Iwona Wrońska[1]

ORCID: 0000-0002-0226-2747
Faculty of Law and Social Sciences, Jan Kochanowski University, Poland
Faculty of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences,
MIS Fellow, University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg

Evolution of Canadian immigration policy. The experience of resettlement and measures towards inclusiveness

Abstract

As a strategy, immigration has been central to Canadian development since Canada's inception in 1867. Bearing in mind what James Hollifield describes "a liberal paradox" that is a trend among states towards greater international economic openness accompanied by internal closure due to security concerns, this article investigates whether Canada is trapped in that paradox. The article argues that the Canadian government succeeded not only in implementing an immigration management system but also in introducing measures towards inclusiveness. Consequently, Canada, to a large extent, escaped this trap.

Explanation of the decision-making processes in immigration policies as well as the function of the main political actors in Canada is based on classical system analysis theory. The main questions are asked: how do inputs from society affect public policy on immigration? How, in turn, do outputs of public policy affect society and subsequent demands? How have inputs and outputs changed immigration policies over time?

Keywords: immigration, refugees, Canada, resettlement, inclusiveness

---

[1] **Corresponding author:** Iwona Wronska, Faculty of Law and Social Sciences, Jan Kochanowski University, Uniwersytecka, 25-406, Kielce, Polska; email: wronska.ujk@gmail.com

Introduction

As James F. Hollifield points out, migrations are linked to various dimensions of politics that trapped the liberal states in a "liberal paradox". In order to maintain a competitive advantage, a government must keep their economies and societies open to migration which involves greater political risk, because migration is often seen as a threat to national security. There are several challenges that the liberal states need to address to escape the trap, such as the politics of immigration control and the politics of integration. Therefore, states must be willing to accept immigration and grant rights to outsiders (Hollifield, 2004, p. 885–887). I would like to argue that over the years, Canada has been able to accept immigrants and grant them rights. It has devised a framework that combines the proactive and controlled immigration policy with the policy that accommodates immigrants. Measures towards inclusiveness were further expanded through resettlement programs but especially through the unique private sponsorship program for refugees. Since 1867, immigration has been central to Canadian development and immigrants have been the main driver of population growth. In 2022, the total population amounted to over 38 million, an increase of around 1.8% in one year. This increase was driven mainly by the influx of immigrants and non-permanent residents. They accounted for 70% of Canada's population growth (Statistics Canada, 2022).

The explanation of the decision-making processes in immigration policies as well as the function of the main political actors in society is based on classical system analysis theory (Easton, 1953). For this investigation, a political system is an entity of interaction in a society through which political decisions biding the society, are made (Easton, 1957, p. 385). Thus, the political system encompasses political institutions (government) and political processes that make political decisions based on society's demands and support (inputs). In return, the decisions (outputs) generate feedback which, in turn, affects further demands and support (Easton, 1957, p. 384).

This approach allows us to organise inquiry into policy formation. The main questions are asked:
1. How do inputs from society affect public policy on immigration?
2. How, in turn, do outputs of public policy affect society and subsequent demands?
3. How have inputs and outputs changed immigration policies over time?

Thus, the first part of the paper will focus on the evolution of Canadian policy highlighting factors (inputs and outputs) that affected current immigration policy. The second part will investigate the current pillars of Canadian immigration policy identifying the primary principles and values that shape this policy. The third and fourth parts will illustrate measures towards inclusiveness that accommodates immigrants.

The evolution of Canadian immigration policy

The federal government has been the key institution responsible for immigration regulation and implementation in Canada. Federal immigration policies have always been regarded as an important tool for influencing the demographic future and eco-

nomic growth of Canada, however, over the years, they have evolved to reflect the country's shifting needs. Since 1867, the federal parliament has introduced several immigration acts that have been supplemented by amendments and various Orders in Council which have reflected the governments' objectives based on economy, social structure, and demography. Six distinct phases of immigration policy can be identified (Wrońska, 2020, p. 206).

Territorial expansion was the main driver of the first phase of Canadian immigration policy that lasted until the outbreak of the Great Depression. The large-scale immigration policy aimed at the promotion of the settlement of the West. Canada actively encouraged the immigration of farmers and farm labourers not only from the British Isles and the United States but also from Continental Europe. Overall, between 1893 and 1913, over 2.5 million immigrants entered the country (Statistics Canada, 1917). Nevertheless, during the first phase, the immigration policy was ethnically selective and exclusionist towards certain nations, especially the Chinese.

The Great Depression and the Second World War influenced the second phase. The federal government not only limited the admission of immigrants, leaving a small opening for farmers, British subjects, and United States citizens with sufficient means to maintain themselves but also applied a strong anti-refugee stance. As a result, the ship St. Louis carrying Jewish refugees from Germany could not enter Canada in the spring of 1939.

