## The 1996 CanCHEC: Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort Profile

by Tanya Christidis, Félix Labrecque-Synnott, Lauren Pinault, Abdelnasser Saidi and Michael Tjepkema

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# The 1996 CanCHEC: Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort Profile 

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#### Abstract

Analytical Studies: Methods and References Papers in this series provide background discussions of the methods used to develop data for economic, health, and social analytical studies at Statistics Canada. They are intended to provide readers with information on the statistical methods, standards and definitions used to develop databases for research purposes. All papers in this series have undergone peer and institutional review to ensure that they conform to Statistics Canada's mandate and adhere to generally accepted standards of good professional practice.


The papers can be downloaded free at www.statcan.gc.ca.

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#### Abstract

This paper describes the creation of the 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort (CanCHEC) -3.57 million respondents to the census long-form questionnaire who were retrospectively followed for mortality and mobility for 16.6 years from 1996 to 2012. The 1996 CanCHEC was limited to census respondents who were aged 19 or older on Census Day (May 14, 1996), were residents of Canada, were not residents of institutions, and had filed an income tax return. These respondents were linked to death records from the Canadian Mortality Database or to the T1 Personal Master File, and to a postal code history from a variety of sources. This is the third in a set of CanCHECs that, when combined, make it possible to examine mortality trends and environmental exposures by socioeconomic characteristics over three census cycles and 21 years of census, tax, and mortality data. This report describes linkage methodologies, validation and bias assessment, and the characteristics of the 1996 CanCHEC. Representativeness of the 1996 CanCHEC relative to the adult population of Canada is also assessed.


Keywords: Age-standardized mortality rate, census, cohort, data linkage, mortality, survival

## 1 Introduction

Since 2008, a number of population censuses have been linked to administrative health data (Bushnik et al. 2016; Rotermann et al. 2015; Withrow et al. 2017; Tjepkema, Wilkins and Long 2013) and to financial data (Jeon and Pohl 2016). These linked datasets have been instrumental in examining health inequalities and have been used in environmental health research (Crouse et al. 2012; Weichenthal et al. 2016).

In 2008, the 1991 Census was linked to 10 years of death records to study mortality by socioeconomic characteristics (Wilkins et al. 2008). In 2012, the dataset was enhanced by the addition of information about place of residence and cancer outcomes (Peters et al. 2013), and was named the Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort (CanCHEC). This dataset was particularly useful for environmental health research because of its long follow-up period (20 years), large size ( 2.6 million people), approximate representativeness (it was census-based), broad geographic coverage, and information about where people lived over a 30-year period (via postal codes from 1981 to 2011). The same linkage methodology was applied to the 2001 Census to create the 2001 CanCHEC (Pinault et al. 2016).

With similar methodology, the 1996 CanCHEC was created by linking the 1996 Census (long form) to mortality and tax files, which makes it possible to examine mortality by ethnocultural and socioeconomic factors (as measured on the 1996 Census) and associations between environmental exposures and health. In conjunction with the 1991 and 2001 CanCHECs, temporal trends in mortality can be traced by socioeconomic characteristics. Environmental hazards (for example, air pollution) and neighbourhood characteristics (for example, green space) can be integrated into estimates of exposure because of the inclusion of annual residential location.

This report describes the deterministic and probabilistic linkage methodologies used to create the 1996 CanCHEC as well as the validation methods and bias assessment. It also describes the 1996 CanCHEC (or the Cohort) by demographic and socioeconomic factors, and mortality rates. Approval for the record linkage was provided by the Executive Management Board at Statistics Canada in 2016 (Record Linkage no. 047-2016) (Statistics Canada n.d.a).

## 2 Data

### 2.1 1996 Census of Population

The 1996 Census of Population was conducted on May 14, 1996. Information about residents of enumerated households was collected with two questionnaires: the short-form questionnaire ( $80 \%$ of households) and long-form questionnaire (typically, 20\% of households, except on Indian reserves and remote/northern areas, where $100 \%$ of households receive the long-form questionnaire). The short-form questionnaire gathered basic information: name, relationship to "person 1" (head of household), date of birth, sex, legal marital status, common-law status, and first language learned in childhood. The long-form questionnaire contained 55 questions, including the 7 listed above, on topics such as labour force activity, income, education, activity limitations, citizenship, housing, and ethnic origin.

Names were not used for analytical or linkage purposes, as digitization of the 1996 Census questionnaires did not include names of respondents. To perform the linkage with names would require a time- and labour-intensive review of the census questionnaires, which have been preserved in microfiche format. However, names of respondents were used to manually validate a sample of links and compute a rate of false positives (Subsection 3.1).

The census questionnaire was sent to approximately $98 \%$ of households; in the other $2 \%$ (typically in remote and northern areas, on most Indian reserves, and in special core areas of major cities), the questionnaire was completed by interview at the household. Some remote northern areas had been enumerated before Census Day, in February and March 1996.

The estimated population undercoverage rate (people not enumerated) of the 1996 Census was $3.18 \%$ (Statistics Canada 1999a). Undercoverage was higher for males (3.89\%, versus $2.49 \%$ for females). Higher undercoverage rates by age were among 20- to 24 -year-olds (men 9.48\%; women $6.45 \%$ ) and 25 - to 34 -year-olds (men 7.74\%; women 3.94\%). A total of 78 Indian reserves or Indian settlements were incompletely enumerated and not included in 1996 Census products, and so were not available for linkage.

