

Working more? Less? What do workers prefer?

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The number of hours Canadians spend at work continues to be a topical issue for several reasons. Persistently high unemployment rates have renewed speculative interest in work time reductions as a means of increasing overall employment. Furthermore, recent research has shown that during the 1980s earnings inequality grew while work hours polarized (Morissette, Myles and Picot, 1994). Specifically, highly paid workers increased their weekly hours while low-paid employees decreased theirs. Thus, changes in the distribution of work time appear to coincide with changes in earnings inequality.

As well, the gradual decline of the standard work week and the growth of non-standard forms of employment may be influencing Canadian workers' attitudes toward their work time. Since the beginning of the 1980s, the proportion of workers employed in jobs of 35 to 40 hours per week has fallen, while that of persons working either few or many hours has increased (Morissette and Sunter, 1994).

Finally, the growing participation of women in the labour force, observed until the early 1990s, and the increasing prevalence of dual-income families make it more difficult for workers to balance the demands of family and workplace (Frederick, 1995). This challenge likely influences the number of work hours preferred by some people.

Faced with high unemployment rates, a more unequal distribution of work time, and shifts to temporary, part-time and contract employment,

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Canadian workers may be interested in changing their work patterns to protect themselves against future employment uncertainties. As well, changing social roles for men and women may mean different preferences for different demographic groups.

About the data

The data for this article are drawn from the Survey of Work Arrangements (SWA), conducted by Statistics Canada as a supplement to the Labour Force Survey (LFS) in November 1995. Like the LFS, the SWA collected information on the labour market activities and demographic characteristics of the working-age population. The SWA covered additional topics of interest, such as place of work (home-based work); reasons for schedules other than regular daytime; hours of work (usual and actual hours, unpaid hours, overtime); non-wage benefits; job permanency; union status; and multiple jobholding. This paper focuses on work-time preferences. Surveyed workers were asked the following question:

"At this job, given the choice, would ..., at his/her current wage rate, prefer to work:

- (1) fewer hours for less pay?
- (2) more hours for more pay?
- (3) the same hours for the same pay?"

The LFS sample consists of the population aged 15 and over residing in Canada, except residents of Yukon and the Northwest Territories, persons living on Indian reserves, institutional residents and full-time members of the armed forces. These exclusions account for roughly 2% of the population.

The SWA sample used a subsample of the LFS sample. Approximately 27,000 households were selected, from which all paid workers and self-employed persons aged 15 to 69 were interviewed. About 42,000 individuals

This article uses data from the November 1995 Survey of Work Arrangements (SWA) to document the extent to which Canadian workers would prefer, *at the same wage rate*, "to work fewer hours for less pay, more hours for more pay or the same hours for the same pay" in their main job (See *About the data*).

responded to the survey, either directly or by proxy response. The SWA data were collected by LFS interviewers using computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) techniques.

This paper focuses on **paid workers** aged 15 to 69 who were not enrolled full time in school. Excluded are individuals who were self-employed, those who did not answer the survey question on preferences for work time, and those who were working part time because they could find only part-time work, yet who wanted fewer hours for less pay or were satisfied with their hours. The resulting sample was 19,143 respondents (9,932 men and 9,211 women).

An earlier attempt to collect data on hours constraints was undertaken by the 1985 Survey of Work Reduction (SWR). The SWR asked its respondents somewhat different questions, namely:

"Would you take a cut in pay if you received more time off in return?"

"Would you trade some of your pay increase in the next two years for more time off?"

"If you continue to be paid at the same rate, would you work more hours for more pay?" (These questions were not consecutive.)

The SWR used a mailout-mailback methodology. Proxy responses were not permitted. Also, SWR respondents were provided more background information to help them understand both the overall concepts and the context of the survey. Accordingly, any comparison of the results from the SWR and the SWA could be misleading.

Canadians' work time preferences

In November 1995, two-thirds of paid workers were satisfied with their work hours. One in three employees said they would alter the length of their work week if given the choice: 27% favoured more hours for more pay, while 6% preferred fewer hours for less pay. The fact that many more people preferred more to fewer hours is a robust finding; that is, it holds for each province, age group, and education level, as well as for all industrial and occupational groups.

