| **Questions** |  |
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| 1. What are the main trends influencing women’s human rights in the world of work in Canada and their impact: | Over the past several decades, the growth in Canada’s labour force participation rate has been driven primarily by the increased participation of women in the labour market. Women’s higher levels of education have helped to increase the labour market participation rate for women aged 15-64 years from 51 per cent to 75 per cent between 1976 and 2018. However, some women continue to experience challenges in certain areas of the labour market, including persistent gaps in workforce participation, and wages and earnings. |
| * + On the types of and quantity of work available to women, and the quality and conditions of work (including access to social protection and equal pay)? | Women remain over-represented in non-standard forms of employment in Canada, such as temporary and part-time work. These forms of work tend to be lower paid and offer fewer or no benefits compared to permanent full-time employment.  In 2018, the three occupationswith the greatest share of women aged over 15 years of age, relative to men:   * + Health occupations (79.7% compared to 20.3% for men);   + Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services (69.9%); and   + Business, finance and administration occupations (69.3%).[[1]](#endnote-1)   By comparison, the three occupations with the lowest share of womenover 15 years of age,relative to men:   * + Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations (6.6%);   + Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations (18.2%); and,   + Natural and applied sciences and related occupations (23.8%).[[2]](#endnote-2)   Women continue to have low representation in the skilled trades. In 2018, women represented roughly 6.5% of all skilled trades workers in Canada.[[3]](#endnote-3)  In 2018, women’s representation in the following skilled trades accounted for approximately:   * + 4% of workers in industrial, electrical and construction trades occupations;   + 5% of workers in maintenance and equipment operation trades occupations;   + 14% of other installers, repairers and servicers and material handlers occupations;   + 8% in transport and heavy equipment operation and related maintenance occupations; and   + 7% in trades helpers, construction labourers and related occupations.[[4]](#endnote-4)   Women’s employment continues to be concentrated in low-paying jobs in the service sector, including administrative, healthcare and social services work, and under-represented in more high-demand and high-paying fields such as management, natural and applied sciences as well as in mining, oil and gas extraction industries.  **Gender representation in industries and occupations**  In 2018, the **greatest share of women** over 15 years of age, relative to men:   * + Health care and social assistance (81.8%);   + Educational services (68.6%); and,   + Finance and insurance (57.8%).[[5]](#endnote-5)   By comparison, the three industries with the **lowest share of women** over 15 years of age, relative to men:   * + Construction (12.6%);   + Forestry and logging and support activities for forestry (15.8%); and,   + Fishing, hunting and trapping (15.8%).[[6]](#endnote-6)   Women also remain under-represented in some of the most rapidly growing occupations, including in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields and skilled trades.  There are many factors that may influence women’s under-representation and higher prevalence of men in higher paid occupations, including:   1. **Social norms about gender roles and views** about which jobs are better for either women or men; 2. **Discrimination and harassment in the workplace** and lack of corporate policies to deal with gendered issues related to harassment; 3. **Workplace culture** that may not be inclusive of women; 4. **Corporate policies** related to hiring, retention and advancement that disadvantage women; 5. **Work environments that do not accommodate flexibility for caregiving,** which is more frequently done by women; and, 6. **Perceived lack of career development opportunities**.   **Full-time / Part-time employment**  The majority of both **women and men** are employed on a **full‑time** basis. However, **women** are overrepresented among those **working part‑time**. In 2018, women (all ages) were twice as likely as men to work part time (26% vs. 12%). More specifically:   * Aged 15 years and over: women represented 66% of part-time workers; * Aged 25-54: women represented 75% of part-time workers.   **Temporary employment**   * In 2018, **women** were slightly more likely than **men** to have temporary jobs (14% for women compared to 13% for men) and **women** (10%) were more likely than **men** (6%) to have multiple jobs.   **Minimum wage and low-paying occupations**   * Women are also overrepresented in low‑paying occupations and underrepresented in high‑paying ones. In 2018, **women** make up 59% of **minimum wage** workers. |
| **Women Owned Small and Medium Sized Enterprises**  In Canada, 15.6% of small and medium sized enterprises are majority-female owned, while 20.9% are majority-male owned.[[7]](#footnote-1) The sectoral segregation of majority-female owned enterprises are primarily concentrated in:   * Information and cultural services (30.3%); * Retail (18%); * Professional, technical and scientific services (13.8%); and, * Accommodation and food services sectors (10.5%).   Small and medium sized enterprises that were owned by women were less likely to request external financing (37.4%) than enterprises wholly owned by men (46.1%) or equally owned by men and women (50.8%).[[8]](#footnote-2)  Sector concentration, access to business supports, gender imbalance of domestic responsibilities and gender stereotypes of entrepreneurship impact the growth of women’s entrepreneurship. |