The fostering of population and economic growth, while protecting the Anglo--Saxon character of the country were the main factors that shaped the third phase. Mackenzie King's government emphasised the need to foster the growth of the Canadian population through immigration while ensuring the careful selection of desirable immigrants. Overall, in the post-war period, the federal government primarily focused on attracting foreign labour from preferred nations in Europe with importance given to family ties, but also on assisting in the resettlement of displaced persons and refugees from Europe. Moreover, the government promoted a sovereign nation-building concept by introducing Canadian citizenship that came into effect on January 1, 1947 (Canadian Citizenship Act, 1946)[2]. It permitted residents of Canada to apply for citizenship regardless of their country of origin. The Act introduced *jus soli*, so persons born in Canada automatically obtained Canadian citizenship and offered a naturalisation procedure to those who had resided in Canada for five years, providing they were of good character and possessed knowledge of English or French.

The fourth phase commenced with the enactment of the Canadian Bill of Rights (1960) by the federal parliament. The act influenced the federal policy on immigration that gradually eliminated racial discrimination during the admission procedure. The new system established two admissible classes of immigrants: the unsponsored or selected immigrants with skills or money and the sponsored or unselected ones with close family members in Canada. In a White Paper on Immigration (White Paper, 1966), the federal government suggested further modifications to the process of selec-

---

[2]   Until January 1, 1947, a person born or naturalised in Canada was a British subject. The British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act ascribed citizenship to any persons born within British Dominions which included Canada.

tion of immigrants. There was no question whether Canada still needed immigrants, but the question was about the number, kind, and place of origin of immigrants. The existing sponsorship system was still ethnically selective favouring British subjects and Americans.

An Order in Council (1967) incorporated modifications outlined by the White Paper, thus the fifth phase of immigration policy commenced. The new rules established a points system for non-sponsored immigrants and allowed Canadians and permanent residents to sponsor a family member from any country. Non-sponsored applicants could be granted admission to Canada for permanent residence based on an assessment. The assessment considered several factors such as education and training, personal qualities, job prospects in the area of residence, level of occupational skills, age, arranged employment, knowledge of one of the official languages, and the presence of relatives in Canada. Furthermore, a foreigner who wanted to establish a business or retire in Canada could do so based on a separate evaluation. These regulations have opened a new path to immigration to Canada which was founded on objective criteria. They have been applied since that time.

As presented above, the points system proves that immigration was, is, and has been used as an economic policy tool in Canada (Green & Green, 2004, p. 120) The "open door" policy further continued with the announcement of the implementation of a multiculturalism policy with a bilingual framework by Prime Minister P.E. Trudeau on October 8, 1971. The announcement took into consideration the diverse social structure of Canadian society and offered accommodation to various cultures and ethnic groups. In other words, ethnic pluralism was recognised as the essence of Canadian identity and as a response to inclusionary immigration (Wrońska, 2020, p. 210).

The Immigration Act of 1976 further expanded the changes in the political approach toward immigration by spelling out its main objectives (Immigration Act, 1976). The objectives included support for immigration based on demographic and economic needs and free from discrimination, as well as family reunification and the protection of refugees and displaced persons. Three classes of admissible immigrants were recognised: a family class, an immigrant class selected based on the points system, and a refugee and displaced person class. Furthermore, the Act required the federal government to cooperate with the provinces in the planning, management, and setting of annual levels of immigration. The provisions of the Act enabled the government to adjust levels of immigration to market conditions, facilitated family reunifications, and provided for the protection of refugees. For example, due to the recession of the early 1980s, the government of Canada lowered the level of immigration. Then it was readjusted based on the market needs and fertility rate. Consequently, the level of inflow of immigrants jumped significantly. As Figure 1 shows, the number of immigrants has been changing per year. Since the 1990s, the number of immigrants has fluctuated between 200,000 to 300,000 per year.
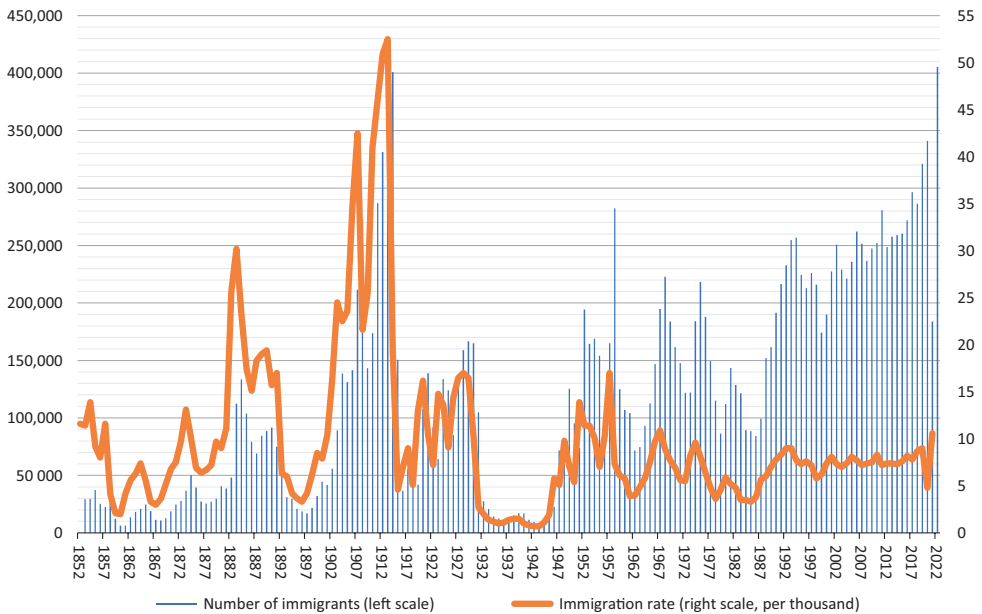
Figure 1. Number of immigrants and immigration rate 1852–2021

