

# Colour-coded Retirement

An intersectional analysis  
of retirement income and savings in Canada

Sheila Block, Grace-Edward Galabuzi, Hayden King





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**ABOUT THE AUTHORS**

Sheila Block is a senior economist with the CCPA's Ontario office. Grace-Edward Galabuzi is an associate professor in the Department of Politics and Public Administration at X University in Toronto. Hayden King is Anishinaabe from Beausoleil First Nation. Dr. King is the Executive Director of Yellowhead Institute and Assistant Professor of Sociology at X University.

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# Executive summary

THIS PAPER DRAWS on 2016 census data to provide an intersectional analysis of seniors' income and of retirement savings among the adult population in Canada. It considers whether two core objectives of government policy—retirement security and reduction of seniors' poverty—are being achieved equitably.

*Colour-coded Retirement* documents the income gap between white, racialized and Indigenous seniors and it examines retirement savings for these groups. The data reveal significant differences in both income and savings among these groups.

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## Key findings

**White Canadians enjoy the most retirement security:** Senior white Canadians enjoy the greatest income security and they also have the most diverse sources of income. Their average income is \$42,800—25% higher than Indigenous seniors' average income and 32% higher than racialized Canadians seniors' average income. Public pension sources (the Canada and Quebec Pension Plans, Old Age Security, and the Guaranteed Income Supplement), at 34%, form the foundation of this income, but white seniors' income from private pension sources—Registered Pension Plans and RRSPs—is the highest of all the groups studied (at 33% of total income).

The poverty rate for white seniors is 13.7%, which is lower than all but one of the groups studied.

**Indigenous seniors have less retirement security than white seniors:**

Indigenous seniors' average income is \$32,200. However, there are differences among Indigenous groups. First Nations seniors have an average income of \$29,500, equivalent to the income of racialized seniors. Public pensions account for almost half (47%) of Indigenous seniors' income, with private pension sources providing just 25% of their income. Despite the exclusion of many First Nations communities from this measure, which results in an underestimate, the Indigenous poverty rate, at 21.5%, is still higher than that of white people or racialized seniors overall.

**Racialized Canadians also have less retirement security:**

Racialized seniors' average income is \$29,200. Public pension plans account for 40% of racialized seniors' income, while private plans account for just 21%—less than for Indigenous or white seniors. Racialized seniors have a poverty rate of 19.8%, which is slightly lower than Indigenous seniors' poverty rate and much higher than white seniors' poverty rate.

**The gender income gap is consistent across all groups studied,**

with senior women of all demographic backgrounds having lower income and a higher poverty rate than senior men.

**There is wide variation in racialized seniors' income:**

Racialized seniors' income varies greatly and for different reasons. Overall, Chinese seniors, at \$28,200, have the lowest income and the highest poverty rate, at 25%, among the groups we considered. South Asian seniors, despite also having low average income, at \$29,000, have a lower poverty rate, at 12.9%, than white seniors. Average income for Black seniors, at \$32,400, is significantly lower than white seniors' income but higher than Chinese and South Asian seniors' income.

**Differences among Canadian-born seniors:**

3% of Chinese seniors and 1% of South Asian seniors are Canadian-born. For both groups, the number of Canadian-born seniors is very small; nonetheless, income for Canadian-born Chinese and South Asian seniors is higher, on average, than for Canadian-born white seniors. In the case of Black Canadians, being Canadian-born offers no income advantage: income for the 92% of Black seniors who are immigrants is roughly the same as for the 8% of Black seniors who are born in Canada.

**Savings for retirement:**

The 2016 census data reveal differences among Indigenous, racialized and white households when it comes to saving for retirement. First Nations participation in pension plans is sharply lower

than white participation. Métis and Inuit households are more likely to have members of pension plans than white households, although with lower contributions. Households among all three Indigenous groups are less likely to contribute to RRSPs and when they do, they contribute significantly less than white households. On the whole, racialized Canadian households are less likely to have members in pension plans than white Canadian households and when they do, their contributions are lower. A similar share of racialized households contributes to RRSPs as white Canadian households and they have similar average contributions. However, that average across all racialized groups masks large differences between them. For example, Chinese households have average contributions of just over \$10,000, Black households have average contributions of \$4,600, and white households have average contributions of \$7,600.

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## Policy solutions

Addressing seniors' poverty and retirement income security for Indigenous peoples and racialized Canadians remains a pressing policy challenge. Sustained efforts to address the underlying economic marginalization resulting from colonialism and systemic racism are urgently required. Only then will the barriers to equitable employment opportunities be dismantled and the gender, Indigenous, and racialized pay gap be closed. Those measures would increase access to workplace-based pension plans and retirement savings. Another part of the solution lies in improving Canada's public pension plans, since they provide crucial support to marginalized seniors. In the absence of all of these measures, income insecurity will continue to track Indigenous peoples and racialized Canadians well into their old age.

# Introduction

THIS PAPER DRAWS on 2016 census data to provide an intersectional analysis of the retirement income of seniors and of savings for retirement among the adult population. It considers whether a core objective of government policy—retirement security—is being achieved equitably.

Government support for seniors' income security is a central feature of the Canadian state. These supports include the government-administered Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Quebec Pension Plan (QPP); the federally funded Old Age Security (OAS) and Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS); and tax expenditures that give special tax treatment to retirement savings—employer-based registered pension plans (RPPs) and individual retirement savings through Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs). Additional provincial tax credits and targeted programs provide further support to seniors.

Public support for Canada's overall retirement regime is strong, and public pension plans have survived largely unscathed through neoliberal policy regimes and attempts to reduce them.<sup>1</sup> In particular, the CPP, the workhorse of the employment pension system, has survived efforts to diminish its role and reduce benefits; it has also been enhanced in the past decade.<sup>2</sup>

This analysis compares retirement income by Indigeneity, racialization, and gender for seniors who are 65 years of age and older. It also examines government-supported retirement savings through RPPs and RRSPs for the population 25 years of age and older in order to compare how this generation of adults is preparing for retirement.

We examine data for the total Indigenous population that is designated as “Aboriginal” in the census and disaggregate that data for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit men and women. These three populations account for 96% of the total Indigenous population.<sup>3</sup> We also examine data for all racialized groups designated as “visible minorities” in the census, as well as disaggregated data for the three largest groups of racialized men and women in Canada: Black, Chinese, and South Asian.<sup>4</sup> Note that racialized and Indigenous identities are treated as non-overlapping in the Statistics Canada definitions and in this paper.

The unit of analysis for seniors’ income is individuals. The unit of analysis for tax-assisted savings that was made available to us from Statistics Canada is the household. We used the racialization or Indigeneity of the “primary household maintainer”<sup>5</sup> to determine whether a household is racialized or Indigenous.

In previous papers, we compared racialized and non-racialized employment income in the 2011 and 2016 censuses, and income from wealth from the 2016 census. This paper extends that analysis to retirement income for those over the age of 65 and to tax-supported saving for retirement for the population that is 25 years of age and over.

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## Population

Table 1 shows the population aged 65 years and older in Canada and the share of that population that is racialized and Indigenous. Among the total 2015 senior population of 5.5 million, 122,000 people (2%) were Indigenous and 691,000 (12.6%) were racialized.

The Indigenous share of the overall senior population is lower than the Indigenous share of the overall population aged 25 years and older. These differences are due, in part, to the impact of colonialism on life expectancy for First Nations, Inuit and Métis people. Life expectancy at birth for Inuit people is 12 years lower than the non-Indigenous population; for First Nations people it is 11.2 years lower; and for Métis people it is 6.9 years lower.<sup>6</sup>

The racialized share of the overall population aged 65 and over is also lower than the racialized share of the overall population aged 25 and over. Racist immigration policies that explicitly prevented racialized workers from immigrating to Canada until the mid-1960s<sup>7</sup> partly explain the distribution.

**TABLE 1** Population 2016

	Population 65+		Share of population 25+
	Number	Share of total	Share of total
Black	87,950	1.6%	2.8%
South Asian	188,895	3.4%	5.1%
Chinese	201,340	3.7%	4.5%
Total Racialized	691,180	12.6%	20.2%
First Nations	62,070	1.1%	3.6%
Métis	51,115	0.9%	1.5%
Inuit	3,065	0.1%	0.2%
Total Indigenous	121,665	2.2%	5.0%
White	4,670,480	85.2%	74.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,479,910</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Source** Statistics Canada, 2016 census, custom tabulation, Statistics Canada. 2017, Census Profile.

# Overview of retirement savings and retirement income

THE FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL governments support private retirement savings (employer-sponsored RPPs and individual or group RRSPs) through favourable tax treatment. It is well documented that tax support for private savings plans disproportionately benefits higher-income individuals.<sup>8</sup>

Defined benefit pension plans are the gold standard as a vehicle for providing secure income in retirement. These plans pool risk across broader populations, they allow for higher returns on investment, and they provide a guaranteed benefit at retirement. The share of Canadian workers who are members of private pension plans has declined from 41% in 1998 to 38% in 2018.<sup>9</sup> However, the share of the working population enrolled in defined benefit plans has dropped more precipitously, from 35% of employees down to 25% of employees over the same time period. Most of this decline is due to private-sector employers switching from defined benefit plans to other retirement approaches that reduce their risk by transferring it to plan members.

