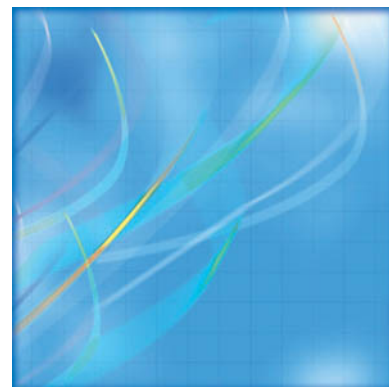


Catalogue no. 97-553-XIE

Family Portrait: Continuity and Change in Canadian Families and Households in 2006, 2006 Census

Families and households, 2006 Census

Census year 2006



 Statistics Canada Statistique Canada

Canada

How to obtain more information

Specific inquiries about this product and related statistics or services should be directed to the National Contact Centre.

For information about this product or the wide range of services and data available from Statistics Canada, visit our website at www.statcan.ca or contact us by e-mail at infostats@statcan.ca or by phone from 8:30am to 4:30pm Monday to Friday at:

Toll-free telephone (Canada and the United States):

Inquiries line	1-800-263-1136
National telecommunications device for the hearing impaired	1-800-363-7629
Fax line	1-877-287-4369
Depository Services Program inquiries line	1-800-635-7943
Depository Services Program fax line	1-800-565-7757

Statistics Canada national contact centre:

Fax line	1-613-951-8116
	1-613-951-0581

Information to access the product

This product, catalogue no. 97-553-XIE, is available for free in electronic format. To obtain a single issue, visit our website at www.statcan.ca and select Publications.

Standards of service to the public

Statistics Canada is committed to serving its clients in a prompt, reliable and courteous manner. To this end, the Agency has developed standards of service which its employees observe in serving its clients. To obtain a copy of these service standards, please contact Statistics Canada toll free at 1-800-263-1136. The service standards are also published on www.statcan.ca under About us > Providing services to Canadians.

Statistics Canada

Family Portrait: Continuity and Change in Canadian Families and Households in 2006, 2006 Census

Families and households, 2006 Census

Census year 2006

by Anne Milan, Mireille Vézina and Carrie Wells, Demography Division

Published by authority of the Minister responsible for Statistics Canada

© Minister of Industry, 2007

All rights reserved. The content of this electronic publication may be reproduced, in whole or in part, and by any means, without further permission from Statistics Canada, subject to the following conditions: that it be done solely for the purposes of private study, research, criticism, review or newspaper summary, and/or for non-commercial purposes; and that Statistics Canada be fully acknowledged as follows: Source (or "Adapted from", if appropriate): Statistics Canada, year of publication, name of product, catalogue number, volume and issue numbers, reference period and page(s). Otherwise, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form, by any means—electronic, mechanical or photocopy—or for any purposes without prior written permission of Licensing Services, Client Services Division, Statistics Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0T6.

September 2007

Catalogue no. 97-553-XIE
ISBN 978-0-662-46681-9

Frequency: occasional

Ottawa

La version française de cette publication est disponible sur demande (n° 97-553-XIF au catalogue).

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 cooperation and goodwill.

Family Portrait: Continuity and Change in Canadian Families and Households in 2006

Table of contents

Highlights	6
National portrait.....	8
Census families.....	8
Common-law-couple families increasing much faster than married-couple families	8
For the first time, more census families comprised of couples without children than with children.....	9
Same-sex married couples counted for the first time.....	12
Lone-parent families: Upward trend has stabilized since 2001.....	13
More never-married lone parents and fewer widowed	14
Lone-mother families remain the majority of lone-parent families but growth is higher for lone-father families	15
Households	16
Household size continues to decline.....	16
Large increase in number of one-person households	17
Individuals	19
Legal marital status: Unmarried people outnumber married people for the first time.....	19
Living as part of a common-law couple growing rapidly, especially for older age groups	20
More common-law partners divorced than never-married after age 50	22
Living as part of a couple peaks for women in their late thirties	22
Increasing proportion of children aged 14 and under live with common-law parents.....	24
Some children shared a home with grandparents.....	25
Higher proportion of children aged 4 and under with mothers in their forties	26
Fewer young adults aged 20 to 29 in couples	27
More young adults aged 20 to 29 living in the parental home	28
Provinces and territories	30
Newfoundland and Labrador: Highest proportion of young adults aged 20 to 29 living in the parental home	32
Prince Edward Island: Third highest proportion of married-couple families	34
Nova Scotia: Lowest proportion of households with couples and children.....	34
New Brunswick: Second highest proportion of common-law-couple families of all provinces after Quebec.....	35
Quebec: More than one-third of couples live common-law	35

Table of contents (concluded)

Ontario: Highest proportion of married-couple families in Canada.....	37
Manitoba: Highest proportion of lone-parent families among the provinces	38
Saskatchewan: Lowest growth of census families in the country.....	39
Alberta: Fastest growth of census families among all the provinces.....	40
British Columbia: Growth of census families above national average.....	41
Yukon: Highest proportion of one-person households.....	41
Northwest Territories: Second highest proportion of households with couples and children after Nunavut.....	42
Nunavut: One-third of households consist of five or more people.....	42
Subprovincial changes	44
Close to one-quarter of common-law-couple families in Canada lived in Montréal and Québec.....	44
Half of same-sex couples lived in three CMAs	46
Close to one in five families were lone parents in six CMAs	47
Half of the municipalities with the lowest proportion of lone-parent families were located in Alberta.....	48
Households with couples and children growing faster in regions with rapidly growing populations.....	49
Households with couples and children tend to be in the suburbs of CMAs... ..	51
... and in rural areas close to CMAs	52
Links between population growth and high percentage of households with couples and children for some municipalities.....	52
Over half of the 25 municipalities showing lowest proportions of households with couples and children located in British Columbia	53
Nearly six in 10 young adults in the Toronto CMA lived in the parental home	54
Pattern observed for CMAs also true for mid-size urban centres	55

Highlights

- The 2006 Census enumerated 8,896,800 census families in Canada. Married couples constituted the largest group (68.6%), although their proportion has been steadily decreasing for the past 20 years.
- The number of common-law-couple families increased 18.9% between 2001 and 2006, more than five times the 3.5% gain observed for married-couple families and more than double the growth of 7.8% for lone-parent families.
- Lone-parent families headed by men increased 14.6% during the five years prior to 2006, more than twice the growth of lone-parent families headed by women (+6.3%).
- For the first time in 2006 there were more census families comprised of couples without children (42.7%) than with children (41.4%).
- The 2006 Census enumerated 45,300 same-sex couples. Of these, about 7,500 (16.5%) were married couples and 37,900 (83.5%) were common-law couples. In 2001 there were 34,200 same-sex couples in Canada.
- The number of same-sex couples grew 32.6% between 2001 and 2006, more than five times the growth observed for opposite-sex couples (+5.9%).
- Households have been declining in size over the past century. In 2006, there were more than three times as many one-person households (26.8%) as those consisting of five or more people (8.7%).
- The census counted 12,437,500 private households in 2006, up 7.6% from 2001. One-person households (+11.8%) and couples without children (+11.2%) grew more than twice as fast as the total population in private households (+5.3%). Households with children edged up only 0.4%.
- For the first time in 2006, there were more unmarried people aged 15 and over in Canada than legally married people. Just over one-half of Canada's population aged 15 and over was unmarried, that is, they had never been legally married, or they were divorced, widowed or separated.
- Two-thirds (65.7%) of Canada's total of 5.6 million children aged 14 and under lived with married parents in 2006, a decline from 81.2% in 1986.
- A growing proportion of young children aged 4 and under had a mother in her forties as more and more women delayed childbearing. In 2001, 7.8% of children aged 4 and under had a mother who was between the ages of 40 and 49. By 2006, this proportion had increased to 9.4%.
- The proportion of young adults aged 20 to 29 who lived in the parental home continued to increase, following an overall upward trend for the past 20 years. In 2006, 43.5% of young adults lived at home, up substantially from 32.1% two decades earlier.

- Provincially, Newfoundland and Labrador (52.2%) and Ontario (51.5%) had the highest proportions of young adults in their twenties living in the parental home in 2006 while Alberta (31.7%) and Saskatchewan (31.8%) had the lowest proportions.
- Nova Scotia had the lowest proportion of private households comprised of couples with children (25.5%) in 2006. The national average was 28.5%.
- Common-law unions continued to be more prevalent in Quebec in 2006, where over one-third of couples lived in a common-law union (34.6%), a level much higher than the other provinces and territories (13.4%).
- Ontario had the highest proportion of married-couple families (73.9%) in Canada in 2006 and the lowest proportion of common-law-couple families (10.3%).
- The number of census families in Alberta increased 11.5% between 2001 and 2006, nearly twice the national average (+6.3%).
- In 2006, half (50.0%) of same-sex couples in Canada lived in Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver. Quebec, Ontario, and British Columbia were the first three provinces to legalize same-sex marriage.
- In 2006, nearly one out of five census families was a lone-parent family in the census metropolitan areas of Regina, Saint John, St. John's, Winnipeg, Thunder Bay and Montréal.
- Census metropolitan areas with fast growing populations in private households also tended to have the most rapid increases in the number of households with couples and children. Between 2001 and 2006, households with couples and children grew above the national average (+0.4%) in Barrie (+14.6%), Calgary (+12.9%) and Oshawa (+7.6%).
- In 2006, more young adults aged 20 to 29 in Toronto's CMA lived with their parents (57.9%) than in any other CMA. The national average was 43.5%.

National portrait

Census families

Common-law-couple families increasing much faster than married-couple families

A 'family portrait' of Canada—a snapshot of families, marital status, households and living arrangements—was taken on May 16, 2006. This analytical document describes how families and households are changing and how children fit into Canada's evolving family structures.

Most Canadians live with other people, and often this takes the form of being part of a census family—married, common-law, or lone-parent—generally as either a spouse, partner, parent, or child. More than eight in 10 people (84.0%) lived in census families in 2006, which has been a fairly consistent proportion over the past 20 years. An additional 5.3% lived with others on Census Day, including relatives and non-relatives, and 10.7% lived alone.

Data from the 2006 Census show that many of the trends observed for at least the past 20 years are continuing. The census enumerated 8,896,800 census families in Canada in 2006, a 6.3% increase from 2001.

Table 1 Distribution and growth of census families, Canada, 2001 and 2006

Census families	2001		2006		Percentage growth 2001 to 2006
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
Total	8,371,020	100.0	8,896,840	100.0	6.3
Couple families	7,059,830	84.3	7,482,775	84.1	6.0
Married	5,901,420	70.5	6,105,910	68.6	3.5
Common-law	1,158,410	13.8	1,376,865	15.5	18.9
Lone-parent families	1,311,190	15.7	1,414,060	15.9	7.8
Female parent	1,065,360	12.7	1,132,290	12.7	6.3
Male parent	245,825	2.9	281,775	3.2	14.6

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

Common-law-couple families grew most quickly since 2001, reflecting the greater social acceptance of this family structure. The number of common-law-couple families grew 18.9% to 1,376,900, more than five times faster than for married-couple families. The census counted 6,105,900 married-couple families, up only 3.5% from 2001.

Lone-parent families increased 7.8% to 1,414,100 in 2006 but lone-father families rose more than twice as fast (+14.6%) during the intercensal period than did lone-mother families (+6.3%). Factors that could have contributed to the stronger growth for lone-father families include a decrease in mothers being awarded sole custody following a divorce and an increase in joint-custody arrangements.¹

As a result of these different growth patterns, married-couple families accounted for 68.6% of all census families in 2006, down from 70.5% five years earlier. The proportion of common-law-couple families rose from 13.8% to 15.5%, while the share of lone-parent families increased marginally from 15.7% to 15.9%.

Two decades ago, common-law-couple families accounted for only 7.2% of all census families, while married-couple families represented 80.2% and lone-parent families, 12.7%.

For the first time, more census families comprised of couples without children than with children

For the first time in 2006 there was a slightly higher proportion of census families comprised of couples without children than with children, continuing a downward trend observed over the past 20 years.

According to 2006 Census data, 42.7% of census families were couples who did not have children compared to 41.4% of families who were couples with children. Twenty years ago, more than half of census families were couples with children (52.0%) while 35.3% were couples without children.

The composition of families is affected by the aging of the population. The large cohort of baby-boomers born between 1946 and 1965, are more likely to be married than younger adults and, as they age, they have fewer young children at home because their children have already grown and may have established independent households elsewhere. The decrease in couples with children is also related to the fact that baby-busters are a smaller cohort and they have lower fertility rates than the previous cohorts. This phenomenon also explains, in large part, the increase in the share of married-couple families without children.

Since 1986, the proportion of married couples with children has declined from 49.4%, just under a majority, to 34.6% in 2006. On the other hand, the proportion of married couples without children has increased from 30.8% to 34.0%.

1. Statistics Canada. 2004. *The Daily, Divorces, 2001 and 2002*. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 84F0213, Ottawa.

Concepts and definitions

Census family:

A census family is composed of a married couple or a common-law couple, with or without children, or of a lone parent living with at least one child in the same dwelling. A couple can be of the opposite sex or of the same sex.

Married and common-law-couple families with and without children:

Unless otherwise specified, in this document, married or common-law-couple families with children refer to census families with at least one child aged 24 and under present in the home. Married- or common-law-couple families without children include families with all children aged 25 and over.

Children present in the home could be from either the current or previous unions, and excludes children that might have a permanent residence other than that of their parents on Census Day.

Conceptual changes in 2001 that affected the definition of census families with children:

As of 2001, the definition of census families was broadened to include the following:

- Children in a census family who can be previously married (as long as they are not currently living with a spouse or common-law partner). Previously, they had to be 'never married'.
- A grandchild living in a three-generation household where the parent (middle generation) is never married is, contrary to previous censuses, now considered as a child in the census family of his or her parent, provided the grandchild is not living with his or her own spouse, common-law partner, or child. Traditionally, the census family usually consisted of the two older generations.
- A grandchild of another household member, where a middle-generation parent is not present, is now considered as a child in the census family of his or her grandparent, provided the grandchild is not living with his or her own spouse, common-law partner, or child. Traditionally, such a grandchild would not be considered as a member of a census family.

The above three changes resulted in 1.4% more census families in 2001, including 9.6% more lone-parent families, than would have been the case if the definitions had remained constant. Historical comparisons for census families, particularly for lone-parent families, must be interpreted with caution as a result of these conceptual changes.

Households:

In this document, private households and the population in private households are included in the analysis and the population in institutions and collective dwellings are excluded.

Unless otherwise specified, in this document, households with couples and children refer to couples with at least one child aged 24 and under present in the home. Households comprised of couples without children include couples with all children aged 25 and over.

Marital and conjugal status:

Legal marital status refers to the categories of legally married (and not separated), separated (but still legally married), never legally married (single), divorced and widowed.

Conjugal status refers to whether a person is legally married or living common-law. Common-law is not a legal marital status. A person who is living common-law can have a legal marital status of never legally married (single), divorced, separated or widowed.

In this document, the term 'spouse' refers to an individual who is legally married, and the term 'partner' refers to a person who is part of a common-law couple. A spouse or partner may be of the opposite sex or of the same sex.

Living arrangements of individuals:

A person living in a private household can be a spouse, a common-law partner, a lone parent, a child or a person not in a census family. Persons not in census families include persons living alone, or individuals living with other relatives or non-relatives.

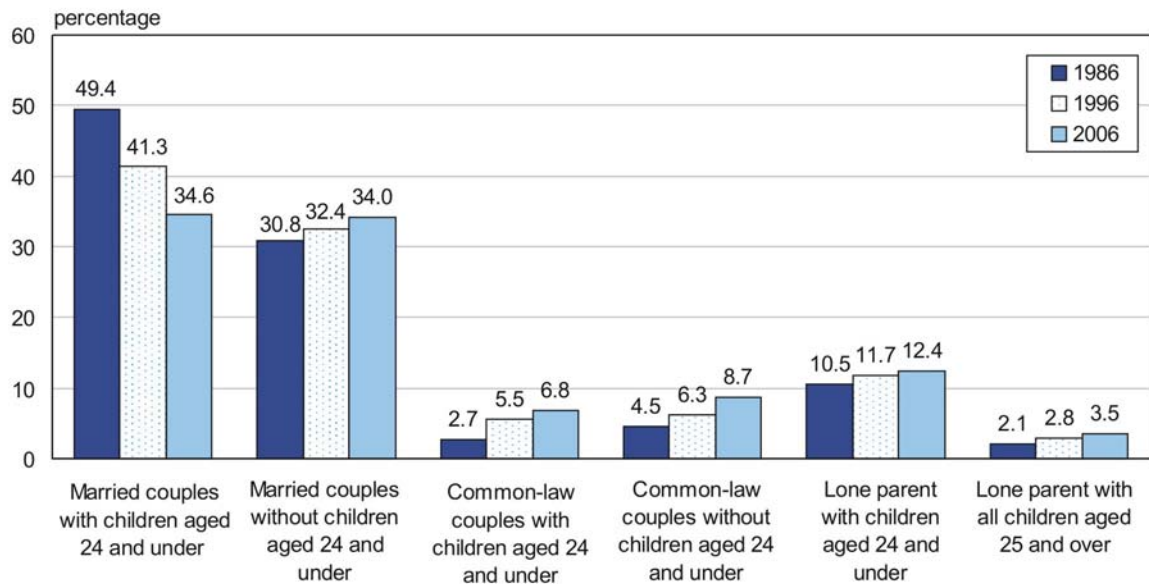
For more information regarding census terminology, please consult the census dictionary:

<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/reference/dictionary/famtoc.cfm>

Note on rounding:

Due to the nature of random rounding of census data, counts may vary slightly in different census products, such as the analytical document, highlight tables, and topic-based tabulations.

