

Business Indicators ♦ July 2007

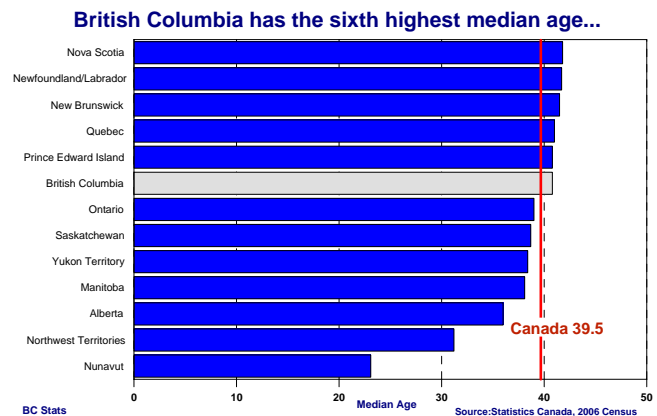
Ageing of the British Columbia Population

The population of British Columbia is ageing as the number of births decline relative to deaths and life expectancy increases. As this ageing progresses, the contribution of natural increase (births less deaths) to population growth becomes less significant, and migration, both interprovincial and international, becomes increasingly important as the driving force behind growth. Since migrants tend to be younger than the resident population, their addition to the province tends to slow the ageing process to a certain degree. Some areas of the province receive few migrants and are mainly dependent on natural increase for their growth, while other regions attract many migrants. The information recently released from the 2006 Census gives us a current snapshot of the age structure of the population in different parts of the province and shows the combined effects of these factors.

According to the 2006 Census, between 2001 and 2006, the provincial population grew by 5.3%. This was slightly lower than the national average of 5.4%, but higher than B.C.'s 1996–2001 growth rate of 4.9%.

For the first time, the Census reported British Columbia's median age (the age at which half the number of residents are older half are younger) passed 40 years old, measuring 40.8 years. Compared to other provinces and territories, B.C. had the sixth highest median age ('younger' than Quebec and the four Atlantic provinces), but it was older than the national average of 39.5. By this measure, Nova Scotia had the 'oldest' population structure (median age of 41.8), and Nunavut the 'youngest' (median age of 23.1).

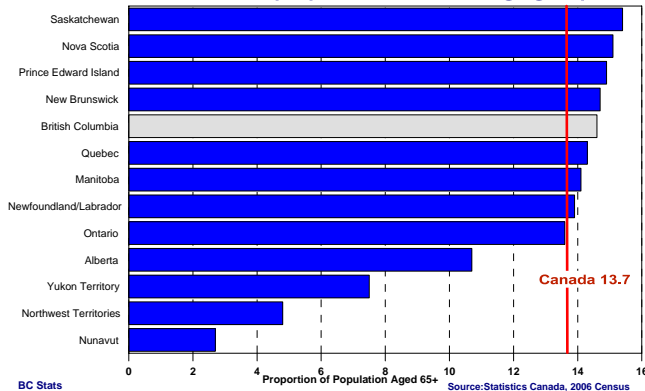
Looking at the population change by age group, growth was concentrated in the 45 and older age groups, with the older working-age population (ages 45–64) increasing 19.4% and seniors (ages 65 and over) increasing 12.5%. In 2006 the 45–64 age group



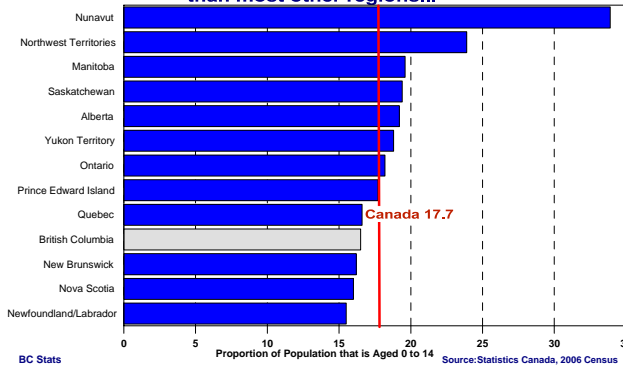
represented 28.4% of the total population, while the 65 and over group was 14.6%. The oldest seniors population (aged 80 and over) expanded by 23.7%, going from representing 3.4% of the total population in 2001 to 4.0% in 2006. In the last five years, the younger working-age population (ages 15–44) actually declined by 1.4% (from 43.2% in 2001 to 40.5%), while the population under 15 decreased by 3.7% (from 18.1% in 2001 to 16.5%). This decline in the youth population results from B.C.'s relatively low fertility rate, coupled with the fact that the baby-boom 'bulge' has aged out of the fertile age groups.

