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C11 ENTREPRENEUR STREAM 2026

Build, Buy or Expand a Business in Canada

A practical business-first pathway for entrepreneurs, franchise buyers, business owners and self-employed professionals who want to actively operate a Canadian business.

- LMIA-EXEMPT ROUTE
- NO FIXED IELTS REQUIREMENT
- NO FIXED MINIMUM INVESTMENT
- FAMILY OPTIONS MAY BE AVAILABLE

WHAT IS THE C11 ENTREPRENEUR STREAM?

A business-first pathway for active entrepreneurs

1. WHAT IT IS

C11 is an LMIA-exempt entrepreneur pathway that allows qualifying applicants to come to Canada to actively operate a genuine business that can provide significant benefit to Canada.

2. WHO IT MAY SUIT

- Foreign business owners
- Franchise buyers
- Business acquisition clients
- Start-up founders
- Self-employed specialists
- Senior managers with a clear operational role

3. AVAILABILITY ACROSS CANADA

C11 opportunities may be explored across Canada, depending on the business model, province, licensing, municipal requirements and commercial viability.

4. CORE HIGHLIGHTS

- No LMIA required
- No fixed IELTS requirement
- No fixed minimum investment
- Family options may be available
- Active management required
- Flexible business models

5. EXAMPLES OF BUSINESS MODELS

- Start-up
- Franchise
- Business acquisition
- Branch
- Subsidiary

C11 is not permanent residence by itself.
If eligible, a client may later explore a separate federal or provincial PR pathway.

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HOW THE C11 PROCESS WORKS

A clear step-by-step client journey

01 **Initial Assessment**
Review business background, funds, family goals and business idea.

02 **Business Model & Location Strategy**
Confirm whether the plan is a start-up, franchise, acquisition, branch or subsidiary and identify a suitable province/city.

03 **Canadian Structure Setup**
Incorporation or registration planning, ownership structure and commercial direction.

04 **Business Plan & Significant Benefit**
Prepare market strategy, operations plan, staffing, projections and the significant-benefit narrative.

05 **Documentation Package**
Organize applicant and business documents, compliance steps and supporting evidence.

06 **Application Filing & Processing**
Submit the C11 application and respond to biometrics, medicals or document requests if required.

07 **Approval, Arrival & Business Launch**
Enter Canada, activate the business and begin day-to-day operations.

PLANNING TIMELINE

Each case varies, but many files are planned over approximately

3–6+ MONTHS

before and during processing.

Final timing depends on the country of application, file quality and IRCC processing.

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DOCUMENTS REQUIRED & HOW MIGRATES SUPPORTS YOU

Organized guidance for a stronger C11 file

Applicant & Family Documents

- Valid passport(s)
- Digital photos
- Marriage/birth records if applicable
- Resume/CV
- Business or management experience evidence
- Bank statements and source of funds
- Tax or ownership records
- Family status documents
- Any police certificates or medical documents if required

Canadian Business File

- Incorporation or registration records where applicable
- Ownership chart
- Franchise or purchase agreement or LOI where relevant
- Lease or location plan
- Supplier/client interest or commercial evidence
- Detailed business plan
- Financial projections
- Proof of funds or investment readiness
- Hiring plan
- Significant-benefit support letter

How MIGRATES.CA Supports the File

Assessment
We assess eligibility, experience and business readiness.

Strategy
We design a tailored C11 strategy aligned with your goals.

Business Plan Support
We help build compelling plans that highlight impact and feasibility.

Documentation Organization
We organize and structure a complete, compliant file.

Business Setup Coordination
We connect you with partners for smooth business setup.

Submission Support
We review, finalize and submit with precision and confidence.

For the first review, we usually need

- Applicant CV
- Current business or employment details
- Approximate available investment funds
- Preferred province/city
- Business idea or target opportunity
- Family composition

Start with a business-first C11 assessment

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ELIGIBILITY FACTORS & WHAT MAKES A STRONGER C11 CASE

What clients and businesses are typically assessed on

1 CORE ASSESSMENT FACTORS

- Relevant business ownership, entrepreneurial or senior-management background
- A genuine plan to actively manage the Canadian business
- A commercially viable business model
- Lawful source of funds and readiness to invest
- A clear reason why the business can benefit Canada
- A practical location and market strategy

2 WHAT STRENGTHENS THE FILE

- Detailed business plan
- Realistic financial projections
- Industry experience
- Market demand evidence
- Potential job creation
- Innovation, regional need or economic impact

3 IMPORTANT COMMERCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Province and city selection
- Licensing and municipal rules
- Lease and setup costs
- Hiring capacity
- Operating expenses
- Ownership structure

C11 is for active business operation, not passive investment. The applicant should have a real and ongoing management role in the business.

There is no fixed minimum investment under C11, but the proposed capital should be appropriate for the type, size and needs of the business.

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BUSINESS MODELS & OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURES

Different ways a C11 business plan may be structured

01 Start-up

Launch a new Canadian business built around your own concept, market strategy and operations plan.

02 Franchise

Operate under an established brand, using a tested business model and support system.

03 Business acquisition

Purchase and continue operating an existing Canadian business with a proven customer base.

04 Branch or subsidiary

Expand an existing foreign business into Canada through a branch or subsidiary structure.

05 Partnership or strategic venture

In some cases, a structured partnership approach may be explored where commercially appropriate.

POTENTIAL SECTORS

- Food service
- Retail
- Hospitality
- Service businesses
- Trade and distribution
- Light manufacturing
- Professional or specialized services where appropriate

The right structure depends on your experience, budget, location strategy and long-term goals in Canada.

AVAILABILITY ACROSS CANADA & IMPORTANT PLANNING NOTES

How location and provincial factors shape a C11 strategy

01 Availability across Canada

C11 is not limited to one province. Opportunities may be explored across Canada depending on the business activity, city, province, local rules and commercial feasibility.

Ontario
Large market options, strong franchise and acquisition opportunities, city-specific cost considerations.

Alberta
Entrepreneur-friendly environment, cost advantages in some markets, strong regional opportunities.

British Columbia
Attractive consumer markets with sector-specific licensing and cost considerations.

Prairies & Atlantic Canada
Regional opportunities may offer strategic advantages depending on industry and location.

02 Planning notes

- Licensing and zoning matter
- Lease terms affect feasibility
- The market must support the business
- Investment should match the model
- Operations should be realistic from day one

03

Province selection should be driven by business logic, not only preference.

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IMPORTANT PR CLARIFICATION & NEXT STEPS

Understanding the route and starting your C11 assessment

C11 entrepreneur route → Establish and actively operate the business in Canada → If eligible, later explore a separate federal or provincial PR pathway

C11 is not itself a direct permanent residence program.

It is an LMIA-exempt entrepreneur route for qualifying businesses that can provide significant benefit to Canada. Permanent residence, if pursued later, depends on a separate immigration pathway and government approval.

FAMILY OPTIONS

- A spouse may be eligible to accompany
- Children may be eligible to accompany
- Options depend on eligibility and the specific application.

TIMING SNAPSHOT

- Many cases are planned over approximately 4–6 months or more
- Some cases take longer depending on the country of application, file quality and IRCC processing
- Exact timelines can never be guaranteed

HOW TO GET STARTED WITH MIGRATES.CA

01 Initial consultation › 02 Profile review › 03 Business model discussion › 04 Document planning › 05 Formal strategy and next steps

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Canada Business Pathway Consultants

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