

# Annual Population Report

Alberta 2019-20

## COVID-19 slows population growth<sup>1</sup>

Alberta's population expanded by 1.38% over the year preceding July 1st 2020, down from 1.48% the year before. Following a solid increase between July and March, population growth slowed significantly between April and June, as COVID-19 limited population movement around the globe.<sup>2</sup>

## Annual Population

As of July 1st, 2020, Alberta's population was 4,421,876. This was an increase of over 60,182 new residents over the 2019 midyear population, resulting in annual growth of 1.38%<sup>3</sup>. Alberta had the second fastest growth among the provinces, behind only PEI at 1.50% and well above the national average of 1.10% (Table 1).

Over the entire period, international migration was the largest contributor to Alberta's population increase, accounting for 0.76% of the total growth. Natural increase added 0.57%, while net interprovincial migration only contributed 0.05%.

With the exception of Newfoundland, all provinces experienced slower growth in 2019-20 when compared to 2018-19 (Table 1). Restrictions on international travel and difficulties getting permits due to the COVID-19

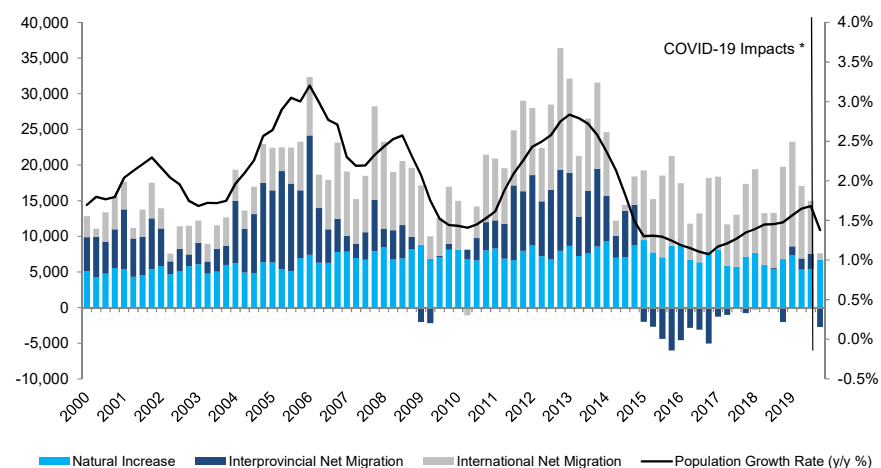
1 All data are from Statistics Canada. Estimates from 2011–2020 are based on the 2016 Census adjusted for net census undercount and incompletely enumerated Indian Reserves. All estimates are subject to revision.

2 Population estimates from 2016 to 2019 have been revised.

3 This growth represents year-over-year variation (July 1, 2019 to July 1, 2020)

**FIGURE 1: ALBERTA COMPONENTS OF POPULATION CHANGE**

2nd Quarter



Source: Statistics Canada

**TABLE 1: POPULATION OF PROVINCES/TERRITORIES AS OF JULY 1, 2020 AND GROWTH RATES SINCE JULY 1, 2018**

	Population	y/y Growth Rate 2019-2020	y/y Growth Rate 2018-2019
Canada	38,005,238	1.10%	1.43%
NL	522,103	-0.26%	-0.40%
PEI	159,625	1.50%	2.52%
NS	979,351	0.99%	1.18%
NB	781,476	0.59%	0.85%
QC	8,574,571	0.86%	1.19%
ON	14,734,014	1.30%	1.65%
MB	1,379,263	0.71%	1.24%
SK	1,178,681	0.54%	0.91%
AB	4,421,876	1.38%	1.48%
BC	5,147,712	1.11%	1.61%
YT	42,052	1.39%	2.13%
NT	45,161	0.30%	0.10%
NU	39,353	1.91%	1.23%

pandemic slowed international migration in the second quarter (the period from April to June)<sup>4</sup>. Growth between July and March was slightly above the same period in the previous year, while the impact of the second quarter slowed annual growth.

