

Policies, politics and people: US and Canadian Immigration Policies from 1960 to the Present

By

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A thesis

submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Education

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

ORILLIA, ONTARIO

September 2025

Abstract

My motivation for writing a thesis on Canadian and US immigration policies stems from my experience as an immigrant from Iran, navigating the Canadian immigration landscape and encountering several effects of Canadian immigration policies that could help new immigrants make informed migration decisions. This thesis critically investigates the evolution of immigration policies in the United States and Canada from the 1960s to the present, with a particular emphasis on their economic, social, and cultural dimensions. It seeks to illuminate how such policies simultaneously reflect and construct national narratives of belonging. In the United States, immigration has been alternately embraced and curtailed by shifting economic imperatives and the rise of populist discourses. In contrast, Canada has employed immigration as a strategic mechanism to attract economically desirable migrants, although tensions persist between its humanitarian commitments and neoliberal policy frameworks. Through a comparative analysis, this study demonstrates that these dynamics profoundly shape not only national trajectories but also the lived experiences of immigrants—among them the author, a diasporic Iranian-Canadian educator. Employing an autoethnographic methodology, the research foregrounds the mediating role of educators and educational institutions in negotiating the boundaries between inclusion and exclusion. As such, it contributes meaningfully to scholarship within faculties of education and to broader conversations on identity and belonging in multicultural societies. The findings yield critical insights for policymakers, teacher educators, and scholars concerned with the intersections of migration, education, and social integration.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I dedicate this thesis to four individuals whose unwavering support and profound influence have shaped both my academic journey and my life.

To my father, Vajihollah Hosseinpour, whose courage as an immigrant and resilience in the face of hardship continue to inspire me every day. It is because of his sacrifices that I have had the privilege of building a life in a new country, learning a second language, and pursuing higher education. Every word of this thesis stands as a testament to the foundation he laid for me.

To my son, Bardia Abrishami Shirazi, who has been my first friend and constant companion since our first day of immigration to Canada, and who endured every challenge of this journey alongside me. May this thesis help illuminate your path as you pursue your goals in Canada, a country of opportunity.

To Dr. Seth Agbo, my mentor and guide since my undergraduate studies. Your wisdom, encouragement, and genuine care have shaped my academic journey in profound ways. You were the one who encouraged me to pursue a Master of Education and who generously accepted the role of my supervisor, offering your guidance and support from the very beginning. You devoted significant time and care to strengthening my confidence as a scholar, particularly during moments of uncertainty, and consistently believed in my potential. Beyond your role as a supervisor, you have also been a trusted friend, offering steady support through both academic and personal challenges. Your mentorship and friendship have deeply influenced my growth as an educator, researcher, and individual, and I remain profoundly grateful for your trust, patience, and unwavering commitment to my success.

I would also like to sincerely acknowledge my committee member, Dr. Michael Hoechsmann, whose steadfast support, thoughtful guidance, and continued encouragement have been instrumental throughout my academic journey. I am deeply grateful for your confidence in my work and for the generosity with which you have shared your time, insight, and encouragement. I owe much of my academic and professional success in Canada to you. At a critical moment, when admission timelines had nearly passed, you took the time to carefully review my application to the Bachelor of Education program and chose to place your trust in me. That decision marked a turning point in my life and opened the door to the path I now walk as an educator and scholar. Your belief in my potential, especially at such a pivotal moment, continues to guide and motivate me, and I carry that gratitude with me in all that I do.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Immigration is a development that stimulates the growth of various cultural and economic aspects in both sending and receiving countries (Hermele, 2021). Both receiving countries can benefit from immigrants' abilities and expertise to improve various aspects of their development, such as the economic dimension, and sending countries can use the experiences of these people in the development of their countries. Therefore, countries, particularly those receiving immigrants from developing countries, enact immigration laws and policies that foster economic growth and mitigate the collateral losses associated with accepting immigrants from these countries (Batalov, 2024). Consequently, nearly one in ten residents of advanced industrialized countries is now an immigrant; international immigration has become a fundamental driver of social, economic, and political change (Cornelius & Rosenblum, 2005; OECD, 2024; UN, 2024).

The United States and Canada are among the countries that have faced a flood of immigrants. These countries determine immigration laws and policies each year based on their economic, cultural, social, security, and military situations, which can facilitate or prohibit immigration. These immigrant-receiving countries, especially the United States and Canada, are similar in that they determine immigration laws based on their own national interests. Therefore, when two countries realize that certain immigrants boost their country's economic growth, they enact laws and policies that facilitate immigration (Bloemraad, 2012). We investigate the following similarities and differences in the immigration policies of these two countries, which have been major receiving countries since the 1960s. They use different immigration policies to elevate themselves economically, maintain their position in the global competition, and show a good pattern of dealing with immigrants from different cultures. The contribution of immigration to Canada's population growth has been considerable since the end of World War II. Between 1946 and 1971, Canada accepted more than 3 million

immigrants, of whom 2.3 million were still residents at the time of the census (Richmond, 1976). But over the past 50 years, the immigrant population in Canada has steadily increased, rising from approximately 3.3 million in 1971 to more than 8.3 million in 2021. This trend indicates that the number of immigrants in Canada has more than doubled during this period (Statistics Canada, 2021). Canada, with a large immigrant population, has a much more open and optimistic approach to immigration than the United States. Likewise, Canada has produced its national identity through immigrants of various nationalities. The government's multicultural policies, anti-discrimination laws, and programs that encourage public-private partnerships also support this national identity. Of course, these policies are for the economic growth of the society rather than the induction of cultural beliefs (Bloemraad, 2012). Thus, prior racial, ethnic, and geographic discrimination was replaced before February 1974 by reliance on educational and occupational qualifications (Parai, 1975). The growing popularity of neoliberalism and its global acceptance in the 1970s led to considerable changes across all aspects of Canada's governance and structure, including immigration during the 1980s and 1990s. The adoption of neoliberal policies in pursuit of this change turned the whole system into one that paid less attention to social and humanitarian aspects governed by economic laws (Ali, 2014). This program has undergone significant changes since July 2012, and the situation of immigrants improved, especially workers and skilled workers, so that their population doubled in 2004 (Ali, 2014). We can say that the majority of new permanent immigrants in the first decade of the 21st century in Canada, i.e., 59%, were economic immigrants, and 11% were refugees because they were subject to strict immigration laws (Bloemraad, 2012). Seemingly, the future policy will also depend, from 2014 onwards, on the society's existing and evolving goals and on anticipated and unexpected events within and outside the country. Expectedly, total annual immigration inflows will likely be about the same as in the past, and perhaps lower, as immigration from Canada to the United States has

recently declined. It means that less immigration is required to increase a determined labor force (Ali, 2014).

Early immigrants to the colonial United States—from England, France, Germany, and other northwestern European countries—were seeking economic opportunity and political freedom. However, they often relied on the labor of enslaved Africans who worked the land they took from Native Americans (Walter & Ewing, 2012). There were no centralized regulations for immigration to the Northern part of the United States during the colonial era. Only a few laws, even after the end of the United States Revolution in 1783, governed white residency for two years. Simultaneously, this territory was also expanding with the arrival of European immigrants and enslaved Africans. The United States acquired Florida from Spain in 1819. The annexation of Texas in 1845 precipitated the war with Mexico, and in 1848, Mexico ceded almost two-fifths of its territory to the United States. Consequently, families and communities that had been part of Mexico for generations suddenly found themselves in the United States. This westward expansion, along with the discovery of gold in California in 1848, created a great demand for workers and new immigrants.

Meanwhile, high levels of immigration from Europe to the United States were triggered by crop failures in Germany during the 1840s, the Great Potato Famine in Ireland (1845-1849), and the economic, social, and political turmoil caused by industrialization throughout Europe. The US government actively encouraged immigration to populate the newly acquired Western United States. For example, the Homestead Act of 1862 granted free tracts of land in the West to settlers, both immigrants and native-born, to live on and develop the land for at least five years. Immigrants from southeastern Europe and from China settled there after the Civil War ended in 1865. Therefore, many immigrants came to the United States to take advantage of these new opportunities and work in the railroad, steel, oil, and other industries; approximately 6.6 million immigrants entered the United States during the

1840s, 50s, and 60s. The US laid down a growing list of immigration laws over the following decades, increasingly focusing on federal control over immigration, paving the way for exclusion from the US, and intensifying racial (and religious) prejudices against Asians and Southeast Europeans. Congress passed the Anarchist Exclusion Act in 1903, which banned anarchists or other political extremists from entering the United States. The Quota Act of 1921 was the first immigration law. It imposed numerical limits on immigration, limiting total immigration to about 350,000 per year and limiting immigration from any particular country to 3% of the number of people of that descent living in the United States in 1910. A separate act in 1924 established the United States Border Patrol. Immigration laws were characterized by contradictory tendencies during World War II and the first years of the Cold War: the expansion of political grounds for exclusion and the intensification of anti-Japanese sentiment; the easing of restrictions on other Asian immigrants; and an increase in humanitarian refugee policies. Public fears and concerns, more than sound public policy, shape the outlines of the US immigration system. For example, the US economy has been increasingly intertwined with Mexico's for more than a century and has relied more on Mexican workers.

Notwithstanding, US immigration laws have tended to place more legal restrictions on immigration from Mexico over the past quarter-century (Walter & Ewing, 2012). Likewise, Congress limited, in 1790, naturalization to "whites". However, the ethnic composition of immigrants changed after the passage of the National Constitution Act; increased immigration from Asia, Africa, the West Indies, and other parts of the United States changed the ethnic composition of the United States (Ludden, 2006). The Immigration Control and Reform Act was passed in 1986, which led to an increase in immigrants under certain conditions (Walter & Ewing, 2012). The federal government implemented, after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, some law enforcement actions that targeted individuals of certain

nationalities (Muslims, Arabs, and South Asians) under national security concerns.

Legislative efforts to comprehensively reform the US immigration system by adapting it to the immigration-driving economic and social realities failed in 2006 and 2007.

Therefore, many state and local governments are implementing or considering proposals to turn police officers into “crackdowns“ on illegal immigration, or those who provide them with jobs or housing (Divados,2019). In short, the United States is as conflicted as ever about its historical identity as a nation of immigrants (Walter & Ewing, 2012). As Divados (2019) shows, stricter immigration controls also have a direct impact on the US and Mexican labor markets, especially on low-skilled workers, because they decrease the number of illegal workers and increase the supply of low-skilled workers in Mexico. Consequently, the illegal wage rate increases in the United States, but the skilled wage rate decreases in Mexico. However, legal immigration policies since 2020, both temporary and permanent, have outpaced the decline that began in 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic and the Trump administration’s restrictive policies and rhetoric.

Likewise, the nativist populist policies of the Trump administration during its second term were a continuation of those from the first term and would have a significant impact on immigration policy (Nagel, 2025). The nativist populist policies could lead to the mass deportation of immigrants and create harsh conditions for resident immigrants, making entry into the country as an immigrant increasingly complex (Nagel, 2025). However, such a situation does not exist in Canada; for Canada has always regarded its economic growth as indebted to immigrants, and immigration has contributed to its economic development and progress. Therefore, there is no sign of nativist populist policies in this country (Gordon, 2019). Nevertheless, in the past year, as a migrant teacher in Canada, the criteria for selection and access to significant jobs were being native-born and white. This was because, as neoliberalism's influence in higher education increased during those years, the extent to

which anti-oppressive education challenged the existing order declined. Despite universities' efforts to portray themselves as equity-conscious institutions by adopting anti-oppressive language in their policy documents, such strategies often equated benevolent rhetoric with equitable practice. They thereby hindered meaningful change (Wagner & Yee, 2011). However, Canada is now as a multicultural country (Callaghan, 2023), and anti-oppressive and equity-based educational policies have been adopted in its education system—particularly in the Toronto district (Wagner & Yee, 2011). As a result, non-native-born and racialized immigrant teachers obtain teaching positions that appear to foster greater understanding among students and immigrant teachers from diverse cultural backgrounds. This mutual empathetic understanding facilitates education.

A background review shows that both countries have similarities. Both countries share the view that immigration is the cornerstone of nation-building. Both countries seek to increase and expand their populations, geographical boundaries, and labor markets by attracting new permanent residents. They have a humanitarian component in policies to select and accept immigrants and provide protection for refugees, asylum seekers, and IDPs. Both countries accept and request temporary foreign workers to supplement their domestic labor force, especially due to the domestic skills shortages. The Canadian and US economies, particularly in the hospitality, transportation, and leisure sectors, are heavily dependent on the free flow of international business travelers and tourists. We can say that both countries have similar problems in border security (Rekai, 2002).

The differences between these two countries in their immigration policies, such as asylum seekers and other immigrants at the United States border, have become a significant concern for the public. However, while Canada welcomes immigrants and sees them as a source of demographic, economic, and civic vitality, the United States is conflicted about its historical identity as a nation of immigrants. Although intensifying screening and monitoring

of visitors and other temporary entrants was also a priority for the United States, this is not the case in Canada. Canada prioritizes young, skilled immigrants, in contrast to the United States' continued emphasis on family reunification and reliance on a significant workforce of undocumented immigrants. The Canadian government has been modernizing its immigrant selection policy and has turned it into a precise tool for economic planning. Canada better defines its selection policy than the United States does for immigrants. Border management in Canada is weaker than in the United States. The composition of immigration in the United States consists mainly of immigrant families, followed by refugees, and immigrants who contribute to the economy; a small number includes lottery winners. The first rank in Canada goes to immigrants who are beneficial to the country's economy, then to families, and finally to refugees (Rekai, 2002).

Thus, although both countries need human resources for their economic progress, they face many challenges that have sometimes forced them to enact laws that limit immigration. However, they never stop accepting immigrants who contribute to their economy. In conclusion, studying the events and how these countries make decisions about immigrants will lead to greater familiarity with immigration policies that have many positive consequences for these two countries, including economic and political progress.

Statement of the Problem

Immigration, as the movement of people across borders and regions, is a fundamental and dynamic aspect of human civilization and has profound consequences for individuals, societies, and nations (Akpuokwe et al., 2024). Indeed, as individuals seek better opportunities, avoid conflict, or respond to environmental challenges, immigration becomes a determining force shaping demographic, economic, and cultural landscapes (Batalov, 2024). It should be noted that in the past and at present, there has been considerable resistance to migration, which is commonly attributed to prejudice and the tendency to blame migrants for problems such as unemployment, housing shortages, and assumed racial or cultural incompatibility. However, this resistance can be understood as a consequence of global inequality rooted in the colonial period (Goodfellow, 2019). However, although the immigrants' countries of origin have a decisive role in the migration of immigrants, the benefits of migration are not only for the individual and the receiving country but also for the country of origin (Batalov, 2024). Because it leads to the inflow of financial remittances, the transfer of knowledge and skills, and the reduction of pressures on the domestic labor market, thereby contributing to the country's economic development (World Bank, 2022).

Empirical studies show that policies significantly affect purposeful migration flows (Czaika & De Haas, 2013; Makeever, 2019), a concept known as migration policies. For example, the migration policies of countries that are often major immigrant-receiving countries, such as the United States and Canada, have undergone significant changes at various points, often imposed for economic reasons and sometimes for social and security reasons. For example, Canada established immigration laws early because of the great need for human resources, so that skilled and unskilled workers, and even their families, could enter the country and meet society's needs. However, anthropomorphism paid less attention to

humanitarian motives in laying down neoliberal laws and focused primarily on establishing immigration laws to achieve economic goals and progress (Ali, 2014).

Although the United States implements conflicting immigration laws, which, while needing immigrants to supply the market force, apply restrictive regulations, it emphasizes the recruitment of human resources (Devadoss, 2019). This country, like Canada, attracts many immigrants, and they make a significant contribution to its economy. So this country enacted laws under the title of "family annexation" to further exploit immigrants so that families of immigrants could also settle in this country (Rekai, 2002). However, it established strict immigration laws, especially for minorities (Muslims and South Asians) following the events of September 11 and increased border surveillance (Bloemraad, 2012). However, immigration restrictions fundamentally change the migration patterns of individuals rather than affecting the overall volume of inflows, such as illegal arrivals (Czaika & De Haas, 2013).

On the other hand, the ideologies of parties seeking governance and political power will influence approaches to immigration, as migration has become one of the most prominent political issues due to the increasing movement of people over the past few decades. As such, this trend has affected the emergence of parties with relatively defined stances on immigration. For example, immigration has played a significant role in the rise of right-wing populism (McKeever, 2019). Populism can conceptually be defined as "a thin-centered ideology that divides society into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups: the pure people and the corrupt elite, and argues that politics should be an expression of the general will of the people." Three core criteria define the essence of populism: anti-elitism, people-centrism, and a Manichean discourse that actively proclaims a moral struggle between the "good people" and the "political elites," which opposes the ruling institution—actors generally seen at the center of political decision-making and power, including the state. Populists often argue

that representative democracy fails to meet their ideological expectations for expressing the people's will (McKeever, 2019).

Meanwhile, the definition of populism itself suggests that populists in power may be less effective at governing, as they oppose collaboration with political elites, which often increases their likelihood of failure (Böhmelt & Ezrow, 2024). Additionally, alongside populism, another ideology influencing immigration policies in major immigrant-receiving countries, such as the United States, is nativism (Tichenor, 2023). Nativism holds that a particular group is the authentic or legitimate inheritor of a geopolitical territory. Consequently, "natives," based on presumed external affiliations, claim the privilege of determining who belongs and who is considered a "foreigner" (Ritter, 2021). This ideology notably influenced the Trump administration and will undoubtedly lead to severe restrictions in the coming four years regarding asylum and refugee resettlement, as well as aggressive practices of detention and deportation, many of which Trump is implementing through executive orders or bureaucratic procedures. The emphasis on racial/cultural purity has led to selective enforcement, restrictions, and the deprivation of rights for specific groups of "foreigners" residing within the United States. Such debates have already emerged among MAGA loyalists concerning the H1B visa for skilled workers—supported by tech oligarchs like Elon Musk but opposed by many far-right commentators. The way these debates unfold will reveal the limits of Trump's nativist-populist agenda (Nagel, 2025). Moreover, the rise of populism and anti-immigration sentiment can be explained by Norris and Inglehart's (2019) Cultural Backlash Theory, which posits that immigrants bring values and beliefs from their country of origin to the host country. Although migrants do not intend to bring about cultural change or fragmentation, their increasing numbers, values, and even political preferences seem to influence the host country. As a result, politicians or individuals with ideologies that differ from those of immigrants may perceive this influence as a threat (Norris & Inglehart,

2019). Conversely, Canada has attracted attention for its relative immunity to nativist populism. Unlike almost every other post-industrial democracy, no competitive nativist party has recently emerged in Canadian federal politics to challenge the mainstream consensus around mass immigration. The lack of a competitive nativist party is because multiculturalism and large-scale immigration have been, at least relatively, successful in Canada, thereby generating little "demand" for a nativist party (Gordon, 2019). Nevertheless, the researcher's lived experience shows that although past educational policies in Canada did not prioritize equity and multicultural education faced significant challenges—for instance, only native-born and white individuals were allowed to become teachers and hold public positions—in recent years, with the emergence of anti-oppressive education and critical multicultural education, non-native-born and racialized immigrant teachers like the researcher have gained access to teaching positions and enjoy equal benefits as their native-born and white counterparts. This shift has facilitated universal education, equal job distribution, social justice, participatory economic and public growth, and ultimately, sustainable community development (Miscovic, 2021).

Therefore, understanding the various motivations behind immigration policies helps understand the immigration policies of countries like the US and Canada, as well as the social and economic factors that inform these laws. Moreover, examining the researcher's lived experience as an immigrant can illustrate the evolution of immigration policies, their impact on the researcher's life, and the trajectory of multicultural and anti-oppressive education, which these immigration policies have influenced. Although these two countries have similar laws governing immigration, they differ in ways that make their immigration policies easier to understand. We should note that immigration laws have undergone significant advancements and become more complex since 1960. Given that a few studies have examined the immigration policies of these two countries since 1960, this research examines

the similarities and differences in their policies since then. Because in 1962 racial discrimination was officially abolished in Canada and merit- and skill-based criteria were incorporated into immigration policies (Kelly & Trebilcock, 1998), and during the same decade, important groundwork was laid for fundamental reforms in the United States (FitzGerald & Cook-Martin, 2015).

State of Research

Migration stimulates the development and growth of various cultural and economic dimensions of countries that send and receive immigrants (Hermel, 2021). Receiving countries can benefit from immigrants' abilities and expertise to improve various aspects of their development, and sending countries can leverage these people's experiences to advance their own development (Batalov, 2024). Indeed, migration is a vital driver of social evolution, cultural exchange, and economic development (Akpuokwe et al., 2024). Migration is important because it can transform populations, contribute to cultural diversity, and address individual aspirations for better opportunities and better living standards (Hsiang et al., 2017). Therefore, understanding the immigration policies of countries like the United States and Canada, along with their similarities and differences, can make the immigration phenomenon more concrete and understandable for its applicants. Likewise, it helps applicants choose a country with strong immigration laws. In addition, this understanding can enable individuals employed in various occupations to become familiar with the status of their jobs before and after the implementation of immigration policies. Immigration policies can provide both non-native and native individuals with valuable insights into the history of their occupational experiences. Since this understanding also encompasses recent immigration policies, it will assist future immigrants in gaining awareness of the policies governing various professions and in preparing accordingly.

Moreover, examining these differences and similarities reveals the consequences of these immigration policies for individuals and societies in each region. This comparative research provides a deeper understanding of the complexities of immigration across two distinct yet interconnected sectors.

Reviewing these similarities and differences ultimately leads to the adoption of specific approaches for planners that balance economic interests, security concerns, and humanitarian considerations in these countries (Akpuokwe et al., 2024). Likewise, this study can create a panorama of the benefits and harms of immigration policies for governments and individuals employed in various professions, especially in the teaching profession.

Research objectives

Main objective

- Examining the similarities and differences between the immigration policies of the United States and Canada since 1960

Secondary objectives

- Examining US immigration policies from 1960 until now
- Examining Canadian immigration policies since 1960

Research questions

- 1) What immigration policies has the United States laid down since 1960?
- 2) What immigration policies has Canada implemented since 1960?
- 3) What are the similarities between the immigration policies of the United States and Canada since 1960?
- 4) What are the differences between the immigration policies of the United States and Canada since 1960?

Assumptions Guiding the Study

- 1) The United States has accepted the immigrants from developing countries than Canada.
- 2) Canada has closely followed US immigration policies since the 1960s.

