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..	not available for a specific reference period
...	not applicable
0	true zero or a value rounded to zero
0^s	value rounded to 0 (zero) where there is a meaningful distinction between true zero and the value that was rounded
^{p}	preliminary
^{r}	revised
x	suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
^{E}	use with caution
F	too unreliable to be published
*	significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

The migration of infrastructure tradespersons

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Overview of the study

This study uses data from the 2011 National Household Survey to examine the migration patterns of 'infrastructure tradespersons' over the period from 2006 to 2011. In this study, infrastructure tradespersons are defined as Canadian residents aged 25 to 44 with a certification in trades and whose major field of study was in construction trades, mechanics and repair, precision production, or heavy equipment machinery/crane operation.

- Among those who were infrastructure tradespersons in 2011, 13% lived in a different region five years earlier (in 2006), either within their province or in another province. This compared with 12% among those in other types of trades and 16% among university graduates.
- Within the 13% of infrastructure trade migrants in 2011 who had moved from where they lived in 2006, 9% had moved to another region within the same province, and 4% (representing 24,400 individuals) had moved to another province.
- More than one-third of all interprovincial migrants with a certification in infrastructure trades were 'returnees'. This means that they lived outside their province of birth in 2006 but had moved back to their province of birth in 2011.
- Excluding those who lived in Alberta in 2006, about one-half of infrastructure tradespersons who changed provinces between 2006 and 2011 moved to Alberta (accounting for more than 8,500 individuals).
- Alberta gained many tradespersons over the period, but also lost many. For every 100 infrastructure tradespersons who moved to Alberta between 2006 and 2011, 84 left the province. About 60% of Alberta leavers returned to their province of birth.

Introduction

In a vast country like Canada, regional labour markets play an important role in determining the types of labour needed to meet the needs of the local economy. Resource-rich regions, in particular, may be experiencing labour shortages in specific industries, while some other regions may have a labour surplus.[1] Increasing the mobility of labour, notably among recent graduates, is therefore seen as a solution to reduce labour market imbalances.[2] Some types of trades are occasionally perceived as particularly likely to reflect such imbalances, especially those that are in high demand in resource-based regions.

The issue of labour imbalance is also confounded by the fact that young adults—who are typically most likely to move—may be less inclined to choose a trades program than before. In 2011, 11% of workers aged 25 to 44 reported that their highest level of educational attainment was a registered apprenticeship certificate or other trades certificate or diploma, compared with 13% among those aged 45 to 64. Policy strategies are currently being developed to encourage students to consider a career in skilled trades through the Canada Student Loans Program (CSLP).[3]

Using data from the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS), this study examines the migration patterns of a key group of skilled trades—'infrastructure tradespersons'. In this article, infrastructure tradespersons are defined as post-secondary graduates whose major field of study was either in construction trades, mechanics and repair, precision production, or heavy equipment machinery/crane operation. Because mobility rates are significantly lower among older individuals, the study focuses on those who were aged 25 to 44 in 2011.

The first section of this paper examines whether infrastructure tradespersons have a different migration rate (within their province or to a new province) than people in other education groups. In other words, are tradespersons proportionately more likely to have migrated (between 2006 and 2011) than those who had other types of education credentials?

The second section examines the provincial migration patterns of infrastructure tradespersons and provides more information about provinces that gained (and lost) the greatest share of them between 2006 and 2011.

Migration rates are not necessarily higher among infrastructure tradespersons

With the large sample size of the NHS, it is possible to identify how people are distributed across fields of study within large education groups. Individuals with a certification in infrastructure trades can be defined as those who have both

1) reported that they had a registered apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma, a college diploma or a certificate below bachelor as their highest level of schooling; and

2) studied in one of the following fields: construction trades, mechanics and repair, precision production, or heavy equipment machinery/crane operation.

