

Alimony and child support

Diane Galarneau

With the growing number of single-parent families and the many criticisms of the present system for determining alimony and child support payments, such disbursements are becoming a subject of increasing concern. According to a Department of Justice study ([DOJ](#), 1990), women and children generally feel the financial effects of a divorce or separation much more harshly than do men. The results of the 1986 Census show that 82% of single-parent families were headed by women, more than half with low incomes. The children of these families made up 3% of all Canadians, but represented more than one-quarter of all persons in low-income families ([Statistics Canada](#), 1991).

There are no data sources currently available that contain complete information on all those who receive or make alimony ([1](#)) payments. However, tax data can be used to identify individuals who receive or make such payments, as long as they report them.

According to Revenue Canada's tax data, support payments averaged about \$4,600 in 1988, or nearly \$400 per month. While they comprised only 0.3% of the combined income of all taxfilers, such payments nevertheless represented 15% of family income for those receiving alimony and 9% of family income for those making payments.

Role of support payments

Canada's first *Divorce Act* was adopted in 1968. At that time, alimony payments by former spouses were based on the principle of fault. Husbands responsible for breaking up their marriages found themselves obligated to make payments to what were then generally called "innocent" wives ([MacDonald](#), 1989), so that they could look after the children and maintain the same standard of living as before the divorce. Thus, "innocent" wives were not responsible for supporting themselves. "Guilty" wives were treated in a totally different manner: they were left to fend for themselves.

As a result of much criticism, the *Divorce Act* was amended in 1985. These amendments were implemented in order to: "(1) make the divorce process less adversarial while increasing the chances for

reconciliation of the spouses; (2) provide a more humane and fairer resolution of the consequences of divorce; and (3) recognize provincial responsibilities and provide for a process of divorce which would operate with as few complications or duplications as possible." ([MacDonald](#), 1989) Subsection 15(7) of the Act sets out four objectives for spousal support orders which should:

- (a) recognize any economic advantages or disadvantages to the spouses arising from the marriage or its breakdown;
- (b) apportion between the spouses any financial consequences arising from the care of any child of the marriage over and above the obligation apportioned between the spouses ... ;
- (c) relieve any economic hardship of the spouses arising from the breakdown of the marriage; and
- (d) in so far as practicable, promote the economic self-sufficiency of each spouse within a reasonable period of time."

The Act establishes a distinction between orders for support payments for spouses and those for children. The objectives of child support awards, set out in subsection 15(8) of the Act, aim to: "(a) recognize that the spouses have a joint financial obligation to maintain the child; and (b) apportion that obligation between the spouses according to their relative abilities to contribute to the performance of the obligation." ([Rogerson](#), 1990)

Other provisions to be taken into account by the judge in making orders for support payments are found in subsection 15(5) of the Act, which provides that the court is to take into consideration the condition, means, needs and general circumstances of the parties, including: "(a) the length of time the spouses cohabited; (b) the functions performed by the spouse during cohabitation; and © any order, agreement or arrangement relating to support of the spouse or child." ([Rogerson](#), 1990)

Repercussions

The introduction of the fourth objective of orders for spousal support, aimed at limiting financial ties between the former spouses as far as possible, has had a number of repercussions. It is generally recognized that the number of support orders for limited terms has risen, along with the number of cases in which no order was granted ([MacDonald](#), 1989).

According to two reports, one a consultation with family law lawyers on the 1985 *Divorce Act* ([MacDonald](#), 1989) and, a second, a study of the case law ([Rogerson](#), 1990), two groups appear to have been especially affected by this objective of economic self-sufficiency: middle-aged women who have not been in the workforce during their years of marriage and women in their thirties and forties with post-divorce custody of their children. Granting this last group fixed-term support orders often gives them too

little time to acquire the knowledge needed to get a job and become self-supporting.

What is alimony?

In this article, the definition of "alimony" corresponds to that of Revenue Canada: an amount paid pursuant to a decree, order or judgement of a competent tribunal or pursuant to a written agreement, for the maintenance of the spouse (whether legal or common-law), former spouse (whether legal or common-law), or any children of the marriage; the spouses are living apart when the payment is made and throughout the remainder of the year and were separated pursuant to a divorce, judicial separation or written separation agreement; and it is payable in the form of periodic payments ([Revenue Canada](#), 1990).

The family tax data file (T1FF) does not distinguish between support payments made on behalf of the former spouse and those made on behalf of the children (see [Description of the data](#)). They are therefore considered as a unit in this article. Since the current trend in divorce cases favours the financial self-sufficiency of the former spouses, it is possible that support payments will be paid more and more often on behalf of the children. At least, that is what Quebec's Justice ministry concluded on the basis of the results of a survey on support payments from 1981 to 1986 ([Pelletier](#), 1987).