Sources: From 1852 to 2014, Statistics Canada (2016); from 2014 to 2021, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (2022)

Proactive immigration policy as a response to demographic and economic challenges

The current policy is based on the statement: "Into the 21st Century: A Strategy for Immigration and Citizenship. The Strategy called for immigration levels to be mandated at 1% of the population, changing the basis for the points system, and providing all provinces with the opportunity to choose several independent immigrants to meet their economic objectives" (CCIC, 1994). Since then, the provinces and territories have been active in supporting immigration management through provincial programs. Given the low fertility rate (1.4 birth per woman in 2021) and aging population, Canada is dependent on immigration for its population and labour force growth. Consequently, as Figure 1 shows the number of immigrants has been growing but the immigration level of 1% of the population was met in 2021. In 2021, Canada exceeded its immigration target by landing 405,303 new permanent residents. Today, over 8 million immigrants with permanent resident status live in Canada which consists of 23% of the population (Statistics Canada, 2022).

The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA, 2001) has regulated immigration issues since 2002. It relates to the 1970s perception that emphasised the importance of immigration by offering a coherent system of selection of immigrants related to economic needs, family reunification, and refugee protection with the promotion of integra-

tion. It also assures the facilitation of family reunification and the protection of persons with a validated fear of persecution. Overall, the Act provides specifies requirements for entering, remaining in Canada, and removing from the country. The IRPA distinguishes three general class categories of immigrants who can apply for permanent residency: economic immigration, family reunification, and refugees (see: Table 1).

Economic immigration is based on the ability to become independently established in Canada. Admission to Canada under the economic category depends on the immigrant potential to meet labour market needs or to make an investment. The selection criteria are based on the points system. The Economic Class includes three federal high skills programs: Federal Skilled Worker (FSK); Federal Skilled Trades (FST) and Canadian Experience Class (CEC)[3]; the special pilot immigration programme designed for the Atlantic Provinces; a special programme aimed at caregivers; the entrepreneurs' programme; the provincial nominations, and the Quebec programmes. The federal high skills programmes also offer the possibility to apply for permanent through the fast-track immigration pathway. The Express Entry program launched in 2015 is supposed to speed up the processing of applications based on labour-market needs. First, an applicant must register for one of the three high skills federal programmes, then selected applicants are accepted into the pool of candidates to be evaluated by the Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS). The candidates with the highest score get invitations to apply for permanent residence. The economic class of immigrants represents around 50–60% of all admissions to Canada. From 2016 to 2021, over half of the immigrants were admitted under the economic category. One-third were selected through skilled worker programmes and another one-third through the Provincial Nominee Program (Statistics Canada, 2022), which indicates the provincial involvement in the process of selection of immigrants. It is especially visible in Atlantic provinces where the share of immigrants raised significantly[4].

The second class consists of the close family member (spouse, common-law partner, child, parent, or other relatives) of a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident. It accounts for around 30% of admissions to Canada.

The third class comprises Convention refugees or displaced or persecuted persons. Usually, it accounts for around 10–20% of admissions. The number of permanent residents planned to be admitted under the Humanitarian Class depends on several factors. First, it provides for an exceptional way of application where each applicant is assessed individually based on a well-founded fear of returning to their country of origin, so it is difficult to estimate how many claims will be successful. Secondly, it is influenced by global conflicts and natural disasters that force people to flee their homes,

---

[3]   The Federal Skilled Worker is a programme for foreign experienced skilled workers who would like to stay in Canada. In order to apply they must have skilled work experience, language ability, and education. They are then selected based on a points system; Federal Skilled Trades is a programme for foreign skilled workers in trade; Canadian Experience Class is a programme for foreign skilled workers with Canadian work experience. The applicant must meet the required language level and have at least one year of skilled work experience (managerial, professional or technical jobs, and skilled trades) in Canada

[4]   There are four Canadian provinces located on the Atlantic coast: New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island.

Table 1. Classes of immigration, with persons who might qualify

Classes of immigration	Persons who might qualify
Economic Class	entrepreneurs; investors; the self-employed
Family Class	family members
Humanitarian Class	refugees; persons under humanitarian measures

Source: Based on IRPA

consequently, the number of refugees and displaced persons looking for Canada's protection fluctuates. Nevertheless, every year the Canadian government makes a commitment to resettle refugees and protected persons. Since 2018, Canada has been a leader in resettlement worldwide.

