

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

Indicators of **Well-being in Canada**

Learning - University Participation

<u>Status</u>	<u>Life events</u>	<u>Key influences</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Attainment • Job-related Training • Adult Literacy • Adult Numeracy • Student Literacy • Student Numeracy • College and Trade Participation • University Participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Drop-outs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Access in Schools

[Definition and Methodology](#) | [Display High Contrast Charts](#)

Relevance

University programs cultivate skills and knowledge that are important for the future career success of students, as well as to Canada's ability to succeed in the global economy. Participation in a university education also provides students with opportunities for social interaction and a solid basis for future civic participation.

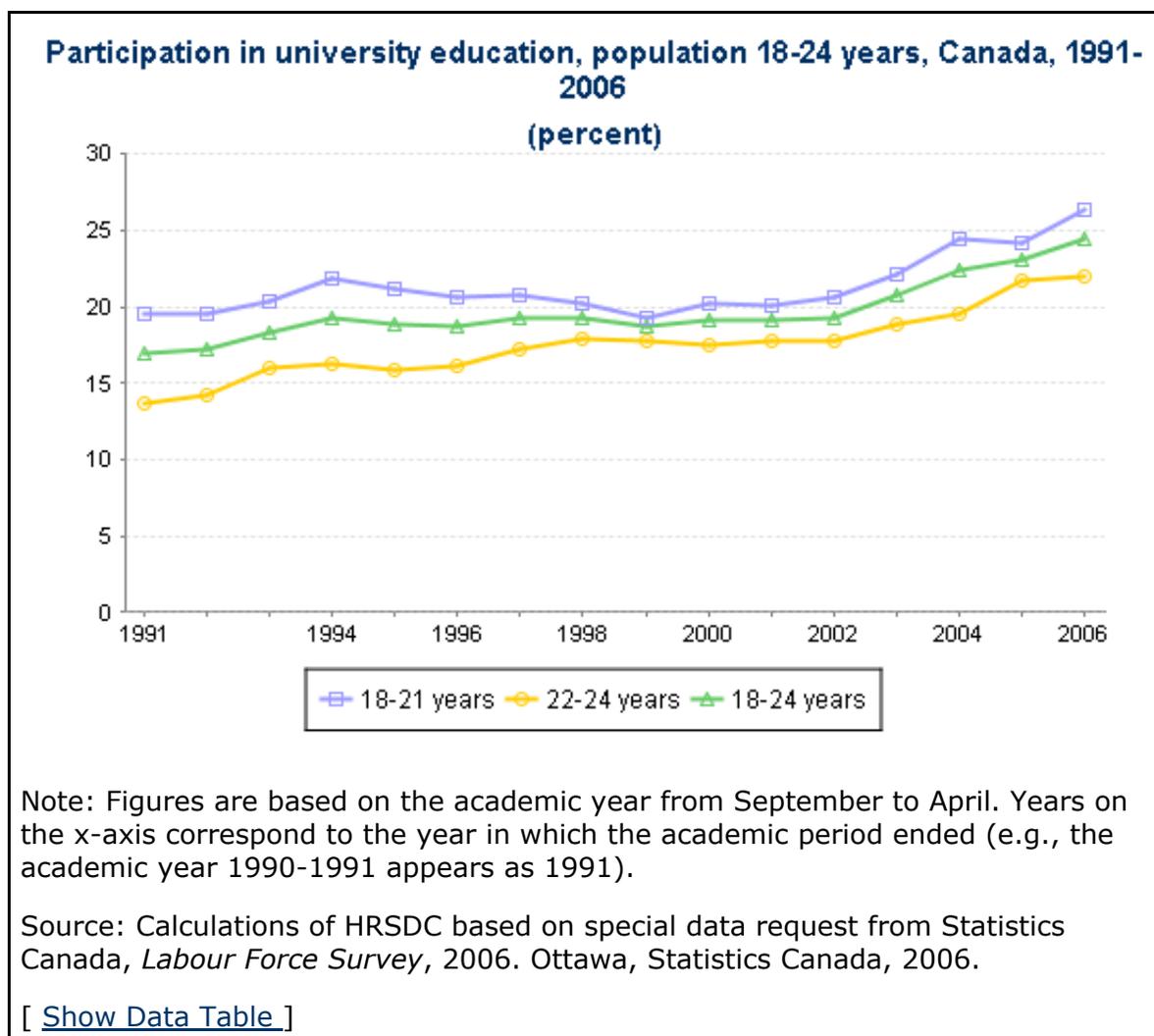
The university participation indicator is one of two indicators addressing participation in post-secondary education. It measures the proportion of individuals who are participating in university studies with the intent of achieving a university degree. The indicator also includes an additional measure that provides information on university enrolment based on data from the Enhanced Student Information System (ESIS).

Summary

- [National Picture](#) — Participation in university education reached an all-time high in 2005-2006, rising to 24% of the population aged 18 to 24.
- [Gender](#) — The proportions of both men and women participating in university education increased between 1990-1991 and 2005-2006; however, the increase of women was twice that of men.
- [Age](#) — Rates of participation increased for those under the age of 30 between 1990-1991 and 2005-2006, rising 7 percentage points (from 17% to 24%) for those aged 18 to 24, and 3 percentage points (from 5% to 8%) for those aged 25 to 29.
- [Regions](#) — University participation was highest in Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia, with all three provinces having an average participation rate of 28%.
- [University Enrolment](#) — The level of both full-time and part-time university enrolments increased between 2001 and 2005, although the increase was much greater for full-time enrolments (25%) as compared to part-time enrolments (6%).

National Picture

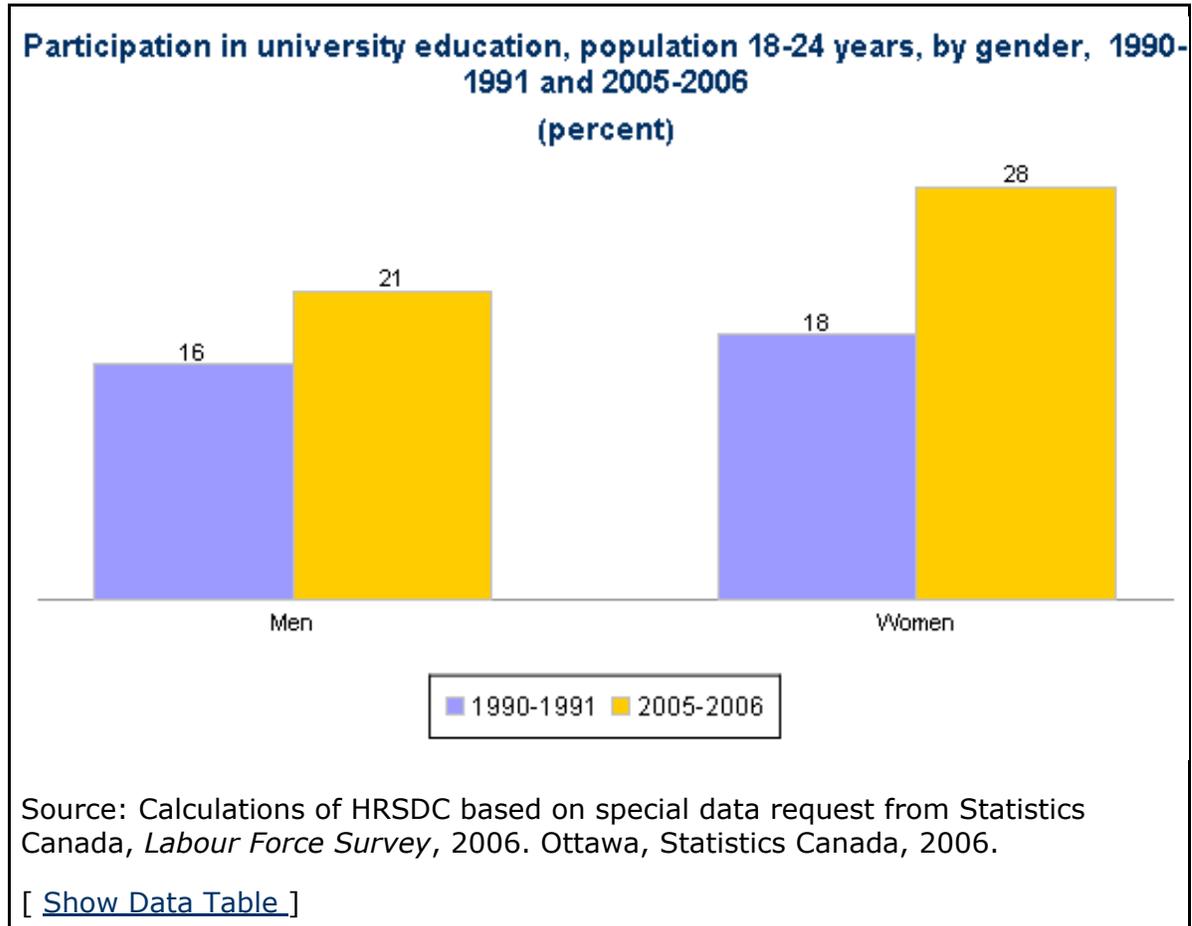
Participation rates for university education rose steadily from the 2000-2001 academic year onward, reaching a high of 24% for those aged 18 to 24 in 2005-2006. When broken down into the separate age groups of 18 to 21 and 22 to 24, both reached their peaks in 2005-2006; 26% for those aged 18 to 21 years and 22% of those aged 22 to 24 years participated in a university education that academic year. As of 2005-2006, university participation rates for the 18 to 21 age group had risen roughly 7 percentage points from the 1990-1991 rate, while rates for the 22 to 24 age group had increased by just over 8 percentage points.



