



The Daily

Statistics Canada

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MAJOR RELEASES

- **Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics: Moving out of low-paid work, 1993 to 1995**

About 21% of Canadians who had a low-paying job in 1993 had managed to climb out of it by 1995. They were able to do so by changing jobs, working longer hours or by receiving a pay increase from their employers.

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- **Communicating by computer, October 1997**

In October 1997, nearly 3 out of every 10 households had at least one member who typically used a computer every month at home, work or another location to communicate in some respect—such as e-mail, electronic banking or simply surfing the Internet.

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Basic summary tabulations

1996 Census

This series from the 1996 Census provides summary information for small geographic areas of the country in tabulations using two or more inter-related census variables.

The entire series comprises 66 basic tabulations. Sixteen tabulations on labour market activities, industry and occupation, household activities, place of work, and mode of transportation to work are released today. Geographic areas include census divisions and subdivisions; census metropolitan areas, tracted census agglomerations and census tracts; federal electoral districts (1996 representation order); federal electoral districts (1987 representation order) and enumeration areas; and forward sortation areas. All geographies include data for Canada, provinces and territories.

Prices begin with a flat fee of \$60, plus \$1 for each of the first 100 geographic areas, and 5¢ for each additional area.

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MAJOR RELEASES

Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics: Moving out of low-paid work

1993 to 1995

About 21% of Canadians who had a low-paying job in 1993 had managed to climb out of it by 1995, according to a study based on new data from the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics. They were able to do so by changing jobs, working longer hours or by receiving a pay increase from their employers.

Men were more likely than women to escape a low-paying job. Moreover, female lone-parents had an especially hard time moving up to jobs that paid more.

This study covered about 2,200 paid workers who were employed in both December 1993 and December 1995, and who had low earnings in December 1993. They ranged in age from 15 to 60, and they had not been enrolled in school full time in either 1993 or 1995.

These workers were considered to have low-paying jobs if their weekly earnings in 1993 were less than \$404.16. This amount approximated Statistics Canada's low income cutoff for a family of two living in an urban area of at least half a million people in 1993. A low earner in 1993 was said to have "moved up" in 1995 if weekly earnings in 1995 were at least \$455.25, that is at least 10% greater than \$413.86, the low threshold for 1995 weekly earnings.

Men more likely to move up

In recent years, the wage gap between men and women has narrowed. Young women who entered the labour market during the 1990s have generally been more educated and more career-oriented than in previous years.

Despite these significant changes, women have moved out of low-paying jobs less frequently than men. This study showed that of all men who had low weekly pay in 1993, almost one-third had a better paying job by 1995; in contrast, only 17% of women had a better paying one.

The upward mobility of female lone-parents was even more limited. Of all those who had low earnings in 1993 and were still employed in 1995, only 12% had moved up by 1995.

The reasons for the less frequently observed upward mobility of women are not well known. Low-paid women may experience slower earnings growth

Note to readers

Statistics Canada today releases the third wave of data from the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID), which sheds new light, among other topics, on the upward mobility of low-paid workers between 1993 and 1995. This release summarizes the findings of a study entitled "The upward mobility of low-paid Canadians, 1993-1995", which is based on the new SLID data.

SLID is a longitudinal survey that is building a picture of Canadians' jobs, income changes and family events over time. The same people are interviewed from one year to the next in order to capture transitions in the nation's labour market along with other changes that individuals and families experience. The target population for the survey consists of about 35,000 individuals of all ages who were selected in 1993 and interviewed in 1994 and 1995. The information gathered covers their demographic characteristics, family income and labour market activities.

Previous SLID data were released on April 11, 1996 ("Life events: How families change"), June 16, 1996 ("Transitions in the labour force") and July 7, 1997 ("Crossing the low income line"). Results from the fourth wave of SLID data are expected by the end of 1998. By then, SLID will show labour market and family experiences covering a four-year stretch, from 1993 to 1996.

Low income cutoffs: Low income cutoffs (LICOs) are established using data from Statistics Canada's Family Expenditure Survey. They are intended to convey the income level at which a family may be in straitened circumstances because it has to spend a greater proportion of its income on the basics (food, shelter and clothing) than the average family of similar size. LICOs vary by family size and by size of community.

Although LICOs are often referred to as poverty lines, they have no official status as such, and Statistics Canada does not recommend their use for this purpose.

if they received less training or had more frequent work interruptions than low-paid men. They may also be over-represented in occupations such as sales and consumer services, where remuneration does not advance much with seniority.

