

Unmasking differences in women's full-time employment

Marie Drolet – Senior Economist,
Centre for Gender, Diversity and Inclusion



A better Canada driven by our agency's leadership in expanding knowledge and insights.



Statistics
Canada

Statistique
Canada

Canada

Background

- **Disaggregated Data Action Plan**

- Delivering better data for better decision-making;
- Providing more detailed data to address gender gaps, racism and other systemic barriers;
- Producing detailed statistical information to highlight the experiences of specific population groups;
- Increasing analytical insights on diverse groups of people.
- [Disaggregated Data Action Plan: Why it matters to you \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/26-264-x/2019001/article/00001-eng.htm)

- **Centre for Gender, Diversity and Inclusion- Statistics Canada**

- Aims to address gaps in the availability of information by gender, sex and other intersecting factors;
- GBA Plus is an analytical process that provides a rigorous method for the assessment of systemic inequalities, as well as a means to assess how diverse groups of women, men and gender diverse people may experience policies, programs and initiatives.
- [What is Gender-based Analysis Plus - Women and Gender Equality Canada](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/26-264-x/2019001/article/00001-eng.htm)
- Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics (GDIS) Hub
 - Platform for all gender, diversity and inclusion related data.
 - Users can access disaggregated and intersectional data, analytical products and insights
 - [Gender, diversity and inclusion statistics \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/26-264-x/2019001/article/00001-eng.htm)





Introduction

- Working full-time (FT) is an integral part of financial well-being and is linked to other positive outcomes
- Women's earnings are increasingly important for families and individuals
- Evidence that the Canadian labour market is becoming less secure for many workers
 - Research has repeatedly shown that Indigenous and immigrant women have worse labour market outcomes than their non-Indigenous and non-immigrant counterparts.
- Differences are complex and intertwined with pre-existing vulnerabilities and continuing disparities in economic conditions





Objectives

- Fills an important data and knowledge gap by applying a *disaggregated and intersectional lens* to an analysis of how women's full-time employment (FTE) has evolved from 2007 to 2021.
- Using data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), this article
 - analyzes how aggregate statistics of women's FTE mask the distinct experiences of women from diverse population groups—namely Indigenous, recent immigrant, long-term immigrant - compared to Canadian-born women
 - allows for a better understanding of how the dynamics in FTE by population group *either mirror or deviate* from broad patterns by age, education and marriage and motherhood status.
- Policymakers can use this information
 - to inform programs and initiatives that promote selection into and persistence in FTE that better meet the needs of diverse populations of women.





Data

- **Labour Force Survey**

- Monthly, cross-sectional household survey collecting labour market information of the population aged 15 years and over living in the ten provinces;
- Excludes residents of collective dwellings, persons living on reserves, and full-time members of the Canadian forces;
- To ensure sufficient sample size, March and September monthly files are pooled for each reference year;
 - Follows a rotating panel sample design: households remain in sample for 6 consecutive months;
 - For analysis of changes over time, combined March and September data from survey year 2007 and 2008 are compared to combined data from survey year 2019 and 2021
 - Sample weights are adjusted accordingly
- Bootstrap methods were used for variance estimation

- **Analytical sample**

- women aged 20 to 54 excluding full-time students and unpaid family members





Definitions

- **Full-time employment (FTE)** refers to those working at least 30 hours per week in their main job including both paid workers and self-employed workers.
 - Differs from international definition of +35 hours
- The **full-time employment rate (FTEr)** is the percent of the total population employed FT.
 - Paper focuses on rates and not on the job characteristics of full-time workers

