Gathering Labour Market Information on Canada's Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Workforce:

Data Collection Methods and Classification Systems

**Child Care
Human Resources
Sector Council**

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Prepared for the
Child Care Human Resources Sector Council
151 Slater St., Suite 714
Ottawa, ON K1P 5H3
Phone: 613–239–3100 or Toll-free: 1–866–411–6960
Email: info@ccsc–cssge.ca

Canada

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Introduction

About the Report

Without quality data on the early childhood education and care (ECEC) workforce, accurately defining and addressing labour market and human resource issues from a provincial/territorial or pan-Canadian perspective is challenging. Many in the sector are unaware of the different data collection methods for the ECEC workforce or do not understand their importance in addressing HR issues. The CCHRSC has produced *Gathering Labour Market Information on Canada's Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Workforce: Data Collection Methods and Classification Systems* – a report developed to inform sector stakeholders about the important tools and methods used to collect and organize quality and accurate data on the workforce.

This report summarizes a selection of data collection tools and classification systems used in Canada, and is designed to clearly describe their key functions, including purpose, types of data collected, who uses the information, why the data is important and the impact on the ECEC sector.

Fact sheets have been created on four different classification tools and data collection methods used in Canada, including:

Classification Systems

The NOC/NOC-S: The National Occupational Classification (NOC) and National Occupational Classification for Statistics (NOC-S) are classification systems designed to organize occupational information and data collected from various surveys.

The NAICS: The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is a classification systems designed to organize industry-related information and data which is collected from various surveys.

Data Collection Methods (Surveys)

The Census: The Census of Canada (the Census of Population and the Census of Agriculture) is a survey that collects information used to describe Canada's people, housing and agriculture operations.

The Labour Force Survey: The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a household survey of the Canadian population 15 years of age or older in Canada's provinces and territories.

The SEPH: The Survey of Employment Payrolls and Hours (SEPH) is designed to provide detailed information on the total number of paid employees, payrolls, and hours at detailed industrial, provincial and territorial levels.

About the Project

This report is part of the CCHRSC's *Labour Market Information Research Agenda (LMIRA)* Project. The LMIRA project was designed to examine how data on the workforce is collected, and how improvements to the quality and availability of future data and data collection methods can be made. Funded by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, the project focused on:

- Identifying current data sources (across provinces and territories), and selecting the best approach for more consistent labour market data.
- Developing a series of recommendations for consistent definitions and approaches for gathering labour market information, including data, analysis, tools and research questions.
- Initiating steps with government departments to ensure more consistent and accurate collection of labour market information, including the refinement of NOC/NOC-S classifications relevant to child care job categories.
- Developing a 3- to 4-year research and planning agenda for the ECEC sector that will make recommendations to improve the availability and quality of labour market information for specific labour market issues such as recruitment and retention.

Research Approach

The *Labour Market Research and Data Development Agenda and Action Plan* will guide the labour market information-related work of the CCHRSC over the coming years. Recommendations were developed with input from a 10-member panel of experts, including ECEC experts, labour market economists, ECEC data experts and government representatives from municipal, provincial/territorial and federal jurisdictions. The composition was designed to reflect a range of expertise from both inside and outside the ECEC sector. The goal of the panel was to make recommendations that would ultimately improve the quality and availability of data collected on the ECEC workforce.

For more information contact:

Child Care Human Resources Sector Council
151 Slater St., Suite 714
Ottawa, ON K1P 5H3
Phone: 613-239-3100 / 1-866-411-6960
Email: info@ccsc-cssge.ca

Note: The authors accept all responsibility for any errors or omissions. The views in this report reflect those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the CCHRSC.

National Occupational Classification (NOC) / National Occupational Classification For Statistics (NOC-S)

What is the National Occupational Classification?

The NOC is a classification system for managing occupational information in Canada. It provides a standardized language for describing the work performed by Canadians in the labour market by organizing over 30,000 job titles into 520 occupational group descriptions. The NOC classifies occupations with a four-digit code according to (1) skill type and (2) skill level.

