



POVERTY IN CANADA: News from the 2006 Census

Statistics Canada released data from the 2006 Census on earnings and income today, May 1, 2008.

Poverty hits young Canadians hardest

- 11.4% of the total population, an estimated 3,484,625 people, lived in low-income households in 2005 using after-tax income.
- 879,955 young people 17 years old and younger lived in low-income families in 2005.
- 14.5% of all children five years old and younger were from low-income families. The rate dropped to 13.0% for children between the ages of six and 14, and to 11.4% for teens between 15 and 17 years.

A stagnating middle class and increasing hardship for lower income Canadians

- Between 1980 and 2005, median earnings among the top 20% of full-time full-year earners increased by 16.4%.
- Median earnings among those in the bottom 20% of the distribution fell 20.6%.
- Median earnings among those in the middle 20% stagnated, increasing by only 0.1%.
- Rapid growth at the top of the earnings distribution has led to an increase in the proportion of high earners over the past quarter century. In 1980, 3.4% of full-time full-year earners received \$100,000 or more; by 2005, this proportion had almost doubled to 6.5%. More than half a million individuals earned \$100,000 or more in 2005.

Recent immigrants are losing ground

- In 1980, recent immigrant men who had some employment income earned 85 cents for each dollar earned by Canadian-born men. By 2005, the ratio had dropped to 63 cents.
- The corresponding numbers for recent immigrant women were 85 cents and 56 cents, respectively.

Lone-parent families continue to struggle

- In 2006, there were 1,037,425 lone-parent families headed by women.
- 248,900 lone-parent families were headed by men, more than double the number in 1981.
- The median income for lone-parent families headed by women in 2005 amounted to \$36,765. While this remains the lowest of all the major economic family types, it was 26.4% higher than in 1980.
- The median income for lone-parent families headed by men declined by 4.1% during this 25-year period, to \$51,974.