

Quality of Employment in Canada

Multiple jobholders, 1976 to 2021

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Multiple jobholders, 1976 to 2021

Overview

In 2021, the proportion of employed workers in Canada who held more than one job (5.1%) was close to two and a half times the rate recorded in 1976 (2.1%). For employees, having more than one job is more common among those with low weekly earnings in their main job. In addition, part-time workers, especially those working part-time involuntarily, are more likely to have multiple jobs than are full-time workers.

In 2020, unprecedented job losses were recorded in the Canadian labour market due to public health restrictions introduced to limit the spread of COVID-19. In this context, the multiple jobholder rate decreased by 1.3 percentage points to an average of 4.5%, the largest annual decline since 1976. While the rate recovered by 0.6 percentage points in 2021, it remained below its 2019 level in a context where public health restrictions continued to be eased and re-introduced in response to waves of the pandemic.

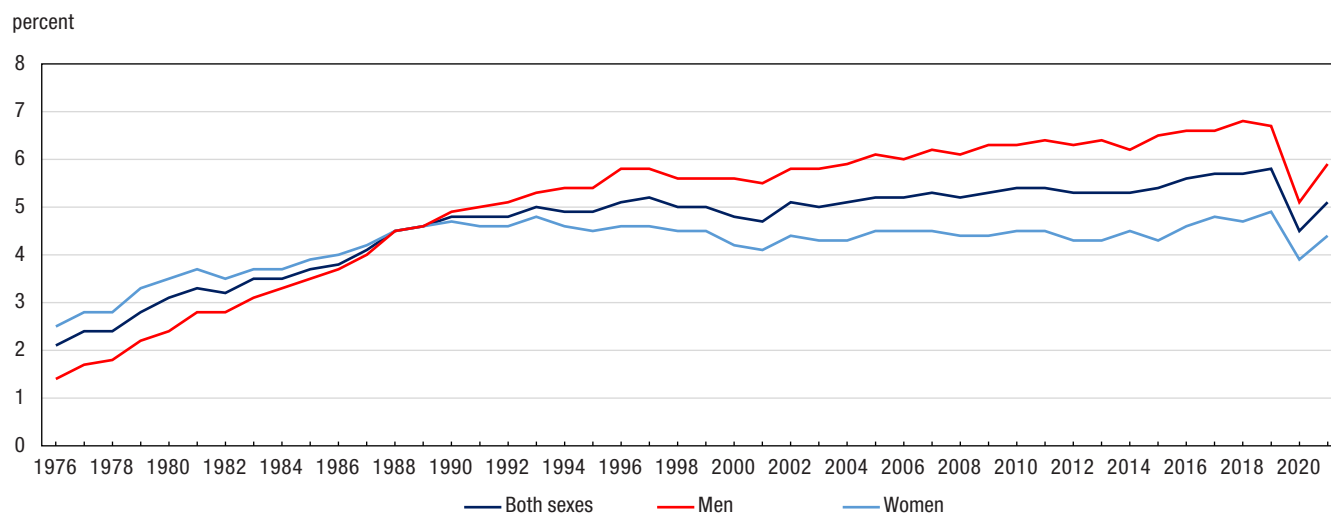
Multiple jobholding is the practice of having two or more jobs simultaneously. Multiple jobholders can be employees or self-employed, work full-time or part-time, or any combination thereof. The Labour Force Survey (LFS) collects selected information about a worker's second job, if they have one, but no detailed information for the third job and beyond. In the context of quality of employment, working more than one job may be an indicator that the main job provides insufficient earnings. However, people have multiple jobs for various reasons, including financial necessity, but also to ensure continuous employment or to accumulate skills and expertise in other occupations.

Historical trends, 1976 to 2021

From 1976 to 2021, the proportion of workers holding multiple jobs more than doubled, rising from 2.1% to 5.1%. Almost all of this increase occurred before 1990.

Chart 1

Percentage of employed persons 15 years and over holding more than one job, by sex, 1976 to 2021



Note: Due to rounding, estimates and percentages may differ slightly between different Statistics Canada products, such as analytical documents and data tables.

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

While employed men were more likely than women to hold multiple jobs in the late 1970s and the 1980s, this trend reversed in the early 1990s. Over the last few decades, the incidence of multiple jobholding has been consistently higher among women than men, and has continued to grow among women.

In 2020 the multiple jobholding rate among men (-1.0 percentage points to 3.9%) and women (-1.6 percentage points to 5.1%) fell to one of its lowest levels since the early 1990s. The rate bounced back among both men (+0.5 percentage points to 4.4%) and women (+0.8 percentage points to 5.9%) in 2021, but remained lower than in 2019 for both groups.

A recent snapshot

Despite the fluctuations in the multiple jobholder rates in 2020 and 2021, differences between demographic groups are mostly the same as before the COVID-19 pandemic.

In-line with pre-pandemic patterns, most multiple jobholders (90.8%) held at least one part-time job as their first or second job in 2021. Workers employed part-time (less than 30 hours or more) in their main job were more likely to hold multiple jobs than those who worked full-time (30 hours or more). In 2021, 8.9% of part-time workers held multiple jobs, a rate more than twice as high compared with full-time workers (4.3%). In addition, involuntary part-time workers were slightly more likely to hold multiple jobs than their counterparts who worked part-time for non-economic reasons (10.5% and 8.5% respectively).

Among employees, the likelihood of holding multiple jobs declines as the main job earnings increase. In 2021, the multiple jobholding rate was 7.3% among employees whose usual weekly earnings at their main job were in the lowest quartile, compared with 3.2% among those whose earnings were in the highest quartile.

Based on the main job, the likelihood of being a multiple holder also varied by industry. Similar to 2019, healthcare and social assistance (7.7%) and educational services (7.6%), had among the highest multiple jobholding rates on average in 2021.

However, in information, culture, and recreation, the industry with one of the highest multiple jobholding rates in 2019 (8.6%), the multiple jobholding rate fell 3.0 percentage points to 5.6% in 2020, and recorded little growth in 2021 (5.9%).

In 2021, among people who were self-employed in their main job, 6.7% held multiple jobs compared with 4.9% among employees. Most multiple jobholders were in the same type of employment (as employees or self-employed) in both their main and second job. Among multiple jobholders who were employees in their main job in 2021, about 7 out of 10 (69.7%) were also employees in their second job. Similarly, 6 out of 10 (64.2%) multiple jobholders who were self-employed in their main job were also self-employed in their second job.

Information on the indicator

Description or definition

The **multiple jobholder** indicator is the number of employed persons who reported holding more than one job simultaneously during the reference week of the survey, expressed as a percentage of all employed persons.

Source

Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1976 to 2021.

Information for interpretation

For more information on the Labour Force Survey (LFS) methodology and population coverage, please consult the [Guide to the Labour Force Survey, 2020](#).

The LFS estimates are based on a sample and are therefore subject to sampling variability. The analysis focuses on differences between estimates that are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. Due to rounding, estimates and percentages may differ slightly between different Statistics Canada products, such as analytical documents and data tables.

Occupations are coded according to the National Occupational Classification (NOC) 2016, while industry coding is based on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) 2017.

Other related information

For more detailed analysis on multiple job holding, please consult the Statistics Canada publication, [Multiple jobholders in Canada](#).

Additional Statistics Canada data are available on the following subject:

[Multiple jobholders](#)