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## Aboriginal Peoples Survey

# Employment characteristics of Métis women and men aged 25 to 54 in Canada

by Tara Hahmann, PhD, Henry Robertson and Nadine Badets

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# Employment characteristics of Métis women and men aged 25 to 54 in Canada

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## Introduction

The Métis population is young and growing, with the population rising 51.2% from 2006 to 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2018a). The average age of the Métis population at 34.7 years in 2016, was 6.2 years younger than the average age of the non-Aboriginal population. Employment rates varied by age group with 75% of core working age adults (25 to 54 years of age), 52% of youth (15 to 24 years of age), and 39% of older adults (55 years and older) being employed in 2016. A majority of Métis aged 15 years and older were employed in permanent positions (85%) (Robertson, 2018). Métis experience inequalities in the labour force that are reflected in lower employment and participation rates, higher unemployment rates, and greater vulnerability to economic downturns when contrasted with the non-Aboriginal population (Arriagada, 2016; Moyser, 2017a). However, high school completion rates and the pursuit of postsecondary education are on the rise among Métis, a promising trend given that higher education is found to better the chances of employment (Arriagada, 2016; Moyser, 2017a).

Gender-based differences in employment rates among Métis have been noted, with Métis men more likely to be employed than women (Anderson & Hohban, 2014). A growing trend throughout Canada, and one that disproportionately impacts women and racialized groups, is the expansion in non-standard<sup>1</sup> work which includes part-time and non-permanent employment (Lightman & Gingrich, 2018; Morgan & Nelligan, 2018; Premji & Lewchuk, 2014). Little research has examined gender differences among Métis with respect to job permanency and job status and their relationship to well-being. Such information would provide an additional layer of insight that could potentially inform policies, programs and initiatives aimed at reducing inequalities within and among Métis. To this end, this paper will examine employment in relation to well-being among core working-age Métis<sup>2</sup> using the 2017 APS, while highlighting gender-based differences. The paper will unfold in two sections. The first section will set the context by providing an employment profile of Métis by sex, including employment rates, median wage and salary income, occupational group, and educational differences using recent APS data. The second section offers an exploration into potential outcomes of employment among Métis men and women, by examining the ability to meet basic needs, cover an unexpected expense and self-reported mental health by job permanency. The paper will conclude by examining recent trends in education among Métis that may have impacts on their future labour market outcomes.

1. Statistics Canada includes the following in its definition of non-standard work: part-time work, temporary employment that is non-permanent, holding multiple jobs and own-account employment (self-employed without an employees). Non-standard work generally refers to a situation where an employee does not have one employer; works in a non-permanent, position that is not year-round full-time, and lacks benefits and entitlements, and is determinate (Cranford, Vosko, & Zukevich, 2003).

2. The Métis identity definition is used in this report. It was possible to self-identify as both single and multiple Aboriginal identities on the APS. For example, a respondent could self-identify as both First Nations and Métis. The vast majority (97%) of Métis reported a single identity.

## Métis identity population

Métis are a constitutionally recognized group of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada with a distinct culture and history (Anderson & Hohban, 2014) and they are also a young and growing segment of the Canadian population (Statistics Canada, 2018a). There are multiple conceptualizations of Métis identity and these are situated in the context of history, language, group acceptance and geography (Sawchuk, 2001). For some, Métis identity is anchored in ties to the Métis Nation Homeland. This Homeland includes the three Prairie provinces (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta), as well as, parts of Ontario, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories, and the Northern United States (Métis National Council, 2019). In 2002 the Métis National Council adopted this definition of Métis: “Métis means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry and who is accepted by the Métis Nation” (Métis National Council, 2019). For others, Métis identity is more broadly defined by self-identification.

In this study, the Métis population includes those who responded ‘Métis’ to the question “Are you First Nations (North American Indian), Métis or Inuk (Inuit)?” on the 2017 Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS). Single and multiple Metis responses were included in the analysis.

