



SUMMARY VERSION

PANDEMIC LESSONS ENDING CHILD & FAMILY POVERTY IS POSSIBLE

2022 Report Card on Child Poverty in Newfoundland and Labrador

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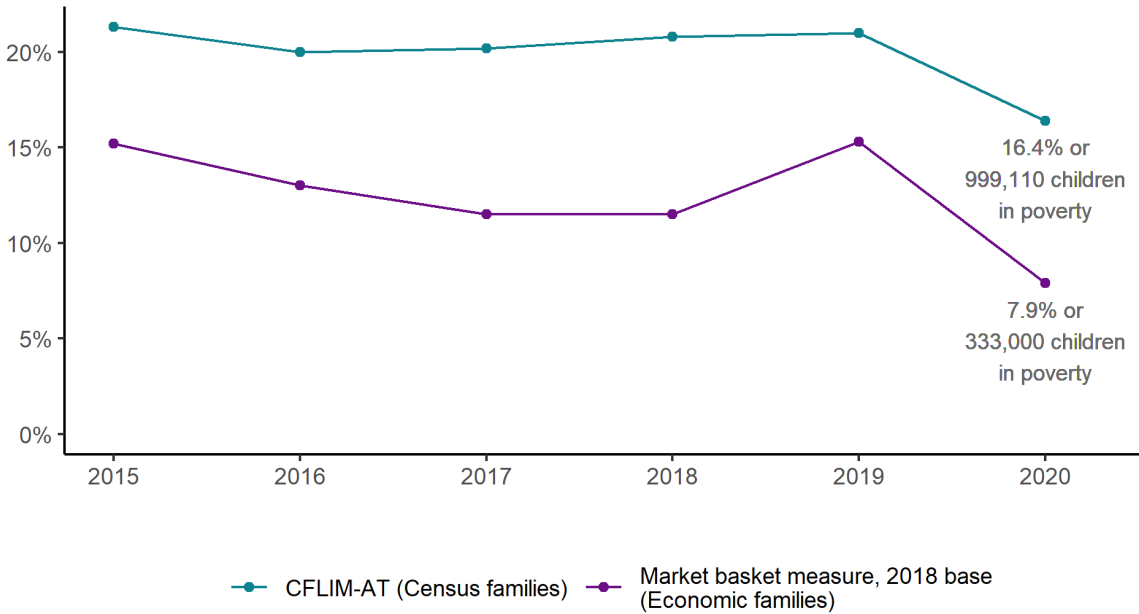
In collaboration with:



IN 2020, children experienced a historic disruption to their schooling, social lives and family lives. The full impacts of illness, deaths and public health measures on children during the “pandemic years” will likely not be visible for years to come.

There is one hopeful aspect of this story. **In 2020, child poverty rates fell across Canada and in Newfoundland and Labrador. The children and families who lived below the poverty line rose closer towards it, and the gap between the richest and poorest in the province narrowed.** Currently, there are 83,305 children and youth ages 0–17 in Newfoundland and Labrador. 15.4% of them live in poverty, which is 4.4% percentage points higher than the national child poverty rate.

