

# Canada's population estimates: Age and sex, July 1, 2020

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## Canada's population surpasses 38 million

Canada's population was estimated at 38,005,238 on July 1, up 411,854 (+1.1%) from July 1, 2019. Following two years of population growth exceeding 500,000, growth in 2019/2020 returned to levels last seen in 2015/2016 (+406,579 or +1.1%). The lower growth in 2019/2020 was mainly attributable to the border restrictions enacted in mid-March, which resulted in fewer immigrants and non-permanent residents entering Canada and, to a lesser extent, more deaths.

The aging of Canada's population continues and the average age was 41.4 years on July 1, up slightly from the same day a year earlier (41.3 years). This average has risen every year since comparable record keeping began in 1971. The share of seniors aged 65 years and older continued to grow, reaching 18.0% on July 1. The number of centenarians (11,517)—first counted in 2001—was the highest on record.

The infographic "Canada's Population, July 1, 2020" ([11-627-M](#)), published today and based on this release, provides an overview of the most recent demographic trends in Canada. A more detailed analysis is available in *Annual Demographic Estimates: Canada, Provinces and Territories, 2020* ([91-215-X](#)).

### Accounting for COVID-19 in the Population Estimates: Technical Supplement

The estimates released today measure Canada's population growth from July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020. These estimates include the first three months of the pandemic, which began to impact Canadian demographics in mid-March. The estimates for some demographic components were adjusted to take into account the effect of the global pandemic on the population of Canada.

For an explanation of how the Demographic Estimates Program has taken COVID-19 into account, please see *Technical Supplement: Production of Demographic Estimates for the Second Quarter of 2020 in the Context of COVID-19* ([91F0015M](#)).

### Population estimates by age and sex: Interactive dashboard

Statistics Canada is pleased to launch the new product "Demographic estimates by age and sex, provinces and territories: Interactive dashboard" ([71-607-X](#)).

This dashboard can be used to visualize Canada's population age and sex structure and how it has evolved over time, at the national, provincial and territorial levels.

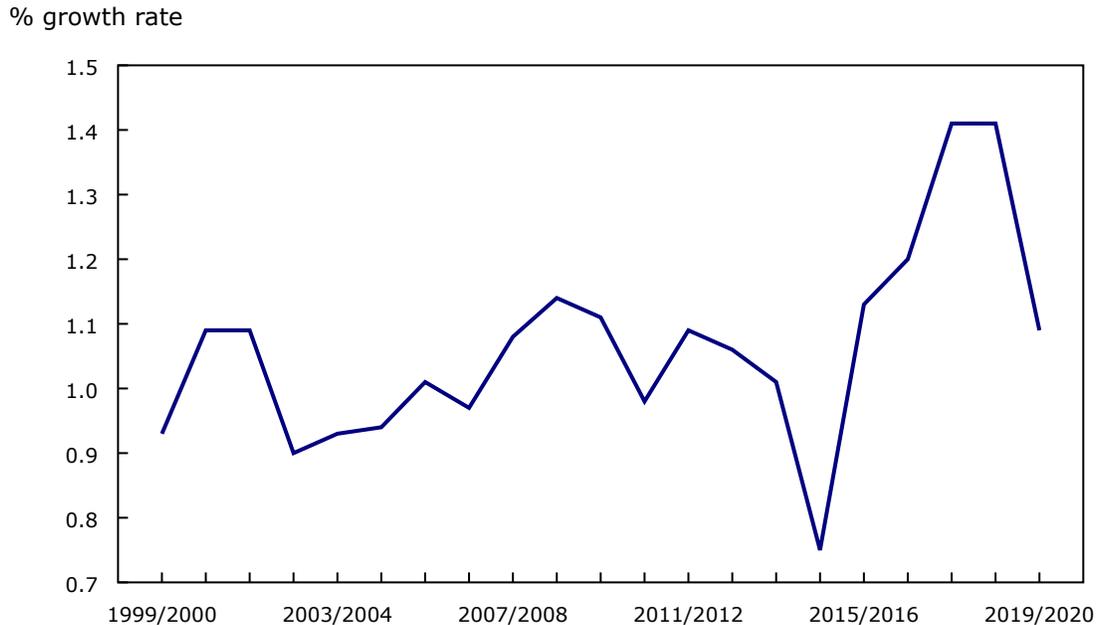
## Population growth swings from a record high to a record low over the course of the past year

Population growth varied markedly over the four quarters from July 1, 2019, to July 1, 2020, reflecting the onset of the pandemic.

