

A Historical and Sociological Analysis of Post-World War II Immigration from Japan to Canada

Takashi Oki

St. Albert, Alberta, Canada

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I. Introduction

This report analyzes fluctuations in the number of Japanese nationals and residents of Japan who obtained Canadian permanent residency from 1945, following World War II, through 2025, in relation to the political, economic, and social conditions in Japan and Canada at the time, as well as Canadian immigration policy. The final chapter of this report examines how changes to Canadian immigration policy in 2025 will affect the acquisition of Canadian permanent residency by Japanese nationals.

II. Statistics on the Number of Japanese Nationals Obtaining Canadian Permanent Residency After World War II

Definition of “Japanese Nationals Obtaining Canadian Permanent Residency” and Its Background

The statistics in Table 1 on the number of Japanese nationals who obtained Canadian permanent residency after World War II are compiled from four sources. The definition of “Japanese nationals” in this statistical table is, for the statistics from 1946 to 1979, the sum of “Japanese nationals (Country of Citizenship: Japan)” and “persons whose last permanent residence was in Japan (Country of Last Permanent Residence: Japan).” From 1980 onward, the statistics cover only holders of Japanese nationality.

Now, I will explain these two classifications and why they exist.

Differences in Definitions

1. Japanese Nationals (Country of Citizenship)

- **Criterion:** Passport (Nationality)
- **Scope:** Individuals who **hold Japanese nationality (Japanese citizenship)** at the time they obtain permanent residency in Canada.
- **Example:** This category includes not only Japanese nationals born in Japan who move directly to Canada, but also Japanese nationals who, after studying or working long-term in the United Kingdom or the United States, apply for and obtain Canadian permanent residency from those countries.

Table 1
**Annual Number of Japanese Immigrants to Canada
from 1945 to 2025**

Year	Num ber	Year	Num ber	Year	Num ber
1945	0	1980	701	2015	995
1946	3	1981	756	2016	1,035
1947	2	1982	598	2017	1,085
1948	6	1983	309	2018	1,035
1949	13	1984	246	2019	1,115
1950	13	1985	198	2020	615
1951	3	1986	248	2021	1,405
1952	7	1987	423	2022	885
1953	49	1988	324	2023	1,015
1954	73	1989	494	2024	900
1955	102	1990	379	2025	650
1956	124	1991	506		
1957	185	1992	605		
1958	193	1993	907		
1959	197	1994	956		
1960	169	1995	826		
1961	114	1996	994		
1962	141	1997	924		
1963	171	1998	897		
1964	140	1999	1,083		
1965	488	2000	1,010		
1966	500	2001	1,092		
1967	858	2002	806		
1968	628	2003	816		
1969	698	2004	973		
1970	785	2005	1,067		
1971	815	2006	1,212		
1972	722	2007	1,250		
1973	793	2008	1,284		
1974	864	2009	1,193		
1975	759	2010	1,167		
1976	641	2011	1,265		
1977	590	2012	1,210		
1978	551	2013	983		
1979	588	2014	1,127		

Sources:

1946-1971 data: Statistics Canada, "The impact of immigration on Canada's population"

1972-1979 data: Department of Manpower and Immigration, "Immigration Statistics"

1980-2014 data: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) , "Canada - Admissions of Permanent Residents by Country of Citizenship (Q1–Q2 2016 ranking), 1980 – Q2 2016"

2015-2025 data: IRCC Open Data Portal, "Canada - Admissions of Permanent Residents by Country of Citizenship and Immigration Category, January 2015 – April 2026"

2. Persons with Japan as Country of Last Permanent Residence

- **Criterion:** The country where the individual physically resided and had their legal base “up until immediately prior to moving to Canada.”
- **Eligibility:** This includes individuals **who**, immediately prior to immigrating to Canada, **had Japan as their last (long-term) base of life or country of residence.**
- **Example:** Japanese nationals who immigrated directly from Japan to Canada are naturally included. However, **“foreign nationals who had been staying in Japan for the medium to long term”** (e.g., non-Canadian nationals who worked as English teachers in Japan for several years, or foreign spouses who were settled in Japan) are also counted as “persons with Japan as their country of last permanent residence” if they immigrated directly from Japan to Canada, even if they are not Japanese nationals.

3. Why do these two sets of statistics exist?

The Canadian government records these two categories separately because they serve different purposes: political and administrative objectives, and the need to understand socioeconomic trends (immigration dynamics).

Classification Criteria	Main Purpose/Administrative Significance
Japanese Nationals (Citizenship)	[Legal Procedures and Monitoring of Bilateral Relations] This involves managing “legal status” based on which country’s government issued a passport. It is important when utilizing diplomatic channels, implementing bilateral visa agreements, or applying restrictions or preferential measures to specific nationalities (or conducting historical compensation procedures, such as those related to the postwar Japanese-American issue).
Persons with Last Residence in Japan (Last Residence)	[Tracking Economic and Geographical Migration Routes] This serves as an indicator for measuring the reality of international population movement, specifically addressing the question: “From which regions (economic zones) of the world have immigrants to Canada come?”

Classification Criteria	Main Purpose/Administrative Significance
	It is also used by the Canadian government for practical resource allocation, such as determining “which countries (or cities) should have their visa-issuing offices (embassies, etc.) expanded.”

4. Unique Discrepancies in Postwar Statistics (1945–1950s)

From the immediate postwar period through the 1950s, conditions were such that a historical discrepancy between these two figures was likely to arise.

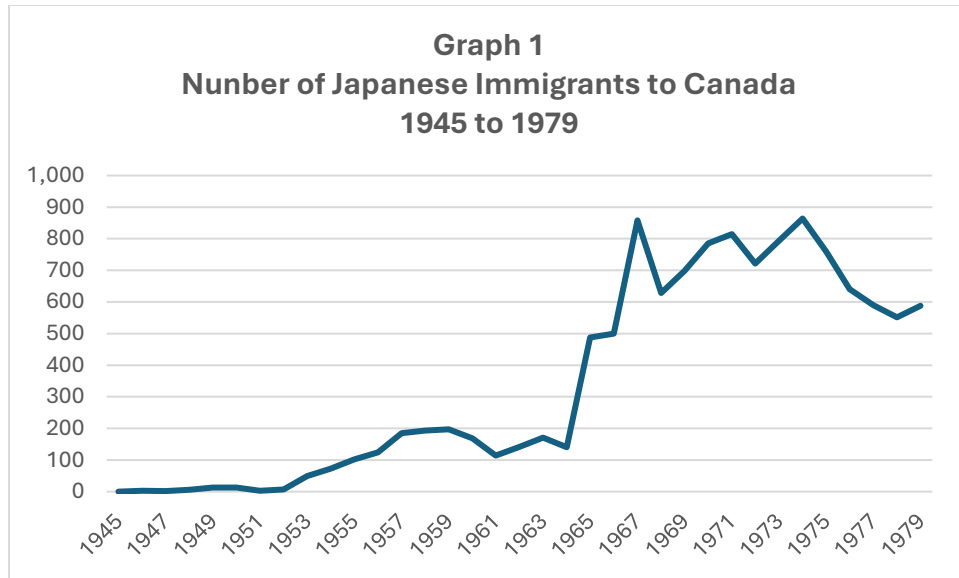
- **Repatriation and Migration of Japanese Nationals via Other Countries:**

In cases where Japanese nationals evacuated to the United States or a third country during the war or immediately after the war, or entered Canada via a complex network of travel routes, there were instances where, even though their “nationality was Japanese,” their “country of last residence was outside Japan.”

