



GENDER EQUALITY

HIGH STAKES

- The employment gap between men and women is costing our economy an estimated 4% in GDP growth.
- Women aged 25–54 continue to perform 10 hours more per week than men of unpaid work in the home and make up 89% of workers taking parental leave.
- Women and girls make up more than half of all victims of violent crime, and the clear majority of victims of sexual assault and harassment.

CLEAR CHOICES

- Invest in sectors where women work and earn a living wage.
- Deliver accessible, affordable and universal child care and a paid paternity leave program.
- Increase funding to women's organizations and implement a fully resourced national action plan to end violence against women.

Three out of every 10 women in the workforce work in health, education and social services, in occupations such as nursing, teaching and community services that accommodate their disproportionate share of unpaid work, particularly child care.¹

Action: Invest in the sectors where women work today, and ensure that job stimulus and infrastructure spending is directed at Canada's entire labour force, 48% of which is made up of women.²

Result: Narrowing the gender employment gap, particularly among highly educated workers, will add 4% to Canada's real GDP, according to the International Monetary Fund.³

An estimated 608,000 women are working part time either involuntarily or because of caring responsibilities. Meanwhile, household debt represents \$1.73 of every dollar earned.⁴ Women aged 25–54 continue to perform 10 hours more per week of unpaid work in the home and make up 89% of workers taking parental leave.

Action: Provide tailored supports and training for women who face employment barriers or work part-time involuntarily; work with employers to increase their uptake of female applicants, particularly those facing significant employment barriers, such as women with disabilities, Indigen-

ous women and single women; and recognize the qualifications of women who have been out of the workforce caring for children and family members.

Result: Adding 608,000 women to the workforce in full-time jobs would increase payrolls by \$17.7 billion a year.⁵ That money would ease family debt burdens and stimulate growth in the economy.

Action: Invest in universal child care (see Child Care chapter) and introduce a paid paternity leave, building on the success of the Quebec model. Return the parental leave window from 18 to 12 months.

Result: The distribution of unpaid work will shift, leaving women better able to balance paid and unpaid work.

Women and girls make up more than half of all victims of violent crime, and the clear majority of victims of sexual assault and harassment. Though the federal government has increased funding for violence prevention, the scale of the problem demands greater attention.

Action: Invest in a fully resourced national action plan to address violence against women, based on the *Blueprint for a National Action Plan*, bringing federal per capita spending on the issue in line with provincial spending. Cost: \$500 million annually.⁶

Result: Levels of violence experienced by women will begin to decline and survivors of violence will receive adequate support for their needs. The estimated \$12.2 billion annual cost of violence against women would be offset by declining crime rates.⁷

Notes

1 Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0297-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0142) Labour force characteristics by occupation, annual (x 1,000). Figures for women aged 15 years and older, 2017.

2 Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0018-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0002) Labour force characteristics by sex and detailed age group, annual (x 1,000). Figures for women aged 15 years and older, 2017.

3 Bengt Petersson et al. 2017. *Women are Key for Future Growth: Evidence from Canada*. Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund.

4 Statistics Canada. Table 36-10-0589-01 (formerly CANSIM 378-0154) *Distributions of household economic accounts, wealth indicators, by characteristic, annual (percentage)*.

5 Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0029-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0014) Part-time employment by reason, annual (x 1,000). Figures for core working age, 25–54 years, 2017.

6 Women's Shelters Canada. 2015. *A Blueprint for Canada's National Action Plan (NAP) on Violence Against Women and Girls*.

7 Josh Hoddenbagh, Ting Zhang and Susan McDonald. 2014. *An Estimation of The Economic Impact of Violent Victimization In Canada, 2009*. Ottawa: Justice Canada; Zhang, Ting et al. *An Estimation of the Economic Impact of Spousal Violence in Canada, 2009*. Ottawa: Justice Canada.