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Adulting together: Parents and adult children who co-reside

by Nora Galbraith and Nadine Laflamme

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Adulting together: Parents and adult children who co-reside

by **Nora Galbraith and Nadine Laflamme**

Overview of the study

This study uses data from the 2021 Census of Population to describe the sociodemographic and economic characteristics of persons living in a household composed of parents and their adult children aged 20 and over. Generational differences in these characteristics (between adult children and their parents) are also examined.

Highlights

- In 2021, 7.1 million people in Canada, or one in five (19.5%), lived in an intergenerational household—composed of parents and their adult children aged 20 and over, without any additional generations of the family present.
- Most (57.0%) 20- to 24-year-olds lived in an intergenerational household in 2021, among which the majority (58.0%) were also attending school.
- Over one-third (35.0%) of 50- to 54-year-olds lived in an intergenerational household in 2021, mainly as parents living with their adult children.
- Within intergenerational households, most adult children who lived with their parents were men (57.5%), while the inverse was true among parents living with their adult children (56.3% of whom were women).
- Nearly two-fifths (42.2%) of one-parent families in 2021 included adult children aged 20 or over.
- Among persons aged 20 to 54, proportionally fewer of those living with their parents in an intergenerational household were employed than their counterparts of the same age group in other living arrangements.
- Among persons aged 55 to 69, proportionally more of those living with their adult children in an intergenerational household were employed than their counterparts living in other arrangements.
- In 2021, 5.7% of intergenerational households were in low income, lower than the 16.7% for other households.

Introduction

In recent years, family researchers have expanded upon the concept of multigenerational living¹ to include those households composed of adults living with their parents, even when no additional generations of the family are present.² Examples of these intergenerational households include a 27-year-old man living with his two parents, or a married couple sharing a home with one of their parents.

Like [multigenerational households](#) (composed of three or more generations of the same family), intergenerational households may be formed as a strategy by parents and their adult children to share resources, manage expenses and provide mutual support. This may be a temporary arrangement during certain stages of life or a more permanent one, whether by choice or necessity.

This study uses data from the 2021 Census of Population to describe the sociodemographic and economic characteristics of parents and their adult children aged 20 and over³ who co-reside. Differences in the characteristics of adult children and parents within intergenerational households are also examined.

One in five people lives in a household composed of parents and their adult children

In 2021, there were 7.1 million people living in intergenerational households, that is, households composed of parents and their adult children aged 20 and over, with no other generations of the family present. This living arrangement represented the situation of one in five (19.5%) people living in private households⁴ in 2021.

Close to half (46.3%) of the population in Canada's intergenerational households resided in Ontario—an overrepresentation given that the province was home to 38.6% of the country's total population (Table 1). Within the province, this living arrangement was most prevalent in the large census metropolitan areas of Toronto (27.0%), Oshawa (24.6%), Windsor (24.0%), Hamilton (24.0%) and Barrie (22.9%). These urban centres generally have relatively high housing prices, proximity to post-secondary institutions and relatively high shares of immigrant and racialized groups—characteristics which are associated with young adults living with their parents.⁵

1. The term "multigenerational household" typically refers to a household composed of three or more generations of the same family; most commonly, these households include a child or children, at least one of their parents and at least one of their grandparents.

2. Fry and Passel, 2014; Cohn and Passel, 2018; Cohn et al, 2022; Easthope, 2017; Emery et al, 2019; Maroto, 2017; Burgess and Muir, 2019; Mazurik et al, 2020.

3. In the international literature, the lower age limit constituting an "adult child generation" varies, from age 18 (Whelan, 2017) to age 25 (Cohn et al, 2022). Moreover, there is no official census standard for 'adulthood'. To match international standards, in the census, persons aged 15 and over can experience what could be considered 'adult statuses' such as living alone, being part of a couple or being a parent. However, in recent decades, census analytical products focused on young adults have selected age 20 as the lower age limit, in recognition of the fact that very few teenagers today actually experience these statuses (see for example [The Daily — Home alone: More persons living solo than ever before, but roomies the fastest growing household type](#)). Consequently, in this analysis, the 'adult population' refers to persons aged 20 and over. Additionally, "adult children" in intergenerational households are aged 20 and over.

4. For brevity, in the remainder of this article, the total population living in private households is referred to instead as "the total population" or "total persons." In 2021, 98.2% of the total population lived in private households. Source: Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0046-01 Dwelling type, age and gender: Canada, provinces and territories, census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations with parts DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25318/9810004601-eng>.

