

Population Density, 1996

Abstract

The majority of the Canadian population, about 60% is concentrated within a thin belt of land representing 2.2% of the land between Windsor, Ontario and Quebec City. Even though Canada is the second largest country in the world in terms of land area, it only ranks 33rd in terms of population. The agricultural areas in the Prairies and eastern Canada have higher population densities than the sparsely populated North, but not as high as southern Ontario or southern Quebec.

This map illustrates the population density for each census division in 1996. Population density was calculated by taking the total population of the census division and dividing by its total area in square kilometres.

The majority of Canada's population occurs in the southernmost part of the country. The agricultural areas in the Prairies and eastern Canada have higher population densities than the sparsely populated North, but not as high as southern Ontario or southern Quebec. The agricultural and resource based economy support a medium or low-density population.

Data and Mapping Notes

The data presented on the map layers were derived from the 1996 Census and were based on either the 288 census divisions (CD) or 5984 census subdivisions (CSD) for which data are released. The choropleth mapping technique is limited in use when displaying data for the large areas in the northern and rural regions, which contain small populations and are therefore, overemphasized. To view the population figures of a specific CD or CSD on a map, press the "Get Statistics" button and select the area of interest.

When comparing information between maps, it is important to understand that each map layer is based on a unique set of data. The class intervals used have been generated to represent the unique information on each map. As a result, the maps cannot be directly compared to each other. The individual maps, together with the supporting map text are the best sources for content comparison.

Note that in choropleth technique, areas are completely shaded and only one such layer can be viewed at a time.

At the time the census division boundaries were defined, Nunavut had not yet been designated as an official territory. It is therefore not referenced on the maps.

Definitions of underlined terms

Census Division: Census Division (CD) is the general term applied to areas established by provincial law which are intermediate geographic areas between the municipality and the province levels. Census divisions represent counties, regional districts, regional municipalities and other types of provincially legislated areas. In Newfoundland, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, provincial law does not provide for these administrative geographic areas. Therefore, census divisions have been created by Statistics Canada in cooperation with these provinces for the dissemination of statistical data. In the Yukon Territory, the census division is equivalent to the entire Territory. (Source: 1996 Census Dictionary, Statistics Canada)

Census Subdivision (CSD): Census subdivision is the general term applying to municipalities (as determined by provincial legislation) or their equivalent (for example, Indian reserves, Indian settlements and unorganized territories). In Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and British Columbia, the term also describes geographic areas that have been created by Statistics Canada in cooperation with the provinces as equivalents for municipalities for the dissemination of statistical data. According to the national hierarchy, census subdivisions add together to form census divisions. The CDs form provinces and territories. Two additional levels are defined in the national hierarchy to facilitate special data analysis. A special aggregation of census subdivisions called census consolidated subdivision (CCS) provides a level of geography between the CSD and CD which facilitates data analysis. In the rural context, the CCS is a grouping of smaller municipalities, usually contained within a larger municipality. For instance, a town located within a surrounding township will be grouped together with the township to form a CCS. In urban areas, CCSs are formed by contiguous groupings of CSDs. A principal user of the CCSs is the Census of Agriculture. (Source: 1996 Census Dictionary, Statistics Canada)

Choropleth map: A thematic map in which areas are coloured or shaded to create darker or lighter areas in proportion to the density or a particular characteristic of the theme subject in that area.

Map Sources

Population Density, 1996

Statistics Canada. 1996 Census of Population.

Related Web sites (1999 – 2009)

Federal Government

Statistics Canada. 1996 Census. Population Counts, Showing Distribution Inside and Outside Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations, for Canada, Provinces and Territories.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/c1996-r1996/4129977-eng.htm>

A census table provided by Statistics Canada clearly demonstrates the higher population base of census metropolitan areas in relation to regions outside of these areas. A link to important information on 1996 census tables on the Internet is also available.

Statistics Canada. Free Internet publications. 1996 Census. Social Conditions. Understanding Rural Canada: Structures and Trends

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/21f0016x/rural96/html/onefile-unfichier/4148134-eng.htm>

This 1996 Statistics Canada slide show presents several images, as well as brief descriptions on the topic of rural demography.

Statistics Canada. Historical Statistics of Canada. Section A: Population and Migration

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-516-x/sectiona/4147436-eng.htm>

Statistics Canada presents a large collection of population-related data derived from national censuses dating back to the late 1800's to 1977.

Statistics Canada. Learning Resources. Animated Age Pyramids

http://www.statcan.gc.ca/kits-trousses/animat/edu06a_0000-eng.htm

Statistics Canada features animated population pyramids to show the change in population distribution of Canada, the provinces and territories from 1971 to 2004. Other useful sections can also be explored on this web site.

Provincial/Territorial Government

Government of Alberta: Official Population List

<http://www3.gov.ab.ca/ma/ms/1996population.htm>

This Government of Alberta Web page publishes the official population figures on municipalities available as of October 1st, 1996. The First Nation population by band is also shown.

Government of Prince Edward Island. Prince Edward Island: Population Strategy

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/population/index.php3>

This government of Prince Edward Island Web page provides an insight into the mandate and objectives of the province on the issue of population. As supplements, two links to documents (PDF) on population are available.

Nova Scotia: Demographic Trends Into the Twenty First Century

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/finance/stats.div/papers/demograf/demo7.htm>

This Government of Nova Scotia paper presents an overview of various aspects of the province's population: population change, population growth, age structure and other themes.

Yukon Facts: Population

<http://www.gov.yk.ca/facts/>

This Government of Yukon Web page posts population figures by community profile, gender population as of December 1999, migration, ethnic origin and population age group.