Alberta posted 0.1% growth over the second quarter, down significantly from the 0.4% during the same period last year. While greater net outflows of interprovincial migrants contributed to lower growth, net international migration was one-fourteenth the level it was during the same period last year. Immigration was one-third the level of the same period in 2019, and there was a significant net outflow of NPRs during this time. Between April and June, natural increase was responsible for almost all of the growth in the province (Figure 1).

## Migration

### International migration

Between July 2019 and June 2020, the province gained 33,229 new international migrants, down from 39,603 in 2018-19. Over the past three years, second quarter international migration averaged over 11,000. At 897, the second quarter estimate of 2020 was less than one-tenth of the prior years' average.

<sup>4</sup> For more information on the impact of COVID-19 on the population estimates, please see <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/91f0015m/91f0015m2020002-eng.htm>

## Immigration

Alberta posted solid gains in the first half of the year (July to December), settling more immigrants when compared to the same period last year. Restrictions due to COVID-19 began late in March and most likely had a minimal impact on immigration in the first quarter when compared to the same period the year before. In the second quarter, immigration slowed significantly, coming in at about one-third the level of the previous year. During this time, Alberta gained only 4,291 new permanent residents, down from 12,418 last year.

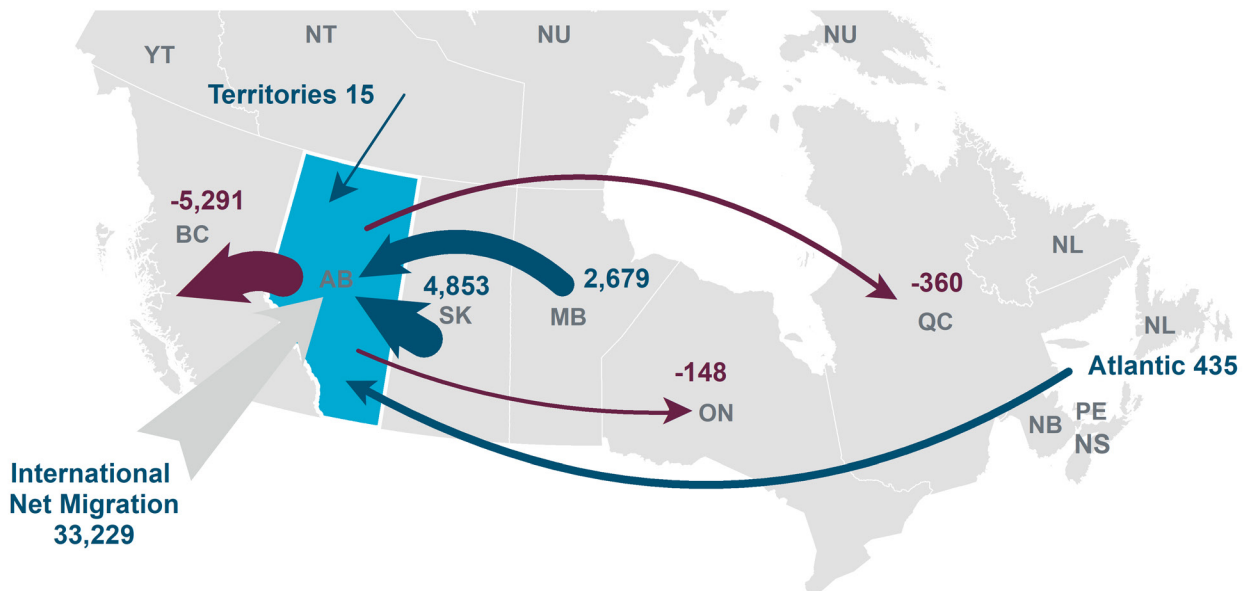
Alberta's gain of 35,519 new permanent residents between July 2019 and June 2020 was the lowest number in eight years. This is due to Canada's level being lower, as well as the province's share of immigrants falling slightly.