It is also not known for how many children each payment is made. That can be important in the case of a blended family, which might have children from a previous marriage and others from the current marriage. Even if payments are made solely on behalf of the children from the previous marriage, the family tax data file will only reveal the total number of children in the new family and the amount paid.

In the case of joint custody, certain expenses related to the children are apportioned between the former spouses, who take turns maintaining them. Since such expenses are in the form of clothing, food or leisure, they are not included in this article.

A support order made during a separation or divorce does not, in itself, guarantee that payments will be made. The tax data disclose only the amounts reported to Revenue Canada, and not those that should be paid. In Ontario, for example, it has recently been estimated that there are 90,000 unpaid support orders, representing \$470 million in delinquent payments ([Canadian HR Reporter](#), 1991).

Recipients and payers

Although some men receive alimony, it is not common. In 1988, they represented barely 2% of those receiving such payments. For the purposes of this analysis they have been excluded since their inclusion could distort the data. ⁽²⁾ Thus, the term "recipients," means only those women who have indicated on their tax returns that they received support payments, whether those payments were made on their own behalf or on behalf of their child(ren). Similarly, "payers" includes only men.

In 1988, 289,000 men reported that they had paid \$1.3 billion in alimony payments in Canada, an average

amount of \$4,500 and a median amount of \$3,000. In the same year, 239,000 women reported that they had received \$1.1 billion in the form of support payments, for an average of \$4,600 and a median of \$3,000. [\(5\)](#)

The differences between the number of payers and the amount paid and the number of recipients and the amount received are due to a number of factors. Although Revenue Canada requires that what is reported on the one side should normally be reported on the other, such is not always the case. For example, it is possible that some recipients do not report the payments they have received because their income is too low to justify a tax return; because their income otherwise consists solely of welfare payments, mothers' allowance or other non-taxable - and consequently, unreported - benefits; because they are living abroad; or, for some other reason. (For more information on the data limits see [Description of the data.](#))

Characteristics of recipients

Family type

To measure the importance of alimony to recipients' incomes, it is preferable to take their family situations into account. A recipient at the head of a single-parent family whose total personal income is \$25,000 is not in the same financial situation as another recipient with the same personal income but who is a member of a husband-wife family (as shown later on, the average and median family income is much higher in the second case). For the purposes of this article, three types of families have been identified: single-parent, husband-wife and non-family persons. Comparisons will be made on the basis of family income [\(6\)](#) while taking into account the number of persons who depend on that income.



Chart A **In 1988, the majority of alimony recipients were from single-parent families.**

Source: Small Area and Administrative Data Division

According to the family file based on tax records, there were 10.9 million families in Canada in 1988 (including non-family persons). Fewer than 9% were single-parent families, 54% were husband-wife families, and 38% were non-family persons. Only 2.2% of these families included one or more recipients, and most of them (1.5%) were in single-parent families.

Age

The average age of the recipients is 38 years. More than three-quarters of them are 25 to 44 years of age.

Non-family persons who receive support payments differ from the rest, as 84% of them are 45 and older.

Recipients tend to be younger than non-recipients. Non-recipients make up about 98% of the total number of women, so it is not surprising that their age distribution is more dispersed. Thus, although a large proportion of non-recipients (45%) are aged 25 to 44, there are more of them under 25 (12%) or 65 and over (16%).

Number of children

The number of children is an important factor when economic circumstances of families are compared. Only children under the age of 18 have been considered in this analysis because most children older than that have left school, and it can therefore be assumed that they pay for most of their own needs.

Setting aside non-family persons, a greater proportion of recipient families have children under 18, and they also have more children than non-recipient families. For example, 7% of single-parent families that are recipients have no children under 18, as opposed to 19% of non-recipient single-parent families. However, 39% and 13% of recipient single-parent families have two and three or more children under 18, respectively, as opposed to 23% and 11% of non-recipient families of the same type.

Of all the family types, recipient husband-wife families are the most likely to have three or more children under 18 (22%). This is probably due to blended families.

Recipients are on average younger than non-recipients, which explains in part why there are more younger children (disregarding, of course, non-family persons, who are older and have not reported any dependent children).

Income

Are the relative financial circumstances of recipient families improved because they receive support payments?

The per capita incomes of recipient and non-recipient families were compared by family type. Per capita income is based on family income and makes it possible to consider all the persons who depend on the same family income.



Chart B In 1988, alimony accounted for 15% of the family income of all recipients.

