

Rural and Small Town Canada ANALYSIS BULLETIN



Rural and Small Town Canada Analysis Bulletin
Vol. 8, No. 2 (June 2009)

Catalogue no. 21-006-X

Immigrants in Rural Canada: 2006

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Highlights

- In Canada's rural and small town areas in 2006, immigrants accounted for 5.3% of the population, numbering 312,555 individuals.
- Across the provinces, the share of immigrants in the rural and small town population ranged from 0.9% in Newfoundland and Labrador to 12% in British Columbia.
- Traditional sources of immigrants (mainly Western and Northern Europe followed by the USA) constituted a higher share of the population across the rural zones of Canada compared to cities. Larger cities had a higher share of immigrants from South-East and East Asian countries.
- In every province, recent immigrants were more prone to migrate into and out of rural areas during the 2001 to 2006 period, compared to the overall Canadian population.
- Considering all residents, four provinces had an overall positive net in-migration to their rural and small town areas between 2001 and 2006: Quebec, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. The results were different for recent immigrants (who arrived between 1996 and 2000). Only the rural and small town areas of Ontario achieved a positive net in-migration of these recent immigrants.
- New immigrants (who arrived between 2001 and 2006) constituted a significant share of the 2006 population in some rural regions, such as the regions around Winkler and Steinbach in Manitoba and Fort McMurray in Alberta.



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**Rural and Small Town Canada
Analysis Bulletin**

ISSN 1481-0964
ISBN 978-1-100-12157-4

Editor: Ray D. Bollman
Associate Editor: Neil Rothwell

Published in collaboration with The Rural Secretariat, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. The *Rural and Small Town Canada Analysis Bulletin* is an occasional publication of the Agriculture Division of Statistics Canada.

This product, catalogue no. 21-006-X, is available free in electronic format. To obtain a single issue, visit our website at www.statcan.gc.ca and select "Publications".

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Special thanks to Véronique Julien and Josée Bourdeau for their contribution in the publication process.

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The following standard symbols are used in Statistics Canada publications:

- . not available for any reference period
- .. not available for a specific reference period
- ... not applicable
- 0 true zero or a value rounded to zero
- 0^s value rounded to 0 (zero) where there is a meaningful distinction between true zero and the value that was rounded
- P preliminary
- r revised
- x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the [Statistics Act](#)
- E use with caution
- F too unreliable to be published

Box 1 Geography definitions

In this paper, the geographical concept of Rural and Small Town Canada is defined as labour markets areas which are outside of the commuting zones of larger urban centers with core populations of 10,000 or more. Rural and Small Town Canada Analysis bulletins address issues of interest to rural Canada such as employment trends, education levels, health status, Internet usage and number of firms by type, among others.

As discussed in Puderer (2009) and du Plessis *et al.* (2001), there are numerous possible operational definitions of urban and rural areas, of which the one used in this paper is only one.

Statistics Canada encourages readers to explore issues raised in this paper using alternative definitions to understand better the sensitivity of the findings to these different definitions.

Larger urban centres: Two types of larger urban centres are delineated by Statistics Canada's Statistical Area Classification (SAC) definition: Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) and Census Agglomerations (CAs). CMAs have an urban core population of 50,000 or more with a total population of 100,000 or more and CAs have an urban core population of 10,000 or more with a total population of less than 100,000. Both CMAs and CAs include the total population of neighbouring census subdivisions (CSDs), that is, incorporated towns and municipalities, where more than 50% of the labour force commutes (i.e. a measure of social-economic integration) to the urban core of a specific CMA or CA. The exact details of the delineation are available from Statistics Canada (2007a).

In this bulletin, the term 'Larger Urban Centres' (LUCs) refers to the combined CMAs and CAs.

Rural and small town (RST) areas refer to non-CMA/CA areas. RST areas are divided into five types of zones based on the degree of influence of LUCs (as indicated by the degree of commuting to any CMA or CA). These zones are Census Metropolitan and Census Agglomerated Influenced Zones (MIZs) (Statistics Canada, 2007a). The five zones are: Strong MIZ, Moderate MIZ, Weak MIZ, No MIZ and the non-CMA/CA part of the Territories. These are defined as follows:

1. *Strong MIZ* includes CSDs with a commuting flow of 30% or more (at least 30% of the total employed labour force living in the CSD works in **any** CMA/CAs' urban core);
2. *Moderate MIZ* includes CSDs with a commuting flow of between 5% and 30% (at least 5%, but less than 30% of the total employed labour force living in the municipality works in **any** CMA/CAs' urban core);
3. *Weak MIZ* includes CSDs with a commuting flow of more than 0%, but less than 5% (more than 0%, but less than 5% of the total employed labour force living in the municipality works in **any** CMA/CAs' urban core);
4. *No MIZ* includes CSDs with either fewer than 40 people in the resident labour force (where data suppression rules apply) or where no people commute to the urban core of **any** CMA or CA; and
5. *RST Territories* refers to the non-CMA/CA parts of the Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

The SAC delineation provides for a more detailed geographic analysis of immigrants in terms of the type of labour market in which they are residing and allows for a more meaningful presentation of their numbers and characteristics.

Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) regional typology

For the presentation of the number of immigrants as a percent of the total population within predominantly rural regions across Canada, the regional typology of the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) geographic definition is used. **Predominantly rural regions** are census divisions (CDs) where more than 50% of the population lives in a rural community. A **rural community** has a density less than 150 persons per square kilometre. Intermediate regions are **CDs where 15% to 49% of the population lives in rural communities**. **Predominantly urban regions** are CDs where less than 15% of the population lives in a rural community.

Using CDs to rank the relative attractiveness of a region for immigrants provides an update to an earlier ranking (Beshiri, 2004, Appendix Table 1) and, in addition, this ranking can be updated on an annual basis using the components of population change published by the Demography Division of Statistics Canada (CANSIM Table 051-0035).

Box 2 Population definitions

Population groups studied in the paper are tabulated from the 2006 Census of Population and include:

Immigrants are those born outside of Canada and are, or have been, landed immigrants. A landed immigrant is a person who has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Some immigrants have lived in Canada for many years while others are recent arrivals. We have grouped immigrants according to their period of arrival (i.e., when they obtained landed immigrant status), as follows:

Well established:	those who arrived in Canada previous to 1986
Established:	those who arrived in Canada between 1986 and 1995
Recent:	those who arrived in Canada between 1996 and 2000
New:	those who arrived in Canada between 2001 and 2006.

The specific question on the Census of Population questionnaire is “In what year did this person first become a landed immigrant? Each of our categories covers a five-year period, except the category for the new immigrants covers the period from January 1, 2001 to the day of the census in 2006 (i.e. May 16, 2006).

Canadian-born are those born in Canada and therefore are not part of any immigrant group. Note that the children of immigrants who are born in Canada are counted with the Canadian-born population.

The rural need for immigrants

Over the 2001 to 2006 period, Canada accepted, on average, about 211,000 immigrants a year.¹ Immigration is an increasingly important component of Canada’s population growth. Over the 1971/1972² to 1975/1976 period, immigration accounted for 37% of total population growth. Between 2000/2001 and 2004/2005, immigration accounted for about 60% of Canada’s population growth (Statistics Canada, 2006).

