

Canada's population estimates: Subprovincial areas, July 1, 2014

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On July 1, 2014, almost 7 in 10 Canadians, or 24,858,600 people, were living in a census metropolitan area (CMA). In turn, more than one in three Canadians (35.3%) made their home in Canada's three largest CMAs—Toronto, Montréal and Vancouver.

Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014 (2013/2014), the population growth rate was considerably higher for Canada's CMAs (+1.4%) than for non-CMAs (+0.4%). In comparison, for Canada as a whole, the population growth rate was 1.1% during this period. The stronger population increase in CMAs was mostly the result of higher levels of international migration in CMAs (+1.0%) compared with non-CMAs (+0.2%).

During the past year, the population of the Toronto CMA broke the 6 million threshold, reaching 6,055,700, while the population of the Montréal CMA passed the 4 million mark (4,027,100).



Table 1
Annual population estimates by census metropolitan area, July 1, 2014

	Population estimates
Canada	35,540,419
All census metropolitan areas	24,858,634
Abbotsford–Mission	178,967
Barrie	200,416
Brantford	143,074
Calgary	1,406,721
Edmonton	1,328,290
Greater Sudbury	165,690
Guelph	150,946
Halifax	414,398
Hamilton	765,228
Kelowna	191,237
Kingston	168,353
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	506,858
London	502,360
Moncton	146,073
Montréal	4,027,121
Oshawa	384,143
Ottawa–Gatineau	1,318,122
Ottawa–Gatineau, Ontario part	989,978
Ottawa–Gatineau, Quebec part	328,144
Peterborough	123,270
Québec	799,632
Regina	237,758
Saguenay	160,138
Saint John	127,314
Saskatoon	300,634
Sherbrooke	212,061
St. Catharines–Niagara	405,906
St. John's	211,724
Thunder Bay	125,112
Toronto	6,055,724
Trois-Rivières	155,813
Vancouver	2,470,289
Victoria	358,685
Windsor	333,937
Winnipeg	782,640

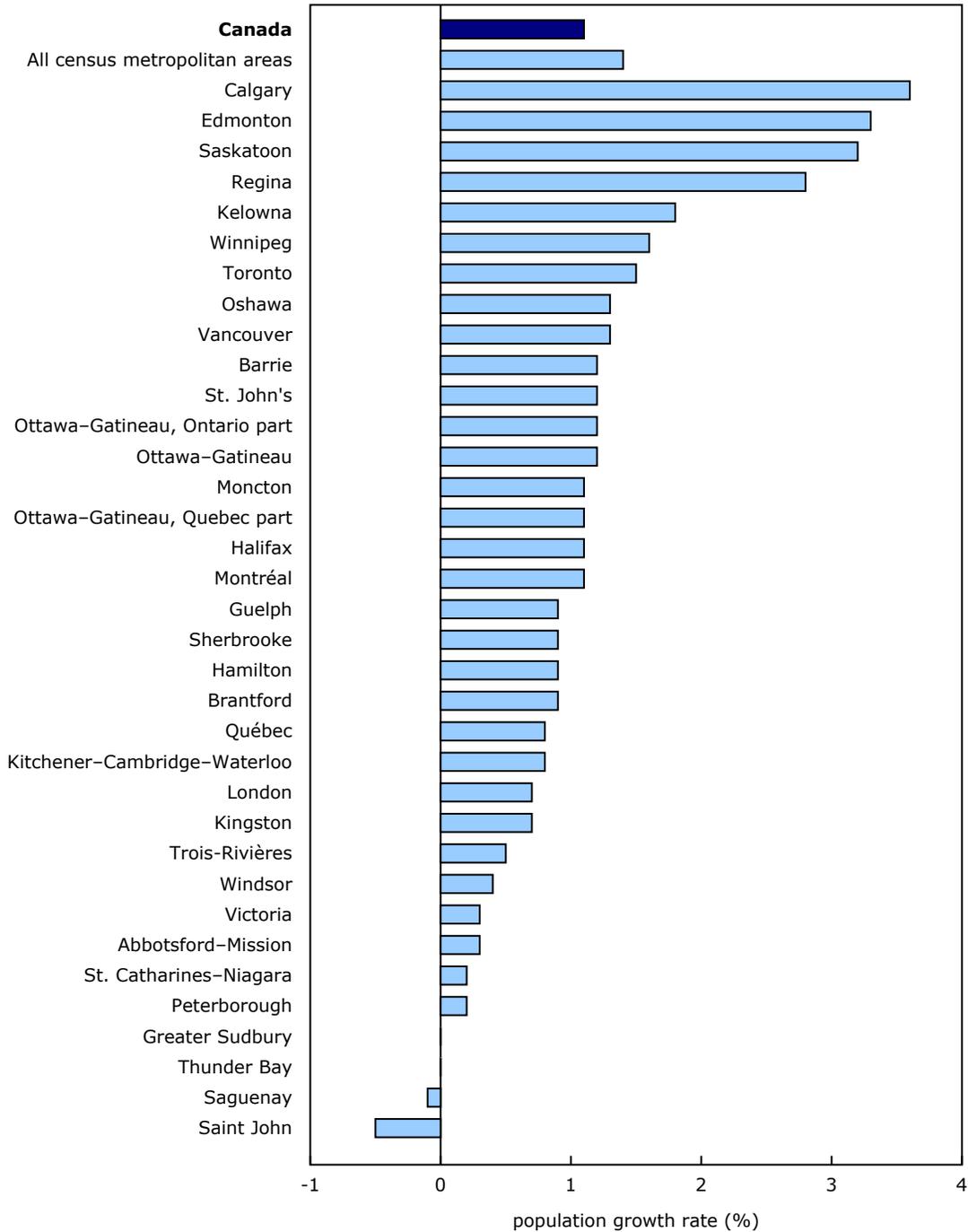
Source(s): CANSIM table [051-0056](#).