5. Milan, 2016; Statistics Canada, 2022.

Table 1
Number, proportion and distribution of persons living in intergenerational households, Canada, provinces and territories, 2021

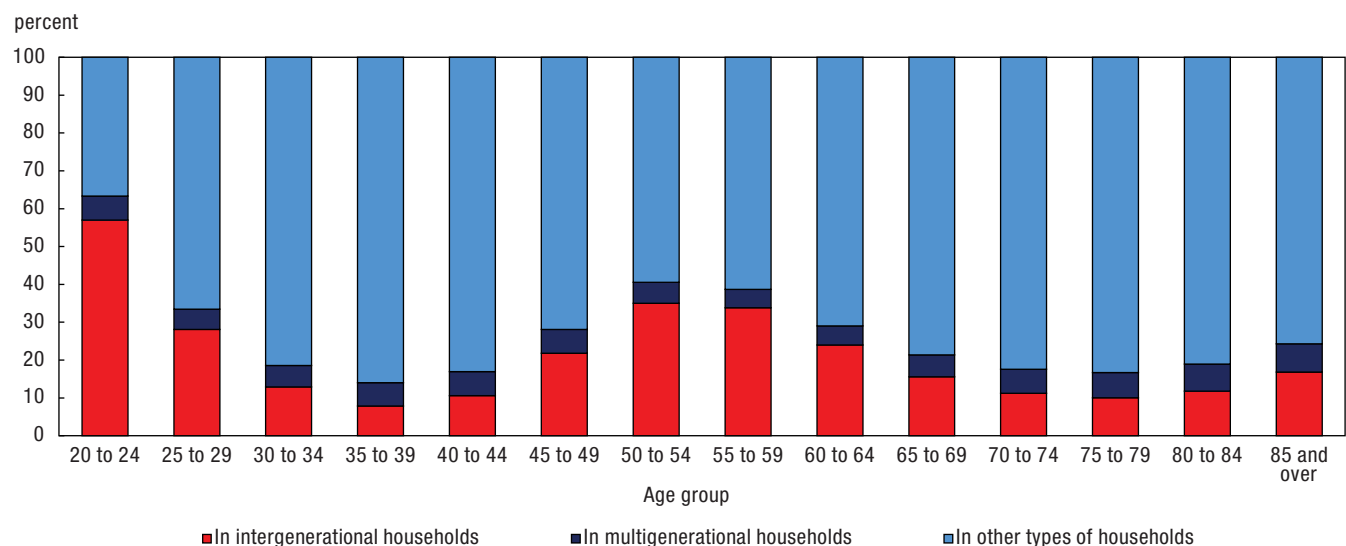
Geography	Number of persons living in private households	Distribution of persons in private households	Number of persons living in intergenerational households	Proportion of all persons in private households who live in intergenerational households	Distribution of persons in intergenerational households
	number	percent	number	percent	
Canada	36,328,480	100.0	7,081,585	19.5	100.0
Newfoundland and Labrador	502,095	1.4	89,815	17.9	1.3
Prince Edward Island	150,485	0.4	26,145	17.4	0.4
Nova Scotia	955,860	2.6	160,740	16.8	2.3
New Brunswick	759,195	2.1	126,155	16.6	1.8
Quebec	8,308,475	22.9	1,337,305	16.1	18.9
Ontario	14,031,755	38.6	3,276,400	23.3	46.3
Manitoba	1,307,185	3.6	244,590	18.7	3.5
Saskatchewan	1,103,200	3.0	161,300	14.6	2.3
Alberta	4,177,720	11.5	725,005	17.4	10.2
British Columbia	4,915,940	13.5	914,200	18.6	12.9
Yukon	39,585	0.1	5,440	13.7	0.1
Northwest Territories	40,380	0.1	7,705	19.1	0.1
Nunavut	36,605	0.1	6,785	18.5	0.1

Source: Census of Population, 2021 (3901).

The majority of 20- to 24- year-olds live with their parents

Around the world, macroeconomic and societal structural changes have spurred an increase in [young adults co-residing with their parents](#) over the last two decades.⁶ More than half (57.0%) of all 20- to 24-year-olds in 2021 lived with their parents in an intergenerational household (Chart 1). While some of these young adults may have returned to their parental home after some period away, previous studies suggest that most are likely to have never left the parental home.⁷

Chart 1
Distribution of persons in private households by household type, for selected age groups, Canada, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021 (3901).

6. Easthope, 2017; Maroto, 2017; Burgess and Muir, 2019; Tomaszczyk and Worth, 2020; Mazurik et al, 2020; Esteve and Reher, 2021; Hertog and Man-Yee, 2021; Hogendoorn and Härkönen, 2023.

7. Specifically, 85% of persons aged 18 and over in Canada who were living with at least one parent in 2017. [Family Matters: Under the same roof, living with my parents! \(statcan.gc.ca\)](#)

Intergenerational living is also relatively frequent among persons in their 50s. In total, over one-third (35.0%) of 50- to 54-year-olds lived in an intergenerational household in 2021, largely as parents living with at least one of their adult children.

In later life, sharing a home with one's adult child may permit parents to access informal care and support that facilitate remaining in a private residence.⁸ Among the population aged 85 and over in private households, nearly one-quarter (24.3%) shared their home with younger generations of their family: 16.8% lived with their adult children in an intergenerational household while 7.5% were the oldest generation in a multigenerational household.