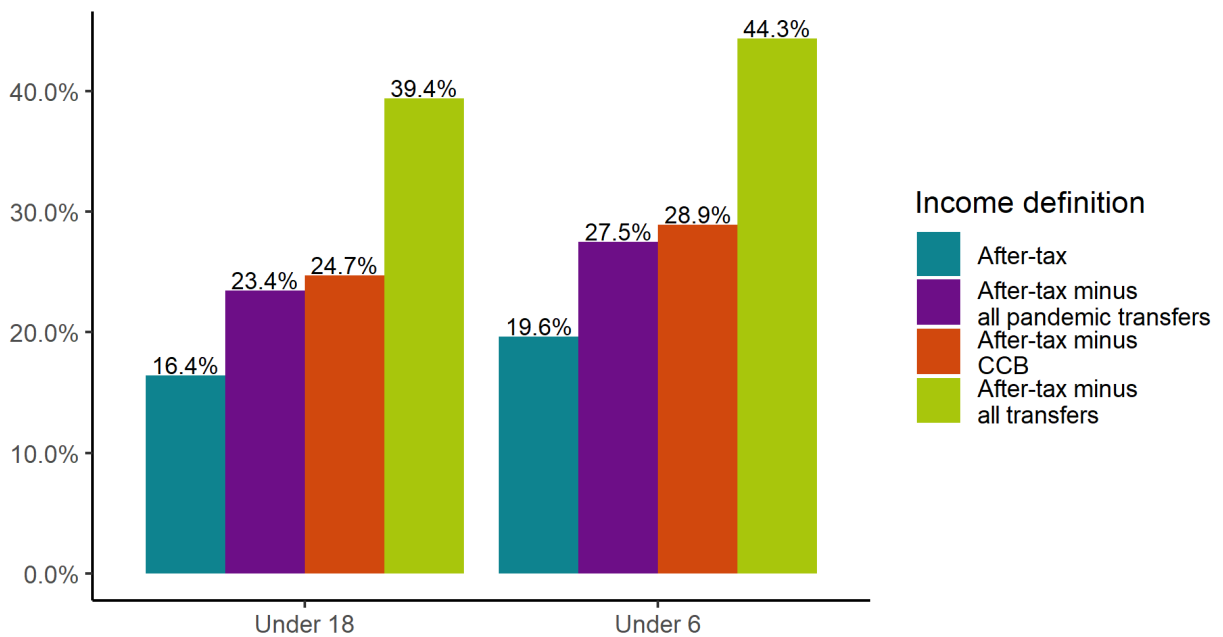
Number and percent of children in poverty, MBM and CFLIM-AT:



Source: Statistics Canada Table 11-10-0018-01, Statistics Canada Table 11-10-0135-01

This drop in child and family poverty can be largely attributed to pandemic benefits like the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). At the onset of the pandemic, many low-income families were encouraged to apply for these benefits—only to have them clawed back by provincial income support. Others, deemed retroactively ineligible, had repayment demanded by the Canada Revenue Agency. As a result, we expect this gain for children in poverty to be reduced—or even reversed—as the pandemic wears on, inflation rises and support measures end.

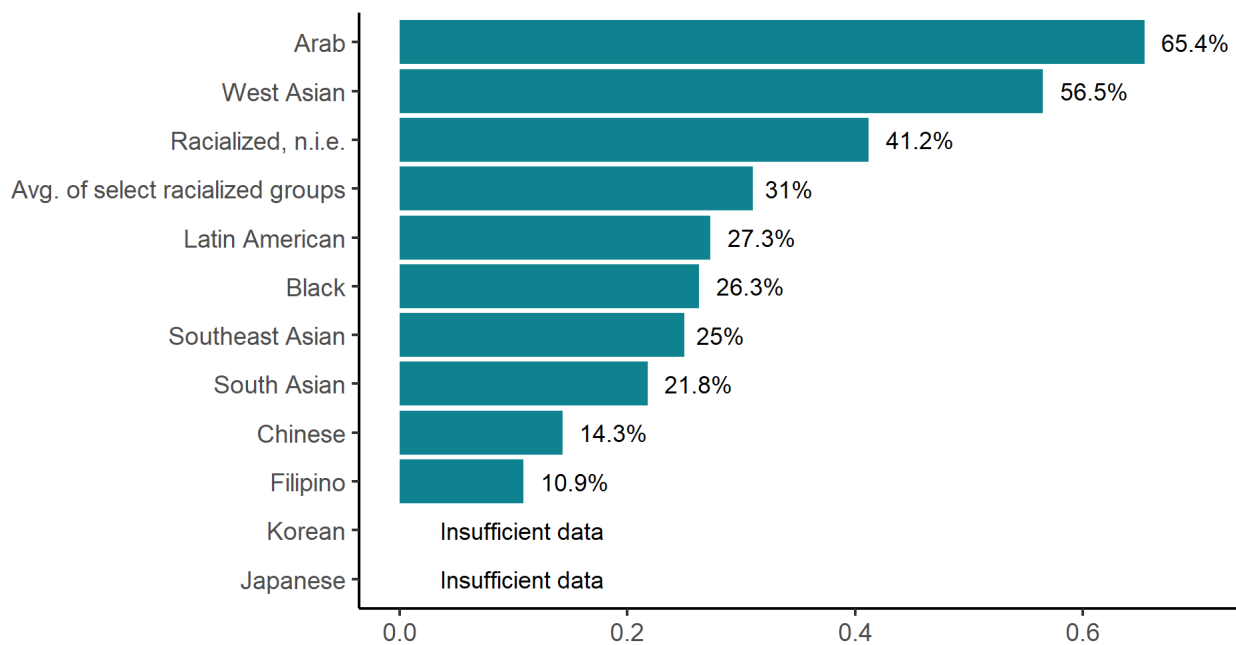
Percentage of children in families with adjusted income below the CFLIM-AT with and without government transfers:



