



Women and Gender  
Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité  
des genres Canada

# Canada's Fifth National Review

2019–2024

Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and  
Platform for Action in the Context of the Thirtieth  
Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on  
Women

Canada 

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## INTRODUCTION

This is Canada's fifth report on the implementation of the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* (1995) and the outcomes of the 23rd Special Session of the General Assembly (2000). As in previous national reviews of progress on the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, Canada's report reflects input from all 13 provincial and territorial governments: Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Northwest Territories, Nova Scotia, Nunavut, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Saskatchewan, and Yukon. It also reflects the input of 21 Government of Canada departments and agencies: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada; Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC); the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC); the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC); the Department of National Defence (DND); Environment and Climate Change Canada; Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC); the Department of Finance; Global Affairs Canada; Health Canada; Infrastructure Canada; Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC); Indigenous Services Canada (ISC); Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED); Justice Canada; Natural Resources Canada; Canadian Heritage; the Public Health Agency of Canada; Public Safety Canada; Statistics Canada; and Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE). In addition, all Canadian jurisdictions regularly engage with a wide range of organizations, stakeholders, and the private and voluntary sectors to shape and coordinate efforts on advancing gender equality across the country. As in the past, a broad network of Canadian women's and other equality-seeking organizations are conducting a separate review process to produce a parallel report. Their report will be submitted to UN Women in preparation for the Beijing+30 process.

This report is organized based on [UN Women's Guidance note for comprehensive national-level reviews](#), which provides questions to guide national reviews and reporting. This is expected to promote consistency and comparability between different countries' reports. It will also more easily inform the review process and spark reflections on implementation at the national, regional, and global levels.

## SECTION ONE: HIGHLIGHTS

Canada<sup>1</sup> has a long-standing commitment to advancing gender equality, both domestically and internationally. Gender equality is a principle that is protected in the [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#). At the international level, Canada's commitment to gender equality and to promoting and protecting women's and girls' human rights is embedded in the framework of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, and other international human rights instruments. These include the United Nations (UN) Security Council resolutions on women, peace, and security; Human Rights Council resolutions on violence against women and girls; and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Over the past five years, Canada has continued to prioritize efforts to advance gender equality both domestically and internationally. This has included taking responsive action to address the unforeseen crises that emerged because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic challenged advances on gender equality in several areas. In Canada, gender-based violence (GBV) increased during the pandemic. The rate of police-reported intimate partner violence (IPV)<sup>2</sup> against women increased by 4.4% between 2019 and 2021.<sup>3 4</sup> Women's unemployment increased more than men's: cumulatively between February and April 2020, employment fell by 16.8% for women, compared to 14.6% for men.<sup>5</sup> Women's care responsibilities for children increased as public health measures required daycares and schools to close, and the pandemic forced many women to leave their jobs or reduce their hours to care for children and sick family members. These and other related factors caused increased stress and affected women's mental health in Canada. In 2021, only 55.1% of women described their mental health as very good to excellent, down from 66.1% in 2018.<sup>6</sup> Within this context, the federal, provincial, and territorial (FPT) governments have had the difficult task of both bolstering and advancing Canada's progress on gender equality over the reporting period.

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<sup>1</sup> Any reference to the "Government of Canada" in this report is a reference to the federal government of Canada, while a reference to "Canada" generally refers to the federal, provincial, and territorial governments combined. A reference to the provinces or territories – for example, British Columbia, Quebec, or the Northwest Territories – generally refers to their respective governments.

<sup>2</sup> Intimate partner violence, also known as spousal or domestic violence, is a widespread form of gender-based violence. It refers to multiple forms of harm caused by a current or former intimate partner or spouse.

<sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada. (2023) [The Daily - Trends in police-reported family violence and intimate partner violence in Canada, 2022](#)

<sup>4</sup> It is important to note that these data only reflect incidents of intimate partner violence that were reported to police. Often, this type of gender-based violence goes unreported to authorities. For instance, according to self-reported data from the 2019 General Social Survey – Canadians' Safety (Victimization), only one in five (19%) victims of spousal violence stated that the violence they experienced was reported to police (for more information, see [Spousal violence in Canada](#), 2019). During the pandemic in particular, reduced in-person social contacts with friends, extended family, and third parties (e.g., teachers, doctors) may have affected the identification and reporting of violence and abuse to authorities.

<sup>5</sup> Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0287-03. Labour force characteristics by province, monthly, seasonally adjusted.](#)

<sup>6</sup> Employment and Social Development Canada. (2023) [Canada's 2023 Voluntary National Review – A Continued Journey for Implementing the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals – Canada.ca](#)

Even within this challenging environment, the FPT governments not only were able to quickly design and deploy many initiatives addressing COVID-19's impacts on gender equality, but also took several new and transformative actions. These important initiatives have positioned Canada for further progress in the coming years:

- Early learning and child care (ELCC): Collaborations and significant investments have been made across the country. Improving access to affordable, inclusive, and high-quality child care benefits gender equality and women's empowerment in a range of areas. Children receive better and more standard care and education. Mothers, who make up the large majority of primary caregivers to children, can pursue employment, education, or training and other opportunities. This improves their own and their families' prosperity and wellbeing. Studies show that for every dollar invested in early childhood education, the broader economy receives between \$1.50 and \$2.80 in return.<sup>7,8</sup>
- Canada's 10-year [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#): Living a life free from violence is a fundamental human right, but gender-based violence remains a significant barrier to achieving gender equality in Canada. As GBV disproportionately affects women and girls, the [endorsement of the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#) is a significant milestone in addressing this complex issue as well as supporting gender equality in Canada. The aim of the National Action Plan and related funding is to prevent GBV; address its root causes; and provide better supports for victims, survivors, and their families. In addition, the National Action Plan's development was made possible through close collaboration among the FPT governments. The plan was also shaped by engagement with Indigenous partners, victims, survivors, frontline service providers, experts, academics, and advocates across the country.
- Tackling barriers facing Indigenous and other marginalized or underrepresented women and girls in all their diversity: the past five years have seen increased engagement with and adoption of many initiatives for these groups to further progress and change. Historic achievements such as [the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls \(MMIWG\)](#) publishing its report and the [Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ People](#) (Federal Pathway) being launched, as well as other initiatives such as the Feminist Response and Recovery Fund, were among the many actions taken across the country to advance equality and empower marginalized and underrepresented women and girls.

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<sup>7</sup> Employment and Social Development Canada. (2021) [Canada country background report – Quality in early childhood education and care – Canada.ca](#)

<sup>8</sup> All dollar amounts in this report are in Canadian funds (Can\$).

## SECTION 2: PRIORITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS, AND CHALLENGES

Canada has a long-standing commitment to gender equality. It is dedicated to taking actions that promote an inclusive and democratic society where everyone can participate fully in all aspects of life. Section 2 of this report presents Canada's priorities for furthering gender equality over the past five years, as well as some of Canada's notable achievements in and challenges to gender equality and women's empowerment. This section also includes a specific focus on the achievements and challenges on gender equality for marginalized and underrepresented women and girls, as well as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and government responses. Finally, upcoming priorities for Canada to promote gender equality across the country are also described here. While several initiatives linked to these priorities, achievements, and challenges are included in Section 2, most initiatives and more detailed descriptions can be found in Section 3.

### PRIORITIES FOR ACCELERATING GENDER EQUALITY PROGRESS (2019–2024)

Canada has shown its commitment to advancing gender equality through significant investments in key programs, policies, and initiatives. In 2018, the Government of Canada introduced the [Gender Results Framework](#) (GRF) to complement the [Canadian Gender Budgeting Act](#). The GRF represents the Government of Canada's vision for gender equality. It is designed as a whole-of-government tool to track how Canada is doing on achieving its gender equality goals. It is also aligned with the Government of Canada's policy of Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus). This ensures that gender is considered in addition and in relation to other intersecting identity factors, including age, disability, education, ethnicity, race, geography, sex, religion, economic status, and language. Under this framework, the federal government has found six key areas where change is required to advance gender equality:

- 1) Education and skills development
- 2) Economic participation and prosperity
- 3) Leadership and democratic participation
- 4) Gender-based violence and access to justice
- 5) Poverty reduction, health, and wellbeing
- 6) Gender equality around the world

#### Education and skills development

Despite significant growth in women's levels of education and labour market participation, women still face barriers to reaching their full potential. Among these barriers are the effects of occupational segregation by gender in education and skills development. As of 2021, women and girls continue to enrol more in the social and human sciences (e.g., health care, education, teaching) than in traditionally men-dominated sectors (e.g., science, technology, engineering, and mathematics [STEM]; construction; transportation;

production).<sup>9</sup> More women have entered STEM over the years, especially as post-secondary qualification holders in sciences and science technology. Yet in 2021, young women (aged 25–34) only accounted for 30.8% of STEM qualification holders.<sup>10</sup>

In apprenticeship programs, this gender gap is also present. Women remain underrepresented across most apprenticeship programs and are concentrated in few trades. In 2021, women were the majority of new registrants in only 3 of 24 major trade groups: early childhood educators and assistants (94.9%), community and social service workers (89.2%), and hairstylists and estheticians (86.4%).<sup>11</sup>

It is a priority in Canada to address these disparities, given that women continue to be overrepresented in lower-paying services and care sectors and underrepresented in higher-paying jobs in the trades and STEM. The federal, provincial, and territorial governments have adopted programs to help grow the number of women working in fields not traditionally dominated by women. For example, the Government of Canada has introduced the [Canadian Apprenticeship Strategy](#), which supports skilled trades workers and employers, and the [Union Training and Innovation Program](#), which aims to create higher-quality training in the skilled trades and a more inclusive workforce.

### **Economic participation and prosperity**

Women's economic participation and prosperity continue to be priorities in Canada. Advancing women's economic participation drives economic growth and boosts the income of Canadian families. More income for women means greater financial security and economic independence, which helps women to exercise control over their lives.

The Government of Canada has adopted policies to help increase women's economic participation and prosperity. These include developing the Canada-Wide [Early Learning and Child Care System](#), which strengthens Canada's labour force and supports parents' – especially mothers' – ability to enter, re-enter, or remain in the workforce, and the [Women Entrepreneurship Strategy](#), which aims to increase women-owned businesses' access to the financing, networks, and expertise they need to start up, scale up, and access new markets. The Government of Canada is also committed to reducing the gender wage gap through several initiatives, including the proactive [Pay Equity Regulations](#) and legislation, which came into force on August 31, 2021. This legislation seeks to ensure that women and men working in federally regulated workplaces receive equal pay for work of equal value. In addition, pay transparency measures came into force on January 1, 2021. They aim to raise awareness of wage gaps facing women, Indigenous people, people with disabilities, and members of visible minorities in federally regulated workplaces.

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<sup>9</sup> Statistics Canada. [Table 98-10-0390-01 Major field of study by highest level of education: Canada, provinces and territories, census divisions and census subdivisions](#)

<sup>10</sup> Statistics Canada. [Table 98-10-0402-01 Occupation \(STEM and non-STEM\) by major field of study \(STEM and BHASE, detailed\) and highest level of education: Canada, provinces and territories](#)

<sup>11</sup> Statistics Canada. [Table 37-10-0219-01 Apprenticeship programs by age groups, major trade groups, sex and registration status](#)



## **Leadership and democratic participation**

Canada also seeks to increase women's leadership and democratic participation. A more balanced distribution of men and women at all levels of decision making is essential to a fair and democratic society. It also leads to better decision making. Gender equality and diversity in positions of leadership are also linked to better management, higher availability of skilled employees, stronger employee engagement, and higher productivity.

Despite the growing representation of women in some areas of leadership, progress has remained slow. Barriers such as harassment and discrimination, limited access to mentors and networks, and a lack of flexible work arrangements limit women's participation and advancement in leadership roles, including in the world of Canadian entrepreneurship. In addition, gender stereotypes; work-life balance challenges; and sexual harassment and violence, including online hate speech and cyberviolence, are also barriers to women's participation in leadership and decision-making roles. On political representation, women remain underrepresented in elected office. In 2024, 35% of all elected officials in federal, provincial, and territorial legislatures are women.<sup>12</sup>

To support women's leadership and democratic participation, the Government of Canada has introduced several key policies and initiatives. These include a [12-month parental leave for parliamentarians](#), which allows pregnant members four weeks of leave before childbirth, and the [50 – 30 Challenge](#), which aims to boost diverse groups' representation and inclusion in their workplaces and highlight the benefits of giving all Canadians a seat at the table.

## **Gender-based violence and access to justice**

Across Canada, at the federal, provincial, and territorial levels, ending GBV remains a key priority. GBV can take many forms, including physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, and financial abuse, as well as technology-facilitated violence. GBV disproportionately affects women and girls. Some groups that are at risk of GBV or underserved when they experience these forms of violence include Indigenous women and girls; Black and racialized women; immigrant and refugee women; 2SLGBTQI+ people; people with disabilities; and women living in northern, rural, and remote communities. GBV can cause long-lasting health, social, and economic damages, often leading violence and abuse to repeat across generations.

In 2022, with the launch of the [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#), the Government of Canada committed to supporting provinces and territories. This support enables them to supplement and enhance services and supports within their jurisdictions to prevent GBV and support survivors. By December 2023, [bilateral agreements between the federal government and all 13 provincial and territorial governments](#) had been announced.

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<sup>12</sup> As of May 2024, there are 385 women among the 1,107 elected political representatives in the federal, provincial, and territorial legislatures in Canada.

These bilateral agreements are flexible in addressing each jurisdiction’s challenges, needs, and priorities, guiding the efforts to end GBV from coast to coast to coast.

Similarly, Canada’s first [Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan](#) aims to advance rights and equality for 2SLGBTQI+ people in Canada. It builds on work the Government of Canada has done since 2016 to address lasting disparities facing 2SLGBTQI+ communities and to build a safer, more inclusive country. The Action Plan prioritizes community action and coordinates the Government of Canada’s work to advance 2SLGBTQI+ issues across federal departments and agencies. This is being done in a holistic, whole-of-government approach that recognizes the types of inequities facing communities can be interconnected.

