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## Housing Statistics in Canada

# Housing Experiences in Canada: Inuit in 2016

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## Housing Experiences in Canada: Inuit in 2016

The Housing Experiences in Canada series of fact sheets highlight the diversity of housing situations experienced by different groups of people living across Canada.

This fact sheet focuses on the Inuit population living in private dwellings. The statistics below are derived from the 2016 Census. For the purposes of this analysis, Inuit were identified based on responses to the Indigenous identity questions on the long-form questionnaire.<sup>1</sup> Only individuals who reported a single Indigenous identity of Inuit are included in the analysis.<sup>2</sup> Since this fact sheet focuses on Inuit in private dwellings, those living in collective dwellings are not included in the data.<sup>3</sup> More fact sheets are available on the [Housing Experiences in Canada issue page](#).

The *National Housing Strategy Act* (2019) declared that “the right to adequate housing is a fundamental human right affirmed in international law.” This right is reaffirmed in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as an important element of the right to life and dignity for Indigenous people. The UNDRIP recognizes the important connections between the right to housing and the right to self-determination, rights related to lands, resources and territories, social and economic rights, and rights related to non-discrimination. The declaration also underscores the importance of Indigenous peoples’ right to development, including the right to determine their own housing institutions, programmes and policies.

Adequate housing is understood in international law as housing that provides secure tenure; is affordable; is habitable; provides access to basic infrastructure; is located close to employment, services and amenities; is accessible for people of all abilities; and is culturally appropriate.

This fact sheet focuses on the experience of Inuit living in private dwellings using the following indicators collected and produced by Statistics Canada: tenure status of household, shelter costs, housing affordability and suitability, condition of dwelling, core housing need, and household living arrangements. While these indicators together do not perfectly measure adequate housing as defined in international law, or Indigenous people’s understanding of adequate housing, they are nevertheless useful proxies for understanding the housing experiences of people living in Canada.

To highlight housing need differences faced by those who chose to live either in or outside the Inuit Nunangat region, the fact sheet will incorporate a distinction between these two regions. Inuit Nunangat, which is located along Canada’s northern coastline and stretches inland in the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, northern Quebec, and northern Newfoundland and Labrador.<sup>4</sup> Inuit Nunangat is recognized as a distinct geographic, cultural and political region.<sup>5</sup>

### Highlights from the 2016 Census: Inuit

Percentage of the population: 0.2%

Average age: 27 years

Median household income<sup>1,2</sup>: \$68,000

Unemployment rate: 22.4%

Percentage in rural areas: 50.2%

1. Inuit status of the household for the 2016 estimate of median household income is determined by examining the characteristics of the first person on the questionnaire who pays housing costs.
2. Median household income reflects income earned in the 2015 calendar year.

1. While the 2016 Census of Population asked respondents if they were “an Aboriginal person, that is, First Nations (North American Indian), Métis or Inuk (Inuit),” the term “Indigenous” is used for the purposes of this report.

2. The data presented in this fact sheet focus on individuals who reported a single Indigenous identity of Inuit and do not include people who reported more than one Indigenous identity (those who also reported being First Nations or Métis as a multiple response) and “Aboriginal responses not included elsewhere” (those who reported “No, not an Aboriginal person” but reported being a Status Indian or a member of a First Nation or an Indian band).

3. A collective dwelling refers to a dwelling of a communal, institutional or commercial nature. Most of the population in Canada resides in private dwellings, but a small portion lives in collective dwellings such as shelters, campgrounds, nursing or seniors’ homes, jails, lodging or rooming houses, or hotels or motels.

4. For more information, see [Inuit Regions of Canada](#) on the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami website.

5. Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada. [Inuit Nunangat Policy](#).

## Tenure status of household



The tenure status of a household refers to whether the household owns or rents its private dwelling.<sup>6</sup> Homeownership is an important aspect of Canadian society and can affect outcomes for many housing indicators. For this reason, owner and renter households are often considered separately in housing analyses. In many cases, researchers further examine whether households in owner-occupied dwellings have mortgages on their dwellings and whether renter households pay subsidized rent.

