

# 2016 Census of Canada

## Immigrants

The 2016 Census showed that over one in five residents of Alberta was an immigrant. Most immigrants in the province were from Asia and most were admitted under the economic category. One in four immigrated in the five years prior to the Census and the majority of these individuals were in the core working ages of 25 to 54 years. Alberta's share of the national total is on the rise; the province was home to about one in ten immigrants overall, but 17% of most recent arrivals to Canada.

### Immigrants make up over one in five Albertans

The 2016 Census found that 845,220 Albertans were immigrants, 11.2% of the 7.54 million immigrants living in Canada. Immigrants account for 21.2% of the provincial population, similar to the national proportion of 21.9% (Figure 1). These figures account for residents who are, or have ever been, a landed immigrant or a permanent resident, regardless of when they arrived in Canada.

Alberta had the third highest proportion of immigrants, after Ontario and British Columbia. Recently, an increasing number of immigrants to Canada have been choosing to settle in Alberta and, as a result, the province's population share of immigrants increased by 3.2 percentage points between 2011 and 2016, a pace second only to Saskatchewan (3.7 percentage points).

### One in four immigrants were new arrivals

At the national level, about six in ten immigrants arrived in Canada prior to 2001. In contrast, most immigrants in Alberta were more recent arrivals, with one in four arriving between

2011 and 2016 (Figure 2). As a result, Alberta was home to a greater share of recent newcomers. For instance, 17.1% of all those who arrived in Canada in the previous five years were residents of Alberta, compared with 13.9% of those arriving between 2006 and 2010, 11.7% of 2001 to 2005 arrivals, and only 8.8% of those who landed prior to 2001.

### Most immigrants from Asia, but Africa increasing

In Alberta, the birthplace of immigrants living in Alberta varied depending on when they landed in Canada. Over half of those who arrived before 1981 were born in Europe (Figure 3). Thereafter, the proportion of immigrants from European countries fell to only one in ten of those who arrived between 2011 and 2016. About a quarter of immigrants who arrived before 1981 came from Asia; for the most recent immigrants this proportion had risen to two-thirds.

Figure 1: Immigrants as Share of Total Population

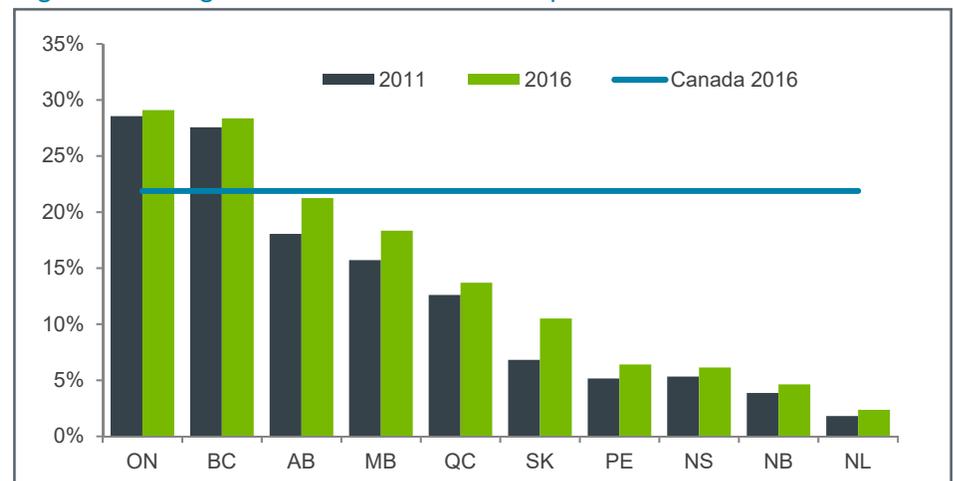
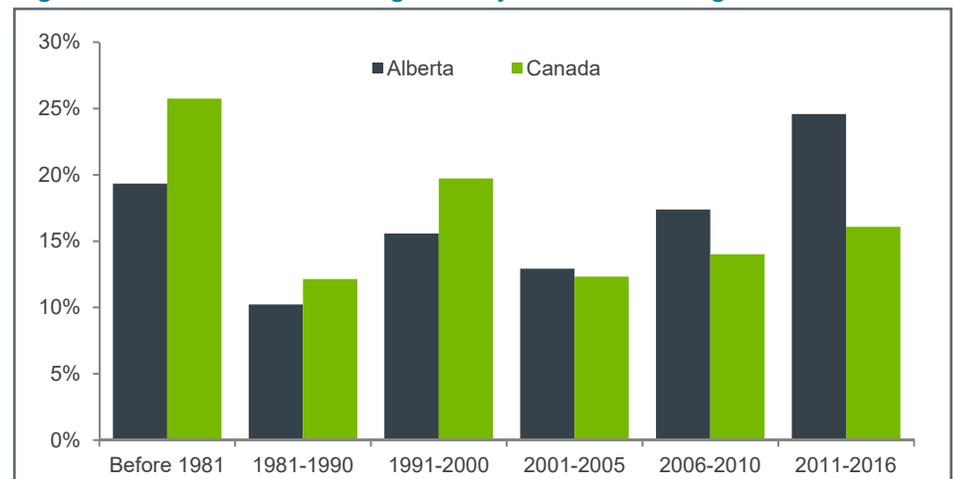


