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Portrait Report  
Hong Kong SAR  
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## Portrait of Canadians Abroad: Hong Kong SAR

Kenny Zhang

**Portrait of Canadians Abroad:  
Hong Kong SAR**

Kenny Zhang<sup>1</sup>

**Executive Summary**

Our study has confirmed that no single source provides the exact number of Canadians in Hong Kong SAR (HKSAR). Based on various available estimates, our study suggests that the total population in HKSAR with a Canadian passport is most likely in the range between 150,000 ~ 250,000, a size of Canadian population similar to that of Saskatoon or Regina. This makes Hong Kong the city boasting perhaps the largest Canadian community outside Canada.

The Canadian communities in HKSAR are not only diversified in terms of their demographic characteristics, but also in their social and economic background as well as their links to Canada and attitudes toward issues related to Canadian society and policies.

The Canadian presence in HKSAR is beyond individual level. Many Canadian organizations and business are well established and influential in HKSAR, playing an important role in connecting Canada, Hong Kong and beyond.

China does not recognize dual citizenship. However, the “One Country, Two Systems” policy gives HKSAR an exception on the citizenship. The exception allows the existence of *de facto* dual citizenship and creates controversial issues related to the recognition of the Canadian nationality and consular protection by the Canadian government in the HKSAR.

The common issues that concern most Canadians in HKSAR include their rights to be a Canadian, paying taxation or a fee for keeping a Canadian passport, their voice and message not be heard back in Canada, lack of information about opportunities in Canada, and their self-defined and perceived identities as Canadians.

Canadians in HKSAR believe strongly that Canadians’ presence in Hong Kong helps bridge Canada and China and beyond. The link to Canada is important; however, more important are the links to other parts of the world, given the nature of Hong Kong as an international business and financial hub.

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## **Introduction**

Hong Kong became a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China on July 1, 1997 in accordance with the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration.

The year 1997 turned out to be a remarkable watershed for migration patterns between Hong Kong and Canada. From 1984 to 2008, an average of 14,500 immigrants moved from Hong Kong to Canada each year, for a total of 362,522 immigrants. Nearly 93% (or 335,646) of the total Hong Kong immigrants came to Canada between 1984 and 1997, while only 7% (or 26,876) arrived in the post-97 period.<sup>2</sup>

Post-97 also saw a changing direction of movement of people between Hong Kong and Canada. In response to a new stage of prosperity and economic growth in the region, an increasing number of Hong Kong immigrants with Canadian citizenship returned to their place of birth, along with many other non-Hong Kong origin-Canadians.

Given our limited knowledge of Canadian citizens in Hong Kong, this portrait intends to provide some essential description of the size and characteristics of this Canadian community in HKSAR. It also intends to provide a brief summary of immigration and citizenship policies in HKSAR that have implications for Canadians.

The first section highlights a statistical overview of Canadian citizens in Hong Kong based on available data sources. The second section features selected prominent Canadian individuals and organizations in Hong Kong that retain connections to Canada. The third section reports the policy and regulations with regard to immigration, citizenship and dual citizenship in Hong Kong that have impact on Canadians. The fourth section summarizes the issues and concerns of Canadians in Hong Kong based on focus groups and interviews.

### **A. Number of Canadian Citizens and Data Sources:**

Hong Kong boasts one of the largest Canadian communities outside Canada. Media often reports that there are approximately a quarter of a million of Canadians living in the HKSAR, a size of population similar to that of Saskatoon or Regina. This number has been widely quoted, including in a recent speech by Hon. Senator Vivienne Poy<sup>3</sup>, to reflect the significance of the Canadian presence in this Asian business hub and the gateway to China.

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<sup>2</sup> Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *Facts and Figures: Immigration Overview*, various years. (<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/index.asp>) Accessed on September 24, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Senator Vivienne Poy, "Who's a Canadian?" Speech at University College of the University of Toronto "Asian cultures in Canada," Feb. 27, 2007, [http://www.sen.parl.gc.ca/vpoy/english/Special\\_Interests/speeches/Speech\\_U\\_of\\_T\\_270207.htm](http://www.sen.parl.gc.ca/vpoy/english/Special_Interests/speeches/Speech_U_of_T_270207.htm), accessed on Sept. 25, 2009.

However, fieldwork in HKSAR by the APF’s Project Team in October 2008 confirmed that there is no solid numbers on the total number of Canadians residing in the region. Based on this fieldwork and extensive literature surveys, this portrait report has to approximate the total number of Canadians in HKSAR by presenting a range of estimates from different sources as summarized in the Table 1 below.

Table 1: Range of Estimates of Canadians in Hong Kong

Source	Number	Definition of Canadian	Note
Media reports <sup>4</sup>	250,000	All kinds, no specific	Methods unknown
Wikipedia <sup>5</sup>	250,000	All kinds, based on passport renews	Over-stated
Canadian Consulate General in HKSAR <sup>6</sup>	220,000	All kinds, no specific	Methods unknown
Canadian census (1996-2005) <sup>7</sup>	100,000	Hong Kong origin Canadians who might have returned to Hong Kong	Under-reported
HKSAR by-census (2006) <sup>8</sup>	11,976	Those whose nationality is reported as Canadian. The nationality may be related to a person’s place of residence, ethnicity or place of birth. It may not necessarily be related to a person’s travel document.	Under-reported
HKSAR census (2001) <sup>9</sup>	33,676	Hong Kong-origin Canadians who returned to Hong Kong	Under-reported

Based on definitions and methods of these estimates, it is observed that a number based on passport renewals is likely over stated because some renewals could be made by Canadian tourists or short-term visitors who happened to be in Hong Kong. The Canadians census number is considered under reported because non-Hong-Kong-origin-Canadians are not captured if they move to Hong Kong. It is also not captured, theoretically, if the Hong Kong returnees returned to Hong Kong before or after the period of 1996-2005.

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<sup>4</sup> For example, [http://www.gcpnews.com/zh-tw/articles/2006-11-13/C1063\\_1741.html](http://www.gcpnews.com/zh-tw/articles/2006-11-13/C1063_1741.html), accessed on Sept 25, 2009.

<sup>5</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadians\\_in\\_Hong\\_Kong](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadians_in_Hong_Kong), accessed on Sept 25, 2009.

