

# The G20 and gender equality: How the G20 can advance women's rights in employment, social protection and fiscal policies <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

[Full report \(pdf\)](#) <sup>[2]</sup>

[Executive summary \(pdf\)](#) <sup>[3]</sup>

## Description:

**Across G20 countries and beyond, women are paid less than men, do most of the unpaid labor, are over-represented in part-time work, and are discriminated against in the household, in markets and in institutions.**

In 2012 in the Los Cabos Declaration, G20 leaders committed to tackling the barriers to women's full economic and social participation and to expanding opportunities for women in their countries.

Oxfam and the Heinrich Böll Foundation support this commitment, and this paper calls on the G20 to assess its agenda and act on its commitments to women's rights and gender equality. During the Australian presidency, the G20 has the chance to make good its promises for truly inclusive growth - working to make women more resilient to economic crisis through gender-sensitive economic growth and gender-equal employment policies.

The G20 countries' commitment to gender equality and inclusive growth can only be realized if they take action to rectify the shortcomings of an economic system that excludes or devalues what matters most: the realization of the rights and dignity of all human beings and protection of the natural environment

## Section on Canada (p. 29)

## Excerpts:

Progress in women's labour force participation in Canada has slowed to a halt over the past two decades, and the gap between men's and women's shares of earned income has remained virtually unchanged. Full-time employment rates for women aged 25-64 have held steady over the past five years at 57 percent on average, compared with 76 percent for men. This gap is most striking among Aboriginal women, whose employment rates are 15 percent below those of non-Aboriginal women.

A key issue affecting women's participation is the absence of a national child care system. Lack of affordable childcare options, coupled with fiscal policies (such as the costly Universal Child Care Benefit programme) that provide an incentive for lower-income mothers to stay at home, create a vicious cycle in which women work fewer years, contribute less to their pensions and employment insurance, and have lower salaries when they re-enter the workforce after their child-rearing years are over. Women also spend on average more than twice as much time as men on unpaid care work in the household (50 hours vs. 24 hours weekly). It is worth noting that data on unpaid work is now less readily available to policy-makers since the government abolished the mandatory long-form census in 2010.

Women's organizations across Canada have been advocating for a federally funded accessible childcare programme as a means to advance gender equality and increase women's participation in the labour force, in particular for low-income women. Many have argued that the CAD 2.8bn currently spent annually through the Universal Child Care Benefit programme could be reallocated for this purpose.

**Related link:** Canada leads on wage equity, but there is still a gap to close [4]

**Region:** International [5]

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