Section B

CANADIAN MULTICULTURALISM

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CANADIAN MULTICULTURALISM

Canada is prominent on the world map not only because it tops the Human Development Index, but also because it is a multicultural nation. Indeed, Canada has the distinction of being the first immigrant country to sincerely attempt to fashion a pluralistic society. The use of the term "multicultural" to describe the Canadian nation implies that most Canadians have a diverse cultural heritage and background as a result of centuries of immigration.

Immigration to Canada has always been an attraction for people from around the world, for reasons ranging from economic betterment to escape from political and religious persecution. Through its immigration policies, which have kept evolving and changing over the years depending on the social, political and cultural developments, Canada has remained open, though selective, about allowing migrants to enter the country for settlement. Thus immigration has played a decisive role in shaping the rich social and cultural diversity of Canada, making it the "mosaic" that it is today.

Canada has always been a land rich in diverse peoples and cultures. Diversity has been a fundamental characteristic of Canada since its beginnings and multiculturalism has developed out of the dynamic diversity of its population (http://www.pch.gc.caprogs/multi/reports/ann20022003/conclusion_e.cfm>. 18 May 2008).

As Member of Parliament Jean Augustine has said, "Canada is a multicultural society in terms of its fundamental values and its demographic composition . . Multiculturalism is an ethic of Canadian society . . ." The vision here is a unique one: that of creating a "fully inclusive society, free of discriminatory barriers," with room for all

denominations   of   people   to   exist   and   flourish (http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/reports/Ann2002-2003/message_

e.cfm. 18 May 2008).

What one sees in Canada today is the fulfillment of this unique Canadian vision. Over the years, Canada has nurtured its policy of Multiculturalism and taken pains to implement it sincerely. Despite the changes in governments, and the consequent fluctuations of policy, Canada has always returned to the belief in the multi-cultural ethic. Speaking at a Canada-India Foundation gala dinner on April 18, 2008 at Toronto, Prime Minister Stephen Harper cited figures to point out how the number of immigrants has kept on increasing with every successive government. "We are bringing in more immigrants than any previous government. You can see this has been an upward trend in the past four decades. The Mulroney government had higher immigration levels than (the previous) Trudeau government. The Chretien government had higher immigration levels still. Since we were elected in 2006, actual immigration across categories has risen yet, including I might add 56,000 new immigrants   from   India   alone" (http://news.indiainfo.com/2008/04/19/0804192231_canadian_pm.   html. 18 May 2008).

How did this unique state of multicultural society come to be? To answer this question, one must briefly go back in time. The initial migrants into Canada were the ancestors of Canada's Native Peoples, who migrated across the icepack that linked Asia to North America several thousand years ago. Many centuries later, approximately 500 years ago, the first Europeans from France arrived in Canada and settled along the banks of the St. Lawrence River and its tributaries. The British, the Scots and the Irish arrived next. The Chinese labourers, who were brought in after

the Canadian Confederation in 1867 to build the Canadian Pacific Railway, resulted in an influx of the Chinese into Canada. According to the 1870-71 census, Canada's total population was 3.6 million. In addition to native peoples (about 136000 in 1851), the two largest groups were the French (1 million) and the British (2.1 million). Except the Germans (203000), other groups (Dutch, American blacks, Swiss, Italians, Spanish, and Portuguese) were much smaller.

During the 19th century, the movement of individuals and groups to Canada was largely unrestricted, although in 1885, under pressure from British Columbia, an Act was passed restricting Chinese immigration through the imposition of a head tax, the first of a series of such measures directed at the Chinese that continued until the late 1940s. Otherwise, immigration policy was concerned mainly with quarantine stations, the responsibilities of transportation companies, and the exclusion of criminals, paupers, the diseased and the destitute.

Immigrants from Europe and America formed the majority of migrants during the first half of the 20th century. During the latter half, we find that it was non-Europeans who came to Canada for economic reasons. By 1970, half of all immigrants were coming from the Caribbean nations, Asia and South America. More people from Africa started arriving after the 1980s (www41.statscan.ca). This implied that Canada's visible minority population was increasing at an alarming rate. From 1981 to 2001, the number of visible minority increased more than three fold from 1.1 million people or nearly 5% of the population, to 4.0 million people or 13% of the population. The Chinese made up the single largest visible minority group in 2001 followed by South Asian and African (www 41.statscan.ca).

