



WINDOW ON YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

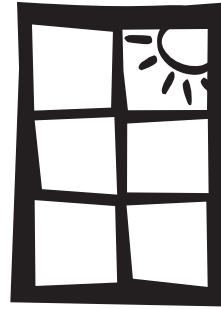


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WINDOW ON YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Youth Employment Trends in Ontario



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this profile is to provide an analysis of youth employment trends to assist in policy and program development. The data presented is for youth in Ontario. Youth is defined as 15 to 24 years old unless stated otherwise.

Youth in Ontario are diverse. Different groups of youth have varied experiences in the labour market. Where possible, observations are made on the impact of gender and ethno-racial identity on employment and education indicators.

**YOUTH BRING A RANGE OF SKILLS
AND TALENTS TO THE PAID
LABOUR MARKET.**

Labour Market Participation

At the time of publication, the unadjusted youth unemployment rate was 13%, the participation rate was 68% and 891,000 youth were employed in Ontario, for an employment rate of 59% (May 2000).

Almost half of employed youth work in sales and services occupations and 14% work in business, finance and administrative occupations. A high proportion of young women work in traditional, female-dominated occupations such as child-care worker and secretary. Young men work more in skilled trades, transport and manufacturing jobs.

Self-employment is becoming a popular employment option for youth. In 1996, approximately 72,000, or 5%, of youth 15 to 29 years old in the Ontario labour market were self-employed. The quality of work and economic feasibility of self-employment for youth is still in question.

Unemployment and Underemployment

In 1999, the youth unemployment rate was approximately double the rate for all workers. Unemployment is higher for men, younger youth, visible minorities, Aboriginal youth and youth with lower education levels.

As unemployment rates decrease, more focus may turn to underemployment and its measurement via a new "structural exclusion index"¹. Younger workers have higher levels of structural exclusion than older workers (42% for 15 to 19 year-olds and 21% for 20 to 24 year-olds, compared to 14% for all workers in Ontario, December 1999).

¹ Burke, Shields. 1999. *The Job Poor Recovery: Social Cohesion and the Canadian Labour Market* Toronto: Ryerson Social Reporting Network. p. 15. The "Structural Exclusion Index" offers a reading of the number and condition of people who want work or who want more work but are unable to find it. It measures unemployment and also various forms of underemployment and marginal employment.



**HELPING YOUTH TO REACH
THEIR POTENTIAL IN THE
LABOUR MARKET WILL REQUIRE
INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES ...**

Education

More youth are in school. In 1996, 63% of youth 15 to 24 years old attended school full-time. Youth are attaining higher levels of education: 45% of 20 to 29 year-olds graduated from college or university and 24% had some post-secondary education. However, compared to all youth and to visible minority youth, a higher percentage of Aboriginal youth have not graduated from high school and a lower percentage have post-secondary qualifications.

While young women are still under-represented in most science and technology fields of study, they were equally represented in medicine and dentistry programs in 1997.

Earnings

Youth aged 15 to 29 earn less than adults. For full-time, full-year employment in 1995, they earned between \$11,900 and \$32,400. Low earnings and ineligibility for income support programs such as Employment Insurance and Social Assistance may put youth at risk for poverty. Increasing tuition fees are making it more difficult for youth to access post-secondary education.

Looking Ahead

Youth bring a range of skills and talents to the paid labour market. As economic and labour market conditions improve, youth who have marketable skills, higher levels of education and social supports in place will need less help than those who have less access to resources and/or are faced with difficult life situations such as homelessness or poverty.

Helping youth to reach their potential in the labour market will require innovative strategies involving partnerships among governments, businesses, educational institutions, community-based employment and social service agencies and youth themselves.



RECOMMENDATIONS

While governments have a major responsibility to help youth through the transition into paid employment, effective solutions to youth unemployment will require the collective efforts of various groups including youth, educators, parents, business people and community agencies.

Support Youth Employment Programs and Training

All levels of government should continue their support of youth employment programs and training with specific programs targeted at youth who face multiple employment barriers, youth with disabilities, young women, Aboriginal and visible minority youth.

Encourage Youth to Stay in School

Governments should continue to support initiatives that encourage youth to stay in school and to pursue all forms of post-secondary education including apprenticeship and other vocational training. To ensure youth have the means to acquire a post-secondary education and to graduate without a significant debt load, governments should provide adequate funding to colleges and universities.

Encourage Young Women to Explore Non-traditional Careers

Governments should continue and expand their support of programs that encourage and assist young women to enter careers in skilled trades, technology, science and other non-traditional areas.

Support Research on Youth Employment

Governments should support further research on employment issues for youth. Future research may examine the combined impact of gender, race and class on youth employment, issues for youth with disabilities and access of low-income youth to new technologies and other research questions as determined by local community needs.

Engage Youth

Governments and other stakeholders should explore ways in which youth can be meaningfully engaged in policy discussions around youth employment issues. Through participation in policy and program development, youth can learn new skills and express their employment needs, while organizations benefit from new energy and ideas.



Comprehensive Strategies

Future youth employment initiatives should assume a holistic approach to service delivery. Recognizing that the social, educational, health, housing, recreational and personal development needs affect employment outcomes will result in the development of more comprehensive and effective strategies to help youth increase their employability.

Changing Labour Market Relationships

Governments should present employment policies that take into account changes in the labour market and their effects on youth and others who find themselves marginally employed. A growing number of people work in casual or part-time arrangements, on contract, in multiple jobs or as own account self-employed. To be effective in the protection of workers and regulation of work conditions, governments will need to create or revise existing employment policies to consider the realities of these new, flexible, work arrangements.



INTRODUCTION

Over the years, member agencies of Ontario Association of Youth Employment Centres (OAYEC) have played an important role in guiding thousands of youth through job searches and career exploration. From our experience, we believe youth bring a range of skills and talents with them to the paid labour market and can approach their work with creativity and energy.

Youth in Ontario are a diverse group with varied needs for employment preparation. The paths a young person takes to enter the labour market may be as varied as the youth themselves. Youth who have marketable skills, higher levels of education and social supports in place will need less help than those who have less access to resources and/or are faced with difficult life situations such as homelessness or poverty. Workplace discrimination based on age, gender, race, ethnicity or ability is another barrier youth may face.

Recent trends in the labour market impact on all young workers regardless of their social status or personal backgrounds. Globalization of economies and advances in technology have contributed to an increase in new work arrangements such as part-time, casual, contract and temporary work. Workers in the 1990s also experienced multiple waves of downsizing and lay-offs. Youth are particularly at a disadvantage competing against mature workers with more experience and seniority.

Working generally means more than having 'a job'; it involves being productive, contributing to society, making a living, feeling good about yourself, developing professional skills and socializing with colleagues. In addition, for a young person, having a job may signal independence and entrance into adulthood.

The human and economic costs of unemployment to a society are great and well documented. Solutions for youth unemployment will likely involve a range of activities and commitments by a number of different stakeholders bridging public and private sectors. OAYEC and our member agencies will continue to engage youth and provide leadership in youth employment programming.

**YOUTH IN ONTARIO ARE A
DIVERSE GROUP WITH VARIED
NEEDS FOR EMPLOYMENT
PREPARATION.**



**YOUTH ARE DEFINED AS 15 TO
24 YEARS OF AGE IN THE
REPORT UNLESS OTHERWISE
INDICATED.**

About this Report

Window on Youth Employment is a research project funded by Human Resources Development Canada, and coordinated by OAYEC. One aspect of the project entails the creation of a report to identify, highlight and increase awareness of youth employment issues in Ontario.

