

Wealth in Canada: Recent Developments in Micro and Macro Measurement

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Paper Abstract: Household wealth is a key policy concern in Canada, with increased focus on questions such as the adequacy of the pension system and the sustainability of rising consumer debt. A number of measures have been put in place to strengthen national accounts measures and improve their timeliness, to purify the sectoring of households and to supplement core estimates with new indicators and satellite accounts. Most recently, funding has been secured for a triennial household Survey of Financial Security, and plans are in place to integrate these data with estimates from the National Balance Sheet Accounts to produce regular timely distributional estimates in the Canadian national accounts. Macro measures of household assets, liabilities and net worth will be distributed by income quintile, age group, labour market status and household type in the context of broader distributional measures of disparities in income, consumption and saving.

This paper will provide a brief retrospective on wealth measurement in Canada from both a micro and macro perspective, with a focus on recent developments and planned micro-macro linkage activities. It will describe available data sources, proposed methodology and highlight preliminary findings.