

Population & Demographics

What you need to know

- Historically, Alberta's population has grown faster than the Canadian average due to strong migration—both from other provinces and countries. This advantage has faded considerably in recent years.
- Nevertheless, as our population ages, international immigration will continue to account for most of Alberta's population—and labour force—growth.
- This means that, over time, Alberta will become increasingly urban and ethnically diverse.
- Meanwhile, the net inflow of other Canadians in their 20s to Alberta has ended, while Albertans in their 30s are somewhat more likely to leave the province.

Reason for optimism

An increasingly diverse workforce presents an opportunity for Alberta in terms of innovation and technology adoption.

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Cause for concern

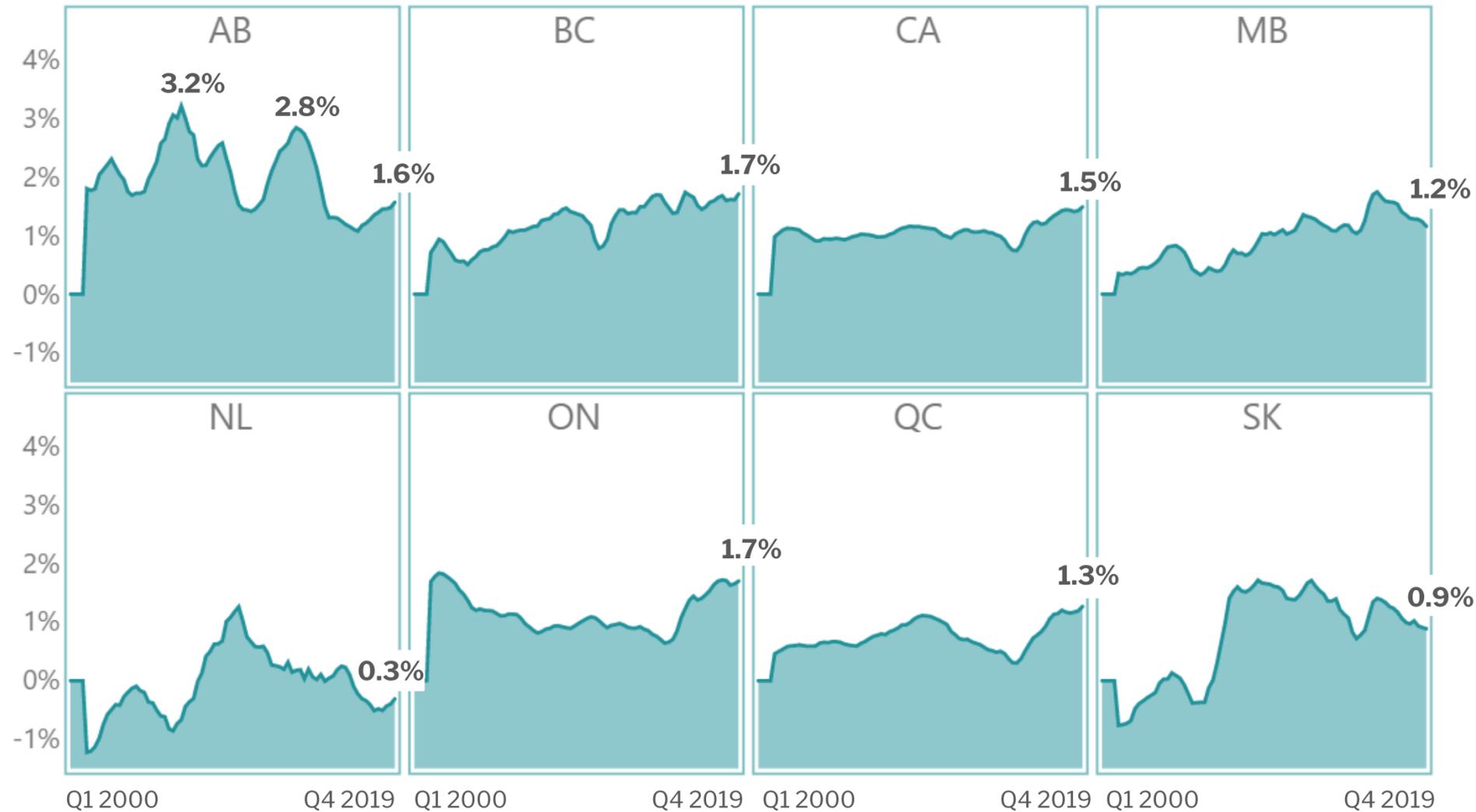
Alberta is increasingly losing in the competition of attracting young families from other provinces.



