

# Women in Alberta

## Family Status

### Women in families

- ◆ In 2011, 80.0% of women aged 15 years and over (just under 1.2 million) were living with their immediate family, while the figure for men was 77.8% (just over 1.1 million).
- ◆ Almost half of women aged 15 years and over in Alberta (49.7% or 718,000) were living with their spouse; 9.4% (136,000) were living in a common-law relationship; 7.7% (111,000) were lone parents; and 13.2% (191,000) were living at home with their parent(s).
- ◆ Between 2001 and 2011, the proportion of women living in a common-law relationship grew the most among family status groups, from 8.1% to 9.4%.
- ◆ The proportion of women who were lone parents, as a percentage of all women in Alberta, declined from 8.0% in 2001 to 7.7% in 2011.
- ◆ Families in Canada were less likely than families in Alberta to have young children (aged 5 years or younger) at home (17.0% in Canada compared to 20.0% in Alberta).
- ◆ Of all census families in Alberta, those headed by female lone parents (22.6%) and common-law couples (20.4%) were most likely to have young children (aged 5 years or younger) living at home, compared with 19.7% of married-couple families and 15.5% of lone-parent families headed by men.
- ◆ The proportion of women living alone increased slightly since 2001, where 11.6% (135,000) lived on their own.
- ◆ Women were only slightly more likely to live alone than men; however, the gap is closing. In 2011, the gap was 0.3 percentage points, a considerable decrease from 1.1 percentage points in 2001.
- ◆ Seniors were by far the most likely women to live alone. In 2011, 33.0% of all women aged 65 and over (64,000) were living on their own, compared with just 12.3% (59,000) of those aged 45 to 64. They were also more than twice as likely as senior men to live alone (15.8%).

### Women's family status by age

- ◆ Women in Alberta aged 25 to 64 years were much more likely than either younger or senior women to be living with either their spouse or common-law partner.
- ◆ In 2011, 69.3% of women aged 25 to 44 (367,000) and 72.6% of women aged 45 to 64 (349,000) were living either with their spouse or common-law partner.
- ◆ Women aged 25 to 44 years were most likely to be lone parents, with 9.3% of women in this age range (49,000) compared with 8.6% (41,000) of 45 to 64 year olds, 7.3% (14,000) of senior women and only 2.7% of 15 to 24 year olds (6,000).
- ◆ Overall, women were over three times more likely than men to be lone parents (7.7% of women compared to 2.3% of men).

### Women living alone

- ◆ In 2011, approximately 173,000 women or 12.0% of the total female population aged 15 and over, were living alone in Alberta, compared with 14.3% in Canada.

## Women in marriages

- ◆ In 2014, a record number of marriages occurred in Alberta (just over 20,300), representing a 12.5% increase from 2010.
- ◆ In Alberta, just under half of all marriages occurred in Calgary (5,323) and Edmonton (4,348).
- ◆ There were 4.9 marriages for every 1,000 persons, down from about 6.0 marriages per 1,000 persons in the early 2000s and from about 6.7 in the early 1990s.
- ◆ Marriage rates varied across the province, with Banff and Jasper having the highest rates (82.6 and 63.4 marriages per 1,000 population, respectively).
- ◆ Women tend to marry at younger ages than men. In 2014, 70.9% of first-time brides were under the age of 30 compared with 57.1% of first-time grooms. That year, there were 14,122 first-time opposite-sex marriages.
- ◆ Since same-sex marriages were introduced in Alberta in July 2005, 2,485 same-sex couples have been married. The proportion of all marriages that were same-sex has been increasing since then: from 0.8% of all marriages in 2005 to 1.7% in 2014. The majority of same-sex marriages were among previously unmarried partners.

## Common-law unions

- ◆ The proportion of couples in common-law unions varies across Canada. In 2011, the share of couples in common-law unions was highest in the territories and Quebec, all of which had corresponding lower proportions of married couples.
- ◆ In Alberta, 15.9% (135,660) of all couples were common-law. This was slightly below the national average of 19.9%. Of all common-law unions in Alberta, 2.3% were same-sex unions.
- ◆ In 2011, 38.1% of Aboriginal individuals living with a partner were in a common-law union.

