

**The role of naturalization in immigrant
integration: a critical analysis of Canadian
citizenship policies**



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I would like to dedicate this portion of my MA program to my fiancée, Lina Sua.

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Abstract

Historically, Canada has had high naturalization rates due to relatively open citizenship policies and legislative support that encourages integration. In 1996, immigrants with 5 years of residence in Canada had a 68.1% naturalization rate and those with 10+ years had a naturalization rate upwards of 80%. However, this began to change in 2006, seemingly at the same time the Conservative government began to redefine Canadian citizenship (however, causation has not been proven). During this period, Canada redefined who they wanted to be a citizen and how it would be done. Thus, the legislative nature of citizenship was exposed at the behest of political party division. A recent report by Feng Hou and Garnett Picot outlines that although the overall measure of citizenship has remained steady at roughly 85%, this is not indicative of the declines that are currently happening, especially for newcomers and vulnerable immigrant groups. Though measuring the naturalization rate can be done in a variety of ways, the current method includes all immigrants eligible for naturalization even if they naturalized decades ago, which skews the overall rate upwards. Canada and Canadian's, as a country that encourages integration, should care about the mounting evidence of a declining naturalization rate. A declining naturalization rate has socioeconomic impacts on both the state and immigrants. Moreover, the effect of a declining naturalization rate on vulnerable immigrants, particularly the refugee population, is especially of concern. There are several initiatives that both IRCC and government could undertake to better understand the naturalization rate and its importance for immigrants. The purpose of this paper is to provide a foundation on which to continue research and evidence-based analysis to aid in our understanding of the effect of the naturalization process on an immigrant's integration trajectory.

Introduction

But when they had bound him with the straps, Paul said to the centurion...
“Is it legal for you to scourge a Roman, and that without trial?”

When the centurion heard this, he went to the tribune and reported, saying
“What art thou about to do? This man is a Roman citizen.”

Then the Tribune came and said to him, “Tell me, art thou a Roman?”

And he said, “Yes.”

And the Tribune answered, “I obtained this citizenship at great price.”

And Paul said, “But I am a citizen by birth.”

At once therefore, those who had been going to torture him left him; and the tribune himself was alarmed to find that Paul was a Roman citizen, and that he had bound him.

Excerpt from New Testament Acts 25-29 as quoted in (Janoski, 2010, pg. 1)

Can the possession of citizenship truly change an individual’s circumstances so drastically? One of the first documented existences of citizenship most comparable to modern societies was in ancient Rome (Wasson, 2016). As the Roman empire expanded, they faced a question that can be extrapolated to modern-day states: would they grant Roman citizenship to individuals of non-Roman origin, and if so, how? The empire responded by granting a lesser citizenship that greatly restricted the freedoms that Roman citizens enjoyed, in particular, the right to vote, whilst requiring the same political and military commitments as that of a Roman. Eventually, the discussion of citizenship to all subjects on Roman territory was raised; marred by violence and protestation. However, full citizenship was eventually granted – except to slaves – and extended by Julius Caesar (Wasson, 2016).

The situation of ancient Rome is eerily similar to that of modern-day states. Immigrant and migrant receiving states have all created laws and policies on how they receive, integrate and eventually incorporate newcomers into their rule. It should be noted that this process was virtually lost for the indigenous populations of lands that were settled. However, the governance structures of settled lands typically continued the policies of the commonwealth or colonizing

state (Janoski, 2010). This involved policies of both immigration and nationality (citizenship), which would be built on in the following century. Some of the most clear-cut and distinguishing features of citizenship policies lie in the concepts of *jus soli* – citizenship by birth in a territory, referred to as birthright citizenship – and *jus sanguinis* – citizenship determined by the citizenship of one’s parents or familial lineage (Picot & Feng as cited in OECD, 2011). Few developed states, besides America and Canada, apply *jus soli*. Moreover, America’s *jus soli* is detailed in fourteenth section of the constitution, whereas Canada’s is outlined legislatively through the Canadian Citizenship Act (CCA). This distinction has critical legal and social impacts, as discovered by Donald Trump in his 2018 tirade vowing to end an individual’s constitutionally obliged right to *jus soli* (Davis, 2018).

However, there is a third type of citizenship: those who wish to acquire the citizenship of a country in which they were neither born in or have familial lineage to, commonly known as the process of *naturalization*, or becoming a *naturalized* citizen (OECD, 2018, pg. 124). The naturalization process is a much more complex legal, social, and political process that is practiced differently by each state across the world. Moreover, defining what citizenship is and what the naturalization process should require has risen to prominence across North America and Europe as unprecedented refugee crises and debates on immigration polarize citizenry.

The notion of citizenship and naturalization are frequently portrayed in media with a negative connotation or in situations of public dismay. The most recent Canadian example involved two children of deep-state Russian spies who were able to maintain their citizenship despite their parents misrepresenting themselves upon arrival to Canada, in a case that went to the Supreme Court of Canada (CBC, 2019). Another topic on the rise in Canadian media is that

of birth tourism. Birth tourism is the organization and facilitation of foreign women to enter Canada in order to give birth to their children who can then take advantage of *jus soli*. While these situations certainly represent *policy issues*, they are a relatively small and geographically concentrated portion of the overall debate on citizenship and/or process of naturalization. While I do not intend to undermine the policy aspect, my argument will not focus on these types of cases and or situations as to not distract from the macro level contributions to citizenship policies.

The process of immigrant naturalization in Canada is no stranger to the change of political and social tides experienced throughout Europe and North America. Yet, Canada has frequently had the highest rate of immigrant naturalization in the world. How is that so? Canada has typically been seen as multicultural, diverse and accepting country that welcomes newcomers (Bloemraad, 2002, 2006). Although immigration rates are prone to change depending on domestic politics, the process of obtaining citizenship had rarely been altered. However, between 2006 and 2015, Canadian citizenship experienced its first dose of change. Under the Conservative government, attempts were made to develop and define a concept of Canadian citizenship through procedure and knowledge of Canada. Thus, an “us” vs. “them” dichotomy was created that had lingering effects to Canadian citizenship and naturalization policies. As this process unfolded, citizenship was used as a divisive topic in domestic Canadian politics. It proved to be a debateable issue that could be changed at the discretion of policy and politics.

Meanwhile, whilst the definition of a citizen was being debated, changes were happening: the naturalization rate was declining for new immigrants, those from low socioeconomic backgrounds and most source regions (particularly East Asia and China) (Hou & Picot, 2019). Thus, it *seemed* that changes in citizenship policy in fact *did* change newcomers propensity to

naturalize as Canadian citizens. However, I will not try to create a causal inference in this paper and make no specific indications of such an event occurring.

A declining citizenship rate is problematic. The very immigrants Canada needs to attract are either unable or unwilling to obtain Canadian citizenship. Thus, both the Canadian state and immigrants fail to reap the mutual benefits that naturalization provides. In 2015, Justin Trudeau famously stated “a Canadian is a Canadian is a Canadian” (Globe and Mail, 2016). But was this statement enough to reverse the damage that had already been done to the naturalization rate? And more importantly, can it? Census data in the coming years will tell. Many may wonder: why does the naturalization rate matter? Why should Canadian policy concern itself with the *choice* of immigrants? As I will attempt to show in this research paper, both the naturalization rate and citizenship policy have profound effects on both immigrants and the political, social and economic dynamics of Canada. Moreover, the downward trend in naturalization rates primarily affects the marginalized Canadian immigrant population with low income, language skills and education. Research on the effects of citizenship discusses the important role that citizenship plays for the integration of refugee communities. Because refugees cannot practice the citizenship of their home country, acquiring citizenship becomes increasingly important. As Maarten Vink details in the Milifestatus project by the European Research Council (2016), citizenship is not the panacea for refugee and immigrant integration. However, when acquired within particular timeframes and demographics, the net social and political effects can be positive.

The intention of this paper is to provide a critical analysis of Canadian citizenship policies. I intend to do so through the following steps:

- 1) Outline the historical processes that have shaped Canadian citizenship policy, with a focus on the profound changes that took place in 2006 and the subsequent decline in naturalization rates.
- 2) Critically analyze the quantitative naturalization rates as currently reported by IRCC and Statistics Canada as well as discuss the complexities of measurement and alternative methods that exist.
- 3) Explain why we should care about a declining naturalization rate: that the benefits probed by accessible citizenship are mutual for both immigrants and the state
- 4) Offer recommendations in which could solidify our knowledge and understanding of citizenship and the role citizenship plays in immigrant integration

I hope to contribute meaningful and original research to both citizenship policy and politics moving forward.

Methodology

This research question will involve a review of qualitative and quantitative analyses with a focus on censuses starting from 1991-2016. A recent report titled “Trends in the citizenship rate among new immigrants to Canada” published in November of 2019 by Feng Hou and Garnett Picot from Statistics Canada will be one section of the quantitative analysis, as this is the first comprehensive report on citizenship naturalization rates after the Conservative government policy changes (Hou & Picot, 2019). Furthermore, it breaks down a variety of demographic factors including income, education, socioeconomic status and source country. This report builds on a previous report produced in November 2015 by Citizenship and Immigration Canada titled “Citizenship acquisition in Canada: An overview based on census 1986 to 2006” by Li Xiu and Pamela Golah (Xu & Golah, 2015). Prior to these reports, few quantitative analyses of citizenship acquisition exist.

First, I will provide a brief qualitative outline of the historical trends and impacts of Canadian citizenship policies in order to situate the current decline. Specifically, outlining the changes that occurred in 2006 that is often attributed to causing the decline in naturalization rates. The negative impacts from the emergence of citizenship, language and knowledge exams were exacerbated by Bill C-24 in 2014, despite its subsequent repeal in 2016 through Bill C-6. Immigration continues to be a political campaign platform and current rhetoric between liberal and conservative governments shows that immigration remains a divisive issue. Thus, it may be subject to perpetual change; along with citizenship. Second, using quantitative analyses conducted by government, I will explore the current naturalization rates. IRCC has proved that Canadian naturalization rates have increased between 1991 (81.6%) to 2016 (86.2%). *However,*

these figures are deceiving as they include all adult immigrants who met the residency requirements, regardless of how long they have lived in Canada. Both Hou and Picot and Xiu and Golah reports indicate that citizenship naturalization rates increase (and are quite high) the more time an immigrant has lived in Canada. Therefore, the naturalization rates for those who have spent 10+ years (to a maximum of roughly 30 years) in Canada skew naturalization rates for newer immigrants. Thus, Hou and Picot's report concludes that the naturalization rate for new immigrants (between 5-9 years) has decreased from 75.4% in 1991 to 60.4% in 2016 – with a particular decline between 2006 – 2011 and 2011 – 2016 censuses. Moreover, for those with precisely 5 years in Canada, the naturalization rate has declined from 68.1% in 1996 to 43% in 2016. These declines are more pronounced when analyzing particular demographics of new immigrants with low income, no knowledge of either English or French, low education levels and depending on the source country (Hou & Picot, 2019, pg. 3). Furthermore, measuring naturalization rates is a complex task and there are both problems and alternative methods to measurement which may provide more effective results.