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Population growth year over year, Q1 2000 to Q4 2019



- From 2000 to 2014, Alberta’s population grew at more than double the Canadian average. There was a consistent net inflow of individuals moving to Alberta from other provinces.
- Since 2014, population growth has been in line with the Canadian average of about 1.3% per year.
- The population is expected to continue to grow—by about 1.6% per year through 2027, slowing to about 1.3% through 2046.
- As the population ages, migration will account for well over half (68%) of population growth.
- As the current population ages, the average age is expected to increase from 38.3 to 41.5 by 2046.

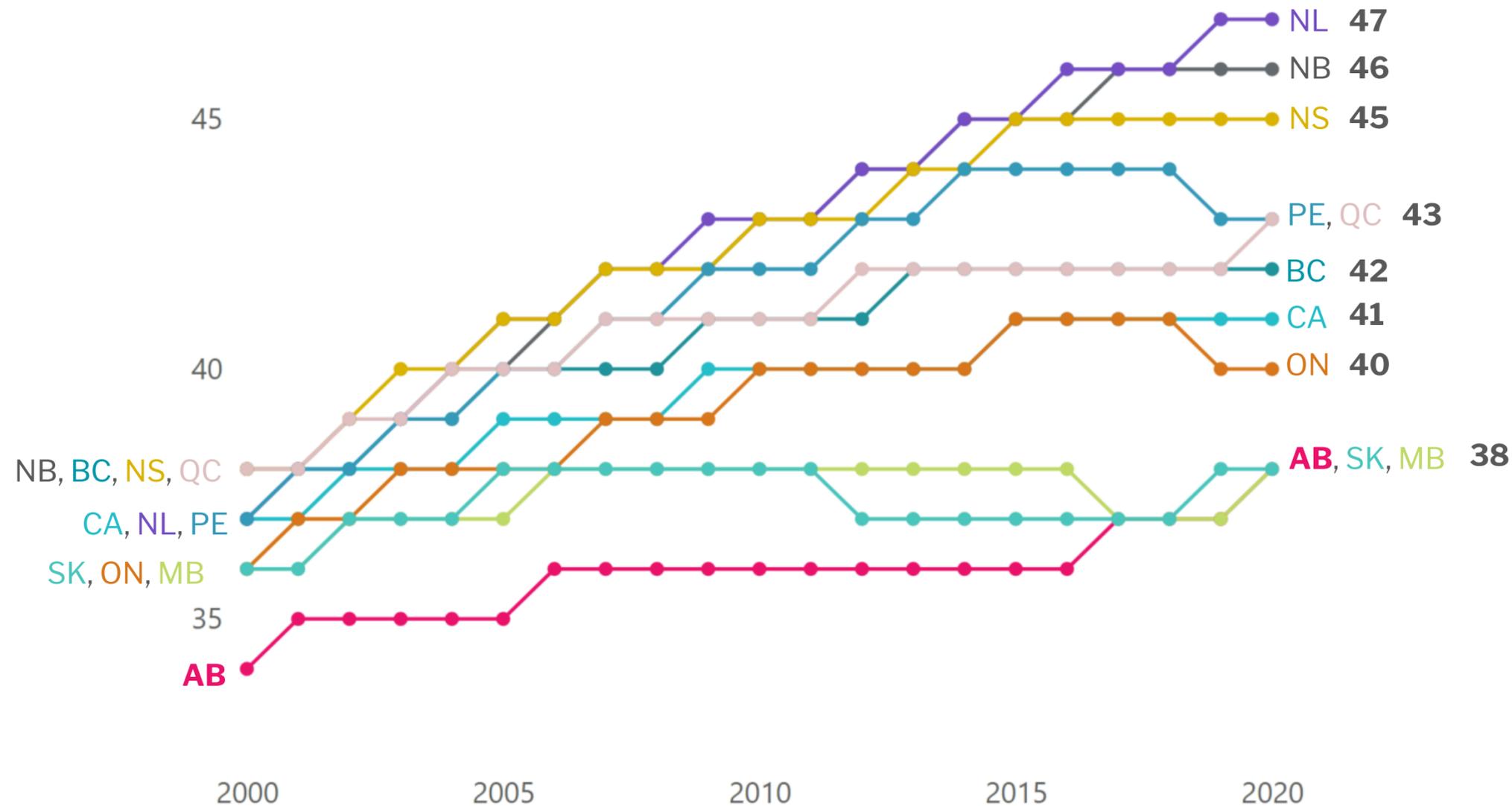
Source: Statistics Canada



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Median age, 2000 to 2020



- Like many countries, Canada is seeing its population age with the ageing of the baby boomer generation.
- The median age of Canadians has increased from 37 in 2000 to 41 in 2020.
- As of 2000, Alberta was an outlier with a population younger than any other province - a median age of just 34. Now it is in line with Saskatchewan and Manitoba at 38.
- Meanwhile, Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia all have a median age of 45 or above.

