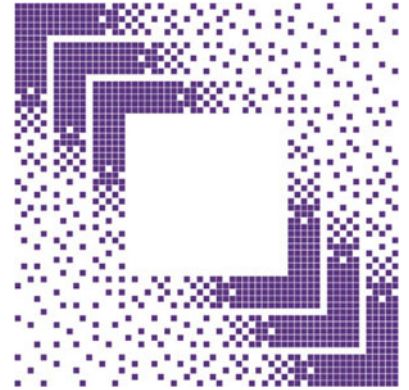




Catalogue no. 89F0115XIE

# The General Social Survey: An Overview



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# The General Social Survey: An Overview

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May 2006

Catalogue no. 89F0115XIE

Frequency: Irregular

ISSN 1710-4157

Ottawa

La version française de cette publication est disponible sur demande (n° 89F0115XIF au catalogue).

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## Note of appreciation

Canada owes the success of its statistical system to a long-standing partnership between Statistics Canada, the citizens of Canada, its businesses, governments and other institutions. Accurate and timely statistical information could not be produced without their continued cooperation and goodwill.

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## 1. Introduction

The two primary objectives of the General Social Survey (GSS) are:

- a) to gather data on social trends in order to monitor changes in the living conditions and well-being of Canadians over time; and
- b) to provide immediate information on specific social policy issues of current or emerging interest.

## 2. Background

The GSS program, established in 1985, conducts telephone surveys from a sample selected across the 10 provinces. The GSS is recognized for its regular collection of cross-sectional data that allows for trend analysis, and its capacity to test and develop new concepts that address emerging issues. The history of GSS data collection is outlined below.

GSS cycle topics	Date of GSS and Cycle no.							
	1 <sup>st</sup> series of survey	Cycle no.	2 <sup>nd</sup> series of survey	Cycle no.	3 <sup>rd</sup> series of survey	Cycle no.	4 <sup>th</sup> series of survey	Cycle no.
Health	1985	1	1991	6	... <sup>1</sup>	... <sup>1</sup>	... <sup>1</sup>	... <sup>1</sup>
Time use	1986	2	1992	7	1998	12	2005	19
Victimization	1988	3	1993	8	1999	13	2004	18
Education, work and retirement	1989	4	1994	9	2000	14	.. <sup>2</sup>	.. <sup>2</sup>
Family	1990	5	1995	10	2001	15	2006	20
Social support	1985	1	1990	5	1996	11	2002	16
Access to and use of information communication technology	2000	14	.. <sup>2</sup>	.. <sup>2</sup>	.. <sup>2</sup>	.. <sup>2</sup>	.. <sup>2</sup>	.. <sup>2</sup>
Social support and aging	2002	16	.. <sup>2</sup>	.. <sup>2</sup>	.. <sup>2</sup>	.. <sup>2</sup>	.. <sup>2</sup>	.. <sup>2</sup>
Social engagement	2003	17	.. <sup>2</sup>	.. <sup>2</sup>	.. <sup>2</sup>	.. <sup>2</sup>	.. <sup>2</sup>	.. <sup>2</sup>

1. This survey topic has been discontinued for the GSS series.

2. This survey series is not yet available.

.. not available for a specific reference period

... not applicable

The average length of an interview is 30-45 minutes. Each survey contains a core topic, focus or exploratory questions and a standard set of socio-demographic questions used for classification. More recent cycles have also included some qualitative questions which explore perceptions.

### 3. Target population

The survey collects data over a twelve month period from the population living in private households in the 10 provinces. For all cycles except Cycle 16, the population aged 15 and older has been sampled. Cycle 16 only sampled persons aged 45 and older.

Until 1998, the sample size was approximately 10,000 persons. This was increased in 1999 to 25,000. With a sample of 25,000, basic estimates are available at both the national and provincial levels. Depending on the survey topic, the increased sample size may also be sufficient to produce estimates for small population groups such as persons with disabilities, people in visible minorities and seniors. However, the sample size is not large enough to produce estimates for Aboriginal peoples.

