

# Police resources in Canada, 2016

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The number of police officers (per 100,000 people) in Canada fell for a fifth consecutive year in 2016, reaching its lowest rate since 2005. In 2016, police officer strength stood at 190 officers per 100,000 population, down 1.2% from 2015 and lower than the peak strength of 206 officers in 1975.

Overall, there were 68,773 police officers working for police services in Canada as of May 2016, about the same number as in 2015.

These findings are included in the new *Juristat* article "[Police resources in Canada, 2016](#)" released today.

## Police strength based on population served declines for fifth consecutive year

The rate of police strength fell in most jurisdictions in 2016. The exceptions were Newfoundland and Labrador (+2.1%) and Yukon (+5.9%). New Brunswick, Alberta and British Columbia reported relatively stable rates.

Across the country in 2016, there were 50 stand-alone municipal police services which served a population greater than 100,000. Of these services, 17 saw an increase in their rate of police strength, 24 saw a decrease in strength and 9 reported no notable change. The largest increases in police strength were in the British Columbia municipalities of Coquitlam (+15%) and Surrey (+13%), and in the Quebec municipality of Terrebonne (+9%).

## Civilian personnel accounting for greater proportion of employees

Police services are increasingly made up of civilian members such as clerks, communications personnel, managers and professionals, security officers and school crossing guards. On May 15, 2016, police services employed 28,422 civilians. The proportion of civilians in policing has gradually increased since data were first collected, growing from 18% in 1962 to 29% in 2016.

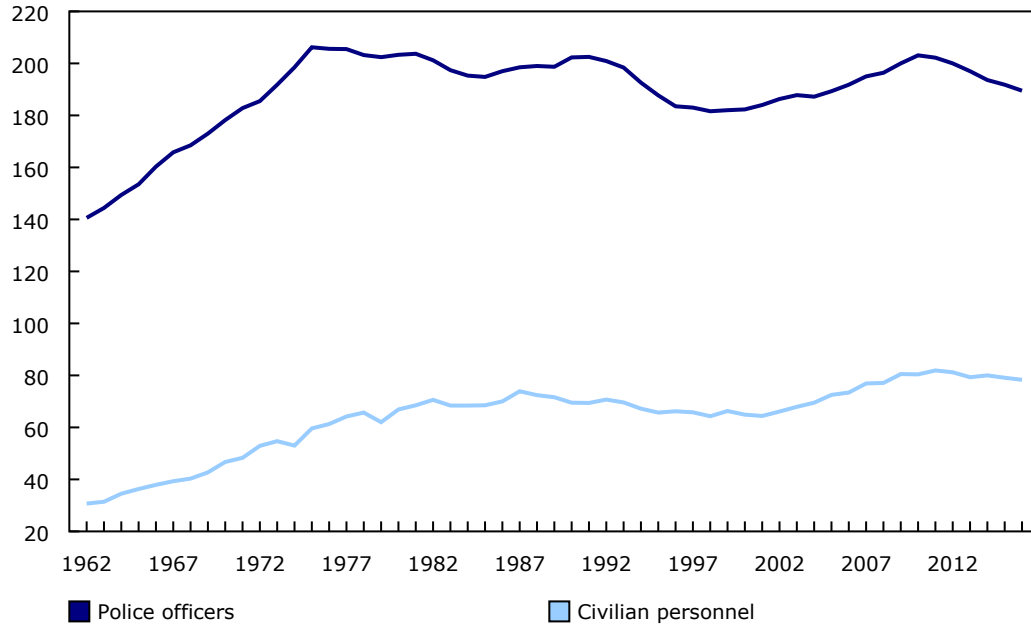
Growth has been concentrated in the category of managers and professionals, which accounted for 10% of all police personnel in 2016, compared with less than 1% in 1986.



**Chart 1**

**Number of police officers and civilian personnel per 100,000 population, Canada, 1962 to 2016**

personnel per 100,000 population



**Note(s):** Police officers represent the actual number of permanent, fully-sworn police officers of all ranks (or their full-time equivalents). Civilian personnel include permanent civilian staff on the police service's payroll, employed in permanent positions such as clerks, dispatchers, managers, cadets, special constables, security officers, school crossing guards and by-law enforcement officers. Populations are based on July 1, 2016, estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Additional data are available on CANSIM table 254-0002.