Population growth stronger in the Prairie census metropolitan areas

For a third consecutive year, the four fastest growing CMAs were in Alberta and Saskatchewan, with Calgary (+3.6%) reporting the largest population growth. It was followed by the CMAs of Edmonton (+3.3%), Saskatoon (+3.2%) and Regina (+2.8%). Kelowna (+1.8%), Winnipeg (+1.6%) and Toronto (+1.5%) were the only other CMAs in the country to post population growth rates higher than the national CMA average rate (+1.4%). In contrast, Saint John (-0.5%), New Brunswick, was the lone CMA in Canada to see its population decline significantly.

Population growth also varied outside CMAs. In 2013/2014, the non-CMA part of Alberta grew at a rate of 1.7%, the fastest rate outside CMAs. However, population decreases were recorded in the non-CMA parts of three provinces and one territory: Newfoundland and Labrador (-1.2%), Nova Scotia (-0.9%), New Brunswick (-0.6%) and the Northwest Territories (-0.5%).

Chart 1
Population growth rates by census metropolitan area, 2013/2014, Canada



Source(s): CANSIM table [051-0056](#).

International migration the main driver of population growth in census metropolitan areas

International migration was responsible for just over two-thirds of the population growth of CMAs in 2013/2014. All CMAs with over 1 million inhabitants reported growth rates from international migration of 1.0% or higher, accounting for most of their population growth (71%). Three CMAs with under 1 million inhabitants, all on the Prairies, had the highest rates of international migration growth: Regina (+1.9%), Saskatoon (+1.8%) and Winnipeg (+1.7%).

In absolute numbers, the Toronto CMA continued to post the highest net international migration with an increase of 79,500 people, or 31% of the total for Canada. However, this proportion represented a decline from 2003/2004, when the Toronto CMA accounted for 48%. The five Prairie CMAs were the main beneficiaries of the decline in Toronto's proportion, as their contribution to Canada's net international migration rose from 9% to 22% in the past decade.

Interprovincial migration a key driver of the growth of Alberta's census metropolitan areas

In most of Canada's CMAs (28 of 34), net interprovincial migration was zero or negative in 2013/2014. Interprovincial migration growth in Saint John (-1.0%) was the lowest in the country, evidence of the population decrease observed in this CMA. In contrast, the CMAs of Calgary and Edmonton recorded the highest interprovincial migration growth rates in Canada (+1.0% each), which contributed to their strong population growth.

Intraprovincial migration behind the growth in smaller census metropolitan areas and the declines in the largest census metropolitan areas

In the vast majority (87%) of CMAs with a population of 500,000 or less, intraprovincial migration exchanges contributed to population growth. The CMAs of Barrie and Oshawa, both just outside the Toronto CMA, recorded the highest intraprovincial migration growth rates in Canada (+1.0% each). Canada's three largest CMAs—Toronto, Montréal and Vancouver—were the only ones to experience losses in net intraprovincial migration.

Comparison between Canada and the United States for metropolitan areas of over 1 million inhabitants

Over the most recent comparable period (2012/2013), and for similar geographic units, population growth in metropolitan areas was generally higher in Canada than in the United States, particularly in those areas with a population of over 1 million.

