

Something's Really Wrong with Workers' E.I. Safety Net

We Need to Fix EI !

- We need to start paying attention to the huge cracks in our EI system – or pay the price with the next economic slowdown or recession.
- Politicians may focus on EI parental or seasonal benefits **but the main job of EI is to provide income security when we're laid off or lose a job.** We pay weekly EI premiums so the safety net's there when we need it.
- EI rules are too harsh, especially for those in part-time and temporary jobs.
- The latest numbers? Only **39.2% of Canada's unemployed** received EI Regular benefits in July. The rest didn't qualify or ran out of benefits. *
- Only **33.3% of unemployed women** received EI Regular benefits in July.
- Immigrants, racialized and indigenous workers are the people who end up in the most precarious jobs and the **least likely to qualify** for EI.
- And in the Toronto area, Canada's largest labour market? **19.8% of unemployed workers** received EI in July - only 1 in 5. New claimants needed a whopping 700 EI hours to qualify because of Toronto's low unemployment rate. Montreal had a 28% EI recipient rate and Vancouver's was 24.8%. Big cities have been stuck at low coverage levels for years.



* Data from Statistics Canada: 'Employment Insurance' Table 14-10-0011-01; 'Labour Force Survey' Tables 14-10-0295-02, 14-10-0287-02. Compiled for: Good Jobs for All Coalition, Sept 24, 2019/lr

Some Questions for Federal Election Candidates

1.

When workers are laid off or lose their job, they rely on Employment Insurance to help them out while they're unemployed. That's what they pay EI premiums for.

But now only 40% of the Canada's unemployed receive EI Regular benefits. In Toronto it's just 20%.

A changing labour market with more temporary and part-time jobs makes it so much harder to qualify for EI. Women and racialized workers are hardest hit.

Will you support community and labour groups who've called for a 360 hour entrance requirement so more workers can access EI?

And will you support a comprehensive review focused on other improvements that make EI accessible to more workers?



2.

EI benefits are normally based on 55% of what a worker earned before they lost their job.

For workers in low-income and part-time jobs, EI benefits are so low they often can't pay for basic necessities like food and shelter.

Will you support increasing EI benefit rates?

3.

Migrant workers who come to Canada for seasonal or other work pay EI premiums just like the rest of us. But when they're laid off or become a parent, they don't qualify for EI benefits.

Will your party improve migrant workers' access to Regular EI benefits and restore their access to Special benefits?