Other youth profiles have been constructed to address both employment and broader social issues². The geographic scope of this analysis is Ontario. Attempts to include gender and ethno-racial analysis in this profile also contributes to its uniqueness.

Method

The main sources of the data for this report were the 1996 Census of Canada and the Labour Force Survey. The Census provides a comprehensive statistical portrait of the country and its people. It is used to collect information about the social and economic situation of people living in various regions. The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a monthly household survey that collects data on labour market activity and demographic characteristics of the working age population. Both the Census and LFS provide cross-sectional data that can be used to create a snapshot of how things stand for youth in the labour market at a particular moment in time.

Numbers and rates do not easily or effectively capture the stories and experiences of young people. However, statistics may serve as a starting point for discussion, and trends can have implications for implementation and delivery of youth employment services. Numbers also provide a baseline from which progress can be measured.

Youth are defined as 15 to 24 years of age in the report unless otherwise indicated. The federal definition of youth extends to 29 years and these older youth are often included in the analysis. This older cut off is substantiated as it is now taking youth longer than in the past to complete schooling, make the transition from school to work and leave home. Recognizing that the issues faced by younger youth may differ from those faced by older youth, some analysis of age differences is included.

² Forum of Labour Market Minister (forthcoming), *Youth in Transition 2000* and City of Toronto, 2000, *Youth Profile*.



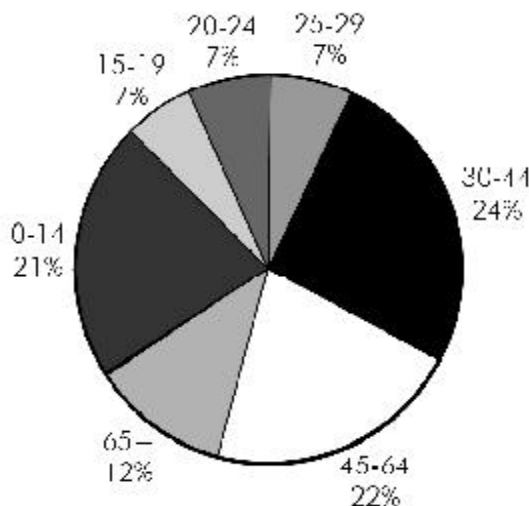
WHO ARE THE YOUTH IN ONTARIO?

Youth Population

In 1996, there were 1.4 million youth in Ontario. They constituted 13% of the total population and 19% of the working age population (15 to 64 years). Although the number of youth is expected to increase, the share of the youth population is expected to decrease as aging baby boomers continue to dominate the age structure. As the population ages, we will want to ensure that governments remain as committed to the social and program needs of younger populations as they do to the larger, and potentially more influential, baby boom population.

IN 1996, 18% OF YOUTH IN ONTARIO WERE BORN OUTSIDE OF CANADA³

Ontario Population by Age 1996



Immigrant Youth

During the 1990s, Canada received about 2.5 million immigrants, over half of whom settled in Ontario. In 1996, 18% of youth in Ontario were born outside of Canada³; Asia and Europe were the main areas of origin.

³ Includes immigrants and non-permanent residents.



Country of Origin of Immigrant Youth (15-24) in Ontario, 1996

Country of Origin	Percent of immigrant youth
United States of America	3
Central and South America	10
Caribbean and Bermuda	9
United Kingdom	7
Other Europe	19
Africa	6
India	6
Other Asia	40
Oceania and other	1
Total number of immigrant youth (15-24)	229,000

Visible Minority Youth

Visible minorities are self-defined as persons (other than Aboriginal persons), who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour. The visible minority population is expected to increase to 20% of the Canadian population by 2016 (in 1996 they accounted for 11%) as more immigrants come from non-European countries⁴. In 1996, 19% of Ontario youth were members of a visible minority.

Aboriginal Youth

In 1996, there were 25,000 Aboriginal youth in Ontario, constituting 2% of the youth population. The Aboriginal population is relatively young: 31% are under 15 years of age compared to 21% for the Ontario population as a whole which means the Aboriginal youth population will increase in the future.

Implications of Diversity in Youth Populations

Increased ethno-racial diversity will have implications for youth initiatives and programs. The educational system should continue to provide programs, such as ESL, and curricula which reflect the diverse experiences of the student body. The success of programs and services assisting youth in finding employment may be contingent on their ability to be responsive and reflective of cultural and ethnic differences. Building partnerships with ethno-specific agencies and groups, such as the Aboriginal communities, may ensure that services are culturally-appropriate and outreach methods are effective. Governments will have a continued role to play in educating the business sector about the benefits of diversity in their workforce.

⁴ Chard, Jennifer and Vivane Renaud. August 1999. "Visible Minorities in Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal" *Canadian Social Trends*.



LABOUR MARKET ACTIVITY

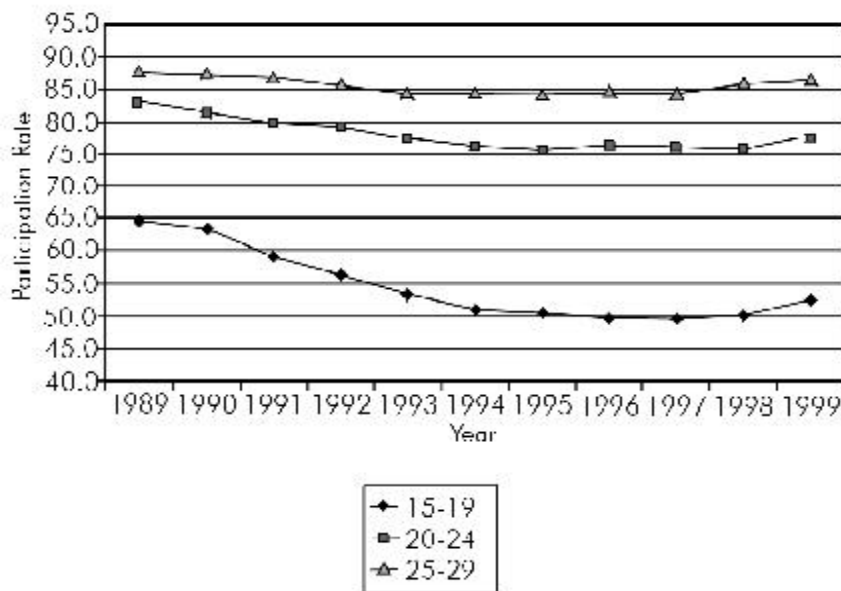
For most of the 1990s, youth had a difficult time getting work. It is only in the last couple of years of the decade that labour market conditions have begun to improve for youth.

Participation

Generally, people are more inclined to look for work when economic conditions are strong. Yet, despite Ontario's strong economic growth in the late 1990s, youth participation rates have not recovered to pre-recession levels. Labour force participation for Ontario youth declined 9.5 percentage points since 1989 to 65% in 1999. The decline in participation rates for young men appear to be slightly greater than for women. Younger youth (aged 15 to 19) have lower rates and a greater decline than other youth. Youth going back to school or continuing their education may explain some of the decrease in their labour market participation. In May 2000, the participation rate for youth was 68%.