### 2.2 Derived Record Depository

The Derived Record Depository (DRD) is a national relational database created by linking selected Statistics Canada source index files (for example, vital statistics registration records for births and deaths, tax records, and immigrant data) to produce a list of unique individuals. Each of these files linked only once to the DRD, and each individual in the DRD is assigned a unique Social Data Linkage Environment (SDLE) identifier (Statistics Canada n.d.b; St-Jean 2016). For the 1996 CanCHEC, version 4 of the DRD was used. To ensure consistent methodology with the 1991 and 2001 CanCHECs, a tax file was built from individual variable-specific tables prepared for the SDLE.

Historical residential postal codes were extracted from the DRD. These postal codes come from Canada Revenue Agency sources, such as the T1 Personal Master File, Canada Child Tax Benefit files, and dependant registries from 1981 to 2012. The postal codes reported on the T1 Personal Master File reflect the mailing address for that tax year, and are assumed to be broadly representative of where a person resides.

Mortality records that were previously linked to the DRD were deterministically linked to the Cohort using the DRD identifier. Deaths captured in the Canadian Mortality Database (CMDB) (1970 to 2012) were probabilistically linked to the DRD using standard linkage methodology (St-Jean 2016). The linkage rate was estimated at $95 \%$ to $98 \%$ for deaths that occurred between 1996 and 2012. Deaths reported in the CMDB included underlying cause of death and were coded using
the version of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) in effect at the time of death. Deaths that occurred from 1996 to 1999 were coded according to the Ninth Revision of the ICD (ICD-9); deaths that occurred from 2000 to 2012 were coded according to the Tenth Revision (ICD-10). Deaths reported via tax filings did not include data on cause of death. For comparability in this paper, deaths previously coded by ICD-9 and ICD-10 were grouped according to the Global Burden of Disease coding (Mathers, Lòpez and Murray 2006).

## 3 Methods

### 3.1 Linkage of 1996 Census to the Derived Record Depository

Persons enumerated by the 1996 Census (respondents to both the long-form and short-form questionnaires, referred to herein as "respondents") were linked to the DRD using deterministic and probabilistic methodology.

Data on sex and birth date were obtained from the DRD version 4. Records were retained if they had a birth date before Census Day, and either a death date after Census Day or no reported death date. Records missing a birth date or postal code were dropped. If sex was missing, two alternate records with options of both male and female were generated in place of the original record. Postal code history from the DRD address table was linked to the Cohort with a deterministic linkage.

In the first of four sequential groups of the deterministic linkage process, the keys used to link the census and the DRD were sex, date of birth, 1996 postal code, and marital status (names were not electronically available for the 1996 Census). The second group was identical to the first, except that it did not consider marital status. The third group used sex, date of birth, and 1995 postal code. Finally, the fourth group used sex, date of birth, and the closest available postal code before 1995 or after 1996 in cases where the 1995 and 1996 postal codes were both missing.

In each group, only records with unique keys on both the DRD and census files were retained in the Cohort; duplicates and non-matches were considered in subsequent linkage groups. Respondents to the census short-form questionnaire were included at this stage to reduce the number of records to be considered for probabilistic linkage and to reduce the number of falsepositive matches, because records from the DRD linked to records of the short-form questionnaire at the deterministic step were not eligible for linkage in the subsequent probabilistic step.

Respondents to the census long-form questionnaire who were not matched during the deterministic linkage and who did not reside in an institutional collective dwelling were considered for probabilistic linkage. Several groups were formed, using linkage weights derived from a probabilistic linkage methodology influenced by the Fellegi-Sunter theory of record linkage (Fellegi and Sunter 1969). The following variables were used for probabilistic linkage: birth date, spousal birth date (if applicable), sex, marital status, postal code(s), and rural/urban status based on postal code. A total of six probabilistic linkage groups were considered for inclusion in the Cohort.

To determine the linkage threshold and the groups that would be included in the Cohort, linkage accuracy was estimated for all potential linkage groups by verifying a random sample of linked records against the original scanned census questionnaires, which contained respondents' names. Respondents for whom the name and birth dates were a match (allowing for minor spelling differences) to those on tax files were considered a successful match. Groups for which $90 \%$ of records were not successfully matched were excluded from the Cohort. Five out of the six groups were included in the final probabilistic linkage.

To be considered in scope, individuals had to meet the following criteria: they were enumerated by the 1996 Census long form; they were aged 19 or older on Census Day (May 14, 1996); they were enumerated as residents of Canada (overseas nationals were excluded); they were not institutional residents; and they had filed an income tax return.

### 3.2 Re-weighting and bootstrap weights

Sampling weights were created for the 1996 CanCHEC to (1) ensure that the Cohort represents the target population (non-institutional population aged 19 or older in 1996); and (2) reduce bias (for example, due to missed links between census and DRD). Weights for the census long-form questionnaire were adjusted by model parameters on the probability of linking to the DRD. These sampling weights were then calibrated according to the raking method (Kalton and FloresCervantes 2003) and incorporated trimming to prevent negative or excessively large weights (Izrael, Battaglia and Frankel 2009).

Generalized bootstrap weights were derived from the calibrated sampling weights using the Poisson bootstrap method proposed by Beaumont and Patak (2012). The same raking and trimming macro that was used to calibrate the sampling weights (after adjustment for missed links) was applied to each of the 500 bootstrap replicates. These weights were finally adjusted to take into account the high sampling fraction of the census, using a method proposed by Beaumont and Charest (2012).

### 3.3 Mortality analysis

Mortality was tracked for 16.6 years from May 14, 1996 (Census Day), to December 31, 2012. Based on records of death, person-years-at-risk (PYAR) were calculated for each respondent. Respondents who lived to the end of follow-up were assigned a PYAR of 16.6 years; those who died during follow-up were given a PYAR reflective of the length of time between Census Day and their death. PYAR was calculated starting at the beginning of the day on Census Day; that is, if someone died on May 14,1996 , their PYAR was equivalent to one day $(1 / 365.25=0.00273$ years at risk). To examine the comparability of the Cohort to the Canadian population, the years that each Cohort member survived during follow-up were compared with survival rates in the Canadian population over the same period.

