

# Understanding **PRECARITY** in BC

**Appendices for: But is it a *good* job? Understanding employment precarity in BC**

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Access the full report: [understandingprecarity.ca/but-is-it-a-good-job](https://understandingprecarity.ca/but-is-it-a-good-job)

## Appendices

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### Appendix 1: Additional details about the BC Precarity Survey

#### THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

**The BC Precarity Survey** pilot was designed to collect more information on job quality and workers' experiences of insecure and precarious employment than what Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey covers. We built on and adapted the survey instrument used by the PEPSO project team to survey workers in Southern Ontario, replicating some elements and modifying others. The BC Precarity Survey pilot questionnaire is available online [understandingprecarity.ca/but-is-it-a-good-job](https://understandingprecarity.ca/but-is-it-a-good-job).

The questionnaire included the following modules:

- **Socio-demographic questions:** Age, gender, region, ethnicity/race, citizenship status, country of birth, years of living in Canada, education level, student status, marital status, presence of children, household living arrangements, basic characteristics of the spouse's employment situation, housing tenure (rent/own), individual employment income and household total income.
- **Characteristics of main job:** Type of employment contract, unionization, broad sector, education requirements of the job, frequency of pay.
- **Overall work characteristics:** Number of jobs worked at the same time, location of work and type of employment contract for each job; frequency of on-call work, temp agency work, work paid in cash; scheduling variability; advance notice of one's schedule; perceived ability to raise a health and safety concern or an employment rights concern with the employer; expectations of reduced hours in the future; access to benefits and paid time off; income variability; access to training.
- **Potential impacts of precarious work:** Self-reported health and mental health, stress, job strain, concerns about work and family life balance, ability to pay for and attend children's activities in and outside of school, work-related decisions to delay having children, financial insecurity.
- **If requiring child care or elder care:** Does access to care negatively impact your or your spouse's ability to work?

## THE BC PRECARIETY SURVEY SAMPLE

A total of 3,117 qualified respondents completed the survey. Regional quotas were used to ensure samples were large enough to do some regional analysis.

To minimize underrepresentation of racialized respondents (which was a problem with the PEPSO survey sample), the BC Precarity Survey questionnaire was translated into simplified and traditional Chinese. The translated questionnaire was used to generate a subsample of workers who self-identify as Chinese balanced by age, gender, country of birth and time in Canada.

Weighting was applied to the data according to Statistics Canada 2016 census figures on region, age, gender and ethnicity, and among respondents who self-identified as Chinese, country of birth and time in Canada, to ensure the figures are representative of the working BC population between the ages of 25 and 65. A true probability sample of this size would have a margin of error of plus or minus 1.8 per cent 19 times out of 20.

**TABLE A1** Demographic composition of the BC Precarity Survey sample and a comparison with 2016 census data

	BC Precarity Survey, 2019		Comparable sample from census 2016
	Percentage of respondents	Weighted total	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>			
Men	51%	1,841	52%
Women	48%	1,720	48%
Non-binary or other	0%	16	n/a
<b>Age</b>			
25–34	24%	870	26%
35–44	25%	897	25%
45–54	28%	1,011	28%
55–65	22%	799	22%
<b>Region</b>			
Metro Vancouver	63%	2,241	56%
City of Vancouver	25%	906	n/a
Rest of Metro Vancouver	37%	1,335	n/a
Vancouver Island	15%	549	n/a
Northern BC	4%	152	n/a
Interior BC	18%	635	n/a
<b>Racialization and Indigenous identity</b>			
Racialized	26%	903	29%
Indigenous	3%	113	5%
White	71%	2,513	66%
<b>Education level</b>			
High school or less	15%	544	33%
Trade, vocational or post-secondary certificate below a bachelor's degree	36%	1,292	35%
University degree	48%	1,709	32%
<b>Immigrant status</b>			
Recent immigrants (<10 years in Canada)	5%	173	8%
Established immigrants (10+ years in Canada)	16%	561	24%
Non-immigrants (Canadian by birth)	79%	2,760	68%
<b>Home ownership status</b>			
Renters	34%	1,184	29%
Owners	66%	2,296	71%

Source: BC Precarity Survey, 2019 and Census 2016 Public Use Microdata File, Individuals (<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/catalogue/98M0001X>).

