



Minister Harinder Takhar



Minister Dr. Eric Hoskins



Minister Ben Stewart



Jim Karygiannis, M.P.



Dr Ruby Dhalla, M.P.

# CANADA 2031



Dr Hedy Fry, M.P.



Gurbax S Malhi, M.P.



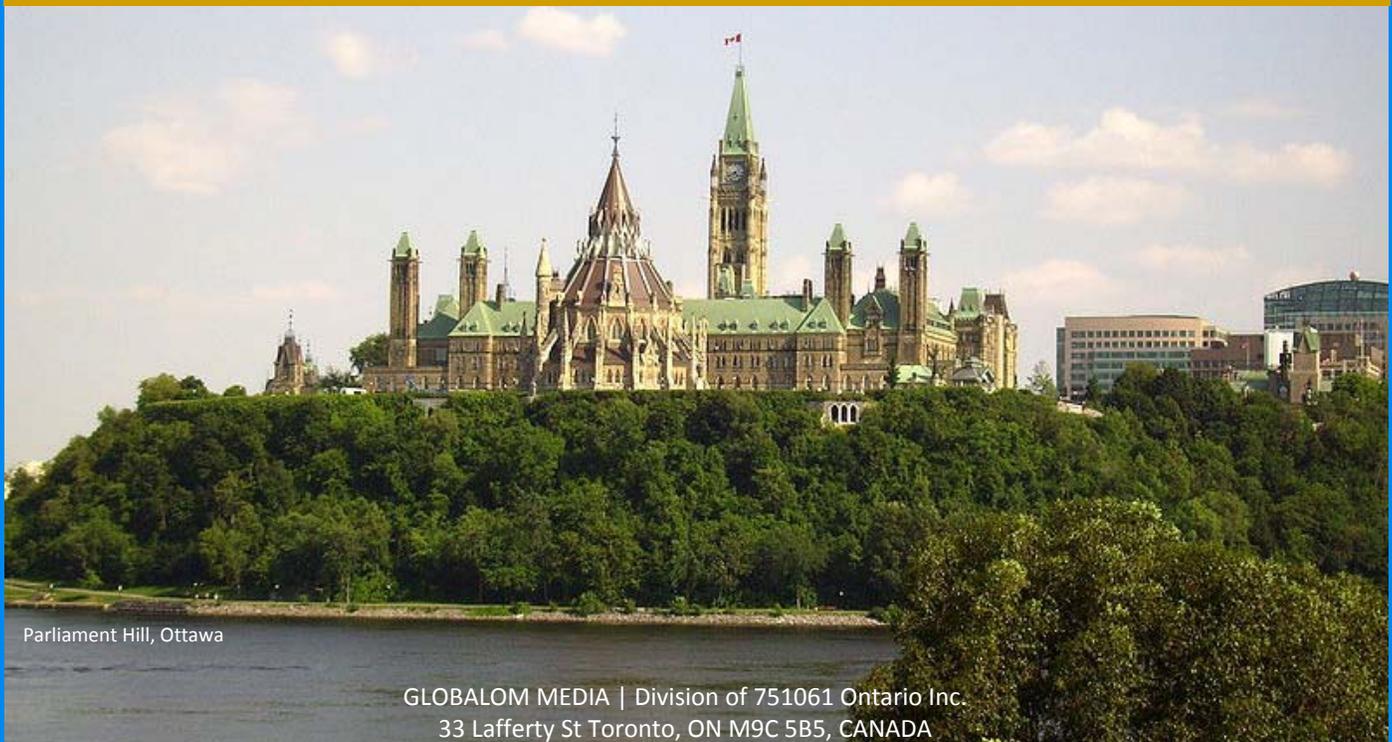
Ontario NDP Andrea Horwath



Maytree President Ratna Omidvar



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# Canada 2031 – Toward Unique Diversity



By Suresh Jaura\*



"India is people of one nation celebrating diversity. Canada will be a unique example of diversity - bringing the world together as a nation," says India-born Harinder S. Takhar (in picture on the left), Ontario's Minister of Government Services, commenting on the Statistics Canada study.