**Figure 1: GSS sample size**

Cycle	Data collection	Sample size	Main core content	Focus issue
1	1985	11,200	Health	Social support
2	1986	16,390	Time use, social mobility	Language
3	1988	9,870	Personal risk	Victim services
4	1989	9,338	Education and work	No focus issue
5	1990	13,495	Family and friends	No focus issue
6	1991	11,924	Health	Various health topics
7	1992	9,815	Time use	Culture, sport and unpaid work activities
8	1993	10,385	Personal risk	Alcohol and drug use
9	1994	11,876	Education, work and retirement	Transition into retirement
10	1995	10,749	Family	Effects of tobacco smoke
11	1996	12,756	Social support	Tobacco use
12	1998	10,749	Time use	Sports participation/culture
13	1999	25,876	Victimization	Spousal, senior abuse/perceptions
14	2000	25,090	Technology – computer and internet	No focus issue
15	2001	24,310	Family history	No focus issue
16	2002	24,870	Social support and aging	Retirement planning and experience
17	2003	24,951	Social engagement	No focus issue
18	2004	23,766	Victimization	No focus issue
19	2005	25,000 <sup>P</sup>	Time use	Social
20	2006	25,000 <sup>P</sup>	Family history	Networks/trust/transportation Family transitions

<sup>P</sup> preliminary

## 4. Collection methodology

Computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) is used to collect data for the GSS. This collection method is attractive because of lower collection costs, as well as considerable flexibility with respect to sample design. Coverage is very good as less than 2% of households in the 10 provinces do not have telephones. Response rates for the GSS are typically around 80%.

Nevertheless, telephone interviewing does have some drawbacks: non-coverage of households, while low, is concentrated in population groups with low educational attainment or income; response rates tend to be lower than for face-to-face interviews, and there are limitations on the amount and type of data which can be collected. Alternative collection methods may be more appropriate than telephone interviewing for particular population groups or for specific types of data.

**Figure 2: GSS refusal and response rates (%)**

Cycle	Survey year	Household refusal	Respondent refusal	Response rate
1	1985	6.5	1.3	83.4
2	1986	6.2	2.8	78.9
3	1988	6.0	1.2	82.4
4	1989	7.2	1.7	80.7
5	1990	10.3	2.4	75.8
6	1991	5.6	1.5	80.2
7	1992	7.3	4.0	76.8
8	1993	5.6	3.6	81.6
9	1994	5.9	4.5	81.2
10	1995	6.0	4.3	81.4
11	1996	5.0	2.4	85.3
12	1998	8.7	3.7	77.6
13	1999	6.6	2.8	81.3
14	2000	8.4	8.6	80.8
15	2001	6.9	3.1	80.9
16	2002	...	...	86.3
17	2003	7.4	2.7	78.0
18	2004	9.4	2.7	74.5

Note: Random Digit Dialing was not used for Cycle 16.

... not applicable

## 5. Content and product description

### Health - Cycle 1 (1985) and Cycle 6 (1991)

In *Cycle 1*, the core content on health covered short and long term disability, well-being, height and weight, health problems, smoking, alcohol use, physical activity, sleep and use of health care services. Focus content concentrated on the elderly, including potential support networks, support received and given and social activities.

<i>Cycle 1 Products</i>	<i>Catalogue Number</i>	<i>Price</i>
Public Use Microdata File – Health and Social Support	12M0001XDB	\$750
Public Use Microdata File – User’s Guide		\$50
Health and Social Support, 1985 (GSS Analysis Series)	11-612-MPE, no. 1	\$30
<i>Canadian Social Trends</i> articles	11-008-XPE	\$11
Lifestyle Risks: Smoking and Drinking in Canada	Spring 1987	
Religious Affiliation in Canada	Autumn 1987	
Help Around the House: Support for Older Canadians	Autumn 1989	

*Cycle 6* marked the first repeat of the GSS core subject areas. Most of the core content of *Cycle 6* repeated that of *Cycle 1* (1985). As well, much of the core content from the Canada Health Survey (1978/79) was included. The three surveys can be used to measure changes in health status over time. Focus content was diffuse: flu vaccinations and emotional health measures sponsored by various divisions of Health and Welfare Canada and a health state classification system sponsored internally by the Analytical Studies Branch of Statistics Canada.

<i>Cycle 6 Products</i>	<i>Catalogue Number</i>	<i>Price</i>
Public Use Microdata File – Health	12M0006XDB	\$750
Public Use Microdata File – User’s Guide		\$50
Health Status of Canadians (GSS Analysis Series)	11-612-MPE, no. 8	\$40
<i>Canadian Social Trends</i> articles	11-008-XPE	\$11
Sleep Problems: Whom do They Affect?	Winter 1992	
Health and Socio-Economic Inequalities	Summer 1995	
Youth Smoking in Canada	Winter 1996	

### Time use - Cycle 2 (1986), Cycle 7 (1992), Cycle 12 (1998) and Cycle 19 (2005)

In *Cycle 2*, the core content on time use and social mobility covered the topics of daily activities done on one’s own and with others, inter- and intra-generational mobility, and personal well-being.

