made up of two streams: the Strategic Occupations stream (which includes skilled worker, medical professional and international student categories) and the Business Categories stream.

The Strategic Occupations stream is employer driven and meant for expediting the process of bringing in international students and highly skilled workers to fill critical labour shortages in the province. An employer applies to the PNP on behalf of an eligible foreign national whom the employer seeks to recruit for or retain in a position which they have been unable to fill with a Canadian citizen or permanent resident. The employers must make a full-time job offer that meets all the local employment standards. The application is evaluated and, once approved or "nominated", the foreign national must apply to the federal government for a permanent resident visa and meet admissibility requirements.

Currently, all provinces except Ontario and Quebec have provincial nominee programs. Québec operates its own immigrant selection program under a separate arrangement with the federal government. Although Ontario and Quebec are non-participating provinces, the following table shows that they both received some PNP immigrants in 2004. This was due to the fact that some immigrants chose to settle in a province different from the one that nominated them.

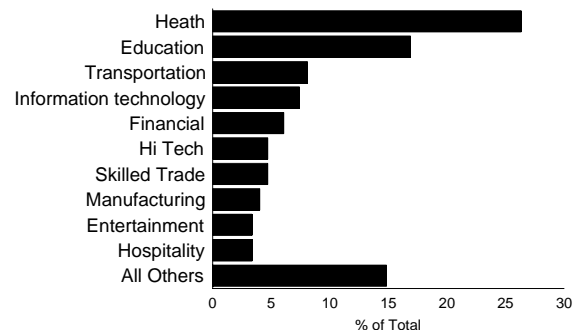
PNP Landed Immigrants by Province of Destination
(Principal Applicants & Dependents)

	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Newfoundland	171	37	38	35	0
Prince Edward Island	141	44	10	0	0
Nova Scotia	64	0	0	11	0
New Brunswick	161	146	105	71	22
Quebec	36	16	2	5	1
Ontario	280	267	138	96	65
Manitoba	4048	3116	1530	973	1095
Saskatchewan	323	173	73	41	37
Alberta	426	178	24	19	19
British Columbia	598	441	206	24	13

Manitoba has been the most active participant, nominating the highest number of skilled immigrants since the inception of the PNP program in 1995. British Columbia ranks a distant second among participating provinces. In 2004, the 596 B.C. immigrants admitted under the PNP represented about 1.6 per cent of total landings in B.C., whereas the 4,048 Manitoba PNP immigrants represented 54.5 per cent of its overall landings of 7,414 immigrants.

Of the 598 B.C. immigrants admitted under the PNP in 2004, 249 were the principal applicants including 28 registered nurses, 7 university professors and many in the management field of various capacities. Most of these immigrants were in the age group between 25 and 45. More than 65 per cent of these PNP immigrants possessed at least a bachelor's degree at the time when they became permanent residents in the Canada.

B.C. PNP Immigrants by Sector
Landed 2004 (Principal Applicants Only)



According to statistics provided by the B.C. department in charge of the PNP, there were a total of 460 applications received for the program during 2004. Of these, 35 cases were rejected and 13 cases were withdrawn, resulting in a successful nomination rate of 77.6 per cent (357 cases nominated). A majority of these applicants were citizens of United Kingdom, the United States, Japan, Australia or South Korea. Other top source countries for new applications in the Strategic Occupations stream in 2004 included China, the Philippines, India, Germany and New Zealand.