- **Movement of Foreign Nationals Residing in Japan (including stateless persons):**

In cases where foreign nationals (or individuals who were considered stateless under the legal framework of the time) residing in Japan during the postwar turmoil migrated to Canada, their “country of last residence” would be Japan, but their “nationality” would be “other than Japanese.”

Thus, when interpreting historical official documents, the figures may vary slightly depending on whether one is looking at “the number of people holding purely Japanese nationality (by nationality)” or “the number of people who left Japan (as a country or society) for Canada (by country of residence).” In contemporary data (from the 2000s onward), due to the increasing globalization of migration, the number of Canadian permanent residents whose “country of last residence” is Japan—including foreign nationals such as English teachers and IT engineers applying from within Japan—exceeds the number of Japanese nationals obtaining Canadian permanent residency. However, data specifically for those whose “country of last residence” is Japan is not publicly available.



The graph in Figure 1 showing the number of Canadian permanent residents from Japan vividly reflects the process from the historical rupture caused by the end of World War II, through the restoration of bilateral relations between Japan and Canada, to the establishment of a modern immigration selection system.

We will analyze changes in the number of permanent residents over these 35 years by dividing the period into three phases, focusing on the political and economic conditions of the time, Canadian immigration policy, and the return of Japanese Canadians forcibly repatriated from Canada to Japan.

III. Background on the Number of Japanese Citizens Obtaining Canadian Permanent Residency by Period

1. 1945–1951

During this period, only a very small number of returnees to Canada (fewer than a dozen permanent residents) among the Japanese Canadians who had been forcibly repatriated—following the severance of diplomatic relations—obtained Canadian permanent residency.

In the immediate postwar period, the number of recipients started at zero in 1945 and remained at an extremely low level of “2 to 13 people” per year until 1951.

Political and Diplomatic Break and the Forced Repatriation of Japanese Canadians:

During World War II, the Canadian government transferred approximately 22,000 Japanese Canadians living on the West Coast to internment camps in the interior and effectively confiscated their property. Furthermore, in 1946, around the time of the war’s end, the McKenzie-King government forced Japanese Canadians to choose between “relocation east of the Rocky Mountains” and “repatriation to Japan,” resulting in the forced repatriation of approximately 4,000 people (half of whom were Canadian-born citizens or naturalized citizens) to Japan.

Background on the Statistics:

Post-war Japan was under the occupation of the Allied Forces (GHQ), and since diplomatic relations between Japan and Canada had been severed, it was completely impossible for ordinary Japanese citizens to travel to Canada. The “3 people (1946)” and “13 people (1949, 1950)” recorded during this period—numbers ranging from single digits to the low teens—are believed to represent a very small number of Japanese Canadians who were forcibly repatriated to Japan but were granted permission to return to Canada or re-entry to Canada through legal challenges mounted by support organizations within Canada (such as the Japanese Canadian Citizens’ Association: JCCA), or who were granted entry under extremely limited humanitarian measures.

2. 1952–1964: Restoration of diplomatic relations and the “period of return and family reunification for Japanese Canadians” following forced repatriation (Number of beneficiaries: from several dozen to the 100s)

Starting with “7 people” in 1952, the number jumped to “49 people” in 1953 and reached “102 people” in 1955—surpassing the 100-person mark for the first time—and subsequently expanded to the upper 100s.

Relaxation of immigration policies and family reunification:

In 1952, the Treaty of San Francisco came into effect, formally restoring diplomatic relations between Japan and Canada. That same year, Canada enacted a new “Immigration Act of 1952.” Although discriminatory language targeting Asian immigrants remained, cases in which “Canadian citizens and permanent residents could sponsor relatives left behind in Japan (such as spouses, minor children, and elderly parents)—known as the family sponsorship category—were gradually permitted.” Furthermore, the 1957 amendment, which “relaxed restrictions on the sponsorship of Asian family members by Canadian permanent residents,” bolstered this trend.

The “Return” to Canada of Those Who Had Been Forcibly Repatriated:

The primary driver of the statistics during this period was the “return to Canada” of Japanese Canadians and their families who had been repatriated to postwar Japan. Having endured harsh living conditions in postwar Japan—a country reduced to rubble—they began returning to Canada, using sponsorship from relatives who had remained there, in search of a new foundation for their lives. In other words, the increase to the “100s” in the 1950s was not merely a rise in the number of new immigrants; it reflected a process of **historical redress in which Japanese-Canadian families, torn apart by wartime policies, were reunited on Canadian soil.**

Japan’s 1964 “liberalization of overseas travel” also played a major role in significantly lowering the psychological and procedural barriers to such migration.

3. 1965–1979: The Abolition of Racial Discrimination and the Immigration of Highly Skilled Professionals via the “Point System” (Number of Immigrants: 500–800)

After a sharp increase to “488 people” in 1965, the number reached 858 in 1967—the highest figure for this period. Throughout the 1970s, the number remained stable at a high level of between 500 and 800 people.