Therefore, immigration has remained the main driver of population growth. The 2021 Canada Census (Statistics Canada, 2021) indicates nearly one quarter (23%) of people in Canada are immigrants. This is the highest proportion of immigrants in the population in more than 150 years. Overall, over 1.8 million immigrants settled in Canada between 2016–2021. Figure 2 shows the number of immigrants that have settled in Canada since 2016 and planned admissions until 2025.
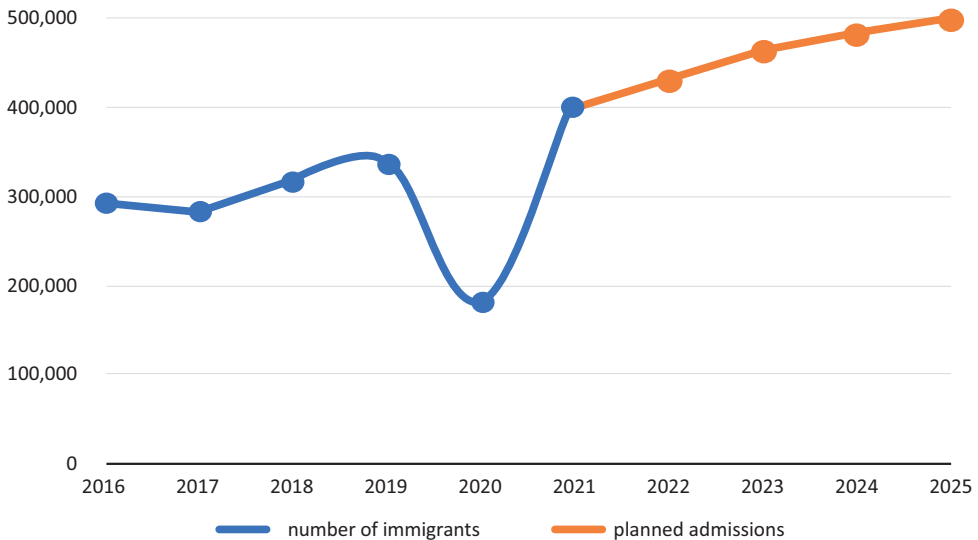

Figure 2. Number of immigrants between 2016–2021 and planned admissions until 2025
Source: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC, 2022)

Immigration is intended to increase in the years to come (see: Table 2). The latest population projection indicates immigrants could represent around 30% of the total population by 2041 (Statistics Canada, 2022).

Table 2. Immigration Levels Plan, 2022–2025

Admission Stream	2022	2023	2024	2025
Economic	241,850	266,210	281,135	301,250
Family	105,000	106,500	114,000	118,000
Refugee	76,545	76,305	74,115	72,750
Humanitarian	8,250	15,985	13,750	8,000
Total	431,000	465,000	485,000	500,000

As Table 3 shows Asia, with India as a leading country, remained the continent of birth for most recent immigrants (62.0%). In contrast, the share of recent immigrants from Europe continued to decline, falling from 61.6% in 1971 to 10.1% in 2021(Statistics Canada, 2022).

Table 3. Top 10 place of birth countries reported by immigrants, Canada, 2016 and 2021

Country	2016	2021
India	12.1%	18.6%
Philippines	15.6%	11.4%
China	10.6%	8.9%
Syria	2.5%	4.8%
Nigeria	1.4%	3.0%
United States	2.7%	3.0%
Pakistan	3.4%	2.7%
France	2.0%	2.0%
Iran	3.5%	1.9%
United Kingdom	2.0%	1.7%

Source: Statistics Canada (2016; 2021)

Inclusiveness measures: accommodation of immigrants as a response to ethnocultural diversity

The economic and social consequences of immigration are perceived differently, so countries apply diverse measures towards the process of immigrants' adaptation. By applying John W. Berry's (2005) model of acculturation that categorises individual adaptation strategies into different cultures, we can identify two major models of state interventions in liberal democracies to make the process of adaptation easier[5]. The first of them is the model of a state policy leading to assimilation. The second model is a policy leading to ethnic integration. The integration policy can only be "freely chosen" and successfully pursued by nondominant groups when the dominant society is open and inclusive in its orientation towards cultural diversity. Therefore, mutual accommodation is required for integration to be achieved when the nondominant group adopts the basic values of the host society while the host society adapts its state institutions to the needs of the new group. As Berry points out, this strategy can only be introduced in multicultural societies that accept the value of cultural diversity, which means that they demonstrate a low level of prejudice, accept different cultures, and identify with the larger society (Berry, 1997, p. 11). Arend Lijphard (1968) used the term "accommodation of differences" that emphasised a peaceful coexistence of differences within a common and shared entity. The concept of accommodation can be linked to the idea of mutual accommodation as one of the strategies of acculturation (Wrońska & Murdock, 2020, pp. 142–143). This concept can be found in Canadian multiculturalism, as one of the inclusiveness measures.

An announcement of the implementation of multiculturalism and bilingualism in Canada came with the proactive immigration policy at the end of the 1960s. The announcement took into consideration the diverse social structure of Canadian society and offered accommodation of various cultures and ethnic groups due to the new immigration policy. In other words, ethnic pluralism was recognised as the essence of Canadian identity and a response to inclusionary immigration. To a great extent, the Official Language Act of 1969 was an important tool leading to the accommodation of ethnocultural minorities in Canada by accepting French as the official language. This recognition can be seen as a further step towards political pluralism. Therefore, multiculturalism is rooted in the integrationist objective that was promoted in the late 1960s by the Liberal Party which valued ethnocultural diversity.