Canada's population growth from July to October (third quarter of 2019) reached 208,659 (+0.6%), the highest level of growth for a quarter since comparable record keeping began in July 1971. However, the global pandemic began to affect the demographic patterns in Canada at the end of the first quarter of 2020. Canada's first COVID-19 death was reported on March 9 and international border restrictions began in mid-March. The resulting decrease in migration from March to June, combined with the [excess mortality](#), led to record low population growth for the second quarter of 2020 (+25,384 or +0.1%).



**Chart 1**  
**Population growth rate, 1999/2000 to 2019/2020, Canada**



**Note(s):** The population growth rate for each annual period corresponds to the population growth rate from July 1 to June 30. For example, the population growth rate for 2019/2020 corresponds to the population growth rate from July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020.

**Source(s):** Table 17-10-0009-01.

## Recent slower growth partly attributable to more deaths, but mainly due to border restrictions

As of June 30, 8,591 people had died of COVID-19 in Canada according to the [Public Health Agency of Canada \(PHAC\)](#). However, international migration is the main driver of population growth in Canada, accounting for 81.9% of growth in 2019/2020. Therefore, the restrictions placed on international borders and the subsequent drop in international migration levels had the largest impact on population growth in 2019/2020.

Canada admitted 284,387 immigrants in 2019/2020, down from 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 when over 300,000 were admitted annually. The vast majority of these immigrants arrived before the pandemic and the ensuing travel restrictions, with 34,271 arriving in the second quarter of 2020.

The number of non-permanent residents rose by 77,172 in 2019/2020, less than half as many as in 2018/2019 (+168,662), due to fewer study permit holders (international students) and asylum claimants in the second quarter of 2020.

## Population growth slows in nine provinces

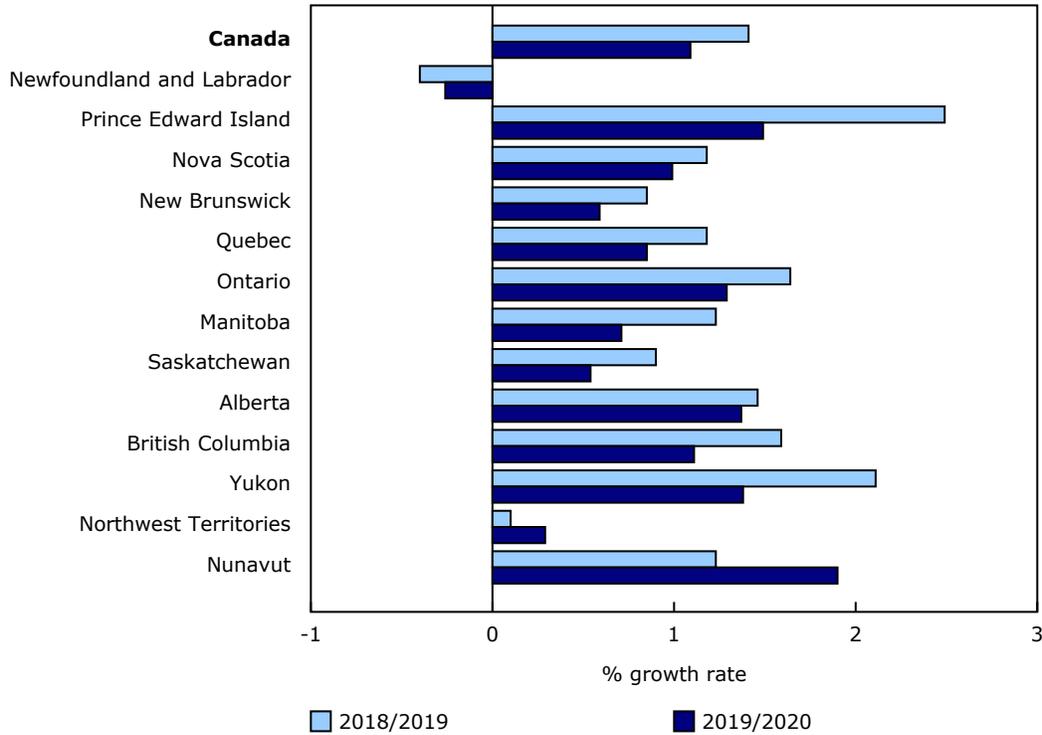
The decrease in international migration occurred throughout most of the country. Population growth was lower in 2019/2020 than a year earlier in every province except Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Despite a higher growth rate in 2019/2020, the population of Newfoundland and Labrador declined for the fourth consecutive year, the lone province or territory with a negative growth rate in 2019/2020. Nunavut (+1.9%) continued to have the highest growth rate in the country.

