

Demographic Transition in Canada

The demographic transition is a model which shows the progression of birth and death rate in a population as it matures from primitive to modern. It is a generalized interpretation of what has been observed around the world and, although every country does not fit the pattern perfectly, most follow the general trend. All countries experience first a sharp drop in the death and infant mortality rates, and then undergo a period of rapid population growth. Later, countries enter a time of gradual decline in birth rates. Developed countries have moved through the transition to phase 4 or 5, but most developing countries remain in either phase 2 or 3. This activity will allow you to investigate some specific aspects of the transition.

1. Use the data in Table 1 to construct a line graph of the birth and death rate versus time. Put them both on the same graph.

Table 1 Demographic Transition: Canada

Year	Birth Rate	Death Rate		Year	Birth Rate	Death Rate
1860	44.3	n/a		1950	24.1	9.1
1880	39.4	n/a		1960	23.6	7.8
1900	32.3	17.2		1970	18.2	7.3
1910	30.1	14.7		1980	16.0	6.9
1920	27.7	13.0		1990	15.9	7.0
1930	21.3	10.8		2000	11.9	7.1
1940	19.4	9.8		2010	11.3	7.1

Table 2 Population of Canada from 1870-2000

Year	Population	Year	Population
1870	3,625,000	1950	13,712,000
1880	4,255,000	1960	17,870,000
1890	4,779,000	1970	21,297,000
1900	5,301,000	1980	24,820,000
1910	6,988,000	1990	28,031,000
1920	8,556,000	2000	31,021,000
1930	10,208,000	2010	34,005,000
1940	11,381,000	2014	35,540,000

2. Using the data in Table 2, calculate the percent increase for each time period. Show your work. This can be calculated by:

$$\frac{\text{pop. at new time} - \text{pop. at old time}}{\text{population at old time}}$$

Construct a graph showing the percent increase versus each time period.

3. What can you say about the trend over time of birth and death rate in Canada? Which phase of the demographic transition do the data suggest we are in?

4. From your second graph, what can you say about the rate of growth of the Canadian population over time? Is this typical of developed countries?