One can agree with Will Kymlicka (2007, p. 138) who proposes a multilayered explanation of Canadian multiculturalism. He distinguishes three dimensions of it as: fact, policy, and ethos. It is a fact that Canada has been a multicultural society since its inception with three founding ethnic groups: the Aboriginal people, the French, and the British. Ethnocultural diversity has expanded, and today, over 200 different ethnic groups live in Canada. Since the beginning of the 1970s, the Canadian government has responded to this fact as a strategy of immigrant inclusion by applying a policy that accommodates diversity in public institutions through a broad framework of legisla-

---

[5] Berry identified four categories of acculturation: assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalisation (Berry, 1997, p. 9).

tion and programmes. Commitment to multiculturalism is entrenched in the Constitution. Section 27 of the Constitution Act 1982, states that the Charter of Rights shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians. Additionally, the representation and equal treatment of ethnic groups within public institutions is assured by Section 15(2) of the Constitution Act 1982, which guarantees equality through affirmative action. The Canadian Multiculturalism Act defines multiculturalism as a policy reflecting the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society so that all citizens can keep their identities, take pride in their ancestry, and have a sense of belonging. It seems that this institutionalisation of multiculturalism influenced the development of Canadians' identity rooted in multiculturalism, so it can be also seen as a certain ethos.

In practical terms, the multicultural approach is on the one hand a response to ethnocultural diversity through official languages schools, ethnic weekends schools, and school curricula advocating cross-cultural understanding as well as mutual tolerance, and on the other, a means of compensating ethnocultural groups for the past exclusion through affirmative actions, employment, or pay equity legislation. Especially important is inclusive education. Schools teach tolerance and respect for each other regardless of ethnic origin and impose a zero-tolerance policy for any form of discrimination.

Data indicates that Canadians value multiculturalism as a defining characteristic of the country. The Environics Institute survey of 2015, showed that an increasing majority of Canadians identify multiculturalism as one of the most important symbols of the country's national identity (Environics, 2015, p. 2). Paul May study on how the term "multiculturalism" was perceived in Canadian newspapers between 2010–2020. indicated that unlike in other Western democracies, there was no increased criticism of the term "multiculturalism" over time in the Canadian public debate. Newspapers that supported multiculturalism have maintained such a positive view over time (May, 2022). Similarly, the Multiculturalism Policy Index, which monitors the evolution of multicultural policies across 21 Western countries, confirms the strong multicultural policy in Canada (MCP, 2020).

Additionally, as several other surveys indicate, the majority of Canadians support immigration policy. According to the Environics Institute (2021), in a survey conducted in September 2021, two-thirds of Canadians supported immigration levels. Most of them (80%) agreed that immigrants are beneficial for the economy and play an important role in the growth of the country's population. Another Environics Institute (Neuman, 2022) public opinion survey on Canadian attitudes about immigration and refugees, showed that regardless of the many disruptions and challenges facing Canadians in 2022, the public as a whole has never been more supportive of their country's welcoming path when it comes to immigration and refugees. Even as the country is now taking in more than 400,000 newcomers each year, seven in ten Canadians expressed support for current immigration levels – the largest majority recorded on Environics surveys in 45 years (Neuman, 2022). According to the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX)[6]. Canadian policy promotes immigration and creates favourable conditions for integration.

---

[6]   The Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX), is a tool that measures eight areas of integration policy in countries across six continents in 56 countries.

Canada scored the highest among the other traditional destination countries. Over the past five years, the country has improved policies on access to basic rights and equal opportunities. Canadian integration policies have shaped not only social attitudes toward immigrants based on tolerance and interaction but also immigrants' attitudes shaped upon a sense of belonging and participation. Under inclusive policies like Canada's, both immigrants and the public are more likely to interact together and think of each other as equals (Solano & Huddleson, 2020, p.72–73). Overall, Canada creates favourable conditions for family reunification, and education, with well-developed multicultural education, access to naturalisation as well as anti-discrimination laws and policies. Still, there is work in progress to offer better labour market mobility and faster access to a permanent residence permit. These findings are confirmed by the 2020 Survey of Canadians which demonstrates that in almost all the situations presented in the survey, immigrants are more likely than people born in Canada to say they feel more Canadian. This includes both ceremonial situations such as on Canada Day or when hearing the national anthem and situations related to the country's diversity. In a country where close to one in four people are foreign-born, it is reassuring from the point of view of integration that national symbols and celebrations appear more, and not less, likely to resonate with the newcomers (Environics Institute, 2020).

Recent data from Canadian public opinion about immigration and refugees has shown that regardless of the many disruptions and challenges facing Canadians today, the public as a whole has never been more supportive of their country's welcoming path when it comes to immigration and refugees. Even as the country is now taking in more than 400,000 newcomers each year, in 2022, seven in ten Canadians expressed support for the current immigration levels – the largest majority recorded on Environics surveys in 45 years (Neuman, 2022).

