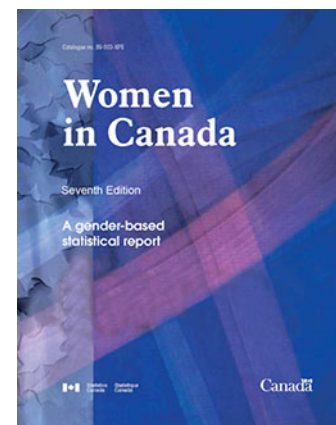


## Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report

### Immigrant Women

by Tamara Hudon

Release date: October 21, 2015



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## Introduction

Immigration is a major driver of Canada's population growth.<sup>1</sup> Over the last century, millions of men, women, and children have travelled from abroad to work, study, and live in Canada. Those who are granted the right to live in Canada permanently comprise Canada's immigrant population. In 2014, it is estimated that over 260,000 people immigrated to Canada.<sup>2,3</sup> These newcomers form a diverse group, contributing to the country's richly multicultural character. In recent decades, changing trends in immigration have shifted the demographic characteristics of the immigrant population in Canada. This chapter explores these trends from a gender-based perspective.

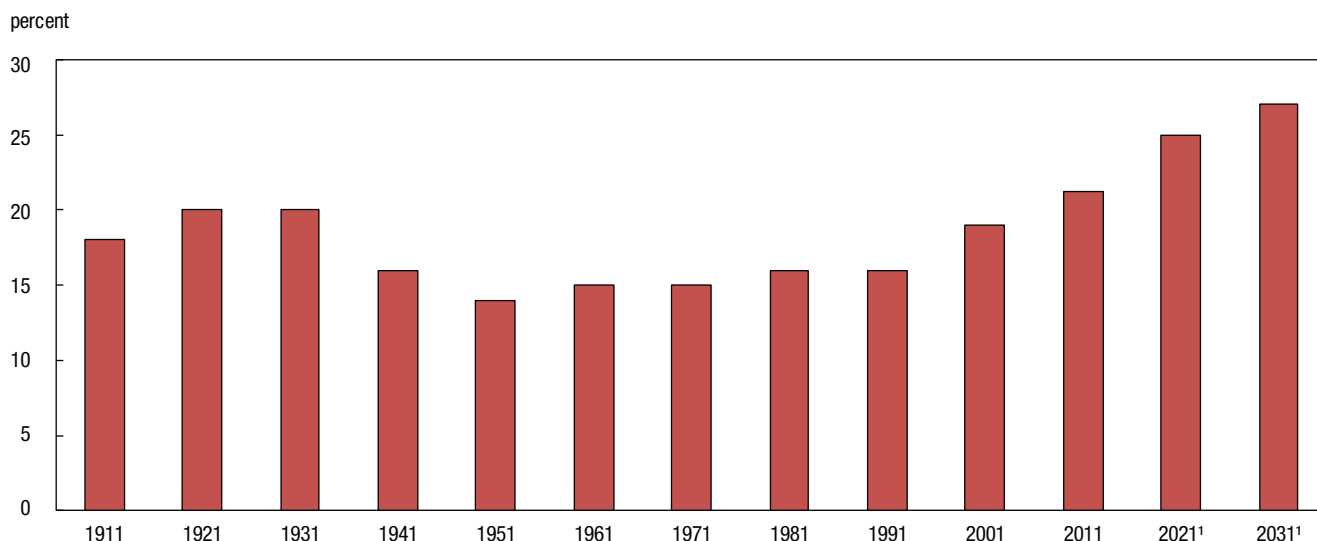
## A growing population

The 2011 National Household Survey estimated 3,544,400 immigrant women and girls in Canada, representing 21.2% of the country's total female population (Chart 1). This marks the highest proportion of immigrants among Canada's female population in 100 years. In close parallel, the total immigrant population has also grown to represent 20.6% of the total population in 2011.

According to the reference scenario of Statistics Canada's population projections<sup>4</sup>, if the 2001-2006 immigration trends continue, Canada could be home to about 11.1 million immigrants in 2031. Of these, approximately 5.8 million (52.3%) would be women and girls. Immigrants would then constitute 27.4% of Canada's female population.

**Chart 1**

### Female immigrants as a proportion of the total female population, Canada, 1911 to 2011 and 2021 to 2031 projections



1. Projection.

**Sources:** Statistics Canada, censuses of the population, 1911 to 2006; Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011; and Projections of the Diversity of the Canadian Population, 2006 to 2031. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2010. Catalogue no. 91-551-X.

The proportion of the immigrant population that is female has also grown substantially over the last 100 years. In 2011, 52.3% of immigrants were female, reflecting a slightly higher proportion of females in the immigrant population compared to 50.8% of females in Canada's total population. In contrast, one hundred years earlier, 38.7% of immigrants were women and girls, compared to 47% in the total population.

## Most are admitted under economic or family classes

Each year, Citizenship and Immigration Canada grants a number of individuals the right to live in Canada permanently. In 2013, Canada admitted approximately 259,000 such permanent residents, 51.8% of whom were women and girls (Chart 2).

1. Statistics Canada. *Table 051-0004 - Components of population growth, Canada, provinces and territories, annual (persons)*, CANSIM (database). (accessed: 2015-03-31)

2. Statistics Canada. 2014. "Quarterly estimates of demographic components, national perspective – Immigrants." Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 91-002-X. Ottawa, Ontario. *Quarterly Demographic Estimates*. Statistics Canada.

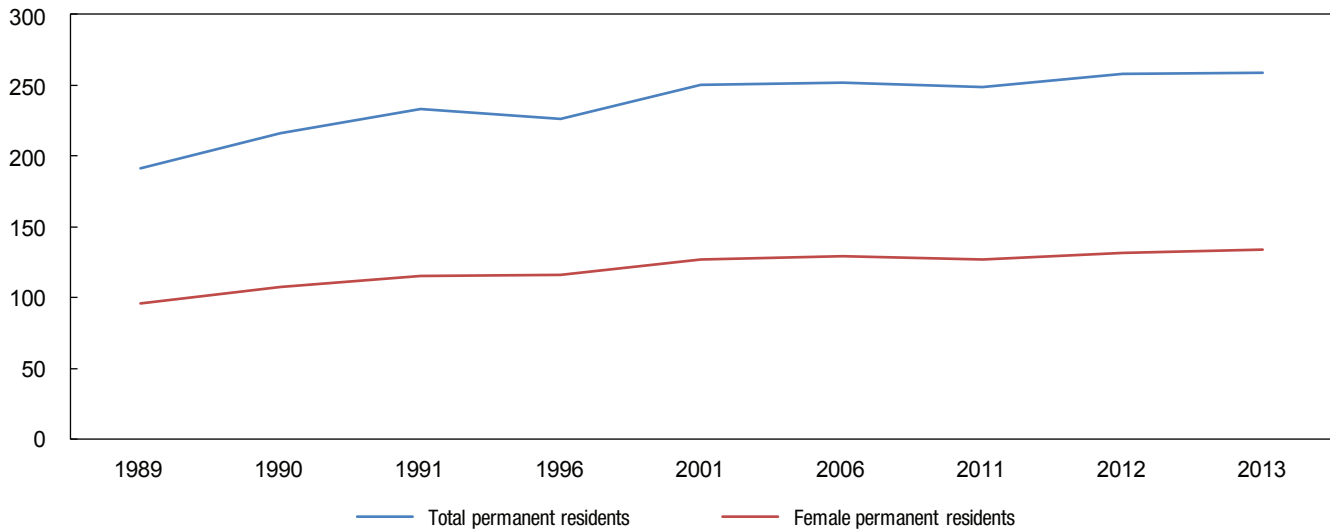
3. Based on preliminary population estimates.

4. Caron Malenfant, Eric, André Lebel and Laurent Martel. 2010. *Projections of the Diversity of the Canadian Population*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 91-551-X. Ottawa, Ontario. Statistics Canada.

Chart 2

## Female permanent residents and total permanent residents admitted annually, Canada, 1989 to 2013

number (in thousands)



Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures, 2013.

Canada's immigration policy is designed to fulfil three main objectives: to promote economic development, to reunite families, and to protect refugees.<sup>5</sup>

Reflecting these objectives, immigrants are admitted to Canada as permanent residents under three broad categories: economic class, family class, or refugee class. In 2013, 54.1% of female permanent residents were admitted under the economic class (19.7% as principal applicants and 34.4% as the spouse or dependent of a principal applicant), 34.3% were admitted under the family class, and 8.9% were admitted as refugees. A further 2.7% were special cases that did not qualify under any of the three broad admission categories, and who were admitted for humanitarian or compassionate reasons, or for reasons related to public policy. Compared to females, a larger proportion (60.6%) of male permanent residents were admitted under the economic class (30.7% as principal applicants and 29.9% as a spouse or dependent of a principal applicant), while fewer (27%) were admitted under the family class, and a similar proportion (9.7%) were admitted as refugees.

### Immigration Categories

Immigration categories are defined by Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

**Economic class:** Permanent residents selected for their skills and ability to contribute to Canada's economy.

- **Principal applicants:** Permanent residents identified as the principal applicant on their application for a permanent resident visa for themselves and, if applicable, for accompanying spouse and/or dependants when they apply to immigrate to Canada.
- **Spouse and dependants:** Permanent residents who are the spouse, common-law or conjugal partner, or dependent children of the principal applicant and listed as such on the application.

**Family class:** Permanent residents sponsored by close relatives or family members in Canada. Family class immigrants include spouses and common-law partners; parents and grandparents; and others (i.e., dependent children, children under the age of 18 whom the sponsor intends to adopt in Canada, brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, and grandchildren who are orphans under 18 years of age, or any other relative if the sponsor has no relative as described above, either abroad or in Canada).

**Refugee class (Protected Persons in Canada):** Persons are admitted under the refugee class after being deemed as needing Canada's protection. Protected persons have been found to be either a Convention Refugee as defined by the United Nations 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 protocol, or a person needing protection based on risk to life, risk of cruel and unusual treatment or punishment, or danger of torture as defined in the Convention Against Torture.

5. Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2013). Facts and Figures. <http://cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2013/permanent/index.asp> (accessed: May 1, 2015).

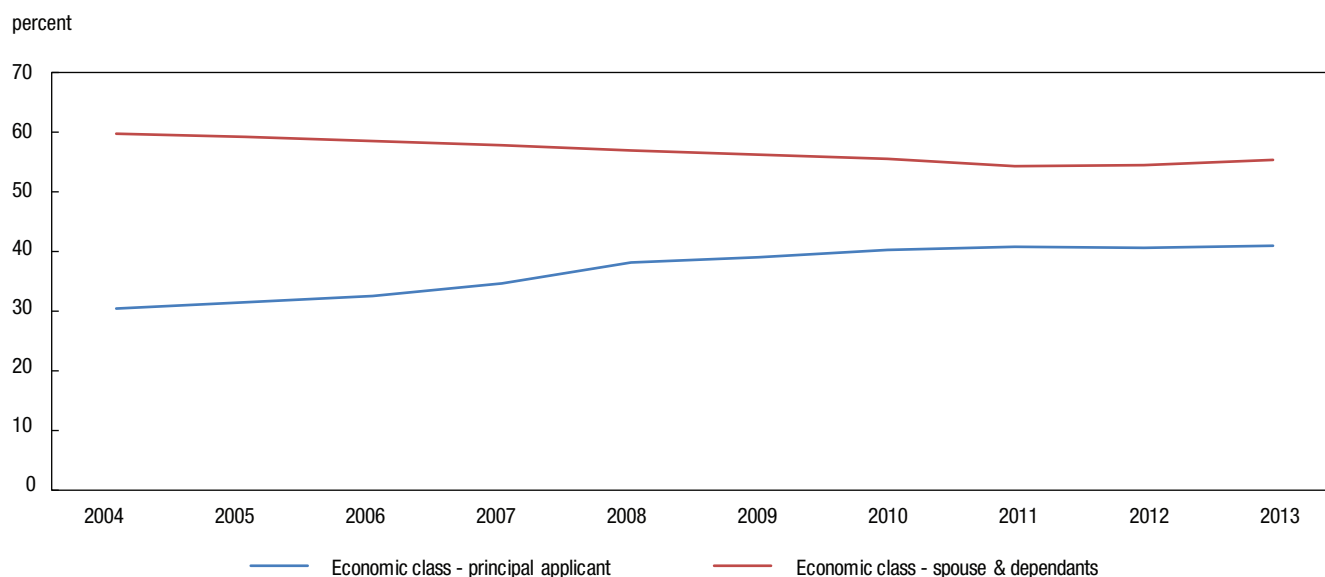
## A rising proportion of principal applicants in the economic class are female

Applications to the economic class can be made either as a principal applicant or as the spouse or dependent of a principal applicant. Relative to the total number of admissions in the economic class, more females are admitted as spouses and dependents, whereas more males are admitted as principal applicants. During the last 10 years however, there has been a trend towards gender parity in these groups (Chart 3).

Over the last decade, the proportion of spouses and dependants in the economic class that are female has been in slow decline. In 2013, 55.3% of spouses and dependants admitted under the economic class were female, down from 59.7% in 2004.

Meanwhile, female principal applicant admissions under the economic class have grown in proportion. In 2004, females comprised 30.4% of applicants admitted under this class. In 2013, however, females accounted for 40.9% of principal applicants admitted under the economic class.

**Chart 3**  
**Proportion of economic class admissions that are female, by applicant status, Canada, 2004 to 2013**



Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures, 2013.

The proportion of females comprising several subcategories of principal applicant economic class admissions has also grown over the last decade. Between 2004 and 2013 female representation in provincial nominee admissions increased by nearly 13 percentage points (Chart 4). In 2004, over 1 in 5 (21.4%) provincial nominees were women, compared to more than 1 in 3 (34.3%) in 2013. Similarly, the proportion of skilled worker admissions that were female rose by just over 10 percentage points, during this time period - from 28.2% in 2004 to 39% in 2013. Women also comprised 21.3% of entrepreneurs, investors or self-employed admissions in 2013, up from 14.2% in 2004.

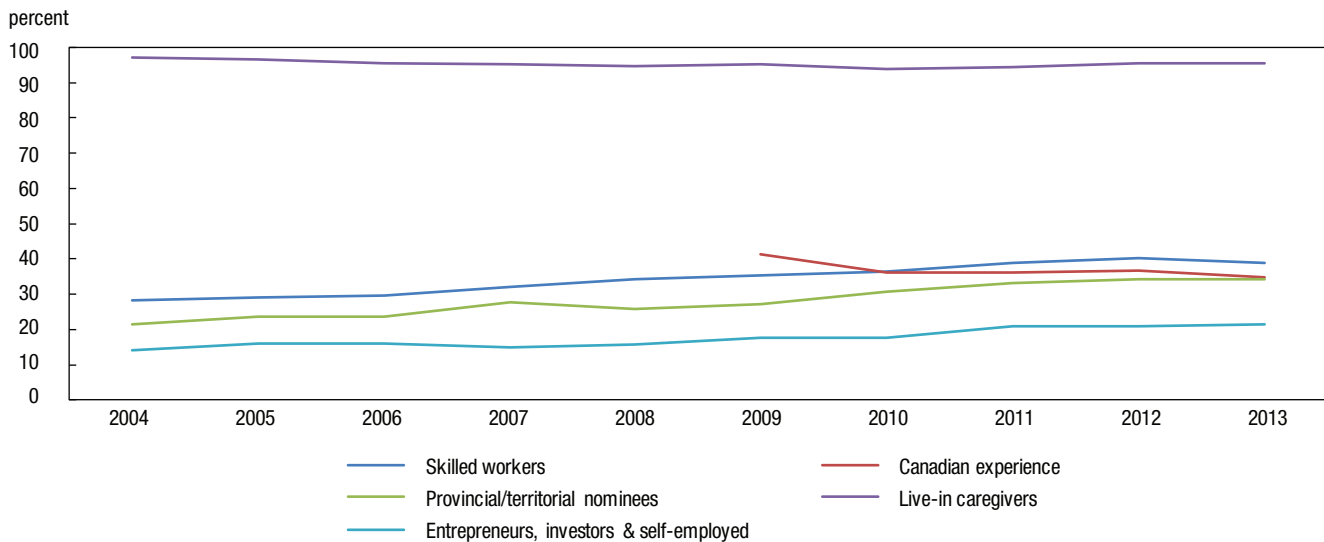
### Subcategories of the economic class:

Subcategories of the economic class are defined by Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

- **Skilled workers:** Economic immigrants who are able to demonstrate their ability to enter the labour market and successfully establish in Canada by meeting selection criteria that assess factors such as English or French language abilities, and work experience.
- **Canadian experience:** This immigration category became effective in September 17, 2008. This is a prescribed class of persons who may become permanent residents on the basis of their Canadian experience. They must intend to reside in a province or territory other than Quebec and must have maintained temporary resident status during their qualifying period of work experience as well as during any period of full-time study or training in Canada.
- **Provincial/territorial nominees:** Economic immigrants selected by a province or territory for specific skills that will contribute to the local economy to meet specific labour market needs.
- **Live-in caregivers:** Persons granted permanent resident status as economic immigrants after their participation in the Live-in Caregiver Program. Initially, live-in caregivers must be qualified to provide care for children, sick or elderly people, or persons with a disability. After two years, they are eligible to apply for permanent resident status.
- **Entrepreneurs, investors and self-employed:** Economic immigrants in the business immigrant category, which includes those who invest their money in an approved venture, those who intend to run their own business, or those who intend to be self-employed.

There are two exceptions to increases in female representation in principal applicants admitted under economic class subcategories. First, the proportion of females, relative to males, in the Canadian experience class decreased between 2009 (when the program was first implemented) and 2013. In 2009, 41.3% of permanent residents admitted under this class were female, compared to 34.8% in 2013. Meanwhile, the proportion of principal applicant live-in caregivers that were female remained fairly constant between 2004 and 2013. In 2013, nearly all (95.5%) immigrants admitted under the live-in caregiver class were female.

