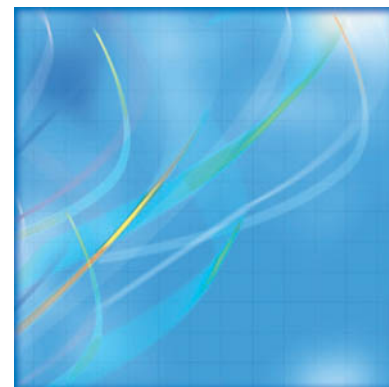


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Canada's Ethnocultural Mosaic, 2006 Census



Census year 2006



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Canada's Ethnocultural Mosaic, 2006 Census

Table of contents

	Page
Highlights	5
National picture.....	6
More than 200 different ethnic origins.....	6
The population's ethnocultural make-up by generational status.....	8
Increased reporting of multiple ethnic ancestries.....	10
Visible minority population surpasses 5-million mark	12
South Asians surpass Chinese as the largest visible minority group	13
Three in 10 visible minorities were Canadian-born.....	13
Cultural mosaic within the visible minority population.....	15
Mixed unions involving visible minorities on the rise.....	16
Visible minorities were younger than the total population.....	17
Provinces and territories	18
Atlantic region: More than half reported British Isles origins.....	18
Quebec: Black and Arab, the two largest visible minority groups.....	18
Ontario: Home to more than half of Canada's visible minority population	19
The Prairies: One in 10 belong to a visible minority group	21
British Columbia: More than 1 million members of visible minorities.....	22
Territories: More than half reported Aboriginal ancestries	23
Canada's major census metropolitan areas	25
Halifax: Highest proportion of visible minorities in the Atlantic region	27
Montréal: Third largest visible minority population.....	27
Ottawa - Gatineau: Visible minorities accounted for 16% of the total population	29
Toronto: Largest number of visible minorities in the country	29
Winnipeg: Filipino was the largest visible minority group.....	31
Calgary: Nearly one in four belonged to a visible minority group	32
Vancouver: Four in 10 belonged to a visible minority group.....	32
Definitions	35

Highlights

- Over 200 ethnic origins were reported by the total population in Canada in the 2006 Census. This list of origins included Canada's Aboriginal peoples as well as the groups that came to settle in Canada.
- After Canadian, the other most frequently reported origins in 2006, either alone or with other origins, were English, French, Scottish, Irish, German, Italian, Chinese, North American Indian and Ukrainian.
- The incidence of people reporting multiple ethnic ancestries continued to rise in 2006. An estimated 41.4% of the population reported more than one ethnic origin, compared with 38.2% in 2001 and 35.8% in 1996.
- The 2006 Census estimated 5,068,100 individuals who belonged to a visible minority. The visible minorities accounted for 16.2% of Canada's total population, up from 13.4% in 2001 and 11.2% in 1996.
- Between 2001 and 2006, Canada's visible minority population increased by 27.2%. This was five times faster than the 5.4% growth rate of the total population.
- The growth in the visible minority population was largely due to the high proportion of newcomers who belonged to visible minorities. In 2006, fully 75.0% of recent immigrants who arrived since 2001 were visible minorities. This compared with 72.9% of visible minority newcomers in 2001 and 74.1% in 1996.
- South Asians surpassed Chinese as the largest visible minority group in 2006. Chinese and Blacks were respectively, the second and third largest visible minority groups.
- Canada's visible minority population is ethnoculturally diverse, with some groups more so than others.
- In 2006, over one-half (52.0%) of the Black visible minority group reported Caribbean origins, another 42.4% reported African origins. Black visible minorities also reported British Isles origins (11.6%), Canadian origin (10.9%) and French origins (4.1%).
- Most South Asian visible minorities reported ancestral backgrounds from the Indian subcontinent: East Indian origin, alone or with other origins, 69.0%, Pakistani (9.3%), Sri Lankan (7.8%), Punjabi (4.1%), Tamil (2.7%) and Bangladeshi (1.8%).
- The most frequently reported origin among Latin American visible minorities was Spanish. Among the Arab visible minorities, it was Lebanese. It was Iranian among the West Asians and Vietnamese among Southeast Asians.
- In 2006, 95.9% of the visible minority population lived in a census metropolitan area, compared with 68.1% of the total population.

National picture

More than 200 different ethnic origins

This report examines the ethnic origins of Canada's population using data from the 2006 Census. It also provides information on the nation's visible minority population.

Each wave of immigration to Canada has increased the ethnocultural diversity of the nation's population. In fact, the 2006 Census enumerated more than 200 different ethnic origins. Ethnic origin refers to the ethnic or cultural origins of the respondent's ancestors. An ancestor is someone from whom a person is descended and is usually more distant than a grandparent.

In contrast, the 1901 Census recorded about 25 different ethnic groups in Canada. People who reported Aboriginal ancestries, and British and French origins, comprised the lion's share of the population at that time.

The list of ethnic origins in 2006 includes cultural groups associated with Canada's Aboriginal people (North American Indian, Métis and Inuit) and the European groups that first settled in Canada, such as the English, French Scottish and Irish. It includes origins of immigrants who came to Canada over the past century, such as German, Italian, Chinese, Ukrainian, Dutch, Polish, East Indian and so on.

Among newer groups reported in 2006 were Montserratan from the Caribbean and Chadian, Gabonese, Gambian and Zambian from Africa.

One way of looking at Canada's ethnocultural portrait is to examine the most frequently reported ethnic origins, whether reported alone or in combination with other ethnic origins.

By 2006, 11 ethnic origins had passed the 1-million mark. The largest group enumerated by the census consisted of just over 10 million people who reported Canadian as their ethnic ancestry, either alone (5.7 million) or with other origins (4.3 million).

The other most frequently cited origins were English (6.6 million), French (4.9 million), Scottish (4.7 million), Irish (4.4 million), German (3.2 million), Italian (1.4 million), Chinese (1.3 million), North American Indian (1.3 million), Ukrainian (1.2 million) and Dutch (1.0 million).

The list of the top ethnic origins reported in 2006 was virtually unchanged from the 2001 Census, except that North American Indian surpassed Ukrainian to take ninth place and Ukrainian became the tenth most frequently reported ancestry in 2006.

Increasing complexity of ethnic reporting

Information on the ethnic origins of the population has been collected in all but two national censuses since Confederation in 1867, reflecting the long-standing and widespread demand for information on the ethnocultural characteristics of the population. Since 1970, the demand for statistical information on ethnicity has increased with government policies in the area of multiculturalism and diversity.

The reporting of ethnicity, and subsequent interpretation of the results, has become increasingly complex due to a number of factors, and poses challenges for historical data comparisons. The concept of ethnicity is fluid and is probably one of the more complex concepts measured in the census. Respondents' understanding or views about their ethnicity, awareness of their family background, number of generations in Canada, the length of time since immigration, and the social context at the time of the census can all affect the reporting of ethnicity from one census to another. Increasing intermarriage or unions among various groups has led to an increase in the reporting of multiple ancestries, which has added to the complexity of the ethnic data.

Furthermore, changes in the format of the census question and the examples provided on the questionnaire have affected reporting patterns over time. Examples of ethnic origins provided on the census questionnaire are chosen based on the frequency of origins reported in the previous census.

In particular, the presence of the Canadian example has led to an increase in Canadian being reported and has had an impact on the counts of other groups, especially for French, English, Irish and Scottish. People who previously reported these origins in the census had the tendency to now report Canadian.

Reporting of Canadian as an ethnic origin

In the 2006 Census, 10.1 million people, or 32.2% of the total population, reported Canadian as their only ethnic origin or in combination with other origins. Nearly six in 10 (57.1%) of these individuals reported Canadian as their only origin, while the rest (42.9%) reported it in combination with other origins.

Canadian was the most frequently reported ethnic origin in 2006, even though the absolute number of individuals reporting Canadian declined from 2001, when 11.7 million, or 39.4% of the population, reported Canadian as their ethnic ancestry.

Changes to the ethnic origin question have affected the number of people reporting Canadian as part of their ethnic heritage. When Canadian was not listed as an example on the 1991 Census questionnaire, only 2.8% reported Canadian as their only ethnic origin and 1.0% reported it in combination with other origins. Canadian was added as an example on the English questionnaire and Canadien on the French questionnaire because this was the fifth most frequently reported origin in the 1991 Census. Consequently, about 8.8 million people reported Canadian, either alone or in combination with other origins, in 1996.

Most individuals who reported Canadian in the 2001 and 2006 censuses had English or French as a mother tongue, were born in Canada, and had both parents born inside Canada. This suggests that many of these respondents are people whose families can be traced for several generations in this country and see their ethnic heritage to be in Canada.

Regions of the country that were settled earliest or that had relatively little recent immigration, also tended to have the highest proportion of people reporting their ethnic ancestry as Canadian. For example, 46.2% of the population in Atlantic Canada reported Canadian either alone or in combination with other origins in 2006, as did 60.2% in Quebec. In other provinces, the proportion reporting Canadian ranged from 4.0% in Nunavut to 23.0% in Ontario, below the national average of 32.2%.

The emergence of the reporting of a national ethnic ancestry was not unique in Canada. Countries such as Australia and United States, which have long immigration histories such as Canada's, have also experienced increasing numbers reporting a national ethnicity. According to the 2006 Australian Census, 37.1%, or 7.4 million, of its population reported Australian as their ethnic ancestry, up from 35.6% in 2001. According to the American Community Survey in 2006, there were 20.4 million people who reported American as their only ethnic ancestry, representing 6.8% of the US population.

The population's ethnocultural make-up by generational status

Census data also allows for the analysis of the nation's population aged 15 years and over on the basis of generational status. Generational status indicates for how many generations a person and their family have been in Canada.