Gender

Participation in university education increased for both men and women between the academic years 1990-1991 and 2005-2006. The participation rate for men aged 18 to 24 increased by 5 percentage points, from 16% in 1990-1991 to 21% in 2005-2006. For the same years, the increase in participation rates among women aged 18 to 24 was twice the increase for men; rates of participation among women increased by 10 percentage points from 18% in 1990-1991 to 28% in 2005-2006.

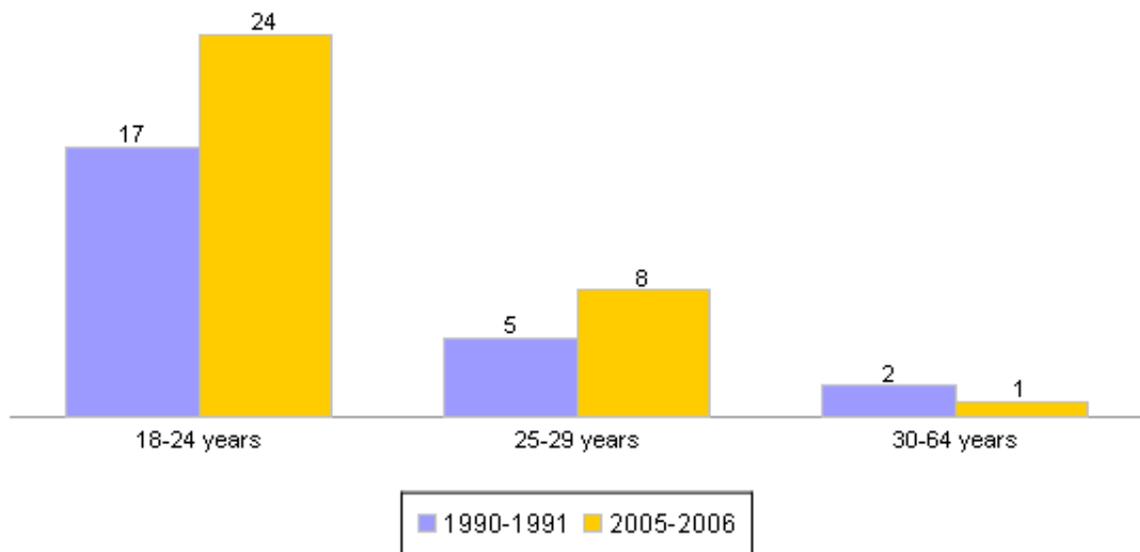
Participation rates were also higher among women aged 18 to 24 than among men in the same age group throughout the entire period from 1990-1991 to 2005-2006.^[1] In 1990-1991, the participation rate for women was roughly 2 percentage points higher than for men, while rates in 2005-2006 were 7 percentage points greater for women than for men.



