



Report summary

**How do Canadian youth view careers in
the trades?**

2026



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Why this study

Canada's workforce is getting older, and many trades jobs are physically demanding. This raises concern that there will not be enough new trades workers in the future. To prepare, we need to know how young people feel about trades careers.

What we did

We used data from the Youth Attitudes toward the Trades questionnaire. This questionnaire was part of the Programme for the International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022. This survey asked 15-year-old students about their plans, their views, and the resources they use to learn about the trades. Using this information, we also looked at how student characteristics shaped results.

What we found

Only 13% of high school students plan to work in the trades, but about one-third say they might consider it.

Certain groups are more likely to plan for a trades career. These include boys, Indigenous students, non-immigrant students, students from lower-income families, and students who struggle with reading or math. These groups are also more likely to say their parents encourage them to pursue the trades.

When students look for information about trades careers, they most often talk to a family member. They also commonly search online or speak with people who work in the trades.

What it means

Many trades workers in Canada are getting older and will retire soon. This means we will continue to need new workers to take their place. Although only 13% of 15-year-olds say they plan to work in the trades, a third of students said they would consider it. Therefore, it's important to ensure that student interest in the trades remains alive and resources are easily available to them.



Sharing more information on the trades with students may help more of them choose these jobs. The Government also has support for those that want to enter the trades. Currently there is about \$1 billion annually in apprenticeship support. This money goes toward making trades training more affordable through loans, grants and other benefits.

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