Note: The comparable sample from census 2016 includes BC workers aged 25-64 who were employed at some point in the five months prior to completing the census. This is not exactly identical to the BC Precarity Survey sample, which also includes workers aged 65 and who worked for pay at some point in the 3 months prior to completing the survey but it is as close as we can get with the census public use microdata files. Sub-provincial regional statistics are only available at the Census Metropolitan Area level in the census 2016 public use microdata files.

**TABLE A2** Comparison of white, Indigenous and racialized men and women in the BC Precarity Survey sample

	White men	Racialized men	Indigenous men	White women	Racialized women	Indigenous women
Aged 25–44	46%	57%	58%	46%	59%	49%
Aged 45–65	54%	43%	42%	54%	41%	51%
University degree	47%	66%	31%	38%	66%	21%
Recent immigrants (<10 years in Canada)	1%	15%	0%	2%	17%	1%
Established immigrants (10+ years in Canada)	9%	39%	1%	9%	39%	2%
Non-immigrants (Canadian by birth)	90%	45%	99%	89%	44%	97%

Source: BC Precarity Survey, 2019.

## CONSTRUCTING THE *EMPLOYMENT PRECARIETY INDEX*

The *Employment Precarity Index* developed by the PEPSO research team is one of the most comprehensive measures of precarious employment in Canada to date. It combines 10 measures of employment insecurity, including the type of employment relationship, income variability, scheduling uncertainty, lack of access to benefits and paid time off, weak voice at work and uncertainty about future employment prospects. Each measure is scored from 0 to 10, and is weighted equally to produce an index with values between 0 (low precarity) and 100 (very high precarity). The PEPSO research team used the Index to construct four categories of employment (*Secure*, *Stable*, *Vulnerable* and *Precarious*) by dividing their original 2011 PEPSO survey sample into four quartiles. The quartile cut-off values were then used to construct these categories of employment in subsequent surveys, including the 2014 PEPSO survey and the 2017 Hamilton Millennial Survey.

We replicated the PEPSO methodology exactly, using the same questions in the BC Precarity Survey and the same index cut-off values to construct the four categories of employment precarity to ensure data comparability. The methodology can be found on the PEPSO website (<https://pepsoc.ca/documents/precariety-penalty.pdf>, appendix B, p. 170).

**TABLE A3** The *Employment Precarity Index* quartiles, PEPSO survey (2014) and BC Precarity Survey (2019)

Precarity level	Index range	Number in each category, PEPSO, 2014	Number in each category, BC Precarity Survey, 2019
<i>Secure</i>	0–2.5	910	590
<i>Stable</i>	5–17.5	1,025	864
<i>Vulnerable</i>	20–37.5	965	629
<i>Precarious</i>	40–97.5	1,156	1,222

Source: BC Precarity Survey, 2019; and PEPSO Survey, 2014.

## Appendix 2: Additional data tables from the BC Precarity Survey

**TABLE A4** Prevalence of employment precarity among different groups of workers

	<i>Secure</i>	<i>Stable</i>	<i>Vulnerable</i>	<i>Precarious</i>
All workers	18%	26%	19%	37%
<b>Gender</b>				
Women	18%	25%	20%	37%
Men	17%	27%	18%	37%
<b>Racialization and Indigenous identity</b>				
White	20%	25%	17%	37%
Racialized	13%	28%	23%	37%
Indigenous	11%	26%	29%	33%
White women	21%	25%	18%	37%
Racialized women	13%	25%	26%	37%
Indigenous women	14%	31%	22%	33%
White men	20%	26%	17%	37%
Racialized men	13%	31%	20%	36%
Indigenous men	7%	21%	37%	34%
<b>Region</b>				
Metro Vancouver	18%	28%	18%	36%
Vancouver Island	19%	23%	22%	35%
Northern BC	16%	28%	20%	36%
Interior	16%	20%	21%	43%
<b>Age</b>				
Aged 25–34	12%	26%	19%	44%
Aged 35–65	20%	26%	19%	35%
<b>Immigrant status</b>				
Non-immigrants (Canadian by birth)	19%	27%	18%	36%
Recent immigrants (<10 years in Canada)	8%	17%	19%	55%
Established immigrants (10+ years in Canada)	15%	25%	23%	36%