RRSPs are the poor cousin of RPPs. RRSPs do not benefit from the economies of scale available to pension plans, they are often subject to high fees that sharply reduce their value over time, and they do not provide certainty with respect to retirement income, as each individual is subject to both risks of variability in investment returns and the impact of interest

rates at retirement. Unlike RPPs, RRSPs are not locked in and these funds can be accessed and spent before retirement—although at considerable cost, in most cases. We did not include Tax Free Savings Accounts (TFSA) in this analysis since they are not as explicitly targeted to retirement savings and do not have as favourable tax treatment as do RPPs or RRSPs.

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## Savings

Saving for retirement is a long-term project, and data for one year has its limitations; nonetheless, the 2015 census data provide a snapshot of how different groups are saving for their retirement.

In 2015, deductions from taxable earnings for contributions plus the non-taxation of earnings on contributions to RPPs and RSPs resulted in federal tax expenditures of over \$57 billion, partly offset by \$15 billion in taxation on withdrawals.<sup>10</sup> Census data lets us consider how these tax expenditures are distributed across different populations and shed light on access to these government supports for Indigenous and racialized people.

The use of the tax system to support private retirement savings raises issues around the tax exemption for First Nations people whose income is earned on reserves.<sup>11</sup> For the data we are using in this paper, 14% of the total Indigenous population lived on reserve and some portion of those people earned income off reserve. Hence the tax-exempt status is not pertinent to at least 86% of the Indigenous population in this analysis.<sup>12</sup>

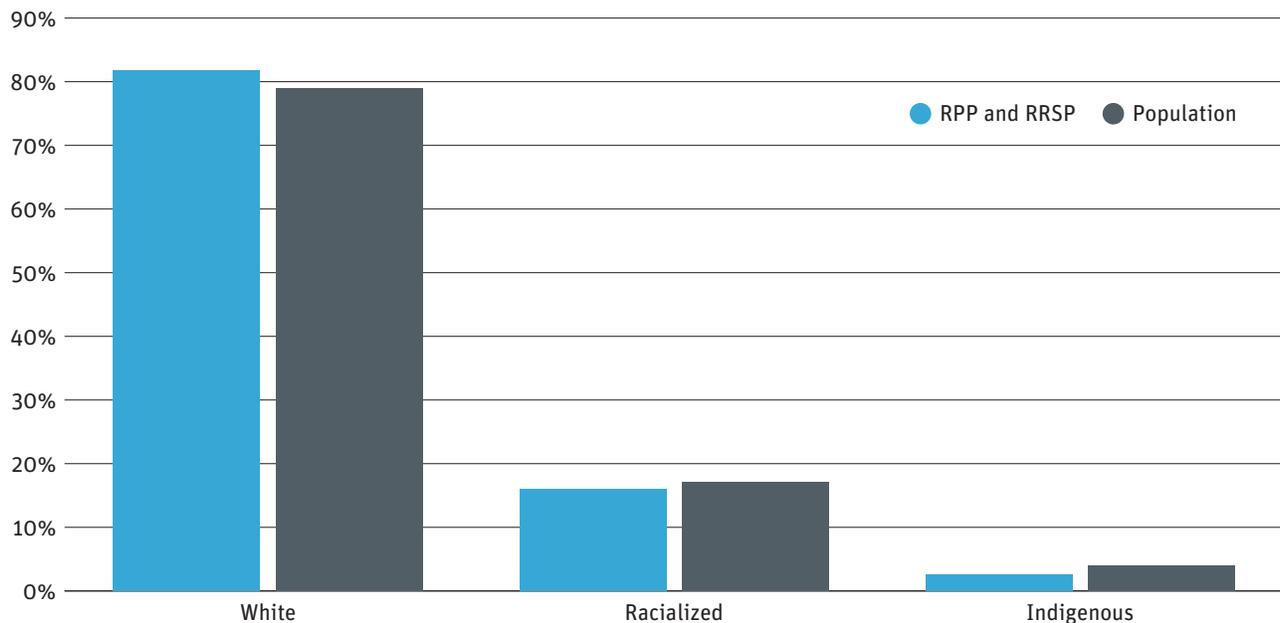
Figure 1 shows that while Indigenous households account for 3.9% of total households, they account for 2.7% of contributions to RPP and RRSPs. While racialized Canadian households account for 17.1% of total households, they account for 15.9% of contributions to RPPs and RRSPs. And while white households account for 79% of households, they account for 81.8% of contributions to RRSPs and RPPs. In the following sections, we disaggregate the data to glean some understanding of the differences in retirement savings for these populations.

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## Differences in total income

Figure 2 shows 2015 total average income for Indigenous, racialized and white seniors. There is a stark difference in total income: Indigenous seniors' average income is 25% lower than white seniors' income and racialized seniors' average income is 32% lower than white seniors' income.

**FIGURE 1** Shares of RPP+RRSP contributions and population 25+, 2015

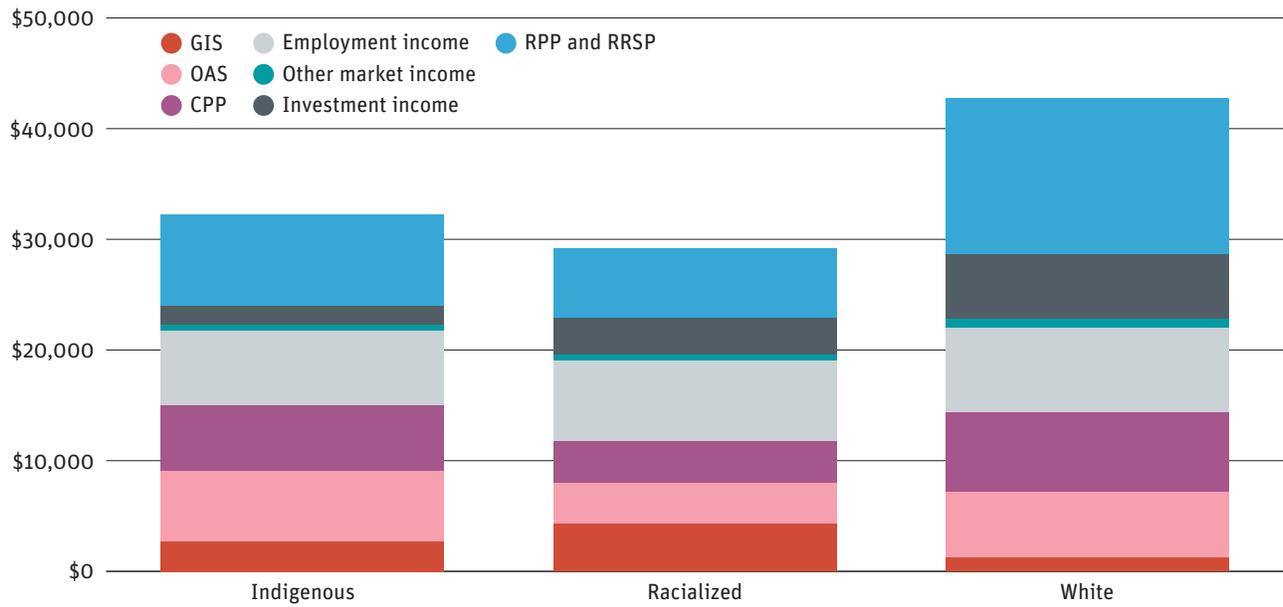


Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 census, special tabulation.

Differences are also evident in the composition of that income: RPPs and RRSPs account for a third of white seniors' income, compared to 25% of Indigenous seniors' income and 21% of racialized seniors' income. Employment income accounts for a slightly larger share of Indigenous and racialized seniors' income, compared to white seniors. There is also a sharp difference in the importance of public pension income: public pension income (CCP/QPP, OAS, and GIS) accounts for 47% of Indigenous seniors' income, 40% of racialized seniors' income, and 34% of white seniors' income.

In an attempt to understand what is driving these differences in retirement income, we disaggregated the data by Indigenous and racialized groups and by gender. We are particularly interested in the greater reliance of Indigenous and racialized seniors on public pension income.

**FIGURE 2** Average seniors' incomes, 2015

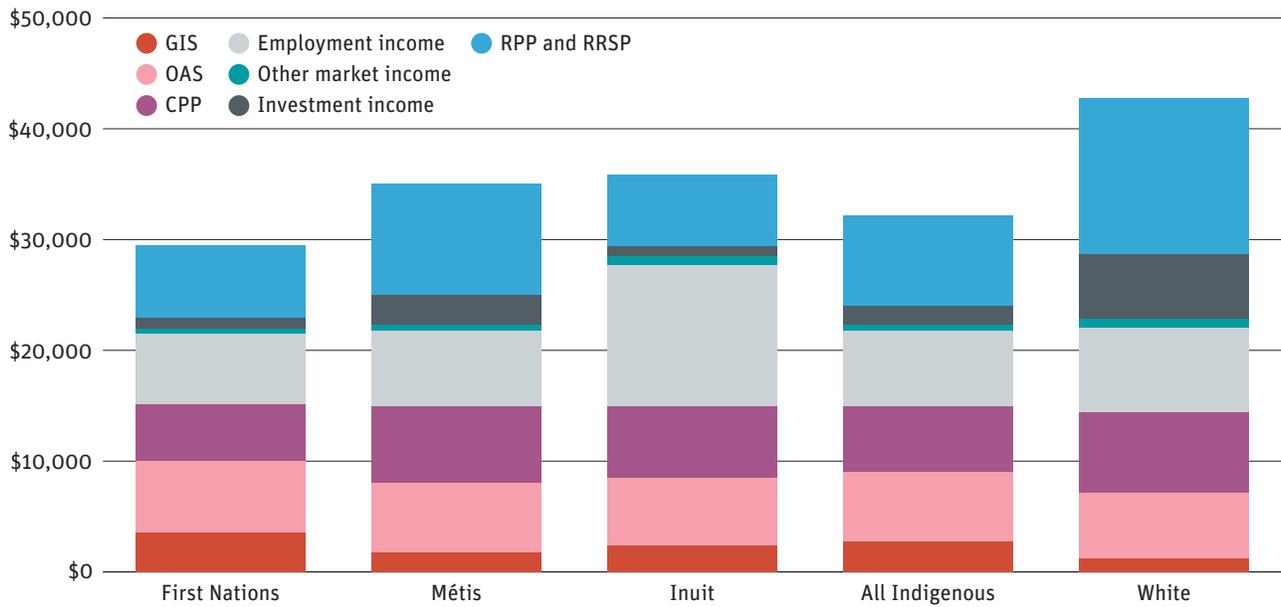


Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 census, special tabulations and authors' calculations.

