

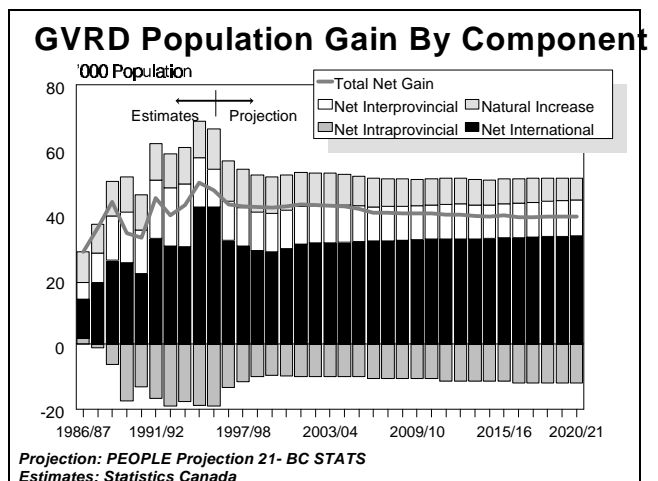
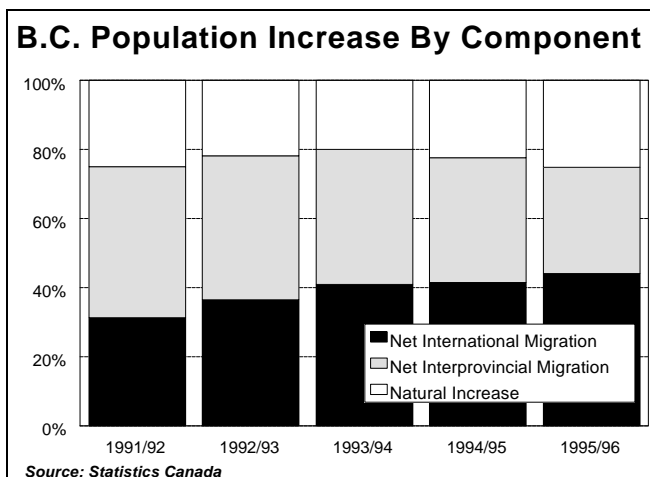
Special Feature: Immigration to the Greater Vancouver Regional District

In 1990, the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) initiated the development of the Livable Region Strategic Plan in order to achieve the following major goals in its long term regional development and city planning:

- To protect Greater Vancouver's natural assets such as major parks, farmland, watersheds and ecologically important areas.
- To build a complete community so as to achieve a better balance in the distribution of jobs and housing, a wider choice of affordable housing types, a better distribution of public services, and more effective transportation services.
- To achieve a compact metropolitan region by allowing a higher residential growth in areas of the Burrard Peninsula, the North East Sector, North Surrey and North Delta, while maintaining a relatively lower population growth in the central and eastern Fraser Valley. This will enable more people to live closer to their jobs and make better use of public transit and community services.
- To increase transportation choice by providing initiatives and facilities so as to encourage walking, cycling, and utilizing mass transit, while discouraging dependency on single occupant automobile travel.

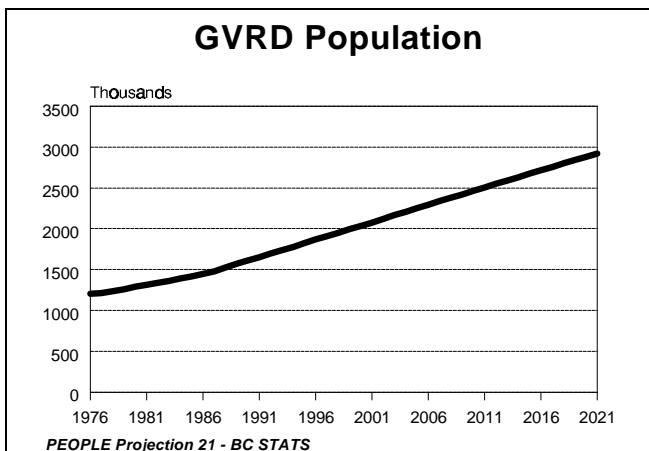
As can be seen from these stated objectives, the single most important factor in designing and implementing the Livable Region Strategic Plan is the population and its growth in the GVRD and surrounding regional districts. Population growth does not only affect the demand for housing, community services and public facilities, but also impacts on the type of facilities demanded as the density of population changes. The composition and characteristics of the population will also shape the preference and priority placed on housing and transportation type as well as the use of public services.

