

Canada's population estimates: Age and sex, July 1, 2018

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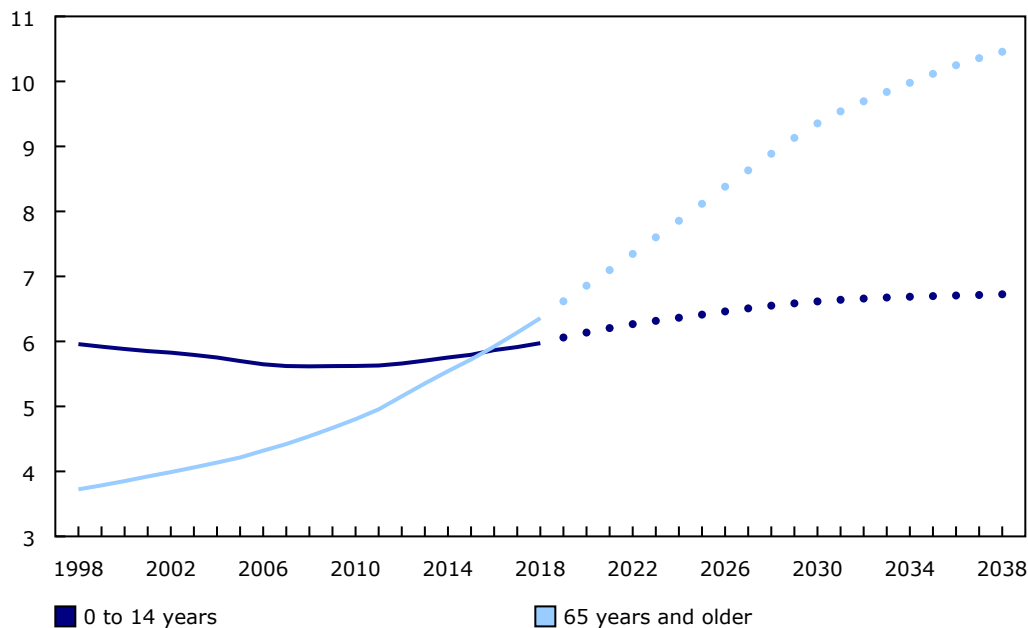
The gap between the number of children and the number of seniors is growing

The most recent population estimates point to the continued rapid aging of the Canadian population. This trend is especially driven by fertility rates below the replacement level, which has been the situation in recent decades, and an increased life expectancy. The aging of the baby boom generation (1946 to 1965), born after the Second World War who make up a significant share of the population (25.6%), further accelerates the actual aging of the population.

As a result, the difference between the number of children and the number of seniors continues to widen. The number of seniors surpassed the number of children aged 0 to 14 in 2016. As of July 1, 2018, there were 106 adults aged 65 and older for every 100 children aged 0 to 14 years in Canada. By comparison, there were twice as many children aged 0 to 14 than people 65 years and older in 1986.

Chart 1
Population aged 0 to 14 years and 65 years and older, 1998 to 2018 (estimates) and 2019 to 2038 (projections), Canada

number (millions)



Note(s): Data from 1998 to 2018 are population estimates. Data for 2019 to 2038 (shown in the graph as dotted lines) are population projections taken from *Population Projections for Canada (2013 to 2063)*, *Provinces and Territories (2013 to 2038)* (91-520-X).
Source(s): Tables 17-10-0005-01 and 17-10-0057-01.

Population estimates rebasing

On [September 27, 2018](#), Statistics Canada released the first demographic estimates to be based on the 2016 Census population counts. These estimates were for the total population of Canada, the provinces and territories. Today, these estimates are available by age and sex. These new estimates also take into account the 2016 Census net undercoverage and incompletely enumerated Indian reserves. Finally, they include the population change for the period from May 10, 2016, to the date of the estimate. In 2011, there were 31 incompletely enumerated Indian reserves, while in 2016 this number had dropped to 14, largely owing to Statistics Canada's commitment to greater engagement.

The rebasing process of the demographic estimates produced by Statistics Canada is part of the normal procedures carried out after each census in order to ensure the highest possible accuracy of the population estimates. For a given reference date, it is expected that population estimates released today differ from those that were published before September 27, 2018, and that were not based on the 2016 Census. The size of the differences is similar to what was noted for previous rebasing exercises, such as for the censuses of 2001, 2006 and 2011.

After every census, Statistics Canada produces a technical report on coverage studies. The [most recent report available](#) discusses the coverage of the 2011 Census. A new report discussing the coverage of the 2016 Census will be available on November 13, 2019.

The aging of baby boom cohorts accelerates Canada's population aging

Starting in 2011, the first year that the baby boom cohorts began turning 65, the increase in the number of seniors in Canada has accelerated. According to preliminary estimates, 17.2% of the country's population were aged 65 and older on July 1, 2018, compared with 14.4% on July 1, 2011. The proportion of seniors is expected to continue to rise rapidly in the coming years as more baby boomers turn 65. According to the most recent demographic projections, one in five Canadians should be aged 65 and older in 2024.

