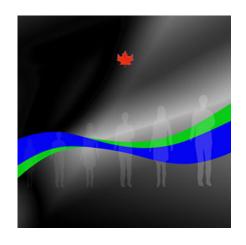# Population Projections for Canada (2023 to 2073), Provinces and Territories (2023 to 2048)

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## Note of appreciation

Canada owes the success of its statistical system to a long-standing partnership between Statistics Canada, the citizens of Canada, its businesses, governments and other institutions. Accurate and timely statistical information could not be produced without their continued co-operation and goodwill.

# Population Projections for Canada (2023 to 2073), Provinces and Territories (2023 to 2048)

## Introduction

Population projections for Canada, provinces and territories are periodically updated to reflect recent developments in Canadian demographics, including rising immigration targets and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The most recent demographic projections have as their base population the 2023 population estimates and cover the 2023 to 2048 period at the provincial and territorial scale and the 2023 to 2073 period at the national level. They also incorporate, for the first time, the concept of gender, which was first introduced in the 2021 Census of Population. Gender refers to an individual's personal and social identity as a man, woman or non-binary person (a person who is not exclusively a man or a woman). Demographic projections are available for the gender category "Men+", which includes men (and/or boys), as well as some non-binary persons, and for the gender category "Women+" category, which includes women (and/or girls), as well as some non-binary persons.

This document provides a summary of the various projection scenarios and highlights of the main projection results.

More information is provided in the following documents:

- A short analysis of the main results is provided in *The Daily*.
- The complete results are available in two tables in the Common Exit Data Warehouse: 17-10-0057-01 (population counts) and 17-10-0058-01 (components of population growth).
- Results can also be accessed using a practical interactive data visualization tool (Statistics Canada catalogue number 71-607-X-2022015).
- In-depth descriptions of the projection assumptions and their rationale are provided in the technical report accompanying these projections, entitled *Population Projections for Canada (2023 to 2073), Provinces and Territories (2023 to 2048): Technical Report on Methodology and Assumptions* (Statistics Canada catalogue number 91-620).

## Cautionary note

The population projections produced by Statistics Canada's Centre for Demography are not intended to be interpreted as predictions about what will happen in the future. They should instead be understood as an exercise designed to investigate what the Canadian population might become in the years ahead according to various scenarios of possible future change. For this reason, Statistics Canada always publishes several scenarios and formulates several explicit assumptions regarding the main components of population growth. Accordingly, users are encouraged to consider several scenarios when they analyze the projection results. It is also worth noting that the accuracy of the projections produced depends on a number of factors. Various events—for example, economic crises, pandemics, wars or natural catastrophes—are difficult (or impossible) to anticipate and can affect the growth and composition of the Canadian population. For this reason, Statistics Canada revises the population projections on a regular basis, so that the context in which they are developed is taken into account.

## Assumptions and selection of scenarios

The purpose of having multiple projection scenarios is to reflect the uncertainty associated with the future. The projection scenarios are constructed by combining a number of assumptions regarding the future evolution of each of the components of population growth. The six medium-growth scenarios (M1, M2, M3, M4, M5 and M6) were developed on the basis of assumptions reflecting different internal migration patterns observed in the past. Each scenario puts forward a separate assumption to reflect the volatility of this component.

The low-growth (LG) and high-growth (HG) scenarios bring together assumptions that are consistent with either lower or higher population growth than in the medium-growth scenarios at the Canada level. For example, assumptions that entail high fertility, low mortality, high immigration, low emigration and high numbers of non-permanent residents are the foundation of the high-growth scenario.

The fast-aging (FA) and slow-aging (SA) scenarios bring together assumptions that are consistent with either faster or slower population aging than in the medium-growth scenarios. For example, assumptions that entail high fertility, high mortality, high immigration, medium emigration and high numbers of non-permanent residents are the foundation of the slow-aging scenario.

The ten scenarios are intended to provide a plausible and sufficiently broad range of projected numbers to take account of the uncertainties inherent in any projection exercise. Note that the low-growth (LG), high-growth (HG), slow-aging (SA) and fast-aging (FA) scenarios all use the same interprovincial migration assumption as the one used in the M1 scenario. The migration rates of assumption M1 over the first ten years consist of a linear interpolation of the average migration rates observed between 2020/2021 and 2022/2023 towards the average rates observed between 1991/1992 and 2022/2023, rates that remain constant thereafter (after 2032/2033).

Projection assumptions and scenarios are summarized in Table 1 and Table 2.

In-depth descriptions of the projection assumptions and their rationale are provided in the technical report accompanying these projections, entitled *Population Projections for Canada (2023 to 2073), Provinces and Territories (2023 to 2047): Technical Report on Methodology and Assumptions* (Statistics Canada catalogue number 91-620).