**Chart 4**  
**Proportion of females in economic class subcategories, Canada, 2004 to 2013**



**Note:** Canadian Experience Class was implemented in 2008 and therefore there were no admissions prior to this year.

**Source:** Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures, 2013.

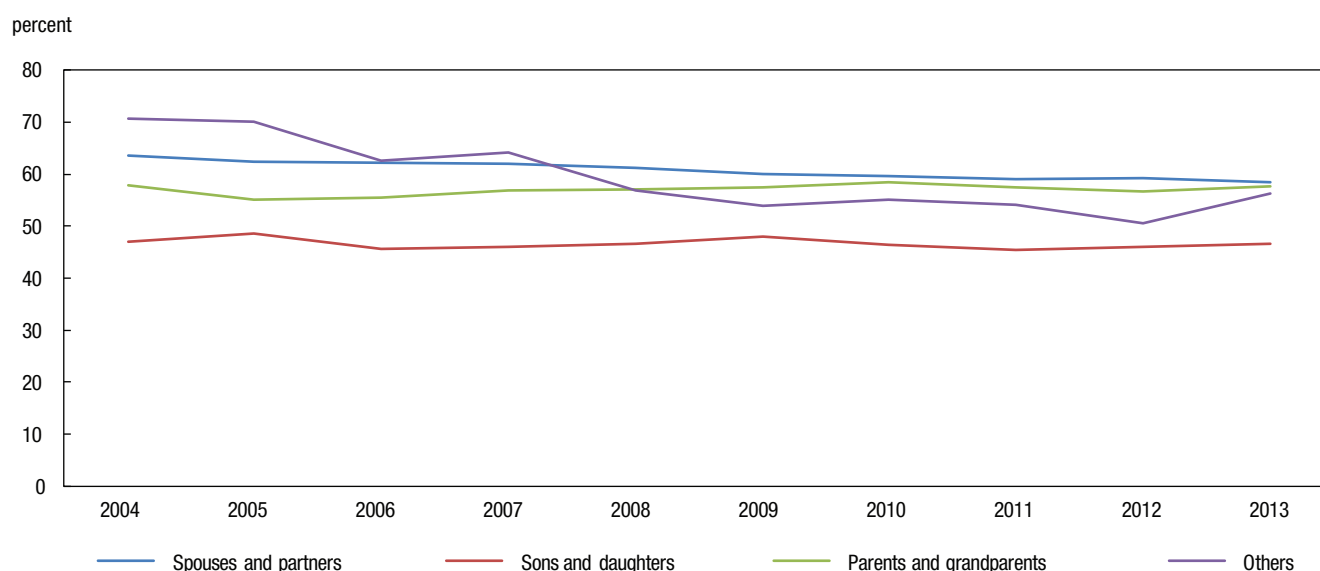
Females also comprised a larger proportion of permanent residents admitted through the family class relative to males. In 2013, females accounted for 57.7% of all permanent residents admitted under the family class.

However, certain subcategories of the family class have trended towards an equal ratio of females to males over the last decade. In 2004, 63.6% of spouses and partners in the family category were female. After steadily declining for several years, this proportion reached a low of 58.4% in 2013 (Chart 5).

The proportion of admissions under the “Other” subcategory of the family class that were female declined even more noticeably between 2004 (70.7%) and 2013 (56.2%). This was due to changes in immigration law surrounding adoption. In 2004, 75.5% of “Other” admissions under the family class were immigrants adopted by a Canadian citizen or permanent resident. Of these, 78.7% were female. On December 23rd, 2007, Canadian citizens became eligible to bring their adopted children to Canada as citizens rather than first going through the immigration process.<sup>6</sup> As a result, by 2013, only 34% of admissions from this category were adoptions by Canadian citizens, effectively reducing the proportion of females in this category.

The male to female ratio in other subcategories of the family class has changed very little over the last ten years. In 2013, there were fewer females admitted as daughters (46.6%) than males admitted as sons in the family class. There were also more women admitted as parents or grandparents (57.6%) than men.

**Chart 5**  
**Proportion of females in family class subcategories, Canada, 2004 to 2013**



Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures, 2013.

In contrast to gender differences observed in the economic and family classes, the refugee class has been fairly equally divided between males and females overall. In 2013, women and girls made-up 49.6% of the refugee class – comparable to 2004 when 48.1% of refugees were female. Gender parity also existed in several refugee subcategories: namely, the government-assisted, refugee dependants and landed in Canada subcategories.

For the landed in Canada subcategory, however, this has not always been the case. In 2004, women and girls formed 45.2% of refugees landed in Canada, that is to say refugees who had lived in Canada prior to obtaining permanent residence. Since then, there has been steady increase in the proportion of females relative to males in this category. In 2013, 50.1% of landed refugee admissions were female. In contrast to this trend towards gender parity, women and girls have consistently comprised a slightly smaller proportion of privately sponsored refugees over the last decade. In 2013, 46% of privately sponsored refugees were female.

6. Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Overview of Bill C-14. <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/tools/cit/overview/hist.asp> (accessed February 11, 2015).

### Subcategories of the refugee class:

Subcategories of the refugee class are defined by Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

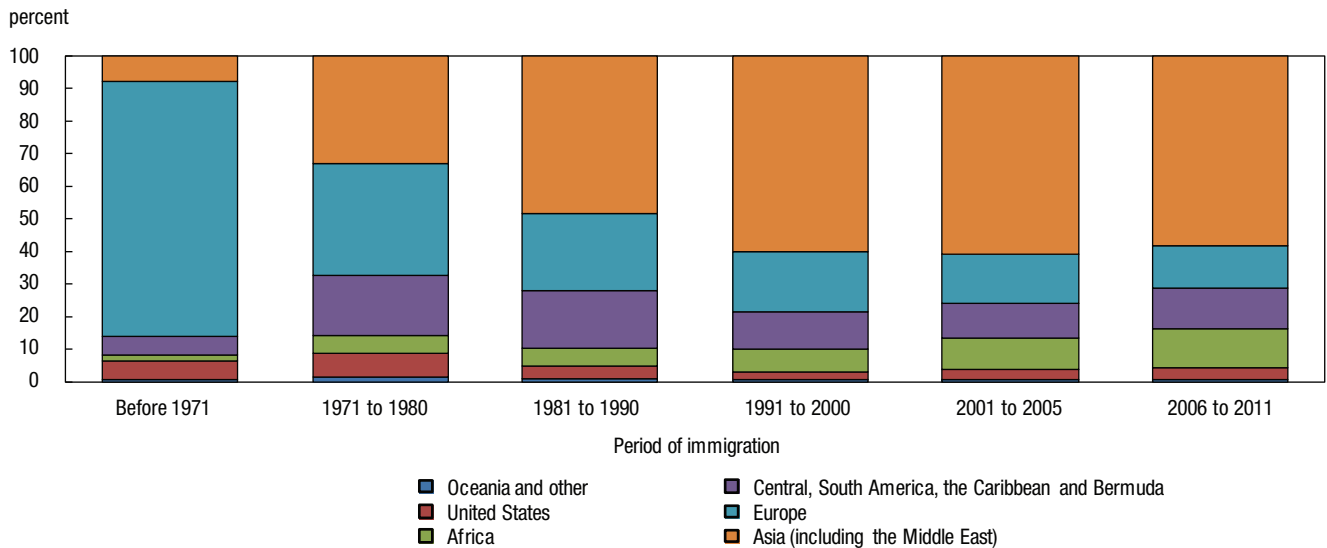
- **Landed in Canada:** Permanent residents in the refugee category who have had their refugee claims accepted, while in Canada, and who subsequently applied for and were granted permanent resident status in Canada.
- **Government-assisted:** Permanent residents in the refugee category who are selected abroad for resettlement to Canada as Convention Refugees under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act or as members of the Convention Refugees Abroad Class, and who receive resettlement assistance from the federal government.
- **Refugee dependants:** Refugee dependants are permanent residents in the refugee category who are family members of a refugee landed in Canada, and who were living abroad or in Canada at the time of application. Their applications for permanent residence are considered concurrently with that of the principal applicant in Canada.
- **Privately sponsored:** Permanent residents in the refugee category who are privately sponsored by organizations, individuals or groups of individuals.

### Asia and the Middle East are the birthplace of more than half of recent immigrants

The birthplaces of Canada's immigrant population span the globe, with close to 200 birth countries reported in the 2011 National Household Survey. Among female immigrants, the most frequently reported birth country was the People's Republic of China (8.4%). The remaining four of the top five reported countries included the United Kingdom (7.9%), India (7.8%), the Philippines (7.5%), and the United States (4.1%). Among recent female immigrants, who landed in Canada between 2006 and 2011, the top five birth places were: the Philippines (14%), the People's Republic of China (11.2%), India (10.1%), the United States (3.8%) and Pakistan (3%).

Chart 6

#### Region of birth of female immigrants by period of immigration, Canada, 2011



**Note:** "Oceania and other" included immigrants born in Oceania, in Canada, in Saint Pierre and Miquelon and responses not included elsewhere, such as "born at sea".

**Source:** Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

The presence of three Asian countries in the top five reported countries of origin for recent immigrants is indicative of an overall shift in the source regions of Canada's immigrants over the last four decades. Since the 1970s, changes in Canada's immigration programs to build on economic, social and humanitarian goals, alongside international events affecting migration and refugees, have resulted in changes in the proportion of immigrants coming from different world regions.



The large majority (78%) of women and girls who immigrated to Canada before 1971 originated from Europe (Chart 6). Since the 1970s, however, the proportion of European immigrants has rapidly declined, while the proportion of immigrants originating from Asia and the Middle East has risen in tandem.

Asia and the Middle East was the birthplace reported by the majority of female immigrants who arrived since the early 1990s. Sixty percent of female immigrants who landed between 1991 and 2000 reported Asia and the Middle East as their birthplace, a figure that is relatively consistent for those who landed in more recent years.

The proportion of female immigrants reporting an African country as their birthplace has also steadily risen, although at a somewhat slower pace. In 2011, 11.9% of recent female immigrants, having landed between 2006 and 2011, were born in Africa, compared to 1.8% of those who landed before 1971.

### Admission category differs by region of birth

The admission categories under which immigrants landed in Canada differed by region of birth.

In 2011, most recent immigrant women and girls arrived through the economic class, either as principal applicants or spouses or dependents of principal applicants. Those who were born in Central, South America, Bermuda and the Caribbean (19.9%) and Africa (17.8%), however, were more likely to have landed as refugees compared to those who were born in Oceania (0%), Europe (2.9%), the United States (7%) or Asia and the Middle East (7.4%). A larger proportion of immigrant women and girls born in the United States (43.5%) and Oceania (51.9%) arrived under the family class compared to those born elsewhere.<sup>7</sup>

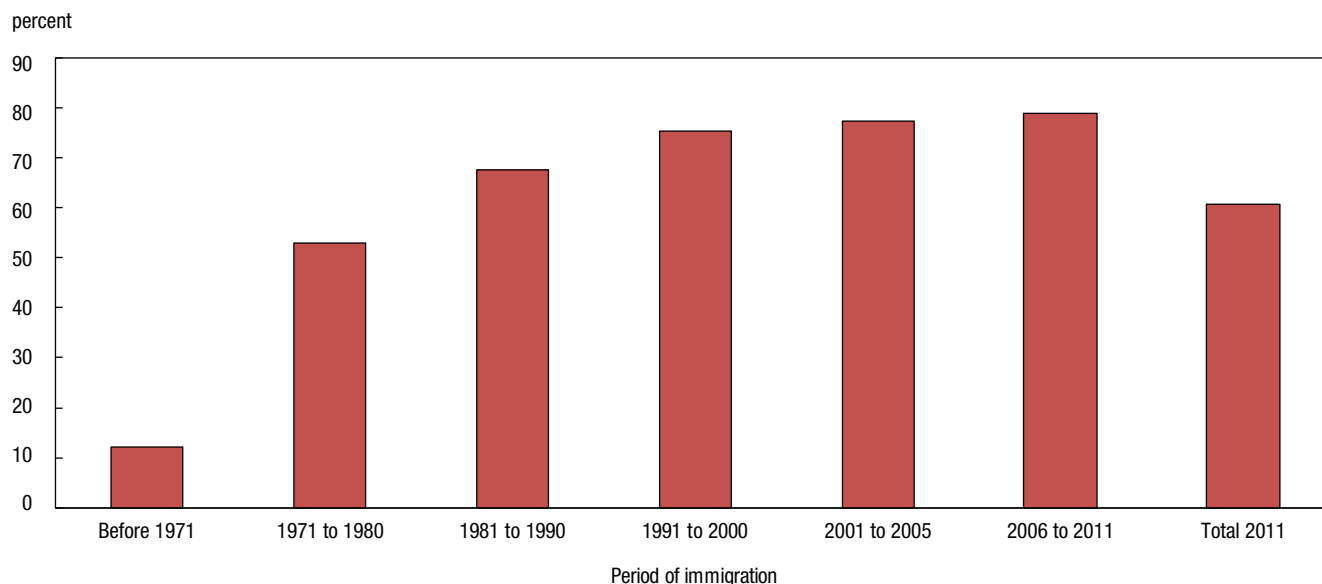
### Most female immigrants belong to a visible minority group

In 2011, 60.6% of immigrant females belonged to a visible minority group. In comparison, 19.3% of Canada's total female population belonged to a visible minority group.

As fewer new immigrants arrive from Europe, a greater proportion identify as belonging to a visible minority group. In 2011, 79% of recent female arrivals belonged to a visible minority group, compared to 53% of those who arrived between 1971 and 1980, and 12.2% of those who arrived prior to 1971 (Chart 7).<sup>8</sup>

**Chart 7**

#### Percentage of visible minority females among immigrant females by period of immigration, Canada, 2011



**Source:** Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

7. This data reflects results from a record linkage, using exact matching techniques, between the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) and the administrative Immigrant Landing File (ILF). The ILF consists of immigrants landed between 1980 and May 10, 2011. As a result of this linkage, ILF data is available for approximately 78% of immigrant women who have landed in that time period. It is possible that the distributions for unlinked records differ from those that were linked.

8. A subsequent chapter of Women in Canada, Visible Minority Women, details the distribution of women and girls across specific visible minority groups. It also discusses the relationship between immigration and the presence of various visible minority groups in Canada.

## Majority settle in four most populated provinces

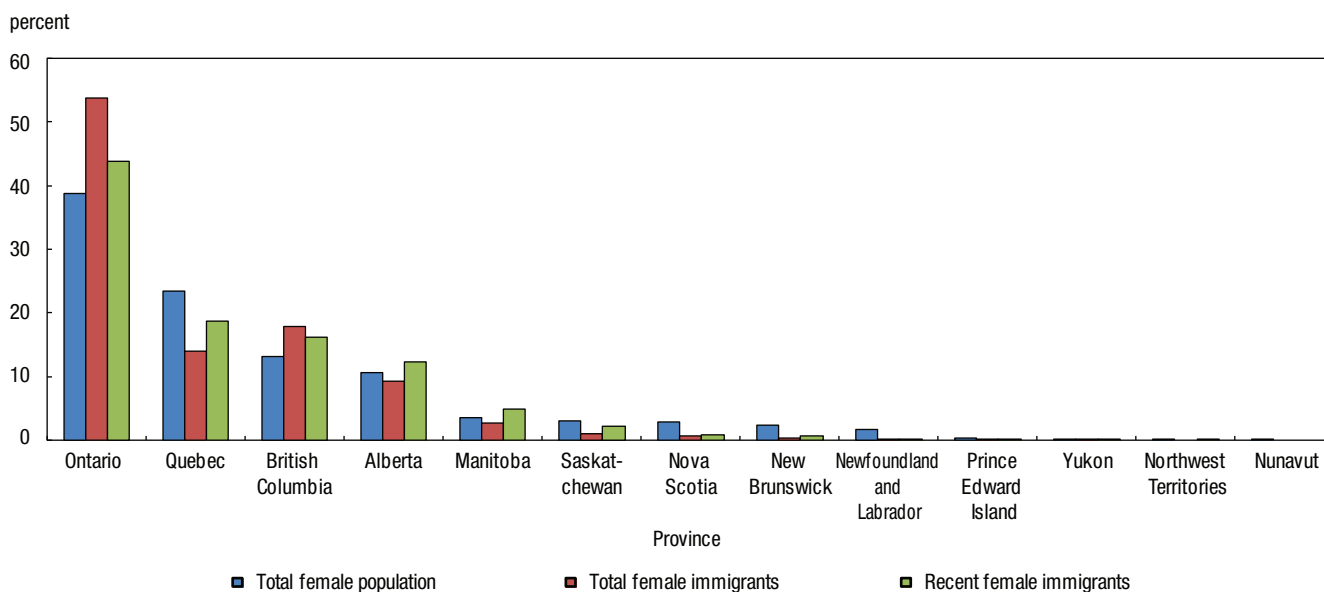
Immigrants, both male and female, tend to settle in the most populated areas of Canada. In 2011, the vast majority, 94.9%, of all female immigrants and 91.1% of recent female immigrants lived in the four most populated Canadian provinces: Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia and Alberta. In comparison, 83.5% of Canadian-born women and girls lived in these provinces.<sup>9</sup>

Two provinces, Ontario and British Columbia, held a greater share of the female immigrant population than their share of the Canada's total female population (Chart 8). Ontario was home to 53.7% of female immigrants but home to only 38.8% of the total female population in Canada. British Columbia was home to 17.8% of all female immigrants in Canada, compared to 13.2% of all females in Canada.

In addition to a disproportionate share of the total female immigrant population, Ontario and British Columbia were also home to a greater share of recent female immigrants compared to their share of the total female population. Despite that the total female immigrant population in Alberta is just less than its share of the female population in Canada, Alberta's 12.3% share of recent female immigrants is slightly higher than its 10.6% share of the total female population.

**Chart 8**

**Proportion of total female population, total female immigrants and recent female immigrants by province or territory, Canada, 2011**



Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

## Region of birth differs by province

Certain regional characteristics, such as language use, climate, or proximity to one's home country, may be more attractive to particular immigrant groups. As such, the distribution of immigrant source regions differed between the four most populated provinces.

Of all immigrant women and girls living in Quebec in 2011, 17.1% were born in Africa. Immigrants born in Africa comprised a comparably smaller proportion of the female immigrant populations in Alberta (7.9%), Ontario (5.3%), or British Columbia (3%) (Chart 9). Females born in Africa comprised an even larger proportion of Quebec's recent immigrant population (30.1%), compared to Alberta (11.3%), Ontario (8%) or British Columbia (3.2%).

The second most frequently reported region of birth for immigrant females living in Quebec was Central, South America, the Caribbean and Bermuda (21.4%). Recent female immigrants in Quebec were slightly more likely (23.8%) to be from this region compared to the total immigrant population.<sup>10</sup> In comparison, 13.5% of Ontario's total immigrant population, and 12.3% of Ontario's recent immigrant population was from Central, South America, the Caribbean and Bermuda. Smaller proportions of the total immigrant population in Alberta (8.4%) and British Columbia (4%), like their respective recent immigrant populations (10.1% and 4.6%) were from this region.