People who are first generation are themselves foreign-born. The second generation refers to those who are Canadian-born and have at least one parent who was born outside Canada. The third generation or more are people who are Canadian-born and whose parents and possibly grandparents were Canadian-born. For more details on generation status, please refer to the Definitions.

A majority of the population aged 15 and over was third generation or more, that is, their family went back at least three generations in the country. The 2006 Census enumerated an estimated 15.5 million such people, or 60.5% of the total population aged 15 and over.

The highest proportion of the third generation or more reported Canadian as their ethnic origin. Close to one-half (46.6%) of the 15.5 million of the third generation reported Canadian as their origin, either alone or in combination with other origins. Furthermore, 42.4% of individuals who were at least third generation in Canada reported British Isles origins, either alone or in combination with other origins. About 23.8% reported European origins; 23.0%, French origins; and 7.0%, Aboriginal ancestries.

The 2006 Census enumerated about 4.0 million second generation individuals who were born inside Canada and had at least one parent who was born outside Canada. They accounted for 15.6% of the population aged 15 and over.

The largest proportion of the second generation (53.9%) reported European origins either as their only ethnic origin or in combination with other origins. The most common European origins were German (13.1%), Italian (11.0%), Dutch (6.3%) and Ukrainian (5.3%). These were groups that first immigrated to Canada in relatively large numbers in the early part of the 1900s.

Slightly over four in 10 (41.1%) second generation individuals reported British Isles origins, reflecting long-standing immigration from the British Isles. Another 15.3% reported Canadian origin and 1.8% reported Aboriginal ancestries.

The 2006 Census enumerated 6.1 million individuals who were born outside Canada and comprised the first generation in the country. They accounted for 23.9% of the population aged 15 and over.

The ethnic composition of the first generation reflected the more recent sources of immigration to Canada. Nearly one-quarter (24.0%) of the first generation reported East and Southeast Asian origins, either alone or with other origins, and about one in 7 (13.8%) reported South Asian origins.

The most common groups among these origins of the first generation were Chinese, who accounted for 15.0% of the first generation; East Indian, who accounted for 10.0%; Filipino (4.7%); and Vietnamese (1.9%).

People of European origins made up slightly over one-third (34.3%) of the first generation population. The leading groups were Italian, comprising 6% of all the first generation population, followed by German (5.8%), Polish (3.5%) and Portuguese (3.2%).

An additional 14.2% of the first generation aged 15 and over reported British Isles origins, either alone or with other origins.

Table 1 Top 10 ethnic origins¹ by generational status for people aged 15 years and over, Canada, 2006

First generation			Second generation			Third generation or more		
Ethnic origin	number	%	Ethnic origin	number	%	Ethnic origin	number	%
Total population	6,124,560	100.0	Total population	4,006,420	100.0	Total population	15,533,240	100.0
Chinese	916,845	15.0	English	1,035,145	25.8	Canadian	7,236,370	46.6
East Indian	612,460	10.0	Scottish	635,600	15.9	English	3,794,250	24.4
English	547,865	8.9	Canadian	613,445	15.3	French	3,530,505	22.7
Italian	366,205	6.0	German	524,645	13.1	Scottish	2,865,800	18.4
German	352,805	5.8	Irish	496,990	12.4	Irish	2,755,420	17.7
Filipino	288,515	4.7	Italian	439,275	11.0	German	1,604,225	10.3
Scottish	271,545	4.4	French	284,900	7.1	North American Indian	813,405	5.2
Irish	230,975	3.8	Dutch (Netherlands)	253,325	6.3	Ukrainian	642,955	4.1
Polish	213,715	3.5	Ukrainian	212,860	5.3	Dutch (Netherlands)	376,555	2.4
Portuguese	195,480	3.2	Polish	203,725	5.1	Polish	364,980	2.3

Note:

1. Table shows total responses. Because some respondents reported more than one ethnic origin, the sum of the total responses is greater than the total population, or 100%.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Increased reporting of multiple ethnic ancestries

The incidence of people reporting multiple ethnic origins was on the rise, probably the result of increased unions among ethnic groups and awareness of family heritage. In 2006, 41.4% of the population reported more than one ethnic origin, compared with 38.2% in 2001 and 35.8% in 1996.

Individuals born in Canada were more likely to report multiple ancestral backgrounds than people born outside the country. In 2006, 47.6% of the Canadian-born population reported more than one ethnic origin, compared with 17.2% of the foreign-born population.

As well, the extent of reporting multiple ancestral backgrounds varied among groups. Some groups that have longer histories in Canada also had a high proportion of their population reporting multiple ancestries.

For example, a majority of individuals who reported Irish origin (88.7%) said that they had other ancestral origins. An estimated 88.0% of individuals reported Scottish origin and some other origins. The proportion was 78.9% among those who reported German origin and 75.0% among individuals of Ukrainian origin. In contrast, only 10.0% of Somali origin and 6.0% of Korean origin reported multiple origins.

Aboriginal ancestries

The 2006 Census enumerated 1,678,200 individuals who reported Aboriginal ancestries, either alone or in combination with other origins. Descendants of the First Peoples of Canada represented 5.4% of the country's total population.

About 1.3 million individuals reported North American Indian ancestry, such as Cree, Mi'kmaq, etc., alone or with other origins. They constituted the largest Aboriginal ancestry group. Another 409,100 individuals reported Métis ancestry, alone or with other origins, and 65,900 individuals reported Inuit ancestry, alone or with other origins.

People with Aboriginal ancestry were more likely than the total population to report multiple origins. In 2006, 62.4% of people with Aboriginal ancestry also reported other origins, compared with 41.4% of the total population of Canada.

Multiple origins were reported by 81.1% of people who reported Métis ancestry, by 59.1% of people who reported North American Indian ancestry and by 37.8% of people who reported Inuit ancestry.

For more information, see:

- *How Statistics Canada Identifies Aboriginal Peoples*
<http://www.statcan.ca/bsolc/english/bsolc?catno=12-592-X&CHROPG=1>
- *Aboriginal Peoples in Canada in 2006: Inuit, Métis and First Nations, 2006 Census*
<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/analysis/aboriginal/pdf/97-558-XIE2006001.pdf>
- *Educational Portrait of Canada, 2006 Census*
<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/analysis/education/pdf/97-560-XIE2006001.pdf>
- *Canada's Changing Labour Force, 2006 Census*
<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/analysis/labour/pdf/97-559-XIE2006001.pdf>

Visible minority population

The people who identify themselves as a visible minority comprise one of four groups designated under the *Employment Equity Act*. The other three are women, Aboriginal people and people with disabilities. The census collects information on these four groups to meet federal employment equity legislation requirements.

According to the *Employment Equity Act*, visible minorities are defined as 'persons, other than Aboriginal persons, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.' Under this definition, regulations specify that the following groups are included in the visible minority population: Chinese, South Asians, Blacks, Arabs, West Asians, Filipinos, Southeast Asians, Latin Americans, Japanese, Koreans and other visible minority groups, such as Pacific Islanders.

Visible minority population surpasses 5-million mark

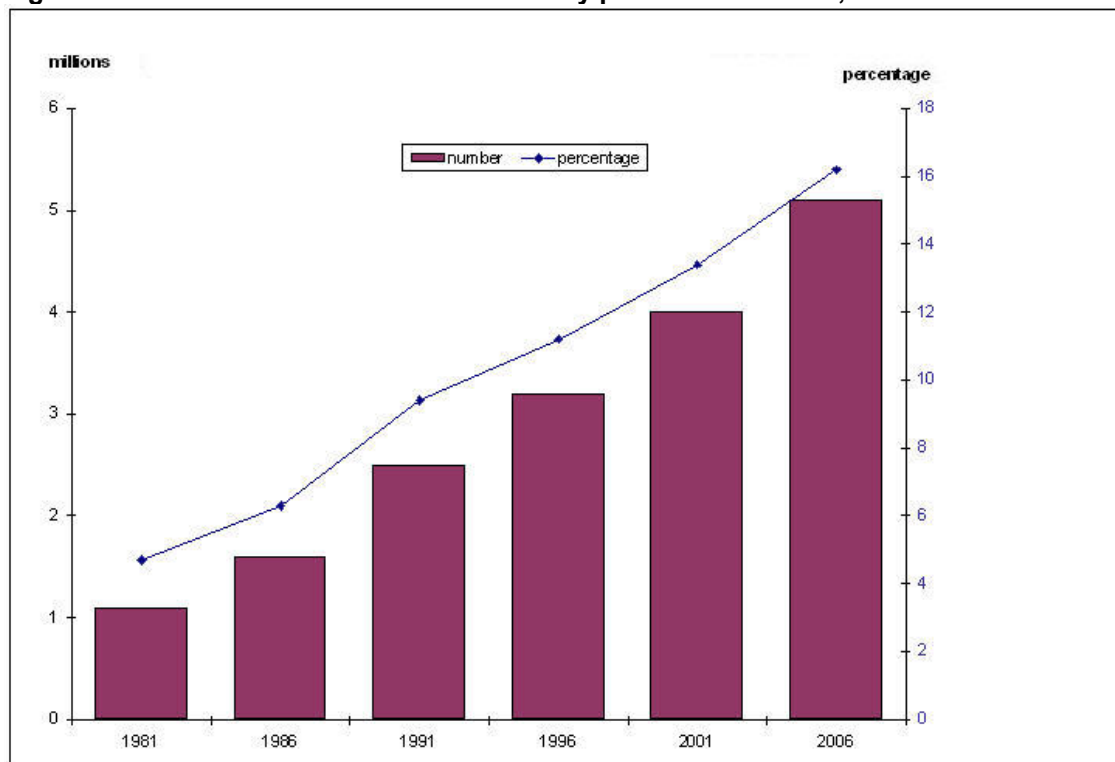
In 2006, the census enumerated an estimated 5,068,100 individuals who identified themselves as a member of the visible minority population. They made up 16.2% of the total population in Canada.