Chart 13.2 Growth of visible minorities in Canada
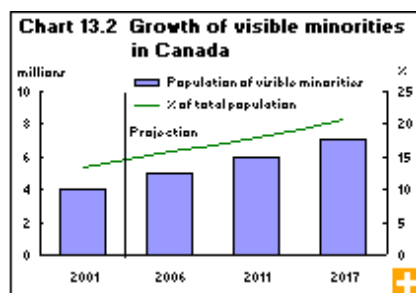
All the initial migrants made their own contributions to Canadian economy, in expanding agriculture, mining, railways and the lumber industry. The contribution of immigrants in building Canadian society and polity has been crucial. However, racial and cultural fears gradually became genuine, particularly among the European Canadians. Fears of assimilation and acculturation of these small cultures into the larger Western culture became a genuine fear. Those born in Canada feared that the new immigrants could take the limited jobs available away. Others feared the dominance of one language over the other. These fears were responsible for the anti-immigrant sentiment that spread across the Canadian sub-continent. In response to this sentiment, particularly after the massive immigration between 1903 and 1913, the First World War and subsequent political upheavals and economic crises, a much more restrictive immigration policy was implemented. With the end of World War I, Canada entered an era of uncertainty — the Russian Revolution of 1917 had created a great amount of apprehension regarding the rise of socialism and the anti-foreign sentiment that surfaced in Canada during the war continued to intensify with postwar economic instability. Spurred on by popular support and the events of the Winnipeg General Strike, in 1919 the Canadian government revised the Immigration Act.

The Immigration Act of 1919 was a radical departure from the Act of 1910. The 1910 Act provided the Federal government with the power to limit immigration, but what was special about the revision of 1919 was that it sought to formalise

immigration guidelines on preferred norms of culture and ideology. Immigrants were classified into preferred groups (such as those of British, American, or northwest European stock), and the "less suitable" groups such as those from central and eastern Europe. While the latter had earlier been accepted whenever there was a demand for professional skills, such as for agriculture in the Canadian west, now there was provision to exclude migrants with ideological beliefs in contradiction to the Canadian government. For instance, in 1919, the newly revised Immigration Act was used to deny entry to any group whose nation of origin had been an enemy during World War I. Starting from the onset of the Great Depression in the 1930s, through the Second World War, Canada literally closed it doors to migrants from Southern and Eastern Europe and to the Jews. Doukhobors, Mennonites and Hutterites were also rejected at this time because their cultural practices were considered too distinctive (http://www.abheritage.ca/albertans/cont-inuity/int_immigrationactof1919.html 18 May 2008).

Moreover, after the Second World War, the Canadian government embarked on an assimilation process. This was a deliberate attempt through public policies to put pressure on the ethnic population to give up their traditions and assimilate with the culture of English Canada. Thus the children of the migrants were encouraged to go to public schools. Both the church and media joined in this assimilation effort.

At the same time during this period, the Canadian economy was poised for expansion. This meant that more people were needed to work in the industries. This made Canada lift its restrictions on immigration, which helped people from all over Europe, Asia and Africa to get into Canada. There seemed to be a genuine effort at trying to end racism and discrimination, particularly towards non-Europeans. The discriminatory immigration policies began to change from 1962, when Canada's

present universal and nondiscriminatory policy was introduced in stages (http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/ index.cfm. 18 May 2008).

After the 1960s, certain social and political upheavals in the Canadian society made it compulsory to abandon the assimilation policy and adopt a policy of Multiculturalism. The assertiveness of Canada's aboriginal people, Quebecois Nationalism, and the increasing resentment of the ethnic minorities were some of the major factors responsible for Multiculturalism as a policy to be adopted in Canada. This is seen right through the Citizenship Act of 1947, which focused on equality and human rights and in the 1969 Official languages Act which recognized English and French as the two official languages of Canada. Diversity has been a fundamental characteristic of Canada since its beginnings. The legislative framework that supports Canada's approach to diversity has been expanded and strengthened throughout our history. Beginning in 1947, the Citizenship Act increased the focus on equality and human rights.

