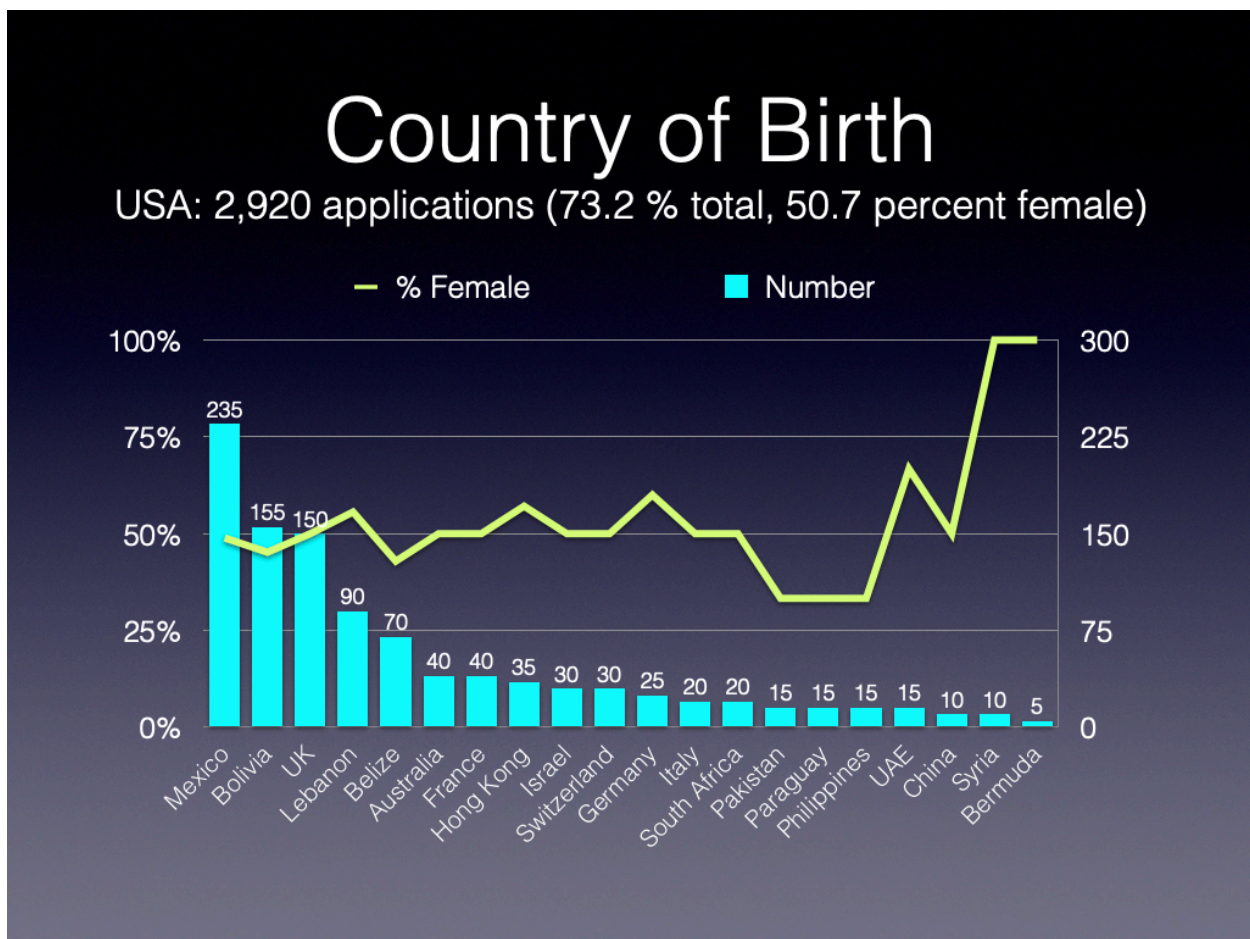


## C-3: Who is likely to apply

One of the more striking aspects of the parliamentary discussions was the relative lack of data and evidence regarding the expected numbers of applicants, with both former minister Miller and current [minister Diab stating](#) the numbers were more likely to be in the tens of thousands, not hundreds of thousands. The PBO provided useful [high level estimates](#) of 115,000 over five years; however, there were no data or estimates on who were most likely to apply.