With the exception of Prince Edward Island, the tendency to prefer more hours was highest in the Atlantic provinces. This may be related to the relatively high unemployment rates observed in these provinces. High unemployment reduces the total number of hours available to workers and compels more of them to work fewer hours than they want. However, differences in provincial unemployment rates do not explain all of the variation in work hour preferences. For example, in 1995 the unemployment rate was higher in Quebec (11.3%) than in Ontario (8.7%), yet the proportion of workers who preferred more hours was lower (Table 1).

Job characteristics

The number of weekly hours usually worked in the main job is highly correlated with work time preferences. In 1995, the majority of those employed part time (fewer than 30 hours per week) preferred more hours, while virtually none wanted less time. Conversely, among men and women working 50 hours or more per week, about 15% preferred more hours, while some 11% of men and 23% of women would have opted for fewer. Roughly 70% of men and women working the standard 35 to 40 hours per week were satisfied with their work hours (Table 2).

Hourly wage rates are an important factor: low-paid workers are much

Table 1
Work time preferences by sex and province

	Paid workers '000	Proportion of paid workers preferring		
		Fewer hours	Same hours	More hours
Canada	9,946.5	6.4	66.6	27.1
Men	5,242.7	5.3	67.5	27.2
Women	4,703.7	7.6	65.5	26.9
Province				
Newfoundland	149.8	2.0	66.7	31.4
Prince Edward Island	40.3	4.5	72.8	22.7
Nova Scotia	288.1	3.2	65.0	31.9
New Brunswick	238.4	4.5	64.7	30.7
Quebec	2,424.8	7.9	69.4	22.8
Ontario	3,957.6	6.2	65.2	28.6
Manitoba	370.4	5.9	65.6	28.4
Saskatchewan	288.9	5.2	67.5	27.3
Alberta	966.1	6.8	63.5	29.7
British Columbia	1,221.9	5.9	68.4	25.7

Source: Survey of Work Arrangements, November 1995

Note: See About the data for definition of paid workers.

more likely to prefer more hours than are highly paid employees. For example, roughly one-half of men paid less than \$10 per hour in 1995 preferred more hours. In contrast, only 13% of those receiving \$25 or more per hour wanted more time. The preference for fewer hours also rises with wage rates. Two factors may explain this finding: other things being equal, highly paid workers are more likely to have high annual incomes, and highly paid employees generally have relatively long work weeks (Kahn and Lang, 1991).

Other job aspects are also likely to matter. For instance, in 1995 non-unionized men were more likely than unionized men to want increased hours, even though they worked more (41.3 hours a week, on average, versus 39.8). Roughly half of workers holding non-permanent jobs preferred more hours, compared with only 25% of those in permanent jobs.¹ More than one-third of men and women not covered by a pension plan wanted more work, compared with about one-fifth of those who were covered.²

Many factors may explain why workers in non-permanent jobs are more likely to prefer an increase in their work hours. Their future income is relatively uncertain and their fringe benefits are few.³ So these workers may be willing to work more hours to try to offset their lack of job security. As well, non-permanent jobs are disproportionately held by young workers: those aged under 25 accounted for 11% of the labour force in 1995, yet they held 19% of non-permanent jobs. These jobs also tend to offer lower hourly wage rates: about one in 5 men in non-permanent jobs reported hourly wage rates of less than \$10, compared with one in 10 in permanent jobs.