<sup>6</sup> <http://geo.international.gc.ca/asia/hongkong/geo/hongkong-bb-en.aspx>, accessed on Sept. 25, 2009.

<sup>7</sup> Chen, V., 2009, “Out- and Return-Migration of Canadian Immigrants between 1996 and 2006, Evidence from STATCAN-RDC 20% Census 1996, 2001, and 2006,” Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, [http://www.asiapacific.ca/files/canadiansabroad/chen\\_outmig9606.pdf](http://www.asiapacific.ca/files/canadiansabroad/chen_outmig9606.pdf), accessed on Sept. 25, 2009.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.bycensus2006.gov.hk/en/data/data3/index.htm>, accessed on Sept 25, 2009.

<sup>9</sup> DeVoretz, Ma, and Zhang, 2003, “Triangular Human Capital Flows: Empirical Evidence from Hong Kong and Canada,” in J Reitz (edits), *Host Societies and the Reception of Immigrants*.

Totals in the Hong Kong census or by-census are also likely under reported because they can hardly capture the Hong-Kong-origin-Canadians who returned Hong Kong but still possess Hong Kong permanent identification cards and are considered Chinese citizens.<sup>10</sup>

To sum up, it is hard to offer a single number of how many Canadians are in HKSAR. But it is fairly reasonable to estimate that the total population in HKSAR with a Canadian passport is most likely within the range 150,000 ~ 250,000.

## **B. Some Demographics of Canadians in HKSAR**

The Canadians in HKSAR can be grouped into two broader categories, namely, Hong Kong-origin Canadians and non-Hong Kong origin Canadians. They move to and live in Hong Kong for various reasons, including,

- (1) Working for international businesses (including Canadian owned) operating in HKSAR;
- (2) Returning Hong Kong-origin Canadians to HKSAR for reasons of economic and business development, personal and family affairs, or others;
- (3) Teaching and studying in HKSAR schools;
- (4) Working for Canadian governments, international organizations, or NGOs operating in HKSAR, etc.

Although Hong Kong census seems to under report the numbers of Canadians in HKSAR, it is still a unique source which provides some demographic background about a segment of Canadians who reported their nationality as Canadian in the Hong Kong census. It may not be representative for entire Canadian communities in HKSAR, but could be a unique proxy.

HKSAR conducts a full population census every ten years and a by-census is undertaken midway between each censuses. The last census was undertaken in March 2001 and the most recent by-census was conducted from July 15 to August 1, 2006. The following demographic description of Canadians in HKSAR is reported by the 2006 Population by-census<sup>11</sup>.

- The majority of Canadian citizens in HKSAR were born in Canada. Nearly 85% were born in Canada, which is even higher than the 80.2% the Canadian census reported as the percentage of the Canadian domestic population born in Canada.<sup>12</sup> In addition, 4% were born in each of Hong Kong and Mainland China; 1% was born in the US and another 6% were born in other countries (See Table 2).

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<sup>10</sup> It will be further elaborated in the section of immigration and citizenship policy in Hong Kong.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Statistics Canada, *Census snapshot: Immigration in Canada: A Portrait of the Foreign-born Population, 2006 Census*, <http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/11-008-XIE/2008001/article/10556-en.pdf> Accessed on August 29, 2008.

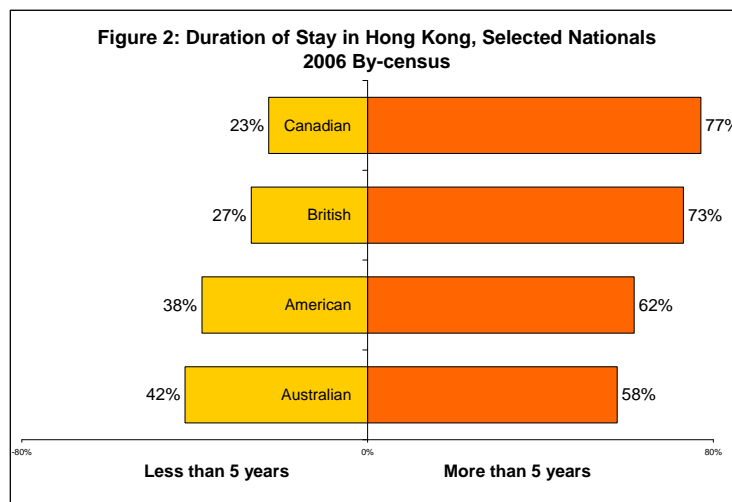
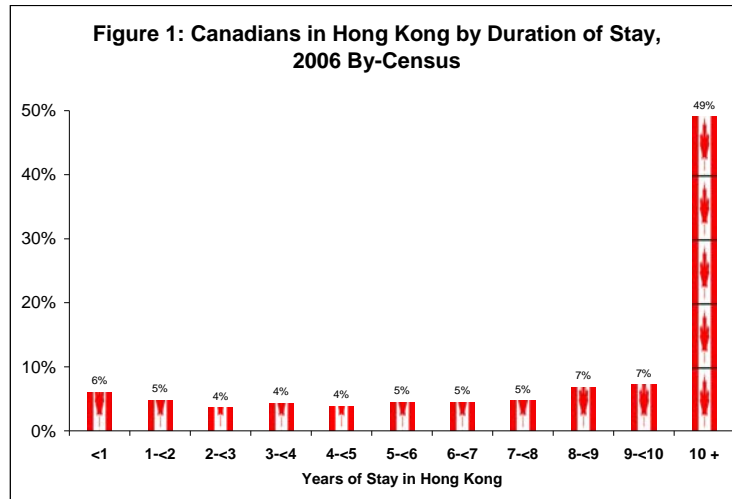
Table 2: Canadians in HKSAR by Place of Birth and Ethnicity, 2006 By-Census

Ethnicity	Place of Birth										Total	
	Canada		Hong Kong		Mainland China		USA		Other countries			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>All Canadians</b>	<b>10,168</b>	<b>84.9</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>11,976</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Of which:												
Chinese	8,965	88.2	151	30.5	436	93.2	79	57.7	354	50.0	9,985	83.4
White	1,001	9.8	164	33.1	22	4.7	48	35.0	144	20.3	1,379	11.5
Mixed	142	1.4	150	30.3	-	-	-	-	18	2.5	310	2.6
Indian	40	0.4	20	4.0	-	-	10	7.3	62	8.8	132	1.1
Korean	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	49	6.9	49	0.4
Japanese	-	-	10	2.0	-	-	-	-	20	2.8	30	0.3
Other Asian	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	4.2	30	0.3
Others	20	0.2	-	-	10	2.1	-	-	-	-	30	0.3
Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Sri-Lankan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	2.8	20	0.2
Black	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	1.4	10	0.1
Vietnamese	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.1	1	0.0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>10,168</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>11,976</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department, *2006 Population By-census*

