



## **2006 Census – Data on Aboriginal Peoples**

### **British Columbia Quick Facts**

#### **Overall**

- British Columbia is home to the second largest Aboriginal population in the country, after Ontario. The 2006 Census enumerated 196,075 Aboriginal people in BC, accounting for 5% of the total population in the province.
- The Aboriginal population in BC grew by 15% between 2001 and 2006, more than three times the rate of the non-Aboriginal population, and by 39% between 1996 and 2006, more than four times as fast as the non-Aboriginal population during this period.
- First Nations people accounted for the majority (66%) of the Aboriginal population in BC, followed by Métis (30%) and Inuit (0.4%). The remaining either identified with more than one Aboriginal group, or were Registered Indians or members of an Indian band or First Nation who did not identify as Aboriginal.
- Of the three Aboriginal groups, the Métis population saw the fastest gain between 1996 and 2006, at 132%, compared to 18% for the First Nations population and 7% for the Inuit population in BC.
- In 2006, 60% of the Aboriginal population in BC lived in urban areas while 26% lived on reserves.
- The census metropolitan area of Vancouver was home to the third largest Aboriginal population of all urban centres in the country, with 40,310 Aboriginal people, after Winnipeg (68,380) and Edmonton (52,100) in 2006.
- Of all municipalities with an Aboriginal population of 250 and above in BC in 2006, Alert Bay had the highest proportion of Aboriginal people (48%), followed by Burns Lake (37%) and Prince Rupert (35%).
- The median age of the Aboriginal population in BC was 28 years in 2006, higher than the national Aboriginal average of 26.5 years.
- The non-Aboriginal population is much older than the Aboriginal population. In BC, for example, the median age of the non-Aboriginal population was 41 years in 2006.

- In 2006, the majority of Aboriginal children aged 14 and under (58%) lived with both parents in BC, while 28% lived with a lone mother and 6% with a lone father. In addition, 3% of Aboriginal children lived with a grandparent (with no parent present) and 5% lived with another relative. In contrast, 13% of non-Aboriginal children in BC lived with a lone mother, 3% with a lone father, 0.5% with a grandparent (with no parent present) and 1% with another relative.
- Nationally, Aboriginal people were almost four times as likely as non-Aboriginal people to live in a crowded dwelling. Crowding is defined as more than one person per room. In BC, 6% of Aboriginal people lived in crowded dwellings, compared to 4% of the non-Aboriginal population.
- In Vancouver, along with Montreal, Ottawa-Gatineau and Toronto, Aboriginal people were in fact less likely to live in crowded homes than non-Aboriginal people – 4% of Aboriginal people in Vancouver lived in crowded homes in 2006, compared to 5% for the non-Aboriginal population.
- Nationally, Aboriginal people were three times as likely as non-Aboriginal people to live in a dwelling in need of major repairs. The same was true of BC, where 21% of Aboriginal people lived in such dwellings, compared to 7% of the non-Aboriginal population.
- Similar trends were observed across all major Census metropolitan areas. For example, 15% of the Aboriginal population in Vancouver lived in dwellings in need of major repairs, compared to 6% for the non-Aboriginal population.

### **First Nations People**

- In 2006, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) recognized 615 First Nations communities in Canada. BC was home to 198 First Nations, about one-third of all First Nations, followed by Ontario, where there were 126 First Nations.
- According to the 2006 Census, BC had the second largest First Nations population in Canada, after Ontario - 129,580 (19%) lived in BC compared to 158,395 (23%) in Ontario. First Nations people accounted for 3.5% of total population in BC.
- First Nations people were the largest Aboriginal group in BC – 66% of British Columbians who identified themselves as an Aboriginal person were First Nations in 2006.
- A smaller proportion of First Nations people lived on reserve than off reserve in 2006. In BC, 62% of First Nations people lived off reserve. Ontario had the highest proportion of First Nations people living off reserve, at 70%.
- The off-reserve First Nations population was most likely to live in a census metropolitan area (CMA). In 2006, nearly half (47%) of them lived in a CMA. Winnipeg counted 25,900, the largest number, followed by Vancouver (23,515), Edmonton (22,440) and Toronto (17,275).
- First Nations people made up 1% of the population in Vancouver CMA. By comparison, they made up a considerable share of the population in several smaller urban areas in BC such as Prince Rupert (32%), Terrace (16%), and Williams Lake (12%).
- The median age of the First Nations population in BC was 27 years in 2006, higher than the national First Nations average of 25 years. The median age of the non-Aboriginal population in BC was 41 years.