Population growth can be attributed to two major components, namely, net migration, and natural increase (births minus deaths). The component that has contributed the most to British Columbia's population growth has been net migration. In the period 1991/92 to 1995/96, net migration accounted for approximately 73 per cent of the province's population growth. Migration can also be further broken down into net international migration (immigrants minus emigrants) and net interprovincial migration (people moving into the



province from the rest of Canada minus people moving out to other provinces). Over the 1991/92 to 1995/96 period, net international migration has contributed slightly more to the overall population growth than did net interprovincial migration.

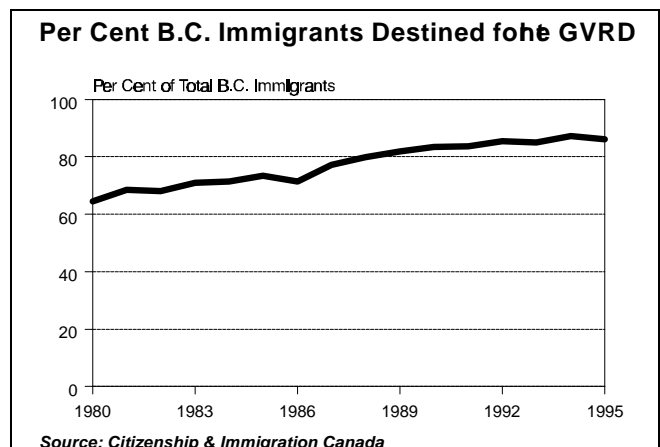
In the case of the GVRD, net intraprovincial migration also affects population change (people moving into the GVRD from other areas minus people moving out of the GVRD to other areas within the province). However, unlike the other two types of net migration, there have been more British Columbians moving out of the GVRD than moving into the GVRD since 1988. The net intraprovincial migration for the GVRD in 1993/94 (latest available figure from Statistics Canada) was negative 17,664 persons. It is projected that future intraprovincial migration for the GVRD will remain negative, although at lower levels than that experienced during 1993/94.

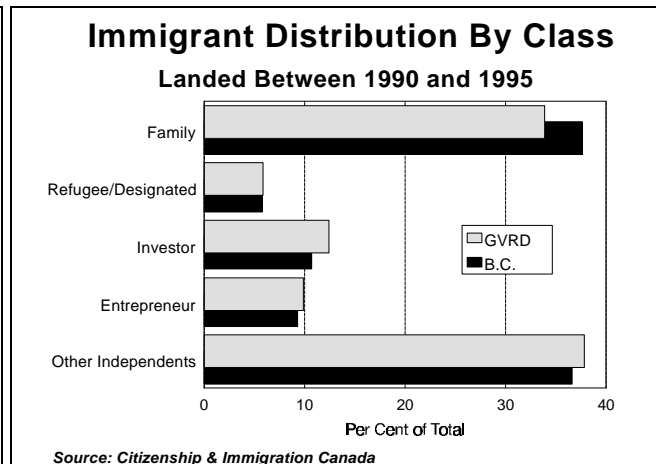
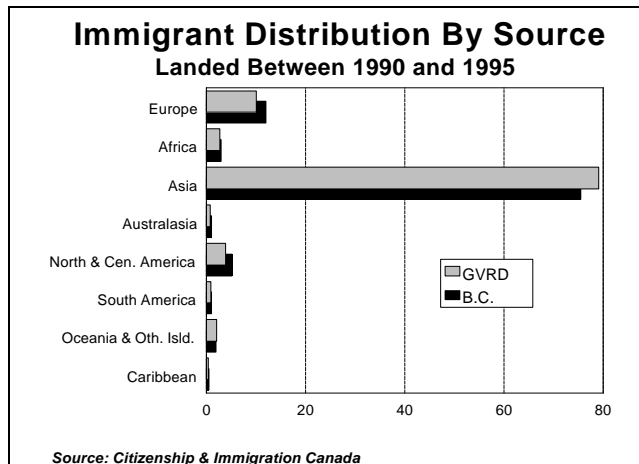


