

Section 4.—Municipal Finance

Subsection 1.—Municipal Assessed Valuations

The revenue resources of municipalities are limited generally to direct taxation based on assessed valuations of real and other types of property. In the Provinces of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Manitoba and Alberta, municipalities assess and tax personal property. In Alberta municipal districts the valuations of personal property assessed have risen sharply with the growth of the oil industry. In Manitoba the personal property tax is used generally by all classes of municipalities except cities. Aside from property the most important type of valuation for taxation purposes is business assessment, although not all provinces assess for business purposes separately and distinctly from real property valuation. A variation in methods, schedules and rates exists not only between provinces but also between municipalities within the same province. Some municipalities use the rental basis, others the value of floor space occupied and still others the capital value of the premises occupied. Three provinces have other miscellaneous types of assessment, the general forms of which are given in the footnotes to Table 35.

The figures in Table 35 are not entirely comparable on an interprovincial basis from the standpoint of relative values of properties taxable for municipal purposes. Each province operates under its own assessment laws which are not all similar either in application or in effect. For instance in British Columbia improvements cannot be taxed on a value in excess of 75 p.c. of taxable values; the values actually taxed in 1953 ranged from nil to 75 p.c.; for all municipalities the total improvements actually taxed represented 53.5 p.c. of total taxable values. In addition there are other intra-provincial inconsistencies between municipalities which, in turn, further affect interprovincial comparisons. These may be said to be caused by the lack of integrated municipal assessment systems and uniform standards for establishing values on a province-wide basis, under the direction and control of a central authority. However there has been considerable progress towards uniformity and improved procedure in recent years.

Complete figures for tax-exempt properties are not available for each province but the information given shows that these properties have assumed relatively high proportions.

35.—Municipal Assessed Valuations by Province 1949-53

Province and Year	Taxable Valuations on which Taxes were Levied					Total Exemptions ^a
	Real Property	Personal Property	Business	Other ¹	Total	
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Newfoundland².....	..	..	..	..	..	..
P. E. Island—³						
1949.....	13,714,935	5,777,847	..	..	19,492,782	7,456,500
1950.....	16,872,045	6,085,510	..	..	22,957,555	7,788,500
1951.....	23,539,274	9,650,989	..	..	33,190,263	9,585,500
1952.....	25,767,825	9,822,300	..	..	35,590,125	9,585,500
1953.....	25,340,017	10,832,041	..	..	36,172,058	9,424,200
Nova Scotia—						
1949.....	179,425,853	35,658,983	11,826,635	4,039,860	230,951,331	96,594,851
1950.....	186,588,461	36,277,551	12,527,060	4,212,700	239,605,772	100,567,331
1951.....	223,083,830	49,077,698	13,704,315	4,582,290	290,448,123	121,862,179
1952.....	240,575,423	55,167,734	14,315,320	4,745,615	314,804,092	135,475,897
1953.....	253,698,529	60,127,611	14,499,605	4,983,895	333,309,640	143,777,931

For footnotes, see end of table.