



May 2026

P.E.O.P.L.E. 2026 Population Estimates and Projections

Highlights

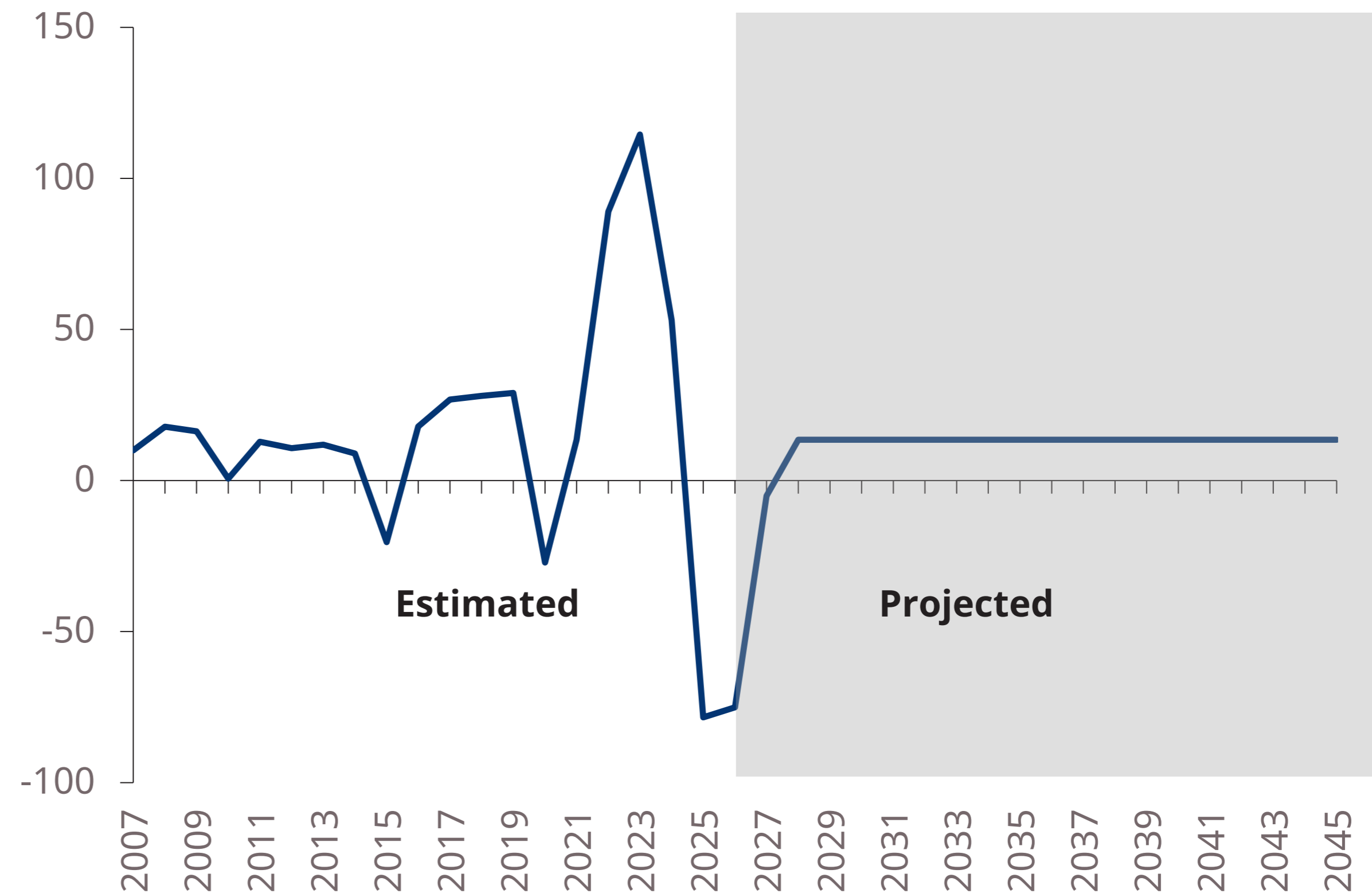
- The population of B.C. was estimated to be around 5.7 million people in July 2025 and is expected to remain at a similar level by July 2027.
- The population is expected to decrease by 0.9% between July 2025 and July 2026, the largest contraction in the province's history.
- Positive population growth is expected to return in late 2026, driven by a recovery of international migration.
- The recent population decrease is largely driven by a reduction in the number of Non-Permanent Residents (NPRs) residing in B.C.

Flows of Non-Permanent Residents

B.C. had a large outflow of NPRs in 2025 that is expected to continue until 2027.

This reflects the federal government's change in immigration policy regarding temporary residents in the [2026 - 2028 Immigration Levels Plan](#).

**Net Flows of Non-Permanent Residents to B.C.
(Thousands)**



Changes from December 2025 Update

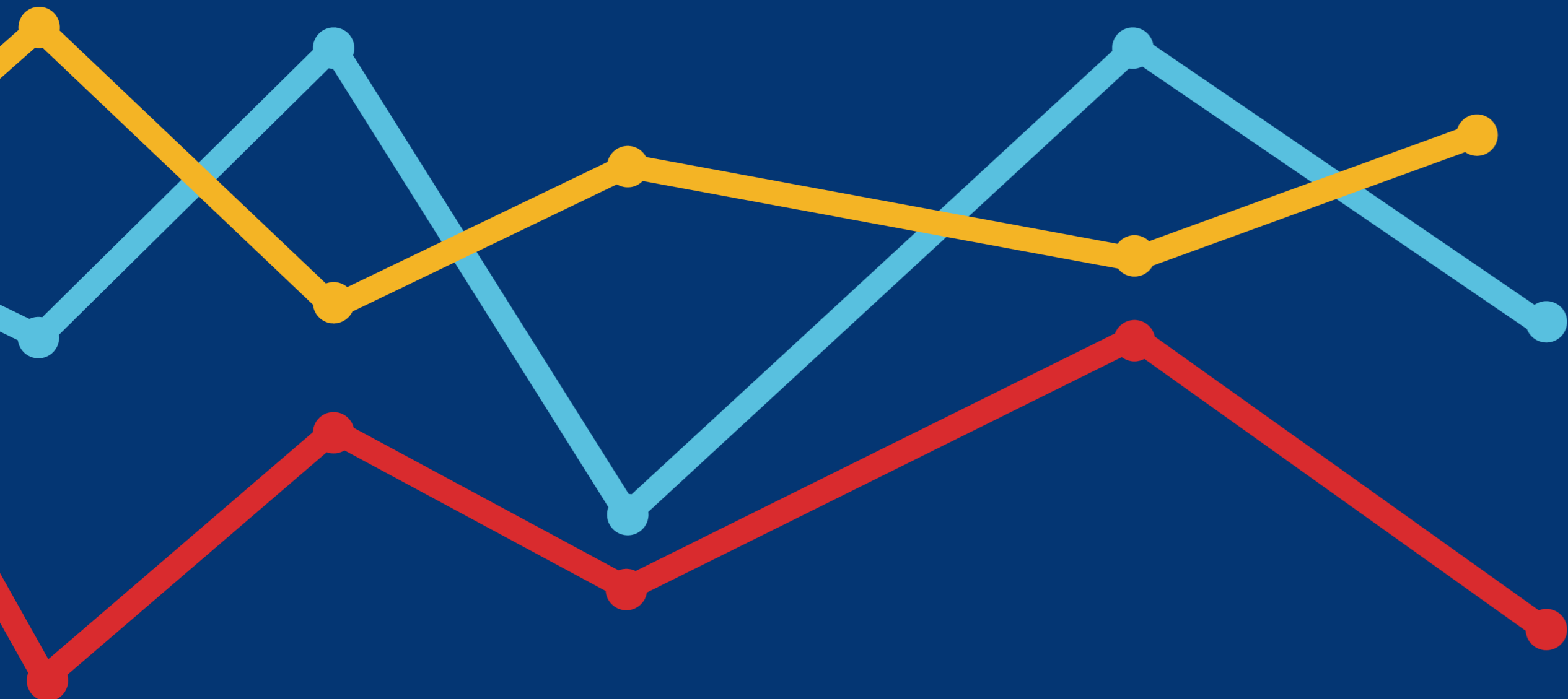
- The P.E.O.P.L.E. estimates are aligned with the 2025 population estimates for sub-provincial areas published by Statistics Canada in January 2026. The latest update includes revised sub-provincial estimates for 2022 to 2024.
- The B.C.-level projections incorporate updated population estimates. This is on top of adjustments incorporating the [2026 – 2028 Immigration Levels Plan](#) as part of the previous December 2025 update.
- B.C.-level projections have been modestly revised to account for gains of interprovincial migrants in 2025 that were higher than previously expected.