Third, I will discuss why citizenship naturalization rates matter and why the declining naturalization rates are of concern. Within this matter, there are several aspects that are of primary focus: (1) the economic, social (integration) and political benefits to immigrants who naturalize (2) the effect on those who *rely on acquiring* citizenship as a means to have citizenship from a country that they have fled. To conduct this qualitative research, I will use the university of Ottawa's research databases for academic sources as well as government, non-government reports that research immigrant naturalization. Furthermore, a Netherlands based researcher named Maarten Vink has published a variety of research on the process, benefits and

life course of migrants to naturalization (European Research Council, 2016). MiLifeStatus is funded by the European Research Council and operates out of Maastricht University to analyze European regime citizenship policies. They have produced a variety of works (Dronkers & Vink, 2012, European Research Council, 2016, Helbling & Vink, 2013, Vink, 2017) exploring the importance of citizenship, naturalization rates, economic effects and ‘life trajectories’ of immigrants integration, with a partial focus on the effects on refugee populations. Former director general of the Citizenship and Multiculturalism Branch for IRCC (CIC), Andrew Griffith, has also produced a variety of qualitative and quantitative analyses as well as op-eds regarding Canadian citizenship policies (Griffith, 2015, 2017, 2019). His bold positioning in a relatively unknown realm has been influential.

Finally, as long advocated by Griffith, I will recommend that the government set a meaningful performance target and also collect more nuanced data for naturalization rates (Griffith, 2019). Although the current Liberal government has promised to waive citizenship fees in the future, signalling a desire to address naturalization rate declines, action has yet to be seen. The need for consistency between attracting new immigrants whilst also promoting and encouraging their naturalization for full participation in Canadian society is critical to contribute to Canada’s democratic values. Thus, I also intend to warn politicians of the potential effects of attempting to redefine citizenship.

Historical considerations

The introduction of Canadian citizenship had a considerable impact on creating a Canadian identity. Soon after citizenship was introduced, legislative proposals were put forward that supported and outlined the rights and responsibilities of Canadian citizens. However, defining citizenship and the naturalization process is a complex task that is interpreted in a variety of ways. Therefore, it is necessary to create a foundation in order to frame our understanding of these concepts. Canadian naturalization rates have been amongst the highest in the world for decades (Bloemraad, 2002, Janoski, 2010). During these periods, there were few changes to the naturalization process. However, in 2006, Canada experienced its first major overhaul of citizenship policies, following tense House discussion. These changes had ripple effects on naturalization rates that exist today.

The beginning of something eternal

The creation of Canadian citizenship is often credited to the Mackenzie government, but, as noted by William Kaplan, specifically to former Liberal MP, Paul Martin (Sr.). Prior to the creation of Canadian citizenship, all “Canadians” were British subjects or “aliens” (Grey & Gill, 2006). However, after World War II, Martin Sr. went to France to pay his respects and recounted:

“On a dull and chilly February day, I was driven from Paris to pay my respects to the Essex Scottish and other Canadians in the military cemetery at Dieppe. There were wooden crosses marking some of the graves. The final tombstones had not been erected. The racial origins of the dead were so varied: Anglo-Saxon. French and other backgrounds. It struck me that herein lay the character of Canada, a land of people from diverse national origins ... Nothing has since epitomized the concept of our nation more poignantly for me than that cemetery. Of whatever origin, these men were all Canadians”

(Kaplan, 2014, pg. 8).

Upon return to Canada, the Canadian Citizenship Act (CCA) of 1947 was passed which officially created a Canadian citizenship. This Act was instrumental in the foundation of the Canadian identity. It also provided two other salient results: (1) gave married women full control over their nationality (as it would previously be defined by the citizenship of her husband) and (2) it outlined the procedures and requirements for which Canadian citizenship could be obtained and revoked (Grey & Gill, 2006). The CCA is typically seen as an embodiment of the demographics of Canada. Andrew Griffith adds that Canada's geography and "imperfect process of accommodation" between indigenous, British and French settlers also contributed to the development of a Canadian identity (Griffith, 2017).

CCA remained relatively untouched until 1977 when it underwent a series of amendments under Pierre Trudeau. Five prominent changes were made that liberalized the CCA which, to this day, have been raised in the citizenship debate: (1) allowed for dual citizenship (2) dropped the intent to reside clause (3) removed the revocation of citizenship clause (4) removed the distinction between British subject and "alien" – which particularly benefited the non-commonwealth immigrant population that was often discriminated against – and (5) defined citizen as a Canadian citizen and provided both naturalized and Canadian born individuals equal rights and duties subject to all citizens (Griffith, 2017 and Grey & Gill, 2006). These changes marked the beginning of a historic period in Canada's institutional development as soon after, the Human Rights, Constitution Act and Charter of Rights and Freedoms were established.

Fundamental institutional frameworks

Institutional developments and supporting frameworks were developed soon after the 1977 citizenship amendments for which Canadian citizenship would further be refined. These

refinements allowed for dual citizenship and liberalized the naturalization process (Janoski, 2010, pg. 110). These frameworks changed the course of Canadian history, beginning with the Canadian Human Rights Act of 1977. The Human Rights Act detailed that all individuals “should have an opportunity equal with other individuals to make for themselves ... without being hindered by discriminatory practices” (Government of Canada, 2020a). This act was a watershed for the Constitution Act of 1982. The Constitution Act enshrined the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in which protects all Canadian’s equally under the law and is arguably Canada’s greatest legislative achievement. Although the Charter applies to everyone in Canada (regardless of citizenship), it has greatly contributed to the concept of Canadian citizenship, the duties of a citizen and the protections that Canadians (and those in Canada) would enjoy. Finally, the Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 1988 recognized multiculturalism as a “fundamental characteristic” of Canadian society and a “invaluable resource in the shaping of Canada’s future” (Government of Canada, 2020b).

<u>Defining Legislative Acts of Early Canadian History</u>
Canadian Citizenship Act (CCA) (1946)
Amendments to CCA (1977)
Human Rights Act (1977)
Constitution Act (1982)
Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982)
Multiculturalism Act (1988)

Other international frameworks also contributed to Canadian citizenship, such as the 1954 UN Human Rights declarations on the Right to Nationality and Statelessness. However, Canada was unique in that it (1) integrated fundamental human rights into its Charter and (2) paid homage to

multiculturalism as the foundation of its social fabric. These policies are used as an example by Banting & Kymlicka's (2013) study on the Canadian integration model.

Banting and Kymlicka's research outlines the role that Canada's institutional frameworks, particularly the Charter and Multiculturalism Act, play in the overall Canadian integration model. This model essentially provides, "support for cultural diversity, but also assistance for minorities to overcome barriers to wider engagement, promotion of intercultural exchange and support for immigrants to acquire one of Canada's official languages 'in order to become full participants in Canadian society'" (Banting & Kymlicka, 2013, pg. 587). Moreover, it notes that the Canadian system has two elements that make it unique: "first, the instruments of integration are voluntary... [and] second, the national identity that newcomers are invited to join celebrates diversity" (Banting & Kymlicka, 2013, pg. 587). Therefore, there is a clear connection between government policies and integration.

Understanding naturalization and citizenship: what concepts do we currently have?

Attempting to create a homogenous understanding of citizenship is a task far beyond the scope of this paper. Thus, my intention here is to simply explore some of the academic literature surrounding the naturalization process as well as the meaning of citizenship.

Citizenship

The vast amount of literature on citizenship is suggestive of its complex nature. However, there is more to citizenship than simply the process that the CCA requires or an individual in Canada is born with. Even within defining citizen and/or citizenship, dichotomy exists. Being a citizen may simply refer to that of being an active participant in a particular community or social group, without actually holding citizenship. Whereas in this paper I discuss citizens as those who

hold or have obtained the citizenship of a state. Maarten Vink develops a general idea of citizenship based on particular citizenship regimes. He describes this as, “institutionalized systems of formal and informal norms that define access to membership, as well as rights and duties associated with membership, within a polity” (Vink, 2017, pg. 222). Linda Bosniak (2000) has also presented a variety of theories regarding citizenship. Her earlier writings touch on how the focus on citizenship is state centric and how the boundaries of citizenship can be and should be pushed. In *Citizenship Denationalized*, she begins with a philosophical notion of a citizen as presented by Hannah Arendt: “[a citizen] is by definition a citizen among citizens of a country among countries. His rights and duties must be defined and limited not only by those of his fellow citizens, but also by the boundaries of a territory” (Bosniak, 2000, pg. 448). Thus, Bosniak pushes for a renewed understanding of citizenship, which goes beyond the nation state and recognizes “the increasingly transterritorial quality of political and social life ... and a vision of citizenship that is multiple and overlapping” (Bosniak, 2000, pg. 450). She also establishes four main tenants of citizenship that are recognized across a variety of academic disciplines and arguments:

1. Legal: the formal membership in an organized political community
2. Rights: the possession of a package of rights enjoyed by citizens
3. Political activity: engagement in the life of the political community and
4. Identity/solidarity: the collective experiences of individuals

(Bosniak, 2000)

Her other writings further identify the substance (the what), the domain of action or location (where) and the class of citizenship’s subject (who) (Bosniak, 2006). The prescribed four conditions provide a basis in which to move forward.

Naturalization

In the *Oxford Handbook of Citizenship* by Sachar et al., Liav Orgad (2017) delves into the process of naturalization and its importance in modern liberal democracies who are “citizen makers” (Orgad as cited in Shachar et al., 2017, pg. 338). He posits that naturalization allows states to (1) “define ‘we’ – who we are and what kind of nation we want to be, (2) set the criteria for identifying the desired ‘they’ – in the states view ... a good citizen and (3) finding substance and form to how ‘they’ should subscribe in order to join the ‘we’” (Orgad as cited in Shachar et al., 2017, pg. 337). He furthers that naturalization is broken down by two parts: the legal and theoretical aspects of citizenship and ethics. The legal aspect includes the ‘social contract’, political test and nation building while the ethics seeks to understand a state’s morality in determining naturalization through cosmopolitan, community or republic theories. One of the most important contributions to this work is the distinction made between citizenship – *who should be a citizen* – versus nationhood – *what citizenship is* (Orgad, 2017 as cited in Shachar et al., 2017). I will focus on the citizenship aspect throughout this paper. This distinction is important and allows for an open definition of citizen and citizenship, eliminating the potential for pre-conceived ideas of these concepts to create qualitative or quantitative error.

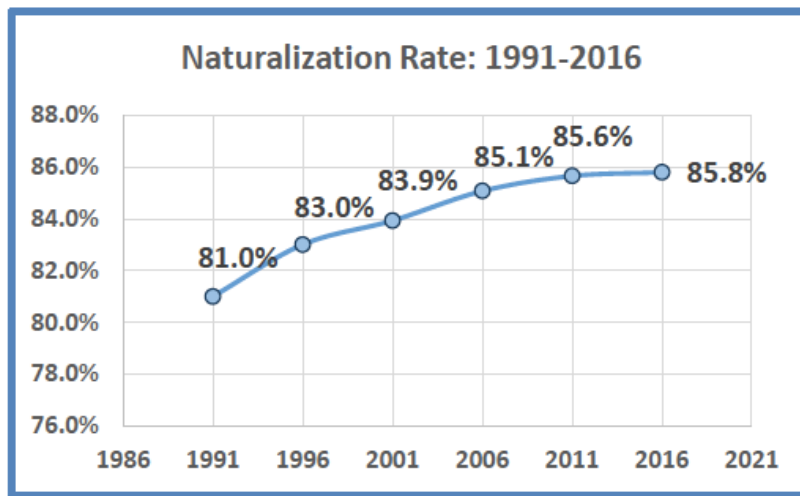
Other considerations of defining citizenship are made by Dennis Mueller (2002) in looking at both the legal and moral implications that citizenship has on a state and its constitution. He discusses the merits of a just, liberal, and a utilitarian definition of citizenship. By applying John Rawls theory of a liberal definition of citizenship, a state is potentially implicating itself in a non-utilitarian dilemma. He then states, “Thus, on pragmatic grounds, we are driven back to some utilitarian approach to defining citizenship and to the question of how those individuals who are not among the initial group of citizens ... can attain citizenship”

(Mueller, 2002, pg. 158). Thus, a state must consider sociocultural, moral and political factors when setting boundaries for citizenship. With these notions in mind, I will reposition the application of the above to the Canadian context. Did (and does) Canada's definition of citizenship facilitate newcomers to obtain citizenship? Historically speaking, how did naturalization rates compare to those of today?

Let the records show: historical naturalization rates

In 1991, Canada had a naturalization rate of 81%, growing slowly every census year to 83% in 1996 and ultimately 85.8% in 2016 (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2018a) - see graph 1. Comparatively speaking, Canada has among the highest naturalization rates in the world (Bloemraad, 2002 and Janoski, 2010). Irene Bloemraad explains that in 1991, Canada's naturalization rate was roughly 30-40 percentage points greater than the US (Bloemraad, 2002, pg. 197). She posits that individual characteristics – such as language, education and age – drive naturalization rates more than institutional policies (Bloemraad, 2002). Moreover, she attributes this difference not particularly to Canadian citizenship policies, but in the relationship between the state, immigrant organizations and individual migrants. In other words, the interaction between the state and the social fabric of its citizenry have implications on naturalization rates.

Graph 1



(Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2018a)

Redefining citizenship: the end of an era

In 2006, the Conservative government under Stephen Harper began to usher in some of the first changes to the naturalization process and citizenship policy in decades. These changes drew the ire of many academics, NGOs and rights organizations as it essentially changed the concept of Canadian citizenship. Moreover, it was said to create different “classes of citizens” (Canadian Council for Refugees, 2009). Andrew Griffith stated these changes “resulted in a redefinition toward more prescriptive integration objectives” and made citizenship, “harder to get and easier to lose” (Andrew Griffith, 2017). *My intention here is simply to outline the changes that were implemented; not to provide a nuanced explanation of each of the rule changes.* These objectives resulted in 3 significant waves of changes. The first wave altered the naturalization process through implementing a:

1. Citizenship Exam: based on the rights and responsibilities of Canadians and the history, geography, economy, government, laws and symbols of Canada

2. Language assessment or proof of language capability: in either English or French determined by a citizenship official

3. Introduced the Discover Canada Guide: the guide for the citizenship exam

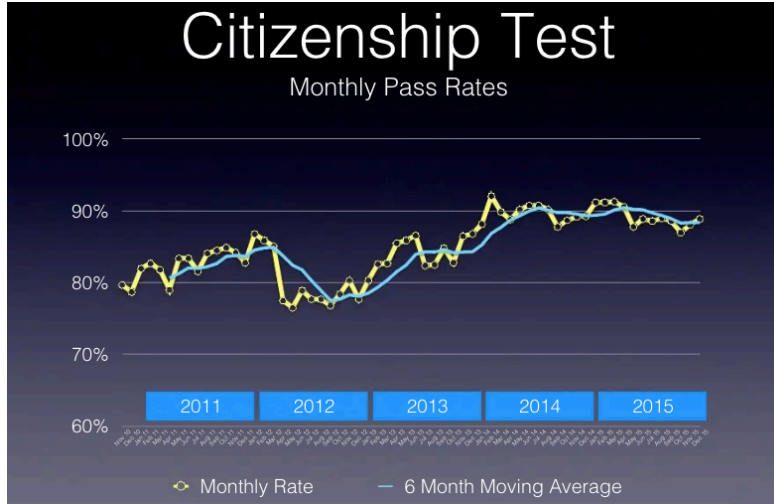
(Griffith, 2017 and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2020)

The second wave of changes occurred in 2009 and largely effected two demographics: those known as “lost Canadians” and second-generation descendants of Canadian citizens (Grey & Gill, 2006, CBC, 2007 and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2018b). These changes:

1. Allowed those who lost citizenship due to quirks in the citizenship law between 1947 and 1977, despite living most of their lives in Canada, to become citizens.
2. Limited Canadian citizenship to the *first generation* born outside Canada (to Canadian parents).

This second wave of change was followed by subtly implemented procedural changes in 2010 in the form of increasingly rigorous language and knowledge assessments, and a refined Discover Canada book. CIC operational data obtained by Andrew Griffith states that citizenship exam pass rates dipped from 96.3% between 2005-2009 to 82.7% between 2010-2013, with a greater dip in 2012 and eventual ease in 2014 with alterations to the exam (see graph 2). Judge refusals based on language and knowledge assessments also increased roughly 200% between the 2004-2009 period to 2010-2013 (Griffith, 2015).

Graph 2



(Griffith, 2016)

The third wave of change came in 2014 in the form of the *Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act*, or Bill C-24. Bill C-24 was an overhaul of the naturalization process, aimed to “update eligibility requirements for Canadian citizenship, strengthen security and fraud provisions and amend provisions governing the processing of applications and the review of decisions” (Government of Canada, 2013). However, the extent of these changes had much greater implications for both new immigrants and those on the cusp of being able to apply for citizenship. The extent (in the form of a general guideline) of these changes are noted below:

1. Physical residence: changed the time of physical residence <i>in</i> Canada to 4 of the previous 6 years
2. Time: to have physically been present in Canada 183 days (more than half the year) during each of four calendar years within six years
3. Taxes: requirement to file a tax return (and provide proof)
4. Intent to Reside: a clause to commit to stay in Canada if granted citizenship
5. Knowledge of official languages: test of history and standard set at Canadian Language Benchmark level 4 requirement
6. Authority to grant citizenship: shift from independent citizenship judges to a more administratively based system

7. Revocation: for misrepresentation, individuals who have received life sentences (or Canadian equivalent) or for committing terrorist acts considered against Canada
8. Lack of review/transparency for revocation: Ministerial decision with inconsistent recourse methods
9. Citizenship by birth: ability to change legislation for clarity purposes

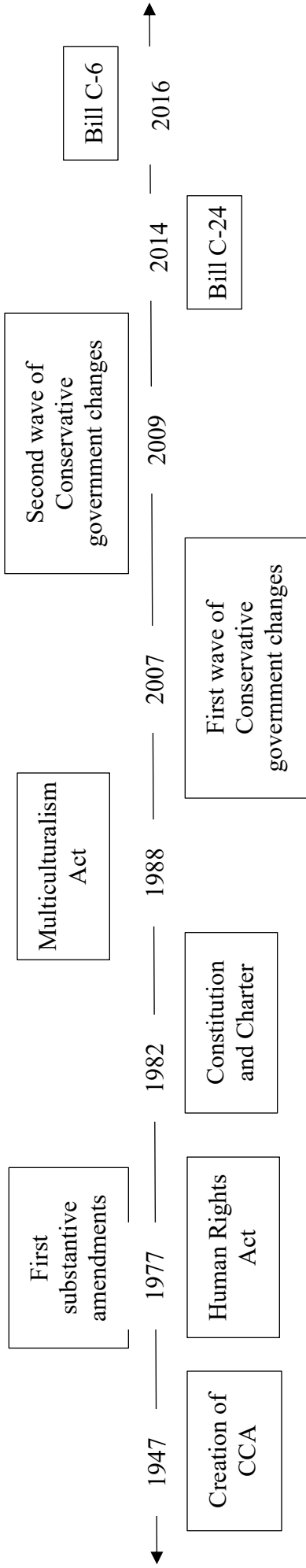
(The Canadian Bar Association, 2014, pg.1-8)

Moreover, during the same time period (but outside of Bill C-24) the application fee for an adult citizenship grant increased from 100\$ to 530\$, including a 100\$ right of citizenship fee. The intention was to shift the economic burden of the application process from taxpayer to applicant, which resulted in the applicant paying up to 90% of the processing costs (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2014 & Griffith, 2017). As noted by Griffith (2017), there was a drastic reduction in citizenship applications during this time period; from 200,000 in 2014 to 92,000 in 2016 (Griffith, 2017).

Thus, the legislative nature of the naturalization process and citizenship policy was exposed by politics. This showed that a political party can change how newcomers become citizens and ultimately redefine who a Canadian should be. The result was a disproportionate effect on vulnerable immigrant groups (which will further be explained in the next section).