**Source(s):** Police Administration Survey (3301).

**Proportion of female police officers continues to increase**

The evolution of policing has also meant more women joining the ranks. In 2016, the 14,545 female officers in Canada accounted for 21% of all officers. In comparison, women constituted 4% of officers in 1986. The proportion of female sworn officers has increased every year since collection began in 1986.

Although women account for a smaller proportion of senior and non-commissioned officers compared with constables, their presence in the higher ranks continues to increase. In 2016, 13% of senior officers were women, compared with 6% in 2006 and less than 1% in 1986. Among non-commissioned officers or chiefs, 18% were women in 2016 compared with 11% in 2006 and less than 1% in 1986.

**Growth in overall proportion of officers aged 45 years and older**

With an aging population, the loss of experienced individuals to pending retirements remain a concern within the workforce. In policing, the proportion of officers aged 45 years and older has grown since 2012, when data were first collected. That year, officers aged 45 years and older accounted for 32% of all officers. In 2016, the proportion grew to 36%.

In the 2015 calendar year or the 2015/2016 fiscal year, 10% of all police officers in Canada were eligible to retire, but 3% or 1,822 officers actually did. Those who did retire accounted for 69% of all police officers who departed police services that year. The other 31% departed for reasons other than retirement, such as being hired by another police service or career change.



In celebration of the country's 150th birthday, Statistics Canada is presenting snapshots from our rich statistical history.

Policing is one of the longest standing institutions in this country, one that pre-dates Confederation by more than 30 years.

As populations expanded and settled across the country, policing in Canada has evolved and has seen the establishment of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, numerous municipal services, some First Nations police services and three provincial police services.

According to some of the earliest information on occupations from the Census of Canada, there were 1,313 "policemen and detectives" in Canada in 1881. Just over 80 years later, according to Statistics Canada's first Police Administration Survey conducted in 1962, policing comprised just over 26,100 police officers and 5,700 civilian personnel that year. The number of police officers was 141 officers per 100,000 population, about 35% lower than the 2016 rate.

## **Salaries among First Nations police services personnel are consistently lower compared with other services, but the gap is narrowing**

Overall, the average annual salary for police personnel in Canada in 2015/2016, including both officers and civilians, was \$96,231. When controlling for inflation, this amount has generally grown since 1995/1996, including a 1% increase from 2014/2015 to 2015/2016.

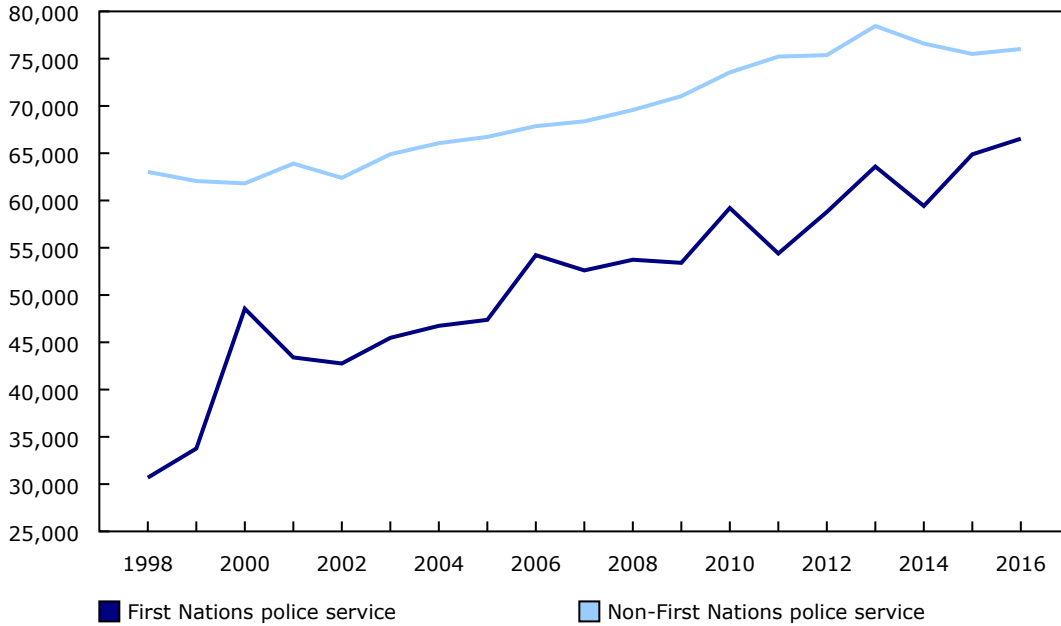
Although the average salaries reported by First Nations services (when accounting for inflation) have been consistently lower than for other types of police services, the gap has narrowed in recent years. In 2015/2016, the average salary in constant 2002 dollars for personnel employed by First Nations police services was \$66,536 compared with \$76,024 for personnel of non-First Nations police services. Of note historically, First Nations police services have reported having a younger police service than all other types of services. Numerous factors could explain the difference in average salaries, for example, differences in age profile or tenure.

