

Canada Memo

Date: August 23, 2018
 To: Express Employment Professionals
 From: The Harris Poll
 Subject: 2018 Survey of Blue Collar Canadians

The survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express 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 labor; and works in one of the following industries: construction, manufacturing, transportation & warehousing, automotive services, maintenance, agriculture/ forestry/ fishing/ hunting, or utilities.

Results were weighted as needed for age within gender, education, household income, region, household size, and language spoken within the household. 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.

Profile of Canadian Blue Collar Worker

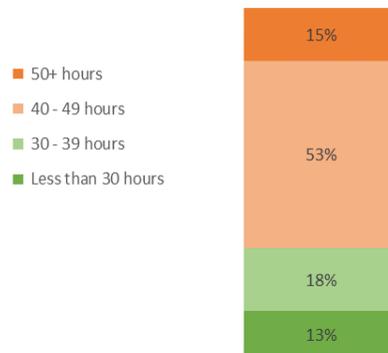
On average, blue collar workers have been working for 25 years, with roughly half (48%) working less than 25 years. More than a third (36%) say they have been working for 35 years or longer.

Canadian blue collar workers have been working at their current job considerably less time, with the average length of service being 10.9 years with a median of 6 years. Just 7% say they have been working at their current job 35 years or more.

Long hours? On average, Canadian blue collar workers say they labor about 39 hours a week (with a median of 40 hours). Just 15% say they work 50 hours or more.

- Skilled trade workers are twice as likely as general laborers to work 30-39 hours per week (24% vs. 12%).

Average Hours Worked Per Week



Just over half (51%) consider the work they do to be a skilled trade, while about 2 in 5 (41%) say they perform general labor. About 5% classify their work as something else, while 4% are not sure how to classify it. More than 3 in 4 (76%) say they are paid hourly, while 16% say they are salaried and 8% would classify it some other way.

- Men are more likely than women to classify their work as a skilled trade (56% vs. 34%).

Perhaps surprisingly, a slight majority (51%) say their work is performed mostly indoors, with just a quarter say it is performed mostly outdoors (25%). About 1 in 5 (22%) say it is equally spent indoors and outdoors, while 2% say it is mostly spent in a vehicle. Using technology is a significant part of Canadian blue collar workers' (13%) jobs, though only 5% work directly in the technology sector.

- Men are more likely than women to work mostly outdoors (28% vs. 13%).
- Meanwhile, women are more like than men to work mostly indoors (67% vs. 46%).

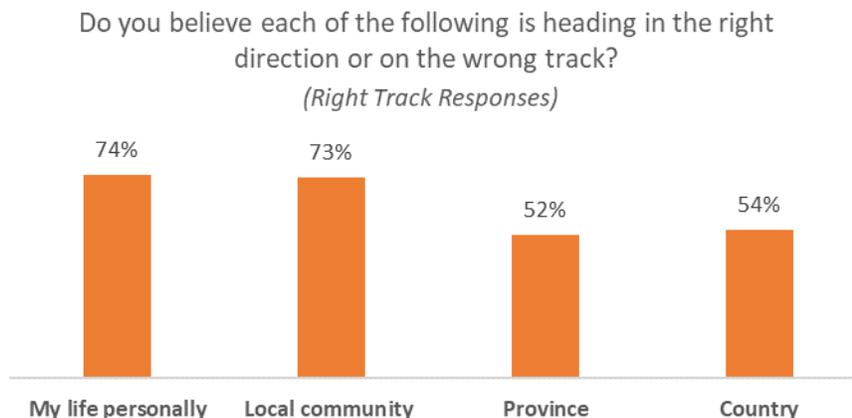
Nearly 1 in 5 (17%) say they are part of a labor union, and among all blue collar workers, 63% say unions generally help the working person.

General Attitudes

About 3 in 4 Canadian blue collar workers say they believe their life is heading in the right direction (74%), and that they are optimistic about their future (76%).

- Skilled trade workers are more likely than general labor workers to believe they personally head in the right direction (79% vs. 64%).
- Similarly, skilled trade workers are more likely than general labor workers to be optimistic about their future (80% vs. 68%).
- Women are more likely than men to be optimistic (87% vs. 73%).

While a large majority (73%) feel their local community is heading in the right direction, a very small majority feel the same way about their province (52%) or Canada in general (54%). Despite this, over 4 in 5 Canada blue collar workers (82%) believe Canada is the greatest country on Earth.