The 78-page study, titled Projections of the diversity of the Canadian population 2006 to 2031, predicts that by 2031, "between 25 percent and 28 percent of the population could be foreign-born. This would surpass the proportion of 22 percent observed between 1911 and 1931, the highest during the twentieth century. About 55 percent of this population would be born in Asia."

Nearly one-half (46 percent) of Canadians aged 15 and over would be foreign-born, or would have at least one foreign-born parent, up from 39 percent in 2006. Between 29 percent and 32 percent of the population – up to 14.4 million people - could belong to a visible minority group.

"Canada is like a table with the four legs supporting top," says Jim Karygiannis, MP since 1988, in seventh term, from Scarborough Agincourt, East of Toronto, with large concentration of ethnic voters, adding: "The first leg is the First Nations people, the second and third legs are the French and English founding nations and the fourth leg consists of the different waves of immigrants.

"As immigrants, whether our ancestors came with the early explorers, landed at Pier 21 in Halifax between 1928-1971 or arrived today at Terminal 1 at Lester B. Pearson International Airport, we brought our traditions, cultures, faiths and good and bad habits with us," says Karygiannis.

Over the years, the face of Canada has changed many times. Today, it reflects the multi-faith and multi-racial makeup of Canada. No matter where future immigrants come from, Karygiannis (of Greek origin) believes that the Canadian values of peace, justice, tolerance and compassion will continue to prevail.

Canada's population was estimated at 33,930,800 as of January 1, 2010, with more than 18.4 percent born outside Canada. More than 13 million immigrants have come to Canada in the past century including over 9 million in the last fifty years.

According to the May 16, 2006 Census, Canada had a higher rate of population growth (5.4 percent) than any other G8 country between 2001 and 2006. The population growth of the United States was second with 5.0 percent. Two-thirds of Canada's population growth was attributable to net international migration, while the U.S. population growth resulted mostly from natural increase, as fertility was higher in the United States than in Canada.

Explaining the purpose and methodology of the study, Statistics Canada said the goal of this study, mandated by three federal departments for key policy planning and programs, was to assess what could be the ethno-cultural diversity of the Canadian population by 2031.

As for the methodology applied, considering the many variables reflecting the ethno-cultural diversity – visible minority groups, religious denomination, generation status, mother tongue, place of birth – to be projected, a micro simulation model for population projections was used.

The projections, including many annex tables, were made accessible to the Canadian public free of charge. The three funding partners have also access to detailed tables for policy planning.

Results of the projections have many social and economic implications. Those are not discussed in the analytical document produced by Statistics Canada and released on March 9, 2010, as it is not the role of Statistics Canada to do so.

Implication touch base with planning the needs of a changing population, social and economic integration, multiculturalism, social cohesion, employment equity, and labour market integration, geographic distribution of the population, among others.

"It has some policy implications in terms of racism and discrimination," Winnipeg Sun quoted Andre Lebel, a Stats Canada demographer who co-authored the study. "It could also be used to improve the integration of specific groups or provide better access to the labour force."

Lebel said he and his colleagues considered immigration, birth and mortality rates, as well as internal migration, when making their population projections.

The study does not try to collate these projections with the social, educational, economic, inter-religious issues arising from these projections. The study focuses on key results and the analysis is neutral, limited to explanations of demographic components at play to understand the trends.

As for an impact of the study on Canada's immigration policy, Statistics Canada spokesperson suggested Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), one of the funding partners of the study, would be the right source to contact. The study has aroused great interest in broad sections of the Canadian society, as underlined by responses Globalom Media agency – with IDN-InDepthNews as its journalistic flagship – received from government ministers, members of federal parliament, provincial legislators and community leaders from what Statistics Canada terms as the "visible minority group".