According to the 2016 Census, the majority of Inuit lived in Inuit Nunangat. Of the 65,020 Inuit, 47,330 (72.8%) lived in Inuit Nunangat and 17,690 (27.2%) lived outside Inuit Nunangat.

Of the 47,330 Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat, 19.1% lived in a private dwelling owned by a member of their household in 2016. This was less than one-third of the share of the total population (71.6%) who lived in owner-occupied dwellings.<sup>7</sup> Inuit living outside Inuit Nunangat (55.1%) lived in owner-occupied dwellings at a rate of 16.5 percentage points lower than the total population.

Of the 38,315 Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat in rented dwellings, 32,400 (84.5%) lived in subsidized housing and 5,910 (15.5%) did not live in subsidized housing. Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat were over 20 times more likely to live in subsidized rented dwellings than the total population (3.3%). Inuit living outside Inuit Nunangat (9.4%) also lived in subsidized housing more often than the total population.

**Table 1**  
**Tenure status of households for Inuit and the total population in private dwellings, Canada, 2016**

	Inuit				Total population	
	Living in Inuit Nunangat		Living outside Inuit Nunangat		count	percent
	count	percent	count	percent		
<b>Total, tenure status</b>	<b>47,330</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>17,690</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>34,460,065</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Owner	9,020	19.1	9,755	55.1	24,683,880	71.6
With a mortgage	4,905	10.4	7,440	42.1	16,670,675	48.4
Without a mortgage	4,115	8.7	2,315	13.1	8,013,205	23.3
Renter	38,315	81.0	7,730	43.7	9,164,150	26.6
Subsidized housing	32,400	68.5	1,670	9.4	1,135,275	3.3
Not subsidized housing	5,910	12.5	6,060	34.3	8,028,875	23.3

**Note:** Figures may not add up to 100% because of rounding

**Source:** 2016 Census of Population

6. A household is considered to own its dwelling if a member of the household owns it, even if it is not fully paid for (for example, if there is a mortgage or another claim on it). A household is considered to rent its dwelling if no member of the household owns it. A household is considered to rent its dwelling even if the dwelling is provided without cash rent or at a reduced rent, or if the dwelling is part of a cooperative.

7. The total population refers to the total population living in Canada in private dwellings. This excludes people residing outside Canada on government, military or diplomatic postings, and those living in collective dwellings.

## Housing challenges in Inuit Nunangat

Because of the harsh climate and remoteness of many communities in Inuit Nunangat, building costs for housing far exceed those in major cities across Canada.<sup>8</sup> Limited transportation infrastructure means that building materials must often be shipped over long distances using marine or air services. Adding to the complexity is a short building season that limits the time frame for construction projects to take place. This, combined with increased costs for maintenance and operation, means that owning or renting a home would not be possible for many Inuit without significant subsidies.

To make housing more accessible, housing authorities in Inuit Nunangat provide subsidized housing to those in need. In some cases, provincial and local housing authorities operate alongside each other, and in others, local housing authorities operate as part of the territorial housing corporation.<sup>9</sup> For example, in Nunavut the local housing authorities are part of the Nunavut housing corporation. Housing authorities may offer different rent programs depending on the needs of the community, including income-tested rent and lease-to-own agreements.

The provision of public housing is reflected in high rates of subsidized housing, low median shelter costs among renters, and low rates of unaffordable housing in Inuit Nunangat.

A recent initiative to improve housing conditions is the Inuit Nunangat Housing Strategy (2019), a Inuit-specific strategy co-developed by Inuit and the federal government through the Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee. Its goal is to bring housing conditions in Inuit Nunangat in line with housing conditions in the rest of Canada. To do this, the strategy focuses on a number of priority areas, including reducing overcrowding and reliance on social housing while increasing affordable housing options and improving housing quality.