Age

Rates of participation in university education decreased with age between 1990-1991 and 2005-2006. Participation rates were highest for the group aged 18 to 24 years and lowest for the group aged 30 to 64. Some 24% of those aged 18 to 24 years participated in post-secondary education in the 2005-2006 academic year, while the participation rate was roughly 1% for those aged 30 to 64 years.

Participation in university education, by age, 1990-1991 and 2005-2006 (percent)



Source: Calculations of HRSDC based on special data request from Statistics Canada, *Labour Force Survey*, 2006. Ottawa, Statistics Canada, 2006.

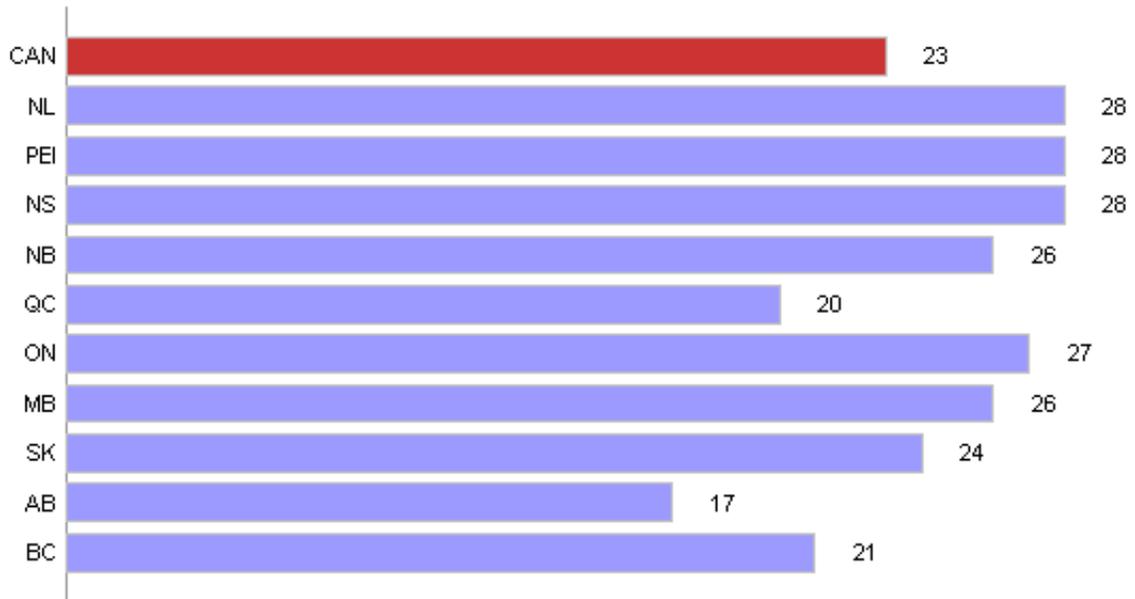
[[Show Data Table](#)]

Regions

Across Canada, average university participation rates for the academic years 2003-2004 to 2005-2006 ranged from a low of 17% in Alberta to a high of 28% in Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia. Large urban areas, or census metropolitan areas (CMAs), had participation rates for university education that were almost double those of other areas; in 2005-2006 the rate for CMAs was 27%, compared to 14% for non-CMAs.[\[2\]](#)

Participation in university education, population 18-24 years, by region, 2003-2004 to 2005-2006

(percent)



