



Canadian Hindu Alliance

Population & Religion in Canada and the U.S. – Highlights



A. Canadian National Data (2021 Census)

Religious Communities in Canada

Religion	Population	% of Total	Trend
Hindus	~828,000	2.3%	Doubled since 2001
Sikhs	~772,000	2.1%	Doubled since 2001
Muslims	~1,776,000	4.9%	Fastest-growing group
Jews	~335,000	0.9%	Stable, declining %
Buddhists	~360,000	1.0%	Stable for over 20 years
Jains	Few thousand	—	—

Over 60% of Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, and Sikhs were born abroad.

Religious Trends & Racialized Groups

- Christianity: 53% in 2021 (↓ from 77% in 2001)
- No religion: 35% in 2021 (↑ from 16% in 2001)
- South Asians: 7.1% of Canadians. Main Religions:
 - Hinduism: 29.9%,
 - Sikhism: 29.6%
 - Islam: 23.1%
- Almost all Sikhs and 94% of Hindus are South Asian
- **Concentrated in: GTA (Ontario), Greater Vancouver (B.C.), Calgary & Edmonton (Alberta)**



B. U.S. Data [Pew Research Centre RLS 2023–24]

Indian Americans in the U.S.

- Population: 5.2 million (2023) – 2nd largest Asian group (21% of U.S. Asians)
- Religion: 48% Hindu, 15% Christian, 15% unaffiliated
- Median household income: \$151,000 (well above U.S. average)
- Concentrated in: California, Texas, New Jersey, New York, Illinois
- **Major hubs: New York, Dallas, San Francisco Bay Area**

Religious Communities in the U.S. (Estimates*)

Religion	Population Estimate	% of U.S. Population
Hindus	~2.5M	0.74%
Sikhs	200K–500K	<0.15%
Muslims	~3.8M	1.1%
Jews	~7.5M	2.2%
Buddhists	1.2M–3.5M	0.35–1.0%
Jains	150K–200K	—

**U.S. Census does not collect data by religion. This makes comparison of the Pew Survey results with the Canadian Census data problematic.*



Comparisons

- **Hindus are proportionally more numerous in Canada (2.3%) than in the U.S. (0.74%).**
- Muslims form a larger share of Canada's population (4.9%) than in the U.S. (1.1%).
- **Jews are more numerous in the U.S. but proportionally slightly smaller than Hindus in Canada.**
- Indian Americans: 5.2M (21% of U.S. Asians).
- **South Asians in Canada: 2.6M (7.1% of total).**
- **U.S. has larger numbers; Canada has higher proportions of South Asian faiths.**

Big Picture

- Rapid religious diversification: Proportion of Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs growing fast.
- Immigration drives religious diversity in both countries.

Summary

- **Canada's religious diversity is rising, driven by immigration and growth in South Asian faiths.**
- Christianity is declining, while "no religion" and Islam are increasing.
- **Indian Americans in the U.S. are economically successful and largely Hindu.**
- **Canada has higher proportions of Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims than the U.S.**
- **Both countries show strong demographic shifts shaped by immigration and urban concentration.**



C. Canadian Sub-national Data – Provincial & CMAs (2021 Census)

Percent Distribution of Total Population by Religion Groups in Canada for Provinces and Territories, 2021

Geography	Total Religion	Buddhist	Christian	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	Sikh	Traditional (North American Indigenous) spirituality	Other religious and spiritual traditions	No religion and secular perspectives
Canada (1)	36,328,480	356,975	19,373,330	828,195	335,295	1,775,715	771,790	80,690	229,015	12,577,475
Newfoundland and Labrador	1.4	0.1	2.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.6
Prince Edward Island	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.3
Nova Scotia	2.6	0.8	2.9	1.0	0.7	0.8	0.6	1.4	2.7	2.9
New Brunswick	2.1	0.3	2.6	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.2	1.2	1.7	1.8
Quebec	22.9	13.5	27.8	5.7	25.2	23.7	3.0	4.7	11.5	18.0
Ontario	38.6	46.0	37.8	69.3	58.5	53.1	38.9	19.8	38.8	35.3
Manitoba	3.6	2.1	3.7	2.2	3.4	1.5	4.6	12.6	3.7	3.8
Saskatchewan	3.0	1.2	3.2	1.7	0.3	1.4	1.2	20.2	3.3	3.2
Alberta	11.5	12.0	10.4	9.5	3.4	11.4	13.4	24.5	14.5	13.3
British Columbia	13.5	23.5	8.7	9.8	8.0	7.1	37.7	14.3	22.5	20.3
Yukon	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.3	0.2
Northwest Territories	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.2	0.1
Nunavut	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.1

Highlights:

- **88.6%** of the **Hindu** Population and **90%** of the **Sikh** population of Canada lives in the **3 Provinces of Ontario, B.C and Alberta.**
- **91.7%** of the **Jewish** population of Canada lives in the **3 Provinces of Ontario, Quebec and B.C.**
- **95.3%** of the **Muslim** population of Canada lives in the **4 Provinces of Ontario, Quebec, Alberta and B.C.**

Percent Distribution of Population by Religion Groups (10) for Eleven Large Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) and Non-CMAs in Canada, 2021

