

Metadata for Household Characteristics

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1. Population by type of living quarters, age and sex

The variable 'gender of person' is expected to be used by default in most social statistics programs at Statistics Canada in accordance with the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's "Policy Direction to Modernize the Government of Canada's Sex and Gender Information Practices" (2018).

Definition

Gender: Gender refers to an individual's personal and social identity as a man, woman or non-binary person (a person who is not exclusively a man or a woman).

Gender includes the following concepts:

- gender identity, which refers to the gender that a person feels internally and individually;
- gender expression, which refers to the way a person presents their gender, regardless of their gender identity, through body language, aesthetic choices or accessories (e.g., clothes, hairstyle and makeup), which may have traditionally been associated with a specific gender.

A person's gender may differ from their sex at birth, and from what is indicated on their current identification or legal documents such as their birth certificate, passport or driver's license. A person's gender may change over time.

Some people may not identify with a specific gender.

Sex: 'Sex' refers to whether the person is male or female.

Given that the non-binary population is small, data aggregation to a two-category gender variable is sometimes necessary to protect the confidentiality of responses provided. In these cases, individuals in the category "non-binary persons" are distributed into the other two gender categories and are denoted by the "+" symbol.

The sex variable in census years prior to 2021 and the two-category gender variable in the 2021 Census are included together in the [data table]. Although sex and gender refer to two different concepts, the introduction of gender is not expected to have a significant impact on data analysis and historical comparability, given the small size of the transgender and non-binary populations. For additional information on changes of concepts over time, please consult the Age, Sex at Birth and Gender Reference Guide.

Age: 'Age' refers to the age of a person (or subject) of interest at last birthday (or relative to a specified, well-defined reference date).

Document type classification

In the census, "**total private dwellings**" refers to the total of

- a) private dwellings occupied by usual residents;
- b) private dwellings occupied solely by foreign residents or temporarily present persons;
- and
- c) unoccupied private dwellings.

Private dwellings occupied solely by temporarily present persons or foreign residents (TRFRs) and unoccupied private dwellings account for a relatively small share of total dwellings (7.3% in 2021). Moreover, counts of private dwellings occupied by TRFRs and unoccupied private dwellings tend to fluctuate more from one census to the next, compared with private dwellings occupied by usual residents. In addition, there can be misclassification errors between the two categories—private dwellings occupied by TRFRs and private unoccupied dwellings—which cannot be identified. For data quality reasons, the data for private dwellings occupied by TRFRs and for private unoccupied dwellings are combined for dissemination purposes.

The classification of a private dwelling as occupied by TRFRs or unoccupied is based on the occupancy status of the dwelling on Census Day. A dwelling that is not the usual place of residence for a person or family may or may not be occupied on Census Day. If occupied on Census Day, then the dwelling unit is classified as “occupied by foreign residents or temporarily present persons.” Otherwise, the dwelling is considered unoccupied. There are multiple factors that can influence whether a dwelling is occupied by TRFRs or is unoccupied. For instance, a cottage that is used as a secondary residence may be occupied on Census Day for a given census cycle because the weather conditions were favourable at the time, while the same dwelling can be unoccupied during the next cycle if conditions differ. These concepts are fluid and they vary from one census cycle to the next. This situation may be more significant in some communities, particularly in areas with a high concentration of vacation homes.

Moreover, it is becoming more common for households to have two residences to accommodate situations that require spouses to work in different cities or to avoid long daily commutes. It is likely that some of these second residences were classified as occupied by TRFRs or unoccupied private dwellings in the 2021 Census.

The above-mentioned considerations are not unique to the 2021 Census. Similar circumstances existed in previous censuses that affected the classification of TRFR and unoccupied dwellings. Consequently, it may be difficult to compare the counts of TRFR and unoccupied dwellings for different geographic areas for different census years.

The enumeration of collective dwellings underwent substantial changes in the 2021 Census. Collection procedures were redesigned to ensure that respondents and census employees were safe by limiting the amount of contact for participation in the census. Census employees were not permitted to visit or enter some collective dwellings, especially those housing residents who were vulnerable to COVID-19, such as seniors’ residences and hospitals. For more information about data quality for collective dwellings, refer to the Type of Dwelling Reference Guide, Census of Population, 2021, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-500-X.

For the 2021 Census, only the usual resident counts were collected for some collective dwellings. This change has resulted in the combination of unoccupied collective dwellings and collective dwellings occupied solely by TRFRs.

