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**LABOUR INTERVIEW  
RESULTS**

§ The first wave of labour information was collected from 15,000 households in February. This sample was selected and first contacted for SLID in January 1993, to collect background demographic and cultural variables, as well as information on current labour market activities. Our first annual labour interview consequently *updated* demographic and labour market information already on record -- so researchers will not have to wait until the second wave before they can use the data in longitudinal applications. For instance, at the time of the 1994 labour interviews, over 1,000 new households were created. These are cases where the people living together as a household in January 1993 were no longer doing so -- perhaps a young person moved away from the parental home, a marriage breakdown occurred or a group of students disbanded. (SLID attempts to trace and interview all members of the original 1993 household.) In addition, over 2,200 cohabitants were identified -- these are people who were not in the original sample who have since moved in with a longitudinal respondent or *vice versa*. These numbers (which do not reflect full households moving intact) indicate a substantial amount of movement in living arrangements of Canadians, even in a one-year period.

**Editor's Note**

The first full wave of SLID data -- labour and income information for the 1993 reference year -- has been collected. The survey team is now working on two fronts: preparing the first wave for release and planning the second wave. On both fronts, there are issues where we will be seeking input from researchers over the coming months.

Philip Giles

The final response rate is not yet known. We experienced data transmission problems in some cases, and need to work with the back-up diskettes used by interviewers in order to retrieve some missing data. This activity did not start right after labour data collection was completed, because our efforts had to be directed to preparing for the May income interview. Now that those preparations have been finalised, attention will turn to processing labour data, including retrieval of missing cases. The final response rate for the labour interview will be in the range of 87% to 94%. The next issue of *Dynamics* will include more on labour interview results.

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## EMPLOYMENT EQUITY DATA

\$ SLID collects the basic information required to identify all Employment Equity groups. The coverage of the survey will not permit use of data on the aboriginal population (since the Territories and Indian Reserves are not part of the sample) and the sample size will constrain the analysis to some extent. However, SLID's longitudinal design should allow new insights for those interested in studying equity issues.

One example is *wage gap studies*. The survey has information on years of work experience, gathered in the preliminary interview, and there is quite detailed information on schooling, including years of schooling, major field of study, highest university degree and most recent postsecondary non-university certificate or diploma. This information is updated annually. All respondents are also asked a direct question on whether or not they completed secondary school, which is an important labour market activity determinant. This type of information should allow wage comparison studies that control for human capital variables.

An area of potential research, that takes advantage of SLID's longitudinal design, is *occupational mobility and career paths*. The survey collects information on all employers (up to six per year). Within the period of a person's attachment to an employer, changes in occupation and wage rate are tracked. Questions on managerial and supervisory responsibilities are asked to complement the data on occupation, including:

- direct supervision of others (yes/no) and, if yes, number supervised



- RRSP annuities and RRIF withdrawals
- RRSP withdrawals
- alimony, separation allowance, child support
- money from persons in other households to help with household expenses
- other money income
- total income
- income tax paid

This information was collected from all persons aged 16 and over who were living together at the time of the labour interview conducted in February -- the income interview is in effect deferred to May so that respondents can consult their tax forms.

The income categories for SLID are identical to those used in this year's Survey of Consumer Finances (SCF). Both surveys followed a similar collection methodology, in that respondents were mailed a form before the interview to allow them to record amounts before the interviewer's call. Early indications for SLID are that about 64% of respondents who agreed to provide income data had completed the form beforehand.

The SLID income data was collected using computer-assisted interviewing (CAI). This had several advantages, including a number of interactive edits to improve consistency with information collected during the labour interview. For example, if it was reported in the labour interview that the respondent received Unemployment Insurance, but no amount is provided during the income interview, the interviewer sees a pop-up message on the screen, asking to probe. The testing program in 1993 indicated that this technique will help to correct the under-reporting of certain income sources.

Although we have made every effort to keep the respondent burden light, it remains a fact that many people are reticent to participate in income surveys. In SLID this is particularly worrisome because of the possible cumulative effects of attrition. For the second wave, we are examining the feasibility of a link to tax file data as an alternative to collecting the data via telephone interviews. This link would require respondent permission, and there are a number



of data issues to consider. If the feasibility study results are promising, we will be preparing a report that will outline the data issues for researchers, and look for input early next fall.

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**FAMILY DATA**

§ Many researchers are interested in family data. The family is a logical entity for analyzing income, a key content area in SLID. Moreover, SLID is expected to support analyses of the relationships that exist between a person's family situation and his or her labour market activities. In a cross-sectional survey, the family might therefore be seen as the appropriate unit of analysis. However, in a longitudinal survey, what is a family? The definition is problematic because the family is not a static entity. Other longitudinal surveys have wrestled with the problem of defining "longitudinal" families or households, but the results have not been very successful. For SLID, the proposed approach is to always view the individual as the unit of analysis and to treat family characteristics as attributes. This "attributorial approach" is further described in a research paper (*see below*).

