

PEPniN

Organized by:



United Way
Niagara Falls and
Greater Fort Erie



Brock University

Funded by:

Ontario
Trillium
Foundation



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Supported by: Bridges Community Health Centre

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AGENDA

1. Introduction
2. Review Methodology
3. Findings
4. Recommendations
5. Next Steps Discussion

PEPIN

- Niagara Poverty Reduction Network
- United Way Niagara Falls and Greater Fort Erie
- Social Justice Research Institute
- Poverty and Employment Precarity of Southern Ontario (PEPSO)



Brock University



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Who is Involved in PEPiN?

Organizing committee:



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Employment precarity is not the same as low-income employment

Precarious employment is not necessarily the same as low-wage work.

High-income workers can also be precariously employed.

Precarious employment is not just “non-standard” (standard=full-time, permanent, w/benefits) work

What is precarious employment?

Paid in cash

Do not know work schedule one week in advance

Do not have health or pension benefits

Do not have paid sick days

Uncomfortable reporting health and safety concerns

Job unlikely to exist in 12 months

Job is on-call

More than one employer

Temporary Employment

“30 hours a week, even though I am paid more than minimum wage, is simply not enough. We barely squeak by and I have a constant anxiety about facing unexpected expenses. I would like it if my employer would provide full-time hours to a few key people instead of hiring several people part-time. Also showing that they value me as a dedicated, long-time employee in the form of raises or benefits” (25 year old, female).

Why PEPiN?

- 1 Establish a **baseline measurement** of precarious employment in Niagara
- 2 ...by applying the **PEPSO methodology** used in other Southern Ontario communities...
- 3 ...to **inform** potential managerial or policy **responses** to patterns and issues identified in the data.

How we gathered PEPiN data

Two phases of data collection:

- Phase 1: A 70+ question telephone survey administered to a random sample of Niagara residents by Leger in June and July 2017
 - Screening in those 25-64 who have worked in the past three months
- Phase 2: A 12 question online survey capturing a non-random sample of Niagara residents' experiences with precarious employment in January 2018.

The seven sections of the PEPiN survey

1. Screening for eligibility
2. Community engagement
3. Health
4. Identity, immigration and education
5. Family / household
6. Job characteristics
7. Overall job experience

PEPiN survey is representative of Niagara's population

Table 7: Comparison of age groups: PEPiN-Census.

	PEPiN 2017		Statistics Canada 2016	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
25-34	11%	9.1%	10.6%	10.7%
35-44	11.1%	11%	10.4%	11.2%
45-54	12.6%	17%	13.5%	14.4%
55-64	9.8%	18.4%	14%	15.3%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016001 and authors' calculations.

PEPiN survey is representative

Table 8: Comparison of samples: PEPiN-Census.

	PEPiN 2017 as % of all respondents	Statistics Canada 2016 as % of all the Niagara region's aged 25-64 years
% Racialized	8.8%	8.9*%
% Male	44.5%	48.5%
% <45 years old	42.2%	42.7%
University degree	34.6%	20.7%
Born in Canada	88.1%	81.3%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue nos. 98-400- X2016286, 98-400- X2016001, 98-400- X2016184, and authors' calculations. *This is a share of the Niagara region's total population, all ages, and not 25-64 years of age.

