

Report on the Demographic Situation in Canada

Fertility: Overview, 2012 to 2016

by Claudine Provencher, Anne Milan, Stacey Hallman and Carol D'Aoust

Release date: June 5, 2018



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Fertility: Overview, 2012 to 2016

by Claudine Provencher, Anne Milan, Stacey Hallman and Carol D'Aoust, Demography Division

Highlights

- In Canada, there were 383,102 births in 2016. Births have been fluctuating between 377,000 and 384,000 per year since 2008.
- Canada's total fertility rate has been falling since 2009, from 1.68 children per woman to 1.54 in 2016, the lowest level observed since 2003.
- The gap between the fertility rate of women aged 30 to 34 years and those aged 25 to 29 years continued to widen between 2012 and 2016, a result of decreasing fertility rates among women aged 25 to 29.
- The fertility rate of women aged 35 to 39 years continued to rise to 56 births per 1,000 women in 2016. It has been higher than the fertility rate of women aged 20 to 24 years since 2010, which has been falling.
- For all births, the average age of mothers at childbirth has been over the age of 30 since 2010 (30.8 years in 2016).
- The average age of mothers at first birth was 28.7 years in 2012 and 29.2 years in 2016. It has been rising steadily since the mid-1960s.

Key statistics

Number of births:

2012:	381,869
2013:	380,323
2014:	384,100
2015:	382,392
2016:	383,102

Average age at maternity (all births):

2012:	30.3 years
2013:	30.4 years
2014:	30.5 years
2015:	30.7 years
2016:	30.8 years

Fertility rate by age group in 2016 (per thousand women):

15 to 19 years:	8.4
20 to 24 years:	37.6
25 to 29 years:	87.6
30 to 34 years:	107.6
35 to 39 years:	56.0
40 to 44 years:	11.5
45 to 49 years:	0.7

Total fertility rate (children per woman):

2012:	1.62
2013:	1.59
2014:	1.58
2015:	1.56
2016:	1.54

Average age at maternity (first birth):

2012:	28.7 years
2013:	28.8 years
2014:	29.0 years
2015:	29.2 years
2016:	29.2 years

Introduction

This article analyzes the recent changes in fertility in Canada, with a focus on the years 2012 to 2016 and a selected historical perspective.

The indicators analyzed include the annual and daily number of births, total fertility rate, age-specific fertility rates, average age at childbirth, including by birth order, cohort completed fertility rate and multiple births. This article also includes results and a brief analysis at the provincial and territorial levels.

Data on the number of births come from the Canadian Vital Statistics Births Database.¹ The birth data in conjunction with the most recent annual population estimates for that year are used to calculate fertility rates.

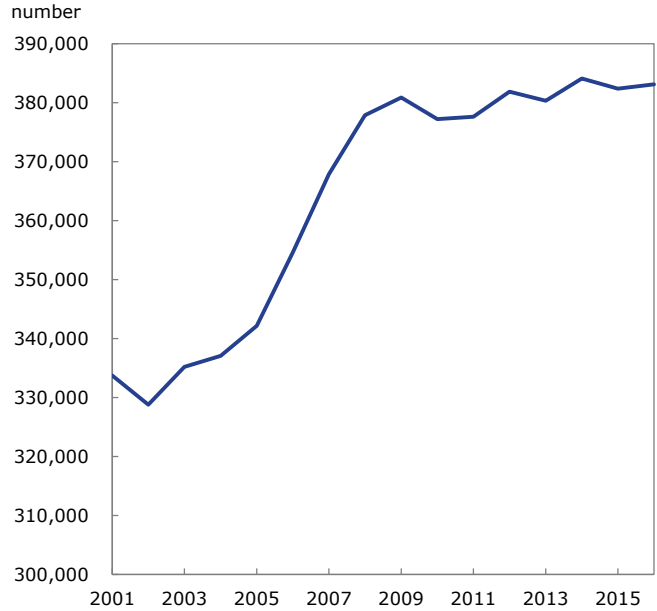
1. The number of births in Ontario for 2016 is considered preliminary.

Number of births

There were 381,869 births in Canada in 2012, 380,323 in 2013, 384,100 in 2014, 382,392 in 2015 and 383,102 in 2016. These figures reflect a period of slow growth in births, following rapid growth between 2003 and 2008. The rise in the number of births starting in 2009, although less marked, was attributable to an increase in the number of women in their prime productive years, since the total fertility rate decreased slightly between 2009 and 2016 (see [Total fertility rate](#) section).

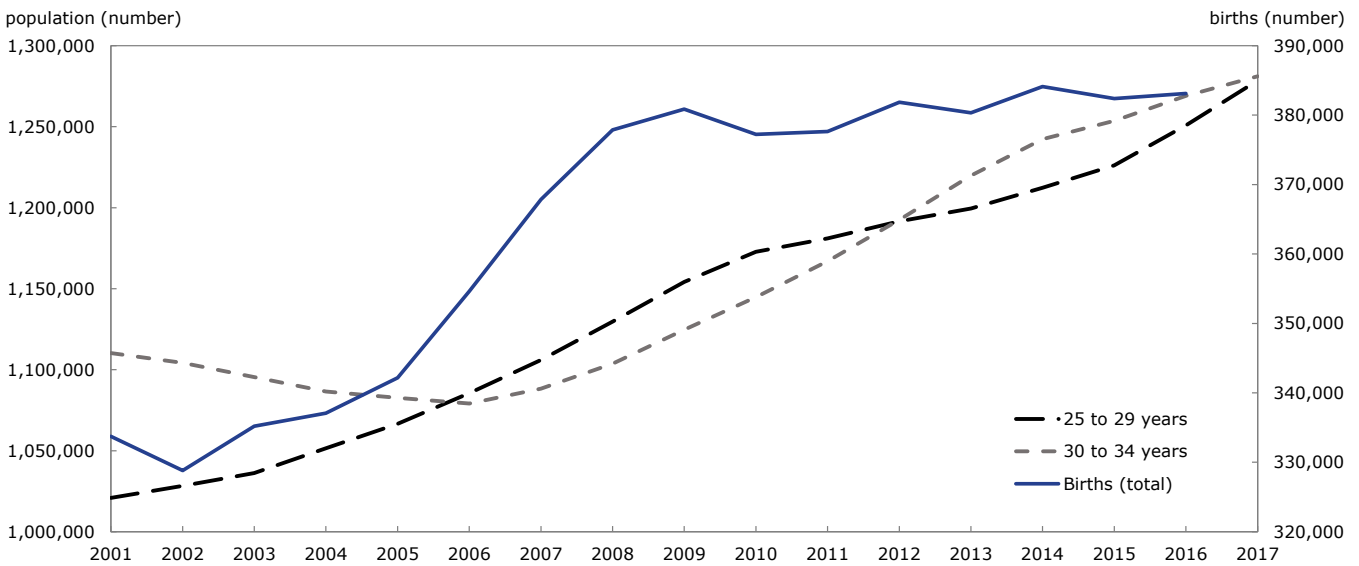
The annual growth in the number of births in the past five years has fluctuated, compared with the period from 2002/2003 to 2008/2009, when it remained positive and stronger (2.1% on average). Between 2011 and 2012 and between 2013 and 2014, the number of births rose around 1.0% across Canada, while they fell 0.4% from 2012 to 2013 and from 2014 to 2015. There was only a small increase of 0.2% between 2015 and 2016. Since 2001, the total number of births fell only four times, in 2001/2002 and 2009/2010, and more recently in 2012/2013 and 2014/2015. In contrast, the growth in the number of women aged 25 to 34 has remained positive since 2003/2004.

Figure 1
Number of births, Canada, 2001 to 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Births Database, 2001 to 2016, Survey 3231.

Figure 2
Population of women aged 25 to 34 years and total number of births, Canada, 2001 to 2017



Note: Data used are the most recent available at time of dissemination.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Births Database, 2001 to 2016, Survey 3231 and Demography Division, Demographic Estimates Program (DEP).

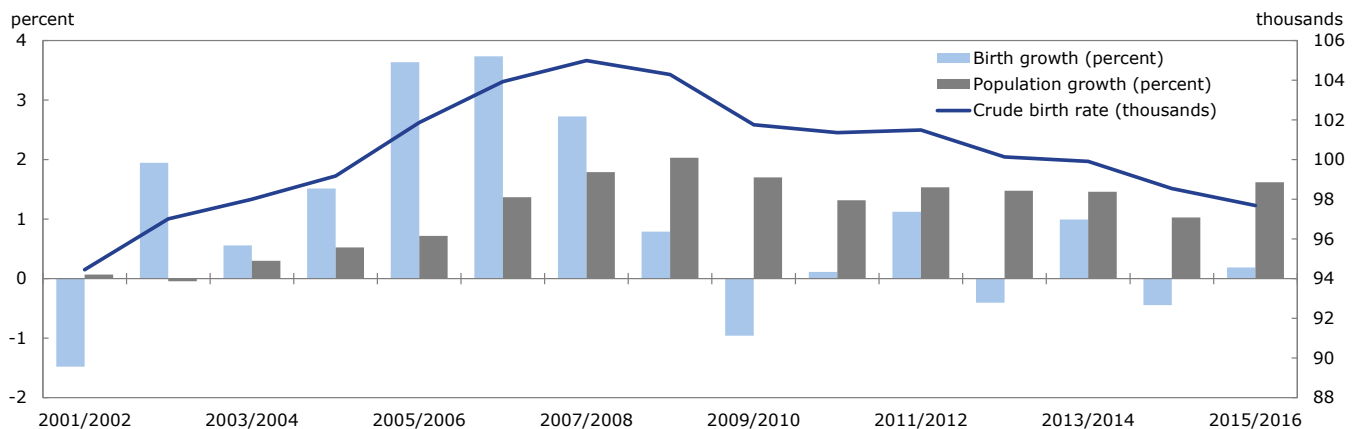
Table 1
Number of births, crude birth rate and annual variation in the number of births, Canada, provinces and territories, 2006 to 2016