- Canadians in HKSAR come from various ethnic backgrounds, representative of Canada’s multicultural makeup. More than eight in ten Canadians in Hong Kong are ethnic Chinese, followed by one in ten Caucasian. The remainder derives from other ethnic groups, including Indian, Korean, Japanese, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Sri-Lankan, or mixed origin.
- Taking a closer look at the place of birth of these Canadians combined with their ethnic background unveils some interesting findings. For those born in Canada, nearly 88% are of Chinese ethnicity, followed by 10% of Caucasian background. Among Hong Kong-born Canadians, Caucasians made up the most at 33%, while almost equal shares of 30% reported Chinese or mixed ethnicity. Canadians in Hong Kong who were born in Mainland China are 93% of ethnic Chinese and 5% of white ancestry. For those born in US, again the majority of 58% are ethnic Chinese with a significant 35% are white. It is notably that 7% of USA-born Canadians in Hong Kong are ethnic Indian.
- Nearly half of the Canadians in Hong Kong have been in Hong Kong for more than 10 years, and another half are almost evenly distributed within the 10-year period (See Figure 1). Compared with other major Western nationals, Canadians are likely to be longer-term foreign residents in Hong Kong as seen in Figure 2. Over 77% of Canadians have lived in Hong Kong for more than five years. This share is even higher than 73% of British who had a long colonial relationship with

Hong Kong before 1997. Australians and Americans are relatively newcomers in terms of higher percentage of residents in Hong Kong for less than five years.



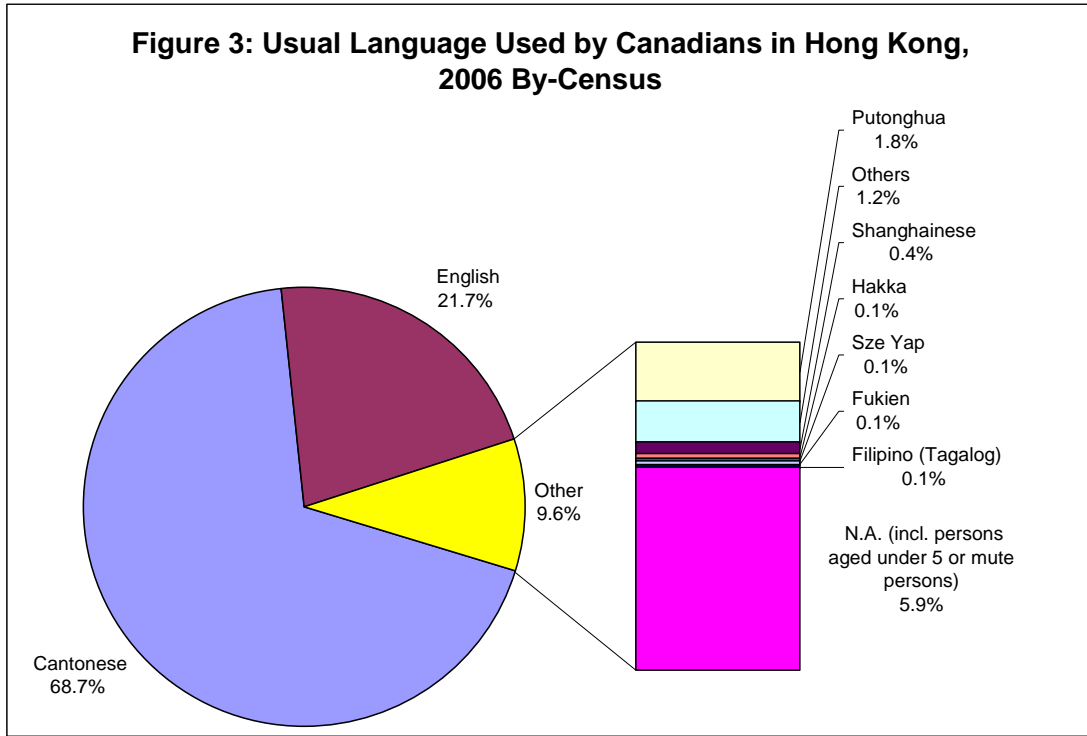
- Canadians in HKSAR show a different pattern of resident location, compared with the total population in Hong Kong. More than half of Canadian citizens concentrate in the Districts of Central & Western, Eastern, Wan Chai, Kowloon City, and Southern, while the total population living in these districts represents less than a quarter of total resident population (Table 3).

Table 3: Canadians in HKSAR by Resident District Council, 2006 By-Census

District Council	Canadian		Total Hong Kong Population	
	No.	%	No.	%
Central & Western	1,431	11.9%	250,064	3.6%
Eastern	1,393	11.6%	587,690	8.6%
Wan Chai	1,281	10.7%	155,196	2.3%
Kowloon City	1,251	10.4%	362,501	5.3%
Southern	1,228	10.3%	275,162	4.0%
Sha Tin	958	8.0%	607,544	8.9%
Sai Kung	629	5.3%	406,442	5.9%
Islands	622	5.2%	137,122	2.0%
Sham Shui Po	534	4.5%	365,540	5.3%
Yau Tsim Mong	412	3.4%	280,548	4.1%
Tsuen Wan	389	3.2%	288,728	4.2%
Kwun Tong	359	3.0%	587,423	8.6%
Tai Po	347	2.9%	293,542	4.3%
Kwai Tsing	293	2.4%	523,300	7.6%
Tuen Mun	283	2.4%	502,035	7.3%
Yuen Long	254	2.1%	534,192	7.8%
Wong Tai Sin	168	1.4%	423,521	6.2%
North	123	1.0%	280,730	4.1%
Marine	21	0.2%	3,066	0.0%
Total:	11,976	100.0%	6,864,346	100.0%

Source: Hong Kong Census and Statistics Department, *2006 Population By-census*

- Among Canadians in HKSAR, 92% or 11,017 are reported as usual residents, of whom, 5,957 are male and 5,060 are female.
- Among usual resident Canadians, two thirds speak Cantonese as usual language. Nearly one fifth speak English and less than 10% use other languages including Putonghua (Mandarin), Shanghainese, Hakka, Sze Yap, Fukien, and Filipino (Tagalog) etc. (as shown in Figure 3).



