

Life tables, Canada, provinces and territories, 2010-2012

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Life expectancy at birth was 79.4 years among Canadian males and 83.6 years among Canadian females during the 2010-2012 period, up 0.3 years for males and up 0.2 years for females compared with 2009-2011.

Note to readers

Understanding life expectancy

The life expectancy at birth presented in this article indicates the average number of years of life remaining for newborns if these newborns were to experience throughout their lives the age-specific mortality rates observed during the 2010-2012 period.

The life tables disseminated along with this release also allow users to access life expectancy at other ages, always according to age-specific mortality rates observed during the 2010-2012 period.

The life expectancy at birth of Canadians born during the 2010-2012 period will very likely be higher than the life expectancy at birth shown in this article because these Canadians will experience reductions in mortality rates throughout their lives.

Reference period

Data on deaths over a three-year period, taken from Canada's Vital Statistics (3233), are used to calculate the life tables. The most recent tables cover the 2010-2012 reference period and are based on the deaths that occurred in 2010, 2011 and 2012.

Canada is among the countries where life expectancy at birth is the highest for both males and females.

According to the World Health Organization, only males living in Iceland, Israel, Switzerland and Australia (81 years each) would have—for a reference period comparable with 2010-2012—a higher life expectancy than Canadian males. The life expectancy at birth of American males in 2012 was 76.4 years, three years lower than that of Canadian males, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Japanese (87 years), Spanish (86 years), Australian, French, Italian, South Korean and Swiss (85 years each) females had a higher life expectancy at birth than Canadian females. For American females, life expectancy at birth was 81.2 years in 2012, 2.4 years lower than that of Canadian females.

In some African countries, such as Sierra Leone, life expectancy at birth was lower than 50 years both for males and females.

Difference between the sexes

The gap between the life expectancy at birth of males and females in 2010-2012 was 4.2 years. This was the smallest gap since the end of the 1970s, when it was at its widest (7.5 years).

The smaller gap in 2010-2012 was partly due to a decrease in mortality rates linked to diseases that more frequently affected males in the past. In addition, women's adoption of behaviours similar to those of men, such as in the labour market, also contributed to the narrowing of the gap over the previous three decades.

Life expectancy at 65

Life expectancy at 65 was 18.7 years among males and 21.7 years among females in 2010-2012, up 0.1 years for males and up 0.2 years for females compared with 2009-2011.



Infant mortality rate

In 2010-2012, the infant mortality rate was 5.2 deaths per 1,000 live births among boys and 4.5 deaths per 1,000 live births among girls. The infant mortality rate in Canada continued its slight downward trend in 2010-2012, as it has for many years.

Regional differences

In 2010-2012, life expectancy at birth among the provinces and territories was highest in British Columbia, at 80.2 years for males and 84.2 years for females. British Columbia has shown the highest life expectancy at birth among the provinces and territories for a number of years.

Among the provinces, life expectancy at birth for males was the lowest in Newfoundland and Labrador (77.3 years) and Saskatchewan (77.5 years) in 2010-2012. Among females, the lowest life expectancy at birth was observed in Newfoundland and Labrador and Manitoba (82.1 years each).

Life expectancy at birth remained lower in the three territories, most notably in Nunavut, where it was 69.3 years among males and 74.7 years among females in 2010-2012. This was about 10 years lower than the life expectancy at birth observed in British Columbia for both males and females.

Available in CANSIM: table [053-0003](#).

The life tables for the 2005-2007, 2006-2008, 2007-2009, 2008-2010 and 2009-2011 reference periods have been updated on the basis of the most recent population estimates and are now available in two formats: CANSIM tables and Excel files.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers [3233](#) and [3604](#).

The publication, *Life Tables, Canada, Provinces and Territories* ([84-537-X](#)), includes complete life tables (for Canada, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia) and abridged life tables (for Prince Edward Island, Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut) for 2010-2012. This publication is available from the *Browse by key resource* module of our website, under *Publications*.

The underlying methods used to produce complete and abridged life tables are described in the updated document, *Methods for Constructing Life Tables for Canada, Provinces and Territories* ([84-538-X](#)), which is available from the *Browse by key resource* module of our website, under *Publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca).