

**Where To Work in Canada?  
An Examination of Regional Differences in Work Life  
Practices**

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## Section One

### Introduction

The issues associated with balancing work and family are of paramount importance to individuals, the organizations that employ them, the families that care for them, the unions that represent them and governments concerned with global competitiveness, citizen well-being and national health. Although much has been written about the topic, only a handful of “high impact” studies have been conducted on this subject in Canada. Despite the popular press fixation on the topic (reflecting its readers’ interest) there is, at this time, little sound empirical data available to inform the debate. This is unfortunate as credible research in this area has the power to change how governments and employers think about the issue and how they formulate and implement human resource, social and labour policy.

A lot has happened in the ten years since we conducted our first study on work-family balance. Academic research on the topic has burgeoned. Nationally the 90's was a decade of turbulence for working Canadians as companies downsized, right-sized, restructured and globalized. The recession of the early 90's was followed by the “jobless recovery” of the mid 90's and job security was the issue that absorbed many working Canadians and their families. Organizations, faced with a glut of competent employees from which to choose, often paid little attention to becoming “best practice” with respect to human resource management. Throughout the 90's technological change and the need to be competitive globally increased the pressures on organizations and employees alike. Time in employment increased for many as did the use of non-standard types of employment. Non-work demands also increased over the decade as family structures continued to change and the percent of working Canadians with child care, elder care or both (the sandwich generation) continued to rise.

Paradoxically, as we enter the new millennium there has been a complete about face with respect to the issue of work-life balance as employers, faced with impending labour shortages, have become preoccupied with recruiting and retaining “knowledge workers<sup>1</sup>.” Such employers have recognized that a focus on “human capital” is one key to increased productivity for the workforce of 2001 and beyond.

At this point in time, we have little understanding about how the ability to balance work and life varies across the country. While we know that social policies that may affect work-life conflict vary by province we do not know to what extent these policies manifest themselves in terms of lower or higher levels of stress, conflict etc. Similarly, while we know that the types of employment and employment conditions vary across the country, we do not know how these differences are associated with key attitudes and outcomes. Such information is necessary to policy makers who are responsible for designing appropriate interventions and the employees and employers who are deciding in which section of Canada to locate.

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Drucker (1999) coined the term knowledge worker to describe highly skilled employees whose work is complex, cyclical in nature, and involves processing and using information to make decisions.

This study seeks to fill some of these gaps.

## **Objectives for this Report**

This report uses data collected in conjunction with the 2001 work-life study to create a report card on work-life and employment practices in five regions of Canada:

- British Columbia (B.C.),
- the Prairies (i.e. Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba),
- Ontario,
- Quebec, and
- the Maritimes (i.e. Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island).

Specifically, it "takes the pulse" of the nation by assessing "vital" signs in six areas:

- work and non-work demands (time in work and non-work activities),
- work environment (culture and benefits),
- work and family outcomes (role overload, role interference, caregiver strain),
- family outcomes (family satisfaction, parental satisfaction, family adaptation, family integration, positive parenting, decision to have children)
- organizational outcomes (view of ones' employer, commitment, job stress, job satisfaction, intent to turnover, absenteeism, spending on prescription medication), and
- employee wellbeing (perceived stress, burnout, depressed mood, life satisfaction, health).

In other words, this research examines the issues associated with work life balance, identifies who is at risk, articulates why employers and provincial governments should care and provides direction on ways to move forward. This research should help interested parties within the different regions of Canada to separate the rhetoric from the reality with respect to work-life balance. It should also help employees determine where they want to live and work within Canada.

## **Organization of Report**

This report is broken down into ten sections. The introduction was presented in section one. Section two provides relevant details on the methodology used in the study. Section three provides a description of the kinds of employees found in each of these five regions in Canada. Three profiles are provided in this section. The first outlines the personal characteristics of the employees (i.e. mean age, marital status) while the second talks about their family circumstances (i.e. parental status, eldercare). The third profile focuses on the characteristics of the work performed by these employees (i.e. unionization, work arrangements). Section four looks at the demands faced by employees across Canada. Data on work demands are presented first followed by data on time in work, family and leisure and volunteer activities. The work environment is examined in Section five. Included in this section is an examination of regional differences in perceived flexibility, work cultures, supportive management and the availability of family friendly benefits. Comparative data on key outcomes are examined in sections six (work-life balance), seven (the

family outcomes) eight (work outcomes) and nine (employee and societal outcomes). Conclusions and policy implications are presented in the final section of the document - section ten.

## **Section Two Methodology**

The data in this report is taken from the 2001 National Worklife Balance Study. Full details on this study can be found in the following locations:

- Work-Life Balance in the New Millennium: Where Are We? Where Do We Need to Go? CPRN Discussion Paper No. W|12 October 2001  
Website: <http://www.cprn.org/cprn.html>
- The 2001 National Work-Life Conflict Study: Report One (2002)  
Website: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgspsp/publicat/work-travail/index.html>
- Voices of Canadians (2003)  
Website: <http://labour-travail.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/worklife/>
- C Work-life Conflict in the New Millennium: A Status Report (2003)  
<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgspsp/publicat/work-travail/report2/index.html>

A summary of key details pertinent to this report are given below.

### **The Questionnaire**

The 12 page survey instrument was divided into 9 sections: your job; your manager; time management; work, family and personal life; work arrangements; work environment; family; physical and mental health; and “information about you.” Virtually all of the scales used in the questionnaire are psychometrically sound measures that have been well-validated in other studies. A summary of the measures used, including the working definition of each of the variables, the source of the measure and its interpretation, can be found in the reports cited above.

### **Statistical Analyses**

The following types of analysis were done on the data presented in this report:

- C **Frequencies:** calculated as the percent of the sample giving a particular response (i.e. gender, education, income, job type, work arrangement, agree or disagree with a particular statement regarding organizational culture, are satisfied, dissatisfied or neutral with some aspect of their job),
- C **Means:** calculated as the sample’s average response to open ended questions (i.e. age, time spent in child care, hours in work per week),
- C **Average scores on outcome variables:** calculated as the summed average score of all items used to measure that outcome. For example, the organizational commitment scale (question 1, page 1) is made up of 9 items. For each of these items the respondent used a five point scale (1=strongly disagree, 3 = neutral, 5=strongly agree) to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with this statement. The overall commitment score was then computed by summing the scores provided by the respondent to each of these 9 items and calculating the average response (i.e., divided by 9).

**C Comparisons over time:** In these cases we compare the results obtained from the 31,000 + Canadians who responded to our 1991 Work-life Balance survey to those provided by the 28,000 + Canadians who answered the 2001 Survey. In all cases where comparisons over time are reported, the identical measure was used in the 2001 and in 1991 surveys

Throughout the discussion that follows we make use of the terms "low" and "high." For example, we might say that 15% of the respondents had "low" job commitment. These percentages are calculated as follows. First, for each scale, an average score is calculated as described. For most scales, if this average score exceeds 3.5 we say the person is "high" on the scale. If the score is below 2.5, we say they score "low" on the scale. For two scales - stress and depressed mood - scores taken from population norms were used to define high and low cutoffs (low = 1.5; high = 2.8). The lower cutoff scores for these measures were advisable as previous research indicates that both these measures have systematic "social desirability" biases.

### **The kind of job you do makes a difference**

In this report we do two different sets of regional comparisons. Set one compares the responses given by managers and professionals in different parts of the company (referred to throughout this report as the professional group). Set two compares the responses given by employees in technical, clerical, production, retail and administrative positions<sup>2</sup> (referred to in this report as the non-professional sample). The decision to break the sample into two groups based on job type was done because our previous analysis of this data set indicated that many of the outcomes examined in this study are significantly associated with job type. The importance of job type is very consistent with previous research in this area which has determine that the type of job an individual holds will affect their ability to balance work and family demands. Job type can also act as a surrogate measure for other important variables such as education, income, commitment, and identification with the work role which are, in turn, linked to work-life conflict and stress. Managers and professionals have been reported to be more highly educated, to receive greater remuneration, to have greater job mobility and to be more highly committed to and involved in their work than their counterparts in non-professional positions. Each of these factors has been linked to an increased ability to cope with work-life conflict and stress, and more positive work outcomes (i.e. higher commitment, higher job satisfaction).

### **Interpretation of the Data**

The focus in this report is on significant differences that are "substantive" in nature. While the very large data set means that between group differences as small as 1% are statistically significant, the focus on our discussion will be on differences that are also meaningful - defined in this report to be between regional

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<sup>2</sup>The decision to include technical employees in the same group as clerical and administrative workers is supported by data analysis done using the total data set which showed that the responses given by employees in technical positions were virtually identical to those obtained from clerical and administrative employees.

differences and job type differences of 3% or greater.

## Reporting of Data

In most cases, the data that are reported in the tables are rounded to the closest number. Sometimes this rounding of the data means that the totals do not add up to exactly 100. A complete set of data tables for the professional and non-professional samples are provided in Appendix at the end of the report. Finally, it should be noted that to increase the readability of this report academic references have been kept to a minimum. The interested reader is directed to look in the reports noted earlier for these references.

**Table 1: Sample Distribution by Region**

Region	Professional Sample	Non-professional Sample	Canada
Atlantic	13%	14%	8%
Quebec	11%	11%	24%
Ontario	43%	40%	38%
Prairies	24%	21%	17%
British Columbia	11%	12%	13%

*Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM, Matrices 6367-6378 and 6408-6409, 2000*

*The Canada data represents the total population in each province. Our sample includes only Canadians between the ages of 18 and 65.*

Note: Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Atlantic region includes Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland and Prairie region includes Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba

## The Sample

In total, 100 companies with 500+ employees participated in the 2001 “National Study on Balancing Work and Family” (referred to throughout the rest of the report as the 2001 study): 40 from the private sector, 22 from the public sector and 38 from the Not for Profit (NFP) sector. Private sector companies from the following sectors were included in the sample: telecommunications, high technology, retail, transportation, pharmaceutical, financial services, entertainment, natural resources and manufacturing. The NFP sector sample consisted of 15 hospitals/district health councils, 10 school boards, 8 universities and colleges, and 5 “other” organizations that could best be classified as NFP/greater public service (e.g. social service,

charity, protective services). The public sector sample included 7 municipal governments, 7 provincial government departments, and 8 federal public service departments/agencies. A total of 31,571 people responded to the “National Study on Balancing Work and Family” survey. Just over 3,000 of these individuals did not give us their postal code and were eliminated from the sample. The final sample used in this report examines the responses of 28,538 Canadian employs.

### **Respondents Come From Across Canada**

Residence was examined in this study by asking respondents to indicate their postal code (used to determine province of residence, region of the province and whether or not the individual lived in an urban or rural area) and the approximate population of the community in which they live. We also asked what language they spoke at home.

Data on the regional distribution of the sample are given in Table 1 below. National data from 2000 are provided for comparison purposes. The data indicate that the respondents to this survey came from across the country. The majority came from the most populous provinces (Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia). While the percent of the sample coming from Quebec is smaller than desired, the sample size (just over 3000) is sufficient to make meaningful observations. Finally, while not shown, it is important to note that we also have an excellent distribution within the different regional groupings. For example, the “Prairies” grouping is obtained by combining the 10% of respondents who live in Alberta with the 5% who live in Saskatchewan and the 5% who live in Manitoba. There were no meaningful gender, job type or dependent care status differences with respect to residence.

A number of interesting observations can be made from the data with respect to the types of communities employees across Canada live and work in. These observations include the following:

#### **The majority of Canadians live and work in urban areas**

The majority of the respondents to this survey (88%) lived in an urban area; 12% lived in a rural area. According to the 1996 Census<sup>3</sup>, nationally 22% of Canadians live in rural areas while 78% live in urban communities.

#### **Respondents live in communities of different sizes**

The sample is well distributed with respect to community size. While the majority of respondents (52%) live in communities with 100,000 or more people, one in four live in communities with fewer than 25,000 people.

#### **Professional employees more likely to live in larger centres**

Respondents who work in professional positions were more likely to be found in the larger centres (55%

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<sup>3</sup>Statistics Canada (1998), 1996 Census: National Tables (Catalogue No. 93-357-XPB\_

of the respondents in the professional sample lived in communities of 100,000 or greater, 23% lived in centres of 500,000 or more); non-professionals were more likely to live in smaller communities (31% of non-professional sample lived in communities of under 25,000 while another 22% lived in communities with populations of 25,000 to 99,999).

### **Employees in the Maritimes and Prairies more likely to live in smaller, rural communities**

A greater percent of the workforce in the Maritime and Prairie regions live in rural communities of under 25,000 people. Approximately half of the employees in the Maritime sample and one in three of those in the Prairies sample live in communities with fewer than 25,000 people. Employees in these smaller communities may find it more difficult to access community services and supports such as special schools, teaching hospitals, elder care facilities etc. which help employed Canadians use to help them achieve balance. They may however, have stronger community support networks.

### **Employees in B.C. and Quebec are more likely to live in mid sized communities**

Employees in B.C. and Quebec were more likely to live in mid-sized communities with 25,000 to 99,000 people. Almost 40% of the professional and non-professional employees in these provinces lived in communities of this size.

### **Employees in Ontario are more likely to live in larger communities**

Approximately two thirds of the respondents working in Ontario lived in communities larger than 100,000. In fact, one in four work in communities of 500,000 or greater. Such communities are more likely to have a greater variety of support services available for Canadians and their families. Inhabitants of such communities are also, however, more likely to have stresses and challenges associated with longer commutes, greater diversity, social isolation, crime etc.

### **French is the mother tongue for one in five respondents**

The majority of respondents (80%) indicated that English was their first language. Seventeen percent of the sample identified French and 4% indicated a language other the French or English.

### **French speakers more likely to be found in Quebec and the Maritimes**

Not surprisingly, respondents from Quebec (85%) and the Maritimes (15%) were more likely to indicate that French was their first language. Non-professionals from these regions were more likely than professionals to identify French as their first language.

### **Most of the non-professionals in the sample worked in clerical positions**

Just over half of the non-professionals in the sample worked in clerical and administrative positions; 27% worked in non-professional technical positions and 22% worked in production and operational jobs. A

lower proportion of employees in this sample living in Western Canada performed clerical and administrative work (47% in B.C. and 48% in Prairies). A higher proportion of those in the Quebec sample (60%) worked in Clerical and administrative jobs. Respondents from the Prairies (29%) and the Maritimes (29%) were more likely to work in technical positions while employees in the B.C. sample (30%) were more likely to work in production and operational positions.

### **One in three in the professional sample worked as managers**

Seventy percent those in the professional sample worked in professional positions. The rest (30%) were managers. There is a lower number of professionals in the Quebec (62%) and Maritime (63%) samples. This means, by definition, there are a higher proportion of managers in both these groups.

## **Section Three Description of the Sample**

This section of the report provides a demographic profile of the people who responded to our survey. Included in this section are a number of variables which have been linked to the ability to balance work and family. This part of the report is divided into three main sections. Personal information on the respondents (i.e. age, gender, education) is presented in part one. This is followed in part two by data outlining the dependent care responsibilities (i.e. childcare, eldercare) assumed by these working Canadians. Relevant details on their work history such as years in job, years in current position, union status etc. are given in the third and last part of this section. In all cases the discussion is organized as follows. Findings obtained with the total sample (including differences associated with job type) are presented first. These data are taken from our previous reports in this series and are repeated here to put the discussion on regional differences in the workforce into context. Regional differences with respect to each of these variables are identified next for both the professional and non-professional samples.

### **Personal Characteristics**

The following variables are used to describe the personal characteristics of the employees in our sample: gender, age, and socio-economic status (defined to include job type, formal education, personal income, and family's financial situation). Details on each of these variables are given in Box One.

### **Who responded to the National Study on Balancing Work, Family and Lifestyle?**

The 2001 study sample is well distributed with respect to age, region, community size, job type, education, personal income, family income, and family's financial well-being. In many ways, the demographic characteristics of the sample correspond to national data suggesting that the results from this research can be generalized beyond this study. Approximately half of the respondents to the survey can be considered to be highly educated male and female knowledge workers. The majority of respondents are part of a dual income family and indicate that they are able to "live comfortably" (but not luxuriously) on two full-time incomes. Respondents who belong to a traditional, male breadwinner family are in the minority (5% of total

sample, 11% of the sample of men) and outnumbered by respondents who are single parents. The fact that the traditional families tended to be headed by highly paid male managers and professionals suggests that this family arrangement is restricted to those with higher incomes.

The sample includes a substantial number of employees who may be at risk with respect to work-life conflict. The mean age of the respondents to this survey is 42.8 years old which puts them in the mid career/fast track stage of the career cycle, the “full-nest” stage of the life cycle and the 40's transition stage of adult development. Each of these stages is associated with increased stress and greater work and family demands. One in three of the respondents is a clerical or administrative employee with a lower level of formal education (i.e. reduced job mobility) and lower personal and family incomes. One quarter of the respondents indicated that money is tight in their family; 29% of respondents earn less than \$40,000 per year and just over one quarter live in families with total family incomes that are less than the Canadian average. One in three of the respondents has a high school education or less.

## **Regional Differences in Personal Characteristics**

### **Men and women do different types of jobs**

The data reviewed in this study indicates that in Canada female employees are still more likely than their male counterparts to be compressed into lower paying positions within organizations (i.e. clerical, administrative). Just under two-thirds of the respondents in the non-professional sample were female - regardless of which region of Canada was being considered.

### **Professional females more likely to be found working in Ontario**

The professional sample, on the other hand, had an approximately equal number of men and women. This suggests that there has been some progress in terms of women's career options over the past several decades. There was a higher proportion of female professionals in the Ontario and Maritime samples - due largely to the higher number of female nurses, teachers and public servants within these samples.

### **Respondents in the mid career phase of their life cycle and going through the 40s transition**

The sample is well distributed with respect to age and closely approximates the age of the Canadian working population. The mean age of the respondents to this survey was approximately 42.5 (professionals were 43, non-professionals 42) which puts them in the mid career (and perhaps “fast track”) stages of the career cycle, the “full-nest” stage of the life cycle and the 40's transition stage of adult development. There were no regional differences in age. The fact that half the respondents were over the age of 43 indicates that companies across Canada will, in the near future, need to place a high priority on recruitment as well as succession planning.

### **Canadian professional employees are well educated**

Education is highly associated with job type throughout the country with managers and professionals reporting more years of formal education than non-professionals. More than half (57%) of the Canadians in the professional sample have a university degree and another one in five have a college diploma. Only 22% of this group have a high school education or less. This situation is almost the opposite of what can be observed in the non-professional sample. In this case, half of the sample have high school education or less, 28% (primarily those in technical positions) have a college diploma and 23% have a university degree.

## Box One: Personal Characteristics of the Sample

**Gender:** Gender is a critical variable in any study of balance between work and family as the literature suggests that gender may influence the ability to balance work and family in a number of different ways. Not only may it act as a direct predictor of the sources of conflict (see the section on dependent care for more details), but it also may act as a moderator which affects how the conflict is perceived, what coping skills are called upon and how the conflict is manifested.

**Age:** Age can be used to approximate life cycle stage (determined by age and normative life events such as marriage and children), career cycle stage (early career, mid career, late career, retirement) and adult development stage (transitional periods where people re-evaluate their life and re-create their life structure typically occur at around 30, 40 and 50 years of age). All of these factors can, in turn, be linked to an individual's ability to balance work and family demands.

**Socio-economic Status:** There are a number of variables that can act as buffers between work and family conditions and positive or negative outcomes. One such variable is socio-economic status. Three highly inter-correlated aspects of socio-economic status are considered in this analysis: job type (described earlier in Chapter Two), education, and income.

**C Education:** To determine education we asked respondents to circle the category which best described their educational background. Research in the area has linked years of formal education to more positive coping, increased job mobility and job security, higher job quality and increased perceived control. These factors are, in turn, associated with lower work-life conflict.

**C Personal Income:** Personal income was quantified in this study by asking respondents to circle the category which best described their income before taxes. Income has been found to be significantly and positively associated with the ability to cope with work and family demands as individuals with higher incomes can usually afford to hire adequate household and child care help to ease domestic burdens. They are also more able to purchase services and labour saving devices (e.g., dining out, hiring a housekeeper, household appliances etc.) which reduce demands on their time and energy. Lower income families, on the other hand, have less money and may, therefore, be less equipped to manage reoccurring work-family strains. It is also likely that families with limited resources are less able to cope with unanticipated stresses, such as a sick child, than can those families with more money.

**C Family Financial Status:** Income levels are not directly comparable as cost of living varies by location and the need for money varies with dependent care status. To get some kind of idea of the financial well-being of the families in our study, we asked respondents to circle the response that best described their families' financial situation (respondents who lived alone were asked to answer the question from their own perspective). These responses were collapsed into the following three categories (1) Money is tight (includes people who circled either "our family's financial resources are not enough to get by on" or "we get by on our family's resources but it is tight"), (2) Live comfortably (includes respondents who circled "we live comfortably on our family's financial resources but do not have enough money for extras"), and (3) Money not an issue (includes people who circled either "we live more than comfortably on our family's financial resources and have money for extras" or "money is not an issue for our family").

### **Professionals in Ontario and Quebec have more formal education**

The data indicates that professional employees in Ontario (63% have at least one university degree) and Quebec (66% have at least one university degree) have more formal education than their counterparts in other regions of the country. These data would suggest that Ontario and Quebec employees a greater number of knowledge workers than other regions of Canada. It would also suggest that these two provinces have a competitive advantage with respect to the competencies within their workforce.

