

Study: COVID-19 deaths among immigrants

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Immigrants were more likely to die of COVID-19 than non-immigrants in the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. A new study released today explores differences in the distribution of deaths attributed to COVID-19 by immigration status. The study focuses on the deaths that occurred in the early days of the pandemic, from early March (when the first COVID-19 death was reported) to July 4, 2020.

According to this study, the share of COVID-19-related deaths among immigrants was greater than their share of the total Canadian population. This was particularly the case among those younger than 65. Overall, about 25% of COVID-19 deaths were linked to immigrants, a group that makes up 22% of the total population, according to the 2016 Census.

Among those younger than 65, immigrants make up 20% of the total population, but accounted for 30% of all COVID-19-related deaths. The disproportionate death burden among immigrants was also high among males, as well as in Ontario, Quebec and, particularly, British Columbia, where immigrants comprise 28% of the population, but represented 41% of the COVID-19 deaths.

COVID-19 has had a disproportionately large impact on certain population subgroups. Immigrants, especially new arrivals, can be at increased risk of COVID-19 infection and mortality, because many newly arrived immigrants live in low income or in overcrowded or multigenerational households. They are also more likely to be employed as essential workers and in occupations that are associated with a greater risk of virus infection.

Note to readers

This article is the first to use the integrated provisional COVID-19 death information taken from the Canadian Vital Statistics Death Database linked to the 2018 Longitudinal Immigration Database, which includes records of immigrants who landed in Canada between 1952 and 2018.

The study "[COVID-19 deaths among immigrants: Evidence from the early months of the pandemic](#)" is now available as part of the series *StatCan COVID-19: Data to Insights for a Better Canada* ([45280001](#)).

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