From 2006/2007 to 2015/2016, average salaries in constant dollars for personnel employed by First Nations police services grew by 26%, compared with 11% for non-First Nations police services.

Various factors can contribute to differences in average salaries among police services. These may include funding formulas, presence of specialized policing services, level of information technology requirements, complexity and size of administration functions, and age profile and tenure of employees. Also, average salary comparisons do not take into account differences in cost of living among the locations of the police services.

**Chart 2**  
**Average salary, total police personnel, constant dollars, Canada, 1998 to 2016**

constant dollars



**Note(s):** Current dollars express the cost of items in terms of the year in which the expenditure occurs. Constant dollars are adjusted (by inflation or deflation) to show changes in the purchasing power of the dollar. The Consumer Price Index was used to calculate constant dollars over a base year of 2002 (2002=100). Populations are based on July 1, 2016, estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division.  
**Source(s):** Police Administration Survey (3301).

### Operating expenditures for policing surpass \$14 billion in 2015/2016

Year-end operating expenditures for police services in Canada in 2015/2016 totalled \$14.2 billion in current dollars. These expenditures comprised salaries and wages (66%), benefits (15%) and other operating expenditures (19%).

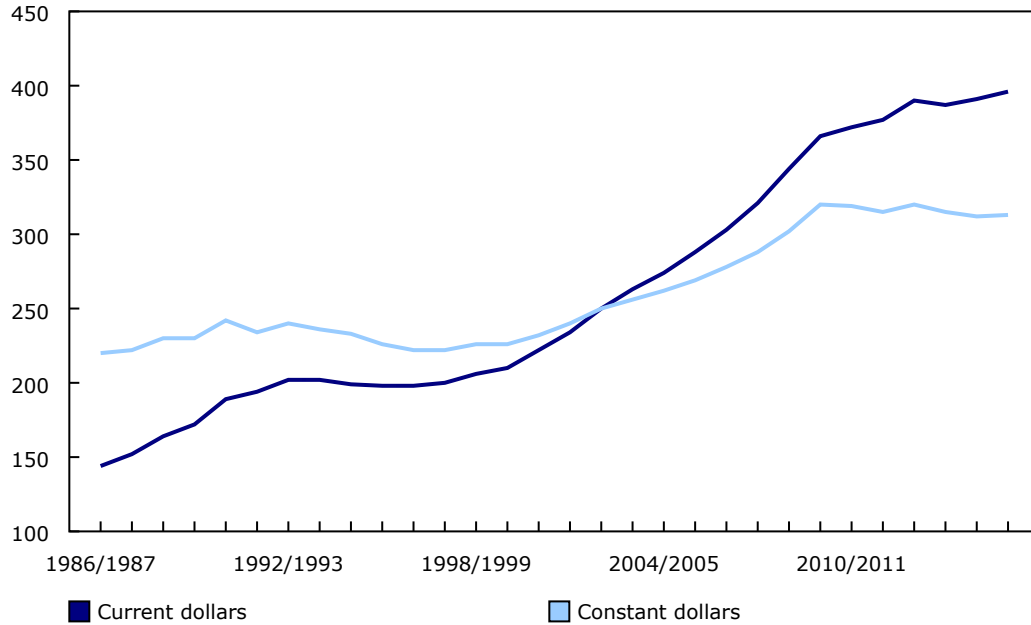
Accounting for inflation, total operating expenditures rose by 1% from the previous year, with the largest increases in Saskatchewan (+5%), Ontario (+3%) and Alberta (+3%).

