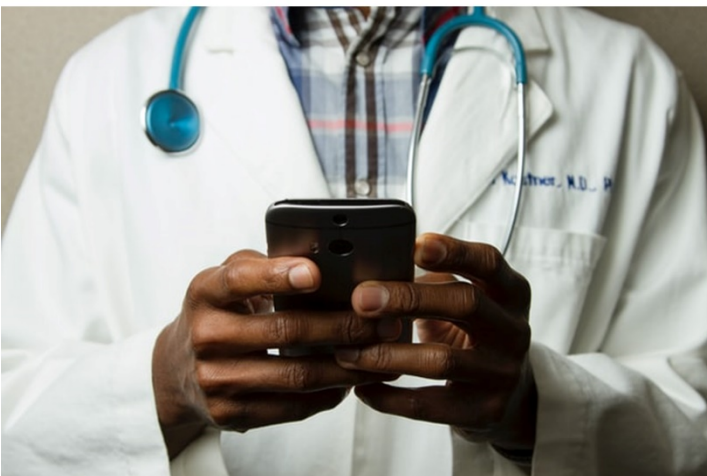# British Columbia Provincial Nominee Program

Statistical Report 2020

BC Provincial Nominee Program

450-605 Robson Street

Vancouver, BC V6B 5J3

Canada

PNPinfo@gov.bc.ca

Website: www.WelcomeBC.ca/PNP

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Introduction

The British Columbia Provincial Nominee Program (BC PNP) Statistical Report has been produced annually since 2016 to share key program statistical results for each calendar year. The 2020 report provides an overview of key program statistics for the 2020 calendar year.

There are several notable changes from the reports produced in previous years. This year's report is organized so that each program stream has its own section, using an explanatory narrative to provide context given that the streams are uniquely distinct from each other. A significant portion of the 2020 report presents the statistical information in the form of pie or line charts or simple diagrams, using more visuals to convey the results of a complex program.

The data is also more holistic, providing a complete picture of nominees' region/country of origin, the regional distribution of nominees, and which occupational categories program nominees fall under.

In addition, this year's report introduces two key performance measures, reporting on nominees' wages and regional distribution.

New in 2020: More complete regional information
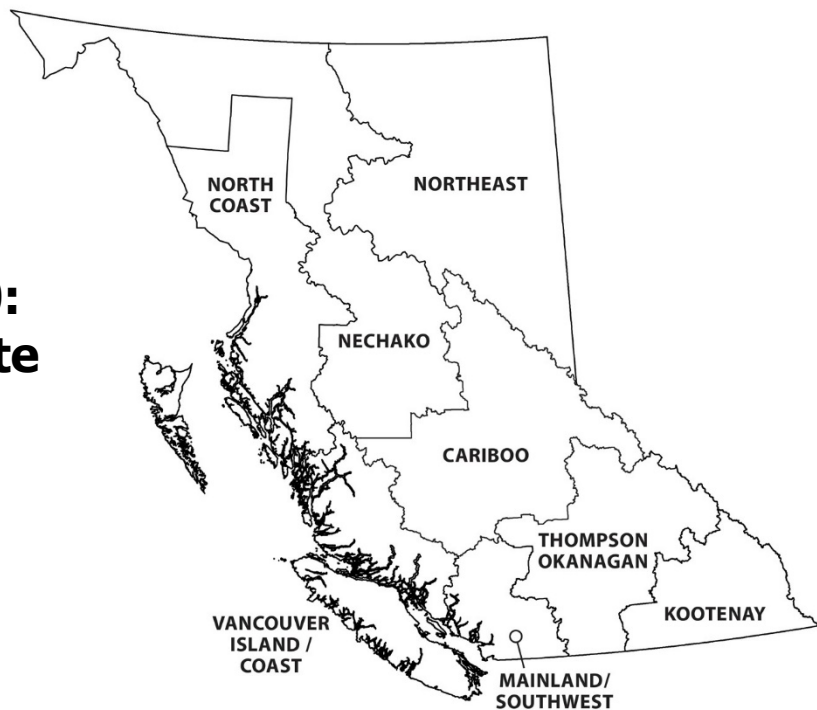
Program Overview

The British Columbia Provincial Nominee Program (BC PNP) was created in 2001 to strategically select and nominate a limited number of prospective immigrants for permanent residence status in Canada. BC provincial nominees can apply to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) for permanent residence for themselves and their dependents.

The BC PNP is the only tool available to the Province to directly influence the selection of economic immigrants who will be coming to live and work in B.C.

Two Streams: Skills and Entrepreneur Immigration

The BC PNP has two streams, each of which takes a unique approach to select immigrants who have the skills and experience needed to help with B.C.'s economic recovery and growth.

The Skills Immigration (SI) stream is intended for workers with the skills, experience, and qualifications needed by B.C. employers.

The Entrepreneur Immigration (EI) stream is for experienced entrepreneurs who intend to actively manage an eligible business in the province.

The SI stream typically accounts for about 99 per cent of BC PNP nominees, but up to 5 per cent of the program's nominations can be used for the EI stream. The longer assessment process of EI registrants and applicants includes a period of temporary status under a PNP-supported work permit. During that period, candidates establish their businesses and then become eligible for a nomination. The period to establish a business is typically between 12 and 18 months.

Both the SI and EI streams were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The effect was especially notable for EI, as travel restrictions directly impacted the mandatory in-person exploratory visits for the EI-Regional Pilot and in-person interviews for all applicants. Processing of EI applications was temporarily halted until an online alternative could be implemented.

