

Religion in Canada (2001 Census, the latest one)

Population by religion. Only those religions with more than 250,000 respondents are included here. The census question was partly aided -- that is, the questionnaire form gave examples of some of the denominations but not others. The actual question asked is noted below.

Religion	Total responses	% of Population
Roman Catholic	12,793,125	43.2
No religion	4,796,325	16.2
United Church	2,839,125	9.6
Anglican	2,035,500	6.9
Christian n.i.e.	780,450	2.6
Baptist	729,470	2.5
Lutheran	606,590	2.0
Muslim	579,640	2.0
Protestant n.i.e.	549,205	1.9
Presbyterian	409,830	1.4
Pentecostal	369,475	1.2
Jewish	329,995	1.1
Buddhist	300,345	1.0
Hindu	297,200	1.0
Sikh	278,410	0.9

Growth in Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism

The largest gains in religious affiliations occurred among faiths consistent with changing immigration patterns toward more immigrants from regions outside of Europe, in particular Asia and the Middle East.

Among this group, those who identified themselves as Muslim recorded the biggest increase, more than doubling from 253,300 in 1991 to 579,600 in 2001. These individuals represented 2% of the total population in 2001, up from under 1% a decade earlier.

The number of people who identified themselves as Hindu increased 89% to 297,200. Those who identified themselves as Sikh rose 89% to 278,400, while the number of Buddhists increased 84% to about 300,300. Each represented around 1% of the total population.

Immigration was a key factor in the increases for all these groups. The proportion of immigrants entering Canada with these religions increased with each new wave of arrivals since the 1960s. Of the 1.8 million new immigrants who came during the 1990s, Muslims accounted for 15%, Hindus almost 7% and Buddhists and Sikhs each about 5%.

In terms of age, each of these religions had relatively young populations. The median age of Muslims was 28 years, Sikhs 30, and Hindus 32, all well below the median of 37 for the overall population.

Ontario was home to 73% of the Hindu population in 2001, 61% of all Muslims, and 38% of all Sikhs. Nearly one-half of the Sikh population lived in British Columbia.