

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada

▲ **Figure 10–6 New permanent residents admitted to Canada, 2012.** In recent years, the percentage of Economic Class immigrants has risen, while the percentages in Family Class and Refugee Class have declined. What might explain this trend?

SKILL FOCUS

Note-taking helps you gather important information when you are reading text. Here are some hints to help make the process as useful as possible. For this section on “How to Become an Immigrant” up to the bottom of page 224, follow these steps:

- Scan the entire section quickly so you have a general idea of what is being covered.
- Read the entire section and make point-form notes as you go.
- There is no one, “best” way to take notes. Develop a style that works for you.
- You may find that using graphic organizers works well.
- Be sure to define or explain unfamiliar terms.

Review your notes to ensure that they are complete and that you understand them. You can use these steps when you read any type of text.

How to Become an Immigrant

The number of people who would like to migrate to Canada far exceeds the number who are actually admitted. The government tries to provide potential immigrants with enough information so that they know whether it makes sense even to apply. In spite of this, immigration officials are often swamped with applications, resulting in long delays in the process. In recent years, the government has had to stop taking some types of new immigrant applications in order to focus on processing existing ones.

The reason for the huge difference between the number of potential immigrants and the number who are actually accepted is quite simple—it is very difficult to qualify. In fact, many Canadian residents would *not* qualify under current requirements. The federal government is constantly fine-tuning the immigration system. The intention is to choose immigrants who will be successful in Canada and benefit Canada’s economy. In recent years, the trend has been toward ever-tougher standards. For example, in 2013, the requirement to speak either English or French was made much stricter.

Immigration to Canada falls into two very broad categories. Some immigrants are accepted because they will provide an economic benefit to Canada. They bring education, experience, and money that will help our economy grow. Other immigrants are accepted for social or humanitarian reasons: to reunite families and to help people who are facing oppression. In 2012, Canada accepted 257 887 immigrants in all classes within these two broad categories. Figure 10–6 shows the breakdown by class.

Economic Immigration—Permanent Residents

Economic immigrants are accepted because they can contribute to Canada’s economy when they arrive. There are four classes or programs in this category.

- **Skilled Worker Class:** Potential skilled-worker immigrants are judged on a point system. To be admitted, they need a minimum number of points. This point assessment is done for the family member with the highest point total. If one person qualifies, the entire family is admitted. The government has identified high-demand occupations, such as engineers, business executives, doctors, nurses, and medical technicians. People with training and experience in these areas are fast-tracked through the system because Canada needs their skills.
- **Skilled Trades Class:** This category exists to attract immigrants with specific trade skills that are in short supply in Canada. Only certain tradespeople are eligible, including electricians, plumbers, machinists, loggers, and mine workers. This class uses a pass-or-fail system rather than a point system. A person must meet four conditions: have a job offer in Canada, have strong enough language skills to do the job, have two or more years of experience in the trade, and be qualified to do the job by Canadian standards.

- **Canadian Experience Class:** This class exists to accept immigrants who have legally worked in Canada under a temporary worker program for at least one year. It is a pass-or-fail system, but the applicant does not require a job offer in Canada.
- **Start-Up Visa:** To apply in this class, a person must want to start a business in Canada. Applicants must meet four criteria to be accepted:
 - They must show that approved Canadian investors will fund their business idea.
 - They must demonstrate a high degree of proficiency in English or French.
 - They must have at least one year of post-secondary education.
 - They must have enough of their own money to support themselves until the proceeds from their business can support them.

Geo Inquiry

Evaluate and Draw Conclusions

Some people have suggested that skilled immigrants, such as doctors, should be required to work in parts of Canada where their services are most needed. Suggest arguments that both support and oppose this idea.

Economic Immigration—Temporary Residents

Temporary workers are allowed into Canada for two reasons. One is to fill labour shortages in certain fields. The other is to allow people with extraordinary talents to contribute to Canada's economy and culture.

