

The Daily

Statistics Canada

Thursday, July 9, 1987

Census of Population: 1986

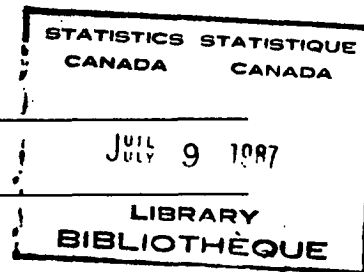
Highlights

- One million Canadians now aged 75 years or over.
- More than half of population over age 30.
- Families increase in number but decline in size.
- Lone-parent families continue to grow at a faster rate than husband-wife families.
- One in 12 couples lives common-law.
- One in four elderly persons lives alone.
- Proportions of Francophones in Canada and of Anglophones in Quebec continue to fall.
- Greater diversity of languages other than English and French.

1986 Census of Canada

The second major data release from the 1986 Census focuses on basic demographic data collected from all households in Canada. The data encompass information on demographic characteristics like age, sex, and marital status, as well as information on households, families, and language.

The final major release from the 1986 Census data base is planned for the Spring of 1988 when detailed socio-economic data, collected from a 20% sample of the population, are released.



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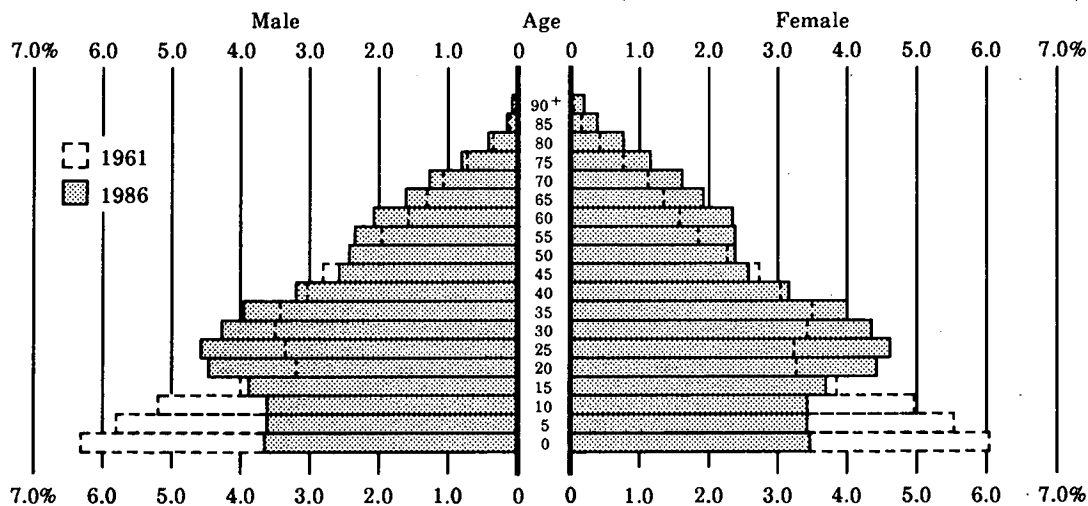
Census of Population: 1986

Census Reveals Continuation of Major Shifts in the Demographic Structure of Canada's Population

Data from the 1986 Census reflect the continuation of large scale changes in the age distribution of the Canadian population. While the growth rate in the total population has gradually declined over the past quarter century, the rate has varied widely for different segments of the population.

The changes in the age structure reflect the impact of varying birth rates in earlier years, in particular, the "baby boom" of the 1950s and early 1960s, followed by the "baby bust" of the late 1960s and 1970s. As persons born during these periods move through their life-cycle, they have had and will continue to have significant impact on the school system, the labour force, family formation, health care and many other aspects of society.

Figure 1
Age-Sex Pyramid, Canada, 1961 and 1986



Another factor contributing to the shift in the age structure is the substantial gain in life expectancy since the mid-1970s. This, in part, explains the large increase in the size of the elderly population. The high growth rate of the elderly population is expected to continue well into the next century. This will have a significant impact on the demand for health and social services.

Child Population Stabilizes...

While the decline in the birth rate has resulted in much smaller preschool and primary school age populations in 1986 compared to 1961, the size of these groups has stabilized during the 1980s.

The preschool population (under six years of age) has in fact increased by nearly 2% over the 1981-86 period while the primary school age population has decreased by only 3%. These changes are small compared to the declines observed during the baby bust and reflect the stabilization in the birth rate during the 1980s.

The stability of this dependant population implies that there will not be additional pressure on the delivery of elementary educational services into the early 1990s.

Population Distribution by Selected Age Groupings, Canada, 1961, 1981 and 1986¹

	Pre-school Age 0-5	Primary School Age 6-13	Secondary School Age 14-18	Youth 18-24	Working Age 20-64	Junior Working Age 20-34	Senior Working Age 35-64	Elderly 65+	75+
Number ('000)									
1961	2,685	3,168	1,513	1,713	9,223	3,665	5,558	1,391	502
1981	2,139	2,947	2,239	3,295	14,186	6,560	7,626	2,361	883
1986	2,174	2,852	1,901	3,021	15,295	6,780	8,514	2,698	1,047
Percentage of total population									
1961	14.7	17.4	8.3	9.4	50.6	20.1	30.5	7.6	2.8
1981	8.8	12.1	9.2	13.5	58.3	26.9	31.3	9.7	3.6
1986	8.6	11.3	7.5	11.9	60.4	26.8	33.6	10.7	4.1
Percent change over the specified period									
1961-86	-19.0	-10.0	25.7	76.4	65.9	85.0	53.2	93.9	108.7
1961-81	-20.3	-7.0	48.0	92.4	53.8	79.0	37.2	69.7	76.0
1981-86	1.7	-3.2	-15.1	-8.3	7.8	3.4	11.6	14.3	18.6
Percent average annual change									
1961-86	-0.8	-0.4	1.0	3.1	2.6	3.4	2.1	3.8	4.3
1961-81	-1.0	-0.3	2.4	4.6	2.7	4.0	1.9	3.5	3.8
1981-86	0.3	-0.6	-3.0	-1.7	1.6	0.7	2.3	2.9	3.7

¹ In this and all subsequent tables and graphs, the figures for 1986 exclude the population on 136 incompletely enumerated Indian reserves and settlements. The total population on these reserves was estimated to be about 45,000 in 1986.

