

Background

The Accounting Services Centre commissioned Groupe conseil Sondages to conduct an exploratory study designed to examine the behaviours of Canadians with respect to the use of coinage. The purpose was to learn about general usage of \$1, \$2, 25-cent, 10-cent, 5-cent and 1-cent coins.

Methodology

Data collection

A telephone survey of 658 respondents was conducted between April 12 and May 3, 2006. Households were selected at random and the adult, in each household, who most recently celebrated a birthday was asked to respond to the survey questions. The estimated rate of response was 29.2 % and the estimated rate of refusal was 52.3 %.

Sampling

The sample, which was prepared by Échantillonneur ASDE, was composed of 10,000 telephone numbers randomly extracted from Canadian telephone directories. In order to assure greater precision during the data segmentation, an oversampling was used for the Atlantic Provinces. The table below illustrates the distribution of the number of interviews conducted as well as the corresponding precision levels:

	Number of respondents (n)	Margin of error (95% confidence interval)
Western Canadian Provinces	180	± 7.3%
Province of Québec	143	± 8.2%
Province of Ontario	234	± 6.4%
Atlantic Provinces	45 (<i>100 with the oversampling</i>)	± 9.8%
Canada	602 (<i>excluding the oversampling</i>)	± 4.0%

Data processing

The data was processed using S.A.S. software. Responses of "I don't know" or "No response" were not included in the percentages. Furthermore, the data was adjusted in order to assure sample coverage with regard to the gender of respondents (for each of the provinces).¹ Finally, the oversampling data was only used when presenting results from the Atlantic Provinces (the total does not include the oversampling).

¹ Actual ratios are proportional to the 2001 Canadian census.

Exploratory Study: Canadians' Behaviours with Respect to Coin Usage

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed by the Accounting Services Centre in collaboration with the Groupe conseil Sondages. The questionnaire is available in APPENDIX 1.

Explanations concerning the codification of results

The main question the survey posed was: "In general, what do you do with your (X-cent coins)?" More precisely, the question was asked on a recurring basis for the following coins: pennies (1 cent), nickels (5 cents), dimes (10 cents), quarters (25 cents), and 1 and 2-dollar coins. This made it possible to group responses within different categories. The table below presents each of these categories with their respective definitions:

Category	Definition
Payment	When the respondent spends the coins and has no specific behaviour with respect to the accumulation of coins.
Accumulation and deposit at least once a year	When the respondent states that he/she saves the coins and deposits them at least once a year .
Accumulation and deposit less than once a year	When the respondent states that he/she saves the coins and deposits them less than once a year.
Accumulation for non-specific spending	When the respondent states that he/she saves the coins without depositing them and uses the accumulated amount for unspecified, non-specific, non-recurring expenses.
Accumulation for specific, regular expenses	When the respondent states that he/she saves the coins without depositing them and uses the accumulated amount for specific, regular (almost daily) expenses (i.e.: drinks, meals, newspapers, bus).
Accumulation for specific, sporadic expenses	When the respondent states that he/she saves the coins without depositing them and uses the accumulated amount for specific, more sporadic expenses (i.e.: car wash, parking).
Accumulation for family altruism or community charity	When the respondent states that he/she saves the coins without depositing them and uses the accumulated amount for the benefit of others (i.e.: children, church, charities).
Accumulation for special projects	When the respondent states that he/she saves the coins without depositing them and uses the accumulated amount for special projects (i.e.: vacations, trips, holiday spending).
Other	Other answers.