Every year, the federal government releases three-year immigration targets for Canada, which generally increase year-over-year. The target for the calendar year of 2020 was higher than the 2019 target. Between January and June last year, Canada had settled close to half of its targeted number of arrivals. Barriers to international movement contributed to an increase of less than one-third of the federal target over the same period this year.

As Canada's landings were down, Alberta's immigrant landings were also down. In addition to fewer immigrants, Alberta's total share of immigrants to Canada between July and June of this year also fell slightly. The province's share was 12.5%, down from 13.0% in the previous year. While lower, this was still the third highest share in the country, following Ontario at 44.7% and BC at 15.8%.

### MAP 1: NET POPULATION MOVEMENT FOR ALBERTA

July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020



## Emigration

The net loss of migrants to international destinations was smaller in 2019-20, due to the uptick in returning emigrants in the first quarter of the year, with the repatriation of Canadian residents and fewer people leaving Canada to live in another country in the second quarter (Table 3). The recent trend in net emigration has been almost 3,900 annually over the past two years; this year saw a loss of 2,298 people.

## NPRs

The net flow of NPRs was negative in the first and second quarter of 2020 (-717 and -3,421, respectively), offsetting net inflows in the latter half of 2019. As a result, the annual net NPR flow was relatively balanced.

In Alberta, NPRs are largely comprised of temporary foreign workers (TFWs), while foreign students make up a smaller, but growing group. In the first quarter, large numbers of international students returned to their home countries outside of Canada. During the second quarter, only select groups of TFWs were able to enter the country, such as those in food production and manufacturing.

## Interprovincial migration

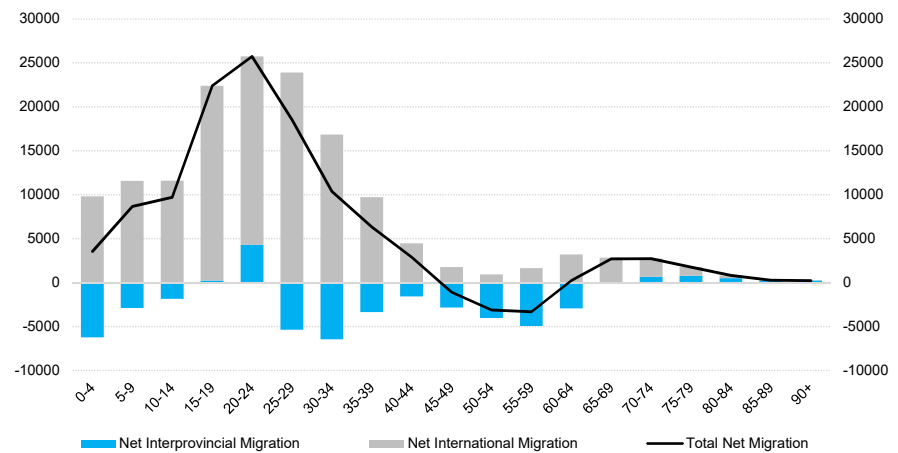
According to preliminary estimates, Alberta received 2,183 net interprovincial migrants in 2019-20, helping to boost population growth. This was the third largest gain in the country, behind British Columbia (15,708) and Nova Scotia (3,901). Saskatchewan and Manitoba saw the largest net losses, at -11,247 and -8,689, respectively (Table 2).

Over the period from July to June, Alberta gained the largest net inflows from Saskatchewan and Manitoba (4,853 and 2,679, respectively), and lost the largest net outflow to British Columbia, with a loss of 5,291 (Map 1).

The first three quarters of this census year saw net population gains in interprovincial migration, while the

**FIGURE 2: NET MIGRATION BY AGE GROUP**

July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2019



Source: Statistics Canada

second quarter of 2020 saw a loss. Between April and June, Alberta lost 2,733 residents. Alberta's interprovincial migration patterns are heavily influenced by the economic conditions in the province, and as the economy cooled, the province experienced net outflows.

