

## Health Fact Sheets

# Trends in Canadian births, 1993 to 2013



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- not available for any reference period
- .. not available for a specific reference period
- ... not applicable
- 0 true zero or a value rounded to zero
- 0<sup>s</sup> value rounded to 0 (zero) where there is a meaningful distinction between true zero and the value that was rounded
- <sup>P</sup> preliminary
- <sup>r</sup> revised
- X suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
- <sup>E</sup> use with caution
- F too unreliable to be published
- \* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

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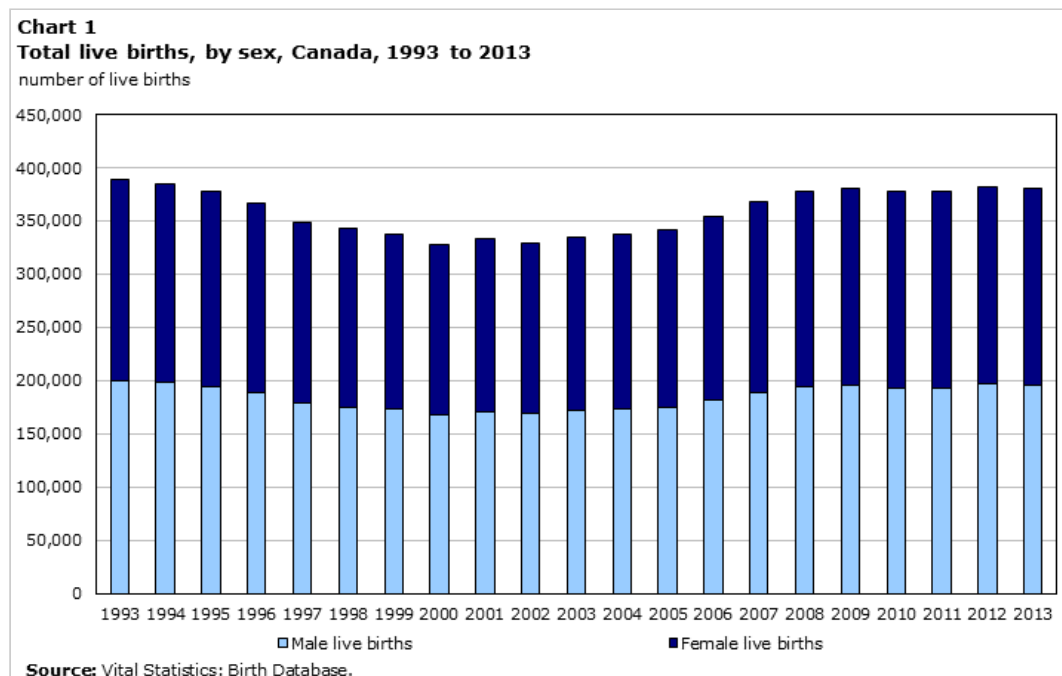
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## Health Fact Sheets Trends in Canadian births, 1993 to 2013



There were 380,323 live births in 2013, of which 195,183 (51.3%) were males and 185,140 (48.7%) were females (Chart 1). The majority (96.7%) of live births in Canada were single births, down from 97.9% in 1993.<sup>1</sup> Multiple births accounted for a greater proportion of live births in 2013 than they did in 1993 (3.3% compared to 2.1%). In general, the percentage of live births that are multiple births has gradually increased since 1993.



In 2013, more than one-third of all live births (36.7%) were born to mothers residing in Ontario, nearly one-quarter (23.4%) in Quebec, 14.0% in Alberta, and 11.5% to mothers living in British Columbia (Table 1). Combined, these four provinces accounted for 85.6% of all live births and 86.2% of the country's population. The remaining provinces and territories accounted for 14.4% of all live births in Canada. Despite having a smaller population, Alberta surpassed British Columbia in terms of live births in 2004 and has continued this trend through to 2013.

**Table 1**  
Proportionate shares of Canada's live births and overall population, by province and territory, 2013

Provinces and territories	Live births in 2013	Share of Canada's 2013 live births	Share of Canada's 2013 population
	number	percent	percent
Ontario	139,736	36.7	38.6
Quebec	88,821	23.4	23.2
Alberta	53,410	14.0	11.4
British Columbia	43,779	11.5	13.1
Manitoba	16,468	4.3	3.6

Saskatchewan	14,798	3.9	3.1
Nova Scotia	8,439	2.2	2.7
New Brunswick	6,959	1.8	2.1
Newfoundland and Labrador	4,525	1.2	1.5
Prince Edward Island	1,409	0.4	0.4
Nunavut	914	0.2	0.1
Northwest Territories	669	0.2	0.1
Yukon	396	0.1	0.1

