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PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT IN RURAL CANADA

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HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ **Rural areas have a higher incidence of part-time employment.**
- ◆ **The average annual rate of part-time job growth in rural Canada was higher between 1987 and 1997 than between 1997 and 1999.**
- ◆ **The predominantly rural provinces have the highest incidence of part-time employment in their rural areas.**
- ◆ **The majority of part-time employment growth in rural areas is occurring in predominantly urban provinces.**

Introduction

One indicator of labour market performance is the pattern of part-time employment (Box 1). In order to assess how rural areas of Canada are performing in this regard, this bulletin reviews rural-urban differences in the share of employment that is part-time. The work goes on to examine provincial differences in the rural and urban share of part-time employment.

Economic Background

Any discussion of labour market performance should take account of the overall economic context. The period 1987 to 1999 was characterized by an overall pattern of increasing economic globalization. In the climate of intensified business competition that resulted, individual enterprises sought to reduce their labour costs and increase their workforce flexibility in order to remain competitive. Part-time employment was encouraged in two major ways. First, greater workforce efficiency and flexibility was often achieved by decreasing the firms' core full-time, permanent workers and hiring more workers on a part-time basis. The schedule of part-time employees could be better matched to fluctuations in business activities thus minimizing marginal labour costs (Schellenberg, 1997). Second, there was a rise in



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Note of appreciation

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the share of service sector jobs caused not only by the relative effect of the loss of manufacturing jobs (both to lower-wage economies and to increasing automation) but also by an absolute increase in demand for consumer and business services. Examples of consumer services included the commoditization of goods formerly produced at home (e.g. breakfast at McDonald's), while specialized business services included legal advice, advertising and accounting that were becoming increasingly important to businesses (Tilly, 1991).

Moreover, during the course of the study period, Canada passed through several different phases of the economic cycle. The late 1980s were a period of economic expansion. In

contrast, the 1990 to 1992 period saw an economic recession. Permanent lay-offs in this recession were concentrated in the manufacturing and construction sectors (Rutherford, 1996). The recession acted to accelerate the ongoing creation of part-time employment. The middle years of the 1990s were a period of recovery, but, as is typical in the early period of a recovery, the improvement in economic activity was not fully matched by an increase in employment. Employers tended to raise production by increasing the hours of existing employees rather than adding to their work forces. By the late 1990s, the economy had entered a more mature phase of economic expansion and was generating jobs at a faster pace.

Definitions and data

This paper uses Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey (LFS) data from 1987 to 1999¹. It is important to note that the LFS polls the number of individuals employed rather than the number of jobs. An individual may have more than one job but only the 'main' job is identified. Part-time work that represents an individual's second job is excluded and, as a result, the incidence of part-time employment is probably higher than reported here.

The LFS does not include data from the Yukon, Northwest Territories or Nunavut. In addition, throughout this work only individuals from 25 to 64 years of age were selected in order to exclude the majority of students and semi-retired individuals who tend to have inordinately high rates of part-time employment. The rural and small town (RST) definition of rural (Box 1) is used. It must be noted that the data from 1995 are excluded from rate and trend calculations because of a change in LFS geography that was initiated at this time (Box 2).

Box 1

Definitions

Rural and small town (RST) areas: refers to the population living outside Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) and Census Agglomerations (CAs). A CMA has an urban core of 100,000 or more and a CA has an urban core of 10,000 to 99,999. CMAs and CAs include all neighbouring municipalities where 50 percent or more of the workforce commutes into the urban core. Thus, RST areas represent the non-CMA and non-CA population.

Larger urban centres (LUCs): refers to the population living in Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) and Census Agglomerations (CAs).

Part-time employment: consists of persons who usually work less than 30 hours per week at their main or only job.

Full-time employment: consists of persons who usually work 30 hours or more per week at their main or only job.

¹ For more details of the definitions and survey methodology used by the LFS refer to: Statistics Canada. (2000) Guide to the Labour Force Survey. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 71-543-GIE.

