

The Precarity Penalty

The impact of employment
precarity on individuals,
households and communities
—and what to do about it

Library Sector Conference 2016



POVERTY AND
EMPLOYMENT PRECARITY
IN SOUTHERN ONTARIO



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POVERTY AND
EMPLOYMENT PRECARITY
IN SOUTHERN ONTARIO

“We’re just giving you jobs or work as it comes. . . . You don’t have benefits. . . . If you get assigned work, great; if you don’t, you don’t get any. . . . That was stressful because you could get a month without work and then suddenly work a long weekend, twelve hour shifts. . . . You get all this money, but you have to make it last because who knows when they’re going to call you again.”

-Rafael



It's More than Poverty

Employment Precarity
and Household Well-being



The Precarity Penalty

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precarity on individuals,
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—and what to do about it



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The Study

- Random survey of 4,193 individuals by Leger Marketing
- Covers Hamilton and the GTA
- 28 interviews with individuals in precarious employment

How to measure precarious employment?

- Form of the employment relationship
 - Is it temp agency work, short-term, casual, own account self-employed?
- Characteristics of the employment relationship
 - Employment Precarity Index

Trends in Precarious Employment: 1976-2014

Table 1: Percentage of workers in precarious employment (total employed, all classes of workers, age 15+)⁴⁴

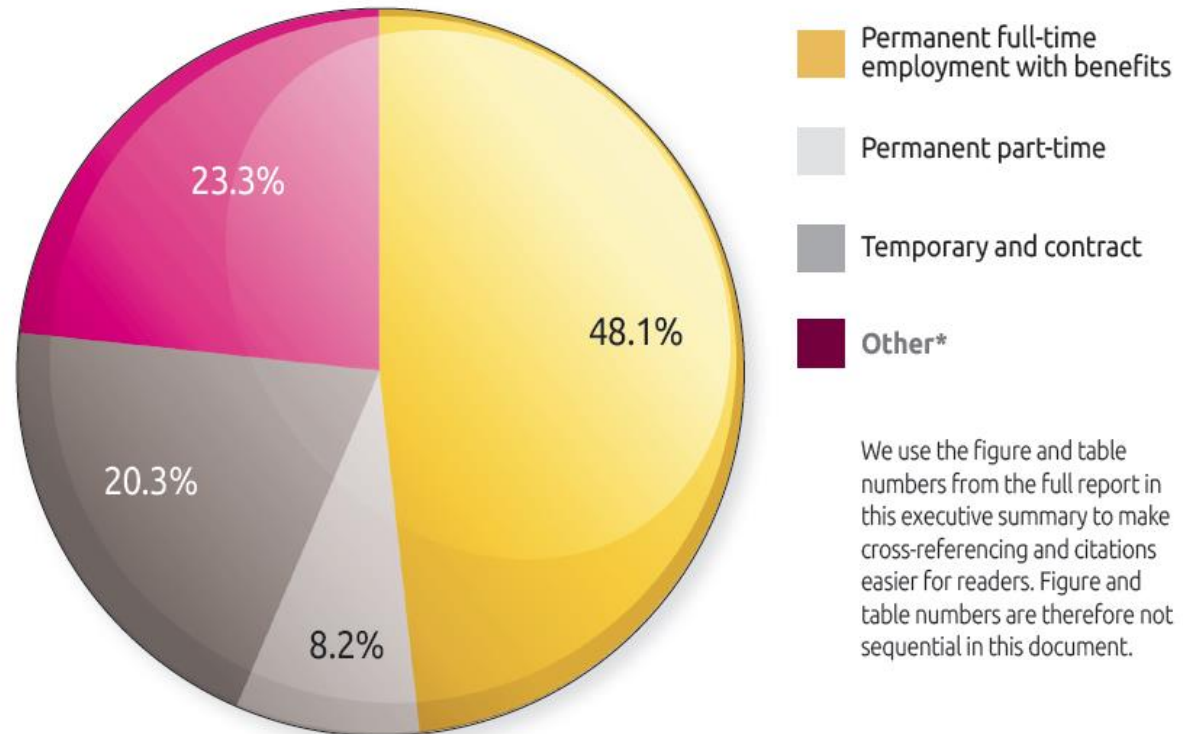
	1976	1989	1997	2007	2011	2014
Temporary employment	–	6.5*	9.4	11.0	11.6	11.3
Self-employed no employees	6.3	7.2	10.7	10.3	10.5	10.5
Total precarious employed	–	13.7	20.1	21.3	22.1	21.8

* 1989 temporary employment Vosko et.al. 2009 p. 30 (ages 15-64 only).

Source:
Statistics Canada tables
282-0080; 282-0012.

Fewer workers are in permanent full-time employment in the 2014 sample.

Figure 1: Employment categories in the GTHA, 2014(%)



* In the "Other" category, 70% are in full-time employment but either receive no benefits beyond a wage or are unable to confirm they would be with their current employer for at least 12 months. 15% are self-employed with employees and 14% are in full-time employment but their hours varied from week to week and in some cases could be less than 30 hours.

Source: PEPSO survey 2014. This figure is a revised version of Figure 1 in the full report.

We use the figure and table numbers from the full report in this executive summary to make cross-referencing and citations easier for readers. Figure and table numbers are therefore not sequential in this document.

The Employment Precarity Index

What is included?

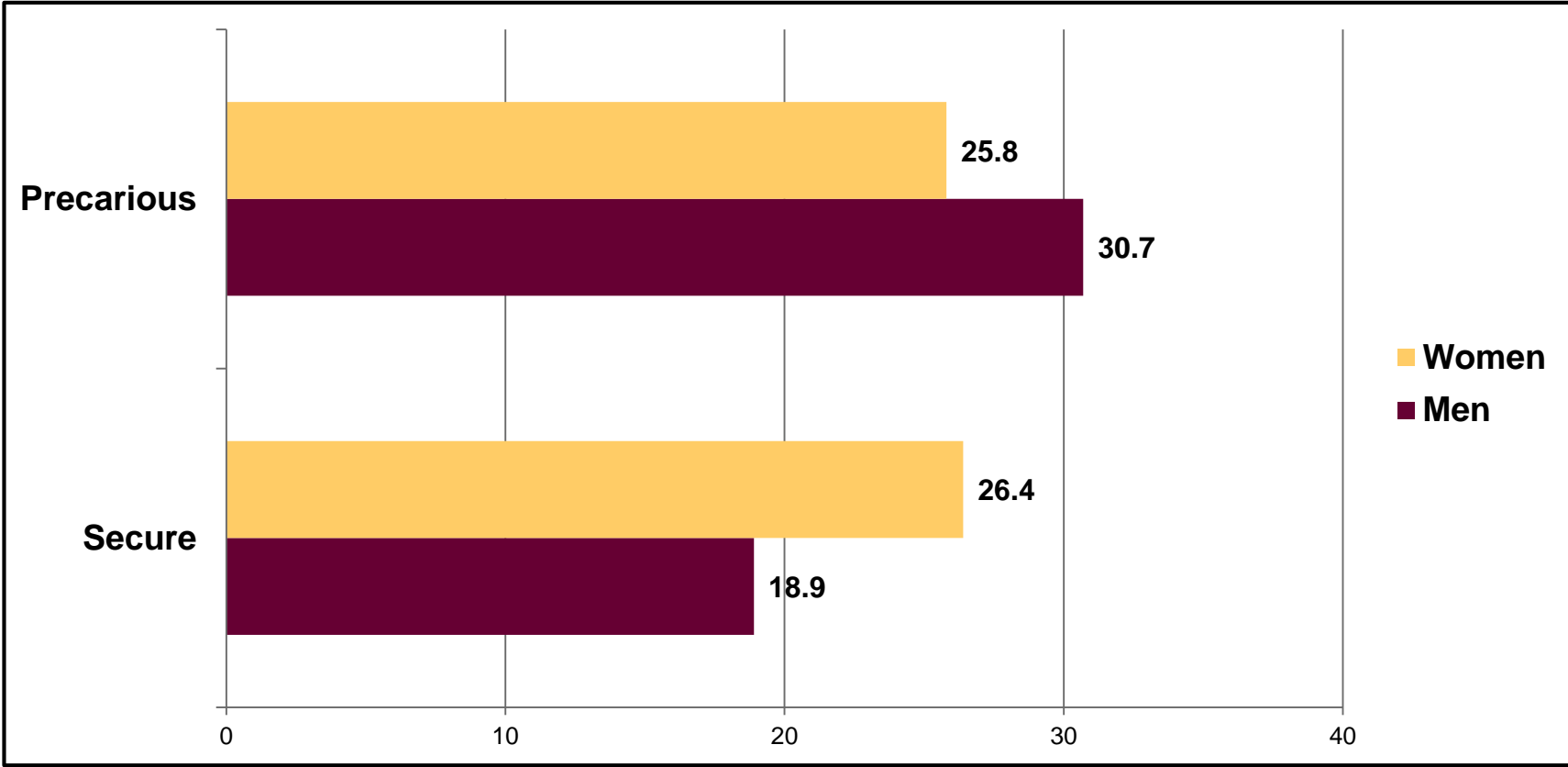
- ⦿ Not paid if miss work
- ⦿ Not in standard employment relationship
- ⦿ Weekly income not stable
- ⦿ Hours worked not stable
- ⦿ Work on-call
- ⦿ Don't know work schedule in advance
- ⦿ Paid in cash
- ⦿ Temporary employment
- ⦿ No benefits
- ⦿ Weak voice at work

What is not included?

