

Employment and Wages in 2017: A Good Year for Aboriginals and Non-Aboriginals in Canada

Robert J. Oppenheimer

PROFESSOR EMERITUS
JOHN MOLSON SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, MONTREAL, CANADA

ABSTRACT

Employment, unemployment and wage rates improved for Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals in Canada in 2017. Participation rates remained the same for Aboriginals and slightly increased for non-Aboriginals. All four of these rates, employment, unemployment, participation and wages, are currently and historically more favourable for non-Aboriginals than for Aboriginals. However, when examined by the educational level completed, wage and employment rates are similar. Measures of employment are examined by gender, age, province, economic sector, and education, and for Métis, First Nations and Inuit.

INTRODUCTION

How well an economy is doing may be determined in different ways. One common method is to look at the gross domestic product or GDP. Another approach, and the one taken here, is to examine employment and wage data. This article provides the employment data for Aboriginals 15 years and older living off Reserves and for non-Aboriginals. The data presented is in three-year intervals from 2007 through 2016 and for 2017. It is provided to enable the reader to assess the changes over time. The focus is on the changes between 2017 from 2016. Some comparisons between 2017 and 2007 are also provided. The next section presents an overview of employment measures.

EMPLOYMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT AND PARTICIPATION RATES

The employment rate is the percent of those working in the total population over the age of 15. The participation rate is the percent of those employed and those seeking to be employed

over the same total population over 15 years old. The higher these rates, in general, the better the economy is thought to be doing. In contrast the lower the unemployment rate, the better the economy is considered to be doing. The unemployment rate is the percent of those seeking employment over those employed and those seeking employment. The combination of those employed and those unemployed (that is, those seeking employment) is considered the labour force. Therefore, another way of defining the unemployment rate is the percent of those unemployed in the labour force. Similarly, another way of defining the participation rate is the percent of the labour force in the population. It may be helpful to note that the employment and unemployment rates are not directly related, as they are measured in different ways.

The unemployment rate for Aboriginals in 2017 was 11.3 versus 12.4 in 2016, which was an improvement (decrease) of 8.9%. The non-Aboriginal unemployment rate made a similar improvement, decreasing 8.8% for the same time period. However, their unemployment rate went from 6.8% to 6.2%. Aboriginals' unemployment rate was therefore 82.3% higher than non-Aboriginals' in 2017. This is similar to the gap of 81.4% which existed in 2007. Unfortunately, Aboriginals have consistently had a significantly higher rate of unemployment than non-Aboriginals. See Table 1.

The participation rate for Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals remained basically the same in both 2017 and 2016. Although the participation rate was 2.1% lower for Aboriginals than for non-Aboriginals in 2017, it is an improvement over the 3.7% difference in 2007.

	2007	2010	2013	2015	2017	2017/2016
Aboriginals						
Unemployment rate	10.7	14.1	11.7	12.4	11.3	-8.9
Participation rate	65.0	62.2	64.1	64.4	64.4	0.0
Employment rate	58.1	53.5	56.6	56.5	57.1	1.1
Non-Aboriginals						
Unemployment rate	5.9	7.9	6.9	6.8	6.2	-8.8
Participation rate	67.5	67.0	66.5	65.7	65.8	0.2
Employment rate	63.5	61.7	61.9	61.2	61.7	0.8
Aboriginal Rates vs. non-Aboriginal Rates						
	2007				2017	
Unemployment rate	82.3%				81.4%	
Participation rate	-2.1%				-3.7%	
Employment rate	-7.5%				-8.5%	

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 4ctl_abo_main_AN.ivt

The employment rate of 57.1% for Aboriginals increased by 1.1% in 2017. For non-Aboriginals it was 61.7%, which was 0.8% higher in 2017 than it was in 2016. This means that the employment rate was 7.5% lower for Aboriginals than for non-Aboriginals in 2017, which is an improvement from the 8.5% gap in 2007.

In summary, the employment and unemployment rates improved somewhat more for Aboriginals than non-Aboriginals in 2017; however, both of these rates, as well as the participation rate, have been consistently worse for Aboriginals.

COMPARING RATES FOR FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS AND INUIT

The rate of unemployment decreased for First Nations and Métis in 2017 by 10% and 9% respectively. However, in 2017 the unemployment rate for First Nations was 13.5%, which is 48.4% higher than the 9.1% rate for Métis. Métis have consistently had lower unemployment rates than First Nations.