### **Poverty reduction, health, and wellbeing**

Poverty is a challenge facing men and women alike. However, its effects can be different for women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people, who are more likely to experience violence, face discrimination, live alone, and face chronic conditions and disabilities at older ages.

According to data from the 2021 Census, 7.7% of women and girls and 7% of men and boys experienced poverty in 2021.<sup>13 14</sup> Yet unattached women were over four times more likely than women and girls in families to experience poverty. Indigenous women living off reserves were almost twice as likely as non-Indigenous women to experience poverty. This pattern of higher poverty was also observed for women with disabilities (11%) compared to women without disabilities (5.7%), newcomer women (11.6%) compared to women born in Canada (7%), and transgender women (12%) compared to cisgender women (6.6%).<sup>15</sup> In addition, the poverty rate among racialized women and girls (9.8%) in 2021 was higher than the rate among their non-racialized counterparts (6.6%).<sup>16</sup>

On health and wellbeing, Canadians saw their mental health as worsening in 2021 with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and its continuing societal impacts. Among Canadians, 59% saw their mental health as very good to excellent in 2021. This was down from 68.6% in 2018, showing a lapse on the goal that Canadians have healthy and satisfying lives. Women’s mental health was reported as particularly worse than their men counterparts’ in both 2018 and 2021. In 2021, 55.1% of women reported very good to excellent mental health compared to 63% of men.<sup>17</sup> The Government of Canada has been working to improve poverty reduction, health, and wellbeing through several initiatives. For instance, the [National Housing Strategy](#) (NHS) is the Government of Canada’s commitment to ensuring more people in Canada have access to safe, affordable, and inclusive housing. The [Menstrual Equity Fund](#) addresses the barriers linked to affordability and stigma that some Canadians face when accessing menstrual products. The Government of Canada also

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<sup>13</sup> Statistics Canada. (2023). [Table 11-10-0135-01 – Low income statistics by age, sex and economic family type](#)

<sup>14</sup> Zhang, X., & Bernard, A. (2022). [Disaggregated trends in poverty from the 2021 Census of Population – statcan.gc.ca](#)

<sup>15</sup> Zhang, X., & Bernard, A. [Statcan.gc.ca](#)

<sup>16</sup> Statistics Canada. (2024). [Just the Facts – International Women’s Day 2024](#)

<sup>17</sup> Employment and Social Development Canada (2023) [Canada’s 2023 Voluntary National Review – A Continued Journey for Implementing the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals – Canada.ca](#)

introduced new measures that will help low-income Canadians in its 2024 federal budget, including the National Pharmacare Plan and the National School Food Program.

### **Gender equality around the world**

Canada is committed to ending poverty and building a more peaceful, inclusive, and prosperous world. Canada invests in gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment as the best ways to achieve these goals, following the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*. For example, research from the International Monetary Fund suggests that narrowing the gender gap in labour markets could raise the gross domestic product (GDP) in emerging markets and developing economies by almost 8%. The gains from fully closing the gender gap would be even higher, lifting GDP in those countries by 23% on average.<sup>18</sup> There are also strong correlations between gender inequalities and extreme poverty. For these reasons and more, Canada is taking a feminist approach across all its international policies and programming, including diplomacy, trade, security, and development.

Advancing gender equality is at the heart of Canada's international development assistance, just as protecting and advancing women's and girls' human rights remains a Canadian foreign policy priority. All of Canada's development policies and programs aim to empower women and girls, including by launching specific projects to achieve these goals. Through Canada's international peace and security initiatives, as well as advocating for gender equality in multilateral forums, Canada supports international efforts to promote and protect women's and girls' rights.

## **CANADA'S ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES**

### **Record labour force participation for women**

One of Canada's most important achievements over the last five years was women's increased participation in the labour force. In 2023, the labour force participation rate of women aged 25 to 54 reached a record high of 85.7%.<sup>19</sup> This increase was supported through nationwide efforts to ensure a feminist recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, and transformational economic policies such as [introducing a nationwide ELCC system](#). For example, the Government of Canada launched the robust COVID-19 Emergency Response Plan, which included key supports for women and marginalized communities impacted by the pandemic. The federal government provided support for organizations delivering vital services to those experiencing GBV. It also introduced the [Feminist Response and Recovery Fund](#) to invest in projects across Canada that support systemic change for women across economic, social, and political spheres.

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<sup>18</sup> The International Monetary Fund. (2024) [Interim Guidance Note on Mainstreaming Gender at the IMF - imf.org](#)

<sup>19</sup> Statistics Canada. (2023) [The Daily: Labour Force Survey, September 2023 - statcan.gc.ca](#)

## Canada-wide child care

The cost of and access to child care has been identified as a potential barrier to women's full participation in the labour market. This includes their entry into the labour market, their ability to work full time, or their capacity to take on more senior roles.

Starting in 2021, the Government of Canada made historic new investments, totalling close to \$30 billion over five years, to build a [Canada-wide early learning and child care](#) system with provinces, territories, and Indigenous partners. The goal for this system is for families to have access to affordable, high-quality, flexible, and inclusive ELCC, no matter where in Canada they live. Investments in ELCC enable parents, especially mothers, to enter, remain in, or re-enter the job market; create jobs for workers in the ELCC sector, most of whom are women; and create a generation of engaged and well-prepared young learners.

In Canada, provinces and territories have primary responsibility for the design and delivery of ELCC programs and services. Each province and territory has its own system governed by legislative and regulatory frameworks. The Government of Canada is providing funding to provincial and territorial governments to support and grow the ELCC system within their jurisdictions. Goals for this funding include reducing fees to \$10 a day on average for regulated child care for children under age 6 and creating 250,000 new high-quality, regulated child care spaces across the country by March 2026. Indigenous governments can also exercise jurisdiction in ELCC and have stated that Indigenous control in the design and delivery of child care is essential. The [Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework](#), co-developed by the Government of Canada and Indigenous partners, is the foundation for ongoing collaboration to address some key Indigenous ELCC issues.

## Preventing and ending gender-based violence

GBV is one of the most pervasive, deadly, and deeply rooted human rights violations of our time. Key achievements for Canada were the endorsement of the [Joint Declaration for a Canada Free of Gender-Based Violence](#) and the launch of the 10-year [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#)<sup>20</sup> in November 2022. The federal, provincial, and territorial governments continued to work with victims and survivors, Indigenous partners, direct service providers, experts, advocates, municipalities, the private sector, and researchers to apply the National Action Plan. As of December 2023, the federal government has signed [bilateral agreements](#) with all 13 provincial and territorial governments to support jurisdictions with their specific needs and priorities on ending GBV. More information is provided in Section 3.3.

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<sup>20</sup> Gender-based violence is a priority for the Government of Quebec, which has invested significant funds to end violence against women. However, although it supports the overall objectives of the [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#), the Government of Quebec cannot adhere to it because it intends to retain its full responsibility in this area on its territory. Through an agreement that respects its autonomy, the Government of Quebec receives federal funding to support the programs, initiatives, and services to end gender-based violence that it puts in place based on the needs of its territory.

Across the provinces and territories, there have been many achievements in addressing GBV:

- In 2020, the Government of Alberta gathered feedback to shape the development of regulations and an implementation plan for the [Disclosure to Protect Against Domestic Violence \(Clare's Law\) Act](#). The law came into full effect on April 1, 2021. It allows people to apply for information about the criminal history and risk of domestic violence for their current or former intimate partner. During the Clare's Law process, the applicant and/or person at risk has access to social supports if requested. In 2022–2023, Alberta provided a local non-profit with grant funding to refer Clare's Law applicants to appropriate support and services. Of the applications received since the law launched, around 60% requested connection to social services and supports at some point during the process.
- Since 2019, more than a billion dollars has been invested to prevent and address sexual and spousal violence in Quebec. In June 2022, the Quebec government launched a new strategy to combat GBV: the [Integrated Government Strategy to Counteract Sexual Violence and Domestic Violence, and to Rebuild Trust 2022–2027](#) (Integrated Strategy to Counteract Violence). The Integrated Strategy to Counteract Violence commits 18 ministries and agencies to addressing sexual and domestic violence. It contains 58 actions, 18 of which focus on sexual violence, 24 on domestic violence, and 16 on both. When the Integrated Strategy to Counteract Violence was launched, its actions represented a total investment of \$462.4 million over five years. A Government of Canada–Quebec agreement to address GBV, signed on November 6, 2023, recently added \$97.3 million to enhance the Integrated Strategy to Counteract Violence actions.
- In 2024–2025, the Government of Nova Scotia committed an additional \$470,000 for ongoing work to prevent sexual violence on post-secondary campuses. Through the collaborative efforts of the Provincial Sexual Violence Prevention Committee, all Nova Scotia universities and the Nova Scotia Community College have a sexual violence prevention policy in place. Institutions have committed to reviewing these policies every three years to ensure they follow best practices.
- A significant portion of frontline services in New Brunswick are delivered outside of what is provided through the social, education, justice, and health systems. Sexual assault centres, domestic violence outreach, transition houses, and second-stage housing are community-based, with provincial government contributions to support the work. These not-for-profit agencies providing services generally have limited communication, administrative, and operational capacity. Therefore, the Government of New Brunswick is adopting a multifaceted response to GBV, where government and community collaborate and engage in awareness and intervention initiatives.
- In August 2022, Nunavut's Minister of Human Resources and the president of the Nunavut Employees Union signed a new collective agreement. In the updated collective

agreement, Nunavut now offers employees up to 10 days off for family abuse leave, which consists of 5 paid days and 5 unpaid days off work if needed.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many of the services supporting GBV victims and survivors were put under extreme stress, given the disturbing rise in GBV that occurred during the lockdowns and throughout the pandemic. Mandatory social isolation measures that were necessary to slow the virus were recognized to raise the risk of violence for family members trapped at home with their abusers. Necessary measures such as quarantines and closing daycares, schools, and workplaces increased survivors' daily exposure to their abusers. The pandemic put significant pressures on the sector in staffing, with high levels of burnout, sick leave, and stress leave both during and after the pandemic. The increase in demand for resources, not only during the pandemic but afterwards, is still impacting the sector to this day.

### ***Missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls***

In 2015, the Government of Canada launched the [National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#). It aimed to seek recommendations on concrete actions to address and prevent violence against Indigenous women and girls. On June 3, 2019, the National Inquiry published its [Final Report – Reclaiming Power and Place](#), including 231 [Calls for Justice](#). It contained the truths of 2,380 family members, survivors of violence, experts, and Knowledge Keepers shared over two years of cross-country public hearings and evidence gathering. The Final Report documents the complex and interconnected causes of ongoing systemic violence that targets Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Centuries of colonialism, racism, and sexism have devalued Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people's sacred and important roles in their families, communities, and society at large. In sharing their truths during the Inquiry, Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQI+ people, families, and survivors outlined the path forward to reclaim their rightful power and place. Five years after the Inquiry's final report was released, applying its Calls for Justice, and the Calls for *Miskotahâ* in [Métis Perspectives of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and LGBTQ2S+ People](#), remains a significant and urgent priority for the Government of Canada.

In response to the National Inquiry, on June 3, 2021, Indigenous partners, provinces, territories, and the federal government launched the [2021 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ People National Action Plan: Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ People](#).<sup>21</sup> The [Federal Pathway](#) outlined the Government of Canada's commitments to apply the Plan. Many provinces and territories have also responded to the Calls for Justice with their own strategies and action plans. For example, in 2020, the Yukon Advisory Committee on Missing and Murdered

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<sup>21</sup> 2SLGBTQI+ terminology and acronyms are constantly evolving. "2SLGBTQI+" is the acronym adopted by the 2SLGBTQI+ Committee, which contributed to the [2021 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and the 2SLGBTQI+ People National Action Plan](#). During the engagement process, 2SLGBTQI+ communities in Canada called for the acronym used by the Government of Canada to be updated. The Government of Canada has adopted "2SLGBTQI+" as a more inclusive term.

Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit+ People released [Changing the Story to Upholding Dignity and Justice: Yukon’s Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit+ People Strategy](#). This is a whole-of-Yukon plan that lays out actions for all levels of government, community partners, and institutions to address the systemic roots of the crisis. Another example is the Government of Nunavut’s current work developing “*Ajiiqatigiilluta*,” A Report on the Government of Nunavut’s Progress Towards Implementation of Inuit-Specific Calls for Justice on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

More information on initiatives such as these can be found in Section 3.

### **Advancing equality for 2SLGBTQI+ people**

The Government of Canada has taken several measures to improve rights and equality for 2SLGBTQI+ communities in Canada over the past five years. These measures include funding organizations that serve and advocate for 2SLGBTQI+ Canadians,<sup>22</sup> expunging and destroying criminal records for people convicted of consensual sexual activity with same-sex partners,<sup>23</sup> passing legislation against conversion therapy,<sup>24</sup> and amending the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and the *Criminal Code* to include gender identity and expression as prohibited grounds of discrimination.<sup>25</sup> Building on these achievements, in August 2022, the Government of Canada launched Canada’s [first Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan... Building our future, with pride](#). The plan aims to advance rights and equality for 2SLGBTQI+ people in Canada.

