
Census in Brief

Canada's fastest growing and decreasing municipalities from 2016 to 2021

Census of Population, 2021



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Canada's fastest growing and decreasing municipalities from 2016 to 2021

Highlights

Municipalities with at least 5,000 inhabitants

- The municipality of Toronto, the largest in the country, had a population of almost 2.8 million people, while Montréal (1.8 million), Calgary (1.3 million), Edmonton (1 million) and Ottawa (1 million) completed the list of Canada's municipalities home to more than 1 million people.
- Canada continues to urbanize. With population growth rates reaching up to 10.6%, 18 of the 25 largest municipalities grew at a faster pace than Canada overall (+5.2%) from 2016 to 2021, further indicating that the country is becoming more urban.
- Topping the list of the fastest-growing municipalities with at least 5,000 inhabitants in Canada was East Gwillimbury (+44.4%), a municipality on the outskirts of the Toronto census metropolitan area (CMA), evidence of the ongoing urban spread in the Toronto area.
- From 2016 to 2021, the population declined in 121 of the 737 Canadian municipalities with at least 5,000 inhabitants, or about 1 in 6 (16%). A fewer share of municipalities had population declines from 2016 to 2021 compared with 2011 to 2016 (18% of the total).

Introduction

The population size and growth rate of municipalities are key indicators to help municipal policy makers and administrators plan the direct services and infrastructure their population needs, such as emergency services, schools, hospitals, roads, social services and parks. One of the strengths of the Census of Population is that it provides reliable data on these topics at the community level.

This document highlights the municipalities in Canada that grew the fastest between the 2016 and 2021 censuses, as well as the municipalities whose population decreased the most. The document is part of the first release of 2021 Census data. Over the coming months, many other releases will continue to provide detailed information on Canadian communities, including the socio-demographic and ethnocultural fabrics of their populations.

Did you know?

Municipalities are also called [census subdivisions](#).

For trends at the national, provincial and territorial, and regional (census metropolitan area and census agglomeration) levels, readers are encouraged to consult the *Daily* articles entitled "[Canada tops G7 growth despite COVID](#)" and "[Canada's large urban centres continue to grow and spread](#)"

For detailed data tables of population size and growth for all municipalities in Canada, as well as at other geographical levels, readers are encouraged to consult [Population and Dwelling Count Highlight Tables](#).

Readers can also consult two sets of detailed [thematic maps](#) showing population growth rates from 2016 to 2021: the first set shows the growth of municipalities located in each province and territory, and the second set shows the growth in the 41 largest urban centres (also called census metropolitan areas), by neighbourhoods (also called census tracts).

Canada's fastest growing and decreasing municipalities from 2016 to 2021

The fastest growing municipalities are inside or close to urban areas

Topping the list of the fastest-growing municipalities in Canada was East Gwillimbury (+44.4%), a municipality on the outskirts of the Toronto CMA, evidence of the ongoing urban spread in the Toronto area.

Three other suburban municipalities surrounding Toronto also had among the 25 highest growth rates in the country: New Tecumseth (+28.3%), Bradford West Gwillimbury (+21.4%) and Milton (+20.7%). These growth rates were over four times that of the Toronto CMA as a whole (+4.6%).

In addition to East Gwillimbury and New Tecumseth, the population of five other suburban municipalities on the outskirts of large urban centres were also among the 10 fastest growing: Langford (+31.8%) in the Victoria CMA, Saint-Apollinaire (+30.4%) in the Québec CMA, Niverville (+29.0%) and West St. Paul (+24.5%) in the Winnipeg CMA, as well as Thorold (+26.7%) in the St. Catharines–Niagara CMA.

Did you know? Urban spread continues

In 2021, urban spread continued in Canada's urban centres as the population growth of many suburban cities outpaced the growth occurring elsewhere.

From 2016 to 2021, most of the 25 municipalities¹ with the highest population growth were located within large and small urban centres, or close to them.

