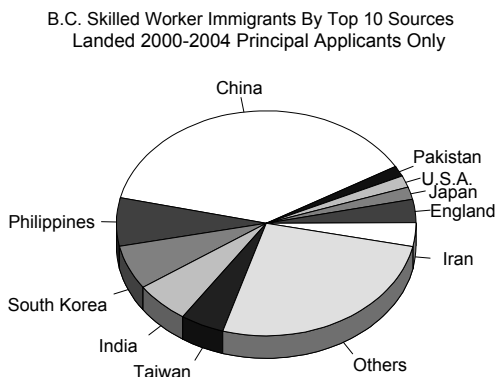


Special Feature: Skilled Worker Immigrants to British Columbia

Skilled worker immigrants are those who are selected primarily based on their skills, education and occupational experiences. Skilled worker immigrants, along with some immigrants admitted under the Provincial Nominee Program, are admitted to Canada mainly for the purpose of filling the domestic shortage of skilled labour. (see the June 2005 Special Feature for a discussion of the Provincial Nominee Program). Apart from the other requirements, skilled worker immigrants must possess a high degree of English or French language proficiency so they can quickly integrate into the Canadian economy and establish themselves successfully as permanent residents in Canada.

Over the five-year period between 2000 and 2004, skilled workers accounted for 48.1 per cent of all immigrants who landed in British Columbia. This represented 87,646 immigrants, with 36,497 being the principal applicants, and the rest being accompanying dependents such as children or spouses. Since it is the principal applicants whose skills were assessed during the admission process, the rest of this article relates only to the principal applicants of immigrants in the skilled work class who landed during 2000–2004.

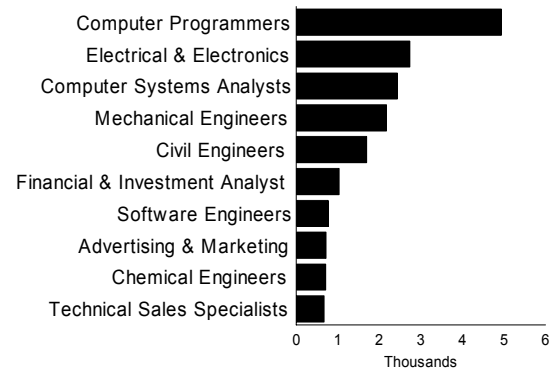


B.C. attracted 14.2 per cent of all skilled workers to Canada during the study period, slightly less than the 15.6 per cent share of the overall landings during the period. Ontario and Quebec were the biggest recipients with each attracting 56.7 and 16.4 per cent of all skilled workers, respectively. The total number of skilled workers who landed in Canada during the five-year period was 257,251 persons.

Skilled workers are generally younger and are more likely to possess post secondary education when compared to immigrants in other classes. Also, male skilled worker immigrants outnumber their female counterparts by 2.3 to one. A majority of the skilled workers were in the 25–45 age group at the time of landing. Of all skilled workers who landed between 2000 and 2004, 57.1 per cent possessed a bachelor degree and another 30.2 per cent had some form of a post-graduate education. These education levels were much higher than the rest of B.C. immigrants, who averaged 17.1 per cent with a bachelor degree, and 5.4 per cent with post-graduate studies.

Approximately half of the B.C. skilled worker immigrants were clustered in ten occupation groups. A majority of these professions were computer related, followed by engineering, finance, marketing and sales. During the five-year period, B.C. skilled worker immigrants were distributed among a total of 539 different occupational groups, although many of these occupation groups were represented by only one or a few immigrants.

B.C. Skilled Worker Immigrants by Top 10 Occupations
Landed 2000-2004 Principal Applicants Only



In addition to skilled worker immigrants, foreign workers on temporary work permits could also be used to effectively fill short-term labour market demands. During 2005 (up to Dec 18), a total of 19,225 persons had entered B.C. on temporary work visas. A majority of these are care-givers, nannies, farm workers and university professors. Some of these temporary workers may eventually become Canadian landed immigrants.