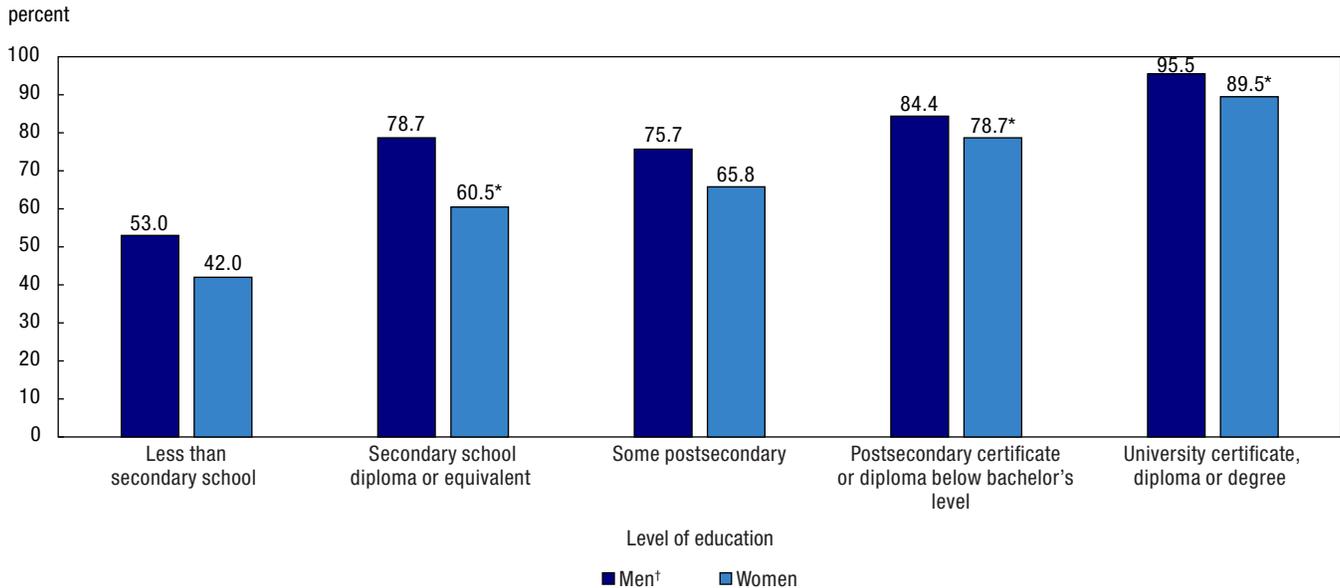
## New Métis question in the 2017 APS

For the first time, the APS included the question: “Do you have a card or certificate issued by a Métis organization that identifies you as Métis?” Statistics Canada worked with Métis organizations to develop this question. It is designed to provide more information about the characteristics of those who had completed the application and registration processes for acquiring a card or certificate from Métis organizations and governments. Nationally, about 45% of those who self-identified as Métis reported having a card or certificate issued by a Métis organization.

## Among those with degrees, employment rates are higher for Métis men than women

According to the 2017 Aboriginal Peoples Survey, among Métis age 25 to 54, 79% were employed (data not shown). When examining the employment rate by gender, it was significantly higher for Métis men (82%) than women (75%) (data not shown).

Research has shown that the gender employment gap decreases as educational level increases, without disappearing (Moyser, 2017b). Mirroring this trend in the broader Canadian population (Moyser, 2017b), Métis women reported a lower employment rate than men across most levels of education, even among those with a university degree (Chart 1). The same overall trend is found for both sexes in that employment increased with education levels, although education appeared to have a lesser effect across education levels for Métis women with the gap narrowing between the sexes with postsecondary education. For example, among Métis women with a high school diploma 61% were employed, and among Métis men with the same level of education 79% were employed with an 18 percentage point difference (Chart 1). Conversely, 90% of Métis women with a university degree were employed and 96% of Métis men, a difference of 6 percentage points (Table 1). A similar trend was observed between Métis women and men who were employed with a postsecondary certificate or diploma below a university degree (Chart 1). The employment gender gap among Métis narrows with higher education, that is, university degree holders.

**Chart 1****Employment rate of Métis aged 25 to 54 within each level of education and by sex, Canada, 2017**

\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

† reference category

**Note:** Employment refers to those who, during the reference period (the week prior), reported being 'employed'. This includes those who during the reference period did any work at all at a job or business, that is, paid work in the context of an employer-employee relationship, but excludes those who report self-employment.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2017.

## Métis women earn less than Métis men but higher education narrows the earnings gap

Similarly, education is related to income earned, where the median income<sup>3</sup> was higher among working-age Métis who had attained at least a bachelor's degree (\$64,304) versus those whose highest level of education was secondary school (\$44,618) with a difference of \$19,686 (data not shown). When median income is examined by sex, Métis women earn less than Métis men with a \$21,059 income differential (Table 1). Although other research has found that men's average earnings are higher than women's at all levels of education (Moyser, 2017b); the rising rates of educational attainment among women have contributed to the narrowing of the male-female pay gap is education (Ferguson, 2016). While Métis women with a postsecondary education below a university degree made less than men (\$36,563 versus \$63,687), the gender pay gap narrows with a university degree (\$57,842 versus \$71,104) (Table 1). The narrowing of the gender pay gap is aligned with findings from the general population where employment income reached greater parity with the possession of a university degree (Ferguson, 2016). Younger Métis, and women, in particular, are making gains in educational attainment when compared to older generations, which may continue to narrow the gender pay gap in years to come (Arriagada, 2016; Statistics Canada, 2013; Statistics Canada, 2018a).