Source: *Small Area and Administrative Data Division*

It should be noted at the outset that variables other than the existence or non-existence of support payments may explain certain income differentials between recipients and non-recipients. As shown later, women from recipient families have greater ties to the labour market than non-recipients (disregarding non-family persons, see [Chart C](#)). ⁽⁷⁾ This probably explains certain income differentials. It is also possible that recipients are generally better educated, which may have an impact on their income. Such distorting factors cannot be detected in the tax file because it does not include personal characteristics.



Chart C In 1988, recipients were more strongly tied to the labour market*.

Source: *Small Area and Administrative Data Division*

* *Men are excluded from all categories in this chart.*



Table 1 Distribution of families by type and by number of children under 18, 1988.*

Source: *Small Area and Administrative Data Division*

* *For the purposes of this table, children 18 and over are not considered children.*

Receiving alimony payments appears to be extremely important for single-parent families with children under the age of 18. The per capita income of recipient families of this type was 45% to 56% higher than that of non-recipient families depending on the number of children in these families. It should be noted that non-recipient single-parent families receive the lowest per capita income of all families. Their most important source of income, after employment (69%), was social assistance (17%) followed by other income (14%). ⁽⁸⁾

However, the income of single-parent recipient families without children under 18 is similar to that of their non-recipient counterparts, who receive greater income from other sources. In fact, 20% of the income of non-recipients comes from investments, pensions and rental property. This is probably not surprising because these non-recipients are older and they may have had a chance to accumulate assets, giving them greater income security.

For husband-wife families, the income differential is less obvious. For each recipient family group (with or without children under 18), the per capita income is much higher ([Table 2](#)). However, the difference is lessened as the number of children increases. It is interesting to note that at the global level the opposite happens. In other words, the per capita income of all recipient families is lower than that of non-recipient families. This is explained by the fact that non-recipient husband-wife families are more concentrated in the group with the highest per capita income (\$20,500), those without any children under the age of 18. On the other hand, recipient husband-wife families are much more concentrated in the group with two children, the group that has one of the lowest per capita incomes (\$13,300).



Table 2 Per capita income by type of family and number of children under 18,1988.*

Source: *Small Area and Administrative Data Division*

* *Per capita income represents family income divided by the number of family members. Only children under the age of 18 are considered children.*

Even if alimony makes up a large proportion of the income of non-family persons, their income is comparable to that of non-family persons who do not receive such payments. However, the make-up of their income is different: non-recipients earn more income from employment and from other sources such as investments and rental property. This is partly explained by the difference in the age distribution of these two groups. For example, the non-recipient group includes more women under 35 (36% versus 5% for recipient families) which would explain in part why they earn more employment income. Although their ties to the labour market appear to be identical to that of the recipient group ([Chart C](#)), this may be because non-recipients work more hours.

A higher proportion of non-family persons who do not receive support payments are 65 and over (34% versus 17%), which may explain why they received a larger share of their income in the form of other income, such as pension benefits ([Chart B](#)). Most recipient non-family women are between 45 and 64 years of age. Many of them may have been unable to participate in the labour market because family obligations and traditional expectations kept them at home, with the result that lifelong support payments were probably essential.

To provide a more complete picture, such comparisons should take into account family expenses. For example, persons living alone must bear certain fixed expenses, such as rent, alone. Thus, they do not benefit from certain economies of scale enjoyed by the members of families with several persons.

Importance of support payments

"...both parents have an equal responsibility toward their children and should contribute in accordance with their own means to the needs of the children." ([DOJ](#), 1991)

As shown earlier, a relatively small proportion of families reported that they had received alimony. When they had, however, these payments represented a large share of their income. The following analysis focuses specifically on the family income (average and median) of recipients. [\(9\)](#)

Support payments, at 30% of their median income or 38% of their average income, represent the largest share of the income of non-family persons. These persons also have the highest median and average payments, at \$4,800 and \$7,400, respectively ([Table 3](#)). It should be remembered that these women are generally older than other recipients and that a much higher proportion have no labour market ties. This observation could, in fact, be made for all non-family women, whether or not they are recipients.



Table 3 **Family income and alimony, by type of family and number of children under 18, 1988.***

Source: Small Area and Administrative Data Division

* Only children under the age of 18 are considered children.

Single-parent families come in second place in terms of amounts of alimony received and shares of income these amounts represent. Single-parent families without children under 18 receive the highest average and median payments of families of this type. The payments then generally rise with the number of children but never attain the amount received by families without children under 18. Although not verifiable, this situation may be an indication that support payments made to children 18 and over are higher.

It is also interesting to note that if the importance of the payments rises with the number of children it is not just because the amount rises, but also because income declines.

