About Geography

• Compare similar levels of geography for counts, but you can get away with percentages to compare different levels of geography.

• Statistic Canada's geographical hierarchy is used by a LOT of Canadian sources.

• A same city might be available at many different geographical levels.
A city available at many geographical levels.

- **Census subdivisions**
  - Halifax (Regional municipality), Nova Scotia [map]

- **Census metropolitan areas / Census agglomerations**
  - Halifax (CMA), Nova Scotia [map]

- **Census divisions**
  - Halifax (County), Nova Scotia [map]

- **Economic regions**
  - Halifax, Nova Scotia [map]

- **Federal electoral districts (2003 representation order)**
  - Halifax, Nova Scotia [map]
  - Halifax West, Nova Scotia [map]

- **Federal electoral districts (2013 representation order)**
  - Halifax, Nova Scotia [map]
  - Halifax West, Nova Scotia [map]

- **Population centres**
  - Halifax, Nova Scotia [map]
Hierarchy of standard geographic units for dissemination, 2016 Census
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Population Minimum</th>
<th>Covers all of Canada?</th>
<th>How many in Canada (2016)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Census agglomeration</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census division</td>
<td>CD</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census metropolitan area</td>
<td>CMA</td>
<td>100,000 with 50,000 in core</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census subdivision</td>
<td>CSD</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5,162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census tract</td>
<td>CT</td>
<td>2,500 (usually)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>5,721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census consolidated subdivision</td>
<td>CCS</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1,768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated place</td>
<td>DPL</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissemination area</td>
<td>DA</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>56,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissemination block</td>
<td>DB</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>489,905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic region</td>
<td>ER</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal electoral district</td>
<td>FED</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Province or territory</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Regions</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>126?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forward Sortation Areas</td>
<td>FSA</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1,638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postal Codes</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>855,056</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finding Maps and Lists of Small Geographies
To give a quick look at dissemination areas or census tracts, cheat by using the Census Mapper! 😊
Finding Maps of Stats Can Geographies

- Choose your source based on your need and the time period to cover.

- Just need to **see the geography for a specific location?** Try GeoSearch or Scholar's GeoPortal or the Census Profiles.

- Want a **beautiful PDF map?** Try the online reference maps or internet archives.

- Need to **play around with maps in GIS software?** Try Scholar's GeoPortal or the Online Boundary Files.
Finding Lists of Geographies

- Choose your source based on your need and the time period to cover.
- Just want to see a simple list online? Try browsing the Census Profiles, or clicking on numbers in the standard geographical classification.
- Want to create a list? You'll want to explore GeoSuite, or GeoSuite online (2016 only) or download the Census Profiles, or extract a list from Boundary Files...
Small Geographies for Which Data is Often Available
Census Subdivision
Census Tract
Dissemination Area
Dissemination Block
Census Division

Census Metropolitan Area
Health Regions

Forward Sortation Areas
And
Postal Codes
Census subdivision (CSD) is the general term for municipalities (as determined by provincial/territorial legislation) or areas treated as municipal equivalents for statistical purposes (e.g., Indian reserves, Indian settlements and unorganized territories). Municipal status is defined by laws in effect in each province and territory in Canada.
Census subdivision (CSD)

Part A - Short definition:

Area that is a municipality or an area that is deemed to be equivalent to a municipality for statistical reporting purposes (e.g., as an Indian reserve or an unorganized territory). Municipal status is defined by laws in effect in each province and territory in Canada.
In this example, a census subdivision *Kings Subdivision D* has two "holes" which are two other census subdivisions: *Wolfville* and *Glooscap 35*. 

Census tract (CT)

Release date: November 16, 2016

Definition

Census tracts (CTs) are small, relatively stable geographic areas that usually have a population of less than 10,000 persons, based on data from the previous Census of Population Program. They are located in census metropolitan areas and in census agglomerations that had a core population of 50,000 or more in the previous census.

A committee of local specialists (for example, planners, health and social workers, and educators) initially delineates census tracts in conjunction with Statistics Canada. Once a census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA) has been subdivided into census tracts, the census tracts are maintained even if the core population subsequently declines below 50,000.

Reported in

Census tracts are available for Census Metropolitan Areas (big cities) only.

Here is a map of Halifax census tracts.

Dissemination area (DA)

Definition

A dissemination area (DA) is a small, relatively stable geographic unit composed of one or more adjacent dissemination blocks with an average population of 400 to 700 persons based on data from the previous Census of Population Program. It is the smallest standard geographic area for which all census data are disseminated. DAs cover all the territory of Canada.

Reported in

Part A - Short definition:

A core area consisting of one or more municipalities situated around a core, that have a total population of at least 50,000 of which 10,000 or more live in the core. A census agglomeration must have a core population of at least 10,000.