



Economic Research

City of Winnipeg Population: January 2021 Update

January 15, 2021

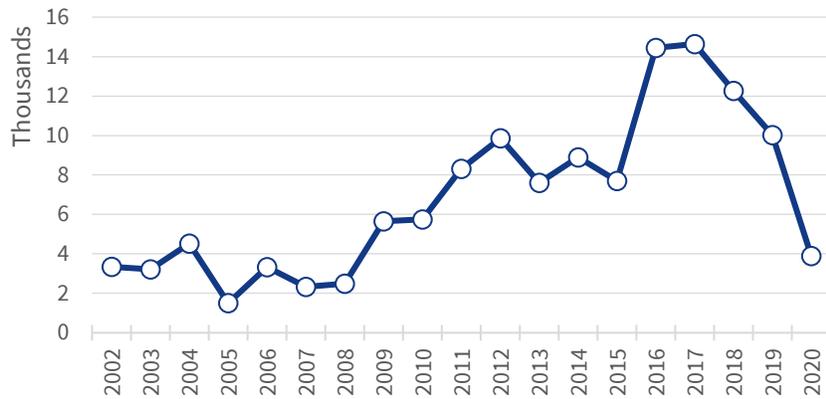
City of Winnipeg Population Estimate Update

On January 14, 2021, [Statistics Canada released updated population estimates for subprovincial areas up to July 1, 2020](#). Based on this information, the City of Winnipeg's population was estimated to be **766,894** on July 1, 2020.^{1,2} This represents a total population growth of 3,897 people from 2019, or 0.5 per cent, and this is the smallest increase in Winnipeg's population since 2008.

For the Winnipeg Census Metropolitan Area (CMA), the population was estimated to be **850,056** on July 1, 2020.³ This represents a total population growth of 5,891 people from 2019, or 0.7 per cent. This was the 8th lowest among all 35 CMAs in Canada.

When looking into the components of population change at the CMA level, this relatively small increase in population was primarily driven by a significant reduction in non-permanent residents (+2,809 in 2019 versus -1,011 in 2020), a group that is primarily made up of international students studying in Manitoba. This reduction is attributable to the restrictions in international travel and transition to online courses at post-secondary institutions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic which has temporarily lowered the number of international study permit holders in Winnipeg.⁴ Further, the Winnipeg CMA continues to experience significant levels of people leaving the region for other provinces, with a net of 6,660 people leaving from 2019 to 2020. This is the highest number on record since the data series begins in 2001.

**City of Winnipeg
Year-over-year Population Change**



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0142-01 Population estimates, July 1, by census subdivision, 2016 boundaries. Accessed January 14, 2021.

¹ Source: Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0142-01 Population estimates, July 1, by census subdivision, 2016 boundaries. Accessed January 14, 2021.

² This is approximately 7,800 fewer people than Economic Research's pre-COVID-19 projection that was produced in February 2020, and 4,500 fewer people than the revised 2020 projection produced for the *Addressing the Financial Challenges of COVID-19* presentation to the September 15, 2020 Standing Policy Committee on Finance.

³ Source: Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0135-01 Population estimates, July 1, by census metropolitan and census agglomeration, 2016 boundaries. Accessed January 14, 2021.

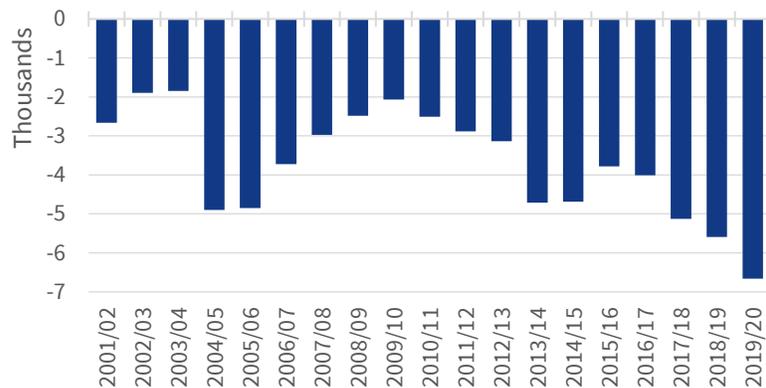
⁴ Source: Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0136-01 Components of population change by census metropolitan area and census agglomeration, 2016 boundaries. Accessed January 14, 2021.

It is important to note that while we expect the COVID-19 pandemic to temporarily affect population growth, and there is evidence of this in the latest data release from Statistics Canada, this data release only covers the last half of 2019 and first half of 2020. We expect to see a further dampening in population growth figures over the next few quarters as permanent immigration numbers continue to remain below their pre-COVID levels even after July 1, 2020.

Interprovincial Out-Migration Continues During Pandemic

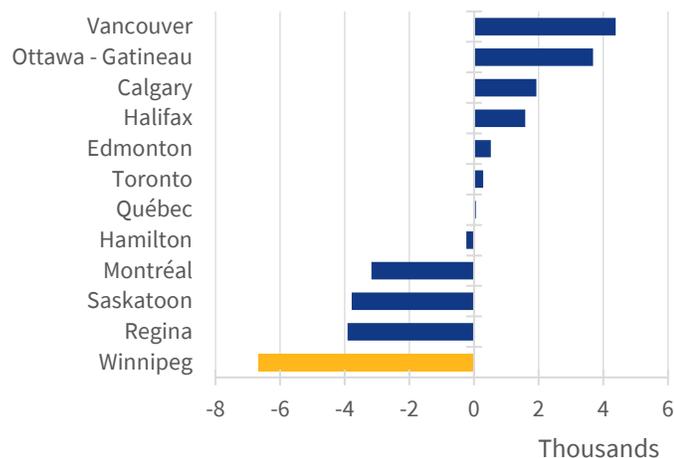
The latest information indicates that from 2019 to 2020 the Winnipeg CMA experienced a net loss of 6,660 residents to other provinces, which is the largest loss since the data series begins in 2001. Based on the most recent data available, the most common destination for Winnipeggers leaving for other provinces are Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, and Ottawa-Gatineau, in that order.⁵

**Winnipeg CMA
Net Interprovincial Migration**



Winnipeg also experienced the largest loss of residents to other provinces compared to other major CMAs in Canada. This loss of 6,660 individuals from 2019 to 2020 represents 0.8 per cent of 2019's total population.

**Net Interprovincial Migration across
Major CMAs, 2019 to 2020**



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0136-01 Components of population change by census metropolitan area and census agglomeration, 2016 boundaries. Accessed January 14, 2021

As this data only represents Q3 2019 to Q2 2020, it is still too early to comment on how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected interprovincial migration in the later half of 2020 in the metropolitan region. Initially Economic Research had speculated that interprovincial out-migration may temporarily slow due to the pandemic, but Q3 2020 data currently available only at a provincial level suggests that provincial out-migration has not slowed significantly, contrary to our initial expectations.⁶

⁵ Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0141-01 Interprovincial and intraprovincial migrants, by census metropolitan area and census agglomeration of origin and destination, 2016 boundaries. Accessed January 14, 2021.

⁶ Source: Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0020-01 Estimates of the components of interprovincial migration, quarterly. Accessed January 14, 2021.