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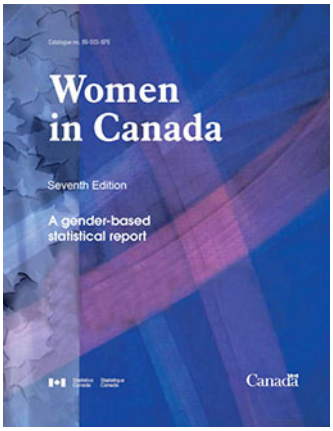
Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report

Women and Paid Work



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.	not available for any reference period
..	not available for a specific reference period
...	not applicable
0	true zero or a value rounded to zero
0^s	value rounded to 0 (zero) where there is a meaningful distinction between true zero and the value that was rounded
^{p}	preliminary
^{r}	revised
x	suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
^{E}	use with caution
F	too unreliable to be published
*	significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

Correction note:

On March 9, 2017, a correction was made in the first paragraph of the sub-section entitled "Employment rate of mothers increases with age of the youngest child." The employment rate of women with no children under the age of 25 grew by 12.0 percentage points between 1976 and 2015, not 2.0 percentage points as was originally stated.

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Women and Paid Work

Introduction

Based on the Labour Force Survey (LFS), 82.0% of women in the core working ages of 25 to 54 years (6 million) participated in the labour market in 2015. This compared to 21.6% (563,000) of women in 1950[1] and 65.2% (3.3 million) in 1983. Although women continue to be somewhat less likely than their male counterparts to participate in the labour market, this gender disparity[2] has decreased considerably over the years, from 75.5 percentage points in 1950 to 28.3 percentage points in 1983 and 8.9 percentage points in 2015. In spite of this trend, women's experiences of paid work tend to differ from those of men, being shaped to a greater extent by their caregiving roles[3,4,5,6] and/or their employers' presumptions of these roles.[7,8]

Using primarily annual data from the LFS, this chapter of *Women in Canada* examines women's labour market experiences in comparison with men's and, where relevant, explores how they have evolved over time. Specifically, historical trends in women's labour force participation in Canada are documented and situated against other G-7 countries. In addition, employment patterns across a variety of personal and work characteristics are considered: province, educational attainment, marital status, presence of dependent children and age of youngest child in the household, lone parenthood, work hours, self-employment, sector of employment (e.g., public or private), "precarious" employment (i.e., part-time and/or temporary employment), industry, and occupation. Unemployment patterns by age, province, and reason are also considered, including Employment Insurance claims and beneficiaries.

Most analyses in this chapter focus on women (and men) in the core working ages of 25 to 54 years, as youth's (15 to 24 years) labour market experiences tend to be shaped by school attendance and, in the case of those 55 years and older, their labour market experiences tend to be shaped by retirement. However, gender differences in labour market indicators among young and older women are considered separately at the end of this chapter.

Gender often overlaps with other social characteristics, such as visible minority status, Aboriginal status, immigrant status (i.e., Canadian-born or foreign-born) and class. These social characteristics may intersect, creating diverse labour market experiences among women (and men). In this chapter, labour market indicators for women versus men are not further disaggregated by the aforementioned social characteristics, as they are covered in other chapters of *Women in Canada*.

Data Source: Labour Force Survey (LFS)

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a household survey conducted monthly by Statistics Canada. It provides timely information on major labour market trends by dividing the working-age population into three mutually exclusive categories—employed, unemployed and not in the labour force—and collecting data on a variety of descriptive and explanatory variables. The LFS is based on a sample of approximately 56,000 households. Excluded from the survey's coverage are: persons living on reserves and other Aboriginal settlements in the provinces, full-time members of the Canadian Armed Forces, the institutionalized population, and households in extremely remote areas with low population density. Although the LFS is conducted nationwide, the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut are not included in the national totals provided in this chapter as a different methodology is used in the territories. Statistics from the LFS presented here are based on monthly data that have been annualized through averaging.

Although the LFS was introduced in 1945, a large-scale revision of the questionnaire and sample design occurred in 1976. For this reason, 1976 serves as the starting point for most series presented in this chapter. Occupational classification begins in 1987, as that is as far back as the series was revised upon the introduction of a new coding scheme.

For more information, please refer to the *Guide to the Labour Force Survey* or the *History of the Canadian Labour Force Survey, 1945 to 2016*.

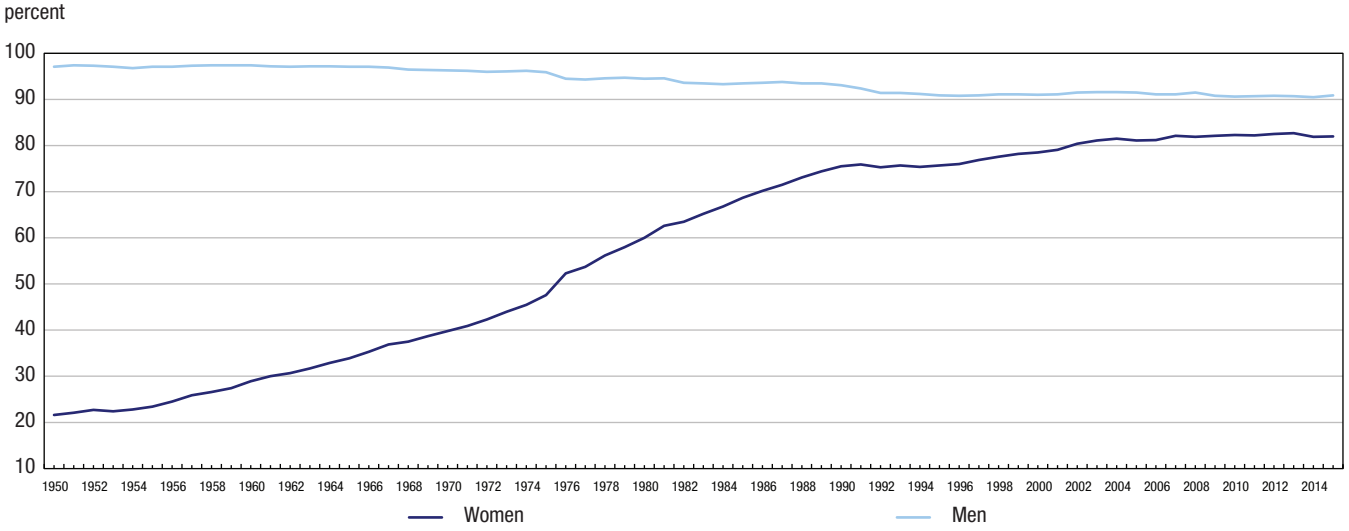
1. The figures covering the period of 1950 to 1965 are based on historical data from the LFS, which exclude Newfoundland.
2. In this chapter, a number of terms are used interchangeably to refer to the difference between men and women in a given labour market indicator, employment characteristic, or wages, including gender disparity and gender gap.
3. Beaujot, Roderic and Zenaida R. Ravenera. 2009. "Family models for earning and caring: Implications for child care and for family policy." *Canadian Studies in Population* 36 (1-2): 145-166.
4. Mennino, Sue Falter and April Brayfield. 2002. "Job-family trade-offs: The multidimensional effects of gender." *Work and Occupations* 29 (2): 226-256.
5. Martinengo, Giuseppe, Jenet I. Jacob and E. Jeffrey Hill. 2010. "Gender and the work-family interface: Exploring differences across the family life course." *Journal of Family Issues* 21 (10): 1363-1390.
6. Bianchi, Suzanne M. 2000. "Maternal employment and time with children: Dramatic change or surprising continuity?" Demography 37(4): 401-414.
7. Acker, Joan. 1990. "Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: A theory of gendered organizations." *Gender and Society* 4 (2): 139-158.
8. Williams, Joan. 2001. *Unbending Gender: Why Family and Work Conflict and What to Do About It.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Women in the labour market: Trends over time in Canada and internationally

Of the many social and economic changes in the post-World War II period, one of the most profound is the dramatic increase in the labour force participation of women.[9,10] The upsurge in women with breadwinning roles has been facilitated by interrelated social changes that include the evolution of norms regarding gender roles, particularly for wives and mothers, in the wake of the women's movement; the invention of electric appliances that lessen the time required to perform housework; the introduction of the birth control pill and reduced fertility; the legalization of divorce, and later the removal of fault-based grounds for divorce; and the expansion of educational and job opportunities with the shift from a manufacturing to service-based economy.[11]

Based on data from the LFS, women's participation in the labour market increased by 60.4 percentage points between 1950 and 2015, from 21.6% to 82.0% (Chart 1). Between 1950 and 1990, the labour force participation of women grew an average of 1.4 percentage points per year. Since 1991, the rate of growth has slowed to an average of 0.3 percentage points per year.

Chart 1
Participation rates of people aged 25 to 54, Canada, 1950 to 2015



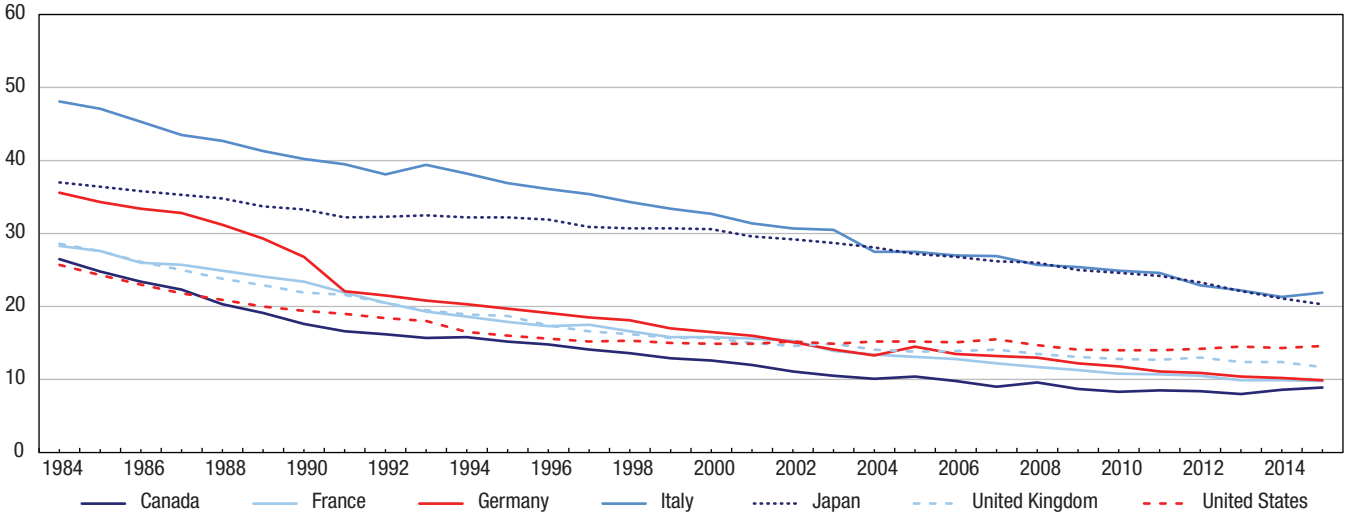
Note: Data covering the period of 1950 to 1965 exclude Newfoundland and Labrador.
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM table 282-0002 and custom tabulations.

While women's labour force participation trended upward between 1950 and 2015,[12] men's trended downward to some extent (Chart 1). In 2015, 90.9% of men participated in the labour market, compared to 97.1% in 1950—a decrease of 6.2 percentage points. This reflects the erosion of "good" job opportunities for men, particularly for those with lower levels of educational attainment, coinciding with broader economic shifts, including technological advances, globalization and the transition from a manufacturing-based economy to a service-based economy.[13] Due to these converging trends, the gender participation gap—defined as the difference between the labour force participation rates of men and women—decreased from 75.5 percentage points in 1950 to 28.3 percentage points in 1983 and 8.9 percentage points in 2015.

9. Crompton, Susan and Michael Vickers. 2000. "One hundred years of labour force." *Canadian Social Trends* 57: 2-14. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2000001/article/5086-eng.pdf?contentType=application%2Fpdf.
10. Goldin, Claudia. 2014. "A grand convergence: Its last chapter." *American Economic Review* 104(4): 1091-1119.
11. Goldin, Claudia. 2006. "The quiet revolution that transformed women's employment, education and family." *American Economic Review* 96(2): 1-21.
12. It is well established that, in Canada (as well as in the United States), women's labour force participation rate stagnated in the early to mid-1990s at around 75% (Drolet, Marie, Sharanjit Uppal and Sébastien LaRochelle-Côté. 2016. "The Canada-U.S. gap in women's labour market participation." *Insights on Canadian Society*, catalogue no. 75-006-X. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Available at: http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/olc-cel/olc.action?ObjId=75-006-X2016001146 51&ObjType=47&lang=en&limit=0). This led some observers to question the continuation of the upward trend in women's labour force participation, until it resumed in the late 1990s.
13. Autor, David and Melanie Wasserman. 2013. "Wayward sons: The emerging gender gap in labor markets and education." Washington, DC: Third Way. Available at: http://content.thirdway.org/publications/662/Third_Way_Report_-_NEXT_Wayward_Sons-The_Emerging_Gender_Gap_in_Labor_Markets_and_Education.pdf.

In the context of the G-7 countries,[14] Canada aligns favorably with respect to the gap between the labour force participation rates of men and women, both historically and currently (Chart 2).[15] In 1984, the first year for which labour market data is available for all of the G-7 countries, the United States had the smallest gender participation gap (25.7 percentage points), followed by Canada (26.5 percentage points). By 1989, this disparity had decreased in Canada such that it was the smallest among the G-7 countries at 19.1 percentage points.[16] With continued declines in the ensuing years, the gender participation gap in Canada remained the lowest among its peers in 2015 (8.9 percentage points).

Chart 2
Gender participation gap of people aged 25 to 54 in G7 countries, 1984 to 2015



Source: The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), employment and labour market statistics.

Definition of key labour market indicators

There are three key measures of labour market activity: the employment rate, the unemployment rate, and the labour force participation rate. In effect, the population is divided into three groups based on how they are related to the labour market. An individual is employed when he/she does any paid work at a job or business, in the context of an employer-employee relationship or self-employment (*Guide to the Labour Force Survey*). Conversely, an individual is unemployed when he/she is without work, but he/she is looking for work and it is available for work. For an individual to be considered part of the labour force, he/she must be either employed or unemployed, according to the preceding definitions. It follows that an individual is not in the labour force if he/she is neither employed nor unemployed, is unable or not available for work, and did not search for work.

For a particular group, the employment rate is defined as the number of employed people in that group expressed as a percentage of the total population for that group. Similarly, the unemployment rate is defined as the number of unemployed people in a given group expressed as a percentage of the labour force (number of employed and unemployed) for that group. The labour force participation rate is defined as the labour force in a given group expressed as a percentage of the total population for that group.

Since this chapter relates to paid work, the focus is primarily on the employment rate as opposed to the participation rate, although the unemployment rate is considered separately. The participation rate includes both those with any kind of job in the labour market and those seeking paid work. The combination of employed and unemployed people in one figure can obscure gender differences between the sexes in employment and unemployment experiences.

14. The G-7 countries are the seven major advanced economies, as reported by the International Monetary Fund: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States.
15. The gender participation gap is used for international comparison, as opposed to women's labour force participation rate, as a means of controlling for differences between countries in levels of labour force participation.
16. According to research by Drolet, Uppal and LaRochelle-Côté (2016), over the past two decades, women's labour force participation rates have diverged in Canada and the United States, in favor of the former. For women aged 25 to 44, rising levels of educational attainment completely explained the increase in their labour force participation rate in Canada. For women aged 45 to 54, rising levels of educational attainment explained one-third of the increase in their labour force participation in Canada.

Employment patterns

The gender employment gap is greater in census metropolitan areas with high day-care fees

Provincial variation in employment rates is an enduring feature of the economic landscape in Canada. The Atlantic region—composed of Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick—has persistently lower employment rates than the rest of the country. Quebec has also had an employment rate that is below the national average, as did British Columbia. On the other hand, historically, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta have been the provinces with high employment rates.

Given provincial variability in employment levels, the most meaningful way to look at gender in this regard involves calculating the difference between the employment rates of men and women within provinces, and then comparing the resulting gender employment gap between provinces (Table 1). Notably, the provinces with the highest employment rates in general also had the largest gender employment gaps in 2015: Alberta (11.3 percentage points), Ontario (8.9 percentage points), Manitoba (8.8 percentage points), and Saskatchewan (8.2 percentage points). In the Prairie region, the employment rates of both women and men exceeded the national average, but they did so to a greater extent for men. In Ontario and British Columbia, the employment rates of women were below the national average, while the employment rates of men were equivalent to the national average.

The gender employment gap was smallest in New Brunswick (1.3 percentage points), Newfoundland and Labrador (2.8 percentage points), Nova Scotia (3.1 percentage points), Prince Edward Island (3.2 percentage points), and Quebec (3.9 percentage points) (Table 1). In these provinces, the employment rates of women were mostly above the national average, while the employment rates of men were below the national average.

Among census metropolitan areas (CMAs), those in Ontario and British Columbia had some of the largest gender employment gaps, led by Abbotsford-Mission (14.8 percentage points), Toronto (12.6 percentage points), and Vancouver (11.8 percentage points) (Table 1). Previous research demonstrates that the labour supply of mothers is sensitive to variations in the cost of childcare.[17] Interestingly, Toronto had the highest childcare fees in Canada, and those in Vancouver were among the highest (Table 1).[18] The cost of childcare in these CMAs, along with the limited availability of regulated spaces, may play a role in the gender employment gap to the extent that they inhibit mothers' participation in the labour market. In comparison with Toronto and Vancouver, the gender employment gap in Montreal was 6.4 percentage points. Women's employment rate exceeded men's by a small margin in two other CMAs in Quebec: Sherbrooke and Trois-Rivières. Additionally, the gender employment gap was among the smallest in Saguenay and Québec City. In Ottawa-Gatineau, the gender employment gap on the Quebec side was 2.6 percentage points, compared to 7.3 percentage points on the Ontario side. This likely reflects Quebec's universal low-fee childcare program,[19] launched in 1997, as well as the increase in the refundable provincial tax credit for daycare expenses in 2009, benefitting parents of children in non-subsidized spaces.[20,21] As a result of these programs, the cost of childcare in Quebec was the lowest in the country by a significant margin in 2015, regardless of the age group of children considered.

17. Baker, Michael, Johnathan Gruber and Kevin Milligan. 2008. "Universal childcare, maternal labor supply, and family well-being." *Journal of Political Economy* 116 (4): 709-745.
18. MacDonald, David and Thea Klinger. 2015. "They go up so fast: 2015 child care fees in Canadian cities." Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. Available at: https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2015/12/They_Go_Up_So_Fast_2015_Child_Care_Fees_in_Canadian_Cities.pdf.
19. Quebec's universal low-fee childcare program initially targeted 4-year-olds. At the same time, full-day kindergarten was extended to all 5-year-olds. In 1998, low-fee before and after school care was offered to all 5-to-12-year-olds. The program was then progressively extended to younger children, opening to all children aged 4 and under in 2000. Quebec's universal low-fee childcare program originally cost all parents $5.00 per day, with this fee being raised to $7.00 per day in 2004. In 2015, the cost to parents for eligible childcare spaces became tied to their family income. Parents now pay $7.30 per day directly to their childcare provider, and an additional amount to Revenu Québec when they file their income tax.
20. Lefebvre, Pierre, Philip Merrigan and Francis Roy-Desrosiers. N.d. *Québec's childcare universal low fees policy 10 years after: effects, costs and benefits.* Available at: http://www.cirano.qc.ca/icirano/public/pdf/20101202_P-Lefebvre_2.pdf.
21. Fortin, Pierre, Luc Godbout and Suzie St-Cerny. N.d. *Impact of Quebec's universal low-fee childcare program on female labour force participation, domestic income, and government budgets.* Available at: http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/atkinson/UserFiles/File/News/Fortin-Godbout-St_Cerny_eng.pdf.