According to this definition, approximately 576,000 Canadians aged 25 to 44 were infrastructure tradespersons in 2011 (Table 1) and accounted for 7% of the overall population in this age group. Those who were trained in other trades numbered 521,000 and accounted for 6% of the population. Other education groups included those with a university degree (29%), other college, CEGEP or diploma below the bachelor level (26%), and a high school diploma or less (31%).

The profile of tradespersons differed from people with other levels of educational attainment in a number of ways. Firstly, nearly all (96%) infrastructure tradespersons were men. This compared with 39% among those in other types of trades (e.g., cooks, hairstylists, truck and bus drivers, and administrative workers), 43% among those with a university degree, and 57% of those with less than a high school diploma.

Secondly, infrastructure tradespersons typically earned $46,800 in 2010. This compared with a median of $29,400 among other tradespersons, a median of $37,900 among other college graduates, and a median of $52,200 among university graduates. Among males, however, the difference between infrastructure and non-infrastructure tradespersons was relatively smaller, and infrastructure tradesmen had similar earnings to those who had a college education.

Thirdly, infrastructure tradespersons also enjoyed a relatively high employment rate (88%, compared with 81% among other tradespersons, 85% among those who had a college diploma, and 87% among university graduates). Among males only, the employment rate among infrastructure tradespersons was 88%, compared with 90% among those with a college diploma and 91% among those with a university degree.

What can be said about the migration patterns of infrastructure tradespersons? With the NHS, information about the location of residence can be compared with information collected about the place of residence five years earlier, in 2006. Respondents can thus be designated as 'migrants' if they lived in a different region or province in 2011 than in 2006 (See *Data sources, methods and definitions*). Migration rates over five years provide a useful indicator of longstanding migration patterns, but do not capture individuals who migrated in the intervening years.

According to this definition, 13% of all individuals aged 25 to 44 in 2011 had moved from where they lived in 2006—either to another region in the same province (9%) or to another province (5%). Infrastructure tradespersons had numbers close to the national average in 2011, as 13% (representing 76,000 individuals) had migrated from a different region five years earlier.

As other studies have previously shown,[4] university graduates had the highest migration rate (16%). By contrast, individuals with other trades and those who had a high school degree or less had migration rates below 12%.

University graduates also had the highest rate of interprovincial migration in 2011 (7%). By contrast, 4% of infrastructure tradespersons lived in a different province five years earlier (about the same as those who had a high school degree). Interestingly, individuals with other trades had the lowest rate of interprovincial migration (3%).

Similar results were found when the sample was restricted to men, who make up the vast majority of people in infrastructure trades. In 2011, 4% among men in infrastructure trades lived in a different province in 2006, compared with 5% of men with a high school diploma.[5] In contrast, 7% of men aged 25 to 44 with a university degree in 2011 lived in a different province in 2006.

Residents of Atlantic provinces had higher rates of interprovincial migration

Life-cycle events have an impact on the probability of migrating. Specifically, the probability of migrating is relatively higher when individuals are about to enter the labour market, but lower in the presence of children.[6] Migration rates also tend to be related to the financial and psychological costs of moving.[7]

Reflecting earlier findings for the general population,[8] tradespersons who were younger and without children were the most likely to have migrated, either within their province or territory or to a new province or territory (Table 2). In 2011, 18% of infrastructure tradespersons aged 25 to 29 lived in a different region or province in 2006, compared with 9% in the 40-to-44 age group. Similarly, those without children were more likely to have migrated (15%, compared with 9% among those with children).