The visible minority population has grown steadily over the last 25 years. In 1981, when data for the four Employment Equity designated groups were first derived, the estimated 1.1 million visible minorities represented 4.7% of Canada's total population.

In 1991, 2.5 million people were members of the visible minority population, 9.4% of the population. The visible minority population further increased to 3.2 million in 1996, or 11.2% of the total population. By 2001, their numbers had reached an estimated 3,983,800 or 13.4% of the total population.

Between 2001 and 2006, the visible minority population increased at a much faster pace than the total population. Its rate of growth was 27.2%, five times faster than the 5.4% increase for the population as a whole.

Figure 1 Number and share of visible minority persons in Canada, 1981 to 2006



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1981 to 2006.

The growth of the visible minority population was due largely to the increasing number of recent immigrants (landed immigrants who came to Canada up to five years prior to a given census year) who were from non-European countries. In 1981, 68.5% of all recent immigrants to Canada were born in regions other than Europe, and by 1991, this proportion had grown to 78.3%. The 2006 Census showed that 83.9% of the immigrants who arrived between 2001 and 2006 were born in regions other than Europe.

Consequently, the proportion of newcomers who belonged to a visible minority group also increased. In 1981, 55.5% of the newcomers who arrived in Canada in the late 1970s belonged to a visible minority group. In 1991, slightly over seven in 10 (71.2%) recent immigrants were members of a visible minority group, and this proportion reached 72.9% in 2001.

The 2006 Census showed that fully three-quarters (75.0%) of the immigrants who arrived between 2001 and 2006 belonged to a visible minority group.

If current immigration trends continue, Canada's visible minority population will continue to grow much more quickly than the non-visible minority population. According to Statistics Canada's population projections, members of visible minority groups could account for roughly one-fifth of the total population by 2017.¹

South Asians surpass Chinese as the largest visible minority group

The South Asians became Canada's largest visible minority group in 2006, surpassing Chinese for the first time. The populations of both were well over 1 million.

The census enumerated an estimated 1,262,900 individuals who identified themselves as South Asian, a growth rate of 37.7% from 917,100 individuals in 2001. They represented one-quarter (24.9%) of all visible minorities, or 4.0% of the total population in Canada.

In contrast, the number of individuals who identified themselves as Chinese increased 18.2% from 1,029,400 to 1,216,600 during this five-year period. Chinese accounted for about 24.0% of the visible minority population and 3.9% of the total Canadian population.

The number of those identifying themselves as Black, the third largest visible minority group, rose 18.4%, from 662,200 individuals in 2001 to 783,800. They accounted for 15.5% of the visible minority population and 2.5% of the total population in 2006.

Other visible minority groups included Filipinos, who represented 8.1% of the visible minority population, Latin Americans (6.0%), Arabs (5.2%), Southeast Asians (4.7%), West Asians (3.1%), Koreans (2.8%) and Japanese (1.6%). Combined, these groups made up nearly one-third (31.6%) of the visible minority population and 5.1% of the total population in 2006.

There was also a small proportion (4.0%) of individuals who reported that they belonged to more than one visible minority group or other visible minorities such as Pacific Islanders.

Three in 10 visible minorities were Canadian-born

Immigration patterns explained to a large extent the proportion of Canadian-born in the visible minority population. Generally, groups that have long histories in Canada and relatively little recent immigration have higher proportions of persons born in Canada.

In 2006, three in 10 of visible minorities were born in Canada. In comparison, visible minorities who came to Canada as immigrants made up two-thirds (66.3%) of the visible minority population.²

1. Statistics Canada. 2005. *Population Projections of Visible Minority Groups, Canada, Provinces and Regions, 2001-2017*. Catalogue no. 91-541-XIE.

2. A small proportion (3.5%) of the visible minority population was non-permanent residents.

Japanese had the highest proportion of Canadian-born among all the visible minority groups. Among the 81,300 individuals who said they belonged to the Japanese visible minority group, almost two-thirds (63.2%) were born in Canada.

Blacks were another visible minority group that had a relatively high proportion of Canadian-born, 44.3%. Some of them had ancestors who migrated to Canada a few hundred years ago and others were children of immigrants who only came in recent decades.

Slightly over one-half (52.5%) of Blacks were foreign-born. Of those who were foreign-born, most came from the Caribbean and Africa, such as Jamaica (25.8%), Haiti (14.9%), Trinidad and Tobago (5.2%), Ethiopia (4.5%), Somalia (4.4%), Ghana (4.4%), Guyana (3.5%), Nigeria (3.3%), Barbados (3.2%) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (3.1%).

Close to one-third (31.2%) of the Southeast Asian visible minorities were born in Canada and two-thirds were foreign-born who came as immigrants. Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos were the top source countries of the foreign-born Southeast Asians.

Although the Chinese and South Asian visible minority groups have had long histories in Canada, recent immigration has also fuelled their growth. Therefore, in comparison with Japanese and Blacks, Chinese and South Asian visible minorities had a smaller proportion of their population born in Canada. In 2006, 29.3% of South Asian visible minorities, and 25.5% of Chinese, were Canadian-born.

A majority of the foreign-born South Asians came from countries in the Indian subcontinent, such as India (48.8%), Pakistan (14.6%), Sri Lanka (11.7%) and Bangladesh (3.6%). The other leading source countries of birth among the foreign-born South Asian visible minorities were Guyana (4.2%), Trinidad and Tobago (2.5%), Fiji (2.4%), the United Republic of Tanzania (1.9%), Kenya (1.8%) and the United Kingdom (1.6%).

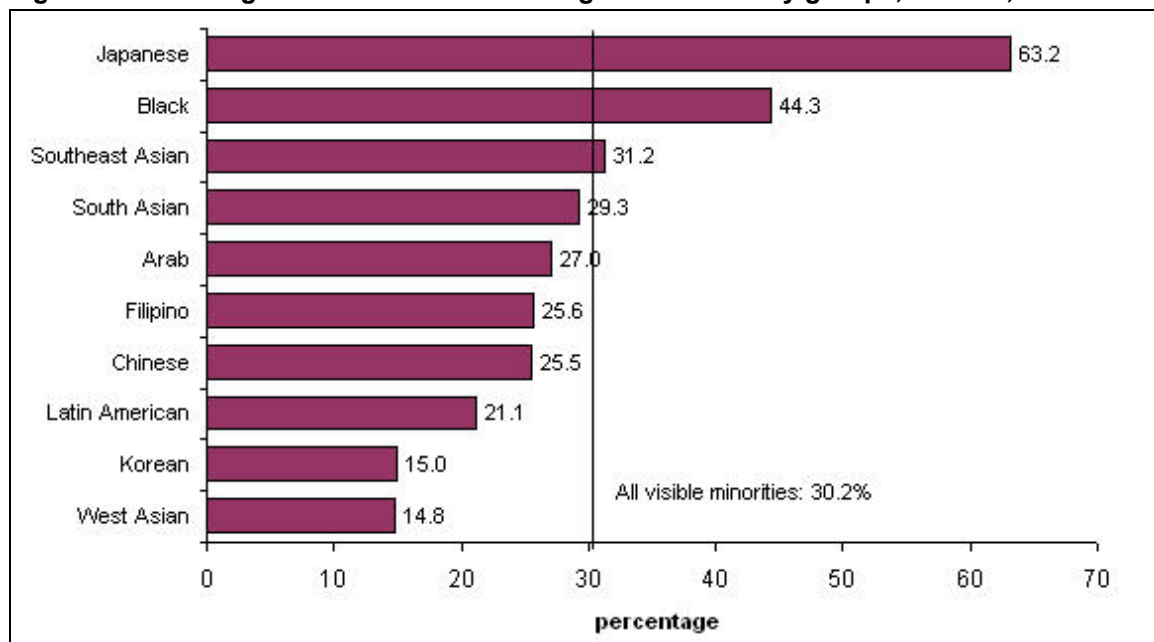
While the People's Republic of China and Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region) were the top two birthplaces among the foreign-born Chinese visible minorities, at 52.9% and 24.2%, respectively, Taiwan (7.4%) and Viet Nam (5.7%) were the other two countries where a relatively large proportion of the foreign-born Chinese came from.

Lebanon (24.1%) and Egypt (13.2%) were the top two birthplaces among the foreign-born Arab visible minorities.

El Salvador (18.6%), Colombia (15.1%) and Mexico (10.3%) were the top three birthplaces among Latin American visible minorities who came to Canada as immigrants.

West Asians had the smallest proportion of Canadian-born, at 14.8%, among all the visible minority groups. The top two birthplaces among the foreign-born West Asian were Iran (59.2%) and Afghanistan (23.9%).

Figure 2 Percentage of Canadian-born among visible minority groups, Canada, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Cultural mosaic within the visible minority population

Canada's visible minority population is ethnoculturally diverse, with some groups exhibiting more diversity than the others.

In 2006, the majority (82.9%) of the visible minority population reported only one ethnic origin. The remaining (17.1%) of the visible minority population reported multiple ethnic origins, that is, individuals provided two or more ethnic origins.

Although Japanese was numerically one of the smallest visible minority groups—1.6% of all visible minorities identified as Japanese in 2006—they had the highest proportion (30.0%) reporting multiple ethnic origins.