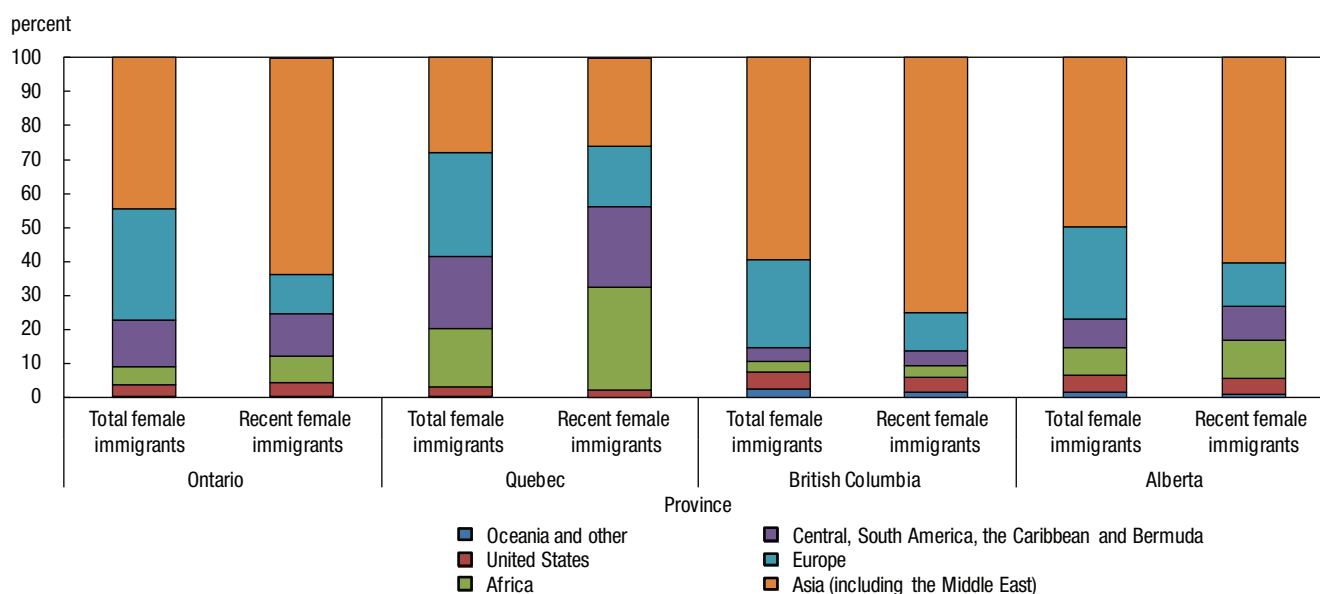
9. For more information on immigrant representation in the provinces and territories see Statistics Canada's Focus on Geography Series, Catalogue no. 99-010-X2011005.

10. A sizeable proportion of the female immigrant population in Quebec born in this region were born in Haiti; specifically, 36.6% of all immigrant females and 29.5% of recent immigrant females from the region of Central, South America, the Caribbean and Bermuda were born in Haiti.

Both Ontario (33%) and Quebec's (30.5%) immigrant populations were comprised of a larger proportion of women and girls born in Europe compared to Alberta and British Columbia (27.3% and 26%). However, when considering only recent immigrants, Quebec's female immigrant population was made-up of a larger share (17.9%) of European-born compared to Alberta (12.8%), Ontario (11.8%) or British Columbia (11.2%).

On balance, the female immigrant population in British Columbia (59.6%), Alberta (49.8%) and Ontario (44.4%) included larger shares of people born in Asia and the Middle East compared to the female immigrant population in Quebec (28.0%). This difference was larger in the recent immigrant population. Just over 75% of the female recent immigrant population in British Columbia was born in Asia and the Middle East in 2011. Women and girls born in this region comprised 63.6% of the recent immigrant population in Ontario, and 60.3% of the recent immigrant population in Alberta. In contrast, 25.9% of recent immigrant women and girls in Quebec reported Asia and the Middle East as their birth region.

**Chart 9**  
**Region of birth by province for total and recent female immigrants, Canada, 2011**



Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

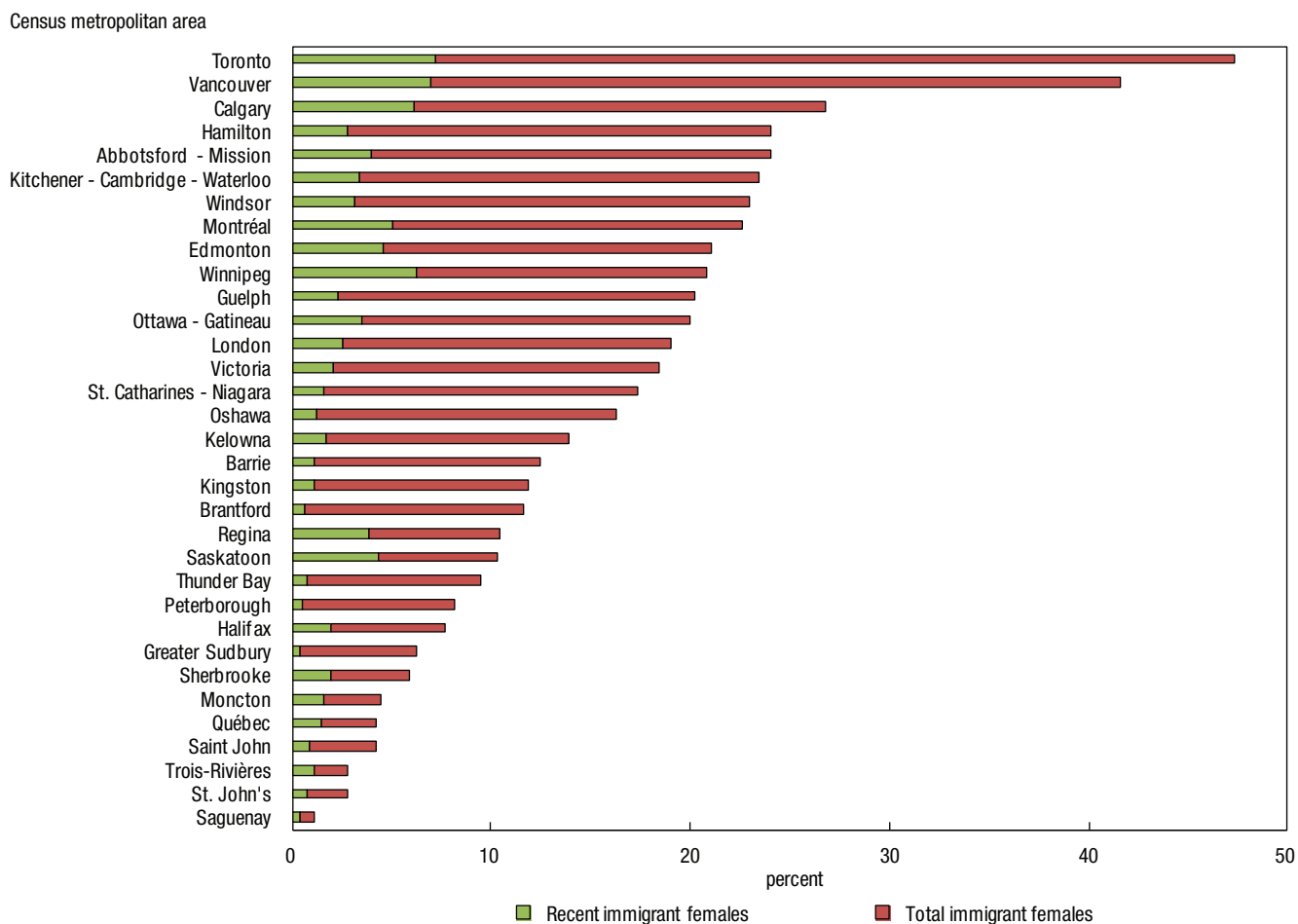
## Most live in large census metropolitan areas

The relatively high proportion of immigrants residing in the most populated provinces is related to the fact that these provinces contain the largest metropolitan areas. In 2011, 91.1% of female immigrants, and 92.5% of recent female immigrants lived in one of the 33 census metropolitan areas (CMAs). In contrast, 69.6% of all females in Canada resided in one of these areas.

Toronto, Vancouver, Montréal and Calgary were the four CMAs with the largest shares of female immigrants. Of these, the largest group of immigrant women and girls (37.9%) resided in Toronto. They accounted for 47.3% of Toronto's female population (Chart 10). Vancouver was home to the second largest share of immigrant females (13.7%), who made up 41.6% of all female residents of that CMA. Another 12.2% of immigrant females resided in Montréal, comprising 22.6% of its female population. Calgary was home to 4.5% of female immigrants; they accounted for 26.8% of the female residents in that CMA.

Chart 10

## Immigrant and recent immigrant females as a percentage of total female population, by census metropolitan area, Canada, 2011



Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

Although these four CMAs were home to the largest share of immigrant women and girls, an analysis of recent immigration patterns suggests that the areas settled by newcomers to Canada may be shifting. The proportion of recent immigrant females residing in the CMA of Toronto had decreased in 2011 (33.5%), compared to 2006 (40.6%) and 2001 (42.9%). Meanwhile, a larger proportion of recent immigrant females reported living in Montréal in 2011 (15.9%), compared to in 2006 (14.4%) and 2001 (11.5%). The proportion of recent immigrant females who lived in Calgary also increased, from 3.8% and 5.2% in 2001 and 2006, to 6.1% in 2011.

Similar changes were observed in two of the smaller CMAs. In 2011, 4.3% of recent immigrant women and girls lived in Edmonton, compared to 2.9% in 2006 and 2.2% in 2001. The proportion of recent immigrant females who lived in Winnipeg was 3.8% in 2011, up from 2.1% in 2006 and 1.4% in 2001.

### Immigrant females form the majority in several municipalities

Within each census metropolitan area, female immigrants were more likely to settle in the most populated urban centres, namely the cities of Toronto, Vancouver, Montréal, and Calgary (Table 1). Still, as a proportion of the total female population, immigrant females can have a large impact on the demographic characteristics of even those municipalities receiving a relatively small share of this population.

For example, in 2011, the municipality of Markham was home to 6.8% of female immigrants living in the CMA of Toronto. Within this municipality, 59.4% of all females were immigrants. During the same year, Richmond was home to 12.4% of female immigrants in the Vancouver CMA and immigrant women and girls made up 61.2% of female residents in that municipality.

**Table 1**  
**Female immigrants by the most populated municipalities in the census metropolitan areas (CMA) of Toronto, Vancouver, Montréal and Calgary, Canada, 2011**

Municipalities	As a percentage of immigrant women in each CMA	As a percentage of total female population in each CMA / municipality
	percentage	
<b>Toronto CMA</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>47.3</b>
Toronto	50.0	50.2
Mississauga	14.5	54.0
Brampton	10.2	51.9
Markham	6.8	59.4
Vaughan	5.2	47.4
<b>Vancouver CMA</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>41.6</b>
Vancouver	28.7	46.1
Surrey	20.1	41.7
Burnaby	12.3	53.1
Richmond	12.4	61.2
Coquitlam	5.6	42.6
<b>Montréal CMA</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>22.6</b>
Montreal	63.6	33.4
Laval	11.3	24.4
Longueuil	3.9	14.5
Terrebonne	0.8	6.5
Repentigny	0.6	6.7
<b>Calgary CMA</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>26.8</b>
Calgary	95.4	28.3
Airdrie	1.2	9.3
Rocky View County	1.6	14.1
Cochrane	0.6	11.4
Chestermere	1.1	23.7

Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

## Younger than the Canadian-born population upon landing, but an older group overall

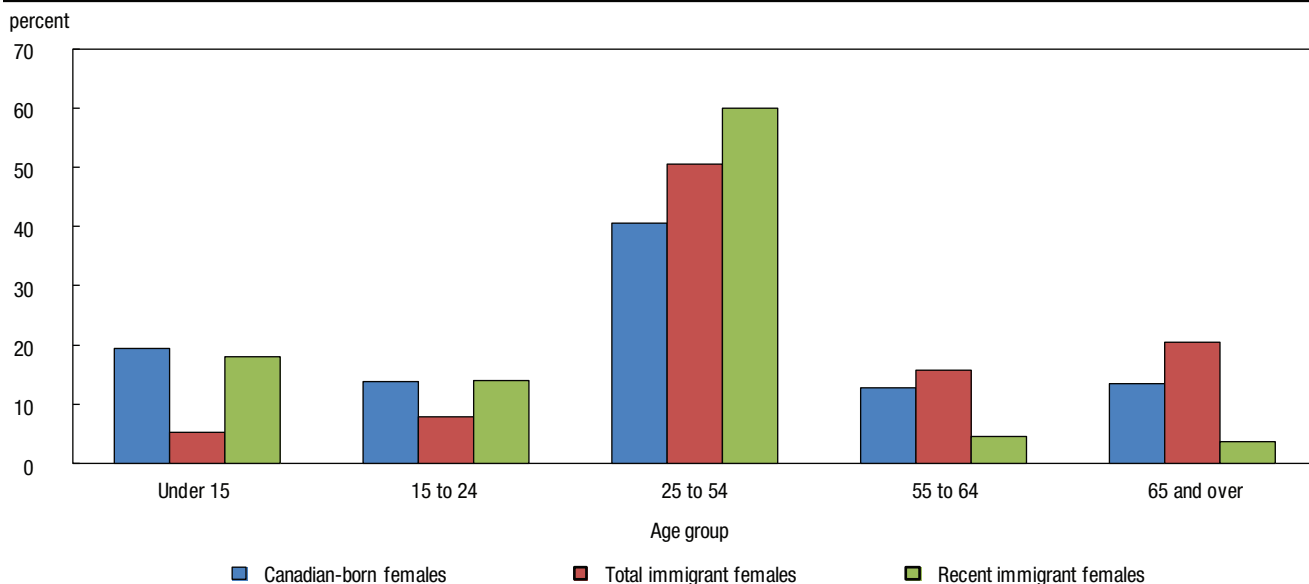
People typically migrate when they are young. As such, recent immigrants tend to be a younger group compared to the total population of immigrants, and the Canadian-born population. In 2011, the median age of recently arrived female immigrants was 32, while the median age of the total female immigrant population was 47. The total female immigrant population was, on average, 9 years older than the Canadian-born female population; the median age of this group was 38. This pattern was the same in the male population.

Age differences are further illustrated by examining the distribution of recent and total immigrant females as well as Canadian-born females across age groups (Chart 11). The fact that immigrant females as a whole were older than the Canadian-born population is reflected in the proportion of women who were 25 and older. In 2011, 86.9% of female immigrants were 25 and older, compared to 66.8% of Canadian-born females. Furthermore, while 19.4% of Canadian-born females were under 15, only 5.3% of immigrant females belonged to this age category.

Recent female immigrants were more likely to be of core working age, 25 to 54 years old, than the total female immigrant population or the Canadian-born population. Specifically, nearly 60% of recent female immigrants belonged to the core working age population of people 25 to 54 years of age. They were less likely to belong to the older working age group; only 4.5% belonged to the older working age group of 55 to 64 year olds. Still fewer, 3.6%, were 65 years of age or older. In sharp contrast, just 40.7% of Canadian-born women were 25 to 54, while 12.8% were 55 to 64 and 13.4% were 65 and over.

Chart 11

## Canadian-born females, total female immigrants and recent female immigrants by age group, Canada, 2011



Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

## Majority live with family members

Most of Canada's population lives in a census family with at least one immediate family member. These include: a spouse or common-law partner, a parent, a child, or for children without another parent in the home, a grandparent.

### Census family

The term **census family** refers to a married couple (with or without children of either or both spouses), a couple living common-law (with or without children of either or both partners) or a lone parent of any marital status, with at least one child living in the same dwelling. A couple may be of opposite or same sex. Children in a census family include grandchildren living with their grandparents but with no parents present.

Among those aged 15 and over, slightly more immigrant women (81%) compared to Canadian-born women (78.6%) lived in this type of family configuration in 2011. Although the gap was quite small for women aged 15 to 24 years old, it widened across the age groups, peaking in the 55 to 64 year old category. In this group, 74.7% of Canadian-born women compared to 81.2% of immigrant women lived in a census family (Table 2). Living in a census family was much less common for senior women, aged 65 and older; this was the living situation for only 55.1% of Canadian-born and 57.4% of immigrant women.

The type of living arrangements that senior women reside in outside of a census family differed between Canadian-born and immigrant women. Although immigrant women were generally more likely than Canadian-born women to live with a relative outside of the definition of a census family, this was most true for senior women. In 2011, 13.1% of immigrant women, and 41% of recent immigrant women aged 65 and over lived with at least one relative, compared to only 4.6% of Canadian-born women. This contributed to a smaller proportion of senior immigrant (27.9%) and recent senior immigrant women (6%) living alone compared to senior Canadian-born women (38.4%). It should be noted, however, that immigrant women were less likely than Canadian-born women to live alone across all age groups.

**Table 2**  
**Household living arrangements by immigrant status and sex, Canada, 2011**

Household living arrangement	15 to 24 years					
	Canadian-born		Total immigrants		Recent immigrants	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Living in a census family	88.1	87.0	89.8	88.4	86.5	84.0
Living with at least one relative	1.9	2.2	3.3	3.5	5.4	5.2
Living with non-relatives only	6.9	7.2	4.6	5.4	6.0	7.9
Living alone	3.2	3.5	2.3	2.7	2.1	2.8

Household living arrangement	25 to 54 years					
	Canadian-born		Total immigrants		Recent immigrants	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Living in a census family	84.4	77.4	89.2	84.6	85.6	80.6
Living with at least one relative	1.2	1.7	2.2	2.4	3.7	3.7
Living with non-relatives only	4.0	6.2	3.2	4.5	5.9	7.5
Living alone	10.4	14.7	5.4	8.6	4.7	8.2

Household living arrangement	55 to 64 years					
	Canadian-born		Total immigrants		Recent immigrants	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Living in a census family	74.7	78.4	81.2	86.4	77.3	89.7
Living with at least one relative	2.5	1.6	4.8	1.8	15.3	3.3
Living with non-relatives only	2.5	3.1	2.0	2.3	2.4	2.4
Living alone	20.3	16.9	11.9	9.5	5.0	4.5

Household living arrangement	65 years and over					
	Canadian-born		Total immigrants		Recent immigrants	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Living in a census family	55.1	76.7	57.4	82.0	51.5	85.8
Living with at least one relative	4.6	2.1	13.1	3.6	41.0	9.8
Living with non-relatives only	1.9	2.2	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.1
Living alone	38.4	19.1	27.9	12.9	6.0	3.4

**Note:** Household living arrangements is reported for the population living in private households and does not include persons living in institutional collective dwellings such as hospitals, nursing homes and penitentiaries.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

Gender differences in living arrangements were mostly consistent in direction between the Canadian-born and immigrant populations, with some difference in magnitude. Across both populations, 25 to 54 year old women were more likely than men to live in a census family. However, the difference between Canadian-born men and women (7 percentage points) was larger than the difference between immigrant men and women (4.6 percentage points). This pattern was reversed in the population of senior men and women, where women were less likely than men to be living in a census family. Here, the difference between Canadian-born men and women spanned 21.6 percentage points, compared to 24.6 percentage points for immigrant men and women.

