

Canadian women equal men in skills but wage gap persists, study finds ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Women in Canada earn 65 cents for every dollar men are paid even though they have the same skills, says a report released on Wednesday.

Women are on par with men in education, literacy and skills, according to the World Economic Forum's annual study on the gender gap. That is showing up in white-collar jobs, where there are now more women than men in high-skilled positions.

"There is equality in the types of skills women are acquiring," said Saadia Zahidi, a member of the forum's executive committee.

The report looked at who was employed in professional and technical positions, such as medicine and computer science, and found that 58 per cent were women and 42 per cent were men.

But in terms of leadership roles and wages, women still come up short.

The average yearly earnings for women in Canada are estimated at \$35,869 compared with \$54,411 for men.

Women hold only a third of the leadership roles in the public and private sector.

"Canada has reached parity in professional and technical workers, but there has been slow improvement in getting women into senior positions," Ms. Zahidi said.

Women are also lagging in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Over all, Canada ranked 35th among the 114 countries that were analyzed on gender equality in economic opportunity, education, health and political empowerment. It was ahead of the United States, which ranked 45th.

The study did not take into account the recent changes to Canada's federal government, where half of the members of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's cabinet are women.

Iceland was considered the most "gender equal," followed by Finland, Norway and Sweden. Rwanda was ranked fifth, mostly because it has the highest share of female parliamentarians in the world.

Yemen was at the bottom of the list, after Syria, Saudi Arabia and Chad.

Although Canada has made progress on the political side, the report showed that the economic gap between genders was worse than the average.

Over the past decade, the country has slipped from 10th to 36th in terms of economic opportunity for women. That decline was due in part to the low number of women in leadership positions and the gap in wages.

Canada was not alone. The forum found that there has been a "dramatic slowdown in progress," because of chronic imbalances in salaries and labour force participation.

The forum, a not-for-profit foundation based in Geneva, predicted that equality between the sexes could take 170 years. Last year, it predicted that the gender gap would close within 118 years.

"Women around the world on average earning just over half of what men earn despite, on average, working longer hours, taking paid and unpaid work into account," the forum said.

Region: Canada ^[2]

Tags: women ^[3]

wages ^[4]

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/16/11/canadian-women-equal-men-skills-wage-gap-persists-study-finds> [2] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7864> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/women> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/wages>