- ⦿ Income

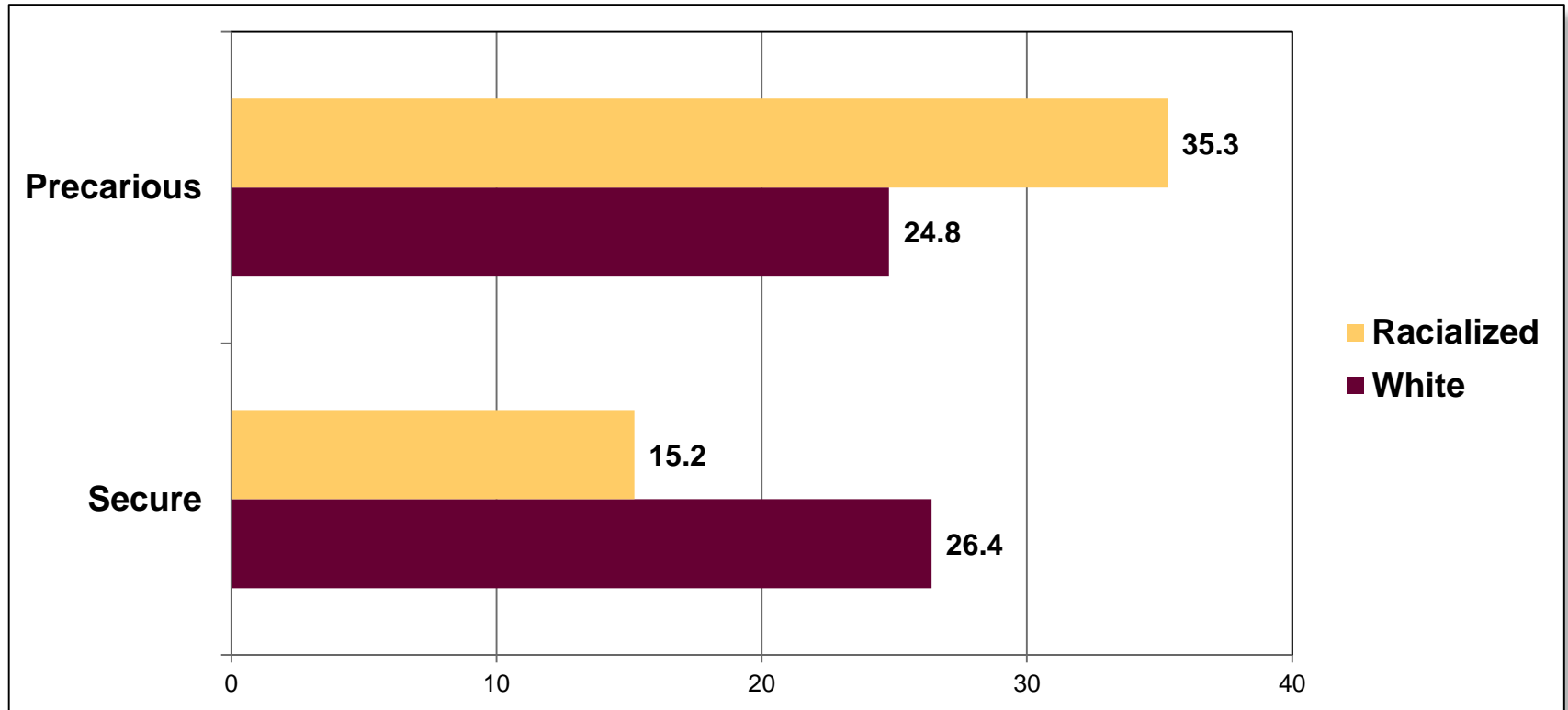
Precarious employment does not affect only women

Figure 6a: Precarious and Secure employment by sex: 2014



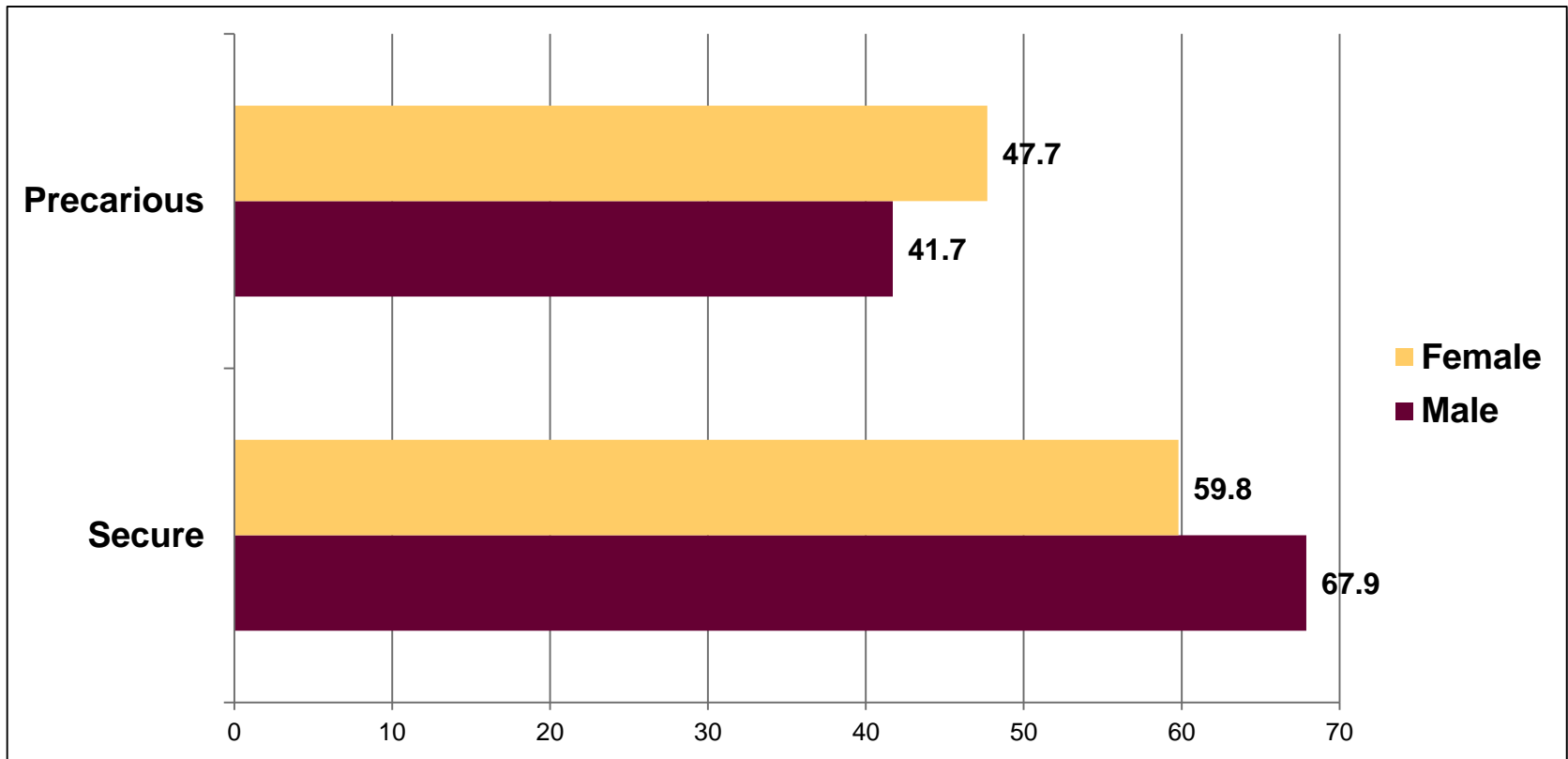
Racialized workers are more likely to be in precarious employment