Both immigrant and Canadian-born women aged 25 to 54 years were more likely than their male counterparts to live in a census family. This gender pattern was reversed in the 55 to 64 year old group, where women were more likely to live alone than men.

## Most immigrant women live with a spouse or common-law partner

According to the 2011 National Household Survey, most immigrant women aged 15 and over were living with a spouse (57.4%) or common-law partner (4.1%), with or without children. Another 9.8% were lone-parents, and 9.7% were daughters living with a parent or grandparent. The remaining 19% were living with extended family members, non-relatives, or alone.

The pattern of family status differed somewhat between Canadian-born and immigrant women. Canadian-born women were less likely than immigrant women to be living with a spouse (41.6%) and more likely to be living with a common-law partner (13.4%). This was true across every age group; however, the magnitude of the difference was largest for 15 to 24 year olds. In this age group, immigrant women were 3.4 times more likely than Canadian-born women of the same age to be living with a spouse. On the other hand, Canadian-born women aged 15 to 24 were 3.3 times more likely than immigrant women to be living with a common law partner.

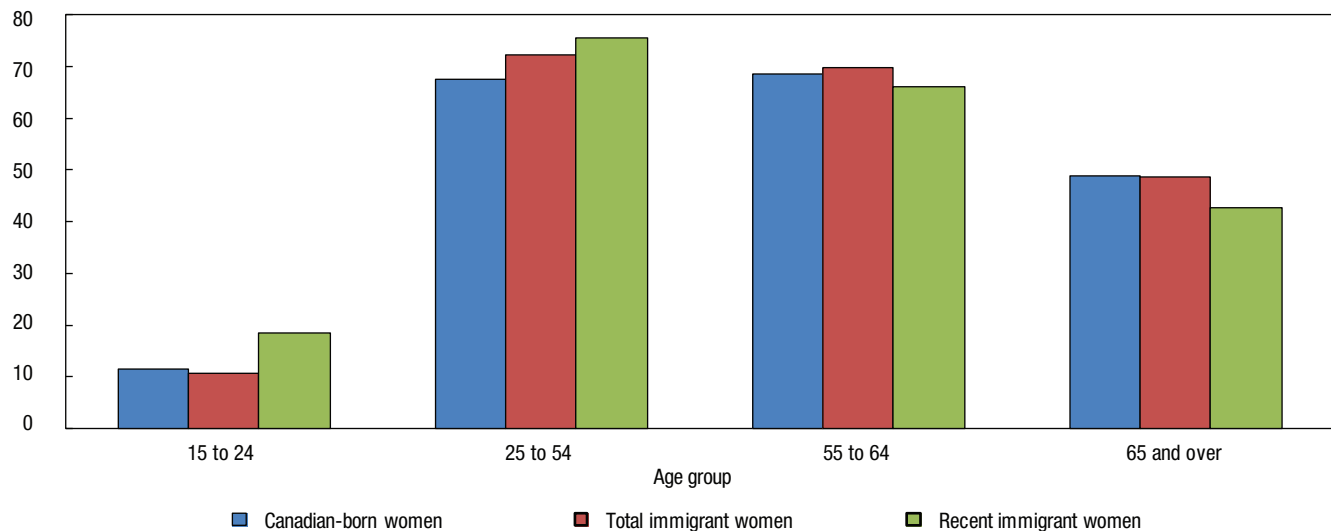
Taken together, Canadian-born (11.4%) and immigrant women (10.6%) between the ages of 15 and 24 were similarly likely to be part of a couple, that is to say residing with either a spouse or a common-law partner (Chart 12). Recent immigrant women, however, were more likely to be living in this type of arrangement, with 18.5% of 15 to 24 year olds reporting that they were part of a co-residing couple in 2011.

In the core working age group of 25 to 54 year olds, Canadian-born women were somewhat less likely (67.6%) than immigrant women (72.2%) to be living with a spouse or common-law partner. Recent immigrant women (75.4%) were most likely to be part of a couple. In the two older age groups (55 to 64 years old and 65 years old and over), however, recent immigrant women were least likely to be living with a spouse or a common-law partner while Canadian-born women and immigrant women as a whole were similarly likely to be part of a couple. Among seniors aged 65 and over, 42.6% of recent immigrant women lived with a spouse or common-law partner, compared to 48.6% and 48.7% of all senior immigrant women and senior Canadian-born women, respectively.

**Chart 12**

### Women living with a spouse or common-law partner, by immigrant status and age, Canada, 2011

percent



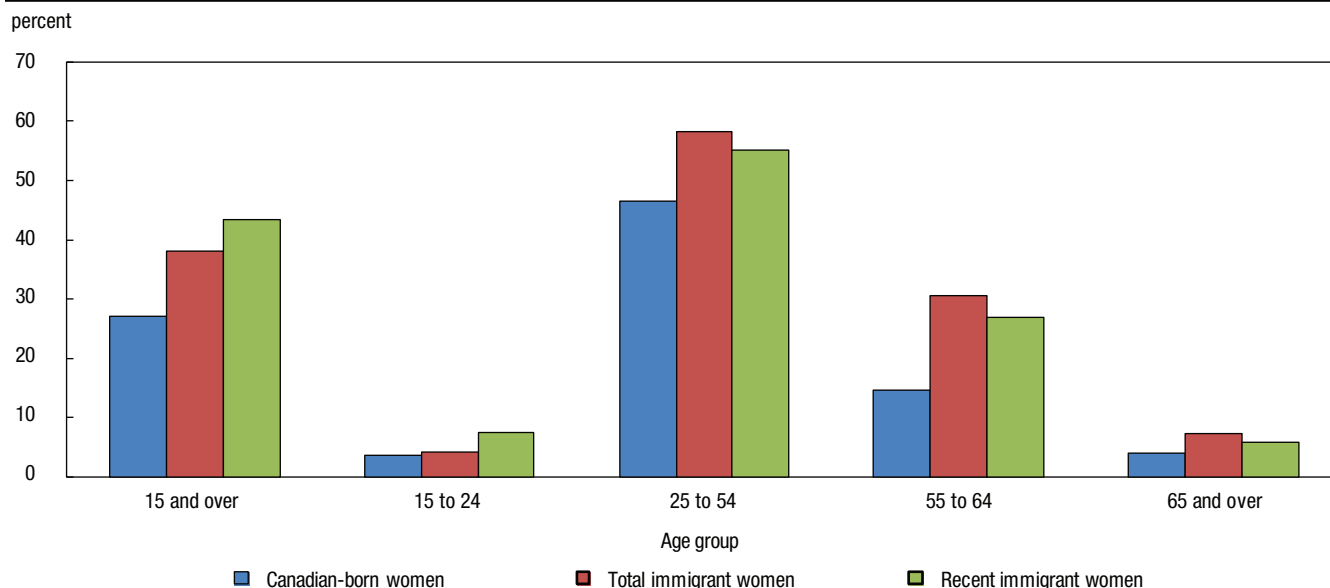
Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

With respect to living with a spouse or common-law partner, immigrant and Canadian-born women were more similar to each other than to their male counterparts across all age groups. For example, while approximately 11% of both immigrant and Canadian-born women between the ages of 15 and 24 were part of a couple, only 3.8% of immigrant men and 6% of Canadian-born men were living in this type of arrangement. Among those between the ages of 55 and 64, 68.4% of Canadian-born women and 69.8% of immigrant women were living with a spouse or common-law partner, compared to 74.7% and 82.3% of Canadian-born and immigrant men, respectively. In later years, due to factors such as higher life expectancy for females, Canadian-born (74.6%) and immigrant (79.3%) men were far more likely than their female counterparts (both nearly 49%) to be living with a spouse or common-law partner.



Immigrant women were more likely than Canadian-born women to be part of a couple<sup>11</sup> with children. Overall, 38.1% of all immigrant women aged 15 and over were in a couple with children, compared to 27% of Canadian-born women (Chart 13). This difference persisted across all age groups of women aged 15 years and over. Recent immigrant women over 24 years of age were less likely than the total immigrant population to be part of a couple with children. However, at younger ages, between 15 and 24, they were more likely than the total immigrant population to be living in this type of household.

**Chart 13**  
**Couples with children by immigrant status and age group, Canada, 2011**



Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

As a group, immigrant women (9.8%) were more likely than Canadian-born women (8.1%) to be lone-parents (Chart 14).<sup>12</sup> This was only true, however, for immigrant women aged 55 and over. Just over 10% of immigrant women aged 55 and 64 were lone-parents, compared to 5.2% of Canadian-born women in this age group. Similarly, 8.7% of immigrant women and 6.2% of Canadian-born women aged 65 and over were lone-parents.

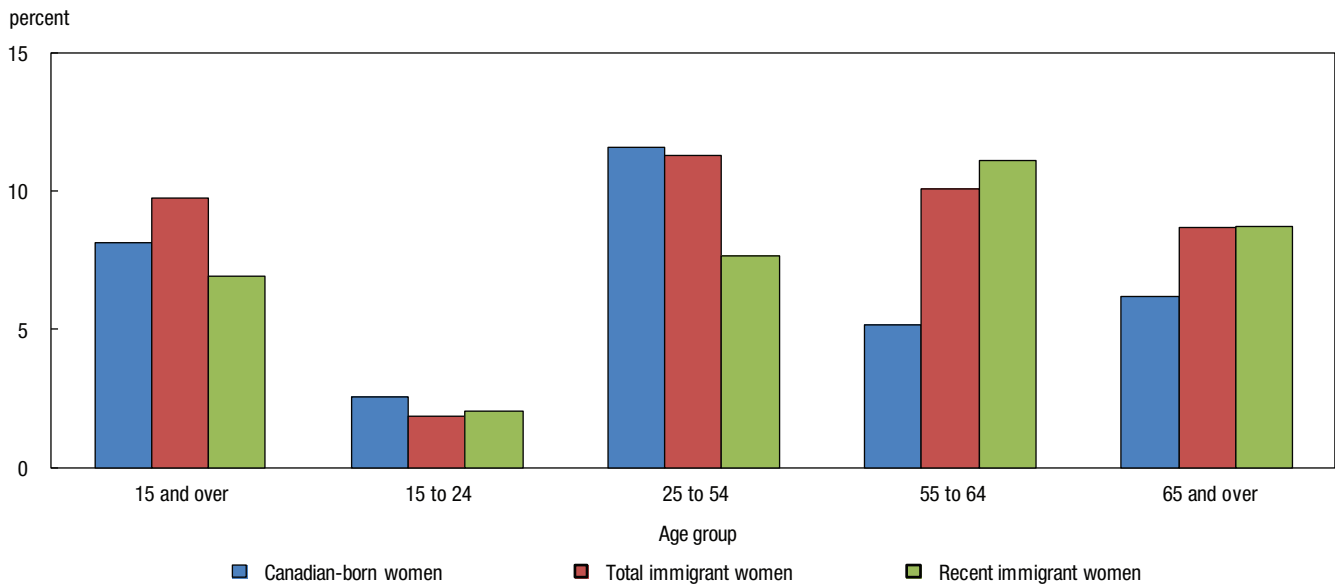
Both immigrant and Canadian-born women were more likely to be lone-parents than their male counterparts. In 2011, immigrant women aged 15 and over were 4.3 times as likely to be a lone-parent in a census family, than immigrant men. The gender divide was somewhat smaller for the Canadian-born population, where women were 3.4 times as likely as men to be lone-parents.

Among those aged 15 and over, Canadian-born women (15.5%) were more likely than immigrant women (9.7%) to be daughters in a census family. This was, however, due to a larger proportion of Canadian-born women belonging to younger age categories. Among 15 to 24 year olds, immigrant women (77.3%) were more likely than Canadian-born women (74.1%) to be daughters living with a parent or grandparent. This pattern did not hold for recent immigrant women (66%), who were less likely than the total immigrant population, and the Canadian-born population, to be daughters in census families.

11. The term couple refers to either a common-law or married couple who are living together.

12. Includes lone grandparents of children who do not have a parent living in the home.

**Chart 14**  
**Lone-parents by immigrant status, and age group, Canada, 2011**



Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

## High naturalization rate

In 2011, 16.8% of all Canadian citizens were immigrants who had become citizens through naturalization. The process of naturalization by which immigrants become eligible for citizenship includes a residency requirement of at least three years in Canada<sup>13</sup>, knowledge of at least one official language, and basic knowledge of Canada.

Most eligible immigrants<sup>14</sup> had Canadian citizenship in 2011. Of all eligible immigrants, 86.1% of males and 85.3% of females were Canadian citizens. Similar to male immigrants, the proportion of female immigrants who acquired Canadian citizenship increased alongside years of permanent residency. Nearly 92% of female immigrants who landed before 2001 were Canadian citizens in 2011. In comparison, 76.9% of those who landed between 2001 and 2005 had acquired citizenship. Amongst female immigrants, naturalization was lowest, 36.6%, for those who only recently became eligible, having landed between 2006 and 2007.

Overall, younger immigrants were least likely to have obtained Canadian citizenship. Eligible female immigrants who were under 15 years of age had a naturalization rate of 73.8%. In comparison, 82.8% of those 25 to 54 years of age and 90.4% of those 65 years and older were Canadian citizens in 2011. However, younger immigrants also tend to be newer arrivals, who have had less time to acquire citizenship, compared to those who arrived earlier.

When considering only those who very recently became eligible (having arrived between 2006 and 2007), younger immigrants were more likely than older immigrants to be Canadian citizens. Fifty percent of female immigrants under the age of 15 had obtained citizenship, compared to 33.3% of 25 to 54 year olds and 30.6% of those aged 65 and over.

Naturalization rates varied by admission category. Eligible female immigrants who landed as refugees (in 1980 or after) had the highest naturalization rate (87.7%). In comparison, 78.4% of those who were admitted under the family class were Canadian citizens in 2011. Immigrants admitted under the economic class were equally likely to have acquired Canadian citizenship regardless of whether they were a principal applicant or the spouse or dependent of a principal applicant; together their naturalization rate was 80.7%.<sup>15</sup>

13. The residency requirement was changed to at least four years on June 11, 2015 under Bill C-24. This change does not affect the present analysis which is based on 2011 National Household Survey data.

14. Defined as have landed in Canada at least 3 years prior to the 2011 National Household survey.

15. This data reflects results from a record linkage, using exact matching techniques, between the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) and the administrative Immigrant Landing File (ILF). The ILF consists of immigrants landed between 1980 and May 10, 2011. As a result of this linkage, ILF data is available for approximately 78% of immigrant women who have landed in that time period. It is possible that the distributions for unlinked records differ from those that were linked.

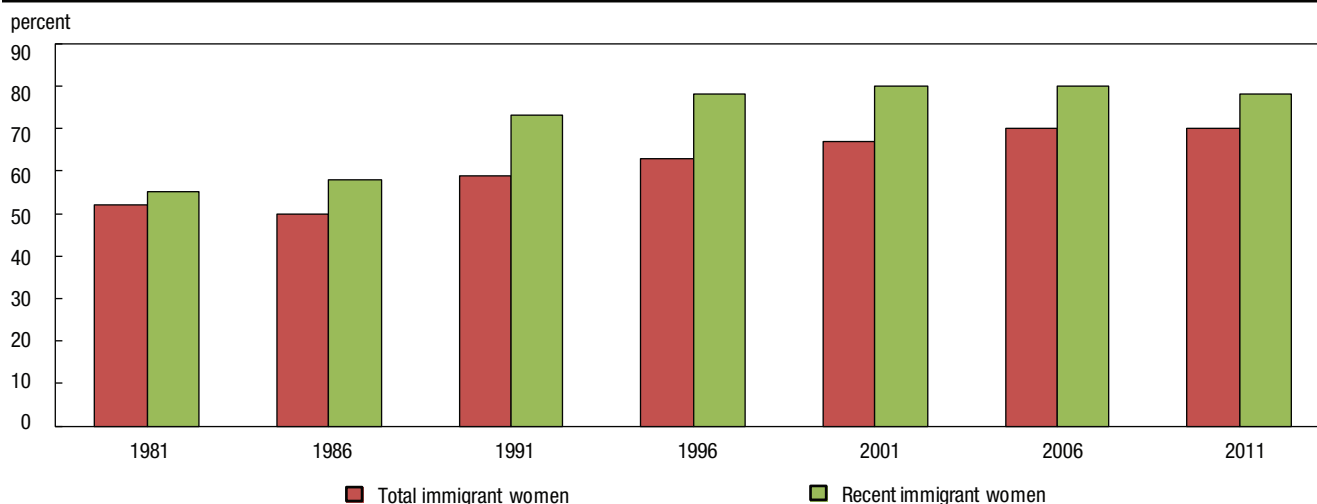
## Linguistic diversity

Immigration plays an important role in shaping Canada's diverse linguistic profile. According to the 2011 National Household Survey, about 1 in 5 females, like males, had a non-official mother tongue only.<sup>16</sup> That is to say that the first language they learned, and still understood at the time of the survey, was neither English nor French. Of those women and girls with a non-official language only as a mother tongue, 73.5% were immigrants.

Within the immigrant population, 70.4% of female immigrants, and 78% of recent female immigrants had a non-official mother tongue only (Chart 15). This degree of diversity is related to a decreasing proportion of immigrants landing in Canada from Europe. In 1981, 52% of female immigrants had a non-official mother tongue only.<sup>17</sup> Conversely, the number of females reporting English or French, with or without a non-official language, as their mother tongue declined from 48% in 1981 to 30% in 2006, remaining stable in 2011.

**Chart 15**

### Immigrant females with neither English nor French as a mother tongue, Canada, 1981 to 2011



**Note:** Statistics Canada has observed changes in patterns of response to the mother tongue question that appear to have arisen from changes in the placement and context of the language questions on the 2011 Census questionnaire relative to previous censuses. As a result, Canadians appear to have been less inclined than in previous censuses to report languages other than English or French as their only mother tongue. Data users are advised to exercise caution when evaluating trends related to mother tongue that compare 2011 Census or National Household Survey data to those of previous censuses.