**Chart 1: Number of marriages increasing, but marriage rate decreasing**

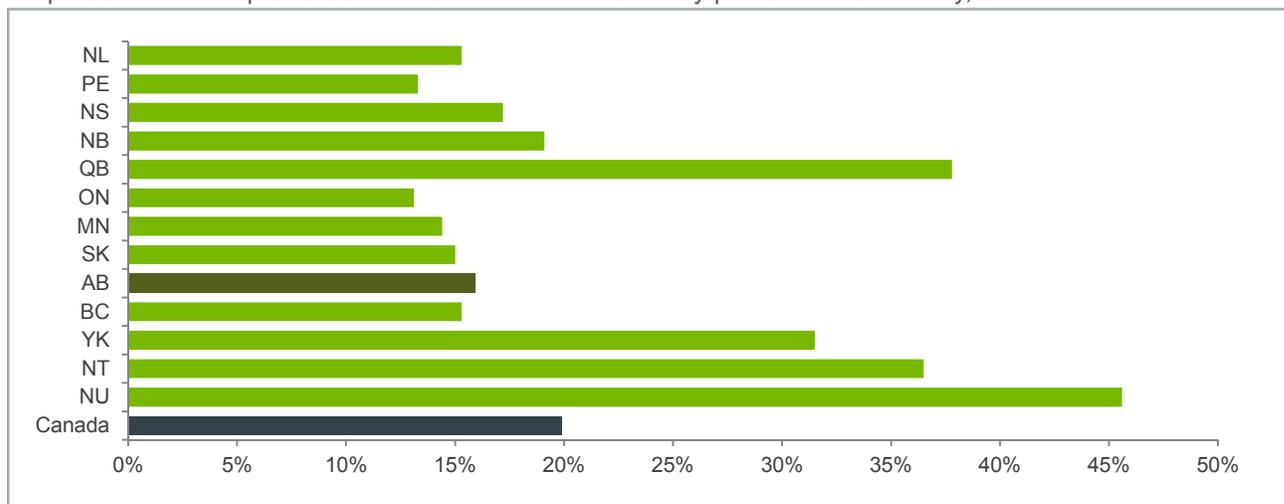
Marriages and marriage rates, Alberta, 1993-2014



Sources: Alberta Vital Statistics and Statistics Canada's Annual Population Estimates (July 1st)

### Chart 2: Residents of western provinces less likely to be in common-law unions

Proportion of all couples that are in common-law unions by province and territory, 2011

