

Insights on Canadian Society

Food insecurity among Canadian families

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Food insecurity among Canadian families

by *Sharanjit Uppal*

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Overview of the study

This study uses data from the 2021 Canadian Income Survey to gain a better understanding of food insecurity, with a focus on families both below and above the poverty line and across income quintiles. The study also uses data from the 2019 Survey of Financial Security to examine the net worth of families who are more likely to be food insecure.

- In 2022, 18% of Canadian families reported experiencing food insecurity in the past 12 months, up from 16% in 2021.
- Food insecurity was the lowest in Quebec (14%) and highest in Newfoundland and Labrador (23%), New Brunswick (22%) and Alberta (22%).
- Families with a female major income earner were more likely to be food insecure compared to those with a male major income earner – 21% versus 16%. Moreover, food insecurity was highest among female lone parent families (41%).
- Families with a racialized major income earner (23%) reported higher food insecurity compared to families with a non-racialized, non-Indigenous earner (16%). This was especially true for Black Canadians (38%).
- Families with an Indigenous major income earner living in the provinces and off reserve were almost twice as likely to report food insecurity (34%), compared to those with a non-Indigenous major income earner (18%).
- More than one-third (35%) of families living below the poverty line reported food insecurity, double the proportion for families living above the poverty line (16%). Though the rate of food insecurity among families below the poverty line was higher, a higher proportion of families (78%) who were food insecure were above the poverty line.
- The risk of being food insecure was much higher among certain groups living below the poverty line. For instance, 62% of families living in subsidized housing were food insecure, over three times higher than the overall average (18%). Other vulnerable groups below the poverty line included female lone parent families (48%), families where the major income earner was unemployed all year (60%), Indigenous families living in the provinces and off reserve (48%), and Black Canadians (56%). Similar groups were at greater risk who were living above the poverty line.
- Part of the observed difference in food insecurity rates between families with a male and female major income earner; female lone parent families and other family types; and families with a Black or Filipino Canadian and non-racialized, non-Indigenous major income earner was explained by various other sociodemographic characteristics including family income.

Introduction

Food security refers to “when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”.¹ There are four dimensions of food security: physical availability of food, economic and physical access to food, food utilization, and stability of the other three dimensions over time. All four dimensions must be fulfilled simultaneously for food security objectives to be met.

Food insecurity, on the other hand, is “the inability to acquire or consume an adequate diet quality or sufficient quantity of food in socially acceptable ways, or the uncertainty that one will be able to do so”.² It usually results from an inability to access adequate food due to financial constraints. Food insecurity is a serious concern as it has been found to be associated with various chronic conditions,³ mental health problems⁴ and other diseases and infections.⁵ It has also been found to increase the likelihood of hospitalization⁶ and has been linked to premature mortality,⁷ and as such, puts pressure on the health care system. Recent Canadian studies on food insecurity have looked at its association with various sociodemographic and economic characteristics,⁸ the association with mental health,⁹ unmet health care needs¹⁰ and changes in prevalence during the COVID-19 pandemic.¹¹

Now known as a key indicator in the goal of reducing poverty, monitoring the prevalence of food security was first identified in the 2018 [Opportunity for All – Canada’s First Poverty Reduction Strategy](#). It has since been reinforced with the 2021 Government of Canada [Quality of Life Framework](#) that identifies food

security as a well-being indicator, falling under the ‘prosperity’ domain. Addressing the need for data on this indicator, Statistics Canada launched the Household Food Security Survey Module (HFSSM) in the 2018 Canadian Income Survey, with a view to measure and track trends in food insecurity over time.¹² The module covers a full spectrum of food insecurity, from worrying about running out of food, to children not eating for a whole day (see [Data sources and definitions](#)).

In this study, data from the 2021 Canadian Income Survey are used to examine how food insecurity (marginally, moderately and severely food insecure) varies among Canadian families (economic families and unattached individuals) living in the ten provinces.¹³ Included are families living below and above the poverty line, as it is recognized that income alone is not the sole driver in food insecurity.¹⁴ Other financial constraints, namely high levels of debt and/or low levels of assets (in other words, low levels of net worth), are examined based on data from the 2019 Survey of Financial Security.¹⁵ While the SFS does not include information on food insecurity, these data can be used to provide a profile of the financial situation of groups most likely to be food insecure (based on CIS findings).

The article is divided into three sections. The first section examines overall patterns in food insecurity. This is followed by a look into the relationship between income and food insecurity, exploring families most vulnerable to experiencing food insecurity below and above the poverty line. The last section takes a look at the possible role of assets and debts in food insecurity. Given the use of cross-sectional data,

the results in this article should be interpreted as associations and not causal relationships.

Section I Food insecurity: Who is most at risk?

In 2022, 18% of families in Canada, representing 6.9 million people, reported that they experienced some level of food insecurity over the past 12 months (Table 1). More specifically, 5% of families were marginally food insecure, meaning that families worried about running out of food and/or experienced limited food selection due to a lack of money for food. Another 8% were considered moderately food insecure, where the quality and/or quantity of food was compromised due to a lack of money for food. A further 5% were severely food insecure, missing meals, reducing their food intake and, at the most extreme, going days without food.

The proportion of families experiencing some level of food insecurity has increased since 2021, increasing from 16% to 18% between 2021 and 2022. This proportion is also slightly higher than before the pandemic - in 2019 (17%).¹⁶ The relatively higher prevalence of food insecurity could be partly attributed to higher levels of inflation, which reduces the purchasing power of consumers, causing families to spend more to buy less.

The year-over-year inflation rate jumped from 1.0% in January 2021 to 4.8% in December 2021. Meanwhile, the annual rate of food inflation increased from 1.0% to 5.2% over the same time period. Prices continued to rise and in June 2022, the overall inflation rate was 8.1% and food inflation in particular was 8.8% - the largest yearly change in 40 years.

While inflation affects all areas of the country, other factors, such as cost of living and policies aimed at poverty reduction, can influence the prevalence of food security at the provincial level. In 2022, food insecurity was the lowest in Quebec, with 14% of families in this province reporting some level of food insecurity. Quebec was also the only province to not experience any change in levels of food insecurity from 2019 to 2022.

On the other end of the spectrum, food insecurity was the highest in Newfoundland and Labrador (23%), followed by New Brunswick (22%) and Alberta (22%). These were also the provinces, along with Prince Edward Island, to experience the greatest increase in food insecurity between 2019 and 2022, ranging from an increase of 3-4 percentage points.

Among larger Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs), in 2022, food insecurity was the highest in Edmonton (21%) and the lowest in Ottawa-Gatineau (14%). Moreover, families residing in rural areas (15%) reported lower level of food insecurity compared to those living in population centres (19%).

Senior-led households have lower rates of food insecurity

The age of the major income earner played a role in the likelihood of food insecurity, with senior-led households being less likely to report food insecurity. In 2022, 10% of families with the major income earner aged 65 years and older reported food insecurity. This compares to 17% for 55- to 64-year-olds and 23% for 35- to 44 year-olds. Older age groups are likely to have a more stable source of income such as government pensions and are more likely to have accumulated

assets over their lifetime. On the other hand, families with middle-aged income earners can have more financial obligations, such as mortgage debt and young children.

Food insecurity higher among families with a female major income earner

Overall, families with a female major income earner were more likely to report food insecurity, compared to those with a male major earner – 21% versus 16%.¹⁷ This may reflect gender differences in income levels. In 2021, the median annual after-tax income of families with a female major earner was \$58,200, compared to \$76,600 for those with a male major income earner.¹⁸

Family structure is also related to food insecurity. Certain family types are more likely to be food insecure. This is especially true for female lone parent families. More than four in ten (41%) of these families reported being food insecure. While food insecurity was also higher than average among male lone parents, the proportion was much lower at 24%. Other families with higher-than-average food insecurity included non-elderly not in economic families (24%) and non-elderly couples with children (20%). The lowest level of food insecurity were among elderly families (8%).

Closely tied to family structure is marital status, as it can further speak to the possibility of pooled assets and financial resources, which in turn, can impact the ability to be food secure. Those who were separated (28%), divorced (22%), and unattached (23%) were more likely to report food insecurity, compared to both legally married couples (14%) and those in common-law relationships (15%). The adverse economic

consequences of separation and divorce are well known.¹⁹ Widowed (12%) were less likely to be food insecure, a result largely driven by an age effect.

Food insecurity was three times higher among those who are chronically unemployed

The likelihood of being food insecure is related to both education and labour force status, as these intertwined factors are closely linked to earning potential. Holding a university degree was a protective factor to food insecurity, with 13% of families in which the major income earner had a university degree being food insecure, lower than the proportion (22%) of those with less than a high school diploma. The relationship between higher levels of education and higher earnings is well documented.²⁰ Also, higher levels of education are associated with higher financial literacy, which in turn is associated with better financial planning.²¹ Higher earnings and sound financial plans are likely to be mitigating factors against food insecurity.

Looking at the labour force status, stable employment - being employed all year - was associated with a lower likelihood of food insecurity (15%). Meanwhile, those who were chronically unemployed - unemployed all year - had a food insecurity rate three times higher than their employed counterparts (45%).

That said, even among employed persons, there were differences in food insecurity based on the class of worker. Self-employed (13%) were less likely to report food insecurity, compared to paid employees (18%). While much diversity exists within the self-employed population, existing research shows that the

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self-employed tend to be wealthier and have higher levels of financial literacy compared to paid employees.²²

While paid employees and self-employed tend to draw their main source of income from wages/salaries and self-employment income respectively, senior-led families often rely on investment

income and pensions. In 2022, families reporting their main source of income as investment income or private retirement pensions were the least likely to be food insecure (5% each).

The families most vulnerable to food insecurity were those relying on government transfers as their major income source.

In 2022, 29% of those whose major source of income was government transfers, such as Employment Insurance (EI) benefits, social assistance benefits, workers' compensation benefits, and the Canadian Pension Plan (CPP) benefits, were food insecure (see Textbox 1).