Projection Comparison

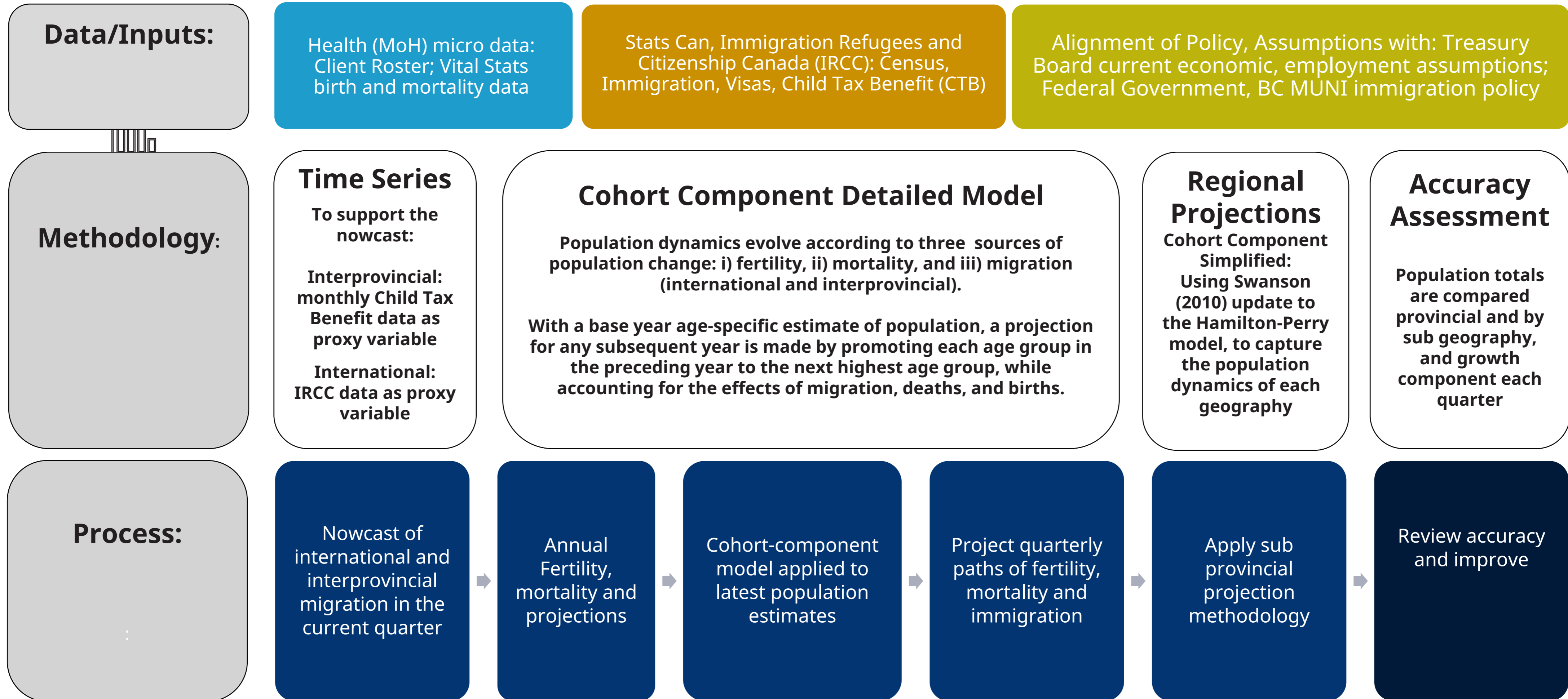
Projected B.C. Population – P.E.O.P.L.E. 2026 Versus Previous Versions (Millions)

Period	P.E.O.P.L.E. 2024 (February 2025)	P.E.O.P.L.E. 2025 (July 2025)	P.E.O.P.L.E. 2026 (May 2026)
July 1 st , 2025	5.710	5.721	5.698
July 1 st , 2027	5.736	5.752	5.671
July 1 st , 2029	5.862	5.886	5.795
July 1 st , 2046	6.839	6.915	6.794