Total BC PNP Nominations				
Stream	2020	2019	2018	2017
Skills Immigration (SI)	6,251	6,503	6,439	5,931
Entrepreneur Immigration (EI)	17	48	61	69
Total	**6,268**	**6,551**	**6,500**	**6,000**

Key Performance Measures

The BC PNP is developing key performance measures so that the program's contribution to the economic development of British Columbia can be more easily quantified, understood and reported publicly. In this year's report, selected preliminary measures related to salary and regional program use in Skills Immigration are included. These measures may be changed or expanded in future years.

Skills Immigration Objectives	Performance Measures	BC PNP Data	BC Norm
The PNP selects nominees who are self-sufficient and therefore contribute to increasing wages within their sector	Median wage of nominees compared to median wage of British Columbians	Median wage for BC PNP nominees in 2020: $28.85/hour	Median wage for individual British Columbians in 2020: $26.37/hour
The PNP selects nominee families who settle into affordable communities outside B.C.'s major urban centres	Nominees who are accepting a job that is located outside of Metro Vancouver	21% of the BC PNP's nominees in 2020 will settle outside Metro Vancouver	Regions outside of Metro Vancouver had 47% of the population of B.C. in 2020

The gap between the BC PNP's median wage and the overall median wage for British Columbia reflects the fact that the BC PNP is mainly focused on nominating higher-skilled workers who bring their specialized knowledge and experience to British Columbia.

Metro Vancouver is highlighted in the figures above because under the current points system for Skills Immigration, registrants do not receive any points under the category "regional district of employment" if they will be working in the Metro Vancouver Regional District. They do receive points in that category if they will be working in any other part of the province. Moving forward, the program will be seeking to progressively increase the proportion of nominees settling outside of Metro Vancouver. Specific targets for each performance measure are under consideration for inclusion in future reporting.

Impact of COVID-19

On March 30th, BC PNP announced that registrations in 31 occupations related to tourism, hospitality, retail and personal services would be placed on hold and would not be eligible to receive invitations to apply until further notice. That suspension was removed in February 2021.

From May 12th to August 30th, the program temporarily allowed applicants to place their applications on hold (initially for up to 16 weeks, later extended to 24 weeks) if they had been temporarily laid off or had their hours reduced because of COVID.

As noted in the previous section, these measures reduced the number of decisions that could be made in 2020. As a result, the program nominated fewer people in 2020 than in 2019. Another notable impact is that there was a significant reduction in nominees in sales and service occupations, which was a direct consequence of the temporary hold introduced in March 2020.

Skills Immigration (SI)

The SI stream is made up of five categories:

- Skilled Worker
- Healthcare Professionals
- International Graduate (IG)
- International Post-Graduate (IPG)
- Entry-Level and Semi-Skilled (ELSS)

Except for ELSS, all categories have an **Express Entry BC (EEBC)** option. The EEBC option requires applicants to meet BC PNP criteria and those of the federal Express Entry programs to benefit from faster processing of their federal permanent residency application.

The Registration Pool and Invitations to Apply (ITAs)

The Province uses an online, points-based expression of interest (EOI) system to manage application intake for the Skilled Worker categories, IG categories and ELSS category. This system helps prioritize candidates who are a strong match with program criteria. It also helps the BC PNP meet its service standards and process 80 per cent of applications within 3 months.

Prospective applicants first complete a no-fee registration that establishes a point score based on six main factors:

- Level of education
- Experience
- Language skills
- Occupation
- Salary being offered to them by a B.C. employer
- Job location

After a registration is received, it is automatically scored and immediately placed in a registration pool.

Chart: Number of active registrations in SI pool, 2018-20
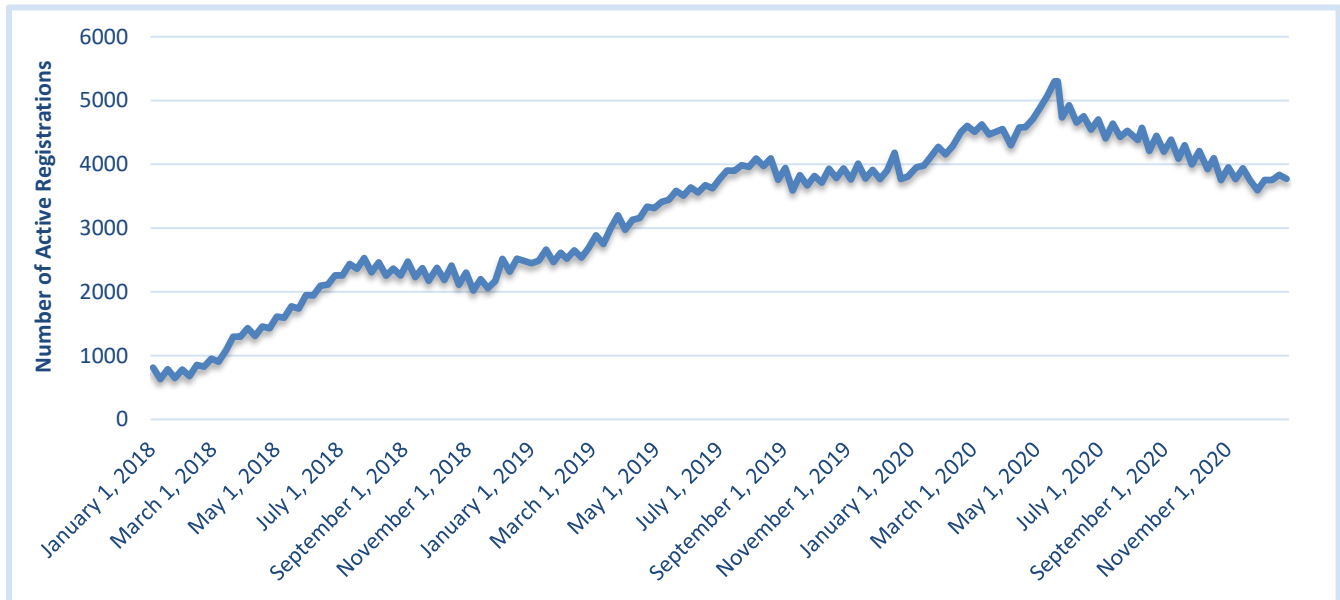
Registrations may remain active in the pool for up to one year. Registrants may elect to withdraw voluntarily at any time. To proceed on to the application stage, a registrant must receive an invitation to apply (ITA). The BC PNP periodically issues ITAs to the highest scoring active registrations. Recipients of ITAs have 30 days to apply. The minimum score necessary to receive an invitation fluctuates and is determined by factors that include BC PNP processing capacity and the size and quality of the registration pool.