For adults of all ages, living in an intergenerational household was more common than living in a multigenerational household.

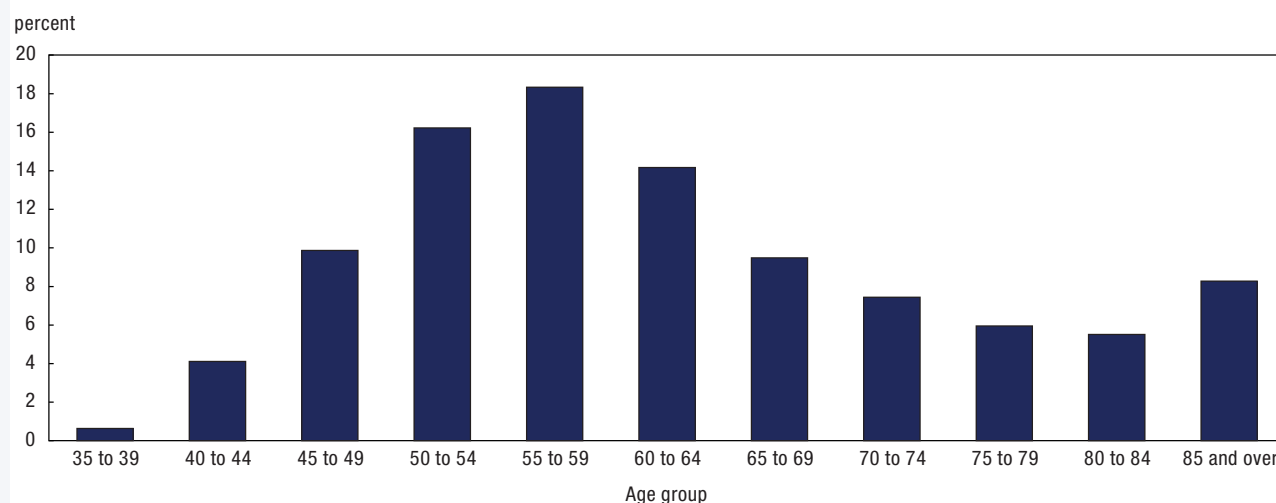
Many of Canada's one-parent families include adult children

When neither a parent nor their adult child is in a couple, they may opt to share a home for practical reasons, including providing mutual support and companionship, to combine resources to better manage the daily costs of living, or to provide informal care to their other family member.

In 2021, over two-fifths (42.2%) of Canada's one-parent families were composed of a parent living with their adult child(ren), without any additional generations of the family present. Within these 712,400 households, the family dynamics are likely to have varied depending on the respective ages of each generation present. Approximately half (49.2%) of these parents were under the age of 60 and living with children who were largely young adults (Chart 2). In these situations, parents are more likely to be primarily supporting their young adult child who may be completing their education, establishing paid employment or navigating an important life transition such as the end of a relationship.⁹

Chart 2

Age distribution of parents heading one-parent families and living in intergenerational households, Canada, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021 (3901).

8. Easthope et al, 2016; Easthope, 2017; Liu, 2020.

9. In a study based on the 2011 National Household Survey, Milan (2016) found that 24% of young adults who lived with their parents were working full-year and full-time, while 90% reported having no responsibility for household payments.

However, the other half (50.8%) of uncoupled parents living with their adult children in an intergenerational household were aged 60 or over, and about one in eight (13.8%) were aged 80 or over. In these situations, the provision and receipt of practical support between the two generations may flow in both directions to some extent; for instance, some adult children may reside with their older parent in part to provide informal care to them, facilitating ‘[ageing in place](#)’.

