

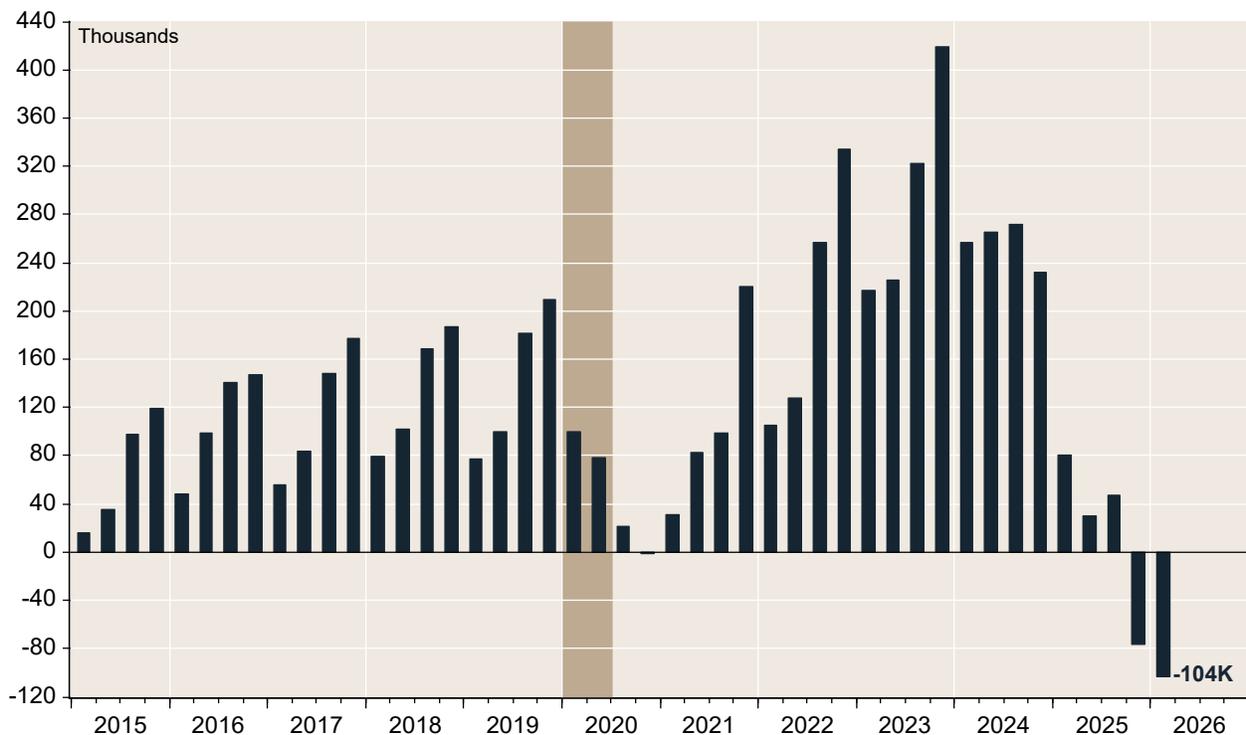
Canada Watch

By Kyle Dahms

Statistics Canada's latest demographic release shows that Canada's population fell by 103,504 people (-0.2%) in the fourth quarter of 2025, its second consecutive quarterly decline and the first back-to-back drop ever recorded. The contraction was driven primarily by a sharp reduction in non-permanent residents (NPRs), whose numbers fell -6.0% in the quarter and have now dropped by nearly 500K since peaking in late 2024. Natural increase also remained negative, reflecting ongoing demographic aging, while permanent immigration offered the only positive contribution to growth but still came in about 20% lower than a year earlier. Regionally, B.C. posted a decline of 0.4%, while Ontario and Quebec each contracted 0.3%. Alberta, by contrast, was once again the only one of the big four provinces to post growth (+0.1%), supported by strong interprovincial inflows. These quarterly dynamics are now reshaping the annual picture as well. Canada's population fell by more than 100,000 people from a year earlier (-0.2%), the first annual population decline since Confederation (see [here](#)) and a clear sign of how abruptly the demographic backdrop is shifting. As today's Hot Chart highlights, the combination of falling NPR counts, negative natural increase and softer immigration inflows has pushed Canada into a period of demographic contraction without precedent in the modern statistical era. While revisions may adjust the magnitude of the Q4 decline, the underlying direction is unmistakable: Canada's demographic engine is cooling rapidly, with broad implications for labour supply, housing demand and the economic outlook.

Canada: First back-to-back population decline on record

Net quarterly change in population (as of January 1st, 2026)



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