In 2016 the Liberal government under Justin Trudeau introduced Bill C-6, which essentially reversed all of Bill C-24 and reset the provisions to those previously established. However, many academics and researchers note that through this period, the decline in naturalization rates was already in motion.

Legislative Foundations of Canadian Citizenship



Current quantitative analyses

Introduction

Quantitative analysis on the Canadian naturalization rate is scant and lacks important details that could provide better insight for Canadian citizenship policies. However, measuring a naturalization rate is also a difficult task that can be done in a variety of ways. Currently, IRCC lacks the ability to collect detailed naturalization rate data to be able to provide further analysis. Moreover, the analysis that has been produced indicates that overall naturalization rates have remained consistent in the last 2 census years. But, the two analyses provided by Statistics Canada between 1991– 2016 clarify that the overall naturalization rate that is measured is essentially flawed in that it “includes all immigrants who met the residency requirements, regardless of how long they lived in Canada. Many had become citizens 10, 20 or even 30 years earlier, obscuring trends up among more recent arrivals” (Hou & Picot, 2019, pg. 1). Thus, the overall naturalization rate used by Statistics Canada and IRCC is not indicative of the reality or pervasiveness of decline. Despite these shortcomings, the results of Hou and Picot’s findings are significant. They outline the what and who: the extent of change in naturalization rates and the demographics that have experienced the most significant changes. The below section will discuss the changes discovered in the recent study conducted by Feng Hou and Garnett Picot and explain some of the quantitative difficulties of measuring naturalization rates.

A declining naturalization rate for who? Canada’s most vulnerable immigrant population

The effect of the declining naturalization is evident on Canada’s most vulnerable immigrants, as cited in the recent report produced by Feng Hou and Garnett Picot. Although correlation is not necessarily causation in this case – that is, that changes in citizenship policy may not have caused naturalization rates to fall – proving causation is not necessary for my

analysis. However, the conclusions by Hou and Picot indicate that between 2006 and 2016 significant changes took place; seemingly around the same time as the first major overhaul of citizenship policies happened. Hou and Picot recognize that Canada's naturalization rate has historically been among the highest in the world. However, they also note that more recent evidence points to a decrease in naturalization rates among newer immigrants (Hou & Picot, 2019, pg. 1). This study analyzes different factors based off Census data between 1991-2016 and leads to six conclusions that merit both discussion and deeper analysis (see table 2):

1. The citizenship rate for immigrants in Canada for 5 years declined from 68.1% in 1996 to 43% in 2016
2. The citizenship rate for immigrants in Canada for 5-9 years dropped from 75.4% in 1996 to 60.4% in 2016
3. Recent immigrants in low income families were much *less* likely to obtain citizenship than those families with high income
4. There was a decline of 29.5 percentage points in citizenship for those with *no* knowledge of English or French and only 8.2.% for those with knowledge of either English or French.
5. The decline in citizenship rate between the most *disadvantaged* immigrant group – those whose income is \$30,000 and less, whose mother tongue was not English or French and have a high school education or less– was 23.5 percentage points compared to the most advantaged group – those whose income is over \$50,000 with English or French as a mother tongue and a university degree – at 0.9%.

6. Changes in citizenship rates by source region have varied, but notable decreases were noted by Chinese citizens: from 82.9% in 1996 to 44.8% in 2016. This resulted in an overall decrease of 38.1 percentage points in East Asian citizenship uptake.

(Hou & Picot, 2019, pg. 1-5)

Table 2

Table 2
Citizenship rates among immigrants aged 18 and older who arrived in Canada five to nine years ago, by selected socio-demographic characteristics, 1991 to 2016

	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016	1996-to-2016 change
	percent						percentage points
Total	68.6	75.4	75.1	73.0	67.5	60.4	-15.0
Adult-equivalent family income (2015 dollars)							
≤ \$10,000	65.8	75.0	73.1	69.9	61.2	51.5	-23.5
> \$10,000 to ≤ \$30,000	68.2	75.1	75.1	71.1	64.3	56.0	-19.2
> \$30,000 to ≤ \$50,000	69.2	75.7	74.2	72.5	68.3	61.0	-14.7
> \$50,000 to ≤ \$100,000	69.6	76.7	77.2	77.4	71.2	65.7	-11.0
> \$100,000	66.2	69.7	75.3	74.0	71.5	66.7	-3.0
Language							
Neither English nor French	61.5	62.1	68.3	56.7	45.6	32.6	-29.5
Other mother tongue, speaks English or French	74.0	79.7	78.9	76.2	70.5	63.4	-16.4
English or French mother tongue	60.2	69.2	65.0	66.2	64.9	61.0	-8.2
Education							
Less than high school	64.7	69.4	71.4	63.4	59.8	46.9	-22.5
High school graduate	68.7	75.7	74.5	70.8	65.4	55.4	-20.3
Some postsecondary	72.1	78.9	75.9	73.8	67.3	60.8	-18.1
University degree	73.8	80.9	79.3	77.0	70.8	67.1	-13.8
Socioeconomic status							
Low income, ¹ high school or less education, mother tongue not English or French	68.7	74.2	75.6	69.8	62.9	50.7	-23.5
High income, ² university education, English or French mother tongue	56.9	67.3	65.6	68.8	66.7	66.4	-0.9
Immigrants not included in above groups	69.1	76.2	75.2	73.9	68.4	61.9	-14.3
Source country/region							
United States	31.0	38.4	41.7	41.8	44.9	40.5	2.1
Central America	66.4	77.1	74.2	72.1	67.5	59.0	-18.1
Caribbean	64.7	72.2	64.1	66.5	67.7	58.2	-14.0
South America	71.6	73.8	68.5	70.0	73.8	72.5	-1.3
Northern Europe	54.4	53.9	45.0	49.2	48.1	45.2	-8.7
Western Europe	50.2	52.9	52.4	53.5	47.9	47.9	-5.0
Southern Europe	53.8	52.8	81.4	83.5	78.7	62.1	9.4
Eastern Europe	84.6	84.3	83.6	84.2	78.6	71.7	-12.6
Africa	78.3	86.2	83.0	76.8	77.2	73.8	-12.5
South Asia	55.7	66.0	68.0	68.5	67.2	59.8	-6.2
Southeast Asia	79.2	81.9	79.0	74.8	70.3	61.3	-20.7
East Asia	80.4	82.9	80.9	73.7	57.0	44.8	-38.1
West Asia	79.7	86.6	84.1	82.1	74.6	69.7	-16.9
Oceania and other	56.9	53.9	50.1	55.7	60.7	49.0	-5.0
Sample size	64,787	123,636	137,708	138,024	163,270	214,067	...

... not applicable

1. Low income is adult-equivalent adjusted income of \$30,000 or less.

2. High income is adult-equivalent adjusted income of over \$50,000.

Sources: Statistics Canada, 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006 and 2016 censuses of population, and 2011 National Household Survey.

(Hou & Picot, 2019, pg. 3)

Feng and Hou also point to the decline during the intercensal years of 2006 – 2011 and 2011 – 2016 periods, in a variety of the above demographics. Between the 2006 – 2011 and 2011

– 2016 censuses, there was an 8.7 and 9.7 percentage point decline in families with incomes of less than \$10,000. For families with neither English or French as a first language, the decline in naturalization rates between 2006 – 2011 and 2011 – 2016 were 11.1 and 13 percentage points. And for those with less than high school education, the decline in naturalization rate between 2011 – 2016 was 13 percentage points. As noted in the final column of the table under “1996-to-2016 change (percentage points)” the greatest declines were in the most vulnerable demographics; those with low income, language ability and education. However, declines were noted amongst almost all variables.

Potential explanations for declining citizenship

Hou and Picot also contribute one potential explanation for a decline in citizenship: economic prosperity in one’s home country. Their research indicates that the drastic decline in citizenship uptake by Chinese immigrants and overall reduction in those from East Asia may be due to China’s economic rise (Hou & Picot, 2019, pg. 5). Thus, Chinese citizens may be less inclined to obtain Canadian citizenship. This same logic could be applied to other growing economies but the decline in naturalization rates would likely be less given the overall number of Chinese immigrants to Canada. However, further research would be necessary to explain the decline in other regions like Central America, Southeast and West Asia.

Marc Helbling (2013) posits that naturalization rates depend on a variety of factors, including immigration policy or low demand from non-citizens (Helbling, 2013, pg. 562). He posits that naturalization rates may actually be more influenced by immigration policies than by naturalization policies. Several researchers also credit the naturalization process to a cost-benefit analysis done by immigrants that depend on a variety of push and pull factors by source and host

countries (Dronkers & Vink, 2012 and DeVoretz & Pivnenko, 2005). However, given that it is difficult to directly link changes in citizenship policies to a declining naturalization rate, more research is needed to understand other potential explanations for a decline in Canadian naturalization rates.

Using indices to measure inclusion: problematic for naturalization rates

A plethora of literature exists in academia that attempts to measure a country's ability to integrate newcomers through a variety of indices based on a state's multicultural policies. These policy frameworks can provide important contributions to naturalization and citizenship policies, but often times they fall short. Such indices use a variety of variables – political, economic and social – in order to measure how, and to what extent, state policies contribute to newcomer's sense of belonging and integration (which will be discussed further in this paper). Some also factor in newcomer's ability to naturalize and obtain citizenship. The following are a few of the policy indices indicated in research on citizenship:

1. Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX): is a tool that measures policies that seek to integrate newcomers based on 167 indicators and 8 policy areas – labor market mobility, education, political participation, access to citizenship, family reunion, health, permanent residence, anti-discrimination. (Huddleston et al., 2015).
2. The Scanlon-Monash index: uses belonging, worth, social justice and equity, participation, acceptance and rejection and legitimacy as factors. (Painter, 2013, pg. 9)
3. The Social Quality Approach: uses a broad approach to measure socio-economic security, social cohesion, social inclusion and social empowerment. (Painter, 2013, pg. 10)

4. Barrier index: developed by Thomas Janoski to identify the legal barriers to naturalization, based on twelve historical, political and economic factors – good conduct, willingness to integrate, language skills, dual nationality, application complexity, application fees, state discretion in granting citizenship, residency requirements, *jus sanguinis* laws, women’s citizenship rights and transfer of citizenship. (Janoski, 2010).
5. European Union Democracy Observatory on Citizenship (EUDO): uses 27 typologies of citizenship acquisition requirements across European countries (Vink, & Honohan, 2013a)

Some researchers note the benefits of using such indices: that it allows researchers to compare a large range of state policies and to create typologies of citizenship regimes and understand how they evolve over time (Helbling & Vink, 2013). However, using indices as a measure of multiculturalism, naturalization or citizenship policies is problematic in a variety of ways. Sara Goodman’s (2015) research on indices outlines some of these problems and starts by explaining the difficulties of concept validity. The use of indices lacks “shared definitions” and “boundary maintenance” which creates difficulties in determining causation. Therefore, it is often difficult to accurately explain the effects of a policy to its “theoretical justification” (Goodman, 2015, pg. 1907). The second issue is ensuring that the indices accurately measure the concepts they are supposed to. Policies are often prone to other intended or accidental outcomes that are not as a result of the actual policy that is enacted. Therefore, it is difficult to isolate the cause of one (or multiple) policies to the proposed outcome. Finally, Goodman notes that often times policy relies on an, “additive relationship between policies, aggregating static policy dimensions – from labor market practices to access to citizenship to family reunification provisions” (Goodman, 2015, pg. 1907). In other words, policy planners tend to add policies on

top of others and suggest that the conclusions drawn are based on the initial policies put in place, which “neglects the possibility that these sub policies differently affect outcomes” (Goodman, 2015, pg. 1907).