Age-standardized mortality rates (ASMRs) and 95\% confidence intervals were calculated using the PYAR value and the PROC RATIO procedure in SUDAAN version 11.0 .1 (Research Triangle Institute 2013). The procedure used the balanced repeated replication design with calibrated sampling weights and calibrated bootstrap weights. ASMRs were calculated for populationstandardized five-year age groups at Cohort inception (Table 1) for a variety of demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. Rate ratios (RRs) and 95\% confidence intervals were calculated using ASMR standard errors that were calculated from PROC RATIO and the methodology of Carriere and Roos (1997).

## Table 1

## Standardized population percentages from the 1996 Census used for age-standardized mortality rates

| Age group (years) | Population group weight |
| :--- | ---: |
|  | percent |
| 20 to 24 | 8.8 |
| 25 to 29 | 9.4 |
| 30 to 34 | 11.4 |
| 35 to 39 | 11.6 |
| 40 to 44 | 10.6 |
| 45 to 49 | 9.6 |
| 50 to 54 | 7.4 |
| 55 to 59 | 6.0 |
| 60 to 64 | 5.5 |
| 65 to 69 | 5.2 |
| 70 to 74 | 4.6 |
| 75 to 79 | 3.6 |
| 80 to 84 | 3.0 |
| 85 to 89 | 2.0 |
| 90 and older | 1.4 |

Note: Percentages may not add up to $100 \%$ because of rounding.
Source: Statistics Canada, authors' calculations based on data from the 1996 Census of Population.

### 3.4 Analytical file

The analytical file contains nearly all the variables in the census long-form questionnaire, including marital status, household composition, languages, labour force activity, income, education, physical activity limitations, housing, Aboriginal identity, immigration, and ethnic origin. However, variables that were the result of write-in responses were removed. Details about the census variables are available elsewhere (Statistics Canada 1999b).

Variables were derived for the analytical file to simplify categorization of key concepts and comparisons between cohorts. For example, highest level of education was grouped into four categories: less than secondary graduation, secondary graduation, postsecondary diploma, and university degree. Documentation for the derived variables is available in the 1996 CanCHEC Technical Report (Christidis and Tjepkema 2017).

One of the derived variables ranked the population by income adequacy quintiles and deciles. For each economic family or unattached individual, total pre-tax, post-transfer income from all sources was pooled across all family members, and the ratio of total income to the Statistics Canada low-income cut-off (LICO) for the applicable family size and community size group was calculated (Statistics Canada 1999b). Thus, all members of an economic family were assigned the same LICO ratio, which was calculated for all non-institutionalized persons (the in-scope population), including people living on Indian reserves. This population was then ranked according to the LICO ratio, and quintiles and deciles were constructed, nationally and within each census metropolitan area or census agglomeration, or rural and small town area. The reason for constructing the quantiles within each area was to account for regional differences in housing costs, which are not reflected in the LICO, and to base comparisons across areas on comparable percentages of the population in each quantile.

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Cohort

The Cohort was formed in several steps (Figure 1), first by combining the deterministic links of respondents to the census long-form questionnaire who did not reside in institutional collective dwellings with the probabilistic links. Of the original 4,706,075 respondents to the 1996 Census long-form questionnaire, $4,389,835$ ( $93.3 \%$ ) were "in-scope." The number linked to tax records was $3,566,775$ ( $81.3 \%$ of the in-scope population); $99.5 \%$ of records were estimated to be true links (less than $0.5 \%$ false positive error rate). The majority of these Cohort members (93.5\%) were linked via deterministic linkage, for which $99.5 \%$ of records were considered to be true links (based on a manual review of 266 records). Fewer Cohort members (6.5\%) were linked through the probabilistic linkage, for which $99.4 \%$ of links were considered to be true links (based on a manual review of 450 records). After mortality records were linked to the Cohort, 90 respondents were removed because of ambiguous death records, resulting in a final Cohort of 3,566,685 census respondents.

Figure 1
Flow chart of the creation of the in-scope census population and the final 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort, showing respondent exclusions


Sources: Statistics Canada, Derived Record Depository and authors' calculations based on data from the 1996 Census of Population.

