



As for young Canadians who aren't in school, almost 90% were either employed or looking for work last year. That was in line with the participation rate for those aged 25-54. Of those youth not participating in labour markets, more than 90% report they don't want a job.

### **Youth are hampered by structural challenges both old and new**

It has always been more difficult for youth to break into the labour market, and to hold onto secure employment once they get there. Since they have less experience, businesses are more hesitant to hire them. And in the event of a downturn, younger workers have less seniority and so are more likely to be the first employees to be let go. That's why younger workers tend to take the brunt of any economic downturn.

Some newer trends add to those difficulties. The rising share of temporary jobs in labour markets in general means youth might need to change jobs more often than previous generations, at least early in their working lives. Technological change is another. RBC's [own research](#) indicates that more than 25% of jobs in Canada will be 'heavily disrupted' by technology in the coming decade.

### **Part of the solution may lie in an increased focus on skills**

While technological change has long disrupted the labour market, a focus on developing transferrable skills may improve labour-market outcomes both now and in the future. That will require some new approaches: better integration between schools, businesses, and governments is almost certainly part of the answer.

Leveraging Canada's high levels of post-secondary education participation is another solution. Labour-market outcomes for those with some form of post-secondary education have always been better than for those without. Incorporating paid work into education programs provides experience and at the same time reduces the work/education trade-off that is an inevitable part of life for students who need to take a part-time job to fund their schooling. Improving labour market outcomes for minority groups under-represented in labour markets would also clearly be beneficial.

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