

Changes in Canada's Immigration Policy in 2025 and Their Impact on New Japanese Immigrants and the Japanese Canadian Community

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Chapter 1: Introduction—The Shift in Canadian Immigration Policy and the Historical Context Surrounding New Japanese Immigrants

Since the Canadian federal government introduced a merit-based points system in 1967, the door to immigration from Japan to Canada has been opened, marking the beginning of the history of “new immigrants (Shin-Issei),” who have brought a breath of fresh air to the Japanese Canadian community. Unlike the generation that directly experienced the tragedies of prewar internment and diaspora, they are a distinct group who voluntarily chose to immigrate to Canada, motivated by the high level of education available in Japan during its period of rapid economic growth and a desire for personal self-fulfillment. The struggle for human rights cultivated by the prewar Issei and their descendants, combined with the modern social and cultural vitality brought by the new immigrants from Japan, has contributed to the development of the Japanese Canadian community.

However, in 2025, a dramatic and sweeping shift in immigration policy—described as the largest in the history of Canadian immigration administration—was implemented. This change in immigration policy is having a profound impact on the structure of the new immigrant community over the next decade (2026–2035). Furthermore, this impact is significantly affecting the relationship between new immigrants and the established Japanese Canadian community.

Behind this major shift lies the distortion caused by the “aggressive quantitative expansion (population growth-focused)” policy implemented during the latter part of the former Justin Trudeau administration (2020–2025). The rapid expansion of the non-permanent resident (NPR) population—a general term referring to foreign residents legally staying in Canada on a temporary basis without permanent residency, such as international students, temporary foreign workers, and refugee claimants—has led to a severe housing shortage in major urban areas, historic spikes in rent and real estate prices, and strain on the public healthcare system (including a shortage of family doctors and abnormally long wait times for hospital appointments). In response, public opinion in Canada rapidly hardened, and the very social consensus—to “tolerantly accept immigrants from around the world under the banner of multiculturalism”—began to collapse as it reached the limits of the country's capacity to sustain such immigration.

To resolve this nationwide crisis, Mark Carney was sworn in as the 24th Prime Minister in March 2025, and in May of the same year, Lena Metlege Diab was appointed Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (hereinafter IRCC, the federal agency responsible for Canada's immigration, visas, citizenship, and refugee protection operations) in May of that same year. The new administration, led by the Carney Cabinet and Immigration Minister Diab, made breaking free from a low-productivity economy overly reliant on cheap foreign labour and stabilizing housing and healthcare infrastructure its top priorities, and implemented a “historic reduction” aimed at reducing the proportion of temporary residents to less than 5% of Canada's total population. In addition to setting a strict national cap on the number of new student visas issued, the government tightened the language requirements for the Post-Graduation Work Permit (PGWP; hereinafter referred to as

PGWP) granted to graduates of accredited Canadian post-secondary institutions, and significantly restricted eligibility for open work permits for spouses.(an open work visa valid for up to three years with no restrictions on employers, granted to graduates of colleges and universities) and significantly restricting eligibility for open work permits for spouses, among other measures, effectively and drastically narrowing all entry points to the immigration pathways that Japanese nationals have traditionally used.

Chapter 2: Analysis of the Number of New Japanese Immigrants Who Obtained Canadian Permanent Residency by Immigration Category

A quantitative analysis of the latest confirmed statistics on permanent residency (PR) grants provided by IRCC (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada), as well as forecast data for the 10-year period from 2026 to 2035, reveals that the shift in national policy has resulted in extremely harsh eligibility thresholds and dramatic upheavals by category for Japanese nationals. This shift in immigration policy was implemented in stages throughout 2025 as changes to the rules governing immigration categories. As a result, this impact is already evident in IRCC's 2025 figures for the number of Japanese nationals granted Canadian permanent residency by immigration category. The forecast data for 2025–2034 represents a scenario projected by the author, taking into account the 2025 actual results and the Canadian government's immigration policy for the next 10 years.

The projections in Table 2 for the number of Japanese nationals obtaining Canadian permanent residency by immigration category from 2026 to 2035 are based on the following assumptions.

Trends in Canadian Immigration Policy from 2026 to 2035

- The historic shift toward “immigration restraint and cap controls” that the Canadian government implemented between late 2024 and 2025 is not merely a temporary policy reversal, but rather the beginning of a structural economic, social, and political paradigm shift in Canada that will span the next decade (2026–2035). This restrictive approach is likely to be further “strengthened and refined (with tighter targeting)” over the next few years, after which it will gradually shift toward “strategic and limited easing (adjustments)” in the latter half of the decade, in response to domestic demographic trends and economic demands.

Future Projections by Category (2026–2035):

- Federal Skilled Worker (FSW): Due to the English language proficiency barrier (CLB 9), direct applications from Japan will be effectively cut off, and we predict a severe slump of around 10–30 people per year will continue.
- Canadian Experience Class (CEC): Due to restrictions on Temporary Residents (TR), the pathway for transitioning from study or working holiday programs will narrow, resulting in a decline to approximately 40–60 people per year.
- Provincial Nominee Program (PNP): To avoid the tightening of federal criteria, Japanese applicants are expected to flock to this program, maintaining the largest share within the economic immigration category (around 150 to 180 people per year).
- Spouse and Partner Sponsorship: As this category does not involve a points-based selection system, it is the most stable and is expected to become the “most stable foundation” for Japanese nationals obtaining permanent residency between 2026 and 2035 (250–300 people per year, approximately 50% share).

- Domestic Protection Class: In contrast to the unusual surge seen from 2021 to 2024, this category is expected to stabilize at around 30 to 50 people per year due to stricter government regulations.

