

# Pathways for Youth to the Labour Market

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November 20, 2007

# Purpose of the Project

- To better **understand the paths** that young people take, from high school through to regular participation in the labour market.
- To **examine institutional and policy structures** that affect people's ability to find pathways that lead to sustained, high quality employment.
- To **develop policy options** to improve the ability of young people to identify, select, and navigate pathways that lead to good jobs.

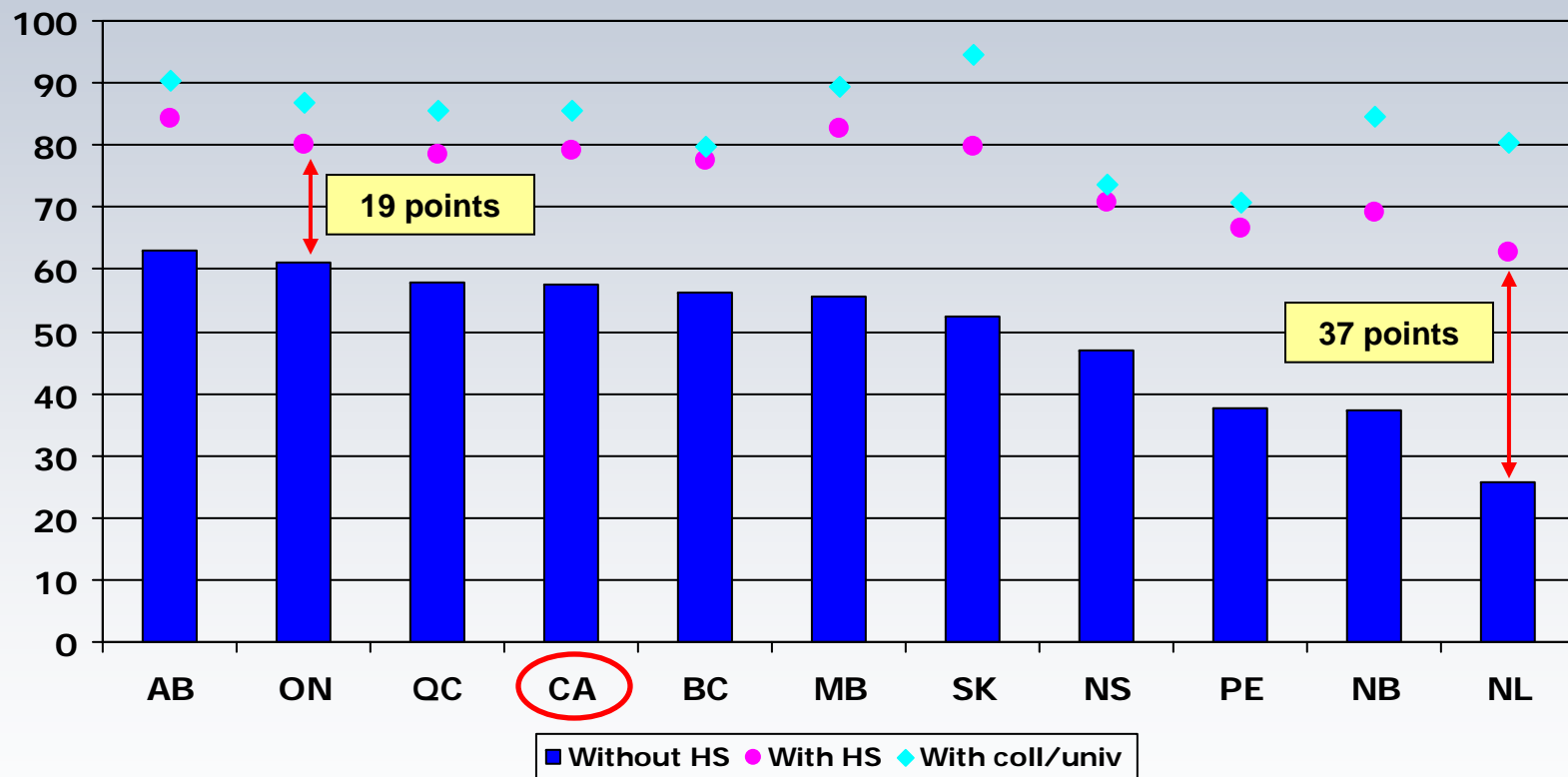
## Published studies

- *Career Development Services for Canadian Youth: Access, Adequacy and Accountability*, Bell and Bezanson, July 2006.
- *Pathways of Alberta Youth through the Post-secondary System into the Labour Market, 1996-2003*, Krahn and Hudson, November 2006.
- *Pathways for Youth to the Labour Market: An Overview of High School Initiatives*, Taylor, April 2007.
- *Trading Up--High School and Beyond: Five Illustrative Canadian Case Studies*, McCrea Silva and Phillips, May 2007.
- *Education-to-Labour Market Pathways of Canadian Youth: Findings from the Youth in Transition Survey*, Hango and de Broucker, November 2007.