Unknown households include overseas households.

2. Households by type of household, age and sex of head of household or other reference member

The variable 'gender of person' is expected to be used by default in most social statistics programs at Statistics Canada in accordance with the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's "Policy Direction to Modernize the Government of Canada's Sex and Gender Information Practices" (2018).

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Age: Age refers to the age of a person (or subject) of interest at last birthday (or relative to a specified, well-defined reference date).

Primary household maintainer: Primary household maintainer refers to the first person in the household identified as someone who pays the rent or the mortgage, or the taxes, or the electricity bill, and so on, for the dwelling.

In the case of a household where two or more people are listed as household maintainers, the first person listed is chosen as the primary household maintainer.

The order of the persons in a household is determined by the order in which the respondent lists the persons on the questionnaire. Generally, an adult is listed first followed, if applicable, by that person's spouse or common-law partner and by their children. The order does not necessarily correspond to the proportion of household payments made by the person.

Household type: Household type refers to the differentiation of households on the basis of whether they are census family households or non-census-family households. Census family households are those that contain at least one census family. Non-census-family households are either one person living alone or a group of two or more persons who live together but do not

constitute a census family. Census family households may be differentiated based on the presence of additional persons (that is, persons not in a census family).

For more information, refer to the Census Dictionary: Household type; Census family structure.

3. Households by type of household and sex and marital status of head of household or other reference member

The variable 'gender of person' is expected to be used by default in most social statistics programs at Statistics Canada in accordance with the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's "Policy Direction to Modernize the Government of Canada's Sex and Gender Information Practices" (2018).

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Marital status: Marital status refers to whether or not a person is living in a common-law union as well as the legal marital status of those who are not living in a common-law union. All persons aged less than 15 are considered as never married and not living common law.

Primary household maintainer: Primary household maintainer refers to the first person in the household identified as someone who pays the rent or the mortgage, or the taxes, or the electricity bill, and so on, for the dwelling.

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4. Households by household size and age and sex of household head or other reference member

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Household size: 'Household size' refers to the number of persons in a private household.

5. Population in households by relation to head of household or other reference member and by age and sex

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Relationship to person 1: Questions on family relationships for all household members are asked based on the relationship to the first person listed on the questionnaire, called Person 1 (after any reordering according to variable PERSNO).

Spouse of child includes:

- Son-in-law or daughter-in-law,
- Son's or daughter's married spouse,
- Son's or daughter's common-law partner,
- Stepson's or stepdaughter's married spouse,
- Stepson's or stepdaughter's common-law partner.

Parent (or parent of spouse) includes:

- Father or mother,
- Stepfather or stepmother,
- Father's or mother's married spouse,
- Father's or mother's common-law partner,
- Father-in-law or mother-in-law,
- Father-in-law's or mother-in-law's married spouse,
- Father-in-law's or mother-in-law's common-law partner.

Other relative includes:

- Foster child,
- Grandchild's married spouse,
- Grandchild's common-law partner,
- Grandparent,
- Grandparent's married spouse,
- Grandparent's common-law partner,
- Brother or sister,
- Brother's or sister's married spouse,
- Brother's or sister's common-law partner,
- Brother-in-law or sister-in-law,
- Brother-in-law's or sister-in-law's married spouse,
- Brother-in-law's or sister-in-law's common-law partner,
- Nephew or niece,
- Nephew's or niece's son or daughter,
- Uncle or aunt,
- Cousin,
- Cousin's son or daughter,
- Other relative,
- Other relative's married spouse,
- Other relative's common-law partner,
- Other relative's son or daughter (or stepson or stepdaughter),
- Other relative's grandchild.

Other unrelated person includes:

- Roommate, lodger or boarder,
- Roommate's, lodger's or boarder's married spouse,
- Roommate's, lodger's or boarder's common-law partner,
- Roommate's, lodger's or boarder's son or daughter (or stepson or stepdaughter),
- Roommate's, lodger's or boarder's grandchild,
- Owner or manager,
- Owner's or manager's married spouse,
- Owner's or manager's common-law partner,
- Owner's or manager's son or daughter (or stepson or stepdaughter),
- Owner's or manager's grandchild,

- Employee's married spouse,
- Employee's common-law partner,
- Employee's son or daughter (or stepson or stepdaughter),
- Employee's grandchild,
- Resident of an institutional collective dwelling,
- Resident of a non-institutional collective dwelling, excluding senior's residences.

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