

Alternative federal budget 2018: Getting there ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

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[Objectif en vue: Le Budget fédéral alternatif 2018 ^{\[3\]} \(FR\)](#)

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Description:

The CCPA's Alternative Federal Budget for the 2018-2019 fiscal year aligns with evidence-based social policy and with what child care advocates have been demanding. Authors draw attention to the fact that federal funding for early childhood education and care (ECEC) represents just 0.3% of Canadian GDP; maintaining Canada's status as one of the lowest spenders on ECEC among peer OECD countries, where the minimum international benchmark sits at 1% of GDP.

The report cites evidence of inefficient use of federal funds-- with the Canada Child Benefit providing little, if any, incentive for second income earners in two-parent families to enter the labour force due to the high cost of child care and the potential loss of income tax benefits. The report recognizes that the government's Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework has appropriate principles, but underscores that a lack of funding does not enable them to become operational. CCPA condemns the government's current targeted approach, which it says does not reflect action on gender equity, and instead espouses a universal approach to child care that would see the rights of children and families recognized through access to high-quality ECEC, regardless of income or geography.

Authors propose \$1 billion in federal spending on ECEC in the current fiscal year, going up by \$1 billion each successive year until spending reaches the established international standard of 1% of GDP. Importantly, the CCPA asserts that federal transfers to the provinces and territories be conditional upon actualization of principles of universality, high-quality and comprehensive services. Adherence to these, authors show, hinge on operational-funding (not parent-payment measures) for non-profit and publicly planned and managed systems of early learning and child care, with secure accountability measures.

Attention to strengthening the federal-provincial/territorial approach to maternity and parental leave through amendments to eligibility, flexibility, adequacy of benefits, special considerations, and leave for parents who are not the birth parent is also outlined in the Employment Insurance chapter. Paternity leave and more on a universal child care program are expounded upon in the Gender Equality chapter.

Excerpts from CCPA:

The 2018 Alternative Federal Budget (AFB) delivers a roadmap to where the country could be on the eve of the next federal election, if the government moves forward with bold action to deliver a progressive economic plan that leaves no one behind. If implemented, the 2018 Alternative Federal Budget: Getting There will reduce income inequality, lift close to a million people out of poverty, close unfair and expensive tax loopholes, and create 600,000 jobs while locking in the unemployment rate in the five per cent range.

The AFB plan:

- Boosts direct transfers to low-income families in ways that would lift 600,000 children and adults out of poverty and reduce child poverty by roughly a third;
- Eliminates all fossil fuel subsidies and creates a Just Transition Fund to help ease energy sector workers into new roles in a fully green economy;
- Tackles historic under-investment faced by First Nations communities through a \$9-billion investment this year in urgently needed infrastructure, clean water, education and health care on reserves;
- ***Acts immediately to implement pay equity legislation and invests heavily in child care so women's labour is no longer discounted as a result of discrimination;***

- Slashes senior poverty rates by 30% by increasing the Canada Pension Plan income exemption for the Guaranteed Income Supplement by \$3,000 and boosting the top-up amount by \$1,000;
- Accelerates the national carbon price to reach \$50 per tonne by 2020, while investing in training, apprenticeships and green infrastructure.

Related link: IMF Working Paper - Women are key for future growth: Evidence from Canada [8]

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[8] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/17/07/imf-working-paper-women-are-key-future-growth-evidence-cana> [9]

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