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Immigration Trends in Canada: What a deeper dive into the numbers tells us about the first half of 2025

Part 1

Permanent Residents and Asylum claims

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Background

Last October 2024, the Government of Canada announced a reduction to its permanent immigration targets to align with the country's economic needs from 500,000 down to 395,000 in 2025; from 500,000 to 380,000 in 2026; and setting a target of 365,000 in 2027. With respect to the breakdown by categories, the economic category remained by far the largest proportion of admissions to reach some 62% by 2027. Support for family reunification continues through the family category, which maintains a rate of 22% of overall permanent resident admissions. Canada's strong and proud tradition of offering protection to those most in need is evident through the sustained targets for Government Assisted Refugees, which contributes to the resettled refugees and protected persons category rate of 15% of overall permanent resident admissions. 21,200 admissions are provided to commitments made on humanitarian and compassionate grounds over three years (<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/notices/supplementary-immigration-levels-2025-2027.html>)

Meeting these targets is not simple given the need to account for regional priorities, pre existing commitments and other considerations. That which follows will look at the immigrant admission numbers as issued by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada for the first two quarters of 2025 (January 1 to June 30th) and the initial adjustments that were made. On the basis of the IRCC data we will compare with the admission numbers for the same two quarters over the period January 1-June 30th, 2024. There has been much speculation about whether the Government of Canada will reach the targets but much less attention directed at how it will go about doing so and what categories of immigrants will be most affected, what regions of the country will feel the impact and how the numbers in immigrant countries of origin will shift accordingly. As we observe the cuts to immigration levels have thus far have unevenly affected the admission numbers of refugees and protected persons. To that end, we've added analysis of the evolving numbers of asylum claimants from the IRCC data with a view to sharing further insights into how accepted refugee levels may shift yet further.

Highlights

- Cuts to immigration in the first half suggest reaching target for permanent residents will require somewhat greater cuts in the second half of the 2025
- Cuts to immigration in the first half of 2025 relative to the previous period disproportionately affected refugee admissions
- Net result of the cuts in Q1 and Q2 is an increase in the percentage of Economic immigration as Permanent residents and a marked decline in the share of immigrants
- In the Economic category, the cuts thus far have had the least impact on Quebec and Ontario
- As regards family sponsored admissions thus far the biggest declines were in Quebec and British Columbia
- Ontario, Quebec, BC, Alberta and NFLD have seen the biggest cuts in the number of refugee admissions in the first half of 2025 relative to the same six month period in 2024
- As regards source countries of permanent residents, they mainly affected India, China, Philippines and Afghanistan when comparing the first half of 2024 and 2025
- Massive drop in asylum claims in Canada when comparing first half of 2025 to the first half of 2024 notably with respect to inland and airport claims
- Massive declines in asylum claimants from India, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Sri Lanka and Mexico, but a considerable increase from Haiti and small increase from Iran

Cuts to immigration in the first half suggest reaching target for permanent residents will require somewhat greater cuts in the second half of the 2025

Category of Immigration	2023	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q3 Total	Q4 Total	2024	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	2025
Permanent Residents									
Economic Category	272,635	76,420	81,995	73,015	50,180	281,600	66,735	63,905	130,650
Sponsored Family	109,715	24,470	26,950	25,865	28,660	105,940	22,140	24,750	46,880
Refugees and Protected persons	74,940	18,515	19,860	18,915	19,385	76,675	11,700	12,645	24,345
Other	14,425	2,350	5,330	6,440	5,175	19,310	3,600	2,120	5,720
Total	471,820	121,780	134,170	124,265	103,440	483,655	104,210	103,440	207,650

Cuts to immigration in the first half of 2025 relative to the previous period disproportionately affected refugee admissions

Category of Immigration	Q1 Total 2024	Q2 Total 2024	Total Q1 and Q2 2024	Q1 Total 2025	Q2 Total 2025	Total Q1 and Q2 2025	Numbers Reduction 2024 -2205 Q1 and Q2	Percentage Reduction 2024-2025 Q1 and Q2 %
Permanent Residents								
Economic Category	76,420	81,995	158,415	66,735	63,905	130,650	27,765	18%
Sponsored Family	24,470	26,950	51,420	22,140	24,750	46,880	4,540	9%
Refugees and Protected persons	18,515	19,860	38,375	11,700	12,645	24,345	14,030	37%
Other	2,350	5,330	7,680	3,600	2,120	5,720	1,960	26%
Total	121,780	134,170	255,950	104,210	103,440	207,650	48,300	19%

Net result of the cuts in Q1 and Q2 is an increase in the percentage of Economic immigration as Permanent residents and a marked decline in the share of immigrants

Category	2023	%	2024	%	January 1-June 30, 2025	%
Economic Category	272,635	57.8	281,600	58.3	130,650	63%
Sponsored Family	109,715	23.2	105,940	21.9	46,880	22.6
Refugees and	74,940	15.9	76,675	15.8	24 345	11.7
Other	14,425	3.1	19,310	4.0	5,720	2.7
Total	471,820	100%	483,655	100%	207,650	100%

In the Economic category, the cuts thus far have had the least impact on Quebec and Ontario