Table 2
In-scope and in-cohort men, by selected census characteristics, 1996

|  | Included in the Cohort |  |  | Cohort as a Not included in the Cohort |  |  | Ratio ${ }^{3}$ | Deaths ${ }^{1}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | respondents ${ }^{1}$ | In-cohort ${ }^{1}$ | In category | of total ${ }^{2}$ | Not linked ${ }^{1}$ | In category |  |  |
|  | Column 1 | Column 2 | Column 3 | Column 4 | Column 5 | Column 6 | Column 7 | Column 8 |
|  | number | number | percent | percent | number | percent | ratio | number |
| Total men | 2,135,970 | 1,728,260 | 100 | 81 | 407,710 | 100 | 1.00 | 300,340 |
| Age group (years) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 19 to 24 | 243,440 | 164,130 | 11 | 67 | 79,310 | 19 | 1.71 | 2,440 |
| 25 to 44 | 964,300 | 769,585 | 45 | 80 | 194,710 | 48 | 1.06 | 26,755 |
| 45 to 64 | 636,515 | 547,455 | 30 | 86 | 89,060 | 22 | 0.73 | 98,590 |
| 65 to 84 | 275,835 | 235,400 | 13 | 85 | 40,435 | 10 | 0.77 | 161,055 |
| 85 and older | 15,880 | 11,685 | 1 | 74 | 4,195 | 1 | 1.38 | 11,505 |
| Marital status |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Not married or common-law | 681,190 | 450,890 | 32 | 66 | 230,300 | 56 | 1.77 | 66,825 |
| Married or common-law | 1,454,780 | 1,277,370 | 68 | 88 | 177,410 | 44 | 0.64 | 233,515 |
| Highest level of education |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Less than secondary diploma | 690,965 | 542,585 | 32 | 79 | 148,375 | 36 | 1.12 | 163,380 |
| Secondary diploma or higher | 1,445,010 | 1,185,675 | 68 | 82 | 259,335 | 64 | 0.94 | 136,960 |
| Labour force participation |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Employed | 1,429,330 | 1,181,155 | 67 | 83 | 248,180 | 61 | 0.91 | 88,825 |
| Unemployed | 169,610 | 124,190 | 8 | 73 | 45,415 | 11 | 1.40 | 11,620 |
| Not in labour force | 537,030 | 422,915 | 25 | 79 | 114,115 | 28 | 1.11 | 199,895 |
| Visible minority status |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Not visible minority | 1,925,550 | 1,569,600 | 90 | 82 | 355,950 | 87 | 0.97 | 287,075 |
| Visible minority | 210,420 | 158,660 | 10 | 75 | 51,760 | 13 | 1.29 | 13,265 |
| Mobility in past year |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Did not move | 1,787,535 | 1,510,635 | 84 | 85 | 276,900 | 68 | 0.81 | 280,515 |
| Moved | 348,435 | 217,625 | 16 | 62 | 130,815 | 32 | 1.97 | 19,825 |
| Rural or urban |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Rural | 546,495 | 448,455 | 26 | 82 | 98,040 | 24 | 0.94 | 82,320 |
| Urban | 1,589,475 | 1,279,805 | 74 | 81 | 309,670 | 76 | 1.02 | 218,020 |

1. Because figures are randomly rounded to base 5 , they may not add up to totals.
2. Column 2 divided by Column 1.
3. Column 3 divided by Column 6.

Note: The 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort is derived from the 1996 Census of Population and the Derived Record Depository.
Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort.

Table 3
In-scope and in-cohort women, by selected census characteristics, 1996

|  | In-scope census respondents ${ }^{1}$ | Included in the Cohort |  | Cohort as a Not included in the Cohort |  |  | Ratio ${ }^{3}$ | Deaths ${ }^{1}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | In-cohort ${ }^{1}$ | In category | percentage of total ${ }^{2}$ | Not linked ${ }^{1}$ | In category |  |  |
|  | Column 1 | Column 2 | Column 3 | Column 4 | Column 5 | Column 6 | Column 7 | Column 8 |
|  | number | number | percent | percent | number | percent | ratio | number |
| Total women | 2,253,865 | 1,838,425 | 100 | 82 | 415,435 | 100 | 1.00 | 265,275 |
| Age group (years) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 19 to 24 | 240,775 | 165,040 | 11 | 69 | 75,740 | 18 | 1.71 | 1,250 |
| 25 to 44 | 984,050 | 813,580 | 44 | 83 | 170,465 | 41 | 0.94 | 18,390 |
| 45 to 64 | 642,940 | 554,765 | 29 | 86 | 88,175 | 21 | 0.74 | 66,015 |
| 65 to 84 | 353,510 | 283,660 | 16 | 80 | 69,850 | 17 | 1.07 | 158,940 |
| 85 and older | 32,585 | 21,385 | 1 | 66 | 11,205 | 3 | 1.87 | 20,685 |
| Marital status |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Not married or common-law | 787,370 | 565,535 | 35 | 72 | 221,835 | 53 | 1.53 | 131,415 |
| Married or common-law | 1,466,490 | 1,272,890 | 65 | 87 | 193,600 | 47 | 0.72 | 133,860 |
| Highest level of education |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Less than secondary diploma | 736,700 | 581,850 | 33 | 79 | 154,850 | 37 | 1.14 | 156,725 |
| Secondary diploma or higher | 1,517,160 | 1,256,575 | 67 | 83 | 260,590 | 63 | 0.93 | 108,550 |
| Labour force participation |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Employed | 1,210,660 | 1,015,625 | 54 | 84 | 195,040 | 47 | 0.87 | 40,925 |
| Unemployed | 132,750 | 101,665 | 6 | 77 | 31,085 | 7 | 1.27 | 4,620 |
| Not in labour force | 910,450 | 721,140 | 40 | 79 | 189,310 | 46 | 1.13 | 219,730 |
| Visible minority status |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Not visible minority | 2,026,075 | 1,666,120 | 90 | 82 | 359,955 | 87 | 0.96 | 254,295 |
| Visible minority | 227,790 | 172,305 | 10 | 76 | 55,485 | 13 | 1.32 | 10,980 |
| Mobility in past year |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Did not move | 1,905,525 | 1,607,665 | 85 | 84 | 297,860 | 72 | 0.85 | 248,440 |
| Moved | 348,340 | 230,760 | 15 | 66 | 117,575 | 28 | 1.83 | 16,835 |
| Rural or urban |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Rural | 524,310 | 433,885 | 23 | 83 | 90,425 | 22 | 0.94 | 57,630 |
| Urban | 1,729,550 | 1,404,540 | 77 | 81 | 325,010 | 78 | 1.02 | 207,645 |

[^0]Overall, $81.3 \%$ of the in-scope population was linked to the DRD-3,566,685 non-institutional individuals aged 19 or older (Tables 2 and 3). Linkage rates were below $70 \%$ among 19- to 24-year-olds ( $69 \%$ women, $67 \%$ men) and women aged 85 or older ( $66 \%$ ). Men and women who had moved in the last year had low linkage rates ( $62 \%, 66 \%$ ), as did men who were not married or in a common-law relationship (66\%).