### C. Canadian Personalities and Organizations in the HKSAR

Recently, Canadian personal stories are increasingly reported through the media or other organizations. For instance, Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (Canada) released a video in June 2009 on Canadians in Hong Kong<sup>13</sup>; *Maclean's* magazine produced business stories on The Canadian diaspora in Asia<sup>14</sup>; and *South China Morning Post* reported concerns of Canadians in Hong Kong about policy changes in Canada.<sup>15</sup>

Most Canadians in HKSAR are hard to distinguish from most other residents in Hong Kong. They are likely to be found at office towers in the Central District, western bars in Central District's Lan Kwai Fong, Asian restaurants in Kowloon City, or even among crowds on the subways or buses during the rush hours. For the purpose of this report, we will only present a few prominent individuals and organizations<sup>16</sup> representative in different sectors, rather than a list of all contacts.

<sup>13</sup> *Destination Hong Kong* can be viewed online at [www.hketo.ca/destination-hong-kong/](http://www.hketo.ca/destination-hong-kong/) (accessed on June 8, 2009).

<sup>14</sup> Andrea Mandel-Campbell, Apr 9, 2007, Leaving Canada behind, [www.macleans.ca/article.jsp?content=20070409\\_104114\\_104114](http://www.macleans.ca/article.jsp?content=20070409_104114_104114) (accessed on June 8, 2009).

<sup>15</sup> Petti Fong, Feb 08, 2009, Canadian expats fear citizenship changes, <http://www.scmp.com/portal/site/SCMP/menuitem.2c913216495213d5df646910cba0a0a0/?vgnextoid=24a8b1d55a15f110VgnVCM100000360a0a0aRCRD&vgnextfmt=teaser&s=news> (accessed on June 8, 2009).

<sup>16</sup> Information about these individuals and organizations is obtained from public information whose sources are referenced.

*Personalities: Media*



([www.albertcheng.hk/](http://www.albertcheng.hk/))

**Albert Jingham Cheng** was born in Hong Kong and moved to Canada in 1968 and later became a Canadian citizen. From 1970 to 1981, Mr. Cheng worked for Air Canada at Vancouver International Airport as an aviation engineer. He returned to Hong Kong in 1981.

After returning, Mr. Cheng joined the Sing Tao Group and started his media career. As the well-known host of a feisty open-line radio program in Hong Kong, Mr. Cheng is outspoken and a highly influential media figure in Hong Kong.

In August 2004, his decision to seek elected office in the Hong Kong legislature attracted prominent and simultaneous media attention in Canada and the HKSAR. Moreover, he was obligated to renounce his Canadian citizenship as a requirement for running for office in Hong Kong<sup>17</sup>, a step he had found to be “a very serious and emotional decision.” But despite this heavy sacrifice and commitment to a long-term political project in China, he was not abandoning his transnational lifeline. “I still consider myself a Canadian and one day I will retire in Canada and apply for my citizenship again.”<sup>18</sup>

From 2004-2008, Mr. Cheng was an HKSAR Legislative Councilor. He was also a founding president of Chinese Canadian Association of Hong Kong. In 2008, he resumed his media career as Chairman of Wave Media Limited.

*Personalities: Commerce*



([www.cki.com.hk/IMG/IMG\\_content/aboutCKI/chairman\\_letter/LITzarKuoi.jpg](http://www.cki.com.hk/IMG/IMG_content/aboutCKI/chairman_letter/LITzarKuoi.jpg))

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<sup>17</sup> Similarly, Under Secretary for Commerce & Economic Development designate Gregory So gave up his Canadian citizenship to ease public concerns over his nationality in May 2008.

<sup>18</sup> David Ley and Audrey Kobayashi, 2005, “Back in Hong Kong: Return Migration or Transnational Sojourn?” RIIM Working Paper No. 05-09, <http://riim.metropolis.net/Virtual%20Library/2005/WP05-09.pdf>, accessed on September 28, 2009.

**Victor Li Tzar-kuoi**, a Hong Kong-based businessman with Canadian citizenship, is the son of tycoon and billionaire Li Ka-shing and the brother of Richard Li. Mr. Li had a net worth of C\$820 million and ranked 69th in 2008 in the Rich100 listing in *Canadian Business*.

Born in Hong Kong, Mr. Li holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering and a Master of Science degree in Structural Engineering from Stanford. He currently holds many positions including Deputy Chairman and Managing Director of Cheung Kong (Holdings) Limited; Co-Chairman of Husky Energy Inc.; Director of The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited.

Mr. Li also serves as a member of the Standing Committee of the 10th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference of the People's Republic of China. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the Commission on Strategic Development of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

Mr. Li immigrated to Canada and spent time with investment bank Wood Gundy Incorporated, a company later acquired by CIBC (a major Canadian bank). He is the Co-Chairman of Canadian-based Husky Energy.

In 2003, Mr. Li offered to invest in the then bankrupt Air Canada and to become the main shareholder in Canada's flagship air carrier which was accepted by airline management. Although this was a one-time deal that fell through, it is symbolic of the economic influence that Chinese Canadians have attained.

#### *Personalities: Sports*



([www.hkolympic.org/article/sport\\_star\\_interviews](http://www.hkolympic.org/article/sport_star_interviews))

**Marco Fu Ka-chun** was born in Hong Kong and emigrated to Canada with his family when he was young. The then 9-year-old kid found himself attracted by the colourful snooker balls before urging his father to introduce him to the sport. It was love-at-first-sight between Marco and snooker. After he was crowned the Western Canadian champion, “Wonder Boy” began to ponder his future as a professional player.

Knowing their son's ambitions, the Fu family moved back to Hong Kong in 1996. Marco, representing Hong Kong, clinched two titles at the World Youth Snooker Championships and World Amateur Championships in 1997, which in turn paved the way for him to turn professional. Marco moved on and was runner-up at Grand Prix 1998, making the 20-

year-old one of the hottest prospects in a sport in which British players had long enjoyed superiority.