Year	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Y.T.	N.W.T.	Nvt.	Canada
number														
2006	4,542	1,413	8,485	7,030	81,938	135,597	14,565	12,288	45,230	41,730	364	687	747	354,617
2007	4,553	1,389	8,868	7,146	84,387	138,436	15,285	13,248	49,028	43,649	355	725	794	367,864
2008	4,898	1,483	9,188	7,402	87,870	140,791	15,485	13,737	50,856	44,276	373	721	805	377,886
2009	4,915	1,457	8,989	7,391	88,868	140,372	15,940	14,243	51,722	44,993	383	711	877	380,863
2010	4,900	1,403	8,879	7,360	88,419	139,611	15,776	14,296	50,847	43,810	382	700	828	377,213
2011	4,478	1,436	8,862	7,124	88,583	140,135	15,620	14,271	51,040	44,129	431	690	837	377,636
2012	4,382	1,312	8,774	7,059	88,929	141,597	16,358	14,850	52,634	44,008	435	688	843	381,869
2013	4,525	1,409	8,439	6,959	88,821	139,736	16,468	14,798	53,410	43,779	396	669	914	380,323
2014	4,569	1,420	8,616	6,982	88,036	140,181	16,566	15,550	55,835	44,376	406	665	898	384,100
2015	4,475	1,345	8,204	6,603	87,050	139,500	16,689	15,309	56,940	44,298	434	683	862	382,392
2016	4,442	1,399	8,309	6,623	86,261	140,424	16,896	15,557	55,936	45,268	440	642	905	383,102
crude birth rate (per thousand)														
2006	8.9	10.2	9.0	9.4	10.7	10.7	12.3	12.4	13.2	9.8	11.3	15.9	24.2	10.9
2007	8.9	10.1	9.5	9.6	11.0	10.8	12.9	13.2	14.0	10.2	10.9	16.7	25.3	11.2
2008	9.6	10.7	9.8	9.9	11.3	10.9	12.9	13.5	14.1	10.2	11.3	16.6	25.2	11.4
2009	9.5	10.4	9.6	9.9	11.3	10.8	13.2	13.8	14.1	10.2	11.4	16.5	26.9	11.3
2010	9.4	9.9	9.4	9.8	11.2	10.6	12.9	13.6	13.6	9.8	11.0	16.2	24.8	11.1
2011	8.5	10.0	9.4	9.4	11.1	10.6	12.7	13.4	13.5	9.8	12.2	15.9	24.5	11.0
2012	8.3	9.0	9.3	9.3	11.0	10.6	13.1	13.7	13.6	9.7	12.1	15.8	24.3	11.0
2013	8.6	9.7	8.9	9.2	10.9	10.3	13.0	13.4	13.4	9.5	10.9	15.3	25.8	10.8
2014	8.6	9.7	9.1	9.3	10.7	10.2	12.9	13.9	13.6	9.6	11.0	15.2	24.9	10.8
2015	8.5	9.2	8.7	8.8	10.5	10.1	12.9	13.5	13.6	9.4	11.6	15.4	23.5	10.7
2016	8.4	9.4	8.8	8.7	10.4	10.0	12.8	13.5	13.2	9.5	11.6	14.4	24.3	10.6
annual variation in the number of births (percent)														
2006	0.9	5.5	-0.8	2.0	7.3	1.4	3.0	2.7	7.4	2.2	13.8	-3.5	6.9	3.6
2007	0.2	-1.7	4.5	1.6	3.0	2.1	4.9	7.8	8.4	4.6	-2.5	5.5	6.3	3.7
2008	7.6	6.8	3.6	3.6	4.1	1.7	1.3	3.7	3.7	1.4	5.1	-0.6	1.4	2.7
2009	0.3	-1.8	-2.2	-0.1	1.1	-0.3	2.9	3.7	1.7	1.6	2.7	-1.4	9.0	0.8
2010	-0.3	-3.7	-1.2	-0.4	-0.5	-0.5	-1.0	0.4	-1.7	-2.6	-0.3	-1.5	-5.6	-1.0
2011	-8.6	2.4	-0.2	-3.2	0.2	0.4	-1.0	-0.2	0.4	0.7	12.8	-1.4	1.1	0.1
2012	-2.1	-8.6	-1.0	-0.9	0.4	1.0	4.7	4.1	3.1	-0.3	0.9	-0.3	0.7	1.1
2013	3.3	7.4	-3.8	-1.4	-0.1	-1.3	0.7	-0.4	1.5	-0.5	-9.0	-2.8	8.4	-0.4
2014	1.0	0.8	2.1	0.3	-0.9	0.3	0.6	5.1	4.5	1.4	2.5	-0.6	-1.8	1.0
2015	-2.1	-5.3	-4.8	-5.4	-1.1	-0.5	0.7	-1.5	2.0	-0.2	6.9	2.7	-4.0	-0.4
2016	-0.7	4.0	1.3	0.3	-0.9	0.7	1.2	1.6	-1.8	2.2	1.4	-6.0	5.0	0.2

Notes: Births for which the province is unknown were prorated using the observed distribution. Data used are the most recent available at time of dissemination.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Births Database, 2006 to 2016, Survey 3231 and Demography Division, Demographic Estimates Program (DEP).

Figure 3
Annual variation in the number of births and in the population of women aged 25 to 34, and the crude birth rate of women aged 25 to 34, Canada, 2001/2002 to 2015/2016



Note: Data used are the most recent available at time of dissemination.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Births Database, 2001 to 2016, Survey 3231 and Demography Division, Demographic Estimates Program (DEP).

Provincial/territorial variation

Between 2012 and 2016, Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia recorded 71.3% of all births on average during the period. However, the annual growth (positive or negative) in the number of births for these three most populous provinces was often below that of Canada. In contrast, the number of births generally increased year over year in the Prairie provinces. These latter provinces also most frequently posted the highest annual increases in the number of births. The Atlantic provinces and the territories had the smallest numbers of births, with annual fluctuations leading to increased variation in annual growth.

Focusing on the last two years, between 2015 and 2016, there was positive growth in the annual number of births in most provinces and territories, above Canadian growth (0.2%). The strongest growth took place in Nunavut (5.0%), followed by Prince Edward Island (4.0%) and British Columbia (2.2%). Three provinces and one territory recorded decreases in the number of births: the Northwest Territories (-6.0%), Alberta (-1.8%), Quebec (-0.9%) and Newfoundland and Labrador (-0.7%).

Number of births by day of the week and time of year

On a quarterly basis, which corresponds closely with the four seasons, there are seasonal birth patterns over the course of a year. Thus, more babies are born during the summer months, from July to September. In contrast, fewer births take place during the winter, from January to March.² It seems that many couples plan the conception of their child so that the baby is born during the summer.³

In Canada, the daily change in births⁴ over the course of a year follows a similar trend to the ones recently observed in England and Wales,⁵ New Zealand,⁶ and the United States.⁷ Between 2001 and 2016, the average number of births per day in Canada was at its lowest on December 25, 26 and 24 respectively, followed closely by January 1. Other times of the year show marked drops in the number of daily births, namely July 1, August 2, October 13, October 31 and November 11. These dates correspond to statutory or other holidays celebrated by most provinces and territories: New Year's Day (January 1), Canada Day (July 1), the provincial holiday (first Monday in August, generally between August 1 and 7), Thanksgiving (second Monday in October, generally between October 8 and 14), Halloween (October 31), Remembrance Day (November 11) and Christmas (December 25). More recently (from 2012 to 2016), Christmas Day was almost always the day of the year with the lowest number of births. A reduction in hospital resources during these holidays may explain the lower number of births, given that some deliveries are planned.

In contrast, September was the month with the highest number of births during the period from 2001 to 2016. Specifically, September 24 was, on average, the day of the year with the highest number of births. September 16 and 20 were in second and third place for the year's most popular day of birth. These three dates occur about 38 to 39 weeks after Christmas, and 37 to 38 weeks after New Year's Day. In recent years (from 2012 to 2016), the number of births tended to peak in September, June and July.

Differences in the timing of births can also be observed through the day of the week. Over the past 16 years, there have been more births during the week (particularly from Tuesday to Friday) than on weekends (Saturday and Sunday). On average, there were 1,088 births per day from Tuesday to Friday and 975 births on Mondays. In comparison, there were, on average, 858 births per day on Saturdays and 792 births on Sundays. Since some

2. Statistics Canada, CANSIM [table 053-0001](#). Last modified: 2018-03-21.

3. Clarke, Damian, Sonia Orefice and Climent Quintana-Domeque. 2015. "Choosing Season of Birth: The Role of Biological and Economic Constraints", https://editorialexpress.com/cgi-bin/conference/download.cgi?db_name=RESConf2016&paper_id=689 (accessed March 28, 2018).

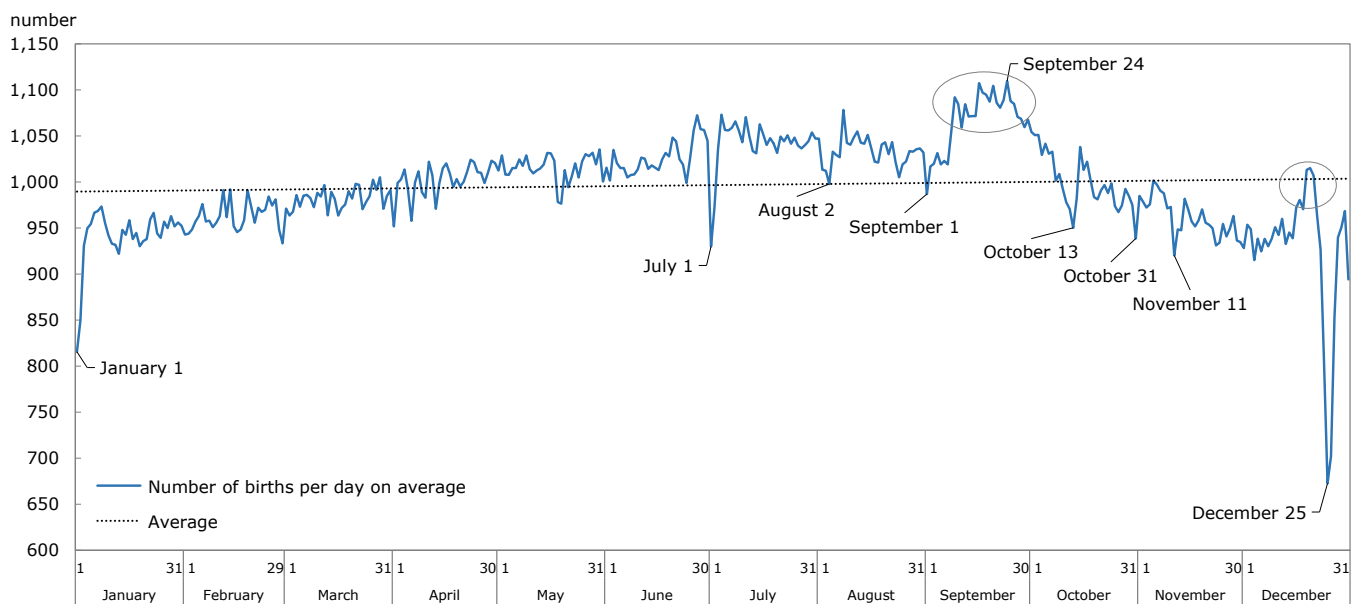
4. The daily average number of births per month takes into account the number of days per month and leap years.