| **New Proactive Pay Equity Legislation**  When women receive equal pay for work of equal value, Canada’s economy grows stronger, families prosper, and communities thrive. That is why, in December 2018, the Government of Canada passed the **Pay Equity Act***[[9]](#footnote-3)*, which establishes a proactive pay equity regime within the federal public and private sectors with amendments to related legislation.  Under the Pay Equity Act, employers will be required to examine their compensation practices and ensure that women and men working in federally regulated workplaces with more than 10 employees receive equal pay for work of equal value, regardless of their employment status.  While the Act is expected to come into force by 2020, the Government of Canada is supporting its implementation by developing regulations, appointing an independent Pay Equity Commissioner in the Canadian Human Rights Commission, and establishing the **Federal Contractors Program**[[10]](#footnote-4) for pay equity.  While these measures alone will not close the gender wage gap, they are expected to contribute to reducing gender-based discrimination in the compensation practices and systems of employers by addressing the portion of the gap that is due to the undervaluation of work traditionally done by women.  In 2018, the Government of Canada also announced funding to implement pay transparency for federally regulated employers. This will require federally regulated private sector employers covered by the **Employment Equity Act**[[11]](#footnote-5) to report any existing wage-gaps within their companies for women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, and persons from racially diverse groups. The Government of Canada is working to amend the Act and its regulations to refine the way salary information is calculated and reported by federally regulated private sector employers, and supporting an online application that collects and publishes employer data online. |
| * + For women’s safety (including violence and sexual harassment) at work? | A recent national survey[[12]](#footnote-6) reported that 52% of Canadian women experienced workplace sexual harassment, 28% of which were subject to non-consensual sexual touching, and 89% of the women surveyed reported taking steps to avoid unwanted sexual advances. The findings demonstrate that harassment and violence hurts all individuals and the organizations where they work. Individuals – including victims, bystanders and the perpetrators themselves are impacted by stress and anxiety, harm to their health, and reduced engagement, job satisfaction and productivity. Employers experience reduced productivity, lower employee commitment, increased rates of absenteeism and sick leave, higher turnover rates, negative publicity, and accrued legal costs.  In a 2016 study, women were more likely to report sexual harassment in their workplace (4%) than men (less than 1%). Among women who reported sexual harassment, more than half were targeted by clients or customers.[[13]](#footnote-7) In Canada, “workplace harassment” includes verbal abuse, humiliating behaviour, threats to persons, physical violence, and unwanted sexual attention or sexual harassment.   * + **Workplace Harassment** - 19% of women and 13% of men reported that they had experienced harassment in their workplace in the year.   + **Verbal Abuse** – 13% of women and 10% of men reported that they had experienced verbal abuse in the year.   + **Humiliating Behaviour** – 6% of women and 5% of men reported that they had experienced humiliating behaviour, and 3% of men and women stated that they had experienced threats.   Over the last three years, the Government of Canada has taken actions to address violence and harassment in the world of work, and adopting new legislation and measures including the Act to amend the **Canada Labour Code on harassment and violence**[[14]](#footnote-8), the **Parliamentary Employment and Staff Relations Act**[[15]](#footnote-9) and the **Budget Implementation Act**[[16]](#footnote-10).  The proposed **Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations**[[17]](#footnote-11) aims to change the culture and prevalence of harassment and violence in the workplace. The regulations will serve to empower affected employees, acknowledge “violence and harassment” behaviours, and importance of prevention of violence and harassment in the workplace, privacy and confidentiality of victims and survivors, and timely resolution. The Bill and the Regulations will come into force in 2020. |
| * + On women’s rights to organize and claim rights? | According to Statistics Canada[[18]](#footnote-12), the rate of overall unionization in Canada has declined since 1981. The data found that this decline was mostly experienced among men, whereas the unionization rate of women remained stable as a result of two offsetting trends: the unionization rate declining among women under 45 years of age, and offset by an increasing rate among women between 45 and 64 of age.  Older women were the only group to see an increase in the unionization rate between 1981 and 2014. The increase in the unionization rate for older women may be explained by their concentration in industries with union presence, such as health care and social assistance, education services and public administration. As of 2018, a union member in Canada is slightly more likely to be a woman, and working in an office, school or hospital. |
