

2011 Census of Canada

Population and Dwelling Release

First 2011 Census Release

Alberta leads the provinces in population growth...

The first release of information gathered by the 2011 Census showed that Alberta had a population of 3,645,257 on May 10, 2011. This represents an increase of 354,907, or 10.8%, from the 2006 Census count (Table 1), nearly double the national average (5.9%). This was the province's highest population growth rate over the past five censuses and the third consecutive census that Alberta had the highest population growth among the provinces. Alberta's share of the national population increased from 10.4% in 2006 to 10.9% in 2011.

Growth in Alberta has not been evenly distributed; some regions grew in size, while others shrank over the five-year period from 2006 to 2011. The next section of this report will present some highlights of population counts for various geographic regions of the province, including census divisions (CD) and large and mid-sized urban regions (CMA/CA), as well as population centres and rural areas.

Table 1: Census Population Counts and Growth Rates for Canada and the Province

Province	2011	2006	% Growth
N.L.	514,536	505,469	1.8%
P.E.I.	140,204	135,851	3.2%
N.S.	921,727	913,462	0.9%
N.B.	751,171	729,997	2.9%
Que.	7,903,001	7,546,131	4.7%
Ont.	12,851,821	12,160,282	5.7%
Man.	1,208,268	1,148,401	5.2%
Sask.	1,033,381	968,157	6.7%
Alta.	3,645,257	3,290,350	10.8%
B.C.	4,400,057	4,113,487	7.0%
Canada	33,476,688	31,612,897	5.9%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Canada

Census Divisions

Fastest growth in the Wood Buffalo region and major urban centres...

Table 2 shows the regional variation in population change over the period 2006 to 2011. The fastest growing census division in Alberta was CD 16, which includes the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo and saw a population increase of 27.2%. The next fastest growing regions were those with Alberta's largest metropolitan areas, CD 6 (Calgary) and CD 11 (Edmonton). Only CD 4 (Hanna) experienced a decline in population from 2006 to 2011, although several other regions saw minimal growth over the period.

The Calgary-Edmonton corridor, a geographic area which includes CD 6, 8 (Red Deer) and 11, saw significant growth

Table 2: Census Population Counts and Per Cent Change for Census Divisions

Census Division	Population		2006-11 % Change
	2011	2006	
16	67,516	53,080	27.2%
6	1,311,022	1,160,936	12.9%
11	1,203,115	1,076,103	11.8%
19	109,712	98,712	11.1%
AB	3,645,257	3,290,350	10.8%
2	156,536	142,429	9.9%
8	189,243	175,337	7.9%
10	93,039	86,796	7.2%
12	63,427	59,990	5.7%
1	78,694	74,550	5.6%
15	35,983	34,150	5.4%
9	21,290	20,351	4.6%
5	53,263	51,104	4.2%
17	61,504	59,282	3.7%
13	68,919	66,972	2.9%
14	28,584	27,881	2.5%
3	38,566	37,846	1.9%
18	14,534	14,322	1.5%
7	40,232	39,909	0.8%
4	10,078	10,600	-4.9%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Canada

between 2006 and 2011. This region added 291,004 residents to its population over the five years, representing a growth rate of 12.1%. These are the most densely populated CDs in the province and 74.2% of Albertans lived in this region in 2011, up slightly from 73.3% in 2006.

Large and Mid-sized Urban Centres¹

Alberta's census metropolitan areas are the fastest growing in Canada...

Alberta has two large urban areas designated as census metropolitan areas (CMA), Edmonton and Calgary. These two metro areas are home to 65.1% of Alberta's residents, up slightly from 64.3% in 2006.

Compared with the growth of other CMAs in Canada, Calgary and Edmonton ranked first and second respectively (Table 3). The Edmonton CMA added 124,924 residents (12.1%) between 2006 and 2011, while the Calgary CMA grew by 12.6%, an increase of 135,529 people. These two metropolitan areas accounted for almost three-quarters of Alberta's total population growth between 2006 and 2011.

Who is counted in the Census?

All Canadian citizens and landed immigrants with a usual place of residence in Canada;

Canadian citizens and landed immigrants who are abroad and are attached to a military base or diplomatic mission, or who are at sea or in port on a vessel under Canadian registry;

Non-permanent residents (refugee claimants, those with study or work permits) who have a usual place of residence in Canada, along with any family residing with them.

For a complete definition of 'usual place of residence' follow this link:

<http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/ref/dict/pop126-eng.cfm>

Source: Statistics Canada

Very fast growth in communities surrounding the CMA urban cores....

