

The Daily

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Study: Trends in dropout rates and the labour market outcomes of young dropouts

1990/1991 to 2009/2010

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Dropout rates in 2009/2010 were lower for young women (6.6%) than for young men (10.3%). While rates have declined for both sexes, the rate of decrease was faster for men, resulting in a narrowing of the gap over time.

Rates were lower for young immigrant adults than for their Canadian-born counterparts and higher for Aboriginal youth in this age group compared with non-Aboriginal youth.

During the recent economic downturn in 2008/2009, nearly one out of every four dropouts in the labour market was unable to find a job. Even among those who did find work, their earnings were less than for those with a high school diploma.

Dropout rates falling, but more slowly in recent years

Dropout rates have been falling since 1990/1991 when nearly 340,000 or 16.6% of young people had not completed a high school diploma and were not currently enrolled in school.

The largest declines occurred during the 1990s; by 2000/2001, the rate had dropped to 11.1%. Decreases during the 2000s were more gradual.

By 2009/2010, 8.5% of young people aged 20 to 24 had not completed their high school diploma and were not attending school.

Rates fell in all provinces. The biggest changes occurred in most of the Atlantic provinces, where rates fell from the 15% to 20% range in the early 1990s to 9% to 11% a decade later. Since then, the rates for these provinces have fallen even further.

Newfoundland and Labrador had the most significant change in dropout rates over the past 20 years. Its three-year average rate between 1990 and 1993 was 19.9%, highest in Canada. Between 2007 and 2010, the three-year average had declined to 7.4%, one of the lowest.

Note to readers

The study "Trends in dropout rates and the labour market outcomes of young dropouts" examines trends in high school dropout rates between 1990/1991 and 2009/2010 based on data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). It also analyzes trends in labour market outcomes of dropouts in terms of unemployment rates and median weekly earnings.

National data for both Aboriginal people and immigrants are now available from the LFS, allowing researchers to assess how dropout rates differ between these groups and the rest of the population.

Since the LFS is a sample survey subject to some inherent error, particularly among smaller geographies, provincial and territorial dropout rates are averaged over three-year periods. At the national level, no averaging was used.

Definition: High school dropout rate

Although typical high school graduates will finish their secondary education by the age of 18, some do not, for a variety of reasons. Some return to school, taking advantage of "second chance" opportunities for completing high school that are available across the country. However, by the age of 20 to 24, they typically have decided whether or not to return to complete their high school education. Therefore, dropout rates are commonly calculated using this age group. To estimate dropout rates using a younger group might lead to counting as a "dropout" those only temporarily stopping their schooling.

As a result, the dropout rate is defined as the share of 20 to 24 year-olds who are not attending school and who have not graduated from high school.

The average was lowest in British Columbia at 6.2% between 2007 and 2010.

Dropout rates for individual groups

In 2009/2010, 10.3% of young men and 6.6% of young women had dropped out of high school. These rates were down significantly for both sexes from 1990/1991 when they were 19.2% for young men and 14.0% for young women.

The gap between the sexes narrowed slightly over time, from 5.2 percentage points in 1990/1991 to 3.7 percentage points in 2009/2010. The share of young men dropping out fell faster during this period.

Between 2007 and 2010, the three-year average dropout rate among First Nations people living off-reserve, Métis and Inuit aged 20 to 24 was 22.6%, compared with 8.5% for non-Aboriginal people. Among young off-reserve First Nations people (North American Indians), the dropout rate was 25.8%, and for Métis, 18.9%.

Among immigrant youth aged 20 to 24, the dropout rate in 2009/2010 was 6.2%, compared with 9.1% for the Canadian-born in this age group. Both rates were down slightly from 7.0% for young immigrants and 9.8% for Canadian-born youth in 2006/2007.

Nearly one in four dropouts unemployed during the recent downturn

During the deepest part of the recent economic downturn in 2008/2009, almost one in four dropouts aged 20 to 24 was unable to find work. In addition, the gap between their unemployment rate and that of their counterparts who had completed high school widened.

In 2007/2008, prior to the downturn, the unemployment rate for dropouts was 18.0%. This was more than double the rate of 8.4% among high school graduates aged 20 to 24 who were not enrolled in any educational institution.