It took Marco eight years to re-discover the joy of playing snooker, and by knowing that enjoyment is the key to success, Fu drove himself into the semi-final of World Snooker Championship in April 2006.

*Personalities: Entertainment*



<http://www.alivenotdead.com/lawrencechou>

**Lawrence Chou** is a Canadian singer and actor. Born in Hong Kong and raised in Vancouver, Chou developed a strong passion for music from the time he was a child. With his exceptional vocal talent, Chou won numerous singing contests in Vancouver and eventually earned a record deal with BMG in 1998. With two EPs and three LPs to his name, Chou quickly established himself as one of the brightest young singers in Taiwan, and was awarded the Best Male Newcomer award in 1998 by Channel V -- the equivalent of MTV in Asia. Chou has further revealed his musical talent as a producer and co-producer on many different albums for other artists or band since 1999, including highly acclaimed Mavis Fan's Jazz album, ASOS's rock album, and released his own independent music group album (Fuluju - Fukulukuju) in 2003, and won the Best Electronic Music Album awards in China 2004.

Chou made his debut cameo in an omnibus film Hero in Love in 2001 and quickly won the heart of the Hong Kong audience. Immediately afterwards, he collaborated with the director of Hero in Love (radio celebrity Gi See Gu Bi) once more and played the lead character in Merry Go Round, earning himself a nomination for Best Newcomer at the Hong Kong Academy Awards 2002. In 2007, Chou played in Dragon Boys, a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) miniseries directed by Jerry Ciccoritti. It aired on CBC on January 7 and 8 of 2007.



<http://www.mtime.com/person/924270/details.html>

**Karena Lam** is a Hong Kong-based award-winning actress and singer, born in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Karena was working at her family's Vancouver

restaurant when she was discovered by a talent scout from Taiwan in 1993, at age 15. The scout persuaded her to fly to Taiwan that Christmas, alone, for a singing audition in the hope of securing a professional contract. The audition was a success and she released two albums, her debut album in 1995 and her second album later in 1999. Both met with modest success.

Her film debut in 2002 changed all this and propelled her to real stardom. Karena starred in three successful Hong Kong films in the same year, winning the awards of Best Supporting Actress and Best New Performer for her role in *July Rhapsody* directed by Ann Hui (at the 2002 Hong Kong Film Awards) and for *Inner Senses* by Lo Chi Leung (at the Taiwan Golden Horse Awards), gaining her recognition as a talented young actress and marking the start of her film career.

*Personalities: Education*



([www.sosc.ust.hk/faculty/detail/davdz.html](http://www.sosc.ust.hk/faculty/detail/davdz.html))

**David Zweig** was born and grew up in Canada. He was educated in York University (Canada), Beijing Languages Institute and Beijing University (China) and earned a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Michigan (US).

Prior to moving to Hong Kong, Zweig had taught political science and international politics at Florida International University and Tufts University (US), University of Waterloo and Queen's University (Canada). In 1996, Zweig started teaching at Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) and has resided in Hong Kong since then. He is currently Chair Professor of the Division of Social Science, and Associate Dean, School of Humanities and Social Science, HKUST. He also runs the Center on China's Transnational Relations.

In addition to teaching, Zweig is active in academic research activities and publishes extensively on topics that are related to Canada and Asia. He has worked on various projects funded by international and Canadian organizations, including Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, DFAIT and Manulife. He is member of many Journal Editorial or Advisory Boards, including the University of British Columbia's *Pacific Affairs*.

*Personalities: Others*



([www.who.int/dg/chan/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/dg/chan/en/index.html))

**Margaret Chan**, fluent in English and Chinese, was born in Hong Kong. Dr Chan received her B.A. and M.D. degrees from the University of Western Ontario, Canada during the periods of 1970-1973 and 1973-1977 respectively. She undertook a rotating internship at Victoria Hospital, London, Ontario from 1977- 1978.

After training in Canada, Dr. Chan started her professional medical career in Hong Kong from 1978 to 2005, being Medical Officer, Senior Medical Officer, Principal Medical Officer, Assistant Director, Deputy Director, and Director at the Department of Health of Hong Kong.

In 2006, when Dr. Chan became Director General of the World Health Organization, Canadian media portrayed her (correctly) as the first Chinese national to lead a UN agency, but neglected to mention that she also held a Canadian passport before she had to renounce it in order to swear in her office as a senior officer in HKSAR.

*Organizations: Business/Chamber of Commerce*

1. The **Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong** ([www.cancham.org](http://www.cancham.org)) is a proactive, non-government body representing more than 1200 members with business interests in Canada, Hong Kong and Mainland China. Founded in 1977, it is today the biggest Canadian business association outside Canada and one of the largest and most influential business groupings in Asia Pacific.

The Chamber is a member-driven organization. The pledge is to facilitate trade for, and between, its members, to provide a platform from which members can address policy-makers and to add real value to membership through the extensive program of publications, seminars, events, functions, missions and preferential purchasing arrangements.

Open to Canadian and non-Canadian members alike, the Chamber represents businesses of every size across the widest spectrum of activities. Its members include managing

directors of small and medium-sized companies and multinational corporations, as well as government officials, business professionals and hi-tech entrepreneurs. They are brought together with the common purpose of fostering trade and addressing related issues with a collective voice.

The purpose of the Chamber is to best promote the interests of its members and convey their views to decision-makers in industry and in government. Accordingly, its efforts are directed at maintaining and continually improving a working environment that fosters commerce, facilitates learning and better enables members to exchange ideas and express their concerns.

## 2. Major **Canadian Companies** in Hong Kong

Many Canadian companies set up their Asian headquarters or regional offices in HKSAR. According to Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (Canada)<sup>19</sup>, these companies include various sectors, such as financial, ICT, Professional Services, Retail, Restaurants and Hotels, Transportation and Education.

### *Financial Sector*

- Bank of Montreal
- Scotiabank
- CIBC
- TD Waterhouse
- National Bank
- RBC Capital
- Manulife International
- Sun Life Assurance
- Power Corporation
- Swift Trade
- CPP Investment Board

### *Information Communication and Technology*

- Advantech
- Breconridge Manufacturing
- Celestica
- CIMTEK
- Cognos
- Descartes System
- Etratech
- Evertz Microsystems

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<sup>19</sup> Available at [www.hketo.ca/canadian-business-in-hong-kong/major-canadian-companies-in-hong-kong/](http://www.hketo.ca/canadian-business-in-hong-kong/major-canadian-companies-in-hong-kong/), accessed on June 8, 2009.

