



YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN CANADA:

The Role of Work-Integrated Learning
in Building Resilient Careers



Research by



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PREFACE:

The Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC) is a neutral, not-for-profit, national centre of expertise with the mission of strengthening Canada's digital advantage in the global economy. For more than 30 years, ICTC has delivered forward-looking research, practical policy advice, and capacity-building solutions for individuals and businesses. The organization's goal is to ensure that technology is utilized to drive economic growth and innovation and that Canada's workforce remains competitive on a global scale.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Canada's youth are facing one of the most challenging labour markets in decades, with unemployment among students and recent graduates rising to levels not seen since previous recessions. In June 2025, the youth unemployment rate was 14.2%—almost twice that of the general workforce—while the unemployment rate for returning students reached 17.4%, a level only comparable to the 2008 financial crisis and the 2012 economic slowdown, excluding the pandemic years. These figures represent more than just temporary challenges. They risk creating long-term labour market scars, where difficulties in starting a career can decrease lifetime earnings, limit professional opportunities, and reduce overall well-being for years to come.

The risks are especially acute for those who cannot find meaningful work during or after their studies. Being unemployed or underemployed at the beginning of a career can lead to missed opportunities for skill development, poor job matching, and negative signalling effects that discourage employers from hiring. The impacts go far beyond economics, resulting in poorer health outcomes, reduced social inclusion, and increased inequality across society.

Amidst these concerning trends, evidence suggests that work-integrated learning (WIL) offers a partial yet powerful solution. Programs such as internships, co-op placements, and apprenticeships provide students critical exposure to the workplace while they are still in school, helping them develop the skills, confidence, and networks necessary for a smoother transition into full-time employment. Research consistently demonstrates that students who participate in WIL are more likely to find jobs related to their field of study, less likely to be overqualified for their roles, and better prepared with both technical and interpersonal skills.

Data from the Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC) supports this point. Over 70% of graduates from ICTC's WIL programs secured full-time jobs after completing their studies, with many landing roles directly related to their WIL placements. Alumni of ICTC's WIL programs also stated that their WIL experiences enhanced

their technical skills, improved their soft skills, and increased their confidence in job interviews and when making career decisions. WIL participation has clear and lasting impacts on employment outcomes, particularly during periods of economic instability.

Recognizing these benefits, stakeholders across government, industry, and education are increasingly highlighting WIL as an essential tool for addressing youth unemployment and reducing labour market scarring. Governments can expand subsidies and training support, employers can create more placement opportunities, and post-secondary institutions can better integrate WIL into their programs while building sustainable partnerships with industry. Civil society organizations also play a role in developing new models and assessing impacts, while students themselves can take proactive steps to connect their academic learning with workplace experience.

While work-integrated learning is not a complete solution to the current youth unemployment crisis, it provides a practical and evidence-based pathway to better early career outcomes. By enabling young people to gain relevant, structured, and supportive workplace experience, WIL minimizes long-term economic harm and helps graduates enter the labour market equipped to succeed. In doing so, it offers not only a lifeline to individuals facing a tough job market but also a crucial boost to Canada's overall economic resilience.

KEY TAKEAWAYS



Work-integrated learning (WIL) programs such as co-ops, internships, and apprenticeships significantly improve employment outcomes by providing relevant work experience, stronger skill development, and smoother transitions into the labour market.



ICTC's survey of WIL graduates shows more than 70% secured full-time jobs after graduation, with nearly one-third employed directly by their WIL employer.



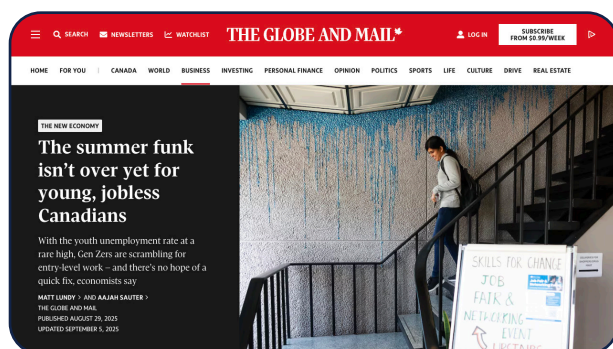
Expanding access to WIL requires collaboration among government, employers, post-secondary institutions, civil society, and students to ensure equitable, high-quality opportunities across Canada.