In 2012/2013, the population growth of the Calgary CMA (+3.8%) and Edmonton CMA (+3.5%) exceeded that of all 52 metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) with over 1 million inhabitants in the United States. Furthermore, the population growth rates of Canada's three largest CMAs—Toronto (+1.6%), Montréal (+1.2%) and Vancouver (+1.3%)—were higher than the average rate of these 52 MSAs (+1.0%). In the United States, the metropolitan areas where the population grew fastest were located mainly in the southern part of the country with Austin–Round Rock (Texas) posting the largest population growth (+2.6%). In Canada, the CMAs with the strongest population growth were in the West.

Table 2
Population growth rate of the fastest growing metropolitan areas with over 1 million inhabitants, Canada and the United States, 2012/2013

	Population % growth rate
Calgary, Alberta	3.8
Edmonton, Alberta	3.5
Austin–Round Rock, Texas	2.6
Houston–The Woodlands–Sugar Land, Texas	2.2
Raleigh, North Carolina	2.2
Orlando–Kissimmee–Sanford, Florida	2.0
San Antonio–New Braunfels, Texas	1.9
Denver–Aurora–Lakewood, Colorado	1.9
Nashville–Davidson–Murfreesboro–Franklin, Tennessee	1.8
Charlotte–Concord–Gastonia, North Carolina / South Carolina	1.7

Note(s): Regions are ranked in descending order of the annual population growth rate. Only the 10 regions with the highest population growth rates are presented. The geographic unit is the census metropolitan area in Canada and the metropolitan statistical area in the United States.

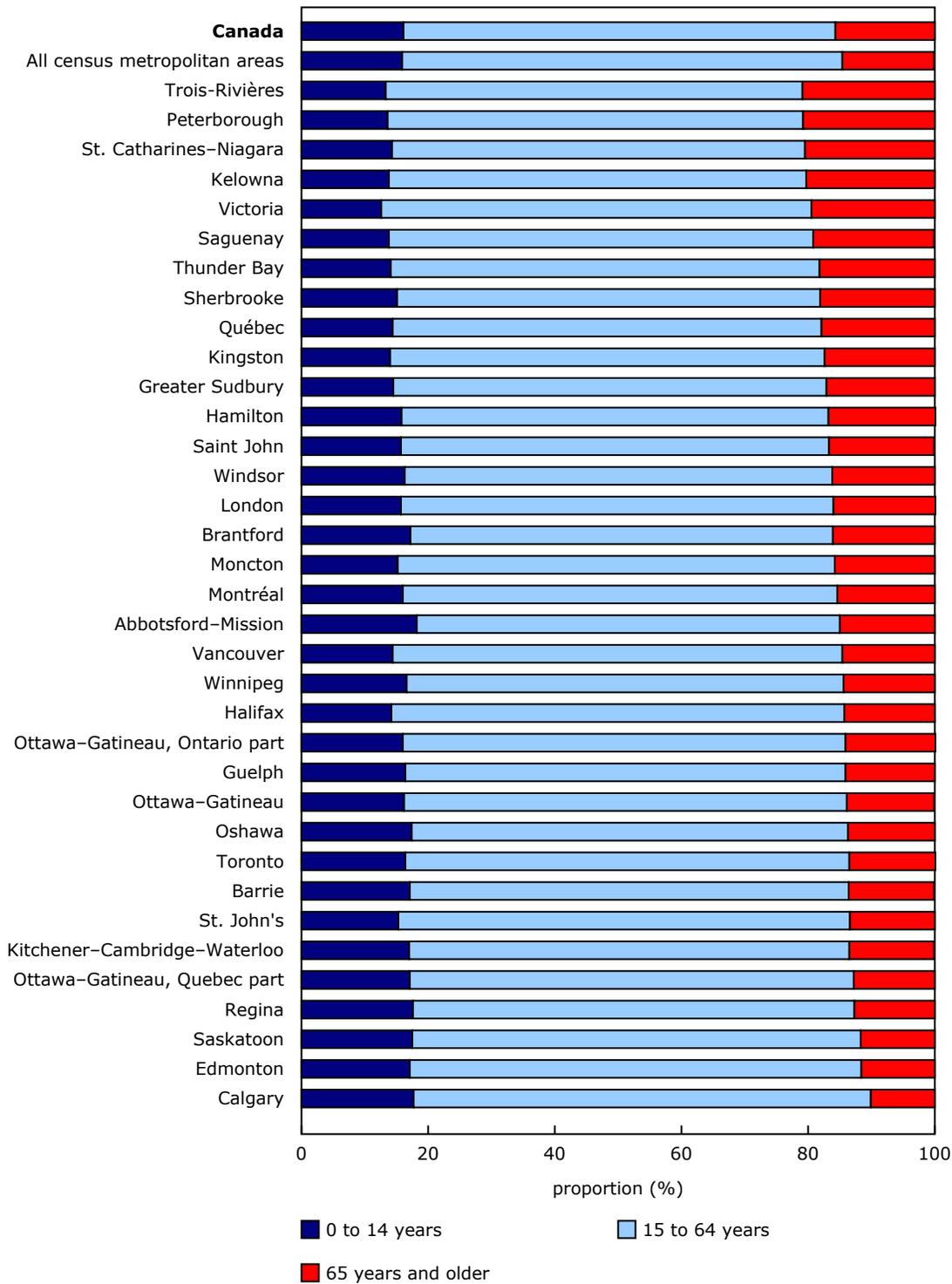
Source(s): Statistics Canada CANSIM table [051-0056](#); US Census Bureau.