Exploratory Study: Canadians' Behaviours with Respect to Coin Usage

Results

The results show that at least one in every three Canadians uses coins for making payments. The payment method (answer most often given) is always found in the response "used for payment," regardless of the value of the coin. Moreover, there is no marked difference among the regions. The table below lists the responses given for each main region and the total for each of the coin values studied:

Use of \$1 and \$2 Coins by Geographic Area

(\$1 and \$2)	% West	% Québec	% Ontario	% Atlantic	% Total
Payment	65.1	66.4	67.6	65.5	65.6
Accumulation and deposit at least once a year	7.8	9.1	9.7	9.8	9.1
Accumulation and deposit less than once a year	5.1	2.1	5.3	3.7	4.4
Accumulation for non-specific spending	3.1	6.3	2.0	8.5	4.0
Accumulation for specific, regular expenses	6.0	6.3	5.1	4.4	5.6
Accumulation for specific, sporadic expenses	6.4	2.8	7.8	3.7	6.3
Accumulation for family altruism and community charity	5.0	4.2	1.6	2.5	3.3
Accumulation for projects	0.0	0.7	0.6	1.2	0.6
Other	1.6	2.1	0.4	0.7	1.1

Use of Quarters (25-cent coins) by Geographic Area

(25 cents)	% West	% Québec	% Ontario	% Atlantic	% Total
Payment	60.1	54.5	60.1	58.5	57.7
Accumulation and deposit at least once a year	8.0	10.7	11.0	17.1	10.7
Accumulation and deposit less than once a year	6.1	5.7	8.4	2.5	6.7
Accumulation for non-specific spending	4.6	9.3	3.3	6.6	5.3
Accumulation for specific, regular expenses	4.4	5.7	5.6	6.1	5.3
Accumulation for specific, sporadic expenses	10.2	5.7	8.3	1.9	7.9
Accumulation for family altruism and community charity	4.7	5.6	2.2	3.7	3.9
Accumulation for projects	0.0	1.4	0.6	3.0	1.1
Other	2.1	1.4	0.7	0.7	1.2

Exploratory Study: Canadians' Behaviours with Respect to Coin Usage

Use of Dimes (10-cent coins) by Geographic Area

(10 cents)	% West	% Québec	% Ontario	% Atlantic	% Total
Payment	50.2	50.2	52.4	51.1	50.2
Accumulation and deposit at least once a year	13.5	16.8	17.0	23.2	16.5
Accumulation and deposit less than once a year	12.6	9.9	13.1	7.9	11.9
Accumulation for non-specific spending	8.8	12.0	6.7	4.9	8.6
Accumulation for specific, regular expenses	3.9	2.1	4.8	4.2	3.8
Accumulation for specific, sporadic expenses	2.1	0.7	1.3	0.0	1.3
Accumulation for family altruism and community charity	7.6	6.3	3.8	3.7	5.6
Accumulation for projects	0.0	2.1	0.0	3.0	1.1
Other	1.2	0.0	0.9	2.0	1.0

Use of Nickels (5-cent coins) by Geographic Area

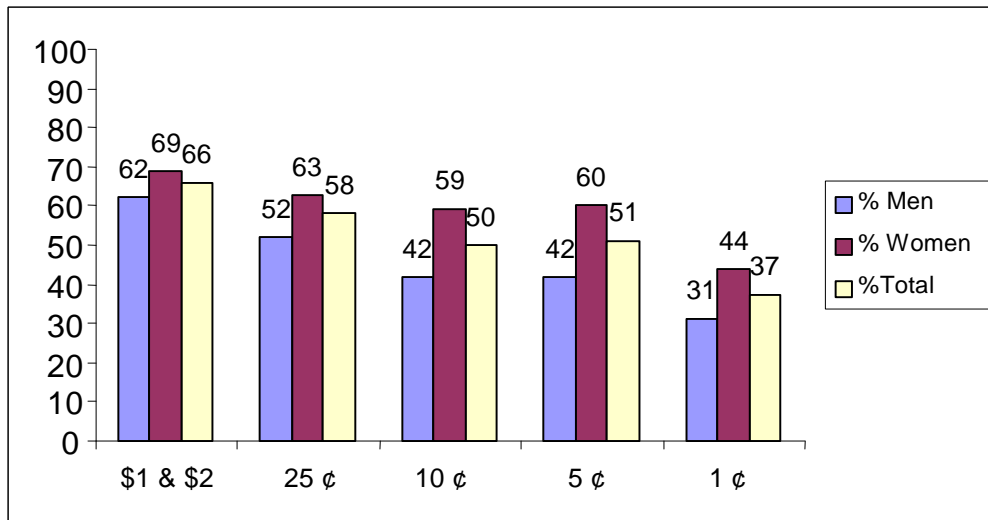
(5 cents)	% West	% Québec	% Ontario	% Atlantic	% Total
Payment	48.2	52.3	55.5	49.6	51.2
Accumulation and deposit at least once a year	14.0	16.8	15.9	24.0	16.6
Accumulation and deposit less than once a year	12.8	10.6	13.2	6.8	12.0
Accumulation for non-specific spending	8.7	11.2	5.6	7.3	8.0
Accumulation for specific, regular expenses	3.2	2.1	2.9	4.9	2.9
Accumulation for specific, sporadic expenses	1.6	0.0	1.3	0.0	1.0
Accumulation for family altruism and community charity	8.5	4.9	4.5	3.1	5.8
Accumulation for projects	0.0	1.4	0.6	3.1	1.1
Other	3.0	0.7	0.6	1.4	1.4