Textbox 1 Food insecurity among those with government transfers as the major source of income

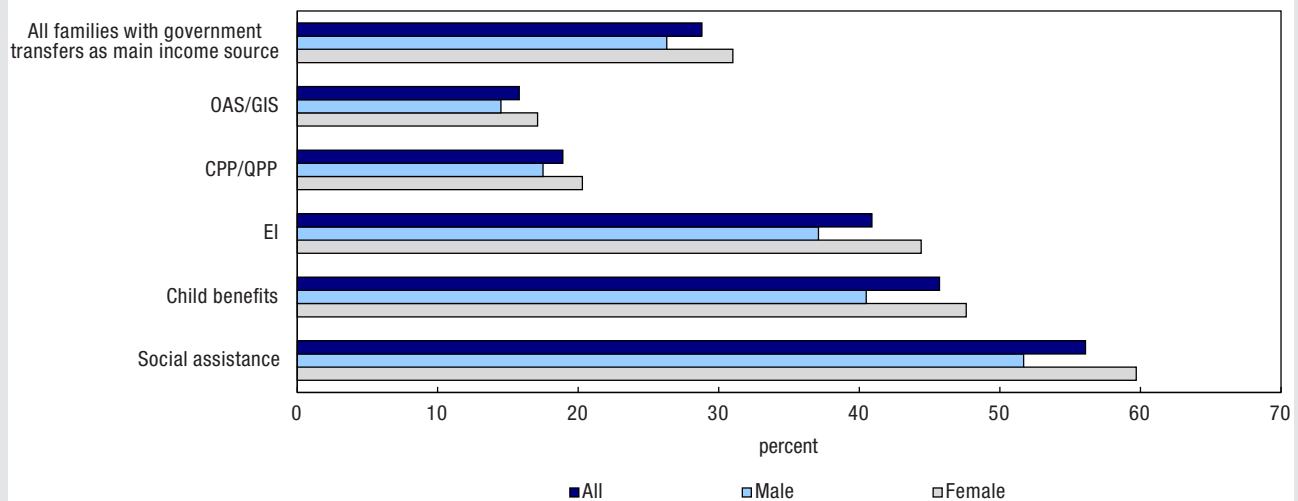
Families that have government transfers as the major source of income are more likely to be food insecure compared to those with other major sources of income. Government transfers consist of all cash benefits received from the federal, provincial, territorial, or municipal governments during the reference period.²³

Looking at some select government transfers, among those with government transfers as the major source of income in 2021, 65% received money from Canada/Quebec Pension Plan

(CPP/QPP), 59% from Old Age Security pension/Guaranteed Income Supplement (OAS/GIS), 19% from Employment Insurance Benefits, 15% from Child Benefits, and 19% from Social Assistance Benefits. Some of these were associated with higher rates of food insecurity. For example, families whose major source of income was government transfers, and who received income from social assistance benefits were more likely to report food insecurity, with more than one half (56%) being in that situation (Chart 1).

Chart 1

Food insecurity among families with government transfers as the major source of income, by select type of government transfer and sex, 2021



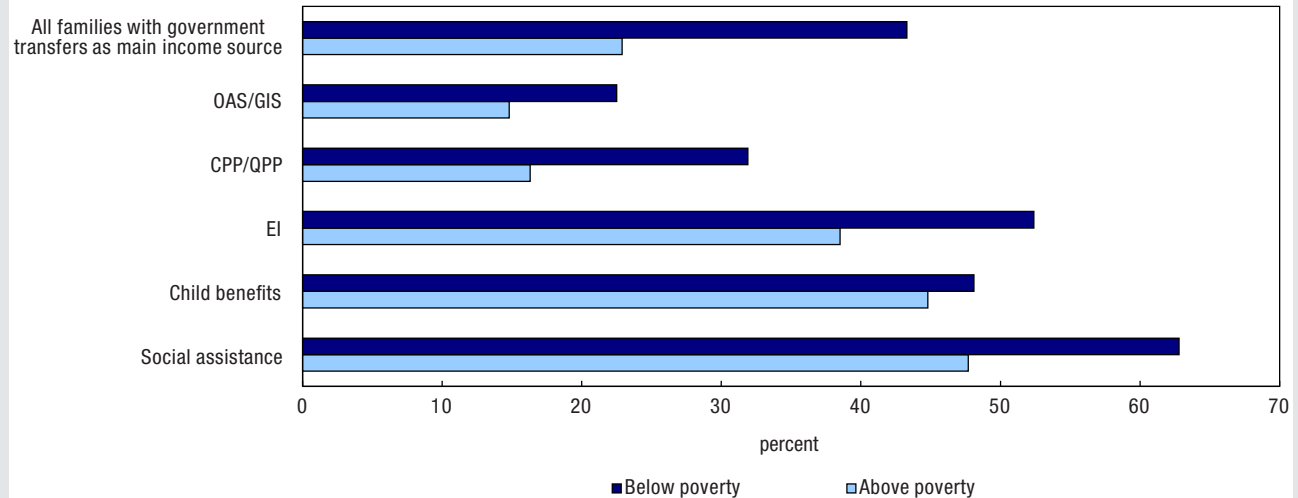
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey, 2021.

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Still referring to those with government transfers as their main source of income in 2021, higher rates of food insecurity were also prevalent among those who received child benefits (46%) and employment insurance benefits (41%). On the other hand, receiving money from CPP/QPP (19%) and

OAS/GIS (16%) was associated with a lower likelihood. These conclusions were similar regardless of whether a family had a male or a female major income earner or whether they were below or above the poverty line (Chart 2).

Chart 2
Food insecurity among families with government transfers as the major source of income, by select type of government transfer and poverty line, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey, 2021.

Owning a home provides some protection against food insecurity

Home ownership, which can be a proxy for wealth, is associated with lower levels of food insecurity. Less than one in ten (9%) of families that owned their homes mortgage-free reported food insecurity. The comparable proportion for homeowners with an outstanding mortgage was 16%.

Renters, on the other hand, were more likely to be food insecure. This was especially true for families living in subsidized housing. Around one in four (26%) of renters in non-subsidized housing and more than four in ten (42%) of those living in subsidized housing reported food insecurity.

Food insecurity was higher among Indigenous families, racialized communities and immigrant families

On average, food insecurity among Indigenous families tended to be higher. Indigenous families living in the provinces and off reserve were almost twice as likely as the non-Indigenous population to be food insecure (34% versus 18%).^{24,25} The rate was higher for First Nations families living off-reserve (38%) than for Métis (31%). The sample size was not large enough to report an estimate for Inuit. However, food insecurity among the Inuit population has been a subject of an earlier study.²⁶ Given that families living in the three territories, on reserves and other Indigenous settlements in the provinces are

excluded, these results do not reflect food insecurity among the overall Indigenous population.

Food insecurity was also higher among racialized families. Overall, 23% of families with a racialized major income earner reported food insecurity, compared to 16% of their non-racialized, non-Indigenous counterparts. However, the overall food insecurity rate for the racialized population masks important differences among different racial groups.

Among racialized groups, Black Canadians had the highest rate of food insecurity, with almost four in ten (38%) reporting being food insecure. This was followed by Filipino Canadians (28%), South-East Asian (23%), Arab (22%),

and South Asian Canadians (19%). There was no statistically significant difference between Chinese Canadians, Latin American Canadians and the non-racialized, non-Indigenous population.

Immigrant families were more likely to report food insecurity compared to the Canadian-born. One in four (26%) of families in which the major income earner immigrated between 2013 and 2022 (recent immigrants) reported being food insecure. This proportion was 20% for established immigrants (immigrated before 2013) and 17% for Canadian-born.

Section 2 Exploring the relationship between income and food security

Food insecurity can be expected to be more prevalent in families with lower income levels, though the relationship between income and food insecurity is complex. It cannot be assumed that all people living below the poverty line are struggling with food insecurity, while at the same time, it would be incorrect to assume that those above are immune to these same difficulties. To explore this relationship between income and food insecurity, the following section examines food insecurity among families below and above the poverty line, highlighting those that are most vulnerable, as well as those that may be at lower risk.

Based on the market basket measure (MBM), 11% of families lived below the poverty line. According to the MBM a family lives in poverty if it does not have enough income to purchase a specific basket of goods and services in its community.²⁷ Overall families below the poverty line were more than twice as likely than those above the line to report food insecurity (35% versus 16%).²⁸ Though the rate of food insecurity

among families below the poverty line was higher, a higher proportion of families (78%) who were food insecure were above the poverty line.

Among those living below the poverty line, young adults were the least vulnerable to food insecurity

Contrasting the overall age-related pattern in food insecurity, young people living below the poverty line were less likely than middle-aged adults below the poverty line to be food insecure. Around 23% of families with the major income earner aged 16 to 24 reported food insecurity, compared to 46% of those aged 35 to 44 years. The 16- to 24-year-old families, representing around 4% of all families, were mostly unattached individuals (almost 9 in 10). Lower food insecurity among this group could be a result of lower financial obligations. Also, half of them were full-time students and though living on their own, some may be receiving financial support from parents.

Indeed, being a student, either full or part-time, was related to lower levels of food insecurity among those living below the poverty line, with the rates being similar between those below and above the poverty line. For instance, 26% of full-time students below the poverty line were food insecure, compared to 24% above the poverty line.

Full-time students (and young people) above the poverty line were actually more vulnerable to food insecurity than non-students/older adults above the poverty line. This could partly be a result of differing characteristics. For example, as compared to those below the poverty line, full-time

students above the poverty line were more likely to be married with children (15% versus 3%) and more likely to be female lone parents (7% versus 3%),²⁹ characteristics that are associated with a higher likelihood of food insecurity.

Food insecurity lowest among seniors

Across the board in terms of income levels, seniors were better off than younger adults. Seniors living below the poverty line had a rate of food insecurity of 21%, lower than the average rate for those below the poverty line (35%) but still slightly higher than the overall average (18%). Their rate of food insecurity was also double the rate of seniors living above the poverty line (21% versus 9%).

Reflecting seniors' overall lower rate of food insecurity relative to younger adults, senior-led families, as well as seniors not in economic families fared better. For instance, among those living below the poverty line, senior-led families and unattached seniors' rates of food insecurity (26% and 20%) were half that of female lone parent families (48%).

In fact, female lone parents were one of the most vulnerable groups across those living below and above the poverty line, with only 8 percentage points separating female lone parents below (48%) and above the poverty line (40%). This contrasts the situation for non-elderly couples with and without children, where the disparity between those below and above the poverty line was much more substantive.