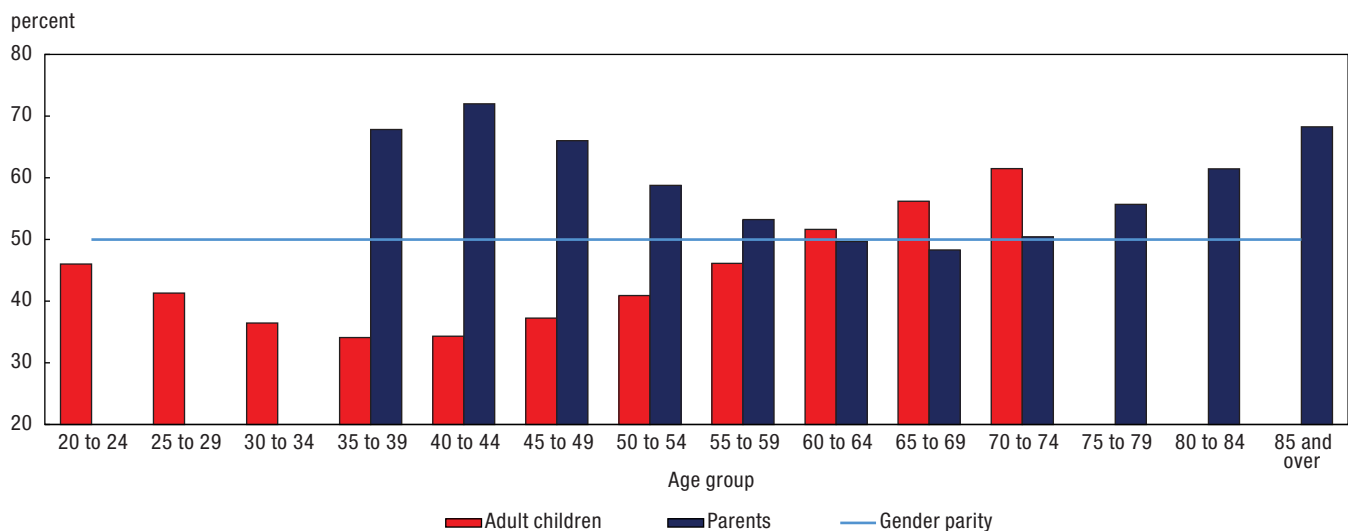
These findings underscore the importance of considering the age and household composition of Canada’s one-parent families. They also highlight the diversity of Canada’s one-parent families, whose experiences can differ significantly depending on the life stages of the parent and child.

Adult children living with their parents are mostly men not in a couple

The gender composition of the members of Canada’s intergenerational households varied by generation: most adult children in these households were men (57.5%), while the inverse was true for parents (56.3% of whom were women). Differences were even more marked for certain age groups: among 35- to 39-year-old adult children, nearly two-thirds (65.9%) were men, while 72.0% of parents aged 40- to 44-year-olds were women (Chart 3).

Chart 3

Proportion of women+ among persons in intergenerational households, by generation and age group, Canada, 2021



Notes: Given that the non-binary population is small, data aggregation to a two-category gender variable is sometimes necessary to protect the confidentiality of responses provided. In these cases, individuals in the category "non-binary persons" are distributed into the other two gender categories and are denoted by the "+" symbol. The category "Women+" includes women, as well as some non-binary persons. The category "Men+" includes men, as well as some non-binary persons. For select combinations of age group and generation status of persons, percentages are omitted due to low counts.

The horizontal line refers to the level at which there would be an equal number of women+ and men+.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021 (3901).

These patterns in the gender of parents and adult children who co-reside are thought to reflect numerous factors including gender norms,¹⁰ interactions between gender and labour market opportunities, educational attainment and wages following the 2008 Global Recession,¹¹ higher unemployment rates among young men in comparison with young women,¹² as well as the fact that women enter coresidential unions at younger ages, on average, than men.¹³

10. Mazurik et al, 2020.

11. Fry and Passel, 2014.

12. Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0287-03 [Labour force characteristics by province, monthly, seasonally adjusted](#).

13. [Narrowing gap between older men and women living in a couple](#)

Among adult children in intergenerational households, a large majority (95.7%) were categorized as children in the same census family as their parent(s), meaning they were not living with a spouse or partner of their own. In contrast, more than three-quarters (77.3%) of parents in these households were part of a couple. Among the parents who were uncoupled, most (92.0%) lived with their adult child who was also not in a couple and 8.0% lived with their child and their child's spouse or partner.

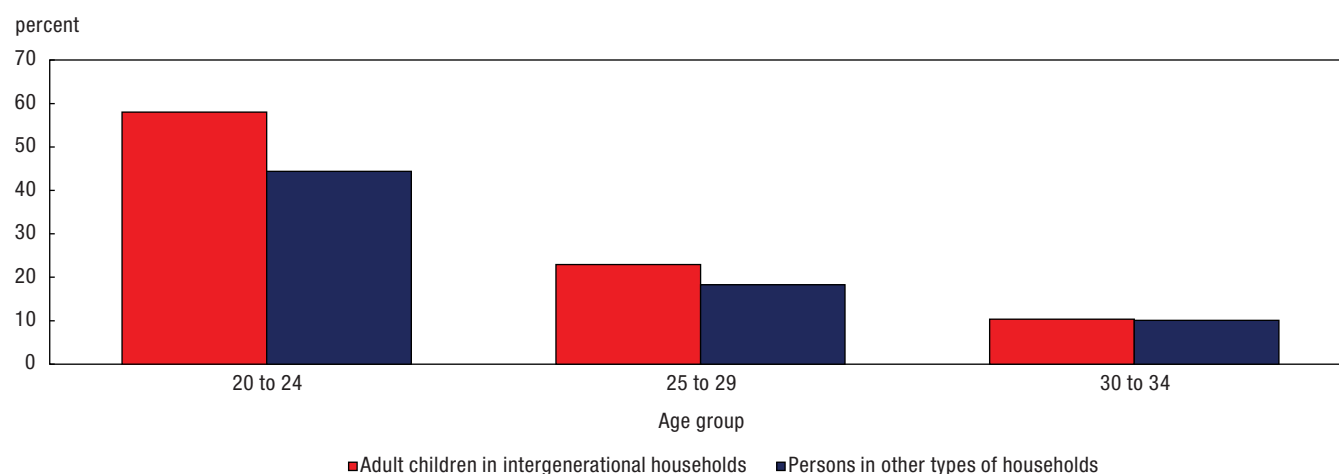
Nearly half of all students aged 20 to 34 live with their parents