Use of Pennies (1-cent coins) by Geographic Area

(1 cent)	% West	% Québec	% Ontario	% Atlantic	% Total
Payment	36.5	38.6	40.1	35.0	37.4
Accumulation and deposit at least once a year	18.9	21.1	23.1	25.2	21.9
Accumulation and deposit less than once a year	16.8	18.4	17.1	13.0	17.1
Accumulation for non-specific spending	9.9	9.2	6.1	11.0	8.2
Accumulation for specific, regular expenses	1.1	1.4	2.4	3.8	2.1
Accumulation for specific, sporadic expenses	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.2
Accumulation for family altruism and community charity	13.3	7.8	7.8	5.7	9.2
Accumulation for projects	0.0	1.4	0.6	2.4	0.9
Other	3.5	2.1	2.4	4.0	3.0

It appears that the lower the value of the coin, the less it is used for payments. In fact, almost two Canadians in three (66%) use their \$1 and \$2 coins for payments. This percentage falls to 58% for quarters, approximately 50% for dimes and nickels and 37% for pennies. Moreover, this trend appears to be influenced more by women than by men. The diagram below illustrates the differences between the sexes for each of the coin values studied:

Use of Coins for Payment By Gender



An analysis of the above diagram also shows that, as a general rule, the lower the value of the coin, the greater the difference between men and women with respect to usage for payment. In fact, while there is a 7% difference between men and women for \$1 and \$2 coins, this difference increases to 11% for quarters and to 17% and 18% for dimes and nickels. However, we should note that, at the same time, the difference goes down to 13 % for the use of pennies. Based on

Exploratory Study: Canadians' Behaviours with Respect to Coin Usage

these results, we can conclude that **women use their small change for payment more than men do.**

Age also influences behaviours with respect to small change. The table below shows the use of coins by age for each of the coin values studied:

Use of Coins for Payment by Age, for Each Coin Value

	% between 18 and 25 (n=53)	% between 26 and 35 (n=91)	% between 36 and 45 (n=127)	% between 46 and 55 (n=129)	% between 56 and 65 (n=105)	% between 66 and 75 (n=48)	% over 75 years (n=38)
\$1 and \$2	61.1	58.6	59.7	64.7	77.1	67.2	80.3
25 cents	35.9	45.5	52.7	58.2	71.1	75.9	74.2
10 cents	27.4	40.2	45.5	46.0	66.2	73.4	62.1
5 cents	23.5	43.7	44.9	46.3	67.9	74.9	68.3
1 cent	13.6	30.2	33.3	33.4	54.6	52.9	47.4