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Table A4 continued	Secure	Stable	Vulnerable	Precarious
<b>Selected job characteristics</b>				
Permanent full-time work, 30+ hours	32%	42%	15%	11%
Non-unionized	14%	25%	20%	41%
Unionized	27%	28%	18%	28%
Public sector (includes all levels of government, public schools, colleges, universities, hospitals and other facilities, Crown corp., etc.)	31%	28%	14%	27%
Private sector	11%	26%	21%	42%
Non-profit sector	19%	25%	18%	38%
Job requires university education	23%	33%	15%	29%
Job requires college or apprenticeship training	17%	24%	21%	38%
Job requires high school or occupation-specific training	19%	25%	21%	35%
Job requires only on-the-job training	7%	18%	23%	52%
<b>Job industry or sector</b>				
Knowledge/creative work	18%	28%	15%	39%
Service sector work	19%	25%	20%	35%
Manufacturing, construction, trades and transport	11%	24%	23%	41%
Primary sector work (fishing, farming, natural resources)	13%	22%	20%	45%
Other sectors	20%	28%	18%	34%
<b>Spousal employment characteristics</b>				
Spouse not employed for pay	12%	21%	18%	49%
Spouse working in a permanent full-time position	22%	28%	19%	30%
Spouse in another employment type (part-time, temporary, etc.)	17%	25%	20%	38%
No spouse	17%	28%	19%	36%
<b>Home ownership status</b>				
Owner	21%	25%	18%	35%
Renter	13%	27%	21%	39%
<b>Employment earnings</b>				
Low income (<\$40,000)	4%	10%	21%	64%
Middle income (\$40,000–\$80,000)	23%	30%	18%	29%
High income (>\$80,000)	26%	34%	18%	23%
Source: BC Precarity Survey, 2019.				

**TABLE A5** Percentage of workers who did not get any training in the last year, by employment precarity and individual employment income

No training in the past year	
<b>Employment precarity category</b>	
<i>Secure</i>	45%
<i>Stable</i>	54%
<i>Vulnerable</i>	59%
<i>Precarious</i>	54%
Total (all workers)	53%
<b>Employment earnings</b>	
Low income (<\$40,000)	70%
Middle income (\$40,000–\$80,000)	51%
High income (>\$80,000)	40%
<b>Employment precarity and individual employment income</b>	
Low income, less secure	70%
Low income, more secure	74%
Middle income, less secure	48%
Middle income, more secure	53%
High income, less secure	35%
High income, more secure	42%

Source: BC Precarity Survey, 2019.

Note: More secure includes *Secure* and *Stable* jobs, while less secure includes *Vulnerable* and *Precarious* jobs. Low individual employment income is defined as annual income up to \$40,000; middle income, between \$40,000 and \$80,000; and high income, over \$80,000.

**TABLE A6** Employment situation of the worker’s spouse, by worker’s employment precarity category

Precarity level	Spouse not employed for pay	Spouse working in a permanent full-time position	Spouse in another employment type (part-time, temporary, etc.)	No spouse
<i>Secure</i>	12%	44%	16%	27%
<i>Stable</i>	14%	38%	16%	32%
<i>Vulnerable</i>	17%	36%	18%	30%
<i>Precarious</i>	24%	29%	17%	29%

Source: BC Precarity Survey, 2019.



**TABLE A7** Percentage of workers with children under 18 who report that lack of access to child care negatively affects the ability to work