...While Youth Population Shows Decline

While the number of people under age 14 has not changed much since 1981, the population aged 14-24 has declined significantly. Most persons in this age group were born during the baby-bust era of the late 1960s and 1970s when birth rates were dropping rapidly.

Between 1981 and 1986, the secondary school age population, (14-18), decreased by 15%, while the youth population, (18-24) experienced an 8% drop. These decreases have started, and will continue to exert a downward pull on the number of persons entering the labour market. This is in sharp contrast to the 1960s and 1970s, when the baby-boomers entered the labour market in record numbers.

... And Adult Population Continues to Increase

The population aged 20-64 continued to increase between 1981 and 1986. This group was 66% larger in 1986 than in 1961 and grew by nearly 8% during the 1981 to 1986 period. In 1986, 56% of this general working age population were 35 years of age or older. In future years, as the baby-boomers move into their forties and beyond, the working age population will become increasingly concentrated in the older age groups.

One Million Persons Aged 75 or Over...

The population aged 65 and over has grown from 1.4 million in 1961 to 2.7 million in 1986, a rate of increase more than twice that of the population as a whole. The numbers of those 75 years of age and older increased at an even higher rate. In 1986, there were just over 1 million persons aged 75 and over, more than double the number in 1961.

More Than Half the Population Over Age 30...

The aging of the population is clearly reflected in the fact that the median age of the Canadian population is now the highest in history. In 1986, the median age of the population was 31.6 years, up from 29.6 in 1981 and 26.3 in 1961.

In 1986, nearly 11% of the population were 65 years of age and older compared to less than 8% in 1961. In contrast, in 1986, 21% of Canadians were under 15 years of age compared to 34% in 1961.

British Columbia had the highest median age (33 years) in 1986 followed by Ontario and Quebec with median ages of 32 years. At the other extreme, the Northwest Territories had by far the youngest population (median age of 24 years) followed by Newfoundland with a median age of 28 years and Alberta and the Yukon with median ages of 29 years.

Percent Distribution of Population by Selected Age Groups, Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1961 and 1986

1961						
	Total Population	All Ages	Age Groups			Median Age
			0-19	20-64	65 +	
Percent						
Canada	18,238,247	100.0	41.8	50.6	7.6	26.3
Nfld.	457,853	100.0	51.4	42.7	5.9	19.1
P.E.I.	104,629	100.0	44.5	45.0	10.4	24.5
N.S.	737,007	100.0	43.5	47.9	8.6	24.9
N.B.	597,936	100.0	46.9	45.2	7.8	22.3
Que.	5,259,211	100.0	44.3	49.9	5.8	24.0
Ont.	6,236,092	100.0	39.2	52.7	8.1	28.4
Man.	921,686	100.0	40.3	50.7	9.0	27.7
Sask.	925,181	100.0	41.9	48.8	9.2	26.6
Alta.	1,331,944	100.0	42.7	50.3	7.0	25.5
B.C.	1,629,082	100.0	38.2	51.7	10.2	29.8
Yuk.	14,628	100.0	41.4	55.4	3.2	25.6
N.W.T.	22,998	100.0	47.5	49.9	2.6	21.4
1986						
Canada ¹	25,309,330	100.0	28.9	60.4	10.7	31.6
Nfld.	568,350	100.0	36.1	55.1	8.8	27.9
P.E.I.	126,645	100.0	31.7	55.5	12.7	30.6
N.S. ¹	873,175	100.0	29.7	58.4	11.9	31.2
N.B. ¹	709,440	100.0	31.3	57.6	11.1	30.5
Que. ¹	6,532,460	100.0	27.8	62.2	10.0	32.0
Ont. ¹	9,101,695	100.0	28.1	61.0	10.9	32.3
Man. ¹	1,063,015	100.0	29.9	57.5	12.6	31.4
Sask. ¹	1,009,615	100.0	32.1	55.1	12.7	30.1
Alta. ¹	2,365,825	100.0	31.4	60.5	8.1	29.2
B.C. ¹	2,883,365	100.0	27.7	60.2	12.1	33.1
Yuk.	23,505	100.0	33.0	63.3	3.7	28.9
N.W.T.	52,235	100.0	42.5	54.6	2.8	23.7

¹ The figures for 1986 exclude the population on 136 incompletely enumerated Indian reserves and settlements. The total population on these reserves was estimated to be about 45,000 in 1986.

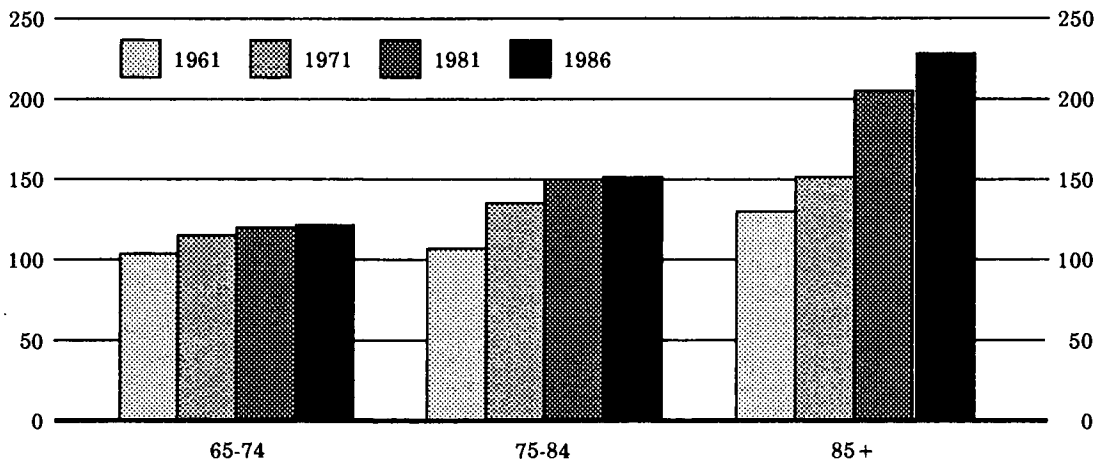
Women Outnumber Men Among Seniors...