But why are workers who are not covered by a pension plan more willing to increase their hours than those who are covered? One possible explanation is that those with no employer-sponsored plan realize they will need to finance their retirement through extra wages. Occupations not offering pension plan coverage are generally poorly paid, and tend to have shorter work weeks. Also, pension plan

Table 2
Work time preferences by job characteristics

	Men					Women				
	Paid workers	Proportion preferring			Usual hours	Paid workers	Proportion preferring			Usual hours
		Fewer	Same	More			Fewer	Same	More	
	'000	%				'000	%			
Total	5,242.7	5.3	67.5	27.2	40.8	4,703.7	7.6	65.5	26.9	34.2
Usual hours in main job										
0 to 19	96.5	-	19.0	81.0	11.2	451.3	1.2	42.1	56.7	12.4
20 to 29	147.2	-	22.8	77.2	22.5	593.3	1.6	47.5	51.0	23.1
30 to 34	133.3	4.4	37.3	58.2	30.9	398.2	4.8	55.8	39.4	31.0
35 to 40	3,672.8	4.8	69.8	25.4	39.3	2,881.6	9.1	73.6	17.4	38.3
41 to 49	531.2	4.0	72.8	23.3	44.5	194.7	10.0	77.8	12.3	44.6
50 and over	661.8	10.9	73.7	15.4	56.4	184.6	23.2	63.8	13.0	55.2
Hourly wage rate										
\$0.01 to <\$7.50	294.8	1.6	41.1	57.3	37.1	586.3	2.7	41.7	55.6	29.8
\$7.50 to <\$10.00	363.9	1.9	51.8	46.3	39.0	500.0	3.3	57.3	39.4	34.1
\$10.00 to <\$15.00	929.8	4.2	56.5	39.3	40.5	1,147.5	7.6	64.9	27.6	34.6
\$15.00 to <\$20.00	959.2	6.4	69.4	24.2	41.1	801.1	10.9	69.9	19.2	35.8
\$20.00 to <\$25.00	710.4	6.0	76.2	17.8	41.2	376.1	11.4	75.1	13.5	35.4
\$25.00 and over	591.2	10.1	77.0	12.9	40.6	272.3	14.2	74.6	11.2	34.0
Union status										
Unionized	1,922.9	6.4	71.4	22.3	39.8	1,556.0	10.3	68.7	21.3	34.7
Non unionized	3,288.8	4.7	65.2	30.1	41.3	3,131.6	6.4	63.9	29.7	33.9
Job permanency										
Permanent job	4,744.6	5.4	69.7	24.9	41.1	4,175.2	7.9	68.3	23.8	34.9
Non-permanent job	471.5	4.3	47.2	48.6	37.1	502.1	4.7	42.6	52.7	28.3
Pension plan										
Worker covered	2,982.0	6.3	73.8	20.0	41.1	2,395.6	10.6	71.7	17.6	36.5
Worker not covered	2,182.7	4.0	59.0	37.0	40.3	2,242.8	4.5	59.1	36.5	31.8
Industry										
Agriculture, forestry, mining, and construction	629.7	3.2	67.8	29.1	43.3	126.8	9.2	77.1	13.7	35.9
Agriculture	61.4	2.8	72.0	25.3	48.5	--	--	--	--	--
Forestry and mining	180.7	4.9	75.9	19.2	44.6	--	--	--	--	--
Construction	387.6	2.4	63.3	34.3	41.8	--	--	--	--	--
Manufacturing	1,355.1	5.2	71.9	23.0	41.1	568.9	8.4	69.1	22.5	38.1
Distributive services *	940.0	5.9	66.9	27.2	41.7	375.3	8.1	69.6	22.3	35.7
Business services **	494.5	5.0	67.6	27.4	40.5	692.0	8.6	69.7	21.7	35.5
Consumer services †	881.6	3.7	57.7	38.7	39.0	1,129.9	3.4	56.2	40.4	32.0
Public administration	941.8	7.9	70.7	21.4	39.4	1,810.8	9.3	67.0	23.6	33.5
Firm size										
1 to 19 employees	1,028.7	4.1	61.5	34.4	41.0	1,045.4	5.1	64.6	30.3	32.3
20 to 99 employees	920.0	3.9	67.1	29.0	41.6	694.0	6.1	65.4	28.5	34.1
100 to 499 employees	908.5	6.1	66.4	27.6	40.7	902.1	8.6	65.4	26.1	34.9
500 and more employees	2,157.8	6.4	71.1	22.5	40.4	1,912.6	9.5	66.6	23.9	35.0

Source: Survey of Work Arrangements, November 1995

Notes: Usual hours are the average usual hours worked each week in the main job.