## Shelter costs



Shelter costs refer to the monthly dwelling-related expenses paid by households, including mortgage or rent. For owner-occupied dwellings, shelter costs include, where applicable, mortgage payments, property taxes and condominium fees, along with the costs of electricity, heat, water and other municipal services. For renter households, shelter costs include, where applicable, rent and the costs of electricity, heat, water and other municipal services.

In Canada, the median shelter cost paid by Inuit households living in Inuit Nunangat was \$396 in 2016.<sup>10</sup> This was mainly driven by the high proportion of subsidized renter households, and was under half the median shelter cost of \$1,020 for all households across Canada. Inuit households outside Inuit Nunangat (\$970) had similar median shelter costs as all households.

The median shelter cost paid by renter households was lower for Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat (\$288) when compared with those living outside the region (\$870) and the total population (\$910). Inuit households in Inuit Nunangat in rented dwellings with a subsidy (\$236) also had lower median monthly shelter costs than all households in rented dwellings with a subsidy (\$524).<sup>11</sup> Median shelter costs for Inuit households in Inuit Nunangat in rented dwellings without a subsidy (\$670) were about two-thirds of the shelter costs for all households (\$960).

Differences in the median shelter costs between owner-occupied Inuit households and all households were driven mainly by the differences in the share of households that had or did not have a mortgage. The median shelter costs of owners with a mortgage were similar across groups, as were the median shelter costs of owners without a mortgage.

While the rents paid in Inuit Nunangat are comparatively lower than outside the region, this can largely be explained by the administration of housing subsidies. According to the Isolated Posts and Government Housing Directive,

8. Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada. (2019). [2019 Inuit Nunangat Housing Strategy](#).

9. Canada, Parliament, Senate. Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples. (2017). [We Can Do Better: Housing in Inuit Nunangat](#). 42nd Parl, 1st sess. Rept. 5.

10. The term "Inuit households" refers to households where the first person listed on the questionnaire who pays the housing costs is Inuk.

11. The term "rent subsidy" refers to whether a renter household lives in a dwelling that is subsidized. Subsidized housing includes rent geared to income, social housing, public housing, government-assisted housing, non-profit housing, rent supplements and housing allowances.

which inflates the salaries of government employees who work in remote areas to account for the cost of living, nearly all of the isolated posts in Nunavut have a cost of living index of 10 or greater, many with a maximum index of 16.<sup>12</sup> After household size is adjusted for, the income levels and the high cost of living for Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat make saving a challenge for those who may hope to one day own their home.

**Table 2**  
**Monthly shelter costs for Inuit and all households in private dwellings, Canada, 2016**

	Inuit households in Inuit Nunangat		Inuit households outside Inuit Nunangat		All households	
	Shelter costs <sup>1</sup>	Adjusted total income <sup>2</sup>	Shelter costs <sup>1</sup>	Adjusted total income <sup>2</sup>	Shelter costs <sup>1</sup>	Adjusted total income <sup>2</sup>
	median (dollars)					
<b>Total, tenure status</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>37,200</b>	<b>970</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>1,020</b>	<b>48,000</b>
Owner	880	66,000	1,210	65,000	1,130	57,200
With a mortgage	1,640	77,000	1,560	70,500	1,620	60,000
Without a mortgage	592	56,800	416	46,000	540	51,600
Renter	288	33,200	870	25,800	910	30,600
Subsidized housing	236	31,000	420	14,500	524	18,600
Not subsidized housing	670	48,800	980	31,000	960	33,600

1. Owner and renter households in non-farm, off-reserve private dwellings.

2. The term “adjusted total income” refers to the total income of the household that is adjusted for economies of scale. The adjustment factor, also known as the equivalence scale, is the square root of the number of people in the household.