In many rural areas of Canada, the natural decline in the population (i.e., where deaths exceed births) and out-migration have reduced their population. Those that are left face problems of an eroding infrastructure, a decreasing economic base and a loss of long-held social capital. Many rural

communities are looking to immigration as a means to stimulate social institutions and economic development and curb population loss. Some rural communities are actively recruiting immigrants, for example, by using the Internet to promote themselves as an immigrant destination. Others are searching in other countries for immigrants to provide the needed labour in their communities (Senate of Canada, 2008). However, both Broadway (2007) and Fairy and Hanson *et al.* (2008) note that the working conditions may be less favourable and/or it is work for which it is difficult to recruit local workers.

Both Kandel and Parrado (2005) and Broadway (2007) have noted that food processing plants in Brooks, Alberta and Brandon, Manitoba have had difficulties maintaining a work force from local areas to fill lower paying, labour intensive and physically demanding positions. As a result, the companies are extensively hiring immigrants and refugees from Africa, Asia, and Central America to fulfill the labour requirements. In Brooks, Alberta, Broadway (2007) observes that this has resulted in a housing shortage, a rising demand

1. “The census estimated that 1,110,000 immigrants came to Canada between January 1, 2001 and May 15, 2006.” (Statistics Canada, 2007c) Thus, in the 5¼ years from January 1, 2001 to May 16, 2006, the number of new immigrants was about 211,000 per year.
2. A double-year reference, such as 1971/1972, refers to the period of July 1, 1971 to June 30, 1972.

for social services, increases in various social disorders, the creation of relatively low-paying or part-time jobs, and a relative fall in income levels. However more positively, he notes that there has been immigrant integration into the community's economy as they have established local services (from groceries to music) for an increasing immigrant and refugee population, which he noted, has enriched the community in general.

Donato *et al.* (2007) have noted more general potential negative implications associated with the arrival of new immigrants – frustration due to a lack of community experience or community infrastructure to assist immigrants and suspicion and resistance from both the host community and the immigrants arising from racial/ethnic tensions. While these potential problems are not unique to rural communities, they may be more overwhelming due to a smaller community tax base to provide resources, a smaller population to provide assistance and perhaps a population that has less experience with cross-cultural community development.

Many rural communities are “witnessing the reality of diversity and demographic transformation” (Radford, 2007). Radford calls for more research on rural immigrants that monitors the experiences, the quality of life and the challenges faced by these new Canadians. Such research can help to improve initiatives to ameliorate the difficulties that may arise. Ram and Shin (1999) suggest the more mobile an immigrant group is, the greater its degree of integration into the mainstream of society. As a result, spatial dispersal of the population is indicative of socio-economic integration. Mobility of immigrants into a rural community, where a relatively stronger sense of community belonging exists (Mitura and Bollman, 2004), may enhance the integration of immigrants into Canada society, compared to the experience in urban areas.

Using 2006 Census of Population data, this

bulletin profiles rural immigrants by five themes: immigrants as a percent of the total population, immigrant period of arrival, immigrant region of birth, migration of recent immigrants and finally a ranking of rural regions in terms of the number of immigrants as a percent of the total population in each rural region.³

3. Earlier bulletins by Beshiri and Alfred (2002) and Beshiri (2004) provided overviews of the number of immigrants in rural Canada in 1996 and 2001, respectively.

Over 5% of rural Canadians are immigrants

The 2006 Census of Population enumerated 6,186,950 immigrants in Canada, which represents 19.8% of the total population, or nearly one in five persons. This is the highest proportion in Canada in 75 years (Statistics Canada, 2007c).

In 2006, 312,555 immigrants (i.e., all immigrants regardless of when they arrived in Canada) were residing in rural and small town (RST) areas

(Box 1) and they represented 5.3% of the total RST population (Figure 1). (Data to update the information in Beshiri (2004) is shown in Box 3.) The immigrant share of the population in CAs, or smaller cities, was slightly higher at 7.5%. However, within CMAs, or larger cities, immigrants represented about one-quarter of the total population. Most immigrants have chosen to live in the larger cities (CMAs) rather than the smaller cities (CAs) or in RST areas.

Box 3 Update on predominantly rural immigrants

In 2004, we published ‘Immigrants in rural Canada: 2001 update’ (Beshiri, 2004). In it we used the OECD definition of rural (see Box 1). This definition is different than the Statistics Canada SAC definition. Using the OECD definition of rural, 7% of the residents of predominantly rural regions were immigrants in 2006, up from 6% in 2001. The share of population accounted for by immigrants increased more in predominantly urban regions.

Table 1 Population that were immigrants

Years	Predominantly rural	Predominantly urban
	percentage	
2001	6	27
2006	7	30

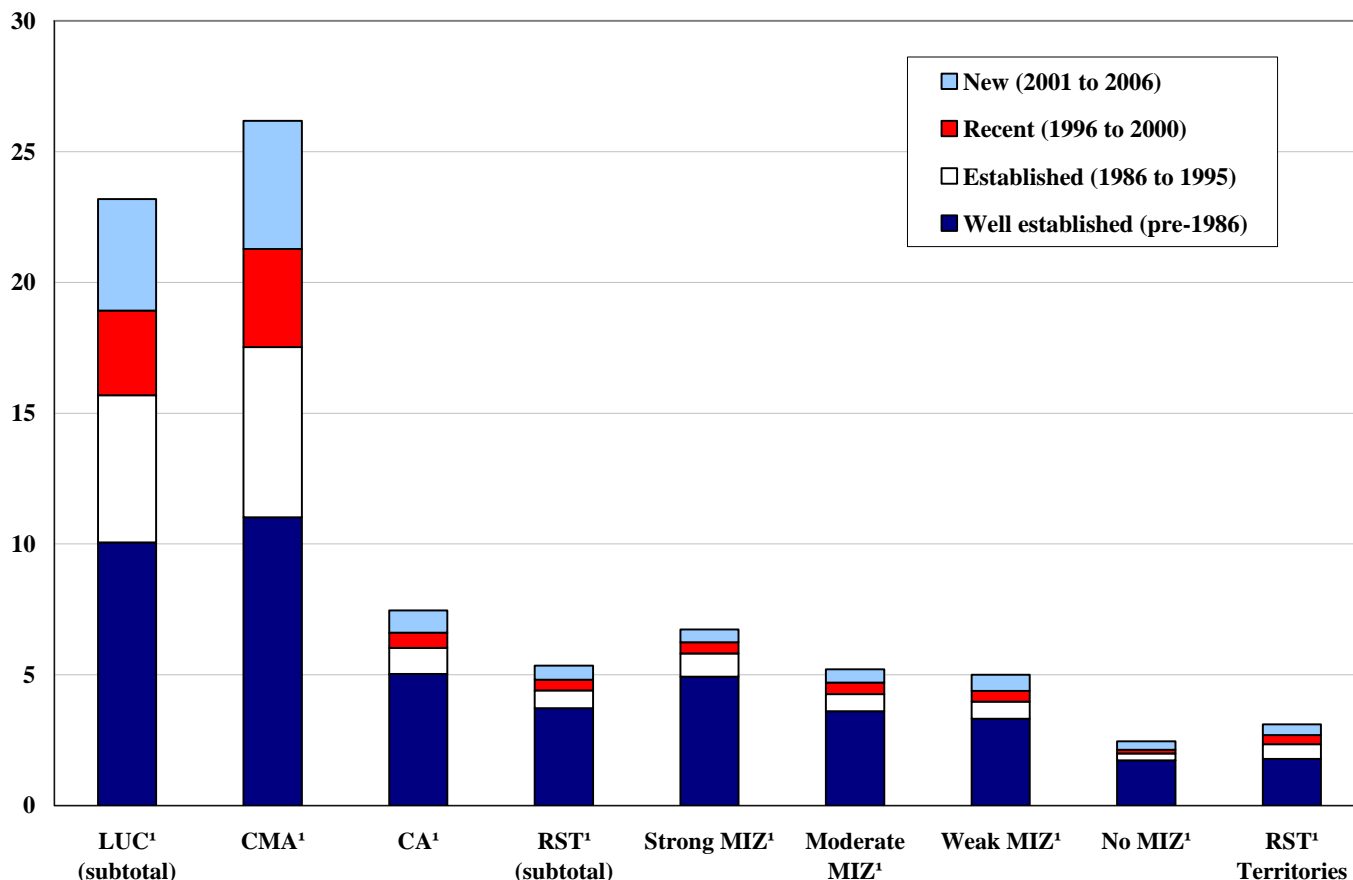
Most immigrants in the rural zones are well established pre-1986 immigrants (3.7% of the total population) while those who arrived later make up a much smaller share (1.6% of the total population). This is in contrast to the CMAs where there are fewer well established immigrants compared to those immigrants that arrived later (11% versus 15%). Overall, every fourth person in a CMA is an immigrant compared to about one in nineteen in RST areas.

