

# COMMUNITY FOCUS



## Population changes in Ottawa based on the 2011 Census



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This factsheet is part of a series produced by the **Social Planning Council of Ottawa**, using data from the **Ottawa and Region Community Data Consortium**.

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[office@spcottwa.on.ca](mailto:office@spcottwa.on.ca)  
or visit us at:  
[www.spcottawa.on.ca](http://www.spcottawa.on.ca)

## Ottawa's Population is Growing!

In 2011, there were 883,390 residents in the city of Ottawa. Ottawa's population grew 8.8% overall between 2006 and 2011. This is nearly double the population growth experienced

between 2001 and 2006. At this rate, Ottawa's population will reach the one million mark in 2016. Migration was a key contributor to the city's population increase.

## More than half of the population is aged 25-64

In 2011, 56% of the population of Ottawa were adults (25 – 64 years old). Children and youth (0 – 24 years) comprised 31% of the population, while seniors (65+) accounted for 13%. The distribution of Ottawa's population by age group shows the same aging trend present at the national level. Despite this,

Ottawa has a younger population (median age 39.2 years) compared with the provincial average (median age 40.4 years). This younger population, related to the increase in the number of children and youth in Ottawa, may help mitigate the impact of an aging population.

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## An aging workforce

Ottawa's labour market needs young workers to keep its dynamism. In 2011 there were 618, 230 residents in the working age bracket of 15-64 years. Of these, 40.5% were between 45 – 64 years old. This group of older workers experienced growth at nearly double the rate of younger workers aged 20 – 39 (15% vs.

8%). There were just enough younger workers aged 15 – 24 to replace those aged 55 – 64 who are nearing retirement age. Effective youth employment supports and training are thus needed to address the gaps caused by an aging labour force and to sustain the city's economic growth.

## Older age groups (60+ years) experience the fastest growth

Adults over 60 years old are the fastest growing population group in Ottawa. In 2011, Ottawa had 167,000 residents over the age of 60. Between 2006 and 2011, the number of residents aged 60 – 64 increased by 34.4%, while the number of seniors aged 65 – 69 increased by 27.6%. While residents aged 60 – 64 are currently part of the workforce, they will be retiring in the coming years and may require additional services. The rapid growth of the seniors population highlights the urgent need for services such as supports for aging at home and protections for fragile seniors. The higher number of women compared to men is an important consideration for service providers. Among those aged 85+, there were twice as many women as men.

## The children and youth population is increasing

The number of children and youth aged 0 -24 living in Ottawa in 2011 was 272,835. The number of children aged 10 – 14 declined between 2006 – 2011, but all other age groups saw population increases. Children aged 0 – 4 and youth aged 20 – 24 years experienced the fastest increases (10.7% and 12.8% respectively). These changes have important implications for the provision of services. For the younger group, there is a need for early years services and child care. Effective employment supports and training are needed for the growing population of young adults aged 20 – 24, to combat high unemployment rates, uncertain job prospects in a challenging labour market and the increasing costs of higher education.