Some numbers may not add to total because of exclusions (missing/not stated/refused/don't know).

* Includes transportation and storage; wholesale trade; communication; and other utilities.

** Includes finance, insurance and real estate; and services to business management.

† Includes retail trade; amusement and recreation; personal services; accommodation, food and beverages; and other services.

coverage is lower in small firms than in large ones (Morissette, 1991). Since smaller firms tend to pay lower wages, workers may need to increase their hours in order to increase their earnings. Consistent with this view is the fact that the percentage of employees who preferred to work more hours was higher in firms with fewer than 20 workers (34% and 30% for men and women) than in firms with at least 500 (23% and 24%).

Worker skills

For each age group, level of job tenure (seniority), level of education, and occupation, the majority of workers who were not satisfied with their work hours in 1995 preferred more to fewer hours (Table 3).⁴

That tendency varied considerably by age group and level of seniority, and, to a lesser extent, by education level and occupation. For example, older workers and those with long job tenure were less likely to want more hours than young employees or those who had been recently hired. Indeed, roughly one-half of workers aged 15 to 24 wanted more hours for more pay. A similar percentage was observed for workers with one to six months of job tenure. In contrast, less than 20% of workers aged 45 to 54 or of those with 11 to 20 years of job tenure expressed a preference for longer hours.

Older workers and those with long job tenure were also more likely to be satisfied with their hours than were other employees. For both men and women, the percentage of employees who reported wanting the same hours for the same pay rose with age and time spent with the employer.

Several factors may explain the preferences of different age groups. Many young workers have low hourly wage rates⁵ and thus may be willing to work more hours to improve their standard of living or to accumulate savings. Young workers are also over-represented in non-permanent jobs. As argued earlier, such workers

may prefer more work time to compensate for the uncertainty of future earnings. Young workers are much more likely than older workers to be involuntarily employed part time, thus working fewer hours than they would like. And because they are more at risk of being laid off in future (Picot and Pyper, 1993), young workers may be more inclined to work more hours while they have the option.

University graduates, professionals, managers and individuals employed in natural and social sciences were more likely than other paid workers to prefer fewer hours: about 10% said so in 1995. This likely reflects, at least in part, their generally high wages.⁶ Their relatively heavy hours may also lead many to strive for balance in their work, social and family lives.

Family environment

Family environment is an important influence on work time preferences. Family earnings⁷ in particular are a key factor in explaining why workers want to change their hours. As family earnings increase, workers' preference for fewer hours grows (Table 4). This is especially true for women.

Demographic characteristics may also explain some of the variation in work time preferences. Those workers with low family earnings are usually young. They tend also to have low levels of job tenure and education, and many work in low-paying occupations.⁸ Conversely, workers with high family earnings are usually older and often highly educated. Many work in professional, managerial and natural and social science occupations and are more likely to have high levels of job tenure.⁹

Marital status also affects workers' preferences. Single, never-married persons are much more likely to prefer increased work time than those who are married or living common law; the former are more likely to be young and to have relatively low earnings. Married people and those in common-

law relationships may have two sets of wages each week. For families with both spouses participating in the labour force, the tendency to prefer increased hours declines as spouses' wages increase.

Above all, the presence of young children influences women's work hours and, indeed, their willingness to participate in the labour force (Nakamura and Nakamura, 1985). But, according to the SWA, this factor does not have the same effect on men's work time preferences. In families with pre-school aged children, women are more likely than men to prefer a reduction in their hours. They also work, on average, far fewer hours. In fact, women's hours drop as the number of young children rises. Men, on the other hand, tend to work more hours. These data suggest that, notwithstanding recent changes in the roles of and attitudes toward women in the workplace, the traditional dichotomy between male "breadwinners" and female "nurturers" still remains a strong characteristic of many families.¹⁰

The last few years have also witnessed the decline of the traditional family structure and the rise of alternative family arrangements: lone-parent families increased as a proportion of all families with children from 17% in 1981 to 22% in 1995.¹¹ Not surprisingly, working single mothers with pre-school aged children are willing to work more hours than other working mothers.

