

Religion in Halton

The Canadian Census collects data on religion every ten years. As part of the long form census, Canadians were asked to indicate a specific denomination or religion even if they were not currently practicing members of the group. The same question was asked in the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS).

The data shows a changing religious landscape. Christianity still remains as the largest religion in Canada, however, its dominance continues to decline. The proportion of Canadians reporting an affiliation with Christianity decreased from 83% in 1991 to 67.3% in 2011. The size of the Christian population stays unchanged at 22.2 million while the total Canadian population has increased from 27 million to 32.8 million.

The other significant change is the growth of the “no religion” population. Within two decades (1991 to 2011), the proportion of the population not concerned with or related to any religion has almost doubled from 12.4% to 23.8%. Over one in five Canadians is secular. Its population exceeds 7.8 million.

The current religious landscape also reflects the changing composition of recent immigrants from non-European countries. Although the size of non-Christian faith groups (including: Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh) is small in comparison with the Christian population, its growth rate is noticeable. Between 2001 and 2011, non-Christian faith groups increased by 51% to over 2.7 million. Collectively, they represented 8% of the Canadian population.

Religion in Halton is also changing. Following the national trend, the proportion of the Christian population decreased from 84% in 1991 to 70% in 2011. However, the number of Christians did experience an increase of 31%. In 2011, there were over 343,000 Christians living in the region. The proportion of Christian population at the local municipal level is above the national average, with the exception of Milton. Catholics were the largest Christian group representing 35% of the population.

The growth rate of the “no religion” population is higher than the national average. Between 1991 and 2011, it has increased 160% to over 111,000 persons. They represent about 22.5% of the population.

The non-Christian faith group has also experienced substantial growth. It outgrew all other faith groups. The fastest growing non-Christian religion is Muslim. There has been a fivefold increase of the Muslim population. Over 80% of the Muslims in the region live in Milton (43%) and Oakville (38%). One in ten Milton residents is Muslim.



How Religious Are We?

86.5%



77.5%

In 1991, 86.5 % of the Halton residents reported a specific denomination or religion even if they were not practicing members of that faith. In 2011, that proportion dropped to 77.5%. The national average is 76.1%.

More than one-fifth (22.5%) of the population was not concerned with or affiliated with any religion.

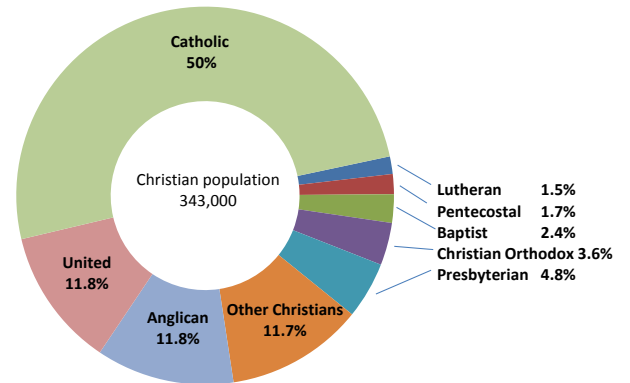
Christian faith is shrinking

84%



70%

Although the number of persons reporting an affiliation with Christian faith has increased, the proportion of the Christian population experienced a decrease from 84% in 1991 to 70% in 2011. Catholics represented half of the Christian population in Halton.



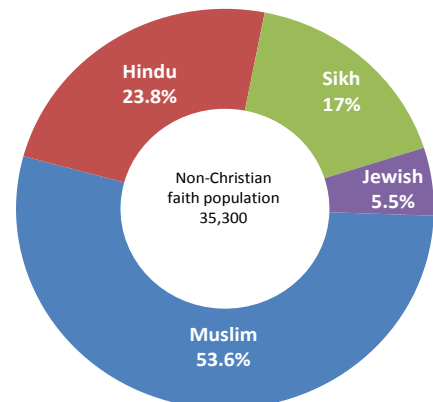
Growth of the non-Christian Faith Groups

8.2%



2.2%

The non-Christian faith groups outgrew all other faith groups. Its proportion has increased from 2.2% in 1991 to 8.2% in 2011. Muslim is the fastest growing and largest non-Christian faith group in Halton. This trend is expected to continue if current immigration patterns remain.



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