Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) on Contingent Work

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A Rise in Precarious Employment

The nature of employment is changing in Canada. More people have temporary or contract jobs, work part-time or are self-employed, but access to comprehensive social and labour protections still tends to be tied to the full-time permanent job. This signals the rise of “precarious employment” – work involving limited social benefits and statutory entitlements, job insecurity, low job tenure, low wages, and high risks of ill-health.

A Better Shared Understanding

The CURA on Contingent Work is examining the growth of precarious employment in order to foster new statistical, legal, political and economic understandings of this phenomenon. It brings together researchers from many institutions, and several public and non-profit sector organizations. This dynamic alliance is examining the shape, size, and location of precarious employment in Canada; work organization and health; labour laws, legislation and policy; and improving working conditions and association building. A sound investment in Canada’s future.

The Cost of Not Acting

Precarious employment is likely to increase. Without regulatory intervention and a creative response, the standard full-time employment relationship will remain the model upon which labour laws, legislation and policies are based. Fewer workers will have access to employment protection and compensation, and stable jobs with decent wages, benefits and working conditions. Consequences are far-reaching, especially for women, people of colour, immigrants, people with disabilities, and other equity-seeking groups.

Real-World Solutions to Real-World Challenges

Real-world challenges demand different angles, different approaches, and different attitudes. Interdisciplinary and collaborative, York University research delivers relevant insights and meaningful solutions that address today’s complex social issues.