

Ever more moonlighters

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More women in the workforce, more service jobs, more part-time workers. Canada's labour market has been remarkably transformed since the 1970s. And multiple jobholding, or moonlighting, has been part of that transformation.

In 1977, moonlighters were a rare breed, just 1 out of every 40 workers. In the ensuing years, the rate [\(1\)](#) or incidence of multiple jobholding more than doubled, so that by 1993, fully 1 in 20 workers had a second job.

This article uses data from a variety of sources to describe moonlighters (see [Data sources](#)). It also provides new information about why people moonlight and about the work patterns of their second jobs.

More women

In the mid-1970s, moonlighting was largely a male domain: just over one-quarter of the 233,000 moonlighters in 1977 were women. By 1993, however, this proportion had risen substantially: almost one-half of the 628,000 moonlighters were women ([Table 1](#)). During this period, the number of female moonlighters grew by 372%, while the number of males rose by 93%.



Table 1 Multiple jobholders by age and sex, 1993

Source: Labour Force Survey

In part, the rising number of female moonlighters reflects women's increasing participation in the workforce. But more importantly, the incidence of multiple jobholding has climbed much more sharply

for women (from 1.8% in 1977 to 5.3% in 1993) than for men (2.8% to 4.9%). Indeed, since 1990, multiple jobholding has been more prevalent among employed women than among their male counterparts ([Chart A](#)).



Chart A Since 1990, moonlighting has been more prevalent for women.

Source: *Labour Force Survey*

Age and education make a difference

Young workers (15 to 24 years), both men and women, had the highest rates of moonlighting in 1993. This is not surprising as young workers who have encountered difficulties finding full-time jobs may **have to** take multiple part-time jobs, while students may **prefer** the flexibility of several part-time jobs. Women outnumbered men among young moonlighters, but men formed the majority in all other age groups.

Multiple jobholding is more prevalent among highly educated workers. In 1993, the rate among workers with an advanced education (either a postsecondary certificate or diploma, or a university degree) was 5.7%, compared with 4.5% for other workers. Indeed, 51% of moonlighters in 1993 had an advanced education, compared with 45% of single jobholders. As well, moonlighting was more widespread among well-educated women than among their male counterparts. This pattern can be attributed, at least in part, to the high rates of moonlighting in health and social services, and in education services, industries in which many well-educated women are employed.

More service jobs

In 1977, the rate of moonlighting was the same for workers in both goods-producing and service-producing industries: 2.4% ([Table 2](#)). ⁽²⁾ That year, the main jobs for some two-thirds of moonlighters were in the service sector.



Table 2 Multiple jobholders by industry*

Source: *Labour Force Survey*

*

Industry refers to the main job of the multiple jobholder.

By 1993, the proportion of moonlighters whose main job was in the service industries had climbed to 78%. And the incidence of multiple jobholding was 5.3% for workers in the service sector, compared with 4.4% in the goods sector. Agriculture recorded the highest industry rate (8.3%), followed by education services (7.2%) and health and social services (6.5%).

Between 1977 and 1993, the number of moonlighters whose main job was in service industries more than tripled, while in goods industries it increased by 77%. (In comparison, total service employment in Canada rose more than 40% during this 16-year interval, while total employment in the goods sector dropped 2%.) The rise in the number of moonlighters with a main job in health and social services was particularly large (over 500%).

Farmers and teachers

The occupational distribution of moonlighters mirrors the industry pattern. In 1993, the highest incidence occurred among workers whose main job was farming (8.1%), followed by workers in artistic, literary and recreational occupations, and teachers (both 7.7%).

More part-time work

The growth of part-time work has been one of the major changes in the Canadian labour market in recent years ([Logan](#), in this issue). Between 1977 and 1993, the number of part-time workers jumped 87% (and the number of part-time jobs more than doubled), while full-time employment rose only 20% ([Pold](#), in this issue).

Moonlighting is much more prevalent among workers whose main job is part time [\(3\)](#) (that is, usually less than 30 hours per week) than among those whose main job is full-time. In 1993, the incidence of moonlighting was 8.4% among part-timers, but only 4.3% among full-timers. In fact, nearly one-third of moonlighters in 1993 (200,000) had a part-time main job, and fully one-half of these moonlighters remained part-time workers despite holding more than one job. In comparison, only one-fifth of moonlighters (48,000) in 1977 had a part-time main job.