In the mid-1960s, the Canadian Government appointed a Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism to study problems arising from the strained English-French relations. The Royal Commission held various hearings throughout Canada. Ethnic spokespersons argued that ethnic groups had contributed to the development of Canada and had endured difficulties just like English and French Canadians. Their argument was that the policy of assimilation was not the answer, but a policy that addressed the pluralism of ethnic groups needed to be adopted by Canadian society. The Commission recommended to the Government that cultural pluralism as a value be adopted and Canadian institutions reflect this pluralism in their policies and programmes. In 1969, the Official Languages Act established English and French as the official languages of Canada. It included recommendations that addressed non-

English and non-French groups, and encouraged federal institutions and agencies to promote "…the preservation of human rights, the development of Canadian identity, the reinforcement of Canadian unity, the improvement of citizenship participation and the encouragement of cultural diversification within a bilingual framework" (http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/reports/ann2002-2003/01_e.cfm 18 May 2008). It was this combination of circumstances that led to the Canadian Multiculturalism policy of 1971.

The key objectives of the Multiculturalism Policy of 1971 were based on the ongoing debates in Canadian society and the new priorities that the country now placed before itself. The Policy stressed the need to: (a) assist cultural groups to retain and foster their identity; (b) assist cultural groups to overcome barriers to their full participation in Canadian society; (c) promote creative exchanges among all Canadian cultural groups; and (d) assist immigrants in acquiring at least one of the official languages of Canada (Michael Dewing and Marc Leman, *Canadian Multiculturalism.* Political and Social Affairs Division, March 2006. www.parl.gc.ca/info/library/PRB 936_e.htm. 14 May 2008).

The Canadian government set apart funds to implement the policy objectives. Multiculturalism was approved in 1972 with an aim to sponsor activity concerning immigration, citizenship and cultural diversity. Speaking 10 years later, the architect of the policy, the Rt. Honourable Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, struck the key to the whole multicultural experiment: "It is my deepest hope that Canada will match its new legal maturity with that degree of political maturity which will allow us to make a total commitment to the Canadian ideal. I speak of a Canada where men and women of Aboriginal ancestry, of French and British heritage, of the diverse cultures of the world, demonstrate the will to share this land in peace, in

justice,   and   with   mutual   respect"
(http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/respect_e.cfm. 20 May 2008).

In the coming years, as if in answer to Trudeau's hope, this uniquely Canadian impulse towards multiculturalism would only gather strength. Two years later, in 1984, the Special Parliamentary Committee on Visible Minorities produced its report *Equality Now*, and in 1985 a House of Commons Standing Committee on Multiculturalism was created. In 1987, the Committee issued an extensive report that called for the enactment of a new policy on multiculturalism and the creation of a Department of Multiculturalism (Dewing and Leman).

In terms of this policy, it was declared that the Government of Canada would recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society and acknowledge the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage. It recognized and aimed to promote the understanding that multiculturalism is a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian heritage and identity and that it provides an invaluable resource in the shaping of Canada's future.

Further, the policy aimed to promote the full and equitable participation of individuals and communities of all origins in the continuing evolution and shaping of all aspects of Canadian society and assist them in the elimination of any barrier to that participation. It recognized the existence of communities whose members shared a common origin and their historic contribution to Canadian society, and pledged to enhance their development.

At the same time, the policy aimed to ensure that all individuals received equal treatment and equal protection under the law, while respecting and valuing

their diversity. It would also encourage and assist the social, cultural, economic and political institutions of Canada to be both respectful and inclusive of Canada's multicultural character. Further, the policy would promote the understanding and creativity that arise from the interaction between individuals and communities of different origins. It also aimed to foster the recognition and appreciation of the diverse cultures of Canadian society and promote the reflection and the evolving expressions of those cultures. At the same time, it aimed to preserve and enhance the use of languages other than English and French, while strengthening the status and use of the official languages of Canada, and to advance multiculturalism throughout Canada in harmony with the national commitment to the official languages of Canada.