When adjusting for inflation, police spending increased annually by an average of 3.7% a year from 1997/1998 to 2010/2011, but has since remained relatively stable with increases in 2012/2013 and in 2015/2016.

When accounting for population and inflation, policing operational costs in 2015/2016 amounted to \$313 per capita, almost unchanged from \$312 per capita in 2014/2015.

**Chart 3**  
**Police expenditures per capita, current dollars and constant dollars,**  
**Canada, 1986/1987 to 2015/2016**

per capita expenditures (dollars)



**Note(s):** Current dollars express the cost of items in terms of the year in which the expenditure occurs. Constant dollars are adjusted (by inflation or deflation) to show changes in the purchasing power of the dollar. The Consumer Price Index was used to calculate constant dollars over a base year of 2002 (2002=100). Populations are based on July 1, 2016, estimates from Statistics Canada, Demography Division.  
**Source(s):** Police Administration Survey (3301).

**Table 1**  
**Municipal police services serving a population of 100,000 or more, Canada, 2016**

|   | Population <sup>2</sup> | Police officers <sup>3</sup>             | Police officers <sup>3</sup>           | Police officers <sup>3</sup> | Hirings <sup>6</sup> | Departures <sup>6</sup> | Net gain or loss: hirings and departures <sup>6</sup> | Police officers eligible to retire <sup>6</sup> |
|---|-------------------------|--|--|------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|---|---|
|   | number                  | rate per 100,000 population <sup>4</sup> | annual % change in number <sup>5</sup> |                              | number               | number                  |   | %   |
| <b>Municipal police services<sup>1</sup></b>    |                         |  |  |                              |                      |                         |   |   |
| Toronto, Ont.                                   | 2,826,498               | 5,366                                    | 190                                    | -1.9                         | 70                   | 151                     | -81   | 6.5   |
| Montréal, Que.                                  | 1,999,795               | 4,583                                    | 229                                    | -1.9                         | 234                  | 249                     | -15   | 16.3  |
| Peel Region (Mississauga/Brampton), Ont.        | 1,373,033               | 1,967                                    | 143                                    | -0.7                         | 90                   | 71                      | 19  | 4.1   |
| Calgary, Alta.                                  | 1,293,023               | 2,172                                    | 168                                    | -1.1                         | 90                   | 50                      | 40  | 0.0   |
| York Region (Markham/Vaughan), Ont.             | 1,139,738               | 1,598                                    | 140                                    | 2.6                          | 48                   | 31                      | 17  | 3.9   |
| Ottawa, Ont.                                    | 956,710                 | 1,239                                    | 130                                    | -3.6                         | 46                   | 27                      | 19  | 4.2   |
| Edmonton, Alta.                                 | 950,421                 | 1,739                                    | 183                                    | 2.2                          | 115                  | 77                      | 38  | 7.5   |
| Winnipeg, Man.                                  | 718,357                 | 1,416                                    | 197                                    | -1.7                         | 2                    | 48                      | -46   | 25.4  |
| Durham Region (Oshawa/Whitby/Ajax), Ont.        | 661,190                 | 861                                      | 130                                    | -1.8                         | 13                   | 27                      | -14   | 8.4   |
| Vancouver, B.C.                                 | 658,198                 | 1,292                                    | 196                                    | -0.2                         | 54                   | 63                      | -9  | 7.9   |
| Québec, Que.                                    | 578,749                 | 771                                      | 133                                    | 7.5                          | 68                   | 13                      | 55  | 1.4   |
| Halton Region (Oakville/Burlington), Ont.       | 559,213                 | 690                                      | 123                                    | 0.9                          | 30                   | 16                      | 14  | 2.6   |
| Hamilton, Ont.                                  | 556,359                 | 840                                      | 151                                    | -0.1                         | 37                   | 38                      | -1  | 19.0  |
| Waterloo Region (Kitchener), Ont.               | 542,511                 | 767                                      | 141                                    | -0.7                         | 23                   | 25                      | -2  | 0.9   |
| Surrey, B.C.                                    | 505,359                 | 730                                      | 144                                    | 12.6                         | 119                  | 9                       | 110   | 6.0   |
| Niagara Region (St. Catharines), Ont.           | 449,098                 | 706                                      | 157                                    | -0.8                         | 20                   | 27                      | -7  | 6.9   |
| Laval, Que.                                     | 425,225                 | 600                                      | 141                                    | 5.0                          | 0                    | 15                      | -15   | 10.8  |
| Longueuil, Que.                                 | 421,342                 | 565                                      | 134                                    | -1.0                         | 9                    | 15                      | -6  | 2.8   |
| London, Ont.                                    | 391,925                 | 582                                      | 148                                    | -2.5                         | 9                    | 18                      | -9  | 4.1   |
| Gatineau, Que.                                  | 278,780                 | 395                                      | 142                                    | -1.0                         | 8                    | 10                      | -2  | 3.8   |
| Saskatoon, Sask.                                | 258,068                 | 453                                      | 176                                    | -0.9                         | 18                   | 11                      | 7   | 10.2  |