Interestingly, compared to RST areas, the smaller cities or CAs have a similar number of immigrants and a similar profile of total immigrants for each period of arrival. In both CA and RST areas, most immigrants arrived at least 20 years earlier than the 2006 Census (i.e. prior to 1986).

Within rural and small town Canada, immigrants constitute a higher share of the population in Strong MIZ, compared to the more rural zones.

Figure 1 Within rural and small town Canada, over 5% of the population were immigrants, 2006

immigrants as a percent of the total population



1. Larger urban centres (LUCs) comprise Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) and Census Agglomerations (CAs). CMAs have a total population of 100,000 or more with 50,000 or more in the urban core and include all neighbouring towns and municipalities where 50% or more of the workforce commutes to the urban core. CAs have an urban core of 10,000 or more and a total population less than 100,000 and includes all neighbouring towns and municipalities where 50% or more of the workforce commutes to the urban core. Rural and small town (RST) areas are comprised of Metropolitan Influenced Zones (MIZ) which are assigned on the basis of the share of the workforce that commutes to any CMA or CA (Strong MIZ: 30% or more; Moderate MIZ: 5% to 29%; Weak MIZ: 1 to 5%; No MIZ: no commuters).

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Immigrants formed a higher share of the rural and small town population in British Columbia than in other provinces

Across the provinces, immigrants made up a larger share of the population in RST areas in British Columbia, Ontario, Manitoba and Alberta relative to the other provinces (Table 2). As well, these provinces had the highest share of new immigrants in their RST areas. In contrast, immigrants formed a lower share of the RST population in Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec and Saskatchewan.

In Manitoba, immigrants form a relatively high share of the population in both Moderate MIZ and Weak MIZ. In Nova Scotia, Moderate MIZ was somewhat higher and in New Brunswick, No MIZ was somewhat higher than the other MIZs.

In 2006, 31,075 new immigrants (those who arrived between 2001 and 2006) resided in Canada's RST areas, representing only 0.5% of all people living in RST areas. In comparison, 4.3% of the population of Canada's larger urban centres comprised new immigrants. Generally, new immigrants, as a share of RST total population, is largest in Manitoba (1.7%), followed by British Columbia (0.9%) and Alberta (0.8%). It was smaller in the other provinces and

lowest of all in Newfoundland and Labrador (0.1%). New immigrants accounted for a relatively higher share of the population in Manitoba's Moderate MIZ (1.9%) and Weak MIZ (1.8%), over three times the Canadian average.

In British Columbia and Ontario, the relatively high share of RST immigrants is due, in part, to these provinces' large CMAs (Vancouver and Toronto) and their more numerous medium-sized urban centres. These urban centres exert a strong influence on the areas beyond them, attracting a large number of immigrants to the surrounding RST areas. Using the Provincial Nominee Program, Manitoba has actively campaigned to attract immigrants to its RST areas. Conducted at both the community and provincial level, this program appears to have been successful (Manitoba Labour and Immigration, 2007). Meanwhile, a thriving provincial economy in Alberta has attracted many immigrants to this province.

The situation is different in the Atlantic Provinces, Saskatchewan and Quebec. The Atlantic Provinces and Saskatchewan have a declining or stable RST population suggesting that they have difficulty not only attracting and retaining immigrants but also the Canadian-born. Quebec has some of the lowest shares of immigrants in their RST areas.

Table 2 British Columbia was the province with the highest percent of its rural and small town population being immigrants, 2006

Province or territory	Geographical area	New immigrants ¹	All other immigrants ²	All immigrants
immigrants as a percent of the total population				
Canada	Strong metropolitan influenced zone	0.5	6.2	6.7
	Moderate metropolitan influenced zone	0.5	4.7	5.2
	Weak metropolitan influence zone	0.6	4.4	5.0
	No metropolitan influenced zone	0.3	2.1	2.5
	Rural and small town areas in the Territories	0.4	2.7	3.1
	All rural and small town areas	0.5	4.8	5.3
Newfoundland and Labrador	Strong metropolitan influenced zone	0.1	0.7	0.8
	Moderate metropolitan influenced zone	0.1	0.7	0.8
	Weak metropolitan influence zone	0.1	0.9	1.0
	No metropolitan influenced zone	0.1	0.4	0.5
	All rural and small town areas	0.1	0.8	0.9
Prince Edward Island	Strong metropolitan influenced zone	0.5	3.3	3.8
	Moderate metropolitan influenced zone	0.2	2.6	2.8
	Weak metropolitan influence zone	0.2	1.7	2.0
	No metropolitan influenced zone	0.0	2.6	2.6
	All rural and small town areas	0.3	2.6	2.9
Nova Scotia	Strong metropolitan influenced zone	0.3	3.6	3.9
	Moderate metropolitan influenced zone	0.5	4.1	4.6
	Weak metropolitan influence zone	0.4	3.1	3.5
	No metropolitan influenced zone	1.0	3.1	4.2
	All rural and small town areas	0.4	3.4	3.8
New Brunswick	Strong metropolitan influenced zone	0.4	2.8	3.2
	Moderate metropolitan influenced zone	0.3	2.5	2.7
	Weak metropolitan influence zone	0.5	3.1	3.6
	No metropolitan influenced zone	0.7	3.6	4.3
	All rural and small town areas	0.4	2.8	3.1
Quebec	Strong metropolitan influenced zone	0.3	2.2	2.4
	Moderate metropolitan influenced zone	0.3	1.9	2.2
	Weak metropolitan influence zone	0.2	0.8	1.0
	No metropolitan influenced zone	0.2	1.2	1.4
	All rural and small town areas	0.3	1.7	2.0

See notes at end of table.