3. Median income refers to before-tax wage and salary income throughout this document, unless otherwise specified.

**Table 1**  
**Median wage and salary income among employed Métis aged 25 to 54 by highest level of education and sex, Canada, 2017**

	Men	Women
	dollars	
<b>Total median wage and salary income</b>	<b>58,176</b>	<b>37,117</b>
Less than secondary school	39,727	25,393
Secondary school diploma or equivalent	52,516	30,519
Some postsecondary	51,427	27,178
Postsecondary certificate or diploma below bachelor's level	63,687	36,563
University certificate, diploma or degree	71,104	57,842

**Notes:** Employment refers to those who, during the reference period (the week prior), reported being 'employed'. This includes those who during the reference period did any work at all at a job or business, that is, paid work in the context of an employer-employee relationship, but excludes those who report self-employment. Median wage and salary income is obtained from administrative data linked to the 2016 Census of Population with the reference period of the calendar year 2015. It refers to gross wages and salaries before deductions for such items as income taxes, pension plan contributions and employment insurance premiums, excluding income from self-employment.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2017.

## Métis men are more likely to occupy positions in trades, transport, and related occupations than women

The plurality of Métis are employed in two occupational groups, grouped according to the 2016 National Occupational Classification<sup>4</sup> (NOC) (Statistics Canada, 2018b), namely sales and services<sup>5</sup> (21%) and trades, transport, equipment operators, and related occupations (20%) (data not shown). The increase in women's employment in recent decades is marked by women's over-representation in the service industry (Moyser, 2017b). Historically, a disproportionate share of women have been employed in occupations such as teaching, nursing and related health occupations, social work, clerical or other administrative positions, or sales and services (Armstrong & Armstrong, 2010; Moyser, 2017b). Métis women were more likely to be employed in such occupations when compared to men: business, finance and administrative occupations<sup>6</sup> (26% versus 8%), and education, law and community and public service (20% versus 12%) (Chart 2). Conversely, Métis men were more likely than Métis women to be employed in typically male-dominated occupations such as trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations (37% versus 3%<sup>E</sup>) (Chart 2) which such findings mirroring those of the non-Aboriginal population as explored by other research (Anderson & Hohban, 2014).

Technological advancement has shaped trends in work with growing demand for employees in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields. Métis women, like women in the general population, remain under represented in this field (Green & Sand, 2015; Moyser, 2017b). For instance, Métis women were less likely to be employed in this occupational group that may serve as a proxy for the STEM field, namely "natural and applied sciences and related occupations" when compared with Métis men (2%<sup>E</sup> versus 7%) (Chart 2). The percentage of Métis women employed in this occupational group mirrored that of all women in Canada (2%<sup>E</sup> versus 3%) (Statistics Canada, 2017). However, gender lines are blurring in many occupations that were previously dominated by one sex or the other (Hegewisch & Hartmann, 2014). For example, no difference was found between Métis women and men employed in management occupations.

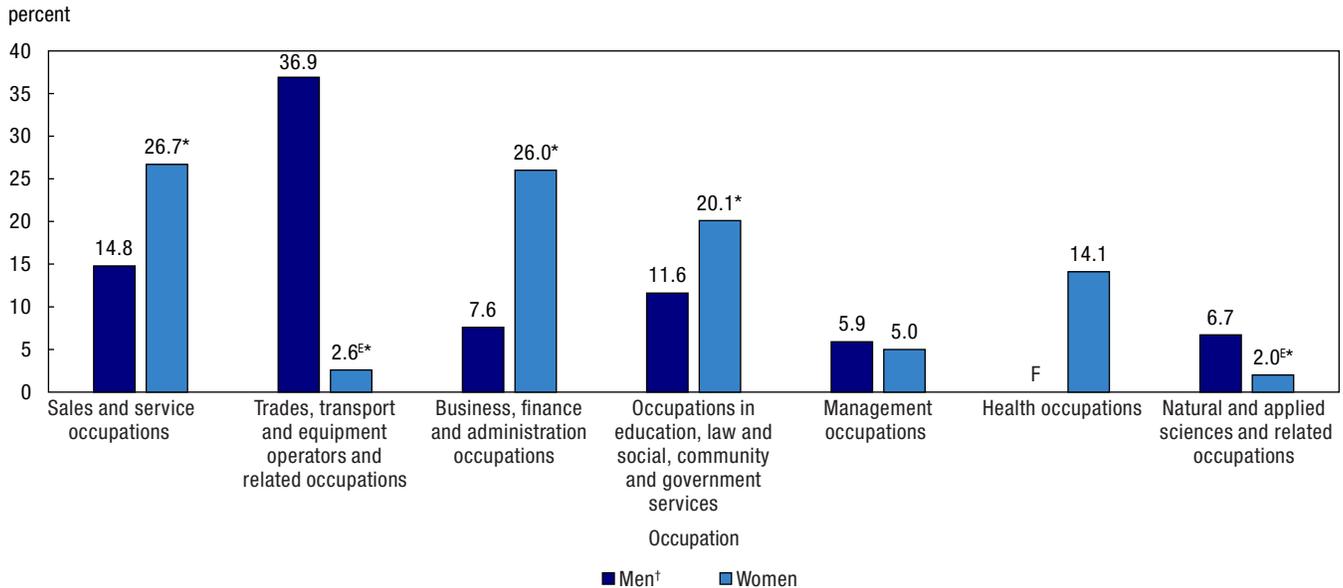
4. The [National Occupational Classification \(NOC\)](#) contains 10 broad occupational categories grouped by similarity of work performed based on tasks, duties and responsibilities of a given job.