Box 2

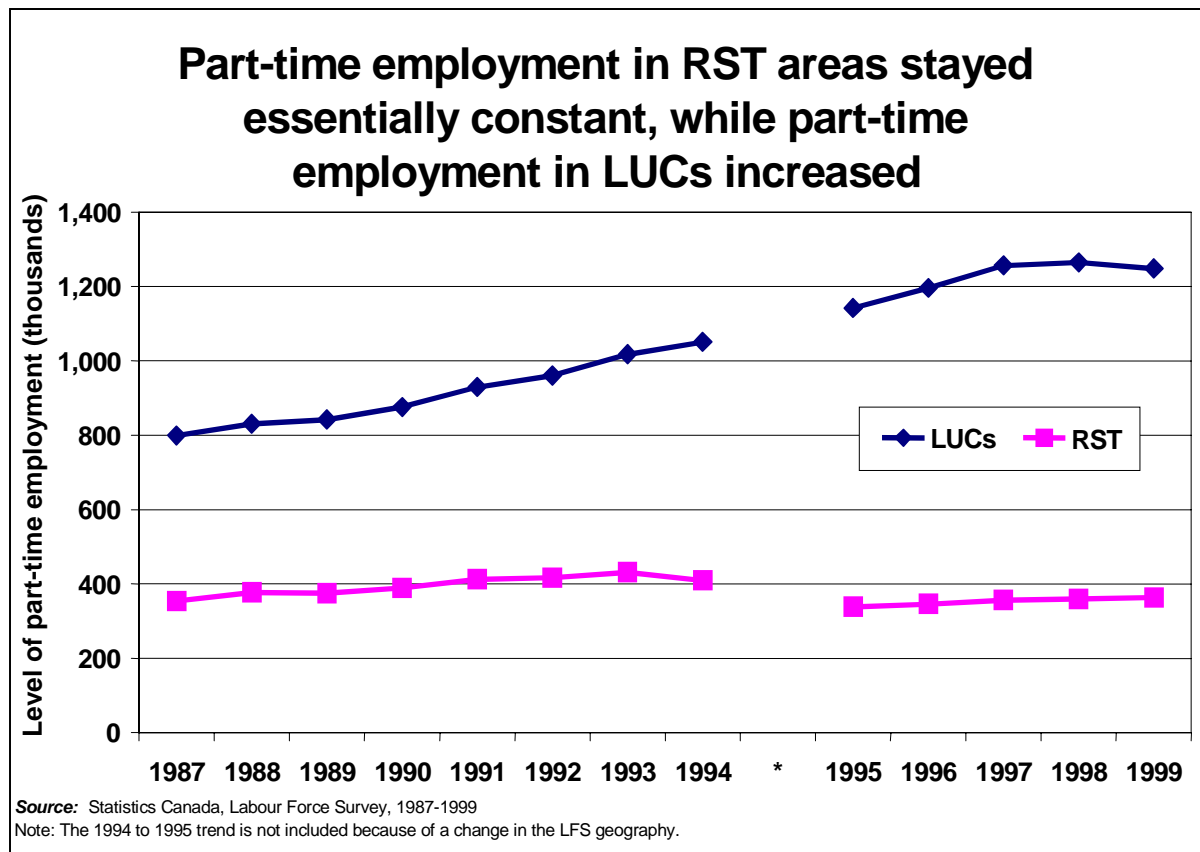
Census Agglomeration Reclassification

In 1995, the Labour Force Survey reclassified some census subdivisions into census agglomerations due to the extension of commuting zones surrounding CAs. Also, some towns reached the population threshold of 10,000 and were reclassified as CAs. This reclassification increased population and subsequent employment levels in LUCs and reduced the population and employment levels within RST areas. As a result, the 1994 to 1995 percent change is excluded from any calculations.

Part-time employment levels

Figure 1 shows the absolute level of part-time employment in RST areas and LUCs from 1987 to 1999. It can be seen that the level of part-time employment generally rose in LUCs but remained essentially constant in RST areas.