An important factor associated with interprovincial migration is whether infrastructure tradespersons lived in their province of birth in 2006. Among people who lived in their province of birth in 2006, 2%

Table 1
Profile and migration status of the population aged 25 to 44 over the period from 2006 to 2011, by highest level of educational attainment

		Profile			Migration status		
	Total population	Men	Employment rate	Median earnings (in 2010)	Total migrants	Intraprovincial migrants	Interprovincial migrants
	thousand	percentage		dollars	percentage		
Total population	**8,164.7**	**49.0**	**81.4**	**38,900**	**13.3**	**8.5**	**4.8**
Education							
Less than high school	802.0	57.1	60.4	25,500	11.3	7.8	3.5
High school	1,751.1	53.7	76.7	32,000	11.8	7.5	4.3
Infrastructure trades	**575.8**	**96.1**	**87.8**	**46,800**	**13.2**	**8.9**	**4.2**
All other apprenticeship or trades certificates or diplomas	521.0	38.5	81.3	29,400	11.5	8.2	3.3
All other college, CEGEP or other certificates or diplomas below bachelor level	2,114.1	39.3	84.9	37,900	12.8	8.6	4.2
University degree	2,400.7	42.5	87.3	52,200	15.8	9.3	6.5
Total men	**4,003.2**	**100.0**	**85.5**	**45,600**	**13.5**	**8.6**	**4.9**
Education							
Less than high school	458.1	100.0	68.6	31,300	11.3	7.8	3.5
High school	940.6	100.0	82.9	38,200	12.3	7.7	4.6
Infrastructure trades	**553.5**	**100.0**	**88.3**	**47,700**	**13.0**	**8.8**	**4.2**
All other apprenticeship or trades certificates or diplomas	200.5	100.0	86.2	39,200	12.8	8.9	3.9
All other college, CEGEP or other certificates or diplomas below bachelor level	829.3	100.0	89.6	48,000	13.3	8.9	4.4
University degree	1,021.2	100.0	90.6	61,100	16.4	9.4	7.0

Note: People who were not living in Canada in 2006 are excluded from the estimates.
Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

changed provinces between 2006 and 2011. This compared with a rate that was eight times higher (16%) among those who resided outside their province of birth in 2006.

Residents of smaller provinces generally had higher rates of interprovincial migration. For example, in the Atlantic provinces, interprovincial migration rates varied between 7% and 10%. In contrast, 1% of Quebec Francophones were interprovincial migrants, compared with 4% of Quebec residents with a different mother tongue. In the other populous province—Ontario—the interprovincial rate was less than 4%. In the West, Alberta had relatively higher rates of interprovincial migration (8%). Alberta also had one of the highest rates of *intra*provincial migration (11%), along with Saskatchewan (12%). As a result, Alberta had the highest overall migration rate (19%) of all provinces and territories in 2011.

Finally, infrastructure tradespersons who lived in rural areas and small population centres were more likely to have moved to another region within their province (12%) than those who lived in census agglomerations and census metropolitan areas (8%). This is as expected, as smaller areas sometimes lose population to closer, large urban centres.[9] Interprovincial migration rates were relatively similar between residents of rural areas and small population centres, as well as CMA and CA residents (4%).

Table 2
Proportion of infrastructure tradespersons aged 25 to 44 in 2011 who lived in another region (intraprovincial migrants) or another province or territory (interprovincial migrants) in 2006, by sociodemographic characteristics

	Infrastructure tradespersons		
	Total migrants	Intraprovincial	Interprovincial
	percentage		
Age group	**13.2**	**8.9**	**4.2**
25 to 29	18.0	12.3	5.8
30 to 34	14.8	10.1	4.7
35 to 39	11.9	8.1	3.8
40 to 44	8.6	5.7	2.9
Presence of children aged 6 and over			
No	15.3	10.4	4.9
Yes	9.3	6.4	3.0
Residence (in 2006)			
Newfoundland and Labrador	16.9	9.0	7.9
Prince Edward Island	11.1	1.3	9.8
Nova Scotia	15.2	6.3	8.9
New Brunswick	15.4	8.2	7.2
Quebec (mother tongue other than French)	7.4	3.2	4.2
Quebec (Francophones)	10.0	9.3	0.7
Ontario	11.9	8.4	3.5
Manitoba	14.1	8.2	5.9
Saskatchewan	16.9	11.9	5.0
Alberta	18.7	10.6	8.1
British Columbia	14.7	9.5	5.1
Territories	17.9	2.3	15.5
Place of birth			
Lived outside birth province in 2006	25.1	8.9	16.2
Lived in birth province in 2006	11.7	9.6	2.2
Born outside Canada	8.1	4.6	3.5
CMAs and CAs versus other areas (in 2006)			
Census metropolitan areas or Census agglomeration	12.4	8.1	4.3
All other areas	15.7	11.8	3.9