Figure 2: Distribution of Immigrants by Period of Immigration



While still relatively small, Africa claimed the second most common region of birth among recent arrivals at 13%.

Figure 3: Region of Birth by Period of Immigration, Alberta

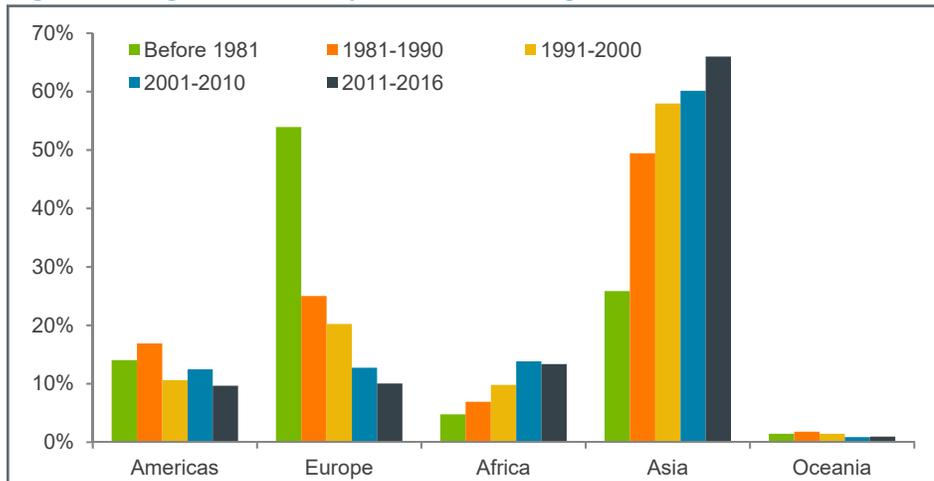


Figure 4: Admission Class by Period of Immigration, Alberta

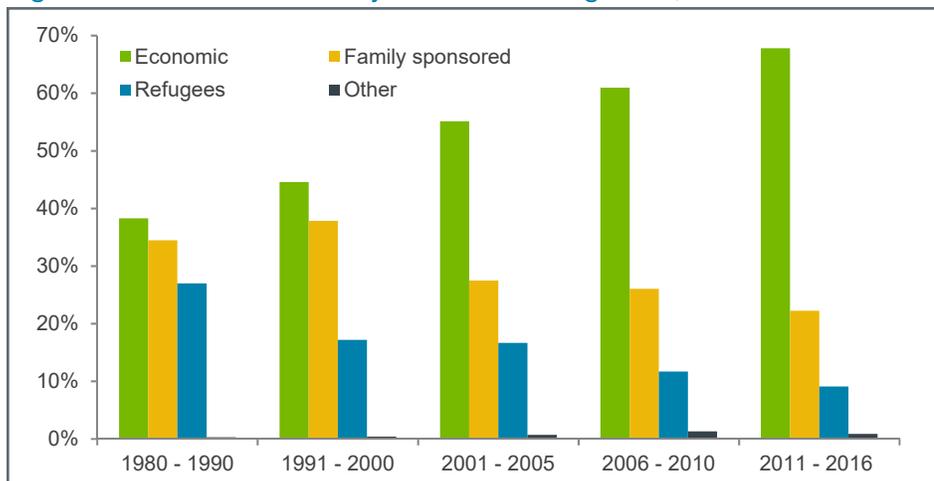
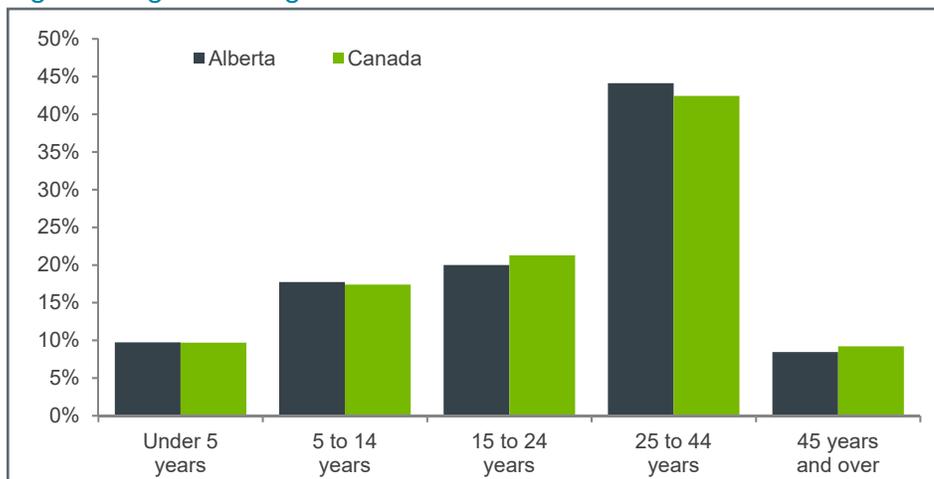


Figure 5: Age at Immigration



**Two-thirds of recent immigrants admitted under economic class**

Of the immigrants living in Alberta who have been in Canada the longest, 38.3% were admitted to Canada as economic immigrants, about another third were sponsored by family, and 27.0% were admitted as refugees (Figure 4). Over time, the distribution of immigrants by admission class has shifted, with the proportions of all classes other than economic decreasing. Among the most recent newcomers, over two-thirds of those living in Alberta were admitted as economic immigrants. The refugee class had shrunk to less than one in ten immigrants, and the family class was down to 22.2%.

Among recent immigrants, the vast majority (68.0%) of the family sponsorship class admissions were spouses and partners, whereas about one in four was a parent or grandparent of a Canadian citizen or permanent resident (Table 1). Most economic immigrants were in the worker category (62.7%), and well over half of these were skilled workers (57.8%). Among economic immigrants, the next most common was the provincial nominee category at 36.7%.

**Immigrants tend to be young**

Canada both targets and receives immigrants who are in working ages, or younger. The age pattern of immigrants has remained relatively stable over time. Regardless of the particular period of immigration, the vast majority of immigrants were relatively young when they arrived (Figure 5).

Relative to the national level, a slightly higher proportion of immigrants (44.1%) in Alberta were in the core working ages when they arrived in Canada and slightly fewer were aged 45 and older (8.5%).

As previously noted, most recent immigrants were admitted under the

Table 1: Distribution of Immigrants by Admission Category and Period of Immigration, Alberta

