

Number of young Canadians NEET doubled this spring

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A [new fact sheet released today](#) shows that, in March and April 2020, the proportion of young Canadians who were not in employment, education or training (NEET) increased to unprecedented levels.

The COVID-19 pandemic—and the public health interventions that were put in place to limit its spread—have affected young people in a number of ways, including high unemployment rates, school closures and education moving online.

In February 2020, just before the pandemic, the NEET rate for young Canadians aged 15 to 29 was 12%, a rate similar to that observed each February in recent years. This rate rose to 18% in March 2020, the first month during which pandemic-related measures were implemented. In April 2020, the NEET rate increased again to reach 24%, the highest rate measured in the past 20 years. These increases were comparable between men and women, and they were similar across the provinces.

Among Canadians aged 20 to 24 and 25 to 29, the increase in NEET rates in the first two months of the pandemic was mostly because of a decrease in employment. When the highest level of education was examined, youth aged 25 to 29 with a trades diploma had the largest increase in NEET rates. This may be related to the fact that individuals with this level of education typically work in occupations with limited telework opportunities.

Among Canadians aged 15 to 19, the increase in NEET rates in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, when most of the school closures took place, was primarily the result of youth who reported that they were not attending school. It is likely that youth reported not attending school because of these closures, as well as because of changes in the way education was delivered, rather than because they actually dropped out of their studies. When Canadian youth were asked in May 2020 whether they planned to return to their studies in fall 2020, the proportion who indicated they planned to return (92%) was similar to what was measured in May 2019 (93%).

Overall, during the early months of the pandemic, groups that are typically at higher risk for being NEET (young women with children, immigrants and off-reserve Indigenous youth) did not experience a greater increase in NEET rates compared with the overall population.

As the education and labour market environments continue to evolve throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, it will be important to monitor the NEET rates of young Canadians during the rest of 2020.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [3701](#).

The fact sheet "[Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the NEET \(not in employment, education or training\) indicator, March and April 2020](#)" which is part of the *Education Indicators in Canada: Fact Sheet* series ([81-599-X](#)), is now available online.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca).