Large urban areas have a population of at least 100,000 inhabitants, and often comprise many municipalities. For example, the CMA of Toronto in Ontario includes many municipalities in addition to the city of Toronto, such as Mississauga, Brampton, Markham, Vaughan and Richmond Hill.

Smaller urban centres have a population of at least 10,000 inhabitants, and can also comprise a few municipalities. For example, the CA of Granby in Quebec includes the municipalities of Granby, Bromont, Roxton Pond, Saint-Alphonse-de-Granby and Saint-Paul-d'Abbotsford.

Table 1
Population and growth rate, 25 municipalities (census subdivisions) with at least 5,000 inhabitants with the highest rate of population growth, 2016 and 2021

Rank	Municipality	Province	CMA/CA in which the municipality is located or type of municipality*	Population		
				2016 number	2021	Growth from 2016 to 2021 percent
1	East Gwillimbury	Ontario	CMA of Toronto	23,991	34,637	44.4
2	The Blue Mountains	Ontario	Close to a CMA or CA	7,025	9,390	33.7
3	Langford	British Columbia	CMA of Victoria	35,342	46,584	31.8
4	Saint-Apollinaire	Quebec	CMA of Québec	6,110	7,968	30.4
5	Niverville	Manitoba	CMA of Winnipeg	4,610	5,947	29.0
6	Southern Gulf Islands	British Columbia	Farther away from a CMA or CA	4,732	6,101	28.9
7	New Tecumseth	Ontario	CMA of Toronto	34,242	43,948	28.3

1. Municipalities with at least 5,000 inhabitants were considered in this article.

Canada's fastest growing and decreasing municipalities from 2016 to 2021

Table 1

Population and growth rate, 25 municipalities (census subdivisions) with at least 5,000 inhabitants with the highest rate of population growth, 2016 and 2021

Rank	Municipality	Province	CMA/CA in which the municipality is located or type of municipality*	Population		
				2016 number	2021	Growth from 2016 to 2021 percent
8	Thorold	Ontario	CMA of St. Catharines - Niagara	18,801	23,816	26.7
9	Bromont	Quebec	CA of Granby	9,041	11,357	25.6
10	West St. Paul	Manitoba	CMA of Winnipeg	5,368	6,682	24.5
11	Cochrane	Alberta	CMA of Calgary	25,853	32,199	24.5
12	Carignan	Quebec	CMA of Montréal	9,462	11,740	24.1
13	Neepawa	Manitoba	Farther away from a CMA or CA	4,609	5,685	23.3
14	Cornwall	Prince Edward Island	CA of Charlottetown	5,348	6,574	22.9
15	Seguin	Ontario	Farther away from a CMA or CA	4,304	5,280	22.7
16	Lake Country	British Columbia	CMA of Kelowna	12,922	15,817	22.4
17	Squamish	British Columbia	CA of Squamish	19,497	23,819	22.2
18	Bradford West Gwillimbury	Ontario	CMA of Toronto	35,325	42,880	21.4
19	Saint-Zotique	Quebec	CMA of Montréal	7,934	9,618	21.2
20	Mirabel	Quebec	CMA of Montréal	50,513	61,108	21.0
21	Lucan Biddulph	Ontario	Close to a CMA or CA	4,700	5,680	20.9
22	Milton	Ontario	CMA of Toronto	110,128	132,979	20.7
23	Wolfville	Nova Scotia	Farther away from a CMA or CA	4,195	5,057	20.5
24	Wasaga Beach	Ontario	CA of Wasaga Beach	20,675	24,862	20.3
25	Airdrie	Alberta	CMA of Calgary	61,581	74,100	20.3

* For municipalities outside CMAs or CAs, the categories in this table are based on Statistics Canada's statistical area classification of [census metropolitan area influenced zone \(MIZ\)](#). Census subdivisions (CSDs) located "close to a CMA or CA" are CSDs classified as having strong metropolitan influence, and CSDs located "farther away from a CMA or CA" are CSDs classified as having moderate, weak, or no metropolitan influence, as well as those located within a territory.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population.

