

# Quarterly Population Highlights



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## B.C. Highlights

- As of January 1, 2026, the population of British Columbia reached an estimated 5,658,528, a net decrease of -24,673 (-0.4%) compared to the previous quarter (see all components of change in Table 1).
- In the previous 12 months, the population of B.C. reduced by -41,461 (-0.7%). The province continued to experience negative population growth, driven primarily by reduced levels of international migration in line with the Federal [2025 -2027 Immigration Levels Plan \(ILP\)](#).
- In the fourth quarter of 2025, B.C. experienced a net outflow of 25,585 international migrants—the highest level of net outflow on record, including the outflows seen during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Immigration by permanent residents increased the province’s population by 9,988.
- There was an estimated net outflow of 31,972 non-permanent residents (NPRs) leaving B.C. over the quarter, the largest outflow of NPRs on record.
- Currently, NPRs make up 7.9% of B.C.’s population and 6.5% of Canada’s population.
- B.C. saw a net inflow of interprovincial migrants, estimated at 1,227 individuals migrating from other provinces to B.C. during the quarter. This marks the third consecutive quarter with net gains of interprovincial migrants for the province.

- The most significant net gain of interprovincial migrants to B.C. during this quarter came from Ontario and Manitoba, with net inflows of 636 and 322, respectively.
- Overall, B.C. experienced positive interprovincial migration with most provinces and territories, except with Alberta, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and Nunavut.
- Natural population change was negative this quarter, with births numbering 10,864 and deaths totalling 11,179; a net loss to B.C.’s population of 315 individuals.

**Table 1: Population Components**

<b>B.C. population October 1, 2025</b>	<b>5,683,201</b>
Interprovincial migration	1,227
Interprovincial arrivals	+9,047
Interprovincial exits	-7,820
International migration	-25,585
Immigrants	+9,988
Net emigrants	-3,601
Net change in non-permanent residents	-31,972
Natural change	1,404
Births	+11,670
Deaths	-10,266
<i>Net Change</i>	-14,335
<b>B.C. population January 1, 2026</b>	<b>5,658,528</b>

## The Last 12 Months

During the 12-month period concluding on December 31, 2025, B.C.’s population declined by 41,461 individuals, representing a negative

growth rate of 0.7%. The decrease in population reflects a historic outflow of non-permanent residents (NPRs), resulting in a reduction of 80,915 individuals over the last 12 months. B.C. also had a net outflow of 45,563 international migrants during this period, the largest net outflow on record over a 12-month period.

Natural population change—the difference between births and deaths—resulted in a modest increase of 927 individuals over the last 12 months. Interprovincial migration also produced a net gain of 3,175 individuals in B.C.'s population over this period.

## National Overview†

Canada's population continued to contract steadily since the COVID-19 pandemic, declining by 103,504 individuals (-0.2%) in the fourth quarter of 2025, the largest population decline on record and bringing the national total to 41,472,081. This population decline was driven primarily by Ontario and British Columbia, which recorded the largest declines among all provinces and territories, with reductions of 54,892 (-0.3%) and 24,673 (-0.4%), respectively.

Most provinces and territories experienced population contractions in this quarter, with Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick recording the largest declines after B.C. and Ontario, with declines of 24,202 (-0.3%), 1,783 (-0.2%), and 1,247 (-0.1%), respectively. Alberta and Nunavut were the only regions that experienced population growth, with increases of 7,280 (+0.1%) and 27 individuals (+0.1%).

## International Migration to B.C.

In the fourth quarter of 2025, Canada recorded a net loss of 102,723 international migrants, a sharp reversal from the net gain of 77,988 in the same quarter of 2024 and the largest outflow on record. B.C. also recorded a record-setting net outflow of 25,585 international migrants during this quarter.

Ontario accounted for the majority of Canada's net international migration loss in the fourth quarter of 2025, with an outflow of 82,291 individuals—representing 52.1% of the national total loss. In contrast, Saskatchewan, the region that experienced the largest net gains of international immigrants in the country, saw a net inflow of only 546 individuals.\*\*

The decline in net international migration to B.C. this quarter was primarily due to a record outflow of 31,972 NPRs, the largest quarterly net outflow of this component on record. This outflow was compounded by 3,601 net emigrants who left the province for international destinations.\*\*\* Although the province welcomed 9,988 new immigrants with permanent resident status, this inflow was insufficient to offset total international outflows of 35,573 individuals.

