

# 2021 Canadian Census

## A look at religious and ethnic diversity in Canada

### INTRODUCTION

The 2021 Census was unlike its predecessors in many ways. The most prominent change was the way in which ethnic and cultural origin data was collected.

Although these changes make it unsuitable for comparison against previous census, the 2021 Census nevertheless provides an opportunity for people to represent their unique identity far more than ever before.

#### Reference

Statistics Canada. (2022). *The Daily — The Canadian census: A rich portrait of the country's religious and ethnocultural diversity.*

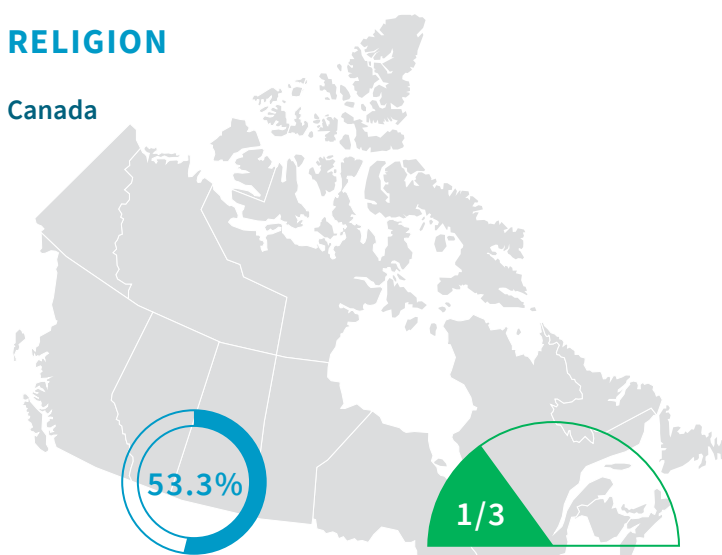
Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/221026/dq221026b-eng.htm>

#### Changes made to the 2021 Census:

1. The 2021 Census included more than 450 ethnic and cultural origins, 200 birthplaces, 100 religions and 450 languages, which is more details on ethnocultural and religious origins than ever before.
2. Respondents were able to report more than one ancestral ethnic or cultural origin.
3. Growing use of electronic questionnaires in 2021.
4. The original list of 28 examples of ethnic and cultural origins was replaced with a link to 500 examples.
5. In 2016, "Canadian" was first in a list of 28 examples included directly on the questionnaire, but in 2021, it was just one example on a list of more than 500.

### RELIGION

#### Canada



**OF CANADIAN POPULATION = CHRISTIAN AFFILIATION**  
19.3 million

a decrease from 67.3% in 2011 and 77.1% in 2001

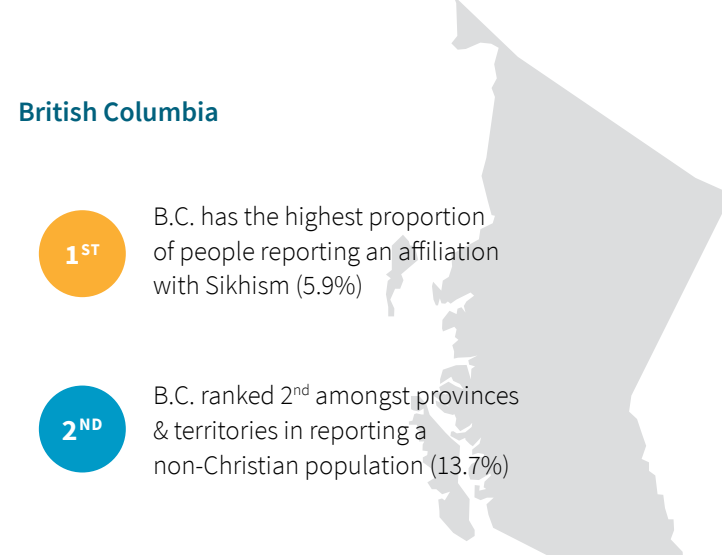
**OF CANADIAN POPULATION = NO RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION**  
12.6 million

an increase from 16.5% in 2011 → 23.9% in 2011 → 34.6% in 2021

→ Islam was the 2nd most reported religious affiliation in 2021 (1.8 million), increasing from 2.0% in 2001 to 4.9% in 2021

→ Major religions of immigrants include Buddhism (68.9%), Hinduism (62.9%), Sikhism (53.8%) and Islam (63.1%)

#### British Columbia



**1<sup>ST</sup>** B.C. has the highest proportion of people reporting an affiliation with Sikhism (5.9%)

**2<sup>ND</sup>** B.C. ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> amongst provinces & territories in reporting a non-Christian population (13.7%)

**52.1%** OF B.C.'S POPULATION REPORTED NO RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION compared to 34.6% of Canada's population

→ B.C. and Ontario contain the largest population percentage that reported a religious affiliation other than Christian

→ The Christian religion was predominant in all of the other provinces & territories except for B.C. and Yukon

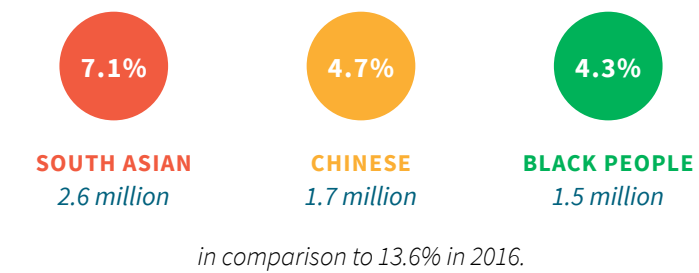
### RACIALIZED GROUPS IN CANADA

The census collects data on the following main racialized groups: South Asian, Chinese, Black, Filipino, Arab, Latin American, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Korean and Japanese populations.