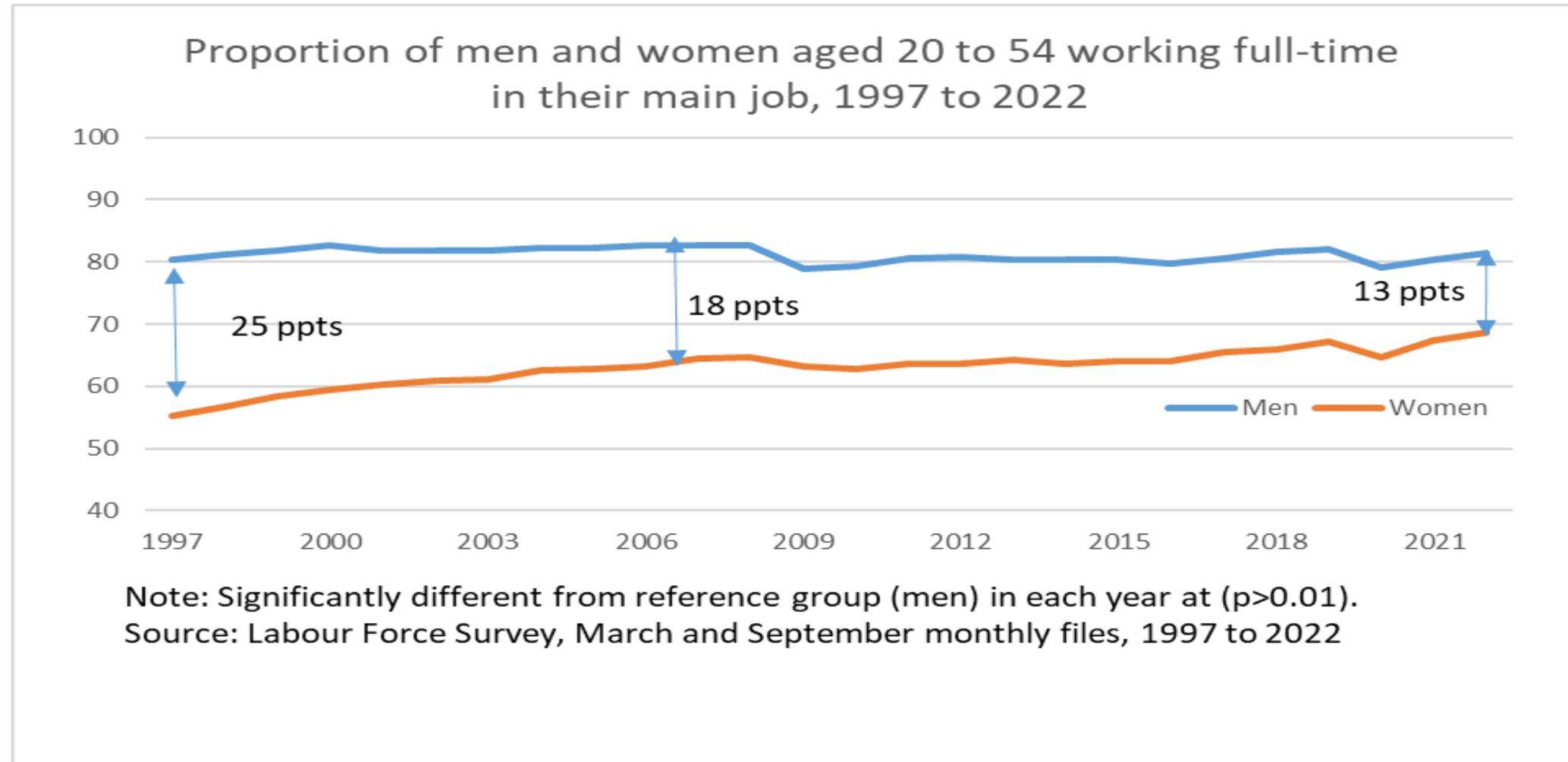


Population groups of interest

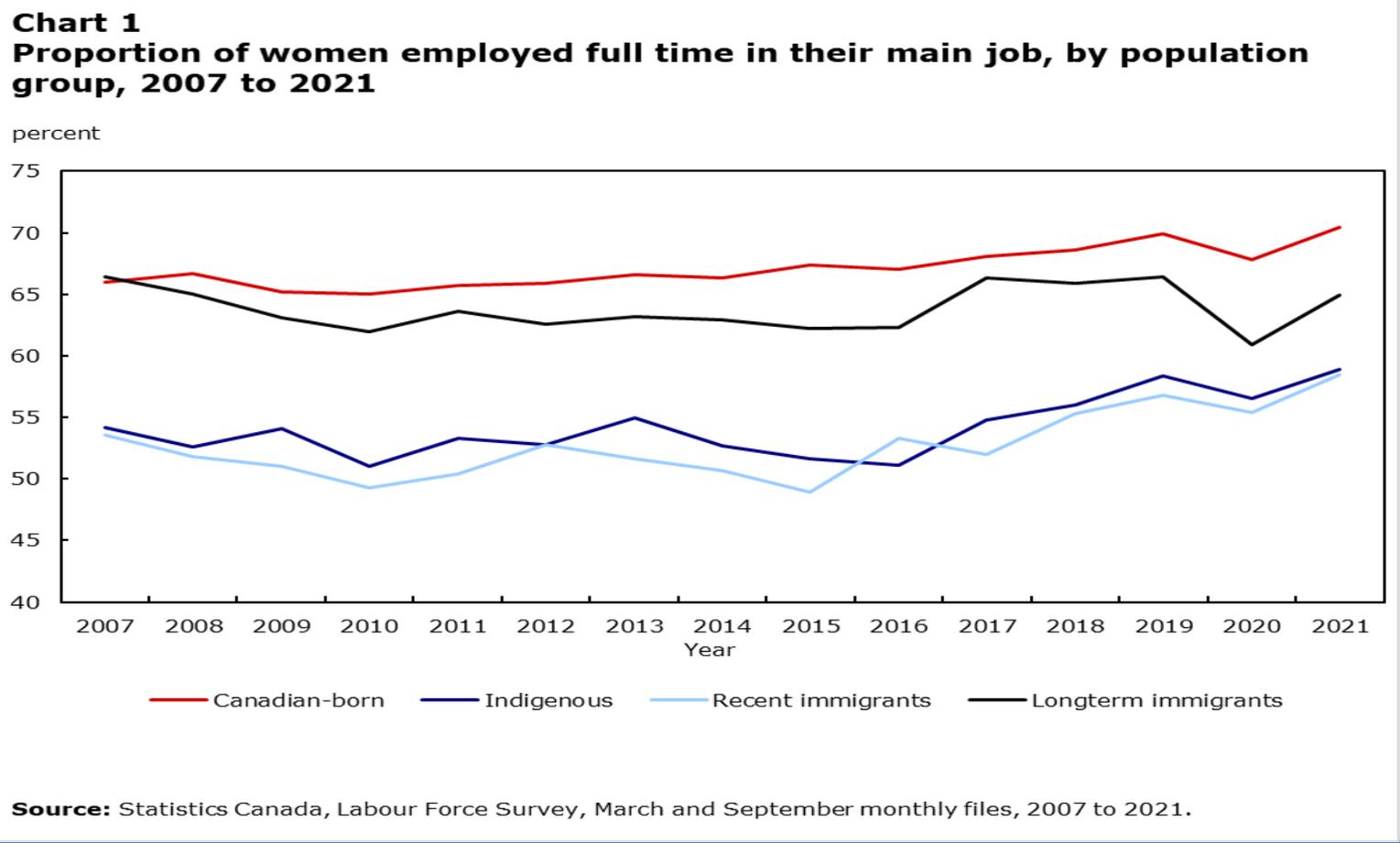
- Data for the **Indigenous population** have been available in the LFS since 2007.
 - Respondents are asked to self-identify as being an Indigenous person, that is, First Nations (North American Indian), Métis, or Inuk (Inuit).
 - A person may identify with more than one group.
 - Separate analyses are not possible due to small sample sizes.
- The **Canadian-born population** refers to non-Indigenous persons born in Canada.
- Data for the **immigrant population** have been available in the LFS since 2006.
 - Individuals not born in Canada and who are granted the right to live in Canada permanently.
 - Analysis excludes persons not born in Canada and that do not reside permanently in Canada
 - Recent immigrants (those arriving in Canada within the past 10 years); long-term immigrants (those arriving in Canada over 10 years ago)