B.C.'s net outflow of international migration was the second largest among the provinces and territories, accounting for 24.7% of Canada's total net loss. Eleven of the thirteen provinces and territories recorded net outflows of NPRs this quarter, with a combined loss of 171,320 international migrants. While two provinces and territories recorded net gains in international migrants this quarter, these gains were modest, totalling only 24 individuals.

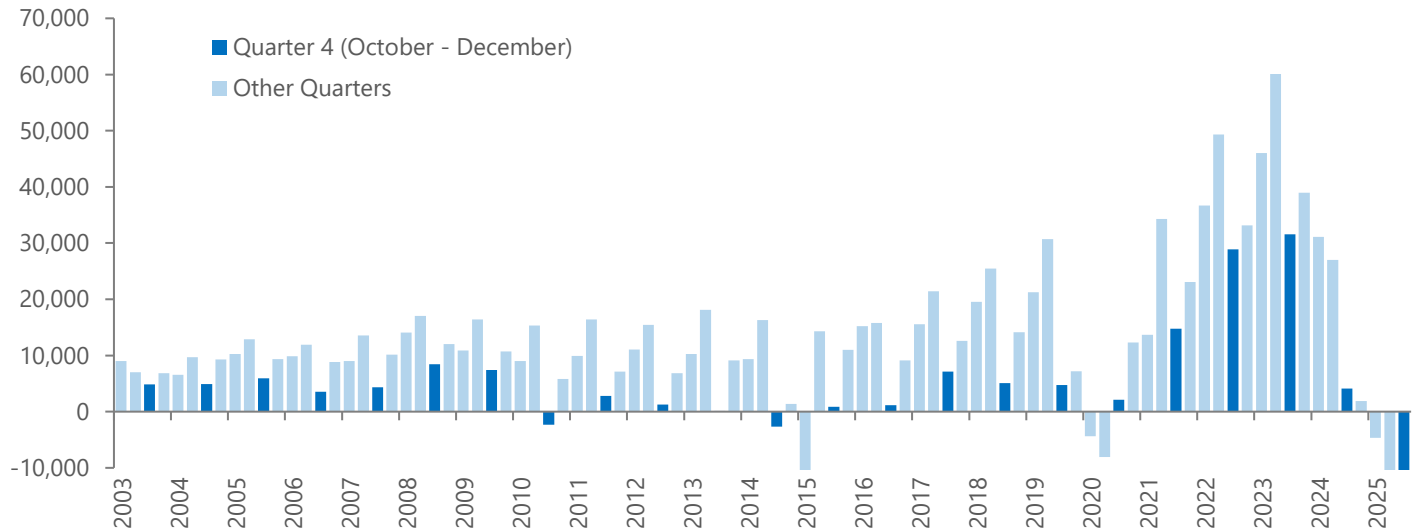
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† The numbers in parenthesis show the quarterly population growth rate.

\*\* Net international migration is calculated as immigrants entering B.C., plus the net change in NPRs, minus net emigrants.

\*\*\* Net Emigrants are calculated as Emigrants plus Net Temporary Abroad minus Returning Emigrants. The component of Net Temporary Abroad was discontinued after the second quarter of 2016. This component was added to Emigrants and Returning Emigrants after this period.

## Chart 1: B.C. Net International Migration by Quarter, 2003Q2 to 2025Q4



Source: Statistics Canada. Table [17-10-0040-01](#) (formerly CANSIM 051-0037) Estimates of the components of international migration, quarterly. Last updated December 17, 2025

### Interprovincial Migration

British Columbia had an interprovincial inflow of 9,047 individuals and an outflow of 7,820 individuals for the fourth quarter of 2025, resulting in a net gain of 1,227 people that arrived in B.C. from other provinces and territories.