The naturalisation procedure is also a part of the response to ethnocultural diversity, which enables an individual to be a member of a political unit with the right to participate in the political processes. According to Bryan Turner, in citizenship, it may be possible to reconcile the claims for pluralism, the need for solidarity, and the contingent vagaries of historical change (Turner, 1993, p. 15). In Canada, the dynamics of the migration process interacted with political, economic, and social developments towards a more inclusive conception of citizenship. The law on Citizenship that was introduced in 1947, is based on the *jus soli* principle. *Jus sanguinis* is used when a child was born abroad to a Canadian parent or was adopted by a Canadian citizen. The naturalisation procedure is open to immigrants with permanent resident status, given the following conditions: having lived in Canada for 1,095 days during the five years before making the application, filing an income tax return if required under the Income Tax Act, passing a test on knowledge of Canada, a language test (English or French)[7], and paying the application fee (Citizenship Act, 1985). Several important changes to the Citizenship Act were introduced on June 19, 2017. These amendments liberalised the criteria for acquiring citizenship and repealed the revocation of citizenship provision for dual citizens brought by the Conservative Government

---

[7] The language requirements must be fulfilled by permanent residents between 18 and 54 years old.

in 2014[8]. Overall, due to the inclusive criteria of naturalisations and the intake of immigrants, Canada has one of the highest naturalisation rates among OECD countries (Wrońska, 2020, p. 214).

Inclusiveness measures: resettlement policy

Canadian resettlement policy is another indicator of inclusionary measures. The concept of resettlement refers to the transfer of recognised refugees to another state, which is willing to admit them. It is regarded as a strategic means and durable solution to provide international protection for refugees. Today, Canada is a world leader in resettlement programmes thanks to impressive public involvement in the process. According to the 2021 Census, there were 218,430 new refugees admitted as permanent residents from 2016 to 2021, and still present in Canada at the time of the Census (Statistics Canada, 2021). Over the decades, the countries of origins of refugees have changed considerably. In the 1980s most refugees came from Vietnam, Poland, and El Salvador. Then, in the next decade, Sri Lanka, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Iran accounted for the largest share of refugees admitted to Canada. In the first decade of the 21st century, refugees originated from Colombia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Due to the war in Syria since 2015, many Syrian refugees have settled in Canada. Overall, from 2016 to 2021, 60,795 Syrian-born exiles were admitted and living in Canada, accounting for over one-quarter (27.8%) of the new refugees in the country. Iraq (15,505), Eritrea (13,965), Afghanistan (9,490), and Pakistan (7,810) were the other most common countries of birth for new refugees from 2016 to 2021 (Statistics Canada, 2021).

The Canadian government's determination to succeed in refugee resettlement programmes would not have been possible without the overwhelming response of Canadian society, especially to the "boat people" and to the Syrian humanitarian crisis. About 60% of refugees who have arrived in Canada over the last decade have been admitted by the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) programme. The PSR is a unique programme through which Canadian residents can engage in the resettlement procedure.

The PSR programme is an initiative established in the mid-1970s to help, the aforementioned "boat people"[9].The Canadian government pledged to match whatever commitments the public made up to a total of 50,000 Indochinese refugees. Ultimately, between 1979 and 1982, more than 7,000 groups from all over Canada resettled Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian in 18 months, about 26,000 were government--assisted and 34,000 were privately sponsored (Adelman, 1982, p. 45)[10]. Additionally, private sponsoring played an important role in refugees' socioeconomic integration

---

[8]   The amendment of 2014 changed the concept of citizenship to permit those born in Canada to be excluded due to an offence. This issue became crucial during the 2015 federal election campaign because of this exclusionary concept.

[9]   Private sponsorship was formalised by the Immigration Act of 1976, 1, article 6.

[10]   Howard Adelman, a York University philosophy professor actively participated in organising sponsorship groups.

(Hou, 2020). With the Syrian refugee crisis, the "boat people" project was revitalised. Once again, Canadian communities responded to the crisis. Between November 2015 and January 2017, 14,274 privately sponsored Syrian refugees entered Canada (Statista, 2017). Overall, between 2016 and 2021, almost 90,000 refugees were admitted under the PSR (see: Table 4).

Table 4. Refugees admitted under the PSR between 2016 and 2021

Year	PSR
2016	18,360
2017	16,700
2018	18,670
2019	19.145
2020	5,314
2021	9,514

Source: Statistics Canada (2021)

Through the PSR programme, a Canadian citizen, or a permanent resident, as a member of an association or an organisation such as a Group of Five, Community Sponsor, or Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) can raise funds or use their income to support a resettlement of a refugee and her or his family for at least their first year in Canada (see: Table 5).