In 1961, there were 106 women aged 65 and over for every 100 men in the same age group. By 1986 the ratio had jumped to 138 women for every 100 men.

The gap between the number of males and females increases with age so that for the population 85 years of age and older, women

outnumbered men by more than 2 to 1 in 1986. This imbalance between females and males among seniors is largely due to differences in longevity, with women outliving men an average of seven years.

Figure 2
Females per 100 Males for Selected Older Age Groups,
Canada, 1961-1986



More Single Young Adults...

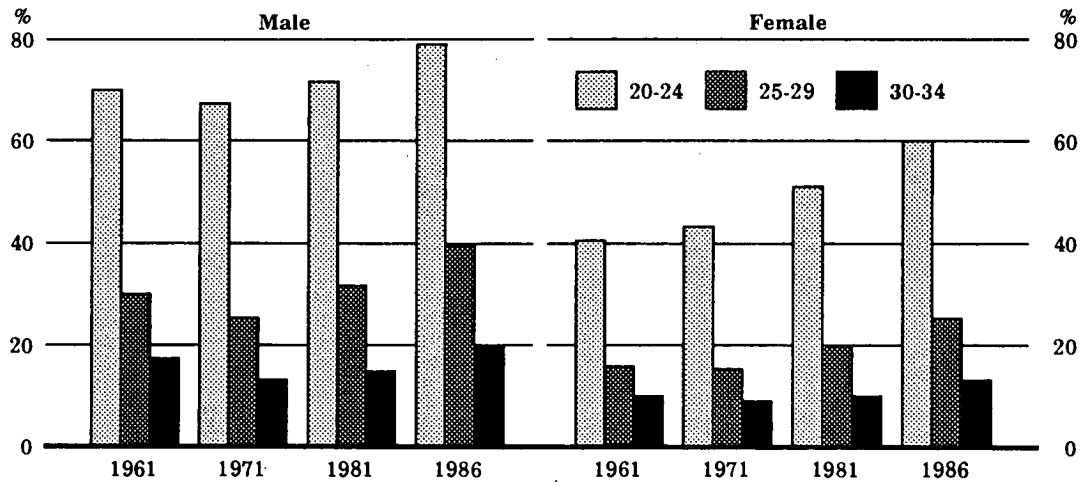
Young adults are tending to marry at a later age. As a result, the proportion of single persons aged 20-34 continued to increase between 1981 and 1986.

For example, among females 20 to 24 years of age, a full 60% were single in 1986, compared

to 40% in 1961 and 51% in 1981. Similar patterns have been observed for women in the 25 to 34 age group as well as among males.

These trends explain, in part, the lower rates of family formation, the lower fertility rates and the increase in one-person households in recent years.

Figure 3
Percentage of Population Never Married by Selected Age Groups and Sex, Canada, 1961-1986



The Family in Canada: Increasing in Numbers...Declining in Size

In 1986 more than four out of five (84%) Canadians lived in families as wives, husbands, lone-parents or children. This proportion was down slightly from 1981, continuing the longer term decline that began in 1966 when just over 88% of the population lived in families.

Though the proportion of Canadians in families has been gradually declining there has been an increase in the number of families from

6.3 million in 1981 to 6.7 million in 1986. This five-year increase (6%) was moderate compared with earlier years. Between 1971 and 1976, the number of families increased by 13%, while between 1976 and 1981, it increased by 10%.

Recent slower growth in the number of families is due in part to delays in marriage, and also to an aging population now moving past the prime family-forming years. Nevertheless, the rate of increase in families was still greater than the population growth in Canada over the 1981-1986 period.

Selected Family Characteristics, Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1986

	Canada	Nfld.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	
Families in private households	6,734,980	142,120	32,065	230,495	186,895	1,751,495	
Husband-wife families	5,881,330	126,295	28,030	200,180	162,025	1,498,690	
With no children at home	2,201,550	30,685	8,950	70,825	52,680	537,435	
With children at home	3,679,785	95,610	19,075	129,355	109,350	961,255	
With children under 6 years	1,337,025	32,480	7,020	44,285	37,140	337,110	
Lone-parent families	853,645	15,825	4,040	30,315	24,865	252,180	
With children under 6 years	175,485	2,760	710	5,650	5,070	46,855	
Average number of children per family	1.3	1.7	1.5	1.3	1.4	1.3	
Average number of persons per family							
All families	3.1	3.6	3.4	3.2	3.3	3.1	
Husband-wife families	3.2	3.7	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.2	
Lone-parent families	2.6	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.6	
Population in private households	24,773,110	559,795	123,325	853,740	694,405	6,391,435	
Family persons	21,194,650	507,750	107,940	737,685	611,105	5,472,270	
Children under 6 years	2,108,600	48,475	10,940	68,945	57,895	515,000	
Non-family persons	3,578,460	52,045	15,390	116,050	83,300	919,165	
	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Yuk.	N.W.T.
Families in private households	2,445,740	276,315	260,600	616,320	775,880	5,825	11,215
Husband-wife families	2,154,990	242,520	231,565	543,460	679,235	4,955	9,390
With no children at home	816,530	95,140	89,390	201,270	294,780	1,750	2,115
With children at home	1,338,460	147,375	142,175	342,190	384,455	3,205	7,205
With children under 6 years	472,155	55,100	57,830	143,560	145,130	1,485	3,725
Lone-parent families	290,755	33,800	29,040	72,860	96,645	870	1,825
With children under 6 years	56,055	7,600	7,705	19,490	22,845	250	535
Average number of children per family	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.3	2.0
Average number of persons per family							
All families	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.0	3.2	3.9
Husband-wife families	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.1	3.3	4.0
Lone-parent families	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.7	3.1
Population in private households	8,926,515	1,031,080	984,620	2,310,050	2,825,135	22,440	50,570
Family persons	7,668,005	873,320	840,545	1,962,750	2,351,185	18,620	43,480
Children under 6 years	736,090	90,035	97,875	235,785	238,245	2,490	6,820
Non-family persons	1,258,510	157,760	144,080	347,300	473,950	3,820	7,095