5. Office for National Statistics. 2015. "How Popular Is Your Birthday", <http://visual.ons.gov.uk/how-popular-is-your-birthday/> (accessed March 23, 2018).

6. Statistics New Zealand. 2015. "Peak Birthday Warning For Late September", http://archive.stats.govt.nz/tools_and_services/media-centre/media-releases-2015/birthdays-17-sept-2015.aspx (accessed April 28, 2018).

7. Stiles, Matt. 2016. "How Common Is Your Birthday? This Visualization Might Surprise You", <http://thedailyviz.com/2016/09/17/how-common-is-your-birthday-dailyviz/> (accessed March 27, 2018).

Figure 4
Number of births per day on average, Canada, 2001 to 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Births Database, 2001 to 2016, Survey 3231.

births are scheduled in advance, such as planned Caesarean sections or births induced for medical reasons (e.g., a previous Caesarean section, preeclampsia, hypertension, diabetes, multiple pregnancy, more than 41 weeks of pregnancy), these births are more likely to occur between Monday and Friday, as hospitals have more human and technical resources during the week.^{8, 9, 10, 11}

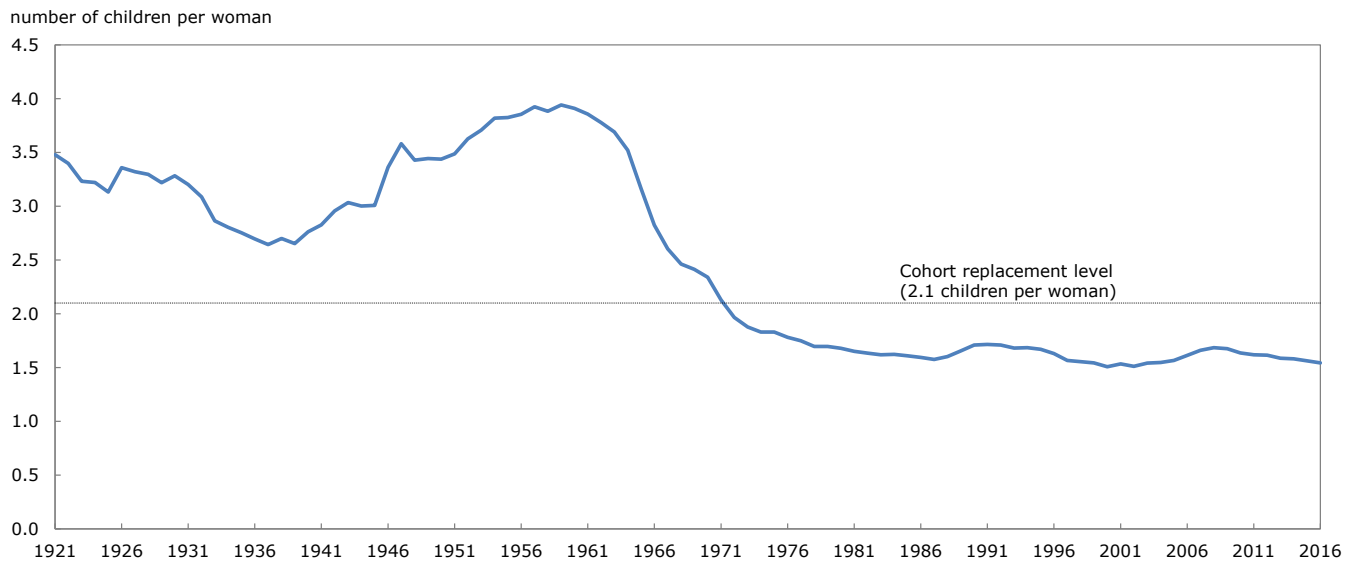
Total fertility rate

The total fertility rate refers to the number of children that a woman would have over the course of her reproductive life if she experienced the age-specific fertility rates observed in a particular calendar year. An advantage of the total fertility rate is that it is easily calculated and is not affected by variations in the size or age structure of the population, facilitating annual, provincial/territorial and international comparisons.

The cohort replacement level is 2.1 children per woman, i.e., the fertility level required to replace the population in the absence of migration, and taking into account mortality conditions between 0 and 15 years old, usually when the fertility period starts. In 1972, Canada's total fertility rate fell below the cohort replacement level for the first time, reaching 1.97 children per woman.

8. Lerchl, Alexander. 2005. "Where Are The Sunday Babies? Observations On A Marked Decline In Weekend Births In Germany", *Naturwissenschaften*, 92: 592, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00114-005-0049-y> (accessed April 13, 2018).
9. Lerchl, Alexander and Sarah C. Reinhard. 2008. "Where Are The Sunday Babies? II. Declining Weekend Birth Rates In Switzerland", *Naturwissenschaften*, 95: 161, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00114-007-0305-4> (accessed April 13, 2018).
10. Lerchl, Alexander. 2008. "Where Are The Sunday Babies? III. Caesarean Sections, Decreased Weekend Births, And Midwife Involvement In Germany", *Naturwissenschaften*, 95: 165, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00114-007-0306-3> (accessed April 13, 2018).
11. According to 2015/2016 data from the Canadian Institute for Health Information, 27.9% of births where the mother was hospitalized required a Caesarean section (https://secure.cihi.ca/free_products/cad_hospitalization_and_childbirth_snapshot_2015-2016_en.pdf). These Caesarean deliveries include all C-sections (regardless of whether or not it was the mother's first) and do not distinguish between planned and emergency C-sections.

Figure 5
Total fertility rate, Canada, 1921 to 2016



Notes: Births for which the age of the mother is unknown were prorated using the observed distribution. Data used are the most recent available at time of dissemination.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Births Database, 1921 to 2016, Survey 3231 and Demography Division, Demographic Estimates Program (DEP).

Despite a general upward trend in the annual number of births since 2012, the total fertility rate has been declining since 2009. This seeming paradox is related to the fact that the total fertility rate is based on a compilation of the fertility experiences of several generations of women in a given year and treats it as if it was representative of one generation. The total fertility rate is influenced by fluctuations in the tempo of fertility (age of mother at childbirth) of current generations of women, many of whom are delaying childbearing to a later age. As for the number of births, it is impacted not only by fertility levels but also by the size and the growth of the actual female population in their childbearing ages.

The total fertility rate in Canada in 2012 was 1.62 children per woman, the same as in 2011. In 2013, the total fertility rate fell to 1.59 children per woman, then decreased further to 1.54 in 2016. The 2016 level is close to the lowest total fertility rate observed in Canadian history (1.51 children per woman in 2000 and 2002).

Many other industrialized countries also have fertility levels below the replacement level. Based on 2014 data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) or the most recent available year, the lowest total fertility rates were in South Korea (1.21 children per woman), Portugal (1.23 children per woman), Poland (1.29 children per woman) and Greece (1.30 children per woman).¹² Japan, for its part, had a total fertility rate of 1.45 children per woman in 2015.¹³ Closer to Canada, the United States had a total fertility rate of 1.82 children per woman in 2016.¹⁴

12. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 2016. *Society at a Glance 2016: OECD Social Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264261488-en> (accessed April 24, 2018).

13. Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. 2018. *Japan Statistical Yearbook 2018*, <http://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/nenkan/67nenkan/index.html> (accessed May 1, 2018).

14. Martin, J.A., B.E. Hamilton, M.J.K. Osterman, A.K. Driscoll and P. Drake. 2018. "Births: Final Data For 2016", *National Vital Statistics Reports*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr67/nvsr67_01.pdf (accessed March 28, 2018).

The most recent total fertility rate for the world as a whole was 2.5 children per woman in 2017.¹⁵ This global rate masks great disparities among the regions studied. Among the continents, Africa had the highest rate, with 4.6 children per woman, compared with Europe which had a total fertility rate of 1.6 children per woman. There are a number of countries where the total fertility rate exceeds six children per woman, mostly African countries: Niger (7.3 children per woman), Chad and Somalia (6.4 children per woman), the Democratic Republic of Congo (6.3 children per woman) and Angola (6.2 children per woman).

Provincial/territorial variation

Since its creation in 1999, Nunavut has always had the highest total fertility rate in Canada, with an average of 2.93 children per woman between 2006 and 2016. The total fertility rate was 2.85 children per woman in 2012 and 2.99 children per woman in 2016. Among all jurisdictions, Nunavut is the only one to surpass the replacement level of generations since its foundation. The residents of Nunavut are predominantly Inuit and they have relatively high fertility.¹⁶ Similarly, the Northwest Territories (1.94 children per woman in 2012 and 1.79 in 2016) and Yukon (1.69 children per woman in 2012 and 1.62 in 2016) often have a total fertility rate above that of Canada, partly because these territories have a higher percentage of Aboriginal population.

Table 2
Total fertility rate, Canada, provinces and territories, 2006 to 2016

Year	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Y.T.	N.W.T.	Nvt.	Canada
	number of children per woman													
2006	1.41	1.65	1.40	1.48	1.65	1.55	1.89	1.91	1.81	1.47	1.61	2.01	2.82	1.61
2007	1.44	1.64	1.49	1.53	1.68	1.58	1.96	2.03	1.89	1.52	1.56	2.11	2.95	1.66
2008	1.55	1.74	1.55	1.60	1.73	1.60	1.96	2.05	1.90	1.52	1.62	2.08	2.93	1.69
2009	1.55	1.71	1.52	1.61	1.73	1.59	1.99	2.07	1.86	1.51	1.62	2.05	3.16	1.68
2010	1.53	1.65	1.51	1.61	1.70	1.56	1.93	2.03	1.80	1.45	1.56	1.99	2.90	1.64
2011	1.40	1.66	1.51	1.57	1.68	1.55	1.88	1.98	1.77	1.45	1.67	1.96	2.85	1.62
2012	1.37	1.52	1.50	1.57	1.67	1.55	1.93	2.00	1.77	1.43	1.69	1.94	2.85	1.62
2013	1.43	1.63	1.46	1.57	1.65	1.51	1.91	1.94	1.73	1.41	1.54	1.88	3.04	1.59
2014	1.45	1.65	1.49	1.60	1.63	1.50	1.89	2.00	1.74	1.41	1.55	1.87	2.97	1.58
2015	1.43	1.56	1.43	1.54	1.61	1.48	1.88	1.94	1.75	1.39	1.67	1.90	2.81	1.56
2016	1.42	1.58	1.42	1.55	1.59	1.46	1.85	1.93	1.69	1.40	1.62	1.79	2.99	1.54

Notes: Births for which the age of the mother or the province is unknown were prorated using the observed distribution. Data used are the most recent available at time of dissemination.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Births Database, 2006 to 2016, Survey 3231 and Demography Division, Demographic Estimates Program (DEP).