- Hummingbird Communications
- Leitch
- Mitel
- Meriton Networks
- Nortel Networks
- Northern Digital Inc.
- Qualicom Innovation
- Redknee
- Research in Motion
- Sierra Wireless
- SiGe Semiconductor
- Skywave Mobile Communications
- Telco Bridges
- ViXS System
- Zi Technology

***Professional Services***

- Golden Associates
- Lord Cultural
- Giffels International
- Delcan
- Full Scale & Partners
- East Communications

***Retail, Restaurants and Hotels***

- Canadian Tire
- Maple Leaf Food
- Seagram
- Reitmans
- Fruits and Passion
- Umbra
- Club Monaco
- Lululemon
- New York Fries
- White Spot Restaurant
- Four Seasons Hotel
- Lan Kwai Fong Hotel
- Panorama Hotel
- Bonaparte Hotel
- ALDO Group

### *Transportation*

- Air Canada
- Bombardier Inc.
- Port Metro Vancouver

### *Education*

- University of Western Ontario, Richard Ivey School of Business
- University of British Columbia
- Canadian International School of Hong Kong
- Delia School of Canada

### *Organizations: Social Networking*

1. The **Canadian Club of Hong Kong** ([www.canadianclub.org.hk](http://www.canadianclub.org.hk)) is a social and charitable organization for Canadians and friends of Canada in Hong Kong. It provides information and support to those arriving from Canada, helps Hong Kongers prepare for their new life in Canada, and offers opportunities for all to socialize and share experiences at events throughout the year. The Club maintains a strong focus on giving back to the community in which the members reside. Through various fundraising activities, the Club donates money each year to local charities.

2. The **Chinese Canadian Association of Hong Kong** ([www.ccahk.org](http://www.ccahk.org)), founded as a non-profit organization in 1987, serves as a bridge between Hong Kong and Canada for Chinese Canadians. It has more than 3,000 members from all walks of life who are actively involved in the Hong Kong community. The majority of CCA members are entrepreneurs, business executives, bankers, accountants, engineers, architects, lawyers or doctors.

CCA has four main objectives to promote strong ties with Canada. First, is to promote better understanding and relationships between the Hong Kong and Canadian communities, and address the concerns and welfare of Chinese Canadians in Hong Kong. Second, is to provide a focal point for Canadians in Hong Kong to socialize, build up friendships, conduct business networking, contribute collectively to society, and maintain and share their Canadian heritage and cultural experiences. Third, is to keep its members abreast of developments in Hong Kong and Canada, which may affect members residing in Hong Kong and, if necessary, to express opinions collectively to the Canadian and Hong Kong Governments on matters and policies that may affect the welfare of members. Fourth, is to promote relationships and friendships among Hong Kong, Canada and Mainland China following closer economic integration between Hong Kong and the Mainland, and China's accession to the World Trade Organization in 2001 giving rise to increased business opportunities for Hong Kong and Canada.

***Organizations: Canadian University Alumni Associations in Hong Kong***

Canadian University Association (HK) Limited<sup>20</sup>, formerly known as the Canadian University Association Hong Kong, was established in 1961. It was founded by a group of Canadian university graduates who returned to Hong Kong during the 1950s. It acts now as an umbrella group for some 28 Canadian university alumni associations active in Hong Kong. Detailed contacts of can be found online.<sup>21</sup>

- Acadia University Alumni
- Bishop's University Alumni Association
- Canadian University Association (HK) Ltd.
- Carleton University
- Concordia University
- Dalhousie University Alumni Association
- McMaster University Alumni Association
- Memorial University of Newfoundland
- Mount Allison
- Queen's University Alumni Association
- Richard Ivey Alumni Association
- Ryerson (HK) Alumni Chapter
- Schulich School of Business
- Simon Fraser University Alumni Association
- The McGill Society of Hong Kong
- The University of Western Ontario
- UBC Alumni Association (Hong Kong)
- University of Manitoba
- University of Alberta
- University of Calgary
- University of Lethbridge
- University of New Brunswick
- University of Ottawa
- University of Saskatchewan / University of Regina
- University of Toronto Alumni Association (HK)
- University of Victoria Alumni Association (Hong Kong Branch)
- University of Waterloo
- York University

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<sup>20</sup> Canadian University Association (HK) Limited, <http://www.cuahk.org.hk/intro.html>, accessed September 25, 2009

<sup>21</sup>Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong, [http://www.cancham.org/asp/links\\_detail.asp?folder=Canadian%20University%20Alumni%20Associations%20in%20Hong%20Kong](http://www.cancham.org/asp/links_detail.asp?folder=Canadian%20University%20Alumni%20Associations%20in%20Hong%20Kong), accessed on September 25, 2009.

***Organizations: Others***

In addition to the Canadian Consulate General in Hong Kong, the provinces of Alberta and Quebec have also established offices in HKSAR to provide services for trading with, investing in and immigration to Canada.

**D. Summary of Immigration and Citizenship Policy in the HKSAR**

***HKSAR immigration policies: Entrance Visa***

Nationals of more than 170 countries and territories may visit Hong Kong visa-free for a period ranging from 7 to 180 days. A Canadian passport holder may visit Hong Kong for maximum 90 days without a visa.

Visitors are required to have adequate funds to cover the duration of their stay without working and, unless in transit to the Mainland of China or the Macao SAR, to hold onward or return tickets.

If someone plans to visit HKSAR beyond the allowed visa-free period to (a) take up employment (paid or unpaid), (b) to establish or join in any business, or (c) to enter school as a student, etc., a visa or entry permit before travelling to the HKSAR is required.

HKSAR offers various types of visas as follows.<sup>22</sup>

- Visit / Transit
- Employment as Professionals
- Training
- Investment (to establish/join in business)
- Study
- Residence as Dependents
- Employment of Domestic Helpers from Abroad
- Employment as Imported Workers
- Capital Investment Entrant Scheme
- Quality Migrant Admission Scheme
- Working Holiday Scheme
- Extension of Stay & Transfer of Endorsement
- Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Travel Pass
- APEC Business Travel Card
- Other applications

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<sup>22</sup> For details, please refer to Immigration Department of the Government of HKSAR, <http://www.immd.gov.hk/ehhtml/hkvisas.htm> (accessed on June 9, 2009).

