A SNAPSHOT OF WOMEN, WORK AND FAMILY IN CANADA

MAY 2017

NATHAN BATTAMS

Statistical Snapshots
The Vanier Institute of the Family is a national, independent, charitable organization dedicated to understanding the diversity and complexity of families and the reality of family life in Canada. The Institute offers access to a range of publications, research initiatives, presentations and social media content to enhance the national understanding of how families interact with, have an impact on and are affected by social, economic, environmental and cultural forces.

Vanier Institute of the Family
94 Centrepointe Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K2G 6B1
613-228-8500
www.vanierinstitute.ca

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Canada is home to more than 18 million women (9.8 million of whom are mothers), many of whom fulfill multiple responsibilities at home, at work and in the community. Over many generations, women in Canada have had diverse employment experiences that continue to evolve and change. These experiences have differed significantly from those of men, and there is a great deal of diversity in the experiences among women, which are impacted by a variety of factors, including (but not limited to) cultural norms and expectations, family status, disability and a variety of demographic characteristics.

Labour force participation rate of core working age women (25 to 54) in 2016 - a rate that has increased steadily over the past half-century (up from 35% in 1964). The employment rate of this group in 2016 was 78%.1

Employment rate of women aged 25 to 54 reporting an Aboriginal identity² and non-Aboriginal women, respectively, in 2016.³

37%  67%  78%

Proportion of women aged 25 to 34 with and without a disability, respectively, who reported being employed in 2012 (15% of all women in Canada report having a disability).⁵

56%  77%

Proportion of women aged 35 to 44 with and without a disability, respectively, who reported being employed in 2012.⁶

53%  79%

Proportion of women aged 45 to 54 with and without a disability, respectively, who reported being employed in 2012.⁷

52%  81%

Proportion of self-employed workers in 2016 who were women, up from 26% in 1976 (rate has been stable since 1999).⁴

Women in Canada have had diverse employment experiences that continue to evolve and change.

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Employment rate of immigrant women aged 25 to 54 in 2011. Rates were lower for those who have been in Canada for less than 5 years (53%).⁸

69%

Amount of income earned by women in Canada for every dollar earned by men in 2014.¹⁰

$0.87

13%  12%

Proportion of women aged 18 to 64 in Canada who lived with low income¹¹ in 2014 (rate has remained stable for the past 20 years).¹²

Average estimated hourly wage gap between women who have children and women who do not have children.¹³

This wage gap is sometimes referred to as the “mommy tax” or “motherhood earnings gap.”
Mothers in Canada manage paid work alongside family responsibilities such as child care and family caregiving.

- **21%**
  Proportion of single-earner couple families in 2014 with a child under 16 living at home that included a breadwinning mother (compared with 4% in 1976).

- **32%**
  Proportion of part-time employed women aged 25 to 44 who said that they were working part-time in 2016 because they were caring for children.

- **30%**
  Proportion of all survey respondents in Canada who reported in 2012 that they provided care to a family member or friend with a long-term health condition, disability, or aging need. Women account for 54% of all caregivers.

- **1.6**
  Average number of children per woman in Canada in 2013, down from 3.9 in 1959 during the peak of the baby boom.

- **70%**
  Proportion of separated or divorced parents who reported in 2011 that the mother’s residence was their child’s primary residence (time was divided equally between parents for 9% of respondents).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Daycare</th>
<th>Home daycare</th>
<th>Private arrangement</th>
<th>Preschool/nursery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **71%**
  Proportion of compassionate care claims in 2014–2015 that were made by women.

- **$677**         **$152**
  Median monthly cost of full-time child care for children aged 4 and under reported by parents in Ontario (highest provincial rate) and Quebec (lowest), respectively, in 2011.

  Rates are far higher in urban centres, however. The highest rates are in Toronto, with 2015 estimates showing median unsubsidized rates of $1,736 per month for full-day infant care (under 18 months of age) and $1,325 for toddlers (aged 1.5 to three years).

- **Ontario**
  Employment rate of mothers aged 25 to 54 with child(ren) aged 5 and under in 1976 and 2015, respectively.

- **Quebec**
  Proportion of single-earner couple families in 2014 with a child under 16 living at home that included a breadwinning mother (compared with 4% in 1976).