<i>Cycle 2 Products</i>	<i>Catalogue Number</i>	<i>Price</i>
Public Use Microdata File – Time Use, Social Mobility and Language Use	12M0002XDB	\$750
Public Use Microdata File – User’s Guide		\$50
Where Does Time Go? (GSS Analysis Series)	11-612-MPE, no. 4	\$40
Ups and Downs on the Ladder of Success: Social Mobility in Canada (GSS Analysis Series)	11-612-MPE, no. 5	\$40
<i>Canadian Social Trends</i> articles	11-008-XPE	\$11
How Canadians Spend Their Day	Winter 1989	
Household Chores	Spring 1990	
Time Use of the Elderly	Summer 1990	
Sleep Patterns	Winter 1990	
Commuting Time	Winter 1990	



Core content for *Cycle 7* was again time use. The diary approach used in *Cycle 2* was repeated. Coding of activities was expanded. A main objective of the cycle was the measurement of unpaid work including domestic work, childcare, volunteer work. Also included were questions to measure participation in sport and cultural activities. These questions were sponsored by Sports Canada, and various government departments and cultural organizations.

<i>Cycle 7 Products</i>	<i>Catalogue Number</i>	<i>Price</i>
Public Use Microdata File – Time Use	12M0007XDB	\$750
Public Use Microdata File – User’s Guide		\$50
As Time Goes By... Time Use of Canadians	89-544-XPE	\$40
<i>Canadian Social Trends</i> articles	11-008-XPE	\$11
Time Use of the Elderly	Summer 1990	
Time Use of Canadians in 1992	Autumn 1993	
Tempus Fugit... Are You Time Crunched?	Winter 1993	
Sport Participation in Canada	Spring 1995	
Measuring and Valuing Households’ Unpaid Work	Autumn 1996	
Working Arrangements and Time Stress	Winter 1996	
Canadian Television in Transition	Spring 1997	
The Leisurely Pursuit of Reading	Autumn 1997	

In *Cycle 12*, content on time use was again repeated, with additional questions on activities helping someone. For the first time, the diary instrument was implemented using a computer assisted telephone interview application. Activities were coded on-line by interviewers as data were being collected. The data enabled analysts to measure unpaid work, such as time spent looking after children or elderly persons, volunteer work, time crunch and quality of life. With funding from Sports Canada and other cultural agencies and departments, participation in sports and cultural activities was also included in this cycle. For the first time, respondents were asked questions about satisfaction and life cycles.

<i>Cycle 12 Products</i>	<i>Catalogue Number</i>	<i>Price</i>
Public Use Microdata File – Time Use	12M0012XCB	\$1,600
Public Use Microdata File – User’s Guide	12M0012GPE	\$75
Overview of the Time Use of Canadians in 1998	12F0080XIE	Free
Days of our lives: time use and transitions over the life course		
- Work, parenthood and the experience of time scarcity	89-584 –XIE no. 1	Free
- Transitions to union formation	89-584 –XIE no. 2	Free
- School, work and the school-work combination by young people	89-584 –XIE no. 3	Free
- The time of our lives: Juggling work and leisure over the life cycle	89-584 –XIE no. 4	Free
- The transition to retirement: When every day is Saturday	89-584 –XIE no. 5	Free
- Living longer, living better	89-584 –XIE no. 6	Free
<i>Canadian Social Trends</i> articles	11-008-XPE/11-008-XIE	\$11/\$8
Traffic Report: Weekday Commuting Patterns	Spring 2000	
Being There: The Time Dual-earner Couples Spend With Their Children	Summer 2000	
A Family Affair: Children’s Participation in Sports	Autumn 2000	
Learning on Your Own	Spring 2001	
You Snooze, You Lose	Spring 2001	
Enjoying Work; An Effective Strategy in the Struggle to Juggle	Summer 2001	
Time of Our Lives	Winter 2001	
Drive to Excel: A Portrait of Canada’s Workaholics	Spring 2002	
No Time to Relax? How Full-time Workers Spend the Weekends	Summer 2002	
Time or Money? How High and Low Income Canadians Spend their Time	Summer 2002	
Time Alone	Autumn 2002	
Traumatic Life Events	Spring 2003	
Studying and Working: The Busy Lives of Students with Paid Employment	Spring 2003	
Unpaid Informal Caregiving	Autumn 2003	

The *Cycle 19 Time Use* survey repeats content from earlier cycles, and again uses the diary instrument which was implemented in the Cycle 12 survey. In addition, respondents are being asked new questions about transportation, sense of belonging, trust and workplace health. Using a computer assisted telephone interview application, the estimated first release of this data is expected sometime June 2006.in the summer of 2006.