Yet many workers are less than fully satisfied with part-time jobs. In 1993, workers (both men and women) with a part-time main job were much more likely to have recently looked for work [\(4\)](#) than workers with a full-time main job. And among workers with a part-time main job, moonlighters, especially women, were more likely than single jobholders to have looked for work.

A part-time main job has become common among female moonlighters; in 1993, this situation applied to almost half of female moonlighters. In fact, women accounted for more than 70% of all moonlighters

whose main job entailed less than 30 hours of work per week.

Some 45% of moonlighters whose main job was part-time had a postsecondary certificate or diploma or a university degree, compared with just 33% of part-timers who had only one job. And more than three-quarters of these well-educated moonlighters were women. The over-representation of well-educated workers among these moonlighters suggests that some of our most highly trained people may be unable to find suitable full-time jobs.

The provincial picture

The incidence of multiple jobholding varies considerably by province. In 1993, Saskatchewan had the highest rate (10.1%), followed by Manitoba (8.4%) and Alberta (7.6%); Newfoundland had by far the lowest (2.7%).

Since 1977, multiple jobholding has shifted sharply westward. By 1993, 44% of all moonlighters worked in the four western provinces (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba), up from 35% in 1977. At the same time, the proportion accounted for by Ontario and Quebec dropped from 59% to 51%. This shift in moonlighting is particularly remarkable as the shares of total employment held by these provinces changed only marginally during the same period. [\(5\)](#)

At first glance, one might assume that at least part of the provincial differences in moonlighting arise from the high rate in agriculture, an industry that provides a larger-than-average share of total employment in the three Prairie provinces. But such is not the case. Provincial moonlighting rates remain virtually the same even when agriculture is excluded from the calculations. [\(6\)](#)

Accordingly, general labour market conditions seem to play an important role. Indeed, moonlighting has tended to be more common in provinces with relatively low rates of unemployment. In addition, in 1993, moonlighting was also more frequent in provinces with a high proportion of part-time work ([Chart B](#)).



Chart B Moonlighting tends to be more common in provinces where ...

Source: *Labour Force Survey, 1993*

Why they moonlight

Financial concerns are the main motivation for moonlighting. According to the Survey of Work

Arrangements (SWA), in November 1991, one-third of moonlighters who were paid workers in their main job needed a second job in order to meet regular household expenses. [\(7\)](#) A somewhat smaller group (29%) were saving for the future, paying off debts, or planning to buy something special. Some 15% of multiple jobholders stated that they held a second job because they "enjoyed the work," while 11% were "gaining experience" or "building up a business" ([Chart C](#)). These findings were similar for both men and women. [\(8\)](#)



Chart C One-third of moonlighters took a second job to meet regular household expenses.

Source: Survey of Work Arrangements, November 1991

Information from the Survey of Consumer Finances (SCF) seems to confirm the relationship between economic need and moonlighting. The April 1993 SCF showed that moonlighting was most prevalent among workers who had earned less than \$20,000 in 1992. Indeed, these "low-earners" accounted for 43% of multiple jobholders, compared with 38% of single jobholders. In addition, the incidence of moonlighting generally declined as earnings rose.

The SCF also seems to support the SWA finding that a substantial minority of moonlighters take second jobs for other reasons. Fully one-quarter of moonlighters in April 1993 had earned \$40,000 or more in 1992.

Where are the second jobs?

The distribution by industry of second jobs is quite different from that of first jobs. In November 1991, more than 70% of moonlighters who were paid employees in both jobs reported that their second jobs were in one of five industries: retail trade (18%); health and social services (14%); education services (14%); accommodation, food and beverage services (12%); and other services (12%). [\(9\)](#) (These five industries accounted for just 44% of paid employment in November 1991.)

Among moonlighters who were paid workers in their main job, those in education services, health and social services, or retail trade were most likely to have their second job in the same industry as their first. In contrast, moonlighters with a main job in manufacturing seldom had their second jobs in the same industry.

Three industries in particular - accommodation, food and beverage services; retail trade; and other services - provided many more of moonlighters' second than first jobs. That is, workers from other industries often found second jobs in these industries.

Work patterns of second jobs

In November 1991, the overwhelming majority of moonlighters, more than 90%, worked every week at their second job. Typically, they worked one or two days per week, with women being more likely than men to work just one day. However, nearly 30% of moonlighters reported that the number of days worked at their second job varied from one week to the next, while 17% stated that they worked five or more days per week.