2020 ITAs Issued: 9386	2020 ITAs that led to applications: 6988*	2020 ITA conversion rate: 74.5%

*The number of 2020 ITAs converted to applications is different from the number of applications received in 2020 in categories that require registration. This difference is caused by the fact that some late 2019 ITAs became applications in early 2020, and some late 2020 ITAs became applications in early 2021. Please also note that not all SI applications require registration, so the number of applications that result from ITAs is always smaller than the number of total applications in any given time period.

Application Intake

In 2020, 8,148 candidates responded to invitations to apply through the SI stream. This is a 1.5 per cent increase from 2019, when the BC PNP received 8,024 SI applications.

The category breakdown is found below. The Skilled Worker and EEBC – Skilled Worker categories, combined, accounted for 58 per cent of applications received in 2020. The four student categories combined to make up 33.7 per cent of applications in 2020.

Total Skills Immigration Applications Received			
Category	2020	2019	2018
Skilled Worker	2,015	2,205	2,025
Entry Level and Semi-Skilled (ELSS)	570	827	794
International Graduate	468	568	388
International Post-Graduate	606	509	611
Healthcare Professional	76	70	95
EEBC - Skilled Worker	2,713	2,269	2,321
EEBC - International Graduate	1,351	1,270	965
EEBC - International Post-Graduate	320	280	197
EEBC - Healthcare Professional	29	26	16
SI Total	8,148	8,024	7,412

1.5% increase in SI applications from 2019 to 2020

Nominations

Each year, IRCC allocates a specific number of nominations to each province. Typically, the BC PNP uses about 99% of this allocation for the SI stream. In 2020, B.C. received an allocation of 6,750. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the BC PNP ended 2020 with 6,251 SI nominations.

Total Skills Immigration Nominations by Category			
Category	2020	2019	2018
Skilled Worker	1,515	1,672	1,607
Entry Level and Semi-Skilled (ELSS)	374	667	633
International Graduate	339	420	636
International Post-Graduate	558	523	371
Healthcare Professional	72	70	92
EEBC - Skilled Worker	2,051	1,941	1,987
EEBC - International Graduate	1030	964	936
EEBC - International Post-Graduate	288	226	165
EEBC - Healthcare Professional	24	20	12
SI Total	6,251	6,503	6,439

In 2020, 57 per cent of all nominations were under the Skilled Worker categories and 35.4 per cent of nominations were under the International Graduate and International Post-Graduate categories. These percentages are similar to the numbers seen in the past two years.

The International Post-Graduate categories have seen consistent growth over the past few years, which helps meet the objective of attracting and retaining innovative graduates in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) with high human capital in British Columbia.

Tech Pilot/BC PNP Tech

The BC PNP introduced the Tech Pilot in 2017 to help B.C. tech employers address their talent needs. In May 2021, the BC PNP indefinitely extended the Tech Pilot under a new name: BC PNP Tech. BC tech employers continue to be able to recruit and retain international skilled talent with a path to permanent residence. A list of the eligible occupations in engineering, technology, and business support services, along with other information about BC PNP Tech, can be found on our website.

| Tech Pilot Nominations		
2020	**2019**	**2018**
1,855	1,509	1,135

The BC PNP Tech Pilot (which draws from the Skilled Worker and International Graduate categories) has accounted for a steadily growing share of the program's SI nominations since it began in May 2017. In 2020, Tech Pilot nominees constituted 29.7 per cent of all SI nominees. Six of the top 10 occupations nominated in 2020 were tech occupations: software engineers and developers, graphic designers and illustrators, computer programmers and interactive media developers, professional occupations in advertising, marketing and public relations, information systems analysts and consultants and user support technicians.

1855 tech workers nominated in 2020

Geographical Origins of Nominees

Many nominees in the SI stream come from countries in Asia. 60.3 per cent of 2020 nominees came from either South/Central Asia or from East/Southeast Asia. Other regions that contributed significant numbers of nominees include Europe (14.1%) and Latin America/Caribbean (10.0%).