If we look across the country at the proportion of the population that is aged 65 and over, B.C. has the fifth highest, at 14.6% (while the national average is 13.7%). Saskatchewan has the highest proportion—at 15.4%—and Nunavut has the smallest (at 2.7%). All three Territories have under 10% of their population aged 65 and over, while all three of the four Atlantic provinces are above 14.6%. Given that the Canadian Institute for Health Information attributes 44% of recent provincial health expenditures to the 65 and over population, the significant growth rates in this age group is of great interest for the delivery of health services.

BC has the fifth oldest proportion of the 65+ age group...

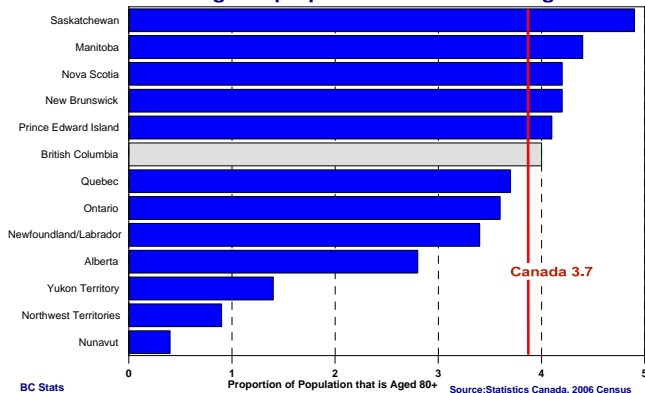


British Columbia has a smaller proportion of young people than most other regions...



Of the population in the ‘oldest seniors’ age group—aged 80 and over—B.C. ranks sixth among the provinces and territories. At a population percentage of 4%, B.C.’s proportion is greater than the Canadian average of 3.7%, with Saskatchewan again having the highest percentage at 4.9% and Nunavut the lowest (0.4%).

BC has the sixth highest proportion of the seniors aged 80+...



On the other hand, the proportion of the population of B.C. aged 0–14 is less than in most other areas of the country. At 16.5%, we have a lower proportion than the national average of 17.7%, and higher than three of the four Atlantic provinces. As noted earlier, B.C.’s proportion of 0–14 year olds declined between 2001 and 2006. Even though the number of 0–14’s has shown increases and decreases in numbers from census to census in the last 35 years, since 1961 the age group has dropped as a percentage of the total population.

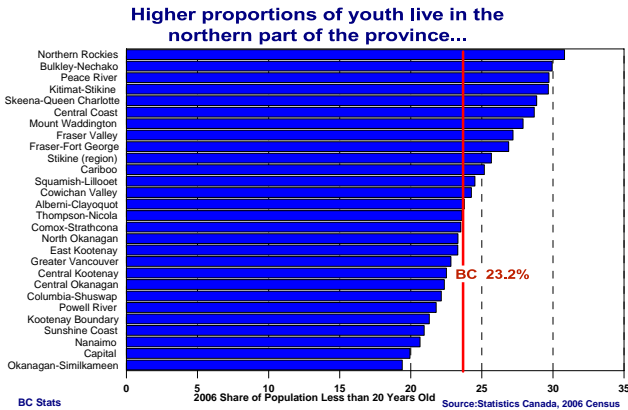
Regional Districts

Which parts of the province have the largest concentration of the different age groupings? The age structure of the province varies between the north and south, as factors such as the availability of different types of jobs, services required by different age groups, climate and so on play a role in the suitability of an area for people of different ages.

