

Closing Canada's gender gap: Year 2240 here we come! ^[1]

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Source: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

Format: Report

Publication Date: 24 Apr 2013

AVAILABILITY

Full report in pdf ^[2]

Excerpts from news release:

Gender gap leaves Canadian women "leaning in" for the next 228 years: study

Without a change in public policy, Canada's gender gap won't go away anytime soon, says a new study from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA).

The study, by CCPA Research Associate Kate McInturff, looks at Canada's progress in closing the gap between men and women over the past two decades. Using the methodology developed by the World Economic Forum, the report calculates Canada's score overall and in the areas of health, education, economics and politics, beginning in 1993.

In spite of recent high-profile initiatives to increase women's representation in politics and on corporate boards, Canada's overall score has climbed just 2.3% in two decades.

"At this rate, Canada will not close its gender gap for another 228 years," says McInturff, "I won't be alive to see it close and neither will my children or my grandchildren."

The good news is Canada has had a nearly perfect score in the areas of health and education over the past twenty years. However, Canada's scores for economic participation and opportunity, and political participation and empowerment fall far short.

Since 1993, Canada's score in economic participation and opportunity has inched forward at less than 0.3% a year. At this rate, it will take 71 years to close the economic gender gap in Canada.

"The economic gender gap is not due to a lack of qualifications, given Canada's high levels of equality in access to education," says McInturff. "In fact, the income gap is actually greater for women with university or college degrees than it is for those with high school diplomas. Having a university degree means a higher level of income overall, yes, but it also means facing a higher level of wage discrimination."

According to the study, the closer women get to the top, the greater the barriers to achieving equality. This trend is startlingly clear in the measures of the gap in political participation. Canada's political empowerment score has hardly budged, from .15 in 1993 to .20 in 2012, meaning Canada will not close the gap on political participation for 390 years at this pace.

"Political participation is the one area measured by the global gender gap in which rapid change is possible, yet it is the area with the least progress and the slowest rate of change," says McInturff.

"In order to make faster progress we need an investment of political and financial resources into both the civil society organizations and the political institutions that represent the needs and interests of women in Canada. This is an investment that would pay huge dividends, not only in the quality of life of Canadians but also in the economic stability of the country," McInturff concludes.

Region: Canada ^[3]

Tags: gender ^[4]

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