Figure 1



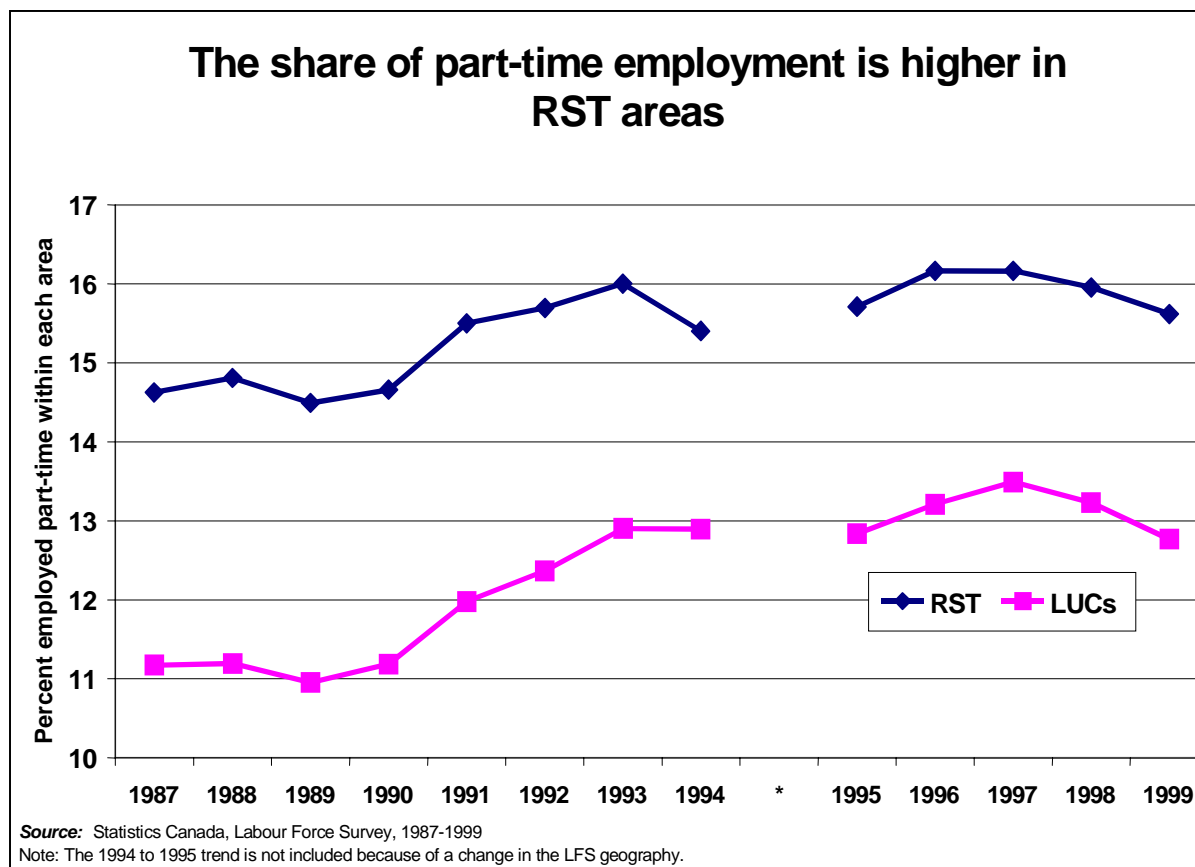
By 1999, 12.1 million individuals between the ages of 25 and 64 were employed in Canada (see the appendix tables for details of all data used in this paper). The large majority of employment was full-time with 10.5 million Canadians regularly working more than 30 hours per week. In contrast, only 1.6 million individuals were employed part-time, 364 thousand of which were resident in RST areas.

The contrast between RST areas and LUCs in the change in level of part-time employment is interesting. The higher rate of increase in LUCs may indicate that the employment patterns associated with globalization had a greater impact in LUCs.

Share of employment that is part-time

Figure 2 shows the share of part-time employment in RST areas and LUCs. While the RST rate remained higher throughout the study period, the differential declined (from a difference of 3.5 percentage points in 1987 to under 3 percentage points in 1999). This decline was mainly attributable to a strong rise in the LUC rate between 1989 and 1997. Both areas exhibited a decline in the part-time employment share from 1997 to 1999.

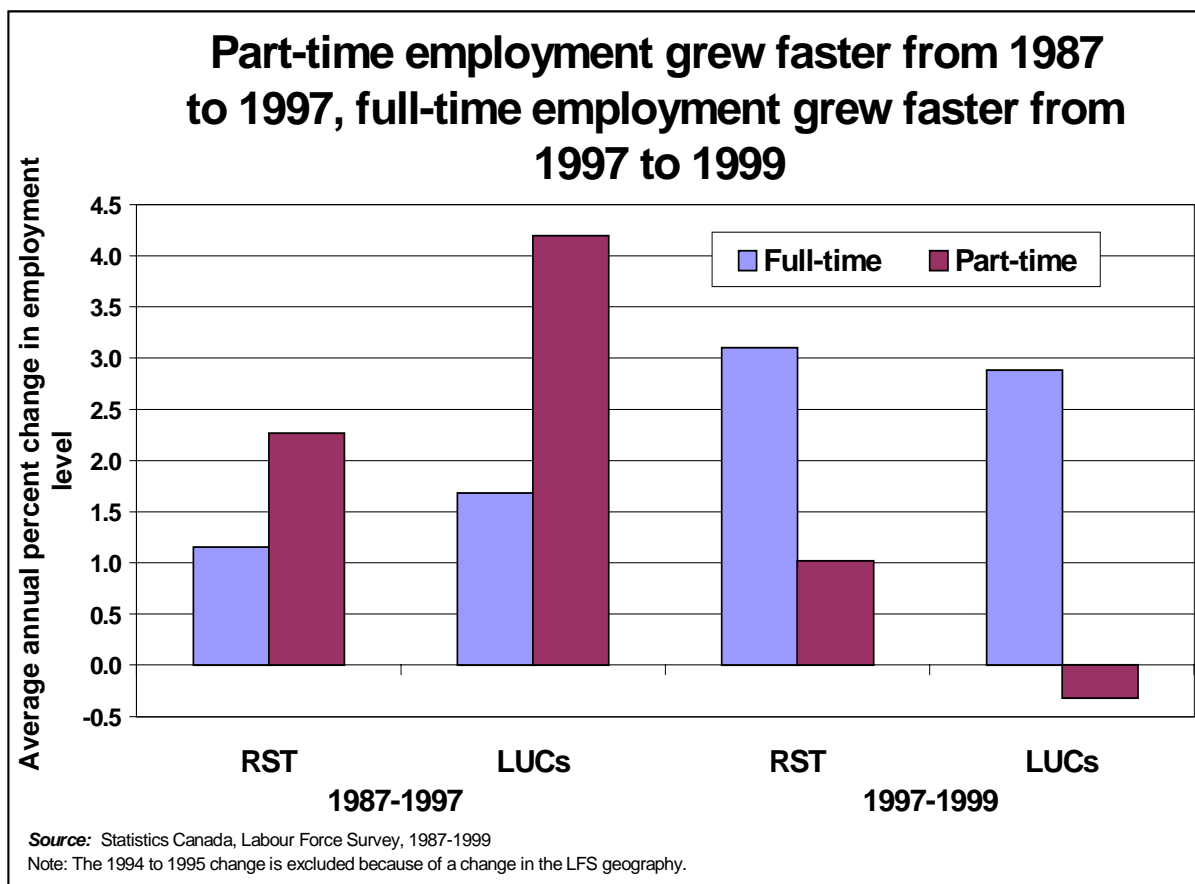
Figure 2



In Figure 3, the average annual percent change in the absolute level of part-time employment is divided into two separate periods. From 1987 to 1997, part-time employment in RST areas increased at an annual average rate of 2.3 percent, while full-time positions only increased by 1.2 percent annually. In LUCs, the average annual increase in part-time work was 4.2 percent, while full-time employment only increased by 1.7 percent.

Much of the 1987 to 1997 period was a time of economic recession and the following “jobless recovery”. These economic conditions may have acted to increase the impact of globalization. It is likely that a large portion of this part-time growth was caused by an increase in employment in the service sector. This trend is exemplified by the “McJobs” phenomenon, in which (principally) low wage part-time jobs in the service sector are generated in place of full-time employment (often in the manufacturing sector). The difference in rates between RST areas and LUCs suggests that this phenomenon manifested itself more strongly in LUCs.

Figure 3



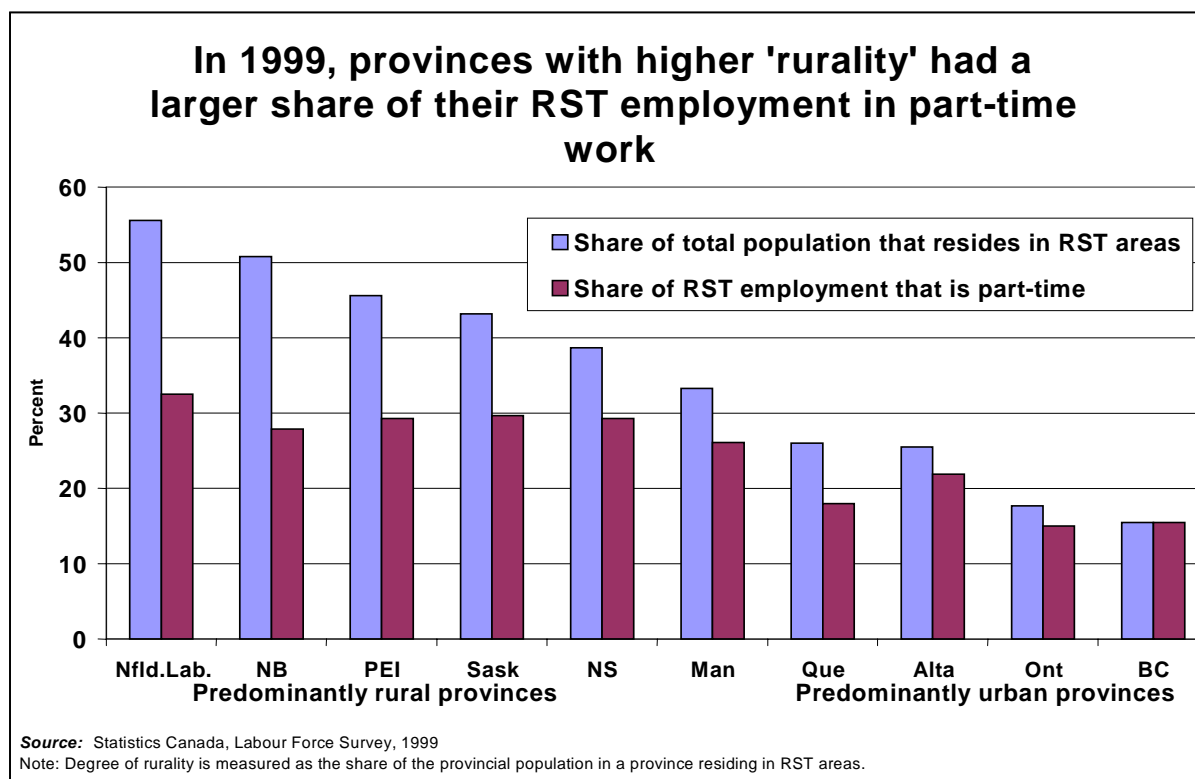
From 1997 to 1999, part-time employment growth slowed, while full-time employment growth increased. Part-time employment in RST areas increased at an annual average of only 1 percent, down from 2.3 percent in the earlier period, while full-time employment increased to 3.2 percent annually from 1.6 percent. This pattern was more pronounced in