On average, men worked about 14 hours per week at their second job, women about 11 hours. More than 30% of both men and women said that their daily hours (and hence, their weekly hours) varied.

Summary

The incidence of moonlighting seems to reflect local economic conditions, as generally it is highest in provinces with low unemployment. Moonlighting is also more common in provinces where part-time jobs are more prevalent.

In the 1970s, most moonlighters were men. Today, nearly as many women as men moonlight, and the incidence among women is higher. And a rising proportion of moonlighters, mainly women and frequently well-educated, have a part-time main job.

On the one hand, moonlighting among well-educated workers highlights their difficulties finding and keeping suitable full-time employment. On the other, well educated workers should be more able to piece together full-time employment from a collection of part-time jobs.

Self-employment and moonlighting

Multiple jobholding has always been closely linked with self-employment. Some persons with a new business may need a second job or they may have to retain their main job to stabilize their income until their business has grown. As well, some self-employed with seasonal businesses may need to supplement their income with a second job. Such second jobs, when they overlap the period of the main business, would be considered moonlighting. Also, according to LFS definitions, anyone who owns and operates a second business would be considered a multiple jobholder.

In 1993, the incidence of moonlighting among workers who were self-employed in their main job was 6.4%, up from 4.0% in 1977. The moonlighting rate for workers who were paid employees in their main job was 4.8% in 1993, up from 2.2% in 1977. Nearly one-fifth of moonlighters reported that they were

self-employed in their main job, that is, they owned and operated a business, farm, or professional practice. And more than one-third of moonlighters were self-employed in their second job.

Overall, in 1993, more than 160,000 paid workers had a second job in which they were self-employed. As well, some 58,000 of the self-employed had a second job as a paid worker, while more than 60,000 of the self-employed had a second self-employed job (that is, a second business venture).



Table **Multiple jobholders by class of worker, 1993**

Source: Labour Force Survey

Data sources

Most of the data in this article come from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), a monthly survey of some 58,000 households involving about 106,000 respondents. According to the LFS, any person (including the self-employed) who holds two or more jobs (or owns and operates two or more businesses) at the same time is a multiple jobholder. (A very small number of workers have more than two jobs.) The LFS defines the main job of a multiple jobholder on the basis of the job that **currently** has the greater number of usual weekly hours worked (not on the basis of annual income or work patterns). Thus, the designation of the main job for some people (for example, farmers) could shift depending on the time of year.

The income data come from the Survey of Consumer Finances (SCF), an annual supplement to the April LFS. The SCF asks respondents for information about their incomes during the previous calendar year. SCF data about multiple jobholder status refer to the survey month (April) only.

The Survey of Work Arrangements (SWA), a supplement to the November 1991 LFS, provides the data about work patterns, the industrial distribution of second jobs, and the reasons for moonlighting. The SWA collected data on work schedules, non-standard work arrangements, and union membership. For further information, see Siroonian, 1993 or the Autumn 1993 issue of *Perspectives*. SWA questions on moonlighting were asked only of multiple jobholders who were paid workers in their main job.

Notes

Note 1

The rate or incidence of multiple jobholding shows the number of multiple jobholders in any group as a percentage of all workers in that group.

Note 2

The service-producing industries are transportation and storage; communication and other utilities; wholesale trade; retail trade; finance and insurance; real estate operators and insurance agents; business services; government services; education services; health and social services; accommodation, food and beverage services; and other services. The goods-producing industries consist of agriculture, fishing, forestry, mining, manufacturing, and construction.

Note 3

The LFS defines the full-time employed as persons who usually work 30 or more hours per week, plus those who usually work less than 30 hours but consider themselves to be employed full time (for example, airline pilots). Persons who hold two or more part-time jobs would be considered to be employed full time if their usual hours at all jobs totalled 30 or more per week.

Note 4

According to the LFS, recent job search means having looked for work at some time during the previous four weeks.

Note 5

The four western provinces accounted for 30% of total employment in 1993, up from 28% in 1977. Ontario's and Quebec's share dropped from 64% to 63% during this period.

Note 6

The exclusion of agriculture lowered moonlighting rates in Manitoba and Alberta by 0.3 percentage points, but had almost no effect on rates in other provinces. In Saskatchewan, the moonlighting rate in agriculture (9.7%) was actually lower than the rate for all other industries (10.1%).