(1) Skill Type

Skill type is based on the type of work performed, but it also reflects the field of training or experience that is normally required for entry into an occupation. The first digit of the NOC code identifies the skill type of an occupation. Canada's occupations are classified into 10 skill types.

Early Childhood Educators and Assistants will be used as an example throughout this report. The code for Early Childhood Educators and Assistants is NOC 4214, with the first digit of the code indicating that Early Childhood Educators and Assistants (ECE + Assistants) are part of the "Occupations in Social Science, Education, Government Service and Religion" category. Supervisors are included among ECE + Assistants, while directors are in the category: NOC 0314 – Managers in Social, Community and Correctional Services.

Skill Type	Occupation	Example Occupation
0	Management Occupations	NOC 0314 - Managers in Social, Community and Correctional Services e.g. ECE Directors
1	Business, Finance and Administrative Occupations	
2	Natural and Applied Sciences and Related Occupations	
3	Health Occupations	
4	Occupations in Social Science, Education, Government Service and Religion	**NOC 4214 - Early Childhood Educators and Assistants** NOC 4142 - Elementary School and kindergarten teachers
5	Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport	
6	Sales and Service Occupations	NOC 6474 - Babysitters, Nannies, Parent Helpers NOC 6472 Elementary and Secondary School Teacher Assistants
7	Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and Related Occupations	
8	Occupations Unique to Primary Industry	
9	Occupations Unique to Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities	

(2) Skill Level

Skill level – represented by the second digit of the NOC code – corresponds to the type and/or amount of training or education typically required to work in an occupation. In NOC 4214 – Early Childhood Educators and Assistants – the second digit (2) indicates that it is a 'skill level B' occupation. Skill level B occupations usually require two to three years of college education or apprenticeship training.

Skill Level (as a letter)	Skill Level (as a digit)	Nature of Training
A - Occupations usually require university education	1	University degree at the bachelor's master's or doctorate level
B - Occupations usually require college or apprenticeship training	2 or 3	Two to three years of post-secondary education at a community college, institute of technology or CEGEP (or) Two to five years of apprenticeship training e.g. NOC 4214 ECE + Assistants
C - Occupations usually require secondary school and/or occupation-specific training	4 or 5	One to four years of secondary school education (or) Up to two years of on-the-job training, specialized training courses or specific work experience
D - On-the-job training is usually provided for occupations	6	Short work demonstration or on-the-job training (or) No formal educational requirements

The first two digits combined (skill type and skill level) make up the major group, while the third and fourth digits provide a further breakdown into minor groups, and finally, occupational (unit) groups. The following chart explains the meaning of each digit using NOC 4214 – Early Childhood Educators and Assistants, as an example.

	Major Group = 42		Minor Group = 1	Unit Group = 4
	There are 26 major groups represented by the first two digits of the code		There are 140 minor groups represented by the first three digits	There are 520 unit groups represented by all four digits
	Digit 1 - Identifies **Skill Type**	Digit 2 - Identifies **Skill Level**	Digit 3 - Identifies the minor groups that make up the major group	Digit 4 - Identifies the occupational or unit group that make up the minor group
NOC 4214 - Early Childhood Educators & Assistants	4	4**2**	42**1**	421**4**
	The number 4 indicates occupations in social science, education, government service and religion	The number 2 (or 3) (also referred to as skill level B) indicates, occupations requiring college level education or apprenticeship training	The number 1 indicates the minor group such as Paralegals, Social Services Workers and Occupations in Education and Religion	The final digit, the number 4, identifies the specific occupational or unit group. NOC 4214 represents the Early Childhood Educators and Assistants occupation

In many cases, the NOC unit group has subgroup descriptions. While the occupations are distinct enough to list separately, data are provided only for the unit group. The Unit Group, NOC 4214 – ECEs and Assistants, is further broken down into two sub-groups:

- NOC 4214.1 Early Childhood Educators, and
- NOC 4214.2 Early Childhood Educator Assistants

What is the difference between NOC and NOC-S?

Canada currently has two versions of National Occupational Classification:

1. National Occupational Classification (NOC) and
2. National Occupational Classification for Statistics (NOC-S)

The Early Childhood Educator and Assistants occupation is classified as 4214 in the NOC and E217 in the NOC-S.