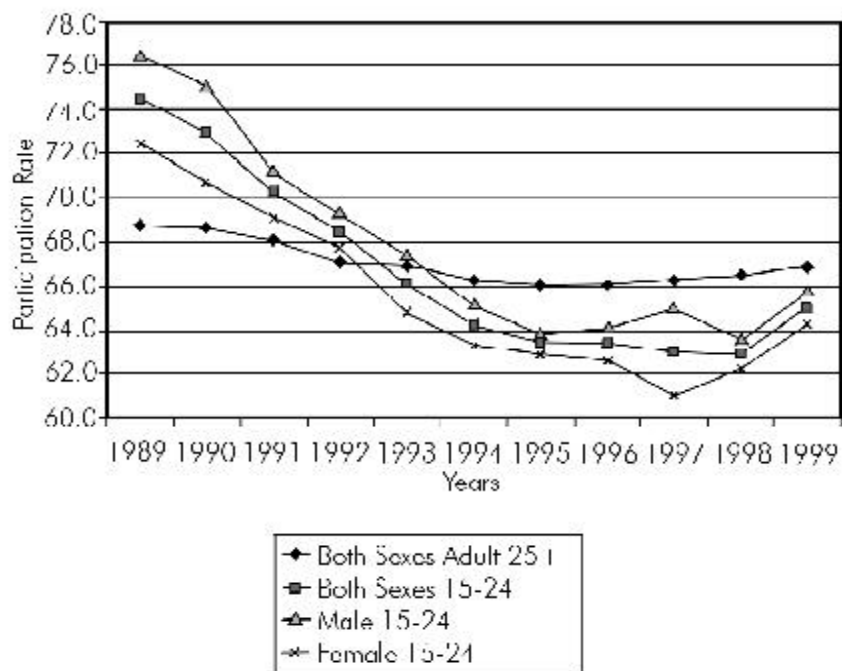
IT IS ONLY IN THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS OF THE DECADE THAT LABOUR MARKET CONDITIONS HAVE BEGUN TO IMPROVE FOR YOUTH.

Youth Participation Rate by Age (Both Sexes) - Ontario





Participation Rate by Age and Sex - Ontario



Employment

In 1999, about 845,000 youth were employed in Ontario for an annual average employment rate of 57%, up from 53% in 1997. By May 2000, 891,000 youth were working and the rate was 59%.

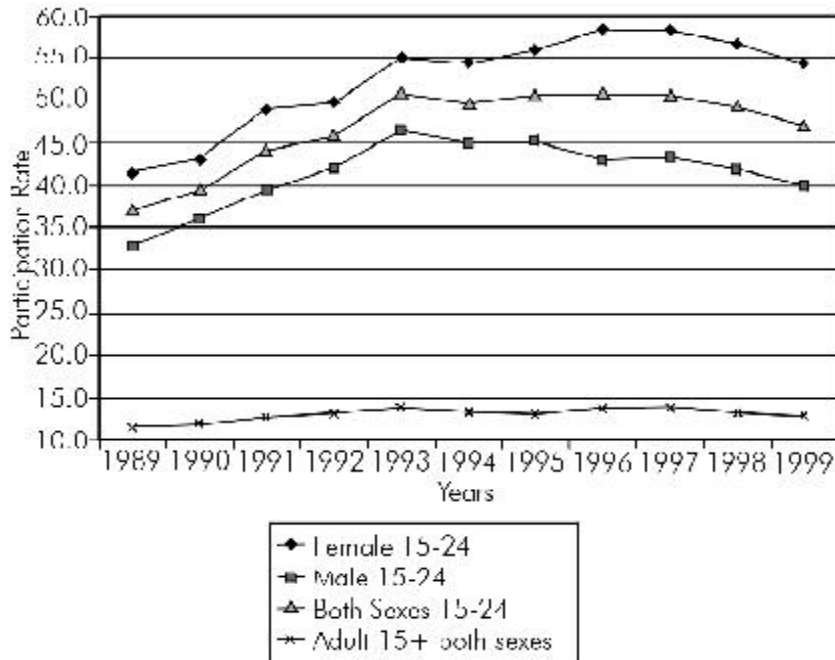
Part-time Work

While an increasing employment rate is generally good, not all youth are working full-time. Youth have higher rates of part-time work than the adult working population (25 years and older). The percentage of employed youth working part-time increased by about one third between 1989 and 1999, from 35% to 47%.

Young women are more likely to work part-time than young men. Between 1993 and 1997, part-time rates decreased slightly for young men but continued to rise for young women. The part-time rate has decreased for both sexes since 1997.



Incidence of Part-Time Work by Age and Sex - Ontario



Working part-time may be convenient for youth who require flexibility for school or other commitments. However, about 20% of youth in 1999 worked part-time because full-time work was not available.

What Jobs Do Youth Do?

Almost half of employed youth work in sales and services areas (55% of females, 39% of males). Women outnumbered men as cashiers, child care and support workers, food and beverage servers and sales clerks.

Fourteen percent of youth (18% of females and 10% of males) work in business, finance and administrative occupations, of which 81% are clerical workers. Of the women working in business professions, 12% are secretaries compared to 1% for men.

Young men work more often in skilled trades, transport and manufacturing jobs. Women are barely represented as labourers in construction trades, mechanics or heavy equipment operators.

**ALMOST HALF OF
EMPLOYED YOUTH WORK
IN SALES AND SERVICES
AREAS.**



Occupations of Ontario Youth, 15-24 years old, 1996

	Percent of women	Percent of men
Management occupations - senior managers, specialist managers, managers in retail, food and accommodation services	2	3
Business, finance and administrative occupations - professional occupations in business and finance, financial and insurance administrators, secretaries, clerical occupations and supervisors	18	10
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations - professional and technical occupations in natural and applied sciences	1	4
Health occupations - professional, technical and assisting occupations in health services, nursing supervisors and registered nurses	3	1
Occupations in social science, education, government service and religion - teachers, judges, social workers, lawyers, paralegals, professors, psychologists	3	2
Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport - professional and technical occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	4	3
Sales and service occupations - sales and services supervisors, cooks and chefs, retail sales clerk, cashiers, occupations in protective, food, travel and accommodation services, child care and home support workers	55	39
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations - contractors and construction supervisors, construction trades occupations, electrical trades, telecommunications, machinists, mechanics, heavy equipment, transportation and crane operators, trades helpers	1	16
Occupations unique to primary industry - occupations in agriculture, fishing, forestry, mining, oil and gas extraction, primary production labourers	2	7
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities - supervisors, machine operators, assemblers and labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities	4	10
Total number of youth (15-24) in labour force	431,000	454,000

Source: 1996 Census, Custom Target Profile



Gender Differences in the Labour Market

Nowadays, though young women have a wide range of occupations to choose from, they still seem disproportionately represented in traditional, female-dominated, low-paying, pink-collar jobs. A recent study indicated women held only 12% of top jobs of executive vice-presidents or higher, confirming suspicions that women's equality in the workplace has yet to be achieved⁵. The Conference Board of Canada reports a need for workers in skilled trades⁶, an area that has often not been presented by teachers or counsellors as lucrative or otherwise attractive to youth, in general, and young women in particular.

RESEARCH ON SELF-EMPLOYED YOUTH CONDUCTED BY OAYEC PROVIDED MIXED CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE QUALITY OF WORK AND ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY OF SELF-EMPLOYMENT FOR YOUTH⁷.

Youth and Self-employment

With the general decline of 'good,' secure, well-paid jobs, today's young workers are exploring less traditional career paths and employment arrangements. Self-employment is an increasingly popular employment option for youth. According to the 1996 Census, approximately 72,000 or 5% of young workers 15 to 29 years old in Ontario were self-employed. Generally, self-employed youth work as own-account self-employed, without employees.

Research on self-employed youth conducted by OAYEC provided mixed conclusions about the quality of work and economic feasibility of self-employment for youth⁷. The self-employed youth interviewed for the study presented as a determined, adaptable and articulate group with high levels of education and many skills. They are willing to work long hours, for low earnings and feel confident and successful in their work. These youth seem to have created work they find personally meaningful and rewarding.