Table 2 British Columbia was the province with the highest percent of its rural and small town population being immigrants, 2006 (continued)

Province or territory	Geographical area	New immigrants ¹	All other immigrants ²	All immigrants
immigrants as a percent of the total population				
Ontario	Strong metropolitan influenced zone	0.6	8.9	9.5
	Moderate metropolitan influenced zone	0.5	7.1	7.6
	Weak metropolitan influence zone	0.4	6.3	6.6
	No metropolitan influenced zone	0.1	2.3	2.4
	All rural and small town areas	0.5	7.6	8.1
Manitoba	Strong metropolitan influenced zone	0.7	4.5	5.3
	Moderate metropolitan influenced zone	1.9	6.4	8.3
	Weak metropolitan influence zone	1.8	5.2	7.1
	No metropolitan influenced zone	0.8	2.7	3.4
	All rural and small town areas	1.7	5.3	6.9
Saskatchewan	Strong metropolitan influenced zone	0.3	2.9	3.1
	Moderate metropolitan influenced zone	0.4	2.3	2.6
	Weak metropolitan influence zone	0.3	2.3	2.6
	No metropolitan influenced zone	0.3	1.9	2.2
	All rural and small town areas	0.3	2.2	2.6
Alberta	Strong metropolitan influenced zone	0.6	6.1	6.7
	Moderate metropolitan influenced zone	0.8	5.6	6.4
	Weak metropolitan influence zone	0.9	5.0	5.9
	No metropolitan influenced zone	0.3	2.5	2.8
	All rural and small town areas	0.8	5.2	6.0
British Columbia	Strong metropolitan influenced zone	0.9	12.6	13.5
	Moderate metropolitan influenced zone	1.0	12.9	13.9
	Weak metropolitan influence zone	0.8	10.6	11.4
	No metropolitan influenced zone	0.4	4.6	5.0
	All rural and small town areas	0.9	11.4	12.2
Territories	Rural and small town areas in the Territories	0.4	2.7	3.1

1. Those who arrived in the 2001 to 2006 period.

2. Those who arrived before 2001.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Immigrants from non-traditional countries formed a larger share of the population in the rural zones of some provinces

In 2006, immigrants born in South-East and East Asia⁴ made up 4.6% of Canada's total population. Immigrants born in Eastern and Southern Europe accounted for 3.9% of the population while those born in Western and Northern Europe accounted for a further 3.4%.⁵ When all Asian-born new immigrants (including those born in the Middle East) are considered, they made up the largest proportion (58%) of new immigrants to Canada.⁶

Across Canada, immigrants in each rural zone mainly comprise those born in regions that have been traditional sources of immigrants – namely, the regions of Western and Northern Europe (1% to 4% of the total population in the rural zones) followed by immigrants born in the USA (about 1%) (Table 3). Immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe ranked third within most of the rural zones but ranked second in Strong MIZ.

The pattern seen in the rural zones at the Canada level is repeated in most provinces, except in the Atlantic Provinces where the share of Asian immigrants equal or surpass the share of those from Eastern and Southern Europe (data not shown). In rural Manitoba, immigrants born in Central and South America ranked second after

those from Western and Northern Europe, numbering 8,340 in 2006. This group was most prevalent in the more rural zones (Moderate MIZ, Weak MIZ and No MIZ) of this province. About one-third of those residing in Moderate MIZ and No MIZ arrived as new immigrants.

Immigrants from Central and South American sources also rank second in Weak MIZ Alberta where they number about 3,360. About one-third of these immigrants arrived as new immigrants in the 2001 to 2006 period.

4. The grouping of countries into regions follows the grouping provided in Statistics Canada (2007a). For example, Western Europe includes France, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland; West Central Asia and the Middle East includes Afghanistan, Israel, Lebanon and Turkey; Eastern Asia includes China, Japan and Korea; South-east Asia includes Indonesia, Philippines and Viet Nam; Southern Asia includes India and Pakistan; and Oceania includes Australia.

5. As a share of all immigrants living in Canada in 2006, immigrants from South-East and East Asia made up the largest share (23%) of immigrants, followed by Eastern and Southern Europe (20%) and Western and Northern Europe (17%).

6. For more information see Statistics Canada (2007c).

Table 3 Nationally, traditional sources of immigrants dominated in the rural zones, 2006

Place of birth of the immigrant ¹	Larger urban centres			Rural and small town areas						All areas
	All LUCs ²	CMA ²	CA ²	All RST areas ²	Strong MIZ ²	Moderate MIZ ²	Weak MIZ ²	No MIZ ²	RST Territories ²	
immigrants as a percent of the total population										
Europe: Western and Northern	3.6	3.6	3.3	2.8	3.9	2.8	2.2	0.9	1.2	3.4
USA	2.1	2.3	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.0	0.7	0.6	1.8
Europe: Eastern and Southern	4.6	5.3	1.2	0.7	1.0	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.3	3.9
Central and South America	1.4	1.6	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.1	1.2
Asia: South-East and East	6.2	7.3	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	5.1
Asia: West and Middle East	3.6	4.2	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.4	3.0
Africa	1.4	1.7	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	1.2
Oceania and other	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2

- Sorted by the intensity of immigrants as a percent of total population within rural and small town areas.
- Larger urban centres (LUCs) comprise Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) and Census Agglomerations (CAs). CMAs have a total population of 100,000 or more with 50,000 or more in the urban core and include all neighbouring towns and municipalities where 50% or more of the workforce commutes to the urban core. CAs have an urban core of 10,000 or more and a total population less than 100,000 and includes all neighbouring towns and municipalities where 50% or more of the workforce commutes to the urban core. Rural and small town (RST) areas are comprised of Metropolitan Influenced Zones (MIZ) which are assigned on the basis of the share of the workforce that commutes to any CMA or CA (Strong MIZ: 30% or more; Moderate MIZ: 5% to 29%; Weak MIZ: 1 to 5%; No MIZ: no commuters).

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

South-Eastern and Eastern Asians formed the highest immigrant share of the total population in CMAs (7.3% or 1,547,830). In Canada's RST, they rank fifth with the 15,635 individuals representing 0.3% of the total RST population. But this immigrant group is more prominent in some western provinces and territories. In Alberta, the 2,560 immigrants from South-Eastern and Eastern Asia formed 0.4% of the RST population while their counterparts in British Columbia numbered 4,780 and comprised 0.9% of the RST population.

Similarly, immigrants born in Western Asia and the Middle East, representing 0.2% of Canada's overall RST population, had higher representations in the RST areas of the west: Manitoba (0.3% or 1,190 individuals), Alberta (0.4% or 2,620 individuals), and British Columbia (0.4% or 2,030 individuals). Only in Manitoba does this group represent a significant population change as 53% of the immigrants from Western Asia and the Middle East arrived as new immigrants between 2001 and 2006.

In 2006, the 7,255 immigrants born in Africa represented 0.1% of Canada's RST residents. Only Oceania contributed a smaller share. Immigrants born in Africa had a somewhat larger presence in the rural zones of a few provinces and territories. There were 1,610 immigrants born in Africa in RST Ontario, 1,555 in RST Quebec and 1,425 in RST Alberta. Because Alberta's RST population is smaller, the share represented by immigrants born in Africa is about 0.2% across the rural zones, above the Canadian average. Over a third of these (525 individuals) arrived in rural Alberta between 2001 and 2006. In rural British Columbia there are 1,290 African immigrants representing 0.2% of the Strong MIZ population and 0.3% of the Weak MIZ population, higher than the average in these zones across Canada.

Thus, while there are relatively more immigrants born in Northern and Western Europe and the USA at the national level in RST areas, this belies

some specific rural immigrant activity in the provinces, particularly in western Canada. There is a long-established Central/South American immigrant population primarily in Manitoba and secondarily in Alberta while a higher than average share of the British Columbia RST population is comprised of immigrants born in Southeastern and Eastern Asia. In addition, African immigrants are making inroads into rural areas.