### 4.2 Weighting

The characteristics of the weighted in-scope respondents (using original census sampling weights) and weighted Cohort respondents (using calibrated weights for missed links) were compared to assess how well the Cohort sampling weights reflect the target population and reduce bias (Table 4). Proportions were estimated by selected characteristics and compared between the Cohort and the original census (using a ratio measure). Ratios close to 1.00 indicate that the Cohort sampling weights adequately addressed differences in the in-scope and Cohort groups. After re-weighting, the Cohort slightly underrepresented unmarried men and women ( $0.98,0.99$ ), men in urban areas ( 0.99 ), men who moved in the year before the census ( 0.98 ), and unemployed women (0.99). The Cohort slightly overrepresented men and women who were married or in a common-law relationship (1.01, 1.01), men and women in rural communities (1.02, 1.01 ), and women who had moved in the year before the census (1.01).

Table 4
Selected characteristics of weighted in-scope and weighted cohort, by sex, 1996


1. Because figures are randomly rounded to base 5 , they may not add up to totals
2. Ratio is cohort percent divided by in-scope percent.

Note: The 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort is derived from the 1996 Census of Population and the Derived Record Depository.
Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort.

### 4.3 Mortality

Of the $3,566,685$ Cohort members, 565,615 (15.9\%) died during the 16.6-year follow-up. The annual number of deaths rose each calendar year, reaching 40,640 in 2012 (Table 5). About 98\% of deaths were ascertained by linkage to the CMDB, which indicates cause of death. The remaining $2 \%$ were ascertained from the T1 tax file, which provides only the date of death. In general, the percentages of deaths that were identified from tax files did not vary greatly by socioeconomic and demographic characteristics. The exceptions were visible minority and immigrant Cohort members, among whom $7.2 \%$ and $3.5 \%$ of deaths, respectively, were ascertained from tax files (data not shown).

Table 5
Number of Cohort deaths, by year, data source and sex

| Year of death | Data source |  | Sex |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Canadian mortality database ${ }^{1}$ | T1 tax files ${ }^{1}$ | Men ${ }^{1}$ | Women ${ }^{1}$ |
|  | number | number | number | number |
| 1996 | 15,520 | 280 | 9,545 | 6,290 |
| 1997 | 25,785 | 545 | 15,550 | 10,780 |
| 1998 | 27,285 | 550 | 16,205 | 11,630 |
| 1999 | 28,600 | 690 | 16,725 | 12,565 |
| 2000 | 29,410 | 630 | 16,730 | 13,310 |
| 2001 | 30,545 | 635 | 17,035 | 14,140 |
| 2002 | 31,600 | 665 | 17,325 | 14,940 |
| 2003 | 32,315 | 710 | 17,455 | 15,565 |
| 2004 | 32,670 | 705 | 17,605 | 15,765 |
| 2005 | 33,950 | 675 | 18,030 | 16,590 |
| 2006 | 36,005 | 750 | 18,965 | 17,795 |
| 2007 | 37,080 | 685 | 19,385 | 18,385 |
| 2008 | 37,705 | 700 | 19,685 | 18,725 |
| 2009 | 38,095 | 735 | 19,825 | 19,010 |
| 2010 | 38,575 | 835 | 19,870 | 19,535 |
| 2011 | 39,240 | 770 | 20,075 | 19,935 |
| 2012 | 39,705 | 935 | 20,320 | 20,315 |

1. Randomly rounded to base 5.

Note: The 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort is derived from the 1996 Census of Population and the Derived Record Depository.
Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort.
Chart 1 shows the proportion of the Cohort who survived during the 16.6-year period (from 1996 to 2012), by age and sex, along with composite life tables (1995-1997 to 2010-2012). The trend in the proportion who survived was similar in each data source. At older ages ( 80 or older), the proportion surviving was slightly greater in the Cohort than in the life tables, perhaps the result of excluding the institutional population from the Cohort.

## Chart 1 <br> Proportion of respondents surviving the 16.6-year follow-up period (1996 to 2012), by age and sex, compared with Canada life tables



Note: The 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort (CanCHEC) is derived from the 1996 Census of Population and the Derived Record Depository.
Sources: Statistics Canada, 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort, and authors' calculations based on data from Canada life tables.

Detailed mortality statistics (ASMRs, RRs) were calculated for the population by various socioeconomic and demographic characteristics (Tables 6 and 7). Mortality rates were higher among people who were not in the labour force, compared with those who were employed. A clear gradient by educational attainment was apparent, with the highest ASMRs among people with less than secondary graduation. A gradient was also evident by income adequacy quintile, with ASMRs highest among the lowest quintile. Mortality rates also varied by community size, mobility, Aboriginal identity, and visibility minority status. RRs reflect the relative differences between the ASMRs in each subgroup, with one group (reference group) held at 1.00 and other RRs calculated as a ratio relative to the reference group.

