

Main highlights on Income of families and individuals: Subprovincial data from the T1 Family File, 2021

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Following 10 consecutive years of growth, the median after-tax income of families decreased to \$59,300 (-2.8%) in 2021. This decrease was seen in all provinces and territories, led by Nunavut (-7.7%) and Manitoba (-4.9%). The three largest regional decreases in median family after-tax income occurred in the Windsor (-5.7%), Winnipeg (-5.0%) and Toronto (-4.9%) census metropolitan areas (CMAs).

The decrease in after-tax income was due in large part to the end of several benefits issued by the government in 2020 to financially support Canadians affected by loss of employment income due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which was partially offset by a limited rebound of employment income in 2021. Lower income families were more impacted by the end of government COVID-19 benefits, especially lone-parent families with children under 6 years old. Accordingly, low-income rates and income inequality also rose in 2021.

Increases in market income for lower-income families do not fully offset decreases in government transfers

Grouping families based on their after-tax income being above or below the median, those with income below the median earned 5.3% less in aggregate after-tax income in 2021 than in 2020, while those above the median earned 1.6% more. Breaking this into sources of income, market incomes rose, while government transfers fell for both lower and higher income families.

The increases in market income in 2021 can primarily be attributed to an increase in employment income, which increased by an equal percentage (6.3%) for families with lower and higher incomes. In nominal terms, this was an increase of \$9.4 billion in the aggregate for those with lower income and an increase of \$65.7 billion for those with higher income.

Simultaneously, the decreases in government transfers from 2020 to 2021 were 13.0% for lower-income families and 19.9% for higher-income families. For those families with lower income, this resulted in \$19.2 billion less in aggregate government transfers. For those with higher income, the aggregate decreased by \$31.1 billion. The changes in government transfers can be attributed to several factors, with the largest being the decline in COVID-19 benefits, particularly with the virtual disappearance of the Canada Emergency Response Benefit and the Canada Emergency Student Benefit in 2021. This disappearance was partially countered by the continuation of the Canada Recovery Benefit and the temporary changes made to Employment Insurance. Additionally, GST/HST credits returned to previous levels following a one-time increase in 2020, and the Climate Action Incentive was not paid out for 2021, having been replaced with a quarterly program that started payments in July 2022.

Overall, the changes in market income and government transfers when combined with taxes paid resulted in a decrease of \$15.1 billion in aggregate after-tax income for families with lower income. In comparison, there was an increase of \$16.5 billion in aggregate after-tax income for families with higher income.

After-tax income decreases the most among lone-parent families with at least one child under 6 years old

While overall, the median family after-tax income decreased by 2.8%, the size of the decrease varied across different family types and the ages of any children. Couple families with and without children saw negligible change in their median after-tax income from 2020 to 2021. In contrast, lone-parent families experienced a decrease of 3.9% in median income, and it was more pronounced for lone-parent families where at least one child was aged 0 to 5 years, decreasing 6.8%.



Low-income rates rise in 2021

After a sharp decrease in 2020, the proportion of Canadians living in low income increased 2.2 percentage points to 15.5% in 2021. Nunavut had the largest increase (+6.1 percentage points to 29.1%), while Quebec had the smallest (+1.1 percentage points to 14.3%).

For CMAs, Québec (10.4%), Victoria (11.5%), Saguenay (11.8%) and Guelph (11.8%) have the lowest low-income rates in 2021. The Windsor (19.3%), Toronto (18.6%) and Winnipeg (17.2%) CMAs had the highest rates of low income in 2021.

Low-income rates up for all families, most notably for seniors

Evolution of low-income rates were similar between individuals living in couple families, lone-parent families or outside of a census family. In fact, low-income rates for all family types were above those in 2020.

For 2021, individuals in couple families with children had the lowest low-income rate among all family types, with about 1 in 15 (6.3%) individuals in low income. Following them were individuals in couple families without children, with just over 1 in 10 (11.7%) in low income. About one in three (31.7%) individuals in lone-parent families or persons not in families (34.3%) were in low income.

In 2021, 17.8% of seniors were living in low income, an increase of 4 percentage points over 2020. Adults under 65 years old had a low-income rate of 14.8%, and youth (those under 18 years old) had a low-income rate of 15.6%.

Income inequality rises from 2020 to 2021

With an increase in low-income rates and larger differences between the upper and lower tails of the income distribution, income inequality would be expected to rise. One way to look at this is to explore the Gini coefficient of family after-tax income adjusted for family size. A Gini coefficient will range between 0, where all members of a population have the same income, and 1, where only one person receives all the income of a population.

