

Police resources in Canada, 2017

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The number of police officers per 100,000 people in Canada fell for a sixth consecutive year in 2017, reaching its lowest rate since 2004. The rate of police officer strength stood at 188 officers per 100,000 population in 2017, down 1.0% from the previous year and lower than the peak strength of 206 officers in 1975. Meanwhile, police services are increasingly made up of civilian members such as clerks, communications staff and managers and professionals.

Overall, there were 69,027 police officers and 29,049 civilians working for police services in Canada as of May 2017. This amounts to 168 more officers and 613 more civilians compared with 2016.

These findings are included in the *Juristat* article "[Police resources in Canada, 2017.](#)"

Police strength declines for sixth consecutive year

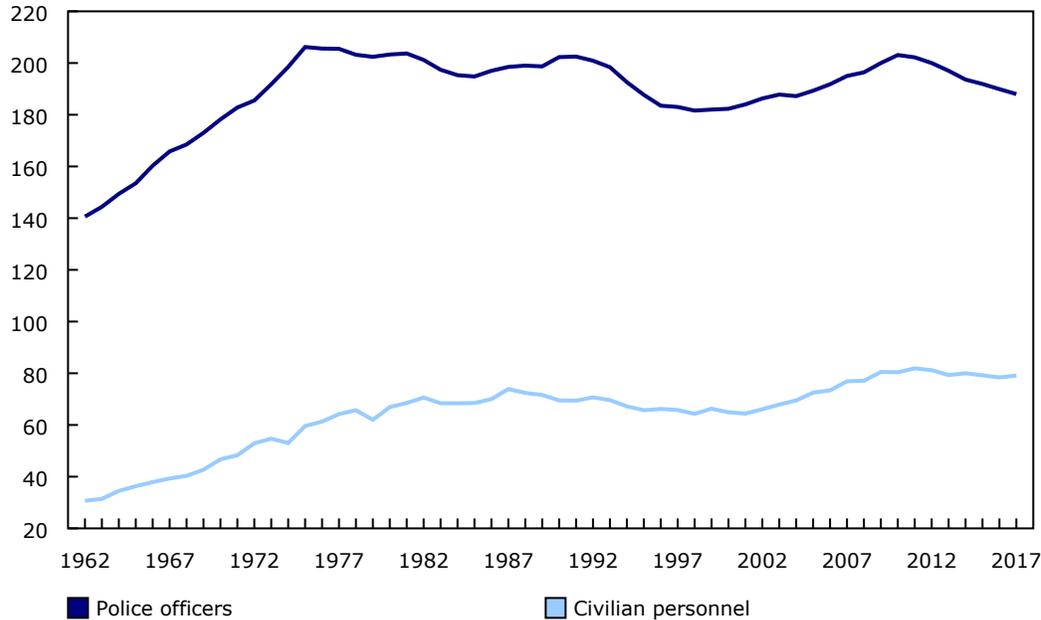
Compared with 2016, rates of police strength declined in seven provinces and territories in 2017. Declines were reported in Yukon (-8%), the Northwest Territories (-8%), New Brunswick (-4%), Prince Edward Island (-4%), Ontario (-2%), Quebec (-1%) and Manitoba (-1%). Conversely, Alberta and British Columbia each reported a 1% growth in the rate of police strength, while rates were stable for the remainder of the provinces and territories.

Of the 50 police services which served a population greater than 100,000 in 2017, 8 saw an increase in their rate of police strength, 31 saw a decrease, and 11 reported no notable change. The largest increases in the rates of police strength among these police services were reported by the municipalities of Delta, British Columbia (+7%), Red Deer, Alberta (+4%) and London, Ontario (+3%). The municipalities of Codiac Region, New Brunswick (-10%), Abbotsford, British Columbia (-6%) and Toronto, Ontario (-5%) reported the largest decreases in rate of police strength.



Chart 1
Rate of police strength and civilian personnel per 100,000 population, Canada, 1962 to 2017

personnel per 100,000 population



Note(s): Police officers represent the actual number of permanent, fully-sworn police officers of all ranks (or their full-time equivalents). Civilian personnel include permanent civilian staff on the police service's payroll, employed in permanent positions such as clerks, dispatchers, managers, cadets, special constables, security officers, school crossing guards and by-law enforcement officers. Populations are based on July 1, 2017 estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Additional data are available on CANSIM (Table 254-0002).
Source(s): Police Administration Survey (3301).