Table 1
Employment rate by sex, province and census metropolitain area; and median monthly childcare fees for selected cities, 2015

	Employment rate			Median monthly childcare fees		
	Women	Men	Difference	Infant[1]	Toddler[2]	Preschooler[3]
	percent			dollars		
Canada	**77.5**	**85.3**	**-7.8**	**…**	**…**	**…**
Newfoundland and Labrador	**73.2**	**76.0**	**-2.8**	**…**	**…**	**…**
St. John's	81.4	83.0	-1.6	1,400	955	857
Prince Edward Island	**80.4**	**83.6**	**-3.2**	**…**	**…**	**…**
Nova Scotia	**78.7**	**81.8**	**-3.1**	**…**	**…**	**…**
Halifax	80.9	86.3	-5.4	867	784	785
New Brunswick	**79.1**	**80.4**	**-1.3**	**…**	**…**	**…**
Moncton	82.5	86.4	-3.9	…	…	…
Saint John	81.2	83.1	-1.9	846	694	651
Quebec[4]	**80.1**	**84.0**	**-3.9**	**…**	**…**	**…**
Saguenay	81.2	82.0	-0.8	…	…	…
Québec	88.6	89.9	-1.3	174	174	174
Sherbrooke	83.7	82.3	1.4	…	…	…
Trois-Rivières	82.4	81.0	1.4	…	…	…
Montréal	77.2	83.6	-6.4	174	174	174
Ottawa–Gatineau, Quebec part	84.3	86.9	-2.6	174	174	174
Ontario	**76.4**	**85.3**	**-8.9**	**…**	**…**	**…**
Ottawa–Gatineau, Ontario part	80.3	87.6	-7.3	976	1,194	987
Kingston	78.5	84.8	-6.3	…	…	…
Peterborough	76.1	80.3	-4.2	…	…	…
Oshawa	78.8	84.7	-5.9	…	…	…
Toronto	73.9	86.5	-12.6	1,736	1,325	1,033
Hamilton	79.2	83.6	-4.4	1,239	1,020	852
St. Catharines–Niagara	81.1	84.8	-3.7	…	…	…
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo[5]	81.3	87.5	-6.2	868	825	813
Brantford	79.7	86.1	-6.4	…	…	…
Guelph	85.0	88.7	-3.7	…	…	…
London	75.6	83.6	-8.0	1,180	1,085	970
Windsor	73.0	80.0	-7.0	977	846	760
Barrie	77.5	87.8	-10.3	…	…	…
Greater Sudbury	77.2	82.9	-5.7	…	…	…
Thunder Bay	80.3	81.0	-0.7	…	…	…
Manitoba	**79.2**	**88.0**	**-8.8**	**…**	**…**	**…**
Winnipeg	80.7	86.7	-6.0	651	451	451
Saskatchewan	**80.6**	**88.8**	**-8.2**	**…**	**…**	**…**
Regina	83.9	90.4	-6.5	800	605	560
Saskatoon	78.9	87.1	-8.2	850	710	655
Alberta	**77.0**	**88.3**	**-11.3**	**…**	**…**	**…**
Calgary	79.5	88.0	-8.5	1,075	960	910
Edmonton	77.2	87.6	-10.4	900	790	800
British Columbia	**75.9**	**85.4**	**-9.5**	**…**	**…**	**…**
Kelowna	77.4	86.0	-8.6	…	…	…
Abbotsford–Mission	73.1	87.9	-14.8	…	…	…
Vancouver	74.8	86.6	-11.8	1,225	1,180	905
Victoria	82.3	82.4	-0.1	…	…	…

… not applicable
1. Children under 18 months.
2. Children aged 1.5 to 3 years.
3. Children aged 3 to 5 years.
4. In Quebec, childcare fees are consistent across CMAs.
5. The median monthly childcare fees are for Kitchener only.
Sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM tables 282-0002 and 282-0129; MacDonald, David and Thea Klinger. 2015. "They go up so fast: 2015 child care fees in Canadian cities." Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

The gender employment gap decreases as educational attainment increases, but it does not disappear

Over the past two and a half decades, there has been a sustained upward trend in educational attainment among Canadians, led by women.[22,23,24] The proportion of women with a university degree has grown twice as much as the proportion of men, such that women outnumbered men among university-degree holders by a sizable margin in 2015 (6.5 percentage points). Specifically, between 1990, when the educational attainment variable was introduced in the LFS, and 2015, the proportion of women with a university degree increased from 13.7% to 35.1% (21.4 percentage points). Over the same period, the proportion of men with a university degree increased from 17.1% to 28.6% (11.5 percentage points). In the United States, Goldin (2006) interprets women's greater investments in education (i.e., human capital) since the 1970s as being indicative of the new-found centrality of employment and occupation to their identity and social worth.[25] She suggests that it also reflects a shift in women's horizons, wherein employment becomes part of a long-term career as opposed to a job.[26]

Higher levels of educational attainment are integral to economic well-being, as they tend to insulate people from unemployment (Table 2). Interestingly, higher levels of educational attainment matter more for women's employment than they do for men's. This is indicated by the greater variability of women's employment rates across levels of educational attainment.[27] For example, in 2015, the employment rate of women with a high school diploma was 69.3% compared to 83.1% for those with a university degree—a difference of 13.8 percentage points. The employment rate of men with a high school diploma was 81.9% compared to 89.9% for those with a university degree—a difference of 8.0 percentage points. That education is more influential for women's employment than it is for men's may reflect the combination of traditional gender roles for women that emphasize the primacy of domesticity, and the lower "opportunity costs" (i.e., foregone wages) associated with being unemployed and not in the labour force for those with lower levels of education.

Table 2
Employment rates of people aged 25 to 54 by highest level of educational attainment, Canada, 2015

	Employment rate		
	Women	Men	Difference
	percent		percentage points
Total, all education levels	**77.5**	**85.3**	**-7.8**
No degree, certificate or diploma	49.0	67.2	-18.2
High school graduate	69.3	81.9	-12.6
High school graduate, some postsecondary	70.5	80.5	-10.0
Postsecondary certificate or diploma	82.1	88.7	-6.6
Without high school graduation	72.5	80.3	-7.8
With high school graduation	82.5	89.3	-6.8
University degree	83.1	89.9	-6.8
Bachelor's degree	83.1	90.3	-7.2
Above bachelor's degree	83.3	89.3	-6.0

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM table 282-0209.

The gender employment gap tends to narrow with increasing levels of educational attainment. The difference between the employment rates of women and men was 18.2 percentage points among those with less than high school (49.0% vs. 67.2%, respectively), 12.6 percentage points among high school graduates (69.3% vs. 81.9%), 6.6 percentage points among those with a postsecondary certificate or diploma (82.1% vs. 88.7%), and 6.8 percentage points among those with a university degree (83.1% vs. 89.9%). It is noteworthy that the gender employment gap exists even among those with a university degree.

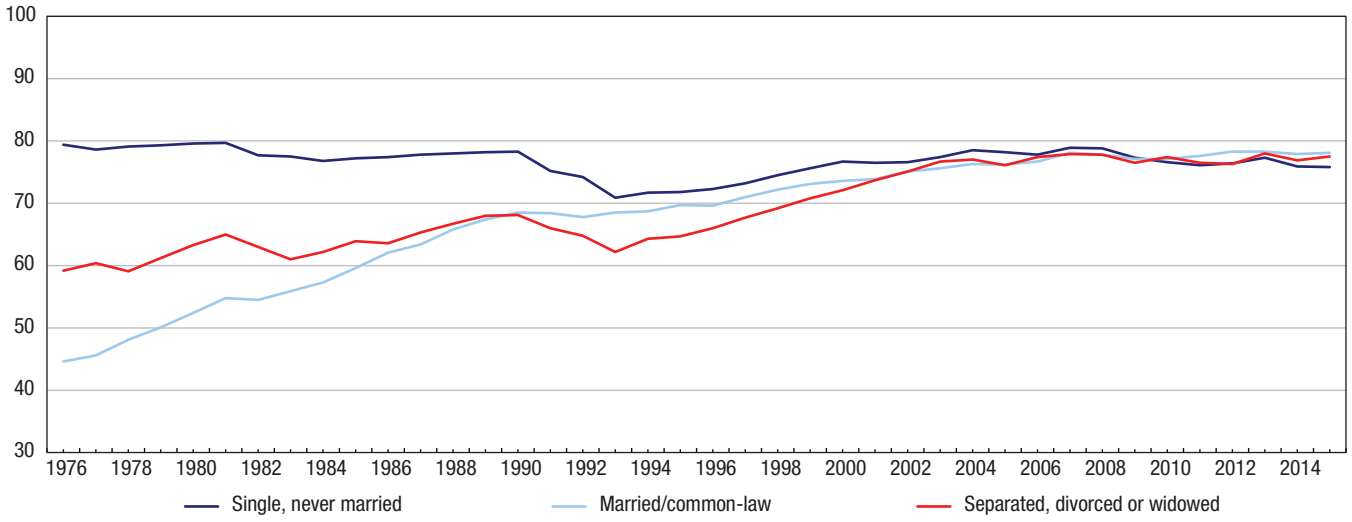
22. Turcotte, Martin. 2011. "Women and education." *Women in Canada: A gender-based statistical report*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 89-503-X. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-503-x/2010001/article/11542-eng.htm.
23. Ferguson, Sarah-Jane. 2016. "Women and education: Qualifications, skills and technology." *Women in Canada: A gender-based statistical report*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 89-503-X. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-503-x/2015001/article/14640-eng.htm.
24. Statistics Canada. 2011. "Education in Canada: Attainment, field of study and location of study." Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Available at: http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/99-012-x/99-012-x2011001-eng.pdf.
25. Goldin, Claudia. 2006. "The quiet revolution that transformed women's employment, education and family." *American Economic Review* 96(2): 1-21.
26. Ibid.
27. This finding holds even when 25- to 54-year-olds are divided into smaller "generational" groups.

The association of marriage with reduced employment among women has weakened

Married women played an important role in the post-war increase in the employment rate of women as a whole. The employment rate of married women (including those living common-law)[28] grew more than that of single, never-married women or separated, divorced or widowed women (Chart 3), as a substantial proportion of single, never-married women has always worked.[29] Specifically, the employment rate of married women grew by 33.5 percentage points between 1976 and 2015, from 44.6% to 78.1%. In contrast, the employment rate of separated, divorced, or widowed women grew by 18.3 percentage points over the same period, from 59.2% to 77.5%, while the employment rate of single, never-married women decreased by 3.6 percentage points, from 79.4% to 75.8%.

Historically, marital status has affected the employment of men and women differently. Given traditional gender roles, which emphasize breadwinning for men and housework and childcare for women, marriage has corresponded to increased employment for men and decreased employment for women. Since the beginning of the modern LFS in 1976, married men (including those living common-law) have had the highest employment rate, followed by separated, divorced or widowed (hereafter referred to as "previously married") men and single, never-married (hereafter referred to as "single") men (Chart 4). In contrast, married women have always had the lowest employment rate, followed by single women and previously-married women until 1992, after which time the latter two groups were inverted (Chart 3).

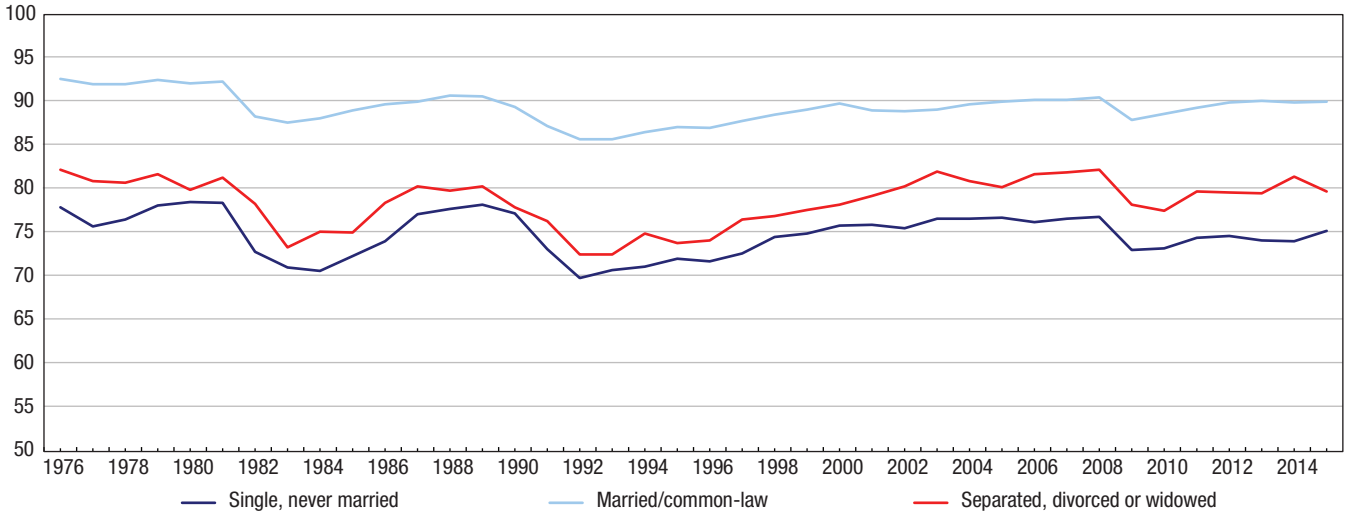
Chart 3
Employment rates of women aged 25 to 54 by marital status, 1976 to 2015



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulations.

28. Same-sex couples cannot be consistently distinguished from heterosexual couples using LFS data.
29. Benoit, Cecilia. 2000. *Women, Work and Social Rights: Canada in Historical and Comparative Perspective*. Scarborough, ON: Prentice Hall.

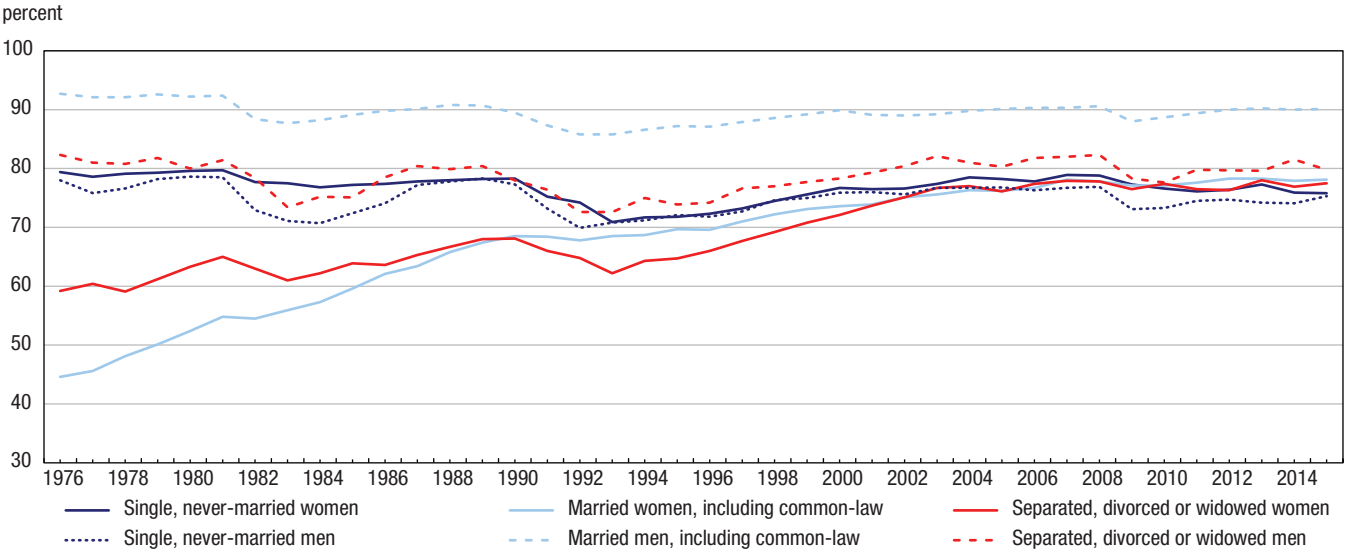
Chart 4
Employment rates of men aged 25 to 54 by marital status, 1976 to 2015



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulations.

The extent to which marriage (including those living common-law) is associated with reduced employment among women has steadily declined over the years (Chart 5). This is the case whether a comparison is made between single and married women or married men and women. In 1976, 79.4% of single women and 92.7% of married men were employed, compared to 44.6% of married women—differences of 34.8 and 48.1 percentage points, respectively. By 2010, nearly equivalent proportions of married and single women were employed (77.1% and 76.6%, respectively), and it has remained that way since. The employment rate for married men has declined somewhat over time (as it has for all men), but the employment rate for married women has risen. As a result, the gender employment gap among married people narrowed to 12.2 percentage points in 2007, and remained in that vicinity thereafter.

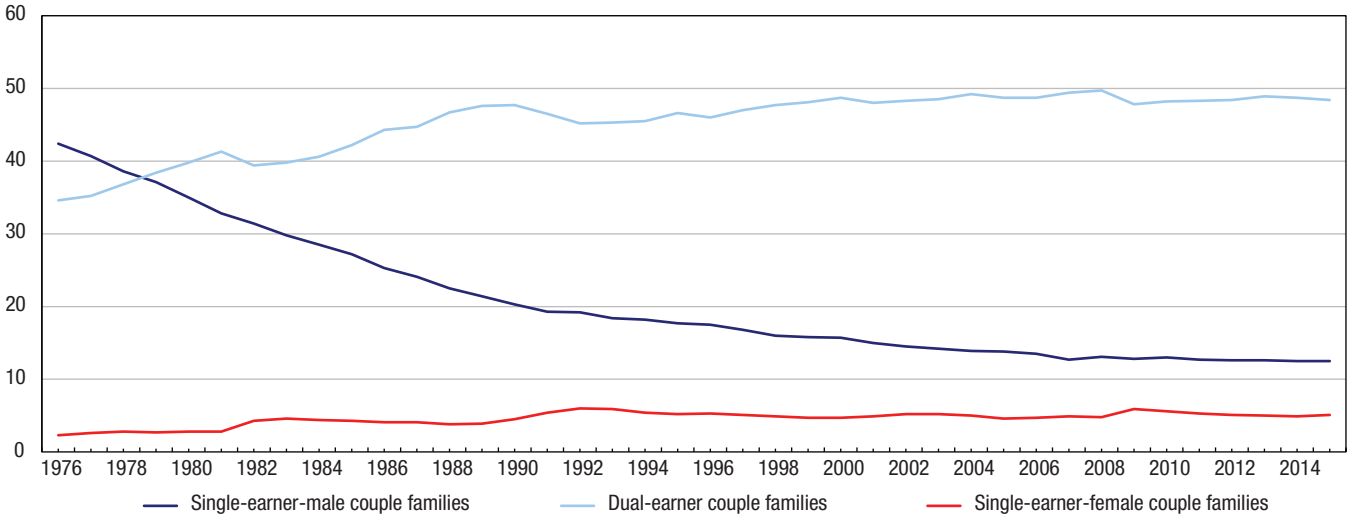
Chart 5
Employment rates of people aged 25 to 54 by marital status, 1976 to 2015



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulations.

