

provinces, counties and metropolitan areas. A small selection of these data is presented in this section, embodying results of the 1971 Census and some published data from the 1976 Census.

The 1976 Census

4.2.1

Canada took its third quinquennial census on June 1, 1976. The aim of this census was to keep statistical information abreast of the demographic and socio-economic factors that form the foundation for decision making in both the private and public sectors. The census is a principal source of information for measuring social and economic progress, and for detecting those needs which necessitate the development and implementation of policies and programs such as regional development, health and welfare programs, education facilities, immigration, low income housing and transportation networks.

Questions of the 1976 Census covered age, sex, marital status, relationship to head of household, and mother tongue (the language first learned and still understood). These were asked of every person whose usual place of residence on June 1, 1976 was in Canada. In addition there were questions on type and tenure of housing of Canadian households. Sampling was also used in the 1976 Census. Persons 15 years of age and over of every third private household provided answers for school attendance, level of schooling, labour force activity and migration (place of residence five years ago).

The population of Canada at June 1, 1976 was 22,992,604, an increase of 6.6% or 1,424,693 from the previous census in 1971. Alberta and British Columbia recorded the largest growth rates at 12.9% each. Ontario was next at 7.3% (Table 4.4).

Provincial and sub-provincial areas

4.2.2

The basic legal reason for decennial censuses is to enable a redistribution of seats in the House of Commons. Under the terms of the Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act, the census must provide population counts by electoral districts. Those from the 1971 Census are shown in Chapter 3, Table 3.4, according to the electoral district boundaries established by the 1966 Representation Order (the redistribution following the 1961 Census).

Provincial trends, 1951-76. Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories had growth rates higher than national figures in all five-year periods between 1951 and 1976 (Table 4.4). However, a decline in the rate of growth occurred in all provinces as birth rates began to fall in the mid-1950s. The most spectacular change took place in Quebec where the rate of growth declined by about 76% between 1951-56 and 1971-76 (from 14.1% to 3.4%).

The lowest rates for 1971-76 were in the Atlantic provinces, Quebec, Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan registered a decline while the Northwest Territories had the highest growth rate (22.4%) followed by the Yukon Territory, Alberta and BC.

Provincial estimates. In addition to the five-year census, estimates are constructed for the total population of Canada and for each province on both an annual and quarterly basis. The estimates of population begin with the preceding census counts, the births of each year are added and the deaths subtracted; immigrants are added and an estimate of emigrants subtracted. Family allowance statistics showing the number of migrant families by province are used in estimating interprovincial shifts in population. The next census serves as a basis for revision of all annual estimates of each intercensal period. Table 4.6 shows population by province for selective years, with 1977 preliminary estimates.

Cities, towns and villages. As at June 1, 1976, some 67.4% of Canada's population lived in 2,079 centres classified as incorporated cities, towns and villages. These are grouped into 13 broad size categories in Table 4.7. Canadian cities and towns having a population of over 50,000 in 1976 are listed in Table 4.8 together with figures for 1966 and 1971. The date of incorporation to their present status is indicated also.

Census terms. A census agglomeration (CA) is an area comprised of at least two adjacent municipal entities, each at least partly urban. Its urbanized core is a continuous