



The Daily

Statistics Canada

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MAJOR RELEASE

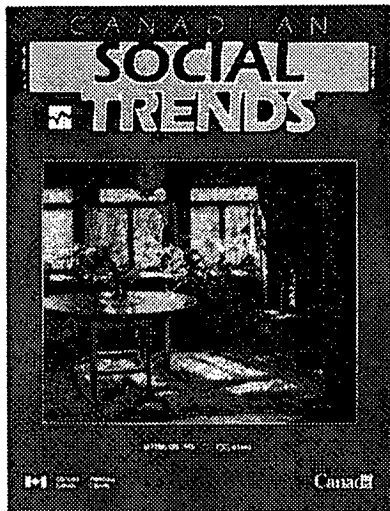
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• General Social Survey - Health, 1991

Canadians are taking better care of themselves today than just a few years ago. They are smoking less, drinking less, and exercising more. Yet the picture is not entirely positive. Overall smoking rates have declined, but not among women - particularly those in younger age groups. Also, despite increased physical activity, the percentage of Canadians who are overweight has increased.

Continued on page 2.



Canadian Social Trends Spring 1992

This issue of *Canadian Social Trends* focuses on children: hungry children, missing children and immigrant children. Private charities have been providing food to needy people for generations. However, since the recession of the early 1980s, the food bank network that began with one operation in Edmonton has expanded to every province in Canada and, in 1991, served an estimated 700,000 Canadian children.

Of the approximately 1,800 children under the age of 18 who are missing from their homes at any given time, most (64%) are run-aways. The remaining cases range from abductions to those who have wandered off and become lost.

With low fertility rates in Canada, immigrant children take on an increasingly important role. If immigration proceeds according to projected levels, more than 300,000 children from diverse countries are expected to arrive in Canada during the 1990-95 period, up considerably from the 160,000 who immigrated during 1984-89.

Other articles in this issue examine motor vehicles as a major source of air pollution and changes in the nursing profession in Canada. This edition also includes annual labour force estimates from 1946 to 1991 and the first data release from the 1991 General Social Survey on health.

The Spring 1992 issue of *Canadian Social Trends* (11-008E, \$8.50/\$34) is now available. See "How to Order Publications".

For further information, contact the editors (613-951-2560).



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PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

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MAJOR RELEASE

General Social Survey - Health 1991

Highlights - A Trend to a Healthier Lifestyle

Smoking

Over the past 25 years, the proportion of Canadians who are regular smokers has declined. In 1991, about 5.4 million people or 26% of the population aged 15 years and over smoked daily, down from 41% in 1966. However, while the rate among men dropped sharply from 54% in 1966 to 26% in 1991, the percentage of smokers among women dipped only slightly from 28% to 26%. As a result, the smoking rates of men and women have now converged.

Within the next five years, if current trends continue, smoking may be more prevalent among women than among men. At ages 15 to 19, the smoking rate of women (20%) now exceeds that of men (12%).

Alcohol Consumption

The majority of Canadians consume alcohol, but the proportion of drinkers is declining. In 1991, 11.6 million people or 55% of the population aged 15 years and over were "current drinkers," in that they consumed alcohol at least once a month. This level of consumption was down from 65% in 1978. There were, however, wide variations in the prevalence of drinking and the amount of alcohol consumed. Men were more likely than women to be drinkers, and men who were drinkers tended to consume more alcohol than did their female counterparts. For both sexes, drinking peaks at ages 20 to 24 and then declines with advancing age. In 1991, 80% of men and 58% of women aged 20 to 24 years were current drinkers.

Heavy drinking is relatively rare among Canadians. In 1991, 10% of adults who were current drinkers had 14 or more drinks a week. Heavy drinking was more common among men (15% of current drinkers) than among women (4%), a disparity that prevailed at all ages.

Physical Activity

Canadians of all ages reported an increased level of physical activity compared with just a few years ago.

In 1991, based on the energy they typically expended in leisure pursuits, 6.7 million Canadians aged 15 years and over or 32% of the adult population were physically "very active." This was up from 1985, when about 27% of adults were defined as very active.

Men are more likely than women to be very active. In 1991, 39% of men and 26% of women were physically active. For both sexes, this was an increase from 1985, when the corresponding figures were 31% and 23%. The physically active component of the population is highest among young people and declines with advancing age. For example, in 1991, 55% of 15- to 24-year-olds were very active compared to 12% of those aged 65 and over. In all age groups, however, the 1991 figures represent increases from 1985.

Weight Relative to Height

Despite increased levels of physical activity in recent years, the proportion of Canadian adults who are overweight has risen. In 1991, approximately 3.7 million people aged 20 to 64 were overweight according to Health and Welfare Canada standards. This estimate represented 23% of the population aged 20 to 64 in 1991, whereas 17% of those in this age range were overweight in 1985.

