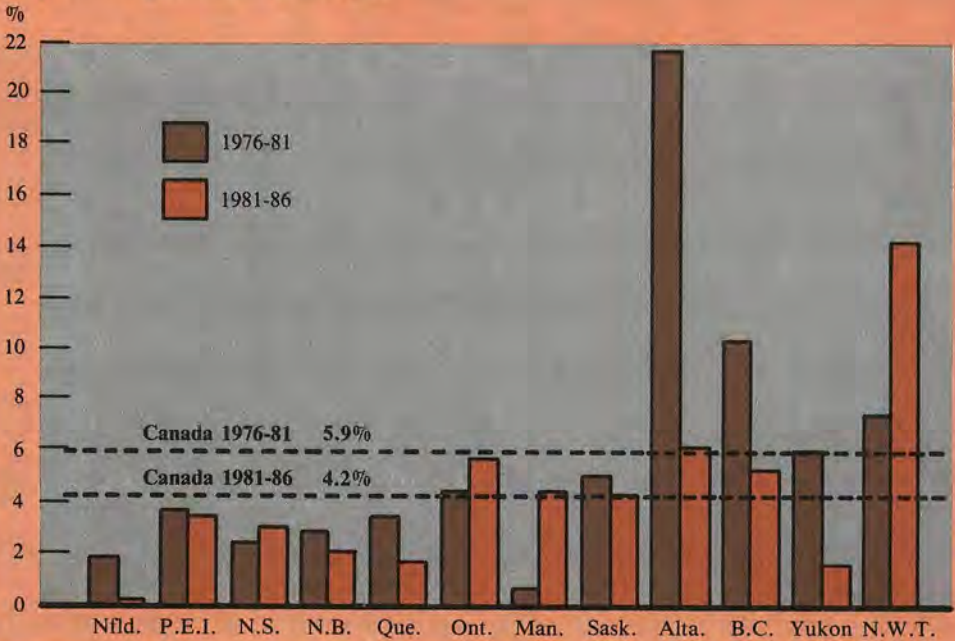


Chart 2.1

Population growth rate, 1976-86

Between 1981 and 1986, Saskatchewan's population increased by 41,885, breaking the one-million population barrier for the first time. Saskatchewan is the sixth province with a population over one million.

Of the 10 provinces, Manitoba experienced the largest increase in growth rate, from 0.5% between 1976 and 1981 to 4.4% between 1981 and 1986.

Quebec registered a population growth rate of 1.6%, the second smallest growth rate among the 10 provinces. This was a decline from a level of 3.3% experienced during the 1976-81 period. Newfoundland had the lowest growth rate, at 0.1%.

The Yukon Territory experienced a population growth rate of 1.5%, a significant decline from the 6.0% registered during the 1976-81 period. The Northwest Territories, however, experienced an increase of 14.2% during 1981-86, up from 7.4% during the 1976-81 period.

2.4 Population redistribution

One effect on the differences in provincial growth has been a continued redistribution of Canada's population over the last 25 years.

British Columbia, in experiencing growth rates consistently higher than the national average, had an 11.4% share of the population in 1986, up from

8.9% in 1961. Alberta accounted for 9.4% of Canada's population, up from 7.3% in 1961. The principal cause of these higher than average growth rates has been international and interprovincial migration.

Although Alberta has experienced an increase, both Manitoba and Saskatchewan recorded a smaller proportion of the population, leaving the Prairie region as a whole almost unchanged from its 1961 level, with 17.6% of Canada's population.

Ontario had 35.9% of Canada's population in 1986, up from 34.2% in 1961. Its share of the total population increased slightly between 1981 and 1986, following a decline during the previous five years.

Both the Atlantic provinces and Quebec showed continued declines in their share of the population. Quebec's share of 25.8% of the population in 1986 was down 3.0% from its 1961 level, while the Atlantic provinces accounted for 9.0% of Canada's population, down from a 1961 level of nearly 10.4%.

2.5 Metropolitan areas

The average growth rate of Canada's 25 Census Metropolitan Areas was 5.9%, as recorded in the 1986 Census, notably above the national average.