Note: People who were not living in Canada in 2006 are excluded from the estimates.
Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

Alberta gained many tradespersons, but also lost many

Regional economic conditions are important factors in the decision to migrate. More particularly, if the expected benefits associated with migration (i.e., better prospective employment and earnings) exceed the potential costs of moving, it may encourage individuals to migrate. Income and unemployment gaps between provinces are thus associated with migration patterns.[10]

Recently, Alberta's economic boom was a magnet for all types of migrants, and especially so for infrastructure tradespersons. Of the 24,400 infrastructure tradespersons aged 25 to 44 who were interprovincial migrants between 2006 and 2011, 35% went to Alberta (Table 3). In comparison, 24% of interprovincial migrants with other trade certifications went to Alberta, and 23% of those who had a university degree did so. About 30% of people with less than a high school education and approximately 29% with a high school diploma went to Alberta. Ontario, the most populous province, was the province of residence of 11% of infrastructure trade migrants in 2011.

When those who resided in Alberta in 2006 are excluded from the interprovincial migrant population, one-half of infrastructure tradespersons (representing more

than 8,500 individuals) reported that they lived in Alberta in 2011. This was the largest percentage of all education groups.

However, Alberta was also characterized by a relatively large outflow of interprovincial migrants. Of the 24,400 tradespersons who migrated to another province between 2006 and 2011, 29% came from Alberta—making it the top province not only in terms of in-migration, but also in terms of out-migration (bottom panel of Table 3).

One way to estimate the extent to which a province gained or lost population due to interprovincial migration is to calculate a migration ratio, which indicates how many individuals left a province ('out-migrants') for every 100 individuals entering the province ('in-migrants'). In Alberta, the ratio was 84 out-migrants for every 100 in-migrants. The lowest ratio was in Saskatchewan, which had 47 out-migrants for every 100 in-migrants, and the migration ratio was also relatively lower in Newfoundland and Labrador (68 out-migrants for every 100 in-migrants). In contrast, the migration ratio was 201 out-migrants for every 100 in-migrants in Ontario, the highest ratio of all provinces in this particular education group (Table 4).

The migration ratios were also generally lower in Newfoundland and Labrador, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia for other education groups. Of note, Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba were the only provinces that had migration ratios of 100 and above in all educational groups.

Table 3
Distribution of infrastructure tradespersons aged 25 to 44 in 2011 who lived in another province or territory in 2006 (interprovincial migrants), by place of residence in 2006 and place of residence in 2011