Preliminary estimates of net interprovincial migration should be interpreted cautiously, as they are revised annually, as new data becomes available. The difference between preliminary and revised estimates can be significant, and can change the story these estimates tell. When the preliminary 2018-2019 estimate was released last year, net interprovincial migration was estimated at 5,542, and was revised down to -2,032 this year (Table 3). This suggests that while interprovincial migration picked up in 2018-19 compared to the year before, it did not improve as much as preliminary estimates suggested.

## Natural increase

Alberta added 24,770 new residents through natural increase in 2019-20. This was the net of 51,996 babies born and 27,226 deaths. While births were not impacted by COVID-19, there were slightly more deaths during the second quarter, due to COVID-19.

Natural increase comprised a large portion to Alberta's population growth annually. Almost 0.6% of the province's growth was due to natural increase, the highest amongst the provinces. This was significant growth, especially when compared to other areas of the country. British Columbia saw growth of only 0.1% due to natural increase, while the Atlantic provinces had negative growth due to natural increase.

## Alberta is the youngest province, but is aging

Alberta remained the youngest province in the country as of July 1st, 2020, with a median age of 37.5 years. The next youngest province was Manitoba at 37.6, while the oldest province was Newfoundland at 47.4.

Despite being the youngest province, Alberta's population is aging very quickly. Alongside Saskatchewan, the median age increased by 0.3 years between 2019 and 2020. The fastest aging province in the country was Newfoundland, which increased by 0.4 years over the same period.

Net outflows of young adults to other regions of the country between 2015-2016 and 2018-2019 accelerated Alberta's aging. During this time, most of the people who left were young adults aged 25 to 39 years and young children aged 0 to 9 years, which aided in the aging of the province (Figure 2).

While interprovincial migration saw net losses, international migration remained positive, which supported positive total migration between July 1st 2015 and June 30th 2019. During this time-frame, Alberta lost almost 36,000 people through net interprovincial migration, but had a net overall gain of 109,000 people from total migration.

Relative to the national population, Alberta's population is composed of greater proportions of children and working age persons, and a smaller proportion of seniors (Figure 3). As of July 1st 2020, two in ten Albertans were younger than 15 years of age, almost seven in ten were working ages (i.e, 15 to 64 years), and one in seven were aged 65 or older.

In Alberta, 19% of the population was in the age range of 0 to 14 years. For Canada, the share of children was 16%. Children outnumber seniors in Alberta, contrary to Canada where the opposite is true.

Out of all the provinces, Alberta had the highest proportion of the working ages 15 to 64 years (68%), as well as those aged 25 to 54 years (or the core working ages) at 43%. At the national level, these shares are slightly lower at 66% and 40%, respectively.

Alberta had the lowest proportion of the population aged 65+ out of all the provinces, comprising 14% of the population as of July 1st, 2020. By contrast, 18% of Canada's population was in the senior age cohort.

Because of the large working age population, Alberta had the lowest dependency ratio out of all the provinces. For every 100 people in the working ages, there were 48 seniors (aged 65 and older) and youth (aged 0 to 14) depending on them.