LUCs. The absolute level of part-time employment actually decreased at an annual average of 0.3 percent, down from an increase of 4.2 percent, while full-time employment increased by 3.0 percent annually, up from 1.7 percent. In times of economic expansion, as exemplified by the 1997 to 1999 period, the shift towards part-time employment growth associated with globalization is temporarily slowed. There is a tendency for part-time jobs to be replaced by full-time employment as the priority of businesses shift from trimming labour costs to increasing production. Once again, this employment pattern is more clearly seen in LUCs.

Provincial variation

As has been seen, from 1987 to 1999, RST areas of Canada consistently had a higher proportion of part-time employment. This intensity of rural part-time employment is reflected in provincial data. In 1999, the provinces that had the highest degree of rurality² also had the highest share of part-time employment in their RST areas (Figure 4). Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia had the highest incidence of part-time employment in RST areas. In contrast, the provinces with the lowest degree of rurality had the lowest incidence of part-time employment in RST areas. These included British Columbia, Ontario, Alberta, Quebec and Manitoba.

Figure 4



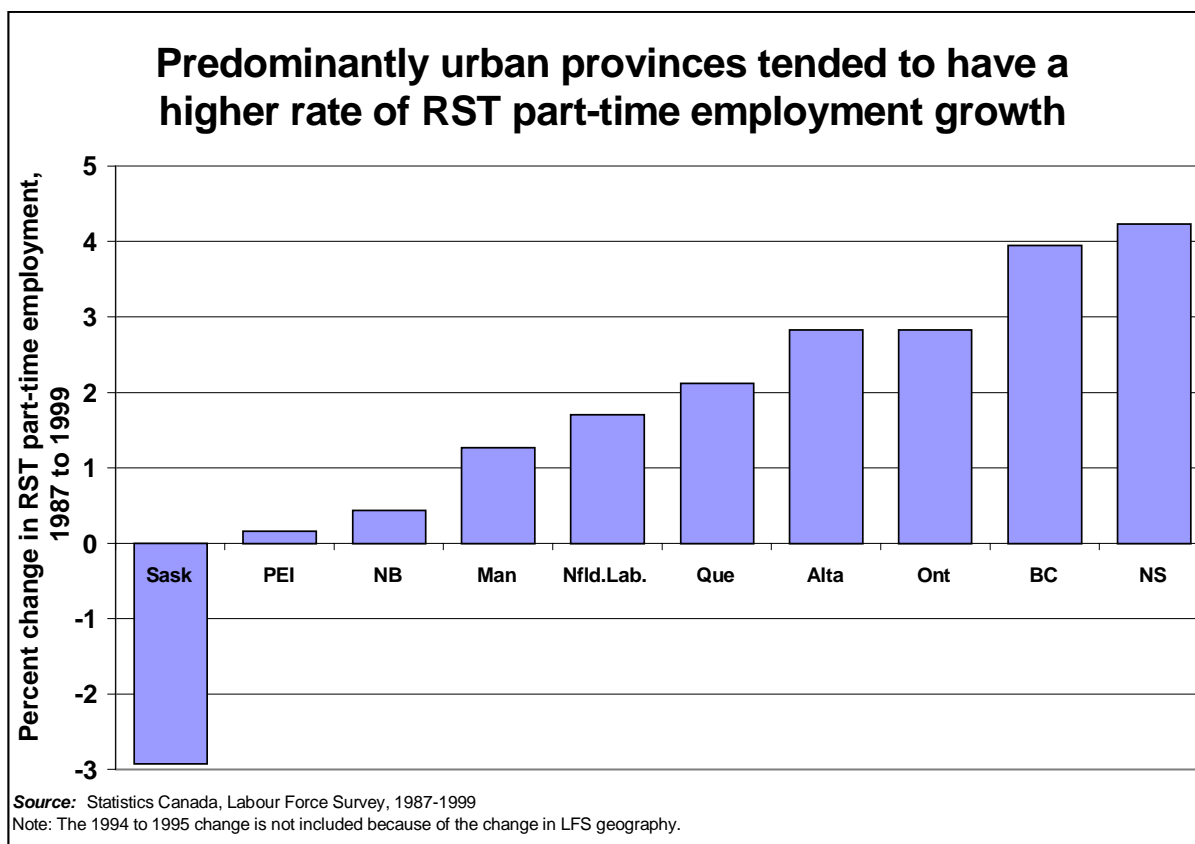
² 'Rurality' is defined as the percent of the provincial population residing in RST areas.