On the other hand, the low level of earnings and lack of medical and other benefits suggest that these workers endure a range of experiences in self-employment, not all of which are positive. Policy responses to improve youth self-employment prospects will need to take into account the range of experiences within self-employment as well as the diversity among young people.

⁵ The Toronto Star, February 9, 2000. "Few women get top jobs, survey confirms" p.A26.

⁶ Globe and Mail, April 24, 2000. "Hot job market can mean riches for high-school grads." p.A1.

⁷ Ontario Association of Youth Employment Centres, 2000, *The Young and the Enterprising: A study of self-employed youth in Ontario*.

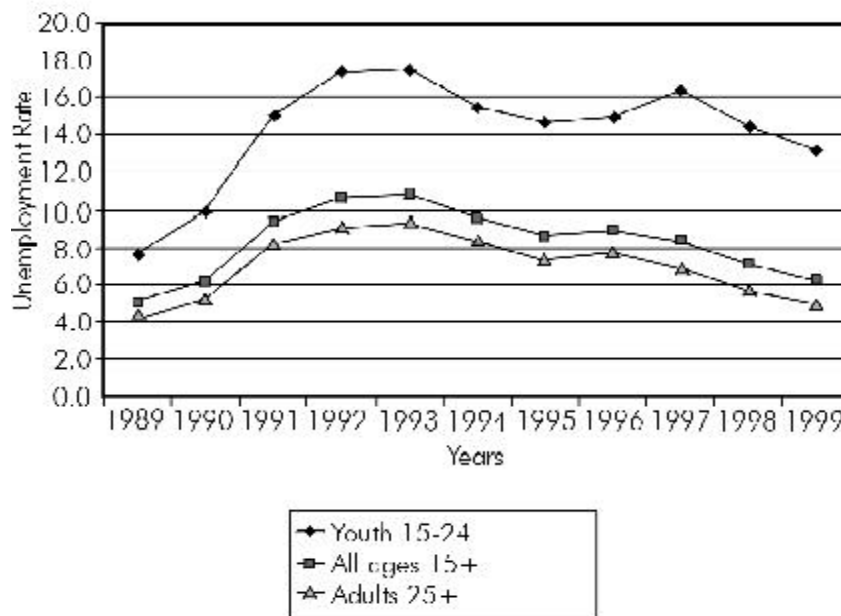


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Unemployment

Youth in Ontario had an unemployment rate of 13% in 1999. The youth unemployment rate still remains high, approximately double the adult - 25 years and older - rate and the overall - all ages - rate. The actual annual difference between youth and overall unemployment rates increased from 2.6 percentage points in 1989 to 6.8 percentage points in 1999.

Adult/Youth Unemployment Rate (Both Sexes) - Ontario

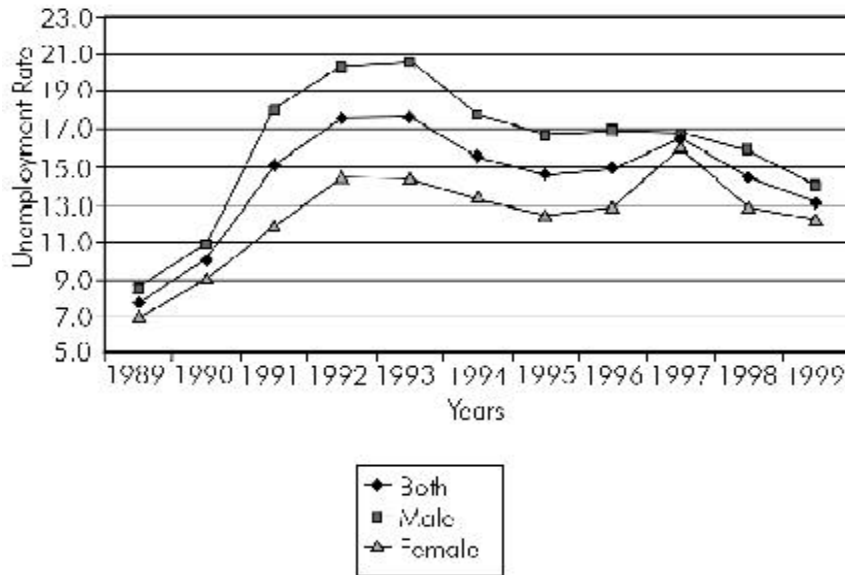


**YOUTH IN ONTARIO HAD AN
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE OF 13%
IN 1999.**

Certain groups of youth experience different rates of unemployment. Young men experienced higher unemployment than young women in the 1990s, with the largest gap - 6.2 percentage points - occurring in 1993. Men experienced a decline in unemployment since 1993, whereas unemployment for women has remained high.

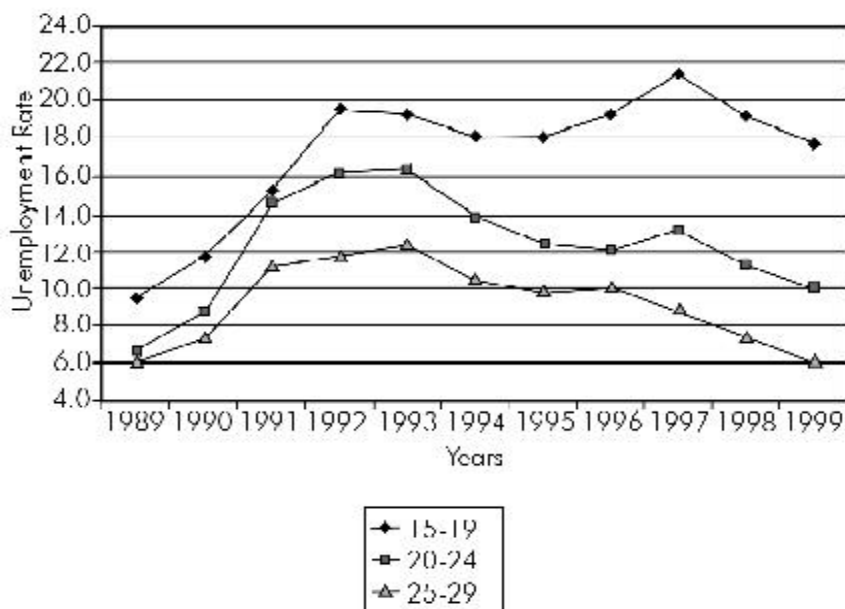


Youth (15-24) Unemployment Rate by Sex - Ontario



Younger youth experience higher unemployment than older youth. Teens typically have less business contacts, work experience and job search skills.

Youth Unemployment Rate - Ontario





Both visible minority and Aboriginal youth experience higher unemployment rates and lower employment rates than all youth as a group.

Labour Market Indicators for Visible Minority and Aboriginal Youth (15-24) in Ontario

	All youth	Visible Minority Youth	Aboriginal Youth
Participation rate	63	47	51
Employment rate	52	35	35
Unemployment rate	18	25	31

Source: 1996 Census, calculations from custom tabulations⁸

Underemployment & Structural Exclusion

Underemployment is a more difficult concept to identify and measure than unemployment. There is no underemployment rate. However, being underemployed, working in a job without enough hours, pay and/ or opportunity to use and develop skills, can be as stressful and devastating as unemployment. As the economy continues to grow and a greater proportion of the population find work, a shift in attention towards underemployment may be expected.