Above the poverty line, female lone parents were the most likely to be food insecure, almost four times as likely as non-elderly couples without children (40% versus 11%). As a

comparison, male lone-parents and non-elderly couples with children were only twice as likely (20%). Senior-led families were the least likely (8%), mirroring patterns for those below the poverty line.

Explaining the consistently higher rate of food insecurity among female lone-parents is critical. Findings suggest the importance of examining the intersectionality of lone-parent family structure and other characteristics. Almost two-thirds (65%) of families in which the lone mother had less than a high school diploma reported food insecurity (Table 2). The proportion was less than half of that among those with a university degree (31%).

Female lone-parents who were not employed all year were more at risk, especially the unemployed (71%). More than one-half (55%) of lone mother families with government transfers as the major source of income were food insecure. Moreover, 50% of those living in rental non-subsidized reported food insecurity compared to 18% of homeowners without mortgage. The rate was even higher among those living in rental subsidized housing (66%).

Six in ten (60%) families with Indigenous lone mothers reported food insecurity compared to 41% of non-Indigenous. The rate of food insecurity was particularly high among Black lone mother families (62%) compared to non-racialized, non-Indigenous (40%). Lone mother families belonging to all other racialized groups had a lower rate (28%).³⁰

Being employed year round reduces the risk of food insecurity among those living below and above the poverty line

Labour force status of those below and above the poverty line seemed to matter notably. Being employed year-round reduced the risk of food insecurity – even for those in working poverty. In 2022, 28% of year-round employed living below the poverty line experienced food insecurity. While higher than the proportion above the poverty line (14%), it was much lower than those living below the poverty line who were unemployed all year (60%) or unemployed part of the year (51%).

Home ownership was associated with a lower likelihood of food insecurity, regardless of whether families were below or above the poverty line. For example, 22% of families below the poverty line who owned their homes mortgage-free reported being food insecure compared to 37% of renters of non-subsidized housing and 62% of families living in subsidized rental housing.

Almost six in ten of families below the poverty line with a Black Canadian as the major income earner were food insecure

Overall, there was no difference between the racialized and the non-racialized, non-Indigenous families below the poverty line in terms of the prevalence of food insecurity. However, this overall trend masks underlying differences. Looking at racialized groups separately, Chinese (24%) and South Asian Canadians (25%) were less likely to be food insecure than the non-racialized, non-Indigenous population (36%).

On the other hand, Black Canadians (56%) were notably more likely to report food insecurity.

Even above the poverty line Indigenous and racialized families were more likely to be food insecure

Indigenous families above the poverty line living off reserve (31%) were twice as likely to be food insecure compared to the non-Indigenous families (15%). The rate was somewhat higher among the off-reserve First Nations families (34%) than Métis families (28%).

Racialized families above the poverty line (21%) had a higher likelihood of reporting food insecurity compared to their non-racialized, non-Indigenous counterparts (14%). When looking at the racialized groups separately this was only true for Black (33%), Filipino (28%), Arab (21%), and South Asian (19%) Canadians. Interestingly, as noted earlier, South Asian Canadians below the poverty line were less likely to be food insecure compared to their non-racialized, non-Indigenous counterparts. Additionally, immigrant families above the poverty line were more likely to report food insecurity.

Patterns in vulnerability also seen across income quintiles

Another way to look at the relationship between income and food insecurity is to compare families across income quintiles. As expected, there is a strong association between income and food insecurity. Families in the bottom quintile of adjusted family income³¹ were more than four times as likely to be food insecure as those in the top quintile - 30% versus 7% (Table 3). The comparable proportions for those in the second, third and fourth quintiles were 23%, 17%, and 12%, respectively.

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Certain family characteristics were associated with a higher or lower likelihood of food insecurity and some of these are common across income quintiles. Not surprisingly, the patterns correspond to those identified for below and above the poverty line.

Across the income quintiles, rates of food insecurity were lowest among seniors, self-employed, those employed year-round, homeowners (especially those without a mortgage), and highest among female lone parent families, Indigenous families, and racialized families.

Groups most vulnerable to food insecurity remain even after accounting for the interplay of multiple socio-economic factors

The preceding discussion explored descriptive associations. Because various family characteristics are expected to be correlated with each other, logistic regressions were estimated to calculate predicted probabilities of food insecurity. Not all characteristics could be included

in the same model given that some of them were perfectly collinear. For example, the “65 years of age and above” category of age group and the “senior-led families/seniors not in economic families” categories of economic family type were perfectly collinear. Results from a model with sex, level of education, family type, class of worker, racialized population group, major source of income, home ownership, income quintile, CMA and province are presented in Table A1.

Most of the conclusions from the descriptive statistics remained similar though the magnitude of the differences changed. For example, after controlling for various characteristics, families with a female major income earner were still more likely to be food insecure compared to their male counterparts. However, the difference was smaller – a predicted probability of 0.19 for female headed families versus 0.17 for the male ones. Similarly, part of the difference between female lone parent families and other family types was accounted

for by family characteristics but they were still more likely to be food insecure. Families with a Black or Filipino Canadian as the major income earner were still more likely to be food insecure compared to the non-racialized, non-Indigenous but the gap was reduced.

Controlling for various characteristics changed some of the results based on descriptive statistics. For example, now there was no statistically significant difference between non-racialized, non-Indigenous families and South Asian, Southeast Asian and Arab families.

Looking at families below the poverty line, after controlling for various characteristics, female lone parent families were no longer the most likely to be food insecure.

Among those above the poverty line, male lone parent families were not more likely to be food insecure. Also, the differences between the non-racialized, non-Indigenous families and South Asian and Arab families were accounted for by the covariates.

Textbox 2 Families with a disability and food insecurity

Families who had a person with a disability as the major income earner more likely to report food insecurity

Families who had a person with a disability as the major income earner were more likely to report food insecurity – 30% versus 18% for all Canadian families (Table 4). This proportion was higher when the disability was more severe or when the person had a higher number of disabilities.

Almost one-fourth (23%) of families with the major earner having a mild disability reported being food insecure. This proportion was 32% for moderate disability, 38% for severe disability, and 39% for very severe disability.

Also, the number of disabilities increased the likelihood of food insecurity. One in four (23%) with one disability reported food insecurity, increasing to 28% among those with two disabilities and to 42% with four or more disabilities.

Six in ten of female lone parents with a disability were food insecure

Looking at age groups, young people were more likely to be food insecure. Almost one-half (49%) of families with a 16- to 24-year-old major earner reported food insecurity. On the other hand, families with the major income earner aged 65 years and older were less likely to be food insecure. This may be explained by the higher likelihood of age-related disabilities among those aged 65 and older, rather than experiencing disability earlier in their lives. As a result, seniors with a disability may have been employed during their working years, which in turn, allowed them to build a strong financial base.

Similar to the overall pattern, families who had a female with a disability as the major income earner were more likely to report food insecurity compared to their male counterparts – 32% versus 27%. In addition, more than six in ten (62%) of female lone parents with a disability reported food insecurity. The rate was 45% among male lone parents. The comparable proportions for non-senior couples with and without children were 30% and 23%, respectively.

Employment served as a protective factor against food insecurity among those with a disability

Families with a major earner who was employed all year were notably less likely to be food insecure. For example, their rate of food insecurity (24%) was almost one-third that of those who were unemployed all year.

More than one-half (54%) of families living in subsidized rental housing were food insecure. This proportion was 41% for those living in non-subsidized rental housing and much lower among homeowners with (26%) and without (14%) a mortgage.

Income levels have an important role to play in food insecurity. Families with a major income earner who had a disability were more likely to be below the poverty line – 16% versus 11% for all Canadian families. Moreover, they were more likely to be in the bottom of the income distribution with 29% in the bottom income quintile and only 14% in the top quintile. Families below the poverty line were more than twice as likely

to be food insecure as those above the line – 52% versus 25%. Also, those in the bottom income quintile (44%) were four times as likely to report food insecurity as those in the top quintile (11%).

Racialized persons with a disability were more often food insecure

Families with a racialized major earner (36%) who had a disability were more likely to report food insecurity compared to those with a non-racialized, non-Indigenous (27%) major income earner. Looking at specific racialized groups, Black Canadians were the most at risk with more than one-half (55%) reporting food insecurity.

Families with an off-reserve Indigenous major earner had a higher rate of food insecurity compared to non-Indigenous (52% versus 29%). The rate was even higher among First Nations people living off reserve (55%).

Section 3 The role of net worth in food insecurity

Existing research suggests that food insecurity results from an “interplay of household resources (including assets) and household expenditures, as well as household debt.”³² The Canadian Income Survey (CIS) contains information on home ownership, with or without mortgage, which serves as a proxy for debt/assets. This measure was used in the preceding discussion.

However, home ownership alone cannot provide a complete picture of a family’s financial situation. The Survey of Financial Security (SFS) has detailed information on debt, assets and net worth. While the SFS does not include information on food insecurity, these data can be used to provide a profile of the financial situation of groups most likely to be food insecure (based on CIS findings).³³

Four indicators of financial well-being are used: (i) proportion of families with consumer debt; (ii) median level of consumer debt among families with consumer debt; (iii) median level of net worth (the overall value of assets held by the

family, minus the overall debt held by that family); (iv) proportion of families with zero or negative net worth. High levels of consumer debt are considered to lead to lower financial well-being, since unlike mortgage debt, it is not necessarily backed by an asset. Even more important indicators of a precarious financial situation, however, would be a low level of net worth and/or having zero or negative net worth.

Home equity and net worth inherently intertwined, meaning homeowners have higher net worth

Homeownership, which is associated with a lower rate of food insecurity, is related to a higher level of net worth. Homeowners without a mortgage tend to have greater home equity available, meaning that they can possibly draw on this equity, if required. Overall, these homeowners had an average net worth of \$965,000 (Table 5). In comparison, homeowners carrying a mortgage, while perhaps having less home equity, still had a substantive net worth of \$497,500. Indeed, this translated into a net worth about 20 times higher than the net worth of renters (\$24,700). Also, almost no

homeowners had a zero or negative net worth, whereas 14% of renters had a zero or negative net worth.

Nonetheless, it is important to contextualize the power of home equity as a driver of wealth, which in the current market, may be less attainable among younger homeowners and first-time home buyers. Recent increases in housing prices, along with higher interest rates impacting both mortgage payments (whether at renewal of a fixed rate or with variable rate) and home equity lines of credit (HELOC) means that some homeowners have less disposable income than before, and face higher disincentives to accessing home equity through a HELOC.