Table 1
Number of Japanese Citizens Granted Permanent Residency in Canada by Immigration Category, 2015 - 2025

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total	% Dist.
Total	995	1,035	1,085	1,035	1,115	615	1,405	885	1,015	900	650	10,735	100.0
Agri-Food Pilot	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	--	0	0	0.0
Atlantic Immigration Pilot Programs	0	0	0	0	15	0	--	--	0	0	0	15	0.1
Atlantic Immigration Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	10	--	15	0.1
Canadian Experience	25	25	30	45	45	25	155	40	90	120	85	685	6.4
Caregiver	0	--	0	--	0	0	0	0	0	--	10	10	0.1
Federal Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	40	80	0.7
Rural and Northern Immigration	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	--	10	10	--	20	0.2
Skilled Trade	0	0	0	0	0	0	--	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Skilled Worker	690	400	180	295	290	85	60	205	115	50	25	2,395	22.3
Worker Program	715	425	210	345	350	115	220	245	215	235	165	3,240	30.2
Entrepreneur	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Investor	30	30	95	25	25	10	30	5	25	20	--	295	2.7
Self-Employed	5	0	--	5	0	0	0	0	0	15	10	35	0.3
Start-up Business	0	5	0	0	5	0	--	--	25	105	40	180	1.7
Business	35	35	95	30	30	10	35	10	50	135	50	515	4.8
Provincial Nominee Program	80	95	105	135	180	85	80	205	265	215	160	1,605	15.0
Provincial Nominee Program	80	95	105	135	180	85	80	205	265	215	160	1,605	15.0
Temporary Resident to Permanent Resident Pathway	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	45	50	5	5	130	1.2
Temporary Resident to Permanent Resident Pathway	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	45	50	5	5	130	1.2
Economic	825	555	410	510	560	210	360	505	580	590	380	5,485	51.1
Sponsored Children	15	25	25	15	15	15	20	15	15	10	25	195	1.8
Sponsored Extended Family Member	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	0	0	10	0.1
Sponsored Parent or Grandparent	40	40	40	45	35	20	25	35	55	35	25	395	3.7
Sponsored Spouse or Partner	145	205	235	320	275	180	280	290	305	315	280	2,830	26.4
Sponsored Family	200	270	300	375	325	215	325	345	375	360	330	3,420	31.9
Sponsored Family	200	270	300	375	325	215	325	345	375	360	330	3,420	31.9
Blended Sponsorship Refugee	0	--	0	0	--	0	0	--	0	0	0	0	0.0
Government-Assisted Refugee	10	25	--	--	5	--	5	10	10	10	5	80	0.7
Privately Sponsored Refugee	10	15	25	20	20	--	5	10	5	--	--	110	1.0
Resettled Refugee	20	40	25	20	30	10	10	20	15	10	10	210	2.0
Protected Person in Canada	55	40	45	60	65	95	235	240	265	290	160	1,550	14.4
Resettled Refugee & Protected Person in Canada	75	85	70	80	95	100	245	260	275	305	170	1,760	16.4
All Other Immigration	10	10	5	20	30	10	25	30	35	15	10	200	1.9

Source: Immigration, Refugee, and Citizenship Canada, "Canada, Admission of Permanent Residents by Nationality and Immigration Category, 2015 to Q2 2026

Table 2
Estimates of the Number of Japanese Citizens Granted Permanent Residency in Canada by Immigration Category, 2026 -2035

	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Total	550	550	550	550	710	710	710	710	710	710
Agri-Food Pilot										
Atlantic Immigration Pilot Programs										
Atlantic Immigration Programs										
Canadian Experience	40	40	40	40	60	60	60	60	60	60
Caregiver										
Federal Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot										
Rural and Northern Immigration										
Skilled Trade										
Skilled Worker	10	10	10	10	50	50	50	50	50	50
Worker Program	50	50	50	50	110	110	110	110	110	110
Entrepreneur										
Investor										
Self-Employed										
Start-up Business										
Business	20	20	20	20	40	40	40	40	40	40
Provincial Nominee Program										
Provincial Nominee Program	150	150	150	150	180	180	180	180	180	180
Temporary Resident to Permanent Resident Pathway										
Temporary Resident to Permanent Resident Pathway										
Economic	220	220	220	220	330	330	330	330	330	330
Sponsored Children	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
Sponsored Extended Family Member										
Sponsored Parent or Grandparent	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
Sponsored Spouse or Partner	300	300	300	300	350	350	350	350	350	350
Sponsored Family	350	350	350	350	400	400	400	400	400	400
Sponsored Family										
Blended Sponsorship Refugee										
Government-Assisted Refugee										
Privately Sponsored Refugee										
Resettled Refugee										
Protected Person in Canada	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Resettled Refugee & Protected Person in Canada	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
All Other Immigration										

Table 3
Number of Japanese Citizens Granted Permanent Residency in Canada, 2015 - 2035