***HKSAR Immigration Policies: Right of Abode (ROA)***

The right of abode (ROA) in the HKSAR means the right:

- to land in the HKSAR;
- to be free from any condition of stay (including a limit of stay) in the HKSAR;
- not to be deported from the HKSAR; and
- not to be removed from the HKSAR.

Under the Immigration Ordinance, a person who belongs to one of the following categories, is a permanent resident of the HKSAR and enjoys the ROA in the HKSAR<sup>23</sup>:

- a. A Chinese citizen born in Hong Kong before or after the establishment of the HKSAR.
- b. A Chinese citizen who has ordinarily resided in Hong Kong for a continuous period of not less than seven years before or after the establishment of the HKSAR.
- c. A person of Chinese nationality born outside Hong Kong before or after the establishment of the HKSAR to a parent who, at the time of birth of that person, was a Chinese citizen falling within category (a) or (b).
- d. A person not of Chinese nationality (a Canadian for instance) who has entered Hong Kong with a valid travel document, has ordinarily resided in Hong Kong for a continuous period of not less than seven years and has taken Hong Kong as his place of permanent residence before or after the establishment of the HKSAR.
- e. A person under 21 years of age born in Hong Kong to a parent who is a permanent resident of the HKSAR in category (d) before or after the establishment of the HKSAR if at the time of his birth or at any later time before he attains 21 years of age, one of his parents has the ROA in Hong Kong.
- f. A person other than those residents in categories (a) to (e), who, before the establishment of the HKSAR, had the ROA in Hong Kong only.

According to this rule, Canadians (of non-Chinese descent) who have entered Hong Kong with a valid travel document, have ordinarily resided in Hong Kong for a continuous period of not less than seven years, and have taken Hong Kong as their place of permanent residence are considered permanent residents of Hong Kong and enjoy the ROA in Hong Kong. Their children born in Hong Kong are also considered permanent residents of Hong Kong and enjoy the ROA in Hong Kong.

If Hong Kong origin Canadians returned to HKSAR, unless they declare to the Government of HKSAR that they are not a Chinese national, they most likely still enjoy the ROA and therefore are considered the permanent residents of HKSAR. The actual ROA can be determined by the check list for returning emigrants (Figure 4).

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<sup>23</sup> For details, please refer to Immigration Department of the Government of HKSAR, [http://www.immd.gov.hk/ehhtml/faq\\_roaihksar.htm](http://www.immd.gov.hk/ehhtml/faq_roaihksar.htm) (accessed on June 9, 2009).

According to Hong Kong Basic Law, permanent residents of the HKSAR shall have the right of abode in the HKSAR, shall be qualified to obtain permanent identity cards which state their right of abode, and shall have the right to vote and the right to stand for election in accordance with law.<sup>24</sup>

### ***HKSAR's De Facto Dual Citizenship Policy***

China does not recognize dual citizenship.<sup>25</sup> However, the “One Country, Two Systems” policy gives HKSAR an exception on citizenship.<sup>26</sup> The exception allows the existence of *de facto* dual citizenship and creates controversial issues related to the recognition of foreign nationalities and the consular protection by related foreign countries in the HKSAR.

Under the Chinese Nationality Law, Hong Kong residents and former residents who are of Chinese descent and born in the Mainland of China or Hong Kong are Chinese citizens.

For historical reasons, many residents of Hong Kong are British Nationals (Overseas) [BN(O)] and a small number are British Citizens. The PRC Government does not recognize British passports -- BN(O) and those of British Citizens -- issued to Hong Kong residents of PRC nationality. They cannot use their BN(O) or British Citizen passports to enter the Chinese mainland before or after the handover of sovereignty.

Besides BN(O)s, British Citizenship, and PRC citizenship, many Hong Kong residents have obtained overseas citizenship in countries such as Australia, Canada or the United States. Officially, if they have not made a "declaration of change of nationality"<sup>27</sup> at the Immigration Department of Hong Kong, they are regarded as PRC citizens in the People's Republic of China. In this case, they are required to use their home-visit permits to enter mainland China instead of their foreign passports. Under the PRC Nationality Law (as applied in Hong Kong and Macau), such nationals are not entitled foreign consular protection even if they entered the PRC (including the mainland) on their foreign passports.

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<sup>24</sup> Hong Kong Basic Law, Chapter III, Article 30-

32, [http://www.basiclaw.gov.hk/en/basiclawtext/chapter\\_3.html](http://www.basiclaw.gov.hk/en/basiclawtext/chapter_3.html), accessed on September 24, 2009.

<sup>25</sup> Nationality Law of the People's Republic of China, [http://www.immd.gov.hk/ehhtml/chnnationality\\_1.htm](http://www.immd.gov.hk/ehhtml/chnnationality_1.htm), accessed on September 24, 2009.

<sup>26</sup> Explanations of some questions by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress concerning the implementation of the Nationality Law of the People's Republic of China in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, [http://www.immd.gov.hk/ehhtml/chnnationality\\_2.htm](http://www.immd.gov.hk/ehhtml/chnnationality_2.htm), accessed on September 24, 2009.

<sup>27</sup> Those citizens holding foreign passports will have the option to declare change of nationality to the HKSAR Immigration Department. Valid documentation will need to be submitted. Upon approval, they will no longer be regarded as Chinese citizens and can enjoy consular protection from the country of their declared nationality. In fact, the declaration of change of nationality has rarely happened. In 2006 and 2007, the HKSAR Immigration Department only received 64 and 52 cases of declaration of change of nationality. In other words, most Hong Kong origin Canadians possess *de facto* dual citizenship.

### **E. Focus Groups and Interviews of Canadians in the HKSAR**

From October 5 to 10, 2008, a total of five focus groups and five interviews with individuals/families on issues related to Canadians residing in Hong Kong were conducted in HKSAR. The focus groups were attended by over 40 Canadians working in business, the professions, academia and government in HKSAR; and the interviewees include returned Hong Kong-Canadians, Canadian school alumni, and former HKSAR government officials in Canada.

