

21; 1871-81, 19; 1881-91, 18; 1891-1901, 16; 1901-11, 13; 1911-21, 13.

Typical of pioneer populations, Canada had high death rates in the mid-1800s with the crude death rate estimated between 22 and 25. It is assumed that while mortality was high at all ages, the rate among infants and children must have been particularly high. In 1921, when official death rates were first available, 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 9.6 in 1981, less than one-tenth the 1921 level. It further declined to 8.3 in 1983 and to 7.9 in 1986. 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 a slight increase to 7.3 in 1986.

### 2.9.5 Marriages

In 1986, there were 175,518 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 6.9 in 1986. Alberta recorded a marriage rate of 8.0 in 1986 and continued to have the highest rate of any province (Table 2.31).

In 1986, the average age at marriage for persons never previously married — the age above and below which half the marriages occurred — was 25.8 for bridegrooms and 23.9 for brides. Bridegrooms averaged 27.0 years, and brides, 24.8.

### 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, then increased to 78,160 in 1986. The divorce rate per 100,000 population declined from 285.9 in 1982 to 275.5 in 1983 and to 244.4 in 1985 and increased to 308.8 in 1986. Of all the provinces, as for the past years, the 1986 divorce rates were highest for Alberta (396.7) and British Columbia (387.6) and lowest for Newfoundland (107.3) and Prince Edward Island (150.9).

**Grounds for divorce.** According to 1986 statistics, the alleged main grounds for divorce in descending order were: separation for not less than three years under the Divorce Act and for not less than one year under the Divorce Act, 1985 (41,204 cases), adultery (21,295 cases), mental cruelty

(18,414 cases), physical cruelty (10,744 cases), addiction to alcohol (835 cases), and desertion by petitioner, not less than five years (723 cases). Of the 76,160 divorces granted during 1986, 54.6% involved no dependent children; another 19.7% involved one dependent child, 19.3% two dependent children and the remaining 6.4%, three or more dependent children.

**Duration of marriage.** The duration of marriage was less than five years for 17% and less than 10 years for 29% of the total divorces. For additional information, see Table 2.36.

**Marital status.** In 1986, 87% of persons granted divorce were involved in first divorce. Over 11.5% of the divorces related to persons who were already divorced at the time of their last marriage and just more than 1.4% 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, social and cultural development in Canada.

Canadian immigration officers apply standard norms of assessment to applicants from all parts of the world. Immigrants are selected for reasons of either family reunification of close relatives, humanitarian concern for refugees who need to be resettled from camps abroad, or economic reasons. In this latter category, immigrants are chosen because they have labour market skills required in the Canadian labour market, or will provide investment capital.

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. The Act states 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