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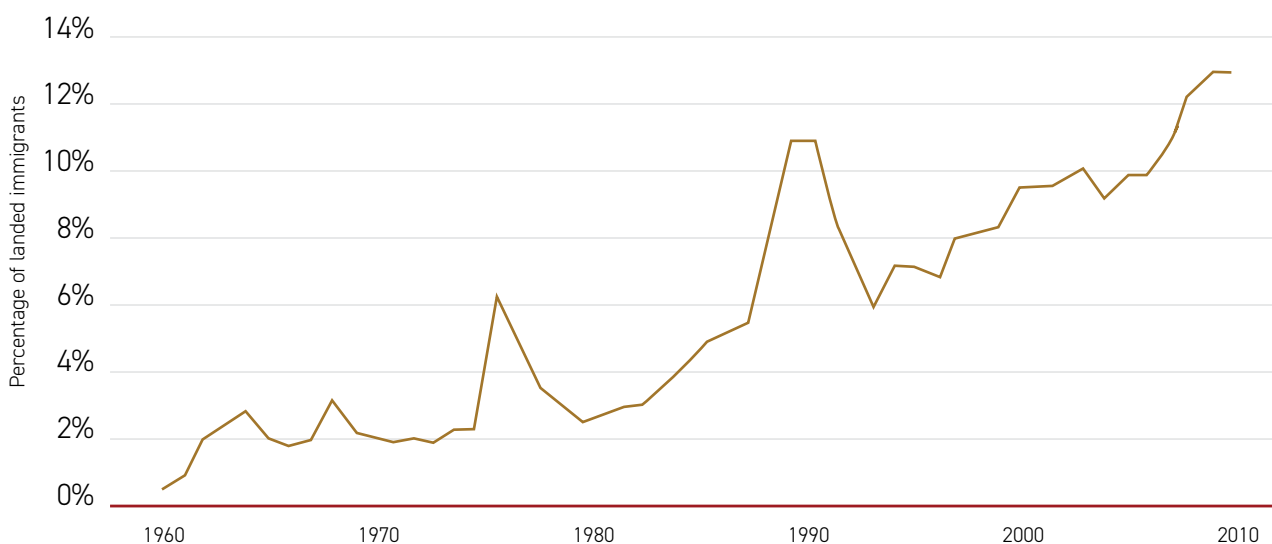
**MARCH 2013**

# ARAB IMMIGRATION TO CANADA HITS RECORD HIGH

According to data CAI recently acquired from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, in 2010, Arab immigration to Canada reached an all-time high, with the arrival of 34,657 citizens of Arab countries[1], Arab immigrants represented 12.4% of the total immigration to Canada, second only to the Philippines (13.0%) and, for the first time, ahead of China and India (at 10.8% each), long the top two source countries of immigrants to Canada. In 2011[2], Arab immigration dropped slightly to 12.25% of total immigration, remaining in second place behind the Philippines.

Immigration data between 1960 and 2011 shows that more than half of Arab immigrants came to Canada in the 11 years between 2000 and 2011, and more than 75% came in the 20 years between 1991 and 2011. That this is such a new community which is steadily and rapidly growing has potentially profound policy connotations.

### Arab Immigration to Canada as a Percentage of Total Immigration 1960-2011



Such numbers have significance to service providers (immigrant settlement, social services, etc.) and community organizations that seek to help integrate, represent and protect the interests of these groups. They have implications to policy makers at various levels of government, agencies of government and civil society.