While WIL cannot eliminate youth unemployment, it offers a practical, evidence-based way to lessen scarring effects and enhance Canada's long-term economic resilience.

CANADA'S TROUBLING LABOUR MARKET FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, STUDENTS, AND RECENT GRADUATES

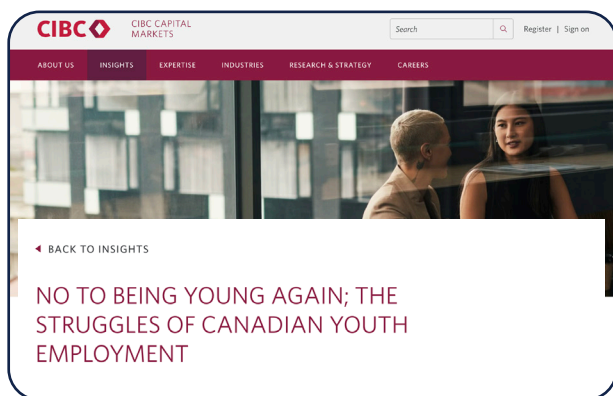
Canadian youth are facing rising unemployment rates. Commenting on the summer job market for students in 2025, the Financial Post observed a 30-year high in student unemployment, decrying it as a “cruel summer,” while The Globe and Mail reported a “summer funk” for young jobseekers, as students and recent graduates faced an uphill struggle to find summer work or an entry-level job.¹ An August 2025 report by CIBC notes that youth unemployment was nearing “recessionary levels,” surpassing that of prime-age workers.²



High youth unemployment rates in Canada are not just unfortunate or temporary issues faced by young people. Over time, these elevated rates can lead to labour market scarring—a situation where the economic harm caused by difficulty in establishing a career endures for many years.

Struggling to land a first job or failing to find a summer job that offers valuable work experience are not just short-term setbacks for a recent graduate seeking an entry-level position or a student looking for a summer job, but significant life events with long-term, negative downstream effects.

This paper examines the current state of youth unemployment in Canada, the phenomenon of labour market scarring, and its implications for individuals and the broader economy. It then examines data on one potential solution: work-integrated learning (WIL) programs, including practicums, internships, and co-op opportunities.



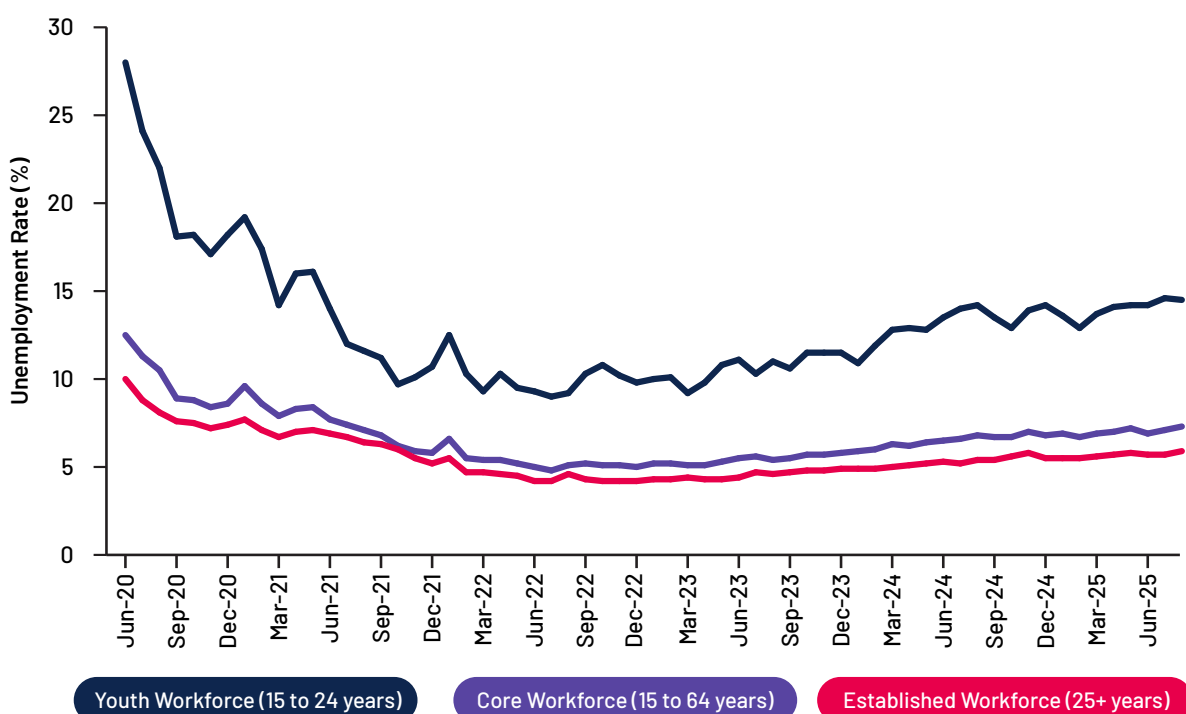
- ¹ "Posthaste: 'Cruel summer' for Canadian youth could linger for years to come," Financial Post, August 7, 2025, <https://financialpost.com/news/cruel-summer-canadian-youth-could-linger-years>; "The summer funk isn't over yet for young, jobless Canadians," The Globe and Mail, August 29, 2025, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/article-young-jobless-canadians-summer-unemployed-gen-z/>.
- ² Andrew Grantham, "No to Being Young Again; the Struggles of Canadian Youth Employment," CIBC Capital Markets, Economics in Focus, August 26, 2025, <https://cibccm.com/en/insights/articles/no-to-being-young-again-the-struggles-of-canadian-youth-employment/>, 1.



YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN CANADA

Canada's youth unemployment rate has risen acutely recently, after youth unemployment rates had recovered from their peak during the pandemic years. In June 2025, the unemployment rate among young people (aged 15-24 years) was 14.2%, up from 13.1% in June 2024 and 11.1% in 2023. The Canadian youth unemployment rate in June 2025 was double that of the general Canadian working-age population (aged 15-64 years), which faced an unemployment rate of 6.9% in June 2025.³

Figure 1. Canada youth (15-24 years) vs. general workforce unemployment (June 2020 to 2025)



Data source: Statistics Canada, 2025.⁴

³ Statistics Canada (Government of Canada), "Labour force characteristics, monthly, seasonally adjusted and trend-cycle," Table: 14-10-0287-01, July 11, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.25318/1410028701-eng>.

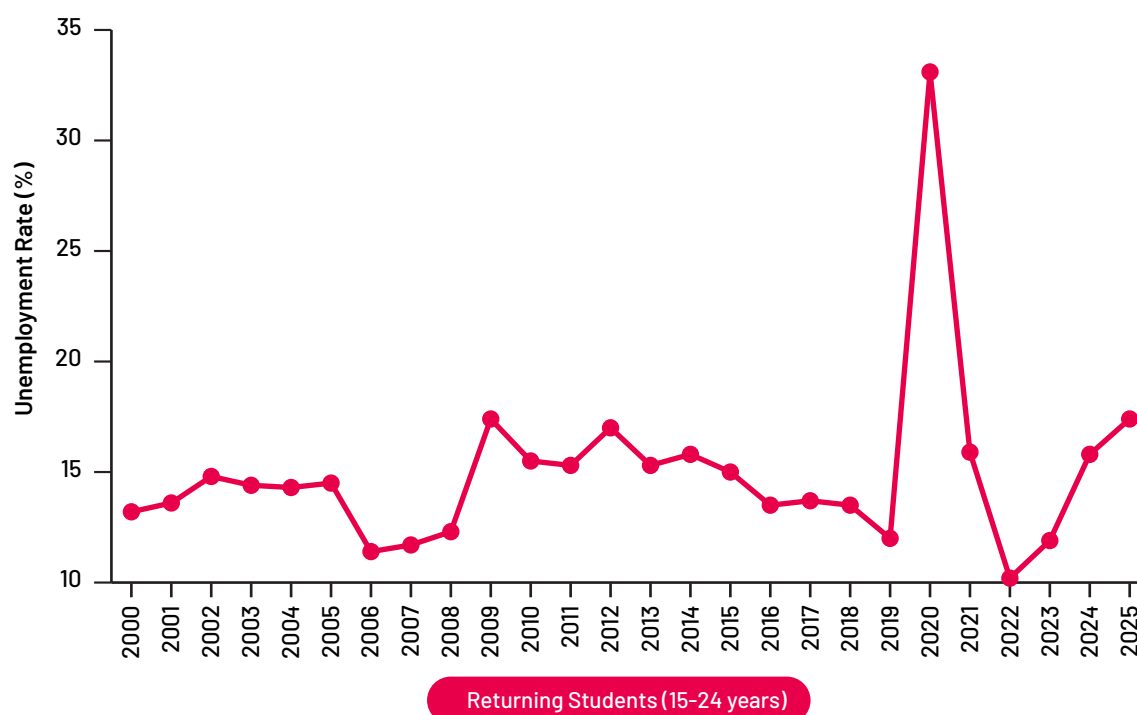
⁴ Ibid.