Despite the progress made over the past five years, 2SLGBTQI+ people and communities continue to experience discrimination, hate, and violence, among other forms of inequality. Between 2017 and 2021, police-reported hate crimes based on sexual orientation rose 107%.<sup>26</sup> As shown in the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan, 25% to 40% of homeless youth in Canada are 2SLGBTQI+, and 64% of 2SLGBTQI+ students in one study reported feeling unsafe at school. In addition, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and other non-heterosexual people are nearly two times more likely to experience violence in their lifetime. Transgender people are over one and a half times more likely to have experienced violent crime in their lifetime than cisgender people are.<sup>27</sup> On February 8, 2024, [the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights issued a report](#) that found rising anti-2SLGBTQI+ hate in Canada and abroad. Also in February 2024, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service revealed that the “anti-gender movement” and rising hate pose a threat of “extreme violence” against 2SLGBTQI+ communities.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> [Government of Canada announces community capacity and project funding for LGBTQ2 organizations – Canada.ca](#)

<sup>23</sup> [Expungement of Historically Unjust Convictions Act](#)

<sup>24</sup> [Bill C-4: An Act to amend the Criminal Code \(conversion therapy\)](#)

<sup>25</sup> [Bill C-16: An Act to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code](#)

<sup>26</sup> Statistics Canada. (2023) [The Daily: Police-reported hate crime, 2021 – statcan.gc.ca](#)

<sup>27</sup> Women and Gender Equality Canada. (2022) [Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan 2022 – Canada.ca](#)

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/csis-lgbtq-warning-violence-1.7114801>

## Women in leadership

Canada has made some progress on the gender balance of women in political leadership. In 2015, Canada witnessed its first gender-balanced federal cabinet in Canadian history. It has maintained gender parity over the past nine years, with women leading key federal portfolios, namely foreign affairs, the Treasury Board, defence, and finance. In the provinces and territories, the Northwest Territories elected Canada's first and only gender-balanced legislative assembly in 2019, led by Canada's only sitting woman premier at the time.

Canada has also seen several high-level appointments of Indigenous women in the past five years. The Honourable Michelle O'Bonsawin, an Abenaki woman from the Odanak First Nation, was the first Indigenous person appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada. Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon, the Governor General of Canada, is an Inuk from Kuujuaq and the first Indigenous person to be Governor General.

A key challenge for Canada is that the share of women elected to federal, provincial, and territorial legislatures remains lower than the share of women candidates. For example, after the 2021 federal election, where 43% of candidates were women or gender-diverse people, women made up 30% of members of Parliament.<sup>29</sup> Another setback for Canada is the reduced number of premiers that are women. The country went from having three women premiers of the 13 provinces and territories in 2020 and 2021 to one woman premier in Alberta in 2024.

## International achievements

Internationally, Canada's feminist foreign policy advances Canada's long-standing commitments to human rights and gender equality. It aims to reinforce Canada's overarching goals of strengthening a rules-based international system, supporting lasting peace and security, and fostering inclusive and sustainable development and prosperity. This is done by working to fix lasting inequalities and address fundamental structural barriers while accounting for the needs of those most affected by multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Canada's feminist foreign policy applies to all areas of international engagement, including diplomacy, peace and security efforts, trade and economic relations, international aid, and consular services. It is notably being applied through a set of complementary international policies, programs, and initiatives developed in recent years. These include Canada's [Feminist International Assistance Policy](#); the Trade Diversification Strategy, with its [inclusive approach to trade](#); and [Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security](#).

[Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy](#) guides efforts to address gender inequalities. These efforts have supported transformational change in countries around the world and made Canada a leader in gender equality. Under its Feminist International

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<sup>29</sup> Bonikowska A. (2022). [Who are Canada's legislators? Characteristics and gender gaps among members of legislative bodies - statcan.gc.ca](#)



Assistance Policy, the Government of Canada committed to ensuring that by 2021–2022, 95% of its bilateral aid on international development would advance gender equality, and 15% would specifically target gender equality results. This ensures that gender-based analysis, activities, and results are integrated into the design of nearly all international aid initiatives. The commitment and effort have meant that Canada has ranked as a top Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) donor for the share of aid supporting gender equality for the past five years (2020–2024). Canada is also the top donor in addressing violence against women and girls among OECD countries.<sup>30</sup> It leads as well in comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights services,<sup>31</sup> reaching \$700 million per year by 2023, and addressing inequalities in paid and unpaid care work,<sup>32</sup> with a \$100 million investment over five years. In July 2021, at the Generation Equality Forum event in Paris, the Government of Canada announced \$180 million in new funding for policy and financial commitments. The focus of this funding would be on care work; girls' education; leadership; civic education; ending child, early, and forced marriage; support for LGBTQI+ organizations; and gender lens investing. Under the *Feminist International Assistance Policy*, Canada has been a top donor (2019–2024) in supporting women's rights organizations. Over \$645 million has gone to signature initiatives including the [Women's Voice and Leadership Program](#), [the Equality Fund](#), and [the Alliance for Feminist Movements](#).<sup>33</sup>

## PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY FOR DIVERSE WOMEN IN CANADA

According to the 2021 Census, over a quarter (26.8%) of women and girls in Canada are racialized, 23.8% are immigrants, and 5.1% are Indigenous.<sup>34</sup> There are around 2.2 million women and girls who are members of a religious minority group in Canada.

### ***Indigenous women and girls***

In the [Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People](#), the Government of Canada acknowledges that "*substantial, immediate, and transformational change is required by all Canadians to end systemic racism and gender-based violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people,*" and that "*colonialism, racism, sexism and ableism have created systemic inequities for Indigenous Peoples, contributing to the loss and extinguishment of Indigenous languages, cultures and traditional practices, and have directly impacted the rightful power and place of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people.*" Recognizing this, the Government of Canada is committed to:

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<sup>30</sup> Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2024, February) [Latest data on official development assistance \(ODA\) for gender equality and women's empowerment – oecd.org](#)

<sup>31</sup> [Canada's 10-Year Commitment to Global Health and Rights – international.gc.ca](#)

<sup>32</sup> [Canada's feminist approach to addressing unpaid and paid care work through international assistance – international.gc.ca](#)

<sup>33</sup> Statistics Canada. [Table 98-10-0393-01 Major field of study \(STEM and BHASE, detailed\) by highest level of education: Canada, provinces and territories, census divisions and census subdivisions](#)

<sup>34</sup> [The rich diversity of women in Canada – statcan.gc.ca](#)

- acknowledging the leadership of Indigenous families, survivors, women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people at decision-making tables on issues that impact them, their families, and communities;
- respecting and upholding the inherent human rights of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in a dignified way;
- working toward ending all forms of violence, particularly all forms of systemic racism, sexism, ableism, and GBV against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people; and
- improving socioeconomic conditions to provide an opportunity for a good life and a safe, stable environment for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, no matter where they live.

The Government of Canada tracks its progress on applying the [Federal Pathway](#) to ensure accountability. The second [Federal Pathway Annual Progress Report](#) was released on June 4, 2023. This date also marked the fourth anniversary of the Final Report of the National Inquiry and the second anniversary of the Federal Pathway's launch.

On June 21, 2021, the Parliament of Canada adopted the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#). This framework to advance the deployment of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* calls for measures to eliminate all forms of violence, racism, and discrimination against Indigenous Peoples, women, and girls. After the Act received Royal Assent, the Government of Canada launched a broad and inclusive process to consult and cooperate with Indigenous Peoples to support the development of the Action Plan, which was released in 2023.

The Government of Canada is funding a range of trauma-informed, culturally appropriate, and Indigenous-led healing initiatives for Indigenous survivors of forced and coerced sterilization. This may include ceremonies, sharing circles, and other activities meant to help affected people grieve and heal by addressing physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual trauma.

Canada is working to strengthen its legislative and institutional foundations to fight discrimination against Indigenous Peoples in Canada and improve access to high-quality, culturally relevant health services for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. This includes a federal commitment to fully applying Joyce's Principle, guaranteeing all Indigenous people the right of equitable access, without discrimination, to all social and health services, as well as the right to enjoy the best possible physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health. The commitment also involves ensuring the principle guides work to co-develop Indigenous health legislation that respects distinctions to foster health systems that will ensure Indigenous people's safety and wellbeing.

In 2020, Ontario established the [Indigenous Women's Advisory Council](#) to provide advice and input on the following:

- Key areas of Ontario's Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity's portfolio – the Council helps address the root causes of violence against Indigenous women and children, and ensure the voices of Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people are heard. The Council's expertise is helping to better understand how violence and racism impact Indigenous women and girls, and ways to engage First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities in violence prevention efforts. The Council also plays a critical role in applying [Pathways to Safety: Ontario's Strategy in Response to the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#).
- As part of the Government of Ontario's progress, the mandate of the Indigenous Women's Advisory Council has been extended to March 2025 to ensure Indigenous voices remain at the centre of all program and policy developments.

***Black, racialized, and religious minority women and girls***

The Government of Canada continues to deliver policies, programs, and services to combat racism, discrimination, and hate so all people and communities in Canada can participate fully and equitably. Actions in this area include [Building a Foundation for Change: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2019–2022](#) (Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2019–2022) and the many steps taken to renew it, consultations to develop Canada's action plan on combatting hate, and funding for community projects and domestic and international engagements. Across its policy frameworks, the Government of Canada has focused on applying intersectional lenses to its work. This will avoid harming marginalized groups and ensure all lived experiences of discrimination are heard.

Since 2018, the Government of Canada has invested over \$200 million in both of Canada's anti-racism strategies. This investment serves to fight racism and hate, invest in multicultural community programs across the country, and ensure that Canada's remarkable diversity keeps strengthening society.

The 2022 and 2023 federal budgets provided \$110.4 million for Canada's new Anti-Racism Strategy. This includes investments to address all forms of racism, including anti-Indigenous racism, anti-Black racism, anti-Asian racism, antisemitism, and Islamophobia. In addition, the 2024 federal budget proposes \$273.6 million over six years, starting in 2024–2025, to confront all forms of hate, including through the action plan on combatting hate.

In 2021, the Government of Canada declared January 29 the National Day of Remembrance of the Québec City Mosque Attack and Action Against Islamophobia. In 2022, the Government of Canada committed \$5.6 million and \$1.2 million ongoing to supporting the work of the new Special Representative on Combatting Islamophobia. This led to Amira Elghawaby being named the Special Representative in January 2023. The 2024 federal budget announced \$7.3 million over six years, starting in 2024–2025, and another \$1.1 million ongoing to grow the capacity of the Office of the Special Representative on Combatting Islamophobia.

In 2022, the Government of Canada also invested \$5.6 million and \$1.2 million ongoing to support the work of the Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism. In October 2023, Deborah Lyons was appointed Canada's new Special Envoy. The 2024 federal budget announced \$7.3 million over six years, starting in 2024–2025, and another \$1.1 million ongoing to grow the capacity of the Office of the Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism.

### **2SLGBTQI+ people**

Members of 2SLGBTQI+ communities in Canada continue to face discrimination, violence, and injustice simply because of who they are. The Government of Canada has taken specific action to prevent discrimination and promote 2SLGBTQI+ people's rights, including through its first [Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan](#), launched in August 2022.

The 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan seeks to address discrimination and stigma based on sexual orientation, sex characteristics, and gender identity and expression, and to prevent it from emerging or worsening for future 2SLGBTQI+ generations. During the Action Plan's first year, there have been many advances in its deployment, including:

- continuing to invest directly in 2SLGBTQI+ organizations through the Projects Fund and Community Capacity Fund (as part of the historic \$100 million commitment in the Action Plan);
- creating a partnership with the non-profit organization Rainbow Railroad to protect 2SLGBTQI+ refugees and welcome them to Canada;
- providing \$1.5 million in emergency support to help Pride organizations amidst the rise in hate across Canada;
- investing \$25 million to create the groundbreaking 2SLGBTQI+ Entrepreneurship Program;
- expunging historically unjust convictions that targeted 2SLGBTQI+ people (bawdy houses and indecency-related offences);
- improving Indigenous and 2SLGBTQI+ communities' access to sexual and reproductive health services through the Sexual and Reproductive Health Fund; and
- launching a research implementation plan (up to \$7.7 million) to support new community-led research, as well as new data collection to shape future 2SLGBTQI+ initiatives.<sup>35</sup>

In 2017, Prime Minister Trudeau delivered a historic apology in the House of Commons to LGBT Purge survivors and 2SLGBTQI+ communities more broadly for their historic treatment, which marked a turning point in the federal government's relationship with 2SLGBTQI+ people. In 2018, the Federal Court approved the *Final LGBT Purge Class Action Settlement Agreement*, which included financial compensation to LGBT Purge survivors, as well as reconciliation and memorialization measures. The settlement agreement mandated the federal government to consult with external experts on ways to enhance 2SLGBTQI+ inclusion in federal workplaces, which led to the publication of the LGBT Purge Fund Report

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<sup>35</sup> Women and Gender Equality Canada. (2022) [Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan 2022 - Canada.ca](#)

in 2021. [Emerging from the Purge: The State of LGBTQI2S Inclusion in the Federal Workplace and Recommendations for Improvement](#) presents 23 recommendations to the Government of Canada to improve 2SLGBTQI+ inclusion in federal workplaces. The settlement agreement also includes a dedicated 2SLGBTQI+ National Monument, [Thunderhead](#), which is now under construction. The monument is intended to memorialize historic discrimination against 2SLGBTQI+ people in Canada, including the LGBT Purge, celebrate the achievements of 2SLGBTQI+ communities, educate visitors, and inspire hope and change for the future. Reconciliation and memorialization measures in addition to the LGBT Purge Report and monument include an exhibit at the Canadian Museum of Human Rights, the release of historical documents, and Canada Pride Citation presentation ceremonies for LGBT Purge claimants, which have now been completed.

