

# Galicia – Population Distribution

There has always been confusion in Canada about that area of the Austro-Hungarian Empire that was called Galicia and the ethnic composition of the Galician immigrants. During the first great immigration wave (1896-1914) as many as 300,000 Galicians immigrated to Canada. There was even individual census category for Galicians in the 1911 census and they were often a separate category in immigration statistics compiled by the Department of the Interior up to 1914.

I have been researching my family history (our ancestral village was in the district of Buczacz) since 1990. I have limited knowledge of Polish and getting information on Galicia has always been difficult. I started with Ukrainian Canadian research on Galicia to get an idea of the composition of historical Galicia and following are salient quotations and sources:

1. From a publication edited by Ivan Rudnytsky and John-Paul Himka: “The most salient characteristic of urbanization in Ukraine in the nineteenth century is that, on the whole, there was so little of it. Or, to be precise, urbanization occurred in Ukraine, but without substantial participation by Ukrainians. As late as 1897, less than 16 per cent of the Ukrainian population could be described as town dwellers. Within the cities themselves, Ukrainians constituted only about one-third of the inhabitants.”<sup>1</sup>
2. From the same article as above: “Unlike Kiev and Kharkiv, Lviv in the nineteenth century was under Austrian rather than Russian rule. It was the capital of the province of Galicia from 1772 to 1918 and thus the principal urban centre in Eastern Galicia, a region largely populated by Ukrainians. (According to the census of 1900, out of 4.8 million inhabitants of Eastern Galicia, 3 million, or 62.5 per cent, were Ukrainians.)”<sup>2</sup>
3. From the same source about Lviv: “Lviv first served the Austrians as an administrative centre, but it also functioned after 1848 as a kind of cultural capital for the subject nationalities (Poles and Ukrainians) of Galicia. In 1900, Poles, who made up only 23 per cent of Eastern Galicia’s population, formed a majority (51.6 per cent) of the inhabitants of Lviv. Although the Ukrainians at this time made up only 18.3 per cent of the city’s population, they also took advantage of the relative leniency of the Austrian government to launch a highly influential political and cultural movement. From the 1870s Galicia served the Ukrainian people as a kind of Piedmont, where cultural and political activities banned in Russian-ruled Ukraine could find an outlet.”<sup>3</sup>
4. From Professor John-Paul Himka in 1982: “Galicia’s population was about 40 percent Ukrainian, 40 per cent Polish, and 10 per cent Jewish, with a small German minority.”<sup>4</sup> [My note: No indication of who made up the other 10 per cent besides Germans.]

5. From the same source as above: “But Poles....also lived in eastern Galicia where they formed the upper class, owned the great estates, dominated the government, and together with the Jews and Germans made up about 75 per cent of the urban population.”<sup>5</sup>
6. From Orest Martynowych: “In 1910, Ukrainians—known to their contemporaries as Ruthenians (*rusyny*)—constituted approximately 40 per cent of Galicia’s 8 million inhabitants. Poles were in the majority at just over 47 per cent, the Jews were 11 per cent and Germans slightly more than 1 per cent.....Even in eastern Galicia and northern Bukovyna, where Ukrainians were the most highly concentrated, they were only 63 per cent and 65 per cent of the population respectively.”<sup>6</sup>
7. Also from Orest Martynowych: “In western Galicia and southern Bukovyna, the peasantry was predominately Polish and Romanian; in eastern Galicia and northern Bukovyna, it was Ukrainian. In the cities and towns, Poles, Romanians, Germans, and especially Jews predominated. Ukrainians were seldom more than 25 per cent of the urban population, and in the larger cities rarely more than 15 percent.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Patricia Herlihy, “Ukrainian Cities in the Nineteenth Century”, in Ivan L. Rudnytsky, ed., with the assistance of John-Paul Himka, *Rethinking Ukrainian History*, Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, 1981, 135.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 143.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 144.

<sup>4</sup> John-Paul Himka, ‘The Background to Emigration: Ukrainians of Bukovyna and Galicia, 1848-1914’ in Manoly R. Lupul, ed. *A Heritage in Tradition, Essays in the History of Ukrainians in Canada*. Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1982, 11.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>6</sup> Orest T. Martynowych, *Ukrainians in Canada: The Formative Years, 1891-1924*, (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, University of Alberta, 1991), 4.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.