Table 6
Number of deaths, age-standardized mortality rate (ASMR) per 100,000 person-years at risk and rate ratios (RRs), men, Canada, 1996 to 2012

|  | Deaths ${ }^{1}$ | 95\% CI ${ }^{2}$ |  |  | RR | 95\% CI ${ }^{2}$ |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | ASMR | From | To |  | From | To |
|  | number | rate | rate | rate | ratio | rate | rate |
| Highest level of education |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Less than secondary graduation | 163,365 | 2,724 | 2,701 | 2,746 | 1.38 | 1.34 | 1.42 |
| Secondary graduation | 87,425 | 2,417 | 2,381 | 2,453 | 1.23 | 1.19 | 1.27 |
| Postsecondary diploma | 24,735 | 2,248 | 2,163 | 2,333 | 1.14 | 1.09 | 1.20 |
| University degree | 24,795 | 1,969 | 1,914 | 2,025 | 1.00 | ... | ... |
| Labour force participation |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Employed | 88,820 | 1,888 | 1,796 | 1,980 | 1.00 | ... | $\ldots$ |
| Unemployed | 11,625 | 2,053 | 1,731 | 2,375 | 1.09 | 0.92 | 1.28 |
| Not in labour force | 199,875 | 2,877 | 2,856 | 2,897 | 1.52 | 1.45 | 1.60 |
| Occupation: skill-based categories |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Professional | 11,535 | 1,638 | 1,413 | 1,862 | 1.00 |  | ... |
| Management | 12,315 | 1,969 | 1,699 | 2,239 | 1.20 | 0.99 | 1.46 |
| Skilled, technical, supervisory | 37,920 | 2,051 | 1,939 | 2,163 | 1.25 | 1.08 | 1.45 |
| Semi-skilled | 32,740 | 1,987 | 1,684 | 2,289 | 1.21 | 0.99 | 1.49 |
| Unskilled | 15,015 | 2,063 | 1,813 | 2,313 | 1.26 | 1.05 | 1.51 |
| No occupation | 190,790 | 2,957 | 2,936 | 2,978 | 1.81 | 1.57 | 2.07 |
| Visible minority status |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Not visible minority | 274,255 | 2,525 | 2,506 | 2,543 | 1.00 | ... |  |
| Visible minority | 13,265 | 1,796 | 1,715 | 1,878 | 0.71 | 0.68 | 0.74 |
| Not applicable (Aboriginal) | 12,795 | 3,122 | 2,914 | 3,329 | 1.22 | 1.17 | 1.27 |
| Mobility in past year |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Did not move | 280,495 | 2,471 | 2,453 | 2,489 | 1.00 | ... |  |
| Moved | 19,825 | 2,634 | 2,530 | 2,737 | 1.07 | 1.02 | 1.11 |
| Community size |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Less than 10,000 | 82,315 | 2,541 | 2,501 | 2,581 | 1.07 | 1.05 | 1.09 |
| 10,000 to 99,999 | 44,635 | 2,641 | 2,601 | 2,682 | 1.11 | 1.09 | 1.13 |
| 100,000 to 499,999 | 28,790 | 2,552 | 2,503 | 2,601 | 1.07 | 1.05 | 1.10 |
| 500,000 to 999,999 | 32,990 | 2,493 | 2,439 | 2,546 | 1.05 | 1.02 | 1.07 |
| 1,000,000 or more | 111,585 | 2,380 | 2,351 | 2,409 | 1.00 | ... | ... |
| Income adequacy quintile |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 (lowest) | 51,500 | 2,979 | 2,937 | 3,020 | 1.39 | 1.35 | 1.43 |
| 2 | 83,995 | 2,645 | 2,615 | 2,675 | 1.23 | 1.20 | 1.27 |
| 3 | 63,380 | 2,442 | 2,403 | 2,481 | 1.14 | 1.10 | 1.18 |
| 4 | 52,845 | 2,302 | 2,251 | 2,354 | 1.07 | 1.04 | 1.11 |
| 5 (highest) | 48,595 | 2,145 | 2,085 | 2,204 | 1.00 | ... | ... |
| Aboriginal identity ${ }^{3}$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| First Nations | 9,600 | 3,060 | 2,911 | 3,209 | 1.26 | 1.20 | 1.33 |
| Métis | 2,095 | 3,096 | 2,708 | 3,485 | 1.28 | 1.13 | 1.45 |
| Inuit | 1,050 | 3,519 | 2,726 | 4,313 | 1.45 | 1.16 | 1.82 |
| No Aboriginal identity | 287,520 | 2,420 | 2,407 | 2,434 | 1.00 | ... | ... |

... not applicable

1. Randomly rounded to base 5 .
2. Confidence interval (CI) based on cohort sample weights and bootstrap weights.
3. Excludes those reporting multiple Aboriginal identities; rates calculated for 14 age groups (oldest was 85 years or older). Notes: The 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort is derived from the 1996 Census of Population and the Derived Record Depository.
Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort.

Table 7
Number of deaths, age-standardized mortality rate (ASMR) per 100,000 person-years at risk and rate ratios (RRs), women, Canada, 1996 to 2012