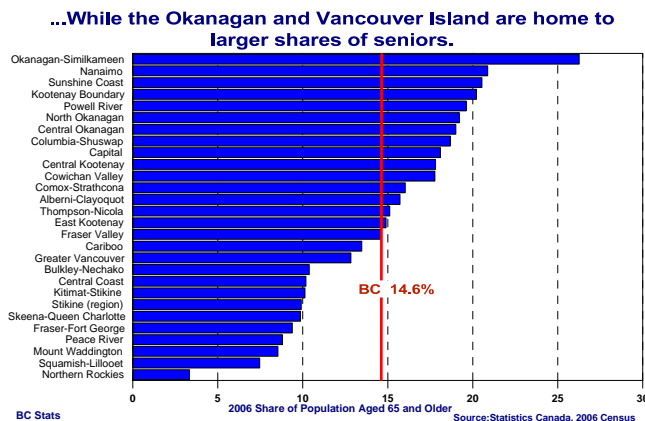
Regional District	2006 Age Structure				
	<20	20-44	45-64	65+	80+
Alberni-Clayoquot	23.8	29.0	31.6	15.7	3.8
Bulkley-Nechako	29.9	31.4	28.3	10.4	2.1
Capitol	19.9	32.2	29.7	18.1	6.4
Cariboo	25.2	29.2	32.1	13.5	2.6
Central Coast	28.7	32.4	28.4	10.2	1.7
Central Kootenay	22.5	26.9	32.7	17.8	4.6
Central Okanagan	22.4	30.3	28.3	19.0	5.2
Columbia-Shuswap	22.1	26.5	32.6	18.7	4.3
Comox-Strathcona	23.5	27.6	32.8	16.0	3.9
Cowichan Valley	24.3	26.6	31.3	17.8	4.8
East Kootenay	23.3	29.9	31.9	14.9	3.7
Fraser Valley	27.2	33.0	25.2	14.6	4.0
Fraser-Fort George	26.9	35.1	28.7	9.4	1.8
Greater Vancouver	22.8	37.1	27.2	12.8	3.6
Kitimat-Stikine	29.7	31.2	29.0	10.1	1.8
Kootenay Boundary	21.3	24.7	33.8	20.2	5.5
Mount Waddington	27.9	30.8	32.8	8.5	1.2
Nanaimo	20.7	26.8	31.7	20.9	5.6
North Okanagan	23.3	27.1	30.4	19.2	5.2
Northern Rockies	30.8	42.9	22.6	3.3	0.7
Okanagan-Similkameen	19.4	23.2	31.1	26.3	7.7
Peace River	29.7	36.8	24.7	8.8	1.8
Powell River	21.8	23.9	34.7	19.6	5.1
Skeena-Queen Charlotte	28.9	31.4	29.8	9.9	2.1
Squamish-Lillooet	24.5	43.1	24.9	7.5	1.5
Stikine (region)	25.7	31.5	31.5	9.9	1.4
Sunshine Coast	20.9	23.0	35.5	20.5	5.5
Thompson-Nicola	23.6	30.7	30.6	15.1	3.4
British Columbia	23.2	33.8	28.4	14.6	4.0

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Canada
Prepared by: BC Stats

Among the 28 Regional Districts, the Northern Rockies has almost 31% of their population who are less than 20 years old, while Okanagan-Similkameen and Capital have less than 20% of their population in this group.



On the other hand, Okanagan-Similkameen, as was the case in 2001, is the Regional District with the largest share of seniors (26.3% of its population), followed by Nanaimo and Sunshine Coast. At the other extreme, only 3.3% of Northern Rockies population, 7.5% of Squamish-Lillooet and 8.5% of Mount Waddington are over the age of 65.



Municipalities

At the time of the 2006 Census there were 157 incorporated municipalities in the province. Municipalities range in size from the City of Vancouver with over half a million people to municipalities that have a population of less than 1,000.

There are a number of municipalities that have traditionally had high concentrations of seniors. This has not changed dramatically in 2006 but Qualicum Beach, with 41.1% of its population 65 years of age and over, has continued to top the list of places with the largest proportion of seniors. The median age increased to a remarkable 60.9 years, with Keremeos close behind at 59.4 years. In 2006 Keremeos, Osoyoos, Sidney, and Oliver also had more than 35% of their population over the age of 65. At the other extreme, Telkwa, Anmore, and Taylor all have less than 3% of their population over 65 years old.

2006 Age Structure					
Municipality	Percent				
	<20	20-44	45-64	65+	80+
Oldest					
Qualicum Beach	13.8	13.4	31.7	41.1	11.1
Keremeos	15.1	16.3	29.1	40.7	11.2
Osoyoos	13.1	16.7	33.0	36.9	9.9
Sidney	16.3	20.7	27.5	35.4	16.3
Oliver	18.6	19.5	26.9	35.2	11.4
Parksville	17.1	20.1	29.2	33.6	10.3
Creston	17.7	20.8	28.4	33.2	11.4
Chase	19.5	21.0	28.9	30.8	8.3
New Denver	16.7	15.7	39.2	29.4	10.8
Greenwood	15.2	17.6	39.2	28.8	3.2
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Port McNeil	29.7	33.7	30.5	5.5	0.6
Smithers	30.4	33.6	25	11.1	3.4
Fort Nelson	30.5	44.9	21.4	3.1	0.8
Terrace	30.5	31.8	26.8	11	2.6
Burns Lake	31.1	35.2	20.9	13.1	4.5
Chetwynd	31.3	37.2	24.1	7.6	1.5
Vanderhoof	31.4	33.4	24.4	11.3	2.6
Taylor	31.4	39.7	23.5	5.8	1.1
Anmore	33.3	33.9	26.6	5.9	0.6
Telkwa	34.7	33.2	25.9	6.6	1.5
Youngest					
British Columbia	23.2	33.8	28.4	14.6	4.0