- 3) Canada has a higher capacity for accepting immigrants with different cultures.
- 4) The US adopts more restrictions in laying down immigration laws than Canada.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter has two sections. The first section examines U.S. immigration policies, and the second section discusses Canadian immigration policies. In the end, I state the similarities and differences between the immigration policies of the two countries.

Part One

The United States

History of Legislation in the United States

The earliest immigrants to the colonial US - from England, France, Germany, and other northwestern European countries - were seeking economic opportunities and political freedom (Walters & Ewing, 2012). However, they often relied on the labor of enslaved Africans working lands taken from Native Americans (Walters & Ewing, 2012).

The descendants of these initial European immigrants who came to the United States in the late 1800s from Italy, Poland, Russia, and elsewhere in southeastern Europe were sometimes “racially“ and religiously suspect by earlier European immigrants. The descendants of these later immigrants, in turn, frequently held ambivalent views toward the increasing numbers of Latin American, Asian, and African immigrants who began arriving in the latter half of the twentieth century (Walters & Ewing, 2012).

It is little surprise, then, that this collective ambivalence toward immigrants has been reflected in U.S. immigration policies as well. In other words, for a hundred years after the nation’s founding, immigration to the United States was neither numerically limited nor centrally regulated. One could argue that everyone in the United States is ultimately a descendant of an “immigrant,” even Native Americans whose ancestors arrived thousands of years earlier, but it bears noting that the laws governing immigration have constantly changed, often capriciously (Walters & Ewing, 2012).

Immigration Policies from 2020 Onwards.

Legal immigration, both temporary and permanent, has rebounded from the decline that began in 2020, driven by the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictive policies and rhetoric of the Trump administration. In some cases, new flows have surpassed previous levels. In 2023, the State Department issued 10.4 million temporary visas to tourists, international students, and others, up from 8.7 million in fiscal year 2019. Within the United States, the 969,000 immigrants who naturalized in 2022 after years as lawful permanent residents (LPRs or green card holders) represented the highest number of people obtaining citizenship since 2008.

Close to 46.2 million immigrants lived in the US in 2022, the highest number ever recorded.

The large numbers of people arriving in the US from Latin America and Asia in recent decades mark a stark shift from the mid-1900s, when immigration was primarily from Europe. In the 1960s, no single country accounted for over 15% of the US immigrant population (Batalova, 2024).

Regarding current immigrants' length of residence in the US, nearly 46% of all immigrants residing in the US in 2022 entered before 2000, including over 26% who entered before 1990 and 19% between 1990 and 1999. The number of immigrants and their children in the US was approximately 90.8 million, or 27% of the total US civilian population in 2023. The population has increased by about 14.7 million (or 20%) since 2010 (Batalova, 2024).

Based on the latest available data as of November 1, 2022, nearly 4.1 million applicants (including spouses and minor children) were on the State Department's immigrant visa waiting list, a 1% decrease from over 4.1 million applicants a year earlier. USCIS^[1] naturalized about 969,000 green card holders in 2022, a 19% increase over the 814,000 who naturalized in 2021 (Batalova, 2024).

Part Two

Canada

Canada is a "nation of immigrants" (Kymlicka, 1998), and with its high proportion of immigrants compared to other Western European countries and the United States, it has a much more open and positive attitude towards immigration. About two-thirds of Canadians feel that immigration is a key positive feature of their country. Those Canadians who strongly identify as patriots support immigration. Canada has constructed its national identity through immigrants of diverse nationalities. This national identity is also supported by the government's multiculturalism policies, anti-discrimination laws, and programs that encourage public-private partnerships. Of course, such initiatives are intended to help people find employment and integrate into society, not to inculcate a set of cultural norms and values (Bloemraad, 2012). The following examines the policies and factors that have influenced Canada's immigration policies from 1960 to the present.

Immigration and Population Growth

Immigration has contributed significantly to Canada's population growth since the end of World War II. Between 1946 and 1971, Canada admitted over three million immigrants, of whom 2.3 million were still residents at the time of the census. These figures, even allowing for offsetting mortality, highlight the importance of re-emigration by the foreign-born and emigration by the Canadian-born in reducing the net effects of immigration. Between 1951 and 1961, 25.5% of population growth was due to net immigration. This proportion declined to 21.7% between 1961 and 1971. A marked decline in fertility rates in recent years, coupled with continued high levels of immigration and a slight decrease in emigration, has increased the importance of net immigration to population growth. Unfortunately, a precise figure will not be available until the next census since Canada lacks adequate statistics on emigration.

While emigration from Canada to the United States has declined in recent years, the rate of return emigration among the foreign-born to their countries of origin is unknown. However, it may average as high as 30% and close to one-half in the case of US immigrants to Canada. In recent years, their share of pre-1967 immigrants to Canada has grown from less than 7% to nearly one in five in 1972. However, this figure includes some persons in the "advance approval" category under review for occupational and age suitability. The social composition of immigrants from the United States suggests that many are older men and women in managerial and professional occupations. They belong to the "mobile" type, showing a high degree of geographic and social mobility but not necessarily settling permanently in any one location (Richmond, 1976). The crude birth rate for Canada declined from 28 per thousand in 1955 to only 16 per thousand in 1974. While this decline was mainly in Quebec, it occurred nationwide and across all ethnic groups. From the end of World War II until the late 1950s, Canada's population was growing at nearly 3% per annum. Since then, the growth rate has declined to less than 1.3% per year. The contribution of net immigration also declined from 6.8 per thousand in the 1951-1961 decade to 3.6 per thousand in the following decade (Richmond, 1976).

From 1975 to 2013

Population projections are highly hazardous, mainly when based on unfounded assumptions. Statistics Canada (1974) has produced a set of projections for the 1972-2001 period based on various alternative assumptions about fertility, mortality, and net migration. Although fertility declined over this period, this trend may continue, or some younger couples may have postponed starting or completing their families. It is unlikely, however, that Canada's fertility rate will return to the high levels of the 1950s. The "C" projection used by Statistics Canada is probably quite realistic. It assumes that Canada will attain a very low fertility rate of 18 births per thousand by 1985 and stabilize at that level. On this basis, net

migration was 60,000 per annum and interprovincial migration was 435,000 per annum. The implication is that the annual population growth rate will decline to 0.5% by the end of the century. The birth rate will rise slightly, then decline to 12 per thousand, while the death rate rises from its current level of 7 per thousand due to population aging. It is important to note, however, that the slowing of Canada's population growth will not result in an actual decline in numbers. Because of the post-war baby boom, Canada will experience a cyclical pattern of population growth over the next 30 years. Since there is presently a large number of young women of childbearing age, even if net migration were zero and the net reproduction rate remained below unity, the population would continue to grow. The effects of such sub-replacement fertility were not apparent beyond the end of the century. Based on population growth from 1941 to 1971 and the projected trend to the end of the century, the projections assume a continuation of low fertility and net migration of 60,000 per annum. Accordingly, to achieve the projected net effects, current immigration levels must be over 100,000 per year. Given these assumptions, Canada's population by the end of the century should be just over 28 million. Alternative assumptions yielding higher fertility and net migration posit a potential maximum of 35 million (Statistics Canada, 1974, quoted from Richmond, 2012).

Canada's immigration system, among the most influential in immigrant-receiving countries, is ranked highly. Since 2006, Canada has welcomed over 250,000 immigrants from around the world annually (CIC, 2013). Notwithstanding Canada's long-standing and discriminatory immigration history based on race, ethnicity, and religion, this has not stopped Canada from emerging as one of the leading players in attracting and accepting large numbers of immigrants among developed nations (Kelley & Trebilcock, 2010). Canada plays a leading role relative to its total population. It has historically accepted a higher per capita level of immigrants than peer countries such as the United States, Australia, and Britain. New

data from the National Household Survey indicate that as of 2011, Canada was home to approximately 6,773,550 foreign-born individuals. They comprised 20.6% of the total population compared to 19.8% in the 2006 Census. The ethnic backgrounds, linguistic diversity, and religious affiliations of this country's immigrant population indicate that Canada is home to rich ethnic diversity. While most industrialized countries are planning to decrease their immigration inflows and have a smaller foreign-born population, Canada, notwithstanding its selective processes, continues to welcome a high volume of immigrants annually (Statistics Canada, 2011). Immigrants in Canada pursue multiple objectives and are an integral part of what Canada is and what it wants to be. Newcomers from diverse racial and national origins bring a wealth of vibrancy and contribute to economic development and socio-political well-being, while also sustaining Canada's population growth (Walks, 2010). It is thus evident that immigrants and immigration have played and continue to play a vital role in Canada's social, economic, and political life (quoted from Ali, 2014).

According to Ali's (2014) research, there are three pathways in Canada's immigration system. Each of them pursues different objectives and has different requirements: Each immigration category is in subcategories designed to cater to particular segments of Canadian immigration. In general, they work collectively to achieve Canada's national immigration objectives.

Economic Class

This class shows that in 2013, 57% of immigrants came through the economic pathway and were considered economic immigrants. Most of them belonged to the Federal Skilled Worker and Temporary Foreign Worker programs (Ali, 2014).

Family Class: This class is the second-largest category of participants in immigration. In 2013, 31% of total immigrants entered through the Family Reunification program (mostly spouses, parents, and grandparents). Compared to 2012, this particular class increased by 6%, which was one of the highest numbers since 1994 (94,187) (Ali, 2014).

Humanitarian and Others: In 2013, only 12% of new arrivals were government-assisted immigrants, privately sponsored refugees, asylum claimants, and others (Ali, 2014).

From 1980 to 2015

Neoliberal Theory. The rising popularity and global acceptance of neoliberalism in the 1970s led to significant changes in all aspects of governance and governmental structure, including immigration (Bockman, 2013). Neoliberalism took place throughout the 1980s and 1990s, when most Anglo-American democracies shifted their governmental structures away from Keynesian institutions by adopting a neoliberal system (Evans et al., 2006). To examine and evaluate the outcome of these changes, it is essential to understand the impact of neoliberalism on Canada's immigration policies. Neoliberalism is not merely an economic-centered ideology but a contemporary political tool for governing that has been generalized to a wide range of phenomena and affects governmental responsibilities such as welfare policies and budgetary constraints in areas like education, social services, and incarceration of those disrupting the neoliberal system en masse (Bockman, 2013).

As the Canadian government moved towards a neoliberal approach, its economic-driven policies focused on "restraint, reduction, and cost-efficiency" of the government (Richmond & Shields, 2004) and on greater fiscal accountability (Sadiq, 2023). Furthermore, the government reduced some social services and continually offloaded responsibilities onto other private institutions by commercializing and coercing them into joining the neoliberal system. Thus, the Canadian neoliberal society is continuously shifting away from the

nation-state as the primary service provider towards public-private governance and entrepreneurial citizenship (Bockman, 2013, cited in Ali, 2014).

The contemporary Canadian immigration system and its selection methods reflect neoliberal ideologies and priorities. The selection methods become particularly evident in Canada's emphasis on economic-class immigrants, where immigrants' human capital has always played a pivotal role in the meticulous selection of desired immigrants. The objectives of the current immigration policy are to attract highly skilled immigrants while simultaneously restricting and implementing highly restrictive policies for undesirable (destitute) immigrants or refugees. The move away from the family class and humanitarian immigration is another indicator of the shift towards neoliberal-driven policies. Furthermore, the commitment to promoting and encouraging settlement in rural and less-populated areas was carried out while "suppressing" those exploiting the Canadian immigration system, as part of Canada's neoliberal framework (Dobrowolsky, 2013, cited in Ali, 2014). Canada's immigration policies have been designed to overvalue the state's economic performance and devalue social aspects of society, such as Canada's humanitarian and family-oriented policies. Thus, the adoption of neoliberal policies renders the entire system less attentive to social aspects and governs it by economic laws (Ali, 2014).

The economic stream is one of the core pillars of Canada's immigration system, comprising numerous subcategories that cater to specific sectors of the Canadian economy, and the majority of immigrants enter through this stream. Over the past five years, economic immigrants accounted for more than 60% of total immigrants. The Federal Skilled Worker Program is one of Canada's most reputable and prominent immigration programs. It has become a common pathway for many prospective immigrants to use this program to secure an easier and less complicated entry into Canada. Since July 2012, this program has undergone significant changes. In recent years, the slogan of a "faster, more flexible

immigration system "(Alexander, CIC, 2014) has become one of the driving forces for changing the economic stream of Canadian immigration. The Federal Skilled Worker program drew considerable attention, leading to significant revisions. A pause on the Federal Skilled Worker program, except for those with arranged employment or Ph.D. applicants, was implemented in 2012 to reduce the number of pending applications by either accepting or rejecting them (CIC, 2012). During the pause, the Temporary Foreign Worker program was also reviewed. In January 2013, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) unveiled its revamped Federal Skilled Worker program. Subsequently, in May 2013, the federal government introduced new caps and eligibility requirements for the Federal Skilled Worker Program-2 for acceptance. Eligible applicants had to meet one of the following eligibility criteria: having at least one year of continuous, paid full-time work experience within the last decade in one of 24 occupations, and scoring a minimum of 67 points based on Canada's immigration selection factors (CIC) such as education, language skills, work experience, age, arranged employment, and adaptability (CIC, 2013). All applicants to this program had to undergo language testing and achieve at least adequate or moderate proficiency in English or French (Canadian Language Benchmark [CLB] 7), and their foreign educational credentials had to be assessed and verified by one of four designated credential assessment organizations. Alternatively, they had to have completed a Ph.D. in Canada or two years of study toward a Ph.D. in Canada. The changes to the Federal Skilled Worker Program were made in several ways. First, they made language proficiency the most crucial factor. Second, they increased the emphasis on the age of immigrants, as younger immigrants are currently more desirable due to their adaptability to Canadian society and the labor market, as well as their longer working lifespan to contribute to the Canadian economy (CIC, 2012).

Additionally, the number of eligible occupations under the Federal Skilled Worker program increased from 24 to 50. A maximum of 1,000 applications was allowed per eligible

occupation. University-related occupations, such as professors, lecturers, and early childhood educators, were eligible occupations, and a new cap of 500 applications was set for PhDs. Applicants with a valid job offer from a Canadian employer were exempt from these caps and could apply for permanent residence at any time (CIC, 2014). These changes and constraints temporarily alleviated pressures from increased labor demand. They enabled CIC to dedicate more time to addressing the backlog in the Federal Skilled Worker program before launching a more effective and efficient application management system (CIC, 2014). The new policies provided greater flexibility for Canadian employers to search for and hire skilled individuals from outside the country (cited in Ali, 2014).

These changes were welcomed by some but criticized by many. They created a hierarchy among applicants awaiting processing. Based on the new measurements, newer files were processed faster than files submitted before February 28, 2008. With the proposed changes, entry into Canada has become much more complicated for prospective immigrants. CIC claims it succeeded in reducing overall application processing time to around 12 months or less and in allowing prospective immigrants to prepare and plan for their future (CIC, 2014). In Canada's efforts to meet regional industry and labor needs, both Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), previously known as HRSDC, and CIC began looking to the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) as a primary source of recruiting lower-skilled foreign workers. Subsequently, CIC announced the launch of a new immigration class. The Federal Skilled Trades Program (FSTP) commenced in January 2013, aiming to facilitate the immigration of skilled tradespeople to Canada (CIC, 2013). This program was designed for individuals with qualifications in skilled trades and practical work experience rather than formal education. In 2013, CIC accepted only 3,000 applications. However, as of May 1, 2014, CIC proposed accepting a maximum of 5,000 applications (CIC, 2014). To be eligible, applicants had to meet the following conditions: have received a

job offer for at least one year in Canada or possess a provincial/territorial certificate of qualification that validates their required skills and employability in Canada. They had to meet the minimum language threshold in English or French, scoring a Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) of 4 in reading and writing, and CLB 5 in speaking and listening comprehension. Applicants must have at least 2 years of work experience in one of 90 skilled trades occupations within the last 5 years. They must have met the employment requirements and possess skills and experience similar to those outlined in the National Occupational Classification system (NOC B) (CIC, 2013) (cited in Ali, 2014).

The Canadian Experience Class (CEC) was launched in 2008 and has since become one of Canada's fastest-growing immigration programs (CIC, 2014). CEC was explicitly designed to provide assistance and an expedited pathway for highly skilled temporary foreign workers in Canada, as well as international students who previously resided in Canada (CIC, 2013). The reforms implemented in this stream over the past two years have primarily affected international students. Since 2004, the number of international students entering Canada has nearly doubled. As part of the CEC international student intake, year-over-year increases were observed, with 2012 and 2013 specifically indicating that Canada had over 100,000 eligible international students. In January 2013, CIC reduced the required length of Canadian work experience (not necessarily related to their field of study) from 24 to 12 months for international students to qualify for CEC (CIC, 2013).

Additionally, the Canadian government allowed international students to emigrate to Canada with their spouses and partners. It provided them with an easier path to obtaining work permits, as long as the student maintained their full-time status at a public or private institution. The flexible work permits allow spouses to work in Canada. However, certain health-related occupations exist that are excluded from the list of eligible occupations unless applicants can access them after undergoing a medical examination (CIC, 2013). With the

increasing number of applications, Ottawa temporarily capped intake at 12,000 for the entire CEC (both skilled workers and international students) from November 9, 2013, to October 31, 2014 (CIC, 2013), and 8,000 applications between May 1, 2014, and April 31, 2015. Under the new instructions, CIC also deemed work experience obtained in six occupations, such as clerical officers, administrative assistants, accounting/bookkeeping technicians, cooks, food service supervisors, and retail supervisors, as ineligible (cited in Ali, 2014).

The Immigrant Investor Program (IIP) and the Federal Entrepreneur Program (FEP) have been active for over three decades, aiming to attract foreign investment to enhance Canada's long-term economic growth and prosperity (CIC, 2014). Canada was one of the first countries to develop and utilize this type of program (Marchi, 2014). According to several media sources, the program became hugely popular among millionaires, such that its quota in 2013 was filled within 30 minutes of opening by millionaires from outside the country, predominantly Chinese (cited in Ali, 2014).

According to Ali (2014), there are three pathways in Canada's immigration system. Each of them pursues different objectives and has different requirements. Each immigration category is divided into subcategories designed to cater to specific segments of Canadian immigration. In general, they work collectively to achieve Canada's national immigration objectives (Ali, 2014).

Economic Class: Figure 1 shows that in 2013, 57% of immigrants came through the economic pathway and were considered economic immigrants. Most of them belonged to the Federal Skilled Worker and Temporary Foreign Worker programs (Ali, 2014).

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From 1980 to 2015

Neoliberal Theory. The rising popularity and global acceptance of neoliberalism in the 1970s led to significant changes in all aspects of governance and governmental structure, including immigration (Bockman, 2013). This took place throughout the 1980s and 1990s when most Anglo-American democracies shifted their governmental structures away from Keynesian-based institutions by adopting a neoliberal-based system (Evans et al., 2006). To examine and evaluate the outcome of these changes, it is essential to understand the impact of neoliberalism on Canada's immigration policies. Neoliberalism is not merely an economic-centered ideology but a contemporary political tool for governing that has been generalized to a wide range of phenomena and affects governmental responsibilities such as welfare policies and budgetary constraints in areas like education, social services, and incarceration of those disrupting the neoliberal system en masse (Bockman, 2013).

As the Canadian government moved towards a neoliberal approach, its economic-driven policies focused on "restraint, reduction, and cost-efficiency" of the government (Richmond & Shields, 2004) and on greater fiscal accountability (Sadiq, 2023). Furthermore, the government reduced some social services and continually offloaded responsibilities onto other private institutions by commercializing and coercing them into joining the neoliberal system. Thus, the Canadian neoliberal society is continuously shifting away from the nation-state as the primary service provider towards public-private governance and entrepreneurial citizenship (Bockman, 2013, cited in Ali, 2014).

The contemporary Canadian immigration system and its selection methods reflect neoliberal ideologies and priorities. The contemporary immigration system becomes particularly evident when we look at Canada's emphasis on economic-class immigrants, where immigrants' human capital has always played a pivotal role in the meticulous selection of desired immigrants. The objectives of the current immigration policy are to attract highly skilled immigrants while simultaneously restricting and implementing highly restrictive policies for undesirable (destitute) immigrants or refugees. The move away from the family class and humanitarian immigration is another indicator of the shift towards neoliberal-driven policies. Furthermore, the government carried out the commitment to promoting and encouraging settlement in rural and less-populated areas while "suppressing" those exploiting the Canadian immigration system, as part of Canada's neoliberal framework (Dobrowolsky, 2013, cited in Ali, 2014). Canada's immigration policies have been pre-designed to overvalue the economic performance of the state and devalue the social aspects of society, such as Canada's humanitarian and family-oriented policies. Thus, the adoption of neoliberal policies renders the entire system less attentive to the social aspects of society governed by economic laws (Ali, 2014).

The economic stream is one of the core pillars of Canada's immigration system, comprising numerous subcategories that cater to specific sectors of the Canadian economy, and the majority of immigrants enter through this stream. Over the past five years, economic immigrants accounted for more than 60% of total immigrants. The Federal Skilled Worker Program is one of Canada's most reputable and prominent immigration programs. It has become a common pathway for many prospective immigrants to use this program to secure an easier and less complicated entry into Canada. Since July 2012, this program has undergone significant changes. In recent years, the slogan of a "faster, more flexible immigration system" (Alexander, CIC, 2014) has become one of the driving forces for

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The Canadian Experience Class (CEC) was launched in 2008 and has since become one of Canada's fastest-growing immigration programs (CIC, 2014). CEC was specifically designed to provide assistance and an expedited pathway for highly skilled temporary foreign workers in Canada as well as international students who previously resided in Canada (CIC, 2013).

The reforms implemented in this stream over the past two years have primarily affected international students. Since 2004, the number of international students entering Canada has nearly doubled, and as part of the CEC international student intake, year-over-year increases could be seen, with 2012 and 2013 specifically indicating that Canada had over 100,000 eligible international students. In January 2013, CIC reduced the required length of Canadian work experience (not necessarily related to their field of study) from 24 to 12 months for international students to qualify for CEC (CIC, 2013). Additionally, the Canadian government allowed international students to be accompanied by their spouses and partners and provided them an easier path to obtain work permits as long as the student maintained their full-time status at a public or private institution. The flexible work permits allow spouses to work in Canada. However, certain health-related occupations exist that are excluded from the list of eligible occupations unless applicants can access them after undergoing a medical examination (CIC, 2013). With the increasing number of applications, Ottawa temporarily capped intake at 12,000 for the entire CEC (both skilled workers and international students) from November 9, 2013, to October 31, 2014 (CIC, 2013), and 8,000 applications between May 1, 2014, and April 31, 2015. Under the new instructions, CIC also deemed work experience obtained in six occupations, such as clerical officers, administrative

assistants, accounting/bookkeeping technicians, cooks, food service supervisors, and retail supervisors, as ineligible (cited in Ali, 2014).