Source: 2016 Census of Population

## Housing affordability



Housing affordability is derived using the shelter-cost-to-income ratio, which refers to the proportion of average total income households spend on shelter costs. A household is said to have affordable housing if it spends less than 30% of its total income on shelter costs.<sup>13</sup>

According to the 2016 Census, 1,410 Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat (3.0%) lived in households that spent more than 30% of their total household income on shelter, again owing to the high proportion of subsidized renter households. This was lower than the rate observed in the total population (20.0%). Inuit living outside Inuit Nunangat (21.8%) experienced unaffordable housing at a slightly higher rate than the total population.

Inuit owners (5.0%) and renters (2.5%) alike, when living in Inuit Nunangat, saw lower rates of unaffordable housing compared with their counterparts living elsewhere in the country. Inuit living in owner-occupied dwellings outside Inuit Nunangat also had marginally lower rates of unaffordable housing when compared with the total population.

For those living in owner-occupied dwellings, the rate of unaffordable housing differed depending on the presence of a mortgage. Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat with a mortgage (7.1%) lived in unaffordable housing at a lower rate than the total population with a mortgage (19.6%). Among Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat in dwellings without a mortgage, 2.4% were living in unaffordable housing, compared with 4.4% of the total population.

The difference in housing affordability rates between Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat and the total population is largely because of the particularly low shelter costs in the region, where subsidized rental units represent a large majority of the housing stock. For example, the Public Housing Program in Nunavut is an income-tested rental program that provides subsidized housing to tenants based on their income and ability to pay rent.<sup>14</sup> This form of subsidy is designed such that tenant households will not spend more than 30% of their income on rent, contributing to the low rates of unaffordable housing.

12. For more information, please see the [Isolated Posts and Government Housing Directive](#) and [Appendix A – Classification of Isolated Posts](#).

13. In 1986, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the provinces agreed to use the 30% threshold to measure affordability for the purposes of defining need for social housing. This agreement was reached during the development of federal and provincial social housing programs. Research on housing affordability in the territories often uses the same threshold.

14. For more information, please visit the Nunavut Housing Corporation’s [web page on public housing](#).

**Table 3**  
**Unaffordable housing for Inuit and the total population in private dwellings, Canada, 2016**

	Inuit				Total population	
	Living in Inuit Nunangat		Living outside Inuit Nunangat		count	percent
	count	percent	count	percent		
<b>Total, shelter-cost-to-income ratio<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>47,310</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>17,380</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>33,642,820</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Spending more than 30% of income on shelter costs	1,410	3.0	3,785	21.8	6,742,050	20.0
Owner	450	5.0	1,155	11.9	3,605,535	14.7
With a mortgage	350	7.1	1,075	14.5	3,257,230	19.6
Without a mortgage	100	2.4	80	3.5	348,300	4.4
Renter	965	2.5	2,635	34.3	3,136,520	34.5
Subsidized housing	565	1.7	465	28.0	361,270	32.3
Not subsidized housing	400	6.8	2,170	36.0	2,775,245	34.8

1. All persons in owner and renter households with household total income greater than zero in non-farm, off-reserve private dwellings.

Source: 2016 Census of Population

## Housing suitability



Housing suitability refers to whether a private household is living in suitable accommodations according to the National Occupancy Standard (NOS), that is, whether the dwelling has enough bedrooms for the size and composition of the household. The indicator assesses the required number of bedrooms for a household based on the age and sex of household members, and the relationships between them.

According to the 2016 Census, 24,495 Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat (51.8%) lived in unsuitable housing, meaning that there were not enough bedrooms in the dwelling to meet the needs of their household, according to the NOS. This was higher than the 8.9% of the total population who lived in unsuitable housing. Inuit living outside Inuit Nunangat (10.9%)

also lived in unsuitable housing at a higher rate than the total population.

Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat in owner-occupied dwellings (33.8%) were more likely to be in unsuitable housing than the total population in owner-occupied dwellings (5.4%). This difference was also reflected in rented dwellings, where the share of Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat in rented dwellings (56.0%) that were unsuitable was higher than the share for the total population (17.8%).

When owner-occupied dwellings are differentiated by the presence of a mortgage, Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat experienced higher rates of unsuitable housing compared with the total population with and without a mortgage.