Admission Category	Total	1980 to 1990	1991 to 2000	2001 to 2005	2006 to 2010	2011 to 2016
<b>All Immigrants</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>Economic immigrants</b>	<b>55.7%</b>	<b>38.3%</b>	<b>44.6%</b>	<b>55.1%</b>	<b>60.9%</b>	<b>67.8%</b>
Worker programs	75.8%	90.0%	86.5%	91.5%	72.7%	62.7%
Skilled workers	79.7%	95.1%	89.9%	91.9%	82.9%	57.8%
Skilled trades workers	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%
Canadian experience class	7.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	22.8%
Caregivers	12.3%	4.9%	10.1%	8.1%	15.3%	16.9%
Business programs	4.0%	10.0%	12.8%	3.4%	1.6%	0.6%
Entrepreneurs	46.6%	51.4%	52.3%	37.4%	36.8%	12.6%
Investors	21.4%	3.1%	17.6%	27.3%	52.9%	76.1%
Self-employed	31.9%	45.5%	30.2%	35.7%	10.4%	11.9%
Provincial and territorial nominees	20.2%	0.0%	0.6%	5.1%	25.7%	36.7%
<b>Immigrants sponsored by family</b>	<b>28.6%</b>	<b>34.5%</b>	<b>37.8%</b>	<b>27.5%</b>	<b>26.1%</b>	<b>22.2%</b>
Sponsored spouses or partners	63.5%	55.1%	56.5%	69.1%	70.5%	68.0%
Sponsored parents or grandparents	26.8%	33.3%	32.9%	22.9%	19.3%	24.3%
Sponsored children	6.4%	10.7%	8.7%	4.4%	3.9%	4.0%
Sponsored intercountry adopted children	1.1%	0.2%	1.5%	1.7%	1.5%	0.4%
Public policy or humanitarian and compassionate cases sponsored by family	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	4.3%	2.5%
Immigrants sponsored by family, n.i.e.	0.6%	0.6%	0.5%	0.4%	0.7%	0.8%
<b>Refugees</b>	<b>14.9%</b>	<b>27.0%</b>	<b>17.2%</b>	<b>16.7%</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	<b>9.1%</b>
<b>Other immigrants</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>0.9%</b>

economic class, and most of these in the worker category. Although the vast majority were young, the age distribution of these recent arrivals varied, depending on the subgroup of the worker program (Figure 6). The highest proportion of Canadian experience and skilled trades worker admissions were aged 25 to 34 years, while skilled worker and caregiver admissions tended to be slightly older.

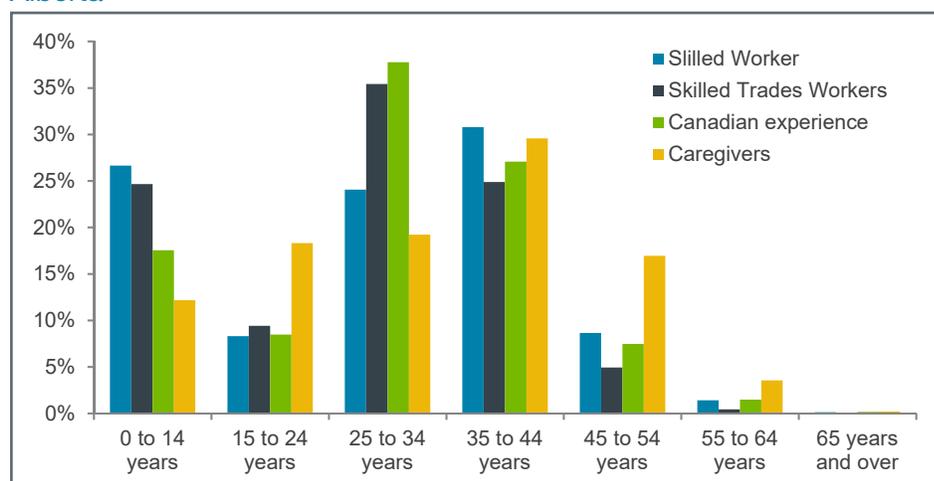
Immigrants are identified as principal or secondary applicants (partner and/or dependents of the principal applicant). Among recent immigrants admitted in the worker program, skilled workers and trades workers were the most likely to have accompanying family members. On average, every principal applicant admitted as a skilled worker was accompanied by 1.7 other people. Each person in the trades category included an average of 1.4 additional

applicants. Canadian experience and caregiver applications included an average of 1 and 1.1 secondary applicants, respectively.