5. Occupational types within this category do not include personal services such as management, health, education, repair and administrative. Sales and services do include, but are not limited to the following: sales support occupations, retail sales supervisors, sales representative and salespersons in wholesale and retail trade, food counter attendants, kitchen helpers, cleaners and support occupations in travel and amusement services.

6. Occupation types within this category range from financial auditors and accountants to administrative assistants.

<sup>E</sup> use with caution

**Chart 2**  
**Top seven occupations among employed Métis aged 25 to 54 by sex, Canada, 2017**



<sup>E</sup> use with caution

F too unreliable to be published

\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

† reference category

**Note:** Employment refers to those who, during the reference period (the week prior), reported being 'employed'. This includes those who during the reference period did any work at all at a job or business, that is, paid work in the context of an employer-employee relationship, but excludes those who report self-employment.

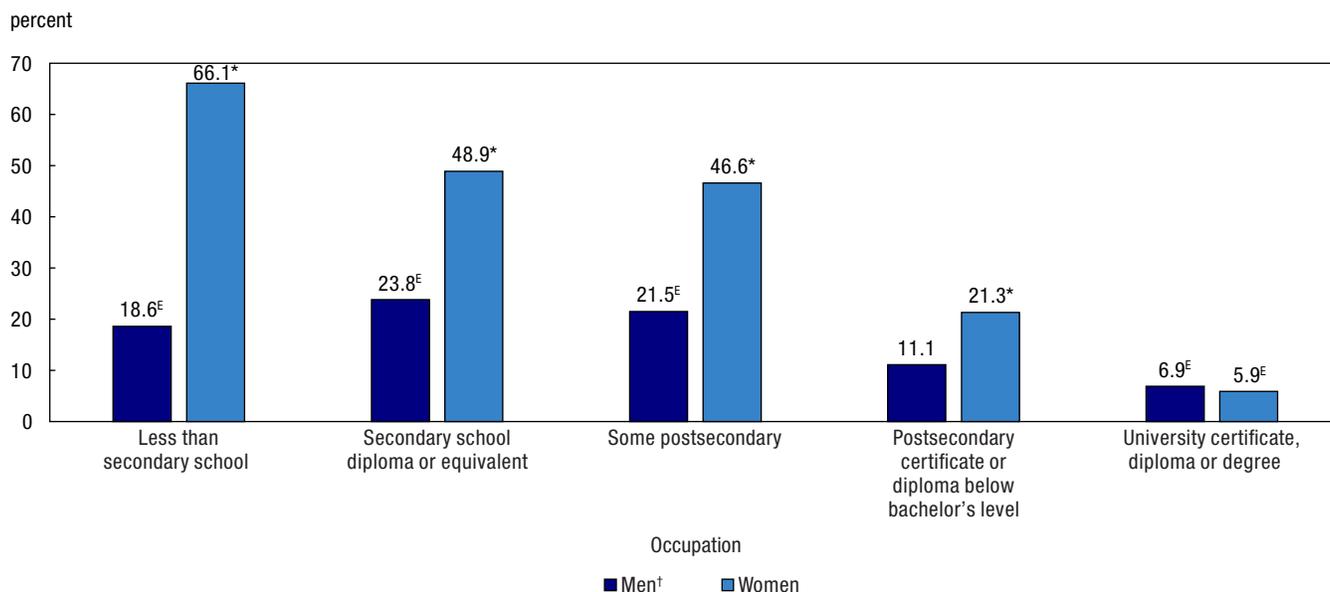
**Source:** Statistics Canada, Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2017.

## More Métis women than men are employed in sales and service occupations across all levels of education aside for university degree holders

To highlight differences in employment by educational attainment and sex, the sales and services occupation group was examined more closely. The share of Métis women employed in sale and services occupations declined with higher levels of education. The overall proportion of Métis women employed in sales and services was higher than Métis men for each level of educational attainment, except for those with a university degree (Chart 3).

Although women are frequently employed in female-dominated occupations such as sales and services and education, there is no gender gap for those holding a university degree (Chart 3). This finding suggests that the returns for education were more pronounced among Métis women than men. For example, 66% of Métis women with less than a high school diploma were employed in sales and service occupations while just under 50% were employed in this occupational category with a secondary school diploma.