# Background: Employment Rates

- The level of educational attainment strongly affects the employment rate of young adults in Canada.
- The influence of education varies among provinces: from a 19 percentage point difference for high school completion in Ontario to 37 points in Newfoundland and Labrador.

# Employment rates, 2002, 20-to-24-year-olds not in education, by level of educational attainment and province

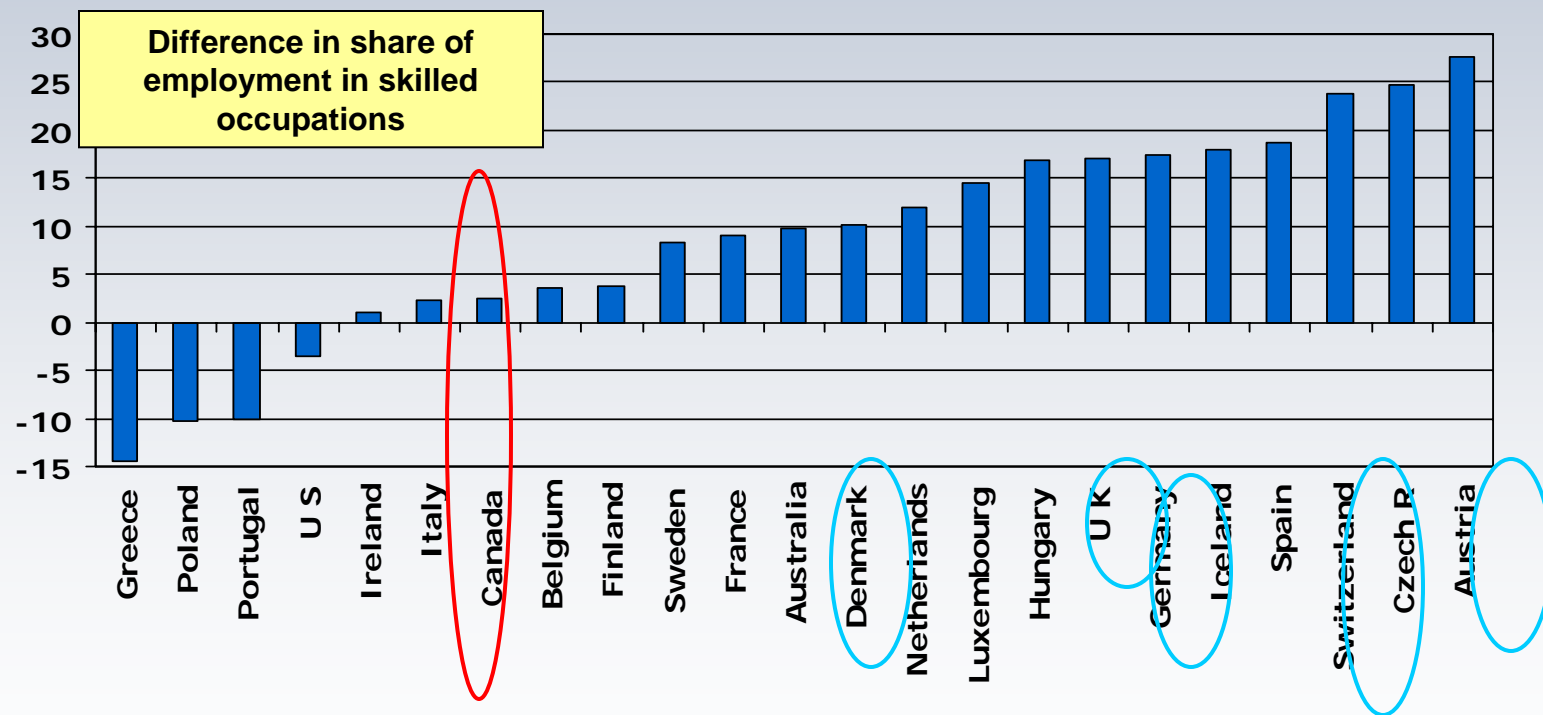


# Background: High School Completion and Skilled Jobs

- In Canada, a high school diploma has little impact on finding a skilled job.
- This is striking in comparison with the experience of some other OECD countries (for example, Switzerland, Germany, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Australia).

# Benefits of further education for access to skilled occupations

## With HS vs. Without HS



# Background: PSE and Skilled Jobs

- PSE provides, on average, clear benefits in terms of employment rates and earnings.
- But, in Canada and US, 1/3 of employed 25-to-29-year-olds with PSE diploma/degree have a low-skill job – the highest ratio among OECD countries.



