

Section 6.—Canadian Life Tables

Four official series of life tables for Canada and the provinces and regions have been published to date, based on deaths in the three-year period around each of the Censuses of 1931, 1941, 1951 and 1956. In addition, tables have been computed for Canada as a whole for the years 1945 and 1947 based on estimated populations by sex and age and the deaths recorded in those years. The life table values for 1956 are given in abbreviated form in Table 23.

Life tables give a summary of the health and general conditions of survival of the population in a conventional, standard form. A hypothetical number (100,000) of births of each sex is assumed as a starting point. The life tables show how, on the basis of the mortality rates at each age in the given years, these 100,000 of each sex are reduced in number by death. For example, during the year 1956, of 100,000 males born, 3,472 died in their first year so that 96,528 survived to one year of age; 241 died in their second year so that 96,287 survived to two years of age, and so on. At 100 years of age only 87 of the original 100,000 would have survived. The probability of death at each age is the ratio between the number of deaths and the population at each age. Finally, the expectation of life is the average number of years which a person might expect to live if the mortality rates in the given years remained constant.

Mortality rates at all ages for males have been almost consistently higher than for females. Males have the highest risk of mortality as compared with females during their first year of life, from their late 'teens to early 30's and from age 50 to 65. For both boys and girls the risk of mortality drops rapidly during childhood and is lowest at about age 10, increases gradually to about age 40 for males and about 50 for females and then rises steeply with advancing age. At the mortality rates given in the 1956 Life Table (see Table 23) about 13,000 males would have died before reaching age 50 as compared with about 8,700 females; only 56,466 of the original group of 100,000 males would have survived to age 70 as compared with about 70,327 females.

By 1956, life expectancy at birth in Canada had reached a new high record of 67.6 years for males and 72.9 for females—comparable to the expectancy for other countries of the world with highly developed programs of medical and public health care. Once a child has passed its first year of life, however, its life expectancy increases appreciably. At one year of age a male child at present mortality risks may, on the average, expect to live an additional 69.0 years and a female 74.0 years, representing for an infant boy a gain of 1.4 years more than his expectation at birth and 1.1 years more for an infant girl. The expectation of life of a 15-year-old boy is 55.9 more years; of a 15-year-old girl 60.6 years. At 25 years of age the expectation is about 46.6 years for men and almost 51 years for women and at age 70, 10.5 years for men and 12.2 years for women.

23.—Canadian Life Table, 1956

Age	Males				Females			
	Number Living at Each Age	Number Dying Between Each Age and the Next	Probability of Dying Before Reaching Next Birthday	Expectation of Life	Number Living at Each Age	Number Dying Between Each Age and the Next	Probability of Dying Before Reaching Next Birthday	Expectation of Life
At birth.....	100,000		.03472	67.61	100,000		.02767	72.92
1 year.....	96,528	3,472	.00250	69.04	97,233	2,767	.00216	73.99
2 years.....	96,287	241	.00144	68.21	97,023	210	.00120	73.15
3 ".....	96,148	139	.00115	67.31	96,907	116	.00093	72.24
4 ".....	96,037	111	.00095	66.38	96,817	90	.00070	71.31
5 ".....	95,946	91	.00083	65.45	96,749	68	.00058	70.35