As might be expected, recipient husband-wife families are much less dependent on support payments. For them, alimony comprises between 5% and 7% of their income. This could be attributable, in part, to the fact that few remarried women receive support payments for themselves, whereas it is more frequent for unattached women. Once again, the average payment rises with the number of children under 18 but is highest when there are no children under 18. This is not true of the median payment, however: it is higher for families with two or more children than for families without children under 18.



Chart D **The majority of payers in 1988 were non-family persons or members of husband-wife families.**

Source: Small Area and Administrative Data Division

The difference between the amounts received by single-parent and husband-wife families might be explained by the single-parent family's greater need for money. It may also be due to the phenomenon of blended families, which are only found among husband-wife families. Even if a family has several children under 18, it is possible that support payments are made only on behalf of a single child from a previous marriage. That could explain in part the difference between the amounts reported by these two types of families when they have more than one child under 18.

The payers

With respect to payers, women are excluded, just as men were excluded from recipients.

Unlike recipients, who come mostly from single-parent families, payers are mainly unattached individuals (49%) or spouses in husband-wife families (43%). Payers are generally a little older than recipients: 41 years old on average, compared with 38 for recipients.

It is generally accepted that while alimony makes up a significant proportion of the income of recipients, this is much less so for payers. To what extent is this true?

The median and average values of support payments represent 7% and 9%, respectively, of the median and average incomes of payers as a whole ([Table 4](#)). The equivalent values for recipients are 12% and 15%, respectively. Thus, the difference does not appear to be great. Nevertheless, a more detailed examination discloses greater differences.



Table 4 **Family income and alimony, comparison of recipients and payers, 1988.**

Source: Small Area and Administrative Data Division

It is impossible to match payers with the persons to whom they make support payments (see [Description of the data](#)). However, the circumstances of payers and recipients can be compared by family type. The

biggest differential in the importance of the payments in the median and average incomes of payers and recipients appears in the case of non-family persons: the payments represent 9% and 12%, respectively, of payers' median and average incomes, as opposed to 30% and 38% for recipients.

Since payers are most often non-family persons or members of husband-wife families (93%) and since the majority of recipients (67%) are found in single-parent families, it would be interesting to compare the importance of alimony in the incomes of these payers and these recipients. In this case, the payments represent 9% of the average income of payer families, as opposed to 19% of the average income of recipient families. Thus, the data appear to confirm that alimony represents a relatively higher proportion of the income of recipients. [\(10\)](#)

To what extent can the income of payers be compared with that of recipients? For this comparison, per capita income, which is based on family income, is used. The per capita income of recipient families represents 41% of the payers' per capita income. It appears that, since all of our recipients are women and all our payers are men, part of this gap is attributable to an already existing income differential between men and women. However, the difference in income between recipients and payers is greater than for the population as a whole, since the income of all women, on average, is 60% that of men.

Therefore, not only do alimony payments represent a larger proportion of the income of recipients than of payers, but recipients must also make do with a distinctly lower income than their counterparts, the payers.

Summary

According to 1988 tax data, a majority of women who receive alimony come from single-parent families. Their average age is 38. Most have children under 18 and they have more children that age than women who do not receive alimony. Payers are a little older than recipients (41 years, on average), and most of them are non-family persons or members of husband-wife families.

Members of single-parent families with children under 18 have the lowest per capita income. Receiving alimony is of considerable importance for this type of family: the per capita income of those who received such payments was 45% to 56% higher, depending on the number of children in these families, than that of families of the same type that did not receive them.

A comparison of the financial circumstances of payers and recipients confirms what was anticipated. First, alimony payments generally represent a smaller share of the income of payers than of recipients. The majority of recipients are from single-parent families and these support payments represent 19% of their average income. In comparison, the majority of payers are non-family persons or from husband-wife families and alimony payments represent only 9% of their average income.

Second, the income of payers is much higher than that of recipients: roughly double overall. Although

this difference also reflects the income differential between men and women, the differential observed between payers and recipients is higher than in the general population.

In June 1990, justice ministers of federal, provincial and territorial governments announced the creation of the Child Support Guidelines Project to define the rules for determining child support payments. These changes in the rules and regulations will be directed at overcoming the weaknesses of the present system.

Current legislation

When a support order is made after a divorce, it is the federal *Divorce Act* that applies. With respect to a legal or de facto separation, the provinces and territories have jurisdiction. The rules for determining support payments are quite vague. As a result, they are decided on more or less arbitrarily by the judge hearing the case. Furthermore, a certain difference can be observed in the amounts of payments (received or made) by province; they appear to be more generous in Quebec, followed by Ontario.

There is currently a joint federal-provincial-territorial project to draw up rules for determining child support payments, which should favour a standardization of the amounts granted throughout the country in addition to overcoming several weaknesses of the present system ([DOJ](#), 1991).