Precarity Index

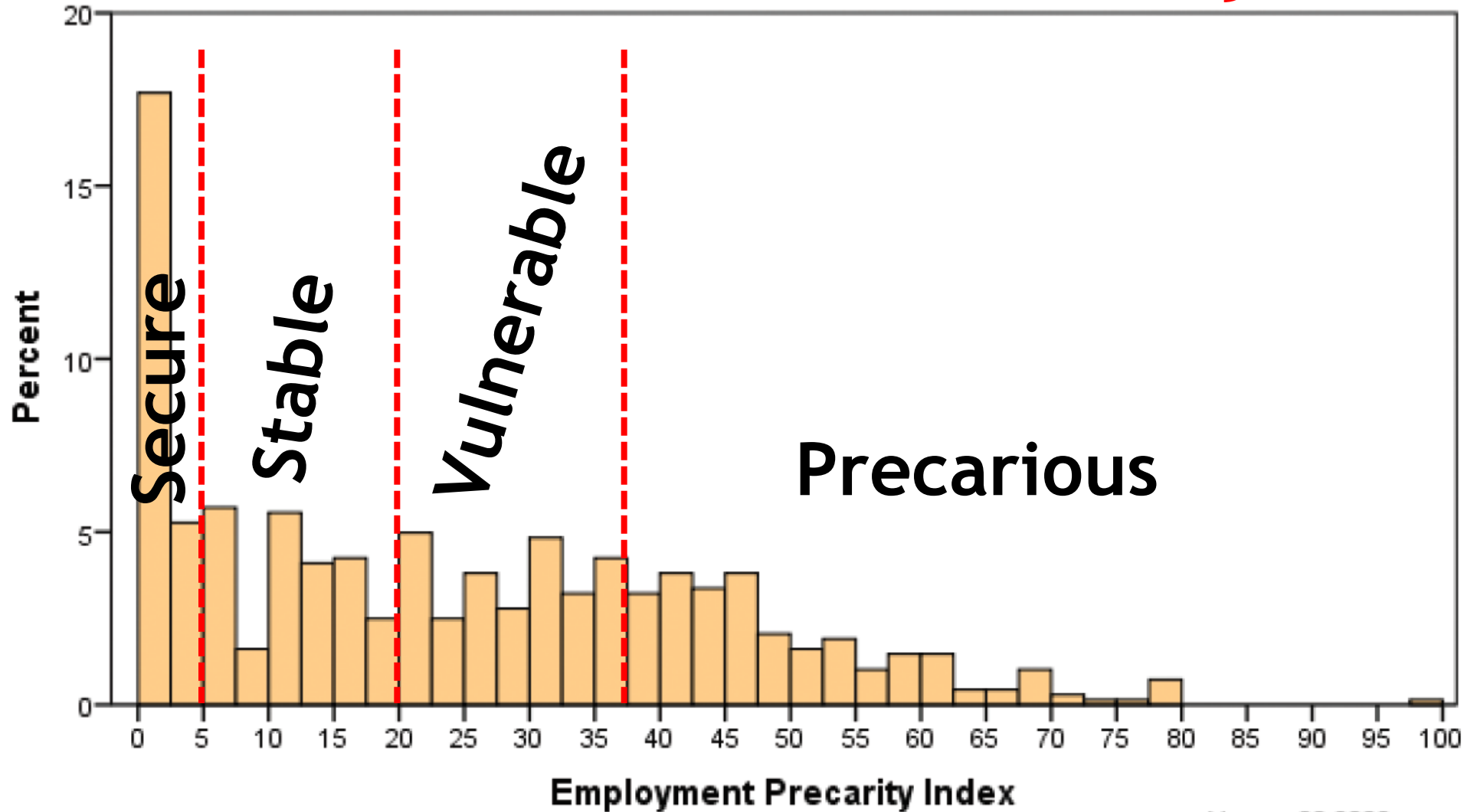
Ten questions used to generate a **employment precarity index** score between 0 and 100.

Workers with a score of **zero** are the **most secure** (or the least precarious).

Workers with a score of **100** are the **most precarious** (or the least secure).



Distribution of Precarity Scores



NB: Unlabelled ticks represent increments of 2.5 EPI units.

Mean = 23.2222
Std. Dev. = 19.6171
N = 684

Vulnerable to Precarious

“I recently had to move back to my dad's because I couldn't afford my apartment after my husband and I split. Even when we were together, things were very tight. I have a daughter to care for and sometimes don't have the means to do that. The hours are too unpredictable and there's nothing for full time with benefits that pays above minimum wage anymore. For one, raising the minimum wage was [challenging] because employers are cutting hours at every corner. What we should be doing is lowering the cost of living, not raising the prices to try to meet the cost of living” (27 year old, Female).