The NOC was developed and is maintained by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), whereas NOC-S is maintained by Statistics Canada. HRSDC and Statistics Canada are in the process of amalgamating the NOC and NOC-S systems.

The NOC-S is a version of the NOC and both are designed to classify occupational information. The classification structure is the same for both the NOC-S and the NOC; however, the two classifications differ in the "aggregation structure of the classification", or how the occupations are grouped. Both NOC-S and NOC have 520 unit groups, 140 minor groups and 10 broad categories in common. However, there are 47 major groups in the NOC–S 2006 and 26 major groups in the NOC 2006.

Where does the information classified by the NOC and NOC-S come from?

The NOC (NOC-S) is a framework that organizes occupational information. Occupational information (data) collected from the Census, Labour Force Survey, and other surveys is organized within the NOC/NOC-S framework. Occupations are grouped primarily in terms of the kind of work usually performed, which is determined by the tasks, duties and responsibilities of the occupation.

What's the difference between an occupation and a job?

An *occupation* is a collection of similar jobs grouped under a common title for classification purposes. A *job* includes all the specific tasks carried out by a particular worker to complete her/his duties.

Who uses the information from the NOC and NOC-S?

The information from the NOC and NOC-S provides statisticians, economists, decision makers, career counsellors, employers and job seekers with a standardized way of describing and understanding the nature of work in the Canadian economy. It also allows them to:

- Compile, analyze and communicate information about occupations.
- Understand the jobs found throughout Canada's labour market and economy.

The NOC is used by HRSDC to organize detailed information about education, jobs and careers in Canada. For example, HRSDC's *Job Futures* website provides information about educational requirements and employment prospects for different occupations. HRSDC's *Career Handbook* provides global ratings assigned to occupations to further define skills, worker characteristics and other indicators related to occupations that are important for career exploration and informed career decision-making.

What are the strengths and limitations of the NOC and NOC-S?

By providing a standard way of organizing labour market information, the NOC/NOC-S helps Canadians to be better informed about Canada's occupational landscape. The limitations of the NOC (NOC-S) include the misalignment between Canada's classification system and other international systems, as well as the reliability of the coding. The Census is self-reported, which means that some people could classify themselves as having a particular occupation when they actually belong to another occupational group. An example of a coding error within the ECEC context would be if an early childhood educator completing the Census identified themselves as a "babysitter". According to the NOC, they should actually be classified as an "Early Childhood Educator". In this example, the Early Childhood Educator would be counted and classified

in the incorrect group. Another example is a centre supervisor mistakenly identifying themselves as a centre director. It is important to avoid such misclassification, as it is accurate information that enables end-users of data to understand pressing labour market issues and make informed decisions.

How often are the NOC and NOC-S categories updated?

Both the NOC and the NOC-S are reviewed and updated on a five-year Census cycle. Currently, they are being reviewed for revision for the 2011 Census. Statistics Canada and HRSDC work together to keep both classifications current and comprehensive.

Is the information publicly available? Who can access the content of the NOC and NOC-S? Is there a cost?

The classification used by Statistics Canada is available on the web at: www.statcan.gc.ca/concepts/occupation-profession-eng.htm

Where can I get more information on NOC and NOC-S?

For information on the NOC, contact HRSDC by visiting: www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/noc/english/noc/2006/ContactUs.aspx

For more information on the NOC-S, contact Statistics Canada, by visiting: www.statcan.gc.ca/subjects-sujets/standard-norme/soc-cnp/2001/noc2001-cnp2001-menu-eng.htm

Additional Sources:

To learn more about NOC 4214, visit: www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/noc/english/ch/2001/QuickSearchResult.aspx?v=4214

For the NOC matrix, visit: www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/noc/english/noc/2006/pdf/Matrix.pdf

For the Job Futures website, visit: www.jobfutures.ca/en/home.shtml

The Career Handbook, visit: www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/noc/english/ch/2001/welcome.aspx

To test your NOC knowledge, visit: www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/noc/english/noc/2006/QuizChallengeLevel.aspx

North American Industry Classification Systems (NAICS)

What is the NAICS?

