After years with virtually no change in the population, Regina has been growing in the past five years. This article looks at that population growth – what has changed from the earlier period and how it has changed the city.

Regina’s population was virtually unchanged at 200,000 persons from 1996 to 2006 (see Figure 1). The population started to grow in 2007 and has been increasing at an average annual rate of 2.1% since then. The most recent estimate from Statistics Canada has the population in the Regina CMA (see box for definition) at 226,312 in July 2012, a 3.2% increase from July 2011.

We start by looking at what has changed since 2007.

Components of Population Change

There are a lot of numbers involved in measuring population change but the concepts are pretty simple. The population for a metropolitan area like Regina will change because of four factors:

- **Natural growth** is the difference between the number of births and the number of deaths.
- **Net international migration** is the difference between the number of people moving to the city from other countries and less the number moving in the opposite direction.
- **Net interprovincial migration** is the flow to the city from other parts of Saskatchewan less the flow in the opposite direction.
- **Net intraprovincial migration** is the flow to the city from other provinces less the flow in the opposite direction.

Figure 2 shows that during the late 1990s and early 2000s, Regina’s population was unchanged because the natural growth and inward migration flows were offset by the outflow to other provinces. Natural growth of 735 per year plus net international immigration of 351 and net intraprovincial migration of 504 totaled 1,590. This inflow was cancelled by a net outward flow of 1,503 to other provinces.

From 2006-07 to 2011-12, natural growth increased slightly and intraprovincial migration continued apace but there were big changes in the other two factors:

- **Net international immigration** went from 351 per year to 2,400.
- **Net interprovincial flow** went from an outflow of 1,503 to an inflow of 209.

In effect, all four population drivers are now moving in the same direction and the population has gone from relative stability to rapid growth.

These factors interact in complex ways. One of the

The population statistics for Regina include those who live in the census metropolitan area (CMA) which includes the “bedroom” communities surrounding the city such as White City, Balgonie, and Lumsden. In 2011, 92% of the CMA population lived in the city proper. Population statistics are published on a “census year” basis from July 1 to June 30 of the following year.

Figure 1: Population of the Regina CMA

![Figure 1: Population of the Regina CMA](image)

**Figure 2: Components of Population Change, Regina CMA**

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reasons for the higher natural growth rate, for example, is the fact that international and interprovincial migrants tend to be young and in the family formation age group. The number of births has increased, at least in part, because there are more young families in the city. Another example is intraprovincial migration to Regina. The flow from rural areas to the city is probably lower than might have otherwise been the case because the rapid growth has been accompanied by an increase in housing prices.

**Interprovincial Comparison**

The population growth in Regina may feel unsustainable but it is increasing at about the same rate as in other western cities and is growing more slowly, in fact, than Saskatoon.

There are 28 metropolitan areas in Canada. During the most recent six years 2006 to 2012, the average annual increase ranged from a low of 0.0% in Windsor to a high of 2.8% in Saskatoon. Regina’s 2.1% growth rate was fourth highest among the 28. Figure 3 also shows that seven of the ten fastest growing centres were in western Canada.

**Age**

David Foote, the author of *Boom, Bust, and Echo* has famously said that “age is 80% of everything” and he may be right. The age distribution of a population affects spending patterns, labour force participation, the number of school children, demand for health care, and a host of other behaviours.

Figure 4 shows the age distribution of the Regina CMA population in 2012. The bulge in the number of people 45 to 59 years of age represents the “baby boomers” – the age cohort born after the second world war. The even larger bulge in the population among those 20 to 34 years of age is made up of three groups:

- the children of the baby boomers – the so-called “echo” generation;
- the large number of young Aboriginal adults living in the city; and
- the population moving to the city from other countries and provinces.

In the last five years, the fastest growing age groups have been:

- those in the 25 to 39 age group (increasing by 23%) and their children (26%);
- those in the 55 to 69 age group (24%).

Simple arithmetic shows that in the next five years, we can expect increases among those 30 to 44 and 60 to 74 years of age. The number of children 5 to 9 years of age will increase and the number 15 to 19 years will decline.
for carpenters and hairdressers makes the city a more attractive destination for those looking for work. The virtuous circle will continue until the economics change.

Population growth has some negative impacts as well including higher prices, more traffic, and an increasing demand for public services. Regina has not had a lot of experience in population growth yet but we have been learning “on-the-job” and will need to continue to do so in the coming years.

Source: Sask Trends Monitor from the Statistics Canada data

Next month’s article from Sask Trends Monitor will focus on “Living Arrangements”

Keeping STARS In The Sky
Submitted by STARS Regina

STARS, a highly specialized, airborne emergency medical transport system for critically ill and injured patients, is quickly becoming a well-known service in Saskatchewan. The province welcomed its first BK117 helicopter in the spring of 2012 in Regina and, six months later, began providing service from its second base in Saskatoon.

As of January, STARS has flown more than 275 missions.

STARS’ medical helicopters are often described as flying intensive care units used for patients in rural and remote areas whose outcomes depend on rapid, specialized care and transportation. Our flight crew includes two pilots, an advanced care paramedic and a registered nurse trained in critical care. An emergency physician is also available by telephone for every emergency response and travels in the helicopter whenever medically necessary.

“We respond when appropriate as determined by doctors, the emergency 911 system and in coordination with local authorities and fixed-wing air ambulance. All our decisions are based on offering time, hope and life-saving transport to critically ill and injured patients,” says Ron Dufresne, vice-president of operations for STARS Saskatchewan.

“Saskatchewan has a great ground ambulance system – our goal is to complement that system. We can land directly at a scene with the helicopter and aid the ground EMS in stabilizing the patient and quickly transporting a patient (them) to a larger tertiary care facility or centre faster.”

Additionally, Dufresne says, STARS helps guide transport decisions and enhance coordination between physicians. “About half of our missions are inter-facility transfers where we transport patients with life-threatening injuries or illness. Every minute saved before treatment can increase a patient’s chance of survival and improve their prospects for recovery,” he adds.

STARS was founded in 1985 when Dr. Greg Powell, an emergency room physician at Foothills Hospital in Calgary saw a need for a critical care transport service that would help save lives. STARS does not bill patients, rather relies on funding from governments, corporate donors and community fundraising. The funds we raise in Saskatchewan are directed to the operation of our two bases in this province, and carrying on Dr. Powell’s vision of helping people.

“The success of STARS depends on the community – the people of Saskatchewan rallying together to raise money and keep those life-saving helicopters in the sky,” said Rod Gantefoer, who leads the STARS Foundation, the fundraising arm of the organization.

One of those community opportunities is the upcoming Jewels ’n Jeans Gala this spring, notes Gantefoer.

“We would encourage local businesses and individuals to support this first annual event on Thursday, April 11, 2013 at the Delta Regina. Our event will feature live and silent auctions, dinner, dancing, live entertainment, prizes and a performance by Canadian country music artist, Gord Bamford. All proceeds from the evening will be directed toward the STARS mission in Saskatchewan.”

For more information, visit STARS.CA

Jewels ‘n JEANS