The Immigrant Investor Program (IIP) and the Federal Entrepreneur Program (FEP) have been active for over three decades: their aim was to attract foreign investment by enhancing Canada's long-term economic growth and prosperity (CIC, 2014). Canada was one of the first countries to develop and utilize this type of program (Marchi, 2014). According to several media sources, the program became hugely popular among millionaires, such that its quota in 2013 was filled within 30 minutes of opening by millionaires from outside the country, predominantly Chinese (cited in Ali, 2014).

From 1960-1975

Canadian Immigration Laws and Regulations.

These years witnessed several notable developments in Canadian immigration. Over the past fifteen years or so, there has been mounting public and parliamentary interest in immigration. For example, the regulations specifying the admissibility requirements for immigrants underwent major revisions in 1962 and 1967, and were significantly amended in 1974; immigration responsibility was transferred in 1966 to the new "Department of Manpower and Immigration" and the "Immigration Appeal Board"; the Manpower and Immigration Council was established in 1967. Over 5,000 refugees from Uganda and about 1,500 refugees from Chile were admitted to Canada in 1972 and 1974, respectively. Several legal changes were enacted in 1973 to deal with the increasing number of visitors in Canada making applications from within for immigrant status, as well as the growing backlog of appeals against deportation that had accumulated before the Immigration Appeal Board in previous years. However, in 1973, the government again promised to enact a new

Immigration Act, leading to the establishment of a special task force to identify available policy options (cited in Parai, 1975).

Main Features and Objectives of Canada's Post-War Immigration Policy Before 1962.

Although immigration is constitutionally an area of shared federal and provincial responsibility, immigration to Canada was effectively controlled by federal laws. Immigration to Canada continued to be regulated by the 1952 Immigration Act, which, however, underwent significant revisions over the ensuing years to define and prohibit those deemed inadmissible on grounds such as health, criminal involvement, and subversive activities. The rights of appeal against deportation, along with the procedures for such appeals, were provided for in the Immigration Appeal Board Act, 1966-67.

The Immigration Act also defined the conditions under which individuals could be admitted to Canada, but set no limitations on the overall annual level of immigration or its composition. The actual classes of persons acceptable as immigrants were specified by Regulations made by Orders-in-Council and often implemented through departmental instructions. On this basis, a notable feature of the existing Immigration Act, from a substantive policy standpoint, was its great flexibility, whereby considerable discretionary authority was vested in the Cabinet (i.e., the executive branch of the federal government) to regulate the volume and composition of immigration to Canada through Orders-in-Council (Parai, 1975).

Thus, even during the war years, encouragement to immigration was pursued with the objectives of achieving economic growth and scale economies for cultural development and greater self-sufficiency. In the post-war period, too, the Canadian government pursued a policy of encouraging immigration to increase population growth. Properly selected immigrants could be readily absorbed into the Canadian national economy with beneficial

effects. However, the essential point was that immigrants should be carefully chosen and their numbers regulated according to the absorptive capacity of the country - a figure that would vary from year to year with changing economic conditions. The Canadian public did not want any radical change in the character of the Canadian population resulting from heavy immigration. Large-scale immigration from the Orient would alter the fundamental composition of the Canadian population; it was therefore decided that "for the present, the admission should be confined to persons whose ethnic background was conducive to the absorption of the immigrants themselves and their descendants into the Canadian population without undue dislocation. "To this end, several Orders-in-Council were passed in the early post-war years (Parai, 1975).

Furthermore, although it was assumed that the character of the population should not be radically changed, explicit reference was made only to restricting Oriental immigration. However, immigration from English and French-speaking Europeans who traditionally formed the dominant ethnic strains in Canada was not precluded. A few years later, immigrants were selected based on their suitability for life in Canada and their potential contribution to the country's development. It was for this reason that entry to Canada for nationals of Britain, the United States, and France, provided they were of good health and character, was virtually free. Thus, a deliberate preference was given to immigrants from countries with comparable political and social institutions (Parai, 1975).

During the post-war years before 1962, the selection criteria embodied in the Regulations for immigration were essentially based on nationality and country of birth, the ability of individuals to maintain themselves until employment was assured or they were established by the Department, citizenship, and immigration to existing employment, and specified family relationships between a potential immigrant and a Canadian resident or citizen. In addition, British subjects by birth or naturalization in the United Kingdom,

Australia, New Zealand, or the Union of South Africa, and citizens of Ireland, the United States, and France (if born in France or the Islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon) who had sufficient means to maintain themselves until employment was assured, were admissible without formality for immigration to Canada. For those lacking such means of maintenance, as well as other independent applicants who were citizens of other European countries, immigration visas were issued, having regard to existing employment opportunities in Canada. Admissions were regulated so that immigration volume varied periodically, depending on economic conditions. This practice, often referred to in parliamentary discussions as the "tap-on-tap-off" policy, resulted in increased immigration during periods of economic expansion and decreased immigration during recessionary periods. Immigration to Canada was also seasonal, with the largest inflows occurring in spring and summer. Each fall, an assessment of prospective labor requirements in Canada was conducted, and the results were provided monthly. However, efforts were made to avoid sharp cut-offs in recruitment activities, as these created difficulties in reactivating the search for immigrants (cited in Parai, 1975).

From 1980 to 1999

Canada, with a higher proportion of immigrants in its population than most other Western European countries and the United States, has a much more open and positive approach toward immigration. About two-thirds of Canadians feel that immigration is a key positive feature of their country. Those Canadians who identify most strongly with patriotism tend to be pro-immigration. Canada produces its national identity through immigrants of diverse nationalities. This national identity is also sustained by the government's multiculturalism policies, anti-discrimination laws, and programs that encourage public-private partnerships. Of course, such initiatives are intended to help people find employment and integrate into society, not to inculcate any set of cultural norms and values

(Bloemraad, 2012). The following examines the policies and factors influencing Canada's immigration policies.

Gender and Immigration to Canada (1980-1999).

Based on Hyndman's (1999) research, Canada's gender policy for male and female immigrants to Canada has been treated equally, and yet, the results of its implementation have often been vastly different for each group; such that it may create a protective female system for refugees, and a gender-blind entry system based on "ability to pay "for other immigrant groups. On the other hand, the government is interested in increasing access to the labor market for highly skilled immigrants and their spouses, albeit temporarily for some. On the other hand, increased economic integration and globalization ("globalization is the code word for the breaking down of traditional boundaries among sovereign nations, economic markets and individuals "(Davis, Kunin and Trempe, Chp. 1.4), emphasizes Canada's role as part of the global village which currently hosts highly skilled but few workers which cannot be cost-effective. In 1998, policies were proposed to promote freer trade among first-degree immigrants, a policy that aligns with the United States' broader approach. However, we need to examine the gender implications of such a policy (NotJust Numbers repository).

According to the NotJust Numbers report, Canada's immigration system welcomes educated, employable candidates proficient in English or French. However, it has an ambiguous approach to promoting diversity across cultures, social classes, countries of origin, and gender balance. Economic goals, similar to many historical periods of immigration to Canada, dominate, and refugee admission is subject to the current immigration policy's economic criteria. The individual's ability to settle, find employment, and become self-sufficient is considered an admission criterion and is factored into the selection of applicants. The NotJust Numbers authors questioned this policy and suggested that refugee

claimants should not be subject to admission criteria, but rather that their claims should be judged solely on humanitarian grounds. Thus, a separate law for refugees and immigrants was proposed, which would involve selecting refugees from outside the country rather than allowing individuals to present a refugee claim at a Canadian port of entry. Such an action in the 1999 document is not a strong foundation for the twenty-first century. Until a thorough and systematic review of gender implications is completed, no new law or policy can be introduced. The ILR suggests separating immigration and refugee laws and combining immigration and citizenship laws, arguing that the latter laws are part of a continuum. Such separation distinguishes refugees, as they do not appear to be part of the citizenship stream (Bloemraad, 2012).

Consequently, it was decided that the objectives of the Protection Act should be to: a) enable Canada to take a leadership role in the international community's discussion of migration, b) fulfill its domestic commitments concerning international humanitarian and human rights laws relating to migrants, and c) fulfill its commitments by ensuring that protection is provided only to those who need and deserve it. In contrast, the primary objective of the Immigration and Citizenship Act is "to facilitate the entry, whether temporary or permanent, of persons who can contribute to Canada's prosperity and economic well-being. "The premise is that Canada is obligated to support refugees, but they do not significantly contribute to the country's economic prosperity (Bloemraad, 2012).

Gender and Language (1980-1999).

One of the central and controversial features of the report is the requirement for an official language. In 1996, 41% of the 224,000 newcomers in Canada spoke neither French nor English (Galt). The consideration of official language proficiency as a criterion for prospective immigrants, meaning those who can be self-supporting, will have a gender impact. The Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) points out that official language ability,

education, and professional experience are currently factored into selection processes to the detriment of women who have had fewer opportunities to acquire such skills and related experience. Single mothers are also less likely to meet "ability to establish" criteria (CCR), as women generally have less access to language training due to family responsibilities, social norms, and economic circumstances (quoted from Hyndman, 1999).

Consequently, during the 1997-1998 fiscal year, the federal government paid Ontario \$95.6 million for adult language instruction. Ontario's cost for children's language instruction was \$236.2 million ("Editorial", Toronto Star 1998b). These figures point to an incentive for ensuring English or French language proficiency. While Ontario receives 54% of all new immigrants ("Editorial", Toronto Star 1998a), the Ontario government is planning severe budget cuts to adult education (Galt). At the same time as the provinces are asking the federal government to increase funding for English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, particularly for children who fall under provincial jurisdiction, the federal government wants to reduce rather than add to its costs, as "tax fatigue, deficits, and debts placed severe fiscal constraints on government. "On this premise, the only way was for immigrants to cover at least their costs (quoted from Hyndman, 1999).

Inequality and Bifurcation (1980-1999).

Immigrants and Refugees in Canada's New Order.

Management Issues.

If the government adopts the ILR's recommendations, a two-tier immigration stream would emerge: on the one hand, a gender-blind stream of employed, educated immigrants with appropriate language levels and their families. Moreover, there is another, quite different stream of newcomer immigrants whose "ability to establish" was weak. In 1999, there were already significant inequalities between landed immigrants based on immigrant class, but the

ILR's proposed changes would significantly exacerbate these inequalities. As Nancy Fraser (1997; 1989) has argued, social assistance is a more feminized stream of state provisioning than unemployment insurance paid to former workers in a waged economy, so too would the refugee stream become more feminized. Reviews have found that to assist the most needy, i.e., women and children, "ability to establish" is a criterion that should be set aside. On the other hand, the assumption that women and children are more needy than men remains unproven, as does the assumption that refugees most urgently requiring resettlement are those closest to the country where they experienced violence or threats of persecution, because many of those reaching Canada's borders are bogus refugees. However, there is no evidence for this (as quoted by Hyndman, 1999).

Instead, the assumption is that gender is a determining factor in granting worthy refugee status. A problematic assumption, both legally and politically. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) states regarding the proposed Protection Act that "the basic premise may be that persons seeking protection from outside the country are more in need than refugee claimants who come directly to Canada. If so, UNHCR would respectfully disagree" (Cheadle). On the other hand, the hierarchy of refugee needs outlined in *Not Just Numbers* is neither codified in law nor supported in refugee policy. This signals a political decision to reduce refugee claims on Canadian soil (Hyndman, 1999).

In this regard, the governments nominally respect their international commitments to refugee law but reduce their resettlement numbers; they increase financial contributions to multilateral organizations like the UNHCR to help manage the "refugee problem" considerably away from their borders (Ferlik; UNHCR) (quoted from Hyndman, 1999).

However, is this protecting refugees or Canada's borders?

According to Veronica Gillies' view, the small refugee resettlement group in Canada is biased towards women, tending to resettle refugee women and children through international assistance in camps near their country. Thus, using this gendered socio-political mapping, the ILR recommends a shift in emphasis from the current resettlement of (female and child) refugees to Canada to resettlement from outside the country. While this recommendation may be more gender-sensitive, it may also be a defensive move to keep the "refugee problem" at a distance from the nation. As Rosalyn Kunin, one of the ILR's authors, states, "We have no legal commitment to protect refugees who are not in Canada. However, Canada is a wealthy and compassionate country...We can certainly help alleviate some of the hardship for refugees outside of Canada" (Kunin). Assisting refugees outside the country means preventing them from becoming legal obligations for the Canadian government under international refugee laws - an example of which is considering the application of Canada's gender guidelines for determining refugee status outside of Canada. The Canadian Immigration and Refugee Board issued these guidelines in 1993 to ensure that refugee women facing gender-related persecution would be considered in the domestic refugee determination process (quoted from Hyndman, 1999).

The 1999 document *Building on a Strong Foundation for the 21st Century* identifies special considerations for particular groups of refugees, including "women-at-risk", victims of torture and violence, the elderly, and unaccompanied minors. These groups tend to be underrepresented in the mainstream refugee population for obvious reasons, but rather than creating policies to ensure "special treatment" for particular categories of refugees like women, how can refugee policy be made more generally sensitive to the needs of these groups without categorizing or separating them as "special"? One of the best solutions identified in framing the "not just numbers" and "firm foundation" streams is to broaden the definition of "family" to include common-law and same-sex couples, and to include adult

children at higher ages. From a feminist perspective, this is a welcome move that reflects the realities of Canadian households today and their ongoing changes (quoted from Hyndman, 1999).

Globalization and Immigration: Who Gets In? (1980-1999). Arguably, the best immigrants are those who can integrate well and contribute financially to the nation's prosperity within the global economy. However, when economic productivity becomes the overriding determinant, diversity in other attributes, such as gender, social class, and cultural background, may be compromised (Hyndman, 1999).

One of the controversial elements of NotJustNumbers was the proposed elimination of the live-in caregiver program. While this program sets lower labor standards for these predominantly female prospective immigrants, its elimination would result in more limited immigration opportunities for this highly gendered stream of future immigrants, while leaving the problem of replacing these caregivers with subsidized childcare spaces across the country unaddressed. For example, many domestic workers from the Philippines are credentialed as teachers, nurses, and accountants in their home countries (Boti and Batista). However, if the live-in caregiver program were to end, they would be unlikely to qualify for immigration under other classes. Their education and credentials are unlikely to be portable for job offers in Canada, which is a requirement for skilled immigrant workers. They would fall under the "foreign worker program" proposed by the ILR, or the "higher-skilled temporary foreign workers" identified in the 1999 document from the Minister (quoted in Hyndman, 1999).

Currently, these (largely racialized) female domestic caregivers contribute to the Canadian economy by providing time and energy so that many Canadian women and men can participate in the higher-wage labor force. In a sense, they free Canadian women and men

from childcare so they can engage in their communities. However, they do so at a very high price: most live-in caregivers forsake career and educational advancement in their home countries to qualify for Canada's current program, and even though many are well-educated, employable, and proficient in an official language, domestic caregivers will lose access to permanent residency and citizenship (quoted from Hyndman, 1999).

Never before have governments and multinational corporations been so indistinguishable. Both view human capital as a gender-blind commodity. NotJustNumbers states that demand is for human capital. Countries (and even large multinational corporations) compete globally to attract individuals who can contribute to economic development and growth. This global competition has revealed a critical shortage of highly skilled workers needed to expand vital economic sectors. The ILD streams and "Building on a Strong Foundation for the 21st Century" propose that designated employers directly sponsor employees for immigration to Canada, bypassing previous layers of government regulation. Case-by-case determination and vetting do not maximize the net economic benefits of immigration. It may be true that this option would save time and legal fees from navigating a myriad of occupational immigration laws and regulations, thereby identifying labor market needs. The private sector is empowered to have potential foreign workers at these companies apply directly to visa offices abroad and receive decisions within days instead of weeks or months (quoted from Hyndman, 1999).

Consequently, the self-supporting immigrants and their families are worthy of Canada, while a dwindling number of refugees accepted for resettlement will be worthy of Canada's diminishing humanitarian hospitality. The least desirable group is the one selected by neither Canadian immigration officials nor designated employers - refugee claimants. Refugees, predominantly women and children, should be kept as close to home as possible,

where they impose the lightest burden on the Canadian economy and taxpayers (quoted from Hyndman, 1999).

From 2000 to 2012

Immigration Policy, Economic Growth, and Geography.

One of the oft-cited responses to the question of Canadian exceptionalism is Canada's points system, which actively selects immigrants based on their potential to join the labor force and contribute to the Canadian economy. In the first decade of the 21st Century, the majority of new permanent immigrants arriving in Canada, 59%, were economic immigrants. Economic-class immigrants apply for permanent residence and are selected by the Canadian government based on their education, language skills, job training, work experience, and age. In contrast, a smaller group is selected based on their ability to invest in a business and create jobs in Canada. Another 26% of new permanent immigrants over the 2001-2010 period entered through family sponsorship, and 11% were refugees (Bloemraad, 2012).

The points system has its critics, and the government has been keen to reform it—especially to reduce the number of immigrants selected for their skills but unable to find highly skilled employment. Nevertheless, the economic rationale behind Canadian immigration policy likely reduces concerns about welfare migration, a major preoccupation in many European countries. Canadians support the idea that immigration benefits the Canadian economy. 70% see immigration as a key tool for strengthening Canada's economy, while only 32% believe immigrants take jobs away from native-born workers. From 1993 to 2010, the proportion of Canadian residents who agreed that immigration has a positive overall impact on the economy increased from 56% to 80%. Even among the unemployed, a near-consensus majority—68%—believes that immigration is beneficial to the economy (Bloemraad, 2012).

There are, of course, differences in attitudes toward immigration across the Canadian population. The single most important determinant of such differences is the individual's level of educational attainment. While 69% of those who have completed university support the current level of immigration, this share drops to 43% among those with a high school education or less. A positive correlation between educational attainment and pro-immigration sentiment is found in other countries as well. However, it arguably matters more in Canada, given the selectivity of its immigration process in favor of highly skilled immigrants. The likelihood that these immigrants will compete with highly educated native-born Canadians does not undermine the latter's pro-immigration attitudes. In countries that place less emphasis on highly skilled immigration, one could imagine the native-born educated population facing less competitive pressures (Bloemraad, 2012).

The economic orientation of Canada's immigration system likely reflects a sense of control over immigration policies that is lacking in places like the United States, where less than one-third of the foreign-born population lacks legal status. Many people view the federal government as ineffective in addressing immigration. In a 2010 comparative poll, 48% of Canadians said their national government is doing a very good or good job on immigration, the highest share of any country surveyed, and twice the 24% in the United States who say the same (Bloemraad, 2012).

However, Canadians are not inoculated against immigration anxiety. An analysis of shifts in Canadian attitudes from 1975 to 2000 finds that the proportion favoring more restrictive immigration has risen somewhat, regardless of respondents' economic circumstances. However, this relationship may be less evident in the past decade. An experimental poll that asked respondents whether a fictional prospective immigrant should be able to come and qualify for citizenship found that Canadian respondents were much more amenable when the individual was highly rather than lowly skilled. Canadians are also ambivalent about

accepting refugees. Environics polls show a notable decline in the proportion agreeing that “many people claiming to be refugees are not genuine refugees,” from 79% in 1987 to 59% in 2010, but a majority still agrees that many refugee claimants are not “genuine.”

(Bloemraad, 2012).

Fear of uninvited immigrants, especially bogus refugees, emerges easily in periodic public outcries—for instance, fueled by media coverage of foreign human-smuggling ships arriving off Canadian shores. In the summer of 2010, nearly 500 ethnic Tamil migrants aboard the MV Sun Sea were intercepted. After being discovered, the group made refugee claims. According to polling at the time, 48% of Canadians felt the boat’s passengers should be returned to Sri Lanka. Two months later, in October 2010, the minority Conservative government introduced legislation targeting human smuggling. A revised version was enacted in June 2012 after the Conservatives won a parliamentary majority. Opponents, including refugee advocates, condemned the law, in part because it allows the government to subject certain refugee claimants to mandatory detention for up to 12 months. Critics charged that the government was pandering to anti-refugee sentiment, like that expressed after the MV Sun Sea incident (Bloemraad, 2012).

There are no reliable statistics on the unauthorized population in Canada, although media reports regularly cite between 200,000 and 400,000 individuals, representing 3 to 6% of the foreign-born population. These figures are highly speculative, but if roughly accurate, they place the number of undocumented immigrants well below the estimated 11.5 million in the United States as of 2011. Consequently, illegal immigration is not a prominent public or political issue in Canada. As in other countries, Canadians are more concerned about illegal than legal immigration, but at 50% of respondents, their proportion is still somewhat lower than in the United States, where 61% express concern. If illegal immigration were to become

a salient issue, Canadian support for immigration could diminish. Overall, Canadians appear to be particularly unsympathetic toward clandestine immigration (Bloemraad, 2012).

In this regard, the current Canadian government's shift toward greater use of temporary worker visas for immigrant labor carries the risk of stoking more anti-immigration sentiment in the country. As a result, trust in and support for Canada's immigration policy rests to a modest degree on the strong preference for permanent over temporary immigration.

However, are economic self-selection, geography, and a relatively small unauthorized population sufficient to account for Canadian exceptionalism? The British Isles, geographically separated from this continent and not sharing a border with a less developed country, nonetheless have public opinion firmly set against further immigration. In the United States, most immigrants, including the unauthorized, are in the labor force, and despite a moderate WELFARE GOVERNMENT, the US is divided over the economic benefits of immigration. Native-born individuals in any country can easily resent wealthy, highly educated immigrants. In Canada, this can be seen in the periodic backlashes in the Vancouver area, where some residents blame Chinese immigrants for pricing ordinary Canadians out of the housing market (Bloemraad, 2012).

Migration, Multiculturalism and the Politics of Integration as Nation-Building (2000-2012).

In the "Canadian model," immigration aids nation-building. This view, promoted by the federal government, is also endorsed by native peoples. In Canada, those expressing stronger patriotism were more likely to support immigration and multiculturalism. In the United States, this correlation went in the opposite direction: those expressing stronger patriotism tended to voice more anti-immigrant attitudes (Bloemraad, 2012).