	It affects their ability to work	It affects their spouse's ability to work	It affects both their and their spouse's ability to work	Does not affect their ability to work
All workers with children under 18	17%	13%	9%	61%
<b>Gender</b>				
Women	21%	6%	10%	64%
Men	14%	19%	8%	59%
<b>Region</b>				
Metro Vancouver	16%	15%	9%	60%
Vancouver Island	18%	7%	9%	65%
Northern BC	11%	11%	10%	68%
Interior	19%	12%	7%	62%
<b>Racialization and Indigenous identity</b>				
White	17%	13%	6%	64%
Racialized	16%	14%	15%	55%
Indigenous	18%	5%	13%	64%
<b>Immigrant status</b>				
Non-immigrants (Canadian by birth)	18%	12%	7%	63%
Recent immigrants (<10 years in Canada)	22%	22%	16%	40%
Established immigrants (10+ years in Canada)	8%	11%	14%	67%
<b>Employment precarity category</b>				
<i>Secure</i>	3%	16%	7%	74%
<i>Stable</i>	10%	11%	7%	72%
<i>Vulnerable</i>	17%	11%	8%	64%
<i>Precarious</i>	29%	14%	11%	47%
<b>Age of children</b>				
No children under 5	9%	8%	5%	77%
Children under 5	25%	17%	14%	45%
No children under 12	3%	3%	1%	93%
Children under 12	21%	16%	12%	51%

Source: BC Precarity Survey, 2019.

**TABLE A8** Percentage of workers who report that caring for an adult negatively affects ability to work

	It affects their ability to work	It affects their spouse's ability to work	It affects both their and their spouse's ability to work	Does not affect their ability to work
All workers	8%	3%	4%	85%
<b>Gender</b>				
Women	7%	2%	3%	89%
Men	10%	5%	5%	81%
<b>Region</b>				
Metro Vancouver	9%	3%	5%	83%
Vancouver Island	6%	4%	2%	87%
Northern BC	4%	1%	3%	92%
Interior	10%	2%	3%	85%
<b>Racialization and Indigenous identity</b>				
White	8%	3%	2%	87%
Racialized	10%	4%	9%	77%
Indigenous	6%	2%	2%	90%
<b>Immigrant status</b>				
Non-immigrants (Canadian by birth)	8%	3%	3%	86%
Recent immigrants (<10 years in Canada)	18%	6%	13%	64%
Established immigrants (10+ years in Canada)	9%	3%	4%	84%
<b>Employment precarity category</b>				
<i>Secure</i>	2%	2%	2%	94%
<i>Stable</i>	4%	2%	3%	92%
<i>Vulnerable</i>	7%	2%	6%	85%
<i>Precarious</i>	16%	6%	5%	73%
Source: BC Precarity Survey, 2019.				

**TABLE A9** Percentage of workers who experience low stress or report that work rarely interferes with family life (a few times a year or never), by employment precariousness category

	Most days are “not at all” or “not very” stressful	The demands of my work rarely interfere with my home and family life	The amount of time my job(s) takes up rarely makes it difficult to fulfill family responsibilities	Things I want to do at home rarely do not get done because of the demands my job(s) puts on me	My job(s) rarely produces strain that makes it difficult to fulfill family duties	Due to work-related duties, I rarely have to make changes to my plans for family activities
<i>Secure</i>	26%	61%	64%	55%	64%	67%
<i>Stable</i>	29%	58%	60%	53%	60%	63%
<i>Vulnerable</i>	29%	58%	60%	49%	57%	57%
<i>Precarious</i>	33%	47%	48%	42%	48%	46%
Total	30%	54%	56%	48%	56%	56%

Source: BC Precarity Survey, 2019.

**TABLE A10** Percentage of workers who experience low stress or report that work rarely interferes with family life (a few times a year or never), by employment precariousness category and gender

	Most days are “not at all” or “not very” stressful		The demands of my work rarely interfere with my home and family life		The amount of time my job(s) takes up rarely makes it difficult to fulfill family responsibilities		Things I want to do at home rarely do not get done because of the demands my job(s) puts on me		My job(s) rarely produces strain that makes it difficult to fulfill family duties		Due to work-related duties, I rarely have to make changes to my plans for family activities	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
<i>Secure</i>	25%	28%	63%	60%	66%	62%	55%	55%	67%	62%	70%	65%
<i>Stable</i>	29%	29%	60%	57%	61%	60%	53%	53%	61%	60%	66%	60%
<i>Vulnerable</i>	28%	30%	62%	54%	67%	55%	53%	45%	62%	53%	63%	52%
<i>Precarious</i>	30%	35%	50%	44%	52%	44%	44%	41%	53%	44%	50%	42%
Total	29%	31%	57%	52%	60%	53%	50%	47%	59%	53%	60%	53%

Source: BC Precarity Survey, 2019.