For young adults pursuing post-secondary studies, living in the parental home can offer considerable cost savings when feasible. In 2021, nearly half (47.5%) of persons aged 20 to 34 who were attending school¹⁴ lived with their parents¹⁵ in an intergenerational household.

While the likelihood of attending school decreased with age, among young adults aged 20 to 34, a higher share of those living with their parents attended school compared to their counterparts living in other arrangements (Chart 4). This difference was most pronounced among persons aged 20 to 24: 58.0% of those living with their parents in an intergenerational household were attending school, compared to 44.4% of those in other living arrangements.

Chart 4

Proportion attending school among persons aged 20 to 34 in private households, by age group, household type and generation, Canada, 2021



Note: School attendance refers to whether a person attended, either full-time or part-time, any accredited educational institution or program at any time during the nine-month period between September 2020 and May 11, 2021. For more information see [Dictionary, Census of Population, 2021 – School attendance](#).

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021 (3901).

Aside from a means of managing household expenses while attending school, co-residing with one's parents may also be considered a necessity for some individuals in the absence of alternative sources of wealth or income. Among persons aged 20 to 54 in 2021, a lower proportion of those living with their parents in intergenerational households were employed¹⁶ compared to their counterparts living in other arrangements (Chart 5). The employment gap between the two groups was widest among persons aged 45 to 49, of whom 59.9% of those living with their parents in intergenerational households were employed compared with 81.5% of persons in other types of households.

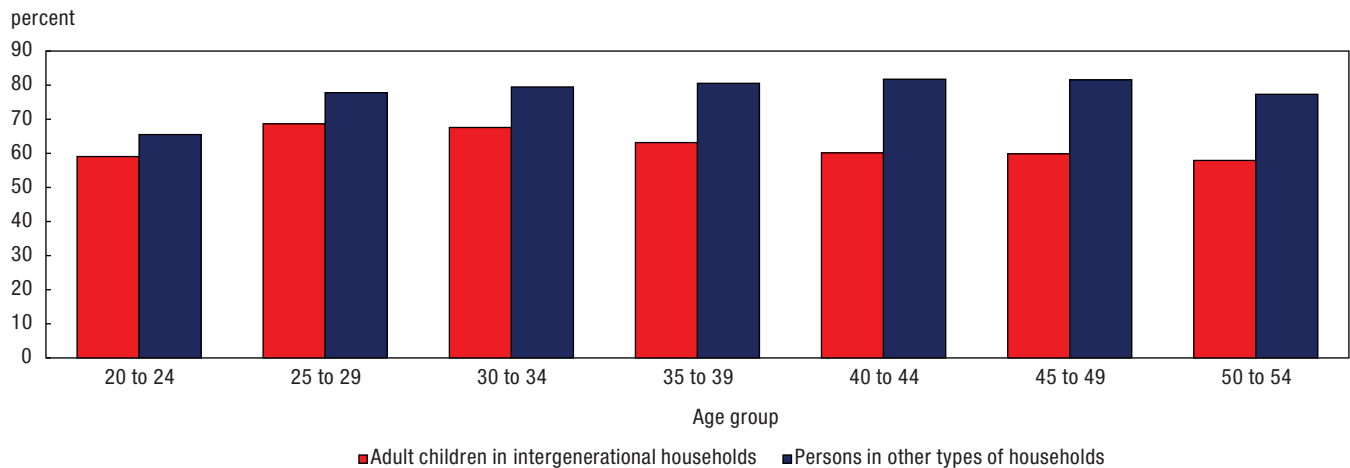
14. School attendance refers to whether a person attended, either full-time or part-time, any accredited educational institution or program at any time during the nine-month period between September 2020 and May 11, 2021. For more information see [Dictionary, Census of Population, 2021 – School attendance](#).

15. In the Census, students who return to live with their parents during the year (for any duration) are instructed to be enumerated at their parents' address.

16. During the reference period of Sunday, May 2 to Saturday, May 8, 2021. For a more detailed definition, see the entry for "[Employed person](#)" in [Dictionary, Census of Population, 2021](#).