# Indigenous seniors' income and retirement savings

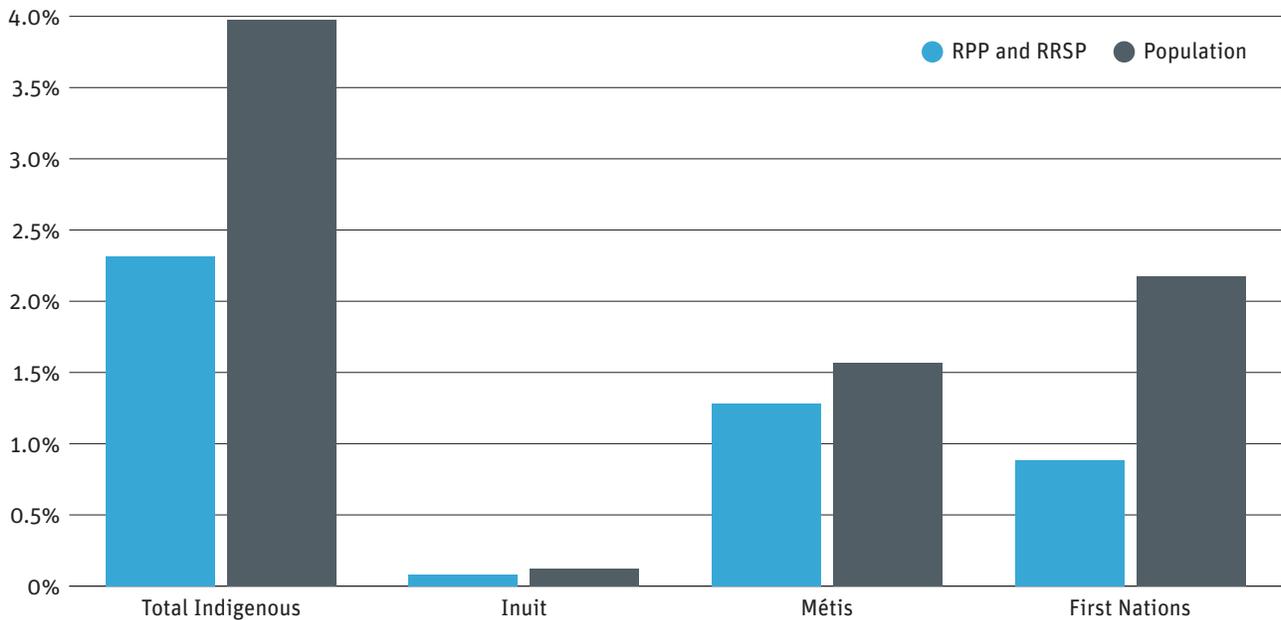
FIGURE 3 SHOWS average total income and sources of income for First Nations, Métis and Inuit seniors. Figure 4 compares the Indigenous population's share with their total contributions to RPPs and RRSPs. It shows that Indigenous seniors' average income is lower than that of white seniors. It also shows the differences between First Nations, Métis and Inuit seniors' income, both in the amount and sources of income. Similarly, while all Indigenous households' share of total contributions to RPPs and RRSPs is smaller than their share of population, there are differences among Indigenous populations.

**FIGURE 3** Average Indigenous seniors' income, 2015



Source: Statistics Canada 2016 census special tabulation and authors' calculations.

**FIGURE 4** Indigenous shares of population and RPP and RRSP contributions, 2015



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 census special tabulation.

# First Nations seniors' income

TABLE 2 SHOWS that First Nations seniors have the lowest average income of any Indigenous group, at \$33,500 for men and \$26,300 for women. There is a very large gap between their income and the average income of white seniors.

First Nations seniors also experience low incomes at a higher rate than other Indigenous populations. However, Statistics Canada cautions that the First Nations poverty rate, measured by the Low-Income Measure After-Tax (LIM-AT), is affected by the incomplete enumeration of reserves and settlements.<sup>13 14</sup> Further, many First Nations communities are excluded from the low-income estimates due to assumptions about the impact of Band housing and food production from agriculture, hunting, and fishing on the measurement of low income. As these exclusions are not applied to non-Indigenous communities, they have to be interpreted as a form of colonial accounting. Consequently, only 63% of the First Nations population that is counted in the census is included in any poverty estimates. As a result, even these high rates underestimate the share of the population of First Nations seniors living in poverty, since the on-reserve poverty rate is substantially higher than off reserve.<sup>15</sup>

The share of the population in receipt of GIS is a clearer indicator of First Nations seniors' poverty. More than 50% of First Nations men and almost 60% of First Nations women receive this payment, and the amounts they receive are higher than for other Indigenous or white seniors. Since the GIS

**TABLE 2** Average total income: Indigenous population 65+, 2015

	Men (\$)	Women (\$)	% White		Women % white men	LIM-AT% total
			Men	Women		
First Nations	33,469	26,334	63.1	77.9	49.7	24.8
Métis	41,765	28,285	78.8	83.7	53.4	19.2
Inuit	39,900	32,150	75.3	95.1	60.6	17.5
Total Indigenous	37,747	27,401	71.2	81.1	51.7	21.5
White	53,011	33,805	100.0	100.0	63.8	13.7

Source Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population Special Tabulations and Statistics Canada—2016 Census. Catalogue Number 98-400-X2016173.

clawback rate is 50% for most income, these higher GIS payments are a further indicator of how low First Nations seniors' income is.

A much lower share of First Nations seniors (43% of men and 37% of women) draw upon RPP and RRSP income than do white seniors (70% of men and 62% of women). Average RPP/RRSP income for First Nations men is 71% of that of white men and First Nations women's RPP/RRSP income is 78% of white women's.

In contrast, the share of senior First Nations men (32%) with employment income is much closer to the share for senior white men (40%). The share of senior First Nations women (22%) with employment income is almost identical to that of senior white women (23%). Senior First Nations men's average employment earnings are 16% lower than senior white men's. Despite their lower average total income, senior First Nations women who are working earn 20% more than senior white women who are working.

The importance of public pensions (CPP/QPP, OAS, and GIS) to First Nations seniors is illustrated both by the large share of the population who receive it and by the fact that these sources of income constitute 51% of First Nations seniors' total income, compared to 34% of white seniors' total income.

## First Nations retirement savings

Looking at the retirement savings of those who are 25 and older, Table 3 shows the share of First Nations households who are contributing to RPPs (19%) or RRSPs (16%) is sharply below the share of white households for both RPPs (31%) and RRSPs (36%). The RPP/RRSP participation rate for First Nations households is below that of Métis and Inuit households as well. More First

**TABLE 3** Retirement savings: Indigenous population 25+

	RPP		RRSP	
	% participation	Average contribution (\$)	% participation	Average contribution (\$)
First Nations	19.2	4,680	15.8	5,350
Métis	33.5	5,221	30.0	5,875
Inuit	40.4	4,653	16.7	5,448
Total Indigenous	25.7	4,971	21.6	5,664
White	31.1	5,557	35.5	7,646

Source Statistics Canada, 2016 census, special tabulation.

Nations households are contributing to RPPs than those who are saving for retirement with RRSPs. Among white households, a larger share contributes to RRSPs compared to RPPs.

The average RPP contribution by First Nations households is 16% lower than the average contribution by white households. There is a larger gap in the average amount of RRSP contributions: First Nations households' average RRSP contributions are 30% lower than white households.

The gulf between First Nations and white households' participation in retirement savings is consistent for both male- and female-led households.

# Métis seniors' income

AT \$41,800 FOR men and \$28,300 for women, senior Métis men's average total income is 21% lower than senior white men's income. Senior Métis women's average total income is 16% lower than senior white women's income.

The share of Métis seniors living in poverty is 19.2%. A smaller share of the Métis population (1.5%) is excluded from the low-income measure than the share of the First Nations population excluded from this measure. Further, the undercounting on reserves and settlements has no substantial impact on Métis low-income estimates. Thus, this measure of the share of the population living in poverty is more accurate than it is for First Nations or Inuit seniors. Low income among Métis seniors is further reflected in the 34% of men and 42% of women who receive GIS.