Civilian personnel account for greater proportion of police employees

Police services are increasingly composed of civilian members, such as clerks, communications staff, managers and professionals, security officers and school crossing guards. As of May 2017, police services employed 29,049 civilians, 2% more than a year earlier. The proportion of civilians in policing has gradually increased since data were first collected, growing from 18% in 1962 to 30% in 2017.

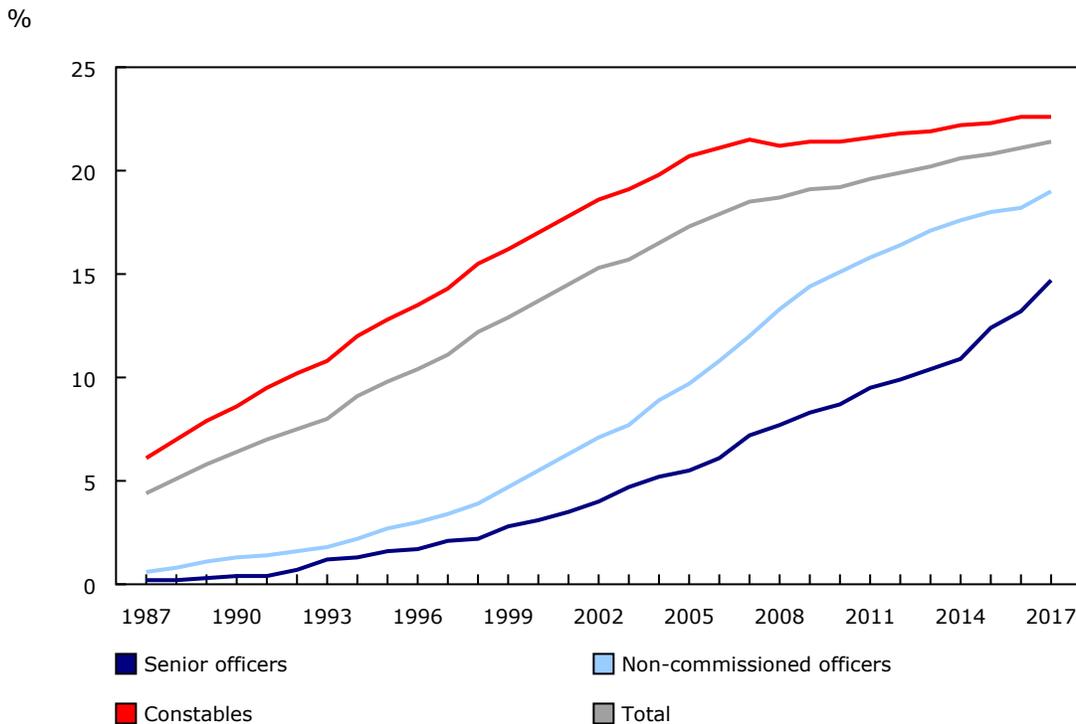
Growth of the civilian work force has been largely seen in the category of managers and professionals, which accounted for 10% of all police personnel in 2017, compared with less than 4% in 1996. Managers and professionals would include, for instance, those who specialize in business intelligence, financial management, crime analysis, systems and information technology, forensic science, and law.

Just over one-fifth of police officers are women

The number and proportion of women in policing continues to grow. In 2017, there were 14,752 female officers in Canada, accounting for just over one in five (21%) officers, a proportion unchanged from the previous year. In contrast, in 1986, the year data collection began, women accounted for 4% of officers. Since that time, the proportion of female officers has increased steadily. Compared with 2016, police services reported 197 more female officers in 2017 and 29 fewer male officers.

Although women account for a smaller proportion of senior and non-commissioned officers compared with constables, their presence in the higher ranks continues to increase. In 2017, the number of female senior officers increased from 348 to 384, accounting for 15% of senior officers. This marks the highest proportion of female senior officers since collection began in 1986. Among non-commissioned officers in 2017, 19% were women, compared with 12% a decade ago and less than 1% in 1986.

Chart 2
Female officers as a percentage of total police officers, by rank, Canada, 1987 to 2017



Note(s): Non-commissioned officers include personnel between the rank of constable and lieutenant, such as staff-sergeants, sergeants, detective-sergeants, corporals and all equivalent ranks. Senior officers includes personnel who have obtained senior officer status, normally at the rank of lieutenant or higher, such as chiefs, deputy chiefs, staff superintendents, superintendents, staff inspectors, inspectors, lieutenants, and other equivalent ranks. Additional data are available on CANSIM (Table 254-0005).

Source(s): Police Administration Survey (3301).

Fewer than 1 in 10 officers belong to a visible minority group

Visible minorities represented more than one-fifth (22.3%) of Canada's population in 2016, compared with 19.1% in 2011.

