

# Memo

Date: June 9, 2016  
 To: Express Employment Professionals  
 From: Harris Poll/Nielsen Consumer Insights (f/k/a Harris Interactive)  
 Subject: Survey of Unemployed Canadians

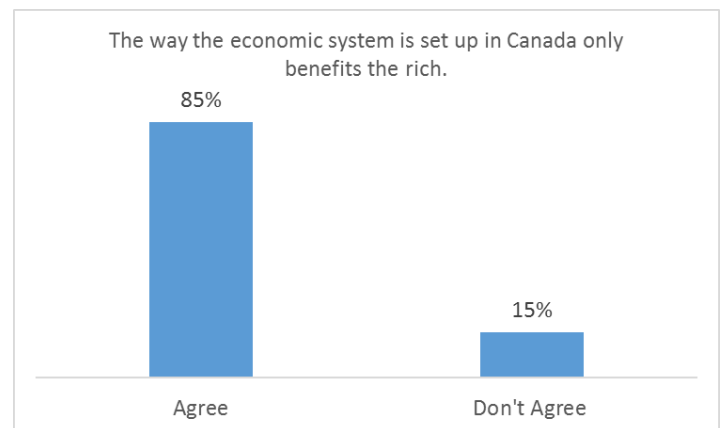
*This study was conducted online by Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals and included 1892 Canadian adults aged 18 or older who are unemployed but capable of working (whether or not they receive unemployment compensation benefits). Excluded are those who are currently retired, choose to stay at home or are unable to work due to long-term disability. The survey was conducted May 5 – May 31, 2016.*

*Results were weighted as needed for age by gender, education, race/ethnicity, region and household income. 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 upon request.*

## Economic factors and their impact on job seekers

Canada's unemployed are now out of work for an average of 16 months, compared to 14 months in 2015. Nearly half (44%) have not had a full time job in over a year. Moreover, half (49%) have not had an interview in the last month and 51% of those have not had an interview since Q4 2014 or earlier, or put another way - one-quarter of the total unemployed have not had an interview since Q4 2014 or earlier.

Unemployed Canadians appear to be uneasy about the direction Canada is taking with 54% feeling the economy is going in the wrong direction. These feelings of uneasiness are fueling perceptions of the unemployed that the Canadian economic system is not designed to benefit them: the vast majority (85%) agree with the statement "The way the economic system is set up in Canada only benefits the rich."



This wave of research revealed an increase in those who say they quit their job (16%, up from 12% in 2014) compared to those who say they were laid off (30%) which has been pretty consistent over time (29% in 2015 and 33% in 2014). Many say they are responsible for their unemployment (46%), while the economy receives less blame for one's unemployment situation (39% vs. 45% in 2014).

## Who are the unemployed? Demographics and Attitudes

The majority of the unemployed are under the age of 40 - with 34% age 18-29 and 24% per cent age 30-39. And, there are slightly more men (55%) than women (45%). Additionally, the majority lacks a higher education degree (less than 1 in 5 (14%) hold at least a bachelor's degree).

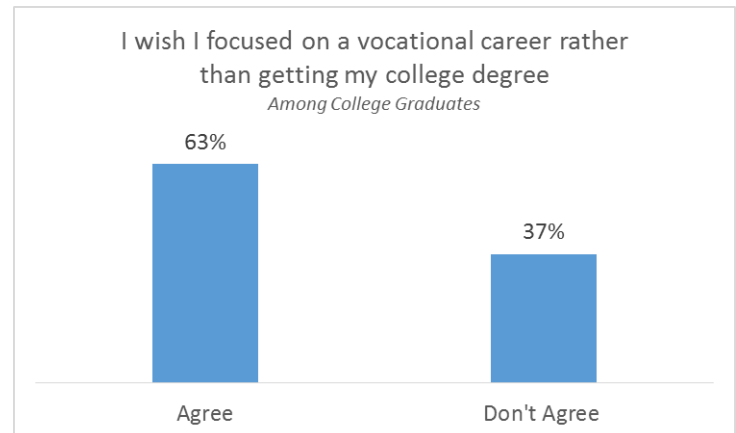
Among those who graduated university, 63% agree with the statement "I wish I focused on a vocational career (e.g., automotive technology, electrician, plumber, HVAC specialist, dental assistant, medical assisting, etc.) rather than getting my college degree."