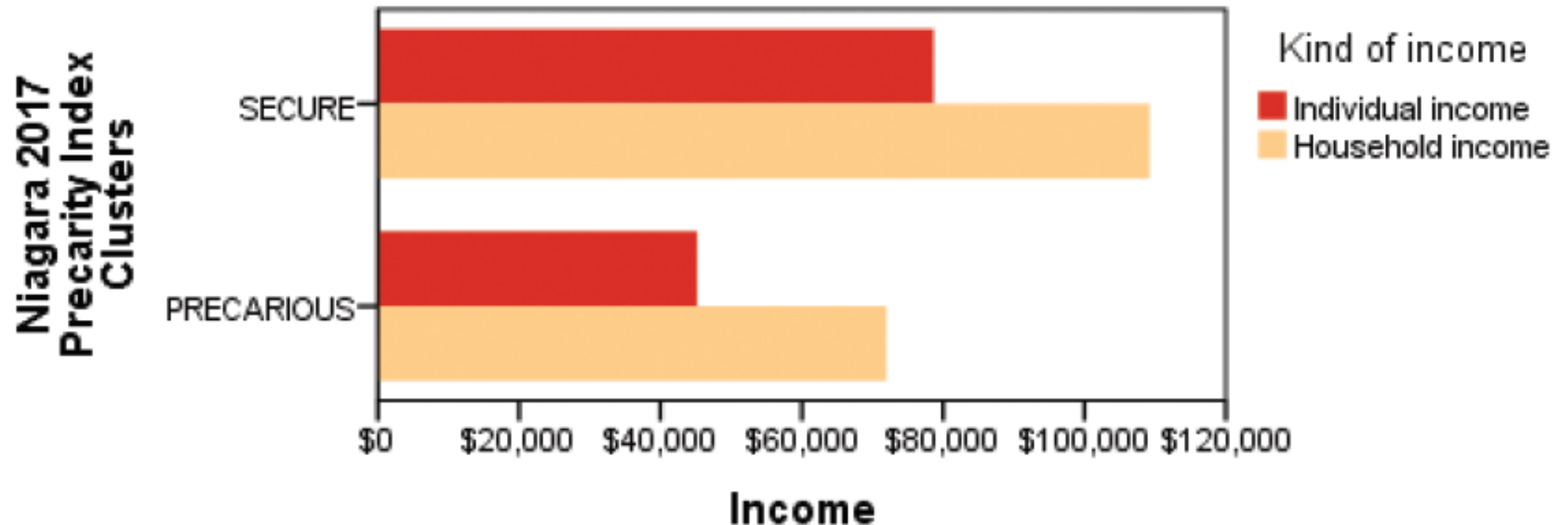
Cutoffs for precarity quartiles

Table 11: The Employment Precarity Index quartiles.

Precarity level	Index range	Average within cluster	Number in each cluster
Secure	< 5	0.6	157
Stable	5 to < 20	10.7	162
Vulnerable	20 to < 37.5	27.5	180
Precarious	> 37.5	49.2	185

Precarious work is associated with lower incomes

Figure 17: Average individual and household income (\$) [sig. at 0.01 level].

