

7.—Single and Multiple Births, Live and Stillborn 1951-54

(Exclusive of Yukon and the Northwest Territories)

Confinements and Births	Numbers				Percentages			
	1951	1952	1953	1954	1951	1952	1953	1954
Confinements	382,660	405,122	419,135	437,417	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Single	378,246	400,496	414,529	432,525	98.8	98.9	98.9	98.9
Twin	4,377	4,587	4,553	4,847	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Triplet	37	39	51	44	—	—	—	—
Quadruplet	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	—
Births	387,111	409,787	423,796	442,355	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Single—								
Live	371,539	393,597	407,898	425,615	98.2	98.3	98.4	98.4
Stillborn	6,707	6,899	6,631	6,910	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.6
Twin—								
Live	8,458	8,822	8,777	9,398	96.6	96.2	96.4	96.9
Stillborn	296	352	329	296	3.5	3.8	3.6	3.1
Triplet—								
Live	104	108	142	125	93.7	92.3	92.8	94.7
Stillborn	7	9	11	7	6.3	7.7	7.2	5.3
Quadruplet—								
Live	—	—	8	4	—	—	100.0	100.0
Stillborn	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals, Live Births	380,101	402,527	416,825	435,142	98.2	98.2	98.4	98.4
Totals, Stillborn	7,010	7,260	6,971	7,213	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.6

Fertility Rates.—Sex and age distribution of the population is an important factor in determining birth, death and marriage rates. More than 95 p.c. of children born are to women between the ages of 15 and 50, so that, as noted earlier, variations in the proportion of women of these ages to the population as a whole will cause variations in the birth rates of different countries or regions even though the fertility of women at each age may be the same. Measures of fertility which are independent of the sex and age distribution of the population have therefore been devised. The best known of these are age-specific fertility rates and reproduction rates.

Ages of Parents.—Ages of the parents is an important variable in any analysis of birth statistics. The numerical and percentage distribution of legitimate live births by the age group of the parents is given for 1941, 1953 and 1954 in Table 8, of illegitimate live births by the age group of the mother in Table 9, of stillbirths by the age group of the mother in Table 10, as well as the average ages of the parents for each year shown.

Besides the fertility rates at each age three other factors help, in the main, to determine the average age of parents having children: firstly the average age of potential parents at any point in time, that is, of the population between the ages of 15 and 50; secondly the average age of couples at marriage; and thirdly the proportions of first and second births to total births. Other things being equal a high proportion of first and second births will result in a lower average age of parents. In 1930-32 first and second births were 43 p.c. of the total births but for the period 1945-48 first and second births together were 57 p.c. of the total. This change is very great and accounts for the lower average age of parents in the latter period. However the proportion of first and second births had declined to approximately 53 p.c. in 1952 and 52 p.c. in 1954.