STUDENT UNEMPLOYMENT IN CANADA

As of June 2025, the unemployment rate for returning students—defined by Statistics Canada as young people (aged 15–24 years) who attended school full-time the previous March and plan to return to school in the fall—was 17.4%.⁵ Excluding the significant unemployment shock experienced by Canadian students during the pandemic years, the unemployment rate among returning students has only reached similar levels during the 2008 financial crisis and the 2012 economic slowdown.

Figure 2. Canada Returning Student June Unemployment Rate (June 2000 to 2025)



Data source: Statistics Canada, 2025.⁶

⁵ Statistics Canada (Government of Canada), "Labour Force Survey, June 2025," July 11, 2025, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/250711/cg-a003-eng.htm>, Chart 3.

⁶ Ibid.



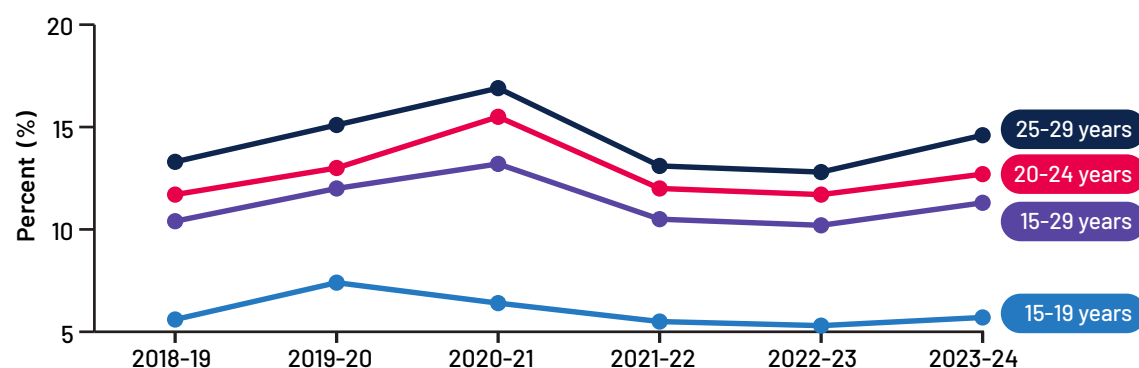
YOUNG PEOPLE NOT ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN THE LABOUR MARKET OR TRAINING

Youth not in employment, education, or training (NEET) refers to the number of young people who are neither actively engaged in the labour market nor participating in the education and training system. NEET youth statistics represent the proportion of young people not engaged in formal education, training, or employment, including full and part-time jobs and education.⁷ Young Canadians included in Statistics Canada's NEET numbers include young graduates who have been unable to secure employment after graduation, as well as young people who have not pursued further education or training and are currently unemployed.

According to a 2020 national study by Statistics Canada, youth aged 25 to 29 who had completed post-secondary education accounted for 12% of the total NEET population in that age category.⁸ While this statistic only includes young people above the age of 25 and not the entire cohort of youth falling under NEET statistics, it does highlight a cohort of young people who are not using their post-secondary qualifications towards gainful employment, nor are they pursuing further studies.

NEET statistics are crucial to consider, as rising NEET rates can indicate worsening economic conditions, especially among younger workers, and highlight issues of intergenerational fairness and social marginalization. High or increasing NEET rates may reflect inefficient use of human capital, which could harm national economic productivity in both the short and long term.

Figure 3. Canadian youth (15-29 years) not in employment, education, or training (NEET) (2018-2024)



Data source: Statistics Canada, 2025.⁹

⁷ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), "Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET)," accessed July 24, 2025, <https://www.oecd.org/en/data/indicators/youth-not-in-employment-education-or-training-neet.html>.

