

2011 Census Bulletin #5

Household & Family Structure in Metro Vancouver

Introduction

This bulletin provides an overview of changes in family structure and size between 2001 and 2011 and includes information on:

- ◆ The structure and composition of households across Metro Vancouver;
- ◆ Changes in family household size and type; and
- ◆ Changes in non-family households.

Households¹ in Metro Vancouver

Based on the 2011 Census, there were 891,335 households in Metro Vancouver. This represents an increase of 18% between 2001 and 2011. Table 1 shows the general distribution of households by type in Metro Vancouver and in other metropolitan areas in Canada. One family households make up approximately 63% of the total occupied private households across the region while non-family households account for approximately 33% of the total. Multi-family households, in turn, represent approximately 4% of all households across the region.

Table 1: Households by Household Type in Metro Vancouver, 2001 - 2011

Household Type	2001		2011		Change	
	#	% of total	#	% of total	#	% Growth
Total - Occupied Private Households	758,175		891,335		133,160	18%
One-family Households	483,330	64%	561,175	63%	77,845	16%
Multi-family Households	24,750	3%	34,315	4%	9,565	39%
Non-family Households	250,630	33%	295,850	33%	45,220	18%
(1 person non-family households)	212,600	28%	251,745	28%	39,145	18%
(2+ persons non-family households)	38,030	5%	44,100	5%	6,070	16%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001, 2011 Census

2011 Census data shows that one in three households (33%) in Metro Vancouver is a non-family household. The share of non-family households did not change between 2001 and 2011, although the total number of non-family households increased by 45,220 households, the majority of which (39,145) are one-person households. The most significant rate of change between 2001 and 2011 has the increase in the number of multi-family households. During the period from 2001 to 2011, the number of multi-family households increased by 39% or 9,565 households. This change can be attributed to household preferences and potentially to affordability considerations. The net change in households between 2001 and 2011 is 133,160 households, of which 7% were multi-family (9,565), 59% were one-family (77,845) and 34% (45,220) were non-family households.

¹ **Household** - refers to a person or a group of persons who occupy the same dwelling and do not have a usual place of residence elsewhere in Canada. It may consist of a family group (census family) with or without other persons, of two or more families sharing a dwelling, of a group of unrelated persons or of one person living alone.



Table 2 shows the composition of household varies significantly among that Canada's largest metropolitan areas. Nationally, approximately two-thirds (66%) of households are one-family households. Metro Vancouver 's proportion of 63% is slightly below the national level, whereas the proportion of one-family households in the Fraser Valley is 68%, higher than the national proportion. Montreal had the smallest proportion of one-family households (54%) and the largest proportion of non-family households (45%). Victoria also shows a high proportion of non-family households (40%) when compared to the national figure of 32%. Metro Vancouver and the Fraser Valley Regional District both have high incidence of multi-family households (4%), double the incidence nationally (2%).

Table 2: Households by Type in Metro Vancouver Municipalities, 2011

Metropolitan Area	Households By Household Type									Average Hsld Size
	Total	One-Family Hsld		Multi-Family Hsld		Non-Family Hsld (1 Person)		Non-Family Hsld (2+ Persons)		
	#	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Canada	13,320,615	8,835,905	66%	268,060	2%	3,673,310	28%	543,340	4%	2.47
Montreal	849,445	458,525	54%	8,130	1%	332,720	39%	50,070	6%	2.33
Ottawa	353,245	229,325	65%	4,985	1%	99,905	28%	19,030	5%	2.44
Toronto	1,047,875	625,820	60%	31,140	3%	331,180	32%	59,740	6%	2.77
Calgary	423,415	276,230	65%	9,715	2%	110,000	26%	27,465	6%	2.58
Edmonton	324,755	200,125	62%	6,990	2%	94,910	29%	22,730	7%	2.53
Metro Vancouver	891,335	561,175	63%	34,315	4%	251,745	28%	44,100	5%	2.56
Victoria	160,630	95,055	59%	2,450	2%	53,870	34%	9,255	6%	2.19
Fraser Valley (FVRD)	101,775	69,050	68%	4,220	4%	24,920	24%	3,590	4%	2.67
British Columbia	1,764,640	1,132,665	64%	50,410	3%	498,925	28%	82,640	5%	2.45

Note: One-family includes "One-family households" and "One-family households with persons not in a census family"

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census



Table 3 shows the general composition of households by municipality in 2011. The data shows that municipalities with high proportions of one-family households are suburban municipalities such as Delta (74%), Langley Township (74%), District of North Vancouver (76%) and Pitt Meadows (74%).

With respect to the multi-family households, the City of Surrey has both the highest proportion of households that are multi-family (8%) and the highest absolute number of multi-family households (11,680 households) in the region.

Table 3: Households by Household Type in Metro Vancouver Municipalities, 2011

2011 Census Municipality	Households By Household Type								
	Total	One-Family Hsld		Multi-Family Hsld		Non-Family Hsld (1 Person)		Non-Family Hsld (2+ Persons)	
	#	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Anmore	630	535	85%	30	5%	55	9%	10	2%
Belcarra	265	210	79%	0	0%	45	17%	5	2%
Bowen Island	1,345	975	72%	25	2%	310	23%	35	3%
Burnaby	86,840	54,940	63%	3,090	4%	23,655	27%	5,150	6%
Coquitlam	45,550	32,590	72%	1,590	3%	9,750	21%	1,625	4%
Delta	34,755	25,780	74%	1,575	5%	6,650	19%	750	2%
Electoral Area 'A'	5,045	3,265	65%	45	1%	1,315	26%	415	8%
Langley City	11,315	6,335	56%	135	1%	4,320	38%	520	5%
Langley Township	37,235	27,555	74%	1,235	3%	7,360	20%	1,080	3%
Lions Bay	510	405	79%	10	2%	70	14%	15	3%
Maple Ridge	28,045	20,140	72%	765	3%	6,250	22%	895	3%
New Westminster	30,585	15,970	52%	630	2%	12,115	40%	1,870	6%
North Vancouver City	22,790	12,330	54%	255	1%	8,970	39%	1,240	5%
North Vancouver District	30,550	23,100	76%	615	2%	6,040	20%	800	3%
Pitt Meadows	6,720	4,950	74%	150	2%	1,415	21%	210	3%
Port Coquitlam	20,650	14,885	72%	620	3%	4,530	22%	610	3%
Port Moody	12,625	9,175	73%	215	2%	2,820	22%	420	3%
Richmond	67,975	48,245	71%	3,435	5%	14,175	21%	2,120	3%
Surrey	152,845	105,825	69%	11,680	8%	30,140	20%	5,205	3%
Vancouver	264,575	135,285	51%	7,675	3%	101,205	38%	20,410	8%
West Vancouver	17,075	11,735	69%	290	2%	4,785	28%	260	2%
White Rock	9,870	4,890	50%	125	1%	4,530	46%	320	3%
Metro Vancouver	891,335	561,175	63%	34,315	4%	251,745	28%	44,100	5%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

Non-Family Households or Persons not in Census Families

Non-family households account for approximately one-third of all households across Metro Vancouver. Statistics Canada defines a **non-family household** as consisting either of one person living alone or of two or more persons who share a dwelling, but do not constitute a family. There were 296,845 non-family household across Metro Vancouver in 2011. This represents a net increase of more than 45,220 households between 2001 and 2011 with the greatest change being in the number of single person non-family households.



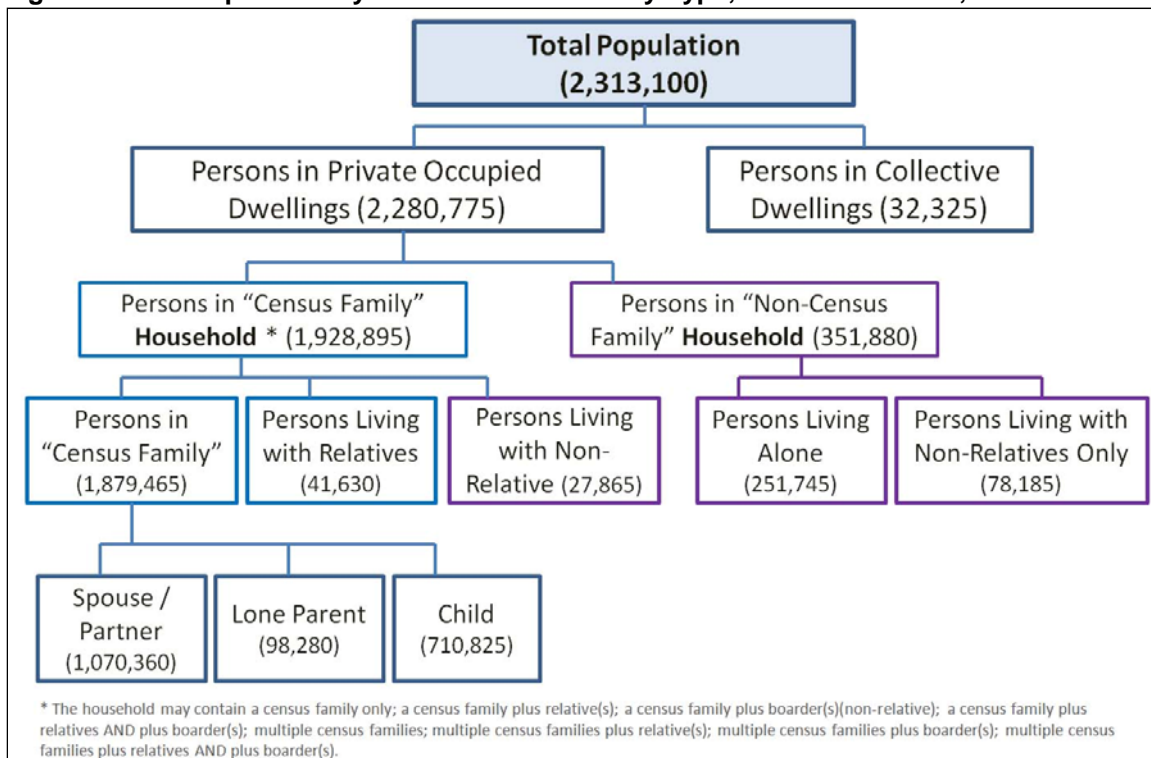
Municipalities with a higher proportion of non-family households include New Westminster (46%), North Vancouver City (44%), Vancouver City (46%) and White Rock (49%).