By way of implementing these goals, it was further declared to be the policy of the Government of Canada that all federal institutions shall ensure that Canadians of all origins have an equal opportunity to obtain employment and advancement in these institutions. Importantly, institutions would promote policies, programs and practices that enhance the ability of individuals and communities of all origins to contribute to the continuing evolution of Canada. They would also promote policies, programs and practices that enhance the understanding of and respect for the diversity of the members of Canadian society. As a theoretical base, the federal institutions were asked to collect statistical data in order to enable the development of policies, programs and practices that are sensitive and responsive to the multicultural reality of Canada. Federal institutions were also advised to make use, as appropriate, of the language skills and cultural understanding of individuals of all origins and, generally, carry on their activities in a manner that is sensitive and responsive to the multicultural reality of Canada (www.pch.gc.ca). Moreover, a

minister was put in charge of overseeing the Multiculturalism Policy and made responsible for implementing programmes and policies.

In 1988, when Bill C-93 was adopted by Parliament as the Multiculturalism Act, Canada became the first country in the world to pass a Multiculturalism Law. It was seen as a means of trying to remove barriers that prevent Canadian citizens from participating in Canadian society. The Act recognized diversity and was sincere about eradicating racism and other discriminatory practices. Institutions in Canada were asked to deliver programmes that mobilised communities by promoting dialogue and helping ethnic groups and minorities to participate as equals in society.

The Canadian Multicultural Act is the *magna carta* of democracy in the modern world. While it is an Act for the preservation and enhancement of multiculturalism in Canada, it is also one that presents a model of civil society for the rest of the world. The Preamble to the Act clarifies the basic premises on which the whole policy of Multiculturalism is based.   For this purpose, the following themes from the Constitution of Canada are highlighted:

1. the Constitution of Canada provides that every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and benefit of the law without discrimination and that everyone has the freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief, opinion, expression, peaceful assembly and association and guarantees those rights and freedoms equally to male and female persons.

2. the Constitution of Canada recognizes the importance of preserving and enhancing the multicultural heritage of Canadians.

3. the Constitution of Canada recognizes rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada.

4. the Constitution of Canada and the *Official Languages Act* provide that English and French are the official languages of Canada and neither abrogates nor derogates from any rights or privileges acquired or enjoyed with respect to any other language.

5. the *Citizenship Act* provides that all Canadians, whether by birth or by choice, enjoy equal status, are entitled to the same rights, powers and privileges and are subject to the same obligations, duties and liabilities.

6. the *Canadian Human Rights Act* provides that every individual should have an equal opportunity with other individuals to make the life that the individual is able and wishes to have, consistent with the duties and obligations of that individual as a member of society, and, in order to secure that opportunity, establishes the Canadian Human Rights Commission to redress any proscribed discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin or colour.

7. Canada is a party to the *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*, which Convention recognizes that all human beings are equal before the law and are entitled to equal protection of the law against any discrimination and against any incitement to discrimination, and to the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, which Covenant provides that persons belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities shall not be denied the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion or to use their own language.

8. The Government of Canada recognizes the diversity of Canadians as regards race, national or ethnic origin, colour and religion as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society and is committed to a policy of multiculturalism designed to

preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians while working to achieve the equality of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada. (www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/policy/act e.cfm.18th May 2008).

It is obvious from the Preamble that the Act is designed to preserve and enhance multiculturalism in Canada and committed to the enhancement of cultural awareness and understanding among the diverse peoples of the country. The architects of Canada's Multiculturalism Act recognized the crucial role federal organizations can play in preserving and enhancing multiculturalism in Canada. In addition to directing federal institutions to "carry on their activities in a manner that is sensitive and responsive to the multicultural reality of Canada," the Act contains five specific instructions under which federal organizations shall:

- ensure that Canadians of all origins have an equal opportunity to obtain employment and advancement in those institutions
- promote policies, programs and practices that enhance the ability of individuals and communities of all origins to contribute to the continuing evolution of Canada promote policies, programs and practices that enhance the understanding of and respect for the diversity of the members of Canadian society
- collect statistical data in order to enable the development of policies, programs and practices that are sensitive and responsive to the multicultural reality of Canada *and*
- make use, as appropriate, of the language skills and cultural understanding of individuals of all origins.

An important aspect of the Multiculturalism Program is the serious attention given to developing a mechanism that will enable Canadians to measure the progress of federal institutions in implementing innovative approaches and best practices in relation to the Canadian Multiculturalism Act. (www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/reports/ann2002-2003/03 e.cfm). The goals of Multiculturalism become extremely important, as they would help all Canadians to participate fully in the economic, political, social and cultural life of the country.