Mobility patterns of rural immigrants

The inter-provincial mobility of Canadians is dynamic and can change from one period to another with considerable variability (Statistics Canada, 2008). As well, the migration of individuals into and out of RST areas has fluctuated over the past few decades (Rothwell, 2000; Rothwell *et al.*, 2000; Clemenson and Pitblado, 2007).

Here, we consider the rate of migration for the 2001 to 2006 period into and out of the RST areas of each province. We compare the migration rates for all Canadian residents to the migration rates of recent immigrants.⁷ Specifically, the interest is whether RST areas were able to retain their recent immigrants (immigrants arriving between 1996

7. The migration to or from a given jurisdiction in this study is calculated from data reported on the 2006 Census of Population where individuals are asked to report the location where they resided in 2001, five years earlier. Thus, the denominator of our calculation is the total population in the 2006 Census of Population who reported a place of residence in 2001. The calculation of rates of internal migration (i.e. migration within Canada) applies to individuals who were residing in Canada in 2001 and 2006 and thus only applies to individuals 5 years of age and older in 2006. Thus, in this section, we are not considering international migration. Rather, we are considering the internal migration within Canada between 2001 and 2006 of recent immigrants (who arrived between 1996 and 2000) compared to the internal migration rates of all Canadian residents. In this section, we focus on the rate of migration into and out of the RST areas of each province.

and 2000) in the subsequent (2001 to 2006) period. The retention of population is often a signal of rural community success.

In each province, recent immigrants were more likely to migrate into RST areas (Figure 2) but they were also more likely to migrate out of RST areas (Figure 3), compared to all RST residents.

The largest rate of RST in-flow by all residents is in British Columbia (16%). The rate of in-flow of recent immigrants into RST areas attained its highest level (relative to the number of recent immigrants residing in those RST areas in 2001) in Quebec and Ontario with 25%. In each province, the rate of recent immigrant in-flow to RST areas was higher than the rate of inflow for all Canadian residents.

At the same time, recent immigrants are more likely to migrate out of RST areas than is the case for the overall RST population. In the 2001 to 2006 period, each province lost 19% or more of the recent immigrants who resided in RST areas. When all residents of RST areas are taken together, the outflow was lower – reaching a high of 16% in the RST areas of British Columbia.

Thus, a recent immigrant is more likely both to migrate into and out of a RST area, compared to the average RST resident. However, these migration flows often involve a small number of people – typically less than 1,000 individuals in the case of recent immigrants (Table 4). In terms of the net gain or loss of recent immigrants in

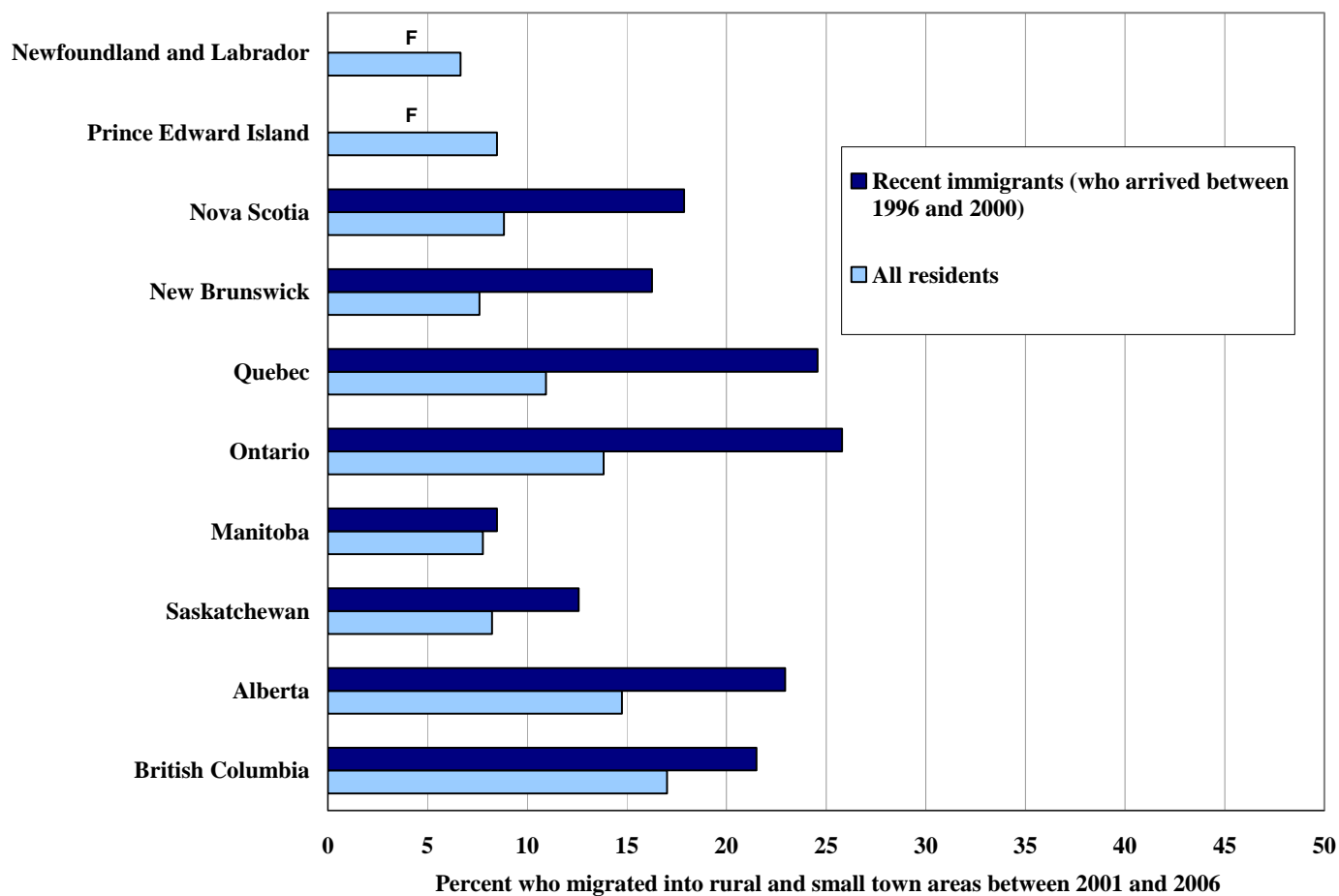
RST areas, no province saw a net change of more than 400 people in its RST area. However, there are two important observations:

- 1) RST areas of Ontario attracted a larger number of recent immigrants in the 2001 to 2006 period compared to the number that left RST areas; and
- 2) RST areas in Manitoba lost, on a net basis, about 300 more recent immigrants than they gained due to migration in the 2001 to 2006 period. This is in the context of the Provincial Nominee Program that has attracted immigrants to rural Manitoba (as noted earlier).

The ability of RST areas to keep recent immigrants is similar to the ability of RST areas to keep their population as a whole. When we look at the internal migration of all Canadian residents, four provinces (Quebec, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia) were able to attract more migrants to their RST areas than they lost during the 2001 to 2006 period (Table 4). But as noted earlier, only Ontario was able to attract more recent immigrants to its RST areas, as internal migrants, than it lost.