**Table 1**
**Summary of the projection scenarios**

| Scenario | Fertility | Mortality | Immigration | Emigration and returning emigration | Non-permanent residents | Internal migration |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **M1** | Medium | Medium | Medium | Medium | Medium | Recent trends (2020/2021 to 2022/2023) transitioning linearly in 10 years to the average of the period 1991/1992 to 2022/2023 |
| **M2** | Medium | Medium | Medium | Medium | Medium | 1995/1996 to 2010/2011 |
| **M3** | Medium | Medium | Medium | Medium | Medium | 2003/2004 to 2008/2009 |
| **M4** | Medium | Medium | Medium | Medium | Medium | 2009/2010 to 2016/2017 |
| **M5** | Medium | Medium | Medium | Medium | Medium | 2014/2015 to 2016/2017 |
| **M6** | Medium | Medium | Medium | Medium | Medium | 2020/2021 to 2022/2023 |
| **LG** | Low | High | Low | High | Low | Recent trends (2020/2021 to 2022/2023) transitioning linearly in 10 years to the average of the period 1991/1992 to 2022/2023 |
| **HG** | High | Low | High | Low | High | Recent trends (2020/2021 to 2022/2023) transitioning linearly in 10 years to the average of the period 1991/1992 to 2022/2023 |
| **SA** | High | High | High | Medium | High | Recent trends (2020/2021 to 2022/2023) transitioning linearly in 10 years to the average of the period 1991/1992 to 2022/2023 |
| **FA** | Low | Low | Low | Medium | Low | Recent trends (2020/2021 to 2022/2023) transitioning linearly in 10 years to the average of the period 1991/1992 to 2022/2023 |

**Notes:** LG (low growth), HG (high growth), SA (slow aging) and FA (fast aging).
**Source:** Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography.

**Table 2**
**Detailed summary of projection scenarios**

| Component / Temporal horizon | Scenario | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Low growth | Medium growth | | | | | | High growth | Slow aging | Fast aging |
| | LG | M1 | M2 | M3 | M4 | M5 | M6 | HG | SA | FA |
| **Fertility (period total fertility rate (number of children per woman))** | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2027/2028 | 1.13 | 1.24 | 1.24 | 1.24 | 1.24 | 1.24 | 1.24 | 1.36 | 1.36 | 1.13 |
| 2047/2048 | 1.15 | 1.37 | 1.37 | 1.37 | 1.37 | 1.37 | 1.37 | 1.61 | 1.61 | 1.15 |
| 2072/2073 | 1.15 | 1.37 | 1.37 | 1.37 | 1.37 | 1.37 | 1.37 | 1.61 | 1.61 | 1.15 |
| **Immigration (rate per thousand)** | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2027/2028 | 10.3 | 11.9 | 11.9 | 11.9 | 11.9 | 11.9 | 11.9 | 13.8 | 13.8 | 10.3 |
| 2047/2048 | 7.0 | 9.3 | 9.3 | 9.3 | 9.3 | 9.3 | 9.3 | 12.0 | 12.0 | 7.0 |
| 2072/2073 | 7.0 | 9.3 | 9.3 | 9.3 | 9.3 | 9.3 | 9.3 | 12.0 | 12.0 | 7.0 |
| **Life expectancy at birth, males (in years)** | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2027/2028 | 80.3 | 80.6 | 80.6 | 80.6 | 80.6 | 80.6 | 80.6 | 80.9 | 80.3 | 80.9 |
| 2047/2048 | 83.6 | 84.3 | 84.3 | 84.3 | 84.3 | 84.3 | 84.3 | 85.0 | 83.6 | 85.0 |
| 2072/2073 | 86.5 | 87.3 | 87.3 | 87.3 | 87.3 | 87.3 | 87.3 | 88.1 | 86.5 | 88.1 |
| **Life expectancy at birth, females (in years)** | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2027/2028 | 84.5 | 84.8 | 84.8 | 84.8 | 84.8 | 84.8 | 84.8 | 85.0 | 84.5 | 85.0 |
| 2047/2048 | 87.1 | 87.8 | 87.8 | 87.8 | 87.8 | 87.8 | 87.8 | 88.4 | 87.1 | 88.4 |
| 2072/2073 | 89.6 | 90.3 | 90.3 | 90.3 | 90.3 | 90.3 | 90.3 | 91.0 | 89.6 | 91.0 |
| **Proportion of non-permanent residents (%)** | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2028 | 4.1 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 6.1 | 6.1 | 4.1 |
| 2048 | 3.1 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 6.5 | 6.5 | 3.1 |
| 2073 | 3.1 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 6.5 | 6.5 | 3.1 |
| **Emigration (gross migraproduction rate per thousand)** | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2027/2028 | 2.4 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 2.0 | 2.0 |
| 2047/2048 | 3.0 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 1.6 | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| 2072/2073 | 3.0 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 1.6 | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| **Return emigration (gross migraproduction rate per thousand)** | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2027/2028 | 1.7 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.2 | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| 2047/2048 | 1.8 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.0 | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| 2072/2073 | 1.8 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.0 | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| **Interprovincial migration** | | | | | | | | | | |
| Reference period | Recent trends (2020/2021 to 2022/2023) transitioning linearly in 10 years to the average of the period 1991/1992 to 2022/2023 | Recent trends (2020/2021 to 2022/2023) transitioning linearly in 10 years to the average of the period 1991/1992 to 2022/2023 | 1995/1996 to 2010/2011 | 2003/2004 to 2008/2009 | 2009/2010 to 2016/2017 | 2014/2015 to 2016/2017 | 2020/2021 to 2022/2023 | Recent trends (2020/2021 to 2022/2023) transitioning linearly in 10 years to the average of the period 1991/1992 to 2022/2023 | Recent trends (2020/2021 to 2022/2023) transitioning linearly in 10 years to the average of the period 1991/1992 to 2022/2023 | Recent trends (2020/2021 to 2022/2023) transitioning linearly in 10 years to the average of the period 1991/1992 to 2022/2023 |