	Interprovincial migrants						
	Total	Less than high school	High school	Infrastructure trades	All other apprenticeship or trades certificates or diplomas	All other college, CEGEP or other certificates or diplomas below bachelor level	University degree
				number			
Total interprovincial migrants	**389,370**	**28,100**	**75,500**	**24,400**	**16,950**	**87,700**	**156,660**
				percentage			
Residence in 2011							
Newfoundland and Labrador	3.4	4.6	3.5	**6.0**	5.4	3.7	2.4
Prince Edward Island	0.9	1.1	0.8	**0.8**	1.0	1.2	0.9
Nova Scotia	5.7	4.7	5.6	**6.5**	5.4	6.0	5.6
New Brunswick	4.1	4.6	4.8	**4.4**	5.4	4.4	3.3
Quebec	6.6	5.7	5.3	**4.4**	9.3	5.6	7.9
Ontario	21.3	15.4	17.8	**11.5**	16.1	20.0	26.8
Manitoba	4.2	5.7	5.0	**3.3**	4.4	4.3	3.6
Saskatchewan	6.6	10.0	7.8	**8.2**	7.5	7.0	4.8
Alberta	26.4	30.2	29.0	**35.1**	24.4	26.7	23.1
British Columbia	19.3	16.7	19.0	**18.4**	19.9	19.4	19.8
Territories	1.6	1.3	1.3	**1.4**	1.1	1.6	1.8
Residence in 2006							
Newfoundland and Labrador	2.7	2.8	2.4	**4.1**	3.0	2.9	2.5
Prince Edward Island	1.0	0.8	1.0	**1.0**	0.7	1.1	0.9
Nova Scotia	6.9	5.3	5.7	**6.7**	5.3	6.2	8.4
New Brunswick	4.3	3.5	4.4	**3.9**	3.7	4.7	4.4
Quebec	10.4	7.7	7.5	**7.4**	10.7	9.2	13.4
Ontario	26.2	23.8	24.5	**23.1**	21.8	26.4	28.2
Manitoba	5.2	5.7	5.8	**4.2**	5.9	4.8	5.2
Saskatchewan	4.5	5.8	4.9	**3.8**	4.8	3.9	4.5
Alberta	22.0	28.4	25.8	**29.4**	26.6	23.8	16.3
British Columbia	15.4	14.8	16.6	**14.6**	15.7	15.6	14.9
Territories	1.4	1.5	1.4	**1.6**	1.7	1.5	1.2

Note: People who were not living in Canada in 2006 are excluded from the estimates.
Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

Table 4
Migration ratios over the period from 2006 to 2011, by province or territory and highest level of educational attainment

	Total	Less than high school	High school	Infrastructure trades	All other apprenticeship or trades certificates or diplomas	All other college, CEGEP or other certificates or diplomas below bachelor level	University degree
				migration ratio[1]			
Provinces and territories							
Newfoundland and Labrador	78	61	67	**68**	56	77	103
Prince Edward Island	104	72	130	**134**	69	92	109
Nova Scotia	122	112	102	**103**	97	103	150
New Brunswick	106	75	91	**90**	69	108	132
Quebec	158	136	140	**170**	115	163	169
Ontario	123	154	137	**201**	136	132	105
Manitoba	125	100	115	**127**	134	111	146
Saskatchewan	69	58	63	**47**	63	55	95
Alberta	83	94	89	**84**	109	89	71
British Columbia	80	89	88	**79**	79	80	75
Territories	88	122	111	**113**	158	94	65

1. Number of people leaving the province or territory for every 100 people arriving from another province or territory.
Note: People who were not living in Canada in 2006 are excluded from the estimates.
Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

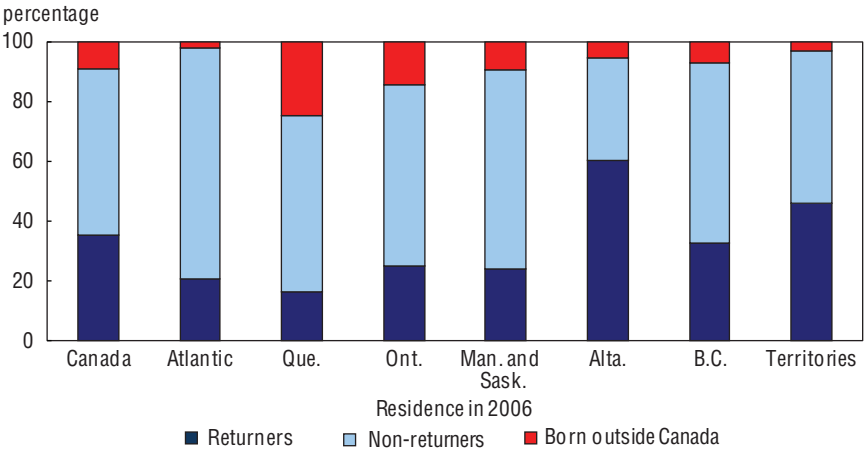
More than one-third of interprovincial migrant tradespersons returned to their province of birth

Improving one's employment opportunities can be a major contributing factor motivating interprovincial migration, but it is not the only one. Some, in fact, may move out of a desire to return home. In the NHS, information on the province of birth can be combined with variables on the location of residence to calculate the proportion of interprovincial migrants who are 'returnees' (going back to their province of birth).