	Actual		Estimates		Actual + Estimates	
	2015 to 2025		2026 to 2035		2015 to 2035	
	Total	% Dist.	Total	% Dist.	Total	% Dist.
Total	10,735	100.0	6,460	100.0	17,195	100.0
Agri-Food Pilot	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Atlantic Immigration Pilot Programs	15	0.1	0	0.0	15	0.1
Atlantic Immigration Programs	15	0.1	0	0.0	15	0.1
Canadian Experience	685	6.4	520	8.0	1,205	7.0
Caregiver	10	0.1	0	0.0	10	0.1
Federal Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot	80	0.7	0	0.0	80	0.5
Rural and Northern Immigration	20	0.2	0	0.0	20	0.1
Skilled Trade	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Skilled Worker	2,395	22.3	340	5.3	2,735	15.9
Worker Program	3,240	30.2	860	13.3	4,100	23.8
Entrepreneur	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Investor	295	2.7	0	0.0	295	1.7
Self-Employed	35	0.3	0	0.0	35	0.2
Start-up Business	180	1.7	0	0.0	180	1.0
Business	515	4.8	320	5.0	835	4.9
Provincial Nominee Program	1,605	15.0	0	0.0	1,605	9.3
Provincial Nominee Program	1,605	15.0	1,680	26.0	3,285	19.1
Temporary Resident to Permanent Resident Pathway	130	1.2	0	0.0	130	0.8
Temporary Resident to Permanent Resident Pathway	130	1.2	0	0.0	130	0.8
Economic	2,530	51.1	2,860	44.3	5,390	31.3
Sponsored Children	195	1.8	250	3.9	445	2.6
Sponsored Extended Family Member	10	0.1	0	0.0	10	0.1
Sponsored Parent or Grandparent	395	3.7	250	3.9	645	3.8
Sponsored Spouse or Partner	2,830	26.4	3,300	51.1	6,130	35.6
Sponsored Family	3,420	31.9	3,800	58.8	7,220	42.0
Sponsored Family	3,420	31.9	0	0.0	3,420	19.9
Blended Sponsorship Refugee	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Government-Assisted Refugee	80	0.7	0	0.0	80	0.5
Privately Sponsored Refugee	110	1.0	0	0.0	110	0.6
Resettled Refugee	210	2.0	0	0.0	210	1.2
Protected Person in Canada	1,550	14.4	300	4.6	1,850	10.8
Resettled Refugee & Protected Person in Canada	1,760	16.4	300	4.6	2,060	12.0
All Other Immigration	200	1.9	0	0.0	200	1.2

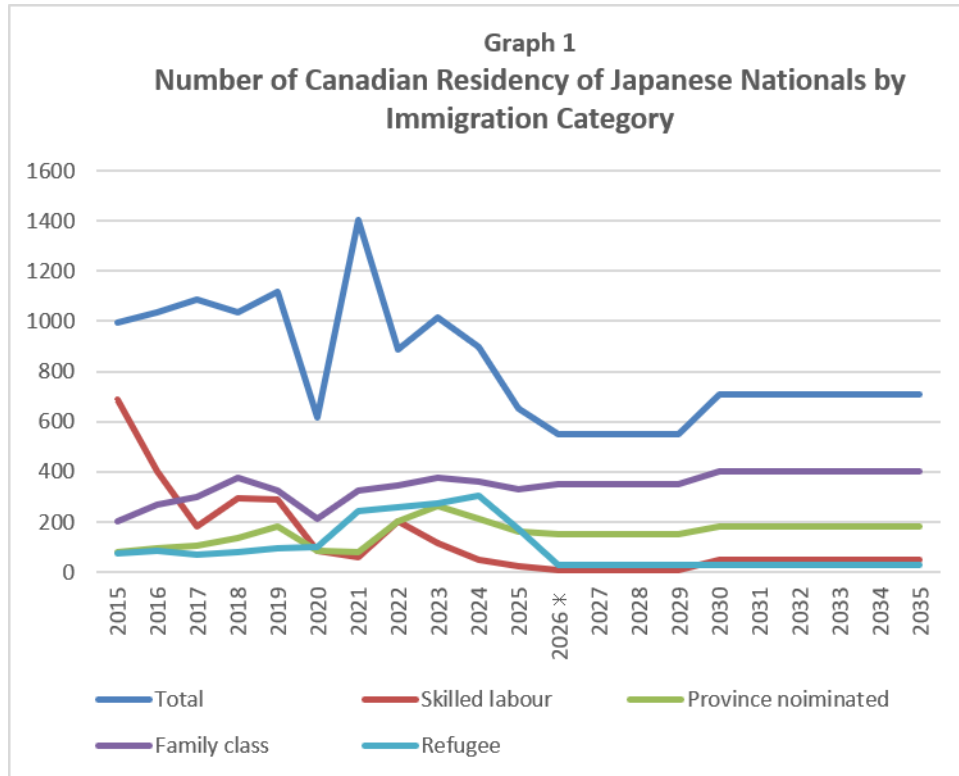
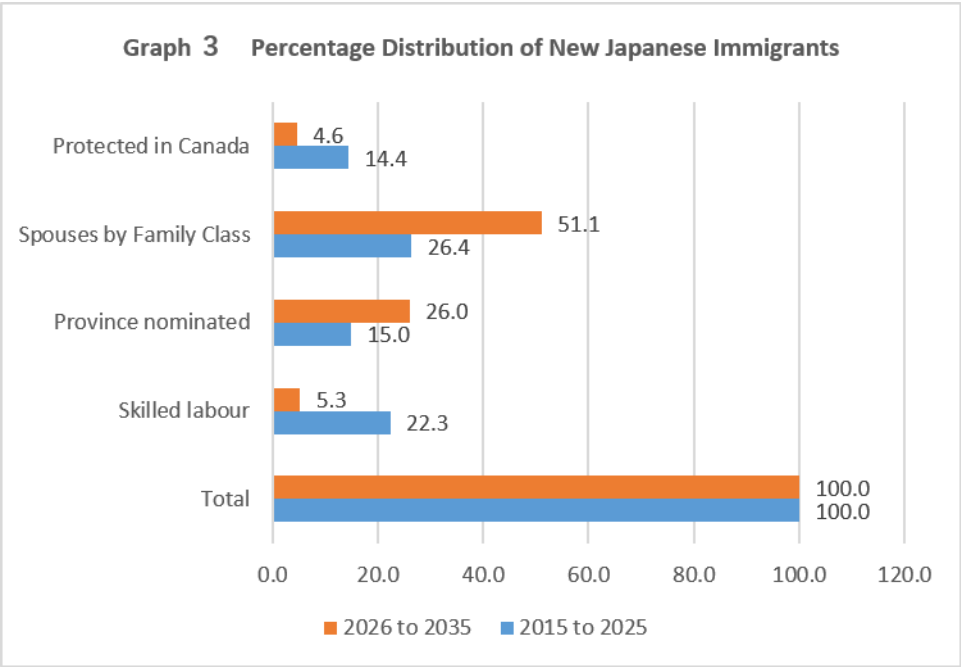
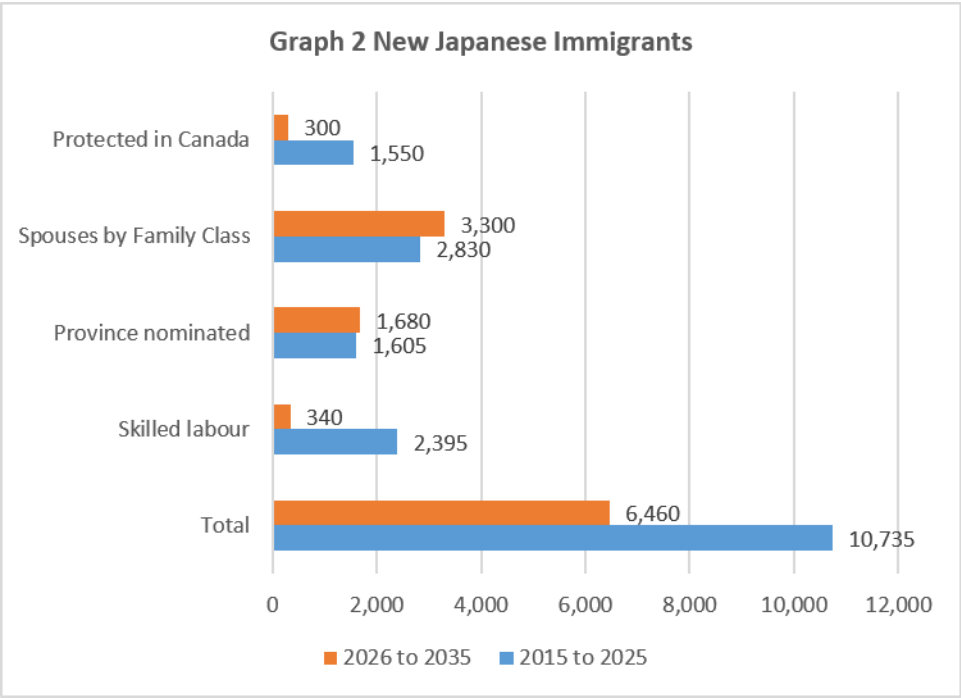