Among many issues, some primary anxieties and concerns arising from these focus groups and interviews include:

- Worry about change of Canadian permanent resident/visa requirement that will have impact on their rights of return to Canada;
- Worry about changes to taxation and voting rules that will impact on their participation in Canada;
- Worry over changes in Canada-China relations that will have impact on their businesses;
- Frustration that the collective voice of overseas Canadian communities is not heard in Canada;
- Mixed reactions toward lose of voting right in Canada after five years away from Canada and obligations associated with the right;
- Struggle between focusing on life in Hong Kong and re-connecting with Canada;
- Concerns by those with the plan to return to Canada that a long period of staying abroad may affect their qualification to re-join the Canadian society;
- Suggestion that Canada should present the opportunities that exist in Canada, and create welcome houses, not only for new immigrants but also for returning Canadians;
- Frustration with the general perception of Canadians abroad that they are perceived as foreign-born, free rider and citizens of convenience;
- Dislike for paying high Canadian taxes, but do not expect a free ride on Canada's benefits -- many are willing to pay user-fees for some of the services received once they return to Canada;
- Anger at Canada's citizenship rule change that will affect their grandchildren's right of being a Canadian citizen;
- Mixed Canadian identity -- some feel stronger while others feel less that they are Canadians and want to keep close ties with Canada;
- Linking to Canada is important. But more important is the links to other parts of the world, given the nature of Hong Kong as an international business and financial hub;
- Many decisions to return/move to Hong Kong from Canada are totally for personal or family reasons, which are not appropriate for others to make judgment;
- Canadians' presence in Hong Kong is to help bridge Canada and China and beyond.

## **F. Conclusion**

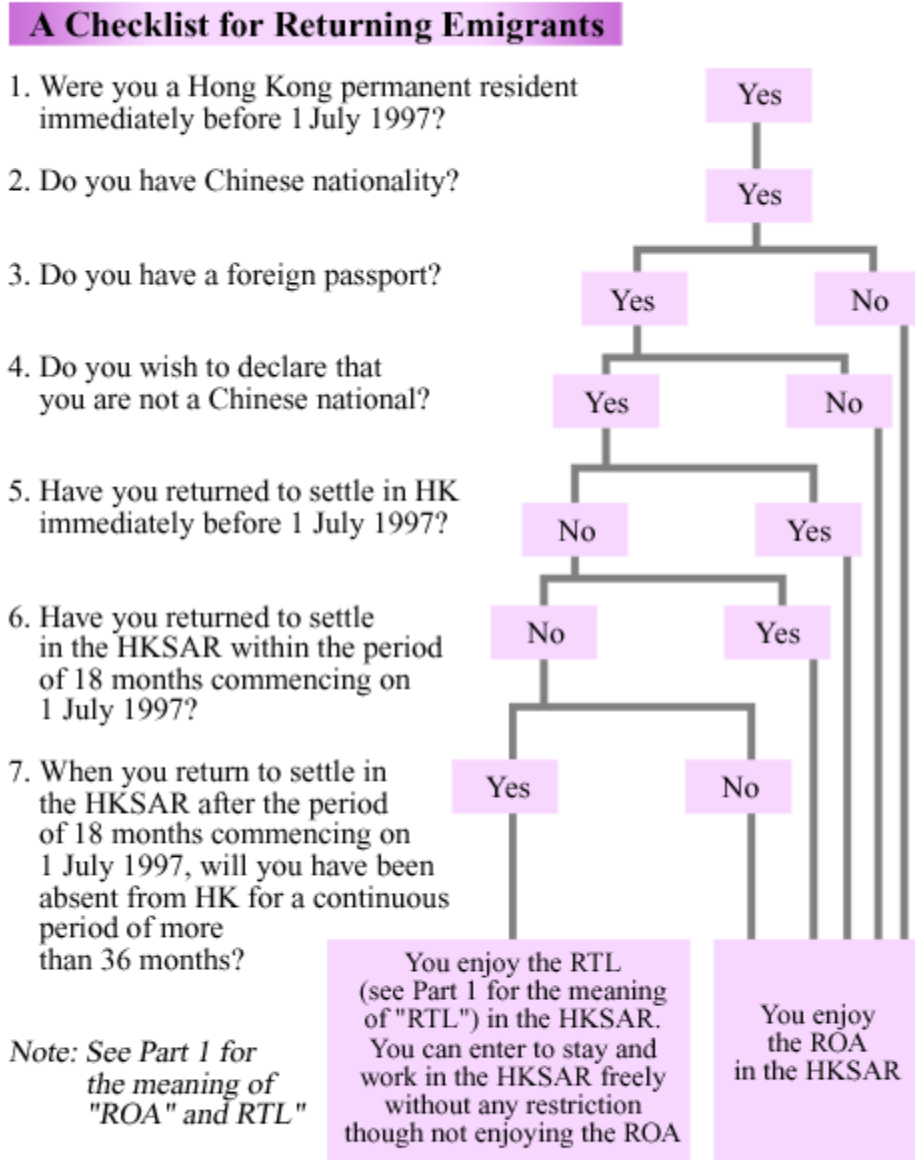
Our study has confirmed that no single source provides an accurate number of Canadians in HKSAR. Based on various available estimates, our study suggests that the total population in HKSAR with a Canadian passport is most likely in the range 150,000 ~ 250,000, the size of Canadian population similar to that of Saskatoon or Regina. This makes Hong Kong a city boasting perhaps the largest Canadian community outside Canada.

The Canadian communities in HKSAR are not only diversified in terms of their demographic characteristics, but also in their social and economic background as well as their links Canada and attitudes toward issues related to Canadian society and policies.

The Canadian presence in HKSAR is beyond the individual level. Many Canadian organizations and business are well established and influential in HKSAR, playing an important role in connecting Canada, Hong Kong and beyond.

The “One Country, Two Systems” policy in HKSAR’s citizenship arena has potential challenges for the Government of Canada when consular protection is called upon. Major concerns among Canadians in HKSAR include their rights and responsibilities of being Canadians, and their Canadian identities.

Figure 4



Source: HKSAR Immigration Department, accessed on June 1, 2009, at [http://www.immd.gov.hk/ehhtml/topical\\_3\\_6\\_1.htm](http://www.immd.gov.hk/ehhtml/topical_3_6_1.htm).