The Multiculturalism Act was augmented in 1991 by the setting up of a separate department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship which encouraged participation of all citizens in the socio-cultural, political and economic institutions of Canada. The institutionalized programmes established under the new department were:

a) Race Relations and Cross Cultural understanding. This concentrated on implementing policies to bring in racial equality.

b) Heritage Cultures and Languages give emphasis in preserving languages and helping ethnic cultures to retain their group identity.

c) Community Support and Participation which supports and enables all individuals from racial and ethno-cultural groups in participating in Canadian society.

Canada has further attempted to translate Multiculturalism into practice when it passed the Broadcasting Act of 1991, created the Canadian Race Relations Foundations in 1996, and the Embracing Change Action Plan in 2000. The Multiculturalism Programme tries to pursue the goals of Identity, Social Justice and

Civic Participation. While maintaining their individual identity as ethnic groups, it also becomes important to give them a sense of belonging to Canada.

In 1996, the Secretary of State for Multiculturalism announced a renewed Multiculturalism Programme that focused on the three objectives of social justice, civic participation and identity. The Secretary of the State also announced the official establishment of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, whose priorities are to undertake research, collect data, develop a national information base, to further understanding of racism, and to disseminate this information to the public to increase their awareness in order to eliminate racism.

Since 2002, the Canadian Multiculturalism Programme has identified, within these three policy goals, four priority objectives on which it is focusing its attention: under the rubric of *Social Justice* the Programme aims to combat racism and discrimination by encouraging more Canadians to get involved in finding positive ways to stop racial discrimination. To achieve the goal of *Civic Participation*, it seeks, on the one hand, to promote shared citizenship, making sure all Canadians feel a sense of belonging to economic, cultural and social life in Canada; and, on the other, to make Canadian institutions more reflective of Canadian diversity by ensuring that public institutions are responsive to and representative of an increasingly diverse population. Thirdly, it seeks to address identitarian issues of fostering cross-cultural understanding by supporting programmes and initiatives that facilitate the understanding of cultural differences and allow the integration into Canada's overall culture, in urban and rural communities.

These goals and objectives, as enunciated, find societal expression in a number of initiatives pushed through by various state agencies and institutions. A

few examples will suffice to prove the point as to how multicultural theory is being translated into multicultural practice. For instance, in February 2003, the Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) called a Forum on Policing in a Multicultural Society. The Forum, organized in partnership with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, built and strengthened partnerships between police and communities and showcased tools and best practices. Participants from law enforcement agencies, Aboriginal, ethnic and racial communities, academia and public institutions discussed and developed strategies in three areas: recognizing and embracing diversity; policing with a national security agenda at the forefront; and civilian oversight and governance (http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/reports/ann2002-2003/02_e.cfm.
18 May 2008).

To take another example, Industry Canada's First Nations School Net Program (http://www.schoolnet.ca/aboriginal/) supports Internet connectivity for First Nations schools under federal jurisdiction. It has connected all First Nations schools that applied, or more than 80 percent of all First Nations schools. The program also supported the development of the First Peoples' Homepage, featuring Aboriginal curriculum resources in English, Cree and Syllabics, cultural collections, and profiles of Aboriginal organizations and communities.

The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) provides grants to Canadian university researchers holding an academic appointment at a Canadian university and working in the natural sciences or engineering, provided they are Canadian citizens or permanent residents. By opening competitions to permanent residents, the Council promotes multiculturalism within academia.

In 2000, NSERC studied the participation of designated groups in its programs. As a result of this study, eligibility under the University Faculty Awards Program (UFA), which was initially restricted to women, was expanded to include Aboriginal men as a measure to address their under-representation in science and engineering disciplines. The Council also targeted funding for Aboriginal applicants for the 2002 scholarship competition at the undergraduate, master's, doctoral and postdoctoral levels. NSERC also provided funding for special activities and outreach programs for Aboriginal youth through its Promo Science program and the President's Discretionary Fund.

