

Women and paid work ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Full report PDF ^[2]

Attachment	Size
 women-paid-work-2017.pdf ^[3]	1.27 MB

INTRODUCTION

Based on the Labour Force Survey (LFS), 82.0% of women in the core working ages of 25 to 54 years (6 million) participated in the labour market in 2015. This compared to 21.6% (563,000) of women in 1950 and 65.2% (3.3 million) in 1983. Although women continue to be somewhat less likely than their male counterparts to participate in the labour market, this gender disparity has decreased considerably over the years, from 75.5 percentage points in 1950 to 28.3 percentage points in 1983 and 8.9 percentage points in 2015. In spite of this trend, women's experiences of paid work tend to differ from those of men, being shaped to a greater extent by their caregiving roles and/or their employers' presumptions of these roles.

Using primarily annual data from the LFS, this chapter of Women in Canada examines women's labour market experiences in comparison with men's and, where relevant, explores how they have evolved over time. Specifically, historical trends in women's labour force participation in Canada are documented and situated against other G7 countries. In addition, employment patterns across a variety of personal and work characteristics are considered: province, educational attainment, marital status, presence of dependent children and age of youngest child in the household, lone parenthood, work hours, self-employment, sector of employment (e.g., public or private), "precarious" employment (i.e., part-time and/or temporary employment), industry, and occupation. Unemployment patterns by age, province, and reason are also considered, including Employment Insurance claims and beneficiaries.

Most analyses in this chapter focus on women (and men) in the core working ages of 25 to 54 years, as youth's (15 to 24 years) labour market experiences tend to be shaped by school attendance and, in the case of those 55 years and older, their labour market experiences tend to be shaped by retirement. However, gender differences in labour market indicators among young and older women are considered separately at the end of this chapter.

Gender often overlaps with other social characteristics, such as visible minority status, Aboriginal status, immigrant status (i.e., Canadian-born or foreign-born) and class. These social characteristics may intersect, creating diverse labour market experiences among women (and men). In this chapter, labour market indicators for women versus men are not further disaggregated by the aforementioned social characteristics, as they are covered in other chapters of Women in Canada.

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