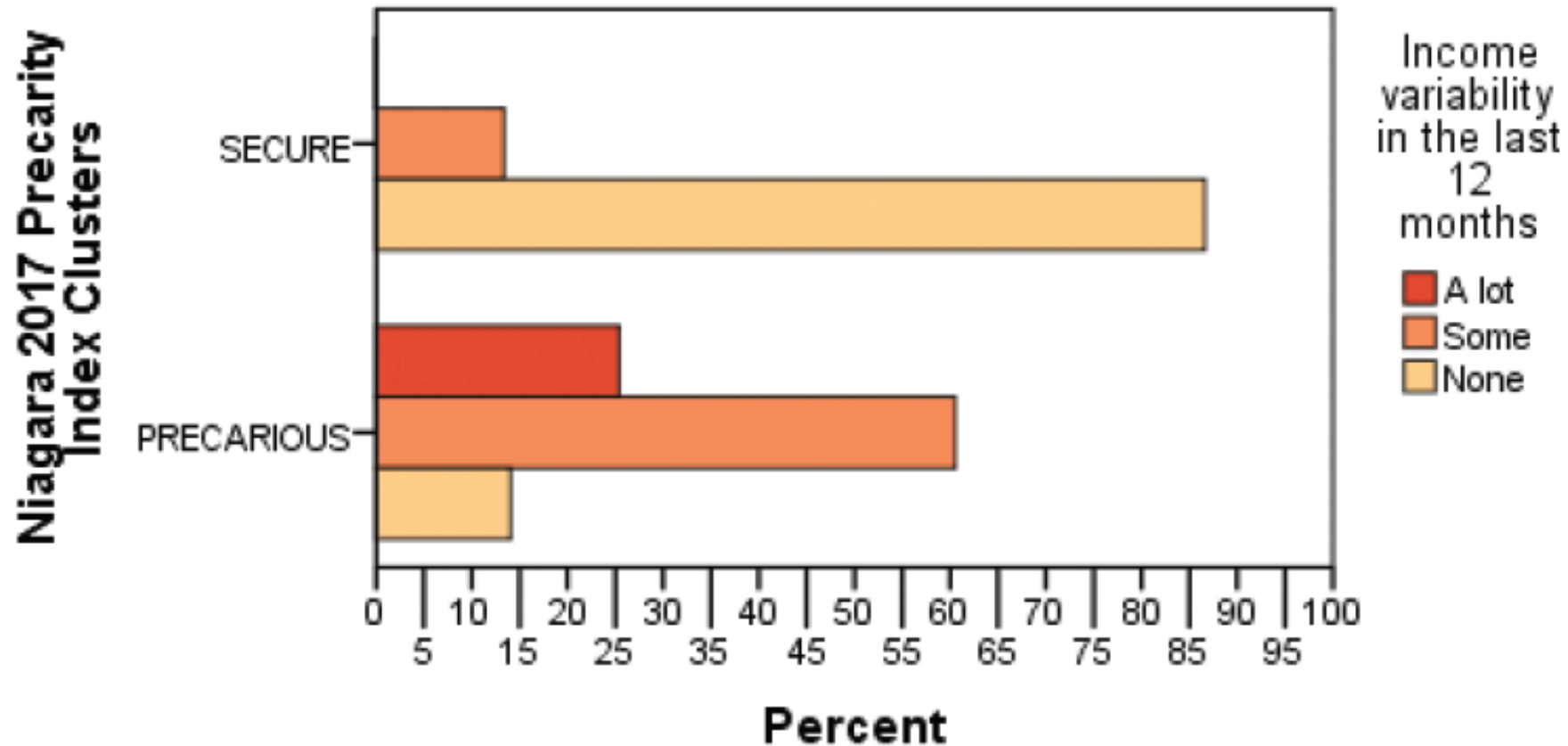


Low Income

“I am a single mother of three with no child support, working part-time, willing to work more but always told, ‘no we cannot give you the hours you need or want.’ By the time I pay \$1,000 for rent I barely have enough for groceries. I also live in a two-bedroom apartment so I have my bed in the dining room. I could go on about how hard the struggle is with my kids never having any extras. I am not in perfect health but work whatever they give me with hopes of call-in's for extra hours. How could it change; I honestly do not think it will with higher minimum wage and companies cutting” (54 year old, Female).