Table 5. Private Sponsoring of Refugees Structure

Name of the group	Members
Group of Five	five Canadian residents of the same community, where a refugee is expected to settle, pledges the sponsorship
Community Sponsor	an organisation, association, or corporation
Sponsorship Agreement Holder	an incorporated local, regional, or national organisation, located in Canada with the necessary financial capacity the signed an agreement to sponsor refugee with the Government of Canada

Source: Based on IRCC data

In the case of Group of Five, at least five Canadian residents can file an application for sponsorship to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) providing that the group commits to supporting a refugee and his family financially and emotionally for 12 months from the date of arrival. The members of the group must reside

in the community where the refugee is going to settle and must have financial resources to fulfil the terms of the sponsorship. The Community sponsor represents an organisation, an association, or a corporation that has the financial capacity to undertake the sponsorship in their community. Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) forms an incorporated organisation that is authorised by the Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada to manage the sponsorship of refugees. There are around 120 SAH units in Canada except in Quebec, that work with Constituent Groups such as churches, educational institutions, or local governments, and with individuals' co-sponsors (RSTP, 2015).

Generally, private sponsors are responsible for associated start-up costs, need to give up to six months of financial support, and need to give up to one year of social and emotional support. The support comes directly from groups of citizens centred on faith-based groups, neighbourhood associations, or even book clubs. The very important feature of this programme is the requirement that the resettled family live in the neighbourhood of the sponsor, thus it is easier to create bonds between them. As Barbara Treviranus and Michael Casasola emphasised the private sponsorship programme has been a flexible tool able to respond to both small- and large-scale resettlement needs (Treviranus & Casasola, 2003, p. 177). The refugees ready to resettle undergo health and security screening abroad. It is done before being issued a Canadian visa which authorises them to receive permanent resident status when they enter Canada.

Conclusion

James F. Hollifield argues that many states are trapped in a "liberal paradox" to maintain a competitive advantage (Hollifield, 2004, p. 885). Even as states become more dependent on trade and migration, they are likely to remain trapped in "a liberal paradox" for decades to come (Hollifield, 2004, p. 905).

This study shows that Canada to a large extent escaped this "paradox" by putting in place a coherent national regulatory scheme not only to manage immigration but also to accommodate immigrants. Canada not only accepts a large number of immigrants but also grants them rights. The public policy on immigration responded to the inputs from a society based on market and demographic needs by implementing proactive and points-based policy with a humanitarian dimension. Over the years, the outputs have affected society by changing the ethnocultural structure, which in turn influenced the implementation of inclusiveness measures. The measures include a zero-tolerance policy for any form of discrimination, affirmative actions, the promotion of cross-cultural understanding, or the naturalisation procedure. In particular, the private sponsorship programme that accounts for two-thirds of Canada's resettled refugees confirms the inclusiveness of Canadian society. It also shows that Canadians are very generous and considerate by welcoming refugees through various social channels.

In other words, ethnocultural pluralism was recognised as the essence of Canadian identity and a response to inclusionary immigration. Inclusiveness measures include the accommodation of immigrants' ethnocultural diversity and resettlement policies. As Berry points out, this strategy can only be introduced in multicultural societies

which accept the value of cultural diversity (Berry, 1997, p. 11). Data indicates that Canadians value multiculturalism as a defining characteristic of the country. It seems that Canada has emerged as a liberal state that creates a legal and regulatory environment in which immigrants are able to pursue individual strategies of acculturation.

The Canadian immigration system is not ideal. It is a selective system favouring high-skilled workers, but on the other hand, through various programmes, it allows the state to maintain the legal channels for temporary or permanent residents, and refugee resettlement.

References

Adelman, H. (1982). *Canada and the Indochinese refugees*. L.A. Weigl Educational Associates.

An Act Respecting Immigration to Canada, S.C. 25–26 Elizabeth II. (1976).

Asthana, R. (1996). Involuntary resettlement: survey of international experience. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *31*(24), 1468–1475. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4404268

Banting, K. & Kymlicka, W. (2013). Is there really a retreat from multiculturalism policies? New evidence from the multiculturalism policy index. *Comparative European Politics*, *11*(5), 577–598. https://doi.org/10.1057/cep.2013.12

Berry, J.W. (1997). Immigration, acculturation and adaptation. *Applied Psychology. An International Review*, *46*(1), 5–68.

Berry, J.W. (2005). Acculturation: living successfully in two cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *29*(6), 697–712.

Canada: Immigration Act, 1976–77, c. 52, s. 1. (1976). https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b5c60.html

Canadian Citizenship Act, S.C., c. 15. (1946).

Canadian Bill of Rights, S.C., c. 44. (1960).

Canadian Multiculturalism Act, R.S.C., c. 24. (1985).

CCIC. (1994). *Into 21ˢᵗ century: strategy for immigration and citizenship*. Minister of Supply and Services Canada.

Chin, C. & Reid, S. (2022). Discourses of multicultural acknowledgment in Canada: liberal and conservative, general and specific. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, *44*(2), 257–273. DOI: 10.1080/07256868.2022.2102595

Citizenship Act, R.S.C., c. C-29. (1985).

Easton, D. (1953). *The political system: an inquiry into the state of political science*. A.A. Knopf.

Easton, D. (1957). An approach to the analysis of political system. *World Politics*, *9*(3), 384–400.