CMAs and non-CMAs	Total Religion	Buddhist	Christian	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	Sikh	Traditional (North American Indigenous) spirituality	Other religious and spiritual traditions	No religion and secular perspectives
Montréal	12	12	13	6	24	21	3	0	7	10
Québec	2	1	3	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
Hamilton	2	2	2	2	1	3	1	0	2	2
Kitchener – Cambridge Waterloo	2	2	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	1
London	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2
Ottawa Gatineau (Ontario part)	3	3	3	2	3	6	1	1	4	3
Toronto	17	34	15	55	49	35	32	2	17	13
Winnipeg	2	2	2	2	3	1	4	4	3	2
Calgary	4	6	3	4	2	6	7	2	5	5
Edmonton	4	5	3	4	1	5	6	4	6	4
Vancouver	7	20	4	8	6	6	29	2	11	10
Large CMAs	56	86	52	87	92	88	85	16	58	53
Other CMAs	15	8	16	8	4	8	11	12	17	17
Non-CMAs	28	6	33	5	4	5	4	72	25	29
Total Population	36,328,480	356,975	19,373,330	828,195	335,295	1,775,715	771,790	80,690	229,015	12,577,475

Highlights:

- **79%** of the **Hindu** population, **78%** of the **Sikh** population and **79%** of the Muslim population lives in 6 large Metros (CMAs): **GTA, Greater Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Ottawa and Greater Montreal.**
- **79%** Of the **Jewish** population lives in just 3 large Metros (CMAs): **GTA, Greater Montreal and Greater Vancouver.**
- The combined population share of the **11 large CMAs** is: **87% of Hindus, 92% of Jews, 88% of Muslims and 85% of Sikhs** living in Canada.
- **Non-CMAs** account for **5% or less** of the Hindu, Sikh, Muslim and Jewish populations.
- The **GTA** accounts for **55%** of the **Hindu**, **32%** of the **Sikh**, **49%** of the **Jewish** and **35%** of the **Muslim** population.
- **Greater Vancouver** accounts for **8%** of the **Hindu** and **29%** of the **Sikh** population.



Canadian Hindu Alliance

Empowering Strong Points: Indian origin & Hindu Canadians

A Dynamic, Growing Community

Statistical Summary (Condensed)

- 1.6 – 1.8 million Canadians of Indian origin (~ 4.3% - 4.8% of population).
- **828,000 Hindus (2.3%)** - one of the fastest-growing faith groups; **share has doubled since 2001.**
- **High educational attainment:** 40%+ with university degrees (vs ~25% national).
- Strong in business, professions and civic life; rising middle-class influence.
- Younger demographic, **concentrated in Ontario, BC, Alberta** - key electoral power zones.
- Increasing visibility in politics, yet still underrepresented.

1. Population Strength & Reach

- ~1.6 – 1.8 million Indian-origin (4-5% of Canadians); 828,000 Hindus (2.3%).
- Younger, dynamic population with **strong urban presence in GTA, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton.**
- Growing electoral influence in major ridings of **Ontario, BC, and Alberta.**

2. Education & Professional Excellence

- **Among top-educated groups:** 40%+ hold bachelor's or higher degrees.
- Prominent in medicine, hi-tech, finance, law, academia, entrepreneurship.
- **Indian international students form the largest group**, fortifying Canada's knowledge economy and providing much needed revenues for its post-secondary educational institutions.

3. Economic Power

- **High employment and entrepreneurship;** strong in hi-tech, real estate, healthcare, retail, hospitality.
- **Key role in Canada–India trade and investment flows.**
- Rising household incomes - core of Canada's urban middle and upper-middle class.
- **Hindu individual incomes highest of any minority religious group other than Jewish population.**
- Sikh and Muslim groups have lower Average and Median Incomes than Hindu group.

Average and Median Total Income in 2020 by Religious Group		
Group	Average Income with recipients (\$)	Median Income with recipients (\$)
Buddhist	43,040	32,000
Christian	54,500	41,600
Hindu	50,800	37,200
Jewish	94,800	52,000
Muslim	41,880	30,400
Sikh	41,760	32,400
Traditional (North American Indigenous)	38,000	29,800
Other Religions	48,360	36,400
No Religion & Secular	56,450	43,200
Total Religion	54,450	41,200

4. Cultural Vibrancy

- Festivals like Diwali, Holi, Durga Puja, and disciplines like **yoga and Ayurveda** enrich Canada's multicultural life.
- Temples and community centers anchor cultural identity and social service.

5. Youth & Demographic Strength

- Younger age profile → future labor force and leadership pool.
- Deep-rooted family values, education focus and professional engagement.

6. Civic & Political Engagement

- Growing number of MPs, MLAs, and local leaders from the community.
- Increasing voice but still below representation parity - need for greater inclusion.

7. Global Connection

- Community acts as a living bridge linking Canada to India - world's fastest-growing major economy.
 - Strengthens Canada's global soft power through trade, culture, diplomacy.
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Summary

- **Indian-origin Canadians, including over 800,000 Hindus, are among Canada's most dynamic communities - highly educated, economically strong, and deeply integrated into national life.**
 - Hindus in Canada have doubled in population between 2001 and 2021. Most are concentrated in major urban metropolitan areas (CMAs).
 - **Their growing presence in business, medicine, technology, and civic leadership is shaping Canada's future.**
 - **However, their representation in policy spaces remains below their actual contribution.**
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Notes

Income Distribution by Religion in Canada (2021 Census Highlights)

- Income data by religion is available through Statistics Canada's Special Interest Profiles, which include breakdowns by income source, religion, and geography.
- Religious minorities like Hindus, Muslims, and Buddhists tend to have higher proportions of immigrants, which can influence income distribution due to factors like recency of arrival, credential recognition, and employment access.
- Christian Canadians (still the majority at 53.3%) show a wide income range, reflecting their broader demographic spread across regions and generations.