

Canada's population estimates: Strong population growth in 2023

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Since the end of 2020, demographic trends in Canada have shifted significantly. The fertility rate reached a [record low of 1.33 children per woman in 2022](#). [Millennials now outnumber baby boomers in Canada](#) and the labour market has changed, with some sectors experiencing shortages. Many permanent and temporary immigrants came to Canada, including many workers and international students.

On January 1, 2024, Canada's population reached 40,769,890 inhabitants, which corresponds to an increase of 1,271,872 people compared with January 1, 2023. This was the highest annual population growth rate (+3.2%) in Canada since 1957 (+3.3%).

Most of Canada's 3.2% population growth rate stemmed from temporary immigration in 2023. Without temporary immigration, that is, relying solely on permanent immigration and natural increase (births minus deaths), Canada's population growth would have been almost three times less (+1.2%).

In 2023, the vast majority (97.6%) of Canada's population growth came from international migration (both permanent and temporary immigration) and the remaining portion (2.4%) came from natural increase.

Trends in permanent and temporary immigration

In 2023, 471,771 permanent immigrants made Canada their home, which was within the target range of [Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada](#) (IRCC). Permanent immigration was up compared with one year earlier in every province and territory except Nova Scotia and Quebec.

A further 804,901 non-permanent residents (NPRs) were added to Canada's population in 2023. This was the second straight year that temporary immigration drove population growth and the third year in a row with a net increase of NPRs.

The majority of those NPRs were temporary workers responding to labour market needs in the different provinces and territories, followed by international students. Moreover, just over 1 in 10 NPRs were asylum claimants (with or without work or study permits).

Every province and territory except Newfoundland and Labrador saw a year-over-year increase in the net number of NPRs in 2023.

It is estimated that 2,661,784 NPRs were living in Canada on January 1, 2024. Among them, 2,332,886 were permit holders and their family members living with them, and 328,898 were asylum claimants (with or without work or study permits).

Difference between numbers of non-permanent residents from Statistics Canada and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Statistics Canada collaborates closely with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and other federal departments to estimate the number of non-permanent residents (NPRs) living in Canada. The demographic estimates from Statistics Canada are updated on an ongoing basis, as new or revised data become available from its partners. Data related to NPRs from Statistics Canada's demographic estimates can differ from IRCC's data, given the different goals of the program.



For the third straight year, interprovincial migration at levels not seen in thirty years

Approximately 333,000 Canadians moved from one province or territory to another in 2023, the second-highest number recorded since the 1990s and the third straight year that interprovincial migration topped 300,000.

Alberta saw the largest net gain in interprovincial migration in 2023, adding 55,107 people. This was the largest gain in interprovincial migration nationally since comparable data became available in 1972. Alberta has been recording gains in population from interprovincial migration since 2022, a reverse of the trend seen from 2016 to 2021, when more people left the province than arrived from other parts of Canada.

Net interprovincial migration was also positive in Nova Scotia (+6,169 people), New Brunswick (+4,790) and Prince Edward Island (+818), although all three Maritime provinces gained fewer interprovincial migrants in 2023 than in the previous two years.

Nationally, Ontario (-36,197) lost the greatest number of people to other provinces and territories in 2023, following a loss of 38,816 people in 2022. The only other times (since comparable data became available) a province has lost more than 35,000 people due to migration to other parts of Canada occurred in Quebec in 1977 (-38,498 people) and 1978 (-36,955).

Unlike the neighbouring Alberta, British Columbia had more Canadians move out than in, meaning that, in 2023, net interprovincial migration (-8,624) was negative for the first time since 2012. In general, the largest migration flows for British Columbia and Alberta are with each other, and most of the net loss from British Columbia in 2023 was to Alberta.

Strong population growth in the fourth quarter of 2023

From October 1 to December 31, 2023, Canada's population increased by 241,494 people (+0.6%). This was the highest rate of growth in a fourth quarter since 1956 (+0.7%).

Canada welcomed 100,472 permanent immigrants in the fourth quarter of 2023, with nine provinces reporting higher year-over-year immigration levels.

In Quebec, the number of new immigrants decreased by about half, from 16,188 in the fourth quarter of 2022 to 8,627 in the fourth quarter of 2023.

From October 1, 2023, to January 1, 2024, the number of NPRs increased by 150,347, up for the eighth quarter in a row.

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Note to readers

The demographic estimates for the fourth quarter of 2023 released today are considered preliminary and will be updated following the standard procedure followed by Statistics Canada for decades. They are based on 2021 Census counts, adjusted for census net undercoverage and incompletely enumerated reserves and settlements. To these counts, the population growth estimates for the period from May 11, 2021, to the date of the estimate are added.

Canada's population clock (real-time model)

[Canada's population clock \(real-time model\)](#) was updated today with the most recent data from 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.

Population growth or **total growth** in Canada is equal to natural increase (births minus deaths) plus international migratory increase (immigrants plus net non-permanent residents minus net emigration). At the provincial and territorial level, total population growth also includes interprovincial migratory increase.

Net international migration 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.

An **immigrant** refers to a person who is a permanent resident or a landed immigrant. Such a person has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Persons who are born abroad to a Canadian parent are not immigrants but are included in the returning emigrant component. For the Centre for Demography, the terms **immigrant**, **landed immigrant** and **permanent resident** refer to the same concept.

Non-permanent resident refers to a person from another country with a usual place of residence in Canada and who has a work or study permit, or who has claimed refugee status (asylum claimant). Family members living with work or study permit holders are also included unless these family members are already Canadian citizens, landed immigrants (permanent residents), or non-permanent residents themselves. For the Centre for Demography, the terms **non-permanent resident** and **temporary immigrant** refer to the same concept.

Asylum claimants are non-permanent residents who have claimed refugee status while in Canada and are awaiting a decision on their claim. This category also includes protected persons who are not yet permanent residents.

Permit holders and their family members are non-permanent residents who are not asylum claimants, but who hold a permit (for work, study or temporary residence). This classification also includes their family members who are not Canadian citizens, landed immigrants (permanent residents) or non-permanent residents themselves.

Interprovincial migration represents all movement from one province or territory to another involving a change in the usual place of residence. A person who takes up residence in another province or territory is an **out-migrant** with reference to the province or territory of origin and an **in-migrant** with reference to the province or territory of destination.

Acknowledgements

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Available tables: [17-10-0009-01](#), [17-10-0020-01](#), [17-10-0040-01](#), [17-10-0045-01](#), [17-10-0059-01](#) and [17-10-0121-01](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [3601](#).

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

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

The [Population and demography statistics](#) and [Older adults and population aging statistics](#) 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; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca).