

2011 NATIONAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY BRIEF

FERTILITY RATES OF CANADA'S JEWISH POPULATION



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This brief examines the fertility rate of Canada's Jewish population using data derived from the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS). Unfortunately, no comprehensive vital statistics regarding Jewish fertility are available for most metropolitan areas in this country. Hospital and municipal records do not generally indicate the religion of the family, and such records are usually not accessible to researchers. It is thus difficult to obtain a figure for the birthrate of the Canadian Jewish population as a whole.

However, an approximate measure of fertility can be derived from the NHS using two cohorts: children 0-4 years and adult females of child-bearing age (15-49 years). This measure is called the Total Fertility Rate (TFR), and is recognized by demographers as a viable alternative in situations where vital statistics related to birthrates are not available.

There are two statistical issues related to this method of fertility calculation. Firstly, it is possible that some of the children 0-4 years

are adopted or otherwise not living with a mother who has since died, or has moved to another country. It is likely that there are very few such children included in this calculation. Secondly, there may be women (15-49 years) whose young children are not living in Canada. Again, there are likely very few such cases involved in this calculation.

It should be noted that the replacement fertility rate for an industrialized country such as Canada is considered to be 2.1 children. This means that a population would have to have an average of 2.1 births per woman in order to sustain itself. At such a rate it would simply remain at the same level rather than grow. Other factors such as in- and out-migration, as well as mortality, influence the general growth or decline of a population.

Calculations reveal that the fertility rate for the Canadian Jewish population is 1.99 children (Table 1). This rate is slightly below replacement levels. The Jewish fertility rate is higher than the non-Jewish

Table 1
Fertility Rates for Canada
Jewish, Non-Jewish & Total Populations

	Fertility Rate
Total Population	1.61
Jewish Population	1.99
Non-Jewish Population	1.61

Table 2
Fertility Rates for Canada
Jewish, Non-Jewish & Total Populations
Provinces

Province / Territory	Total Population	Jewish Population	Non-Jewish Population
Nova Scotia	1.47	1.57	1.47
New Brunswick	1.54	--	1.54
Newfoundland/Labrador	1.45	--	1.45
Prince Edward Island	1.62	--	1.62
Quebec	1.69	2.34	1.68
Ontario	1.52	1.88	1.51
Manitoba	1.86	1.67	1.86
Saskatchewan	1.99	3.11	1.99
Alberta	1.81	1.87	1.81
British Columbia	1.42	1.85	1.42
Total Canada	1.61	1.99	1.61

fertility rate (1.99 and 1.61 respectively). The fertility rate for the overall Canadian population is likewise 1.61.

Table 2 shows the fertility rates for the Jewish, non-Jewish and total populations of the provinces. Note that the Jewish communities in three of four Atlantic Provinces were too small to reliably calculate their birthrates.

The Jewish community with the highest birthrate is found in Saskatchewan (3.11), followed by that of the Jewish community in Quebec (2.34). This latter figure is likely due to the large Ultra-Orthodox population in Montreal, which has a significantly higher birthrate than the rest of the Jewish community in that metropolitan area.

The Jewish populations of Ontario (1.88), Alberta (1.87) and British Columbia (1.85) have similar fertility rates. The lowest rate is found in Nova Scotia (1.57) followed by Manitoba (1.67).

Note that Jewish fertility levels are higher than those of non-Jews and total populations in all provinces but Manitoba.

According to Table 3, there are relatively high fertility rates among Jews living in Regina (2.72), Kingston (2.50), Hamilton (2.39), and Montreal (2.27).

The lowest birthrate among Jewish communities is found in Windsor (1.06), followed by Victoria (1.40), Ottawa (1.53) and London (1.53).

Of the 15 metropolitan areas presented in Table 3, Jews have higher birthrates than total populations for all but one (Windsor).

Table 4 examines the fertility rates of selected ethnic groups in Canada. The Pakistani community has the highest birthrate (2.86 children), followed by the Arab (2.75), African (2.63), Aboriginal (2.43) and Latin American (2.11) communities. All the other groups register a birthrate below replacement levels. The Jewish population's fertility rate (1.99) is ranked 7th among ethnic groups.

The lowest fertility rate is registered by those of British extraction (1.02 children). The Korean (1.06), Spanish (1.32) and Chinese (1.35) communities also show very low fertility rates.

Table 3
Fertility Rates for Canada
Jewish, Non-Jewish & Total Populations
Metropolitan Areas

Census Metropolitan Area	Total Population	Jewish Population	Non-Jewish Population
Halifax, NS	1.41	1.61	1.41
Montreal, QC	1.61	2.27	1.60
Toronto, ON	1.49	1.93	1.48
Ottawa (Ontario part)	1.51	1.53	1.51
Hamilton, ON	1.55	2.39	1.55
Kingston, ON	1.41	2.50	1.40
Kitchener - Waterloo, ON	1.58	1.85	1.58
London, ON	1.50	1.53	1.50
Windsor, ON	1.48	1.06	1.48
Winnipeg, MB	1.54	1.63	1.54
Regina, SA	1.78	2.72	1.78
Calgary, AL	1.63	1.82	1.63
Edmonton, AL	1.64	1.74	1.64
Vancouver, BC	1.33	1.86	1.32
Victoria, BC	1.27	1.40	1.27

Table 4
Fertility Rates for Selected Ethnic Groups
Population of Canada

Ethnic Group	Birth Rate
Pakistani	2.86
Arab	2.75
African	2.63
Aboriginal	2.43
Latin American	2.11
Caribbean	2.09
(Jewish: full definition)	(1.99)
Greek	1.94
Japanese	1.87
East Indian	1.85
Italian	1.79
Ukrainian	1.70
Portuguese	1.65
American	1.63
Russian	1.62
German	1.58
Vietnamese	1.54
Polish	1.51
French	1.39
Filipino	1.39
Chinese	1.35
Spanish	1.32
Korean	1.06
British	1.02
All other ethnic categories	1.19
Total Canada	1.61