

# Canadians, particularly women, caught in time crunch<sup>[1]</sup>

National dialogue needed on how to lead more balanced lives

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## AVAILABILITY

See text below

## EXCERPTS

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A new study being released Tuesday shows that Canadians - especially women - are caught in a time crunch.

The problem has worsened since 1992, says the Canadian Index of Wellbeing which links economic, health, social, cultural and environmental indicators to Canadians' quality of life.

Today, 20 per cent of Canadians experience high levels of "time crunch" compared to just 16 per cent in 1992, according to the report.

Women are feeling the strain more acutely than men with about 23 per cent reporting high levels of time pressure compared to 17 per cent of men.

The report, which looks at time use, leisure and culture trends over the last 15 to 20 years found Canadians struggling to meet the competing demands of a blackberry-enabled 24/7 workplace, children and parents needing support, and their own need for leisure, family and cultural time.

"Not so long ago we dared to imagine a shift to the leisure society - a world where robots lifted the burden of work and prosperity allowed more time for stimulating activities and fun," says Roy Romanow, chair of the Canadian Index of Wellbeing advisory board and a former Saskatchewan premier.

"Today's reality is starkly different than yesterday's dream," he writes in the report.

Fewer Canadians are working long hours, with 11 per cent working more than 50 hours a week, down from almost 15 per cent in 1996, the report says. But more of us - 29 per cent - are working weekends, evenings, nights and rotating shifts.

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"The trends suggest that Canadians are increasingly sacrificing satisfying and meaningful relaxation and leisure time in order to attend to the more pressing demands of work, child care and looking after dependent seniors," the report says.

Romanow said he hopes the report will be a "clarion call" to spark a national dialogue involving individuals, communities, employers and government to reverse this "worrisome" trend.

"If we're always on the BlackBerry and tied to the computer - and I understand these are tools to do the job better - then we risk losing the importance of family, leisure and culture in Canada," he said in an interview.

The report suggests workplaces provide more flextime and job sharing; more vacation and shorter work weeks; more child care and better parental and elder-care leave benefits.

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"We need to make room in our lives for both our obligations and our human needs," Romanow says in the report. "And that means lives that satisfy and enrich, not just for some of us, but for all of us."

- reprinted from the Toronto Star

**Related link:** Caught in the time crunch: Time use, leisure and culture in Canada<sup>[2]</sup>

**Region:** Canada<sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** health<sup>[4]</sup>

parent involvement<sup>[5]</sup>

maternity and parental leave<sup>[6]</sup>

public management<sup>[7]</sup>

## Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/10/06/canadians-particularly-women-caught-time-crunch> [2]

<https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/10/10/caught-time-crunch-time-use-leisure-and-culture-canada> [3]

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