Gender gap in FTER continues to narrow at a slower pace

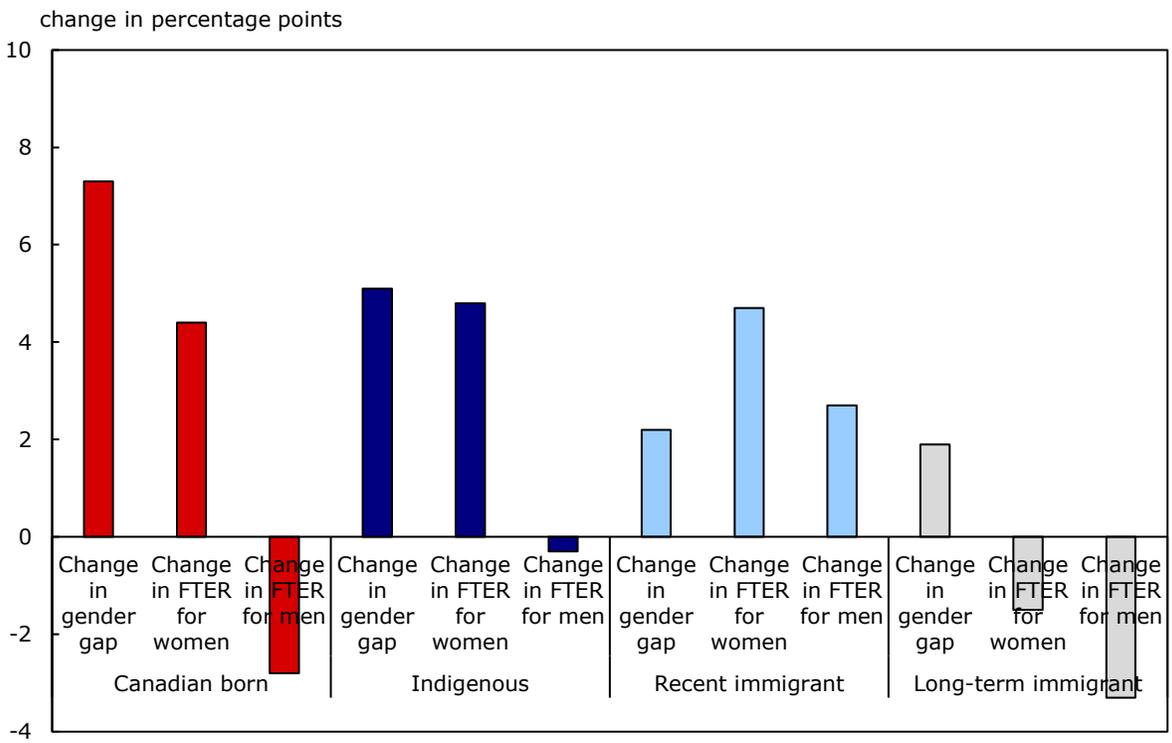


Full-time employment increased for most women but did little to narrow the gap between groups of women



Gender gap in FTER narrowed for all groups mostly due to increase in FTER of women

Chart
Change in gender gap in full time employment, 2007-2008 and 2019-2021



- This is not the case for all population groups
 - For Canadian-born, their gender gap narrowed due (a) to rising FTER for women and (b) declining rates for men
 - For Indigenous populations, their gender gap narrowed due (a) to rising FTER for women
 - For recent immigrants, their gap narrowed because the rising FTER for women outpaced the rising FTER of men
 - For long-term immigrants, their gap narrowed because the declining FT employment rate for men outpaced the decline in FT employment for women

Rising labour force participation rates and declining part-time employment are driving the increase in FT employment

The proportion of women working full-time may have increased between 2007 and 2021 because:

1. More women participated

- Indigenous and recent immigrants (+6 ppts each)
- Canadian-born and long-term immigrant women (+2 ppts each);

2. More of those participating were employed

- Unemployment is traditionally higher among immigrants and Indigenous women than Canadian-born women.
- For recent immigrants, more of those participating in the labour force were employed in 2021 than in 2007.

3. Fewer of those employed worked part-time

- More employed Canadian-born women are working full time in 2021 than in 2007 while the opposite is true for immigrants.