Economic Category	2023	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q1 and Q2 total 2024	Q3 Total	Q4 Total	2024	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q1 and Q2 Total 2025
NFLD	4,025	1,025	1,410	2,435	1,365	815	4,610	1,395	940	2,335
PEI	3,280	1,250	1,090	2,340	880	410	3,635	730	465	1,195
NS	9,005	3,405	3,755	7,160	2,970	1,550	11,680	2,330	1,710	4,040
NB	9,470	3,420	4,485	7,905	3,730	2,025	13,655	2,895	2,320	5,220
QC	36,185	8,955	11,210	20,165	11,655	9,395	41,215	6,510	14,725	21,235
ONT	102,390	28,670	27,410	56,080	25,870	20,140	102,090	28,210	24,635	52,845
manit	18,220	4,280	6,005	10,285	4,725	2,495	17,500	4,015	3,215	7,230
sask	21,310	4,820	6,385	11,205	4,960	2,900	19,065	3,750	2,605	6,355
Alberta	25,085	8,680	9,780	18,460	7,735	4,890	31,085	6,810	5,585	12,400
BC	42,690	11,560	10,165	21,725	8,810	5,420	35,960	9,780	7,455	17,235
Yukon	755	275	215	490	245	95	830	215	150	365
NWT	220	80	85	165	70	45	275	95	100	195
Total	272,635	76,420	81,995	158, 415	73,015	50180	281,600	66,735	63905	130,650

As regards family sponsored admissions thus far the biggest declines were in Quebec and British Columbia

Sponsored Family	2023	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q1 and Q2 2024	Q3 Total	Q4 Total	2024	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q1 and Q2 Total 2025
NFLD	280	60	65	125	90	105	320	70	70	140
PEI	155	45	50	95	50	60	200	55	55	110
NS	1,185	245	315	560	320	345	1,230	280	265	540
NB	620	200	165	365	195	220	775	180	195	375
QC	10,295	1,890	3,665	5555	3,175	1,670	10,400	1,825	2,490	4,320
ONT	56,125	12,995	12,680	25655	11,930	15,065	52,665	11,180	12,050	23,230
manit	3,440	755	880	1635	945	990	3,570	805	880	1,685
sask	2,280	490	550	1040	605	635	2,275	490	585	1,070
alta	17,035	3,725	4,245	7970	4,060	4,815	16,850	3,595	4,220	7,815
BC	18,100	4,015	4,300	8315	4,435	4,700	17,455	3,605	3,875	7,480
Yuk	120	20	20	40	30	30	100	30	30	55
NWT	80	30	15	45	30	25	100	25	35	60
Total	109715	24470	26950	51420	25865	28660	105940	22140	24750	46880

Ontario, Quebec, Bc, Alberta and NFLD have seen the biggest cuts in the number of refugee admissions in the first half of 2025 relative to the same six month period in 2024

	2023	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q1 and Q2 total 2024	Q3 Total	Q4 Total	2024	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q1 and Q2 Total 2025
Refugees										
NFLD	1,135	300	130	430	160	210	800	85	135	220
PEI	160	30	15	45	40	10	95	30	25	55
NS	1,535	350	235	585	295	385	1,265	220	205	430
NB	1,330	360	200	580	135	165	865	115	185	300
QC	5,435	2,405	1,880	4285	1,570	1,145	7,000	1,025	1,575	2,600
ONT	39,125	9,520	10,245	19765	9,550	9,445	38,755	5,730	5,990	11,715
manit	2,985	600	735	1335	895	860	3,090	440	585	1,025
sask	1,520	300	455	755	410	530	1,695	300	260	555
alta	14,160	2,795	4,195	6990	4,125	4,595	15,710	2,580	2,515	5,090
BC	7,525	1,855	1,760	3615	1,725	2,030	7,370	1,175	1,170	2,345
Yuk	20	0	0	0	--	0	--	0	0	0
NWT	10	--	10	10	10	10	30	0	--	--
Total	74,940	18515	19860	38375	18915	19385	76675	11700	12645	24335

As regards source countries of permanent residents, they mainly affected India, China, Philippines and Afghanistan when comparing the first half of 2024 and 2025