⁸ Statistics Canada (Government of Canada), "Education Indicators in Canada: An International Perspective, 2020 - Chapter A: The output of educational institutions and the impact of learning," last updated October 20, 2022, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/81-604-x/2020001/ch/cha-eng.htm>, Table A.4.6.

⁹ Jaclyn Layton, Genevieve Latour, and Katherine Wall, "Youth not in employment, education or training: Recent trends," Statistics Canada, Education, Learning and Training Research Paper Series, May 1, 2025, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/81-595-m/81-595-m2025001-eng.htm>, Chart 2.

LABOUR MARKET SCARRING

Graduating from post-secondary education and entering the labour market during a recession makes it more challenging for graduates to find employment that matches their educational level and training. Graduates who face the challenge of entering the workforce during a recession often face long-term, multi-year adverse effects on their career paths, wage earnings, and even their future health and well-being. This phenomenon, in which graduates who enter the workforce during recessions experience adverse long-term effects, is often referred to as *labour market scarring*.¹⁰

A 2012 paper by economists Philip Oreopoulos, Till von Wachter, and Andrew Heisz found that graduating during an adverse economic shock, such as a recession, reduced graduates' initial wage earnings by 9% in their first year of work, with this gap in earnings not recovering fully until a decade into their careers. The authors observed that "graduating during a recession leads to significantly lower earnings at the beginning of an individual's career, but the gap converges to zero within ten years after graduation."¹¹

As a 2023 report by Century Initiative explains, "Young people graduating into a recession land lower-quality work with lower pay, which leads to labour market scarring," noting how labour market scarring amounts to "lasting impacts on a person's earnings and career opportunities over time."¹² Writing for the Marginal Revolution blog, economist Alex Tabarrok notes, "Graduating in a recession can be rough. Wages start lower and advance more slowly. It's hard to get hired at a top firm, which means it takes longer to get on a rapid ascent career path."¹³

¹⁰ See: Jeff Borland, "Scarring effects: A review of Australian and international literature," Australian Journal of Labour Economics, vol. 23, no. 2 (2020): 173–188, https://ajle.org/index.php/ajle_home/article/view/36/.

¹¹ Philip Oreopoulos, Till von Wachter, and Andrew Heisz, "The Short- and Long-Term Career Effects of Graduating in a Recession," American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, vol. 4, no. 1, January 2012, 1–29, <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/app.4.1.1>, 3–14.

¹² Jasmine Lee, Owen Brown, and Noah Zon, "After the Shocks: Preventing Long-Term Labour Market Scarring for Youth," Century Initiative, Key Insight Report No. 5, October 2023, available at: <https://lmic-cimt.ca/future-of-work/after-the-shocks-preventing-long-term-labour-market-scarring-for-youth/>, 3.

¹³ Alex Tabarrok, "Graduating in a Recession Can Be Rough," Marginal Revolution, November 8, 2020, <https://marginalrevolution.com/marginalrevolution/2020/11/long-term-consequences-of-recessions.html>.

¹⁴ Dan Andrews, Nathan Deutscher, Jonathan Hambur, and David Hansell, "The career effects of labour market conditions at entry," Working Paper, OECD Publishing, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), December 2020, https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/the-career-effects-of-labour-market-conditions-at-entry_29c11c75-en.html, 22–23.



A 2020 study on labour market scarring in Australia, published by the OECD, posited that potential mechanisms to explain persistent and long-term reduced wages brought about by labour market scarring include:¹⁴



Human capital destruction occurs when recent graduates who spend time unemployed or underemployed during an economic downturn miss out on workplace learning and development opportunities, which hinders long-term career growth.



Bad matching occurs when recent graduates entering the labour market during an economic downturn find jobs that are suboptimal fits for their education, training, interests, and aptitudes, and face delayed career advancement. At the same time, they seek more optimally matched jobs.



Structural skills mismatch occurs when recent graduates, particularly those graduating from programs aligned with specific jobs or industries, enter the labour market during an economic downturn and find that the skills and knowledge they acquired during their education programs no longer meet the needs of the contemporary economy, as entire industries are permanently disrupted.



Psychosocial scarring and signalling effects occur when recent graduates seeking employment during an economic downturn reduce their early career ambitions and accept lower-paying or misaligned jobs. Conversely, employers may interpret a graduate's failure to obtain employment quickly post-graduation as a negative signal regarding the graduate's employability and professional potential.