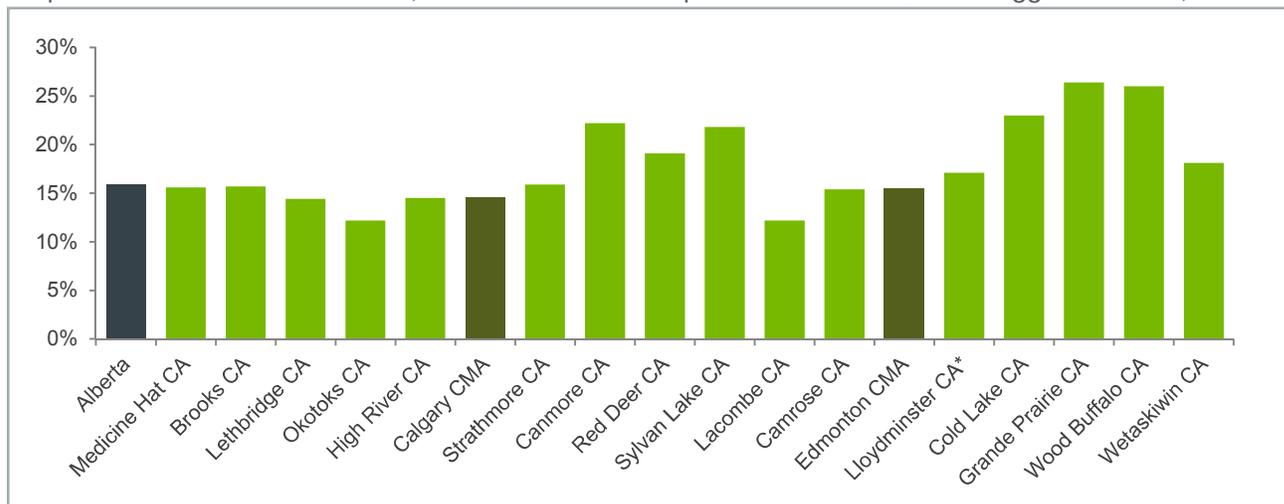


Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Population

- ◆ The share of common-law unions also varied across Alberta. The Census Agglomerations of Grande Prairie (26.4%), Wood Buffalo (26.0%) and Cold Lake (23.0%) had the highest proportion of couples in common-law unions, well above the provincial average of 15.9%.
- ◆ Census Agglomerations of Lacombe (12.2%), Okotoks (12.2%) and Lethbridge (14.4%) had the lowest common-law rates among couples.

### Chart 3: Proportion of couples in common-law unions varied considerably across Alberta

Proportion of common-law unions, Alberta Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations, 2011



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Population

## Female lone parents

- ◆ In 2011, there were over 110,000 female-headed lone-parent households in Alberta, an increase of 8.0% since 2006 and 19.2% higher than in 2001.
- ◆ The number of male lone-parent households also grew since 2001. In Alberta, there were over 33,000 families headed by a male lone parent in 2011, a 43.0% increase from 2001.
- ◆ Women constitute the large majority of lone parents, but the proportion of female-headed families as a percentage of all lone-parent families has been decreasing. In 2011, 76.7% of all lone-parent families were headed by women, a decline of 3.1 percentage points since 2001.
- ◆ From 2001 to 2011, the number of Aboriginal women and men who were lone-parents increased by 31.7% and 47.5%, respectively. Aboriginal women constituted 79.8% of all Aboriginal lone-parents in 2011, down slightly by 1.7 percentage points from 2001.

## Fertility

- ◆ Since 1973, the total fertility rate (TFR) in Alberta, or the average number of children per woman, has remained below the replacement level of 2.1 (i.e., the level needed in order to replace the population in the absence of migration). In 2016, the TFR in Alberta was 1.76, slightly higher than the record low of 1.65 children per women in 2002.
- ◆ Alberta had the third highest TFR among the provinces in 2013 (the latest year of national data available) at 1.73, following behind Saskatchewan (1.94) and Manitoba (1.91). Alberta's TFR was higher than the national rate of 1.59 children per woman.
- ◆ Women are having fewer children overall and they are having them at older ages. The decrease in the TFR is generally the result of lower fertility rates among women under 30 years of age and an increase in the rates of those 30 years of age and older.
- ◆ Starting in 2010, Alberta women in their early 30s were on average having more children than those in their late 20s. In 2014, women aged 35 to 39 years were having more children than 20 to 24 year olds. In 2016, the fertility rate of women in their early 40s surpassed the rate among 15 to 19 year olds (or teen births).

**Table 1: Proportion of female lone parents decreasing in relation to male lone parents**

Lone-parent households

	Alberta			Edmonton CMA			Calgary CMA		
	2001	2006	2011	2001	2006	2011	2001	2006	2011
<b>Female-headed</b>									
Number of households (thousands)	92.9	102.6	110.8	33.3	36.8	39.0	30.9	33.6	36.2
As a percent of all families with children	18.1	18.5	18.4	20.1	20.7	20.1	18.5	18.1	17.5
<b>Male-headed</b>									
Number of households (thousands)	23.6	27.7	33.7	7.8	9.3	11.3	7.3	8.6	10.4
As a percent of all families with children	4.6	5.0	5.6	4.7	5.2	5.8	4.4	4.6	5.0
<b>Women as a percent of lone parents</b>	79.8	78.7	76.7	81.0	79.9	77.5	80.9	79.6	77.7

**Sources:** Statistics Canada, 2001, 2006 and 2011 Censuses of Population