Part-time job growth by province

Despite the fact that part-time employment was most intensive in RST areas in predominantly rural provinces, predominantly urban provinces had a higher rate of growth in RST part-time employment (Figure 5). The predominantly rural provinces of Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Manitoba and Newfoundland and Labrador all had an average annual increase of less than two percent in their RST areas, while RST Saskatchewan actually decreased at an average annual rate of 2.9 percent.

On the other hand, British Columbia, Ontario, Alberta and Quebec had average increases in excess of 2 percent annually in their RST areas. Nova Scotia was an exception to this overall pattern. Nova Scotia is a predominantly rural province but its RST part-time workforce had an average annual increase of 4.2 percent, the highest in Canada.

Figure 5



Summary

RST areas have a higher share of part-time employment. Part-time employment grew rapidly in RST areas from 1987 to 1997 and stabilized from 1997 to 1999. Full-time employment increased substantially in the latter period.

In RST areas, the predominantly rural provinces (Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador and Saskatchewan) had the highest incidence of part-time employment in 1999. However, between 1987 and 1999, the majority of part-time employment growth in RST areas occurred in predominantly urban provinces.

This paper has highlighted the differences between RST areas and LUCs in terms of part-time employment. However, it should not be assumed that RST areas in Canada are homogeneous in this regard. It is likely that there are variations in part-time employment levels and rates within RST areas, particularly between rural areas closer to urban centres and those that are more remote. Future research into intra-rural differences of part-time employment patterns would be valuable.

Justin Curto is a student at the University of Waterloo and Neil Rothwell is an analyst in the Research and Rural Data Section, Agriculture Division, Statistics Canada. Justin Curto contributed to this paper during a co-op work term at Statistics Canada.

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Appendices

Table A1

Employment Trends in Canada – Population Aged 25 to 64, 1987 to 1999

Region		1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	Change 1987 to 1999*
		(.000)													
Canada	Total	9,579.6	9,976.2	10,279.5	10,491.9	10,424.4	10,430.4	10,583.9	10,809.1	11,053.2	11,192.6	11,524.4	11,820.6	12,111.2	2,531.6
	Part-time	1,154.2	1,209.0	1,217.5	1,266.0	1,342.6	1,378.5	1,449.5	1,460.9	1,481.1	1,541.8	1,613.8	1,625.4	1,612.9	458.7
	Full-time	8,425.4	8,767.2	9,062.0	9,225.9	9,081.8	9,051.9	9,134.4	9,348.2	9,572.1	9,650.8	9,910.6	10,195.2	10,498.3	2,072.9
RST	Total	2,425.3	2,551.7	2,590.2	2,657.2	2,665.5	2,660.3	2,696.0	2,663.7	2,158.8	2,141.4	2,208.1	2,257.7	2,332.1	-93.2
	Part-time	354.8	377.9	375.4	389.6	413.2	417.6	431.5	410.4	339.2	346.2	357.0	360.2	364.3	9.5
	Full-time	2,070.5	2,173.7	2,214.8	2,267.6	2,252.3	2,242.7	2,264.5	2,253.3	1,819.6	1,795.2	1,851.1	1,897.4	1,967.8	-102.7
LUCs	Total	7,154.3	7,424.6	7,689.3	7,834.7	7,758.9	7,770.1	7,887.9	8,145.4	8,894.4	9,051.2	9,316.3	9,563.0	9,779.1	2,624.8
	Part-time	799.4	831.1	842.1	876.5	929.4	960.8	1,018.0	1,050.5	1,141.9	1,195.7	1,256.7	1,265.2	1,248.6	449.2
	Full-time	6,354.9	6,593.5	6,847.2	6,958.2	6,829.5	6,809.2	6,869.9	7,094.9	7,752.5	7,855.6	8,059.5	8,297.7	8,530.5	2,175.6

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1987 – 1999

LUCs refers to CMAs and CAs. RST refers to those areas outside of CMA/CAs.