Table 4
Number of Canadian Residency of Japanese Nationals by Immigration Category

	2015 to 2025	2026 to 2035
Total	10,735	6,460
Skilled labour	2,395	340
Province nominated	1,605	1,680
Spouses by Family Class	2,830	3,300
Protected in Canada	1,550	300

% distribution	2015 to 2025	2026 to 2035
Total	100.0	100.0
Skilled labour	22.3	5.3
Province nominated	15.0	26.0
Spouses by Family Class	26.4	51.1
Protected in Canada	14.4	4.6



Skilled Worker Class

Looking at Figure 1, which summarizes Table 1, we see that while the total number of Japanese nationals obtaining Canadian permanent residency over the 11-year period from 2015 to 2025 was 10,735 (an annual average of approximately 1,000), this figure will plummet by approximately 39.8% to a total of 6,460 over the 10-year period from 2026 to 2035. The number of permanent residents, which stood at 900 in 2024, plummeted instantly to 650 in 2025, when the policy changes were fully implemented; this rate of decline is notably faster than that for other nationalities. This is due not only to domestic factors in Japan—such as increased travel costs for young people (driven by the rapid depreciation of the yen) and a growing inward-looking mindset—but above all to the Canadian government's stricter selection criteria.

The economic immigration category—where individuals secure permanent residency on their own merits based on their skills and educational background—was particularly hard hit. Through Express Entry (hereinafter “EE”), an online points-based selection system centrally managed by the federal government (An online selection system that comprehensively evaluates educational background, work experience, language proficiency, and other factors to issue invitations to apply for permanent residency to high-calibre candidates. In Japanese, it is sometimes translated as the “Rapid Immigration System”), IRCC concluded that “language proficiency is the most accurate indicator of integration into Canadian society and economic success” and set the weighting for language scores at an unreasonably high level. In the EE Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) score, the system is designed such that not only are points awarded for language test scores alone, but a substantial number of additional points—known as the “Skill Transferability Bonus”—are awarded when advanced educational qualifications (bachelor's degree or higher) are combined with language proficiency.

To earn the full amount of this bonus, applicants must achieve Level 9 on the Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB; a Canadian government standard for evaluating individual language proficiency). However, for Japanese speakers, whose language system differs fundamentally from English, achieving CLB 9 on the IELTS is an extremely difficult feat.

As a result, the number of individuals who applied and were selected directly from outside Japan as economic immigrants under the Federal Skilled Worker Program (Federal Skilled Worker Program: hereinafter FSW; a representative category under the Express Entry system that awards permanent residency directly based on a points-based assessment of overseas work experience, educational background, and language proficiency) has suffered a catastrophic decline—effectively amounting to “near-total collapse”—with the number of permanent residents granted dropping from 690 in 2015 to 50 in 2024 and 25 in 2025. With the CRS cutoff score soaring into the high 500s, the EE system has become an ultra-high-scoring game accessible only to English-speaking elites worldwide. For the average Japanese citizen, applying for the FSW program from Japan has become a futile endeavour—one in which applicants are cut off without ever receiving a single ITA (Invitation to Apply: the formal invitation to apply for permanent residency sent to successful candidates from the EE pool).

State-Nominated Category

Even before the 2025 shift in immigration policy, the “Direct Skilled Worker Application from Japan (FSW)” —once the mainstay—had become a mere formality following the transition to the points-based system in 2015. As a result, the route for Japanese nationals to obtain permanent residency

has been forced to shift entirely toward the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP), which requires no more than 1 year of skilled work experience in Canada and relies on employer support. Consequently, applicants have increasingly chosen either to gain experience through the Canadian Experience Class (CEC) before applying through the Express Entry system, or to participate in Provincial Nominee Programs (PNP), where provinces and territories individually nominate immigrants (Provincial Nominee Program) to secure a nomination from a provincial government. As shown in Figure 2, the total number of Provincial Nominee Program candidates is projected to increase from 1,605 between 2015 and 2025 to 1,680 between 2026 and 2035.