The population of the GVRD is projected to increase from 1,867,136 persons in 1996 to 2,922,651 persons in year 2021, representing a 57 per cent increase in population living in the region over the next 25 years. Population growth of this magnitude will have significant impacts on the design and implementation of the Livable Region Strategic Plan. It is also further complicated by the anticipation that the largest component of this population growth will be immigrants who have diverse cultural backgrounds, and who might require different

settlement services. As a result, it is important that future immigration to the GVRD be forecast as accurately as possible. The challenge, however, is that the long term immigration level to the country can vary considerably due to factors such as changes in federal immigration policies or economic conditions in Canada.

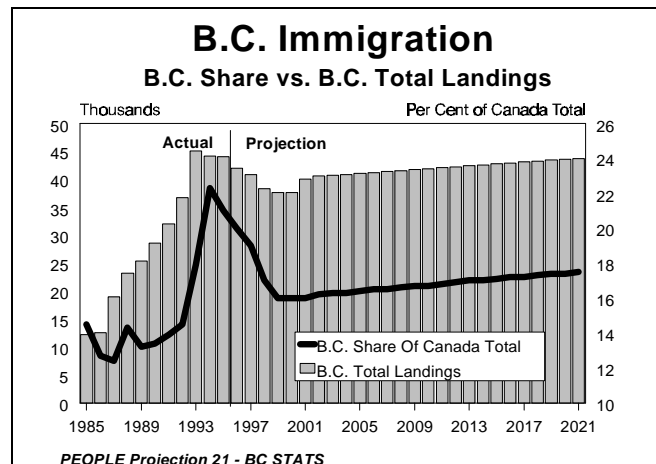
Predicting the number of immigrants who will settle in the GVRD also requires estimating the share of Canadian immigrants who will choose to settle in British Columbia. In many respects, analyzing immigrants to the GVRD can be achieved through examining immigrants to the province, because recent immigration levels show that approximately 85 per cent of all B.C. immigrants choose to settle in the GVRD. Many of the characteristics, such as distribution by immigrant class and origin of recent immigrants settling in the GVRD, were similar to that of the overall landings in the province. Hence, the future level of immigrants to the GVRD can be derived from the immigration forecast at the provincial level.