Chart 5

Proportion employed among persons aged 20 to 54 in private households, by age group, household type and generation, Canada, 2021

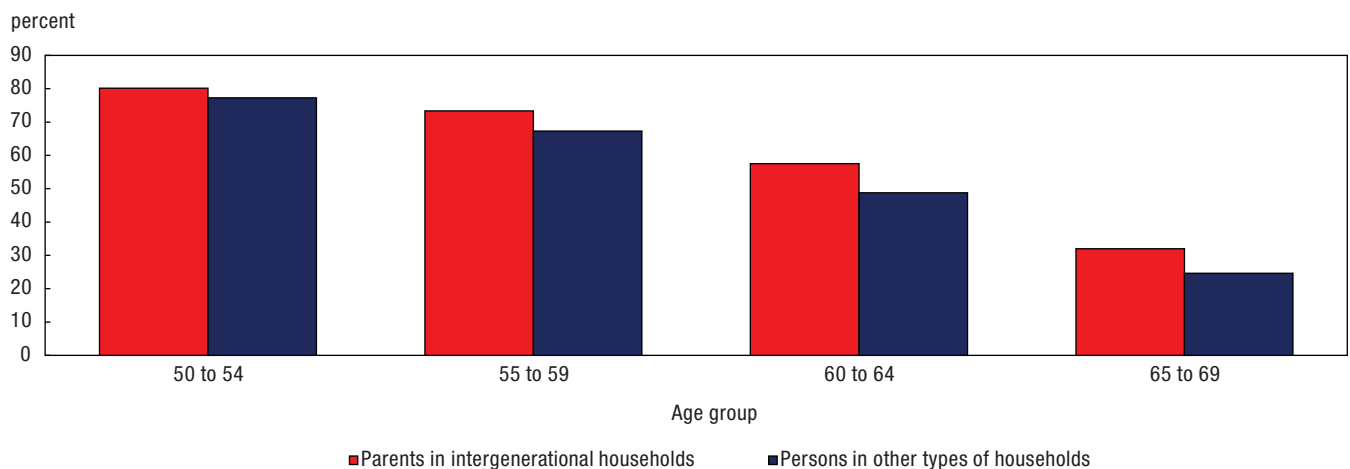


Note: "Employed" refers to persons who, during the reference period, had a labour force status of 'employed'. The reference period was the week of Sunday, May 2 to Saturday, May 8, 2021. For a more detailed definition, see the entry for "Employed person" in *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2021*.
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021 (3901).

In contrast, retirement-aged parents living with their adult children may continue to engage in paid employment to support their children financially to some degree.¹⁷ As evidence of this, among persons aged 50 to 69 in 2021, employment rates were higher among those who were parents in intergenerational households than among persons living in other types of households (Chart 6). These differences were largest for persons aged 65 to 69, for whom 32.0% of parents in intergenerational households were employed compared with 24.6% of persons living in other arrangements.

Chart 6

Proportion employed among persons aged 50 to 69 in private households, by age group, household type and generation, Canada, 2021



Note: "Employed" refers to persons who, during the reference period, had a labour force status of 'employed'. The reference period was the week of Sunday, May 2 to Saturday, May 8, 2021. For a more detailed definition, see the entry for "Employed person" in *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2021*.
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021 (3901).

17. Milan, 2016; Maroto, 2017; Tomaszczyk and Worth, 2020.

Intergenerational living most prevalent among persons born in Southeast Asia, West Central Asia and the Middle East, or the Caribbean and Bermuda

The sociodemographic characteristics of persons living in intergenerational households are broadly similar to those of persons living in multigenerational households, reflecting the fact that the latter also includes parents co-residing with their adult children. Like persons who live in multigenerational households, those living in intergenerational households were more likely to be foreign born (32.5%) or racialized¹⁸ (33.6%) than persons living in other types of households (25.0% and 24.8%, respectively). Intergenerational living was most prevalent among persons born in Southeast Asia (31.9%), West Central Asia and the Middle East (29.6%) or the Caribbean and Bermuda (27.9%) (Table 2).¹⁹

Table 2
Proportion of persons in private households who live in intergenerational households, by place of birth, Canada, 2021

Place of birth	Proportion living in intergenerational households
	percent
Southeast Asia	31.9
West Central Asia and the Middle East	29.6
Caribbean and Bermuda	27.9
Eastern Asia	25.7
South America	23.8
Central America	23.4
Southern Asia	21.9
Africa	21.1
Europe	19.7
Oceania	19.5
Canada	17.9
North America (excluding Canada)	17.8

Source: Census of Population, 2021 (3901).

Among the populations reporting specific groups of ethnic or cultural origin, living in an intergenerational household was most prevalent for Somali persons, of whom two-fifths (38.5%) lived in this arrangement in 2021 (Table 3). Persons reporting Afghan, Sri Lankan, Tamil, Lebanese, Filipino, Vietnamese, Pakistani, Jamaican or Hong Konger ethnic or cultural origins also ranked among the top-ten highest proportions of living in an intergenerational household.²⁰ In contrast, intergenerational living was least prevalent among persons who reported Caucasian (White) ethnic or cultural origin (13.4%).