### **Managerial and professional positions in Canada are comparatively well paid**

Managers and professionals employed in Canada's largest organizations are comparatively well paid. Only 13% of the respondents in this group make less than \$40,000 per year. A plurality of the managers and professionals in our sample (42%) earn between \$40,000 and \$59,999 per year. Just under one in three (31%) earn between \$60,000 and \$79,999 while 14% earn \$80,000 or more per year. In other words, approximately one in ten of the professional group can be considered to be lower income, 42% can be considered to have moderate incomes and 45% can be considered to have higher incomes.

### **Non-professional employees are more likely to be found in lower income positions**

Just over half of those in the non-professional sample (52%) reported that they made under \$40,000 per year. None of the employees in this group earned more than \$80,000 per annum. Approximately one in three (35%) in the non-professional sample made between \$40,000 and \$59,999 per year and one in ten (11%) earn between \$60,000 and \$79,999. In other words, approximately half of the non-professional group can be considered to be lower income, 35% can be considered to have moderate incomes and 11% can be regarded as having higher incomes.

### **Canadians working in the Prairies and the Maritimes have lower personal incomes**

Income is strongly associated with region of employment. Canadians who work in the Prairies and the Maritimes for companies employing 500+ people have lower personal incomes than their counterparts in other parts of the country. This difference in incomes could be observed in both the professional and non-professional samples suggesting that it is related to region rather than the type of work being done. Consider the following:

- C 68% of the professionals who lived in the Prairies and 63% of the professionals who lived in the Maritimes earned less than \$60,000 per year, and
- C 57% of the non-professionals who lived in the Prairies and 54% of the non-professionals who lived in the Maritimes earned less than \$40,000 per year.

### **Professionals working in Ontario and Quebec have higher personal incomes**

Employees with higher personal incomes tend to be managers and professionals working in Ontario and

Quebec. Almost one in five of the respondents in this group living in Ontario and 16% of those in Quebec made more than \$80,000 per year. Professionals in B.C., on the other hand, were more likely than other professionals to be paid between \$60,000 and \$79,999.

### **B.C. pays its non-professionals employees higher salaries**

One in five of the non-professional employees in the B.C. sample made \$60,000 to \$79,999 per year - almost double the proportion observed in the rest of Canada.

### **Most Canadians are able to live comfortably on their family income**

Almost half of the respondents in both the managerial and professional sample (45%) perceived that they were able to live comfortably on their families' income. Those in the professional sample were more likely than their non-professional counterparts to say that within their family money was not an issue (37% of professionals gave this response versus 24% of non-professionals). Non-professionals, on the other hand, were more likely to say that within their family money was tight (31% of non-professionals gave this response versus 19% of professionals).

### **Professional employees in B.C and the Maritimes are more likely to say that in their family money is tight**

One in four of the professionals in the B.C and Maritime samples indicated that in their families money is tight. This finding is not surprising given our previous data that showed that:

- professionals in the Maritimes sample were more likely than other professionals to earn less than \$60,000 per year.
- professionals in the B.C. sample were more likely than other professionals to earn between \$60,000 and \$79,999 per year (as opposed to over \$80,000).

### **Professional employees in Ontario and Quebec are more likely to say that money is not an issue in their family**

Approximately 40% of the professionals in Ontario and Quebec in our sample indicated that money was not an issue in their family. This finding is consistent with the higher personal incomes reported by these two groups of employees.

### **Professionals in the Prairies are more likely to report that they can live comfortably on their incomes**

It is also interesting to note that although professionals in the Prairies sample received lower incomes than their counterparts in other regions of the country, they were more likely to say that their families were able to live comfortably on their incomes and less likely to say that money was not an issue within their families.

In other words, employees in the Prairies region live in families that have enough money to get by on but not a lot of money for luxuries.

### **Non-professionals employees across Canada have similar perceptions of their families' financial situation**

Non-professional families across the company tended to have very similar views of their families' financial situation. That being said there are a few differences that are worthy of note:

- C respondents in the Prairies sample were more likely to say that in their families money was tight (consistent with the lower incomes earned by this group),
- C respondents in B.C., Ontario and Quebec were more likely to say that in their families money was not an issue, and
- C respondents in the Maritimes were more likely to say that they could live comfortably on their family income.

### **Dependent Care Responsibilities**

Research has shown that employees who are responsible for the care of others are more likely to experience productivity losses from increased absences, tardiness and stress at home and on the job and such time-wasters as excessive use of the phone. They were also more likely to have difficulties balancing work and family responsibilities and reported higher levels of stress and role overload.

The following variables are used to describe the dependent care responsibilities of the employees in our sample: marital status, family type, parental status, eldercare dependents and membership in the sandwich generation. Details on each of these variables are given in Box Two. The data outlined in this section should give provincial governments an appreciation of the extent to which work-life conflict may be a problem for employees in their area of the country.

### **Canadians have a multitude of responsibilities outside of work**

The majority of employees in the 2001 survey sample have responsibilities outside of work. Three-quarters of the respondents were married or living with a significant other and 69% were part of a dual-income family. Eleven percent of the respondents were single parents. Seventy percent were parents (average number of children for parents in the sample is 2.1); sixty percent have eldercare (average number of elderly dependents is 2.3); 13% have responsibility for the care of a disabled relative; 13% have both childcare and eldercare demands (i.e. were part of the "sandwich generation"). The fact that these data on non-work demands correspond closely to national data provided by Statistics Canada and the Vanier Institute suggests that the findings from this study can be generalized to all Canadians working for large firms.

## **Box Two: Dependent Care Responsibilities**

**Marital Status:** While the research literature has found an association between marital status and work-life conflict, the relationship is not a straight forward one and we have a lot to learn in this area. On the one hand, marriage can increase an employee's non-work demands while simultaneously decreasing the amount of control they have over their time (i.e. greater need to co-ordinate activities with others). On the other hand, a spouse can provide emotional and tangible support in times of stress (e.g. take responsibility for home chores, help out in a crisis), thereby increasing the employee's sense of control.

**Family Type:** It is necessary to examine the changing face of the Canadian family in any study on balancing work and family as many of the attitudes and values of the workforce are being driven by the changing roles and responsibilities of family members. Today's family may be composed of: two parents with children, a single parent and children, two adults with children from one or two marriages, parents in a common-law relationship, children whose parents live in separate residences etc.. Despite significant changes in family structure, the needs and wants of family members remain the same. In most cases, however, the responsibility for satisfying those needs and wants rests with people who face the demands and obligations associated with being paid employees as well as family members. Family type is defined in this study as follows: (1) dual career: both spouses worked in managerial and professional positions, (2) dual earner: both spouses worked in non-professional positions, (3) single: respondent indicated they had no spouse or partner, (4) dual mixed: one partner worked in a "career" job while the other worked in a non-professional position, traditional: respondent indicated that partner was at home full time. Within each of these groupings we then further subdivided the sample according to whether they had children at home or not.

**Parental Status:** To get a better comprehension of the dependent care demands experienced by those participating in this research we asked respondents to indicate the number of children they had and the age of these children.

**Elder-care Status:** The number of employees with responsibilities for an elderly dependent are also considered in this study. Dependent care is not just a question of care for children. Concern over elder-care responsibilities is now increasing. Elder care is defined as providing some type of assistance with the daily living activities for an elderly relative who is chronically ill, frail or disabled.

**Sandwich Generation:** Employees who have responsibility for dependent children and aging parents are known as the "sandwich generation" to reflect the fact that they are often caught in the middle of competing demands. The trend toward women delaying childbearing until they are established in their career suggests that dependent care (both children and elderly) may become more of an issue in the next decade as a greater number of families find themselves caring for young children and elderly parents.

Dependent care responsibilities do not depend on either job type or sector. They do, however, vary considerably by gender. The men in the sample were more likely to have children than were the women (77% of men are fathers while 65% of women are mothers). Closer examination of the data indicates that this gender difference in parental status is due to the fact that the women in managerial and professional positions in this sample were less likely to have children than their counterparts in non-professional positions. The opposite results was observed for the men in our sample (i.e. men in managerial and professional positions were more likely to have children than their non-professional counterparts). Why are professional women less likely to have children? The data would suggest that motherhood and career advancement are not perceived by many of the professional women in the sample to be compatible goals. Just under half of the managerial and professional women in the sample agreed that they had not yet started a family because of their career or (for those women with children) that they had fewer children because of the demands of their work.

### **The majority of Canadians live in dual-income families**

Just over half of the non-professionals (52%) and professionals (57%) in the sample were dual income parents. Another 15% of both samples were DINKS (dual-income, no children). In contrast, only 5% of the non-professionals and 8% of the professionals in the sample were part of a traditional (i.e. male breadwinner, wife and children at home) family unit. While the proportion of dual-income families varied from region to region, there were no regional differences with respect to the number of traditional families or DINK couples. These data indicate that the traditional family is in decline in Canada and the dual-income family unit now the norm. Canadian organizations can, therefore, no longer manage according to the myth of separate works (i.e. assume that work and family do not influence each other).

### **Regional Differences in Family Characteristics**

#### **Higher proportion of dual-income parents in the Maritimes**

The following regional variations in family structures were observed in the data:

- C A higher proportion of the workforce in the Maritimes were dual-income parents (57% of the non-professionals and 59% of the professionals).
- C A higher proportion of professionals in Ontario were dual-income parents (60%).
- C A lower proportion of both the professional and non-professional workforces in B.C. and Quebec were dual-income parents (52% of the professionals in the Quebec and B.C. samples and 48% of the non-professionals were dual-income parents). The lower number of dual-income parents in Quebec can be explained by the higher proportion of single mothers in this province. In, B.C., on the other hand, the findings can be explained by the fact that a higher proportion of workforce are unmarried and have no children.

#### **Quebec has a higher number of of single mothers in its workforce**

One in ten of the professionals in the sample and 13% of the non-professionals are single parents. The

data collected for this study indicates that Quebec has a higher proportion of employed single mothers (over 80% of the single parents in the sample were women) than other regions of Canada. Seventeen percent of the non-professional employees in Quebec and 12% of the professional employees were single parents. It should be noted that most of the research in this area suggests that single parents are at greater risk with respect to work-life conflict.

Ontario also has a disproportionately higher number of professional single mothers (12% of the families in the Ontario sample). The Maritimes, on the other hand, have fewer single parent mothers in their workforce (6%).

### **Approximately 15% of employed Canadians are single with no children**

Almost one in five (17%) of the non-professionals in our sample and 13% of the professionals were single employees with no children. Employees in B.C. (21%) and the Prairies (20%) were more likely to be in this group. Employees in Ontario, on the other hand, were less likely. Single employees tend to be younger, and more mobile as they have fewer encumbrances and financial obligations. These employees also have fewer problems with respect to work-life balance.

### **The majority of Canadian employees have dependent care responsibilities**

Two-thirds of the non-professional employees and almost three quarters (72%) of the professionals in the sample had children at home. Approximately the same proportion (64% of all respondents) had eldercare responsibilities. These data reinforce the idea that work-life conflict in Canada is no longer restricted to those employees with children but now encompasses a much wider group of working Canadians.

### **Challenges with respect to eldercare are systemic across the country**

It is important to note that there were no regional differences with respect to the percent of the workforce with eldercare responsibilities. In other words this is an issue that needs to be addressed by all provincial governments.

### **Canadian employees are having fewer children**

The mean number of children for the parents in the sample was 1.5. There was no variation in this number across the various regions of Canada. This finding is consistent with birth rate and fertility data reported by Statistics Canada. Is it also disturbing in that it indicates that employed Canadians are not having enough children to maintain our population through reproduction (it has been calculated that we need 2.1 children per family to just keep our population at its current size without relying on immigration).

### **Employees in B.C. are less likely to have children**

Employees in B.C., regardless of their job type, were significantly less likely to be parents (62% of non-professional sample have children and 60% of professional sample with children). Non-professional

employees in Quebec, on the other hand, were more likely than other non-professionals to have children (70%).

### **More employees are sandwiched between childcare and eldercare**

Fifteen percent of employed Canadians, regardless of job type or region of the country have a dual set of responsibilities - childcare and eldercare. The proportion of Canadian employees in this group should increase in the next decade due to two factors: (1) the aging of the Canadian population, and (2) the tendency of Canadian employees to delay having children. The data suggests that all regions of the country will need to deal with this issue.

### **Characteristics of Work**

To understand an employee's ability to balance work and life you need to appreciate the constraints imposed and opportunities available in two domains: work and non-work. The previous sections described the key features of the respondent's non-work life. This section provides similar information with respect to the individual's work domain. The following data are discussed: span of control, time in current organization, time in current position, union status, % moonlighting (i.e. holding more than one job) and the use of alternative work arrangements. Details on each of these work variables are given in Box 3.

### **Working Conditions Make Achieving a Balance Challenging**

What do we know about the work done by those who responded to the survey (and by extension the work environments of Canadians who work for larger organizations)? Half belong to unions. One in three supervise the work of others. The demands associated with supervision are substantive as the typical supervisor has a very wide span of control (an average of 20 direct reports). This span of control is significantly higher than was observed in the 1991 sample (an average of 6 direct reports) a finding that is consistent with the fact that many organizations shed layers of management as part of their downsizing and restructuring initiatives. These data suggest that one consequence of this strategy is an increased workload for the supervisor that "survived" the downsizing.

Despite the turbulence of the 1990's, the data from the 2001 survey would suggest that most Canadian employees make a long term commitment to their employers; the average respondent has been working at their present organization for an average of 13.9 years. Unfortunately, the data also suggest that the rhetoric about the importance of continuous learning and career development has not translated into concrete actions in these areas. In fact, the average respondent in 2001 has been in their current job for an average of 7.3 years. These data would suggest that Canada's largest employers need to focus more on career development.

The data indicate that there is a disconnect between the work schedules desired by Canadians and the work arrangements offered by Canada's largest employers. While the current needs of our society require a diversity of work schedules, the majority (52%) of Canadians who responded to this survey work "regular" hours (i.e. have little to no flexibility with respect to arrival and departure times or ability to work

at home). Furthermore, the percent of respondents using the most desired

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### **Box Three** **Characteristics of Work**

**Span of control:** Span of control is defined as the number of employees who directly report to a particular manager. Spans of control can be narrow (i.e. lower in number) or wide (a higher number of employees report to each manager). Research suggests that as work become less routine (i.e. managing a professional workforce) spans of control should become narrower.

**% Belonging to a Union:** Unionized workers generally receive higher wages, greater non-wage benefits and in many respects better work arrangements than non-unionized workers. This would suggest that unionized workers are better able to balance work and family demands than their peers who are non-unionized.

**Percent in Contract/Temporary Positions:** Concomitant with the restructuring and downsizing that occurred in Canada in the '80s and '90s was a growth in the use of non-standard forms of work. Research suggests that many of these non-standard positions are low quality and offer few benefits and little flexibility. Employees working in such positions typically experience higher levels of work stress which "spills over" into their family domain.

**Time With Organization (i.e. Organizational Tenure) in Years:** Traditionally, organizational tenure has been positively correlated with higher levels of organizational commitment and loyalty to the organization. In this study we observed the opposite effect (i.e. higher number of years, lower commitment). We attributed this finding to the fact that employees who have spent more time with their current organization are more likely to be "survivors" of the downsizing of the 90's. These survivors are typically less loyal to their employer and report higher job stress due to increased work demands and lower levels of job security.

**Time in Present Position:** Years in current position has traditionally been used to assess career mobility. While the optimal number of years in one job depends on the employee and their career aspirations, previous research suggests that employees who have spent a relatively long time in one job (e.g. over 4 years) are more likely to feel frustrated and de-motivated.

**Alternative Work Arrangements:** There is nothing inherently magical about the traditional five-day, forty-hour "fixed" work week. A number of researchers, in fact, feel that many organizations use this schedule solely as a result of tradition. Organizations have recently become interested in alternative ways to schedule work as most of the research in this area links the use of flexible work arrangements with greater work-life balance.

**Shiftwork:** Rapidly evolving business environments, demographic changes in the markets and global competition often mean that companies that want to be competitive have to change how they schedule work. Thanks to new technology many companies can now offer their services or produce their goods on a 24 hour basis if they schedule their employees to work evenings or weekends. Employees who work shift traditionally have greater difficulties balancing work and family demands.

desired “family friendly” flexible work arrangements (flextime and telework) has not changed over the decade and remains relatively low (approximately 20% work flextime, and 1% telework). In fact, for many Canadian employees, work schedules may have deteriorated over the decade as the percent of the workforce who use work schedules known to increase work-life conflict and stress (i.e. rotating shifts, fixed shifts, atypical work arrangements) has increased. It is worthwhile noting, in fact, that in the 2001 sample, the same percent of respondents work shifts (20%) as use flextime.

The data also indicate that access to flexible work arrangements is not evenly distributed throughout the workforce. Professional employees are more likely to use flextime arrangements than are non-professionals. Non-professionals employees, on the other hand, are more likely to engage in shift work. These data would suggest that alternative work arrangements are not equally available to all employees.

Further examination of the data indicate that those employees who have the greatest need for flexible work arrangements (i.e. parents and employees with eldercare responsibilities) do not have access to them. This suggests that despite all the talk about “family friendly” and “employer of choice”, the myth of separate worlds still appears to be the operating principal in many of Canada’s largest employers. Organizations that insist on regular work schedules have the same expectations of employees (regardless of family situation) and fail to recognize the impact of the work domain on the family domain.

It is also interesting to note that while few respondents formally telework, 12% engage in guerilla telework (i.e. informal work at home). This would suggest that work at home is possible (i.e. work can be done outside of the regular office environment) and that employees do want to use such arrangements. These findings suggest that barriers to telework exist at the organizational level.

## **Regional Differences in Characteristics of Work**

### **Managers in Canada have very high spans of control**

The number of direct reports per manager in the sample was 23 - reflecting very high spans of control. Managers in the Maritime sample had the highest number of direct reports (29) and hence the greatest management burden. Those in the Quebec sample, on the other hand, had the lowest number (18).

### **Non-professionals in Maritimes and Quebec more likely to be unionized**

Just over half (54%) of the non-professional employees who responded to this survey and 40% of the professionals belonged to a union. The percent of the workforce unionized varies with the region of the country. Eastern Canada has a higher proportion of unionized workers (66% of the non-professional respondents from the Maritimes and 62% of those from Quebec were unionized). In contrast, only 35% of the professional employees from B.C. belonged to a union.

### **The majority of survey respondents hold what are traditionally considered to be “good” jobs**

Just over 90% of the total sample (non-professional and professional alike) worked in full-time positions: only 12% worked in contract (i.e. non-permanent) positions. Professional employees in Ontario were more likely to work part-time (13%). Professional employees in the Maritime sample were more likely to work in contract positions (12%). These findings suggest that the results obtained with this sample can be considered a best case scenario with respect to work attitudes and outcomes and employee wellbeing. The attitudes and outcomes of employees in contingent and part-time positions as well as those who are currently unemployed will likely be much worse than observed here.

### **A significant proportion of the Canadian workforce “moonlight”**

One in ten of respondents to this survey, professionals and non-professionals alike, moonlight (i.e. hold one or more additional jobs outside their main position). Respondents from the Maritimes and Quebec were less likely to moonlight (approximately 5% of both the professional and non-professionals in these samples moonlight). In contrast, 11% of the professionals in the Ontario sample moonlighted.

### **Workforce across the country made up of “survivors”**

The typical non-professional employee in this sample has been with their current employer for 13.3 years: the typical professional 13.8 years. This means that many of the employees to be survivors in our sample (and, by extrapolation, the Canadian workforce) are survivors of the downsizing and restructuring that occurred across much of Canada in the late 80s and the 1990s.

Where are employees with the longest tenure likely to be found? The Maritimes and B.C. Non-professionals in the Maritimes have been with their current employer for an average of 15 years, professionals in B.C. have been with their organization for 15.7 years.

In contrast, professionals in the Prairies region have only been with their current employer for an average of 12.8 years.

### **Canadian companies are not doing a good job of developing their staff**

The Canadians in this sample have worked in their current position for just over 7 years. There are no differences in this number associated with job type. Nor are there any regional differences in these data that are worthy of note. These data indicate that Canada's larger employers pay little attention to career development and that Canadian employees are not very mobile. It also suggests that many companies may have difficulties with respect to motivation as key motivators such as challenging work and job variety typically decline as years in current position increase.

### **The 9 to 5 work day is still alive and well in Canada**

The data indicates that there is a significant disconnect between how Canadian employees would like their work days to be arranged and what is offered by Canadian employers. More than half of the non-professionals in the sample and 43% of the professionals work a 9 to 5 fixed work schedule. Only 15% of the non-professionals and 22% of the professionals work flextime arrangements while one in five work

a compressed work week (CWW).

### **The use of flexible work arrangements highest in Quebec**

Employees in Quebec are almost twice as likely to work flextime as their counterparts in other regions of Canada. Just under one in four (22%) of the non-professionals in the Quebec sample and one in three of the professionals reported that they work flextime.

It is also interesting to note that employers in Quebec are more likely to permit “Guerilla” (i.e. informal) telework. For example:

- C 15% of the non-professionals in the Quebec sample use this work arrangement as compared to 10% nationally, and
- C 19% of the professionals in the Quebec sample use this work arrangement as compared to 10% nationally.

### **Employees in the Maritimes are the least likely to use flexible work arrangements**

The use of flexible work arrangements varies dramatically from one side of the country to the other. Companies operating in the Maritimes are less likely to offer employees flexible work options and more likely to stick with the more traditional yet inflexible 9 to 5 arrangements. Consider the following:

- C 62% of the non-professional employees in the Maritime and 54% of the professionals work a 9 to 5 schedule,
- C only 19% of the professionals and 7% of the non-professionals in the Maritime sample work flextime, and
- C only 3% of the professionals in the Maritime sample work a CWW.