### **Personal risk - Cycle 3 (1988), Cycle 8 (1993), Victimization - Cycle 13 (1999) and Cycle 18 (2004)**

Core content for *Cycle 3* was on personal risk, with primary emphasis on exposure to accidents and crime. Focus content, sponsored by the Department of Justice, was on services to victims of crime. The 1993 GSS again covered personal risk including both accidents and criminal victimization.

<i>Cycle 3 Products</i>	<i>Catalogue Number</i>	<i>Price</i>
Public Use Microdata File – Personal Risk	12M0003XDB	\$750
Public Use Microdata File – User’s Guide		\$50
Patterns of Criminal Victimization in Canada (GSS Analysis Series)	11-612-MPE, no. 2	\$38
Accidents in Canada (GSS Analysis Series)	11-612-MPE, no. 3	\$40
<i>Canadian Social Trends</i> articles	11-008-XPE	\$11
Household Property Crime	Spring 1990	
Perceptions of the Justice System	Winter 1990	

Focus content for *Cycle 8* was alcohol and drug use, which was sponsored by the Health Promotion Directorate of Health Canada. Cycle 8 marked the first time that GSS collected data using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). The interviewer asked the respondent the questions, then entered the responses directly into a computer. Built-in edits were programmed into CATI, thereby reducing the amount of editing required after collection.

<i>Cycle 8 Products</i>	<i>Catalogue Number</i>	<i>Price</i>
Public Use Microdata File – Personal Risk	12M0008XDB	\$1,500
Public Use Microdata File – User’s Guide		\$50
Tables in Victimization	12F0042XPE	\$40
Trends in Criminal Victimization: 1988-1993 (Juristat)	85-002-XPB, vol. 14, no. 13	\$5
Urban/Rural Criminal Victimization in Canada (Juristat)	85-002-XPB, vol. 14, no. 17	\$5
Public Perceptions of Crime (Juristat)	85-002-XPB, vol. 15, no. 1	\$5
Risk of Personal and Household Victimization: Canada, 1993 (Juristat)	85-002-XPB, vol. 15, no. 2	\$5
Victims’ Use of Police and Social Services (Juristat)	85-002-XPB, vol. 15, no. 6	\$5
Fear and Personal Safety (Juristat)	85-002-XPB, vol. 15, no. 9	\$5
Accidents in Canada 1988 and 1993 (Health Reports)	82-003-XPB, vol. 7, no. 2	\$35
<i>Canadian Social Trends</i> articles	11-008-XPE	\$11
Violent Victimization	Summer 1990	
Accidents	Summer 1990	
School Leavers	Autumn 1993	
Seniors 75+: Living Arrangements and Lifestyles	Autumn 1993	
Alcohol Use and Its Consequences	Autumn 1995	

The 1999 - *Cycle 13* of the GSS was the third cycle that collected information on the nature and extent of criminal victimization in Canada. This cycle did not include questions on accidents as this topic is now covered by the National Population Health Survey. Focus content for Cycle 13 addressed two areas of emerging interest. First, the Solicitor General of Canada sponsored eight scenario questions aimed at measuring public perception toward alternatives to imprisonment. One

on Family Violence sponsored modules on spousal violence and senior abuse. Respondents who disclosed spousal violence or senior abuse were asked to complete an abuse report, which provided details about the nature of the abuse.

<i>Cycle 13 Products</i>	<i>Catalogue Number</i>	<i>Price</i>
Public Use Microdata File – Victimization	12M0013XCB	\$1,600
Public Use Microdata File – User’s Guide	12M0013GPE	\$75
Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2000	85-224-XIE	Free
Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2001	85-224-XIE	Free
Criminal Victimization in Canada, 1999 (Juristat)	85-002-XPE, vol. 20, no. 10	\$10
	85-002-XIE, vol. 20, no. 10	\$8
Public Attitudes Toward the Criminal Justice System (Juristat)	85-002-XPE, vol. 20, no. 12	\$10
	85-002-XIE, vol. 20, no. 12	\$8
Break and Enter, 1999 (Juristat)	85-002-XPE, vol. 20, no. 13	\$10
	85-002-XIE, vol. 20, no. 13	\$8
Children Witnessing Family Violence (Juristat)	85-002-XPE, vol. 21, no. 6	\$10
	85-002-XIE, vol. 21, no. 6	\$8
Spousal Violence After Marital Separation (Juristat)	85-002-XPE, vol. 21, no. 7	\$10
	85-002-XIE, vol. 21, no. 7	\$8
Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics Profile Series	85F0033MIE	Free
A Profile of Criminal Victimization: Results of the 1999 GSS	85-553-XIE	\$26
Overview: Personal Safety and Perceptions of Policing	85-554-XIE	Free
<i>Canadian Social Trends articles</i>	11-008-XPE/11-008-XIE	\$11/\$8
Is your community child friendly?	Winter 2002	
Family Violence Against Seniors	Spring 2003	

