



CANADIAN TOURISM
HUMAN RESOURCE
COUNCIL

YOUTH (AGED 15 TO 24 YEARS) EMPLOYED IN TOURISM

According to recent population estimates from Statistics Canada, the country's working-age population is shrinking. In 2006, for each person leaving the workforce, there was just over one young person in the 15-24 age group entering the labour market.¹

With the labour force barely maintaining status quo, the tourism sector will face the challenge of labour shortages in the medium-to long-term. As Canada's population ages and the birth rate continues to decline, the potential labour shortage for the tourism sector is projected to balloon to a quarter-million jobs by 2025.

Canada's Tourism Sector: a quick overview

Canada's tourism sector consists of five component industry groups: food and beverage services, transportation, accommodation, recreation and entertainment, and travel services. A large and dynamic contributor to the nation's economy, tourism spending in Canada reached \$75 billion in 2008 and the sector's contribution to Canada's GDP was 2.2%.

According to the 2008 Labour Force Survey, 1.75 million people were employed in Canada's tourism sector, which represents 10.2% of all employment in the country. Among the five tourism industry groups, food and beverage services was the largest employer, employing 827,900 people (47% of the tourism labour force).

While there are over 400 occupations in the tourism sector, over three-quarters of the tourism workforce is employed in one of 38 occupations. One-third of all tourism workers are employed as food counter attendants and kitchen helpers, food and beverage servers, and cooks.

Young workers accounted for one-third of the tourism labour force in 2006

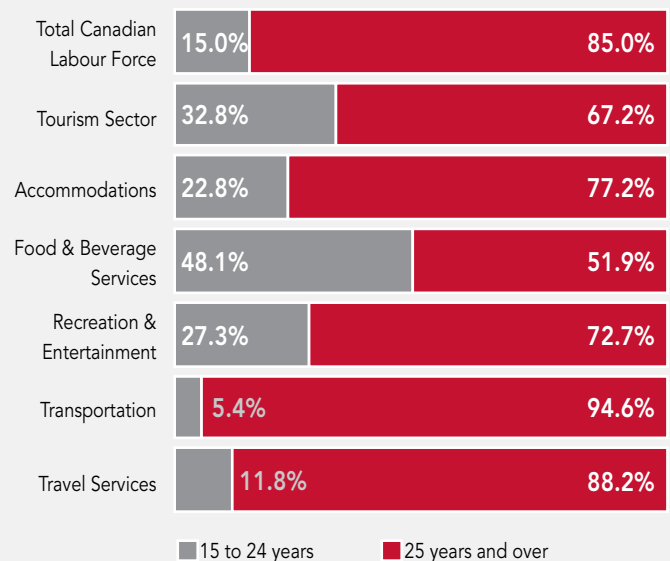
With the aging of Canada's workforce, younger workers are an essential component of the tourism sector labour force. In 2006, three in ten workers (33%) working in tourism were under the age of 25. This was more than double the share of young men and women in the Canadian workforce as a whole.

Compared to the overall Canadian workforce, a higher proportion of tourism employees worked part-time, which indicates a high level of opportunity in the sector for students. In 2006, 71% of youth in the tourism labour force were pursuing secondary or post-secondary education and over two-thirds (68%) worked part-time.

Food and beverage services had the largest proportion of young people

Within the tourism industry groups, food and beverage services had the youngest labour force. In 2006, nearly half (48%) of the people working in food and beverage services fell within the 15-24 age group. Given the education and experience required by most transportation-related occupations, it is not surprising that just 5.4% of this industry group's labour force was under the age of twenty-five.

Age Groups of the Tourism Sector's Employed Labour Force, 2006



SOURCE: Canadian Census 2006, Customized tabulation.

¹ Statistics Canada, 2006 Census: Portrait of the Canadian Population in 2006, by Age and Sex: National portrait. 2006 Census analysis series.

From an occupational point of view, youth comprised the majority of people employed as maîtres d'hôtel and hosts (78%), food counter attendants and kitchen helpers (67%), and cashiers (64%). Young workers also represented over half of the employees in two key occupations in the recreation and entertainment industry group: program leaders and instructors in recreation and sport (55%), and operators and attendants in amusement, recreation and sport (54%).