* A 1995 change in LFS geography has impacted these results.

Table A2

Regional Shares of Employment in Canada – Population Aged 25 to 64, 1987 to 1999

Region		1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	Percentage point change, 1987 to 1999
		Percent of total employment													
RST	Part-time	14.6	14.8	14.5	14.7	15.5	15.7	16.0	15.4	15.7	16.2	16.2	16.0	15.6	1.0
	Full-time	85.4	85.2	85.5	85.3	84.5	84.3	84.0	84.6	84.3	83.8	83.8	84.0	84.4	-1.0
LUCs	Part-time	11.2	11.2	11.0	11.2	12.0	12.4	12.9	12.9	12.8	13.2	13.5	13.2	12.8	1.6
	Full-time	88.8	88.8	89.0	88.8	88.0	87.6	87.1	87.1	87.2	86.8	86.5	86.8	87.2	-1.6

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1987 – 1999

LUCs refers to CMAs and CAs. RST refers to those areas outside of CMA/CAs.

A 1995 change in LFS geography has impacted these results.

Table A3

Average Annual Rates of Employment Change in Canada – Population Aged 25 to 64, 1987 to 1999

Region		1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	Annual average percent change, 1987 to 1999*
		Year-over-year percent change													
Canada	Total		4.1	3.0	2.1	-0.6	0.1	1.5	2.1	*	1.3	3.0	2.6	2.5	2.0
	Part-time		4.7	0.7	4.0	6.1	2.7	5.2	0.8	*	4.1	4.7	0.7	-0.8	3.0
	Full-time		4.1	3.4	1.8	-1.6	-0.3	0.9	2.3	*	0.8	2.7	2.9	3.0	1.8
RST	Total		5.2	1.5	2.6	0.3	-0.2	1.3	-1.2	*	-0.8	3.1	2.2	3.3	1.6
	Part-time		6.5	-0.7	3.8	6.1	1.1	3.3	-4.9	*	2.1	3.1	0.9	1.1	2.0
	Full-time		5.0	1.9	2.4	-0.7	-0.4	1.0	-0.5	*	-1.3	3.1	2.5	3.7	1.5
LUCs	Total		3.8	3.6	1.9	-1.0	0.1	1.5	3.3	*	1.8	2.9	2.6	2.3	2.1
	Part-time		4.0	1.3	4.1	6.0	3.4	6.0	3.2	*	4.7	5.1	0.7	-1.3	3.4
	Full-time		3.8	3.8	1.6	-1.8	-0.3	0.9	3.3	*	1.3	2.6	3.0	2.8	1.9

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1987 – 1999

LUCs refers to CMAs and CAs. RST refers to those areas outside of CMA/CAs.

* The 1994 to 1995 change is not included because of a change in LFS geography.