The Blue Mountains (+33.7%) in Ontario, Southern Gulf Islands (+28.9%) in British Columbia and Bromont (+25.6%) in Quebec rounded out the list of the 10 fastest growing municipalities. These tourist municipalities or resort cities are not necessarily located in a large urban centre, but often nearby. They are popular vacation and leisure sites located close to ski hills and also offer activities during the summer such as mountain biking or water parks, or navigable bodies of water. Their outdoor facilities and their optimal location may have attracted new residents – young retirees or those able to work from home given the COVID-19 pandemic – in search of greater proximity to nature and outdoor activities. Some people already having a second residence there may also have chosen to make it their primary home since the start of the pandemic.

On another note, the overall faster population growth from 2016 to 2021 of peripheral municipalities (+6.9%) compared with central municipalities (+5.5%) located at the core of CMAs further demonstrates urban spread (Table 2).

Canada's fastest growing and decreasing municipalities from 2016 to 2021

Did you know? Distinguishing central and peripheral municipalities is useful to assess urban spread

A central municipality is defined as the municipality that lends its name to the corresponding CMA or CA. All other municipalities within a CMA or CA, except the central municipality, are called peripheral municipalities.

For example, Toronto is the central municipality of the Toronto CMA. Other municipalities located within the Toronto CMA, such as Mississauga and Brampton, are peripheral municipalities.

Using data from the census of population and distinguishing between central and peripheral municipalities is useful for assessing some phenomena such as urban spread.

Table 2
Population and growth rate, central and peripheral municipalities (census subdivisions) included in census metropolitan areas, 2016 and 2021

Region	Municipalities	Population		Growth from 2016 to 2021
		2016	2021	
		number		percent
Central municipalities	47	15,155,187	15,985,225	5.5
Peripheral municipalities	532	10,563,313	11,295,894	6.9
Total	579	25,718,500	27,281,119	6.1

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population.

Strong population growth in suburban municipalities located close to or in urban areas is frequently fuelled by an influx of young adults leaving the core of large urban areas to live on their own and often to start a family. Peripheral municipalities located close to central municipalities, such as Mississauga in the Toronto CMA and Laval in the Montréal CMA usually gain migrants from the central municipality, but at the same time, they also lose migrants to more distant suburbs, such as Milton and Mirabel, also in the Toronto and Montréal CMAs. Ultimately, the rapid growth of more distant suburbs is the result of multiple nested migration patterns occurring as people relocate from the centre of large urban centres to the periphery.

As well, other Canadians may be drawn to more distant suburbs by lower housing prices, greater availability of residential developments or a desire to live closer to nature. With the increased ability to telework and the less frequent need to commute since the onset of the pandemic, some may have chosen to relocate to more distant suburbs where housing can provide more space for less cost than in central municipalities².

Furthermore, several municipalities that experienced a decrease in their population from 2011 to 2016 saw their population grow slightly or remain relatively stable from 2016 to 2021, particularly in the Maritimes, Quebec and Ontario.

These include, for example, the municipalities of New Glasgow, Nova Scotia (+4.4% from 2016 to 2021 versus -5.1% from 2011 to 2016); Mont-Joli, Quebec (+1.6% versus -5.8%); and Elliot Lake, Ontario (+5.9% versus -5.3%). These reversals were often driven by more people relocating to these municipalities from within their province or from elsewhere in the country.

2. Refer to [Price trends and outlook in key Canadian housing markets](#)

Canada's fastest growing and decreasing municipalities from 2016 to 2021

The COVID-19 pandemic and population growth of municipalities

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the lives of Canadians in many ways. Population dynamics of municipalities were also affected, either by guidelines and rules issued during the pandemic, or by personal choices made by Canadians.

For example, full-time remote work has created opportunities for many Canadians to live in more distant suburbs or rural areas that would not have been deemed a viable option before the onset of the pandemic.

Between censuses, annual data from the Demographic Estimates Program of Statistics Canada are very useful to monitor emerging population trends. Findings show that the pandemic has not reversed or drastically reshaped municipal population growth trends in most cases.

