

cases). Other alleged grounds for divorce and reasons for marital breakdown include mental cruelty (13,981); physical cruelty (11,221); desertion by petitioner for not less than five years (1,870); and addiction to alcohol (1,791).

Dependent children. Of the 55,370 divorces granted in 1977, 44.6% involved no dependent children. Divorces involving dependent children ranged from 55.8% in 1972 to 58.7% in 1977. Almost two out of every five of the latter cases involved one child only, and almost one-third of them involved two children.

Duration of marriage. The duration of marriage in 17.2% of the divorces in Canada in 1977 was less than five years and in 47.4% of the cases it was less than 10 years. The short-term trend over the past few years indicates a relative shortening of the average marriage period before divorce. In 1974 only 15.5% of the divorces involved marriages of less than five years and 43.7% to those of less than 10 years. The median duration of marriage in 1974 was 11.5 years compared to 10.5 in 1977.

Marital status. More than nine out of every 10 persons divorced in 1977 were involved in a first divorce. Around 6.5% of the divorces were to persons who were divorced at the time of their last marriage and less than 2% to those who were widowed.

Migration

4.6

Besides the vital components of population change (fertility, mortality, nuptiality), the flows of population across national borders (immigration and emigration) also affect the country's growth and demographic structure.

Immigration

4.6.1

Canada's immigration policy is based on the principle of non-discrimination and emphasizes the selection of immigrants who are likely to adapt to the Canadian way of life, making a positive contribution to economic and cultural development in Canada.

Canadian immigration officers apply standard norms of assessment to applicants from all parts of the world and, apart from sponsored relatives and refugees, select those with skills in short supply in Canada.

The employment and immigration commission also regulates the entry of temporary workers and foreign students planning to enrol in public or private institutions and examines millions of visitors who come to Canada each year as tourists or for family, social, cultural or other reasons. The commission facilitates the return of Canadian residents and enforces measures relating to public health, welfare of Canadians or national security.

The Immigration Act, 1976 proclaimed in April 1978, brought Canada's immigration policy into sharper focus than ever before. It stated, for the first time in Canadian law, the basic principles underlying immigration policy — non-discrimination, family reunion, humanitarian concern for refugees and promotion of national goals. The legislation links the immigration movement to Canada's population and labour market needs and provides for an annual forecast of the number of immigrants Canada can comfortably absorb, to be made in consultation with the provinces. The act establishes a new family class, allowing Canadian citizens and permanent residents to sponsor a wide range of relatives, confirms Canada's protective obligations to refugees under the United Nations Convention and establishes refugees as an admissible immigrant class. It requires that immigrant and visitor visas and student and employment authorizations be obtained abroad, and prohibits visitors from changing their status from within Canada.

In recent years, Canada's concern for the displaced and the persecuted has been manifested in two types of refugee resettlement programs: an ongoing program operating continuously around the world, and special programs in response to urgent refugee or humanitarian situations.

Indochinese refugee program. Canada launched the largest single refugee movement in its history in July 1979, offering to provide homes for up to 50,000 Indochinese refugees in a two-year period through partnership arrangement between the federal