Canada's paradigm of immigration as nation-building is rooted in a particular set of policies and institutions (2000-2012): It is about permanent settlement and integration into a

diversified citizenry, where legal systems, public policies, and political structures foster participation and membership. Immigrants to Canada generally feel welcomed. Given the essentially permanent nature of immigration to Canada, government policy promotes integration (often in partnership with community organizations), as both sides are assumed to be in it for the long haul. At the same time, given the government's policy and ideology of multiculturalism, integration does not mean assimilation. Ultimately, the near totality of immigrants acquiring citizenship and this enfranchisement make it hard for anti-immigration politicians to gain traction, since immigrant votes affect electoral outcomes (Bloemraad, 2012).

Immigration and Permanent Residence (2000-2012).

The immigration-as-nation-building pattern rests on particular features of Canadian policy. As noted earlier, there is a strong preference for permanent rather than temporary immigration to Canada, with 80% of first-time immigration being for permanent residence. It is easy to imagine that a native-born population would have little incentive to view temporary outsiders as future members of society, or for immigrants to feel invested in a society where their residence is meant to be transient. Historically, Canada has had minimal temporary worker programs. Thus, unlike the Bracero program in the United States—which is undoubtedly a catalyst for today's sizable undocumented population—the near totality of immigration to Canada has been for permanent settlement. Canada's various temporary worker programs, such as the Live-in Caregiver Program, provide visa holders with a relatively straightforward and short path to permanent residence. Under the “Canadian Experience Class,” introduced in 2008, workers with 2 years of skilled work experience—including trades and professions—can apply for permanent residence based on their demonstrated experience and language abilities. Similarly, international students graduating from a Canadian tertiary institution who obtain one year of work experience can

transition to permanent status. Most analogous programs in other countries, from Japan to the United States, keep migrants temporarily. In Canada, 32,827 individuals transitioned from temporary foreign worker status to permanent residence in 2010, and another 8,667 transitioned from temporary student status to permanent residence. This means that 15% of the total 280,681 permanent admissions were individuals who were previously in Canada on temporary work or study visas. The proportion transitioning from temporary to permanent status has risen over the past decade. In 2001, only 8% of permanent residents had previously held temporary worker or student visas (Bloemraad, 2012).

Canadian Multiculturalism (2000-2012).

Multiculturalism has played an important role in reorganizing the symbolic order of membership in Canada. The Bi-and-Bi Commission of the 1960s, which helped shape what would ultimately become multiculturalism policy, still spoke of Canada's two "founding races": English and French. Given the stickiness of national ideologies, it is remarkable that in one generation, Canadians have shed these views and now many embrace the idea of a diversified citizenry. Support for multiculturalism and immigration go hand-in-hand. 68% supported current immigration levels. By comparison, only 42% of the small group who thought multiculturalism was "not important" (12%) supported existing immigration (Bloemraad, 2012).

Why and how did this shift in national identity—one that includes immigrants—occur?
(2000-2012)

It was partly due to the fortuitous timing of multiculturalism's birth. In the 1960s and 1970s, Canadians were seeking a sense of national cohesion that was neither British nor American. That is a country that could somehow accommodate Quebec's burgeoning separatist movement. Multiculturalism served to distinguish Canada from the US melting pot and

images of Protestant Britishness. It also affirmed Québécois nationalism grounded in the Francophone cultural distinctiveness. While it is often argued in Europe that traditional immigrant-receiving countries like the United States and Canada are better able to accommodate an “immigrant“ storyline into national identity, this underestimates the Britishness of Canadian society until late in the twentieth Century. Government recognition and celebration of diversity, in an overarching Canadian frame, has provided a portal through which new Canadians can enter the national community. Initiatives like multicultural curricula in schools include immigration histories and the participation of long-standing minorities in the national narrative (Bloemraad, 2012).

Family Reunification and Shifts in Canadian Immigration Policy (2000-2012).

Family reunification has long been a feature of Canada’s immigration stream, although the numbers admitted through this stream have varied over time. Similarly, the types of individuals considered “eligible“ family members have shifted over the decades (Daniel, 2005). Three to four decades ago, the ratio of humanitarian immigrants (family class and refugees) to economic immigrants entering Canada was 60:40. Now (2015), it is the reverse, with economic immigrants dominating. In recent years, there has been a notable decline in the proportion of family-class immigrants admitted to Canada (from 39% in 1994 to 22% in 2012) (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012), and the number of individuals admitted as family-class immigrants and refugees has fallen. This trend accelerated with the election of a right-of-center Conservative minority government in 2006 (after 13 years of Liberal rule), and subsequently a Conservative majority in 2011. This has occurred within the international framing of global capitalism and neoliberalism. For Canadian immigration policy, this has meant a shift towards greater emphasis on the market and economic prioritization. Consequently, Canada's immigration policy has undergone fundamental shifts over the past 3 years (2012 to 2015). In 2011, the government temporarily suspended the Family

Reunification program, which allowed immigrants and citizens to sponsor parents and grandparents to come to Canada. Instead, the government created a special visitor visa stream for family members: the Parent and Grandparent Super Visa. The Canadian Super Visa is a 2-year visa that can be renewed for up to 10 years with standard visitor visa fees. However, the Super Visa also requires families to meet minimum income thresholds and purchase Canadian medical insurance. This program reopened on January 1, 2014, accepted 5000 applications, and re-closed on February 3, 2014, after reaching the application cap. In 2015, the Canadian government announced that a new program for parents and grandparents would be launched (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2014; Bragg & Wong, 2016).

While family separation could be liberating for some, especially women, research indicates that constraints on family reunification disproportionately impact diverse immigrant communities in Canada. These impacts are both numerical – immigrants from Global South countries have historically been the primary users of Canada’s family reunification programs – and fundamental – immigrants seeking meaningful reunification with family members report inability to sponsor relatives, which compounds feelings of unbelonging. Arguably, the debates surrounding family reunification in Canada shape how the nation is imagined by its diverse constituents, warranting a revisit. Currently, Citizenship and Immigration Canada includes the following individuals under the “Family Class“:

1- Spouses, common-law partners, dependent children, children of spouses/partners, and dependent children of dependent children are included. It also covers parents and grandparents who may be financially sponsored to immigrate after their children/grandchildren have immigrated to Canada. Not all spouses and dependent children are counted under the Family Class - they may be included in an Economic Class application and therefore counted as economic rather than family immigrants. Additionally, Canada’s new Parent and Grandparent Super Visa program is somewhat similar to Australia’s

temporary “Contributing Parent” visa stream, given its limited and relatively expensive nature, in contrast to the U.S., which continues to allow citizens over 21 to sponsor parents for permanent residence. Some countries (like France, Italy, and Spain) allow parents to reunite under family provisions without any eligibility tests. In 2010, before the new Super Visa program, Canada ranked 2nd out of 31 MIPEX III countries for family reunification policies, indicating that its previous policy was highly favorable compared to those of other countries (MIPEX, 2014). As a result, Canada’s new temporary Super Visa policy could now rank it among other countries with more restrictive and less favorable policies for family reunification...potentially having negative impacts on immigration levels to Canada (Bragg & Wong, 2016).

Today, Canada has a non-discriminatory policy for admitting permanent immigrants in the economic, family, and refugee classes. Historically, Canada has pursued immigration to grow its population, strengthen the economy, and nation-build (Ritz, 2003). Major immigration waves have aligned with economic needs (Green & Green, 1999). In the 19th and early 20th centuries, agricultural development drove economic opportunity in Canada, leading to the recruitment of immigrants for Western settlement. The 1880s Pacific railway construction created a notable immigration wave, while the 1900s saw renewed agricultural development and 30 years of substantial immigration. Post-WWII, Canada reinstated a nation-building immigration policy that remains a significant component of its immigration policy today. Two major shifts in economic immigration goals reflected Canada’s changing economic needs. First was the rural-to-urban shift accompanying industrialization - large-scale post-war immigration involved lower-skilled workers needed for urban industrial employment, entering the economic hierarchy at lower rungs. The second shift was from low-skilled to high-skilled immigration, accompanying the transition to a post-industrial economy. Canada also eliminated origin-based selection criteria in the 1960s, introducing a points system in

1967 for selecting putatively “independent“ or economic immigrants designed to maximize employment capabilities for an economy prioritizing skilled labor. Since then, immigrant selection has evolved into a form of human capital management. The federal government’s role in immigration has been reinforced through successive legislation (1976, 2001), but in recent decades, Quebec has gained significant powers over selection and settlement for its francophone segment. Other provinces have also negotiated immigration agreements with the federal government since the late 1990s. Immigrant settlement and integration are shared responsibilities across levels of government. Key issues around Canada’s immigration policy include: (a) management, (b) policy objectives, (c) economic impacts, (d) social impacts across linguistic/cultural/racial dimensions, and (e) emerging issues (Reitz, 2003).

Given that policy reforms in Canada’s immigration policy have maintained a “managerial“ stance focused on program size and immigrant numbers, the evolution of “economic“ immigration, and reducing overall program costs (Reitz, 2003).

Managing Numbers and Population:

Over the past decade, Canada has admitted between 200,000 and 250,000 immigrants per year, with a peak of 251,000 in 2001. The current government policy aims to increase this to 1% of the population annually, or around 300,000. The 1996 Canadian census showed about 17% of the country’s population was foreign-born (Reitz, 2003).

Managing Economic Immigration: The points system for selecting independent or “economic” immigrants, and related efforts to maximize the proportion this class represents relative to the Family Class and other non-economic categories, have become the primary policy tools to ensure the immigrant intake responds to Canada’s economic needs. In points-based selection, applicants are scored for admissibility based on criteria such as education, job skills, and proficiency in one of the official languages, English or French. The

basic assumption has been that immigrants who are successful in employment make a more positive economic and societal contribution: they buy more goods, pay more taxes, start more businesses, create more jobs, and use fewer social services. They will not take jobs from native workers or depress wages (Reitz, 2003).

Managing “Non-Economic” Immigration and Overall Program Costs: In this regard, policy has also focused on reducing the Family Class’ share of total immigration, decreasing settlement and social service costs, and addressing issues in the refugee determination process (Reitz, 2003).

(b) Immigration Policy

Public Opinion: Public opinion polls indicate relatively strong support for immigration (Simmons & Lynch, 1999). In most years since 1970, majorities have favored current or increased immigration levels. The proportion wanting decreased immigration has fluctuated between 30 and 46%, peaking at 55% in 1982, particularly at the height of an economic downturn when immigrants were seen as competition for jobs. Majorities have occasionally agreed that “overall there is too much immigration to Canada,” but the proportion disagreeing reached a 54% majority in 2000 (Reitz, 2003).

(c) Economic Impact

In Canada, there is a widespread belief that in the current era, immigrants with better education, due to higher incomes and greater economic self-sufficiency, have a more positive economic impact. Economists generally agree, though they differ in their methods for estimating this impact. Unlike the low-skilled immigration of the 1950s and 1960s, immigrants entering Canada since the 1970s under the merit-based selection program generally have high levels of education (Reitz, 2001b, p. 610). Earlier immigrants, especially those from southern Europe, averaged eight or fewer years of schooling and worked in

unskilled occupations – for example, Italians in construction, or other groups in particular manufacturing industries. Over time, as admission criteria became more stringent, immigrant educational levels rose substantially. The 1996 census showed working-age immigrants entering in the latest 5-year period averaged 14 years of schooling, and nearly 30% had university degrees (Reitz, 2001b, p. 610). However, while immigrant educational levels have been high, they may still lag somewhat behind those of native-born young urban workers who may be their main labor-market competitors (Reitz, 2003).

(d) Social Impact: Language, Multiculturalism, and Race

Understanding the social and cultural integration of immigrants in Canada requires attention to three conditions that pose policy management challenges (Breton, 1979). First, immigration to Canada must be managed in consideration of its linguistic duality and relations between its two founding language communities, English and French. Second, Canada's official "multiculturalism," touted domestically as a force promoting effective integration of immigrant groups, requires evaluation. Third, the racial cleavages resulting from recent immigration raise questions about the immigrant integration process.

(e) Emerging Issues in Canadian Immigration Policy: Canadian immigration policy faces an uncertain future: controlling immigration and its impact may pose greater challenges in the future than in the past (Reitz, 2003).

Immigration vs. Security (2007).

Three concerns after 9/11 have shaped Canada's approach to immigration, citizenship, and security. Identifying new security threats; continental integration, that is, the pull toward greater economic integration with the United States, along with pressure for coordination on security, immigration, and border controls; and most saliently, in dealing with situations perceived as potentially threatening, an emphasis on security over human rights and civil

liberties. Security concerns for states were not new. For, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Mujahideen, cajoled, supported, and even trained by the CIA, turned their attention to new targets, including their erstwhile allies. Several U.S. embassies and consulates around the world were attacked in the 1990s. Specifically for Canada, two Smart Border Accords – a bilateral agreement with the U.S. signed December 12, 2001, and Canada's new Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA), that received Royal Assent November 1, 2001 but was first introduced as Bill C-31 in the House on April 6, 2000, well before 9/11, were drafted (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2003, p. 291). The events of 9/11 expedited their formal adoption. When an Algerian national who had been living in Canada for 5 years was caught attempting to enter the U.S. at Los Angeles airport with a trunk full of explosives, it marked the beginning of the politicization of the Canada-US border (Andreas 2005, p. 454). From that point on, U.S. politicians and media frequently referred to Canada as having lax immigration policies and soft laws regarding political asylum, and thus border issues became politicized (quoted in Antonius et al, 2007).

Since 2014

Characteristics of Recent Immigrants to Canada.

Over the past several decades, Canada has experienced notable shifts in immigrant origins and characteristics. Immigration from the U.K. and Western Europe has steadily declined, while arrivals from Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and the Caribbean have increased, reflecting both global demographic changes and adjustments in Canadian immigration policy (Ali, 2014). The share of immigrants entering professional and technical occupations has risen, whereas unskilled immigration has decreased. Changes in global economic conditions, reduced post-war emigration from Europe, and social unrest in the United States also contributed to shifts in migration patterns. Meanwhile, variations in Canadian admission standards and efforts to process backlogged applications have influenced the skill composition of recent immigrants. Additionally, settlement trends have shifted slightly, with fewer newcomers choosing Quebec and more opting for British Columbia, while major urban areas continue to attract the majority of immigrants (Ali, 2014).

2014 and Beyond

Future Immigration Policies.

Since most policies tend to evolve rather than change abruptly, future immigration policies will no doubt be shaped to some extent by current and past policies and developments. Of course, future policy will also depend on society's evolving mix of objectives and on how immigration helps meet those objectives, as well as on anticipated and unanticipated events that occur both inside and outside the country, with a special committee playing an important role in shaping its content. Developments in immigration policy will have to take all of these factors into account. Thus, the overall annual level of immigration intake would likely be about what it has been, and perhaps somewhat lower to the extent that immigration from Canada to the U.S. has declined recently. The decline means that less immigration will be required to augment the labor force by a given number (Ali, 2014).

Nativism and Immigration Policies

The first US nativist movement dates back to the rapid influx of 4.2 million immigrants between 1840 and 1860, reaching its peak with the prominent rise of the US National Party and culminating in some of the bloodiest anti-immigrant riots in the country's western cities—namely, Chicago, Cincinnati, Louisville, and St. Louis. Initially, these conflicts were motivated by US nativism. The unprecedented migration from Europe and the rapid westward expansion rekindled fears of Catholics as a corrosive force, associated with rising crime and poverty in urban Western areas. The political era of nativism in the United States renewed the US's commitment to the separation of church and state. Native US forced Catholics and immigrants—who might otherwise have leaned toward monarchism—to accept US-style democracy. Catholics and immigrants compelled the US to adopt a broader definition of religious freedom. This point sheds light on today's immigration concerns, particularly the role of anti-Islamic appeals in recent elections (Ritter, 2021). Nativism is the idea that a specific group of people can identify as the authentic or rightful heirs of a geopolitical territory; consequently, the “natives” claim decision-making privileges regarding who belongs and who is considered a “foreigner” based on supposed external connections. Arguably, nativism is a global phenomenon. Nativist movements prioritize the interests of natives over non-natives or those born abroad (e.g., “US First”). Political nativism describes the convergence of nativism—the belief in inheritance—and a nativist movement—the reaffirmation of “natives first”—to create measurable political change. At its core lies the innate human desire to feel “at home.” What people need to feel “at home” varies across time and place but often involves economic stability and a shared combination of behaviors, values, religious beliefs, language, or race. For example, in the 1930 presidential election, the candidate nominated by the US Party won nearly 1% of the popular vote, making the party the second-largest third party in U.S. history. Its official platform called for increasing the

residency requirement for citizenship from five to twenty-one years, supported only native-born US citizens for administrative positions, and opposed anyone who showed greater loyalty to a church or foreign government than to the U.S. Constitution. Specific anti-immigrant thought patterns from the pre-Civil War era have repeated since then, especially amid demographic changes caused by immigration. However, much of the historical context of US nativism, and thus its meaning, has varied across time and place (Ritter, 2021).

A persistent and challenging issue in the history of U.S. immigration, particularly since the 1924 Immigration Act, has been the coexistence of highly restrictive, anti-immigrant laws alongside the demand for a nativist legal framework that also meets employers' need for cheap immigrant labor (Tichenor, 2023). Donald Trump's three presidential campaigns centered on promises to halt illegal immigration, either through "building the wall" or enacting the largest mass deportation in U.S. history (Nagel, 2025). To fulfill these promises, Trump appointed Stephen Miller—a hardline anti-immigration advocate responsible for the stringent border policies of Trump's first administration—to a key position in the White House. The newscast views Trump as someone who breaks liberal-democratic norms; however, when it comes to immigration policy, by employing Miller, he followed a well-worn path. This brief interpretation situates the Trump/Miller anti-immigration policy within a historical context, illustrating how concerns over labor competition and racial/cultural integrity led to selective enforcement, restrictions, and the deprivation of rights for particular groups of "foreigners" present on U.S. soil. The next four years will undoubtedly see severe restrictions on asylum and refugee resettlement, alongside aggressive detention and deportation practices, many of which the government implemented through executive orders or bureaucratic procedures. Amid this more restrictive environment, debates over the relative merit of certain groups of foreigners will continue. Indeed, such debates

have already emerged among MAGA loyalists regarding the H1B visa for skilled workers—supported by tech oligarchs like Elon Musk but opposed by many far-right commentators (Nagel, 2025). How these debates unfold will reveal the limitations of Trump’s nativist-populist agenda. Ultimately, the tension between restrictionism and leniency is a perennial feature of U.S. immigration policy. Stephen Miller’s ability or inability to resist employers’ demands for foreign workers—both skilled and “unskilled”—will expose the particular constraints of Trump’s nativist-populist form of restrictionism (Nagel, 2025).

In recent years, Canada has been portrayed as a symbol of openness, diversity, and social peace amid a rise in nativist populism worldwide. The election of Donald Trump only popularized this view further, as Justin Trudeau, Canada’s Prime Minister, gained prominence in media comparisons as a passionate advocate of global citizenship and multiculturalism. According to some interpretations, Canada might be considered the “world’s first post-national state.” Indeed, Trudeau himself seems to embrace this perspective, claiming that “there is no core identity, no mainstream in Canada” (Lawson, 2015). From this viewpoint, nativism has become impossible and even unthinkable for a competitive political party in contemporary Canada. Perhaps uniquely among major developed democracies, Canada—except for a brief anomaly—has not seen the rise of a competitive nativist party on the national stage in recent decades. The primary explanation for this lies in the relative success of multiculturalism and extensive immigration policies in Canada, which have limited the “demand” for a nativist party. In other words, public opinion strongly supports pro-immigration and pro-diversity positions, making nativism a losing stance for any rival party. Thus, Canada’s immigration system design and government-endorsed multiculturalism have contributed significantly to strengthening a “pro-immigration Canada.” Although Canadians are generally less hostile toward immigration than voters in many other countries, a significant portion of the population still desires lower immigration levels. The immigration

preferences of Canadian voters are not markedly different from those in some countries where nativist parties have emerged (Akin, 2017). To offer the most precise comparison, consider attitudes toward immigration policies from two recent surveys in the United States and Canada. A 2017 Gallup poll in the U.S. found that 35% wanted lower immigration levels, 38% supported the status quo, and 24% desired higher immigration (Gordon, 2019).

Meanwhile, a 2018 Angus Reid poll showed that 49% of Canadians wanted less immigration, compared to 31% who preferred current levels and only 6% who wanted more. Given this evidence, one may speak of Canada's "exceptionalism," which hinges on the interaction of so-called demand and supply factors that typically lead to the rise of nativist parties (Gordon, 2019). Explanations for Canada's exceptionalism point to its geographical isolation and distinct immigration and multicultural policies. However, three other factors also play a role: the distribution of immigrants across Canada, Canadian citizenship policies, and the single-member plurality electoral system. The interaction of these forces increases the electoral weight of new Canadian voters, which in turn moderates the positions of Canadian political parties and helps consolidate a strong bipartisan political consensus. Therefore, the transferability of the "Canadian model" is limited. While other countries may adopt aspects of Canada's policy approach, given the conditional factors shaping immigration politics in Canada, achieving similar degrees of political consensus elsewhere will be challenging (Triadafilopoulos & Taylor, 2021).

Overall, public opinion's relatively favorable stance toward immigration has reduced the likelihood of the emergence of a nativist party—representing the "demand" side. Had Canadian public opinion been strongly opposed to large-scale immigration, as is the case in the UK, a competitive nativist party would likely have emerged. Meanwhile, on the "supply" side, Canada's single-member plurality (SMP) electoral system has limited the rise of such a party. The SMP system encourages parties to compete for the median voter, restricting their

ability to adopt controversial positions that might alienate key voter groups. The SMP system helps explain why, for example, New Zealand has a competitive nativist party while Canada does not. However, Australia's experience shows that a majoritarian voting system alone, even when anti-immigrant sentiment is moderate, is insufficient to prevent such a party from entering competitive politics. Another distinctive feature of the Canadian context, which has received insufficient or incorrect attention in the literature, relates to Quebec. In Quebec, stronger anti-immigration sentiment was found in rural and smaller urban areas, as well as in English-speaking Canada. They were fragmented, thereby preventing right-wing parties from mobilizing these sentiments in a way that could realistically win elections. Consequently, such parties have been forced to moderate their messages and appeal to "ethnic voters" in suburban ridings around Toronto and Vancouver (Gordon, 2019). In general, the United States has at times accepted and at other times restricted immigration depending on economic interests and rising populism. In contrast, Canada has used immigration policies primarily to attract economic migrants, albeit with tensions between humanitarian goals and neoliberal priorities (Gordon, 2019).

Now, we must ask why immigration remains such a controversial issue in the United States.

