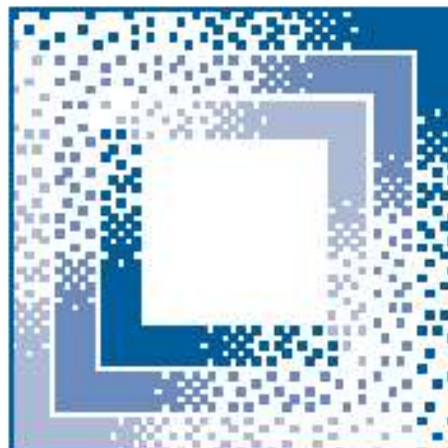




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Family History

July 2002



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Statistics Canada
Housing, Family and Social Statistics Division

General Social Survey - Cycle 15

Family History

July 2002

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- ... not applicable
- ^p preliminary
- ^r revised
- x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the Statistics Act
- E use with caution
- F too unreliable to be published

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Introduction

This report presents a first overview of the information collected in the 2001 General Social Survey (GSS), *Family History*. For a detailed analysis, please see *The Changing Conjugal Life in Canada* (Catalogue no. 89-576-XIE).

The General Social Survey has two principal objectives: first, to gather data on social trends in order to monitor changes in Canadian society over time, and second, to provide information on specific social issues of current or emerging interest. The content of the 2001 GSS focussed on Canadian families. Topics covered include marital history, common-law unions, biological, adopted and stepchildren, fertility intentions, leaving the family home, family structure while growing up, work and education histories, as well as a wide range of basic characteristics including the domestic situation of the respondent at the time of the survey. The 2001 survey was the third GSS focussing on the family, with the other two surveys having been conducted in 1990 and 1995.

The target population for the 2001 GSS included all people aged 15 and over, except full-time residents of Nunavut and the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. Data were collected from February 2001 to December 2001. Over this period, a total of 24,310 people were successfully interviewed, yielding a response rate of 79.3%. For further information on methods and data quality, please refer to the section at the end of this report.

Questions or comments pertaining to this report should be addressed to:

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Table 1

Families by family structure, Canada, 1995 and 2001¹

	1995		2001	
	(000s)	%	(000s)	%
Family structure				
Total families	8,363	100.0	8,790	100.0
Couples with no children	3,048	36.4	3,334	37.9
Married	2,489	29.8	2,720	30.9
Common-law	559	6.7	614	7.0
Couples with children	4,165	49.8	4,271	48.6
Intact families	3,734	44.6	3,768	42.9
Married	3,506	41.9	3,438	39.1
Common-law	228	2.7	330	3.8
Step families	430	5.1	503	5.7
Married	217	2.6	251	2.9
Common-law	213	2.5	252	2.9
Blended families	161	1.9	200	2.3
Her children	216	2.6	253	2.9
His children	54	0.6	50	0.6
Total married couples (with children)	3,723	44.5	3,688	42.0
Total common-law couples (with children)	442	5.3	583	6.6
Lone-parent families	1,151	13.8	1,185	13.5
Male parent	168	2.0	209	2.4
Female parent	982	11.7	976	11.1

¹ The sum of values categories may not add to total due to rounding.

Sources: General Social Survey, 1995 and 2001.

Table 2

Parents by family structure and union type, showing age group and sex, Canada, 2001¹

	Total	Intact families	Step families			Lone-parent families
			Total	Blended families	His or Her children	Total
000s						
Age group and sex						
Total						
15-24	240	141	22 E	F	15 E	77
25-34	1,985	1,513	268	138	130	204
35-44	3,858	2,999	452	190	262	407
45-54	2,602	2,096	213	62 E	152	293
55+	1,106	820	58 E	F	50 E	228
Total	9,791	7,569	1,013	406	608	1,209
Male						
15-24	58	47 E	F	F	F	F
25-34	789	657	113	55	58	19 E
35-44	1,803	1,512	220	82	138	71
45-54	1,330	1,116	140	48 E	92	74
55+	593	513	39 E	F	34 E	41 E
Total	4,572	3,845	522	193	328	205
Female						
15-24	181	93	12 E	F	F	76
25-34	1,198	857	155	83	72	186
35-44	2,055	1,487	232	108	124	336
45-54	1,272	980	73	F	59	219
55+	513	307	19 E	F	16 E	187
Total	5,220	3,724	492	212	280	1,004

¹ The sum of values categories may not add to total due to rounding.

Source: General Social Survey, 2001.

Methods

The target population for Cycle 15 of the GSS was all persons 15 years of age and over residing in Canada, excluding:

1. residents of Nunavut and the Yukon and Northwest Territories; and
2. full-time residents of institutions.

In the survey, all respondents were contacted by telephone. Households without telephones were therefore excluded; however, persons living in such households represent less than 2% of the target population. Survey estimates have been adjusted (i.e. weighted) to account for persons without telephones.

Data for Cycle 15 of the GSS were collected from February 2001 to December 2001. The sample was selected using the elimination of non-working banks method of random digit dialing.

From the 30,617 households in the GSS Cycle 15 sample, 24,310 usable responses were obtained, producing a response rate of 79.3%.

Data Limitations

The figures which appear in this report are estimates based on data collected from a small fraction of the population (roughly one person in 1,025) and are subject to error. The error can be divided into two components: sampling and non-sampling error.

Sampling error is the difference between an estimate derived from the sample and the one that would have been obtained from a census that used the same procedures to collect data from every person in the population. The size of the sampling error can be estimated from the survey results and an indication of the magnitude of this error is given for the estimates in this report. If the estimated sampling error is greater than 33.3% of the estimate, it is considered too unreliable to publish and the letter "F" is printed in table cells where this occurs. Although not considered too unreliable to publish, estimates with an estimated error between 16.6% and 33.3% of the related estimate should be "qualified" and used with caution. These are identified with the letter "E".

All other types of errors, such as coverage, response, processing, and non-response, are non-sampling errors. Many of these errors are difficult to identify and quantify.

Coverage errors arise when there are differences between the target population and the surveyed population. Households without telephones represent a part of the target population that was excluded from the surveyed population. To the extent that this excluded population differs from the rest of the target population, the estimates will be biased. In general, since these exclusions are small, one would expect the biases introduced to be small.

Glossary of terms

Family

The term “family” refers to a now-married or common-law couple with or without children of either or both spouses, or a lone parent of any marital status with at least one child living in the same dwelling.

Intact family

A family in which all children in the household are the biological and/or adopted offspring of both members of the couple.

Step family

Refers to a family in which at least one of the children in the household is from a previous relationship of one of the parents. In a simple step family, the child(ren) of one of the spouses lives in the household. A blended step family contains children of both spouses from one or more previous unions or one or more children from the current union and one or more children from previous unions.