**Sources:** Statistics Canada, censuses of the population, 1981 to 2006; and Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

The proportion of female immigrants whose mother tongue was a non-official language only was highest in Manitoba, with 74.7% of immigrants in this province reporting a non-official language as a mother tongue (Chart 16). Female immigrants in the Atlantic provinces were less likely than those in other provinces to report a non-official language only as their mother tongue. For example, 36.3% of female immigrants in New Brunswick, 38.2% of female immigrants in Newfoundland and 42.5% of female immigrants in Nova Scotia had only a non-official language as their mother tongue.

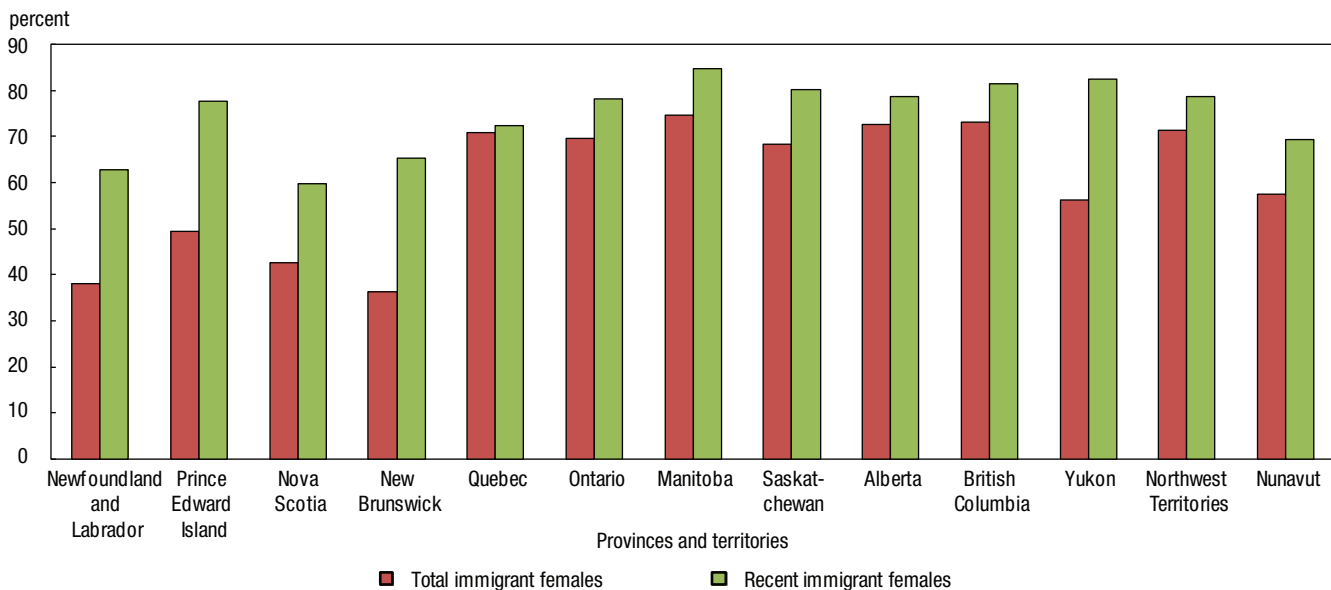
Changes in immigration patterns have changed the linguistic profile of immigrants in some provinces more than others. In New Brunswick, the proportion of recent immigrants with a non-official language only as a mother tongue was nearly double that of the total female immigrant population in that province. Recent immigrant women in Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, and Yukon were similarly more likely than the total immigrant population to have a non-official language only as their mother tongue.

16. Includes persons with multiple non-official languages as mother tongues.

17. Statistics Canada has observed changes in patterns of response to the mother tongue question that appears to have arisen from changes in the placement and context of the language questions on the 2011 Census questionnaire relative to previous censuses. As a result, respondents appear to have been less inclined than in previous censuses to report languages other than English or French as their only mother tongue, and also more inclined to report multiple languages as their mother tongue. Data users are advised to exercise caution when evaluating trends related to mother tongue that compare 2011 Census or National Household Survey data to those of previous censuses.

Chart 16

## Proportion of female immigrants with neither English nor French as a mother tongue, by province of residence, Canada, 2011



Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

In the 2011 National Household Survey, female immigrants reported over 200 languages and dialects as a mother tongue. Among those whose mother tongue was neither English nor French, Chinese languages (including languages such as Mandarin, Cantonese, and Hakka), reported by over 18%, were most frequent. The next four most common mother tongues included: Tagalog (7.5%), Spanish (6.5%), Punjabi (6.2%) and Italian (4.9%).

The top three mother tongues were the same for both the total female and recent female immigrant populations. However, slightly fewer recent female immigrants (15.5%) reported a Chinese language as their mother tongue. At the same time, a greater proportion of recent female immigrants reported Tagalog (13%) or Spanish (8.9%) as their mother tongue. In the recent female immigrant population, Arabic (7.9%) was the fourth most commonly reported mother tongue, followed by Punjabi (6.5%).

Of the 30% of immigrant females who reported at least one official language as their mother tongue, either in combination with a non-official language or not, 87.1% reported English as a mother tongue. A further 12.6% reported that French was their mother tongue. A very small proportion (0.3%) reported both English and French as a mother tongue, with or without a non-official language. Of the 22% of recent female immigrants who reported at least one official language as their mother tongue, 76.1% had English as a mother tongue, 23.5% had French as a mother tongue, and 0.5% had both English and French as a mother tongue.

## Official language use increases with time living in Canada

In the 2011 National Household Survey, 30% of female immigrants had a mother tongue that was English or French. A higher proportion, 57%, of female immigrants reported that they used English and/or French most often at home. Of this group, 14.6% also cited a non-official language as one which they used most often at home.

As immigrants spend more time in Canada, they are more likely to cite an official language as at least one of the languages they use most frequently at home. In the 2001 Census, 38.9% of women who immigrated to Canada between 1991 and 2000 reported using English or French, with or without a non-official language, most often at home. In the 2011 National Household Survey, 48.1% of immigrant women who arrived during the same period reported that they most frequently used an official language, with or without a non-official language, in their home. This suggests an increase in official language use in the immigrant population over time.<sup>18,19</sup>

18. Statistics Canada has observed changes in patterns of response to both the mother tongue and home language questions that appear to have arisen from changes in the placement and context of the language questions on the 2011 Census questionnaire relative to previous censuses. As a result, respondents appear to have been less inclined than in previous censuses to report languages other than English or French as their only mother tongue, and also more inclined to report multiple languages as their mother tongue and as the language used most often at home. Data users are advised to exercise caution when evaluating trends related to mother tongue and home language that compare 2011 Census and National Household Survey data to those of previous censuses.

19. These analyses were conducted using estimates from the 2006 Census and 2011 National Household Survey, the latter of which is a voluntary survey. Although we infer that an increase in the proportion of immigrants using an official language between the 2001 and 2011 data collection periods is due to the lapse in time, a longitudinal design following the same participants over time would be more appropriate.

The positive relationship between time spent in Canada and official language use was predominantly driven by an increase in instances of English used most often at home among women who reported having a non-official language (or languages) only as a mother tongue. In 2011, 32.4% of immigrant women who landed between 1991 and 2000 and who had neither English nor French as a mother tongue, reported speaking English most often at home. In comparison, 22% of women who landed during the same period and who had only a non-official language as a mother tongue, reported speaking English most often at home in 2001.

There was also an increase in English spoken most often at home between 2001 and 2011, reported by women who landed between 1991 and 2000, and who reported English as a mother tongue. In 2001, 88.6% of these women reported speaking English most often at home, compared to 92.7% in 2011. There was no increase in French spoken most often at home reported by women with English as a mother tongue between these two time periods.

Among those who reported French as a mother tongue, there was a small increase in the proportion of women who landed between 1991 and 2000 who reported speaking French most often at home; from 81.9% in 2001 to 84.5% in 2011.

Compared to other provinces and territories, Quebec has a unique language profile with French as the majority language. As such, the language use pattern among immigrant women living in Quebec, who arrived in Canada between 1991 and 2000, was slightly different than that of Canada as a whole. In 2001, 24.8% of those who had a non-official language as her mother tongue reported speaking French most often at home. This proportion was somewhat higher, 27.8%, in 2011. A similarly sized increase was observed in English spoken most often at home among those with a non-official mother tongue only – from 10.2% in 2001, to 13.3% in 2011.

Among immigrant women in Quebec who landed between 1991 and 2001, and who reported French as a mother tongue, there was also a small increase in French spoken most often at home; from 90% in 2001 to 92.7% in 2011. Meanwhile, the proportion of immigrant women with French as a mother tongue, who reported speaking English most often, decreased by about half of a percentage point, from 4.5% to 3.9%. Among those with English as a mother tongue, there was an increase in English used most often at home, from 74.2% in 2001 to 79.1% in 2011. During the same time period, there was a small decline in the proportion who reported speaking French most often at home, from 12.8% in 2001 to 10.8% in 2011.

### **Most immigrants can converse in an official language, but fewer females than males**

Although many immigrants use non-official languages most frequently at home, the vast majority are capable of conversing in at least one official language. In 2011, 92.2% of female immigrants overall, and 90% of recent immigrants reported that they were able to converse in an official language. Conversely, 7.8% of all female immigrants, and 10% of recent female immigrants were unable to converse in an official language. In comparison, a slightly smaller proportion of male immigrants, 5%, and recent male immigrants, 7.9%, were unable to do so. This gender gap for recent immigrants had narrowed slightly since 2006, when 10.9% of recent immigrant females and 7.5% of recent male immigrants were unable to converse in English or French. Nonetheless, the data continue to suggest that the need for language training is higher amongst female compared to male immigrants.

### **Educational attainment is higher among immigrant population compared to Canadian-born**

Immigrant women were more likely than Canadian-born women to have completed a university certificate or degree at the bachelor's level or above. In 2011, 27.7% of immigrant women aged 15 and over had completed this type of credential, compared to 19.2% of Canadian-born women of the same age. A slightly larger proportion of immigrant men (31.2%), compared to immigrant women, had completed a bachelor's level education or higher. In contrast, a smaller proportion of Canadian-born men (16.6%), compared to women, had earned a bachelor's level credential or higher.

Among both immigrant and Canadian-born women, 25 to 54 year olds were the most likely to have completed a university education at the bachelor's level or above (Table 3). It is also within this age group that the difference in educational attainment between immigrant and Canadian-born women was most apparent. Thirty-eight percent of all immigrant women and 49.6% of recent immigrant women had attained a bachelor's level education or higher. In contrast, 26.6% of women born in Canada had achieved this level of education.

**Table 3**  
**Level of education among 25 to 54 year olds, by immigrant status and sex, Canada, 2011**

Level of education	Females			Males		
	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants
	percentage					
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
No certificate, diploma or degree	9.8	9.9	7.9	13.6	9.8	7.2
High school certificate or equivalent	22.9	19.5	15.0	23.9	19.3	14.9
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	9.2	5.7	4.6	17.9	8.6	7.0
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	27.2	18.5	12.9	20.8	15.5	11.4
University certificate or diploma below the bachelor level	4.3	8.3	9.9	3.3	7.2	8.6
University certificate or degree	26.6	38.0	49.6	20.4	39.5	50.8

Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

Completion of graduate level studies was also more common for immigrant women. Just over 9% of all immigrant women and 13.6% of recent immigrant women aged 25 to 54 had achieved a masters or doctorate, compared to 4.9% of women born in Canada.

### Immigration policy and family factors are related to educational attainment

Higher educational attainment in the immigrant population is partly related to Canadian immigration policy. This is particularly true as it relates to principal applications to the economic class, where educational attainment is an important selection factor, intended to reflect the applicant's ability to adapt to changes within the labour market if necessary.<sup>20</sup> In 2002, the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (IRPA) came into effect, placing additional weight on educational attainment, along with proficiency in an official language, in the selection process of economic applicants.

At the time of the 2011 National Household Survey, 68.8% of recent female immigrants aged 25 to 44, who were principal applicants admitted under the economic class, held a bachelor's level credential or higher. The majority, 59%, of those who were admitted as the spouse or dependent of a principal economic applicant also had completed at least a bachelor's level education. Bachelor's level education or higher was less common amongst recent immigrant women of the same age who were admitted under the family class; 42.5% of this group had achieved such a credential. Refugees were the least likely to have attained this level of education, with only 18.8% of recent immigrant women between the ages of 25 and 44 having achieved a certificate, diploma, or degree at the bachelor's level or above.<sup>21</sup>

In addition to selection factors, family factors also contribute to greater educational attainment amongst the immigrant population. Immigrants who arrived in Canada at younger ages were also more likely than their Canadian-born peers to attain a university degree.<sup>22</sup> Factors contributing to their achievement included having parents who were also highly educated, and who placed value on education at the high school level.<sup>23</sup>

In 2011, recent immigrant men and women were similarly likely to have attained a university education. In the core working age group of 25 to 54 year olds, 49.6% of recent immigrant women had completed at least a bachelor's level certificate or degree, comparable to 50.8% of recent immigrant men. In contrast, in 2006, recent immigrant men (57%) were more likely than recent immigrant women (49%) to have attained this level of education.

Nonetheless, as in 2006, in 2011 there was a gap between the proportion of recent immigrant men and women who had attained a graduate level degree. Of recent immigrant women in the core working age group, 13.6% had a masters or doctorate, compared to 17.9% of recent immigrant men of the same age.

20. Picot, Garnett, Feng Hou and Theresa Qiu. 2014. "The Human Capital Model of Selection and the Long-run Economic Outcomes of Immigrants." Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11F0019M2014361. Ottawa, Ontario. *Analytical Studies Research Paper Series, no. 361*. Statistics Canada.

21. This data reflects results from a record linkage, using exact matching techniques, between the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) and the administrative Immigrant Landing File (ILF). The ILF consists of immigrants landed between 1980 and May 10, 2011. As a result of this linkage, ILF data is available for approximately 78% of immigrant women who have landed in that time period. Recent immigrant women, aged 25 to 44, with unlinked records were somewhat less likely (41.1%) to have a bachelor's certificate, diploma or degree compared to those with linked records (53.7%).

22. Bonikowska, Aneta and Feng Hou. 2011. "Reversal of Fortunes or Continued Success? Cohort Differences in Education and Earnings of Childhood Immigrants." Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11F0019M2011330. Ottawa, Ontario. *Analytical Studies Research Paper Series, no. 334*. Statistics Canada.

23. Finnie, Ross, Eric Lascelles and Arthur Sweetman. 2005. "Who Goes? The Direct and Indirect Effects of Family Background on Access to Post-secondary Education." Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11F0019MIE2005237. Ottawa, Ontario. *Analytical Studies Research Paper Series, no. 237*. Statistics Canada.

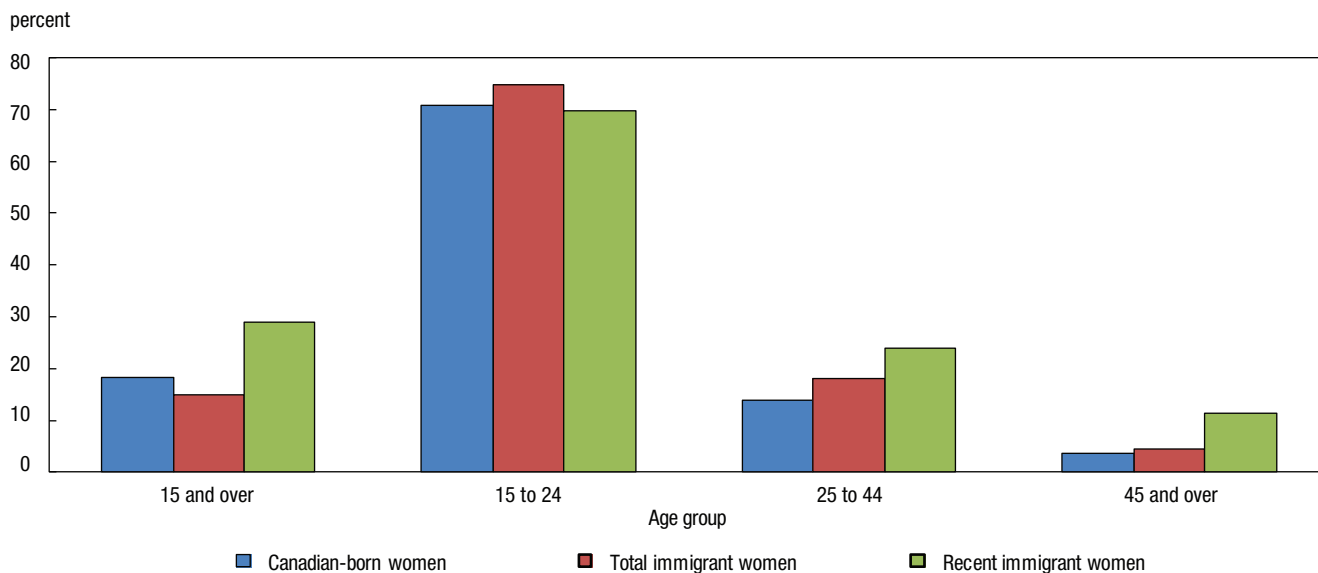
Among immigrant women who had earned a postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree, the majority (52.3%) had earned their highest credential from an educational institution outside of Canada. Foreign-earned credentials were even more common amongst recent immigrant women, 82.7% of whom completed their highest postsecondary credential outside of Canada. Of the recent immigrant women who completed a postsecondary credential outside of Canada, 18.1% did so in the Philippines, 11% completed their studies in India and 9.2% in China. These top three locations of study matched the top three birthplaces of recent immigrant women in 2011.

## School attendance higher for recent immigrant women compared to overall immigrant population and Canadian-born population

Overall, immigrant women were less likely than Canadian-born women to have attended school full or part-time at any time between September 2010 and May 11, 2011. School attendance during this period was reported by 14.9% of immigrant women and 18.3% of Canadian-born women aged 15 and over (Chart 17). However, this difference is related to the different age structures of these two populations; the immigrant population is older, and therefore less likely to have attended school.

**Chart 17**

### School attendance of women, by immigrant status and age group, Canada, 2011



Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

A higher proportion of immigrant women between the ages of 15 and 24 reported attending school compared to their Canadian-born counterparts (74.8% compared to 70.9%). This was also the case for women aged 25 to 44, among whom 18.1% of immigrant women and 14% of Canadian-born women attended school.

Attending school might be a good strategy for some newcomers wishing to enter the Canadian labour force; for example, to become a more competitive candidate for employment, or to transfer foreign credentials. Recent immigrants were the most likely to have attended school during the nine months prior to the 2011 National Household Survey. The school attendance rate among recent immigrant women was 28.9%; nearly double that of the total immigrant population. This difference was largely carried by those over the age of 25. For example, 23.9% of recent immigrant women between the ages of 25 and 44 attended school, compared to 18.1% of the total female immigrant population and 14% of Canadian-born women. This difference carried into older ages as well – 11.4% of recent immigrant women aged 45 and over attended school, compared to 4.5% of the total immigrant population, and 3.5% of Canadian-born women.