Growth in the City of Calgary (10.9%) itself accounted for about 80% of the increase in the Calgary CMA between 2006 and 2011. However, some other municipalities in the metropolitan area also experienced dramatic growth. Significant growth occurred in the three communities of Chestermere (49.4%), Airdrie (47.1%) and Cochrane (27.8%), which are part of the Calgary CMA's population.

Growth in the City of Edmonton (11.2%) accounted for about 65% of the metropolitan region's growth over the period. Like Calgary, the City of Edmonton is adjacent to some very fast-growing communities, such as Beaumont (48.2%), Leduc (43.1%), Spruce Grove (33.9%) and Stony Plain (21.7%). Although its rate of growth was slower than the other communities mentioned, Strathcona County added almost 10,000 to its population between 2006 and 2011 (12.1%).

Eight of the top ten fastest growing mid-sized urban centres were in Alberta...

Alberta's high growth relative to other parts of Canada is reflected in the rapid growth demonstrated by its mid-sized urban centres, also referred to as census agglomerations (CA). As in the 2001-2006 period, the CA of Okotoks was the fastest growing (42.9%) mid-sized centre in Canada between 2006 and 2011, followed by the Wood Buffalo CA (27.1%). Grande Prairie CA (16.8%) and Lloydminster CA (14.0%) also made a repeat appearance on the top ten list. **Table 3** shows that Alberta has eight of the top ten fastest growing census agglomerations in Canada, and ten of the top fifteen. All of these regions saw double-digit growth from 2006 to 2011.

Urban/Rural Population Distribution

From urban areas to population centres...²

For the 2011 Census, the term 'urban area' has been replaced with the term

'population centres'. A population centre is defined as an area with a population of at least 1,000, and a density of at least 400 people per square kilometer. All areas outside population centres will continue to be referred to as 'rural'. Population centres are further classified as small (1,000 to 29,999 population), medium (30,000 to 99,999 population) and large (population of 100,000 and over).

About five out of six (83%) Albertans lived in population centres in 2011...

In 2011, Alberta had 101 small population centres, which comprised 15.8% of Albertans. The province's six medium population centres were home to 10.9% of its residents and a further 56.4% of Alberta's population resided in the two large population centres of Calgary and Edmonton. Overall, the proportion of Albertans living in population centres was 83.1%, up by one percentage point from the 2006 share. The remainder of the provincial population (614,855 people, 16.9%) lived in areas that would be classified as rural using the stated definition.

Alberta is one of Canada's most urban provinces...

Compared with the other provinces (**Table 4**), Alberta has the third highest proportion of urban population (83.1%), behind only British Columbia (86.2%) and Ontario (85.9%). Over the past half-century, Alberta has experienced one of the fastest urbanization shifts in the country, as the proportion of its urban population grew by 19.8 percentage points since 1961. Only Saskatchewan experienced a faster shift, as the proportion of its population living in urban areas increased by 23.8 percentage points from 1961 to 2011.

Table 4: Proportion (%) of Urban Population by Province³

Province	1961	2011	Difference
N.L.	50.7	59.4	8.7
P.E.I.	32.4	46.7	14.3
N.S.	54.3	56.6	2.3
N.B.	46.5	52.5	6.0
Que.	74.3	80.6	6.3
Ont.	77.4	85.9	8.6
Man.	63.9	72.4	8.5
Sask.	43.0	66.8	23.8
Alta.	63.3	83.1	19.8
B.C.	72.6	86.2	13.7
Canada	69.6	81.1	11.5

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Canada

The 2011 Census of Population, Canada's largest and most comprehensive survey, is meant to capture the entire population of Canadian residents. However, sometimes persons and dwellings are missed or double-counted, or mistakenly enumerated (i.e., visitors). In the previous census of 2006, approximately 111,500 people were added to Alberta's total population due to census net undercoverage. Net undercoverage estimates will be released in September 2013.

Upcoming 2011 Census of Population Releases

May 29, 2012

Age and Sex

September 19, 2012

Families, Households and Marital Status; Structural Type of Dwellings and Collectives

October 24, 2012

Language

¹ For a detailed definition of census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations, follow this link: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/ref/dict/geo009-eng.cfm>

² For a detailed description of the change to population centres, follow this link: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/subjects-sujets/standard-norme/sgc-cgt/urban-urbain-eng.htm>

³ Rural population for 1981 to 2006 refers to persons living outside centres with a population of 1,000 AND outside areas with 400 persons per square kilometre. Previous to 1981, the definitions differed slightly but consistently referred to populations outside centres of 1,000 population.