Figure 1 Married-couple families with children aged 24 and under is largest family structure, but declining¹



1. Historical comparisons for census families, particularly lone-parent families, must be interpreted with caution due to conceptual changes in 2001.

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1986, 1996 and 2006.

Married couples with children were the only census family structure to experience a decline in numbers compared to 2001. The census enumerated 3,077,700 of these families in 2006, down 54,700 from 2001.

Indeed, these differences between family structure and the presence of children can be seen in the median age, that is, the age at which one half of the population is older and the other half is younger. For married spouses with children, the median age in 2006 was 43.4 years, while for married spouses without children the median age was 60.8 years. For common-law partners, who are generally younger than their married counterparts, the median age for those with and without children was 37.8 years and 40.2 years, respectively. The median age for lone parents, regardless of the children's age, was 45.8 years.

Between 1986 and 2006, the proportions of common-law couples with children and without children went up. The share with children more than doubled from 2.7% to 6.8%. The proportion without children at home rose from 4.5% to 8.7%.

The number of children has also dropped over time, reflecting lower fertility. Of census families with children, the proportion that had one child at home in 2006 increased slightly to 38.3% from 37.3% in 2001. In contrast, the proportion of all families with children who had three or more children dropped to 18.9% in 2006 from 19.8% in 2001.

Same-sex married couples counted for the first time

For the first time, the census counted same-sex married couples, reflecting the legalization of same-sex marriages for all of Canada, as of July 2005.²

The 2006 Census enumerated 45,300 same-sex couples. Of these, about 7,500 or 16.5% were married couples.

Canada became the third country in the world to legalize same-sex marriage, after the Netherlands (2000) and Belgium (2003). Spain (2005) and South Africa (2006) became the fourth and fifth countries, respectively, where same-sex marriage can legally occur. Other countries have various other laws and policies. For example, Israel recognizes same-sex marriages performed in other countries. In the United States, Massachusetts legalized same-sex marriage in 2004, the only state to have done so.

Table 2 Distribution of couples by conjugal status, Canada, 2001 and 2006

Couples in census families	2001		2006	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
All couples	7,059,830	100.0	7,482,775	100.0
Opposite-sex couples	7,025,630	99.5	7,437,430	99.4
Married	5,901,425	83.6	6,098,445	81.5
Common-law	1,124,200	15.9	1,338,980	17.9
Same-sex couples	34,200	0.5	45,345	0.6
Married ¹	7,465	0.1
Common-law	34,200	0.5	37,885	0.5

... not applicable

1. Same-sex married couples were not enumerated in 2001.

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

The counts of same-sex couples are not large, yet growth was still quite dramatic during the intercensal period. The number of same-sex couples surged 32.6% between 2001 and 2006, five times the pace of opposite-sex couples (+5.9%).

In 2006, same-sex couples represented 0.6% of all couples in Canada. This is similar to 2006 data from New Zealand (0.7%) and Australia (0.6%) and higher than Ireland (0.2%).³ While not directly comparable, in the United States, same-sex couples comprised 0.7% of households in 2005.⁴

Over half (53.7%) of same-sex married spouses were men in 2006, compared with 46.3% who were women. Proportions were similar for same-sex common-law partners in both 2006 and 2001. Male couples were also more predominant in Australia and Ireland, while female couples predominated in New Zealand.

2. Bill C-38, the *Civil Marriage Act*, was adopted on July 20, 2005 which legalized same-sex marriage. Some provinces and territories had already legalized same-sex marriage, beginning with Ontario in June 2003.

3. Statistics New Zealand. 2006. *QuickStats National Highlights: 2006 Census*, table 63. Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2007. *Family Composition: Count of families in family households based on place of usual residence*, 2006 Census of Population and Housing. Ireland Central Statistics Office. 2007. *Census 2006: Principal Demographic Results*, March, p. 21 and 64.

4. U.S. Census Bureau. 2005. *American Factfinder*, table S1101-Households and Families, 2005 American Community Survey.

Children were present in the home for less than one-tenth of persons in same-sex couples. About 9.0% of individuals in same-sex couples had children in 2006. This was more common for women in same-sex couples (16.3%) than for men (2.9%).

Same-sex married spouses were more likely to have children present in the home compared to same-sex common-law partners, and this was especially the case for women. Among same-sex married spouses, 16.2% had children, as did 7.5% of partners in same-sex common-law couples. Again, women in same-sex married couples were more likely to have children (24.5%) than women in same-sex common-law unions (14.6%). Similarly, 9.0% of men in same-sex married couples had children, compared with only 1.7% of men in same-sex common-law couples.

In general, people in same-sex couples were younger than their counterparts in opposite-sex couples. For example, 24.5% of persons in same-sex couples were aged 34 and under, while only 3.8% were seniors aged 65 or older. In contrast, 18.1% of people in opposite-sex couples were aged 34 and under, while 16.0% were seniors.

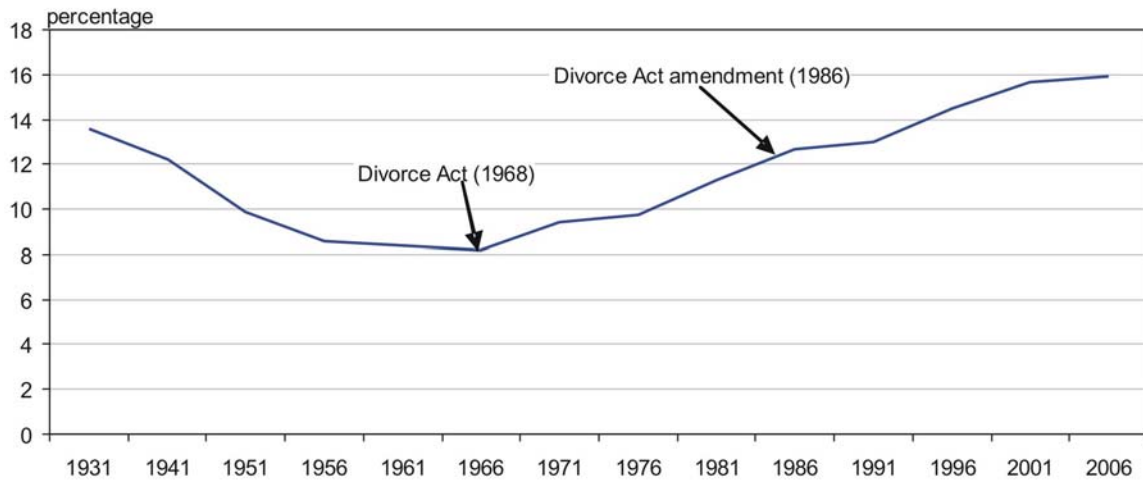
Lone-parent families: Upward trend has stabilized since 2001

The proportion of lone-parent families in 2006 was similar to 2001, although the trends have changed historically.

Lone parents represented 15.9% of all census families in 2006, higher than any other recorded census figure in the last 75 years. However, the proportion was up only slightly from 15.7% in 2001, which could indicate that the upward trend may have recently stabilized.

Historically, the proportion of lone parents was high earlier in the 20th century. In 1931, 13.6% of families were headed by a lone parent, a level not surpassed until 1996, when it was 14.5%. The proportion of lone-parent families was low during the baby-boom (1946 to 1965) when more census families were comprised of married couples and children. The lowest proportion for lone-parent families in the past 75 years was 8.2% in 1966, but there has been a steady increase in recent decades.

Figure 2 The proportion of lone-parent families¹ has been increasing since 1966



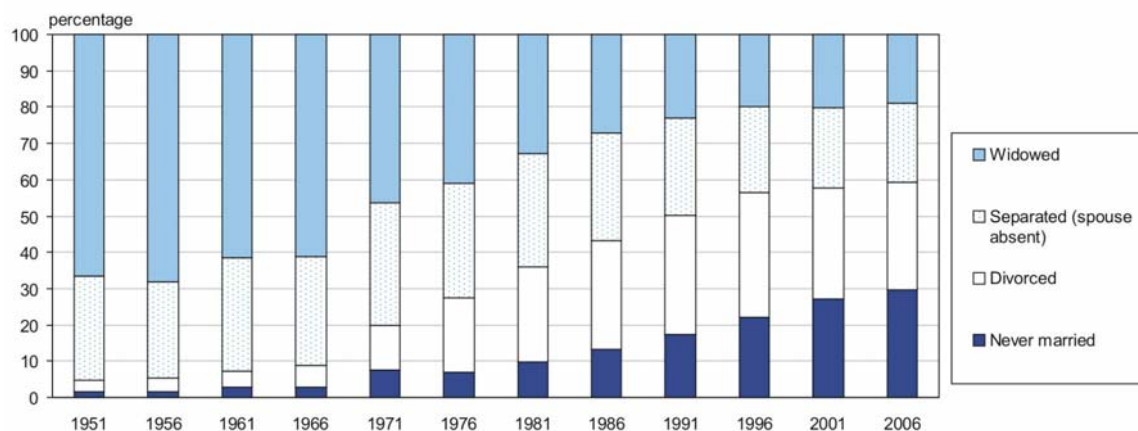
1. Historical comparisons for lone-parent families must be interpreted with caution due to conceptual changes in 2001.
Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1931 to 2006.

More never-married lone parents and fewer widowed

In 2006, there were more never-married lone parents and fewer who were widowed compared to 55 years earlier, reflecting both changing social conditions and increasing life expectancy. In 2006, 29.5% of lone parents had never been legally married, while 19.0% were widowed.

In 1951, two-thirds (66.5%) of lone parents were widowed, while only 1.5% had never been legally married. Less developed medical technology, poorer health conditions, and higher mortality at all ages resulted in a greater possibility of a spouse dying prematurely in the early decades of the 1900s. Some widowed lone parents could also have lost a spouse during one of the wars earlier in the last century.

Figure 3 More never-married, fewer widowed lone parents



Note: Comparable historical data are not available for census years prior to 1951.

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1951 to 2006.

Nearly three in 10 (29.9%) lone parents were divorced in 2006. This proportion has been decreasing since it peaked at 34.3% in 1996. In 1951, only 3.1% of lone parents were divorced.

The higher proportion of never-married lone parents is at least partially attributed to a greater social acceptance in having children outside of marriage. In addition, some never-married lone parents could have lived as part of a common-law couple at some point in their lives.

The 1968 *Divorce Act* broadened the grounds for divorce by introducing 'no fault' divorce based on separation for at least three years. An amendment in 1986 reduced the minimum separation period to one year. Both contributed to the increase in lone parents who were divorced in 2006. The first census to count more divorced lone parents than widowed occurred in 1986.

Lone-mother families remain the majority of lone-parent families but growth is higher for lone-father families

The majority (80.1%) of the 1,414,100 lone-parent families in 2006 were comprised of women and their children. The remaining 19.9% consisted of lone-parent families headed by men.

For at least the past 20 years, there has been a fairly consistent pattern of about four lone-parent families headed by women for every one lone-parent family headed by a man. However, families headed by men have been growing at a faster pace. Between 2001 and 2006, lone-father families rose 14.6%, more than twice the pace of 6.3% for lone-mother families.

One explanation for the faster gain among lone-parent families headed by men is that fewer mothers are granted sole custody following a divorce. In 2003, the custody of less than half (47.7%) of dependents determined through divorce proceedings was awarded only to the mother, down from over three-quarters (78.2%) in 1980.⁵ In contrast, custody of 43.8% of dependents was awarded to both the father and mother in 2003, continuing an upward trend of joint custody arrangements.

5. Statistics Canada. 2004. *Divorces, 2003*. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 84F0213, Ottawa; Statistics Canada. 1993. *A Portrait of Families in Canada*. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 89-523, Ottawa.

Households

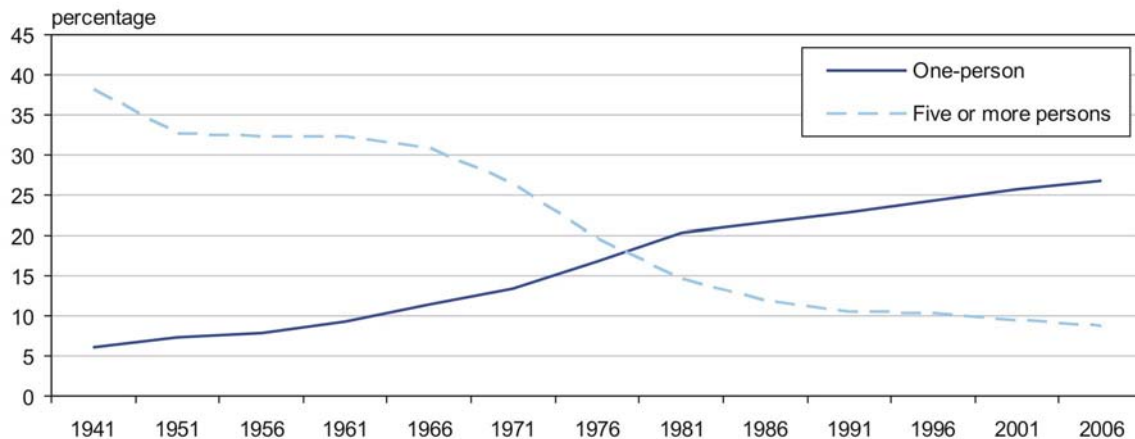
Household size continues to decline

Throughout the 20th century and into the 21st century, the proportion of large households has decreased with each successive census, and there has been a steadily increasing trend toward smaller households.

The 2006 Census found that there were more than three times as many one-person households as households with five or more persons. Of the 12,437,500 private households, 26.8% were one-person households, while 8.7% were households of five or more persons.

In 1941, only 6.0% of households contained one person, while 38.2% were comprised of five or more persons. The proportion of one-person households surpassed that of large households in 1981.

Figure 4 More one-person households, fewer large households



Note: Comparable historical data are not available for census years prior to 1941.

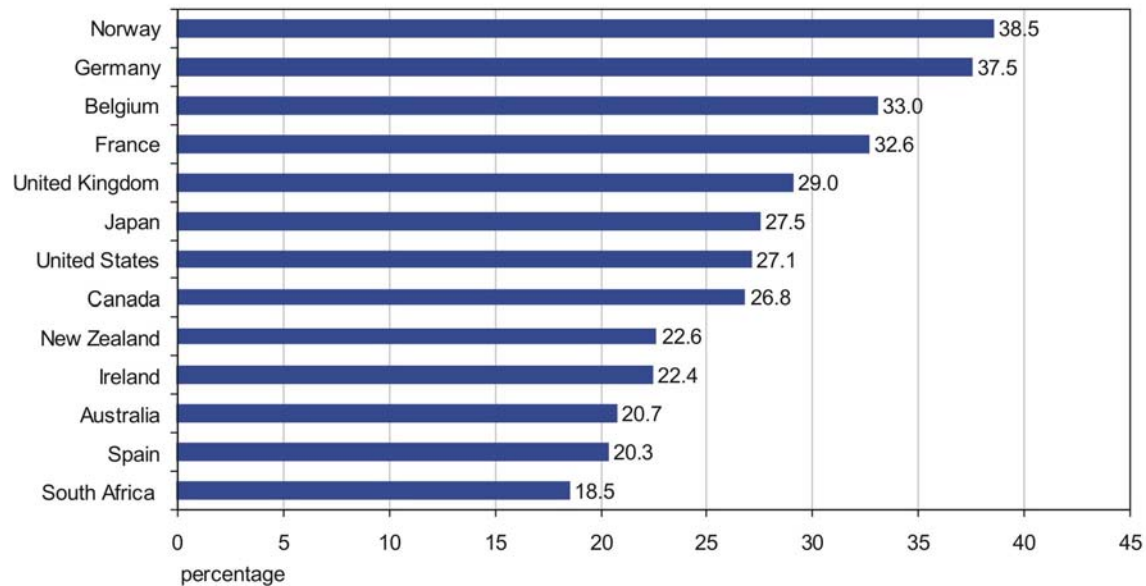
Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1941 to 2006.

Households have been declining in size as people have fewer children or no children living at home. Smaller households also result when people live alone or when adult children leave the parental home. They are also the product of higher rates of divorce and separation, which generally creates two smaller households from one which was previously larger. These patterns may have implications for housing needs, as households with only one or two persons may require less living space than a larger household.

The trend toward one-person households is not unique to Canada. It is also occurring to varying degrees in many other countries, where the proportion of one-person households ranges between one in five households to nearly two in five.

