



Family Reunification and Family Class Immigration in Canada

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Family Reunification in Canadian Context

- **Family reunification is an important principle of Canada's immigration policy.**
 - **Long-standing policy allows Canadians and permanent residents to bring their family with them when they immigrate to Canada or to sponsor close family members for immigration to Canada.**
 - **Principle reaffirmed in the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act***
- **Research suggests that immigrants tend to establish themselves more easily if they are supported by their families.**



Newcomers are welcomed to Canada through one of three main classes: Family, Economic or Refugee

- **The *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* established three basic classes for those seeking permanent residence in Canada, which correspond to major program objectives;**
 - **Contributing to economic development: Economic Immigrants**
 - **Reuniting families: Family Class**
 - **Protecting refugees**
- **The Family Class is made up of people who join family members already settled in Canada.**



Family Class Immigration: How does family reunification work in Canada?

- **Family Class immigrants are people sponsored to come to, or remain in Canada by a relative who is a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada.**
- **The Family Class applicant must be the sponsor's:**
 - **spouse, common-law or conjugal partner (aged 16 or older);**
 - **dependent child, including a child adopted abroad;**
 - **child under 18 years of age to be adopted in Canada;**
 - **parent or grandparent; or**
 - **brother, sister, niece, nephew or grandchild who has been orphaned, is under 18 years of age and is not married or in a common-law relationship;**
 - **other relatives may also be considered in certain circumstances.**



Family Class Immigration: Sponsors have an important responsibility

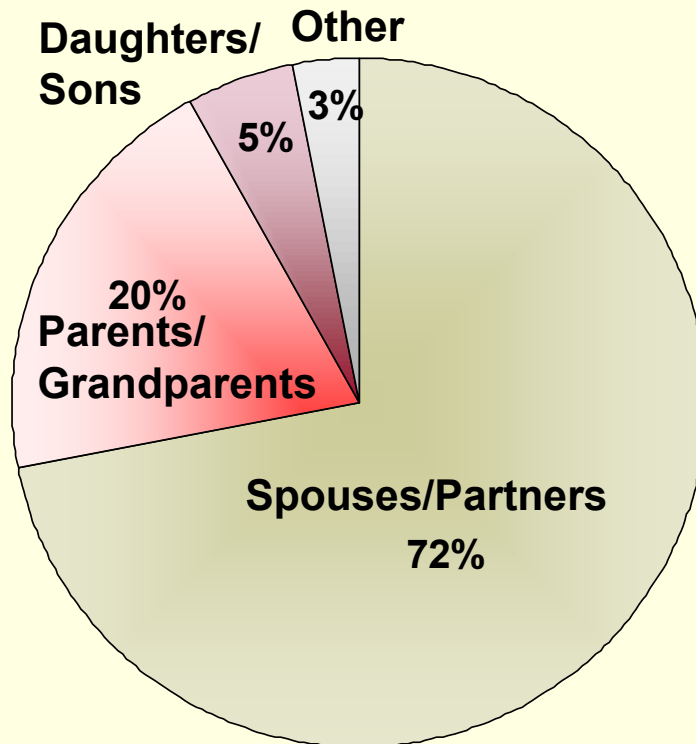
- **Sponsors must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents, 18 years of age or older.**
- **Sponsors are responsible for;**
 - **initiating the immigration process for family class applications;**
 - **providing the essential needs of permanent residents after arrival in Canada; and**
 - **ensuring that sponsored family members do not become dependent on the Canadian social assistance system for a period of 3-10 years.**
- **Given their level of responsibility, sponsors are subject to certain eligibility criteria, to ensure that they will be able to support family members upon arrival in Canada.**



Family Class Immigration: Becoming a permanent resident of Canada

- **Family Class applicants are subject to health and security criteria, not additional criteria required of economic immigrants.**
- **Successful applicants become permanent residents of Canada and are accorded most of the rights, entitlements and responsibilities as Canadians citizens.**
- **Family Class immigrants are more likely to benefit from the presence of support networks already established in Canada, a factor which research suggests is important for successful integration.**

A profile of Family Class immigrants in Canada, 2005



Who are Family Class?

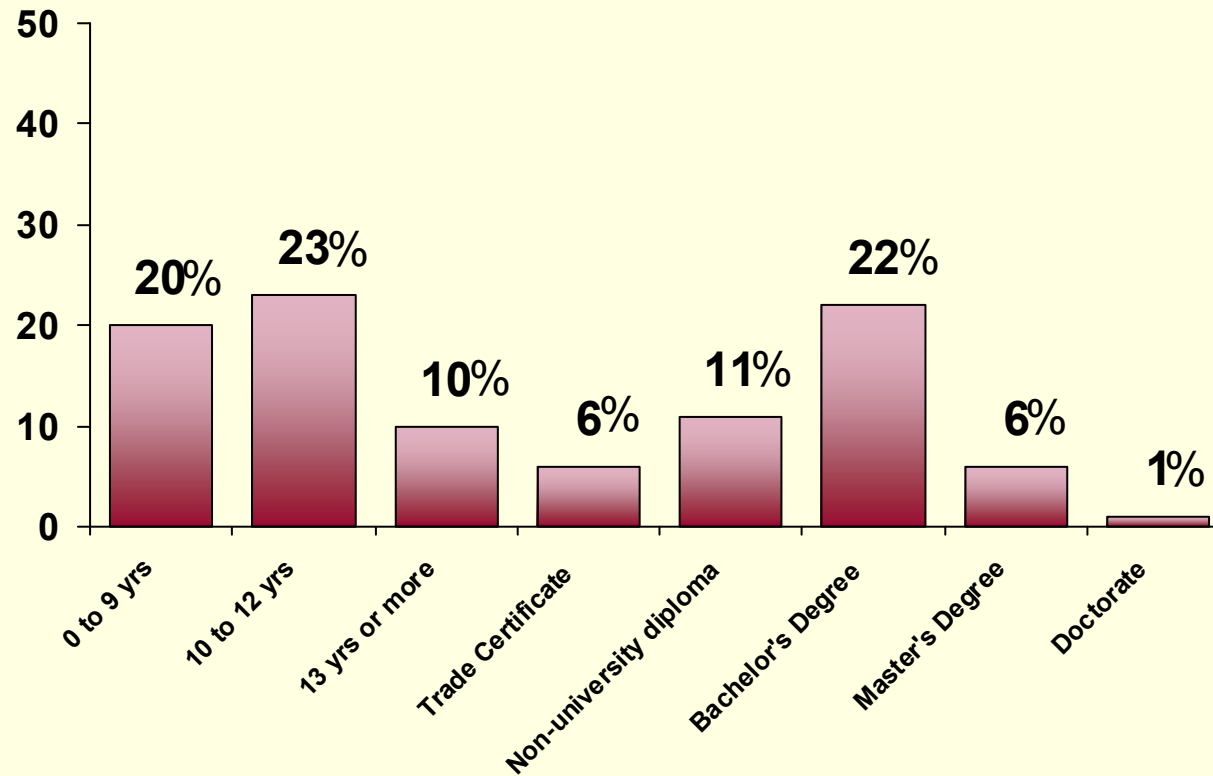
- Female (60%)
- aged 25-44 (43%)