## **Krahn & Hudson (re Alberta HS grads): Key findings**

- Youth in large cities more likely to go to university.
- Youth with university-educated parent much more likely to have a university degree.
- Immigrant and visible minority youth more likely to have acquired a PSE credential.
- Aboriginal youth severely under-represented among PSE graduates.
- Many had deviated from a traditional “straight out of high school, into, and through college / university” educational path.
- Those with university or trades/technical credentials (but not college) earned much more than those without PSE credentials, other things being equal.

## **Hango and de Broucker (Statcan): Key findings**

- Females less likely to drop out of high school; more likely to go on to PSE, especially directly after HS.
- Aboriginal youth less likely to participate in PSE.
- Visible minority youth and those born outside Canada more likely to have a university degree.
- More of siblings associated with greater risk of not finishing high school, as is living in a single- or step-parent household during HS.
- Youth with parents who have a high level of education were more likely to go to PSE.
- Marks matter.
- Early family responsibilities increase risk of dropping out.

## **Hango & de Broucker: Key findings cont'd**

- Working some hours in high school can be beneficial, while working a great number of hours (over 20) can be detrimental.
- Higher parental expectations are associated with higher educational attainment.
- University, college, and trades graduates earn significantly more than High School dropouts, 2nd Chancers, Post Secondary Leavers, and those with a high school diploma only. However, more than a quarter of PSE graduates earn less than median for drop-outs.
- Women earn almost 28% less than their working male counterparts.
- Geographical mobility brings earnings benefits.

## **Bell and Bezanson (study of career development services): Key Findings**

- Career development services for youth are highly decentralized: neither coherent nor comprehensive.
- Those not in school have very limited access to services.
- Some provinces are beginning to develop career development service policies from K-Adult or K-12.
- Only Quebec regulates the profession.
- Most respondents to a 1999 survey of youth access to career info reported finding it difficult to obtain what they needed to make an informed career decision.
- Service provision is primarily career information and support with immediate education and training decisions rather than career planning and preparation.

## **Taylor (pathways initiatives in high schools in BC, Alta, ON, NL): Key findings**

- All 4 provinces have placed increased emphasis on career planning and career pathways in high school.
- All are interested in enhancing flexibility and mobility in learning systems (but they vary in support for student transfer within the PSE system).
- All emphasize the need for local partnerships between schools, post-secondary institutions, and employers.
- 3 of the 4 provinces studied have established a high school apprenticeship program.
- Some provide opportunities for HS students to earn post-secondary credits and/or industry certification.
- To date, these initiatives involve a small proportion of the high school population.

## **Taylor: possible reasons for low participation**

- All provinces have a decentralized “market” approach to vocational education and training, waiting for locally-developed models to emerge. There has been limited co-ordination and unreliable funding.
- All provinces are struggling to update technology curriculum and facilities and to hire enough qualified teachers.
- Few provinces collect information about program outcomes, and enrolment information is not readily available or easily comparable across jurisdictions. (Contrast with Australia and Queensland. Also, in Australia, secondary school curricula are more closely tied to a national system of qualification.)

## **McCrea Silva and Phillips (case studies of high-school career pathways initiatives)**

### Characteristics of effective programs

- Vision
- Sustained support from district/school board
- Active partnerships and employer participation
- Flexible delivery options
- Active marketing and recruitment
- Career awareness curriculum that begins early
- Articulation with post-secondary institutions

## McCrea Silva and Phillips, cont'd

### Issues/Challenges

- Recruitment/retention of instructors
- Gender
- Transportation to work sites
- Finding enough work placements, especially during economic downturns
- Coordination/articulation between institutions
- Risk of premature streaming/closing doors
- Outcome data



## **Connecting the supply and demand sides of the youth labour market (Brisbois, Orton, Saunders)**

Study currently under way; roundtable Nov.30

Key questions:

- What information is available about demand for labour in various occupations?
- How is such information used?
- How well are young people's skills being utilized in their jobs?
- How can employers facilitate the school to work transition?

## Preliminary Findings

- Canadian occupational projection system is well regarded, but not clear that it is well used.
- Data on skill utilization raise concerns about over-qualification; need more research on this.
- We need to “value all destinations without devaluing any destination” (Halton School Board).
- Difficulty to predict future demand (or to expect youth to have career chosen by age 20); important to have bridges between various program options.
- Not all the skills that people will eventually want to develop are going to be in place when people complete, or think they have completed, formal schooling.

## Preliminary Findings, cont'd

- Both past research and recent interviews with employers and educators suggest school-employer partnerships can help young people make informed choices. These partnerships could be strengthened by:
  - providing the resources needed to sustain school-work programs, and ensure that both the training facilities and the skills of the teachers are up to date;
  - improving awareness;
  - involving employers in program design and delivery;
  - calling employers' attention to evidence of return on investment.

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