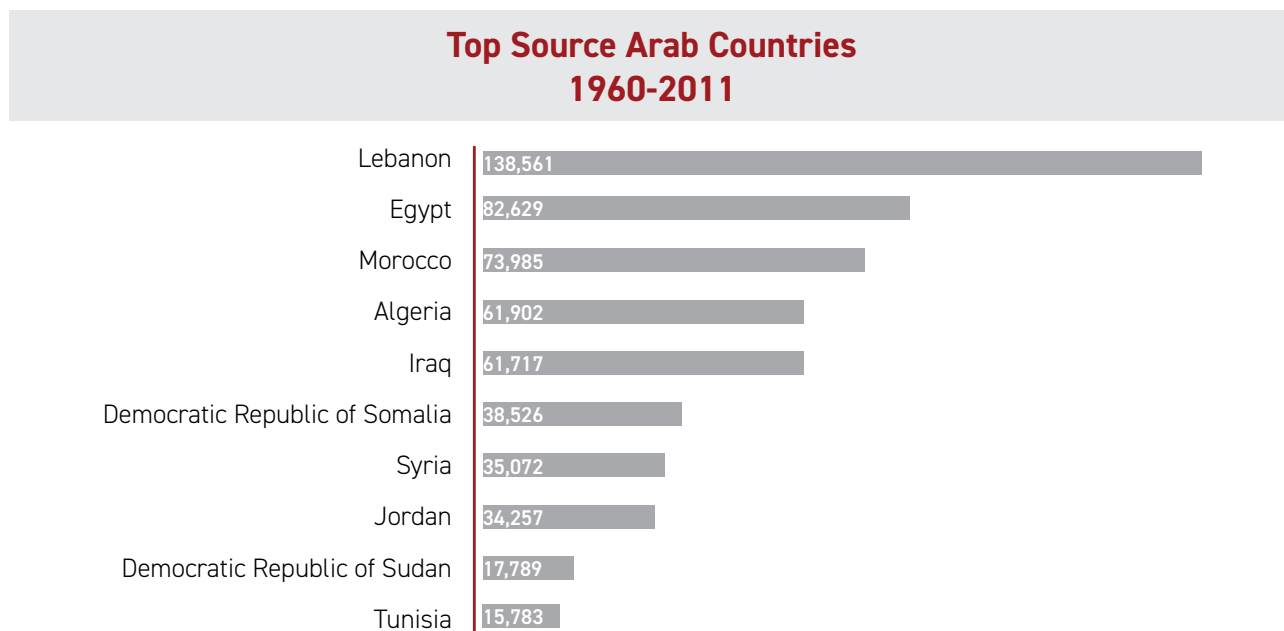
Who these immigrants are, their levels of education and income, levels of integration, their successes and the barriers they face will be the subject of Canadian Arab Institute's examination and analysis in the coming years.

While Arab immigrants have been arriving in Canada since the late 19th century, their numbers only started to rise significantly in the last 25 years. With one exception[3], the percentage of Arab immigrants did not push past 5% of total immigration to Canada until 1988 (8,455). High numbers of Arab immigrants marked the 1990-1993 period, with a heavy influx of immigrants fleeing the war in Lebanon, augmented by large numbers fleeing Somalia following the collapse of the government in 1991 (close to 6,000 Somalis arrived in 1992). In 1990 Arab immigration represented over 10% of total immigration to Canada (24,160).

The number of Arab immigrants to Canada did not peak again until the late 2000's, supported by rising numbers from Egypt, Morocco, Algeria and Iraq.

## Top Source Arab Countries

With 24% of total Arab immigration to Canada between 1960 and 2011, Lebanon is by far the largest contributor of Arab immigrants, followed by Egypt (a distant second) at 14%, Morocco at 13%, Algeria at 11%, and Iraq also at 11%. Between them, these countries are responsible for nearly three-quarters of Arab immigration to Canada in this 52-year period.



When joined with immigration from Somalia (7%), Jordan (6%), Syria (6%), Tunisia (3%) and Sudan (3%), the ten countries amount to 96%, or almost all of total Arab immigration to Canada.

## Palestinians

The first recorded immigrants from the Palestinian Authority were in 1996 (5), with numbers increasing annually to a high of 655 in 2010, and a total of 5,520 by 2011.

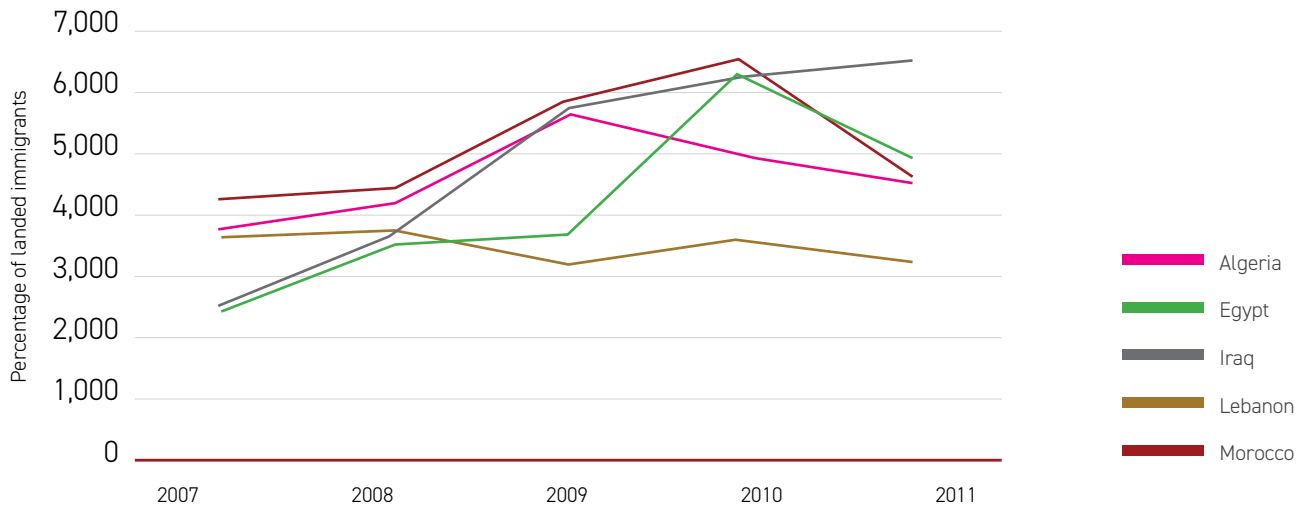
It is believed that many more Palestinians have immigrated to Canada since 1960, but they would have been carrying citizenships of other countries (mostly Jordanian and Lebanese), making an accurate assessment of their numbers using immigration-by-citizenship data not possible.