- Nationally, children represented a slightly higher share of the on-reserve population. About one-third (34%) of on-reserve First Nations people were aged 14 and under, compared with 31% of their counterparts living off reserve. However, the opposite was true in BC, where children accounted for a smaller share of the on-reserve population.
- In BC, 35% of First Nations children aged 14 and under lived with a lone parent, compared to 16% of non-Aboriginal children.
- In BC, 8% of First Nations people lived in crowded conditions in 2006, down from 12% in 1996. Crowding was more common in on-reserve communities – 13% of on-reserve First Nations people lived in crowded homes in 2006, down from 18% in 1996. In contrast, 4% of the non-Aboriginal population lived in crowded homes in 2006.
- In BC, off-reserve First Nations and non-Aboriginal people were equally likely to live in crowded conditions.
- In BC, 25% of First Nations lived in dwellings in need of major repairs, compared to 7% of the non-Aboriginal population. The poor condition of dwellings was especially common in on-reserve communities, where about 39% of First Nations people lived in a home requiring major repairs in BC.
- Off-reserve First Nations people were 2.5 times more likely to live in dwellings in need of major repairs than non-Aboriginal people in BC.
- In BC, 13% of First Nations people could speak an Aboriginal language in both 2001 and 2006.
- In 2006, 2,755, First Nations people spoke Salish, and 2,310 spoke Carrier.

### **Métis**

- BC was home to the fourth largest Métis population in Canada. The 2006 Census enumerated 59,445 Métis in BC, which accounted for 15% of the total Métis population in the country. Alberta had the largest Métis population (85,500 or 22%), followed by Ontario and Manitoba.
- Métis accounted for 30% of the Aboriginal population in BC. The number of Métis increased by 132% between 1996 and 2006 in BC, more than seven times the increase of the First Nations population.
- Métis are urban people. In 2006, nearly seven out of 10 Métis (69%) lived in urban areas, up slightly from 67% in 1996. Winnipeg was home to the largest number of Métis, at 40,980, followed by Edmonton (27,740) and Vancouver (15,075).
- Métis accounted for 0.7% of the total population in Vancouver CMA. By comparison, they made up a considerable share of the population in several smaller urban centres in BC, such as Dawson Creek (8%) and Prince George (5%).
- The median age of Métis in BC was 29.7 years, slightly higher than the national Métis average of 29.5 years.
- In Canada and in BC, 31% of Métis children aged 14 and under lived with a lone parent. They were twice as likely as non-Aboriginal children to live with a lone parent. In several cities where the Métis made up a large share of the population, more than four out of 10 children lived in lone-parent families. These include Dawson Creek

(43%) in BC.

- In BC, 2% of the Métis lived in crowded homes in 2006, down from 4% in 1996. The proportion of Métis living in crowded homes is in fact lower than that of the non-Aboriginal population BC (4%).
- In BC, 12% of the Métis lived in dwellings in need of major repairs in 2006, down from 14% in 1996. By comparison, 7% of the non-Aboriginal population in BC lived in dwellings requiring major repairs in 2006.
- In 2006, 1% of Métis in BC spoke an Aboriginal language, compared with 4% of the overall Métis population in Canada.

### **Inuit**

- The 2006 Census enumerated 795 Inuit in BC, accounting for 0.4% of the total Aboriginal population. The Inuit population in BC grew by 7% between 1996 and 2006.