



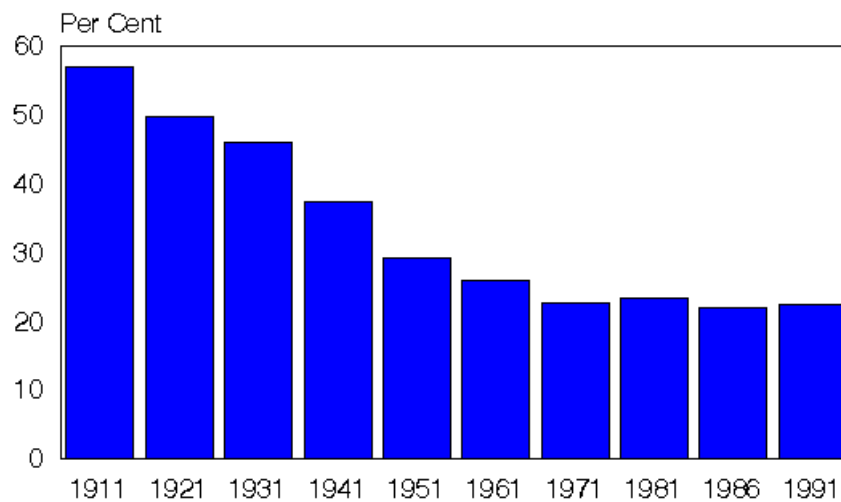
Census 91 Fast Facts

Issue 14: Immigrant Population

Produced by: Population Statistics Section

Data from the 1991 Census shows that there are 723,170 immigrants living in British Columbia, which represents 22.3 per cent of the provincial population. The number of immigrants living in British Columbia has increased slightly faster than the overall population (14.7% vs. 13.8% overall), which has resulted in a slight increase in share from 21.8 per cent in 1986 to the 1991 level of 22.3 per cent. Of all provinces, British Columbia has the second highest proportion of its population who are immigrants. Ontario ranks first at 23.7 per cent. This relatively higher proportion of population who are immigrants is due to the fact that British Columbia, on average, has attracted 16 per cent of immigrants to Canada, but accounts for only 12 per cent of the Canadian population.

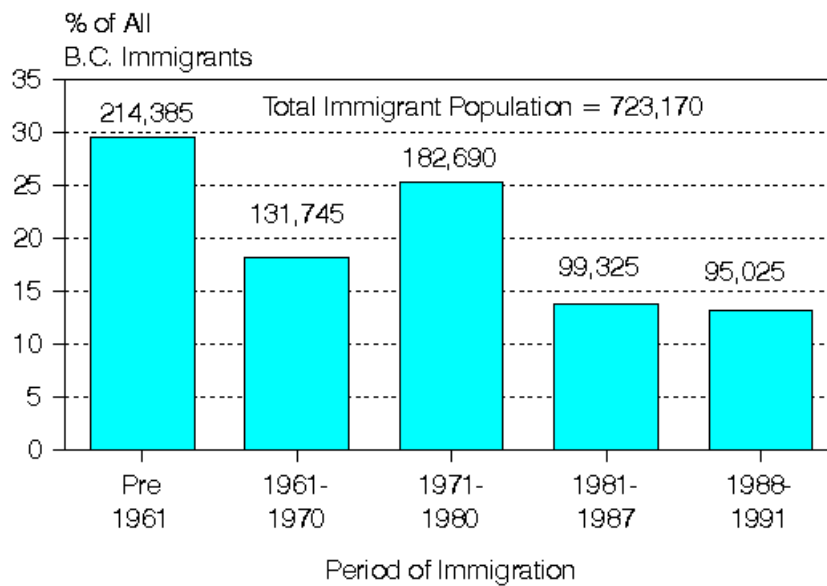
B.C. Immigrant Population as a Per Cent of Total Population



