

# Our demographics, education and jobs



## Our rich history

Edmonton is a place rich with history and fascinating stories. It began as an ancient and sacred site, a meeting place for Indigenous Nations. They came to trade, to share stories, to take part in cultural activities. It was a ceremonial site, where leaders and Elders found spiritual guidance and political direction. It played an important role in building and maintaining relationships among Indigenous Nations and with newcomers from Europe. It's had many names over the years, one of which was *Pehonan* - the Cree word for 'the gathering or waiting place'.

Today, thousands of years later, we are still a gathering place; a city that welcomes newcomers, offers opportunity and works to improve our quality of life. We're a city that's growing; very recently, in the early 2000's, record numbers of people came here, many looking for work, putting down roots and becoming Edmontonians.

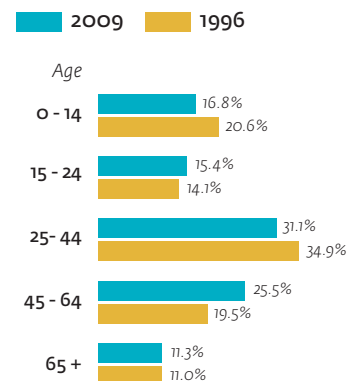
In 1986, there were almost 600,000 of us; now there are almost 800,000. The expectation is that by 2031, there will be more than one million Edmontonians.

## We're an aging population – but young compared to Canada overall

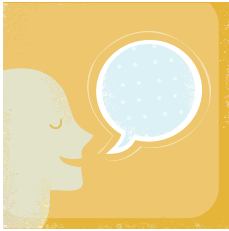
A significant proportion of us (around 57%) are between the ages of 25 and 64. However, like that of many other developed countries, we are an aging population. Our average age has risen from 34.7 in 1996 to 37.4 in 2006. That's despite our rising birthrate in recent years. Canada's average age in 2006 was 39.5.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Federal Census 1996, 2006. Statistics Canada Census Trend Data 2006.

## Our age profile now and 10 years ago



Source: Federal Census, 1996. Edmonton Municipal Census 2009.



## Edmonton: I Won't Be Leaving

*"I love the sense of community in my neighbourhood, walking the streets and bumping into parents of children from the schools my kids attend. The happiness of my children here most makes Edmonton feel like home for me. There are fantastic facilities for them - hockey, gymnastics, ballet, tennis, baseball... the list goes on and on. I can run or bike with my son down from our neighbourhood into the river valley. Even in winter we can get out and about. It's wonderful to have skating rinks for free like Hawrelak and the legislature. Add in the trails, ski hills, etc, and there is so much here. I have considered an offer from Calgary. My family is happy here, and my community so strong, that I don't feel enough "pull" to leave."*

- Source: Mike, Connect2Edmonton<sup>2</sup>

## Our education

Edmonton offers a wide variety of educational opportunities and Edmontonians take advantage of these. Twenty-eight per cent of us have college level, apprenticeship or trades certificates or diplomas. This is equal to and/or higher than the proportion of people in other Canadian cities with similar accreditation. A quarter of Edmontonians have university certificates or degrees, which is slightly more than Albertans as a whole. Proportionately, fewer of us are university educated than in other major Canadian cities: Vancouver, Toronto and Calgary.

### Moreover:

- 22% of us have not completed high school,
- 26% of us have only high school education.<sup>3</sup>

While formal education is key to getting a job, literacy is essential for survival in today's world. In Alberta, 60% of us have the literacy skills we need; conversely, 40% of us don't have the literacy skills needed for knowledge-based jobs.

<sup>2</sup> C2E is a self-funded, not-for-profit virtual public forum guided by an all-volunteer Board of Directors. C2E receives no funding from the City of Edmonton or any of its agencies.

<sup>3</sup> Federal Census 2006.

## Our jobs

Almost three-quarters of all jobs in the Edmonton region are in the service sector. As the provincial capital and home to the province's largest university – the University of Alberta – Edmonton has a relatively high proportion of public sector workers (6% of our labour force work in public administration jobs).

As the construction, manufacturing and transportation base for much of the province's oil and gas industry, the Edmonton region has relatively more jobs in these industries than the rest of the province, particularly since the boom in the first part of this decade.

The past ten years have seen an increase in the proportion of us working in the following industries:

- Construction
- Education services
- Professional, scientific and technical services
- Trade (wholesale and retail trade)

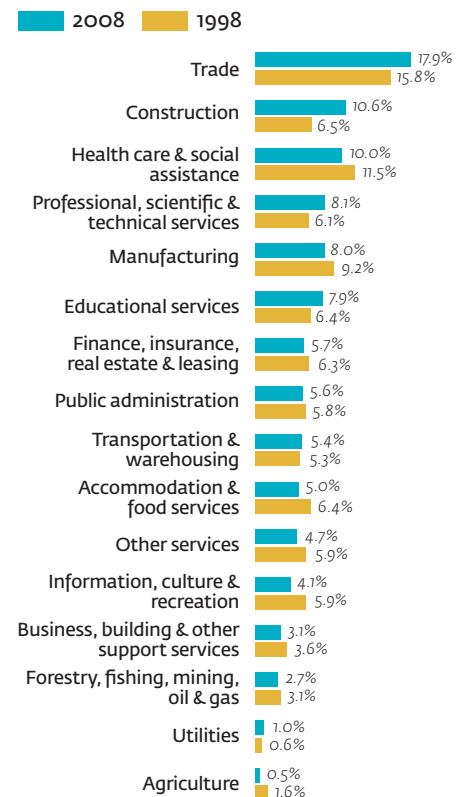
<sup>4</sup> Labour force statistics and facts for Edmonton are drawn from the Edmonton Census Metropolitan Area (CMA), as many Edmontonians work in outlying communities, such as Nisku, Leduc, St. Albert; likewise many residents of those communities work in Edmonton.

<sup>5</sup> Labour Force Historical Review 2008.

## We work hard

In 2008, the proportion of Edmontonians age 15 and older who were working or looking for work (our labour force participation rate) in the Edmonton area<sup>4</sup> was 73%, a full 5% higher than the Canadian rate.<sup>5</sup>

## Our jobs



Source: Labour Force Historical Review 2008.