*Cycle 18* of the GSS is the fourth cycle that collected information on the nature and extent of criminal victimization in Canada. The data were collected in 2004 and were released in July 2005. The representative sample was 23,766 respondents. Questions on senior abuse have been dropped for Cycle 18, as well as the questions on public perception of alternatives to imprisonment. The new questions for this cycle cover topics such as: use of restraining orders; stalking and social disorder.

<i>Cycle 18 Products</i>	<i>Catalogue Number</i>	<i>Price</i>
Public Use Microdata File – Victimization	12M0018XCB	\$2,140
Public Use Microdata File – User’s Guide	12M0018GPE	\$75
Overview of Findings	85-565-XIE	Free
Overview: Personal Safety and Perceptions of the Criminal Justice System	85-566-XIE	Free
Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2005	85-224-XIE	Free
Criminal Victimization in Canada, 2004 (Juristat)	85-002-XPE, vol. 25, no. 7	\$10
	85-002-XIE, vol. 25, no. 7	\$8

### **Education, work and retirement - Cycle 4 (1989) and Cycle 9 (1994)**

Three main themes underlie *Cycle 4* content: work and education in the service economy, new technologies and human resources, and emerging trends in education and work. A small module on knowledge and attitudes to science and technology was also included.

<i>Cycle 4 Products</i>	<i>Catalogue Number</i>	<i>Price</i>
Public Use Microdata File - Education and Work	12M0004XDB	\$750
Public Use Microdata File - User's Guide		\$50
Quality of Work in the Service Sector (GSS Analysis Series)	11-612-MPE, no. 6	\$40
Human Resource Challenges of Education, Computers and Retirement (GSS Analysis Series)	11-612-MPE, no. 7	\$40
<i>Canadian Social Trends</i> articles	11-008-XPE	\$11
Computer Literacy	Winter 1990	
Canadians and Retirement	Autumn 1992	

Core content for *Cycle 9* was education, work and retirement. These were first covered in the 1989 GSS. Focus content for *Cycle 9* covered transition into retirement and post-retirement activities, as well as some questions on computer use. Also included were questions to measure social mobility, a topic covered in *Cycle 2*.

<i>Cycle 9 Products</i>	<i>Catalogue Number</i>	<i>Price</i>
Public Use Microdata File - Education, Work and Retirement	12M0009XDB	\$1,500
Public Use Microdata File - User's Guide		\$50
Canada's Changing Retirement Patterns: Findings from the General Social Survey	89-546-XPE	\$37
<i>Canadian Social Trends</i> articles	11-008-XPE	\$11
Preparing for the Information Highway: Information Technology in Canadian Households	Autumn 1995	
Retirement in the 90s: Retired Men in Canada	Autumn 1996	
Retirement in the 90s: Going Back to Work	Autumn 1996	
Everyday Technology: Are Canadians Using It?	Autumn 1997	
"I Feel Overqualified for My Job..."	Winter 1997	
The Impact of Family Structure on High School Completion	Spring 1998	

Note: Some additional data on work-related issues can be found in *Cycle 14* Access to and use of Information Communication Technology, and retirement-related issues in *Cycle 16* Social Support and Aging. Details on these cycles follow below.

### **Family and friends - *Cycle 5* (1990), *Cycle 10* (1995), Family history - *Cycle 15* (2001) and *Cycle 20* (2006)**

Core content for *Cycle 5* concentrated on the respondent's family and friends, as well as the relationships and interactions with them. The content drew heavily on the 1984 Family History Survey for birth and marriage/cohabitation history questions and on the social support sections of GSS *Cycle 1* (1985 Survey). Some comparisons are possible with both of these earlier surveys.