**Chart 3**  
**Percentage of Métis aged 25 to 54 employed in sales and service occupations within each level of education and by sex, Canada, 2017**



<sup>‡</sup> use with caution

\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

† reference category

**Note:** Employment refers to those who, during the reference period (the week prior), reported being 'employed'. This includes those who during the reference period did any work at all at a job or business, that is, paid work in the context of an employer-employee relationship, but excludes those who report self-employment.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2017.

### Métis men were employed in typically male-oriented occupations which are tied to higher earnings

Gender representation varies by occupation type. Canadian men are overrepresented in occupations that include construction, forestry, fishing, mining quarrying, and oil and gas extraction as well as utilities when compared to women (Moyser, 2017b). The greatest proportion of Métis men were employed in the male-dominated trades, transport, equipment operators and related occupations sector (37%) and were more likely to be employed in this type of work than Métis women (3%<sup>‡</sup>) (Chart 2).

A gender pay gap was observed across occupations with a narrower gap for occupations that are female-dominated among Métis. For example, the gender pay gap for health occupations was narrower at \$4,021 whereas for management occupations, those historically occupied by men, the gap was wider at \$14,886 (Table 2). Although more women are breaking into management roles (Ezzedeen, Budworth, & Baker, 2015) as the data here affirm with near equivalent shares of men and women in such roles (Chart 2), evidence of barriers in the careers of high achieving women, remain.

Across all occupations, even for female-dominated occupations, a pay gap persists. Métis men employed in the sales and services occupational group earned a higher median annual employment income when compared with Métis women also employed in this occupational group (\$36,548 versus \$23,475) (Table 2). This trend is similar in the slightly higher paying, and female-dominated, education, law and social, community and government services occupational group where men earned a higher median annual income when compared to Métis women (\$68,926 versus \$42,592). These findings appear to demonstrate what is known as the “glass-escalator”, a term that denotes the structural advantages men are provided even in female-dominated fields, which result in benefits including greater earnings (Williams, 1992).

**Table 2**  
**Median wage and salary income among the top seven occupations reported by Métis aged 25 to 54 by sex, Canada, 2017**

Occupational group	Men	Women
	dollars	
Sales and service occupations	36,548	23,475
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	61,627	F
Business, finance and administration occupations	54,645	45,546
Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	68,926	42,592
Management occupations	81,261	66,374
Health occupations	45,403	41,381
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	81,748	F

F too unreliable to be published

**Note:** Median wage and salary income is obtained from administrative data linked to the 2016 Census of Population with the reference period of the calendar year 2015. It refers to gross wages and salaries before deductions for such items as income taxes, pension plan contributions and employment insurance premiums, excluding income from self-employment.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2017.

## A higher percentage of Métis women than men reported working part-time

Employment rates can mask growing trends in the nature of work, such as the rise of unstable employment (Kallenberg, 2009). Unstable work is typically part-time and non-permanent, and has been tied to economic hardship with some research indicating that this type of work is gendered (Lewchuk, 2017; Chui, 2011; Cranford, Vosko, & Zukewich, 2003; Vosko & Clark, 2009).

The percentage of Métis men employed full-time was higher than women (95% versus 84%) whereas a higher percentage of Métis women were employed part-time compared to men (16% versus 5%<sup>F</sup>) (Table 3). Métis women had lower median income than men whether they worked full-time or part-time. This finding may be a reflection of gender typical roles wherein women take on the bulk of childcare, opting for more flexible work arrangements to accommodate motherhood (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2016; Patterson, 2018).

**Table 3**  
**Employment rate and median wage and salary income by hours worked for Métis aged 25 to 54 by sex, Canada, 2017**

	Full-time		Part-time	
	percent	dollars	percent	dollars
Men <sup>†</sup>	95.2	61,313	4.7 <sup>F</sup>	12,420
Women	83.5*	42,515	16.4*	11,413

<sup>F</sup> use with caution

\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

<sup>†</sup> reference category

**Notes:** Employment refers to those who, during the reference period (the week prior), reported being 'employed'. This includes those who during the reference period did any work at all at a job or business, that is, paid work in the context of an employer-employee relationship, but excludes those who report self-employment.

Median wage and salary income is obtained from administrative data linked to the 2016 Census of Population with the reference period of the calendar year 2015. It refers to gross wages and salaries before deductions for such items as income taxes, pension plan contributions and employment insurance premiums, excluding income from self-employment.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2017.

## Métis women employed in permanent work were more likely to report the inability to meet basic household needs when compared with men

Previous research suggests that there is a link between unstable work and economic instability (Lewchuk, 2017; Lewchuk & Lafleche, 2014). A measure of economic instability is one's inability to meet basic household needs, including transportation, housing, food, clothing and related expenses.<sup>7</sup> A similar measure centers on the ability to cover an unexpected expense should one arise (Fukuda-Parr, 2016).