A similar pattern existed for men; however, men in general were slightly less likely to have attended school. Among those aged 15 and over, 17.3% of Canadian-born, 14.7% of the total immigrant population, and 28.8% of recent immigrant men reported attending school full or part-time in the nine months preceding the 2011 National Household Survey.

## Immigrants score lower on adult skills assessment

The Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) provides information on the literacy, numeracy, and problem solving skills in technology rich environments (PS-TRE) of Canada's population of persons aged 16 to 65. In particular, it examines the relationship between skills and socio-demographic characteristics, such as age and gender, and highlights the skill levels of certain subpopulations in Canada, such as the immigrant population.<sup>24</sup>

PIAAC is administered in Canada's two official languages, English and French. Although the majority of immigrant men and women have a mother tongue that is neither of these languages, the test is intended to assess skills in the context of Canadian society. Within this context, immigrants showed lower proficiency than the Canadian-born population on all three tiers of the PIAAC skills assessment.

On the literacy measure, 9% of established immigrants and 7% of recent immigrants scored in the top two proficiency levels out of six, compared to 16% of the Canadian-born population.<sup>25</sup> Similarly, 10% of established immigrants and 9% of recent immigrants scored in the top two proficiency levels out of six on the PIAAC numeracy measure, compared to 14% of their Canadian-born counterparts. PS-TRE performance was also lower for immigrants, with 27% of established immigrants and 26% of recent immigrants scoring in the top two proficiency levels out of four, compared to 41% of Canadian-born assessment takers. However, on this measure alone, Canadian-born and established immigrants were similarly likely to fall into the bottom two proficiency levels; recent immigrants were more likely than both of these two groups to do so.

In 2012, PIAAC reported that in general, men have higher numeracy skills across all age groups covered, with differences increasing alongside age. Approximately 6%<sup>E</sup> of immigrant women scored in the top two proficiency levels for numeracy, compared to 13% of immigrant men. Canadian-born women were also less likely than their male counterparts to score in the top two proficiency levels for numeracy (10% versus 17%, respectively).<sup>26</sup>

Literacy scores did not vary significantly by gender. Immigrant women (8%) and Canadian-born women (15%) had literacy scores in the top two proficiency levels at a rate comparable to their male counterparts (9% and 17%, respectively). Likewise, the proportion of immigrant women (34%) and Canadian-born women (47%) with high scores on PS-TRE were statistically similar to their male counterparts (39% and 48%, respectively).

## Immigrant and Canadian-born women study in similar fields

Immigrant and Canadian-born women obtained postsecondary education in similar fields. The three most commonly reported fields of study across both groups in 2011 were: business, management and public administration (26.4%), health and related fields (22.1%) and social and behavioural sciences and law (13%). Immigrant women (20.2%) were slightly less likely than Canadian-born women (22.8%) to have studied in health and related fields. They were also somewhat less likely (8.3%) than Canadian-born women (12.1%) to have completed their postsecondary credential in education (Table 4).

Compared to Canadian-born women, immigrant women were more likely to have earned a postsecondary credential in the sciences, mathematics, computer and information sciences, or architecture, engineering and related technologies.<sup>27</sup> Immigrant women were 2.3 times as likely as women born in Canada to have earned a postsecondary credential in architecture, engineering, and related technologies. Likewise, immigrant women were about twice as likely as women born in Canada to have earned a postsecondary credential in mathematics, computer and information sciences, or physical and life sciences and technologies.

The fields of study chosen by recent immigrant women were similar to the overall population of immigrant women and Canadian-born women. However, recent immigrant women were slightly less likely to have a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree in education (7.5%), or in a health related field (18.2%). They were also slightly more likely to have studied in mathematics, computer and information sciences or architecture, engineering and related technologies.

24. "Skills in Canada: First Results from the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)." 2013. Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 89-555-X. Ottawa, Ontario. *Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies Series*. Statistics Canada.

25. The term recent immigrants is defined differently in the PIAAC compared to in the rest of this chapter. Within the PIAAC, recent immigrants are those who have been in Canada for 10 years or less, while established immigrants are those who have been in Canada for more than 10 years.

26. <http://oecd.org/site/piaac/publicdataandanalysis.htm> (accessed August 12th, 2015).

27. A more specific examination of women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields at the university level will be available in a subsequent chapter of *Women in Canada, "Women and Education: Qualifications, Skills and Technology"*.



**Table 4**  
**Population aged 15 and over with a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree by major field of study, Canada, 2011**

Major field of study	Females			Males		
	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants
	percentage					
<b>Population with a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Education	12.1	8.3	7.5	4.3	2.5	2.2
Visual and performing arts, and communications technologies	4.0	3.6	3.4	3.7	3.0	2.5
Humanities	6.0	8.0	8.7	4.6	4.3	4.5
Social and behavioural sciences and law	13.1	12.8	12.9	7.1	7.0	8.0
Business, management and public administration	26.4	26.5	26.8	15.9	17.6	20.7
Physical and life sciences and technologies	2.9	5.1	5.7	3.4	5.5	5.5
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	2.3	4.5	5.4	4.4	7.4	9.1
Architecture, engineering, and related technologies	2.6	5.9	7.4	40.7	40.3	33.9
Agriculture, natural resources and conservation	1.5	1.1	1.3	3.4	2.1	2.2
Health and related fields	22.8	20.2	18.2	5.1	6.2	7.8
Personal, protective and transportation services	6.3	4.0	2.7	7.4	4.1	3.5

Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

The educational profile of immigrant men differed from that of immigrant women. Immigrant men aged 15 years and older, similar to their Canadian-born counterparts, were concentrated in two areas of study. They were most likely to have a postsecondary certificate or diploma in architecture, engineering and related technologies (40.3%) followed by business, management, and public administration (17.6%). Immigrant men were also somewhat more likely than immigrant women to have earned a postsecondary credential in mathematics, computer and information sciences.

### Labour force participation rate lower among immigrant women compared to Canadian-born women

The female labour force grew from 8.1 million women, aged 15 and older, in 2006, to 8.5 million women in 2011.<sup>28</sup> Of those women who were part of the labour force in 2011, 1.9 million, or 22.3% were immigrants, up from 1.7 million immigrant women in 2006.

The labour force participation rate<sup>29</sup> of immigrant women (56.5%) was somewhat lower compared to women born in Canada (63.3%). In the core working age group of 25 to 54 year olds, 83.6% of Canadian-born women were labour force participants, compared to 76.4% of immigrant women. This gap narrowed with age; the participation rate of immigrant women in the older age group of 55 to 64 year olds, was in fact one percentage point higher than that of Canadian-born women of the same age. Senior immigrant women and Canadian-born women participated in the labour force at the same rate.

There was a negligible gap in the participation rates of Canadian-born and immigrant men of core working age, 90.6% and 89.8% of who were labour force participants, respectively. Both groups of men were more likely to be labour force participants than their female counterparts.

Participation rates also varied by admission category.<sup>30</sup> Within the core working age group of immigrant women, those admitted as principal applicants to the economic class had the highest participation rate (85%) in 2011. Spouses and dependents of principal applicants to the economic class had the second highest participation rate (75.2%) followed by those admitted under the family class (73.2%) and refugee class (72.7%).

In comparison, immigrant men of core working age were as likely to be labour force participants regardless of whether they were admitted under the family class (91.8%) or as principal applicants to the economic class (91.6%). They were slightly less likely to be labour force participants if they were admitted under the economic class as the spouse or dependent of a principal applicant (88.7%), or as a refugee (87.2%).

28. Excluding non-permanent residents (temporary workers).

29. Labour force participants were persons who are either employed or unemployed, but not out of the labour force, during the week of Sunday, May 1 to Saturday, May 7, 2011.

30. This data reflects results from a record linkage, using exact matching techniques, between the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) and the administrative Immigrant Landing File (ILF).

The ILF consists of immigrants landed between 1980 and May 10, 2011. As a result of this linkage, ILF data is available for approximately 78% of immigrant women who have landed in that time period. It is possible that the distributions for unlinked records differ from those that were linked.

## Gender-role attitudes and labour force participation

Previous research has shown a strong relationship between source-country female labour force participation rates and immigrant women's labour force participation in the host country. In the past, this relationship has been attributed to source-country gender-role attitudes that persist following emigration to a new country.<sup>31</sup> That is to say that women who emigrate from countries with less equitable attitudes towards education and employment for females and males, will be less likely to participate in the labour force of their new country. Indeed both source-country participation rates and source-country gender role attitudes have been shown to be individually related to female labour force participation rates in Canada.

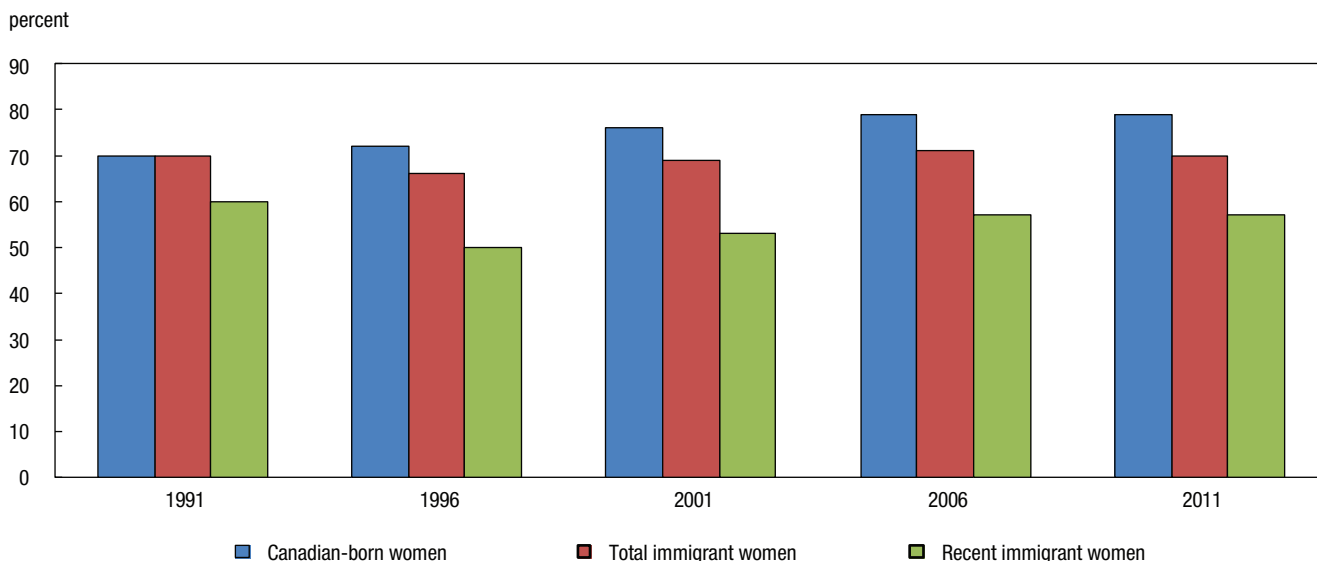
However, recent evidence has shown that source-country female labour force participation rates and source-country gender role attitudes are only moderately correlated. To be sure, while countries with the lowest scores on gender-role attitudes (i.e., Iraq, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt and Morocco) typically had the lowest female labour force participation rate, the reverse was not true for countries with the highest labour force participation rates. Rather, countries with the highest labour force participation rates (i.e., Ghana, Ethiopia, Uganda, Rwanda, and Tanzania) ranked in the middle range on gender-role attitude scores. Similarly, those with the highest gender-role attitude scores (i.e., Norway, Sweden, France and the Netherlands), had only moderate female labour force participation rates.<sup>32</sup>

Thus, while low scores on attitudes towards gender equity do appear to be related to low female labour force participation, it does not necessarily follow that high female labour force participation rates are indicative of favourable gender-role attitudes. In fact, when source-country participation rates are taken into account, gender role attitudes were no longer a significant predictor of immigrant women's labour force participation in Canada. This suggests that, although gender-role attitudes may be related to participation in the labour force, this relationship is mediated by source-country labour force participation to predict labour force participation in Canada.

## Employment rate lower and unemployment rate higher for immigrant women compared to Canadian-born women

The employment rate for immigrant women aged 15 and older rose from 50% in 2001 to 51.5% in 2006 remaining stable at 51.3% in 2011. The same pattern held for Canadian-born women; however, the employment rate for Canadian-born women was consistently higher than that of immigrant women, reaching 58.9% in 2011.

**Chart 18**  
**Employment rates of women aged 25 to 54, by immigrant status, Canada, 1991 to 2011**



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1991 to 2006; and Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

31. Frank, Kristyn and Feng Hou. 2013. "Cultural Influences Across Time and Space: Do Source-country Gender Roles Affect Immigrant Women's Paid and Unpaid Labour Activity?" Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11F0019M2013349. Ottawa, Ontario. *Analytical Studies Research Paper Series*, no. 349. Statistics Canada.

32. Frank, Kristyn and Feng Hou. 2015. "Source-country Female Labour Force Participation and the Wages of Immigrant Women in Canada." Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11F0019M2015365. Ottawa, Ontario. *Analytical Studies Research Paper Series*, no. 365. Statistics Canada.

Employment trends in the core working age group of 25 to 54 year olds were similar to those in the overall population. Employment rates increased between 2001 and 2006 for both Canadian-born (3 percentage points) and immigrant women (2 percentage points), with little change in 2011 (Chart 18).

Relative to their Canadian-born peers, the employment rate was lower for immigrant women in all age categories, except for those aged 55 and older (Table 5). Recently arrived immigrant women were the least likely to be employed. The employment rate for recent immigrant women in the core working age group of 25 to 54 year olds was 57.1%, whereas it was 69.7% for the same age group of women in the total immigrant population. Canadian-born women were most likely to be employed, with an employment rate of 79.2% in the core working age group.

**Table 5**  
**Employment rates, by immigrant status, age group and sex, Canada, 2011**

Age group	Females			Males		
	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants
	percentage					
<b>Age 15 and over</b>	<b>58.9</b>	<b>51.3</b>	<b>50.1</b>	<b>65.6</b>	<b>63.2</b>	<b>66.0</b>
15 to 24	53.4	41.7	35.7	51.3	41.2	36.6
25 to 54	79.2	69.7	57.1	85.1	83.9	77.2
55 to 64	52.9	52.9	33.6	62.9	68.8	55.9
65 and over	8.7	8.4	9.5	17.5	16.9	16.0

Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

In 2011, the unemployment rate for immigrant women aged 15 and over was 9.1% compared to 6.9% for Canadian-born women. The unemployment rate was higher for immigrant women in 2011, compared to in 2006 when it was 7.8%. In contrast, the unemployment rate rose by only half of a percentage point for Canadian-born women. Within the core working age group of 25 to 54 year olds, there was a gap of 3.6 percentage points, where immigrant women of this age had an unemployment rate of 8.8% compared to 5.2% of Canadian-born women the same age. Unemployment was highest amongst recent immigrant women, at 15.5% overall, and 14.7% for the core working age group.

## Immigrant women take longer to integrate into the labour force compared to immigrant men

The decision to enter the labour force may involve several factors, including: family responsibilities, ability to converse in a local language and other settlement issues. Participation in the labour force, that is to say working or looking for work, increased with time spent in Canada for all immigrants of core working age. However, data from the 2011 National Household Survey suggest that it may take female immigrants longer than their male counterparts to become labour force participants and to find work (Table 6).

Recent immigrant men of core working age were less likely than their Canadian-born counterparts to be labour force participants (85.8% versus 90.6%, respectively). However, immigrant men who had been in Canada for longer than 5 years had a participation rate that was similar to the Canadian-born population.

The difference in participation rates between recent immigrant women and Canadian-born women of core working age was broader than that of their male counterparts. Sixty-seven percent of recent immigrant women of core working age were labour force participants, compared to 83.6% of same-aged Canadian-born women. Although the participation rates of immigrant women increased alongside time spent in Canada, even those who had arrived before 1991 had slightly lower participation rates than their Canadian-born peers (81.9%). This same pattern, whereby immigrant women take longer to reach Canadian-born levels of labour force participation compared to immigrant men, was also observed for employment rates.

Immigrant women of core working age also appeared to experience more persistent challenges becoming employed. Recent immigrant women of core working age had an unemployment rate of 14.7%, compared to 5.2% among the Canadian-born population. Only those who had arrived in Canada prior to 1991 had an unemployment rate that was similar (5.9%) to their Canadian-born counterparts. In contrast, although unemployment was higher for recent immigrant men (10%) compared to Canadian-born men (6.1%), the unemployment rates for Canadian-born men and immigrant men who had been in Canada longer than 5 years were similar.

**Table 6**  
**Labour force status among 25 to 54 year olds, by immigrant status, period of immigration and sex, Canada, 2011**

	Participation rate		Employment rate		Unemployment rate	
	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males
<b>Immigrant status and immigration period</b>	<b>percentage</b>					
<b>Canadian-born</b>	83.6	90.6	79.8	85.1	5.2	6.1
<b>Period of immigration</b>						
2006 to 2011	67.0	85.8	57.1	77.2	14.7	10.0
2001 to 2005	74.6	91.3	67.2	85.5	9.9	6.4
1991 to 2000	78.0	90.7	71.9	85.2	7.8	6.0
Before 1991	81.9	90.7	77.1	85.8	5.9	5.5

Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

## Challenges in labour market integration

Finding employment can be a challenge for newcomers to Canada. This issue may be compounded by difficulties having foreign educational credentials and work experience recognized by Canadian employers.<sup>33</sup> Consequently, there is a greater degree of education-to-job mismatch amongst immigrants compared to the Canadian-born population.

In 2011, 48.6% of working immigrant women with a bachelor's level education or higher were employed in positions that do not typically require a degree. In contrast, this was the case for 32.8% of Canadian-born women. This difference was slightly more pronounced for the core working age group of 25 to 54 year olds, where 48.7% of immigrant women and 30% of Canadian-born women with a bachelor's level degree or higher were working in jobs that typically require less education. Recent immigrant women were least likely to be employed in positions that matched their education. Of those in the core working age group who had attained a bachelor's level degree or higher, 60.1% were employed in positions that did not match their education level (Table 7).

Men were less likely to report a mismatch between the skill requirements of their occupation and their education level. This was particularly true amongst male immigrants. For example, in the core working age group, 41% of male immigrants overall and 49.9% of recent immigrants with degrees were employed in positions requiring college training or less compared to 48.6% and 60% of immigrant women and recent immigrant women, respectively.