- **Temporary Foreign Worker Program:** Canada grants work permits for temporary foreign workers. A wide variety of people qualify for these permits, ranging from professional athletes who play for Canadian teams to workers in fast-food restaurants, especially in parts of Canada that have low unemployment rates (Figure 10–7). Some end up staying in Canada by qualifying for the Canadian Experience Class of immigration described above. Most return to their home country at the end of their work contract. Throughout its history, this program has been controversial. Critics claim that it allows companies to hire foreign workers when they could employ Canadian residents. Supporters say that it is essential to the operation of many kinds of businesses.

▼ **Figure 10–7** Temporary foreign workers provide a variety of benefits to Canada. A few are famous, but most work in ordinary jobs. (a) Dancer Svetlana Lunkina came from the renowned Bolshoi Ballet in Russia to dance with the National Ballet of Canada. (b) Thousands of workers come to Canada each year from Mexico and other countries to work on farms.



Social and Humanitarian Immigration



▲ **Figure 10-8** An interpreter helps a Canadian Border Services officer talk to newly arrived immigrants.

refugee someone who moves to another country because of fear of cruel or inhumane treatment (even death) in her or his home country as a result of race, religion, sexual orientation, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group

Canada also accepts immigrants for social and humanitarian reasons. Social immigration involves reuniting families. Humanitarian immigration helps people escape danger or severe discrimination in their home countries.

Family Class: Citizens or permanent residents of Canada are allowed to sponsor close family members who want to move to Canada (Figure 10-8). The sponsor agrees to be financially responsible for the person being sponsored. For example, if that person does not have a job, the sponsor has to support him or her. Depending on the relationship, the length of the financial commitment varies from 3 to 10 years.

Refugee Class: Under international law, all countries have a responsibility to accept legitimate refugees. **Refugees** are people who move to another country because they fear for their safety in their home country (Figure 10-9). A person may apply for refugee status while in Canada or from another country. Each refugee claim is judged on its merits. For example, refugee claims by members of the U.S. armed forces who did not want to fight in the recent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were rejected. A generation earlier, claims by those who did not want to serve in the Vietnam War were accepted. The logic behind the different decisions was that during the Vietnam War, the United States drafted young men involuntarily into the military. In the more recent wars, those claiming refugee status had all volunteered to join the military.



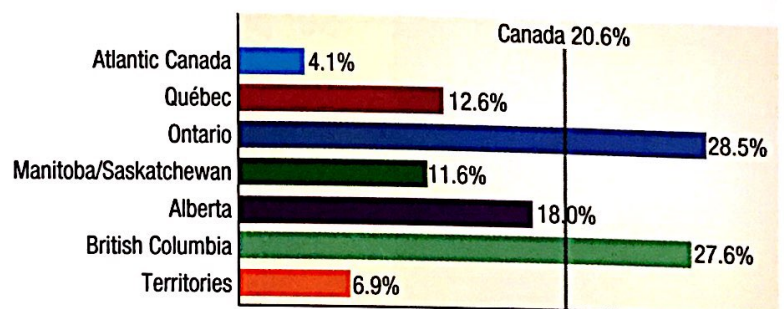
▲ **Figure 10-9** Many refugee claimants to Canada are coming from countries where the threat of violence is high because of political unrest or a repressive government. This photo was taken in Egypt, but it could have been taken in a dozen or more other countries.

APPLY IT!

