

Media Contacts:

Ana Curic 613.858.2622 | [ana@mapleleafstrategies.com](mailto:ana@mapleleafstrategies.com)

Sheena Karami 405.717.5966 | [sheena.karami@expresspros.com](mailto:sheena.karami@expresspros.com)

@ExpressPros  
#CanadaEmployed

[ExpressPros.com/CanadaEmployed](https://ExpressPros.com/CanadaEmployed)

---

## **Blue Collar Workers: Job and Life Satisfaction High; But Trust in Elected Officials Low**

### **New Labour Day Poll Reveals State of Blue Collar Workers in Canada**

**85% Satisfied with Their Job; 74% Believe Their Life Is  
Heading “In Right Direction”**

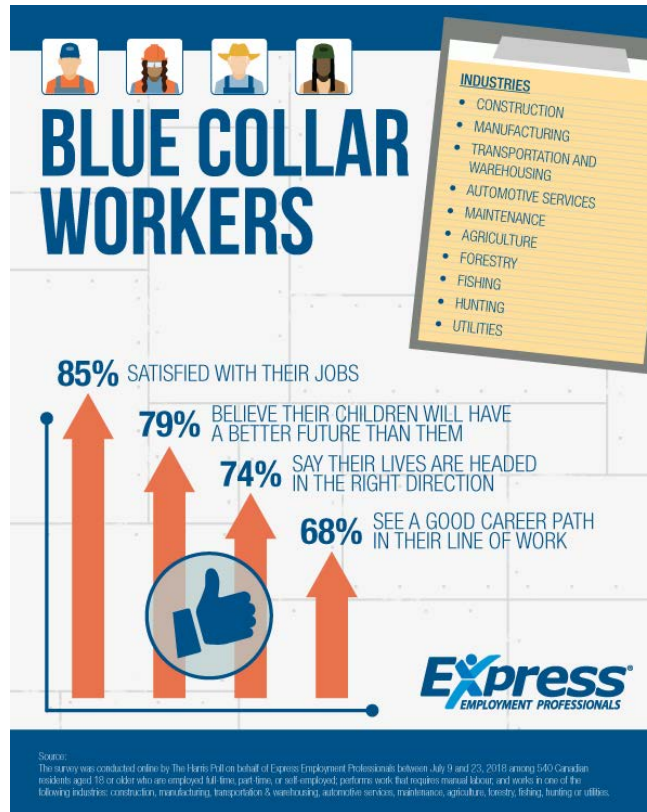
**Only 36% Trust Elected Officials**

---

**TORONTO, Aug. 29, 2018** – A new survey by The Harris Poll, commissioned by Express Employment Professionals, found that blue collar workers are satisfied with their jobs and optimistic about their lives. However, that optimism is not reflected in their views on politics.

The new national online survey of 520 blue collar workers offers a detailed, in-depth look at the background and attitudes of those working in blue collar professions.

“There’s been a great deal of discussion about the state of blue collar work in Canada,” said Express CEO Bill Stoller. “Our survey reveals that blue collar workers are upbeat, optimistic and proud of the work they do. While the news is often full of stories about economic anxieties, this survey shows workers who are exceptionally optimistic. While they certainly express concerns, it’s clear that the vast majority feel like things will work out for themselves and their families.”



### **Satisfied with — and feel very secure in — their jobs**

#### **Blue collar workers have a very high rate of job satisfaction.**

More than 4 in 5 (85 per cent) Canadian blue collar workers say they are satisfied with their job, with a quarter (25 per cent) saying “very satisfied.” Even more say they are proud of the work they do (88 per cent).

**Additionally, 63 per cent say they like their job, and 95 per cent had something positive to say about it, including:**

- They make a good living wage (47 per cent)
- They are challenged by the work (44 per cent)
- They have flexible hours (39 per cent)
- There is a low likelihood of being replaced by automation (39 per cent)

For those who are self-employed, nearly all (99 per cent) say they love being their own boss.