Status of Women Canada (SWC) worked with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) on the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, which came into force in June 2002. The new Act explicitly refers to the Canadian Charter's equality rights provisions and upholds the principles of equality and freedom from discrimination. It helps immigrants and refugees contribute to the evolution of Canada by ensuring the protection of their rights and their full participation in Canadian society. In 2002-2003, SWC's Women's Program provided funding and technical assistance to 240 initiatives at local, regional and national levels. Approximately 12 percent pertained to ethnocultural women under three distinct but complementary areas: women's economic status, elimination of systemic violence against women and the girl child, and social justice.

Of the many projects initiated by SWC, one may highlight the work by the Asian Society for the Intervention of AIDS to document and draw public attention to the isolation, violence, exploitation and legal victimization experienced by Asian women trafficked into Vancouver's sex trade. This work formed part of a larger international project that examined trafficking of women from their countries of

origin to their countries of destination. Special mention must be made of the work done on the barriers to employment of immigrant women by three groups, the Immigrant Women of Saskatchewan-Saskatoon Chapter, the Calgary Immigrant Women's Association, and the African Community Working Group in Edmonton. Immigrant Women of Saskatchewan-Saskatoon Chapter focused on developing strategies to work with potential employers to enhance immigrant women's access to the labour market. The Calgary Immigrant Women's Association worked on encouraging corporate employers to make their organizations more accessible to immigrant women. The African Community Working Group in Edmonton pursued ways to increase the number of African immigrant women in leadership positions and decrease their under-employment.

To take another example of the way multicultural policy translates itself into practice, the Canada Council for the Arts increased its grants to culturally diverse artists and arts organizations by 6.6 percent, from $10.2 million in 2001-2002 to $10.9 million in 2002-2003. Of the total, $4.4 million was in indirect funding (such as a grant to a publisher that publishes a book by an author who is a visible minority). This gains importance from the perspective of the fact that only 4 percent of arts organizations funded by the Council in 2001-2002 were culturally diverse. In response, the Council launched a $5.75-million, three-year capacity building initiative that offered grants and opportunities for networking and development to culturally diverse arts organizations. The networking and development opportunities were offered in partnership with Canadian Heritage. The initiative also offered training and internships to culturally diverse arts managers, through the University of Waterloo's Income Managers Program.

To ensure that the broadcasting system provides programming by and for Canadians of all origins, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission continued to license more television and radio services directed to Aboriginal and ethnocultural minority groups in 2002-2003. As a result, more diverse Canadian voices are being heard, and more programming is being produced that engages, includes, integrates and informs Canadians from a variety of backgrounds, particularly new Canadians. The ownership of the broadcast system is becoming more diverse as new players from a variety of origins join the system; and more Canadian talent is being nurtured, benefiting the broadcasting system as a whole.

The National Film Board (NFB) sees openness and commitment to diversity as lying at the very heart of its mission to interpret Canada to Canadians. The NFB maintains programs and measures that ensure conditions favourable to the emergence of artists from intercultural communities and that provide them with means and opportunities to assert themselves and express conditions in their communities   (http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/reports/ann2002-2003/03_e.cfm. 18 May 2008).

To give these initiatives a symbolic resonance, the Government of Canada announced in November 2002 that every year Canada would celebrate Canadian Multiculturalism Day on 27th June. In the 2005 budget the Government earmarked $56 million to implement Canada's Action Plan against Racism. At the International level, on 23 November 2005, Canada accepted the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

The Multiculturalism Policy is all the more relevant today in the context of globalization, where there is a movement of people from one part of the globe to