Another way of looking at marital status and gender in relation to employment involves focusing on the allocation of earning roles among husband-wife couples (including those living common-law). The gender division of paid work has changed considerably over time (Chart 6). In 1976, couple families in which there was a single, male earner were the most prevalent family type: 46.6% of people were in husband-wife couples where only the male spouse worked for pay. Around 38.0% of people were in dual-earner couple families. With the rising labour force participation of women, single-earner-male couple families became less prevalent, while dual-earner couple families became more prevalent. By 2015, 15.0% of people were in husband-wife couples where only the male spouse worked for pay—three times fewer people than in 1976. Conversely, 58.1% of people were in dual-earner couple families—20.0% more than in 1976. Interestingly, the proportion of single-earner-female couple families also increased by 3.5 percentage points between 1976 and 2015, from 2.6% to 6.1%.

Chart 6
Proportion of people aged 25 to 54 in couple families by economic arrangement, Canada, 1976 to 2015
percent



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulations.

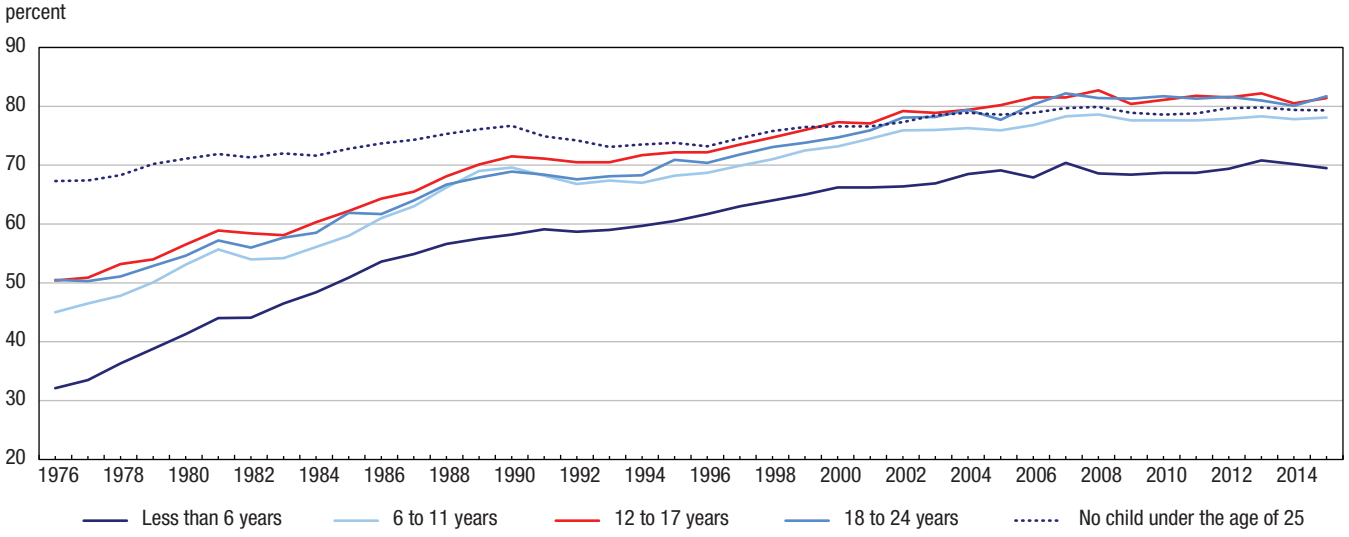
Employment rate of mothers increases with age of their youngest child

It was once common for women to cease work upon parenthood, if they had not already done so upon marriage.[30] For this reason, the post-war increase in women's employment was greatest among women with young children. Between 1976 and 2015, the employment rate of women whose youngest child was under the age of 6 grew by 37.4 percentage points, from 32.1% to 69.5%; and the employment rate of women with children aged 6 to 11 grew by 33.1 percentage points, from 45.0% to 78.1% (Chart 7).[31] The employment rate of women with children aged 12 to 17 grew to a lesser extent (31.0 percentage points), from 50.4% to 81.4%, as did the employment rate of women with children aged 18 to 24 (31.2 percentage points), from 50.5% to 81.7%. The employment rate of women with no children under the age of 25 grew at a much slower pace between 1976 and 2015—12.0 percentage points, from 67.3% to 79.3%. In summary, the employment rate of women with no children under the age of 12 (including those with no children) grew to a lesser extent than did the employment rate of women with younger children, as the former had higher rates to begin with in 1976.

The employment rate of mothers generally rises with the age of the youngest child in the household, as the child enters school and matures such that they are increasingly self-reliant. For this reason, between 1976 and 2015, mothers whose youngest child was under the age of 6 consistently had the lowest employment rates. However, during this period, the employment rates of women with children of different ages converged—albeit not completely (Chart 7). As a result, in 2015, the age of the youngest child in the household still affected the likelihood of women's employment, but it did so to a lesser extent than it did in previous years. One indicator of this diminished effect is the degree of variability in the employment rates of women related to the age of the youngest child. Among women with a child under the age of 18 in 2015, the employment rate differed by 11.9 percentage points between those with a child under the age of 6 and those with a child aged 12 to 17. The equivalent figure for 1976 was 18.3 percentage points.

30. Ibid.
31. Age of the youngest child pertains to those living in the household.

Chart 7
Employment rates of women aged 25 to 54 by age of youngest child in the household, Canada, 1976 to 2015

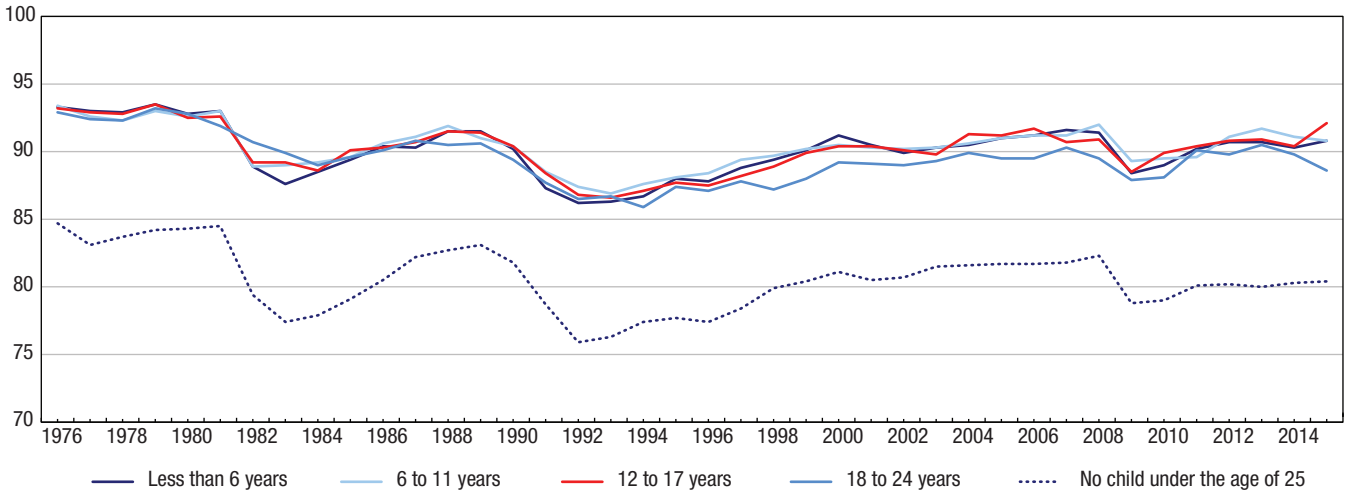


Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulations.

The age of the youngest child tends to be less influential for men's employment than it is for women's employment (Chart 8). In 1976, the employment rate of men with children under the age of 6, aged 6 to 11 and aged 12 to 17 were virtually identical at 93.3%, 93.4% and 93.2%, respectively. In 2015, men with children under the age of 12 were slightly less likely to be employed than men with children aged 12 to 17 (90.8% vs. 92.1%, respectively). In both 1976 and 2015, men with children aged 18 to 24 had the lowest employment rate, except for men with no children under the age of 25, as they were themselves nearing the end of the core working ages and some may have already retired.

There is limited variability in the employment rate of men related to the age of the youngest child in the household. Among men with a child in the household under the age of 18 in 2015, the employment rate differed by 1.3 percentage points between those with a child under the age of 6 and those with a child aged 12 to 17. As mentioned above, the equivalent figure for women was 11.9 percentage points.

Chart 8
Employment rates of men aged 25 to 54 by age of youngest child in the household, Canada, 1976 to 2015

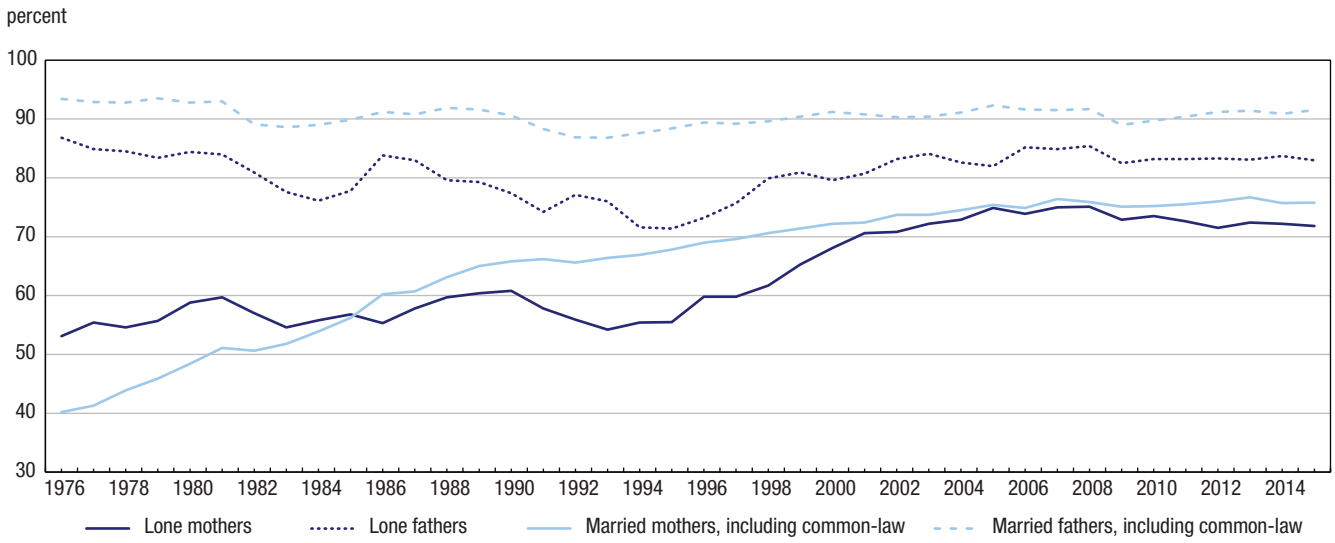


Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulations.

Lone female parents have a lower employment rate than both lone male parents and mothers in couples

The absence of a spouse/partner tends to hinder the employment of parents. This is particularly true for women, who constituted 80.8% of lone parents with a child under the age of 18 in the household in 2015. Nearly 72.0% of lone mothers were employed, compared to 75.8% of mothers in couples (Chart 9). Lone parenthood also limits the employment of men: 83.0% of lone fathers were employed, compared to 91.5% of fathers in couples. For women, it has not always been the case that lone parenthood corresponds to a lower likelihood of employment. Lone mothers actually had a higher employment rate than mothers in couples until 1986, at which point the relationship was reversed. After burgeoning through the 1990s, when the employment rate of lone mothers failed to keep pace with improvements in the employment rate of mothers in couples, the employment gap between these groups converge in the early to mid-2000s. Beginning in 2009, and coinciding with the global economic downturn, the employment rate of lone mothers declined relative to that of mothers in couples, and the employment gap between these groups expanded once again.

Chart 9
Employment rates of parents aged 25 to 54 with children under the age of 18 by marital status and sex, Canada, 1976 to 2015



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulations.

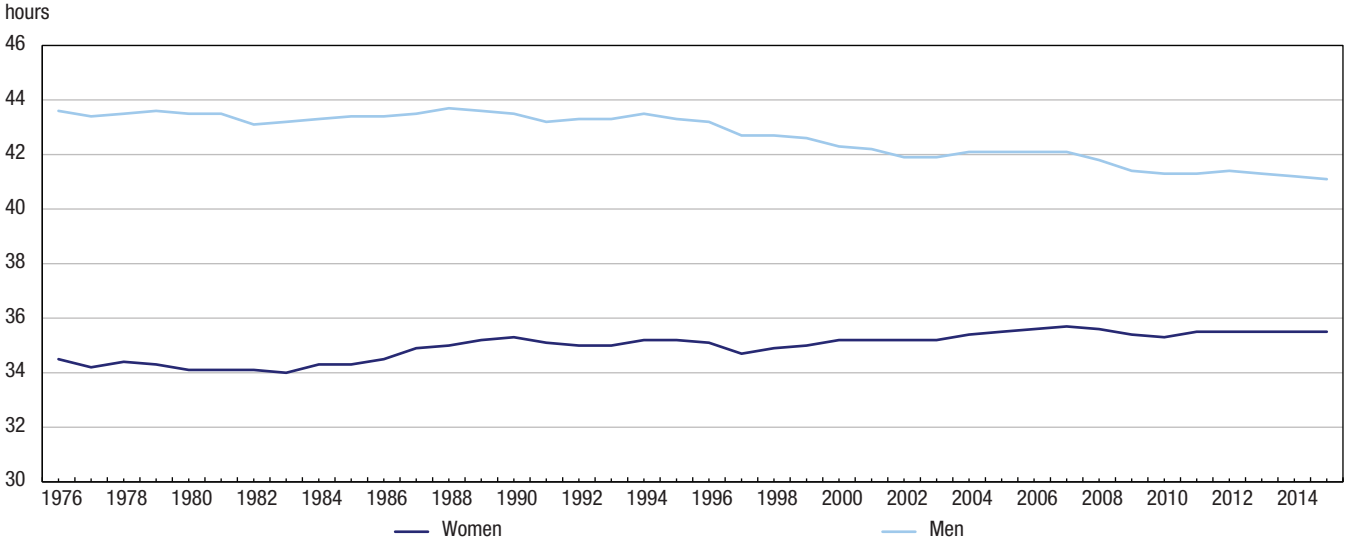
Why does lone parenthood tend to negatively affect the likelihood of employment? Although former spouses/partners may have a joint custody/co-parenting arrangement, implementing daily routines (e.g., meals, homework, chores, and bedtimes) within the household is the purview of the one parent with whom the child resides (be it on certain days or everyday) in that household. Given that lone parents have to manage day-to-day household and childrearing responsibilities on their own, it may be difficult for them to combine these responsibilities with paid work. There may also be a segment of the lone-parent population for whom it is economically rational to forego employment, given gender disparities in wages and the limited availability of affordable, quality childcare.[32]

Women perform fewer hours of paid per week on average than men

Women generally perform fewer paid hours than men, as they tend to spend more time on housework and childcare.[33,34,35,36] However, the difference between the work hours of men and women has narrowed to some extent with the passage of time, mostly as a result of declines in men's work hours (Chart 10). In 1976, women usually worked 34.5 hours per week at all jobs, while men worked 43.6 hours—a difference of 9.1 hours on a weekly basis. By 2015, this gender difference in work hours had decreased to 5.6 hours per week, as women's weekly work hours rose by 1 hour to 35.5 and men's weekly work hours declined by 2.5 hours to 41.1.

32. Gucciardi, Enza, Nalan Celasun and Donna E. Stewart. 2004. "Single-mother families in Canada." *Canadian Journal of Public Health* 95(1): 70-73.
33. Bianchi, Suzanne M., John P. Robinson and Melissa A. Milkie. 2006. *Changing Rhythms of American Life*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
34. Bianchi, Suzanne M. 2000. "Maternal employment and time with children: Dramatic change or surprising continuity?" *Demography* 37(4): 401-414.
35. Bianchi, Suzanne M., Melissa A. Milkie, Linda C. Sayer and John P. Robinson. 2000. "Is anyone doing the housework? Trends in the gender division of household labor." *Social Forces* 79(1): 191-228.
36. Milan, Anne, Leslie-Anne Keown and Covadonga Robles Urquijo. 2011. "Families, living arrangements and unpaid work." *Women in Canada: A gender-based statistical report*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 89-503-X. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-503-x/2010001/article/11546-eng.htm.

Chart 10
Average usual weekly hours of people aged 25 to 54, Canada, 1976 to 2015



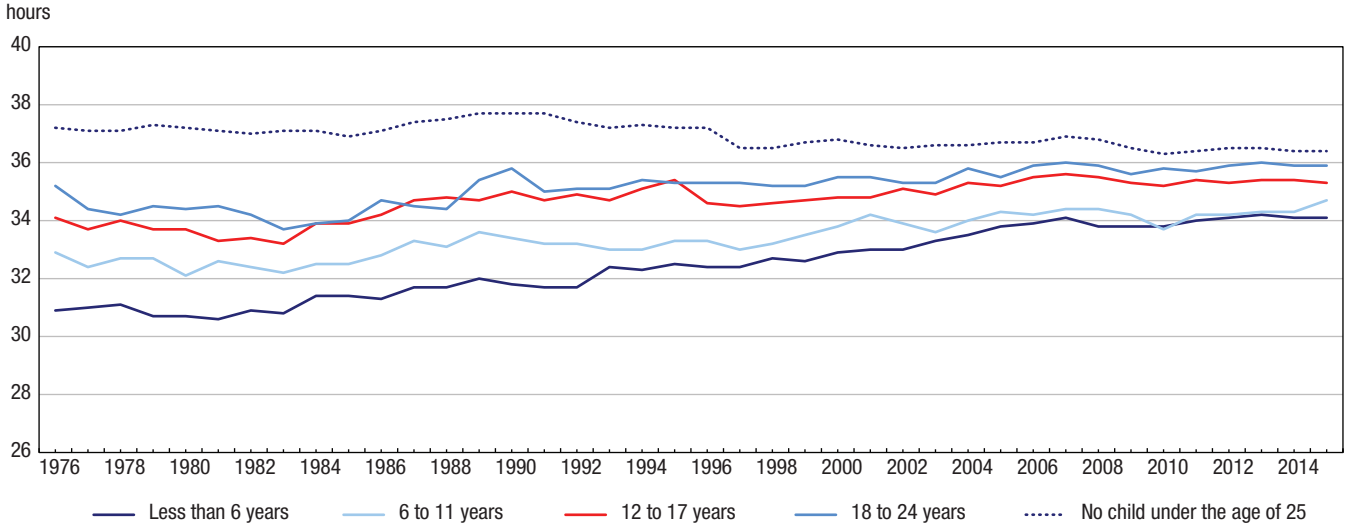
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM table 282-0016.

