Many immigrants leave Canada within years after landing

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in The Daily, Friday, February 2, 2024

Canada has had a long period of sustained immigration since the late 1980s.

However, Canada is not always the last stop on an immigrant's migration journey. For various reasons, many immigrants decide to emigrate from Canada back to their country of origin or to another country.

Statistics Canada has examined the emigration of immigrants from 1982 to 2017 in a study entitled "Emigration of Immigrants: Results from the Longitudinal Immigration Database."

More than 15% of immigrants left Canada within 20 years of landing

This study revealed that more than 15% of immigrants admitted to Canada from 1982 to 2017 emigrated within 20 years of admission. However, this proportion varies by characteristic, including immigrants' country of birth.

Emigration is slightly more common from three to seven years after admission. This period may reflect the length of time that immigrants try to integrate into Canada by attempting to find a job and a place to live and adapting to life in Canada. Some immigrants may also emigrate if they encounter challenges in integrating or because they intended to from the outset.

Immigrants born in Taiwan, the United States, France, Hong Kong or Lebanon and immigrants admitted in the investor and entrepreneur categories are more likely to emigrate

More than 25% of immigrants born in Taiwan, the United States, France, Hong Kong or Lebanon emigrated within 20 years of admission. These countries can continue to be attractive to their nationals because of a higher standard of living or because settling in Canada was part of a larger migration strategy.

Furthermore, over 40% of immigrants admitted in the investor category and 30% of those admitted in the entrepreneur category emigrated within 20 years of admission. These categories include wealthy immigrants who tend to be highly mobile and who may—even when they are admitted—intend to leave Canada in the future.

Looking ahead

Every quarter, the Demographic Estimates Program publishes estimates of the number of emigrants. These estimates help to track the recent evolution of Canadian emigration and how it affects population growth in Canada and its different regions.

Longitudinal Immigration Database data will continue to be used to analyze the socioeconomic situation of immigrants, including economic integration and retention in the province or territory of admission.

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Note to readers

Data source

This study uses data from the Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB), which includes administrative data for all immigrants since 1952 and non-permanent residents since 1980. Outcomes for this population are linked to tax files since 1982. The IMDB provides detailed, reliable information on the socioeconomic situation of immigrants after their admission, such as employment income and mobility.

Definition of emigration

Because there is no national database that measures the number of people who leave Canada, immigrant emigration must be estimated using indirect criteria. In this study, emigrants are identified through information in T1 tax returns and in the Permanent Resident Landing File from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. The results of this study were compared with results from other sources and have a high degree of coherence.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5057.

The study "Emigration of Immigrants: Results from the Longitudinal Immigration Database" is now available.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; **infostats@statcan.gc.ca**) or Media Relations (**statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca**).