### **Employees in B.C. are the most likely to use a compressed work week**

Employees in B.C. are less likely than employees in other regions of Canada to work a regular work schedule (only 50% of the non-professionals and 35% of professionals work a regular work day). In this case, however, these differences cannot be attributed to higher use of flextime as only 11% of the non-professionals and 15% of the professionals in the B.C. sample work flextime. Instead, the lower use of the 9 to 5 day can be attributed to the fact that B.C. makes the highest use of a CWW with 19% of the non-professionals and 28% of the professionals using this work arrangement.

### **Canadian firms, especially those in Western and Eastern Canada are highly reliant on shift work**

Approximately one in four of the Canadians in the sample work shifts. Such work arrangement have traditionally been associated with greater difficulty in balancing work and life and a greater number of personal challenges. Which regions are more likely to rely on shift work? The data identifies the following areas: the Maritimes (29% of non-professionals), B.C. (39% of professionals and 30% of non-professionals), and the Prairies (34% of professionals).

## **Section Four**

### **Work and Non-Work Demands**

Keeping a home and raising children or caring for an elderly dependent - as anyone who has ever done it knows - is a full-time job. The increasing rarity of the full-time homemaker has done more to reduce everyone's leisure time than any other factor. If both mother and father are working, someone still has to find time to make lunches, attend doctor appointments, shop for groceries and cook. Time at work is the single largest block of time which most people owe to others outside their family. Consequently it is often the cornerstone around which the other daily activities must be made to fit. As a fixed commodity, time allocated to employment is necessarily unavailable for other activities, including time with the family. Thus, time spent at work offers an important and concrete measure of one dimension of employment that affects individuals and their families. When asked to identify their biggest concern in life, working parents typically respond "time".

In order to get a better picture of work-life balance in the different regions of Canada we need to understand what types of demands, challenges, pressures and stresses that employees in different parts of the country face. This section of the report tries to give us this picture by quantifying some of the demands and stressors typically faced by working Canadians. This section is divided into two parts to reflect the fact that working Canadians have to deal with two very different sets of demands: those that stem from their workplace (part one) and those that arise due to their non-work roles (i.e. time spent in housework, family, leisure, and volunteer activities).

#### **Time in Work**

Time at work is clearly an important factor with respect to an employee's ability to balance home and work demands. In the survey we quantified work demands by asking respondents to tell us approximately how many hours they spent per week (or per month in the case of paid and unpaid overtime) in work at the office, commuting to work, performing paid overtime, performing unpaid overtime, completing work at home outside of regular work hours (referred to as supplemental work at home or SWAH) and engaging in educational activities related to their work. Details on each of these work demands are given in Box 4.

#### **Work is the Cornerstone Around Which All Other Activities Must Revolve**

The typical respondent to the 2001 survey spent approximately 42 hours in work per week. The sample is fairly well distributed with respect to hours spent in work per week with one in four respondents spending 35 to 39 hours per week and one in four spending 50 or more hours. One in three respondents spent between 40 and 44 hours in work per week.

Comparisons done using the 1991 and 2001 samples suggest that time in work has increased over the course of the decade. Whereas one in ten respondents in 1991 worked 50 or more hours per week, one in four do so now; during this same time period the proportion of employees working between 35 and 39 hours per week declined from 48% of the sample to 27%. This increase in time in work was observed for all job groups and all sectors.

#### **Box 4** **Work Demands**

**Total Hours in Work per Week:** Total hours in work per week is defined in this report as the amount of time spent in work per week - both paid and unpaid (i.e. unpaid overtime, supplemental work done at home in the evenings and on weekends). Previous research in the area has found total hours in work per week to be the most reliable predictor of role overload, work-family conflict and perceived stress.

**Overtime:** Overtime work was quantified in three ways in this study: paid overtime, unpaid overtime and supplemental work at home (SWAH). Why look at overtime? Previous research in this area has determined that downsizing and restructuring has increased the work demands placed upon many employees who are now doing their job as well as parts of jobs which used to be done by workers who are no longer with the organization. Employees with heavy work demands who cannot get their jobs done during regular work hours often have to work evenings and weekends to keep “caught-up.” This overtime work can be paid or non-paid and done at home (supplemental work at home - SWAH) or at the office. Our data indicates that employees who regularly take work home to complete on their own time (i.e. SWAH) find it more difficult to separate their work life from their family and personal life as the boundaries between work and family blurs. To assess the amount of SWAH (i.e. unpaid overtime at home) we asked respondent how many hours per week they spent working at home outside their regular hours. We also asked respondents how often, in an average month they would have to work paid overtime and unpaid overtime and to estimate how many hours per month they spent in each of these activities.

**Time in education** is also included in our assessment of work demands to reflect the fact that for many employees in today’s labour force, job security and/or career advancement depends on their ability to remain current and acquire the skills valued by their organization. The need to pursue educational opportunities (often on one’s own time) may, therefore, place additional stress and time demands on already busy employees.

#### **Most Canadians donate a substantial amount unpaid overtime to their organization**

The data are unequivocal - a substantial proportion of Canadians who work for large employers regularly engage in overtime work. The following key observations were drawn using the total sample data on overtime:<sup>4</sup>

- C Canadians are more likely to work unpaid overtime than paid overtime,
- C the amount of time per month spent performing SWAH and unpaid overtime is considerable and greater than the amount of time spent in paid overtime, and
- C employees donate a significant proportion of unpaid time to their employer.

Thirty percent of the sample worked paid overtime in the month prior to the survey being conducted. Respondents who worked paid overtime did so an average of 3.6 times in the and worked an average of

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<sup>4</sup>The interested reader is directed to Report One in this series for more details on the work demands of Canadian employees

11 hours in this time period (i.e. an additional one and a half days of work per month). Non-professional employees were more likely to work paid overtime.

Half of the respondents to the 2001 survey performed SWAH (versus 31% of the 1991 sample). The average respondent who performed SWAH spent an additional 6.7 hours per week working at home outside of regular hours (i.e. unpaid overtime). Professional employees were twice as likely as non-professionals to perform SWAH.

Just under half of the employees who participated in the 2001 survey worked unpaid overtime in the month prior to the survey being conducted. Those who worked unpaid overtime contributed an additional 18 hours per month of unpaid work to their company. In other words, approximately half of the employees of the large Canadian organizations who participated in this study “donated” 2.5 days of work a month to their organization. Professional employees were five times more likely than non-professional employees to perform unpaid overtime.

The trends observed with respect to time in work and overtime work suggest that it has become more difficult over the past decade for Canadian employees (especially those working in managerial and professional positions) to meet work expectations during regular hours. It would appear that employees who work for larger organizations have attempted to cope with these increased demands by working longer hours and taking work home. Further work is needed to determine why work demands have increased over the decade. Competing explanations drawn from the data collected as part of this study include (among others):

- C organizational anorexia (downsizing - especially of the middle manager cadre - has meant that there are not enough employees to do the work and managers to strategize and plan),
- C corporate culture (if you don't work long hours and take work home you will not advance in your career or not keep your job during downsizing),
- C increased use of technology (e-mail in particular appears to have increased workloads),
- C global competition (work hours have been extended to allow work across time zones, increased competition and a desire to keep costs down has limited the number of employees it is deemed feasible to hire),
- C the speed of change has increased to the point that many organizations have lost their ability to plan and prioritize - workloads increase when organizations practice crisis management,
- C employees are worried about the consequences of “not being seen to be a contributor” (i.e. non-professionals fear that they will lose their jobs if they do not work overtime while professionals worry that they will not “get ahead”).

Other, more indirect work demands, arise due to the need for continuous learning and reskilling. One third of the 2001 survey respondents engaged in educational activities in the month prior to the survey. Those who engaged in educational pursuits spent, on average, 4.6 hours per week in such activities. Respondents in non-professional positions were almost half as likely to engage in educational activities as their counterparts in managerial or professional positions.

Finally, it should be noted that the link between hours in work and role overload, work-life conflict, burnout and physical and mental health problems suggest that the work loads identified in this sample are not

sustainable over the long term.

Are there regional differences in work demands? The answer to this question is addressed in the section below.

## **Regional Differences in Work Demands**

### **Managers in all regions of Canada have heavier work demands**

The average non-professional in the sample spent 42.0 hours in work per week (this total includes paid and unpaid overtime). There were no regional differences in time spent in work per week for the non-professional sample.

The average professional in the sample, on the other hand, spent 46.4 hours in work per week (this total includes paid and unpaid overtime). Professionals in the Prairies (45.3) and Ontario (45.8) spent fewer hours per week in work. Professionals in the other three regions devote approximately 48 hours per week to work.

### **Employees in Ontario, Quebec and B.C. spent more time per week commuting to work**

Employees in B.C., Ontario and Quebec, regardless of job type, spend more time commuting to and from work per week than employees in the Prairies and the Maritimes (approximately one hour per day!). These differences can be explained by the longer commutes associated with living in Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal.

### **Non-professionals are more likely to work paid overtime than unpaid overtime**

One in three of the non-professionals in the sample worked paid overtime, one in ten worked unpaid overtime and 36% took work home to complete in the evening (SWAH). Employees who worked paid overtime averaged 13 hours of paid overtime per month (or almost two extra days per month of work) whereas those who performed SWAH did an additional 7 hours of unpaid overtime per week at home (i.e. one day of unpaid overtime per week). While relatively few of the non-professionals worked unpaid overtime at the office, those who did donated approximately 34 hours of overtime per month to their company (i.e. approximately 4 days).

### **Professionals are more likely to work unpaid overtime than paid overtime**

One in three of the professionals in the sample worked paid overtime, 62% worked unpaid overtime and 61% took work home to complete in the evening (SWAH). Employees who worked paid overtime averaged 10 hours of paid overtime per month (or approximately one additional work day) whereas those who performed SWAH did an additional 7 hours of unpaid overtime per week at home (i.e. one day of unpaid overtime per week). Professionals who worked unpaid overtime donated approximately 19 hours of unpaid work to their company per month (i.e. approximately 2.5 days).

## **The number of hours in unpaid overtime increases as one goes from west to east in Canada**

There are a number of substantive regional differences with respect to the likelihood of performing the different kinds of overtime as well as the amount of time actually spent in unpaid overtime. These differences are outlined below.

B.C. places the highest reliance on paid overtime. Professional employees in B.C. are more likely to work paid overtime (40% do so) and spent more time in paid overtime per month (11.1 hours). Professional employees in B.C. were less likely to perform SWAH (54% did so) and devoted the fewest hours of unpaid overtime per month to their organization (16.9).

Both professional and non-professional employees in the Prairies region were more likely to work paid overtime (approximately 38% of the sample did so). The professional employees in this region were less likely to work unpaid overtime and worked far fewer hours of unpaid overtime (17.8 hours per month) than other professionals.

Non-professional employees in Ontario were less likely than their counterparts in other regions of Canada to work paid overtime (28% worked unpaid overtime). Similarly, professional employees in Ontario were less likely than other professionals to work unpaid overtime (58% worked unpaid overtime). The number of hours of unpaid overtime in Ontario was, however, higher than in the Western provinces.

Employees in Quebec, professionals and non-professional alike, were less likely to work overtime of any form. Only 10% of the non-professional employees in Quebec performed unpaid overtime - only one in three performed SWAH. Fewer than 60% of the professional employees worked unpaid overtime - a lower percent of professionals engaged in this activity than was observed elsewhere.

Professional employees in the Maritimes donate the highest number of hours per month to their organization (work an average of 21.7 hours per month of unpaid overtime). This group also reported the highest level of SWAH (70%) and spent more time in SWAH (7.6 hours per week) than any other group.

### **B.C. employees more likely to be spending time each week in educational activities**

Just under one third (30%) of the non-professionals in the sample and just over one third (37%) of the professionals spend approximately 5 hours per week upgrading their educational qualifications. Respondents in B.C, regardless of their job type, were more likely to be pursuing their education (this is consistent with the fact that this group is less likely to have children). Respondents in Quebec, on the other hand, were the least likely to be engaging in continuous learning.

## **Time in Non-Work Activities**

Family labour is defined as being those tasks required to maintain a household and fulfill child and elder-care responsibilities. Work-family conflicts regarding family roles tend to fall into two areas: allocation of household tasks and dependent care responsibilities.

Household Responsibilities: A perennial debate for many families concerns who is to do what tasks in the household. When work demands press into family life, this debate becomes more complicated. The dispute concerns actual amount of time spent in housework as well as conflicts regarding who has ultimate responsibility for these chores.

Time in Dependent Care: Research has found that for full time employees of both genders, an increased number of hours spent in dependent care places employees at high risk for work-family conflict. This conflict, in turn, appears strongly associated with decreased physical and emotional well-being as measured by depressed feelings, life satisfaction, health and energy levels and days absent from work.

This section of the report looks at how Canadian employees spend their hours outside of work. The following types of non-work demand are considered: time per week spent in home chores, child care, leisure, volunteer activities and total time in non-work activities. The estimates of time presented in this section were collected by asking respondents to tell us approximately how many hours they spend in a week in home chores and errands, child care or in activities with their children, caring for elderly relatives or dependents, in self related activities (i.e. activities alone, with partner or with friends), and in volunteer activities and community work. Total time spent in non-work demands was calculated as the sum total of time spent in these activities.

How do Canadian employees spend their non-work hours? Findings with respect to the total sample are presented next. This is followed by a discussion of key regional differences.

## **Canadians spend substantially less time in non-work activities and with their families than they do in paid employment**

The employees who answered the 2001 survey spent approximately 17 hours per week in non-work-related activities - a significantly lower amount of time than they spent in paid employment. Employees with dependent care responsibilities have more demands on their time than their counterparts without childcare or eldercare - regardless of their gender. They spent more than twice as much time in non-work activities as those without dependent care (23 hours versus 10 hours) and approximately 3 hours less per week in leisure. In this sample, childcare could be seen to generate heavier time demands than eldercare. Respondents with eldercare responsibilities spent approximately 5.3 hours helping their elderly relative; parents spent approximately 10.8 hours per week in childcare.

A key finding from this research is that the role of “caregiver” is not as strongly associated with gender as it was in the past. Traditionally, research in this area has determined that women spend more time in childcare than men. Such was not the case in this study as mothers and fathers who engaged in childcare spent essentially the same amount of time each week in childcare related activities (the typical mother in the sample spent approximately 11.1 hours per week in childcare while the typical father spent approximately 10.5 hours). Similarly, the men and the women in the sample with eldercare responsibilities spent approximately the same amount of time per week in eldercare activities (the typical man with eldercare responsibilities spent 4.6 hours per week in their care while the typical woman spent approximately 5.2 hours).

These data would suggest that women's entry into the paid labour force has had a measurable impact on the division of family labour within the home. The fact that we did not observe large gender differences with respect to the amount of time devoted to childcare may be attributed to the fact that time for family related activities has declined as time in work has increased (after all, there are only 24 hours in a day!) A comparison of the 1991 and 2001 data sets provides support for this conclusion. These data indicate that while both genders are now spending less time in family activities than previously, the decline in time spent in childcare has been more precipitous for women (dropped by 33% over the decade) than for men (dropped 15%)<sup>5</sup>.

It should also be noted that this "enlightened" attitude with respect to the distribution of "family labour" does not extend to home chores. The women in the sample spent substantially more time in home chores per week than the men, regardless of sector, job type or dependent care status. The typical woman in our 2001 sample spent 12.2 hours in home chores per week - a substantially higher number of hours than was spent by the men in the sample (10.1 hours per week). The men in the sample, on the other hand, spent more time per week in leisure (9.6 hours per week) than the women (8.5 hours per week). While the men were also more likely than the women to engage in volunteer activities (43% of the men in the sample volunteered vs 34% of the women), the amount of time spent in volunteer activities (3.7 hours per week) was not associated with gender. This finding would suggest that in many Canadian families home chores are still perceived to be "women's work."

## **Regional Differences in Family Demands**

### **No regional differences with respect to childcare**

Just over half of the respondents (55% of the non-professionals and 59% of the professionals) spend time in childcare activities each week. These individuals spend an average of 10.8 hours per week in childcare. There were no regional differences with respect to the amount of time spent per week in childcare for the parents in the sample. Employees in the B.C. sample, however, were less likely to engage in such activities (only 50% spent time each week in childcare). This is not surprising given the fact that respondents in the B.C. sample were less likely to be parents.

### **No regional differences with respect to eldercare**

One in three of the non-professionals in the sample and 28% of the professionals spent time each week in eldercare. These individuals spent an average of 5.6 hours per week in eldercare activities (approximately half the time spent in childcare). There were no regional differences in time spent in eldercare for those with this type of responsibility. As was the case with childcare, employees in the B.C. sample were less likely to spend time in eldercare activities. Professional employees in the Quebec sample, on the other hand, were more likely to spend time each week caring for an elderly depend (35% had such responsibilities).

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<sup>5</sup>See Report One for a more complete discussion of this phenomena as well as a list of academic references on this topic.

### **Employees in the Prairies and the Maritimes are more likely to volunteer**

One third of the non-professionals in the sample and 43% of the professionals engage in volunteer activities each week. These individuals spent an average of 3.8 hours per week in volunteer activities. While there were no regional differences in the amount of time spent in volunteer activities for the volunteers in our sample, the likelihood of an employee volunteering their time is strongly associated with the region of the country in which they live. Who is more likely to volunteer? Employees living in the Prairies and the Maritimes. Approximately 42% of the non-professionals and 52% of the professionals in these regions spent time each week in volunteer activities. Who is less likely to volunteer? Employees living in Quebec and Ontario. Consider the following:

- C One in five of the non-professionals living in Quebec and 27% of the professionals engaged in volunteer activities.
- C One in three of the professionals living in Ontario engaged in volunteer activities.

### **Employees living in B.C. spend the most time in leisure - those in Quebec spend the least**

Canadian employees, regardless of job type, spend approximately 10 hours per week in leisure activities. Respondents living in B.C. spent the most time per week in leisure (11 hours). Employees in Quebec, on the other hand, spent the least amount of time per week in leisure (8.5 hours per week).

### **Employees living in Quebec spend less time in homechores**

The typical Canadian employee, regardless of job type, spends about 11.5 hours per week in homechores. Canadians living in Quebec spend substantially less time in homechores (approximately 9 hours per week) than their counterparts in other regions.

### **Canadian employees devote substantially more time to their employer than their family**

How many hours a week do Canadians spend in non-work activities per week? Non-professionals spent approximately 17.3 hours (less than half the amount of time they spend in work) while professionals devote 18.2 hours (approximately one third the amount of time they spend in work). Not surprisingly, given the above time in family activities data, respondents in the Quebec sample spent the least amount of time in non-work activities per week (just over 15 hours per week).

## **Section Five: The Work Environment**

Although the implementation of family friendly and supportive policies and benefits can help employees manage competing work and family responsibilities, the availability of these benefits alone does not address the fundamental aspects of the organization that can inhibit employees from successfully balancing work and family. These inhibitors can include:

- C organizational norms and values that dissuade employees from using the benefits (i.e. norms that encourage workers to devote themselves to their work at the expense of their life),
- C a lack of support (perceived or real) from one's immediate supervisor or the organization itself, and
- C a concern that using such benefits will jeopardize career advancement.

This section of the report looks at how employees across Canada perceive their work environment by looking at data with respect to the amount of flexibility they have, the organization's culture, norms and values with respect to work and family, the supportiveness of its managers and the types of benefits offered by the organization. The section is divided into four parts. Part one looks at the amount of flexibility employees feel that they have with respect to work hours and work location. The second part focuses on issues with respect to work culture and work climate. Part three addresses management behaviour and part four evaluates the types of support provided.

### **Perceived Flexibility**

One of the most problematic aspects of the issue of time is what has been termed schedule incompatibility. Since society makes certain events possible only at certain times, timing becomes important in determining the effects of working hours. Work schedule incompatibility affects members of a family and their ability to spend time together. Conflict is also caused by the clash of an employee's work schedule with events at school and the ability to access necessary services (e.g., doctor, dentist).

Work time and work location flexibility have the potential to balance work and family by increasing an employees' ability to control, predict and absorb change in work and family roles. If the organization provides flexibility with regards to when and where work is performed, then the employee can select the most efficient hours and locale according to work style, the demands of other family members, and the scheduling of leisure activities.

In many organizations patterns of informal accommodation are evolving as a normal part of the interaction among employees. These informal accommodations are permitted by the employer but are not the result of any formal organizational policy. Instead they are negotiated or provided on a case by case basis (typically they depend on who your manager is). Ten questions were used in this analysis to quantify informal work time and work location flexibility. Respondents were asked how easy or difficult it was for them to: vary their work hours, spend some of their time working at home, take holidays, take time off to attend a course, interrupt their work day for personal reasons and then return to work, receive personal calls when they are at work, balance work and personal/family commitments, keep family commitments, and take a paid day off when either a child is sick or a crisis occurs with an elderly relative. A total perceived flexibility score was calculated as the summed average of these ten items.

## Only One in Three Canadian Employees Perceive High Work Flexibility

Data from the total sample indicate the only one in three of the Canadians employed by the countries largest employees perceive they have control over their work schedule and their work time. A substantive proportion of the sample (29%) reported that it was very difficult for them to change any aspect of their work schedule. The rest of the sample (39%) indicated that while it was not easy for them to change their work schedule, it was not impossible. Further information on perceived flexibility for the total sample can be obtained by looking at the different items making up this measure (see Box 5).

<b>Box 5</b>		
<b>Perceived Flexibility</b>		
	<u>% Saying Easy</u>	<u>% Saying Difficult</u>
Paid day off - sick child	53	26
Take holidays when want	51	27
Interrupt your work day and return	50	29
Vary work hours	46	35
Paid day - sick elder	44	32
Attend conference or course	42	32
Arrange work to meet personal commitments	39	39
Telework	16	71
Be home when children get home	12	75

Perceived flexibility is not associated with job type in any straight forward manner. It is, however, associated with the region in which one works.