Almost three in 10 Blacks (28.4%) reported more than one ethnic origin. The most frequently reported ethnic origins among Black visible minority group were Caribbean and African. Nearly one-quarter (24.5%) of Blacks reported Jamaican origin, either alone or in combination with other origins, while 12.3% reported Haitian origin.

Among the most common African origins reported by Blacks in 2006 were Somali (4.5%), Ghanaian (2.9%), Ethiopian (2.8%) and Nigerian (2.4%). Just over one-tenth (11.6%) of Black visible minorities also reported British Isles origins, 10.9% reported Canadian origin and 4.1% reported French origin.

South Asians were also a diverse group in terms of ancestral background, many of them coming from various parts of the Indian subcontinent. Fully 69.0% of the South Asian visible minority members reported East Indian as their ethnic origin, either alone or with a combination of other origins. Another 9.3% reported Pakistani, 7.8%, Sri Lankan, 4.1%, Punjabi, 2.7%, Tamil and 1.8%, Bangladeshi.

Also, about 2.7% South Asian visible minorities reported Canadian origin, either alone or with other origins; 2.5% reported British Isles origins, such as English, Irish and Scottish; and 2.6% reported European origins, such as Portuguese.

Overall, about 13.1% of the South Asian visible minority members reported multiple origins.

The Korean visible minority group had the smallest proportion of its members reporting multiple ethnic origins. Only 3.7% reported having more than one ethnic origin. The majority (96.3%) reported only one ethnic origin. In fact, virtually all Korean visible minorities reported Korean ethnic ancestry.

Similar to the Koreans, the Chinese visible minority group had a relatively small proportion (7.0%) of its members with multiple ethnic origins.

Mixed unions involving visible minorities on the rise

The 2006 Census counted 289,400 mixed unions (marriages and common-law unions) involving a visible minority person with a non-visible minority person or a person from a different visible minority group. This was a 33.1% increase from 2001, more than five times the increase of 6.0% for all couples.

In 2006, mixed unions represented 3.9% of all unions in Canada, compared with 3.1% in 2001 and 2.6% in 1991.

Among all mixed unions in 2006, 247,600 couples were in unions involving a visible minority person and someone who was not a visible minority. They made up 3.3% of all couples in Canada.

The remaining type of mixed unions, 41,900 couples in 2006, was of a couple of two different visible minority groups. They accounted for 0.6% of all couples in Canada in 2006.

Japanese had the highest proportion of mixed couples. Although there were only 29,700 couples involving at least one Japanese person, 74.7% of these pairings included a non-Japanese partner. The second and third groups to be most likely involved in a mixed union were Latin Americans (47.0%) and Blacks (40.6%).³

In contrast, South Asians and Chinese were among the least likely to form a union outside their group. Of the 327,200 couples involving South Asians, only 12.7% of them were either in a union with a non-visible minority person or with a person of a different visible minority group. Among the 321,700 couples involving Chinese, only 17.4% were mixed.

3. The shares of mixed unions involving couples of Japanese, Latin American and Black visible minorities were higher than their respective shares of couples.

Visible minorities were younger than the total population

In 2006, the median age of the visible minority population was 33 years, compared with 39 years for the total population in Canada. (The median age is the point where exactly one-half of the population is older, and the other half is younger.)

An estimated 22.6% of the visible minority population were children aged 14 years and under whereas 17.9% of the total population were in this age bracket.

There was also a higher proportion (46.5%) of visible minorities who were of the core working-age group of 25 to 54 years than the total population (44.0%).

Conversely, at the other end of the age spectrum, only 7.3% of the visible minorities were aged 65 years and over in 2006, compared with 13.0% of the total population.

Provinces and territories

The ethnocultural portrait of Canada's provinces and territories reflects both the historical and current settlement patterns of the different waves of immigration to the country. The following sections provide a statistical portrait of the various regions of Canada in terms of ethnic origin and the visible minority population.

Atlantic region: More than half reported British Isles origins

The four Atlantic provinces share similar ethnocultural characteristics. Many of the region's residents can trace their ancestors back to the first settlements in Canada.

Canadian was the most frequently reported ancestry among residents of the Atlantic region. In 2006, almost one-half (46.2%) of the population reported Canadian as their only ethnic origin or in combination with other origins. British Isles and French were the other most often reported origins.

Prince Edward Island had the highest proportion of all the provinces reporting British Isles origins; nearly seven in 10 people (68.1%) reported at least some heritage from the British Isles.

Over one-quarter (28.7%) of New Brunswick's population reported French origins, either alone or with other origins. This was the highest proportion of all four Atlantic provinces, and second only to Quebec nationally.

The 2006 Census enumerated 58,600 visible minorities in the Atlantic region. They accounted for 2.6% of the region's population of about 2.3 million residents, well below the national average of 16.2%.

Nonetheless, the visible minority population rose in all four Atlantic provinces. In fact, the growth of visible minorities offset the overall population decline in Newfoundland and Labrador. Between 2001 and 2006, the total population in Newfoundland and Labrador dropped slightly from 508,100 to 500,600. However, the province's visible minority population rose from about 3,900 to 5,700.

In Nova Scotia, visible minorities accounted for 4.2% of the population, the highest proportion in the Atlantic region. Blacks, many of whom have a long history in Nova Scotia, accounted for just over one-half of its visible minority population. The 2006 Census enumerated 19,200 people belonging to the Black visible minority group. The vast majority (91.7%) of these individuals were Canadian-born.

Quebec: Black and Arab, the two largest visible minority groups

The 2006 Census enumerated 654,300 visible minorities in Quebec, the third highest number after Ontario and British Columbia. These individuals accounted for 8.8% of Quebec's population, up from 7.0% in 2001 and 6.2% in 1996. Quebec ranked fifth in the proportion of visible minority population, after British Columbia, Ontario, Alberta and Manitoba.

Quebec's visible minority population rose 31.4 % between 2001 and 2006, just over seven times the pace of 4.4% among the total population.

The vast majority (90.2%) of the visible minorities in Quebec lived in the census metropolitan area of Montréal. Its visible minority population of 590,400 represented 16.5% of its population.

Blacks, the largest visible minority group in Quebec

Blacks formed the largest visible minority group in Quebec in 2006. An estimated 188,100 people reported Black as their visible minority group, up 23.6% from 152,200 in 2001. In 2006, they represented 2.5% of Quebec's population and 28.7% of its visible minority population.

Four in 10 Blacks in Quebec were born in Canada. Those who were born outside Canada came as immigrants from more than 100 different countries. Over one-quarter (27.8%) were born in an African country, but the leading source country was Haiti (52.5%) in the Caribbean. Over one-quarter (26.0%) of the foreign-born Blacks in Quebec came to Canada since 2001.

Arab and Latin American are the fastest growing visible minority groups in Quebec

On the other hand, the fastest growing visible minority groups in Quebec were Arab and Latin American. The 2006 Census enumerated 109,000 Arabs, up 48.6% from 2001, and 89,500 Latin Americans, up 50.4%. Arabs accounted for 16.7% of the visible minority population in Quebec, the second largest visible minority group, while Latin Americans represented 13.7%, the third largest.

A majority (71.9%) of Arabs in Quebec were born outside Canada; about 37.7% of those who were foreign-born came to Canada between 2001 and 2006. The top three countries of birth for the Arab visible minority group were Morocco, the source of 26.4%, Lebanon (22.1%) and Algeria (20.1%).

Latin Americans in Quebec were also born mostly outside Canada, coming mainly from South and Central America. About one-third (32.5%) of the Latin Americans who were foreign-born came to Canada between 2001 and 2006. The leading source countries of the foreign-born Latin Americans were Colombia, El Salvador, Peru and Mexico.

The two most frequently reported ancestries in Quebec were Canadian and French. In 2006, three-fifths (60.2%) of the people in Quebec reported Canadian as their ethnic origin, alone or with other origins. In addition, 28.9% of the province's population reported French origin, and 1.9% reported Québécois origin. The vast majority who reported these origins were born in Canada.

The ethnic origins of the population in Quebec who were born outside Canada reflect the main sources of immigration to the province. In 2006, the most frequently reported origin in terms of total responses among the foreign-born population in Quebec was Italian. About 9.8% of the foreign-born population reported Italian origin, alone or with other origins. It was followed by French origin (9.0%), Chinese (7.5%), Haitian (5.7%) and Spanish (4.2%).

Ontario: Home to more than half of Canada's visible minority population

Ontario had a population of 2,745,200 visible minorities in 2006, more than half (54.2%) of Canada's total visible minority population. British Columbia had the second largest share, 19.9%.

Visible minorities comprised 22.8% of Ontario's total population in 2006. In contrast, just 25 years earlier, they accounted for only 6.4%. Most visible minorities in Ontario lived in major urban centres in 2006, especially in Toronto.

Ontario's visible minority population increased 27.5% between 2001 and 2006. Much of this growth can be traced to immigration, particularly among newcomers from India and the People's Republic of China.

South Asian population, largest group

As it was in 2001, South Asian was the largest visible minority group in Ontario in 2006. The South Asian population of 794,200, accounted for 28.9% of all visible minorities in Ontario in 2006.

About 71.6% of South Asians in the province were foreign-born people who came to Canada as immigrants. One in five (21.7%) South Asian visible minorities arrived in Canada between 2001 and 2006, while another 28.4% came in the 1990s.

South Asians were among the fastest growing visible minority groups in Ontario, increasing 43.1% between 2001 and 2006. This rate of growth was virtually the same as the 42.3% increase in the previous intercensal period between 1996 and 2001.

Chinese, Ontario's second largest visible minority group

The 2006 Census counted 577,000 people who reported they were Chinese, Ontario's second largest visible minority group. They accounted for 21.0% of all visible minorities in the province.