| 1. What are the promising practices emerging in Canada to ensure the realization of women’s rights to work and women’s rights at work, in the context of technological and demographic change, as well as continuing globalization and the shift towards sustainability? (laws; economic, labour market and social policies; programmes); | Women entrepreneurs represent a significant source of potential for greater economic growth and new jobs in Canada. Recognizing the important contributions of women’s entrepreneurship to both women’s economic empowerment and the overall Canadian economy, Canada has developed several programs to assist women entrepreneurs in starting and growing their businesses, such as improving access to financing, promoting women in international trade, and using government procurement to support businesses led by women.  Government investments in early learning and child care can support the labour market participation of women. In recent years, Canada has signed multilateral early learning and child care frameworks with provinces and territories to support access to affordable child care, which is still mostly done by women. Improving access to child care can support mothers in lower and middle income families.  Over the last three years, the Government of Canada has introduced several measures to support the participation and success of women, and other groups that face barriers, in the skilled trades. These include the **Apprenticeship Incentive Grant for Women**[[19]](#footnote-13), the **Women in Construction Fund[[20]](#footnote-14)**, the **Skilled Trades Awareness and Readiness Program**[[21]](#footnote-15), and the **Union Training and Innovation Program**.[[22]](#footnote-16)  The Government of Canada announced the **Women Entrepreneurship Strategy[[23]](#footnote-17)** supporting initiatives and partnerships helping women grow their businesses and increasing access to financing, networks and expertise. In addition to other government supports for small business owners**, Innovation Canada[[24]](#footnote-18)** provides a “one-stop-shop”[[25]](#footnote-19) for Canada’s innovators and entrepreneurs that includes more than 1,000 supports from across the federal, provincial and territorial governments in Canada.    In 2018, the **Canada Business Corporations Act**[[26]](#footnote-20) was amended to include measures that aim to increase the diversity of boards of directors and management teams of federally-incorporated, public corporations. The new measures will require the affected corporations to report annually to their shareholders prescribed information regarding specified groups identified through the Employment Equity Act, including women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, and persons from racially diverse groups.  The related regulations will come into force in 2020 and apply to information provided for annual meetings held on or after January 1, 2020. Corporations will need to disclose the same type of information as required under provincial securities rules, which includes, among other things, the number and proportion of directors from the specified groups on the board and in senior management; information on any policies relating to the identification and nomination of directors from the specified groups; information on targets and representation on the board and among senior management for the specified groups and; and information on board or nomination committee decisions and considerations based on diversity in identifying and nominating candidates for election or re-election to the board, or when making senior management appointments. |
| **Modernizing Federal Labour Standards**  The Government of Canada passed significant changes to the federal labour standards set out in the Canada Labour Code in 2017 and 2018.[[27]](#footnote-21) Once in force, these changes are expected to particularly benefit women employees and enhance both their right to work and their rights at work.  The first focus of changes was on improving work-life balance. To that end, federal labour standards were revised to ensure employees the right to request flexible work arrangements from their employers. The creation of a new five-day personal leave, of which three days are paid provides employees with security and flexibility for use, including family responsibilities; the creation of a 17-week leave to care for a critically ill adult; the requirement by employers to provide 96 hours’ notice of schedules and 24 hours’ notice of shift changes to employees; improvement or enhancement of vacation entitlements; and allowance of employees to refuse overtime to deal with family responsibilities. These measures will especially benefit women employees who bear a disproportionate share of caregiving responsibilities and domestic work than that of male employees.  Another focus of the modernization effort was addressing non-standard work. Changes in this area included eliminating unpaid internships in federally regulated sectors where the internships are not part of a formal educational program and by prohibiting employers from paying their employees who do the same work under the same conditions at different rates of wages because of their employment status (e.g. part time vs full-time). Women are overrepresented among interns and part-time workers in the federally regulated private sector, and so are expected to benefit disproportionately from these changes as well, once in force.  Finally, another series of amendments was designed to address a range of challenges that women, in particular, face in the workplace. These include ensuring that employees can take time off work to attend medical appointments by amending medical leave; providing unpaid nursing breaks for employees who nurse or express breast milk; and creating a new 10-day leave (of which five days are paid) for employees who are victims of family violence or whose children are victims. |