2SLGBTQI+ people in Canada still face significant challenges, including mental health issues, underemployment, homelessness, harassment, bullying, and violence. These challenges are heightened for people with intersecting lived experiences, including Indigenous 2SLGBTQI+ communities, Black and racialized 2SLGBTQI+ communities, and 2SLGBTQI+ people with disabilities. In a report that shaped the [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ People National Action Plan](#) and [Federal Pathway](#), the 2SLGBTQI+ Committee explains that Two-Spirit people existed and filled vital roles in many Indigenous Nations before contact with European settlers.<sup>36</sup> In the report, Dr. Percy Lezard states European settlers brought the “closet” to Indigenous lands. The report uses the term “gendercide” to describe “the intentional elimination of Indigenous people who were perceived to be neither fully male nor fully female, or expressed a unique third or other gender.” The report also highlights that “while there is no contestation about the resilience of 2SLGBTQI+ people, the level of violence, exclusion and erasure that our community members continue to experience is in need of immediate attention at multiple levels.”

Priority area 3 of the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan seeks to support the resilience and resurgence of Indigenous 2SLGBTQI+ communities, recognizing them as the first 2SLGBTQI+ communities. Accomplishments under this area during the Action Plan’s first year include the following:

- To date, 17 organizations that listed Indigenous 2SLGBTQI+ people and communities as a primary group they serve have received support under the 2SLGBTQI+ Community Capacity Fund and 2SLGBTQI+ Projects Fund.
- The Supporting Indigenous Women’s and 2SLGBTQI+ Organizations program provided close to \$2 million in funding to four organizations promoting Indigenous 2SLGBTQI+ voices and unique views on how to effectively protect and promote Indigenous 2SLGBTQI+ people.
- In spring 2023, the 2SLGBTQI+ Secretariat hired a senior advisor on Indigenous 2SLGBTQI+ issues. The advisor works with partners throughout the federal government and with Indigenous 2SLGBTQI+ communities, organizations, and representatives. Their

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<sup>36</sup> Lezard, P., Prefontaine, N., Cederwall, D-M., Sparrow, C., Maracle, S., Beck, A., & McLeod, A (2020). [2SLGBTQI+ Sub-Working Group. MMIWG2SLGBTQI+ National Action: Final Report.](#)

role is to provide advice on unique challenges for Indigenous 2SLGBTQI+ communities, shape policies and programs impacting these communities, and support the deployment of 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan initiatives.

- In September 2022, Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak / Women of the Métis Nation launched a project, “Two-Spirit Pride: Protecting and Celebrating 2SLGBTQIA+ Individuals.”
- The new “2SLGBTQI+” acronym was adopted and encouraged across the Government of Canada, along with 2SLGBTQI+ terminology – [Glossary and common acronyms](#).

## **Data and evidence**

The Government of Canada’s commitment to improving data on the [GRF](#) pillars continues, as highlighted in Section 5 of this report. Since these priority areas are interdependent and the state of gender equality is evolving, research is also taking on cross-cutting and emerging issues. This includes research on the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours that shape gender norms. By prioritizing data development and knowledge mobilization efforts, the federal government aims to improve the quality of gender statistics. This will lay a foundation for informed policy making and effective initiatives to advance gender equality. A better understanding of the circumstances in which people live and the barriers they face supports better decision making on policy and programs across all levels of government and within society.

For the past five years, commitments to better data collection, analyses, and disaggregation have included collaboration across FPT governments to improve data access and availability for the key priorities and issues in the [GRF](#). Research has also been conducted with Indigenous organizations, academics, and the private sector to fill knowledge gaps on issues spanning the GRF, as well as exploring emerging issues. Accomplishments also include support for community-based research that builds knowledge and addresses data gaps to help meet the needs of communities, help develop community-based solutions, and promote knowledge sharing.

The Government of Canada is committed to disaggregating data and collecting other specific knowledge to support evidence-based policies and programs. Disaggregated data and specifically isolated knowledge to highlight women’s and girls’ situations will allow the federal government to effectively target their needs in initiatives and policies.

## ***International***

In multilateral forums, Canada works to advance gender equality and urges states to respect their human rights obligations on girls and women in all their diversity. At the UN Human Rights Council, Canada is a strong advocate for gender equality language across resolutions. Since the Human Rights Council’s creation and building on Canada’s work before that at the UN Commission on Human Rights, Canada has led the biennial resolution on ending violence against women and girls. In 2019, the resolution focused on violence against women and girls in the world of work. In 2021, the resolution focused on violence against women and girls with disabilities. In July 2022, Canada led the resolution to renew

the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls for three years and expand the mandate's scope to cover violence against girls as well as women. In July 2023, the resolution focused on preventing and ending violence against women and girls held in prisons.

In June 2022, Dr. Laverne Jacobs was elected to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. She is Canada's first-ever candidate for this committee. Dr. Jacobs is an accomplished Canadian law professor with over 20 years of direct experience in disability, human rights, and administrative law. Her work is very significant for Black women and girls with disabilities.

In addition, Canada has continued to actively promote LGBTQI+ rights in several multilateral forums and international coalitions, including from 2019 to 2024. At the Human Rights Council, Canada has co-sponsored resolutions on sexual orientation and gender identity. It also strongly supported creating the mandate for the UN Independent Expert on sexual orientation and gender identity. In addition, Canada remains heavily engaged in the [Equal Rights Coalition](#), which brings together representatives from member states, civil society, and multilateral organizations on LGBTQI+ rights. Canada is also a partner of the Global Equality Fund, designated specifically to provide emergency aid to LGBTQI+ people threatened with violence. Finally, Canada is an active member of the [UN LGBTI<sup>37</sup> Core Group](#), the LGBTI Core Group at the Organization of American States, and the Group of Friends of the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Mandate based in Geneva.

In February 2019, [Canada announced its LGBTQ2I International Assistance Program](#). The program is a commitment to providing \$30 million in international aid over five years (2020–2025) and \$10 million each year afterwards to promote human rights and improve socioeconomic inclusion for 2SLGBTQI+ people around the world. This funding complements and supports the efforts of partners and movements working with 2SLGBTQI+ communities in developing countries. It will also serve to support local and regional organizations and equality movements, as well as partnerships and multilateral initiatives that contribute to policy, advocacy, and research efforts in this area.

To date, the Program has funded 15 projects globally that are working to produce important results, including:

- improved access to health services, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, for LGBTQI+ women and girls in West Africa;
- strengthened organizational, advocacy, and service delivery capacities for local and regional LGBTQI+ organizations across Southeast Asia and Central America;
- increased emergency and legal support for LGBTQI+ communities facing discrimination, violence, and criminalization; and
- improved legal analysis and policy recommendations to promote LGBTQI+ rights and inclusion globally.

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<sup>37</sup> Internationally, "LGBTI" is often used.

## RESPONDING TO THE EFFECTS OF RECENT CRISES ON GENDER EQUALITY

Like other countries, Canada has faced overlapping crises over the past five years (COVID-19, climate change, economic disruption, etc.). These affected many of the important gains for gender equality and continued progress. Canada's economic shutdowns and job losses during the pandemic disproportionately impacted women<sup>38</sup> and 2SLGBTQI+ people.<sup>39</sup> This was a key gender equality challenge, with job losses among women almost double those of men in April 2020. A key factor was that women are overrepresented in the service sector, which disproportionately drove the overall job losses during the pandemic.<sup>40</sup> In addition, 52% of 2SLGBTQI+ households in Canada were affected by layoffs and reduced hours, compared to 43% of overall Canadian households.<sup>41</sup>

In response to widespread economic shutdowns and job losses due to the pandemic, the federal government launched the robust COVID-19 Emergency Response Plan. The plan included key supports for women and marginalized communities impacted by the pandemic. The federal government provided support for organizations delivering vital services to those experiencing GBV. It also introduced the [Feminist Response and Recovery Fund](#) to invest in projects across Canada that support systemic change for women across economic, social, and political spheres. Other benefit programs, including the [Canada Emergency Response Benefit](#) (CERB), the [Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit](#), and the [Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit](#), provided financial support to those affected by COVID-19. According to Statistics Canada, nearly three-quarters (74.8%) of women received income from one or more of the pandemic relief programs.<sup>42</sup>

In addition, the Government of Canada provided around \$300 million in emergency funding to over 1,400 organizations. These included women's shelters, sexual assault centres, and other organizations that provide critical supports and services to those experiencing GBV, including IPV.

This historic funding builds on other Government of Canada investments to address GBV since 2021–2022:

- \$55 million over five years to bolster the capacity of Indigenous women's and 2SLGBTQI+ organizations to provide GBV prevention programming aimed at addressing the root causes of violence;
- \$30 million over five years for crisis hotlines to offer more robust supports for those experiencing GBV;

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<sup>38</sup> Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0287-03 Labour force characteristics by province, monthly, seasonally adjusted](#)

<sup>39</sup> Statistics Canada. (2021). [The Daily: A statistical portrait of Canada's diverse LGBTQ2+ communities - statcan.gc.ca](#)

<sup>40</sup> Grekou, D., & Lu, Y. (2021). [Gender differences in employment one year into the COVID-19 pandemic: An analysis by industrial sector and firm size - statcan.gc.ca](#)

<sup>41</sup> Egale Canada. (2020). [Impact of COVID-19 on the LGBTQI2S Community: Second National Report](#)

<sup>42</sup> Zhang, X. & Bernard, A. (2022) [The contribution of pandemic relief benefits to the incomes of Canadians in 2020 - statcan.gc.ca](#)



- \$105 million over five years to enhance the Gender-Based Violence Program, including promising practices to support victims, survivors, and those at risk of experiencing GBV; and
- \$11 million over five years for GBV research and knowledge mobilization, including support for community research models.

### **International**

Funding to address the COVID-19 pandemic and greater needs for humanitarian assistance posed challenges to reaching the 15% goal for international aid investments that specifically target gender equality. Canada has strengthened its institutional capacity to meet its gender equality policy objectives, making gender equality a responsibility of all international assistance teams. Humanitarian assistance has gone from 69% in 2015–2016 to nearly 100% of investments promoting gender equality, mostly as a significant objective. Work is under way to also reach the 15% target within humanitarian aid funding.

Other initiatives addressing the gendered impacts of COVID-19 can be found in Section 3.2.

## **UPCOMING PRIORITIES TO ACCELERATE GENDER EQUALITY IN CANADA**

### **Pharmacare**

In the next five years, applying the *Pharmacare Act* will be a priority. In February 2024, the Government of Canada [introduced Bill C-64, An Act respecting pharmacare](#) (*Pharmacare Act*). This bill proposes the foundational principles for the first phase of national universal pharmacare in Canada. It will provide single-payer coverage for contraception and diabetes medications.

The 2024 federal budget proposes providing \$1.5 billion over five years, starting in 2024–2025, to Health Canada to support launching the National Pharmacare Plan. This will provide immediate support for women’s and gender-diverse people’s health care needs. Every woman has the right to choose the family planning options that work best for her – and national pharmacare ensures cost is not a barrier to that right. Coverage of contraceptives will mean that 9 million Canadians of reproductive age in Canada will have better access to contraception and reproductive autonomy, reducing the risk of unintended pregnancies and improving their ability to plan for the future. Many Canadians also rely on prescription contraceptives to treat a variety of reproductive health concerns and conditions. Cost has consistently been named the single most important barrier to accessing these medications, and the cost is unevenly borne by women and gender-diverse people.

### **Implementation of the bilateral agreements to end gender-based violence**

Leading the rollout and monitoring of the [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#) with the provinces and territories, and focusing on creating a Canada free of GBV, will remain a priority for the Government of Canada. The [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#) is aligned with and complements the [Missing and Murdered](#)

[Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ People National Action Plan](#) and the [Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ People](#). In 2024–2025, the Government of Canada will continue to work across federal institutions to help ensure a coordinated approach that supports sustainable progress toward ending GBV against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Finally, Canada will provide funding and support for community-based research. This will build and mobilize knowledge to better understand and address the needs of at-risk and underserved groups in Canada who experience GBV.

The federal, provincial, and territorial governments are also working together to monitor the results and impacts of actions through the [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#). They will do so using an agreed-upon [expected results framework](#). The Government of Canada will publish a national report annually to show progress, starting in fall 2024.

Ending GBV continues to be a priority for the provinces and territories over the next five years. Many provinces are developing their own strategies and plans to end GBV, some of which are noted below.

In October 2023, the Government of Alberta announced the development of Alberta’s 10-year strategy to end GBV and support survivors. Comprehensive engagement to develop this strategy began in early 2024 and is ongoing. GBV leaders, survivors, community organizations, municipalities, Indigenous communities, and academics are providing input to help shape the strategy’s development to ensure that it meets all Albertans’ needs.

New Brunswick is working to apply its response to the [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ People National Action Plan](#) and the [Atlantic Domestic Homicide Review Network](#), a 10-year retrospective study of all domestic homicides in Atlantic Canada.

The Government of Nova Scotia has prioritized ending GBV on post-secondary campuses. It plans to strengthen existing prevention programs; expand their impact by broadening outreach to Nova Scotian youths before starting post-secondary studies; and enhance equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility content.

In 2023, the Government of Prince Edward Island released its first sexual violence prevention and response strategy for adults – [Creating a Culture of Care: A Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Adult Sexual Violence in Prince Edward Island](#). Feedback from survivors, communities, and service providers guided this five-year strategy. It aims to empower frontline services with knowledge and skills, strengthen trauma-informed processes, increase options for survivors and interventions for offenders, and coordinate overall efforts to address sexual violence.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has signed a four-year bilateral agreement with WAGE, resulting in \$13.6 million in new funding. This funding will support the province's work in addressing and preventing GBV while developing and applying culturally appropriate supports and services for local communities.

Over the next four years, Ontario will apply [Ontario-STANDS: Standing Together Against gender-based violence Now through Decisive actions, prevention, empowerment and Supports](#). This cross-government action plan will increase funding for service providers to enhance their ability to provide supports, expand initiatives that help stop GBV before it occurs, and provide training and job opportunities for women so they can gain financial independence.

The Government of Quebec launched the [Integrated Government Strategy to Counteract Sexual Violence and Domestic Violence, and to Rebuild Trust](#), which will run until 2027 and aims to address sexual and spousal violence. The funding from the Canada-Quebec agreement to address gender-based violence will add to the Government of Quebec's actions in this area.