As seen with the [2021 Census](#), homeownership is connected to age. Three-quarter of seniors (75%) owned their home, compared to 36% of 25-to-29-year-olds and 52% of those aged 30 to 34 years. Reflecting this pattern in homeownership (and possibly the presence of a mortgage), the median net worth of families with the major income earner aged 65 and above was \$543,200, double the amount among 35- to 44-year-olds (\$234,400).

Older age groups also had lower proportions with a zero or negative net worth.

Substantive disparity in net worth among pensioners and families with government transfers

Private retirement pensioners had among the highest net worth of all groups. With an average net worth of \$1,089,800, their net worth was 1.6 times higher than self-employed (\$672,400), nearly 3.8 times higher than paid employees (\$288,900), and 10 times higher than those receiving government transfers as the major source of income (\$109,700). This pattern in declining net worth mirrors the pattern of increasing food insecurity.

Those relying on investment income, such as interest, dividends, and capital gains, had the highest overall net worth of \$1,297,700. And, along with private retirement pensioners (0.1%), they were less likely to have zero or negative net worth (2%). In comparison, 8% of those with major source of income as government transfer had a zero or negative net worth.

Lower net worth is more common among female lone parents and unattached individuals

Families with female as the major income earner are more likely to be food insecure. The median net worth of families with a female major earner was \$278,000, 28% lower than the net worth of families with a male major earner (\$384,900). Also, 7% of the female major income earners had zero or negative net worth, compared to 5% of their male counterparts. A lower level of net worth and a higher likelihood of having zero

or negative net worth represent a more financially vulnerable position, which in turn can be associated with a higher likelihood of food insecurity.

In some cases, the female as a major income earner can also be a female lone parent, a group that is vulnerable to higher rates of food insecurity. The net worth of female lone parents (\$64,500), however, was much lower than the overall net worth of families with female as a major income earner (\$278,000), and notably lower than non-senior couples with children (\$435,700). Also, they were the most likely to have zero or negative net worth, with 16% in this situation.

Looking at the marital status, separated, divorced and single (never married) were the most likely to report food insecurity. The net worth of the divorced (\$116,300) and single (\$54,200) was relatively lower and their proportions with zero or negative net worth were relatively higher. However, this was not true for the separated. They have a relatively high net worth (\$418,200) and a low proportion with zero or negative net worth (1%).

Lower net worth among Indigenous families and recent immigrants

The net worth of Indigenous families living off reserve (\$102,000), especially off reserve First Nations families (\$56,000) was lower than that of non-Indigenous families (\$341,000). For Métis families, the net worth was \$168,000. Indigenous families were also more likely to have a zero or negative net worth.

Lastly recent immigrants (year of immigration: 2010 to 2019) had a notably lower net worth and a

higher proportion with zero or negative net worth compared to the Canadian-born.

Much variations in net worth exists among those living above the low-income cutoff

Despite being above the poverty line, certain types of families were more likely to report food insecurity. These included families in which the major income earner was female, younger, less educated, recent immigrant, or Indigenous. All these characteristics were also associated with a more financially vulnerable position, due to either a lower net worth and/or a higher likelihood of having a zero or negative net worth.

Among families living above the low-income cutoff,³⁴ families living in rental accommodation had a much lower net worth and a much higher likelihood of a zero or negative net worth (Table 6). Their net worth was \$41,700 compared to that of homeowners with (\$499,400) and without (\$1,009,300) a mortgage.

Families with government transfers as the major source of income had a net worth almost one-half of those with wages and salaries as the major source and much lower than those with investment income, private retirement pensions and self-employment income as the major source. The net worth of paid employees was less than half that of self-employed.

Female lone parent families above the poverty line were at least twice as likely as other family types to report food insecurity. Their net worth (\$104,200) was the lowest among all family types – it was less than one-fourth of all family types other than the non-elderly not in economic families. They were also the most likely to have a zero or negative net worth.

Food insecurity among Canadian families

Indigenous families above the low-income cutoff living off reserve had a net worth of \$153,400 compared to \$427,500 for non-Indigenous families. The net worth for First Nations families living off reserve was even lower - \$89,800. It was \$225,700 for Métis families. Indigenous families were also more likely to have a zero or negative net worth.

Compared to Canadian-born and established immigrants, recent immigrants had a lower net worth and one-tenth had a zero or negative net worth.

Conclusion

Food insecurity, defined as a condition of not having access to sufficient food, or food of an adequate quality, to meet one's basic needs, is a concern as it has been found to be associated with various chronic conditions. In this study, data from the 2021 Canadian Income Survey were used to look at characteristics of families who reported being food insecure. The study also used data from the 2019 Survey of Financial Security to look at the financial well-being of families that are more likely to be food insecure.

In 2022, 18% of families in Canada reported that they experienced some level of food insecurity over the past 12 months. This was up from 16% in 2021 and 17% in 2020. In 2022, among families below the poverty line, 35% reported food insecurity compared to 16% of those above the poverty line, though the majority of families (78%) who were food insecure were above the poverty line. Across income quintiles, 30% of families in the bottom income quintile were food insecure, compared to 7% in the top quintile.

Overall, families with a female as the major income earner were more likely to be food insecure compared to those with a male major income earner. Families with major income earners who were 55 years of age or older were less likely to be food insecure than the younger age groups. Higher levels of education were associated with lower food insecurity and so was being employed.

Certain family types/characteristics were associated with higher food insecurity overall and regardless of income levels (below or above the poverty line and across income quintiles). These included female lone parent families, those living in rental housing, families in which

the major income earner was Indigenous, Black Canadian, and families whose major source of income was government transfers.

Families that were more likely to be food insecure were also more likely to be in a weaker financial position. For example, in 2019, compared to a net worth of \$329,900 for all Canadian families, the net worth was notably lower for female lone parent families (\$64,500), renters (\$24,700), families in which the major income earner was Indigenous (\$102,000), those for whom the major source of income was government transfers (\$109,700).

A shortcoming of this study is that a direct association between food insecurity and debt, assets and net worth could not be provided given the unavailability of food insecurity information in the Survey of Financial Security. Another limitation of this study is the exclusion of families living in the three territories, on reserves and other Indigenous settlements in the provinces.³⁵ This is likely to lead to an underestimate of food insecurity among the Indigenous population.

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Data sources and definitions

This study uses data from two sources: 2021 Canadian Income Survey (CIS) and 2019 Survey of Financial Security (SFS). Excluded from the study are people living in the territories, on reserves and other Indigenous settlements in the provinces, institutionalized population, and households in extremely remote areas.

The primary objective of the CIS is to provide information on the income and income sources of Canadians, along with their individual and household characteristics. The data collected in the CIS is combined with Labour Force Survey and tax data.

The purpose of the SFS is to collect information from a sample of Canadian households on their assets, debts, employment, income and education. The SFS provides a comprehensive picture of the financial health of Canadians. Information is collected on the value of all major financial and non-financial assets and on the money owing on mortgages, vehicles, credit cards, student loans and other debts.

The CIS uses the Household Food Security Survey Module as a measure of food insecurity. It contains 18 questions designed to measure food insecurity resulting from limited financial resources. The questions relate to the household's experience during the 12 months preceding the survey. The survey was conducted from January 16, 2022, to July 5, 2022.

Based on a household's experience, food insecurity was categorized into three categories: *marginal food insecurity*: worry about running out of food and/or limited food selection due to a lack of money for food; *moderate food insecurity*: compromise in quality and/or quantity of food due to a lack of money for food; *severe food insecurity*: miss meals, reduce food intake and, at the most extreme, go day(s) without food. In this study, food insecurity refers to marginal, moderate or severe food insecurity.

The poverty line is based on the Market Based Measure of low income (MBM). The MBM develops thresholds of poverty based upon the cost of a basket of food, clothing, shelter,

transportation, and other items for individuals and families representing a modest, basic standard of living. A family with disposable income less than the poverty threshold appropriate for their family's size and region would be living in poverty (Heisz (2019)).

Income quintiles were calculated using after-tax economic family income and economic family size. The income levels were adjusted by dividing the economic family income by the square root of economic family size.

The unit of analysis is Canadian families. Canadian families include economic families and unattached individuals. An *economic family* refers to a group of two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage, common-law union, adoption or a foster relationship.

The unit of analysis to provide estimates of food insecurity from the CIS was chosen to be families rather than households for two reasons: (i) the focus of the study is on those living below and above the poverty line and the MBM measure of poverty uses family income rather than household income to define the poverty line; (ii) the unit of analysis in the SFS is family. Given that food insecurity is a household measure, results should be interpreted as "economic families and unattached individuals living in households that experienced food insecurity".

Family characteristics including sex, age, level of education, marital status, student status, immigrant status, racialized group, Indigenous identity, labour force status, and class of worker refer to the characteristics of the major income earner.

Net worth of a family is the difference between its total assets and total debts. Total assets pertain to total family assets and include real estate (principal residence and all other real estate), employer pension plans (on a termination basis) and all other assets. Total debt pertains to total family debt and includes mortgage debt on the principal residence and all other real estate (Canadian and foreign), and consumer debt.