Note 7

This distribution of respondents by main reason for moonlighting is based only on those who replied; one-third of respondents, 44% of men and 24% of women, did not answer this question.

Note 8

Data from the United States Current Population Survey provide comparable results. A May 1991 survey showed that 31% of 7.2 million American moonlighters were meeting regular household expenses. Some 26% were paying off debts, saving for the future, or planning to buy something special, while 16% stated that they had a second job because they enjoyed the work.

Note 9

Other services consists mainly of amusement and recreation services plus personal and household

services.

References

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Source

Perspectives on Labour and Income, Autumn 1994, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Statistics Canada, Catalogue 75-001E). This is the fifth of five articles in the issue.

Table 1

Multiple jobholders by age and sex, 1993

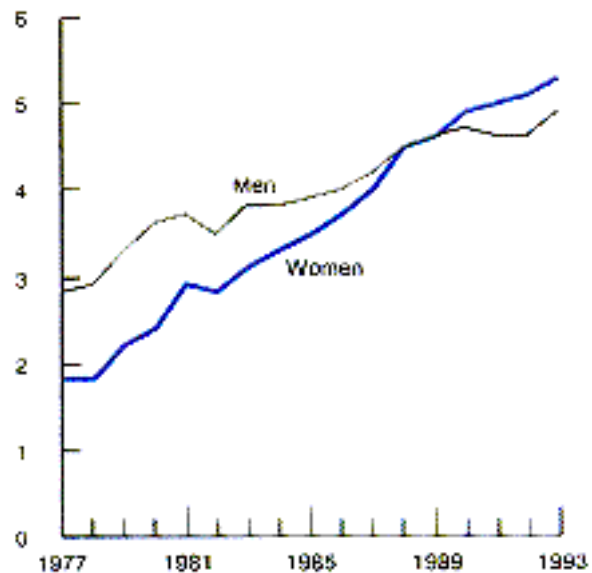
	Total employed	Multiple jobholders	Incidence of multiple jobholding
	'000		%
Both sexes*	12,383	628	5.1
15-24 years	1,943	121	6.2
25-44 years	6,833	351	5.1
45-64 years	3,419	152	4.4
Men*	6,753	329	4.9
15-24 years	993	54	5.4
25-44 years	3,676	188	5.1
45-64 years	1,957	84	4.3
Women*	5,630	299	5.3
15-24 years	949	67	7.1
25-44 years	3,157	163	5.2
45-64 years	1,462	68	4.6

*Source: Labour Force Survey*** Includes persons aged 65 and over.*

Chart A

Since 1990, moonlighting has been more prevalent for women.

Incidence of multiple jobholding (%)



Source: Labour Force Survey

Table 2

Multiple jobholders by industry*

	1977		1993	
	Multiple jobholders	Incidence of multiple jobholding	Multiple jobholders	Incidence of multiple jobholding
	'000	%	'000	%
All industries	233	2.4	628	5.1
Agriculture	24	5.3	37	8.3
Other primary**	5	1.9	12	4.6
Manufacturing	36	1.9	64	3.5
Construction	12	1.9	25	3.8
Transportation and storage	12	2.4	20	4.1
Communication and other utilities	7	2.1	19	4.4
Wholesale trade	11	2.5	28	5.1
Retail trade	24	2.0	81	5.1
Finance and insurance	5	1.5	16	3.2
Real estate operators and insurance agents	4	2.5	14	5.4
Business services	7	2.2	29	4.2
Government services	21	3.0	39	4.6
Education services	26	3.7	64	7.2
Health and social services	14	1.9	83	6.5
Accommodation, food and beverage services	10	2.2	40	5.2
Other services†	15	2.8	57	6.1