About three-quarters of Chinese were foreign-born. Of these, about one-fifth (20.8%) came to Canada between 2001 and 2006, while another 39.8% arrived during the 1990s. Consequently, the majority (60.5%) of Chinese immigrants in Ontario have lived in Canada for 15 years or less.

Blacks were the third largest visible minority group in Ontario in 2006, with an estimated population of 473,800, up 15.2% from 411,100 five years earlier. Ontario was home to 60.4% of the nation's total Black population in 2006.

Just over one-half (53.4%) of Blacks were foreign-born. Among them, about half immigrated to Canada before 1991, while nearly one-third (31.6%) came during the 1990s. About 17.2% arrived between 2001 and 2006.

The result in part of their long immigration history in Canada, Blacks had among the highest proportions of second generation people. Slightly over one-fifth (21.3%) of Blacks aged 15 years and over in Ontario were born in Canada to at least one foreign-born parent, the second highest proportion behind Japanese, with 30.3%.

Other visible minority groups in Ontario with more than 100,000 people included Filipinos (203,200), Latin Americans (147,100), Arabs (111,400) and Southeast Asians (110,500). All have increased since 2001.

Top ethnic origins reflect the cumulative effects of immigration in Ontario

In 2006, the top ethnic origins in Ontario were the people who first settled Canada, such as English, Canadian, Scottish, Irish and French. German, Italian, Chinese, East Indian and Dutch rounded out the top 10 ethnic origins in the province, reflecting the legacy of immigration over the past century.

The census enumerated more than 200 different ethnic ancestries in Ontario, including some new origins largely resulting from recent immigration. Although they were small in number, these new origins included Gabonese, Peulh and Dinka, illustrating Ontario's rich ethnic diversity.

In 2006, more than 4.9 million people reported British Isles origins, either as their only ethnic origin (23.9% of all British Isles origins), or in combination with another origin (76.1%). Those with British Isles origins accounted for 40.8% of the province's population; English, Scottish and Irish were the most commonly reported British Isles origin.

About 4.4 million Ontario residents, just over one-third (36.4%) of the total, reported European origins (other than British Isles or French), as either a single or multiple ancestry. About 1.1 million reported German ancestry, 868,000, Italian and another 491,000, Dutch. They were the three largest European ancestries in Ontario.

The Prairies: One in 10 belong to a visible minority group

The three Prairie provinces—Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta—were collectively home to 597,200 people belonging to a visible minority group, up 34.3% from 444,600 in 2001. These individuals represented 11.2% of the region's 5.3 million residents in 2006.

Alberta was home to the lion's share of the visible minorities in the three Prairie provinces, an estimated 454,200. Another 109,100 lived in Manitoba and 33,900 in Saskatchewan. They accounted for 13.9% of the population in Alberta, 9.6% in Manitoba and 3.6% in Saskatchewan, all below the national average of 16.2%

Alberta had the third highest proportion of visible minorities in the country, behind only British Columbia and Ontario, while Manitoba ranked fourth.

The largest visible minority group in both Alberta and Saskatchewan was Chinese, which accounted for 26.5% of all visible minorities in Alberta and 28.0% in Saskatchewan. In Manitoba, Filipino was the largest group, with 34.6% of all visible minorities. In fact, Manitoba was home to a larger share of Filipinos than its share of visible minorities. In 2006, 9.2% of all Filipinos in Canada resided in Manitoba. In comparison, only 2.2% of Canada's visible minorities lived in the province.

Ethnic origins reflect European heritage and Aboriginal peoples

Ethnic origins on the Prairies reflect the European and Aboriginal heritage of the population.

In Manitoba, the top three ethnic ancestries reported alone or in combination with other ancestries were English (259,600), German (216,800) and Scottish (209,200). The seven other most frequently reported ancestries were Canadian, Ukrainian, Irish, French, North American Indian, Polish and Métis.

Overall, 38.0% of Manitoba's population reported British Isles origins. Another 50.2% of the population had European origins other than British Isles or French, and 16.5% reported Aboriginal ancestries. About two-thirds of those reporting Aboriginal ancestries were of North American Indian ancestry. Nearly four in 10 (38.8%) reported Métis ancestry.

In Saskatchewan, three in 10 people reported German ancestry, its largest ethnic group in 2006. Just over one-quarter of them said German was their only origin, while the rest reported German and other ancestries. Virtually all (97.6%) of those with German ancestry were Canadian-born. Only 2.3% of individuals with German ancestry in Saskatchewan were foreign-born, and almost one-half of them came to Canada before 1961.

The other frequently reported ancestries in Saskatchewan were English, Scottish, Canadian and Irish, as well as Ukrainian, French, North American Indian, Norwegian and Polish.

In Alberta, English was the most frequently reported ancestry, either alone or in combination with other ancestries. An estimated 885,800 individuals reported English origin and another 667,400 individuals reported Canadian origin. In addition, nearly one-half (48.8%) of Alberta's population reported some European ancestries. The largest European origins were German, Ukrainian, Dutch, Polish and Norwegian.

French origin accounted for 12.0% of Alberta's total population. The vast majority (88.9%) of individuals who reported French origin also reported other ancestral roots.

The 2006 Census enumerated 244,600 individuals with Aboriginal ancestries in Alberta. They accounted for 7.5% of the province's overall population.

British Columbia: More than 1 million members of visible minorities

For the first time, the 2006 Census enumerated over 1 million people who reported a visible minority group in British Columbia. The province's 1,008,900 visible minorities represented 24.8% of its population, the highest proportion of all provinces and territories. In 2001, the visible minority population was 836,400, which accounted for 21.6% of British Columbia's population.

Between 2001 and 2006, the visible minority population in British Columbia grew by 20.6%. The increase in the visible minority population in recent years can be largely attributed to the high level of immigration among people from non-European countries. In fact, 80.2% of recent immigrants who arrived in Canada since 2001 belonged to a visible minority group.

The vast majority (86.8%) of visible minorities in British Columbia resided in just one census metropolitan area: Vancouver. Nearly 3% of the visible minority population lived in each of Abbotsford and Victoria.

The province's largest visible minority group was Chinese, who made up 40.4% of its visible minority population. The 407,200 Chinese in British Columbia comprised 10.0% of its total population in 2006.

Almost three-quarters (72.9%) of Chinese were foreign-born. Among the foreign-born Chinese, 18.4% arrived in Canada since 2001, while 45.2% came during the 1990s. While the majority of Chinese were foreign-born, fully one-quarter of all those who reported Chinese as their visible minority group were Canadian-born.

South Asian visible minority group (including East Indian, Punjabi and Pakistani, among others) was the second largest group, with 262,300 people. They represented 6.4% of the province's total population. About six in 10 South Asians in British Columbia were immigrants, many of them arriving between 2001 and 2006.

The South Asian population has a strong presence in Abbotsford. About 25,600 people reported belonging to the South Asian visible minority group in Abbotsford in 2006, 16.3% of its total population. This was the highest proportion among the census metropolitan areas, even higher than the proportion of 13.5% in the census metropolitan area of Toronto.

The 88,100 Filipinos in British Columbia formed its third largest visible minority group. They made up 8.7% of all visible minority groups and just over 2% of the province's population. Almost three-quarters of all Filipinos were foreign-born. Among the foreign-born Filipino population, 26.2% arrived in Canada between 2001 and 2006.

While many members of visible minority groups were relatively new arrivals in Canada, others had ancestors who were among the early settlers here and were, therefore, Canadian-born. In 2006, close to three in five Japanese were born in Canada. Almost half (48.3%) of Blacks in British Columbia were Canadian-born and 37.3% of South Asians were born in Canada.

Ethnocultural portrait of British Columbia reflects past immigration patterns

The diversity of the population of British Columbia can be seen by the wide number of different ethnic origins reported. Residents of British Columbia reported more than 200 different ethnic origins in the 2006 Census. Although the province is home to a large Asian population, the most common ethnic ancestries reported were British Isles, Canadian and other European origins.

The top ethnic origins in British Columbia show a mix of historical and current immigration patterns. The most numerous ethnic origins reported, either alone or in combination with another origin, included English (1.2 million), Scottish (828,100), Canadian (720,200), Irish (618,100) and German (561,600). Also among the top 10 ethnic origins were Chinese, French, East Indian, Ukrainian and Dutch.

The majority of European or British Isles descent were Canadian-born, or had been in Canada for several decades. The 2006 Census showed that 10.7% of those with British Isles origins were foreign-born, as were 18.6% with other European origins. In comparison, 71.5% of those reporting Chinese ethnicity and 61.2% with East Indian origins were born outside Canada.

Moreover, 87% of residents with either Chinese or East Indian origins reported that ethnic group as their only origin. In contrast, only 21.5% of British Isles origin, and 29.0% of other European origin, reported one of those groups as their only ethnic origin.

The ethnic origins of immigrants reflect the current and historical immigration patterns. The top ethnic origins reported either alone or in combination with other groups among the foreign-born were Chinese, East Indian, English, German and Filipino.

Territories: More than half reported Aboriginal ancestries

In the Yukon Territory, those with at least one British Isles origin made up a slightly over one-half (51.1%) of the population. English and Scottish were the most frequently cited. An estimated 7,800 individuals reported Aboriginal ancestry in the Yukon Territory, just over one-quarter of the population. Of this group, the vast majority (90.5%) were of North American Indian heritage.

In the Northwest Territories, the most frequently reported ancestry was those reporting Aboriginal ancestries, particularly North American Indian. About seven in 10 of those with Aboriginal ancestries reported North American Indian, either alone or with other ancestries. Another 21.9% reported Inuit. Overall, about one-third of the population of the Northwest Territories reported some British Isles origins. About one in five had other European origins, either as their only ethnic ancestry, or in combination with others.

