

Report on Business

## Wage gap grows rapidly after students' graduation, study finds

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Men are paid more than women in Canada as soon as they graduate from college or university and see their earnings increase at a faster rate over time, a new study shows.

The study found that the wage gap between men and women was small in the first year after graduation and grew significantly eight years after graduation, with men making as much as 60 per cent more than their female counterparts in some fields.

The disparity was seen across most fields, with men seeing the most gains in science, agriculture, business and engineering, according to the study by the Education Policy Research Initiative, a national research group run out of the [University of Ottawa](#).

Men who graduated from college earned \$5,500 more than women in their first year after graduation. Eight years after completing school, male college grads made \$23,600 more than their female counterparts.

The biggest gap for college graduates was in the fields of science, agriculture and "personal, protective and transportation," with men earning 60 per cent more than women. The smallest gap was in fine arts, with a 20 per cent difference between the genders.

At the university level, men who completed a bachelor's degree earned \$2,800 more than women one year after graduation and \$27,300 eight years after graduation.

The wage gap was the widest for graduates of social sciences, business, science, agriculture and engineering. It was the smallest for graduates with humanities and fine arts degrees.

The study found that in the fields of health and humanities, women started with higher earnings than men. But "men subsequently caught up and surpassed women."

The study, which was based on tax data, did not take into account factors such as the differences within fields of learning as well as the impact of child-raising, marriage and the accumulation of work experience.

The data did show that over all graduates saw a steady increase in earnings over an eight-year period. The 2005 grads with a bachelor's degree earned an average of \$45,200 in their first year and \$74,900 eight years later. The 2005 college grads earned an average of \$33,900 in the first year after graduation and \$54,000 eight years after graduation.

The study also showed that people who graduated with a degree in social sciences or humanities found success in the workplace.

The study tracked students who graduated in 2005 through 2012 from 14 colleges and universities in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and Atlantic Canada.

Education Policy Research Initiative worked with Statistics Canada to link students to income tax data. The study

excluded those who pursued further education on top of their college diploma or bachelor's degree.

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