

POVERTY PROFILE

UPDATE FOR 1991

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POVERTY IN CANADA IN 1991

The pages that follow contain selected poverty statistics for 1991 and update statistics published by the National Council of Welfare in Poverty Profile, 1980-1990.

Some of the statistics were previously published by Statistics Canada in the latest edition of Income Distributions by Size in Canada. Additional unpublished data for 1991 were prepared for the National Council of Welfare by Statistics Canada. We are grateful for the assistance provided by officials of the bureau, especially Kevin Bishop of the Income and Housing Surveys Section.

This update includes all of the tables from Poverty Profile, 1980-1990, plus several of the graphs in the report. The numbers and letters that identify the tables and graphs are the same as the ones used in the report. The final table, with detailed information on poverty among women and men over the age of 18, is new.

The measures of poverty used in all this material are Statistics Canada's low income cut-offs (1986 base) for the year in question. The cut-offs increase each year in line with the rate of inflation. The low income cut-offs for 1992 and the National Council of Welfare's estimates of the cut-offs for 1993 appear on the last page of this update.

The National Council of Welfare, like many other social policy groups, regards the low income cut-offs as poverty lines and uses the term poor and low-income interchangeably. Statistics Canada takes pains to avoid references to poverty. It says the cut-offs have no official status, and it does not promote their use as poverty lines.

Poverty rates compare the number of poor persons, families or unattached individuals in a particular category to all the persons, families or unattached individuals in the same category. For example, there were an estimated 272,000 poor families with children under 18 headed by a female single parent under age 65 in 1991. The estimated total number of families with children under 18 headed by a female single parent under 65 was 440,000. The poverty rate was 272,000 divided by 440,000 or 61.9 percent.

Additional information about poverty in Canada can be found in Income Distributions by Size in Canada and Poverty Profile, 1980-1990. The National Council of Welfare plans to publish its next Poverty Profile in early 1994.

TABLE 1
STATISTICS CANADA'S LOW INCOME CUT-OFFS (1986 BASE) FOR 1991

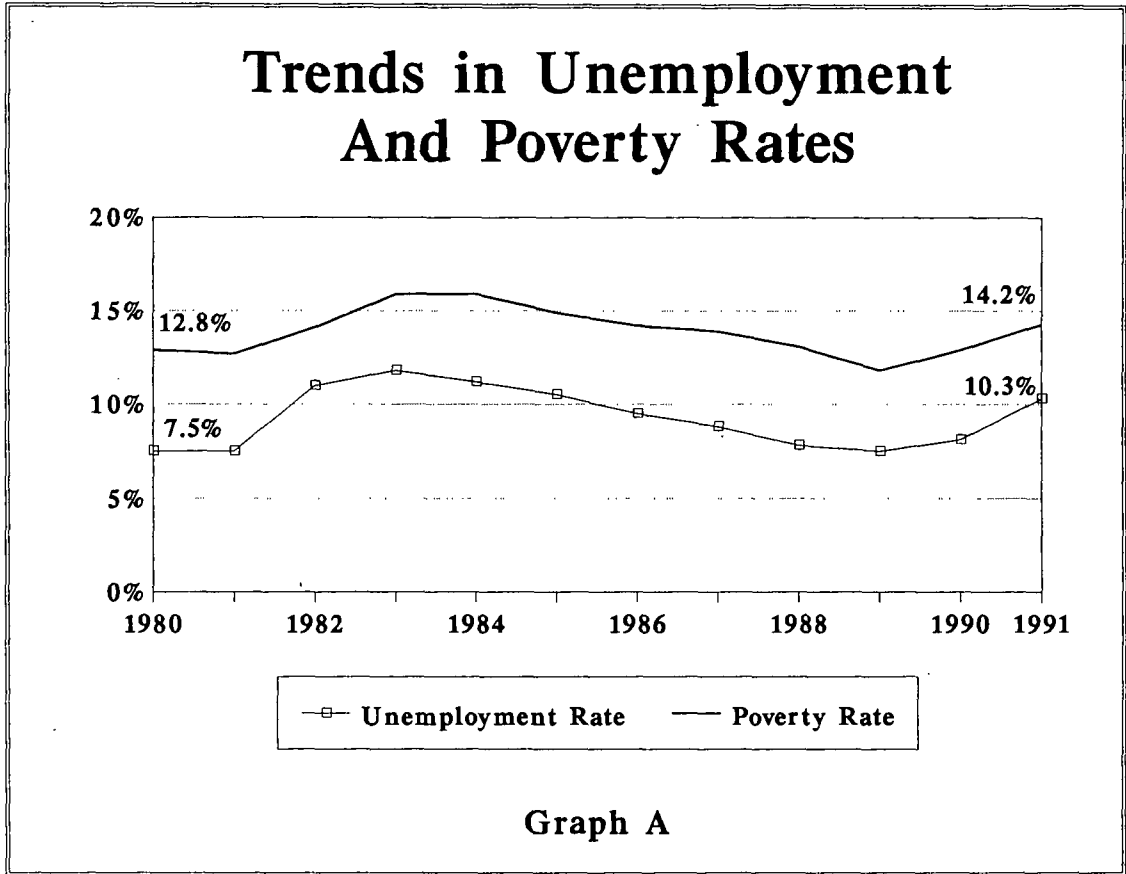
Family Size	Community Size				
	Cities of 500,000+	100,000-499,999	30,000-99,999	Less than 30,000	Rural Areas
1	\$ 14,951	\$ 13,132	\$ 12,829	\$ 11,695	\$ 10,179
2	20,266	17,802	17,390	15,852	13,799
3	25,761	22,626	22,103	20,149	17,539
4	29,661	26,049	25,449	23,200	20,192
5	32,406	28,462	27,805	25,347	22,062
6	35,177	30,893	30,180	27,512	23,947
7+	37,833	33,230	32,463	29,593	25,757