18. In this study, the concept of "racialized groups" is measured by the "visible minority" variable. "Visible minority" refers to whether or not a person belongs to one of the visible minority groups defined by the Employment Equity Act. The Employment Equity Act defines visible minorities as "persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour." The visible minority population consists mainly of the following groups: South Asian, Chinese, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Arab, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Korean and Japanese.

19. The countries included within each world region of origin are described in: [Countries and Areas of Interest for Social Statistics - SCCAI 2019](#).

20. Among ethnic or cultural origin groups with a total population of at least 50,000 in 2021.

Table 3

Proportion of persons in private households who live in intergenerational households, for selected ethnic or cultural origin groups, Canada, 2021

	Proportion living in intergenerational households
	percent
Somali	38.5
Afghan	34.7
Sri Lankan	33.6
Tamil	33.0
Lebanese	32.2
Filipino	30.7
Vietnamese	30.3
Pakistani	29.7
Jamaican	29.7
Hong Konger	28.9

Source: Census of Population, 2021 (3901).

In 2021, the proportion of Indigenous persons living in an intergenerational household (17.8%) was lower than the proportion among non-Indigenous persons (19.5%). Among Indigenous groups, Inuit had the highest prevalence of intergenerational living (19.2%), followed by First Nations people (18.1%) and Métis (17.3%).

Compared with other households, relatively more intergenerational households have housing that is adequate in condition, suitable in size and affordable

About one in 20 (5.7%) households composed of parents and their adult children were in low income²¹ in 2021, less than the proportion among other households (16.7%). The lesser instance of low income could reflect the presence of the parent generation in these homes, whom were generally at ages that tend to earn higher employment income, on average, than younger persons.²² Additionally, most (49.1%) intergenerational households had three or more persons earning employment income, while this was the case for 6.3% of other households.

In 2021, three-quarters (75.5%) of intergenerational households were considered to have acceptable housing—meaning housing that is adequate in condition, suitable in size, and affordable (Table 4).²³ This proportion was slightly higher than that of other types of households (70.0%), primarily because intergenerational households had a rate of unaffordable housing that was half that of other households (10.5% versus 22.2%).

21. Low-income status is based on the low-income measure, after-tax (LIM-AT). It refers to a fixed percentage (50%) of median adjusted after-tax income of private households. The household after-tax income is adjusted by an equivalence scale to take economies of scale into account. This adjustment for different household sizes reflects the fact that a household's needs increase, but at a decreasing rate, as the number of members increases.

22. Table 98-10-0599-01 [Employment income statistics by industry groups, visible minority, highest level of education, work activity during the reference year, age and gender: Canada, provinces and territories.](#)

23. Acceptable housing refers to whether a household meets each of the three indicator thresholds established by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation for housing adequacy, suitability and affordability.

Housing indicator thresholds are defined as follows:

- Adequate housing is reported by their residents as not requiring any major repairs.
- Affordable housing has shelter costs equal to less than 30% of total before-tax household income.
- Suitable housing has enough bedrooms for the size and composition of resident households according to the National Occupancy Standard (NOS), conceived by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and provincial and territorial representatives.

Acceptable housing identifies which thresholds the household falls below, if any. Housing that is adequate in condition, suitable in size and affordable is considered to be acceptable.

Table 4
Proportion of households with selected housing characteristics, by household type, Canada, 2021

Housing characteristics	Intergenerational households	Other types of households
	percent	
Acceptable housing ¹	75.5	70.0
Housing is below affordability threshold	10.5	22.2
Housing is below suitability threshold	10.3	4.6
Housing is below adequacy threshold	6.6	6.1

1. Refers to whether a household meets each of the three indicator thresholds established by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation for housing adequacy, suitability and affordability.

Notes: Housing indicator thresholds are defined as follows:

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Acceptable housing identifies which thresholds the household falls below, if any. Housing that is adequate in condition, suitable in size and affordable is considered to be acceptable.

Source: Census of Population, 2021 (3901).

About one in 10 intergenerational households in 2021 had housing below the suitability threshold—that is, the dwelling did not have enough bedrooms for the size and composition of the household (10.3%). In contrast to patterns for housing affordability, the rate of unsuitable housing among intergenerational households was twice that of other types of households (4.6%).

Conclusion

This study provides a first look at intergenerational households. This living arrangement was found to be common in Canada, representing the situation of about one in five individuals in 2021. The prevalence of this living arrangement was even higher among individuals in their 20s and those in their 50s.

This study found that support within intergenerational households tends to flow primarily from the older generation to the younger. Across all age groups, adult children living with their parents had lower employment rates and higher school attendance rates than their peers living in other arrangements. Conversely, retirement-aged parents living with their adult children had relatively higher employment rates than others in the same age group. More research is needed to understand the implications of this dynamic for the financial well-being of retirement-aged parents in Canada who provide partial or full financial support to their adult children.²⁴ Further analysis of the income and wealth characteristics of each generation within intergenerational households could help clarify whether this living arrangement contributes to narrowing or widening the intergenerational wealth gap within Canadian families.²⁵

Lastly, in the current context of rising housing costs and affordability challenges,²⁶ sharing a living space with one's parents or adult children appears to be a strategy to manage household expenses. This study found that the prevalence of low income was lower among intergenerational households compared to other types of households.