Canada's Groundbreaking Policy Shift (1967: Introduction of the Points System):

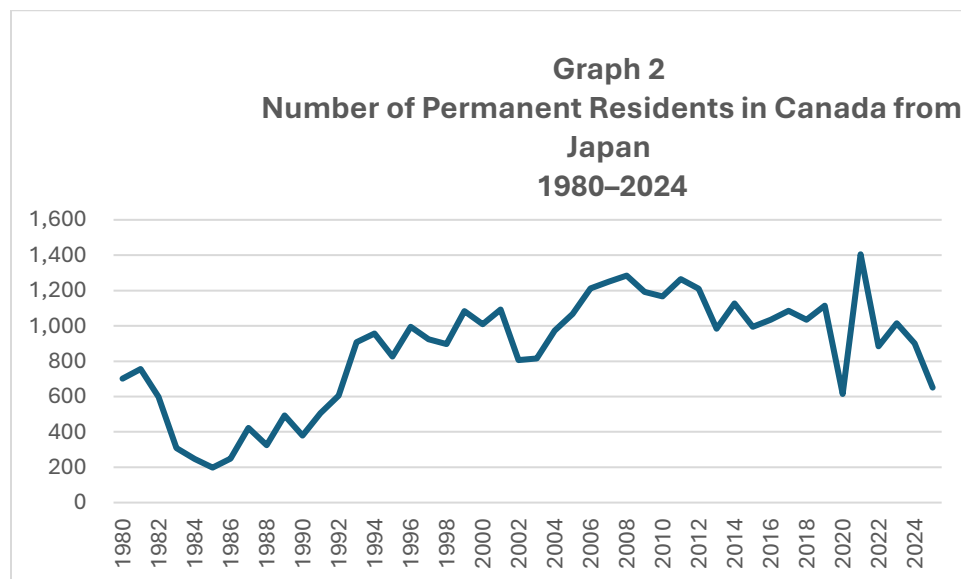
In 1967, the Canadian government became the first in the world to fully implement the “Points System,” which completely eliminated discrimination based on race, nationality, or religion from immigration selection criteria. Under this system, applicants’ “educational background, occupational skills, language proficiency (English and French), and age” were objectively scored, and those who met the criteria could obtain permanent residency regardless of their country of origin.

Synchronization with Japan's Period of Rapid Economic Growth:

From the late 1960s through the 1970s, Japan was in the golden age of its so-called “period of rapid economic growth,” during which technological and educational standards improved dramatically.

Since the timing of Canada's growing demand for “highly skilled, immediately employable professionals” perfectly coincided with Japan's economic capacity to produce large numbers of “outstanding engineers, technicians, researchers, and medical professionals,” there was a sharp increase in economic immigrants (highly skilled professionals) from Japan. Data from this period illustrates that the nature of this migration had completely shifted: it had moved beyond the previous phase characterized by “pre-war connections and the return of those repatriated after forced deportation (historical reckoning)” to become “voluntary career migration based on the modern economic needs of both Japan and Canada.”

4. Number of Permanent Residency Status Grants to Japanese Nationals in Canada from 1980 to 2001 and the Background



Graph 2 shows the number of Canadian permanent residents granted to Japanese nationals from 1980 to 2025. The statistics for permanent residents granted since 1980 cover only Japanese nationals and do not include those who ultimately emigrated from Japan.

The period from 1980 to 2001 was a time of upheaval, marked by dramatic changes in Japan's economic status—from the peak of the bubble economy to its collapse, and then into the “Lost Decade”—and,

simultaneously, by a major shift in Canada's immigration policy away from a focus on humanitarian and family considerations toward a focus on economically productive workers (talent), a trend that continues today.

We will explain the trends in the number of Japanese nationals obtaining permanent residency during this period—from 701 in 1980 to a sharp decline to around 200 in the mid-1980s, and then a recovery to over 1,000 around the year 2000—by dividing it into three phases and relating it to the political, economic, and policy contexts in both Japan and Canada.

4.1 1980–1986: “Period of Sharp Decline” Due to the Recession and the Onset of the Bubble Economy (701 → 248)

The early 1980s marked the period when the number of Japanese nationals obtaining permanent residency in Canada fell to its lowest point (reaching a record low of 198 in 1985).

Factors on the Canadian side (severe economic recession and restrictions):

From 1981 to 1982, Canada was hit hard by the Second Oil Crisis and faced what is said to be the worst economic recession since World War II. As the domestic unemployment rate exceeded 12%, the Canadian government tightened immigration policies to protect domestic jobs. In particular, it severely restricted the admission of general immigrants seeking employment.

Factors on the Japanese side (the run-up to the bubble economy and affluence):

Meanwhile, Japan's economy was expanding rapidly toward the mid-1980s, entering what would later be known as the “bubble economy.” With the domestic economy booming—nearing full employment—and wage levels rising, the economic incentives for Japanese citizens to emigrate (and settle permanently) overseas—to countries with different languages and cultures—rapidly diminished.

4.2 1987–1992: Promotion of Business Immigration and the Decline of the Bubble (423 → 605)

From the late 1980s to the early 1990s, the number of immigrants began to recover gradually, rising from the 200s to around 600.

Canada's Policy Shift (Strengthening Business Immigration):

Having emerged from recession, the Canadian government shifted its policy toward attracting “individuals with capital and business acumen” to revitalize the domestic economy. In 1986, the “Immigrant Investor Program” was fully implemented, opening the door to entrepreneurs and investors.

Economic and Political Context in Japan and Canada:

During this period, at the peak of Japan's economic bubble, a significant number of companies backed by abundant capital expanded overseas, while a certain number of wealthy individuals and business leaders used the investor immigration quota to relocate to Canada (particularly Vancouver and Toronto). Furthermore, the collapse of Japan's bubble economy in the early 1990s served as a catalyst for those concerned about the country's future to once again turn their attention overseas.

4.3 1993–2001: The “Lost Decade” Following the Bubble Collapse and the “Period of Rapid Growth and High Numbers” Driven by the IT Boom (907 people → 1,092 people)

From 1993 onward, the number of immigrants surged past 900, reaching 1,083 in 1999 and 1,092 in 2001, settling firmly in the 1,000s—far exceeding previous levels.

Factors on the Japanese side (structural recession and the desire to “escape overseas”):

Throughout the 1990s, Japan suffered from a severe recession following the bursting of the bubble economy—the so-called “Lost Decade.” As large-scale corporate restructuring, the “employment ice age,” and the collapse of the seniority-based promotion system progressed, a sentiment rapidly grew—particularly among Japan’s younger generation and career-oriented women—that “there is no future in Japan” and “I want to work overseas where my abilities will be fairly evaluated” (the overseas migration boom).

Canadian Policy and Global Economic Trends (the IT Boom and Emphasis on the Points System):

In the 1990s, the Canadian government completely shifted the focus of its immigration policy toward “economic immigrants (Economic Class)” and refined a “points system” that objectively evaluated educational attainment, language proficiency, and professional skills.

Furthermore, the late 1990s marked the era of the global “IT and dot-com boom.” In Japan, there was a sharp increase in cases of professionals with computer and technical skills (such as engineers) obtaining permanent residency through Canada’s selection categories for highly skilled workers. Additionally, a pathway was established during this period whereby individuals stayed in Canada through programs such as the Working Holiday Program—which had been in place since the late 1980s—and then progressed to permanent residency.

5. Number of Permanent Residency Grants to Japanese Nationals in Canada from 2002 to 2025 and the Background

Looking at data from 2002 to 2025, it is evident that the number of Japanese nationals obtaining Canadian permanent residency remained stable and grew gradually from 2002 to 2019, ranging from “approximately 800 to 1,300 people per year,” in contrast to the sharp fluctuations seen in the 1980s and 1990s. However, from 2020 to 2025, the number of Canadian permanent residents granted to Japanese nationals fluctuated significantly due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Canadian government’s immigration policies.