Details



BC Stats Population Projections: At A Glance



BC Stats Population Projections: Value Added

BC Stats Projections

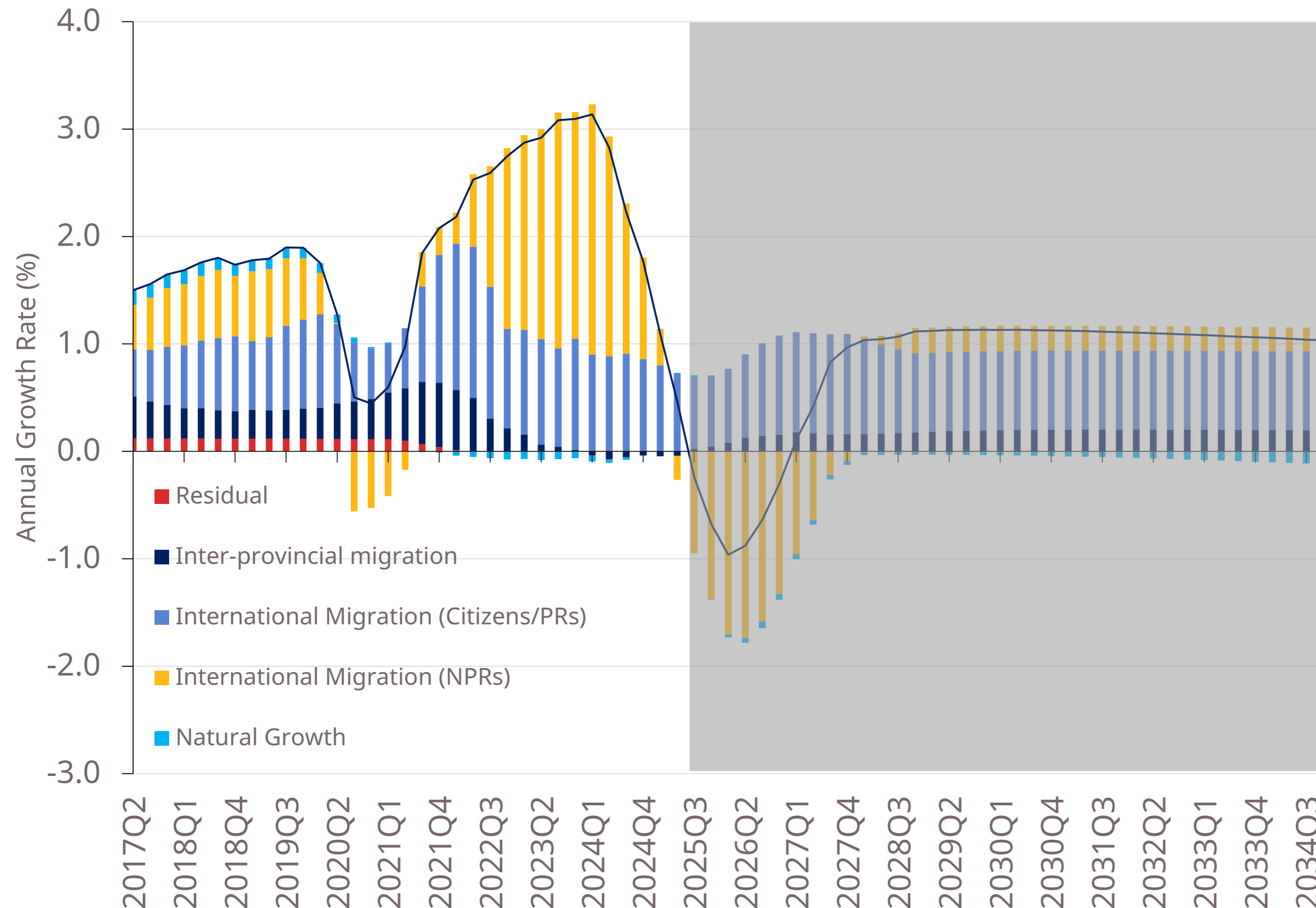
- Updated twice per year
- Available at the provincial level and across 11 sub-provincial geographies
- Available by custom age group
- [Self-serve custom data extracts](#)
- [Migration dashboard](#)
- Specialized datasets for 7 Ministry clients

Statistics Canada Projections

- Frequency of update depends on external funding
- Provincial and municipal levels only
- Fixed age groups (5-year)
- 10 projection scenarios

Drivers of Growth

**Components of B.C. Population Change, PEOPLE 2026
(Quarterly, 2017 Q2 - 2034 Q4)**



Source: Statistics Canada tables [17-10-0020](#), [17-10-0040](#), [17-10-0045](#), [17-10-0059](#) and BC Stats

Main drivers of population growth:

- Natural Population Growth (NG)
- Net interprovincial migration (IPM)
- Net international migration, permanent residents (PRs)
- Net international migration, non-permanent residents (NPRs)

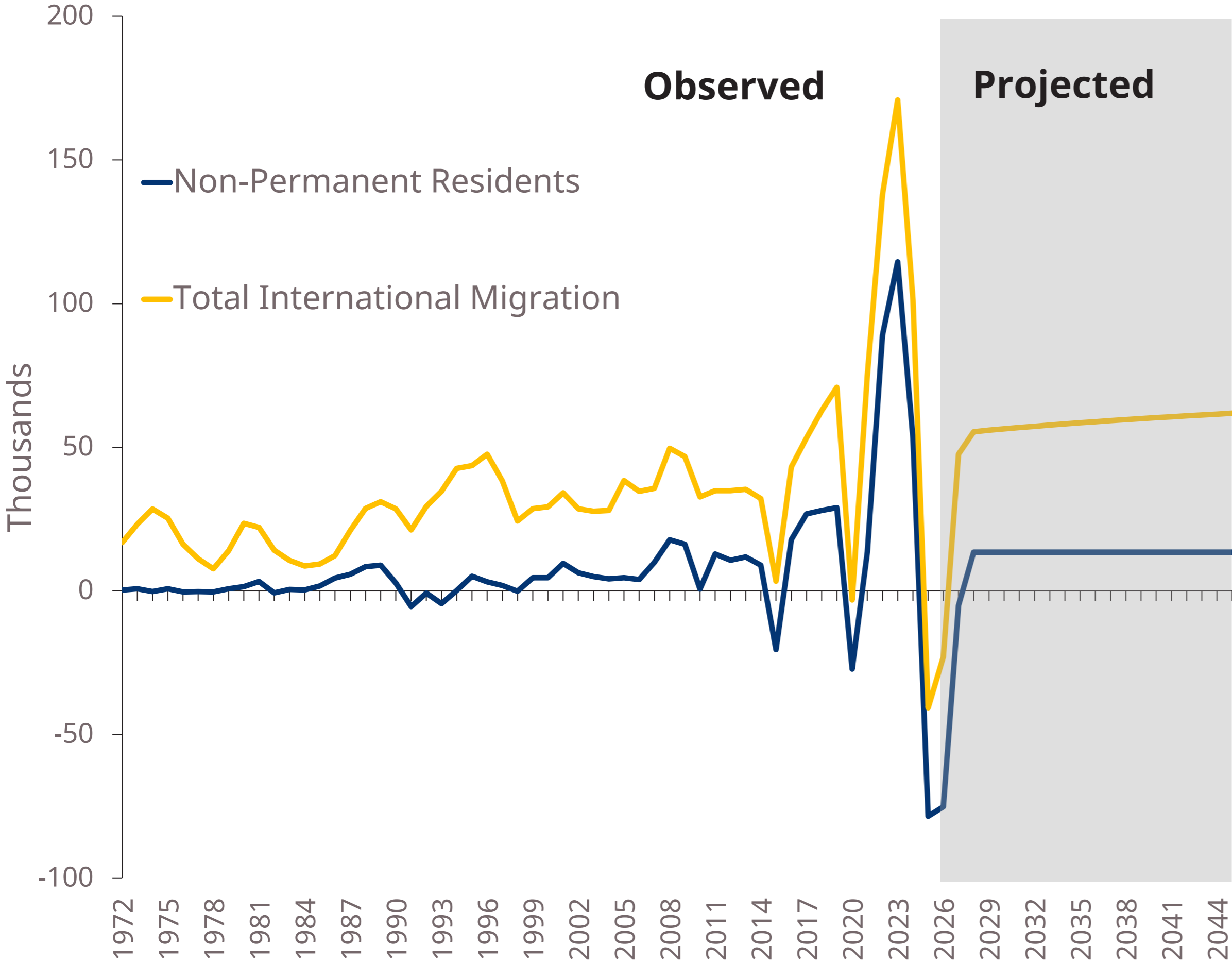
Recent population gains almost entirely driven by net inflows of PRs

- Expect IPM to provide a modest boost to growth going forward

NPRs expected to remain a significant drag on population growth until the end of 2027

- Also expect modest population losses from negative NG to continue for the foreseeable future

International Migration and NPRs



Source: Statistics Canada table [17-10-0040](#) and BC Stats

Recent international migration has been dominated by the unprecedented surge in NPRs during 2022-2024:

- B.C. has the third-highest NPR intake in Canada after Ontario and Quebec.