Table 1
Changes in women's full-time employment rates, by population group, 2007 to 2021

	All women	Canadian-born	Indigenous	Recent immigrants	Long-term immigrants
	percentage				
Full-time employment rate					
2007-2008 (ref.)	64.8	66.3	53.4	52.7	65.7
2019-2021	67.4 ***	70.1 ***	58.7 **	57.6 ***	65.6
Change in FTER	4.2	5.7	9.9	14.3	-0.1
Change in FTER due to each of the main labour market indicators					
Labour force participation	58.9	47.0	87.0	99.5	...
Unemployment	-5.9	-0.3	1.4	29.0	...
Part-time employment	47.0	53.3	11.5	-28.5	...
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	...

... not applicable

Significantly different from reference category at *** (p<0.01) or ** (p<0.05)

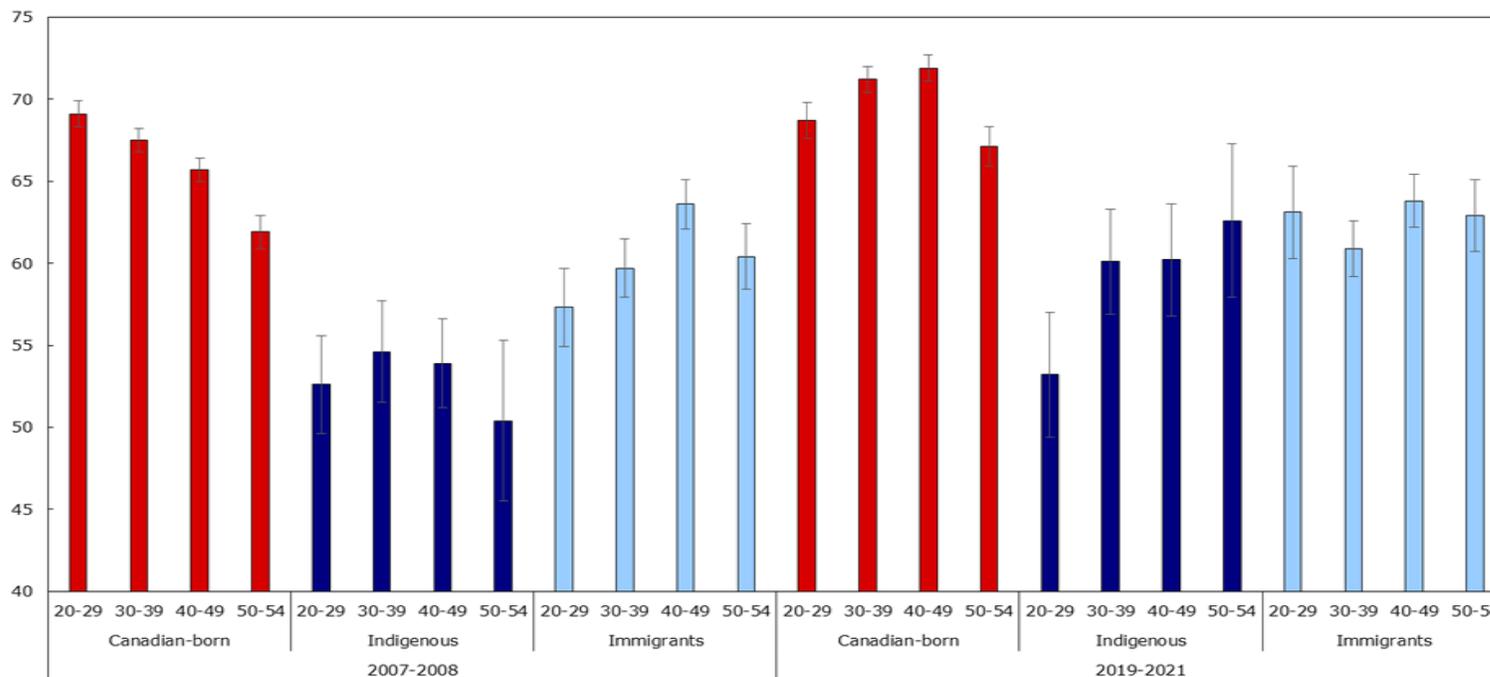
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, monthly data March and September, 2007, 2008, 2019 and 2021.



Gap with Canadian-born largest among younger women and smallest among older women

Chart 2
Proportion of women aged 20 to 54 working full time, by population group and age group, 2007-2008 and 2019-2021

percent



Note: 95% confidence intervals are included for Canadian-born and immigrant women; 90% confidence intervals are included for Indigenous women.
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, March and September monthly files, 2007, 2008, 2019 and 2021.

Canadian-born women (RED):

- Higher in 2021 than in 2007
- Follows an inverted U pattern in 2021

Indigenous women (DARK BLUE)

- Did not vary by age in 2007
- Increased with successive age groups in 2021
- Narrowed the gap with Canadian-born in older age groups

Immigrant woman (LIGHT BLUE)

- Varied little by age and between 2007 and 2021

- Canadian-born women had higher FTER in each age group and in each year than their immigrant and Indigenous counterparts.

