

## 2006 Census Fast Facts

### Ethnicity and Visible Minority Characteristics of BC's Population

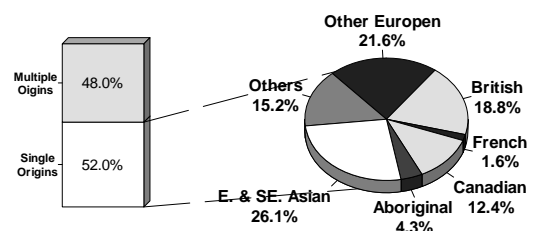
Ethnic origin, as defined in the Census, refers to the ethnic or cultural group(s) to which an individual's ancestors belonged. Visible minority, on the other hand, refers to whether or not a person, under criteria established by the Employment Equity Act, is non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour. Under the Act, an Aboriginal person is not considered to be a visible minority.

The 2006 Census reported that for every 100 people living in B.C. at the time of the census, about 52 belonged to a single ethnic origin and 48 belonged to more than one ethnic origin (multiple origins). Taking both single and multiple responses together, people with an English ethnic origin represented the largest population in B.C. On the other hand, Chinese represented the largest ethnic group in the B.C. population who reported a single ethnicity. In 2006, of those who reported a single ethnic origin, 17.7 per cent were Chinese, 12.4 per cent Canadian, and 11.4 per cent English. Also, 4.3 per cent reported Aboriginal as their ethnic origin.

| Top 10 Reported Single Ethnic Origins for B.C. -2006 |                 |                       |                    |
|--|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
|  | Number Reported | % of Total Population | % of Single Origin |
| Chinese  | 377,550         | 9.2%                  | 17.7               |
| Canadian   | 264,515         | 6.4%                  | 12.4               |
| English  | 242,610         | 5.9%                  | 11.4               |
| East Indian  | 202,465         | 4.9%                  | 9.5                |
| German   | 114,130         | 2.8%                  | 5.4                |
| Scottish   | 87,025          | 2.1%                  | 4.1                |
| Filipino   | 65,250          | 1.6%                  | 3.1                |
| Irish  | 46,105          | 1.1%                  | 2.2                |
| Italian  | 45,680          | 1.1%                  | 2.1                |
| Ukrainian  | 37,450          | 0.9%                  | 1.8                |

The high inflow of Asian immigrants to B.C. during the past two decades had helped shift the ethnic mosaic of the province. Large numbers of immigrant landings from Asian countries including China, India, the Philippines, South Korea and Taiwan have gradually made the Asian ethnic group a larger share of the population in B.C. The proportion of the B.C. population who reported a single East Asian or South East Asian ethnic origin had increased from 9.0 per cent in 1986 to 18.7 per cent in 1996 then to 26.1 per cent in 2006.

B.C. Population Ethnic Origin - 2006 Census



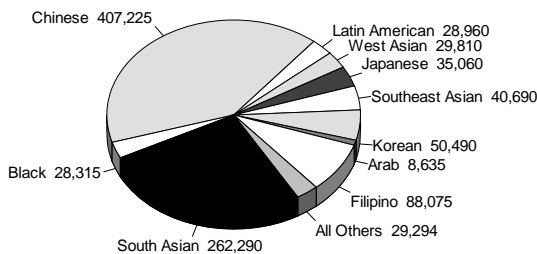
More people have been reporting Canadian as their ethnicity since 1996 when Statistics Canada modified the questions in the census form. Also, British Columbians having non-Canadian ancestors might have reported their own ethnicity as Canadian after having immigrated to Canada for a period of time or if they were born in Canada. The number of British Columbians who reported themselves as ethnic Canadians varies significantly with their generation status. Based on Statistics Canada's

definition, first generation include persons who are foreign born ; second generation are those who were born in Canada with at least one parent born outside Canada; whereas third generation are Canadian born with both parents who are also Canadian born. In 2006, 0.4 per cent of those who reported a single Canadian ethnic origin were first generation, verses 5.5 per cent in the second generation and 32.1 per cent in the third generation.

More and more British Columbians who reported themselves as ethnic Canadians may be a member of a visible minority group as a result of the recent high inflow of non-white immigrants to B.C. and Canada. In 2006, about one in every four British Columbians (24.8%) was a visible minority, representing about one million people in the province. Chinese was the single largest visible minority group, accounting for 40.0 per cent of all visible minorities in the province, followed by East Asians. A high proportion of the visible minority population were of ethnic Asian origin.

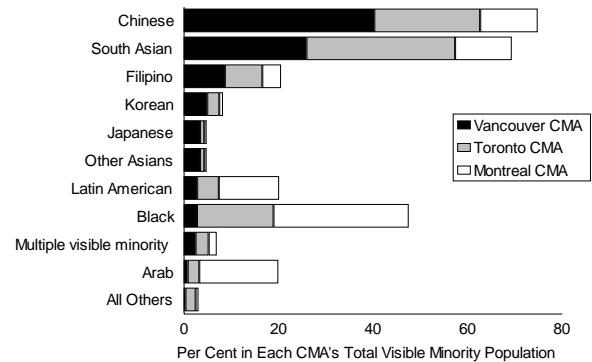
and 297,000 non-immigrants in B.C. who belonged to a visible minority group. The visible minority population was more concentrated in the Lower Mainland. About four in every ten people who lived in the Vancouver Census Metropolitan Area (Vancouver CMA) were visible minorities. Vancouver CMA topped the other two largest CMAs (Toronto and Montreal) by having a relatively higher proportion of Chinese in its visible minority population. In 2006, 43.6 per cent of the visible minorities living in the Vancouver CMA were Chinese, compared to 22.4 per cent for the Toronto CMA and 12.2 per cent for the Montreal CMA.

Visible Minority Population in B.C.  
2006 Census



Approximately two-thirds of those in a visible minority group were born outside Canada, and a majority (60%) immigrated to the country within the last 15 years. At the time of the 2006 census, there were about 676,000 immigrants

Relative Distribution of Visible Minority by Origin  
2006 Census



Another growing trend in the visible minority population in Canada is that the number of mixed unions (marriages) involving visible minorities has been increasing. Over the last two decades, the number of unions between one visible minority and one non-visible minority persons has increased from 2.2 per cent (of all mixed unions) in 1996 to 3.3 per cent in 2006, whereas the same statistics for unions between two different visible minority groups has climbed from 0.3 per cent to 0.6 per cent.

*"Census Fast Facts" is a series of feature articles published by BC Stats that focus on different aspects of British Columbia's demography based on the 2006 Census. Please visit: [www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/cen06/facts/facts.asp](http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/cen06/facts/facts.asp)*