Summary

The persistently high unemployment rates following the 1990-92 recession have revived interest in hours redistribution as a means of increasing overall employment. The main finding of this paper is that, in all age groups, in all education levels, in all occupations and in all industries, many more Canadians, given the choice, would work more hours for more pay than fewer hours for less pay (a ratio of 4:1).

Table 3
Work time preferences by worker characteristics

	Men					Women				
	Paid workers	Proportion preferring			Usual hours	Paid workers	Proportion preferring			Usual hours
		Fewer	Same	More			Fewer	Same	More	
	'000	%				'000	%			
Total	5,242.7	5.3	67.5	27.2	40.8	4,703.7	7.6	65.5	26.9	34.2
Age										
15 to 24	574.5	0.9	49.4	49.8	38.2	517.2	3.0	47.4	49.7	33.1
25 to 34	1,543.0	4.0	62.9	33.1	41.0	1,325.7	7.8	63.4	28.8	34.6
35 to 44	1,628.6	6.7	68.4	24.9	41.2	1,559.7	8.5	67.0	24.5	34.4
45 to 54	1,063.6	6.6	78.1	15.3	41.3	999.5	9.1	71.5	19.4	34.5
55 and over	433.0	6.9	78.4	14.7	40.1	301.6	4.8	79.0	16.2	32.8
Education										
Grades 0 to 8	282.2	2.5	77.6	19.9	40.9	161.0	4.7	69.2	26.2	33.9
High school (some or all)	1,892.9	4.1	64.4	31.5	40.7	1,641.9	6.0	65.3	28.8	33.4
Some postsecondary	425.1	3.1	61.6	35.3	39.7	407.7	8.7	59.5	31.8	34.9
Postsecondary certificate or diploma	1,682.7	5.2	68.8	26.0	40.5	1,596.5	7.2	66.4	26.4	33.9
University degree	959.8	9.7	70.9	19.5	41.7	896.6	11.3	66.6	22.1	36.2
Job tenure										
1 to 6 months	669.7	1.9	52.3	45.9	39.2	636.6	3.2	44.3	52.5	29.5
7 to 12 months	419.0	3.1	55.5	41.5	40.4	289.1	2.7	59.0	38.3	33.4
1 to 5 years	1,339.4	4.8	61.2	34.0	40.7	1,365.1	6.8	61.5	31.8	34.0
6 to 10 years	1,009.2	5.8	71.1	23.1	41.3	1,100.4	8.7	70.7	20.6	35.2
11 to 20 years	1,077.9	7.1	75.4	17.5	41.3	890.3	11.6	74.2	14.3	35.8
Over 20 years	727.6	7.1	83.3	9.6	40.9	422.2	9.0	83.6	7.4	36.4
Occupation										
Professional and managerial	811.2	8.0	75.3	16.6	43.2	742.1	10.1	75.2	14.8	38.0
Natural and social science	731.1	8.8	72.3	19.0	40.4	1,172.8	9.7	67.1	23.3	34.0
Clerical	328.3	3.6	60.9	35.5	37.7	1,316.7	7.8	68.4	23.8	33.7
Sales	355.9	5.0	60.9	34.1	40.4	402.6	5.2	55.4	39.4	32.0
Service	525.3	2.7	59.8	37.5	37.9	586.3	3.1	52.9	44.0	31.0
Primary and processing	1,301.2	4.3	69.5	26.2	41.3	293.5	6.4	67.4	26.2	38.6
Construction and other	1,188.7	4.0	64.2	31.8	40.9	189.4	4.4	56.3	39.4	33.2
Construction	440.5	2.6	63.9	33.5	40.8	--	--	--	--	--
Other	748.2	4.8	64.4	30.8	40.9	--	--	--	--	--

Source: Survey of Work Arrangements, November 1995

Notes: Usual hours are the average usual hours worked each week in the main job.