**\*Suresh Jaura is managing editor of South Asian Outlook and Indo-Canada Outlook published by Globalom Media - North America, which also runs the South Asian Web TV.**



INDO-CANADA  
OUTLOOK

## Questions

**WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE 2031 PROJECTIONS?**

**WHAT DO YOU THINK GOVERNMENTS AT DIFFERENT LEVELS SHOULD DO TO ENSURE SOCIAL EQUITY, ECONOMIC JUSTICE, AND RELIGIOUS HARMONY?**

**WILL IT HAVE AN IMPACT ON CANADA'S IMMIGRATION POLICY?**

**ANY OTHER COMMENTS?**

## Respondents

- Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) headed by Minister Jason Kenney.
- Dr. Eric Hoskins, Ontario Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.
- Ben Stewart, British Columbia Minister of Citizens' Services and Minister Responsible for Multiculturalism and the Public Affairs.
- Jim Karygiannis, MP, Scarborough - Agincourt, since 1988.
- Dr Ruby Dhalla, MP, Brampton - Springdale, since 2004.
- Dr Hedy Fry, M.P., Vancouver Centre, since 1993.
- Gurbax Singh Malhi, P.C., M.P. Bramalea - Gore - Malton, since 1993.
- Andrea Horwath, Leader of the Ontario NDP.
- Ratna Omidvar, President of Maytree, a private foundation that promotes equity and prosperity.
- Farzana Hassan, Freelance writer, author of 'Prophecy and the Fundamentalist Quest'.

**Questions:**

- **What do you think of the 2031 projections?**
- **What do you think governments at different levels should do to ensure social equity, economic justice, and religious harmony?**
- **Will it have an impact on Canada's immigration policy?**
- **Any other comments?**

**Responses:**

**Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) headed by Minister Jason Kenney**

All one has to do is look at the face of Canada today to realize that these projections are probably correct. Canada is a country of immigrants. We have opened our doors to the people of the world. We have invited immigrants to share all that Canada has to offer and ask only that they share the Canadian principles of peace, justice, tolerance and compassion. No matter where we come from, Canadians embrace our differences and our common goals.

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The Government of Canada is committed to promoting an integrated and inclusive Canada and expressing our diversity through common Canadian values of democracy, freedom and rule of law.

We will support this vision by strengthening our settlement, integration, citizenship and multicultural programs.

Our multiculturalism programs focus on fostering social integration and interfaith understanding, assisting public institutions to respond to diversity, and are a model to the world in building social cohesion.

The report underscores the need to ensure the successful economic, social and cultural integration of newcomers, as part of a socially integrated and cohesive society.

The Government of Canada has tripled our investment in settlement funding over the last five years to help newcomers

integrate into our communities and our economy. For example, as the ability to speak an official language is vital to finding meaningful employment and successfully integrating into Canadian society, CIC funds settlement service organizations to provide free language training to permanent residents to Canada.

Canada's 2009 Economic Action Plan also committed \$50 million to work with provinces and territories and stakeholders to address barriers to foreign qualification recognition in Canada.

Our citizenship programs foster a shared sense of identity while protecting the value of Canadian citizenship.

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The release was commissioned by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Canadian Heritage, and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, as a follow up to Statistic Canada's 2005 report "Population Projections of Visible Minority Groups, Canada, Provinces and Regions, 2001 to 2017." The purpose of these projections is to inform public policy discussions rather than to predict the future. The study projects that Canada will remain a country of cultural, religious and linguistic diversity. CIC will use the study to frame policy discussions around its settlement, integration, citizenship and multiculturalism programs.

**Ontario Minister Dr. Eric Hoskins**

Ontario has a long history of people of different backgrounds, coming together to make our province economically, culturally and socially prosperous. About half of all immigrants that come to Canada choose to settle in Ontario. And Ontario has become the great province that it is today thanks to the many contributions of newcomers from all over the world. Newcomers are a huge asset for Ontario. They offer experience and expertise to Ontario's employers. Whether competing at home, or on a global scale, highly skilled immigrants offer a great competitive advantage for Ontario's businesses.