Inuit living in renter households in Inuit Nunangat with (56.8%) and without (51.4%) a subsidy had higher rates of unsuitable housing than the total population. The rate of unsuitable housing was 19.2% for the total population in households with a subsidy, and 17.6% for those without one.

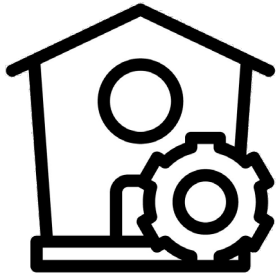
Contrary to the housing suitability rates seen in Inuit Nunangat, Inuit living outside Inuit Nunangat experienced similar levels when compared with the total population.

**Table 4**  
**Housing suitability for Inuit and the total population in private dwellings, Canada, 2016**

	Inuit				Total population	
	Living in Inuit Nunangat		Living outside Inuit Nunangat		count	percent
	count	percent	count	percent		
<b>Total, housing suitability</b>	<b>47,330</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>17,690</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>34,460,065</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Not suitable	24,495	51.8	1,930	10.9	3,081,315	8.9
Owner	3,045	33.8	570	5.8	1,335,345	5.4
With a mortgage	1,710	34.9	425	5.7	1,062,985	6.4
Without a mortgage	1,335	32.4	145	6.3	272,365	3.4
Renter	21,450	56.0	1,305	16.9	1,631,845	17.8
Subsidized housing	18,410	56.8	255	15.3	218,130	19.2
Not subsidized housing	3,040	51.4	1,055	17.4	1,413,720	17.6

Source: 2016 Census of Population

## Condition of dwelling



Data on condition of dwelling are used to provide some insight into whether housing is habitable. Dwellings are classified into three groups by condition: needing regular maintenance only, needing minor repairs and needing major repairs. Dwellings in need of major repairs are considered to be inadequate housing. Examples of dwellings in need of major repairs include homes with defective plumbing or electrical wiring, and housing needing structural repairs to walls, floors, or ceilings.

The percentage of Inuit living in dwellings in need of major repairs was more than double for those living in Inuit Nunangat (31.5%) than Inuit living outside the region (12.2%). This could be owing to the harsher climate and the challenges of providing resources and supplies that are more readily available in urban areas compared with more remote areas. Conversely, the percentage of the total population who lived in dwellings in need of major repairs was much smaller (6.7%).

Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat in owner-occupied (31.5%) and rented (31.5%) dwellings also lived in dwellings in need of major repairs at a higher rate. Within the total population in owner-occupied dwellings, 5.5% of individuals lived in dwellings in need of major repairs. This was the case for 8.8% of the total population in rented dwellings. Inuit living outside Inuit Nunangat in owner-occupied (9.2%) and renter (15.1%) households also lived in dwellings in need of major repairs at a higher rate than the total population.

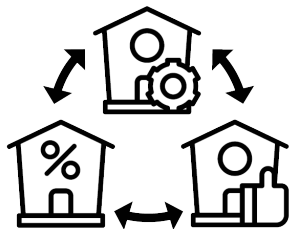
Inuit owners and renters living in Inuit Nunangat, regardless of the presence of a mortgage or a subsidy, experienced higher rates of living in dwellings in need of major repairs. This indicates a particularly acute need for maintaining the existing housing stock in the region.

**Table 5**  
**Condition of dwelling for Inuit and the total population in private dwellings, Canada, 2016**

	Inuit				Total population	
	Living in Inuit Nunangat		Living outside Inuit Nunangat		count	percent
	count	percent	count	percent		
<b>Total, dwelling condition</b>	<b>47,330</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>17,690</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>34,460,065</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Dwelling in need of major repairs	14,900	31.5	2,150	12.2	2,298,760	6.7
Owner	2,840	31.5	895	9.2	1,351,740	5.5
With a mortgage	1,450	29.6	665	8.9	956,105	5.7
Without a mortgage	1,390	33.8	230	9.9	395,640	4.9
Renter	12,060	31.5	1,165	15.1	807,125	8.8
Subsidized housing	10,375	32.0	305	18.3	131,670	11.6
Not subsidized housing	1,685	28.5	860	14.2	675,460	8.4

