

Infant Mortality Rates in First Nations in Alberta

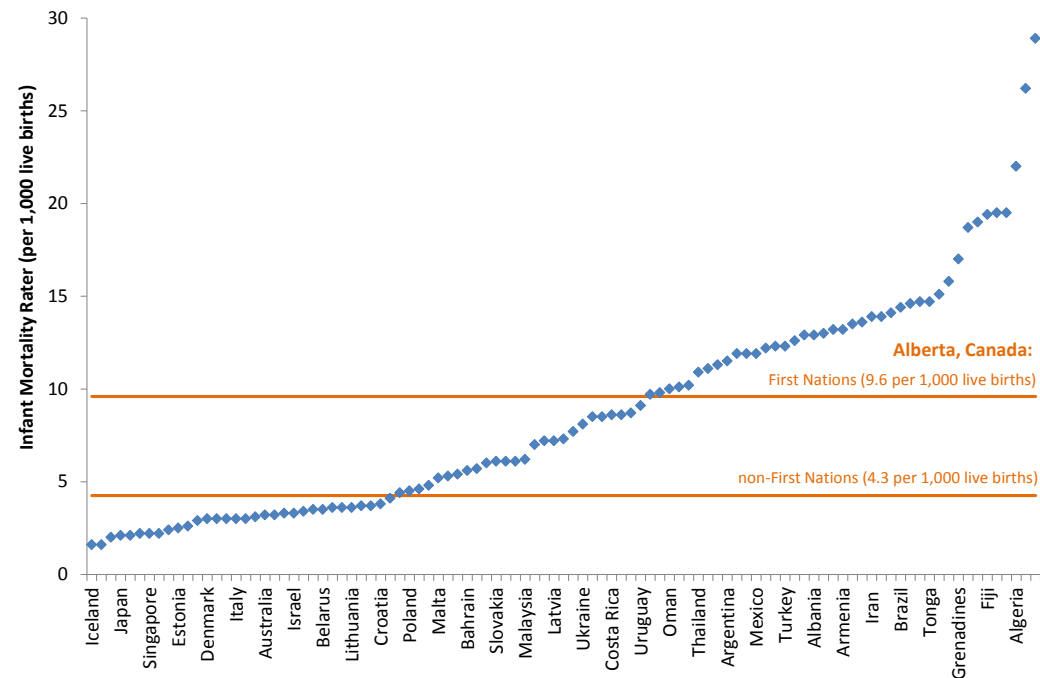
Infant mortality rates by higher human development country and First Nations status (Alberta, Canada), 2012

The infant mortality rate is the number of infant deaths (under 1 year of age) per 1,000 live births in a given year. It is an important indicator of population health as it is associated with a number of factors, including socio-environmental conditions. In this edition of *First Nations – Health Trends Alberta*¹ infant mortality rates are presented for 99 countries (not all labeled in figure) classified by the United Nations as ‘very high’ or ‘high’ human development² and for non-First Nations and First Nations in Alberta separately.

Country-specific infant mortality rates were reported by The World Bank.³ In 2014, mortality rates in ‘higher human development’ countries ranged from 1.6 per 1,000 live births in Iceland and Luxembourg to 28.9 per 1,000 in Azerbaijan. Canada was ranked 19th in 2014 with an infant mortality rate of 4.4 per 1,000 live births.

Infant mortality rates for First Nations in Alberta are double those in non-First Nations

In Alberta, the infant mortality rate for non-First Nations in 2014 was 4.3 per 1,000 live births. This mortality rate was comparable to countries such as Poland and New Zealand. For First Nations in the province, however, the infant mortality rate was double that of non-First Nations: 9.6 per 1,000 live births. Countries with infant mortality rates similar to First Nations in Alberta included Uruguay and China. The disparity in infant mortality rates between First Nations and non-First Nations in Alberta is similar to inequities reported between indigenous people and their non-indigenous counterparts in other developed countries: in Australia, for example, infant mortality rates were estimated to be two times higher in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in 2012-2014.⁴



1 This is the 4th in a series of First Nations-specific Health Trends compiled in collaboration by Alberta Health and the Alberta First Nations Information Governance Centre (AFNIGC). To suggest future topics, please contact the AFNIGC (communications@afnigc.ca; 403-539-5775).

2 United Nations Development Programme. Human Development Index and its components. Accessed online January 26, 2016 (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/HDI>).

3 The World Bank. Estimates developed by the UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality. Accessed online January 21, 2016 (<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.IMRT.IN>).

4 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2014) Deaths, Australia, 2013. Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics. Accessed online January 21, 2016

(<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/3302.0Main%20Features72014?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=3302.0&issue=2014&num=&view=>)