| ***Technology***   1. How is technological change impacting on women’s experiences of work in Canada? (e.g. increasing access to ICTs, robotics, machine learning, automation) | The changing nature of work poses unique gender-based challenges as men and women are not evenly represented across all sectors/occupations of the economy. For example, in 2016, women accounted for only 24% of computer and information systems professionals and 23% of computer and information systems technicians.  Women may have the potential to be better positioned than men for the jobs of the future. They have higher academic achievement and tend to occupy positions that require more personal interaction and social perceptiveness, which could better insulate them from having their tasks automated. Also, women tend to have a more generalist skillset compared to men. The demand for generalist skillsets is expected to increase while machines displace more task-oriented jobs typically held by men.[[28]](#footnote-22) |
| Technological change is increasingly enabling work to be decoupled from traditional workplaces and standard 8 hour workdays. This increased flexibility in where and how work may be performed can, if properly accompanied by policy and regulation, enhance women’s participation in the workforce by enabling them to create work arrangements that balance work and family obligations.  In an effort to promote the use of flexible work arrangements, the Government amended the Canada Labour Codeto give workers in the federally regulated private sector the right to request flexible work arrangements, such as flexible start and finish times and the ability to work from home, from their employers after six months of employment. The employer is required to consider the request and respond in writing within 30 days. The request can only be denied for reasons set out in the legislation and regulations.  This measure came into force on September 1, 2019. It is expected to contribute to ensuring that more women in the federally regulated private sector are able to maintain work-life balance and labour market attachment in spite of caregiving and other responsibilities. |
| * What are some of the good practices for supporting women to benefit equally from technological advances? (laws, economic and social policies, institutional measures, regulation, actions by employers). | The Government of Canada is investing in the **Future Skills**[[29]](#footnote-23) initiative, which aims to support skills development policies and programs that evolve to meet Canadian workers’ and employers’ changing needs as a result of disruptive change. The program establishes a ministerial Council of diverse subject matter experts from the public, private and not-for-profit sectors, working closely with provinces and territories and partners across the Government of Canada to address the priorities identified by the Council.  The Council provides advice on emerging skills and workforce trends and recommend concrete areas of action of pan-Canadian significance, and establishes an independent applied research centre that supports the development of innovative approaches to skills assessment and development, and ensuring that all Canadians can benefit from emerging opportunities. This includes a focus on addressing the needs of disadvantaged and traditionally under‑represented groups, including women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, low-income workers, newcomers to Canada and youth.  In 2017, the Government of Canada announced the **Innovation and Skills Plan**[[30]](#footnote-24) with the objectives to grow the economy, create middle-class jobs, and provide Canadians with the skills they need to succeed. It includes funding to help Canadians develop the digital skills necessary for tomorrow’s labour market and identify skills needs for the changing labour market with a focus on the specific needs of persons and groups that have been traditionally under-represented, including women and Indigenous Peoples. |
| Women are under-represented and often underpaid in STEM occupations where new and high paying jobs are concentrated. The Canadian government’s new pay equity legislation sets the course to address gender wage gaps and systemic issues that impact women’s right to equal pay for work of equal value, and requiring employers to establish a pay equity plan and compensations, and an independent Pay Equity Commissioner within the Canadian Human Rights Commission to administer and enforce the legislation.  While technology is increasing the automation of manual-routine and non-cognitive tasks, the value of manual-non-routine and cognitive tasks is increasing. This includes the demand for skilled trade workers, which Canada is facing a shortage due to demographic changes. To help meet the increasing need for more workers in skilled trades, the Government introduced the **Apprenticeship Incentive Grant for Women**[[31]](#footnote-25), supporting women’s training and skills development in trades. |