Labour market scarring not only causes unlucky recent graduates to face a decade-long setback in wages and career progression—the Century Initiative study highlights that it also poses risks to health and well-being, hinders social inclusion and the development of social capital, and worsens existing social inequalities.¹⁵ Research indicates that cohorts of new workers entering the labour market during periods of adverse economic conditions tend to experience higher mortality rates, poorer health behaviours, and lower rates of family formation, as well as increased rates of divorce later in life.¹⁶

¹⁵ Jasmine Lee, et al., "After the Shocks: Preventing Long-Term Labour Market Scarring for Youth," 5.

¹⁶ Till von Wachter, "The Persistent Effects of Initial Labor Market Conditions for Young Adults and Their Sources," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, vol. 34, no. 4, Fall 2020: 168-94, <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/jep.34.4.168>. 19-21.

WIL PROGRAMMING AND EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

Work-integrated learning (WIL) programs, such as internships or co-op placements, offer a potential partial remedy to combating the worsening youth unemployment and labour market scarring risks faced by the current cohort of young people and recent graduates in Canada.

Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada (CEWIL Canada) defines WIL as “curricular experiential education that formally integrates a student’s academic studies with quality experiences within a workplace or practice setting.”¹⁷ WIL programming typically involves a partnership between a student, a host employer, and an academic institution, such as an apprenticeship, co-op, internship, practicum, or other type of blended curricular and work experience.

CEWIL Canada also emphasizes that not all WIL programming is created equally; their Quality WIL Framework identifies characteristics of high-quality WIL, including careful integration between academic learning and work experience, meaningful tasks in work placements, and well-defined outcomes for all participants.¹⁸

Research into WIL’s impact on employment outcomes often focuses on the construct of “employability” or “career readiness.” Participating in WIL has helped students develop knowledge of the professional world, including workplace norms, collegial communication skills, job interview preparedness, and enhanced domain knowledge in their chosen career.¹⁹ Further research has suggested that WIL can help students develop

resilience, independence, adaptability, and self-efficacy—qualities essential for navigating a rapidly changing future of work.²⁰

There is also evidence that WIL has a direct influence on employment outcomes. In Canada, several studies use National Graduate Survey (NGS) data to understand WIL’s impact on employment and income. This includes a Statistics Canada study using 2015 NGS data, which shows that one in two post-secondary graduates had participated in some form of WIL programming during their post-secondary studies.²¹

Looking at labour market outcome indicators three years after the 2015 cohort graduated, the Statistics Canada study found that participation in WIL was associated with a higher likelihood of working in a field related to students’ degrees (even when the analysis excluded health and education graduates, fields where embedded practicums are very common).²² Additionally, WIL participants were less likely to be overqualified for their jobs compared to those who did not participate in the WIL program.²³ A study by the C.D. Howe Institute found that WIL programs are associated with higher income for graduates, particularly for women.²⁴

¹⁷ CEWIL Canada, “What is Work-Integrated Learning (WIL)?” accessed August 12, 2025, <https://cewilcanada.ca/EN/EN/Resources/What-is-WIL/Types-of-WIL.aspx>.

¹⁸ CEWIL Canada, “Quality WIL Framework,” accessed August 12, 2025, <https://cewilcanada.ca/EN/Resources/What-is-WIL/Quality-WIL-Framework.aspx?WebsiteKey=9e5f465e-15b5-4c7b-ad03-86d7945c1ccc&12e8d8413b10=4#12e8d8413b10>.

¹⁹ Alexandra Cutean, Letitia Henville, and Faun Rice, “The Impact of Work-Integrated Learning on Student Success and the Canadian Economy: A Case Study of Canada’s Student Work Placement Program (SWPP),” Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC), August 2023, <https://ictc-ctic.ca/reports/the-impact-of-workforce-integrated-learning-on-student-success-and-the-canadian-economy>, 14–19.

²⁰ Ibid, 19–22.

²¹ Diane Galarneau, Mark Kinack, and George Marshall, “Work-integrated learning during postsecondary studies, 2015 graduates,” Statistics Canada, Insights on Canadian Society, May 25, 2020, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/75-006-x/2020001/article/00003-eng.pdf?st=lrWEn4v3>.