**Note:** The medium growth scenarios M2, M3, M4, M5 and M6 were created in order to reflect distinct interprovincial migration assumptions in comparison with the medium growth scenario M1. For more details, see the section on interprovincial migration in *Population Projections for Canada (2023 to 2073), Provinces and Territories (2023 to 2048): Technical Report on Methodology and Assumptions*, Statistics Canada catalogue number 91-620.
**Source:** Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography.

# Highlights

For exhaustive insights on the most recent population projections for Canada, provinces and territories, see the interactive dashboard "Population projections for Canada, Provinces and Territories".

## Canada

- According to the various projection scenarios, the Canadian population, estimated at 40.1 million in 2023, would continue to increase over the next decades to between 47.1 million (low-growth (LG) scenario) and 87.2 million (high-growth (HG) scenario) by 2073. Under the medium-growth (M1) scenario, the Canadian population would reach 62.8 million in 2073.

- From an average of 1.12% over the last 30 years, the annual rate of growth would diminish to 0.79% by 2072/2073 according to the medium-growth (M1) scenario. In comparison, by 2072/2073, Canada's rate would be 1.59% under the high-growth scenario (HG) and 0.07% under the low-growth scenario (LG).

- In all scenarios, migratory increase would be the main driver of population growth at the national level, continuing a pattern that began in the early 1990s.

- The share of persons aged 65 and over within the total population would increase from 18.9% in 2023 to between 21.9% (slow-aging (SA) scenario) and 32.3% (fast-aging (FA) scenario) in 2073. However, the growth in the proportion of persons aged 65 and over would be less pronounced after 2030, when all baby-boomers will have reached or passed this age.

- The share of children (aged between 0 and 14) in the Canadian population has greatly decreased since 1962, when it peaked at 34.0%. Estimated at 15.4% in 2023, the projected proportion of children decreases in all scenarios except in the slow aging (SA) and high-growth (HG) scenarios.

- The number of persons aged 85 and over would continue to increase rapidly in the coming years, particularly between 2031 and 2050 as the many baby-boom cohorts enter this age group where needs for health care and health services are important. According to the projection scenarios, the population aged 85 and over would increase from 896,600 people in 2023 to between 3.3 million (scenario LG) and 4.3 million (scenario HG) by 2073.

- The average age of Canada's population would reach between 42.6 years (scenario SA) and 50.1 years (scenario FA) in 2073, up from 41.6 years in 2023.

## Provinces and territories

- If recent trends continue over the long term, the relative weight of the population of the provinces east of Ontario within Canada would continue to decline as a share of the total Canadian population, according to all projection scenarios. Specifically, the populations of Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Quebec would experience a decrease in their demographic weight from 2023 to 2048 under almost all scenarios. Conversely, the demographic weight of Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia would increase according to all scenarios.

- In all projection scenarios, Ontario and Quebec would continue to be the most populous provinces in Canada over the next 25 years.

- Average annual growth rates would vary considerably among the provinces and territories. Some provinces and territories would experience population decrease in certain scenarios.

- As population aging continues, all provinces and territories would see an increase in the proportion of the population aged 65 and over in the coming years. The number of persons aged 85 and over would also increase rapidly in all provinces and territories.

# Related products

Population Projections for Canada, Provinces and Territories: Interactive Dashboard (statcan.gc.ca)

Population estimates on July 1, by age and gender (statcan.gc.ca)

Estimates of the components of demographic growth, annual (statcan.gc.ca)

Crude birth rate, age-specific fertility rates and total fertility rate (live births) (statcan.gc.ca)

Mortality rates, by age group (statcan.gc.ca)

Life expectancy and other elements of the complete life table, single-year estimates, Canada, all provinces except Prince Edward Island (statcan.gc.ca)

Life expectancy and other elements of the abridged life table, three-year estimates, Prince Edward Island and the territories (statcan.gc.ca)