While the share of senior Métis men and women that draw upon RPP and RRSP income is lower than it is for white men and women, it is higher than it is for First Nations men and women. Similarly, for those who receive this form of income, senior Métis men and women's income is lower than white seniors' but higher than First Nations seniors'. While the share of senior Métis men with employment income is similar to senior white men's, the share of senior Métis women with employment income is 3% higher than senior white women. Senior Métis men's average employment earnings are 25% lower than senior white men's, while senior Métis women's average employment earnings are 3% lower than senior white women's.

Like other Indigenous communities, public pensions (CPP/QPP, OAS, and GIS) are an important source of income for Métis seniors. This is illustrated

by both the large share of the population who receive it and by the fact that these sources of income constitute 43% of Métis seniors' total income, compared to 34% of white seniors' total income.

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## **Métis retirement savings**

The share of Métis households contributing to RPPs (34%) is higher than the share of white households (31%). Average contributions to RPPs for Métis households are 6% lower than white households that contribute to RPPs. However, the share of Métis households who contribute to RRSPs (30%) is lower than the share of white households (36%). The average RRSP contribution amount for Métis households is 23% below of that of white households. This difference in retirement savings is consistent for both male- and female-led households.

# Inuit seniors' income

AT \$39,900 FOR men and \$32,100 for women, senior Inuit men's total income is 25% lower than senior white men's income. Senior Inuit women's income is 5% lower than senior white women's income.

The low-income rate for Inuit seniors, at 17.5%, is lower than it is for other Indigenous populations. However, this measure excludes 44% of Inuit seniors since it excludes those who live in the Yukon, North West Territories (the Inuvialuit region) and Nunavut. The share of the population in receipt of GIS is a clearer indicator of Inuit seniors' poverty: 38% of senior Inuit men and 47% of senior Inuit women receive this payment. The amount of GIS that they receive is higher than that received by Métis or white seniors.

While 42% of senior Inuit men draw upon RPP and RRSP income, 40% of senior Inuit women have this form of income. This is similar to the share of First Nations seniors who draw upon RPP and RRSP income. For those who draw upon this form of income, senior Inuit men make, on average, 38% less than senior white men, and senior Inuit women make, on average, 15% less than senior white women.

A much higher share of senior Inuit men (52%) has employment income compared to senior white men, while the share of senior Inuit women with employment income is almost twice as high as senior white women. Senior Inuit men's average employment earnings are 2% lower than senior white men's earnings. Senior Inuit women's earnings are 31% higher than senior white women's earnings. Income levels are consistent with the higher concentration of senior Inuit men and women in higher-paid public sector

jobs, like administration and health care, and the higher average wage rates in the North.<sup>16</sup>

Public pensions (CPP/QPP, OAS, and GIS) account for a smaller share of total income for Inuit seniors (41%) than for First Nations (51%) or Métis (43%) seniors. This might be due, in part, to the smaller share of senior Inuit women who are in receipt of CPP/QPP compared to senior Métis women and a lower share of senior Inuit women who are in receipt of OAS compared to senior First Nations women. However, public pensions remain a larger share of Inuit seniors' income (41%) than is the case for white seniors (34%).

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## **Inuit retirement savings**

The share of Inuit households contributing to RPPs (40%) is higher than the share of white households (31%). This higher participation rate is likely due to the fact that 21% of Inuit employment is in public administration compared to 6% of total non-Indigenous employment.<sup>17</sup> Pension plan coverage in the public sector is much higher than in the private sector. Average RPP contributions for Inuit households are 16% lower than white households. At 42%, there is a slightly larger share of female-led Inuit households who contribute to RPPs than male-led (39%) Inuit households. However, the average RPP contribution of male-led Inuit households is slightly higher than that of female-led households.

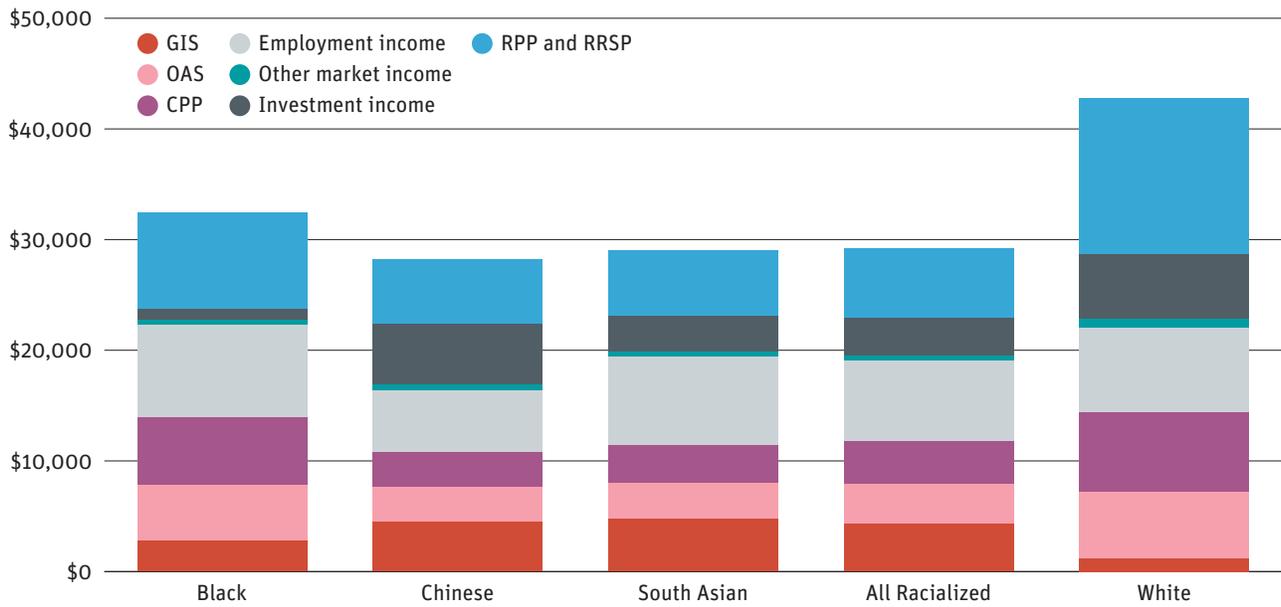
A much smaller share of Inuit households (17%) than white households (36%) contribute to RRSPs, and average contributions are 29% lower than those of those of white households. A part of this difference is likely due to the higher share of Inuit households that are making contributions to RPPs.

# Racialized seniors' income and retirement savings

FIGURE 5 SHOWS average total income and sources of income for Black, Chinese, South Asian and all racialized seniors. (Note that this group excludes all Indigenous peoples.) As the chart makes clear, all groups of racialized seniors have lower income, on average, than white seniors do. That said, there is variation both in total average income and in the sources of income among the different groups of racialized seniors.

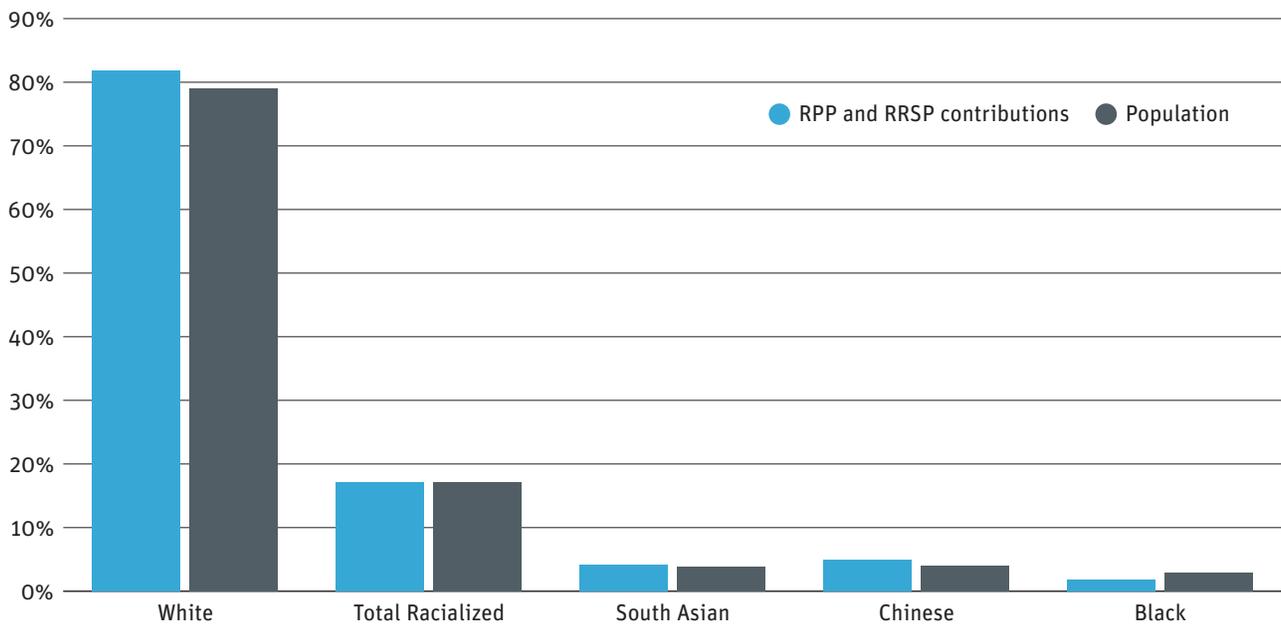
Figure 6 shows the share of total households and total contributions to RPPs and RRSPs. It shows the variation in patterns of contribution to RPPs and RRSPs among racialized groups: Chinese and South Asian people contribute more to RPPs and RRSPs than their share of the population, while Black seniors contribute less than their share of the population.

**FIGURE 5** Average racialized seniors' income: 2015



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 census special tabulation, and authors' calculations.

**FIGURE 6** Racialized share of population and RPP and RRSP contributions



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 census special tabulation.

## Black seniors' income

TABLE 4 SHOWS Black seniors' average total income is \$36,700 for men and \$29,200 for women. Senior Black men's income is 31% lower than senior white men's income; senior Black women's income is 14% lower than senior white women's income. The low-income rate for Black seniors is 18.3%, 4.5 percentage points higher than for white seniors.

A smaller share of Black seniors (51% of men and 50% of women) draw upon RPP and RRSP income compared to white seniors (70% of men and 62% of women). However, the gender gap between senior Black men and women with RPP and RRSP income is lower than the gender gap for the population as a whole and for any of the groups that are considered in this analysis. This is likely due to distinct patterns of employment, and perhaps immigration, for Black men compared to Black women in Canada. For those who have secured income from RPPs and RRSPs, their average income is 24% lower for senior Black men than for senior white men and 12% lower for senior Black women than for senior white women.

In contrast, the share of senior Black men with employment income (39%) is almost the same as the share of senior white men with employment income (40%), while the share of senior Black women with employment income (28%) is appreciably higher than the share of senior white women (23%). There is only a 6% average earnings gap between senior Black men and senior white men and senior Black women who are working earn, on average, 24% more than senior white women who are working. Black seniors' continued employment is likely necessitated by lower RRSP, RPP and

investment income and lower entitlements for public pensions. The lower share of Canadian-born Black seniors with employment income suggests that this is the case.

Public sector pensions account for a much larger share of Black seniors' income (43%) than white seniors' income (34%). This is despite the fact that a smaller share of Black seniors draw income from CPP/QPP and OAS and their average income from those sources is smaller. Due to their lower income level, GIS plays a more important role in Black seniors' income than in white seniors' income.

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## **Comparing immigrant and Canadian-born Black seniors' income**

While 92% of Black seniors are immigrants, 22% of white seniors are immigrants. Total income for Canadian-born Black seniors is virtually identical to those of Black seniors who are immigrants: \$32,500. The income gap between Black and white seniors is also virtually unchanged: Black immigrant seniors' average income is 25% lower than white immigrant seniors and Black Canadian-born seniors' average income is 24% lower than Canadian-born white seniors.

However, there is a shift in the composition of income between Black seniors who are Canadian born and those who are immigrants: employment income represents a smaller share of total income for Canadian-born seniors while both public pensions and RPP/RRSP income account for a larger share of their retirement income. This would be expected: for Canadian-born Black seniors, there is a larger share of the population with income from CPP/QPP and OAS—programs that are dependent on Canadian employment and residency. Despite the increased access to pension income, total income for Canadian-born Black seniors remains low, suggesting the ongoing impact of anti-Black racism on employment and labour market outcomes.

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## **Black Canadians' retirement savings**

While the share of Black households with RPP contributions is slightly higher than the share of white households, RPP contributions remain sharply lower for Black households. Table 5 shows average RPP contributions for Black households are 22% lower than those of white households.

In contrast, there is a smaller share of Black households (30%) that contribute to RRSPs than white households (36%). There is also a larger gap in average contributions, with Black households contributing 39% less in RRSPs than white households. This pattern of retirement savings is consistent for both male- and female-led households.

# Chinese seniors' income

TABLE 4 SHOWS Chinese seniors' average total income at \$32,000 for men and \$24,800 for women. Senior Chinese men's income is 39% lower than senior white men's income and senior Chinese women's income is 27% lower than senior white women's income. Senior Chinese men have the lowest average income among the senior populations that we examined. The low-income rate for Chinese seniors is 25%, 11 percentage points higher than white seniors.

A much lower share of Chinese seniors (39% of men and 35% of women) draw upon RPP and RRSP income compared to white seniors (70% of men and 62% of women). For those with this form of income, the average income of senior Chinese men is 32% lower than senior white men and senior Chinese women's average income from RPPs and RRSPs is 23% lower than white women's.

The share of senior Chinese men with employment income (24%) is markedly lower than the share of senior white men with employment income (40%), as is the share of senior Chinese women with employment income (16%) compared to senior white women (23%). However, average income for senior Chinese men who are working is 8% higher than the average for senior white men who are working. Senior Chinese women who are working earn, on average, 17% more than white women who are working.

Public pensions account for 38% of Chinese seniors' total income, higher than the 34% for white seniors but lower than for other racialized seniors. This is because average income from CPP/QPP and OAS is sharply lower for senior Chinese men and women than for their white and other racialized counterparts. Given these income levels, it is unsurprising that a much higher share of senior Chinese men and women receive GIS income compared to senior white men and women.

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## **Comparing immigrant and Canadian-born Chinese seniors' income**

While 97% of Chinese seniors are immigrants, 22% of white seniors are immigrants. There is a large and marked difference between the income of Canadian-born Chinese seniors and Chinese seniors who are immigrants. Canadian-born Chinese seniors have an average income of \$61,200—higher than any other population group considered in this analysis. This higher income is driven by market income, and the largest difference between the Chinese senior population and other senior populations is the share of investment income. Much of this difference seems to be driven by about 3,000 seniors in Alberta and British Columbia who have high average employment and investment income. The higher average income of this Canadian-born group stands in stark contrast to the average income—and the composition of that income—of the overwhelming majority of Chinese seniors.

As would be expected with the difference in total income and residency, there is a shift in the composition of income between Chinese seniors who are Canadian born compared to those who are immigrants. A much larger share of the Canadian-born population has employment income (36%) compared to the population who are immigrants (19%). However, this form of income actually accounts for a smaller share of total income for Canadian-born Chinese seniors (17%) compared to immigrant seniors (19%).

There is also a marked difference in the share of Canadian-born Chinese seniors (71%) with investment income compared to immigrant seniors (51%). Investment income represents the largest difference in both average income and the share of total income. The average amount for those with investment income was \$16,000 higher for Canadian-born Chinese seniors compared to immigrant seniors. A larger share of Canadian-born Chinese seniors have income from CPP/QPP and OAS than those who are immigrants, as these programs are dependent on Canadian employment and residency.

Despite high average income, 18% of Canadian-born Chinese seniors draw income from GIS.

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## Chinese Canadians' retirement savings

What is most evident for Chinese households is their lower participation in RPPs and their higher savings rate in RRSPs. There is a higher share of Chinese households with RRSP contributors (41%) than white households with RRSP contributors (36%), and Chinese households' average contributions are 33% higher than they are for white households.

The pattern of higher contributions to RRSPs is consistent for both male- and female-led Chinese households. To determine whether this high rate of participation in RRSP and high average contributions is linked to income levels, we calculated the retirement savings rate (total RPP and RRSP savings as a share of total income) for different household income groupings in \$10,000 increments. Across all these income groupings, Chinese households had a 10%–60% higher savings rate compared to the total population.

At the same time, a smaller share of Chinese households contribute to RPPs (23%) compared to the share of white households (31%). Average RPP contributions for Chinese households are just 2% below those of white households. This pattern was consistent for male- and female-led households.

# South Asian seniors' income

TABLE 4 SHOWS South Asian seniors' average total income is \$35,200 for men and \$22,900 for women. Senior South Asian men's average income is 34% lower than senior white men's income and senior South Asian women's average income is 32% lower than senior white women's. Senior South Asian women's average income is also lower than that of the Black, Chinese or total racialized senior women's populations. However, the poverty rate for South Asian seniors is much lower than might be expected, despite their low income. The share of South Asian seniors living in poverty is 12.9%, which is lower than the share of white seniors. Research from the National Household Survey suggests that South Asian seniors are more likely to live in multi-generational homes.<sup>18</sup> This is likely a contributing factor to the lower poverty rate, since it is based on household income.

A much lower share of South Asian seniors (36% of men and 25% of women) have RPP and RRSP income compared to white seniors (70% of men and 62% of women). For those who have this source of income, the average income for senior South Asian men is 20% lower than senior white men's income. For senior South Asian women, their average income is 5% lower than senior white women's average income.

The share of senior South Asian men (34%) and women with employment income (19%) is lower than the share of senior white men (40%) and women (23%). However, the average income for senior South Asian men

who are working is 14% higher than the average for senior white men who are working, while senior South Asian women who are working earn, on average, 16% more than senior white women who are working.

Public pensions account for 39% of South Asian seniors' income, higher than white seniors (34%) but lower than the share for Black and total racialized senior populations. A markedly smaller share of senior South Asian men (73%) and women (59%) draw income from CPP/QPP than senior white men (96%) and women (94%). A higher proportion of senior South Asian women (75%) receive OAS, still well below the 93% of senior white women who receive this payment, and 72% of senior South Asian men receive OAS compared to 90% of senior white men. Average income from these public sources is sharply lower for senior South Asian men and women than for their white counterparts. Given these income levels, it is unsurprising that a sharply higher share of senior South Asian men (42%) than senior white men (24%) receive GIS, as do a higher proportion of senior South Asian women (53%) compared to senior white women (32%).

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## **Comparing immigrant and Canadian-born South Asian seniors' income**

While 99% of South Asian seniors are immigrants, 22% of white seniors are immigrants. There is a large and marked difference between the income of Canadian-born South Asian seniors and South Asian seniors who are immigrants. Canadian-born South Asian seniors' average income, at \$51,000, is higher than the average income of South Asian seniors who are immigrants (\$29,000). Canadian-born South Asian seniors' income is 19% higher than Canadian-born white seniors' income. As would be expected, this higher income is driven by market income. However, average employment income is lower for Canadian-born South Asian seniors than it is for immigrant South Asian seniors. Also, employment earnings account for a larger share of immigrant South Asian seniors' income compared to Canadian-born South Asian seniors.

The share of total income accounted for by investment income is higher for the Canadian-born South Asian senior population, and that's driving the higher average income. Much of this difference seems to be driven by about 650 seniors in British Columbia with high investment income. This is a marked difference from the average income and composition of income for the overwhelming majority of South Asian seniors.

As would be expected with the differences in total income and residency in Canada, there is a shift in the composition of income between South Asian seniors who are Canadian-born compared to those who are immigrants. A larger share of the Canadian-born population has employment income (34%) compared to the population who are immigrants (26%). However, average employment earnings are lower for Canadian-born seniors than they are for those who are immigrants.

There is also a marked increase in the share of Canadian-born seniors (55%) with investment income compared to seniors who are immigrants (35%). The largest difference in both average income and the share of total income is investment earnings. The average amount of investment earnings is \$16,400 higher for Canadian-born South Asian seniors compared to senior South Asian immigrants. As would be expected, a larger share of the Canadian-born South Asian senior population has income from CPP/QPP and OAS since these programs are dependent on Canadian employment and residency. Despite high average income, 29% of Canadian-born South Asian seniors receive income from GIS, a similar share as white Canadian-born seniors.

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## South Asian retirement savings

A smaller share (27%) of South Asian households contributes to RPPs than do white households (31%). Average contributions for South Asian households are 9% lower than contributions from white households. A similar share of female- and male-led households contributes to RPPs. Female-led South Asian households' average contributions are 5% lower than white female-led households. Male-led South Asian households' average contributions are 12% lower than white-male led households.

At 37%, there is a slightly higher share of South Asian households with RRSP contributors than white households with RRSP contributors (36%). Average contributions are 14% higher for South Asian households than for white households. At 35%, a slightly higher share of South Asian women-led households contribute to RRSPs than households led by white women (32%), while 38% of both male-led South Asian and white households contribute to RRSPs. Average RRSP contributions from South Asian female-led households are 12% higher than white female-led households; average RRSP contributions for South Asian male-led households are 9% higher than white male-led households.

# Total racialized population

IT IS IMPORTANT to note that when considering the total racialized population, it includes very disparate experiences for different racialized groups. The total racialized population includes 12 different groups that Statistics Canada characterizes as “visible minorities.” Those who identify as Black, Chinese and South Asian account for 55% of racialized seniors. As a result, these three groups have a large impact on the averages for the racialized population. Table 4 shows the overall racialized senior population’s average total income is \$33,900 for men and \$25,000 for women. Senior racialized men’s average income is 36% lower than senior white men’s income and senior racialized women’s average income is 26% lower than white senior women’s average income. At 19.8%, the share of racialized seniors living in poverty is higher than the share of white seniors (13.7%).

A much lower share of racialized seniors (39% of men and 34% of women) have RPP and RRSP income than do white seniors (70% of men and 62% of women). Among those with this form of income, average income is 27% lower for senior racialized men than senior white men and 14% lower for senior racialized women than senior white women.

The share of senior racialized men with employment income (31%) is lower than the share of senior white men with employment income (40%) and the share of senior racialized women with employment income (20%) is slightly lower than the share of senior white women (23%). However, average

**TABLE 4** Average total income: racialized population 65+, 2015

	Men (\$)	Women (\$)	%White		Women % white men	LIM-AT total
			Men	Women		
Black	36,731	29,201	69.3	86.4	55.1	18.3
Chinese	32,086	24,832	60.5	73.5	46.8	25.0
South Asian	35,244	22,878	66.5	67.7	43.2	12.9
Total Racialized	33,907	25,094	64.0	74.2	47.3	19.8
White	53,011	33,805	100.0	100.0	63.8	13.7

Source Statistics Canada, 2016 census, special tabulation.

**TABLE 5** Retirement savings: racialized population, 25+

	RPP		RRSP	
	% participation	Average contribution (\$)	% participation	Average contribution (\$)
Black	32.1	4,340	30.1	4,641
Chinese	23.1	5,439	40.5	10,198
South Asian	27.0	5,042	37.4	8,698
Total racialized	26.8	4,731	36.1	7,587
White	31.1	5,557	35.5	7,646

Source Statistics Canada, 2016 census, special tabulation.

income for senior racialized men who are working is 9% higher than the average for senior white men; senior racialized women who are working earn, on average, 22% more than senior white women.

Public pensions account for 40% of racialized seniors' income, higher than the 34% for white seniors. A markedly smaller share of senior racialized men (74%) and women (65%) derive income from the CPP/QPP than white men (96%) and women (94%). At 75%, a similar share of senior racialized men receives OAS income. A larger share of senior racialized women (78%) draws income from OAS compared to those who receive CPP/QPP. In comparison, 90% of senior white men and 93% of senior white women receive OAS. In addition to the smaller share of the population with this form of income, average income from these public sources is much lower for senior racialized men and women than for their white counterparts. Given these income levels, it is unsurprising that a sharply higher share of senior racialized men

(43%) receives GIS than senior white men (24%), as do a higher proportion of senior racialized women (51%) compared to senior white women (32%).

A smaller share of racialized households contributes to RPPs (27%) compared to their white counterparts (31%). Average RPP contributions for those racialized households are 15% lower than they are for white households. The pattern is similar for both male- and female-led households.

The same share of racialized households (36%) contributes to RRSPs as do white households (36%). Average contributions are almost identical. There is a slightly larger share (33%) of households led by racialized women who contribute to RRSPs compared to those led by white women (32%). Average RRSP contributions by female-led racialized households are 5% lower than those led by white women. White and racialized male-led households' average RRSP contributions are almost identical.

# Conclusion

THE CENSUS DATA provides us with a clear view of the disparities in income between Indigenous, racialized and white seniors. It shows that retirement security is, indeed, colour coded in Canada. Indigenous senior men's income ranges between 21% and 37% below white senior men's income. Indigenous senior women's income ranges from 50% to 39% below white senior men's income. Racialized senior men have income that ranges between 31% and 39% below white senior men's income. Racialized senior women's income ranges between 45% and 57% below white senior men's income. While Indigenous poverty rates are muddied by measurement issues, it is also clear that racialized and Indigenous seniors are more likely to be living in poverty.

The gender income gap is consistent across Indigenous and racialized seniors. However, the income gap between senior white, Indigenous and racialized women, and the gulf in income between senior white men and senior racialized and Indigenous women points to the intersectional impact of racism and sexism across the life course. It is only when the economic impacts of underlying racism and sexism are addressed that we will achieve equal access to a secure retirement for all.

From a policy perspective, the data demonstrates the importance of public pensions in addressing these intersectional impacts. Because GIS payments are an anti-poverty measure, they are a more important source of income for senior women who are First Nations or racialized immigrants. Similarly, OAS provides an important source of income to First Nations and

other Indigenous seniors. It is similarly an important source of income for senior women, although to varying degrees depending on length of residency.

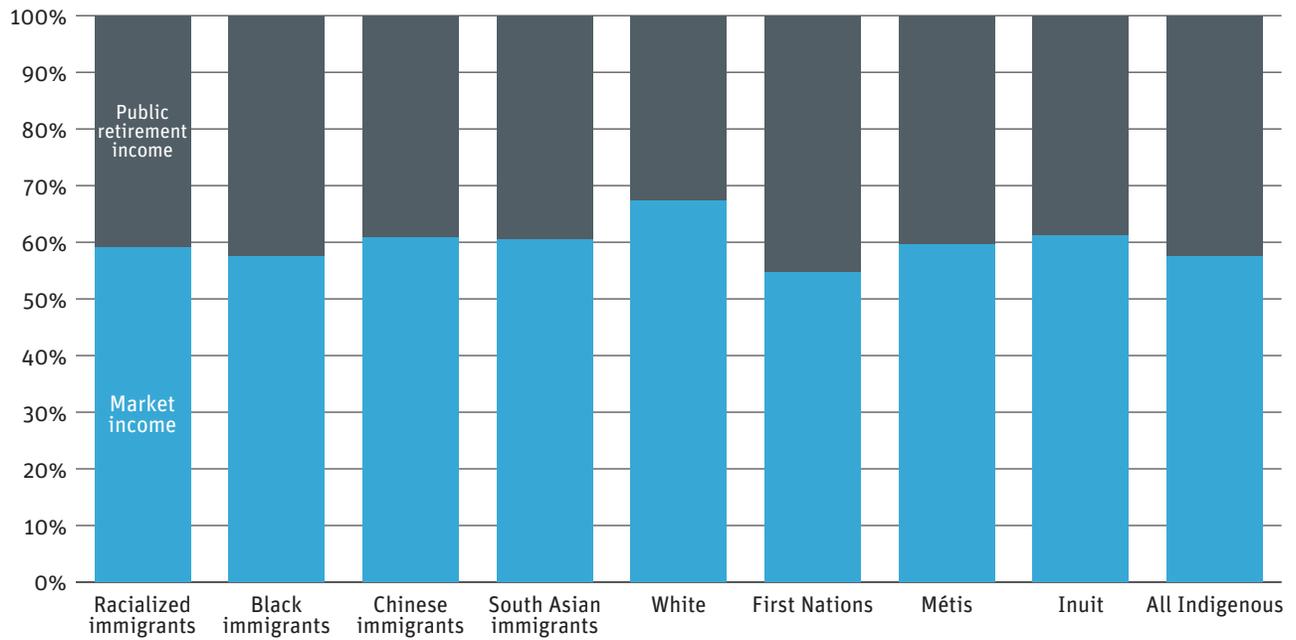
The number of Canadian-born racialized seniors is small, and we hesitate to draw too many conclusions from the data. However, the Canadian-born Black seniors' population is larger than that of other racialized groups. Canadian-born Black seniors' income is virtually identical to that of Black immigrants, with the result that Canadian-born Black seniors' average income continues to be 25% lower than Canadian-born white seniors' income. This provides us with insight into the continuing impact of anti-Black racism on seniors' income. The share of Canadian-born Chinese and South Asian seniors is much smaller. For Chinese and South Asians seniors, those who are Canadian-born have sharply higher income—and higher income than Canadian-born white seniors.