Figure 7a: Precarious and Secure employment by race: 2014



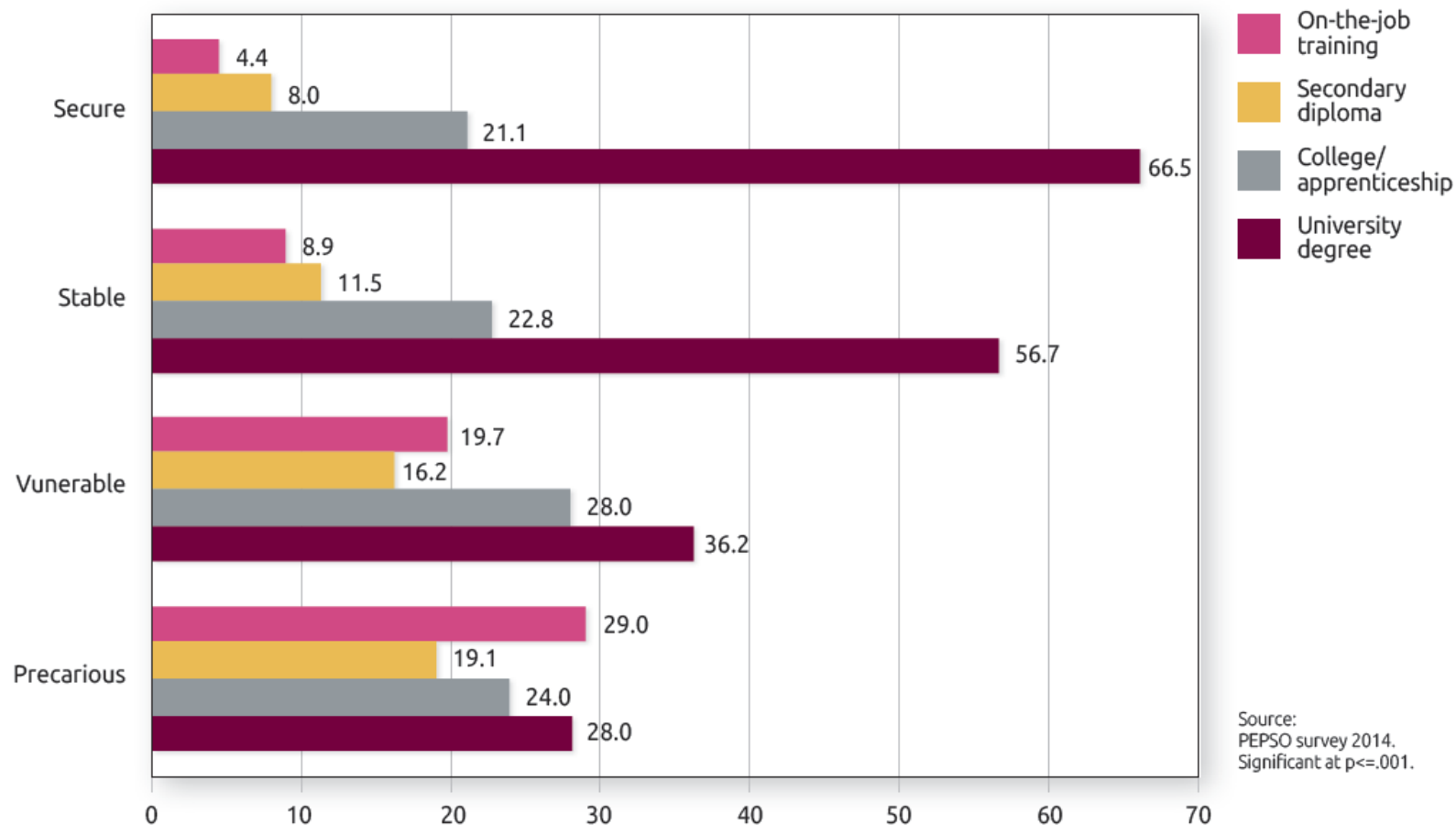
Many workers in precarious employment have a university degree

Figure 8a: Precarious and Secure employment with university degree by sex: 2014



Many workers in precarious employment do jobs that require a university education

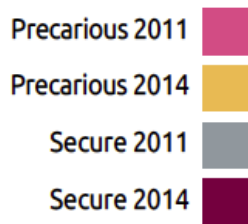
Figure 20: Education needed for job by employment security (% of each employment category)



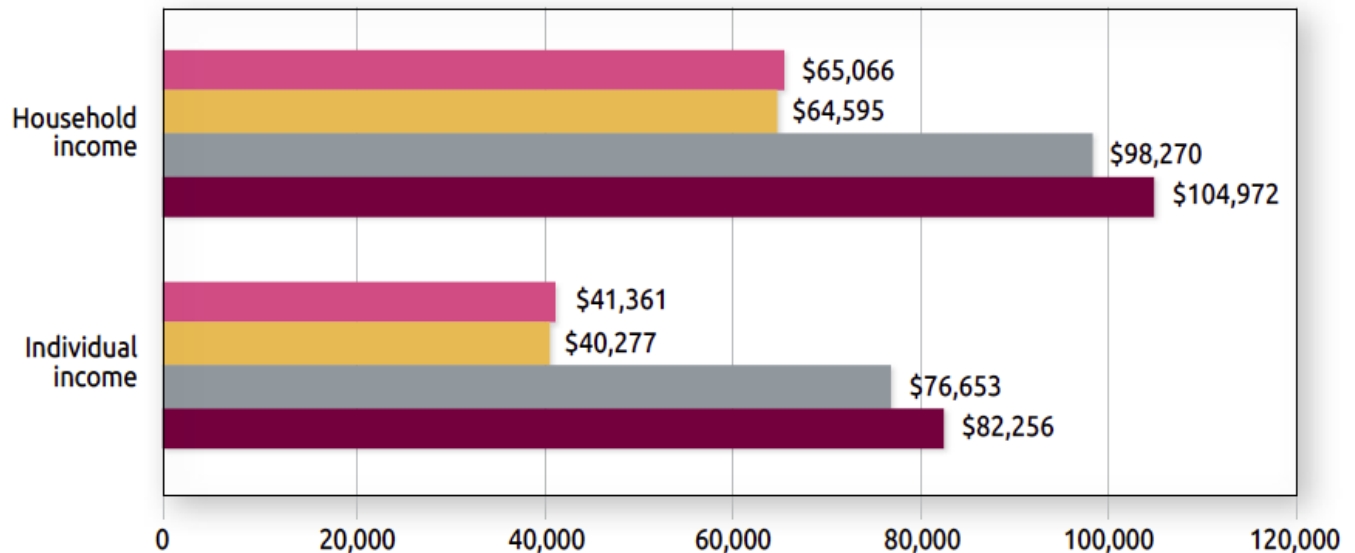
Source:
PEPSO survey 2014.
Significant at $p \leq .001$.

They earn less income and live in households with less income.

Figure 14: Average individual and household income by employment security: 2011–2014 GTHA (\$)

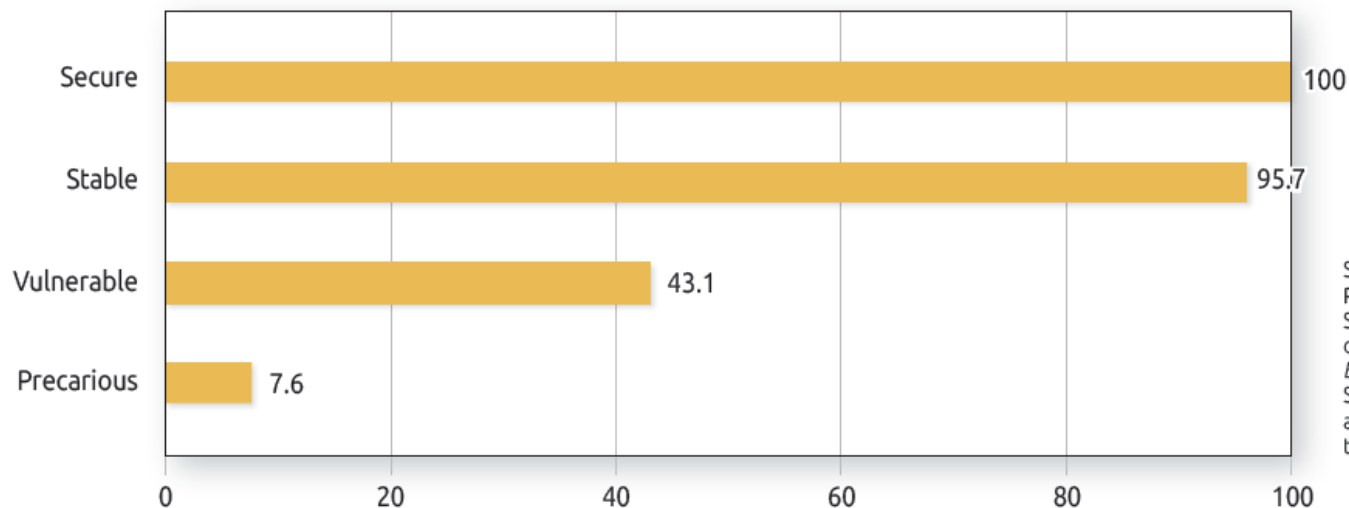


Source: PEP SO survey 2011 and 2014. 2014-11 change in *Secure* individual and household income significant at $p < .001$. Change in *Precarious* income not significant.



Workers in precarious employment do not receive supplemental health benefits.