In late 2024, the federal government announced policies to reduce the size of the NPR population in Canada.

B.C. is now experiencing large outflows of NPRs that are expected to continue until 2027.

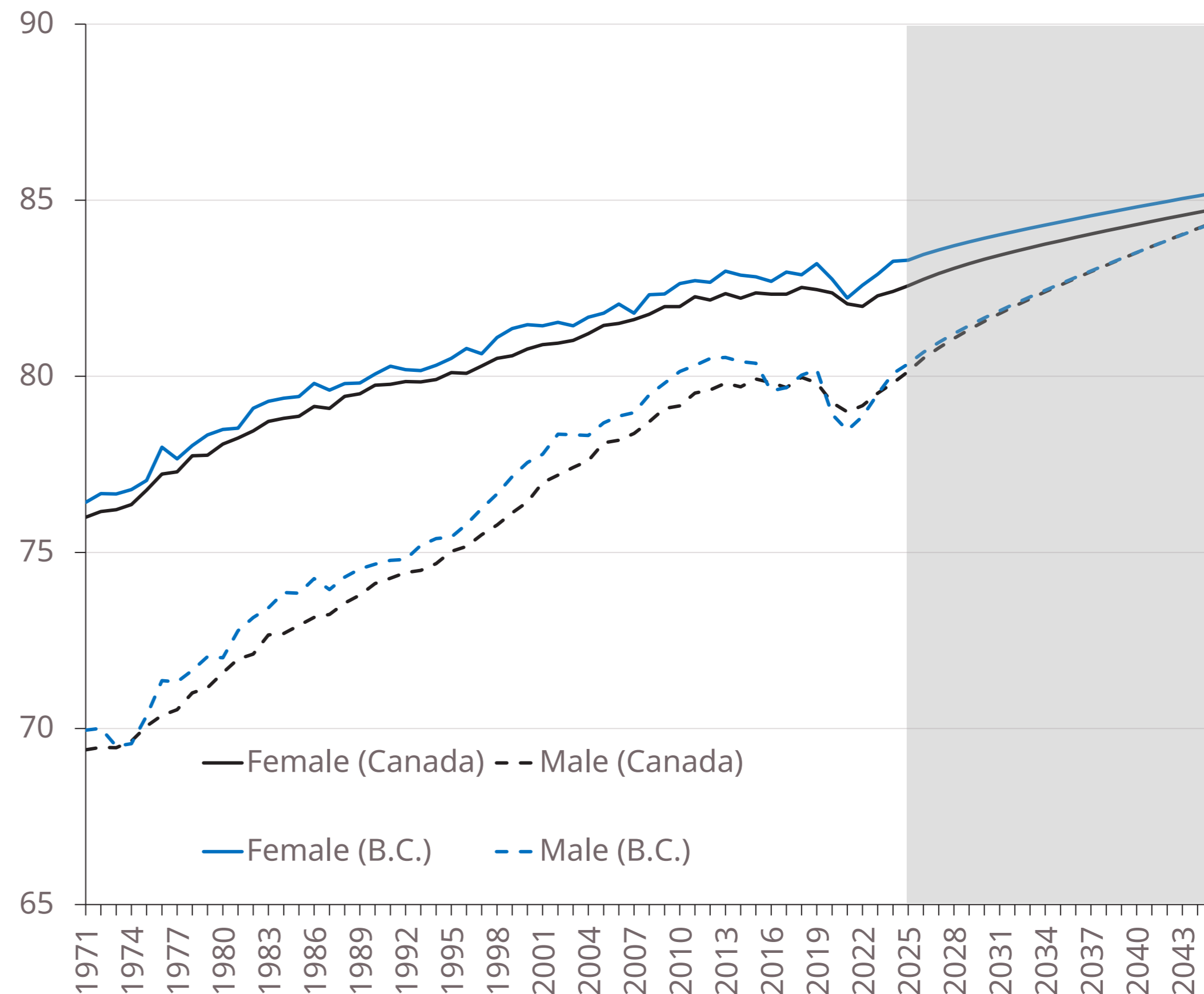
- Expect see a net outflow of nearly 200,000 NPRs during 2025-2026 (almost equal to the total increase in BC's NPR population during 2022-2024).

Net NPR flows are expected to stabilize approaching pre-2022 levels by 2028.

Mortality Projections

- The mortality rate is projected for each age and sex.
- The projections control for the COVID-19 pandemic and the opioid crisis.
- The Life expectancy at birth (LEB) decreased significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- However, it has recovered and is already near its long-term trend for some segments of the population.