Trump's immigration rhetoric increasingly relies on lies, misinformation, and racist stereotypes. However, his claim that immigration is "out of control" - and his insistence that decisive action is needed to address it - has been central to the Republican agenda, with one of Trump's most frequent campaign promises being that he will deport millions of illegal immigrants. Immigration is a highly complex policy area in US politics. Its hidden nuances defy lay understanding. The fact that immigration touches on core identity issues, fears of demographic change, and economic uncertainties makes it ripe for scapegoating and misinformation. For decades, a longstanding political stalemate has blocked efforts to create a more modern and flexible immigration system in the United States - one with adequate legal

immigration pathways to meet labor market demand and sufficient resources to process asylum claims. However, the Biden-Harris administration has had a different record. Since President Biden took office in January 2021, the United States has rebuilt and expanded a refugee resettlement system that President Trump had dismantled. The US has also provided humanitarian protection to hundreds of thousands of Afghans and Ukrainians, extended Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for some foreign nationals in the US from an unprecedented 16 countries of origin, and granted temporary entry to individuals from Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Venezuela who can find US sponsors, regardless of their humanitarian protection needs. However, many of these newcomers have precarious legal status, leaving them vulnerable to deportation, especially if there is a change in party power. Deeply concerning to immigrant rights advocates, the Biden administration has continued or reinstated many Trump-era restrictions on asylum access at the southern border, albeit in a more humane form (CIDOB, 2024).

In past decades, bipartisan efforts at comprehensive immigration reform had recognized the need to a) improve immigration law enforcement, b) regularize the undocumented population, and c) create better pathways for future immigrant flows. However, Trump has long pushed for an “enforcement-first“ policy approach, insisting on the need to “secure the border“ before addressing other elements of immigration policy. Under Trump’s leadership, Republicans have essentially shifted to an “enforcement-only“ policy, reducing immigration policy complexities to the extreme and narrowing the scope of policy solutions to mass deportation and severe restrictions on future flows (CIDOB, 2024).

Immigration, Refugee, and Asylum Policy Under the Biden Administration

President Biden moved quickly after taking office in January 2021, issuing several executive actions early in his presidency to reverse many of Trump’s immigration policies.

The new president ended the refugee ban from Muslim-majority countries, halted family separations at the border (and began efforts to reunite separated families), and called for an interagency report on the relationship between climate change and migration. Biden also proposed a path to citizenship for millions of undocumented immigrants, including DACA recipients - unauthorized individuals brought to the United States as children who had received temporary legal status under President Obama (Congress has yet to pass legislation for these “dreamers“), and he temporarily halted deportations while reviewing immigration enforcement policies. The new administration also increased refugee admissions to the United States. When Biden took power, the annual refugee ceiling was at 15,000. In April 2021, he raised it to 63,500 - a largely symbolic gesture at the time, given the impact of Trump’s dismantling of the refugee program and the near impossibility of processing refugees overseas at the height of the pandemic. The total refugee admissions for the fiscal year were only 11,411, slightly less than Trump’s final year and the lowest refugee admission level in the 40-year history of the resettlement program. The refugee program eventually recovered, with over 60,000 admissions in fiscal year 2023 and 100,034 - the highest level in three decades - in the fiscal year that ended September 30, 2024. Just as the refugee program was beginning to rebuild, the fall of Kabul in August 2021 led to a massive influx of Afghan migrants, with over 90,000 coming to the United States. Nearly 76,000 of these individuals obtained humanitarian parole status, allowing them to live and work in the United States for two years but not providing a path to permanent residence similar to the US’s formal refugee admission program. Then came Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, resulting in the admission of large numbers of Ukrainians, also under humanitarian parole. To support Ukrainian parole, the Biden administration created an innovative private sponsorship program called Uniting for Ukraine (U4U). Launched in April 2022, the program allows US citizens and permanent residents to welcome Ukrainians they financially support for their

stay in the US. A similar program was created for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans (or CHNV) who could find a US sponsor group. As of October 2024, over 230,000 Ukrainians have entered the United States under U4U, and approximately 530,000 have entered through the CHNV program. The latter program was part of a set of measures the Biden administration took to manage migration flows from the Western Hemisphere. Another component is the Safe Mobility Initiative (Movilidad Segura), launched in 2023, which includes establishing Safe Mobility Offices (SMOs) in Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Guatemala, allowing applicants to apply for potential legal pathways from within Latin America. The SMOs operate within the framework of the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection, a June 2022 statement endorsed by the United States, Canada, Mexico, and 19 other Latin American and Caribbean countries. Through the Declaration, partner countries committed to collaborating on root causes, legal pathways, and humane enforcement. At SMOs—operated in partnership with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and International Organization for Migration (IOM)—applicants are screened for protection needs and, depending on their eligibility, may be directed to one of several pathways, including resettlement, humanitarian parole, family reunification, and temporary work visas. For some eligible applicants, migration pathways to Canada, New Zealand, or Spain are available. According to the US State Department, as of September 2024, approximately 242,600 applicants had applied to the Movilidad Segura program, with 17,600 resettled as refugees in the United States and 1,000 referred for resettlement to other countries. Just as the CHNV and SMO programs offer new legal pathways, the Biden administration has also doubled down on its enforcement efforts at the US southern border with mixed results and negative impacts on the right to seek asylum. Initially, President Biden modified the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP), the “Remain in Mexico“ policy enacted by President Trump in January 2019, which required asylum seekers at the border to wait in

Mexico for immigration court dates. A court ruling led the Biden administration to reinstate MPP, in a slightly modified form, from December 2021 to October 2022. Trump-era Title 42 border restrictions largely remained under Biden, only ending in May 2023 when President Biden declared the end of the COVID-19 emergency. On May 11, 2023, the administration replaced Title 42 with new, stringent controls on asylum through the Circumvention of Lawful Pathways (CLP) rule (CIDOB, 2024).

The end of the pandemic required potential asylum seekers to register for a border screening appointment through an app called “CBP One,” which disqualified most (non-Mexican) asylum seekers who had not sought asylum in another country en route to the United States and imposed other restrictions. Advocacy groups, such as Human Rights First and the National Immigration Forum, argued that the CLP rule imposes restrictions and conditions on asylum access that violate US and international law. A year later, in June 2024, asylum access was further restricted with a presidential proclamation accompanied by an interim final rule on “Border Security.” These measures ban almost everyone from entering the United States outside ports of entry and close the border to asylum seekers when encounters exceed 1,500 in 7 days. On September 30, the US finalized a policy requiring border encounters to remain below 1,500 for up to 28 days. As the US Immigration Lawyers Association points out, this effectively closes access to asylum indefinitely (although the rule allows limited exceptions). According to the Biden administration, the combination of the CHNV program and asylum restrictions has led to a sharp decrease in migrants entering the US through the southern border. In late September, the US Department of Homeland Security released a fact sheet crediting the June proclamation and interim rule with a 55% reduction in border encounters, and the Pew Research Center notes a dramatic decline in border encounters from December 2023 to August 2024, with the steepest drops (over 95% decline) among nationalities with alternative pathways through CHNV. As CBS News reported, the

Biden administration announced on October 4, 2024, that it would not extend the two-year parole period for those who entered under CHNV, meaning that - after their parole period ends - they must apply for other immigration relief, leave the country, or face possible deportation (CIDOB, 2024).

On the other hand, immigration was one of the main issues in the 2024 presidential campaign, with President-elect Trump promising stringent measures to restrict both legal and illegal immigration to the United States. Such actions would have severe impacts on immigrant families' health and well-being, as well as significant economic consequences for the country. By 2023, 47.1 million immigrants lived in the United States, and one in four children had immigrant parents. Increased immigration raises federal revenues and reduces the national deficit by boosting the country's economy and workforce and generating billions in tax revenue. President-elect Trump has indicated plans to restrict and eliminate legal immigration pathways, including humanitarian protections, and deport millions of immigrants, likely resulting in family separations, adverse mental and physical impacts for immigrant families, and adverse effects on the country's workforce and economy (Moodir, 2024).

Similarities and Differences in U.S. and Canadian Immigration Policies

According to researches (Rekai's, 2002; Banerjee, 2024; Baxter, A. M., & Nowrasteh, 2022), the similarities in US and Canadian immigration policies include: 1- In the wake of the horrific events of September 11, 2001, both Canada and the United States have reviewed their immigration policies. Intensified screening of immigrants and refugee claimants has been a significant focus for change in both countries. 2- Concerning the movement of people and related security issues at the shared border, the United States and Canada face similar challenges and must continue cooperating to resolve bilateral problems. 3- Historically, the

United States and Canada have shared similar values regarding immigration as a nation-building cornerstone. Immigration policies in the two countries have dealt with admitting those seeking permanent residence (immigrants) as well as those seeking temporary entry (non-immigrants). 4- Both countries have sought to grow and expand their populations, geographic boundaries, and labor forces by attracting new permanent residents. 5- Both countries regard family reunification as an important criterion in selecting their immigrants. 6- They have a humanitarian component in their immigrant selection and admission policies and protect refugees, asylum seekers, and displaced persons. 7- Both countries admit and recruit temporary foreign workers to supplement their domestic labor forces, particularly in the face of domestic skills shortages. 8- Canada and the United States are among the countries that continue to welcome new permanent immigrants. However, they are also among those who rely on temporary admission of foreign workers to meet specific skills needs. 9- In both Canada and the United States, refugees and refugee policy have attracted considerable attention in the security-conscious world since September 11, 2001, and both base their acceptance and treatment of refugees on the principles laid down in the international conventions and protocols to which they are signatories. 10- An applicant for permanent residence through a Canadian visa office abroad can expect to wait between one and seven years for medical screening, security, and criminal record checks to be completed prior to entry into Canada, similar to the wait times faced by US green card applicants. 11- The economies of Canada and the United States, particularly the hospitality, transportation, and leisure sectors, are heavily dependent on the free flow of international business travelers and tourists. 12- While Canada has been more passive in developing its initiatives to monitor visitors in the country, it has been much more proactive on border security issues. It has proposed several cooperative measures to US authorities (Canada, 2001b). Generally, the two countries manifestly face similar challenges in border security.

Based on researches (Rekai's, 2002; Banerjee, 2024; Baxter, A. M., & Nowrasteh, 2022), the differences between US and Canadian immigration policies include:

- 1- Canada restricted sponsorship of extended family in the 1980s–1990s; the U.S. still prioritizes family reunification (~64% of legal immigrants).
2. U.S. immigration is mainly family-based, followed by refugees, economic, and diversity visa immigrants.
3. Canada admits mostly economic immigrants, then families, and lastly refugees.
4. In 2000, Canada admitted ~89,000 foreign workers (0.03% of the population).
5. In 2000, the U.S. admitted ~1,234,000 temporary foreign workers (0.04% of the population).
6. Canada negotiates flexible foreign worker arrangements with employers; the U.S. is less flexible due to professional associations.
7. Fewer legal avenues exist in the U.S. for hiring lower-skilled foreign labor than in Canada.
8. The U.S. requires advanced visitor tracking, including fingerprints, database checks, and periodic confirmation of residence.
9. Canada has made little progress in developing an entry–exit tracking system for visitors.
10. Visitors in Canada are largely unmonitored after entry.
11. Overall, Canada's visitor scrutiny initiatives are modest compared to U.S. practices.

Briefly, the U.S. and Canada differ in immigration priorities and management. The U.S. emphasizes family reunification, admitting most immigrants through family sponsorship, while Canada prioritizes economic immigration and offers more flexible arrangements for temporary foreign workers. Although both countries host foreign labor, the

U.S. admits higher numbers, while Canada negotiates directly with employers. Visitor management also differs: the U.S. uses strict tracking and security checks, whereas Canada has limited monitoring, resulting in relatively modest visitor scrutiny.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

This chapter presents a methodological framework encompassing my personal and cultural background, research design, and data collection methods. My personal and cultural introduction is relevant to this study, as I have navigated the Canadian immigration system as an immigrant. While this represents a theoretical study, my background may enhance mutual understanding and interpretation of the findings.

Personal and Cultural Positionality

This section situates my personal and cultural background, as it shapes both my perspective and the interpretation of the research findings. I was born in Tehran, Iran, where societal norms, religious beliefs, and family structures significantly influence individual behaviors, educational paths, and career choices. While the culture emphasizes respect for parents and adherence to social expectations, I developed a strong personal motivation to learn and advance professionally from an early age. This drive guided my educational journey through primary, secondary, and higher education in Iran, culminating in degrees in English Language Studies and Architecture.

My passion for education and global professional development eventually led me to immigrate to Canada with my husband and son. Achieving the required IELTS score allowed me to enter Canadian education programs and later pursue a master's degree in education.

My lived experience navigating immigration policies in both Canada and the United States, including challenges arising from systemic inequities and shifting national policies, has deeply informed my understanding of multicultural and anti-oppressive educational practices.

Canada's current policies offer immigrants equitable opportunities, particularly in education. Students are placed in grades based on age rather than prior educational attainment, with ESL support provided as needed. Immigrant teachers are recognized for their prior experience, receive equal pay and rights compared to native colleagues, and enjoy professional integration and psychological adjustment. Such policies foster a sense of belonging, enhance teaching effectiveness, and contribute positively to the educational system.

My research interest emerged from a desire to analyze and compare immigration policies in Canada and the United States, understand historical trends from the 1960s to the present, and explore their implications for multicultural education. This study also aims to serve as a guide for future immigrants, particularly teachers, by clarifying immigration pathways, highlighting supportive policies, and identifying best practices for successful integration.

Data collection for this study primarily involved document analysis of immigration policies spanning from the 1960s to the present. The guiding research question is: What are the similarities between U.S. and Canadian immigration policies from the 1960s to the present? This study demonstrates how lived experience and policy analysis intersect to illuminate pathways for immigrant integration, educational equity, and professional advancement within multicultural contexts.

Research Design

This study is a qualitative document analysis employing a thematic analytic approach. The researcher systematically analyzed government documents on immigration policies and conducted data analysis concurrently with data collection, as is standard in qualitative

inquiry. Through continuous review and note-taking, patterns, similarities, and differences in U.S. and Canadian immigration policies since the 1960s were identified. The data were then organized into emerging themes, allowing the researcher to develop, refine, and connect conceptual ideas grounded in the documents.

Qualitative methodology researchers (Creswell, 2007; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2014) maintain that data collection and analysis in the qualitative study are inextricable and jointly constituted. Hence, responsive, well-designed qualitative studies should integrate data collection with analysis. I therefore analyzed the data continuously from the beginning of the study. I continuously referred to the documents and composed systematic notes that captured insights into the similarities and differences in US and Canadian immigration policies since the 1960s (Creswell, 2007). I classified the data into emerging themes, and I formed and tested ideas and connections among the ideas and related concepts within the emerging themes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2014).

Data Collection

For this thesis, I treated documents as data sources, similar to information gathered through other research tools. My document analysis began with examining each document and determining its relevance to my study, followed by creating a document summary form (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I first examined each document related to Canadian and US immigration. Several key questions guided my document analysis: a) What immigration policy concepts does the document convey? b) What insights do the documents reveal about perspectives on immigration policy? c) What similarities exist between Canadian and US immigration policies? d) What differences exist between Canadian and US immigration

policies? The issues emerging from document analysis provide orientation and guidance for the study, enabling me to understand the similarities and differences between Canadian and US immigration policies.

I reviewed and analyzed 10 documents relevant to the present study. The first document I reviewed was *Opportunity and Exclusion: A Brief History of US Immigration Policy*. This research examines the US continent, early immigrants, and US immigration policies from 1960 to 2012. This document's related historical context effectively illustrated the development of the US continent, indigenous peoples, first immigrants, and their interactions with subsequent immigrants. It also revealed the country's initial immigration policies and the historical factors that shaped them through 2012. The lay's significance in providing valuable historical insights into the origins of US policymaking. It systematically explained immigration barriers and their rationales from 1492 to 2012. The key areas covered by the documents include:

1. US legislative history from 1492
2. Immigration prohibitions from specific countries during 1875-1920
3. Elimination of national origin quotas and establishment of refugee settlement
4. Enhanced immigration control and immigrant rights restrictions during 1986-2000
5. Exclusion of immigrants with serious criminal records
6. New immigration restrictions following September 11
7. National origin quota system and the end of anti-Asian exclusion.

The second document that I analyzed was titled *Immigration Policy Mismatches and*

Counterproductive Outcomes: Unauthorized Migration to the US in Two Eras. The document presents information on US immigration policies that failed to achieve their intended outcomes, leading to failures and an inability to control immigration matters in the 1980s. In related events, the document examined how the mismatch between the fundamental realities of international migration and the policies implemented to manage them produces and continues to yield ineffective outcomes across both periods. The document was significant for providing comprehensive information about US immigration policies and the events that influenced their establishment. The key points identified in the document include:

1. The establishment of the Immigration Bureau and its responsibilities throughout various periods
2. The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965
3. The Family Reunification Act
4. The removal of racial discrimination from US immigration laws
5. The failure of US immigration policy
6. The implementation of restrictive immigration laws due to the Cold War in 1980

The third document I reviewed was *Implications of US Immigration Policies for the Northern US Economies*. This document analyzes the impact of a four-sector model (labor-intensive agriculture, capital-intensive agriculture, services and construction, and manufacturing) on the general equilibrium of North American countries to determine the effects of stricter US immigration policies. In related events of the document, research findings demonstrate that immigration policies eliminate the comparative advantage of US labor-intensive agriculture, decreasing US production and exports while other countries expand their exports to the United States. Mexico experiences increased production, resulting

in higher demand for low-skilled labor in intensive agriculture. The effectiveness of stricter US immigration policies depends on the substitutability between domestic and unauthorized US workers. Immigration policies widen the wage gap between low-skilled Mexican immigrants and unauthorized immigrants, intensifying the root cause of unauthorized immigration. The document was significant in effectively illustrating the impact of strict US policies on ineffective immigration control and analyzing how these measures intensify illegal immigration. The key findings in the document include:

1. The impact of strict immigration control in 2019
2. The effects of harsh border and internal policies
3. The conflict between US immigration policies and domestic producers

The title of the fourth document I reviewed was *Frequently Requested Statistics on Immigrants and Immigration in the United States*. This document addresses immigration debates as a public policy issue throughout US history, which has become a primary public concern amid encounters with asylum seekers and other migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border. In related events, the document provides information about the strain caused by large and continuous arrivals through various channels, including legal pathways, on the immigration system and municipal services in key US cities and counties that have become primary destinations for recent arrivals. The significant document provided clear and valuable insights into the negative impacts of immigration on US urban and rural services, as well as other adverse effects on immigration policies in the country in 2020. The key points identified in the document include:

1. Reasons for decreased immigration in 2020
2. The Trump administration's restrictive policies

The fifth document significant to the present study was *Immigration, Population, and the Canadian Future*. This document examines the role of population and future demographic projections in Canada's immigration-related matters. The document discusses Canada's need for human resources to drive its economy, as outlined in related events. It highlights policies encouraging immigration and permanent residency in Canada from 1960 onward and addresses factors affecting population growth and decline from 1946 onward. The document provided clear, valuable information on Canada's population needs and the effects of demographic changes among immigrants over various years. The key points identified in the document include:

1. Reasons for population growth from 1946 to 1971
2. Reasons for population decline from 1971

The sixth document I analyzed was titled "*Welcome to Canada? A Critical Review and Assessment of Canada's Fast-Changing Immigration Policies*". This document examines proposed and effective immigration policies established between July 2012 and 2014. It analyzes in depth significant policy reforms and evaluates their potential impact on all parties involved in Canadian immigration matters. The document significantly highlighted the rapid transformation of Canada's immigration system from July 1, 2012, to July 31, 2014. These swift changes affected potential immigrants and created unpredictable conditions for policy analysts, non-governmental actors, researchers, and other stakeholders. The key points identified in the document include:

1. Changes in the country's immigration policies regarding immigrant families
2. Impact of immigration policies that led to the weakening of the country
3. Immigrants' role in improving Canada's social, economic, and political life

4. Population aging and its influence on immigration policies
5. The impact of neoliberalism since 1970
6. Introduction of a new skilled workers program in 2013
7. Implementation of the Federal Skilled Trades Program
8. Launch of the Canadian Experience Class in 2008
9. Execution of the Immigrant Investor Program and Federal Entrepreneur Program
10. Characteristics of recent immigrants to Canada
11. Future immigration policies

The seventh document was *Canada's Immigration Policy, 1962-74*. This document examines significant immigration policies implemented between 1962 and 1974. It also covers the immigration policies enacted during these years, which either encouraged or restricted migration. The document addresses several key policies, including the establishment of a new immigration department branch, the acceptance of numerous refugees from various countries, new guidelines for land-based immigration, the elimination of country-of-origin criteria, and the opening of Canadian immigration offices in European countries. This document provided crucial information about Canadian immigration policy changes from 1962 to 1974. It explains how these changes emerged after numerous ups and downs and how post-1962 warfare influenced this country's immigration policies. The key document findings include:

1. Main characteristics and objectives of Canadian immigration policies after the war, before 1962
2. Changes in immigration policy and regulations from 1962 to 1974

3. Immigration laws in 1975
4. Supportive immigration laws, such as loan provisions
5. Support for refugees from countries like Uganda and Chile
6. Elimination of visitor entry for immigration visa applicants.

The eighth document reviewed was *Understanding 'Canadian Exceptionalism' in Immigration and Pluralism Policy*. The document explores Canadian attitudes toward accepting immigrants from various nationalities, revealing an optimistic outlook while maintaining a selective immigration system. In a related document context, the document details Canadian national ethics based on multicultural policies and anti-discrimination laws. It demonstrates how integration occurs through public-private partnerships. The text also presents the points-based system for admitting immigrants to Canada. The document significantly offered valuable insights into Canadian society's acceptance of immigrant groups. It also demonstrates how immigration policies work to attract individuals while effectively managing associated challenges. The key document findings include:

1. Government initiatives to expand skilled immigrants' access to the job market
2. Implementation of gender-equal immigration quotas
3. Shortage of skilled workers
4. Points-based immigrant selection system
5. Immigration, multiculturalism, and integration policies as nation-building from 2000 to 2012
6. Immigration and permanent residency from 2000 to 2012
7. Canadian multiculturalism and national identity evolution

The ninth document title was *Gender and Canadian Immigration Policy: A Current Snapshot*. This document examines how immigration policies intended to ensure equal treatment of men and women often yield substantially different outcomes for each group. The text argues that any attempts to separate immigration laws from refugee laws might create a foundation for a feminine refugee protection system alongside a gender-blind entry system based on "ability to pay "for all other immigrant groups. The document provided valuable insights into the gender-blind entry system and Canada's interest in expanding job-market access for highly skilled immigrants and their spouses. Additionally, due to the emphasis on economic integration and globalization, Canada hosts very few highly skilled workers, making it difficult to maintain competitiveness. The key document findings include:

1. Official language requirements for immigrants
2. Canadian gender policies and their implications
3. Canada's explicit and ambiguous approaches to immigration matters
4. New refugee regulations introduced in 1999
5. Quota considerations for women and refugees
6. Analysis of goals positioning Canada as an international leader in immigration discourse
7. Facilitation of entry for temporary and permanent contributors to Canadian prosperity
8. Immigrants and refugees in the new US order
9. Political decisions to reduce refugee acceptance
10. Globalization and migration
11. Immigration policy, economic growth, and geography
12. Canadian public attitudes toward immigration

For the document analysis, I first reviewed each government document related to immigration policies. I determined their significance to the present study and prepared document summary forms (See appendices 1-10). Questions guiding the document analysis included issues related to immigration from the 1960s to the present. Accordingly, data analysis concentrated on creating meaning from the documents.