However, some trends that developed before the pandemic have accelerated, including higher population growth in more distant suburbs of urban areas as well as in many municipalities in the Maritimes. Memramcook and Burton in New Brunswick, as well as Argyle, Annapolis, Subd. A, and Pictou, Subd. B in Nova Scotia are a few examples of municipalities within the Maritimes that had annual population growth rates in 2020/2021 of at least three times larger than their average growth rates from 2016 to 2021. Likewise, municipalities located just outside urban centres in Ontario and Quebec saw similar accelerations specific to 2020/2021 in their growth rate, such as Scugog in Ontario and Lac Brome in Quebec.

High population growth also seen among Canada's largest municipalities

As of 2021, there were 27 municipalities in Canada, all located within the country's large urban centres, with more than 200,000 inhabitants and the top 25 are shown in Table 3. Together, these 25 municipalities have a combined population of over 16 million people, representing 44.1% of the total population living in Canada.

With growth rates reaching up to 10.6%, 18 of the 25 largest municipalities grew at a faster pace than the country as a whole (+5.2%) from 2016 to 2021, further indicating that Canada is becoming more urban. However, Canada's two largest municipalities—Toronto (+2.3%) and Montréal (+3.4%)—grew at a slower pace than Canada overall.

Brampton (+10.6%), within the Toronto CMA, had the highest growth among these 25 fastest-growing municipalities, illustrative of the trend of the population in peripheral municipalities increasing faster than central municipalities.

Ottawa and Edmonton top the 1 million mark

The municipality of Toronto (+2.3%), the largest in the country, had a population of almost 2.8 million people, while Montréal (+3.4%), Calgary (+5.5%), Edmonton (+8.3%) and Ottawa (+8.9%) topped 1 million. Edmonton and Ottawa surpassed the 1 million mark between the 2016 and the 2021 censuses.

Canada's fastest growing and decreasing municipalities from 2016 to 2021

Table 3
Population and growth rate of the 25 largest municipalities (census subdivisions) in 2016 and 2021

Rank	Municipality	Province	Census metropolitan area in which the municipality is located	Population		Growth from 2016 to 2021 percent
				2016 number	2021 number	
1	Toronto	Ontario	Toronto	2,731,571	2,794,356	2.3
2	Montréal	Quebec	Montréal	1,704,694	1,762,949	3.4
3	Calgary	Alberta	Calgary	1,239,220	1,306,784	5.5
4	Ottawa	Ontario	Ottawa–Gatineau	934,243	1,017,449	8.9
5	Edmonton	Alberta	Edmonton	933,088	1,010,899	8.3
6	Winnipeg	Manitoba	Winnipeg	705,244	749,607	6.3
7	Mississauga	Ontario	Toronto	721,599	717,961	-0.5
8	Vancouver	British Columbia	Vancouver	631,486	662,248	4.9
9	Brampton	Ontario	Toronto	593,638	656,480	10.6
10	Hamilton	Ontario	Hamilton	536,917	569,353	6.0
11	Surrey	British Columbia	Vancouver	517,887	568,322	9.7
12	Québec	Quebec	Québec	531,902	549,459	3.3
13	Halifax	Nova Scotia	Halifax	403,131	439,819	9.1
14	Laval	Quebec	Montréal	422,993	438,366	3.6
15	London	Ontario	London	383,822	422,324	10.0
16	Markham	Ontario	Toronto	328,966	338,503	2.9
17	Vaughan	Ontario	Toronto	306,233	323,103	5.5
18	Gatineau	Quebec	Ottawa–Gatineau	276,245	291,041	5.4
19	Saskatoon	Saskatchewan	Saskatoon	247,201	266,141	7.7
20	Kitchener	Ontario	Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	233,222	256,885	10.1
21	Longueuil	Quebec	Montréal	239,897	254,483	6.1
22	Burnaby	British Columbia	Vancouver	232,755	249,125	7.0
23	Windsor	Ontario	Windsor	217,188	229,660	5.7
24	Regina	Saskatchewan	Regina	215,106	226,404	5.3
25	Oakville	Ontario	Toronto	193,832	213,759	10.3

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population.