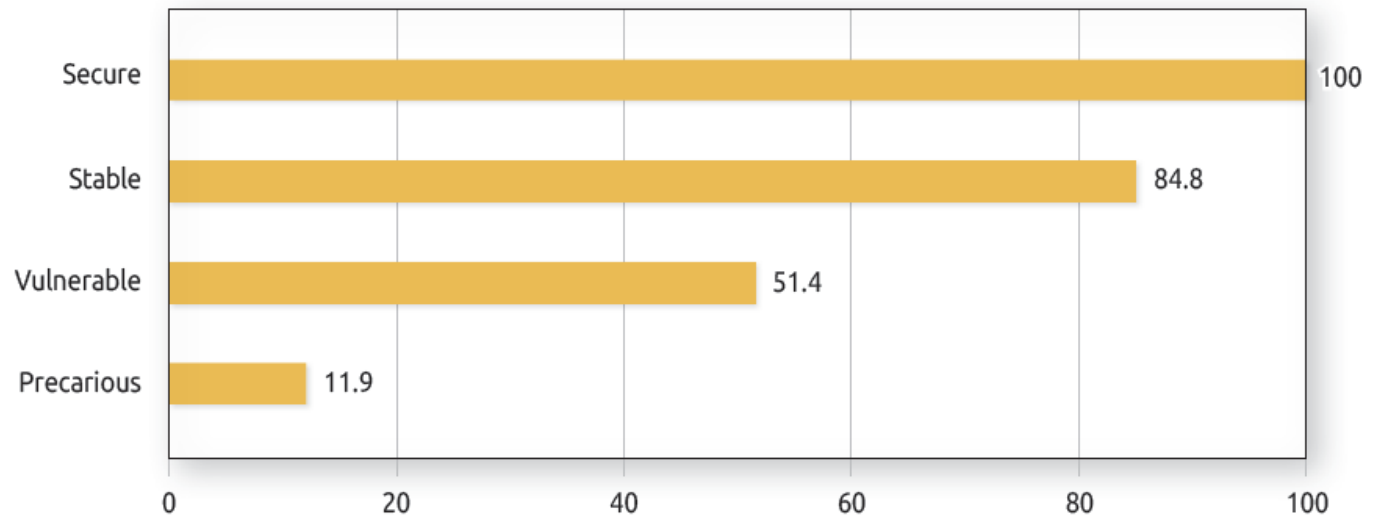
Figure 33: Employer funds drug, vision and/or dental benefits by employment security (%)



Source: PEP SO survey 2014. Significant at $p < .001$. This question is included in the *Employment Precarity Index*. Survey respondents were asked if they have any of these benefits.

Workers in precarious employment do not get paid if they miss work.

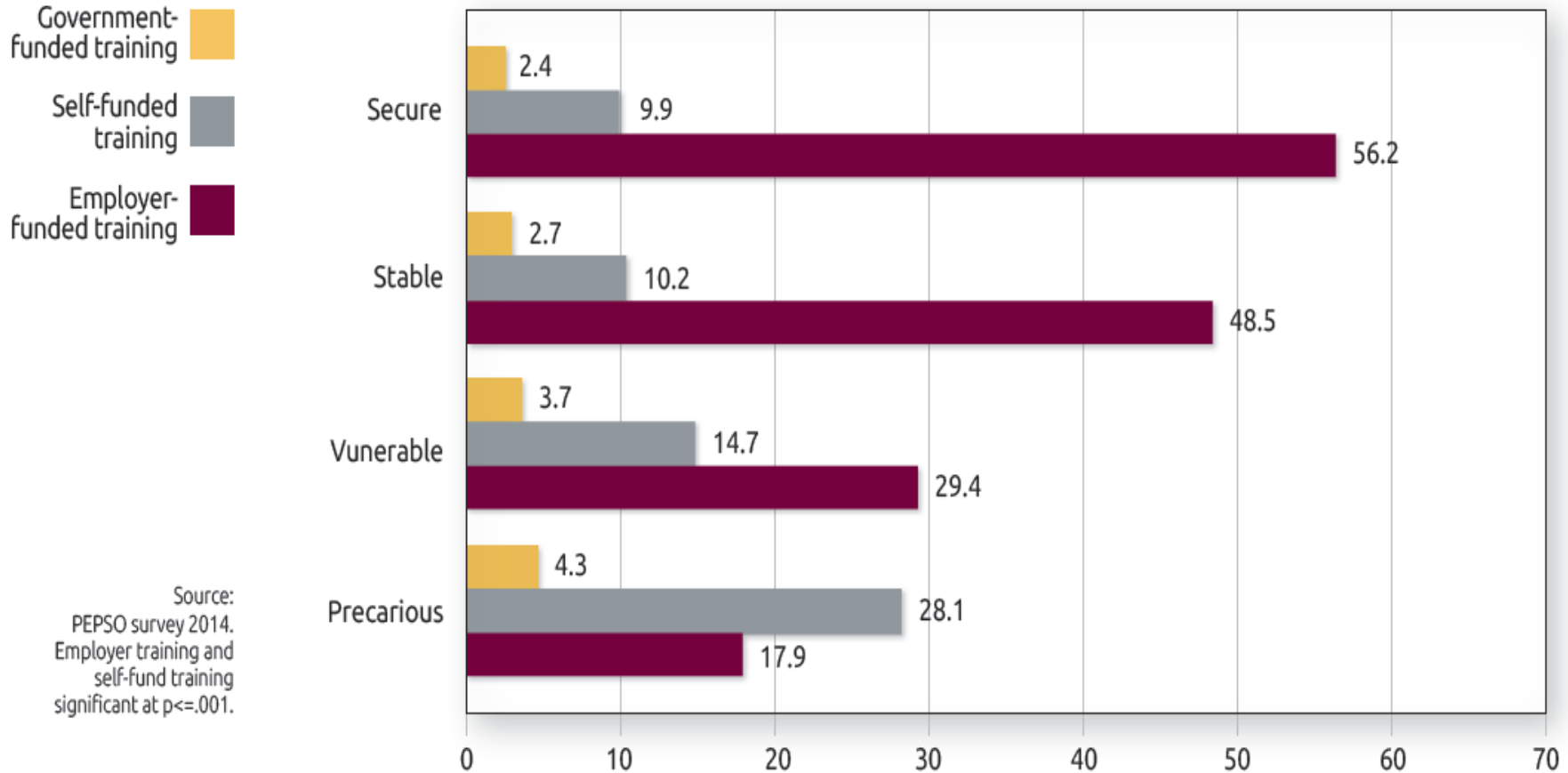
Figure 35: Paid if misses a day's work by employment security (%)



Source:
PEPSO survey 2014.
Significant at $p < .001$. This
question is included in the
Employment Precarity Index.

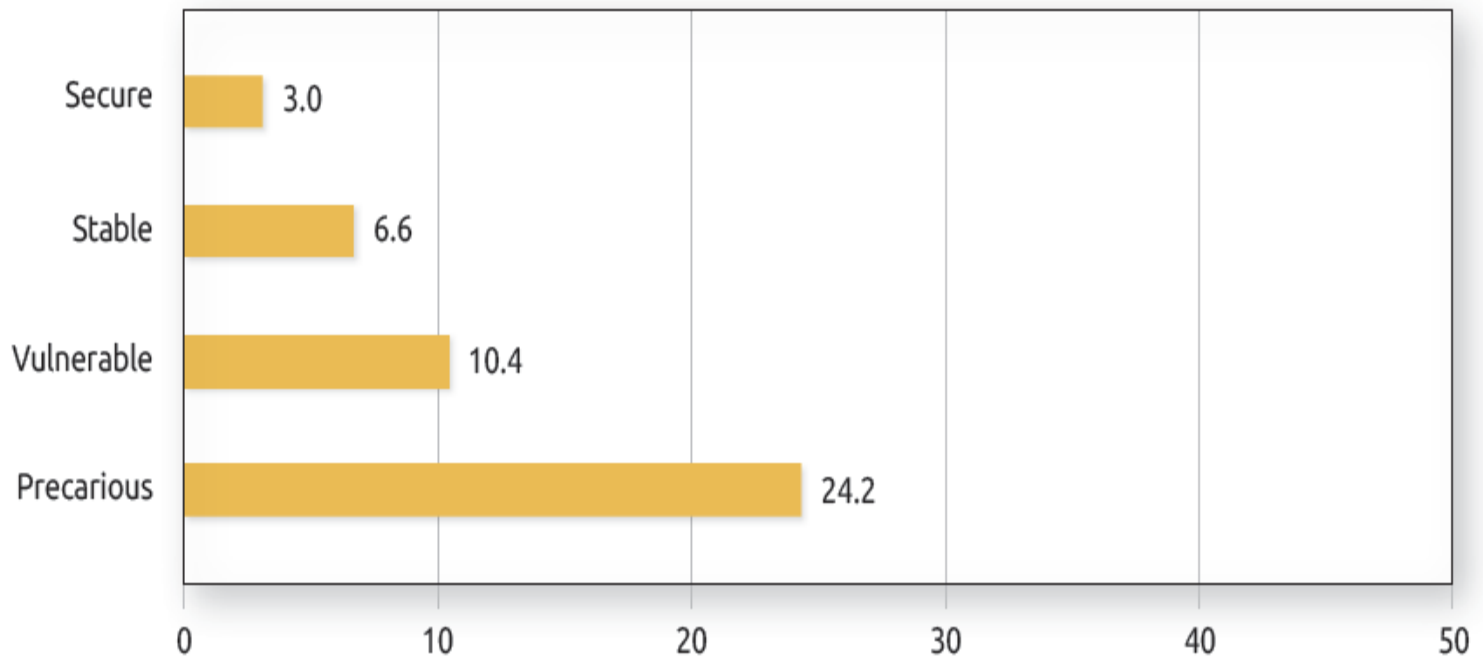
They have less access to training.

