Study: Full-time employment, 1976 to 2014

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Proportionately more people were employed full time in 2014 than in the mid-1970s. However, data from a new study shows that the increase in full-time employment was not uniform across gender, age groups and regions.

Of all individuals aged 17 to 64 who were not attending school full time, 66% were employed full time as employees or self-employed workers in 2014, up from 62% in 1976. This increase conceals divergent trends among women and men. Over the study period, the share of women employed full time increased from 40% to 57%, while the share of men employed full time declined from 84% to 74%.

The decline in full-time employment was evident among men in every age group. Among men aged 25 to 29, the share employed full time declined by 10 percentage points and among those aged 30 to 54 it declined by 7.5 percentage points.

The full-time employment rate—the percentage of the population employed full time in their main job—also declined among male and female youth. Men and women aged 17 to 24 not attending school full time saw their full-time employment rate decrease by 18 percentage points and 11 percentage points respectively between 1976 to 2014.

Based on a simple framework, the share of the population employed full-time may decline because proportionately fewer individuals are in the labour force, proportionately more labour market participants are unemployed, or proportionately more workers hold part-time jobs.

Among male youth, about three-quarters of the decline in full-time employment was due to an increase in part-time employment and about one-quarter was due to a decline in labour force participation. Among female youth, the entire decline in full-time employment was attributable to the increased prevalence of part-time employment.

Among men aged 25 to 54, about 40% of the decline in full-time employment was due to an increased prevalence of part-time employment and a comparable share was due to a decline in labour force participation. The remainder was attributable to higher unemployment rates.

Across regions, the full-time employment rates of men and youth declined far less in the oil-producing provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland and Labrador than they did in the other provinces. Among men aged 30 to 54, for example, the incidence of full-time employment declined by 3 percentage points in the oil-producing provinces and by 8 percentage points in the other provinces.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3701.

The research article "Full-time Employment, 1976 to 2014" part of the *Economic Insights* series (**11-626-X**) is now available from the *Browse by key resource module* of our website under *Publications*.

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