



The Daily

Statistics Canada

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MAJOR RELEASES

- **Marriages and divorces, 1996** 2
Fewer couples married in 1996, but far fewer divorced that same year. The number of marriages declined 2.2%, while the number of divorces fell 7.9%.

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MAJOR RELEASES

Marriages and divorces

1996

Fewer couples married in 1996, but at the same time far fewer officially ended their marriages. A total of 156,692 couples married in Canada in 1996, down 2.2% from 1995. Meanwhile, 71,528 couples were divorced, down 7.9%.

The number of divorces was the lowest since 1985. Amendments to the Divorce Act came into effect in 1986, allowing divorce after one year of separation instead of three. Those amendments resulted in a record 96,200 divorces in 1987.

Ontario and Quebec were largely responsible for the overall drop in divorces in 1996. In Ontario, 25,035 couples officially ended their marriages, a 14.7% decline from 1995, and the lowest level since 1985. In Quebec, 18,078 couples obtained divorces, down 10.2%. The decline in Quebec followed an increase of just over 10% in 1995.

Divorces declined slightly in all other provinces except British Columbia, where they went up 5%, and Newfoundland, where they rose 8%. The Yukon and the Northwest Territories recorded slight increases.

With respect to marriages, the number declined in every province except Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, where marginal increases were recorded.

Several factors likely contributing to decline in divorces

After peaking in 1987, the number of divorces fell abruptly the following year, then levelled off, fluctuating between 77,000 and 79,000 annually during the 1990s.

A number of factors may explain the 7.9% decline in 1996. One could be the decline in marriages nationally between 1990 and 1991, given that the incidence of divorce peaks after five or six years of marriage. However, it is unlikely this event acted in isolation.

Many couples settle a marriage breakdown through separation agreements that need not be followed by a legal divorce unless, for example, one of the spouses wants to remarry. The 1996 decline in divorces

could have been partly offset by an increase in legal separations. Although statistics on legal separations are not available, there was a reduction in the number of divorces funded by legal aid in Ontario.

According to The Law Society of Upper Canada 1997 Annual Report on The Ontario Legal Aid Plan, the number of completed divorce cases funded by this program dropped to 5,800 in the April 1996-March 1997 fiscal year, down from 11,600 the year before. Given that the cost of divorce may induce some couples to remain legally separated, reduced legal aid funding may have contributed to the falling divorce rate in Ontario, particularly among lower-income couples. (Ontario accounted for 35% of divorces nationally in 1996.)

Marriage stability can be estimated using divorce rates according to years of marriage. Based on 1996 divorce rates, the percentage of marriages expected to end in divorce declined to 37% nationally, compared with 40% based on 1995 rates. In Quebec, 46% of marriages could have been expected to end in divorce based on 1996 rates, compared with 50% based on 1995 rates. In Ontario, the proportion fell from 39% to 33%.

Canadians are waiting longer to get married

Continuing a trend observed since the early 1970s, the average age at first marriage rose slightly for both men and women in 1996: to 29.3 years for men (from 29.0 in 1995) and 27.3 years for women (from 27.1). The proportion of newlyweds accounted for by previously divorced persons reached 21.8% in 1996, up from 21.0% the previous year.

The marriage rate (marriages per 1,000 Canadians) fell to 5.2 in 1996, from 5.4 in 1995 (and a high of 7.0 in 1988). The rate in Quebec and the Northwest Territories remained about half that in the rest of Canada.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 7.