Population younger in census metropolitan areas than in non-census metropolitan areas

On July 1, 2014, the median age of the population residing in a CMA was 39.2 years, compared with 43.6 for the non-CMA population. The proportion of people aged 65 years and older (seniors) was also lower in CMAs (14.5%) than in areas outside CMAs (18.4%). The number of people aged 65 years and older now exceeds the number of people under the age of 15 in half of Canada's 34 CMAs.

Trois-Rivières remained the CMA with the highest median age (45.8 years) and had the highest proportion of people aged 65 years and older (20.9%). In contrast, Saskatoon had the lowest median age at 34.5 years, while Calgary had the smallest proportion of people aged 65 years and older (10.1%). The Abbotsford–Mission CMA had the largest proportion of inhabitants under 15 years of age (18.2%).

Chart 2
Distribution of population by age group and census metropolitan area, Canada, July 1, 2014



Note(s): Census metropolitan areas are sorted in descending order of the 65 years and older population percentage. Percentage figures may not add up to 100% as a result of rounding.

Source(s): CANSIM table [051-0056](#).

Population also aging in census metropolitan areas

Although the CMA population is younger than the non-CMA population, it is also aging. Between July 1, 2004 and July 1, 2014, the proportion of persons aged 65 years and older in CMAs rose from 12.2% to 14.5%, an increase of 2.3 percentage points. During the same period, this proportion rose 3.9 percentage points in non-CMAs from 14.5% to 18.4%.

Over the past decade, the proportion of persons aged 65 years and older increased in every CMA except Saskatoon, where it was stable (11.7%). The largest increases were in the CMAs of Saguenay (+5.3 percentage points) and Trois-Rivières (+5.1 percentage points). The faster pace of population aging in these two CMAs was due, among other things, to the stronger postwar baby boom in Quebec as well as repeated losses of persons aged 20 to 29 as a result of internal migration.

Note to readers

This release focuses mainly on preliminary postcensal population estimates for census metropolitan areas by age and sex as of July 1, 2014. Revised estimates as of July 1, 2012, and July 1, 2013, are also available. Population estimates are also released for census divisions and economic regions.

The estimates presented in this release are subject to revision. Future updates could affect the trends observed and analyzed in this release.

Estimates by age and sex in this release are based on 2011 Census counts adjusted for census net undercoverage and incompletely enumerated Indian reserves, to which is added the estimated demographic growth from May 10, 2011 to June 30, 2014.

These estimates are also based on the 2011 Standard Geographical Classification.

Population growth rates are calculated using the average of populations at the beginning and end of the period under consideration as a denominator. A rate that is higher than minus 0.1% but lower than 0.1% is considered not to be significant.

A census metropolitan area (CMA) is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more must live in the core. To be included in the CMA, other adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from census place of work data.

The Ottawa–Gatineau CMA is split in two in order to distinguish its Ontario and Quebec parts.

A metropolitan statistical area (MSA) in United States is a similar geographic unit to the census metropolitan area (CMA) in Canada. A MSA consists of an urbanized area that has a population of at least 50,000. A MSA comprises the central county or counties containing the core, plus adjacent outlying counties having a high degree of social and economic integration with the central county or counties as measured through commuting. Commuting thresholds used to delimit metropolitan areas boundaries slightly vary according to the MSA or CMA definitions.

The comparison with United States uses data for the 2012/2013 period for population growth because data for the 2013/2014 period are not available yet for the United States.

Available in CANSIM: tables [051-0056 to 051-0065](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [3608](#).

The publication *Annual Demographic Estimates: Subprovincial Areas*, July 1, 2014 ([91-214-X](#)), is now available from the *Browse by key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; mediahotline@statcan.gc.ca).