Source: Statistics Canada

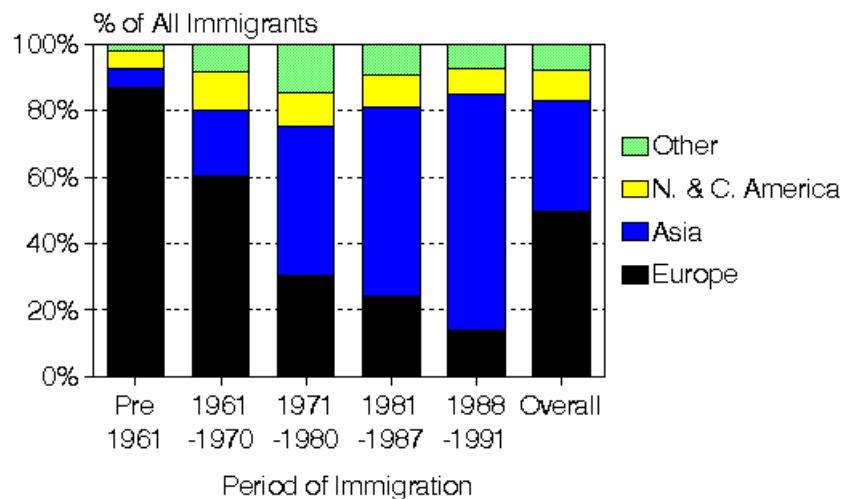
Of the immigrant population living in British Columbia, approximately 30 per cent arrived in Canada before 1961. In the ten-year period between 1961 and 1971, the figure is 18.2 per cent. From 1971 to 1981 and 1981 to 1991, approximately equal proportions of immigrants arrived (25.3 per cent and 26.8 per cent respectively).

B.C. Immigrant Population by Period of Immigration



Source: 1991 Census

B.C. Immigrant Population by Origin by Period of Immigration

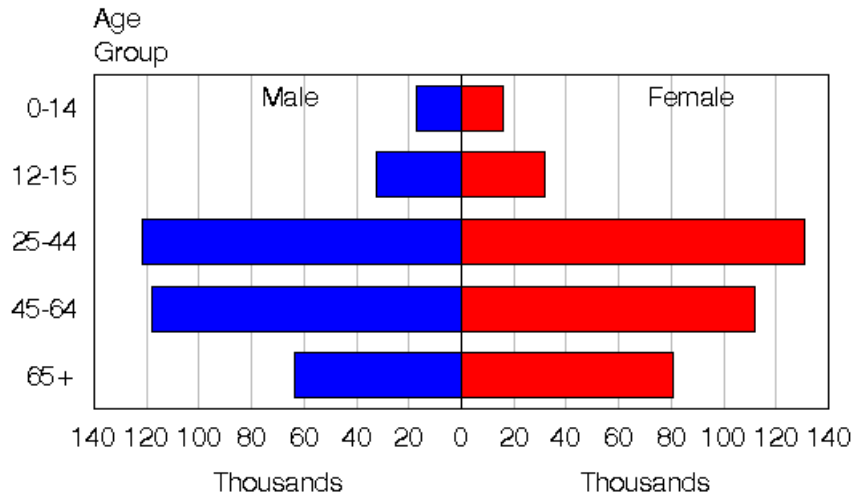


Source: 1991 Census

While B.C.'s share of Canadian immigrants has been relatively constant over the past two decades, the characteristics of the immigrant population have been changing. Most of the immigrant population were born in Europe (49.5 per cent). However, the share of European born immigrants has been declining over the last two decades, while that of Asian immigrants has been increasing. For immigrants who arrived during the 1988 to 1991 period, 71.5 per cent were born in Asia, 13.7 per cent were born in Europe, 7 per cent in North and Central America, 1.5 per cent in South America, 2.8 per cent in Africa, 2.7 per cent in Oceania, and 0.5 per cent in the Caribbean.