Table 3: Census Population Counts and Per Cent Growth by CMA and the 33 Census Agglomerations with the Fastest Growth

Rank	Census Metropolitan Area	2011	2006	% Change	Census Agglomeration	2011	2006	% Change
1	Calgary (Alta.)	1,214,839	1,079,310	12.6	Okotoks (Alta.)	24,511	17,150	42.9
2	Edmonton (Alta.)	1,159,869	1,034,945	12.1	Wood Buffalo (Alta.)	66,896	52,643	27.1
3	Saskatoon (Sask.)	260,600	233,923	11.4	Steinbach (Man.)	13,524	11,066	22.2
4	Kelowna (B.C.)	179,839	162,276	10.8	High River (Alta.)	12,920	10,716	20.6
5	Moncton (N.B.)	138,644	126,424	9.7	Strathmore (Alta.)	12,305	10,280	19.7
6	Vancouver (B.C.)	2,313,328	2,116,581	9.3	Sylvan Lake (Alta.)	12,762	10,703	19.2
7	Toronto (Ont.)	5,583,064	5,113,149	9.2	Grande Prairie (Alta.)	55,032	47,107	16.8
8	Ottawa - Gatineau (Ont./Que.)	1,236,324	1,133,633	9.1	Cold Lake (Alta.)	13,839	11,991	15.4
9	St. John's (N.L.)	196,966	181,113	8.8	Squamish (B.C.)	17,479	15,256	14.6
10	Brantford (Ont.)	135,501	124,607	8.7	Lloydminster (Alta./Sask.)	30,798	27,023	14.0
11	Regina (Sask.)	210,556	194,971	8.0	Whitehorse (Y.T.)	26,028	22,898	13.7
12	Oshawa (Ont.)	356,177	330,594	7.7	Chilliwack (B.C.)	92,308	82,465	11.9
13	Abbotsford - Mission (B.C.)	170,191	159,020	7.0	Lethbridge (Alta.)	105,999	95,196	11.3
14	Québec (Que.)	765,706	719,153	6.5	Collingwood (Ont.)	19,241	17,290	11.3
15	Kitchener - Cambridge - Waterloo (Ont.)	477,160	451,235	5.7	Camrose (Alta.)	17,286	15,630	10.6
16	Barrie (Ont.)	187,013	177,061	5.6	Brandon (Man.)	53,229	48,256	10.3
17	Sherbrooke (Que.)	201,890	191,410	5.5	Fredericton (N.B.)	94,268	86,226	9.3
18	Guelph (Ont.)	141,097	133,698	5.5	Estevan (Sask.)	12,973	11,883	9.2
19	Montréal (Que.)	3,824,221	3,635,556	5.2	Salmon Arm (B.C.)	17,683	16,205	9.1
20	Winnipeg (Man.)	730,018	694,668	5.1	Petawawa (Ont.)	15,988	14,651	9.1
21	Trois-Rivières (Que.)	151,773	144,713	4.9	Red Deer (Alta.)	90,564	83,154	8.9
22	Halifax (N.S.)	390,328	372,858	4.7	Lacombe (Alta.)	11,707	10,752	8.9
23	Kingston (Ont.)	159,561	152,358	4.7	Charlottetown (P.E.I.)	64,487	59,325	8.7
24	Victoria (B.C.)	344,615	330,088	4.4	Joliette (Que.)	46,932	43,306	8.4
25	Saint John (N.B.)	127,761	122,389	4.4	Granby (Que.)	77,077	71,176	8.3
26	Hamilton (Ont.)	721,053	692,911	4.1	Courtenay (B.C.)	55,213	51,383	7.5
27	London (Ont.)	474,786	457,720	3.7	Victoriaville (Que.)	46,354	43,195	7.3
28	Peterborough (Ont.)	118,975	116,570	2.1	Wetaskiwin (Alta.)	12,525	11,689	7.2
29	Greater Sudbury / Grand Sudbury (Ont.)	160,770	158,258	1.6	Drummondville (Que.)	88,480	82,949	6.7
30	Saguenay (Que.)	157,790	156,305	1.0	Kamloops (B.C.)	98,754	92,797	6.4
31	St. Catharines - Niagara (Ont.)	392,184	390,317	0.5	North Battleford (Sask.)	19,216	18,081	6.3
32	Thunder Bay (Ont.)	121,596	122,907	-1.1	Nanaimo (B.C.)	98,021	92,361	6.1
33	Windsor (Ont.)	319,246	323,342	-1.3	Swift Current (Sask.)	17,535	16,533	6.1

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Canada