Chart: Geographical Origins of 2020 Nominees
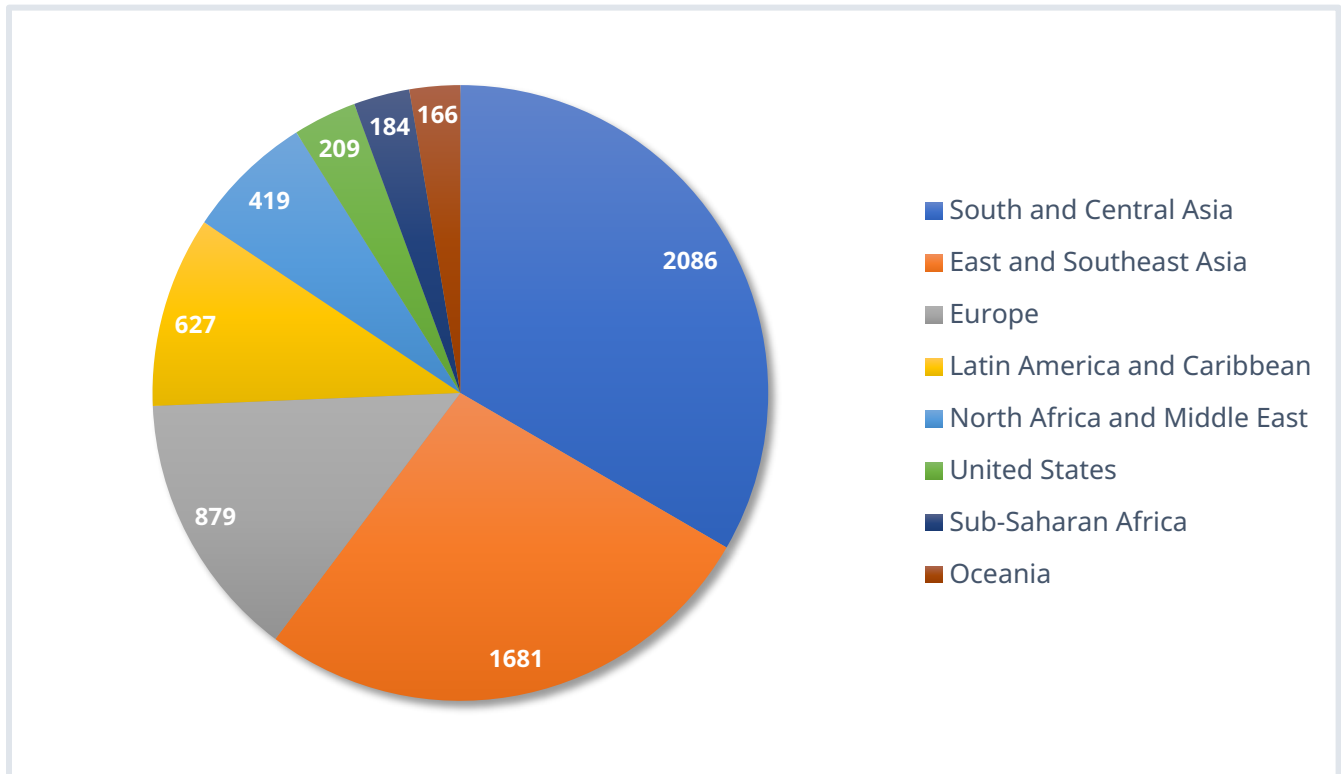
Top 5 Individual Source Countries for the SI Stream		
2020	**2019**	**2018**
India	India	India
China	China	China
Brazil	Brazil	South Korea
United Kingdom	United Kingdom	Brazil
Iran	South Korea	United Kingdom

Occupations

In recent years, the SI stream has nominated a growing number of occupations in the natural and applied sciences. More than a quarter of 2020 nominees belonged to that group. One of the driving factors behind this trend is the increasing number of BC PNP Tech Pilot nominations.

As previously noted, there was a significant decrease in the number of nominees in sales and service occupations in 2020. This drop was caused by the temporary restrictions on occupations in tourism, hospitality, retail and personal services that were put in place to help deal with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Occupational Category of SI Nominees	2020	2019	2018
Natural and applied sciences and related	26.5%	20.0%	15.4%
Business, finance and administration	18.4%	15.9%	15.8%
No listed occupation (IPG)	13.3%	11.4%	8.3%
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related	13.0%	11.3%	14.6%
Sales and service	12.8%	27.6%	31.9%
Art, culture, recreation and sport	5.4%	5.5%	4.3%
Education, law and social/community/government services	5.0%	3.5%	4.2%
Health	2.8%	2.5%	3.0%
Legislators and senior management	1.1%	0.9%	1.1%
Natural resources, agriculture and related production	0.9%	0.4%	0.7%
Manufacturing and utilities	0.8%	0.8%	0.6%

Regional Distribution

The primary destination for SI nominees is the Mainland/Southwest development region. Within the Mainland/Southwest region, most nominees (93.3%) went to the Metro Vancouver Regional District, which is home to many of the jobs that immigrants are needed to fill.

The next three charts place a sharper focus on how the Mainland/Southwest region and the Metro Vancouver Regional District nominees can be further broken down.