Some 84.8% of Nunavut's population of 29,300 reported Inuit ancestral background in 2006. The vast majority (88.8%) of those reporting Inuit did not report any other ancestry. About 14.5% of Nunavut's population reported that they had British Isles origins, either as their only origin, or in combination with others.

The census enumerated a visible minority population of 3,900 in the three territories, 3.9% of the combined population. The largest group, Filipino, had a population of nearly 1,000, representing one-quarter of all visible minorities in the territories. About 700 identified themselves as members of the Chinese visible minority group, and they accounted for 18.4% of all visible minorities.

Canada's major census metropolitan areas

Visible minorities had a strong presence in Canada's largest census metropolitan areas. Almost all (95.9%) visible minorities resided in Canada's census metropolitan areas, compared with 68.1% of the country's total population.

Toronto, Vancouver, Montréal, Calgary, Ottawa - Gatineau, Edmonton and Winnipeg were each home to at least 100,000 visible minorities in 2006.

Six in 10 visible minorities resided in just two census metropolitan areas: Toronto and Vancouver. The visible minority population made up a large proportion of the population in these two census metropolitan areas, 42.9% and 41.7%, respectively.

Abbotsford in British Columbia had the third largest proportion (22.8%) of visible minorities among all census metropolitan areas in the country, after Toronto and Vancouver. In fact, Abbotsford had the highest proportion of South Asians in all census metropolitan areas. In 2006, 16.3% of Abbotsford's population belonged to the South Asian visible minority group; this was ahead of 13.5% in Toronto and 9.9% in Vancouver.

Calgary ranked fourth, and Edmonton fifth, in their proportion of visible minorities. In 2006, visible minorities made up 22.2% and 17.1%, respectively, of the populations in these two census metropolitan areas.

Of the 33 census metropolitan areas in Canada in 2006, the city with the highest proportion of residents who reported British Isles origins was Peterborough, where 67.7% reported British ancestry as either their only origin or a part of a multiple of origins. British Isles origins were also reported by about two thirds of the population in both Saint John in New Brunswick and St. John's in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The three census metropolitan areas where Aboriginal ancestries were most frequently reported as either a single or multiple responses were Winnipeg (11.1%), Saskatoon (10.4%) and Thunder Bay (9.8%).

Table 2 Count, percentage distribution and relative ratio of visible minority population, by census metropolitan areas, 2006

Census metropolitan areas	Total population	% of total population	Visible minority population	% of visible minority population	Relative ratio ¹
Canada	31,241,030	100.0	5,068,090	100.0	...
Toronto	5,072,075	16.2	2,174,065	42.9	2.6
Vancouver	2,097,965	6.7	875,300	17.3	2.6
Montréal	3,588,520	11.5	590,375	11.6	1.0
Calgary	1,070,295	3.4	237,890	4.7	1.4
Ottawa - Gatineau	1,117,120	3.6	179,295	3.5	1.0
Ottawa - Gatineau (Ont. part)	835,475	2.7	162,405	3.2	1.2
Ottawa - Gatineau (Que. part)	281,650	0.9	16,890	0.3	0.4
Edmonton	1,024,825	3.3	175,295	3.5	1.1
Winnipeg	686,035	2.2	102,940	2.0	0.9
Hamilton	683,445	2.2	84,295	1.7	0.8
Kitchener	446,495	1.4	61,455	1.2	0.8
Windsor	320,730	1.0	51,200	1.0	1.0
London	452,575	1.4	50,300	1.0	0.7
Abbotsford	156,645	0.5	35,715	0.7	1.4
Victoria	325,060	1.0	33,870	0.7	0.6
Oshawa	328,065	1.1	33,700	0.7	0.6
Halifax	369,455	1.2	27,645	0.5	0.5
St. Catharines - Niagara	385,035	1.2	25,470	0.5	0.4
Québec	704,180	2.3	16,355	0.3	0.1
Guelph	126,085	0.4	16,025	0.3	0.8
Saskatoon	230,850	0.7	14,865	0.3	0.4
Regina	192,435	0.6	12,605	0.2	0.4
Barrie	175,335	0.6	10,130	0.2	0.4
Kingston	148,475	0.5	8,600	0.2	0.4
Kelowna	160,565	0.5	8,320	0.2	0.3
Sherbrooke	183,635	0.6	7,000	0.1	0.2
Brantford	122,825	0.4	6,715	0.1	0.3
Saint John	120,875	0.4	3,805	0.1	0.2
St. John's	179,270	0.6	3,460	0.1	0.1
Greater Sudbury / Grand Sudbury	156,395	0.5	3,280	0.1	0.1
Thunder Bay	121,050	0.4	3,275	0.1	0.2
Peterborough	115,140	0.4	3,095	0.1	0.2
Moncton	124,055	0.4	2,425	0.0	0.1
Trois-Rivières	138,555	0.4	2,270	0.0	0.1
Saguenay	149,600	0.5	1,280	0.0	0.1

... not applicable

Note:

1. The relative ratio shows whether the share of visible minority population in a given location is higher than the share of the total population in the same location. For example, Montréal has a ratio of 1.0, which means that Montréal's share of visible minorities in Canada (11.6%) is roughly the same as Montréal's share of the total population of Canada (11.5%).

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Halifax: Highest proportion of visible minorities in the Atlantic region

An estimated 7.5% of Halifax's population, 27,600 people, belonged to a visible minority group. While this proportion was below the national level of 16.2%, it was higher than any other census metropolitan areas in the Atlantic region, such as Saint John (3.1%), Moncton (2.0%) and St. John's (1.9%). The proportion of visible minorities in Halifax was up from 7.0% in 2001.

Blacks accounted for almost one-half (48.0%) of visible minorities in Halifax. They represented the largest group in the census metropolitan area's visible minority population and made up 3.6% of the total population in Halifax in 2006. Nine in 10 Blacks in Halifax were Canadian-born. This was the highest proportion of Canadian-born Blacks in any census metropolitan area in Canada. In fact, Halifax had the highest proportion of Canadian-born visible minorities in the country.

The second largest visible minority group was those who reported Arab. They made up 1.0% of the total population in Halifax. Among Arabs, 71.4% were born outside of Canada. Chinese and South Asian visible minority groups each comprised 0.8% of the population.

Halifax was home to about 180 different ethnic origins. In 2006, the most frequently reported ethnic origin was Canadian. Over one-third of the population (37.6%) reported Canadian origin, either alone or with other ancestries. English, Scottish, Irish and French were also among the top ethnic origins reported. The ethnic composition of the population reflects the long history of these ethnic groups in Halifax.

Other common ancestries in Halifax were German, Dutch and North American Indian. Most residents who reported these ancestries did so in combination with at least one other group. The list of the 10 most frequently reported ancestries was almost the same as in 2001.

Montréal: Third largest visible minority population

The 2006 Census enumerated 590,400 people who belonged to a visible minority in the census metropolitan area of Montréal, the third largest visible minority population in Canada, after Toronto and Vancouver. Of all visible minorities living in Canada, 11.6% lived in Montréal, 42.9% in Toronto and 17.3% in Vancouver.

Montréal's visible minorities accounted for 16.5% of the census metropolitan area's population, up from 13.5% in 2001 and 12.2% in 1996. The proportion in 2006 was slightly above the national level of 16.2% and the provincial level of 8.8%, but below the proportions recorded in Toronto (42.9%) and in four other census metropolitan areas.

The visible minority population in Montréal grew by 28.8% between 2001 and 2006. In contrast, the total population in the census metropolitan area grew by 5.4% over the same period.

Immigration was largely responsible for the growth of the visible minority population. In 2006, Montréal was home to the second largest group of recent immigrants in Canada, after Toronto, and close to two-third (64.8%) of recent immigrants were members of a visible minority group.

Home to largest number of Arab visible minorities

The census enumerated almost 100,000 Arabs visible minorities in Montréal in 2006, accounting for 37.2% of all Arabs in Canada. They represented 2.8% of Montréal's total population, and 16.7% of all visible minorities in Montréal.

Arabs formed one of the fastest growing visible minority groups in Montréal—the number of Arab visible minorities increased by 45.8% since 2001. About seven in 10 Arabs were foreign-born; most of them born in Morocco, Lebanon or Algeria.

While Montréal was home to the largest number of Arab visible minorities in Canada, the largest visible minority group in the census metropolitan area was Black. The 2006 Census enumerated about 169,100 Blacks in Montréal. This group made up nearly three in 10 (28.6%) of Montréal's visible minorities and over one-fifth (21.6%) of all Blacks in Canada.

An estimated 55.9% of Blacks in Montréal were foreign-born. Among them, over one-half (55.4%) were born in Haiti.

Latin American was the third largest visible minority group in Montréal. With an estimated 75,400 individuals in 2006, they accounted for 2.1% of the census metropolitan area's population.

A majority (71.8%) of Latin American visible minorities in Montréal were born outside Canada. Of those who were foreign-born, over one-quarter (28.5%) arrived in Canada between 2001 and 2006 and one-third (33.5%) came in the 1990s. The top five countries of birth were El Salvador, Peru, Colombia, Mexico and Chile.

Chinese (72,000), South Asian (70,600), Southeast Asian (45,000) and Filipino (23,500) were other visible minority groups that each represented between 1% and 2% of the Montréal census metropolitan area's total population.

Majority of visible minorities lived in the City of Montréal

Montréal's largest municipality, the City of Montréal, was also home to the largest number of visible minorities. In 2006, an estimated 414,800 visible minorities lived in the city itself. They accounted for seven in 10 (70.3%) of all visible minorities in the census metropolitan area of Montréal. In comparison, 44.4% of the total population in the Montréal census metropolitan area lived in the City of Montréal in 2006.