Source: 2016 Census of Population

## Core housing need



Core housing need touches on several elements of the right to adequate housing. It considers whether the affordability, suitability, and condition of dwelling needs of the household are being met and if not, whether affordable rental housing is available that meets all these needs. A household is said to be in core housing need if their dwelling falls below at least one of the affordability, suitability, or condition of dwelling standards, and would have to spend 30% or more of their total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable (meets all three housing standards).

According to the 2016 Census, despite the high proportion of subsidized housing, 48.3% of Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat were living in households in core housing need. This is nearly five times higher than the total population (10.6%) living in core housing need. Inuit living outside Inuit Nunangat (16.1%) also experienced core housing need at a higher rate than the total population.

Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat in owner-occupied dwellings (22.4%) were in core housing need at a higher rate than the total population in owner-occupied dwellings (5.4%). For renter households, Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat (54.4%)

experienced a higher rate of core housing need than the total population (25.3%). A difference in core housing need rates also existed for Inuit living outside Inuit Nunangat in both owner-occupied (5.1%) and renter (30.1%) households. The incidence of core housing need among those in owner-occupied dwellings with a mortgage was again higher for Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat (20.5%) compared with the total population (6.0%). For Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat without a mortgage (24.7%), the rate of core housing need was also higher than that of the total population without a mortgage (4.3%).

Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat in renter households with (56.3%) and without (44.0%) a subsidy experienced higher rates of core housing need than the total population. For the total population, 39.9% of individuals in renter households with a subsidy lived in core housing need and 23.2% of individuals in households without a subsidy lived in core housing need. The rate of core housing need for Inuit living outside Inuit Nunangat in renter households without a subsidy (27.8%) was also higher than that for the total population.

**Table 6**  
**Core housing need status for Inuit and the total population in private dwellings, Canada, 2016**

	Inuit				Total population	
	Living in Inuit Nunangat		Living outside Inuit Nunangat		count	percent
	count	percent	count	percent		
<b>Total, core housing need<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>47,125</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>16,935</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>32,803,125</b>	<b>100.0</b>
In core housing need	22,765	48.3	2,720	16.1	3,492,080	10.6
Owner	2,010	22.4	490	5.1	1,307,620	5.4
With a mortgage	995	20.5	355	4.9	971,150	6.0
Without a mortgage	1,015	24.7	145	6.4	336,470	4.3
Renter	20,755	54.4	2,225	30.1	2,184,455	25.3
Subsidized housing	18,175	56.3	620	38.6	433,190	39.9
Not subsidized housing	2,580	44.0	1,610	27.8	1,751,265	23.2

1. Only private, non-farm, non-reserve and owner- or renter-households with incomes greater than zero and shelter-cost-to-income ratios less than 100% are assessed for core housing need.

Source: 2016 Census of Population

According to the 2016 Census, 66.7% of the total population who was in core housing need was below the threshold of affordability only, living in a dwelling with enough bedrooms and that was not in need of major repairs. Conversely, 97.1% of Inuit who were living in Inuit Nunangat and in core housing need were living in dwellings without enough bedrooms or that were in need of major repairs. Despite rarely spending more than 30% of their household income on housing, Inuit in Inuit Nunangat were still often unable to afford the market rent for housing that met their needs.