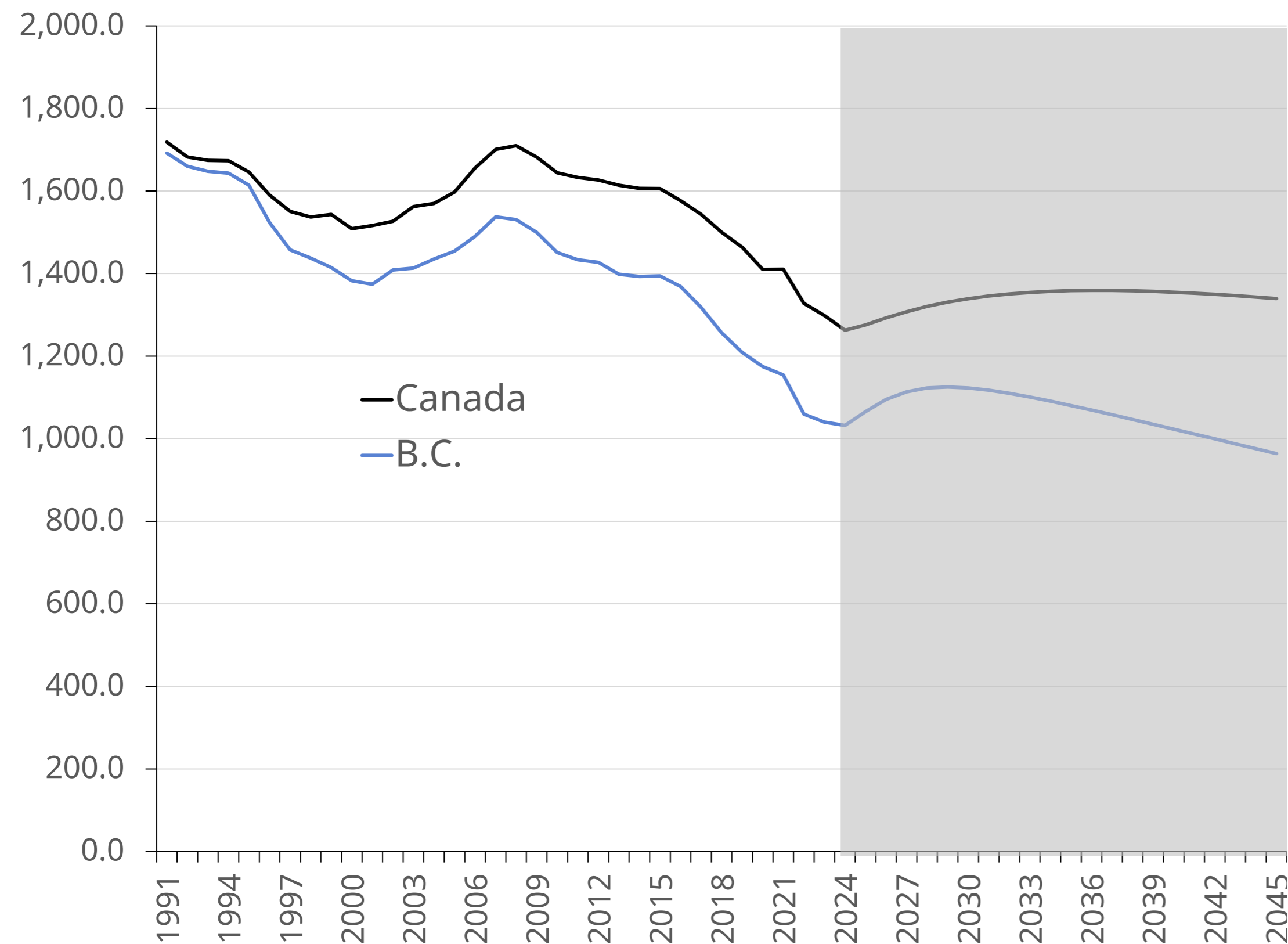
Life Expectancy at Birth in Canada and B.C.



Source: Statistics Canada table [17-10-0006-01](#) and BC Stats

Fertility Projections

**Total Fertility Rate
(Births per 1,000 Women)**



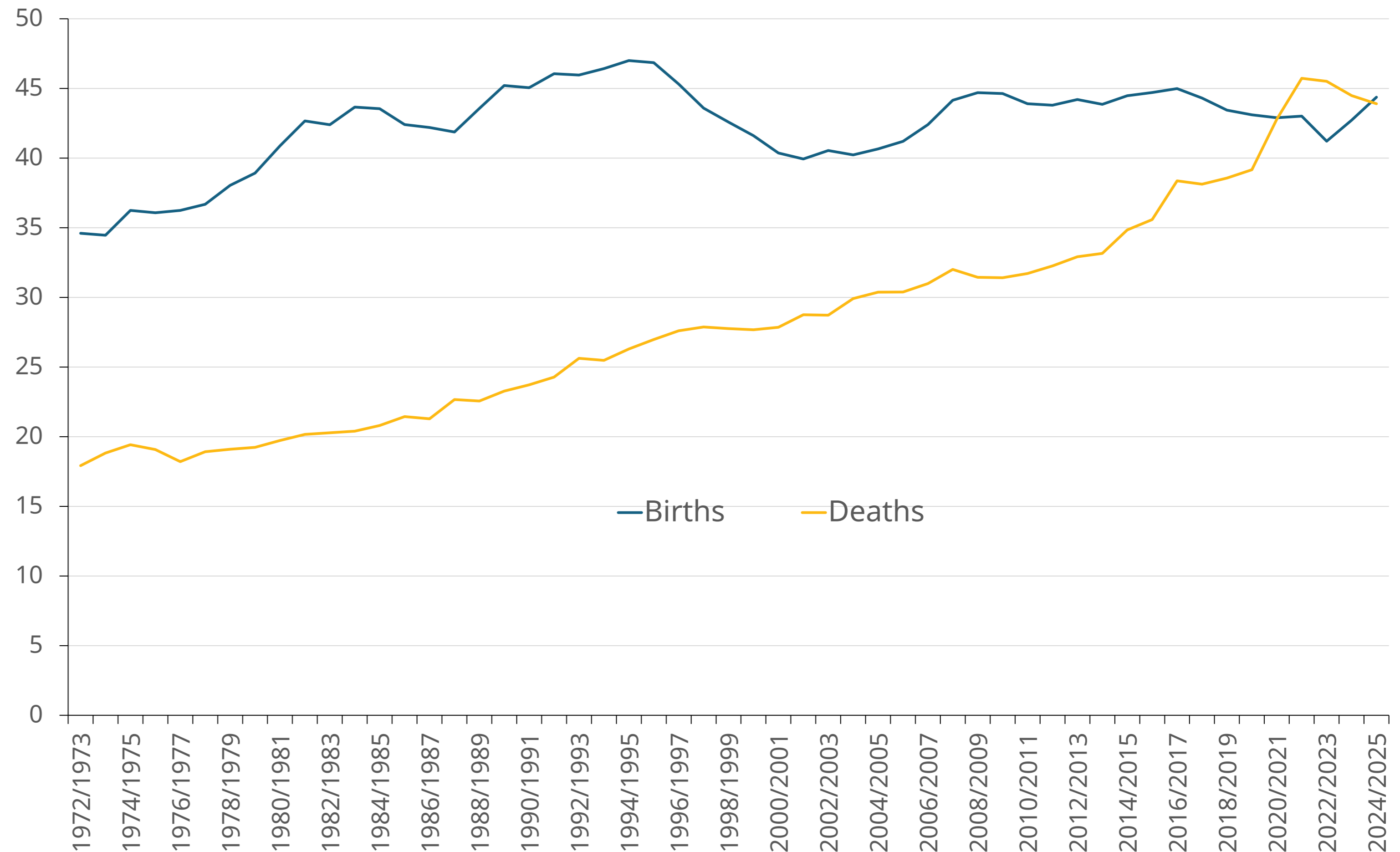
Source: Statistics Canada table [13-10-0418-01](#), Vital Statistics Agency of BC and BC Stats

- BC Stats produces age-specific fertility rates controlling for the effects of the pandemic.
- The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in B.C. decreased in recent years.
- The TFR is expected to return to its long-term trend slowly in the coming years.
- B.C. is still expected to continue having one of the lowest TFRs in Canada.

Natural Population Change

- The number of deaths recently exceeded the annual numbers of births in the province.
- B.C. has the lowest provincial fertility rate in Canada.
- This downward pressure on overall population growth is projected to continue as the general population ages.

