

**Submission to the  
Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the  
Status of Persons with Disabilities,  
on Precarious Employment in Canada  
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**The Future of Work**

Our approach to this subject is to consider the broader issue of the Future of Work, although it is fair to say that precarious employment runs through most of the sub-issues we have identified.

Whether it's rapid technological change, the layoffs at GM in Oshawa and at Fiat Chrysler in Windsor, or the downturn in the natural resource sector in Alberta and Saskatchewan, the depletion of jobs in rural Canada, the deep sense of uncertainty among people in many sectors and regions....the rapidly evolving economy and the changing nature of work is an important challenge facing Canadians and indeed much of the world. It needs close attention. It needs a critical review of current and past efforts. It needs new solutions.

Precariousness is at the core of a lot of the issues we have identified and the solutions lie in a comprehensive approach that consider the complex array of issues, and the range of partners which include the private sector, labour, governments, the education and training system, families and individuals.

**Future of Work: Here are some of the issues we are looking at:**

- Training for technological advancement – the skills of tomorrow
- The effects of artificial intelligence on the workplace and on jobs
- Identifying the new and future sectors and jobs
- Strengthening manufacturing and other existing sectors
- Employment uncertainty and the steady reduction in full time jobs
- The growth of the gig economy – part-time and contract work
- The role of start-ups and self-employment
- The need for Entrepreneurship training for all
- Outsourcing, Off-shoring and global production
- The formal education and training system and life-long learning
- Eliminating barriers, advancing equality and inclusive workforces
- Creating opportunity for under-represented groups
- Advancement for Indigenous Peoples
- Recognizing international credentials and opportunities
- Global education

This is about having discussions in key regions of the country, research and writing of a series of focused reports on the main issues, including those listed above. Rather than more research the project builds on the research that exists, and focuses on bold but realistic recommendations for action.

Some issues to consider in “continuum of precariousness”:

- Some sectors have been and will continue to be highly precarious
- Some sectors become more precarious as parts of the work can be automated or outsourced
- Workers with lower levels of education and training are more precarious (It is predicted that 60% of workers of the future will require PSE – what about the other 40%?)
- Sectors with rapidly changing skills requirements will result in more precarious work

While the Pearson Centre has been addressing this issue for the last two years and have had roundtables in various cities, the project will have a formal launch in mid-May 2019, at a session that we are hosting in partnership with the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau and CPAC, our broadcast partner.

**Recommendations at this time:**

- **Give consideration to the “continuum of precariousness” and how it will change over time**
- **Support entrepreneurship training for all high school and PSE students (not just the business students), as almost all workers will be self-employed for short or long periods during their career.**

APPENDIX

Please see a more detailed outline of the issues below:

**Future of Work**

**The following are some of the issues we are looking at:**

- Training for technological advancement – the skills of tomorrow
  - o The training and education requirements of jobs of today and tomorrow continue to evolve and change. This includes coding and programming, STEM, international languages, cultural competency and new soft skills.
- The effects of artificial intelligence on jobs
  - o AI is growing fast and in unpredictable ways presenting benefits and challenges. The speed of development means that we are not fully aware about what the changes mean, what the benefits are and what the ways are to overcome the challenges.

- Identifying the new and future sectors and jobs
  - o As society and priorities evolve there are new and growing sectors that need more employees with new skills, some of which may have transferable skills from other sectors. These sectors include the green economy, science, the online community, gaming and graphics, cannabis.
- Strengthening manufacturing and other existing sectors
  - o While the importance of various sectors increase and decrease over time, there is a need to ensure that we make the best of manufacturing and other existing sectors and grow them in innovative ways.
- Employment uncertainty and the steady reduction in full time jobs
  - o We are seeing a steady reduction in full time jobs across many sectors. This has a significant effect on people, families and the economy at large.
- The growth of the gig economy – part-time and contract work
  - o Increasingly young people are starting their working careers with a patch work of part-time jobs and contracts work. Also increasingly, workers of all ages will find themselves out of a full time jobs for short or extended periods of time, and have to turn to their own creativity to make a living through various part-time means. Indeed many workers prefer this format and the flexibility it provides.
- The role of start-ups and self-employment
  - o As part of the gig-economy, many workers will start up their own companies in areas of their interest and expertise.
- The need for Entrepreneurship training for all
  - o As our economy moves to a system of increased self-employment, we need to recognize to teach entrepreneurship to all students – and increasingly for all adults, as most Canadians will find themselves operating as entrepreneurs for short or long periods of their careers.
- Outsourcing, Off-shoring and global production
  - o In a globalized world with more free trade, work can be outsourced locally and globally. This presents benefits and challenges.
- The formal education system and life-long learning
  - o The formal education system needs to do be more agile to be able to teach and train for the changing skills needed in the workplace. This goes for the school system, starting with young children, for colleges and universities and for the apprenticeship system.
  - o There is also a need for Canadian workers and employers to focus more on life-long learning – that is learning – that is learning at all ages.
- Eliminating barriers, advancing equality and inclusive workforces

- We know that barriers exist in the workplace for people based on gender, race, ethnicity, ability and sexual orientation. While much has been done in this area, much more needs to be done in various sectors and workplaces. Some of the solutions also lies with changing attitudes through the school systems and general attitudes.
- Advancement for Indigenous Peoples
  - There are a range of solutions that need to be put in place to facilitate the advancement of Indigenous Peoples, some on-reserve and some off-reserve and in cities.
- Creating opportunity for under-represented groups
  - There is much room to create opportunities for under-represented groups, which can vary from sector to sector and profession to profession. Discrimination or under-representation affects both the excluded individuals and the economy at large as the skills in our society are not fully utilized.
- Recognizing international credentials and opportunities
  - We bringing over 100,000 workers to Canada through our immigration system. More work is needed to fully recognize international credentials as we recognize them as a benefit to our economy.
- Global education
  - In a world that is being increasingly globalized, we should do more to encourage Canadian students to study and work abroad, to learn languages and make contacts the world over. Likewise we can better utilize th3e skills that immigrants and international students bring to Canada to educate the local population and benefit an export orientation of goods and services produced in Canada.

For more information on the project please contact us:

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