Except for \$1 and \$2 coins, it appears that young people use their coins less frequently than their elders for payments. In fact, it is interesting to look at the percentages for each of the lines (for each of the coins), which reveals an upward trend in that respect. For example, almost one young person in four (23.5%) between the ages of 18 and 25 uses his/her nickels; this proportion rises to 74.9% for people between the ages of 66 and 75. **Generally speaking, it seems that the older we are, the more we use our coins for payments.**

Beyond defining which Canadians pay with their change, the survey made it possible to index the purchases and the special projects paid for by individuals who deposit their change. These individuals are very similar to those in the other response categories. In fact, 39.7% of respondents state that they use the money for vacations and trips, 30.8% use it for charitable acts benefiting their family and community, and 17.7% use it for gifts and special holiday purchases. The other components are disparate and difficult to classify.

It must be specified that the results did not reveal any trends with respect to the gross annual income of the household or to the language spoken by the respondents. Finally, the results presented for the sub-categories of responses are pertinent to the overall total but are difficult to analyze separately, given the number of respondents and the associated margins for error.

Conclusion

It appears that the lower the value of the coin, the less it is used for payment. Furthermore, women use their small change more often than men when paying, and there is a noticeable tendency to use our small change more and more as we grow older.

ANNEXE 1 – Questionnaire

INTRO

Parler à la personne qui a fêté sa fête en dernier <ville >

Bonjour, mon nom est \$I du département de recherche de Desjardins. Nous effectuons actuellement une courte étude pour connaître les habitudes des canadiens sur l'utilisation qu'ils font de leur monnaie. Pourrais-je parler à la dernière personne de 18 ans ou plus qui a célébré son anniversaire. Auriez-vous 2-3 minutes à m'accorder? \$n *Au besoin, spécifier que les données seront traitées de façon confidentielle

- Oui, procéder à l'entrevue
- Non

Q1

De façon générale, que faites-vous avec vos pièces de 1 dollar et de 2 dollar ?

- Je les utilise lorsque je paie
- Je les accumule et les dépose au moins une fois l'an
- Je les accumule et les dépose moins d'une fois l'an
- Autre (spécifier) :
- Nsp / Nrp

Q2

De façon générale, que faites-vous avec vos pièces de 25 cents?

- Je les utilise lorsque je paie
- Je les accumule et les dépose au moins une fois l'an
- Je les accumule et les dépose moins d'une fois l'an
- Autre (spécifier) :
- Nsp / Nrp

Q3

De façon générale, que faites-vous avec vos pièces de 10 cents?

- Je les utilise lorsque je paie
- Je les accumule et les dépose au moins une fois l'an
- Je les accumule et les dépose moins d'une fois l'an
- Autre (spécifier) :
- Nsp / Nrp

Exploratory Study: Canadians' Behaviours with Respect to Coin Usage

Q4

De façon générale, que faites-vous avec vos pièces de 5 cents?

- Je les utilise lorsque je paie
- Je les accumule et les dépose au moins une fois l'an
- Je les accumule et les dépose moins d'une fois l'an
- Autre (spécifier) :
- Nsp / Nrp

Q5

De façon générale, que faites-vous avec vos pièces de 1 cents ?

- Je les utilise lorsque je paie
- Je les accumule et les dépose au moins une fois l'an
- Je les accumule et les dépose moins d'une fois l'an
- Autre (spécifier) :
- Nsp / Nrp

Q6

Faites-vous des achats ou des projets spéciaux avec la monnaie que vous accumulez?

- Oui (spécifier) :
- Non
- nsp / Nrp
- Ne s'applique pas

Q7

Les prochaines questions seront utilisées pour des fins statistiques Quel est le revenu brut (avant impôt) de votre ménage?

