

Multiple Births.—Approximately one confinement in 90 in Canada results in the birth of more than one child as compared with one in 85 several years ago—in other words the chances of a confinement resulting in the birth of more than one child are fewer now than formerly. Other facts illustrated by Table 7 are that the proportion of stillbirths is higher among multiple than among single births and is about twice as high for twins and between three and five times as high for triplets.

7.—Single and Multiple Births, Live and Stillborn, 1955-58

Confinements and Births	Numbers				Percentages			
	1955 ¹	1956	1957	1958	1955 ¹	1956	1957	1958
Confinements	443,586	452,607	470,651	471,436	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Single.....	438,639	447,547	465,423	466,065	98.9	98.9	98.9	98.9
Twin.....	4,897	5,012	5,178	5,334	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Triplet.....	50	48	49	37	--	--	--	--
Quadruplet.....	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Births	448,583	457,715	475,930	476,844	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Single—								
Live.....	432,089	440,916	458,859	459,652	98.5	98.5	98.6	98.6
Stillborn.....	6,550	6,631	6,564	6,413	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4
Twin—								
Live.....	9,453	9,683	10,093	10,360	96.5	96.6	97.5	97.1
Stillborn.....	341	341	263	308	3.5	3.4	2.5	2.9
Triplet—								
Live.....	139	140	137	106	92.7	97.2	93.2	95.5
Stillborn.....	11	4	10	5	7.3	2.8	6.8	4.5
Quadruplet—								
Live.....	—	—	4	—	—	—	100.0	—
Stillborn.....	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals, Live Births	441,681	450,739	469,093	470,118	98.5	98.5	98.6	98.6
Totals, Stillborn	6,902	6,976	6,837	6,726	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4

¹ Excludes the Yukon and Northwest Territories.

Fertility Rates.—Sex and age distribution of the population is an important factor in determining birth, death and marriage rates. More than 99 p.c. of the 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 crude 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—either per 1,000 *total* women* or per 1,000 *married* women in these age groups—and reproduction rates.

Ages of Parents.—Age of parents is an important variable in any analysis of birth statistics. The distribution of legitimate and illegitimate live births by age of the parents is given in Table 8, and for stillbirths in Table 9, as well as the average age of parents.

More than 6 p.c. of the legitimate children born each year are born to mothers under 20 years of age, in about one-third of the births the mother is under 25 years, and in almost two-thirds, under 30 years; in over 47 p.c. of all births the father is under 30 years of age. On the other hand, over one-third of the illegitimate infants born are born to mothers under 20 years of age and an additional one-third to mothers under 25 years.

* Available from DBS annual report, *Vital Statistics* (Catalogue No. 84-202).