

Section 3.—Consumer Expenditure

A continuing program of surveys of family expenditure in urban areas was begun in 1953, and surveys were conducted since then at two-year intervals up to and including 1959. No expenditure surveys were taken in 1961, the decennial census year, but the regular program was resumed in 1962, when monthly surveys of food expenditure were made throughout the year and a recall survey of the complete budget was made in February and March 1963. Early in 1965 a recall survey of the complete budget was made, referring to the calendar year 1964.

The primary purpose in most of these surveys was to collect information for reviewing and revising, when necessary, the weights of the consumer price index. Therefore the surveys, with the exception of those for 1959 and 1964, have been restricted to cover only the families comparable in composition and income level to the consumer price index target group which was selected for index number purposes from a nation-wide survey conducted in 1947-48. For each of the four survey periods covering 1953, 1955, 1957 and 1962, respectively, the program consisted of a series of monthly surveys in which the major objective was the collection of detailed expenditure data on food, followed by a recall survey of all expenditures and income for the same calendar year. Detailed results for each survey have been published in two series of occasional publications of which the latest are: *Urban Family Food Expenditure, 1962* (Catalogue No. 62-524) and *Urban Family Expenditure, 1962* (Catalogue No. 62-525).

In the 1959 and 1964 survey programs the monthly surveys were omitted and the recall surveys were enlarged in size and scope, referring in 1959 to all families and individuals in cities with populations of 15,000 or over, and in 1964 to all families and individuals in eleven cities. The decision to limit the sample in 1964 to selected major cities was based on the desire to produce representative data for individual cities, in contrast to the broader regional representation afforded by the 1959 survey. Summary results of the 1959 survey appear in the 1962 Year Book at pp. 934-937. Table 11 presented here gives 1964 results for families of two or more, classified by family income. Tables showing expenditures for individuals only and for all families and individuals combined will be published in *Urban Family Expenditure, 1964*.

For the 1964 survey a sample of 3,000 households was drawn from households which had been interviewed earlier in the monthly labour force surveys. The following cities were represented: St. John's, Halifax, Quebec, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Regina-Saskatoon, Edmonton and Vancouver. The number of usable family records obtained was 2,034, of which 1,723 were families of two or more. Characteristics of sample families are shown at the beginning of the table in the form of averages and percentages.

The classification of expenditures by income level shows how expenditures vary as family income increases. Although dollar amounts expended increase in all consumption groups as income increases, the proportions of total expenditure going to the basic necessities of food and shelter decline with rising income, reflecting the growing importance of other groups as more income becomes available for discretionary spending and as personal taxes account for a larger share of the family dollar.