The difference between the proportions of men and women working long hours—defined as 50 hours or more per week—also narrowed between 1976 and 2015. In 1976, 4.8% of women worked long hours compared to 18.1% of men—a difference of 13.3 percentage points. By 2015, the proportion of women working long hours increased by half of a percentage point to 5.3%, and the proportion of men working long hours decreased by 4.1 percentage points. As a result, the difference between the proportions of men and women working long hours narrowed to 8.7 percentage points.

The presence and age of the youngest child in the household has a notable effect on the work hours of women, but very little effect on those of men (Charts 11, 12 and 13). For women, work hours generally increase as children age, although this relationship has weakened over time (Chart 11). In 1976, the average weekly work hours of mothers ranged from 30.9 for those with a child under the age of 6 to 35.2 for those with a child aged 18 to 24, a difference of 4.3 hours. By 2015, the average weekly work hours of mothers ranged from 34.1 for those with a child under the age of 6 to 35.9 for those with a child aged 18 to 24, a difference of 1.8 hours. Between 1976 and 2015, the average weekly work hours of mothers grew most among those with children under the age of 6. Women who did not have a child under the age of 25, including women with no children, worked the greatest number of hours per week on average in both 1976 and 2015: 37.2 and 36.4, respectively.

Chart 11

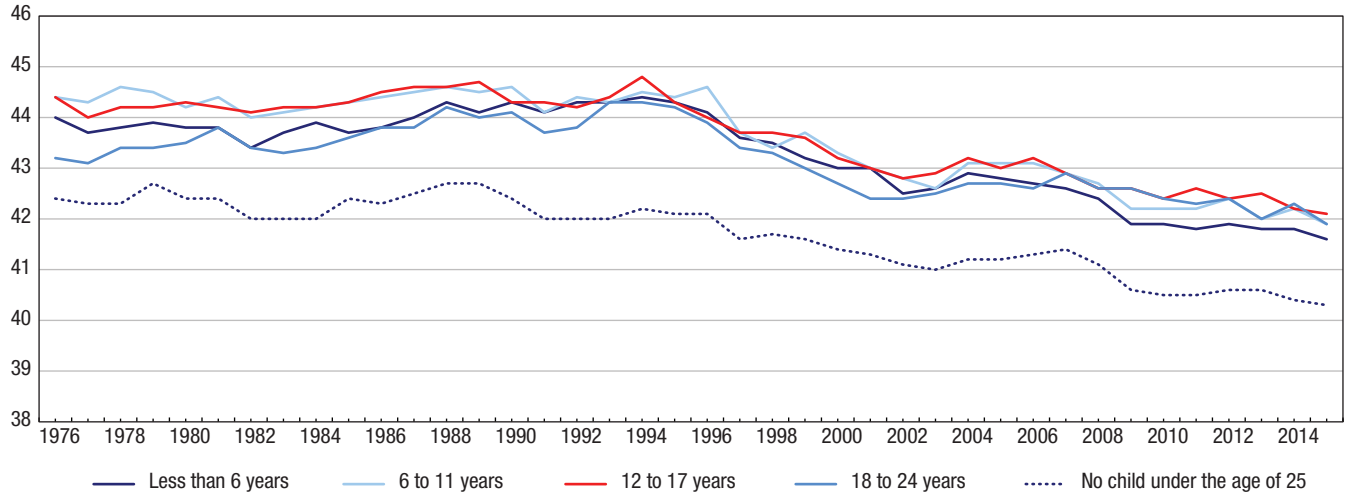
Average usual weekly hours of women aged 25 to 54 by age of youngest child in the household, Canada, 1976 to 2015



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulations.

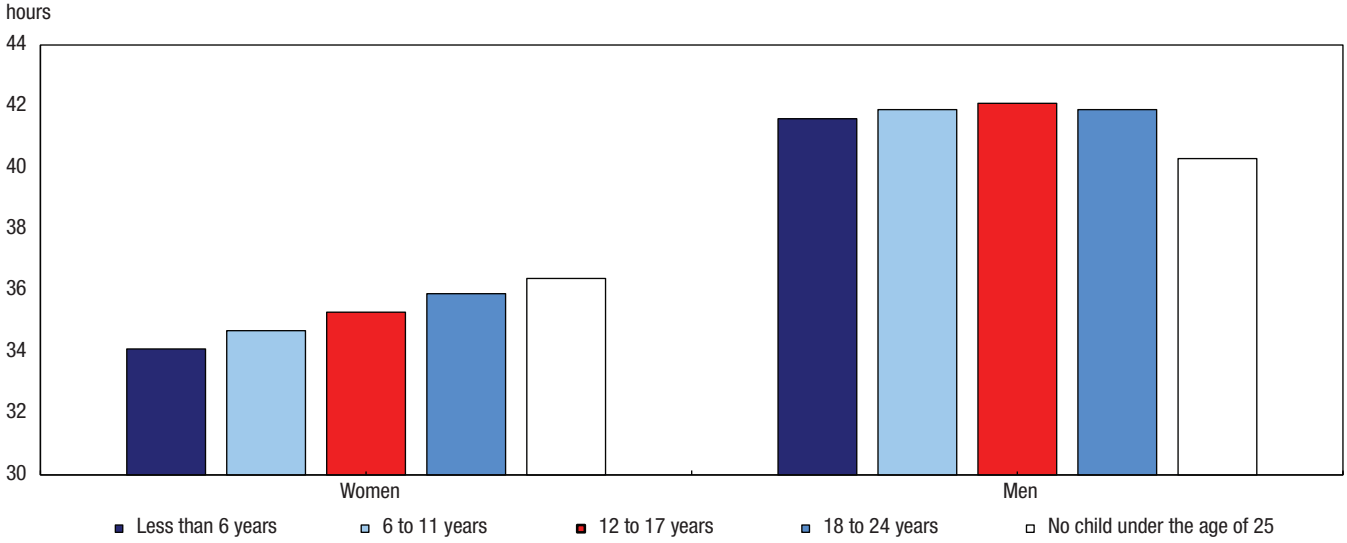
Chart 12

Average usual weekly hours of men aged 25 to 54 by age of youngest child in the household, Canada, 1976 to 2015



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulations.

Chart 13
Average usual weekly hours of people aged 25 to 54 by age of youngest child in the household, Canada, 2015



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulations.

In contrast, the average weekly hours of fathers varied according to the age of the youngest child in the household to a lesser extent (Chart 13). In 2015, the average weekly work hours of fathers fluctuated by 30 minutes, from 41.6 for those with a child under the age of 6 to 42.1 for those with a child aged 12 to 17. Fathers with children aged 18 to 24 worked the same number of average weekly hours (41.9) as those with children aged 6 to 11.

Interestingly, in 2015, women without children had higher average weekly work hours than mothers, while men without children had lower average weekly work hours than fathers.

Women are more likely than men to work part-time, and the reason most cited by women for working part-time was caring for children

While the vast majority of both women and men were employed on a full-time basis, women were over-represented among those working part-time, which partly accounts for their lower average weekly work hours relative to men. In 2015, 18.9% of employed women worked part-time, as did 5.5% of employed men (Table 3). Put differently, three quarters (75.8%) of those working part-time were women. This represents a decrease in women's share of those employed on a part-time basis, which stood at 89.0% in 1976.

The reasons that women and men work part-time generally differ. Women have retained "ultimate" responsibility for childrearing and household operation, in accordance with traditional gender roles, even as they have assumed earning responsibilities.[37,38,39,40,41] Part-time work may enable women to balance earning and caring roles. Among those who worked part-time in 2015, a greater proportion of women did so voluntarily—meaning that they wanted to work less than 30 hours per week—than men (67.2% vs. 53.0%). Chief among all reasons identified by women for working part-time was caring for children: one-quarter of women reported caring for children as their reason for working part-time, compared to 3.3% of men.

Conversely, a greater proportion of men than women worked part-time involuntarily in 2015, meaning that they wanted to work 30 or more hours per week (47.0% vs. 32.8%). Of involuntary reasons for working part-time, business conditions was cited by the largest proportion of both men and women (35.0% and 23.3%, respectively).

37. Hays, Sharon. 1996. *The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
38. McMahon, Martha. 1995. *Engendering Motherhood: Identity and Self-Transformation in Women's Lives*. New York: Guilford Press.
39. Walzer, Susan. 1998. *Thinking about the Baby: Gender and Transitions into Parenthood*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
40. Fox, Bonnie. 2009. *When Couples Become Parents: The Creation of Gender in the Transition to Parenthood*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
41. Barnes, Medora W. 2015. "Gender differentiation in paid and unpaid work during the transition to parenthood." *Sociology Compass* 9(5): 348-364.

Table 3
Proportion of part-time workers aged 25 to 54 by reason for part-time work, Canada, 2015

	Women	Men
	percent	
Part-time employment, all reasons	**18.9**	**5.5**
Voluntary reasons	67.2	53.0
Own illness	4.6	7.5
Caring for children	25.0	3.3
Other personal or family responsibilities	5.1	2.4
Going to school	6.8	14.1
Personal preference	22.8	20.5
Other voluntary	3.0	5.2
Involuntary reasons	32.8	47.0
Business conditions	23.3	35.0
Could not find full-time work	9.4	12.0

Sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM tables 282-0002 and 282-0014.

Women's careers are interrupted more frequently than men's careers, for longer total durations

Women still tend to have greater responsibility for children and other family members as well as for the smooth functioning of the home.[42,43,44] As a result, they are more likely than men to experience work absences and interruptions—both long-term, scheduled absences related to childbearing and rearing and short-term, sporadic absences related to a child's illness or a major household appliance in need of repair.[45,46] Previous research has documented the stigmatization of work absences and interruptions, as well as fewer subsequent promotion opportunities and earnings increases.[47,48]

The LFS tracks the incidence, duration, and reasons for the work absences of employees in the reference week. Part-time workers and the self-employed are excluded from the data presented here because they tend to have more schedule flexibility, and they are therefore in a better position to minimize work absences.[49]

In 2015, 30.0% of women were away from work sometime during the reference week, compared to 23.9% of men (Table 4). Among those employees, more women were away for the full week (38.4%) than men (24.8%). The reasons provided by women and men for their work absence in the reference week also differed to some extent. Most women and men were absent for voluntary reasons, such as vacation. However, a smaller proportion of women were away from work for voluntary reasons compared to men (57.1% vs. 72.4%). Women were more likely to be away from work for involuntary reasons—their own illness, disability or personal or familial reasons, including maternity and parental leave—than men. Specifically, 21.1% of women who were absent cited their own illness or disability as the reason, compared to 18.2% of their male counterparts. Another 21.7% of women who were absent attributed their absence to family or personal responsibilities, compared to 9.3% of men.

42. McMahon, Martha. 1995. *Engendering Motherhood: Identity and Self-Transformation in Women's Lives*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
43. Milkie, Melissa A. and Pia Peltola. 1999. "Playing all the roles: Gender and the work-family balancing act." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 61(2): 476-490.
44. Walzer, Susan. 1998. *Thinking about the Baby: Gender and Transitions into Parenthood*." Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
45. Milkie, Melissa A. and Pia Peltola. 1999. "Playing all the roles: Gender and the work-family balancing act." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 61(2): 476-490.
46. Nomaguchi, Kei M. 2009. "Change in work-family conflict among employed parents between 1977 and 1997." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 71(1): 15-32.
47. Judiesch, Michael K. and Karen S. Lyness. 1999. "Left behind? The impact of leave of absence on managers' career success." *Academy of Management Journal*. 42(6): 641-651.
48. Murrell, Audrey J. "Career advancement: Opportunities and barriers." *Encyclopedia of women and gender: Sex similarities and differences and the impact of society on gender*, volume 1, edited by Judith Worell. San Diego, CA: Academic Press. Pp. 211-218.
49. Uppal, Sharanjit and Sébastien LaRochelle-Côté. 2013. "Understanding public-private sector differences in work absences." *Insights on Canadian Society*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 75-006-X. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-006-x/2013001/article/11862-eng.htm.

Table 4
Distribution of hours lost by employees aged 25 to 54 by reason of absence and sex, and work absence statistics, Canada, 2015

	Women	Men
	percentage distribution	
Employees at work all week	**70.0**	**76.1**
Employees away during the week	30.0	23.9
Employees away full week	38.4	24.8
Employees away part week	61.6	75.2
Reason of absence		
Own illness or disability	21.1	18.2
Personal or family	21.7	9.3
Other reasons, primarily voluntary	57.1	72.4
	percent	
Incidence rate, personal or family responsibility	2.6	1.9
Inactivity rate, personal or family responsibility	0.8	0.5
Days lost per worker in a year, personal or family responsibility	2.1	1.3

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulations.

Work absences for personal sickness or providing care to an ill child generally arise spontaneously. Focusing on these absences (as distinct from other types, such as vacation and maternity or parental leave, which tend to be scheduled in advance and therefore can be fairly easily accommodated by the employer), the incidence rate can be calculated as the percentage of full-time employees who were absent during the reference week.[50,51] In 2015, more women were absent from work during the reference week for reasons of illness, injury, or personal or family responsibilities than were their male counterparts: 2.6% vs. 1.9%.

The incidence rate does not provide an indication of the duration of work absences. The inactivity rate is valuable in this regard, as it expresses hours lost as a percentage of the usual weekly hours of full-time employees.[52] In 2015, women lost 0.8% of their usual weekly hours through work absences related to illness, injury, or personal or family responsibilities. The comparable figure for men was 0.5%. Assuming that there are 250 work days in a given year, each female employee lost an average of 2.1 work days annually. In comparison, each male employee lost an average of 1.3 work days annually.

Cycle 25 of the General Social Survey (GSS) on family tracks respondents' work history retrospectively, given its interrelationship with family transitions. In the context of this survey, a work interruption is defined as being away from work for more than three months. Based on data from Cycle 25 of the GSS, a greater proportion of men had either no work interruptions since they first started working for a period of six months or longer (27.9%) or only one work interruption (50.5%) compared to women (24.7% and 42.1%, respectively) in 2011 (Table 5).[53] Conversely, more women had two or more work interruptions than men (33.2% vs. 21.6%). Given women's greater number of work interruptions, the total duration combined amounted to an average of 18.5 months (approximately 1.5 years). The comparable figure for men was 8.6 months.

Not surprisingly, 46.8% of women took at least one maternity or parental leave, compared to 3.8% of their male counterparts. The average duration of a women's maternity or parental leave combined was 15.2 months, or 1.3 years. The comparable figure for men was 3.7 months.

50. Dabboussy, Maria and Sharanjit Uppal. 2012. "Work absences in 2011." *Perspectives on Labour and Income.* Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 75-001-X.
51. Uppal, Sharanjit and Sébastien LaRochelle-Côté. 2013. "Understanding public-private sector differences in work absences." *Insights on Canadian Society.* Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 75-006-X. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-006-x/2013001/article/11862-eng.htm.
52. Ibid.
53. For consistency with the rest of this chapter, data from Cycle 25 of the GSS were limited to respondents aged 25 to 54.

Table 5
Proportion of work interruptions and maternity and parental leave among people aged 25 to 54 who have worked anytime in the past, Canada, 2011

	Women	Men
	percent	
Number of work interruptions		
None	24.7	27.9
One	42.1	50.5
Two	20.4	12.6
Three	8.3	5.7
Four	3.8	2.8
Five	0.8	0.5
Average duration of all work interruptions combined (in months)	18.5	8.6
Number of maternity and parental leave		
None	53.2	96.2
One	32.6	3.4
Two	11.7	0.0
Three	1.3	0.4
Four	0.9	0.0
Five	0.3	0.0
Average duration of all maternity/parental leaves combined (in months)	15.2	3.7

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, Cycle 25.

Important differences exist in maternity or parental leave taking, particularly by fathers, in Quebec as compared to the rest of Canada (ROC). Canada currently has two maternal/parental leave benefit programs for the care of newborn or newly adopted children: a federal program administered through Employment Insurance (EI) and, since 2006, a provincial program exclusive to residents of Quebec. The Quebec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP) has lower eligibility criteria and higher maximum for insurable income, making it both more accessible and more generous than the federal program.

According to data from the 2015 Employment Insurance Coverage Survey (EICS), 87.4% of new mothers (defined as women with a child aged 12 months and under) in Quebec had insurable employment[54] in the past two years, compared to 71.9% of their counterparts in the ROC.[55] Of new mothers with insurable employment in the past two years, 98.7% in Quebec received maternity or parental benefits, as did 83.9% in the ROC.

New fathers are increasingly claiming or intending to claim parental benefits in both Quebec and the ROC, but proportionally more new fathers in Quebec have done so than their counterparts in the ROC. In addition to being more accessible and generous, QPIP includes a non-transferable paternity leave of up to five weeks. Since the introduction of this program, the proportion of new fathers in Quebec who claimed or intended to claim parental benefits increased by 61.0 percentage points, from 25.3% in 2005 to 86.3% in 2015.[56] Over the same period, the proportion of new fathers in the ROC who claimed or intended to claim parental benefits increased by 1.0 percentage point, from 11.3% to 12.3%.

Women have nearly equivalent job tenure with their current employer as men

Most people, regardless of sex, were paid employees in 2015, as opposed to being self-employed or unpaid family workers (Table 6). Specifically, 88.1% of women and 83.0% of men were paid employees. The private sector employed a greater proportion of people than did the public sector, but women were less likely to work in the private sector than men (58.2% vs. 67.3%). Conversely, nearly double the proportion of women were employed in the public sector than men (29.9% vs. 15.7%).

Among employees, around one-third had union coverage in 2015 (Table 6). Given that women were over-represented in the public sector, it follows that a greater proportion of female employees had union coverage than male employees (35.9% vs. 31.1%). The vast majority of people were employed on a permanent basis in 2015, but slightly more women than men were employed on a temporary basis. Women and men were fairly similar in terms of job tenure

54. Employment that is not insurable under the EI program is not necessarily excluded employment under the QPIP program.
55. For consistency with the rest of this chapter, data from the 2015 EICS were limited to respondents aged 25 to 54.
56. Data on new fathers' claims or their intention to claim parental benefits come from the 2005 and 2015 EICS, as reported by new mothers aged 25 to 54.

with their current employer. Women's average job tenure was 93.7 months, while men's was 94.9 months—just under 8 years in both cases. The current similarity in job tenure between women and men is noteworthy. In 1976, men had much longer job tenure than women: 101.4 months compared to 67.6 months—a difference of 33.8 months, or just over two-and-a-half years. The increase in women's job tenure over time is suggestive of their greater attachment to the labour force over the life course (i.e., temporary, fewer and/or shorter family-related career interruptions).

Multiple jobholding has become increasingly common over time, especially for women, as people are drawn to extra work to supplement regular income or repay debt, hedge precarious employment or compensate for inconsistent work hours, or simply for the enjoyment of a second job.[57] In 1976, 2.8% of men were multiple jobholders, as were 1.5% of women. By 2015, the proportion of men who were multiple jobholders had increased by 1.7 percentage points to 4.5%, while the proportion of women who were multiple jobholders had increased by 5.0 percentage points to 6.5%.

For most multiple jobholders in 2015, their main job was in the services-producing sector, particularly in industries such as health care and social assistance, educational services, and wholesale and retail trade (data not shown). As will be seen later on, women are over-represented in the services-producing sector, and in the health care and social assistance and educational services industries in particular. A sizable proportion of female multiple jobholders have a main job that is part-time (38.9%), compared to about half that number of male multiple jobholders (18.2%). For women, then, multiple jobholding may be a means of making ends meet in circumstances where full-time work is either underpaid, unavailable or too inflexible to accommodate their family responsibilities.