Figure 37: Access to training by employment security (%)



They face uncertain work schedules

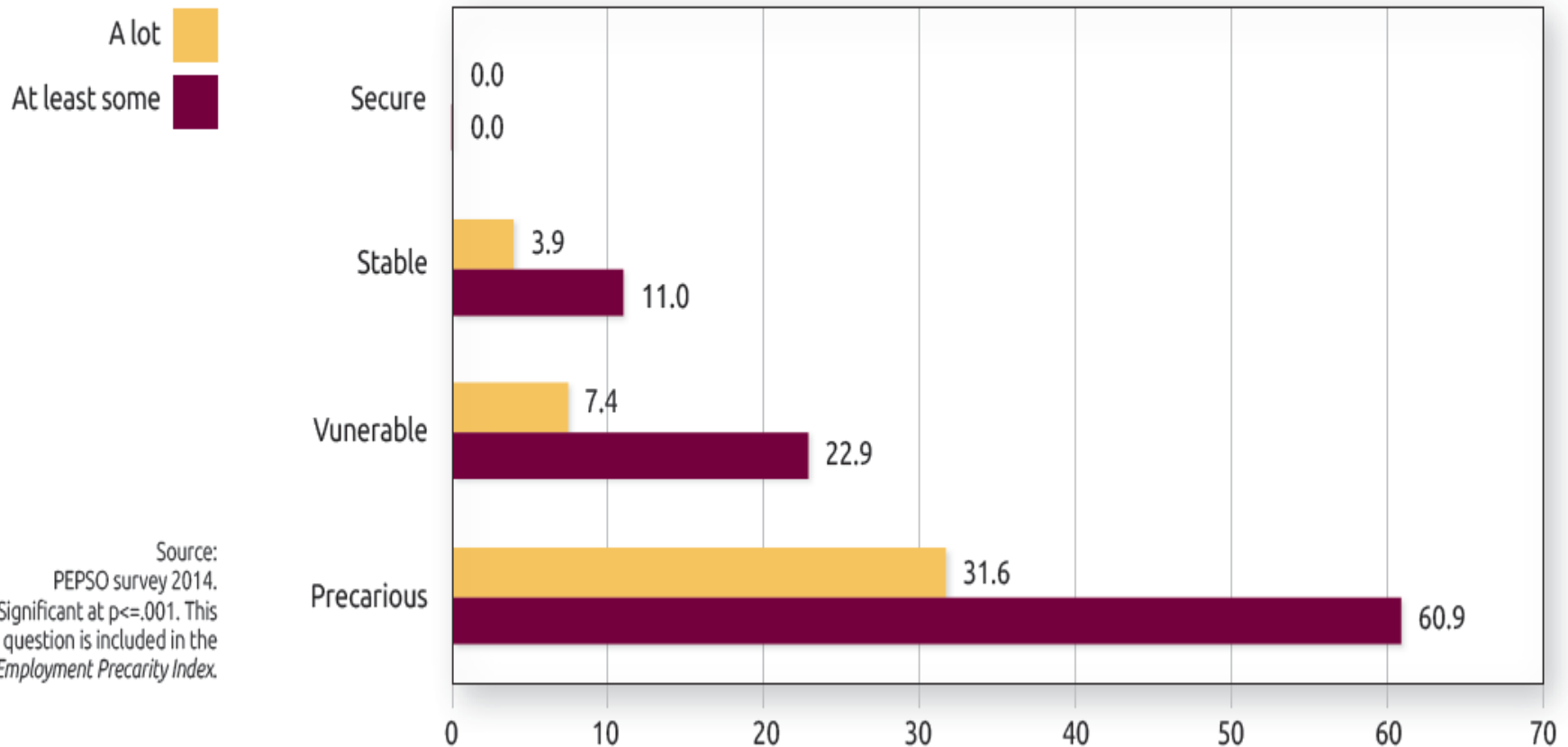
Figure 27: Work schedule often changes unexpectedly by employment security (%)



Source:
PEPSO survey 2014.
Significant at $p \leq .001$.

They face income uncertainty

Figure 23: How much income varied from week to week in the last 12 months by employment security (%)



Source:
PEPSO survey 2014.
Significant at $p \leq .001$. This
question is included in the
Employment Precarity Index.

Precarious employment has a major impact on the health and well-being of individuals and their families.

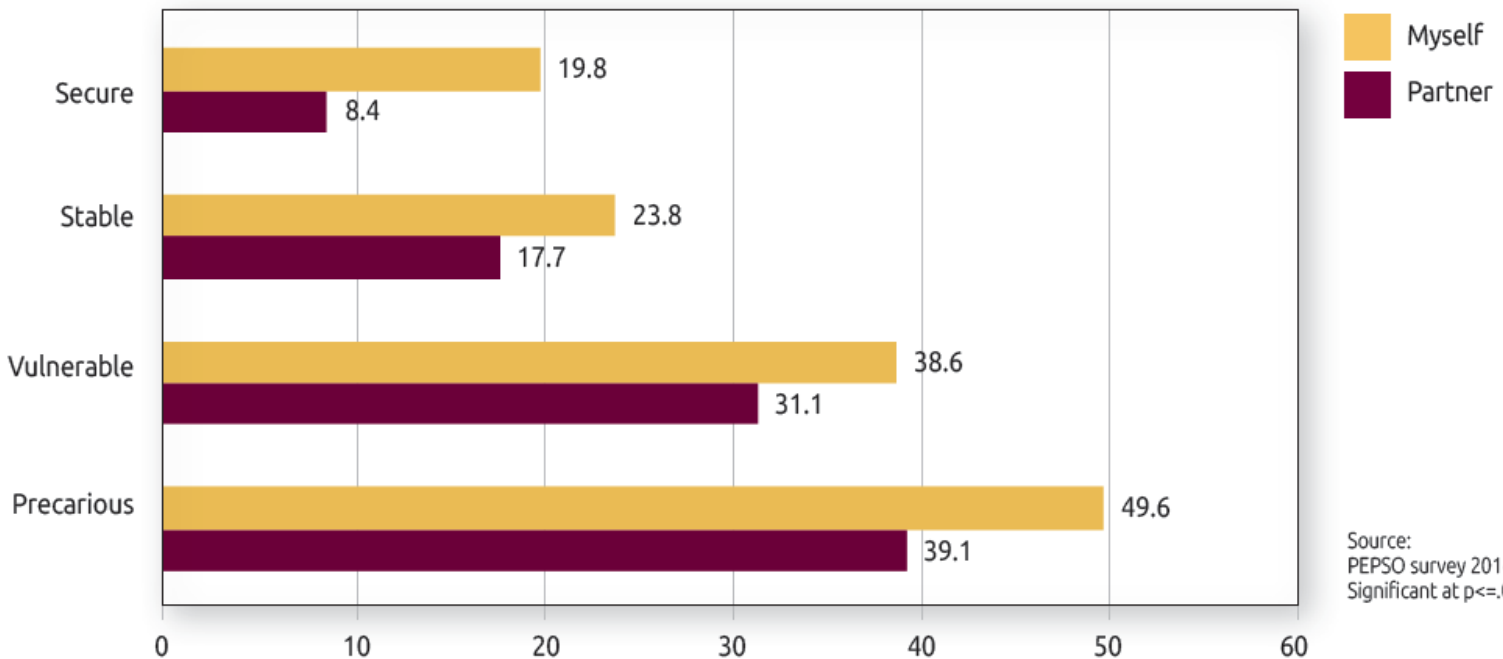
“You’re just constantly fighting for work; you’re constantly trying to find work. . . . But the way that my brain is going right now is like I just need a steady income because this is just getting ridiculous. Where I’m at right now is, financially, really precarious; it’s really precarious.”