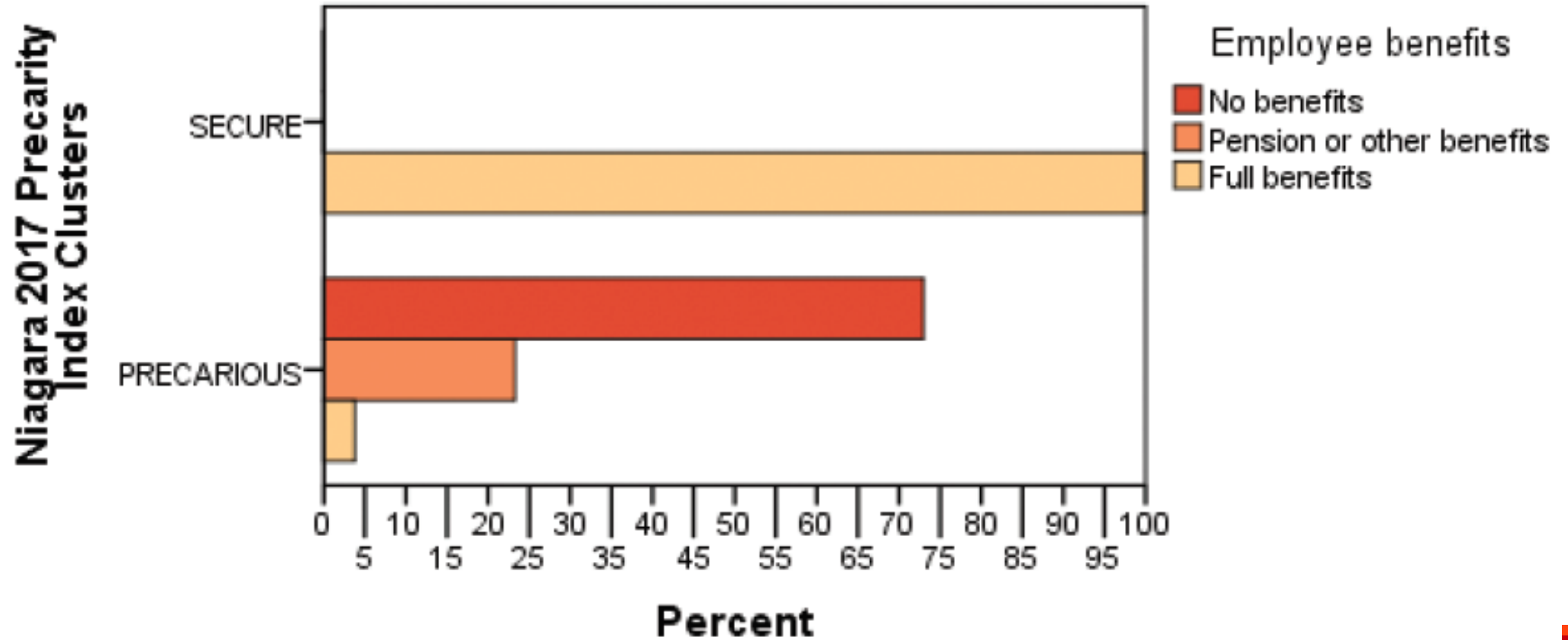
Precarious work has much more income variability

Figure 18: Degree of income variability from week to week in the last 12 months (% of each cluster) [sig. at 0.01].



Fewer than one-third of precarious workers have any benefits

Figure 19: Employment benefits – vision, dental, drugs, life insurance, pension (% of each cluster) [sig. at 0.01].



Lack of Benefits

“Budgeting for the future. Even future bills. Being able to go from 30 hours one week to 15 the next is difficult when it comes to how to divvy up for bills each week because I'm constantly under stress for how my next week or next month is going to look.

As well, never having the ability to be ill. No benefits means you can't afford to be sick or need medicine and you can't afford the regular rate of medication since you barely know how many hours you're getting” (27 year old, Female).

Over 50% of precarious quartile work on call

Figure 24: Working on-call (% of each cluster).

