

GENDER WAGE GAP IN ONTARIO

April 22, 2017

WHAT IS IT?

- The gender wage gap is the difference between wages earned by men and wages earned by women.
- The gap can be measured in various ways, but the most common method is to look at full-time, full year wages. It is also possible to measure the gender wage gap on the basis of hourly wages.
- For 2011 – the gap was 26% for full-time, full-year workers, or the female worker earns 74 cents per \$1.00 for men

Pay Equity Commission, *What is the Gender Wage Gap*

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

- Reducing the gender wage gap would help to increase the economic security of women.
- Women constituted the majority (58.3%) of minimum wage earners in Ontario in 2012.
- Families that depend on female earners, such as female lone-parent families, are more vulnerable to poverty.
- Reducing the wage gap would improve women's earnings during their lifetimes and lower the likelihood of poverty during their working years and in retirement. It may also help to lower the number of women on social assistance.

Ministry of Labour, *Closing the Gender Wage Gap: A Background Paper, 2015*

- To put the figure in perspective: if a man were to retire today at 65, a woman would have to keep working until she was 79 to quit with the same earnings.
- The gap sharpens considerably based on race and origin. The pay gap for indigenous women is 57 per cent, for immigrant women it is 39 per cent, and for racialized women it is 32 per cent. Women also make up the majority of minimum-wage earners and part-time workers.
- The gap has narrowed by just 6 per cent since the late 1980s.
- Female-dominated sectors such as caregiving continue to be systematically undervalued. Caregiving is something that is expected to be done by women. It isn't viewed as a career.
- "the cult of flexibility in the workplace is about making work more precarious. And women — racialized women in particular — overwhelming predominate precarious work."

Sara Mojtehdzadeh,
"Ontario urged to tackle gender pay gap with transparency law"
Toronto Star, April 11, 2017

- Precarious part-time work is more likely to involve women.
- Women are more likely than men to work part-time... Women have accounted for about 7 out of 10 of part-time employees in Canada since the late 1970s (2009)
- Many women in Canada work part-time because of family responsibilities...34% of female part-time workers aged 25 to 44 work part-time because they are caring for children, in comparison to more than 3% of their male counterparts (2012).

Ontario. Ministry of the Status of Women. *Statistics: Women and Work*
http://www.women.gov.on.ca/owd/english/economic/women_work.shtml

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

- A new full Ministry of Status of Women was established, Jan. 2017
- The Pay Equity Act, with the Pay Equity Commission, celebrated its 30th Anniversary, January 2017
 - PAY EQUITY is equal pay for work of equal value.
 - "Ontario's Pay Equity Act, instituted in 1987, was once hailed as trailblazing the world over. But after its establishment 30 years ago, the Pay Equity Commission budget has decreased by half — from around 6 million to about 3 million, according to its annual reports. ... Commission staffing has dropped from around 70 employees in the early '90s to 25. 'Employers and parties need to know the act exists. Without having resources to do massive education campaigns, that puts people at a disadvantage,' said Emanuela Heyninck, who heads the Pay Equity Office." Sara Mojtehdzadeh, Toronto Star, Apr.11,2017
- The Ontario Equal Pay Coalition sponsors Equal Pay Day annually. That is the day into the new year to earn what men do by December 31 of the year before.
 - In 2017, it was held on April 11th with a rally in downtown Toronto. The Minister of Labour Kevin Flynn and the Minister of Women's Issues, Indira Naidoo-Harris also gave speeches in the Ontario Legislature.
- **Pay Transparency to Close the Gender Pay Gap Act, April 2017**, was prepared by the Equal Pay Coalition and proposed to both Ministers on Equal Pay Day.
 - It would require employers to report and post hourly wage and pay arrangements, including the breakdown of part-time, contract and temporary agency employees as women increasingly bear the brunt of precarious work.
- Gender Wage Gap Strategy Steering Committee released its Recommendations, Nov.2016.
- The Gender Wage Gap Working Group, with representatives from 14 organizations (including the Ontario Equal Pay Coalition) was established to guide the province's action plan to close the gap. The first meeting was held April 2017, with hopes of having recommendations ready during 2017.
- The Changing Workplace Review has delivered its review, and legislation will be presented in the fall of 2017. Part-time precarious work affects the gender wage gap.