5.1 2002–2008: Gradual Increase and Peak (806 → 1,284)

Canadian Policy (Enforcement of the “Amended Immigration and Refugee Protection Act”): In 2002, Canada’s immigration law underwent major revisions, shifting from a system that emphasized “demand for specific occupations” to a more objective system (the points system) that evaluates applicants based on a comprehensive assessment of their adaptability—including educational background, language proficiency (English and French), and work experience—and assigns points accordingly.

Economic Context in Japan and Canada:

In Japan, a sense of stagnation persisted during the so-called “Lost Decade,” leading to a growing trend—particularly among young people and women—to move abroad (especially to

Canada, which is known for its safety and popularity as a study abroad destination) in search of career advancement and more flexible work arrangements. On the Canadian side, the economy was booming due to factors such as the resource boom, leading to an increase in young Japanese people with strong language skills and advanced degrees, as well as those transitioning from work visas or working holiday visas to permanent residency. This resulted in a high figure of **1,284 people** in 2008.

5.2 2009–2014: Maintaining High Levels and Stagnation (1,193 → 1,127)

Impact of the Global Financial Crisis (Lehman Shock):

The Lehman Shock at the end of 2008 caused the global economy to cool, and the Canadian job market also temporarily deteriorated. This led to stricter overall screening criteria and processing delays, resulting in a slight decline or stagnation in numbers from 2010 onward.

Situation in Japan:

Triggered by events such as the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, a certain number of people began considering emigration abroad in search of changes in their living and child-rearing environments; however, because Canada's selection criteria remained high, the number of successful applicants did not increase dramatically.

5.3 2015–2019: Dramatic Changes in the Selection System and a Shift in Focus from “Economic Immigration” to “Family Reunification”

During this period, the total number stabilized at around 1,000 (995–1,115), but the composition of the immigration categories changed dramatically.

The Sharp Decline in the “Skilled Worker Class” and the Impact of “Express Entry”:

The “Skilled Worker Class,” which numbered **690** in 2015, plummeted to **180** in 2017 and subsequently remained stagnant at around 290. This was due to the impact of “Express Entry,” which was introduced in 2015. Under the previous system, applications were processed on a first-come, first-served basis (resulting in a backlog), which led to a high number of applications from Japan being recorded in 2015. However, with the full transition to the new system, it has become more difficult for applicants from Japan to apply directly under the “Skilled Worker Class,” where points are awarded based on English proficiency and age.

The Rise of the “Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)” and the “Canadian Experience Class (CEC)”:

To compensate for the decline in skilled workers, the “Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)” doubled from **80** people in 2015 to **180** in 2019. The “Canadian Experience Class (CEC)” has also seen a slight increase, rising from 25 to 45. This clearly reflects political and policy shifts that have caused the path Japanese nationals take to seek permanent residency to shift from “applying directly from Japan” to **a route that emphasizes domestic experience in Canada**—such as working in a Canadian city or province, or gaining experience through studying or working on a working holiday.

A sharp increase in “spouse or partner sponsorship”:

The “Spouse Sponsorship Class” doubled from 145 people in 2015 to **320 in 2018**. Since taking office, the Trudeau Liberal government has prioritized humanitarian considerations and family reunification, implementing policies that significantly reduced the processing time for spousal visas from “up to 2–3 years” to “within one year.” Thanks to these policy benefits, the granting of permanent residency following marriages between Japanese nationals and Canadian partners became much smoother, offsetting the decline in economic immigration.

5.4 2020: Economic Immigration Paralyzed by the Pandemic (Total Halved to 615)

In 2020, the **total number** plummeted to **615** due to pandemic-related border closures.

Data Fluctuations:

The “total number of economic immigrants” was particularly hard hit, falling from 560 in 2019 to 210—less than half the previous figure (with skilled workers dropping to 85, CEC to 25, and PNP to 85).

Background:

This was due to physical restrictions on international travel and the suspension of visa office operations, which brought the processing of new economic immigrants to a complete halt. On the other hand, while “spousal sponsorship” also declined to 180 people, it did not suffer as devastating a blow as economic immigration, suggesting that humanitarian procedures were prioritized.

5.5 2021: Policy-Driven Boom and the “Canadian Experience Class (CEC)” Surge (Total: 1,405)

In 2021, the **total number** jumped to **1,405**, but the breakdown was extremely skewed toward specific categories.

Record Spike in the “Canadian Experience Class (CEC)”:

The CEC, which typically numbered around 30 to 45 people per year, surged to 155 in 2021. Additionally, 25 people were admitted through the newly established “Temporary Resident to Permanent Resident (TR to PR) Program.”

Background:

To meet its immigration targets while maintaining travel restrictions from overseas, the Canadian government implemented policies—such as significantly lowering CRS scores and establishing special quotas—that gave top priority to granting permanent residency to “residents already working or studying in Canada.” As a result, many Japanese nationals already in Canada benefited from these measures. In addition, the “Spousal Sponsorship” category saw 280 people granted permanent residency, and the “Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)” saw 205 people granted permanent residency, with all categories recovering to high levels.

6. 2022–2024: The Mysterious Surge in the “In-Country Protection and Refugee Class” and the Expansion of Business Programs

The most notable feature of this period was that, while the total number remained around 1,000 (885–1,015), the **“Protection in Canada Class” (refugee claims, humanitarian considerations, etc.)** saw an unusually sharp increase.

The Surge in the “In-Canada Protection Class”:

This category, which had remained at around 50 to 65 people annually until 2019, swelled steadily to 235 in 2021, 240 in 2022, **265 in 2023**, and 290 in **2024**, becoming a major category accounting for approximately 30 percent of the total.

Background (International and Domestic Conditions):

This suggests that, rather than purely political refugees, the increase stems from Japanese nationals who found it difficult to maintain their visas (work or study) in Canada following the pandemic, the aftermath of international travel restrictions, or an increase in Japanese nationals granted permanent residency after applying on humanitarian and compassionate grounds (H&C). It reflects the social climate during a period when the Canadian government broadly maintained relief measures for individuals already residing in the country.

Increase in “New Business Class (Start-up Visa, etc.)” Applicants:

The “New Business Class” category has surged from 25 people in 2023 to **105** in 2024. This coincided with a period when the Canadian government strengthened the Startup Visa (SUV) program to attract innovation and investment, and entrepreneurs and investors from Japan capitalized on this policy trend.

