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## Labour Statistics at a Glance

# Multiple jobholders in Canada

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## Highlights

- Between 1998 and 2018, the proportion of workers who held more than one job at the same time increased from 5.0% to 5.7%. This period of relative stability followed a more notable increase over the previous two decades (from 2.4% in 1978 to 5.0% in 1998).
- The majority (65.7%) of multiple jobholders work full-time in their main job. Multiple jobholders work 10 hours more per week, on average, than single jobholders.
- Multiple jobholding is most common for workers in the female-dominated sectors of healthcare and social assistance (8.7%) and educational services (8.5%).

## Introduction

Multiple jobholding is the practice of having two or more jobs simultaneously. Multiple jobholders can be paid employees or self-employed, work full-time or part-time, or any combination thereof.

People engage in multiple jobholding for various reasons, such as out of financial necessity, to ensure continuous employment, or to accumulate skills and expertise in other occupations.<sup>1</sup> Although multiple jobholding can provide some benefits, it is also associated with an increased risk of injury, both at work and not at work.<sup>2</sup> Multiple jobholding may also be a partial indicator of the extent to which changes in the economy—including the “gig” economy—have contributed to the prevalence of non-standard or precarious work.

Building on previous work on multiple jobholding in Canada,<sup>3</sup> this article uses data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) to highlight selected characteristics of multiple jobholders in 2018 and discuss notable shifts over the past few decades. The LFS currently collects selected information about a worker’s second job, if applicable, but not the total number of jobs worked (see *Data source, concepts and definitions*).

## Multiple jobholding increased most among women

In 2018, just over 1 million people (5.7% of workers) held more than one job, compared with 704,100 or 5.0% in 1998 (Chart 1). Looking back further, the rate grew more rapidly in the 1980s, then fluctuated around 5.0% through the 1990s and into the early 2000s. From 2005 to 2015, the rate hovered between 5.2% and 5.4%, and then edged up to 5.7% by 2018.

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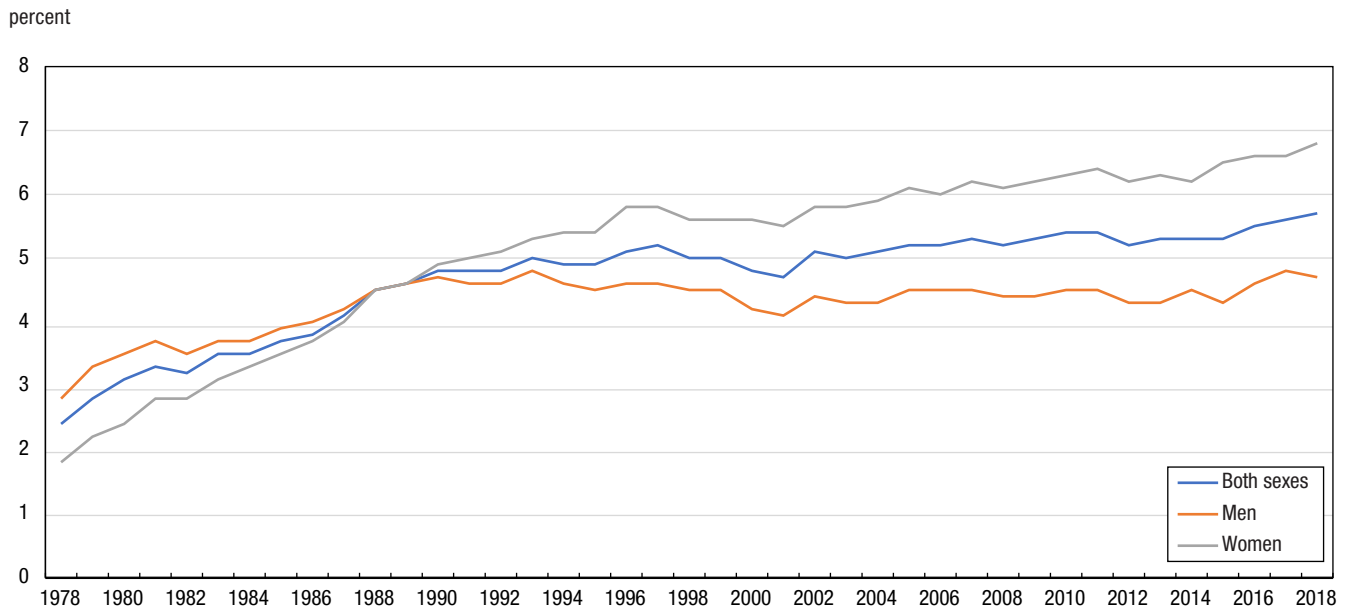
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**Chart 1**  
**Proportion of workers holding more than one job, by sex, 1978 to 2018**



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey; Tables 14-10-0044-01 and 14-10-0023-01 (1987 to 2018), and custom tabulation (1978 to 1986).