WHAT'S BEING PROPOSED SO FAR?

- **ONTARIO EQUAL PAY COALITION** <http://equalpaycoalition.org/>
Founded in 1976, the Coalition is an active advocate for eliminating the gender wage gap. CFUW Ontario Council is a member.

EQUAL PAY COALITION'S 12 STEPS TO CLOSE THE GENDER PAY GAP BY 2025

- Step 1: Treat closing the gap as a human rights priority
- Step 2: Raise awareness through annual Equal Pay Days and education
- Step 3: Develop a 'Close the gender pay gap by 2025 Plan'
- Step 4: Enforce and expand pay equity laws
- Step 5: Implement employment equity law and policies
Pay Transparency to Close the Gender Pay Gap Act, April 2017, was prepared by the Equal Pay Coalition and proposed to the Ministers of Labour and of Status of Women on Equal Pay Day.
- Step 6: Promote access to collective bargaining
- Step 7: Increase the minimum wage
- Step 8: Provide affordable and accessible child care
100,000 new child care spaces over 5 years are being proposed for Ontario.
- Step 9: Mainstream equity compliance into government laws and policies
- Step 10: Mainstream equity compliance into workplaces and businesses
- Step 11: End violence and harassment of women
Ontario has strong Sexual Violence and Harassment legislation, with the campaign It's Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment
- Step 12: Secure decent work for women across the economic spectrum

For more information, please see <http://equalpaycoalition.org/12-steps-to-closing-the-gap/>

- **GENDER WAGE GAP STRATEGY STEERING COMMITTEE released its Recommendations, Nov.2016**
FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS of the Gender Wage Gap Strategy Steering Committee, Prepared for the Minister of Labour and Minister Responsible for Women's Issues
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/final-report-and-recommendations-gender-wage-gap-strategy-steering-committee>

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS Nov.2016

1. An early child care system within a defined timeframe, that is: high quality, affordable, accessible, publicly funded and geared to income, with sufficient spaces to meet the needs of Ontario families.

2. Review access and eligibility for child care fee subsidy programs; meet the need for services on a flexible basis.
3. Sufficient capacity in the long-term care system, home and community care services for Ontarians.
4. Establish a Parental Shared Leave.
5. Ask the federal government to coordinate EI benefits with the Parental Shared Leave; increase the amount payable.
6. Address barriers to compliance; support employers in ongoing obligations by amending the Pay Equity Act.
7. Proxy pay equity, coordinate pay equity with wage enhancement programs .
8. Consult on how to value work in female-dominant sectors.
9. Pay transparency policies.
10. Develop an easy to use gender workplace analysis tool.
11. Minimum of 30% women on boards with compliance penalties.
12. Gender balance in appointments to provincial bodies.
13. Social awareness strategy explaining gender equality and wage gap.
14. All aspects of the education system are free of gender bias.
15. An action plan to increase women's participation in male-dominant skilled trades and men's participation in female-dominant ones.
16. Employment and skills training programs help women succeed in getting and keeping jobs they are trained for.
17. Apply gender-based analysis to all government policies and programs.
18. Gender responsive budgeting and redress gender inequalities
19. Procurement policies that show no unresolved orders or decisions against vendors under anti-discrimination laws.
20. Programs to ensure employees understand their rights and obligations, and how to access justice.

OTHER RESOURCES:

Mary Cornish, *A Growing Concern: Ontario's Gender Pay Gap*, CCPA, April 2014

www.policyalternatives.ca

Mary Cornish and Jan Borowy, *Brief to the Parliamentary Special Committee on Pay Equity, May 2, 2016*, <http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/HOC/Committee/421/ESPE/Brief/BR8223427/br-external/EqualPayCoalition-e-final2.pdf>