

In 1987 alone, over \$10.4 billion was paid to approximately 3.1 million persons who experienced some interruption in their employment income. This compares, for example, with disbursements of \$4.4 billion in 1980. To provide some perspective, during the fiscal year 1985-86, a total of \$45.4 billion was paid in Canada through income security programs. Of this amount, 22.3% was distributed through Unemployment Insurance payments, 19.5% through the Old Age Security Program and 14.9% through the Canada and Quebec pension plans.

The Unemployment Insurance Act of 1971 covers virtually all paid workers in the labour force as well as members of the armed forces. The main exceptions are persons 65 years of age and over and individuals who work fewer than 15 hours per week and who earn less than 20% of the maximum weekly insurable earnings (respectively, \$113 and \$565 in 1988).

After a qualifying period, usually the 52 weeks immediately preceding the claim, workers may be eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits if they experience a loss of earnings. They may apply for regular benefits if they experience a layoff or for special benefits in case of sickness, birth or adoption of a child or retirement. In addition, there are fishing, job creation and work-sharing benefits.

On average, 1,033,000 persons received Unemployment Insurance benefits each month in 1987, down 17.2% or by 215,000 beneficiaries from 1983. Over the same period, average weekly benefits rose from \$152.72 to \$190.28 or by 24.6%. (See Tables 5.24 and 5.25.)

The Unemployment Insurance statistics are obtained from Employment and Immigration Canada. The data which are released monthly include information on claims received, benefits paid, disqualifications, beneficiaries and persons covered by Unemployment Insurance.

5.7.3 Compensation payments

Fatal occupational injuries and illnesses. Data on fatal occupational injuries and illnesses compiled by Labour Canada are collected from provincial worker compensation boards. From 1976 to 1987, an annual average of 969 industrial workers sustained fatal injuries and illnesses. Of 665 fatality reports received in 1987 (excluding Quebec), collisions, derailments or wrecks caused 131 deaths; being struck by or against an object, 120; falls and slips, 59; drowning, 41; being caught in, on or between objects or vehicles, 47; occupational illnesses, 120; fire, explosion, temperature extremes, 17; and the remaining 130 resulted from miscellaneous accidents (Tables 5.21 to 5.23).

5.7.4 Work injuries statistics

Over one million Canadians are injured every year in work-related accidents. About half of these injuries are sufficiently severe that employees need to take time off work to recuperate. In 1986, there were 586,718 work-related injuries in Canada for which time-loss or permanent disability claims were accepted by provincial Workers' Compensation Boards. Data on these injuries are supplied by the Boards under the aegis of the National Work Injuries Statistics Program.

In 1986, most injuries involved the back (27%); followed by the wrist, hand or finger(s) (22%); and the ankle, foot or toe(s) (10%). The most frequent types of accident were overexertion (30%), struck by an object (19%), and falls (16%). In terms of physical characteristics, or their nature, 48% of the injuries involved sprains and strains, and 17% resulted from contusions, crushing or bruising. The most common sources of injuries were working surfaces such as floors, ramps and platforms (13%), and voluntary and involuntary motions (11%).

5.8 Family incomes

Annual statistics on income distribution for families and individuals are derived from the Survey of Consumer Finances. The data are an important source of statistical information for government and non-government data users concerned with the development, analysis and evaluation of policies and programs related to the economic well-being of Canadians.

5.8.1 Family and income concepts

The survey, with a sample of approximately 31,500 dwellings, excludes residents of Yukon and Northwest Territories, and persons living in institutions, on Indian reserves and in military camps. A wide variety of tabulations are published for different units (households, families, individuals). Special tabulations and public use microdata files are available on a cost-recovery basis.

The following definitions are applicable to the tabulations presented.

Family. A group of individuals sharing a common dwelling unit and related by blood, marriage or adoption. This is often referred to as an economic family and is a broader definition than that employed by most demographic studies and the Census in which a family is restricted to a married couple with or without unmarried children or a parent with unmarried children.

Unattached individual. A person living alone or in a household where he or she is not related to other household members.