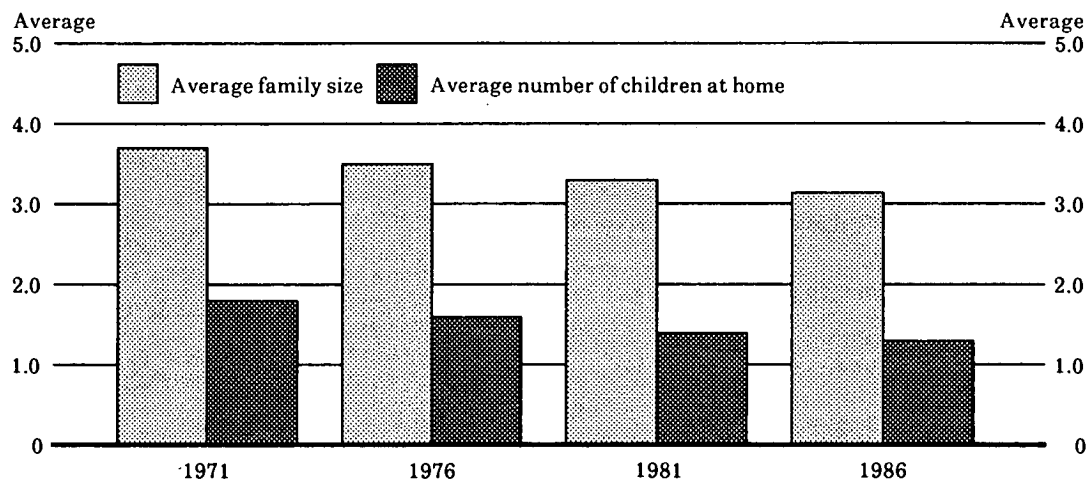
Family Size Dropping...

While there are more families in Canada, the typical family is now smaller. Family size has declined since 1961 when the average

family size was 3.9 people. Since then, the decline in size has been steady. In 1976, the average family had 3.5 people, in 1981, 3.3, and in 1986, 3.1.

Figure 4

Average Family Size and Average Number of Children at Home, Canada, 1971-1986



The decline in family size is due mainly to lower fertility rates. For example, in 1986, the average number of children living at home was 1.3, down from 1.4 in 1981 and 1.9 in 1961. The increase in the number of lone-parent families also has contributed to smaller family size. Lone-parent families averaged 2.6 persons per family in 1986, compared to 3.2 persons among husband-wife families.

And, there also has been a dramatic growth in families with no children at home. (These may either be childless families, or families where grown children have left home.) In 1986, there were 2.2 million such families, or close to a third of all families. This represented a 9% increase over 1981, and far outpaced the growth of families with children at home (5%).

Figure 5
Five-year Increases in Husband-wife and Lone-parent Families,
Canada, 1971-1986

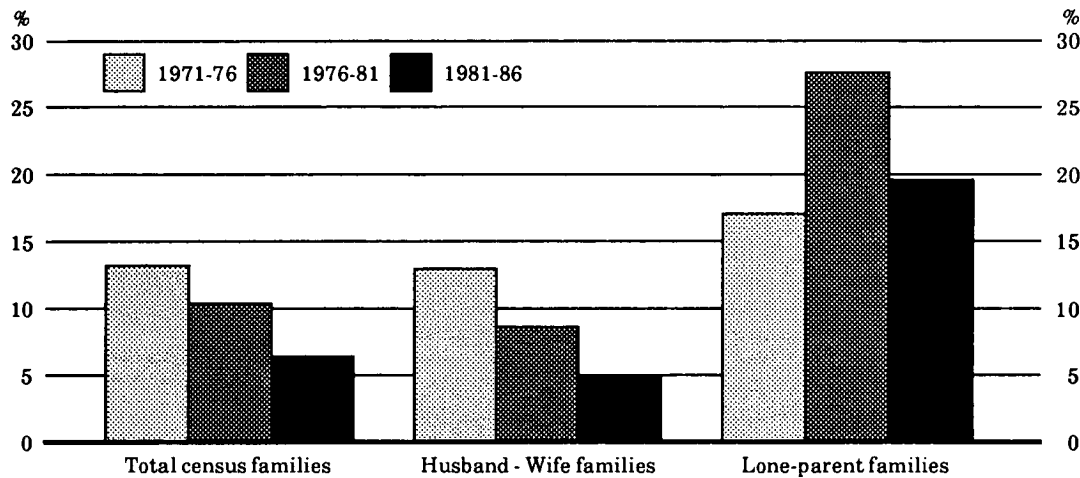
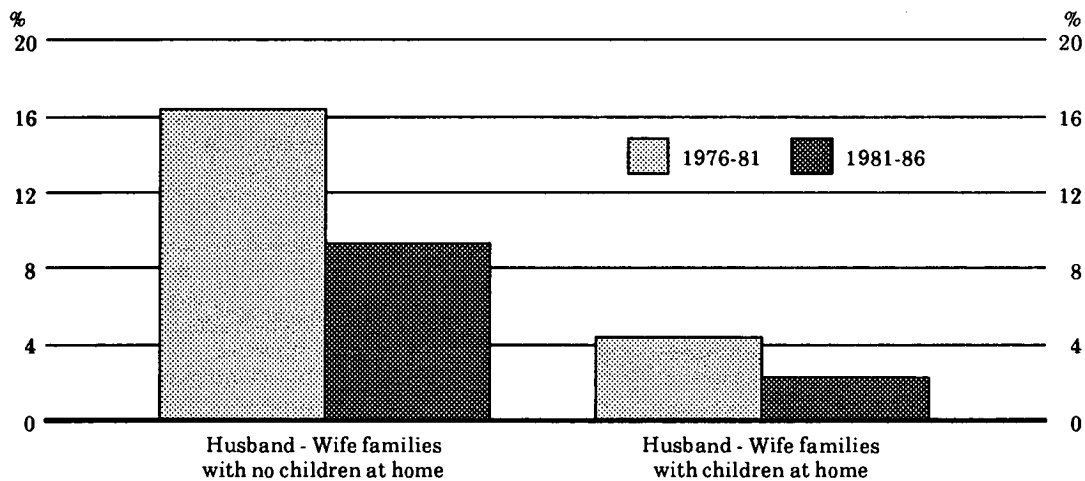


Figure 6
Five-year Increases in Husband-wife Families with and without Children
at Home, Canada, 1976-1986



Families With Children Still in the Majority...