Among employed Métis, women employed in a permanent job were more likely than permanently employed men to report that their household income did not meet their basic needs (17% versus 11%) and was insufficient to cover an unexpected expense of \$500 (32% versus 20%) (Table 4). The gender-based differences in economic

7. This type of measure of economic stability is also factored in to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDGs are an agenda developed by the United Nations and adopted by Canada with the goal of eradicating poverty, in all forms. Canada's SDGs have a special focus on improving the socio-economic and health outcomes of Indigenous peoples.

hardship were substantiated by the lower median reported economic family income by Métis women employed in permanent work. For example, Métis women, employed in a permanent job who reported that economic family income was insufficient to meet an unexpected expense of \$500, had a median economic family income that was \$17,216 lower than Métis men (Table 4). The reverse trend was observed for men and women employed in non-permanent work. Métis men who reported insufficient household income for basic needs, reported a lower median economic family income than Métis women at a difference of \$7,761. This may be reflective of the financial importance of men's income, which is typically higher as demonstrated in earlier analysis, and likely the major source of earning power for the household. When examining couple status, there is evidence to suggest being in a couple has an impact on women's economic well-being a finding demonstrated elsewhere in the literature (Moyser, 2017b). For example, amongst permanent workers, 89% of men versus 77% of women (data not shown) were in a couple whereas differences in couple status were not observed for non-permanent workers. This finding may explain why there was no difference between men and women employed non-permanently in reported inability to meet basic needs and cover unexpected expenses whereas among permanent workers, women were more likely to be single than men, reporting lower median economic family income and more difficulty in meeting unexpected expenses. This economic hardship might be further explained by single women bearing a greater economic burden for dependents (Moyser, 2017b).

**Table 4**  
**Percentage employed and median economic family income for Métis aged 25 to 54 who reported being unable to meet basic household needs and cover an unexpected expense by job permanency and sex, Canada, 2017**

Type of employment	Measure of financial well-being			
	Household income was not enough to meet necessary expenses		Household could not cover an unexpected expense of \$500 from individual/household resources	
	percent	dollars	percent	dollars
<b>Permanent</b>				
Men†	10.8	71,200	20.2	77,348
Women	16.8*	55,527	32.3*	60,132
<b>Non-permanent</b>				
Men†	35.4 <sup>E</sup>	62,506	31.2 <sup>E</sup>	67,915
Women	34.1 <sup>E</sup>	70,267	43.5	70,075

<sup>E</sup> use with caution

\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

† reference category

**Notes:** Employment refers to those who, during the reference period (the week prior), reported being 'employed'. This includes those who during the reference period did any work at all at a job or business, that is, paid work in the context of an employer-employee relationship, but excludes those who report self-employment.

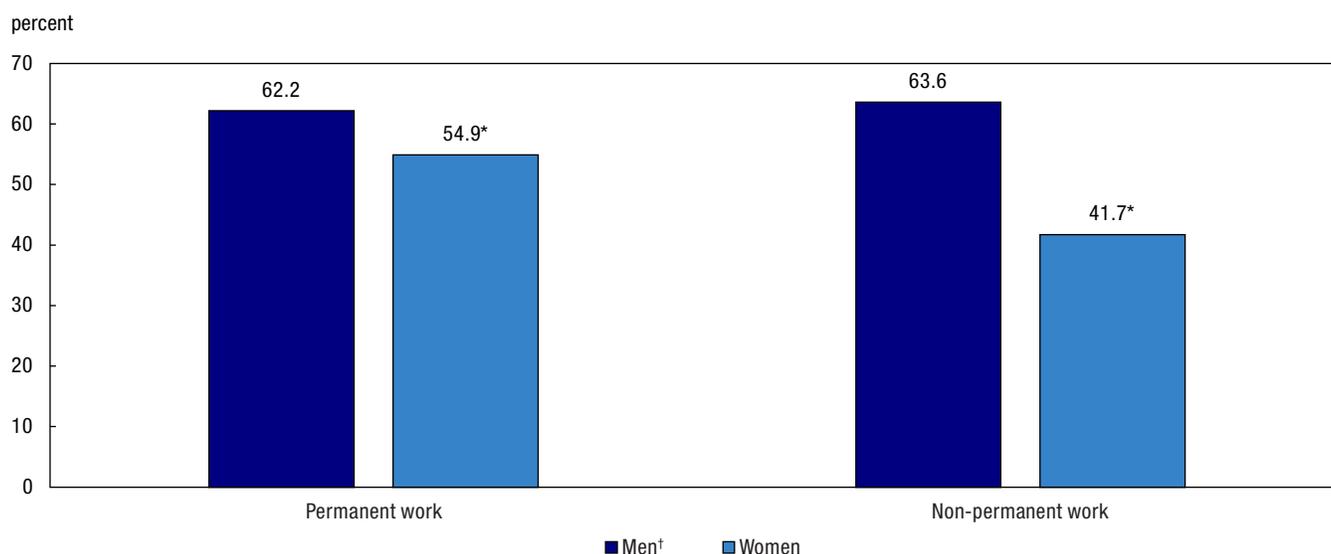
Median income of economic family for all persons is obtained from administrative data linked to the 2016 Census of Population with the reference period of the calendar year 2015. It refers to total income of economic family for all persons. For a person not in an economic family, this variable contains the total income of that individual. For a person in an economic family, this variable contains the sum of the total incomes of all members of that family.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2017.