Similar to the NOC system, NAICS is a framework which organizes Canada's industries. Currently, NAICS consists of 20 sectors, 102 subsectors, 324 industry groups, 718 industries and 928 national industries. The industry in which the individual is employed is determined by the kind of economic activity of the establishment. Within the early childhood education and care context, and example of an "establishment" could be a child care centre or family home. Examples of "establishments" for other occupations might be factories, mines, stores or government agencies.

Industries classified within the NAICS framework relevant to ECEC include:

- Child Care Services, which mainly employs ECEs + Assistants
- Private Households which mainly employs Babysitters, Nannies and Parents Helpers
- Elementary and Secondary Schools, which mainly employs Kindergarten Teachers, Teaching Assistants and ECEs + Assistants

Difference between NAICS and NOC/NOC-S?

It is important to note the difference between an industry classification (NAICS) and an occupational classification (NOC/NOC-S). An establishment can have employees with different occupations, and likewise, employees working in a certain occupation can work in different industries. For example, a child care centre (the "establishment") may have a variety of occupations including ECE+ Assistants, Janitors, Cooks, etc. Alternatively, those working as Janitors, Cooks or ECE + Assistants could work in establishments other than child care centres, that are categorized in a different industry, such as a school, for example.

Where can I find more information about the NAICS?

www.statcan.gc.ca/subjects-sujets/standard-norme/naics-scian/2002/naics-scian02l-eng.htm

The Census

What is the Census?

The Census of Canada (the Census of Population and the Census of Agriculture) is a national survey that collects information used to describe Canada's people, housing and agricultural operations. Information from the Census provides a statistical portrait of Canada and its people. Data collected from the Census is classified in both the NOC/NOC-S and NAICS classification systems.

What is the purpose of the Census?

The Census tells us about the social, economic and demographic situation of Canadians living in various regions, including those living abroad. A vast majority of all countries regularly carry out a Census to collect important information about the population, such as age, sex and occupation.

What does the Census tell us about the ECEC sector?

The Census provides data on the percentage of the population working in ECEC–related occupations, and can be broken down by province, territory, sub–provincial areas, or for Canada as a whole. These data can be compared with other categories to more precisely identify people working in the ECEC sector.

Those who work in the ECEC sector are primarily classified as working at a usual place of work or at home, which are thought to represent centre-based and home-based child care respectively. Early Childhood Educators and Assistants (NOC 4214) primarily work in the Child Care Services industry, but also in elementary and secondary schools. And Babysitters, Nannies and Parents' Helpers (NOC 6474)[1] mainly work in the Private Households industry, but also in Child Care Services. The broader ECEC workforce includes teaching assistants and kindergarten teachers. Census data tells us that between 2001 and 2006, the ECEs and Assistants occupation grew by 24.9%, whereas the number of people working as Babysitters, Nannies and Parents' Helpers decreased by 24.8%.

Did you know?

There are an estimated 322,425 people working in the early childhood education and care workforce. Data collected from the 2006 Census survey classified within the NOC/NOC-S framework tells us there are:

- 170,340 early childhood educators and assistants (100% of NOC 4214)
- 69,785 babysitters, nannies and parent helpers (100% of NOC 6474)
- 49,600 teaching assistants who work with children under the age of 12 (NOC 6472)
- 32,700 kindergarten teachers or an estimated one eighth of all elementary and kindergarten teachers (NOC 4142)

Census data can also be broken down by socio–demographic factors (e.g., age, sex and level of education). For example, Census data can be used to estimate the number of people who are ECEs and Assistants working in Halifax with an ECEC diploma.

The Census provides additional benefits to the ECEC sector, including providing support in service planning and development as well as overall decision-making. For example, information from the Census can assist in identifying characteristics of Canadian children, such as the number of children, their ages and where they live. This information helps municipal planners estimate the number of child care spaces required in a particular city.

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[1]   See www.hrsdc.gc.ca for more details.

What type of data does the Census collect?