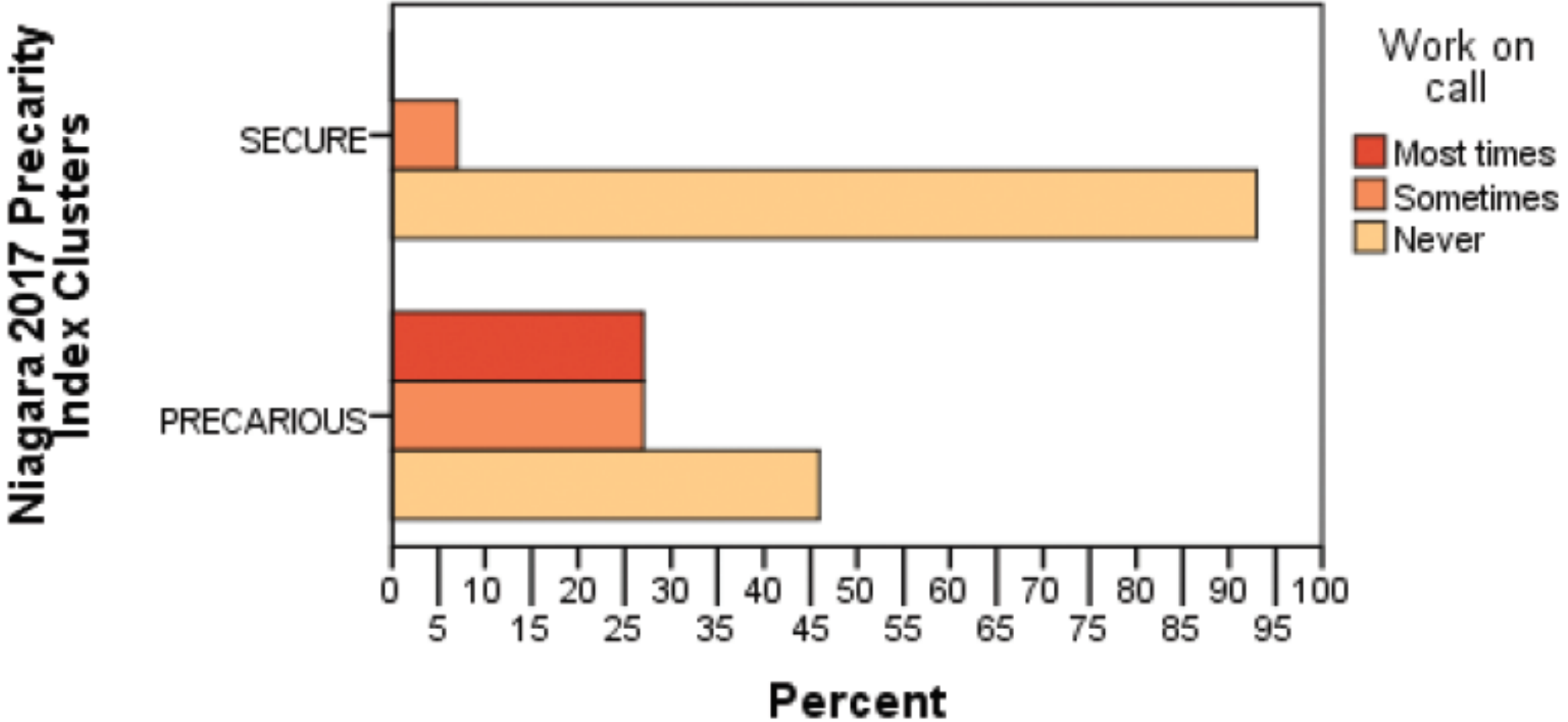