Men are more likely than women to be overweight. In 1991, 28% of men were overweight compared to 18% of women. The proportion of those who are overweight tends to rise with advancing age.

Trends in lifestyle risk factors are the first data to be released from Cycle 6 of the General Social Survey. A short report on these trends appears as a supplement in today's issue of *Canadian Social Trends* (11-008E, 8.50/\$34) and is also to appear in the next issue of *Health Reports* (82-003, \$26/\$104). See "How to Order Publications".

The survey also provides a range of measures of health status and health care utilization. A public-use microdata file will be available this summer and a major descriptive and analytical publication will be available by winter 1992-93.

For more information contact Wayne Millar (613-951-1631), Canadian Centre For Health Information or the General Social Survey Project (613-951-9180), Housing, Family and Social Statistics Division. ■

DATA AVAILABILITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Department Store Sales

February 1992

Advance department stores sales including concessions, for February 1992 were \$744 million. Sales for the major department stores were \$404 million and sales for the junior category were \$340 million.

For further information, on this release, contact Tom Newton (613-951-9693) or David Roeske (613-951-3559), Retail Trade Section, Industry Division. ■

Shipments of Rolled Steel

January 1992

Rolled steel shipments for January 1992 totalled 902 733 tonnes, an increase of 8.8% from the preceding month's total of 829 909 tonnes and an increase of 8.2% from the year-earlier level of 833 953 tonnes.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 58 and 122 (series 22-25).

The January 1992 issue of *Primary Iron and Steel* (41-001, \$5/\$50) will be available at a later date.

For more detailed information on this release, contact Greg Milsom (613-951-9827), Industry Division. ■

Railway Carloadings

January 1992

Revenue freight loaded by railways in Canada totalled 19.4 million tonnes in January 1992, an increase of 5.4% from January 1991. The carriers received an additional 1.0 million tonnes from United States connections.

All 1991 figures have been revised.

Available on CANSIM: matrix 1431.

The January 1992 issue of *Railway Carloadings* (52-001, \$8.30/\$83) is to be released the third week of March.

For seasonally adjusted revenue freight loadings, contact Angus MacLean (613-951-2484), Transportation Division. ■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Canadian Social Trends, Spring 1992.

Catalogue number 11-008E

(Canada: \$8.50/\$34; United States: US\$10/US\$40;
Other Countries: US\$12/US\$48).

Pulpwood and Wood Residue Statistics, January 1992.

Catalogue number 25-001

(Canada: \$6.10/\$61; United States: US\$7.30/US\$73;
Other Countries: US\$8.50/US\$85).

Production and Shipments of Steel Pipe and Tubing, January 1992.

Catalogue number 41-011

(Canada: \$5/\$50; United States: US\$6/US\$60;
Other Countries: US\$7/US\$70).

Air Carrier Traffic at Canadian Airports, October-December 1990.

Catalogue number 51-005

(Canada: \$30.50/\$122; United States: US\$36.50/
US\$146; Other Countries: US\$42.75/US\$171).

Air Carrier Traffic at Canadian Airports, January-March 1991.

Catalogue number 51-005

(Canada: \$30.50/\$122; United States: US\$36.50/
US\$146; Other Countries: US\$42.75/US\$171).

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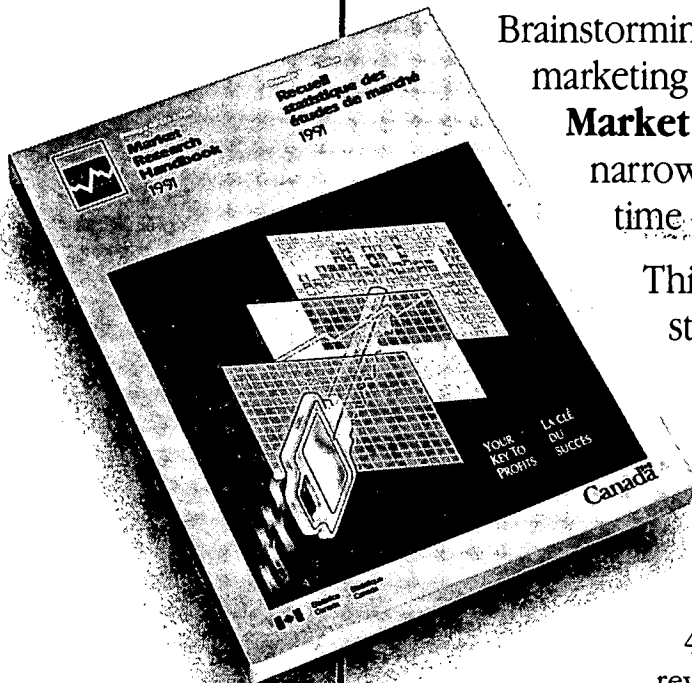
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