**Table 7**  
**Occupational skill level for 25 to 54 year olds with a bachelor's level education or higher, by sex and immigrant status, Canada, 2011**

	Females			Males		
	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants
<b>Skill level required for occupation</b>	<b>percentage</b>					
Managers and Professionals	70.0	51.3	39.9	71.7	59.0	50.1
College or apprenticeship training	18.9	23.4	23.1	17.9	21.1	21.7
High school or job-specific training	9.9	19.6	25.7	8.7	15.8	20.6
On-the-job training	1.2	5.8	11.3	1.6	4.1	7.6

Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

## More immigrant women than Canadian-born women work part-time

The 2011 National Household Survey collected data on work-activity during 2010. Among people who worked in 2010, women (29.2%) were more likely than men (15.5%) to have worked predominantly or entirely part-time as opposed to full-time.<sup>34</sup> As a group, immigrant women (26.6%) were somewhat less likely than Canadian-born women (30%) to have worked part-time; however, recent immigrant women were slightly more likely (31.1%) to have done so. Within the core working age group, immigrant women worked part-time (21.1%) at a similar rate as Canadian-born women (20.1%); however, recent immigrant women were slightly more likely to have worked part-time (26.0%).

33. Houle, René and Lahouaria Yssad. 2010. "Recognition of newcomers' foreign credentials and work experience." Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 75-001-X2010109. Ottawa, Ontario. *Perspectives on Labour and Income*, vol. 11, no. 9. Statistics Canada.

34. Persons who worked at any time during 2010 were asked to report whether the weeks they worked were full-time weeks (30 hours or more per week) or not, on the basis of all jobs held. Persons with a part-time job for part of the year and a full-time job for another part of the year were asked to report the information for the job at which they worked the most weeks – thus describing whether they typically worked full-time or part-time.

## Most immigrant women who work are wage earners

Of the immigrant women aged 15 and over who worked at any time during 2010, the vast majority (90.4%) were wage earners. A smaller proportion (9.2%) were self-employed, and less than 1% were unpaid family workers, for example workers who do unpaid work in a family business or who provide care-giving. This breakdown was similar for the core working age group of 25 to 54 year old immigrant women, except that there were slightly more wage earners (91.3%) in this age group, and conversely, slightly fewer (8.4%) women who were self-employed.

The worker profile of Canadian-born women was similar to that of immigrant women as a whole, however, Canadian-born women were slightly less likely (7.9%) to be self-employed. This small difference was primarily carried by immigrant women in the older working age group of 55 to 64 year olds, 12.6% of whom were self-employed, compared to 11.6% of their Canadian-born counterparts.

Recent immigrant women were less likely (5.7%) to be self-employed than both the total female immigrant population and the Canadian-born female population. Within the older working age group of 55 to 64 year olds, they were also slightly more likely (1.7%) to be unpaid family workers.

Regardless of immigrant status, men were generally more likely than their female counterparts to be self-employed. Just over 16% of immigrant men, compared to 9.2% of immigrant women, were self-employed. Likewise, 13.1% of Canadian-born men were self-employed, compared to 7.9% of Canadian-born women.

## Immigrant and Canadian-born women work in similar fields

Most immigrant and Canadian-born women reported working in traditional female occupations in 2011. Women aged 15 and over were most commonly employed in sales and service occupations and in business, finance, and administrative disciplines. Of immigrant women who were employed during the week before census day in 2011, 27.8% worked in sales and services, and 23.2% held positions in business, finance and administration.

Immigrant women in the core working age group of 25 to 54 year olds were also most commonly employed in sales and service occupations (25.3%) and in business, finance and administration (23.5%). Other common occupations for this group of women included education, law and social, community and government services (14.8%) and health (11.7%).

These occupations were also most common for Canadian-born women in the core working age group. However Canadian-born women more frequently reported being employed in business, finance and administration fields (26.4%) than in sales and services (20.6%) (Table 8). Canadian-born women were also slightly more likely (10.3%) than immigrant women (8.9%) to hold a management position. Meanwhile, immigrant women were more likely than Canadian-born women to have worked in occupations related to natural and physical sciences (5.6% versus 3.5%) and manufacturing and utilities (5.5% versus 2.1%). These occupations were held in similar proportions by recent immigrant women.

**Table 8**

**Employed labour force aged 25 to 54, by major occupational group, immigrant status and sex, Canada, 2011**

Occupational group	Females			Males		
	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants
	percentage					
<b>All occupational groups</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Management	10.3	8.9	6.3	15.2	13.3	9.9
Business, finance and administration	26.4	23.5	19.6	9.4	10.3	10.1
Natural and applied sciences	3.5	5.6	5.7	11.2	16.8	16.6
Health	12.0	11.7	11.0	2.4	3.3	3.4
Education, law and social, community and government services	19.4	14.8	17.4	8.6	6.2	7.0
Art, culture, recreation and sport	3.0	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.0	2.2
Sales and service	20.6	25.3	30.6	13.7	17.7	21.8
Trades, transport and equipment operators	1.9	1.6	1.4	27.7	21.8	19.3
Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	0.7	0.6	0.6	3.1	1.2	1.3
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	2.1	5.5	5.0	6.2	7.5	8.4

Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

Regardless of immigrant status, men were more much likely than women to work in trades, transport and equipment operation as well as in the sciences. Men were also more likely than women to hold management positions.

## Senior immigrant women have a larger share of income from employment compared to Canadian-born women

An individual's total income consists generally of two broad components: market income, such as employment and investment earnings, and government transfer payments, such as employment insurance and child benefits.

Employment earnings (including wages, salaries, and self-employment income) accounted for 67.1% of the total income reported by immigrant women, aged 15 and over, with income in 2010. The contribution of employment income to total income was higher for recent immigrant women (73.5%). In comparison, Canadian-born women reported that 71.2% of their total income was from employment.

The share of income from employment was higher among the core working age group of 25 to 54 year olds. However, relative to the Canadian-born population, immigrant women reported a smaller share of income from employment sources. Among Canadian-born women of core working age, 85.3% of total income came from employment whereas employment income accounted for 82.8% of immigrant women's income and 75.6% of recent immigrant women's income (Table 9).

**Table 9**  
**Composition of total income for women aged 15 and over with income in 2010, by immigrant status and age group, Canada**

Composition of total income	15 to 24 years			25 to 54 years		
	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants
	percentage					
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Market income</b>	<b>87.3</b>	<b>86.0</b>	<b>80.5</b>	<b>89.6</b>	<b>86.9</b>	<b>79.5</b>
Employment income	80.7	79.1	74.6	85.3	82.8	75.6
Wages and salaries	79.3	77.0	72.2	81.4	78.8	72.4
Self-employment income	1.4	2.1	2.4	3.9	4.0	3.2
Investment income	3.1	2.6	2.1	2.8	2.8	2.4
Retirement pensions	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1
Other money income	3.5	4.2	3.8	1.3	1.2	1.5
<b>Government transfer payments</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>19.5</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>20.5</b>
Old Age Security pension and Guaranteed Income Supplement	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.1
Canada/Quebec Pension Plan benefits	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Child benefits	2.6	2.2	3.1	2.9	2.7	4.3
Employment Insurance benefits	2.9	3.0	5.7	4.8	7.4	11.9
Other income from government sources	6.8	8.4	10.6	2.3	2.7	4.2
	55 to 64 years			65 years and over		
	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants
	percentage					
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Market income</b>	<b>89.9</b>	<b>90.1</b>	<b>85.3</b>	<b>50.3</b>	<b>49.2</b>	<b>56.0</b>
Employment income	67.6	72.6	66.4	9.5	12.3	21.8
Wages and salaries	63.5	68.0	61.5	8.4	10.8	16.3
Self-employment income	4.1	4.6	4.8	1.1	1.4	5.5
Investment income	6.3	7.9	8.7	10.9	11.9	8.4
Retirement pensions	12.5	6.8	6.8	28.0	23.1	21.5
Other money income	3.4	2.7	3.5	1.9	2.0	4.2
<b>Government transfer payments</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>49.7</b>	<b>50.8</b>	<b>44.0</b>
Old Age Security pension and Guaranteed Income Supplement	5.5	4.0	3.1	19.7	17.5	14.1
Canada/Quebec Pension Plan benefits	0.6	1.2	0.0	27.0	27.9	0.0
Child benefits	1.3	1.2	2.5	0.2	0.2	0.7
Employment Insurance benefits	0.2	0.4	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.2
Other income from government sources	2.5	3.1	7.9	2.8	5.2	29.0

**Note:** Income is reported for 2010. Calculations exclude immigrants who landed in 2010.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

Conversely, government transfer payments comprised a larger portion of immigrant women's income compared to their Canadian-born counterparts in this age group. Canadian-born women of core working age reported that 10.4% of their income came from government transfers. In comparison, immigrant women reported 13.1% and recent immigrant woman reported 20.5% of their income came from government transfers.

This pattern was not consistent across the older age groups, and was reversed for senior women aged 65 and over, where 21.8% of the income reported by recent immigrants was from employment income, compared to 12.3% for immigrant women as a whole and 9.5% of Canadian-born women. This is in part attributable to a higher proportion of Canadian-born income coming from retirement pensions (28%) compared to immigrant women (23.1%) and recent immigrant women (21.5%) in this age group. Recent immigrant seniors also received a smaller proportion of their income from government transfers (44%) compared to the total immigrant population (50.8%) and the Canadian-born (49.7%) population.

Income sources differed for men compared to women, and differences by immigrant status were also less pronounced among men. In general, men reported a higher proportion of income from employment compared to their female counterparts. Within the core working age group, 91.8% of total income reported by Canadian-born men came from employment. Similarly, 92% of the total income reported by immigrant men, and 91.1% of the income reported by recent immigrant men was from employment.

Men reported a smaller proportion of total income from government transfers compared to their female counterparts. Among men of core working age, government transfers accounted for 3.9% of the income reported by Canadian-born men, 4.3% of the total income reported by immigrant men, and 5.9% of the income reported by recent immigrant men.

Senior men also reported a smaller proportion of total income from government transfers compared to senior women. However, like women, recent immigrant men reported the smallest proportion of income from government transfers (31%) followed by Canadian-born men (34.2%) and the total immigrant population (35.3%).

## Median employment income is lower for immigrant women of core working age compared to Canadian-born women

As a group, immigrant women earned less than their Canadian-born counterparts in 2010. Immigrant women aged 15 and older who had worked full-time and for a full year had a median employment income of \$40,710, which was \$2,065 less than their Canadian-born peers. Employment income disparity, however, differed across age groups.

The median employment income of younger earners, between the ages of 15 and 24, was similar between immigrant and Canadian-born women. Within that age group, immigrant women earned a median of \$23,977; approximately \$900 more than women born in Canada. Immigrant women of core working age, however, had a lower median income than Canadian-born women. Immigrant women between the ages of 25 and 54 had a median employment income of \$41,187, compared to the Canadian-born median of \$44,745; a difference of \$3,558. The gap was slightly narrower for immigrant women in the older, 55 to 64 year old working group, where the median income for immigrant women was \$2,286 less than that of women born in Canada. Senior immigrant women, however, were earning more than their Canadian-born peers. Immigrant women who were 65 and over had a median income of \$36,246, which was \$5,242 higher than that of Canadian-born women the same age.

Like Canadian-born women, immigrant women had a lower median employment income compared to their male counterparts. At \$41,187, immigrant women in the core working age group earned, on average, 81% of the median employment income earned by immigrant men of the same age.

## Employment income becomes more similar to Canadian-born with time spent in Canada

Integrating into the Canadian labour market can be challenging for new immigrants to Canada – particularly in terms of finding work that reflects their training. Consequently, recent immigrants typically have lower employment income than immigrants with longer tenure in Canada. In 2011, recent immigrant women had the lowest employment income across all age groups. Within the core working age group, the median income for recent immigrant women was \$33,270.

Past research has suggested that changes to immigration selection policy in the early 2000s have resulted in better economic outcomes for recent immigrants.<sup>35</sup> Compared to immigrants who landed in the 1990s, principal applicants admitted under the economic class who arrived after 2000 earned more upon landing, and had a median employment income that increased at a faster pace.<sup>36</sup>

35. Garnett Picot and Feng Hou. 2014. "Immigration, Low Income and Income Inequality in Canada: What's New in the 2000s." Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11F0019M2014364. Ottawa, Ontario. *Analytical Studies Branch Research Paper Series, no. 364*. Statistics Canada.

36. Chui, Tina and Danielle Ziestsma. 2003. "Earnings of immigrants in the 1990s." Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11-008. Canadian Social Trends. Statistics Canada.

Despite improved economic outcomes within the recent immigrant population, the earnings gap between recent immigrant women and Canadian-born women widened between the 1980s and the mid 2000s.<sup>37</sup> Time spent in Canada narrowed this gap. The average salary of recent immigrant women was 78% of that of their Canadian-born counterparts in 1991; nearly 20 years later, the average employment income of that same cohort of immigrant women was 93% of that of women born in Canada.<sup>38</sup> Immigrant men also experienced greater income parity with time, although at a lesser rate. The average employment income of immigrant men was 86% of that of Canadian-born men; up from 76% in 1991 when they had only recently arrived.

### Prevalence of low-income higher for immigrant women and girls than Canadian-born

In 2010, immigrant women and girls were more likely than their Canadian-born counterparts to be living in a low-income household, according to the National Household Survey after-tax low income measure (Table 10). The prevalence of low-income was highest amongst recent immigrants at 28.3%, compared to 17.5% in the total female immigrant population and 14.6% in the Canadian-born female population. Prevalence of low income was slightly lower amongst male immigrants (15.8%) and recent male immigrants (27.6%).

Of the total female immigrant population, girls under the age of 15 had the highest prevalence of low-income (26.6%). In contrast, senior immigrant women aged 65 and over had the lowest low-income rate (14.4%).

Longer time spent living in Canada was related to lower prevalence of low-income status. For example, in 2010, the prevalence of low income after tax for recent female immigrants, who arrived between 2006 and 2009, was 28.3%, but was lower (20.5%) for those who arrived earlier in the new millennium, and lower still for those who arrived during the second half of the 1990s (18.4%). This pattern was consistent for immigrant women and girls across all age groups, except for senior women aged 65 and over. The prevalence of low-income remained approximately the same, dropping only for those who had arrived prior to 1981.

**Table 10**  
**Prevalence of low income after-tax by immigrant status and sex, Canada, 2010**

Prevalence of low income and age group	Canadian-born		Total immigrants		Recent immigrants	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
	percentage					
<b>All age groups</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>28.3</b>	<b>27.6</b>
Less than 15 years	16.4	16.3	26.6	27.4	32.5	33.0
15 to 24	15.8	13.9	25.1	24.0	33.8	32.7
25 to 54	12.5	10.9	17.7	16.0	26.8	25.0
55 to 64	14.6	13.2	15.0	14.6	22.7	23.9
65 and over	17.0	10.0	14.4	9.6	19.0	21.1

**Note:** Income is reported for 2010. Calculations exclude immigrants who landed in 2010.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

37. Morissette, René and Rizwan Sultan. 2013. "Twenty Years in the Careers of Immigrant and Native-born Workers." Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11626X2013032. Ottawa, Ontario. *Economic Insights Series, no. 32.* Statistics Canada.

38. Ibid.



## Employment earnings increased over time

The Longitudinal Immigration Database links information from immigrant landing files to annual tax files. Using these linked records the median employment income of immigrants who were of core working age when they landed in 1997 was examined at two time points: one year after landing (1998) and 15 years after landing (2012). Respondents were selected for analysis if they had positive employment income at both time points. Across all admission categories, median employment income increased over a 15 year period for immigrant women who reported positive employment earnings.

Principal applicants to the economic class are admitted to Canada based on their suitability for the Canadian labour market, and potential to adapt to labour market changes. As such, as a group, women in this category had higher employment income one year after landing in 1998, and experienced the largest increase in income over a 15 year period. In 1998, immigrant women who had landed in 1997 under the economic class (principal applicants), and who had positive employment income earnings, had a median earnings of \$15,100 (in 2012 constant dollars). In 2012, the median income of this group of women had risen to \$44,000.

Women who landed under the family class in 1997 had lower median employment earnings; however, these also increased over a fifteen year period, from about \$10,100 in 1998 to \$28,000 in 2012. Similar patterns of employment income increases over time were also observed for those who landed in the mid-1980s and early 1990s.

## Share of total income from government transfers declined over time

Records from the Longitudinal Immigration Database showed that time spent in Canada is related to an increase in share of total income from employment earnings and a decrease in share of total income from government transfers.

Sources of income were examined for immigrant women who landed in 1997 and who were linked to a tax record in 1998 and 2012. Immigrant women who were of core working age upon landing in Canada reported employment earnings (from wages, salaries, and/or self-employment) that accounted for 66.3% of their total income on year after landing. Another 8.2% of their total income came from other income sources such as investments or retirement income. The remaining 25.5% came from government transfers such as employment insurance or welfare benefits.

After having resided in Canada for 15 years, employment earnings accounted for 81.5% of the total income reported by women from the 1997 landing cohort. Meanwhile, the proportion of total income from government transfers decreased to 12.3% in 2012.

The proportion of total income from employment earnings was higher for women who were principal applicants admitted under the economic class in 1997. One year after landing, 80.5% of their total income came from employment earnings, while 12.5% came from government transfers. Fifteen years after landing, nearly nine tenths (89.1%) of their total income came from employment earnings, while 5.8% came from government transfers.

## Immigrant women have fewer local social connections than their Canadian-born counterparts

An individual's social network is comprised of connections to family, friends and acquaintances. Academic research has often used the term social capital to describe the benefits associated with these connections. For example, a larger social network has been associated with better life satisfaction, as well as higher levels of self-reported mental and physical health.<sup>39</sup> On the other hand, more diversified networks, with connections to people in a variety of occupation types, has been linked to better employment outcomes.<sup>40</sup>

Data from the 2013 General Social Survey showed that there was a small but statistically significant difference in the number of social connections reported by men and women aged 15 and over. Women reported having about 28 social connections to family, friends and/or acquaintances while men had about 29 such connections.

Immigrant women<sup>41</sup> had fewer social connections than Canadian-born women (24 compared to 29, respectively). Within age groups, however, this difference was only apparent for those between the ages of 25 and 54. In this group, immigrant women had about 25 connections, compared to about 31 connections reported by Canadian-born women. Recent immigrant women, on the other hand, had networks that were comparable in size to their Canadian-born peers, with around 26 connections overall.