Food insecurity among Canadian families

Table 1
Proportion of families that experienced food insecurity, by family characteristics and characteristics of the major income earner, 2021

Characteristics	All families	Poverty line		Sex of major income earner	
		Below	Above	Male	Female
		percentage			
All families	17.9	35.3	15.7	15.9	20.5
Sex					
Male (ref.)	15.9	35.1	14.0	...	...
Female	20.5*	35.4	18.1*	...	...
Age group					
16 to 24 years	22.1	23.2*	21.3	20.2	24.0
25 to 34 years	21.9	34.3*	20.2	18.8	26.3
35 to 44 years (ref.)	22.8	45.7	20.7	19.6	27.4
45 to 54 years	20.2*	43.8	17.6*	18.9	21.9*
55 to 64 years	16.9*	45.6	12.9*	14.6*	20.3*
65 years and over	10.2*	21.2*	9.3*	9.1*	11.6*
Highest level of education					
Less than a high school diploma (ref.)	22.1	42.1	17.7	21.0	23.8
High school diploma	21.6	36.9	18.8	19.9	23.9
Trades/college certificate	19.3*	38.4	17.2	15.8*	24.1
University degree	12.6*	24.6*	11.6*	11.4*	14.1*
Economic family type					
Non-elderly couple without children (ref.)	11.9	29.0	11.1	11.2	13.2
Non-elderly couple with children	20.4*	40.7	19.5*	18.1*	24.5*
Female lone-parent	41.4*	48.2*	39.9*	...	41.4*
Male lone-parent	24.4*	F	20.4*	24.4*	...
Other non-elderly families	17.9*	37.2	17.1*	16.1*	20.3*
Non-elderly not in economic families	24.0*	38.0	19.1*	22.7*	25.6*
Elderly families	8.3*	25.5	7.7*	7.2*	11.0
Elderly not in economic families	12.3	20.2	11.1	13.1	11.8
Economic family size					
One	20.2*	34.5*	16.2*	20.5	19.9*
Two	12.7*	33.7*	11.5*	10.3*	16.6*
Three	18.0*	40.6	16.8*	14.9*	22.4*
Four	18.6*	37.7	17.7*	15.8*	23.2*
Five or more (ref.)	24.2	52.6	23.4	20.1	30.9
Marital status					
Married (ref.)	14.3	30.6	13.6	12.7	17.6
Common-law	15.3	42.4	14.2	14.3*	17.1
Separated	27.5*	42.8*	24.5*	22.2*	31.9*
Divorced	22.3*	38.2	18.9*	19.5	24.1*
Widowed	12.0*	27.0	10.4*	11.3	12.3*
Single (never married)	23.1*	35.6	19.5*	21.5*	25.1*
Annual labour force status during the reference year					
Employed all year (ref.)	14.7	28.1	14.3	13.6	16.6
Unemployed all year	45.3*	60.0*	30.7*	45.3*	45.4*
Not in the labour force all year	26.1*	42.6*	17.8*	23.8*	28.4*
Employed part-year, unemployed part-year	29.6*	40.5*	27.8*	26.3*	34.5*
Employed part-year, not in labour force part-year	19.4*	26.9	18.3*	16.5*	23.2*
Unemployed part-year, not in labour force part-year	40.7*	51.0*	32.1*	27.2*	52.7*
Employed, unemployed and not in labour force during year	34.7*	27.1	37.2*	29.5*	41.0*
Class of worker during the reference year					
Employee (ref.)	18.4	29.3	17.7	16.5	21.0
Self-employed	12.8*	28.4	10.0*	11.1*	16.4*
Employee and self-employed	18.3	34.1	16.1	16.6	20.7
Did not work	18.3	39.9	12.5	16.3	20.4

Food insecurity among Canadian families

Table 1
Proportion of families that experienced food insecurity, by family characteristics and characteristics of the major income earner, 2021

Characteristics	All families	Poverty line		Sex of major income earner	
		Below	Above	Male	Female
	percentage				
Student status during the reference year					
Full-time student (ref.)	25.0	25.9	24.2	19.8	28.8
Part-time student	24.4	28.6	24.0	19.5	27.9*
Not a student	17.4*	37.7*	15.2*	15.7	19.7
Indigenous identity					
Indigenous	34.2*	48.1*	30.6*	29.6*	39.7*
First Nations people living off reserve	37.5*	49.1*	34.0*	34.6*	40.1*
Métis	31.2*	43.6	28.4*	25.4*	39.4*
Inuit	F	F	F	F	F
Non-Indigenous (ref.)	17.5	34.7	15.3	15.6	20.0
Racialized population group					
All Racialized	22.7*	32.4	21.0*	20.4*	25.5*
South Asian	19.3*	24.6*	18.5*	15.5	25.5*
Chinese	17.3	23.9*	15.8	16.4	18.2
Black	37.6*	56.4*	33.2*	35.2*	40.1*
Filipino	27.5*	F	28.4*	26.9*	28.1*
Arab	21.9*	F	20.6*	21.6*	22.4
Latin American	19.0	F	16.2	19.0	19.0
Southeast Asian	23.3*	F	17.7	21.7*	24.9
Other racialized	19.1	21.7*	18.4*	15.1	23.9
Non-racialized non-Indigenous (ref.)	15.9	35.7	13.7	14.1	18.2
Immigrant status					
Immigrated 2013 to 2022	25.6*	29.0	25.0*	20.3*	32.4*
Immigrated before 2013	20.0*	35.8	18.1*	18.0*	22.5*
Canadian born (ref.)	16.7	38.2	14.2	15.0	18.9
Major source of income					
Wages and salaries (ref.)	16.5	26.4	16.0	15.2	18.4
Self-employment income	11.6	16.3	10.5*	9.8*	14.5
Government transfers	28.8*	43.3*	22.9*	26.3*	31.0*
Investment income	4.9*	F	4.3*	4.7*	F*
Private retirement pensions	4.8*	F	4.6*	4.5*	5.0*
Other income	17.6	19.5	16.5	11.2	23.2
Home ownership					
Owner without mortgage (ref.)	8.7	21.7	7.9	7.7	10.1
Owner with mortgage	16.1*	27.1	15.4*	15.0*	17.8*
Renter - non-subsidized housing	25.5*	37.3*	22.6*	23.1*	28.2*
Renter - subsidized housing	42.3*	61.9*	33.6*	40.4*	43.8*
Population centre/rural					
Population centre (ref.)	18.5	35.7	16.2	16.4	21.3
Rural area	14.6*	31.6	13.1*	13.7	16.1
CMA					
Montreal	15.8*	33.3	14.0*	13.7*	18.6*
Ottawa-Gatineau	14.4*	23.6	13.4*	12.7*	16.7*
Toronto (ref.)	20.2	34.6	17.8	17.6	23.3
Winnipeg	18.7	30.8	16.8	16.3	21.6
Calgary	19.5	33.6	17.5	18.9	20.3
Edmonton	20.7	27.3	19.8	20.3	21.2
Vancouver	15.9*	32.4	13.2*	13.6*	18.8
Other CMA or CA	18.4	38.6	16.0	16.4	21.1

Food insecurity among Canadian families

Table 1

Proportion of families that experienced food insecurity, by family characteristics and characteristics of the major income earner, 2021

Characteristics	All families	Poverty line		Sex of major income earner	
		Below	Above	Male	Female
		percentage			
Province					
Newfoundland and Labrador	22.6*	50.1*	19.2*	19.7	26.7*
Prince Edward Island	21.2	23.6*	20.9*	18.5	24.3
Nova Scotia	21.1*	35.9	18.8*	17.7	25.3*
New Brunswick	21.8*	37.5	20.0*	20.1*	24.0
Quebec	14.1*	32.9	12.3*	12.2*	16.6*
Ontario (ref.)	18.7	36.2	16.4	16.8	21.2
Manitoba	18.8	32.5	16.9	16.9	21.4
Saskatchewan	19.7	37.0	17.2	17.6	22.8
Alberta	21.7*	36.2	19.6*	20.8*	23.0
British Columbia	16.9	33.9	14.3*	13.9*	20.8

... not applicable

F too unreliable to be published

* significantly different from the reference category (ref.) (p<0.05)

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey, 2021.

Table 2

Proportion of female lone-parent families who experienced food insecurity, by selected characteristics, 2021

	Percentage
All families	41.4
Age group	
16 to 24 years	F
25 to 34 years	50.6
35 to 44 years (ref.)	40.5
45 to 54 years	37.7
55 to 64 years	F
65 years and over	...
Highest level of education	
Less than a high school diploma (ref.)	65.4
High school diploma	43.5*
Trades/college certificate	42.1*
University degree	30.8*
Economic family size	
One	...
Two	36.9
Three	43.4
Four	40.2
Five or more (ref.)	51.9
Marital status	
Married (ref.)	37.9
Common-law	F
Separated	40.9
Divorced	35.1
Widowed	F
Single (never married)	46.0

Food insecurity among Canadian families

Table 2
Proportion of female lone-parent families who experienced food insecurity, by selected characteristics, 2021

	Percentage
Annual labour force status during the reference year	
Employed all year (ref.)	33.4
Unemployed all year	70.5*
Not in the labour force all year	56.5*
Employed part-year, unemployed part-year	52.5*
Employed part-year, not in labour force part-year	37.3
Unemployed part-year, not in labour force part-year	F
Employed, unemployed and not in labour force during year	55.5*
Class of worker during the reference year	
Employee (ref.)	39.6
Self-employed	18.9
Employee and self-employed	F
Did not work	57.4
Student status during reference year	
Full-time student (ref.)	57.1
Part-time student	F
Not a student	40.3
Indigenous identity	
Indigenous (living off-reserve)	60.1*
Non-Indigenous (ref.)	40.6
Racialized population group	
Black	62.4*
All other racialized	27.8*
Non-racialized non-Indigenous (ref.)	40.3
Immigrant status	
Immigrated 2013 to 2022	46.3
Immigrated before 2013	40.2
Canadian born (ref.)	41.4
Major source of income	
Wages and salaries (ref.)	34.6
Self-employment income	F
Government transfers	54.9*
Investment income	F
Private retirement pensions	F
Other income	F
Home ownership	
Owner without mortgage (ref.)	17.7
Owner with mortgage	29.8*
Renter - non-subsidized housing	49.9*
Renter - subsidized housing	66.0*

... not applicable

F too unreliable to be published

* significantly different from the reference category (ref.) ($p < 0.05$)

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey, 2021.