#### **Blue collar workers feel very secure in their employment.**

Canada’s blue collar workers also feel secure in their jobs, with very few worried they may lose their job in the future (12 per cent). In addition, when thinking about their current workplace, a remarkable 93 per cent of blue collar workers are not worried about being replaced by automation.

#### **They believe their jobs provide a good living for their family.**

Among Canadian blue collar workers, 68 per cent agree there is a good career path in their line of work, and 73 per cent agree that their job provides a good living to financially support their family.

**More than half have received a pay raise in the past year.**

A slight majority of blue collar workers have received a pay raise in the last year (55 per cent), with another 21 per cent having received a raise in the past two to three years. Of those who have received a pay increase in the past few years, 43 per cent received a 2–5 per cent raise, another 17 per cent received a 6–9 per cent raise.

**But many blue collar workers believe their jobs are not respected.**

While 57 per cent believe having a blue collar job is respected more now than it was 10 years ago, nearly half (49 per cent) view society as generally looking down on blue collar workers or say they feel like a second-class citizen at times based on the work they do (47 per cent).

**Optimistic about their lives**

**Three-quarters of blue collar workers believe their life is heading in the right direction (74 per cent).**

**Most blue collar workers are satisfied with their lifestyle.**

- 77 per cent say they can make ends meet
- 58 per cent say they are satisfied with their lifestyle
- 72 per cent say they are confident they will reach their lifestyle goals

**But blue collar workers do have some economic anxiety.**

Despite this optimism, blue collar workers do have economic anxiety. Even though 3 in 4 say they can make ends meet, a slight majority (56 per cent) say doing so is difficult.

**A plurality believes they are better off now than they were five years ago.**

Looking at the past five years, 41 per cent say they are better off now than they were then. However, 31 per cent say just the opposite—that they are worse off, while 28 per cent say things are about the same.

**Blue collar workers are very optimistic about their future.**

Just over three in four blue collar workers say they are optimistic about their future (76 per cent). Among parents, 79 per cent believe their children will have a better future than them.

**Political Views****Blue collar workers are very patriotic.**

More than four in five Canadian blue collar workers (82 per cent) believe Canada is the greatest country on Earth.

**But only one-third trust politicians.**

- 64 per cent do not trust elected government officials
- Only 36 per cent say they trust elected government officials

**More blue collar workers disapprove of the Prime Minister's job performance than approve.**

- 42 per cent of blue collar workers disapprove of the job that the prime minister is doing, with 25 per cent mostly disapproving and 17 per cent somewhat disapproving
- 34 per cent neither approve nor disapprove

- Only 24 per cent approve, with 15 per cent somewhat approving and 9 per cent mostly approving

**A slight majority believe the country is heading in the right direction.**

- 54 per cent believe country is heading in the right direction
- 46 per cent believe country is heading in the wrong direction

**However, the reverse is true for women and general labourers, with a slight majority believing the country is heading in the wrong direction.**

- 51 per cent of women believe the country is heading in the wrong direction vs. 45 per cent of men
- 53 per cent of general labourers believe the country is heading in the wrong direction vs. 41 per cent of skilled tradespersons

**Slightly fewer believe their province is heading in the right direction.**

- 52 per cent believe their province is heading in the right direction
- 48 per cent believe their province is heading in the wrong direction

**In contrast, almost 3 in 4 believe their local community is headed in the right direction.**

- 73 per cent believe their local community is heading in the right direction
- 27 per cent believe their local community is heading in the wrong direction

**Blue collar workers are split on strength of the Canadian economy.**

- Exactly half (50 per cent) believe it is strong
- The other half (50 per cent) believe it is weak

**A relatively similar polarity of opinion occurs looking at the Canadian economy five years out.**

- 38 per cent believe the Canadian economy will be stronger in five years
- 34 per cent believe the Canadian economy will be about the same as it is now
- 28 per cent believe the Canadian economy will be weaker in five years

**Women and skilled tradespersons are the most optimistic about the future of the Canadian economy.**

- 43 per cent of women believe the Canadian economy will be stronger in five years vs. 36 per cent of men
- 44 per cent of skilled tradespeople believe the Canadian economy will be stronger in five years vs. 29 per cent of general labourers