In Canada, the Gini coefficient for 2021 increased to 0.353 (+0.017) following a drop in 2020. Among the provinces and territories, the adjusted family after-tax income of individuals in Yukon (0.311), New Brunswick (0.313), Prince Edward Island (0.313) and Quebec (0.320) was the most evenly distributed in 2021. Meanwhile, Nunavut (0.409), Ontario (0.369), British Columbia (0.361) and Alberta (0.358) had highest inequality in adjusted family after-tax income.

The three CMAs with the highest levels of income inequality in 2021, as measured by the Gini coefficient, were Toronto (0.407), Calgary (0.386) and Vancouver (0.385). The three CMAs with the lowest levels of income inequality were Saguenay (0.284), Québec (0.293) and Drummondville (0.303). One CMA of note is the combined CMA of Ottawa–Gatineau (0.339), where the Ontario part (0.350) had notably higher inequality than the Quebec part (0.292).

Table 1
Median after-tax income of families, by province and territory, 2016 to 2021

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Change 2020 to 2021
	2021 constant dollars						%
Canada	55,820	56,560	56,720	56,900	61,030	59,300	-2.8
Newfoundland and Labrador	54,270	53,450	52,760	52,070	55,110	54,110	-1.8
Prince Edward Island	50,850	51,550	50,890	50,510	54,440	53,280	-2.1
Nova Scotia	49,910	50,220	50,170	49,900	53,810	52,320	-2.8
New Brunswick	50,090	50,610	50,600	50,510	54,260	52,660	-2.9
Quebec	49,960	51,020	51,280	51,980	55,410	54,700	-1.3
Ontario	57,990	58,480	58,740	58,720	63,330	60,950	-3.8
Manitoba	53,870	54,440	54,110	54,010	58,880	56,020	-4.9
Saskatchewan	59,840	60,210	59,980	59,660	63,640	60,810	-4.4
Alberta	67,670	68,360	68,030	67,770	70,170	67,820	-3.3
British Columbia	55,610	56,600	56,770	57,040	62,050	61,060	-1.6
Yukon	67,470	68,950	69,440	69,570	73,930	73,760	-0.2
Northwest Territories	76,310	75,470	74,880	75,880	82,470	80,820	-2.0
Nunavut	65,460	66,750	66,830	67,250	74,380	68,670	-7.7

Source(s): Annual Income Estimates for Census Families and Individuals (T1 Family File) (4105), table 11-10-0017-01.

Table 2
Median after-tax income of families, by family type, 2020 to 2021

	2020	2021	Change 2020 to 2021
	2021 constant dollars		%
All families and persons not in families	61,030	59,300	-2.8
Couple families	93,330	92,140	-1.3
Couple families with children	114,540	113,950	-0.5
Couple families with at least one child 5 years old or younger	98,690	98,960	0.3
Non-senior couples with at least one child 5 years old or younger	98,710	98,990	0.3
Senior couples with at least one child 5 years old or younger ¹	79,360	75,700	-4.6
Couple families with all children 6 years old or older	123,710	122,460	-1
Non-senior couple families with all children 6 years old or older	125,540	124,490	-0.8
Senior couple families with all children 6 years old or older ¹	111,410	108,960	-2.2
Couple families without children	74,610	73,420	-1.6
Non-senior couple families without children	82,780	82,140	-0.8
Senior couple families without children ¹	67,080	65,750	-2
Lone-parent families	55,610	53,440	-3.9
Lone-parent families with at least one child 5 years old or younger	43,240	40,300	-6.8
Non-senior lone parents with at least one child 5 years old or younger	43,240	40,300	-6.8
Senior lone parents with at least one child 5 years old or younger	47,540	41,680	-12.3
Lone-parent families with all children 6 years old or older	59,730	57,630	-3.5
Non-senior lone parents with all children 6 years old or older	57,900	55,860	-3.5
Senior lone parents with all children 6 years old or older	68,850	66,400	-3.6
Persons not in census families	33,080	32,130	-2.9
Non-senior persons not in census families	34,650	34,120	-1.5
Senior persons not in census families	30,650	29,210	-4.7

1. Senior couple families are those with at least one person over 65 years old.

Source(s): Annual Income Estimates for Census Families and Individuals (T1 Family File) (4105), table 11-10-0017-01 and custom tabulation.