The SLID data will show the composition of the family in January of each year, and it is possible to construct derived variables (including family income) on the basis of the composition at that time. In addition, some researchers will be interested in the changes themselves. How many people experience a change in family living arrangements between two points in time? What are the major kinds of changes?

What are the impacts of family changes on labour market behaviour and income? To help study these questions, variables summarising family events will be derived and will hopefully help to pinpoint certain types of changes occurring during the six year lifespan of the panel.

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**RESEARCH PAPERS**

§ The following are recently released Research Papers which can be ordered individually or received automatically. For more information, contact Anne Palmer at (613) 951-2903, by fax at (613) 951-3253, or by mail at 11-D8 Jean Talon Building, Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, K1A 0T6.

*94-02 Respondent Relations in Longitudinal Surveys*

*Debbie Lutz*

SLID will follow individuals and their families for six years. Should incentives be used to increase response rates, or can we rely solely on motivational material? This paper describes the experiences of other surveys, and documents several viewpoints and findings from surveys on incentives, their effects on response and on ways of maintaining interviewer morale. The information will help SLID develop its own respondent relations materials with the hope of sustaining high response without offering monetary incentives. A proposed respondent relations plan is also presented.

*94-03 Results of the Income Permission Question from the August 1993 Test*

*Tom Greenberg*

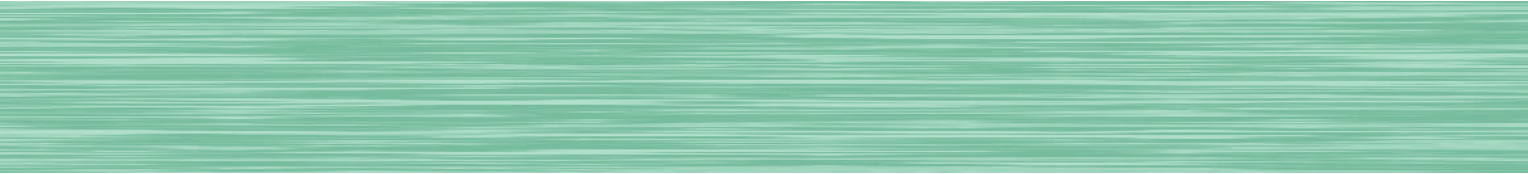
This report summarizes the results of the "permission question" added as a supplement to the Labour Force Survey in August 1993. The respondents were asked if they would allow Statistics Canada access to their Revenue Canada income tax records instead of completing an income survey interview. Half the test sample was in the Survey of Consumer Finance (SCF) the previous April, the other half was not. The results show that 55% to 60% of respondents would be willing to allow access to their tax return. This permission rate varied little by geographical area or by demographic group. The difference between those who had been included in the SCF and those who had not was not large.

*94-04 Social and Labour Market Policy Research Using the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics*

*Maryanne Webber*

The first wave of SLID data has now been collected, and the survey team's attention is turning to preparing the data for dissemination. This report describes major expected data uses, to set the scene for processing and dissemination activities. Major research topics are grouped around five themes: employment and unemployment dynamics, life-cycle labour market transitions, job quality/quality of working life, family economic mobility and dynamics of low income. Each broad research area and its





associated data needs, in terms of variables and units of analysis, are discussed. Researchers are invited to comment on whether the views presented are consistent with the ways in which they expect to use the data.

*94-05 SLID Labour Interview Questionnaire -- February 1994*  
*David Coish, Alison Hale, Cindy Heffernan*

This report describes the structure and content of the labour interview conducted using computer-assisted interviewing in February 1994. It also reviews changes to the labour content implemented following the the 1993 testing program. Flow charts showing the paths respondents can follow through the "questionnaire" are provided, as well as question wordings and response categories.

*94-06 SLID Household and Family Variables*  
*George Butlin*

SLID data are collected entirely at the person level. However, the construction of derived variables at the household and family level is important to analysts. The longitudinal nature of SLID data poses certain difficulties. The purpose of this document is to review the work done to date in this area. It provides a general strategy and direction for the first SLID data products. User consultation and feedback will be necessary to identify modifications and enhancements to this strategy.

*94-07 The Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics:  
Lessons Learned in Testing*  
*Maryanne Webber*

Presented to the US Census Bureau's Annual Research Conference in March 1994, this paper summarizes some of the major findings from a year of testing. Topics covered include, among others, the impact of user consultations, lessons learned in the design of computer-assisted interviewing instruments and the use of dependent interviewing.