24. For example, in an examination of the United States, Maroto (2017) found that co-residence with adult children led to decreases in parental assets and savings, on average.

25. Tomaszczuk and Worth, 2020; Cohn et al, 2022.

26. [Housing costs and affordability](#)

Data sources, methods and definitions

For more information about trends in families, households and living arrangements, see [Families, households and marital status statistics](#).

This study is based on data from the 2021 Census of Population, and its main purpose is to enumerate the population. To ensure that individuals are counted only once in the census, people in private households are counted as residing at only one dwelling, and in only one household, by applying the concept of the “[usual place of residence](#).” In turn, census families are identified based on relationships among people who share a usual place of residence. A consequence of this approach to identifying families is that it may not fully reflect the complexity of family and household characteristics, especially for people who split their time between two or more residences. For more information on these considerations, see the appendix of the [Families, Households and Marital Status Reference Guide, Census of Population, 2021](#).

Given that the non-binary population is small, data aggregation to a two-category gender variable is sometimes necessary to protect the confidentiality of responses provided. In these cases, individuals in the category “non-binary persons” are distributed into the other two gender categories. In this study, the category “women” includes women, as well as some non-binary persons, and the category “men” includes men, as well as some non-binary persons.

Key concepts and definitions

The term **generation** can have different meanings depending on the social phenomenon being examined. For example, a **demographic generation** refers to a group of people born within a specific range of years who have grown up in a shared social, economic or political context—such as the Millennial generation. Generation status can also be used in the context of immigration, e.g., a “second-generation Canadian” is someone who was born in Canada and has at least one parent born outside of Canada. In this study, the term “generation” refers to relationships within a family.

An **intergenerational household** refers to a household composed of at least one parent (the older generation) and at least one of their adult children aged 20 and over (the younger generation), without any additional generations of the family present. Other relatives or non-relatives may be present, including younger siblings, spouses or partners of the adult children.

There is considerable overlap between the population of adult children living in an intergenerational household and the population of young adults (aged 20 to 34) living with their parents. However, there are important conceptual differences between the two. The latter group—which totaled 2,483,960 in 2021—may have a range of family characteristics and may be part of any type of census-family household. For example, some of these young adults may be living with both their own children and their parents, placing them in the middle generation of a multigenerational household.

In contrast, the population of adult children living in intergenerational households numbered 2,691,185 in 2021, of whom 2,137,095 were aged 20 to 34. To be classified as an adult child in an intergenerational household, the individual must not be living with a child of their own or with any additional generations of their family beyond their parents.

A **multigenerational household** refers to a household in which there is:

- at least one person who is both the grandparent of a person in the household and the parent of another person in the same household, or
- there is at least one person who is both the child of a person in the household and the grandchild of another person in the same household.

Census family: refers to a couple family (with or without children) or a one-parent family. The family members must share a usual place of residence (live in the same dwelling). Children may be biological or adopted children of any age, provided they do not have their own spouse, partner or child living in the same dwelling. Grandchildren living with their grandparent(s) and with no parents present also constitute a census family.

Child in a census family refers to a person of any age whose usual place of residence is the same dwelling as their parent(s), as well as to grandchildren living in households with grandparent(s) with no parents present. Individuals who are living with their married spouse or common-law partner, or with one or more of their own children, are not considered to be members of the census family of their parent(s), even if they are living in the same household.

Census family status of person refers to whether a person who is a member of a census family is a married spouse or common-law partner (with or without children), a parent in a one-parent family, or a child.

Census family status is prioritized for the youngest generations in households with two or more generations of the same family. Table 5 provides two examples of how census families are formed based on household relationships within intergenerational households, following the rule of prioritizing the youngest generation.

Table 5
Determination of census families in intergenerational households

Household	Person	Age of person	Relationship to reference person	Census family status of person	Census family membership of person
1	A	42	Reference person	Spouse in couple census family without children	Member of census family #1
	B	40	Married spouse	Spouse in couple census family without children	
	C	75	Mother	Living with relatives	Not in a census family
2	A	25	Reference person	Child in couple census family with children	Member of census family #1
	B	58	Mother	Parent in couple census family with children	
	C	59	Father	Parent in couple census family with children	

Source: Census of Population, 2021 (3901).

Family and household characteristics of person refers to the relationship between a person and the other members of their household. Specifically, emphasis is placed on whether they are a member of a census family— a couple, with or without children, or a one-parent family—or if not in a census family, whether they are living with relatives, with non-relatives only, or alone.

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