Census data are available for every province and territory, and sub-provincial areas such as Census Metropolitan Areas[2] (CMAs). The data provides very detailed and reliable information on many social and economic aspects of Canada and its people, including:

- employment
- labour force
- industry
- occupation
- education
- income
- age
- sex
- migration status
- place of work

Who administers the Census? How often is the Census conducted?

The Census is conducted by Statistics Canada once every five years. The last Census was taken in 2006, and the next one will be collected in 2011, followed by 2016, 2021, and so on.

Who completes the Census survey?

The Census survey counts every person (including children) living in Canada, as well as Canadians who are abroad – either on a military base, attached to a diplomatic mission, at sea or in port aboard Canadian-registered merchant vessels.

There are two Census surveys: the short-form questionnaire and the long-form questionnaire. All households (100%) are surveyed. More specifically:

- 80% of households complete a short-form questionnaire that collects basic information about age, sex, marital status and language of the members of the household.
- 20% of households complete a long-form questionnaire, which collects additional information about income, employment, education, housing, ethnic background and other relevant information.

Typically, who uses information from the Census?

Census information is beneficial to many, including: all levels of government, business, industry, media, academia and independent organizations.

Social, economic and demographic information collected from the Census is essential for making decisions regarding the many services each stakeholder provides to the public. For example, when developing plans and policies, the **federal government** calculates the transfer of federal money to various programs in the provinces and territories based on Census population data. **School boards and communities** use Census data on the number of children in certain age groups when planning new schools. **Municipal planners** use Census data on households and families to estimate current and future needs for housing, hospitals and child care centres.

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[2]   A Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) consists of one or more adjacent municipalities situated around an urban core, where the urban core must have a population of 100,000.

What are the strengths and limitations of the Census?

The Census is the only source of detailed data that can provide information on several attributes of the workforce or general population simultaneously. However, it has drawbacks. The Census is only collected every five years, so does not provide up-to-date information. In addition, it can take several years for the data from the long-form questionnaire to be made available. For example, the detailed labour force and employment data from the 2006 Census was not released until 2008.

As well, the Census is self-reported, which means that some people could list themselves as having a particular occupation even though they technically belong to another occupation. For example, within the ECEC context, if an early childhood educator working in a child care centre identified herself or himself as a babysitter when completing the Census survey, the early childhood educator would most likely be included in the incorrect NOC code. This would be an example of a coding error.

Who can access information collected through the Census?

Information collected from the Census is available to the public, free of charge, on the Statistics Canada website: www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/rt-td/index-eng.cfm. For more specific Census data at the sub-provincial areas, or for smaller geographic areas such as Census Metropolitan Areas, health regions, or school districts, data can be purchased.

Where can I find more information?

Publicly released information from the 2006 Census is available. A list of the 2006 Census information at the national, provincial and metropolitan area level can be accessed at no cost by visiting the main Statistics Canada 2006 Census highlight pages: www12.statcan.ca/Census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/hlt/index-eng.cfm. Statistics Canada also makes available custom services that provide products and services tailored to more detailed and complex requests on a cost-recovery basis. Cost estimates vary based on client needs and on the complexity of the request. For more information about 2006 Census custom services, visit: www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/serv/index-eng.cfm.

The Labour Force Survey

What is the Labour Force Survey?

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) measures how well the Canadian economy is performing by estimating employment and unemployment rates. Apart from people in the armed forces and people living on reserves, the Labour Force Survey is targeted to Canadians over the age of 15 residing in Canada's provinces and territories. Data collected from the LFS is classified within both the NOC/NOC-S and NAICS systems.

What is the purpose of the LFS?

The purpose of the LFS is to provide explanatory data on the working-age population, divided into three distinct categories:

- **Employed**
  Employment estimates include detailed break-downs by demographic characteristics, industry and occupation, job tenure,[3] and usual and actual hours worked.

- **Unemployed**
  Unemployment estimates are produced by demographic group, duration of unemployment and activity before looking for work. To be officially unemployed one must be able, willing and actively looking for work.

- **Not in the labour force**
  Those who are "not in the labour force" are neither employed nor officially unemployed. This includes students, homemakers, retired workers, seasonal workers in an "off-season" and people who are unable to work due to long-term illness or disability. Information on reasons for leaving the last job is also available for people who are currently not in the labour force.