Young women more likely to work in tourism than male counterparts

The tourism sector employed a higher proportion of women (58%) than men (42%) in the 15-24 age group. This is reflective of the larger share of women in the tourism sector; however the gap is more distinct in this age group. Compared to the total tourism labour force, a higher proportion of young women were found in each of the industry groups, but this trend was most prominent in transportation.

One in ten young workers employed in tourism were born outside of Canada

The proportion of tourism workers aged 15-24 born outside of Canada was similar to that of the total Canadian labour force. Approximately 12% of youth working in tourism in Canada were born in another country.

One-quarter of young workers employed in tourism self-identify as members of equity groups

One-quarter (26%) of young people employed in tourism were members of one of the following equity groups: visible minorities, Aboriginal Peoples, and/or disabled persons. This mirrors the proportion seen in the Canadian workforce but differs from the distribution in the entire tourism labour force.

Youth in Canada's Tourism Sector by Equity Group

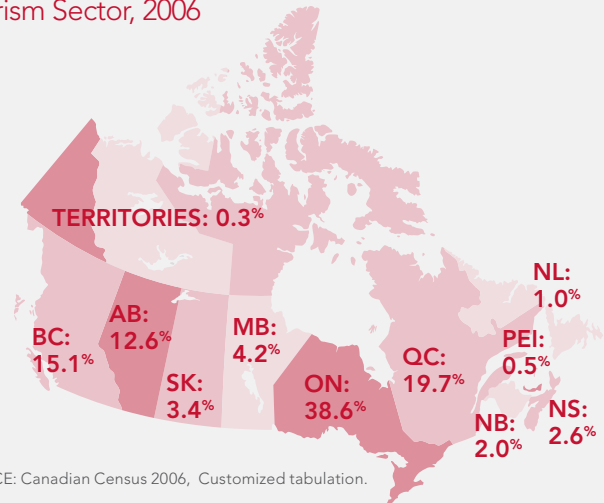
	Total Tourism Labour Force	Tourism Labour Force aged 15-24 years
Visible Minorities	19%	15%
Aboriginal Peoples	3%	4%
Disabled Persons	12%	7%
TOTAL	34%	26%

SOURCE: Canadian Census 2006, Customized tabulation.

Three-quarters of young people employed in tourism work in Canada's most populous provinces

In absolute terms, the highest percentages of young men and women employed in tourism were working in Ontario (39%), Quebec (20%), and British Columbia (15%). Given the size of the tourism sector in these provinces, these proportions are not surprising. On the other hand, when comparing the number of youth working in tourism with each province's overall share of young workers, an interesting trend appears. The participation rates of youth in tourism were highest in Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island, and Manitoba.

Geographic Distribution of Young Workers in Canada's Tourism Sector, 2006



SOURCE: Canadian Census 2006, Customized tabulation.

On a provincial level, the food and beverage services industry groups in Newfoundland and Labrador, and Prince Edward Island employed the largest proportions of young workers. In Ontario, the recreation and entertainment industry group employed the highest share of youth.

Youth are attracted to the opportunities for part-time and seasonal employment that Canada's tourism sector offers. Many occupations in tourism give people between the ages of 15 and 24 the flexibility they need while attending school and exploring the early stages of their careers. In turn, tourism businesses reap the benefits of this symbiotic relationship because, without young workers, the tourism sector would not meet its full potential. These workers are a commonly targeted group for employment in the tourism sector. But, to effectively attract the dwindling number of youth in the labour force, businesses must make an effort to understand the needs of this labour pool in order to compete for their attention.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

The "Demographic Profile of Tourism Sector Employees" report is produced every five years as new Census data is made available. This summary was developed using specialized tabulations from the 2006 Census and offers employment statistics for demographic groups within the tourism labour force.

The detailed "Demographic Profile of Tourism Sector Employees" report is available on the CTHRC website: www.cthrc.ca

For more information contact: research@cthrc.ca



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