Source: Custom tabulation from T1FF data

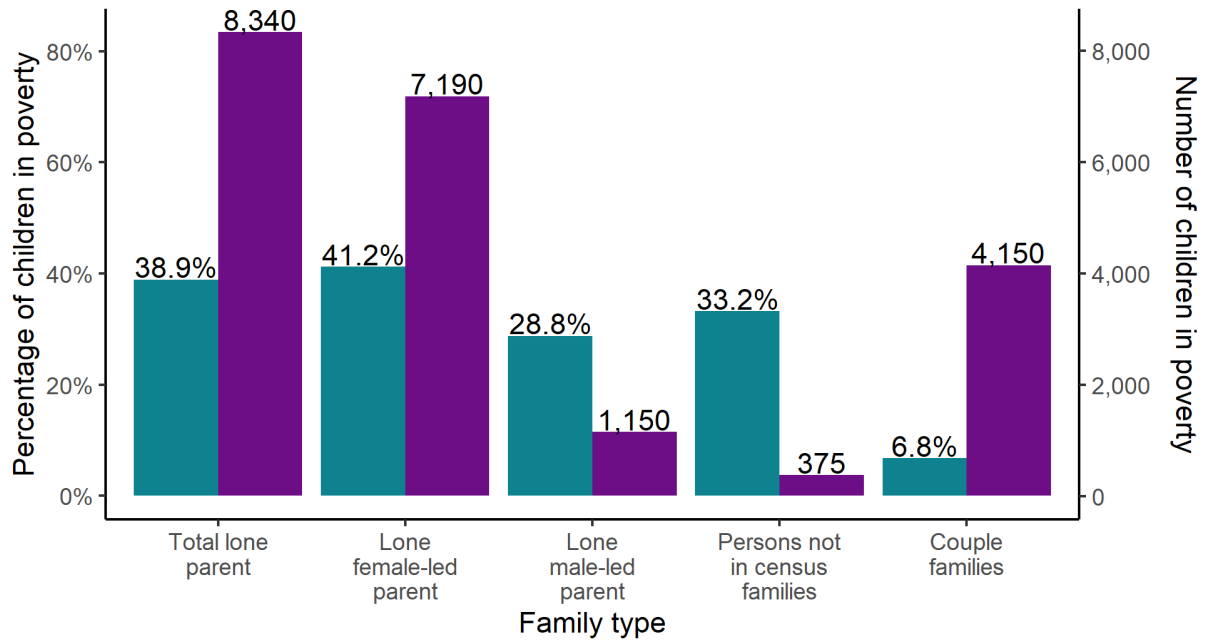
Still, poverty fell unfairly on the shoulders of communities who are already marginalized in Newfoundland and Labrador. Lone-parent families, Indigenous families, racialized families and new immigrants still have much higher rates of poverty. Although this report only examines a limited dataset and a narrow dimension of social exclusion (relative income), it can still give us a picture of how patriarchy, white supremacy and colonialism shape the possibilities available to all children and their families.

Percent of children 0-14 in poverty for select racialized groups:



