

## Census 2016: Immigration and Language in BC

*This edition of Migration Matters brings together the most relevant information from the 2016 Census for Settlement and Language Service Provider Organizations in BC. It also provides guidance on how to access community-specific information.*

### Introduction

The 2016 Census of Population created a detailed statistical portrait of Canada through mandatory short-form and long-form questionnaires. Data related to various themes is released over a period of several months.<sup>1</sup>

### Linguistic Diversity in BC

Around 1 in 3 (29.6%) of BC residents had a mother tongue other than English or French.<sup>2</sup> This is the second highest proportion in Canada, after Nunavut, and is above the Canadian average of 22.9%.

Punjabi, Cantonese, and Mandarin are the most common immigrant language mother tongues in BC, with native speakers of each language representing between 4 and 5% of all British Columbians.<sup>3</sup>

In Canada, more than half (54.6%) of people whose mother tongue is not English or French speak both their mother tongue *and* another language at home—usually English or French. 28% speak only their mother tongue, and 17.4% do not speak their mother tongue at home.<sup>4</sup> Only 3.3% of BC residents have no knowledge of English.<sup>5</sup>

Top 10 Immigrant Language Mother Tongues in BC		
	Percent of immigrant languages	Percent of total population
Punjabi (Panjabi)	15.9	4.7
Cantonese	15	4.4
Mandarin	14.2	4.2
Tagalog (Pilipino, Filipino)	6.9	2
German	5.2	1.5
Korean	4	1.2
Spanish	3.8	1.1
Persian (Farsi)	3.4	1
Hindi	2.3	0.7
Vietnamese	2.2	0.6

In Canada outside Quebec, 98.6% of workers report using English at least on a regular basis, and about 90% of workers use only English. 8.9% of workers in BC report using an “other” language at work (including those who use it alongside English).<sup>6</sup>

### Immigration to BC

Top 11 Communities with Large Immigrant Populations in BC		
	Percent of population immigrants	Number of immigrants
Vancouver	40.8	989,540
Abbotsford - Mission	24.8	43,780
Parksville	18.5	5,175
Victoria	18.3	65,615
Squamish	18.2	3,545
Nanaimo	14.6	14,915
Kelowna	13.9	26,450
Penticton	13.6	5,715
Duncan	13.5	5,810
Chilliwack	13.4	13,265
Powell River	13.4	2,190

28.3% of BC residents were immigrants, giving BC the second highest proportion of immigrants in Canada, after Ontario.<sup>7</sup> The majority (61.6%) of newcomers in BC are established immigrants, having arrived before 2001.<sup>8</sup> In addition to a large population of newcomers, BC also has a large population of second generation immigrants—22.9% of BC residents.<sup>9</sup>

Over half (56.3%) of BC’s immigrants came through the Economic Class, including both principal applicants and dependents. Around a third of immigrants came through the family class, and 8.6% came as refugees.<sup>10</sup>

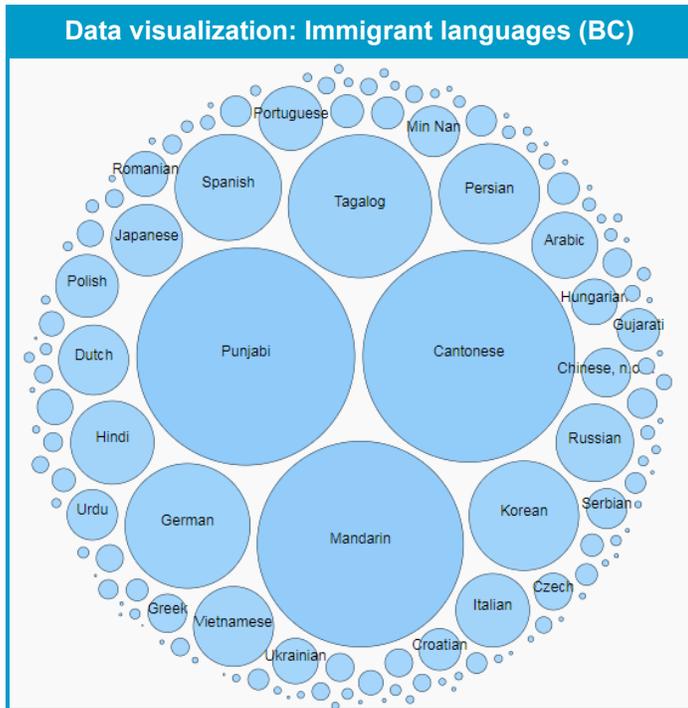
The five most common countries of origin for recent immigrants (2011-2016) are China, India, Philippines, Iran, and South Korea.<sup>11</sup>