Table 3
Aggregate income by income source for those above and below the median family after-tax income, 2020 to 2021

	Below Median Family After-Tax Income ^{2,4}			Above Median Family After-Tax Income ²		
	2020	2021	% Change	2020	2021	% Change
Number of Families	8,554,280	8,703,190	1.7	8,554,040	8,703,110	1.7
Amount (\$1000s) ¹						
Total Income	317,538,995	307,666,990	-3.1	1,297,973,265	1,332,505,190	2.7
Market Income	169,523,635	178,883,055	5.5	1,141,684,690	1,207,356,085	5.8
Employment Income	123,239,105	130,953,050	6.3	931,862,210	990,624,110	6.3
Government Transfers	148,015,360	128,783,935	-13.0	156,288,575	125,149,105	-19.9
Net Taxes ³	30,832,890	36,052,655	16.9	247,715,845	265,745,740	7.3
After-Tax income	286,706,105	271,614,335	-5.3	1,050,257,420	1,066,759,450	1.6

1. Amounts are expressed in 2021 constant dollars.

2. In 2021 constant dollars, the median family after-tax income is \$61,030 in 2020 and is \$59,300 in 2021.

3. Net Taxes are the sum of income taxes paid less abatements.

4. Families with family after-tax income equal to the median are included with those below the median

Source(s): Annual Income Estimates for Census Families and Individuals (T1 Family File) (4105), custom tabulation.

Table 4
Families and individuals with income, by income source, 2020 to 2021

	Individuals ²		Census families ²		Aggregate amount ¹	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
	number				thousands of dollars	
Total Income	28,696,810	28,931,530	17,108,320	17,406,300	1,615,512,255	1,640,172,185
Market Income	25,232,160	25,583,370	15,398,130	15,662,490	1,311,208,320	1,386,239,145
Employment Income	20,378,280	20,631,680	12,732,910	12,923,610	1,055,101,320	1,121,577,160
Dividend and Interest Income	8,273,780	8,040,510	6,143,900	6,003,690	87,048,095	91,647,855
Private Pensions	4,794,020	4,917,450	3,787,420	3,876,290	119,703,295	122,805,570
Registered Retirement Savings Plan Income	386,540	409,030	356,100	375,360	4,732,970	5,015,590
Market Income not included elsewhere	5,783,220	6,222,470	4,619,050	4,880,480	44,622,650	45,192,965
Government Transfers	24,789,950	21,366,570	16,288,660	15,149,130	304,303,935	253,933,040
Employment Insurance Benefits	3,237,710	3,772,090	2,862,760	3,282,310	23,881,910	41,683,435
Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Quebec Pension Plan (QPP) benefits	7,756,490	7,910,420	5,718,640	5,832,680	63,232,420	63,172,035
Old age security and Net Federal Supplements (incl. GIS)	6,420,700	6,605,240	4,735,800	4,870,520	61,729,985	60,882,345
Federal Child Benefits ³	3,927,110	3,713,860	3,902,480	3,689,840	27,551,885	24,510,380
Goods and Services Tax (GST) credit and Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) credit ³	10,850,740	9,247,780	9,689,680	8,321,950	9,326,045	4,136,955
Workers Compensation benefit	575,000	610,640	561,480	595,730	6,501,200	6,535,230
Social Assistance benefits	1,611,070	1,595,400	1,521,520	1,509,120	14,403,295	13,493,525
Provincial Benefits and Tax Credits	11,976,070	12,670,590	10,263,810	10,795,720	14,535,735	15,437,410
Other Government transfers	17,111,740	4,721,170	12,700,730	4,108,420	83,141,465	24,081,730
Emergency and Recovery Benefits (ERB)	8,132,170	2,147,300	6,400,890	1,873,210	75,342,115	21,356,750
Other Government transfers Excluded ERBs ⁴	13,124,840	3,029,150	10,490,580	2,798,980	7,799,350	2,724,980
After-Tax Income	28,714,730	28,954,280	17,076,930	17,322,470	1,336,963,530	1,338,373,785

1. Amounts are expressed in 2021 constant dollars.

2. Counts exclude zeros.

3. Federal child benefits, GHT/HST credits included one-time payments COVID-19 benefits enhancements in 2020 but not in 2021.

4. Changes to the climate action incentive program halt the payments of the benefits in 2021 to resume in 2022.

Source(s): Annual Income Estimates for Census Families and Individuals (T1 Family File) (4105), tables 11-10-0007-01 and 11-10-0014-01, and custom tabulation.