TABLE 2
POVERTY TRENDS, ALL PERSONS

	Number of Persons Living in Poverty	Poverty Rate
1980	3,624,000	15.3%
1981	3,643,000	15.3%
1982	3,951,000	16.4%
1983	4,406,000	18.2%
1984	4,397,000	18.1%
1985	4,170,000	17.0%
1986	3,976,000	16.0%
1987	3,912,000	15.6%
1988	3,744,000	14.8%
1989	3,487,000	13.6%
1990	3,821,000	14.6%
1991	4,227,000	16.0%

TABLE 3
POVERTY TRENDS, CHILDREN UNDER 18

	Number of Children Under 18 Living in Poverty	Poverty Rate
1980	984,000	14.9%
1981	998,000	15.2%
1982	1,155,000	17.8%
1983	1,221,000	19.0%
1984	1,253,000	19.6%
1985	1,165,000	18.3%
1986	1,086,000	17.0%
1987	1,057,000	16.6%
1988	987,000	15.4%
1989	934,000	14.5%
1990	1,105,000	16.9%
1991	1,210,000	18.3%



The unemployment rate is the average annual unemployment rate for people age 15 and older. The poverty rate is the rate for people ages 18 through 64, the age group where people are most likely to be in the paid labour force.

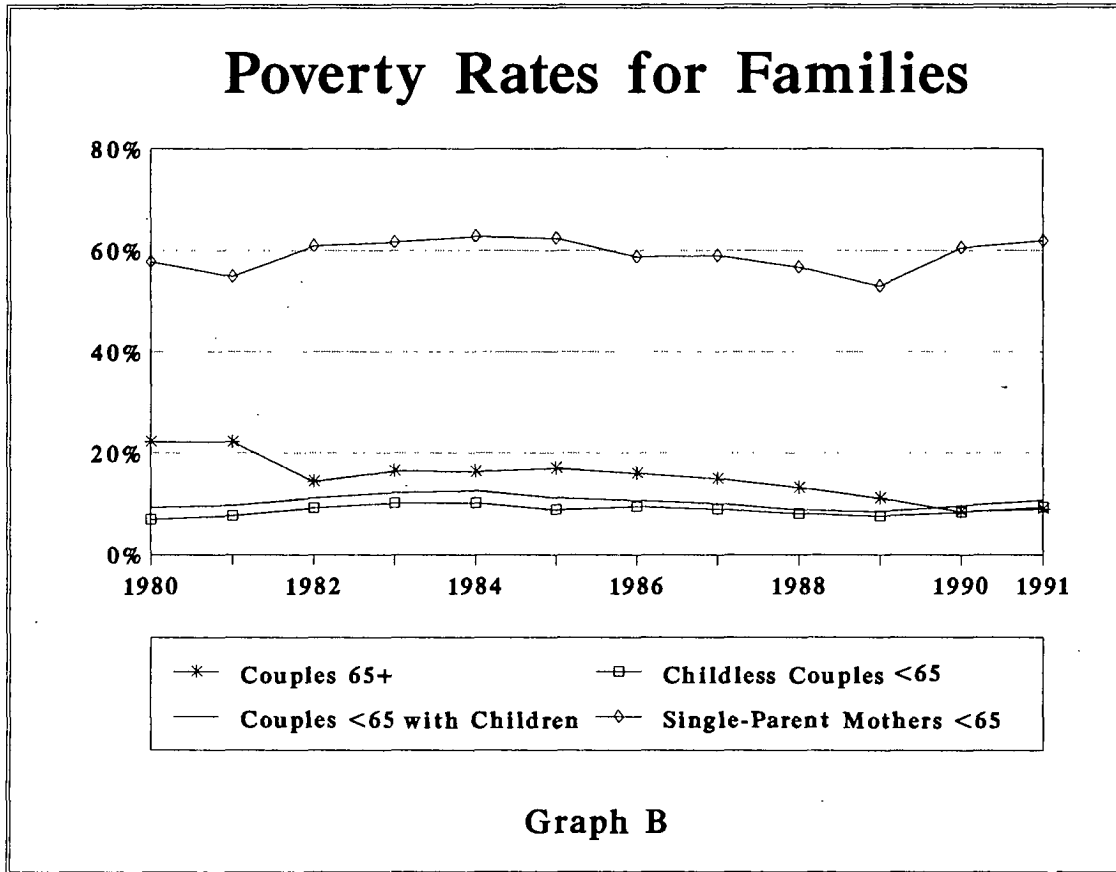
TABLE 4
POVERTY TRENDS, PEOPLE 65 AND OLDER