At the provincial level, some efforts are being made to make sure that support payments are indeed paid. For example, certain provinces have automatic enforcement systems for alimony payments, which do not impose any expenses on the plaintiffs. Ontario's Bill 17 ([Government of Ontario](#), 1991), which came into effect on March 1, 1992, implements stricter measures than the other provinces in this area. Employers are obligated to withhold the amounts of alimony payments from the wages of employees who are delinquent in their payments. These deductions are obligatory, like those required for Unemployment Insurance or the Canada Pension Plan. These considerations, however, exceed the limits of this article.

Average alimony payment made and received by province and territory, 1988.

	Alimony paid		Alimony received
		\$	\$
Canada	4,500		4,600

Newfoundland	3,400	3,400
Prince Edward Island	3,600	3,700
Nova Scotia	3,300	3,400
New Brunswick	3,400	3,800
Quebec	4,900	5,100
Ontario	4,800	4,800
Manitoba	3,900	3,900
Saskatchewan	3,700	3,800
Alberta	3,800	3,900
British Columbia	4,100	4,200
Northwest Territories	4,800	4,000
Yukon	3,600	3,100

Source: Small Area and Administrative Data Division

Description of the data

The Small Area and Administrative Data Division has developed a file on families (TIFF) based on personal income tax data. Although the file has been in existence since 1982, information on support payments has only been available since 1986. This article presents the most recent results when this report was written, namely those for 1988. [\(3\)](#)

The file can be used to compare the economic circumstances of certain types of families. The concept of "family" used in the TIFF is an approximation of the "nuclear family." It is an "approximation" because the make-up of the families is based on information contained in tax returns. If an income tax return does not suggest that there is a spouse or a dependent child, the person who filed it will be considered a non-family person, although he or she could actually be in an entirely different situation.

For the purposes of this article, three types of families - single-parent, husband-wife and non-family persons were selected. Non-family persons do not necessarily live alone, (in fact, in 1986 only 67% of them were living alone), while all unattached individuals are non-family persons. According to the census definition, which is similar to that used in TIFF, a non-family person may or may not be related to the

household's "reference persons." Therefore he or she could be a brother-in-law, a grandmother, a roomer, an employee, and so on.

The availability of child tax credits and federal sales tax credits encourages people with low incomes to complete tax returns in order to receive those credits. A rise in the number of taxfilers in the low income brackets has been observed since those credits came into force. The income of those recipients is often below the average and their representation has tended to increase.

In this article, when faced with a question of income, the reference is to family income before deductions and, therefore, before tax. Alimony payments are part of the taxable income of recipients, which means that they actually receive a smaller amount, considering their taxes, than the gross amount that appears in the tables shown here. Alimony payments, however, are included in the payers' total income. While these amounts reduce the payers' disposable income, they can be deducted from the payers' taxable income, so that the amounts actually paid are smaller than the gross amounts shown in the tables.

There are also rules regarding the types of payments that are eligible for tax deductions. For example, a lump-sum payment [\(4\)](#) is not eligible; payments must be regular and recurring. Thus, informal, out-of-court agreements are not included in the tax data because they are not deductible.

The file does not permit matching payers with the recipients to whom payments are made. As a result, it is impossible to compare the income of payers and recipients on a one-to-one basis; only global comparisons are possible.

Thus, the data used here are not exhaustive. But they are the only data in existence on the subject, and they make it possible to provide some insights into the circumstances of a portion of the recipients and a portion of the payers.

Notes

Note 1

In this article, the term "alimony" refers to both spousal and child support.

Note 2

Men who head single-parent families generally have higher incomes than women in that family type, a situation that could inflate the data on the income of such families as a whole.

Note 3

For more recent data or for more information on the concept of families used here, contact the Small Area and Administrative Data Division at Statistics Canada, R.H. Coats Building, 14th Floor, Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0T6; telephone (613) 951-9720.

Note 4

Such lump-sum payments might represent net proceeds from selling the family home, half of the actuarial value of benefits from an employer's pension plan accrued during the marriage, and the apportionment of accrued pension credits in the C/QPP.

Note 5

It is usually advisable to rely on both average and median values when using tax data. This is because extreme (positive or negative) values have greater weight on an average than other values. Consequently, the average can be skewed. (The median is the middle value of a distribution - in this case, all support payments - ordered from smallest to largest.)

Note 6

In this article, income is that reported to Revenue Canada before deductions and before tax.

Note 7

Individuals are considered to have labour market ties if they received income from employment or from Unemployment Insurance during the 1988 taxation year.