**Table 7**  
**Dimensions of core housing need for Inuit and the total population in private dwellings, Canada, 2016**

	Inuit				Total population	
	Living in Inuit Nunangat		Living outside Inuit Nunangat		count	percent
	count	percent	count	percent		
<b>Total, in core housing need<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>22,765</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,720</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3,492,075</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Below one standard	15,880	69.8	2,040	75.0	2,767,620	79.3
Below affordability only	670	2.9	1,560	57.4	2,328,625	66.7
Below suitability only	11,235	49.4	255	9.4	289,685	8.3
Dwelling in need of major repairs only	3,975	17.5	215	7.9	149,315	4.3
Below two standards	6,790	29.8	615	22.6	679,675	19.5
Below affordability and suitability	225	1.0	240	8.8	395,750	11.3
Below affordability and dwelling in need of major repairs	185	0.8	310	11.4	235,335	6.7
Below suitability and dwelling in need of major repairs	6,385	28.0	60	2.2	48,590	1.4
Below all three standards	85	0.4	70	2.6	44,785	1.3

1. Only private, non-farm, non-reserve and owner- or renter-households with incomes greater than zero and shelter-cost-to-income ratios less than 100% are assessed for core housing need.

Source: 2016 Census of Population

## Housing experiences of Inuit men and women

In 1995, the Government of Canada committed to using Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) to advance gender equality in Canada, as part of the ratification of the United Nations' [Beijing Platform for Action](#).

Gender equality is enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which is part of the Constitution of Canada. Gender equality means that diverse groups of women, men and gender-diverse people are able to participate fully in all spheres of Canadian life, contributing to an inclusive and democratic society.

GBA Plus is an analytical process used to assess how diverse groups of women, men and gender-diverse people may experience policies, programs and initiatives. The “plus” in GBA Plus is not just about differences between people on the basis of gender. Everyone has multiple characteristics that intersect and contribute to who they are. GBA Plus considers many other identity factors, such as race, ethnicity, immigrant status, religion, age, presence of a mental or physical disability, and how the interaction between these factors influences the way people experience government policies and initiatives.

The data presented here highlight the differences in housing experiences for Inuit men and women. Compared with Inuit men living outside Inuit Nunangat, Inuit women living outside Inuit Nunangat were less likely to live in an owner-occupied dwelling and more likely to live in unaffordable housing and be in core housing need.

**Table 8**  
**Housing indicators for Inuit men and women, Canada, 2016**

	Living in Inuit Nunangat		Living outside Inuit Nunangat	
	Inuit men	Inuit women	Inuit men	Inuit women
	percent			
In an owner-occupied dwelling	18.9	19.2	57.3	53.3
In a household spending 30% or more of income on shelter costs <sup>1</sup>	3.1	2.9	20.2	23.2
In unsuitable housing	51.2	52.3	11.2	10.7
In a dwelling requiring major repairs	31.9	31.0	11.6	12.6
In core housing need <sup>2</sup>	48.2	48.2	14.9	17.1

1. All persons in owner and renter households with household total income greater than zero in non-farm, off-reserve private dwellings.

2. Only persons in private, non-farm, non-reserve and owner- or renter-households with incomes greater than zero and shelter-cost-to-income ratios less than 100% are assessed for core housing need.

Source: 2016 Census of Population

More information on GBA Plus can be found at the Government of Canada's [Status of Women](#) web page.

More information on the housing experiences of other subpopulations, broken down by age and gender groups, immigrant status, population groups designated as visible minorities, Indigenous populations, and other groups can be found in the additional fact sheets on the [Housing Experiences in Canada issue page](#). Additional data products that focus more on an intersectional GBA Plus analysis of housing experiences will also be released through the [Housing Experiences in Canada issue page](#) as they become available.

## Household living arrangements



Household living arrangements refer to whether a person lives with another person or people, and, if so, whether they are related to that person or those people. Households can be further differentiated based on whether they are census family households or non-census-family households. Census family households contain at least one census family.<sup>15</sup> Non-census-family households are either one person living alone or a group of two or more people who live together but do not constitute a census family (for example, roommates).

According to the 2016 Census, 71.0% of Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat lived as part of a one-census-family household. This was below the rate for the total population (79.6%). Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat in one-census-family households were more likely to live in a one-couple family with children (50.7%) than one without children (3.9%). For the total population, 45.7% of individuals lived in a one-census-family household with children and 22.5% lived in one without children. Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat (16.4%) were more likely to live in a one-parent family household than the total population (11.3%).