What does the LFS tell us about the Early Childhood Sector?

The LFS provides useful information for the ECEC sector that can assist in determining the national employment and unemployment rates for occupations in the sector.

Did you Know?

The Canadian Labour Force Survey was developed following World War II to satisfy the need for reliable and timely data on the labour market. Information was urgently needed on the massive labour market changes involved in the transition from a war-time to peace-time economy.

What type of data does the LFS collect?

The LFS collects information on total employment, including those who are self-employed, employed (full-time and part-time), unemployed and not part of the labour force. In addition to employment information, the LFS also contains information on the demographic characteristics of the working-age population, including age, sex, marital status, educational attainment and family characteristics. The LFS provides detailed national and provincial estimates. More general labour market information is provided by CMAs, Economic Regions,[4] Employment Insurance Regions and the territories.

How often is the LFS conducted?

The LFS is conducted monthly by Statistics Canada. The results are typically released at the end of the first week of the month in which the survey was conducted.

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[3]   Tenure is the number of months or years a person has worked for their current or most recent employer.

[4]   An Economic Region is a grouping of Census divisions designed for analysis of regional economic activity.

Who completes the LFS survey?

The LFS survey is completed by approximately 54,000 households across Canada's provinces and territories each month. A subset of the data file containing most demographic and labour-related information is available to the public on a yearly basis. For additional documentation, please visit the Statistics Canada website: www.statcan.gc.ca/dli-ild/data-donnees/ftp/lfs-epa/lfs-epa1976-xxxx-eng.htm.

Typically, who uses the information from the LFS?

The LFS is one of the most important measures of the overall performance of the Canadian economy. Data collected from the LFS is considered to be the backbone of the household survey program, which is designed to inform all levels of government about Canada's labour market.

The data are also used by labour market analysts, economists, consultants, planners, forecasters, academics and decision makers in both the private and public sector. For example, data from the LFS is used by all levels of government to evaluate and plan government employment programs across Canada. Regional unemployment rates are used by the federal government to determine eligibility, level and duration of employment insurance (EI) benefits for unemployed individuals.

Who can access information collected through the LFS? Is there a cost associated?

Data from the LFS are released monthly in *The Daily* (Statistics Canada's official release bulletin and first line of communication with the media and the public) approximately 10 working days after the survey is completed. If additional information is required, Statistics Canada can provide a custom tabulation on a cost-recovery basis in order to meet clients' specific needs and particular interests. A public use data file is also made available for clients wishing to do their own data analyses.

What are the strengths and limitations of the survey?

The LFS is the most up-to-date survey. It is the only source of monthly estimates of total employment, including the self-employed, those employed full- and part-time, and those who are unemployed. The LFS has monthly estimates of the ECE + Assistants workforce, for example. In addition, the LFS is a major source of information on the personal characteristics of the working-age population, including age, sex, marital status, educational attainment and family characteristics.

The limitation of the LFS is its sample size (54,000 households), which is considerably smaller than the Census. This affects the quality and availability of the data. As a result, it is difficult to obtain consistent information for smaller geographic areas, such as some provinces or regions.

Where can I find more information?

For more information about the Labour Force Survey or to order data, please visit the Statistics Canada website, www.statcan.gc.ca, or email labour@statcan.gc.ca.

The Survey of Employment, Payroll and Hours (SEPH)

What is the SEPH?

The SEPH is a Statistics Canada survey designed to identify levels and trends related to employment, earnings and hours worked at detailed industrial, provincial and territorial levels. The SEPH is an employer based survey, which means that self-employed lone operators are excluded. Data collected from the SEPH is classified within the NAICS framework, but not the NOC/NOC-S framework.

What is the purpose of the SEPH?

Information gathered from the SEPH paints a frequent and accurate picture of Canada's employment, earnings, payroll and hours. This information is vital for business-es and governments in planning and decision-making.

Within the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) context, the SEPH reflects employment, weekly and hourly earnings and hours worked for employees in centre-based care.