39. Sinha, Maire. 2014. "Canadians' connections with family and friends." Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 89-652-X2014006. Ottawa, Ontario. *Spotlight of Canadians: Results from the General Social Survey*. Statistics Canada.

40. Thomas, Derrick. 2011. "Personal networks and the economic adjustment of immigrants." Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11-008-X201100211592. Ottawa, Ontario. *Canadian Social Trends*. Statistics Canada.

41. Due to differences in the coding of General Social Survey data, "Canadian-born" includes a small proportion of immigrants who were born in Canada, such as the children of foreign diplomats. It also excludes a small proportion of Canadian citizens by birth who were born outside of Canada.

Current technology can facilitate the maintenance of long-distance or internet-only connections. However, local connections<sup>42</sup> may be particularly important to accessing certain resources, such as employment and childcare. When leaving their home country, immigrants typically leave a large part of their local social network behind and must rebuild that network in a new environment, and this process may take time.

When accounting for only local connections, recent immigrant women had fewer connections than their Canadian-born peers (10 versus 17, respectively). The total population of immigrant women also typically had fewer local connections compared to Canadian-born women (13 versus 17); however, this was again driven by those who were 25 to 54 years old. Among those who were 25 to 54, immigrants had 13 local connections compared to the average of 17 connections for Canadian-born women of this age. Within other age groups, there were no significant differences, suggesting that with time immigrant women in most age groups build social networks that are comparably sized to those of their Canadian-born peers.

### Social support is related to better health outcomes

Upon landing in Canada, immigrants are typically healthier than the average Canadian-born person.<sup>43</sup> One contributor to the “healthy immigrant effect” involves self-selection: people who choose to migrate are able and motivated to do so. Another contributor involves immigrant selection procedures, which may exclude those with serious medical conditions, and favour those with characteristics (such as higher education, and language ability) related to positive health outcomes.<sup>44</sup>

Some health measures by which recent immigrants have surpassed the Canadian-born population include: a lower mortality rate, lower incidence of chronic conditions, lower incidence of mental health problems, and better self-reported health.<sup>45,46</sup> However, these health advantages have been shown to decrease with time spent in Canada, with certain subgroups of immigrants (persons with low-income, seniors and women) at greater risk than others.<sup>47</sup> For example, immigrant women who had been in Canada longer than 10 years had poorer self-reported health than their Canadian-born counterparts, while immigrant men who had been in Canada for the same time period had similar levels of self-reported health to the Canadian-born population.<sup>48</sup>

This decline in health has been attributed in part to stresses associated with migration including: challenges finding an adequate source of income, language difficulties, and rebuilding social networks in a new country. However, health risks known to be associated with the stresses of migration can be mitigated by social support and services provided within the community. Indeed, according to previous research, “social support from family and community sources buffers the stresses of migration and resettlement, promotes mental and physical health, and enables help-seeking.”<sup>49</sup>

### Immigrants are less likely than Canadian-born to participate in organizations and associations

Joining associations and organizations offers the opportunity to broaden and diversify one’s social network. However, both recent immigrant women (55%) and immigrant women as a group (61%) were less likely than Canadian-born women (67%) to have been a member or participant in an association or organization.<sup>50</sup> Within age groups, this difference was only significant for those between the ages of 25 and 54. In this group, 69% of Canadian-born women participated in at least one association or organization, compared to 61% of immigrant women and 54% of recent immigrant women.

Males and females were equally likely to have participated in at least one association or organization; however there were some differences in the types of activities they were involved in. Women, regardless of whether they were or were not immigrants, were more likely than men to participate in religious groups, school or community groups, cultural and educational groups, youth groups, and seniors groups. They were less likely than men to participate in political groups, service clubs, unions and professional organizations or sports and recreation groups.

42. Local connections include people living in the same community or city as the respondent.

43. Ng, Edward, Russel Wilkins, Francois Gendron and Jean-Marie Berthelot. (2005). “Dynamics of Immigrants’ Health in Canada: Evidence from the National Population Health Survey.” Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 82-618. Ottawa, Ontario. Healthy Today, Healthy Tomorrow? Findings from the National Population Health Survey. Statistics Canada.

44. Ibid.

45. Chui T. (2003). “Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada: Process, Progress and Prospects.” Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 89-611-XWE. Ottawa, Ontario. Statistics Canada.

46. Hyman, Ilene and Beth Jackson. 2010. “The healthy immigrant effect: a temporary phenomenon?” *Health Policy Research Bulletin, Migration Health, Issue 17*, pp. 17-20. Health Canada.

47. Ibid.

48. Bilkis, Vissandjee et al. 2004. Integrating Ethnicity and Migration as Determinants of Canadian Women’s Health. *BMC Women’s Health*, 4(Suppl 1):S32.

49. Simich, Laura and Beth Jackson. 2010. “Social determinants of immigrant health in Canada: what makes some immigrants healthy and others not?” *Health Policy Research Bulletin, Migration Health, Issue 17*, pp. 26-29. Health Canada.

50. Due to differences in the coding of General Social Survey data, “Canadian-born” includes a small proportion of immigrants who were born in Canada, such as the children of foreign diplomats. It also excludes a small proportion of Canadian citizens by birth who were born outside of Canada.

Nonetheless, the top three reported group types were consistent across males and females. Approximately 34% of males and 28% of females indicated that they had been a member or participant of a sports or recreational group, while 28% of men and 27% of women indicated that they had belonged to a union or professional association, and 18% of males and 23% of females participated in a cultural or educational group (data not shown).

Immigrant women were more likely than Canadian-born women to have participated in a religious group (22% versus 15%) (Table 11). Likewise, immigrant men were more likely to have participated in a religious group compared to their Canadian-born counterparts (19% versus 11%).<sup>51</sup>

**Table 11**  
**Participation in organizations and associations for women aged 15 and over, by immigrant status, Canada, 2013**

Association or organization type	Canadian-born (ref.)	Total immigrants	Recent immigrants
	percentage		
Sports or recreational organization	30	20*	15*
Union or professional association	28	24*	20*
Cultural, educational, or hobby group	23	20*	12*
School or community group	21	18*	17
Religious group	15	22*	25*
Seniors' group	9	7*	F
Service club	6	3*	4* <sup>E</sup>
Youth organization	6	4*	6 <sup>E</sup>
Political party or group	4	3	F
Immigrant or ethnic association or club	2	7*	10* <sup>E</sup>

\* significantly different from the reference category (ref.) at  $p < .05$

<sup>E</sup> use with caution

F too unreliable to be published

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2013.

## Immigrant women were less likely to have voted than Canadian-born women

In addition to participation in organizations and associations, another measure of civic engagement that may indicate integration into Canadian life is voting behaviour. Among eligible voters, immigrant women were less likely than Canadian-born women to have voted in the last federal, provincial and municipal elections (Table 12).<sup>52</sup> In contrast, voting behaviour among immigrant men was not statistically different than Canadian-born men at the federal or provincial level. However, immigrant men were less likely than Canadian-born men to have voted in the last municipal election.

51. For information on religious diversity in the immigrant population, see *Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity in Canada*. 2011. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-010-X2011001.

52. Due to differences in the coding of General Social Survey data, "Canadian-born" includes a small proportion of immigrants who were born in Canada, such as the children of foreign diplomats. It also excludes a small proportion of Canadian citizens by birth who were born outside of Canada.

**Table 12**  
**Proportion of eligible voters who voted, by sex and immigrant status, Canada, 2013**

Election type and age group	Females		Males	
	Canadian-born	Total immigrants	Canadian-born	Total immigrants
	percentage			
<b>Federal election</b>				
Total age groups	81	77*	81	80
18 to 24	61	47*	61	41*
25 to 54	78	71*	79	74*
55 to 64	90	87	88	88
65 and over	92	88	94	91
<b>Provincial election</b>				
Total age groups	82	75*	79	76
18 to 24	64	43*	56	45
25 to 54	79	70*	76	68*
55 to 64	90	82*	88	83
65 and over	92	86*	93	90
<b>Municipal election</b>				
Total age groups	69	62*	65	62*
18 to 24	45	39	40	33 <sup>E</sup>
25 to 54	64	56*	61	52*
55 to 64	79	69*	77	71
65 and over	82	73*	85	78*

\* significantly different from Canadian-born, within sex, at  $p < .05$ .

<sup>E</sup> use with caution

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2013.

At the federal level, differences in voting behaviour between immigrant and Canadian-born women were only statistically significant among the two youngest age groups; 18 to 24 and 25 to 54 year olds. The difference was largest for 18 to 24 year olds, where 47% of eligible immigrant women voted, compared to 61% of Canadian-born women. In contrast, women between the ages of 55 and 64 were about equally likely to have voted in the last federal election, with 87% of immigrant women and 90% of Canadian-born women having voted. At the provincial and municipal levels immigrant women were generally less likely than Canadian-born women to vote regardless of their age.

Due to small sample sizes, voting behaviour among recent immigrants is not reported here. However, previous research has shown that recent immigrants are less likely to vote than more established immigrants.<sup>53</sup> This relationship persisted even after accounting for the younger age of recent immigrants.

Overall, without considering immigrant status, there was no gender difference associated with voting at the federal level, where approximately 81% of eligible men and women voted in the last election (data not shown). However, women were slightly more likely than men to have voted at the provincial level (81% versus 78%) and at the municipal level (67% versus 65%). This difference did not exist when only immigrant men and women were considered.

Immigrant women most commonly cited not being interested as the main reason they did not vote in the last federal election. This was reported by 15% of immigrant women. The second mostly commonly reported reason was not being informed on the issues (12%) followed by being too busy (11%). The top two reasons for not voting in the last federal election were the same for Canadian-born women; 22% of whom cited not being interested and 13% of whom reported not being informed on the issues. The third most commonly reported reason for not voting among Canadian-born women was that they did not like the candidates or the campaign issues (9%).

Men also cited not being interested as the top reason for not voting; this was reported by 18% of immigrant men and 22% of Canadian-born men. The second most frequently reported reason for not voting among immigrant men was being too busy (17%) followed by having a conflicting work or school schedule (10%).

53. Uppal, Sharanjit and Sébastien LaRochelle-Côté. 2012. "Factors associated with voting." Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 75-001-X201200111629. Ottawa, Ontario. *Perspectives on Labour and Income*, vol 12, no. 1. Statistics Canada.

## Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

**Immigrant population** refers to a person who is or has ever been a landed immigrant. This is a person who has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Immigrants are either Canadian citizens by naturalization or permanent residents (landed immigrants) under Canadian legislation. Some immigrants have resided in Canada for a number of years, while others have arrived recently. Most immigrants are born outside Canada, but a small number are born in Canada. The immigrant population excludes non-permanent residents, who are persons in Canada on a work or study permit, or who are refugee claimants.

**Recent immigrants** (also known as newcomers or recent arrivals) are landed immigrants who came to Canada up to five years prior to a given survey year. For the 2011 National Household Survey, recent immigrants are landed immigrants who arrived in Canada between January 1, 2006 and May 10, 2011. Similarly, recent immigrants in the 2006 Census were newcomers who came to Canada between January 1, 2001 and May 16, 2006. For the 2013 General Social Survey, recent immigrants had arrived between 2008 and 2013.

**Canadian-born population** refers to Canadian citizens by birth or non-immigrants. Most of them are born in Canada, but it includes a small number of Canadian citizens by birth who were born outside of the country. It excludes immigrants and non-permanent residents (see definition above).

**Canada's total population** includes immigrants, Canadian-born, and non-permanent residents.

**The reference scenario of Statistic's Canada's population projections** combines medium fertility, life expectancy, immigration, an immigration composition representative of what was observed from 2001 to 2006, and medium internal migration. It serves to estimate what the population would be if the 2001 to 2006 situation and trends were to continue in the coming years.

**Permanent residents (previously known as landed immigrants)**, defined by the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, fall into three basic categories: Economic, Family and Refugee (Protected Persons). Permanent residents are persons who have been authorized to live and work in Canada indefinitely, provided that they meet residency requirements and do not lose their status by reason of serious criminality, security, human rights violations, organized crime or misrepresentation (see [Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures, 2013](#)).

**Economic class:** Permanent residents selected for their skills and ability to contribute to Canada's economy.

- **Principal applicants:** Permanent residents identified as the principal applicant on their application for a permanent resident visa for themselves and, if applicable, for accompanying spouse and/or dependants when they apply to immigrate to Canada.
- **Spouse and dependants:** Permanent residents who are the spouse, common-law or conjugal partner, or dependent children of the principal applicant and listed as such on the application.

### Subcategories of economic class:

- **Skilled workers:** Economic immigrants who are able to demonstrate their ability to enter the labour market and successfully establish in Canada by meeting selection criteria that assess factors such as English or French language abilities, and work experience.
- **Canadian experience:** This immigration category became effective in September 17, 2008. This is a prescribed class of persons who may become permanent residents on the basis of their Canadian experience. They must intend to reside in a province or territory other than Quebec and must have maintained temporary resident status during their qualifying period of work experience as well as during any period of full-time study or training in Canada.
- **Provincial/territorial nominees:** Economic immigrants selected by a province or territory for specific skills that will contribute to the local economy to meet specific labour market needs.
- **Live-in caregivers:** Persons granted permanent resident status as economic immigrants after their participation in the Live-in Caregiver Program. Initially, live-in caregivers must be qualified to provide care for children, sick or elderly people, or persons with a disability. After two years, they are eligible to apply for permanent resident status.
- **Entrepreneurs, investors and self-employed:** Economic immigrants in the business immigrant category, which includes those who invest their money in an approved venture, those who intend to run their own business, or those who intend to be self-employed.

**Family class:** Permanent residents sponsored by close relatives or family members in Canada. Family class immigrants include spouses and common-law partners; parents and grandparents; and others (i.e., dependent children, children under the age of 18 whom the sponsor intends to adopt in Canada, brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, and grandchildren who are orphans under 18 years of age, or any other relative if the sponsor has no relative as described above, either abroad or in Canada).

**Refugee class (Protected Persons in Canada):** Persons are admitted under the refugee class after being deemed as needing Canada's protection. Protected persons have been found to be either a Convention Refugee as defined by the United Nations 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 protocol, or a person needing protection based on risk to life, risk of cruel and unusual treatment or punishment, or danger of torture as defined in the Convention Against Torture.

#### Subcategories of refugee class:

- **Landed in Canada:** Permanent residents in the refugee category who have had their refugee claims accepted, while in Canada, and who subsequently applied for and were granted permanent resident status in Canada.
- **Government-assisted:** Permanent residents in the refugee category who are selected abroad for resettlement to Canada as Convention Refugees under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act or as members of the Convention Refugees Abroad Class, and who receive resettlement assistance from the federal government.
- **Refugee dependants:** Refugee dependants are permanent residents in the refugee category who are family members of a refugee landed in Canada, and who were living abroad or in Canada at the time of application. Their applications for permanent residence are considered concurrently with that of the principal applicant in Canada.
- **Privately sponsored:** Permanent residents in the refugee category who are privately sponsored by organizations, individuals or groups of individuals.

**Visible minority** refers to whether a person belongs to a visible minority group as defined by the Employment Equity Act, and if so, the visible minority group to which the person belongs. The Employment Equity Act defines visible minorities as "persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour." For more details see the Visible Minority Population and Population Group Reference Guide, National Household Survey, 2011, Catalogue no. [99-010-XWE2011009](#).

**Census metropolitan area (CMA)** is an area consisting of one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a major core. A census metropolitan area must have a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more live in the urban core.

**Census family** refers to a married couple (with or without children of either or both spouses), a couple living common-law (with or without children of either or both partners) or a lone parent of any marital status, with at least one child living in the same dwelling. A couple may be of opposite or same sex. Children in a census family include grandchildren living with their grandparents but with no parents present.

**Citizenship** refers to the legal citizenship status of the respondent. Canadian citizenship is obtained either by birth or by naturalization. A small number of individuals who were born outside Canada, but who have at least one Canadian parent, are considered Canadian citizens by birth. Only those landed immigrants who have met certain criteria are eligible for Canadian citizenship by naturalization.

**Naturalization** refers to the process by which a person is granted citizenship of Canada under the Citizenship Act. Permanent residents who have met certain criteria such as residency, language and other requirements are eligible to apply for Canadian citizenship through naturalization.

**Major field of study** refers to the predominant discipline or area of learning or training of a person's highest postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree. For more information on the classification of the fields, refer to 2011 National Household Survey Dictionary, Catalogue no. [99-000-XWE](#).

**Occupation** refers to the kind of work people were doing during the reference week, as determined by their kind of work and the description of the main activities in their job. If the person did not have a job during the week of Sunday, May 1 to Saturday, May 7, 2011 the data relate to the job of longest duration since January 1, 2010. People with two or more jobs were to report the information for the job at which they worked the most hours. For more information on the classification of the occupational group, refer to 2011 National Household Survey Dictionary, Catalogue no. [99-000-XWE](#).

**Employment rate** is the number of persons for a particular group (age, sex, marital status, geographical area, etc.) employed in the week of Sunday, May 1 to Saturday, May 7, 2011 expressed as a percentage of the total population in that particular group.

**Unemployment rate** is the number of unemployed persons in a particular group (age, sex, marital status, geographical area, etc.) expressed as a percentage of the labour force in that group, in the week of Sunday, May 1 to Saturday, May 7, 2011.

**Employment income** or earnings refers to total income received by people 15 years of age and over as wages and salaries, net income from a non-farm unincorporated business or professional practice or net farm self-employment income. In the 2011 National Household Survey, employment income was reported for the 2010 calendar year; immigrants who landed during 2010 or 2011 were excluded from the analysis.

**After-tax low-income measure (LIM-AT)** Low income can be measured in several different ways in household surveys. For the standard products of the National Household Survey, the line chosen is a relative measure: the after-tax low-income measure (LIM-AT).

For this measure, the income used is after-tax income of households. There are no regional variations to account for prices or cost of living differences: all applicable households in Canada face the same line adjusted for household size. The line is set at half the median of adjusted household after-tax income. To account for economies of scale, the income of households with more than one member is divided by the square root of the size of the household. All household members are considered to share the household income and are attributed the same income status. The LIM-AT is not related to the low-income cut offs (LICO) presented in the 2006 Census and prevalence rates are not conceptually comparable.

**Full-time or part-time work** refers to the number of hours, per week, typically worked for pay or in self-employment. Persons were asked to report whether the weeks they worked in 2010 were full-time weeks (30 hours or more per week) or not, on the basis of all jobs held. Persons with a part-time job for part of the year and a full-time job for another part of the year were to report the information for the job at which they worked the most weeks.

**Full-year, full time work** refers to people aged 15 and over who worked 49 to 52 weeks (mostly fulltime) in 2010 for pay or in self-employment.