## Métis women employed in non-permanent and permanent work less likely to report excellent or very good mental health than men

Unstable work is said to create a cycle of fear and instability where current and future planning is difficult, if not impossible (Kallenberg, 2009; Lewchuk & Lafleche, 2014). Research indicates that non-permanent work is a risk factor for poor mental health (Canivet et al., 2016). According to existing research, women are more likely to be engaged in this type of work than men (Vosko & Clark, 2009), which could place them at greater risk for adverse mental health outcomes. Although Métis women were more likely to be employed in part-time work than men (16% versus 5%<sup>E</sup>), a significant gender difference was not observed for non-permanent work (data not shown). There were, however, gender-based differences in self-reported mental health between those in permanent and non-permanent positions. Métis women were less likely than men to report excellent or very good mental health in both permanent (55% versus 62%) and non-permanent positions (42% versus 64%), with a starker difference observed for non-permanent workers (Chart 4). Men's reporting of excellent or very good mental health did not change across employment types. This finding could demonstrate a greater mental burden on women involved in precarious work when compared with men, however, literature does point to reporting biases with men showing more reluctance in the reporting of psychological problems (Lee & Owens, 2002).

**Chart 4**  
**Self-reported excellent or very good mental health among Métis aged 25 to 54 employed in permanent and non-permanent work by sex, Canada, 2017**



\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

† reference category

**Note:** Employment refers to those who, during the reference period (the week prior), reported being 'employed'. This includes those who during the reference period did any work at all at a job or business, that is, paid work in the context of an employer-employee relationship, but excludes those who report self-employment.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2017.

## Discussion and conclusion

The analysis used Statistics Canada data from the 2017 Aboriginal Peoples Survey to examine participation in the wage economy among Métis aged 25 to 54. Métis women reported a lower employment rate than men, which was further observed across most levels of education, even among those with a university degree. The same trend was observed for median wage and salary income where Métis women reported lower earnings across all levels of education, with the gap being the narrowest for Métis women with a university degree. Métis women were more likely to be employed in female-dominated occupations such as sale and services when compared with men with the reverse trend for occupations that are male dominated such as trades, transport, equipment operators and related occupations and the natural and applied sciences occupations. With increasing levels of education the percentage of women employed in the sales and services occupations approached greater parity with men. The structural advantages of men are observed when examining median personal wage and salary income. That is, female-dominated occupations had the lowest reported median income and even within these occupations, Métis men reported higher median income than women. Upon further examination, men were more likely to be employed full-time and less likely to be employed part-time than women, and reported higher median income for both full- and part-time work when compared with women. Further demonstrating economic vulnerability, Métis women employed in permanent work were more likely to report household income that was insufficient to meet necessary expenses and poorer mental health when compared with men.

Education appeared to narrow the employment and income gap between Métis women and men, with a similar trend observed in the non-Aboriginal population (Moyser, 2017b). Education level comparisons across several cycles of the APS, suggest an upward trend in postsecondary completion among Métis aged 15 and older. In particular, while the share of Métis with less than high school is reducing over time and high school completion remains constant, the percentage of Métis completing some postsecondary education is on the rise. For example, the proportion of Métis who completed some post-secondary education increased roughly 12 percentage points from 2001 to 2017 (44% versus 56%) while the same trend is noted for the completion of a university degree or more, albeit with a small increase of 7 percentage points between 2001 and 2017 (6% versus 13%) (Kumar, Furgal, Hutchinson, Roseborough, & Kootoo-Chiarelo, 2019). Among Métis, data has shown that higher education leads to better chances of employment (Statistics Canada, 2018a). In particular, research has found that earnings were

higher among Métis women with at least a bachelor's degree than among those with lower levels of education (Statistics Canada, 2018a), which findings here mirrored. With the gains in educational attainment for Métis and its association with employment and income it appears that momentum is building in the right direction.

Despite the positive association between education and employment (Arriagada, 2016; Ferguson & Wang, 2015), further research would help to better understand this relationship. For instance, despite the growth in educational qualification among core-aged employed Métis, employment rates did not increase between 2006 and 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2018a). Similarly, more research is required on generational differences, given that educational attainment for Métis (Statistics Canada, 2018a), especially for younger generations, is growing although younger Métis labour force participants, those aged 15 to 24 years, were more likely to be unemployed (Anderson & Hohban, 2014). Although education can serve as an employment facilitator, other factors including labour market trends and their alignment with educational systems and subsequent qualifications (Hardy, Lovei, & Patterson, 2018; Tierney, 2004), skills and employment training strategies (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2019), and discrimination (Agocs, 2002) need be considered when examining the association between education and employment among Métis. Furthermore, when it comes to hours worked and job permanency, more research needs to be conducted on self-employment, a type of non-standard work. Métis, although less likely to be self-employed<sup>8</sup> than non-Aboriginal people, the share of Aboriginal self-employed persons is growing (Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, 2016) with Métis comprising the largest proportion of the self-employed Aboriginal population (50%) (Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, 2016).