	Number of Seniors Living in Poverty	Poverty Rate
1980	731,000	33.6%
1981	733,000	33.0%
1982	648,000	28.5%
1983	719,000	30.9%
1984	669,000	27.9%
1985	669,000	27.0%
1986	637,000	24.9%
1987	627,000	23.8%
1988	634,000	23.4%
1989	599,000	21.4%
1990	554,000	19.3%
1991	590,000	20.0%

TABLE 5
POVERTY TRENDS, FAMILIES AND UNATTACHED INDIVIDUALS

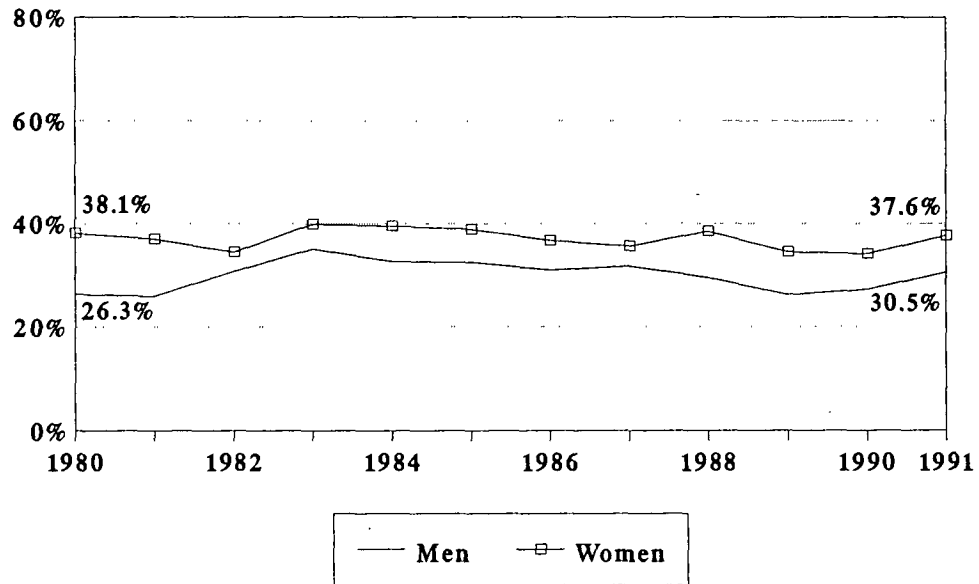
	Families		Unattached Individuals	
	Number of Poor Families	Poverty Rate	Number of Poor Unattached	Poverty Rate
1980	830,000	13.2%	1,013,000	41.4%
1981	832,000	13.0%	1,010,000	40.3%
1982	905,000	14.0%	1,034,000	40.2%
1983	1,007,000	15.3%	1,183,000	44.9%
1984	1,032,000	15.6%	1,118,000	41.3%
1985	963,000	14.3%	1,136,000	40.8%
1986	924,000	13.6%	1,112,000	38.3%
1987	895,000	13.1%	1,137,000	37.5%
1988	851,000	12.2%	1,172,000	37.7%
1989	786,000	11.1%	1,100,000	34.4%
1990	874,000	12.1%	1,123,000	34.1%
1991	949,000	13.1%	1,258,000	36.5%

A family is defined as "a group of individuals sharing a common dwelling unit and related by blood, marriage or adoption." An unattached individual is a "person living alone or in a household where he/she is not related to other household members."