²² Ibid, 4.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Rosalie Wyonch and Bradley Seward, “From Class to Career: How Work Integrated Learning Benefits Graduates Looking for Jobs,” Commentary 642, C.D. Howe Institute, May 2023, <https://cdhowe.org/publication/class-career-how-work-integrated-learning-benefits-graduates-looking-jobs/>.



ICTC DATA ON WIL AND EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

The Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC) provides subsidies for WIL placements where students and learners are placed in technology- and digital economy-related roles.²⁵ ICTC also manages subsector-specific WIL placements with a focus on areas such as cybersecurity.²⁶

In 2024, ICTC distributed a voluntary long-term follow-up survey to all graduates from its WIL programs. A total of 168 students responded, with 40% from a 2021 cohort, 35% from a 2022 cohort, 18% from a 2020 cohort, and 7% from a 2023 cohort. The majority of respondents (93%) had graduated from their respective post-secondary programs by the time they completed the survey, with about 75% having graduated in 2022 or earlier. Student majors included business management and public administration (28%), mathematics, computer and information sciences (18%), and architecture, engineering, or related technologies (12%), among others.

The majority of WIL graduates (71%) who responded to ICTC's alumni survey reported having secured a full-time, permanent position (55%) or a full-time contract position (16%). Just under one in ten (9%) reported struggling to find work, a number that should be considered in the context of some

graduates completing their degrees during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Between 2020 and 2021, all indicators of youth and student unemployment were well over 9%, suggesting that overall, students who participated in ICTC's WIL program experienced better employment outcomes than their peers.

Additionally, nearly a third of WIL graduate survey respondents obtained a job with the same employer they did their ICTC WIL placement with, and a further third secured a job placement related to another WIL experience (7%), or in a field related to their WIL experiences (27%). See Figure 4 below.

ICTC's WIL alumni reported several benefits from participating in WIL. Most commonly, WIL allowed them to explore a career to see if it was a good fit (63%), improve their technical skills (63%) and soft/human skills (60%), and feel more confident in job interviews (58%).

²⁵ Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC), "eTalent Canada," accessed September 7, 2025, <https://etalentcanada.ca/>.

²⁶ See: Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC), "Cybersecurity Training and Work Integrated Learning Program (CTWIL)," eTalent Canada, accessed September 7, 2025, <https://etalentcanada.ca/for-businesses/programs/cybersecurity-training-and-work-integrated-learning-program>.



Figure 4. ICTC WIL program participant employment outcomes (2021 to 2023 cohorts)



Survey Question: "Please select the answer that best applies to your employment experience after graduation, as it relates to work-integrated learning (WIL). After graduating from my post-secondary program, I..."

31.17%

48 responses

Secured a role with the same organization I did an ICTC co-op with.

26.62%

41 responses

Secured a role with an employer I had not previously worked with, but that drew from my expertise gained in WIL.

24.68%

38 responses

Secured a role not related to my WIL experiences.

7.14%

11 responses

Other (please specify)

7.14%

11 responses

Secured a role with an employer I knew through a WIL experience other than ICTC's.

3.25%

5 responses

Was offered a job by a WIL employer but chose not to take it.

Answered: 154 Skipped: 14

Data Sources: ICTC WIL Graduates Survey, 2024.



WIL PROGRAMMING AS A PARTIAL SOLUTION TO LABOUR MARKET SCARRING

Other organizations in Canada are also increasingly identifying WIL as a partial remedy to labour market scarring. Acknowledging the deteriorating employment prospects for young people in Canada, a recent report by TD Economics highlights the important role that WIL programs can play in enhancing labour market outcomes, noting that participation in WIL programs can increase students' workplace skills and significantly improve their chances of securing employment upon graduating.²⁷

Noting the difficult employment situation being experienced by young people in Canada right now, an economic update by Desjardins highlights the important role that government funding for programs such as the federal Youth Employment and Skills Strategy (YESS) and Canada Summer Jobs program can play in "bridging the gap" to improve employment outcomes for young Canadians trying to participate in the labour market.²⁸

By providing learners with structured workplace learning opportunities, mediated by a program design that reduces hiring risk for employers, WIL programs counteract the mechanisms that lead to labour market scarring.

By placing learners in the workplace during their post-secondary studies, or shortly after graduation, WIL programs help prevent the potential loss of human capital and, in fact, build upon the skills and knowledge imparted in the classroom in a practical way. Participation in WIL programs also reduces the likelihood of imperfect career matching, as structured WIL programs help learners pursue WIL opportunities at employers in relevant industries.