| The Government launched the **Student Work Placement**[[32]](#footnote-26) (SWP) Program, which provides wage subsidies to employers to offer quality work-integrated learning (WIL) placements that focus on foundational “work ready” skills for post-secondary students. Employers can receive up to 50% of wages, up to a maximum amount for each new WIL placement created for a student, and an enhanced wage subsidy (up to 70%, or a maximum amount) for each new WIL placement for students in under-represented groups, which includes women in STEM.  In 2019, the program was expanded from STEM and business programs to include students from all fields of study. This will make WIL opportunities more available to students and is expected to increase participation from women and under-represented groups. |
| The Government of Canada also has **Workforce Development Agreements[[33]](#footnote-27)** (WDAs) with the provinces and territories. The WDAs allow provinces and territories to provide employment assistance and skills training with the flexibility to respond to the diverse needs of their respective clients.  Programs delivered under the WDAs seek to help individuals who are further removed from the labour market, unemployed, underemployed or seeking to upskill to find and keep employment or reorient their career.  These agreements include specific funding targeted for persons with disabilities, and can also be used to support programs that seek to improve the labour market outcomes of women. The WDAs also support employer’s seeking to hire or train current or future employees.  The WDAs complement the **Labour Market Development Agreements[[34]](#footnote-28)** (LMDAs), the largest labour market transfer to provinces and territories. The LMDAs support Canadians with Employment Insurance (EI) funded skills training and employment assistance. Eligibility for programming under the LMDAs was recently expanded to allow more individuals to access these supports.  The latest available results demonstrate that LMDA program participants improved their labour market outcomes in employment and earnings, and reduced their dependence on government income support including employment insurance and social assistance.  Women traditionally have had more access to “lighter touch” interventions, for example in employment counselling, resume writing, or other soft skills. This has resulted in broadening eligibility requirements that will help women access more extensive supports in skills training, wage subsidies, and work experience placements, which may also help improve labour market outcomes for women. |
|  | The **Canada Pension Plan Disability (CPPD) Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program**[[35]](#footnote-29) is a voluntary program to assist CPP disability benefit recipients return to work. Research suggests that the CPPD-VR improved the labour market outcomes of women. However, a lack of data hinders researchers’ ability to complete a thorough analysis.[[36]](#footnote-30) |
| ***“Gig” and “On Demand” Economy***   1. How is the rise of more flexible forms of labour, including the “gig” and “on demand” economy impacting on women’s experiences of work? | “On-demand” approaches to work and some forms of non-standard work, including temporary and self-employment, can provide flexibility and act as enablers for some marginalized women that succeed in finding employment, which they may not have found in the formal economy. However, gig economy work can also lead to weakened job quality, may increase social isolation, diminish access to labour market and social supports, and could shift key financial responsibilities (e.g., benefits, pensions etc.) from firms onto governments and workers.  The Bank of Canada’s study finds that wages in the gig economy tend to be lower than in formal jobs.[[37]](#footnote-31) Women could become particularly vulnerable to the gig economy over the long term as they often pursue non-standard work arrangements as a means to offer them the flexibility they need given their family responsibilities. This may exacerbate adverse labour market outcomes, such as lower wages and income for women.    The study also finds that most gig economy workers in Canada do so involuntarily, and more than half of gig workers in Canada would rather have a formal working arrangement for the same pay.[[38]](#footnote-32)  The gig economy may also be continuing to entrench gender norms on work, with women being disproportionately concentrated in on-demand household services, paid care and domestic work. |
| * + What are the implications for job security for increased flexibility and women’s caring responsibilities, and for harassment and violence? | While the gig economy offers flexibility and could potentially boost the labour market participation of women, it could potentially exacerbate inequalities as non-standard work often features lower pay, less benefits and less chance of promotion. However, offering the ability to work from home (i.e. online gig work), could potentially reduce the risk of gender-based harassment or violence, such as when travelling to and from external workplaces. |