Participation rates increased for First Nations in 2017, but declined for Métis and Inuits in 2017. Employment rates increased for First Nations and Métis but declined for Inuits in 2017. The Métis employment and participation rates have consistently been higher than for First Nations and in most years are higher than for Inuits. The participation rate was 67.1% for Métis, 62% for First Nations and 60.5% for Inuits in 2017. Thus the participation rates are 7.6% and 9.8% lower for First Nations and Inuits, respectively, when compared to Métis. The employment rate for Métis was 61% and was 53.6% for First Nations and 51.5% for Inuits in 2017. This is 12.1% lower for First Nations and 15.6% lower for Inuits than for Métis. See Table 2.

EMPLOYMENT RATES BY AGE AND GENDER

Employment rates improved for almost all age groups for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal men and women. The exceptions to this were for Aboriginal men 55 over and Aboriginal women 15–24, which declined 8.3% and 0.6% respectively. The largest percentage increase in the employment rate in 2017 was 9.9% for Aboriginal women 55 and over.

The increase in employment rates for Aboriginal men aged 15–24 had the next largest percentage increase of 3.5%, followed by 2.4% for non-Aboriginal men in the same 15–24 age group. Non-Aboriginal men and women aged 25–54 had the highest employment rates at 86.3% and 79%, respectively. Aboriginal men and women in this same 25–54 category have the next highest employment rates of 73% and 67.8%, respectively.

For men and women in the 15–24 and the 25–54 age categories, the employment rate has been consistently lower for Aboriginals. The largest difference in employment rates for Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals is for males, aged 25–54, where it is 15.4% less than for non-Aboriginals. Some may argue that this is the most critical gender and age category, because of the large number of people in this category. For men and women 55 and over the employment rate varied, but since 2013 it has been consistently higher for Aboriginals. See Table 3.

TABLE 2
Employment, Participation and Unemployment Rates
First Nations, Métis, Other* and Inuits
In Thousands, Except for Rates

		2007	2010	2013	2016	2017	2017/2016 % Change
Non-Aboriginal	Population	25823.2	26833.6	27823.3	28675.5	28953	1.0
	Unemployment rate (%)	5.9	7.9	6.9	6.8	6.2	-8.8
	Participation rate (%)	67.5	67.0	66.5	65.7	65.8	0.2
	Employment rate (%)	63.5	61.7	61.9	61.2	61.7	0.8
Aboriginal	Population ('000)	638.3	740.5	824.3	911.7	949.0	4.1
	Unemployment rate (%)	10.7	14.1	11.7	12.4	11.3	-8.9
	Participation rate (%)	65.0	62.2	64.1	64.4	64.4	0.0
	Employment rate (%)	58.1	53.5	56.6	56.5	57.1	1.1
First Nations	Population	303.8	364.8	405.5	449.6	472	5.0
	Unemployment rate (%)	12.5	17.1	13.5	15	13.5	-10.0
	Participation rate (%)	62.4	58.3	60.9	61.7	62	0.5
	Employment rate (%)	54.6	48.3	52.6	52.4	53.6	2.3
Métis	Population	320.7	361.6	402.3	442.7	457.6	3.4
	Unemployment rate (%)	9.2	11.4	10.1	10.0	9.1	-9.0
	Participation rate (%)	67.3	66.2	67.3	67.4	67.1	-0.4
	Employment rate (%)	61.2	58.7	60.5	60.7	61.0	0.5
Other*	Population	13.8	14.1	16.6	19.4	19.4	
	Unemployment rate (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.0	
	Participation rate (%)	69.8	61.4	68.0	61.1	57.9	-5.2
	Employment rate (%)	63.5	52.8	60.8	54.2	48.6	-10.3
Inuits	Population	12.0	12.1	13.9	16.5	15.1	
	Unemployment rate (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
	Participation rate (%)	71.0	64.6	69.6	61.0	60.5	-0.8
	Employment rate (%)	65.1	54.9	64.0	54.3	51.5	-5.2
2017 %							
Métis vs.		FN	Other*	Inuits			
Unemployment rate		48.4%	75.8%				
Participation rate		-7.6%	-13.7%	-9.8%			
Employment rate		-12.1%	-20.3%	-15.6%			

NOTE: Table cells showing 0.0 refer to estimates that are suppressed (cannot be published) because they are below the confidentiality threshold. The LFS estimates are based on a sample and are therefore subject to sampling variability. As a result, monthly estimates will show more variability than trends observed over longer time periods. Estimates for smaller geographic areas or industries also have more variability. For an explanation of sampling variability of estimates and how to use standard errors to assess this variability, consult the 'Estimates quality' section of the publication Labour Force Information (Catalogue number 71-001-X). The confidentiality threshold is 200 for Canada.