Table 5
Percentage of individuals in low income according to the Census Family Low Income Measure, by province and territory, 2016 to 2021

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
	%					
Canada	16.8	16.6	16.5	16.4	13.3	15.5
Newfoundland and Labrador	14.6	14.8	15.6	16.0	14.0	16.1
Prince Edward Island	16.2	16.3	16.9	16.8	13.9	15.0
Nova Scotia	18.5	18.7	19.1	19.2	15.8	17.4
New Brunswick	17.1	17.0	17.2	17.4	14.4	16.2
Quebec	16.1	15.9	15.7	15.4	13.2	14.3
Ontario	17.0	16.9	16.7	16.6	13.4	16.1
Manitoba	20.7	20.6	21.0	21.2	16.1	18.8
Saskatchewan	18.1	18.4	18.8	19.0	15.1	18.4
Alberta	13.6	13.2	13.4	13.3	11.1	13.6
British Columbia	18.7	18.4	18.1	17.9	13.2	15.2
Yukon	12.1	11.0	10.9	11.6	8.9	10.1
Northwest Territories	18.3	19.0	18.5	18.3	11.9	15.3
Nunavut	29.0	26.9	27.3	28.5	23.0	29.1

Source(s): Annual Income Estimates for Census Families and Individuals (T1 Family File) (4105), table 11-10-0018-01.

Table 6
Percentage of individuals in low income according to the Census Family Low Income Measure, by family type and age, 2016 to 2021

	Persons aged 0 to 17 years		Persons aged 18 to 64 years		Persons aged 65 years and over		All persons	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
	%							
All Family Types	13.5	15.6	13.1	14.8	13.8	17.8	13.3	15.5
Couples with children	6.2	7.6	4.6	5.6	3.9	5.2	5.1	6.3
Couples without children	58.8	65.6	11.3	13.2	5.9	9.3	9.2	11.7
Lone-Parent Families	36.5	41.3	23.2	26.4	9.0	11.2	27.9	31.7
Persons not in Census Family	98.0	98.5	31.7	33.3	28.7	34.6	31.2	34.3

Source(s): Annual Income Estimates for Census Families and Individuals (T1 Family File) (4105), table 11-10-0018-01.

Table 7
Gini Coefficients based on the adjusted family after-tax income, by province and territory, 2016 to 2021

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Canada	0.363	0.364	0.360	0.360	0.336	0.353
Newfoundland and Labrador	0.336	0.333	0.333	0.336	0.314	0.330
Prince Edward Island	0.320	0.321	0.316	0.317	0.295	0.313
Nova Scotia	0.337	0.339	0.339	0.337	0.311	0.327
New Brunswick	0.324	0.321	0.318	0.320	0.297	0.313
Quebec	0.329	0.329	0.327	0.326	0.308	0.320
Ontario	0.372	0.374	0.371	0.372	0.350	0.369
Manitoba	0.358	0.358	0.356	0.357	0.322	0.338
Saskatchewan	0.357	0.359	0.357	0.355	0.325	0.345
Alberta	0.372	0.372	0.368	0.367	0.343	0.358
British Columbia	0.375	0.379	0.370	0.373	0.341	0.361
Yukon	0.329	0.326	0.321	0.326	0.303	0.311
Northwest Territories	0.381	0.383	0.375	0.375	0.338	0.355
Nunavut	0.424	0.415	0.413	0.418	0.383	0.409

Source(s): Annual Income Estimates for Census Families and Individuals (T1 Family File) (4105), custom tabulation.

Table 8
Gini Coefficients based on the adjusted family after-tax income, by census metropolitan area, 2020 to 2021

	2020	2021
St. John's	0.322	0.345
Halifax	0.316	0.331
Moncton	0.295	0.315
Saint John	0.314	0.330
Fredericton	..	0.316
Saguenay	0.274	0.284
Québec	0.282	0.293
Sherbrooke	0.296	0.308
Trois-Rivières	0.293	0.305
Drummondville	..	0.303
Montréal	0.330	0.343
Ottawa–Gatineau (Combined)	0.326	0.339
Ottawa–Gatineau (Quebec)	0.282	0.292
Ottawa–Gatineau (Ontario)	0.334	0.350
Kingston	0.315	0.330
Belleville–Quinte West	0.295	0.311
Peterborough	0.309	0.328
Oshawa	0.307	0.320
Toronto	0.382	0.407
Hamilton	0.331	0.346
St. Catharines–Niagara	0.312	0.327
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	0.326	0.348
Brantford	0.323	0.324
Guelph	0.319	0.335
London	0.328	0.345
Windsor	0.344	0.356
Barrie	0.304	0.319
Greater Sudbury	0.305	0.319
Thunder Bay	0.310	0.324
Winnipeg	0.325	0.341
Regina	0.324	0.340
Saskatoon	0.325	0.344
Lethbridge	0.302	0.319
Calgary	0.371	0.386
Red Deer	..	0.327
Edmonton	0.328	0.343
Kelowna	0.326	0.343
Kamloops	..	0.319
Chilliwack	..	0.312
Abbotsford–Mission	0.308	0.322
Vancouver	0.363	0.385
Victoria	0.319	0.334
Nanaimo	..	0.313

.. not available for a specific reference period

Source(s): Annual Income Estimates for Census Families and Individuals (T1 Family File) (4105), custom tabulation.