The structural exclusion index can be considered a measure of underemployment. The index was developed by the Social Reporting Network at Ryerson Polytechnic University⁹ in response to the inadequacy of the official unemployment rate to capture the broader reality of worklessness. While the unemployment rate includes only the number unemployed (those out of work and actively seeking employment) as a percentage of the labour force, the structural exclusion index includes the unemployed, discouraged workers who want to work but cannot find employment, and workers who want to work more hours. In December 1999, the structural exclusion index was 42%¹⁰ for Ontario youth aged 15 to 19 years and 21% for youth 20 to 24 years. The unemployment rate was 12% and 8% respectively for the same two youth groups. Younger workers tend to have higher levels of structural exclusion than older workers. Women generally have higher levels of structural exclusion than men across all age groups which suggests they may be more likely employed in less secure positions.

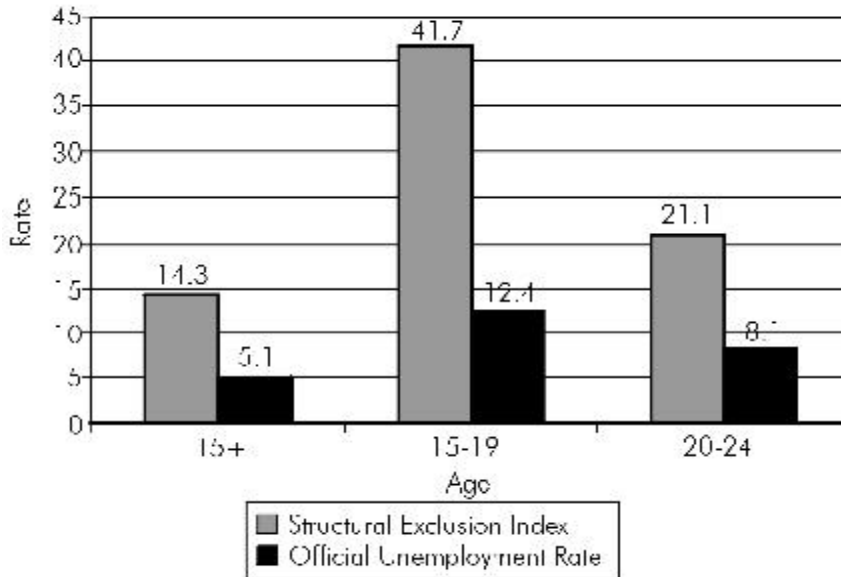
⁸ Note: The unemployment, employment and participation rates from the Census will differ from rates from the Labour Force Survey. Rates from these two different data sources cannot be compared. Census rates are examined here because the LFS does not include information on visible minority or Aboriginal status.

⁹ Burke, Shields. 1999. *The Job Poor Recovery: Social Cohesion and the Canadian Labour Market*, Research report of the Ryerson Social Reporting Network.

¹⁰ This analysis was completed prior to the Labour Force Survey revisions introduced in February 2000. The estimates reported here will differ slightly from those based on the revised LFS data used in the rest of this report. For more information on the nature and impact of the LFS revisions, see the document 'Improvements in 2000 to the LFS' at Statistics Canada's Website (<http://www.statcan.ca>).



*Structural Exclusion Index versus
Official Unemployment Rate - Ontario December 1999¹¹*



Earnings

Youth generally earn less than adults do. A gender wage gap exists, although it appears to be less than that for all workers, with young women earning between \$0.80 to \$0.86 for every dollar earned by young men in full-time, full-year employment.

*Average Employment Income for Youth and All Workers,
Ontario 1995*

	15-19 years	20-24 years	25-29 years	15 years and over
Male	\$4,200	\$12,400	\$25,800	\$35,200
Female	3,600	9,900	20,500	22,500
Full-time Full Year	15-19 years	20-24 years	25-29 years	15 years and over
Male	\$14,900	\$22,000	\$32,400	\$45,500
Female	11,900	18,900	27,500	32,600
Part-time or part year	15-19 years	20-24 years	25-29 years	15 years and over
Male	\$3,700	\$8,900	\$16,400	\$18,900
Female	3,400	7,500	13,300	13,400

Source: Census 1996, Custom Target Profile (figures rounded)

¹¹ Source: Custom calculations by John Shields and Mike Burke, Ryerson Social Reporting Network. Figures are unadjusted for seasonal variation.



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The rather low levels of employment income for youth should be viewed with caution because the figures do not take into account living arrangements. Youth who live at home may have the financial support of their families, employment income need not reflect a "living wage."

**IN 1970 AND IN 1980, YOUTH
EARNED ABOUT ONE HALF OF
THE NATIONAL AVERAGE BUT
BY 1995, THAT DROPPED TO
LESS THAN A THIRD.**

National trends reveal a devaluation of youth workers. In Canada, all age groups experienced earnings losses between 1990-1995. However, the largest decline of earnings, almost 20%, occurred among youth. In 1970 and in 1980, youth earned about one half of the national average but by 1995, that dropped to less than a third. The decline in earnings since 1980s is partly due to an increasing proportion of youth working part-time¹².

With incomes decreasing, poverty among youth becomes a concern. In 1997, in Ontario, just over half (51%) of persons under 25 who live on their own had incomes below the poverty line, compared to 32% for all persons. For families headed by youth under 25, the poverty rate was 45%, compared to 13% for all families¹³.

¹² Statistics Canada, *The Daily*, May 12, 1998.

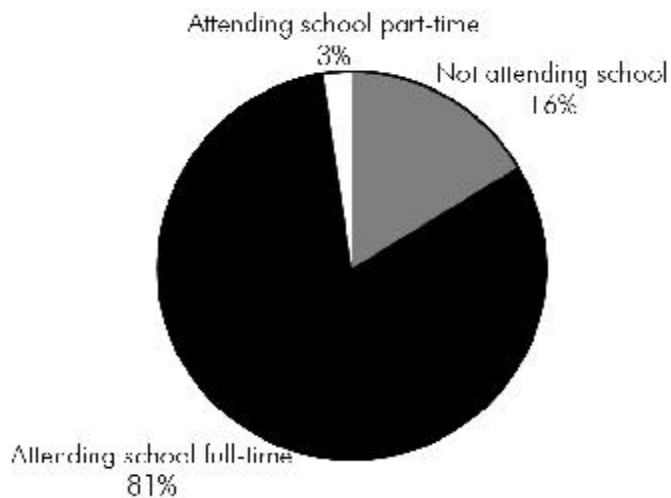
¹³ Based on Statistics Canada 1986's base low income cut-offs, custom calculation from National Council of Welfare.



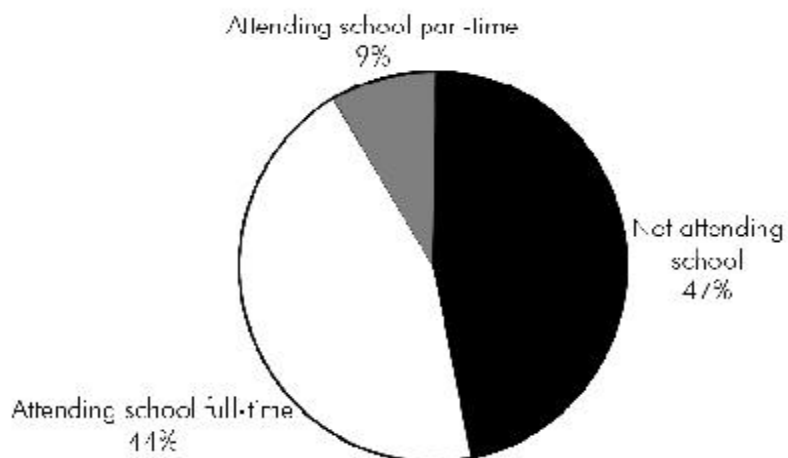
EDUCATION

Jobs in the new, knowledge-based economy will require workers with higher levels of education than in the past. More young people are staying in school. In 1996, 81% of youth 15-19 years and 44% of youth 20-24 years were attending school full-time.