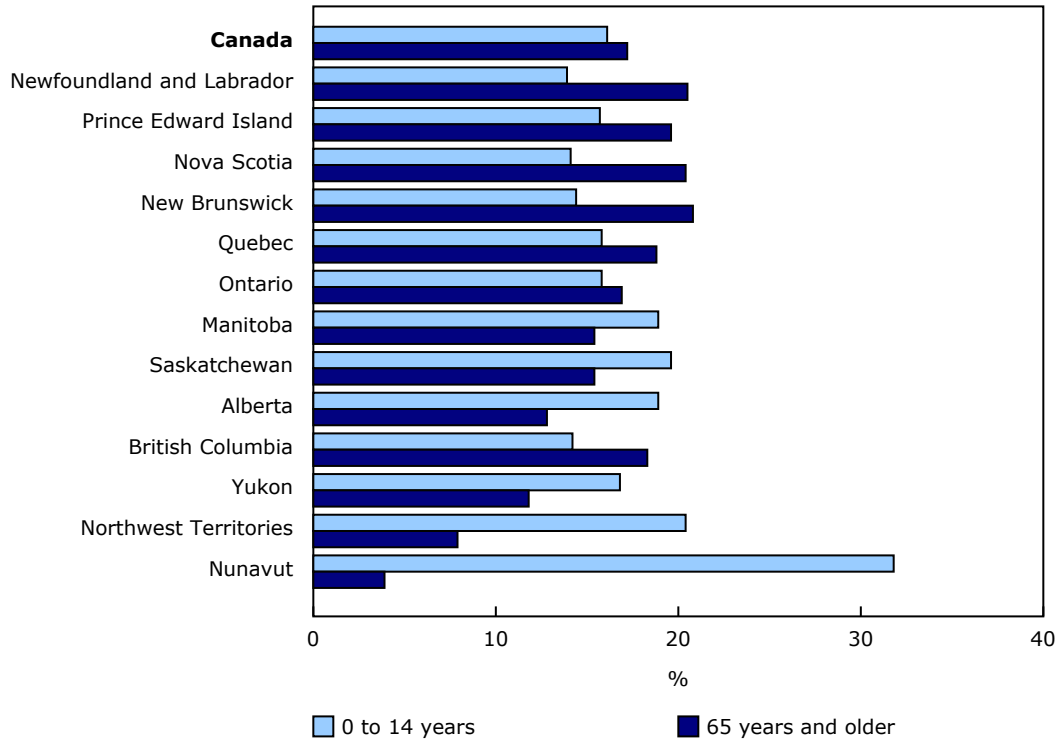
As of July 1, 2018, close to one in two seniors (46.3%) were born during the baby boom period. This proportion has increased rapidly, up from 41.3% a year earlier.

The youngest populations are in the Prairie provinces and the territories

The age structure of the population varies considerably from one province or territory to another. Most often, these variations are due to differences in fertility levels, but also in part due to internal migration. Generally, the youngest populations in Canada are in the Prairie provinces and the territories, and the oldest populations are in the Atlantic provinces.

On July 1, 2018, half the population of Newfoundland and Labrador was at least 46.5 years old, the highest median age in Canada (40.8 years old). The province also had the second-highest proportion of people aged 65 and older (20.5%), after New Brunswick (20.8%). These two provinces have seen almost continuous interprovincial migration losses in recent decades, with many young people of reproductive age moving to other provinces and territories, thus contributing to the acceleration of demographic aging.

Chart 2
Proportion of the population aged 0 to 14 years and 65 years and older, July 1, 2018, Canada, provinces and territories



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

Nunavut had the youngest population in the country, with a median age of 26.1 years and with nearly one-third of individuals under the age of 15 (31.8%). This is primarily due to higher fertility and lower life expectancy.

Canada has one of the lowest proportions of seniors in the G7

Canada had the second-lowest proportion of seniors (17.2%) among the G7 countries, after the United States (15%). The proportion of seniors in Canada is below Japan (28%), Italy (23%), Germany (21%), France (20%) and the United Kingdom (18%).

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 change estimates for the period from May 10, 2016, to the date of the estimate. The data starting from July 2001 were also revised.

This analysis is based on preliminary data. Since these data will be revised in the coming year, some trends described in this analysis may 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 (medium growth, trends from 1991/1992 to 2010/2011) presented in the publication *Population Projections for Canada (2013 to 2063), Provinces and Territories (2013 to 2038)* (91-520-X).

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.

The **median age** is an age "x", such that exactly one half of the population is older than "x" and the other half is younger than "x".

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

Baby boom cohorts include people born between 1946 and 1965.

The Group of Seven (**G7**) is an informal grouping of seven of the world's advanced economies consisting of the United States, Japan, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy and Canada. Data on the proportion of persons aged 65 years and older in these countries (excluding Canada) are from the Population Reference Bureau, *2018 World Population Data Sheet*. Data are rounded to the unit as shown in the source used.

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

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [3604](#).

The *Annual Demographic Estimates: Canada, Provinces and Territories, 2018* ([91-215-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).