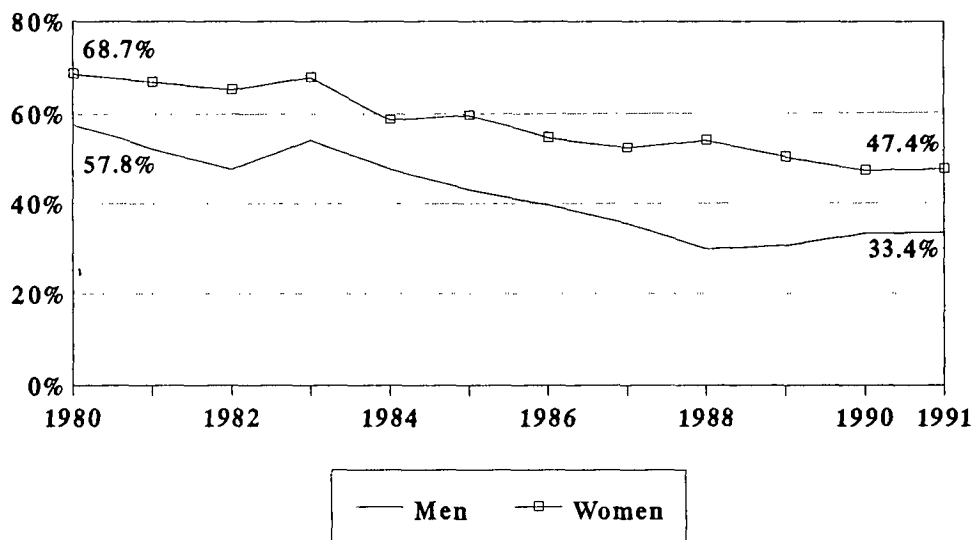


POVERTY RATES BY FAMILY TYPE			
	1980	1990	1991
Couples 65 and Older	22.2%	8.5%	9.0%
Couples under 65 with Children under 18	9.4%	9.6%	10.7%
Childless Couples under 65	6.9%	8.3%	9.3%
Single-Parent Mothers under 65 with Children under 18	57.7%	60.6%	61.9%