| Gig work can provide workers with flexibility to choose when and how they work. This can benefit women with caregiving responsibilities by enabling them to work when appropriate for them. However, this type of work arrangement can be detrimental in terms of women’s job security.  Gig work generally operates on the premise that workers are independent contractors, not employees. This denies these workers access to key employment protections and supports such as, for instance, reasonable notice of termination and job- and income-protected leaves of absence such as maternity leave and parental leave. Their job security is thus limited by this type of work.  Other non-standard work arrangements created or grown by the “on demand” economy include part-time, on-call and temporary work. While these workers are generally considered employees, they may lack the required hours or length of service to access key employment protections, including employment insurance or other forms of leave, and may be subject to unpredictable work schedules that conflict with their caring responsibilities.  In 2017 and 2018, the Government of Canada took action to address these issues, as discussed in “good practices” response below. |
| * + Which groups of women are most likely to be impacted by this type of work? | As a group, women are overrepresented in precarious work. However, women who are older, single parents, women from racially diverse groups, and women who are recent immigrants are particularly vulnerable.  Indeed, young women are more likely to work in the gig economy compared to core-age and older women. They are also the most likely to report that gig work is their main source of income.27 As the gig economy is sometimes a means to compensate for a lack of formal employment opportunities, some groups of women with a higher unemployment rate could also be more likely to work in the gig economy. Part-time workers, most of which are women, are also more likely to work in the gig economy compared to full-time workers.27 |
| * + What are some of the good practices for ensuring access to social protection for women in informal and “on demand” work? (laws, economic and social policies, institutional measures, regulation, actions by employers) | Women’s participation in informal and “on demand” work will have no bearing on their eventual eligibility for Old Age Security[[39]](#footnote-33) benefits. A person’s entitlement to these benefits is determined by how long he or she has lived in Canada. However, this type of benefit is different than other components of Canada’s social safety net such as Employment Insurance (EI)[[40]](#footnote-34), and requires individuals to have participated in insurable employment for a required number of hours. An increase in new business models that promote some forms of non-standard employment where women are overrepresented (e.g., contract work) may increase the number of workers who are not covered by such components, including EI. |
| While part-time employment is a form of non-standard work in which women with severe disabilities are over-represented, part-time employment may provide an accommodation for some women with disabilities who may be unable to participate in the labour market on a full-time basis. The importance of part-time employment for women with severe disabilities demonstrates the need for consideration of income and financial security. |
| **Federal Labour Standards**  To help federal employees improve their work-life balance, the Government of Canadahas also introduced federal labour standards that include the right to request flexible work arrangements and access to a new personal leave and leave for victims of family violence.  **Leave for victims of family/domestic violence**  A new leave for victims of family violence was introduced as part of a series of amendments to the Canada Labour Code in 2017 and 2018, and came into force on September 1, 2019. Employees in the federally regulated private sector will have up to 10 days of job-protected leave per year (the first five days of which are paid for those with three consecutive months of continuous employment) if they or their minor child are victims of family violence. This will allow employees who are victims of family violence or the parents of victims of family violence to take time off work to recover without fear of losing their livelihood. The leave will especially benefit women, as statistics show that the rate of family violence against women is nearly double the rate for men.  **Hours of Work and Breaks**  In addition, a suite of modernized federal labour standards came into force on September 1, 2019 including notice of schedules and shift changes, rest periods between shifts, 30-minute breaks, unpaid breaks for medical reasons and notably, unpaid breaks for nursing or expressing breast milk. These changes are expected to have a positive impact on workers in less formal and more insecure workplaces who are less likely to be protected by collective agreements.  As discussed above, the “on demand” economy has increased the use of non-standard work arrangements such as part-time, on-call and temporary work. To address the particular challenges faced by women in these types of work and improve their social protection, the *Canada Labour Code* was amended in 2017 and 2018 to:   * + require employers to provide 96 hours’ advance notice of schedules and 24 hours’ advance notice of shift changes,   + give employees the right to refuse overtime to deal with family responsibilities;   + introduce a new personal leave that can be taken for personal reasons including emergencies and family responsibilities;   + eliminate or reduce continuous employment requirements so that employees can access job-protected leaves (e.g. maternity, parental) sooner; and   + prohibit employers from treating employees as independent contractors in order to avoid their labour standards obligations.   Together, these initiatives are expected to ensure greater job security and schedule predictability for women in non-standard work in the federally regulated private sector. |