7. 2025: A Major Shift Toward Immigration Restrictions and the Collapse of “Economic Immigration” (Total: 650)

In 2025, the total number dropped dramatically to 650. This is a direct result of the Canadian government’s shift toward a historic “immigration cap and quota system.”

The Collapse of Economic Immigration:

The “total number of economic immigrants” plummeted from 590 in 2024 to 380. Looking at the breakdown, the “Skilled Worker Class” fell **to a mere 25** (a near-total collapse from 690 in 2015), the “Canadian Experience Class (CEC)” to 85, and the “Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)” to 160—all showing across-the-board declines. This is a direct result of the Canadian government’s policy to reduce the number of Express Entry invitations and raise the required scores.

The Resilience of the “Spousal Sponsorship” Category:

Amid this overall decline, the “Spouse or Partner Sponsorship Class” maintained a high level at **280 people** (only a slight decrease from 315 the previous year), accounting for approximately 43% of all immigrants in 2025.

6.1 Why did the emphasis on “English proficiency × educational background” work against Japanese applicants?

In the Express Entry point calculation (CRS score), the system is designed so that not only English proficiency (CLB score) alone **but also the “Skill Transferability” category** grants an explosive number of bonus points when [high educational attainment (bachelor’s or master’s degree) × high English proficiency] are combined.

Point Loss Due to the “Barrier” of English Proficiency:

When Japanese university graduates wish to immigrate to Canada, most of them meet the educational requirements (such as a four-year university degree). However, to earn the full bonus points for this “English Proficiency × Educational Background” combination, **they must achieve a CLB 9 or higher** on a recognized English proficiency test (such as IELTS or CELPIP)—a very high hurdle, equivalent to an IELTS score of 8.0 in Listening and 7.0 or higher in all other sections. **Many Japanese people, despite their high educational attainment, often have English scores that remain at CLB 7–8 (roughly IELTS 6.0–6.5).** As a result of this revised standard, there have been numerous cases where applicants—who hold the strong advantage of a university degree—are cut off from the selection process without receiving a single bonus point simply because their English proficiency falls just short of the requirement.

Surge in Invitation Scores (Passing Thresholds):

As a result of the government reducing the total number of invitations, the CRS score required to pass has skyrocketed to the high 500s. This is a level that only the global elite—such as those in their 20s who have graduated from overseas graduate schools and possess native-level English proficiency—can compete with, making it virtually impossible for the average Japanese businessperson to apply for the Express Entry program directly from Japan and receive an Invitation to Apply (ITA).

6.2 The Collapse of the “Standard Path” in the Japanese Community

Consequently, the following “standard path”—which Japanese applicants had excelled at until before the pandemic—no longer works.

Traditional Route:

Work in Japan for several years ⇒ Go to Canada on a working holiday or through a co-op program ⇒ Work locally for one year to qualify for the “Canadian Experience Class (CEC)” ⇒ Obtain permanent residency through Express Entry.

The Reality Following the Policy Change:

Because the Canadian government has introduced a cap that reduces the number of student visas and temporary work visas issued by nearly 40% to 50% compared to the previous year, the “entry point” for gaining work experience in Canada (CEC) has become extremely narrow. Even if applicants work in Canada for one year and qualify for the CEC, they now face the double challenge of meeting the sky-high eligibility threshold—unless their English proficiency is at a native level (CLB 9 or higher).

6.3 Specific “Survival Strategies” Adopted by Japanese Applicants and Their Impact on the Data

As a result of this rigorous screening process, there has been a dramatic shift in the pathways chosen by Japanese applicants.

A Sharp Decline in “Economic Immigration (Skilled Workers/CEC)” and Giving Up:

The numbers for the “Skilled Worker Class”—where success hinges purely on English proficiency and educational background—have virtually dried up, precisely because of these stricter selection criteria. Many applicants either remained stuck in the EE pool indefinitely or gave up on applying altogether.

Desperate Shift to the “Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)”:

Since the federal EE system was out of reach, applicants flocked to “Provincial Nominee Programs (PNP),” which have relatively lenient (or occupation-specific) English proficiency and educational requirements. There was an accelerated trend of applicants avoiding major cities like Vancouver and Toronto and instead seeking permanent residency by obtaining job offers from employers in regional cities.

The Relative Advantage of the “Spousal Sponsorship (International Marriage)” Category:

As the doors to the political and economic skills-based Express Entry (EE) system closed, the proportion of applicants in the “Spouse and Partner Sponsorship Class”—the only humanitarian route that imposes no requirements whatsoever regarding English proficiency, educational background, or financial resources—skyrocketed.

Exploring the “Ultimate Wild Card” of French:

The Canadian government has announced a policy to maintain and expand the preferential quota for the “French-proficiency category” even as regulations tighten, scheduled for 2025 and beyond.

Consequently, among some Japanese prospective immigrants who have lost hope in the points-based competition for English proficiency, a previously unseen, highly strategic—and extremely challenging—approach has begun to emerge: “Rather than aiming for CLB 9 in English, I’ll study French intensively from scratch to reach an intermediate level or higher and try to slip into the French-language selection category.”

IV. Projected Trends in Canadian Immigration Policy for the Decade from 2026 to 2035

The historic shift toward “immigration restraint and quota controls” that the Canadian government implemented from the second half of 2024 through 2025 is not merely a temporary policy reversal but should be viewed as 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.**

We will analyze the future trajectory of policy across three expected axes over the next decade: “Economy,” “Society,” and “International Relations.”

1. Social Factors: “Strengthening of the Restraint Policy” Due to Housing and Healthcare Crises (Short to Medium Term: 1–5 Years)

The most significant influence over the next five years will be the strain on Canada’s social infrastructure.

Hardening of Public Opinion and Political Conservatism:

Although Canada has long upheld “multiculturalism and immigration” as a national policy, public anger has reached a peak over **soaring housing prices and rents, the collapse of the healthcare system, and infrastructure dysfunction caused** by the rapid population influx following the pandemic. This discontent is directly linked to a change in government (or the entrenchment of conservative policies), and regardless of which party takes power, it will be politically impossible to return to a “policy of easy immigration expansion” in order to gain public support.

Strict Control of Non-Permanent Residents (International Students and Work Visa Holders):

Not only will the permanent residency quota (PR cap) be tightened, but the total volume restrictions (the 5% of population rule) on “student visas” and “temporary work visas”—which have previously served as loopholes—will be enforced **even more strictly and strengthened** over the next few years. As a result, a system for politically controlling the balance between society’s carrying capacity (its infrastructure capacity) and population growth will be fully established.

2. Economic Factors: “Qualitative Changes and Re-expansion” Due to a Declining Birth Rate and Aging Population (Long Term: 5–10 Years)

However, over a 10-year span, the Canadian economy cannot afford to choose the option of “accepting no immigrants at all.” This is where a “shift (course correction)” in policy will occur.