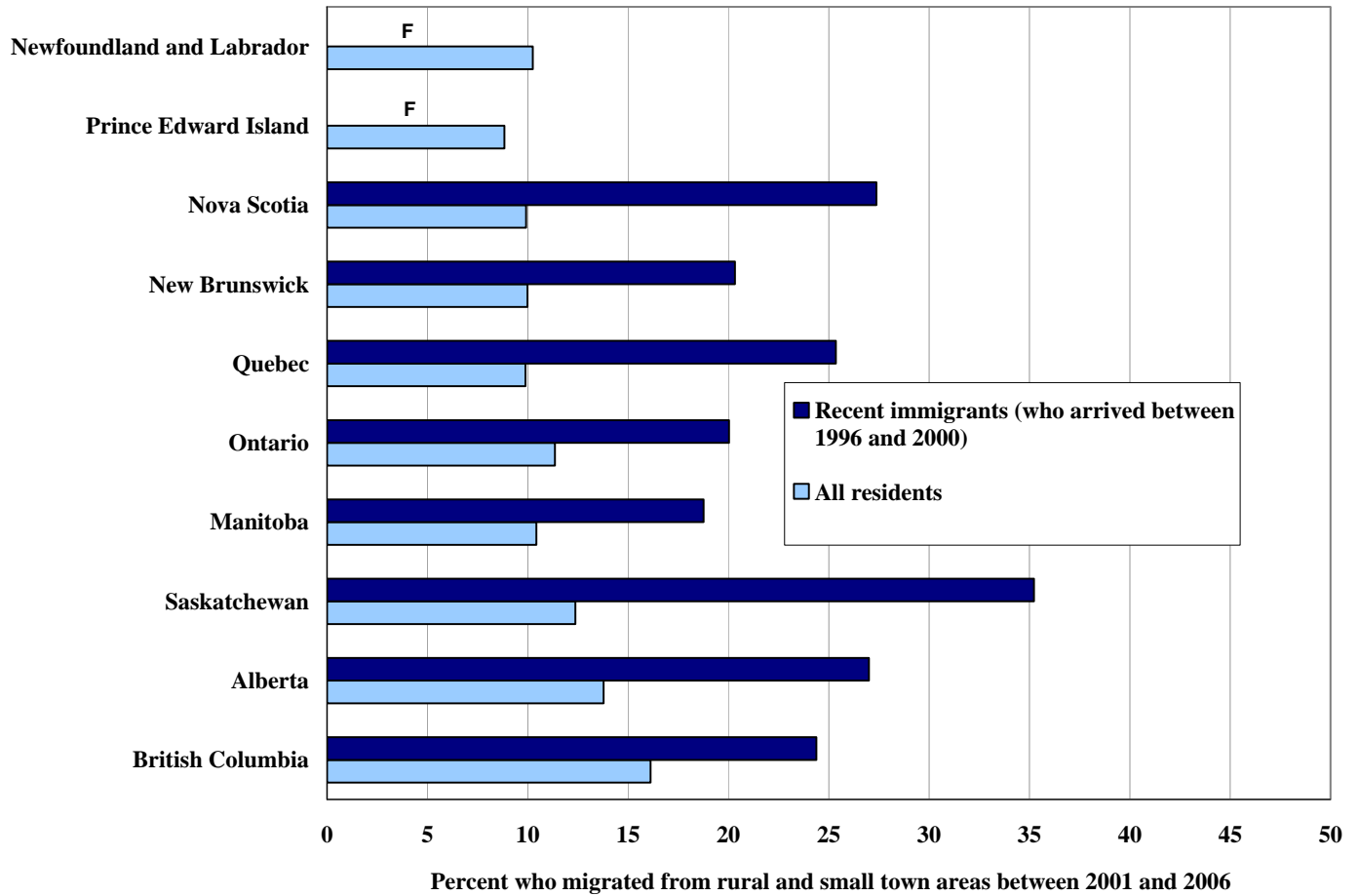
In most provinces, both rural and urban areas experienced net out-migration of recent immigrants. They were, however, attracted to the urban areas of two provinces: Alberta and, to a lesser extent, Ontario (data not shown). As well, they were also attracted to the RST areas of Ontario (as noted above).

Figure 2 Compared to all Canadian residents, recent immigrants were more likely to move into a rural and small town area in the 2001 to 2006 period



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Figure 3 Compared to all Canadian residents, recent immigrants were more likely to move out of a rural and small town area in the 2001 to 2006 period



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Table 4 Migration to and from rural and small town areas between 2001 and 2006

Province	Total number migrating to and from rural and small town areas between 2001 and 2006				Number of recent immigrants ¹			
	In-migrants	Out-migrants	Net migration	Net migration rate ¹	In-migrants	Out-migrants	Net migration	Net migration rate ²
Newfoundland and Labrador	17,895	27,570	-9,675	-3.6	F	145	F	F
Prince Edward Island	4,870	5,075	-205	F	F	F	F	F
Nova Scotia	27,295	30,645	-3,350	-1.2	160	245	F	F
New Brunswick	22,085	28,990	-6,905	-2.6	100	125	F	F
Quebec	153,820	138,960	14,860	0.9	785	810	F	F
Ontario	181,900	149,295	32,605	2.3	1610	1,250	360	5.8
Manitoba	26,690	35,780	-9,090	-3.0	260	575	-315	-10.3
Saskatchewan	30,930	46,445	-15,515	-4.2	100	280	-180	-22.6
Alberta	92,560	86,480	6,080	0.6	875	1,030	-155	-4.1
British Columbia	82,980	78,600	4,380	0.5	860	975	-115	-2.9

1. Those who arrived between 1996 and 2000 who migrated to and from rural and small town areas between 2001 and 2006.
2. The net migration rate is calculated as the net migrants as a percent of the population in the rural and small town areas of the given province in 2001. This includes only those who were subject to internal migration (i.e. those born before the 2001 census who did not die and who did not leave the country by the 2006 census).

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Top rural destinations of well established immigrants in 2006

The previous section focused on the mobility patterns of recent immigrants, compared to the mobility patterns of all Canadian residents. Here, we return to our focus on where immigrants are residing in Canada.

The pattern of immigration at the regional level (defined by census divisions) (Box 1) provides some finer geographical detail of the impact of immigration in Canada. Table 5 and Table 6 show the top predominantly rural census divisions in each province and territory in terms of the proportion of well established and new immigrants, respectively, in the total population. As well, the national rank of each census division is shown.

Predominantly rural regions with the highest share of well established immigrants (those who arrived

in Canada before 1986) were found in British Columbia (Table 5). Here, the three highest ranked predominantly rural census divisions had over 12% of their population represented by well established immigrants.⁸ These three regions ranked among the top ten of all the census divisions in Canada. All three census divisions are popular retirement-destination regions. The share of well established immigrants was comparable to that of the province’s largest cities, Vancouver (14%) and Victoria (13%). In this regard, the share of well established immigrants in these regions was also comparable to Montreal (12%), but was well below that of Toronto whose population registered the highest share of well established immigrants (18%).

8. Note that well established immigrants (i.e. those who arrived before 1986) would have been born before 1986. On average, they were about 20 years older than the average Canadian in 2006.

The population in Ontario's predominantly rural regions also had a relatively high proportion of well established immigrants (although none exceeded 10%). Ontario's predominantly rural census divisions with the largest proportion of well established immigrants were all located in central Ontario within commuting distance to metropolitan Toronto. Well established immigrants may be following the path of the Canadian-born and moving out from the larger urban centres to regions that are more affordable.

