

A Stronger and More Resilient Canada: Speech from the Throne to open the Second Session of the Forty-Third Parliament of Canada ^[1]

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WOMEN IN THE ECONOMY

Women – and in particular low-income women – have been hit hardest by COVID-19. This crisis has been described as a She-cession.

Many women have bravely served on the frontlines of this crisis, in our communities or by shouldering the burden of unpaid care work at home. We must not let the legacy of the pandemic be one of rolling back the clock on women's participation in the workforce, nor one of backtracking on the social and political gains women and allies have fought so hard to secure.

The Government will create an Action Plan for Women in the Economy to help more women get back into the workforce and to ensure a feminist, intersectional response to this pandemic and recovery. This Plan will be guided by a task force of experts whose diverse voices will power a whole of government approach.

It has been nearly 50 years since the Royal Commission on the Status of Women outlined the necessity of child care services for women's social and economic equality. We have long understood that Canada cannot succeed if half of the population is held back. Canadians need more accessible, affordable, inclusive, and high quality childcare.

Recognizing the urgency of this challenge, the Government will make a significant, long-term, sustained investment to create a Canada-wide early learning and childcare system.

The Government will build on previous investments, learn from the model that already exists in Quebec, and work with all provinces and territories to ensure that high-quality care is accessible to all. There is broad consensus from all parts of society, including business and labour leaders, that the time is now.

The Government also remains committed to subsidizing before- and after-school program costs. With the way that this pandemic has affected parents and families, flexible care options for primary school children are more important than ever. The Government will also accelerate the Women's Entrepreneurship Strategy, which has already helped women across Canada grow their businesses

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