Spouse or Partner Sponsorship Class

The family sponsorship program includes sponsorship of children, extended family, parents and grandparents, and spouses or partners; however, for Japanese nationals, the “spouse or partner sponsorship” category accounted for 83 percent of the family sponsorship program between 2015 and 2025. Between 2015 and 2025, 3,420 Japanese nationals obtained Canadian permanent residency through family sponsorship, and this number is projected to increase to 3,800 between 2026 and 2035. However, because the number of new immigrants is projected to decrease from 10,735 to 6,450 between 2026 and 2035 compared with the previous period, the percentage of family-sponsored immigrants will rise from 31.9 percent to 58.8 percent. In fact, nearly 60 percent of new immigrants will be family-sponsored immigrants.

As the pathways to obtaining permanent residency through one’s own efforts—such as the Federal Skilled Worker (FSW) Program and the Canadian Experience Class (CEC)—which are designed for Japanese nationals to settle in Canada with a non-Japanese male partner who holds permanent residency, have become extremely limited, “spousal or partner sponsorship” has become more important than ever as a route for Japanese nationals to obtain Canadian permanent residency. However, among Japanese nationals utilizing this program, there is a significant skew toward women. Although Table 1 does not provide statistics broken down by gender, approximately 75 percent of new immigrants over the past 10 years have been women, and given that the rate of mixed marriages—between Japanese Canadians (including new immigrants) and non-Japanese Canadians—is very high (79 percent in 2011), it can be estimated that the majority of Japanese nationals who obtain Canadian permanent residency through the “Spousal or Partner Sponsorship” program are Japanese women who have been sponsored by non-Japanese Canadian male partners.

Protected Person in Canada

As shown in Table 1, the “Protected Person in Canada” category (a pathway to permanent residency through refugee claims or humanitarian considerations within Canada) for Japanese nationals has existed from 2015 to 2025 and has recorded an unusually sharp increase, particularly in recent years. Since Japan is internationally recognized as a “safe country” with extremely good public safety and no serious civil wars or nationwide political oppression, it is not anticipated that Japanese nationals would be directly accepted as refugees from abroad (resettled refugees). Consequently, all recipients of this “Domestic Protection Class” status are Japanese nationals who entered Canada as temporary residents (TR) for purposes such as tourism, study, or work, and who subsequently applied for refugee protection or humanitarian and compassionate (H&C) consideration while in the country, thereby obtaining permanent residency.

The existence of this category among Japanese nationals—which has seen a particularly sharp increase since 2021—stems from a complex interplay of “individual and societal factors” related to human rights and gender, and “institutional and practical factors” resulting from Canada’s immigration system.

Despite Japan being a safe, developed nation, the existence of applications and approvals in this category stems primarily from the following serious social and institutional issues:

Lack of legal and institutional protection for members of sexual minorities (LGBTQ+): Since same-sex marriage has not been legalized in Japan, some individuals feel their future is blocked by the absence of joint custody rights and discrimination, leading them to apply for refugee protection in Canada. In fact, in the fall of 2023, a Japanese female same-sex couple—who substantiated Japan’s institutional shortcomings (marital inequality and de facto discriminatory structures) with over 200 pages of evidence—was officially recognized as refugees (persons entitled to protection) by the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB). In this case, the IRB cited the following three points as criteria for its judicial and administrative decision:

There are cases where victims facing severe domestic violence, abuse, or serious harassment from a spouse seek legal protection in Canada when they cannot obtain sufficient and effective protection from the Japanese police, judiciary, or administrative authorities (state protection), or when they are so cornered that they are unable to seek redress.

To date, while the two examples mentioned above are exceptions, they are legally possible.

The number of recipients, which had remained steady at around 40 to 65 per year from 2015 to 2019, surged to 95 in 2020, 235 in 2021, 240 in 2022, 265 in 2023, and 290 in 2024 (33.8% of the total number of Japanese permanent residents). In many cases, this increase was driven by issues within Canada’s immigration system. The collapse of the “standard economic immigration route” due to the intensification of Express Entry (EE). Since the introduction of the online selection system “Express Entry” in 2015, CRS scores have continued to soar. In recent years in particular, “English proficiency at CLB 9 (IELTS Listening 8.0, and 7.0 or higher in all other areas)” —unless applicants combine these extremely high language proficiency levels with their educational background, they are unable to earn bonus points (skills transfer points) and are now being cut off. As a result, there is a growing trend among Japanese nationals—who are currently residing in Canada on Working Holiday or Post-Graduation Work Permit (PGWP) visas but have been excluded from standard economic immigration programs (such as the Canadian Experience Class or Skilled Worker Class) due to insufficient language proficiency or scores—to explore applying for refugee status or Humanitarian and Compassionate (H&C) consideration as a last resort to maintain their legal status and protect their established ties to Canada.

Once a refugee claim is filed and the applicant is awaiting the outcome (during the processing period), the applicant can legally remain in Canada and receive an “open work permit” allowing them to work full-time, as well as access to universal health care at no cost. Currently, the number of refugee cases under review in Canada has skyrocketed, with the backlog exceeding 260,000 cases and the average processing time reaching 44 months (approximately 3.6 years). This “prolonged waiting period” has served as a practical way for Japanese nationals facing visa expiration to buy time (a workaround) while legally remaining in Canada and awaiting their next opportunity for transition (such as common-law partnerships or the Provincial Nominee Program).