Saving for retirement is a long-term project. One year of data on contributions to RPPs and RRSPs provides us with a very limited snapshot of differences in retirement savings. Much better data is needed to understand differences in savings for retirement and its impact on retirement security. We need data on pension plan membership by Indigenous and racialized groups. We need data on the balances in RPPs and RRSPs, as opposed to contributions in one year. That said, this census data is the first to provide us with information about retirement savings by racialized and Indigenous groups.

When comparing savings for retirement, the importance of disaggregated data is evident. The gender gap in retirement savings is consistent across racialized and Indigenous groups. The overall low share of the racialized and Indigenous population that contribute to RPPs points to reduced retirement security for the next generation of workers. Differences in retirement savings rates for different racialized groups need to be better understood and explored.

Figure 7 shows the reliance of marginalized seniors on public pensions. With an overall low rate of private retirement savings, it is critically important to expand public pensions to reduce seniors' poverty and inequality. Enhancing the GIS and the OAS would have a real, positive impact on Indigenous and racialized seniors. The increase in OAS for those 75 and older in the 2021 federal budget is a step in the right direction. A further enhancement of the CPP would increase retirement security and address declining pension plan coverage rates for all workers. Previous reports from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives have made proposals that would strengthen these

**FIGURE 7** Importance of public pensions for marginalized seniors



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 census, special tabulation.

public programs, including increasing GIS payments, increasing indexation of OAS payments, and increasing the CPP replacement rate.

# Appendix A

## Sources of retirement income

RETIREMENT INCOME IN Canada is a well-researched and complex issue. This section provides a brief overview of the forms of retirement income in Canada.

Canada's retirement income system is generally considered to have three pillars: Old Age Security (OAS) and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS); the Canada and Quebec Pension Plans (CPP/QPP); and private savings, including Registered Pension Plans (RPPs) and Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs).

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### Old Age Security (OAS)

OAS is funded from general tax revenues. Eligibility for OAS is based solely on residency and not on employment history or need.<sup>19</sup> With 40 years of residency in Canada, residents are eligible for a full OAS pension. Residents can be eligible for a partial OAS pension if they have lived in Canada for more than 10 years after the age of 18. The pension earned is 1/40th of the maximum monthly amount for each year of residence in Canada.

The maximum monthly OAS amount in 2015 was \$569.95.<sup>20</sup> OAS is clawed back for high-income seniors; in 2015, the claw back began with individual income of \$72,809 and went to 100% at \$118,055.

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## The Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)

The GIS is an additional monthly payment for low-income seniors who are receiving OAS.<sup>21</sup> The maximum GIS monthly payment in 2015 was \$772.83. For the most part, GIS payments are reduced from the maximum payable by 50 cents for every dollar of income other than OAS. The cut off level for that payment varies by family size and sources of income and ranged from \$17,280 to \$41,424 in 2015. Sponsored immigrants are eligible for OAS if they meet a residency requirement but are not eligible for the GIS nor the spousal allowance during their sponsorship period.<sup>22</sup>

The allowance for GIS recipients' spouses aged 60 to 64 is an anti-poverty measure. Since the populations in this paper are over 65, only the GIS (not the spousal allowance) is included in income in this analysis.

Unlike other public pension programs, the GIS is income-tested at the family level and is intended as an anti-poverty measure. The OAS is clawed back based on individual income.

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## Canada Pension Plan/Quebec Pension Plan

The Canada Pension Plan (CPP) is a monthly retirement pension available to most employees and self-employed individuals in Canada outside of Quebec. It is available to part-time and full-time employees. Membership in the plan is transferrable from job to job and is indexed to inflation. There are provisions in the plan to compensate workers for the impact that taking time out of the workforce for caregiving has on pension income. The Quebec Pension Plan parallels the CPP and is the public pension plan in Quebec.

First Nations people's income from employment or self-employment earned on a reserve is exempt from mandatory CPP/QPP contributions.<sup>23</sup> However, employers or employees can elect to participate. While working for an Indigenous business, this exemption from mandatory participation could have a negative impact on retirement security for First Nations people.

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## RPP and RRSP income

In the census data, RPP and RRSP income comes from payments by the employer or personal retirement pensions, benefits, or savings plans. They include payments received from all annuities, including payments from employer-based Registered Pension Plans (RPPs), pooled registered

pension plans (PRPPs) and matured Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs). They also include pensions paid to widow(er)s or other relatives of deceased pensioners.

These forms of retirement income are directly related to pre-retirement Canadian employment experiences of the individual or the employment of a deceased spouse: whether you had employment that provided an employer-sponsored pension plan, whether your earnings were high enough, and whether those earnings generated enough room in RRSPs for saving to produce income from registered retirement income funds. It also reflects how much of your working life was in Canada.

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## **Other income included in total**

Other forms of income that are included in this data are: employment income earned at age 65 or older and investment income that is not associated with registered retirement saving. TFSA withdrawals are not included in this analysis since they are not tracked by the census.

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## **Tax supported savings for retirement**

Contributions to RRSPs are deductible from taxable income. As a result, they provide a greater tax benefit to those with higher income, who pay higher tax rates. Income earned on the funds in RRSPs is not taxable as long as it is left in the fund. There are limitations on the tax support available for RRSPs; the maximum contribution was 18% of earned income up to \$24,930 in 2015.<sup>24</sup> These limits and tax treatment parallel the limits to RPP contributions, which were a maximum of 18% of earned income to the same maximum of \$24,930. The limit of 18% of earned income or \$24,930 apply to the total of both RPP and RRSP contributions. Any individual combined contributions to RPPs and RRSPs cannot exceed this limit.

# Appendix B

**TABLE 6** Indigenous seniors: selected sources of income

	RPP and RRSP		Employment		CPP		OAS		GIS	
	Average (\$)	With Amt %	Average (\$)	With Amt%						
<i>First Nations</i>										
Men	17,756	43.1	24,290	31.5	5,901	91.2	6,445	94	5,748	53.2
Women	13,508	37.0	21,375	22.2	5,228	83.1	6,472	94	6,033	59.3
<i>Métis</i>										
Men	20,525	58.7	21,724	40.0	7,675	97.3	6,394	92	4,264	33.8
Women	14,544	49.9	17,264	25.7	6,152	94.4	6,467	94	4,264	41.8
<i>Inuit</i>										
Men	15,500	41.9	28,406	51.5	7,028	94.6	6,446	95	5,013	38.2
Women	14,613	39.9	23,268	40.5	7,028	90.2	6,411	90	5,256	46.5
<i>Total Indigenous</i>										
Men	19,294	50.6	23,363	36.1	6,816	94.3	6,420	92	5,161	43.5
Women	14,231	42.6	19,645	24.0	5,668	88.2	6,467	94	5,545	51.3
<i>White</i>										
Men	24,943	69.8	29,061	39.5	8,258	96.3	6,367	90	3,802	24.0
Women	17,222	62.3	17,788	22.5	6,722	94.2	6,408	93	4,305	32.1

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Special Tabulations.

**TABLE 7** Retirement savings: Indigenous men and women, 2015

	Average contribution: female-led households (\$)					Average contribution: male-led households (\$)				
	First Nations	Métis	Inuit	Total Indigenous	White	First Nations	Métis	Inuit	Total Indigenous	White
RRSP	4,857	4,833	4,929	4,890	6,565	5,733	6,512	5,954	6,193	8,264
RPP	4,421	4,848	4,603	4,656	5,279	4,923	5,498	4,712	5,235	5,738

	Participation rates: female-led households					Participation rates: male-led households				
	First Nations	Métis	Inuit	Total Indigenous	White	First Nations	Métis	Inuit	Total Indigenous	White
RRSP	13.0%	15.4%	15.7%	17.7%	32.0%	19.0%	28.5%	17.8%	25.5%	37.8%
RPP	17.5%	32.2%	41.6%	23.7%	30.4%	21.1%	34.4%	39.1%	27.6%	31.5%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 census, special tabulation.