<i>Cycle 5 Products</i>	<i>Catalogue Number</i>	<i>Price</i>
Public Use Microdata File - Family and Friends	12M0005XDB	\$750
Public Use Microdata File - User's Guide		\$50
Family and Friends (GSS Analysis Series)	11-612-MPE, no. 9	\$40
<i>Canadian Social Trends</i> articles	11-008-XPE	\$11
Leaving the Fold: Declining Church Attendance	Autumn 1991	
Common Law: A Growing Alternative	Winter 1991	
Food Banks	Spring 1992	
Canadians on the Move	Summer 1992	
Well-being of Older Canadians	Summer 1992	
Today's Extended Families	Winter 1992	
Emotional Support and Family Contacts of Older Canadians	Spring 1993	
Dual Earners: Who's Responsible for Housework?	Winter 1993	
Leaving the Nest? The Impact of Family Structure	Autumn 1995	

*Cycle 10* focused on Canadian families. This theme, in conjunction with the theme relating to social support and social networks, was also covered in *Cycle 5*. More specifically, *Cycle 10* collected data on family and marital history (marriage and common-law relationships), joint custody arrangements, child leaving, family origins, fertility intentions, values and attitudes towards certain areas of family life, and work interruptions. In addition to the core content, *Cycle 10* included two focus themes: the effects of environmental tobacco smoke, and wartime service, which targeted persons aged 55 and over.

<i>Cycle 10 Products</i>	<i>Catalogue Number</i>	<i>Price</i>
Public Use Microdata File - The Family	12M0010XDB	\$1,500
Public Use Microdata File - User's Guide	12M0010GPE	\$50
<i>Canadian Social Trends</i> articles	11-008-XPE/11-008-XIE	\$11/\$8
Youth Smoking in Canada	Winter 1996	
Changes in Women's Work Continuity	Autumn 1997	
Attitudes Toward Women, Work and Family	Autumn 1997	
Moving in Together: The Formation of First Common-law Unions	Winter 1997	
Older Canadians on the Move	Spring 1998	
What Influences People's Plans to Have Children?	Spring 1998	
Exposure to Second-hand Smoke	Summer 1998	
Religious Observance, Marriage and Family	Autumn 1998	
Trends in Contraceptive Sterilization	Autumn 1998	
Under One Roof: Three Generations Living Together	Summer 1999	
Who Has a Third Child?	Summer 1999	
The Changing Face of Conjugal Relationships	Spring 2000	
Staying in Touch: Contact between Adults and Their Parents	Spring 2002	
Marital satisfaction during the retirement years	Spring 2005	

Data collection for *Cycle 15* began in February 2001 and continued through December 2001. *Cycle 15* covers much the same content as *Cycle 10* with some sections revised and expanded. Information was gathered on family and marital history, children, family origins, fertility intentions, values and attitudes. Questions on custody and financial arrangements between the separated/divorced parents have been modified for *Cycle 15*. An Education History section was developed for this cycle and questions on education from *Cycle 10* were included. The Work section was remodelled based on periods of work. Also, a set of questions on mobility was added to the Other Characteristics section. Questions asked as part of the survey had a variety of reference periods, such as the past week, the past month, and the past year.

<i>Cycle 15 Products</i>	<i>Catalogue Number</i>	<i>Price</i>
Public Use Microdata File - The Family	12M0015XCB	\$2,000
Public Use Microdata File - User's Guide	12M0015GPE	\$75
Family History	89-575-XIE	Free
Changing Conjugal Life in Canada	89-576-XIE	Free
<i>Canadian Social Trends</i> articles	11-008-XPE/11-008-XIE	\$11/\$8
Pockets of belief: Religious attendance patterns in Canada	Spring 2003	
Couples living apart	Summer 2003	
Childfree by choice	Summer 2003	
Would you live common-law	Autumn 2003	
Across the generations: Grandparents and grandchildren	Winter 2003	
Marital satisfaction during the retirement years	Spring 2005	
Always the bridesmaid: People who don't expect to marry	Spring 2005	

*Cycle 20* will be in data collection in 2006. This cycle focuses on families and early course transitions. Along with data from previous family surveys that allow us to monitor the evolving

structures of Canadian families, new content will look at the challenges and transitions faced by families such as family formation, work/life balance, child care and buying a first home. The anticipated date for the first release of the data is June 2007.

### **Social support – Cycle 11 (1996) and Social support and aging – Cycle 16 (2002)**

The first (1985) and sixth cycles (1991) of the GSS had health as their core content. With the introduction of the National Population Health Survey in 1994, there was no longer a need to collect data in the health core subject area. This allowed for a new core to be introduced and social support was proposed. Social support was not a new topic for the GSS; however this cycle expanded the concept extensively.

