

Grey wave gains momentum: New data sheds light on Basin-Boundary demographics

There are now more seniors than youth in the Columbia Basin-Boundary region, and our population is aging faster than the overall populations for Canada and British Columbia.

Statistics Canada recently released data from the 2016 Census on age and sex of the population. While Basin-Boundary populations are showing certain demographic trends that are common across much of the country, the data shows that there are other issues that are unique to rural places, including the many diverse communities in our region.



“The aging population is well documented and communities across Canada have been seeing that change come gradually over the past several years,” says Lauren Rethoret with the Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute. “But for many communities in our region, this issue is compounded by trends like an out-migration of youth seeking education and employment, and an in-migration of retirees seeking a rural lifestyle”. As a result, the average age of most Basin-Boundary populations is rising at a faster rate than that for Canada as a whole, and only 3 of 57 communities are now younger overall as compared to 2011.

The aging population may also begin to affect our region’s overall gender balance due to the fact that women are typically over-represented in the older age groups as a result of their longer life expectancy. Some communities with older average ages show a sex ratio that leans towards women. For example, New Denver has an average age of 54.4 and a sex ratio of 0.8 males for every female.

The RDI has released a new report with updated age and sex data for the Basin-Boundary population. The report covers trends and conditions related to gender, average age, age structure and dependency, as well as population projections. Results are reported for the Basin-Boundary region as a whole, as well as the individual communities that comprise it. Click [here](#) to view the report.

The report was prepared as part of the RDI’s State of the Basin research program, which monitors trends and conditions related to well-being in the Basin-Boundary region. To view all of the RDI’s State of the Basin research products, click [here](#).

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This article is a product of the Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute, at Selkirk College. We are a regional research centre with a mandate to support informed decision-making by Columbia Basin-Boundary communities through the provision of information,

applied research and related outreach and extension support. Visit www.cbrdi.ca for more information.

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITY

Columbia Basin Trust is hosting the 2017 [Columbia Basin Symposium](#) this October in Kimberley. A key theme is the Basin's shifting demographics. Applications for innovative displays that feature how Basin organizations have embraced this change (and others related to climate change and technology) are being accepted until June 30. Apply [here](#).

DID YOU KNOW?

The Early Bird Rates for the September Different by Design conference in Nelson end June 30. Visit <http://kootenays2017.crrf.ca/> to learn more about the conference and to register!



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