another. A policy like this helps in not only accommodating cultural differences but also accepting each other with their ethnic and cultural individualities. This would also provide opportunities for all Canadians to develop their skills and realize their potential. The ethno-cultural diversity of Canadian population can be seen as a great advantage especially in the market economy of today. If this advantage is to be translated into economic prosperity, then an attempt to stop all discriminatory practices needs to be taken up. This would not only strengthen Canada as an economy and country, but also be a pointer to other countries to follow suit.
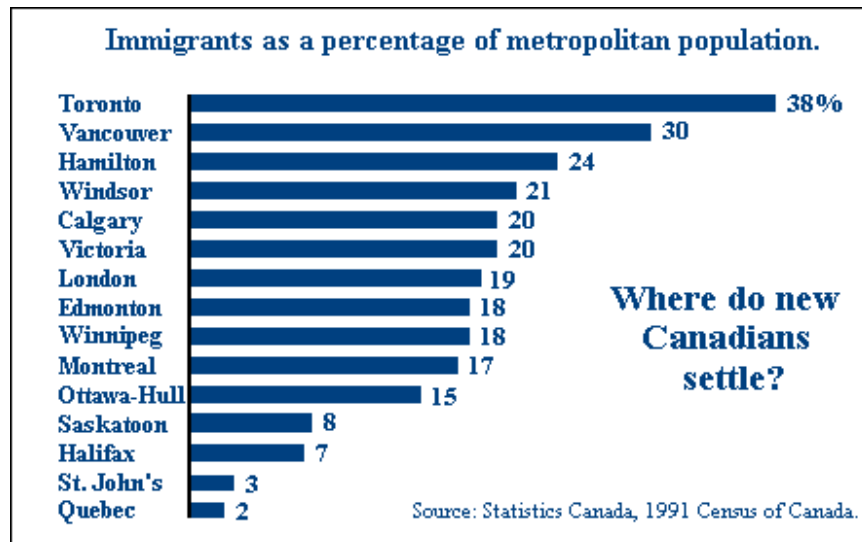
As a result of these various efforts, all directed towards the common goal of ushering in a non-discriminatory society, there was an upsurge of immigration into Canada, strengthening its time-honoured diversity. About 9.3 million people immigrated to Canada, bringing the total number of immigrants in the past one hundred years to 13 million. Although many immigrants went on to the US or eventually returned to their native lands, by 1996 Canada's population had surpassed 29 million.

In 2001, approximately a quarter of a million people from all parts of the globe immigrated to Canada. That year's census found that foreign-born Canadians made up 18 percent of the population, up from 17 percent in 1996. In 1950, nearly all (92%) of the population growth was a product of the birth rate; today, immigration has outpaced the birth rate, accounting for 53 percent of overall population growth. From July 2005 – July 2006, two-thirds of the country's population increase was due to immigration, as Canada welcomed 254,400 immigrants. Thanks to its multicultural policy, as on July 1, 2006, Canada had achieved a population of 32.6 million (www41.statscan.ca).

Chart 13.1 Recent immigrants to Canada, by region of origin
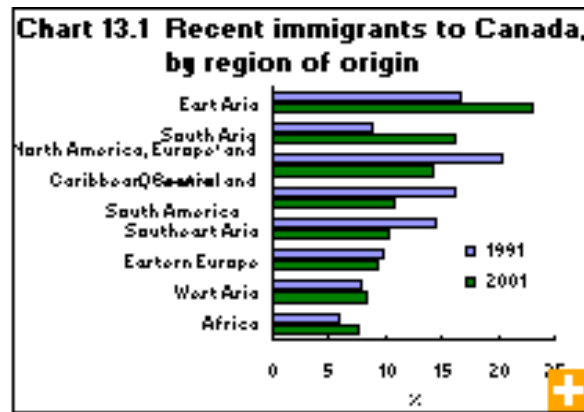
http://www41.statcan.ca/2007/30000/ceb30000_000_e.htm May 18, 2008

It is interesting to note here that half a century ago, most immigrants came from Europe. Now most are from Asia and, as a result, the number of visible minorities in Canada is growing. In the 1990s, visible minorities made up 73 percent of all immigrants to Canada, compared to 52 percent in the 1970s. From 1996 to 2001, the visible minority population increased by 25 percent, compared to 4 percent for the population as a whole. Visible minorities now make up 13.4 percent of the Canadian population. This figure rises to 30 percent in Vancouver and 38 percent in Toronto; Toronto has one of the highest proportions of foreign-born residents of any city in the world. It is predicted that visible minorities will make up 20 percent of the Canadian population by 2016.

Immigrants as a percentage of metropolitan population.

City	Percentage
Toronto	38%
Vancouver	30
Hamilton	24
Windsor	21
Calgary	20
Victoria	20
London	19
Edmonton	18
Winnipeg	18
Montreal	17
Ottawa-Hull	15
Saskatoon	8
Halifax	7
St. John's	3
Quebec	2

Where do new Canadians settle?