Births and Deaths in B.C.
(Thousands, 1972 / 1973 – 2024 / 2025)



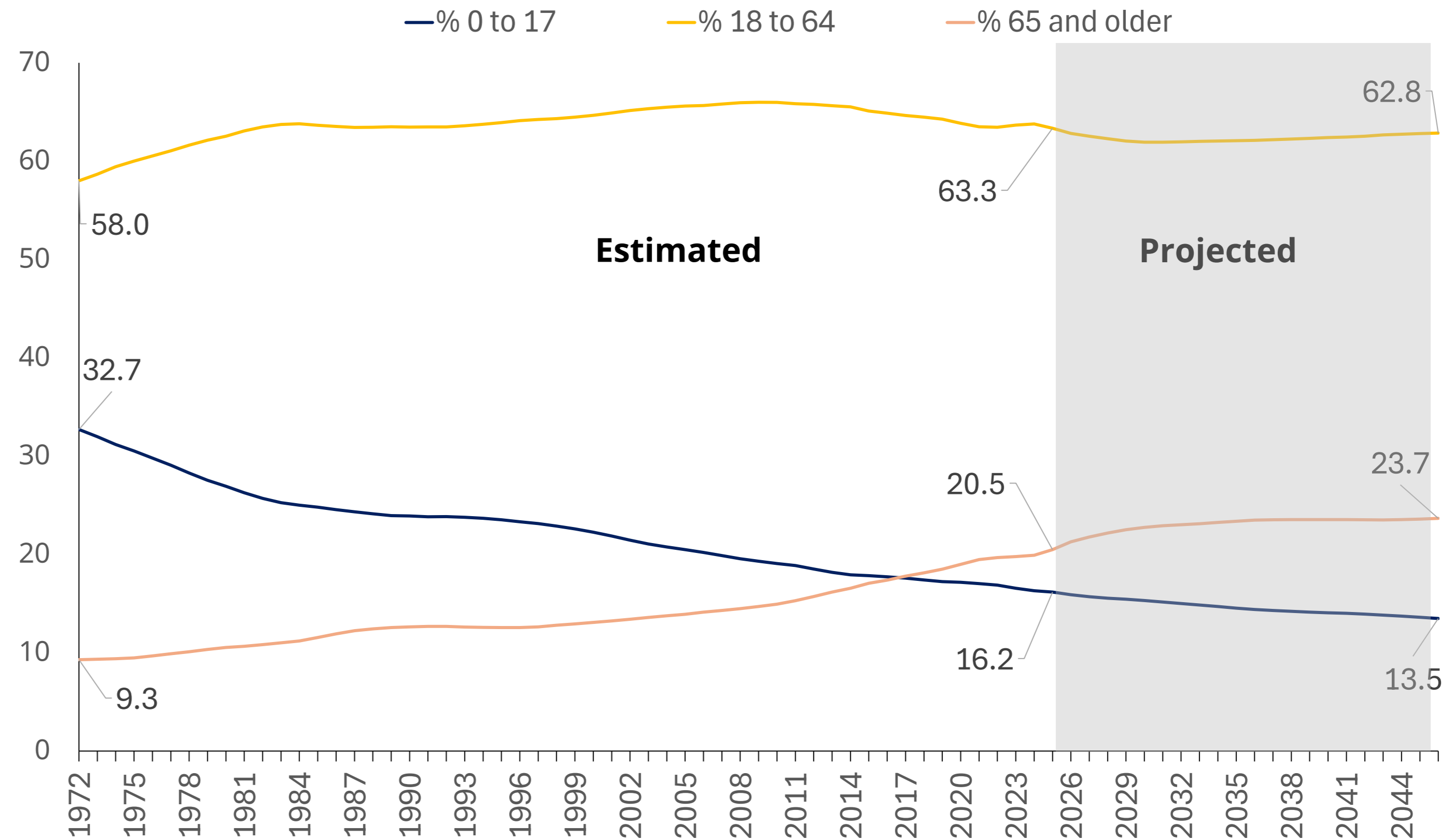
Each period encompasses from July 1st of the first year to June 30th of the next year.

Source: Statistics Canada table [17-10-0059-01](#).

Age Composition

- The demographic aging of B.C. is expected to continue in the coming years.
- In particular, the share of individuals aged 65 years and older is expected to increase.
- However, the share of the working-age population (individuals aged between 18 and 64 years old) is expected to remain stable at around 63% of B.C.'s population.

Distribution of B.C.'s Population by Age (%)