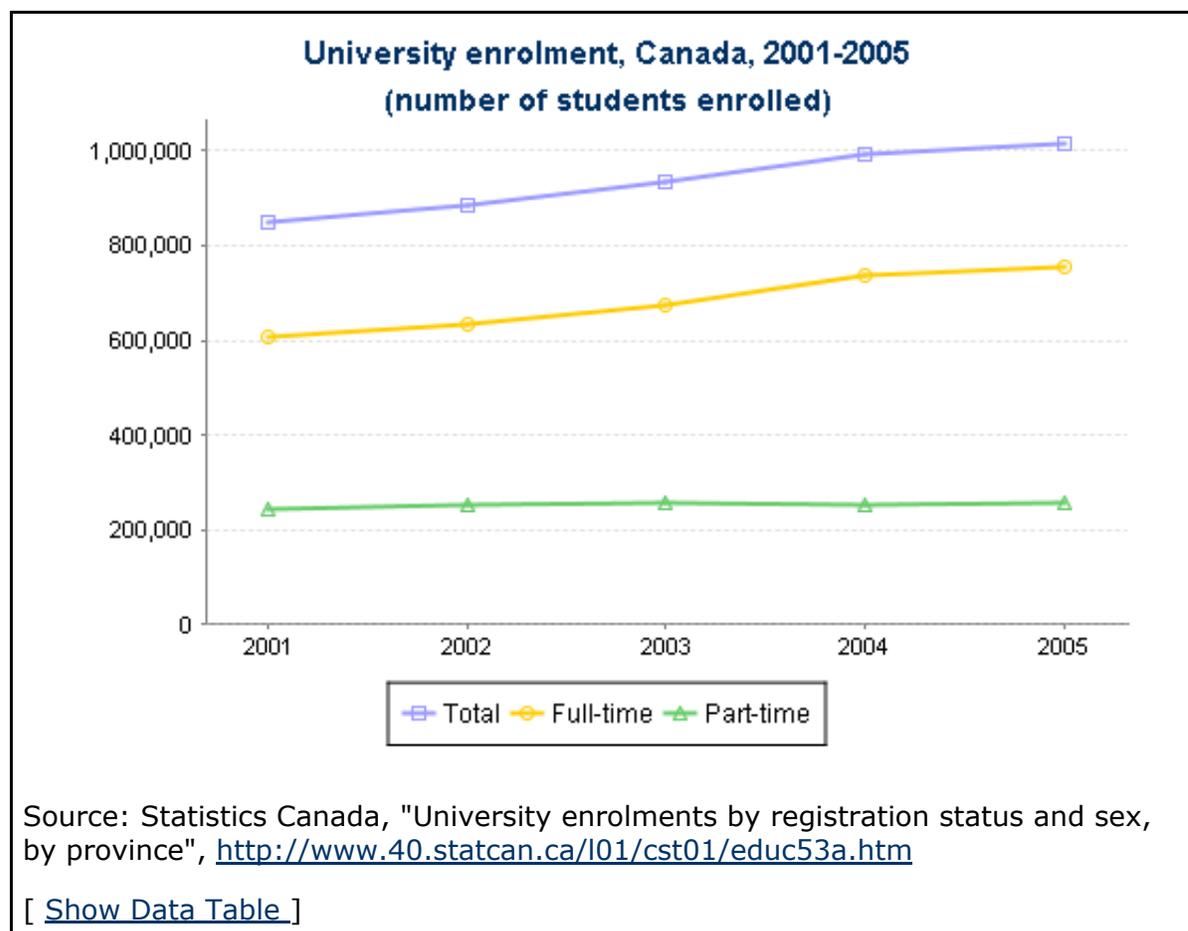
Note: Data are based on a three-year average for the academic years 2003-2004 to 2005-2006.

Source: Calculations of HRSDC based on special data request from Statistics Canada, *Labour Force Survey*, 2006. Ottawa, Statistics Canada, 2006.

[[Show Data Table](#)]

University Enrolment

Since 2001, the Enhanced Student Information System (ESIS) has been collecting data on enrolment in Canadian universities. ESIS data show that both full- and part-time rates of university enrolment increased between 2001 and 2005. The increase was greatest for full-time enrolment, which rose from 606,819 students in 2001 to just under 757,000 students in 2005. The rate of change was much smaller for part-time enrolments, which rose only 6% between 2001 and 2005, as compared to 25% for full-time students. In 2005, 257,499 students were attending university part-time.



Footnotes

1. Calculations of HRSDC based on special data request from Statistics Canada, *Labour Force Survey*, 2006. Ottawa, Statistics Canada, 2006.

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2. Calculations of HRSDC based on special data request from Statistics Canada, *Labour Force Survey*, 2006. Ottawa, Statistics Canada, 2006.

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Download Data

- [Download the data in Excel format](#) (.xls, 8704 bytes)
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Date Modified: 2012-06-09