Food insecurity among Canadian families

Table 3
Proportion of families that experienced food insecurity, by adjusted family income quintile, 2021

Characteristics	Adjusted family income quintile				
	Bottom	Second	Third	Fourth	Top
	percentage				
All families	30.4	23.3	17.4	11.7	6.6
Sex					
Male (ref.)	28.8	21.3	16.4	11.4	6.6
Female	31.8	25.5*	18.8	12.1	6.6
Age group					
16 to 24 years	24.5*	24.9*	17.0*	F	F
25 to 34 years	34.9*	30.7	22.2	12.4	10.1*
35 to 44 years (ref.)	44.5	35.1	25.3	14.3	6.4
45 to 54 years	43.2	27.9*	22.2	17.9*	7.3
55 to 64 years	40.6	24.4*	12.4*	10.0*	5.9
65 years and over	18.0*	10.8*	7.4*	4.1*	2.5*
Highest level of education					
Less than a high school diploma (ref.)	31.1	19.4	15.1	9.6	F
High school diploma	32.5	23.1	18.4	15.9*	7.9
Trades/college certificate	33.0	26.2*	19.0	11.6	7.4
University degree	22.9*	21.4	15.1	10.0	5.8
Economic family type					
Non-elderly couple without children (ref.)	27.0	23.7	14.3	10.0	5.6
Non-elderly couple with children	39.1*	32.9*	23.7*	14.6*	7.4
Female lone-parent	54.8*	45.9*	28.1*	18.3*	F
Male lone-parent	50.6*	30.3	15.6*	F	F
Other non-elderly families	38.4*	32.7*	20.2*	16.6*	8.1*
Non-elderly not in economic families	36.4*	25.1	20.6*	12.1	8.7*
Elderly families	18.0*	9.8*	9.0*	4.2*	2.4*
Elderly not in economic families	18.1*	11.7*	5.0*	4.0*	F
Economic family size					
One	29.2*	20.0*	16.2*	10.4*	7.7*
Two	27.5*	19.4*	12.6*	8.5*	4.4*
Three	40.3	27.5*	20.7	13.4	7.1*
Four	40.9	33.7	21.4	14.9	6.7*
Five or more (ref.)	45.0	36.7	26.5	17.4	11.9
Marital status					
Married (ref.)	24.2	21.9	17.6	11.9	6.1
Common-law	36.7*	25.8	18.2	10.7	6.3
Separated	39.7*	36.1*	25.8*	13.7	F
Divorced	33.3*	24.2	14.9	14.1	6.2
Widowed	18.8*	11.7*	5.9*	5.8*	F
Single (never married)	34.1*	26.3*	19.1	11.9	9.7*
Annual labour force status during the reference year					
Employed all year (ref.)	24.9	25.6	19.3	12.6	6.2
Unemployed all year	56.7*	38.1	F	F	F
Not in the labour force all year	40.0*	22.0	9.1*	7.4*	7.6
Employed part-year, unemployed part-year	43.0*	30.5	29.3*	18.6*	11.4
Employed part-year, not in labour force part-year	26.5	29.0	19.2	12.1	9.3*
Unemployed part-year, not in labour force part-year	52.5*	F	F	F	F
Employed, unemployed and not in labour force during year	31.4	44.6*	35.4*	22.1*	F
Class of worker during the reference year					
Employee (ref.)	31.1	29.7	21.2	14.0	7.4
Self-employed	23.1*	21.9*	13.3*	4.5*	3.4*
Employee and self-employed	35.1	24.6	23.2	F	F
Did not work	31.0	14.0	7.5	5.0	4.4
Student status during reference year					
Full-time student (ref.)	25.0	31.0	21.7	18.0	F
Part-time student	33.2	29.5*	27.2	20.8	F
Not a student	31.2	22.7	17.0	11.3	6.4

Food insecurity among Canadian families

Table 3
Proportion of families that experienced food insecurity, by adjusted family income quintile, 2021

Characteristics	Adjusted family income quintile				
	Bottom	Second	Third	Fourth	Top
	percentage				
Indigenous identity					
Indigenous	47.5*	36.2*	33.5*	29.1*	F
First Nations people living off reserve	48.1*	38.7*	36.6*	40.5*	F
Métis	44.2*	33.7*	31.5*	23.0*	F
Inuit	F	F	F	F	F
Non-Indigenous (ref.)	29.8	23.0	17.0	11.3	6.5
Racialized population group					
All Racialized	31.5	29.0*	23.7*	16.1*	11.0*
South Asian	25.4	26.7	23.6*	13.4	7.6
Chinese	23.2	21.8	16.3	13.5	10.7*
Black	53.1*	45.0*	37.3*	17.6*	19.4*
Filipino	F	36.5*	27.5*	27.3*	21.7*
Arab	26.0	33.8	F	F	F
Latin American	38.6	21.7	F	F	F
Southeast Asian	42.5	F	25.6*	F	F
Other racialized	25.5	25.6	24.8*	F	F
Non-racialized non-Indigenous (ref.)	29.2	21.1	15.0	9.9	5.3
Immigrant status					
Immigrated 2013 to 2022	28.6	31.5*	29.8*	16.5*	12.9*
Immigrated before 2013	30.5	25.7	19.3*	16.4*	9.3*
Canadian born (ref.)	31.3	21.8	15.8	10.1	5.6
Major source of income					
Wages and salaries (ref.)	26.8	27.4	20.2	13.5	7.4
Self-employment income	13.7*	23.2	12.2	13.1	F
Government transfers	34.1*	22.6*	21.7	12.6	F
Investment income	11.6*	F	F	F	F
Private retirement pensions	13.2*	7.9*	5.3*	2.2*	2.5*
Other income	19.2	F	F	F	F
Home ownership					
Owner without mortgage (ref.)	18.0	11.4	7.6	5.6	2.6
Owner with mortgage	26.3*	24.0*	20.2*	13.5*	8.4*
Renter - non-subsidized housing	34.3*	29.6*	22.1*	14.9*	8.4*
Renter - subsidized housing	48.8*	40.8*	21.1*	F	F
Population centre/rural					
Population centre (ref.)	31.1	24.5	18.0	12.1	6.8
Rural area	26.5*	17.3*	14.5*	9.6*	6.0
CMA					
Montreal	27.1	21.1*	13.0*	9.4	5.9
Ottawa-Gatineau	21.0*	17.3*	21.4	12.0	6.4
Toronto (ref.)	31.6	35.2	19.0	12.1	7.1
Winnipeg	29.1	25.0*	14.7	12.8	8.5
Calgary	34.8	23.6*	28.8*	10.8	7.1
Edmonton	26.9	26.5	28.2*	21.5*	7.2
Vancouver	29.7	16.3*	16.4	13.3	6.2
Other CMA or CA	32.6	22.6*	17.5	11.1	6.5

Food insecurity among Canadian families

Table 3
Proportion of families that experienced food insecurity, by adjusted family income quintile, 2021

Characteristics	Adjusted family income quintile				
	Bottom	Second	Third	Fourth	Top
	percentage				
Province					
Newfoundland and Labrador	38.2	26.3	22.2	12.8	F
Prince Edward Island	26.2	31.6	17.8	12.2	F
Nova Scotia	32.7	29.2	19.6	9.2	F
New Brunswick	31.9	25.0	21.4	14.6	8.8
Quebec	25.6*	16.4*	11.8*	7.8*	4.7
Ontario (ref.)	32.2	27.9	18.2	11.7	6.6
Manitoba	29.6	23.1	15.6	12.1	8.8
Saskatchewan	31.5	25.5	19.9	12.2	7.1
Alberta	34.1	27.1	27.1*	18.1*	9.1
British Columbia	31.0	19.4*	17.5	12.6	6.2

F too unreliable to be published

* significantly different from the reference category (ref.) ($p < 0.05$)

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey, 2021.

Table 4
Proportion of families, with the major income earner with a disability, who experienced food insecurity, 2021

Characteristics	Percentage
All families	29.5
Number of disabilities	
One (ref.)	23.3
Two	28.1*
Three	33.9*
Four or more	42.2*
Severity of disability	
Mild (ref.)	23.3
Moderate	31.9*
Severe	38.0*
Very severe	39.2*
Sex	
Male (ref.)	26.6
Female	32.4*
Age group	
16 to 24 years	49.1
25 to 34 years	39.6
35 to 44 years (ref.)	37.9
45 to 54 years	35.8
55 to 64 years	32.5
65 years and over	16.2*
Highest level of education	
Less than a high school diploma (ref.)	33.6
High school diploma	33.1
Trades/college certificate	30.3
University degree	22.9*
Economic family type	
Non-elderly couple without children (ref.)	22.8
Non-elderly couple with children	29.7
Female lone-parent	62.0*
Male lone-parent	45.1*
Other non-elderly families	33.7
Non-elderly not in economic families	42.6*
Elderly families	13.6*
Elderly not in economic families	18.5*

Food insecurity among Canadian families

Table 4
Proportion of families, with the major income earner with a disability, who experienced food insecurity, 2021

Characteristics	Percentage
Marital status	
Married (ref.)	21.2
Common-law	29.2*
Separated	47.6*
Divorced	32.3*
Widowed	17.3*
Single (never married)	41.2*
Annual labour force status during the reference year	
Employed all year (ref.)	23.8
Unemployed all year	65.6*
Not in the labour force all year	41.6*
Employed part-year, unemployed part-year	45.0*
Employed part-year, not in labour force part-year	34.5*
Unemployed part-year, not in labour force part-year	59.5*
Employed, unemployed and not in labour force during year	48.4*
Class of worker during the reference year	
Employee (ref.)	31.4
Self-employed	22.1*
Employee and self-employed	30.7
Did not work	28.6
Student status during the reference year	
Full-time student (ref.)	53.9
Part-time student	41.7*
Not a student	28.3
Indigenous identity	
Indigenous	52.2*
First Nations people living off reserve	55.2*
Métis	48.8*
Inuit	F
Non-Indigenous (ref.)	28.7
Racialized population group	
All Racialized	35.7*
South Asian	30.5
Chinese	30.1
Black	54.5*
Filipino	42.2
Arab	35.0
Latin American	35.4
Southeast Asian	46.8
Other racialized	23.2
Non-racialized non-Indigenous (ref.)	27.3
Immigrant status	
Immigrated 2013 to 2022	41.5*
Immigrated before 2013	29.8
Canadian born (ref.)	29.0
Major source of income	
Wages and salaries (ref.)	27.6
Self-employment income	21.3
Government transfers	39.9*
Investment income	7.1*
Private retirement pensions	9.1*
Other income	33.0
Home ownership	
Owner without mortgage (ref.)	14.2
Owner with mortgage	26.1*
Renter - non-subsidized housing	41.3*
Renter - subsidized housing	54.3*

Food insecurity among Canadian families

Table 4
Proportion of families, with the major income earner with a disability, who experienced food insecurity, 2021

Characteristics	Percentage
Poverty	
Below poverty line	52.2*
Above poverty line (ref.)	25.1
Income quintile	
Bottom (ref.)	44.3
Second	35.5*
Third	23.6*
Fourth	17.1*
Top	10.7*
Population centre/rural	
Population centre (ref.)	30.4
Rural area	24.5*
CMA	
Montreal	32.0
Ottawa-Gatineau	24.1
Toronto (ref.)	32.1
Winnipeg	32.4
Calgary	39.0
Edmonton	33.1
Vancouver	20.9*
Other CMA or CA	29.7
Province	
Newfoundland and Labrador	40.0*
Prince Edward Island	34.5
Nova Scotia	34.9
New Brunswick	30.7
Quebec	27.6
Ontario (ref.)	29.7
Manitoba	29.7
Saskatchewan	31.5
Alberta	34.5
British Columbia	24.6*

F too unreliable to be published

* significantly different from the reference category (ref.) (p<0.05)

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey, 2021.

