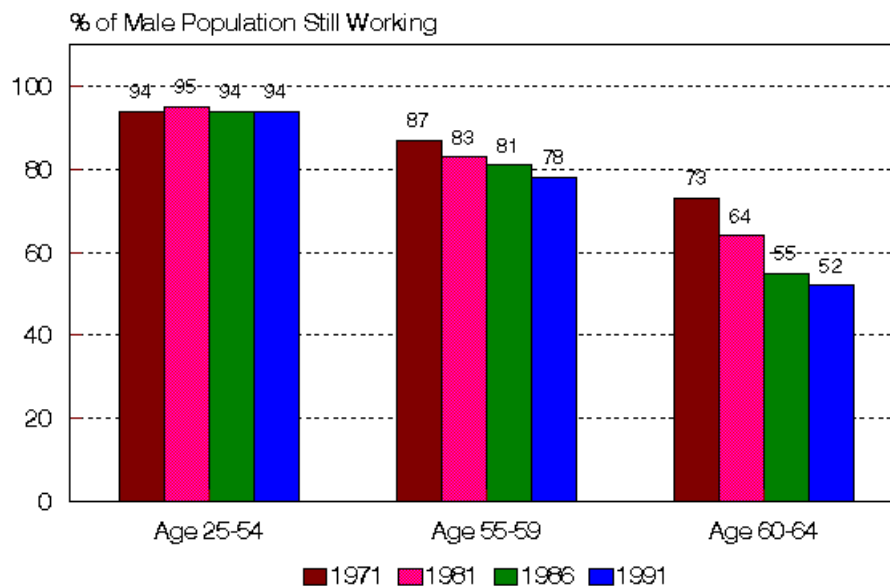


Issue 24: Men in the Labour Force

Produced by: Population Statistics Section

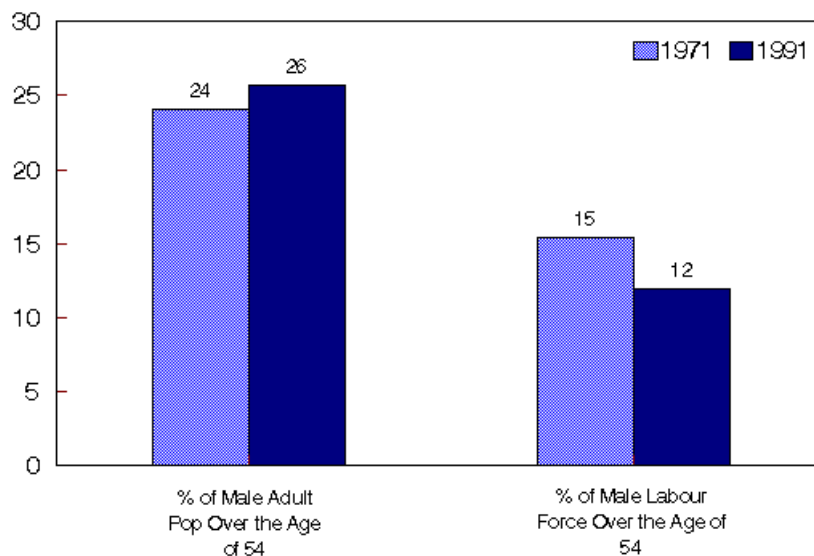
- Men between the ages of 25 and 54 have traditionally been very active in the labour market. That commitment does not appear to have changed in recent times, despite the significant changes that have occurred in the workforce overall. Approximately 94 per cent of all men aged 25-54 were in the workforce in May of 1991, as was the case 20 years previously in 1971.
- Prime-aged males' labour market behaviour does not appear to have been affected by the increased labour market participation of married women. Wives seem to be working as well as their husbands rather than instead of their husbands; in other words, there is no evidence that “house-husbands” are on the upswing.

Early Retirement for Men Is Gradually Becoming the Norm



- While there is no indication of changing labour market behaviour among prime age males, it is a different story for men aged 55-64. Early retirement has obviously become a more common occurrence, so much so that close to half of all men aged 60-64 were not working (nor looking for work) in May of 1991. Twenty years earlier, only one out of four men was in that position.
- Early retirement among males has had an impact on the age structure of the workforce. Interestingly, while all other indicators of demographic trends show an aging population (a growing proportion of the population over the age of 54), the workforce is moving in the opposite direction. There are now relatively fewer older men in the workforce than twenty years previously; 15 per cent of the male workforce was over the age of 54 in 1971 and that had fallen off to 12 per cent by 1991.

Despite the Aging Population The Male Labour Force is Getting Younger



Labour Force Participation Rates by Gender, British Columbia

Per cent of population (aged 15 and over) in the labour force

Age Group	Male				Female				Total			
	1971	1981	1986	1991	1971	1981	1986	1991	1971	1981	1986	1991
Total	77.5	78.5	75.8	75.6	40.4	52.9	55.0	59.7	59.0	65.5	65.2	67.5
15-19	53.5	61.7	55.3	58.9	42.1	58.1	53.4	58.0	48.0	59.9	54.4	58.5
20-24	89.0	93.1	91.3	90.4	61.1	77.7	80.8	82.9	75.2	85.3	86.0	86.7
25-34	94.5	95.7	94.7	94.5	44.6	66.6	73.1	79.1	70.2	81.2	83.8	86.7
35-44	95.3	96.1	94.9	94.7	46.2	67.2	73.4	80.4	71.9	81.9	84.3	87.5
45-54	92.3	92.7	91.9	92.1	46.9	59.2	65.5	73.9	69.2	76.5	79.0	83.2
55-59	87.0	83.0	80.6	77.7	40.5	42.5	45.9	51.2	63.4	61.9	63.4	64.7
60-64	72.7	64.3	55.3	51.5	29.9	27.6	26.8	28.4	51.0	44.7	40.2	39.9
65+	19.0	13.1	10.6	11.0	6.6	4.9	3.7	4.4	12.4	8.5	6.7	7.3

Source: 1991 Census of Canada