

Subsection 2.—Infant Mortality

In recent years a great part of the energy designed to effect a decline in the general death rate has been directed at infant mortality and with a large measure of success. That Dominion, provincial and municipal health authorities, together with the private welfare agencies, have all taken part in the struggle to reduce infant mortality is reflected in the figures for the period 1921 to 1942, which show a fairly constant improvement each year. In fact any fluctuations in the general downward trend have been caused by the presence of epidemic diseases. In 1921 the infant death rate for Canada was 102 per 1,000 live births. Figures for 1942 show the lowest rate since the registration area was established, viz., 54 per 1,000 live births. New Brunswick had the highest rate, Quebec the second highest and Nova Scotia the third. In other words over 13,000 young Canadians were added to the population of Canada in 1942, who under conditions prevailing in 1921 would have died before their first birthday.

21.—Infant Mortality and Rates per 1,000 Live Births, by Provinces, 1911-42, with Five-Year Averages, 1921-40

Note.—Figures for individual years from 1921-40 will be found in previous editions of the Year Book, beginning with the 1931 edition.

Year	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Canada ¹
INFANT DEATHS										
Averages, 1921-25	152	1,139	1,164	²	5,916	1,394	1,790	1,327	621	²
Averages, 1926-30	122	934	1,040	10,518	5,091	1,031	1,560	1,195	571	22,063
Averages, 1931-35	131	840	857	7,757	3,962	835	1,260	997	463 ¹	17,101
Averages, 1936-40	142	782	913	6,470	3,196	773	1,025	869	532	14,701
1941	163	908	936	6,770	3,294	788	946	879	552	15,236
1942	106	884	978	6,657	3,139	807	788	696	596	14,651
INFANT DEATH RATES PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS										
Averages, 1921-25	77	94	105	²	83	84	83	86	61	²
Averages, 1926-30	70	85	101	127	74	72	73	75	55	93
Averages, 1931-35	67	73	82	98	61	61	62	60	46	75
Averages, 1936-40	69	65	82	82	50	57	55	53	44	64
1941	80	65	76	76	46	53	51	51	37	60
1942	50	58	77	70	40	51	43	38	35	54

¹ Exclusive of the Territories.

² Quebec was not included in the registration area prior to 1926.

Infant Mortality by Causes of Death.—Nine principal group causes of death accounted for between 89 and 92 p.c. of the infant mortality in the Dominion, during the years 1931 to 1942. These are shown in Table 22 and it is worthy of note that four diseases present at birth, viz., premature birth, injury at birth, congenital debility and congenital malformations, accounted for over 45 and 46 p.c. of the infant deaths in 1941 and 1942, respectively. In 1926 the percentage was 41 and 42 in 1930, but since the rate of infant deaths has declined over 18 p.c. in the interval between 1936 and 1942, much improvement is indicated in pre-natal, intra-natal and post-natal care.