## Regional Differences in Perceived Flexibility

### Managers have less flexibility that non-managers

Just over one in three (34%) of those in the non-professional sample and just under one in three (31%) of those in the professional sample reported high perceived flexibility. In other words, non-professional employees are slightly more likely than their professional counterparts to perceive that they can vary when and where they work. This findings is the reverse of what was the case a decade ago when professionals had higher levels of perceived flexibility. These data indicated that rank no longer comes with a greater set of privileges or control over ones work schedule.

A greater understanding of these flexibility scores can be obtained by looking at some of the key items that make up the measure. Examination of the non-professional sample determined that 53% of this group agreed it was easy for them to take a paid day off to care for a sick child, 51% it was easy for them to interrupt their work day and return, 41% agreed it was easy for them to vary their work hours, and 44%

agreed it was easy for them to take a paid day off to care for an elderly dependent. Similar findings were obtained with the professional sample where 52% agreed it was easy for them to take a paid day off to care for a sick child, 48% agreed it was easy for them to interrupt their work day and return, 47% agreed it was easy for them to vary their work hours, and 43% agreed it was easy for them to take a paid day off to care for an elderly dependent.

Worthy of note here is the fact that respondents are 10% more likely to perceive that they can get paid time off to care for a sick child than an elderly dependent. This finding suggests that many organizations across Canada do not provide adequate support for the employees with elder care responsibilities.

### **Employees in Quebec have higher perceived flexibility**

Perceived flexibility varies by region. Who has higher perceived flexibility? Employees in Quebec, regardless of the type of job they perform (37% of non-professionals and 38% of professionals indicate they have high flexibility).

The non-professionals in the Quebec sample were significantly more likely than the non-professionals in any other region of Canada to agree that it was easy for them to vary their work hours (52% agreed), interrupt their work day and return (58% agreed), take a paid day off to care for a sick child (61% agreed), and take a paid day off to care for an elderly dependent (48% agreed). Similarly, professionals in the Quebec sample were significantly more likely than the professionals in any other region of Canada to agree that it was easy for them to vary their work hours (54% agreed), interrupt their work day and return (57% agreed), take a paid day off to care for a sick child (60% agree) and take a paid day off to care for an elderly dependent (55% agreed).

Non-professionals in the B.C. sample were more likely to say that they could take a paid day off to care for a sick child (58%) or an elderly dependent (48% agree), an ironic finding given the fact that this set of employees were less likely to have elderly dependents or children.

### **Non-professionals in the Maritimes and Ontario have lower perceived flexibility**

Who has lower perceived flexibility? Non-professionals in the Maritimes and Ontario. The reasons behind the lower perceived flexibility varied between the two areas. While both groups indicated that they found it hard to take a paid day off to care for an elderly dependent, the other areas of inflexibility were quite different. The non-professionals in the Maritimes region were significantly less likely to say that it was easy for them to vary their work hours (39% agreed) while the non-professionals in Ontario were significantly less likely to say that it was easy for them to interrupt their work day and return (48% agreed) or take a paid day off to care for a sick child (43% agreed).

### **Professionals in Ontario and B.C. have lower perceived flexibility**

Who has lower perceived flexibility? Professionals in Ontario and B.C.. Professionals working in Ontario were less likely than any other group to say they could interrupt their work day and return (44% agreed), take a paid day off to care for a sick child (45% agreed), or take a paid day off to care for an elderly

dependent (38% agreed). Professionals in B.C., on the other hand, were less likely to say they could vary their work hours (42% agreed) while professionals in the Prairies were less likely to say they could interrupt their work day and return (43% agreed).

## **Organizational Culture and Climate**

Organizational culture can be defined as the complex of attitudes, practices, values and relationships within an organization. Organizational climate, a closely related construct, refers to corporate norms; unwritten rules regarding how things work and what is to be done. The research indicates that an organization's climate and culture can have a significant impact on employee's ability to balance work and family demands, work stress, overall stress, job satisfaction, work involvement and organization commitment. An organization's culture has also been found to be a strong determinant of the support for and success of family responsive policies. It can also have a critical impact on the type of programs used or even whether they are considered at all.

Employees were asked to what extent they agreed that their organizations manifested the following types of culture:

- C **Culture of Hours:** Focus on face time, being there, crisis management and "presenteeism" rather than outputs, deliverables and working to priorities. Workloads are typically a problem in such organizations especially in the management and professional communities.
- C **Culture of Work or Family:** Organization talks about work and family but policies and practice make combining the two very difficult. Those who advance within these types of organizations are those who give work priority over all other demands.
- C **Culture of Policy versus Practice:** Policies that support employees are in place within the organization but the culture itself discourages the use of such policies

Data on each of these dimensions of culture are shown for the total sample in Box 6. Regional differences in work culture are presented below.

## **Regional Differences in Organizational Culture**

### **Managers and professionals are more likely to describe the culture in their organization as one that focuses on hours**

Almost half of those in the professional sample would describe the culture in their organization as one of hours:

- C 47% agreed that if they did not work long hours it would limit their advancement, and
- C 43% agreed that it was unacceptable in their organization to say no to more work.

Far fewer respondents in the non-professional sample (approximately one in three) described the culture in their organization as one of hours:

- C 31% agreed that if they did not work long hours it would limit their advancement, and
- C 37% agreed that it was unacceptable in their organization to say no to more work.

### **Managers and professionals across the country believe that it is hours that are important**

There were no regional differences in the professional sample with respect to the view that not working long hours would limit career advancement. This would suggest that the perception that advancement is linked to putting in long hours is part of the management and professional cultures across Canada. This conclusion is supported by the fact that with the exception of managers and professionals in Quebec, there were no regional differences with respect to the perceived acceptability of saying no to more work (generally speaking, the majority of managers and professionals across the country felt that they could not say no to more work if they wanted to advance within their organization). It is interesting to note that this view was substantially less likely to be shared by those in the professional sample from Quebec where only 31% of professionals agreed that it was not acceptable for them to say no.

**Box 6  
Organizational Culture**

	<u>% Agreeing</u>
<b>Culture of Hours</b>	
Not working long hours limits advancement	39
Cannot say no to more work limits advancement	39
<b>Culture: Work or Family</b>	
Family leave limits advancement	31
Family responsibilities make advancement difficult	25
<b>Culture of Policy versus Practice</b>	
Policies in place that support balance	38
The work environment supports balance	33
I feel comfortable using the supports that are available	24
Open and respectful discussions of balance take place in organization	24

It should be noted that managers and professionals were substantially more likely to “buy-in” to the culture of hours and work or family (i.e. to feel that to advance in their careers they have to work long hours and put work first). Non-professionals, on the other hand were more likely to perceive a disconnect between the policies in place within their organization and the practices.

**Non-professionals in B.C. and Ontario more likely to believe in culture of hours**

Within the non-professional sample the perception of culture of hours varies with region of the country as follows. Non-professionals in the Quebec sample were the least likely to describe the culture in their organization as a culture of hours (only 30% agreed that if they did not work long hours they would not advance, and 22% agreed that it was unacceptable to say no to more work). Relatively few in the Maritimes sample identified this form of culture in their organization (only 28% agreed that if they did not work long hours they would not advance, and 38% agreed that it was unacceptable to say no to more work). On the other hand, the culture of hours seems strongest in B.C. and Ontario (35% of the non-professionals in both samples agreed that if they did not work long hours they would not advance, and 40%

agreed that it was unacceptable to say no to more work). The views of those in the Prairies is mixed. While only 29% agreed that they would not advance if they did not work long hours, 40% agreed that they could not say no to more work.

### **One in three professionals perceive that the culture in their organization is one of work or family**

Approximately one in three of those in the professional sample and one in four in the non-professional sample perceive that the culture in their organization is one that forces a choice between work or family.

For example:

- C 34% of professionals and 27% of non-professionals agreed that if they took family leave in their organization it would limit their advancement, and
- C 28% of professionals and 23% of non-professionals agreed that family responsibilities made advancement difficult

### **Employees living in B.C. more likely to perceive culture emphasizes work or family**

Employees in both the professionals and non-professional B.C. samples were the most likely to perceive that the culture within their organization is one that forces a choice between work and family (this perhaps explains why there is a higher proportion of single employees and employees without children in this sample). Thirty-seven percent of the professionals in B.C. agreed that family leave limits advancement and 33% agreed that family responsibilities make it difficult to advance. One in three of the non-professionals in B.C. agreed that family leave limits advancement and 26% disagreed that family responsibilities make it difficult to advance.

### **Employees living in Quebec less likely to perceive culture emphasizes work or family**

Employees living in Quebec, on the other hand, were the least likely to feel that the culture in their organization forced a choice between work and family. Only 27% of the professionals in Quebec agreed that family leave limits advancement while 28% agreed that family responsibilities make it difficult to advance. Only 19% of the non-professional sample agreed that if they took family leave it would hurt their career. There were no other region differences in these data.

### **Policy does not necessarily translate into practice in Canada**

The data would suggest that the majority of employees in this sample, regardless of the region in which they live or the type of job they perform, perceive a disconnect in their organization between work-life policies and practice. While 38% of respondents agreed that the policies in their organization supported work life balance (there were no regional or job type differences with respect to this perception):

- C only 33% of the respondents agreed that their organization promoted an environment that actually supported balance,
- C only 24% of the agreed that they felt comfortable using the work-life supports offered by the

- organization, and
- C only 23% of the respondents agreed that there were open and respectful discussions of work-life issues in their organization.

The lack of job type differences in these data suggest that those with higher rank within the organization are no longer accorded any type of special status or privilege - at least with respect to work-life issues

### **Professionals in B.C. and Ontario less likely to believe that culture supportive**

Professionals in Ontario were less likely than other professionals to agree that there were supportive policies in place within their organization (35% agreed), and that the environment in their organization supported balance (only 30% agreed). Professionals in the B.C. region were significantly less likely to agree that the environment in their organization supported balance (only 30% agreed).

### **Professionals in Quebec more likely to believe that the culture in their organization is supportive**

Professionals in Quebec, on the other hand, were more likely to agree that they felt comfortable using the policies in place in their organization (38% agreed) and that there were open and respect respectful discussions of work-life issues in their organization (33% agreed). It should be noted, however, that even in the best case scenario (i.e. Quebec), there appears to be a wide gulf between policy and practice.

### **Non-professionals in Quebec more likely to believe that culture supportive**

There were no regional differences in perceptions of the policies in place or the extent to which the organization promotes an environment supporting balance. There are, however, two key differences in the other two questions which are worthy of note:

- C non-professionals in Quebec were 14 percentage points more likely than their counterparts in any other region of Canada to agree that they feel comfortable using the supports offered by their company (36% of those in Quebec agreed versus 22% of those in the other regions)
- C non-professionals in Quebec were more likely to agree that there were open and respectful discussions of these issues in their company (note that again, even in the more favourable conditions in the province that seems to place the most emphasis on work-life balance, only 26% of respondents agreed with this statement), and
- C non-professionals in the Prairies region were significantly less likely to agree there were open and respectful discussions in their organizations (only 20% agreed).

## **Supportive Managers**

Our research has clearly demonstrated that work and family policies are ineffective if supervisors do not support them. While employees want increased work-time and work location flexibility, simply offering flexible work arrangements and family friendly benefits is not enough. There is a tremendous amount of inequity in organizations today as supervisors act as gatekeepers to many of the benefits offered by the firm. WHO you work for within an organization has become more important than WHERE you work. Employees who work for "supportive" supervisors who trust and respect their employees and who base their decisions on circumstances rather than "the book" report less stress and greater productivity than employees

who work for managers who deny their employees any sort of flexibility (even when such arrangements are technically available).

Formal policies alone are insufficient to ensure that employed parents are able to satisfy the role demands of work and family. Our research indicates that organizations need to alter their culture and the behaviour of their managers and supervisors to facilitate any form of permanent change. They also have to measure progress in these areas and make managers accountable for how they treat their people.

The measure of supervisor support used in this study was developed and tested by Duxbury and Higgins over a five year period. The measure focuses on sixteen behaviours which are associated with being a supportive or a non-supportive supervisor. Five of these behaviours (i.e. has unrealistic expectations on how much work can be done, puts me down in front of colleagues or clients, makes me feel guilty about time off for personal or family reasons) are “non-supportive”; eleven (i.e. gives recognition when I do my job well, listens to my concerns, provides me with challenging opportunities) are supportive. To be considered supportive managers need to be awarded higher scores on the supportive behaviours and lower scores on the non-supportive behaviours. Benchmark data is used to divide managers into three groups: those that are supportive, those that are “mixed” (i.e. sometimes they are supportive, sometimes they are not) and those that are non-supportive. All of the outcomes in this study are strongly associated with management support with employees with supportive managers reporting more positive outcomes than their counterparts with non-supportive or mixed managers. Finally, it is interesting and important to note that employees with mixed managers are, in many cases worse off than those who work for non-supportive managers. This finding can be attributed to the high levels of uncertainty that comes with reporting to such managers.

## **Fewer than Half of the Canadians that Are Employed in Larger Organizations Perceive Their Manager as Supportive**

Just under half (47%) of the 28,000 + employees who responded to our survey perceived their manager as supportive: 15% of these individuals viewed their manager as non-supportive while 38% reported to a “mixed” manager. Professional employees were more likely than non-professional employees to report that their manager was supportive.

There are a number of regional differences in management support that are worthy of note.

### **Regional Differences in Management Support**

Only 46% of the non-professionals in the sample and 49% of the professionals perceived that they reported to a supportive manager. There were three regional difference with respect to management support:

- Non-professionals and professionals in the Prairies sample were less likely to perceive that their manager was supportive (only 43% of the non-professionals and 46% of the professionals awarded their manager a high support score).
- Professionals in the Ontario sample were less likely to perceive that their manager was supportive (only 46% gave their manager a positive evaluation).

### **Availability of Supportive Organizational Benefits**

For some time, Canadian organizations have focused on “streamlining,” “downsizing” and “doing more with less.” Research would suggest, however, that the considerable restructuring that has taken place within many Canadian workplaces over the past decade has taken its toll on both employers and employees alike. Productivity, creativity and morale for both managers and employees has been negatively impacted while the incidence of stress and burnout has increased.

Future success in an increasingly competitive business environment will depend on making the most of one's employees. As we progress into the next century, the relationship between work and family will become a critical issue for workers with child care and/or elder care responsibilities - the majority of the workforce. While Canadian organizations have long held that “people are our most important resource,” the policies and practices currently in place in many organizations do not reflect this view. With the worst of the layoffs behind them, employers are searching for ways to stay “lean and mean” but effective.

<b>Box 7</b>			
<b>Availability of Benefits</b>			
<u>% Saying Benefit Available</u>			
	<u>Total Sample</u>	<u>Non-Professionals</u>	<u>Professionals</u>
Unpaid LOA	63	61	73
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	62	56	68
Emergency days off	60	56	64
Time off in lieu of overtime	60	58	63
Short term leave	54	48	56
Pro-rated part time	42	37	47
Flextime	40	38	42
Personal days with pay	34	34	35
Support for re-location	31	28	33
Telework	16	13	18
Daycare	7	6	7
Childcare referral	5	5	6

In the battle for competitive advantage employers will rely increasingly on the productivity, motivation and loyalty of their employees. Workplace policies that recognize that work and family are no longer separate spheres of activity will go a long way in encouraging these imperatives. Recognition of the needs of the new workforce has prompted a number of organizations to investigate ways in which they might play a part in helping their employees obtain a better integration of their work and non-work lives. The types of support offered and the level of organizational commitment to work-lifestyle issues, however, varies widely across companies. This part of the report examines the prevalence of various benefits or practices that the research literature suggests may help employees balance work and family demands. Data on the availability of key are shown for the total sample in Box 7.

## **Canadians Organizations Are More Likely to Be Reactive than Proactive With Respect to Benefits**

The data collected as part of this study indicates that more Canadian organizations offer benefits to support employees with personal or family problems (i.e. EAP, emergency days off) than offer benefits to prevent the occurrence of such problems in the first place (i.e. flextime, child or eldercare referral). In other words, their approach to work-life issues is reactive rather than proactive. The data also suggests that many employees are willing to give employees time to deal with personal concerns, but are not willing to pay for this time (i.e. time off without pay and time in lieu of overtime are more common than paid personal days off). Such an approach is not likely to yield a committed and loyal workforce.

## **Regional Differences in Benefits**

### **Fewer employers offer childcare or eldercare referral**

There were no substantive regional differences in either the professional or non-professional sample with respect to the availability of childcare or eldercare referral. This benefit is not common anywhere!

### **Employers in B.C. less likely to offer personal days with pay and telework**

Employers in B.C. appear to be more likely than employers in other provinces to offer employees (both professional and non-professional) time off in lieu of overtime. Employers in B.C. were also more likely to offer their non-professional employees unpaid LOA, emergency days off, short term leave and pro-rated benefits for part time work. Both professionals and non-professional groups in B.C. were less likely to be allowed to take personal days off with pay and to be able to telework. This list of benefits suggests that many employers in B.C. are not prepared to offer financial assistance to employees who have personal problems.

### **Employers in the Prairie provinces less likely to offer supportive benefits**

Employers in the Prairies region appear to be behind the rest of the country with respect to the types of benefits which are available to employees. With one exception, none of the supportive benefits considered in this analysis were more available in the workplaces we surveyed in the Prairies region. Employers did, however, offer professional employees the opportunity to take time off in lieu of overtime. Furthermore, employers in the Prairies were less likely to have implemented policies which provide employees with personal days off with pay or the opportunity to telework.

### **Ontario has fewer supportive benefits than any other province**

Employers in the Ontario are behind the rest of the country with respect to the types of benefits which are available to employees. None of the supportive benefits considered in this analysis were more available in the workplaces we surveyed in Ontario. Furthermore, Ontario was less likely to offer its employees (professional and non-professional alike) EAP, emergency days off, short term leave, personal days off with

pay and support for relocation.

### **Quebec is more likely than any other province to offer supportive benefits**

Quebec can be considered to be best practice in Canada with respect to the provision of supportive benefits. Employers in Quebec were more likely than the employers in other regions to offer personal days with pay, telework and on-site day care (18% of the sample said this was available!) They were also more likely to offer their professional workers the opportunity to work flextime. Furthermore, they were less likely to offer unpaid LOA (employees were paid when they needed to take time off) and emergency days off. They were also less likely to offer pro-rated part-time work to their professional employees.

### **Professional employees in the Maritimes are less likely to receive supportive benefits.**

Employers in the Maritimes were less likely to offer their employees the opportunity to work flextime or to provide pro-rated part-time work. They were, however, more likely to offer their non-professionals unpaid LOA, emergency days off, Time off in lieu of overtime, short term leave, personal days off with pay, support for relocation and telework. None of these benefits were as available to the professionals in the Maritimes as they were to professionals in other regions of Canada.

## Section Six Work Life Conflict

Work-family conflict occurs when an individual has to perform multiple roles: worker, spouse and in many cases parent. Each of these roles imposes demands on their incumbents requiring time, energy and commitment to perform the role adequately. The cumulative demands of multiple roles can result in role strain of four types: overload, interference from work to family, interference from family to work and spillover.

Four sets of measures are used in this study to determine how successful Canadian employees have been at balancing work and family life: (1) role overload, (2) work interferes with family, (3) family interferes with work, and (4) caregiver strain.

### Box 8 Work-Life Conflict

**Role overload** exists when the total demands on time and energy associated with the prescribed activities of multiple roles are too great to perform the roles adequately or comfortably.

**Role interference** occurs when conflicting demands make it difficult to fulfill the requirements of multiple roles. Role interference has been found to have two distinct components: family interferes with work and work interferes with family. In the first case, interference occurs when family-role responsibilities hinder performance at work (i.e., a child's illness prevents attendance at work). In the second case, problems arise when work role activities impede performance of family responsibilities (i.e., long hours in paid and unpaid work prevent the performance of duties at home).

**Caregiver strain:** Recent research has determined that the burdens of caregiving can result in a type of stress labeled caregiving strain. Most of the research on caregiving strain looks at the burdens associated with caring for elderly relatives. This research suggests that caregiving strain can take several forms including emotional burdens, multiple role strain, financial strain and physical exhaustion.

Details on each of these aspects of work-life conflict are given in Box 8. Also included in this section are the responses to the following questions:

- C Do you choose to work different hours than your partner in order to better manage child-care or elder-care? (referred to in the text as “off shifting”)
- C Which activity would you choose to spend more time on if you could: Time with family? Personal time (i.e. relaxation)? Sports/fitness? Education/studies? Work?

What we can infer from these data about the ability of Canadian employees to balance work and family demands? Findings using the total sample are reviewed first. This is followed by an examination of regional differences with respect to work-life conflict.

## **The Majority of Working Canadians Experience Conflict Between Work and Non-Work Roles**

Data from the total sample help us appreciate the extent to which work-life conflict is a problem plaguing the majority of Canadian employees. The majority of employees in the 2001 sample (58%) are currently experiencing high levels of role overload (i.e. have too much to do in a given amount of time). Another 30% report moderate levels of role overload. Only 12% of the respondents in this sample report low levels of overload. The percent of employees with high levels of role overload has increased by almost 20 percentage points in the last decade.

One in four of the Canadians in the 2001 sample report that their work responsibilities interfere with their ability to fulfil their responsibilities at home. Almost 40% of the respondents report moderate levels of interference. The percent of employed Canadians with this form of work-life conflict has increased by approximately 5% over the last decade.

Only 10% of the Canadians in the 2001 sample reported high levels of family interferes with work (i.e. met family demands as the expense of work role commitments). Another third reported moderate levels of family interferes with work. The percentage of working Canadians who give priority to family rather than work has doubled over the past decade. This increase can be largely attributed to the fact that the number of employees with eldercare responsibilities has increased over the past decade.