### References

- <sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada (2017). [Census of Population](#).
- <sup>2,5</sup> Statistics Canada (2017). [Language \(including language of work\)](#). Focus on Geography Series, 2016 Census.
- <sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada (2017). [Proportion of mother tongue responses for various regions in Canada, 2016 Census](#).
- <sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada (2017). [Linguistic diversity and multilingualism in Canadian homes](#). Census in Brief.
- <sup>6</sup> Statistics Canada (2017). [Languages used in the workplace in Canada](#). Census in Brief.
- <sup>8</sup> Statistics Canada (2017). [Immigrant status and period of immigration. % distribution 2016, both sexes, age \(total\), Canada, provinces and territories, 2016 Census – 25% Sample data](#). Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity Highlight Tables.
- <sup>7,9,10,11</sup> Statistics Canada (2017). [Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity](#). Focus on Geography Series, 2016 Census.

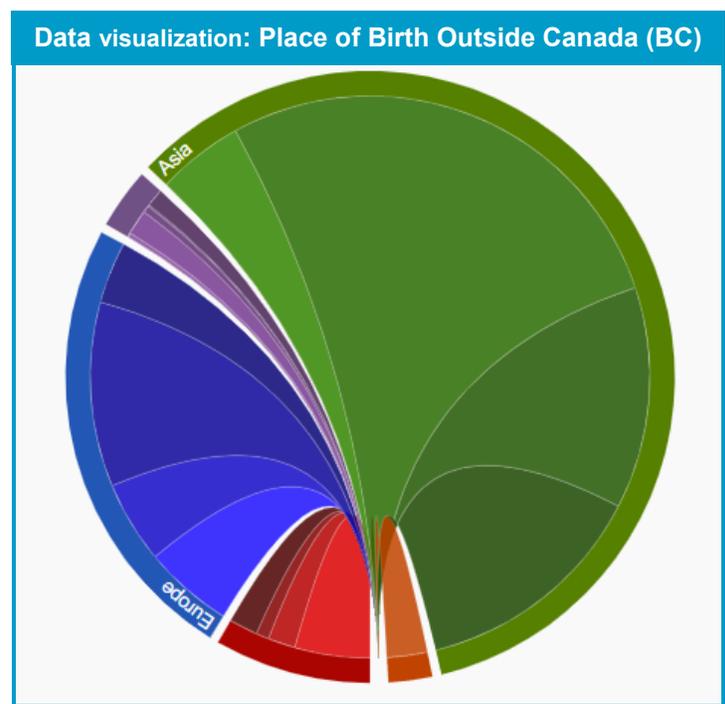
## Data visualization tools from Statistics Canada

The [proportion of mother tongue responses for various regions in Canada](#) data visualization represents the numbers of speakers for different languages, broken down by province/territory, census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA). This data visualization is available for 26 communities in BC.<sup>12</sup>



Source: Statistics Canada 2017

The [immigrant population by selected places of birth, admission category and period of immigration](#) data visualization represents the places of birth of immigrants to Canada, broken down by province/territory or CMA. This data visualization is available for 4 CMAs in BC: Kelowna, Abbotsford-Mission, Vancouver, and Victoria.<sup>13</sup>



Source: Statistics Canada 2017

### Accessing BC's community-level data from the 2016 Census

Because the census collects information from every household in Canada, a wide variety of information is available for communities of various sizes. The following links allow users to access data for specific communities:

- [Focus on Geography Series](#): 26 census agglomerations (CA) or census metropolitan areas (CMA) in BC
- [Census Profiles](#): Allows searching for data by postal code, place name, and other methods
- [Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity Highlight Tables](#) and [Language Highlight Tables](#): Tables are available at CA, CMA, census divisions, and census subdivisions with more than 5,000 people.
- The [Immigrant Language](#) and [Place of Birth](#) data visualizations above are available for multiple communities in BC
- The [Census Program Data Viewer](#) allows users to choose the geographic level of analysis

### Additional Census 2016 links

#### Reports

- [Linguistic integration of immigrants and official language populations in Canada](#)
- [Children with an immigrant background: Bridging cultures](#)
- [Ethnic and cultural origins of Canadians: Portrait of a rich heritage](#)
- [Languages used in the Workplace in Canada](#)

#### Infographics

- [Immigrant languages in Canada](#)
- [Gateways to immigration in Canada](#)
- [Immigrant population in Canada](#)

#### Data Definitions

- [Languages Reference Guide](#)
- [Census 2016 Dictionary: Language Index](#)
- [Census 2016 Dictionary: Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity Index](#)

### References

<sup>12</sup> Statistics Canada (2017). [Proportion of mother tongue responses for various regions in Canada, 2016 Census.](#)

<sup>13</sup> Statistics Canada (2017). [Immigrant population by selected places of birth, admission category and period of immigration, Canada, provinces and territories, census metropolitan areas and areas outside of census metropolitan areas, 2016 Census.](#)

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