## Trends

The five years between 2007 and 2011 show a steady increase in the number of immigrants from Iraq, which went from being the lowest of the five countries in 2007 to being the highest in 2011, perhaps reflecting the ongoing instability and lack of security in many parts of the country.

A steady increase in immigration from Egypt and Morocco between 2007 and 2010 is also evident, suggesting economic immigration rather than a politically motivated one (these are pre-Arab Spring years). Immigration from Lebanon was steady (also reflecting economic motivations, in contrast to the war years) whereas that from Algeria fluctuated.

## Top Source Countries 2007-2011



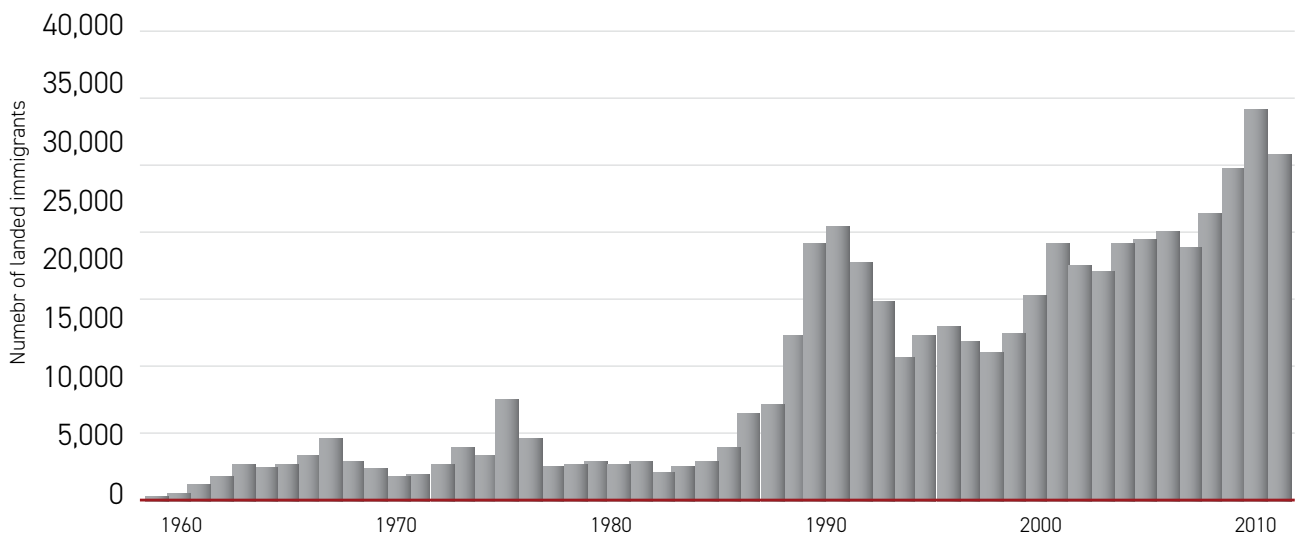
Long-term trends show the rate of increase in Arab Immigration climbed steadily between 1988 and 2011. Whereas it took 29 years for the first 100,000 Arab immigrants to land in Canada (1960-1988), it only took five years for the second 100,000 (1993), seven years for the third 100,000 (2000), four years for the fourth (2004), five years for the fifth (2009), and three years for the sixth (2012[4]). A total of 581,264 Arab immigrants landed in Canada between 1960-2011.

This community is at an unprecedented potential for economic, political and cultural achievement. The Canadian Arab institute will be examining the opportunities for development and organization necessary for this community to realize its potential.

## Still to come

In the coming issues of this bulletin we will look at settlement patterns of Arab immigrants and refugee claimants. We will also analyse the recent spike in the number of Arab students joining Canadian universities.

## Arab Immigration to Canada 1960-2011



[1] The 22 countries of the Arab League were included.

[2] The last full year of data available at the time of publication.

[3] In 1976, the Lebanese exodus following the start of civil war in that country pushed the number of Arab immigrant to Canada to 8,809, or 5.9% of total immigration.

[4] Projected.