In 2006, the proportion of one-person households in Canada (26.8%) was similar to the United States (27.1%), but lower than recent data from such other countries as Norway (38.5%) and Germany (37.5%). However, the proportion in Canada was higher than in New Zealand (22.6%), Ireland (22.4%) and Australia (20.7%).⁶

Figure 5 Proportion of one-person households in Canada similar to the United States but lower than some European countries



Sources: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006; Statistics Norway; Federal Statistical Office of Germany; Economy-Directorate-general Statistics Belgium; National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies of France; United Kingdom National Statistics; Statistics Bureau of Japan; U.S. Census Bureau; Statistics New Zealand; Ireland Central Statistics Office; Australian Bureau of Statistics; Instituto Nacional de Estadística and Statistics South Africa.

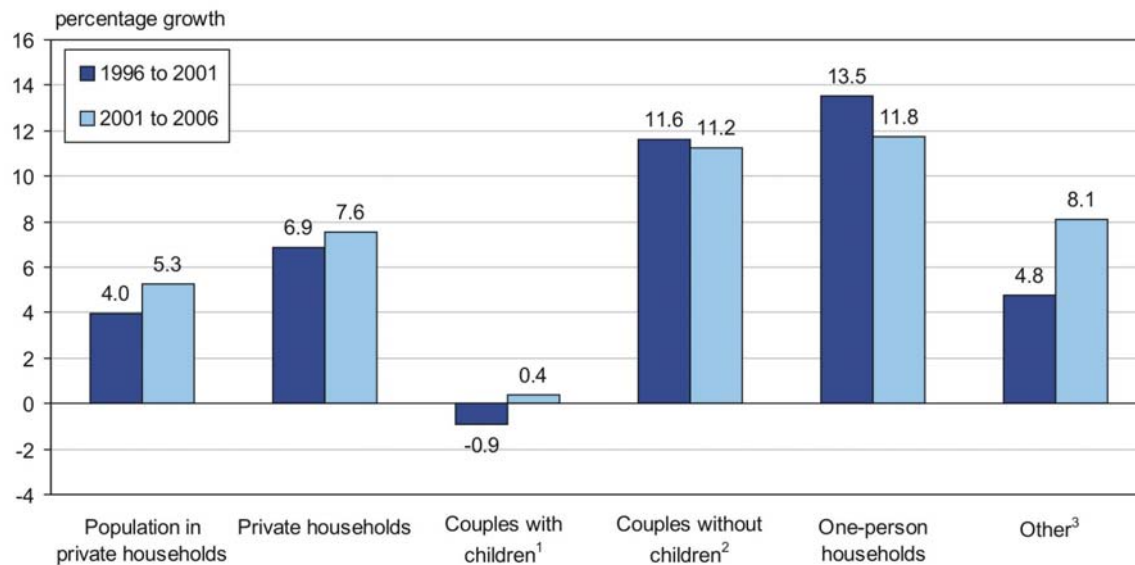
Large increase in number of one-person households

The number of private households has been growing faster than the population in private households during each intercensal period for at least the past 20 years. Between 2001 and 2006, the number of households increased 7.6%, while the population in private households rose only 5.3%.

6. Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2006. *Census QuickStats*; Federal Statistical Office of Germany. 2005; Ireland Central Statistics Office. 2007. *Census 2006: Principal Demographic Results*, p. 60; Statistics New Zealand. 2006. *QuickStats National Highlights: 2006 Census*, Table 26 Household composition in New Zealand; Statistics Norway. 2006. Table 5: Private households by type of household, county municipality and urban district; U.S. Census Bureau. 2005. *United States General Demographic Statistic: 2005 American Community Survey*.

During the previous intercensal period, 1996 to 2001, the number of private households grew 6.9%, and the population in these households increased only 4.0%. This can be explained by an overall decrease in household size and the rapid growth of one-person households over the past 10 years.

Figure 6 One-person households and households containing couples without children are growing the fastest



1. Refers to households containing a couple with at least one child aged 24 and under at home.
2. Includes households containing a couple with all children aged 25 and over at home.
3. Includes lone-parent households, multiple-family households and non-family households other than one-person households.

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1996, 2001 and 2006.

The population grows either through natural increase or immigration. In contrast, the growth of households reflects a reconfiguration of the existing population. For example, when a couple sets up a new home together, young adults leave the parental home, or a divorced couple seeks separate accommodations.

Between 2001 and 2006, both the number of one-person households and households comprised of couples without children grew more than twice as fast as the population in private households. The number of one-person households was up 11.8%, while the number of households comprised of couples without children increased 11.2%. In contrast, the population in private households rose only 5.3%.

Households with the slowest growth between 2001 and 2006 were those comprised of couples and children, which edged up only 0.4%. However, this reversed a decline of 0.9% during the period 1996 to 2001. The slow growth of households with couples and children likely reflects not only low levels of fertility, but to some degree, the aging of the population, as fewer couples have younger children living at home.

Indeed, in 2006, there was a slightly higher proportion of households comprised of couples without children (29.0%) than households with couples and children (28.5%). In 2001, the opposite was true, as there were more households with couples and children than without (30.5% and 28.0%, respectively).

Individuals

Legal marital status: Unmarried people outnumber married people for the first time

For the first time, the 2006 Census enumerated more unmarried people aged 15 and over than legally married people.

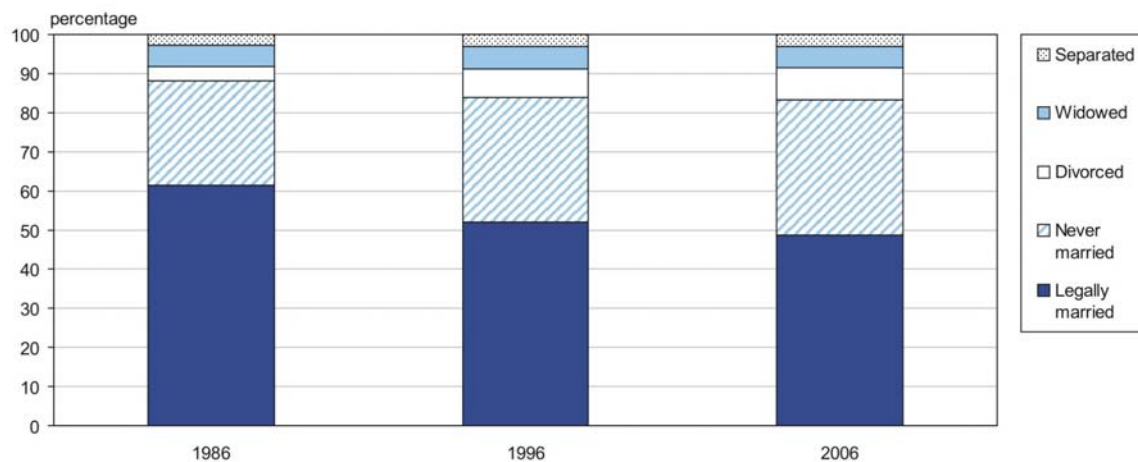
In 2006, more than one-half (51.5%) of the population aged 15 and over was unmarried, that is, never married, divorced, separated, or widowed, compared to 49.9% five years earlier. Conversely, only 48.5% of persons aged 15 and over were legally married in 2006, down from 50.1% in 2001.

Twenty years earlier, 38.6% of the population aged 15 and over was unmarried, while 61.4% were married.

Although the proportions of widowed and separated persons have remained relatively stable over the past two decades, increases have occurred largely among the divorced and even more so, among the never legally married population.

In 2006, 8.1% of the population aged 15 and over was divorced, while 34.9% had never been legally married, up from 7.7% and 33.4% in 2001. In 1986, only 3.5% of individuals aged 15 and over were divorced and 26.8% had never been legally married.

Figure 7 For the first time, legally married population aged 15 and over falls below 50%



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1986, 1996 and 2006.

Many factors account for the decreasing proportion in the legally married population and increases in the other categories. The greater social acceptance of common-law unions means that fewer people are choosing legal marriage, at least temporarily. Delayed union formation, in general, and more young adults living in the parental home while they pursue personal or professional goals also contribute to fewer marriages.

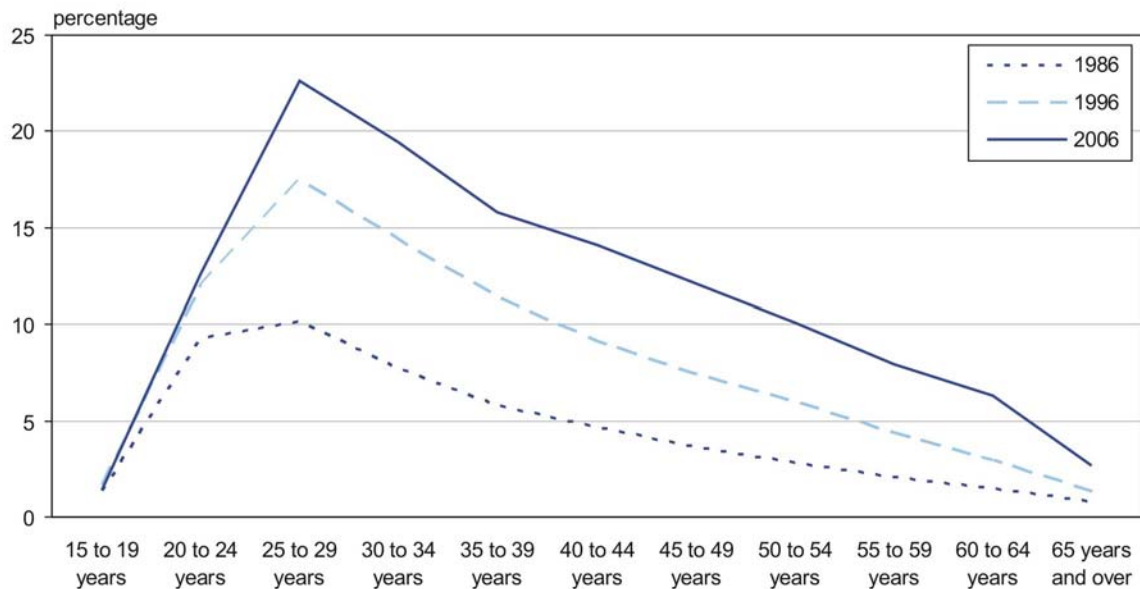
A contributing factor to the increase in the proportion of the divorced population is the 1986 amendment of the *Divorce Act* which made divorces easier to obtain by reducing the length of separation from three years to one year for the grounds of 'no fault' divorce. Consequently, individuals who do not subsequently remarry retain the legal marital status of divorced.

Living as part of a common-law couple growing rapidly, especially for older age groups

Common-law unions have increased in popularity over the past 25 years in Canada. The census enumerated 2.8 million persons aged 15 and over who lived in a common-law union in 2006. They represented 10.8% of the population, up from 9.7% in 2001.

Common-law unions were most prevalent among young adults and they were most popular among individuals aged 25 to 29. About 22.6% of people in this age group were in a common-law union in 2006, up from 20.6% five years earlier.

Figure 8 Persons in common-law couples increasing for all age groups

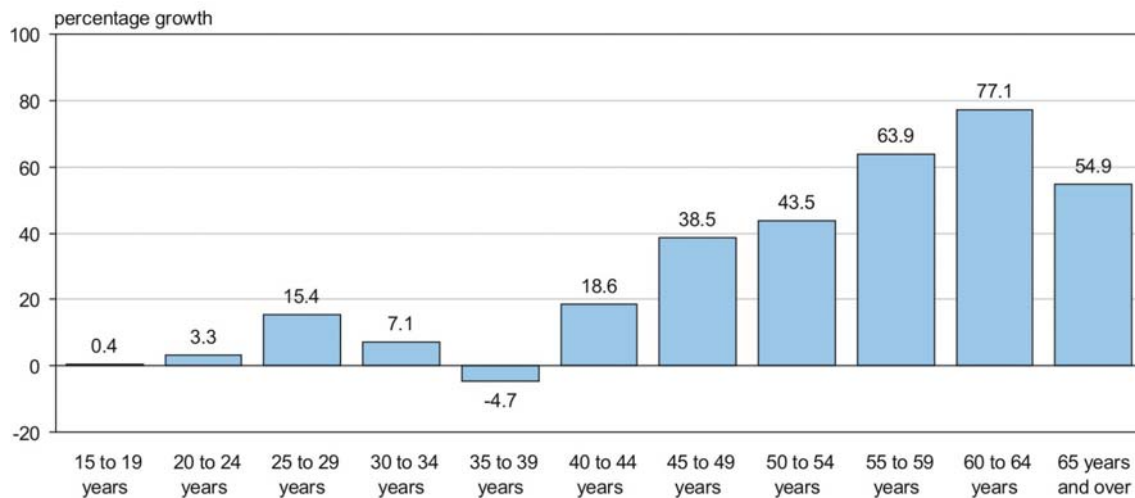


Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1986, 1996 and 2006.

The increase in common-law relationships suggests greater social acceptance of this family structure, as well as a desire to be part of a couple, but perhaps with fewer perceived emotional or financial obligations than those generally associated with marriage.

Although common-law unions were more predominant among the young, in recent years older age groups have experienced the most rapid growth. Gains have been especially fast during the past five years among people in their forties and over. The number of individuals aged 60 to 64 in common-law unions rose 77.1% between 2001 and 2006, the fastest pace of all age groups.

Figure 9 Growth rate for persons in common-law couples is more rapid for older age groups, 2001 to 2006



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

Conversely, growth occurred at a much slower pace among younger individuals. In fact, the number of people aged 35 to 39 in a common-law union fell 4.7%, reflecting a decline in the population of this age group during the past five years. These were the baby-busters, the first cohort to follow the large cohort of baby-boomers.

Among the nation’s 4.0 million seniors aged 65 and over, about 106,500, or 2.7%, lived in a common-law union in 2006. In Quebec, this proportion was 4.5%.

Several factors could explain the gains among older age groups. First, baby-boomers, the large cohort aged roughly 41 to 60 in 2006 contribute to increased growth for all living arrangements due to their sheer size. Indeed, persons in married couples also grew for all age groups over the age of 45 between 2001 and 2006, but the growth was nowhere near the increases observed for common-law partners. The most rapid increase for married persons was for 55- to 59-year-olds (+25.0%).

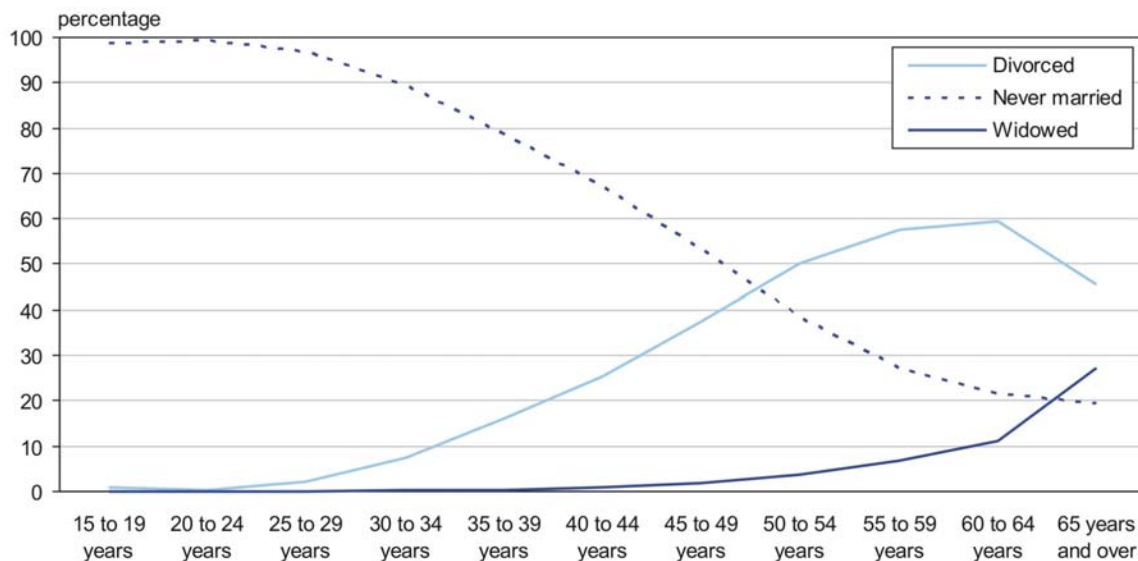
Beyond the impact of the large baby-boom generation, there are other factors that could account for the rapid growth of middle aged and older adults living common-law. It is possible that what was once primarily a living arrangement of young adults is becoming increasingly accepted by older generations. In addition, it could represent an ‘aging in place’ of people living common-law, that is, people who began living common-law in their twenties continue this living arrangement as they move into later ages. Following the dissolution of an earlier marriage, more and more people may choose to live common-law for subsequent relationships. This suggests that individuals still desire to be part of a couple, but they may be less interested in remarriage.

More common-law partners divorced than never-married after age 50

Not only did common-law partners in different age groups grow at different paces, but the legal marital status of common-law partners also varied with age.

Most common-law partners aged 15 and over (70.0%) had never been legally married in 2006, while 22.7% were divorced.

Figure 10 By their early fifties, more common-law partners had been previously married



Note: 'Married, but separated' category is not shown (8.2% or less for each age group).

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

For the youngest age groups, it was most common to be never married, but this gradually declined with age as the proportion of persons who were divorced increased. By their early fifties, more common-law partners were divorced than never legally married. There was also an increase in the proportion of people aged 50 and over living in common-law unions who were widowed.

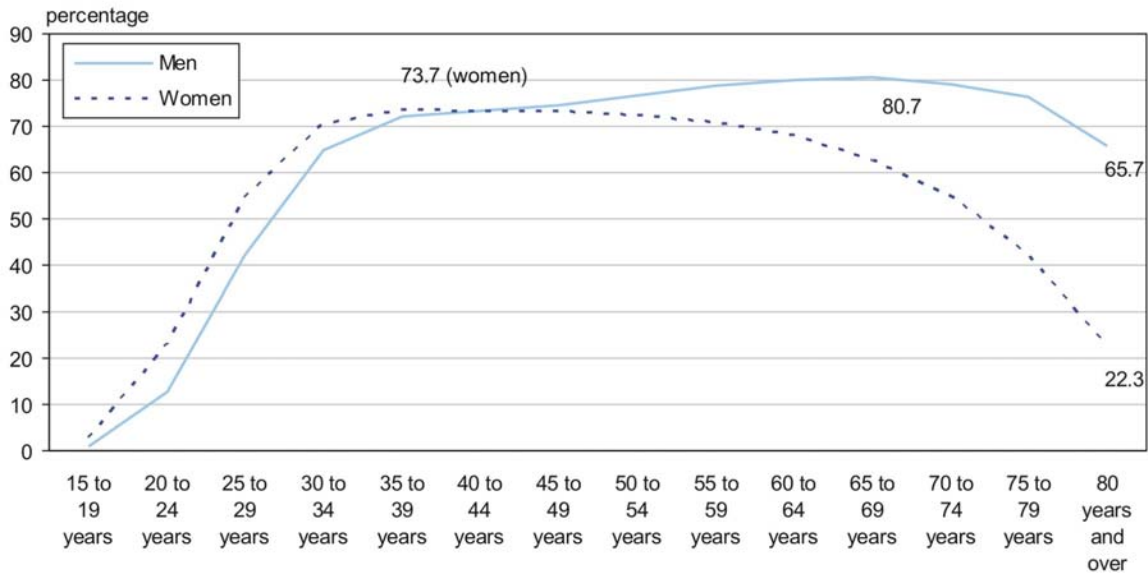
Living as part of a couple peaks for women in their late thirties

About 15 million Canadians aged 15 and over lived with a spouse or partner in 2006, representing 58.7% of the population, down slightly from the proportion of 59.3% in 2001.

Living with a spouse or partner peaked for women in their late thirties, but this did not occur for men until their late sixties. Nearly three-quarters (73.7%) of women aged 35 to 39 lived with a spouse or partner. By the time women reached their late sixties, the proportion living as part of a couple had fallen quite dramatically, while this was not the case for men until the oldest age groups. The proportion of seniors living as part of a couple decreases with age, and particularly for women, as they are more likely to outlive their spouses or partners. This age pattern has been consistent over the past 20 years.

About two-thirds of men aged 80 or over in private households (65.7%) lived with a spouse or partner in 2006, compared to only 22.3% of women. The slight increase in the proportion of men who were spouses or partners in their fifties compared to younger ages could reflect a higher tendency among men to remarry or find a new partner after the dissolution of an earlier relationship.

Figure 11 In 2006, living as part of a couple peaks for women in their late thirties

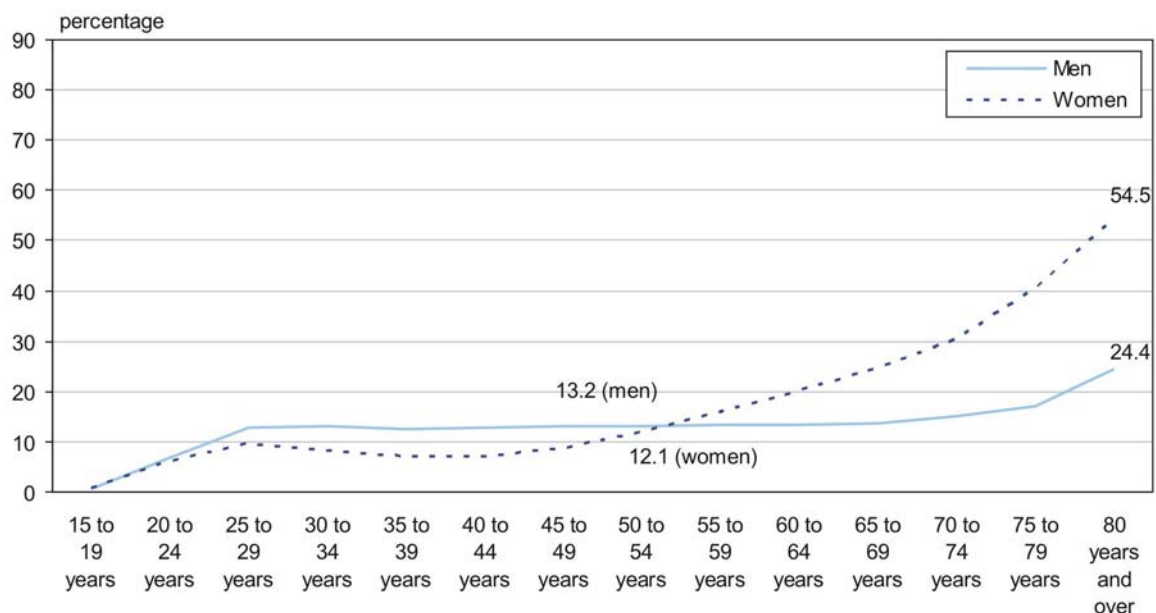


Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

There were large differences in the proportion of men who lived alone in 2006 compared to women across age groups.

In 2006, some 3.3 million people aged 15 and over lived alone. These people represented 13.0% of the population in private households, up slightly from 12.5% in 2001.

Figure 12 In 2006, more senior women than senior men lived alone



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

The proportion of persons who lived alone was low for both men and women during their young adult years. Until their early fifties, a higher proportion of men lived alone than did women, reflecting earlier union formation for women as well as the tendency to be younger than their spouse or partner. The last age group for which the proportion of men living alone was higher than women was from age 50 to 54 (13.2% of men and 12.1% of women).

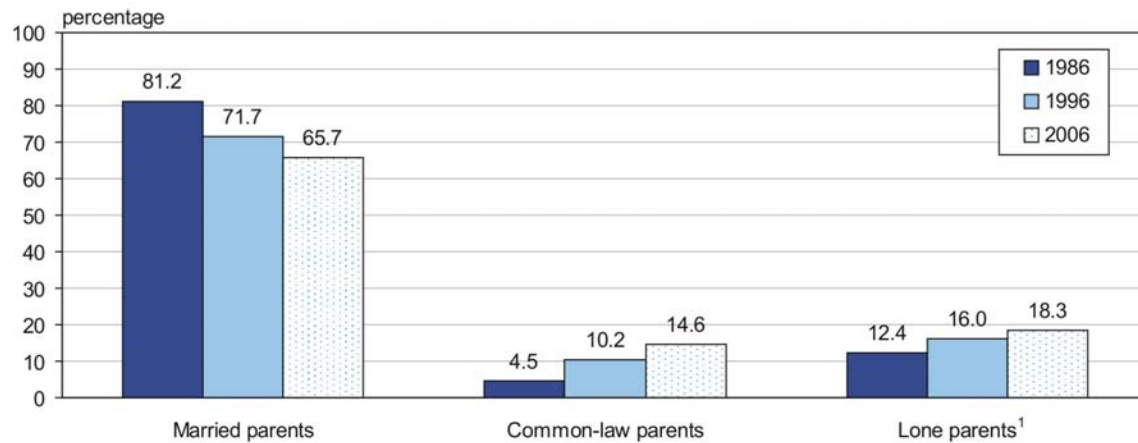
By their mid-to-late fifties, more women than men lived alone. This gap continued to increase throughout the senior years, reflecting higher life expectancy and, as a consequence, a greater proportion of women who were widowed. By the age of 80 and over, more than half (54.5%) of women lived alone, as opposed to less than one-quarter (24.4%) of men. The age pattern has been consistent over the past 20 years.

Increasing proportion of children aged 14 and under live with common-law parents

According to the 2006 Census, a growing proportion of children aged 14 and under lived with common-law parents, a direct consequence of the rapid increase in common-law-couple families.

Of the 5.6 million children aged 14 and under who lived in private households, 14.6% lived with parents in a common-law union in 2006. This was up from 12.8% in 2001, more than triple the percentage of 4.5% two decades earlier.

Figure 13 Proportion of children aged 14 and under living with married parents continues to decrease



1. Historical comparisons for census families, particularly lone-parent families, must be interpreted with caution due to conceptual changes in 2001.

Note: For each census year, 2.1% or a smaller percentage of children are counted in the 'other' category.

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1986, 1996 and 2006.

The growing tendency of children to live with parents not legally married to each other has contributed to a decline in the proportion of children who live with married parents. While the majority of children aged 14 and under (65.7%) lived with married parents in 2006, this was down from 68.4% in 2001. Twenty years earlier, 81.2% of children in this age group had married parents.

Results from the 2006 General Social Survey (GSS) showed that common-law unions were less stable and less likely to have children. According to the 2001 GSS, about 29.7% of women in their thirties whose first conjugal union was a marriage would be expected to separate, compared to 63.2% for those whose first union was common-law.⁷ However, because common-law partners were typically younger than married spouses, children also tended to be younger.⁸

Less than one in five (18.3%) children aged 14 and under lived with lone parents in 2006, up slightly from 17.8% in 2001.

Some children shared a home with grandparents

Some children aged 14 and under in 2006 were living in homes that also included grandparents, including living arrangements where the parent(s) may or may not have been present. Overall, 209,900 children aged 14 and under, or 3.8% of all children in this age group, shared a home with their grandparents.

In 2006, about 28,200 children aged 14 and under, or 0.5% of all children in this age group, lived with one or both grandparents where no parents or middle generation was present. This proportion was similar to 2001. These families are sometimes referred to as skip-generation

7. Statistics Canada. 2002. *Changing Conjugal Life in Canada*, General Social Survey - Cycle 15. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 89-576, Ottawa.

8. Beaupré, P. and E. Cloutier. 2007. *Navigating Family Transitions: Evidence from the General Social Survey, 2006*. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 89-625, no. 2, Ottawa.

families. To the extent that parents are not present due to emotional, financial or other difficulties, grandparents could provide an important resource for these grandchildren.

From the grandparent perspective, 514,800 grandparents aged 45 and over, representing 4.1% of the population in this age group, lived in a home shared with their grandchildren in 2006. Just over half (52.2%) of these grandparents were seniors aged 65 and over. They accounted for 6.7% of all seniors in private households.

Of these 514,800 grandparents aged 45 and over living in a shared home, just over one-half (52.5%) lived with a middle generation who were the parents of the child. In other words, these households consisted of three generations—grandparents, adult children and grandchildren, regardless of the age of the grandchildren.

For an additional 32.3% of grandparents in shared homes, the middle generation was a lone parent. Grandparents in skip-generation families, that is, grandparents in families comprised of only the grandparent(s) and grandchild(ren) and no parents present, represented about 62,500 grandparents or 12.1% of grandparents in shared homes.

Higher proportion of children aged 4 and under with mothers in their forties

Women in Canada have been delaying childbearing as they pursue other interests, including education and employment opportunities. The 2006 Census found an upward shift in children aged 4 and under who had mothers in their forties, and a downward shift for children in the same age group living with younger mothers.⁹

In 2001, 7.8% of children aged 4 and under had mothers who were between the ages of 40 and 49. By 2006, this proportion had increased to 9.4%.

In contrast, in 2001, 11.8% of children in this age group had mothers who were 24 and under. By 2006, this proportion had declined to 9.9%.

Table 3 Distribution by age groups and census family status of mothers of children aged 4 years and under, Canada, 2001 and 2006

Age groups of mothers	All mothers		Married mothers		Common-law mothers		Lone mothers	
	2001	2006	2001	2006	2001	2006	2001	2006
	percentage							
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
15 to 19 years	1.3	1.1	0.1	0.1	2.3	1.7	6.2	5.0
20 to 24 years	10.4	8.8	5.0	3.8	20.1	16.4	25.4	23.3
25 to 29 years	23.9	23.2	22.0	20.2	29.6	31.0	26.3	27.2
30 to 34 years	33.5	33.7	37.8	37.6	26.5	28.4	21.1	21.3
35 to 39 years	23.1	23.8	26.6	27.8	16.2	15.9	14.1	14.8
40 to 44 years	6.8	8.2	7.5	9.2	4.7	5.7	5.7	6.9
45 to 49 years	1.0	1.2	1.0	1.3	0.6	0.8	1.1	1.5

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

9. This section refers only to children aged 4 and under with mothers aged 15 to 49.

The ages at which women are getting married and having children has been increasing over the past several decades. In 2003, women on average were 28.5 years old when they were first married, compared with less than 23 years old throughout most of the 1960s.¹⁰ Their average age when they had their first child in 2003 was 28.0 years, up from 23.6 years during most of the 1960s.

This aging trend among mothers of young children, which translates into a larger age gap between mothers and children, can be observed for married, common-law and lone mothers. The distribution, however, is slightly older for married mothers of children aged 4 and under. The most common age group for married mothers of young children was 30 to 34 years, while it was 25 to 29 years for lone mothers and mothers living common-law.

In 2006, for 28.3% of the 1.7 million young children aged 4 and under with lone mothers, these mothers were under age 25, although it decreased from 2001 (31.7%). In comparison, 18.2% of young children had common-law mothers in this age group, and 3.9% of children aged 4 and under had young married mothers in 2006.

The diversity in ages of mothers and family structures of young children reflects the variety of lifecycle stages and living arrangements. The heterogeneity of these environments suggests that children could have very different childhood and family experiences depending on the circumstances of their early years. Lone parents, and especially lone-mother families, are more likely to face financial difficulties than other family structures.

According to 2001 Census data, the majority of young lone mothers aged 25 to 34 with less than a high school education experienced low income in 2000.¹¹ Future census results on the income and education of lone mothers will be able to show if this trend continues.

Fewer young adults aged 20 to 29 in couples

The census found that fewer young adults aged 20 to 29 were in couples in 2006, despite an increase in the percentage of common-law partners in this age group over the past 20 years.

Among young adults aged 20 to 24, only 17.9% were in a couple in 2006, down from 19.6% in 2001 and 28.4% in 1986. For individuals in their late twenties, 48.5% lived as part of a couple in 2006, compared to 51.1% in 2001 and 62.3% in 1986.

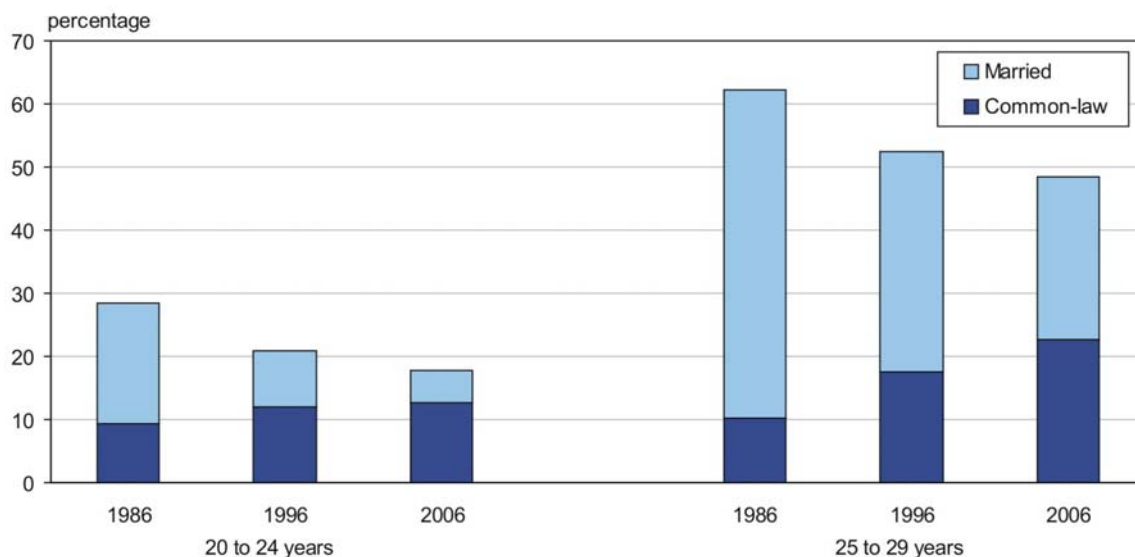
Fewer young adults could be in couples for many reasons. They could be delaying union formation while they pursue higher education, become emotionally and financially independent, or they may prefer to devote time to other personal or professional goals.

However, between 1986 and 2006, the proportion of individuals aged 25 to 29 in a common-law union more than doubled from 10.2% to 22.6%. This indicates that young adults still desire to be part of a couple, but perhaps with fewer perceived emotional or financial obligations than those generally associated with marriage.

10. Statistics Canada. 2007. *Marriages 2003*. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 84F0212, Ottawa. Note: Ontario does not identify the sex of the person getting married and is therefore excluded from the 2003 count; Dumas, J. and Y. Péron. 1992. *Marriage and Conjugal Life in Canada*. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 91-534, Ottawa.

11. Galarneau, D. 2005. *Education and income of lone parents, Perspectives in Labour and Income*. Volume 6 (12). Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 75-001, Ottawa.

Figure 14 Decreasing proportion of young adults living as couples



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1986, 1996 and 2006.

The proportion of common-law partners also increased for those in their early twenties, rising from 9.3% in 1986 to 12.6% in 2006. When individuals aged 20 to 24 were in a couple in 2006, it was more frequently a common-law union, whereas 20 years earlier, they were more likely to be in a marriage.

Generally, women enter relationships at younger ages than do men, and they also tend to be younger than their spouses or partners. For women in their early twenties, 23.2% lived as part of a couple in 2006. This proportion rose to 54.5% for those in their late twenties. The corresponding figures for men were 12.6% and 42.2%.

There was also a long-term decline in being part of a couple even among individuals in their thirties. Overall, the proportion of spouses and partners for 30- to 39-year-olds dropped from 77.3% to 70.5% between 1986 and 2006. As was the case with young adults in their twenties, the increase in the proportion of common-law partners (from 6.8% to 17.5%) was not sufficient to offset the decrease in the proportion of spouses in their thirties (from 70.6% to 53.0%).

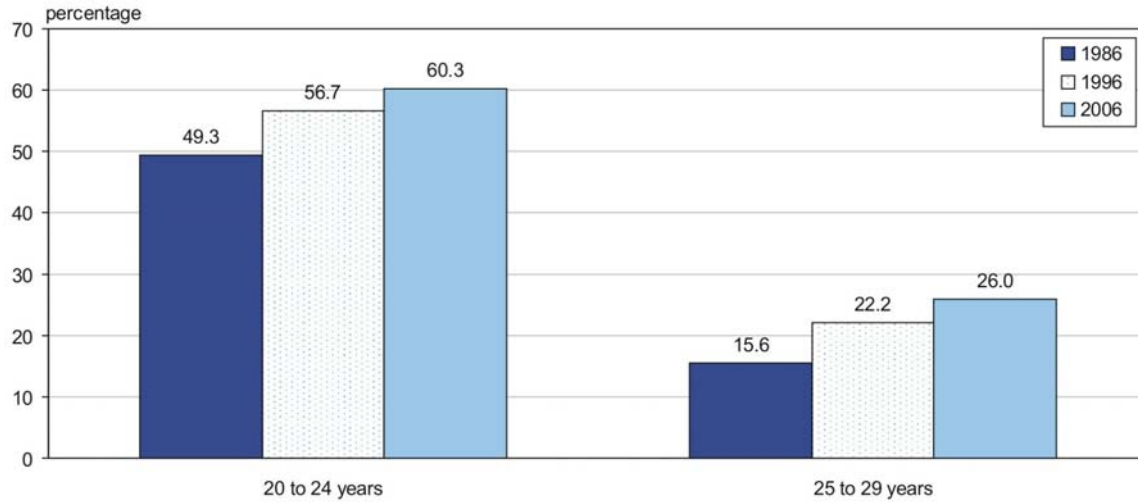
More young adults aged 20 to 29 living in the parental home

Over the last two decades, one of the trends for young adults has been their growing tendency to remain in, or return to, the parental home. This trend has continued during the past five years.

In 2006, 43.5% of the 4.0 million young adults aged 20 to 29 either stayed in the parental home or moved back in, up from 41.1% in 2001. Twenty years ago, 32.1% of young adults lived in the parental home.

Among individuals aged 20 to 24, 60.3% were in the parental home in 2006, up from 49.3% in 1986. Among those aged 25 to 29, 26.0% were in the parental home in 2006, up from 15.6% two decades earlier.

Figure 15 More young adults in their twenties live in the parental home in 2006



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1986, 1996 and 2006.

Young adults could remain or return to the parental home for reasons such as school attendance, financial difficulties, lack of job opportunities or cost of living in a particular area. It could also be a response to a break-up in a relationship, lower expectations about establishing an independent household, or other perceived benefits.¹²

Few adult children living with their parents were also accompanied by a spouse or partner. In cases where this did occur, it was more likely for adult children in their late twenties and, in particular, for young women. More than one in 10 young women in their late twenties (11.3%) who lived in the parental home in 2006 lived with a spouse or partner, as did 7.5% of young men. Living at home as part of a couple was much less common for young adults aged 20 to 24. Only 3.2% of women and 1.6% of men did so.

In terms of family structure, lone-parent families were far more likely to have older children at home than other family structures. More than one in five lone-parent families (22.2%) had children all at home aged 25 and over in 2006, compared to 10.6% of married-couple families and 2.4% of common-law-couple families. This is an increase from 1986 when the figures were 16.8%, 5.0% and 1.1%, respectively. In such situations where there are older children in the home, exchanges of care and support could flow in either direction between generations.

12. Beaupré, P., P. Turcotte, and A. Milan. 2006. 'Junior comes back home: Trends and predictors of returning to the parental home', *Canadian Social Trends*. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 11-008, winter, p. 28 to 34, Ottawa.

Provinces and territories

Most of the national-level family and household trends revealed by the 2006 Census were also evident at the provincial/territorial level. For example, married-couple families remained the most common census family structure across the country. However, they were not growing as quickly as other family structures. In addition, the number of one-person households and households comprised of couples without children grew faster than the number of households comprised of couples with at least one child.

These patterns are related to population aging, which also affects every part of Canada. This relationship between aging and the proportion of households containing couples without children also accounts for the fact that Ontario, Alberta, Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut were the only provinces and territories where households with couples and children still outnumbered households comprised of couples without children. They have younger populations including a high proportion of children and a low proportion of seniors.

Even with these many similarities regarding families and households, there were still many differences among Canadian provinces and territories.

Table 4 Distribution of census families by family structure, Canada, provinces and territories, 2006

Regions	Total families	Married families		Common-law families		Lone-parent families		Percentage growth for census families - 2001 to 2006
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
Canada	8,896,840	6,105,910	68.6	1,376,870	15.5	1,414,060	15.9	6.3
N.L.	155,730	114,630	73.6	16,935	10.9	24,165	15.5	0.9
P.E.I.	39,185	28,700	73.2	4,085	10.4	6,400	16.3	2.0
N.S.	267,415	187,420	70.1	34,705	13.0	45,290	16.9	1.7
N.B.	217,795	151,210	69.4	30,995	14.2	35,585	16.3	1.3
Que.	2,121,610	1,156,930	54.5	611,855	28.8	352,825	16.6	5.1
Ont.	3,422,315	2,530,560	73.9	351,040	10.3	540,715	15.8	7.2
Man.	312,810	225,875	72.2	33,720	10.8	53,210	17.0	3.3
Sask.	267,460	194,165	72.6	28,850	10.8	44,445	16.6	0.7
Alta.	904,845	658,900	72.8	115,685	12.8	130,265	14.4	11.5
B.C.	1,161,425	844,430	72.7	141,830	12.2	175,165	15.1	6.9
Y.T.	8,335	4,640	55.7	1,965	23.6	1,725	20.7	6.7
N.W.T.	10,880	5,555	51.1	2,990	27.5	2,330	21.4	12.2
Nvt.	7,035	2,890	41.1	2,205	31.3	1,940	27.6	10.6

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

Table 5 Distribution of households by household structure, Canada, provinces and territories, 2006

Regions	Total number of private households	Total private households	Couples with children ¹	Couples without children ²	One-person households	Other ³
Canada	12,437,470	100.0	28.5	29.0	26.8	15.8
Newfoundland and Labrador	197,185	100.0	30.4	34.0	20.2	15.4
Prince Edward Island	53,130	100.0	29.6	30.9	24.1	15.5
Nova Scotia	376,845	100.0	25.5	31.9	26.5	16.1
New Brunswick	295,965	100.0	26.9	32.9	24.3	15.9
Quebec	3,189,345	100.0	25.7	28.7	30.7	14.9
Ontario	4,555,030	100.0	31.2	28.3	24.3	16.3
Manitoba	448,780	100.0	27.6	28.2	28.6	15.5
Saskatchewan	387,140	100.0	26.4	29.9	28.8	14.9
Alberta	1,256,195	100.0	30.5	28.7	24.6	16.3
British Columbia	1,643,150	100.0	26.3	29.6	28.0	16.1
Yukon	12,610	100.0	26.1	24.9	30.9	18.2
Northwest Territories	14,235	100.0	34.4	22.0	21.7	21.9
Nunavut	7,855	100.0	42.0	10.9	18.3	28.8

1. Refers to households containing a couple with at least one child aged 24 and under at home.

2. Includes households containing a couple with all children aged 25 and over at home.

3. Includes lone-parent households, multiple-family households and non-family households other than one-person households.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Table 6 Growth rate of census families by family structure, Canada, provinces and territories, 2001 to 2006

Regions	All census families	Married-couple families	Common-law-couple families	Lone-parent families	Lone-mother families	Lone-father families
Canada	6.3	3.5	18.9	7.8	6.3	14.6
Newfoundland and Labrador	0.9	-1.6	13.7	4.8	4.3	7.4
Prince Edward Island	2.0	0.7	12.5	1.6	0.5	7.6
Nova Scotia	1.7	-0.7	15.8	2.6	1.6	7.6
New Brunswick	1.3	-1.0	11.8	2.8	3.8	-1.6
Quebec	5.1	-1.6	20.3	5.1	2.7	14.6
Ontario	7.2	5.2	17.6	11.2	9.9	17.4
Manitoba	3.3	0.8	13.8	8.2	7.1	13.5
Saskatchewan	0.7	-2.1	14.3	5.7	3.0	17.2
Alberta	11.5	9.6	23.4	11.8	10.3	17.6
British Columbia	6.9	5.9	18.1	4.0	2.4	10.7
Yukon	6.7	3.9	9.7	11.3	5.3	35.4
Northwest Territories	12.2	8.8	17.2	14.5	10.8	27.0
Nunavut	10.6	5.7	10.8	18.7	21.4	11.2

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

Table 7 Growth rate of population in private households and by household structure, Canada, provinces and territories, 2001 to 2006

Regions	Population in private households	Private households	Couples with children ¹	Couples without children ²	One-person households	Other ³
	percentage growth					
Canada	5.3	7.6	0.4	11.2	11.8	8.1
Newfoundland and Labrador	-1.6	4.3	-11.8	14.6	16.9	6.6
Prince Edward Island	0.2	4.6	-6.7	12.8	10.8	4.5
Nova Scotia	0.5	4.7	-7.9	10.1	12.3	5.3
New Brunswick	-0.1	4.3	-9.7	11.3	13.1	5.4
Quebec	4.2	7.1	-2.8	13.2	11.3	6.4
Ontario	6.5	8.0	3.2	9.2	11.6	10.2
Manitoba	2.7	3.8	-3.0	7.1	5.4	8.1
Saskatchewan	-1.1	2.0	-7.8	6.9	5.9	4.5
Alberta	10.6	13.8	6.4	16.8	20.9	13.3
British Columbia	5.1	7.1	2.1	11.0	10.2	3.6
Yukon	6.0	11.0	-0.2	12.6	19.3	13.6
Northwest Territories	10.2	13.3	4.6	24.7	10.8	20.5
Nunavut	10.1	9.5	0.5	15.5	15.7	18.9

1. Refers to households containing a couple with at least one child aged 24 and under at home.

2. Includes households containing a couple with all children aged 25 and over at home.

3. Includes lone-parent households, multiple-family households and non-family households other than one-person households.

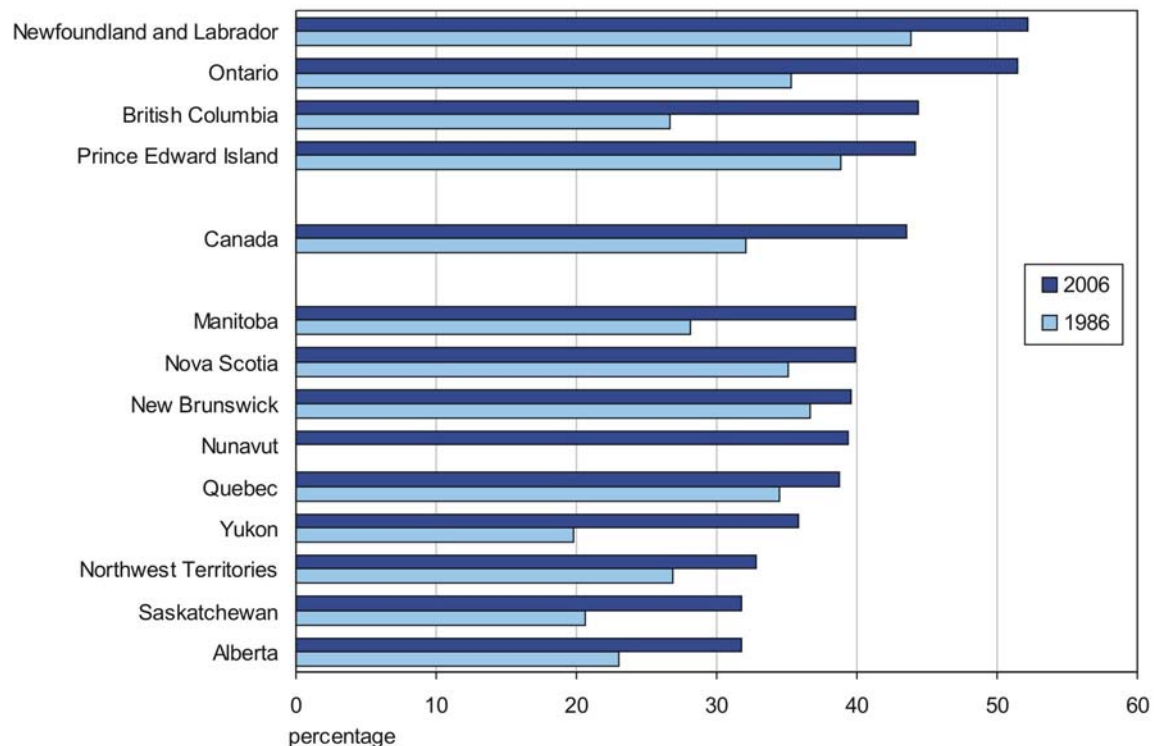
Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

Newfoundland and Labrador: Highest proportion of young adults aged 20 to 29 living in the parental home

As was the case in 2001, Newfoundland and Labrador had the highest proportion in Canada of young adults in their twenties who lived in the parental home in 2006.

Over one-half of young adults aged 20 to 29 (52.2%) lived with their parents, much higher than the national average (43.5%). Young adults could be in the parental home for many reasons such as the pursuit of higher education, relationship break-up, delayed union formation, difficulty finding employment or other financial challenges.

Figure 16 Newfoundland and Labrador has the highest proportion of young adults aged 20 to 29 in the parental home



Note: Nunavut was part of the Northwest Territories until 1999.
Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1986 and 2006.

The 2006 Census enumerated 155,700 census families in Newfoundland and Labrador. This was an increase of 0.9% from 2001, well below the national average growth of 6.3%. This slow growth in families may be due to the fact that fertility in Newfoundland and Labrador is the lowest in the country, averaging 1.3 children per woman since 1999.¹³

Married couples represented 73.6% of all census families in 2006, the second highest proportion in Canada, behind Ontario (73.9%). Just over one in 10 census families were comprised of common-law couples (10.9%) and 15.5% were lone-parent families.

The census counted 197,200 private households in 2006, up 4.3% from 2001. During the same time period, the population in private households declined by 1.6%.

One-person households (+16.9%) and households comprised of couples without children (+14.6%) grew most rapidly during the intercensal period. In contrast, the number of households with couples and children decreased by 11.8%.

13. Statistics Canada. 2006. *Report on the Demographic Situation in Canada, 2003 and 2004*. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 91-209, Ottawa.

Prince Edward Island: Third highest proportion of married-couple families

In 2006, Prince Edward Island had one of the highest proportions of married-couple families across Canada.

Of the 39,200 census families enumerated in Prince Edward Island in 2006, 73.2% were married-couple families, third highest in the nation, behind Ontario (73.9%) and Newfoundland and Labrador (73.6%). This proportion was also above the national average of 68.6%.

In contrast, only 10.4% of census families consisted of common-law unions, below the national average of 15.5%. Still, the number of common-law unions increased by 12.5% between 2001 and 2006. These patterns likely reflect an older population for whom marriage is more popular.

Lone-parent families accounted for 16.3% of all census families, just above the national average of 15.9%.

Overall, census families grew 2.0% in the province between 2001 and 2006. This was the fastest growth rate among census families in the Atlantic provinces, although it was well below the pace of 6.3% for the country as a whole.

The proportion of Prince Edward Island households with couples and children fell from 33.1% in 2001 to 29.6% in 2006. The proportion of one-person households increased from 22.8% to 24.1% during the same period.

Nova Scotia: Lowest proportion of households with couples and children

Nova Scotia had the lowest proportion in Canada of private households comprised of couples with children.

Of the 376,800 households in Nova Scotia in 2006, only one-quarter (25.5%) were comprised of couples with children, compared with the national average of 28.5%. This is a reflection of a low fertility level that has remained below the national average for at least two decades.

Furthermore, the number of these households fell 7.9% between 2001 and 2006, while they grew 0.4% at the national level. Nova Scotia was the second oldest province in Canada in 2006, so it is possible that the province could have more middle-aged or older couples whose adult children have already left home.

Overall in Nova Scotia, the number of private households grew 4.7% between 2001 and 2006 while the population in private households increased only 0.5%. Similar to other provinces and territories, the households growing most rapidly were one-person households (+12.3%) and those comprised of couples without children (+10.1%).

The 2006 Census enumerated 267,400 families in Nova Scotia, up 1.7% from 2001. Married couples accounted for 70.1% of census families, and lone-parent families represented an additional 16.9%, both higher than the national average. However, common-law-couple families accounted for 13.0% of the total, below the national average of 15.5%.

Nova Scotia had the highest number of same-sex couples in the Atlantic provinces. According to the 2006 Census, there were 1,300 same-sex couples, representing 0.6% of all couples, the same proportion as for Canada.

New Brunswick: Second highest proportion of common-law-couple families of all provinces after Quebec

In 2006, New Brunswick had the second highest proportion of common-law-couple families of all provinces after Quebec. Of the 217,800 census families in this province, 14.2% were common-law couples, about half the proportion in Quebec (28.8%), but well above Ontario (10.3%), the province with the lowest proportion.

Overall, the census enumerated 296,000 private households in New Brunswick in 2006, up 4.3% from 2001. This increase occurred despite a slight 0.1% decline in the population in these households.

One-person households in New Brunswick grew 13.1% between 2001 and 2006, a faster gain than the national average of 11.8%. Growth in private households would have been even faster in the province were it not for the 9.7% decline in the number of households with couples and children during the past five years.

In 2006, 26.9% of households in New Brunswick contained a couple with at least one child, down from 31.0% in 2001. At the same time, the proportion of one-person households increased from 22.4% to 24.3%.

As in the other Atlantic provinces, New Brunswick is characterized by a population with an above-average proportion of seniors compared to the country overall, as well as a lower fertility than the national average.

Quebec: More than one-third of couples live common-law

The prevalence of common-law unions in Quebec is one of the defining family patterns in this province, and this trend has continued between 2001 and 2006.

The census enumerated 2,121,600 census families in Quebec. Of these, 611,900 consisted of common-law-couple families, a 20.3% increase from 2001.

Common-law-couple families in Quebec represented 44.4% of the national total. The closest other province was Ontario, where common-law-couple families accounted for only 25.5% of the national total.

Within Quebec, common-law couples represented one-third (34.6%) of all couples in the province, much higher than the other provinces and territories (13.4%). The proportion was also far above several other countries for which recent data were available such as Sweden (25.4%), Finland (23.9%), New Zealand (23.7%) and Denmark (22.2%).¹⁴

14. Statistics Denmark. 2007. *FAM44: Families1*. January by region, type of family, size and number of children; Statistics Finland. 2006. Families by family type and number of children by area 2000-2006; Statistics New Zealand. 2006. *QuickStats National Highlights: 2006 Census*; Statistics Sweden. 2005.

Table 8 Proportion of common-law couples in Quebec higher than in Canada and in other selected countries

Countries	Percentage of all couples	Reference year
Sweden	25.4	2005
Finland	23.9	2006
New Zealand	23.7	2006
Denmark	22.2	2007
Iceland	19.9	2006
Canada	18.4	2006
Quebec	34.6	2006
Other provinces and territories	13.4	2006
United Kingdom	15.5	2004
Australia	14.8	2006
Ireland	14.1	2006

Sources: Statistics Canada, Statistics Finland, Statistics New Zealand, Statistics Denmark, Statistics Iceland, United Kingdom - Office for National Statistics, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Ireland Central Statistics Office and Statistics Sweden.

The popularity of common-law unions in Quebec is rooted in the Quiet Revolution. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, a new 'mode de vie' emerged in Quebec which reflected a declining influence of the Catholic church on family life. At the same time, greater access to contraception, the women's movement, and more liberal divorce laws contributed to the decline in marriage and the growth of common-law unions in Quebec.¹⁵

Consequently, the proportion of married-couple families was much lower in Quebec. Married couples represented 54.5% of census families in Quebec in 2006, the lowest proportion among the provinces, and well below the national average of 68.6%. Lone parents accounted for 16.6% of families.

Between 2001 and 2006, the number of census families increased 5.1% in Quebec, lower than the national average (+6.3%).

The census counted 13,700 same-sex couples in Quebec, 30.2% of all same-sex couples in Canada. These same-sex couples in Quebec represented 0.8% of all couples in the province, the highest proportion in the country. Along with British Columbia (0.7%), these were the only two provinces that surpassed the national average of 0.6%.

15. Peron, Y. 2003. « Du mariage obligatoire au mariage facultatif », in Piché, V. and C. Le Bourdais. 2003. *La démographie québécoise. Enjeux du XXI^e siècle*, Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, chapter 3, p. 110 to 143, Canada.

Table 9 Distribution of same-sex couples by conjugal status, Canada, provinces and territories, 2006

Regions	Same-sex couples			Percentage of all couples
	Total	Married	Common-law	
Canada	45,345	7,465	37,885	0.6
Newfoundland and Labrador	310	50	255	0.2
Prince Edward Island	140	15	125	0.4
Nova Scotia	1,255	140	1,115	0.6
New Brunswick	770	125	650	0.4
Quebec	13,685	1,260	12,425	0.8
Ontario	17,510	3,765	13,745	0.6
Manitoba	935	100	835	0.4
Saskatchewan	565	100	465	0.3
Alberta	3,055	510	2,540	0.4
British Columbia	7,035	1,370	5,665	0.7
Yukon	30	10	20	0.5
Northwest Territories	40	15	25	0.5
Nunavut	15	10	15	0.3

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Quebec was the third province to legalize same-sex marriage in March 2004. Of the 13,700 same-sex couples in Quebec, 1,300, or 9.2%, were married couples. This proportion is below the national average of 16.5% which may reflect the greater popularity of common-law unions in general for all couples in the province.

The census counted 3,189,300 private households in Quebec in 2006. Of these, 30.7% were one-person households, the second highest proportion in Canada.

The number of one-person households in Quebec increased 11.3% between 2001 and 2006, while the number of households comprised of couples without children rose 13.2%. On the other hand, the number of households with couples and children declined 2.8%.

Ontario: Highest proportion of married-couple families in Canada

Married-couple families accounted for 73.9% of the 3,422,300 census families in Ontario, the highest proportion in the country. On the other hand, common-law families represented only 10.3% of all census families, the lowest proportion. Lone-parent families accounted for 15.8% of families.

Census families in Ontario grew 7.2% between 2001 and 2006, a slightly faster gain than the national average of 6.3%. The number of common-law-couple families grew most quickly during the intercensal period (+17.6%). Lone-parent families rose 11.2% and the number of married-couple families was up only 5.2%.

The 2006 Census counted 17,500 same-sex couples in Ontario, representing 0.6% of all couples in the province, on par with the national average. Of all same-sex couples in Canada, 38.6% lived in Ontario.

Ontario became the first province to legalize same-sex marriage in June 2003. Over one-fifth (21.5%) of same-sex couples in this province were married, well above the national average of 16.5%.

The census enumerated 4,555,000 private households in Ontario in 2006, up 8.0% from 2001. The population in private households increased 6.5%. Many of these households were large—10.5% consisted of five or more persons—compared to the national average of 8.7%. About one-quarter (24.3%) of households were comprised of only one person.

Ontario was one of only two provinces in which the proportion of households with couples and children still exceeded the proportion of households comprised of couples without children. About 31.2% of all households consisted of couples with children in 2006, compared to 28.3% which had none. Alberta was the only other province in this situation. One reason for this may be that Ontario is the second youngest province in Canada, after Alberta. In addition, many immigrants are women of childbearing age, who have higher numbers of children on average.

Ontario also had one of the highest proportions of young adults aged 20 to 29 living in the parental home, second only to Newfoundland and Labrador. In 2006, 51.5% of young adults in this age group lived at home with their parents, up from 47.1% in 2001, and well above the national average of 43.5%. In Newfoundland and Labrador, 52.2% of young adults lived at home.

Young adults could be living at home because of the higher cost of living in some large urban areas of Ontario, such as Toronto.

Manitoba: Highest proportion of lone-parent families among the provinces

The census enumerated 312,800 census families in Manitoba, up 3.3% from 2001. Of these families, 17.0% were lone-parent families. This was the highest such proportion among the provinces in 2006, and above the national average of 15.9%.

Between 2001 and 2006, lone-parent families in Manitoba grew 8.2%. Growth was more rapid for common-law-couple families (+13.8%) and married-couple families increased very little (+0.8%).

Overall, married-couple families represented 72.2% of census families, while common-law-couple families accounted for 10.8%.

In Manitoba, 6,300 children aged 14 and under lived in an arrangement that did not include married, common-law or lone parents. They represented 2.8% of all children in this age group, the highest proportion among the provinces. Of all the children aged 14 and under in Manitoba, nearly 2,400, or 1.1% of all children in this province, lived in a skip-generation family, that is, with a grandparent and no parents or middle generation. The remainder lived with other relatives or non-relatives. At the national level, 0.5% of children lived in skip-generation families in 2006.

Table 10 Distribution of children aged 14 and under by family structure, Canada, provinces and territories, 2006

Regions	Total	Married parents	Common-law parents	Lone parents	Other ¹
	percentage				
Canada	100.0	65.7	14.6	18.3	1.4
Newfoundland and Labrador	100.0	65.8	12.0	21.0	1.3
Prince Edward Island	100.0	70.4	8.7	19.8	1.1
Nova Scotia	100.0	64.3	11.5	22.9	1.4
New Brunswick	100.0	62.8	13.9	21.8	1.4
Quebec	100.0	45.9	33.8	19.4	0.9
Ontario	100.0	73.8	7.9	17.1	1.1
Manitoba	100.0	66.0	9.6	21.6	2.8
Saskatchewan	100.0	63.4	11.2	22.8	2.7
Alberta	100.0	72.9	9.4	16.0	1.7
British Columbia	100.0	71.1	9.3	17.8	1.8
Yukon	100.0	52.9	18.6	25.4	3.1
Northwest Territories	100.0	46.3	27.6	22.5	3.4
Nunavut	100.0	40.9	33.2	22.2	3.7

1. Includes other relatives and non-relatives.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Saskatchewan: Lowest growth of census families in the country

The number of census families in Saskatchewan increased only 0.7% to 267,500 between 2001 and 2006, far below the national average (+6.3%). Saskatchewan, along with Newfoundland and Labrador and New Brunswick, experienced a decline in its population in private households during the intercensal period.

The number of common-law-couple families increased 14.3%, while the number of married-couple families declined 2.1%. About 72.6% of Saskatchewan families consisted of married couples, 10.8%, common-law couples, and 16.6%, lone-parent families.

Saskatchewan had a fairly high proportion of children aged 14 and under in skip-generation families (1.3%), nearly triple the national average (0.5%). Overall, about 2.7% of children in this age group did not live with married, common-law or lone parents, one of the highest proportions among the provinces.

Saskatchewan had a low proportion of young adults aged 20 to 29 living in the parental home in 2006 (31.8%), well below the national average of 43.5%. Saskatchewan has experienced out-migration of its young adult population to Alberta, which could be one factor contributing to this pattern.

Alberta: Fastest growth of census families among all the provinces

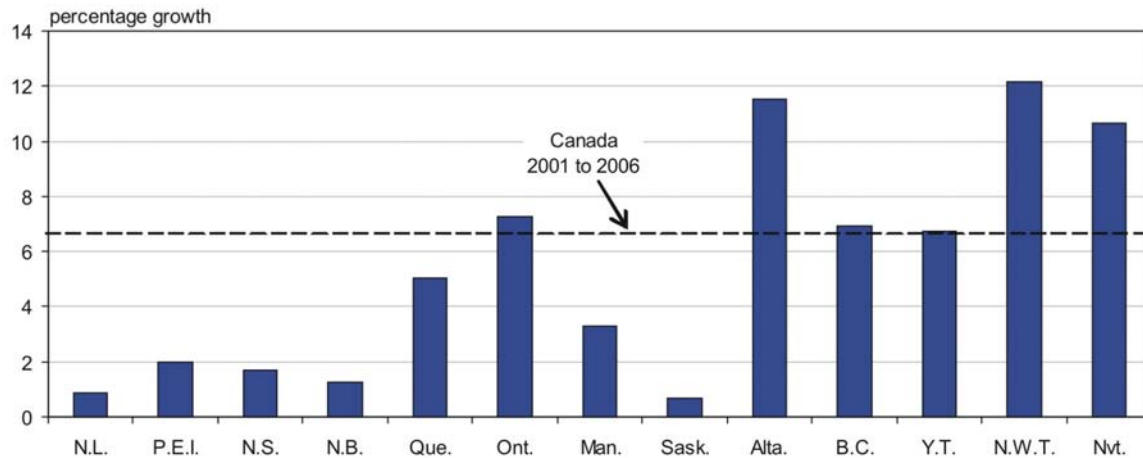
Developments in family structure in Alberta mirror the oil-generated economic and demographic boom that has occurred in the province in recent years. Between 2001 and 2006, Alberta experienced one of the highest growth rates for census families.

The census enumerated 904,800 census families in Alberta, up 11.5% from 2001, almost double the national average of 6.3%.

Alberta also had the highest growth rate for common-law-couple families (+23.4%) and married-couple families (+9.6%) during this five-year period.

Of all census families in the province, married-couple families represented 72.8%, higher than the national average (68.6%). Common-law-couple families accounted for only 12.8%, while lone-parent families represented only 14.4%, the lowest proportion in Canada.

Figure 17 Census families are growing rapidly in Alberta



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

The 2006 Census counted 1,256,200 households in Alberta. Of these, 30.5% consisted of a couple and at least one child, one of the highest proportions in the country. An additional 24.6% of these households consisted of only one person.

The number of private households in Alberta increased 13.8% between 2001 and 2006 while the population in private households rose 10.6%. One explanation is the fact that the number of one-person households increased 20.9% during the past five years, the fastest growth in the nation. At the same time, the number of households with couples and children rose 6.4%, also the fastest growth.

British Columbia: Growth of census families above national average

The number of census families in British Columbia increased at a slightly faster pace than the national average during the past five years.

The census counted 1,161,400 census families in British Columbia in 2006, up 6.9% from 2001, compared with 6.3% for Canada as a whole. British Columbia has been attractive to many migrants, both internationally and internally, which could be contributing to the growth of census families in the province.

Of these census families, 72.7% were married couples, 12.2% were common-law couples and 15.1% were lone parents.

The 2006 Census enumerated 7,000 same-sex couples in British Columbia, accounting for 0.7% of all couples in the province, just above the national average of 0.6%. British Columbia was the second province to legalize same-sex marriage in July 2003. Of all same-sex couples in the province, 1,400, or 19.5%, were married.

The number of private households in British Columbia increased 7.1% to 1,643,100, while the population in private households grew 5.1%. Households containing one person represented 28.0%, while 8.9% had five or more persons.

The private households which grew most quickly between 2001 and 2006 were those comprised of couples without children (+11.0%) and households with only one person (+10.2%). The province also had a proportion of seniors aged 65 or more in 2006 that was higher than the national average.

In British Columbia, 26.3% of households consisted of a couple with at least one child in 2006, below the national average of 28.5%. This province also has a lower fertility rate than the national average.

Yukon: Highest proportion of one-person households

The Yukon had the highest proportion of one-person households of any province or territory in 2006.

The census enumerated 12,600 private households in the Yukon, up 11.0% from 2001. Of these households, almost one out of three (30.9%) consisted of only one person, 26.1% consisted of couples with at least one child and 24.9% consisted of couples without children.

The census also counted 8,300 census families in the Yukon, up 6.7% from 2001. This was the slowest growth among the three territories, but one of the fastest nationwide.

Of these census families, only 55.7% were married-couple families, well below the national average of 68.6%. Common-law-couple families represented 23.6% of families, which was one of the highest proportions in the country. More than one in five families (20.7%) were lone parents, also one of the highest proportions in the nation.

Northwest Territories: Second highest proportion of households with couples and children after Nunavut

The Northwest Territories had 14,200 private households in 2006. Just over one-third (34.4%) of these were households with couples and children, second only to Nunavut (42.0%). This is a consequence of the high levels of fertility observed in this territory.

However, the number of households comprised of couples without children increased 24.7%, five times the growth rate in the number of households with couples and children (+4.6%).

Between 2001 and 2006, the number of private households grew 13.3%, a faster gain than the 10.2% increase in the population in private households.

The census counted 10,900 census families in the Northwest Territories in 2006, a 12.2% increase from 2001. This was the fastest growth in Canada, and was nearly double the national average (+6.3%). It surpassed even the 11.5% increase in Alberta.

Statistics Canada makes every effort to enumerate Canadians accurately in the census. Some regions may present greater challenges than others. The statistics for the Northwest Territories must be used with caution, as its net undercoverage in the 2001 Census (8.11%) was higher than the national average (2.99%). Because of the improved coverage of the Northwest Territories in 2006, growth of census families for the 2001 to 2006 period is probably overstated.

Lone-parent families accounted for 21.4% of all families in 2006, the second highest proportion in Canada. Only 51.1% were married-couple families, while 27.5% were common-law-couple families.

Nunavut: One-third of households consist of five or more people

Nunavut had the highest proportion of large households and the lowest proportion of one-person households of any province or territory in 2006. This is related to the fact that the number of children per woman (3.1) is twice the national average (1.5).¹⁶

The census counted 7,900 private households in Nunavut in 2006, up 9.5% from 2001. One-third (32.8%) of these households were comprised of five or more people, the highest proportion in Canada. In contrast, only 18.3% consisted of one-person households, the lowest proportion nationally.

Nunavut was the only province or territory in which the population in private households increased at a faster pace than the number of private households. Between 2001 and 2006, the number of households in Nunavut increased by 9.5%, while the population in those households rose 10.1%.

16. Statistics Canada. 2006. *Report on the Demographic Situation in Canada, 2003 and 2004*. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 91-209, Ottawa.

The number of census families in Nunavut increased 10.6% to 7,000. Of these, less than one-half (41.1%) consisted of married-couple families, well below the national average of 68.6%. Common-law-couple families represented 31.3% of families, while 27.6% were lone-parent families, the highest in the nation for both proportions.

Of children aged 14 and under, 3.7% did not live with married, common-law or lone parents in Nunavut in 2006, the highest proportion in Canada. Of the 10,000 children in this age group, 2.3% lived in skip-generation families, that is, with their grandparents and no parents or middle generation, compared to 0.5% nationally.

Subprovincial changes

Initial results from the 2006 Census revealed a number of differences in population growth and age structure between Canada's metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas. Census metropolitan areas grew more rapidly than the rest of the country since 2001, and Canada's metropolitan population was, on average, younger than its rural population.

In this report, the terms 'metropolitan' and 'urban' are used interchangeably to refer to regions formed by census metropolitan areas (CMAs) and mid-size urban centres (census agglomerations (CAs)). The terms 'non-metropolitan' and 'rural' both refer to all other regions, that is, regions that are not part of a CMA or a CA.

There were also differences in families and households which varied between urban and rural areas in Canada, as well as at lower levels of geography.

Close to one-quarter of common-law-couple families in Canada lived in Montréal and Québec

Of the 1.4 million common-law-couple families in Canada, nearly one-quarter (23.4%) lived in the two census metropolitan areas (CMAs) of Montréal and Québec on May 16, 2006.

A census metropolitan area (CMA) is a region that has a population of at least 100,000, including an urban core of at least 50,000. Canada has 33 CMAs today, up from 27 in 2001. The six new CMAs are Barrie, Guelph, Brantford and Peterborough, Ontario; Moncton, New Brunswick; and Kelowna, British Columbia.

In fact, the proportion of common-law-couple families was much higher than the national average (15.5%) among the five census metropolitan areas located in the province of Quebec. Roughly one-third of census families lived in common-law unions in Québec (34.5%), Sherbrooke (33.1%), and Trois-Rivières (32.4%), a proportion higher than the provincial average of 28.8%. Proportions of common-law-couple families were also high in Saguenay (29.5%) and Montréal (25.4%) compared to the other CMAs of Canada, but closer to the provincial average.

The lower proportion of common-law-couple families in Montréal may be related to the fact that its population has a high proportion of immigrants. When census data on immigration are released, it could provide more information on the family structures in these CMAs. The CMAs of Toronto and Vancouver, which also attract a large proportion of immigrants to Canada year after year, also had a low proportion of common-law-couple families. Toronto had the lowest proportion of all CMAs across the country, at only 7.8%. In contrast, the proportion of married-couple families in the CMAs of Toronto and Vancouver was much higher than the national average, and Montréal was higher than the Quebec provincial average.

Table 11 Distribution of census families by family structure, census metropolitan areas, 2006

Census metropolitan areas	Total number of census families	Married-couple families	Common-law-couple families		Lone-parent families
			percentage		
Canada	8,896,840	68.6	15.5	15.9	
St. John's	52,525	69.9	11.5	18.6	
Halifax	105,200	69.3	14.2	16.5	
Moncton	37,135	68.2	16.2	15.7	
Saint John	35,565	70.3	10.7	19.0	
Saguenay	44,540	55.6	29.5	14.9	
Québec	200,955	50.0	34.5	15.6	
Sherbrooke	51,405	50.2	33.1	16.7	
Trois-Rivières	39,680	50.5	32.4	17.0	
Montréal	994,965	56.5	25.4	18.1	
Ottawa - Gatineau	314,310	67.3	16.3	16.4	
Kingston	42,995	71.2	13.6	15.2	
Peterborough	33,500	72.2	12.6	15.3	
Oshawa	94,575	71.9	11.7	16.5	
Toronto	1,405,845	75.3	7.8	16.9	
Hamilton	195,905	73.6	10.0	16.4	
St. Catharines - Niagara	112,550	72.5	10.5	16.9	
Kitchener	126,205	73.9	11.2	14.9	
Brantford	35,680	71.1	12.5	16.5	
Guelph	35,735	72.2	12.8	15.0	
London	127,800	71.5	12.0	16.6	
Windsor	90,350	73.5	9.2	17.3	
Barrie	50,095	71.0	13.8	15.2	
Greater Sudbury / Grand Sudbury	46,340	69.3	13.8	16.9	
Thunder Bay	35,050	69.5	12.4	18.2	
Winnipeg	189,790	70.8	10.7	18.4	
Regina	53,715	69.9	11.0	19.1	
Saskatoon	63,210	71.4	10.8	17.8	
Calgary	295,345	73.6	12.1	14.3	
Edmonton	284,400	71.7	12.1	16.2	
Kelowna	48,280	73.6	11.7	14.6	
Abbotsford	44,365	76.2	9.3	14.6	
Vancouver	580,120	74.7	10.1	15.2	
Victoria	91,935	69.8	14.3	15.9	

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Two other CMAs had a higher proportion of common-law-couple families than the national average: Ottawa - Gatineau and Moncton. Located partially in the province of Quebec or fairly close to that province, these CMAs also had a high proportion of francophones among their population.

The map showing the percentage of all couples who were common-law provides a more detailed picture of the geographic distribution of common-law unions in Canada. Aside from the particularly high levels in all parts of Quebec, it is noteworthy that the proportion of common-law unions in Northern Canada is above the national average.

Half of same-sex couples lived in three CMAs

In 2006, 37,200 same-sex couples—more than eight out of 10 (82.0%)—were counted in Canada's urban areas.

About 22,700 of the 45,300 same-sex couples (50.0%) enumerated on May 16, 2006, lived in the three largest urban areas of Montréal, Toronto, and Vancouver. Same-sex couples in Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver accounted respectively for 18.4%, 21.2%, and 10.3% of all same-sex couples across the nation.

In the CMAs of Montréal and Vancouver, same-sex couples represented 1.0% of all couples, and accounted for 0.8% of all couples in Toronto, higher than the national average (0.6%). The proportion of same-sex couples was also above average in Halifax, Moncton, Victoria, and Ottawa - Gatineau (0.9% in each CMA), 0.8% in both Québec and Kingston, and 0.7% in Guelph.

The provinces of Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia were the first three provinces to legalize same-sex marriage, beginning with Ontario and British Columbia in 2003, and followed by Quebec one year later. In the census metropolitan areas of Toronto (24.8%) and Vancouver (18.9%), the proportion of same-sex couples who were legally married was also higher than the national average (16.5%). In Montréal, only 10.5% of same-sex couples were married, likely reflecting the higher propensity to live in common-law unions for all couples in the province of Quebec.

Within census metropolitan areas, same-sex couples were generally found more in central municipalities (77.4%) than in peripheral municipalities (22.6%), compared to opposite-sex couples (56.3% and 43.7%, respectively).

It is important to distinguish between census metropolitan areas (CMAs) and municipalities (census subdivisions—CSDs). A CMA usually consists of many municipalities, one of which, called the central municipality, lends its name to the CMA. For example, the Montréal CMA includes nearly 100 municipalities, such as Laval, Longueuil, La Prairie and Mirabel. The municipality of Montréal, on the island of Montréal, is the central municipality, that is, the census subdivision for which the CMA is named.

Table 12 Number and proportion of same-sex couples, by census metropolitan areas, 2006

Census metropolitan areas	Same-sex couples	Total couples	Percentage of all couples
Canada	45,345	7,482,775	0.6
St. John's	225	42,750	0.5
Halifax	820	87,830	0.9
Moncton	285	31,315	0.9
Saint John	110	28,800	0.4
Saguenay	215	37,900	0.6
Québec	1,335	169,665	0.8
Sherbrooke	230	42,805	0.5
Trois-Rivières	205	32,915	0.6
Montréal	8,365	814,735	1.0
Ottawa - Gatineau	2,415	262,700	0.9
Kingston	295	36,450	0.8
Peterborough	130	28,390	0.5
Oshawa	325	78,995	0.4
Toronto	9,620	1,168,415	0.8
Hamilton	830	163,720	0.5
St. Catharines - Niagara	340	93,480	0.4
Kitchener	480	107,430	0.4
Brantford	55	29,805	0.2
Guelph	200	30,385	0.7
London	670	106,630	0.6
Windsor	285	74,685	0.4
Barrie	115	42,495	0.3
Greater Sudbury / Grand Sudbury	150	38,525	0.4
Thunder Bay	135	28,675	0.5
Winnipeg	755	154,780	0.5
Regina	155	43,435	0.4
Saskatoon	235	51,935	0.5
Calgary	1,410	253,125	0.6
Edmonton	1,060	238,310	0.4
Kelowna	175	41,205	0.4
Abbotsford	150	37,905	0.4
Vancouver	4,685	492,005	1.0
Victoria	720	77,300	0.9

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Close to one in five families were lone parents in six CMAs

In general, Canada's metropolitan areas in 2006 had a higher proportion of lone-parent families (16.5%) than its rural areas and small towns (13.3%). Of particular note were six CMAs where lone-parent families accounted for nearly one out of five families, which is higher than the national average of 15.9%: Regina (19.1%), Saint John (19.0%), St. John's (18.6%), Winnipeg (18.4%), Thunder Bay (18.2%) and Montréal (18.1%).

Three of these CMAs (Winnipeg, Regina and Thunder Bay) also have high counts of Aboriginal peoples, who are more likely to live in lone-parent families.¹⁷

17. Siggner, A. 2005. *Aboriginal Conditions in Census Metropolitan Areas, 1981 to 2001*. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 89-613, no. 008, Ottawa.

Previous research has found that in most CMAs, members of lone-parent families were nearly twice more likely to live in a low income neighborhood than the general population.¹⁸ The central municipalities of CMAs had higher proportions of lone-parent families (18.5%) in 2006 than the suburbs, also known as peripheral municipalities (14.0 %). Future 2006 Census results will be able to show if central municipalities are also more likely to be characterised by low income than peripheral municipalities.

As the maps for Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver show, the geographic concentration of lone-parent families generally followed a similar pattern in these CMAs in 2006, though each CMA had unique characteristics.

Half of the municipalities with the lowest proportion of lone-parent families were located in Alberta

Half (12) of the 25 municipalities that had the lowest proportions of lone-parent families in 2006 were in Alberta. Given the association between low-income areas and lone-parent families, this observation may be due in part to Alberta's recent economic boom.

Stanley, Manitoba, and Taber, Alberta, were the municipalities with the lowest proportions of lone-parent families in Canada in 2006 (1.7% and 2.4%, respectively). They were also among the municipalities with the youngest populations in Canada and the largest proportions of households with couples and children. This is probably related to the presence of a large Mennonite community in Stanley and a high proportion of Mormons in Taber.

In contrast, 10 of the 25 municipalities with the largest proportions of lone-parent families were in the Atlantic Provinces. The municipality that had the highest proportion of lone-parent families in the country was Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, at 28.2%. Prince Albert also has a high proportion of the population comprised of Aboriginal peoples.

18. Heisz, A. and L. McLeod. 2004. *Low-income in Census Metropolitan Areas, 1980-2000*. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 89-613, no. 001, Ottawa.

Table 13 Municipalities with 5,000 persons or more in private households having the highest and lowest proportions of lone-parent families, 2006

Order	Top 25 municipalities	Province	Proportion (in percentage)	Order	Bottom 25 municipalities	Province	Proportion (in percentage)
1	Prince Albert	Sask.	28.2	1	Stanley	Man.	1.7
2	Campbellton	N.B.	27.1	2	Taber	Alta.	2.4
2	Selkirk	Man.	27.1	3	Peace River B	B.C.	4.0
4	North Battleford	Sask.	26.1	4	Mapleton	Ont.	4.2
5	Yarmouth	N.S.	25.8	5	Kneehill County	Alta.	5.0
6	The Pas	Man.	25.7	6	Cypress County	Ont.	5.1
7	Saint John	N.B.	24.7	7	Vermilion River County No. 24	Alta.	5.3
8	Cape Breton	N.S.	24.6	7	Wellesley	Ont.	5.3
9	Joliette	Que.	24.4	9	Lacombe County	Alta.	5.4
10	Shippagan	N.B.	23.5	10	Puslinch	Ont.	5.5
11	Prince Rupert	B.C.	23.2	11	Georgian Bluffs	Ont.	5.6
12	Iqaluit	Nvt.	23.1	12	Barrhead County No. 11	Alta.	5.7
13	Stephenville	N.L.	22.9	12	Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh	Ont.	5.7
14	Thompson	Man.	22.6	14	Sainte-Catherine-de-la-Jacques-Cartier	Que.	5.9
15	Smiths Falls	Ont.	22.5	14	East St. Paul	Man.	5.9
16	Saumarez	N.B.	22.3	16	Corman Park No. 344	Sask.	6.0
16	Midland	Ont.	22.3	16	Augusta	Ont.	6.0
18	Chandler	Que.	22.2	18	Mountain View County	Alta.	6.1
19	St. John's	N.L.	22.0	19	St. Paul County No. 19	Alta.	6.2
20	Charlottetown	P.E.I.	21.9	20	Tay Valley	Ont.	6.4
21	Montréal	Que.	21.8	20	Rocky View No. 44	Alta.	6.4
21	Whitehorse	Y.T.	21.8	20	Foothills No. 31	Alta.	6.4
23	Portage la Prairie	Man.	21.7	20	Lethbridge County	Alta.	6.4
23	Truro	N.S.	21.7	24	Wheatland County	Alta.	6.5
23	Alnwick	Ont.	21.7	25	Mackenzie No. 23	Alta.	6.6

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Households with couples and children growing faster in regions with rapidly growing populations

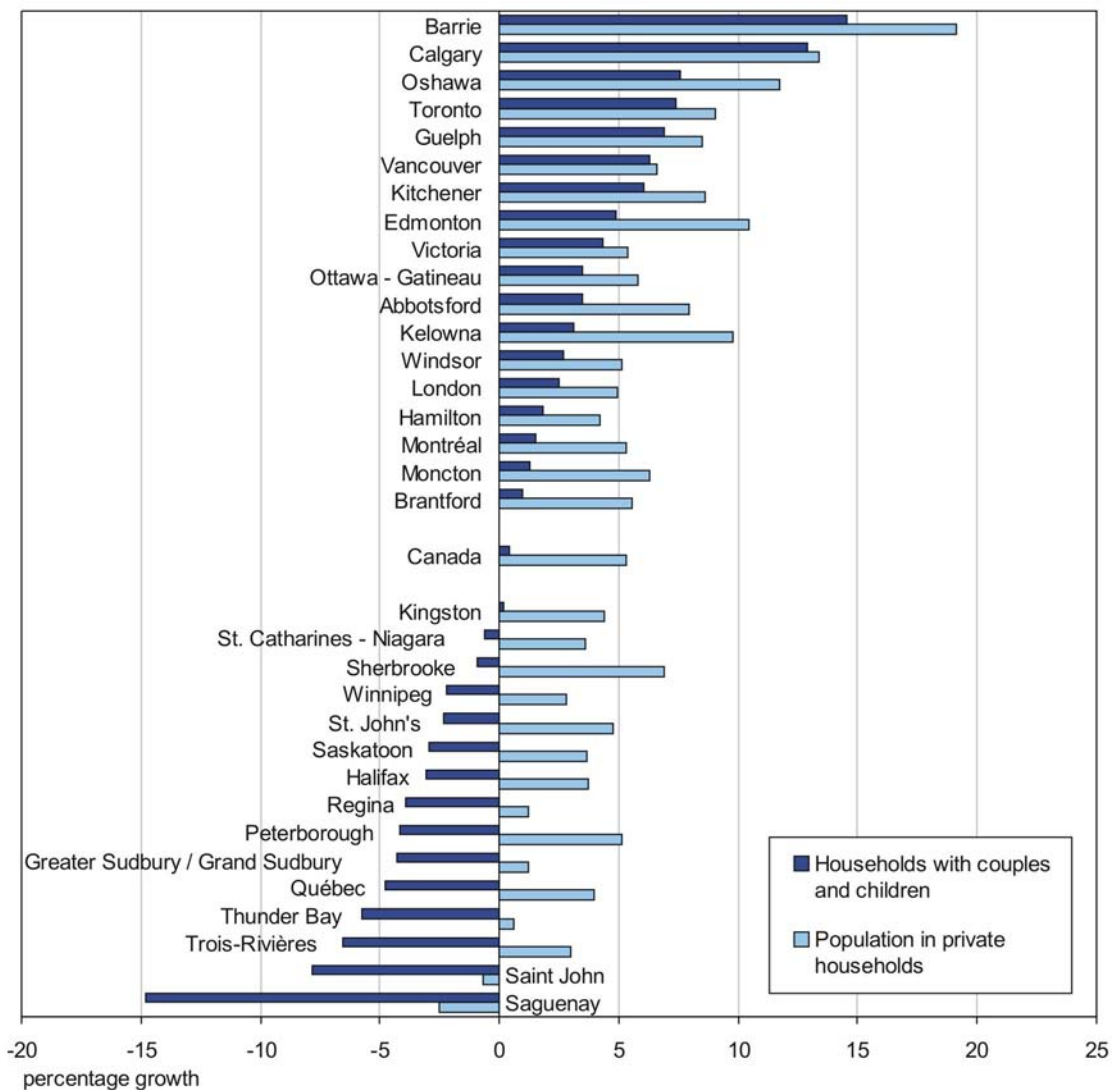
The first two 2006 Census releases revealed significant differences in population growth and age structure between Canada's metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas. Metropolitan areas, with faster-growing and, on average, younger populations than non-metropolitan areas, also have a higher rate of growth in the number of households with couples and children.

In fact, the number of households comprised of couples with children increased only in metropolitan areas between 2001 and 2006 (+2.4%), as it declined 7.6% in non-metropolitan areas. However, there was a great deal of variation between metropolitan areas across the country.

For example, nine of the 18 CMAs with the highest rates of growth in households with couples and children were in southern Ontario, a region that also experienced rapid population growth between 2001 and 2006. The proportion of children under age 15 was also above the national average in those nine CMAs (Barrie, Oshawa, Toronto, Guelph, Kitchener, Windsor, London, Hamilton and Brantford) in 2006.

This is probably attributable in part to the fact that some of the CMAs experienced substantial migration gains of adults of childbearing age. The large proportion of immigrants settling in Toronto may explain the situation in that CMA, as many immigrants have children following their arrival in Canada. The Montréal and Vancouver CMAs, which like Toronto attract large numbers of immigrants, also had a higher rate of growth in households with couples and children than the national average between 2001 and 2006.

Figure 18 The proportion of households with couples and children¹ generally growing most rapidly in fast growing census metropolitan areas, 2001 to 2006



1. Refers to households containing a couple with at least one child aged 24 and under at home.

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

In contrast, 14 CMAs experienced a decline in households with couples and children between 2001 and 2006. That was the case for four of Quebec's five CMAs, the exception being Montréal; the three CMAs in Manitoba and Saskatchewan; and three of the four CMAs in the Atlantic provinces, the exception being Moncton. The Atlantic Provinces, Quebec, Manitoba and Saskatchewan all had growth rates of their population in private households that were below the national average; in some cases, the rate was negative. In addition, there is little immigration to those CMAs.

Households with couples and children tend to be in the suburbs of CMAs...

According to the first 2006 Census results, urban spread is continuing in CMAs. One characteristic of urban spread is that populations are younger, on average, in the suburbs (peripheral municipalities) of major urban centres than in the downtown areas (central municipalities). One of the explanations for a younger population is that peripheral municipalities are favoured by households with couples and children, probably because they provide a lifestyle that meets their needs.

In 2006, households with couples and children accounted for more than one-third (35.9%) of the households in CMA suburbs. The corresponding figure for downtown areas was only 24.9%, close to one-quarter of all households.

The difference between central and peripheral municipalities in the proportion of households with couples and children is clearly visible in the Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver CMAs (see maps).

In the Montréal CMA, for example, the proportion of households with couples and children was substantially lower in the central municipality formed by the City of Montréal (19.3%) than in the surrounding suburban areas in 2006. Conversely, the highest concentrations of households with couples and children in the Montréal CMA were in new peripheral municipalities such as Saint-Colomban (39.1%), Mirabel (39.5%) and Blainville (45.6%) to the north, Saint-Lazare (49.1%), Sainte-Julie (43.4%), La Prairie (33.9%) and Mercier (39.4%) to the south, and some municipalities in the western part of the island.

The situation was similar in the Toronto CMA. As the map shows, the municipalities with the highest proportions of households with couples and children in 2006 bordered the municipality of Toronto on the north and west: Vaughan (51.3%), Markham (45.9%), Richmond Hill (45.4%), Brampton (43.7%), Oakville (41.9%) and Mississauga (41.3%). Those municipalities also had a high growth rate of the population in private households between 2001 and 2006.

The municipality of Toronto, on the other hand, had a much smaller proportion of households with couples and children (25.5%) than the Toronto CMA overall (33.7%) and the national average (28.5%).

Though less clear-cut, the differences between downtown and suburban areas in the proportion of households with couples and children were also observed in Vancouver. The central municipality of Vancouver had a smaller proportion of couple households with children (20.0%) than was generally found in peripheral municipalities such as Anmore (48.6%), North Vancouver (38.1%), Coquitlam (36.2%), Maple Ridge (35.2%) and Surrey (34.7%).

... and in rural areas close to CMAs

The proportion of households with couples and children was not only higher in the suburbs of CMAs than in their downtown areas, it was also higher in rural areas close to large urban centres than in remote rural areas. Initial 2006 Census results showed that rural areas close to urban centres also experienced a higher rate of population growth than remote rural areas between 2001 and 2006.

Nearly one-third (31.5%) of households in rural areas close to urban centres were composed of couples with children, which suggests that some of those areas were actually suburbs located outside the borders of the large urban centres. The proportion of one-person households was lower in those areas (20.9%) than elsewhere, which is also typical of the suburbs of CMAs.

In contrast, the proportion of households with couples and children was much lower in remote rural areas (27.3%).

Table 14 Distribution of households by household structure, metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas, 2006

Area types	Total private households	Couple households		One-person households	Other ³
		With children ¹	Without children ²		
	percentage				
Canada	100.0	28.5	29.0	26.8	15.8
Metropolitan areas of Canada	100.0	28.5	27.6	27.2	16.6
Total of rural areas and small towns	100.0	28.3	34.6	24.6	12.4
Rural areas close to urban centres	100.0	31.5	36.4	20.9	11.2
Remote rural regions	100.0	27.3	34.3	25.7	12.7
Territories	100.0	34.5	16.8	23.6	25.0

1. Refers to households containing a couple with at least one child aged 24 and under at home.

2. Includes households containing a couple with all children aged 25 and over at home.

3. Includes lone-parent households, multiple-family households and non-family households other than one-person households.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Links between population growth and high percentage of households with couples and children for some municipalities

In 2006, as in 2001, the municipality of Stanley, Manitoba, had the largest proportion of households with couples and children in Canada, at two-thirds (66.8%). The presence of a Mennonite community is probably a factor in this case, as it is for Hanover, Manitoba, and Mapleton, Ontario, which also ranked high on the list of municipalities with large proportions of households with couples and children.

Vaughan, Wellesley, Caledon, Markham, Aurora and Richmond Hill, Ontario, also had a high proportion of couple households with children. They are all located in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, just north of the municipality of Toronto, a highly urbanized area that experienced rapid population growth between 2001 and 2006.

Table 15 Municipalities with 5,000 persons or more in private households having the highest and lowest proportions of households containing couples with children aged 24 and under at home, 2006

Order	Top 25 municipalities	Province	Proportion (in percentage)	Order	Bottom 25 municipalities	Province	Proportion (in percentage)
1	Stanley	Man.	66.8	1	Victoria	B.C.	10.7
2	Mackenzie No. 23	Alta.	54.3	2	Capital G	B.C.	12.7
3	Beaumont	Alta.	53.9	3	Qualicum Beach	B.C.	13.1
4	Hanover	Man.	53.4	4	Parksville	B.C.	13.4
5	Taber	Alta.	51.7	5	White Rock	B.C.	13.7
6	Vaughan	Ont.	51.3	6	Elliot Lake	Ont.	14.8
7	Kirkland	Que.	51.2	7	Sidney	B.C.	15.2
8	Wellesley	Ont.	49.5	8	Chertsey	Que.	15.7
9	Saint-Lazare	Que.	49.1	9	Perth	Ont.	16.0
10	Mapleton	Ont.	48.6	10	Esquimalt	B.C.	16.1
10	Chestermere	Alta.	48.6	10	Tsinstikeptum 9	B.C.	16.1
12	Macdonald	Man.	48.5	12	Truro	N.S.	16.2
13	Taché	Man.	48.4	13	Joliette	Que.	16.9
14	East St. Paul	Man.	47.9	14	Gimli	Man.	17.0
15	Notre-Dame-de-l'Île-Perrot	Que.	47.5	15	Asbestos	Que.	17.1
16	Lorraine	Que.	47.2	16	Trail	B.C.	17.5
17	Caledon	Ont.	46.8	17	Louiseville	B.C.	17.8
18	Markham	Ont.	45.9	17	Columbia-Shuswap C	B.C.	17.8
18	Corman Park No. 344	Sask.	45.9	19	Nanaimo E	B.C.	17.9
20	Aurora	Ont.	45.8	20	Saint-Sauveur	Que.	18.0
21	Blainville	Que.	45.6	21	Sechelt	B.C.	18.1
22	Richmond Hill	Ont.	45.4	22	Campbellton	N.B.	18.2
23	Lethbridge County	Alta.	45.2	23	Penticton	B.C.	18.3
23	Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures	Que.	45.2	24	Capital F	B.C.	18.4
23	Ajax	Ont.	45.2	25	Shawinigan	Que.	18.5

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Over half of the 25 municipalities showing lowest proportions of households with couples and children located in British Columbia

More than half (15) of the 25 municipalities that had the lowest proportions of households with couples and children in 2006 were in British Columbia. Seven of them (Victoria, Capital G, Qualicum Beach, Parksville, Sidney, Nanaimo E and Capital F) were on Vancouver Island. According to 2006 Census data, they had the oldest populations in Canada. Older populations generally had fewer households comprised of couples and children, as many of those children are probably adults.

Other municipalities that had among the lowest proportions of households with couples and children in Canada also had among the oldest populations in the country. Examples include Elliot Lake and Perth, Ontario, and Gimli, Manitoba.

Nearly six in 10 young adults in the Toronto CMA lived in the parental home

In 2006, Toronto was the CMA with the highest proportion of young adults who lived in their parents' home. Nearly six in 10 (57.9%) young adults aged 20 to 29 remained in, or returned to, the parental home, a proportion much higher than the national average of 43.5%. Toronto also had the highest proportion of all the CMAs in 2001, with 54.0%.

It is worth noting that among the CMAs with the highest percentage of young adults still living in the parental home, were those who had the highest proportions of immigrants in their population in 2001: Toronto, Vancouver, Hamilton, and Windsor. The high cost of living, particularly in Toronto and Vancouver, could also help explain why living in the parental home is high in these CMAs.

Table 16 Proportion of young adults aged 20 to 29 living in the parental home, census metropolitan areas, 2001 and 2006

Census metropolitan areas	2001	2006
	percentage	
Toronto	54.0	57.9
Hamilton	48.7	53.8
Oshawa	47.5	52.8
St. Catharines - Niagara	47.6	51.4
Vancouver	45.7	50.6
Thunder Bay	43.8	50.0
Windsor	43.3	49.1
St. John's	46.3	47.6
Brantford	44.6	47.4
Canada	41.1	43.5
Abbotsford	41.1	43.3
Barrie	36.3	43.0
Peterborough	40.1	42.6
Kitchener	38.7	42.1
Winnipeg	38.0	42.0
Saint John	38.6	41.9
Greater Sudbury / Grand Sudbury	41.3	41.3
Ottawa - Gatineau	35.8	41.1
Saguenay	45.2	40.2
Guelph	35.2	40.2
Montréal	39.1	39.8
London	36.2	39.2
Kingston	32.8	36.1
Kelowna	33.0	36.0
Edmonton	34.2	34.5
Calgary	31.8	34.0
Victoria	30.0	33.5
Trois-Rivières	38.3	33.5
Québec	37.8	33.3
Halifax	30.7	33.2
Regina	32.5	32.9
Moncton	30.1	30.7
Saskatoon	27.0	28.4
Sherbrooke	26.4	25.3

Note: 2001 data for Barrie, Brantford, Guelph, Kelowna, Moncton and Peterborough are based on 2006 Census geographic boundaries.

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001 and 2006.

In contrast, all CMAs located in the province of Quebec had a proportion of young adults living in the parental home lower than the national average: Saguenay (40.2%), Montréal (39.8%), Trois-Rivières (33.5%), Québec (33.3%) and Sherbrooke (25.3%). These were also the CMAs which had the highest proportions of census families comprised of common-law couples. Results from the 2001 General Social Survey found that individuals who spent their youth in Quebec tend to be older than those in other provinces when they leave home, but they were also less likely to return home once independence had been achieved.¹⁹

Economic conditions in census metropolitan areas could also impact the likelihood of young adults being in the parental home. Some CMAs might have lower proportions of young adults at home where the economy is booming and people in their twenties can establish an independent household more easily. This could be the reason why the proportions in CMAs such as Edmonton (34.5%) and Calgary (34.0%) were below the national average.

Lower proportions of young adults aged 20 to 29 at home in CMAs such as Saskatoon (28.4%) and Regina (32.9%) likely reflect the out-migration of adults from these census metropolitan areas. Out-migration flows from Saskatchewan to Alberta have been important during the period 2001 to 2006.

Pattern observed for CMAs also true for mid-size urban centres

Just as for CMAs, the economic situation of mid-size urban centres is probably having an impact on young adults staying in the parental home as five of the 10 mid-size urban centres with the highest proportions of young adults at home are located in the Atlantic provinces where the economy is generally not as strong as in other provinces, such as Alberta. About six in 10 young adults in Cape Breton (Nova Scotia) and Bay Roberts (Newfoundland and Labrador) were living in the parental home in 2006, a proportion similar to what was observed in the Toronto CMA.

On the other hand, five of the 10 mid-size urban centres with the lowest proportions of young adults at home were located in Alberta, that is Grande Prairie, Brooks, Cold Lake, Lloydminster and Red Deer. The economic boom in this province could have contributed to more people being able to afford accommodations and a lifestyle independent from their parents.

19. Beaurpré, P., P. Turcotte and A. Milan. 2006. 'When is junior moving out? Transitions from the parental home to independence', *Canadian Social Trends*. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 11-008, Ottawa; Beaurpré, P., P. Turcotte and A. Milan. 2006. 'Junior comes back home: Trends and predictors of returning to the parental home', *Canadian Social Trends*. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 11-008, Ottawa.

Table 17 Proportion of young adults aged 20 to 29 living with their parents, mid-size urban areas, 2006

Order	Top 10 mid-size urban areas	Province	Proportion (in percentage)	Order	Bottom 10 mid-size urban areas	Province	Proportion (in percentage)
1	Cape Breton	N.S.	61.2	1	Petawawa	Ont.	16.2
2	Bay Roberts	N.L.	58.9	2	Fort St. John	B.C.	17.4
3	Norfolk	Ont.	56.0	3	Grande Prairie	Alta.	18.0
4	Grand Falls - Windsor	N.L.	54.7	3	Brooks	Alta.	18.0
5	Miramichi	N.B.	54.5	5	Cold Lake	Alta.	18.5
6	Kawartha Lakes	Ont.	53.8	6	Lloydminster	Alta.	19.7
7	Port Hope	Ont.	52.7	7	Red Deer	Alta.	21.1
8	Cobourg	Ont.	51.9	8	Brandon	Man.	22.0
9	Corner Brook	N.L.	51.8	9	Estevan	Sask.	22.8
10	Sault Ste. Marie	Ont.	51.4	10	Dawson Creek	B.C.	23.8

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2006.

Note to reader:

To obtain a copy of the maps referenced in this document, refer to the following link:
<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/analysis/famhouse/tables.cfm#maps>.

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared with the assistance of Statistics Canada's Demography Division, as well as staff members from Census Operations Division and Dissemination Division.