The sharp rise in the total number of refugees and protected migrants to 245 in 2021 (235 in the Domestic Protection class) was influenced by processing delays in the “TR to PR Pathway” program, which was implemented for residents in Canada during the COVID-19 pandemic. At that time, some approvals involving humanitarian considerations were included and processed under the broad statistical category of “In-Country Protection and Humanitarian Considerations” rather than economic immigration, which contributed to the temporary surge in 2021.

Therefore, the sharp increase in the “Domestic Protection Class” among Japanese nationals does not reflect a geopolitical shift that led to a sudden rise in Japanese political refugees. Rather, it reflects the reality that, due to the extreme competition and rising score thresholds in the Express Entry (economic immigration) system, Japanese nationals who could no longer enter through the “front door” were forced to desperately utilize bypass procedures such as “Humanitarian and Compassionate Considerations (H&C)” or “refugee claims” in order to remain in Canada. Since delays in processing refugee claims are expected to continue for the decade beginning in 2026, it is projected that approximately 300 Japanese nationals will obtain Canadian permanent residency through the “Internal Protection Class” as a last resort for the reasons outlined above.

Chapter 3: The Impact of the Shift in Immigration Policy on the New Immigrant Community and the Japanese Canadian Community

A Sharp Decline in the Skilled Worker Category

The dramatic shift in the number of immigrants by category within the new immigrant community will have long-term, serious, and multifaceted impacts on the existing Japanese Canadian community (which is centred on third- and fourth-generation descendants of pre-war immigrants). The most severe blow is the “dwindling of the economic immigrant leadership” that has driven community organizations. From the 1970s through the 2010s, many of the principal applicants under the “Federal Skilled Worker (FSW) Program”—who immigrated with high levels of professional expertise, English proficiency, and financial independence—played extremely important leadership roles in collaboration with Japanese Canadians in the operation of community infrastructure, including local Japanese associations, cultural centers, volunteer activities, and financial management. However, due to the 2025 shift in immigration policy, the influx of new immigrants through the FSW Route is set to plummet by approximately 85%, from 2,395 over the past decade to just 340 over the next decade. This near-total decline in the supply of talented, highly skilled individuals who form the core of these organizations carries the risk of stalling the operations of Japanese Canadian community groups across the country.

Spouse or Partner Sponsorship Category

The number of Japanese women obtaining Canadian permanent residency through this category is expected to remain at current levels. However, the “extreme reliance on international marriage and common-law relationships” inherent in the process of obtaining permanent residency is creating a precarious group of new immigrants who are forced to live in a state of legal limbo. If Japanese mothers or women living with their partners in Canada face severe domestic violence (DV) or harassment, they are subjected to the fear that “if they separate or lose the sponsor’s cooperation, their permanent resident visa application will be rejected, and they will be forced to leave the country.” Many perpetrators of domestic violence exploit their position of having the power to grant or revoke these visas and residency status, posing a risk of subjecting their female victims to mind control, social isolation, and economic exploitation.

Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)

Furthermore, the shift toward the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) route—where applicants receive a job offer from an employer in a regional city to obtain a provincial nomination—also carries similar vulnerabilities. Many Japanese nationals are forced to rely on Japanese-affiliated companies or specific service industries (such as travel, trading companies, and food service/culinary positions) that require a Japanese-language environment, because local Canadian companies and small businesses often dislike handling visa support procedures. However, this approach—which involves gaining practical work experience with the support of an employer who secures a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA; an official government permit obtained by employers to demonstrate that hiring foreign workers will not adversely affect the Canadian labour market)—leaves workers at the mercy of their employers regarding visa support. This makes it difficult for them to voice complaints about harsh working conditions or low wages. In some cases, malicious employment disputes have arisen in which employers hold the promise of permanent residency hostage to extort unreasonable fees or force excessive labour, making the livelihoods of new immigrants hoping to obtain Canadian permanent residency through these methods extremely precarious.

Widening Gap in Average Employment Income Between New Immigrants and Other Japanese Canadians

Table 5, “Average Employment Earnings by Immigrant Category and Visible Minority Group in Canada, 2020,” reveals the following:

The average employment income for male new immigrants (\$41,080) is lower than that for male Japanese Canadians (non-immigrants) (\$56,650). Since the number of skilled workers—who tend to have relatively high employment incomes among new immigrants—will plummet between 2026 and 2035, the aforementioned average employment income gap is expected to widen.

The average employment income for female new immigrants (\$34,680) is significantly lower than that of female Japanese Canadians (non-immigrants) (\$49,280). Since Japanese new immigrants during 2026 to 2035 will consist primarily of family-sponsored immigrants, this average employment income gap will persist throughout this period. Among other visible minority immigrant groups as well, the average employment income of female new immigrants is lower than that of non-immigrant women. However, this gap is larger for female new immigrants than for other groups. The cause of this is unknown. However, it is notable that the rate of interracial marriage among female Japanese new immigrants is significantly higher than that of female new immigrants from other groups. The following factors may be possible causes:

- Compared to other groups, the educational and professional backgrounds of Japanese female immigrants are not sufficiently recognized in Canadian society.
- Because their English proficiency is inferior to that of other groups, they are unable to secure jobs commensurate with their educational and work backgrounds.
- Since they immigrated on the assumption that they would depend on their spouse’s income, they do not take on jobs other than part-time work.

Relationships Between New Immigrants and the General Japanese Canadian Population

Changes to immigration categories for new immigrants risk creating a divide between new immigrants and the Japanese Canadian community at large. There exists an “asymmetry in the right to survival” between the third- and fourth generation “established community”—who have already

fully assimilated into Canadian society, obtained citizenship, and established stable lives—and first-generation newcomers (including those on temporary visas), many of whom currently face legal and economic instability due to Canada’s strict visa quotas and harsh eligibility thresholds (CLB 9). While third- and fourth-generation immigrants feel frustrated that new immigrants “do not understand that their current high social standing is built upon the achievements of our redress (postwar compensation) movement and human rights struggles,” new immigrants are prone to misunderstanding third- and fourth-generation immigrants as having “assimilated too much as Canadians and being indifferent to the survival crisis faced by their compatriots who are currently struggling.” If this psychological disconnect is left unaddressed, solidarity and intergenerational mutual support within the Japanese Canadian community—including new immigrants—will be lost, and there is a risk that among isolated first-generation immigrants, groups will emerge who are forced into illegal employment, return to Japan, or live at the very bottom of society.

