

# Workers Reporting a Disability

## Demographic Profile of Tourism Sector Employees 2011\*



Tourism **HR**  
Canada

In 2011, Canada's tourism sector had an employed labour force of 1,651,440 workers. This represented 10% of Canada's employed workers, making tourism the third largest sector in terms of total employment share, ahead of manufacturing (9.2%), educational services (7.5%) and public administration (7.3%).<sup>1</sup> The following demographic profile presents tourism sector data from the 2011 National Household Survey, and represents only a sample of the available data. For more information, contact Tourism HR Canada at [research@tourismhr.ca](mailto:research@tourismhr.ca).

### Disability in the Tourism Workforce

According to the National Household Survey, 12.8% of workers reported a disability in 2011. Tourism workers reported a slightly lower rate of disability at 12.3%. The data provides information on the number of people who have trouble with daily activities and who experience reduced activities due to a physical or mental condition or other health problem.<sup>2</sup>

Increased levels of reported disability correlate with increased age. As the age of Canada's workforce increases, the proportion of reported disabilities increases as well (See Table 1). Since tourism as a whole includes a higher proportion of young workers (32% of the tourism workforce, compared to 13% of the entire labour force), the overall proportion of those with a disability is pulled downwards.

However, this decrease is not as significant as it might be because young tourism workers report higher rates of disability compared to their own age group in the overall labour force.

Table 1: Percent of Workers Reporting a Disability – By Age Group

Age Cohort	Total Labour Force (%)	Total Tourism (%)
All Age Groups	12.8	12.3
15 to 24	6.4	6.7
25 to 34	7.6	8.8
35 to 44	9.9	11.4
45 to 54	14.7	16.3
55 to 64	21.6	23.0
65 +	32.8	32.2

### Disability by Industry Group

Of the five industry groups in the tourism sector, transportation had the highest reported prevalence of disability (14.5% of the workforce), followed by accommodations (14.2%) (See Figure 1). The lowest reported prevalence was seen in the food and beverage industry. This is to be expected as food and beverage has the youngest workforce of the five industry groups and transportation has a large proportion of mature workers.

<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey Portrait of Canada's Labour Force

<sup>2</sup> The term disability is used here as a shorthand for difficulties with daily activities or a reduction of activities. Complete information on disability in Canada is available through the Canadian Survey on Disability (CSD), which is conducted as a follow-up to the NHS.

\* Customized Tabulations: National Household Survey, 2011.

Figure 1: Percent of Workers Reporting a Disability – By Industry Group



### Disability by Occupation

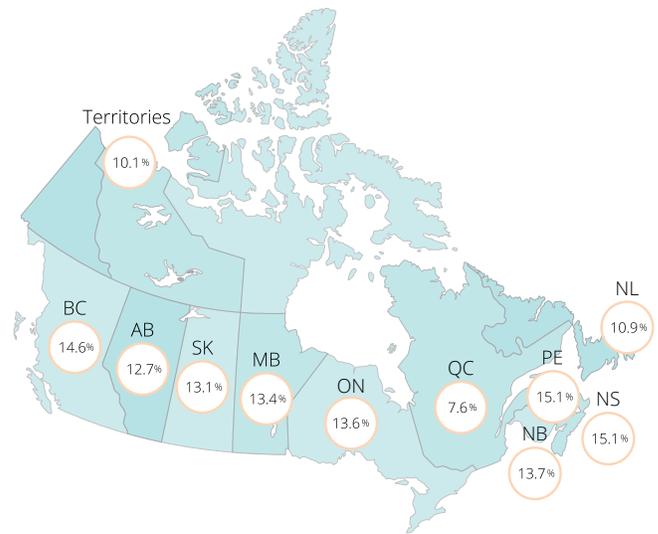
Specific occupations that demonstrated a higher than average level of disability included janitors and caretakers (20.1%), taxi and limousine drivers (18.5%), bus drivers (18.4%), light duty cleaners (18.2%), outdoor sport and recreation guides (17.7%), and casino occupations (17.4%).