Canada's fastest growing and decreasing municipalities from 2016 to 2021

Municipalities with a population decrease often located far from large urban centres, with many in Alberta

From 2016 to 2021, the population declined in 121 of the 737 Canadian municipalities with at least 5,000 inhabitants, or about 1 in 6 (16%).

Population decreased in fewer municipalities in this five-year period compared with 2011 to 2016 (18% of the total). This is consistent with the acceleration of population growth nationally from 2016 to 2021.

Table 4
Population and growth rate, 25 municipalities (census subdivisions) with at least 5,000 inhabitants with the highest rate of population decline, 2016 and 2021

Rank	Municipality	Province or territory	CMA/CA in which the municipality is located or type of municipality*	Population		
				2016 number	2021	Growth from 2016 to 2021 percent
1	Athabasca County	Alberta	Farther away from a CMA or CA	7,869	6,959	-11.6
2	Peace River C	British Columbia	CA of Fort St. John	6,667	5,947	-10.8
3	Lac la Biche County	Alberta	Farther away from a CMA or CA	8,330	7,673	-7.9
4	Brazeau County	Alberta	Farther away from a CMA or CA	7,771	7,179	-7.6
5	Barrhead County No. 11	Alberta	Farther away from a CMA or CA	6,288	5,877	-6.5
6	Greenview No. 16	Alberta	Farther away from a CMA or CA	9,154	8,584	-6.2
7	Estevan	Saskatchewan	CA of Estevan	11,483	10,851	-5.5
8	Vermilion River County	Alberta	Farther away from a CMA or CA	8,453	7,994	-5.4
9	Yellowhead County	Alberta	Farther away from a CMA or CA	10,995	10,426	-5.2
10	Sainte-Anne-des-Monts	Quebec	Farther away from a CMA or CA	6,437	6,121	-4.9
11	Colchester, Subd. C	Nova Scotia	CA of Truro	13,098	12,476	-4.7
12	Dryden	Ontario	Farther away from a CMA or CA	7,749	7,388	-4.7
13	Thompson	Manitoba	CA of Thompson	13,678	13,035	-4.7
14	Peace River B	British Columbia	Close to a CMA or CA	5,628	5,379	-4.4
15	Stettler	Alberta	Farther away from a CMA or CA	5,952	5,695	-4.3
16	Clare	Nova Scotia	Farther away from a CMA or CA	8,018	7,678	-4.2
17	Port-Cartier	Quebec	Farther away from a CMA or CA	6,799	6,516	-4.2
18	Bayham	Ontario	Close to a CMA or CA	7,396	7,096	-4.1
19	Iqaluit	Nunavut	Farther away from a CMA or CA	7,740	7,429	-4.0

Canada's fastest growing and decreasing municipalities from 2016 to 2021

Table 4

Population and growth rate, 25 municipalities (census subdivisions) with at least 5,000 inhabitants with the highest rate of population decline, 2016 and 2021

Rank	Municipality	Province or territory	CMA/CA in which the municipality is located or type of municipality*	Population		
				2016 number	2021	Growth from 2016 to 2021 percent
20	Baie-Comeau	Quebec	CA of Baie-Comeau	21,536	20,687	-3.9
21	Didsbury	Alberta	Farther away from a CMA or CA	5,268	5,070	-3.8
22	Kirkland	Quebec	CMA of Montréal	20,151	19,413	-3.7
23	Chibougamau	Quebec	Farther away from a CMA or CA	7,504	7,233	-3.6
24	Dolbeau-Mistassini	Quebec	CA of Dolbeau-Mistassini	14,212	13,718	-3.5
25	Fort Frances	Ontario	Farther away from a CMA or CA	7,739	7,466	-3.5

* For municipalities outside CMAs or CAs, the categories in this table are based on Statistics Canada's statistical area classification of [census metropolitan area influenced zone \(MIZ\)](#). Census subdivisions (CSDs) located "close to a CMA or CA" are CSDs classified as having strong metropolitan influence, and CSDs located "farther away from a CMA or CA" are CSDs classified as having moderate, weak, or no metropolitan influence, as well as those located within a territory.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population.

In contrast to the municipalities with the most sustained growth rates, those with the highest rates of population decline were more often located outside of CMAs or CAs, including several in remote areas.

Over half of the 25 municipalities with the largest population declines from 2016 to 2021 were in Western Canada (13 of 25), particularly Alberta (9 of 25). This reflects the lower population growth in Alberta from 2016 to 2021 compared with previous census cycles. Recent economic conditions help explain why several Alberta municipalities had among the highest population declines nationally. In particular, lower oil prices and higher unemployment³ in the province from 2016 to 2021 preceded the slowdown of population growth. From 2011 to 2016, only 2 municipalities in Alberta were among the 25 municipalities with the greatest declines, compared with 21 in Atlantic Canada, Quebec and Ontario.

The social and economic vitality of the most remote municipalities frequently depends on specific industries, often oriented towards natural resources. Consequently, population growth in such areas is closely linked to structural changes affecting those industries, such as price changes or shifts in the supply and demand for primary goods. As a result, remote municipalities tend to have older populations and to post low or negative growth. This situation is linked to the fact that they frequently record more deaths than births, they welcome few immigrants and are often characterized by out-migration of young adults to elsewhere in the country.

3. Gellatly, Guy and Richards, Elizabeth, 2016. [Recent Developments in the Canadian Economy: Fall 2016](#) in Economic Insights, Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 11-626.

Canada's fastest growing and decreasing municipalities from 2016 to 2021

Municipalities with the highest rates of population growth or rates of population decline, by province and territory

The table below shows the five municipalities with the highest population growth rates and the five with the highest population decline rates for each province and territory.

Over the coming months, the next releases of the Census of Population will enhance the socio-demographic portrait of Canada's municipalities. As well, the Demographic Estimates Program will be useful to monitor population trends between censuses, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 5
Population and growth rate, five municipalities (census subdivisions) with at least 5,000 inhabitants with the highest rate of population growth, 2016 to 2021

Province or territory	Rank	Municipality	Highest rate of population growth		
			Population		Growth from 2016 to 2021
			2016	2021		percent
			number		
Newfoundland and Labrador	1	Paradise	21,389	22,957	7.3
	2	Clareville	6,291	6,704	6.6
	3	Conception Bay South	26,199	27,168	3.7
	4	Portugal Cove-St. Philip's	8,147	8,415	3.3
	5	Labrador City	7,220	7,412	2.7
Prince Edward Island	1	Cornwall	5,348	6,574	22.9
	2	Stratford	9,711	10,927	12.5
	3	Three Rivers	7,169	7,883	10.0
	4	Summerside	14,839	16,001	7.8
	5	Charlottetown	36,094	38,809	7.5
Nova Scotia	1	Wolfville	4,195	5,057	20.5
	2	Halifax	403,131	439,819	9.1
	3	Antigonish, Subd. A	8,278	8,963	8.3
	4	Cumberland, Subd. C	5,268	5,694	8.1
	5	Kentville	6,271	6,630	5.7
New Brunswick	1	Sackville (Town)	5,331	6,099	14.4
	2	Shediac	6,664	7,535	13.1
	3	Dieppe	25,384	28,114	10.8
	4	Moncton (City)	71,889	79,470	10.5
	5	Moncton (Parish)	9,811	10,704	9.1
Quebec	1	Saint-Apollinaire	6,110	7,968	30.4
	2	Bromont	9,041	11,357	25.6
	3	Carignan	9,462	11,740	24.1
	4	Saint-Zotique	7,934	9,618	21.2
	5	Mirabel	50,513	61,108	21.0
Ontario	1	East Gwillimbury	23,991	34,637	44.4
	2	The Blue Mountains	7,025	9,390	33.7
	3	New Tecumseth	34,242	43,948	28.3
	4	Thorold	18,801	23,816	26.7
	5	Sequin	4,304	5,280	22.7