However, IRCC detailed data on the 4,000 pending applications provides a preliminary snapshot of who is likely to apply in terms of country of birth, gender and age. The overwhelming majority are American-born, there are roughly an equal number of males and females with some notable country of birth exceptions, and the largest age groups are children and working age adults.

As expected, the USA-born form the vast majority, 73.2 percent. Figure 1 highlights the country of birth for the top 20 countries after the USA along with the percentage of females.

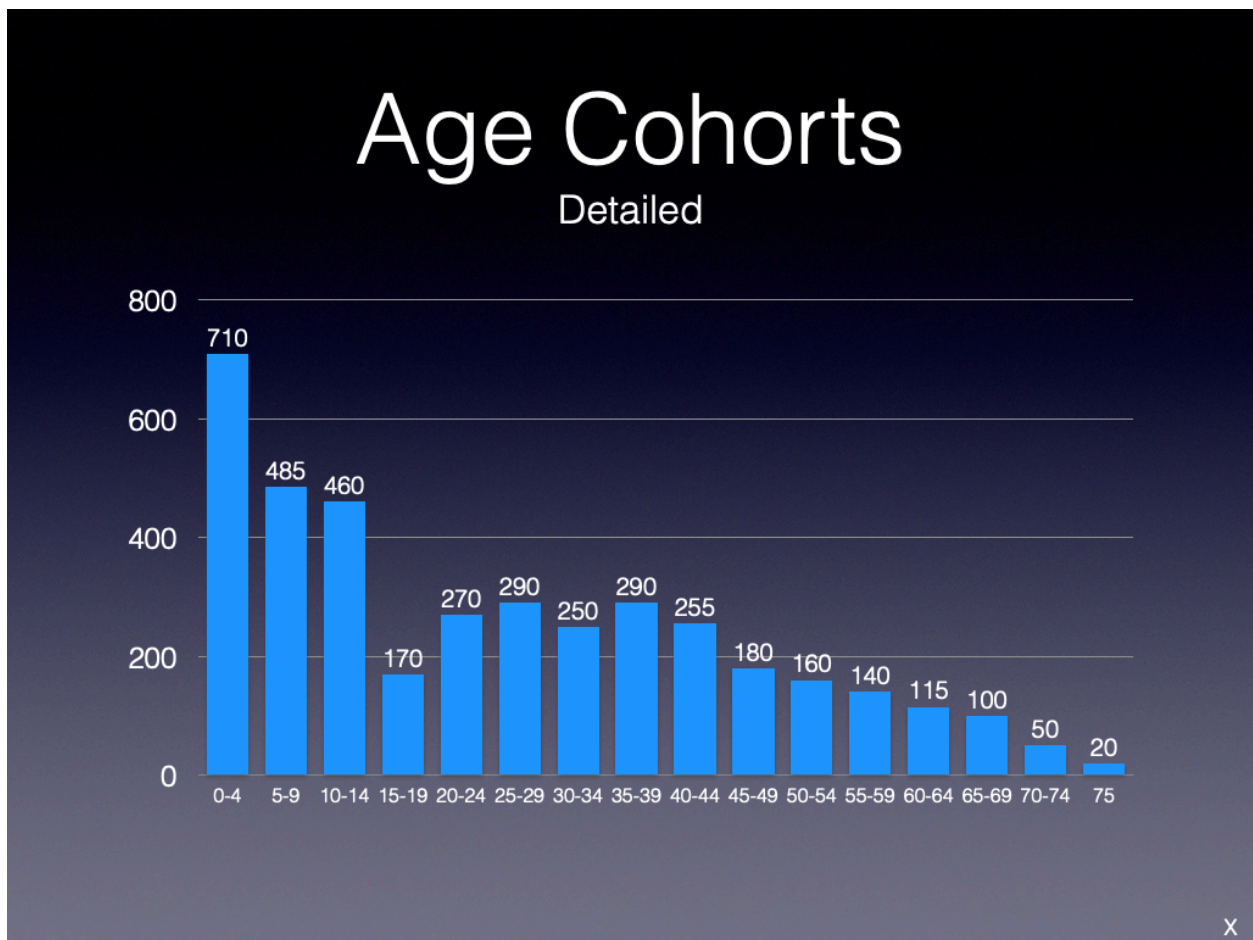


The percentage of American born is higher than the estimated two-thirds of expatriates that live in the USA. Moreover, only one-third of citizenship proofs were to American-born Canadian citizens. While there are a variety of reasons that Canadians obtain proofs, the higher percentage suggests greater awareness of the change in the USA among early requesters and greater interest in having Canadian citizenship proof given the turmoil and xenophobia under the Trump administration.

The top ten countries account for 94.4 percent of all applications. It is striking that recent major source countries such as India, China, Philippines and Nigeria have few or no applications, reflecting fewer third-generation immigrants overall. Given coverage in Indian media, it is surprising that there are no applications from Indian-born. The relatively high number of Mexican-born likely reflects long-standing Canadian expatriate communities and the number of Paraguayan-born reflects established Mennonite colonies.

The percentage of females overall is 50.8 percent. Notable outliers are Lebanon, Hong Kong, Germany, UAE and Syria, with more than 55 percent female and Belize, Pakistan, Paraguay and Philippines with less than 45 percent female.

Age analysis, as shown in Figure 2, indicates that 42.0 percent are children and 42.6 percent are working age adults. It is likely that some of the working age adults are the parents of these children. From a gender perspective, only seniors have a major imbalance, with 55.9 percent women.



How do these numbers compare to previous cohorts of “Lost Canadians?” As immigration ministers and officials have noted, the number based upon citizenship proofs accounted for some 22,000, 2007-2022, a far cry from the [early arguments made by activists](#). Moreover, this represented a small percentage of the total number of citizenship proofs issued, 2.5 percent. Most previous cohorts were [American-born \(e.g., border babies\) or residents](#).