Among police officers in 2016, 8.4% self-identified as belonging to a visible minority group, compared with 8.2% in 2011.

Most provinces saw an increase in the proportion of total officers reporting as a visible minority from 2011 to 2016, particularly in Prince Edward Island, Manitoba, British Columbia, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Saskatchewan.

In every province except Prince Edward Island, the representation of visible minority police officers in 2016 was lower than the representation of visible minorities in the general population. In Prince Edward Island, visible minorities accounted for 4.8% of the population and 4.8% of officers in the province. British Columbia, which is

home to the greatest proportion of visible minorities (30.3%) in Canada, reported 15.6% of their officers as visible minority. In Ontario, 29.3% of the population reported being a visible minority, compared with 10.7% of the province's officers.

Higher proportion of police officers identifying as Aboriginal

In 2017, there were 36 First Nations self-administered police services, employing 874 officers.

As Aboriginal populations have grown, so too have the proportion of police officers reporting their identity as Aboriginal. In 2016, the census reported there were 1,673,780 Aboriginal people in Canada, accounting for 4.9% of the population, up from 4.3% in 2011.

Of the total number of officers in 2016, 5.4% reported their identity as Aboriginal, up from 4.7% in 2011.

From 2011 to 2016, eight provinces and two territories reported an increase in the proportion of officers of Aboriginal identity, while Alberta, Manitoba and Nunavut reported a decline.

In Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario, Aboriginal people were more highly represented in policing in 2016 than in the general population. For example, while 5.7% of the population in Nova Scotia reported being of Aboriginal identity, 8.8% of police officers in that province reported being of Aboriginal identity. For the remaining five provinces, Aboriginal representation in policing was slightly lower than in the general population.

Operating expenditures for policing reach \$14.7 billion in 2016/2017

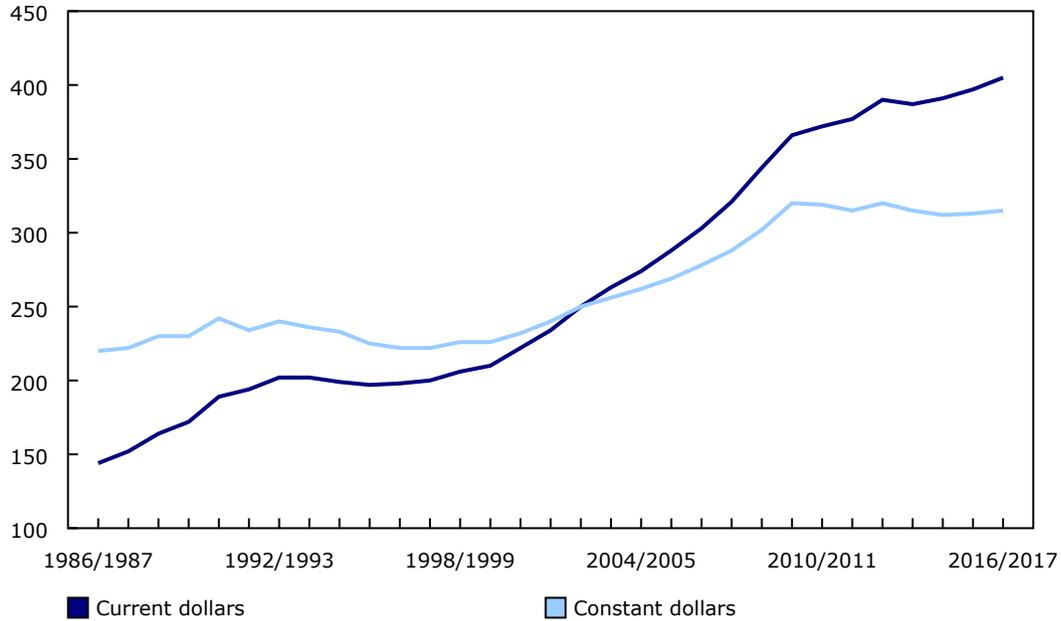
Year-end operating expenditures for police services in Canada in 2016/2017 totalled \$14.7 billion in current dollars. Almost two-thirds of these expenditures were for salaries and wages (65%), while 16% were for benefits and 20% were for other operating expenditures.

Accounting for inflation, total operating expenditures rose by 2% from the previous year, with the largest increases in Alberta (+7%), Nunavut (+7%) and Newfoundland and Labrador (+6%). Total operating expenditures in constant dollars have risen every fiscal year since 1996/1997, except for relatively small declines in 2011/2012 and 2013/2014. Overall, spending in 2016/2017 was 26% higher than a decade earlier.