The objectives and scope of *Cycle 11* were to understand the dynamic between an individual's social network and help received and provided, and to determine the nature of the help received and provided. A "social network" is comprised of the individual's spouse, family, close friends, neighbours, co-worker or any organizations (composed of either volunteers or paid employees) that revolve around an individual. The 1996 GSS focused on help given or received during either temporarily difficult times or out of necessity due to long-term health or physical limitations in daily activities either inside or outside the household.

Cycle 11 used the following approach to collect this information: a screening section established a "help roster" which was comprised of the help provided to the respondent due to the respondent's long-term health or physical limitations, and the receivers of help from the respondent due to the receiver's long-term health or physical limitations. Four major groups of instrumental activities of daily living were asked about to establish the help roster. They were: 1) child care; 2) meal preparation and cleanup; house cleaning, laundry and sewing; house maintenance and outside work; 3) shopping for groceries or other necessities; transportation; banking and bill paying; and 4) personal care. Also, persons/organizations receiving/giving care such as checking up or providing emotional support were added to the roster, however, there was no detailed follow-up. Detailed information on episodic help due to temporary difficult times was also collected in the screening section though no rostering of help receivers/providers was done.

<i>Cycle 11 Products</i>	<i>Catalogue Number</i>	<i>Price</i>
Public Use Microdata File – Social and Community Support	12M0011XDB & XCB	\$1,600
Public Use Microdata File – User's Guide	12M0011GPE	\$75
Who Cares? Caregiving in the 1990s – Initial Data Release Tables, Canada or by Individual Province		\$50
Tobacco Use, Initial Data Release Tables, Canada and Provinces		\$40
Eldercare in Canada: Context, Content and Consequences	89-570-XPE	\$45
<i>Canadian Social Trends</i> articles	11-008-XPE/11-008-XIE	\$11/\$8
Canada's Caregivers	Winter 1997	
Religious Observance, Marriage and Family	Autumn 1998	
Who Needs Short-Term Help?	Autumn 1998	
Exposure to Second-hand Smoke	Summer 1998	
At Work Despite a Chronic Health Problem	Spring 1999	
Under One Roof: Three Generations Living Together	Summer 1999	
Eldercare in Canada: Who Does How Much?	Autumn 1999	
Help Close at Hand: Relocating to Give or Receive Care	Winter 1999	

The 2002 GSS – *Cycle 16* Social Support and Aging covered the theme of social support for the senior population. This was the second time that the GSS had collected information on social

support. While data from the 1996 GSS on “Social and Community Support” focused on caregiving and receiving for the entire population, Cycle 16, unlike all other cycles of the GSS sampled only respondents aged 45 and over. The sample were drawn from the much larger sample of respondents to the Canadian Community Health Survey. This cycle collected data on help provided to and received by people. As well, the survey collected information on transitions to retirement, retirement planning as well as other topics targeted at an older population.

Data were collected over an 11 month period from February to December 2002. The representative sample had 24,951 respondents and the response rate was greater than 86%.

While the main objective of the 2002 GSS was to provide data on the aging population, the survey will allow detailed analysis of characteristics of family and friends who provide care to seniors; characteristics of seniors receiving formal and informal care; links to broader determinants of health (such as income, education and social networks); and people’s retirement plans and experiences.

<i>Cycle 16 Products</i>	<i>Catalogue Number</i>	<i>Price</i>
Public Use Microdata File – Social Support and Aging	12M0016XCB	\$2,140
Public Use Microdata File – User’s Guide	12M0016GPE	\$75
Caring for an Aging Society	89-582-XIE	Free
Aging and Social Support – Tables	89-583-XIE	Free
<i>Canadian Social Trends</i> articles	11-008-XPE/11-008-XIE	\$11/\$8
Looking after Seniors: Who does what for whom?	Autumn 2004	
You can’t always get what you want: Retirement preferences and experiences	Winter 2004	
The Sandwich Generation	Summer 2005	
Elder care and the complexities of social networks	Summer 2005	
What Do Seniors Spend on Housing	Autumn 2005	
Preparing for Retirement	Autumn 2005	
What Makes Retirement Enjoyable	Autumn 2005	

### **Access to and use of information communication technology - Cycle 14 (2000)**

The main theme for *Cycle 14* of the GSS was access to and use of technology, specifically computers and the Internet. This was the first cycle of the GSS to collect detailed information on individual access to and use of technology. Two previous cycles (cycle 4 and cycle 9) included questions on computer use as part of the work and education focus. Since much of the work and education component was being covered by other surveys (particularly the Workplace and Employee Survey) and there was considerable interest in the social impact of technology, Cycle 14 has a detailed focus on computer and Internet use. Cycle 14 asked Canadians about their use of computers and the Internet, the impact of technology on privacy and access to information as well as the social cohesion of families and communities.