The final document I analyzed was titled "*US and Canadian Immigration Policies.*" The document analyzes similarities and differences between US and Canadian immigration policies. The context of the related document highlights how the US and Canadian governments compare their decision-making approaches to immigration matters. The document was significant for providing valuable insights into shared challenges, common goals, and the similarities and differences in immigration policies between the two countries. The key document findings include:

1. Immigration policy similarities between the two countries
2. Immigration policy differences between the countries
3. Both countries' stances on refugees and humanitarian immigration policies
4. Administrative similarities and differences in immigration management
5. The government structure's impact on immigration policies in both countries
6. Public attitudes toward immigration in both nations

Data Analysis

For the document analysis, I first reviewed each government document related to immigration policies. I determined their significance to the present study and prepared document summary forms (See appendices 1-10). Questions guiding the document analysis included issues related to immigration from the 1960s to the present. Hence, responsive,

well-designed qualitative studies should integrate data collection with analysis. I therefore analyzed the data continuously from the beginning of the study. I continuously referred to the documents and composed systematic notes that captured insights into the similarities and differences in US and Canadian immigration policies since the 1960s (Creswell, 2007). I classified the data into emerging themes, and I formed and tested ideas and connections among the ideas and related concepts within the emerging themes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2014).

Chapter 4: Findings

This section aims to address the research questions. The first part covers Canada's new immigration policies, while the second part examines the United States' new policies in 2024.

Canada's New Immigration Policies

According to Mark Miller, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, the immigration balance is not yet in equilibrium. The new immigration targets reflected a pause in the COVID-19 pandemic, during which the government reduced temporary resident restrictions to address labor shortages. Last year, Canada had planned to admit 500,000 new permanent residents in 2025 and the same number in 2026. According to Statistics Canada, as of the second quarter of 2024, there were 2.8 million temporary residents in Canada, including workers and students. The government's statement indicates that the country's post-pandemic needs have shaped business demands to aid economic recovery and that pressure from the right has focused on housing, infrastructure, and social services. According to Miller: "Today's announcement is the next step in our plan to address

the country's immigration needs. While it is clear our economy needs newcomers, we see the pressures our country is facing and must adjust our policies accordingly." Prime Minister Justin Trudeau commented on the policy shift: "We did not get the balance right." The new plan will bring in 395,000 new permanent residents in 2025, 380,000 in 2026, and 365,000 in 2027, down from 485,000 in 2024. Trudeau has recently faced pressure to step down amid declining poll numbers and rising support for the Conservative opposition. Justin Trudeau, Canada's Prime Minister, dismissed calls for his resignation as his opponents' rankings rose, stating that he "has important work to do" (Reuters, quoted by Al Jazeera, 2024).

Attack on Immigrants

According to Reuters, Canada has long prided itself on welcoming newcomers, but in recent years, the national discourse on immigration has shifted, partly due to rising housing costs. Many Canadians have been priced out of the housing market since interest rates began climbing two years ago. Meanwhile, increased immigration has pushed Canada's population to unprecedented levels, further driving housing demand and increasing prices in some sectors. With a federal election due no later than October 2025, this has become one of the most contentious issues in Canadian politics. Public polls have shown that a growing portion of the population believes Canada has too many immigrants. Advocates and community members report increased backlash against newcomers and hate crimes against minorities. Immigration advocates strongly criticized this shift. Syed Hussein, spokesperson for the Migrant Rights Network Secretariat, stated in a release: "We are witnessing one of the most egregious rollbacks of migrant rights in Canadian history. The reduction in permanent residents is a direct attack on migrants who will be forced to remain temporary or undocumented and pushed further into exploitative jobs." Canada's three-year immigration controls are expected to reduce its population growth by 0.2% in both 2025 and 2026.

According to the government, population growth is expected to increase by 0.8% next year. The government stated: “These changes help provinces, territories, and stakeholders align their capacities and allow the population to grow as we encourage institutions to do their part in better welcoming newcomers“ (Al Jazeera, 2024, p. 1) (*Where are the page numbers for this citation?).

Canada Reduces Immigration in 2024

October 24, 2024 - Ottawa: Marc Miller, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, announced the 2025-2027 Immigration Levels Plan - a strategy that temporarily pauses population growth to enable managed and sustainable growth in the long term. For the first time, the Levels Plan includes controlled targets for temporary residents, particularly international students and foreign workers, alongside permanent residents. Immigration remains vital to Canada’s success and economic growth. When Canada reopened following the pandemic, business demand exceeded the workforce needed to support its recovery. The government of Canada took decisive actions to attract some of the world’s best and brightest to study and work in Canada, facilitating their swift integration into the economy, accelerating economic recovery, and helping prevent a recession while strengthening Canada’s workforce. In response to the country’s evolving needs, this transitional-level plan reduces pressure on housing, infrastructure, and social services to enable long-term economic and social prosperity through immigration. This unprecedented plan presents a comprehensive approach to welcoming newcomers - one that maintains the integrity of our immigration programs while preparing newcomers for success. Canadians expect the government to maintain a well-managed immigration system (Government of Canada, 2024).

The government of Canada projects the 2025-2027 Immigration Levels Plan to result in a 0.2% population decrease in both 2025 and 2026 before returning to 0.8% growth in

2027 (Government of Canada, 2024). These projections reflect announced reductions in targets across multiple immigration streams over the next two years, as well as expected temporary resident departures due to the 5% cap, natural population decline, and other factors. Consequently, permanent residence targets will be reduced compared to last year's plan: from the current 500,000 permanent residents in 2024 to 395,000 in 2025, from 500,000 to 380,000 in 2026, and to 365,000 in 2027 (Government of Canada, 2024).

The Levels Plan also supports efforts to reduce the volume of temporary residents to 5% of Canada's population by the end of 2026. Given the temporary resident reduction measures announced in September and last year, Canada's temporary population will decrease over the next few years, with temporary residents shifting significantly to permanent residence or leaving Canada, rather than arriving as new arrivals. Specifically, compared to the previous year, we will see temporary decreases in Canada's population of 445,901 in 2025 and 445,662 in 2026, followed by a moderate increase of 17,439 in 2027. These reductions result from a series of changes in 2023-2024, including restrictions on international students and strengthened eligibility conditions for temporary foreign workers, implemented to reduce volume and enhance the integrity and quality of our temporary residence programs. The changes are also designed with long-term economic objectives to ensure we continue attracting the best and brightest. These changes help provinces, territories, and stakeholders align their capacities and allow the population to grow as we encourage institutions to do their part in better welcoming newcomers. Other measures in the 2025-2027 Immigration Levels Plan include (Government of Canada, 2024):

Transitioning temporary residents who have previously been students and workers in Canada to permanent residence, comprising over 40% of permanent residence admissions in 2025. They are already integrated into Canadian society and will continue to support the workforce and economy without increasing demands on social services, as they are already

involved in housing and employment. Focusing on long-term economic growth and key labor market sectors, such as healthcare and trades, permanent resident admissions in the economic class will reach 61.7% of total admissions by 2027. Strengthening Francophone communities outside Quebec and supporting their economic prosperity through permanent residence admission targets: Francophone immigration will be 8.5% in 2025, 9.5% in 2026, and 10% in 2027 (Government of Canada, 2024). Through this plan, we are utilizing our existing programs to ensure everyone benefits from new businesses. We will have access to high-paying jobs, affordable housing, and the social services they need to thrive in our beautiful country. Today's announcement is the next step in the country's plan to address Canada's immigration needs. While it is clear that our economy needs newcomers, we recognize the pressures our country faces and must adjust our policies accordingly. These changes will make immigration work for our country so everyone can access quality jobs, homes, and the support they need to succeed. Therefore, we will continue to protect the integrity of the government system and responsibly grow Canada's population." (Government of Canada, 2024).

Canada's population has grown in recent years, reaching 41 million in April 2024. Immigration accounted for nearly 98% of this growth in 2023, with 60% attributable to temporary residents. This post-pandemic population growth plan supports continued strong GDP growth and accelerates per capita GDP growth throughout 2025-2027, while also improving housing affordability and reducing unemployment rates. Reducing immigration volume will help ease pressure in the housing market, with the housing supply gap expected to decrease by approximately 670,000 units by the end of 2027. Temporary residence targets in the Levels Plan do not include short-term visitors or seasonal workers and are not part of the annual population estimates. The target is to determine the number of new temporary residents entering Canada annually. The Canadian government has implemented measures to

manage temporary resident inflows, maintain immigration system integrity, and protect vulnerable individuals (Government of Canada, 2024), including:

- Reforming the international student program
- Strengthening eligibility requirements for:
 - Temporary foreign workers
 - Post-graduation work permits
 - Work permits for spouses of international students and temporary foreign workers.

What is Canada's Immigration Policy?

Canada, with its relatively open and regulated immigration system, remains a primary destination for immigrants and refugees. As a global leader in refugee resettlement, Canada's immigration policy is a model for other countries. Foreign-born individuals make up nearly a quarter of its population. Immigrants play a vital role in Canada's economy. In 2022, authorities issued more than 600,000 new temporary work permits to foreigners. The government pursued an ambitious plan to welcome 500,000 immigrants annually by 2025, though critics worry this would intensify demand for housing and social services. Canada has been known for welcoming immigrants and valuing multiculturalism over the past half-century. Foreign-born individuals comprise almost a quarter of Canada's population - the highest share in over 150 years and one of the highest ratios among Western industrial nations. Immigrants have helped the country combat population aging and boost economic growth, although some Canadians have expressed concerns about increased pressure on housing and social services. Canada became a more attractive destination for immigrants in the past decade after policies implemented during Donald Trump's presidency severely restricted access to the United States (PIIE, 2024). While President Joe Biden has essentially

reversed these policies, his administration has worked with the Canadian government to limit the number of asylum seekers crossing the U.S.-Canada border (PIIE, 2024).

Meanwhile, Canada faces a long-term labor shortage exacerbated by a shortage of skilled workers. The country's immigration system also faces other challenges, including increased asylum claims, rising deportations, and labor exploitation of temporary visa holders. Nineteenth and early twentieth-century policies prevented or restricted immigration from select groups, including specific individuals with non-European and non-Christian backgrounds, as well as the poor, ill, and disabled. Canada's immigration calculations changed post-war as refugees and others fled Europe, public attitudes toward foreigners softened, and economic growth required labor. Cold War tensions also influenced Canadian policy, creating priorities for anti-communist and Soviet bloc immigrants. Laws enacted in the 1960s and 1970s laid the foundation for Canada's current immigration regime, which embraced multiculturalism. In 1967, Ottawa introduced a points-based system for evaluating applicants, after which Canada saw a surge in immigration from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. A 1971 policy first articulated government support for cultural diversity, and 1976 legislation explicitly codified Canada's commitment to refugees and required federal and provincial authorities to develop immigration objectives together. It also views immigration as a tool for achieving the country's cultural, economic, and social goals. Immigration has long played a vital role in Canada's economy, providing a relatively young workforce. As the native workforce ages and fertility rates remain low, at around 1.3 births per woman, far below the global average of 2.4, immigrants have become increasingly important. However, Canada continues to suffer from significant skilled labor shortages across industries, though this problem had eased slightly by mid-2023 (Government of Canada, quoted in William Rampe and Antonio Barreras Lozano, 2024).

How Do Canadians View Immigration?

Canadians have maintained a positive view of immigration for decades, though these attitudes have weakened somewhat in recent years amid rising immigration levels and growing concerns about affordability and housing. In a 2023 survey by the Toronto-based Environics Institute, 44% of Canadians felt there was too much immigration to Canada, compared to 27% the previous year (Government of Canada, quoted in Rampe & Lozano, 2024). Nevertheless, Canadians view immigrants and their country's immigration system more favorably than their U.S. counterparts because of the Canadian government's efforts to promote and embrace multiculturalism policy and make diversity part of the national identity. Canada also lacks large-scale illegal immigration, a challenge that has fueled anti-immigrant backlash in many other countries, including the United States. However, some research suggests that public support for immigration can quickly decline, as occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic (Government of Canada, quoted in Rampe & Lozano, 2024).

Who Immigrates to Canada and Where Do They Settle?

Canada granted permanent residence to more than 437,000 foreigners in 2022. The largest share of Canada's new permanent residents in 2022 came from India, China, Afghanistan, Nigeria, and the Philippines. The current government plans to continue steadily increasing immigration levels, aiming to welcome 500,000 new permanent residents by 2025, after which Ottawa will stabilize its immigration targets (Government of Canada, quoted in Rampe & Lozano, 2024).

From Where Do Canada's Immigrants Come?

New permanent residents by country of origin in 2022 included: India (118,200), China (31,800), Afghanistan (23,700), Nigeria (22,100), Philippines (22,100), France

(14,200), Pakistan (11,600), Iran (11,100), United States (10,400), and Syria (8,500) (Government of Canada, quoted in William Rampe and Antonio Barreras Lozano, 2024).

Where Do Immigrants Settle in Canada?

New permanent residents by city during 2016-2021 settled primarily in Canada's top six cities, with Toronto leading at over 392,000: Toronto (392,000), Montreal (162,000), Vancouver (155,000), Calgary (86,000), Edmonton (75,000), and Winnipeg (46,000) (Government of Canada, quoted in Rampe & Lozano, 2024).

How Does Canada's Immigration Process Work?

Canada accepts new permanent residents in four main categories. In 2022, 58% of immigrants were admitted through economic pathways, 22% through family sponsorship, 17% as refugees and protected persons, and 2% for humanitarian or other reasons (Rampe & Lozano, 2024).

Economic

Canada's economic immigration process is a model for other countries. The federal government offers several economic programs, most of which are managed through a points-based system called Express Entry. This system prioritizes young candidates with job offers and high levels of education, experience, and language skills (both English and French). About every two weeks, the government invites top-ranked individuals to apply for permanent residence, a comprehensive and costly process that includes language testing and biometric screening. Most applicants receive decisions within six months. Following pandemic-related changes, the Express Entry program now accepts immigrants with a minimum score of sixty-seven, down from the previous threshold of seventy-five. Other immigration pathways include regional economic programs, such as the Provincial Nominee

Program, which accounted for approximately 35% of economic admissions in 2022. Through this process - and similar Quebec-specific programs - people apply to individual provinces that select nominees meeting their economic needs. The federal government must still approve provincially sponsored immigrants, but grants permanent residence to the majority (Rampe & Lozano, 2024).

Family

This immigration category includes spouses, partners, and children joining family members living in Canada. Under this program, legal permanent residents apply to sponsor their relatives, who must also apply for permanent residence. Canada recognizes same-sex couples in this immigration category, even if they are not legally married, though couples must provide evidence of a long-term relationship. The government occasionally prioritizes family reunification applications supporting nationals from certain war-affected countries, such as Afghanistan and Ukraine (Rampe & Lozano, 2024).

Refugees and Protected Persons

In 2022, Canada resettled more refugees than any other country for the fourth consecutive year (surpassing the United States in 2018). The government welcomed over 47,000 refugees in 2022, primarily from Africa and the Middle East, representing a 133% increase from the previous year when pandemic-related restrictions still slowed resettlement. There are two main types of resettled refugees: government-assisted and privately sponsored. Government-assisted refugees, identified by the UN Refugee Agency based on their location and vulnerability, receive assistance during the transition. Privately sponsored refugees accounted for nearly half of all resettled refugees in 2022 and are brought to Canada by citizens and government-approved organizations that assume legal and financial responsibility. Refugees cannot directly apply for resettlement in Canada. All refugees

undergo thorough screening by Canadian authorities and generally have permanent residence upon arrival (Rampe & Lozano, 2024).

Humanitarian and Other

Canada grants permanent residence to a small number of individuals for reasons other than immigration. These include defined humanitarian and compassionate grounds, such as specific hardships applicants would face if returned to their home country. Individuals must receive permission to apply. Authorities consider various factors when processing cases, such as applicants' connections to Canada and the circumstances they would face if not accepted (Rampe & Lozano, 2024).

What is Canada's Policy on Asylum Seekers?

Canada is also known for its relative openness to asylum seekers. They often come to Canada for reasons similar to resettled refugees, but differ in that they have not received government authorization before arrival. Migrants can claim asylum at any border crossing or airport, as well as at certain government offices within Canada. In 2022, nearly 40,000 asylum seekers entered the country without authorization through official ports of entry. This figure was approximately 9 times higher than the previous year, likely due to worsening conditions in many migrants' home countries and reduced pandemic-related travel and border restrictions. Officials' decisions to grant protected status can take up to two years. Once granted this status, most asylum seekers immediately qualify to apply for permanent residence. In limited circumstances, some unsuccessful asylum seekers may qualify for permanent residence under the humanitarian category. Some critics, including immigrants who entered through regular channels, claim that Canada allows asylum seekers to "jump the queue" and enter through "backdoor immigration." While officials review their cases, asylum seekers receive healthcare and potentially housing assistance, social welfare, and work rights.

Additionally, the government tends not to deport unsuccessful asylum claimants, and some remain in Canada illegally. However, deportations still occur. In 2022, the Canadian government deported over 8,500 people, averaging 23 daily (Rampe & Lozano, 2024).

How Do Immigrants Adapt to Life in Canada?

Canada makes extensive efforts to help immigrants integrate by offering orientation programs, skills training, social services, and citizenship pathways. In recent years, nearly three-quarters of the federal immigration agency's budget has gone to settlement programs. This level of support has helped make Canada one of the most sought-after destinations for immigrants; overall, immigrant satisfaction and citizenship rates are high. Immigrants, including the Prime Minister's cabinet, have reached prominent positions in Canadian society. Immigrants comprise a large portion of Canada's population. Percentage of foreign-born population, 2020: Australia 30%, Canada 21%, Germany 19%, United States 15%, Spain 15%, United Kingdom 14%, France 13%, Italy 11%, Chile 9%, Turkey 7%, Colombia 4%, South Korea 3%, Poland 2%, Japan 2%, Mexico 1%. (International Organization for Migration, quoted in Rampe & Lozano, 2024).

Moreover, based on the researcher's lived experience, educational policies for immigrants have undergone significant improvements in recent years. Although the onset of these changes began years ago, when critics challenged unjust educational policies and deemed multicultural education essential for achieving social justice and, consequently, sustainable development. Prior to discussions on anti-oppressive education, most immigrants did not have equal rights in the educational system (Wagner & Yee, 2011). However, gradually, alongside the country's Indigenous populations and white citizens, non-Indigenous people and people of color also began to receive equal standing, leading to the realization of educational justice (Mišćević, 2021). As the researcher's lived experience demonstrates,

individuals of all age groups have the right to continue their education, with age being the determining factor for school placement. For students, the government establishes prerequisites to address educational delays, and even in periodic assessments, attention is paid to bilingualism and educational setbacks relative to age. Moreover, the researcher, as a teacher, enjoys equal rights with other Indigenous and white teachers. Even non-Indigenous individuals can assume roles such as school principals (Rampe & Lozano, 2024).

However, immigrants still lag behind native-born Canadians in some economic indicators, though these differences have diminished over time and generations. Many struggle to find employment that matches their skills and qualifications. Daniel Hiebert, a University of British Columbia professor who has advised Canadian officials on immigration, says, "Immigrants have to work very hard to find their place in the Canadian economy, especially those who do not have language ability." (Rampe & Lozano, 2024).

What are Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker Programs?

Canada maintains several temporary foreign worker programs designed to address specific industry needs and support the country's economic and cultural advancement. In 2022, authorities issued 604,382 new temporary work permits to foreigners. These include agricultural workers, in-home caregivers, and highly skilled professionals. In 2024, the government announced it would, for the first time, begin limiting the number of temporary foreign workers admitted to the country. This system is complex, but temporary workers typically come to Canada through one of two paths. The International Mobility Program provides work visas to foreigners who meet broad criteria. Employers can hire them without considering Canadian applicants, although some permit holders have restrictions on where and what jobs they can work (Rampe & Lozano, 2024).

Meanwhile, the Temporary Foreign Worker Program allows businesses that cannot find domestic employees to recruit internationally. All foreign workers receive labor protections, and authorities inspect their workplaces to reduce mistreatment. However, abuse and corruption are common in Canada's temporary worker system, facilitated by insufficient government oversight and by work permits that tie migrants to a single employer. These problems worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic. The length of time foreign workers can stay in Canada varies. While some skilled temporary workers eventually gain permanent residence, low-wage workers typically cannot (Rampe & Lozano, 2024).

How Challenging is Illegal Immigration to Canada?

Canada's geography – bordered by three oceans and the United States, which is a magnet for immigrants – has helped Ottawa limit the flow of unauthorized individuals. Its highly regulated immigration system, including some of the world's strictest visitor visa requirements, is designed to further contain this phenomenon. Estimates vary, but academic sources say between three hundred thousand and six hundred thousand undocumented people live in Canada. In line with its ambitious immigration goals, the government announced in 2023 that it plans to offer some unauthorized workers a path to citizenship. In 2023, Canadian polling firm Leger found that more than half of respondents felt the government's target of 500,000 immigrants annually was too high, while 75% expressed concern that increased immigration would lead to excess demand for housing and social services. Nevertheless, several Canadian cities have "access without fear" policies that limit police cooperation with immigration authorities and guarantee public services to unauthorized individuals. Officials rarely enforce a law prohibiting Canadian companies from hiring unauthorized workers (Rampe & Lozano, 2024).

How Have U.S. Policies Influenced Canada's Immigration System?

