

New report shows strong earnings for Canadian graduates, but women and international students have lower earnings right out of the gate

*Earnings difference between men and women highest among college-level certificates
International master's degree graduates earn in fifth year as much as Canadians in first year*

(January 14, 2019 - Ottawa, ON) – [How Much Do They Make?](#), published today by the [Labour Market Information Council](#) (LMIC) and the [Education Policy Research Initiative](#) (EPRI) finds that earnings for Canadian post-secondary education students grow across all credentials and fields of study following graduation – although women and international students experience lower earnings right out of the gate.

The report analyzes the early career earnings of post-secondary education (PSE) graduates with college-level certificates and diplomas and bachelor's, master's, doctoral, and professional degrees in 11 fields of study, with a focus on students who graduated in 2010.

The fields include Education, Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Business, Sciences, Math and Computer Science, Engineering, Natural Resources, Health, and Personal and Protective Services.

Professional degree graduates have the strongest growth in earnings over five years (46%), followed by bachelor's (43%) and doctoral degree holders (38%). Master's degree graduates start with high earnings the first year following graduation, but then grow the least (27%) over the five years among the six credentials. College-level diploma and certificate graduates have cumulative earnings growth, on average, of 35% and 31% respectively.

“The investments Canadians make in post-secondary education play a pivotal role in determining their career pathways and overall wellbeing, as well as the country's economy prosperity,” said Ross Finnie, Professor at the University of Ottawa and Director of EPRI. “We conducted this research to provide reliable, up-to-date, and readily available information on graduates' earnings so that students, parents, institutions, policy makers, researchers, and the broader Canadian public can make more informed decisions,” added Finnie. While earnings are just one of the many elements that Canadians consider when deciding to pursue PSE, it is the most sought-after labour market information among college and university students.

Early career earnings of graduates are strong, while varying by credential and field of study

“Our report finds that taken together, earnings for all PSE students who graduated in 2010 grew on average by 8.4% per year between 2011 and 2015 or by 38% in total over the entire period,” according to Steven Tobin, Executive Director of LMIC.

There are some notable differences by credential:

- College-level certificate and diploma graduates follow similar paths after graduation, starting at approximately \$35,000 in the first year following graduation and then reaching \$47,000 five years following graduation.

- For bachelor's degree graduates, earnings start at \$41,100 in the first year after graduation and increase to \$58,700 five years after graduation.
- For master's and doctoral degree graduates, average earnings start at \$65,200 and \$60,100, respectively, and then follow roughly similar trajectories, both reaching approximately \$83,300 in the fifth year following graduation.
- Professional degree graduates, such as doctors, lawyers, dentists and pharmacists, start at \$68,300 and rise to approximately \$99,600.

Women earn less than men across all credentials and fields of study – and these gaps widen following graduation

Women earn on average 12% (or \$5,700) less than men one year after graduation for students across all credential levels taken together, and the difference widens to \$17,700 (or 25%) less than men five years following graduation:

- One year after graduation, the earnings differential is lowest at 2% (\$1,400) for professional degree holders and highest among college-level certificates at 21% (\$8,600).
- Five years after graduation, the earnings differences range from 16% (\$14,300) for doctoral degree holders to 34% (\$19,700) for college-level certificate holders.
- The earnings differential is the lowest for bachelor's degree graduates in Health with women earning 2% (\$1,300) less than men after five years.
- The earnings differential is the highest for college-level certificate and diploma holders in Education with women earning 45% (\$28,500) less than men after five years.

“Our findings show differences in earnings between men and women begin immediately after graduation regardless of credential or field of study. More concerning is that these differences widen over time and that after five years in the job market, women earn less than men in every field of study,” said Tobin.

International students earn less than their Canadian counterparts, but the difference narrows over time

After graduation, for all credentials except college-level certificates, international students earn less than Canadian graduates. Taking graduates at all credential levels together, international students who graduated in 2010 and then stayed and worked in Canada earned 21% (\$9,000) less than Canadian graduates one year following graduation. This earnings differential shrinks over time to reach 9% (\$5,300) after five years. The difference in earnings is by far the greatest at the master's level, where international graduates earn \$25,700 (or 38%) less than Canadian graduates in the first year, with this gap narrowing to \$16,800 (or 20%) five years after graduation.

About the Labour Market Information Council

The Labour Market Information Council (LMIC) is a non-profit research institute dedicated to ensuring Canadians have the necessary information and insights to navigate the changing world of work. Our mission is to empower Canadians with timely and reliable labour market information in an engaging way that supports their decision-making process.

Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#). To find out more, check our Student Outcomes [Project Page](#) and our companion [interactive dashboard](#) which allows users to view and download earnings patterns by credential, field of study, gender, and more according to their own interests.

About the Education Policy Research Initiative

The Education Policy Research Initiative (EPRI) is a national research organization based at the University of Ottawa. EPRI engages in research aimed at informing policy discussions focused on education, skills and the labour market.

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