WIL alone is not a complete remedy for the economic and personal setbacks that new graduates face when graduating during a recession. However, it can improve career and financial outcomes and therefore is likely to reduce the long-term effects of labour market scarring.



Businesses can reduce scarring by seeing the potential in the person behind the resumé, not the gaps in it."

Tiff Macklem, Governor, Bank of Canada

²⁷ Rannella Billy-Ochieng and Anusha Arif, "Entering the Labour Market During Recession Can Leave Lasting Scars," TD Economics, February 1, 2024, <https://economics.td.com/ca-labour-market-during-recession-can-leave-scars>.

²⁸ Kari Norman, L.J. Valencia, and Randall Bartlett, "Why Has the Youth Unemployment Rate Increased By So Much, So Fast?," Desjardins, September 4, 2025, <https://www.desjardins.com/qc/en/savings-investment/economic-studies/canada-youth-employment-4-september-2025.html>, 6.

²⁹ Tiff Macklem, "Canada's labour market: rebound, recuperation and restructuring (speech)," remarks delivered virtually to the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce and Calgary Chamber of Commerce, February 23, 2021, Bank of Canada, <https://www.bankofcanada.ca/2021/02/canadas-labour-market-rebound-recuperation-and-restructuring/>.



During economic downturns and shocks, industries often face disruption. In these times, well-planned WIL programs can assist students and recent graduates in redirecting their early careers away from struggling sectors towards related industries with stronger employment opportunities. This shift allows them to leverage their skills and energies, although supplementary training through reskilling programs might be necessary to ensure a successful transition.

Ultimately, WIL programming that offers practical work experience essential for helping new graduates kick-start their careers, even during economic downturns, can provide a feasible pathway for them to move forward. A solid career path lessens the risk of psychosocial scars during the early years of young people's careers. Participation in WIL programs also diminishes the risk of negative signals to employers,

as graduates will be actively engaged in their early careers through these programs.

In a 2021 speech to the Calgary and Edmonton Chambers of Commerce, Bank of Canada Governor Tiff Macklem noted, "Businesses can reduce scarring by seeing the potential in the person behind the resumé, not the gaps in it."²⁹ One powerful way businesses can do so is through participating in WIL programming.

To increase access to WIL programming for students and recent graduates, who are currently facing an adverse labour market, Canadian employers, government, post-secondary institutions, and civil society organizations should work collaboratively to accelerate access to WIL programming for students and new graduates and increase the scope of WIL programs throughout the country.

Figure 5. Collaborative model for national work-integrated learning (WIL) programming in Canada

Stakeholder	Role	Responsibilities
Government	Funder	› Fund WIL programming through wage subsidies, grants for supplementary training, WIL program administration, and research and program evaluation
Employers	Placement providers	› Provide ongoing WIL placements (i.e., apprenticeships, co-op and internship positions, practicum placements, etc.) › Collaborate with post-secondaries and other stakeholders
Post-Secondaries	Program providers	› Offer WIL programming relevant and accessible to students pursuing programs across the institution › Promote WIL programming and its importance to post-graduate employment outcomes to students and other institutional stakeholders › Develop sustainable employer partnerships at a local, provincial, and national level as appropriate › Monitor and evaluate effectiveness of WIL programming across the institution on an ongoing basis
Civil society, non-profits, think tanks, and associations	Conveners and program innovators	› Collaborate with post-secondaries, employers, and government to advocate for WIL programming › Administer national, and sector-specific cross-institutional WIL programming and funding › Develop best practices, research, and public policy leadership on WIL programming › Carry out research and systemic evaluation of WIL programming nationally
Students/ WIL program participants	Program participants	› Seek relevant WIL placements during post-secondary studies › Actively learn and work hard during WIL placements › Strive to integrate skills and theoretical knowledge learned during academic programs into employment context during WIL placement

CONCLUSION

There is significant evidence that graduating during an economic downturn, such as a recession, has adverse and long-lasting effects on the careers, financial prospects, and life trajectories of new graduates. Canadian youth are currently facing significant levels of unemployment in an uncertain Canadian economy. In aggregate, early-career setbacks are associated with longer-term labour market scarring effects.



WIL programs can offer a targeted remedy to counteract some of these adverse outcomes of graduating during a recession.