The United States and Canada have long collaborated to control the movement of people and goods across their largely unprotected shared border - the world's longest at over five thousand miles. In 2011, the governments announced the "Beyond the Border" strategy to strengthen security cooperation and promote legitimate travel and trade. Under this plan, the two countries began sharing information about visa applicants and border crossers. More broadly, the bilateral framework has reinforced a healthy working relationship between Canada and the U.S., which some analysts say will likely continue for years. Teresa Cardinal Brown, an immigration expert at the Bipartisan Policy Center, says: "The Beyond the Border agreement and all subsequent actions under it have institutionalized a level of Canada-U.S. border cooperation that's deep enough to survive changes in political leadership in both countries." The Trump administration's immigration measures put pressure on Canada's system. In 2017, when Trump took office, Canada received nearly 50,000 asylum applications, double the previous year. Experts link this to several Trump policies, including refugee and travel restrictions, intensified immigration enforcement, and the decision not to renew Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haitians. The surge in asylum claims continues post-pandemic. Total asylum claims processed by Canada increased significantly (150,000) in 2022, following pandemic-related declines (Canada.ca, 2024).

However, some Trump immigration measures were a boon for Canada's economy. For example, in June 2020, his administration suspended visas for highly skilled workers. Meanwhile, Canada made it easier for foreign workers by granting qualified professionals - many of whom were applying from the U.S. - work permits within two weeks. Some U.S. companies have expanded their presence in Canada. Given Canada's success in managing immigrant flows, Trump proposed a merit-based plan modeled on Canada's points system that prioritizes highly skilled immigrants, though it failed to advance in Congress. However,

President Biden's immigration policies have been different. He reversed many Trump-era measures, including the late-2020 green card freeze (Rampe & Lozano, 2024).

Additionally, his administration has restored TPS for Haitians, extended benefits to several other countries, including Afghanistan and Ukraine, and increased the annual refugee admission ceiling to 125,000 for fiscal years 2022, 2023, and 2024. However, Biden has also modified the two countries' "Safe Third Country Agreement" - making it easier for border officials to turn away asylum seekers by introducing new restrictions on asylum - and imposed stricter requirements at U.S. southern border crossings. The sharp increase in restrictions affected Canadian officials, prompting them to intensify border security, reform asylum review processes, and even consider deterring potential migrants from the U.S. Nevertheless, immigration pressures persisted. In 2020, a Canadian court ruled that the 2002 U.S.-Canada agreement, also known as the "Safe Third Country Agreement," managing asylum claims at the border, was unconstitutional. Human rights organizations similarly argued that the measure put asylum seekers at risk. However, the government overturned the ruling in April 2021, and the deal remains in force (Rampe & Lozano, 2024).

Under the Immigration Levels Plan, Canada now seeks to admit over 360,000 new immigrants annually in the coming years. Canada's immigration objectives are to strengthen the economy, reunite families, and assist refugees (Canada Immigration Lawyer, 2024).

Summary of Canada's Immigration Levels Plan

Every year, the federal Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) publishes a new Immigration Levels Plan to guide its operations. In 2025, Canada's target for newcomers is 395,000 permanent residents (PRs). In 2026, Canada will see immigration levels with permanent residence decrease to 380,000, followed by a further reduction to 365,000 total permanent residents in 2027 (Canada Immigration Lawyer, 2024).

Table 1 summarizes Canada's immigration targets for 2025-2027 by immigration class.

Table 1 shows that this year's Immigration Levels Plan is the first to set targets for both permanent and temporary resident levels for the next three years.

Permanent Resident Levels

The Economic class totals 232,150 targets in 2025, 229,750 in 2026, and 225,350 in 2027. The Family class includes 94,500 targets in 2025, 88,000 in 2026, and 81,000 in 2027. The Refugee category comprises 58,350 in 2025, 6,900 in 2026, and 54,350 in 2027. For Humanitarian and Others, targets are 10,000 in 2025, 6,900 in 2026, and 4,300 in 2027. Additionally, Francophone permanent resident immigration outside Quebec will be 29,325 in 2025, 31,350 in 2026, and 31,500 in 2027 (Canada Immigration Lawyer,2024).

Table 1

Canada's Immigration Levels Plan 2025-2027

Immigration Levels	2025	2026	2027
Economic	232,150	229,750	225,350
Family	94,500	88,000	81,000
Refugees, Protected Persons,			
Humanitarian,	68,350	62,250	58,650
Compassionate & Others			

Francophone			
Admissions outside	29,325	31,350	31,350
Quebec			
Total	395,000	380,000	365,000

Temporary Resident Level

The overall total for all levels will be 673,650 in 2025, 516,600 in 2026, and 543,600 in 2027. Total workers will be 367,750 in 2025, 210,700 in 2026, and 237,700 in 2027. The International Mobility Program (IMP) targets 285,750 in 2025, 128,700 in 2026, and 155,700 in 2027. The Temporary Foreign Worker Program will maintain 82,000 annually from 2025 through 2027. Student numbers will remain constant at 305,900 each year from 2025 through 2027 (Canada Immigration Lawyer,2024).

Why Does Canada Need Immigrants?

Canada welcomes high levels of immigration to keep its economy strong. Canada has one of the world's oldest populations and one of the lowest global birth rates, creating economic and fiscal pressures. Canada's natural population growth rate is low, resulting in low workforce and economic growth rates. Low economic growth makes it difficult to raise the taxes needed to support social spending on services such as education, healthcare, and other areas that help maintain the country's high living standards. Consequently, Canada has increased immigration levels since the late 1980s to boost population, workforce, and economic growth. Canada now relies on immigration for most of its population and workforce growth and an increasing share of its economic growth. By 2030, Canada will have 9 million baby boomers who will reach the retirement age of 65. Canada has been proactive for over 30 years to address this challenge by gradually increasing its immigration targets. Canada has regularly welcomed over 200,000 immigrants annually since 1988.

Canada's current immigration rate is nearly 1.2%. In other words, Canada welcomes three times as many immigrants per capita as the United States, as immigration will be vital to supporting a healthy economy and fiscal situation (Canada Immigration Lawyer, 2024).

Overview of Canadian Immigration Programs

Economic immigration, the main driver of Canada's economic growth, accounts for more than half of the planned admissions through the multi-year levels plan. Nearly half of the projected economic admissions will come through federal Express Entry programs (Canada Immigration Lawyer, 2024):

- Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSW)
- Federal Skilled Trades Class (FSTC)
- Canadian Experience Class (CEC)

The Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) also plays a crucial role in economic immigration. This program allows participating Canadian provinces and territories to nominate eligible immigration candidates who match local workforce needs for permanent residence.

Below are the immigration programs included in Canada's multi-year Immigration Levels Plan:

Economic Programs

Federal Skilled Worker Program (FSW)

This Express Entry-managed program is for immigrants with the education, work experience, English and/or French language skills, and other abilities needed to establish themselves economically in Canada.

Federal Skilled Trades Class (FSTC)

The Federal Skilled Trades Class, managed by Express Entry, is for foreign workers with qualifications in a skilled trade.

Canadian Experience Class (CEC)

The Express Entry system manages the Canadian Experience Class. It welcomes expressions of interest from foreign workers with Canadian work experience, or from recent graduates of Canadian educational institutions, who are working in Canada.

Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program (AIPP)

The Atlantic Immigration Pilot allows designated Atlantic employers to recruit and hire foreign skilled workers or international graduates in Canada's Atlantic region (Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick).

Caregiver Programs

Canada offers eligible foreigners who care for children and individuals with high medical needs the opportunity to apply for Canadian permanent residence.

Federal Business (Start-up Visa Program and Self-employed Persons)

Federal business class programs allow eligible foreigners to establish new or existing businesses in Canada.

Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)

The Provincial Nominee Program allows participating provinces and territories to nominate eligible economic immigration candidates for Canadian permanent residence.

Quebec Skilled Worker and Quebec Business

The province of Quebec maintains its immigration system separate from the federal system. The Quebec government's planned levels for 2019-2021 are yet to be determined.

Family Class Programs

- Spouse/Common-Law Partner and Dependent Children Sponsorship
- Parents and Grandparents Program
- Refugees, Protected Persons, Humanitarian and Others:
- Protected Persons in Canada and Dependents Abroad
- Privately Sponsored Refugees
- Blended Visa Office-Referred
- Government-Assisted Refugees

Recent US Immigration Policies

Today's politically charged immigration debate has roots in global, regional, and US immigration policy developments over the past half-century. Previous immigration restrictions were primarily removed by the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, which eliminated national origin quotas and enabled increased immigration from Latin America, Asia, and Africa, setting the stage for subsequent demographic changes and political debates. Another key development, prompted by the end of the Vietnam War and the influx of refugees from Southeast Asia, was the passage of the 1980 Refugee Act, which aligned US law with the international definition of a refugee and established the current US refugee admissions program. In the 1980s and 1990s, the United States saw increasing numbers of undocumented immigrants, mainly from Mexico (although illegal migrant flows from Central

America surpassed Mexico in the 2010s). The last mass legalization policy in the United States was in 1986, when the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) offered amnesty to about three million undocumented immigrants while imposing a new employment verification process and sanctions on employers who hired illegal workers. The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks led to a decisive shift in US immigration policy discourse toward national security concerns. Immigration and naturalization services were merged into the newly created Department of Homeland Security, with a heavy emphasis on border enforcement. Annual resettled refugee admissions peaked in the early 1980s and again in the first half of the 1990s before settling at annual levels between 70,000 and 85,000 in the latter half of that decade. After 9/11, refugee admissions were temporarily halted and then slowly resumed. Total refugee admissions significantly exceeded 60,000 only twice in the next decade. Bipartisan efforts to reform immigration have failed. Comprehensive immigration reforms were proposed in 2006, 2008, and 2013, failing each time due to political polarization. While there was general agreement on the need for reforms, including citizenship paths for undocumented immigrants and improved border security, partisan disagreements over enforcement-first approaches and legalization derailed these efforts (CIDOB, 2024).

Immigration took on a more divisive tone during the 2016 presidential campaign. Donald Trump announced on June 16, 2015: “When Mexico sends its people, they are not sending their best. They are sending people who have lots of problems; they bring drugs, they bring crime, they are rapists, and some are good people.” Throughout Trump’s 2016 campaign, which centrally featured his promise to build a “great and beautiful wall” on the U.S.-Mexico border, Trump repeatedly resorted to this racist and xenophobic rhetoric that equated immigrants with crime (CIDOB, 2024). After taking office, Trump enacted hundreds of measures to restrict immigration, limit asylum access, and curtail refugee resettlement. A

February 2022 report by the Migration Policy Institute showed that in Trump's four years as president, his administration "completed 472 executive actions affecting US immigration policy." The travel ban, separation of children from parents arrested at the southern border, and returning most asylum seekers to Mexico were among the most significant (CIDOB, 2024). The annual refugee admissions ceiling was gradually reduced to 15,000 in Trump's final year. Trump's presidency was marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, which by March 2020 had restricted people's movement worldwide. In the pandemic's early months, the Trump administration implemented a series of new travel bans and used public health law, Title 42, to close borders to virtually all asylum seekers (CIDOB, 2024).

One of the most dangerous aspects of Trump's immigration policy is his promise of mass deportation, a policy that would have devastating human and economic consequences (CIDOB, 2024; Kewin, 2018). Millions of families would be torn apart, as many undocumented immigrants live in "mixed-status" families where one or more family members are US citizens or legal residents. According to an article published by the Center for Migration Studies of New York (CMS), mass deportation would dismantle nearly 5 million US families. The deportation would leave millions of U.S.-born children without their parents, creating a humanitarian disaster given its incalculable psychological and emotional impact on children and families (CIDOB, 2024).

Trump claims that mass deportation would help the economy. He even defends deportation to address the country's affordable housing shortage. However, the economic costs of mass deportation on the scale promised by Trump's campaign would be staggering. According to a recent US Immigration Council report, given the costs of arrest, detention, legal proceedings, and deportation, an operation to deport over 13 million undocumented people "would cost at least \$315 billion." Given the logistical impossibility of deporting large numbers of people at once, the report also estimates that even at a more practical pace,

“removing 1 million immigrants per year would incur an annual cost of \$88 billion for ten years“ (CIDOB, 2024, p. 3).

Undocumented immigrants make up a significant portion of the US workforce, particularly in industries such as agriculture, construction, and food services. Deporting millions of workers would create labor shortages in these industries, increasing prices for goods and services, especially food. Undocumented immigrants also contribute billions in taxes annually despite being ineligible for many public benefits. CMS estimates that undocumented workers contribute \$96.7 billion annually in federal, state, and local taxes. Removing them from the workforce would result in significant tax revenue losses and strain public budgets at all levels of government (CIDOB, 2024).

The economic impact would extend beyond the immediate labor market. Removing millions of consumers from the economy would decrease demand for goods and services, hurt businesses, and cause job losses for US citizens. The resulting economic contraction – particularly if mass deportation coincides with the imposition of tariffs on imported goods – could push the United States into recession, with the most vulnerable communities bearing the greatest impact. Furthermore, mass deportation would likely lead to violent resistance, as many immigrants would refuse to leave quietly, and the situation could result in widespread unrest with potentially deadly consequences for both immigrants and law enforcement. Beyond the immediate economic and social costs, mass deportation would have long-term implications for US society. It would deepen racial and ethnic divides, create a permanent underclass of people living in fear of deportation, and destroy trust in law enforcement. Although most immigrants in the United States (and the majority who enter each year) have legal status, this fact carries little weight in the political debate. However, a deportation network targeting undocumented individuals could affect legal immigrants (CIDOB, 2024).

Therefore, the following changes are expected (Moodie, 2024):

End of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

DACA's future remains uncertain due to pending litigation, and President-elect Trump attempted to terminate DACA during his first term. Over half a million DACA recipients would lose their protected status if it were eliminated. DACA was established through executive action in June 2012 to protect certain undocumented immigrants brought to the US as children from deportation proceedings and to allow them to obtain work authorization for renewable two-year periods. President-elect Trump sought to end DACA during his previous term, but the Supreme Court blocked it in 2020. The Biden administration issued regulations in 2022 to preserve DACA protections. In September 2023, a Texas district court ruled that DACA was illegal. It prevented the Biden administration from implementing new regulations while the case is pending before the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. Under pending court orders, while the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) accepts first-time DACA applications, it cannot process them. DHS continues processing DACA renewal requests and related employment authorization applications. After failing to end DACA in 2020, the Trump administration said it would try again to eliminate DACA protections. The administration is unlikely to appeal if the pending court ruling finds the program illegal. However, President-elect Trump recently stated in an interview that he would work to address the "dreamers" situation and showed willingness to work with Democrats on this issue, although details of this proposed plan remain unclear. Over half a million active DACA recipients exist, most of whom are employed, and many have U.S.-born children who could face separation risk if the government eliminates the program. Recent healthcare coverage expansion for DACA recipients is also subject to pending litigation, which, if resolved in favor of the plaintiffs, would leave many DACA recipients without access to affordable coverage options. In May 2024, the Biden administration issued regulations extending

Affordable Care Act (ACA) Marketplace coverage eligibility, including premium and cost-sharing subsidies, to DACA recipients who previously were not eligible for federally funded healthcare options. These regulations took effect on November 1, 2024, enabling enrollment during the 2025 open enrollment period. In August 2024, nineteen states filed suit against the federal government, claiming the ACA Marketplace coverage expansion to DACA recipients violates the Administrative Procedure Act. On December 9, 2024, a North Dakota federal court granted the plaintiffs' request, blocking the implementation of the ACA coverage expansion in the 19 plaintiff states. However, on December 16, 2024, the US Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals temporarily suspended the federal court order, allowing DACA recipients in all states to enroll in ACA Marketplace coverage. Eliminating coverage expansion in some states could leave thousands of DACA recipients uninsured in those states without affordable coverage options (Moodie, 2024).

President-elect Trump could reinstate changes to the public charge policy that he made during his first term, which led to increased fear and misinformation among immigrant families about accessing programs and services, including healthcare coverage. Under longstanding immigration policy, federal officials can deny US entry or adjustment to lawful permanent resident (LPR) status (i.e., "green card") to someone they determine to be a public charge (Moodie, 2024). During his previous term, President-elect Trump issued 2019 regulations expanding the scope of programs the federal government considered in public charge determinations to include non-cash assistance programs such as Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Research shows these changes increased fear among immigrant families about participating in programs and seeking services, including health coverage and care, with about one in four undocumented immigrant adults saying they avoided seeking help for food, housing, or healthcare due to immigration-related fears.

However, as of November 2024, President-elect Trump has not indicated whether his administration will reinstate his first-term changes to public charge policy (Moodie, 2024).

Expansion of Interior Enforcement Actions

President-elect Trump has indicated his administration intends to detain and deport millions of immigrants, including long-term residents, which could lead to family separations and adverse mental and physical health consequences. He has announced he will declare a national emergency and use the US military for the mass deportation of tens of millions of undocumented immigrants residing in the United States, many of whom have lived and worked in the country for decades. Such a policy could result in family separations and mass detentions that could have negative implications for immigrant families' mental health and well-being and put their physical health at risk. Research shows such raids can lead to family separations, poor physical and mental health outcomes for immigrant families, adverse birth and educational outcomes for immigrants' children, and financial hardships due to job loss.

Negative Economic Impacts

Mass deportation could also negatively impact the US workforce and economy, where immigrants make significant contributions. Immigrants have employment rates similar to those of their US counterparts and play significant roles in occupations such as agriculture, construction, and healthcare. Research (KFF, 2024) has shown that immigrants do not substitute for U.S.-born workers and contribute to job growth through entrepreneurship and consumption of goods and services. Moreover, federal data shows that unemployment rates for U.S.-born workers have not decreased between 2022 and 2023 and remain similar to those of immigrant workers. Additionally, immigrants, including undocumented immigrants, pay billions in federal, state, and local taxes annually. Mass deportation of immigrants could result in labor shortages in key sectors, potentially leading to negative economic

consequences, including higher prices for essential goods like groceries. Mass deportation of immigrants could also worsen housing shortages, as immigrants comprise a significant share of construction workers. Workplace raids could exacerbate existing labor shortages and negatively impact local economies and communities where they occur. Furthermore, research indicates that without undocumented immigrants' contributions to the Medicare trust fund, it would become insolvent sooner, and undocumented immigrants have a net positive impact on Social Security's financial status. There would likely be significant taxpayer costs to implement large-scale government detention and deportation (KFF, 2024).

On another front, the United States extended the validity of work permit renewals for visa spouses to 540 days. The US government increased the automatic work permit extension for H-4 and L-2 visa holders from 180 to 540 days. This change helps spouses of H-1B and L-1 visa holders address work gaps caused by authorization delays. The policy ensures employment continuity, guarantees financial stability for families dependent on dual incomes, and reduces workforce disruptions for employers. The H-1B and L-1 visas represent a significant step in addressing long-term challenges in immigrant work authorization (Moodie, 2024).

What Workers and Employers Need to Know in 2025

In 2025, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will implement significant revisions to Form I-129 to increase transparency and oversight in employment-based immigration processes. The updated requirements introduce stricter documentation standards related to employer–employee relationships, third-party worksites, and detailed wage and benefit information. While these measures enhance worker protections, they also create additional procedural complexity for both employers and applicants (Moodie, 2024). A comparison of immigration policies across the Trump and

Biden administrations indicates that Trump's first term adopted more restrictive approaches in employment-based, family-based, and entry policies, whereas the Biden administration reversed several of these limitations. Nonetheless, projections suggest a likely return to stringent measures under a new Trump term, including higher wage thresholds, tighter OPT and STEM OPT rules, stricter financial criteria for family sponsorship, and reinstated broad screening procedures and travel restrictions. These shifts could result in increased Requests for Evidence (RFEs), higher denial rates, and longer processing times for foreign workers and employers. However, strategic job planning, robust supporting documentation, and proactive internal audits may help reduce exposure to these risks. In the family-based immigration system, potential reinstatement of public-charge restrictions and elevated sponsor income requirements may impose additional barriers, especially for households with limited financial flexibility. President-elect Trump has also announced plans to limit birthright citizenship through executive action—despite its constitutional protection under the Fourteenth Amendment—which would carry substantial negative implications for the healthcare system and broader labor market by increasing the population lacking legal status (KFF, 2023). Nevertheless, polling data show that a majority of U.S. voters oppose ending birthright citizenship and favor expanding legal pathways over mass deportations (Moodie, 2024).

Impact of Trump's Presidency in 2024

To understand the commitment scale, the United States spent \$333 billion on immigration policy enforcement from the Department of Homeland Security's creation in 2003 through fiscal year 2021 (American Immigration Council, 2021). KFF's analysis of federal data shows that adult children of immigrants have slightly better educational and economic outcomes than adult children of U.S.-born parents and represent twice their population share of physicians, surgeons, and other healthcare practitioners. Other research has also shown that children of immigrants contribute more in taxes, on average, than their

parents or the rest of the U.S.-born population, and their financial contributions exceed the costs of healthcare, education, and other social services.

Reinstating “Remain in Mexico” Policy

President-elect Trump has announced he will reinstate the “Remain in Mexico” border policy and may use military funding for stricter border enforcement, causing increasing numbers of asylum seekers to face unsafe conditions at the border. The first Trump administration implemented the Migrant Protection Protocols, commonly known as the “Remain in Mexico” policy, in 2019. Under this policy, asylum seekers had to stay in Mexico, often in unsafe conditions, while awaiting their immigration court hearings. The Biden administration ended this policy in 2022 following some legal challenges. However, in 2023 and 2024, it implemented a series of increasingly restrictive limitations on asylum eligibility in response to high numbers of border encounters.

Restrictions on Humanitarian Protections

President-elect Trump has said he intends to limit humanitarian immigrant entry to the United States in his second term by restricting refugee caps, closing the CBP One application for asylum seekers, and eliminating Temporary Protected Status (TPS) designations for immigrants from certain countries. During his first term, Trump set the annual refugee admissions ceiling at historically low levels, ranging from 50,000 in 2017 to 18,000 in 2020. The Biden administration increased this limit to 65,000 in 2021, near the pre-first-Trump-term annual caps, and raised it in 2022 and 2024 in response to humanitarian concerns. As of March 2024, over 860,000 immigrants from 16 countries had protection under TPS. Losing TPS would expose individuals to deportation risk, which could contribute to family separation, potentially having negative mental and physical health impacts on

immigrant families and broader negative implications for the workforce and economy (KFF, 2023).