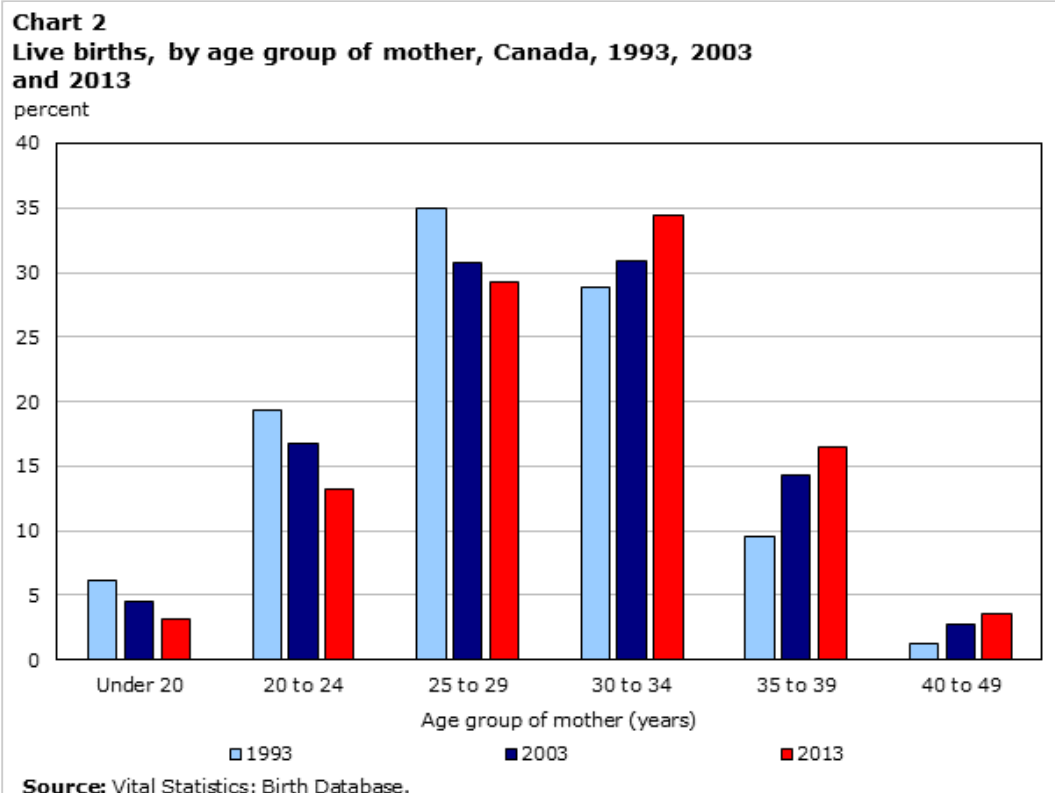
**Sources:** Vital Statistics: Birth Database and Statistics Canada CANSIM table 051-0001 ([www.statcan.gc.ca/cansim/a26?lang=eng&retrLang=eng&id=0510001&&pattern=&stByVal=1&p1=1&p2=50&tabMode=dataTable&csid=](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/cansim/a26?lang=eng&retrLang=eng&id=0510001&&pattern=&stByVal=1&p1=1&p2=50&tabMode=dataTable&csid=)), Estimates of population, by age group and sex for July 1, Canada, provinces and territories.

Among all live births in Canada, the average age of mothers at time of delivery was 29.9 years in 2013, up from 29.1 in 2003 and 28.0 in 1993.<sup>2</sup> British Columbia (30.7 years), Ontario (30.5 years), and Quebec (29.9 years) had average ages higher than or equal to the national average in 2013. Nunavut had the lowest average age (24.7 years), followed by Saskatchewan (28.1 years), Northwest Territories (28.3 years), New Brunswick (28.4 years), and Manitoba (28.5 Years). The average age of mothers in Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Alberta, and Yukon ranged from 28.9 to 29.8 years.

### **Increasing share of babies born to women 30 years and older**

The majority of babies were born to mothers 20 to 39 years old. Excluding cases where age of mother was unknown, 93.4% of all Canadian live births in 2013 were born to mothers aged 20 to 39 years, up slightly from 92.8% in 2003 and 92.6% in 1993. The proportion of live births born to mothers 30 to 49 years old has notably increased since 1993. Conversely, the share of live births born to mothers younger than 30 years of age markedly decreased during this period (Chart 2). Over one-half (54.4%) of all live births in 2013 were born to mothers between 30 and 49 years old, up from 47.9% in 2003 and 39.6% in 1993. Similarly, 3.5% of all live births in 2013 were born to mothers between 40 and 49, compared with 2.7% in 2003 and 1.3% in 1993.