Some numbers may not add to total because of exclusions (missing/not stated/refused/don't know).

Available data suggest that the number of hours generated by a voluntary work time reduction would be insufficient even to eliminate the underemployment of those currently employed.¹² Under this scenario, redistribution of hours would take place only among the employed, and while the level of underemployment would fall, the unemployment rate would remain unchanged (Galarneau, 1997).

Furthermore, the groups most likely to prefer fewer hours are differ-

ent from those most likely to prefer more. The former include those who already work many hours and have long job tenure. They tend to be professionals, managers or employees in natural and social science occupations (for example, architects, engineers, teachers or doctors) and to be well-educated. They have high hourly wage rates, are employed in permanent jobs and in jobs covered by pension plans. On the other hand, groups most likely to prefer more hours tend

to be young, and to have limited job tenure and low levels of education. They are employed in clerical, sales or service occupations, in temporary jobs and in jobs not covered by pension plans. It is therefore unlikely that many hours could be redistributed between these two groups. Work time redistribution is more likely to be feasible *within* occupations, where workers preferring fewer hours could be replaced by workers with similar education and experience.

Table 4
Work time preferences by family characteristics

	Men					Women				
	Paid workers	Proportion preferring			Usual hours	Paid workers	Proportion preferring			Usual hours
		Fewer	Same	More			Fewer	Same	More	
	'000	%				'000	%			
Total	5,242.7	5.3	67.5	27.2	40.8	4,703.7	7.6	65.5	26.9	34.2
Family earnings										
Under \$20,000	411.5	0.7	41.9	57.4	33.1	798.0	2.4	47.4	50.3	28.1
\$20,000 to < \$30,000	504.7	3.6	53.4	43.0	40.0	557.5	5.0	70.0	25.0	35.6
\$30,000 to < \$40,000	660.4	5.4	63.8	30.9	41.0	548.5	7.5	65.8	26.6	35.7
\$40,000 to < \$50,000	630.9	4.3	69.1	26.6	40.9	416.9	8.3	64.2	28.6	34.7
\$50,000 to < \$60,000	482.4	6.4	72.3	21.3	40.9	354.5	9.2	65.1	25.8	34.5
\$60,000 to < \$70,000	389.7	5.0	74.6	20.4	41.7	354.4	9.8	68.4	21.9	36.4
\$70,000 and over	769.8	10.5	72.6	17.0	42.7	653.5	15.6	69.3	15.1	36.7
Marital status										
Married / Common-law	3,579.4	6.0	70.8	23.1	41.6	3,227.2	8.8	68.4	22.8	33.7
Single, never-married	320.7	2.8	58.4	38.8	40.4	488.7	4.1	55.8	40.2	36.0
Divorced, separated, widowed	1,343.7	7.3	68.3	24.4	38.6	987.8	6.2	66.7	27.2	35.0
Spouse's weekly pay										
Single, separated, divorced, widowed	1,664.4	3.7	60.3	36.0	39.0	1,476.5	4.8	59.4	35.9	35.4
Spouse out of the labour force	723.5	5.5	72.9	21.6	41.9	59.2	4.1	64.5	31.4	33.6
Spouse unemployed	140.5	2.1	62.3	35.6	40.8	23.8	8.4	63.9	27.7	34.5
Spouse's weekly wage: \$0 to \$249	382.1	3.0	67.3	29.8	41.3	53.9	2.6	50.1	47.4	32.6
Spouse's weekly wage: \$250 to \$499	668.2	6.6	67.5	25.8	41.0	269.3	5.2	60.9	34.0	34.5
Spouse's weekly wage: \$500 to \$749	493.2	5.9	74.1	20.0	40.7	532.9	8.3	67.6	24.1	34.2
Spouse's weekly wage: \$750 to \$999	197.5	12.7	69.1	18.2	41.9	450.3	13.4	66.1	20.5	33.4
Spouse's weekly wage: \$1,000 & over	93.4	15.9	65.4	18.8	42.4	346.1	13.6	68.9	17.4	33.5
Pre-school aged children										
No pre-school aged children	4,237.7	5.4	67.6	27.0	40.5	3,780.4	6.8	65.6	27.6	34.7
1 pre-school aged child	669.9	3.7	67.1	29.3	41.5	579.0	11.0	64.1	25.0	32.7
2 or more pre-school aged children	335.2	6.5	66.8	26.7	41.8	244.4	11.7	67.1	21.3	30.9
Living arrangements and children										
Living alone & no pre-schoolers	950.1	5.3	61.9	32.8	40.0	912.7	5.9	64.2	29.9	36.5
Living alone & 1 pre-schooler	--	--	--	--	--	51.6	7.3	53.9	38.8	33.8
Living alone & 2+ pre-schoolers	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Not living alone & no pre-schoolers	3,287.5	5.8	69.3	25.3	40.7	2,967.7	7.1	66.0	26.9	34.1
Not living alone & 1 pre-schooler	664.4	3.7	67.3	29.1	41.6	527.4	11.3	65.1	23.6	32.6
Not living alone & 2+ pre-schoolers	334.7	6.5	66.8	26.8	41.8	234.0	11.9	70.0	18.1	31.0

