

Section 4.—Municipal Finance

Subsection 1.—Municipal Assessed Valuations

The revenue resources of municipalities are limited, generally, to direct taxation based on assessed valuations of real and other types of property. In the Provinces of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Manitoba and Alberta, municipalities assess and tax personal property. In Alberta municipal districts, the valuations of personal property assessed have risen sharply with the growth of the oil industry. In Manitoba, the personal property tax is used generally by all classes of municipalities except cities. Aside from property, the most important type of valuation for taxation purposes is business assessment, although not all provinces assess for business purposes separately and distinctly from real property valuations. A variation of methods, schedules and rates exists not only between provinces but also between municipalities within the same province. Some municipalities use the rental basis, others the value of floor space occupied and still others the capital value of the premises occupied. Four of the provinces have other miscellaneous types of assessment, the general nature of which are given in the footnotes to Table 43.

It should be noted that the figures in Table 43 are not entirely comparable, on an interprovincial basis, from the standpoint of relative values of properties taxable for municipal purposes. Each province operates under its own assessment laws, which are not all similar either in application or in effect. For instance, in British Columbia cities and municipal districts, improvements cannot be taxed on a value in excess of 75 p.c. of taxable values or, in most of the villages, in excess of 50 p.c. of taxable values; the values actually taxed in 1951 ranged from nil to 75 p.c. In the majority of cases, improvements were assessed for tax purposes at 50 p.c. of taxable values, but for all municipalities the total improvements actually taxed represented 50.2 p.c. of total taxable values. In addition, there are other intra-provincial inconsistencies between municipalities which, in turn, further affect interprovincial comparisons. These may be said to be caused by the lack of integrated municipal assessment systems and uniform standards for establishing values on a province-wide basis, under the direction and control of a central authority. Some provinces, however, have made considerable progress along these lines in recent years.

43.—Municipal Assessed Valuations, by Province, 1947-51

Province and Year	Taxable Valuations on which Taxes were Levied					Total Exemptions ^a
	Real Property	Personal Property	Business	Other ¹	Total	
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Nfld.—	..	..	..	..	..	..
P.E.I. —						
1947.....	11,425,735	4,656,100	..	..	16,081,835	6,176,500
1948.....	12,272,825	5,353,199	..	..	17,626,024	7,456,500
1949.....	13,714,935	5,777,847	..	..	19,492,782	7,456,500
1950.....	16,872,045	6,085,510	..	..	22,957,555	7,788,500
1951.....	23,539,274	9,650,989	..	..	33,190,263	9,585,500
N.S. —						
1947.....	163,793,261	30,708,957	10,473,500	3,831,875	208,807,593	95,469,188
1948.....	172,646,093	32,901,111	10,866,035	3,934,300	220,347,539	98,190,291
1949.....	179,425,833	35,658,983	11,826,635	4,039,860	230,951,331	96,594,851
1950.....	186,588,461	36,277,551	12,527,060	4,212,700	239,605,772	100,567,331
1951.....	223,083,830	49,077,698	13,704,315	4,582,280	290,448,123	121,862,179

For footnotes, see end of table.