

Canadian Megatrends: The rise of the dual-earner family with children

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Monday, May 30, 2016

Canadian families with children are more likely than ever to have both parents in the workforce.

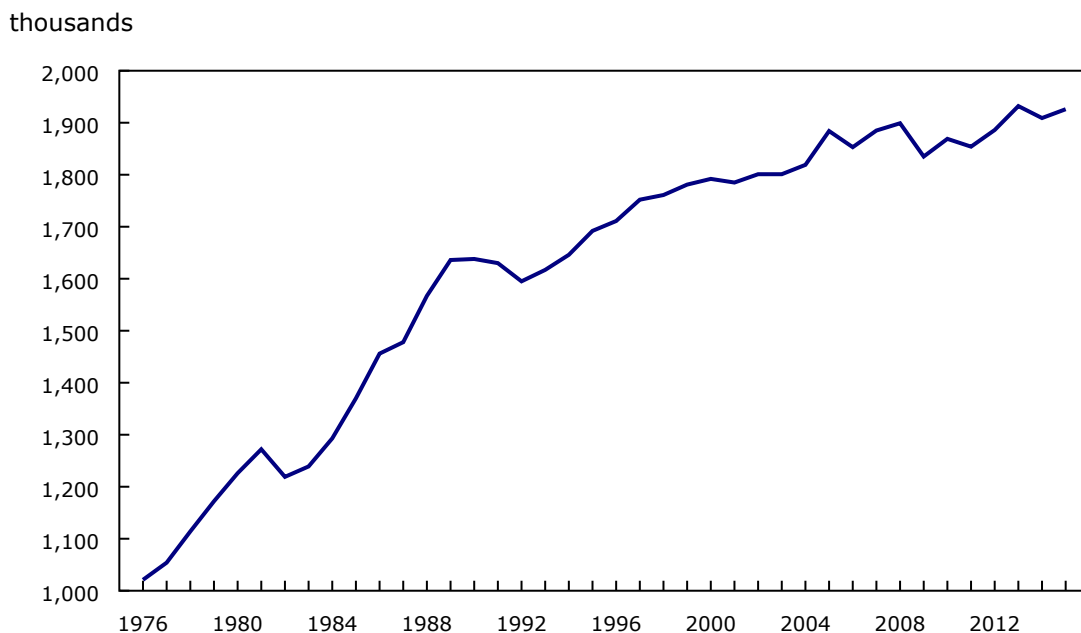
This month's edition of *Canadian Megatrends* looks at the growing trend in the number of women joining the workforce. The number of Canadian families with at least one child aged under 16 at home and two employed parents almost doubled in the last 40 years—from 1.0 million families in 1976 to 1.9 million in 2015. Today, dual income families account for nearly 7 in 10 families with children, whereas in 1976, they accounted for 4 in 10.

A variety of factors played into this new reality, including changes in cultural attitudes, improved female education, general market conditions and, to some extent, more flexible working arrangements and greater family supports.

The proportion of dual-earner families varied among the provinces. In 1976, Alberta had the highest proportion of dual-earner couples among couples with children (43%), followed by Ontario (42%). In contrast, the Atlantic provinces (27%) and Quebec (29%) had the lowest proportions.

By 2015, Alberta had the lowest proportion of dual-earner couples with children (64%), while Saskatchewan (74%) and Quebec (73%) had the highest proportion.

Chart 1
Number of dual-earner couples with at least one child aged under 16 at home



Source(s): Labour Force Survey (3701).



Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [3701](#).

The article, "[The rise of the dual-earner family with children](#)," is now available as part of *Canadian Megatrends* ([11-630-X](#)) from *The Daily* module of our website.

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