The fact that low-paid women work more often than low-paid men in part-time jobs, which generally provide fewer opportunities for advancement, must be ruled out as an explanation. The reason is that the lower upward mobility of women remains even after accounting for this difference in part-time work.

Compared with other women, female lone-parents may be more limited in the type of jobs they can choose. They may have to accept jobs that are close to home or school, part-time jobs that coincide with children's school hours, or jobs that do not require long work weeks.

Changing employers—not always a good thing

In general, the study showed that workers who changed employers were more likely to escape low earnings than those who remained with the company. However, this pattern was not observed for all job changers.

Only 19% of employees who found a new job after being laid off moved up, compared with 24% of those who had quit their previous job. This likely reflected the fact that displaced workers were more vulnerable to earnings losses when moving to another job than workers who left a firm voluntarily.

Job changers who moved from a non-unionized to a unionized job were particularly successful at escaping low earnings. Between 1993 and 1995, 32% of job changers who did so succeeded in moving out of low-paid work, compared with 20% of other workers.

Unskilled workers have least chance of moving up

Individuals who had only a high school diploma had much lower chances of moving out of a low-paying job than did university graduates. Between 1993 and 1995, only 16% of high school graduates managed to improve their level of earnings. This was less than half the corresponding proportion for university graduates (34%).

Similarly, 33% of highly skilled workers involved in professional, natural and social science occupations moved on to better pay, compared with 11% of those employed in sales and 12% of those in service-related occupations.

Workers in the consumer services industry were less likely to move up than other workers, probably because they had relatively low skills. The upward mobility of these workers might have been foiled because their abilities were not marketable in other better-paying sectors of the economy.

These results support the idea that in an economy increasingly based on knowledge, highly skilled workers are expected to be more successful than workers who have low education and training.

Older workers less likely to move up

Workers aged 55 to 60 were three times less likely to move out of low earnings than their younger

counterparts. At least two factors may explain this result.

On the one hand, perhaps low-paid workers who are near the end of their careers enjoy a relatively modest growth in their pay rates, compared with what they have experienced in the past. That is, they may be at a point where their earnings have already peaked and, as a result, are not experiencing further significant changes in their paycheques.

On the other hand, some of the older workers may currently keep receiving low earnings simply because they have decided to reduce their work hours as a means of moving gradually into retirement.

Mobility varies by province

Distinct upward mobility patterns are evident in the different regions of Canada. About 1 in 4 workers in Ontario and British Columbia moved out of low weekly earnings in 1995, compared with only 1 in 10 workers in the Atlantic provinces and in Manitoba.

Even if favourable economic conditions may have contributed to the upward mobility of workers in Ontario and British Columbia, those conditions cannot explain all the regional differences.

For example, workers in Quebec escaped low weekly earnings more often than they did in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, even though average weekly earnings and employment grew as strongly in those two provinces as they did in Quebec.

The regional differences observed could reflect the fact that upward mobility is more limited in thin labour markets. Large provinces generally have a more diversified industrial structure than smaller provinces, and thus may offer low-paid workers more opportunities to find new jobs in better-paying sectors of the economy.

All the differences in upward mobility outlined in this report remain statistically significant when all factors are considered simultaneously. These include differences between men and women, between workers who are laid off and workers who quit, between workers who move from a non-unionized to a unionized job and other workers, between high school and university graduates, and so on.

**Percentage of low earners moving up¹
1993 to 1995**

	%
All low earners	21.1
Men	31.3
Women	16.7
Lone-parent	11.8
Married	15.9
Not married, no children	21.4
Changed employer?	
Yes, following a layoff	19.2
Yes, following a quit	24.1
Yes, for other reasons	28.5
Remained with employer with a change in duties	24.0
Remained with employer with no change in duties	18.6
Moved from non-unionized to unionized job?	
Yes	32.1
No	20.3
Education	
High school or less	15.8
University degree	34.2
Occupation	
Professional, managers, natural and social sciences	32.6
Clerical	20.3
Sales	10.9
Services	12.3
Blue-collar	25.9
Industry	
Goods sector	29.3
Distributive and business services	27.9
Public services	26.5
Consumer services	11.4
Age	
15-24	21.6
25-34	23.6
35-44	22.4
45-54	19.0
55-60	6.9
Region	
Atlantic provinces ²	11.9
Quebec	21.8
Ontario	24.7
Manitoba	11.1
Saskatchewan	14.9
Alberta	19.4
British Columbia	27.3

¹ The sample consists of paid workers who had low weekly earnings in December 1993 and who were employed in December 1995. The data on family composition, education level, occupation, industry and region are as of December 1993.