Other problems lie in the convoluted nature of indices that use unique variables to measure multiculturalism or citizenship. A study of European databases that measure policies found that “most indices consist of different components and are sometimes weakly related to each other even if they can be explained by similar factors” (Helbling, 2013, pg. 585). This result is confirmed in the case of immigration and citizenship. Correlation between the two is often quite low, whereas correlation within the groups themselves are higher. Moreover, analyses of the myriad of citizenship indicators shows the variety that exists. For example, one set of indices measuring citizenship uses solely legal aspects, while another uses more complex legal indicators, such as jurisprudence, administrative decrees, local implementation practices, and cultural aspects. Other indices use more than 80 variables (Helbling, 2013, pg. 570).

However, Vink (2017) notes that there are some benefits of indices to measure citizenship and naturalization rates in that it allows us to create *typologies* in order to cross compare citizenship regimes. In particular it allows researchers to understand five main aspects of citizenship: the ascriptive membership rights required for citizenship, the process of acquisition, loss of citizenship regulations and *jus soli* and *jus sanguinis* laws (Vink, 2017, pg. 224). These factors can then be used to contribute particular attributes to a state’s citizenship policies. Some of the indicators mentioned – comprehensive and specific as well as static and dynamic citizenship policies – contribute to a state’s citizenship typology. Janoski also supports “the long-term existence of nationality regime types” (Janoski, 2010, pg. 243). The advantage of these

typologies of regimes allows for generalization, interdisciplinarity, methodological nationalism, data validity and availability and political contestation (Vink, 2017, pgs. 238-240).

Defining what we want to measure

Throughout this paper, constructing an understanding of citizenship has proven to be difficult and this effects how we measure citizenship acquisition. This experience is shared by academics and state actors who report solely on data that is obtainable and defined by the state. Therefore, naturalization data for most countries (including Canada) is a straightforward measure of those who go through the naturalization process. However, as noted in the Hou and Picot research, measuring naturalization rates is quite complex and requires nuance. Thomas Janoski (2013) outlines some of those difficulties and discusses (1) the different ways that citizenship could be measured and (2) what variables should be considered to measure. The below findings outline these considerations:

1. Solely measure those who are eligible and go through the naturalization process
2. The number of people who are born of foreign parents and gain nationality through *jus soli* rules
3. Those who have special integration privileges (mainly applicable in the European context of former colonizing countries that can pass citizenship to its colonized states: Netherlands, United Kingdom etc.)
4. Specifying the base upon which naturalization should be standardized: based on stocks of foreign population on a territory, stocks of foreign-born population or the population as a whole

5. Consider other rates that may measure citizen integration (for example, rejection, cohort and group-specific rates)

(Janoski, 2013, pg. 660)

Janoski (2013) considers these unique measures as either a narrow focus or a broad focus. The narrow focuses solely on those who go through the naturalization process and negates the other listed possible measures of citizenship (as listed). The broad focus encompasses variables outside the usual scope of states for those who become citizens. **In the Canadian context, this point is particularly relevant, as jus soli births aren't measured in the naturalization rates.** Further academic and moral debate could be raised if measuring jus soli births are justifiable, as they are born citizens and thus are not part of any irregular process to acquire citizenship; but are born to non-citizen parents (Janoski, 2010, pg. 25). This point gains significant saliency on the discussion of birth tourism. Janoski's excerpt from W.R Brubaker's research notes the complications that lie in *not* measuring jus soli births and the implications this has for measuring the naturalization rate:

“If jus soli always comes up when discussing naturalization, are they not more or less what we refer to as citizenship acquisition? It seems that if we are looking at the importance of naturalization and for its impact on society, the wider term with jus soli just makes more sense. Further, if you discuss naturalization rates in the context of jus soli, one bears some responsibility for calculating the size and impact of jus soli”.

(Janoski, 2013, pg. 661)

The next complication of concern is to consider what denominator should be used to measure the naturalization rate. Janoski's research indicates the myriad of options there are to use as the basis for naturalization rates: stocks of foreign population on a territory, stocks of foreign-born population or the population as a whole. The stock of foreign population would be an indicator of “the number of people who could naturalize, or the relevant ‘population at risk’”

(Janoski, 2013, pg. 663). However, this figure is (1) difficult to obtain and (2) not all foreign population is eligible to naturalize, such as individuals with student or work permits. However, Janoski seems to hint that it could provide greater insight into jus soli births. The current denominator used to measure the Canadian naturalization rate by IRCC and Statistics Canada is the foreign-born population eligible for citizenship. But, using this rate leads to the problems outlined by Hou and Picot (2019). Those who are foreign born may have naturalized years or even decades ago and distorts the overall naturalization rate (as will be explained in the next section). Therefore, it is clear that defining the what and how in the measurement of citizenship is a complex task. However, there is one measurement that is verifiable and confirmed by research and academia in both European and American contexts: length of time in a country.

Time as a determinant of naturalization

One conclusion that can be drawn from a variety of quantitative research on measuring citizenship rates across North America and Europe is that *time* is a critical factor in the naturalization rate. That is, the longer an individual has been in a host country, the more likely they are to be citizens. This concept is supported by high levels of naturalization in Canada, USA and Europe amongst immigrants who have been in a host country for 10+ years – see tables 3, 4. As previously mentioned, Canada has renowned levels of naturalization, as outlined in table 3. The Canadian context is highlighted by naturalization rates of between 82%-98% for immigrants with more than 15 years in Canada (Xu & Golah, 2015, pg. 9). The United States has dramatically lower overall naturalization rates but follows a similar trend for immigrants with 11+ years in the USA up to a high of 86.9% for Philippine immigrants with 21-25 years of residence (Bloemraad, 2002, pg. 200). Vink et al. research on European naturalization rates finds

that individuals with less than 10 years in a host country are roughly 90% less likely to have host country citizenship (Vink et al., 2013b, pg. 11). Some hypotheses for the high levels of naturalization rates are less restrictive citizenship policies at the time of application, increased integration and improved individual characteristics like language, education and earnings.

The question could be asked: is there reason to be concerned with drops in naturalization for new immigrants if in the long run there is a high tendency to become citizens? The answer is yes for two reasons. One, as outlined by Hou & Picot and Griffith, naturalization rates for new immigrants in 1996 was 68.1% and fell to 43% in 2016. Perhaps this figure will simply shift upon an immigrant spending more time in the host country. However, as I will explain in the next part, citizenship plays a critical role in the integration process for newcomers – particularly when received at peak “life course” moments – and especially to vulnerable immigrants.

Table 3

Table 2: Citizenship Take-up Rate by Region of Birth and by YSL, 2006 Census

Place of birth of Immigrants	Years Since Landing				
	3-4	5-14	15-24	25-34	35+
Asia	46.3%	86.0%	94.4%	96.4%	97.6%
Eastern Asia	44.1%	87.4%	95.7%	97.2%	98.2%
Southern Asia	42.8%	80.9%	90.3%	94.5%	97.0%
Southeast Asia	49.7%	87.9%	95.4%	97.4%	97.5%
West Central Asia and the Middle East	55.4%	90.4%	94.9%	95.5%	97.1%
Europe	51.0%	82.4%	82.7%	84.2%	92.1%
Southern Europe	61.2%	87.8%	75.8%	85.5%	91.4%
Northern Europe	37.3%	60.9%	75.3%	82.0%	90.3%
Eastern Europe	55.2%	91.4%	95.0%	95.4%	97.7%
Western Europe	37.1%	63.4%	70.7%	79.8%	92.6%
Americas	49.4%	77.0%	84.7%	84.1%	84.1%
Caribbean and Bermuda	45.1%	80.1%	89.6%	93.7%	95.9%
North America	50.4%	57.6%	57.0%	59.6%	72.9%
South America	47.2%	81.7%	91.1%	93.8%	97.4%
Central America	58.9%	84.1%	92.2%	95.2%	97.1%
Africa	48.5%	88.0%	95.2%	96.9%	97.7%
Northern Africa	47.5%	89.2%	95.4%	96.2%	98.0%
Eastern Africa	48.7%	88.5%	95.9%	98.2%	97.6%
Western Africa	53.3%	89.5%	94.7%	96.5%	93.3%
Southern Africa	42.3%	84.4%	94.3%	94.8%	97.6%
Central Africa	49.8%	81.6%	88.1%	91.4%	88.1%
Oceania	41.2%	72.2%	82.9%	84.6%	84.5%
Total	47.6%	84.1%	89.4%	89.1%	91.8%

Source: 2006 Census, 20% sample.