Poverty Rates for Unattached People Under 65



Poverty Rates for Unattached People 65 and Older

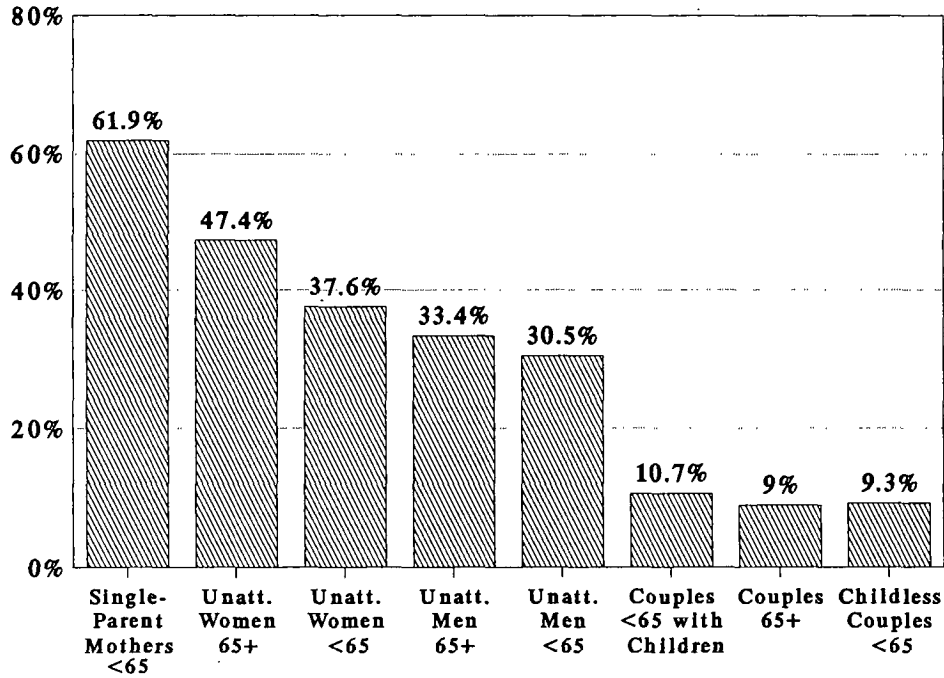


Graph C

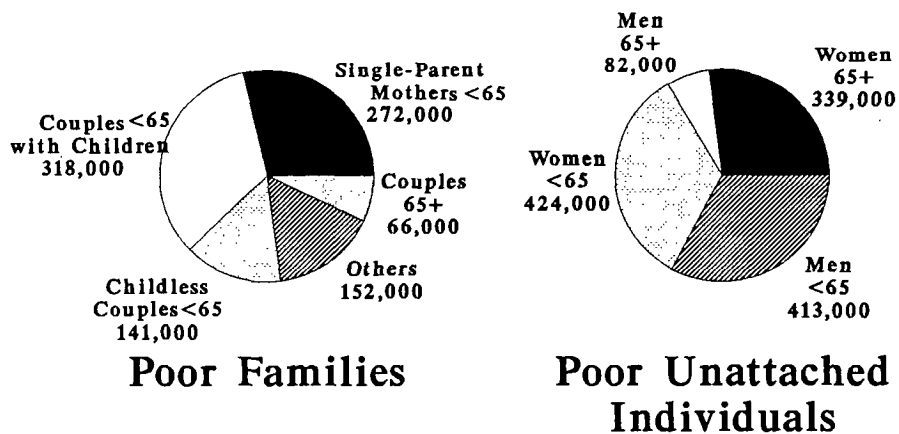
TABLE 6
POVERTY BY PROVINCE, 1991

	Families		Unattached Individuals		All Persons	
	Number of Poor Families	Poverty Rate	Number of Poor Unattached	Poverty Rate	Number of Poor Persons	Poverty Rate
Newfoundland	25,000	16.4%	14,000	41.3%	100,000	17.6%
Prince Edward Island	3,000	9.9%	6,000	40.5%	17,000	13.2%
Nova Scotia	31,000	12.9%	34,000	35.6%	134,000	15.5%
New Brunswick	25,000	12.3%	23,000	35.6%	100,000	14.3%
Quebec	300,000	15.9%	403,000	44.2%	1,296,000	19.2%
Ontario	303,000	11.2%	380,000	31.8%	1,327,000	13.5%
Manitoba	47,000	17.1%	54,000	38.2%	218,000	21.1%
Saskatchewan	35,000	13.4%	40,000	34.5%	161,000	17.1%
Alberta	87,000	13.1%	106,000	33.4%	396,000	15.9%
British Columbia	93,000	11.1%	197,000	35.7%	479,000	15.1%
Canada	949,000	13.1%	1,258,000	36.5%	4,227,000	16.0%