Approximately one in four of the individuals in the 2001 sample experience what can be considered to be high levels of caregiver strain: While the majority of the respondents to this survey (74%) rarely experience caregiver strain, 9% find eldercare to be a strain (physically, financially or mentally) several times a week or daily. Another 17% experience such feelings approximately once a week.

Who, in the sample, has more problems balancing work and family responsibilities? The evidence is quite clear - employed Canadians with dependent care responsibilities. Employees who have child and/or eldercare responsibilities report higher levels of work-life conflict than those without such responsibilities regardless of how work-life conflict was assessed (i.e. reported higher levels of role overload, work interferes with family, family interferes with work and caregiver strain). Employees without dependent care responsibilities are more able to separate work and family. This greater ability to balance can be attributed to two factors: fewer demands outside of work and more degrees of freedom to deal with work issues (i.e. more control over their time).

Job type is associated with all but one of the measures of work-life conflict. Employees with higher demands at work (i.e. managers and professionals) are more likely than those in "other" jobs to experience high levels of overload and work interferes with family. Those in "other" jobs, on the other hand, are more likely to report higher levels of caregiver strain due to the financial stresses associated with eldercare.

Finally, it is interesting to note that one in three respondents arrange their work schedule so that they and their partner can share childcare (i.e. work a different shift from their partner so that they do not need to

arrange any kind of childcare). This strategy, typically referred to as “off-shifting” is a strategy that is primarily used by men in managerial and professional positions with dependent care responsibilities. While such arrangements may be beneficial to children, how they affect marriages and work-life conflict is still largely unknown.

## **Regional differences in Work-life Conflict**

### **Employees in B.C. and Ontario are more likely to report high levels of role overload**

Just over half (54%) of the non-professionals and approximately two-thirds of the professionals (61%) in the sample reported high role overload.

Employees in B.C. and Ontario were more likely to report high levels of role overload:

☐ 64% of professionals and 56% of non-professionals in Ontario report high role overload

☐ 61% of professionals and 55% of non-professionals in B.C. report high role overload

Professionals employees in Quebec, on the other hand, were less likely to report high role overload (57% high).

### **Employees in Quebec report lower work interferes with family**

One third of the professionals in the sample and 22% of the non-professionals reported high work interferes with family. Employees in Quebec are less likely to perceive that their work demands interfere with their ability to meet family role responsibilities. Approximately 16% of the employees in the Quebec sample reported high levels of work interferes with family. Non-professionals in the Prairie (24%) and B.C. (24%) samples, on the other hand, are more likely to report high work interferes with family.

### **No regional differences in family interferes with work**

Approximately one in ten of the respondents, regardless of job type of region, reported high levels of family interferes with work. The fact that there are no regional differences in this form of work life conflict indicates that the idea that work should take priority over family is widely held in Canada.

### **High levels of caregiver strain more likely to be reported by employees in Ontario and Quebec**

Twenty-eight percent of the non-professionals in the sample and 24% of the professionals reported high caregiver strain. Who is more likely to report high levels of caregiver strain? Non-professionals in Ontario (31% high) and professionals in Quebec (28% high). Professionals in the Prairies, on the other hand, are less likely to report high caregiver strain (18% high).

### **Professionals twice as likely as non-professionals to off shift**

Forty three percent of the professionals in the sample indicated that they deal with childcare demands by “off-shifting” with their partner. They were twice as likely as their non-professional counterparts to use this strategy (22% of the non-professionals in the sample “off-shift” with their partner).

### **Employees in Western Canada more likely to off-shift**

Who is more likely to off shift? Employees in B.C. (26% of non-professionals and 48% of professionals) and the Prairies (25% of non-professionals and 43% of professionals). Who is less likely to off shift? Respondents in Quebec (13% of non-professionals and 29% of professionals).

### **Canadian employees do not want to spend any extra time in work**

Where would Canadian employees spend any extra time that they had? The non-professionals in our sample indicated that they would chose to spend more time in the following activities: Personal activities and relaxation) (36%), family activities (33%) and sports/fitness (32%). The professional respondents gave slightly different responses. They would choose to spend more time in: sports/fitness (38%), Personal activities and relaxation (31%) and family activities (31%). No one in either sample indicated that they wished to spend more time working or in educational activities.

There were a number of interesting regional differences in these findings.

### **Employees in the Maritimes would give more time to their family**

Both the professionals (35%) and the non-professionals (38%) in the Maritime sample were more likely to indicate that they would give any extra time to their family. The professionals in the Maritimes sample were less likely to say they would spend any extra time in sports/fitness (33%)

### **Employees in Quebec would spend extra time in sports and fitness**

There seems to be consensus within Quebec on how extra time should be spent - sports and fitness (37% of non-professionals and 45% of professionals gave this response). Both non-professionals (21%) and professionals (23%) also agreed that extra time should not be spent on personal activities.

### **Employees in the Ontario would spend extra time on themselves**

Both the professionals (38%) and the non-professionals (35%) in the Ontario sample were more likely to indicate that they would spend any extra time in personal. The professionals in Ontario were less likely to say they would spend any extra time with their family (27%).

### **Professional employees in the Prairies would give more time to their family**

Professional employees in the Prairies (34%) were more likely to indicate that they would give any extra time to their family. Non-professionals were less likely to say they would spend any extra time in personal activities (26%).

### **Employees in B.C. would spend extra time in sports and fitness**

Employees in B.C. seem to have the same opinion as their colleagues in Quebec ...extra time should be spent in sports and fitness (40% of non-professionals and 45% of professionals gave this response). Employees in this province were, however, less likely to identify family as a place where one would devote extra time (only 28% of employees in B.C. identified family as a place where extra time should be spent.

## **Chapter Five: Family Attitudes and Outcomes**

What do we know about the impact of work on key family outcomes? About how Canadian families are doing overall? The answer, unfortunately, is “not much!” In November, 2000, the “Journal of Marriage and the Family” produced a special review issue which provided an overview of family research done in the 1990's. It was noted in this issue that, while a great deal is known about families (i.e. how to think about them, how to study them, personal relationships) less is known about how work affects key family indicators. This section of the report examines how Canadian families are doing. The following outcomes are used to make this assessment: family adaptation, family life satisfaction, parental life satisfaction family integration and positive parenting. Details on each of these family outcomes are given in Box 9.

### **Box 9 Family Outcomes**

**Family Adaptation** is defined as occurring when family members use their strengths and capabilities to reduce the demands of the situation, promote individual development of members, and achieve a sense of congruency in family functioning. Families high in family adaptation have a general sense of physical and psychological family health that is referred to as family well-being.

**Family Life Satisfaction** is defined as overall satisfaction with family relationships. The measure used in this study defines family life satisfaction to include the respondent's satisfaction with their family life, their relationship with their children, their spouse, their parents and their in-laws.

**Parental Life Satisfaction** is defined to be perceived satisfaction with the parenting role and one's ability as a parent. Parental satisfaction in this study includes satisfaction with respect to their relationship with their children, the behaviour of their children, themselves as a parent and their partner's relationship with their children.

**Positive Parenting:** The National Longitudinal Study of Children and Youth, jointly administered by Statistics Canada and Human Resources Development Canada, has identified a number of behaviours which appear to be associated with positive parenting. Five of these behaviours were included in this study. Higher scores on this measure reflect a greater amount of time spent in behaviours associated with being a good parent.

**Family Integration** is defined in terms of the stability of the family unit and the amount of security family members get by being part of the family and participating with the family in joint activities and functions.

Also included in this section are the responses to the following questions:

C Have you had fewer children because of demands at work?

C Have you not started a family because of demands at work.

Total sample findings with respect to family outcomes are presented below. This is followed by an examination of regional differences in family outcomes.

### **Work Demands Appear to be Having a Negative Impact on Family Functioning, Family Well Being and Family Stability**

A plurality of the Canadians who responded to this survey (46%) reported moderate levels of family well being (i.e. they were only moderately satisfied with the way their family deals with conflicts, spends its leisure time, communicates with each other). While 38% of respondents felt that their family was well adapted, 16% (i.e. almost one in six of the respondents) were not satisfied with their family's current ability to adapt and function.

Furthermore, while one in four of the respondents to this survey engaged in those activities which have been found to be associated with higher levels of family stability (i.e. attending events as a family, working around the house together, having family time during the week) several times a week or daily almost half (47%) engaged in them only weekly. More disturbing is the data showing that 27% of the sample said they rarely engaged in such activities.

Almost two thirds of those who responded to our survey indicated that they were completely satisfied with their family relationships - only 7% were not satisfied. It is interesting to note that a substantially higher percentage of the sample expressed satisfaction with their family life than were satisfied with their jobs.

Just over 60% of the sample indicated that they were completely satisfied with their ability as a parent- only 7% were not satisfied. Almost one in three were moderately satisfied. This is consistent with the fact that the vast majority of the Canadians in the total sample (79%) said that they were engaging in behaviours that are associated with positive parenting several times a week or daily. Only one in five parents engaged in such behaviours once a week or less.

None of the family outcomes examined in this study were associated with job type.

### **Regional differences in Family Outcomes**

#### **Only one in three respondents report high levels of family well being**

Only one in three of the respondents to this study reported high levels of family well being (i.e. high family adaptation).

#### **Employees in Quebec report higher levels of family adaptation**

Who has higher levels of family well being? Employed Canadians living in Quebec. Forty-five percent of the employees in the Quebec sample reported high family adaptation - a substantially greater proportion with this perception than elsewhere in Canada.

### **Employees in the Maritimes and Quebec are more likely to report high family satisfaction**

Approximately two thirds of the respondents to this study (63% of non-professional sample and 65% of the professional sample) reported high levels of family satisfaction.

Which groups were more likely to be satisfied with their family lives? Employed Canadians living in the Maritimes and Quebec. Consider the following:

- 68% of the non-professionals in Quebec and 72% of the professionals reported high family satisfaction, and
- 66% of the non-professionals in the Maritimes and 68% of the professionals reported high family satisfaction.

### **Employees in Western Canada and Ontario less likely to report high family satisfaction**

Which groups were more likely to be satisfied with their family lives? In this case the answer is dependent on the type of job done by the respondents. Non-professionals in B.C. (60%) and the Prairies (60%) and professionals in Ontario (62%) reported the lowest levels of family satisfaction.

### **Canadians living in Quebec and the Maritimes are more likely to be satisfied with their performance as a parent**

Most Canadians are satisfied with their performance as a parent. Approximately two thirds of those surveyed reported high parental satisfaction.

Who were more satisfied with their performance as a parent? The results are very similar to what was observed with respect to family satisfaction. Employees in Quebec, both professionals (70% with high satisfaction) and non-professionals (68% with high satisfaction) alike and non-professionals in the Maritimes (67% with more satisfaction) were more likely to report high parental satisfaction. Non-professionals in B.C. (56% with high satisfaction), on the other hand, were less likely to report high parental satisfaction.

### **Canadians living in Quebec and the Maritimes are more likely to engage in positive parenting**

The majority of employed parents in this sample (approximately 80%) reported a high incidence of behaviour associated with positive parenting. Who spent the most time in positive activities with their children? Employees in Quebec and the Maritimes. Eighty-one percent of the non-professionals in the Maritimes and Quebec samples and 83% of the professionals in the Quebec sample reported high levels of positive parenting. These findings are very consistent with those observed with respect to family satisfaction and positive parenting. Also consistent are the data showing that non-professionals in B.C. (74%) were less likely to report positive parenting.

### **Employees in Quebec are more likely to report high levels of family integration**

The data would suggest that the majority of Canadian employees do not perceive that their family units are stable. Only one in three Canadian employees reported high levels of family stability. Again, employees in

Quebec are the outliers with respect to the data with just under half of the employees (managers and professionals alike) in the Quebec sample reporting high levels of family integration.

### **One in five Canadian employees cope with work-life conflict by having fewer children**

It would appear from the data collected as part of this study that approximately one in five Canadians have decided to limit their family size in an attempt to deal with the issues associated with work and family. This strategy appears to be ubiquitous across Canada. It is equally likely to be used by professionals in all regions in Canada. In fact, there were only two difference in the data and these were found in the non-professional sample. Non-professionals in B.C. (24%) and the Maritimes (22%) were more likely to agree that they have had fewer children due to the demands of work.

### **Over a quarter of the employed professionals in this sample have delayed starting a family because of the demands of their job**

Just over one quarter of the professionals in the sample (28%) have delayed starting a family because of the demands of their job. One in five of those in the non-professional sample have employed a similar strategy. The fact that professionals are substantially more likely to delay starting a family because of their work is consistent with the fact that professionals have heavier work demands than non professionals and are more likely to believe that their culture rewards long hours and that if they take a leave from work for family reasons it will hurt their career advancement.

### **Employees in B.C. are more likely to have delayed having a family because of work**

Who is more likely to have delayed having a family because of work? Employees in B.C. (38% of the non-professionals in the B.C. sample and 32% of the professionals agreed that they have not yet started a family due to the demands of work). This finding is consistent with the fact that employees in the B.C. sample were significantly less likely to have children. Professionals in the Prairie region were also more likely to agree with this statement (32% of this group agreed with this statement).

### **Fewer employees in Quebec have delayed having a family because of work**

Who is less likely to have delayed starting a family? Employees in Quebec (Only 10% of the non-professionals in the Quebec. sample and 21% of the professionals agreed that they have not yet started a family due to the demands of work).

## Section Seven

### Work Attitudes and Outcomes

We have already established in this report that work-life conflict is a fact of life for a significant proportion of Canadian employees. We have also shown that in a substantial number of Canadian families' well being have been negatively impacted by work demands. But how about the employer? How do Canadians who work for the countries larger employers feel about their work and the institutions that employ them. The answers to these questions are addressed in this section of the report. The data collected as part of the 2001 National Survey on Work, Family and Life allow us to create a report card which evaluates organizational health in terms of the following key attitudes and outcomes: (1) View of the organization as a place to work, (2) Organizational commitment, (3) Job stress, (4) Job satisfaction, (5) Intent to turnover, (6) Absenteeism, and (7) Spending on prescription medication. Details on each of these work attitudes and outcomes are given in Box 10. Findings obtained with respect to the total sample are reviewed first. This is followed by the identification of key regional differences.

#### Box 10

##### Work Attitudes and Outcomes

**View of the Organization as a Place to Work:** In this survey we asked individuals to indicate "overall, how would you rate your organization as a place to work?" We gave them the following choices from which to pick: One of the best, above average, average, below average, one of the worse. This item was found to be highly associated with intent to turnover and organizational commitment and can be used as an indicator of how easy or difficult it will be to recruit and retain in a particular area or with a particular group.

**Organizational Commitment** measures an employee's loyalty to the organization. An individual who has high organizational commitment is willing to exert extra effort on behalf of the organization, and has a strong desire to remain with the organization. Individuals who view their employers as being unsupportive of their non-work roles have been found to be less likely to feel a sense of loyalty to the perceived source of the conflict. Commitment is particularly critical to organizations as it is linked to productivity (those with high commitment tend to work longer hours, work more paid and unpaid overtime) and retention (employees who are more committed to their employer are less likely to leave the organization).

**Job Stress** is viewed in terms of the incompatibility of work demands. This may be in the form of conflict between organizational demands and one's own values, problems of personal resource allocation, conflict between obligations to other people and conflict between excessively numerous or difficult tasks (role overload). Working conditions associated with job stress include heavy work loads, high levels of role ambiguity, under utilization of abilities, lack of participation in decision making, health and safety hazards, job insecurity, tight deadlines and responsibility for the safety and well-being of others.

**Box 10**  
**Work Attitudes and Outcomes**

**Job Satisfaction** is defined in this study to include both overall satisfaction with ones job and satisfaction with key facets of ones job (i.e. pay, career development, work schedule, workloads, job security). Job satisfaction is an important construct as it has been associated with the organization's bottom line through its impact on absenteeism, intent to turnover and commitment.

**Intent to Turnover** is defined as an individual's desire to leave an organization. From the employee's point of view, there are three major reasons to leave a job: (1) a better offer elsewhere, (2) a way of coping with undesirable job conditions (i.e. withdrawal), or (3) a poor work-family fit. No matter what the cause, turnover has a number of undesirable implications for organizations including the cost of losing an experienced worker, recruiting and retraining a successor the lower productivity of a new worker, and secondary morale effects on managers, peers and subordinates.

**Absenteeism:** Many organizations use absences from work as a measure of productivity (if workers are not on the job, the work is definitely not being done). While companies expect a certain amount of absenteeism and recognize that some absenteeism is even beneficial to the employee, too much absenteeism can be costly in terms of productivity and is often symptomatic of problems within the workplace. Several types of absenteeism were assessed in this study: (1) absenteeism due to ill health, (2) absenteeism due to family-related problems (i.e. sick child, elder care), and (3) absenteeism due to physical or mental exhaustion (mental health day).

**Spending on Prescription Drugs:** Canada spends more per person on drugs (approximately \$15.5 billion per year) than most other countries. In fact, prescription and non-prescription medications were estimated to account for 6.3% of the total economic burden of illness in Canada. The Government of Canada (and hence all taxpayers) pay almost half (43%) of these costs. The rest is paid by private insurance companies and individuals. The findings from this study suggest that these drug costs can be reduced substantially by if governments and organizations were to successfully address the issue of work-life conflict. The perceived use of prescription medicine was quantified in this study by asking respondents if, in the past six months, they had purchased prescription medicine for their own personal use (yes/no response). Those who answered yes were asked to indicate approximately how much they had spent on prescription medicine in the last six months.

## **Many of Canada's Larger Employers Cannot be Considered Best Practice**

The data collected in 2001 for the National Study on Work, Family and Lifestyle paint a disturbing picture for Canada's larger employers. Only about half of the employees who participated in this study were highly committed to their employer, satisfied with their job and viewed their organization as "an above average place to work". One in three reported high levels of job stress and just over one in four (28%) were thinking of leaving their current organization once a week or more. Absenteeism (especially absenteeism due to

physical and mental health issues) also appears to be a substantial problem for Canadian employers with half of the respondents reporting high levels of absenteeism (defined as 3 or more days of absence in the six months prior to the study being conducted). One in four respondents missed three or more days of work in a six month period due to physical health problems, while one in ten missed a similar amount of time due to physical, mental or emotional fatigue.

Comparison of the 2001 data set with the data collected in 1991 suggest that the conditions within Canadian organizations have declined over time. High job stress and absenteeism due to ill health have become more problematic over the past decade. Almost three times as many respondents reported high job stress in 2001 (35%) than in 1991 (13%). More than half (56%) of those in the 1991 sample did not miss work due to ill health in the six months prior to the study being conducted, while just under one in four (24%) missed three or more days. In 2001, the number of respondents missing 3 or more days of work due to ill health had increased to 28% of the sample while the proportion reporting zero days absence due to ill health had declined to 44%.

During the same time period, job satisfaction and organizational commitment have also appeared to decline. Whereas almost two-thirds of employees in 1991 were highly satisfied with their jobs (62%) and committed to their organization (66%), approximately half reported high satisfaction (46%) or high organizational commitment (53%) in 2001. Such findings are not surprising given the fact that workloads (see Report One) and work-life conflict also increased over the same time period. Taken as a whole, these findings suggest that many of the management practices instituted by Canada's larger organizations over the past decade (i.e. downsizing, re-engineering, focus on hours not output, pay freezes, restructuring) have had a negative impact on how Canadian employees perceive their job and their employer.

The data also indicates that how an employee feels about their organization (i.e. commitment, view of the organization as a place to work, intent to turnover) and their job (i.e. job satisfaction, job stress) has more to do with the type of work being done and the work environment (i.e. job type and sector) than demands outside of work (i.e. gender, dependent care status). In other words, it is what you do within the work setting and how you are treated at work rather than responsibilities outside of work or gender (i.e. men and women react in similar fashions to the same work stimuli) that influence key organizational outcomes. Taken as a whole, the data indicate that managers and professionals are more committed to their organizations and satisfied with their jobs than their non-professional counterparts, despite the fact that their jobs are associated with higher levels of stress. The data also indicate that, generally speaking, employees in the private sector feel more positively about their employer and their jobs than their counterparts in the public and NFP sectors.

The typical Canadian employee in this sample spent approximately \$81.82 in a six month period (approximately \$164 per year) on prescription medicine. While 44% of employees did not purchase any prescription drugs, one in five (19%) spent more than \$150.00 on prescription medicines for their own personal use. In most cases, these prescription drug costs are borne by the employer as 80% of the respondents noted that their employer paid for 100% of their drug costs.

## **Regional differences in Work Attitudes and Outcomes**

### **Employees in Ontario and the Prairies were less likely to rate their organization as an above average place to work**

Just under half of the employees in the sample agreed that their organization is an above average place to work. Those in the professional sample had a slightly more favourable view of their organization than the non-professionals (50% of the professionals agreed their organization was above average versus 47% of the non-professionals).

Employees in two regions, Ontario and the Prairies, were less likely to rate their organization as above average (46% of all employees in the Ontario sample and 48% of the respondents in the Prairies samples gave this rating).

### **Employees in the Maritimes and Quebec are more highly committed to their employer**

Just over half (54% of the professionals and 51% of the non-professionals) of the employees in our sample were highly committed to their employer. There were several important regional differences in commitment. Who is more likely to be committed? Employees in the Maritimes (64% of the professionals and 59% of the non-professionals in this region were highly committed) and Quebec (61% of the professionals and 55% of the non-professionals in Quebec were highly committed).