Provincially, the total fertility rate was above the Canadian level in the Prairie provinces: Saskatchewan (2.00 children per woman in 2012 and 1.93 in 2016), Manitoba (1.93 children per woman in 2012 and 1.85 in 2016) and Alberta (1.77 children per woman in 2012 and 1.69 in 2016), which, like the territories, average younger populations. Also similar to the territories, in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, a comparatively higher proportion of their populations have an Aboriginal identity, which contributes to their higher fertility level. In contrast, the total fertility rate in the Atlantic provinces—which have the oldest populations in Canada¹⁷—was below that of Canada, particularly in Newfoundland and Labrador (1.37 children per woman in 2012 and 1.42 in 2016). It was also lower in British Columbia (1.43 children per woman in 2012 and 1.40 in 2016) and in Ontario (1.55 children per woman in 2012 and 1.46 in 2016).

15. Population Reference Bureau. 2018. *2017 World Population Data Sheet*, <http://www.worldpopdata.org/index.php/table> (accessed April 4, 2018).

16. Statistics Canada. 2015. *Projections of the Aboriginal Population and Households in Canada, 2011 to 2036*, Catalogue no. 91-552, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/91-552-x/91-552-x2015001-eng.htm> (accessed on May 14, 2018).

17. Statistics Canada. 2017. *Annual Demographic Estimates: Canada, Provinces and Territories, 2017*, Catalogue no. 91-215-X.

Age-specific fertility rates

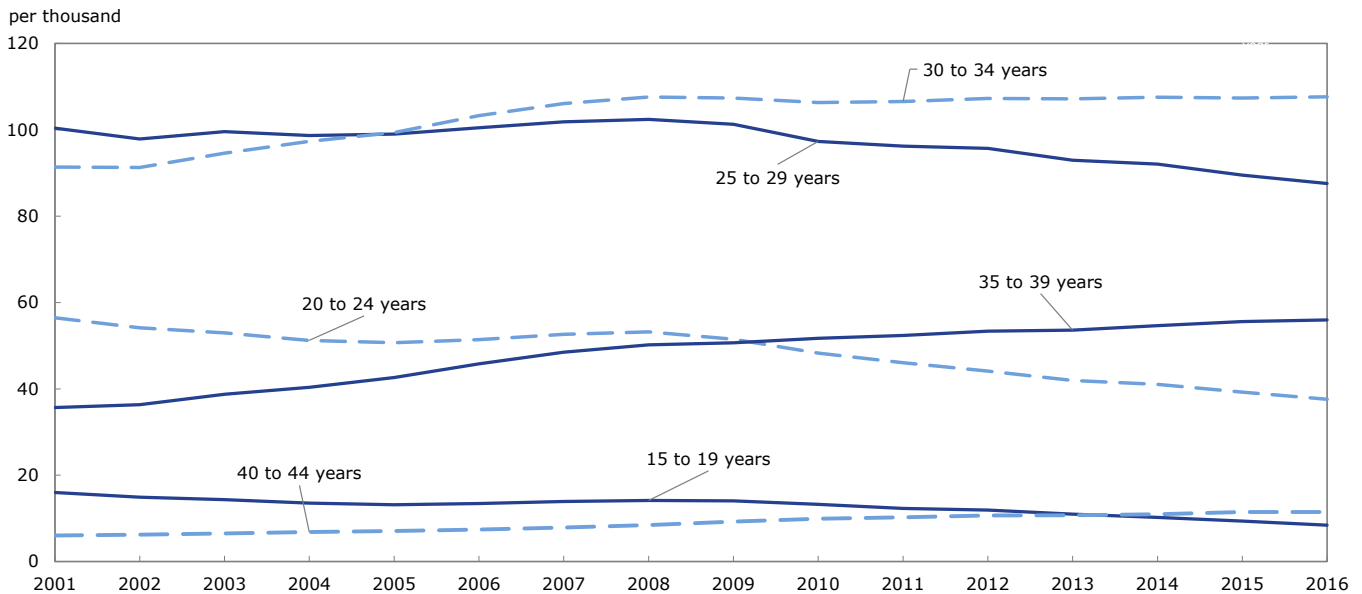
The overall decrease in the total fertility rate in Canada over the past four decades is due to relatively steady declines in the age-specific fertility rates of all age groups under 30 years. In contrast, the fertility rates of those aged 30 and older have generally increased during this period.

The fertility rate for women aged 15 to 19 years has been steadily declining since its peak in 1959 (59.9 births per 1,000 women). In contrast, the fertility rate of women aged 40 to 44 years has been increasing since 1986, after reaching its lowest level on record (3.0 births per 1,000 women) in 1985. Over the past decade, the gap has narrowed between the fertility of older women (40- to 44-year-olds) and those at the beginning of their reproductive years (15 to 19 years). In 2013, fertility rates of these two age groups were similar, with 10.7 births per 1,000 women aged 40 to 44 years and 11.0 births per 1,000 women aged 15 to 19 years. Since then, the gap has widened such that the fertility rate of 40- to 44-year-old women exceeded that of women aged 15 to 19 years starting in 2014, a first in the history of Canadian fertility. The fertility rate was at 11.5 and 8.4 births per 1,000 women respectively in 2016.

Since 2005, the fertility rate for women aged 30 to 34 has surpassed that of women aged 25 to 29. The gap between these two age groups progressively widened during the 2012 to 2016 period, mostly as a result of the decreased fertility rate among women aged 25 to 29 since the rates among women aged 30 to 34 have stabilized since 2007. The fertility rate for women in their early thirties was 107.3 births per 1,000 women in 2012 and 107.6 in 2016, compared with 95.7 births per 1,000 women in 2012 and 87.6 in 2016 among women aged 25 to 29.

For the first time in 2010, the age-specific fertility rate for women aged 35 to 39 (51.7 births per 1,000 women) was higher than for women aged 20 to 24 (48.3 births per 1,000 women). By 2016, this gap had widened to 56.0 births and 37.6 births per 1,000 women in each age group, respectively.

Figure 6
Fertility rate by age group of mother, Canada, 2001 to 2016



Notes: Births for which the age of the mother is unknown were prorated using the observed distribution. Data used are the most recent available at time of dissemination.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Births Database, 2001 to 2016, Survey 3231 and Demography Division, Demographic Estimates Program (DEP).

Provincial/territorial variation

There were important variations in the fertility rates by age at the provincial/territorial level.

In Ontario, which has the highest number of births, the fertility rate of women aged 30 to 34 has been higher than the rate for women aged 25 to 29 years since 2001. This did not occur in Quebec until 2013. The most recent fertility rate of women in their thirties in Ontario was actually very close to that of women in Quebec, although the increase in recent years has been more modest for women in Ontario. However, there was a much greater difference between these two provinces in the fertility rate of women in their twenties.

The fertility rate of women aged 25 to 29 in Ontario was 85.9 births per 1,000 women in 2012 and 76.5 in 2016. It was considerably higher for women in the same age group in Quebec, at 111.7 births per 1,000 women in 2012 and 100.9 in 2016. The fertility rate was also slightly higher for women in their early twenties in Quebec (43.8 births per 1,000 women in 2012 and 38.7 in 2016) compared with women in the same age group in Ontario (35.8 births per 1,000 women in 2012 and 29.7 in 2016). In British Columbia, fertility rates variations have been similar to those in Ontario in the last 40 years. In addition to having fewer births overall, fertility rates by age group in British Columbia were generally lower than those in Ontario.

Table 3
Fertility rate by age group of mother, Canada, provinces and territories, 2012 to 2016

Year and age group	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Y.T.	N.W.T.	Nvt.	Canada
	per thousand women													
2012														
15 to 19 years	14.6	13.4	17.4	20.0	8.9	9.3	27.1	33.0	15.9	7.9	10.9	29.8	97.8	11.9
20 to 24 years	49.9	45.1	52.4	67.0	43.8	35.8	73.2	77.0	57.4	33.3	63.9	85.7	185.7	44.1
25 to 29 years	85.2	103.1	92.8	103.4	111.7	85.9	114.2	122.6	105.3	76.8	91.3	105.2	129.1	95.7
30 to 34 years	85.0	93.7	90.7	86.8	109.4	109.9	111.2	113.6	110.2	99.3	101.6	99.1	93.6	107.3
35 to 39 years	34.0	40.3	40.0	31.5	50.6	57.2	50.2	46.7	55.1	56.3	58.5	49.8	49.9	53.4
40 to 44 years	5.1	6.0	7.0	4.8	10.0	11.7	9.8	8.4	11.0	11.7	12.6	17.9	10.5	10.7
45 to 49 years	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.7	1.2	0.0	0.5
2013														
15 to 19 years	16.1	12.0	16.6	16.0	8.1	8.4	25.3	29.0	15.1	7.5	17.8	26.3	124.3	11.0
20 to 24 years	50.5	47.3	50.5	61.5	42.8	33.3	68.8	73.2	54.9	31.3	48.9	82.6	192.4	41.9
25 to 29 years	88.1	109.0	83.9	106.1	108.5	82.8	114.1	120.1	102.2	74.7	86.0	95.8	130.7	93.0
30 to 34 years	90.0	107.7	91.7	93.0	109.8	109.4	111.4	110.0	109.5	98.7	94.5	109.8	94.5	107.2
35 to 39 years	34.8	42.0	41.1	32.4	51.6	56.6	52.9	48.5	54.5	57.0	53.1	53.1	58.9	53.6
40 to 44 years	5.5	6.5	7.0	5.0	10.5	11.4	9.8	9.3	10.9	12.1	8.6	6.6	5.8	10.7
45 to 49 years	0.1	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.6
2014														
15 to 19 years	15.8	9.4	13.9	17.0	7.5	7.7	23.9	28.2	13.6	6.7	14.2	35.7	102.3	10.2
20 to 24 years	51.6	51.5	51.8	62.2	41.2	32.8	69.5	75.6	52.9	30.0	43.2	73.9	170.7	41.0
25 to 29 years	90.7	112.3	84.4	106.7	106.1	81.5	111.2	122.6	102.8	74.2	87.8	103.6	153.4	92.1
30 to 34 years	91.2	105.7	97.0	95.7	108.9	108.4	111.7	115.1	111.6	100.7	97.2	107.1	102.7	107.6
35 to 39 years	35.9	42.2	44.1	33.3	51.9	57.5	52.1	50.9	57.6	57.6	54.4	45.0	52.2	54.6
40 to 44 years	4.9	6.4	7.2	4.8	10.7	11.7	9.4	9.0	11.5	12.0	11.9	10.1	10.9	10.9
45 to 49 years	0.3	0.8	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.7	1.5	0.7	1.0	0.6
2015														
15 to 19 years	11.3	10.5	12.6	15.3	7.2	7.0	21.7	24.9	12.9	6.1	9.5	31.1	110.3	9.4
20 to 24 years	51.9	48.8	47.4	60.3	39.6	30.9	65.1	72.7	52.6	28.7	52.2	69.8	161.8	39.3
25 to 29 years	89.4	104.6	82.2	101.2	103.1	78.7	108.0	117.2	102.6	71.8	116.1	98.8	147.7	89.5
30 to 34 years	91.3	96.7	93.8	91.3	108.3	107.4	116.5	114.4	113.6	101.2	95.5	116.0	91.1	107.4
35 to 39 years	37.3	41.7	41.8	34.5	52.5	59.5	54.1	50.2	57.1	57.9	48.1	54.1	41.8	55.6
40 to 44 years	4.7	6.7	7.3	4.3	11.4	12.1	10.0	10.2	12.0	12.7	11.4	14.2	9.3	11.5
45 to 49 years	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.6	0.8	0.4	0.4	0.9	0.8	0.8	1.4	0.0	0.7
2016														
15 to 19 years	12.5	8.4	11.3	12.3	6.7	6.1	20.5	23.7	11.2	5.2	6.8	25.0	110.2	8.4
20 to 24 years	48.3	44.7	48.2	59.2	38.7	29.7	63.4	71.2	48.5	26.7	51.7	66.8	162.7	37.6
25 to 29 years	87.8	93.4	81.1	104.1	100.9	76.5	105.5	120.0	98.1	72.7	75.0	90.4	151.9	87.6
30 to 34 years	91.8	120.3	94.6	92.7	107.9	108.5	114.4	111.9	111.3	103.1	105.1	101.8	99.6	107.6
35 to 39 years	37.8	38.2	42.3	35.3	52.0	59.0	55.2	51.7	58.8	60.4	73.3	64.8	47.0	56.0
40 to 44 years	5.9	7.5	7.1	5.1	11.3	12.0	10.7	9.1	12.5	12.7	9.9	11.1	21.0	11.5
45 to 49 years	0.2	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.7	1.4	0.7	1.0	0.7