Table 6
Proportion of employment characteristics among people aged 25 to 54 by sex, Canada, 2015[1]

	Women	Men
	percent	
Class of worker		
Paid employees	88.1	83.0
Public employees	29.9	15.7
Private employees	58.2	67.3
Self-employed		
1976	6.0	15.3
2015	11.8	17.0
Unpaid family worker	0.1	0.0
Job permanence		
Temporary	10.4	9.3
Permanent	89.6	90.7
Union coverage		
No	64.1	68.9
Yes	35.9	31.1
Average job tenure (in months)		
1976	67.6	101.4
2015	93.7	94.9
Multiple jobholder		
No		
1976	98.5	97.2
2015	93.5	95.5
Yes		
1976	1.5	2.8
2015	6.5	4.5
Multiple jobs as a paid employee	87.2	86.2
Multiple jobs involving self-employment, exclusively or in combination with paid employment	12.8	13.8
Main job is part-time	38.9	18.2
Selected reasons for working part-time		
Caring for children	11.9	1.7
Business conditions	29.0	35.1

1. Unless otherwise noted.
Sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM tables 282-0038, 282-0078, 282-0080, and custom tabulations.

57. Statistics Canada. 2007. "Section L – Multiple jobholding and work arrangements." *The Canadian Labour Market at a Glance*. Labour Statistics Division. Catalogue no. 71-222-X: 85-88. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/71-222-x/71-222-x2008001-eng.pdf.

Self-employment is less common among women compared to men

Owning one's own business is either seen as the ultimate coup in the world of work, as it enables individuals to set their own hours and pursue projects of self-interest, or as a last resort, particularly in a slack labour market. While increasing numbers of women have pursued business ownership as a labour market strategy in the past three decades, men continue to dominate self-employment. In 2015, 38.8% of self-employed people were women and 61.2% were men. This represents a sizable increase over 1976, when 17.2% of self-employed people were women and 82.8% were men.

Not only are women under-represented among the self-employed, they are also less likely than men to have an incorporated business while self-employed—that is, a business declared as a legal entity that is separate from the owner as an individual. Specifically, 34.2% of self-employed women had an incorporated business in 2015, compared to 53.2% of men. Conversely, 65.8% of women had an unincorporated business compared to 46.8% of men. Women were also less likely than men to have paid help, whether or not their business was incorporated.

Women outnumber men in the services-producing sector

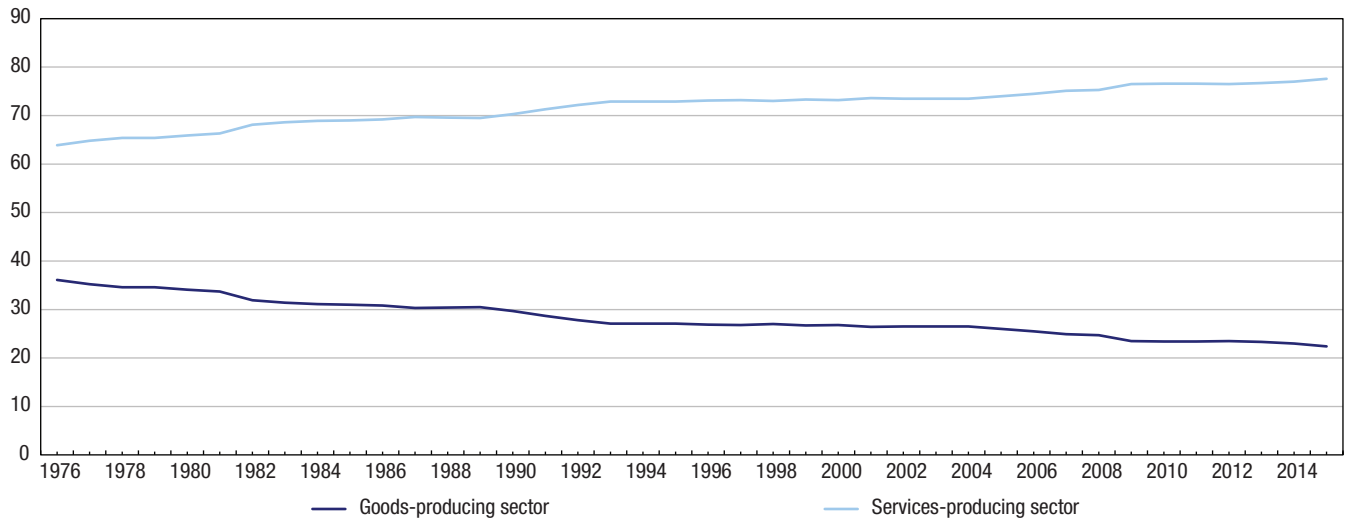
The economy consists of two broad sectors: the goods-producing sector and the services-producing sector. The goods-producing sector yields tangible products, and consists of industries related to the exploitation of natural resources (i.e., agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction), utilities, construction, and manufacturing. As its name suggests, the services-producing sector produces intangible goods in the form of services. This sector consists of a diverse range of industries, including wholesale and retail trade; transportation and warehousing; finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing; professional, scientific and technical services; business, building and other support services; educational services; health care and social assistance; information, culture and recreation; accommodation and food services; public administration; and other services.

Since the late 1960s, the services-producing sector has been the main employer in Canada.[58] The proportion of people employed in this sector, as opposed to the goods-producing sector, rose from 63.9% in 1976 to 77.6% in 2015 (Chart 14). The growth of the services-producing sector is intertwined with the upsurge in women's employment.[59] Virtually all of the increase in the number of employed women occurred in the services-producing sector, while the number of women employed in the goods-producing sector remained fairly stable (Chart 15). As of 1985, women have outnumbered men with respect to employment in the services-producing sector.

As the proportion of people employed in the services-producing sector increased over time, the proportion of people employed in the goods-producing sector declined (i.e., economic restructuring). Specifically, 36.1% of people were employed in the goods-producing sector in 1976, compared to 22.4% of people in 2015 (Chart 14). This trend reflects the forces of technological advancement in communication and transportation as well as globalization and international competition, which have progressively eliminated jobs from manufacturing in particular.[60] The goods-producing sector has been a stronghold of men's employment historically, and it continues to be so today. As a result, men's job opportunities have been reduced by economic restructuring, while women's have expanded.

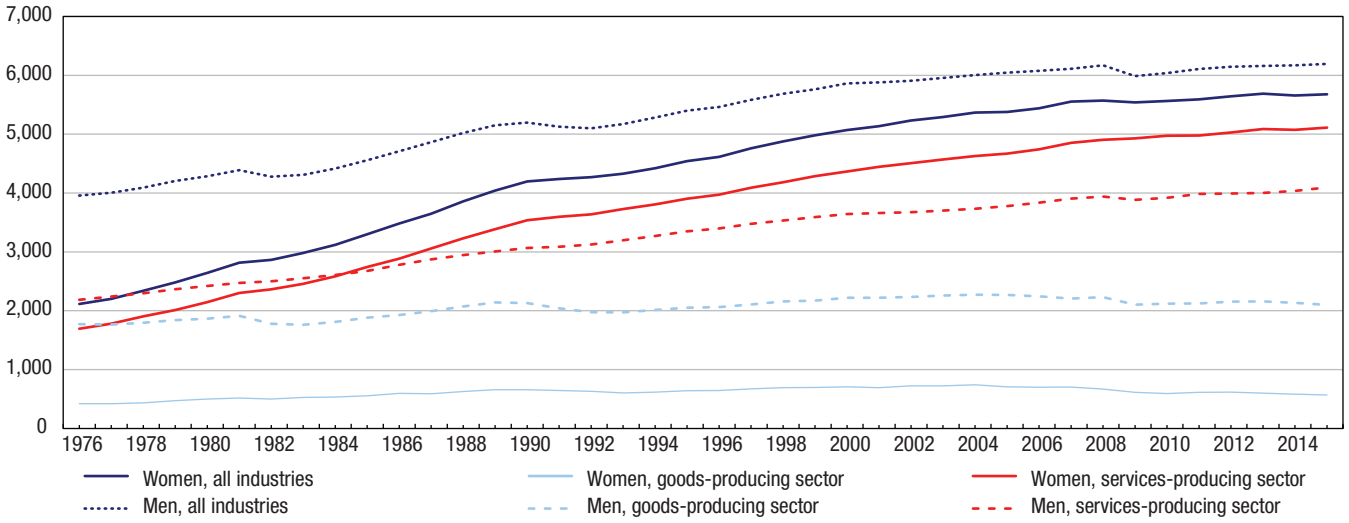
58. Crompton, Susan and Michael Vickers. 2000. "One hundred years of labour force." *Canadian Social Trends* 57: 2-14. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2000001/article/5086-eng.pdf?contentType=application%2Fpdf.
59. Benoit, Cecilia. 2000. *Women, Work and Social Rights: Canada in Historical and Comparative Perspective.* Scarborough, ON: Prentice Hall Canada.
60. Capeluck, Evan. 2015. "Explanations of the decline in manufacturing employment in Canada." *Centre for the Study of Living Standards (CSLS) Research Report 2015-2017.* Ottawa: CSLS. Available at: http://www.csls.ca/reports/csls2015-17.pdf.

Chart 14
Proportion of employed people aged 25 to 54 by industrial sector, Canada, 1976 to 2015



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM table 282-0008.

Chart 15
Number of employed people aged 25 to 54 by industrial sector, Canada, 1976 to 2015



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM table 282-0008.

Women are concentrated in industries that parallel their traditional gender roles at more than double the rate of men

Although breadwinning has become a central and enduring role for most women, their employment often parallels their traditional gender roles of homemaking and caregiving.[61] In other words, what is typically designated as "women's work" in the private sphere tends to be designated as such in the public sphere as well. Consequently, in 2015, the three industries with the greatest share of women (relative to men) were health care and social assistance (82.4%), educational services (69.3%), and accommodation and food services (58.5%). The proportion of women who worked in these industries was 41.0%, versus 13.1% of men. In comparison, 18.4% of men worked in the three industries with the greatest share of men (relative to women): construction (88.3%); forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (80.5%); and utilities (77.8%). Thus, women were concentrated in sex-typed industries at more than double the rate of men.

61. Benoit, Cecilia. 2000. *Women, Work and Social Rights: Canada in Historical and Comparative Perspective.* Scarborough, ON: Prentice Hall Canada.

The same three industries that had the greatest share of women in 2015 did so in 1976 as well: health care and social assistance (74.1%), accommodation and food services (59.1%), and educational services (52.1%). Although these were the only industries dominated by women in 1976, a smaller proportion of women worked in them (35.4%) than in 2015. The proportion of women in all female-dominated industries increased between 1976 and 2015, from 35.4% to 59.6% (24.2 percentage points). In contrast, the proportion of men in all male-dominated industries decreased over the same period, from 88.5% to 72.0% (16.5 percentage points).

Women and men occupy distinct occupations, with women's typically being at lower levels than men's

Situated within industries are occupations. Just as industries are sex-typed, so are occupations. Female-dominated occupations are often in female-dominated industries, and male-dominated occupations are often in male-dominated industries, but that is not always the case. Even in industries dominated by the opposite sex, women and men tend to occupy distinct occupations, with women's typically being at lower levels than men's.[62] For example, in the accommodation and food services industry, 59.7% of chefs and cooks were men in 2015, while 71.6% of food counter attendants, kitchen helpers and related support personnel were women, as were 71.3% of food and beverage servers.

National Occupational Classification (NOC)

Occupations in the LFS are coded according to the 2011 National Occupational Classification (NOC) as far back as 1987. This scheme was developed jointly by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and Statistics Canada, and it is revised periodically to reflect the evolution of occupations and ensure their comparability over time.

The basic principle of the NOC is kind of work performed. Jobs can be assembled into common occupations, and occupations further bundled into groups, when the work usually performed is sufficiently similar. Similarity of the work usually performed is determined by the tasks, duties, and responsibility of a given job. Factors like the material processed or used, the industrial processes and equipment used, the degree of responsibility and complexity of work, and the products made and services provided are used as indicators of the work performed when combining jobs into occupations and occupations into groups.

The NOC 2011 is a four-tiered hierarchical arrangement of occupational groups with successive levels of disaggregation. It contains ten broad occupational categories (distinguished by a one-digit code), 40 major (distinguished by a two-digit code), 140 minor (distinguished by a three-digit code), and 500 unit groups (distinguished by a four-digit code). The code assigned to a given occupation or occupational group indicates the higher-order groups in which it is nested. For example, for a unit group, the first digit of its code indicates the occupational category to which it belongs; the second and third digits indicate the major and minor groups to which it belongs, respectively; and the fourth digit is unique, distinguishing it from other unit groups.

For more information, please see the National Occupational Classification (NOC) 2011.

Most women are employed in traditionally-female occupations

Most women are employed in traditionally-female occupations—teaching, nursing and related health occupations, social work, clerical or other administrative positions, or sales and services—in which women have been concentrated historically.[63] This is reflected in Table 7, which shows the proportion of women and men in the 20 occupations (of 140, based on the three-digit National Occupational Classification [NOC]) with the greatest concentration of women in 2015. Around 56.0% of women were employed in occupations involving the "5 Cs": caring, clerical, catering, cashiering and cleaning.[64] This is little changed from 1987, when 59.2% of women were employed in these occupations. In contrast, 17.1% of men were employed in traditionally-female occupations in 2015, compared to 15.7% in 1987.

62. Armstrong, Pat and Hugh Armstrong. 2010. *The Double Ghetto: Canadian Women and their Segregated Work*, 3rd edition. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press Canada.
63. Ibid.
64. Close the Gap. 2014. "Women and work: What comes next in a post-referendum Scotland?" Close the Gap Working Paper 13. Glasgow: Close the Gap. Available at: https://www.closethegap.org.uk/content/resources/CTG-Working-Paper-13---Women-and-work-what-comes-next-in-a-post-referendum-Scotland.pdf.

Table 7
Proportion of people aged 25 to 54 employed in the top 20 occupations[1] for women in 2015, Canada, 1987 and 2015

	Women		Men	
	1987	2015	1987	2015
	percent			
Total	**59.2**	**56.1**	**15.7**	**17.1**
Secondary and elementary school teachers and educational counsellors	3.8	5.3	2.0	1.6
Paraprofessional occupations in legal, social, community and education services	2.8	4.7	0.4	0.6
Administrative and regulatory occupations	2.5	4.6	1.5	1.2
General office workers	7.1	4.2	1.0	0.4
Professional occupations in nursing	4.7	3.9	0.3	0.4
Assisting occupations in support of health services	1.5	3.4	0.2	0.5
Auditors, accountants and investment professionals	2.0	2.9	2.3	2.5
Financial, insurance and related administrative support workers	2.9	2.8	0.4	0.4
Cleaners	2.6	2.6	2.0	2.1
Home care providers and educational support occupations	3.7	2.4	0.4	0.2
Retail salespersons	4.0	2.3	1.8	1.5
Human resources and business service professionals	0.7	2.3	0.8	1.2
Customer and information services representatives	2.1	2.1	0.2	0.9
Finance, insurance and related business administrative occupations	2.4	2.1	0.4	0.6
Office administrative assistants - general, legal and medical	9.5	2.0	0.2	0.1
Social and community service professionals	0.8	1.8	0.7	0.6
Cashiers	2.3	1.8	0.2	0.3
Occupations in food and beverage service	1.8	1.7	0.4	0.6
Policy and program researchers, consultants and officers	0.4	1.7	0.4	1.0
Other technical occupations in health care	1.7	1.6	0.2	0.4

1. Minor group of the 2011 National Occupational Classification (NOC).
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulations.

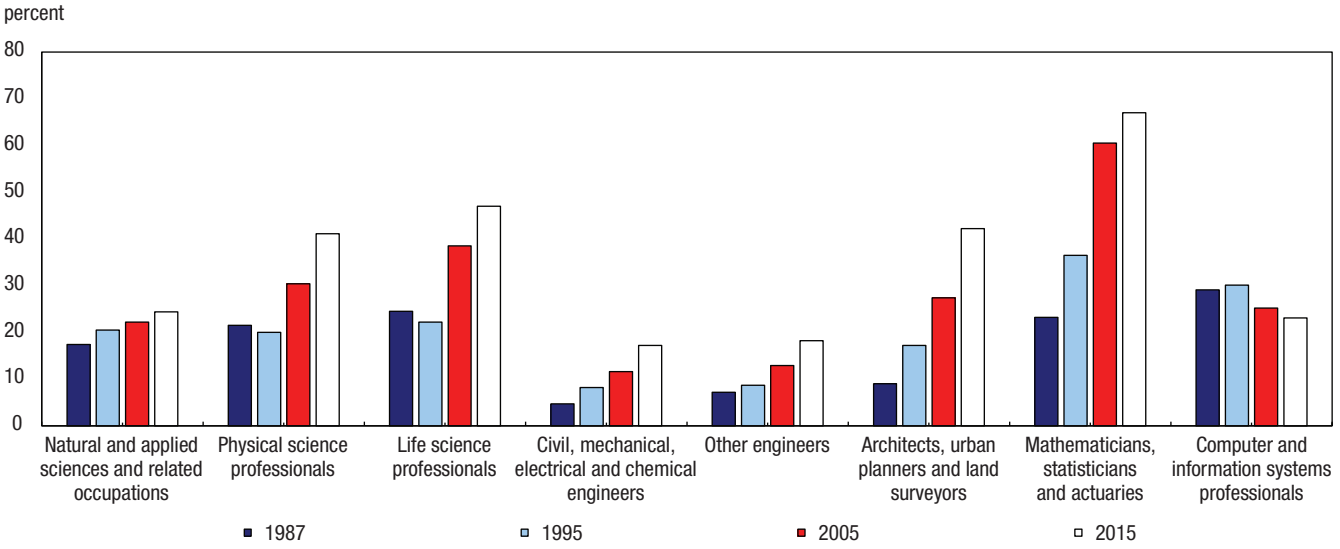
Approximately one-quarter of those employed in professional occupations in natural and applied science are women

Particular interest is often paid to the share of women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, partly because it reflects the sway of gender stereotypes about male and female capabilities that steer boys and girls, men and women toward different educational and career paths.[65,66] Occupations in these fields also tend to be well-paid, so a shortage of women in them is thought to play a role in the gender pay gap.[67] Using occupations in natural and applied science as a proxy for STEM occupations,[68] and focusing on those that usually require a university degree, it is clear that women are under-represented by a sizable margin. Specifically, in 2015, 24.4% of the people employed in professional scientific occupations were women, while 75.6% were men (Table 8). This mostly reflects the sub-group of computer and information systems professionals, which is the largest[69] and the most unbalanced in terms of gender after engineering.

Women's representation in STEM occupations has improved somewhat over time. Specifically, the proportion of women in these occupations grew by 7.0 percentage points between 1987 and 2015 (from 17.4% to 24.4%). Women have gradually made inroads in all types of professional natural and applied scientific occupations, with the exception of those in computer science, where their representation has actually declined over time (Chart 16). From 1987 to 2015, the proportion of women among mathematicians, statisticians and actuaries increased the most, followed by architects, urban planners and land surveyors.

65. Science and math fields are associated with males, while the social sciences, humanities and arts are associated with females.
66. Hill, Catherine, Christianne Corbett and Andresse St. Rose. 2010. "Why so few? Women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics." Washington, DC: American Association of University Women (AAUW). Available at: https://www.aauw.org/files/2013/02/Why-So-Few-Women-in-Science-Technology-Engineering-and-Mathematics.pdf.
67. Dionne-Simard, Dominique, Diane Galarneau and Sébastien LaRochelle-Côté. 2016. "Women in scientific occupations." *Insights on Canadian Society*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 75-006-X. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-006-x/2016001/article/14643-eng.htm.
68. Ibid.
69. Among professional occupations in the natural and applied sciences, 57.8% were related to computer science in 2015.

Chart 16
Proportion of women aged 25 to 54 in professional occupations in natural and applied sciences, Canada, 1987 to 2015



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulations.

Among professional occupations in natural and applied science, women accounted for the largest share (relative to men) of mathematicians, statisticians and actuaries (67.0%) in 2015, followed by a smaller share of life science professionals (47.0%); architects, urban planners and land surveyors (42.2%); and physical science professionals (41.1%) (Table 8). They accounted for the smallest share of civil, mechanical, electrical and chemical engineers (17.2%) and other engineers (18.2%).

Table 8
Proportion of people aged 25 to 54 in professional occupations in natural and applied sciences, Canada, 1987 and 2015

	Women		Men	
	1987	2015	1987	2015
	percent			
Professional occupations in natural and applied sciences	**17.4**	**24.4**	**82.6**	**75.6**
Physical science professionals	21.5	41.1	78.5	58.9
Life science professionals	24.5	47.0	75.5	53.0
Civil, mechanical, electrical and chemical engineers	4.7	17.2	95.3	82.8
Other engineers	7.2	18.2	92.8	81.8
Architects, urban planners and land surveyors	9.0	42.2	91.0	57.8
Mathematicians, statisticians and actuaries	23.2	67.0	76.8	33.1
Computer and information systems professionals	29.1	23.1	70.9	76.9

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulations.

Women are underrepresented in leadership positions in the private sector, although not in the public sector

Women's representation in leadership positions is also important, as it is suggestive of the extent to which they face obstacles to career advancement that ultimately prevent them from reaching the top positions (i.e., the proverbial "glass ceiling"). According to previous research, among such obstacles are: the association of leadership with assertive, decisive, and independent behaviours that are generally deemed to be the purview of men; entrenched organizational structures and work practices that presuppose the male-breadwinner/female-homemaker model of family, and therefore render the combination of earning and caring roles problematic; women's limited access to informal networks, influential colleagues and mentors related to their organizational roles, their tendency to interact with others of the same sex, and the inclination of men in positions of power to direct opportunities for development to junior men; and the lack of female role models to emulate and serve as mentors, suggesting to women that being female is a barrier to upward occupational mobility.[70]

70. Ibarra, Herminia, Robin J. Ely and Deborah M. Kolb. 2013. "Women rising: The unseen barriers." *Harvard Business Review*, September. Pp. 3-8.

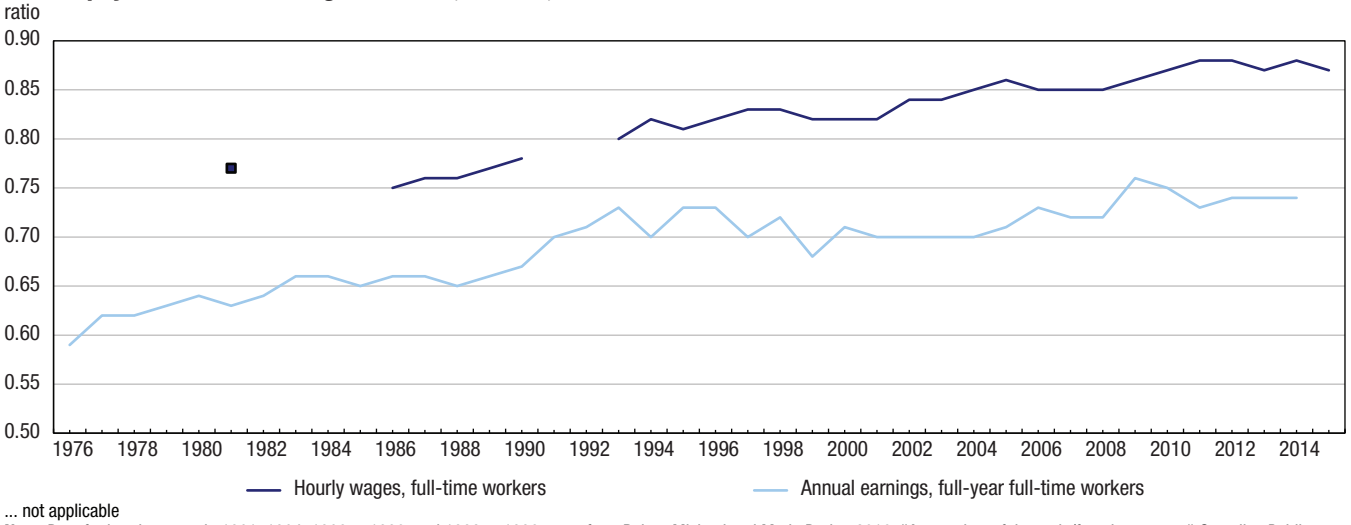
Since the 1960s, through the Public Service Commission of Canada, and later the *Employment Equity Act* as well, the federal government has endeavored to make its workforce representative of the national population by providing employment opportunities to qualified Canadians who have historically been disadvantaged in this regard, including women.[71] Beyond federal employment equity legislation, seven provinces have employment equity policies that pertain to provincial public servants: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia[72] (Ontario repealed its employment equity legislation in 1995, two years after its creation). Partly as a result of these efforts, gender parity now exists in the public sector with respect to women's representation in leadership positions. Based on the LFS, in 2015, 54.0% of legislators and senior government managers and officials were women. This represents an improvement over 1987, when the proportion of women in the top public sector positions was 17.2 percentage points less, at 36.8%. In contrast, in 2015, 25.6% of senior managers in the private sector were women—11.3 percentage points more than in 1987.

Women earn $0.87 for every dollar earned by men, largely as a result of wage inequality between women and men within occupations

The gender pay gap is a matter of intense scholarly and popular interest, often being seen as indicative of the broader state of gender equality in society. The size of the gender pay gap depends on the measure of earnings that is used (Chart 17).[73] Traditionally, academics (and Statistics Canada) have used the annual earnings of full-time, full-year workers. According to that metric, women aged 25 to 54 earned an average of $52,500 in 2014, while their male counterparts earned an average of $70,700.[74] These figures correspond to a gender earnings ratio (women: men) of 0.74, meaning that women earned $0.74 for every dollar earned by men. Yet annual earnings are a problematic measure of gender-based pay inequality, as women work fewer hours on average than men, even on a full-time, full-year basis, typically due to their family responsibilities.[75] Put differently, when the gender pay gap is measured from the annual earnings of full-time, full-year workers, it is confounded by gender differences in work hours. While annual earnings reflect both the price of labour and its quantity, the hourly wages of full-time workers reflect only the price of labour, and they are therefore closer to the issue of gender-based discrimination.[76] Women earned an average of $25.38 per hour in 2014, while their male counterparts earned an average of $28.92. It follows that women earned $0.88 for every dollar earned by men.[77] Thus, the male-female pay gap calculated on the basis of average hourly earnings is $0.14 smaller than the one calculated on the basis of average annual earnings, as it is not confounded by gender differences in work hours.

71. Equity and Diversity Directorate. 2011. "History of employment equity in the public service and the Public Service Commission of Canada." Ottawa: Public Service Commission of Canada. Available at: http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/406061/publication.html.
72. Bakan, Abigail B. and Audrey Kobayashi. 2000. "Employment equity policy in Canada: An interprovincial comparison." Ottawa: Status of Women Canada.
73. Baker, Michael and Marie Drolet. 2010. "A new view of the male/female pay gap." *Canadian Public Policy* 36(4): 429-464.
74. Annual income is available up to 2014.
75. Baker, Michael and Marie Drolet. 2010. "A new view of the male/female pay gap." *Canadian Public Policy* 36(4): 429-464.
76. Ibid.
77. For comparability with data on annual earnings, average hourly wages are provided for 2014. In 2015, women earned an average of $26.11 per hour and their male counterparts earned an average of $29.86, corresponding to a gender wage ratio of 0.87.

Chart 17
Gender pay ratio of workers aged 25 to 54, Canada, 1976 to 2015



... not applicable
Note: Data for hourly wages in 1981, 1984, 1986 to 1990, and 1993 to 1996 came from Baker, Michael and Marie Drolet. 2010. "A new view of the male/female pay gap." Canadian Public Policy 36(4): 429-464.
Sources: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey and Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics and Canadian Income Survey, custom tabulations.

The current gender wage ratio represents considerable improvement over previous decades (Chart 17). In 1981, women earned an average of $0.77 for every dollar earned by men.[78] The gender wage ratio hovered around the mid- to high-0.70 range until 1994, when it reached 0.82. From the mid-1990s to the early 2000s, the gender wage ratio remained in the low 0.80 range. In 2004, it reached 0.85, and has stayed in that vicinity to date. In 2015, women were $0.10 closer to every dollar earned by men than their counterparts in 1981.

One of the factors that has contributed to the improvement of the gender wage ratio over time is the increase in women's educational attainment.[79] Gender-based pay inequality tends to diminish with increasing levels of education (Table 9), and women have sustained a long-term trend toward higher education.[80] Between 1991 and 2015, the proportion of women with a university degree increased by 21.1 percentage points, from 14.0% to 35.1%. The proportion of men with a university degree also increased during this period, but to a lesser extent: 11.2 percentage points, from 17.4% in 1991 to 28.6% in 2015. Yet women have not been able to educate themselves out of gender differences in pay entirely. Even when they had a university degree above the Bachelor's level, women earned an average of $0.90 for every dollar earned by men in 2015.

Table 9
Average hourly wages of full-time workers aged 25 to 54 by highest level of educational attainment, Canada, 2015

	Women	Men	Ratio
	dollars		
Total, all education levels	**26.11**	**29.86**	**0.87**
0 to 8 years	15.09	21.70	0.70
Some high school	17.68	23.00	0.77
High school graduate	20.64	25.43	0.81
Some postsecondary	22.43	25.59	0.88
Postsecondary certificate or diploma	24.09	29.37	0.82
Trades certificate or diploma from a vocational or apprenticeship training	21.06	29.06	0.72
Non-university certificate or diploma from a community college, CEGEP or school of nursing	24.32	29.19	0.83
University certificate below bachelor's degree	27.80	32.67	0.85
University degree	31.42	35.51	0.88
Bachelor's degree	30.23	34.45	0.88
Above bachelor's degree	34.27	37.89	0.90

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulations.

78. Baker, Michael and Marie Drolet. 2010. "A new view of the male/female pay gap." *Canadian Public Policy* 36(4): 429-464.
79. Drolet, Marie. 2011. "Why has the gender wage gap narrowed?" *Perspectives on Labour and Income* 23(1): 3-13. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-001-x/2011001/pdf/11394-eng.pdf.
80. Ferguson, Sarah-Jane. 2016. "Women and education: Qualifications, skills and technology." *Women in Canada: A gender-based statistical report*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 89-503-X. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-503-x/2015001/article/14640-eng.htm.

The gender pay gap partly owes to the differential allocation of female and male workers across occupations. Women are over-represented in low-paying occupations and under-represented in high-paying ones.[81,82] In 2015, 21.2% of women who worked full-time had occupations with average hourly wages in the bottom 20% of the wage distribution, compared to 17.3% of their male counterparts. Conversely, 25.9% of men who worked full-time had an occupation with average hourly wages in the top 20% of the wage distribution, compared to 18.3% of their female counterparts. Put differently, women are more likely to have an occupation in the bottom 20% of the wage distribution than they are in the top 20%; the reverse is true for men.

Differences in how female-dominated occupations are valued, relative to male-dominated jobs, also contribute to the gender-based pay inequality.[83] Female-dominated occupations tend to be compensated at lower wage rates than male-dominated occupations—even when they involve the same skill level (Table 10). Employment and Social Development Canada organizes NOC occupations according to the skill level they usually require: A: university education; B: college education or apprenticeship training; C: secondary school and/or occupation-specific training; and D: on-the-job training. Within these skill levels, women earn less in female-dominated occupations than men do in male-dominated occupations. For example, professional occupations in nursing and professional occupations in natural and applied sciences are dominated by women and men, respectively, and both usually require a university education. Even so, the average hourly wage for professional women working in nursing was $35.37 in 2015, while the average hourly wage for professional men working in natural and applied sciences was $39.85—a difference of $4.48. Similarly, administrative and financial supervisors and administrative occupations and industrial, electrical and construction trades are dominated by women and men, respectively, and both usually require a college education or apprenticeship training. The average hourly wage for women in administrative occupations was $25.11, compared to $29.76 for men in construction-related trades. Given female-dominated occupations largely resemble work women have traditionally performed in the household, the fact that women in these occupations tend to have lower wages than men in male-dominated occupations at the same skill level speaks to the devaluation of women's work in both the private and public spheres.

81. Drolet, Marie. 2001. "The male-female wage gap." *Perspectives* 12(7): 29-37. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-001-x/01201/6036-eng.html.
82. Cohen, Philip N. and Matt L. Huffman. 2003. "Occupational segregation and the devaluation of women's work across U.S. labour markets." *Social Forces* 81(3): 881-908.
83. Ibid.

Table 10
Average hourly wages of full-time workers aged 25 to 54 by occupation[1], skill level[2] and sex, Canada, 2015

	Women	Men
	dollars	
Skill level A: occupations usually require a university education		
Senior management occupations	…	50.01
Managers in administrative services, financial and business services, and communication (except broadcasting)[3]	…	44.03
Managers in engineering, architecture, science and information systems[4]	…	49.13
Managers in health care[5]	40.62	…
Managers in public administration, education and social and community services, and public protection services[6]	40.59	…
Managers in art, culture, recreation and sport[7]	…	33.19
Middle management occupations in retail and wholesale trade and customer services	…	36.22
Managers in construction and facility operation and maintenance, and transportation[8]	…	38.62
Managers in natural resources production and fishing, and agriculture, horticulture and aquaculture[9]	…	38.71
Managers in manufacturing and utilities[10]	…	43.23
Professional occupations in business and finance	32.86	…
Professional occupations in natural and applied sciences	…	39.85
Professional occupations in nursing	35.37	…
Professional occupations in health (except nursing)	36.04	…
Professional occupations in education services	35.12	…
Professional occupations in law and social, community and government services	34.05	…
Professional occupations in art and culture	31.13	…
Skill level B: occupations usually require a college education or apprenticeship training		
Administrative and financial supervisors and administrative occupations	25.11	…
Finance, insurance and related business administrative occupations	24.41	…
Technical occupations related to natural and applied sciences	…	31.98
Technical occupations in health	27.40	…
Paraprofessional occupations in legal, social, community and education services	22.57	…
Occupations in front-line public protection services	…	38.43
Technical occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	…	28.16
Retail sales supervisors and specialized sales occupations	21.25	…
Service supervisors and specialized service occupations	…	19.02
Industrial, electrical and construction trades	…	29.76
Maintenance and equipment operation trades	…	29.17
Supervisors and technical occupations in natural resources, agriculture and related production	…	33.60
Processing, manufacturing and utilities supervisors and central control operators	…	30.76
Skill level C: occupations usually require secondary school and/or occupation-specific training		
Office support occupations	21.65	…
Distribution, tracking and scheduling co-ordination occupations	…	21.64
Assisting occupations in support of health services	20.95	…
Care providers and educational, legal and public protection support occupations	19.36	…
Sales representatives and salespersons - wholesale and retail trade	…	26.20
Service representatives and other customer and personal services occupations	18.20	…
Other installers, repairers and servicers and material handlers	…	21.47
Transport and heavy equipment operation and related maintenance occupations	…	24.08
Workers in natural resources, agriculture and related production	…	22.33
Processing and manufacturing machine operators and related production workers	…	21.64
Assemblers in manufacturing	…	21.91
Skill level D: on-the-job training is usually provided for these occupations		
Sales support occupations	13.97	…
Service support and other service occupations, n.e.c.	15.13	…
Trades helpers, construction labourers and related occupations	…	23.81
Harvesting, landscaping and natural resources labourers	…	22.94
Labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities	…	19.41

… not applicable
1. Major group of the 2011 National Occupational Classification (NOC).
2. Based on the variant for analysis by NOC skill level.
3. This combines the National Occupational Classification (NOC) codes 011 to 013.
4. National Occupational Classification (NOC) code 021.
5. National Occupational Classification (NOC) code 031.
6. This combines the National Occupational Classification (NOC) codes 041 to 043.
7. National Occupational Classification (NOC) code 051.
8. This combines the National Occupational Classification (NOC) codes 071 to 073.
9. This combines the National Occupational Classification (NOC) codes 081 to 082.
10. National Occupational Classification (NOC) code 091.
Note: Wages are provided only for the sex that dominates each occupational group.
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulations.

If the occupational distribution of women was equivalent to that of men, women's average wages would decrease by $0.01 per hour. It follows that the gender wage ratio would be unchanged.

Men out-earned women in every occupational group (of 46 at the two-digit NOC level) in 2015, except for managers and professionals in art, culture, recreation and sport (i.e., librarians, archivists, conservators and curators; writing, translating and related communications professionals; and creative and performing artists) and middle management occupations in production (data not shown). Even in traditionally-female occupations like teaching, nursing and other health services, clerical or other administration, and sales and services, the average hourly wages earned by men were greater than those earned by women (data not shown). This may reflect a phenomenon referred to in the literature as the "glass escalator," whereby men in female-dominated occupations are promoted higher and faster than women by virtue of their gender privilege and tokenism.[84]

Traditionally-male occupations that usually involve manual labour had the greatest gender wage gap in 2015, with women earning an average of $7.24 less per hour than their male counterparts ($20.23 vs. $27.47). In professional, "white-collar" occupations, women earned an average of $4.56 less per hour than their male counterparts ($35.32 vs. $39.88). The gender wage gap was similar traditionally-female occupations in clerical and administration, health services, and education, legal, social and community services, where women earned an average of $4.60 less per hour than their male counterparts ($23.66 vs. $28.26). In retail and service occupations, women earned an average of $4.83 less than their male counterparts ($17.91 vs. $22.74).

Given their occupational distribution, if women earned the same amount as men within occupations, their hourly wages would increase by an average of $2.86 per hour. As a result, the gender wage ratio would nearly reach equality at 0.97. It follows that the gender pay gap owes largely to wage inequality between women and men within occupations, as opposed to the uneven distribution of women and men across occupations.

A number of explanations for the gender wage gap that exists within occupations have been suggested in the academic literature, although none can be evaluated using data collected by Statistics Canada. One interpretation is that women experience wage discrimination on the basis of their gender. In this case, a woman is paid less than her male colleague for doing the exact same job. An alternative or supplementary interpretation is that, within occupational groups, women choose the less demanding and/or more flexible positions in order to accommodate their caregiving responsibilities.[85] Women may also be less adept at negotiating their pay or less interested in competing,[86] as these attributes are deemed "masculine" in the context of gender socialization.[87]

The impact of motherhood on women's wages has lessened

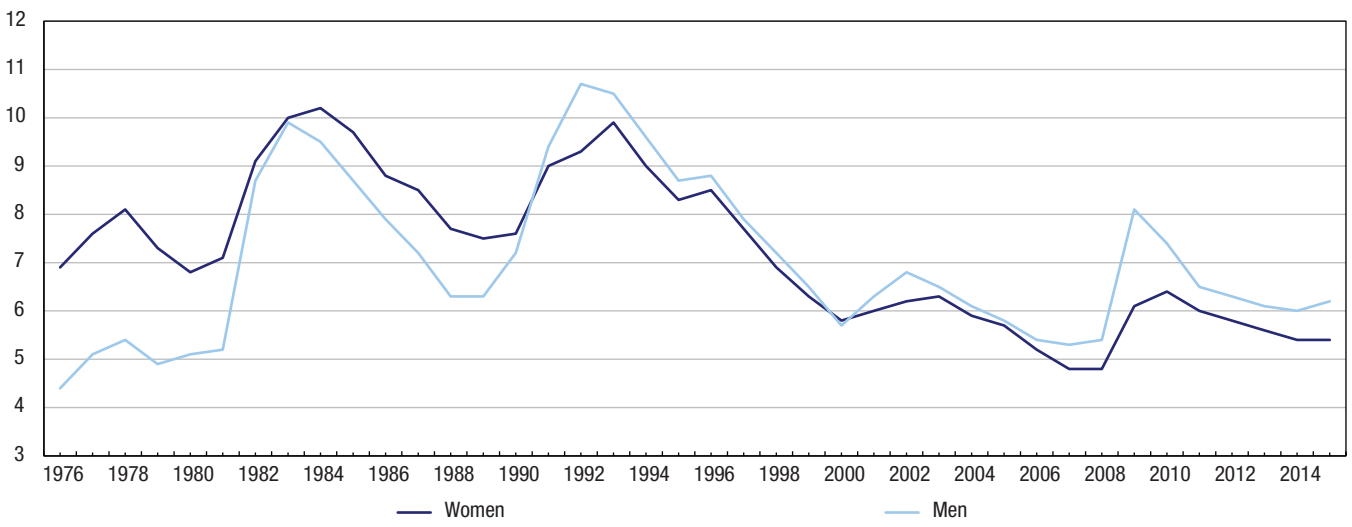
Mothers typically earn less than both women without dependent children and fathers. Previous research demonstrates that this "motherhood penalty" exists at a given point in time and persists over the life course.[88.89.90] In 1997, mothers with at least one child under the age of 18 earned $0.79 for every dollar earned by fathers, and women without children earned $0.88 for every dollar earned by men without children. By 2015, the impact of motherhood on women's hourly wages had lessened, but not yet disappeared: mothers with at least one child under the age of 18 earned $0.85 for every dollar earned by fathers, while women without children earned $0.90 for every dollar earned by men without children.

Unemployment patterns

From 1976 to 1990, women had a higher unemployment rate than men (Chart 18). However, in 1980, the gender unemployment gap—defined as the difference between the unemployment rates of men and women—began to decrease. By 1991, the gender employment gap had decreased such that it became positive, as women had a lower unemployment rate than men for the first time in recent history. Although this trend continued to present, during the recessions of the early 1990s and late 2000s, the (positive) gender unemployment gap temporarily increased, as the unemployment rate rose more steeply for men than women. This is because the industries that were hardest hit by employment losses during these economic downturns were in the male-dominated, goods-producing sector.[91,92]

84. Williams, Christine L. 1992. "The glass escalator: Hidden advantages for men in the 'female' professions." *Social Problems* 39(3): 253-267.
85. Goldin, Claudia. 2014. "A grand convergence: Its last chapter." *American Economic Review* 104(4): 1091-1119.
86. Ibid.
87. Williams, Joan C. and Rachel Dempsey. 2014. *What Works for Women at Work: Four Patterns Working Women Need to Know*. New York: New York University Press.
88. Correll, Shelley J., Stephen Bernard and In Paik. 2007. "Getting a job: Is there a motherhood penalty?" *American Journal of Sociology* 112(5): 1297-1339.
89. Budig, Michelle J. and Paula England. 2001. "The wage penalty for motherhood." *American Sociological Review* 66: 204-225.
90. Anderson, Deborah J., Melissa Binder and Kate Krause. 2003. "The motherhood wage penalty revisited: Experience, heterogeneity, work effort, and work-schedule flexibility." *Industrial and Labour Relations Review* 56(2): 273-294.
91. Cross, Philip. 2011. "How did the 2008-2010 recession and recovery compare with previous cycles?" *Canadian Economic Observer*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 11-010-X. Available at: http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/olc-cel/olc.action?ObjId=11-010-X201100111401&ObjType=47&lang=en.
92. Chan, Ping Ching Winnie, René Morissette and Marc Frenette. 2011. "Workers laid-off during the last three recessions: Who were they, and how did they fare?" *Analytical Studies Branch Research Paper Series*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 11F0019M-No. 337. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11f0019m/11f0019m2011337-eng.pdf.

Chart 18
Unemployment rates of people aged 25 to 54, Canada, 1976 to 2015



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM table 282-0002.

The decrease in the gender unemployment gap over time may also reflect women's increasing attachment to the labour market and, conversely, men's decreasing attachment.[93] In effect, women have become less likely to leave the labour force for non-participation (indicative of greater labour force attachment), while men have become more likely to leave the labour force once unemployed and less likely to rejoin afterward (indicative of weaker labour force attachment).[94]

Gender unemployment gap tends to be larger in high-unemployment provinces, smaller in low-unemployment provinces

As with employment rates, provincial variation exists in unemployment rates. Unemployment rates were generally below the national average in Ontario and the Prairie region, and above the national average in Quebec, the Atlantic region and British Columbia. Given this provincial variability, it is most informative to consider gender differences in unemployment within provinces, as opposed to considering provincial differences within gender.

The gender unemployment gap differed across the provinces, and it did so in a way that largely paralleled provincial variation in unemployment rates in general (Table 11). In 2015, men's unemployment rates were higher in the Atlantic region than both their female counterparts and the male national average. As a result, the greatest gender unemployment gaps were observed in Newfoundland and Labrador (4.2 percentage points), New Brunswick (3.7 percentage points) and Nova Scotia (2.4 percentage points). The higher unemployment rates for men, and the resulting gender gaps, in the Atlantic region is a function of the prevalence of high-seasonality industries in the goods-producing sector—forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction as well as construction—where far more men are employed than women.[95]

The gender unemployment gap tended to be smallest in low-unemployment provinces, where the unemployment rates for women and men were equal to or less than the gender-corresponding national average in 2015: Ontario (0.3%), Manitoba (0.4%), British Columbia (0.4%), and Alberta (0.6%). The exceptions to this pattern were Saskatchewan (1.1%), Quebec (1.4%) and Prince Edward Island (1.6%), for which the moderate size of their gender unemployment gaps places them in-between the other two groups of provinces.

93. Albanesi, Stefania and AySegül Sahin. 2013. "The gender unemployment gap." *Federal Reserve Bank of New York Staff Report* no. 613. Available at: https://www.newyorkfed.org/medialibrary/media/research/staff_reports/sr613.pdf.
94. Ibid.
95. Sharpe, Andrew and Jeremy Smith. 2005. "Labour market seasonality in Canada: Trends and policy implications." Centre for the Study of Living Standards (CSLS) report no. 2005-01. Ottawa: CSLS. Available at: http://www.csls.ca/reports/csls2005-01.pdf.

Table 11
Unemployment rates of people aged 25 to 54 by province, 2015

	Women	Men	Difference
	percent		percentage points
Canada	**5.4**	**6.2**	**-0.8**
Newfoundland and Labrador	8.8	13.0	-4.2
Prince Edward Island	8.0	9.6	-1.6
Nova Scotia	6.0	8.4	-2.4
New Brunswick	6.2	9.9	-3.7
Quebec	5.8	7.2	-1.4
Ontario	5.4	5.7	-0.3
Manitoba	4.9	4.5	0.4
Saskatchewan	3.8	4.9	-1.1
Alberta	5.1	5.7	-0.6
British Columbia	4.9	5.3	-0.4

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM table 282-0002.

After dissatisfaction, personal or family reasons were the most common explanation given by women for leaving their job

In 2015, most unemployed people had worked in the past year; however, a greater proportion of men had done so than women (70.7% vs. 58.7%). Conversely, a greater proportion of women were labour force re-entrants than men, 34.1% vs. 26.1% (Table 12). A greater proportion of women were new job market entrants as well, meaning they had never been employed previously (7.4% vs. 3.2%).

Men had slightly longer unemployment spells on average than women (23.1 weeks vs. 20.3 weeks), so the fact that more women were labour force re-entrants than men likely reflects women's greater likelihood of taking maternal/parental leaves upon the birth or adoption of young children or other family-related leaves. Of women who received Employment Insurance (EI) benefits in 2015, 45.6% received maternal, parental or compassionate care benefits.[96] A little more than 3.0% of men who were EI beneficiaries received these types of benefits.

Among unemployed people who worked in the last year, there were gender differences in the reasons for leaving or losing their last job. In 2015, most people were unemployed because they lost their job, as opposed to leaving it; however, a greater proportion of men lost their job (80.3% vs. 70.5%). On the other hand, a greater proportion of women left their job (29.5% vs. 19.7%). After dissatisfaction, personal or family reasons were the most common explanation given by women for leaving their job (19.0%), while it was the least common explanation given by men (8.9%). For the vast majority of women and men, their job loss involved a permanent layoff, as opposed to a temporary one. However, more women were laid off permanently (91.9% vs. 85.7% of men), while more men were laid off temporarily (14.3% vs. 8.1% of women), reflecting men's over-representation in highly-seasonal industries (i.e., agriculture; fishing, mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction; construction; and manufacturing).

Table 12
Proportion of unemployed aged 25 to 54 by reason for unemployment and sex, Canada, 2015

	Women	Men
	percent	
Worked in the last year	**58.5**	**70.7**
Job leavers	29.5	19.7
Own illness or disability	14.8	15.1
Personal or family reasons	19.0	8.6
Going to school	7.3	9.0
Dissatisfied	37.4	41.9
Other reasons	20.8	24.5
Job losers	70.5	80.3
Permanent layoff	91.9	85.7
Temporary layoff	8.1	14.3
Have not worked in last year	**34.1**	**26.1**
Never worked	**7.4**	**3.2**

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM table 282-0217.

96. Statistics Canada, Employment Insurance data, CANSIM table 276-0020.

Employment Insurance benefits

The Employment Insurance (EI) program provides temporary benefits to those who have lost their job (regular benefits) or who are unable to work due to illness or injury (sickness benefits), the birth or adoption of a child (maternity benefits and parental benefits), a child's critical illness (parents of critically ill children benefits), or a family member's risk of death (compassionate care benefits). The latter five types of benefits are jointly referred to as "special benefits." In addition to regular and special benefits, there are work-sharing benefits and fishing benefits.

According to the Employment Insurance Coverage Survey (EICS), nearly equivalent proportions of women and men who were separated from their job through leaving, loss, or an unpaid absence were eligible to receive EI benefits in 2015 (44.5% and 45.0%, respectively). To be eligible to receive EI benefits, claimants must meet the minimum requirements set forth by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) for their geographic place of residence, with respect to having a "valid" reason for job separation, insurable employment in the past 12 months, and a sufficient number of accumulated hours since the previous job separation. Most women and men who were ineligible to receive EI benefits had not worked in the past 12 months (or ever) and therefore could not qualify (55.6% and 50.3%, respectively). An additional 22.3% of ineligible women and 23.6% of their male counterparts quit their job without a cause acceptable to the EI program, including school attendance. The remaining 22.1% of ineligible women and 26.1% of ineligible men did not meet the entrance requirements for the EI program, including having insurable employment.

While EI eligibility and reasons for ineligibility are similar for women and men, the types of benefits they receive at a given point in time differ. Based on administrative data from ESDC and Service Canada, 44.7% of female beneficiaries received regular benefits in 2015, while 54.6% received special benefits (Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 276-0020). Among male beneficiaries, 86.6% received regular benefits and 10.3% received special benefits. The gender disparity in special benefits was more pronounced for parental benefits—91.9% of beneficiaries were women and 8.1% were men—than it was for sickness benefits, where 60.7% of beneficiaries were women and 39.3% were men. Gender differences in the other types of special benefits are suppressed to protect the confidentiality of EI beneficiaries.

Young women

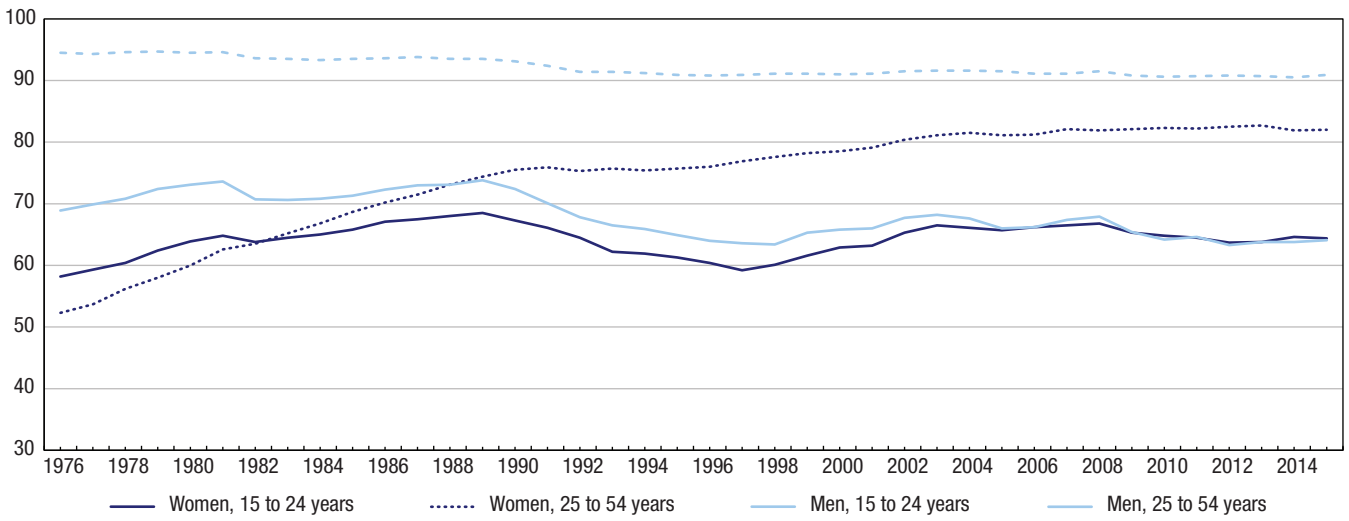
Youth, as it pertains to the workforce, is conventionally defined as people aged 15 to 24. Although some commentators have highlighted the fact that "youth" encompasses two distinct age groups—teenagers (aged 15 to 19) and twenty-somethings (aged 20 to 24)—with divergent labour market outcomes,[97] this demarcation is used here for statistical consistency internationally.[98]

More young women attend school than do young men

Youth tend to have lower rates of labour force participation than people in the core working ages (Chart 19) because they are often still in school.[99] In fact, the proportion of young people who are students has increased since 1976, particularly among females. In 1976, 41.2% of young women attended school, as did 45.3% of young men. By 2015, 65.1% of young women and 58.2% of young men attended school—increases of 23.9 percentage points and 12.9 percentage points, respectively. Although students are less likely than non-students to participate in the labour market, and a greater proportion of young women attended post-secondary school than young men from 1981 onward, the participation rates of female and male youth have been within 1.0% of each other since 2005.[100]

97. Cross, Philip. 2015. "Serving up the reality on youth unemployment: How rising unemployment among teens has skewed public perceptions about young people and work." Ottawa: MacDonald-Laurier Institute. Available at: http://www.macdonaldlaurier.ca/files/pdf/MLI-PCrossYouthUnemployment10-15-webready.pdf.
98. For statistical purposes, the United Nations defines youth as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24.
99. Bernard, André. 2015. "Youth labour force participation: 2008 to 2014." *Economic Insights*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 11-626-X-no. 052. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-626-x/11-626-x2015052-eng.htm.
100. Ibid.

Chart 19
Participation rates of people aged 15 to 24 and 25 to 54, Canada, 1976 to 2015



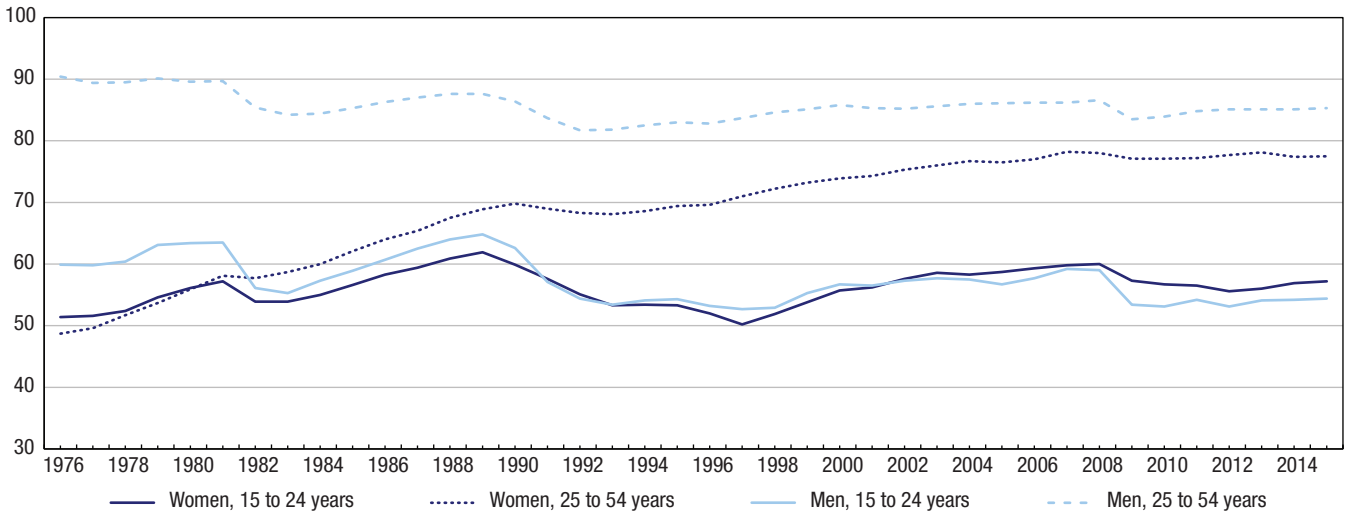
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM table 282-0002.

Gender employment gap is smaller among youth than it is among people in the core working ages

While the employment rate of women in the core working ages has consistently been lower than that of men, the employment rate for young women was slightly higher than that of young men in 1991, 1992 and from 2002 onward (Chart 20). In fact, the gender gap in employment rates is notably smaller among youth, compared to people aged 25 to 54. In 1976, 51.4% of young women were employed, as were 59.9% of young men—a difference of 8.5 percentage points. The employment rate for women in the core working ages was slightly lower at 48.7%, while the employment rate for men was much higher at 90.4%, corresponding to a difference of 41.7 percentage points. The greater gender employment gap among people in the core working ages in 1976, relative to youth, partially reflects the tendency of women at that time to cease paid work either temporarily or permanently upon marriage or motherhood.[101,102] In 2015, 57.2% of young women were employed, compared to 54.4% of their male counterparts—a difference of 2.8 percentage points in favor of women. In contrast, 77.5% of women in the core working ages were employed, compared to 85.3% of their male counterparts—a difference of 7.8 percentage points in favor of men. Why is the gender employment gap smaller and in favor of women (i.e., positive) among youth, compared to people in the core working ages? It has much to do with the fact that the ages of 25 to 54 are not only "core" in terms of work, but also "core" in terms of family formation and parenthood. Parenthood tends to move couples toward a more conventional or "gendered" division of labour,[103] which in turn impedes women's participation in the labour market. As youth increasingly delay the transition to parenthood—as they pursue post-secondary education and establish themselves in paid work[104,105]—labour market disruptions related to childbearing and rearing, which primarily affect women, are also postponed to later ages.

101. Crompton, Susan and Michael Vickers. 2000. "One hundred years of labour force." *Canadian Social Trends* 57: 2-14. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2000001/article/5086-eng.pdf?contentType=application%2Fpdf.
102. Goldin, Claudia. 2006. "The quiet revolution that transformed women's employment, education and family." *American Economic Review* 96(2): 1-21.
103. Fox, Bonnie. 2001. "The formative years: How parenthood creates gender." *Canadian Review of Sociology* 38(4): 373-390.
104. Clark, Warren. 2007. "Delayed transitions of young adults." *Canadian Social Trends*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 11-008-XIE-no. 84: 13-21. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2007004/pdf/10311-eng.pdf?contentType=application%2Fpdf.
105. Hayford, Sarah R., Karen Benjamin Guzzo and Pamela J. Smock. 2014. "The decoupling of marriage and parenthood? Trends in the timing of marital first births, 1945-2002." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 76(3): 520-538.

Chart 20
Employment rates of people aged 15 to 24 and 25 to 54, Canada, 1976 to 2015



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM table 282-0002.

Young women have a lower unemployment rate than young men

Although young adults have long had an unemployment rate that is higher than their counterparts in the core working ages (Chart 21), there is concern that the consequences of the global financial crisis in 2008/2009 have fallen disproportionately on youth.[106,107] Since youth are usually the first targets of job cuts, their transition from school to work may have become increasingly difficult after the economic downturn. In fact, the level of youth unemployment recorded at the height of the recent recession (15.4% in 2009) was notably lower than that recorded during two previous recessions in the early 1980s (19.2% in 1983) and early 1990s (17.2% in both 1992 and 1993). Further, the youth unemployment rate has largely recovered to pre-recession levels. Even so, as it currently stands, the youth unemployment rate is more than double that of the core working ages: 5.8% vs. 13.2%.[108] Besides the immediate consequences of unemployment, such as economic hardship and mental distress,[109] there are longer-term consequences such as human capital erosion[110] and diminished self-confidence.[111] Hence, youth unemployment leads to "scarring" in the form of lower pay and higher unemployment in later life, reduced life chances, and poorer mental health.[112,113]

Since 1991, women have consistently fared better than men in terms of unemployment, having lower rates (and shorter durations). Among youth, these gender differences are exacerbated. While the gender gap in unemployment rates was less than 1.0 percentage point in favor of women among the core working ages in 2015 (6.2% for men vs. 5.4% for women), it was 3.7 percentage points in favor of women among youth, at 15.0% for men vs. 11.3% for women (Chart 21).[114]

106. See, for example: Geobey, Sean. 2013. "The young and the jobless: Youth unemployment in Ontario." Toronto: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. Available at: https://uwaterloo.ca/canadian-index-wellbeing/sites/ca.canadian-index-wellbeing/files/uploads/files/the_young_and_the_jobless-youth_unemployment_in_ontario.pdf.
107. Bell, David N.F. and David G. Blanchflower. 2011. "Young people and the great recession." Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA) Discussion Paper no. 5674. Available at: http://ftp.iza.org/dp5674.pdf.
108. Some commentators (e.g., Cross 2015) have highlighted the fact that "youth" encompasses two distinct age groups—teenagers (aged 15 to 19) and twenty-somethings (aged 20 to 24)—with divergent labour market outcomes. Specifically, teenagers have much lower labour force participation and employment rates (49.9% and 40.9%, respectively, in 2015) than twenty-somethings (76.4% and 68.4%, respectively). Further, the unemployment rate among teenagers (18.2%) is much higher than among twenty-somethings (10.4%). Given that the United Nations defines youth as consisting of people aged 15 to 24, we retain this demarcation for statistical consistency internationally.
109. Winefield, Anthony H. 2002. "Unemployment, underemployment, occupational stress and psychological well-being." *Australian Journal of Management* 27(1): 137-148.
110. Mroz, Thomas A. and Timothy H. Savage. 2006. "The long-term effects of youth unemployment." *Journal of Human Resources.* 41(2): 259-293.
111. Goldsmith, Arthur H., Jonathan R. Veum and William Darity. 1997. "Unemployment, joblessness, psychological well-being and self-esteem: Theory and evidence." *Journal of Socio-Economics* 26(2): 133-158.
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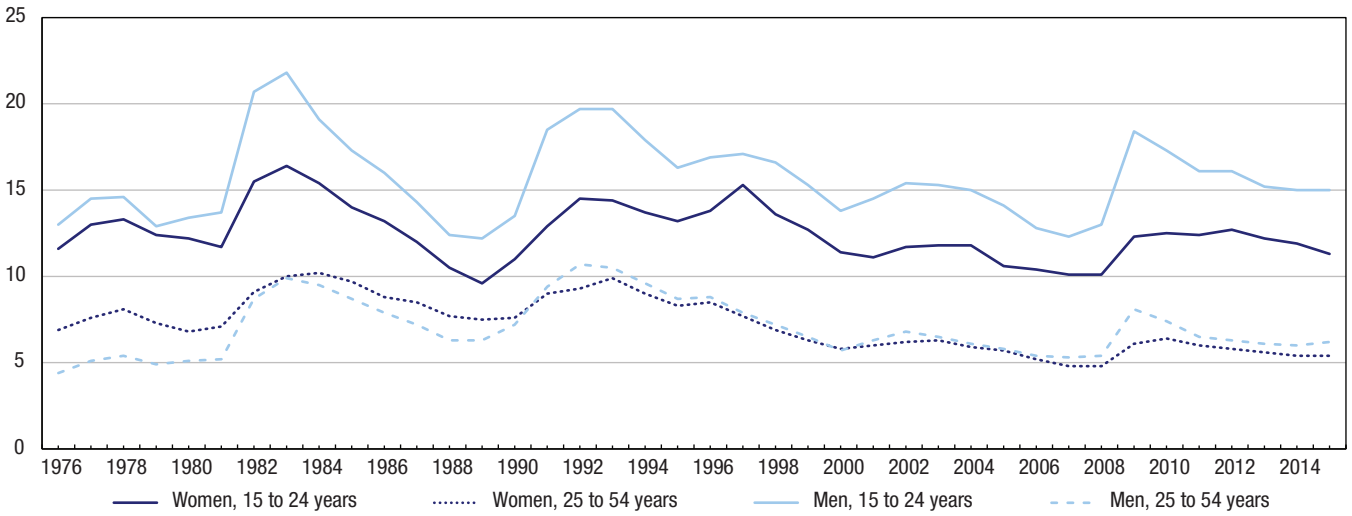
114. This is the case even when we distinguish between teenagers (15 to 19) and twenty-somethings (20 to 24), with gender differences in their unemployment rates of 3.4% and 4.1% in 2015, respectively.

Chart 21
Unemployment rates of people aged 15 to 24 and 25 to 54, Canada, 1976 to 2015



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM table 282-0002.

There are at least two explanations for the fact that the gender unemployment gap among youth is negative (meaning that young women are less likely to be unemployed than young men). First, women are over-represented in industries with the greatest concentration of youth: retail trade and accommodation and food services (data not shown). Second, given that young men are less likely than their female counterparts to pursue post-secondary education, there may be gender differences in the type of work sought, translating to gender differences in the difficulty associated with finding work. Nationally, 61.1% of unemployed young men were non-students in 2015, compared to 44.8% of their female counterparts. It follows that a larger proportion of young men were looking for full-time work than young women (53.0% vs. 40.5%). Full-time work may be harder to obtain—judging by both the duration of young men's unemployment being nearly two weeks longer than young women's and information on job vacancies by industry. While the proportion of job vacancies was highest (and the average offered hourly wages the lowest) in retail trade and accommodation and food services,[115] which are the industries with the greatest concentration of youth, these were also industries with high proportions of part-time positions.

Additional evidence that young men may find it harder to find full-time work comes from gender differences in the proportion of part-time workers who work less than 30 hours per week for reasons other than personal ones (i.e., "involuntarily"). Slightly more young men were involuntary part-time workers in 2015, at 20.4% vs. 18.7% for women.

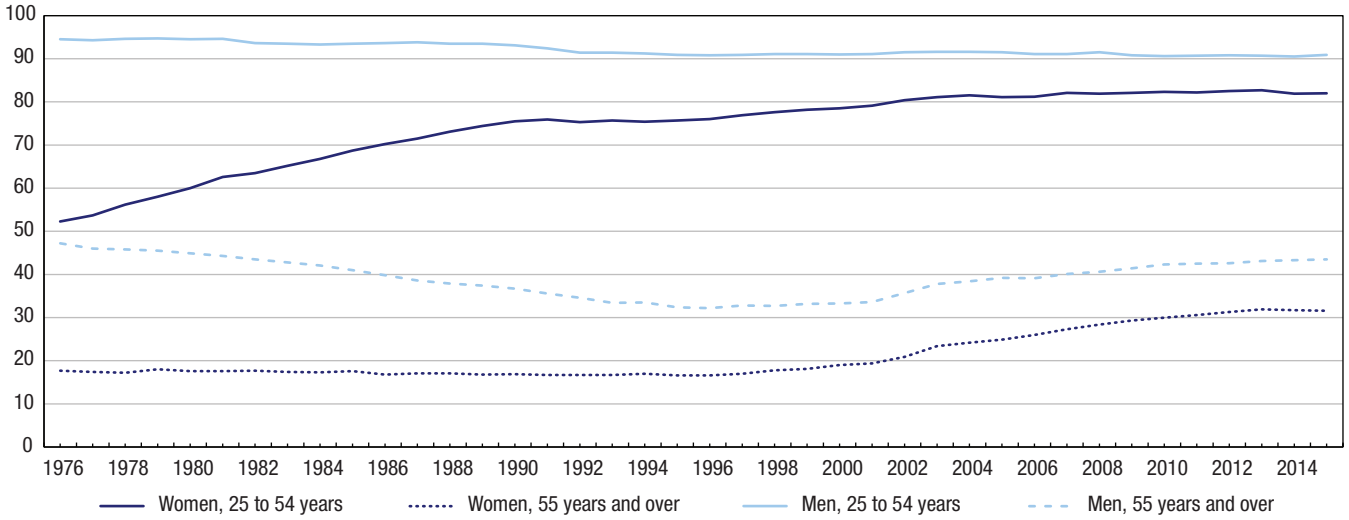
Older women

As medical advances and lifestyle changes have improved population health and longevity, a new life stage has recently emerged in later adulthood after career building, known as the "third age" or "encore."[116] In contrast to the conventional, post-war view in which retirement involves a permanent exit from full-time employment and entry into total leisure, the bonus years of healthy life expectancy are increasingly used to pursue meaningful engagements in education, paid work, volunteerism or other informal forms of helping out.[117]

Labour force participation rates generally decline with age, as increasing proportions of people retire. For this reason, older people—defined as those 55 years and over—have lower participation rates than people in the core ages (Chart 22). Among older people, women have lower participation rates than men, owing to both cohort and age-of-retirement effects. Women in earlier birth cohorts had lower participation rates across the life course, reflecting traditional gender norms regarding the division of labour within conjugal families (i.e., male breadwinner/female homemaker). Regardless of birth cohort, women tend to retire at younger ages than men. For example, in 2015, the average age of retirement for women was 62.7 compared to 64.1 for men. Together, these factors largely explain older women's lower participation rates, relative to their male counterparts.

115. Statistics Canada, Job Vacancy and Wage Survey (JVWS), CANSIM table 285-0002.
116. Moen, Phyllis and Sarah Flood. 2013. "Limited engagements? Women's and men's work/volunteer time in the encore life course stage." *Social Problems* 60(2): 1-32.
117. Ibid.

Chart 22
Participation rates of people aged 25 to 54 and 55 years and over, Canada, 1976 to 2015
percent

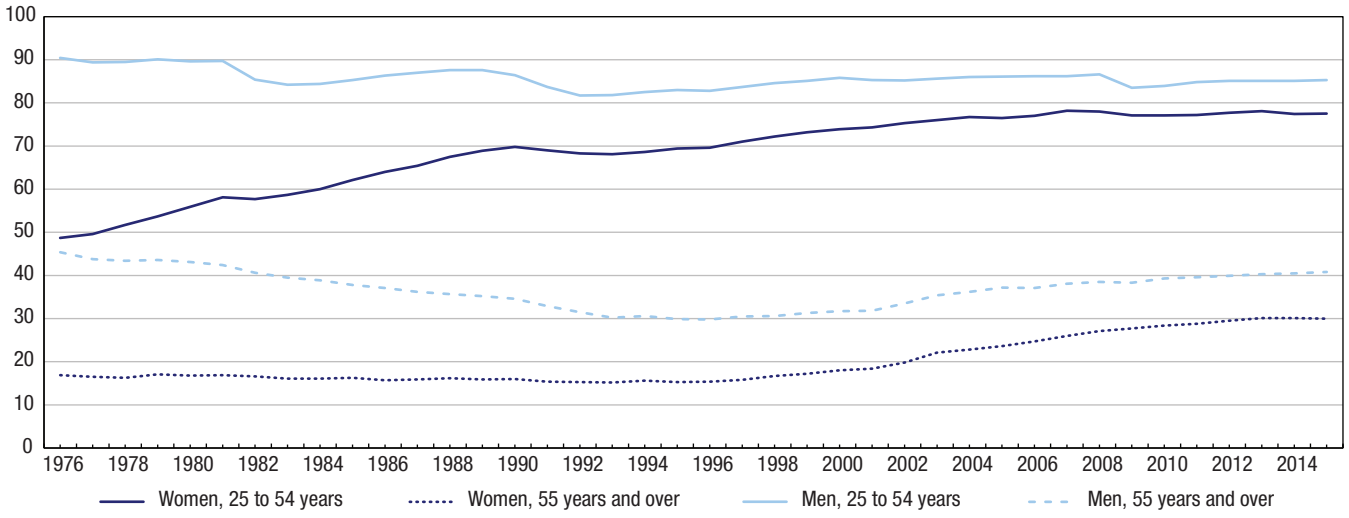


Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM table 282-0002.

Employment rate of older women has risen to a greater extent than that of older men

The employment rate of older women was fairly consistent from 1976 through to the late 1990s, averaging 16.1% (Chart 23). Over the same period, the employment rate of older men trended downward, from 45.4% in 1976 to 31.3% in 1999, narrowing the gender employment gap among older people in the process. Around the early 2000s, the employment rates of both older women and men commenced an upward trend. Older women's employment increased somewhat more than their male counterparts between 2000 and 2015, further narrowing the gender employment gap. By 2015, the employment rate of older women was 30.0%—13.1 percentage points higher than it was in 1976. The employment rate of older men was 40.8% in 2015—9.1 percentage points higher than it was in 2000, yet 4.6 percentage points lower than in 1976.

Chart 23
Employment rates of people aged 25 to 54 and 55 years and over, Canada, 1976 to 2015
percent

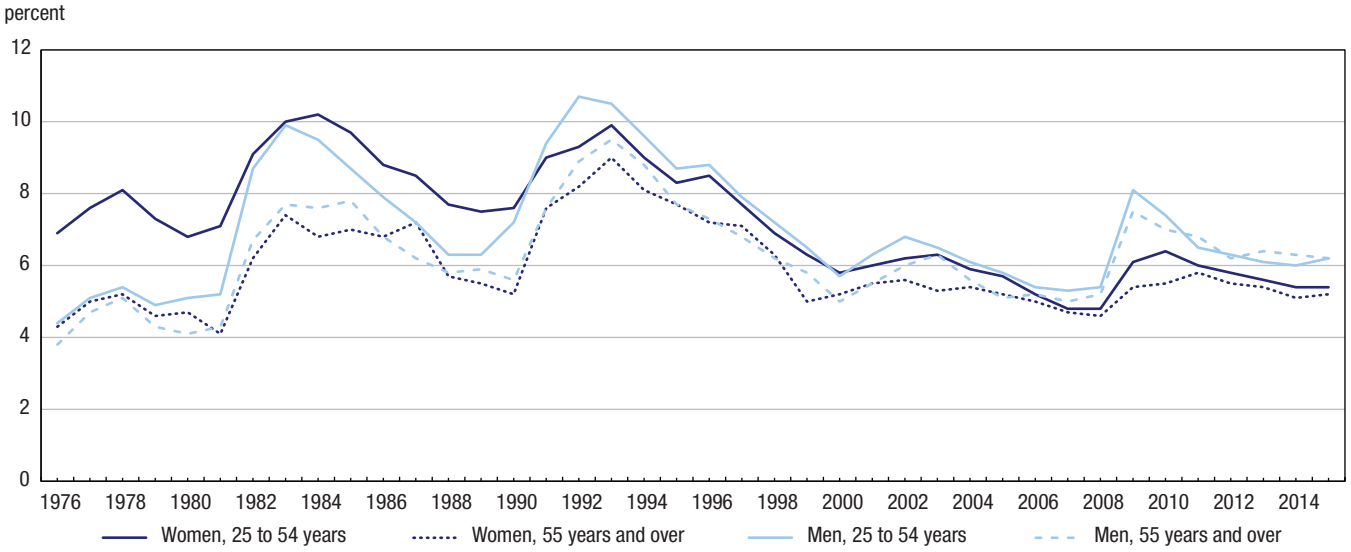


Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM table 282-0002.

Older women have a lower unemployment rate than both older men and core-age women

Older women and men generally have lower unemployment rates than their counterparts in the core ages, as many of them will have saved enough money in the course of their employment to retire after leaving or losing a job. After three decades of trending fairly closely, the unemployment rates of older women and men diverged after the global economic downturn of 2008/2009 (Chart 24). In 1976, 4.3% of older women and 3.8% of their male counterparts were unemployed, corresponding to a gender unemployment gap of half a percentage point. In 2009, 5.4% of older women were unemployed, as were 7.5% of older men, corresponding to a gender unemployment gap of 2.1 percentage points in favor of females. By 2015, this gap was reduced to 1.0 percentage point in favor of females, as the unemployment rate of older men decreased to 6.2%. The unemployment rate of older women was virtually unchanged.

Chart 24
Unemployment rates of people aged 25 to 54 and 55 years and over, Canada, 1976 to 2015



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM table 282-0002.

The divergence of the unemployment rates of older women and men following the global economic downturn reflects the fact that men over the age of 45 were more likely to be laid-off during the most recent recession, relative to previous recessions in the early 1980s and the early 1990s.[118] Women were generally less likely to be laid-off in each of these recessions.[119]

118. Chan, Ping Ching Winnie, René Morissette and Marc Frenette. 2011. "Workers laid-off during the last three recessions: Who were they, and how did they fare?" *Analytical Studies Branch Research Paper Series*. Ottawa: Statisics Canada. Catalogue no. 11F0019M-No. 337. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11f0019m/11f0019m2011337-eng.pdf.
119. Ibid.