- In 2021, the gap was largest for younger women, and was smallest among women aged 50 to 54 years

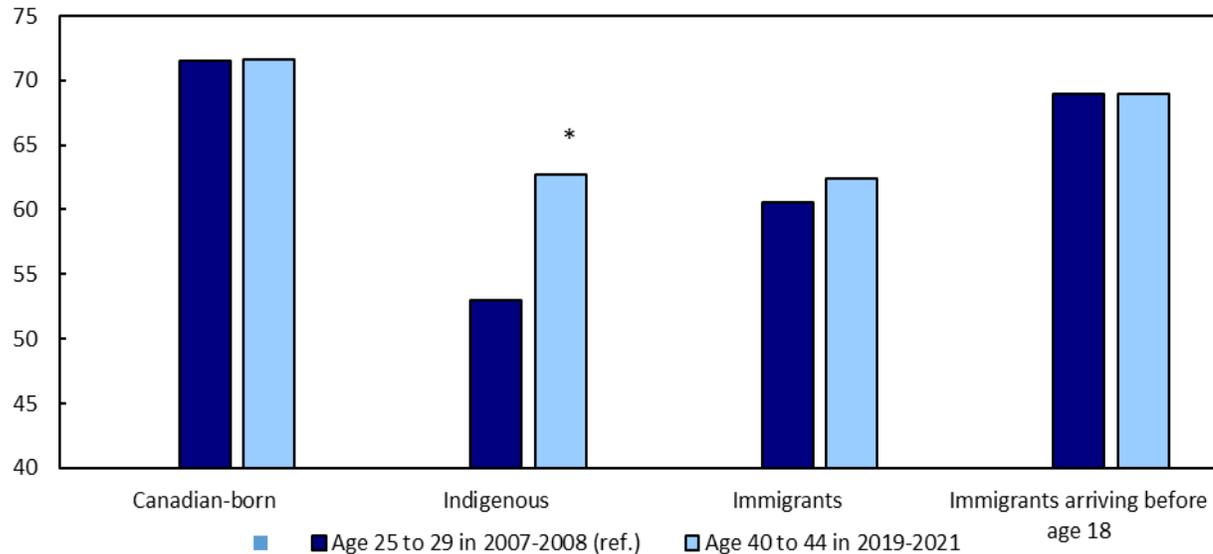
- The comparison of age-specific FTERs made above is between women from different birth periods.



Cohort-specific patterns tell a slightly different story

Chart 3
Proportion of women employed full time, by birth cohort, 2007-2008 and 2019-2021

percent



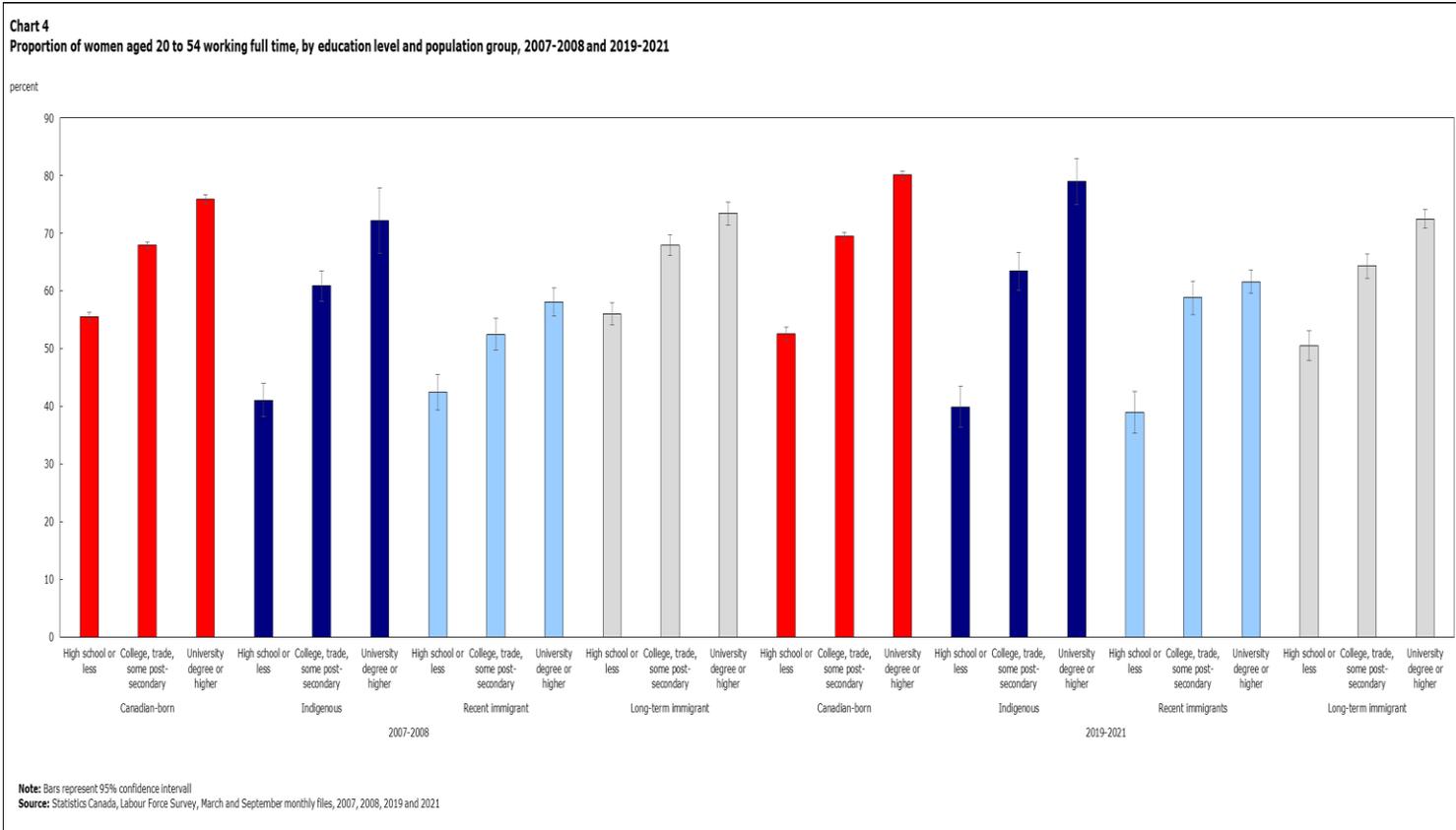
* Significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.10$).