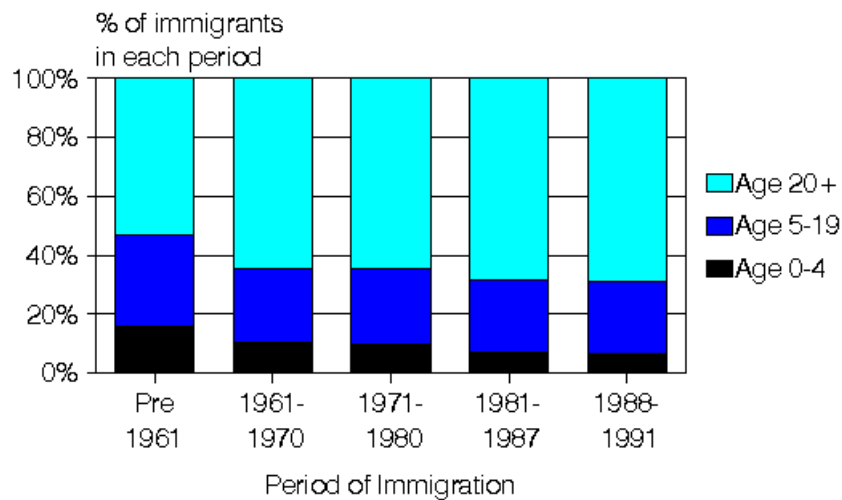
In the past, a relatively higher proportion of immigrants were under the age of 20. Forty-seven per cent of the B.C. immigrant population who immigrated before 1961 were under the age of 20 at the time of arrival. For immigrants who arrived during the period from 1988 to 1991, only 31 per cent were under the age of 20 at the time of immigration.

B.C. Immigrant Population By Age and Sex (1991 Census)



Source: 1991 Census

B.C. Immigrant Population by Age at Period of Immigration



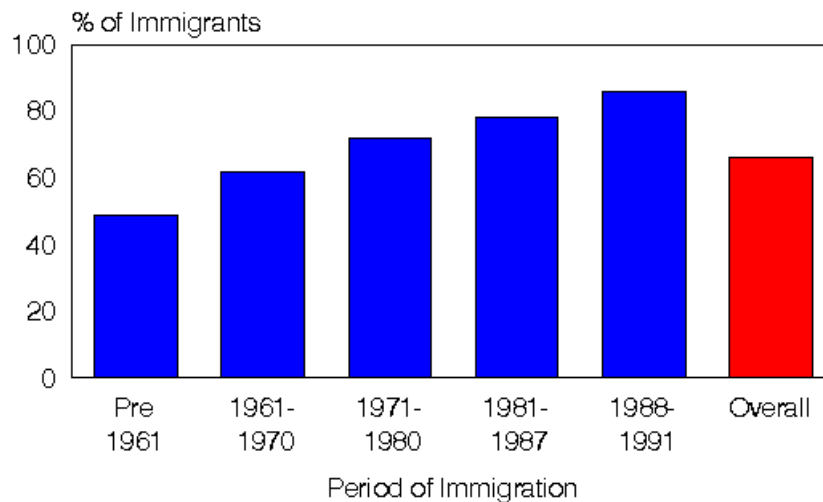
Source: 1991 Census

About one third of the immigrant population live in the Vancouver Census Metropolitan Area (CMA). The number of immigrants living in the Vancouver CMA has been increasing over the last three decades. At the time of the 1991 Census, 49 per cent of the immigrants who arrived before 1961 lived in the Vancouver CMA, whereas 86 per cent of those who arrived between 1988 and 1991 lived in the Vancouver CMA. This increasing trend is partially due to an increase in Asian immigrants, who are more inclined to settle in the Vancouver area. Overall, 86 per cent of Asian immigrants live in the Vancouver CMA, compared to 45 per cent for European immigrants.

In 1991, 71 per cent of the immigrant population were Canadian citizens. Immigrants who arrived earlier are more likely to have become Canadian citizens than those who came later. Ninety-two per cent of immigrants who came prior to 1961 have obtained Canadian citizen status, while 66 per cent of those who arrived between 1981 and 1987 have done so.

In 1991 there were 28,035 persons living in British Columbia (0.9 per cent of the population), who were of "non-permanent resident" status. These are people who are neither immigrants nor Canadian born and include foreign students, refugee status claimants and other foreigners who are in B.C. for a temporary period.

Proportion of B.C. Immigrants Living in Vancouver CMA



Source: 1991 Census