Canadian blue collar workers are split over how the overall economy is doing with exactly half (50%) believing it is strong and half (50%) seeing it as weak. A relatively similar polarity of opinion occurs looking 5 years out, with roughly a third each saying the economy will get stronger (38%), stay about the same (34%), or get weaker (28%).

- Again, skilled trade workers appear more positive than their general labor counterparts, being more likely to say they believe the economy to be strong (54% skilled vs. 41% general) and also to get stronger in the next 5 years (44% vs. 29%).

And looking into the past 5 years ago, about 2 in 5 (41%) say they are better off now than they were then. However, 3 in 10 (31%) say just the opposite—that they are worse off. About another 3 in 10 (28%) say things are about the same.

- Opinion differs between labor type, with skilled labor more likely than general labor to say they are better off (46% vs. 32%), and less likely to say they are worse off (26% vs. 39%).

Financial Status

Nearly half of Canadian blue collar workers (47%) consider themselves middle class, roughly 2 in 5 (38%) say lower class, and just 14% would consider themselves in the upper class. About 3 in 5 (58%) say they are satisfied with the lifestyle they have.

About half (50%) say they are on par financially with their neighbors, though over a third (35%) believe they are worse off financially. Just 16% believe they themselves are better off.

Looking back at their parents' financial situation at the same age, a third of blue collar workers each believe compared to their parents they are better off (33%), worse off (34%), or about the same (33%).

Optimism does shine through to some degree. Among parents, nearly 3 in 5 (58%) believe their children will be better off than they are—or at least about the same (26%). In addition, nearly 4 in 5 (79%) agree their children will have a better future than they themselves will.

Among all Canadian blue collar workers, 3 in 4 (75%) confess life is a struggle. Over half (58%) say they have less than \$2500 saved up for an emergency, with 17% saying they have nothing saved.

Roughly 3 in 4 say they can make ends meet (77%) and that they are confident they will reach their lifestyle goals (72%), though a slight majority (56%) say making ends meet is difficult. Furthermore, 68% are worried about saving enough for retirement, and less than a third (31%) are currently do so.

Just over 2 in 5 (44%) believe it's more likely that Martians will land on earth than they will collect a public pension.

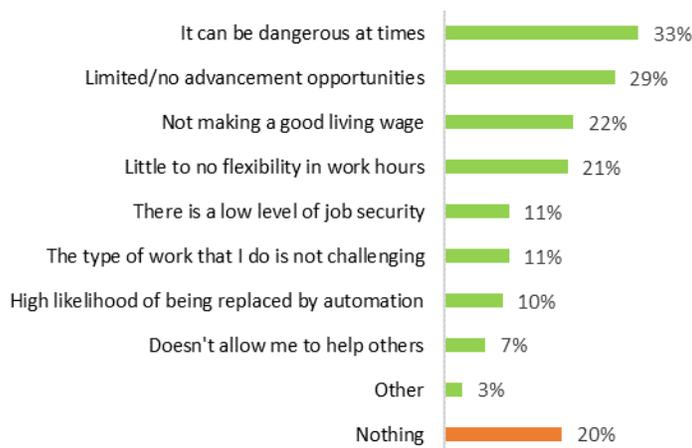
Above all, however, nearly 4 in 5 (79%) believe the harder you work, the more successful you will be.

Job Satisfaction

More than 4 in 5 (85%) Canadian blue collar workers say they are satisfied with their job, with a quarter (25%) saying “very satisfied”. A similar percentage say they are proud of the work they do (88%). In addition, 63% say they like their job, and 95% had something positive to say about it, including that they make a good living wage (47%), they are challenged by the work (44%), that they have flexible hours (39%) and there is a low likelihood of being replaced by automation (39%). For those that are self-employed, nearly all (99%) say they love being their own boss.

Four in 10 workers (42%) believe their company treats them fairly, and 29% say they have a great boss. Four in five (80%) have reasons to dislike their job, including 33% saying it can be dangerous and 29% saying there is either limited or no advancement opportunities.

Negatives About Job



About a quarter each are concerned about being paid well (26%), long hours (25%), high performance demands (24%), and poor working conditions (23%).

More than 7 in 10 (71%) believe their employer cares about its employees, and about 2 in 3 (65%) in general believe that employers care about their employees.

When it comes to pay increases in their current job, a little more than half (55%) say they saw a pay increase in the past year, while 28% say their last pay increase was more than a year ago. 17% say they have never seen one. For those who did see an increase, a slight majority (56%) say the increase was 5% or less.

More than 2 in 5 (42%) say they were given increased responsibility over the past year, and another 22% more than a year ago. About third (36%) say they never have.