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, March and September monthly files, 2007, 2008, 2019 and 2021.

- Individuals from different birth periods (cohort effects) who potentially faced different market labour conditions (period effects) at specific ages (lifecycle effects).
- Exploit the cross-sectional representativeness of LFS, by tracking the outcomes of individuals from same birth cohort...age 25-29 in 2007 now aged 40-44 in 2021
 - FTER of Canadian born are similar as they age
 - FTER of Indigenous women increased as they aged
 - The analysis is not straightforward for immigrant women as they enter Canada at different ages, in different years and from different source countries.



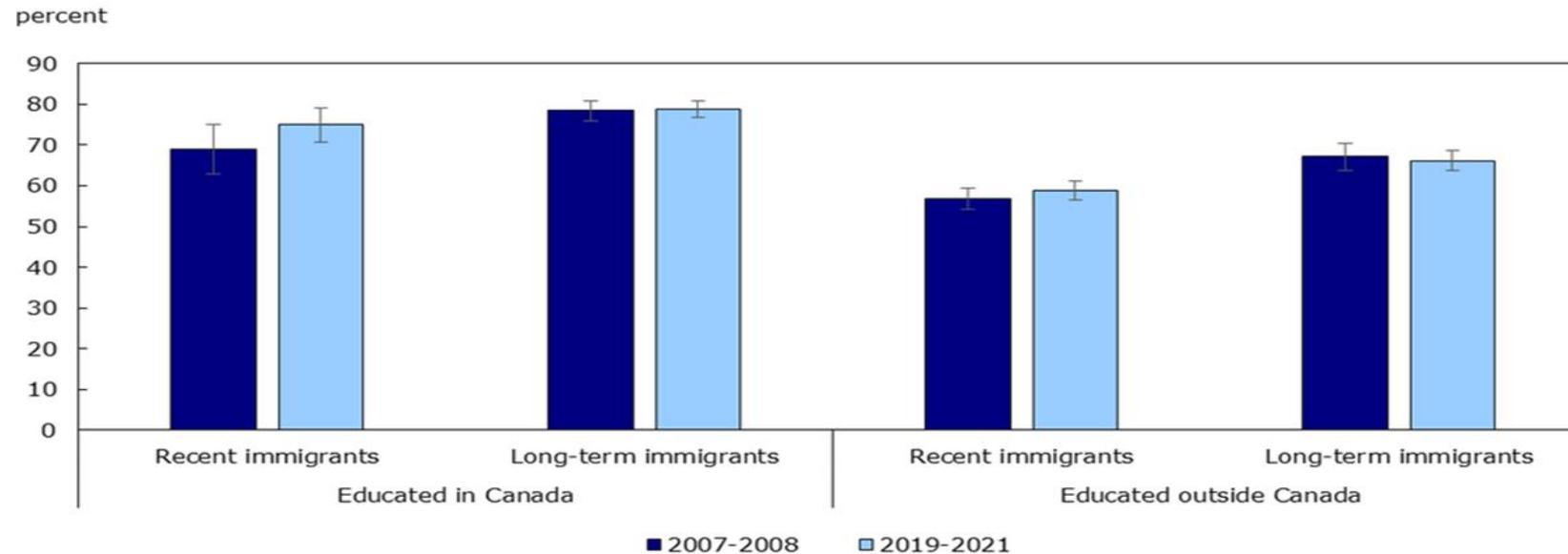
Indigenous women with a bachelor's degree or above just as likely to work FT as Canadian-born but not so for immigrants



- Higher education is associated with higher FTER for all groups and in each period
- The gap in FTER between those with a high school diploma or less and those with a bachelor's degree or higher *widened* for each group
 - Mostly due to (1) a decline in FT work for less educated and (2) an increase in FT work for those with higher education
- Between group comparison:
 - Indigenous women with a bachelor's degree or higher were just as likely to hold a FT job as their Canadian-born counterparts but not at lower levels of education
 - Immigrant women are more likely to be highly-educated, but less likely to work FT than Canadian-born women with similar education and this gap did not narrow over the time period considered

Immigrant women educated in Canada fare better than those educated outside of Canada

Chart 5
Proportion of immigrant women with a bachelor degree or higher, employed full-time, by place of study, 2007-2008 and 2019-2021

