

Living Arrangements of Seniors

Between 2006 and 2011, the number of seniors in Halton Region has increased by 21% to over 66,000 compared to 14% for the total population. One in eight (13.2%) residents is a senior. For the City of Burlington with a high proportion of seniors, that percentage has reached 16.9%.



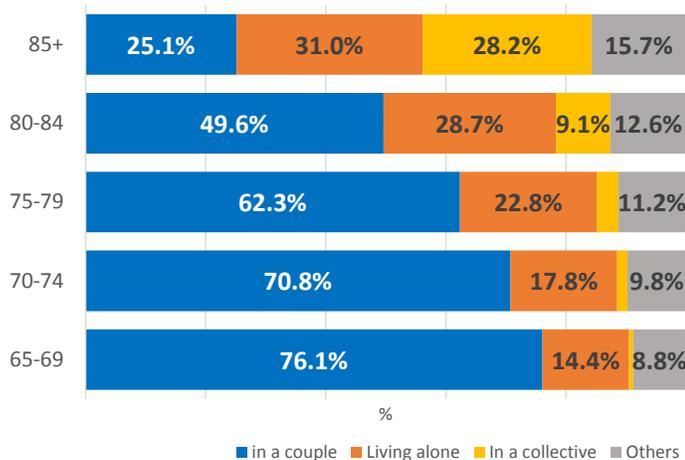
The senior population can be divided into five age groups, the youngest group (65 to 69 years old) represented about 30% of the senior cohort. As a group, they grew by 31% between 2006 and 2011. The oldest group (85 years and over) which accounted for about 13% of all seniors and had the fastest growth rate of 34%.

The living arrangement of seniors change as they age. In moving up the age pyramid, they are more likely to live in different arrangements either by choice or by circumstances. As the baby boomers enter retirement, these changes are becoming more significant in considering their housing needs and requirements.

In 2011, most (94%) seniors lived in private households (single detached, semi-detached, apartment or row houses). The remaining 6% lived in collective dwellings such as residences for senior citizens, long term care, retirement or health care and related facilities.

For young seniors (65 to 69 years), a majority (76.1%) of them lived as a couple (married – 96.5% and common-law – 3.5%), with or without children. One in seven (14.4%) lived alone. About 3% were lone parents living with children. Very few lived in collective dwellings.

Living Arrangements of Seniors, Halton Region, 2011



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

When they reached the age of 85 years and older, the most common living arrangement shifted from a couple to living alone. That percentage doubled from 14.4% for young seniors to 31%. The proportion (28.2%) of older seniors living in collective dwellings also surpassed those living with spouses or partners (25.1%). However, Statistics Canada reports a declining trend of individuals aged 85 and over living in collective dwellings over the past thirty years¹. According to the Census, data on living arrangements are not available for those in collective dwellings.

¹ Statistics Canada, *Emerging trends in living arrangements and conjugal unions for current and future seniors*, Insights on Canadian Society, February 24, 2014

Seniors also lived with relatives or non-relatives, that percentage increased from about 9% for young seniors to about 16% for older seniors.

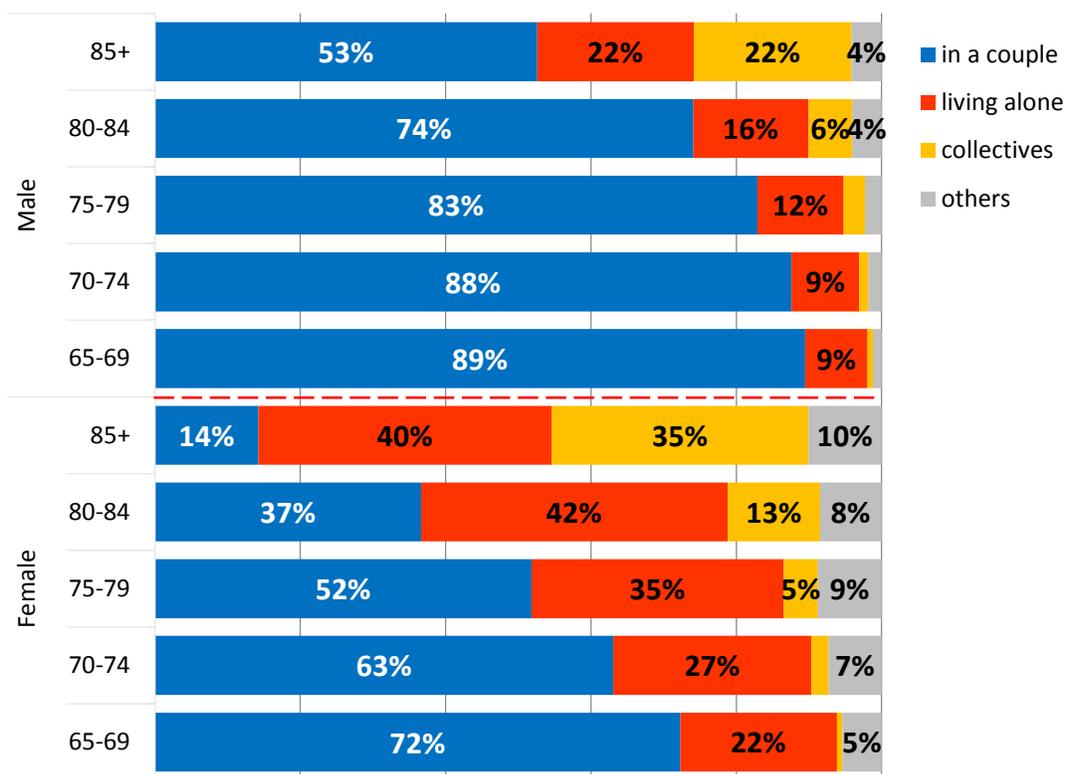
In addition to age variations, the living arrangements of seniors also show a gender differentiation. The differences become more pronounced as the seniors get older.

For all age cohorts, male seniors are more likely to live as a couple (married or common-law) than their female counterparts. About one in seven (14%) older female seniors lived with their spouse or partner compared to over half (53%) for their male counterparts.

On the other hand, female seniors are more likely to live by themselves than male seniors. This differentiation is common in all five age groups. By the time they reach 85 years and over, four in ten female seniors lived alone. These phenomena may attribute to factors such as the lower life expectancy of men, and women often forming unions with a spouse or partner who is slightly older than themselves.

As women live longer than men, it is expected that there is a higher proportion of senior women in collective dwellings. In 2011, over one in three (35%) older senior women lived in collective dwellings.

Living Arrangement of Seniors by Sex Halton Region, 2011



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

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