While the number of childless families has increased, close to 70% of Canada's families have children at home. In 1986, there were 4.5 million families with children. Moreover, four out of five of these families were the "traditional" husband-wife-child(ren) families.

Although lone-parent families are considerably fewer in number than these traditional families, they have been increasing at a much faster rate. Between 1981 and 1986, there was a 20% increase in their numbers. In 1986, they represented 13% of all families, up from 11% in 1981.

While the majority (80%) of lone-parent families were headed by women, there has been a slightly more rapid increase in the number of male lone-parents. Between 1981 and 1986, lone-parent families headed by men increased by 22%, following a 31% increase between 1976 and 1981. This compares to increases of 19% during 1981-86 and 27% during 1976-1981 for lone-parent families headed by women.

Families With Young Children...

There were 1.3 million husband-wife families and 175,485 lone-parent families with children under six years of age in 1986.

Together, these families with young children made up 22% of all families in Canada.

While the growth in the preschool population has been slow, a continuing increase in the participation of young mothers in the labour force may see the current demand for day care facilities maintained. Labour force data from the 1986 Census will enable trends in the work patterns of young mothers to be analyzed further.

One in 12 Couples Lives Common-law...

More and more Canadians are living as husband and wife outside the bounds of formal marriage. Since 1981, there has been a 38% increase in the number of reported common-law unions. In 1986, 8% of all couples, about 487,000 families, reported that their union was common-law. In 1981, 6% of all couples, or about 352,000, reported living in such unions.

There were fairly wide regional variations in the incidence of such unions. The highest proportions of common-law couples were to be found in the Yukon (20%) and the Northwest Territories (17%). Among the provinces, 13% of couples in Quebec were living common-law, while in Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, less than 5% of all couples were not formally married.

Husband-wife Families, Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1981 and 1986

		Total Husband- wife Families	Common- law Couples	Presently Married
Canada	1981	5,610,970	352,140	5,258,830
	1986	5,881,330	486,940	5,394,395
Newfoundland	1981	121,670	2,575	119,090
	1986	126,295	5,035	121,260
Prince Edward Island	1981	26,560	855	25,705
	1986	28,030	1,310	26,720
Nova Scotia	1981	190,045	9,125	180,915
	1986	200,180	13,205	186,980
New Brunswick	1981	155,090	6,515	148,575
	1986	162,025	9,605	152,425
Quebec	1981	1,463,100	119,510	1,343,585
	1986	1,498,690	188,660	1,310,025
Ontario	1981	2,028,690	100,775	1,927,915
	1986	2,154,990	134,720	2,020,270
Manitoba	1981	232,920	11,780	221,140
	1986	242,520	15,305	227,215
Saskatchewan	1981	222,025	9,510	212,510
	1986	231,565	13,735	217,825
Alberta	1981	508,720	39,225	469,495
	1986	543,460	45,150	498,310
British Columbia	1981	648,960	50,400	598,560
	1986	679,235	57,645	621,590
Yukon	1981	4,970	820	4,145
	1986	4,955	980	3,975
Northwest Territories	1981	8,215	1,035	7,175
	1986	9,390	1,585	7,805

Living Arrangements Among Canada's Elderly...

Close to 2.7 million people in Canada were 65 years of age and over in 1986. Of these, 91% were living in private households while 9% lived in nursing homes and other institutions. A full 25% of the elderly lived alone. Further releases of census data will enable closer study of the income and housing situations of this rapidly growing segment of our population.

There are significant differences in living arrangements among the elderly in Canada. In the 65 to 74 year age group, only 3% were living in nursing homes and other institutions. Almost two-thirds of this age group lived in families (with their spouses or perhaps with unmarried children). About 22% lived alone and 7% lived with other relatives.

Living Arrangements Among the Elderly, Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1986

	Canada	Nfld.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	
65-74 years							
Total population	1,650,085	31,885	9,200	63,285	47,465	407,515	
Population in private households	1,592,370	30,920	8,895	61,515	45,945	386,725	
Family persons	1,087,010	22,605	6,250	41,685	32,025	255,210	
Non-family persons	505,360	8,315	2,645	19,830	13,920	131,515	
Living with relatives	107,475	3,500	710	5,340	3,745	32,230	
Living alone	363,230	4,310	1,715	12,980	8,995	87,890	
75 years or over							
Total population	1,047,490	18,065	6,885	40,560	31,275	243,125	
Population in private households	864,330	15,515	5,665	35,255	26,625	192,300	
Family persons	401,655	7,785	2,690	15,785	12,600	89,560	
Non-family persons	462,655	7,730	2,975	19,470	14,025	102,740	
Living with relatives	122,250	4,310	995	6,610	4,810	33,470	
Living alone	316,940	3,015	1,805	11,525	8,255	61,560	
	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Yuk.	N.W.T.
65-74 years							
Total population	602,610	79,055	75,550	116,515	215,460	605	950
Population in private households	585,390	76,460	73,395	111,840	209,845	575	865
Family persons	402,815	51,990	50,790	76,835	145,825	335	635
Non-family persons	182,575	24,470	22,605	35,005	64,020	240	230
Living with relatives	38,270	3,935	3,065	6,175	10,360	45	95
Living alone	132,885	19,375	18,360	26,960	49,485	170	115
75 years or over							
Total population	390,090	54,830	53,055	74,815	134,025	255	525
Population in private households	326,010	45,930	44,490	59,005	112,845	225	455
Family persons	146,260	21,205	21,960	28,855	54,615	90	260
Non-family persons	179,750	24,725	22,530	30,150	58,230	135	195
Living with relatives	46,675	4,165	3,275	5,775	11,995	40	110
Living alone	125,375	19,845	18,380	23,225	43,800	85	70

The rapidly growing population 75 years and over has quite a different pattern of living arrangements. For example, 17% of those 75 years and over lived in nursing homes or other

institutions. The proportion of those living alone increased to 30% while 38% lived with a spouse or unmarried children. As well, 12% were living with other relatives.

Households Increasing In Number, But at a Slower Rate...

Between 1981 and 1986, the number of private households in Canada increased twice as fast as the population. In 1986, there were 8.9 million households, up 9% from 1981. In the same period, the country's population increased by only 4%.