Poverty Rates by Family Type, 1991



Distribution of Poor Families And Unattached Individuals, 1991

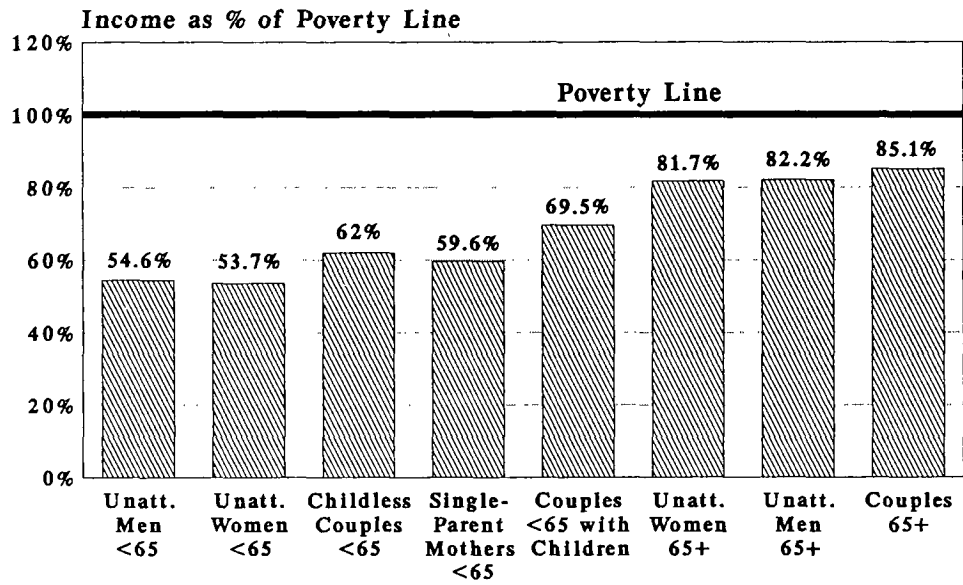


Graph N

TABLE 7
POVERTY RATES BY OCCUPATION, 1991

Occupational Group	Family Heads	Unattached Individuals
Managerial	4.4%	8.6%
Professional	5.2%	18.6%
Processing and Machining	6.1%	10.9%
Transport	8.7%	22.2%
Product Fabrication	7.2%	16.9%
Construction	10.6%	21.3%
Sales	10.4%	30.6%
Clerical	15.7%	20.7%
Farming, Fishing, Forestry	12.9%	36.6%
Services	20.2%	44.3%

Depth of Poverty By Family Type, 1991



Graph V

TABLE 8
AVERAGE DEPTH OF POVERTY IN DOLLARS, 1991

Family Type	Dollars Below Poverty Line
Single-Parent Mothers under 65 with Children under 18	\$ 9,051
Couples under 65 with Children under 18	\$ 7,977
Childless Couples under 65	\$ 6,617
Unattached Men under 65	\$ 6,216
Unattached Women under 65	\$ 6,382
Couples 65 and Older	\$ 2,880
Unattached Women 65 and Older	\$ 2,546
Unattached Men 65 and Older	\$ 2,475

Average depth of poverty in this table is the difference between the poverty line and the average income of families or unattached individuals who were living in poverty in 1991.

TABLE 9
TOTAL POVERTY GAP BY FAMILY TYPE, 1991

Family Type	Poverty Gap	Percentage of Total Gap
Couples under 65 with Children under 18	\$ 2,536,000,000	18.9%
Single-Parent Mothers under 65 with Children under 18	\$ 2,463,000,000	18.4%
Unattached Men under 65	\$ 2,570,000,000	19.2%
Unattached Women under 65	\$ 2,706,000,000	20.2%
Unattached Women 65 and Older	\$ 863,000,000	6.4%
Childless Couples under 65	\$ 935,000,000	7.0%
Couples 65 and Older	\$ 190,000,000	1.4%
Unattached Men 65 and Older	\$ 202,000,000	1.5%
Others	\$ 936,000,000	7.0%
Total Poverty Gap	\$ 13,402,000,000	100.0%

The total poverty gap of \$13.4 billion is the amount of money it would have taken in 1991 to bring all Canadians up to the poverty line.

TABLE 10

INCOMES OF THE POOR COMPARED TO AVERAGE INCOMES, 1991

Family Type	Average Income of Poor	Average Income of All	Income of Poor as Percentage of All
Unattached Men under 65	\$ 7,787	\$ 26,066	30%
Unattached Women under 65	\$ 7,753	\$ 22,040	35%
Childless Couples under 65	\$ 11,402	\$ 52,873	22%
Unattached Women 65 and Older	\$ 11,407	\$ 17,304	66%
Unattached Men 65 and Older	\$ 11,456	\$ 20,259	57%
Single-Parent Mothers under 65 with Children under 18	\$ 13,382	\$ 22,186	60%
Couples 65 and Older	\$ 16,549	\$ 35,553	47%
Couples under 65 with Children under 18	\$ 18,626	\$ 59,014	32%

TABLE 11
SOURCES OF INCOME FOR POOR SENIORS, 1991

Source of Income	Poor Couples 65 and Older		Poor Unattached 65 and Older	
	Percent Receiving	Average Amount to Recipient	Percent Receiving	Average Amount to Recipient
Old Age Security Pension and Guaranteed Income Supplement	95%	\$ 11,432	99%	\$ 7,827
Canada and Quebec Pension Plans	69%	\$ 4,278	62%	\$ 2,980
Investment Income	samples too small		41%	\$ 1,663
Welfare or Provincial Supplements			30%	\$ 784
Occupational Pension Plans			16%	\$ 2,142
Income from All Sources	100%	\$ 16,549	100%	\$ 11,417

The category "welfare or provincial supplements" is probably made up mainly of provincial income supplements for low-income seniors. Not all provinces have supplements, and in provinces that have them, the amounts vary greatly from province to province.

