

The employed include all persons who, during the reference week, did any work for pay or profit; that is, paid work in an employer-employee relationship or self-employment. Also included is unpaid family work which contributed directly to the operation of a farm, business or professional practice owned or operated by a related member of the household. The employed also include persons who had jobs but were not at work due to illness or disability, personal or family responsibilities, bad weather, labour dispute or other reason.

The unemployed are those who, during the reference week, were without work, had actively looked for work in the past four weeks and were available for work; had not actively looked for work in the past four weeks but had been on lay-off (with the expectation of returning to work) for 26 weeks or less and were available for work; or had a new job to start in four weeks or less and were available for work. Persons not in the labour force are those who are neither employed nor unemployed.

Because they are based on a sample of households, estimates derived from the labour force survey are subject to sampling error. In the design and processing of the survey, extensive efforts are made to minimize the sampling error; in general, the error, expressed as a percentage of the estimate, tends to decrease as the size of the estimate increases.

As noted, the substantial revisions were introduced into the Labour Force Survey in January 1976. These revisions included the introduction of an entirely new and expanded questionnaire, the adjustment of some definitions, a revision of the sample frame, a re-benchmarking of the population totals used to weight the sample and the adoption of new methods of transmitting and processing the survey information. This revised survey was run in parallel with the former survey throughout 1975 and, as expected, some of the estimates from the two surveys differed significantly. However, by using the relationships in the estimates from the two surveys for 1975, the estimates from the former survey have been revised for the period 1970 to 1974 allowing for the production of a consistent time series from 1970 to the present.

In the period 1970-75, the total Canadian labour force increased by 1.7 million persons or 19.8%. This was composed of an increase of 31% in the number of women in the labour force and an increase in the number of men of only 14%. These increases reflected corresponding increases in the participation rates (the labour force as a percentage of the corresponding population aged 15 and over) for women from 38.3% in 1970 to 44.2% in 1975 and for men from 77.8% to 78.4%.

The increase in the proportion of men in the labour force was generated by the increase in the participation rate of young males (age 15-24) from 62.5% to 69.0% which more than offset the slight decline for older males (25 and over) from 83.4% to 81.9%. In the case of women, both age groups increased their participation although the rise was more pronounced among those aged 15-24.

The total number of persons employed in Canada rose by 1.4 million or 18.2% over the 1970-75 period. Although employment rose in all provinces the increases were not uniform, ranging from 12.0% in Saskatchewan to 25.3% in British Columbia. Other increases were 17.8% in Newfoundland, 22.9% in Prince Edward Island, 15.2% in Nova Scotia, 19.3% in New Brunswick, 15.2% in Quebec, 19.0% in Ontario, 13.2% in Manitoba, and 22.9% in Alberta.

Unemployment as a percentage of the labour force varied from 5.4% in 1974 to 6.9% in 1975 with an average over the entire 1970-75 period of 6.0%. Throughout those years women had higher unemployment rates than men and young persons (age 15-24) had considerably higher rates than persons age 25 and over.

8.2.2 Labour force (1971 Census)

At each decennial census of Canada, questions are asked of persons 15 years of age and over relating to their employment status and present work activities. The