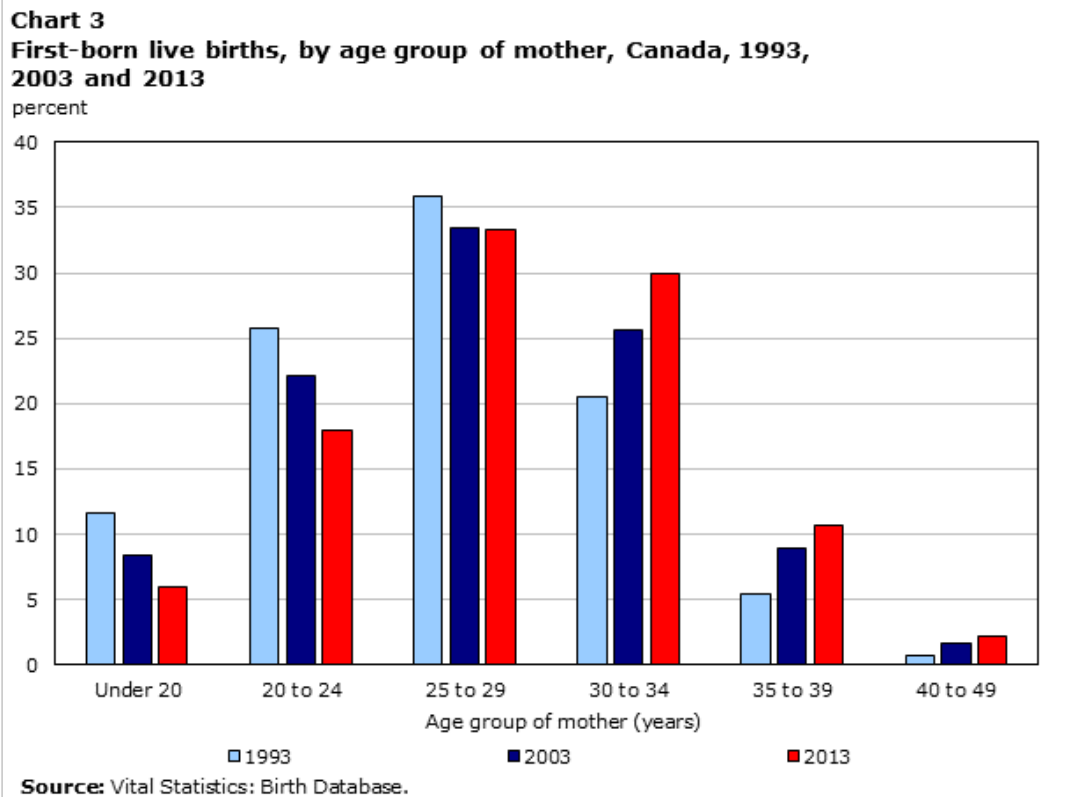
Nearly one-half (45.6%) of all live births in 2013 were born to mothers younger than 30 years of age, compared to 52.1% in 2003 and 60.4% in 1993. The percentage of live births born to mothers younger than 20 also decreased over this period (6.1% in 1993, 4.5% in 2003, and 3.1% in 2013).



Among all age groups, women aged 30 to 34 years recorded the most live births in Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories in 2013.<sup>3</sup> In New Brunswick, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan it was mothers 25 to 29 years old that had the most babies, while Nunavut had the highest number of its live births born to women 20 to 24 years old.

### Women delaying birth of first child

The last two decades have shown a tendency for women to delay having their first child. Between 1993 and 2013, the proportion of all first births born to women 30 to 49 years old substantially increased. Excluding cases where age of mother was not stated, mothers aged 30 to 34 accounted for 29.9% of first-born live births in 2013, up from 20.5% in 1993 (Chart 3). Similarly, mothers aged 35 to 39 years increased their share of first births from 5.4% in 1993 to 10.7% in 2013 and mothers aged 40 to 49 increased their share of first births from 0.7% to 2.2%. Conversely, the share of first births born to women under 30 years notably decreased during the last twenty-one years. The largest decrease occurred among mothers aged 20 to 24 who accounted for 25.8% of all first births in 1993 and 18.0% in 2013. Mothers aged 25 to 29 years accounted for 35.9% of all first births in 1993 and 33.3% in 2013, while mothers younger than 20 years decreased from 11.6% in 1993 to 6.0% in 2013.



In 2013, 43.5% of all live births were the mothers' first live birth (first born), 35.3% were second births, 13.6% were third births, 4.5% were fourth births, 1.5% were fifth births, 1.3% were to mothers having their sixth or higher live birth.<sup>4</sup> These proportions have been very consistent annually over the last twenty-one years.

**Data**

Additional data on Canadian births and characteristics of mothers are available in CANSIM tables 102-4501 to 102-4513.

**Notes**

- 1 Vital Statistics: Birth Database, CANSIM Table 102-4515 and Table 102-4513.
- 2 Vital Statistics: Birth Database, CANSIM Table 102-4504.
- 3 Vital Statistics: Birth Database, CANSIM Table 102-4503.
- 4 Vital Statistics: Birth Database, CANSIM Table 102-4508.