* Other includes Inuits and multiple identities.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 4ctl_abo_main_AN.ivt

TABLE 3
Employment Rates by Age and Gender
Aboriginals and Non-Aboriginals

			2007	2010	2013	2016	2017	2017/2016 % Change
Aboriginals	Both sexes	15 years and over	58.1	53.5	56.6	56.5	57.1	1.1
		15–24 years	49.8	45.2	49.2	49.2	49.9	1.4
		25–54 years	69.9	65.8	69.2	69.1	70.3	1.7
		55 years and over	32.5	29.8	33.2	35.4	35.4	0.0
	Men	15 years and over	62.9	55.4	59.2	58.5	58.7	0.3
		15–24 years	50.9	44.6	49.5	48.4	50.1	3.5
		25–54 years	75.5	69.5	72.8	71.8	73.0	1.7
		55 years and over	38.7	29.7	34.8	39.7	36.4	-8.3
	Women	15 years and over	53.7	51.7	54.3	54.5	55.6	2.0
		15–24 years	48.7	45.8	49.0	50.0	49.7	-0.6
		25–54 years	64.6	62.4	65.8	66.7	67.8	1.6
		55 years and over	27.3	29.9	31.7	31.3	34.4	9.9
Non-Aboriginals	Both sexes	15 years and over	63.5	61.7	61.9	61.2	61.7	0.8
		15–24 years	59.8	55.2	55.3	55.6	56.8	2.2
		25–54 years	82.5	80.9	82.0	81.7	82.7	1.2
		55 years and over	31.7	33.6	35.0	35.4	35.7	0.8
	Men	15 years and over	68.0	65.5	65.7	65.0	65.6	0.9
		15–24 years	59.4	53.4	54.3	54.3	55.6	2.4
		25–54 years	86.5	84.2	85.5	85.4	86.3	1.1
		55 years and over	38.1	39.4	40.4	40.6	40.9	0.7
	Women	15 years and over	59.1	58.0	58.2	57.5	57.9	0.7
		15–24 years	60.2	57.1	56.4	57.1	58.0	1.6
		25–54 years	78.5	77.5	78.5	78.1	79.0	1.2
		55 years and over	26.0	28.4	30.1	30.7	31.0	1.0

2017 %
Aboriginals vs. Non-Aboriginals

Both sexes	15 years and over	-7.5%
	15–24 years	-12.1%
	25–54 years	-15.0%
	55 years and over	-0.8%
Men	15 years and over	-10.5%
	15–24 years	-9.9%
	25–54 years	-15.4%
	55 years and over	-11.0%
Women	15 years and over	-4.0%
	15–24 years	-14.3%
	25–54 years	-14.2%
	55 years and over	11.0%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation 4ct1_abo_main_AN.ivt

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY AGE AND GENDER

Unemployment rates declined for men and women in all three age categories for both Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals in 2017, except for Aboriginal men 55 and over, which increased by 28%. Otherwise, unemployment rates for Aboriginals decreased from 6% for men 15–24 to as much as 19.3% for women 55 years and over. For non-Aboriginals, unemployment rates decreased by as little as 1.9% for women 55 years and older, and as much as 12.7% for men 25–54 years old.

The unemployment rates for Aboriginal men were twice as high (100%) as non-Aboriginal men and almost two-thirds (64.9%) higher for Aboriginal women in 2017. Significantly higher rates of unemployment for Aboriginal men and women in each of the three age groups have persisted since 2007, which is the time period for which the data is available. See Table 4.

EMPLOYMENT RATES AND POPULATION BY PROVINCE OR REGION

The province with the highest Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations is Ontario. In Ontario the employment rate for Aboriginals was unchanged at 54.9% in 2017 and 2016. The provinces with the highest Aboriginal employment rates were British Columbia with a rate of 63.2%, followed by Alberta, with a rate of 60.5%. Quebec was the province with the lowest Aboriginal employment rate in 2017, at 51.5%, followed by the Atlantic region with a rate of 52.9%. Quebec Aboriginals had the greatest increase in its employment rate, by 4.5%, followed by the Atlantic region with an increase of 4.3%. The two provinces that experienced a decrease in their employment rates were Saskatchewan, with a decline of 2.2% and Alberta with a decrease of 0.2%.

Saskatchewan also had the largest decline in employment rates for non-Aboriginals, with a decrease of 0.9%. The Atlantic region was the only other area to experience a lower employment rate for non-Aboriginals, which was down by 0.7%. British Columbia was the province which had the largest increase in employment rates for non-Aboriginals, by 2.3%. The provinces with the highest employment rates for non-Aboriginals were Alberta, with a rate of 66.9%, Saskatchewan, with 65.8% and Manitoba with 64.4%. These are higher employment rates than the highest rate for Aboriginals, which was 63.2% in British Columbia. However, British Columbia is the only province in which the Aboriginal employment rate is greater than it is for non-Aboriginals in 2017. See Table 5.

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

Industrial sectors are divided between goods-producing and services-producing sectors. The percent of Aboriginals employed in the goods-producing sectors was 22.9% and for non-Aboriginals it was 21% in 2017. Within each sector there are multiple categories and sub-categories. Examining these may provide insights into what areas offer greater employment opportunities. In the goods-producing sector in 2017, construction was where the greatest number of Aboriginals were employed, 57,600, or 10.6%. This was an increase of 5.5% over 2016.

TABLE 4
Unemployment Rates by Age and Gender
Aboriginals and Non-Aboriginals

			2007	2010	2013	2016	2017	2017/2016 % Change
Aboriginals	Both sexes	15 years and over	10.7	14.1	11.7	12.4	11.3	-8.9
		15-24 years	16.9	21.1	17.8	19.0	17.4	-8.4
		25-54 years	8.9	12.1	10.1	10.8	9.6	-11.1
		55 years and over	8.4	11.7	9.3	9.6	10.3	7.3
	Men	15 years and over	11.2	15.7	12.8	13.9	13.2	-5.0
		15-24 years	18.5	24.5	19.3	21.5	20.2	-6.0
		25-54 years	9.1	13.0	11.1	12.2	10.8	-11.5
		55 years and over	9.6	14.5	11.0	10.7	13.7	28.0
	Women	15 years and over	10.1	12.4	10.6	10.8	9.4	-13.0
		15-24 years	15.3	17.8	16.4	16.6	14.5	-12.7
		25-54 years	8.7	11.1	9.1	9.3	8.5	-8.6
		55 years and over	0.0	9.2	7.6	8.3	6.7	-19.3
Non-Aboriginals	Both sexes	15 years and over	5.9	7.9	6.9	6.8	6.2	-8.8
		15-24 years	11.0	14.7	13.6	12.9	11.4	-11.6
		25-54 years	5.0	6.8	5.8	5.8	5.3	-8.6
		55 years and over	4.8	6.2	5.9	6.0	5.6	-6.7
	Men	15 years and over	6.3	8.7	7.4	7.5	6.6	-12.0
		15-24 years	12.1	17.1	15.0	14.6	13.0	-11.0
		25-54 years	5.3	7.3	6.0	6.3	5.5	-12.7
		55 years and over	4.9	6.9	6.3	6.6	5.9	-10.6
	Women	15 years and over	5.6	7.1	6.5	6.1	5.7	-6.6
		15-24 years	9.9	12.4	12.0	11.1	9.7	-12.6
		25-54 years	4.7	6.3	5.5	5.3	5.1	-3.8
		55 years and over	4.7	5.4	5.4	5.2	5.1	-1.9

2017 %
Aboriginals vs. Non-Aboriginals

Both sexes	15 years and over	82.3%
	15-24 years	52.6%
	25-54 years	81.1%
	55 years and over	83.9%
Men	15 years and over	100.0%
	15-24 years	55.4%
	25-54 years	96.4%
	55 years and over	132.2%
Women	15 years and over	64.9%
	15-24 years	49.5%
	25-54 years	66.7%
	55 years and over	31.4%

NOTE: Table cells showing 0.0 refer to estimates that are suppressed (cannot be published) because they are below the confidentiality threshold. The LFS estimates are based on a sample and are therefore subject to sampling variability. As a result, monthly estimates will show more variability than trends observed over longer time periods. Estimates for smaller geographic areas or industries also have more variability. For an explanation of sampling variability of estimates and how to use standard errors to assess this variability, consult the 'Estimates quality' section of the publication Labour Force Information (Catalogue number 71-001-X).

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation 4ctl_abo_main_AN.ivt

TABLE 5
Employment Rates and Population by Province or Region
Aboriginals and Non-Aboriginals

		2007	2010	2013	2016	2017	2017/2016 % Change
Aboriginals							
CANADA	Population ('000)	638.3	740.5	824.3	911.7	949.0	4.1
	Employment rate (%)	58.1	53.5	56.6	56.5	57.1	1.1
Atlantic Region	Population ('000)	40.0	53.5	61.8	66.7	68.1	2.1
	Employment rate (%)	51.5	50.1	54.8	50.7	52.9	4.3
Quebec	Population ('000)	62.8	77.3	87.0	96.3	100.5	4.4
	Employment rate (%)	46.3	45.2	52.1	49.3	51.5	4.5
Ontario	Population ('000)	159.8	188.2	211.0	234.5	246.0	4.9
	Employment rate (%)	57.8	49.7	52.4	54.9	54.9	0.0
Manitoba	Population ('000)	87.0	95.1	103.8	113.8	117.0	2.8
	Employment rate (%)	59.6	58.6	57.8	56.4	57.2	1.4
Saskatchewan	Population ('000)	64.7	70.6	74.7	81.7	85.2	4.3
	Employment rate (%)	56.3	53.9	59.0	55.8	54.6	-2.2
Alberta	Population ('000)	111.8	125.3	140.4	159.8	168.0	5.1
	Employment rate (%)	66.9	61.0	65.6	60.6	60.5	-0.2
British Columbia	Population ('000)	112.2	130.5	145.6	158.9	164.4	3.5
	Employment rate (%)	58.4	54.0	55.5	61.7	63.2	2.4
Non-Aboriginals							
CANADA	Population ('000)	25823.2	26833.6	27823.3	28675.5	28953.0	1.0
	Employment rate (%)	63.5	61.7	61.9	61.2	61.7	0.8
Atlantic Region	Population ('000)	1870.5	1893.8	1907.5	1911.5	1918.4	0.4
	Employment rate (%)	57.2	56.8	57.2	55.9	55.5	-0.7
Quebec	Population ('000)	6239.9	6477.1	6668.4	6791.7	6831.5	0.6
	Employment rate (%)	61.0	60.2	60.2	60.1	61.0	1.5
Ontario	Population ('000)	10160.9	10524.5	10931.5	11289.0	11438.9	1.3
	Employment rate (%)	63.5	61.2	61.4	60.8	61.1	0.5
Manitoba	Population ('000)	812.0	833.3	860.5	885.2	896.4	1.3
	Employment rate (%)	66.4	66.3	65.9	64.3	64.4	0.2
Saskatchewan	Population ('000)	693.7	729.3	764.7	787.2	791.7	0.6
	Employment rate (%)	67.3	67.3	68.2	66.4	65.8	-0.9
Alberta	Population ('000)	2665.8	2842.6	3049.5	3239.1	3260.8	0.7
	Employment rate (%)	71.8	68.5	70.0	66.8	66.9	0.1
British Columbia	Population ('000)	3380.4	3533.0	3641.2	3771.8	3815.4	1.2
	Employment rate (%)	63.3	60.9	60.0	60.5	61.9	2.3
2017 Employment Rate							
Aboriginals vs. Non-Aboriginals							
CANADA						-7.5%	
Atlantic Region						-4.7%	
Quebec						-15.6%	
Ontario						-10.1%	
Manitoba						-11.2%	
Saskatchewan						-17.0%	
Alberta						-9.6%	
British Columbia						2.1%	
NOTE: Atlantic provinces are grouped together because of the relatively small populations in the four provinces.							
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 4ct1_abo_educ_AN.ivt							

The services-producing sector was where 77.1% of Aboriginals were employed in 2017. The three largest areas were health care and social assistance, 76,100 employed or 14%, followed by retail trade, 67,700 employed or 12.5%, with accommodation and food services being next with 48,500 employed or 9%. All of these increased over 2016. The largest percentage increase was in educational services, which was 20.1% higher in 2017 than it was in 2016. The next highest percentage increases were in information, culture and recreation, 17.8%, followed by utilities with a gain of 14.6%. Two areas experienced declines. One was forestry and fishing, which decreased by 1,200, which was a decline of 24.5%. The other was management of companies and administration and other support, which decreased by 900, or 3.4%.

Non-Aboriginals also experienced a decline in the area of management of companies and administration and other support of 1.3% in 2017. In contrast to Aboriginals, who lost employment in forestry and fishing, non-Aboriginals gained 6% in this area. This was their largest percentage increase. Non-Aboriginals' largest areas of employment are health care and assistance, with 12.9% employed there, followed by retail trade with 11.6% employed. See Table 6.

EMPLOYMENT RATES BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

The overall employment rate for Aboriginals was 7.5% lower than for non-Aboriginals in 2017. However, when employment rates are examined by educational level there is very little difference in the rates between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals. Aboriginals who are high school graduates and those with a university degree had considerably higher rates of employment than non-Aboriginals, 5.2% and 6.3% higher, respectively. For those who did not graduate high school, those who had some post-secondary and those with a post-secondary certificate or diploma, the employment rates for Aboriginals were lower than for non-Aboriginals by 1.2%, 2.4% and 1.2% respectively.

The similarity of employment rates for Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals when examined by educational level is consistent for the 11 years for which the data is available. This is highly significant. It means that education is an important aspect in determining employment for both Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals. Further, the higher the level of "completed" education, the higher the employment rate. The reason "completed" is in quotes is that those who attended some post-secondary, but didn't complete it, often had lower employment rates than those who graduated from high school.

Aboriginals who completed high school had the largest percentage increase in employment rates at 5.3% in 2017. The largest decrease for Aboriginals was for those who did not complete high school, which declined by 3.6%. This contrasts with non-Aboriginals who didn't finish high school, who had an employment rate increased by 2.5%. See Table 7.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

The unemployment rates decreased for Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals in 2017 for every educational level examined, with the one exception of Aboriginals with some post-secondary, which worsened by 13%. It went from 12.3% in 2016 to 13.9% in 2017. The highest rates of unemployment are for those with less than a high school graduation. For

TABLE 6
Employment by Industrial Sector
Aboriginals and Non-Aboriginals

	2007	2010	2013	2016	2017	2017/2016 # Change	2017/2016 % Change	2017 % Employment
Aboriginals								
Total employed ('000)	370.7	395.9	466.8	514.8	541.7	26.9	5.2	100.0%
Goods-producing sector	97.1	92.2	115.6	119.7	124.1	4.4	3.7	22.9%
Agriculture	4.8	4.5	5	4.7	4.7	0	0.0	0.9%
Forestry & fishing	4.8	4.3	5.6	4.9	3.7	-1.2	-24.5	0.7%
Mining & oil and gas extraction	12	14.2	18.2	16.2	17.4	1.2	7.4	3.2%
Utilities	3.4	3.4	4.7	4.8	5.5	0.7	14.6	1.0%
Construction	35.7	40.2	49.3	54.6	57.6	3	5.5	10.6%
Manufacturing	36.4	25.7	32.9	34.5	35.2	0.7	2.0	6.5%
Services-producing sector	273.6	303.7	351.2	395.1	417.6	22.5	5.7	77.1%
Educational services	20.1	23.1	28.4	30.4	36.5	6.1	20.1	6.7%
Health care & social assistance	46.3	52.7	61.2	75.3	76.1	0.8	1.1	14.0%
Public administration	25.3	34	32.1	33.2	34.6	1.4	4.2	6.4%
Wholesale trade	9.6	10.3	12.6	13.5	14.8	1.3	9.6	2.7%
Retail trade	46	46.5	53.7	64.3	67.7	3.4	5.3	12.5%
Transportation & warehousing	19.5	20.6	25.2	26.2	26.7	0.5	1.9	4.9%
Finance, insurance, real estate & leasing	12.3	16.8	18.7	17.2	19	1.8	10.5	3.5%
Professional, scientific & technical services	12	11.7	18.1	19.1	21.1	2	10.5	3.9%
Management of companies & administrative and other support services	18.3	19.3	23.2	26.2	25.3	-0.9	-3.4	4.7%
Information, culture & recreation	14.6	15.2	16.5	17.4	20.5	3.1	17.8	3.8%
Accommodation & food services	33.1	35.2	40.3	47	48.5	1.5	3.2	9.0%
Other services	16.4	18.3	21.1	25.2	26.9	1.7	6.7	5.0%
Non-Aboriginals								
Total employed ('000)	16390.5	16555.1	17219.9	17553.7	17864	310.3	1.8	100.0%
Goods-producing sector	3871.3	3630.7	3793.5	3710.9	3749.2	38.3	1.0	21.0%
Agriculture	329.6	301.3	308.4	282.9	273.9	-9	-3.2	1.5%
Forestry & fishing	78.7	68.3	62.6	58.2	61.7	3.5	6.0	0.3%
Mining & oil and gas extraction	247.2	237.9	282.5	247.5	246.8	-0.7	-0.3	1.4%
Utilities	134.2	137.9	130.1	132.2	127.5	-4.7	-3.6	0.7%
Construction	1092	1202.6	1320.3	1331.5	1352.1	20.6	1.5	7.6%
Manufacturing	1989.5	1682.7	1689.5	1658.6	1687.3	28.7	1.7	9.4%
Services-producing sector	12519.1	12924.4	13426.4	13842.8	14114.7	271.9	2.0	79.0%
Educational services	1152.1	1142.7	1197.4	1236.9	1247.6	10.7	0.9	7.0%
Health care & social assistance	1790.9	1986.5	2128.4	2262.9	2304.9	42	1.9	12.9%
Public administration	840.3	887.7	886.8	894.3	926.2	31.9	3.6	5.2%
Wholesale trade	610.4	614	592.3	664.2	658.4	-5.8	-0.9	3.7%
Retail trade	1997.1	2008.4	2050	2002	2068.1	66.1	3.3	11.6%
Transportation & warehousing	801.1	792.9	858	881.6	916.6	35	4.0	5.1%
Finance, insurance, real estate & leasing	1032.5	1055.9	1060.5	1107.8	1150.9	43.1	3.9	6.4%
Professional, scientific & technical services	1110.9	1202.1	1291.7	1371.6	1424.8	53.2	3.9	8.0%
Management of companies & administrative and other support services	677.6	672.4	717.8	741.7	732	-9.7	-1.3	4.1%
Information, culture & recreation	759.2	746.6	739.6	763.8	768.1	4.3	0.6	4.3%
Accommodation & food services	1039.3	1062.6	1129.3	1166.5	1162.7	-3.8	-0.3	6.5%
Other services	707.8	752.6	774.6	749.6	754.3	4.7	0.6	4.2%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 4ctl_abo_ind_AN.ivt