Immigration is and will continue to be the lifeblood of our province.

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We are an Open Ontario.

Ontario has a long tradition of welcoming immigrants. In return, newcomers have long contributed to the province's prosperity and cultural richness in numerous ways.

We are a province where our people speak every language, practice every religion, and come from every place on earth to live in peace and prosperity. Nowhere else in the world have more people come together from more places to live so well together.

We are committed to ensuring that our society continues to be one where all Ontarians are respected. That is why since 2003, our government has invested more than \$700M in programs and services, like language training and bridge training, to help newcomers settle successfully in the community and find work in their field.

As Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, I will work with and on behalf of all Ontarians to ensure that we continue to find ways to live in harmony.

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Canada's immigration policy is mainly set by the federal government. What's important for our government is that newcomers have access to programs and services that help them settle and get work as soon as possible. That's why we invest in those programs and encourage the federal government to live up to its funding obligations in areas where it has come up short, such as immigration.

Our government will continue to pursue a positive and productive relationship with the federal government to ensure that newcomers to Ontario receive all the support they need to succeed.



**British Columbia Minister Ben Stewart**

Our province is already recognized as the most multicultural province in Canada for its rich cultural diversity, faiths and languages.

British Columbians are globally connected, so it is natural that our province reflects our global environment and our role as global citizens.

British Columbia embraces immigration and cultural diversity, regardless of a person's point of origin or ethnicity.

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This Statistics Canada report helps identify the future direction of our multiculturalism and anti-racism programming and funding. These projections are just further evidence of a positive growth in our country and our provinces. To be ready for this growth, we need to ensure Canada is a place that welcomes, accepts and embraces difference.

All levels of government need to ensure they are able to provide culturally responsive services to meet the needs of diverse citizens. The Province's services build relationships and understanding among all people – including new immigrants, aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples.

As a provincial government, we look forward to working with our federal counterparts in finding solutions to the challenges that lie ahead. Demographic shifts do not happen overnight, and these projections will assist us in tailoring our programs to the needs of our citizens.

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British Columbia had already anticipated these changes back in 2007 as illustrated in our WelcomeBC strategic framework.

As the local population continues to age, employers will increasingly rely on skilled workers to fill job openings, and communities will turn to outside investors for investment capital and entrepreneurial skills.

- Through the process of welcoming newcomers from various parts of the world, the B.C. population will become more ethnically and culturally diverse. This is expected to bring challenges, but also opportunities which will require policy adjustments.
- Through continued investments in integration (e.g. providing orientation, language and labour market services, creating welcoming and inclusive communities and workplaces) and multiculturalism (e.g. coordinating anti-racism activities, supporting interethnic bridging programs and events) programming, the Province directly supports the settlement and integration of minorities while at the same time working to attenuate systemic barriers to full participation into BC communities and workplaces.
- Through harnessing the human, social and cultural capital of minority population, the Province aims to unlock the "diversity advantage".

Immigration is a shared jurisdiction between the federal and provincial and territorial governments. In the case of British Columbia, respective roles and responsibilities in managing immigration are set out in the Canada-BC Immigration Agreement, renewed in April 2010.

Immigration is, and will continue to be, key to supporting BC's socioeconomic goals and objectives in the short- and long-term and who we attract, select or who decides to come to our province will have an impact on not just Canada but BC's policy and program considerations.

**Jim Karygiannis, M.P.**

Immigration has helped make Canada into the country it is today; it has been a sustaining feature of Canada's history as waves of immigration have built and transformed the population.

The study shows that Canada is, and will remain, a country of cultural, religious and linguistic diversity. It shows that regardless of future levels or countries of origin of immigration, Canada's diversity will likely continue to increase as a result of the fertility rates of immigrants and Canadians already here.