Living in a multiple-census-family household was more common for Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat, where 23.6% of individuals lived in multiple-census-family households, compared with 5.1% of the total population. Inuit living outside Inuit Nunangat lived in multiple-census-family households at a similar rate as the total population (5.1%). The greater proportion of multiple-census-family households is partly attributable to multigenerational households.<sup>16</sup> Cultural preferences may contribute to the higher rate of multigenerational households, but the situation could also be exacerbated by housing supply shortages in remote areas that put pressure on families who wish to remain in the same region to combine households.

Living in a non-census-family household was less common for Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat (5.5%) than the total population (15.4%). This is because a small proportion of Inuit living in Inuit Nunangat lived alone (3.4%). By comparison, 11.5% of the total population in private households in Canada lived alone.

**Table 9**  
**Household living arrangements for Inuit and the total population in private dwellings, Canada, 2016**

	Inuit				Total population	
	Living in Inuit Nunangat		Living outside Inuit Nunangat		count	percent
	count	percent	count	percent		
<b>Total, household type</b>	<b>47,330</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>17,690</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>34,460,065</b>	<b>100.0</b>
One-census-family household <sup>1</sup>	33,585	71.0	14,150	80.0	27,414,900	79.6
Couple family without children	1,825	3.9	2,815	15.9	7,761,355	22.5
Couple family with children	24,000	50.7	7,925	44.8	15,754,465	45.7
One parent family	7,760	16.4	3,410	19.3	3,899,085	11.3
Multiple-census-family household <sup>1</sup>	11,155	23.6	905	5.1	1,746,110	5.1
Non-census-family household	2,595	5.5	2,640	14.9	5,299,050	15.4
One-person household	1,625	3.4	1,705	9.6	3,967,770	11.5
Two- or more person household	970	2.0	935	5.3	1,331,280	3.9

1. One-census-family households and multiple-census-family households may include additional persons that do not belong to a census family.

**Note:** Figures may not add up to 100% because of rounding

**Source:** 2016 Census of Population

15. A census family is defined as a married couple and the children, if any, of either or both spouses; a couple living common law and the children, if any, of either or both partners; or a single parent of any marital status with at least one child living in the same dwelling and that child or those children. All members of a particular census family live in the same dwelling. A couple may be of opposite or same sex. Children may be children by birth, marriage, common-law union or adoption regardless of their age or marital status as long as they live in the dwelling and do not have their own married spouse, common-law partner or child living in the dwelling. Grandchildren living with their grandparent(s) but with no parents present also constitute a census family.

16. The *Insights on Canadian Society* article "[Living arrangements of Aboriginal children aged 14 and under](#)" offers more detailed insights on multigenerational households.

## About the data

The estimates presented in this fact sheet are from the 2016 Census of Population. For detailed information on any of the indicators in this fact sheet, please refer to the [Census of Population](#) main page.

The Census of Population data on housing are collected on the long-form questionnaire which draws its sample from a frame of private dwellings across Canada. Because the survey sample is drawn from private households, individuals in the following situations are not included in the data:

- official representatives of foreign countries living in Canada and their families
- members of religious and other communal colonies
- members of the Canadian Armed Forces living on military bases
- people living in seniors' residences
- people living full time in institutions (e.g., inmates of penal institutions, and chronic care patients living in hospitals and nursing homes)
- people living in other types of collective dwellings (e.g., shelters, campgrounds and hotels).

Because of data limitations, not all aspects of Inuit's housing experience could be covered. These aspects include, but are not limited to: homelessness, migration to and from Inuit Nunangat to visit relatives and ancestors, the costs associated with maintaining one's dwelling, mould, the housing supply and changes in the stock over time, systemic barriers to access, sense of belonging, and proximity to health and social services.

For housing statistics on non-Status and Status First Nations people and Métis, please see the [Housing Experiences in Canada issue page](#).