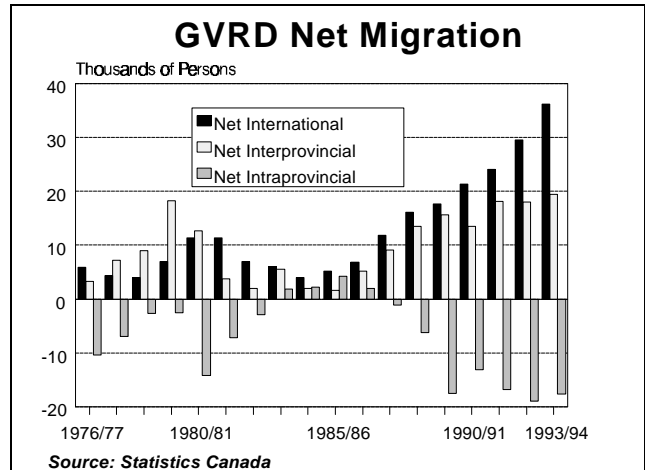
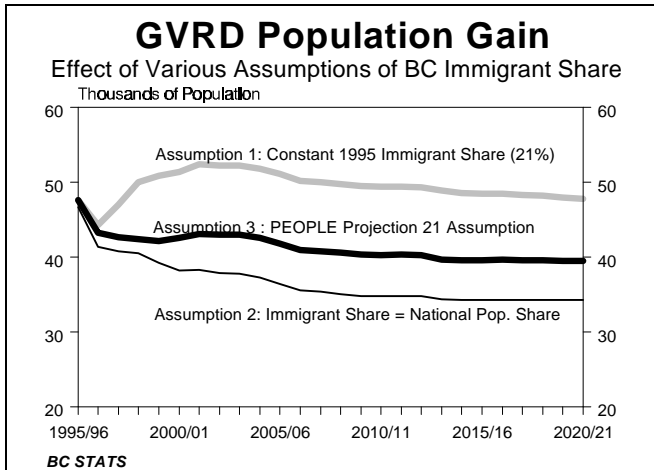
The PEOPLE 21 Population Projection published by BC STATS forecasts the immigration level for British Columbia to decline slightly from the 1995 level of 44,000 to approximately 38,000 by year 2000, then increase steadily to 44,000 persons by year 2021. This projection is based on the assumption that total immigrants to Canada will increase steadily from the estimated 1996 inflow of 210,000 persons to reach 250,000 persons by year 2001, and remain constant at the 250,000 level for the remaining period of the projection (to 2021). In the PEOPLE 21 Projection, the number of immigrants to the GVRD is also projected to be approximately 85 per cent of the total B.C. immigrant landings.

Another major factor that determines the number of immigrants to the province, which in turn affects the number to the GVRD, is the province's share of total immigrants to Canada. Prior to 1993, B.C.'s share of Canadian immigrants had been in the range of 12 to 14 per cent, or approximately the share of the nation's population (13 per cent). However, B.C.'s immigrant share jumped to 18 per cent in 1993, 22 per cent in 1994 and 21 per cent in 1995. This trend could have been the result of factors such as the relatively strong economic conditions of British Columbia when compared to that of central Canada; Quebec's lower than expected immigrant intake; and the geographic proximity of British Columbia to the Pacific Rim from where most of the recent immigrants originate.



The effect of B.C.'s immigrant share on the GVRD's total immigrant inflow and population growth is charted below. In PEOPLE 21, it is projected that the share will decline slowly from the current 21 per cent to 16 per cent by 1999 as a result of an easing in immigration from Hong Kong to Canada expected after 1997. The B.C. immigration share is then expected to increase steadily to 17.5 per cent by 2021. In order to measure the sensitivity of these assumptions on the resulting population projection for the GVRD, two alternative assumptions were prepared: (1) keeping the future share the same as that observed in 1995 (approximately 21%), and (2) setting the future immigrant share to be the same as B.C.'s

share of the national population. If other factors remain unchanged, the constant population share assumption would give an overall lower inflow whereas the constant 1995 share (21%) would give a higher inflow of immigrants and total population growth to the GVRD.



Predicting the long term immigration share for the province, and hence the GVRD's share, is as challenging as predicting the future level of immigrants to the country. Unlike natural increase, in which mortality and fertility rates of a population follow some probabilistic patterns and trends that statisticians can forecast with a higher degree of confidence, national immigration levels and provincial share can vary from year to year subject to a number of external factors that lie beyond the influence of provincial or even national policy. As immigration has become such a important element in the future population growth within the GVRD, one of the biggest challenges to the development and implementation of the Livable Region Strategic Plan is that the plan be able to adapt to unforeseeable fluctuations in the number of immigrants settling in the region.