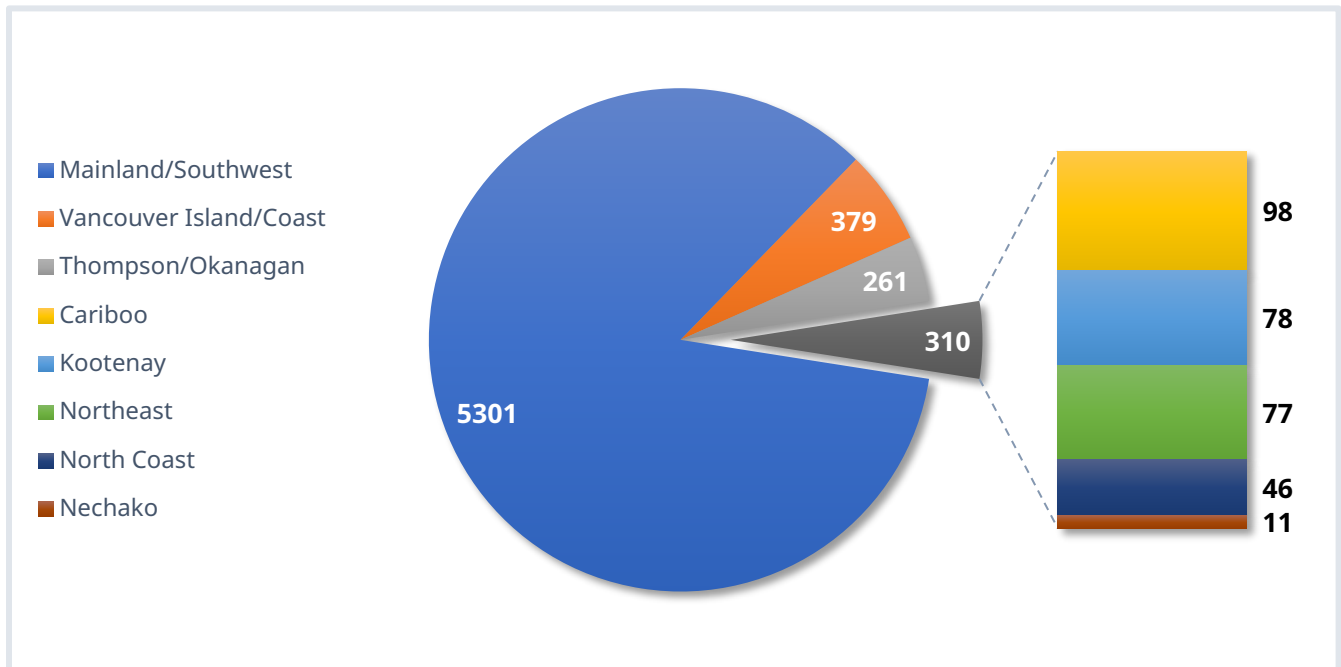*Chart: 2020 SI Nominees by Development Region*

Chart: 2020 SI Nominees per Regional District in the Mainland/Southwest Development Region

- Metro Vancouver
- Fraser Valley
- Squamish-Lillooet
- Sunshine Coast

4947

354

249

93

12
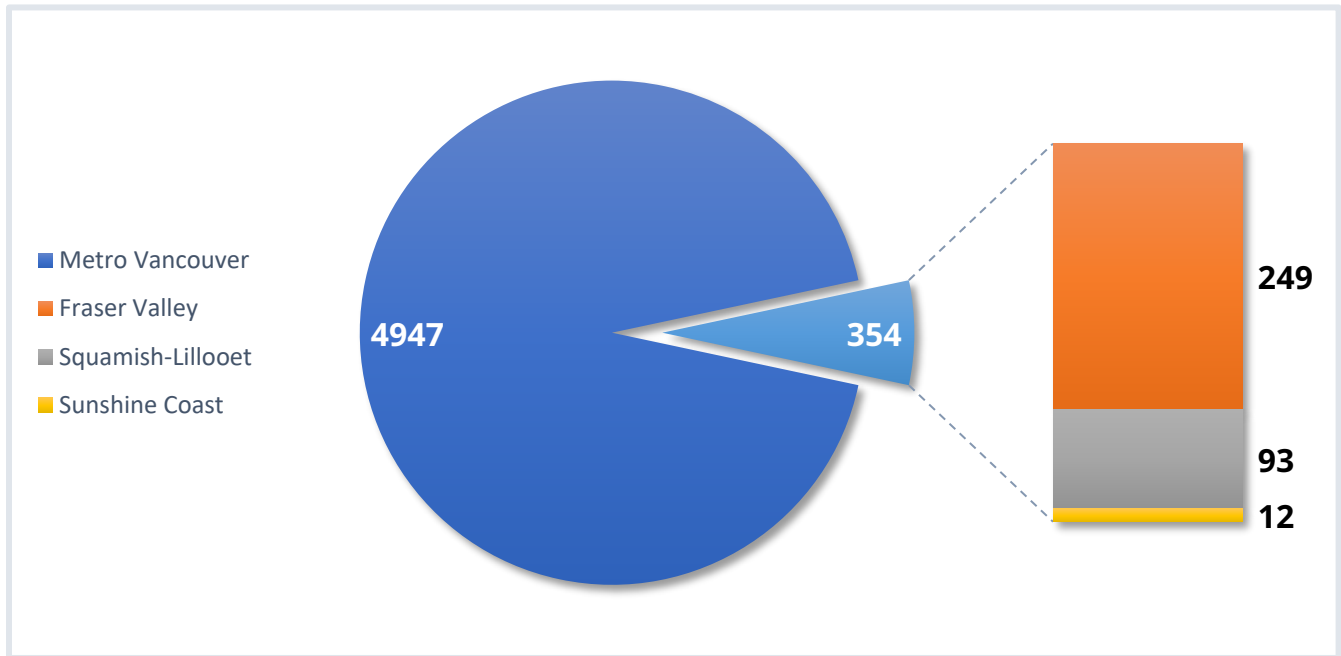
Chart: 2020 Metro Vancouver Regional District SI Nominees by Municipality

