FACTS ABOUT IMMIGRATION TO CANADA AND TORONTO

Key Facts about Immigrants to Canada

- An average of 235,214 immigrants and refugees were accepted as Permanent Residents to Canada each year from 1999-2008. Of these 58% were economic immigrants, 27% were family class immigrants and 12% were refugees.
- An average of 31,000 refugee claimants entered Canada annually between 1999 and 2008; about 12,000 refugee claimant applications are approved every year.
- In 2006, 6.2 million of Canadian residents were born outside of Canada (19.8% of the population).
- Between 2001 and 2006, 1.1 million immigrants and refugees entered Canada; this corresponds to 69.3% of the population growth in Canada during this period.
- The proportion of immigrants of European origin has fallen from over 80 percent prior to 1967 to 47% in 1996, 17 percent by 2001, and 16.7% in 2006.
- 70.2% of newcomers reported a mother tongue other than English or French.
- The majority of immigrants--62.9%--reside in 3 major urban centres (Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal Census Metropolitan Areas); 69.3% of immigrants arriving between 2001 and 2006 settled in these 3 CMAs.
- Second-tier cities experiencing rapid growth in immigrant population include Richmond, B.C. (57.4% are immigrants), Markham (56.6% immigrants; grew by 34.1% between 2001 and 2006) and Brampton (47.8% immigrants; grew by 59.5% between 2001 and 2006).

Key Facts about Immigrants to Toronto

- Half of the city’s population--over 1.2 million persons--was born outside of Canada.
- Toronto has 30% of all recent immigrants to Canada (2001-2006), but just 8% of Canada’s population.
- Toronto received an average of 35,000 new permanent residents each year between 2004 and 2008.

Who is immigrating to Toronto?

- The majority of recent immigrants to Toronto are from Asian countries. The top regions of origin for immigrants settling in Toronto between 2001 and 2006 were:
  - South Asia (26% - nearly half from India)
  - East Asia (22% - predominantly China at 18%)
  - Europe (14% - primarily from Eastern European countries)
  - Middle East and West Central Asia (11%)
  - Caribbean, Central and South America (10%)
  - South East Asia (10% - predominantly Philippines at 8%)
  - Africa (6%)
- 81% of recent immigrants to Toronto and 47% of all residents identified themselves as members of a racialized (non-white/European) group in 2006.

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Most recent immigrants to Toronto are highly skilled and educated upon arrival:
  o Nearly 50% have post-secondary education
  o About 13% have Masters degrees or higher
  o Refugees are significantly less likely to have post-secondary education than economic or family class immigrants.

What languages do they speak?

Toronto remains a mosaic of many languages. 47% of the population had a mother tongue in a language other than English or French and 31.2% speak only a non-official language at home.

130,185 or 5.2% of the city’s population does not speak (any) English or French.

Approximately 35% of immigrants have no knowledge of English or French when they arrive in Canada.

The top languages spoken at home as reported by recent immigrants (2001-2006):

1. Chinese languages 5. Hindi
2. Urdu 6. Farsi
3. Russian 7. Spanish
4. Tagalog 8. Tamil

The top mother tongue languages for new Permanent Residents arriving in the City of Toronto in 2007 and 2008:

1. Mandarin 5. Russian
2. Spanish 6. Urdu
3. Tagalog 7. Farsi
4. Arabic 8. Bengali

Where do new immigrants live?

The majority of recent immigrants settle in the northern and eastern parts of Toronto (North York and Scarborough). The neighbourhoods with the highest number of recent immigrants (2001-06) are shown below.

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<tr>
<td>1. Woburn:</td>
<td>9,135</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. L’Amoureaux:</td>
<td>7,885</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
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<td>3. Mt. Olive-Silverstone-Jamestown:</td>
<td>7,125</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
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<td>4. Don Valley Village:</td>
<td>6,960</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
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<td>5. Willowdale East:</td>
<td>6,425</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
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<td>6. Westminster-Branson:</td>
<td>5,850</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
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<td>7. Parkwoods-Donalda:</td>
<td>5,685</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
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<td>8. Thorncliffe Park:</td>
<td>5,570</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
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<td>9. Tam O’Shanter-Sullivan:</td>
<td>5,280</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
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<td>10. Malvern:</td>
<td>4,985</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
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(note: there are 140 neighbourhoods in Toronto)