An aging population and persistent low fertility means that within the next few years all of Canada's labour force growth will come from immigration.

However, new entries from Canada's educational system would continue to outnumber recent immigrants entering the labour force by a factor of at least 4 to 1. Studies indicate that at current levels, immigration is adequate to maintain the size of both Canada's total and working-age populations through 2050.

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The different levels of government should continue with and enhance programs, which are presently in place. These programs help to ensure that all Canadians see themselves in the institutions of the country. Governments should assist those professionals who received a non-Canadian education up-grade their skills to Canadian standards. Government should encourage the leadership of all the religious communities to support Canadian values and help them educate members of other faiths in the tenets of their religion.

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I do not believe that these projections will have a major impact on Canada's immigration policy. As new Canadians are re-united with their loved ones and Canadian-born youth travel the world – falling in love, marrying, having babies and bringing their new families home to Canada – the face of Canada will continue to change. Our multi-cultural make up is one of the major strengths of Canada and the world can learn valuable lessons in the peaceful co-existence of peoples from different backgrounds, races and religions.

Immigration has helped make Canada into the country it is today; it has been a sustaining feature of Canada's history as waves of immigration have built and transformed the population.



**Dr Ruby Dhalla, M.P.**

These projections reflect the new and changing face of Canada. When you see Canada you see the rest of the world. The projections showing that almost 1/3 of the population could be foreign born reflects the desire of people to build their lives in a nation in which there is equality, opportunity, respect, and acceptance. As the Member of Parliament for one of the most multicultural, multi lingual, and multi religious communities in Canada I have seen firsthand the contributions of immigrants to our community and country. The projections made by Stats Canada are a symbol of the new reality in Canada. The Indian Diaspora in Canada which is one of the largest ethnic communities in Canada has achieved success in the areas of business, medicine, media, and politics. In Canada's Parliament the Punjabi language is the 4th most common spoken language by Parliamentarians. These achievements are a reflection of the dedication, hard work and vision of the immigrants but also are a sign of the many barriers broken, challenges encountered and sacrifices made by those that have come before us. As a daughter of immigrant parents these projections are a symbol of the unlimited potential of Canada and the opportunities that exist for Canada to work with its immigrant communities to forge strong cultural, trade, and economic relationships with the rest of the world.

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I believe it is vital that Parliaments are reflective of the demographic of the country. Political party structures must also reflect the people they desire to represent. Honest efforts need to be made at all levels to ensure that the voices of all people- from every culture, religion, socio-economic status and all walks of life are heard in political parties, in Governments, and parliaments. Actions must be taken and initiatives implemented to ensure that the needs and challenges faced by immigrants both when they arrive and as they build their journeys are addressed.

**Dr Hedy Fry, M.P.**



It is obviously based on statistical data so they have a relative amount of credibility to them.

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It is inappropriate for me to comment on other levels of government, as a federal politician I can only speak on federal initiatives and federal jurisdiction. Since social equity, economic justice and religious harmony are all supported in various sections of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms a federal government should adhere to the Charter and develop programs that will allow those who have Charter challenges to have real access to justice under the law. This Conservative federal government should restore the Court Challenges Program, set up by Liberals under Trudeau, to assist people who may, because of socio-economic status and discrimination, not have the means to seek justice in the courts.

Additionally, the Department of Multiculturalism used to have a mandate under Liberal government to provide diverse community organizations with the tools and funding, when necessary, to overcome legal societal and discriminatory barriers that prevented them from participating fully in the economic, social and

political and cultural life of Canada. This does not seem to be the mandate of multicultural policies and programs any longer. An example for instance was the internationally trained worker initiative that the Liberal government, under Paul Martin, had developed to assist persons with foreign education or credentials to be quickly employed within their areas of expertise. This was a complex issue and required many different solutions, under at least eleven departments of the federal government, along with cooperation and coordination with provincial and municipal government, with unions, credentialing organizations, bridge to work projects and enhanced language programs. This initiative was cut by the current Conservative government as were other programs dealing with apprenticeship and work experience in Canada.