Table A4

**RST Employment Patterns by Province –
Population Aged 25 to 64, 1987 to 1999**

Province	RST employment	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	Annual average percent change in part-time employment, 1987 to 1999 *
Newfoundland and Labrador		(,000)													
	Total	21.1	20.5	22.1	21.8	24.4	23.3	24.9	23.9	27.9	26.3	31.1	30	29.5	
	Part-time	7.1	7.3	7.5	7.4	8.2	7.7	8.2	7.7	9	8.2	10.1	9.5	9.6	1.7
	Full-time	14	13.2	14.6	14.4	16.2	15.6	16.7	16.2	18.9	18.1	21	20.5	19.9	
	Part-time share	33.6	35.6	33.9	33.9	33.6	33.0	32.9	32.2	32.3	31.2	32.5	31.7	32.5	
Prince Edward Island		(,000)													
	Total	7	7.1	7	7.6	8.1	7.3	8.3	7.3	8	8.3	8	8.4	7.5	
	Part-time	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.7	2.4	2.8	2.3	2.4	2.6	2.3	2.4	2.2	0.2
	Full-time	4.8	4.8	4.7	5.1	5.4	4.9	5.5	5	5.6	5.7	5.7	6	5.3	
	Part-time share	31.4	32.4	32.9	32.9	33.3	32.9	33.7	31.5	30.0	31.3	28.8	28.6	29.3	
Nova Scotia		(,000)													
	Total	45.8	46.1	48.6	49.7	54	56.5	56.8	58.9	62.6	62.8	70.6	69.1	68.4	
	Part-time	11.9	12.3	13.1	13.7	14.9	16.3	15.9	15.8	17.1	17.5	19.9	19.8	20.1	4.2
	Full-time	33.9	33.8	35.5	36	39.1	40.2	40.9	43.1	45.5	45.3	50.7	49.3	48.3	
	Part-time share	26.0	26.7	27.0	27.6	27.6	28.8	28.0	26.8	27.3	27.9	28.2	28.7	29.4	
New Brunswick		(,000)													
	Total	34.6	38.4	40.4	40.4	40.2	40.2	41.5	41.5	44.4	45	45.9	43.3	45.6	
	Part-time	10.3	11.4	12.6	12	12.2	11.2	11.6	11	13.2	12.8	12.9	12.1	12.7	0.4
	Full-time	24.3	27	27.8	28.4	28	29	29.9	30.5	31.2	32.2	33	31.2	32.9	
	Part-time share	29.8	29.7	31.2	29.7	30.3	27.9	28.0	26.5	29.7	28.4	28.1	27.9	27.9	
Quebec		(,000)													
	Total	330.6	352.9	348.4	364.8	394.9	389.9	408.2	385.5	397.2	420.3	435.2	434.2	419.2	
	Part-time	67.4	78.6	73.5	77.3	82.1	78.9	85.1	75.1	68.8	74.3	76.2	76	75.5	2.1
	Full-time	263.2	274.3	274.9	287.5	312.8	311	323.1	310.4	328.4	346	359	358.2	343.7	
	Part-time share	20.4	22.3	21.1	21.2	20.8	20.2	20.8	19.5	17.3	17.7	17.5	17.5	18.0	
Ontario		(,000)													
	Total	511.1	546.2	545.1	570.4	604.7	623.8	664	650.5	621.7	666.6	691.3	696.7	695.6	
	Part-time	97.2	102.3	99.6	105.6	118.2	120.3	123.7	117.2	93.1	99.9	101.5	102.2	104.1	2.8
	Full-time	413.9	443.9	445.5	464.8	486.5	503.5	540.3	533.3	528.6	566.7	589.8	594.5	591.5	
	Part-time share	19.0	18.7	18.3	18.5	19.5	19.3	18.6	18.0	15.0	15.0	14.7	14.7	15.0	
Manitoba		(,000)													
	Total	79.3	80.2	83.9	89.1	91.5	94.5	94.1	91.5	85.4	89.5	87.1	84.3	87.1	
	Part-time	23.9	24.7	25.6	26.6	26.6	27.2	26.9	25.9	21.6	23	22.8	21.4	22.7	1.3
	Full-time	55.4	55.5	58.3	62.5	64.9	67.3	67.2	65.6	63.8	66.5	64.3	62.9	64.4	
	Part-time share	30.1	30.8	30.5	29.9	29.1	28.8	28.6	28.3	25.3	25.7	26.2	25.4	26.1	
Saskatchewan		(,000)													
	Total	102.1	103.9	103.6	104.8	102.7	105.8	103.8	96.1	94.9	89.1	87	85.9	86	
	Part-time	39.7	40.1	40.7	40.1	38.6	40.3	39	34.6	31.1	28.7	27.8	27	25.5	-2.9
	Full-time	62.4	63.8	62.9	64.7	64.1	65.5	64.8	61.5	63.8	60.4	59.2	58.9	60.5	
	Part-time share	38.9	38.6	39.3	38.3	37.6	38.1	37.6	36.0	32.8	32.2	32.0	31.4	29.7	
Alberta		(,000)													
	Total	176.8	183.8	188.2	191.5	197.1	207	217.5	227.6	213.7	207	215.2	228.6	232.1	
	Part-time	52.8	56.3	57	59.5	60.4	62.5	65.4	68.4	49.1	45.1	44.4	50.4	50.8	2.8
	Full-time	124	127.5	131.2	132	136.7	144.5	152.1	159.2	164.6	161.9	170.8	178.2	181.3	
	Part-time share	29.9	30.6	30.3	31.1	30.6	30.2	30.1	30.1	23.0	21.8	20.6	22.0	21.9	
British Columbia		(,000)													
	Total	200.5	207.9	205	215	238.1	247.2	261.6	288.4	264.4	272.4	298.7	304.7	306.3	
	Part-time	42.3	42.8	43.4	44.7	49.4	50.7	52.9	52.5	33.8	34	39	39.4	41.3	4.0
	Full-time	158.2	165.1	161.6	170.3	188.7	196.5	208.7	235.9	230.6	238.4	259.7	265.3	265	
	Part-time share	21.1	20.6	21.2	20.8	20.7	20.5	20.2	18.2	12.8	12.5	13.1	12.9	13.5	

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1987-1999

* The 1994 to 1995 change is excluded from the calculation because of a change in LFS geography.

Rural and Small Town Canada Analysis Bulletins (Cat. no. 21-006-XIE)

Volume 1

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