



FACTS ABOUT WOMEN AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING



FACT #1 – Economic insecurity for women

Thirty per cent of jobs lost in the recession were women's jobs. And when men lost their jobs it increased stress and pressure on women as they became the only income earner for their family.

For women who are working (or when they return to work), their jobs are a lot more insecure compared to men's jobs. The jobs women have tend to be lower-paid, non-unionized, part-time or temporary.

In Canada today, 27% of working women work part-time, compared to 12% of working men. In addition, women working in these sectors who have had their jobs eliminated usually don't have severance pay and Employment Insurance benefits are not accessible for many of these women.

SOURCES:

Living With Economic Insecurity: Women in Precarious Work (2011). International Trade Union Confederation; Elson, Diane and Devaki, Jain. (2010). Vision for a Better World: From Economic Crisis to Equality. New York: United Nations Development Program.

"Full-Time and Part-Time Employment by Sex and Age Group." CANSIM table: 282-0002. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, last modified: January 24, 2011.

FACT #2 – Women earn less on average

Although more women are entering non-traditional occupations, as well as higher-paying professional work, women in Canada still earn significantly lower incomes than men. On average Canadian women earn \$31,100 per year, compared to \$45,200 for men.

SOURCES:

Ferrao, Vincent. (2010). "Paid Work." Women in Canada: A Gender-Based Statistical Report. Ottawa: Statistics Canada; "Full-Time and Part-Time Employment by Sex and Age Group." CANSIM table: 282-0002. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, last modified: January 24, 2011.

"Average Earnings by Sex and Work Pattern." CANSIM table: 202-0102, Ottawa: Statistics Canada, last modified: June 15, 2011.

FACT #3 – Pay inequity

Statistics Canada (2010) reports that nationally women working full-time in 2008 earned on average 71.3% of what men earned.

SOURCES:

Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report: by Cara Williams; December 2010; A Component of Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 89-503-X

FACT #4 – Inequality between distinct women's groups

Women in all social groups face economic inequalities compared to men, but there are also significant differences among women.

The erosion of economic well-being is particularly pronounced among single mothers, racialized women, First Nations women, and women with disabilities. For these groups there is both a wage gap between women and men of the same group, and a significant gap between their earnings and the national average.

For example:

- The average income for women with disabilities in Canada is 32% lower than women in Canada overall at \$22,013; their income is 33% lower than the income of men with disabilities and their income is 57% lower than men in Canada overall.
- Racialized women earn only 70.5% as much as racialized men; and First Nations women living off-reserve earn 68.5% as much as First Nations men living off-reserve. The average income for racialized women is \$22,993, and for First Nations women, living off-reserve the average income is \$22,035.

It is therefore unsurprising that in spite of increasing levels of education and work experience these women are disproportionately affected by the economic recession.

SOURCES:

Disability in Canada: A 2006 Profile. (2011). Ottawa: Human Resource and Skills Development Canada; Galarneau, Diane and Radulescu, Marian. (2009). Employment Among the Disabled. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.

“Average Incomes by Racialized Census Groups and Gender.” (2007). 2006 Census of population. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.

“Study: Aboriginal People and the Labour Market.” The Daily. Statistics Canada. November 23, 2011.

FACT #5 – Women’s unpaid work

Women continue to perform at least twice the number of hours of unpaid work per day as men. So not only do women have more insecure jobs, they also have more unpaid work at home.

SOURCES

“General Social Survey: Paid and Unpaid Work.” The Daily, Ottawa: Statistics Canada, July 19, 2006.

FACT #6 – Lack of child care

Much of the unpaid work women do is care-taking work, including care for young children. Whether or not parents of young children wish to leave paid work to care for young children, few have the economic means to do so.

Two-thirds of all mothers with children under the age of six do paid work. Their participation in the economy is hamstrung by the lack of affordable and accessible child care. Canada has the lowest child care access rates in the industrialized world; Canada’s public spending on early childhood education and care programs is only 0.25% of GDP — one-third of the OECD average of 0.7%. Less than 20% of existing child care spaces are regulated spaces.

SOURCES:

Statistics Canada, “Paid Work.” Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report. Government of Canada, 2010.

Erika Shaker, Ed. Beyond Child’s Play: Caring For and Educating Young Children in Canada. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2009.

Fact #7 – Caregiving

In 2007, over 2.5 million employed Canadians were providing 893 million hours of caregiving annually at an estimated value of \$25 billion. Employed women provided an additional 3.75 hours per week more than their male counterparts. Women over the age of 45 spent 11.9 hours per week providing caregiving.

Women caregivers were much more likely to incur employment consequences because of their caregiving responsibilities than men: 30% missed full days of work, 6.4% retired early, quit, or lost their paid job, and 4.7% turned down a job offer or promotion.

In addition to the employment consequences, there is an additional financial strain associated with caregiving. A study conducted by Health Canada in 2002 found that 44% of caregivers paid out-of-pocket expenses; 40% spent \$100 to \$300 per month on caregiving, and another 25% spent in excess of \$300.

With Canada's aging population expected to double in the next 23 years, combined with decreasing public services and programs, the burden on women will increase resulting in higher stress, financial insecurity and poorer health.

SOURCES:

"Gender differences in family/friend caregiving in Canada." December 2010.
and "Employment consequences of family/friend caregiving in Canada." April 2011.
Research on Aging Policies and Practice.

"Supporting Caregivers and Caregiving in an Aging Canada." Janice Keefe. Institute for Research on Public Policy. November 2011.