Note: Data used are the most recent available at time of dissemination.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Births Database, 2012 to 2016, Survey 3231 and Demography Division, Demographic Estimates Program (DEP).

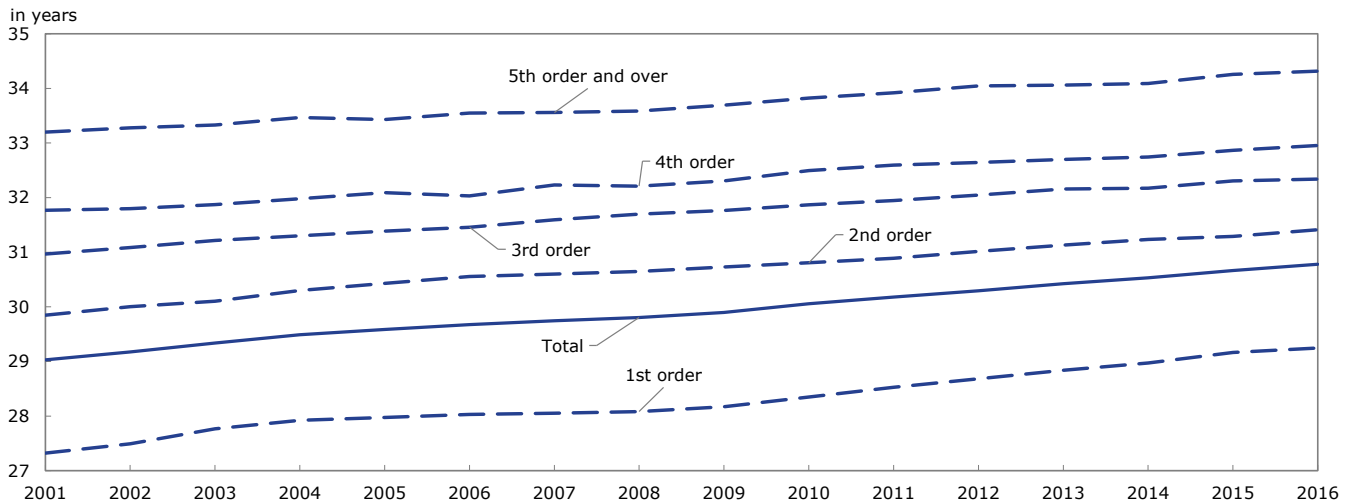
Overall, a large part of the difference in fertility levels between the provinces and territories between 2012 and 2016 was due to the fertility of women in their twenties. Across Canada, British Columbia had the lowest fertility rates for women in their twenties between 2012 and 2016, followed closely by Ontario; these rates have been declining for both provinces since the early 1990s. Alberta also registered a decline in the fertility rate of women in their twenties in the late 2000s, leading to a decrease in the total fertility rate for the province (from 1.90 children per woman in 2008 to 1.77 in 2012 and 1.69 in 2016). The lowest total fertility rate observed in Alberta over the last 43 years was 1.66 children per woman in 2000, still above that of Canada. Lastly, between 2012 and 2016, Manitoba and Saskatchewan posted some of the highest fertility rates for those under 35 years of age, along with Nunavut (under 30 years of age) and the Northwest Territories (under 25 years of age).

Age of mother at childbirth and birth order

In Canada, the average age of mothers¹⁸ at childbirth has been increasing fairly steadily for the last 40 years, as successive generations of women have delayed childbearing to pursue educational and employment opportunities, among other factors. Easy access to effective contraceptive methods, diversification of conjugal life and changes in values have also contributed to delaying entry into parenthood.¹⁹ Since 2010, the average age of mothers at childbirth has been over 30 years, edging up to 30.3 years in 2012 and to 30.8 years in 2016, compared with 29.0 years in 2001. Moreover, fathers are generally older than mothers; for example, the average age of fathers at childbirth was 33.2 years in 2012 and 33.7 years in 2016.

Similarly, the average age at first birth (1st order) has been increasing since the late 1960s, reaching 28.7 years in Canada in 2012 and 29.2 years in 2016, compared with 27.3 years in 2001. The average age of fathers at the birth of their first child (1st order) was 31.6 years in 2012 and 32.2 years in 2016.

Figure 7
Average age of mothers at birth by birth order, Canada, 2001 to 2016



Notes: Births for which the age of the mother or the birth order is unknown were prorated using the observed distribution. Data used are the most recent available at time of dissemination. The mothers' age is the one at the middle of the year.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Births Database, 2001 to 2016, Survey 3231 and Demography Division, Demographic Estimates Program (DEP).

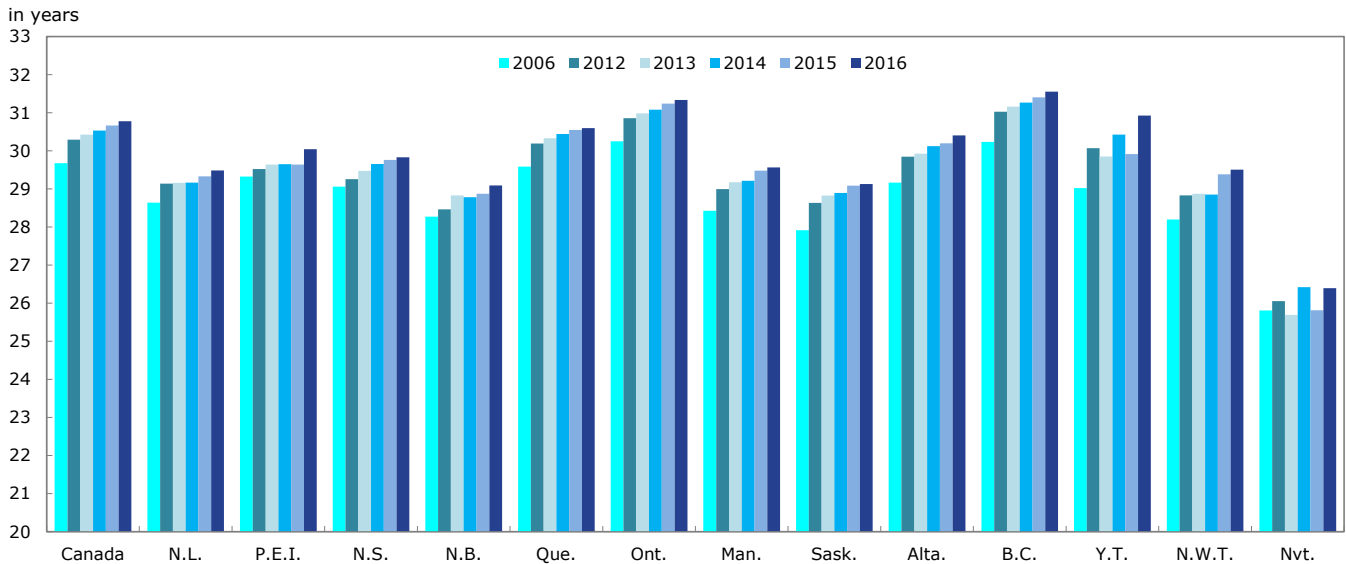
18. The average age of mothers at childbirth is the mean age of mothers at the birth of their child for a given year, regardless of birth order. The mothers' age is the one at the middle of the year.
 19. Mills, Melinda, Ronald R. Rindfuss, Peter McDonald and Egbert te Velde. 2011. "Why Do People Postpone Parenthood? Reasons and Social Policy Incentives", *Human Reproduction Update*, November, 17(6), pages 848 to 860, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3529638/pdf/dmrQ26.pdf> (accessed May 2, 2018).

Provincial/territorial variation

Between 2012 and 2016, the average age of mothers at childbirth continued to increase in all provinces, with half of them reaching or surpassing the 30-year mark during this period: British Columbia (31.0 years in 2012 and 31.6 in 2016), Ontario (30.9 years in 2012 and 31.3 in 2016), Quebec (30.2 years in 2012 and 30.6 in 2016), Alberta (29.8 years in 2012 and 30.4 in 2016), and Prince Edward Island (29.5 years in 2012 and 30.0 in 2016). In both British Columbia and Ontario, the average age of mothers at birth has been over 30 years since 2004. Yukon was the only territory to reach the level of the provinces with an average age of mothers at childbirth over 30 (30.1 years in 2012 and 30.9 in 2016). The lowest average age of mothers at birth was in Nunavut (26.1 years in 2012 and 26.4 in 2016), followed by New Brunswick (28.5 years in 2012 and 29.1 in 2016), Saskatchewan (28.6 years in 2012 and 29.1 in 2016), the Northwest Territories (28.8 years in 2012 and 29.5 in 2016) and Newfoundland and Labrador (29.1 years in 2012 and 29.5 in 2016).

