

## Canada Now a Middle-Aged Country: Statistics Canada



Baby boomers have started reshaping the demographic map of Canada again, as they enter late middle age. Statistics Canada released the second round of data from the 2001 census recently. The data covering age and sex reveals dramatic changes in Canada's population that have ramifications for financial advisors and their clients. In short, we are a nation with older workers, fewer young workers, more octogenarians and fewer babies.

"The population aged 45 to 64 increased 35.8% from 1991 to 2001, as a result of the entry of baby boomers into this age group," said the report titled *A Profile of the Canadian Population by Age and Sex*. "It is projected to grow an additional 30% by 2011, when nearly one-third of the population will be aged 45 to 64."

There are more Canadian workers than ever before in the older age group (45-64), and fewer than ever in the younger brackets. Since 1991, the population aged 45-64 grew to almost 7.3 million. "This increase was fuelled mainly by the entry into this group of the oldest baby boomers, those individuals born between 1946 and 1965," said the report.

Canadians aged 45 to 64 accounted for almost one-quarter of Canada's total population of just over 30 million in 2001, compared with only 20% in 1991. The Stats Canada report says the population of this group is expected to jump a further 30% during the next 10 years to about 9.5 million.

The median age (the point where exactly one-half of the population is older, and the other half is younger) within the group of Canadian workers aged 20 to 64 was 41.3 years, up 3.2 years from 38.1 in 1991. That was the biggest increase since 1921. Ten years from now, this median age is projected to reach 43.7.

"Data show that there are fewer young people entering the working-age population to replace individuals in the age group nearing retirement. In 1991, for every person aged 55 to 64, there were 1.6 individuals in the group aged 15 to 24. By 2001, the ratio was down to 1.4, and by 2011, if current demographic trends continue, the potential exists for a parity situation," said Stats Canada.

While Canada's median age has risen steadily since the end of the baby boom in 1966, it made a significant jump over the last five years. "On May 15, 2001, the median age of Canada's population reached an all-time high of 37.6 years, up 2.3 years from 35.3 in 1996. This was the biggest census-to-census increase in a century," said the report. In 1996, the median age was only 25.4 years. Nova Scotia and Quebec are the oldest provinces, each with a median age of 38.8 years. Alberta was the youngest with a median age of 35.

Another major demographic shift is occurring among Canada's oldest citizens. From 1991 to 2001, the population aged 80 and over increased 41.2% to 932,000. It is expected to increase an additional 43% by 2001, when there will be an estimated 1.3 million.

The 2001 census also enumerated 3,795 people aged 100 and over, a 21% increase from the 1996 census.

For more census data, go to:

<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/Products/Analytic/companion/age/contents.cfm>