| Burnaby, B.C.                                   | 242,412                 | 281                                      | 116                                    | -1.2                         | 26                   | 5                       | 21  | 7.8   |
| Halifax, N.S.                                   | 233,874                 | 512                                      | 219                                    | 0.3                          | 28                   | 17                      | 11  | 6.3   |
| Windsor, Ont.                                   | 219,335                 | 429                                      | 196                                    | -1.8                         | 10                   | 17                      | -7  | 0.0   |
| Regina, Sask.                                   | 219,279                 | 393                                      | 179                                    | -0.1                         | 14                   | 10                      | 4   | 2.5   |
| Richmond, B.C. <sup>7</sup>                     | 205,983                 | 200                                      | 97                                     | 0.3                          | 14                   | 4                       | 10  | 7.5   |
| St. John's, N.L.                                | 205,776                 | 342                                      | 166                                    | 4.6                          | 32                   | 14                      | 18  | 28.4  |
| Richelieu Saint-Laurent, Que.                   | 202,732                 | 212                                      | 105                                    | 0.1                          | 0                    | 6                       | -6  | 0.0   |
| Sherbrooke, Que.                                | 164,666                 | 203                                      | 123                                    | -1.1                         | 2                    | 4                       | -2  | 2.0   |
| Greater Sudbury, Ont.                           | 164,266                 | 264                                      | 161                                    | 3.4                          | 18                   | 17                      | 1   | 3.8   |
| Barrie, Ont.                                    | 148,134                 | 237                                      | 160                                    | -1.6                         | 8                    | 1                       | 7   | 1.3   |
| Saguenay, Que.                                  | 147,976                 | 178                                      | 120                                    | 0.2                          | 0                    | 2                       | -2  | 2.2   |
| Abbotsford, B.C.                                | 144,949                 | 212                                      | 146                                    | -2.1                         | 5                    | 12                      | -7  | 1.9   |
| Lévis, Que.                                     | 144,040                 | 153                                      | 106                                    | 2.0                          | 7                    | 4                       | 3   | 13.1  |
| Terrebonne, Que.                                | 138,422                 | 166                                      | 120                                    | 9.2                          | 3                    | 3                       | 0   | 1.2   |
| Coquitlam, B.C.                                 | 136,717                 | 167                                      | 122                                    | 14.8                         | 23                   | 7                       | 16  | 10.2  |
| Trois-Rivières, Que.                            | 135,374                 | 157                                      | 116                                    | -2.3                         | 8                    | 7                       | 1   | 1.9   |
| Kingston, Ont.                                  | 130,490                 | 201                                      | 154                                    | 4.0                          | 9                    | 7                       | 2   | 2.5   |
| Guelph, Ont.                                    | 130,440                 | 193                                      | 148                                    | 0.2                          | 5                    | 5                       | 0   | 10.9  |
| Kelowna, B.C.                                   | 128,924                 | 178                                      | 138                                    | 2.1                          | 8                    | 1                       | 7   | 12.4  |
| Codiac Region (Moncton), N.B.                   | 117,287                 | 147                                      | 125                                    | -2.3                         | 1                    | 9                       | -8  | 21.8  |
| Thunder Bay, Ont.                               | 116,311                 | 232                                      | 199                                    | 4.4                          | 9                    | 6                       | 3   | 5.2   |
| Saanich, B.C.                                   | 115,609                 | 158                                      | 137                                    | 0.3                          | 10                   | 8                       | 2   | 3.2   |
| Langley Township, B.C.                          | 112,909                 | 139                                      | 123                                    | 6.5                          | 10                   | 3                       | 7   | 7.9   |
| Delta, B.C.                                     | 108,754                 | 155                                      | 143                                    | -12.5                        | 8                    | 5                       | 3   | 0.0   |
| Chatham-Kent, Ont.                              | 105,322                 | 159                                      | 151                                    | -1.1                         | 0                    | 5                       | -5  | 8.2   |
| Roussillon Region, Que.                         | 105,168                 | 115                                      | 109                                    | 0.9                          | 3                    | 8                       | -5  | 7.0   |
| Red Deer, Alta. (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) | 103,232                 | 164                                      | 159                                    | 8.3                          | 25                   | 7                       | 18  | 7.3   |
| Victoria, B.C.                                  | 102,973                 | 243                                      | 236                                    | -1.0                         | 11                   | 13                      | -2  | 21.4  |
| Lethbridge Region, Alta.                        | 100,995                 | 161                                      | 159                                    | -5.9                         | 1                    | 4                       | -3  | 10.6  |

1. Refers to the municipal stand-alone police services and municipalities policed by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police that have a population of 100,000 or more (based on 2015 populations).
2. Populations are based on preliminary postcensal estimates for 2015 and are adjusted to follow policing boundaries. Populations according to policing boundaries for 2016 were not available in time for this publication.
3. Represents the actual number of permanent, fully-sworn police officers of all ranks (or their full-time equivalents) as of May 15, 2016. This number also includes officers who are deployed to contract positions and who are not available for general policing duties in their community. Police officers on long-term leave who are not being paid by the police service's annual budget are excluded.
4. Based on the number of police officers on May 15, 2016 and populations for 2015. Populations are adjusted to follow policing boundaries. Populations for 2016 are not yet available.
5. Percent changes are based on unrounded rates.
6. Represents hirings, departures and eligibility to retire during the 2015 calendar or 2015/2016 fiscal year. The percent of officers eligible to retire is calculated using these data, along with the number of fully sworn officers employed on May 15, 2016.
7. Includes Vancouver International Airport.

**Note(s):** A new version of the Police Administration Survey was implemented in 1986. Data on police strength pertain to the snapshot date (May 15, 2016, for the most recent data). Additional data are available on CANSIM table 254-0004.

**Source(s):** Police Administration Survey (3301).

**Note to readers**

Several factors may contribute to differences in the number of police officers (per 100,000 people) across jurisdictions and police services. These include differences in police services' priorities, policies, procedures and enforcement practices, and the availability of resources.

In Canada, information on police personnel and expenditures is collected by Statistics Canada through the annual Police Administration Survey. Using data reported by each police service in Canada, this report provides details on police personnel at the national, provincial and territorial, and respondent levels.

Data in this report represent two distinct time periods. Most of the information on police personnel is based on a "snapshot date" of May 15, 2016, while data on hirings, departures, retirements, eligibility to retire, and expenditures represent the calendar year ending December 31, 2015 (or March 31, 2016, for those police services operating on a fiscal year).

In this release, rates with a percent change that rounds to 0% are considered stable.

**Available in CANSIM: tables [254-0002](#) and [254-0004](#) to [254-0006](#).**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [3301](#).**

The *Juristat* article "[Police resources in Canada, 2016](#)" ([85-002-X](#)) is now available.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; [STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca)).