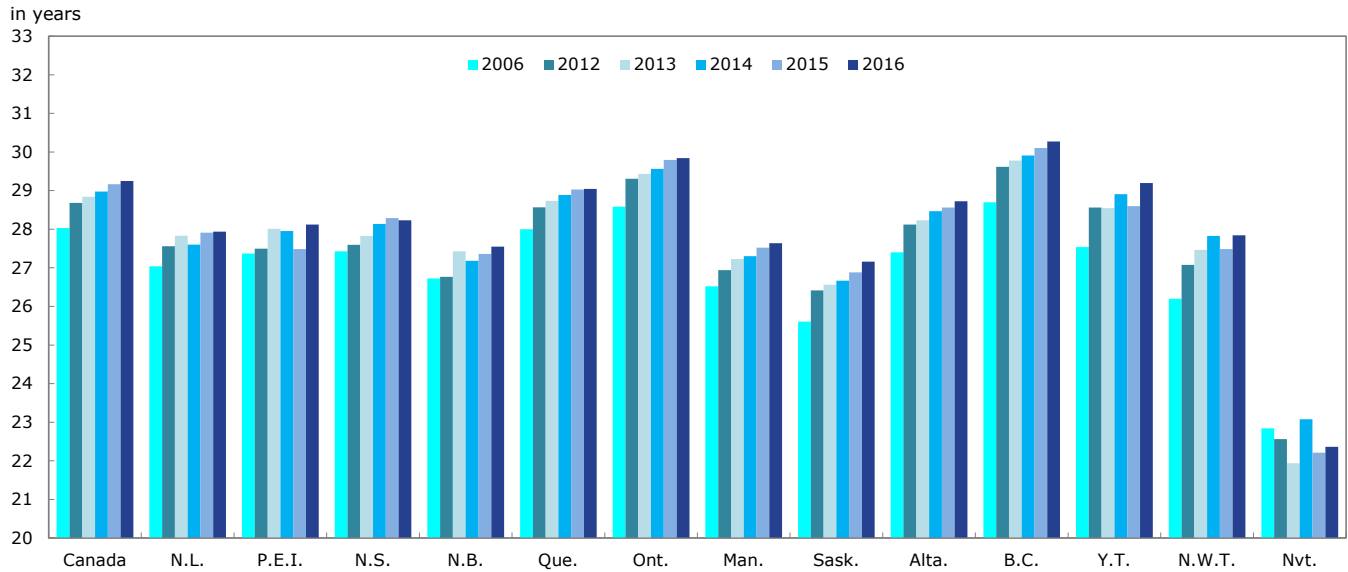
There was also variation in the average age of mothers at first birth across the provinces and territories. The highest average age of mothers at first birth was in British Columbia (29.6 years in 2012 and 30.3 in 2016), followed by Ontario (29.3 years in 2012 and 29.8 in 2016). The lowest average age of mothers at first birth was in Nunavut (22.6 years in 2012 and 22.4 in 2016).

Figure 8
Average age of mothers at birth, Canada, provinces and territories, 2006, 2012 to 2016



Notes: Births for which the age of the mother or the province is unknown were prorated using the observed distribution. Data used are the most recent available at time of dissemination. The mothers' age is the one at the middle of the year.
Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Births Database, 2006, 2012 to 2016, Survey 3231 and Demography Division, Demographic Estimates Program (DEP).

Figure 9
Average age of mothers at first birth (1st order), Canada, provinces and territories, 2006, 2012 to 2016



Notes: Births for which the age of the mother, the birth order or the province is unknown were prorated using the observed distribution. Data used are the most recent available at time of dissemination. The mothers' age is the one at the middle of the year.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Births Database, 2006, 2012 to 2016, Survey 3231 and Demography Division, Demographic Estimates Program (DEP).

Table 4
Average age of mothers at birth by birth order, Canada, provinces and territories, 2012 to 2016

Year and birth order	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Y.T.	N.W.T.	Nvt.	Canada
	in years													
2012														
1st order	27.6	27.5	27.6	26.8	28.6	29.3	26.9	26.4	28.1	29.6	28.6	27.1	22.6	28.7
2nd order	30.3	30.1	30.0	29.3	30.8	31.5	29.5	29.0	30.5	31.9	31.0	29.0	25.0	31.0
3rd order	30.9	31.6	31.4	30.6	32.3	32.6	30.2	30.4	31.5	32.6	32.3	30.3	26.4	32.0
4th order	32.0	32.4	32.4	31.6	33.1	33.1	31.0	31.2	32.3	33.3	32.4	31.3	28.4	32.6
5th order and over	32.9	34.5	34.2	33.3	34.6	34.6	32.9	33.1	34.1	34.2	33.0	34.3	31.3	34.0
2013														
1st order	27.8	28.0	27.8	27.4	28.7	29.4	27.2	26.6	28.2	29.8	28.5	27.5	21.9	28.8
2nd order	30.0	30.3	30.2	29.5	30.9	31.7	29.7	29.3	30.6	32.0	30.3	29.3	24.9	31.1
3rd order	31.1	31.1	31.6	30.7	32.4	32.7	30.3	30.6	31.6	32.8	32.0	30.6	26.3	32.2
4th order	32.0	32.4	32.4	31.6	33.3	33.2	30.8	31.3	32.4	33.2	33.0	32.0	28.5	32.7
5th order and over	32.6	34.4	34.2	33.0	34.8	34.6	32.8	33.2	33.9	34.6	36.4	33.5	31.5	34.1
2014														
1st order	27.6	27.9	28.1	27.2	28.9	29.6	27.3	26.7	28.5	29.9	28.9	27.8	23.1	29.0
2nd order	30.3	30.5	30.3	29.6	31.0	31.8	29.7	29.5	30.8	32.1	31.0	28.7	24.7	31.2
3rd order	31.2	30.9	31.5	30.5	32.4	32.6	30.4	30.6	31.8	32.8	32.6	30.3	27.1	32.2
4th order	32.2	32.3	32.2	31.6	33.4	33.3	30.8	31.1	32.5	33.2	32.7	31.4	28.3	32.7
5th order and over	33.5	34.1	34.3	32.3	34.8	34.7	32.8	33.0	34.2	34.4	38.1	34.1	31.9	34.1
2015														
1st order	27.9	27.5	28.3	27.4	29.0	29.8	27.5	26.9	28.6	30.1	28.6	27.5	22.2	29.2
2nd order	30.2	30.3	30.4	29.6	31.1	31.8	29.9	29.6	30.8	32.2	30.7	30.0	24.5	31.3
3rd order	31.1	31.7	31.3	30.4	32.6	32.8	30.7	30.8	31.8	32.9	31.6	31.0	26.2	32.3
4th order	31.1	32.3	32.5	31.7	33.3	33.4	31.1	31.5	32.6	33.4	32.4	33.2	28.5	32.9
5th order and over	33.3	35.5	34.4	32.6	34.9	34.7	32.9	33.3	34.5	34.7	32.9	34.7	31.6	34.3
2016														
1st order	27.9	28.1	28.2	27.5	29.0	29.8	27.6	27.2	28.7	30.3	29.2	27.8	22.4	29.2
2nd order	30.5	30.8	30.6	29.6	31.1	32.0	29.9	29.4	31.0	32.3	31.9	29.4	24.9	31.4
3rd order	31.5	31.4	31.3	30.9	32.6	32.8	30.8	30.7	32.0	32.9	33.1	32.4	26.7	32.3
4th order	32.0	32.7	32.4	31.7	33.5	33.5	31.1	31.5	32.7	33.4	33.7	31.1	28.3	33.0
5th order and over	33.8	33.9	34.3	33.3	35.0	34.8	33.1	33.3	34.2	34.8	34.7	34.9	32.4	34.3

Notes: Data used are the most recent available at time of dissemination. The mothers' age is the one at the middle of the year.

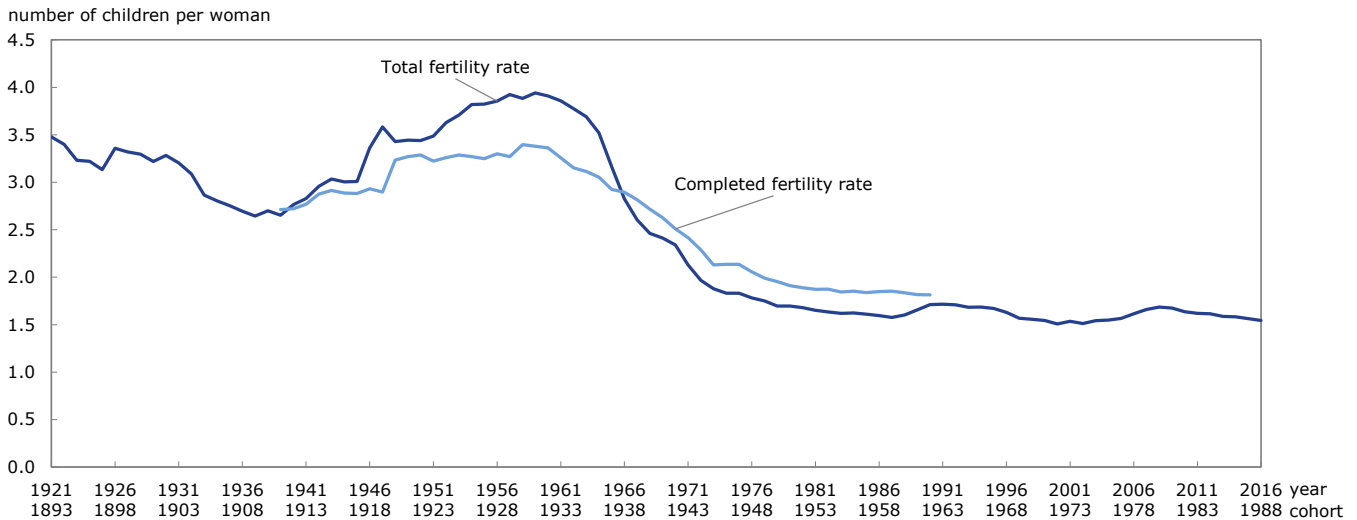
Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Births Database, 2012 to 2016, Survey 3231 and Demography Division, Demographic Estimates Program (DEP).

Completed fertility rate of recent generations

While the total fertility rate is a common indicator for analyzing fertility trends because it is simple to calculate and it can summarize trends for a given calendar year, the completed fertility rate is a better indicator for understanding the changes in the fertility behaviours of different cohorts of women. The completed fertility rate is a longitudinal indicator that refers to the actual fertility experiences of cohorts of women once they have completed their reproductive life. The disadvantage of this indicator is that it is necessary to wait until the end of the reproductive life of the cohort of women to obtain all the data required for its calculation for a given cohort.