Compared to the number of proofs issued in 2024, C-3 applications are balanced between under 18 and working age adults (18-54), about 45 percent for each cohort, possibly family groups, compared to proofs which are about two-thirds under 18. Similarly, C-3 applications from American residents are about twice that of all citizenship proofs, 73 percent compared to 35 percent. Of note, however, is the percentage of American-born and residents has increased substantially over the 2015-24 period, from 20.5 to 35.3 percent, perhaps reflecting the impacts of the Trump administration policies and language.

It will remain to see the degree to which this second generation cohort claims citizenship under C-3 provisions or, whether like other cohorts, they prefer to remain “lost.” The government clearly does not expect that the vast majority will not claim Canadian citizenship in the near future but that may change over time as the political climate in the USA, in particular, may drive greater interest.

The electoral impact is likely to be limited, given that close to half of pending applications are under voting age. This will, however, increase over time as this cohort ages, more applications emerge and will likely also become more diverse in terms of countries of birth. Based upon Parliamentary Budget Office estimates of approximately 20,000 applications annually, the number of voting age would be approximately 11,000. Assuming the same voting rate as in the 2025 election (56.5 percent), the total number of expatriate votes cast would be approximately 6,000.

In the longer-term, these numbers would likely become more significant in terms of numbers and countries of residence. This may result in the major political parties considering whether to emulate countries like the USA which have organized efforts to encourage expatriate voting.

Andrew Griffith is the author of *[“Because it’s 2015...” Implementing Diversity and Inclusion](#)*, *[Multiculturalism in Canada: Evidence and Anecdote](#)* and *[Policy Arrogance or Innocent Bias: Resetting Citizenship and Multiculturalism](#)* and is a regular media commentator and blogger ([Multiculturalism Meanderings](#)). He is the former Director General for Citizenship and Multiculturalism and has worked for a variety of government departments in Canada and abroad and is a fellow of the Environics Institute.