School Attendance of Youth 15-19 Ontario, 1996



School Attendance of Youth 20-24, Ontario, 1996

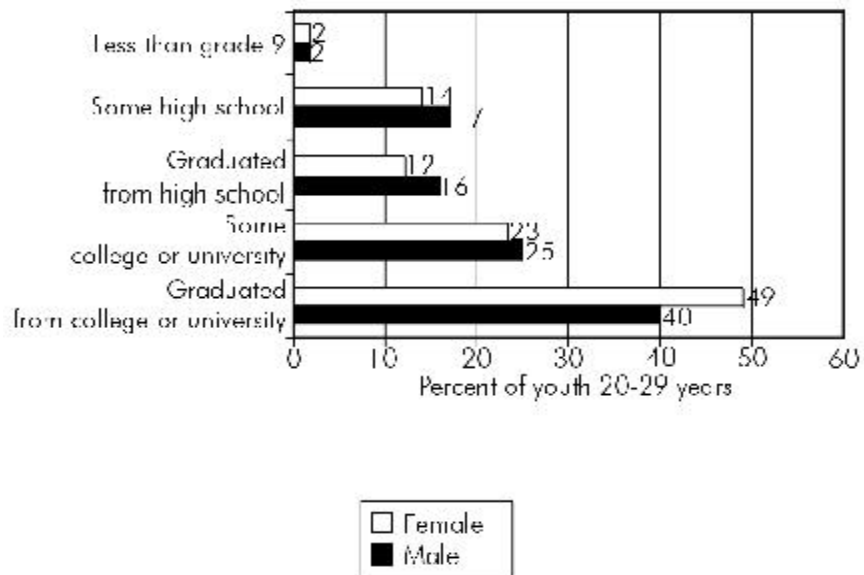




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Youth are attaining higher levels of education than in the past. Only 2% of youth aged 20 to 29 had less than grade 9 education. Almost half of the women and 40% of men graduated from college or university.

Highest Level of Education for Youth 20-29 years, Ontario 1996



Gender Differences in Fields of Study

Gender differences are apparent across different fields of study for youth who attain post-secondary qualifications. The proportion of women studying engineering, applied science, mathematics and physical science is low compared to men, whereas women dominate in education, recreational and counselling services and health professions, including

nursing and rehabilitation medicine. On a national level, women undergraduates made gains in the field of medicine since the 1980s, but are still underrepresented in engineering and physical science and their proportions have actually regressed in the area of computer science¹⁴. Social science, and business and commerce were the leading fields of study for 33% of men and 43% of women.

THE GENDER DIFFERENCES IN BOTH OCCUPATIONS AND FIELDS OF STUDY INDICATE THERE MAY STILL BE BARRIERS AND STEREOTYPES PREVENTING WOMEN FROM ENTERING NON-TRADITIONAL FIELDS.

¹⁴ Globe and Mail. July 26, 1999 "Women still underrepresented in engineering and physical sciences" p.B4.



With a predicted skill shortage in high growth industries such as the information technology sector, there may be excellent opportunities for women. The gender differences in both occupations and fields of study indicate there may still be barriers and stereotypes preventing women from entering non-traditional fields.

Youth (15-29 years) with Post-Secondary Qualifications by Sex and Field of Study in Ontario, 1996

	Percent of women	Percent of men
Educational, recreational & counselling services	13	4
Fine & applied arts	8	4
Humanities & related fields	9	7
Social sciences & related fields	19	15
Commerce, management and business administration	24	18
Agricultural and biological sciences/ technologies	4	5
Engineering & applied sciences	2	7
Engineering and applied science technologies and trades	4	30
Health professions, sciences & technologies	13	4
Mathematics and physical sciences	3	6
Total number of youth (15-29) with post-secondary qualifications	370,000	297,000

Source: 1996 Census, Custom Target Profile

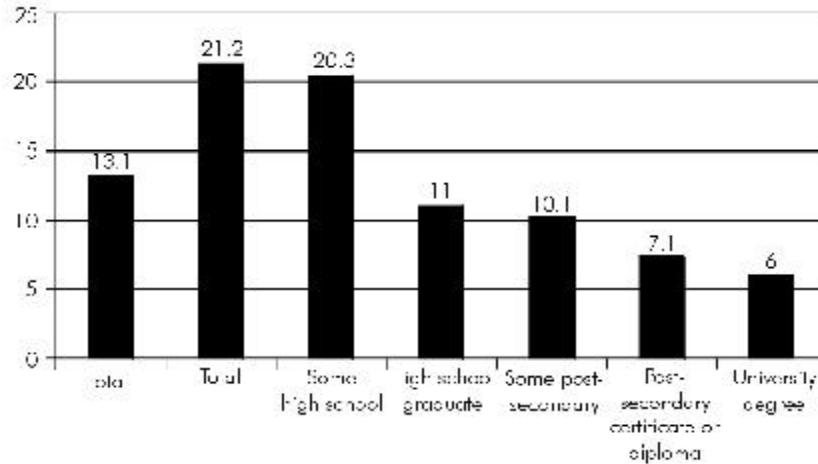
Education and Labour Market Outcomes

It is well known that education level has an effect on labour market outcomes. Youth with higher levels of education generally experience lower rates of unemployment. In 1999, youth who had not finished high school had a rate of unemployment about three times that of youth with post-secondary credentials. Yet, reduced funding for adult education is making it more difficult for older youth to return to school to complete secondary school credits.

YOUTH WHO HAD NOT FINISHED HIGH SCHOOL HAD A RATE OF UNEMPLOYMENT ABOUT THREE TIMES THAT OF YOUTH WITH POST-SECONDARY CREDENTIALS.



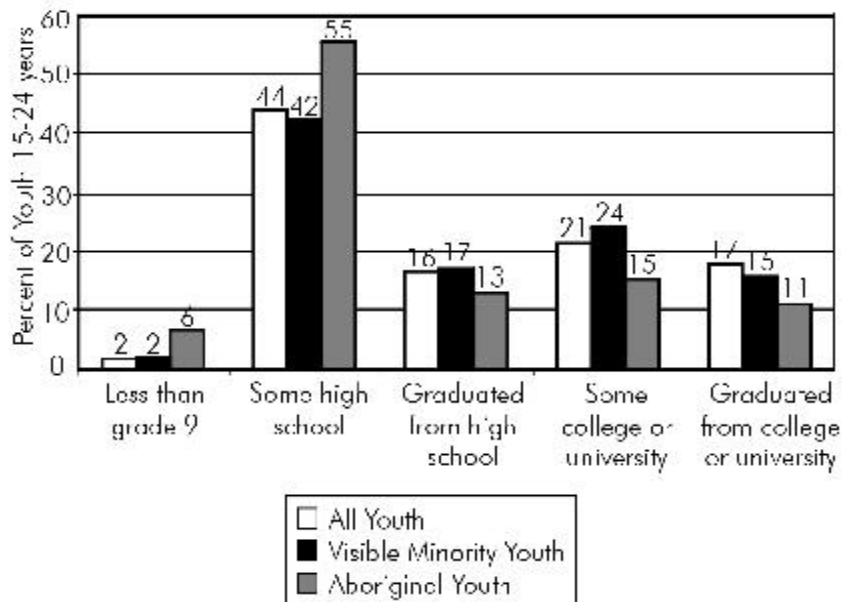
*Unemployment Rate by Education Attainment -
Youth 15-24, Ontario 1999*



Education Levels for Aboriginal and Visible Minority Youth

Aboriginal youth had lower levels of educational attainment in 1996 when compared to all youth and to visible minority youth in Ontario. Six percent of Aboriginal youth had less than grade 9 education compared to 2% for all youth and visible minority youth. Only 11% of Aboriginal youth had some post-secondary qualifications, compared to 17% of youth and 15% of visible minority youth.