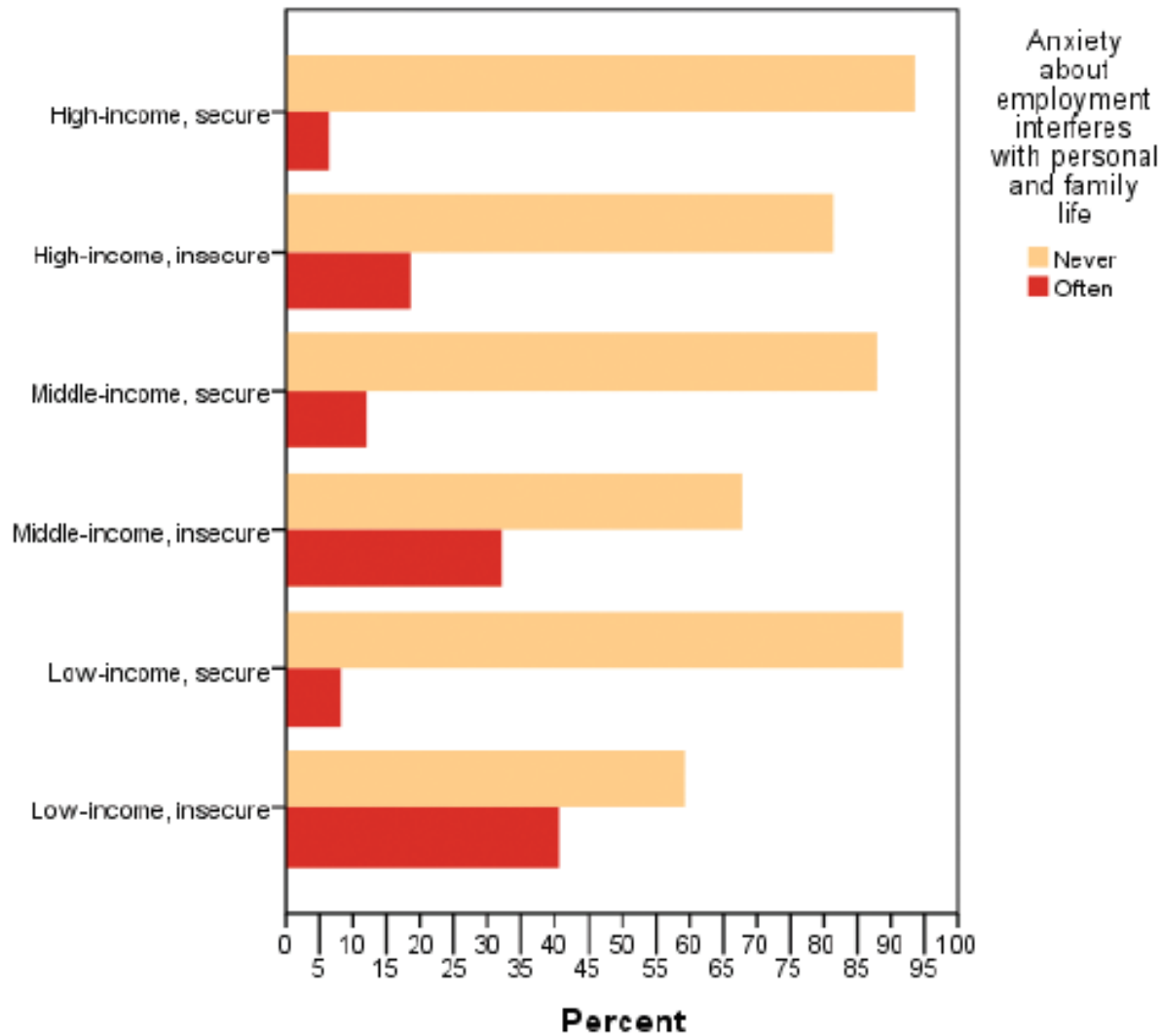