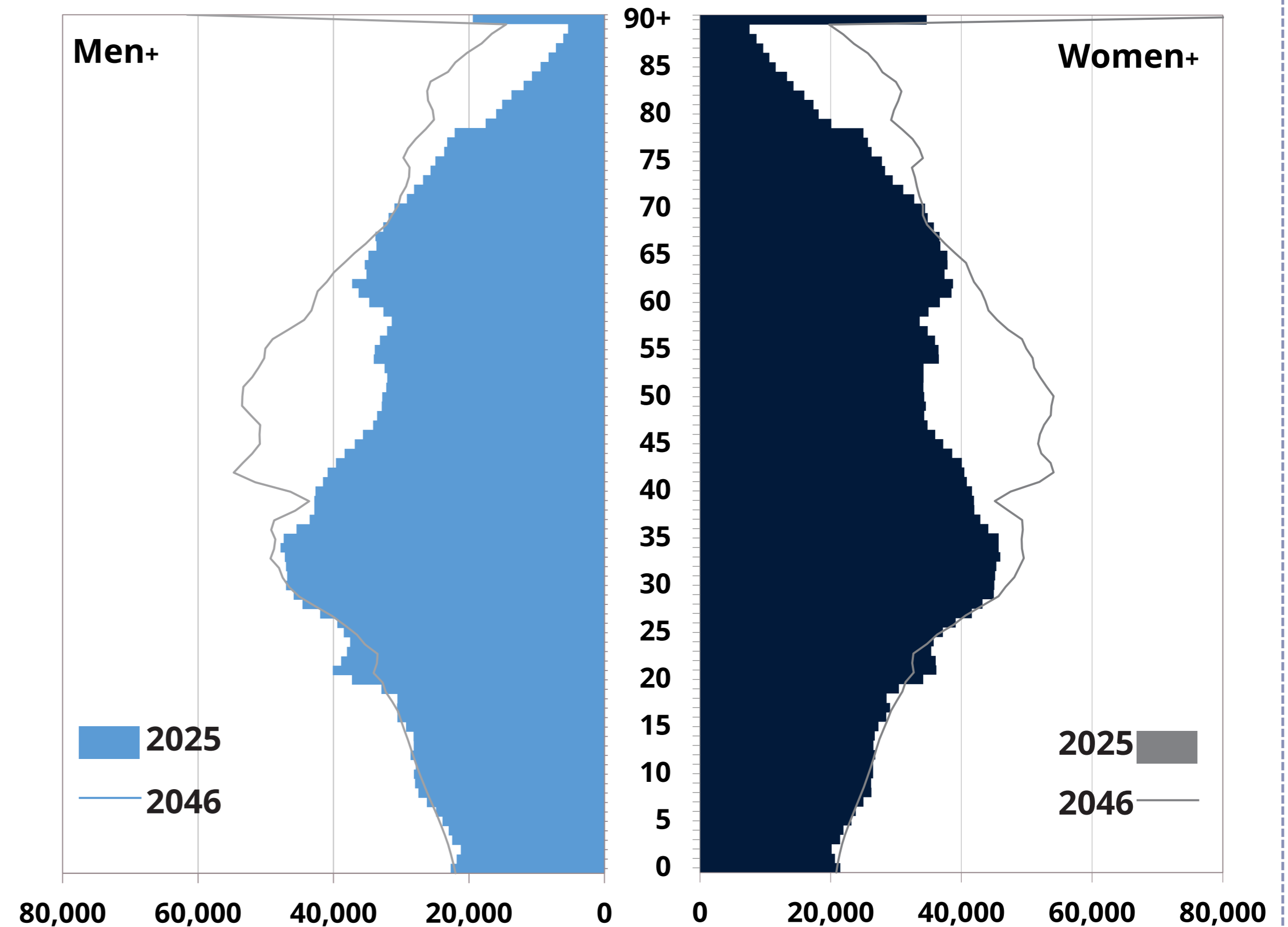


Source: Statistics Canada table [17-10-0005-01](#) and BC Stats

Age Composition and Growth

- The population of B.C. is expected to grow by nearly 1.1 million between 2025 and 2046.
- This growth is expected to be mostly driven by international and inter-provincial migration to the province.
- Therefore, the age groups that are expected to grow the most are individuals of working age.

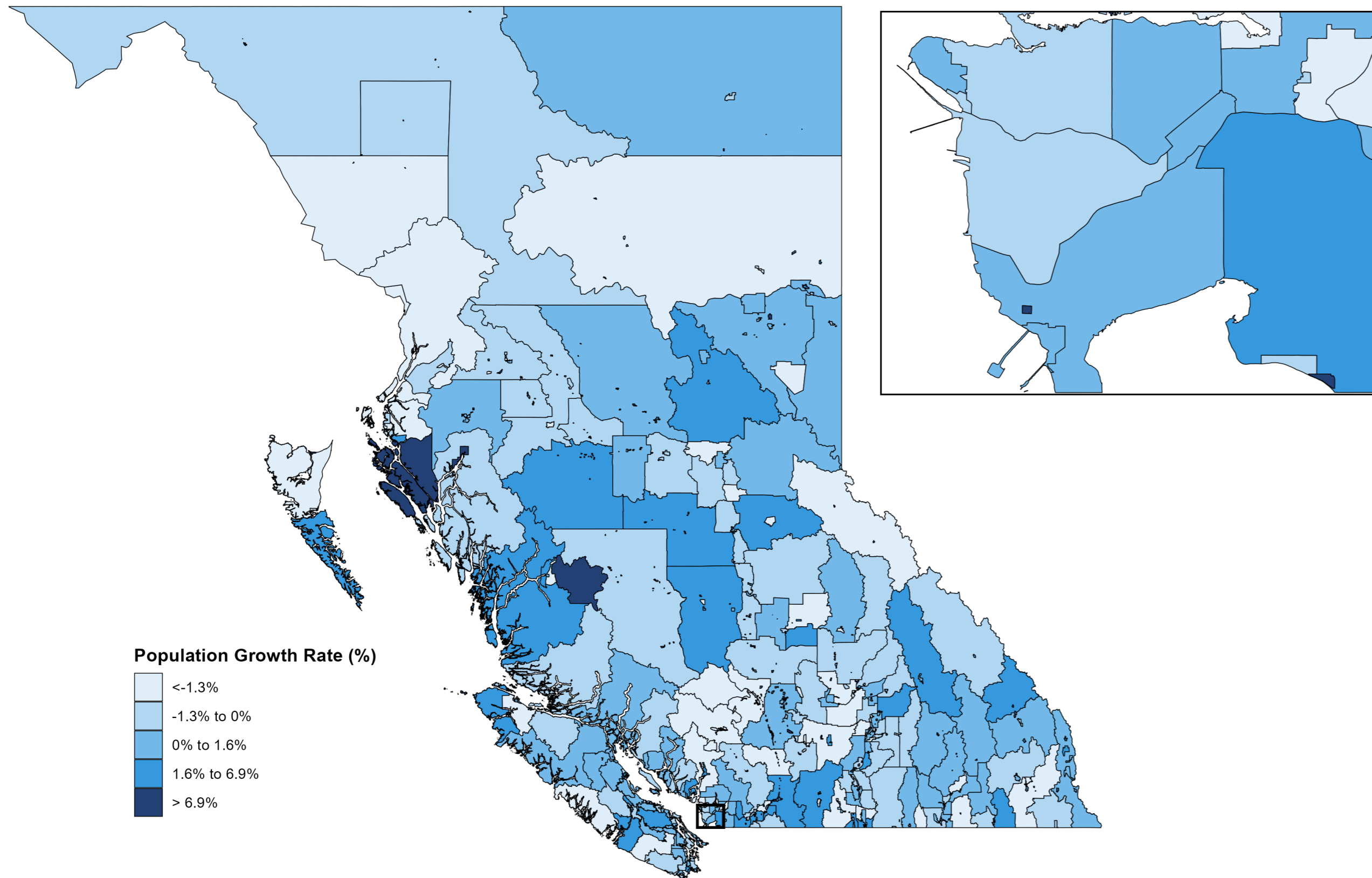
Population of B.C. as of July 1st
(2025 versus 2046)



Source: Statistics Canada table [17-10-0005-01](#) and BC Stats

Distribution of Growth – Recent Trends

**Population Growth by Census Subdivision
(2024 – 2025, %)**



The population growth of the province between 2024 and 2025 was concentrated in Surrey and other parts of the Lower Mainland:

- Surrey grew by 13,400 (1.9%) to over 703,000, amounting to 29% of total population gains in the province over this period.
- Burnaby grew by 3,600 (1.2%) to nearly 300,000.
- Abbotsford grew by 3,400 (2.0%), reaching 175,000.
- Among municipalities, Kitimat posted the highest % population increase over this period (9.6%)