Through the [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#), the Yukon will be conducting a program review to stabilize the sector and address gaps and opportunities for future work. The review will engage community partners and First Nation governments.

### **Enhancing GBA Plus**

Another priority that Canada will focus on to advance gender equality is strengthening the framing, parameters, and supporting infrastructure for GBA Plus. Canada has sustained its commitment to GBA Plus for 30 years and has continuously improved the tool and its approach to applying it. Today, GBA Plus is embedded in all the federal government's key decision-making processes. As well as expanding where GBA Plus is required, Canada has strengthened guidance to promote more robust and intersectional applications of it across more functional areas. Work will continue to advance across the federal government, and WAGE will support this in its roles as a convener, knowledge broker, and capacity builder. Ongoing enhancement of GBA Plus will continue and will include external groups, experts, academia, and community services to ensure the tool is relevant, applicable, and effective. In addition, the Government of Canada plans to promote innovation across the federal government to integrate intersectionality into policies, programs, and initiatives. This will be done by growing practitioners' skills and developing leaders in the system, empowering them to grow capacity across their organizations and functional communities.

Specific actions that will be priorities include methodological improvements and related guidance; maintaining a standing offer, a procurement tool allowing federal partners to access the capacity they need through a pool of pre-vetted intersectional experts; and developing peer-to-peer learning opportunities. The Government of Canada will also work with partners to ensure that diverse players within and outside the federal government have access to the resources, data, and supports required to advance GBA Plus application.

This includes brokering and promoting relationships with key players in the system, such as the Canada School of Public Service and Statistics Canada, and working on achieving the goals of Canada's first [Disaggregated Data Action Plan \(DDAP\)](#). The Government of Canada will also continue to deliver on its GBA Plus mandate and legislative obligations under the [Canadian Gender Budgeting Act](#) and other legislation where intersectional considerations are mandatory (e.g., the *Impact Assessment Act* review process).

Developing and applying gender-based analysis was also a priority for many provinces and territories in Canada over the past five years.

In 2019, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador mandated an “all-of-government” approach to using GBA Plus. All government departments and agencies must perform GBA Plus on all work. This includes policies, programs, services, legislation, and budgets.

The Government of New Brunswick established and deployed the Gender Impact Statement alongside public budget documents. This initiative, led by the collaboration between the government's Women's Equality department and the Finance and Treasury Board, shows a progressive commitment to including GBA Plus principles in budgeting processes. Since its launch in the Government of New Brunswick's Budget 2021–2022, the province's Gender Impact Statement has been consistently published with budget documents. It has provided crucial insights into the gender and diversity impacts of specific budget measures. Notably, the Gender Impact Statement has evolved from conducting GBA Plus on the whole budget to developing impact reports for individual budget items.

### **Gender pay equity**

On July 14, 2021, the Government of Canada launched a task force to conduct a comprehensive review of the *Employment Equity Act* (EEA) (1995) and provide evidence-based recommendations on modernizing and strengthening the federal employment equity framework.

On December 11, 2023, the Task Force's final report, [A Transformative Framework to Achieve and Sustain Employment Equity](#), was released. In response, the Government of Canada announced several initial commitments to modernize the Act. These include creating two new designated groups under the Act, Black people and 2SLGBTQI+ people, and replacing the term “Aboriginal Peoples” with “Indigenous Peoples.” Legislation will be introduced after targeted consultations. Modernizing the EEA will help advance equity in federally regulated workplaces.

Reducing the gender pay gap is also a priority for British Columbia in the coming years. British Columbia is taking a multi-pronged approach to reduce this gap.<sup>43</sup> It includes introducing new pay transparency legislation in 2023 that requires employers to include pay information on job postings, disclose their pay gaps, and avoid behaviour that contributes

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<sup>43</sup> According to [Statistics Canada, in 2022 women in B.C. earned 17% less than men.](#)

to the gap. British Columbia is also increasing the minimum wage and significantly expanding access to child care and skills training to reduce the gender pay gap and advance gender equity.

## **2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan**

Applying and furthering work on the [Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan](#) is a priority for the Government of Canada over the next five years. It will do this by prioritizing community action and coordinating the federal government's work to advance 2SLGBTQI+ issues across federal departments and agencies. This will involve a holistic, whole-of-government approach that recognizes the types of inequities facing communities are interconnected. Achieving full equality and improving overall outcomes for 2SLGBTQI+ communities will require sustained efforts across all levels of government, industries, and society. The Action Plan is an evergreen document that builds on progress the Government of Canada has already made. It will continue to guide the Government of Canada's work into the future. This Action Plan is an important step in a series of recent milestones that seek to strengthen inclusion and achieve equality for 2SLGBTQI+ communities. However, it is not the last step. Real change takes a sustained commitment over many years. It requires dedication and support, in collaboration with 2SLGBTQI+ communities, by those inside and outside the federal government.

The 2024 federal budget pledged \$273.6 million over six years, starting in 2024–2025, to support community outreach and law enforcement reform, tackle the rise in hate crimes, enhance community security, counter radicalization, and increase support for victims. Specific investments include:

- \$12 million over five years, starting in 2024–2025, for WAGE to fund projects that combat hate against 2SLGBTQI+ communities; and
- \$3 million over two years, starting in 2024–2025, for WAGE to support security needs for Pride festivals.

## **International priorities**

Internationally, support for women's rights organizations and feminist movements is particularly important in the current global climate of coordinated and well-funded backlash against gender equality, LGBTQI+ rights, and human rights more broadly. This support is a priority moving forward. Canada is committed to working collaboratively with partners, including countries in the Global South, civil society, and international organizations, to counter these trends. Canada advocates for and practises working closely with women's rights, feminist, and equality-seeking organizations and movements, given the vital role they play in creating social change for gender equality. Their voices, leadership, and participation must be part of all levels of policy dialogue, and they must be key partners in designing and deploying international aid initiatives. By listening to and building on civil society partners' recommendations and expertise, the Government of Canada has gained valuable insights into how Canada can be a more effective feminist partner and expand the network and coalition of a transnational feminist movement. Canada remains committed to these broader partnerships and networks.

## SECTION 3: PROGRESS ACROSS THE SIX THEMATIC CLUSTERS<sup>44</sup>

This section provides an analysis of Canada's progress in advancing gender equality under the six thematic clusters listed by UN Women to reflect the implementation of the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* and the 2030 Agenda. While Canada's national review was extensive, the initiatives listed in this document are not exhaustive due to space limitations. However, they provide an accurate overview of the key work that has been done by the Government of Canada and provincial and territorial governments to support women and girls across the country. Note that while some programs across the federal, provincial, and territorial governments may be similar, they are developed by each government to reflect their own priorities and needs.

### 3.1 Inclusive development, shared prosperity, and decent work

Everyone should have the opportunity to contribute to, and benefit from, Canada's economy. Too many women, particularly single mothers, Indigenous women, Black and racialized women, women with disabilities, and senior women, face challenges making ends meet. Women still face barriers in achieving their full potential – they are overrepresented in lower-paid jobs and often cannot fully participate in the workforce due to caregiving responsibilities.

Canada acknowledges that there are persistent barriers to full participation in the economy and equal distribution of paid and unpaid work. Despite advancements, women and diverse communities in Canada still face inequalities in access to education, employment opportunities, wage parity, and access to decision-making spaces that may influence more inclusive financing, policies, and programming.

The wage gap between men and women in Canada remains a challenge. In 2023, women working full time in Canada earned 88 cents for every dollar men earned.<sup>45</sup> Intersectional factors reveal even wider wage gaps. Women from diverse groups – namely Indigenous women, immigrant women who landed in Canada in childhood (aged 18 or younger), and those who landed in adulthood (older than 18) – experience the gender wage gap differently. Compared to Canadian-born men, immigrant women who landed as adults (21%) and Indigenous women (20%) had the largest wage gaps in 2022. Gaps were smallest for immigrant women who landed as children (11%) and Canadian-born women (9%).<sup>46</sup> Between 2007 and 2022, gender differences within the same job shrunk for women but

<sup>44</sup> To simplify the analysis set out by UN Women, the Beijing 12 [critical areas of concern](#) have been clustered into 6 overarching dimensions that align the Beijing Platform for Action with the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

<sup>45</sup> Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0417-01 Employee wages by occupation, annual](#)

<sup>46</sup> Statistics Canada. (2023) [The Daily: Intersectional Gender Wage Gap in Canada, 2007 to 2022](#)

remain a substantial source of the wage gap. In fact, more than half of the gender wage gap remains when we compare men and women in the same job in 2022. For example, 67.4% of the gender difference in pay remains when we compare Canadian-born men and women in the same job.<sup>47</sup> Relatedly, women shoulder the majority of unpaid care, which impacts their ability to fully participate in the labour force. In 2022, more than half of women aged 15 and older (52%, or almost 8.4 million women) provided some form of care, whether paid or unpaid, to children and care-dependent adults. Regardless of whether they cared for children or adults, women were significantly more likely than men (42%) to provide care.<sup>48</sup>

Although these remain challenges, Canada has made some progress in closing the gender wage gap. While still sizable, the gap narrowed between 2007 and 2022. Canadian-born women earned 9.2% less than their men counterparts in 2022, down from 15% in 2007.<sup>49</sup> The wage gap between Canadian-born men and Indigenous women narrowed by 7.1 percentage points, from 27.2% in 2007 to 20.1% in 2022.<sup>50</sup> As mentioned in Section 2, more women are part of the Canadian labour force than ever before, in part because of the initiatives across the country supporting access to ELCC.

## **ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WORKFORCE/WORKPLACE**

Advancing gender equality in the workplace is a priority for Canada and key to achieving diverse women's economic empowerment. Canada continues to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion as an integral part of fulfilling its commitment to removing discriminatory barriers to labour market participation.

### **General legislation**

As noted in Section 2, one of the Government of Canada's steps to advance equity over the years was announcing a comprehensive review of the [EEA](#) through a task force model in fall 2020. The [EEA Review Task Force](#), launched in July 2021, had a mandate to advise the Canadian Minister of Labour on how to modernize and strengthen the EEA. The Task Force published its final report, *A Transformative Framework to Achieve and Sustain Employment Equity*, in December 2023.

### **Federal Pay Equity Act**

The federal [Pay Equity Act](#) came into force on August 31, 2021. It established a proactive pay equity regime for around 1.32 million workers in federally regulated workplaces. The Act is an effective step toward addressing the portion of the gender wage gap that can be attributed to undervaluing work traditionally done by women. The *Pay Equity Regulations* ensure that workers in federally regulated workplaces receive equal pay for work of equal

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<sup>47</sup> Drolet, M. & Madare Amini, M. (2023) [Intersectional perspective on the Canadian gender wage gap - statcan.gc.ca](#)

<sup>48</sup> Statistics Canada. (2022). [The Daily: More than half of women provide care to children and care-dependent adults in Canada, 2022 - statcan.gc.ca](#)

<sup>49</sup> Drolet, & Madare Amini. Statcan.gc.ca

<sup>50</sup> Drolet, & Madare Amini. Statcan.gc.ca

value. Employers are required to establish, regularly review, and update their pay equity plans. These plans analyze any differences in compensation between positions mostly held by women and those held by men that are found to be of equal value. Where the plan finds differences in compensation, employers must eliminate them by raising the compensation of those positions mostly held by women.

On February 2, 2024, the Government of Canada launched [Equi'Vision](#). This new website shines light on the barriers to equity for women, Indigenous people, people with disabilities, and members of visible minorities in federally regulated private-sector industries. It provides user-friendly, easily comparable data on workforce representation rates and pay gaps for members of the four designated groups under the *Employment Equity Act*. With Equi'Vision, **Canada becomes the first country in the world to make this level of information publicly available**. Pay gap data for 2021 were reported by employers for the first time in 2022 and is now accessible online through this tool.

The Northwest Territories has made great strides in economic participation for women. The Government of the Northwest Territories has had equal pay legislation since 2004. Among people who worked full time year-round in 2021, the average annual employment income for women was \$94,100 compared to \$101,000 for men (a lower difference than Canada's national average<sup>51</sup>).<sup>52</sup> Overall, the proportion of women (78%) earning \$60,000 or over was slightly higher than that of men (76%). The employment rates for men and women were similar, at 68.6% and 71.3% respectively, as of July 2023. Before that, women's annual employment rate was higher only once since 2001, when the labour market survey started collecting information for the Northwest Territories. Across business sector industries (non-government), there were more women (51%) in senior management in the Northwest Territories during the first quarter of 2023. Industries with the highest proportion of women managers were real estate and rental and leasing as well as health care and social assistance. Currently, 16.5% of the Northwest Territories' businesses are owned by women. This was the ninth highest among the 13 jurisdictions in Canada.

### **Workplace harassment**

The *Canada Labour Code* was amended to better protect employees from harassment and violence in federal workplaces. [The Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations](#) came into force in January 2021. Important [changes were also made to the policy and directives on harassment and violence](#) to help create a public service that is free of harassment and violence, where all employees are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness.

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<sup>51</sup> In 2021, the difference between the average annual incomes of men and women in the Northwest Territories was \$6,900. For Canada as a whole, the difference was \$16,800.

<sup>52</sup> Statistics Canada. [Table 11-10-0239-01 Income of individuals by age group, sex and income source, Canada, provinces and selected census metropolitan areas](#)



In 2023, amendments were made to the *Saskatchewan Employment Act* requiring employers to develop and apply harassment policies in consultation with workers or an occupational health and safety committee. This will ensure that incidents of harassment are investigated.

