

## SPECIAL FEATURE: 2001 RESIDENCE OF RECENT IMMIGRANTS

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Every year a large number of immigrants choose to settle in British Columbia. Most establish themselves in the province's largest centres in the Lower Mainland and the Capital region. These large centres of population offer many services aimed at easing the adjustment to a new country. For those of ethnic or cultural minorities, pre-existing cultural communities may ease the transition, and widespread language services assist those who must improve their ability to speak one of Canada's official languages. The large centres also provide numerous employment opportunities for individuals of varying skill levels.

Of the immigrants who arrived in Canada between 1996 and 2001, the

### Residence of Recent Immigrants\* in 2001

	Number	Percent
BC	191425	100
CMA	179470	93.8
Abbotsford CMA	5105	2.7
Vancouver CMA	169615	88.6
Victoria CMA	4750	2.5
Non-CMA	11955	6.2

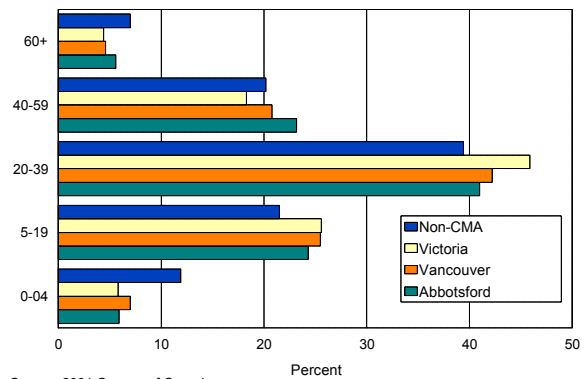
\*Refers to immigrants who arrived in Canada between 1996 and 2001

majority were living in one of British Columbia's Census Metropolitan Areas (CMA) in 2001, and most of these resided in the Vancouver CMA. However, almost 12,000 individuals were living in non-CMA areas at the time of the census.

The attraction of CMA's for recent immigrants is very strong. Overall, 63% of British Columbia's population lived in a CMA in 2001. The proportion of new immigrants who resided in a CMA

was much higher at 94%. This is perhaps not surprising considering the source countries of most recent immigrants in British Columbia. The top five source countries for recent immigrants who arrived in the 1996-2001 period and stated an intention to settle in British Columbia were China, Taiwan, India, Hong Kong and the Philippines. Asia was the last permanent residence of 77% of recent immigrants who intended to settle in British Columbia. Most of these immigrants would likely be in need of the services offered in CMA's to assist them to become successfully established in British Columbia.

2001 Residence of Immigrants by Age at Immigration(Landed 1996 to 2001)

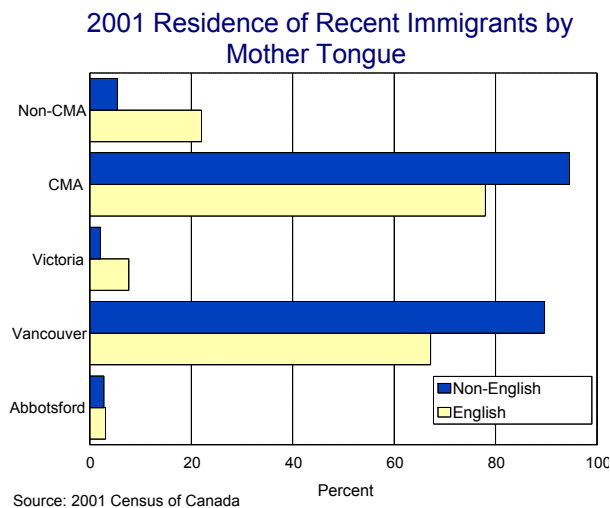


Source: 2001 Census of Canada

The above chart demonstrates the residence of recent immigrants of selected age groups. Most notable is the higher numbers of immigrants at each end of the age spectrum in non-CMA's.

As expected, immigrants whose mother tongue was not English were more likely to be living in a CMA in 2001. Recent immigrants who resided in non-CMA's were far more likely to be native

English speakers. Vancouver CMA was clearly the choice of the majority of recent immigrants, regardless of their mother tongue. Interestingly, immigrants for whom English is a second language are less likely to settle in Victoria than are other recent immigrants. As the provincial capital, government and tourism dominate Victoria's economy. It is likely that this less diversified economy provides fewer opportunities for new immigrants who have not yet mastered the language.



Immigrants with a non-English mother tongue are more likely to live in a CMA regardless of when they immigrated to Canada. However, compared to the most recent immigrants, those who have been in Canada the longest were more likely to be living outside a CMA in 2001. Among other factors, it is likely that increased language competence allows a greater number of immigrants to access opportunities outside of the CMA's.

Language ability seems to be only one of many reasons why recent immigrants may choose to live in a CMA. Recent immigrants who speak English are more likely to live in non-CMA's than are non-English speakers (20% compared with 4%), the majority resided in CMA's in 2001. Relative to the newest immigrants, those who have lived in Canada longer are more likely to be residing in non-CMA's.

