

preference, 7.4%; Eastern Orthodox, 1.5%; Jewish, 1.2%; and other small groups, 1.3%.

Two provinces were predominantly Catholic, Quebec with 88.2% of its population and New Brunswick with 53.9%. All other provinces had a Protestant majority.

Nearly 1.8 million persons who reported themselves as having no religious preference showed an increase in proportion in this category by 90% between 1971 and 1981.

One-half of persons of Jewish religion lived in Ontario, where they numbered 148,255 or 1.7% of the population. Another one-third or 102,355 were in Quebec, where they accounted for 1.6% of the population.

Buddhists recorded the largest 10-year increase among religious groups, up 223% to 51,955. Pentecostals had the second largest rate of growth, increasing 54%. Other religious groups increasing since 1971 included Mormons, up 36%; Roman Catholics, up 13%; Jewish, up 8%; and the United Church, up 1%. By contrast, Unitarians decreased by 31%; Doukhobors, 27%; Presbyterians, 6%; and Anglicans, 3%.

The Atlantic provinces had the smallest proportion stating no religious preference, ranging from 1% in Newfoundland to 4% in Nova Scotia. This category rose to just over 7% of the population of both Ontario and Manitoba, to 11.7% in Alberta, 20.3% in Yukon and 20.5% in British Columbia. Just over 6% of the people of both Saskatchewan and Northwest Territories reported no religious preference.

2.8 Families and households

In 1986 more than four out of five (84%) Canadians lived in families as wives, husbands, lone-parents or children, recorded in the 1986 Census. This proportion was down slightly from 1981, continuing the longer term decline that began in 1966 when just over 88% of the population lived in families.

Though the proportion of Canadians in families has been gradually declining, there has been a slight increase in the number of families, from 6.3 million in 1981 to 6.7 million in 1986. This five-year increase (6%) was moderate compared with earlier years. Between 1971 and 1976, the number of families increased by 13%, while between 1976 and 1981, it increased by 10%.

Recent slower growth in the number of families is due in part to delays in marriage, and also to an aging population now moving past the prime family-forming years. Nevertheless, the rate of increase in families was still greater than the

population growth in Canada over the 1981-86 period.

Family size dropping. While there are more families in Canada, the typical family is now smaller. Family size has declined since 1961 when the average family size was 3.9 people. Since then, the decline in size has been steady. In 1976, the average family had 3.5 people, in 1981, 3.3, and in 1986, 3.1.

The decline in family size is due mainly to lower fertility rates. For example, in 1986, the average number of children living at home was 1.3, down from 1.4 in 1981 and 1.9 in 1961. The increase in the number of lone-parent families also has contributed to smaller family size. Lone-parent families averaged 2.6 persons per family in 1986, compared to 3.2 persons among husband-wife families.

There has also been a dramatic growth in families with no children at home. (These may either be childless families, or families where grown children have left home.) In 1986, there were 2.2 million such families, or close to a third of all families. This represented a 9% increase over 1981, and far outpaced the growth of families with children at home (5%).

Families with children still in the majority. While the number of childless families has increased, close to 70% of Canada's families have children at home. In 1986, there were 4.5 million families with children. Moreover, four out of five of these families were the traditional husband-wife-child(ren) families.

Although lone-parent families are considerably fewer in number than these traditional families, they have been increasing at a much faster rate. Between 1981 and 1986, there was a 20% increase in their numbers. In 1986, they represented 13% of all families, up from 11% in 1981.

While the majority (80%) of lone-parent families were headed by women, there has been a slightly more rapid increase in the number of male lone-parents. Between 1981 and 1986, lone-parent families headed by men increased by 22%, following a 31% increase between 1976 and 1981. This compares to increases of 19% during 1981-86 and 27% during 1976-81 for lone-parent families headed by women.

Families with young children. At the time of the 1986 Census, there were 1.3 million husband-wife families and 175,485 lone-parent families with children under six years of age. Together, these families with young children made up 22% of all families in Canada.