*Highest Level of Education - Youth 15-24 years
by Visible Minority and Aboriginal Status, Ontario 1996*



A study of secondary school students in the Toronto District School Board found Aboriginal students are under-represented in university-bound advanced level programs¹⁵. With lower educational levels, Aboriginal youth are at risk of exclusion from the labour market.

Tuition Fees and Student Debt

Access to post-secondary education becomes more important as the demand for highly- skilled workers continues to increase. Yet increasing tuition fees and mounting student debt loads are making it more difficult for youth to pursue post-secondary education. For Ontario students, the average repayable debt load has increased over the last couple of years and the average annual loan remains high. Substantial proportions of full-time university and college students rely on the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) (38% and 51% respectively in 1998-99)¹⁶. A study of Canada Student Loans from 1990-91 and 1995-96 reveals increases in the number of students with loans, the average amount of loan to be repaid, the rate of default and the average value of loans in default¹⁷.

Average Repayable Debt - Ontario (OSAP less Ontario Student Opportunity Grant)

	1996/97	1997/98
University Graduate (4 year)	\$17,181	\$19,166
College graduate (2 year)	\$11,574	\$12,012

Source: Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, Student Support Branch

Average Annual Loan - Ontario

	1998/99
University student	\$7,526
College student	\$7,118

Source: Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, Student Support Branch

Higher debt loads and increased demand for student loans are predicted for the future as both enrollment and tuition fees for higher education continue to increase. The annual Ontario tuition fees for undergraduate arts programs increased by 134% to \$3,872 in 1999-00, from \$1,653 in 1990-91¹⁸. High debt loads may put pressure on youth to take any job to fulfill re-payment obligations, possibly creating underemployment, frustration and pessimism.

¹⁵ Toronto District School Board, June 1999, *The 1997 Every Secondary Student Survey: Detailed Findings*. Students of low social economic status, Portuguese, foreign-born Black and Latin American backgrounds were also underrepresented in advanced level programs.

¹⁶ Statistics provided by Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, Student Support Branch.

¹⁷ Statistics Canada, *The Daily*, Friday, July 30, 1999.

¹⁸ Toronto Star, August 26, 1999. "Ontario students face largest fee hike" p. A9.



INCOME SUPPORT PROGRAMS

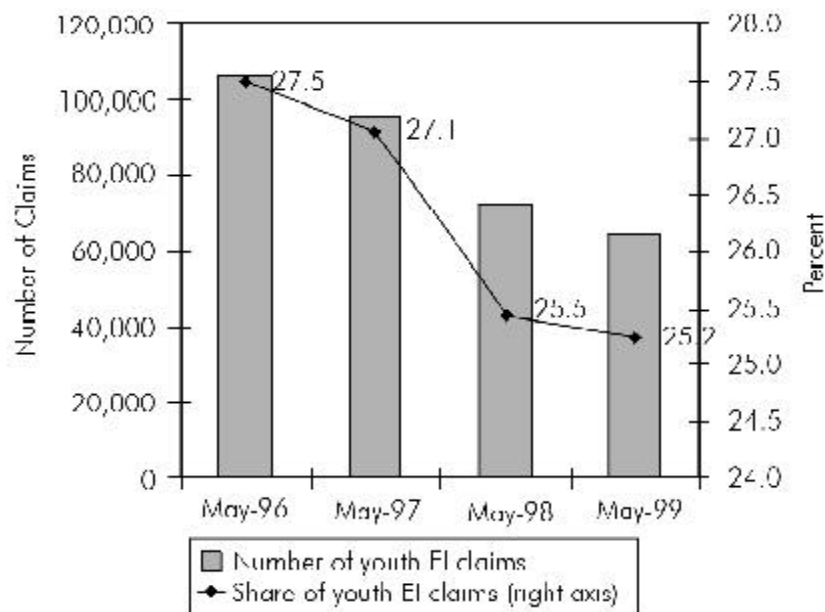
**LEGISLATIVE REFORMS TO THE
EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE
SYSTEM IN 1996 HAVE HAD A
NEGATIVE EFFECT ON YOUTH.**

In times of need, youth may require financial assistance from government income support programs. The following section examines the eligibility of youth for Employment Insurance (EI) and Social Assistance in Ontario.

Youth and EI¹⁹

Legislative reforms to the employment insurance system in 1996 have had a negative effect on youth. In May 1999, youth (15-29 years old) represented almost half - 49% - of the unemployed, but made up only approximately 25% of EI claims. While the number of EI claims in general decreased between 1996 and 1999, the decline in youth claims is slightly higher, 40% compared to 34% overall.

*Number and Share of Youth (15-29 years)
Employment Insurance Claimants - Ontario*



¹⁹ Source of data: Human Resources Development Canada.

**Number and Share of Youth (15-29 years old) Employment
Insurance Claimants - Ontario**

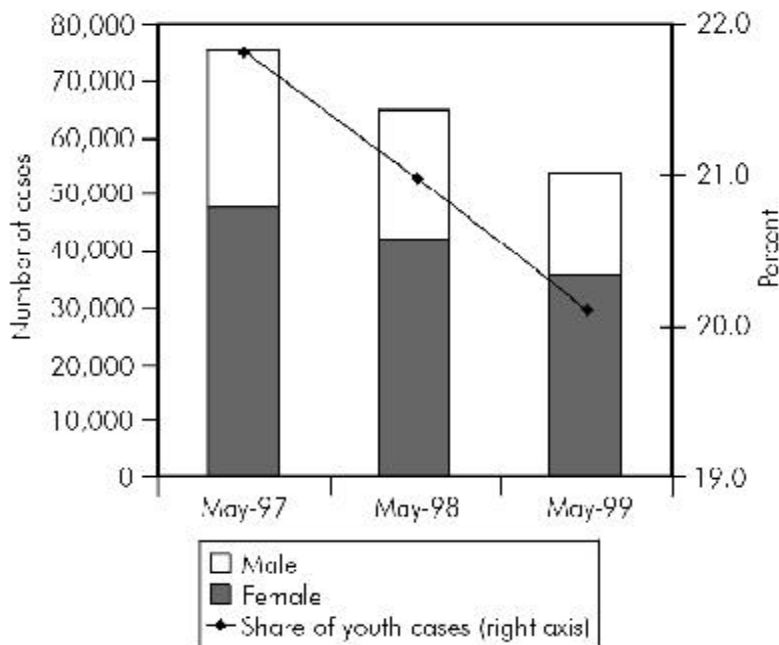
	Number of youth (15-29) claims	Total number of claims (all ages)	Percent of youth claims
May			
1996	106,300	386,700	27
1997	95,100	351,200	27
1998	72,500	284,700	25
1999	64,100	254,000	25

Source: Human Resources Development Canada

Youth and Social Assistance - Ontario Works^{20 21}

The number of youth in Ontario receiving social assistance²² has decreased since the mid-1990s. In just two years, between May 1997 and 1999, the number of youth cases decreased by almost 30%, while the decrease for all cases over the same period was only 23%. The youth proportion of the welfare caseload also decreased 2 percentage points to 20% in the same period. The share of the unemployed Ontario youth population receiving social assistance dropped from approximately 49% in May 1997 to 31% in May 1999.

