

# RESEARCH BRIEF



## Divorced and Unpartnered: New Insights on a Growing Population in Canada

SOURCE: Rachel Margolis and Youjin Choi, "The Growing and Shifting Divorced Population in Canada," *Canadian Studies in Population* 47(1-2) (February 17, 2020). Link: <https://bit.ly/39u1uv3>.

### INSIGHTS

- There has been **large growth in the number of divorced Canadians** since 1971, and as a group, this population is getting older, and more than half currently live alone.
- Gendered analysis reveals improved economic circumstances for divorced women and **stagnating economic circumstances for divorced men** since 1991.
- Both women and men who are divorced and unpartnered have **lower levels of economic well-being than married people**, and the gap between the divorced and married has increased over time.

### INFORMATION

- 1.9M** Number of currently divorced and unpartnered (i.e. not remarried and not living with a new partner) adults aged 20 and above in Canada in 2018, a **tenfold increase** since 1971
- 44%** Proportion of currently divorced and unpartnered Canadians **aged 60 and older**, more than double the share in 1991 (16%)
- 26% and 24%** Proportion of divorced and unpartnered adult women and men, respectively, aged 20 and above who lived in a **low-income family** in 2016, down from 37% and 25% in 1991

### IMPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS

Separation and divorce agreements; divorce law and associated regulations; family finances; child and/or spousal support orders; mediation

### INDICATORS

Income; Consumer Price Index (CPI); low-income status (individual and family); employment rate

### FUNDING

Government of Canada; Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR); Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)

### PRIMARY DATA SOURCES

Census data; annual estimates of population

### STAKEHOLDERS

Family lawyers; family court judges; immigration adjudicators; divorce mediators; family researchers; family studies and law students; financial advisors; demographers; marriage counsellors and therapists; faith leaders

### AUTHORS AND AFFILIATIONS

Rachel Margolis, PhD (University of Western Ontario)  
Youjin Choi, PhD (University of Western Ontario)

### ALIGNMENT WITH UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