The growing number of single person non-family households has important implications in terms of housing affordability as well as future housing demand. In addition, it is important to note that as the population continues to age, it is likely that the number of single person non-family households will continue to increase.

2011 Population within Dwellings, Households and Families

The following graphic shows how the 2011 Census population is distributed within dwellings, and how the dwellings contain households, and how those households are comprised of families, family members, and non-family members.

Figure 1: 2011 Population by Household and Family Type, Metro Vancouver, 2011



Family Structure

Statistics Canada defines a census family as a married couple (with or without children), a couple living common-law, or a lone parent of any marital status, with at least one child living in the same dwelling. (Note: in 2006 Census definition changed to recognize a couple may be of opposite or same sex). Children in a census family can include the traditional family arrangements as well as non-traditional arrangements such as grandchildren living with their grandparent(s) but with no parents present.

The 2011 Census reported that there are 633,460 census families, representing 1,879,465 people (81% of the population) across Metro Vancouver (Table 4). This represents an increase of 98,205 census families between 2001 and 2011. Between 2001 and 2011, the growth in the number of families without children present (23% increase) outpaced the growth in couples with children present (15% increase). Table 4 shows that the number of traditional families (couple with children at home) increased by 38,260 families and lone parent families increased by 16,420 families, whereas the number of couples without children at home increased by 43,530. The demand for housing with multiple bedrooms is impacted by the increasing number of families with children at home.

Table 4 shows the general distribution of census families by family type for municipality for 2011. In Metro Vancouver 48% of the total families in 2011 are couples (married or common-law) with children at home, while couples without children represented 36% of all census families.

Table 4: Census Families in Metro Vancouver, 2001, 2006, 2011

Family Type	2001		2006		2011		Change ('01 - '11)	
	#	% of total	#	% of total	#	% of total	#	% Change
Total - Census Families	535,255		580,120		633,460		98,205	18%
Couple, No Children	189,910	35%	207,650	36%	233,440	37%	43,530	23%
Couple with Children	263,480	49%	284,355	49%	301,740	48%	38,260	15%
Lone Parent Family	81,860	31%	88,115	31%	98,280	33%	16,420	20%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

Table 5 shows that the proportion is above 50% in the District of North Vancouver (51%), Electoral Area A / UBC (52%), and Anmore (57%). Coquitlam (49%), Port Coquitlam (48%) and Port Moody (49%) also have higher than average proportion of families with children at home.

In some municipalities such as White Rock, Lions Bay, Belcarra, Bowen Island and the City of New Westminster, couples without children tended to be more prevalent when compared to other communities as well as Metro Vancouver as a whole. Lone parent families account for 14% of families in the region, however cities such as the City of North Vancouver, Langley City and Electoral Area A / UBC lone parent families tended to be more prevalent.