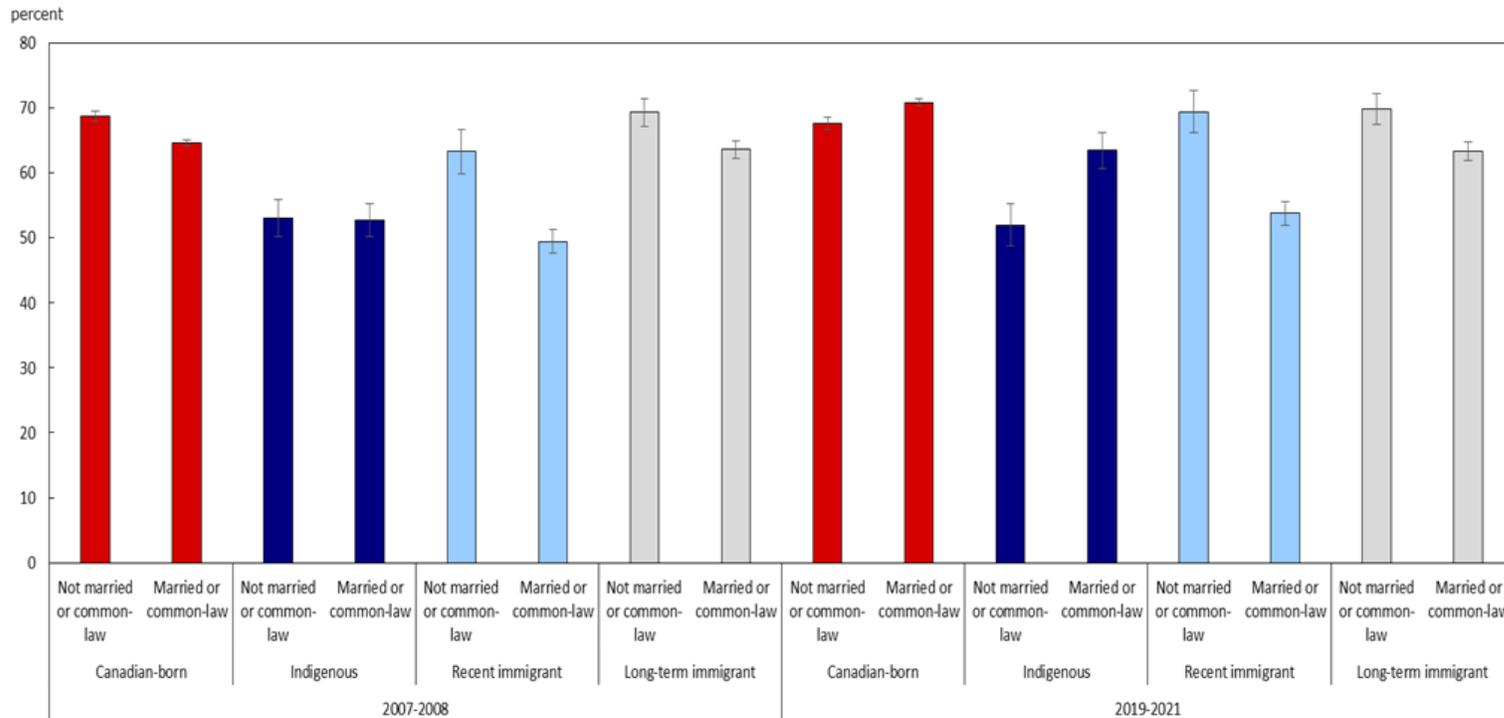


Note: Bars represent the 95% confidence interval.

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS monthly files, March and September, 2007, 2008, 2019, 2021.

Being part of a couple impacts differently full-time employment

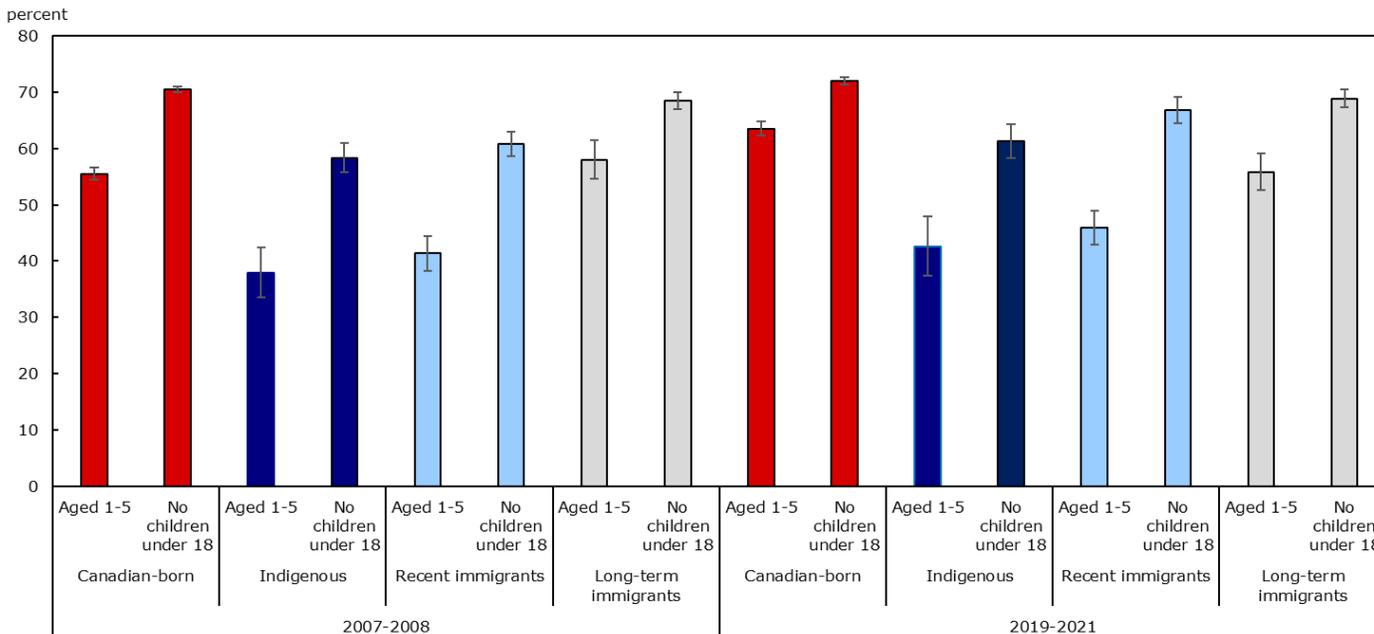
Chart 6
Proportion of women aged 20 to 54 working full time, by marital status, 2007-2008 and 2019-2021



- Literature suggests that association between being in a couple with reduced employment has *weakened* over time
- For Canadian-born and Indigenous women the association has *reversed* over time
- The opposite is found for immigrant women.
 - Regardless of arrival date and year considered, being in a couple is associated with lower FTER.