Figure 41: Anxiety about employment situation interferes with your personal and family life?
(% of each category, including single-person households).

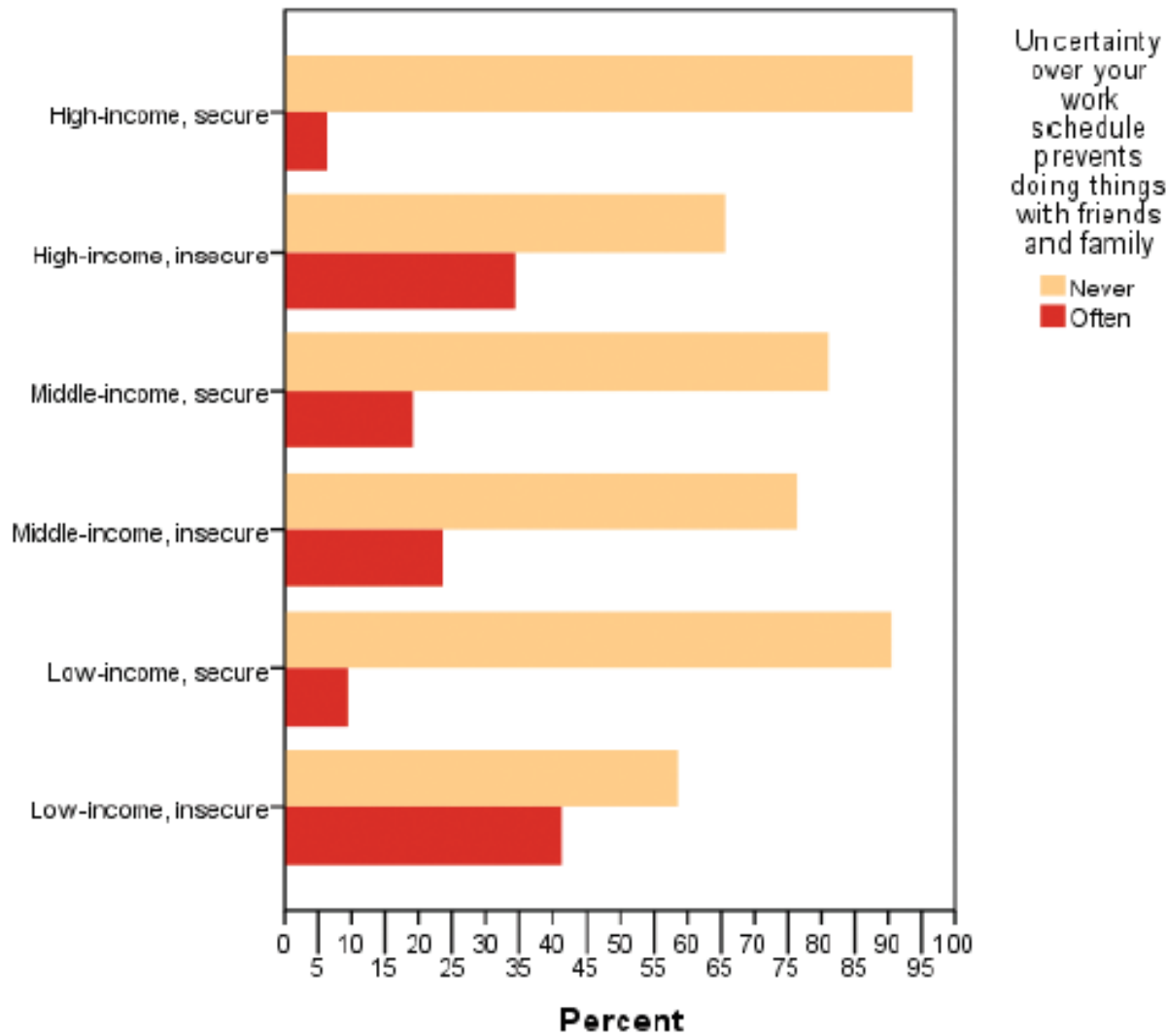


After controlling for income, insecure workers report higher rates of anxiety about employment interferes with personal and family life

Future Planning

“After struggling for 9 years we have finally cleared our bankruptcy and have had stable decent-paying employment for about a year and a half now. We've been saving to buy a house but cannot commit until we know if contracts are renewed or can find permanent work. We currently are in the top 1% of earners in the Niagara region, but work is not stable enough to commit to a mortgage” (45 year old, Male).

Figure 43: Uncertainty over work schedule prevents doing things with friends and family (% of each category).



After controlling for income, insecure workers more often report uncertainty over work schedule makes it difficult to do things with family and friends

Changes to Ontario's Labour Laws

Since the passage of the Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act 2017, some key changes affecting Ontario's employees and workplaces include:

- Raising the minimum wage to \$14.00/hour on Jan. 1, 2018 with a move to \$15.00/hour on Jan. 1, 2018 (pending the provincial election outcome)
- Equal pay for equal work for casual, part-time, temporary, and seasonal workers
- A minimum of three weeks' paid vacation after five years with the same employer
- 10 personal emergency leave days per year, including two paid days if the employee has been employed for one week or longer
- Fairer scheduling rules

Key Recommendations

Government:

- Develop an official definition and statistical measure of precarious employment (PE)
- Modernize Canada's social safety net to match 21st century labour conditions: i.e.
 - Health benefits
 - Employment Insurance
 - Working Income Tax Benefit
 - Social assistance reform
- Expand access to public transit and childcare
- Procurement practices

Key Recommendations

Business:

- Participate in training workshops and software/process tools to help small/medium-sized business founders and operators reduce their reliance on PE.
- Implement best business practices to mitigate PE, such as :
 - Professional development, career mapping, mentoring, viewing employees as assets, cross-training, etc. in order to unlock full value and potential of employees
 - Increase worker participation and voice
 - Adopt a Living Wage policy
 - Employer-provided health benefits
 - Consider ways this information can be shared among peers (i.e. business networks)

Key Recommendations

For post-secondary educators:

- Encourage further research and publication of case studies to post-secondary business programs with successful alternatives to PE-based human resources management and business models
- Encourage post-secondary educators in business studies to incorporate business models and human resources management models that do not impose precarious employment, and to encourage recognition of where and when it may occur

For academic researchers:

- Encourage further research into identifiable racialized and demographic groups that seem more prone to employment precarity.
- Encourage more research into subcategories of PE and industries with higher incidences of same, so recommendations may be better marketed and made more effective.

Everyday Advocacy Discussion

- How do we ensure that people who are precariously employed are involved in this conversation and engaged in developing solutions?
- What roles can the Niagara Poverty Reduction Network play to advance this work?

Thank you

<http://pepniagara.ca>