TABLE 12

SOURCES OF INCOME FOR POOR FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS UNDER 65, 1991

Source of Income	Unattached Men		Unattached Women		Childless Couples		Couples with Children		Single-Parent Mothers	
	Percent Receiving	Average Amount to Recipient	Percent Receiving	Average Amount to Recipient	Percent Receiving	Average Amount to Recipient	Percent Receiving	Average Amount to Recipient	Percent Receiving	Average Amount to Recipient
Earnings	59%	\$ 6,138	59%	\$ 6,583	61%	\$ 6,900	84%	\$ 11,903	47%	\$ 6,994
Welfare	40%	\$ 5,123	34%	\$ 5,445	34%	\$ 7,094	30%	\$ 7,886	64%	\$ 9,061
Unemployment Insurance	20%	\$ 4,773	13%	\$ 3,814	21%	\$ 6,080	33%	\$ 5,649	16%	\$ 4,098
Investment Income	13%	\$ 1,475	15%	\$ 159	27%	\$ 3,266	23%	\$ 1,665	9%	\$ 1,396
Family Allowances	--	--	--	--	--	--	98%	\$ 1,089	98%	\$ 854
Child Tax Credit	--	--	--	--	--	--	97%	\$ 1,334	100%	\$ 1,144
Other*	6%	\$ 5,486	13%	\$ 4,554	22%	\$ 5,572	--	--	15%	\$ 3,564
Income from All Sources	100%	\$ 7,787	100%	\$ 7,753	100%	\$ 11,402	100%	\$ 18,626	100%	\$ 13,382

* The category "other" actually means Canada or Quebec Pension Plan benefits in the case of unattached men and women and childless couples under 65. The source was not specified in the case of single-parent mothers, but much of the money could be for child support.

TABLE 13

**POOR FAMILIES AND UNATTACHED INDIVIDUALS UNDER 65
WITH EARNINGS OF 50 PERCENT OR MORE OF TOTAL INCOME, 1991**

	Unattached Men	Unattached Women	Childless Couples	Couples with Children	Single-Parent Mothers
Total Number of Poor Families or Unattached People	365,000	390,000	128,000	301,000	268,000
Number with Earnings of 50 Percent or More of Total Income	175,000	195,000	54,000	180,000	67,000
Percentage with Earnings of 50 Percent or More of Total Income	48%	50%	42%	60%	25%
Average Annual Earnings	\$ 7,389	\$ 7,644	\$ 8,876	\$ 14,846	\$ 10,877
Average Total Income	\$ 8,302	\$ 8,100	\$ 11,247	\$ 19,492	\$ 14,649
Earnings as a Percentage of Total Income	89%	94%	79%	76%	74%

This table excludes people who reported that they were permanently unable to work.

TABLE 14
CHILDREN UNDER 18 LIVING IN POVERTY IN 1991, BY PROVINCE

	All Poor Children		Poor Children of Two-Parent Families		Poor Children of Single-Parent Mothers	
	Poverty Rate	Number of Children	Poverty Rate	Number of Children	Poverty Rate	Number of Children
Newfoundland	20.3%	33,000	16.3%	24,000	74.1%	8,000
Prince Edward Island	14.5%	5,000	8.7%	3,000	52.2%	2,000
Nova Scotia	20.2%	43,000	12.0%	21,000	66.8%	20,000
New Brunswick	18.1%	32,000	10.6 %	15,000	63.4%	13,000
Quebec	19.7%	322,000	14.2%	202,000	65.2%	107,000
Ontario	17.0%	408,000	8.8%	175,000	68.5%	209,000
Manitoba	26.9%	72,000	21.5%	50,000	66.0%	19,000
Saskatchewan	21.0%	56,000	15.5%	37,000	68.5%	17,000
Alberta	18.7%	129,000	13.2%	79,000	63.9%	46,000
British Columbia	14.5%	111,000	8.0%	52,000	58.9%	54,000
Canada	18.3%	1,210,000	11.7%	657,000	65.8%	496,000