Table 5
Consumer debt and net worth by family characteristics and characteristics of the major income earner, 2019

Characteristics	Proportion with consumer debt	Median consumer debt	Median net worth	Zero or negative net worth
	percentage	dollars		percentage
All families	61.2	20,000	329,900	5.6
Sex				
Male	61.6	20,000	384,900	4.8
Female	60.5	17,600	278,000	6.7
Age group				
16 to 24 years	53.9	8,900	13,300	15.5
25 to 34 years	73.2	20,000	79,700	12.0
35 to 44 years	73.9	21,000	234,400	7.2
45 to 54 years	69.6	24,000	521,100	3.6
55 to 64 years	62.4	22,000	690,000	3.5
65 years and over	38.6	10,000	543,200	1.2

Food insecurity among Canadian families

Table 5
Consumer debt and net worth by family characteristics and characteristics of the major income earner, 2019

Characteristics	Proportion with consumer debt percentage	Median consumer debt dollars	Median net worth dollars	Zero or negative net worth percentage
Highest level of education				
Less than a high school diploma	47.5	10,700	186,000	5.6
High school diploma	60.2	17,300	249,700	5.6
Trades/college certificate	66.9	20,000	328,300	5.8
University degree	61.4	22,000	530,002	5.4
Economic family type				
Non-elderly couple without children	68.4	25,000	459,400	3.9
Non-elderly couple with children	77.5	27,300	435,700	4.0
Female lone-parent	73.6	15,000	64,500	16.0
Male lone-parent	73.2	17,000	356,300	7.3
Other non-elderly families	74.2	25,000	579,800	3.8
Non-elderly not in economic families	58.4	12,500	51,000	11.8
Elderly families	44.1	14,000	840,900	0.5
Elderly not in economic families	33.4	5,700	322,300	1.8
Economic family size				
One	49.9	10,300	109,400	8.4
Two	59.2	20,000	551,200	3.5
Three	72.4	22,500	462,000	4.8
Four	75.6	29,000	551,100	3.6
Five or more	80.8	29,700	460,300	4.4
Marital status				
Married	63.5	25,000	657,600	2.3
Common-law	77.3	21,600	284,800	5.6
Separated	31.9	10,000	418,200	1.1
Divorced	66.6	20,500	116,300	13.5
Widowed	60.3	12,500	251,300	7.2
Single (never married)	58.2	11,900	54,200	10.8
Class of worker				
Employee	71.9	21,000	288,900	5.9
Self-employed	64.6	26,600	672,400	6.0
Unpaid family worker	29.0	F	F	F
Did not work	42.5	10,000	350,600	5.0
Indigenous identity				
Indigenous	66.1	24,300	102,000	9.1
First Nations people living off reserve	58.7	21,200	56,000	7.9
Métis	74.1	25,000	168,000	10.5
Inuit	F	F	F	F
Non-Indigenous	61.0	19,600	341,000	5.5
Immigrant status				
Immigrated 2010 to 2019	67.2	18,000	55,200	10.8
Immigrated before 2010	56.4	20,000	524,200	4.6
Canadian born	62.7	20,000	359,000	5.3
Economic family major source of income				
Wages and salaries	71.3	21,000	326,900	5.6
Self-employment income	60.0	20,400	399,900	5.4
Government transfers	43.6	1,000	109,700	7.7
Investment income	53.0	34,200	1,297,700	1.8
Private retirement pensions	39.6	11,900	1,089,800	0.1
Other income	57.8	10,500	39,000	16.2
Home ownership				
Owner without mortgage	44.1	20,000	965,000	F
Owner with mortgage	77.4	25,000	497,500	0.7
Renter	58.7	12,500	24,700	13.9
Rural area				
Not a rural area	60.8	19,200	328,000	5.9
Rural area	64.5	21,800	341,200	2.4

Food insecurity among Canadian families

Table 5
Consumer debt and net worth by family characteristics and characteristics of the major income earner, 2019

Characteristics	Proportion with	Median	Median net worth	Zero or negative
	consumer debt	consumer debt		net worth
	percentage	dollars		percentage
CMA				
Montreal	61.6	12,500	220,200	5.8
Ottawa-Gatineau	59.5	19,400	348,000	7.9
Toronto	54.6	20,000	467,900	6.0
Calgary	62.4	25,000	336,100	8.9
Vancouver	52.7	21,800	521,500	4.6
Province				
Newfoundland and Labrador	69.1	24,600	247,300	4.9
Prince Edward Island	65.6	20,000	211,400	5.6
Nova Scotia	69.2	20,000	257,900	9.6
New Brunswick	71.1	21,200	185,000	5.3
Quebec	62.4	13,000	237,800	4.5
Ontario	59.9	20,000	434,500	6.1
Manitoba	59.5	16,000	295,700	2.7
Saskatchewan	66.4	24,000	330,500	4.0
Alberta	63.8	26,000	317,300	7.2
British Columbia	55.7	21,500	423,700	5.4

F too unreliable to be published

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Financial Security, 2019.

Table 6
Consumer debt and net worth by family characteristics and characteristics of the major income earner - below and above poverty line, 2019

Characteristics	Below LICO			Above LICO		
	Median	Median net	Zero or negative	Median	Median net	Zero or negative
	consumer debt	worth	net worth	consumer debt	worth	net worth
	dollars	dollars	percentage	dollars	dollars	percentage
All families	9,900	13,700	13.3	20,000	415,100	4.4
Sex						
Male	10,000	14,000	10.4	21,000	456,900	4.1
Female	8,000	13,300	16.2	19,000	351,200	4.9
Age group						
16 to 24 years	8,000	6,100	14.0	11,000	23,200	17.2
25 to 34 years	10,000	7,200	19.2	20,500	101,300	10.9
35 to 44 years	10,500	19,800	16.9	24,000	280,300	5.8
45 to 54 years	12,000	21,100	14.3	25,000	582,800	2.4
55 to 64 years	12,000	32,500	11.9	22,500	800,600	2.2
65 years and over	3,900	65,000	F	10,000	586,500	1.0
Highest level of education						
Less than a high school diploma	2,500	8,100	9.8	13,700	235,000	4.7
High school diploma	6,300	8,700	12.2	20,000	380,600	4.3
Trades/college certificate	10,500	8,400	15.9	20,000	388,600	4.3
University degree	13,500	54,200	14.0	23,000	620,000	4.5
Economic family type						
Non-elderly couple without children	25,000	216,700	F	25,000	491,700	3.7
Non-elderly couple with children	25,000	53,300	F	28,000	457,100	3.5
Female lone-parent	7,000	7,000	19.9	18,800	104,200	14.9
Male lone-parent	F	F	F	17,300	415,000	F
Other non-elderly families	8,000	42,000	F	26,000	622,000	3.8
Non-elderly not in economic families	8,500	5,400	16.8	15,000	122,800	9.4
Elderly families	F	534,000	F	13,500	847,400	F
Elderly not in economic families	2,500	33,000	F	6,600	377,400	1.7

Food insecurity among Canadian families

Table 6
Consumer debt and net worth by family characteristics and characteristics of the major income earner - below and above poverty line, 2019

Characteristics	Below LICO			Above LICO		
	Median consumer debt	Median net worth	Zero or negative net worth	Median consumer debt	Median net worth	Zero or negative net worth
	dollars		percentage	dollars		percentage
Economic family size						
One	8,000	8,000	14.3	12,000	205,600	6.3
Two	13,200	175,000	8.6	20,000	567,500	3.3
Three	12,300	38,000	12.2	24,000	493,100	4.2
Four	20,800	53,300	F	30,000	592,700	3.4
Five or more	12,100	23,300	F	30,000	478,500	3.6
Marital status						
Married	22,500	158,000	7.0	25,000	691,500	2.0
Common-law	F	27,700	F	21,800	297,200	5.3
Separated	F	134,000	F	10,000	447,100	F
Divorced	5,500	21,800	F	25,000	192,000	13.9
Widowed	10,500	6,300	16.4	15,000	315,200	4.9
Single (never married)	8,000	6,000	16.2	13,000	115,700	8.7
Class of worker						
Employee	9,900	13,000	14.3	22,000	326,100	5.2
Self-employed	12,500	92,500	F	29,000	780,600	4.4
Unpaid family worker	F	F	F	F	F	F
Did not work	7,000	9,500	12.7	11,000	512,000	2.8
Indigenous identity						
Indigenous	7,100	1,400	F	27,500	153,400	7.2
First Nations people living off reserve	F	1,400	F	24,000	89,800	F
Métis	F	F	F	31,500	225,700	F
Inuit	F	F	F	F	F	F
Non-Indigenous	9,900	15,000	13.1	20,000	427,500	4.3
Immigrant status						
Immigrated 2010 to 2019	10,000	15,300	14.1	18,000	71,000	9.9
Immigrated before 2010	10,000	24,700	13.2	20,000	601,000	3.1
Canadian born	10,000	13,700	14.7	20,000	422,500	4.2
Economic family major source of income						
Wages and salaries	9,900	12,900	14.9	22,000	364,500	5.0
Self-employment income	18,000	40,000	F	29,000	667,600	F
Government transfers	8,000	9,600	12.9	10,000	210,700	5.1
Investment income	F	794,600	F	35,000	1,493,800	F
Private retirement pensions	F	F	F	12,000	1,089,800	F
Other income	10,500	5,500	F	12,000	204,000	F
Home ownership						
Owner without mortgage	13,000	581,000	F	20,000	1,009,300	F
Owner with mortgage	20,000	415,100	F	25,000	499,400	0.7
Renter	8,000	5,500	16.5	14,000	41,700	13.0
Rural area						
Not a rural area	9,900	13,300	13.8	20,000	420,400	4.6
Rural area	11,000	67,700	F	22,000	368,600	2.4
CMA						
Montreal	9,900	7,000	17.4	13,000	318,700	3.2
Ottawa-Gatineau	15,000	14,500	F	19,500	536,500	F
Toronto	10,500	15,000	F	20,800	671,900	5.2
Calgary	6,000	16,000	F	27,000	413,800	7.6
Vancouver	17,000	39,800	F	23,000	685,400	3.5