Declining birth rates and an aging population (mass retirement of baby boomers):

Canada is experiencing one of the fastest-aging populations among developed nations, and over the next 10 years, the baby boomer generation—which has long supported the labour market—will retire entirely. Natural population growth (births minus deaths) is already close to zero, and if immigration were to stop, an economic contraction due to labour shortages, a decline in tax revenue, and the collapse of the social security system would become a reality.

A complete shift from “quantity to quality (sector-specific)”:

Consequently, while a “slight increase or easing” in the number of immigrants is expected in the latter half of the decade, this will not be an expansion along the lines of the former “open-door” policy. “Category-based selection”—which **focuses exclusively on** “occupations facing genuine shortages (healthcare professionals, skilled workers in housing construction, and engineers in cutting-edge fields such as AI and clean energy)” —will be strengthened to the

utmost extent. Immigration quotas for office work and general service industries will remain closed, and the system will shift to selecting only those whose skills are directly linked to national strategy.

3. Projections for the Number of Canadian Immigration Approvals for Japanese Nationals by Immigration Category Over the Next 10 Years (2026–2035)

3.1 Skilled Worker Class

- **2025 Actual:** 25 people (virtually nonexistent)
- **Short- to Medium-Term Forecast (2026–2028): Continued Slump (approximately 10–30 people per year)**
 - Due to the continued requirement of a high score resulting from the combination of the “high barrier” of CLB 9 English proficiency (IELTS 7.0–8.0 or higher) and educational background, direct applications from Japan and applications from mid-level professionals will be virtually eliminated, and numbers will remain at an all-time low.
- **Long-term (2030 and beyond) forecast: Extremely limited recovery (specific occupations only)**
 - Under the “category-specific selection” process, only “highly skilled professionals (with native-level English proficiency)” in the fields of AI, cutting-edge IT, or clean energy—as designated by the Canadian government—will be specifically invited, and the number is expected to remain capped at around 50 people per year.

3.2 Canadian Experience Class (CEC)

- **2025 Results:** 85 people (a significant decrease from the peak of 155)
- **Short- to Medium-Term Forecast (2026–2028): Further decline (approximately 40–60 people per year)**
 - Since the entry point to the “standard route”—“Working Holiday or Study Abroad → One Year of Local Employment → Permanent Residency via CEC”—which Japanese nationals have traditionally excelled at, is being restricted (e.g., through caps on student visas), the pool of eligible applicants will shrink. Even with one year of local work experience, applicants will not meet the qualifying threshold without a high English proficiency bonus, so the number of successful applicants will decline further.
- **Long-term (2030 and beyond) forecast: A gradual recovery accompanied by polarization**
 - From 2030 onward, as Canada’s infrastructure stabilizes and labour shortages due to an aging population become apparent, limited easing of restrictions is expected, targeting those who have worked at designated medical institutions or IT companies within Canada. However, the system will not revert to the previous model of “any occupation is acceptable as long as you have local experience”; eligibility will be limited to those working in designated occupations.

3.3 Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)

- **2025 Actual:** 160 people (a downward trend from 265 in 2023, but still a major destination)
- **Short- to Medium-Term Forecast (2026–2028): Numbers will remain steady or see an expansion in relative share (around 150–180 people per year)**
 - As the doors to the federal Express Entry (Skilled Workers and CEC) programs close, Japanese prospective immigrants will shift their “survival strategies” toward applying to provincial PNP programs, which have relatively lower score requirements. Although the federal government’s quota will be reduced, Japanese applications are expected to concentrate in these programs, allowing them to maintain the largest share among economic immigration categories.
- **Long-term (2030 and beyond) forecast: Stable intake linked to regional demand (construction, healthcare, and primary industries)**
 - Candidates who match the labor needs of provincial regions outside major metropolitan areas (Vancouver, Toronto)—such as infrastructure construction and healthcare—will be selected, ensuring a stable number of successful applicants.

3.4 Sponsored Spouse or Partner Class

- **2025 Results:** 280 people (accounting for approximately 43% of the total, making it the largest category)
- **Projections for the Next 10 Years (2026–2035): This category is expected to remain the most stable and continue as the de facto mainstream (approximately 250–300 people per year)**
 - Since this category is based on humanitarian and family reunification principles—such as international marriage—it is not subject to points-based screening (e.g., screening for English proficiency, educational background, or occupation). As a result of the extremely narrow opening in economic immigration quotas, the proportion of “unconditional spouse sponsorship” will remain relatively high. Even if the Canadian government restricts the overall quota, its policy is to prioritize maintaining the family class; therefore, this will remain the “most stable foundation” for Japanese nationals to obtain permanent residency over the next 10 years.

3.5 Protected Persons in Canada (Humanitarian and Compassionate Considerations, etc.)

- **2025 Actual:** 160 people (down from the 2024 peak of 290)
- **Projections for the next 10 years (2026–2035): Will decrease gradually and stabilize at a low level (around 30–50 people per year)**
 - The sharp increase in this category from 2021 to 2024 was driven by relief measures and humanitarian exceptions for individuals who faced difficulties maintaining their temporary visas due to the pandemic and other factors. As the government tightens its quota system—aiming to reduce the proportion of temporary residents (TR) to 5% of the

population—and continues to strengthen screening procedures, the route to permanent residency via this category is expected to be strictly limited going forward and to decline to previous levels.

3.6 New Business Categories (Start-up Business / SUV, etc.)

- **2025 Results:** 40 people (a 50% decrease from 105 in 2024)
- **Forecast for the Next 10 Years (2026–2035): A select, high-calibre group (approximately 20–40 people per year)**
 - Although there was a temporary surge in 2024, the Canadian government has imposed strict limits on the number of nominations from designated venture capital firms and other entities starting in the second half of 2024 to prevent abuse of the Startup Visa (SUV) program and ensure its quality. Over the next 10 years, only highly capitalized, high-tech projects that are truly innovative and contribute to Canada’s cutting-edge tech industry will be carefully selected, so the number of recipients will remain limited.

3.7 Summary: The Big Picture for the Next 10 Years

Over the next 10 years starting in 2026, the structure for Japanese nationals to obtain Canadian permanent residency will undergo a complete and permanent shift from the “economic capacity and occupation-based selection model” to a model based on “family and international marriage” and “selection limited to ultra-high-skilled and specific occupations.”

- During the “ice age” of 2026–2028, the total number of recipients will shrink to between 500 and 600, with “spousal sponsorship” accounting for the majority (more than 50 percent).
- Even as we enter the **adaptation period after 2030**, we will not return to the era when “anyone with a decent command of English could aim for permanent residency through study abroad.” Instead, an era of extremely sophisticated and precise control will continue, in which only Japanese nationals possessing specific skills designated by the government—such as in “healthcare, AI, and construction”—will be selectively identified through programs like the CEC and PNP.

