

On this basis, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Quebec, in that order, had the highest fertility rates and British Columbia and Ontario the lowest.

Also contrary to popular impression, since 1953 more babies were born each year in Ontario than in the Province of Quebec; in 1959, 157,124 babies were born to Ontario mothers as compared with 142,383 to Quebec mothers. Altogether, 479,275 children were born in Canada in 1959, a record number.

Sex of Live Births.—Wherever birth statistics have been collected they have shown an excess of male over female births. No conclusive explanation of this excess has yet been given. Nevertheless it is so much of an accepted statistical fact that a proper ratio of male to female births has become one of the criteria of complete registration. The number of males to every 1,000 females born in Canada has averaged around 1,057 since the middle 1930's. Provincial sex ratios vary much more widely because of the relatively small number of births involved—the smaller the total number of births, the greater the chance of wide sex-ratio variations from year to year. Another commonly acknowledged fact in many countries—although there is no generally accepted explanation for it—is that the male ratio appears to rise during or shortly after major wars. This seems to have happened in Canada between 1942 and 1945 when the ratio rose to an average of 1,064 during these four years as compared with averages of 1,054 between 1931-41 and 1,057 since 1946.

3.—Sex Ratios of Live Births, 1936-59

NOTE.—Figures for Newfoundland are included from 1949 and those for the Yukon and Northwest Territories from 1950.

Year	Males	Females	Males to 1,000 Females	Year	Males	Females	Males to 1,000 Females
	No.	No.	No.		No.	No.	No.
1936.....	113,289	107,082	1,058	1948.....	178,123	169,184	1,053
1937.....	113,143	107,092	1,057	1949.....	188,339	177,800	1,059
1938.....	117,862	111,584	1,056	1950.....	191,413	180,596	1,060
1939.....	117,594	111,874	1,051	1951.....	195,918	185,174	1,058
1940.....	125,279	119,037	1,052	1952.....	208,070	195,489	1,064
1941.....	131,175	124,142	1,057	1953.....	214,423	203,461	1,054
1942.....	140,584	131,729	1,067	1954.....	224,168	212,030	1,057
1943.....	145,725	137,855	1,057	1955.....	227,382	215,555	1,055
1944.....	146,652	137,568	1,066	1956.....	231,697	219,042	1,058
1945.....	148,912	139,818	1,065	1957.....	241,073	228,020	1,057
1946.....	169,945	160,787	1,057	1958.....	241,675	228,443	1,058
1947.....	183,973	175,121	1,051	1959.....	246,073	233,202	1,055

Hospitalized Births.—In 1959 over 93 p.c. of all Canadian births occurred in hospital. Table 4 shows the rise in hospitalized births in each province since 1931. Before the initiation of the federal-provincial hospital insurance program in 1958, in which all provinces with the exception of Quebec were participating by the end of 1959, wide variations existed among the provinces in percentages of hospitalized births. Such variations were caused by the existence of prepaid or provincially sponsored hospital, maternity or medical care plans in some provinces, the unavailability of hospital facilities in others—particularly in remote rural areas—and preference for home delivery in some local areas. Although some variation still exists, the operation of the hospital insurance program has probably been responsible for the noticeable increases in hospitalized births in provinces that previously had lower proportions—New Brunswick, for example, where hospital insurance was put into effect on July 1, 1959.