Food insecurity among Canadian families

Table 6
Consumer debt and net worth by family characteristics and characteristics of the major income earner - below and above poverty line, 2019

Characteristics	Below LICO			Above LICO		
	Median consumer debt	Median net worth	Zero or negative net worth	Median consumer debt	Median net worth	Zero or negative net worth
	dollars		percentage	dollars		percentage
Province						
Newfoundland and Labrador	F	3,700	F	27,000	280,400	F
Prince Edward Island	F	F	F	21,000	257,000	F
Nova Scotia	10,800	1,300	F	20,300	311,800	7.4
New Brunswick	3,700	10,100	F	23,500	199,100	4.3
Quebec	6,000	9,000	14.6	14,000	303,100	2.9
Ontario	10,000	14,500	11.2	21,000	548,900	5.2
Manitoba	2,000	25,300	F	17,000	378,000	F
Saskatchewan	F	49,400	F	24,500	376,500	F
Alberta	7,000	16,000	21.5	27,500	343,300	5.6
British Columbia	14,400	25,000	11.4	22,500	534,000	4.3

F too unreliable to be published

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Financial Security, 2019.

Table A1
Predicted probabilities from logistic regressions of food insecurity

Characteristics	All families	Poverty line		Sex of major income earner	
		Below	Above	Male	Female
	predicted probabilities				
Sex					
Male (ref.)	0.17	0.35	0.15	...	...
Female	0.19*	0.36	0.16*	...	...
Highest level of education					
Less than a high school diploma (ref.)	0.20	0.39	0.17	0.19	0.21
High school diploma	0.19	0.36	0.17	0.17	0.21
Trades/college certificate	0.19	0.38	0.17	0.16	0.23
University degree	0.15*	0.28*	0.13*	0.13*	0.17*
Economic family type					
Non-elderly couple without children (ref.)	0.18	0.38	0.15	0.16	0.20
Non-elderly couple with children	0.24*	0.49	0.20*	0.21*	0.29*
Female lone-parent	0.28*	0.39	0.26*	...	0.31*
Male lone-parent	0.24*	0.54	0.19	0.21	...
Other non-elderly families	0.23*	0.43	0.20*	0.21*	0.26*
Non-elderly not in economic families	0.20*	0.40	0.17	0.18	0.23
Elderly families	0.09*	0.24*	0.09*	0.07*	0.13*
Elderly not in economic families	0.08*	0.14*	0.08*	0.08*	0.09*
Class of worker during the reference year					
Employee (ref.)	0.18	0.31	0.16	0.15	0.21
Self-employed	0.14*	0.31	0.11*	0.13*	0.15*
Employee and self-employed	0.18	0.36	0.16	0.16	0.21
Did not work	0.19	0.39*	0.15	0.18	0.21

Food insecurity among Canadian families

Table A1
Predicted probabilities from logistic regressions of food insecurity

Characteristics	All families	Poverty line		Sex of major income earner	
		Below	Above	Male	Female
		predicted probabilities			
Racialized population group					
South Asian	0.17	0.28	0.16	0.14	0.21
Chinese	0.17	0.28	0.17	0.17	0.18
Black	0.28*	0.52*	0.25*	0.27*	0.29*
Filipino	0.23*	0.14	0.23*	0.22*	0.26
Arab	0.16	0.24	0.15	0.17	0.15
Latin American	0.18	0.48	0.14	0.18	0.17
Southeast Asian	0.18	0.49	0.14	0.18	0.19
Other racialized	0.16	0.24	0.16	0.13	0.19
Non-racialized non-Indigenous (ref.)	0.17	0.36	0.15	0.15	0.20
Indigenous people living off reserve	0.24*	0.39	0.23*	0.21*	0.29*
Major source of income					
Wages and salaries (ref.)	0.16	0.28	0.14	0.15	0.17
Self-employment income	0.14	0.19	0.15	0.11	0.17
Government transfers	0.25*	0.43*	0.22*	0.23*	0.29*
Investment income	0.09*	0.13*	0.09*	0.08*	0.09*
Private retirement pensions	0.12*	0.22	0.11*	0.11*	0.14
Other income	0.13	0.18	0.15	0.08*	0.17
Home ownership					
Owner without mortgage (ref.)	0.11	0.23	0.10	0.10	0.14
Owner with mortgage	0.17*	0.27	0.16*	0.16*	0.19*
Renter - non-subsidized housing	0.21*	0.39*	0.19*	0.19*	0.24*
Renter - subsidized housing	0.26*	0.50*	0.22*	0.25*	0.29*
CMA					
Montreal	0.21	0.41	0.19	0.19	0.24
Ottawa-Gatineau	0.17	0.22*	0.16	0.15	0.20
Toronto (ref.)	0.19	0.36	0.17	0.16	0.23
Winnipeg	0.17	0.28	0.15	0.14	0.22
Calgary	0.13*	0.28	0.12*	0.13	0.14*
Edmonton	0.14*	0.24	0.13	0.13	0.15*
Vancouver	0.16	0.40	0.13*	0.14	0.18
Other CMA or CA	0.18	0.36	0.16	0.16	0.21
Province					
Newfoundland and Labrador	0.22*	0.41	0.19*	0.20	0.25
Prince Edward Island	0.21	0.30	0.20*	0.19	0.24
Nova Scotia	0.21	0.36	0.19*	0.17	0.25*
New Brunswick	0.22*	0.35	0.20*	0.20*	0.24*
Quebec	0.13*	0.29	0.10*	0.11*	0.15*
Ontario (ref.)	0.19	0.36	0.16	0.17	0.21
Manitoba	0.17	0.37	0.15	0.17	0.18
Saskatchewan	0.19	0.37	0.17	0.17	0.22
Alberta	0.26	0.44	0.24*	0.24	0.29*
British Columbia	0.19	0.34	0.17	0.16*	0.24*
Income quintile					
Bottom (ref.)	0.24	0.35	0.25	0.22	0.27
Second	0.22*	...	0.21*	0.20	0.24
Third	0.19*	...	0.17*	0.17*	0.20*
Fourth	0.14*	...	0.12*	0.13*	0.15*
Top	0.09*	...	0.08*	0.08*	0.09*
Second to Top	...	0.48	...	...	...

... not applicable

* significantly different from the reference category (ref.) (p<0.05)

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey, 2021.

Notes

1. United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (1996).
2. Health Canada (2020).
3. Tait, et al. (2018).
4. Jessiman-Perreault and McIntyre (2017); Tarasuk, et al. (2020); and Men, et al. (2021).
5. Bekele, et al. (2018) and Cox, et al. (2016).
6. Men, et al. (2020).
7. Men, et al. (2020).
8. Tarasuk, et al. (2022).
9. Polsky and Gilmour (2020).
10. Caron and Plunkett-Latimer (2022).
11. Polsky and Garriguet (2020).
12. Data on food insecurity have previously been collected in other Statistics Canada surveys including the Canadian Community Health Survey, the Longitudinal International Study of Adults, and the Aboriginal Peoples Survey.
13. On the choice of families rather than households as the unit of analysis, see *Data sources and definitions*.
14. Roshanafshar and Hawkins (2015).
15. 2019 is the latest year for which data on financial security are available. Data from the 2023 Survey of Financial Security will be released in 2024.
16. Looking at different categories of food insecurity, in 2022, 5.1% reported marginal, 8.2% moderate and 4.6% severe food insecurity. The comparable proportions for 2021 were 4.3%, 7.4%, and 4.1%, respectively.
17. Data on gender and sexual orientation are not available in the survey.
18. Family income adjusted for family size was also lower for families with a female versus a male as the major income earner - \$43,200 versus \$52,800.
19. Galarneau and Sturrock (1997). See also [Economic Consequences of Divorce and Separation - JustFacts](#) (justice.gc.ca).
20. See, for example, Statistics Canada (2017).
21. Uppal (2016).
22. Uppal and LaRochelle-Côté (2011).
23. For a complete list of government transfers, see [Dictionary, Census of Population, 2021 – Government transfers](#) (statcan.gc.ca).
24. Systemic barriers to employment and education, racial discrimination in the workplace and housing market, and the intergenerational effects of colonization and residential school experiences have created conditions of poverty among the Indigenous population which in turn leads to food insecurity.
25. Higher rates of food insecurity among the Indigenous population have also been noted by other studies, see, for example. Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (2021).
26. Using data from the Aboriginal Peoples Survey, Arriagada (2017) found that in 2012, 52% of Inuit aged 25 and over living in Inuit Nunangat experienced food insecurity.
27. See *Data sources and definitions*.
28. To look at variation in food insecurity rates among families below the poverty line, they were divided into five equal groups (quintiles) based on the poverty gap ratio (difference between a family's disposable income and the MBM threshold). Those in the bottom quintile (i.e. the poorest) were less likely to be food insecure (28% versus at least 35% for quintiles 2 to 5). However, the differences were not statistically significant. One of the reasons for a low rate among the poorest (though not statistically significantly different) could be a higher proportion of students in the lowest quintiles (33%) compared to the upper quintiles (16%) and the fact that students below the poverty line were less likely to report food insecurity.
29. The proportion of 3% is based on a relatively small number of observations (and a relatively high coefficient of variation) and hence should be interpreted with caution.
30. Lone mother families belonging to racialized groups other than Black Canadians had to be grouped together due to small individual sample sizes.
31. Economic family income was adjusted for family size by dividing the income level by the square root of family size.

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32. Sriram and Tarasuk (2015).
 33. SFS does not have demographic information related to the racialized population. It also does not have information on student status.
 34. The market-basket measure is not available with SFS. As such, the low-income cutoffs (LICOs) were used, rather than the poverty line.
 35. Canadian Income Survey data on the three territories were not available at the time of the analysis.
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