Youth (15-24) on Social Assistance - Ontario Works



²⁰ Source of data: Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services.

²¹ For further discussion, see briefing note "Ontario Youth and Social Assistance" prepared by Ontario Association of Youth Employment Centres, January 2000.

²² The data reflects the number of youth as primary clients or cases; it does not include youth who are dependents of OW or Ontario Disability Support Program recipients.



Ontario Works Caseload

	Number of youth cases (15-24)	Number of cases (all ages)	Percent of youth cases
May			
1997	75,000	345,000	22
1998	65,000	308,000	21
1999	54,000	267,000	20

Source: Ministry of Community and Social Services

Interpretation of Decline in Youth Welfare Caseload

Youth who leave welfare may have found jobs, hopefully jobs that are long-term and pay a decent wage. The decline in the number of welfare cases may also reflect changes in policy and regulations, which restricted eligibility for social assistance and increased obligations for those receiving benefits, particularly for youth. Sixteen and seventeen year olds can only receive assistance through a trustee or guardian and the benefits for youth living with parents can be drastically reduced or denied²³.

Implications for Youth without Income or with Low Income

Consequences for youth who do not qualify for either EI or welfare may prove disastrous. Youth who do not qualify in their own right for benefits may be forced to stay at home; a solution which is not always adequate, especially if the family environment is violent and otherwise unsafe. Street life is an obviously unacceptable option, but youth are among the groups at highest risk of homelessness according to a Toronto report²⁴. The insufficient level of income provided by welfare²⁵ may be an incentive to take any work that is available, even low-paying, contingent work with substandard work conditions.

THE INSUFFICIENT LEVEL OF INCOME PROVIDED BY WELFARE²⁵ MAY BE AN INCENTIVE TO TAKE ANY WORK THAT IS AVAILABLE, EVEN LOW-PAYING, CONTINGENT WORK WITH SUBSTANDARD WORK CONDITIONS.

Job searching is an expensive activity.

Transportation, telephone, faxing, résumé production and mailing costs need to be covered. The longer job seekers spend not working, the harder it is to get work, as experience becomes outdated and network connections cease while finances dwindle. Supports are required to help low-income youth to do their job search and where possible, to assist jobless youth to find work at the beginning of their unemployment period.

²³ Community Social Planning Council of Toronto, April 1999. *Broken Promises*.

²⁴ Mayor's Homelessness Action Task Force, City of Toronto, July 1998. *Breaking the Cycle of Homelessness: Interim Report*.

²⁵ National Council of Welfare, winter 1997-98. *Welfare Incomes 1996*. In Ontario in 1996, a single employable person on welfare receives an income that is \$9,000 below the poverty line or 42% of the poverty line as calculated using low income cut-off of Statistics Canada.



CONCLUSION

There is hope that the predicted economic prosperity in Ontario will translate into opportunities for youth to reach their full potential in the paid labour market. The challenge remains to engage all stakeholders - governments, businesses, educational institutions, community-based employment and social services agencies and young people themselves - in coordinating a comprehensive system of integrated programs and services for youth.

**THE CHALLENGE REMAINS TO
ENGAGE ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN
COORDINATING A
COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF
INTEGRATED PROGRAMS AND
SERVICES FOR YOUTH.**



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

For further assistance on labour market terminology see the Statistics Canada website at <http://www.statcan.ca>.

Employment rate (employment/population ratio)

Number of employed persons expressed as a percentage of the population 15 years of age and over. The employment rate for a particular group (age, sex, etc.) is the number of employed in that group expressed as a percentage of the population.

Full-time employment

Persons who usually work 30 hours or more per week at their main or only job.

Participation rate

Total labour force expressed as a percentage of the population aged 15 years and over. The participation rate for a particular group (age, sex, etc.) is the labour force in that group expressed as a percentage of the population for that group.

Part-time employment

Persons who usually work less than 30 hours per week at their main or only job.

Part-time rate or incidence of part-time work

Number of employed persons working part-time as a percentage of the employed population.

Self-employed

Working owners of an incorporated or unincorporated business, farm or professional practice with or without employees or unpaid family members; those that work on a farm or business owned and operated by a family member living in the same dwelling.

Unemployment rate

Number of unemployed persons expressed as a percentage of the labour force. The unemployment rate for a particular group (age, sex, etc.) is the number of unemployed in that group expressed as a percentage of the labour force for that group.



APPENDIX

Youth Participation Rate by Age (Both Sexes) - Ontario

Age	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
15-19	64.6	63.3	59.2	56.3	53.4	51.1	50.4	49.8	49.6	50.1	52.5
20-24	83.1	81.5	80.0	79.4	77.5	76.2	75.6	76.3	76.1	75.7	77.6
25-29	87.8	87.4	87.0	85.9	84.6	84.5	84.2	84.5	84.6	86.2	86.6

Participation Rate by Age and Sex - Ontario

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Adult 15+ Both Sexes	68.8	68.7	68.1	67.1	67	66.3	66.1	66.1	66.3	66.6	66.9
Both Sexes 15-24	74.5	72.9	70.2	68.5	66.1	64.2	63.4	63.4	63	62.9	65
Males 15-24	76.5	75.1	71.2	69.3	67.4	65.1	63.8	64.1	65	63.6	65.8
Females 15-24	72.4	70.7	69.1	67.8	64.8	63.3	62.6	62.6	61	62.2	64.2

Incidence of Part-Time Work by Age and Sex – Ontario

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Adult 25+ Both Sexes	11.6	11.9	12.8	13.1	13.7	13.3	13	13.7	13.8	13.4	12.9
Both Sexes 15-24	37	39.6	44.4	46	50.9	49.8	50.7	50.7	50.6	49.4	47.1
Males 15-24	32.9	36.1	39.6	42.1	46.6	45.1	45.3	43.2	43.5	42	40.3
Females 15-24	41.6	43.3	49	49.8	55.1	54.4	56.1	58.4	58.4	56.9	54.3

Adult / Youth Unemployment Rate (Both Sexes) - Ontario

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Youth 15-24	7.7	10	15	17.4	17.5	15.5	14.6	14.9	16.4	14.4	13.1
All Ages 15+	5.1	6.2	9.5	10.7	10.9	9.6	8.7	9	8.4	7.2	6.3
Adults 25+	4.4	5.2	8.3	9.2	9.5	8.4	7.5	7.9	6.9	5.8	5

Youth (15-24) Unemployment Rate by Sex - Ontario

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Both	7.7	10	15	17.4	17.5	15.5	14.6	14.9	16.4	14.4	13.1
Male	8.4	10.9	17.9	20.2	20.5	17.6	16.6	16.8	16.7	15.8	14
Female	6.9	9	11.9	14.4	14.3	13.3	12.5	12.9	16	12.9	12.2

Youth Unemployment Rate by Age - Ontario

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
15-19	9.5	11.8	15.3	19.5	19.2	18.1	18.1	19.2	21.4	19.1	17.7
20-24	6.5	8.7	14.7	16.1	16.4	13.9	12.4	12.1	13.2	11.3	10
25-29	6	7.3	11.3	11.8	12.5	10.5	9.9	10	8.8	7.3	6

The Ontario Association of Youth Employment Centres (OAYEC) is a non-profit, umbrella organization that offers communication, research, program development and support services to 60 member agencies providing employment services to youth in Ontario.

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