3.8 Changes in the Distribution of Immigration Categories

This analysis focuses on the impact on recipients of Canadian permanent residency by immigration category from 2026 onward, specifically regarding new immigrants arriving in Canada during this period; it does not reflect the immigration categories of Japanese nationals already residing in Canada with permanent residency as of 2026 at the time of their immigration to Canada. The tables below summarize the distribution of Canadian permanent residency grants to Japanese nationals by immigration category for three periods: 2015–2025, 2026–2035, and 2015–2035. The following trends can be observed from these tables.

3.8.1 Background of Time-Series Changes: Detailed Analysis Linked to Political and Economic Conditions and Immigration Policy

The structural changes evident in the data can be summarized into three points: “① A decline in the total number of recipients,” “② A decline in economic immigration (particularly federal skilled workers) and a shift toward the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) and the Canadian Experience Class (CEC),” and “③ The absolute dominance of family reunification (spousal sponsorship).”

Decline in Total Number of Immigrants (10,085 → 6,400: approx. 36.5% decrease)

- **Shift in Canada’s Immigration Policy:** In response to recent housing shortages and strain on healthcare and infrastructure, the Canadian government (IRCC) has announced a policy to reduce the number of temporary residents (international students, working holiday participants, and work permit holders) and to curb its Immigration Levels Plan. As the overall quota is restricted, the annual cap on the number of Japanese nationals admitted is also being lowered.
- **Socioeconomic Conditions in Japan:** Amid a declining birthrate, an aging population, and severe labour shortages, employment and career options for young people within Japan are expanding. Additionally, the weakening yen and wage disparities have increased the initial financial burden of studying abroad or participating in working holiday programs, creating a significant barrier. Furthermore, a growing preference for staying in Japan and rising barriers to travel are also contributing to the overall decline in numbers.

Tectonic Shifts Within the Economic Immigration Category (The Collapse of Direct Federal Applications and a Complete Shift to “Two-Step Immigration”)

- **A sharp decline in the Federal Skilled Worker (FSW) class (23.5% → 4.9%):**
 - **Background:** The Comprehensive Ranking System (CRS) cutoff score for Express Entry has remained high, creating significant barriers in terms of language proficiency (English and French), age limits, and educational requirements. Obtaining permanent residency through direct applications from one’s home country (Japan) has become extremely difficult.
- **Increased share of Provincial Nominee Programs (PNP: 14.3% → 25.7%) and the Canadian Experience Class (CEC: 5.9% → 8.4%):**
 - **Background:** The Canadian government is expanding its Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) quotas with the aim of addressing labour shortages in regional cities and improving retention rates. It also promotes “Two-Step Immigration,” a process that allows individuals who have already gained work experience in Canada through working holiday programs, as international students, or on temporary work visas to transition to permanent residency. The pathway for Japanese nationals to obtain permanent residency (PR) under the economic immigration category has shifted entirely from direct federal applications to the Canadian Experience Class (CEC) or Provincial Nominee Programs (PNP) based on work or educational experience gained within Canada.

Family reunification (spousal sponsorship) has become the absolute mainstream (25.3% → 50.0%)

- **“One in two immigrants will come through international marriage or partnership” from 2025 to 2034:**

- **Background:** As a result of the sharp rise in CRS points for the economic immigration category, it has become extremely difficult to obtain permanent residency on one's own based solely on work experience and language proficiency. On the other hand, the route of meeting Canadians or Canadian permanent residents through working holidays, language study, or professional training programs, forming an international marriage or common-law relationship, and obtaining permanent residency through spousal sponsorship has become the most reliable, stable, and system-unrestricted method.

Decline in Refugee and Protected Migrant Admissions (15.8% → 6.8%)

- **Background:** The “Protection Class in Canada (13.8%)” figure based on actual data from 2015 to 2024 is believed to have included individual applications for humanitarian and compassionate (H&C) reasons during specific periods. However, since Japan is a politically and human rights-wise stable country with excellent public safety, the long-term forecast (2025–2034) shows this figure converging toward a low level (6.8%), in line with the system's original intent.

Summary for 2015–2034 (20-Year Total)

Looking at the cumulative data for the 20-year period (16,485 people), “economic immigrants” account for approximately half (48.6%) of the total, while “family reunification” accounts for about 40% (41.4%); these two categories form the two main pillars of Japanese nationals obtaining Canadian permanent residency.

However, when comparing the first 10 years (2015–2024) with the second 10 years (2025–2034), the following shift in trends can be observed:

- **A shift in the primary focus from “self-sponsored immigration based on skills and abilities” to “immigration based on lifestyle and personal relationships (marriage)”**
- **The erosion of “direct applications from Japan” and the establishment of “settlement via local experience (CEC/PNP)”**

It can be concluded that a structural shift is occurring that strongly reflects the socio-economic realities surrounding Japan and Canada (Japan's demographic changes and economic conditions, and Canada's increasingly stringent immigration system).

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

While the 2025 immigration policy changes will significantly affect the categories through which new immigrants from Japan will obtain permanent residency, their impact on the distribution of permanent residency by category among all new immigrants since 2015 will be limited. This is because new immigrants who obtained Canadian permanent residency before the 2025 immigration policy changes will account for a large share of those residing in Canada by 2034.

Table 4
Number of Japanese Canadians in 2011, 2021 and 2034

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
2034*	151,135	53,501	97,634**	

Notes: 2011 and 2021 numbers are from the Census of Canada.

* 2034 numbers are estimates.

** the sum of the second and third and more generations.

Table 5
Percentage Distribution of Japanese Canadians by Generation

Year	All generations	First generation	Second generation	Third and more generations
2011	100	36	32	32
2021	100	37	30	33
2034*	100	35	65**	

Notes: 2011 and 2021 numbers are from the Census of Canada.

* 2034 numbers are estimates.

** the sum of the second and third and more generations.

Table 4 presents projections of the number of Japanese Canadians by generation in 2034, based on the projections in Table 2 regarding the acquisition of Canadian permanent residency by Japanese nationals, by immigration category, from 2026 to 2034. The figures for Japanese Canadians in 2011 and 2021 in Table 4 are derived from the Canadian Census; therefore, “Japanese Canadians” refers to “Canadians who identify themselves as Japanese ethnically and culturally.” The projections for 2034 were made as follows.

