# Life tables, 2016/2018

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For the third year in a row, male life expectancy at birth in Canada did not increase, which is likely related to the opioid crisis that is particularly affecting British Columbia and Ontario. From 2017 to 2018, life expectancy for males has remained unchanged at 79.9 years, while female life expectancy increased from 84.0 to 84.1 years (see note to readers).

For males, the stagnation observed in 2016, 2017 and 2018 is the longest on record. Since Canada started recording information on deaths in 1921, life expectancy has typically increased from one year to the next, both for males and females.

It is clear that the recent stagnation of life expectancy among males is due to an increase in mortality between the ages of 25 and 45. This increase in mortality offsets the decrease in the probability of dying observed among all other ages.

The increase in mortality among males aged 25 to 45 is likely related to the opioid crisis affecting certain regions of the country. In the United States, life expectancy at birth has decreased over the last three years, and many studies show that this decrease is linked to the opioid crisis.

Life expectancy at age 65 has increased among males in Canada, from 19.3 years in 2017 to 19.4 years in 2018, while it remained stable among females (22.1 years). This is not the first time in the last three decades that life expectancy at 65 among females remained stable from one year to the next.

## Third consecutive decrease in life expectancy in British Columbia

A decrease in life expectancy at birth among males was observed in British Columbia and Ontario. In British Columbia, the 0.2 year decrease in life expectancy at birth for males was the largest among all provinces and 2018 marked the third consecutive year of decline. In 2015, life expectancy was 80.5 years among males of this province and was the highest in the country. In 2018, it had decreased to 79.9 years, and was the third highest after that of males in Quebec (80.9 years) and males in Ontario (80.3 years).

An analysis of the probabilities of dying by age shows that mortality among males living in British Columbia continued to increase recently between the ages of about 25 to 50 years, a trend observed since 2016. It is likely that this increase is related to the opioid crisis, as deaths resulting from opioid intoxication tend to be more common in males of this age group, with British Columbia being more affected than other provinces and territories. In contrast, life expectancy at age 65 among males living in British Columbia has increased from 19.8 years in 2017 to 19.9 years in 2018.

For the first time in decades, a slight decrease (-0.1 year) in life expectancy at birth among males living in Ontario was also observed from 2017 to 2018. This decrease was also related to higher mortality among adults around the ages of 25 to 50 compared with previous years. As in British Columbia, it is likely that this slight decrease in life expectancy is related to the opioid crisis.

While a decrease in life expectancy at birth among males was also observed in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, the results should be interpreted with caution. The small population sizes of these territories means life expectancy estimates are heavily influenced by a small number of deaths.

Life expectancy at birth increased among males living in Quebec, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador from 2017 to 2018. It also increased among females over the same period in Quebec, Alberta, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador.

Among females, a slight decrease in life expectancy was observed in New Brunswick, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. In these two territories, the results should be interpreted with caution because of the small population size.

In other provinces and territories, for both males and females, life expectancy at birth has remained stable from 2017 to 2018.

### *Note to readers*

*Life expectancy in 2018 is calculated using three years of deaths records (2016, 2017 and 2018) to limit the possible annual random fluctuations due to the small number of deaths registered in many provinces and territories. The same approach is taken for previous years, to ensure comparability of the results: for example, life expectancy for 2017 is computed using deaths records in 2015, 2016 and 2017.*

*The life tables from which the life expectancy estimates presented in this release are obtained, are preliminary and will be revised later. Following improvements to methodology and collection, the length of time needed to collect data on deaths has decreased compared with previous years. However, some deaths might be registered later and for this reason, Statistics Canada will revise the life tables.*

*Deaths occurring in Yukon or to residents of Yukon that occurred in other Canadian regions were not available for 2017 and 2018. For this reason, there is no life table and associated life expectancy available for Yukon for 2017 and 2018. The life tables for Canada for 2017 and 2018 used in this release are also calculated without the death figures for Yukon.*

**Available tables: 13-10-0114-01 and 13-10-0140-01.**

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3233.**

The product *Life Tables, Canada, Provinces and Territories* (**84-537-X**), is now available.

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**).