Canada's fastest growing and decreasing municipalities from 2016 to 2021

Table 5
Population and growth rate, five municipalities (census subdivisions) with at least 5,000 inhabitants with the highest rate of population growth, 2016 to 2021

Province or territory	Rank	Municipality	Highest rate of population growth		
			Population		Growth from 2016 to 2021
			2016	2021		percent
			number		
Manitoba	1	Niverville	4,610	5,947	29.0
	2	West St. Paul	5,368	6,682	24.5
	3	Neepawa	4,609	5,685	23.3
	4	Morden	8,668	9,929	14.5
	5	Macdonald	7,162	8,120	13.4
Saskatchewan	1	Warman	11,020	12,419	12.7
	2	Martensville	9,655	10,549	9.3
	3	Saskatoon	247,201	266,141	7.7
	4	Regina	215,106	226,404	5.3
	5	Prince Albert	35,926	37,756	5.1
Alberta	1	Cochrane	25,853	32,199	24.5
	2	Airdrie	61,581	74,100	20.3
	3	Beaumont	17,457	20,888	19.7
	4	Mackenzie County	11,171	12,804	14.6
	5	Canmore	13,992	15,990	14.3
British Columbia	1	Langford	35,342	46,584	31.8
	2	Southern Gulf Islands	4,732	6,101	28.9
	3	Lake Country	12,922	15,817	22.4
	4	Squamish	19,497	23,819	22.2
	5	Tsinstikeptum 9	7,612	9,134	20.0
Yukon	1	Macpherson-Grizzly Valley	1,245	1,540	23.7
	2	Dawson	1,375	1,577	14.7
	3	Whitehorse	25,085	28,201	12.4
	4	Yukon, Unorganized	1,388	1,496	7.8
	5	Watson Lake	1,083	1,133	4.6
Northwest Territories	1	Yellowknife	19,569	20,340	3.9
Nunavut	1	Igloolik	1,744	2,049	17.5
	2	Coral Harbour	891	1,035	16.2
	3	Sanikiluaq	882	1,010	14.5
	4	Naujaat	1,082	1,225	13.2
	5	Clyde River	1,053	1,181	12.2

Note: For the territories, municipalities with at least 1,000 inhabitants in 2021 were included in this table. Northwest Territories had only one municipality of at least 1,000 inhabitants with a positive population growth rate.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population.

Canada's fastest growing and decreasing municipalities from 2016 to 2021

Table 6
Population and growth rate, five municipalities (census subdivisions) with at least 5,000 inhabitants with the highest rate of population decline, 2016 to 2021

Province or territory	Rank	Municipality	Highest rate of population decline		
			Population		Growth from 2016 to 2021
			2016	2021		percent
			number		
Newfoundland and Labrador	1	Mount Pearl	23,120	22,477	-2.8
	2	Corner Brook	19,806	19,333	-2.4
	3	Grand Falls-Windsor	14,171	13,853	-2.2
	4	Marystown	5,316	5,204	-2.1
	5	Stephenville	6,623	6,540	-1.3
Prince Edward Island	..	..	..	..	..
Nova Scotia	1	Colchester, Subd. C	13,098	12,476	-4.7
	2	Clare	8,018	7,678	-4.2
	3	Antigonish, Subd. B	6,306	6,138	-2.7
	4	Barrington	6,646	6,523	-1.9
	5	Cumberland, Subd. B	6,859	6,786	-1.1
New Brunswick	1	Grand Falls / Grand-Sault	5,326	5,220	-2.0
	2	Oromocto	9,223	9,045	-1.9
	3	Edmundston	16,580	16,437	-0.9
	4	Beresford (Parish)	6,248	6,226	-0.4
	5	Tracadie	16,114	16,043	-0.4
Quebec	1	Sainte-Anne-des-Monts	6,437	6,121	-4.9
	2	Port-Cartier	6,799	6,516	-4.2
	3	Baie-Comeau	21,536	20,687	-3.9
	4	Kirkland	20,151	19,413	-3.7
	5	Chibougamau	7,504	7,233	-3.6
Ontario	1	Dryden	7,749	7,388	-4.7
	2	Bayham	7,396	7,096	-4.1
	3	Fort Frances	7,739	7,466	-3.5
	4	Kirkland Lake	7,981	7,750	-2.9
	5	Temiskaming Shores	9,920	9,634	-2.9
Manitoba	1	Thompson	13,678	13,035	-4.7
	2	Rhineland	5,945	5,819	-2.1
	3	St. Andrews	11,913	11,723	-1.6
	4	Portage la Prairie (Rural municipality)	6,975	6,888	-1.2
	5	Portage la Prairie (City)	13,304	13,270	-0.3
Saskatchewan	1	Estevan	11,483	10,851	-5.5
	2	North Battleford (City)	14,315	13,836	-3.3
	3	Moose Jaw	33,910	33,665	-0.7
	4	Melfort	5,992	5,955	-0.6
	5	Meadow Lake	5,344	5,322	-0.4