Manitoba and Alberta's top predominantly rural census divisions have similar shares of well established immigrants (ranging from 5.0% to 7.4%). In southern Manitoba, Census Division 1 (the Lac du Bonnet area) appears to be attracting well established immigrants to retire to their summer cottages. Census Division 3 (the Winkler area) has successfully created jobs over recent decades and they have been able to attract Mennonite immigrants to join their Mennonite community.

In Alberta, relatively large shares of established immigrants were seen in the predominantly rural census division that contains Canmore and Banff, the one that contains Lethbridge and Brooks and the one that contains Cardston and Pincher Creek. Canmore and Banff would represent a popular retirement location for well established immigrants.

Quebec's predominantly rural regions tended to have a relatively low share of well established immigrants, with well established immigrants not exceeding 4% of any regional rural population. Quebec's top three predominantly rural regions, in terms of the share of the population represented by well established immigrants, are located within a one-hour driving distance from Montreal in rural amenity areas – ski resorts north of Montreal and the rolling farmland, mountains and valleys of the Eastern Townships.

Table 5 Well established immigrants in predominantly rural census divisions, Canada, 2006

Within each province, predominantly rural census divisions whose population has the highest share of well established immigrants	Number of well established immigrants	Percent of total population	Ranking among all census divisions
Newfoundland and Labrador			
1006 Division No. 6 - includes Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor	305	0.9	221
1005 Division No. 5 - includes Corner Brook	325	0.9	224
1004 Division No. 4 - includes Stephenville	145	0.7	238
Prince Edward Island			
1102 Queens County - includes Charlottetown	2,020	2.8	122
Nova Scotia			
1205 Annapolis County	920	4.4	87
1206 Lunenburg County - includes Bridgewater, Lunenburg	1,530	3.3	112
1214 Antigonish County	605	3.2	114
New Brunswick			
1302 Charlotte County - includes St. Stephen	1,180	4.4	84
1305 Kings County - includes Sussex	1,815	2.8	125
1306 Albert County - includes Riverview	755	2.8	126
Quebec			
2477 Les Pays-d'en-Haut - includes Sainte-Adele, Saint-Sauveur	1,385	3.8	96
2446 Brome-Missisquoi - includes Cowansville	1,670	3.7	100
2469 Le Haut-Saint-Laurent - includes Huntingdon	785	6.6	102
Ontario			
3522 Dufferin County - includes Orangeville	5,112	9.5	24
3514 Northumberland County - includes Port hope and Cobourg	7,920	9.0	32
3543 Simcoe County - includes Barrie, Orillia	36,635	8.8	35

Table 5 Well established immigrants in predominantly rural census divisions, Canada, 2006
(continued)

Within each province, predominantly rural census divisions whose population has the highest share of well established immigrants	Number of well established immigrants	Percent of total population	Ranking among all census divisions
Manitoba			
4601 Division No. 1 - includes Lac du Bonnet	1,290	7.5	51
4603 Division No. 3 - includes Winkler	3,195	7.2	54
4613 Division No. 13 - includes Selkirk	2,780	6.3	67
Saskatchewan			
4707 Division No. 7- includes Moose Jaw	1,190	2.7	131
4708 Division No. 8- includes Swift Current	745	2.6	137
4712 Division No. 12 - includes Battleford, Rosetown	540	2.4	146
Alberta			
4815 Division No. 15 - includes Canmore, Banff	2,325	6.9	62
4802 Division No. 2 - includes Lethbridge, Brooks	9,450	6.7	64
4803 Division No. 3 - includes Cardston, Pincher Creek	1,845	5.0	79
British Columbia			
5929 Sunshine Coast Regional District - includes Gibsons	3,670	13.3	7
5907 Okanagan-Similkameen Regional District - includes Penticton	9,900	12.6	9
5921 Nanaimo Regional District - includes Nanaimo, Parksville	17,235	12.6	10
The Territories (Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut)			
6001 Yukon - includes Whitehorse	1,740	5.8	73
6106 Fort Smith Region - includes Fort Smith, Hay River	1,145	3.6	103

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Predominantly rural census divisions in the Atlantic Provinces, Quebec and Saskatchewan tended to have a lower share of well established immigrants than that found in other regions. Census divisions in Newfoundland and Labrador had particularly low shares, with well established immigrants forming no more than 1% of the total population in any census division.

Despite the relatively low shares, some predominantly rural census divisions in the Atlantic Provinces have a greater proportion of well established immigrants than some of the nearby urban regions. For example, 4.4% of the population of Nova Scotia's Annapolis rural region comprised well established immigrants. This was a higher share than that seen in the city of Halifax (3.8%). Similarly in New Brunswick, 4.4% of the population of the predominantly rural census division of Charlotte County (which includes the town of St. Stephen) was comprised of well established immigrants, higher than the share seen in the cities of Fredericton (3.5%) and Saint John (2.4%).⁹

Top rural destinations of new immigrants

Not surprisingly, new immigrants (those who arrived in Canada between 2001 and 2006) formed a smaller share of the population of the predominantly rural regions than did the well established immigrants. Part is due to the fact that a majority of immigrants go to metropolitan centres and part is due to the fact that our count of new immigrants refers to a shorter (5-year) time period. As was the case for well established immigrants, the population in the predominantly rural regions of the Atlantic Provinces, Quebec and Saskatchewan contained a lower share of new immigrants than was the case in other parts of the country (Table 6). There were only two

predominantly rural census divisions in all of these provinces where new immigrants exceeded 1% of the total population.

At the other extreme, two of Manitoba's predominantly rural regions (Census Division 3, the Winkler area; and Census Division 2, the Steinbach area) had the highest share of new immigrants seen in any predominantly rural region in the country. As well, these two regions ranked 6th and 11th among all the census divisions in Canada in terms of the share of the total population that were new immigrants. These two regions have a critical mass of people with a Mennonite ethnic origin. With the assistance of the Provincial Nominee Program, the Winkler and Steinbach areas have promoted the international immigration of Mennonites for many years¹⁰ and this activity has contributed to the high share of new immigrants seen in these predominantly rural census divisions.

The third highest predominantly rural census division in Manitoba in terms of the share of the population made up by new immigrants is Census Division 7 (the Brandon area). As noted by Silvius (2005a, 2005b) and by Manitoba Labour and Immigration (2007), this high ranking is due, in part, to the active recruitment of immigrant workers for food processing jobs in Brandon, in conjunction with the Provincial Nominee Program.

Similar to the pattern seen with well established immigrants, the population in the rural regions of British Columbia also had a relatively high share of new immigrants. The predominantly rural census division of Fraser Valley Regional District (which includes the CMA of Abbotsford and the CA of Chilliwack) not only had a relatively high share of new immigrants (2.7%) but also had the highest absolute number (6,860) of new immigrants seen in any predominantly rural census division in Canada.