Note to readers

In this release, the term *families* refers to census families and persons not in a census family. A census family refers to a married or a common-law couple, with or without children at home, or a lone-parent family. Products also include data for persons not in census family. Data for this release are derived from personal income tax returns filed in spring 2022 and are not adjusted on the basis of Statistics Canada's population estimates.

In this release, income has been adjusted for inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index, and all dollar amounts are expressed in 2021 dollars.

For additional data related to the product discussed in this release, please refer to the [data release of July 12, 2023](#). Data based on specific government income support programs and benefits for COVID-19 can be found in tables 11-10-0100-01 and 11-10-0101-01.

After-tax income refers to total income less income taxes. Income taxes refer to the sum of federal income taxes, provincial and territorial income taxes, less abatement, where applicable. Total income includes employment income, dividend and interest income, government transfers (taxable and non-taxable), pension income and other income. In accordance with international standards, capital gains are excluded from total income.

This release reports on low-income statistics using the after-tax Census Family Low Income Measure (CFLIM-AT). Individuals are deemed in low income if their adjusted after-tax income falls below 50% of the national median adjusted after-tax income. Adjusted after-tax income is derived by dividing census family income by the square root of census family size and assigning this to all members of the census family. Persons not in census families are treated as census families of size 1. Data based on the CFLIM-AT methodology can be found in tables [11-10-0018-01](#) and [11-10-0020-01](#).

Low-income estimates reported in this release differ from those reported in other sources, such as the Census of Population or the Canadian Income Survey (CIS). Reasons for this include differences in the unit of analysis and the data coverage. The low-income measure presented in the census and CIS uses the household unit of analysis (instead of census family), and currently excludes those living in the territories, in collective dwellings and on reserves. Users interested in more details can refer to the paper "[Low Income Measure: Comparison of Two Data Sources, T1 Family File and 2016 Census of Population](#)." The census and CIS also produce low-income estimates based on other approaches such as the Market Basket Measure (MBM), which was adopted as Canada's official poverty line in 2019. It is not possible to compute the MBM for the T1 Family File. In addition to income, the MBM relies on data that is obtained through survey questions and not available for this release.

The Gini coefficient is a number between zero and one that measures the relative degree of inequality in the distribution of income. The coefficient would register zero (minimum inequality) for a population in which each person received exactly the same adjusted family income and it would register a coefficient of one (maximum inequality) if one person received all the adjusted family income and the rest received none. Even though a single Gini coefficient value has no simple interpretation, comparisons of the level over time or between populations are very straightforward: the higher the coefficient, the higher the inequality of the distribution.

The median is the point at which half of the observations are higher and half are lower.

The average is the sum of the observations divided by the number of observations.

All data in this release have been tabulated according to the [2021 Standard Geographical Classification](#) used for the 2021 Census.

A census metropolitan area (CMA) is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (also known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [4105](#).

The Technical Reference Guide for the Annual Income Estimates for Census Families, Individuals and Seniors, T1 Family File, Final Estimates ([72-212-X](#)), presents information about the methodology, concepts and data quality for the data available in this release.

The free tables linked to this release are available for Canada, provinces and territories, census metropolitan areas, and census agglomerations. Versions of these tables are also available as a custom service, upon request, for lower levels of geography. The tables are available for Canada, provinces and territories, federal electoral districts, economic regions, census divisions, census subdivisions, census metropolitan areas, census agglomerations, census tracts, and postal-based geographies.

The most recent sub-provincial income information for families and individuals for metropolitan areas can also be explored in an interactive format by visiting the "[Income of men and women, sub-provincial regions, T1 Family File: Interactive tool](#)" and the "[Sources of family income by family type, sub-provincial regions, T1 Family File: Interactive tool](#)."

The [Income, pensions, spending and wealth statistics](#) portal, which is accessible from the Subjects module of the Statistics Canada website, provides users with a single point of access to a wide variety of information related to revenue, pensions, spending and wealth.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca).