

Life After Service Survey, 2019

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Thursday, January 16, 2020

Every year, thousands of members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) transition from military to post-service life. In 2019, 39% of Regular Force Veterans who left the CAF between 1998 and 2018 reported their transition to post-service life as being difficult or very difficult. This was up from one-third (33%) of Veterans reporting difficulties in transition in 2016.

Difficulties in adjusting were not limited to Veterans. In 2019, one-third of Veterans (excluding Veterans without a spouse or partner, or children) also reported that their release was difficult for their spouse or partner or children, up from 30% in 2016.

Better understanding the transition from military to post-service life and, ultimately, improving the health of Veterans in Canada is a priority for Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC). To ensure that the programs and services in place respond to the needs of Veterans, Statistics Canada, in collaboration with VAC and the Department of National Defence, conducted the 2019 cycle of the Life After Service Survey (LASS). The LASS provides insight into how former CAF members have experienced reintegration following their military service. This can include many challenges, such as changes in employment, income, health, family dynamics and personal relationships.

Most Veterans return to the labour force after leaving military service

More than half (57%) of Veterans reported that working was their main activity over the 12 months preceding the survey. Just over one-fifth (21%) were retired or not looking for work, 12% reported having a disability or being on disability leave, and 4% were attending school or training. Age was an important factor in Veterans' working status. For those under the age of 65, the majority (61%) reported working as their main activity during the previous 12 months. In contrast, 71% of Veterans aged 65 and older reported their main activity as being retired and not looking for work.

Of the Veterans who reported working in the 12 months preceding the survey, 79% were satisfied or very satisfied with their work. In terms of job stability, 79% of CAF members who were released prior to 2013 had the same job in 2019 as they did in 2016.

In 2019, similar to the 2016 LASS results, just over half (52%) of the Veterans who worked since their release, worked in jobs that used the knowledge and skills they acquired during their military service. Almost three-quarters (74%) of the Veterans who had worked since their release from the CAF reported that the experiences, education and training they obtained during their military career helped them in their current or most recent civilian job.

Note to readers

The Life After Service Survey, a longitudinal survey, was conducted in 2013, 2016 and 2019.

Data on Veterans who reported their main activity within the 12 months preceding the survey cover Veterans of all ages. Data do not add up to 100%, as 6% of respondents provided answers outside of the main response categories—for example, some responded that they worked in the Reserve Force, that they were looking for work, that they cared for or nurtured a family member or partner, or that they did not know—while others provided no response.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [5172](#).

The infographic "[Life After Service Survey, 2019: Key findings on Veterans' transition to civilian life](#)," which is part of the series *Statistics Canada — Infographics (11-627-M)*, is now available.



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).