For further information on this release, contact François Nault (613-951-1764), Health Statistics Division. □

Marriages and marriage rates

	Marriages			Marriage rates per 1,000 population		
	1995	1996	1995 to 1996	1995	1996	1995 to 1996
			% change			dif- fer- ence
Canada	160,256	156,692	-2.2	5.4	5.2	-0.2
Newfoundland	3,404	3,194	-6.2	5.9	5.6	-0.3
Prince Edward Island	877	924	5.4	6.5	6.7	0.3
Nova Scotia	5,329	5,392	1.2	5.7	5.7	0.0
New Brunswick	4,257	4,366	2.6	5.6	5.7	0.1
Quebec	24,238	23,968	-1.1	3.3	3.2	-0.1
Ontario	67,583	66,208	-2.0	6.1	5.9	-0.2
Manitoba	6,703	6,448	-3.8	5.9	5.6	-0.3
Saskatchewan	5,799	5,671	-2.2	5.7	5.5	-0.2
Alberta	18,044	17,283	-4.2	6.6	6.2	-0.4
British Columbia	23,597	22,834	-3.2	6.3	5.9	-0.3
Yukon	207	198	-4.3	6.8	6.3	-0.5
Northwest Territories	218	206	-5.5	3.3	3.1	-0.2

Divorces and divorce rates

	Divorces			Total divorce rates per 100 marriages		
	1995	1996	1995 to 1996	1995	1996	1995 to 1996
			% change			dif- fer- ence
Canada	77,636	71,528	-7.9	40.0	36.9	-3.1
Newfoundland	982	1,060	7.9	24.2	26.3	2.1
Prince Edward Island	260	237	-8.8	26.1	24.0	-2.1
Nova Scotia	2,294	2,228	-2.9	32.8	32.4	-0.4
New Brunswick	1,456	1,450	-0.4	25.9	25.8	-0.1
Québec	20,133	18,078	-10.2	50.0	45.7	-4.3
Ontario	29,352	25,035	-14.7	38.8	32.9	-5.9
Manitoba	2,677	2,603	-2.8	32.0	30.9	-1.1
Saskatchewan	2,320	2,216	-4.5	31.6	30.6	-1.0
Alberta	7,599	7,509	-1.2	39.0	38.3	-0.7
British Columbia	10,357	10,898	5.2	43.2	45.0	1.8
Yukon	112	115	2.7	55.5	56.1	0.6
Northwest Territories	94	99	5.3	38.1	38.9	0.8

■

OTHER RELEASES

Steel primary forms

Week ending January 24, 1998 (preliminary)

Steel primary forms production for the week ending January 24, 1998, totalled 295 641 metric tonnes, up 0.2% from the week-earlier 295 005 metric tonnes and up 1.7% from the year-earlier 290 714 metric tonnes. The cumulative total at the end of the week was 979 368 metric tonnes, a 5.1% increase compared with 931 463 metric tonnes for the same period in 1997.

For further information on this release, contact Huguette Montcalm (613-951-9827; Internet: monthug@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Electric lamps

December 1997

Light bulb and tube manufacturers sold 29.7 million light bulbs and tubes in December, up 6.1% from the 28.0 million a year earlier. Year-to-date sales at the end of December totalled 310.9 million light bulbs and tubes, an increase of 2.5% from the 303.4 million a year earlier.

The December 1997 issue of *Electric lamps* (43-009-XPB, \$7/\$62) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Laurie Vincent (613-951-3523; Internet: vincwil@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Electric lamps

Fourth quarter 1997

Data on manufactures' imports, production and inventories of electric lamps for the fourth quarter of 1997 are now available.

For further information on this release, contact Laurie Vincent (613-951-3523; Internet:

vincwil@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Cereals and oilseeds review

November 1997

Additional information is now available in the Cereals and oilseeds review for November.

The November issue of *Cereals and oilseeds review* (22-007-XPB, \$15/\$149), which contains the December situation report, will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact Rick Burroughs (613-951-2890) or Les Macartney (613-951-8714), Grain Marketing Unit, Agriculture Division. ■

Electric power generating stations

1996

Data on electric power generating stations in operation in 1996 are now available. The stations are classified by type, owner, fuel or water source, and province or territory.

The 1996 issue of *Electric power generating stations* (57-206-XPB, \$30) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For further information on this release, contact André Lefebvre (613-951-3560; Internet: alefeba@statcan.ca), Energy Section, Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

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