The lower population growth in Canada in 2019/2020 was driven by the three largest provinces of Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia.

Population growth in Ontario slowed from 1.6% a year earlier to 1.3% in 2019/2020 or 46,725 fewer people. Population growth also slowed in Quebec (an increase of 27,097 fewer people) and British Columbia (an increase of 23,722 fewer people).

The largest percentage point drop in the growth rate occurred in Prince Edward Island (from +2.5% to +1.5%).

**Chart 2**  
**Population growth rate, 2018/2019 and 2019/2020, Canada, provinces and territories**



**Note(s):** The population growth rate for each annual period corresponds to the population growth rate from July 1 to June 30. For example, the population growth rate for 2019/2020 corresponds to the population growth rate from July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020.  
**Source(s):** Table 17-10-0009-01.

### COVID-19 has had no discernable impact on the population age-structure of Canada

While the pandemic has undoubtedly had an impact on the overall population change, its effect on the population age structure of Canada is less clear. Neither the changes in the number of deaths nor those linked to international migration were significant compared with the overall size of the population. Long-term trends, such as the aging of the Canadian population, continue unabated.

The PHAC reported that almost three-quarters of the COVID-19 deaths (6,164) occurred among those aged 80 and older. Nevertheless, the number of deaths in this age group remained relatively small compared with its size (1,663,666 people). Despite the excess mortality from COVID-19, the population growth rate of those aged 80 and older (+2.4%) has remained relatively stable since 2015/2016.

Although population growth in 2019/2020 from international migration (+337,283 people) was lower than in recent years, it accounted for a small percentage of the total population. This means that the demographic weight of international migrants at each age is too small compared with the corresponding total population to change substantially the age structure of the population.

### The number of centenarians continues to steadily increase

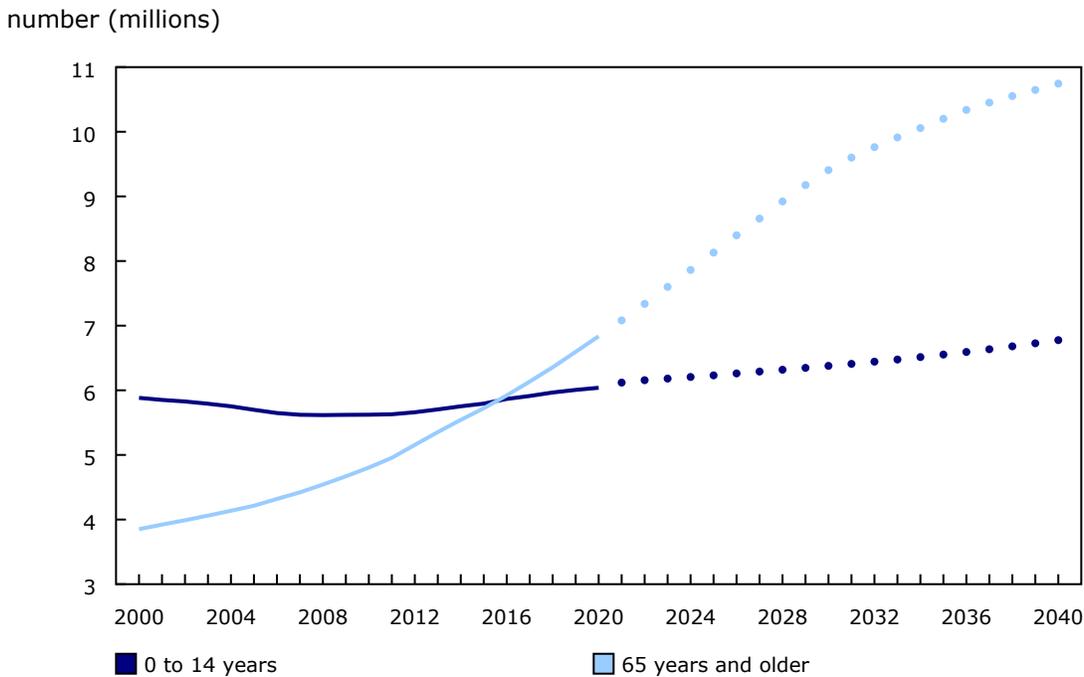
There were 11,517 centenarians in Canada on July 1, up 1,137 people from July 1, 2019 (+10.4%), or nearly ten times the population growth rate of the overall population (+1.1%). This was the highest growth for the centenarian group since this age group was first estimated in 2001, and their growth has exceeded that of the overall population during this period (2001 to 2020). Since women have a higher life expectancy than men, the vast majority of centenarians are women (81.3%).

