

A COLOUR-BLIND POLICY

By the 1960s, some of the old prejudices that had shaped Canadian immigration and citizenship were fading. In 1962, Conservative Minister of Immigration Ellen Fairclough—Canada's first female Cabinet minister—eliminated most of the entrance regulations that discriminated on the basis of race and country of origin. Most immigrants to Canada, however, continued to be Europeans (see Figure 2.6).

In 1976, Canada created different admission categories. It streamlined the process for sponsoring (supporting) family members and created a **points system** for independent applicants. The system awarded applicants points for knowing English or French and for level of education and job skills. The separate category for refugees was also created.

Removing racial regulations and introducing the new points system led for the first time to major immigration from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin America. Newcomers settled mainly in Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal, making those cities vibrant centres of **multi-culturalism**. By the end of the 20th century, Canada had also become a major refugee-receiving country, admitting thousands of refugees from Bosnia, Kosovo, Rwanda, and other places.

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Canada accepted 60,000 Vietnamese refugees in 1979–1980, in the aftermath of the Vietnam War (1965–1973). It also accepted some 30,000 young Americans who fled to Canada to avoid being forced to fight during the war, which Canada did not support.

	Period of Immigration									
	Before 1961		1961–1970		1971–1980		1981–1990		1991–2001*	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total immigrants	894,465	100.0	745,565	100.0	936,275	100.0	1,041,495	100.0	1,830,680	100.0
United States	34,805	3.9	46,880	6.3	62,835	6.7	41,965	4.0	51,440	2.8
Europe	809,330	90.5	515,675	69.2	338,520	36.2	266,185	25.6	357,845	19.5
Asia	28,850	3.2	90,420	12.1	311,960	33.3	491,720	47.2	1,066,230	58.2
Africa	4,635	0.5	23,830	3.2	54,655	5.8	59,715	5.7	139,770	7.6
Caribbean, Central and South America	12,895	1.4	59,895	8.0	154,395	16.5	171,495	16.5	200,010	10.9
Oceania and other countries	3,950	0.4	8,865	1.2	13,910	1.5	10,415	1.0	15,385	0.8

* Includes data up to May 15, 2001

FIGURE 2.6 Place of birth by period of immigration, Canada, 2001. Source: Statistics Canada, www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/products/analytic/companion/etoimm/tables/canada/period.cfm