**Although a plurality disapproves of the job the prime minister is doing, a slight majority believe the prime minister has had no impact on the industry in which they work.**

- 53 per cent say the Prime Minister has neither helped nor hurt their industry
- 27 per cent say the Prime Minister has hurt their industry
- 20 per cent say the Prime Minister has helped their industry

**A small plurality believe that no political party does a good job of helping blue collar workers.**

- 28 per cent believe no party does a good job of helping blue collar workers
- 25 per cent believe the Conservative Party does the best job of helping blue collar workers
- 22 per cent believe the New Democratic Party does the best job of helping blue collar workers

- 19 per cent believe the Liberal Party does the best job of helping blue collar workers
- 5 per cent believe the Green Party does the best job of helping blue collar workers

**Blue collar workers have diverse political affiliations, but a quarter do not feel affiliated with any political party.**

- 25 per cent do not feel affiliated with any political party
- 24 per cent feel most affiliated with the Conservative Party
- 24 per cent feel most affiliated with the Liberal Party
- 18 per cent feel most affiliated with the New Democratic Party
- 8 per cent feel most affiliated with the Green Party

**Unions are seen in a favorable light, although most blue collar workers don't belong to one.**

- 63 per cent believe that unions help workers
- But only 17 per cent say they belong to a labor union

**Who Are Canada's Blue Collar Workers?**

Canada's blue collar workers are split between those who identify themselves as skilled trade workers (51 per cent) and those who identify as general labourers (41 per cent). Men are more likely than women to classify their work as a skilled trade (56% vs. 34%).

A slight majority work mostly indoors (51 per cent), while 25 per cent work mostly outdoors, 22 per cent work both indoors and outdoors equally and 2 per cent work inside of a vehicle.

About half of Canadian blue collar workers (47 per cent) consider themselves middle class, 38 per cent say lower middle class and just 14 per cent would consider themselves in the upper middle class.

The vast majority are paid hourly (76 per cent), with only 16 per cent salaried. Most are employed full-time (72 per cent), with 13 per cent employed part-time and 15 per cent self-employed.

- 7 per cent say their household income is less than \$25,000 per year
- 34 per cent say their household income is between \$25,000 to \$49,999
- 41 per cent say their household income is between \$50,000 to \$99,999
- 11 per cent say their household income is between \$100,000 to \$149,999
- 6 per cent say their household income is \$150,000 or more

"I think there are a lot of assumptions and stereotypes out there about blue-collar workers," Stoller continued. "But this survey shows that most blue collar workers feel good about themselves and their jobs. They're proud of who they are and what they do. As we head into Labour Day weekend, this survey shows that Canada's blue collar labour force is doing well—and that's good to see."

**Survey Methodology**

The survey was conducted online by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between July 9 and 23, 2018 among 520 Canadian residents aged 18 or older who are employed full-time, part-time, or self-employed; performs work that requires manual labour; and works in one of the following industries: construction, manufacturing, transportation & warehousing, automotive services, maintenance, agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting or utilities.

Figures for age within gender, education, household income, region, household size, and language spoken within the household were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online. Totals may not equal the sum of their individual components due to rounding. No estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated; a full methodology is available.

- [Memo from Harris Poll](#)
- [Survey by Harris Poll](#)
- [Infographic](#)

\*\*\*

If you would like to arrange for an interview to discuss this topic, please contact Ana Curic at (613) 858-2622 or email [ana@mapleleafstrategies.com](mailto:ana@mapleleafstrategies.com).

#### **About Bill Stoller**

William H. "Bill" Stoller is chairman and chief executive officer of Express Employment Professionals. Headquartered in Oklahoma City, the international staffing company has more than 800 franchises in the U.S., Canada and South Africa. Since its inception, Express has put more than 6 million people to work worldwide.

#### **About Express Employment Professionals**

Express Employment Professionals puts people to work. It generated \$3.4 billion in sales and employed a record 540,000 people in 2017. Its long-term goal is to put a million people to work annually. For more information, visit [ExpressPros.com](http://ExpressPros.com).