According to this definition, 28% of all interprovincial migrants in 2011 were returnees. Among infrastructure tradespersons, the proportion was higher at 35%.

Such results masked differences across regions of residence in 2006—particularly between Alberta and the rest of the country. Among those who lived in Alberta in 2006 and had migrated out of the province in 2011, 60% had returned to their home province (Chart 1). This compared with 33% among British Columbia out-migrants and percentages varying between 16% and 25% among out-migrants from other provinces.

Chart 1
Distribution of infrastructure tradespersons aged 25 to 44 in 2011 who were interprovincial migrants, by type of out-migration



Note: People who were not living in Canada in 2006 are excluded from the estimates.
Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

It is also possible to examine the proportion of in-migrants who are returning home by province of residence in 2011, in order to provide another perspective on returnees.

For example, the vast majority (86%) of those who migrated to Newfoundland and Labrador were born in that province (Chart 2). The proportion of returnees was also relatively higher in Prince Edward Island (70%), Quebec (63%) and New Brunswick (58%).

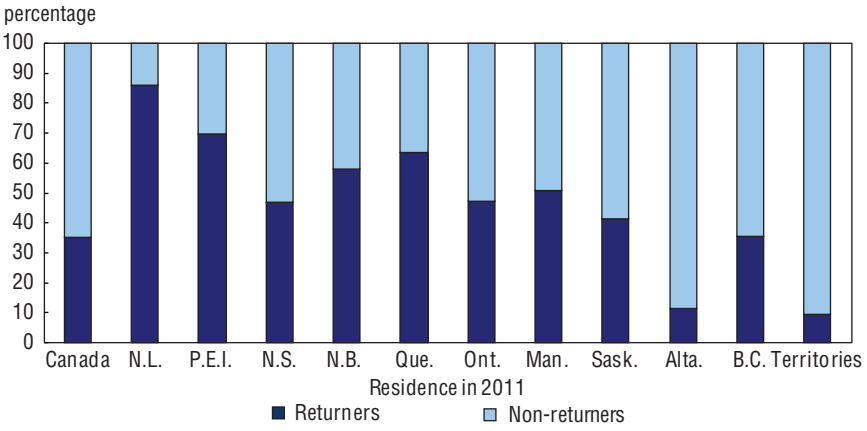
In contrast, the proportion of in-migrants who were born in their province of residence in 2011 was the lowest in the Alberta (11%) and in the territories (10%).[11]

Conclusion

Because some areas of the country may be facing labour shortages, studying the migration patterns of skilled individuals is important. Using data from the NHS, this article examined the migration patterns of individuals aged 25 to 44 who had a certification in construction trades, mechanics and repair, precision production, and heavy equipment machinery/crane operation. Of these "infrastructure tradespersons" in 2011, 13% lived in a different region five years earlier (in 2006). Within these migrants, 9% moved to another economic region within the same province and 4% moved to another province. Such rates, however, were not significantly different from other education groups. For instance, the migration rate was 11% among those with other types of trades, and 16% among university graduates over the same period. Alberta was a particularly strong magnet for infrastructure tradespersons: among those who lived outside of Alberta in 2006, about one-half moved to Alberta.

That said, a significant portion of infrastructure migrants were returnees (i.e. moved back to their province of birth). In 2011, more than one-third of infrastructure tradespersons who migrated over the period from 2006 to 2011 were returnees (compared with 28% for all interprovincial migrants). The proportion of returnees was particularly higher in Alberta, as 60% of out-migrants from this province returned to their province of birth. Hence, even if Alberta gained more infrastructure tradespersons than it lost, it was characterized by a large volume of entries and exits.

