

proportion to the total number of families. The majority of the remaining families were related families, characterized by the fact that they were mostly small in size, usually two persons (e.g. the daughter and son-in-law of the household head), and the head of the family was under 25 years of age. On the other hand, lodging families, although increasing slightly in number, constituted a very low proportion of 0.8%, unchanged from the 1966 Census.

Husband-wife families. For the analysis of family data, a useful classification is the subdivision into husband-wife families and one-parent families. Table 4.29 shows the distribution of both types of families by age of family head. In the case of one-parent families, the age of head is further classified into male and female heads. In the case of husband-wife families, this type of subdivision is not necessary, since for statistical tabulating purposes, the husband was considered to be the head of the family in 1971 and earlier censuses.

Although between 1966 and 1971 the proportion of husband-wife families dropped slightly, in actual number they increased. They still constituted a predominant proportion (90.6%) of total Canadian families. The majority of one-parent families were headed by females. During the decade 1961-71, these families increased both in number and proportion from 6.6% in 1961 to 7.4% in 1971. This reflects a slight increase in the incidence of "broken" families in Canada because the proportion of females heading such families increased in the age groups 25-34 and 35-44, and these are the ages in which divorces most frequently take place.

Families by mother tongue of head. Table 4.30 shows the distribution of families by the mother tongue of family head for Canada and the provinces. For census purposes, mother tongue is defined as "the first language learned that is still understood". As might be expected, the proportion of family heads reporting English, French, or other mother tongue in the 1971 Census showed a fairly similar pattern to that for the population as a whole. For example, 60.2% of the Canadian population reported English as the mother tongue, as compared with 57.3% of all family heads. The corresponding proportions for French mother tongue were 26.9% and 25.6%. However, mother tongues other than English or French were reported by only 13.0% of the total population, but by 17.2% of all family heads.

Children in families. There were 8.8 million children in families in 1971. These are limited by definition to children never married and under 25 years of age who were living with their parents or guardians at the time of the census. The above number of children are classified in Table 4.31 into selected age groups which roughly correspond to pre-school-age children (under six years), those of elementary school age (6-14), those at the secondary school level (15-18), and those of college or working age (19-24).

Declining birth rates are reflected dramatically in the proportionate increases of children in families during the 1966-71 period. The 19-24 age group of children in families increased by 20.1% over the five years, the 15-18 group by 16.9%, the 6-14 group by only 5.8%, while those under six years of age declined by as much as 16.2%. Children in families for all age groups combined advanced in numbers by 11.3% (7.8 million to 8.7 million) in the 1961-66 period, but by only 2.2% (8.7 million to 8.8 million) during 1966-71. The average number of children per family declined from 1.9 in 1961 and 1966 to 1.7 in 1971.

4.5 The vital components of population change

Vital statistics are an indispensable key to the interpretation of population change. They provide a measure of the pace at which the population is increasing by natural means (births minus deaths) and the rate at which women are marrying and reproducing. As such they do much to explain the changing patterns of population growth and composition described in earlier sections of this Chapter. These vital processes of population change are reflected in the statistics compiled from the records of births, deaths, marriages and divorces registered in the provinces and territories of Canada.

4.5.1 History of vital statistics

The history of the collection of vital statistics in Canada is described in the *1948-49 Canada Year Book* pp 185-188. Most trend tables on this subject in the present edition are for recent years back to 1951. An historical summary of vital statistics data for Canada and the provinces back to 1921 is contained in the *Vital statistics, Preliminary annual report* (Catalogue