Source: Survey of Work Arrangements, November 1995

Notes: Usual hours are the average usual hours worked each week in the main job. Family earnings are the sum of wages and salaries for all paid workers in the household. Respondents living alone are the head of the household and have no spouse present and are single, divorced, widowed or separated. Respondents not living alone are married or living common law, or are single, divorced, separated or widowed and living with other persons.

Some numbers may not add to total because of exclusions (missing/not stated/refused/don't know).

Work hour preferences are also likely to be affected by labour market conditions. During recessions, the proportion of the workforce involuntarily employed part time rises; as a result, more employees work fewer hours than they would like. Furthermore, some employees may be less inclined to report a preference for fewer hours if they believe a reduction could threaten their job security. Generally, it seems reasonable to suggest that workers' preferences depend on a number of economic and non-economic factors, and that changes in some of these could influence their choices considerably. □

■ Notes

1 One in nine Canadian workers held a non-permanent job in 1995. Non-permanent jobs refer to seasonal, temporary, contract, term, or casual jobs and work done through a temporary help agency.

2 Roughly half of paid workers were employed in jobs that offered a pension plan.

3 About 58% of permanent jobs and 24% of non-permanent jobs were covered by pension plans in 1995.

4 The only exception was women with over 20 years of job tenure.

5 Roughly 45% of men aged 15 to 24, compared with only 6% of men aged 45 to 54, earned less than \$10 per hour in 1995.

6 In 1995, about 40% of university graduates earned over \$20 per hour, compared with about 10% of workers with a high school education. Over one in three university graduates had family incomes over \$70,000.

7 Family earnings are the sum of wages and salaries for all paid workers in the household.

8 Of workers in families earning less than \$20,000 in 1995, 26% were young workers, and just over half had a high school education or less; 62% were employed in clerical, sales or service occupations and 41% had been on the job for one year or less.

9 Of workers in families earning more than \$70,000 in 1995, 36% had university degrees, 56% were employed in professional, managerial or natural and social science occupations and 42% had over 10 years' experience.

10 The 1994 General Social Survey (GSS) found that having children had a greater effect on the lives of women than on the lives of men.

11 The majority of these families were headed by women (83% in 1991) (Statistics Canada, 1997). Furthermore, most lone-parent families headed by women were living below Statistics Canada's low income cut-offs (61% in 1990) (Lindsay, 1992). The 1996 Census revealed no real change to the first figure. More recent data for the second have not been released yet.

12 The Survey of Work Arrangements does not contain information on the number of additional hours that "underemployed workers" would be willing to work or on the number of hours by which "overemployed workers" would reduce their work week. As a result, any attempt to estimate how many hours could be redistributed on a voluntary basis must rely on assumptions about Canadians' willingness to alter the length of their work week.

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