Over the past 20 years, the incidence of multiple jobholding has consistently been higher among women compared to men, and has also increased more among women. In 2018, 6.8% of employed women held more than one job, up 1.2 percentage points from 1998. In contrast, the incidence of multiple jobholding among men was almost unchanged over the period, at 4.5% in 1998 compared with 4.7% in 2018.

These differences between men and women are partly associated with differences in employment and multiple jobholding across sectors.

## Multiple jobholding most prevalent in healthcare and social assistance

Multiple jobholding varies across the 15 major industrial sectors (Table 1). In both 1998 and 2018, workers whose main job was in healthcare and social assistance had the highest multiple jobholding rate (8.2% in 1998; 8.7% in 2018). Just over one quarter of the rise in multiple jobholding among women between 1998 and 2018 can be attributed to increased employment in this sector. In 2018, the occupational groups that contributed the most to the multiple jobholding rate in this sector were assisting occupations in support of health services, and technical occupations in health.<sup>4</sup>

The lowest incidence of multiple jobholding was among workers in natural resources (2.9%), manufacturing (3.1%), and construction (3.4%). In 2018, nearly three of every ten (28.6%) employed men worked in these three sectors, compared with fewer than one in ten (8.1%) employed women.

4. National Occupational Classification System (NOCS) at the 2-digit level.

**Table 1**  
**Proportion of workers holding more than one job, by industrial sector, 1998 and 2018**

Industrial sector	1998	2018
	percent	
Healthcare and social assistance	8.2	8.7
Educational services	6.6	8.5
Information, culture and recreation	5.5	8.5
Agriculture	7.9	7.3
Accommodation and food services	6.1	6.8
Other services	5.0	5.9
Business, building and other support services	5.6	5.6
Professional, scientific and technical services	4.6	5.6
Public administration	4.8	5.1
Wholesale and retail trade	5.0	5.0
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	3.7	4.5
Transportation and warehousing	4.3	4.2
Construction	3.1	3.4
Manufacturing	2.8	3.1
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	3.2	2.9

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Tables 14-10-0044-01 and 14-10-0023-01.

## Multiple jobholding increased the most in sectors with the greatest rise in temporary employment

In 2018, 8.1% of workers whose main job was temporary (which includes contract, seasonal, and other forms of temporary work) held multiple jobs, compared with 5.0% of workers with a permanent main job. The sectors that saw the largest increase in the prevalence of temporary work from 1998 to 2018 were information, culture, and recreation (+10.1 percentage points) and educational services (+8.8 percentage points).

Since 1998, the incidence of multiple jobholding has increased the most among workers in these same sectors, rising 3.0 percentage points in information, culture and recreation, and 1.9 percentage points in educational services. The increase in the multiple jobholding rate in these sectors, which employ a larger share of women than men, accounts for more than one third of the overall rise in multiple jobholding among women over the 1998 to 2018 period.

## As earnings increase, multiple jobholding declines

Among paid employees, the likelihood of holding multiple jobs declines as the main job earnings increase (Table 2).<sup>5</sup>

**Table 2**  
**Proportion of employees holding more than one job, by usual weekly earnings quartile, 1998 and 2018**

Weekly earnings quartile	1998	2018
	percent	
<b>All quartiles</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>5.4</b>
First	7.7	8.5
Second	4.9	5.6
Third	3.6	4.4
Fourth	3.2	3.3

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

5. The LFS collects earnings information for only the job at which a person worked the longest hours in a reference week. Earnings data are also collected from paid employees only.

The sectors that are characterized by high rates of multiple jobholding are not necessarily the lowest paying. Although the majority (66.7%) of employees in agriculture were in the lower two earnings quartiles in 2018, the opposite was true for the educational services sector, where 61.6% of employees were in the upper two quartiles.