Figure 10

Total fertility rate, 1921 to 2016 and completed fertility rate, 1911 to 1962, Canada



Notes: Births for which the age of the mother is unknown were prorated using the observed distribution. Data used are the most recent available at time of dissemination.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Births Database, 1921 to 2016, Survey 3231 and Demography Division, Demographic Estimates Program (DEP).

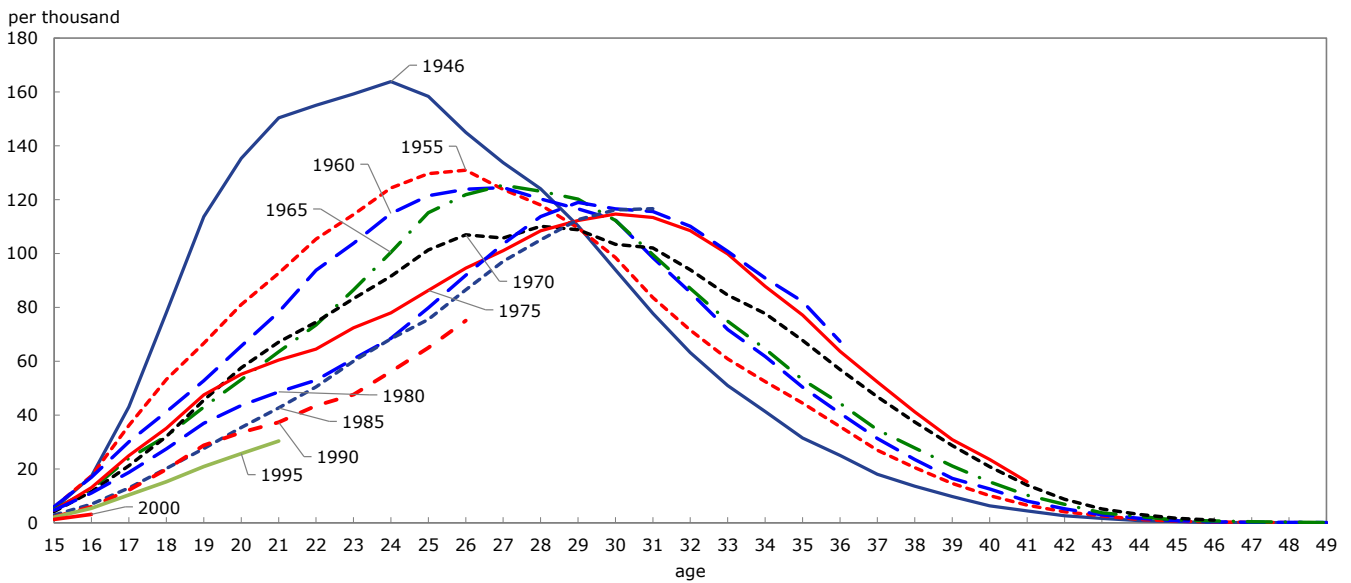
The completed fertility rate of women born up to 1967 can be calculated as they were aged 49 or older in 2016. It is also possible to estimate the completed fertility rate of the 1975 birth cohort, who were 41 years of age in 2016, since this generation is reaching the end of the reproductive ages and fertility rates after age 41 are quite low. Similarly, the fertility rates of the 1980 cohort, aged 36 in 2016, have also started to decline, since this generation has passed the age when fertility is at its peak. However, the estimated completed fertility rates for these two cohorts comprise a higher degree of uncertainty as a larger portion of their childbearing years is based on extrapolation of the recent trends based on fertility after age 30.

The age pattern of fertility among younger generations of women has changed compared with that of previous generations of women: the peak of the curve is lower than before, and appears later in reproductive life than in the past. This reflects both lower fertility as well as the older age at childbirth.

The first baby-boom cohort, that is, women born in 1946, is often used as a reference group, given that it was the last cohort to have reached cohort fertility above the replacement level. The 1946 cohort fertility rate peaked at age 24 with 163.8 births per 1,000 women. In contrast, the fertility for the cohort born in 1980 peaked at a higher age (29 years), with approximately 119.0 births per 1,000 women. Even though younger cohorts have higher fertility rates in their thirties, their general fertility remains below older cohorts because they cannot catch up for the lower fertility rates observed in their twenties.

The completed fertility rate of the cohort of women born in 1967 in Canada was 1.79 children per woman. This rate is similar to the cohorts born in the mid-1950s, but much lower than its peak of 3.40 children per woman in the 1930 birth cohort, who were the mothers of the baby boom generations.

Figure 11
Fertility rate by age of mothers, selected cohorts, Canada



Notes: Births for which the age of the mother is unknown were prorated using the observed distribution. Data used are the most recent available at time of dissemination.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Births Database, 1921 to 2016, Survey 3231 and Demography Division, Demographic Estimates Program (DEP).

Trends in childlessness

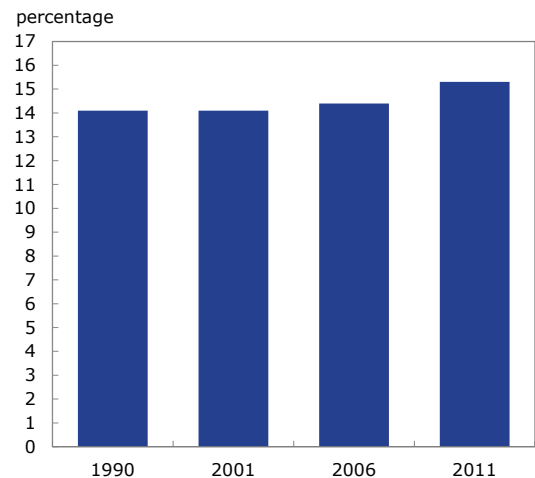
Based on data from the General Social Survey on Families, the biological childlessness has been steady between 1990 and 2011. The percentage of women aged 50 and older who have never given birth to a child was 14.1% in 1990, compared with 15.3% in 2011. Women who have not had a biological child might create families by other means, such as adoption, step-parenthood or surrogacy.

According to a special compilation of data from the 2011 General Social Survey on the Family,²⁰ adults aged 20 to 39 years may choose to not have children for many possible reasons. The intention to never have children was higher among single individuals compared with those who were married or in a common-law relationship. The proportion was also higher among men, among those with no religious affiliation, and among those born in Canada. Of the Canadians aged 20 to 39 years who reported that they did not plan to have children,²¹ a majority mentioned that they made this decision by personal choice. Financial reasons, not having a spouse or partner, and reasons related to work or health are among other answers supporting their intention to not have children.

20. We would like to thank Pascale Beaupré of the Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division at Statistics Canada for her collaboration on the processing of data from the 2011 General Social Survey.

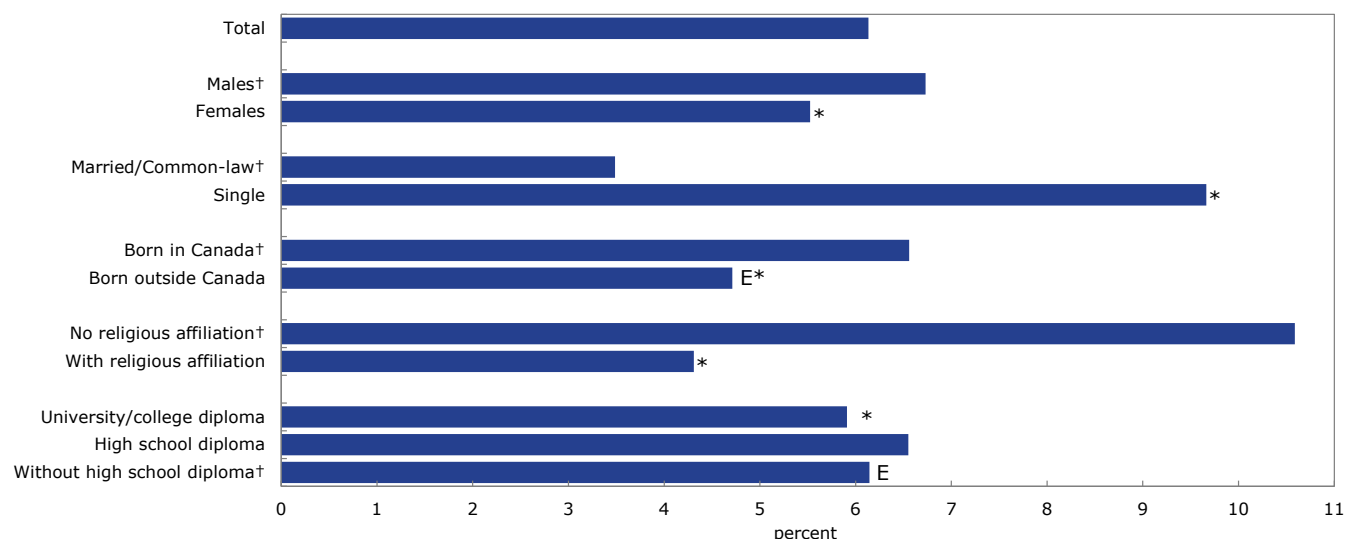
21. Those who reported that they were infertile were excluded from this category.

Figure 12
Proportion of women aged 50 and over who have never given birth to a child, Canada, 1990, 2001, 2006 and 2011



Note: The data was weighted to represent the Canadian population.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1990, 2001, 2006 and 2011.

Figure 13**Proportion of persons aged 20 to 39 intending not to have children according to various characteristics, Canada, 2011**

† Reference group.

* Different from reference group at $p < 0.05$.

E Use with caution.

Note: The data was weighted to represent the Canadian population.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey 2011.

Multiple births

The vast majority of births in 2016 were single births (96.9%), but around 12,000 births consisted of twins (3.0% of all births) and triplets or more (0.1% of all births).²² These proportions have been quite stable since 2006, but are higher than those observed in 1991. This increase is seen across all age groups of mothers. For example, among women aged 25 to 29 years, 2.7% of all births in 2016 were multiple births, up from 2.1% in 1991. The older the age group, the bigger the difference, meaning that multiple births increased more among older women. For example, 4.0% of women aged 35 to 39 who gave birth in 2016 had twins or more, compared with 2.4% in 1991. These proportions were 5.0% and 2.0%, respectively, among women aged 40 to 44 years, and 15.9% and 2.9% among women 45 years or older.