By 2008/2009, during the deepest part of the downturn, the unemployment rate for dropouts reached 21.3%. In 2009/2010, into the early recovery, their unemployment rate had increased to 23.2%.

In contrast, the unemployment rates for high school completers who were not in school rose to 10.0% in 2008/2009 and increased to 11.9% in 2009/2010.

Dropouts employed full time in 2009/2010 were working almost one hour more per week than high school graduates who were not in school (39.9 hours versus 39.2 hours). However, they were earning about \$70 less per week on average (\$551 versus \$621).

A second article in the November 2010 issue of *Education Matters: Insights on Education, Learning and Training in Canada*, "A note on high school graduation and school attendance, by age and province, 2009/2010" addresses what appears to be a paradox. That is, in some provinces, high school graduation rates and high school dropout rates both are low, while in others, both rates are high. This article examines differences across provinces in the "typical" age at which students graduate from high school and shows how the share of graduates, continuers and dropouts changes as students age.

The article "Trends in dropout rates and the labour market outcomes of young dropouts" is now available in the the November 2010 issue of *Education Matters: Insights on Education, Learning and Training in Canada*, Vol. 7, no. 4 (81-004-X, free). In *Browse by subject*, click on *Education, training and learning*, and then *Education Matters* under *Featured Products* on the right.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-800-307-3382; 613-951-7608; fax: 613-951-9040; educationstats@statcan.gc.ca), Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics Division. ■

Farm product prices

September 2010

Prices received by farmers in September for grains, oilseeds, specialty crops, potatoes, cattle, hogs, poultry, eggs and dairy products are now available.

The September Saskatchewan non-board wheat price was \$146.37 per metric tonne, up 2.4% from August and up 4.2% from September 2009 when the price was \$140.41.

The Ontario hogs price in September was \$76.59 per hundredweight, down 0.2% from August but up 60.6% from September 2009 when it stood at \$47.68.

Farm commodity prices are now available on CANSIM. The prices of over 35 commodities are available by province, some series going back 20 years.

Available on CANSIM: table 002-0043.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3436.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Nickeisha Patterson (613-951-3249; fax: 613-951-3868; nickeisha.patterson@statcan.gc.ca), Agriculture Division. ■

Sawmills

August 2010

Lumber production by sawmills increased 0.1% from July to 4 395.5 thousand cubic metres in August. Compared with the same month in 2009, lumber production increased 23.0%.

Sawmills shipped 4 242.0 thousand cubic metres of lumber in August, down 6.7% from July.

Available on CANSIM: table 303-0009.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2134.

The August 2010 issue of *Sawmills*, Vol. 64, no. 8 (35-003-X, free), is now available from the *Key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

To order data, obtain more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the dissemination officer (toll-free 1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497; manufact@statcan.gc.ca), Manufacturing and Energy Division. ■

Canadian Foreign Post Indexes

November 2010

Data on Canadian foreign post indexes are now available for November.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2322.

The November 2010 issue of *Canadian Foreign Post Indexes* (62-013-X, free) is now available from the *Key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

For more information, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-866-230-2248; 613-951-9606; prices-prix@statcan.gc.ca). To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Claudio Perez (613-951-1733; claudio.perez@statcan.gc.ca), Consumer Prices Division. ■

Asphalt roofing

September 2010

Data on asphalt roofing are now available for September. Revised data for November and December 2009 are also available.

Available on CANSIM: table 303-0052.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2123.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the dissemination officer (toll-free 1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497; manufact@statcan.gc.ca), Manufacturing and Energy Division. ■

New products and studies

Sawmills, August 2010, Vol. 64, no. 8
Catalogue number **35-003-X** (PDF, free; HTML, free)

Canadian Foreign Post Indexes, November 2010
Catalogue number **62-013-X** (HTML, free)

Employment, Earnings and Hours, August 2010,
Vol. 88, no. 8
Catalogue number **72-002-X** (PDF, free; HTML, free)

**Education Matters: Insights on Education, Learning
and Training in Canada**, Vol. 7, no. 4
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