Note 8

Social assistance includes non-taxable payments such as welfare and Mothers' Allowance. Other income includes investment, pension and rental income, and Family Allowance. Non-recipient single-parent families include approximately 2% of women 65 and over, eligible for pension income, along with 25% of widows, who cannot receive support payments.

Note 9

The use of tax data generally warrants using average and median values.

Note 10

These comparisons do not take into account the effects of taxes. On the payer's side, two effects are present: the payment is included in the payer's total income which is artificially inflated because the amount paid in alimony is not one that can be enjoyed by the payer. On the other hand, the amount paid can be deducted from his taxable income. For the recipient, the payment after taxes will be lower since the alimony received is part of taxable income, for those who pay taxes. Furthermore, for those eligible for social assistance, any alimony received often reduces the amounts paid by the social assistance program. This indirectly decreases the value of the alimony received.

Acknowledgements

The author wishes to thank Louise Dulude, a lawyer and specialist in women's issues, and Linda Standish, a senior research analyst in the Small Area and Administrative Data Division at Statistics Canada, for their valuable comments and suggestions in reviewing this paper.

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Author

Diane Galarneau is with the Labour and Household Surveys Analysis Division of Statistics Canada.

Source

Perspectives on Labour and Income, Summer 1992, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Statistics Canada, Catalogue 75-001E). This is the first of five articles in the issue.

 HIGHLIGHTS

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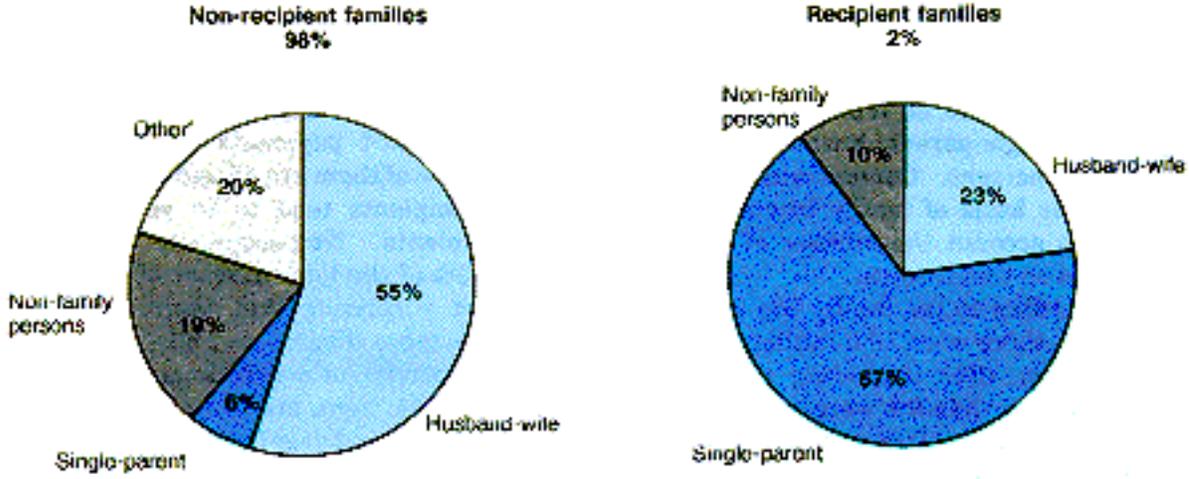
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Chart A

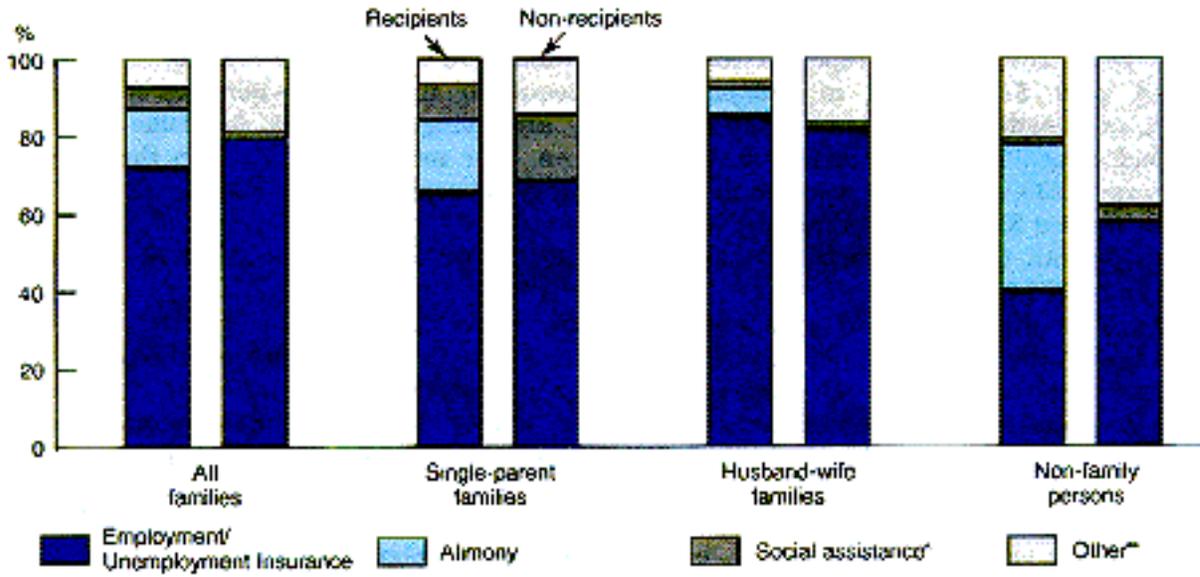
In 1988, the majority of alimony recipients were from single-parent families.