- How does our system for admitting economic immigrants help Canada?
 - Is this process fair to the countries these people are leaving? Explain your answer.
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada has a website that helps potential migrants determine whether they would qualify to immigrate to Canada. You are going to do only Step 1 of the process, which checks the eligibility of potential migrants.
 - You will have to create a potential immigrant. Your person will need a specific set of characteristics: age, family status, education, job experience, and so on. Record the characteristics of your person so you can analyze the connections between these characteristics and the person's eligibility for admission.
 - Did the person you created qualify? What characteristics of your person were important in meeting (or failing to meet) the criteria for admission?
 - If a person does not qualify, what options are open to him or her?
 - What value does this website have for potential immigrants?
 - What value does it have for the government?
- Why would the requirement that immigrants speak either English or French help to make them more successful in Canada?
- Many people who apply for refugee status have been called "economic refugees" and "line jumpers." What do these terms mean?
 - Why is it often very difficult to determine whether a refugee claim is valid?
 - Without doing any research, do you think most refugee claimants are accepted or rejected? Check online to see if you were right.
- What are the costs and benefits, for refugees and for Canada, of admitting refugees?
- What one change would you like to make to Canada's immigration system? Put your answer in the form of a tweet to your Member of Parliament.

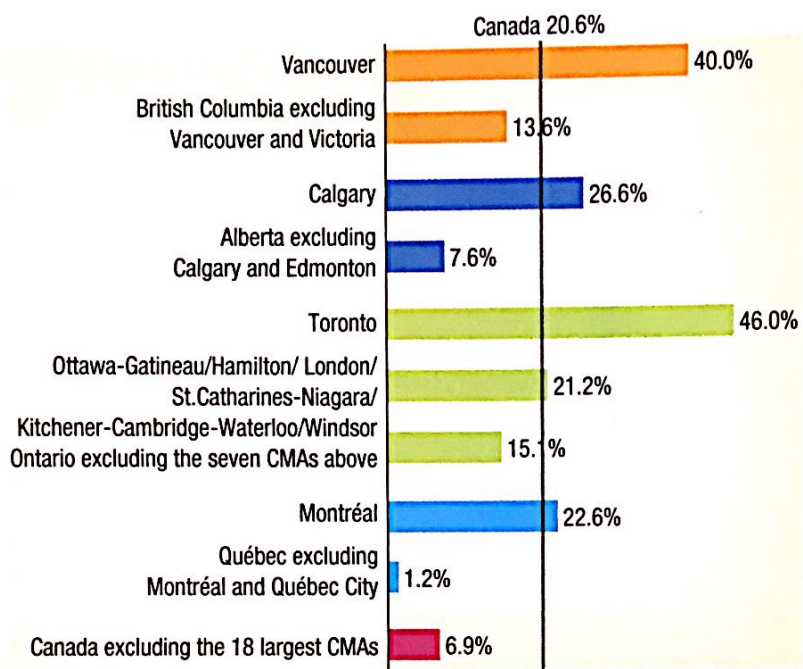
Where Immigrants Settle

Immigrants tend to move to relatively few parts of Canada. You can see this in the proportion of each province's population that is made up of immigrants (Figure 10–10). For the sake of comparison, remember that in 2011, 20.6 percent of Canada's population was made up of immigrants.



Source: Human Resources and Development Canada

▲ **Figure 10–10 Percentage of immigrants in each province and territory.** Why do you think the distribution is so uneven?



Source: Statistics Canada

▲ **Figure 10–11 Percentages of people who are immigrants in the populations of various parts of Canada.** Remember that 20.6 percent of the total population is made up of immigrants. What important conclusions can you draw from these data?

Looking at the number of immigrants going to each province tells us only part of the story. Within each province, large census metropolitan areas (CMAs) are more attractive destinations than smaller cities, and smaller cities are more attractive than rural areas (Figure 10–11). In particular, Toronto and Vancouver have very large immigrant populations. In fact, in the City of Toronto part of the Toronto CMA, immigrants actually make up more than half of the population. The immigrant populations of cities in western Canada, such as Calgary, Regina, and Edmonton, are rapidly increasing because of the good job markets there.

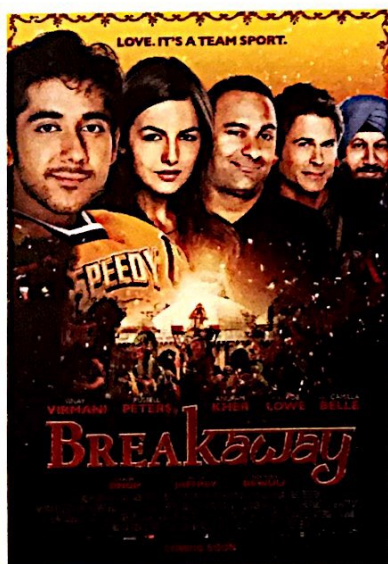
Immigrants choose to settle in large cities for several reasons, including the following:

- Most immigrants to Canada come from large cities so they are most comfortable living in large cities in Canada. Note that even the Toronto CMA, with almost six million people, seems small to someone coming from Beijing (21 million) or Mumbai (12 million).
- The large CMAs have large and growing economies. New immigrants need to find jobs, and most go where the job prospects are good.
- Many immigrants have family members and friends who previously came to Canada, and most of these people are in the largest cities.
- It is easier to make the transition to life in Canada. Large cities provide formal and informal supports for this process.

Because of their huge numbers of immigrants, the Toronto and Vancouver CMAs increasingly demonstrate a blending of immigrant and traditional Canadian cultures (Figure 10–12).

Supports for Immigrants

This is one of those chicken and egg situations. Which comes first? If a place has many immigrants, supports for immigrants will be established. If supports for immigrants exist, more immigrants will want to move there. Formal supports are programs and organizations funded by governments and charities to help immigrants adapt to life in Canada. These supports exist in almost all areas of life, such as education, health care, housing, and recreation. Across Canada, hundreds of agencies help immigrants adapt to life here. Most of these are in the largest cities. For example, the City of Toronto provides translation services in 180 languages from A (Acholi, a language from northern Uganda) to Y (Yupi, spoken in



▲ **Figure 10–12 Hockey meets Bollywood.** This movie could only have been made in Canada.

extreme northeastern China). (There do not seem to be any “Z” languages.) Bajuni, Mien, Mixteco, Pahari, and Twi are all spoken in Toronto. Do you know where these languages come from?

Informal supports are businesses and services that grow in areas where there is a concentration of immigrants. Figure 10–13 shows an Iranian plaza in Toronto. Here is what a recent immigrant to Canada had to say about this modest plaza: “When I came to Canada, and saw the Iranian Plaza for the first time, I was surprised. It reminded me of home. I felt nostalgic and more comfortable even though I was lonesome for my homeland.”

A large community of people from one ethnic group means that immigrants can find the goods and services they need and want. It is important to note that these become valuable assets for the entire community. In a large city, it is not unusual for a high school to have cricket, Bollywood dancing, Ukrainian Easter egg decorating, table tennis, and a steel band, with students of many ethnic backgrounds participating in all of them.

go online

Check out the list of languages supported in Toronto.

go online

You can see an example of an agency that supports immigrants in Hamilton. It provides health-care support.



◀ **Figure 10–13** This shopping mall attracts shoppers of Iranian descent since it provides goods and services of particular interest to people from Iran. It is interesting to note that Iran ranks only 21st in terms of ethnic origin in Toronto, with 1.2 percent of the population. Nevertheless, there are enough Iranians to support businesses like these.

APPLY IT!

1. a) Pull factors not only encourage people to move to Canada—they can also attract immigrants to particular cities. Explain how this works.
b) How is this pattern changing? Why is this change happening?
2. a) How might the health needs of a recent immigrant be different from those of someone who has lived in Canada for many years?
b) What other factor(s) might attract an immigrant to an immigrant health centre?
3. Why is it generally easier for immigrants to be accepted into Canadian society if they move to a large CMA than if they live in a rural area or small town?
4. a) What kinds of supports do new immigrant families need when they move to Canada? Who provides those supports?
b) How do we know whether these supports are working?
5. China, India, and the Philippines provide our largest number of immigrants, and they all have large rural populations. Why do few immigrants from these (and other) countries choose to live in rural parts of Canada?