Sources: 2006 Census, City of Toronto, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, RDM, Facts and Figures 2008
DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH FOR IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES: FACT SHEET

The ‘Healthy Immigrant Effect’

- Upon arrival in Canada, the health of immigrants is better than that of the Canadian-born population (e.g., Beiser, 2005). The “healthy immigrant effect” is believed to be strongest among recent immigrants (10 years or less since immigration) because Canadian immigration policies tend to disqualify individuals with serious medical conditions.
- Several research studies have suggested that the health status of immigrants to Canada deteriorates over time (e.g., Hyman, 2004, De Maio & Kemp, 2009).
- Significant declines in immigrants’ health status are noted within as little as two years post-arrival. Refugees are observed to have lower levels of health upon arrival and are more likely to transition to a state of poor health, while economic immigrants report the highest levels of self-assessed health (Newbold, 2009).
- Immigrants in lower income quartiles are significantly more likely to report a deterioration in self-reported mental health status than those with higher incomes (De Maio & Kemp, 2009).

Education and Employment

- While the unemployment rate for the Canadian-born population is 4.4%, the rate for very recent immigrants is 11% (almost 3 times higher). Among the latter, those born in Africa are at 19.7% unemployment rate (with those from East Africa at 24.6%).
- Recent immigrants with a bachelor’s degree had unemployment rate three times greater than Canadian-born degree holders (11.8% compared with 3.9%); Recent immigrants with graduate level degrees had unemployment rates more than 3.5 times higher than Canadian-born counterparts.
- After 15 years, immigrants with university degrees are still more likely than native-born to be working in low skill jobs. (Garlarneau & Morissette, 2008; Picot, 2008).
- “Compared with children of Canadian-born parents, children of immigrant parents achieved a clear advantage with regard to university completion rates. Among immigrant groups, children whose parents were from Africa, China, India, West Asia/Middle East, United Kingdom, Eastern Europe or “other Europe” had significantly higher rates of university completion than children of Canadian born parents” (Abada, Hou & Ram, 2008).

Income and Poverty

- In the City of Toronto, 46% of recent immigrant (2001-2006) households and 23% of other immigrant households (arriving before 2001) were low income, compared to 19.4% on non-immigrant households.
- In 2006, 47.5% of recent immigrant children (0-14) and 28.9% of other immigrant children in Canada experienced poverty, compared to 16.6% of children born in Canada.
The earning gap between recent immigrants and Canadian born has been widening despite higher immigrant educational levels. In 2006, recent immigrants were twice as likely as Canadian born residents to have a university degree.

**Housing**

- In 2001, recently arrived immigrants paid a higher proportion of their income on shelter (31%) compared to non-immigrants (21%) (the ratio dropped according to length of residence in Canada) (Murdie, 2006).
- 44% of recent immigrants to Toronto in 2001 fell below the minimum standards of housing (as defined by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation) and could not afford to rent housing locally that meets these standards (Murdie, 2006).
- Refugees across Canada report low rates of home ownership compared to ‘family class’ immigrants and ‘skilled workers’. They face the most crowded circumstances, are the most likely to experience problems when looking for housing, and over half of the refugee tenants within this group spent more than 30 per cent of their income on housing (CMHC, 2009).
- Compared to other homeless people in Toronto, homeless recent immigrants were more likely to report financial reasons for being homeless (i.e., insufficient income or lack of job/employment), and less likely to report reasons related to mental health conditions or addictions (CRICH, 2009).

**Discrimination**

- In 2004, 26% of recent immigrants and 18% of established immigrants reported experiencing discrimination—compared to 10% for respondents born in Canada (General Social Survey, 2004).
- Data from the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada suggests that visible minorities and immigrants who experienced discrimination or unfair treatment are most likely to experience a decline in self-reported health status after settling in Canada (De Maio & Kemp, 2009).

**Access to Health Care**

- Overall, immigrants show similar patterns of medical service utilization to the Canadian-born population (e.g., Globerman, 1998).
- However, differences exist within the immigrant population and for different types of health services. Various studies reviewed by Hyman (2001) show that that recent immigrants experience significant underutilization of preventive services (e.g. cancer screening) and mental health services, despite evidence of significant need.
- Recent immigrants and refugees in Toronto expressed concerns about health care access, wait times, language barriers and expenses, e.g., for prescriptions and services not covered by OHIP (Access Alliance, 2006).
Fact Sheet References