(pg. 9, Xu & Golah, 2015)

Table 4

TABLE 1
PERCENT OF ADULT IMMIGRANTS NATURALIZED IN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES 1990/1991

Place of Birth	Residence in Canada					Residence in the United States						
	% of Adult Immigrants Naturalized					% of Adult Immigrants Naturalized						
	All Eligible Immigrants	Yrs Res. (83-85)	Yrs Res. (76-80)	Yrs Res. (66-70)	Population Estimate	All Eligible Immigrants	Yrs Res. (82-84)	Yrs Res. (75-79)	Yrs Res. (65-69)	Population Estimate	Sample N	
China (PRC)	88.5	84.0	89.8	95.8	152,210	29,253	64.0	27.2	59.9	82.0	494,653	23,076
El Salvador	63.8	69.3	81.2	93.8	20,400	3,931	22.0	11.6	22.6	47.1	387,995	17,588
France	88.0	73.9	86.7	88.4	51,885	10,269	65.8	12.6	32.2	58.6	111,891	4,047
Germany	83.1	41.6	60.9	73.2	175,575	35,221	77.2	15.5	31.7	57.7	698,425	34,375
Greece	88.0	72.5	81.0	87.5	82,320	15,646	75.4	21.7	51.1	76.2	170,204	7,949
Guyana	86.1	78.7	90.0	95.1	61,245	11,538	53.3	23.9	58.9	78.9	101,458	3,997
Haiti	89.3	92.1	93.5	86.4	34,805	6,719	33.3	12.3	30.9	53.7	193,844	7,855
Hong Kong	87.9	86.6	92.4	95.6	124,370	23,739	73.5	30.5	73.6	87.0	128,894	5,957
India	73.1	53.4	72.2	90.7	164,570	31,737	50.4	18.6	51.8	72.2	409,157	18,646
Iran	79.0	85.4	89.0	93.8	25,340	4,734	37.9	12.7	32.6	73.6	187,109	8,648
Ireland	79.3	45.7	69.7	76.6	26,495	5,254	78.2	14.9	38.4	60.0	164,752	7,914
Italy	82.2	59.2	68.7	74.1	349,705	67,127	78.3	26.1	37.0	61.0	564,986	27,336
Jamaica	81.1	58.8	81.2	91.1	94,100	17,876	48.3	20.2	41.7	64.6	292,478	11,621
Korea	80.4	59.3	86.1	96.5	28,230	5,393	58.5	21.0	62.8	88.5	496,730	22,703
Lebanon	85.4	86.0	88.0	91.7	45,785	8,871	68.5	29.1	71.0	83.3	80,725	3,584
Mexico	81.4	72.1	79.3	86.9	14,845	2,957	29.0	17.1	23.2	34.0	3,616,564	177,472
Netherlands	87.0	32.1	49.6	76.0	127,515	25,182	69.2	7.8	24.3	48.5	91,715	4,574
Pakistan	85.5	75.1	87.3	95.6	22,840	4,342	52.5	20.9	62.0	80.4	75,253	3,321
Philippines	87.1	81.4	91.3	95.6	111,115	21,465	71.0	38.2	72.9	86.9	831,302	39,361
Poland	90.7	82.5	84.7	88.9	166,560	32,304	74.5	31.6	45.3	65.6	371,851	17,229
Portugal	65.6	44.7	57.5	71.1	150,645	28,600	48.4	15.0	31.7	50.5	199,765	9,953
UK	81.9	56.4	69.3	78.5	693,690	136,387	58.2	7.3	23.6	47.3	609,182	29,811
USA/Canada*	55.0	30.9	39.7	54.8	225,635	48,038	60.3	8.5	21.4	36.7	706,525	34,953
USSR	95.6	85.7	93.9	87.5	97,255	18,907	83.7	44.8	77.1	69.1	355,813	16,419
Vietnam	84.6	83.0	88.3	92.8	94,545	18,211	58.5	31.8	69.9	86.7	439,252	20,739

Note: *Born in the United States for residence in Canada and born in Canada for residence in the United States.
Source: Canadian figures are calculated from all "long" forms in the 1991 Canadian Census (distributed to 1 in 5 households); U.S. figures are from the 5% 1990 U.S. Census PUMS. Percentages and population estimates are adjusted using Statistics Canada and U.S. Census Bureau supplied weights. Canadian population estimates are randomly rounded to 0 or 5 as per Statistics Canada regulations.

(Bloemraad, 2002, pg. 200)

Structured mobilization: why we should care about declining naturalization rates

Another explanation of differences between states naturalization rates, as outlined by Irene Bloemraad, lies in “states normative stances regarding immigrant integration” which generate simultaneous connections between the state, immigrant organizations and individual migrants (Bloemraad, 2002, pg. 193). Bloemraad’s research into the “naturalization gap” between the USA and Canada, determines that citizenship policies and individual characteristics of immigrants alone aren’t enough to lead to such stark differences in naturalization rates. Further research done by Bloemraad in 2006 indicates the existence of 3 potential models of citizenship: (1) citizenship as a cost/benefit analysis (2) an approach that individuals may be endowed with different skills, resources and interests necessary to acquire citizenship and (3) an approach that believes states adopt citizenship regimes which either encourages assimilation or integrates immigrants (Bloemraad, 2006. pg. 686).

However, these models miss the existence of a more holistic approach that includes policies and individual characteristics called *structured mobilization*. Structured mobilization, “views political incorporation as a social process of mobilization by friends, family, community organizations and local leaders that is embedded in an institutional context shaped by government policies of diversity and newcomer settlement” (Bloemraad, 2006, pg. 667). Bloemraad believes that Canada’s model of structured mobilization, in the form of Canadian institutions and settlement services that encourage citizenship and facilitate newcomer integration, is a key contributor to its high naturalization rate. Therefore, newcomers feel a “thrust” or motivation to become citizens because, “without it they have diminished political voice, and to native-born citizens, because newcomers' failure to become citizens undermines the meaning of democracy” (Bloemraad, 2006, pg. 668). European literature on the acquisition of citizenship also confirms that institutional conditions matter, in the form of accessibility, administrative procedures and promotion of citizenship. Moreover, that research should further include destination country and origin country factors as well as individual characteristics (Dronkers & Vink, 2012, pg. 390). The theory of structured mobilization recognizes the importance of newcomer integration and naturalization and leads us to why we should care about a declining naturalization rate.

Why we should care about a declining naturalization rate

A declining naturalization rate has profound impacts on both immigrants and the social and economic fabric of Canada. First, the economic impacts of citizenship have long been noted, as citizenship provides access to new economic opportunities as well as reduces discrimination (DeVoretz & Pivnenko, 2005, Enchautegui & Giannarelli, 2015, Hainmueller et al., 2015). Second, citizenship creates a sense of belonging amongst citizenry and immigrants. Typically, it was thought that immigrants with higher socioeconomic status obtained citizenship (DeVoretz & Pivnenko, 2015). However, Peters et al. (2018) research indicates that the prospect of citizenship tends to stimulate immigrant's investment into their own human capital to acquire the language and cultural knowledge, which is a net benefit to immigrants and Canadian society (Peters et al, 2018, pg. 1052). While a variety of concerns arise around the abuse of Canadian citizenship, such as dual citizens or citizens of convenience, the current Canadian system both respects and allows these situations and is supported by institutional and legal doctrines. Third, as observed by Hou and Picot, the largest naturalization rate declines have been observed amongst vulnerable immigrants, and in particular, refugees who depend on obtaining host country citizenship. The lower rate of naturalization amongst refugees also affects the overall rate. Fourth, this decline impacts strategic and operational initiatives on government institutions like IRCC that facilitate citizenship. At present, there is a vast amount of both European and American research (Bloemraad, 2002, 2006, Enchautegui & Giannarelli, 2015, Vink & Honohan, 2013, Vink, 2017) on the qualitative impacts of declining naturalization but insufficient Canadian research as the decline has only been reported on in the last few years. However, the life course of an immigrant is complex and involves much further research.

Economic benefits of citizenship

Acquiring citizenship provides an array of economic benefits for those who naturalize, (DeVoretz & Pivnenko, 2005, Enchautegui & Giannarelli, 2015, Hainmueller et al., 2015). This is often attributed to increased employment opportunities, particularly with government, and reduced discrimination. DeVoretz and Pivnenko (2005) outline this point through the 2003 Supreme court decision that upheld the citizenship requirement for an array of Canadian federal government jobs. The claimants stated that the lawsuit was based on an, “earnings discrimination ... since immigrants without citizenship were unable to practice their profession and enjoy the relatively high earnings derived from a federal position” (DeVoretz & Pivnenko, 2005, pg. 4). The positive effects are even greater for individuals from developing states who acquire the citizenship of a developed state. Their study found that immigrants from non-OECD countries have significant increase in earnings in the long run (12.6% for females and 14.4% for males) versus OECD countries (5.9% for females and 4.1% for males) (DeVoretz & Pivnenko, 2005, pg. 16). For example, “Chinese immigrants experience a substantial earnings disadvantage upon arrival, but by becoming a citizen augments his or her earnings to a degree that nearly equals those of the Canadian-born” (DeVoretz & Pivnenko, 2005, pg. 19). This finding is particularly notable for the children of immigrants, who benefit from host country education systems and integration. Thus, acquiring citizenship opens economic opportunities that are otherwise not attainable.

Table 5, created by Picot and Feng (2011) in an OECD study on the naturalization process in Canada, shows some of the employment and occupational benefits of being a citizen (Picot & Feng as cited in OECD, 2011, pg. 158). In this table, the effects of citizenship on particular demographics are significant. As noted, the employment rate for citizens of OECD

countries is slightly higher for almost all source regions compared to non-citizens, particularly African (84.4% for male citizens, 70.5% for female citizens compared to 77.7% for male non-citizens, 58.3% for female non-citizens), and unemployment rate for citizens is lower for all source regions (Picot & Feng as cited in OECD, 2011, pg. 158). Furthermore, although a low overall share of individuals work in the public sector, those with citizenship are slightly more likely than non-citizens, particularly for Central and South America, Asia and Africa. More importantly, both male and female citizens benefit from overall higher correlation to having a share in a high-status occupation (Picot & Feng as cited in OECD, 2011, pg. 158).

A study conducted by Enchautegui & Giannarelli (2015) of the Urban Institute based in New York City explored the myriad of economic benefits that naturalization provides both immigrants and the state. The study researched 21 of the largest US cities and identifies two main benefits to those eligible to naturalize: an increase of roughly 6% both in earnings and home ownership (Enchautegui & Giannarelli, 2015, pg. 16-20). Their research also correlates earnings and home ownership and details that the increased earnings (1) improves individual ability to afford a home (2) which in turn creates a greater sense of belonging in the USA and a commitment to long term residence (Enchautegui & Giannarelli, 2015, pg. 17). The study found that if everyone eligible to naturalize in the 21 cities did so, earnings could increase by \$5.7 billion, creating \$2 billion in tax revenues and 45,000 new homeowners (Enchautegui & Giannarelli, 2015, pg. 25).