Table 5

Average Employment Income in 2020 by Visible Minority Group, Immigration Status and Gender (Dollars)**Canada**

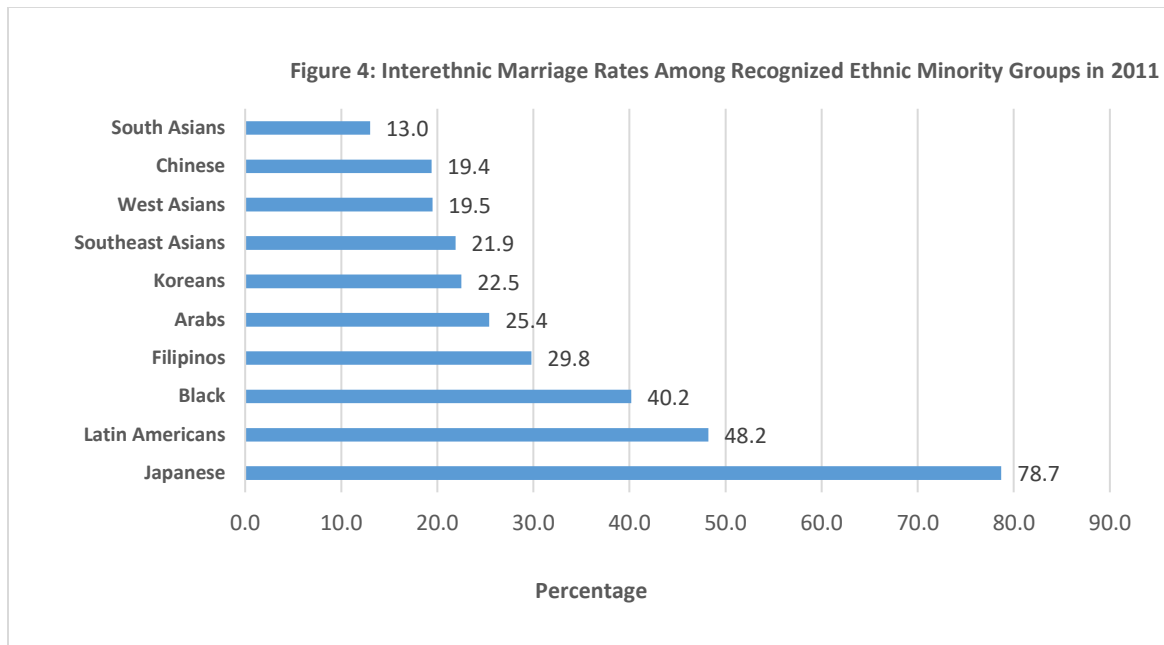
		Visible Minority Groups	All Canadians	Total of Visible Minority Groups	South Asian	Chinese	Black	Pilipino	Arabic
Total	Average Employment Income	All	50,840	45,560	48,480	51,650	40,520	41,720	43,320
		Non-immigrants	51,400	43,720	46,880	55,350	35,720	39,360	37,640
		Immigrants	49,160	46,080	48,840	50,400	42,720	42,040	44,560
Men	Average Employment Income	All	58,750	51,900	56,700	58,650	43,600	45,480	50,800
		Non-immigrants	59,300	47,960	52,400	61,750	37,480	41,400	42,040
		Immigrants	57,200	53,050	57,700	57,550	46,360	46,200	52,450
Women	Average Employment Income	All	42,400	39,160	38,960	45,200	37,520	38,680	33,120
		Non-immigrants	42,960	39,440	41,120	49,080	34,040	37,280	32,880
		Immigrants	40,800	39,040	38,360	43,960	39,160	38,880	33,200

Source: 2021 Census of Canada Table 98-10-0439-01

Average Employment Income in 2020 by Visible Minority Group, Immigration Status and Gender (Dollars)**Canada**

		Visible Minority Groups	Middle and South America	Southeast Asian	West Asian	Korian	Japanese	Non-Visible Canadian
Total	Average Employment Income	All	43,280	40,760	42,560	43,440	50,720	52,550
		Non-immigrants	33,440	37,800	31,800	49,320	56,650	52,050
		Immigrants	45,200	41,920	43,640	42,400	41,080	57,250
Men	Average Employment Income	All	50,640	46,480	48,720	50,040	62,400	60,900
		Non-immigrants	36,840	39,640	36,440	53,250	63,850	60,200
		Immigrants	53,300	49,480	49,840	49,440	58,000	67,400
Women	Average Employment Income	All	36,040	35,480	35,440	37,080	42,320	43,480
		Non-immigrants	30,000	35,920	27,360	45,040	49,280	43,240
		Immigrants	37,200	35,320	36,360	35,800	34,680	45,720

Source: 2021 Census of Canada Table 98-10-0439-01



Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011, “Mixed Unions in Canada,” Catalogue Number 99-010-X2011003

Impact on the Total Number of Japanese Canadians and Distribution by Generation

Regarding the total number of Japanese Canadians, including new immigrants, the only indicator used in the Canadian Census is “of Japanese ethnic or cultural ancestry.” In Canada, a multicultural nation, Japanese Canadians defined by this criterion include both those with “Japanese as their sole ethnic or cultural ancestry” and those with “multiple ethnic or cultural ancestries, one of which is Japanese.” Consequently, the increase in the Japanese Canadian population stems not only from (1) the influx of new immigrants and the natural increase among existing Japanese Canadians but also from the rise in the number of people with “multiple ethnic or cultural ancestries, one of which is Japanese,” resulting from mixed marriages. It is not straightforward to determine how the increase in new immigrants correlates with the increase in the Japanese Canadian population. Here, we correlated changes in the number of Japanese Canadians from the Canadian Census between 2011 and 2021 with changes in the number of new immigrants during the same period. Assuming this relationship continues from 2022 to 2035, we estimated the number of Japanese Canadians by age group for 2035. The main results are as follows.