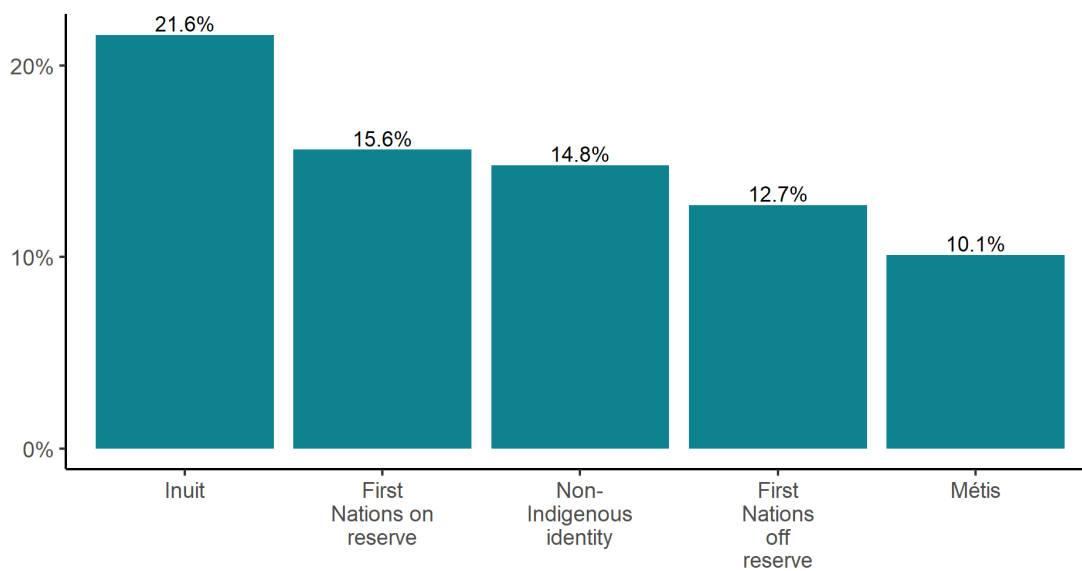
Source: Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016211

Percent of children in poverty by family type:



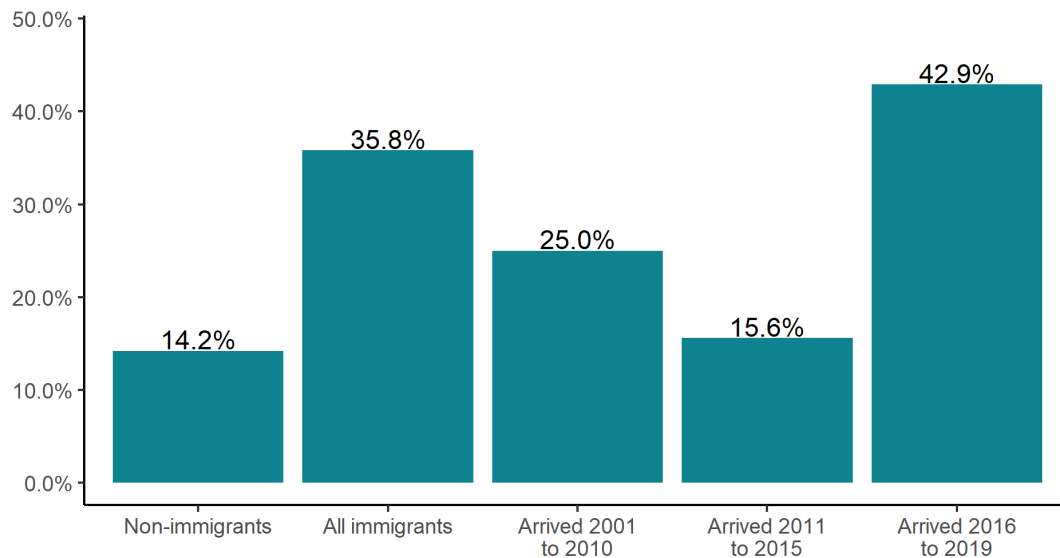
Source: Statistics Canada Table 98-10-0100-01

Percent of children in poverty in Indigenous communities:



Source: Statistics Canada Table 98-10-0283-01

Percent of children in poverty by immigration status and period:



Source: Statistics Canada Table 98-1003-14-01

The experience of 2020 suggests two main things. **Bold, barrier-free income supports can play an important role in reducing child and family poverty.** The drop in child poverty between 2019–2020 is the largest since another cash transfer, the Canada Child Benefit, was introduced in 2016.

However, income supports cannot eliminate inequities—we also need strong public services and systems change that balances the scales. Strong public services—like Early Learning and Child Care, public transit, and affordable housing play an essential role in controlling families’ costs of living. To address the gendered and racialized nature of child and family poverty, systemic reforms are needed to ensure nobody is left behind.

There is a way to end child poverty in Newfoundland and Labrador—as long as we have the will.



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