There is a great deal of diversity in the experiences among women.
Mothers in Canada utilize supports such as maternity/parental leaves and benefits to manage family responsibilities, but not all have access.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quebec</th>
<th>Rest of Canada</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>87%</td>
<td>72%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Proportion of all recent mothers\(^{30}\) in Quebec and in the rest of Canada, respectively, who had insurable employment in 2015.\(^{31}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quebec</th>
<th>Rest of Canada</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11%</td>
<td>36%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Estimated proportion of all recent mothers inside Quebec and in the rest of Canada, respectively, who did not receive maternity and/or parental leave benefits in 2013.\(^{32}\)

This gap has been attributed to differing eligibility criteria regimes. Quebec has lower eligibility criteria that provide benefits to any parent who has earned $2,000 or more in the past year. In the rest of Canada, applicants must have worked 600 hours in the past year.\(^{33}\) Approximately one-quarter of parents in the rest of Canada did not work enough hours to qualify to receive parental leave benefits between 2004 and 2013.\(^{34}\)

The differences in eligibility criteria can have a significant impact on people who may have difficulty meeting Employment Insurance (EI) criteria outside Quebec, such as those with low, sporadic or seasonal employment (e.g. part-time employees, contract workers, students or self-employed Canadians who have not opted into the EI program).\(^{35}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quebec</th>
<th>Rest of Canada</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Estimated proportion of families with annual incomes under $30,000 who received maternity and/or parental benefits in Quebec and in the rest of Canada, respectively, in 2013.\(^{36}\)

| 1 in 5 |

Proportion of recent mothers who are beneficiaries of EI or the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP) who report that they receive an employer top-up to supplement their benefits.\(^{37}\)

| 72%    | 63%           |

Proportion of all mothers who said in 2014 that they were satisfied with their work–life balance. This rate falls to 63% for those who are raising children while also providing care to a sick family member or friend.\(^{38}\)

| 75%    | 69%           |

Proportion of working mothers with and without a flexible schedule, respectively, who said in 2014 that they were satisfied with their work–life balance.\(^{39}\)

| 72%    |

Estimated share of women caregivers in Canada aged 45 to 65 in Canada who are also employed.\(^{40}\)

The differences in eligibility criteria can have a significant impact on people who may have difficulty meeting Employment Insurance (EI) criteria.
Learn more about women, work and family in Canada with the following Vanier Institute resources:

- **Fifty Years of Women, Work and Family in Canada** (timeline)
- **Women, Work and Caregiving in Canada** (infographic)
- **Families and Work in Canada** (article)
- **Flex: From a Privilege to a Right** (public policy brief)
- **Caring Enough to Flex, Flexing Enough to Care** (article)
- **The Current State of Canadian Family Finances** (report series)
- **Work–Family Conflict Among Single Parents in the Canadian Armed Forces** (article)

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2 From Statistics Canada: “The term ‘Aboriginal identity’ refers to whether the person reported being an Aboriginal person, that is, First Nations (North American Indian), Métis or Inuit (Inuit) and/or being a Registered or Treaty Indian (registered under the Indian Act of Canada), and/or being a member of a First Nation or Inuit band. Aboriginal peoples of Canada are defined in the Constitution Act, 1982, section 35 (2) as including the Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada.”
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
11 Low income measure after tax.
14 Low-income measure after tax.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
23 Under the “Private arrangement (relative, nanny, etc.)” category, no further breakdown was provided in the General Social Survey.
25 Methodology note from Statistics Canada: “These costs are based on the amount of money spent by parents and account for any reductions based on subsidies, but [do] not consider income tax credits or other financial supports, which can reduce total out-of-pocket expenses.”
27 Fees reported in this study (including these rates) do not account for subsidies unless otherwise stated.
30 Compassionate care benefits were introduced in 2004 through the EI program in order to support families in their caregiving responsibilities. The benefits are available to eligible employed caregivers who are providing care or support to a gravely ill family member, including extended family and those considered to be like family. To learn more, read “Public Policy Brief: Compassionate Care Benefits from the Vanier Institute of the Family.”
32 Mothers with a child aged 12 months or less.
33 Moyser, 2017.
36 McKay, Mathieu and Doucet, 2016.
38 Other conditions apply. For a complete list of eligibility criteria, visit the Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) website.
39 McKay, Mathieu and Doucet, 2016.
40 While self-employed people in Quebec are already entitled to apply for maternity, paternity and parental benefits through OPPP, those outside Quebec must “opt in” to the program by registering with the Canada Employment Insurance Commission. To receive EI special benefits, applicants must have registered and been paying into the program for a year and have earned a minimum specified amount of net self-employed earnings during this period. Self-employed applicants must also have reduced the amount of time devoted to their business by more than 40% to be eligible. To learn more, visit the ESDC website.
44 Other conditions apply. For a complete list of eligibility criteria, visit the Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) website.
45 McKay, Mathieu and Doucet, 2016.
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