



Statistics
Canada

Statistique
Canada

1986 CENSUS

PUBLIC USE MICRODATA FILE

ON FAMILIES

Documentation and User's Guide

May 1990

***La version française est disponible sur demande
(Fichier de microdonnées à grande diffusion sur les
familles).***

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Introduction

The Public Use Microdata File on Families is derived from the 1986 Census of Population and Housing. It contains a wide range of statistical data on the population of Canada, the provinces and most metropolitan areas.

These data are based on a sample of 67,000 families and 36,000 non-family persons representing approximately 1% of all families and non-family persons in Canada.

This file is unique among census products since it allows the users to return to the base unit of the census, enabling them to group data to suit their own requirements. As a result, it is a powerful analytical and research tool.

As it is imperative for Statistics Canada to preserve the confidentiality of the data, some of the information collected during the census are not available in this file.

This document informs users of the content of the file and how to use the computer tape. The reader will also find information on the characteristics of the sample, along with notes on the reliability of the estimates derived from the data.

Two other microdata files from the 1986 Census are also available, one on households and housing, and the other on individuals. Similar files may be obtained for the 1971, 1976 and 1981 Censuses. Chapter 3 provides additional information on these and other products and how to order them.

Chapter 1 - Content

This chapter lists and describes the approximately 102 variables contained in the Public Use Microdata File on Families. The record layout of the file is contained in Appendix A.

Overview of the Contents

The index lists each variable by order of appearance in the file (page 9) and by alphabetical order (page 15).

Description of Variables

The reader will also find in this chapter detailed information on each variable. In particular, a description of:

- the concept
- the universe (the group covered as well as all exclusions)
- the categories of a variable.

Confidentiality of Data

It is imperative that Statistics Canada preserve the confidentiality of the information collected. Considering the nature of the microdata file, special measures must be taken to meet this objective:

- (i) **Reduced Level of Detail:** Data for small geographic areas are not given. It is also not possible to provide as detailed information on family characteristics as in other census products. Some data have been aggregated, providing the maximum detail without disclosure, while maintaining the analytical value of the data. For example, the variable "Occupation" would not indicate "Physician", but rather the more general classification "Medical and Health Occupations". This category would include other medical occupations, such as "Nurse".
- (ii) **Data Suppression:** To further protect the confidentiality of responses, categories which contain few persons must occasionally be suppressed. In these cases, the label "Not Available" is included in the description of the variable. In addition to suppression, other special techniques are applied. Income data are rounded to respect pre-established high and low revenue limits. Further information on income data is provided in Chapter 2.

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