Who provides information for the SEPH?

The Survey of Employment Earnings and Hours is produced from the combination of the payroll deductions administrative data received by Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and the results from the Business Payroll Survey (BPS). The target population is all employers in Canada, except those primarily involved in agriculture, fishing and trapping, private household services, religious organizations and military personnel of defence services.

Within the ECEC context, all employers must submit monthly payroll information to CRA about gross monthly payroll and the number of employees. For the BPS, an employer selected to be part of the sample would be responsible for completing the monthly survey.

What type of data does the SEPH collect?

SEPH data are primarily collected in two ways: directly from survey respondents and extracted from administrative files.

Administrative data are extracted from CRA's *Payroll Deductions* files. This administrative data provides information on total gross monthly payrolls and the total number of employees.

Each month, 11,000 survey respondents (employers) identified from the Canada Revenue Agency's (CRA) Business Register (i.e., they have a business number and one or more active payroll deduction accounts) complete what's called the *Business Payroll Survey* (BPS). Information from the BPS is used to estimate the number of paid hours and the allocation of hours, earnings and employment by categories of employees—salaried and paid by the hour.

Typically, who uses information from the SEPH?

SEPH data are used by the private sector to determine wage rates, and by the Canada Revenue Agency to determine maximum pensionable earn-ings and retirement savings plan contribution limits. ECEC employers might find SEPH information beneficial when developing pay scales or when reviewing or determining wage rates for their employees.

What are the strengths and limitations of the SEPH?

Compared to other surveys, data collected from the SEPH provides some of the most detailed information on employees working for employers in the ECEC sector. The main drawbacks of the SEPH are that the data are for the whole ECEC sector and are not specific to any particular occupation in the sector. Furthermore, there are data gaps for smaller jurisdic-tions, and the self-employed are not represented. Within the ECEC context, this means that employers and employees from rural or remote areas, and self-employed family child care providers are not reflected in the survey results. However, they are captured in other national surveys, such as the Census.

How often is SEPH conducted?

SEPH data are collected on a monthly basis. Toward the end of each month, data collected two months previously is released. For example, toward the end of May, preliminary data would be released for March. SEPH data are subject to additional revisions as more information becomes available, and therefore the estimated level of employment can change for a particular reference month. For example, the SEPH data for 2008 were not finalized until mid-2009.

Is the information collected through the SEPH publicly available?

Information about the SEPH can be obtained (at a cost) from Statistics Canada: http://cansim2.statcan.gc.ca/cgi-win/cnsmcgi.exe?LANG=e&ResultTemplate=CII&CORCMD=GETEXT&CORTYP=1&COR-RELTYP=4&CORID=2612. (new link)

Where can I find more information?

For more information on the SEPH, please visit the Statistics Canada website: www.statcan.gc.ca or email labour@statcan.gc.ca.

Conclusion

In order to understand and address key labour market and human resource issues facing the ECEC sector, such as turnover and recruitment and retention, it is important to have current, first-hand data and labour market information on the workforce. Employers, decision-makers and planners working in the sector can use the data to make informed decisions related to short- and long-term planning.

The Census, Labour Force Survey, Survey of Employment, Payroll and Hours and the structure within which data are organized (the National Occupational Classification, the National Occupation Classification for Statistics and North American Industry Classification System) are just a few of the many tools and systems in place designed to collect data and labour market information on Canada's workforce. In spite of the ECEC-specific data provided by each survey, consistent and accurate information on the sector overall is relatively scarce. There is no regularly collected, pan-Canadian ECEC survey, and Census data are collected on a five-year cycle. While there are data gaps, combining and analyzing data and information from surveys and classification systems can be done to create a picture of Canada's workforce, and specifically the ECEC sector. More statistical information on Canada's ECEC sector can be found in the CCHRSC's *Portrait of Canada's Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce (2009)*. The report is available in print and on the CCHRSC's website.

For more information or to order print versions of this document, contact the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council (CCHRSC):

 www.ccsc-cssge.ca

 info@ccsc-cssge.ca

 1-866-411-6960 (Toll-Free)

 613-239-3100