Source: Statistics Canada

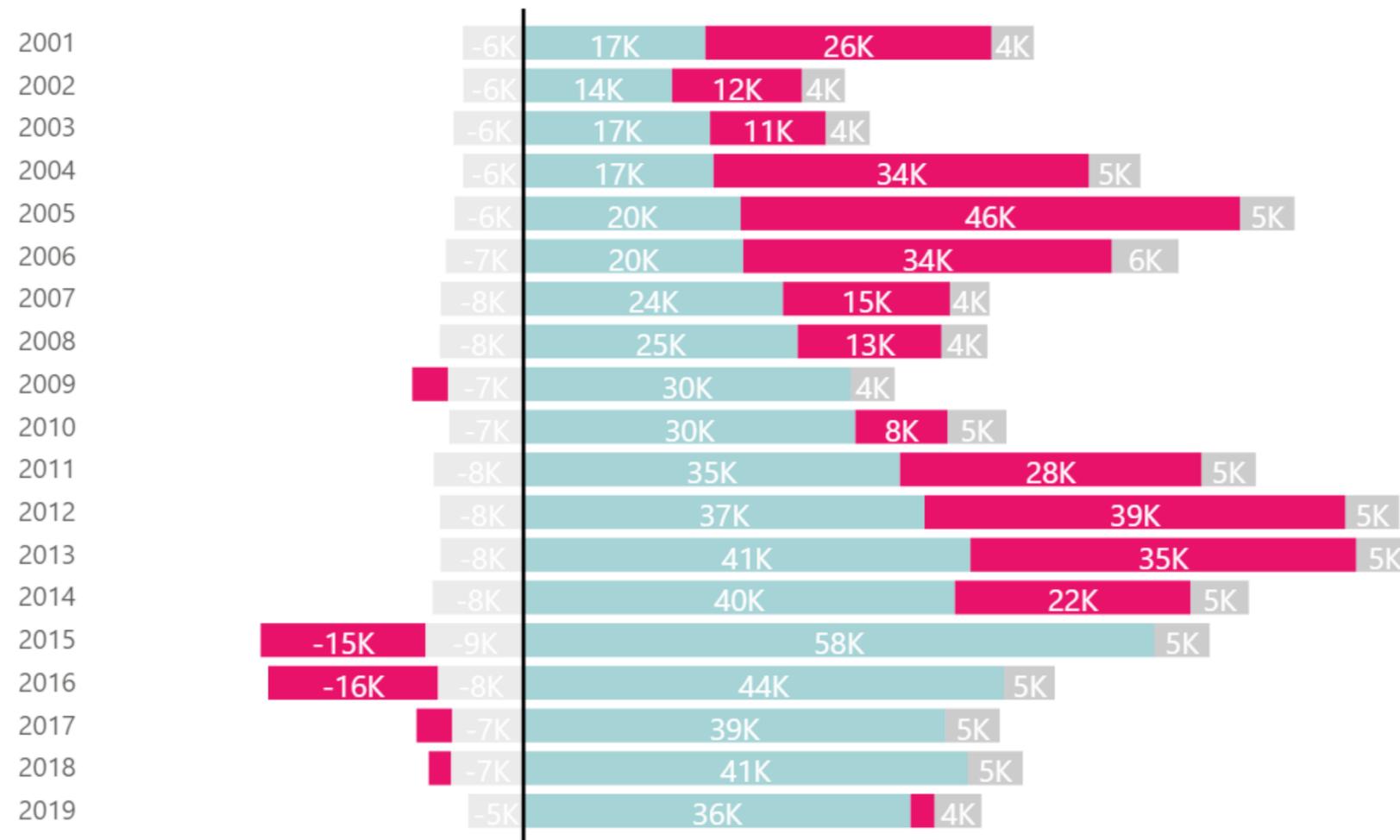


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Drivers of population growth (excludes natural), 2001 to 2019

- International immigration
- Net interprovincial migration
- Albertans emigrating to other countries
- Albertans returning back from another country



- Since 2014, international migration has remained relatively strong but domestic migration patterns have changed.
- 2015 was one of the biggest years for international migration to Alberta. Immigration patterns are likely slower to respond to economic shocks but it has since since decreased versus the 2015 peak.
- However, as economic opportunity diminished, interprovincial migration flows reversed as more people started leaving Alberta. This trend is especially prevalent among younger, working-age Albertans as well as those nearing retirement.
- From 2016 to 2019, 40-42% of Albertans who have left the province have moved to BC while 28-29% moved to Ontario.