- Vancouver
- Surrey
- Burnaby
- Richmond
- Coquitlam
- New Westminster
- North Vancouver
- Delta
- Langley
- West Vancouver
- Port Moody
- Port Coquitlam
- Maple Ridge
- Others

605
412
191
151
142
111
189
1018
2128

63
37
24
21
20
24
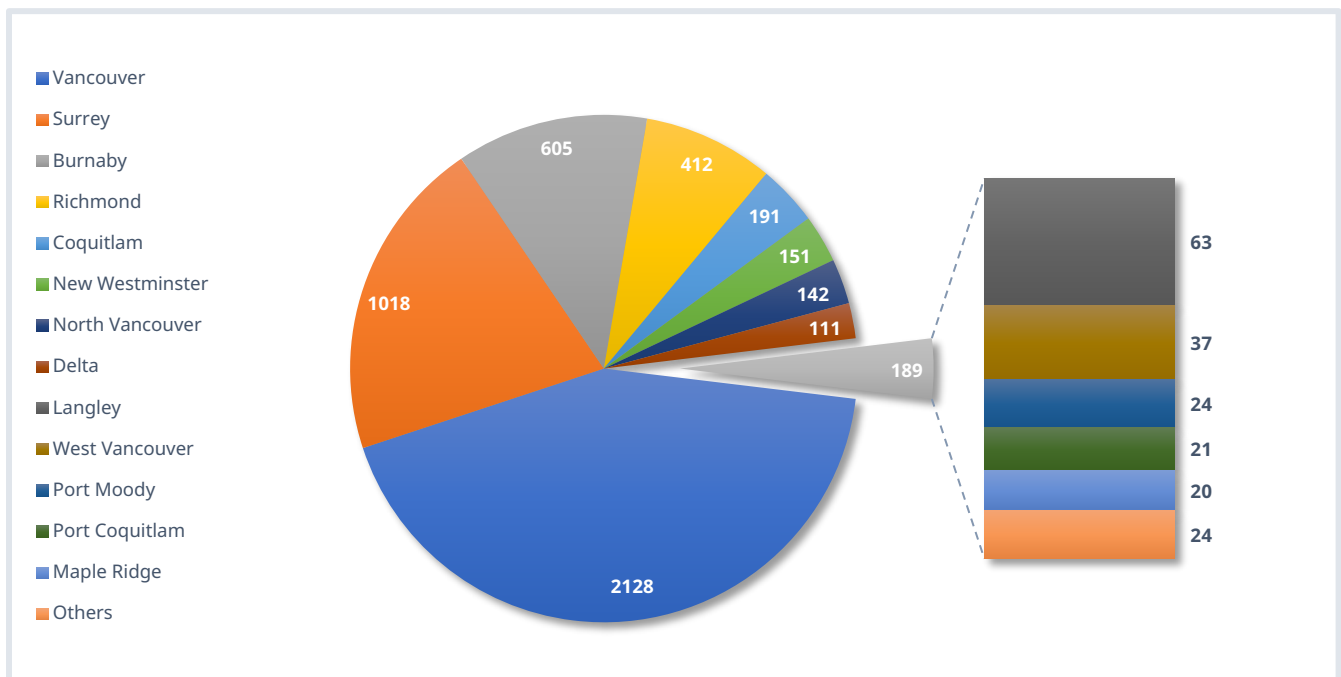
Salary

Salary information about 2020 SI nominees can be seen in the table below.[1] Previous versions of this report provided average salary data. This year's report also includes median salary data, which give an accurate indication of what the typical salaries are for each category.

Category of Nominee	Average 2020 Salary	Median 2020 Salary
EEBC - Skilled Worker	$81,618.78	$70,000.00
Skilled Worker	$74,911.90	$62,400.00
EEBC - International Graduate	$51,744.70	$47,840.00
International Graduate	$50,459.96	$47,000.00
Entry Level and Semi-Skilled	$58,880.64	$62,400.00

As the charts on the next page illustrate, SI nominee salaries have consistently risen in recent years. The rise in the median and average salaries for the Entry Level and Semi-Skilled (ELSS) category was caused by the temporary COVID pause on many lower-paid ELSS occupations throughout 2020.

14.4% increase in median salary for EEBC-Skilled Workers from 2019 to 2020

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[1] For salary calculations, International Post-Graduates, EEBC – International Post-Graduates, Health Care Professionals and EEBC – Health Care Professionals have been excluded. Average salaries are found by simply dividing the sum of all the salaries by the total number of salary earners. Median salary data is found by identifying the middle number in the sequence of salary numbers when it is ordered from lowest to highest (or vice versa).