FTER of Canadian-born mothers with young children increased but not so for other groups

Proportion of women aged 20 to 54 employed full time, by population group and presence and age of youngest child, 2007-2008 and 2019-2021



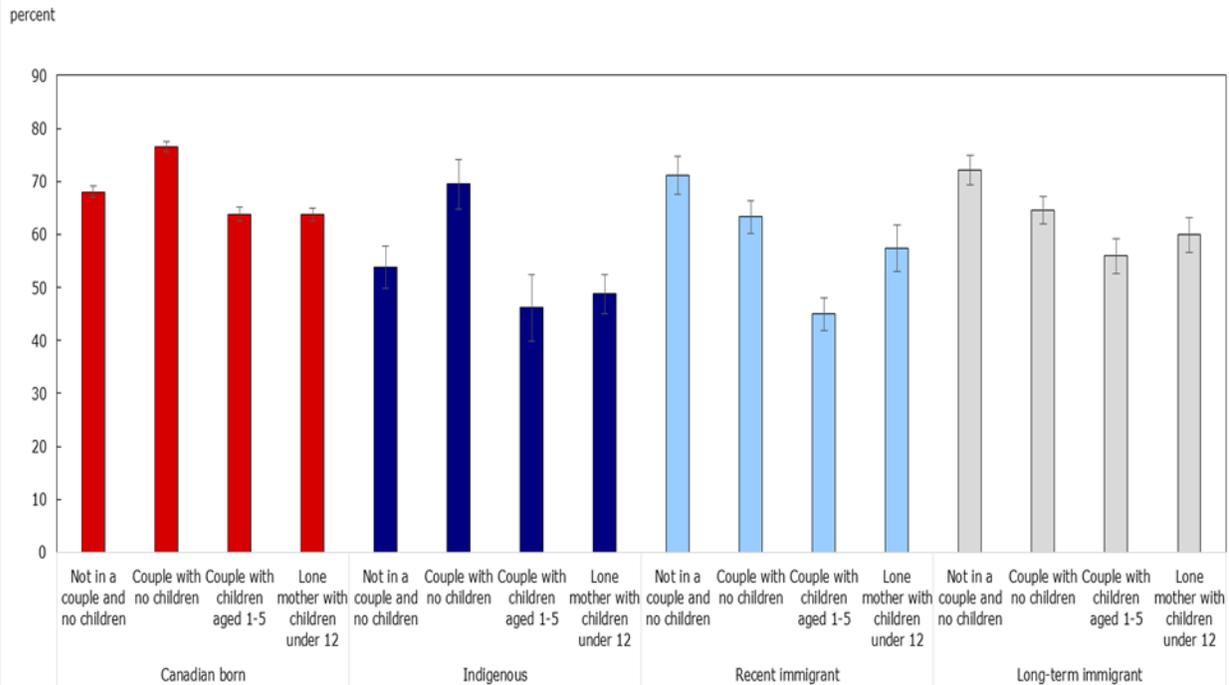
Note: Bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, March and September monthly files, 2019 and 2021.

- The presence of children in the household is associated with lower FTER for women – in each population group and in each year considered.
- For Canadian-born:
 - the gap between mothers with young children and women without children narrowed from 15 pts in 2007 to 9 pts in 2021.
 - due to the change in the rate of mothers with young children since the rate of women with no children or older children has remained stable
- In contrast, the FTER of Indigenous and immigrant mothers with young children did not change

Marriage and motherhood associated with lower FTE for immigrant women, not for other women

Chart 8
Proportion of women aged 20 to 54 employed full time, by couple status and presence of young children, 2019-2021



Note: Error bars represent the 95% confidence interval.
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force survey, March and September, 2019 and 2021.

- Combining marriage and motherhood produces a more nuanced result.
- For immigrant women, both marriage and motherhood are jointly associated with lower FTER.
- Different story for Canadian-born and Indigenous women:
 - FTER are higher when part of a couple with no children and lower when part of a couple with young children.
- Indigenous lone mothers have the lowest FTER (49%) compared to Canadian-born lone mothers (64%) who have the highest.





Concluding remarks

- The data presented here does not support the idea that the overall gap in FTER between Canadian-born women and immigrant and Indigenous women has narrowed since 2007
- This article demonstrates how the FTER of immigrant and Indigenous women differ from their Canadian-born counterparts
- Along many dimensions, aggregate measures do not offer a complete picture
- The results presented here focus on the supply side of the labour market.... they should be interpreted carefully since access to employment may be influenced by differential treatment in the labour market.
- Labour market conditions may also have played a role
- Understanding how and why there are differences in the selection into and persistence in FTE between women from different population groups remains an important area for continued research and is useful for policy makers seeking to address gender differences in the labour market.



Statistics
Canada

Statistique
Canada

Delivering insight through data for a better Canada

Canada



Full article is available:

Drolet, Marie. 2022. “Unmasking differences in women’s full-time employment”. *Insights on Canadian Society*. September. Statistics Canada Catalogue No. 75-006-X.

Author contact information:

Marie.drolet@statcan.gc.ca



Statistics
Canada

Statistique
Canada

Delivering insight through data for a better Canada

Canada