

BC Provincial Nominee Program (BC PNP) Entrepreneur Immigration – Regional Pilot

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the BC Provincial Nominee Program (BC PNP) Entrepreneur Immigration – Regional Pilot (EI – Regional Pilot)?

- The pilot is focused on attracting entrepreneurs from around the world to establish businesses in regional communities. This will help meet the communities' economic development needs and encourage investments outside urban areas.

What is the role of the community in the EI – Regional Pilot?

- As each community has the best knowledge of their local business environment, they are perfectly situated to identify the economic development needs of their community.
- After reviewing the detailed community profiles and their priority sectors, communities should be contacted using only the contact details listed in each community's profile.
- Foreign entrepreneurs must visit their selected community and present a business case to the designated contact person as indicated on the community's profile who then determines if the proposed business aligns with their identified sectors.
- Communities can then refer the foreign entrepreneur to the BC PNP.
- Communities will also work with local partners and access existing networks to support the settlement of the foreign entrepreneur in the community.

Which communities are eligible to enrol in the pilot?

- To be eligible to participate in the pilot, a community must have a population of fewer than 75,000. The community must be at least 30 kilometres away from any neighbouring municipality with a population greater than 75,000.
- The community must also demonstrate their capacity to support foreign entrepreneurs through an established network of business and settlement support agencies.
- Pilot-specific information is available for interested communities. Training is available before a community confirms enrollment in the EI – Regional Pilot.

Which enrolled communities are participating in the EI – Regional Pilot?

- Community profiles of all participating communities are [listed on our website here](#).
- We ask interested parties to respect and follow a community's specific process. Communities reserve the right to meet only with those potential applicants for the EI Regional Pilot that have been qualified through the community's official intake process.

- After reviewing the detailed community profiles and their priority sectors, the foreign entrepreneur should contact the community using only the contact details listed in each community's profile.

How long will the EI – Regional Pilot be offered?

- The pilot will be delivered for a two-year period and will be evaluated to ensure that the community and entrepreneur are benefiting the program, and to ensure continued program integrity for the BC PNP.

How does a foreign entrepreneur participate in the EI – Regional Pilot?

- Before considering the EI – Regional Pilot, you should familiarize yourself with the program criteria and check your eligibility.
- A foreign entrepreneur must be formally referred by a participating community.
- The foreign entrepreneur will then register to the BC PNP with the referral from the community. General processing times for pilot registrations will be four weeks.
- On a regular basis, the BC PNP will invite the highest scoring registrants to apply. Applicants generally receive a decision in four months from the date of submitting an application.
- Please refer to the [BC PNP Entrepreneur Immigration – Regional Pilot Program Guide](#) for full program and category requirements, and for more information on the process to register and apply.

Why is the financial commitment of the applicant lower in the pilot compared to the existing Entrepreneur Immigration – Base Category?

- To attract entrepreneurs with a desire to start a business and settle in smaller communities, the personal net worth and investment criteria has been reduced.
- In comparison with the existing BC PNP Entrepreneur Immigration – Base Category, applicants to the pilot must have a net worth of \$300,000 rather than \$600,000 and propose a minimum investment of \$100,000 rather than \$200,000.
- The applicant criteria reflects the lower cost of starting a business in a smaller community.

What are the minimum language requirements?

- Foreign entrepreneurs must have a minimum of [Canadian Language Benchmark](#) (CLB) 4 equivalent to register and apply for the EI – Regional Pilot.
- Individuals interested in the EI – Regional Pilot must submit their language test results at the time of registration.

Will the EI – Regional Pilot only accept new businesses?

- Yes, the pilot is intended for entrepreneurs who are starting a new business. Entrepreneurs wishing to purchase existing businesses across B.C. are able to register under the existing Entrepreneur Immigration – Base Category.

What is the difference between the EI – Regional Pilot and the federal Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot?

- There are a few differences between the two pilot programs.
- To be eligible for B.C.'s EI – Regional Pilot, communities must have a population of less than 75,000 people and be at least 30 kilometres away from a larger centre.
- For the federal pilot, communities must have a population of less than 50,000 people and be at least 75 kilometres away from a larger centre. Or, be up to 200,000 people and be considered remote from larger cities.
- B.C.'s EI – Regional Pilot is focused on entrepreneurs.
- The federal pilot is focused on workers rather than entrepreneurs.
- Information regarding the federal Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot can be found on the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot webpage at Canada.ca.

Who can access the BC PNP concierge service?

- The EI – Regional Pilot includes customized assistance for B.C. communities as part of a concierge service. The service is custom-tailored intended to build strong relationships with communities by assisting them in navigating immigration processes.
- As the concierge service is for communities, potential applicants may submit questions to the program at en.imm@gov.bc.ca.

Where can I find more information?

- If you are a community representative interested in enrolling your community in the EI – Regional Pilot, please contact PNPConcierge@gov.bc.ca.
- Refer to our [BC PNP Entrepreneur Immigration – Regional Pilot Program Guide](#) for detailed information about the pilot.
- Refer to our [BC PNP Entrepreneur Immigration Program Guide](#) for complete, up-to-date program information and requirements for the EI – Base Category.
- Refer to our [BC PNP Entrepreneur Immigration Pocket Guide](#) for high-level information about the BC PNP Entrepreneur Immigration stream.