## EMPOWERING WOMEN IN THE WORLD OF WORK

Despite progress, women remain underrepresented in senior management in Canada, accounting for 30% of senior managers in 2023 and just 35% of other management positions.<sup>53</sup> The situation is worse for diverse women. Racialized women only hold 9.4% of board, executive officer, senior management, and pipeline-to-senior-management positions combined. Indigenous women, women with disabilities, and 2SLGBTQI+ women each hold 2% or less of senior leadership and pipeline positions.<sup>54</sup>

Since 2020, distributing corporations governed by the *Canada Business Corporations Act* must give their shareholders and [Corporations Canada](#) information about the representation of women, Indigenous people, members of visible minorities, and people with disabilities on their boards of directors and among senior management.

The [50 – 30 Challenge](#) was launched on December 10, 2020, to advance and recognize diversity, inclusion, and economic prosperity in Canada. The Challenge represents a \$33 million investment over three years (2020–2023) to develop tools and resources to help participating organizations advance diversity and inclusion in workplaces. The 50 – 30 Challenge is an agreement between the Government of Canada, business, and diversity organizations to increase corporate diversity. It aims for gender parity (50% women and/or non-binary people) on Canadian boards and/or senior management and significant representation (30%) of other equity-deserving groups on Canadian boards and senior management. As of March 1, 2024, 2491 organizations of all sizes have signed on to the Challenge. Organizations that participate are offered resources to support them in the program and help them find their best path forward in a way that responds to their unique needs.

Canada recognizes the vital role women continue to play in growing the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector. However, women remain underrepresented in the sector and still face barriers. Measures to address these challenges include the [Women Entrepreneur Program from Farm Credit Canada \(FCC\)](#), which was announced in March 2019 and is a key partner program of the Canadian government’s Women Entrepreneurship Strategy. FCC’s Women Entrepreneur Program helps to provide capital and skills development opportunities for women to start or grow their businesses. As of March 2024, FCC has financed 3,969 Women Entrepreneur Loans totalling over \$2.96 billion since the program launched, almost six times the original commitment of \$500 million over three years.

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<sup>53</sup> Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0416-01 Labour force characteristics by occupation, annual](#)

<sup>54</sup> The Prosperity Project. (2024). [Annual Report Card on Gender Equity and Leadership – canadianprosperityproject.ca](#)

Launched in 2018, the Government of Canada's [Women Entrepreneurship Strategy](#) helps address challenges faced by women entrepreneurs and advances women's economic empowerment. The Women Entrepreneurship Strategy is now a \$7 billion initiative involving programs and services offered by nearly 20 federal players. These serve to increase women-owned businesses' access to the financing, networks, and expertise that they need to start up, scale up, and access new markets. In 2022–2023, Women Entrepreneurship Strategy initiatives provided almost 2,600 loans to women entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs accessed federal ecosystem programs and events over 31,400 times, federal programs to help women entrepreneurs export were accessed over 5,000 times, and the [Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub](#) took part in or co-sponsored over 1,000 events with over 31,800 attendees. Altogether, federal programs and services for women entrepreneurs were accessed over 74,600 times in 2022–2023. These supports have been key to helping women entrepreneurs launch and grow their businesses, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic and a changing economic environment.

Ontario is removing barriers so more women can excel as entrepreneurs and in business, leadership roles, skilled trades, and sectors where the need is greatest. Among the Ontario government's efforts are two programs:

- The [Investing in Women's Futures program](#) provides a range of services and employment supports to help women overcome barriers, increase wellbeing, build skills, and gain employment. Through this program, GBV survivors and women facing social and economic barriers have access to employment readiness and wraparound supports to transition to employment and gain financial independence. The program expanded in 2023 and is now available at 33 locations across the province.
- Through the [Women's Economic Security Program](#), low-income women receive training to gain the skills, knowledge, and experience to find work or start a small business and increase their financial security. Since launching in 2018, the program has helped more than 2,100 women secure employment, become entrepreneurs, or pursue further training and/or education, including in sectors where women are underrepresented. The Government of Ontario increased funding for the Women's Economic Security Program in 2023.

From 2020 through 2023, Manitoba provided two organizations with grants to support programs that support women's reskilling efforts, namely Manitoba Aerospace and the Manitoba Construction Sector Council. In addition to technical training, these programs incorporate life skills and job readiness training to ensure that the women entering these programs feel supported and prepared to work in these fields.

[Manitoba Aerospace's Women Transitioning to Careers in Aerospace program](#) is a 21-week initiative to provide women the technical skills they need to work as gas turbine engine mechanics in Manitoba's aerospace industry. Manitoba Aerospace partners with Neeginan

College of Applied Technology in Winnipeg to deliver the training. The program has an incredible success rate in graduating participants. More than 90% of participants were offered job opportunities after the training program ended.

The [Manitoba Construction Sector Council's program](#) was developed to provide culturally informed training in the building and heavy construction trades to Indigenous women within their home communities in northern Manitoba. The program included job readiness training; safety certification; and education in either framing, blast-hole drilling, or water and waste installation. The program was offered in five First Nation communities across Manitoba. Nearly all women who participated in this program stayed in the field, either through work in their areas of expertise or more education to continue developing their skills.

### ***Indigenous women's entrepreneurship***

Since 2021, the Government of Canada has funded the [Indigenous Women's Entrepreneurship Program](#), which is designed and managed by an Indigenous partner organization, the National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association (NACCA). The program was created to meet potential and/or current Indigenous women entrepreneurs where they are and provide them with supports to build their entrepreneurial careers. These supports include financial literacy/capability workshops, training materials, resources, and a mentorship program. The program also provides a micro-loan fund to enable Indigenous women to launch a micro-business in a low-risk environment.

In addition to the Indigenous Women's Entrepreneurship Program, NACCA and participating Indigenous financial institutions delivered \$5 million from Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada's [Women Entrepreneurship Loan Fund](#). This national fund, which was part of the Women Entrepreneurship Strategy, supported Indigenous women entrepreneurs with loans of up to \$50,000. NACCA has also been building tools and supports for Indigenous women to start or expand their businesses through contributions from WAGE and the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario.

### ***Supports for diverse women***

Expanding on supports for women entrepreneurs, the Government of Canada through Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada has made significant investments to address barriers facing diverse groups of entrepreneurs in Canada. These programs provide a wide range of support, helping entrepreneurs to start up, scale up, and access new markets. Women business owners with intersecting identities may be able to benefit from programs such as:

- The [Black Entrepreneurship Program](#): This is the result of collaboration between the Government of Canada, Black-led business organizations, and financial institutions. It includes components like the [Black Entrepreneurship Loan Fund](#), which offers loans of up to \$250,000. In 2022–2023, the Black Entrepreneurship Loan Fund and the Business Development Bank of Canada provided over \$17 million to support 180 loans for Black

entrepreneurs. In 2022–2023, 28% of clients who were approved for loans were women, and 14% were 2SLGBTQI+.

Racialized newcomer women often face multiple barriers to employment, including gender- and race-based discrimination, precarious employment, and a lack of affordable child care. In 2018, the Government of Canada launched the Racialized Newcomer Women Pilot through Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada’s Settlement Program. The pilot aimed to test the effectiveness of targeted employment-related services for racialized newcomer women in supporting their labour market access and advancement. Examples of programming include work placements, mentorships, and employment counselling for women-only cohorts. While the pilot ended in March 2023, research on the interventions’ impact continues. The latest findings from the pilot’s evaluation, published in February 2024, highlight improved career adaptability, including confidence in career decision making, clarity in job search goals, and confidence in job-search abilities, for program participants. This leads to increases in the likelihood of working, hours of work, and earnings. Program participants were also more likely to find commensurate employment (meaning employment relevant to their skills and experiences) faster than participants in the pilot who used regular, non-targeted employment-related services.

### ***International***

In 2022, Canada became chair of the [Equal Pay International Coalition \(EPIC\)](#) Steering Committee. This strategic, multi-stakeholder partnership aims to help UN Member States achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly global target 8.5, which calls for equal pay for work of equal value by 2030. Canada has been a member of EPIC since its launch in 2017. Through its engagement at the International Labour Organization (ILO), Canada continues to support initiatives that advance gender equality in the world of work. On January 30, 2023, Canada ratified ILO Convention 190, [the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019](#) (C190). This is the first-ever global treaty on ending violence and harassment in the world of work.

Canada has increased its capacity-building efforts to help better integrate migrants and refugees into local communities and labour markets. Where possible, it has also included gender considerations in project development to address women’s specific needs. For example, in 2021, Canada supported an ILO project to help integrate low- and medium-skilled Venezuelan workers into their host countries’ labour markets through skills recognition, certification, and integration into public employment services. Through this project, the ILO created a web page with information on women workers’ labour rights, where to seek help when facing occupational harassment, and a list of the ILO’s most important guides for protecting migrant women in the workplace.

## **WORK AND CARE RESPONSIBILITIES**

Women in Canada continue to bear most of the weight of care for children and other family members. In 2022, nearly one in three (32%) women looked after or provided unpaid care

to children, and 23% provided unpaid care to adults with long-term disabilities (compared to 26% and 19% of men, respectively). Women were also more likely to provide dual care (for both children and care-dependent adults) than men (7% versus 5%).<sup>55</sup>

Despite the possible rewards of being a caregiver, unpaid care often impacts a person's physical and mental health. Women were more likely not only to be unpaid caregivers but also to experience health effects of their caregiving responsibilities. The impacts were greater for women across several health-related symptoms: 62% of women who provided care felt tired, compared with 48% of men. Women were also more likely than men to feel worried or anxious (50% versus 37%), overwhelmed (45% versus 27%), short-tempered or irritable (35% versus 26%), and depressed (20% versus 15%) due to their caregiving responsibilities.<sup>56</sup>

As discussed in Section 2, [the federal government announced the creation of a Canada-wide system of affordable ELCC in 2021](#). All provinces and territories are on track or have already begun delivering on the goal of \$10 a day or less for regulated child care. This investment has helped address labour shortages in Canada and supported record women's employment.

As of April 2024, five provinces and all three territories are delivering regulated child care for \$10 a day or less on average. The other jurisdictions have reduced fees by at least 50%.

Women make up much of the Canadian ELCC workforce (96%), with immigrants and non-permanent residents (33%) and racialized people (24%) overrepresented. Canada considers valuing their work a key part of improving workforce conditions. All [current agreements with provinces and territories on Canada-wide ELCC](#) contain commitments to support a qualified ELCC workforce. These commitments include wage grids for educators and initiatives to increase the percentage of certified early childhood educators.

In July 2023, the [federal, provincial, and territorial ministers most responsible for ELCC agreed to develop a Canada-wide, multilateral strategy for the ELCC workforce](#). The multilateral strategy will centre on recruitment, retention, and recognition.<sup>57</sup>

To better meet newcomer families' needs, the Government of Canada funds organizations to deliver child care for newcomer children in several formats. These include licensed care governed by provincial law; seats purchased in provincially licensed daycares run by other organizations; and unlicensed child care governed by the *Care for Newcomer Children Requirements*, which the organization Childminding Monitoring, Advisory and Support developed and monitors. Providing child care services enables newcomer parents,

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<sup>55</sup> Statistics Canada. (2022) [The Daily: More than half of women provide care to children and care-dependent adults in Canada, 2022 - statcan.gc.ca](#)

<sup>56</sup> Statistics Canada. "More than half of women provide care to children and care-dependent adults in Canada, 2022".

<sup>57</sup> In order to preserve its exclusive jurisdiction over child care and to maintain sole responsibility for planning, organizing, delivery, and rollout of ELCC services in the province, Quebec participates in the Forum as just an observer to share best practices.

particularly women, to access a range of training, classes, and supports through settlement and resettlement programs. The Government of Canada is funding more online language training for newcomers, including self-directed classes. These classes help make scheduling more flexible for learners, particularly women, who often have care responsibilities in the home.

In addition to new ELCC initiatives, Canada's maternity and parental benefits through Employment Insurance (EI) provide key supports for Canadians welcoming a new child into their families. Besides job protection, these benefits provide temporary income support to eligible workers who are away from work because of pregnancy, childbirth, or caring for newborn or newly adopted children. Changes were made to give parents more flexibility in using EI maternity and parental benefits. Since March 2019, more weeks of parental benefits are available to parents who share benefits. This measure aims to increase gender equality in the home and the workplace by encouraging all parents, especially fathers, to take some leave when welcoming a new child and raise their children more equally, in a culturally relevant environment.

The 2024 federal budget has also proposed creating a sectoral table on the care economy. It will consult and provide recommendations to the federal government on concrete actions to better support the care economy, including on early learning and child care.

The [2021/2022 EI Monitoring and Assessment Report](#) found that while women make most claims for parental benefits, the share of claims men made increased to 28.3% in 2021–2022. This higher proportion can be linked to the 2019 program changes. A 2022 evaluation of EI maternity and parental benefits assessed benefits for employed workers in terms of access, use, effects, and program delivery from January 2006 to December 2019. Preliminary results showed that fathers' participation rate was relatively low over the study period (below 13%). However, the recent changes to parental benefits increased the rate from 13.6% in 2016 to 18.1% in 2019. In addition, the sharing of parental benefits increased from 14.5% in 2017 to 19.9% in 2019.

Quebec is investing to reduce debt by 50% for parents who are beneficiaries of the Loans and Bursaries Program for secondary vocational training and full-time post-secondary studies. Most loan and bursary recipients deemed "full-time" because of their family responsibilities are women. The Loans and Bursaries Program has been enhanced with a measure to reduce loans that are granted to its beneficiaries who are parents, by increasing the portion of assistance granted in equivalent bursaries. This includes measures to help students balance family, work, and studies. People with family responsibilities who pursue part-time studies remain eligible for the Loans and Bursaries Program and are deemed to be full-time students.

In 2021, the Yukon government introduced universal child care based on four key principles: quality, affordability, accessibility, and inclusivity. Costs for child care dropped from about \$43 a day to about \$11 a day for families who use participating programs for

licensed child care. Parents do not need to apply for the subsidy, as it is universally applied. Low-income families are eligible for further supports beyond the universal subsidy. The program also includes wage enhancements for trained early childhood educators.