|  | Deaths ${ }^{1}$ |  | 95\% CI ${ }^{2}$ |  | RR | 95\% CI ${ }^{2}$ |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | ASMR | From | To |  | From | To |
|  | number | rate | rate | rate | ratio | rate | rate |
| Highest level of education |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Less than secondary graduation | 156,720 | 1,875 | 1,864 | 1,886 | 1.31 | 1.26 | 1.35 |
| Secondary graduation | 65,455 | 1,689 | 1,667 | 1,710 | 1.18 | 1.13 | 1.22 |
| Postsecondary diploma | 31,035 | 1,544 | 1,517 | 1,570 | 1.08 | 1.04 | 1.12 |
| University degree | 12,050 | 1,436 | 1,387 | 1,485 | 1.00 | ... | ... |
| Labour force participation |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Employed | 40,925 | 1,287 | 1,212 | 1,362 | 1.00 |  |  |
| Unemployed | 4,615 | 1,507 | 1,291 | 1,723 | 1.17 | 1.00 | 1.37 |
| Not in labour force | 219,720 | 1,854 | 1,844 | 1,863 | 1.44 | 1.36 | 1.53 |
| Occupation: skill-based categories |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Professional | 7,000 | 1,285 | 1,137 | 1,433 | 1.00 |  |  |
| Management | 3,310 | 1,561 | 1,034 | 2,088 | 1.21 | 0.85 | 1.73 |
| Skilled, technical, supervisory | 13,365 | 1,401 | 1,292 | 1,509 | 1.09 | 0.95 | 1.25 |
| Semi-skilled | 20,250 | 1,278 | 1,171 | 1,385 | 0.99 | 0.86 | 1.15 |
| Unskilled | 7,340 | 1,580 | 1,398 | 1,763 | 1.23 | 1.04 | 1.45 |
| No occupation | 214,000 | 1,875 | 1,865 | 1,885 | 1.46 | 1.30 | 1.64 |
| Visible minority status |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Not a visible minority | 244,190 | 1,759 | 1,749 | 1,768 | 1.00 | ... |  |
| Visible minority | 10,980 | 1,318 | 1,269 | 1,366 | 0.75 | 0.72 | 0.78 |
| Not applicable (Aboriginal) | 10,095 | 2,409 | 2,300 | 2,518 | 1.37 | 1.31 | 1.43 |
| Mobility in past year |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Did not move | 248,425 | 1,730 | 1,721 | 1,739 | 1.00 |  |  |
| Moved | 16,835 | 1,858 | 1,813 | 1,904 | 1.07 | 1.05 | 1.10 |
| Community size |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Less than 10,000 | 57,630 | 1,793 | 1,771 | 1,816 | 1.07 | 1.05 | 1.09 |
| 10,000 to 99,999 | 41,910 | 1,826 | 1,803 | 1,849 | 1.09 | 1.07 | 1.10 |
| 100,000 to 499,999 | 27,645 | 1,800 | 1,773 | 1,828 | 1.07 | 1.05 | 1.09 |
| 500,000 to 999,999 | 31,715 | 1,735 | 1,711 | 1,760 | 1.03 | 1.02 | 1.05 |
| 1,000,000 or more | 106,365 | 1,677 | 1,664 | 1,691 | 1.00 | ... | ... |
| Income adequacy quintile |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 (lowest) | 68,515 | 1,968 | 1,952 | 1,984 | 1.26 | 1.23 | 1.28 |
| 2 | 78,810 | 1,777 | 1,760 | 1,794 | 1.14 | 1.11 | 1.16 |
| 3 | 48,355 | 1,721 | 1,697 | 1,744 | 1.10 | 1.07 | 1.13 |
| 4 | 37,695 | 1,651 | 1,622 | 1,680 | 1.06 | 1.03 | 1.08 |
| 5 (highest) | 31,890 | 1,564 | 1,535 | 1,593 | 1.00 | ... | ... |
| Aboriginal identity ${ }^{3}$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| First Nations | 7,700 | 2,446 | 2,338 | 2,554 | 1.45 | 1.39 | 1.52 |
| Metis | 1,570 | 2,155 | 1,944 | 2,366 | 1.28 | 1.16 | 1.41 |
| Inuit | 780 | 2,483 | 2,052 | 2,914 | 1.47 | 1.24 | 1.75 |
| No Aboriginal identity | 255,165 | 1,684 | 1,677 | 1,692 | 1.00 | ... | ... |

... not applicable

1. Randomly rounded to base 5 .
2. Confidence interval (Cl) based on cohort sample weights and bootstrap weights.
3. Excludes those reporting multiple Aboriginal identities; rates calculated for 14 age groups (oldest was 85 years or older).

Note: The 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort is derived from the 1996 Census of Population and the Derived Record Depository.
Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort.
Table 8 shows the number of Cohort members who died, by cause. Most deaths were the result of non-communicable diseases ( $90 \%$ of male deaths, $80 \%$ of female deaths), specifically, neoplasms (34\% of male deaths, 29\% of female deaths) and cardiovascular diseases (33\% of male deaths, $28 \%$ of female deaths). Within these groups, the most frequently reported causes were ischemic heart disease ( $20 \%$ of male deaths, $14 \%$ of female deaths) and cancer of the trachea, bronchus or lung ( $10 \%$ of male deaths, $7 \%$ of female deaths).

Table 8
Number of deaths (among CMDB deaths) for selected causes of death, by Global Burden of Disease cause of death groups ${ }^{2}$ and sex, 1996 to 2012

