

Armine Yalnizyan: Why Canada needs a SHE-covery ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

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Excerpts from transcript:

It's late August, and I'm starting to get really worried that Canada's economic recovery is going to stall out or maybe even reverse course as schools open in the fall. That's because our Canadian decision-makers are not paying enough attention to the unique nature of a "she-cession," which is what we are in for the first time all around the world.

Back in 2009, I wrote a piece for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives that documented how every recession was gendered. And in fact, the pattern was that men would lose jobs initially and women come in taking other jobs in the immediate recovery period. Mostly, that was about men losing better paid jobs and women taking lesser paid jobs, men losing jobs in the goods producing sector, and women picking up jobs in the service sector. And over time, that meant that the gap between men and women in both unemployment and employment rates started to close. In fact, by the global financial crisis, women made up half the employed labour force. And that was the case going into the pandemic this time.

But all around the world for the first time, the people that lost their jobs were in the service sector first, primarily lower paid and primarily women. It was the world's first "she-cession."

But "she-covery" is the pathway that's blocked without public policy to ensure that something happens to keep our kids safe in childcare centres and schools. And that's the plan that's lacking. We have no path to "she-covery" without our school boards, our provinces and our federal governments working together to develop a plan. We've had almost half a year to develop that plan and it is now lacking.

As I've been saying for months now: "no recovery without a 'she-covery'; no 'she-covery' without child care." We got to make good on this and we have no time to waste.

Region: Canada ^[4]

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women ^[6]

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