The concept of what this government offers, offering to tell people sooner whether or not their credentials are acceptable or not is ludicrous; since knowing that whether or not your credentials are acceptable is not really the point. The point is getting access to programs that make them acceptable, such as language programs or apprenticeship programs. This is not substantive public policy, is really a facade.

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Statistics Canada has said that by 2011 Canada will depend for one hundred percent for its net work force on immigrants. Therefore, immigration policies should be changed with a view to enhancing and including the immigrant workforce and ensuring that they are able to work in their fields as soon possible after arrival to Canada.

To ensure equity, justice, and harmony programs and policies by Governments must be culturally and linguistically sensitive and reflect the needs of the people they are trying to help. Policies and programs must have a bottom up approach in which the grassroots are involved in the development and creation vs. a top down approach.

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One of the challenges that have been brought to the forefront with an increasing immigrant population is the issue of Foreign Credential Recognition. As Canada attracts the best and brightest to come to this country there must be mechanisms to ensure their qualifications are accredited and recognized and they can work in Canada. Seeing Doctors driving cabs and engineers working as security guards is an injustice that must be corrected. One of the first initiatives I undertook when I was elected was to bring forward a private member's motion that called on the government to work in collaboration with all stakeholders to create a separate department for Foreign Credential Recognition. Since this motion was passed in parliament there has been much progress and I hope moving forward there will be more.

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We must ensure that all stakeholders- people, community organizations and elected officials work together to provide all Canadians with the resources, skills and tools they need to succeed. The demographic and the dynamic of our country are changing. We need to ensure that the powers that be recognize and reflect this reality.



Increased immigration must be seen as a positive policy. Canada cannot compete nor be productive in a global marketplace if we do not have sufficiently employed population base as does China and India, and some of the new Asian economies. The US has a population much larger than ours, even though it's a smaller geographically and the European Union (EU) has created a sizable workforce through merging. Canada has a low birthrate and an ageing population. These are issues that cannot be ignored in the long term even though there is currently a temporary period of unemployment at this time.

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I think that diverse Canadian cities with people coming from every corner of the world, bringing with them different languages, cultures and an understanding of the world's market places gives Canada a strong competitive advantage – as the Conference Board told us in 1977. Canada is a trading nation; we

### Gurbax Singh Malhi, P.C., M.P.

I believe Canada is one of the greatest multicultural societies throughout the world. Diversity is greatly appreciated and accepted. With so many different ethnicities, the population of minorities is sure to increase. With such an increase in population and minorities, Canada's multi-cultural reputation is sure to prosper at the international level. This will also create a brighter and more prosperous future.

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The government at all levels, should teach and promote tolerance of various ethnicities. They should be in favour of diversity and demonstrate to the citizens how it is beneficial for Canada. The government should also further implement new immigration policies in order to prepare for the increase of new immigrants.

### Andrea Horwath, Ontario NDP Leader



Ontarians have long known that the demographics of our province are changing. These statistics put hard numbers behind the growing diversity of our communities. With the increasingly diverse ethnocultural makeup in Ontario, all three levels of government have an obligation to consider whether our programs and policies meet the needs of a changing Ontario.

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We know that a diverse, inclusive society of equal opportunity improves the lives of each of us. Racism and exclusion hurts us all. The sad reality is that equality for foreign-born Canadians as well as racialized minorities in Ontario remains lacking. In recent years we've received public reports that talk about the colour of poverty, public reports like the Roots of Violence report. What do these reports show us? They clearly show the racialization of

### Maytree President Ratna Omidvar

These projections are not really surprising. We've known of these demographic trends for a while. Canada is a country of immigrants, and many see this country as an example of how to integrate immigrants.