Use of Military Forces for Border Security or Ending Birthright Citizenship

Border security encompasses policy, administration, globalization, and politics whereby sovereignty delegates life-and-death decision-making to border agents to fulfill and combine neoliberal objectives for authoritarian power, racist nationalism, and corporate profitability. Trumpism, accelerated through authoritarian populism, is a process well underway before the Department of Homeland Security's creation, emphasizing preventing, stopping, wounding, or killing migrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border while maintaining sufficient migrant personnel for cheaper labor and exploitation in agricultural and service sector industries. A key Trumpism addition to US border security policy used against border crossers is the explicit emphasis on white nationalism, mainly targeting immigration to the United States and asylum seekers from Mexico and Latin America, among others. options (Moodie, 2024).

Halting Immigration to the United States and Racism

With Trump's anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim advisor, Miller, taking office, he focused on reviewing not just existing immigration laws but all federal regulations. Regulations that allowed the president to halt immigrant flows to the United States. For example, before the COVID-19 pandemic, Miller devised ways to cite Title 42 to stop immigration to the United States, including relatively common diseases like mumps and flu that occurred at or before the coronavirus's onset. From March 2020, the US government "has misused the expulsion order more than 1.7 million times to turn away people seeking asylum" through March 2022. The absence of a human rights element is essential for

understanding Trumpism and immigration policies, whether before, during, or after Trump's presidency. Of course, Stephen Miller's racist impacts on US immigration policy continue. While its effects may have been hidden or concealed before Trumpism, Miller has added accelerated dimensions to it that continue the political and media display of widespread discrimination. This aspect is central to the initiation of authoritarian populism through border securitization (Garrett, 2023).

Government Corruption

Government corruption and human rights violations have supported the bureaucratic and authoritarian political structure in the form of US border security, which is the primary executor of immigration policy before, during, and after Trump. In the United States, authoritarian populist Republican politicians and sometimes Democrats and their leaders use immigration policy to implement essential policies, at state and national levels, to victimize refugees, asylum seekers, and other border crossers - homo sacer - who are themselves real victims of political developments, economic disasters, and environmental catastrophes in their countries. Like what currently exists, who are consistently complicit with them. Political and media displays also continue regarding immigration policy. Right-wing propaganda and communications are key to presenting fascist ideals and policies to the US people and globally through the media. Fear of the other, whether through commodification, political discourse, or visual imagery, is effectively used by populist authoritarians to convert susceptible individuals into white nationalists or other right-wing objectives. US immigration policy is one of the main drivers of the outcome of populist authoritarianism. With the help and support of sympathetic border sectarians who lean toward popular police-state autocrats, the Trump administration, the United States is moving toward an authoritarian system based on white nationalism and anti-immigration sentiments (Garrett, 2024).

Immigration Policy to Expect from the White House

Mass Deportation

With an increase in interior deportations compared to Obama's second term. However, it didn't reach the levels of Obama's first term or implement what most would consider mass deportations. However, interior enforcement was less targeted. During his campaign, Trump promised the most considerable deportation effort in US history. His first term saw that under Obama, and created widespread fear (KFF, 2023).

Humanitarian Protections

Several major humanitarian parole programs will likely end under the new administration. Biden-era programs for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, Venezuelans (CHNV), and Ukrainians (U4U) will likely immediately stop processing new applications. These two programs welcomed 500,000 parolees through December 2023. Recipients will risk deportation if they have not received asylum or another status change before their two-year expiration date. The administration may revoke the status of those living in the US under these humanitarian programs (KFF, 2023).

Legal Pathways

The administration will add complications and barriers to existing legal immigration pathways without requiring congressional action. One mechanism proposed by Project 2025 is defaulting visa applications deemed too backlogged, and student visas from China could face significant restrictions. Reinstatement of the "Muslim ban" on travel from certain countries is not unlikely. Given backlogs in many parts of the system, slowing routine immigration processing could reduce employment-based and family immigration, as happened in Trump's first administration. Reducing legal immigration pathways is

unfortunate, given that the system currently restricts regular immigration at levels many consider too low, with legal immigration caps largely stagnant since 1990 (Economic Studies Media Office, 2024).

Other Policy Areas

Immigration policy is traditionally a federal issue. The extent to which states and localities can pursue immigration enforcement, protect immigrants from enforcement, or support undocumented immigrants is an essential issue that scholars debate (Cite scholars here). For example, the administration will likely pressure so-called “sanctuary cities“ that limit cooperation with federal enforcement efforts. The same applies to 26 states and DC, which offer in-state tuition to DACA recipients and undocumented immigrants. Meanwhile, the administration will encourage local law enforcement efforts to facilitate immigration enforcement. The administration may also seek ways to prevent immigrant integration. Something like the 2018 “public charge“ rule proposal might deter immigrants from accessing the US safety net. (Undocumented immigrants are currently ineligible for most programs.) Resources for communities welcoming newcomers in schools and shelters will likely be limited (Economic Studies Media Office, 2024).

Based on this, we can expect:

More Bark Than Bite

The administration will almost certainly undertake visible anti-immigration efforts in the first 100 days, likely including high-profile deportation raids, the immediate termination of Biden’s humanitarian parole programs, and restrictions on travel or student visas from certain countries. However, Trump’s first administration had relatively moderate overall deportation rates, which could happen again if business community interests prevail. The main impact of initial efforts in this scenario would be creating fear and uncertainty in

immigrant communities and obstructing immigration bureaucracy, as done in the first administration. The result will be reduced immigration; though significant, it will not differ much from what was in Trump's first term (Economic Studies Media Office, 2024).

Aggressive Anti-Immigration Policy, Within Legal Bounds

The executive branch has considerable discretion regarding immigration policies, especially given Congress's apparent unwillingness to legislate. Project 2025 has devoted significant attention to policy development on this topic, which could serve as a blueprint for the new administration. Proposed actions include restricting and slowing current legal immigration pathways, further limiting border flows with harsh tactics, eliminating humanitarian protections, and significantly increasing deportation efforts. In this scenario, we have predicted net harmful immigration with macroeconomic implications and significant local disruptions across industries such as agriculture, construction, hospitality, and direct care. This scenario also includes widespread psychological harm in immigrant communities, including for 4.4 million US citizen children with undocumented parents (Economic Studies Media Office, 2024).

Constitutional Crisis

The administration might turn immigration policy into a testing ground for limits on executive power. In the first administration, court decisions restricted the administration. For example, the Supreme Court ruled against ending the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, and courts limited the so-called "Muslim ban," restricting visas from certain countries. Faced with court challenges, there is a slight possibility the new administration might ignore court orders, thereby escalating a constitutional crisis (Economic Studies Media Office, 2024).

Changes in Public Charge Policy

State Map on Immigration Enforcement 2024

While immigration law is federal, administered by federal agencies, state laws guide immigration enforcement. Since creating the "Secure Communities "program, US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is automatically notified of anyone arrested nationwide - regardless of the basis or pretext for their arrest. This law gives local law enforcement extraordinary power to enforce immigration laws. Over the past decade, 70-75% of ICE arrests inside the United States have been through another law enforcement organization, whether a local or state jail or federal prison. Thus, it is these domestic governments, law enforcement, and their criminal legal systems that empower the mass detention and deportation system. When Donald Trump becomes the next US president, he has promised to dedicate massive federal resources to round up and deport immigrants, mainly targeting "sanctuary cities, "or invoke the Alien Enemies Act, or any other horrific measures his campaign has promoted, from which most people have recoiled. The deportation system will continue to be fed by state and local law enforcement. This engine is what ICE has built over two decades, and on which the Trump administration's goals rely.

Furthermore, some states have heavily expanded this engine with their laws. Texas, for example, has redirected a significant portion of its criminal justice system toward immigration enforcement. Specifically, 2024 saw several states innovate by using their criminal laws against immigrants. These states and their anti-immigrant political agenda will gain more power after Trump becomes president again. However, there are states in between that do not enforce these laws (ILRC, 2024).

As the Biden administration ends on January 20, one of the most ambitious migration management policy initiatives in recent memory also concludes. Over the past four years, the

administration launched an innovative strategy that combined enhanced regional cooperation on migration enforcement and a more orderly border entry system with a significant expansion of legal pathways and efforts to move humanitarian protection decisions away from the border. Based on "safe mobility," this strategy ultimately saw illegal migration to the U.S.-Mexico border fall to its lowest level nearly five years after record arrivals. However, implementing the various elements took considerable time - a period during which the US public grew increasingly unsettled by border chaos and large numbers of irregular entries. Even though some key aspects of this strategy have not yet been fully implemented, the incoming Trump administration will demonstrate its different vision for managing migration at the US borders and for its relationships with neighboring countries.

Nevertheless, the Biden-era innovations have been watched with interest across the Atlantic, where many European governments are struggling to find an effective response to similar mixed movements of asylum seekers and illegal immigrants. While some US measures were more developed than others, they provided the seeds of an approach that ensures greater border control while advancing pathways for humanitarian protection. However, the Biden experience makes clear that sequencing matters. Many elements promoting protection pathways preceded efforts to strengthen regional enforcement and increase US asylum requirements at borders. It was not until June 2024 that many enforcement measures, including enhanced cooperation with Mexican and Panamanian governments and limiting asylum eligibility at borders, were fully implemented, and illegal entries rapidly declined. As a result, the administration will likely be remembered more for the several million migrants who were allowed to cross the U.S.-Mexico border rather than the combination of measures that ultimately brought illegal migration under control. The incoming Trump administration will undoubtedly pursue a strategy grounded in law enforcement rather than legal pathways, reducing access to humanitarian protection.

However, this does not mean a balanced approach incorporating vigorous enforcement and legal pathways is dead. Instead, for countries willing to pursue it, it points to a more pragmatic approach that achieves an early reduction in entries while preserving protection pathways and avoiding delays to enforcement-focused elements of the strategy (MPI, 2024).

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

How have Canada's immigration policies been in the past two years?

The results of this study indicate that immigration intake in Canada has been decreasing in recent years. Experts say this situation results from the government's immigration policies, driven by rising housing prices and reduced social services for Canada's large population. Many Canadians have exited the housing market since interest rates began to rise two years ago. Additionally, the increase in immigration has pushed Canada's population to unprecedented levels, further increasing housing demand and, in some sectors, driving price hikes. Therefore, the government has implemented a policy known as the Immigration Levels Plan, under which analysts predict that Canada's three-year immigration controls will cause a 0.2% decrease in the population in both 2025 and 2026 (Al Jazeera, 2024). Although this situation will not benefit immigrants, the plan aims to alleviate pressure on housing, infrastructure, and social services, thereby increasing the country's long-term economic and social welfare through immigration (Immigration, R. A. C. C., 2024). In addition to reducing the number of immigrants, this plan also aims to shorten the duration of immigrants' stays.

Moreover, the government has implemented other policies, including restrictions for international students and tighter eligibility conditions for temporary foreign workers, to

reduce the volume and strengthen the integrity and quality of temporary residency programs (Immigration, R. a. C. C., 2024), all aimed at reducing immigration in the short term in 2024. The reasons behind these policies for the coming years (2024-2027) are as follows: Although Canada is a primary destination for refugees, increasing immigration will raise the demand for housing and social services. The demand for housing and social services, in turn, could cause a shortage of both and create dissatisfaction among residents. On the other hand, the Trump administration's policies have severely limited immigrants' access to the United States. As a result, more immigrants have chosen Canada as their destination, leading to significant negative consequences. In 2017, when Trump took office, nearly 50,000 asylum seekers applied to Canada—twice the number of the previous year (Piie, 2024).

The increase in asylum applications to Canada in 2017 was due to Trump's policies, including restrictions on asylum and travel, intensified immigration enforcement, and the decision not to extend the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) of Haitians, which contributed to this rise (Immigration, R. a. C. C., 2024). Consequently, the Canadian government, through laws and plans such as the Immigration Levels Plan, will limit immigration in the short term to build the infrastructure needed to support immigrants, who are the main drivers of Canada's long-term growth. During this period, the government has also set policies to accept talented individuals to foster the country's development. Under the Immigration Levels Plan, specific categories will receive a fixed number of individuals each year. In recent years, the government has generally not accepted all immigrants. Humanitarian admissions have also faced stricter measures; however, the Caregivers Program is to accept this group of immigrants (Bragg and Wang, 2016).

Additionally, the government has imposed restrictions on the acceptance of temporary foreign workers (Ramp & Lozano, 2024). Under the Immigration Levels Plan, programs such as Federal Workers, Federal Skilled Trades, Canadian Experience Class, and the Atlantic

Immigration Pilot Program are to attract the required workforce (Canada Immigration Lawyer, 2024). Although in past years, governmental jobs such as teaching, school administration, military positions, and others often required individuals to be white and Indigenous, the researcher's lived experience indicates that in recent years—particularly within the Toronto District School Board—teachers of diverse racial and non-Indigenous backgrounds are now accepted, due to the adoption of multicultural and anti-oppressive education. These teachers receive the same benefits as their white and Indigenous counterparts, representing a crucial policy shift toward achieving educational justice, which is essential to the advancement of an immigrant-receiving country like Canada.

This policy carries numerous positive outcomes—for instance, fostering a sense of belonging among immigrants to their host country. Such policies, by positively impacting the living conditions of immigrants who have often endured significant hardships, can cultivate a sense of gratitude. This gratitude, in turn, may motivate immigrants to contribute to the country's development. Moreover, these policies lead to a deeper understanding among immigrants—both as students and as teachers—which can enhance the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the educational system.

It is worth noting that in 2020, Biden also amended the "Safe Third Country" agreement between the US and Canada, imposing new restrictions on asylum and stricter requirements for crossings at the southern US border. The sharp increase in restrictions affected Canadian officials, prompting them to strengthen border security, reform the asylum process, and even visit the United States to prevent potential migrants. However, immigration pressures continued in the following years (Ramp & Lozano, 2024). In conclusion, although the Canadian government implemented policies in 2024 aimed at limiting the influx of immigrants, these decisions were intended to prepare the necessary infrastructure to ensure the future well-being of newcomers to the country. Canada, as an immigrant-receiving nation

that considers immigration a core part of its civilizational identity, has consistently viewed immigrants as a vital human resource contributing to its economic growth and development (Gordon, 2020; Erkisi et al., 2023).

On the other hand, anti-immigrant politicians and parties have employed nativist rhetoric to gain electoral support and push back against immigration policies. However, Canadian governments—backed by public support—have continued to pursue an expansive immigration agenda, emphasizing the strategic distribution of immigrants across the country, a robust Canadian citizenship policy, and a single-member plurality electoral system. The interaction of these forces increases the electoral weight of new Canadian voters, which, in turn, moderates political parties' positions and helps reinforce a strong bipartisan consensus on immigration (Triadafilopoulos & Taylor, 2021).

Box 5.2:

How have the immigration policies of the United States been in the past two years?

The United States' immigration policies have undergone significant changes over the past two years. From 2020 to 2023, under President Biden, immigration had fewer strict regulations but was managed more systematically. However, starting in 2024, with the beginning of the Trump administration, stricter immigration policies will be applied. Specifically, during President Biden's administration, resettlement, humanitarian parole, family reunification, and temporary work visas will facilitate immigration. During this period, the US resettled 17,600 refugees, and 1,000 people were resettled in other countries. Simultaneously, this administration doubled its executive efforts at the southern US border, with mixed results and negative impacts on the right to access asylum, and altered the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP), the "Remain in Mexico" policy, which President Trump approved in January 2019. However, similar to the previous administration (Trump in 2017),

border restrictions to prevent illegal entry continued, resulting in a sharp decrease in the number of immigrants entering the United States through the southern border (CIDOB, 2024).

President Biden's administration took significant steps to increase refugee admissions to the United States. When Biden took office, the annual refugee ceiling was 15,000. However, in April 2021, he raised it to 63,500. Notably, one reason for the increase in the immigration ceiling during this period was the end of restrictions imposed by the previous administration, such as the Muslim ban, which the Trump administration imposed following the September 11 attacks. Additionally, the reunification of immigrant families was another immigration policy that increased the immigration ceiling. Furthermore, the coincidence of this administration with the fall of Kabul in 2021 and Russia's invasion of Ukraine led to the decision to increase the refugee intake ceiling (CIDOB, 2024).

On the other hand, during President Trump's administration from 2017 to 2020 and 2024, stricter measures were taken to limit legal and illegal immigration to the United States. The reason for this forecast is that President-elect Trump has referred to plans for limiting and eliminating legal immigration pathways, including humanitarian support and the deportation of millions of immigrants, which would have consequences such as family separations, adverse mental and physical impacts on immigrant families, and adverse effects on the workforce and economy, leading to a humanitarian crisis (Moodir, 2024; CIDOB, 2024).

Trump claims that his goal of mass deportation is to help the growth of the US economy. Although mass deportation may benefit the economy by alleviating housing shortages, its costs will be staggering (CIDOB, 2024). Moreover, deporting illegal immigrants, who make up a significant portion of the US workforce, will lead to labor shortages in industries, resulting in price increases for goods and services, reduced tax

revenues, increased violence, and a widening racial divide (CIDOB, 2024), which will create serious challenges for US society. Additionally, during this period, the government will implement immigration policies, such as terminating DACA and changing the public charge policy for immigrants, to reduce immigrant intake. The reinstatement of the "Remain in Mexico" border policy is highly likely, and officials may use military resources to enforce stricter border laws, leading to an increasing number of refugees facing unsafe conditions at the border. Furthermore, the government will likely introduce policies to limit refugee acceptance, as Trump set the lowest annual refugee ceiling during his first term. Additionally, reinstating restrictions for Muslim and Chinese students is also predictable (KFF, 2023).

In general, although both the Democratic and Republican parties' efforts in the United States emphasize reforms such as improving immigration law enforcement, regulating the undocumented immigrant population, and creating better pathways for future immigration flows, the Trump administration has focused most heavily on securing the borders before addressing other elements of immigration. This policy reduces the complexity of immigration policy to merely securing the borders and does not see a solution other than mass deportation and implementing strict immigration restrictions, which will have serious consequences for the country (CIDOB, 2024).

Conclusion

It appears that both countries are compelled to adopt more restrictive immigration policies in the short term—Canada due to limited infrastructure to accommodate and support incoming immigrants, and the United States due to security considerations. While such policies may yield long-term benefits for Canada, an exclusive emphasis on border security in the United States could impose high future costs on the country's economic trajectory. Furthermore, research indicates that advanced economies rely heavily on immigrant labor to

sustain productivity and mitigate demographic decline. Therefore, overly restrictive U.S. immigration policies may impede innovation, reduce labor-market adaptability, and ultimately weaken the nation's global economic standing.

Box 5.3:

How have the immigration policies of the United States and Canada been in the past two years?

This research aimed to review the changes in U.S. immigration policies since 1995 and to examine the recent changes in immigration policies over the past two years in both Canada and the United States. No study that focuses on the immigration policies of these two countries during this time frame is available. Although various studies have reviewed the immigration policies of these two countries up to 2020, extending the analysis to 2024 has enabled us to gain a deeper understanding of the ups and downs of immigration to the U.S. and Canada, along with the historical, social, geographical, and political factors that have influenced them. This review showed that the governments of major immigrant-receiving countries, such as Canada and the U.S., adopt policies based on the conditions within their countries, which can either facilitate or hinder the acceptance of immigrants.

As mentioned above, countries adopt policies based on their governance and socio-economic conditions. For example, while Canada has always been open to accepting immigrants, population growth and the inability to provide housing and social services led the country to reduce immigration levels between 2023 and 2024. This decision aims to create better conditions for immigrants and residents in the long run. By improving infrastructure, Canada intends to resume immigrant intake in the future, as its economic growth depends on a significant number of immigrants, who are still needed even with reduced intake (Ramp & Lozano, 2024).

On the other hand, the United States adopts immigration policies based on each party's views. For example, during President Biden's administration, in line with the goals and policies of the Democratic Party, although the government enacted laws to control the borders and prevent excessive and illegal immigration—resulting in very minimal negative impacts on various aspects of the country and even neighboring countries—it took a more lenient approach toward other immigrants and increased the immigration ceiling during this period.

Although the United States is among the major immigrant-receiving countries, it does not appear to follow immigration policies that are as consistent or aligned as those of Canada. This divergence may be attributed to the ideologies of the ruling parties, which significantly influence immigration policies. Given that immigration is on the rise in these countries—particularly in the U.S.—and considering that, according to the cultural backlash theory by Norris and Inglehart (2019), immigration is viewed as a highly significant issue in political and cultural elections, it has become one of the central topics on the political agenda of various parties. Immigration has played a crucial role in the emergence of right-wing populism (McKeever, 2019) and even nativism. Populist, nativist politicians like Donald Trump claim that the increasing number of immigrants poses numerous cultural and political threats to the country's present and future. As a result, they have implemented strict immigration restrictions. While it seems that his plans—to limit unauthorized border crossings from the southern border, reduce asylum claims, and aggressively deport those residing in the U.S. without authorization—might be effective, it remains to be seen how he will address the challenge of meeting the demand for foreign labor, a concern raised by employers such as Elon Musk (Nagel, 2025).

However, with President Trump's rise and his strict Republican approach, the government will implement policies with significant negative consequences for the U.S.

economy, its people, permanent and temporary immigrants, and neighboring countries (CIDOB, 2024; Moodir, 2024). Additionally, concerns about demographic changes and identity issues surrounding immigration seem to be another reason why the Trump administration is sacrificing immigration (CIDOB, 2024). Immigration policies such as mass deportations, in addition to their high costs, will reduce national income, increase prices, cause housing shortages, widen class and ethnic divides, and lead to increased crime and violence, which will have severe consequences for the country (CIDOB, 2024).

Based on the above, comparing the immigration policies of the two countries can lead to the understanding that although halting and reducing immigration in the short term to create the necessary infrastructure for the current population and future immigrants is a wise, scientific, and practical approach (referring to the approach taken by the Canadian government), this is because the reduction in population growth in Canada will decrease the labor force and, consequently, economic growth, making it harder to provide social services such as education, healthcare, and other welfare facilities at standard levels (Canada Immigration Lawyer, 2024).

The mentioned comparison also showed that implementing stringent laws, especially in the United States, affects immigrants and immigrant-receiving countries whose economies depend on immigrants in various sectors. The problems these countries face as a result are immeasurable. For example, this can lead to family crises, decreased productivity, economic setbacks, and weakened infrastructure.

Suggestions and Limitations

In this study, I searched for all relevant articles on the immigration policies of the United States and Canada. However, not all cases were available. Therefore, I suggest that

future research explore all related sources. Additionally, this review helps us better understand the factors affecting these countries, allowing us to predict future changes and immigration policies, and even critically assess the pros and cons of each immigration policy. Thus, this research can be of interest to policymakers in immigration matters. Furthermore, immigration policymakers should consider the findings of this research and scientifically examine the negative consequences of applying strict laws on society and the economy.

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