TABLE 15
POVERTY RATES FOR MEN AND WOMEN 65 AND OLDER BY PROVINCE

	Men			Women		
	1980	1991	Percent Change	1980	1991	Percent Change
Newfoundland	27.6	11.6	-58%	36.9	21.1	-43%
Prince Edward Island	33.7	11.1	-67%	52.7	15.7	-70%
Nova Scotia	22.8	9.9	-57%	31.5	20.6	-35%
New Brunswick	22.1	9.1	-59%	34.2	18.3	-46%
Quebec	33.7	18.8	-44%	46.2	31.2	-32%
Ontario	24.0	11.2	-53%	34.3	23.0	-33%
Manitoba	23.8	13.9	-42%	41.2	27.0	-34%
Saskatchewan	28.1	6.2	-78%	49.0	15.0	-69%
Alberta	25.2	10.8	-57%	38.8	25.1	-35%
British Columbia	29.6	15.1	-49%	32.7	25.1	-23%
Canada	27.3	13.3	-51%	38.4	25.0	-35%

TABLE 16

POVERTY RATES FOR WOMEN IN HIGH-RISK GROUPS, 1991

Region	Unattached Women Under 65	Unattached Women 65 and Older	Single-Parent Mothers Under 65
Atlantic	39.7%	43.4%	64.3%
Quebec	46.3%	56.0%	61.7%
Ontario	29.9%	45.2%	64.0%
Prairies	37.6%	42.6%	60.1%
British Columbia	37.8%	sample too small	55.7%
Canada	37.6%	47.4%	61.9%

TABLE 17		
POVERTY RATES FOR FAMILIES WITH TWO SPOUSES UNDER AGE 65, WITH AND WITHOUT THE EARNINGS OF WIVES, 1991		
	Percentage of Families Who Were Poor in 1991	Percentage of Families Who Would Have Been Poor Without the Earnings of Wives
Newfoundland	13.7%	23.8%
Prince Edward Island	6.1%	17.7%
Nova Scotia	9.4%	20.0%
New Brunswick	8.7%	16.7%
Quebec	12.0%	23.1%
Ontario	6.9%	16.4%
Manitoba	14.8%	26.7%
Saskatchewan	11.9%	25.0%
Alberta	9.7%	22.5%
British Columbia	7.4%	16.1%
Canada	9.3%	19.7%

TRENDS IN POVERTY AMONG WOMEN AND MEN 18 AND OLDER

	Adult Women		Adult Men		Ratio of Female to Male Poverty Rates
	Poverty Rate	Number of Poor	Poverty Rate	Number of Poor	
1980	18.0%	1,565,000	12.7%	1,058,000	1.42
1981	17.8%	1,567,000	12.6%	1,063,000	1.41
1982	18.1%	1,624,000	13.6%	1,160,000	1.33
1983	20.1%	1,836,000	15.4%	1,334,000	1.31
1984	19.7%	1,817,000	14.9%	1,304,000	1.32
1985	18.8%	1,754,000	14.0%	1,240,000	1.34
1986	17.7%	1,677,000	13.4%	1,197,000	1.32
1987	17.4%	1,673,000	12.9%	1,176,000	1.35
1988	17.1%	1,664,000	11.7%	1,081,000	1.46
1989	15.5%	1,534,000	10.7%	1,001,000	1.45
1990	16.2%	1,622,000	11.3%	1,079,000	1.43
1991	17.3%	1,767,000	12.7%	1,234,000	1.36

STATISTICS CANADA'S LOW INCOME CUT-OFFS (1986 BASE) FOR 1992

Family Size	Community Size				
	Cities of 500,000+	100,000-499,999	30,000-99,999	Less than 30,000	Rural Areas
1	\$ 15,175	\$ 13,328	\$ 13,021	\$ 11,870	\$ 10,331
2	20,569	18,068	17,650	16,089	14,005
3	26,146	22,965	22,434	20,450	17,801
4	30,105	26,439	25,830	23,547	20,494
5	32,891	28,888	28,221	25,726	22,392
6	35,703	31,355	30,632	27,924	24,305
7+	38,399	33,727	32,949	30,036	26,142

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WELFARE ESTIMATES OF STATISTICS CANADA'S LOW INCOME CUT-OFFS (1986 BASE) FOR 1993*

Family Size	Community Size				
	Cities of 500,000+	100,000-499,999	30,000-99,999	Less than 30,000	Rural Areas
1	\$ 15,509	\$ 13,621	\$ 13,307	\$ 12,131	\$ 10,558
2	21,022	18,465	18,038	16,443	14,313
3	26,721	23,470	22,928	20,900	18,193
4	30,767	27,021	26,398	24,065	20,945
5	33,615	29,524	28,842	26,292	22,885
6	36,488	32,045	31,306	28,538	24,840
7+	39,244	34,469	33,674	30,697	26,717

* based on inflation of 2.2 percent as forecast in the 1992 budget speech