

Family. A family is defined as a group of individuals sharing a common dwelling unit and related by blood, marriage or adoption. This is often referred to as the economic family and is a broader definition than that employed by most demographic studies and the census, where a family is restricted to a married couple with or without unmarried children or a parent with unmarried children. Under the survey definition all relatives in a household, regardless of the degree of relationship, constitute a family.

Unattached individual. An unattached individual is a person living alone or in a household where he is not related to any other household member. The incomes of unattached individuals are different from those of families, particularly as a large portion of them are young entrants into the labour force or elderly persons living on pensions. Tabulations on unattached individuals are not included here but can be found in *Income distributions by size in Canada* (Statistics Canada Catalogue 13-207).

Income. Survey estimates relate to money income received from all sources before payment of taxes and such deductions as pension contributions and insurance premiums. This income may be composed of: wages and salaries; net income of the self-employed, such as partners in unincorporated businesses, professional practitioners and farmers; investment income including interest, dividends, and rents; transfer payments, for example old age pensions, family allowances; and other money income such as retirement pensions and alimony. Thus the concept of income is similar to personal income in the national accounts except that, first, it covers only private households in the 10 provinces and not the non-commercial institutions such as churches and charitable organizations and, second, the survey estimates do not include imputed income such as the value of farm products produced and consumed on the farm. On the other hand, the survey income concept is broader than the income defined for the calculation of income tax since it includes such non-taxable money income as the Guaranteed Income Supplement and pensions to the blind.

Income trends, 1961-78

7.7.2

Tables 7.30 and 7.31 provide an indication of how family incomes changed over a period of years. The sample coverage changed in 1966 to include farm families, but this does not seriously affect the comparability of the data with earlier years. Although the first part of Table 7.30 indicates that the average income (in current dollars) from 1961 to 1977 increased four to five times in all regions, these changes do not reflect the decrease in the purchasing power of the dollar. The second part of Table 7.30 does take this into account and gives the average incomes in constant 1971 dollars. Averages in all regions have still at least doubled in constant dollar terms since 1951.

Major sources of income. The percentage distribution of families by major source of income within quintiles is shown in Table 7.36 for 1961-77. For this type of analysis families are arranged in an ascending order by size of income and divided into five equal groups or quintiles. The characteristics (major source of income) are then tabulated for each quintile.

Table 7.36 shows that while government transfer payments have replaced wages and salaries as the major source of income for the largest group of families in the lowest quintile, families in the other quintiles are still largely dependent on wages and salaries as their principal income source.

Regional income distributions. Although the average family income for all of Canada was \$21,346 in 1978, as Table 7.32 shows the average for the different regions ranged from \$17,064 in the Atlantic provinces to \$23,327 in British Columbia.

Income distributions by family characteristics

7.7.3

Income distributions are influenced by a variety of personal and labour force characteristics of the family and its head. While only three summary classifications of family income are presented here relating to age and sex of head, education of head and combination of income recipients, data on other variables may be found in the annual report *Income distributions by size in Canada* (Statistics Canada Catalogue 13-207).