**TABLE 8** Racialized Seniors: selected sources of income

	RPP and RRSP		Employment		CPP		OAS		GIS	
	Average (\$)	With Amt %	Average (\$)	With Amt%						
<i>Black</i>										
Men	19,003	50.7	27,225	39.0	7,357	87.8	5,892	83.6	6,111	31.8
Women	15,112	49.5	22,090	27.9	6,519	81.8	5,631	85.4	7,583	42.3
<i>Chinese</i>										
Men	17,049	39.1	31,376	23.8	5,358	65.8	4,267	72.1	8,007	45.1
Women	13,296	34.6	20,832	16.3	4,332	59.3	4,049	75.6	9,153	52.9
<i>South Asian</i>										
Men	19,892	35.7	33,089	33.8	5,410	73.3	4,369	72.1	8,550	42.4
Women	16,317	25.3	20,584	18.5	4,115	58.5	4,011	75.2	9,963	52.8
<i>Total Racialized</i>										
Men	18,310	38.6	31,545	30.9	5,726	73.7	4,614	74.9	7,954	42.5
Women	14,783	33.5	21,659	20.2	4,865	64.6	4,403	78.2	9,201	51.0
<i>White</i>										
Men	24,943	69.8	29,061	39.5	8,258	96.3	6,367	90.0	3,802	24.0
Women	17,222	62.3	17,788	22.5	6,722	94.2	6,408	93.2	4,305	32.1

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 census special tabulation.

**TABLE 9** Retirement savings: racialized men and women, 2015

	Average contribution: female-led households (\$)					Average contribution: male-led households (\$)				
	Black	Chinese	South Asian	Total Racialized	White	Black	Chinese	South Asian	Total Racialized	White
RRSP	3,933.7	8,881.0	7,358.9	6,254.4	6,564.6	5,195	10,815	9,047	8,215	8,264
RPP	3,887.0	5,128.5	5,016.0	4,402.5	5,278.9	4,761	5,594	5,049	4,908	5,738

	Participation rates: female-led households					Participation rates: male-led households				
	Black	Chinese	South Asian	Total Racialized	White	Black	Chinese	South Asian	Total Racialized	White
RRSP	27.0%	35.0%	34.6%	32.5%	32.0%	33.0%	43.7%	38.2%	38.1%	37.8%
RPP	31.7%	20.8%	28.2%	26.4%	30.4%	32.6%	24.4%	26.6%	27.1%	31.5%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 census, special tabulation.

**TABLE 10** Average income, 65+, immigrants and Canadian born

	Immigrants					Canadian born				
	Black	Chinese	South Asian	Racialized	White	Black	Chinese	South Asian	Racialized	White
Total income	32,472	27,391	28,947	28,601	43,098	32,545	61,195	50,926	46,161	42,675
Market income	25,177	23,231	29,162	25,807	32,965	23,634	51,959	43,137	36,576	32,814
Employment income	25,198	26,632	28,712	27,435	28,778	19,128	29,472	22,911	24,164	23,512
Investment income	2,806	9,670	8,515	8,115	11,604	3,436	25,694	24,894	13,788	10,629
Private retirement income	16,704	14,702	18,345	16,138	19,100	17,663	24,380	22,456	22,283	21,596
OAS	5,674	4,087	4,169	4,418	6,182	6,455	6,149	6,120	6,349	6,446
GIS	7,226	8,705	9,362	8,762	4,510	5,175	5,062	6,013	4,840	3,990
CPP/QPP	6,886	4,705	4,808	5,160	7,590	7,015	8,228	7,254	7,915	7,409

With an amount (%)	Immigrants					Canadian born				
	Black	Chinese	South Asian	Racialized	White	Black	Chinese	South Asian	Racialized	White
Market income	71.1	68.5	56.4	62.0	86.2	70.8	90.6	84.2	84.8	84.4
Employment income	32.9	19.3	26.1	25.0	28.6	30.0	35.6	34.1	31.5	30.9
Investment income	31.5	50.9	34.5	37.2	57.2	26.9	71.0	55.3	56.2	51.4
Private retirement income	49.7	35.9	30.3	34.9	66.3	54.6	69.5	63.0	66.5	65.7
OAS	84.1	73.9	73.7	76.4	89.3	92.9	83.9	89.0	90.3	92.4
GIS	37.6	50.1	47.8	47.9	28.5	40.5	17.8	28.9	26.0	28.3
CPP/QPP	83.9	61.6	65.8	68.0	91.7	93.1	93.3	91.6	94.3	96.2

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 census, special tabulation.

**TABLE 11** Estimated average incomes by income source: Indigenous seniors, 2015

	First Nations	Métis	Inuit	All Indigenous	White
GIS	3,575	1,777	2,337	2,707	1,186
OAS	6,402	6,212	6,147	6,299	5,972
CPP	5,126	6,920	6,406	5,971	7,226
Employment income	6,434	6,837	12,829	6,790	7,625
Other market income	393	564	738	490	804
Investment income	953	2,657	903	1,732	5,828
RPP and RRSP	6,584	10,065	6,542	8,208	14,117
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,468</b>	<b>35,032</b>	<b>35,902</b>	<b>32,198</b>	<b>42,759</b>

Source Statistics Canada, 2016 census, special tabulation, and authors' calculations.

**TABLE 12** Estimated average incomes by income source: racialized seniors, 2015

	Black	Chinese	South Asian	All Racialized	White
GIS	2,778	4,457	4,745	4,312	1,186
OAS	5,063	3,204	3,286	3,640	5,972
CPP	6,058	3,146	3,390	3,839	7,226
Employment income	8,418	5,507	7,957	7,240	7,625
Other Market income	439	624	498	537	804
Investment income	924	5,471	3,195	3,347	5,828
RPP and RRSP	8,750	5,797	5,960	6,257	14,117
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,430</b>	<b>28,206</b>	<b>29,030</b>	<b>29,172</b>	<b>42,759</b>

Source Statistics Canada, 2016 census, special tabulation and authors' calculations.

# Notes

**1** Caragata, Warren. 1995. “The Power of Seniors.” *Maclean’s*, July 10. Retrieved from <https://archive.macleans.ca/article/1995/7/10/the-power-of-seniors>.

**2** Government of Canada. 2019. Canada Pension Plan Enhancement, February 7. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/publicpensions/cpp/cpp-enhancement.html>.

**3** The remaining 4% includes those who self-identify as “multiple Aboriginal responses” and “Aboriginal responses not included elsewhere.”

**4** Visible minority status is self-reported and based on the *Employment Equity Act*. The census question asks: is this person white, South Asian, Chinese, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Arab, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Japanese, Korean, other (specify).

**5** In the census, the “primary household maintainer” is the first person in the household identified as someone who pays the rent or the mortgage, or the taxes, or the electricity bill, and so on, for the dwelling. In the case of a household where two or more people are listed as household maintainers, the first person listed is chosen as the primary household maintainer. The order of the persons in a household is determined by the order in which the respondent lists the persons on the census questionnaire. Generally, an adult is listed first, followed, if applicable, by that person’s spouse or common-law partner and their children. The order does not necessarily correspond to the proportion of household payments made by the person. See Statistics Canada (2016). Dictionary, Census of Population. Retrieved from <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/households-menageo20-eng.cfm>.

**6** Public Health Agency of Canada. 2018. “Key Health Inequities in Canada: A National Portrait.” Retrieved from [https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/publications/science-research/key-health-inequalities-canada-national-portrait-executive-summary/key\\_health\\_inequalities\\_full\\_report-eng.pdf](https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/publications/science-research/key-health-inequalities-canada-national-portrait-executive-summary/key_health_inequalities_full_report-eng.pdf).

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- 8** See for example Macdonald, David. 2016. *Out of the Shadows: Shining a light on Canada's unequal distribution of federal tax expenditures*. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. Retrieved from <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/loopholes>.
- 9** Statistics Canada. 2021. "Registered pension plan (RPP) active members by area of employment" (Table 11-10-0133-01) and "Employment by class of worker, annual (x 1,000)" (Table 14-10-0027-01). Retrieved from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/200813/too2b-eng.htm>.
- 10** Department of Finance. 2016. *Report on Federal Tax Expenditures*. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-finance/services/publications/federal-tax-expenditures/2016.html>.
- 11** Government of Canada. 2021. "Information on the tax exemption under section 87 of the Indian Act." March 11. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/aboriginal-peoples/information-indians.html>.
- 12** Statistics Canada. 2016. Data Tables, 2016 census, catalogue no. [98-400-X2016167](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/98-400-x/2016167).
- 13** Statistics Canada. 2016. Data Tables, 2016 census, catalogue no. [98-400-X2016173](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/98-400-x/2016173).
- 14** Settlement in this context is specific to First Nations in northern jurisdictions, not to be confused with Metis settlements in Alberta.
- 15** Beedie, Natasha, David Macdonald, and Daniel Wilson. 2019. "Towards Justice: Tackling Indigenous Child Poverty in Canada." Upstream. Retrieved from <https://www.thinkupstream.ca/post/status-first-nations-child-poverty-rates-deplorably-high>.
- 16** Statistics Canada. 2016. Data Tables, 2016 Census Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016359.
- 17** Statistics Canada. 2016. Data Tables, 2016 census, catalogue no. 98-400-X2016359 and authors' calculations.
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- 20** Service Canada. Canada Pension Plan/Old Age Security Quarterly Report—Monthly Amounts and Related Figures. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/pensions/pension/statistics/2015-quarterly-october-december.html#topic3>.
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- 24** Canada. MP, DB, RRSP, DPSP, and TFSA limits and the YMPE. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/registered-plans-administrators/pspa/mp-rrsp-dpsp-tfsa-limits-ympe.html>.



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