

IRCC Bumps Up Processing Times For Start-Up Visas To Over 10 Years As More Canadian Investors Look Abroad

Amid the uncertainty, a growing number of high-net-worth Canadians are planning legal exits through investment migration programs that offer more flexibility.

MIAMI, FL, UNITED STATES, November 13, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In an unprecedented development, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has revised the projected processing times for permanent residence applications under the Start-Up Visa (SUV) Program from 53 months to over 10 years.



A Canadian immigration program with a standard processing time exceeding a decade is unprecedented.

The adjustment follows the IRCC's adoption of a new forecasting methodology that factors in current application inventory, evolving immigration targets, and modifications to processing capacity. As annual immigration targets fluctuate and resources are routinely reassigned in response to rising demand, the variability in SUV processing times is set to increase.

“

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Jean-François Harvey, Global Managing Partner at HLG

A Canadian immigration program with a standard processing time exceeding a decade is unparalleled in history, with officials already reducing SUV targets to 500 admissions in 2026.

At the same time, Canadian lawmakers are deliberating Bill C-12, which - if passed - would grant IRCC officers and border agents expanded authority to amend, suspend, or cancel immigration documents. The legislation currently

awaits its third reading in the House of Commons and will likely undergo further scrutiny and

potential amendments.

As the bill primarily targets individuals deemed threats to national security or those making refugee or asylum claims, it will likely have minimal to no impact on qualified SUV applicants.

WHAT IS THE CANADA START-UP VISA (SUV) PROGRAM?

The Canada SUV Program offers entrepreneurs and their families permanent residence in Canada for developing a qualifying innovation-driven business with the backing of a designated entity. To be eligible:

- The entrepreneur must hold at least 10% of voting shares in their venture incorporated in Canada, and together with a designated angel investor group, venture capital fund, or business incubator, must control over 50% of the voting rights.
- The business must be managed principally from within Canada, with a meaningful portion of operations conducted domestically.
- Applicants must have a commitment from a designated entity (minimum CAD 75,000 from an angel investor group, CAD 200,000 from a venture capital fund, or acceptance into a qualified incubator) and demonstrate CLB 5 proficiency in English or French.
- Adequate settlement funds must be shown for the applicant and dependents.

Dependent family members may include a spouse and children under 22. Successful applicants can obtain permanent residency, access Canada's healthcare system, assist their minor-aged children in accessing subsidized education, and may apply for citizenship after three years.

CANADIAN INVESTORS SET SIGHTS ABROAD

Amid the soaring processing times, rising domestic tax rates, and policy uncertainty stemming from pending legislative changes, a growing number of high-net-worth [Canadians are planning legal exits](#) through investment migration programs that offer more favourable tax treatment, family mobility, and warmer climates.

"We are seeing rising interest from Canadians in international residency and citizenship-by-investment programs, particularly across Europe and the Caribbean," Jean-François Harvey, Global Managing Partner at Harvey Law Group, said.

Before departing, Canadians must file a departure tax return - potentially triggering [deemed disposition tax](#) on certain assets - while ensuring all Canadian obligations are lawfully closed.

[Canadian tax obligations](#) are based on residency and not citizenship. Even after leaving Canada,

those who have not formally severed primary residential ties (such as homes, family, and dependents within Canada) may still be treated as tax residents, and remain liable for worldwide income tax.

Exiting Canadians must also minimize secondary connections (bank accounts, health coverage, credit cards), and establish a documented new life abroad, with options including residency or citizenship through Golden Visa programs in Europe or citizenship by investment (CBI) programs in the Caribbean, each offering potential new tax residency and enhanced mobility.

ABOUT HARVEY LAW GROUP

Founded in 1992, Harvey Law Group (HLG) is a premier multinational law firm specializing in immigration and business law. With over 20 offices globally, HLG is dedicated to providing trusted legal counsel and tailored, practical solutions for a diverse clientele, including entrepreneurs, skilled professionals, families, and international corporations.

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