The study consistently finds that unemployed Canadians simultaneously embody both feelings of desperation and hope about their current employment situation. Hope is evident in the fact that most are:

- Confident everything will turn out fine (93%)
- Hopeful that they'll find a job they really want in the next six months (92%)
- Hopeful they'll find a job in their field (82%)
- Hopeful they'll find a job for the pay they want (81%)
- In addition, one in five have turned down job offers

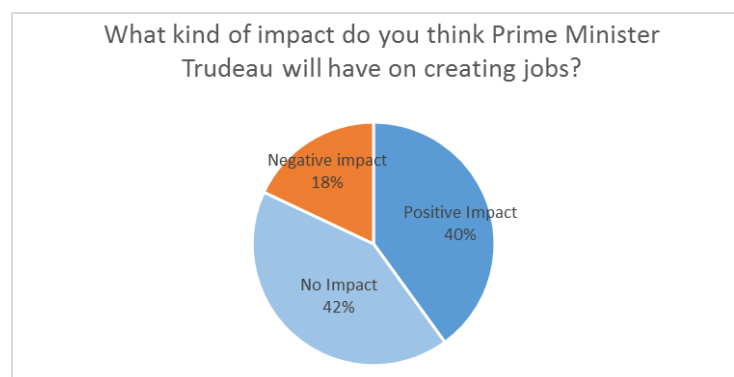
However, feelings of despair and embarrassment are also readily apparent:

- More than a third (36%) say they have completely given up looking for a job (38% in 2015, 39% in 2014) - particularly those out of a job for more than two years (59%)
- Eight in 10 (82%) are becoming discouraged the longer they are out of work and find it hard to keep their effort level up in looking for a job (89% and 85%, respectively among those out of work for four to six months)
- More than three-quarters (79%) are becoming insecure about their ability to find a job the longer they're out of work (84% among those out of work four to six months) and being out of work makes them feel like they don't know what they're doing with their life (77%)
- Seven in 10 (72%) are angry about being out of work and 74 per cent agree that being out of work makes them feel desperate (74% and 81%, respectively among those out of work for four to six months)

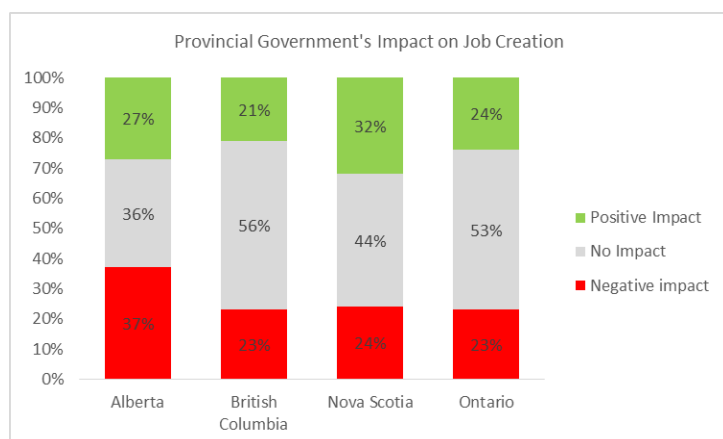


## Recent Election and Key issues

Forty-two per cent of the unemployed believe the election of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will have no impact on creating jobs.

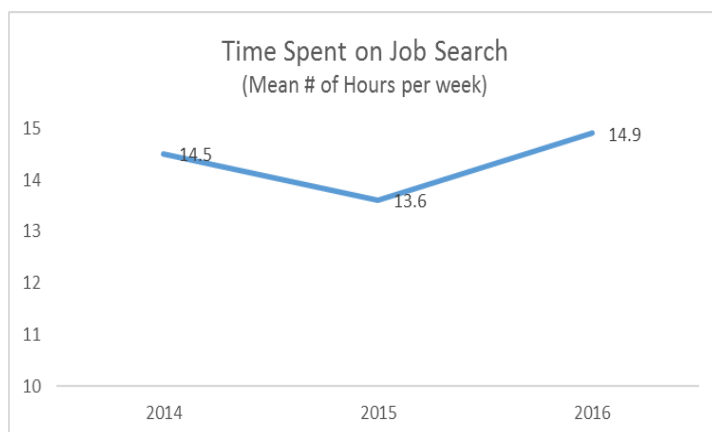


In addition across Canada, Alberta's provincial government receives the least confidence in job creation perceptions among the unemployed.



### Activities of the Unemployed

Unemployed Canadians believe employment insurance gives them a cushion so that they can take their time to search for a job – 74% (76% in 2015, 77% in 2014); and allowing them to take time for themselves 67% (75% in 2015 and 74% in 2014). These attitudes may be affecting how hard Canadians are looking for that next job since the unemployed are putting in just under two full workdays (14.9 hours) per week looking for work, though that is up from 14.5 hours in 2014 and 13.6 hours last year. Of the time that is spent, researching job opportunities and sending resumes are the most prevalent activities.



### Barriers to Employment

And while the vast majority (86%) report being willing to take almost any job to help pay the bills, more than two-thirds (69%) say they have applied for jobs below their previous job level. In addition, willingness to move city/town (54%) or province (36%) is down compared to in 2015 (58% and 40%, respectively). Moreover, four in 10 (43%) plan to or have gone back to school to become more marketable, however, this is down from 2014 (49%).

The unemployed cite no available jobs (40%), that their experience doesn't match hiring requirements (35%), not having relevant experience (31%), education not meeting hiring requirements, being out of work too long (27%), being too old (24%) and that their experience is too narrow/not transferable (21%) as the biggest hurdles to finding that next job. Moreover, currently three-quarters (74%) of the unemployed say they do not apply to minimum wage jobs because they don't think they'll pay the bills.