Ontario produced the largest net inflow of interprovincial migrants to B.C. during the quarter, with 2,775 individuals arriving from Ontario and 2,139 leaving B.C. for Ontario, resulting in a net gain of 636. B.C. recorded positive net gains with most provinces and territories, including Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Quebec, Yukon, Newfoundland and Labrador, Northwest Territories, and New Brunswick. Collectively, B.C. had net gains of 1,454 interprovincial migrants from these provinces and territories.

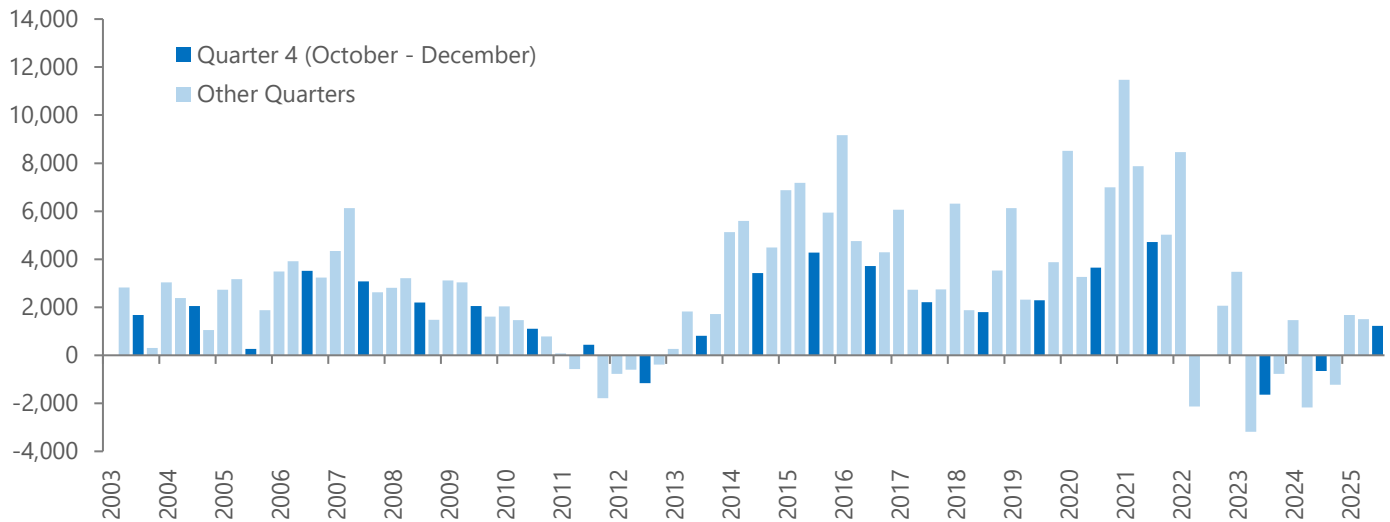
Alberta remained the most popular destination for interprovincial migrants from B.C., with 3,761 people leaving B.C. for Alberta and 3,655 arriving from Alberta, resulting in a net loss of

106. This was the smallest net loss of interprovincial migrants with Alberta since the second quarter of 2022. This was mainly the result of a sharp reduction in the number of people leaving B.C. for Alberta, which fell 16.8% compared to the same quarter of 2024.

B.C. also had net interprovincial losses with Prince Edward, Nova Scotia, and Nunavut, with these three provinces accounting for a combined net loss of 121 interprovincial migrants.

B.C. had the second-largest net gain of interprovincial migrants in the country, behind only Alberta, which had a net interprovincial gain of 3,684 individuals. In contrast, Ontario had the largest net loss of interprovincial migration, 1,598, followed by Quebec with a net loss of 1,579. Manitoba, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Yukon also reported net losses of interprovincial migrants, totalling 2,560 individuals.

## Chart 2: B.C. Net Interprovincial Migration by Quarter, 2003Q2 to 2025Q4



Source: Statistics Canada. Table [17-10-0020-01](#) (formerly CANSIM 051-0017) Estimates of the components of interprovincial migration, quarterly. Last updated: December 17, 2025.