-Eva



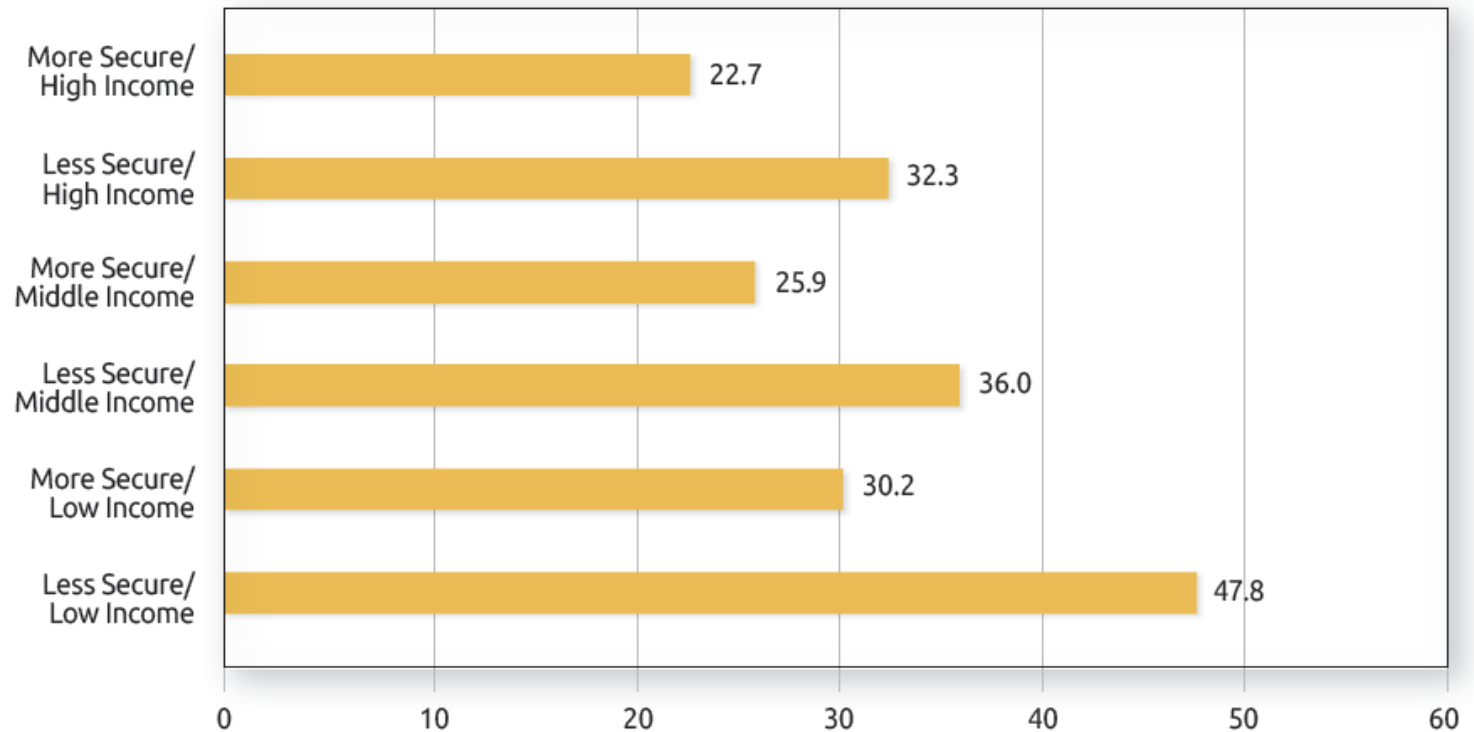
Lack of childcare is an issue for workers in precarious employment.

Figure 85: Lack of access to childcare limits ability to work by employment security (%)



Precarious employment is associated with increased anxiety at home.

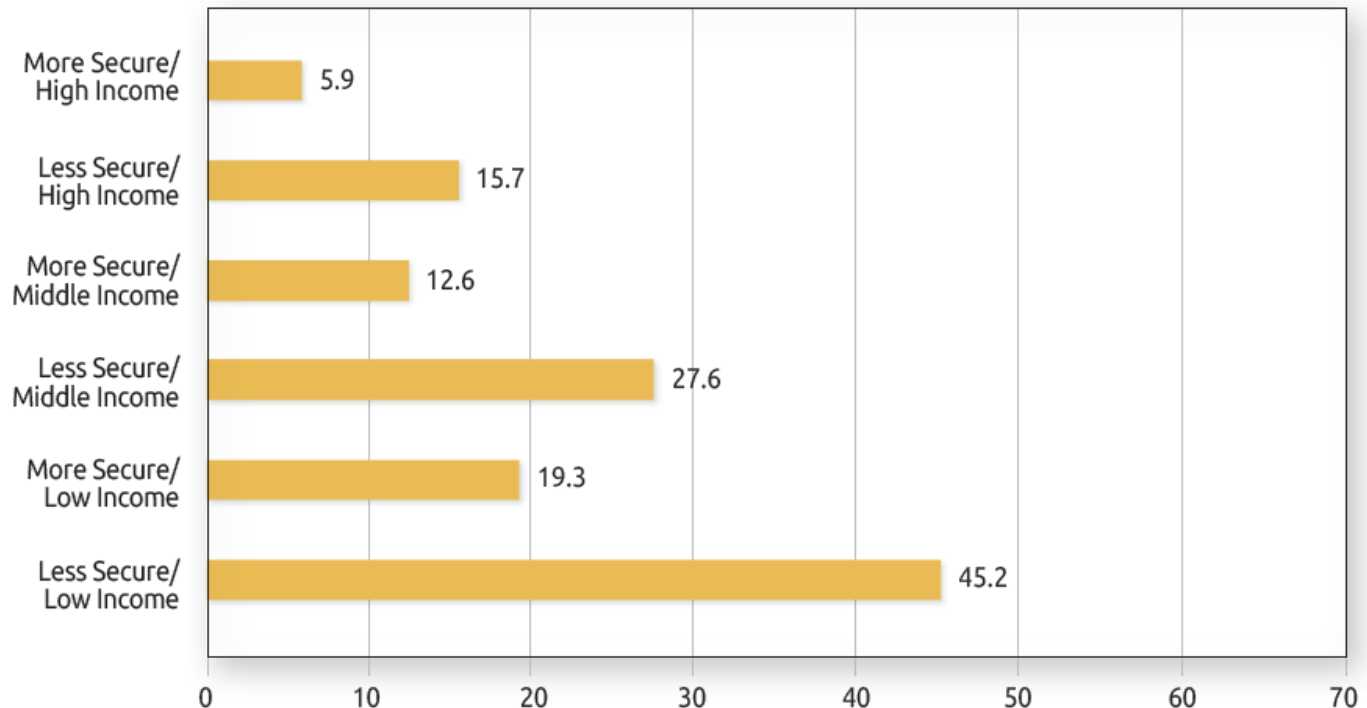
Figure 66: Anxiety about employment situation interferes with personal or family life by employment security and household income (%)



Source:
PEPSO survey 2014.
Significant at $p < .001$.
Household low-income < \$60,000, middle-income \$60,000-\$99,999, high-income => \$100,000.

Precarious employment is associated with increased income stress.

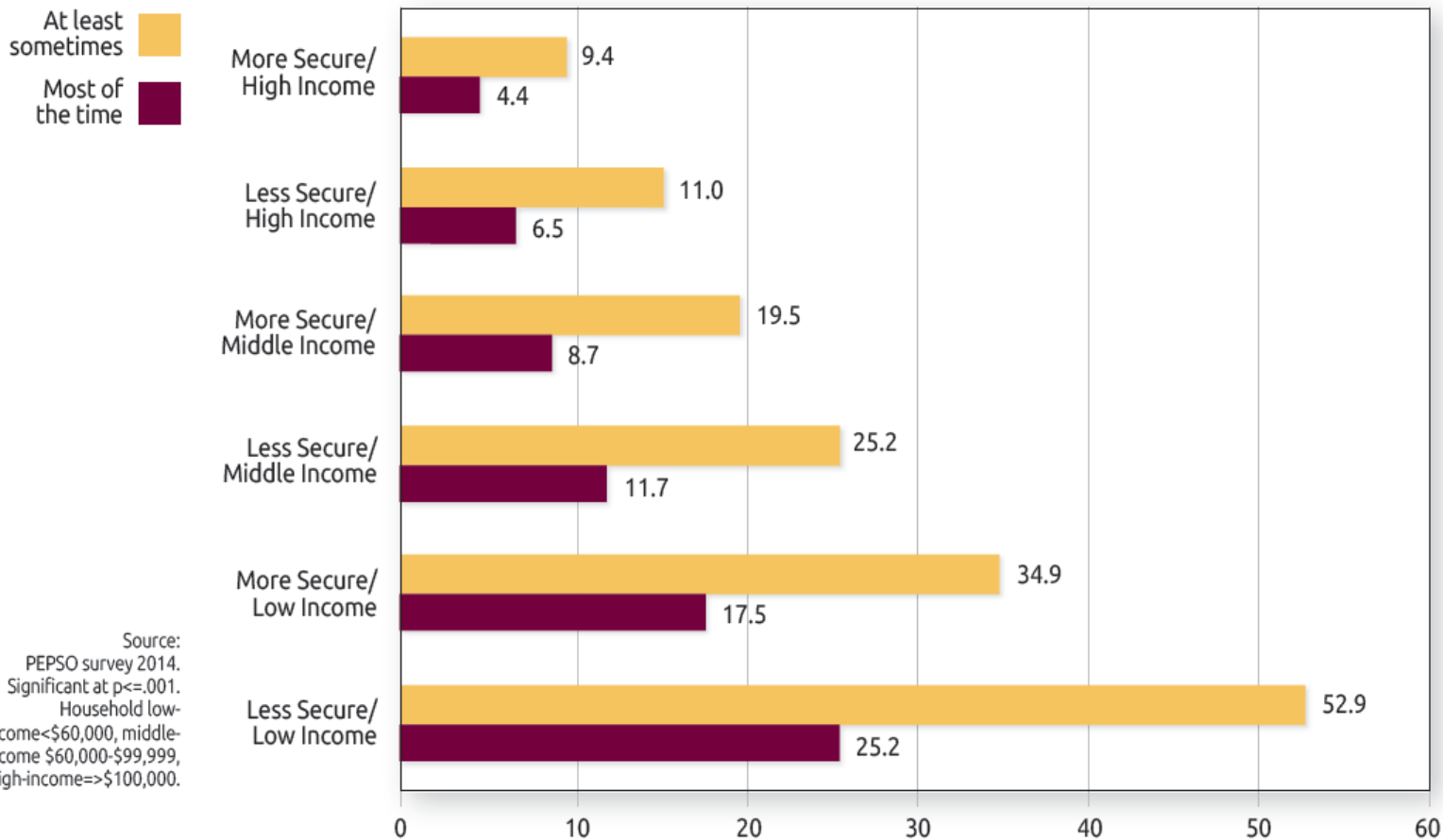
Figure 74: Concerned about maintaining standard of living in the next 12 months by employment security and household income (%)



