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This Week...

2011 Census Population Counts  
Non-Residential Building Construction  
International Merchandise Trade  
Airport Traffic  
Job Vacancy Rates



## 2011 Census Population Counts By Doug Elliott, Editor

Statistics Canada has released the first data from the 2011 census. This release covers

only population and dwelling counts so it is not as valuable as other census data because there are other more up-to-date sources of population information available. Nevertheless, the figures are useful because they provide population counts for smaller communities.

Counting all urban centres with a population greater than 10,000 including the surrounding metropolitan areas, there are 56 urban centres in the West with a population of 8.2 million in 2011. This represents 30% of the population in the 147 urban centres in Canada.

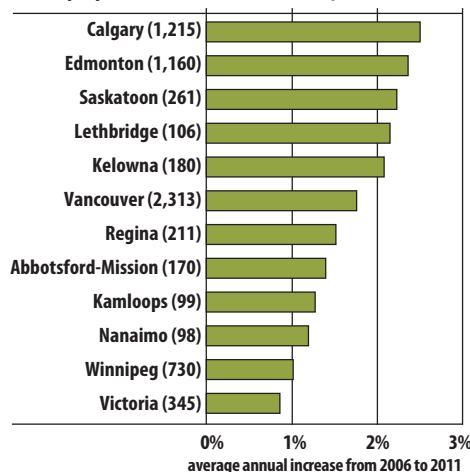
From 2006 to 2011, the population in these 56 centres grew by an average of 1.8% per year compared with 1.1% for urban centres in other parts of Canada. Figure 1 shows the growth rates for the largest twelve cities in the West. All but two of these urban centres have grown more quickly than the national average.

The next release from the 2011 census covers the age and sex of the population – these figures will be released on May 29.

## Non-Residential Building Construction

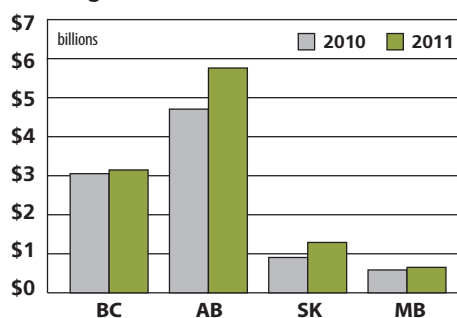
Statistics Canada has released initial estimates for the value of building permits issued in 2011. These figures measure the value of non-residential construction activity using building permits issued by the municipalities. They are affected by both the level of activity, the nature of the buildings being constructed, and by price inflation in the

**Figure 1: Population Growth, Largest Western Metropolitan Areas (showing 2011 population in thousands)**



From 2010 to 2011, the value of non-residential construction work in the West increased from \$9.3 to \$10.7 billion.

**Figure 2: Value of Non-Residential Building Permits Issued**



cost of construction. Engineering construction such as highways, bridges, and mines is not included.

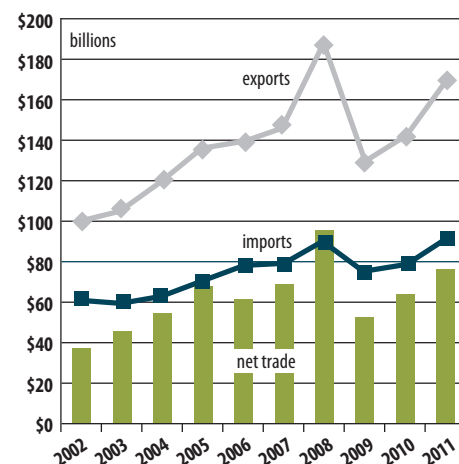
From 2010 to 2011, the value of construction work in the West increased from \$9.3 to \$10.7 billion. There were increases in each of the four western provinces (see Figure 2). The largest percentage increases were in Saskatchewan (26%) and Alberta (20%).

## International Merchandise Trade

Measured on a customs basis, exports of goods from the four western provinces to other areas of the world totalled \$167 billion in 2011. This is an increase of \$26 billion (18%) from 2010 and marks the second consecutive annual increase. Most of the ground lost in 2009, when the value of exports fell by almost \$60 billion, has been regained.

The increase in exports was accompanied by a 16% increase in the value of imports. With exports increasing more quickly than imports, net trade grew by 22% to reach \$78 billion.

**Figure 3: International Trade from/to the Western Provinces, Customs Basis**



The majority of the 2011 exports were energy products (53%), with other raw materials accounting for a further 38%.

The increase in the value of international merchandise exports from 2010 to 2011 by province was:

- 25% in Saskatchewan;
- 18% in Alberta;
- 15% in Manitoba; and
- 14% in B.C.

## Airport Traffic

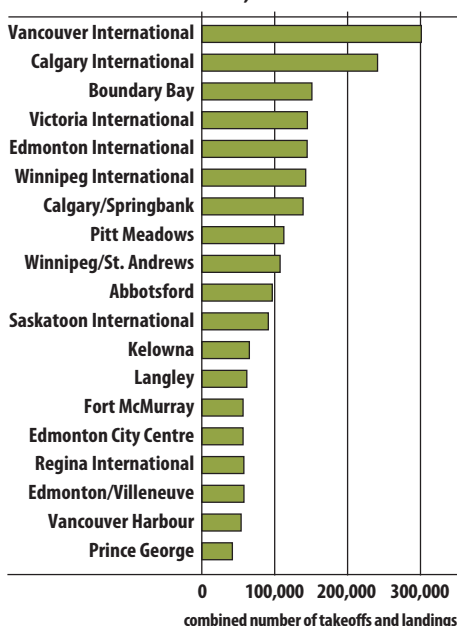
Vancouver International Airport is the busiest airport in western Canada, at least among those with NAV Canada air traffic control towers. The number of takeoffs/landings, excluding military flights, was 298,000 in 2011. The Calgary International Airport was the second busiest with 236,000 takeoffs/

Some of the busiest airports in the West are not the primary airports but the regional airports.

landings. In aggregate, the nineteen airports in Figure 4 account for just less than one half of the flights from all airports in Canada.

Some of the busiest airports in terms of air traffic are not the primary airports but the regional airports that manage smaller planes with relatively few passengers. Examples include the Pitt Meadows Airport and Boundary Bay Airport near Vancouver and the Springbank Airport in Calgary.

**Figure 4: Takeoffs and Landings, Western Airports with NAV Canada Traffic Control Towers, 2011**



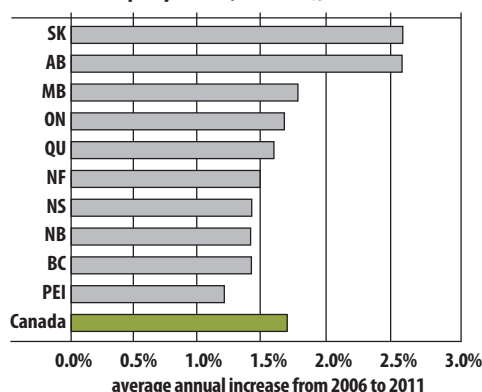
## Job Vacancy Rates

Statistics Canada has begun to ask questions about the number of job vacancies in their regular survey of Canadian businesses determining weekly earnings and payrolls. This is important labour market information that will become increasingly valuable as the labour force ages and shortages occur. Several years of data will need to be collected and published before trend lines can be established, but the current information is still useful as a snapshot of present conditions.

There is a larger unmet need for employees in Alberta and Saskatchewan than in other provinces.

Figure 5 shows the vacancy rates for the third quarter of 2011, demonstrating there is a larger unmet need for employees in Alberta and Saskatchewan than in other provinces.

**Figure 5: Job Vacancies as a Percentage of Paid Employment, 2011 Q3**



## Upcoming Releases

In the next two weeks, Statistics Canada will be releasing data describing:

- December motor vehicle sales on February 14;
- December manufacturing sales on February 16;
- January consumer price index on February 17;
- December wholesale and retail trade on February 21; and
- December payrolls, earnings, and hours on February 23.

### Sources:

*The figures are adapted from the following sources.*

**2011 Census Population Counts:** Statistics Canada

**Non-Residential Building Construction:** Statistics Canada CANSIM 026-0003

**International Merchandise Trade:** Statistics Canada CANSIM Table 228-0034 and 228-0031

**Airport Traffic:** Statistics Canada CANSIM Table 401-0008

**Job Vacancy Rates:** Statistics Canada Daily, January 24 2011

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