### Composition of Non-Permanent Residents in B.C.

B.C. recorded its fifth consecutive quarter of net outflows of Non-Permanent Residents (NPRs), following 11 straight quarters of net inflows from the first quarter of 2022 to the fourth quarter of 2024. Over the past 12 months, a total of 80,915 net NPRs left the province, reducing the population of NPRs living in B.C. from 527,064 to 446,149 (-15.4%). NPRs currently make up 7.9% of B.C.'s population and 6.5% of Canada's population.

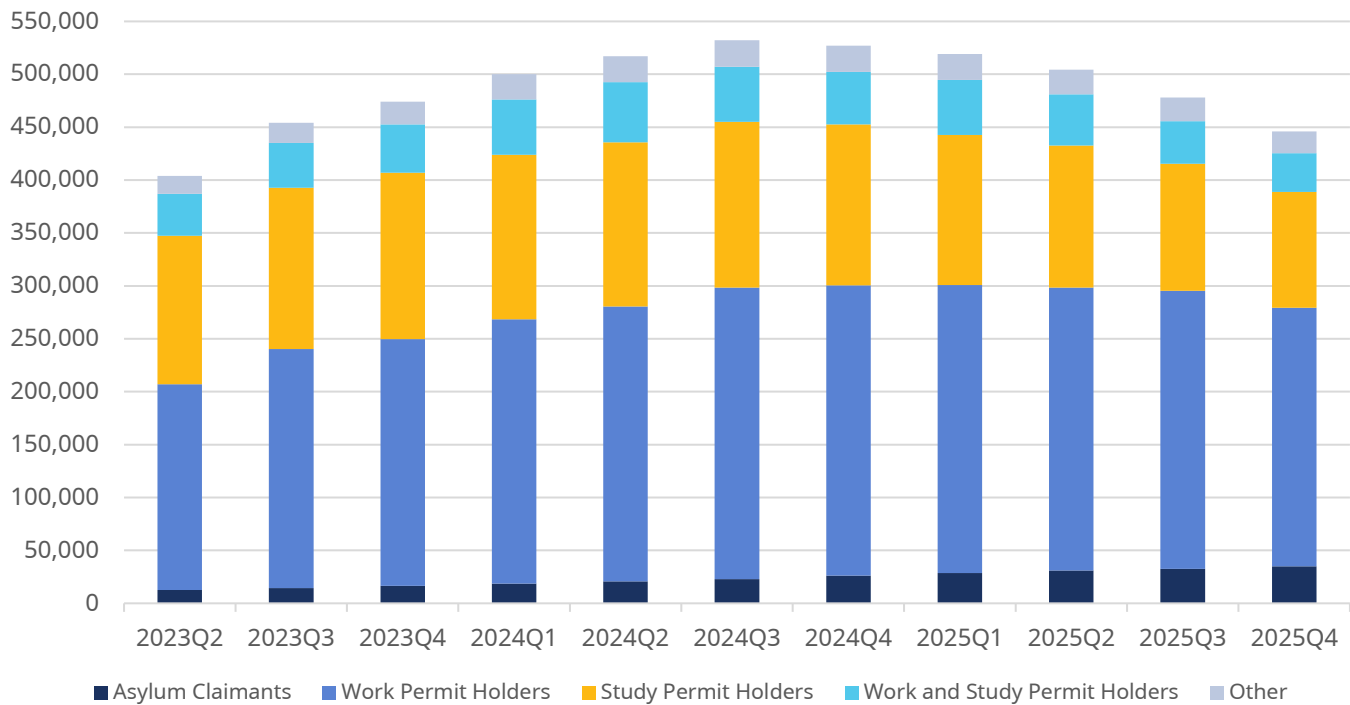
The primary driver of B.C.'s decline in NPRs over the last 12 months was a sharp reduction in the number of study permit holders residing in the province, which fell from 152,319 to 109,502 (-28.1%). Consequently, the share of NPRs in B.C. holding only a study permit dropped from 28.9% to 24.5% during the same period.

Over the past 12 months, the number of work permit holders in B.C. declined by 10.9%, falling from 274,364 to 244,394. Despite this decrease, their share of the total NPR population rose from 52.1% to 54.8%. This indicates that the

overall NPR population in the province declined more rapidly, driven mainly by a reduction in the number of NPRs with study permits. Meanwhile, individuals holding work and study permits decreased from 49,627 to 36,483 (-26.5%), reducing their share of the total NPRs in B.C. from 9.4% to 8.2% over the same period.