Source:
PEPSO survey 2014.
Significant at $p < .001$.
Household low-income < \$60,000, middle-income \$60,000-\$99,999, high-income => \$100,000.

Precarious employment can affect children

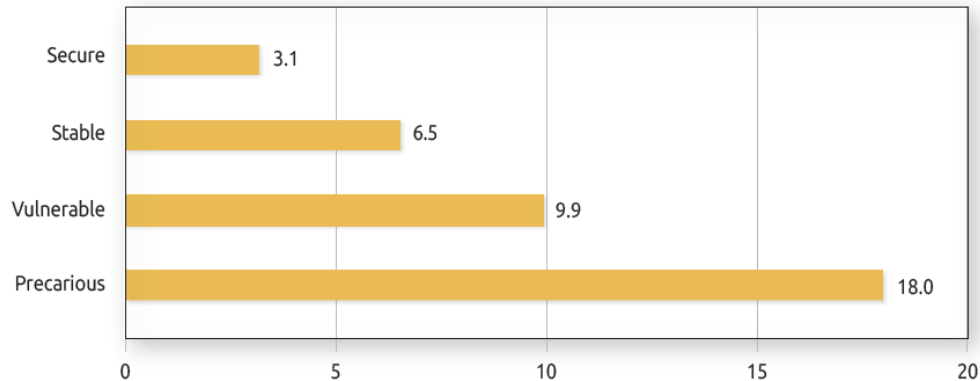
Figure 82: Unable to pay for activities outside of school by employment security and household income (%)



Source:
PEPSO survey 2014.
Significant at $p < .001$.
Household low-income < \$60,000, middle-income \$60,000-\$99,999, high-income => \$100,000.

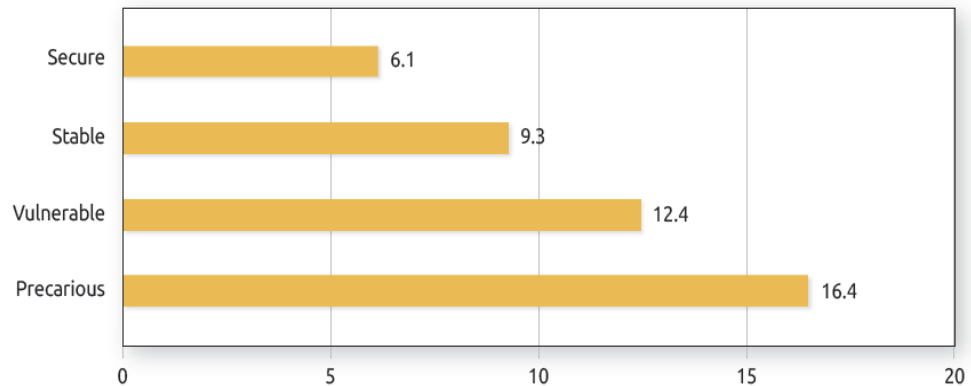
Precarious employment affects household formation

Figure 62: Delayed forming a relationship because of employment uncertainty by employment security (%)



Source:
PEPSO survey 2014.
Significant at $p < .001$.

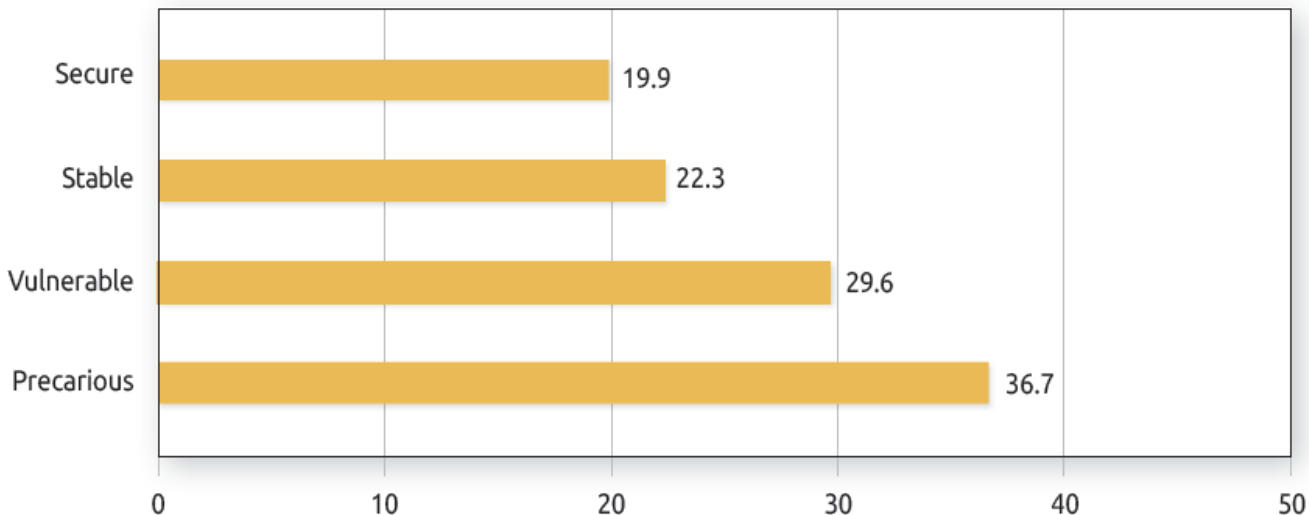
Figure 64: Delayed having children because of employment uncertainty by employment security (%)



Source:
PEPSO survey 2014.
Significant at $p < .001$.

Precarious employment is associated with increased risk of mental health issues.

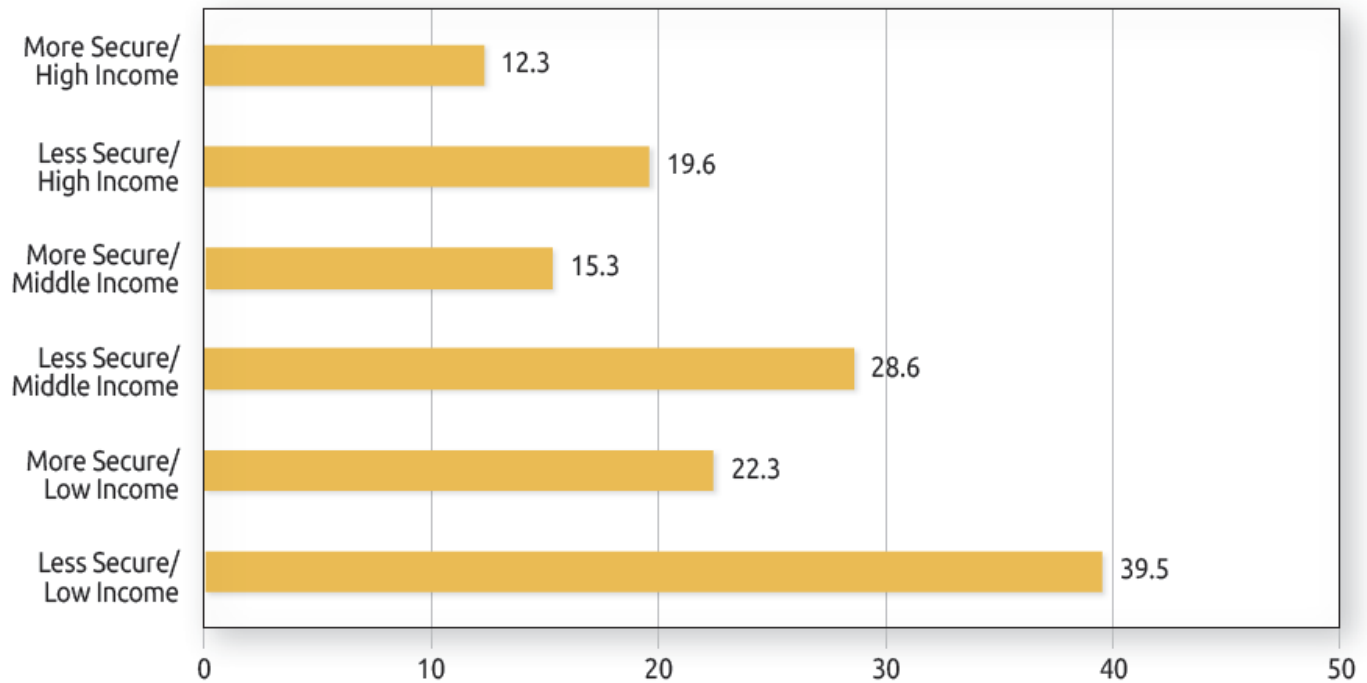
Figure 58: Mental health is less than very good by employment security (%)



Source:
PEPSO survey 2014.
Significant at $p < .001$.