- Moins de 25 000 \$
- Entre 25 000 et 34 999 \$
- Entre 35 000 et 44 999 \$
- Entre 45 000 et 54 999 \$
- Entre 55 000 et 64 999 \$
- Entre 65 000 et 74 999 \$
- Entre 75 000 et 84 999 \$
- Entre 85 000 et 94 999 \$
- Entre 95 000 et 104 999 \$
- 105 000 \$ et +
- Nsp / Nrp

Exploratory Study: Canadians' Behaviours with Respect to Coin Usage

Q8

Dans quelle catégorie d'âge vous situez-vous?

- Entre 18 et 25 ans
- Entre 26 et 35 ans
- Entre 36 et 45 ans
- Entre 46 et 55 ans
- Entre 56 et 65 ans
- Entre 66 et 75 ans
- Plus de 75 ans
- Nsp / Nrp

MERC2

C'est terminé, je vous remercie de votre bonne collaboration. ET AU NOM DE DESJARDINS, je vous souhaite une bonne fin de soirée. Aurevoir.

****N'oubliez pas de revenir corriger vos ouvertures ****

- Ok 1

SEXE

Inscrire le sexe

- Masculin
- Féminin

LANG

Inscrire la langue

- Français
- Anglais

Exploratory Study: Canadians' Behaviours with Respect to Coin Usage

INTRO

Parler à la personne qui a fêté sa fête en dernier <ville >

Hello, my name is \$I from the Desjardins research department. We are conducting a short study to find out the habits of canadian adults regarding the use of their change. May I speak to the person who last celebrated their birthday and who is at least 18 years old. Could you spare 2-3 minutes? **If need be, specify that the answers are anonymous and confidential*

- Yes, proceed with the interview
- No

Q1

In general, what do you do with your 1 or 2 dollar coins ?

- I use them when I pay
- I accumulate them and deposit them at least once a year
- I accumulate them and deposit them less than once a year
- Other (specify) :
- DNK / DNA

Q2

In general, what do you do with your quarters (25 cents)?

- I use them when I pay
- I accumulate them and deposit them at least once a year
- I accumulate them and deposit them less than once a year
- Other (specify) :
- DNK / DNA

Q3

In general, what do you do with your dimes (10 cents)?

- I use them when I pay
- I accumulate them and deposit them at least once a year
- I accumulate them and deposit them less than once a year
- Other (specify) :
- DNK / DNA

Q4

In general, what do you do with your nickels (5 cents)?

- I use them when I pay
- I accumulate them and deposit them at least once a year
- I accumulate them and deposit them less than once a year
- Other (specify) :
- DNK / DNA

Q5

In general, what do you do with your pennies (1 cent)?

- I use them when I pay
- I accumulate them and deposit them at least once a year
- I accumulate them and deposit them less than once a year
- Other (specify) :
- DNK / DNA

Q6

Do you make purchases or have special projects with the change you accumulate?

- Yes (specify) :
- No
- DNK / DNA
-

Q7

The following questions are for statistical purposes only What is the gross salary of your household (before taxes)?

- Less than 25 000 \$
- Between 25 000 and 34 999 \$
- Between 35 000 and 44 999 \$
- Between 45 000 and 54 999 \$
- Between 55 000 and 64 999 \$
- Between 65 000 and 74 999 \$
- Between 75 000 and 84 999 \$
- Between 85 000 and 94 999 \$
- Between 95 000 and 104 999 \$
- 105 000 \$ and more
- DNK / DNA

Exploratory Study: Canadians' Behaviours with Respect to Coin Usage

Q8

In which age category are you situated?

- Between 18 and 25 years
- Between 26 and 35 years
- Between 36 and 45 years
- Between 46 and 55 years
- Between 56 and 65 years
- Between 66 and 75 years
- More than 75 years
- DNK / DNA

MERC2

This now concludes the questionnaire. I would like to thank you for your kind cooperation. On behalf of Desjardins, we hope you have an enjoyable evening. Good bye.

****N'oubliez pas de revenir corriger vos ouvertures ****

- Ok

SEXE

Inscrire le sexe

- Masculin
- Féminin

LANG

- Français
- Anglais