

assumed that while mortality was high at all ages, the rate among infants and children must have been particularly high. Even in 1921 the Canadian infant mortality rate was 102.1 per 1,000 live births. With increasing urbanization and improved sanitation and medical services, the infant mortality rate declined to 10.4 in 1981, less than one-tenth the 1921 level. It further declined to 8.6 in 1983 and to 7.9 in 1985. The crude death rate dropped by 50%, from 22 to 11, between 1851 and 1930. It continued to decline to a low of 7.3 in 1970 and 1971, fluctuating slightly for a few years and further declining to 7.0 in 1981 and 1983 with slight increase to 7.2 in 1985.

2.9.5 Marriages

In 1985, there were 184,096 marriages solemnized in Canada compared to 191,069 in 1980. The rate of marriages (marriages per 1,000 population) declined from 8.0 in 1980 to 7.3 in 1985. Alberta recorded a marriage rate of 8.4 in 1985 and continued to have the highest rate of any province (Table 2.27).

In 1985, the median age at marriage for persons never previously married — the age above and below which half the marriages occurred — was 25.6 for bridegrooms and 23.7 for brides. Bridegrooms averaged 26.7 years, and brides, 24.6.

2.9.6 Divorces

The number of decrees absolute granted in Canada has risen sharply as a result of the 1968 changes in divorce legislation. Divorces rose to 70,436 in 1982 from an average of about 11,000 divorces per year over the period 1966-68. The number of annual divorces declined to 68,567 in 1983 and to 61,980 in 1985. The divorce rate per 100,000 population declined from 285.9 in 1982 to 275.5 in 1983 and to 244.4 in 1985. Of all the provinces, as for the past years, the 1985 divorce rates were highest for Alberta (344.9) and British Columbia (288.0) and lowest for Newfoundland (96.6) and Prince Edward Island (167.6).

Sex of petitioners. In 1985, more female petitioners (39,093) than males (22,887) were granted divorces in Canada. This represents a ratio of 58 divorces to male petitioners for every 100 to females.

Grounds for divorce. According to 1985 statistics, the alleged main grounds for divorce in descending order were: separation for not less than three years (25,948 cases), adultery (22,613 cases), mental cruelty (17,969 cases), physical cruelty (10,811 cases), addiction to alcohol (880 cases) and desertion by petitioner not less than five years (727 cases). Of the 61,980 divorces granted during 1985, 48.5% involved no dependent children; another 22.1% involved one dependent child, 21.9% two dependent children and the remaining 7.5%, three or more dependent children.

Duration of marriage. The duration of marriage was less than five years for 15.9% and less than 10 years for 45.4% of the total divorces. For persons divorced in 1985, the median age at marriage was 21.4 years for females and 23.7 years for males and at divorce was 34.1 years for females and 36.7 years for males.

Marital status. In 1985, 88% of persons granted divorce were involved in first divorce. Over 10% of the divorces related to persons who were already divorced at the time of their last marriage and just more than 1% to those who were widowed.

2.10 Migration

2.10.1 Immigration

Canada's immigration policy is based on the principle of non-discrimination and emphasizes the selection of immigrants who are likely to adapt to the Canadian way of life, making a positive contribution to economic and cultural development in Canada.

Canadian immigration officers apply standard norms of assessment to applicants from all parts of the world and, apart from sponsored relatives and refugees, select those with skills in short supply in Canada or whose skills could contribute to the development of Canada.

Employment and Immigration Canada (EIC) also regulates the entry of temporary workers and foreign students planning to enrol in public or private institutions and examines millions of visitors who come to Canada each year as tourists or for family, social, cultural or other reasons. EIC facilitates the return of Canadian residents and enforces measures to protect the health, welfare and security of Canadians.

The Immigration Act, 1976, proclaimed in April 1978, brought Canada's immigration policy into sharper focus than ever before. It stated, for the first time in Canadian law, the basic principles underlying immigration policy — non-discrimination, family reunion, humanitarian concern for refugees, demographic concerns and promotion of national goals. The act links the immigration movement to Canada's population and labour market needs and, after consultation with the provinces, provides for an annual forecast of the number of immigrants Canada can comfortably absorb. It established a new family class, allowing Canadian citizens and permanent residents to sponsor a wide range of relatives, confirmed Canada's protective obligations to refugees under the United Nations Convention and established refugees as an admissible immigrant class. It required that immigrant and visitor visas and student and employment authorizations be obtained abroad, prohibiting visitors from changing their status from within Canada.