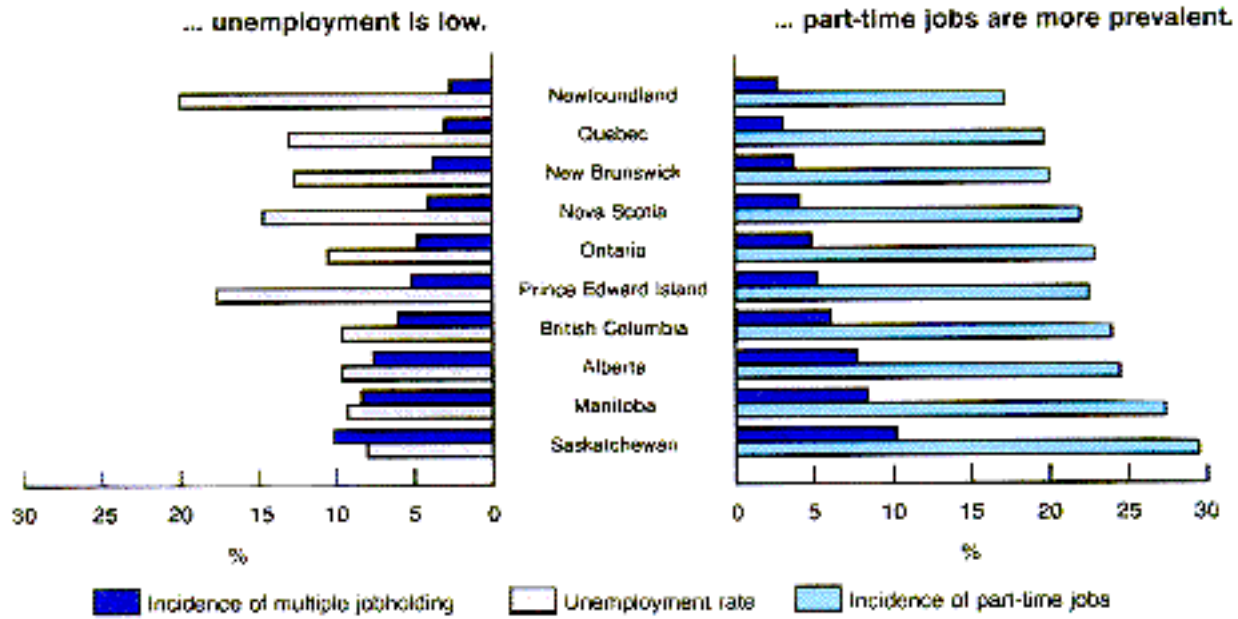
Source: Labour Force Survey

** Industry refers to the main job of the multiple jobholder.*

*** Fishing, forestry and mining*

† Mainly amusement and recreation services, plus personal and household services

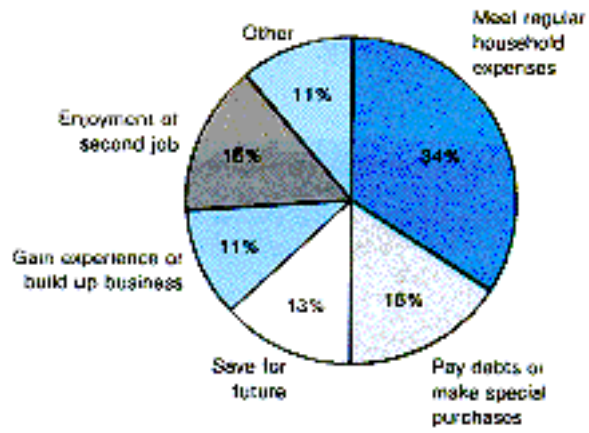
Chart B
Moonlighting tends to be more common in provinces where ...



Source: Labour Force Survey, 1993

Chart C

One-third of moonlighters took a second job to meet regular household expenses.



Source: *Survey of Work Arrangements, November 1991*

Multiple jobholders by class of worker, 1993

		Class of worker in second job				
		Self-employed				
	All classes	Paid workers	Total	With paid help	Without paid help	Unpaid family workers
	‘000					
Class of worker in main job						
Both sexes						
All classes*	628	383	227	47	180	19
Paid workers	501	322	164	27	137	15
Self-employed	122	58	61	19	42	--
With paid help	47	15	30	15	15	--
Without paid help	76	43	31	4	27	--
Men						
All classes*	329	171	153	35	118	5
Paid workers	250	138	108	19	89	4
Self-employed	78	32	45	16	29	--
With paid help	36	10	25	13	12	--
Without paid help	42	22	20	--	17	--
Women						
All classes*	299	212	74	12	62	14
Paid workers	251	184	56	8	48	11
Self-employed	45	26	17	4	13	--
With paid help	11	5	5	--	--	--
Without paid help	34	21	12	--	11	--

Source: Labour Force Survey

** Includes unpaid family workers*