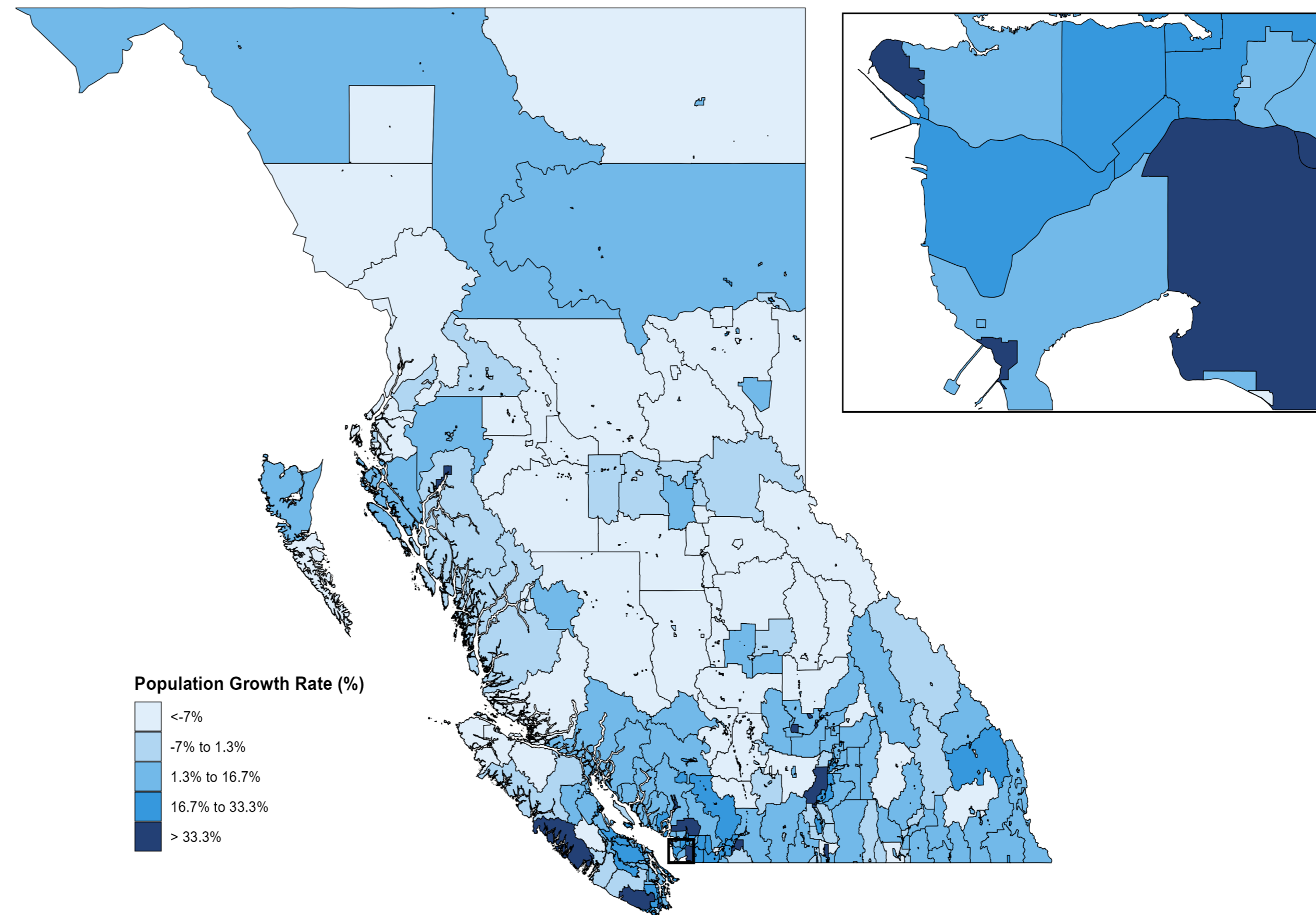
Population losses were heaviest in Vancouver and Richmond:

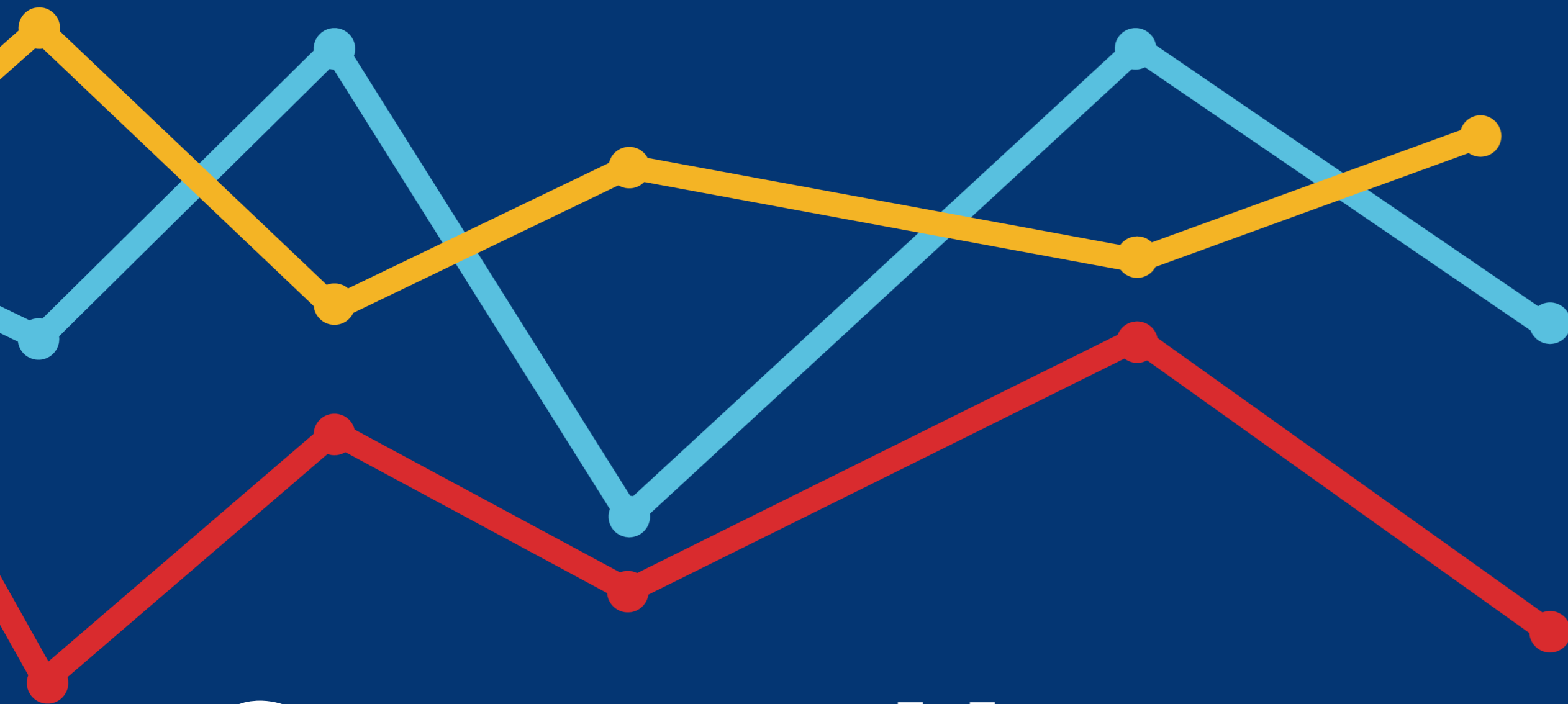
- Vancouver decreased by 8,300 (-1.1%) to 740,000 during this period, amounting to 42% of total population losses over this period.
- Richmond decreased by 2,500 (-1.0%) to 240,000
- Among municipalities, Lillooet posted the highest % population decrease over this period (-8.5%).

Distribution of Growth – Long Term

- Between 2025 and 2046, the province's population is expected to increase by 1.1 million.
- Much of this growth is expected to concentrate in urban centres on the Lower Mainland and, to a lesser extent, southern Vancouver Island
- Population growth in urban areas is expected to significantly outpace that of rural areas.

**Population Growth by Census Subdivision
(2025 – 2046, %)**





Contact Us

Submit feedback about these slides, request more information about B.C.'s population projections, or get help through the [BC Stats request system](#).