² The sample size is too small to produce reliable estimates for each of the Atlantic provinces (Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick).

The upward mobility of low-paid Canadians, 1993 to 1995 (product number 75F0002MPE, 98-07, \$10 for a paper copy or free on the Internet) is now available. In addition, the third wave of data from the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics corresponding to the reference year 1995 is released today. In order to allow for an earlier release of the next wave of data, no public-use microdata file will be produced for the third wave. These data will be included in the next public-use microdata file scheduled for release at the end of 1998. However, third-wave data are available for access through custom data retrievals or remote access.

For further information on data products, or to order the study, contact Client Services (613-951-7355; 1 888 297-7355; dynamics@statcan.ca), Income Statistics Division.

For further analytical information on this study, contact René Morissette (613-951-3608) or Marie Drolet (613-951-5691), Business and Labour Market Analysis Division. ■

Communicating by computer

October 1997

In October 1997, nearly 3 out of every 10 households had at least one member who typically used a computer every month at home, work or another location to communicate in some respect—such as e-mail, electronic banking or simply surfing the Internet.

According to the Household Internet Use Survey released today, 35% of households in Alberta had at least one member who had used some form of computer communication each month, the largest proportion of any province. By contrast, only 20% of households in Quebec had someone who had done so—the lowest percentage.

Communicating by computer was more prevalent in households with young people. At least one person used a computer regularly to communicate in 38% of households in which there was someone under the age of 18, compared with only 25% of households in which there was no one under 18.

Communicating by computer

October 1997

	All households	
	Households that typically used computer communications	Households that ever used computer communications
	%	
Canada	29.3	38.1
Without a member under age 18	24.5	31.6
With a member under 18	38.3	50.1
Newfoundland	26.6	34.7
Prince Edward Island	26.0	35.5
Nova Scotia	32.2	41.9
New Brunswick	29.1	39.7
Quebec	20.1	28.9
Ontario	33.2	41.5
Manitoba	29.2	38.8
Saskatchewan	27.2	36.2
Alberta	34.5	43.3
British Columbia	33.6	42.6

Individuals were most likely to use a computer to communicate at their workplace, followed by the home, schools and public libraries in that order. The ranking was the same for households with a child under 18; however, the use of computer communications at schools and at public libraries was much higher (see the table at the end of this release).

Of those households that typically used computer communications every month, 84% reported using this tool to search for specific information on the Internet.

About 83% said they used them for e-mail. About one-third of these households had someone using computers to communicate from home for employer-related business.

Purpose of computer communications

October 1997

Households that typically used computer communications	
	%
Search for information	84.4
E-mail from home	83.1
For employer-related business from home	33.7
Self-employment	21.8
Electronic banking from home	19.6
Purchases from home	9.2

In terms of frequency, 61% of households that typically used computer communications every month had someone who communicated on a daily basis, 34% had someone communicating on a weekly basis, and 5% used it for that purpose less than four times a month. However, frequency alone provides an incomplete picture of intensity of use, as it does not recognize that use can vary from minutes to hours. On a national basis, 42% of these households spent at least 20 hours per month on some form of computer communication from home. This percentage did not vary substantially among regions.

Frequency of computer communications

October 1997

Households that typically used computer communications	
	%
At least 7 times a week	61.0
At least 4 times a month	33.6
Less than 4 times a month	4.8
Not known	0.6

Note: On November 27, 1997, Statistics Canada released data from the May 1997 Household Facilities and Equipment Survey. It reported that 14% of households used the Internet, including commercial on-line services, from home. By comparison, this survey indicates that 15% of households used the Internet from home in a typical month for communicating.

The public-use microdata file of results from the Household Internet Use Survey will be available June 29. To order the microdata file (56M0002XCB, \$2,000), contact Carol Nusum-Sol (613-951-4598; 1 800 461-9050), Special Surveys Division.

For further information on this release, contact Marc Hamel (613-951-2495; hamemar@statcan.ca), Special Surveys Division, or Dustin Chodorowicz

(613-951-3497; choddus@statcan.ca), Science and Technology Redesign Project.