Chart: Median Salaries in SI Categories, 2018-20

Legend: EEBC-Skilled Worker, Skilled Worker, EEBC-International Graduate, International Graduate, Entry Level and Semi-Skilled
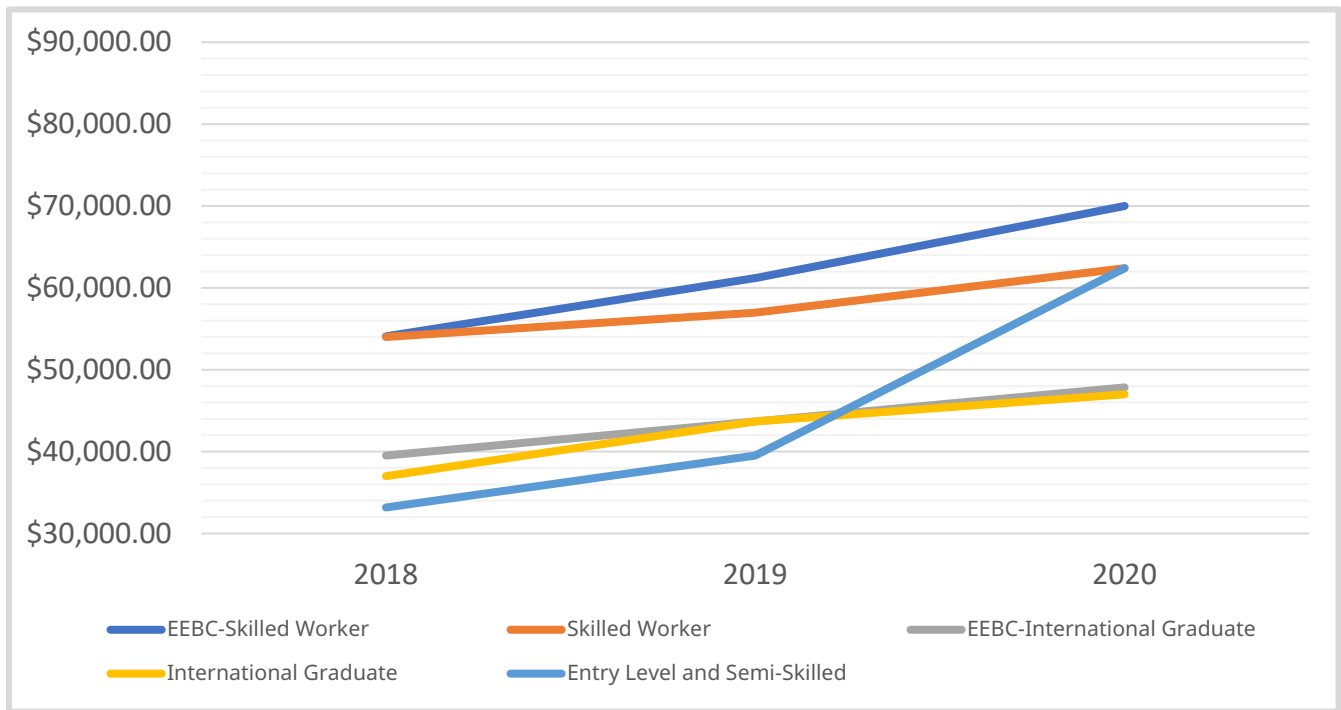
Chart: Average Salaries in SI Categories, 2018-20

Legend: EEBC-Skilled Worker, Skilled Worker, EEBC-International Graduate, International Graduate, Entry Level and Semi-Skilled
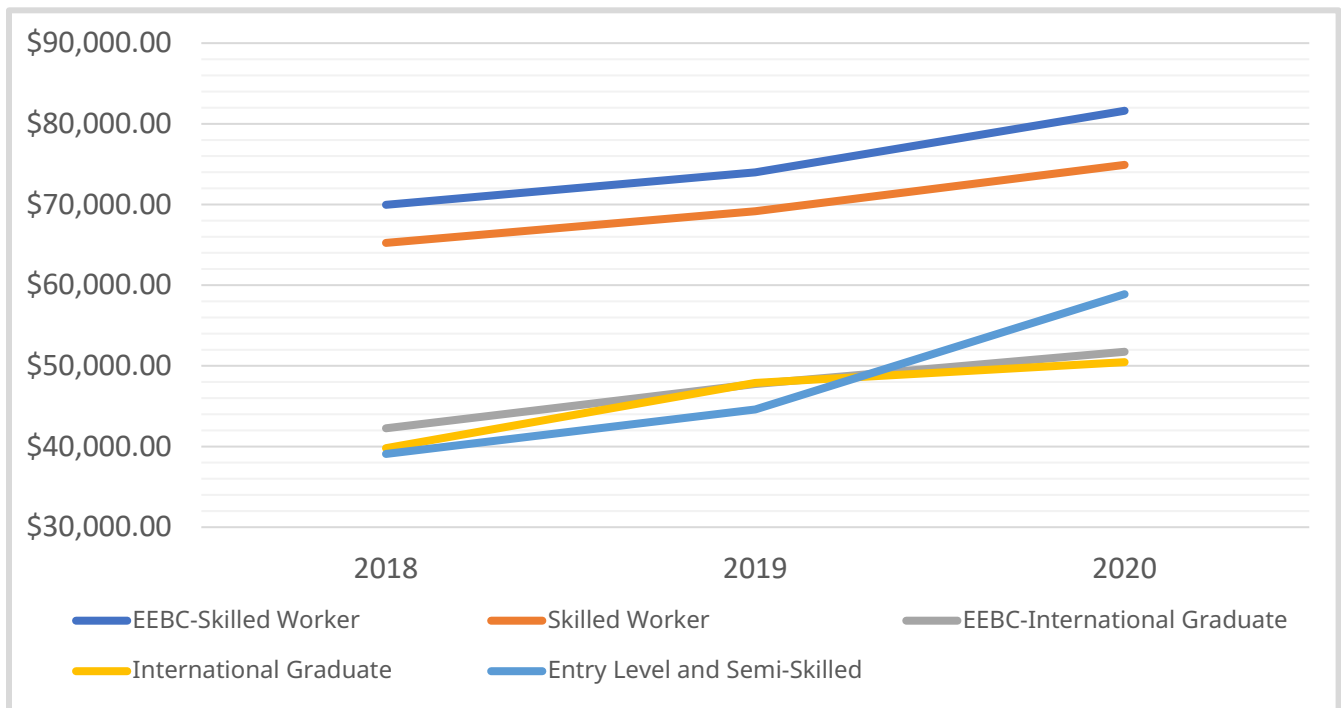
Entrepreneur Immigration (EI)

The EI Stream is designed to target experienced entrepreneurs who can support innovation and economic growth in the province. It has three categories:

- Base
- Regional Pilot
- Strategic Projects

The Base category allows foreign entrepreneurs to propose a new business or purchase an existing business in any part of British Columbia.

