

1971 Census results were not available in time for this edition. Tables 5.19 to 5.21 show preliminary figures rounded to thousands. Final data for 1971 are available in the relevant census reports, as indicated in the footnotes to the Tables.

**Ethnic groups.** The ethnic composition of the population of Canada has changed considerably over the years because of many factors, including differences in the flow and source of immigrants. Trends in recent years have been characterized by a gradual decline in the proportions of British Isles groups and a corresponding increase in other European ethnic groups other than French. For example, the former groups had dropped from 57.0% of the total population in 1901 to 44.6% by 1971, whereas other European groups rose from 8.5% to 23.0%. The French ethnic group remained relatively stable, starting at 30.7% in 1901, and moving irregularly lower to 28.7% by 1971. Table 5.19 provides preliminary 1971 figures for the larger ethnic groups in Canada, together with earlier data from the two previous decennial censuses in 1951 and 1961.

**Religious denominations.** Census figures on religious denominations do not measure church membership or the degree of affiliation with a particular religious body. Respondents were requested to answer the question "What is your religion?" and to enter if possible a specific religious denomination, sect or community. Thus, the census data on this subject relate to the religious denominations to which persons state they belong, adhere or favour, with the opportunity to report "no religion" if so desired. As shown in the preliminary 1971 figures in Table 5.20, three out of every four persons in Canada in 1971 reported one of the three numerically largest denominations — Roman Catholic, United Church or Anglican. Largest relative gains since 1961 occurred in such groups as Jehovah's Witnesses and Pentecostal. None of the major denominations registered actual declines in the 1961-71 period, but the Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Presbyterian and United Church groups were among those showing losses relative to the total population.

**Country of birth.** The proportion of the population born outside Canada has ranged during the present century from a high of 22% throughout the period 1911-31, following the heavy waves of immigration in the early decades, to a low of 15% in 1951 following a period of lower immigration and rising birth rates. Persons born in the United Kingdom comprised over 11% of the population in 1911 and 1921, but this percentage declined gradually to 4.3% by 1971 in the face of the rising proportions of Canadian-born and immigration from other European countries. Persons born in the latter countries rose from 5.6% of Canada's population in 1911 to 7.8% in 1971 (Table 5.21).

### 5.3.4 The native peoples of Canada

Many centuries before the first European settlers arrived on what is now Canadian soil, this vast country had received immigrants in the prehistoric period. Present-day Eskimos and Indians are the descendants of these early settlers but as a result of heavy immigration by other groups they now represent less than 2% of Canada's population. Administration relating to the affairs of the Indian and Eskimo peoples is described in Chapter 4. Demographic data on their numbers and locations can be obtained from reports of the 1971 Census of Canada, preliminary figures of which indicate a total of 297,000 Indian people and 18,000 Eskimo. The former figure includes both registered Indians (232,000) and non-registered (65,000).

From a later source, there were 257,619 persons registered as Indians by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development as of December 31, 1971. These are persons who are entitled to be so registered in accordance with the terms of the Indian Act. They comprise 560 bands who occupy or have access to some 2,200 reserves having a combined area of about 6.3 million acres. Membership of these bands is distributed among the provinces and territories as shown in Table 5.22. The 29 Indian bands in the Yukon Territory and Northwest Territories are located in 59 settlements that have not been formally designated as reserves. No permanent residents of Newfoundland are registered under the Indian Act.

About two thirds of Canada's roughly 18,000 Eskimos reported in the 1971 Census live in communities in the Northwest Territories, and the remainder mainly in Arctic Quebec (3,800), Labrador (1,000), and Northern Ontario (800). Similar to the rest of Canada the Eskimo birth rate is now declining. In 1971 the rate for the Eskimo population in the Northwest Territories was 38 per 1,000 compared with the Canadian average of 17 per 1,000.