

changes in assets and liabilities. The record-keeping phase was not featured in all the survey programs, particularly in the more recent surveys.

A primary use of such surveys is to provide information for constructing, reviewing and revising the weights of the consumer price index (see Chapter 21). Initially these small-scale sample expenditure surveys carried out in selected Canadian urban centres since 1953 were designed to follow changes in the patterns of a well-defined group of middle-income urban families known as the "target group" of the consumer price index. In recent years the demand for expenditure statistics to serve other needs of government, business, welfare organizations and academic research has resulted in a widening in the scope and size of the surveys. This culminated in the expansion of the biennial program for 1969 to provide a large-scale national survey for the first time since 1948-49 covering both urban and rural households in the 10 provinces.

The most recent survey, the eleventh in the series, was carried out in February and March 1975 and refers to the calendar year 1974 (to be published as *Urban family expenditure, 1974*). In order to produce data for individual cities, the main sample was concentrated in 14 major urban centres, with no restrictions imposed on family composition or income. For the 1974 survey the usable sample of 6,630 spending units was distributed in the cities of St. John's, Halifax, Saint John, Montreal, Quebec, Ottawa, Toronto, Thunder Bay, Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver.

6.2.1 Family (spending unit) concept

The definition of a family or spending unit used in the family expenditure surveys is not the same as that of the census, or the "economic family" concept used in the Surveys of Consumer Finances (see Section 6.1.1). The family or spending unit is defined as a group of persons dependent on a common or pooled income for the major items of expense and living in the same dwelling or one financially independent individual living alone. Never-married sons or daughters living with their parents are considered as part of their parents' spending unit. In the great majority of cases the members of spending units of two or more are related by blood, marriage or adoption, and are thus consistent with the "economic family" definition employed in surveys of family income, i.e. "a group of individuals sharing a common dwelling unit and related by blood, marriage or adoption". However, it should be noted that according to the "economic family" definition, unrelated persons living in the same household would be counted as unattached individuals. Under the definitions in the expenditure survey, it is possible for two or more unrelated persons to comprise one family or spending unit.

6.2.2 Family expenditure patterns

In addition to trend comparisons it is useful to classify the expenditure patterns of families by a number of related variables (e.g. family income, size of family, age of family head, and so on) to determine the influence and effects of these various factors on family spending habits. Such classifications will be available in the report *Urban family expenditure, 1974*. This section provides a brief trend comparison of expenditure patterns for 1969-74 and a classification of family expenditures in 1974 by income quintiles, income being the most influential of all factors bearing on most items of family spending.

Expenditure trends, 1969-74. While the average net income of survey families of two or more persons in 14 Canadian cities rose from \$10,243 in 1969 to \$16,147 in 1974, Table 6.9 indicates that there were few significant shifts in the overall expenditure patterns of these families during this period. The one possible exception arises from the increase in average incomes which resulted in personal income taxes forming 18.6% of total family expenditure in 1974 as compared to 15.2% in 1969. Food (17.2% in 1974), shelter (14.5%), clothing (7.2%), travel