Location of computer communications
October 1997

	Households that typically used computer communications:				
	at home	at work	at school	at public library	elsewhere
	%				
Canada	54.5	67.9	31.9	12.5	9.6
Without a member under age 18	52.5	68.0	22.2	10.7	8.6
With a member under 18	56.8	67.9	43.2	14.6	10.7
Newfoundland	46.6	59.0	48.3	16.2	..
Prince Edward Island	40.5	63.8	43.7	7.8 ¹	8.5 ¹
Nova Scotia	44.5	64.4	44.4	15.5	9.6
New Brunswick	41.7	61.8	36.7	8.8	16.7
Quebec	50.6	64.9	27.7	10.3	8.9
Ontario	58.0	70.2	38.3	13.2	9.4
Manitoba	46.8	69.8	32.2	11.4	10.7
Saskatchewan	45.3	67.0	32.9	10.4	12.0
Alberta	54.0	74.7	34.3	12.6	10.0
British Columbia	59.2	63.1	28.7	13.3	9.3

.. Figure not available because of its low level of reliability.

¹ Figure is of low reliability due to high sampling variability.



OTHER RELEASES

Per capita food consumption

1997

Canadians included more grain products, rice, poultry and cheese in their diet in 1997, but continued to eat less red meat and drink less milk and alcohol.

Canadians are eating more cereal products: 85 kg per person in 1997. Historically, much of the wheat flour was used in the production of traditional bread and baked goods. In recent years, pasta, cereal-based snack foods and specialty bread products (pita bread, tortilla shells and bagels) have become increasingly popular among consumers. Rice is also popular, with consumption peaking at 7 kg per person in 1997.

Canadian cheese remained in high demand last year as consumption of all cheeses exceeded 11 kg per person for a seventh consecutive year. Most of the growth came from the expanding popularity of variety cheeses. Promotional campaigns, the popularity of take-out and/or pre-packaged meals and versatile cheese products have contributed to this growth.

Greater demand for poultry was large enough to offset the decline in red meat consumption. Processed poultry products, which are convenient and quick to prepare, have become more popular with consumers. Even so, red meat (mainly beef and pork) still accounts for almost two-thirds of all meat eaten by Canadians. In 1997, per capita consumption of red meat and poultry was 90 kg.

There are several reasons for the shift from red meat. An increasing number of busy families are choosing pre-packaged foods that often contain less red meat. As well, new immigrants from Asia and the Middle East tend to include less meat in their diet. And seniors, who represent a growing proportion of the population, eat less meat.

Milk consumption averaged 88 litres per person in 1997, down 14% from the high of 102 litres in 1979. Although overall milk consumption is declining, Canadians are buying more lower-fat milk products such as 1% and skim milk. From 1990 to 1997, the market share of lower-fat milk products more than doubled to 27%.

Reasons for the drop in milk consumption may include an aging population that drinks less milk, a more ethnically diverse population that does not normally

include milk in its diet, and increased competition from juices, bottled water and soft drinks.

Canadians are drinking more soft drinks: 106 litres per person in 1997, an increase of 10 litres per person compared with 1988. Reasons for this continuing growth may include competitive prices and promotional campaigns.

Canadians drank on average almost 74 litres of alcohol in 1997, down 22 litres per person from 1987. Beer still remains the most popular choice at 62 litres per person, but spirits and wine continue to grab more of the market. In 1997, Canadians drank on average almost 5 litres of spirits and 7 litres of wine.

Data available up to 1996 also show that consumers have a strong preference for fresh fruit and vegetables. The 1997 data for fruit and vegetables, oils, fats and fish will be released in October.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 2260-2267.

Historical consumption data (1983 to 1997) for dairy products, beverages, eggs, pulses and nuts, sugars and syrups, cereals, meats, poultry, plus detailed information on production, stocks, international trade and supplies used by manufacturers are available in *Food consumption in Canada, part I* (32-229-XPB, \$33). This publication (32-229-XIB) will also be available on the Internet on June 24.

For further information on this release, contact Debbie Dupuis (613-951-2553) or Patricia Chandler (613-951-2506; fax: 613-951-3868), Agriculture Division. ■

Stocks of frozen poultry meat

June 1, 1998 (preliminary)

Preliminary data on the stocks of frozen poultry meat in cold storage as of June 1, 1998 are now available.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 5675-5677.

For further information on this release, contact Sandra Gielfeldt (613-951-2505), Livestock and Animal Products Section, Agriculture Division. ■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Steel wire and specified wire products, April 1998
Catalogue number 41-006-XPB
(Canada: \$7/\$62; outside Canada: US\$7/US\$62).

Electric lamps (light bulbs and tubes), April 1998
Catalogue number 43-009-XPB
(Canada: \$7/\$62; outside Canada: US\$7/US\$62).

All prices exclude sales tax.

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MAJOR RELEASES

- **Urban transit, 1995** 2
Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took an average of about 51.9 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.
- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1995** 4
Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was modest weak again in 1996, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

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