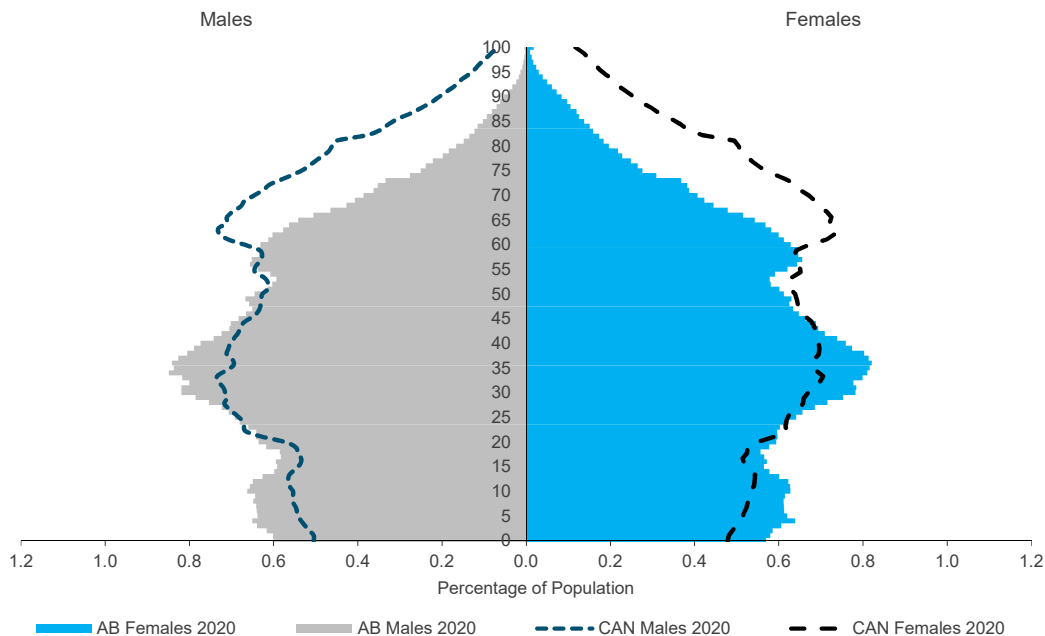
As of July 1st, 2020, Alberta had the third highest youth dependency ratio (28 youth per 100 working age population) of the provinces, behind Manitoba and Saskatchewan (ratios of 29 and 30, respectively).

At the other end of the spectrum, Alberta had the lowest old age dependency ratio of all the provinces, at 20 seniors per 100 working age population.

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**FIGURE 3: ALBERTA AND CANADA'S AGE PYRAMIDS**

Population age structure, as of July 1, 2020



Sources: Statistics Canada

**TABLE 2: ORIGIN AND DESTINATION OF INTERPROVINCIAL MIGRANTS**

July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020

		Destination												
		NL	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT	NU
Origin	NL	0	110	1226	411	375	2051	83	66	2326	446	52	67	50
	PE	74	0	680	405	285	1489	45	53	311	410	0	0	6
	NS	759	506	0	1822	1058	4808	347	152	2404	1472	29	152	172
	NB	206	302	1994	0	1564	3270	198	73	2113	864	0	52	7
	QC	166	166	755	1447	0	17181	359	315	2632	3456	50	91	81
	ON	2238	1336	6607	4016	14696	0	3256	2470	15905	17719	305	343	627
	MB	107	66	535	211	836	6239	0	1503	4858	4143	27	50	42
	SK	177	86	406	393	625	5594	1501	0	9949	4507	89	80	20
	AB	1484	445	2946	1844	2992	16053	2179	5096	0	23799	385	648	119
	BC	468	251	1951	909	2688	12236	1856	2308	18508	0	464	236	171
	YT	0	5	101	28	85	203	39	50	284	426	0	53	5
	NT	48	23	144	51	116	335	44	69	778	434	68	0	31
	NU	67	0	237	69	141	422	21	25	105	78	29	60	0

	NL	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT	NU
IN	5,794	3,296	17,582	11,606	25,461	69,881	9,928	12,180	60,173	57,754	1,498	1,832	1,331
OUT	7,263	3,758	13,681	10,643	26,699	69,518	18,617	23,427	57,990	42,046	1,279	2,141	1,254
NET	-1,469	-462	3,901	963	-1,238	363	-8,689	-11,247	2,183	15,708	219	-309	77

2019-20	NL	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	NT	NU
Outflow to AB	2,326	311	2,404	2,113	2,632	15,905	4,858	9,949	0	18,508	284	778	105
Inflow from AB	1,484	445	2,946	1,844	2,992	16,053	2,179	5,096	0	23,799	385	648	119
Net Flow to AB	842	-134	-542	269	-360	-148	2,679	4,853	0	-5,291	-101	130	-14