|  | Male ${ }^{1}$ | Female ${ }^{1}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | number |  |
| Communicable, maternal, perinatal, and nutritional conditions (U001) | 11,755 | 11,525 |
| Infectious and parasitic diseases (U002) | 4,820 | 4,515 |
| Respiratory infections (U038) | 6,455 | 6,255 |
| Other communicable, maternal, perinatal, and nutritional conditions (U042, U049, U053) | 480 | 755 |
| Non-communicable diseases (U059) | 262,255 | 234,065 |
| Neoplasms (U060) | 98,595 | 83,835 |
| Mouth and oropharynx cancers (U061) | 1,840 | 865 |
| Esophageal cancer (U062) | 3,200 | 1,000 |
| Stomach cancer (U063) | 3,265 | 1,945 |
| Colon and rectal cancers (U064) | 10,610 | 8,770 |
| Liver cancer (U065) | 2,735 | 1,585 |
| Pancreas cancer (U066) | 4,840 | 4,770 |
| Trachea, bronchus, and lung cancers (U067) | 28,020 | 19,640 |
| Melanoma and other skin cancers (U068) | 1,900 | 1,125 |
| Breast cancer(U069) | 120 | 12,805 |
| Ovarian cancer (U072) |  | 4,125 |
| Prostate cancer (U073) | 10,320 |  |
| Bladder cancer (U074) | 3,180 | 1,260 |
| Lymphomas and multiple myeloma (U075) | 5,880 | 4,670 |
| Leukemia (U076) | 3,460 | 2,430 |
| Other neoplasms and malignant neoplasms (U070, U071, U077, U078) | 19,225 | 18,845 |
| Diabetes (U079) | 9,405 | 7,980 |
| Endocrine disorders (U080) | 2,880 | 3,035 |
| Neuropsychiatric disorders (U081) | 17,745 | 23,220 |
| Cardiovascular diseases (U104) | 95,170 | 81,650 |
| Ischemic heart disease (U107) | 57,090 | 39,490 |
| Cerebrovascular disease (U108) | 15,290 | 18,510 |
| Other cardiovascular diseases (U105, U106, U109, U110) | 22,790 | 23,650 |
| Respiratory diseases (U111) | 38,460 | 34,345 |
| Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (U112) | 13,655 | 10,305 |
| Other respiratory diseases (U113, U114) | 5,680 | 4,655 |
| All other non-communicable diseases ${ }^{3}$ (U098, U115, U120, U124, U125, U131, U143) | 19,125 | 19,385 |
| Injuries (U148) | 17,830 | 10,330 |
| Unintentional injuries (U149) | 11,670 | 8,375 |
| Self-Inflicted injuries (U157) | 5,690 | 1,710 |
| All other injuries (U158, U159, U160) | 470 | 245 |
| Other |  |  |
| III-defined death ${ }^{4}$ | 3,220 | 3,095 |

... not applicable

1. Randomly rounded to base 5 .
2. Coding from the ninth revision (ICD-9) and the tenth revision (ICD-10) of the International Classification of Diseases (as cited in Mathers, López and Murray 2006) to coding from the Global Burden of Disease from C.D. Mathers,
A.D. López, and C.J. Murray, 2006, "The burden of disease and mortality by conditions: Data, methods and results for 2001," in Global Burden of Disease and Risk Factors, ed. A.D. Lopez, C.D. Mathers, M. Ezzati, D.T. Jamison, and C.J.L. Murray, Chapter 3, Annex table 3A.2.
3. Other: sense organ diseases, skin diseases, musculoskeletal, congenital abnormalities, oral conditions, digestive diseases, genitourinary diseases
4. "Symptoms, signs, and ill-defined conditions" or "Injury deaths where the intent is not determined."

Note: The 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort is derived from the 1996 Census of Population and the Derived Record Depository.
Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort.

## 5 Discussion

The 1996 CanCHEC is a retrospective cohort that followed a sample of nearly one-fifth of Canadians 19 years of age or older to determine mortality over a follow-up period of 16.6 years. With this, the third CanCHEC, it is now possible to examine mortality trends spanning three census cycles and 21 years of data.

The 1996 CanCHEC was constructed by linking 81\% of respondents to the census long-form questionnaire to the DRD through probabilistic and deterministic linkages. The false positive error rate was less than $0.5 \%$, indicating that most links were true links. This is comparable to the 2001 CanCHEC, which linked $78.6 \%$ of in-scope census respondents to tax files and followed them for mortality ( $3,537,520$ of $4,500,245$ ), and to the original linkage results for the 1991 Census Cohort, where $80.0 \%$ of in-scope census respondents were linked to tax files and followed for mortality $(2,860,240$ of $3,576,485)$ (Pinault et al. 2016; Peters et al. 2013).

Linkage rates of the 1996 Cohort to the DRD differed by census characteristics. Rates were relatively low for respondents who were in the youngest or oldest age groups, not married, or of low income; who had moved in the past year; and who reported Aboriginal identity. These findings are consistent with those of the 1991 and 2001 Cohorts. The 2001 Cohort had lower linkage rates for respondents who were younger, Aboriginal, and movers in the previous year. The 1991 Cohort had lower linkage rates for respondents who were unmarried, were not working, had low income, or reported Aboriginal ancestry. In weighted analysis, the linkage bias was addressed and representativeness of the Cohort was improved.

The survival curve for the Cohort indicated strong concordance with national life tables. The curves diverged slightly at older ages (particularly at age 80) and among women, likely because of smaller sample sizes in these older age groups, and the exclusion of institutionalized residents from the Cohort. Higher survival rates for older women, compared with life table estimates, was also reported for the 1991 and 2001 Cohorts.

Mortality patterns were broadly consistent with the previous CanCHECs-ASMRs were higher among people who were not in the labour force, in the lowest income quintile, or reported Aboriginal identity (or ancestry in the 1991 Census).

## 6 Conclusion

This paper describes linkage of respondents to the 1996 Census long-form questionnaire to tax and mortality records to create the 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort (CanCHEC), an analytical dataset that can be used to examine mortality trends by demographic and socioeconomic characteristics and for environmental health research. This is the third in a set of similar cohorts, which offers the potential to study trends over three census cycles and 21 years of mortality follow-up. Validation revealed a slight bias which increased the probability of respondents to be included in the 1996 CanCHEC and linked to mortality databases, relative to the Canadian population. However, cohort weights were created to allow researchers to reduce the effect of this bias.

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[^0]:    1. Because figures are randomly rounded to base 5 , they may not add up to totals.
    2. Column 2 divided by Column 1.
    3. Column 3 divided by Column 6.

    Note: The 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort is derived from the 1996 Census of Population and the Derived Record Depository.
    Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort.