When controlling for population and inflation, policing operational costs in 2016/2017 amounted to \$315 per capita. This was virtually unchanged from 2015/2016 (\$313 per capita). Overall, rates per capita have ranged between \$312 and \$320 since 2009/2010.

Chart 3
Police expenditures per capita, current dollars and constant dollars,
Canada, 1986/1987 to 2016/2017

per capita expenditures (dollars)



Note(s): Current dollars express the cost of items in terms of the year in which the expenditure occurs. Constant dollars are adjusted (by inflation or deflation) to show changes in the purchasing power of the dollar. The Consumer Price Index was used to calculate constant dollars over a base year of 2002 (2002=100). Populations are based on July 1, 2017 estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division.
Source(s): Police Administration Survey (3301).

**Table 1
Municipal police services serving a population of 100,000 or more, Canada, 2017**

	Population ²	Police officers ³	Police officers ³	Police officers ³	Female officers	Hirings ⁶	Departures ⁶	Net gain or loss: hirings and departures ⁶	Police officers eligible to retire ⁶	
	number		rate per 100,000 population ⁴	annual % change in rate ⁵	%		number		%	
Municipal police services¹										
Toronto, Ont.	2,876,095	5,190	180	-4.9	19.1	26	171	-145	7.1	
Montréal, Que.	2,014,221	4,596	228	-0.9	32.1	180	220	-40	16.3	
Peel Region (Mississauga/Brampton), Ont.	1,404,431	1,973	140	-2.0	18.3	100	74	26	4.5	
Calgary, Alta.	1,318,817	2,215	168	-0.4	18.5	128	55	73	0.0	
York Region (Markham/Vaughan), Ont.	1,157,419	1,586	137	-2.4	19.0	52	39	13	5.3	
Ottawa, Ont.	973,481	1,242	128	-1.5	22.6	62	45	17	5.8	
Edmonton, Alta.	969,068	1,775	183	-0.2	18.9	134	65	69	8.5	
Winnipeg, Man.	735,552	1,409	192	-2.6	15.6	2	43	-41	25.8	
Durham Region (Oshawa/Whitby/Ajax), Ont.	671,839	854	127	-2.3	19.8	36	26	10	2.7	
Vancouver, B.C.	670,718	1,313	196	0.0	25.3	73	34	39	8.4	
Québec, Que.	575,398	757	132	-2.3	27.2	0	6	-6	2.6	
Halton Region (Oakville/Burlington), Ont.	569,591	686	120	-2.5	20.7	33	23	10	2.2	
Hamilton, Ont.	561,022	835	149	-1.7	23.8	21	26	-5	15.7	
Waterloo Region (Kitchener), Ont.	548,936	776	141	-0.1	21.6	33	22	11	0.6	
Surrey, B.C. (RCMP)	514,522	732	142	-1.3	18.4	72	19	53	5.9	
Niagara Region (St. Catharines), Ont.	453,817	706	156	-0.8	16.6	22	18	4	6.8	
Laval, Que.	429,413	611	142	0.9	30.0	11	15	-4	12.3	
Longueuil, Que.	423,525	568	134	-0.4	34.7	10	12	-2	3.5	
London, Ont.	397,493	605	152	2.5	20.3	38	29	9	3.6	
Gatineau, Que.	281,392	393	140	-1.7	22.6	13	15	-2	4.3	
Saskatoon, Sask.	266,064	460	173	-1.4	23.0	17	14	3	10.7	
Burnaby, B.C. (RCMP)	246,987	290	117	1.5	23.4	31	7	24	7.6	
Halifax, N.S. ⁷	238,467	531	223	1.7	19.0	21	17	4	2.3	
Regina, Sask.	223,637	397	178	-1.2	24.9	9	11	-2	2.5	
Windsor, Ont.	221,862	428	193	-1.2	15.9	24	17	7	4.0	
Richmond, B.C. ⁸ (RCMP)	209,738	206	98	1.3	18.4	30	6	24	7.3	
St. John's, N.L.	207,695	341	164	-1.2	28.7	15	16	-1	24.0	
Richelieu Saint-Laurent, Que.	205,564	212	103	-0.8	23.1	0	12	-12	0.0	
Greater Sudbury, Ont.	165,154	264	160	0.0	17.4	6	9	-3	4.5	
Sherbrooke, Que.	164,538	200	122	-2.6	23.5	1	4	-3	1.5	
Barrie, Ont.	150,443	239	159	-0.6	15.9	0	2	-2	2.5	
Saguenay, Que.	147,543	178	121	0.2	24.2	0	9	-9	3.4	
Abbotsford, B.C.	146,498	203	139	-5.6	18.2	9	8	1	3.0	
Lévis, Que.	144,918	155	107	0.4	21.3	8	7	1	10.3	
Terrebonne, Que.	139,818	169	121	0.7	27.2	19	2	17	3.0	
Coquitlam, B.C. (RCMP)	139,055	163	117	-3.9	26.4	11	8	3	8.6	
Trois-Rivières, Que.	136,168	157	115	-0.5	19.7	4	4	0	2.5	
Guelph, Ont.	132,350	194	147	-0.8	22.7	2	9	-7	7.7	
Kingston, Ont.	131,746	203	154	-0.1	18.7	3	4	-1	3.4	
Kelowna, B.C. (RCMP)	129,512	173	134	-4.3	31.8	9	10	-1	9.8	
Codiac Region (Moncton), N.B. (RCMP)	118,122	134	113	-9.8	18.7	6	14	-8	17.2	
Saanich, B.C.	117,285	158	135	-1.2	24.7	7	8	-1	5.1	
Thunder Bay, Ont.	115,740	228	197	-1.3	16.7	6	5	1	3.5	
Langley Township, B.C. (RCMP)	114,940	139	121	-1.6	25.2	13	3	10	8.6	
Delta, B.C.	110,730	168	152	6.6	22.6	14	7	7	3.0	
Roussillon Region, Que.	105,835	115	109	-1.0	25.2	0	2	-2	1.7	
Chatham-Kent, Ont.	104,859	155	148	-2.3	13.5	3	2	1	10.3	
Victoria, B.C.	104,777	244	233	-0.9	25.4	7	6	1	6.1	
Red Deer, Alta. (RCMP)	103,690	172	166	3.7	22.7	11	6	5	5.8	
Brantford, Ont.	100,791	173	172	0.1	15.0	8	4	4	0.0	