The future of a majority/ minority city is alluring for many reasons: An intensified, international outlook to the world, new markets, new talent, new customers, new ideas, and new tourists.

But we cannot rely on these positives without addressing the economic, social and political gaps that exist today (consider the city of Toronto: while close to half of our residents are visible minorities (43%), you would be hard pressed to see any visible minority faces in the leadership profiles of our city - whether you looked at Bay Street, in Queen's Park, or at the city's largest voluntary sector organizations and its many agencies, boards and commissions).

depend for 45% of our GDP on trade. The advantage that the Conference Board refers to allows Canada to be competitive in trading in a linguistic, culturally sensitive manner and gives us the knowledge of what to sell to emerging markets in Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin American. It is necessary in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to diminish our dependence on US markets where we currently do 80% of our trade. As the US has suffered in this recession, Canada's trade with the US market has decreased. Given the diverse population in the cities, we should be poised to trade effectively with China, India and all of these other countries.

Taking and accepting that advantage is going to be Canada's challenge. Diverse cities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are considered to be creative liveable cities that encourage a mobile, creative and innovative workforce. Montréal, Vancouver and Toronto should benefit from this in attracting the best and brightest.

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Yes this will have an impact on Canada's immigration policy. With so many new Canadians arriving in our country, new immigration policies might have to be created in order to adapt. This may also lead to Canada's immigration policy being reviewed and upgraded in the years ahead.



poverty in the province of Ontario. They show us that racialized minorities are three times more likely than anybody else in this province to be poor. The Ontario government has regrettably dropped the ball when it comes to addressing these issues; we see this from their inadequate poverty reduction plan and in their inability to reform our education and justice systems to address these disparities.

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It should have an impact. Immigrants can no longer just be a footnote when it comes to budgets and employment strategies. What is good for immigrants is good for Canada and vice versa.

We also know that accreditation programs for internationally-trained professionals are a vital component of meeting the needs of new Canadians. Without appropriate programs, new Ontarians are unable to work in their field and this negatively impacts both the newcomers as well as the province as a whole. We are all too familiar with renowned physicians, scientists, and professors who upon immigration take jobs as janitors and taxi drivers in order to survive. Ontario must meet its promise to these immigrants and provide opportunity for training and accreditation.



Governments will need to reconfigure how to provide effective programs and services to the new mainstream, instead of thinking of a small segment of the population with special needs that can be met in a silo fashion. The two big spending envelopes of government, health and education, will need to review policies and programs for their suitability and relevancy to the new mainstream.

However, we can't just leave it up to governments. All citizens and society as a whole have to do a better job of making sure that minorities have a fair share at opportunities in the workplace and in leadership positions. So we need to ensure that we offer: the right services for integration, labour market integration strategies, and participation beyond the labour market, such as civic and political; the reconfiguration of public services such that they are updated and relevant; For example, looking at the city of Toronto again, here are a few things that should happen: ensuring that new voices are being heard at City Hall, including finding alternatives to the way city councillors are elected ([Better Ballots](#)); allowing landed immigrants to vote in local elections so they can learn and experience early on what it means to be a participating citizen ([I Vote Toronto](#)); rewarding employers who hire skilled immigrants ([Immigrant Success Awards](#)); ensuring that city institutions are governed by qualified appointees who are more reflective of the people who live in the city ([DiverseCity onBoard](#)). Many argue that time will take care of these issues. But time is what we don't have. We would be better advised to work at collapsing natural time frames so that we ready for the Toronto (and Canada) of tomorrow. It should have an impact. Immigrants can no longer just be a footnote when it comes to budgets and employment strategies. What is good for immigrants is good for Canada and vice versa.

**Farzana Hassan, Writer**



The projections indicate an increase in racial, cultural and religious diversity in Canada. The various racial and ethnic groups comprising Canada will come to dominate the business, media and politics of Canada by the year 2031. This has sparked interest in what Canadian society will look like with respect to social cohesion and attitudes toward diversity.