The BC PNP launched the EI Regional Pilot in March 2019. The Regional Pilot is limited to smaller communities that are not located within 30 km of a major center (population 75K or more). Unlike the Base category, which does not directly involve communities, the Regional Pilot category is delivered in collaboration with participating communities, based on their specific economic development needs.

The Strategic Projects category is designed for foreign corporations that have identified strategic investment opportunities in B.C. to establish operations that are integral to the growth and expansion of their core business. It enables foreign corporations to permanently transfer key staff with specialized corporate knowledge and expertise to their operation in British Columbia. The volume of prospective applicants who meet the criteria for this category is small, so their statistics are only captured in the totals for the EI stream.

Registration, Qualification, and ITAs

Both the Base and Regional Pilot categories require registration. Registrations for the EI stream require a $300 processing fee because program staff must assess it and assign a business concept score to determine whether an entrepreneur is qualified for the pool. Qualified registrants may remain in the pool for up to six months. Periodically, invitations to apply (ITAs) are issued to the highest scoring registrations. Draws for each category are conducted separately and at different scores.

EI Base registrations submitted in 2020:

2020 EI Base Registrations: 450	→	Portion that Qualified for Pool: 297 (66%)	→	Portion that Received ITAs: 73 (16%)

Registration for the Base category is unrestricted and open to all interested entrepreneurs who feel they meet the criteria. In 2020, 66 per cent of registrants in this category were assessed as qualified and remained in the pool for up to six months. Invitations to apply were issued to seventy-three of these qualified Base Category entrepreneurs.

EI Regional Pilot registrations submitted in 2020:

2020 EI-RP Registrations: 57	→	Portion that Qualified for Pool: 51 (89%)	→	Portion that Received ITAs: 44 (77%)

To register for the Regional Pilot, an entrepreneur must have a referral from one of the 60+ participating communities. In 2020, the BC PNP received 57 registrations for the Regional Pilot, of which 51 were qualified (89 per cent). This rate is an increase from 2019, when 83 per cent were qualified.

Delays in processing due to travel restrictions, the development of virtual options for in-person interviews, processing capacity, and a focus on the Regional Pilot all contributed to 44 entrepreneurs (77 per cent) receiving invitations to apply to the Regional Pilot category and 73 entrepreneurs (16 percent) receiving invitations to apply under the EI Base in 2020.

Information about EI registrations in previous years can be found in the 2019 BC PNP Statistical Report.

Application Intake

There are three different types of EI applications, each of which is listed separately in the table below. In 2020, the majority of applications continued to be for the EI-Base Category, but EI-Regional Pilot applications more than doubled in comparison to 2019. Key Staff applications are for key personnel who are attached to a Strategic Projects application, or to an EI-Base application that was received prior to January 29th, 2020. On that date, the EI-Base Category was adjusted to no longer allow principal applicants to include additional key staff in their applications.

EI Applications	2020	2019	2018
EI-Base (Principal Applicant)	127	224	92
EI-Regional Pilot	70	34	N/A
Key Staff	10	10	3
Total	**207**	**268**	**95**

207 Entrepreneur Immigration applications in 2020

Work Permits

The Entrepreneur Immigration stream is a two-stage process. Applicants whose business proposals are approved by the Province receive provincial support to apply for a work permit so they can come to B.C. and implement their business plan. Entrepreneurs then have a specific period of time (18-24 months for the Base or 12-18 months for the Regional Pilot) to establish their businesses before they become eligible for nomination.

Entrepreneurs Approved at the Work Permit stage			
Year	2020	2019	2018
Work Permit Stage Approvals	77	77	73

Of the 77 work permits approved in 2020:

- 52 were in the Base category
- 23 were in the Regional Pilot category
- 2 were for Strategic Projects Key Staff

77 EI nominee candidates supported for work permits in 2020

Nominations and Nominee Origins and Destinations

All of the 17 entrepreneurs nominated in the EI stream in 2020 applied through the EI-Base category. Since the Regional Pilot category was only launched in March 2019, entrepreneurs in that category who have arrived have not yet had enough time to complete the business establishment stage and become eligible for nomination.

As mentioned in the program overview section, COVID-19 had a strong impact on the operation of the EI stream and led to a much smaller number of nominations in 2020 than in previous years. Before a final decision can be made, a program advisor must conduct an in-person visit to the site of the business. The COVID-19 pandemic meant these visits could not be conducted, bringing a temporary halt to the nomination process.

Because of the small number of nominees, it is not possible to provide useful complete breakdowns of data on the geographical origins of entrepreneurs or their destinations in British Columbia. However, it is possible to provide the following highlights:

- China continued to be the primary country of origin, with over half of nominees holding Chinese passports
- Nominated entrepreneurs were split roughly evenly between the Mainland/Southwest Development Region and the rest of the province

53% of 2020 EI nominees started businesses outside of the Lower Mainland

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