| * + What are the good practices for women’s collective organizing in the context of more flexible forms of labour? | Non-standard flexible forms of labour, including those in the “gig” and “on demand” economy, has been increasing as a share of the labour market in Canada. Statistics Canada (2018) reported that the rate of standard employees (permanent, full-time) has decreased by 5 per cent since 1989. The gig economy may appeal to women because women are more likely to take on flexible work arrangements to provide child care responsibilities.  A good practice for women’s collective organizing in the context of flexible forms of labour is exemplified in the model used by the Canadian Freelance Union (CFU), a community chapter of Unifor that focuses on advancing the rights and working conditions for freelancers in the communications and media industries. Research shows women are overrepresented in freelancing positions, perhaps as a response to seeking flexible work arrangements. As a community chapter of Unifor, CFU benefits from Unifor’s experience, skills, and power. CFU members have access to a range of health and dental plans, home and liability insurance, national and international press cards, grievance support, and contract advice. The community chapter provides avenues for freelancers to find work and connect with other freelancers.  Moreover, gig and on demand workers in Canada have shown a heightened interest in formal unionization in recent years. Notably, in 2019 both Toronto-based Foodora couriers and Uber drivers, in separate cases, took steps towards voting on union certification suggesting there is an appetite for collective organizing among gig workers. In Canada, it should be noted that there are data and knowledge gaps on how different groups, such as women, experience gig work. |
| ***Demographic change***   1. How is demographic change in Canada impacting on women’s experience of work? | The Canadian demographic landscape is undergoing transition with population growth slowing and Canadians living and working longer than ever before. The impacts of population ageing will be long term and the slowing growth in the labour force is expected to affect almost all occupations. This would result in pressures in sectors and occupations where strong labour demand and/or high retirement rates are expected. |
| * + What are the implications of an ageing population and of the “youth bulge”? | The majority of the care and support provided to seniors is provided by women, many of whom are family members or friends. While caregiving can be a positive experience, it has both financial and health consequences for caregivers, especially those providing intense care or providing care for a person with dementia. Caregivers often experience negative impacts on their emotional and physical health from caregiving, as well as financial strain from time off work or out-of-pocket expenses. Flexible and supportive work environments are critical, as many caregivers are trying to balance work and the provision of care to aging parents and/or spouses.  Canada’s ageing population is expected to lead to an increase in the demand for workers in the healthcare sector.[[41]](#footnote-35) This is a predominantly female sector and jobs creation in this sector is expected to contribute to protect women against job losses due to automation.  In 2015, a greater proportion of women performed unpaid work activities than did men (89.9% versus 80.1%).[[42]](#endnote-7) Women spent more time on unpaid work than men in 2015:[[43]](#endnote-8)   * + **women** **aged 25 to 54** spent an average of **3.9** hours daily on **unpaid work** as a primary activity, compared to **2.4** for **men**;and   + **women aged 15 to 64** (measure used by OECD) spent an average of **4.1** hours daily on **unpaid work**, compared to **2.6** for **men**.[[44]](#endnote-9)   The presence and age of the youngest child in the household has a notable effect on the work hours of women, but very little effect on those of men.[[45]](#endnote-10)   * + In 2015, the average weekly work hours of mothers ranged from 34.1 for those with a child under the age of 6, to 35.9 for those with a child aged 18 to 24 (a difference of 1.8 hours). Women who did not have a child under the age of 25 worked the greatest number of hours per week on average at 36.4.[[46]](#endnote-11)   + In 2015, the average weekly work hours of fathers fluctuated by 30 minutes, from 41.6 for those with a child under the age of 6, to 42.1 for those with a child aged 12 to 17. Fathers with children aged 18 to 24 worked the same number of average weekly hours (41.9) as those with children aged 6 to 11.[[47]](#endnote-12)   + Women without children had higher average weekly work hours than mothers, while men without children had lower average weekly work hours than fathers.[[48]](#endnote-13) |