Older motherhood is evident not only in the variations of the age distribution of mothers who had single births, but also for multiple births. The share of multiple births has fallen for women aged 29 years or less, but has risen among women 30 years and older. For example, in 2016, among women who gave birth to twins, the proportion of women aged 35 to 39 years was 23.1%, compared with 9.8% 25 years earlier. Among women who had twins, the proportion aged 40 to 44 years also rose from 1.0% to 5.6%. In contrast, among the women who had twins, the proportion of those in their late twenties fell from 38.0% in 1991 to 24.4% in 2016. The trends for triplets or more were similar. A number of factors could contribute to the increase in multiple births among women 30 years or older, including postponing motherhood to a later age and increased use of fertility treatments, which increase the overall likelihood of multiple births.

22. Multiple births involving quadruplets or more are very rare.

Table 5
Births distribution by type of birth and age group of the mother, Canada, 1991 and 2016

Age group	Type of birth by age group				Age group by type of birth				Number
	Single	Twin	Triplet or more	Total	Single	Twin	Triplet or more	Total	
	percent								
1991									
Less than 20 years	6.2	3.5	1.5	6.1	98.9	1.1	0.0	100.0	24,593
20 to 24 years	20.2	17.2	6.2	20.2	98.3	1.7	0.0	100.0	81,211
25 to 29 years	37.5	38.0	30.3	37.5	98.0	2.0	0.1	100.0	150,929
30 to 34 years	26.8	30.4	45.3	26.9	97.7	2.2	0.1	100.0	108,206
35 to 39 years	8.2	9.8	14.6	8.3	97.6	2.3	0.1	100.0	33,305
40 to 44 years	1.0	1.0	2.2	1.0	98.0	1.9	0.1	100.0	4,149
45 years and over	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	97.1	2.9	0.0	100.0	139
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	98.0	2.0	0.1	100.0	...
Number	394,395	7,864	274	402,533	...	...	...	...	402,533
2016									
Less than 20 years	2.3	1.1	0.0	2.2	98.6	1.4	0.0	100.0	8,521
20 to 24 years	11.9	7.7	6.4	11.8	98.0	2.0	0.0	100.0	45,143
25 to 29 years	28.7	24.4	21.5	28.6	97.3	2.6	0.1	100.0	109,544
30 to 34 years	35.6	36.9	38.8	35.7	96.8	3.2	0.1	100.0	136,593
35 to 39 years	17.8	23.1	23.4	18.0	96.0	3.9	0.1	100.0	68,906
40 to 44 years	3.5	5.6	9.9	3.5	95.0	4.8	0.2	100.0	13,506
45 years and over	0.2	1.2	0.0	0.2	84.1	15.9	0.0	100.0	889
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	96.9	3.0	0.1	100.0	...
Number	371,110	11,680	312	383,102	...	...	...	...	383,102

Note: Births for which the age of the mother is unknown were prorated using the observed distribution. Numbers expressed in percentages are rounded, so their sum may not add up to 100%.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Births Database, 1991 and 2016, Survey 3231 and Demography Division, Demographic Estimates Program (DEP).

Table A1

Total fertility rate by birth order, Canada, provinces and territories, 2006 to 2016

Year and birth order	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Y.T.	N.W.T.	Nvt.	Canada
	number of children per woman													
2006														
1st order	0.67	0.67	0.65	0.70	0.76	0.70	0.73	0.72	0.79	0.68	0.73	0.93	0.86	0.73
2nd order	0.52	0.64	0.49	0.53	0.59	0.56	0.59	0.61	0.61	0.53	0.61	0.58	0.69	0.57
3rd order	0.16	0.24	0.18	0.17	0.20	0.20	0.30	0.32	0.25	0.17	0.15	0.26	0.48	0.21
4th order	0.04	0.07	0.05	0.05	0.06	0.06	0.13	0.14	0.09	0.06	0.08	0.14	0.28	0.07
5th order and over	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.14	0.13	0.07	0.03	0.04	0.10	0.51	0.04
2007														
1st order	0.70	0.64	0.67	0.72	0.77	0.71	0.75	0.75	0.83	0.70	0.66	0.95	1.00	0.74
2nd order	0.52	0.60	0.53	0.53	0.60	0.57	0.61	0.66	0.64	0.55	0.52	0.58	0.63	0.59
3rd order	0.16	0.29	0.20	0.20	0.21	0.21	0.31	0.34	0.26	0.19	0.25	0.32	0.45	0.22
4th order	0.04	0.07	0.06	0.05	0.06	0.06	0.15	0.14	0.09	0.05	0.10	0.14	0.33	0.07
5th order and over	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.15	0.14	0.07	0.03	0.04	0.12	0.53	0.04
2008														
1st order	0.78	0.75	0.71	0.76	0.78	0.70	0.73	0.79	0.82	0.70	0.71	0.97	0.89	0.74
2nd order	0.54	0.62	0.54	0.57	0.62	0.57	0.62	0.64	0.65	0.54	0.52	0.57	0.68	0.59
3rd order	0.17	0.26	0.21	0.19	0.23	0.22	0.30	0.34	0.26	0.18	0.29	0.27	0.45	0.23
4th order	0.04	0.08	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.07	0.15	0.14	0.10	0.06	0.05	0.15	0.39	0.07
5th order and over	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.15	0.13	0.07	0.03	0.05	0.13	0.52	0.05
2009														
1st order	0.76	0.73	0.70	0.77	0.79	0.69	0.75	0.81	0.80	0.70	0.72	0.92	0.91	0.74
2nd order	0.54	0.59	0.53	0.56	0.61	0.57	0.61	0.68	0.63	0.54	0.56	0.53	0.79	0.59
3rd order	0.17	0.27	0.20	0.19	0.23	0.22	0.31	0.33	0.26	0.19	0.22	0.33	0.54	0.23
4th order	0.05	0.08	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.07	0.15	0.14	0.10	0.05	0.08	0.13	0.38	0.08
5th order and over	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.17	0.11	0.07	0.03	0.04	0.14	0.53	0.05
2010														
1st order	0.75	0.69	0.71	0.75	0.76	0.66	0.72	0.78	0.76	0.68	0.80	0.91	0.82	0.71
2nd order	0.54	0.58	0.51	0.56	0.61	0.57	0.61	0.65	0.61	0.51	0.45	0.55	0.71	0.58
3rd order	0.18	0.27	0.20	0.21	0.23	0.22	0.31	0.33	0.26	0.17	0.20	0.29	0.50	0.23
4th order	0.04	0.08	0.06	0.05	0.07	0.07	0.14	0.14	0.09	0.05	0.06	0.13	0.39	0.08
5th order and over	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.16	0.13	0.07	0.03	0.05	0.11	0.48	0.05
2011														
1st order	0.67	0.70	0.70	0.74	0.74	0.67	0.71	0.76	0.74	0.67	0.80	0.92	0.87	0.70
2nd order	0.52	0.61	0.51	0.55	0.61	0.56	0.58	0.64	0.61	0.52	0.54	0.52	0.62	0.58
3rd order	0.15	0.27	0.20	0.18	0.23	0.22	0.30	0.33	0.25	0.18	0.24	0.27	0.52	0.22
4th order	0.04	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.07	0.13	0.14	0.09	0.05	0.05	0.12	0.33	0.07
5th order and over	0.02	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.12	0.07	0.03	0.04	0.13	0.50	0.05
2012														
1st order	0.66	0.61	0.70	0.73	0.74	0.68	0.73	0.78	0.77	0.65	0.82	0.88	0.84	0.71
2nd order	0.51	0.54	0.52	0.55	0.60	0.56	0.60	0.63	0.60	0.53	0.55	0.52	0.67	0.57
3rd order	0.15	0.25	0.19	0.21	0.22	0.21	0.31	0.34	0.24	0.17	0.23	0.26	0.48	0.22
4th order	0.04	0.08	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.07	0.14	0.14	0.09	0.05	0.08	0.14	0.35	0.07
5th order and over	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.15	0.12	0.06	0.03	0.02	0.14	0.51	0.05
2013														
1st order	0.70	0.68	0.67	0.74	0.74	0.65	0.73	0.74	0.76	0.64	0.77	0.97	0.99	0.69
2nd order	0.52	0.61	0.50	0.54	0.58	0.55	0.59	0.63	0.58	0.52	0.48	0.47	0.64	0.56
3rd order	0.16	0.24	0.18	0.19	0.23	0.20	0.29	0.32	0.24	0.17	0.20	0.22	0.54	0.22
4th order	0.04	0.08	0.06	0.07	0.07	0.06	0.15	0.14	0.09	0.05	0.08	0.12	0.37	0.07
5th order and over	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.16	0.11	0.06	0.03	0.02	0.09	0.49	0.05
2014														
1st order	0.71	0.69	0.68	0.72	0.72	0.64	0.73	0.77	0.76	0.64	0.74	0.96	0.87	0.69
2nd order	0.52	0.58	0.53	0.59	0.58	0.55	0.59	0.64	0.58	0.52	0.54	0.49	0.66	0.56
3rd order	0.16	0.26	0.19	0.20	0.23	0.20	0.28	0.32	0.24	0.17	0.15	0.25	0.49	0.22
4th order	0.04	0.08	0.06	0.07	0.07	0.06	0.13	0.14	0.09	0.05	0.08	0.08	0.43	0.07
5th order and over	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.15	0.12	0.06	0.03	0.04	0.09	0.52	0.05
2015														
1st order	0.67	0.62	0.64	0.67	0.72	0.64	0.70	0.75	0.75	0.64	0.80	0.97	0.89	0.68
2nd order	0.52	0.58	0.50	0.57	0.58	0.53	0.60	0.63	0.59	0.50	0.56	0.44	0.64	0.55
3rd order	0.17	0.23	0.19	0.19	0.22	0.20	0.28	0.31	0.25	0.17	0.22	0.23	0.45	0.21
4th order	0.05	0.09	0.06	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.14	0.14	0.09	0.05	0.06	0.14	0.30	0.07
5th order and over	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.16	0.11	0.06	0.03	0.03	0.13	0.53	0.05
2016														
1st order	0.67	0.62	0.64	0.66	0.70	0.62	0.69	0.75	0.71	0.64	0.73	0.82	0.86	0.66
2nd order	0.53	0.59	0.49	0.56	0.57	0.54	0.58	0.61	0.58	0.52	0.60	0.51	0.67	0.55
3rd order	0.17	0.24	0.20	0.22	0.22	0.20	0.28	0.32	0.25	0.17	0.20	0.24	0.47	0.21
4th order	0.04	0.08	0.06	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.13	0.13	0.09	0.05	0.06	0.13	0.40	0.07
5th order and over	0.02	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.16	0.12	0.06	0.03	0.03	0.10	0.59	0.05

Notes: Births for which the birth order or the province is unknown were prorated using the observed distribution. Data used are the most recent available at time of dissemination.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Births Database, 2006 to 2016, Survey 3231 and Demography Division, Demographic Estimates Program (DEP).