While first generation Canadians continue to demonstrate loyalty to their native cultures and traditions, second generation Canadians are more socialized to imbibe many of the values that define Canadians. These include acceptance of differences, equality of men and women, and an affirmation of the Canadian identity as one's primary identity. Second generation Canadians will hopefully be engaged in the affairs of the country as patriotic Canadians ought to be. An exception to this trend exists among some Muslim youth who have been radicalized due to religious indoctrination. Such indoctrination is rife among radical Muslims--an untoward trend that must be countered through education and public policy.

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Social integration must begin early in one's academic career. Although the Canadian educational system strives to foster respect for diversity, it has not been able to achieve its objectives fully, as racial and religious strife remain quite noticeable in Canadian schools. Recent immigrants invariably bring along cultural and political baggage that often causes friction in secondary schools and institutes of higher learning. Social and political enclaves are easily detectable, the most recent examples of these being Israel Apartheid Week and Know Radical Islam Week. For the sake of social cohesion, public and educational institutions must adopt a proactive approach in educating political adversaries with a view to fostering understanding between them. They can be urged to embrace objectivity and open-mindedness towards "the other" as well as the generosity to forgive transgressions.

Certain subcultures within Canada tend to be more conservative and traditional. Sometimes this causes friction between members of these various subcultures and Canadian society in general. Recently, conservative Muslim groups have sought excessive faith accommodations in the educational, professional and legal spheres of Canadian life. There is a desire among these segments of the Muslim community to mould existing Canadian institutions so as to render them more compliant to their fundamentalist lifestyles. The recent statistics indicate that Muslims will be the largest religious minority in Canada by the year 2031. While the majority of Muslims are law-abiding and well-integrated, the vociferous minority aspires to change Canadian society through institutional change. It is this group of individuals who pose a threat to Canadian values by demanding faith accommodations that are detrimental to social cohesion.

Such demands test the limits of Canada's multiculturalism. Canadian society is built on egalitarian, pluralistic and libertarian values. Religious fundamentalism by its very nature flies in the face of such values. In the long run, it hopes to curtail such freedoms. While religious fundamentalism thrives in pluralistic societies, it is essentially antithetical to pluralistic principles. In the end, fundamentalism, if allowed to grow and flourish, will result in the demise of pluralism. For most Canadians, this is a pernicious trend that needs to be nipped in the bud, and rightly so. One can see a movement among Canadians in general and policy-makers in particular to preserve what is truly Canadian.

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I am not sure if the statistical data under discussion will result in any changes to immigration policies. I feel that entry into Canada should be based on the willingness among prospective immigrants to uphold their loyalty to Canada and Canadian values. Immigrants ought to be screened for how much they are willing to subordinate their primary identities: Religious, cultural or ideological, to the values that define Canadian society. Since Muslim fundamentalism has already come into conflict with Canadian society, the sentiment may exist among policy makers to discourage immigration from countries that are avowedly Islamist. However, it is also from these countries that many individuals are fleeing religious persecution. A fine balance needs to be struck between a lax immigration policy and an excessively stringent one. Such a balance will allow genuine victims of religious persecution to make Canada their home, while at the same time keep out any individuals who are likely to be influenced by belligerent ideologies hostile to Canada and Canadian society.

*North America's First*

**Surinder Sharma, Past Co-Chair of Panorama India and Past President of IIT Alumni Canada** and Founder President of Power Saving Systems Inc., says, "I feel we all must care for our adopted country and take more pro-active interest in the affairs of the country. There could be some special inputs from the government in its programs which help bring the foreign-born population of Canada as a part of the mainstream. We have to move from the "Separate Enclave Theory" to "The Taco Salad Approach". "The future immigration policy should ensure quality people are coming into Canada."

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