Although Switzerland has a unique, local citizenship referendum in which the municipality decides on individual citizenship, similar increases were also found. The study found that gaining citizenship increased annual earnings around \$5000 a year over 15 years,

increased tax revenues and decreased social welfare (Hainmueller et al., 2019, pg. 1). Moreover, that the largest effect on earnings was for some marginalized groups (Yugoslavia and Turkey) and those with low earnings (Hainmueller et al., 2019, pg. 4).

Table 5

Table 6.1. Labour market outcomes by citizenship among immigrants, Canada

	Source regions				
	All	Developed countries	Central and South America	Asia	Africa
Men					
Employment rate (%)					
No citizenship	81.0	83.2	81.0	77.5	77.7
With citizenship	82.7	81.5	84.3	83.1	84.4
Unemployment rate (%)					
No citizenship	5.5	4.2	7.5	6.4	10.7
With citizenship	4.4	3.5	5.2	4.7	6.1
Share in high status occupation (%)					
No citizenship	38.1	42.1	26.8	34.6	46.6
With citizenship	48.7	48.8	40.3	49.3	62.5
Share in public administration (%)					
No citizenship	1.4	2.0	0.9	0.7	1.5
With citizenship	2.3	2.8	2.4	1.6	2.8
Log weekly wages					
No citizenship	6.6	6.8	6.4	6.4	6.6
With citizenship	6.7	6.8	6.6	6.6	6.7
Women					
Employment rate (%)					
No citizenship	63.7	68.2	65.0	56.1	58.3
With citizenship	68.6	68.1	72.8	67.4	70.5
Unemployment rate (%)					
No citizenship	7.0	4.6	10.4	10.0	13.1
With citizenship	5.8	4.4	6.7	6.5	7.2
Share in high status occupation (%)					
No citizenship	54.2	62.6	48.5	39.7	58.4
With citizenship	63.1	67.4	63.3	57.8	72.9
Share in public administration (%)					
No citizenship	1.7	2.2	1.3	0.8	1.5
With citizenship	2.4	2.8	3.0	1.7	3.4
Log weekly wages					
No citizenship	6.2	6.3	6.1	6.1	6.1
With citizenship	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.4

Note: High status occupations include management, Business, Finance and administrative occupations, natural and applied science, and other professional occupations. Developed countries include North America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

Source: 2006 Canadian census.

(OECD, 2011, pg. 158)

Overall investment into human capital

The naturalization process also triggers an important investment into immigrant’s human capital (Hainmueller et al., 2019 and Peters et al., 2018). Hainmueller et al. present the “catalyst” and “crown” theories that posit that citizenship either acts as a catalyst for integration or a crown for a “successfully completed integration process” (Hainmueller et al., 2019, pg. 1). Both these theories result in a commitment by immigrants to the host country and themselves. Furthermore, the naturalization process requires applicants to take a language and knowledge test, which requires significant investment by an immigrant into their own integration process and ultimately

leads to greater employment opportunities. Peters et al. (2015) report titled “Anticipating the citizenship premium: before and after effects of immigrant naturalisation on employment” also details the invigoration of self-investment in anticipation of naturalization. He further states that this build up can signal attachment and leads immigrants to see a future in their host society. Moreover, the results conclude that “immigrants who naturalise enjoy a one-time boost in the probability of employment after citizenship acquisition, constituting an increase of 12% and 13% for men and women, respectively” (Peters et al., 2017, pg. 1059). Thus, the mere access and anticipation of naturalization acts as a catalyst to trigger an investment into immigrant’s human capital.

Towards a sense of belonging: naturalization and integration

Belonging frequently arises in the discussion around citizenship (Bevelander, 2011, pg. 238). Creating a sense of belonging has a strong impact on immigrant integration and aids in building the foundation in which we understand citizenship. The European Union definition of belonging includes social cohesion and inclusion, “[in] a process which ensures that those at risk of poverty and social exclusion gain the opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life and to enjoy a standard of living and well-being that is considered normal in the society in which they live ... in which social inclusion is seen as a pre-requisite to well-being and as contributing to the achievement of it” (Bevelander, 2011, pg. 238-239). A CIC (IRCC) report conducted by Carla Valle Painter (2013) also details the important role of inclusion in the discussion on citizenship theory. Within citizenship theory, belonging raises important debates on the interplay between individual, communal and state level factors. At the individual level, defining the scope of belonging is complicated by territory, language and ethnicity, especially if they do not match the “territorial borders” of a state (Painter, 2013, pg. 6).

Moreover, she notes that although no causal direction exists, sense of belonging and citizenship are correlated in that, “becoming a citizen may consolidate and strengthen one’s attachment to Canada, but also, realizing that one belongs may motivate citizenship take-up” (Painter, 2013, pg. 38). This study revealed several findings regarding sense of belonging in Canada:

1. Older age is consistently found to have a strong and positive impact on sense of belonging (to all geographic scales, but after a decline between youth and the early thirties for community belonging).
2. Females have slightly higher sense of belonging than males, more so to the lower geographic scales.
3. Income and education are found to have very small net effects, and findings are inconsistent (they change direction depending on the data source).
4. High income individuals understand themselves as belonging to multiple communities through multiple institutional and organizational connections and use their economic means to participate and invest in their broad community. By contrast, low income individuals define themselves as belonging to limited networks of friends and neighbors.

(Painter, 2013, pg. iii)

Therefore, sense of belonging impacts particular demographics differently than others. Of particular interest is the effects of belonging on high- and low-income individuals. The transnational nature of high-income individuals creates multiple senses of belonging and is sharply contrasted by those with low income who are confined by their economic situation. This finding is yet another factors that effects vulnerable and low-income groups.

Research done by Kristina Bakkaer Simonsen details the extent to which belonging, citizenship policies and immigrant integration interact. The study used data gathered by MIPeX

to study 19 western democracies citizenship policies as well as qualitative interviews of immigrants about their sense of belonging to the host country. The study found that sense of belonging was grouped into two criteria: ascriptive (impossible to obtain ex. being born in a country) or attainable (possible to obtain ex. acquiring host country's language). Her study indicates that, "in particular, first- and second-generation immigrants' national belonging is greater in countries where the majority population places high value on attainable boundary criteria, such as the United States, France, and Canada ... in other words, boundaries can be positive when they signal to immigrants their being welcome to belong" (Simonsen, 2019). Thus, although the complexities of belonging are subjective, a welcoming boundary criterion – requirements for belonging or citizenship – that encourages integration can contribute to immigrant belonging.

Addressing concerns of citizenship

Throughout this paper so far, I have outlined the benefits and opportunities that citizenship can present immigrants. However, there are also several legitimate concerns in regard to the openness and abuse of Canadian citizenship. The first comes in the form of dual citizenship, or what many think is a citizenship of convenience. In an article titled "Is it time to close hotel Canada?" by William Kaplan (2006) argues that citizenship policies in Canada are liberal and create unique domestic and international repercussions. The two case studies of Latvia and Somalia present cases in which Canadian citizens became presidents or members of parliament of their respective countries of origin. In response, former minister of Heritage Bev Oda stated, "permission to have persons resident in Canada sit in a foreign legislature is unprecedented ... the impact of such a practice on the integration of newcomers in an increasingly diverse Canada, which includes more than 200 ethnic groups, will need to be

carefully considered” (Kaplan, 2006, pg. 2). Kaplan notes that Latvia made the president renounce her Canadian citizenship, and not the other way around. Thus, a concern of dual citizenship lies in the use of Canadian citizenship when there are potential advantageous circumstances to being Canadian. In other words, the concern is an individual’s loyalty to Canada.

Another concern that has risen to prominence is the “citizenship for sale” regime, particularly aimed at European countries who offer citizenship for a significant financial investment. This concern arises with the greater concern of the “commodification of citizenship” as suggested by David Owen (2019) (Konrad & Rees, 2019, pg. 4). Ayelet Shachar argues that these programs may “change important moral, social and cultural aspects of the very nature of citizenship” (Konrad & Rees, 2019, pg. 4) Although Canada has never had a *citizenship* for sale regime, it has had parallel permanent residence programs in the form of the former investor class immigration program (in which a similar format still continues in some provincial programs). This program led to permanent residence and the possible eventuality of citizenship. Therefore, the commodification of both immigration and citizenship continues to be of concern.

These issues have longed plagued Canadian citizenship policy. And much like many problems that exist within government ministries there is no clear solution to this problem, as these situations are supported by legislation. As displayed through this paper, further defining citizenship raises many other concerns that complicate state laws and individual lives which in turn effects socioeconomic conditions of potential Canadians. However, where there remains a clear policy specific issue, like the commodification of citizenship, the government does have the ability and responsibility to respond. This extends to situations like birth tourism. These

complications are unlikely to be solved in the near future. However, it is pertinent that they are looked at equitably and that potential harms on vulnerable demographics are considered.

The impact of precarious situations on refugees

The refugee population has a need for citizenship that is unparalleled to other demographics. Whereas a majority of European responses to refugee crises result in temporary status for refugees, Canada is somewhat distinct. The majority of both resettled refugees and successful asylum seekers in Canada will hold permanent residence until they are able to apply for Canadian citizenship as they are unable to use the citizenship of their home country. However, permanent residence in Canada is not a permanent solution. David Owen's (2019) research on the current refugee crises in the EU advocates for citizenship regime and refugee policy coherence. Owen even goes as far as stating that refugees should enjoy "relatively speedy access to membership of the state" because their "time horizon is liable to be indeterminate – and the consequent position of refugees is that of persons who are 'situated in a condition of social civic limbo, unable to commit to building a new life because they may be returned to the old, unable to commit to the old life because they may never be able to take it up once more'" (Owen, 2019, pg. 350). Further research connects belonging to rights and citizenship which are "foundational to understandings of refugee integration" (Strang & Ager, 2010, pg. 592). The precarious situation of temporariness along with the often traumatic lived experiences of refugees inhibits their ability to successfully integrate: "there is confirmation of the assertion that integration begins, for the refugee, on reaching the place that he or she considers as the destination... however, a clear message comes through that once refugees judge that they have reached their destination society they are strongly motivated to contribute, and to avoid

dependence” (Strang & Ager, 2010, pg. 600). In other words, the grant of permanency for refugees facilitates integration; a mutually beneficial concept for both the state and refugees.