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Province or territory	Rank	Municipality	Highest rate of population decline		
			Population		Growth from 2016 to 2021
			2016	2021		percent
			number		
Alberta	1	Athabasca County	7,869	6,959	-11.6
	2	Lac la Biche County	8,330	7,673	-7.9
	3	Brazeau County	7,771	7,179	-7.6
	4	Barrhead County No. 11	6,288	5,877	-6.5
	5	Greenview No. 16	9,154	8,584	-6.2
British Columbia	1	Peace River C	6,667	5,947	-10.8
	2	Peace River B	5,628	5,379	-4.4
	3	Merritt	7,139	7,051	-1.2
	4	Cariboo A	6,234	6,169	-1.0
	5	Esquimalt (District Municipality)	17,655	17,533	-0.7
Yukon	..	..	..	..	..
Northwest Territories	1	Fort Smith	2,542	2,248	-11.6
	2	Hay River	3,528	3,169	-10.2
	3	Fort Simpson	1,202	1,100	-8.5
	4	Behchokò	1,874	1,746	-6.8
	5	Inuvik	3,243	3,137	-3.3
Nunavut	1	Kugluktuk	1,491	1,382	-7.3
	2	Iqaluit	7,740	7,429	-4.0
	3	Pond Inlet	1,617	1,555	-3.8
	4	Cape Dorset	1,441	1,396	-3.1
	5	Baker Lake	2,069	2,061	-0.4

.. not available for a specific reference period

Notes: Prince Edward Island did not have any municipality of at least 5,000 inhabitants showing a population decline. For the territories, municipalities with at least 1,000 inhabitants in 2021 were included in this table. Yukon did not have any municipality of at least 1,000 inhabitants showing a population decline.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population.

Canada's fastest growing and decreasing municipalities from 2016 to 2021

Additional information

Additional analysis on population and dwelling counts can be found in the *Daily* articles entitled "[Canada tops G7 growth despite COVID](#)", "[Canada's large urban centres continue to grow and spread](#)", and in the Census in Brief article entitled "[Population growth in Canada's rural areas, 2016 to 2021](#)", Catalogue no. 98-200-X.

Additional information on population and dwelling counts can be found in the [Highlight tables](#), Catalogue no. 98-402-X; the [Census Profile](#), Catalogue no. 98-316-X; and the [Focus on Geography Series](#), Catalogue no. 98-404-X.

[Thematic maps](#) for this topic are also available for various levels of geography.

For details on the concepts, definitions, and variables used in the 2021 Census of Population, please consult the [Dictionary, Census of Population, 2021](#), Catalogue no. 98-301-X.

In addition to response rates and other data-quality information, the [Guide to the Census of Population, 2021](#), Catalogue no. 98-304-X, provides an overview of the various phases of the census including content determination, sampling design, collection, data processing, data quality assessment, confidentiality guidelines and dissemination.

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