## Data sources, methods and limitations

### Data sources

The data used are from the 2017 Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS). The 2017 APS is a voluntary, national survey of First Nations people living off reserve, Métis and Inuit aged 15 or older. The objectives of the APS are to identify the needs of these Aboriginal groups and to inform policy and programs. The APS aims to provide current and relevant data for a variety of stakeholders, including Aboriginal organizations, communities, service providers, researchers, governments, and the general public.

The APS is a post-censal survey, designed to follow and complement the Census of Population. The 2017 APS represents the fifth cycle of the survey and follows the thematic approach that was first introduced in the 2012 APS. The focus for the 2017 APS is on participation in the Canadian economy, transferable skills, practical training, use of information technology, Aboriginal language attainment, etc. It collected data on part-time employment, self-employment, business assistance, job satisfaction, job seeking, and non-participation in the labour force and job skills. It also collected unique and detailed information on education, health, languages, society and community.

The 2017 APS was developed by Statistics Canada with funding provided by Indigenous Services Canada, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, Health Canada, and Employment and Social Development Canada.

While this paper analyzes the employment rates of the Métis from the 2017 APS, official employment, unemployment and participation rates are produced via the [Labour Force Survey \(LFS\)](#).

The target population of the 2017 APS was composed of the Aboriginal identity population of Canada, 15 years of age or older as of January 15, 2017, living in private dwellings. It excluded people living on Indian reserves and settlements and in certain First Nations communities in Yukon and the Northwest Territories (NWT). The sample for the survey was derived from a sampling frame of individuals who answered "Yes" to one of the three Census questions defining the identity population (questions 18, 20 and 21) or those who reported Aboriginal ancestry to question 17 on the Census. Although not part of the 2017 APS target population, some individuals with Aboriginal ancestry who did not report Aboriginal identity were still sampled, since past survey experience indicates that nearly one-third of these individuals will report an Aboriginal identity on the APS. Therefore, unlike the target

8. Self-employed workers include working owners of an incorporated business, farm, or professional practice. The latter group includes self-employed workers who do not own a business (Statistics Canada, 2012). In addition, according to the 2011 Census, Aboriginal businesses tend to be quite small with the majority being unincorporated and without employees (Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, 2016).

population, the sampled population (or survey population) was composed of both the identity population and the Aboriginal ancestry-only population. Additional details are available on the [Aboriginal Peoples Survey \(APS\)](#) and in the [Concepts and Methods Guide](#).

The 2017 APS was conducted from January through August, 2017. The overall response rate was 76%.

## Methods

The population of study for this analysis were people who identified Métis, aged 25 to 54 years. The data presented here represent a combination of the single and multiple responses for Métis.

Employment, throughout this document, refers to those who during the reference period (the week prior), reported being 'employed'. This includes those who during the reference period did any work at all at a job or business, that is, paid work in the context of an employer-employee relationship, but excludes those who report being self-employed. Median wage and salary income is obtained from administrative data linked to the 2016 Census of Population with the reference period of the calendar year 2015. It refers to gross wages and salaries before deductions for such items as income taxes, pension plan contributions and employment insurance premiums, excluding income from self-employment. Gross wages and salaries are rounded to the nearest dollar.

Prevalence estimates presented in this article are based on descriptive analysis conducted using SAS-callable SUDAAN. Weighted estimates were calculated using methods that took into account the survey design of the APS. Missing values including "don't know," "not stated" and "refusal" were excluded from the denominator when calculating percentages.

To ensure confidentiality of respondents, estimates based on small cell counts (10 or less) were suppressed. Further, estimates with unacceptable precision (coefficient of variation greater than 33.3%) were also suppressed. Estimates with marginal precision (coefficient of variation between 16.6% and 33.3%) are presented with an "E" and should be used with caution. Median wage and salary income was calculated with bootstrap weights, but it should be noted that the variance estimates are unstable. If the sample size for a median income was less than 30 an 'F' was placed in the table.

## Limitations

The results of this analysis should be interpreted in the context of a number of methodological and conceptual limitations. The analysis was based on self-identification. It should be noted these self-identity based populations may differ from populations in other data sources such as Métis citizenship registries or the Indian Register. The estimates are based on self-reports which are susceptible to some biases such as social desirability bias. While this paper analyzes the employment rates of the Métis population from the 2017 APS, official employment, unemployment and participation rates are produced via the [Labour Force Survey \(LFS\)](#), which is conducted every month. Further, due to the cross-sectional nature of the data no cause-and-effect relationships or directionality can be inferred.

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