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## Portrait of the Canadian population in 2006: Highlights

- The Canadian population grew more rapidly between 2001 and 2006 (+5.4%) than in the previous intercensal period (+4.0%). This acceleration was due to an increase in international migration.
- According to the May 16, 2006, Census of Population, there were [31,612,897](#) people in Canada.
- Canada had a higher rate of population growth (+5.4%) than any other G8 country between 2001 and 2006. The population growth of the United States was second with +5.0%.
- Two-thirds of Canada's population growth was attributable to net international migration, while the U.S. population growth resulted mostly from natural increase, as fertility was higher in the United States than in Canada.
- Alberta and Ontario were responsible for two-thirds of Canada's population increase. Nearly all of the remaining third occurred in British Columbia and Quebec.
- Alberta is the Canadian province with the highest growth rate since 2001. Alberta's growth rate (+10.6%) was twice the national average (+5.4%).
- Overall, the population of the Atlantic provinces was essentially unchanged since 2001. However, the population of Newfoundland and Labrador shrank by 1.5%.
- Quebec's growth rate was three times as high as in the previous intercensal period, jumping from 1.4% between 1996 and 2001 to 4.3% between 2001 and 2006.
- Ontario's population increase has been steady for the last 15 years at just over 6.0% per intercensal period, which is above the national average.



- The growth of British Columbia's population between 2001 and 2006 (+5.3%) was slightly higher than during the previous intercensal period (+4.9%).
- For the first time, the territories have a population of more than 100,000.
- In 2006, nearly 25 million people, or more than four-fifths of Canadians, were living in urban areas.
- Between 2001 and 2006, nearly 90% of Canada's population growth took place in census metropolitan areas.
- In the 2006 Census, Canada had six metropolitan areas with more than 1 million people: Toronto, Montréal, Vancouver, Ottawa - Gatineau and, for the first time, Calgary and Edmonton. Together, this "millionaire's club" had a total of 13.6 million residents, or 45% of Canada's population.
- Between 2001 and 2006, six of the 15 census metropolitan areas that had growth rates higher than the national average were in the Greater Golden Horseshoe: Barrie (+19.2%), Oshawa (+11.6%), Toronto (+9.2%), Kitchener (+8.9%), Guelph (+8.2%) and Brantford (5.5%).
- Calgary's population has grown by 13.4% since 2001. Edmonton's growth rate at 10.4% was also among the highest in the country.
- Moncton is the only census metropolitan area in the Atlantic provinces whose growth rate surpassed the national average between 2001 and 2006. It now has a larger population than any other urban area in New Brunswick.
- Eight mid-size urban centres had a growth rate of more than 10%, about twice as high as the rate for Canada as a whole. Seven of the eight were in Alberta.
- Between 2001 and 2006, the growth rate of municipalities surrounding the core cities of Canada's 33 census metropolitan areas was double the national average (+11.1% versus +5.4%).
- The rural population increased by 1.0% since 2001. In 2006, just under one in five Canadians (6 million people) lived in rural areas.
- Rural areas close to urban centres grew much faster (+4.7%) than remote rural areas (-0.1%).
- Nearly half (47%) of the territories' population was living in one of the three capital cities in 2006.