

July 17, 2007

Introduction

The second of eight releases from the 2006 Census of Canada, taken on May 16, 2006 is Age and Sex. Highlights of this release for Alberta are provided in the following briefing.

Alberta is the youngest province

Alberta's population on May 16, 2006 was 3,290,350. Alberta had the youngest population among the provinces. The median age of Albertans (the point at which 50% of the population is older and the other 50% is younger) was 36 years, one year older than the 2001 Census. The oldest province was Nova Scotia with a median age of 41.8 years. For Canada, the median age increased to 39.5 years in 2006, up 1.9 years from the previous Census. Alberta enjoyed the lowest proportion (10.7%) of senior population (aged 65 and over) as compared to the other provinces. The proportion of seniors was 13.7% in Canada.

Dependency Ratios

Dependency ratios measure the proportion of the dependent population on the working population or the labour force. The higher the ratio, the more dependence will be on the labour force. Table 1 shows all three dependency ratios for Canada and provinces. The child ratio includes those under 15 years of age and the senior ratio consists of those 65 and older. The economic dependency is the ratio of both children and seniors on the working population aged 15 to 64. Alberta, as a young province has a higher child dependency and a lower senior dependency than the national average (Table 1). The overall economic dependency ratio is also lower in Alberta as compared to Canada.

A picture of Alberta in 30 years

The age and sex distributions of Albertans are presented in the following population pyramids. Although Alberta has less than 11% of seniors aged 65 and over, we are still aging as we live longer. As shown in the population pyramids, the "bulge" of the Alberta baby boomers has moved up during the past 30 years (1976-2006) due to population aging. Low fertility rate and higher life expectancy are the two main factors behind this aging phenomenon across Canada.

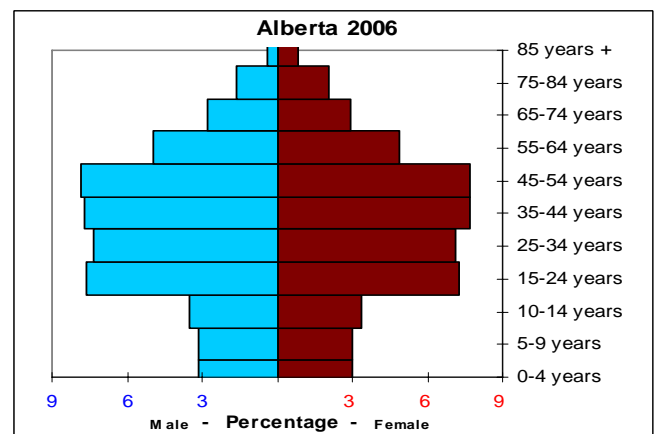
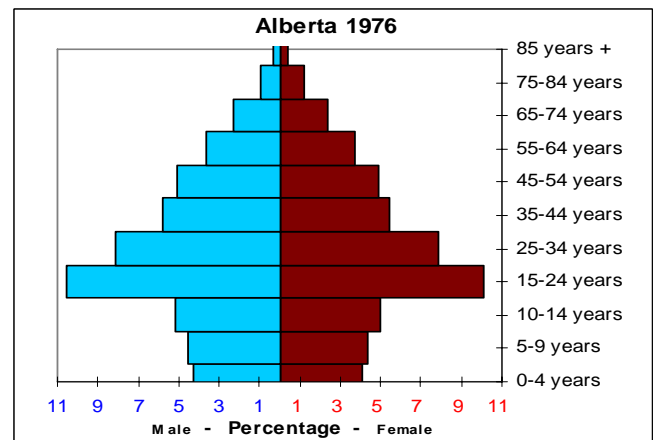


TABLE 1 DEPENDENCY RATIOS FOR PROVINCES AND CANADA, 2006 CENSUS

Dependency	NFLD.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	QUE.	ONT.	MAN.	SASK.	ALTA.	B.C.	Canada
Child	0.22	0.26	0.23	0.23	0.24	0.27	0.30	0.30	0.27	0.24	0.26
Senior	0.20	0.22	0.22	0.21	0.21	0.20	0.21	0.24	0.15	0.21	0.20
Economic	0.42	0.48	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.47	0.51	0.53	0.43	0.45	0.46

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Canada