Source: Small Area and Administrative Data Division
* Includes male recipients who represented 2% of all recipients.

Chart B

In 1988, alimony accounted for 15% of the family income of all recipients.



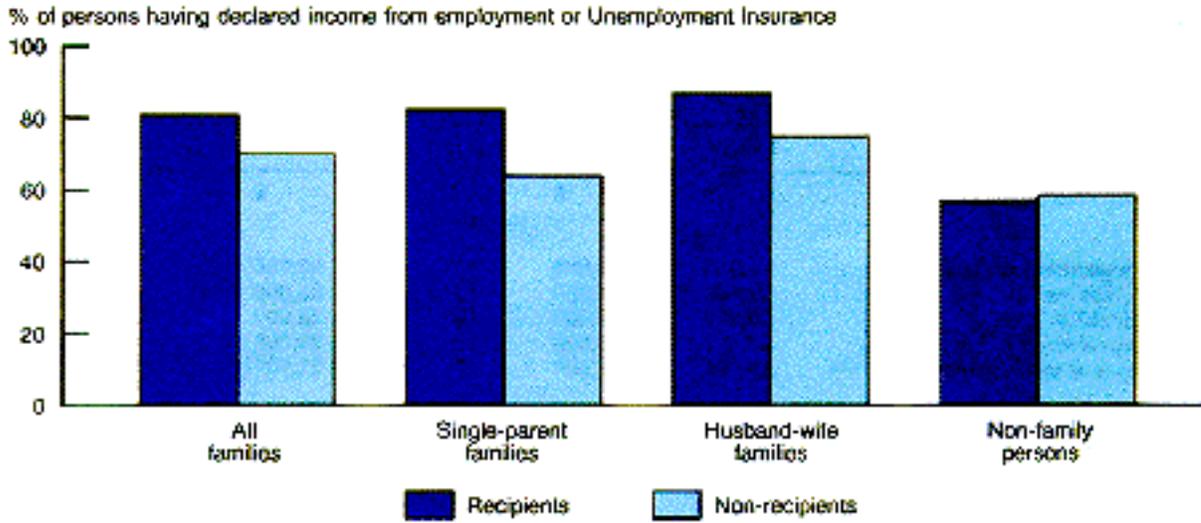
Source: Small Area and Administrative Data Division

* Includes non-taxable benefits such as welfare and Mothers' Allowance.

** Includes pension, investment and rental income, and Family Allowance.

Chart C

In 1988, recipients were more strongly tied to the labour market.*



Source: Small Area and Administrative Data Division

* Men are excluded from all categories in this chart.

Table 1

Distribution of families by type and by number of children under 18, 1988*

	Children under 18					
	Families	Total	None	One	Two	Three or more
	'000	%				
Single-parent						
Recipients	161	100	7	41	39	13
Non-recipients	605	100	19	47	23	11
Husband-wife						
Recipients	55	100	9	32	37	22
Non-recipients	5,821	100	52**	18	21	10
Non-family persons						
Recipients	23	100	100	...	...	...
Non-recipients	2,069	100	100	...	...	...

Source: Small Area and Administrative Data Division

** For the purposes of this table, children 18 and over are not considered children.*

*** This proportion is high because some 15% of husband-wife families with children aged 18 and over are included*

Table 2

Per capita income by type of family and number of children under 18,1988*

		Children under 18				
		Total	None	One	Two	Three or more
All families						
Recipients	\$	10,500	18,900	12,500	9,300	6,900
Non-recipients	\$	15,000	19,600	14,100	11,800	8,300
Recipient/non-recipient ratio	%	0.70	0.96	0.89	0.79	0.83
Single-parent						
Recipients	\$	8,400	15,600	10,500	7,500	5,000
Non-recipients	\$	7,200	15,300	7,200	5,100	3,200
Recipient/non-recipient ratio	%	1.17	1.02	1.45	1.48	1.56
Husband-wife						
Recipients	\$	13,900	24,300	17,700	13,300	9,600
Non-recipients	\$	15,400	20,500	15,200	12,400	8,900
Recipient/non-recipient ratio	%	0.91	1.19	1.16	1.07	1.09
Non-family persons						
Recipients	\$	19,700	...	...	...	...
Non-recipients	\$	17,500	...	...	...	...
Recipient/non-recipient ratio	%	1.13	...	...	...	...

