

Glossary of Demographic Terms

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Demographic Terms - "A"

Aboriginal Peoples

Within Canada, Aboriginals include First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people. Also referred to as Indigenous peoples.

Age

The time difference between date of birth and the current date, measured in completed years.

Age-Dependency Ratio

The number of people aged 65 or older who depend economically on the working age population (aged 15-64). This is becoming increasingly important as the baby boomers age into dependency, leaving smaller numbers of working aged persons to support them.

Age-Sex Structure

The number of people differentiated by age and sex within a population.

Age Specific Fertility Rate

Number of births per 1,000 women of a specific age within the childbearing age range, normally age 15 to 49 years.

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Demographic Terms - "B"

Baby Boomer Period

Period following World War II (1946–1965), marked by an important increase in fertility rates and in the absolute number of births.

Baby Bust

Following the Baby Boom, there was a period of sharp decline in fertility, which is called the 'Baby Bust'.

Balancing Equation

A basic demographic calculation used to see how a population changes with the impacts of natural increase and migration. The Balancing Equation is: *Population = Births – Deaths + Total Net Migration*.

Base Population

The beginning population upon which population projections are based on. Base populations are generally taken from the last full census year population.

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Demographic Terms - "C"

Census Division (CD)

Geographic areas which are smaller than provinces but larger than census subdivisions. There are currently 19 CDs in Alberta. These are created in cooperation between Statistics Canada and Alberta.

Census Family

A married or common-law couple with or without children of either spouse, or a single parent with at least one child living with them. The couple may be heterosexual or homosexual, and "children" can entail offspring or grandchildren whom live with at least one grandparent instead of the parent.

Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)

At least one or more adjacent municipalities centered on a large urban area with a minimum population of 100,000, wherein 50,000 or more people must live within the urban center. For inclusion, other municipalities necessarily have high levels of integration with the central urban area, which is captured by commuting flows. Once an area is designated as a CMA, it cannot lose that status.

Census of Population

An official count of the complete population, which usually contains age, sex, occupation, and other characteristics. The Canadian census occurs every five years, and captures the entire population of Canada on census day of that year. The census is important because it provides information on the entire Canadian population, which is then used to understand how Canada is changing, and to support research and policy decisions.

Census Year

Census year runs from July 1st to June 30th. Annual population estimates are stated "As of July 1st, [of that year]".

Cohort

A group of people with the same group membership, such as all people born in 1980, or all people married between 1990-1995. Examining people based on cohorts allows demographers to view changes in that specific group over time, and to compare multiple cohorts at different life stages.

Components of Population Growth

Births, deaths and migration are components that alter the size of the total population and its composition by age and sex.

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Demographic Terms - "D"

Demography

The scientific study of human populations. Demography applies population statistics to understand population changes, look at trends which occurred in the past, and project trends into the future.

Dependency Ratio

The ratio of people who are of dependent age (0-14 and 65 or older), divided by people in the working ages (15-64).

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Demographic Terms - "E"

Emigrant

Canadian citizen or immigrant who left Canada to settle permanently in another country.

Emigration

The act of leaving the country of residence to permanently settle in a different country.

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Demographic Terms - "F"

Fertility

The act of reproducing.

Forecast

A forecast projects a logically derived population at a future date, taking into consideration past demographic trends (regarding fertility, mortality, and migration) and also current information. All forecasts are projections, but not all projections are forecasts.

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Demographic Terms - "G"

Generation

A group which includes all people born during the same time period. For instance, the baby boomer generation includes all people born between 1946 to 1965.

Growth Rate

The change in a defined population from one period to another.

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Demographic Terms - "I"

Immigrant

Person who has been permitted by immigration authorities to live in Canada permanently.

Immigration

Permanently moving from one's home country to a country one is not a native of.

Infant Mortality

The death of a child under one year of age.

Internal Migration

Migration within a country/province/area, depending on the required area boundaries.

International Migration

Migration that crosses national boundaries, where a person migrates from one country to a different one.

Interprovincial Migration

Movement from one province/territory to another resulting in a permanent change in residence. A person who takes up residence in another province is an out-migrant with reference to the province of origin and an in-migrant with reference to the province of destination.

Intraprovincial Migration

Movement within the province from one Census Division to another resulting in a permanent change in residence.

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Demographic Terms - "L"

Life Expectancy

The age that a hypothetical new born can expect to live until. This varies by time and space.