Source: Statistics Canada, 1991 Census of Canada.

http://www41.statcan.ca/2007/30000/ceb30000_000_e.htm May 18, 2008

From the above immigrant landscape, it is clear that Language diversity is also at the core of Canadian pluralism. The 2001 Canadian census says that 59% of Canadians spoke English, while 23% spoke French. Chinese, Italian and German are the other common languages spoken. Between 1996 and 2001, the number of allophones (those having a mother tongue other than English or French) rose by 12.5%.   However, we have to remember that there are more than hundred other languages that are spoken in Canada. Once in Canada most of the immigrants learn to speak English or French. However, many immigrants teach their mother tongue to their children and insist that they speak it at home.   In the 2002 Ethnic Diversity Study (EDS), 64% of the adults said that they learned their parents' ancestral language in childhood (www41.statscan.ca). The EDS was designed to understand how Canadians conceptualize and report their ethnicity. It made available ground-breaking data on key areas such as ethnic and racial self-definition, perceived discrimination, knowledge and use of languages, social networks, belonging, and socio-economic activities. The EDS preliminary results were released in September 2003, which the Multiculturalism Program would utilize in the years ahead.   In a

sense, the EDS was the fulfillment of a brave, new Canadian policy of multiculturalism.

While it is sometimes felt that the future of multiculturalism is not clear, there is a general consensus in Canada that it is a unique and worthwhile experiment. While the contours of multiculturalism are not entirely worked out, it has been a continuing exercise in living together and learning together. As the Honourable Jean Augustine, P.C., M.P., has stated, multiculturalism in Canada continues to be a work in progress: "We are still learning and seeking to achieve our vision of an inclusive society where all Canadians, regardless of their religion, origin, race or culture can participate fully. We recognize our diversity as a national asset, and as a basis for leadership in an increasingly complex world of economic globalization. We also recognize that we still have serious challenges that will require a deliberate approach to eradicate racism, and inequity. While much remains to be done, I am proud of what we have achieved so far and confident that by working together we can continue to make meaningful progress in furthering our collective vision." (http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/reports/ann2002-2003/message_ e.cfm 18 May 2008).

The fact of the matter is that Canada has been and is a diverse country. What is more important is that Canada has also respected this diversity. The Canadian Multicultural Act promises to preserve various cultures by trying to reduce discrimination and also to sensitize people of different cultures to the need to respect other cultures. The various federal institutions have tried to incorporate the ethos of Multiculturalism into their programmes, services and policies. This is a phenomenal effort, and one that will be celebrated as a landmark in human history.

Immigrant population by place of birth
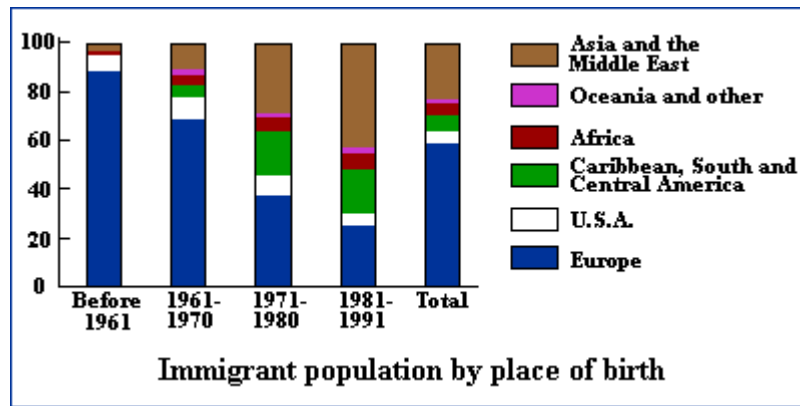
The goals and achievements of multiculturalism have given to the nation of Canada not only a new demographic character but also an abiding faith and sense of pride, and a new place in the history of the world. The Right Honourable Jean Chretien, then Prime Minister of Canada, summed up the sentiment when she said, "Canada has become a post-national, multicultural society. It contains the globe within its borders, and Canadians have learned that their two international languages and their diversity are a comparative advantage and a source of continuing creativity and innovation. Canadians are, by virtue of history and necessity, open to the world" (http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/respect_e/cfm. 20 May 2008).

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