Just a quarter (24%) say they actually received a promotion in the past year, while about a quarter (23%) say they did in more than a year. However, over half (53%) say they never have received a promotion in their current job.

Career Path

Among Canadian blue collar workers, 68% agree there is a good career path in their line of work. The main reason they first became interested in their field of work is split. Roughly 1 in 10 each say it was either being interested in the field (14%), that it's enjoyable (13%), it's profitable/pays well (12%), other family members are in the line of work (12%), there was high demand for it (10%), it was the only job they could get (10%), it was a new field at the time (7%), or that it had job security (7%). Fewer say there will be high demand for it in the future (6%), schedule is flexible (5%), or something else (5%). For 12%, their parents had an influence on the work they do.

- Skilled trade workers are more likely than their general labor counterparts to say the work is enjoyable is the reason they first became interested in their line of work (17% vs. 7%).

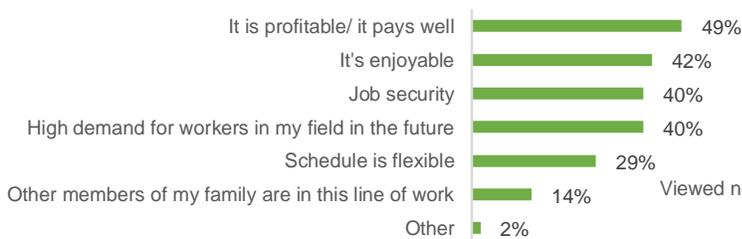
About 2 in 3 (66%) say it is easy to find a job in their field currently; however, looking forward 10 years, 31% believe more jobs in their field will be available, 41% believe about the same amount, and 28% believe fewer will be available. Few are worried they may lose their job in the future (12%).

More than 2 in 5 (43%) would be likely to encourage a child to pursue a career in their field, while over half of workers (55%) would encourage a family member or friend to do so.

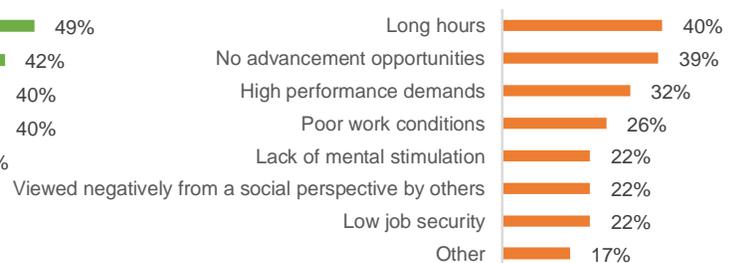
- Among those who would encourage a child to pursue their field, reasoning echos their personal likes for the job, including that it pays well (49%) and it's enjoyable (42%).

Similarly, those who say they are not likely to encourage a child to pursue their field, long hours (40%) and no advancement opportunities (39%) are the top reasons.

55% would their job recommend to their/a child...



45% would not....



Overall, a majority of blue collar workers believe more young men (64%) and women (51%) should join their line of work, and nearly 4 in 5 (79%) believe the people they know respect the type of work they do.

- Skilled trade workers are more likely than their general labor counterparts to advocate for young men (69% vs. 54%) and women (57% vs. 40%) to join their line of work.

Political Outlook

More than 1 in 3 (36%) say they trust elected government officials, and just 1 in 4 (24%) approve of the job Prime Minister Trudeau is doing, while 42% disapprove, and 34% are neutral on the matter.

Although a plurality disapprove of the job the Prime Minister is doing, a slight majority (53%) do not believe Trudeau has hurt or helped their industry, with roughly a quarter feeling he hurt their industry (27%) and about 1 in 5 (20%) believe he's helped.

Thinking about their provincial government, 43% view it as pro-business, while 20% see it as anti-business. More than a third (37%) aren't sure.

About a quarter each say they affiliate most with either the Conservative party (24%) or the Liberal party (24%). This is followed by the New Democratic party (18%), Green party (8%), and some other party (2%). A quarter do not affiliate with any party (25%).

When it comes to the party who helps blue collar Canadians the most, a quarter of blue collar workers say the Conservative party does (25%), followed by the New Democratic party (22%), the Liberal party (19%), and Green party (5%). Nearly 3 in 10 (28%) say no party does.

While nearly 3 in 5 (57%) believe having a blue collar job is respected more now than it was 10 years ago, nearly half (49%) 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%).

Although nearly half of blue collar workers (46%) feel it's easy for their employer to find cheaper labor to do their job, about 3 in 10 workers say that illegal immigrants make it harder for them to get a job in their field (31%) or that their employer is able to pay them less because of illegal immigrants (31%).