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Canada
Prepared by: BC Stats

A number of northern communities have the highest proportion of children: Telkwa (36%), Fort Nelson, New Hazelton and Chetwynd (34%). Communities with relatively few children are in many cases those with a large share of seniors, such as White Rock, Osoyoos and Qualicum Beach.

Data on mobility and migration, available in December 2007, will provide information on how these factors have influenced population growth and the age structure of different parts of the province, and will be covered in future Census Fast Fact releases.

	Total			
	Median Age	2006 counts	% distribution (2006)	% change (2001-2006)
Canada	39.5	31,612,895	100	5.4
Newfoundland and Labrador	41.7	505,470	100	-1.5
Prince Edward Island	40.8	135,855	100	0.4
Nova Scotia	41.8	913,460	100	0.6
New Brunswick	41.5	729,995	100	0.1
Quebec	41.0	7,546,135	100	4.3
Ontario	39.0	12,160,280	100	6.6
Manitoba	38.1	1,148,400	100	2.6
Saskatchewan	38.7	968,155	100	-1.1
Alberta	36.0	3,290,350	100	10.6
British Columbia	40.8	4,113,485	100	5.3
Yukon Territory	38.4	30,375	100	5.9
Northwest Territories	31.2	41,465	100	11.0
Nunavut	23.1	29,475	100	10.2

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

	Age Group: 0 to 14			Age group: 15 to 64		
	2006 counts	% distribution (2006)	% change (2001-2006)	2006 counts	% distribution (2006)	% change (2001-2006)
Canada	5,579,835	17.7	-2.5	21,697,805	68.6	6.4
Newfoundland and Labrador	78,230	15.5	-11.9	356,975	70.6	-1.1
Prince Edward Island	23,985	17.7	-10.0	91,685	67.5	1.8
Nova Scotia	146,435	16.0	-11.3	628,815	68.8	2.0
New Brunswick	118,255	16.2	-9.1	504,110	69.1	0.7
Quebec	1,252,510	16.6	-3.0	5,213,335	69.1	4.6
Ontario	2,210,800	18.2	-1.0	8,300,300	68.3	7.7
Manitoba	225,175	19.6	-3.7	761,340	66.3	4.4
Saskatchewan	187,695	19.4	-9.4	631,155	65.2	1.1
Alberta	631,515	19.2	2.3	2,305,425	70.1	12.5
British Columbia	679,605	16.5	-3.7	2,834,075	68.9	6.2
Yukon Territory	5,720	18.8	-5.2	22,365	73.6	7.0
Northwest Territories	9,920	23.9	-1.9	29,570	71.3	15.4
Nunavut	10,000	33.9	0.8	18,660	63.3	15.0
	Age group: 65 and over			Age group: 80 and over		
	2006 counts	% distribution (2006)	% change (2001-2006)	2006 counts	% distribution (2006)	% change (2001-2006)
Canada	4,335,255	13.7	11.5	1,167,310	3.7	25.2
Newfoundland and Labrador	70,265	13.9	11.4	17,075	3.4	14.1
Prince Edward Island	20,185	14.9	8.7	5,610	4.1	9.0
Nova Scotia	138,210	15.1	9.2	38,480	4.2	12.4
New Brunswick	107,635	14.7	8.8	30,305	4.2	16.3
Quebec	1,080,285	14.3	12.6	276,055	3.7	28.4
Ontario	1,649,180	13.6	12.0	442,080	3.6	29.9
Manitoba	161,890	14.1	3.5	50,290	4.4	13.8
Saskatchewan	149,305	15.4	1.2	47,920	4.9	8.5
Alberta	353,410	10.7	14.6	92,615	2.8	26.5
British Columbia	599,810	14.6	12.5	165,980	4.0	23.7
Yukon Territory	2,290	7.5	32.4	420	1.4	40.0
Northwest Territories	1,975	4.8	20.8	385	0.9	28.3
Nunavut	810	2.7	35.0	105	0.4	31.3

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