### **Employees in the Ontario and the Prairies are less likely to be committed to their employer**

Who reports lower levels of commitment? Employees in Ontario (only 49% of the respondents from Ontario were highly committed) and the Prairies (only 52% of the professionals and 46% of the non-professionals in this region were highly committed). It should also be noted that professionals in B.C. (54% with high commitment) were less committed than the professionals in the Maritimes and Quebec.

### **Non-professional employees in the Maritimes and professionals in Quebec enjoy the lowest levels of job stress**

Almost 40% of the professionals in the sample and 28% of the non-professionals reported high levels of job stress. The non-professionals in the Maritime sample (26% with high stress) and the professionals in the Quebec sample (29% with high stress) were less likely to report high levels of job stress. Interestingly enough, non-professionals in the Quebec sample (33% with high job stress) were more likely to report high levels of job stress.

### **What do Canadian employees like about their jobs? What do they dislike?**

Data addressing these questions for both professional and non-professional sample, while not critical to this report, are provided for the interested reader in Box 11 below. These numbers should help put the regional differences into perspective.

**Box 11**  
**Job satisfaction**

	<b>Professionals</b>		<b>Non-professionals</b>	
	% satisfied	% dissatisfied	% satisfied	% dissatisfied
Job in general	70	12	63	14
Sorts of things do on the job	70	11	63	13
Schedule of work hours	65	15	63	14
Job security	63	14	49	23
Number of hours worked	54	22	63	15
Amount of pay	50	29	45	31
Ability to meet career goals	42	26	35	28
Workload	40	36	45	27
Training and development	39	33	38	35

**Employees in the Maritimes and Quebec are more satisfied with their jobs**

Under half of the employees in this sample (47% of the professionals and 44% of the non-professionals) reported high levels of job satisfaction. Employees in the Quebec and Maritime regions were more likely to report high levels of job satisfaction. In the Quebec sample, 57% of the professionals and 52% of the non-professionals reported high job satisfaction while in the Maritime sample approximately 52% of all respondents reported high job satisfaction. Non-professionals in the B.C. sample, on the other hand, were less likely to report high levels of job satisfaction (only 39% of this group reported high job satisfaction).

Looking at the different facets of the job satisfaction give us additional information with respect to job satisfaction in the different regions of Canada

**Respondents in the Maritimes are more satisfied with their job in general and their workloads**

All employees in the Maritimes reported higher levels of satisfaction with their job in general (68% of non-professionals and 75% of professionals satisfied) and their workloads (51% of non-professionals and 47% of professionals satisfied). Professional employees in the Maritimes are also more likely to be satisfied with their work schedule (68% satisfied) and their ability to meet their career goals (48% satisfied). Non-professionals, on the other hand, are more likely than their counterparts in other provinces to be satisfied with their pay (55% satisfied).

### **Employees in Quebec report higher satisfaction with respect to work schedules, job in general, career development and workloads**

Employees in the Quebec sample reported higher levels of satisfaction with respect to half of the facets examined in this study. They were more satisfied with their:

- work schedule (74% of non-professionals and 68% of professionals satisfied)
- their job in general (72% of non-professionals and 75% of professionals satisfied)
- their ability to meet their career goals (46% of non-professionals and 48% of professionals satisfied), and
- their workloads (47% of non-professionals and 52% of professionals satisfied).

Non-professionals in Quebec were also more likely than other non-professionals to be satisfied with their pay (56% satisfied).

### **Employees in Ontario had no areas where there job satisfaction was higher**

Employees in Ontario had no areas where there job satisfaction was higher than could be observed in the other regions of Canada. All employees in Ontario were, however, less likely to be satisfied with their levels of job security (46% of non-professionals and 57% of professionals satisfied). Professionals were also less likely to be satisfied with their jobs in general (57% satisfied).

### **Employees in the Prairies were less likely to be satisfied with their job in general and their career development**

As was the case in Ontario, there were no instance where employees in the Prairies region were more satisfied than their counterparts in other provinces. There were two areas, however where all employees in the Prairies regions expressed lower levels of job satisfaction:

- with the job in general (58% of non-professionals and 66% of professionals satisfied), and
- with their ability to meet their career goals (30% of non-professionals and 37% of professionals satisfied).

### **Employees in B.C. more likely to be satisfied with their job security but less likely to be satisfied with their career development**

There was only one area where employees in the B.C. region expressed higher levels of job satisfaction than their counterparts elsewhere: job security (59% of non-professionals and 75% of professionals satisfied). It should be noted, however, that this survey was done before the provincial election.

All employees in the B.C. sample had lower levels of job satisfaction with their ability to meet their career goals (29% of non-professionals and 38% of professionals satisfied). Professionals were less satisfied than other professionals with their work schedules (61% satisfied) and their workloads (35% satisfied).

### **Why are Canadians thinking of leaving their current organization?**

Just over in four of the Canadian employees in the sample are seriously thinking about leaving their current organization. Reasons these individuals gave for leaving their organization are presented in descending order (i.e. from most to least common) in Box 12. When the data are organized in this way they show that relatively few people are thinking of leaving to move closer to family members, because they do not get along with their managers or their co-workers, or because their values are not the same as their organization's. Rather, the main pushes are a lack of recognition, the perception that their work environment is frustrating and non-supportive, and unrealistic workloads. With respect to attractions outside of their current organization, the data are very consistent to those observed with respect to job satisfaction: employees would leave for greater career development opportunities and higher pay. It should be noted that salary is often looked at as another form of recognition. These data are provided to help the interested reader better appreciate the discussion on regional differences in intent to turnover presented below.

<b>Box 12</b>			
<b>Intent to Turnover</b>			
<u>Reason for leaving</u>	<u>Total Sample</u>	<u>Professionals</u>	<u>Non-Professionals</u>
Frustrated by work environment	53	57	51
Do not feel their efforts recognized	50	50	51
Higher salary	51	46	52
Most interesting work elsewhere	38	33	42
Opportunities for advancement elsewhere	36	32	36
More time for personal/family	31	36	29
Work environment not supportive	31	31	32
Work expectations unrealistic	26	29	24
Personality conflicts at work	19	16	20
Values not the same as the organization	19	18	19
Move closer to family	14	14	12

### **Employees in Quebec and the Maritimes have lower intent to turnover**

Just over one in four (26% of the non-professionals and 28% of the professionals) in the sample have high intent to turnover. Which groups are less likely to be thinking of leaving? Not surprisingly, employees in Quebec (17% thinking of leaving) and the Maritimes (21% thinking of leaving). It is also interesting to note that there were no job type differences in intent to leave in these regions.

### **Professional employees in Ontario and the Prairies have higher intent to turnover**

Which groups are more likely to be thinking of leaving? Professional employees working in Ontario (32% high intent to turnover) and the Prairies (30% high intent to turnover).

An examination of the frequency with which the various reasons for leaving are cited gives us additional

information with respect to intent to turnover in the various regions of Canada.

### **Professionals in Ontario and the Maritimes more likely to say they would leave because work expectations are unrealistic and the work environment is frustrating**

Respondents from Ontario scored at the mean or higher with respect to all the reasons for leaving the organization examined in this analysis. Professionals in Ontario were more likely than other professionals to indicate that they would leave due to unrealistic work expectations (35% gave this reason) and because of frustrations with the work environment (58% gave this reason).

Professionals working in the Maritimes were also more likely than other professionals to indicate that they would leave due to unrealistic work expectations (34% gave this reason) and because of frustrations with the work environment (58% gave this reason).

### **Non-professionals in Ontario and the Prairies would leave for an increase in pay**

Non-professionals in Ontario and the Prairies were more likely to say that they would leave for a pay increase (54% of those in the Ontario sample and 55% in the Prairies sample gave this reason). Non-professionals in the Maritimes, on the other hand, were less likely than other non-professionals to say they would leave for increased pay (46% gave this reason).

### **Employees in Quebec are less likely to leave because their work environment is frustrating**

Respondents from Quebec scored at the mean or lower with respect to all the reasons for leaving the organization examined in this analysis. All employees, regardless of job type, were less likely to say they were thinking of leaving because of frustrations with the work environment in their current organization (38% gave this reason). Non-professionals were less likely to mention non-supportive work environments (28% gave this reason) and higher pay (44% gave this reason). Professionals, on the other hand, were less likely to say they were leaving because of unrealistic work expectations (only 22% gave this reason).

### **Non-professionals in B.C. less likely to leave because of lack of recognition.**

With two exceptions, the respondents in B.C. reflected opinions that were neither higher nor lower than the respondents in other regions of Canada. The exceptions occurred with the non-professional sample who were less likely to say they would leave because they did not feel their efforts were being recognized (43% gave this response) and because their work environments were non-supportive (26% gave this response).

### **Employees in Quebec and the Maritimes are less likely to say they would leave for reasons of balance**

One in four of the professionals and one in five of the non-professionals said they would leave their current organization to work for one that offered more balance. Both professional and non-professional employees in the Quebec and Maritime samples were less likely to be thinking of leaving their organization for more

balance (17% of non-professionals and 21% of professionals in Quebec and 19% of non-professionals and 23% of professionals in the Maritimes agreed that they had high intent to leave for this reason).

### **Professionals in Ontario and the Prairies and non-professionals in Quebec have higher absenteeism**

Two-thirds of employees in the sample, regardless of job type, indicated that they had missed work in the six months prior to the study being done. Non-professional employees in the Quebec sample were more likely than other non-professionals to have missed work (70% had been absent at least once in the six months prior to the study being done) whereas professional employees in the Ontario (67%) and Prairie (68%) samples were more likely than other professionals to have missed work. The reasons behind these differences can be ascertained by looking at the data below.

### **Ill health is the most common reason given for missing work**

Just over half (52%) of the sample missed work due to ill health in the six months prior to the study being done. There were no regional differences in absence due to ill health in the non-professional sample. Professionals in the Quebec (45%) and Maritime (46%) samples were less likely to have missed work due to ill health.

### **One in three employees took a mental health day off work**

The second most common reasons employees gave for missing work was mental or emotional fatigue. Approximately one in three of the respondents (31% of the non-professionals and 32% of the professionals) took at least one “mental health day” in the six months prior to the study being done.

### **Employees in Ontario and the Prairies more likely to take “mental health” days**

Employees in the Ontario sample, regardless of job type, were more likely than their counterparts in other regions to have taken at least one “mental health” day (34%). Professionals in the Prairies samples (33%) were also more likely to report this form of absenteeism.

### **Non-professionals in Quebec less likely to take “mental health” days**

Non-professionals in the Quebec sample, on the other hand, were less likely than their counterparts in other regions to have taken a “mental health” day (25%).

### **Just under one in four employees miss work due to childcare and 10% report absenteeism due to eldercare**

Employees are less likely to miss work because of dependent care demands. Just under one in four (22% of non-professionals and 24% of professionals) missed work due to childcare. Only 10% missed work due to eldercare.

### **Employees in Quebec are more likely to have missed work due to childcare**

Both professional and non-professional employees in the Quebec sample were more likely to have missed work due to childcare issues (26% of non-professionals and 30% of professionals missed at least one day of work due to childcare issues).

### **Employees in B.C. are less likely to have missed work due to dependent care issues**

Employees in the B.C. sample were less likely to have missed work due to childcare issues (18% of the sample missed work due to childcare) or eldercare concerns (only 6% missed work because of eldercare). These findings are not surprising given the fact that the employees in the B.C. sample were less likely to have children or spend time in eldercare.

### **Employees in Ontario and the Prairies spend more on prescription medication**

Approximately half of the non-professional sample and 41% of the professional sample had not purchased any prescription drugs for their own use in the 6 months prior to the study being done. On the other hand, 13% of respondents spent more than \$200 on medications during this same time period.

Employees in the Ontario and Prairie samples were more likely than their counterparts in other regions to have spent \$200 on prescription medications in the six months prior to the study being completed (15% of the non-professionals and 16% of the professionals in the Ontario sample and 14% of all employees in the Prairie sample spent \$200+).

## **Section Eight**

### **Employee Wellbeing**

Previous research indicates that an individual's well-being is associated with the successful interaction between work and family domains. The literature suggests that opposing pressures between work and home domains as well as stress at work and outside work may jeopardize an individual's well-being in a number of ways. The following individual outcomes of work-family conflict and stress are examined in this study: (1) Perceived physical health, (2) Perceived stress, (3) Burnout, (4) Depressed mood, and (5) Life satisfaction. Details on each of these employee outcomes are given in Box 13. This is followed by a summary of key findings on employee well being obtained with the total sample. This is followed by the identification of key regional differences in employee wellbeing.

### **So.... how are Canadian employees doing?**

How are Canadian employees doing? The data suggest that many working Canadians are not doing as well as they could be and not as well as they were a decade ago. Over half of the employed Canadians who responded to our survey reported high levels of perceived stress; one in three reported high levels of burnout and depressed mood. Only 41% were satisfied with their lives and one in five were dissatisfied. Almost one in five perceived that their physical health was fair to poor. These data are disturbing as they can be considered to be a “best case scenario” as these data reflect the mental health status of employed Canadians, many (if not virtually all) of whom can be considered to have a “good” jobs in one of the “best countries to live in the world!” This begs the following question: If a substantial number of employed Canadians can be considered to be in poor mental health, what is the prevalence of mental health problems in those groups who are considered to be at risk with respect to stress, depression, and poor physical health (i.e. contingent workers, the unemployed, those on social assistance)?

Furthermore, the data indicate that the physical and mental health of Canadian employees has deteriorated over time and that the 1990's has been a tough decade for Canadians working for medium and large organizations. Comparison of the 1991 and 2001 samples indicate that the prevalence of high levels of perceived stress and depression in the Canadian labour force has increased in the past decade. In 1991, 44% of the respondents to our survey reported high levels of perceived stress; this had increased to 55% with high levels of perceived stress in 2001. In 1991, 24% of the respondents to our survey reported high levels of depressed mood compared to 36% in the 2001 sample. This decline in mental health over the past decade is not surprising given the increase in work demands noted earlier in the report.

Given these findings and the link between mental health and life satisfaction it is not surprising to find that the life satisfaction of our respondents (and by extension that of Canadians employed by medium and large organizations) also declined over the decade (45% with high life satisfaction in 1991 versus 41% in 2001). This decline in life satisfaction is consistent with the rise in perceived stress and depressed mood. Taken as a whole, these data suggest that the increase in the work demands of Canadian employees as well as the proliferation of work-life conflict over the decade are having a negative impact on the mental health of employees.

**Box 14**  
**Employee Outcomes**

**Physical Health:** There is a growing body of evidence to suggest that work-family conflict, stress and burnout are causal factors in physical disease. A well recognized surrogate measure of physical health (developed by Statistics Canada) was used in this study to assess health. Respondents were asked: “All things considered, how would you rate your own physical health?: Excellent, above average, average, below average and poor.”

**Perceived stress** refers to the extent to which one perceives one's situation to be uncontrollable and burdensome. Stress has been found to be related to various psychological outcomes including job dissatisfaction, anxiety, and depressed feelings, among others. Behavioural outcomes of stress include smoking, drug use, drinking, decreased work productivity, absenteeism and turnover. The health consequences of stress documented in the literature include elevated diastolic blood pressure, serum cholesterol level, and heart rate, as well as gastrointestinal disorders and cardiovascular disease. Excessive stress can also produce dysfunctional outcomes in the work and family domains.

**Burnout** is defined here as a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion which is often found in those who have involvement with people in emotionally demanding situations. Chronic daily stresses rather than unique critical life events are regarded as central factors in producing burnout.

**Depressed mood** is defined as a state characterized by low energy, and persistent feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. The stress of balancing work and family responsibilities has been found to be a significant factor contributing to depressed feelings among employees.

**Life satisfaction** is defined as an overall sense of well being. Research findings consistently indicate that men and women who are satisfied with the balance between their work and their non-work domains tend to be satisfied with their lives.

With respect to job type, it is interesting to note that managers and professionals can be considered to be in better overall mental health (i.e. less likely to be depressed, more likely to be satisfied with their lives) and physical health (i.e. more likely to describe their health as very good to excellent) than employees who occupy blue and pink collar jobs (i.e. clerical, administrative, production positions). This finding is particularly striking given the fact that the managers and professionals in our sample were more likely than the blue and pink collar employees to work long hours, take work home with them and report high role overload, high work interferes with family, negative spillover from work to family and high job stress - conditions which are generally a recipe for poorer mental health.

## **Regional differences in Employee Well Being**

### **Professionals working in Quebec are more likely to perceive that they are in good health**

Approximately half of the sample (47% of the non-professionals and 51% of the professionals) reported that their health was above average; almost one in five (18% of the non-professionals and 15% of the professionals) reported that their health was poor. There were no regional differences in perceived health for the non-professionals in the sample. The following differences with respect to the professional sample are, however, worthy of note:

- C Professionals in the Quebec sample were more likely to report that their health was above average (54% high),
- C Professionals in the Prairies sample were less likely to report that their health was above average (48% high), and
- C Professionals in the B.C. sample were more likely to report that their health was poor (17% low).

### **Employees in Ontario and the Prairies report higher levels of stress**

Just over half (56% of the non-professionals and 52% of the professionals ) reported high levels of perceived stress. Who reports higher levels of stress? Employees in the Ontario sample (55% of the professionals reported high stress as did 58% of the non-professionals) and non-professionals in the Prairies region (59% of this group reports high stress).

### **Employees in Quebec report lower levels of stress**

Who reports lower levels of stress? Employees in the Quebec sample (45% of the professionals reported high stress as did 47% of the non-professionals).

### **Employees in Quebec and the Maritimes less likely to report burnout**

One in three of the respondents to this survey (30% of the non-professionals and 32% of the professionals) reported high levels of burnout. Employees in Quebec and the Maritimes were less likely to report high levels of burnout (26% of the professionals in both these regions, 26% of the professionals in Quebec and 30% of the non-professionals in the Maritimes reported high levels of burnout).

### **Non-professionals in Ontario and the Prairies are at higher risk for depression**

Forty percent of the non-professionals in the sample reported high levels of depressed mood. Who is at increased risk for depressed mood? Non-professionals in the Prairies (42% high) and Ontario (42% high). Professional employees in the sample, regardless of region, were at lower risk for depression (32% of non-professionals reported high levels of depressed mood).

### **Employees in Quebec report lower levels depressed mood**

Employees in the Quebec sample were less likely than their counterparts in other regions of Canada to report high levels of depressed mood (only 31% of the non-professionals in the Quebec sample and 25% of the professionals reported high levels of depressed mood).

### **Non-professionals are less likely to report high levels of life satisfaction**

Only 38% of the non-professionals in this sample reported high levels of life satisfaction. By comparison 46% of the professionals who responded to our survey reported high levels of life satisfaction. Non-professionals in the Quebec sample (47% high) and professionals in the Maritimes sample (55% high) were more likely than to report high levels of life satisfaction.

## **Section Ten**

### **How Do the Different Regions of Canada Stack Up as a Place to Work?**

The following broad conclusions can be drawn from the data reviewed in this report.

- A significant proportion of the Canadian workforce is having difficulties balancing the competing roles of employee, parent, spouse, and eldercare giver.
  - Work-life conflict has increased over the decade.
  - Work demands have increased over the decade as has time in both paid and unpaid work.
  - The majority of Canada's largest employers cannot be considered to be best practice employers. Fewer than half of the Canadian employees in this sample were satisfied with their job and committed and loyal to their employer. Just over one in three reported high levels of job stress.
  - Conditions within Canadian organizations employing 500 people or more have declined over the past decade.
  - The "health" of the families in which Canadian employees live is under stress. While the majority of the Canadian employees in this sample were satisfied with their families and their performance as a parent and engaged in behaviours associated with positive parenting several times a week or more, only one in three were completely satisfied with their families' well-being and one in four frequently engaged in activities which have been linked to family stability.
  - Many Canadians working for Canada's largest employers are in poorer mental health (i.e. report high levels of perceived stress, depressed mood and burnout and lower levels of life satisfaction).
  - The mental health of Canadians employed in our counties larger firms has deteriorated over time.
  - These trends can be observed in all regions of Canada - no area has been left unscathed.
- C There are important regional differences in the data that can likely be linked with employment legislation, government policies and community practices in place in the different areas of Canada.

The last section of the report provides a summary of the data discussed in preceding sections. The focus in this section is on the identification of similarities and differences with respect to these issues in the different regions of Canada. It seeks to answer the following questions: In what ways are the different regions of Canada the same with respect to issues associated with work-life balance? What makes the various regions unique?

This chapter is divided into seven parts. The first part looks at regional similarities in the data - concerns shared by Canadians working in the different parts of the country. Sections two through six looks for regional differences with Section Two focusing on B.C., Section Three the Prairies, Section Four Ontario, Section Five Quebec and Section Six the Maritimes. The final section of this chapter offers a summary of the recommendations offered in previous reports in this series. The interested reader is directed to these earlier reports for details on how to address issues associated with work-life conflict.

When reading this last section the reader needs to be aware of the following terminology:

- C Employee: The finding holds true for both the professional and non-professional samples,
- C Professionals: The comparison holds true only for the professional sample, and
- C Non-professionals: The comparison holds true only for the non-professional sample.

Finally, it should be noted that the discussion in Sections two through six focus on those findings which differentiate one region from another. This means that there is no discussion of the areas in which the region did not differ in any substantive way from what was observed in other parts of Canada are not

### **What's the Same? Common Concerns**

There were no regional differences in this sample with respect to the average age of the workforce. The fact that half the respondents were over the age of 43 indicates that companies across Canada will, in the near future, need to place a high priority on recruitment as well as succession planning.

The majority of employees in all regions of Canada lived in dual-income families. Fewer than one in ten of the respondents belonged to a "Traditional" (i.e. male breadwinner, wife at home) family. Employers therefore need to realize that for the majority of their employees, balancing work and life is a relevant issue.