However, the rate of increase for households has actually declined significantly. Between 1976 and 1981, the number of households increased by 16%, compared to 9% between 1981 and 1986.

Private Households, Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1981 and 1986

Province/Territory	Private Households 1981	Private Households 1986	Percentage Change 1981-86
Canada	8,281,530	8,991,675	8.6
Newfoundland	148,420	159,080	7.2
Prince Edward Island	37,660	40,690	8.0
Nova Scotia	273,195	295,780	8.3
New Brunswick	214,920	231,680	7.8
Quebec	2,172,860	2,357,105	8.5
Ontario	2,969,785	3,221,730	8.5
Manitoba	357,985	382,345	6.9
Saskatchewan	332,710	358,270	7.7
Alberta	758,240	836,130	10.3
British Columbia	996,640	1,087,120	9.1
Yukon	7,600	7,970	4.9
Northwest Territories	11,515	13,775	19.6

The One-person Household... A Growing Phenomenon...

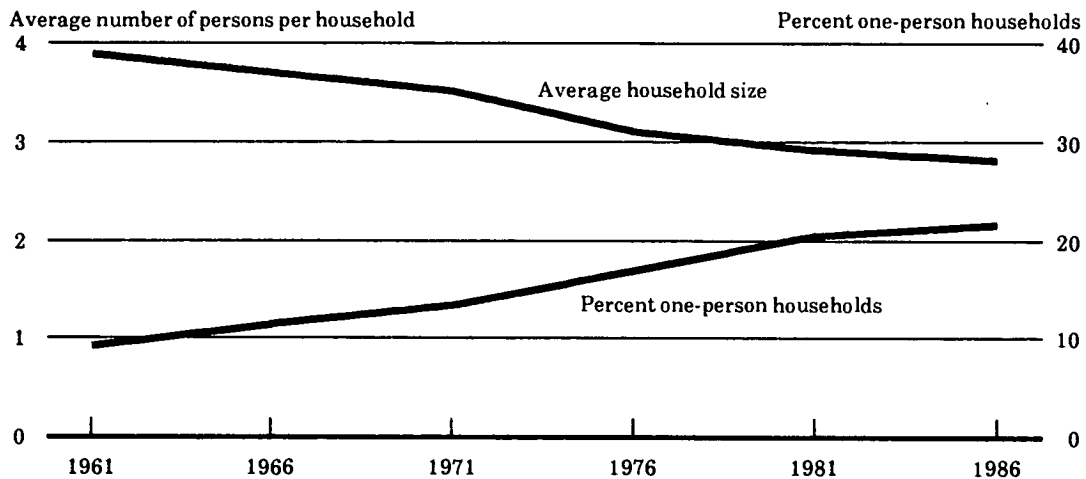
In Canada, an increasing number of people are living alone. In 1961, less than 10% of all private households were one-person households. By 1986, the 1.9 million people living alone made up 21% of all private households.

Factors contributing to the growth in the number of one-person households are the aging of the population and increases in marriage

breakdown. In the latter case, while most divorced persons eventually remarry, they do swell the ranks of those living alone, if only temporarily. In the former case, differences in mortality rates, with wives outliving their husbands, have continued to result in rising numbers of elderly widows left on their own.

Figure 7

Average Household Size and Percent One-person Households, Canada, 1961-1986



Home-ownership in Canada: Part of a Life Cycle...

Following a slight decline in home-ownership over the 1961-1976 period, the pattern of home-ownership has not changed significantly throughout Canada since 1976.

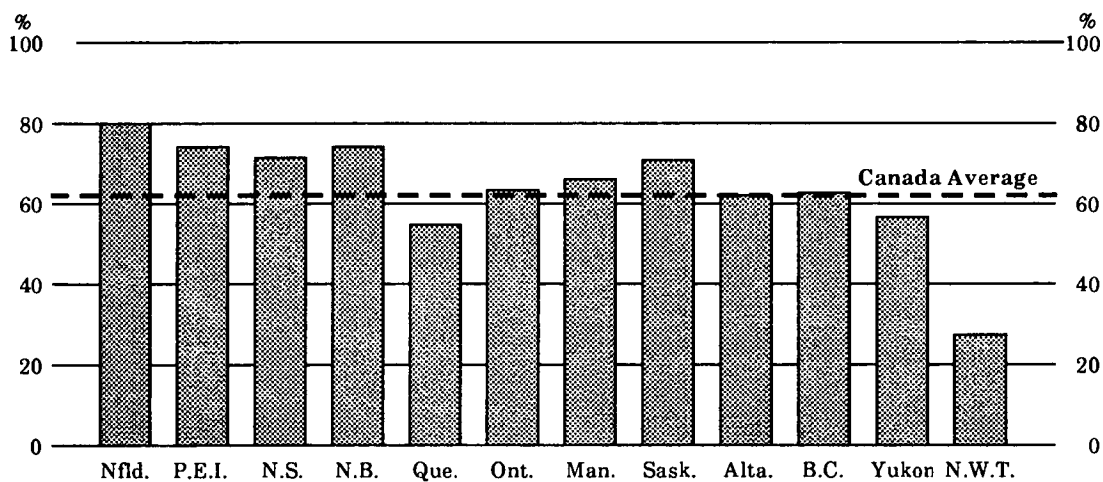
Overall, 62% of all private dwellings in Canada were owner-occupied. But ownership varied from about 28% in the Northwest Territories to about 80% in Newfoundland.

Percent of Private Dwellings That Are Owner-occupied, Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1976-1986

Area	1976	1981	1986*
Canada	61.8	62.1	62.4
Newfoundland	80.6	80.6	80.1
Prince Edward Island	76.6	75.7	74.2
Nova Scotia	72.4	71.5	71.8
New Brunswick	71.8	73.4	74.4
Quebec	50.4	53.3	54.8
Ontario	63.6	63.3	63.7
Manitoba	66.4	65.8	66.5
Saskatchewan	75.5	72.9	71.2
Alberta	64.8	63.1	62.0
British Columbia	65.3	64.4	62.9
Yukon	49.2	52.8	56.8
Northwest Territories	25.0	22.6	27.7

* Excludes private dwellings on Indian reserves and settlements.

