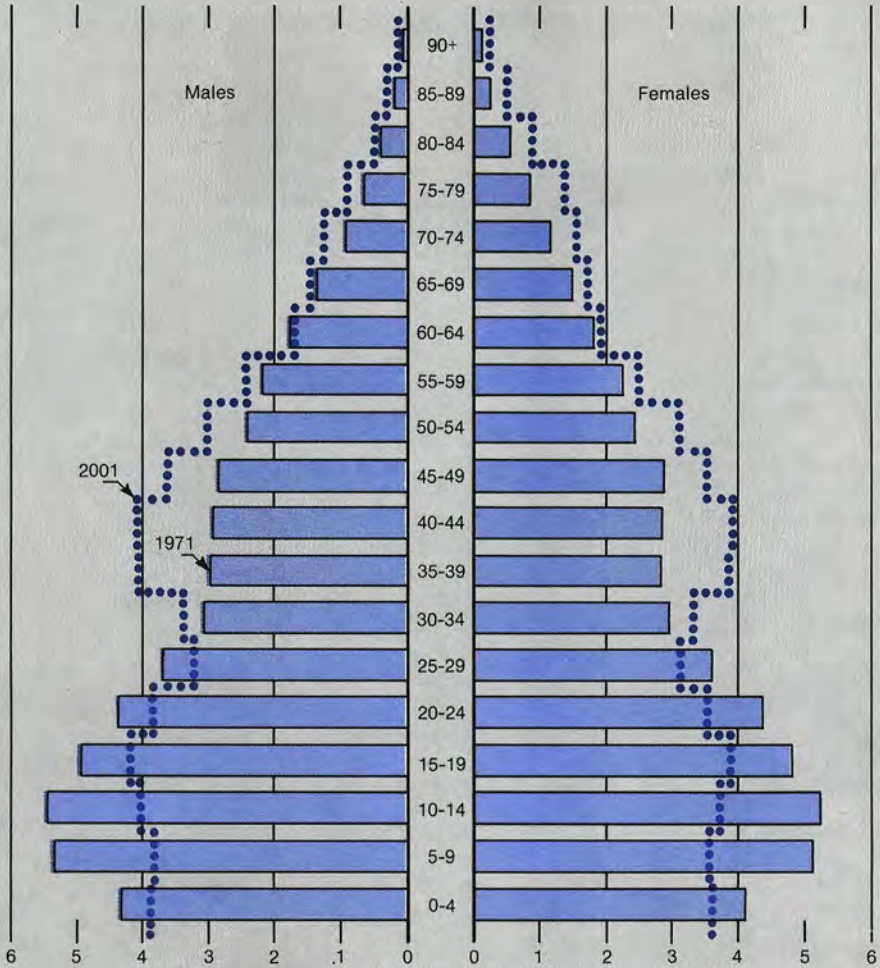


Percentage distribution of the population by age groups and sex, Canada, 1971 and 2001



variations in the proportion of women of these ages to the total population will cause variations in the crude birth rate of different countries, or of different regions, even though the actual rates of reproduction or fertility of the women are identical. It is therefore conventional practice to calculate age-specific fertility rates, the number of infants born annually to every 1,000 women in each of the reproductive age groups.

Table 4.38 indicates that women in their 20s are the most reproductive. On the average, for every 1,000 women between age 20 and 24, there were 112 infants born during 1975. Expressed another way, about one woman out of eight in that age group gave birth to a live-born infant. The highest rate is found in the 25-29 age group.

Another measure of fertility is the gross reproduction rate (Table 4.38) that indicates the average number of female children born to each woman in the child-