Asylum claimants and individuals with other types of permits remained the smallest categories of NPRs in B.C., representing 7.8% and 4.7% of the total NPR population in the fourth quarter of 2025. Asylum claimants increased sharply over the past 12 months, rising from 26,054 to 34,951 (+43.8%), making them the fastest-growing NPR segment in the province. In contrast, the NPRs with other permit types declined from 24,700 to 20,819 (-15.7%) during the same period.

### Chart 3: Non-Permanent Residents by Type, 2023Q2 to 2025Q4



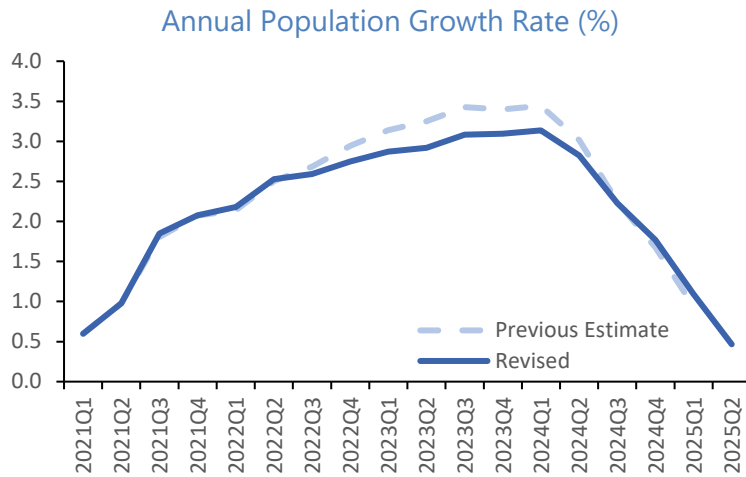
Source: Statistics Canada. Table [17-10-0121-01](#) Estimates of the number of NPRs by type, quarterly. Last updated: December 17, 2025.

### Revisions to the Population Estimates

On September 24, 2025, Statistics Canada revised the population estimates for the provinces and territories. This marks the second revision of the population estimates since September 2023. Overall, the population of B.C. was revised downward by 20,271 individuals for the first quarter of 2025, to 5,699,690 as of April 1, 2025. B.C. was one of the two provinces and territories that saw a reduction in its estimated population. Quebec’s population for the first quarter of 2025 was revised down by 69,493 with respect to the estimates for this period published by Statistics Canada on June 18, 2025.

In contrast, all other provinces and territories saw their estimated populations increase. Overall, the population of Canada for April 1, 2025, was revised up by 55,768, with Ontario and Alberta having the largest upward revision in their population as of April 1, 2025, with increases of +79,561 and +29,419, respectively. Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick also saw revisions of +10,968, +10,619 and +7,175, respectively. The rest of the provinces and territories saw a combined revision of +7,790 in their population. Consequently, B.C.’s share in the national population as of April 1, 2025 was revised from 13.8% to 13.7%.