Figure 8
Percent of Private Dwellings that are Owner-Occupied,
Provinces and Territories, 1986



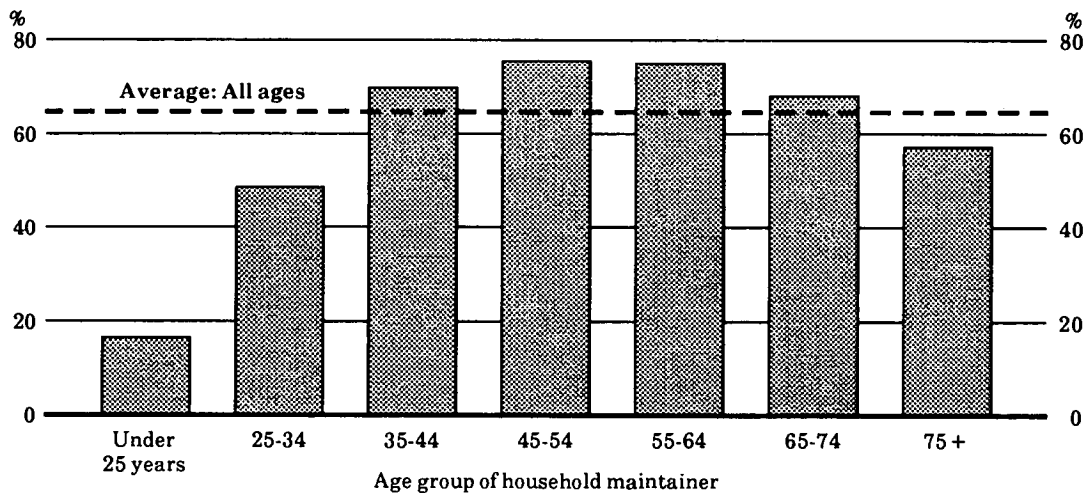
In 1986, 17% of all household maintainers under the age of 25 were homeowners. For the 25 to 34 year age group, the proportion increased very sharply to about 49%, and reached a peak of 76% for the group aged 45 to 54. Among the elderly, the proportion of homeowners was less than for the middle-aged groups, being 69% for the group aged 65 to 74 years, and 57% for the group 75 years and over. These figures, of course, reflect a change in lifestyle for some seniors who move to rental apartments or institutions to escape the rigours of home maintenance.

This pattern of home-ownership reflects the notion of the "life cycle" of most households. First, young householders tend to rent their dwellings, becoming homeowners later, and remaining so until much later in life when housing needs again change.

In summary, the period 1981 to 1986 has seen a continuation of previously established trends in households and families. As further data become available from the 1986 Census, it will be possible to explore more fully the implications of these changes.

Figure 9

Percent of Household Maintainers Owning Homes by Age Group, Canada, 1986



Linguistic Composition of Country: Recent Trends Are Continuing

At the time of the 1986 Census, 15.3 million persons, or 61% of the population of Canada, reported English as their only mother tongue;¹ 6.2 million, or 24% of the population, reported French as their only mother tongue; and 2.9 million, or 11% of the population, reported a language other than English or French as their only mother tongue.

To better reflect the linguistic reality in Canada, the 1986 Census was the first census in which Canadians could indicate more than one mother tongue, if they had been learned simultaneously and were spoken as frequently during childhood. Nearly one million persons, or a little less than 4% of the population, reported having more than one mother tongue. The distribution of these responses was as follows:

English and French:	333,000
English and language(s) other than French:	526,000
French and language(s) other than English:	36,000
English, French and other language(s):	47,000
more than one language other than English and French:	14,000

¹ First language learned and still understood.

The existence of multiple responses makes comparing 1986 Census results with those of the previous censuses difficult (see inset p. 21).

Proportions of Francophones in Canada and Anglophones in Quebec continue to fall...

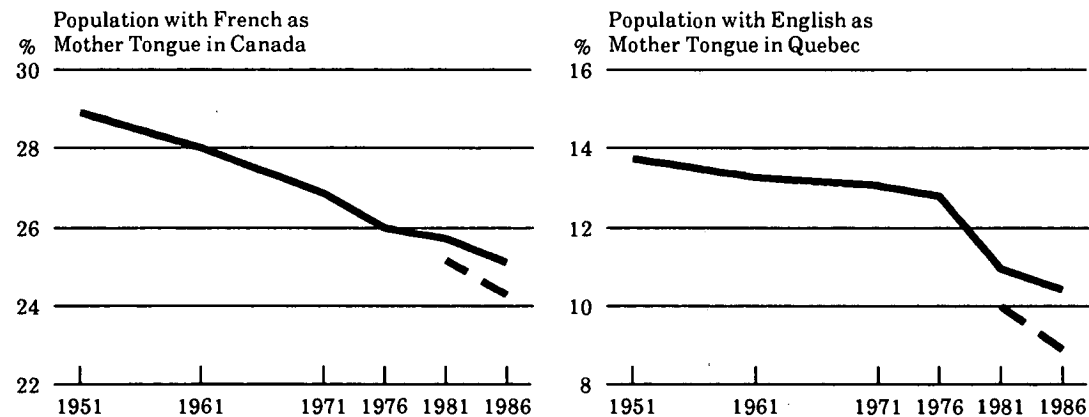
The proportion of Francophones in Canada and the proportion of Anglophones in Quebec continue to decline. However, because of the change between 1981 and 1986 data, it is difficult to accurately estimate the variations in the linguistic composition of the population from 1981 to 1986.

The drop in the percentage of persons with French as their mother tongue began in 1951. The French-language group then accounted for 29% of the Canadian population, compared with approximately 25% in 1986. In Quebec, the percentage of persons with English as their mother tongue has been falling since 1941². This group accounted for 14% of the province's population in that year, compared with approximately 10% at the time of the last census.

² This was the year of the first census from which we have data that can be compared with today's data.

Figure 10

Proportion of the Population with French as Mother Tongue in Canada and of Population with English as Mother Tongue in Québec, 1951 to 1986¹



¹ Two basis of comparison have been used to determine the trends between 1981 and 1986. The dotted line illustrates the trend calculated using the 1986 base, while the 1981-1986 part of the solid line illustrates the trend calculated using the 1981 base. For further information, consult the inset.

Little change in proportion of Francophones in Quebec ...