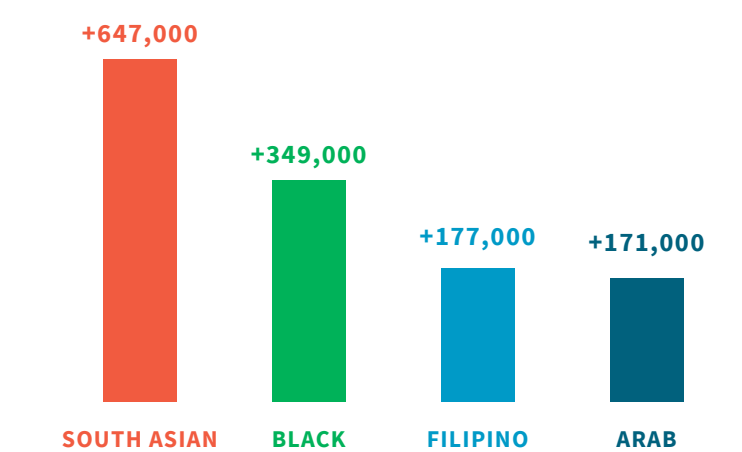
1 out of 4 people are a part of a racialized group.

#### 3 racialized groups made up 16.1% of Canada's population



**Other main racialized groups included:** Filipino (960,000 / 2.6%), Arab (690,000 / 1.9%), Latin American (580,000 / 1.6%), Southeast Asian (390,000 / 1.1%), West Asian (360,000 / 1.0%), Korean (220,000 / 0.6%) and Japanese (99,000 or 0.3%).

#### The following groups saw the biggest increases from 2016–2021



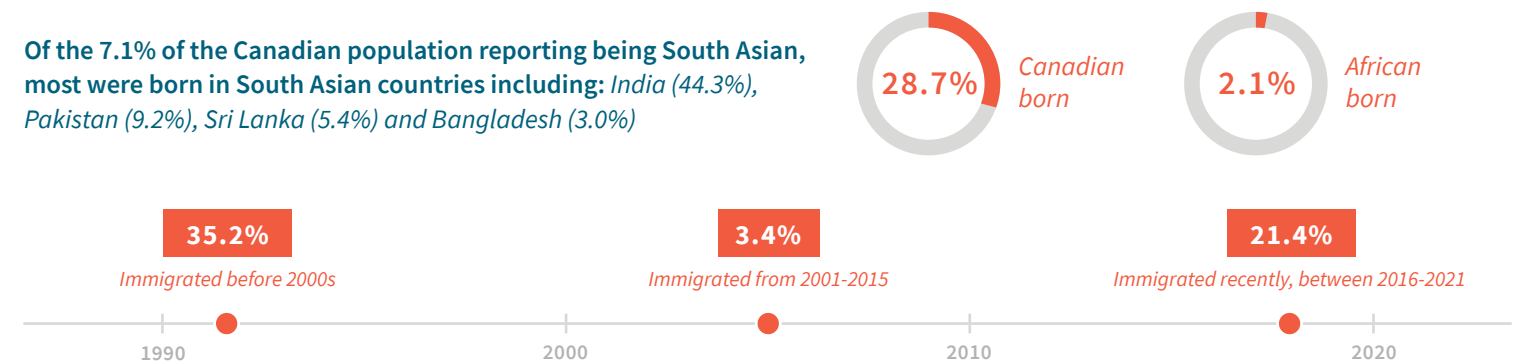
People who reported more than one racialized group made up 0.9% of the Canadian population in 2021

Immigration represents the main driver of population growth for racialized groups

Racialized groups represented 69.3% of the immigrant population in 2021 (83% of immigrants admitted since 2016)

### GENERATIONAL MIGRATION

Of the 7.1% of the Canadian population reporting being South Asian, most were born in South Asian countries including: India (44.3%), Pakistan (9.2%), Sri Lanka (5.4%) and Bangladesh (3.0%)



- In the 2021 census, of the 1.7 million people who indicated being Chinese, 86.6% reported Chinese as their ethnic or cultural origin as well as no religious affiliation (71.7%)
- 59.2% of the Japanese group reported being born in Canada, showing a longer history of immigration
- 1.5 million people reported identifying as Black, with Canada as the main country of birth (40.9%)

#### Filipinos show a more recent history of Canadian immigration

- 72.6% immigrated to Canada in the last 20 years
- 73.9% of individuals in the Filipino group were born in the Philippines and 24.7% were born in Canada