Where do they come from?

- Asia and Pacific (58%)
- Europe/UK (12%)
- Africa/Middle East (12%)
- South/Central America (11%)
- United States (6%)

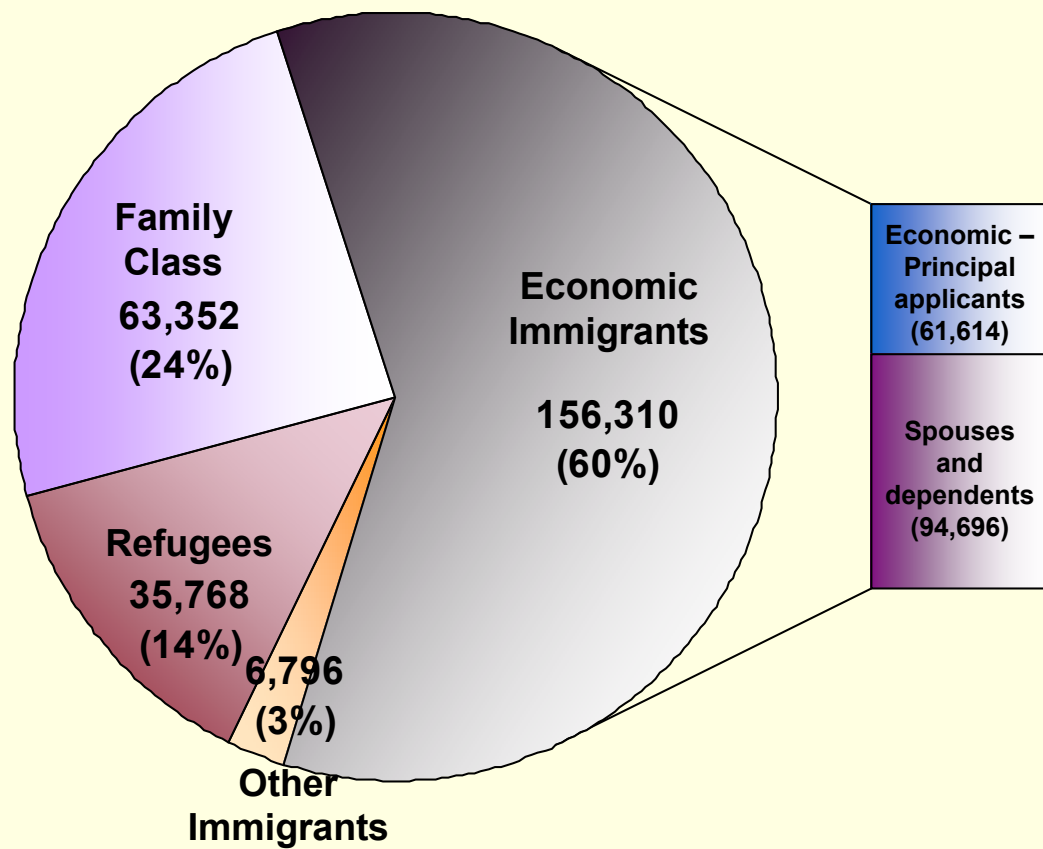
A profile of Family Class immigrants in Canada, 2005: Level of education

**Level of Education of Family Class Immigrants 15 Years of Age or Older
(percentage distribution)**



Family Class Immigration in Canada, 2005

Canada – Permanent Residents by Category, 2005





Summary:

Key Features of Family Class Immigration in Canada

- **Family reunification is a formally recognized objective, articulated in legislation and supported by the Family Class of immigration.**
- **Regulations recognize a relatively broad definition of Family Class.**
- **Sponsorship is an important responsibility and is key to the successful integration of Family Class immigrants.**
- **Family Class immigrants are granted permanent residence and have the rights, responsibilities and entitlements of citizens, with few exceptions.**



Areas for further study...

- **Role of family reunification in:**
 - **supporting the integration of permanent residents;**
 - **maximizing social, cultural and economic benefits of Canadian society;**
 - **enriching the social and cultural fabric of Canadian society;**
 - **supporting the development of a strong, prosperous economy.**



Citizenship and Immigration Canada

For further information:

www.cic.gc.ca

www.canada.metropolis.net