**TABLE 3: ALBERTA COMPONENTS OF GROWTH BY QUARTER**

Quarters in Census Year	Interprovincial Migration <sup>1</sup>			International Migration						Total	Vital Events		Total <sup>4</sup>
	In	Out	Net	Immigrants	Net Non-Permanent Residents <sup>2</sup>	Emigrants	Net Temporary Emigrants	Returning Emigrants	Net <sup>3</sup>	Total Net Migration	Births	Deaths	Sum of Components
2017-18													
Jul-Sep	15,585	16,859	-1,274	8,440	2,771	2,403	654	2,127	10,281	9,007	14,194	6,106	17,095
Oct-Dec	10,085	11,091	-1,006	7,997	-1,228	1,243	523	765	5,768	4,762	12,683	6,787	10,658
Jan-Mar	14,889	15,065	-176	10,629	-2,054	1,411	556	694	7,302	7,126	12,536	6,809	12,853
Apr-Jun	21,312	22,103	-791	11,631	-807	1,508	538	1,414	10,192	9,401	13,573	6,405	16,569
<b>Total</b>	<b>55,147</b>	<b>58,394</b>	<b>-3,247</b>	<b>38,697</b>	<b>-1,318</b>	<b>6,565</b>	<b>2,271</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>33,543</b>	<b>30,296</b>	<b>52,986</b>	<b>26,107</b>	<b>57,175</b>
2018-19													
Jul-Sep	14,495	14,715	-220	10,398	2,253	2,437	662	2,157	11,709	11,489	13,791	6,102	19,178
Oct-Dec	10,909	10,851	58	9,371	-1,114	1,261	529	776	7,243	7,301	12,626	6,682	13,245
Jan-Mar	13,744	13,601	143	8,545	442	1,431	564	704	7,696	7,839	12,471	7,057	13,253
Apr-Jun	19,356	21,369	-2,013	12,418	1,178	1,529	546	1,434	12,955	10,942	13,433	6,632	17,743
<b>Total</b>	<b>52,796</b>	<b>54,828</b>	<b>-2,032</b>	<b>40,732</b>	<b>2,759</b>	<b>6,658</b>	<b>2,301</b>	<b>5,071</b>	<b>39,603</b>	<b>37,571</b>	<b>52,321</b>	<b>26,473</b>	<b>63,419</b>
2019-20													
Jul-Sep	17,782	16,518	1,264	12,682	2,973	2,472	671	2,188	14,700	15,964	13,630	6,320	23,274
Oct-Dec	12,189	10,634	1,555	10,047	1,173	1,279	537	787	10,191	11,746	12,252	6,921	17,077
Jan-Mar	18,129	16,032	2,097	8,499	-717	1,270	354	1,283	7,441	9,538	12,574	7,151	14,961
Apr-Jun	17,898	20,631	-2,733	4,291	-3,421	19	7	53	897	-1,836	13,540	6,834	4,870
<b>Total</b>	<b>60,173</b>	<b>57,990</b>	<b>2,183</b>	<b>35,519</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5,040</b>	<b>1,569</b>	<b>4,311</b>	<b>33,229</b>	<b>35,412</b>	<b>51,996</b>	<b>27,226</b>	<b>60,182</b>

<sup>1</sup> The sum of quarterly in- and out- interprovincial migrants may not be equal to annual interprovincial in- and out- migrants from 2011 onwards. It is however possible to add quarterly net interprovincial migration estimates to calculate annual estimates.

<sup>2</sup> Estimates of Non-Permanent Residents (NPRs) represent the number of "...persons who are lawfully in Canada on a temporary basis under the authority of a temporary resident permit, along with members of their family living with them. Non-Permanent Residents include foreign workers, foreign students, the humanitarian population and other temporary residents. The humanitarian population includes refugee claimants and temporary residents who are allowed to remain in Canada on humanitarian grounds and are not categorized as either foreign workers or foreign students." (Statistics Canada)

<sup>3</sup> Includes NPRs

<sup>4</sup> The sum of the components may not equal the quarterly population change due to differences in the methods used to derive intercensal and postcensal population estimates.

All figures subject to revision.