There were no regional differences with respect to the percent of the workforce that have eldercare and sandwich responsibilities. The heavier demands faced by these groups needs to be addressed by employers in all parts of Canada.

Canadian employers are not paying enough attention to career development. The average Canadian employee has spent approximately 7 years in their current job. Employers need to address this issue if they wish to remain globally competitive given the strong association between career development and motivation.

There were no regional differences in amount of the amount of time per month that Canadians devote to parenting, eldercare, SWAH, paid overtime, education and volunteering for those employees who engaged in such activities. Similarly, the amount of time spent in work is approximately the same across the country: 39.3 hours per week for the non-professionals in the sample and 42.0 hours in work per week for the typical professional, when overtime is not considered.

The majority of employees in this sample, regardless of region, perceive a disconnect in their organization between work-life policies and practice. Similarly, almost half of the professionals in the sample believe that if they do not work long hours they will not get ahead. This last finding is consistent with the fact that across the country, one in four professionals have pursued a strategy of limiting family size to help them cope with their work demands.

One in ten Canadians experience high levels of one form of work-life conflict: family interferes with work. One in ten have missed work due to elder care concerns and 15% perceive that their health is fair/poor. There were no regional variations in any of these data

## **What Makes B.C. Unique?**

Demographically, our sample from B.C. was unique in the following ways:

- Employees in B.C. were more likely to live in mid-sized communities with 25,000 to 99,000 people. Employees in B.C. were less likely to live in a dual-income family with children, less likely to be working single parents, less likely to have eldercare, less likely to be part of the sandwich group and less likely to be parents. They were also less likely to spend time each week on childcare and eldercare.
- Employees in the B.C. sample BC were more likely to work in production and operational positions and less likely to perform clerical and administrative work.
- Professional employees in B.C. were less likely than other professionals to be unionized.
- Professionals in B.C. had lower personal incomes and were more likely to say that in their family money was tight.
- Non-professionals in B.C. had higher personal incomes
- The typical employee in B.C is a “survivor” and has been with their current employer for almost 16 years - longer than in other regions.

The following work and non-work demands also differentiate B.C. from other regions:

- C Employees living in B.C. spend more time per week commuting to work (due to influence of Vancouver), more time per week in educational activities and more time per week in leisure.
- C Employees in B.C. have fewer family demands (due to the lower percent of workforce with children and eldercare).
- C Employers in B.C. place a very high reliance on paid overtime. Compared to their counterparts in other provinces, professionals in B.C. were more likely to work paid overtime less likely to work unpaid overtime (in fact, this group of professionals devoted the fewest hours of unpaid overtime to their employer per month) and less likely to take work home to complete in the evening (i.e. supplemental work at home or SWAH).

What makes the B.C. work environment unique? The data suggests the following:

- C Employees in BC were less likely to work a regular, “9 to 5” work day. This finding can be explained by the higher number of shift workers and employees who work a compressed work

- week in this province. Employees in B.C. were less likely to work flextime arrangements.
- C Professionals in the B.C. sample were less likely to report high levels of workplace flexibility and less likely to say that it was easy for them to vary their work hours.
- C Professionals in the B.C. sample were significantly less likely to agree that the environment in their organization supported balance.
- C Non-professionals in B.C. were more likely than other professionals to say that they could take a paid day off to care for a sick child or an elderly dependent. This finding is ironic since this group is less likely to have elderly dependents or children.
- C The culture of hours (the belief that if one does not work long hours they will not advance and that it is unacceptable to say no to more work) is very strong in B.C. firms and more likely to be espoused by employees in this province.
- C Employees in the B.C. sample were the most likely to perceive that the culture within their organization is one that forces a choice between work and family (i.e. agree that family leave and family responsibilities make it difficult to advance). This is consistent with the fact that there is a higher proportion of single employees and employees without children in this province.
- C Employers in BC appear to be more likely than employers in other provinces to offer employees (both professional and non-professional alike) time off in lieu of overtime. Employers in BC were also more likely to offer its non-professional employees unpaid LOA, emergency days off, short term leave and pro-rated benefits for part time work. Both professionals and non-professional groups in B.C. were less likely to be allowed to take personal days off with pay and to be able to telework. This list of benefits suggests that many employers in B.C. are not prepared to offer financial assistance to employees who have personal problems.

Are employees in B.C. more or less able than other Canadians to balance work and family demands? The data would say no.

- Non-professionals in B.C. were more likely to report high role overload and high work interferes with family
- Employees in B.C sample. were more likely than other employees to say that if they had extra time it would be spent in sports and fitness and less likely to identify family as a place where one would devote extra time.
- Employees in B.C. sample were more likely than their counterparts in other provinces to agree that they have not yet started a family due to the demands of work and that they have had fewer children due to the demands of work.
- Non-professionals in B.C. sample were less likely to report high family satisfaction and high parental satisfaction.
- Employees in B.C. sample were more likely to off-shift with their spouse as a way to balance work and family.

What do we know about the work attitudes and outcomes of employees in B.C.

- C Employees in B.C. sample were less likely to have missed work due to childcare issues (this is not surprising since this group less likely to have children).
- C Employees in BC sample were more likely to have purchased prescription medication in the 6

months prior to the study being done.

- C Professionals in B.C. sample reported lower absenteeism due to eldercare.
- C Professionals in the B.C. sample were less likely to be committed to their employer.
- C Non-professionals in the BC sample were less likely to report high levels of job satisfaction.
- C There was only one area where employees in the B.C. region expressed higher levels of job satisfaction than their counterparts elsewhere: job security (59% of non-professionals and 75% of professionals satisfied). It should be noted, however, that this survey was done before the provincial election. All employees in the B.C. sample had lower levels of job satisfaction with their ability to meet their career goals. Professionals were less satisfied than other professionals with their work schedules and their workloads.
- C With two exceptions, the respondents in B.C. reflected opinions that were neither higher nor lower than the respondents in other regions of Canada with respect to intent to turnover. The exceptions occurred with the non-professional sample who were less likely to say they would leave because they did not feel their efforts were being recognized and because their work environments were non-supportive.

With respect to employee wellbeing, B.C. differed from the other regions of Canada in only one respect - Professionals in the B.C. sample were more likely to report that their health was poor.

From the following data we would conclude that B.C. offers a less favourable work environment for Canadian professionals who wish to have a meaningful career as well as a family. Issues with respect to career development of employees and the work environment itself need to be addressed within this province.

## **What Makes the Prairies Unique?**

Demographically, the sample from the Prairies was unique in the following ways:

- A greater percent of the workforce in the Prairie region live in rural communities of under 25,000 people.
- Employees who work in the Prairies have lower personal incomes
- Professionals in the Prairies were more likely to report that they can live comfortably on their incomes while non-professionals in this sample were more likely to say that in their families money was tight.
- Employees in the Prairies sample were more likely to work in technical positions and less likely to perform clerical and administrative work.
- Employees in the Prairies sample were less likely to work in contract positions.
- There appears to be more job mobility in the Prairies. Professional employees in the Prairies sample have spent fewer years in their current organization than other professionals and worked in their current position for substantially fewer years. Consistent with this is the fact that a higher proportion of the employees in the Prairies sample were single employees with no children.

The work and non-work demands reported by the non-professionals in the Prairies sample were very similar

to those reported elsewhere. The same cannot be said for those in the professional group. Compared to other professionals, professionals in the Prairies

- C spent the fewest hours per week in work (45.3),
- C were more likely to work paid overtime,
- C devoted the fewest hours of unpaid overtime to their employer per month (17.8) , and
- C were more likely to engage in volunteer activities (52%).

Non-professional employees in this region also spent more time in volunteer activities and were also more likely to work paid overtime.

In terms of the work environment, there were only a few key differences between the Prairies region and the rest of Canada. These differences include the following:

- C Employees in the Prairies sample were more likely to work shifts.
- C Employees in the Prairies sample were less likely to perceive that their manager was supportive.
- C Non-professional employees in the Prairies region were significantly less likely to agree there were open and respectful discussions in their organization.
- C Professionals in the Prairies sample were less likely to say they could interrupt their work day and return.

Finally, it is interesting to note that employers in the Prairies region appear to be behind the rest of the country with respect to the types of benefits which they offer employees. With one exception, none of the supportive benefits considered in this analysis were more available in the workplaces we surveyed in the Prairies region. Furthermore, employers in the Prairies were less likely to have implemented policies which provide employees with personal days off with pay or the opportunity to telework. Employers were, however, more likely to offer their professional employees the opportunity to take time off in lieu of overtime.

There were also several interesting differences noted between the Prairies sample and the rest of the country with respect to work and family and family outcomes. For example:

- C Non-professionals in the Prairies were more likely to report high work interferes with family and less likely to report high family satisfaction.
- C Professionals in the Prairies sample were less likely to report high caregiver strain and more likely to off-shift with their spouse in an attempt to balance.
- C Professional employees in the Prairies were more likely to indicate that if they had any extra time they would give it to their family and to agree that they have not yet started a family due to the demands of work.

With respect to work attitudes and outcomes, employees in the Prairies sample were:

- less likely to rate their organization as an above average place to work,
- less likely to be committed to their employer,
- more likely to be thinking of leaving the organization (i.e. had higher intent to turnover), and
- more likely to have spent \$200+ dollars on prescription medications in the six months prior to the

study being completed.

The professionals in the Prairie samples were more likely to have taken at least one “mental health” day off work and more likely to have been absent from work in the six months prior to the study being done. These results are consistent with the fact that professionals in the Prairies sample were less likely to perceive that they were in good health.

In terms of job satisfaction, there were no instance where employees in the Prairies region were more satisfied than their counterparts in other provinces. Employees in the Prairies regions did, however, express lower levels of job satisfaction with respect to their job in general and their ability to meet their career goals.

In terms of employee well being, there are two differences that are worthy of note - both of which were observed in the non-professional sample. Non-professionals in the Prairies sample were more likely to report high levels of perceived stress and depressed mood.

The above data would suggest that employers in the Prairies regions need to work on the benefits they provide employees and focus on work environment and supportive management issues. Right now many of their employees do not view them favourably. This will make it difficult for them to attract and retain employees in an increasingly competitive labour market.

## **What Makes Ontario Unique?**

Demographically, the sample from the Ontario was unique in the following ways:

- C Approximately two thirds of the respondents working in Ontario lived in communities larger than 100,000. In fact, one in four worked in communities of 500,000 or greater.
- C Professional employees in Ontario have more formal education and earn higher incomes.
- C A higher proportion of the professional workforce in Ontario were part of a dual-income family with children. There were also more single parents in professional positions in Ontario.
- C A lower proportion of the professional group in Ontario were single employees without children.
- C A higher proportion of the professional workforce in Ontario moonlighted and worked part-time.
- C A higher proportion of the non-professional workforce in Ontario worked in contract positions

The work and non-work demands faced by those in Ontario were very similar to those noted for the total sample with the following exceptions:

- C Employees in Ontario spent more hours per week commuting to work, largely due to the higher travel demands associated with living in the greater Toronto area.
- C Non-Professional employees in Ontario were less likely to work paid overtime and less likely to spend time in volunteer activities.
- C Professionals in Ontario were less likely to work unpaid overtime.

The work environment in Ontario is somewhat unique and appears to be less supportive of the work-life concerns of its employees. For example:

- Employees in Ontario have lower perceived flexibility at work.
- Employees in Ontario were more likely to indicate that it was hard for them to take a paid day off to care for an elderly dependent, interrupt their work day and return, or take a paid day off to care for a sick child.
- The culture of hours is stronger in Ontario than in any other region.
- Professionals in the Ontario sample were less likely to perceive that their manager was supportive.
- Professionals in Ontario were less likely to agree that supportive policies were in place within their organization, or that the environment in their organization supported balance.
- Employers in the Ontario appear to be behind the rest of the country with respect to the types of benefits which they offer to employees. None of the supportive benefits considered in this analysis were more available in the workplaces we surveyed in the Ontario region. Furthermore, Ontario was less likely to offer its employees (professional and non-professional alike) EAP, emergency days off, short term leave, personal days off with pay and support for relocation.

Given the above data it is not surprising to note that work-life balance and family outcomes appear to be more problematic in Ontario than elsewhere.

- Employees in Ontario were more likely to report high role overload and high caregiver strain.
- Employees in the Ontario sample were more likely to indicate that they would spend any extra time they had in personal activities and relaxation.
- Professionals in Ontario were less likely to report high levels of family satisfaction.

Employees in our Ontario sample reported more negative work attitudes and outcomes than any other regional sample. Employees in Ontario were:

- less likely to be committed to their employer,
- less likely to rate their organization as above average,
- were more likely to have taken at least one “mental health” day off work, and
- more likely to have spent \$200 + dollars on prescription medications in the six months prior to the study being completed.

In addition to the above, those in the professional group in Ontario were more likely to be thinking of leaving their organization (i.e. higher intent to turnover), and more likely to be absent from work in the six months prior to the study being conducted. Respondents from Ontario scored at the mean or higher with respect to all the reasons for leaving the organization examined in this analysis. The professionals in the Ontario sample were more likely than other group of professionals in Canada to indicate that they would leave due to unrealistic work expectations and because of frustrations with their work environment. Non-professionals in Ontario were more likely to say that they would leave for a pay increase

Finally, it is interesting to note that although we looked at 9 facets of job satisfaction as well as overall job satisfaction, there were no cases where job satisfaction was higher in the Ontario sample than in the other regions of Canada. All employees in the Ontario sample were, however, less likely than employees in other regions of Canada to be satisfied with their levels of job security. Professionals were also less likely to be

satisfied with their jobs in general.

Not surprisingly, given the above data, employee well being in Ontario does not compare favourably to that reported elsewhere in Canada. Compared to their counterparts in other regions of the country the employees in the Ontario sample (professional and non-professionals alike) were more likely to report high levels of perceived stress. The non-professionals in the Ontario sample more also likely to report high levels of depressed mood.

The above data supports the following conclusions. Ontario needs to address workplace issues if it wishes to remain the economic powerhouse of Canada. At this point in time the employment practices in this province as well as the organizational culture do not make this an attractive place for many Canadians to work. The workforce itself is highly skilled and well paid - but the extra money does not appear in this case to be compensating for non-supportive work cultures.

### **What Makes Quebec Unique?**

The sample from Quebec stood out from the rest in many ways. Demographically this province had a number of distinct characteristics including the fact that, not surprisingly, the overwhelming majority of respondents from Quebec indicated that French was their mother tongue. Other differences included the following:

- A higher proportion of those in the Quebec sample worked in clerical and administrative jobs.
- There was a lower number of professionals in the Quebec sample and a higher number of managers.
- Professionals in Quebec had higher personal incomes.
- A lower proportion of the workforce in Quebec were dual-income parents. A higher proportion were single parents.
- A higher proportion of the employees in the Quebec sample had children.
- Respondents from Quebec were more likely to be unionized.
- Employees in the Quebec sample were less likely to moonlight.
- Managers in the Quebec sample had the lowest number of direct reports (18), a finding consistent with the higher number of managers.

With respect to work and non-work demands:

- C Employees in the Quebec sample spent more time per week commuting to work. These data are consistent with the longer commute times experienced by employees who lived in and around Montreal.
- C Employees in Quebec were less likely to work unpaid overtime and supplemental work at home. Furthermore, those who did work unpaid overtime spent far fewer hours per month in such activities.
- C Non-professional employees in Quebec were more likely than any other group of employees to

spend time each week in eldercare.

- C Respondents in the Quebec sample spent the least amount of time per week in homechores, continuous learning and education, leisure and volunteer activities.

The data from this study would suggest that work environments in Quebec are far more supportive of the needs of their employees than in any other region of Canada. These findings are consistent with the fact the greater emphasis placed on social policy in this province. How are work environments more supportive? Consider the following. Employees in Quebec, regardless of the type of job they perform, perceived that they had more flexibility with respect to when and where they work. They were significantly more likely than their counterparts in any other region of Canada to agree that it was easy for them to vary their work hours, interrupt their work day and return, take a paid day off to care for a sick child, and take a paid day off to care for an elderly dependent. Professional employees in Quebec were approximately twice as likely as other professionals to work flextime arrangements and all employees in the Quebec sample were more likely to perform Guerilla telework.

Quebec can also be considered to be best practice in Canada with respect to the provision of supportive benefits. Employers in Quebec were more likely than the employers in other regions to offer personal days with pay, telework and on-site day care (18% of the sample said this was available!) They were also more likely to offer their professional workers the opportunity to work flextime. Furthermore, they were less likely to offer unpaid LOA and emergency days off. Rather, employees in this province were more likely to be offered paid personal time off to deal with personal or family issues.

The cultures within the Quebec based organizations in our sample were also more supportive. For example, the non-professionals in the Quebec sample were the least likely to describe the culture in their organization a culture of hours, as one that forced a choice between work and family and the most likely to indicate that the culture in their workplace was one that was supportive of work and family. In fact, the non-professionals in the Quebec sample were 14 percentage points more likely than their counterparts in any other region of Canada to agree that they felt comfortable using the supports offered by their company and more likely to agree that there were open and respectful discussions of these issues in their company.

Compared to their counterparts in other regions of the country, the professionals in the Quebec sample were more likely to agree that they felt comfortable using the policies in place in their organization and that there were open and respectful discussions of work-life issues in their organization. They were less likely than other professionals to feel that the culture in their organization forced a choice between work and family (i.e. only one in four of the professionals in the Quebec sample agreed that family leave limits advancement and that family responsibilities make it difficult to advance). Employees in Quebec were also less likely to “off- shift” with their spouse and more likely to agree that if they had any extra time it would be spent on sports and fitness.

Given the above data it should come as no surprise that the respondents in the Quebec sample reported the highest levels of balance and the best family outcomes in the study (though it should be noted that even

in this “best” case scenario there is a lot of room for further improvement). Consider the following:

- C Non-professionals in Quebec were less likely to report high levels of work interferes with family.
- C Professionals in the Quebec sample were less likely to report high role overload and less likely to report high levels of work interferes with family. Consistent with the earlier data on eldercare responsibilities employees in this group were, however, more likely to report high caregiver strain.
- C Employees in the Quebec sample were more likely to report high levels of family adaptation, family satisfaction, parental satisfaction, family integration and positive parenting.
- C Employees in Quebec were less likely to agree that they have not yet started a family due to the demands of work

The positive outcomes noted above are mirrored in the findings with respect to work attitudes and outcomes. Compared to their counterparts in the other regions of Canada, employees in the Quebec sample were:

- more likely to be highly committed to their employer,
- more likely to report high levels of job satisfaction, and
- less likely to be thinking of leaving their organization, especially for reasons associated with work-life balance.

Employees in the Quebec sample, regardless of job type, reported higher levels of satisfaction with their work schedule, their job in general, their ability to meet their career goals, and their workloads. Non-professionals in Quebec were also more likely than other non-professionals to be satisfied with their pay.

Respondents from Quebec scored at the mean or lower with respect to all of the reasons for leaving the organization examined in this analysis. All employees, regardless of job type, were less likely to say they were thinking of leaving because of frustration with the work environment in their current organization or for more balance. Non-professionals were less likely to mention that they were thinking of leaving because of non-supportive work environments and to obtain higher pay. Professionals, on the other hand, were less likely to say they were thinking of leaving because the work expectations in their organization were unrealistic.

While employees in the Quebec sample were more likely to have been absent from work, this higher level of absenteeism could be linked to a higher absenteeism due to childcare issues. Employees in the Quebec sample were less likely than other employees to have taken a “mental health” day.

The link between work life balance, healthy workplaces and employee wellbeing is supported by the fact that when compared to their counterparts elsewhere in Canada, employees in the Quebec sample were:

- less likely to report high levels of perceived stress,
- less likely to report high levels of burnout,
- less likely to report high levels of depressed mood, and
- more likely to report high levels of life satisfaction.

Professionals in the Quebec sample were also more likely to report that their health was above average.

From these data there are two key conclusions that can be drawn. First, sound and progressive social policy and an emphasis on family appears to make a real difference with respect to work-life outcomes and employee wellbeing. Second, employees who wish to balance work with family and life demands should consider working in Quebec. These data also suggest that other regions in Canada who wish to address issues associated with employee wellbeing and work-life balance examine the policies and practices in place in Quebec. Finally, these data indicate a need for the government of Quebec to address issues associated with eldercare.

## **What Makes the Maritimes Unique?**

Demographically the Maritimes sample is quite different from what was observed in the rest of Canada. Our data supports the following observations:

- C Professionals in the Maritimes sample had lower personal incomes and were more likely to say that in their family money was tight: non-professionals were more likely to say that money was not an issue.
- A greater proportion of the workforce in the Maritimes indicated that French was their first language (second only to Quebec).
- A greater percent of the workforce in the Maritimes lived in rural communities of under 25,000 people.
- A higher proportion of the workforce in the Maritimes were part of a dual-income family with children.
- There were fewer employed single parents in the Maritimes (6%).
- Employees in the Maritimes were more likely to work in technical positions.
- Employees in the Maritimes were more likely to be unionized.
- Employees in the Maritimes were less likely to moonlight.
- Non-professional employees in the Maritimes are survivors who have worked in their current organization for a longer period of time (15 years).
- The number of direct reports per manager in the Maritimes sample (23) was higher than in any other region in Canada.
- Professional employees in the Maritime sample were more likely to work in contract positions

The work ethic also appears to be quite different in the Maritimes. For example:

- C Respondents in the Maritime sample spent more time in work per week (44.5) than their counterparts in the other regions of Canada.
- C Professional employees in the Maritimes sample donated the highest number of overtime hours per month to their organization.
- C Employees in the Maritimes sample were more likely to take work home with them to complete (i.e. perform SWAH). They also performed more hours of SWAH per week than any other group in

the sample.