The workforce of these occupations tends to have an older age structure. For example, 6.2% of janitors are over 65 years of age compared to only 2.9% of all tourism workers. This partially explains the higher levels of disability. However, these occupations also tend to have higher than average levels of reported disability for all age groups. In tourism, 6.7% of 15 to 24 year olds and 8.8% of 25 to 34 year olds report some level of disability. However, in these six occupations, reported levels of disability often ranged from 10% to 15% for the two youngest age groups.

### Disability by Province

Compared to the Canadian average, Quebec had significantly lower levels of self-reported disability among tourism employees (7.6%). Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island had significantly higher levels (15.1%) (See Figure 2). Low levels of self-reported disability in Quebec has been noted in previous censuses, as well as other studies of disability. The higher rates of disability in Nova Scotia have been linked to several health determinants such as an older population, increased rates of obesity, smoking, rural living and lower income. Quebec shares many of these determinants, yet the lower reported rates of disability remain.<sup>3</sup> This “Quebec effect” may be the result of cultural perceptions of disability that affect reporting.

Figure 2: Percent of Workers Reporting a Disability – By Province



### Work Patterns and Reported Disability

At the sector level, little difference in self-reported disability was seen between people working full-time or part time: 12.4% of full-time workers reported a disability and 11.9% of part-time workers reported a disability.

By industry group, some difference in the proportion of disabled workers was seen in food and beverage services, travel services and transportation. In food and beverage services, a smaller proportion of part-time workers reported a disability, likely because as a group they are younger than their full-time counterparts.

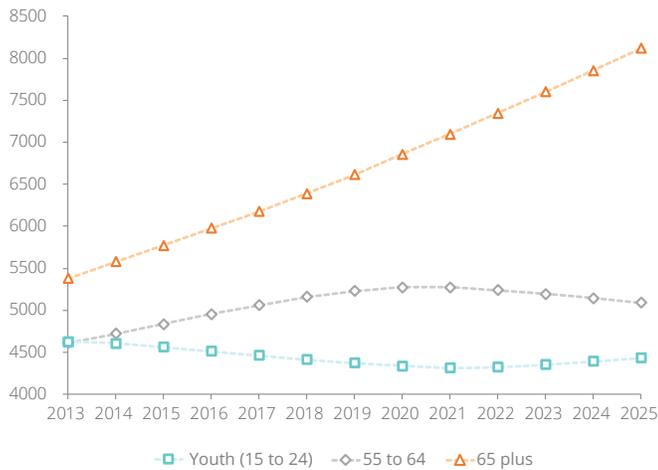
Part-time transportation and travel services workers were more likely to report a disability. In travel services, 15.7% of part-time workers reported a disability compared to 11.0% of full-time workers. In transportation, the gap was larger with 22.4% of part-time workers reporting a disability compared to 12.8% of full-time workers. This data also correlates with age. In travel services and transportation, part-time work is more commonly associated with mature workers. Part-time work may allow those with some limitation to continue working if full-time work becomes less viable.

<sup>3</sup> MacKenzie, Andrew M., 2013, Divergent Disability Rates in Canada: Analysis of the Social Determinants of Disability. PhD thesis, Carleton University.

## Moving Towards the Future

In the decade between 2015 and 2025, Canada will see a significant aging of its population and labour force. The number of young people aged 15 to 24 will actually decrease until 2021, while the number of people aged 55 to 64 increases and the number of people over the age of 65 increases drastically. (See Figure 3). This implies that the labour force will also age, and an older labour force will have increased levels of disability. To an increasing degree, employers will need to find ways to accommodate disabilities in order to ensure that they have the employees needed to operate their businesses.

Figure 3: Population Growth By Age Group (2013–2025)<sup>4</sup>



<sup>4</sup> Adapted from Statistics Canada, Population Projections for Canada (2013 to 2063) Projection scenario M1: medium-growth, 1991/1992 to 2010/2011 trends, May 26, 2015, Catalogue no. 91-520-X