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Demographic Terms - "M"

Marital Status

The conjugal arrangements of a person; this includes single (never married persons or persons with a marriage annulment), married, widowed, divorced. The 'married' category includes common-law couples and people who are separated.

Median Age

Age "x", such that exactly one half of the population is older than "x" and the other half is younger than "x".

Migrant

Someone who moves permanently from one location to another.

Migration

Permanent change of residence from one geographical unit to another

Mortality

Deaths within a population.

Mortality Rate

The number of deaths per 1,000 individuals in a defined population for a particular time period.

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Demographic Terms - "N"

Natural Increase

Population change resulting from only the births and deaths within that population. Natural increase can be positive or negative.

Net Migration

Difference between in-migration and out-migration for a given area and period of time.

Net International Migration

Equal to: immigrants – emigrants + returning emigrants – temporary emigrants + net non-permanent residents

Net Interprovincial Migration

Difference between in-migrants and out-migrants for a given province or territory.

Net Intraprovincial Migration

The difference between in-migrants and out-migrants for a given region within a province or territory.

Net Non-Permanent Residents

Variation in the number non-permanent residents between two dates.

Net Temporary Emigrants

Variation in the number of temporary emigrants between two dates.

Net Undercoverage

Difference between the number of persons who were covered by the census but who were not enumerated (i.e. undercoverage) and the number of persons who were enumerated when they should not have been or who were enumerated more than once (i.e. overcoverage).

Non-Permanent Residents

Persons from another country who had an employment authorization, a student authorization, or a Minister's permit, or who were refugees claimant, and family members living with them.

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Demographic Terms - "P"**Permanent Resident**

A person who legally resides in Canada on a permanent basis as an immigrant or refugee, but is not yet a Canadian citizen.

Population

The number of people living in a specific geographic area at a set time. Population usually refers to the usual residents of that area.

Population Aging

Over time, a population shift occurs where people age, resulting in a decrease in the number of people in the younger age groups and an increase in the number of people in the older age groups, such that the population as a whole grows older. This is demonstrated by the aging of the median age.

Population Density

The number of people living in a specific area.

Population Growth

Total change in the population of a given geographic unit in a given period, resulting from fertility (births), mortality (deaths) and migration. This can be positive growth (an increasing number of people) or negative growth (a decreasing number of people).

Population Momentum

The force of future growth within a population, given the current demographic characteristics of that population. For example, Alberta has a relatively young population. The large proportion of young adults in the population will have children, and these children will then have children, creating momentum for population growth, even without migration.

Population Projection

An estimate of a future population derived from calculations made on certain assumptions of fertility (births), mortality (deaths) and migration.

Population Pyramid

A chart which shows the distribution of a population by age and sex.

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Demographic Terms - "R"

Replacement Level (Fertility)

Mean number of births per woman necessary to assure the long-term replacement of a population for a given mortality level. Currently, the replacement level in Canada and most other developed countries is about 2.1 children per woman.

Reproductive Age

Women who are in their reproductive ages are capable of having children. In demography, the reproductive ages are said to be between 15-49, however women can and do reproduce at younger and older ages.

Returning Emigrants

Canadian citizens or landed immigrants who have emigrated from the country and subsequently returned to Canada to re-establish a permanent residence.

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Demographic Terms - "S"

Sex Ratio

The ratio of males to females in a population.

Shadow Population

Individuals who reside in one region on a temporary basis, while their primary residence is located somewhere else. They are enumerated by the census as residents of the jurisdictions where their primary residence is located.

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Demographic Terms - "T"

Temporary Emigrant

Canadian citizen or immigrant who left Canada to settle temporarily in a foreign country.

Total Fertility Rate

The sum of age-specific fertility rates during a given year. The TFR indicates the average number of children that a generation of women would have if, over the course of their reproductive life, they had fertility rates identical to those of the year considered.

Two-Way Raking

An adjustment method (also known as the “Deming method”) where proportions are distributed to ensure that the age and sex of the census divisions equal the province’s total population.

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Demographic Terms - "V"

Vital Statistics

Legally required reporting of life events, such as birth, death or marriage. These events are mandatory to register within Canada, and allow for the collection of very accurate data on the population.

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Demographic Terms - "Y"

"Young" Population

A population where there are a disproportional number of “younger people”. Alberta is considered a “younger” population than the rest of Canada, because of high net interprovincial migration into Alberta by young people who then have children here.

Youth-Dependency Ratio

The number of youth aged 0-14 who depend economically on the working aged population (15-64).

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