Source: Statistics Canada



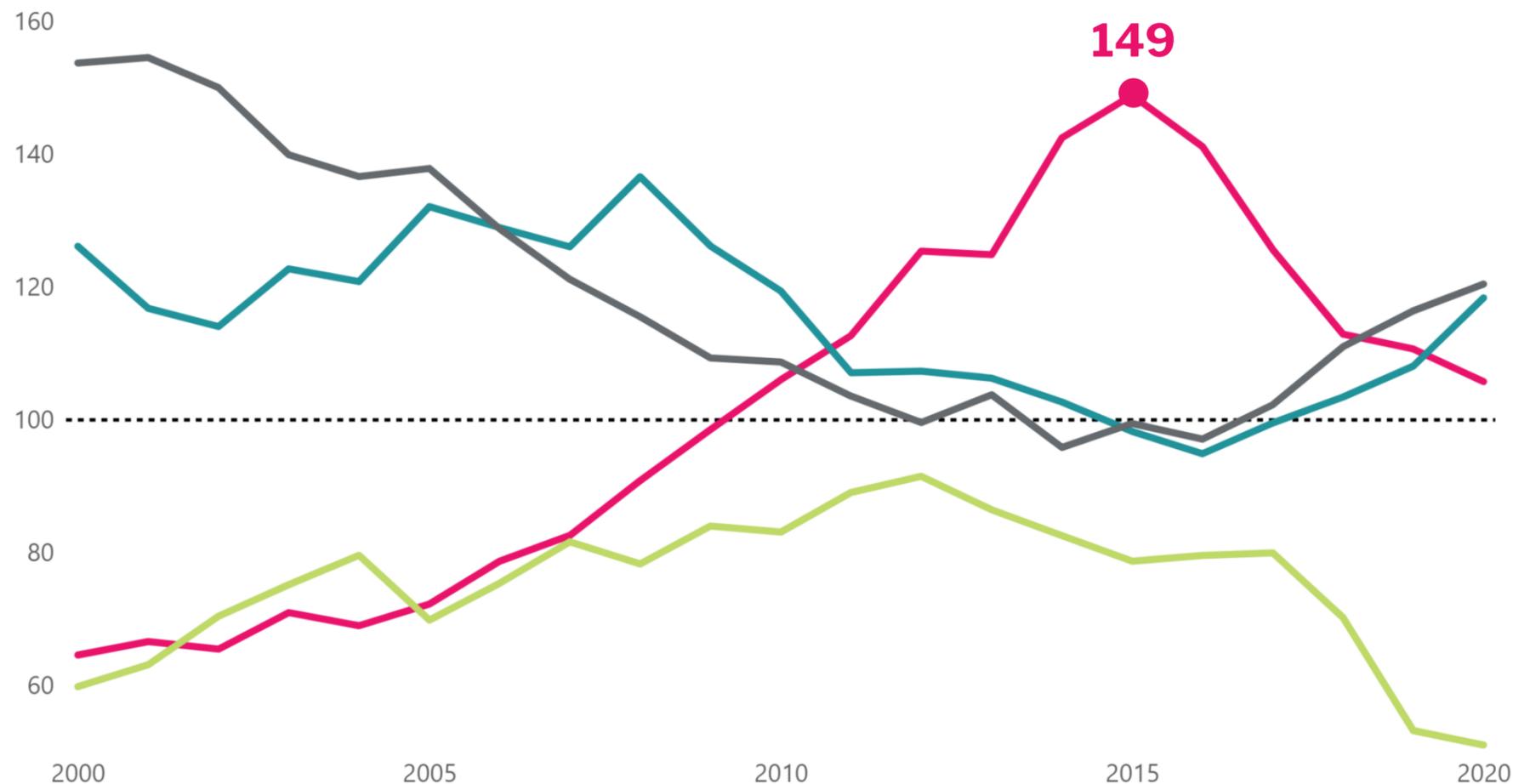
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Immigration attractiveness index, 2000 to 2020

Share of international immigration divided by share of population, annually

● Alberta ● British Columbia ● Ontario ● Quebec



- As of the last quarter of 2019, Alberta was not seen as especially attractive to new immigrants.
- In fact, Alberta attracted just 6% more new immigrants than expected based on Alberta's share of the population while Ontario and BC attracted 20% and 18% more than their fair share, respectively.
- This is a large shift compared with Alberta's historical draw. As of 2015, at the height of Alberta's international immigration growth, it attracted nearly 50% more than its fair share.
- Still, Alberta continues to attract more immigrants now than it did in the early 2000s when it attracted 35% less than its fair share.

Source: Statistics Canada



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Alberta net migration to/from other provinces by age, 2001 to 2020