### The gap between the number of seniors and the number of children continues to widen

The average age of the Canadian population was 41.4 years on July 1, up slightly from the same day a year earlier (41.3 years). The aging of the population has led to seniors outnumbering children in Canada since 2015/2016. There were 6,835,866 seniors aged 65 and older in Canada on July 1, accounting for 18.0% of the population, compared with 6,038,647 children aged 0 to 14, accounting for 15.9% of the population.

It is projected that the number and share of seniors will continue to increase over the next few decades. According to the medium growth scenario of Statistics Canada's most recent [demographic projections](#), seniors could account for over one-fifth of the population by 2025 and could reach one-quarter by 2059. In contrast, the share of children aged 0 to 14 is expected to remain around 15% to 16% over the same period.

**Chart 3**  
**Population aged 0 to 14 and 65 and older, 2000 to 2020 (estimates) and 2021 to 2040 (projections), Canada**



**Note(s):** Data from 2000 to 2020 are population estimates. Data for 2021 to 2040 (shown in the graph as dotted lines) are population projections taken from *Population Projections for Canada (2018 to 2068), Provinces and Territories (2018 to 2043)* (91-520-X).  
**Source(s):** Tables 17-10-0005-01 and 17-10-0057-01.

## Children still outnumber seniors in the Prairie provinces and in the territories

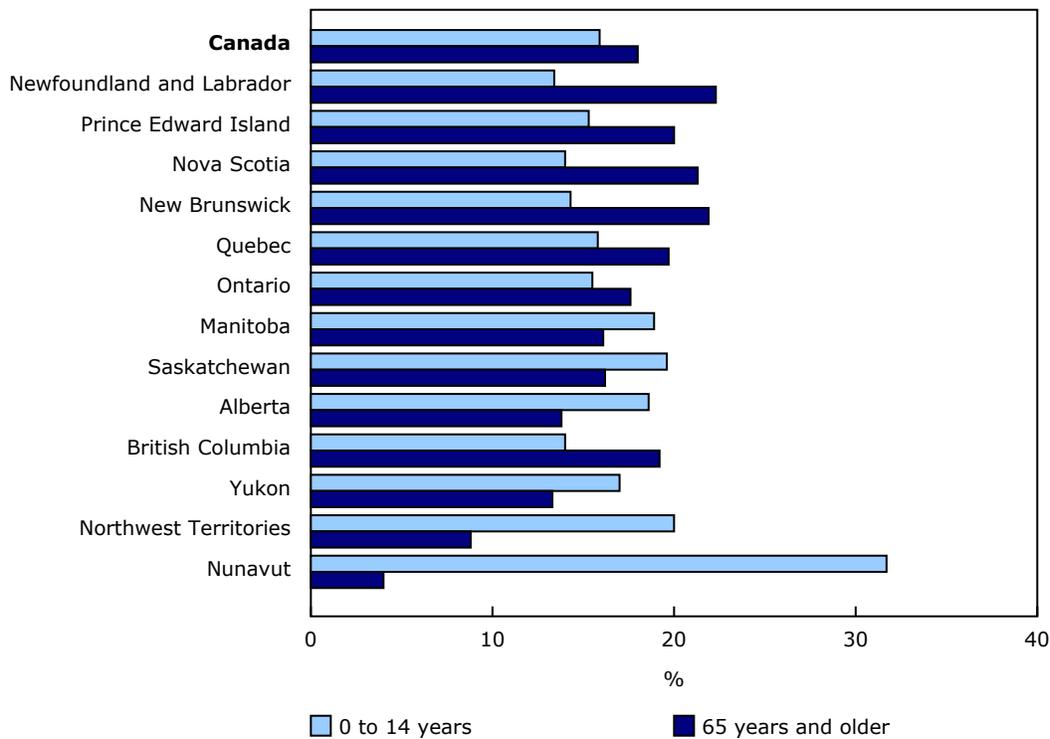
While population aging is occurring in every region of the country, some provinces are aging more rapidly than others. As of July 1, the Prairie provinces and the territories had a higher share of children aged 0 to 14 than seniors aged 65 and older.

Newfoundland and Labrador had the highest share of people aged 65 and older (22.3%) and the lowest share of children aged 0 to 14 (13.4%) among the provinces. Saskatchewan had the highest proportion of children aged 0 to 14 (19.6%), while Alberta (13.8%) had the lowest proportion of seniors aged 65 and older. Among other things, lower fertility rates in Newfoundland and Labrador compared with the Prairie provinces result in these different age structures.

In the territories, higher fertility and mortality rates explain why there are more children than seniors. Nunavut had both the highest proportion of children aged 0 to 14 (31.7%) and the lowest share of seniors aged 65 and older (4.0%) in the country.

### Chart 4

Proportion of the population aged 0 to 14 and 65 and older, July 1, 2020, Canada, provinces and territories



Source(s): Table 17-10-0005-01.

## Note to readers

The estimates released today are based on 2016 Census counts adjusted for census net undercoverage and incompletely enumerated Indian reserves, to which are added the population growth estimates for the period from May 10, 2016, to the date of the estimate.

This analysis is based on preliminary data. These data will be revised over the coming year, and it is possible that some trends described in this study will change as a result of these revisions. Therefore, this analysis should be interpreted with caution.

The population projections in this release are based on the M1 scenario presented in the publication *Population Projections for Canada (2018 to 2068), Provinces and Territories (2018 to 2043)* (91-520-X).

### Canada's population clock (real-time model)

Canada's population clock was updated today with the most recent quarterly population estimates released by Statistics Canada.

Canada's population clock is an interactive learning tool aiming to give Canadians a sense of the pace of the country's population renewal. The population estimates and census counts remain the measures used by various government programs.

### Definitions

For the purpose of calculating rates, the denominator is the average population during the period (the average of the start-of-period and end-of-period populations). For the sake of brevity, the terms growth, population growth and population growth rate have the same meaning.

Excess mortality occurs when there are more deaths during a period of time than what would be expected for that period. For more information, please see [The Daily](#), August 28, 2020.

Natural increase is the difference between the number of births and deaths.

Net international migration basically refers to the total number of moves between Canada and abroad that result in a change in the usual place of residence. It is calculated by adding immigrants, returning emigrants and net non-permanent residents, then subtracting emigrants and net temporary emigration.

An immigrant (or permanent immigrant) refers to a person who is or has been a landed immigrant (permanent resident) and who has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Immigrants are either Canadian citizens by naturalization (the citizenship process) or permanent residents under Canadian legislation. Some immigrants have resided in Canada for a number of years, while others have arrived recently. Most immigrants are born outside Canada, but a small number are born in Canada. Also, children born in other countries to parents who are Canadian citizens who are temporarily residing in another country are not included in the category as they are Canadian citizens at birth. The terms immigrant, landed immigrant and permanent resident are equivalent.

A non-permanent resident (or temporary immigrant) is a person who is lawfully in Canada on a temporary basis and who holds a work, study or other (excluding visitor visas) permit issued for that person along with members of their family living with them. This group also includes individuals who seek refugee status upon or after their arrival in Canada and remain in the country pending the outcome of processes relative to their claim. Note that Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada uses the term temporary resident rather than non-permanent resident. Net non-permanent residents is calculated by subtracting the number of non-permanent residents estimated at the beginning of the period from the number estimated at the end of the period.

A senior or an older person is designated as a person aged 65 and older.

Available tables: [17-10-0005-01](#), [17-10-0006-01](#), [17-10-0008-01](#), [17-10-0014-01](#) to [17-10-0016-01](#) , [17-10-0021-01](#) and [17-10-0022-01](#).

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers [3601](#) and [3604](#).**

The *Annual Demographic Estimates: Canada, Provinces and Territories, 2020* ([91-215-X](#)) is now available.

The *Quarterly Demographic Estimates*, Vol. 34, no. 2 ([91-002-X](#)) publication is now available.

An infographic entitled "Canada's Population, July 1, 2020" ([11-627-M](#)), published today and based on this release, provides an overview of the most recent demographic trends in Canada.

The document *Technical Supplement: Production of Demographic Estimates for the Second Quarter of 2020 in the Context of COVID-19* ([91F0015M](#)) is now available.

The product *Quarterly demographic estimates, provinces and territories: Interactive dashboard* ([71-607-X](#)) is also available.

The product *Demographic estimates by age and sex, provinces and territories: Interactive dashboard* ([71-607-X](#)) is also available.

The product *Canada's population clock (real-time model)* ([71-607-X](#)) is also available.

The updated [population and demography](#) and [seniors and aging](#) portals are also 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](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; [STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca)).