- C Employees in the Maritimes were more likely to engage in volunteer activities in the community.

The work environments in the Maritimes also have a number of unique characteristics. For example:

- C Employees in the Maritimes were more likely to work regular schedule and less likely to work flextime or a CWW. They were also more likely to have to work shifts.
- C Employees in the Maritimes sample had lower perceived flexibility. They found it harder to take a paid day off to care for an elderly dependent and to vary their work hours.
- C The culture of hours was less strongly held by employees in the Maritimes sample.
- C Employees in the Maritime sample were more likely to indicate that they would give any extra time to their family.

With respect to benefits, employers in the Maritimes were less likely to offer their employees the opportunity to work flextime or to provide pro-rated part-time work. They were, however, more likely to offer their non-professionals unpaid LOA, emergency days off, time off in lieu of overtime, short term leave, personal days off with pay, support for relocation and telework. None of these benefits were as available to the professionals in the Maritimes as they were to professionals in other regions of Canada.

Work-life balance in the Maritimes is very similar to what was observed elsewhere although employees in the Maritimes were more likely to report high positive parenting and family satisfaction.

Employees in the Maritime sample were more favourably predisposed towards their organization than was observed elsewhere in Canada. They were more likely to report:

1. high levels of job satisfaction,
2. high levels of organizational commitment,
3. high levels of job stress,
4. lower intent to turnover, and
5. lower intent to leave for more balance

than their counterparts in the other regions of Canada. That being said, the professionals in the Maritimes sample were also more likely than other professionals to indicate that they would leave their current organization due to unrealistic work expectations and because of frustrations with the work environment. This finding is consistent with the fact that the professionals in the Maritimes sample (especially the managers) have heavier work demands. Professionals in the Maritime samples were also less likely to have been absent from work.

All employees in the Maritimes sample reported higher levels of satisfaction with their job in general, and their workloads (despite the fact that they are working harder!) Professional employees in the Maritimes were also more likely to be satisfied with their work schedule (although they had less flexibility) and their ability to meet their career goals. Non-professionals, on the other hand, were more likely than their counterparts in other provinces to be satisfied with their pay (although their pay was lower). Finally, it is interesting to note that, despite the longer hours the employees in this sample were less likely to report high

levels of burnout and more likely to report high levels of life satisfaction.

What can we conclude from these data. First, that employers who value a committed, hard working workforce should consider locating in the Maritimes. Second, further research into the Maritimes workforce is warranted from these data. It would be interesting to determine to what extent the findings reported above can be attributed to the lifestyle “out east” (i.e. small, close knit communities, short commutes) rather than the work itself. It may be that there are real benefits to employees and employers alike from living in smaller communities where work, family and community are more easily integrated.

## **Recommendations**

There is “no one size fits all” solution to the issue of work-life conflict. That being said, the data would indicate that there are a number of strategies and approaches that the various stakeholders in this issue (i.e. employers, employees, families, unions and governments) can use to reduce work-life conflict. We have offered a number of recommendations in our previous reports in this area. These recommendations are summarized below. The interested reader is directed to the original reports.

### **What can employers do?**

Employers who wish to address work-life balance need to:

1. identify ways of reducing employee workloads. Special attention needs to be given to reducing the workloads of managers and professionals in all sectors.
2. recognize that unrealistic work demands are not sustainable over time and come at a cost to the organization which is often not recognized or tracked. Accordingly, we recommend that the employer start recording the costs of understaffing and overwork.
3. hire more people in those areas where the organization is overly reliant on unpaid overtime.
4. collect data which reflect the total costs of delivering high quality work on time (i.e. paid and unpaid overtime, subsequent turnover, EAP use, absenteeism).
5. change their accountability frameworks and reward structures.
6. tangibly reward and recognize overtime work.
7. develop an etiquette around the use of office technologies (i.e. e-mail, laptops, cell phones)
8. reduce their reliance on both paid and unpaid overtime.
9. give employees the opportunity to say “no” when asked to work overtime. Saying “no” should not be a career limiting move.
10. make alternative work arrangements more widely available within their organization.
11. implement time off in lieu of overtime pay arrangements.
12. provide a limited number of days of paid leave per year for childcare, eldercare or personal problems.
13. provide appropriate support for their employees who work rotating shifts.
14. measure the use of the different supportive policies and reward those sections of the organization

- that demonstrate best practices in these areas. Investigate those areas where use is low.
15. implement cafeteria benefits packages which allow employees to select those benefits which are most appropriate to their personal situation on a yearly basis.
  16. offer childcare and eldercare referral services.

### **What can employees do?**

Employees should:

17. say “no” to overtime hours if work expectations are unreasonable.
18. try and limit the amount of work they take home to complete in the evenings. If they do bring work home, they should make every effort to separate time spent in work from family time (i.e. do work after the children go to bed, have a home office).
19. try and reduce the amount of time they spend in job-related travel.
20. take advantage of the flexible work arrangements available in their organization.

## Appendix A: Results with professional sample

Variable	B.C.	Prairies	Ontario	Quebec	Maritimes	Total
N	1,586	2,006	5,920	1,439	1,820	13,672
Percent of sample	12	21	43	11	13	
<b>Profile of The Communities in Which These Respondents Live</b>						
% Live in rural community	11	19	9	12	18	13
% French as first language	4	4	8	80	12	13
Population of community						
± Under 25,000	26	30	16	28	48	25
± 25,000 to 99,999	34	12	16	36	24	20
± 100,000 to 499,999	24	26	41	17	27	32
± 500,000 or higher	18	32	27	20	1	23
<b>Demographics of the Sample: Personal Characteristics</b>						
Variable	B.C.	Prairies	Ontario	Quebec	Maritimes	Total
% Women	41	49	55	47	50	51
Mean age (years)	43	42	44	42	42	43
Education						
± High school or less	36	29	14	18	26	22
± College	21	22	23	16	15	21
± University	43	49	63	66	59	57
Personal income per year						
± under \$40,000	7	17	13	9	14	13
± \$40,000 to \$59,999	42	41	40	43	49	42
± \$60,000 to \$79,000	39	32	29	32	28	31
± \$80,000 or more	12	10	18	16	9	14
Family's Financial Situation						
± Money is tight	23	19	17	17	23	19
± Money not an issue	33	24	41	37	31	37

<b>Demographics of the Sample: Family Circumstances</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
% Married	79	79	81	77	83	80
Family Type (% in group):						
± Dual career - children	27	30	33	26	29	30
± <u>Dual mixed - children</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>27</u>
<b>Total Dual Income: children</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>57</b>
± Dual career - no children	10	8	9	9	9	9
± <u>Dual mixed- no children</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>
<b>Total DINKS</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
± Single parents	9	9	12	12	6	9
± Traditional - children	6	7	9	8	7	8
± Single no children	15	14	4	13	12	13
% with children	69	72	73	72	74	72
Mean number of children	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.6
% with eldercare	65	65	66	63	63	63
% in sandwich group	10	12	15	16	14	13

<b>Demographics: Characteristics of Work</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
Job Type (% in group):						
± Manager	28	29	27	39	37	30
± Professional	72	71	73	62	63	70
Number of direct reports	22	25	24	18	29	23
% Belonging to union	35	39	41	40	40	40
% Who Moonlight	7	8	11	5	5	9
% Who work full-time	96	90	87	95	95	90
% In contract position	6	6	7	7	12	7
Years with organization	15.7	12.8	13.2	14.4	14.0	13.8
Years in current position	7.3	5.6	7.6	7.0	6.6	7.2
<b>Work Arrangement</b>						
% Who work "9 to 5" day	35	43	42	43	54	43
% Who work flextime	15	22	24	33	19	22
% Who work CWW	28	8	9	8	3	10
% Who work shift	39	34	23	17	23	27
% Guerilla telework	13	13	15	19	16	15

<b>Work Demands</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
Hours in work per week	43.7	42.3	42.2	43.9	44.5	42.9
Hours commuting per week	4.3	3.7	4.6	4.9	3.8	4.3
% performing paid OT	40	38	26	26	25	31
Hours per month paid OT	11.2	9.6	9.3	10.3	9.9	9.8
% performing unpaid OT	67	65	58	60	68	62
Hours per month unpaid OT	16.9	17.8	19.9	19.9	21.7	19.2
% performing SWAH	54	57	62	60	70	61
Hours per week in SWAH	6.6	6.5	6.7	5.9	7.6	6.7
% pursuing education	41	36	39	32	35	37
Hours/ week in education	4.7	4.3	4.3	4.7	4.1	4.4
Total hours in work/week	47.3	45.3	45.8	48.6	47.5	46.4

<b>Non-work Demands</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
% performing childcare	54	59	60	59	60	59
Hours per week in childcare	11.4	10.8	10.9	10.2	10.5	10.8
% performing eldercare	24	29	32	33	32	28
Hours per week in eldercare	5.1	5.0	5.1	4.5	5.5	5.1
% performing volunteer activities	43	52	39	27	51	43
Hours/week volunteering	4.0	3.8	3.4	3.0	4.0	3.7
Hours/week homechores	11.3	11.8	11.9	9.0	11.1	11.5
Hours/week leisure	11.2	10.2	9.9	8.8	9.7	9.9
Total hours/week non-work	17.9	18.6	18.4	15.7	18.3	18.2

<b>Work Environment</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
% with high perceived flexibility	27	33	30	38	31	31
% saying it is easy to:						
± vary work hours	42	48	46	54	45	47
± interrupt work day	50	43	44	57	50	48
± take paid day sick child	55	59	45	60	56	52
± take paid day, eldercare	43	48	38	55	45	43
% who perceive manager is supportive	50	46	46	49	55	49
% who agree with the following statements						
Culture of hours						
± No long hours limits adv.	47	45	48	47	48	47
± Cannot say no more work	46	45	42	31	44	43
Culture: work or family						
± Family leave limits adv.	37	34	34	27	33	34
± Family makes adv. difficult	32	26	28	28	26	28
Culture: Policy not practice						
± Env. supports balance	30	32	30	35	35	32
± Policy supports balance	37	39	35	38	40	37
± Feel comfortable using supports	21	23	21	38	22	23
± Open and respectful discussions in organization	23	23	25	33	25	25

<b>Availability of Benefits</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
% who indicated that they had access to following benefits in their organization						
Unpaid LOA	77	74	71	65	75	73
EAP	68	69	67	66	68	68
Family/emergency days off	72	71	56	63	72	64
Time off in lieu of overtime	69	68	61	58	58	63
Short term leave	61	61	51	57	62	56
Pro-rated part-time	47	47	49	39	41	47
Flextime	40	40	43	51	38	42
Personal days with pay	33	38	31	47	41	35
Support for re-location	41	39	24	43	41	33
Telework	10	11	20	31	23	18
Day care	4	3	9	18	3	7
Childcare referral	3	7	8	5	5	6
Eldercare referral	2	7	7	3	3	5

<b>Work and Family Outcomes</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
% High caregiver strain	24	18	25	28	24	24
% High role overload	60	58	64	57	59	61
% High work interferes family	33	33	33	25	33	32
% High family interferes work	9	9	10	10	9	10
% off shift with spouse so do not need caregiving	48	43	37	29	41	40
Which activity if more time?:						
± Family	29	34	27	32	35	31
± Personal	26	30	35	23	32	31
± Sports/fitness	45	37	38	45	33	38

<b>Family Outcomes</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
% High family satisfaction	64	65	62	73	68	65
% High parental satisfaction	64	62	63	70	67	64
% High family adaptation	34	31	33	44	34	34
% High family integration	31	28	30	47	28	31
% High positive parenting	78	80	80	83	80	80
% Agree had fewer children due to demands of work	20	20	22	22	22	21
% Agree have not started family due to demands of work	33	32	28	21	25	28

<b>Organizational outcomes</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
% agree organization is above average as employer	53	49	46	55	54	50
% High commitment	54	52	50	61	64	54
% High job stress	40	38	40	29	38	38
% High job satisfaction	44	45	45	57	51	47
% Satisfied with:						
± Work schedule	61	64	65	68	68	65
± Job in general	69	66	57	75	75	70
± Job security	75	64	57	66	66	63
± Pay	44	48	50	51	51	50
± Workloads	35	40	39	47	47	40
± Ability to meet career goals	38	37	42	48	48	42
% High intent to leave	26	30	32	18	22	28
Why intend to leave?						
± Unrealistic work expectations	27	26	35	22	34	29
± Frustrated work env.	53	55	58	39	58	57
% would leave for more balance	26	26	26	21	23	25
<b>Absenteeism</b>						
% who missed work - all causes	64	68	67	62	63	67
% who missed work: health	51	52	51	45	46	51
% who missed work: childcare	17	24	25	30	21	24
% who missed work: eldercare	6	11	10	11	10	10
% who missed work: mental or emotional fatigue	27	33	33	30	27	32
<b>Spending on prescription medicine in six month period (personal use)</b>						
% who spent nothing	46	42	37	42	43	41
% who spent 200 +	11	14	16	12	8	13

<b>Personal outcomes</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
% High stress	49	52	55	45	51	52
% High burnout	33	33	34	26	30	32
% High depressed mood	31	32	33	25	31	32
% High life satisfaction	43	45	45	44	55	46
% Health above average	51	48	52	54	51	52
% Health fair/poor	17	15	13	15	14	15

## Appendix B: Results with non- professional sample

Variable	B.C.	Prairies	Ontario	Quebec	Maritimes	Total
N	1,638	3,530	5,999	1,668	2,030	14,866
Percent of sample	11%	24%	40%	11%	14%	
<b>Profile of The Communities in Which These Respondents Live</b>						
% Live in rural community	12	19	15	17	19	15
% French as first language	3	3	9	88	15	19
Population of community						
± Under 25,000	25	36	23	34	53	31
± 25,000 to 99,999	37	14	19	39	24	22
± 100,000 to 499,999	21	23	40	15	23	30
± 500,000 or higher	17	27	18	12	0	17
<b>Demographics of the Sample: Personal Characteristics</b>						
Variable	B.C.	Prairies	Ontario	Quebec	Maritimes	Total
% Women	63	63	66	62	64	64
Mean age (years)	42	41	43	42	42	42
Education						
± High school or less	53	56	44	49	47	49
± College	21	26	30	30	29	28
± University	26	18	26	21	24	23
Personal income per year						
± under \$40,000	44	57	51	51	54	52
± \$40,000 to \$59,999	34	29	38	37	37	35
± \$60,000 to \$79,000	20	12	9	10	9	11
Family's Financial Situation						
± Money is tight	30	33	30	27	30	31
± Money not an issue	27	22	27	26	19	24

<b>Demographics of the Sample: Family Circumstances</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
% Married	72	74	75	71	78	75
Family Type (% in group):						
± Dual earner - children	34	36	36	38	42	37
± <u>Dual mixed - children</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>
<b>Total Dual Income: children</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>52</b>
± Dual earner - no children	11	11	10	8	10	10
± <u>Dual mixed- no children</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
<b>Total DINKS</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
± Single parents	12	10	13	17	10	13
± Traditional - children	4	5	4	6	5	5
± Single no children	21	20	16	17	15	17
% with children	62	65	67	70	68	66
Mean number of children	1.3	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.5	1.5
% with eldercare	63	65	62	63	62	64
% in sandwich group	12	14	14	16	13	14

<b>Demographics: Characteristics of Work</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
Job Type (% in group):						
± technical	23	29	26	23	29	27
± clerical/administrative	47	48	53	60	54	51
% Belonging to union	54	58	51	62	66	54
% Who Moonlight	10	11	11	4	4	9
% Who work full-time	92	89	90	91	92	91
% In contract position	13	10	10	15	13	12
Years with organization	12.4	13.1	13.0	13.1	15.0	13.3
Years in current position	6.7	7.2	7.4	6.8	7.8	7.3
<b>Work Arrangement</b>						
% Who work "9 to 5" day	50	54	56	54	62	55
% Who work flextime	11	14	15	22	13	15
% Who work CWW	19	12	11	10	7	12
% Who work shift	30	24	21	23	29	24
% Guerilla telework	11	10	12	15	11	11

<b>Work Demands</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
Hours in work per week	39.8	39.6	38.7	39.9	39.9	39.3
Hours commuting per week	4.5	3.8	4.9	4.4	4.0	4.4
% performing paid OT	32	37	28	31	33	32
Hours per month paid OT	12.5	11.8	13.5	13.7	13.4	12.9
% performing unpaid OT	41	35	34	26	33	34
Hours per month unpaid OT	11.1	12.3	11.3	9.8	11.8	11.2
% performing SWAH	37	35	36	32	36	36
Hours per week in SWAH	6.2	7.9	6.5	7.3	6.8	6.9
% pursuing education	36	29	30	26	28	30
Hours/ week in education	5	5	5	5	5	5
Total hours in work/week	43.0	41.3	41.7	42.2	42.1	42.0

<b>Non-work Demands</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
% performing childcare	50	55	55	53	58	55
Hours per week in childcare	11.1	10.4	10.9	9.3	11.5	10.7
% performing eldercare	28	32	32	35	31	32
Hours per week in eldercare	5.5	5.8	5.8	4.7	5.7	5.6
% performing volunteer activities	37	42	34	21	41	36
Hours/week homechores	12.1	12.0	12.0	9.6	11.8	11.5
Hours/week leisure	11.0	9.9	9.7	8.5	9.2	9.9
Hours/week volunteering	3.9	3.9	3.7	3.3	3.9	3.8
Total hours/week non-work	17.4	17.9	17.5	15.1	18.4	17.3

<b>Work Environment</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
% with high perceived flexibility	33	32	33	37	29	35
% saying it is easy to:						
± vary work hours	42	44	46	52	39	44
± interrupt work day	53	52	48	58	51	51
± take paid day sick child	58	54	48	61	52	53
± take paid day, eldercare	48	45	43	48	41	44
% who perceive manager is supportive	48	43	46	47	47	46
% who agree with the following statements						
Culture of hours						
± No long hours limits adv.	35	29	35	30	29	31
± Cannot say no more work	40	40	40	22	38	37
Culture: work or family						
± Family leave limits adv.	32	28	28	19	29	27
± Family makes adv. difficult	26	22	22	22	24	23
Culture: Policy not practice						
± Env. supports balance	32	32	32	35	34	33
± Policy supports balance	38	38	39	38	39	38
± Feel comfortable using supports	22	22	22	36	22	24
± Open and respectful discussions in organization	23	20	22	26	23	22



<b>Availability of Benefits</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
% who indicated that they had access to following benefits in their organization						
Unpaid LOA	68	62	59	56	66	61
EAP	59	56	51	58	62	56
Family/emergency days off	66	58	49	53	64	56
Time off in lieu of overtime	62	58	55	55	65	58
Short term leave	55	49	43	50	55	48
Flextime	41	37	39	41	36	38
Pro-rated part-time	42	38	35	35	37	37
Personal days with pay	29	32	32	41	42	34
Support for re-location	35	30	20	32	37	28
Telework	11	7	14	22	17	13
Childcare referral	3	9	7	5	4	6
Day care	4	2	7	11	4	5
Eldercare referral	3	7	7	3	2	5

<b>Work and Family Outcomes</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
% High caregiver strain	27	26	31	28	27	28
% High role overload	55	52	56	52	51	54
% High work interferes family	24	24	21	17	21	22
% High family interferes work	9	8	10	8	7	9
% off shift with spouse so do not need caregiving	26	25	19	13	23	22
Which activity if more time?:						
± Family	27	34	32	31	38	33
± Personal	32	26	38	21	33	36
± Sports/fitness	40	30	30	37	29	32

<b>Family Outcomes</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
% High family satisfaction	60	60	63	68	66	63
% High parental satisfaction	56	60	63	68	61	62
% High family adaptation	27	29	34	46	28	34
% High family integration	28	27	29	46	28	31
% High positive parenting	74	77	78	81	81	78
% Agree had fewer children due to demands of work	24	17	18	19	21	21
% Agree have not started family due to demands of work	38	25	19	10	21	21

<b>Organizational outcomes</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
% agree organization is above average as employer	52	48	46	51	53	47
% High commitment	52	46	49	55	59	51
% High job stress	31	29	29	33	26	28
% High job satisfaction	39	41	43	52	47	44
% Satisfied with:						
± Work schedule	68	67	69	74	66	69
± Job in general	63	58	61	72	68	63
± Job security	59	49	46	51	49	49
± Pay	41	41	41	56	55	45
± Workloads	41	42	44	52	51	45
± Ability to meet career goals	29	30	34	46	37	35
% High intent to leave	28	29	30	17	21	26
Why intend to leave?						
± Higher pay	49	55	54	44	46	52
± Lack of recognition	43	53	52	53	50	51
± Frustrated work env.	51	54	55	38	52	51
± Non-supportive work env.	26	32	32	28	34	32
% would leave for more balance	23	22	22	17	19	20
<b>Absenteeism</b>						
% who missed work - all causes	65	67	65	70	65	66
% who missed work: health	52	53	50	52	54	52
% who missed work: childcare	18	21	23	26	23	22
% who missed work: eldercare	8	10	9	9	8	9
% who missed work: mental or emotional fatigue	30	31	34	25	28	31
<b>Spending on prescription medicine in six month period (personal use)</b>						

% who spent nothing	46	51	53	51	51	51
% who spent 200 +	10	14	15	11	10	12

<b>Personal outcomes</b>						
<b>Variable</b>	<b>B.C.</b>	<b>Prairies</b>	<b>Ontario</b>	<b>Quebec</b>	<b>Maritimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
% High stress	54	59	58	47	54	56
% High burnout	31	32	31	26	26	30
% High depressed mood	37	42	42	31	38	40
% High life satisfaction	35	35	38	47	38	38
% Health above average	46	45	48	48	47	47
% Health fair/poor	18	19	18	18	17	18