## Total Population of B.C., 2021Q1 to 2025Q2



Population of B.C. as of April 1<sup>st</sup> of each Year

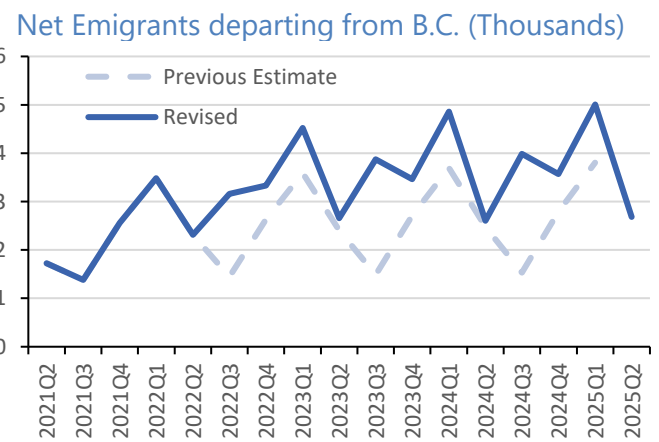
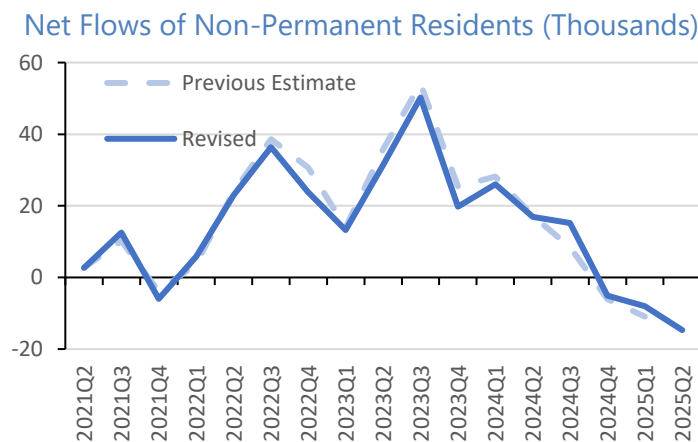
Year	Previous	Revised	Change
2021	5,200,393	5,200,393	0
2022	5,311,608	5,313,881	2,273
2023	5,478,258	5,466,566	-11,692
2024	5,666,888	5,638,043	-28,845
2025	5,719,961	5,699,690	-20,271

Source: Statistics Canada. Table [17-10-0009-01](#) Population estimates, quarterly. Last updated: September 25, 2024.

This revision stemmed primarily from updates to the net flows of NPRs and interprovincial migrants coming to B.C. In particular, the net flows of NPRs arriving in B.C. between 2021Q2 and 2025Q1 decreased by -14,117, reducing from 271,906 to 257,789.

The number of emigrants who left B.C. for international destinations between the second quarter of 2021 and the first quarter of 2025 was also revised from 40,024 to 52,487, an increase of +12,463 individuals.

## Net Flows of Non-Permanent Residents and Interprovincial Migration Arriving in British Columbia, 2021Q2 to 2025Q2



Source: Statistics Canada. Table [17-10-0040-01](#), quarterly. Last updated: September 24, 2025.

## Did You Know?

**While data collected from the 2021 Census provides a characterization of the Canadian population at a point in time, it is not an entirely accurate picture.** The Census doesn't count people who did not complete their census questionnaire, e.g., because they were on holiday or travelling on business; this is an example of census undercoverage. It may also count persons more than once, e.g., parents sharing custody of their child(ren) and each adding them to both of their households as residents; this is an example of census overcoverage. Census undercoverage and overcoverage can cause estimates of the censal population to differ from the actual population count at the time of the Census.

After the census data collection, Statistics Canada conducts a comprehensive evaluation of its accuracy, a process that takes about two years to complete. This evaluation is referred to as the Census Coverage Studies, which aims to estimate the amount of census over- and undercoverage. The 2021 Census Coverage Studies are now complete, and after correcting for census net undercoverage, the new censal population estimate adjusted B.C.'s population upwards by approximately 24,300 persons or 0.47% as of July 1, 2021.

Starting with the release on September 27, 2023, the population estimates for Canada, the provinces and territories are based on 2021 Census population counts adjusted for census net undercoverage and incompletely enumerated Indian reserves. Statistics Canada population estimates have been revised back to 2001.

## Using the Information

Detailed results from the quarterly population and migration estimates for B.C. are published in Microsoft Excel format and are available on the [Population](#) page on the BC Stats website. The [Excel file](#) contains additional information and tables with data from 2000 to date that help users to look deeper.

BC Stats updates the quarterly population and migration estimates for B.C. on a regular basis. Readers are encouraged to provide feedback. In addition to your feedback, we'd love to know:

- Are there any different population and migration statistics and trends that you would like to see?
- What is the research problem you have, and how do you think this report might help?

Please submit your suggestions and feedback at [www.gov.bc.ca/BCStatsRequests!](http://www.gov.bc.ca/BCStatsRequests)

Visit the [Population](#) page on the BC Stats website for more information.