(1) Projection for the first generation in 2034 = (Number of first-generation immigrants in 2021) + (Total number of new immigrants from 2022 to 2034) × (75.9 percent reduction in the number of new immigrants during the period from 2022 to 2034 due to returning to Japan, emigrating to other countries, death, etc.) = 48,195 + 5,306

(2) Projected total number of second- and third-generation immigrants in 2034 = (Total number of second- and third-generation immigrants in 2021) × (Growth rate from 2021 to 2034)

Of the total first-generation population of 53,501 in 2034, approximately 5,300 are projected to be new immigrants residing in Canada in 2034 who obtained permanent residency on or after 2022. This represents approximately 10 percent of the first-generation population (new immigrants) in 2034.

V. The Impact of Changes to Canada's Immigration Policy in 2025 on the New Immigrant Community and the Japanese-Canadian Community

1. While the number of new immigrants will decline, they will continue to play a significant role in the Japanese-Canadian community

The number of Japanese nationals obtaining Canadian permanent residency is projected to decrease by 40 percent, from 10,735 during the 2015–2025 period to 6,460 during the 2026–2035 period. However, as of 2021, first-generation immigrants (new immigrants) account for 37 percent of the total Japanese Canadian population; therefore, even in 2034, they will still make up 35 percent of the total Japanese Canadian population and will continue to hold a potentially significant position within the Japanese Canadian community.

2. Concerns Regarding Potential Discrepancies in the Relationship Between New Immigrants and Japanese Canadians

There will be significant changes in the distribution of immigration categories. The number of skilled workers will plummet from 2,395 to 340. Since new immigrants in this category are more economically stable than those in other categories, they have traditionally formed the core of local new-immigrant organizations and Japanese Canadian organizations. The sharp decline in this category of new immigrants risks slowing these organizations' activities. It is now an urgent priority to develop measures that enable young Japanese women who have immigrated to Canada through family reunification to actively participate in local newcomer and Japanese Canadian organizations.

The analysis notes that one factor hindering interaction between new immigrants and the third- and fourth-generation Japanese Canadians—who currently form the mainstream of the Japanese Canadian community—is a mutual misunderstanding: the third- and fourth-generation feel that new immigrants “do not understand that their current status is built upon the achievements of our human rights struggles (such as the postwar compensation movement),” while new immigrants perceive the third- and fourth-generation as “having assimilated too much and showing no interest in their roots.” Based on their historical experiences, third- and fourth-generation Canadians are sensitive to human rights issues. However, due to stricter regulations on work and student visas (including quota systems) and the cut-off scores in the Express Entry system, new immigrants currently in Canada or those planning to arrive—including temporary residents—are facing a “legal crisis of survival” (difficulties in maintaining visas or obtaining permanent residency) in a form different from what the first-generation immigrants faced before the war. If the third and fourth generations adopt the stance of bystanders in the face of these issues, an asymmetry—a lack of solidarity—will arise between “new immigrants currently placed in a legal predicament by national policy (exclusion)” and “the privileged class (their descendants) observing this from the safe vantage point of citizenship.” This will only serve to heighten the divide

between new immigrants and established Japanese Canadians. Since the root of this problem lies in Canada's immigration policies, it cannot be resolved solely within the communities of new immigrants or Japanese Canadian organizations. While this issue requires a new political movement, it raises the difficult question of how new immigrants and Japanese Canadian organizations can address it.

3. The Proportion of Mixed-Marriage Families Is Increasing in the New Immigrant Community

The number of Japanese nationals obtaining Canadian permanent residency through the family reunification category is projected to increase from 3,400 for the 2015–2025 period to 3,800 for the 2026–2035 period. Furthermore, nearly 90 percent of this category falls under “spouse or partner sponsorship,” with the vast majority involving Japanese women sponsored by Canadian men (although no statistics are available, 75 percent of new immigrants from 2011 to 2021 were women). In these mixed-marriage households, cultural traditions and language choices are determined within the family, and generally, the transmission of Japanese culture and language to children is less common than in households where both parents are Japanese. However, Japanese homemakers in such families often maintain a deep-rooted commitment to their children's Japanese-language education, and many families enroll their children in Japanese-language schools. In recent years, Japanese language schools across Canada have increasingly seen children from mixed-marriage families make up the majority of their students. This trend is likely to continue. There is a growing need to establish clear objectives and methods for Japanese language education for these children.

4. Decline in Average Employment Income Among New Immigrants, Particularly Female New Immigrants

We extracted statistics on “Average Employment Income by Immigrant Category and Visible Minority Group in Canada in 2020” from the 2021 Census and summarized them in Table 6.

The average employment income for male Japanese immigrants (newcomers) was \$58,000, which was approximately 9 percent lower than the \$63,850 earned by male non-immigrant Japanese Canadians. From 2025 onward, as skilled worker immigration declines sharply, the average employment income of male newcomers will decrease, and the income gap with male Japanese Canadians will widen.

The average employment income for female Japanese immigrants (newcomers) was \$36,480, which was approximately 25 percent lower than the \$49,280 earned by female non-immigrant Japanese Canadians. This gap represents the largest percentage difference among gender gaps across all immigrant groups. These statistics do not reveal the cause of this significant disparity. Possible reasons include a higher proportion of part-time work and a greater number of low-wage jobs compared to other immigrant groups. It is predicted that this income gap will widen as changes in immigration policy lead to a sharp decline in the number of economically motivated immigrants of Japanese nationality, with sponsored immigrants becoming the mainstream among female immigrants.

5. The Need to Protect the Rights of New Immigrants

A notable trend in the statistics in Table 1 is that the number of Japanese nationals classified as “Protected Persons in Canada” has surged to between 200 and 300 per year since 2021. This suggests that Japanese nationals who have been excluded by the stringent Express Entry selection criteria are desperately seeking workarounds—such as “humanitarian and compassionate (H&C) applications” or “maintaining work permits while their refugee claims are being processed”—to maintain their legal status and protect their established lives. This fact indicates that among new immigrants, there are vulnerable groups (potentially disadvantaged individuals) facing “,” and that this group is growing due to changes in immigration policy in 2025.

To address this issue, the support activities of the Japanese Canadian community must go beyond traditional initiatives such as “cultural exchange” and “elderly welfare” to include practical, specialized support in areas such as “visa systems, lifestyle counselling, and humanitarian crises (prevention of domestic violence and illegal employment).” This presents new challenges for organizations that have traditionally supported new immigrants and Japanese Canadians. There is an urgent need to develop organizations that serve as a bridge between public services for the general Canadian population and those for new immigrants.

To achieve this, we need programs and organizations led by third- and fourth-generation Japanese Canadians—who are fluent in English and well-versed in the local legal system and administrative procedures—to provide “advocacy” and “mentorship” to new immigrants facing visa difficulties or humanitarian crises (particularly those with limited language skills or local networks). These activities have the potential to transform interactions between third- and fourth-generation Japanese Americans and new immigrants into opportunities for building strong, life-saving partnerships that go beyond mere cultural nostalgia.

Canada

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