The number of Japanese Canadians will increase from 129,420 in 2021 to 149,044 in 2035. The average annual growth rate will decrease from 1.6 percent to 1.0 percent.

The age distribution of Japanese Canadians will remain largely unchanged from 2021 to 2035. Starting in 2026, changes in Canada’s immigration policy will cause the number of new Japanese immigrants to decline compared to previous years; however, as of 2021, they already accounted for 37 percent of Japanese Canadians, and they will maintain a similar percentage in 2035 as well. Regarding the 2025 immigration policy changes, the key factor will not be the impact on the relative proportion of new immigrants within the Japanese Canadian community, but rather the impact on the immigration categories of these new immigrants.

Table 7
Number of Japanese Canadians

Year	All generations	First generation	Second generation	Third and more generations
2011	109,740	39,235	34,885	35,620
2021	129,420	48,195	38,810	42,415
2035*	149,044	55,283	44,518	49,243

Notes: 2011 and 2021 are from the Census of Canada

* 2035 figures are estimates

Table 8
Number of Japanese Canadians

Year	All generations	First generation	Second generation	Third and more generations
2011	100	36	32	32
2021	100	37	30	33
2035*	100	37	30	33

Chapter 4 Proposal for a Program to Mitigate the Adverse Effects of Canada's 2025 Immigration Policy on New Japanese Immigrants and the Japanese Canadian Community

Provision of Social and Welfare Services for New Immigrants and Bridging Them to Public Services

As Japanese immigrants become increasingly reliant on spousal sponsorship and provincial PNP (employer-sponsored) programs, their legal and physical safety becomes precarious. When faced with the breakdown of an international marriage, domestic violence (DV) from a spouse, or unfair labour practices (labour exploitation) by a regional employer, victims—whose right to remain in the country is held hostage—cannot speak out for fear of deportation. Japanese Canadian organizations must build regional social safety nets to protect these vulnerable immigrants with limited staff.

One model is the Japanese Social Service in Toronto. Japanese Social Services (JSS) is a Toronto-based nonprofit organization that supports the Japanese Canadian community by providing life counselling, counselling, support for seniors, and domestic violence (DV) counselling in Japanese. Established in the 1990s, JSS provides guidance in Japanese on issues such as immigration-related anxieties, family problems, mental health, and accessing the welfare system, and refers clients to medical institutions, legal support services, and specialized domestic violence agencies as needed. Its services cover a wide range of areas, including individual counselling, women's support groups, programs for the elderly, support for those facing financial hardship, and informational seminars. It is highly regarded as a place where people can seek advice in Japanese with peace of mind.

The organization is run by a board of directors and a small team of professional staff (social workers, counsellors, and administrative staff), with volunteers also supporting its activities. Its annual budget is 150,000 Canadian dollars, funded by municipal and provincial grants, federal immigration support subsidies, private donations, and community fundraising. As Toronto's largest Japanese Canadian support organization, JSS provides ongoing support to new immigrants facing language and cultural barriers.

Currently, no other Japanese Canadian organizations in Canada provide such services. To offer these programs, organizations must meet certain requirements, including facility standards, securing specialized staff, and ensuring stable funding sources (such as federal and local government grants, charitable donations, individual contributions, and service fees); meeting these conditions is difficult in cities with small Japanese Canadian populations. However, the National Association of Japanese Canadians (NAJC) and its member organizations across the country must collaborate to develop the conditions and methods necessary to establish organizations like the Japanese Social Service outside of Toronto.

Even if it is not possible to establish an organization with its own facility like JSS, local NAJC member organizations can use their respective websites to provide new immigrants with information that serves as a bridge to social and welfare services offered by public and volunteer organizations. As a first step, the NAJC and its member organizations need to develop model web pages addressing family issues, domestic violence, and the working conditions of new immigrants and temporary residents and promptly post them on their respective websites.

Developing Female Leaders Among New Immigrants

More than 50 percent of new immigrants during the 10-year period from 2026 to 2035 will be women, the majority of whom will be family-class immigrants sponsored by their Canadian male partners. Amid a sharp decline in skilled worker immigrants, these female newcomers represent a potential pool of leaders for the immigrant community over the next decade. We must devise ways for female newcomers to join and actively participate in organizations for newcomers and Japanese Canadians. Take the Edmonton Japanese Canadian Association (EJCA) as an example. Several years ago, the EJCA launched a program in which female newcomers and their children gather regularly at the EJCA Center to converse in Japanese and play together. Through this program, female newcomers learn about the EJCA's other programs. In addition, they have been hired as instructors for the EJCA's Japanese language classes and for programs that introduce Japan and Japanese culture to local middle and high school students. As a result of these activities, the number of new immigrant women serving on the EJCA board has increased, and they have begun participating in planning and operating the summer festival and local heritage festivals. For new immigrant women, the experience gained through local Japanese Canadian organizations serves as a first step toward participating in other community organizations and employment opportunities.

Establishing a Network to Connect Isolated New Immigrants in Small Towns

In the past, skilled Japanese workers tended to concentrate in Canada's major cities. However, over the next decade, the number of new immigrants entering the Skilled Worker and Provincial Nominee Programs is expected to increase, leading to more settling in small towns and municipalities. The NAJC and its member organizations need to build networks in these communities to provide social and welfare information to new immigrants and facilitate mutual exchange. While there is currently no national organization for new immigrants, there are many small local networks across the country.

It is necessary to build a network that efficiently connects these small networks according to specific objectives.

References

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