

## Population Distribution, 1996

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### Abstract

Even though Canada is the second largest country in the world in terms of land area, it ranks 33rd in terms of population. Almost all of Canada's population is concentrated in a narrow band along the country's southern edge. Nearly 80% of the total population lives within the 25 major metropolitan areas, which represent only 0.79% of the total area of the country.

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This map illustrates the percentage of the total population in each census division for 1996. Population distribution was calculated by dividing the census division population, by the total national population and multiplying the result by 100.

In Canada, the most populated areas coincide with the geographic location of the 25 census metropolitan areas (CMAs). According to Statistics Canada 1996 figures, nearly 80% of the total population lives in CMAs, which represent only 0.79% of the area of the country or 72 350 860 square kilometres.

### 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.

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## 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 Metropolitan Area (CMA):** A census metropolitan area (CMA) is a very large urban area (known as the urban core) together with the adjacent urban and rural areas (known as urban and rural fringes) that have a high degree of social and economic integration with the urban core. A CMA has an urban core population of at least 100 000, based on the previous census. Once an area becomes a CMA, it is retained as a CMA even if the population of its urban core declines below 100 000. All CMAs are subdivided into census tracts. A CMA may be consolidated with adjacent census agglomerations (CA) if they are socially and economically integrated. This new grouping is known as a consolidated CMA and the component CMA and CA are known as the primary census metropolitan area (PCMA) and primary census agglomeration(s) (PCA). A CMA may not be consolidated with another CMA. (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.

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## Map Sources

### Percentage of Total Population, 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](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.