## Part-time workers more likely to hold multiple jobs

Workers who are employed part-time (less than 30 hours per week) in their main job are more likely to hold multiple jobs than those who work full-time (30 hours or more). In 2018, 10.5% of part-timers held multiple jobs, a rate more than twice as high as that of full-timers (4.6%). This pattern was similar for both men and women. The inability to find full-time work, and the resulting impact on earnings, may be an important motivation to hold more than one job. Involuntary part-time workers were even more likely to hold multiple jobs (14.6%). Relatively few workers worked full-time hours in both their main and other job (8.4% of multiple jobholders in 2018).

## Multiple jobholders work more total hours per week than single jobholders

Although part-time workers have a higher incidence of holding multiple jobs, the majority of multiple jobholders (65.7% in 2018) held a full-time main job. This reflects the fact that full-timers make up a much greater share of all workers.

Multiple jobholders usually worked an average of 32.1 hours per week in their main job and an average of 13.9 hours in their other job, representing a total of 45.9 hours in all jobs.<sup>6</sup> Single jobholders usually worked an average of 36.1 hours per week. Average usual hours for both single and multiple jobholders have remained relatively stable since 1998.

## Multiple job holding remains most common among young adults

In 2018, young adults aged 20 to 24 had the highest rate of multiple jobholding (7.6%), followed by those aged 25 to 29 (6.5%). People aged 55 and older had the lowest rate (4.7%). Over the last 20 years, workers in their early 20s have consistently had the highest multiple jobholding rates. The rate has changed the most for older workers, increasing by 1.4 percentage points since 1998.

## Self-employed are more likely to hold multiple jobs

In 2018, 7.3% of workers who were self-employed in their main job held multiple jobs, driven by those whose main job was in healthcare and social assistance, and professional, scientific, and technical services. This compared with 5.4% of paid employees. More than four in ten multiple jobholders owned and operated a business (or helped a family member do so) as their main or other job. From 1998 to 2018, the incidence of multiple jobholding increased faster among the self-employed (+1.6 percentage points) than among employees (+0.5 percentage points).

Most multiple jobholders were in the same type of employment (as employees or self-employed) in both their main and other job. Among multiple jobholders who were paid employees in their main job in 2018, 7 out of 10 (71.1%) were also employees in their other job. Similarly, 6 out of 10 (61.8%) multiple jobholders who were self-employed in their main job were also self-employed in their other job.

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6. Numbers do not add up due to rounding.

## Conclusion

Over the last 20 years, the proportion of Canadian workers holding more than one job has been relatively stable. Women are more likely than men to be multiple jobholders, which is partly associated with the industries in which they are employed. Workers whose main job is in healthcare and social assistance have the highest incidence of multiple jobholding, while those in natural resources, manufacturing, and construction have the lowest. The sectors that have seen the largest increase in multiple jobholding since 1998—information, culture, and recreation, and educational services—have also seen the greatest rise in temporary employment.

People who are in part-time employment (particularly if it is involuntary) are more likely to hold multiple jobs, although the majority of multiple jobholders work full-time in their main job. This means that multiple jobholders work more hours per week than single job holders, on average. Lower weekly earnings are also associated with a higher likelihood of holding multiple jobs.

Young adults in their 20s remain the most likely to work multiple jobs, although the incidence of multiple jobholding has increased the most among workers aged 55 and older. Self-employed workers are more likely to hold multiple jobs, and the majority of multiple jobholders hold the same type of position (employee or self-employed) in both their main and other job.

### Data source, concepts and definitions

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a monthly survey of approximately 56,000 households conducted by Statistics Canada. The sample excludes persons living on reserves and other Aboriginal settlements, full-time members of the Canadian Armed Forces, the institutionalized population, and households in extremely remote areas with very low population density.

According to the LFS, any person who holds two or more jobs, or owns and operates two or more businesses, simultaneously during the reference week is a multiple jobholder. For multiple jobholders, the “main” job or business is the one involving the greatest number of usual hours during the survey reference week.

The LFS asks at least four questions relating to an individual’s second job. These questions are:

- Did he/she have more than one job or business last week?
- I have a couple of questions about ...’s other job or business.
  - Is he/she an employee or self-employed?
    - ▶ Does he/she have an incorporated business?
    - ▶ Does he/she have any employees?
  - Excluding overtime, how many paid hours does ... usually work per week at this job? / How many hours does ... usually work per week at this business/family business?
  - Last week, how many hours did ...actually work at this job/business/family business?

Beginning in 2020, the LFS will include a new question which will allow the respondent to specify the total number of jobs worked.

The findings in this report are based on annual averages of estimates. The analysis focuses on differences that are statistically significant at the 68% confidence level (one standard deviation).