- Refers to the municipal stand-alone police services and municipalities policed by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) that have a population of 100,000 or more (based on 2016 populations).
- Populations are based on preliminary postcensal estimates for 2016 and are adjusted to follow policing boundaries. Populations according to policing boundaries for 2017 were not available in time for this publication.
- Represents the actual number of permanent, fully-sworn police officers of all ranks (or their full-time equivalents) as of May 15, 2017. This number also includes officers who are deployed to contract positions and who are not available for general policing duties in their community. Police officers on long-term leave who are not being paid by the police service's annual budget are excluded.
- Based on the number of police officers on May 15, 2017 and populations for 2016. Populations are adjusted to follow policing boundaries. Populations for 2017 are not yet available.
- Percent changes are based on unrounded rates.
- Represents hirings, departures and eligibility to retire during the 2016 calendar or 2016/2017 fiscal year. The percent of officers eligible to retire is calculated using these data, along with the number of fully sworn officers employed on May 15, 2017.
- The data in this table represents Halifax Regional Police (HRP) only. It does not include data for RCMP Halifax rural which shares responsibility to police the same area. When RCMP Halifax rural data is added to the calculation, the rate of police strength amounts to approximately 175 police officers per 100,000 population.

8. Includes Vancouver International Airport.

Note(s): A new version of the Police Administration Survey was implemented in 1986. Data on police strength pertain to the snapshot date (May 15, 2017 for the most recent data). Additional data are available on CANSIM (Table 254-0004).

Source(s): Police Administration Survey ([3301](#)).

Note to readers

Several factors may contribute to differences in the number of police officers per 100,000 people across jurisdictions and police services. These include differences in police services' priorities, policies, procedures and enforcement practices, and the availability of resources.

In Canada, information on police personnel and expenditures is collected by Statistics Canada through the annual Police Administration Survey. Using data reported by each police service in Canada, this report provides details on police personnel at the national, provincial and territorial, and respondent levels.

Data in this report represent two distinct time periods. Most of the information on police personnel is based on a "snapshot date" of May 15, 2017, while data on hirings, departures, retirements, eligibility to retire, and expenditures represent the calendar year ending December 31, 2016 (or March 31, 2017 for those police services operating on a fiscal year).

In this release, rates with a percent change that rounds to 0% are considered stable.

Available in CANSIM: tables [254-0002](#) and [254-0004](#) to [254-0006](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [3301](#).

The *Juristat* article "[Police resources in Canada, 2017](#)" ([85-002-X](#)) is now available.

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; STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca).