

Introduction

“Immigration, Language and Mobility” is the fourth data release from the 2006 Census of Canada, taken on May 16, 2006. Highlights of this release for Alberta are provided in the following.

Immigration and Foreign-Born

Canada received 1.1 million new immigrants, or 3.6% of its 31.2 million population between 2001 and 2006. A growing share of these recent immigrants chose to settle in Alberta. About 103,700 (or 9.3%) newcomers arrived in Alberta, up from 6.9% in the previous census in 2001. While immigrants who arrived years before chose to settle near good farmland, a higher proportion of recent immigrants decided to live in metropolitan areas. The Calgary CMA ranked fourth in 2006 in its share of recent immigrants, after Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. Calgary received 57,900 (or 5.2%) new immigrants in 2006, up from 3.8% in 2001. Edmonton welcomed 31,900 (or 2.9%) of all newcomers, up from 2.2% in 2001.

The 2006 Census enumerated 6,186,950 (19.8%) foreign-born people in Canada, nearly one in five of the country’s 31.2 million people. This represents the highest proportion since 1931 when 22.2% of the population was born outside of Canada. In 2006, Alberta had a total of 527,035 (or 16.2%) foreign-born population, the third highest proportion in Canada, after Ontario and British Columbia. Recent immigrants born in Asia made up the largest proportion of newcomers in this province. The top five nations of origin among recent immigrants settled in Alberta include: China (13,930), Philippines (11,145), India (10,990), Pakistan (6,150) and United States (4,370).

Language: Allophones on the rise

In 2006, the Anglophone population (whose mother tongue is English) were still the majority in Alberta, but their proportion declined like Francophones (French mother tongue). In contrast, the proportion of Allophone population (whose first language is neither English nor French) rose due to the rapid rise of new immigrants. According to the 2006 Census, Anglophones made up 80% of Alberta’s total population, followed by Allophones 18% and Francophones 2%. As presented in Table 1, the top five most common spoken languages at home (other than English and French) in Alberta are Chinese, German, Punjabi, Spanish and Filipino.

Table 1: Language Spoken at Home, Alberta, 2006

2006 Census	Number	%
Official Languages		
English	2,915,865	89.5%
French	21,350	0.7%
Unofficial Languages		
Chinese	71,920	2.2%
German	32,520	1.0%
Punjabi	27,475	0.8%
Spanish	16,065	0.5%
Filipino	14,730	0.5%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Canada

Mobility: Alberta Big Winner

Alberta was the first place winner in interprovincial migration in 2001-06. As shown in Table 2, a total of 226,865 persons moved here from other provinces between 2001 and 2006. During the same five-year period, a total of 138,690 Albertans moved to other provinces. The net gain of 88,175 to the Alberta total population came largely from Saskatchewan (20,795) and Ontario (19,655).

TABLE 2: ORIGIN AND DESTINATION OF INTERPROVINCIAL MIGRANTS, ALBERTA, 2001-06

	NFLD.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	QUE.	ONT.	MAN.	SASK.	B.C.	Yukon	N.W.T.	NVT.	TOTAL
Alberta-In From	11,355	1,345	12,625	7,765	9,750	49,455	19,595	37,430	72,680	1,455	3,105	310	226,865
Alberta-Out To	4,115	630	5,295	3,175	5,890	29,800	7,745	16,635	62,795	750	1,655	195	138,690
Net	7,240	715	7,330	4,590	3,860	19,655	11,850	20,795	9,885	705	1,450	115	88,175

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Canada