| * + What economic and social policies are needed to ensure that the growth in the care sector creates decent work opportunities for women? What are some emerging promising practices? (laws, economic and social policies, institutional measures, regulation, actions by employers). | Canada is undertaking measures to address issues and barriers that women face in the labour market, implementing labour reforms to better accommodate flexible work arrangements, investing in child care and promoting women’s participation in male-dominated occupations, such as the skilled trades. There are some promising and emerging practices, including:  **Modernizing Federal Labour Standards**  The care sector is regulated under provincial/territorial labour standards legislation. However, recent amendments to federal labour standards could serve as a model to improve outcomes for women in this sector going forward. See a full list of relevant changes in the response to Question 2. |
| **Investing in Early Learning and Child Care**  Availability of quality and affordable child care is one of the measures that would have an impact on increasing women’s labour force participation, by allowing them to better balance family and employment responsibilities. Access to affordable high-quality early learning and child care is important to achieving greater equality between men and women by providing mothers of young children with increased opportunity to participate in education and training, to join the labour force in greater numbers, and to earn higher incomes. Investment in child care also reduces the cost associated with child care expenses, which can make up a significant proportion of household expenses, especially for low-income women and their families.  To help Canadian children get the best start in life and better support Canadian families, the Government of Canada announced investments over 11 years, starting in 2017-2018, to support and create more high-quality, affordable child care across the country, particularly for families more in need.  The Government of Canada has entered into three-year bilateral agreements with each province and territory that is providing funding over three years (2017-18 to 2019-20) for early learning and child care programs. These investments support the creation of affordable, high-quality child care spaces for low and modest income families, with the goal of supporting more affordable child care spaces, which is anticipated to make it more affordable for thousands of parents, particularly for mothers, to enter the labour market and return to work. |
| ***Transition to sustainability***   1. What measures are necessary to ensure that women benefit equally from the transition to sustainability? What are some of the promising practices to ensure that green jobs do not replicate existing gender inequalities in other sectors (e.g. occupational segregation, gender pay gap)? | **Proactive Pay Equity Legislation**  When women receive equal pay for work of equal value, Canada’s economy grows stronger, families prosper, and communities thrive. That is why, in December 2018, the Government of Canadapassed an Act to Establish a Proactive Pay Equity Regime within the Federal Public and Private Sectors (Pay Equity Act) with amendments to related legislation.  Under the Pay Equity Act, employers will be required to examine their compensation practices and ensure that women and men working in federally regulated workplaces with more than 10 employees receive equal pay for work of equal value, regardless of their employment status. This includes the federally regulated private sector, the federal public service, and parliamentary workplaces, such as the Prime Minister’s and Ministers’ offices. To ensure effective implementation, a Pay Equity Commissioner will be appointed within the Canadian Human Rights Commission, and supported by a Pay Equity Unit to inform, educate and help enforce the Pay Equity Act when necessary.  The Pay Equity Act is expected to come into force in 2020. Until then, the Government of Canadawill support its implementation by developing regulations, appointing the Pay Equity Commissioner, and establishing the Federal Contractors Program for Pay Equity.  **Pay Transparency**  In 2018, the Government of Canada also announced funding to implement pay transparency measures for federally regulated private-sector employers with over 100 employees subject to the Employment Equity Act.  The federally regulated private sector covers many businesses and industries that are likely to contribute to the green economy. These industries include banks, air transportation, rail and road transportation that involves crossing provincial or international borders, marine transportation, pipelines crossing provincial borders, feed, flour and seed mills and grain elevators, telecommunications and broadcasting.  Pay transparency measures will make employer wage gap percentages and other aggregated wage information publicly available online and report any existing wage-gaps within their companies for women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, and persons from racially diverse groups, and raise awareness of wage gaps that affect women in full time, part time and temporary work in these sectors.  While pay transparency measures alone will not close the gender wage gap, together with pay equity they are expected to contribute to its reduction by addressing the portion of the gap that is due to the undervaluation of work done by women. |

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