While the largest number of visible minorities in the census metropolitan area lived in the City of Montréal, the municipality of Brossard had the largest proportion of visible minorities. In 2006, over one-third (34.4%) of Brossard's population belonged to a visible minority. It was followed by Dollard-des-Ormeaux (30.9%), the City of Montréal (26.0%), Mont-Royal (19.7%) and Dorval (19.1%).

In most municipalities, Black was the largest visible minority group, followed by Arab or Latin American. But Chinese and South Asian were the largest visible minority groups in Brossard, Pointe-Claire and Kirkland.

In 2006, more than 200 different ethnic origins were reported by residents of the census metropolitan area of Montréal. Canadian (1.7 million) and French (937,000) were the two most common ethnic ancestries reported either alone or in combination with other origins. It was followed by Italian, Irish, English, Scottish, Haitian, Chinese, German and North American Indian origins.

Among those who reported Canadian, French, Irish, English, Scottish or North American Indian as their ethnic origin (total responses), around nine in 10 were born in Canada. In contrast, 69.7% of those who reported Chinese origin were born outside Canada, as were 54.1% of those with Haitian origin, 29.6% of those with Italian origin and 20.3% of those with German origin.

Ottawa - Gatineau: Visible minorities accounted for 16% of the total population

Ottawa - Gatineau is a census metropolitan area that cuts across two provinces and encompasses the city of Ottawa on the Ontario side and the city of Gatineau on the Quebec side, in addition to several surrounding municipalities.

In 2006, 16.0% of the population in Ottawa - Gatineau belonged to a visible minority group. This was on par with the national level of 16.2%. Ottawa - Gatineau's visible minority population was tied with Windsor's for the second highest proportion of visible minorities in Ontario, after Toronto (42.9%).

The largest visible minority group in Ottawa - Gatineau was Black, who made up 4.0% of the total population in the census metropolitan area. Four in 10 Blacks were Canadian-born. Slightly over one-third (36.8%) were immigrants who arrived in Canada since 1991.

Chinese, estimated at 32,400, was the second largest visible minority group; they accounted for 2.9% of Ottawa - Gatineau's total population. It was followed by the Arab visible minority group, which made up 2.5% of the census metropolitan area's population. About two-thirds of Chinese and Arab residents in Ottawa - Gatineau were born outside of Canada.

Canadian, reported alone or with other ancestries by 419,800 individuals, was the most frequently reported ethnic origin. It was followed by French (291,700) and English (219,500).

French was the second largest group on the Quebec side of the Ottawa - Gatineau census metropolitan area while English was the second largest group on the Ontario side of the border.

Other common ancestries of the residents of Ottawa - Gatineau included Irish, Scottish, German, Italian, North American Indian, Chinese and Polish.

Toronto: Largest number of visible minorities in the country

As it did in 2001, the census metropolitan area of Toronto had the highest share of visible minorities among all census metropolitan areas in Canada. This was because a large share of recent immigrants who were visible minorities settled there between 2001 and 2006. During this period, Toronto took in 40.4% of all newcomers to Canada; 81.9% of these newcomers belonged to a visible minority group.

The 2006 Census enumerated 2,174,100 individuals who identified themselves as visible minorities in Toronto, by far the largest number among all census metropolitan areas. They made up 42.9% of Toronto's population of 5.1 million, up from 36.8% in 2001 and 31.6% in 1996.

Between 2001 and 2006, Toronto's visible minority population grew by 27.0%, about the same growth rate as the national average of 27.2%.

The vast majority (94.0%) of the visible minority population in the census metropolitan area of Toronto lived in only six municipalities: the City of Toronto, Mississauga, Brampton, Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan. These municipalities were also home to 83.5% of Toronto's total population.

About 1.7 million of the visible minorities in Toronto were aged 15 and over. They represented 41% of Toronto's total workforce population.

South Asians and Chinese: Toronto's two largest visible minority groups

The two largest visible minority groups in Toronto in 2006 were South Asians and Chinese. The census enumerated 684,100 South Asians, the largest group, and 486,300 Chinese.

The South Asians in Toronto accounted for over one-half (54.2%) of all South Asians in Canada in 2006. They represented 31.5% of all visible minorities in Toronto, and 13.5% of Toronto's total population.

Almost three-quarters (72.3%) of the South Asian community in Toronto were foreign-born, having arrived as immigrants. Just under one-third (30.7%) of foreign-born South Asians immigrated to Canada between 2001 and 2006. Most of them came from India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Slightly over one-quarter (25.9%) of Toronto's South Asians were born in Canada. This population of Canadian-born South Asians was fairly young. In 2006, their median age was 10 years, compared with 27 years among the total Canadian-born population in Toronto.

The 486,300 Chinese made up 22.4% of Toronto's visible minority population, and 9.6% of its total population in 2006. Their top three birthplaces were the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region) and Viet Nam.

As it did with the South Asian community, recent immigration fuelled the Chinese population in Toronto. Among the Chinese visible minorities, 74.7% were foreign-born; one-fifth of these arrived between 2001 and 2006.

Toronto was also home to the largest number of Blacks and Filipinos among all census metropolitan areas. These two groups were respectively the third and fourth largest visible minority groups in Toronto in 2006.

The Black population of 352,200 made up 16.2% of Toronto's visible minority population, and 6.9% of its total population.

Just 55.4% of the Black population, about 195,300, were foreign-born in 2006, a smaller proportion than for the South Asian and Chinese communities. Over one-half (55.1%) of foreign-born Blacks came from three countries: Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Ghana.

The 2006 Census enumerated 172,000 individuals identified as members of the Filipino visible minority group in Toronto. They represented 7.9% of all visible minorities and 3.4% of its total population. Nearly three-quarters (73.1%) of Filipinos were foreign-born.

Other visible minority groups in the census metropolitan area of Toronto included Latin Americans (99,300), West Asians (75,500), Southeast Asians (70,200), Koreans (55,300), Arabs (53,400) and Japanese (19,000).

Markham and Brampton had the highest proportions of visible minority population

Visible minorities in the census metropolitan area of Toronto were more likely to reside in just a few municipalities, such as the City of Toronto, Mississauga, Brampton, Markham and Richmond Hill. Consequently, the proportion of visible minorities in these municipalities surpassed the Toronto census metropolitan area's average.

The municipality of Markham had the highest proportion of visible minorities in the country; they accounted for 65.4% of its population. In fact, Markham surpassed even Richmond, in British Columbia, where they represented 65.1% of the population.

Over one-half (52.4%) of Markham's visible minorities were Chinese and slightly over one-quarter (26.4%) were South Asian.

Visible minorities represented 57.0% of Brampton's population, the second highest proportion in Toronto. The largest group in Brampton was the South Asian community, whose population represented 55.6% of all visible minorities in Brampton. They were followed by Blacks, who represented 21.7% of all visible minorities.

Close to one-half (49.0%) of Mississauga's population identified as visible minorities in 2006, followed by the City of Toronto (46.9%) and Richmond Hill (45.7%).

English ancestry most frequently cited in Toronto

The 2006 Census counted more than 200 different ethnic origins in the census metropolitan area of Toronto. English was the most frequently cited ethnic ancestry. About 804,100 individuals reported English ancestry either as their only origin or in combination with other origins. It was followed by 651,600 individuals reporting Canadian origin, 561,100 Scottish, 537,100 Chinese and 531,900 Irish.

Other ethnic origins among the top 10 total responses were East Indian, Italian, German, French and Polish.

In total, over one-third (35.8%) of Toronto's population reported at least some European origins, while over one-quarter (26.3%) reported some British Isles origins.

Winnipeg: Filipino was the largest visible minority group

New data from the 2006 Census shows that about 36,900 individuals who belonged to the Filipino visible minority group lived in Winnipeg in 2006. Only Toronto, with 172,000 Filipinos, and Vancouver, with 78,900, had higher numbers than Winnipeg.

In fact, Filipino was the largest visible minority group in the census metropolitan area of Winnipeg. They accounted for 35.9% of the 102,900 visible minorities or 5.4% of the total population in Winnipeg. Among all Filipinos in Winnipeg in 2006, a full two-thirds were born outside of Canada.

The second and third largest visible minority groups in Winnipeg in 2006 were South Asian and Black. Each group accounted for about 2% of Winnipeg's total population.

Overall, visible minorities represented 15.0% of Winnipeg's total population. This proportion was below the national level of 16.2% but was the ninth highest among the 33 census metropolitan areas in Canada. The visible minority population made up 12.4% of the population in 2001, and 11.1% in 1996.

Compared to other census metropolitan areas in the Prairie provinces, Winnipeg ranked in the middle, behind Calgary (22.2%) and Edmonton (17.1%) but ahead of Regina (6.6%) and Saskatoon (6.4%).

An estimated 156,300 individuals reported English ancestry, either alone or with other origins. Another 126,700 reported Scottish ancestry. German was the third largest ethnic group in Winnipeg with 121,600 people reporting this ancestry, either alone or with another ancestry. Canadian and Ukrainian origins were also among the top five ethnic ancestries reported by residents of Winnipeg in 2006.

Calgary: Nearly one in four belonged to a visible minority group

In 2006, 22.2% of the population in the Calgary census metropolitan area, or 237,900 individuals, belonged to a visible minority group. This was up from 164,900 in 2001 when visible minorities accounted for 17.5% of Calgary's population and 15.6% in 1996.

Nationally, Calgary ranked fourth in proportion of visible minorities, behind Toronto (42.9%), Vancouver (41.7%) and Abbotsford (22.8%). Two-thirds of Calgary's visible minorities were born outside Canada. In fact, among recent immigrants who arrived between 2001 and 2006, 78.0% belonged to a visible minority group.