TABLE 7
Employment Rates by Educational Level
Aboriginals and Non-Aboriginals

	2007	2010	2013	2015	2017	2017/2016
Aboriginals						
Total, all education levels	58.1	53.5	56.6	56.5	57.1	1.1
Less than high school	37.5	31.8	34.6	33.6	32.4	-3.6
High school graduate	69.1	59.9	62.2	58.1	61.2	5.3
Some post-secondary	58.7	58.3	59.3	56.9	57.5	1.1
Post-secondary certificate or diploma*	72.4	66.1	66.7	69.0	68.0	-1.4
University degree	79.6	77.6	80.6	78.1	79.1	1.3
Non-Aboriginals						
Total, all education levels	63.5	61.7	61.9	61.2	61.7	0.8
Less than high school	36.9	33.7	33.2	32.0	32.8	2.5
High school graduate	65.3	61.7	60.6	58.0	58.2	0.3
Some post-secondary	64.3	60.9	59.9	58.2	58.9	1.2
Post-secondary certificate or diploma*	72.8	70.9	70.7	69.2	68.8	-0.6
University degree	76.7	75.2	74.5	73.8	74.4	0.8
2017 % Aboriginal Rates vs. Non-Aboriginal Rates						
Total, all education levels						-7.5%
Less than high school						-1.2%
High school graduate						5.2%
Some post-secondary						-2.4%
Post-secondary certificate or diploma*						-1.2%
University degree						6.3%

* Trade certificate or diploma from a vocational school or apprenticeship training, a non-university certificate or diploma from a community college, CEGEP or school of nursing, etc., or a University certificate below bachelor's level.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 4ctf_abo_educ_AN.ivt

Aboriginals with less than high school graduation, their unemployment rate was 19.7% in 2017, while for non-Aboriginals it was 12.2%. The lowest rates of unemployment were for university graduates. Aboriginals had a rate of 5.6% and non-Aboriginals 4.4%. This is the smallest gap between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals, although Aboriginals having a university degree had a 27.3% higher unemployment rate. The other differences in unemployment rates ranged from 61.5% for those with less than high school completion to 67.5% for those with some post-secondary education.

Unemployment rates for Aboriginals are substantially higher than for non-Aboriginals, regardless of educational level. The equalizing effect of education that applied for employment rates does not apply for unemployment rates. See Table 8.

TABLE 8
Unemployment Rates by Educational Level
Aboriginals and Non-Aboriginals

	2007	2010	2013	2015	2017	2017/2016
Aboriginals						
Total, all education levels	10.7	14.1	11.7	12.4	11.3	-8.9
Less than high school	17.0	24.0	19.6	22.4	19.7	-12.1
High school graduate	9.0	14.1	11.4	13.1	11.5	-12.2
Some post-secondary	10.6	12.7	12.2	12.3	13.9	13.0
Post-secondary certificate or diploma	8.5	10.6	9.8	9.0	8.8	-2.2
University degree	5.0	5.3	3.9	5.8	5.6	-3.4
Non-Aboriginals						
Total, all education levels	5.9	7.9	6.9	6.8	6.2	-8.8
Less than high school	11.9	15.6	14.3	13.4	12.2	-9.0
High school graduate	6.0	8.6	7.7	7.7	6.9	-10.4
Some post-secondary	7.0	9.9	9.2	9.3	8.3	-10.8
Post-secondary certificate or diploma	4.8	6.4	5.5	5.8	5.4	-6.9
University degree	3.7	5.3	4.7	4.9	4.4	-10.2
2017 %						
Aboriginal Rates vs. non-Aboriginal Rates						
Total, all education levels						82.3%
Less than high school						61.5%
High school graduate						66.7%
Some post-secondary						67.5%
Post-secondary certificate or diploma*						63.0%
University degree						27.3%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 4ctl_abo_educ_AN.ivt

AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

Wages increased by 3% for Aboriginals and by 1.6% for non-Aboriginals in 2017. However, Aboriginals' wages are still lower than for non-Aboriginals. The overall wages for Aboriginals were 8.3% lower than for non-Aboriginals in 2017, which is an improvement from the 11.7% gap that existed in 2007.

As education increases, wages increase for both Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals. When wage rates are examined by educational level we obtain further information. The average wage rate for Aboriginal high school graduates was 1.2% lower than for non-Aboriginals and 4.8% and 6.4% lower for those with a bachelor's degree and above, respectively. For others, Aboriginals' wage rates were higher than for non-Aboriginals by 9.4%, 6.4%, and 1.4% for those with less than high school completion, less than some post-secondary, and post-secondary with diploma or certificate, respectively. See Table 9.

TABLE 9
Average Weekly Wages by Educational Level
Aboriginals and Non-Aboriginals

	2007	2010	2013	2015	2017	2017/2016
	Aboriginals					% Change
Total, all education levels	665	743	816	855	881	3.0
Less than high school	522	571	609	622	661	6.3
High school graduate	623	672	737	772	769	-0.5
Post-secondary certificate / diploma without high school completion	705	802	915	847	946	11.7
Post-secondary certificate / diploma with high school completion	769	825	908	942	983	4.4
Bachelor's degree	874	1033	1060	1135	1109	-2.3
Above bachelor's degree	1178	1219	1195	1299	1285	-1.1
	Non-Aboriginals					
Total, all education levels	753	819	883	943	958	1.6
Less than high school	488	532	577	599	604	0.8
High school graduate	645	695	734	766	778	1.6
Post-secondary certificate / diploma without high school completion	747	787	866	885	888	0.4
Post-secondary certificate / diploma with high school completion	786	848	905	953	970	1.8
Bachelor's degree	959	1024	1084	1144	1164	1.7
Above bachelor's degree	1145	1208	1295	1371	1373	0.2
	Aboriginal Rates vs. Non-Aboriginal Rates					
	2007			2017		
Total, all education levels	-11.7%			-8.1%		
Less than high school	6.9%			9.4%		
High school graduate	-3.5%			-1.2%		
Post-secondary certificate / diploma without high school completion	-5.5%			6.4%		
Post-secondary certificate / diploma with high school completion	-2.1%			1.4%		
Bachelor's degree	-8.9%			-4.8%		
Above bachelor's degree	2.9%			-6.4%		

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 4ctl_abo_educ_AN.ivt

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The employment and unemployment rates improved for both Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals in 2017, while the participation rates remained about the same. However, all three rates have been consistently worse for Aboriginals.

Métis have consistently had lower unemployment rates and higher employment and participation rates than for First Nations. In most years Métis' participation rates were higher than for Inuits.

In 2017 unemployment and employment rates improved for non-Aboriginal men and women in each of the three age categories. For non-Aboriginals most categories improved.

The exceptions were that the employment rates for men 55 and older and for women 15–24 declined and the unemployment rate for men 55 and older increased.

The provinces with the highest Aboriginal employment rates were British Columbia followed by Alberta. Quebec was the province with the lowest Aboriginal employment rate, followed by the Atlantic region.

The services-producing sector was where 77.1% of Aboriginals were employed in 2017. The three largest in 2017 were health care and social assistance, followed by retail trade, with accommodation and food services being next, employing 14%, 12.5%, and 9%, respectively. In the goods-producing sector, construction was where the greatest percentage, 10.6%, of Aboriginals were employed.

Employment rates for Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals are very similar when examined by educational level. This is the case for the 11 years for which the data is available. This is highly significant. It means that education is an important aspect in determining employment for both Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals. Unemployment rates for Aboriginals are substantially higher than for non-Aboriginals, regardless of educational level.

Aboriginals' wages were 8.3% lower than for non-Aboriginals in 2017, which is an improvement from the 11.7% gap that existed in 2007.

As education increases, wages increase for both Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals.

Education is a key determinant of employment and wage rates. It is education that makes a significant contribution toward lessening and, in some cases, overcoming the historical gaps in the rates between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals.

REFERENCE

Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.