Environics Institute. (2015). Focus Canada-Spring 2015 – Canadian public opinion about immigration and multiculturalism. http//www.environicsinstitute.org

Environics Institute. (2020). *Survey of Canadians. Report 3. Environics Institute For Survey Research*. https://www.environicsinstitute.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/confed-survey-2020–3-1-finalaa0c343e66484e41b30e6f91bd5b2446.pdf?sfvrsn=a3447a39_0

Environics Institute. (2021). Focus Canada – Fall 2021. Canadian public opinion about immigration and refugees. https://www.environicsinstitute.org/docs/default-source/project-documents/focus-canada-fall-2021/focus-canada-fall-2021---canadian-public-opinion-about-immigration-refugees---final-report.pdf?sfvrsn=977f51d4_2

Hollifield, J.F. (2004.) The emerging migration state. *The International Migration Review, 38*(3), 885–912.

Hou, F. (2020). The resettlement of Vietnamese refugees across Canada over three decades. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *47*(21), 4817–4834. DOI: 10.1080/1369183X.2020.1724412

Goodwin, E. (1993). A conceptual theory of relocation. In W. Fred Van Raaij, G.J. Bamossy (eds), *E – European advances in consumer research, volume 1.* (366–370). Association for Consumer Research.

Green, A.G. & Green, D. (2004). The goals of Canada's immigration policy: a historical perspective. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, *13*(1), 102–139.

Immigration Regulations, Order-in-Council, P.C. 1967–1616. (1967). Canada Privy Council.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. (2022). *2022 annual report to Parliament.* https: //www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/annual-report-parliament-immigration-2022.html

IRPA. (2001). *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, *S.C. 2001. c. 27*.

Kymlicka, W. (2007). Disentangling the debate. In J. Gross Stein, *Uneasy partners: multiculturalism and rights in Canada*. (137–156). Wilfrid University Press.

Kymlicka, W. (2021).The precarious resilience of multiculturalism in Canada. *American Review of Canadian Studies*, *51*(1), 122–142. DOI: 10.1080/02722011.2021.1878544

Lijphard, A. (1968). *The politics of accommodation. Pluralism and democracy in the Netherlands*. University of California Press.

Marchand, J. (1966). White Paper on immigration. Queen's printer and controller of stationery. https://pier21.ca/research/immigration-history/white-paper-on-immigration-1966

May, P. (2022). Canada: the standard bearer of multiculturalism in the world? An analysis of the Canadian public debate on multiculturalism (2010–2020). *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *45*(10), 1939–1960, DOI:10.1080/01419870.2021.1977366

MCP. (2020). *Multiculturalism policies in contemporary democracies*. Queens University. https://www.queensu.ca/mcp/

Neuman, K. (2022). *Canadian public opinion about immigration and refugees – Fall 2022*. Environics Institute. https://www.environicsinstitute.org/projects/project-details/canadian-public-opinion-about-immigration-and-refugees---fall-2022

RSTP. (2015). *Best practices vol. VI – Sponsorship Agremeet Holders working with Constituent Groups and Co-sponsors*. http://www.rstp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Best-Practice-Vol-4-Knowledge-Sharing-Document.pdf

Solano, G. & Huddleson, T. (2020). Migrant integration index. https://www.migpolgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Solano-Giacomo-Huddleston-Thomas-2020-Migrant-Integration-Policy-Index-2020.pdf

Statista. (2017). *Number of Syrian refugees in Canada as of January 29, 2017, by entrance category*. https://www.statista.com/statistics/555329/number-of-syrian-refugees-in-canada-as-of-by-entrance-category/

Statistics Canada. (1917). *Numbers of immigrant arrivals in Canada by fiscal year and place of origin, 1897 to 1917*. https://www65.statcan.gc.ca/acyb02/1917/acyb02_19170112-eng.htm

Statistics Canada. (2016). *150 years of immigration in Canada*. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11–630-x/11–630-x2016006-eng.htm

Statistics Canada. (2021). Census of population. https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/index-eng.cfm

Statistics Canada. (2022). Immigrants make up the largest share of the population in over 150 years and continue to shape who we are as Canadians. *The Daily*. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/221026/dq221026a-eng.htm

Westlake, D. (2020). Following the Right: Left and Right Parties. Influence over multiculturalism. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, *53*(1), 171–188. DOI:10.1017/S0008423919001021

Winter, E. (2015). Rethinking multiculturalism after its "retreat": lessons from Canada. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *59*(6), 637–657. https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764214566495

Wrońska, I. (2020). The provinces and Canadian immigration policy. Evolution and trends. In M. Gabryś, M. Marczuk-Karbownik, M. Paluszkiewicz-Misiaczek (eds.), *Canadian political, social and historical (re)visions in 20ᵗʰ and 21ˢᵗ century*. (205–226). Peter Lang.

Wrońska, I. & Murdock, E. (2020). Accommodation of non-nationals in Luxembourg. In A. Kłos, J. Misiuna, M. Pachocka, A. Szczerba-Zawada (eds.), *Connecting the European Union of shared aims, freedoms, values and responsibilities. European Union and its values: freedom, solidarity, democracy*. Polish European Community Studies Association (PECSA) – Cedewu.

Treviranus, B. & Casasola, M. (2003). Canada's private sponsorship of refugees program: A practitioners perspective of its past and future. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, *4*, 177–202. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-003-1032-0

Turner, B.S. (1993). *Citizenship and social theory*. Sage.