### Recent Immigrants disproportionately in core working ages

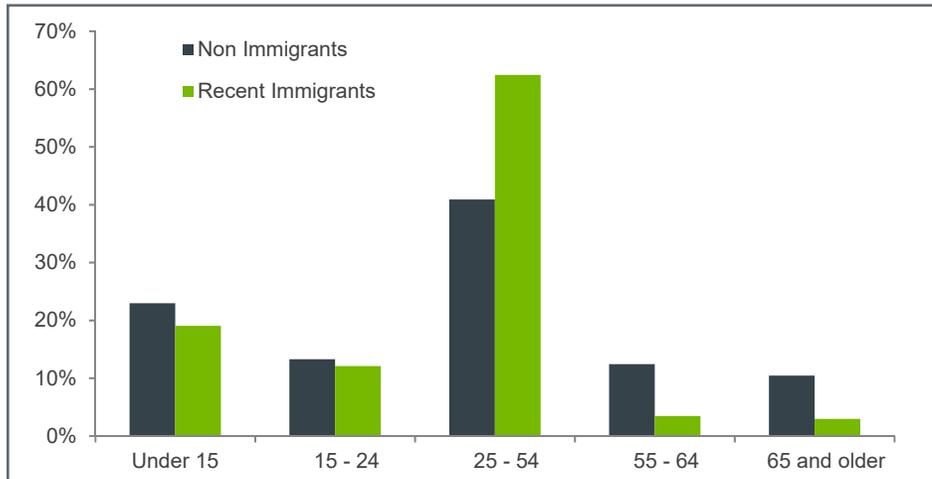
Focusing on immigrants who arrived in the 5 years prior to the 2016 Census, the vast majority in Alberta were in the core working ages of 25 to 54 years of age. As a result of the selection criteria, recent immigrants were much younger

Figure 6: Age Distribution of Recent Immigrants (Worker Program), Alberta



than non-immigrants residing in Alberta. For every 100 recent immigrants, about 62 were in the core working ages, and a further 31 were under 25 (Figure 7). In comparison, 41% of Canadian-born Albertans were aged 25 to 54 years, and 36% were younger. One in ten non-immigrant Albertans were aged 65 or older, whereas only 3% of recent immigrants were seniors.

**Figure 7: Age Structure of Non-Immigrants and Recent Immigrants, Alberta**



### More females among recent immigrants

Among recent immigrants living in Alberta, the Census found only 94 males for every 100 females. In contrast, among non-immigrants, males outnumber females 103 to 100.

### Almost one in ten Albertans not a Canadian citizen

Likely due to the large number of recent immigrants in Alberta, a smaller proportion of residents of the province were citizens, compared with the national level (91.1% versus 93.0%). A slightly greater proportion of females (9.2%) than males (8.7%) did not hold Canadian citizenship, a pattern that was also reflected among the national population. Among residents of Alberta who were not Canadian citizens, about six out of ten were born in Asia, followed by Europe and the Americas, at 15.4% and 12.9%, respectively.

A small proportion (3.3%) of Albertans had citizenship in Canada and at least one other country. About one in five of these individuals were born in Canada, whereas 27.0% were born in Europe and 24.3% were born in Asia.

### Immigrants in Alberta's metro areas

Almost three of ten residents of the Calgary census metropolitan area (CMA) were immigrants. In the Edmonton CMA, immigrants were 23.8% of the population and in the Lethbridge CMA, the proportion was 13.5%. Among Canada's CMAs, Calgary ranked third in proportion of immigrants, behind Toronto (46.1%) and Vancouver (40.8%), while Edmonton came in at seventh. Alberta's CMAs were home to almost 730,000 immigrants, 9.7% of the total immigrant population of Canada; just over one in twenty lived in the Calgary CMA and 4.1% lived in the Edmonton CMA. Of Canada's 1.2 million recent immigrants, Calgary CMA's share jumped to 7.7%, while the Edmonton CMA claimed 6.5% of the national total.

The vast majority (84.4%) of immigrants in Alberta lived in the two largest CMAs of Calgary and Edmonton. The immigrant population is much more concentrated in the two largest urban areas of the province, compared with the 62.1% of the non-immigrant population of the province.

#### Recent 2016 Census of Population Releases

November 29, 2017

Education, Labour, Journey to work, Language of work, Mobility and Migration

1. 'Population' in this highlight refers to the non-institutional population i.e. excludes people living in an institutional collective dwelling, like a hospital, nursing home or a jail. All data in this publication is from the Censuses of Canada, conducted by Statistics Canada.
2. Following the Fort McMurray wildfires, Statistics Canada took steps to make sure residents of Wood Buffalo were included in the 2016 Census. Many residents responded over the usual collection period. Statistics Canada returned to Wood Buffalo in August 2016 to follow up with households that had not yet responded. If direct responses could not be obtained, administrative data was used. For more information see: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/98-304/app-ann1-4-eng.cfm>

#### Contact

[Jennifer Hansen](mailto:jennifer.hansen@statcan.gc.ca)

780.427.8811