Source: Statistics Canada

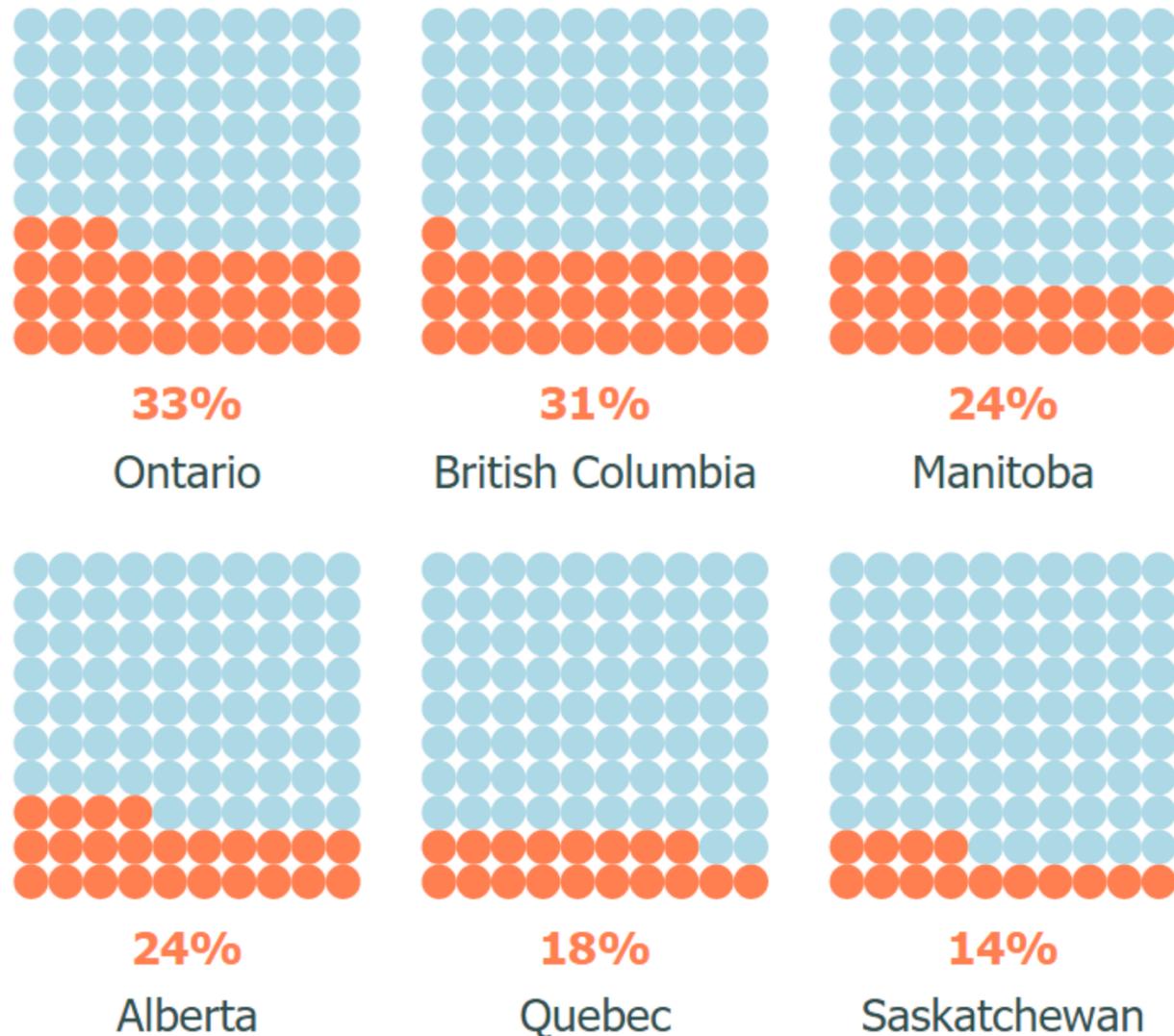
- Those in their 20s and 30s drive the vast majority of migration to and from Alberta; they have also contributed to the fact that Alberta is relatively young compared to other provinces.
- Over the last few years, individuals in their 20s are not that much more likely to leave than they have been historically; however, fewer are choosing to move to Alberta from other provinces.
- Meanwhile, Alberta is increasingly losing in the competition for attracting young families; of those in their 30s, Alberta has seen a decrease in those coming in and an increase in those leaving, compared with historical trends.



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Immigrants as a share of the labour force, 2020



- Alberta's workforce is quickly aging. Those 55 and over used to account for just 10% of the workforce 20 years ago, now they account for 20%.
- New immigrants already account for almost a quarter of Alberta's labour force. Population projections show that this share will increase over time.
- The population is also becoming more diverse. Visible minorities represented just 10% of the population in 1996 but 23.5% 20 years later, higher than the national average. This group is younger and most likely to live in Alberta's cities.
- In other words, Alberta's current population will continue to age, while also becoming increasingly urban and diverse.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2020