Permanent Residents	2023	Q1	Q2	Q1 and Q2 2024	Q3	Q4	2024	Q1	Q2	Q1 and Q2 2025
India	139,790	37,930	37,500	75 430	29,390	22,555	127,375	31,660	27,600	59,260
Philippines	26,965	7,995	9,385	17 380	8,565	6,375	32,320	7,160	6,770	13,925
China	31,785	8,145	7,735	15 880	8,115	5,970	29,970	6,280	5,200	11,480
Cameroon	11,685	3,735	5,075	8 810	6,165	6,235	21,205	4,655	5,700	10,355
Nigeria	17,465	4,695	5,815	10 510	5,190	4,690	20,395	4,575	4,345	8,920
France	10,075	2,080	2,925	5 005	2,770	2,170	9,945	2,010	3,950	5,960
Eritrea	10,680	2,365	3,635	6 000	5,190	5,410	16,600	2,410	2,930	5,340
Pakistan	11,860	2,640	2,995	5 635	3,055	3,275	11,960	2,405	2,370	4,780
Ukraine	3,110	1,540	2,395	3 935	1,680	1,165	6,780	2,445	1,895	4,340
USA	10,640	2,485	2,495	4 980	2,340	2,010	9,330	1,960	1,825	3,785
Algeria	5,245	1,185	2,545	3 730	2,940	1,585	8,255	1,180	2,600	3,780
Colombia	4,660	1,345	2,045	3 390	3,090	2,380	8,865	2,290	1,400	3,690
Morocco	6,410	1,400	2,275	3 675	2,360	1,595	7,635	1,240	2,250	3,495
Iran	10,680	3,570	3,270	3 840	2,460	1,845	11,150	1,845	1,520	3,360
Afghanistan	20,180	5,025	2,980	8 005	2,295	1,985	12,285	1,740	1,445	3,185
Brazil	7,225	1,830	1,700	3 530	1,420	1,030	5,985	1,400	1,480	2,880
Mexico	5,735	1,845	1,665	3 510	1,515	1,390	6,415	1,460	1,265	2,725
Tunisia	3,470	965	1,650	2 615	1,945	1,150	5,710	835	1,850	2,685
Haiti	3,015	700	900	1 600	1,680	1,895	5,180	1,310	1,260	2,570

Asylum Claims to June 2025

Massive drop in asylum claims in Canada when comparing first half of 2025 to the first half of 2024 notably with respect to inland and airport claims

Canada - Asylum Claimants by Claim Office Type, Claim and Claim Year, January 2015 - June 2025	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024 Total Q1 and Q2	Total 2024	2025 Total Q1 and Q2
Airport - Total	3,035	3,865	6,930	8,110	1,865	3,460	17,150	41,315	31,440	42,590	6,275
Border - Total	7,355	11,615	21,025	20,680	5,705	9,040	46,345	29,920	9,390	15,425	10,655
Inland - Total	13,440	34,855	27,035	35,195	16,095	12,345	28,120	72,040	65,085	113,790	40,505
Other Offices	10	25	25	25	15	20	35	40		30	--
Total	23,835	50,360	55,015	64,010	23,680	24,870	91,645	143,315	105,925	171,840	57,440

Massive declines in asylum claimants from India, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Sri Lanka and Mexico, but a considerable increase from Haiti and small increase from Iran

Canada - Asylum Claimants by Claim Office Type, Claim and Claim Year, January 2015 - June 2025	2020 Total	2021 Total	2022 Total	2023 Total						2024 Total			Q1 and Q2 2025 Total
					Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q1 and Q2 2024 total	Q3 Total	Q4 Total		Q1 Total	Q2 Total	
India	3,025	1,495	4,100	11,260	6,755	10,005	16,760	7,660	7,860	32,280	5,185	4,585	9,770
Bangladesh	330	350	845	4,440	5,455	5,430	10,885	2,685	2,110	15,680	985	920	1,905
Nigeria	675	600	1,830	9,110	4,010	3,610	7,620	2,685	2,835	13,135	1,770	1,690	3,455
Sri Lanka	545	435	1,185	2,690	1,955	2,735	4,690	3,140	1,970	9,805	930	600	1,530
Mexico	2,910	3,150	16,390	23,720	4,335	1,540	5,875	1,405	1,575	8,855	1,225	1,265	2,490
Haiti	1,140	1,780	11,475	5,540	2,100	1,890	3,990	1,915	2,090	8,000	2,550	5,305	7,855
Ghana	135	95	440	1,895	1,365	2,265	3,630	2,000	1,395	7,025	760	780	1,540
Iran	2,520	1,970	4,715	5,905	1,670	1,625	3,295	1,520	1,950	6,765	1,745	1,770	3,510
Pakistan	850	800	2,625	5,240	1,345	1,350	2,695	1,490	1,375	5,560	850	860	1,710
Colombia	1,155	2,100	7,970	6,055	1,275	1,085	2,360	1,060	870	4,295	750	625	1,375
China, People's Republic of	705	625	965	1,870	825	900	1725	1,015	1,165	3,905	1,130	1,025	2,155
Algeria	220	195	390	1,105	470	735	1205	1,170	930	3,310	560	560	1,120
Turkey	570	1,770	9,465	6,360	845	545	1390	620	680	2,690	435	285	715
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	395	470	1,375	3,655	845	665	1510	610	510	2,635	495	430	925
Guinea, Republic of	70	80	165	855	500	500	1000	675	955	2,630	770	420	1,190
Uganda	130	125	685	3,635	745	630	1375	400	270	2,050	125	110	235
Cameroon, Federal Republic of	205	160	405	1,825	535	555	1090	480	435	2,005	370	300	670

Asylum Claims

Cautionary note: This data should not be used as an indication of the number of asylum claimants residing in a province or territory. The table pulls data on number of asylum claimants who have submit a valid claim by year and province of claim. The data set may include individuals who have claimed asylum and since obtained a referral to the IRB, individuals who have been determined to be protected persons by IRPA, as well as those who may have since become a permanent resident may still be included in the claimant count in the year in which their asylum claim was made.

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