Chart 2
Distribution of infrastructure tradespersons aged 25 to 44 in 2011 who were interprovincial migrants, by type of in-migration



Note: People who were not living in Canada in 2006 are excluded from the estimates. People who were born outside Canada are included in 'non-returners'.
Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey, 2011.

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Data sources, methods and definitions

Data source

This report uses data from the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS). It focuses on infrastructure tradespersons who were aged 25 to 44 in 2011 (114,390 respondents representing 575,840 persons) and who were residents of Canada in 2006 and 2011.

Definitions

Infrastructure tradespersons

For the purpose of this study, infrastructure tradespersons are between the ages of 25 and 44 in 2011, who were residents of Canada in 2006 and 2011, who reported having a post secondary certification (below bachelor) as their highest level of education, and whose major field of study was in one of the following fields:

46. Construction trades

47. Mechanic and repair technologies/technicians

48. Precision production

49.0202 Construction/heavy equipment/earthmoving equipment operation

49.0206 Mobile crane operation/operator.

All other trades, referred to as 'all other apprenticeship or trades certificates or diplomas' in this study, include various fields: personal and culinary services (26% of the population); health professions and related programs (19%); and business, management marketing and related support services (18%)—the three most commons major fields of study within the group.

Returners

A person is defined as a returner if, in 2006, he or she lived in a province or territory other than his or province of birth and reported living in his or her province (or territory) of birth in 2011.

Non-migrants, intraprovincial migrants and interprovincial migrants

A person is defined as a non-migrant if, in 2011, he or she reported living in the same area as the one reported in 2006. Migration in this study is defined as moving from one region in Canada to a different region. As a consequence, people are considered non-movers/non-migrants if they moved within the same region.

More specifically, persons who reported a change of address within the same census metropolitan area / census agglomeration (CMA/CA), whether within the same province or between two provinces (i.e., Campbellton, Ottawa–Gatineau, Hawkesbury, Lloydminster), were defined as being non-migrant. Furthermore, movements where the distance travelled was less than 30 km (measured from the middle of one census subdivision, or CSD, to the middle of another CSD) were defined as being non-migrant. This was necessary because the vast majority of migrants who travelled less than 30 km moved from regions located just outside a CMA or CA to get closer to the urban core.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that migrants may move for economic reasons, but also for non-economic reasons. The NHS did not collect information about the reasons for moving among those who lived in a different location in 2006.

Intraprovincial migrant

A person is defined as an intraprovincial migrant if, in 2011, he or she reported a different municipality of residence within the same province (territory) as the one he or she reported for 2006. If that municipality was in the same CMA or CA, or if that municipality was located 30 km or less from the new one, the person is considered a non-migrant.

Interprovincial migrant

A person is defined as an interprovincial migrant if, in 2011, he or she reported a different province (territory) of residence than the one he or she reported for 2006. People who moved to another province but stayed in the same metropolitan area are considered non-movers/non-migrants (for example, within Ottawa–Gatineau).

Notes

1. See House of Commons (2012).
2. Mobility rates have declined since 1981, but remain higher among youth. See McQuillan (2013).
3. See Canada's Economic Action Plan.
4. See, for example, Dion and Coulombe (2008); Gomez and Gunderson (2007).

5 As was the case for the overall population aged 25 to 44, infrastructure tradespersons were slightly more mobile between 2006 and 2011 than between 2001 and 2006 (4.2% and 3.7% respectively). University graduates, the most prone to be interprovincial migrants, moved to another province at a lower rate (6.5% versus 6.8% between 2001 and 2006).

6. See Finnie (2004).
7. See Gomez and Gunderson (2007).
8. See Dion and Coulombe (2008).
9. See Heisz et al. (2005).
10. See Helliwell (1996).
11. Previous research has shown that people returning home were relatively more frequent in Atlantic Canada. See Newbold and Liaw (1994).

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