Source: Small Area and Administration Data Division

** Per capita income represents family income divided by the number of family members. Only children under the age of 18 are considered children.*

Table 3

Family income and alimony, by type of family and number of children under 18, 1988*

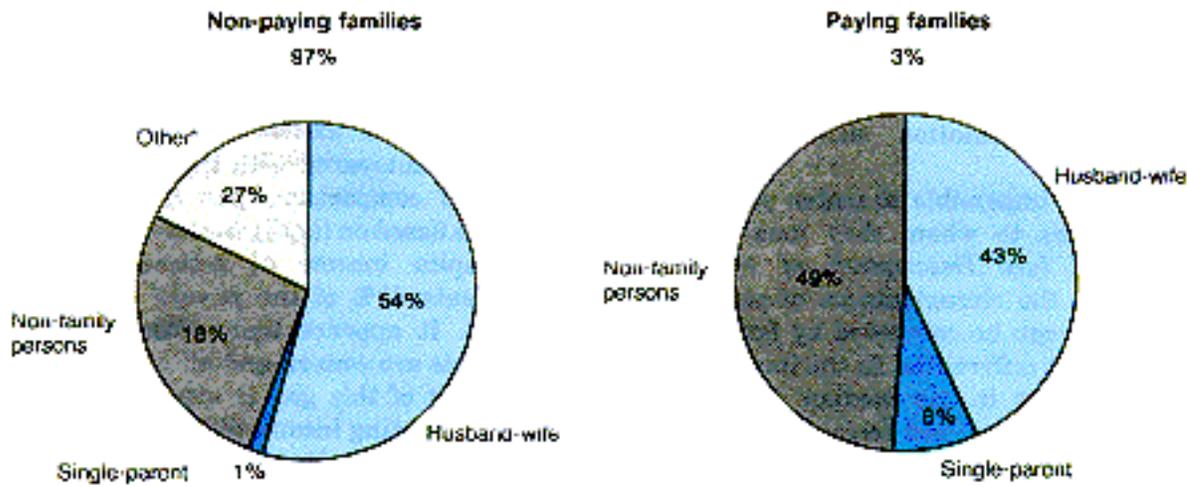
	Median			Average		
	Income	Alimony		Income	Alimony	
	\$	\$	% of income	\$	\$	% of income
Single-parent families	20,900	3,000	14	23,700	4,500	19
No children	32,900	4,200	13	36,000	7,000	19
One child	20,800	2,400	12	23,000	3,600	16
Two children	20,500	3,600	18	23,000	4,800	21
Three or more children	18,000	3,600	20	21,700	5,200	24
Husband-wife families	50,000	2,600	5	55,500	3,500	6
No children	53,000	2,500	5	61,000	4,300	7
One child	51,300	2,400	5	56,700	2,900	5
Two children	49,700	2,800	6	54,600	3,700	7
Three or more children	47,800	3,000	6	53,000	3,900	7
Non-family persons	16,000	4,800	30	19,700	7,400	38

Source: Small Area and Administrative Data Division

** Only children under the age of 18 are considered children.*

Chart D

The majority of payers in 1988 were non-family persons or members of husband-wife families.



Source: Small Area and Administrative Data Division

*Includes female payers, who accounted for 2.2% of all payers.

Table 4

Family income and alimony, comparison of recipients and payers, 1988

	Median			Average			Per capita income \$
	Income	Alimony		Income	Alimony		
	\$	\$	% of income	\$	\$	% of income	
Paying families	40,900	3,000	7	50,400	4,500	9	25,800
Single-parent	40,600	2,700	7	48,700	4,400	9	21,100
Husband-wife	54,900	2,800	5	65,200	4,400	7	22,000
Non-family persons	31,800	3,000	9	37,700	4,600	12	37,700
Recipient families	24,600	3,000	12	30,600	4,600	15	10,500
Single-parent	20,900	3,000	14	23,700	4,500	19	8,400
Husband-wife	50,000	2,600	5	55,500	3,500	6	13,900
Non-family persons	16,000	4,800	30	19,700	7,400	38	19,700

Source: Small Area and Administrative Data Division