Table 5: Census Families by Family Type in Metro Vancouver, 2011

Municipality	Total Census Families	Couple, no children		Couple, with children		Lone Parent Family	
	#	#	%	#	%	#	%
Anmore	595	180	30%	365	61%	40	7%
Belcarra	220	130	59%	80	36%	10	5%
Bowen Island	1,025	485	47%	450	44%	85	8%
Burnaby	61,370	21,935	36%	29,475	48%	8,825	14%
Coquitlam	35,880	11,500	32%	18,835	52%	4,925	14%
Delta	29,080	10,670	37%	14,765	51%	3,165	11%
Electoral Area 'A'	3,360	970	29%	1,800	54%	575	17%
Langley City	6,615	2,795	42%	2,515	38%	1,220	18%
Langley Township	30,095	11,450	38%	14,530	48%	3,605	12%
Lions Bay	430	225	52%	175	41%	25	6%
Maple Ridge	21,705	7,720	36%	10,460	48%	3,170	15%
New Westminster	17,290	7,585	44%	6,945	40%	2,510	15%
North Vancouver City	12,840	5,330	42%	5,045	39%	2,360	18%
North Vancouver District	24,350	8,275	34%	12,855	53%	3,000	12%
Pitt Meadows	5,260	1,955	37%	2,475	47%	750	14%
Port Coquitlam	16,155	5,270	33%	8,205	51%	2,405	15%
Port Moody	9,605	3,400	35%	4,875	51%	1,240	13%
Richmond	55,400	17,910	32%	28,570	52%	7,665	14%
Surrey	131,065	43,820	33%	67,720	52%	15,810	12%
Vancouver	151,335	62,815	42%	63,790	42%	21,580	14%
West Vancouver	12,330	5,215	42%	5,600	45%	1,415	11%
White Rock	5,140	2,875	56%	1,480	29%	745	14%
Metro Vancouver	633,460	233,440	37%	301,740	48%	85,655	14%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

Family Size

Table 6 shows the distribution of census families in Metro Vancouver for different household sizes. Of the 633,460 census families, two-person families accounted for approximately 46% of the total. Two-person family households can include couples without children as well as lone parent families with a single child present. Larger family households (4+) also accounted for approximately 30% of all census families in 2011, a decline from the 32% of all census families in 2006. Surrey and the District of North Vancouver have the highest proportion of families that are 4 or more persons with 38%, compared to 30% in the region.

Table 6: Census Families by Size in Metro Vancouver, 2011

Municipality	Total Families		2-Person Families		3-Person Families		4-Person Families		5+ Person Families	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Anmore	595		210	35%	120	20%	180	30%	80	13%
Belcarra	220		140	64%	40	18%	35	16%	10	5%
Bowen Island	1,025		545	53%	190	19%	225	22%	75	7%
Burnaby	61,370		28,295	46%	15,935	26%	13,025	21%	4,115	7%
Coquitlam	35,880		14,850	41%	9,070	25%	9,240	26%	2,725	8%
Delta	29,080		12,775	44%	6,350	22%	7,365	25%	2,595	9%
Electoral Area 'A'	3,360		1,320	39%	1,105	33%	760	23%	175	5%
Langley City	6,615		3,595	54%	1,405	21%	1,145	17%	465	7%
Langley Township	30,095		13,850	46%	6,290	21%	7,010	23%	2,940	10%
Lions Bay	430		240	56%	75	17%	95	22%	20	5%
Maple Ridge	21,705		9,765	45%	5,025	23%	5,120	24%	1,785	8%
New Westminster	17,290		9,550	55%	3,890	22%	2,880	17%	965	6%
North Vancouver City	12,840		7,010	55%	3,000	23%	2,280	18%	555	4%
North Vancouver District	24,350		10,210	42%	5,510	23%	6,765	28%	1,870	8%
Pitt Meadows	5,260		2,455	47%	1,210	23%	1,180	22%	405	8%
Port Coquitlam	16,155		6,875	43%	4,030	25%	4,030	25%	1,220	8%
Port Moody	9,605		4,205	44%	2,345	24%	2,375	25%	680	7%
Richmond	55,400		23,515	42%	15,400	28%	12,515	23%	3,970	7%
Surrey	131,065		55,135	42%	29,295	22%	32,160	25%	14,475	11%
Vancouver	151,335		79,030	52%	34,395	23%	28,625	19%	9,280	6%
West Vancouver	12,330		6,085	49%	2,540	21%	2,710	22%	990	8%
White Rock	5,140		3,455	67%	885	17%	605	12%	185	4%
Metro Vancouver	633,460		294,465	46%	148,630	23%	140,635	22%	49,730	8%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

Conclusions and Observations

While the majority of households across Metro Vancouver live in census families, the findings from the 2011 Census draw attention to the significant level of diversity across the region. In looking at changes between 2001 and 2011, the findings suggest that the traditional household and family composition is changing. There is a growing number of lone parent households and non-family households across the region. Likewise, there appears to be a growing proportion of multi-family households in some municipalities. The changing structure and composition of family households has important implications in terms of future housing demand as well as in terms of the related community infrastructure and amenity requirements.

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