The largest visible minority group in Calgary was Chinese with 66,400 people, or 6.2% of the census metropolitan area's total population. In 2006, of all the Chinese in Canada, Calgary was home to the fourth largest number, behind Toronto, Vancouver and Montréal.

South Asians (57,700) was the second largest visible minority group in Calgary. They accounted for 5.4% of the total population in the census metropolitan area. More than two-thirds (68.8%) of South Asians residing in Calgary were born outside of Canada, mainly in India or Pakistan.

Calgary was home to more than 200 different ethnic origins. The most frequently reported ancestries, either single or multiple response, were English, Scottish, Canadian, German and Irish.

Vancouver: Four in 10 belonged to a visible minority group

The census metropolitan area of Vancouver, comprised of the cities of Vancouver, Surrey, Richmond, Burnaby, Coquitlam and others, was home to the second highest proportion of visible minorities among all census metropolitan areas.

Of Vancouver's 2.1 million residents, 875,300 belonged to a visible minority group in 2006, up 20.6% from 725,700 in 2001.

These people accounted for 41.7% of Vancouver's population in 2006, second only to the 42.9% in the census metropolitan area of Toronto. Visible minorities made up 36.9% of Vancouver's population in 2001, and 31.1% in 1996.

About seven in 10 visible minorities in Vancouver were born outside Canada. In fact, nearly two-thirds (62.7%) of all visible minorities who were foreign-born came to Vancouver within the last 15 years. About 18.3% of the foreign-born visible minority population arrived in the 1980s, and 13.8% came in the 1970s. Only 5.2% consisted of immigrants who came to Canada in the 1960s or before.

One in five was Chinese, the largest visible minority group

The largest visible minority group in Vancouver was the Chinese population of 381,500, representing 18.2% of Vancouver's total population. This was the highest proportion among all census metropolitan areas. In contrast, 9.6% of Toronto's population were Chinese.

The Chinese made up an even larger proportion of individual municipalities in the Vancouver area. In the city of Richmond, 43.6% of the population was Chinese, the highest proportion of Chinese in any municipality in Canada. Chinese accounted for about 30% of the population in each of Greater Vancouver A, Burnaby and the City of Vancouver.

The Chinese population in the census metropolitan area of Vancouver grew by 11.3% between 2001 and 2006. This growth was faster than the 6.6% overall gain for Vancouver during the same period, but it was slower than in previous intercensal periods. Between 1996 and 2001, the Chinese population grew 22.8%.

Almost three-quarters of the Chinese in Vancouver were born outside Canada. Most were born in the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region), Taiwan or Viet Nam. Among the foreign-born Chinese residents, about one in five arrived in Canada between 2001 and 2006, while 45.8% came in the 1990s.

The second largest visible minority population in the census metropolitan area of Vancouver was the South Asian community estimated at 207,200, an increase from 164,400 five years earlier. In 2006, they represented 9.9% of Vancouver's total population, compared with 8.4% in 2001.

More than half of all South Asians lived in Surrey in 2006. In fact, South Asians made up 27.5% of the total population of Surrey, the second highest proportion of South Asians among all municipalities. Only Brampton in Ontario had a higher proportion (31.7%).

Over one-third (36.3%) of South Asians in the Vancouver metropolitan area were born in Canada. Among those who were born outside the country, the top three countries of birth were India, Fiji and Pakistan.

Filipinos, the third largest visible minority group in Vancouver, had a population of 78,900 in 2006. Filipinos accounted for 3.8% of this census metropolitan area's population. This proportion was second only to Winnipeg, where Filipinos represented 5.4% of the population.

Korean, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Japanese, and Latin American were other visible minority groups, each with at least 20,000 individuals. Each group represented between 1% and 2% of the Vancouver census metropolitan area's total population.

Richmond had one of the highest proportions of visible minority groups in the country

Many municipalities within the census metropolitan area of Vancouver had much higher proportions of visible minorities than the national average of 16.2%.

In Richmond, 65.1% of the population belonged to a visible minority group in 2006. This was just below the proportion of 65.4% in Markham, Ontario. Five years earlier, 59.0% of Richmond's population belonged to a visible minority group.

In Burnaby, 55.4% of the population belonged to a visible minority group, the second highest proportion in the Vancouver area and the fourth highest proportion in the country, behind only Markham, Richmond and Brampton. In 2001, 48.6% of Burnaby's population belonged to a visible minority group. The Chinese visible minority population accounted for 30.3% of Burnaby's total population in 2006, while South Asians comprised 8.4%.

Visible minorities also accounted for high proportions of the populations of the City of Vancouver (51.0%), Surrey (46.1%), Coquitlam (38.6%) and New Westminster (29.6%).

One-third of Vancouver's population had British heritage

Vancouver was home to over 200 different ethnic origins in 2006. Despite the metropolitan area's large and ethnically diverse population, Vancouver's British and European groups have a strong presence.

The most common ethnic ancestries reported were British Isles. About 753,200 people, slightly over one-third of Vancouver's population, reported at least one British Isles ancestry. In fact, English was the most frequently reported origin in 2006: about 484,300 indicated that English was either their only origin, or was one of a number of origins. Other frequently reported British Isles origins were Scottish (337,200) and Irish (251,700). The majority of those who indicated Scottish or Irish ancestry reported multiple ethnic origins.

Also among the largest groups were other European origins such as German, Ukrainian, Italian and Dutch. People with these ancestries came in large numbers during the first half of the 20th century. About 203,700 Vancouver residents, almost one in 10, reported German as either a single or multiple ethnic origins. Those who reported at least some Ukrainian ancestry made up 3.9% of Vancouver's population.

The current wave of immigration from Asia is also reflected in the origins of the population in Vancouver. Those with Chinese, East Indian origin and Filipino ancestry were also among the 10 largest groups in the census metropolitan area.

While many Vancouver residents of Asian descent are relatively new arrivals in Canada, those with British Isles and other European origins were mainly Canadian-born.

The 2006 Census showed that 12.2% of those who reported at least one British Isles origin were born outside the country, while 24.3% who reported European origins were immigrants. In contrast, 62.2% of those who indicated East Indian ancestry, 70.5% with Filipino origin and 73.3% of those with Chinese origin were born outside Canada.

Definitions

Ethnic origin (also known as ethnic ancestry) refers to the ethnic or cultural origins of the respondent's ancestors. An ancestor is someone from whom a person is descended and is usually more distant than a grandparent. Ethnic origin should not be confused with language, place of birth or citizenship. For example, a person of Haitian origin may speak French, be born in Canada and have Canadian citizenship. Since 1981, when respondents were first permitted to report more than one ethnic origin in the census, a distinction has been made between single response, multiple responses and total responses.

- A **single response** occurs when a respondent provides one ethnic origin only. For example, in 2006, 741,045 people stated that their only ethnic origin was Italian.
- A **multiple response** occurs when a respondent provides two or more ethnic origins. For example, 704,285 people in 2006 gave a response which included Italian and one or more other ethnic origins.
- **Total responses** are the sum of single and multiple responses for each ethnic origin. Total response counts indicate the number of persons who reported a specified ethnic origin, either as their only origin or in addition to one or more other ethnic origins. For example, 1,445,335 persons reported at least some Italian ancestry in 2006. Total responses to ethnic origin do not sum up to the total population.

Most of the data that are reported in this document refers to the total response count for each ethnic group, unless otherwise indicated.

The *Employment Equity Act* defines **visible minorities** as 'persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.' Under this definition, regulations specify the following groups as visible minorities: Chinese, South Asians, Blacks, Arabs, West Asians, Filipinos, Southeast Asians, Latin Americans, Japanese, Koreans and other visible minority groups, such as Pacific Islanders.

Foreign-born population (also known as the immigrant population) is defined in the 2006 Census as persons who are, or who have been, landed immigrants in Canada. In this analysis, the foreign-born population does not include non-permanent residents. The foreign-born population also excludes persons born outside Canada who are Canadian citizens by birth. The latter are considered part of the Canadian-born or non-immigrant population.

Recent immigrants (also known as newcomers) refers to landed immigrants who came to Canada up to five years prior to a given census year. For the 2006 Census, recent immigrants are landed immigrants who arrived in Canada between January 1, 2001 and Census Day, May 16, 2006. Similarly, recent immigrants in the 2001 Census were newcomers at the time of the 2001 Census, i.e., they came to Canada between January 1, 1996 and Census Day, May 15, 2001.

Non-permanent residents refers to people from another country who had a Work or Study Permit, or who were refugee claimants at the time of the census, and family members living in Canada with them.

Generation status indicates for how many generations a person and their family have been in Canada. It is derived from place of birth of respondent, place of birth of father and place of birth of mother and it pertains only to the population aged 15 years and older. Persons are defined as either 'first generation,' 'second generation' or 'third generation or more,' which are defined as follows:

- **first generation:** Persons born outside Canada. For the most part, these are people who are now, or have ever been, landed immigrants in Canada. Also included in the first generation are a small number of people born outside Canada to parents who are Canadian citizens by birth. In addition, the first generation includes people who are non-permanent residents.
- **second generation:** Persons born inside Canada with at least one parent born outside Canada. This includes: (a) persons born in Canada with both parents born outside Canada and (b) persons born in Canada with one parent born in Canada and one parent born outside Canada (these persons may have grandparents born inside or outside Canada as well).
- **third generation or more:** Persons born inside Canada with both parents born inside Canada (these persons may have grandparents born inside or outside Canada as well).

Census metropolitan area is an area consisting of one or more neighbouring municipalities situated around a major urban 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.

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