<i>Cycle 14 Products</i>	<i>Catalogue Number</i>	<i>Price</i>
Public Use Microdata File - Access to and Use of Information Communication Technology	12M0014XCB	\$1,600
Public Use Microdata File - User's Guide	12M0014GPE	\$75
Changing Our Ways: Why and How Canadians Use the Internet	56F0006XIE	Free
Overview: Access to and Use of Information Communication Technology	56-505-XIE	Free
Working With Computers (Perspectives on Labour and Income)	75-001-XPE vol. 13, no. 2	\$18
	Single article 75-001-XIE vol. 2, no. 5	\$5
Evolution of the Canadian Workplace: Work From Home (Perspectives on Labour and Income)	Single article 75-001-XIE vol. 2, no. 9	\$5
<i>Canadian Social Trends</i> articles	11-008-XPE/11-008-XIE	\$11/\$8
Kids and Teens on the Net	Autumn 2001	
Connected to the Internet, Still Connected to Life	Winter 2001	
Older Surfers	Winter 2001	
Wired Young Canadians	Winter 2001	
Learning Computer Skills	Spring 2002	
Better Things to Do or Dealt out of the Game	Summer 2002	
Vox Populi: Canadians who speak up	Autumn 2002	
Health Information on the Net	Autumn 2002	
I Still Feel Overqualified for my Job	Winter 2002	
Stress at Work	Autumn 2003	

## **Social engagement - Cycle 17 (2003)**

Cycle 17 was the first cycle of the GSS to survey the topic of social engagement in Canada. Topics include well-being, social participation, civic participation, trust and values. Although this was the first GSS cycle dedicated to this topic, questions on several sub-themes of social engagement had appeared in earlier cycles, including questions about contact with friends and relatives (Cycle 16, Cycle 15, Cycle 14, Cycle 11, Cycle 10), giving and receiving informal help (Cycle 16, Cycle 11), volunteering (Cycle 16, Cycle 14, Cycle 12, Cycle 9), voting and other political activity (Cycle 14).

Data were collected in 2003 and were released in July 2004. The representative sample had 24,951 respondents.

<i>Cycle 17 Products</i>	<i>Catalogue Number</i>	<i>Price</i>
Public Use Microdata File – Social Engagement	12M0017XCB	\$2,140
Public Use Microdata File - User's Guide	12M0017GPE	\$75
Overview of Findings	89-598-XIE	Free
Social Engagement and Civic Participation: Are rural and small town populations really at an advantage? Rural and Small Town Canada Analysis Bulletin, vol. 6, no. 4 (June 2005)	21-006-XIE	Free
<i>Canadian Social Trends</i> articles	11-008-XPE/11-008-XIE	\$11/\$8
Perceptions of Canadians: A sense of belonging, confidence and trust	Winter 2004	
Political Engagement of Young Canadians	Winter 2005	



## Notes Notes

1. Prices listed are in Canadian dollars. Outside Canada prices may vary.
2. Foreign clients pay total amount in US funds drawn on a US bank.
3. "Free" products are available free of charge at: [www.statcan.ca](http://www.statcan.ca).
4. User's Guide documentation (1 copy) is included free of charge when purchasing a Public Use Microdata File.
5. Microdata License Agreement is required before the purchase and delivery of a file.
6. CD-ROMs are available in SAS, SPSS or ASCII format.
7. The General Social Survey Program has made all of its Public Use Microdata files available to the Data Liberation Initiative (DLI). The DLI provides Canadian academic institutions with affordable access to Statistics Canada data files and databases for teaching and research.
8. *Canadian Social Trends*, Catalogue no. 11-008-XPE, costs \$11 per issue. As of the Winter 1998 issue, this product is also available on the Internet (Catalogue no. 11-008-XIE, \$8 per issue).
9. Prices do not include tax.

The General Social Survey data and information are available to all Canadians. Dissemination activities begin for each survey with a data availability announcement in *The Daily*. A public use microdata file is produced for each survey and the Statistics Canada flagship publication *Canadian Social Trends* features many interesting findings from the analysis. Special publications have also been produced for specific topics. Moreover, clients may request special tabulations that fit their specific needs by contacting Client Services and Dissemination at (613) 951-5979, by fax at (613) 951-0387 or by e-mail at [sasd-dssea@statcan.ca](mailto:sasd-dssea@statcan.ca).

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