In Quebec, the proportion of Francophones changed little between 1981 and 1986. In the last census, 5.3 million persons, or 81% of the population, reported that French was their only mother tongue.

Official language minorities: their proportion continues to decrease in most provinces...

In most provinces other than Quebec, there has been a downward trend in the proportion of the Francophone population since 1981, continuing a trend from previous censuses. However, the proportion seems to have remained the same in New Brunswick, while rising in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. In New Brunswick, when the multiple responses given in 1986 are allocated among the various languages as in

1981, the proportion of persons with French as their mother tongue shows little change. Francophones accounted for a third of the population of New Brunswick. Outside of Quebec, Ontario had the largest number of persons with French as their only mother tongue (425,000 in 1986). These persons accounted for a little less than 5% of the population of that province.

Overall, the size of French language minorities in the country decreased between 1981 and 1986. In 1986, 843,000 persons living outside Quebec indicated French as their only mother tongue. During the same period, in Quebec, the number of persons with English as a mother tongue also fell, continuing the trend that began in the mid-1970s. In 1986, 580,000 persons reported English as their only mother tongue.

Greater diversity of languages...

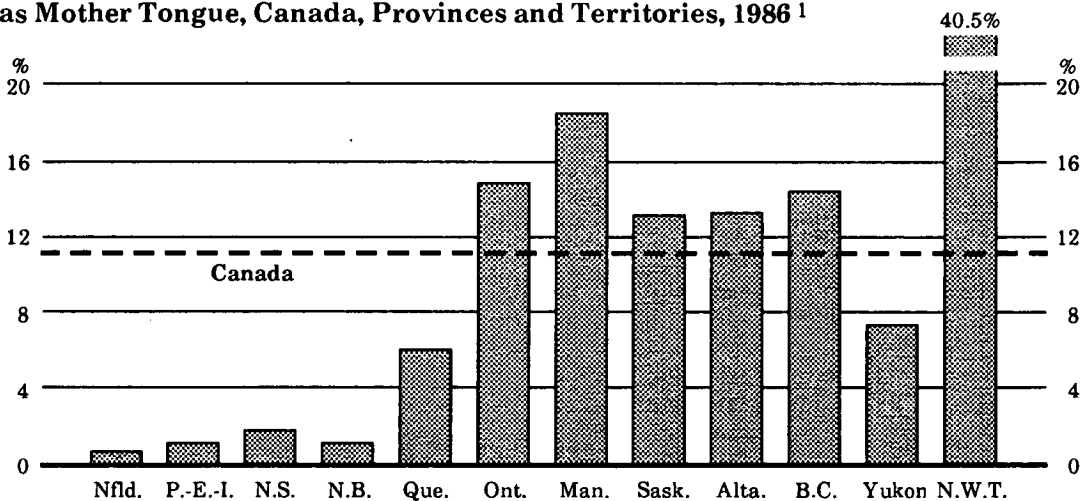
In the 1986 Census, 2.9 million persons, or a little more than 10% of the Canadian population, reported having a single mother tongue other than English or French. Of these persons, 2.1 million indicated a language of European origin, 634,000 a language of Asian or Middle Eastern origin, 138,000 an aboriginal language and 13,000 a language of another origin.³

Linguistic diversity in Canada is greater today than it was twenty-five years ago. Since then, the population whose mother tongue is of

Asian or Middle Eastern origin - mainly Chinese, Vietnamese, Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu - has grown considerably. On the other hand, there was little change from 1961 to 1986 in the number of persons who indicated a language of European origin, although there have been changes within this group. For example, the number of persons with Spanish as their mother tongue is larger now than it was twenty-five years ago, while the number with German or Ukrainian as their mother tongue has decreased. Overall, the proportion of the population reporting a mother tongue other than English and French has changed little in twenty-five years.

³ "Origin", means the geographical region where a language came into being. Persons who report that language may actually come from another region.

Figure 11
Proportion of the Population with Neither English Nor French
as Mother Tongue, Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1986 ¹



¹ Determined using population that reported having only one mother tongue.

In 1986, the proportion of the population for which the only mother tongue was neither English nor French varied a great deal from one region of the country to another: this group made up less than 2% of the population in the Atlantic provinces, 6% in Quebec, 15% in

Ontario, 19% in Manitoba, 13% in Saskatchewan, 13% in Alberta, 14% in British Columbia and 7% in the Yukon. The Northwest Territories stood out at 40%; most of these persons reported Inuktitut as their mother tongue.

Collection of Data on Mother Tongue

The following is an overview of some changes made in data collection and a description of the analytical methods used to determine the trends.

Data collection

The question on mother tongue was the same in the last two censuses, but the instructions to respondents were modified. In 1981, the respondents were asked to indicate only one language, nevertheless, 597,980 persons reported more than one. This instruction was dropped from the 1986 Census. Under the new instructions, people could indicate two mother tongues if they had learned them at the same time and had spoken one as frequently as the other when they were children.

The number of multiple responses given in the 1986 Census was significantly higher than the number given in the 1981 Census. This increase may have resulted from changes made in the questionnaire, changes in the way the population answers language questions or an increase in the number of persons who learned more than one language as a mother tongue. In 1986, 954,940 persons provided a multiple response.

When the 1981 data were processed, only one language was retained, even in cases where the respondent reported more than one. In 1986, responses indicating more than one language were accepted.

Comparison between 1981 and 1986

In order to facilitate the determination of the trends between 1981 and 1986, two methods of comparison were established:

- 1986-based method: The presentation of the data from the 1981 Census shows the multiple responses obtained at that time.
- 1981-based method: The results of the 1986 Census were adjusted, based upon the methods used in 1981. In cases where several languages were reported, the multiple responses were distributed among the component languages.

These adjustments make it easier to relate the 1986 data to the 1981 data, but do not make the results of the two censuses entirely comparable.

Generally speaking, the two methods reveal similar trends. For New Brunswick, the results obtained using the second method indicate that the size of the French-language group grew and that its proportion did not change between 1981 and 1986.

For further information, contact Luc Albert, analyst with the Housing, Family and Social Statistics Division, at (613) 991-2563.

For your needs...

The data summarized here represent only a sample of the information from the 1986 Census of population. A wide range of 1986 Census products and services, including reference products, data tables and maps are now available.

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