

Ecuadorians in Canada: Contexts of Departure and Arrival

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2002

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I. Context of Departure

a. Numbers of incoming population, time periods, peak flows

Table 1. Refugee Claimants from Ecuador by sex, 1989-2002

Year	Male	Female
1989	23	20
1990	79	58
1991	79	48
1992	103	90
1993	35	36
1994	54	39
1995	48	48
1996	41	25
1997	29	18
1998	24	27
1999	35	30
2000	50	52
2001	43	46
2002	27	30

Source: Elmagraby, Sambia. 2002. Figures on refugee claimants from Ecuador. Statistics Section, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Ottawa.

Table 2. Refugee Claimants from Ecuador by age group, 1989-2002.

Year	0-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-65
1989	2	2	2	3	6	7	8	6	3	4	0
1990	2	12	8	2	18	19	30	15	14	6	5
1991	2	6	6	10	10	16	28	23	12	8	5
1992	3	11	8	10	17	41	36	32	16	7	4
1993	1	6	4	10	2	13	13	4	6	5	3
1994	3	7	2	8	14	21	20	10	3	1	2
1995	8	6	3	9	19	16	12	11	6	4	1
1996	3	6	3	8	12	14	5	6	4	2	3
1997	3	2	5	10	7	9	3	4	0	2	0
1998	6	3	3	4	6	10	8	4	3	0	1
1999	9	4	6	10	12	7	4	6	4	2	1
2000	9	5	9	6	20	20	9	13	8	1	0
2001	12	8	11	16	10	9	10	6	4	2	0
2002	11	4	11	5	5	10	2	5	1	2	0

Source: Source: Elmagraby, Sambia. 2002. Figures on refugee claimants from Ecuador. Statistics Section, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Ottawa.

Table 3. Refugee Claimants from Ecuador by marital status, 1989-2002.

Year	Single	Married	Widowed	Divorced	Separated
1989	16	24	0	1	1
1990	48	75	0	6	6
1991	41	75	2	3	5
1992	59	111	3	9	5
1993	28	35	0	4	2
1994	33	41	1	7	8
1995	34	53	0	5	3
1996	26	31	0	2	5
1997	19	21	0	0	2
1998	17	24	0	3	2
1999	29	25	1	1	2
2000	38	42	0	11	8
2001	45	33	1	4	4
2002	31	18	0	4	3

Source: Elmagraby, Sambia. 2002. Figures on refugee claimants from Salvador. Statistics Section,, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Ottawa

According to 1991 census, there were 3,360 (2,700 single and 660 multiple responses). Figures about Ecuadorians in Canada were confusion. Unofficial calculation estimated the population around 20,000 to 30, 000. A reasonable estimate would be about 18,000.

Migration Flow: 1970 - 1975

Ecuador has not been as considered a conventional refugee producing country. However, there was one big flow of Ecuadorians to Canada that was identified between the late 1960s and early 1970s. A figure shows that during the period of 1970-1975, 20,000 Ecuadorians arrived, and majority of them were not professionals and they came to Canada for financial accord.

The US restricting law for Ecuadorians was one of the reasons for the flow to Canada; there are also some of them who came for family reunion as the early flow from Ecuador to Canada started in the 1950s (Lynn Phillips, 1999, 451-453).

a. State policies that contribute to displacement

Social Political Context

Ecuador had been characterized by a combination of continuing economic uncertainty, chronic political instability, strong local and inter-regional rivalries and social division.

Four political features in Ecuador since the 1950s had been the roots for the migration of Ecuadorians to Canada.

- Limited electoral franchise

- Disputes over which constitution should be adopted
- Intense subdivision of the major political parties
- Tendency of political parties to be focused on the dominant individual

Military Dictatorship.

A four-men military Junta took power in 1963, and was followed by agrarian reform in 1964, which was not successful.

Military coup took place in 1972. Two factors were significant:

- Oil exports had begun
- 1972 election

Current Policy on Refugees

Ecuador is a signatory country to the UN Refugee Convention and Protocol. Ecuador also hosted refugees and asylum seekers. In 2001, it received approximately 4,300 refugees, including 1,700 Colombians. A report also indicated that there were 30,000 Colombians living in Ecuador in refugee-like circumstances. In general, the Ecuadorian government is welcoming of Colombians because of strong social, economic and familial links between the two countries.

At present, the narcotics industry and the conflict in Colombia have increased the tension between Ecuador and Colombia on the border. Ecuador announced militarization of the border with Colombia in 2000. In 2001, the Ecuadorian military found and destroyed several cocaine processing plants. However, military action around the border region has often led to the displacement of Ecuadorian indigenous people. (Source: www.refugees.org)

Government led by Sixto Duran Ballen's initiated economic reforms but encountered fierce resistance, labour strikes, and political wars between the executive and the opposition-dominated legislation. An Indigenous peoples organization named CONAIE led a strike to fight against Duran's government which ended the land distribution program introduced in 1964 (See *Freedom in the world*, 1995, 225-227)

II. Context of Arrival

a. Canadian State Policies

Acceptance rate is being 0% for 54 claimants in 2002, 38% for 89 in 2001, 32% for 102 in 2000 and 17% for 65 in 1999 (Elmagraby, 2002). Compared with other five refugee groups, refugee claimants from Ecuador have the least number.

Canadian visa office locates in Quito, Ecuador. It provides services only for visitors. Information about staffing in the Visa sections is not available from public source.

Media

Colombian Newspaper El Tiempo (Phillips, 1999)

b. Civil Society Reception

1. Ethno-specific resource

Residential concentration

80% of Ecuadorians live in Ontario, a rather small proportion live in Quebec, and a fraction of population in Alberta and British Columbia.

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