Workers in precarious employment can be more isolated.

Figure 102: Does not have a friend at work to ask a favour of by employment security and household income (%)



Source:
PEPSO survey 2014.
Significant at $p < .001$.
Household low-
income < \$60,000, middle-
income \$60,000-\$99,999,
high-income \geq \$100,000.

Precarious employment is bad for everyone—but your race, gender and where you were born can make things worse.

“I couldn’t find job. I looked and looked . . . so I said “you know what? It is not there”. . . This is very, it’s very degrading, it’s very humiliating. . . . It makes me feel like “okay, I’m not doing well here, so maybe I had to go back to where I come from, because I’m just getting by in this country.”

-Sofia



Workers in precarious employment face more discrimination.

Figure 46: Discrimination is a barrier to getting work by employment security (%)

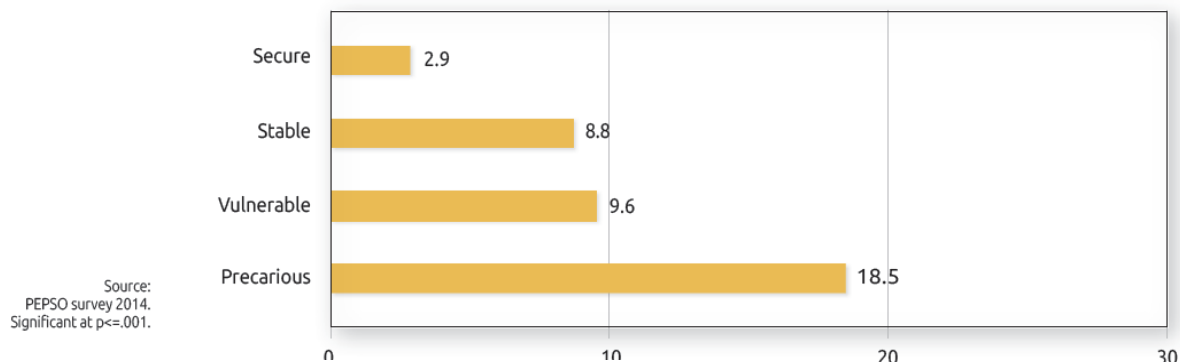
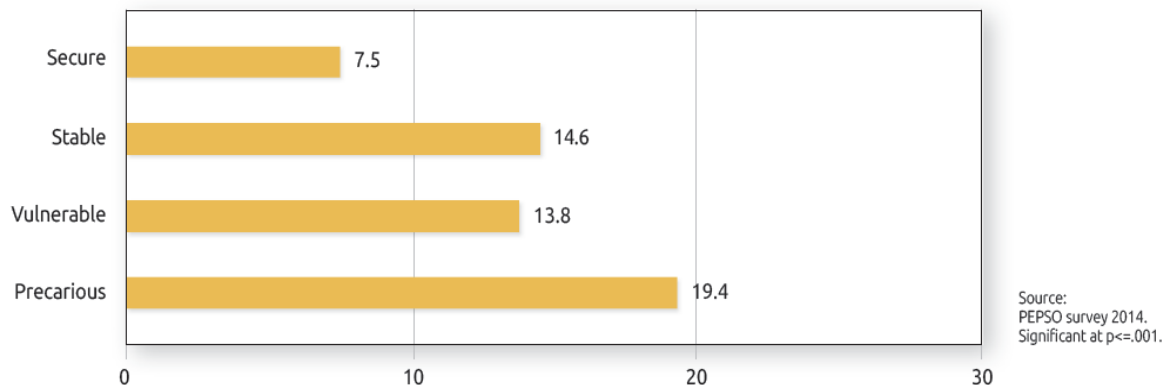


Figure 52: Discrimination is a barrier to advancement by employment security (%)

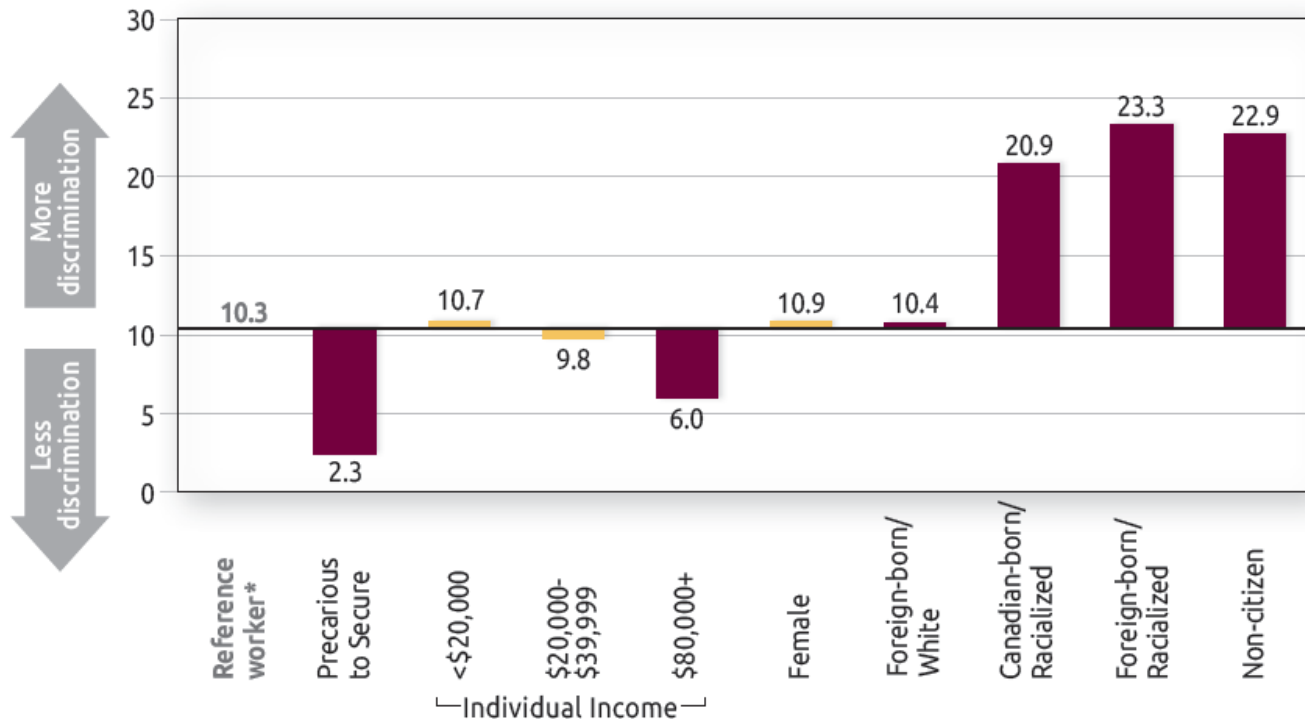


Racialized workers report more discrimination.

Figure 48: Percentage for whom discrimination is a barrier to getting work (Reference worker=10.3%*)

* Reference worker: Canadian-born, white male in *Precarious* employment, individual income \$40,000-\$79,999, aged 35-44.

Source: PEPSO survey 2014. Maroon bars significant at the 5% level. Analysis based on logistic estimations. The non-citizen category included 219 workers of whom about two-thirds are racialized.



There are practical solutions that will give people in precarious jobs a pathway to more stability and security.

1. Building a dynamic labour market that supports workers in precarious employment
2. Ensuring that jobs are a pathway to income and employment security
3. Enhancing social and community supports for a new labour market

1. Building a dynamic labour market that supports workers in precarious employment

- Building a workforce-development plan for a changing labour market
- Providing training opportunities for those in insecure employment
- Enabling more secure employment
- Addressing discrimination in hiring, job retention and advancement

2. Ensuring that jobs are a pathway to income and employment security

- Modernizing employment standards
- Reducing the impacts of irregular work schedules for workers
- Improving income security for workers in precarious jobs
- Enhancing access to benefits for workers in insecure jobs
- Supporting voice at work

3. Enhancing social and community supports for a new labour market

- Enabling flexible, quality childcare
- Improving access to community services
- Creating accessible opportunities for children and youth
- Ensuring meaningful volunteer opportunities

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