European Research Council’s original research project called MiLifeStatus by Vink et al. has explored the role of the naturalization process in the overall life course of an immigrant’s integration. Vink notes that citizenship is not necessarily a panacea for immigrant integration, but as previous research discusses, in certain circumstances it can help (European Research Council, 2016). His analyses indicate the importance of citizenship acquisition by individuals that come from politically less stable countries (Dronkers & Vink, 2012 and Vink et al., 2013b). As he states, “it matters much more where an immigrant comes from than where he or she is going” because “... citizenship confers not only political rights but also a secure residence status and diplomatic protection and for immigrant from less developed countries the comparative benefits of citizenship of a European state will be far greater than they are for immigrants from more developed states” (Dronkers & Vink, 2012, pg. 394). Quantitative analysis on the naturalization gap between Netherlands, Sweden and Germany and Switzerland finds that immigrants from developing countries naturalize much faster than immigrants from highly developed countries (Vink et al. 2013b, pg. 11). Thus, although citizenship may be difficult for refugees to attain, it is also necessary.

This is supported by American research on citizenship acquisition rates. Mossaad et al. report on citizenship acquisition by refugees in the United States concludes that between 2000-2010, refugees naturalized at a (high) rate of 66% (Mossaad et al., 2018, pg. 9175). These naturalization rates are higher than non-refugee immigrant categories that were able to naturalize during the same periods. Moreover, that refugees from Iran, Iraq and Somalia were roughly 8-19 percentage points more likely to naturalize than others (Mossaad et al., 2018, pg. 9177). This is

likely due to pressures from increased instability in their home country which in turns creates pressure to naturalize. The study also finds that four variables influenced refugee naturalization rates: resettlement location, economic conditions, urban density, and ethnic networks” (Mossaad et al., 2018, pg. 9177). For example, those that lived in an area with a high proportion of conationals had a 3% higher likelihood to naturalize and those places in areas of high and low urban density were more likely to naturalize than those in moderate urban density (Mossaad et al., 2018, pg. 9177). Therefore, both quantitative and qualitative analyses point to the role that citizenship plays in the overall integration of refugees, as “citizenship brings refugeehood to an end” (Orgad, 2017 as cited in Shachar et al., 2017, pg. 718).

IRCC’s role in citizenship acquisition and the naturalization process

IRCC plays a critical role in the implementation and promotion of the naturalization process and citizenship. Citizenship is a core responsibility in IRCCs overall objectives, to “promote the rights and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship ... so that Canadians can participate fully in civic society” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2018b, pg. 18). Moreover, IRCC has 3 fundamental goals pertaining to citizenship:

1. Facilitate the arrival of people and their integration into Canada in a way that maximizes their contribution to the country
2. Enhance the values and promote the rights and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship.
3. Reach out to all Canadians and foster increased intercultural understanding and an integrated society with equal opportunity for all, regardless of race, ethnicity and religion.

(Painter, 2013, pg. 2)

Unlike its American counterparts, IRCC is unique in that it plays a role in the promotion of citizenship (Bloemraad, 2002, pg. 196). Given the aforementioned goals of IRCC, the promotion of citizenship is within their mandate. Moreover, the departmental plan of 2018-2019 outlines a variety of responsibilities and goals that pertain to immigration more generally, including targets for integration, economic independency, employment and creating a sense of belonging. Within the core responsibility of citizenship, IRCC has a performance target for an overall naturalization rate of 85% of permanent residents to become citizens that is measured every 5 years (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2018a, pg. 19). As of current, they have consistently met their targets as overall naturalization rates have remained steady. Furthermore, the current Liberal government campaigned on the elimination of citizenship processing fees by increasing application processing expenditures by 40% - from 75 million to 110 million – which, “suggests the government expects a 40% increase in new citizens by 2024” (El Assal, 2019). However, we have yet to see any action on this promise and as will be discussed in the recommendations, there is much room for improvement.

Recommendations

There are a variety of ways to sufficiently address the declining naturalization rate for newcomers. Through collaboration between government and academic stakeholders, I believe there is a lot we can learn to better understand the Canadian naturalization process and effect that citizenship has on newcomers. The process and results will be beneficial for both the government and newcomers. In other words, with such research, we will be able to better determine the effects of citizenship on newcomers in Canada and especially on the refugee population.

Therefore, I propose the following recommendations:

1. That IRCC improve their data collection method for naturalization rate by:
 - a. Reconsidering the measurement of the overall naturalization rate to more accurately reflect the reality of naturalization rates. That includes the potential to measure *jus soli* births and to eliminate the measurement of those with 10+ years of residence in Canada (or exclude it from overall measurement and focus on 5-10 year period).
 - b. Collecting more nuanced data in order to better inform reports and research about naturalization rates, sense of belonging, impact on refugees and overall integration.
2. Reiterate the call made by Andrew Griffith to set more meaningful performance standards of naturalization rates (Griffith, 2019). As previously mentioned, the naturalization rate target is set at 85% by IRCC. However, this is for the overall naturalization rate. IRCC should reconsider making a target directed at the newcomer population for those between 5-10 years of residence in Canada to target the population of concern.

3. To encourage further Canadian research of the effects of citizenship and the naturalization process on immigrants.
 - a. Throughout my research for this paper, there was a variety of detailed research based in the United States and especially Europe, perhaps for obvious reasons like funding and the unique nature of citizenship regimes within Europe. However, Canada's world-renowned naturalization rate status should be supported by extensive qualitative and quantitative analyses.
 - b. A project similar to that of Maarten Vink's *Milifestatus* would be beneficial to better understand the naturalization process as part of an immigrants integration trajectory.
4. A warning to politicians that making changes to the naturalization process – like the 2006 changes to make citizenship “harder to gain and easier to lose” – has profound effects on both vulnerable immigrants and the socioeconomic fabric of Canada and may drive away the very immigrants we are trying to integrate.

The proposal of these considerations would provide: (1) researchers, policy makers and immigrants themselves a better idea of the effects of citizenship (2) provide a quantitative and qualitative foundation on which to better understand immigrant integration – as Maarten Vink states, “science instead of gut feelings” (European Research Council, 2016) – and (3) help to understand some of the underlying concerns of Canadian citizenship policies. In a time of heightened concern of immigrants, this research could provide much needed clarification.

Conclusion

Canada's history of relatively open citizenship policies and institutional and legislative support through the 1970's provided a foundation in which citizenship remain unchanged for years. Our very definitions of citizen and citizenship are based within these doctrines, such as the Charter and Multiculturalism Act, which outline the duties, rights and responsibilities of citizens (Government of Canada, 2020b). The first recordings of naturalization rates in 1996 indicated that roughly 68% of newcomers and upwards of 80% of those with 10+ years of residence in Canada naturalized (Hou & Picot, 2019). Comparatively speaking, this was profound (Bloemraad, 2002 and Janoski, 2010). However, as citizenship started to be redefined in 2006, changes began to happen to the naturalization rate and mainly effected the vulnerable immigrant population.

A recent report by Hou and Picot outlined that although the overall naturalization rate has remained stable, there has been a significant decline in newcomers propensity to naturalize, down from 68.1% in 1996 to 43% in 2016 (Hou & Picot, 2019). This decline was particularly noted in immigrants from less advantaged socioeconomic situations as well as East Asia. Although creating a causal argument between the changes implemented in 2006 to a decline in naturalization rate is difficult, quantitative data indicates that declines began in 2006. Another salient issue in quantitative data and naturalization rates lies in the difficulty of measuring naturalization rates (Huddleston et al., 2015, Painter, 2013, Janoski, 2010 and Vink & Honohan, 2013a). Indices are often used to measure a state's attitude towards integration, including its naturalization policies (Goodman, 2015, Helbling, 2013 and Vink, 2017). However, indices are often convoluted and measure different aspects that are difficult to prove effects. Moreover, defining what it is we want to measure is a difficult task (Janoski, 2013). IRCC current

measurement of naturalization rates includes all immigrants eligible to naturalize. This measurement excludes jus soli births and uses a denominator which doesn't accurately reflect the fluctuations currently happening. It also distorts the overall naturalization rate because those with 10+ years of residence in Canada are likely to have naturalized (Hou & Picot, 2019).

A declining citizenship rate has impacts on the economic and social fabric of Canada. A variety of research indicates the economic benefits of citizenship compared to non-citizens (DeVoretz & Pivnenko, 2005, Enchautegui & Giannarelli, 2015, Hainmueller et al., 2015). Moreover, that the very ability to naturalize spurs an investment into an immigrant's human capital that assists in economic and social integration through employment and knowledge of a country's language and culture (Hainmueller et al., 2019 and Peters et al., 2018). These facets also contribute to immigrant sense of belonging to Canada which has been qualitatively concluded to spur long term investment to the host country (Bevelander, 2011, Painter, 2013 and Simonsen, 2019). However, this is often where concerns over dual citizenship and liberal citizenship policies arise (Kaplan, 2006 and Konrad & Rees, 2019). Unfortunately, some of the most notable declines in the Canadian naturalization rate were found in vulnerable immigrant groups – those with low income, education and language skills (Hou & Picot, 2019). This particularly concerns refugees who depend on receiving Canadian citizenship in order to obtain permanence in a country and be able to invest in their own social and economic integration (Owen, 2019, Strang & Ager, 2010, Dronkers & Vink, 2012, Vink et al., 2013b and Orgad, 2017 as cited in Shachar et al., 2017).

Throughout this paper, I have attempted to demonstrate the effect that citizenship and the naturalization process have on immigrants. Canada, as a leader in naturalization rates, has a

critical role to play in continuing to show the world that newcomer integration is important. The very legislative nature of citizenship in Canada provided the political intervention that took place during the 2006 – 2015 changes to redefine citizenship. The subsequent complications that were raised and potential effect that these changes had on newcomer’s naturalization rate was a first for Canada. As immigration continues to be at the forefront of political campaigns, citizenship could be too. In the section “why we should care about a declining naturalization rate”, I outlined some of the economic and integration benefits that citizenship provides and the need for citizenship by Canada’s refugee population. Therefore, I believe it is pertinent that citizenship is *accessible*. Furthermore, redefining what Canadian citizenship is highly subjective. By attempting to define it, we may be pushing away the very immigrants that we encourage to naturalize. That being said, I also don’t believe, as Maarten Vink states, that citizenship is a panacea for immigrant integration. Immigrant integration is a complex and nuanced process that is experienced uniquely by each immigrant. Therefore, I believe that further research and a Canadian version of *Milifestatus* will help to provide greater understanding of the role of citizenship on newcomer integration. The intent of this paper was to provide a basis in which further research could be conducted. By encouraging research on citizenship, I believe we can create a mutually beneficial situation for the state and immigrants and build upon our understandings of integration.

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