9. See Bruce (2007) for more information on immigrants in Maritime Canada.

10. See Manitoba Labour and Immigration (2007) and Silvius (2005a, 2005b) for more information.

Table 6 New immigrants in predominantly rural census divisions, Canada, 2006

Within each province, predominantly rural census divisions whose population has the highest share of new immigrants	Number of new immigrants	Percent of total population	Ranking among all census divisions
Newfoundland and Labrador			
1010 Division No. 10 - includes Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Labrador City	70	0.27	203
1005 Division No. 5 - includes Corner Brook	90	0.22	216
1006 Division No. 6 - includes Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor	55	0.15	246
Prince Edward Island			
1102 Queens County - includes Charlottetown	580	0.81	81
Nova Scotia			
1205 Annapolis County	185	0.87	73
1206 Lunenburg County - includes Bridgewater, Lunenburg	255	0.55	115
1214 Antigonish County	85	0.45	138
New Brunswick			
1302 Charlotte County - includes St. Stephen	280	1.05	56
1311 Carleton County - includes Woodstock	185	0.70	91
1307 Westmorland County - includes Moncton	875	0.67	96
Quebec			
2420 L'Île-d'Orléans	70	1.03	59
2477 Les Pays-d'en-Haut - includes Sainte-Adele, Saint-Sauveur	340	0.94	70
2411 Les Basques - includes Trois Pistoles	65	0.71	90
Ontario			
3534 Elgin County - includes St Thomas	1,320	1.57	33
3522 Dufferin County - includes Orangeville	660	1.22	48
3531 Perth County - includes Stratford	695	0.95	69

Table 6 New immigrants in predominantly rural census divisions, Canada, 2006 (continued)

Within each province, predominantly rural census divisions whose population has the highest share of new immigrants	Number of new immigrants	Percent of total population	Ranking among all census divisions
Manitoba			
4603 Division No. 3 - includes Winkler	2,305	5.19	6
4602 Division No. 2- includes Steinbach	2,095	3.78	11
4607 Division No. 7 - includes Brandon	950	1.63	31
Saskatchewan			
4707 Division No. 7- includes Moose Jaw	375	0.85	74
4702 Division No. 2 - includes Weyburn	110	0.55	113
4716 Division No. 16 - includes North Battleford	180	0.49	130
Alberta			
4816 Division No. 16 - includes Fort McMurray	1,940	3.66	13
4802 Division No. 2 - includes Lethbridge, Brooks	2,790	1.98	25
4815 Division No. 15 - includes Canmore	670	1.97	26
British Columbia			
5931 Squamish-Lillooet Regional District - includes Squamish, Whistler	1,055	3.00	18
5909 Fraser Valley Regional District - includes Abbotsford, Chilliwack	6,860	2.70	20
5935 Central Okanagan Regional District - includes Kelowna	2,280	1.42	36
The Territories (Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunuvat)			
6106 Fort Smith Region - includes Fort Smith, Hay River	565	1.77	30
6001 Yukon - includes Whitehorse	365	1.28	44

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

In British Columbia, the census divisions with a relatively high share of their population being new immigrants differs from the census divisions with well established immigrants (as discussed above). New immigrants appear to be attracted to the jobs in the tourist locations of Whistler and the agricultural sectors of Kelowna and the Lower Fraser Valley. Well established immigrants were more prevalent in the coastal regions (i.e., Nanaimo and the Sunshine Coast) and the mountainous interior (i.e., Penticton). In general, it appears that new immigrants are going to the

jobs while well established immigrants are being found in retirement communities.

The predominantly rural region of Ontario with the greatest absolute number of new immigrants was Simcoe County, situated north of Toronto and including the cities of Barrie and Orillia. In this case, it appears that many new immigrants were following the Canadian-born and contributing to making Barrie the fastest growing city in Canada

in 2006.¹¹ The number of new immigrants who resided there was 3,414. Despite this relatively high number, they formed only 0.8% of the total population, and thus this census division does not appear in Table 6.

In Alberta, relatively large shares of new immigrants were seen in some of the same predominantly rural census divisions that have high shares of well established immigrants – Lethbridge and Brooks, and Canmore and Banff. An addition is the oil rich census division containing Fort McMurray, where 3.7% of the population is made up of new immigrants. This is the third-ranking predominantly rural census division in Canada and it has a higher share of new immigrants than does Edmonton (3.0%). Despite this high ranking, this region has a lower share of new immigrants than that seen in Calgary (5.1%).

In Quebec, new immigrants formed a relatively large share of the population in the predominantly rural regions Les Pays-d'en-Haut (north of Montreal), L'Île-d'Orléans (beside Quebec City) and Les Basques region (which includes Trois Pistoles) on the south shore of the St. Lawrence River about 250 kilometres north of Quebec City. While the absolute number of new immigrants was about 300 in Les Pays-d'en-Haut, the number involved in the other two rural regions was smaller (less than 75). In these latter two rural regions the total population is very small. As a result, a relatively small number of new immigrants have a significant impact on these regional populations.

11. See Statistics Canada (2007b) and Statistics Canada (2008, p. 92) for more information about the city of Barrie.

Conclusions

Many rural communities are looking to immigration as a means to stimulate their communities. Many rural communities and areas already have a strong immigrant presence. In order to describe the immigrant phenomenon in rural areas, this bulletin profiles rural immigrants by five themes: immigrants as a percent of the total population; immigrant period of arrival; region of birth; migration of recent immigrants; and a ranking of rural regions in terms of the number of immigrants as a percent of the total population in each rural region.

Most immigrants go to the three provinces that have Canada's largest cities (Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia). British Columbia and Ontario also have a higher share of immigrants in their rural areas. Quebec's rural zones differ in having a relatively small share of immigrants. An active economy in Alberta and an active government immigration program in Manitoba have contributed to higher shares of immigrants in their rural areas. Rural Manitoba in particular has the highest share of new immigrants in its total population.

Northern and Western Europe, the United States and Eastern and Southern Europe are the dominant regions of birth for immigrants living in rural areas. However, there are some rural areas where higher proportions of immigrants from non-traditional sources are found, particularly in western Canada.

The retention of a population, especially new arrivals, is one measure of community success. For most provinces the retention of the rural population in general is difficult and this is even more so for recent immigrants who are relatively more likely to migrate. The RST areas of most provinces had a net out-migration of recent immigrants in the 2001 to 2006 period. Only the RST areas of Ontario showed a positive net migration for recent immigrants. It is noteworthy

that RST Manitoba has had success in recruiting new immigrants, but RST Manitoba lost more immigrants due to migration that it gained during the 2001 to 2006 period.

The share of immigrants relative to the total population in rural regions indicates that in many provinces the impact of immigrants is significant – in some rural regions of British Columbia over 12% of the population is a well established immigrant. In Winkler, Manitoba, new immigrants account for 5% of the regional population. In some Atlantic rural regions the share of new immigrants is greater than that found in neighbouring urban centres.

Why have some of the rural regions reported high shares of new immigrants? Not surprisingly, the main reason is jobs. Predominantly rural census divisions in Alberta and Manitoba are attracting new immigrants mainly due to the labour needs for food processing plants in Brooks, Alberta and Brandon, Manitoba. British Columbia's Fraser Valley is another predominantly rural region that is a destination for new immigrants, in this case due, in part, to local agricultural labour shortages.

Some rural communities have attracted immigrants to help meet their economic needs. However, this development opportunity challenges community, government and business organizations to provide resources for increased social infrastructures (safe working conditions, housing, education, medical, social services) and to mediate the challenges of cultural/ethnic conflicts. In this study we have seen that the well established pre-1986 immigrants, who would be relatively older in 2006 compared to all Canadian residents, are now living in high amenity and retirement regions. The same is occurring for the Canadian-born, but perhaps there are particular cultural needs for these retiring well established immigrants. Some rural communities may be able to target these people and promote their

communities as unique ‘cultural’ retirement destinations. As well, rural communities may actively plan for and promote the recruitment of young new immigrants. Such strategic efforts

would assist immigrants and ensure that they can call their new rural community home for a long time.

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