In 2021, Canada’s families came in many shapes and sizes.

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| table 1 Table summary This table displays the results of table 1. The information is grouped by Census family structure (appearing as row headers), Number and Distribution (in percent) (appearing as column headers). | | |
| **Census family structure** | **Number** | **Distribution (in percent)** |
| **Census families** | 10,262,920 | 100.0 |
| **One-parent families** | 1,686,340 | 16.4 |
| **Couple families (married or common-law)** | 8,576,580 | 83.6 |
| **Couple families (married or common-law) – Without children** | 4,286,165 | 41.8 |
| **Couple families (married or common-law) – With children** | 4,290,415 | 41.8 |
| **Couple families (married or common-law) – With children – Two-parent non-stepfamilies** | 3,786,935 | 36.9 |
| **Couple families (married or common-law) – With children – Two-parent stepfamilies** | 503,475 | 4.9 |

In Budget 2021, the federal government laid out a plan to provide Canadian parents with, on average, $10-a-day regulated child care spaces for children aged 0 to 5 years within the next five years.[Note 1](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2022039-eng.htm#n1)

According to the 2021 Census, 1,643,320 families had at least one child aged 0 to 5 years, representing 16% of all families in Canada.

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| table 2 Table summary This table displays the results of table 2. The information is grouped by Geography (appearing as row headers), Proportion of census families that have children aged 0 to 5 years, 2021 (appearing as column headers). | |
| **Geography** | **Proportion of census families that have children aged 0 to 5 years, 2021** |
| **Canada** | 16.00% |
| **Newfoundland and Labrador** | 11.7%[table 2 Note ¥](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2022039-eng.htm#tbl02n_¥) |
| **Prince Edward Island** | 13.9%[table 2 Note ¥](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2022039-eng.htm#tbl02n_¥) |
| **Nova Scotia** | 13.3%[table 2 Note ¥](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2022039-eng.htm#tbl02n_¥) |
| **New Brunswick** | 13.0%[table 2 Note ¥](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2022039-eng.htm#tbl02n_¥) |
| **Quebec** | 16.3%[table 2 Note ǂ](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2022039-eng.htm#tbl02n_ǂ) |
| **Ontario** | 15.6%[table 2 Note ¥](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2022039-eng.htm#tbl02n_¥) |
| **Manitoba** | 18.7%[table 2 Note ǂ](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2022039-eng.htm#tbl02n_ǂ) |
| **Saskatchewan** | 19.1%[table 2 Note ǂ](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2022039-eng.htm#tbl02n_ǂ) |
| **Alberta** | 18.9%[table 2 Note ǂ](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2022039-eng.htm#tbl02n_ǂ) |
| **British Columbia** | 14.3%[table 2 Note ¥](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2022039-eng.htm#tbl02n_¥) |
| **Yukon** | 18.4%[table 2 Note ǂ](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2022039-eng.htm#tbl02n_ǂ) |
| **Northwest Territories** | 22.4%[table 2 Note ǂ](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2022039-eng.htm#tbl02n_ǂ) |
| **Nunavut** | 38.4%[table 2 Note ǂ](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2022039-eng.htm#tbl02n_ǂ) |
| Note ¥  Lower than the national average  [Return to note ¥ referrer](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2022039-eng.htm#tbl02n_¥-refa)  Note ǂ  Higher than the national average  [Return to note ǂ referrer](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2022039-eng.htm#tbl02n_ǂ-refa) | |

In Nunavut, one-parent families represented one in three families, compared with one in seven families in British Columbia.

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| table 3 Table summary This table displays the results of table 3. The information is grouped by Geography (appearing as row headers), Proportion of census families that are one-parent families (appearing as column headers). | |
| **Geography** | **Proportion of census families that are one-parent families** |
| **Canada** | 16.40% |
| **Newfoundland and Labrador** | 15.80% |
| **Prince Edward Island** | 15.50% |
| **Nova Scotia** | 17.40% |
| **New Brunswick** | 16.40% |
| **Quebec** | 16.50% |
| **Ontario** | 17.10% |
| **Manitoba** | 17.00% |
| **Saskatchewan** | 17.10% |
| **Alberta** | 15.20% |
| **British Columbia** | 14.90% |
| **Yukon** | 18.70% |
| **Northwest Territories** | 23.30% |
| **Nunavut** | 33.20% |

Did you know? Over the last century, the average census family size has decreased from 4.2 persons in 1931 to 2.9 persons in 2021.

**Sources:** 2021 Census of Population; Wargon, Sylvia T. 1979. “Canadian Households and Families: Recent Demographic Trends,” Census Analytical Study, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-753E.

**Notes**

Footnote 1.

A similar program has been in place in Quebec since 1997. [For more information](https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2021/12/a-canada-wide-early-learning-and-child-care-plan.html), see: https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2021/12/a-canada-wide-early-learning-and-child-care-plan.html.