### ***Indigenous early learning and child care***

The Government of Canada is working with Indigenous partners to apply the co-developed [Indigenous ELCC Framework](#). The Framework guides the design, delivery, and governance of Indigenous ELCC. It is supported by Government of Canada investments and applied through collaboration with Indigenous governments and organizations. Together, these actions aim to enhance access to culturally appropriate, affordable, high-quality, flexible, and inclusive ELCC for Indigenous children and families. Dedicated Indigenous ELCC investments seek to advance Canada-Indigenous priorities. These include building Indigenous governance to enable self-determination and a future transfer of accountability to Indigenous governments.

These investments are now permanent and ongoing. A key feature of this funding was the creation of funding envelopes that respect distinctions. Co-managed with Canada, these envelopes provide Indigenous leaders with control over funding allocations, plans, and priorities. Federal investments are handled in partnership with First Nations, Inuit, and the Métis Nation, who have the flexibility to direct investments to a range of ELCC priorities, regardless of where their citizens live.

The Government of Canada works to recognize the work of those in the care and domestic field through the First Nations and Inuit Home and Community Care Program. This program manages contribution agreements with First Nations and Inuit communities and territorial governments. The agreements fund running home care by registered nurses and trained certified personal care workers in 455 First Nations and Inuit communities. The goal is to enable First Nations and Inuit people with disabilities and chronic or acute illnesses, and the elderly, to receive the care they need in their homes and communities.

### ***International***

In 2021, Canada joined the Global Alliance for Care and announced a five-year, \$100 million commitment to address unpaid and paid care work issues in low and middle-income countries. For example, in 2022, Canada's investment in the World Bank Group's multi-donor [Invest in Childcare initiative](#) (\$10 million, 2022-2024) contributed to childcare activities in over 28 countries, most of which are in Sub-Saharan Africa. This includes 26 small catalytic grants, which supported countries to advance the childcare agenda, and five larger grants (\$2 to 5 million) deployed by country governments in Côte d'Ivoire, Moldova, Rwanda, Senegal, and Somalia. The initiatives support data and evidence gathering, knowledge exchange, and analysis on childcare, as well as capacity building. This is expected to make quality and affordable childcare more available specifically for the most vulnerable families, and in support of women's economic empowerment.

In 2023, [Canada's Federal Secretariat on ELCC](#) contributed seven resources to the Global Alliance's [Global Digital Community platform](#). The platform is a bank of information on care produced by the Global Alliance's members, with the goal of providing information to support designing and applying care policies and services. The ELCC secretariat's contributions include links to information on Government of Canada ELCC investments, [Statistics Canada's Early Learning and Child Care Information Hub](#), the federal government's bilateral ELCC agreements with provinces and territories, and ELCC frameworks.

## EQUITABLE DIGITAL FUTURE

To ensure an equitable digital future for women and girls, the Government of Canada launched several initiatives on intellectual property (IP) with targeted actions.

The national [IP Strategy](#) was launched in 2018–2019 to help Canadian businesses, creators, innovators, and entrepreneurs better understand, protect, and commercialize IP. Its development was shaped by country-wide consultations, including with women's business and entrepreneurial groups, on how initiatives could be designed to promote traditionally underrepresented groups, including women, participating in the IP system. Based on consultations, measures were taken to ensure that any unequal impacts are addressed through more resources for and outreach to underrepresented groups. Input from the IP Strategy consultations helped in designing the following initiatives:

[The IP Clinics Program](#) was launched in 2018–2019 to support free or low-cost access to basic IP advisory services. It will also foster the development of future IP experts by increasing university students' exposure to IP issues. One of the IP Clinics Program's goals is to increase access to IP services for those traditionally underrepresented as IP holders, including women. Eligible recipients are encouraged to consider projects that grow the capacity of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and underrepresented groups, including women, to develop IP strategies and protect their innovations. Eligible activities relate to delivering free or low-cost IP services and include outreach to those traditionally underrepresented as IP holders.

[The Patent Collective](#) is a \$30 million pilot program to assist Canadian SMEs with their patent and other IP needs. Applicants were asked to identify how they could support underrepresented groups, including women, to better access IP services and protect and leverage their assets. The selected recipient, [Innovation Asset Collective](#) (IAC), hosted a forum and roundtable discussion in 2021 that focused on women entrepreneurs and IP. IAC also launched the Canadian Women in IP Community Program to address the gender imbalance in patent filing. By educating and raising awareness on the importance of IP and innovation, both the IP education and the IP funding services benefit women working in IP. IAC's Women in IP community currently has 70 members. Other Canadian Women in IP Community Program initiatives include the Grant for Women in IP and engagement activities with partners. The grant is available to collective members that are women-led, -



founded, or -owned. It provides \$100,000 per funding round, with individual grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$10,000. The 2024 federal budget announced that IAC will receive \$14.5 million over two years to ensure that small and medium-sized clean tech businesses will benefit from specialized IP support to grow their businesses and leverage IP.

The [Canada Digital Adoption Program](#), introduced in 2022, offers funding and expertise to Canadian SMEs to help them adopt digital technologies, grow their e-commerce capabilities, and be more productive and competitive in the digital economy. The program's two streams, Grow Your Business Online (GYBO) and Boost Your Business Technology (BYBT), foster an inclusive approach by targeting businesses owned by equity-deserving groups. For example, GYBO aims to ensure women-owned businesses are a fair proportion of recipients by setting a target that at least 18% of grants go to women-owned businesses. In addition, BYBT has organized targeted outreach with organizations that serve underrepresented populations, such as women, Indigenous people, and Black and other racialized communities. This outreach through participation in events such as the #IgniteDigital campaign and The51 platform seeks to help boost the participation of SMEs owned and operated by equity-deserving group members. These targeted efforts have reached over 24,000 SMEs.

The [CanCode program](#) supports initiatives that provide educational opportunities to Canadian youth from kindergarten to Grade 12 for coding and digital skills development. It also supports initiatives that provide kindergarten to Grade 12 teachers with the training and professional development they need to teach digital skills, coding, and related concepts in their classrooms. This program prioritizes providing learning opportunities to traditionally underrepresented groups in the information and communication technology and STEM fields, including girls. CanCode supports gender equality by targeting at least 50% of participants being girls. Since its launch in 2017, the program has provided digital skills training to more than 3 million girls. The 2024 federal budget announced \$39.2 million over two years, starting in 2024–2025, to advance the next phase of CanCode.

## **CANADA'S ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT AND POLICIES FOR A MORE GENDER-EQUAL ECONOMY**

The most notable macroeconomic event over the last five years was the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic and resulting public health restrictions had an unprecedented impact on the Canadian economy. More than 3 million Canadians lost their jobs and another 2.5 million worked significantly reduced hours – representing about 30% of the pre-pandemic workforce. The most severe impacts targeted many of the most vulnerable people in Canada: low-wage workers, young people, racialized workers, and especially women.

Women are more likely than men to work in the sectors that were hardest hit by COVID-19 public health restrictions, including tourism, hospitality, and retail. Many women with children had to cut back on hours worked or employment to provide schooling and child

care. More women also tend to work in frontline jobs, such as nursing and personal support work, that exposed them to health risks.

The Canadian government's COVID-19 economic response, which included job protections and direct transfers, helped to bridge households and businesses through the pandemic. These support measures were not targeted specifically at women, but they helped to stabilize the economy at a time when women were bearing the most significant economic harms of the pandemic.

The pandemic temporarily blocked Canada from advancing on implementing the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* since entire sectors of the economy were closed and access to critical services in the education, health, and justice systems was reduced. However, these developments placed a renewed focus on women's precarity in the economy as well as the importance of the care sector to women's economic participation.

In the economic recovery from the pandemic, **women's employment bounced back to exceed pre-pandemic levels**. Since then, the macroeconomic environment has remained generally favourable to women, with labour force participation for women aged 25 to 54 at or near record highs. Despite this, gendered inequalities remain. Women, particularly newcomer women, racialized women, and women with disabilities, still participate in the labour market at lower rates than men do. While gender gaps in earnings have narrowed over the past few decades, women are still a disproportionate share of low-wage workers. Cost of living pressures due to high global inflation have also fuelled food insecurity and difficulty finding affordable housing for some low-income families, of whom women-led single-parent households make up a significant share.

As Canada draws on lessons learned from the pandemic and works to address post-pandemic economic impacts, the Government of Canada is making substantial investments to advance women's economic participation. These include applying the [Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Plan](#), the [Women Entrepreneurship Strategy](#), and the [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#), among others. Other measures referenced earlier in this section, such as the federal [Pay Equity Act](#) and the [50 – 30 Challenge](#), are also contributing to a more gender-equal economy.

### 3.2 Poverty eradication, social protection, and social services

There is strong evidence that advancing gender equality and empowerment for women, girls, 2SLGBTQI+ people, and youth has a critical multiplier effect on poverty eradication and helps drive sustainable economic development. Poverty is a challenge facing men and women alike. However, its effects can be different for women and girls, who are more likely to experience violence, live alone, and face chronic conditions and disabilities at older ages.

Public institutions play a critical role in advancing gender equality and empowering women and girls in all their diversity. Strengthening governance mechanisms and institutions supports sustainable change in communities by formalizing duty bearers' and rights holders' systematic and institutionalized empowerment.

Strengthening social protection systems goes hand in hand with economic resilience and empowerment. Setting the conditions and building strong and supportive ecosystems for women and diverse populations requires addressing key issues. These include food insecurity, the need for access to safe and affordable housing, skill building, and affordable and accessible child care. These barriers must be addressed to set the conditions for poverty reduction and economic empowerment.

## INCOME AND BENEFITS

[Opportunity for All – Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy](#), released in 2018, sets ambitious and concrete poverty reduction targets based on Canada's Official Poverty Line. These targets are a 20% reduction in poverty by 2020 (achieved) and a 50% reduction in poverty by 2030, relative to 2015 levels, which will lead to the lowest poverty rate in Canada's history.

In July 2022, [the Old Age Security](#) pension was permanently increased by 10% for seniors aged 75 and over. This benefit helps to provide a minimum income to seniors aged 65 and over who meet the legal status and residence requirements, and to provide income replacement for seniors in retirement.

The [Guaranteed Income Supplement \(GIS\)](#) provides financial aid to low-income Old Age Security pensioners, most of whom are single women. It also provides Allowances for low-income people aged 60 to 64 who are the spouses or common-law partners of GIS recipients, or who are widowed. In July 2020, the GIS earnings exemption was enhanced to further assist low-income seniors who work. The enhanced exemption applies to both employment and self-employment income. It provides a full exemption on up to \$5,000 of annual earnings, as well as a 50% exemption on the next \$10,000 of earnings. This means that low-income seniors who work can keep more of their benefits.

The enhancement to the [Canada Pension Plan \(CPP\)](#) began in 2019. The enhancement raises the amount working Canadians receive from the CPP retirement pension, post-retirement benefit, disability benefit, and survivor's pension. The value of these benefits will grow gradually over time as people work and contribute to the enhanced Plan, with benefits increasing by up to 50%. In 2023, the CPP provided 3.1 million women with \$21.3 billion in CPP retirement pensions. In addition, 945,000 women were paid \$4.6 billion in survivors' pensions, and 176,000 women were paid \$2.2 billion in disability benefits. The CPP is a mandatory, contributory social insurance program. It provides workers and their families a minimum basic income replacement if the worker retires, becomes disabled, or dies.

In 2021, the poverty rate among senior women (6.1%) was lower than for all women (7.7%). This rate has declined from the 2015 rate of 8%. Though the poverty rate remains higher for women, Canada's public pensions have played a major role in reducing the number of low-income senior women.

The [Canada Child Benefit \(CCB\)](#) helps over 3.5 million families and over 6 million children yearly. The CCB is a tax-free, income-based benefit that provides more support to families who need help the most. According to the 2021 Canadian Income Survey, more than half (59%) of families receiving the maximum CCB are single-parent families, with around 90% led by single mothers. In the 2023–2024 benefit year, the maximum annual benefit is \$7,437 per child under 6 years of age, and \$6,275 per child aged 6 to 17. Families with an adjusted family net income under \$34,863 receive the maximum benefit. This is a 6.3% increase since the last benefit year (2022–2023). Both the maximum benefits and the income thresholds are indexed annually based on the Consumer Price Index to keep pace with the rising cost of living. This gives parents more support each month to help them provide for their children.<sup>58</sup>

Ontario released its third Poverty Reduction Strategy in December 2020 – [Building a Strong Foundation for Success: Reducing Poverty in Ontario \(2020–2025\)](#). The strategy named women, youth, Indigenous people, and Black and other racialized communities as priority groups. The five-year strategy was developed with valuable input from the public and stakeholders. It sets out the Government of Ontario's plan for addressing poverty throughout the province. The strategy is built on four pillars:

- Encouraging job creation and connecting people to jobs
- Connecting people with the right supports and services
- Making life more affordable and building financial resiliency
- Accelerating action and driving progress

The strategy is about connecting people in poverty with training, health, and other supports. Through this, they can participate in their communities and, where possible, find meaningful work and achieve financial stability. The strategy focuses resources and shapes policies and programs across government to help achieve better outcomes for priority groups who are in or at risk of poverty.

The Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) continues to invest in relief on the rising costs of living for people with disabilities who receive social assistance. In July 2023, rates for ODSP and the Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities Program increased by 6.5% to match annual inflation rates. This brought the total increase to almost 12% since September 2022. Going forward, rates will remain tied to inflation. In addition, as of February 2023, people with disabilities can now earn up to \$1,000 a month (up from \$200 a month) through employment with no impacts to their ODSP monthly payments.

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<sup>58</sup> Statistics Canada. (2024) [Canadian Income Survey \(CIS\) – Detailed information for 2022 – statcan.gc.ca](#)

Saskatchewan amended the *Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act* in 2022 to enable enforcement actions on child maintenance, such as child support, to start sooner. If payments are overdue after only one month, provincial government officials can provide reviews and directions to pursue formal enforcement of the maintenance order process.

## Housing

The [National Housing Strategy](#) is a 10-year, over \$82 billion plan to give more people in Canada a place to call home. Launched in 2017, the Strategy includes a range of complementary programs and initiatives that address diverse needs across the entire spectrum of housing types. The NHS recognizes that women and their children are disproportionately in need of housing. It also notes that intersections of identities such as race, sexual orientation, age, and socioeconomic status create distinct types of housing barriers. Therefore, the Government of Canada aims to put 33% of NHS investments, with a minimum of 25%, toward serving the unique needs of women and their children. As of December 31, 2023, [progress on the NHS](#) has included an estimated \$12.32 billion toward meeting the housing needs of women and their children. This includes funding to build, repair, and support 269,697 housing units. This represents 31% of all NHS funding committed.

Of the \$12.32 billion, \$9.44 billion is supporting the needs of women and their children. This involves providing features such as security; outdoor and indoor play spaces; on-site support; or being close to amenities such as public transportation, parks, recreation spaces, child care, health care, and cultural centres.

Below are other key NHS programs and initiatives supporting women and their children:

The Affordable Housing Fund has committed funding to build 1,354 shelter spaces or transitional housing units and repair/renew 344 shelter spaces or transitional housing units for GBV survivors as of December 31, 2023. This includes units funded under the [Affordable Housing Fund's Women and Children Shelter and Transitional Housing Initiative](#). The 2023 Federal Fall Economic Statement also announced an additional \$1 billion for the Affordable Housing Fund starting in 2025-2026.

The Canada Housing Benefit provides \$4 billion in direct affordability support to households in need through programs developed with and cost-matched by provinces and territories. Budget 2021 also announced a further \$315.4 million federal investment to increase direct financial aid for low-income women and children fleeing violence.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Department of Finance Canada (2021) [Budget 2021 Housing - Canada.ca](#)

### **Indigenous housing**

The [Shelter Initiative for Indigenous Women and Children](#), led by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and Indigenous Services Canada, provides \$44.8 million over five years to support building 2 shelters in the territories and 10 in First Nations communities across Canada. They will serve Indigenous women, children, and 2SLGBTQI+ people escaping family violence.

The [Indigenous Shelter and Transitional Housing Initiative](#) provides \$420 million to build at least 38 shelters and 50 new transitional homes for Indigenous women, children, and 2SLGBTQI+ people escaping GBV. As of December 31, 2023, 47 projects have been selected: 25 shelters and 22 transitional housing projects. This represents \$207 million in capital funding, equivalent to 786 spaces/units.

## **IMPROVED HEALTH OUTCOMES**

Social factors such as income, education, gender, and ethnicity may negatively affect health outcomes. This, in turn, may affect people's wellbeing, their capacity to participate in the economy, and their engagement in their communities. Women in Canada have a higher life expectancy at birth than men do (84.1 years versus 79.6 years in 2019–2021).<sup>60</sup> In 2020, life expectancy at birth in Canada dropped, mostly because of the COVID-19 pandemic. This was the largest annual drop the country had ever seen.<sup>61</sup>

Disparities in women's health research, funding, and care remain. As of 2021, women (8.9%) were more likely than men (6.9%) to report unmet health care needs.<sup>62</sup>

### **Menstrual equity**

Menstrual equity is essential to supporting sexual and reproductive health and rights. It is unhindered access to menstrual products, including water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities; access to education; and the ability to discuss issues on menstruation without fear or shame.

Many people face barriers to accessing menstrual products or educational materials because of financial limitations and/or harmful social norms and attitudes on menstruation. According to 2023 public opinion research, one in six (17%) Canadians who menstruate have personally experienced period poverty.<sup>63</sup> This rises to one in four (25%) if their household earns less than \$40,000 a year. One in five (20%) people who menstruate say they may not afford period products sometime in the next 12 months, and 7% say this is very likely. Six in ten people in the first group agree that inflation has increased the odds of

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<sup>60</sup> Public Health Agency of Canada. (2023). [How healthy are people in Canada? An indicators dashboard - health-infobase.canada.ca](#).

<sup>61</sup> Public Health Agency of Canada. (2023). [How healthy are people in Canada? An indicators dashboard - Life expectancy - How healthy are people in Canada? An indicators dashboard - health-infobase.canada.ca](#)

<sup>62</sup> Statistics Canada. (2023) [The Health of Canadians - statcan.gc.ca](#)

<sup>63</sup> Period poverty is a lack of access to menstrual products, education, hygiene facilities, waste management, or a combination of these.

not affording period products. One in four Canadians agree periods are dirty and unclean. About one in five agree menstruation should not be publicly discussed (22%) and menstrual products should be kept out of sight (22%).<sup>64</sup>

A national pilot for the [Menstrual Equity Fund](#) is under way to help address barriers linked to menstrual equity and period poverty. The main goal of the national pilot is to make menstrual products more accessible for low-income groups in diverse parts of the country as a first step in exploring options to close long-term menstrual equity gaps across Canada. The national pilot also seeks to raise awareness of period poverty and reduce the stigma of menstruation.

Food Banks Canada is the recipient chosen to lead the Menstrual Equity Fund pilot's rollout. It is working directly with community organizations (e.g., women's shelters, local food banks, community centres, and friendship centres) in 392 pilot sites from every province and territory to deliver the pilot. As of May 2024, the Menstrual Equity Fund pilot has distributed almost 75 million menstrual products, serving over 3.5 million people. Based on the pilot's early success, WAGE is providing up to \$5 million more in funding for Food Banks Canada to enhance the pilot's impact. This includes expanding the distribution of disposable and reusable menstrual products to more sites in northern communities. Food Banks Canada updates their [Menstrual Equity Fund website](#) with information on the pilot's progress, including statistics on distribution.

Through the education and awareness part of the Menstrual Equity Fund national pilot, six grassroots organizations across Canada are scaling up their education and awareness activities to teach about period poverty and reduce stigma around menstruation. The 2024 federal budget committed to continuing the Menstrual Equity Fund pilot's work.

The pilot also builds on ongoing work at the federal level to advance menstrual equity. This includes as an initiative led by Indigenous Services Canada to provide free menstrual products in First Nations schools on reserves and in federal schools across Canada.

Beyond the Menstrual Equity Fund national pilot, [changes to the Canada Labour Code](#) came into effect on December 15, 2023. They require federally regulated employers to make menstrual products available to workers for free in the workplace. These changes aim to create healthier and more inclusive workplaces, improve gender equality, and reduce stigma around periods.

Provincial governments are also introducing measures to address period poverty. For example, the Menstrual Products in Schools initiative was created in 2020 to provide students in Prince Edward Island free menstrual products. In total, 60 schools participate in the program, which provides thousands of free products every school year.

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<sup>64</sup> Environics Research (2023). [Attitudes and Awareness of Menstrual Equity and Period Poverty Among Canadians](#).

## **Sexual and reproductive health**

The Government of Canada remains committed to ensuring that all Canadians have equitable access to sexual and reproductive health resources and services that are helpful and relevant to their needs, no matter where they live. To improve access to abortion throughout the country, \$81 million has been committed over six years through Canada's Sexual and Reproductive Health Fund. This commitment will support community-based organizations that help enhance access to abortion, gender-affirming care, and other sexual and reproductive health care information and services for underserved groups. The Fund has already invested \$8 million to date in four projects. Through these projects, new resources and supports are being developed for health care professionals, access to accurate information on abortion is being improved, and financial and logistical support for travel for abortion care is being provided.

In February 2024, the Government of Canada introduced the *Pharmacare Act*. It presents a plan for the first phase of national universal pharmacare in Canada and the intent to work with provinces and territories to provide universal, single-payer coverage for several medications, such as contraceptives.

British Columbia launched universal coverage of prescription contraception in 2023. It also launched self-screening for human papillomavirus, the leading cause of cervical cancer, in January 2024 to remove barriers for women and gender-diverse people in accessing cancer screening.<sup>65</sup>

## **Mental Health**

During pregnancy and after giving birth, many women experience significant mental health challenges such as depression, psychosis, and suicidal thoughts. These perinatal mental health issues can adversely affect not only the mother and child, but can also have a long-lasting negative impact on families. The Government of Canada announced close to \$857,000 in funding to three organizations for their projects in support of maternal mental health. This funding will support initiatives such as the development of national clinician guidelines for perinatal mood disorders and projects aimed at promoting positive mental health by increasing access to support services for parents struggling with perinatal mood disorders. In addition, the 2024 federal budget has proposed an investment of \$500 million for a new Youth Mental Health Fund which will help younger Canadians access the mental health care they need, by reducing wait times and providing more care options.

## **Women's health information and research**

In 2023, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the [Institute of Gender and Health](#), and WAGE established the [National Women's Health Research Initiative](#). The initiative targets all women, girls, and Two-Spirit and gender-diverse people. The hubs and the coordinating centre are led by diverse teams consisting of Canadian non-governmental organizations, health care professionals, early-career researchers and trainees, Indigenous people, and

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<sup>65</sup> Government of British Columbia. (2024, January) [New self-screening program will help detect cervical cancer sooner – news.gov.bc.ca](#)



people with lived and living experience navigating women’s health. The goal is to mobilize new and existing knowledge for gender-sensitive and culturally appropriate women’s health. Processes will be designed to bring together community-based groups of women who experience multifaceted forms of discrimination at the intersections of sexual orientation, gender, race/ethnicity, disability, Indigeneity, and other aspects of diversity (such as age, faith, immigrant status, or language) and/or oppressive processes (e.g., ableism, classism, racism, xenophobia, heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, prejudice, discrimination, and marginalization).

In 2022, the Government of Prince Edward Island’s Department of Health and Wellness partnered with Health PEI, other government departments, community organizations, and Islanders to develop [Awareness to Action: A Health Strategy for Women and Islanders Who Are Gender Diverse](#). The Strategy will shape work from 2022 to 2027 to improve women’s and gender-diverse Islanders’ health and wellbeing. The Strategy also sets out principles, priority areas, initiatives, indicators, and a governance model. It is intended to have an impact across multiple settings and demographic groups.

### ***Indigenous health***

Canada is committed to respecting Indigenous Peoples’ right to health, and to addressing anti-Indigenous racism in health systems. It recognizes that Indigenous women and other marginalized groups, such as 2SLGBTQI+ people, are disproportionately impacted.

Initiatives being supported include:

- expanding support for Indigenous midwives and doulas to improve access to prenatal, postnatal, and birth supports for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis;
- capacity funding for national Indigenous women’s organizations to support them in addressing Indigenous women’s health and anti-Indigenous racism issues, and help ensure that women’s voices and perspectives are included in policy development; and
- strengthening youth sexual health networks by expanding current activities to raise awareness of sexual and reproductive health rights.

In 2023, the Government of Canada committed funds to the Indigenous Health Equity Fund. This funding will address the unique challenges Indigenous Peoples across Canada face on fair and equitable access to quality and culturally safe health care services. The Fund will be developed and deployed with a respect for distinctions, in line with the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, the [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice](#), and the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action](#). Efforts will follow the leadership of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis partners.

### ***International***

Canada is a long-standing leader in promoting global health, nutrition, and sexual and reproductive health and rights. In June 2019, Prime Minister Trudeau made a [10-year commitment to global health and rights](#) (2020–2030). From the commitment’s start in 2020 to 2022, Canada has ramped up its global health investments toward the announced target of \$1.4 billion on average by 2023–2024. This includes providing \$700 million on average for

comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights. A particular focus is on the following neglected or underfunded areas: safe abortion and post-abortion care, comprehensive sexuality education, family planning and contraception, advocacy and reform on sexual and reproductive health and rights, and preventing and addressing sexual violence and GBV. The 10-year commitment is a key way for Canada to fulfill the goals of its [Feminist International Assistance Policy](#), as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It helps make sure women and girls around the world, in all their diversity, have access to the quality health services they need, including safe and legal abortion. It also supports women's right to make their own decisions about their bodies.

In 2021–2022, Canada's work with Nutrition International enabled teachers to deliver weekly iron and folic acid supplements to over 2 million teenage girls. This prevented thousands of cases of anemia and enabled girls to stay in school.

## **IMPROVED EDUCATION OUTCOMES AND SKILLS IN UNDERREPRESENTED SECTORS**

Canadians are among the most educated people in the world. Canada has led the G7 on post-secondary graduates since 2006, with 57.5% of the working-age population (those aged 25 to 64) having a college or university credential. Women have made substantial gains in their level of education over the past decades by increasingly getting post-secondary education. Today, they are among the most educated in the world and are even more likely than men to hold a post-secondary qualification. In Canada in 2021, more women held college or university credentials (63.9%) compared to men (50.9%), as well as a bachelor's degree or higher (36.1%) compared to men (29.5%).<sup>66</sup>

Despite this progress, academic segregation is still present. This leads to less gender diversity across educational paths. For example, young women remain less likely to choose a STEM field of study – which are associated with high-paying jobs that promote a country's competitiveness and economic prosperity. This gender segregation in education results in less gender diversity across jobs and limits career opportunities for women (and men) in certain disciplines.

However, Canada is taking action to provide women, including women facing multiple barriers, with the supports they need to gain the skills necessary for long-term, meaningful work, including in STEM and trades.

Announced in the Government of Canada's 2020 Fall Economic Statement, the [Women's Employment Readiness pilot program](#) is a two-year, \$50 million pilot. It funds organizations to provide and test pre-employment and skills development supports for women facing multiple barriers to employment. These supports include training on foundational and

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<sup>66</sup> Statistics Canada. (2022) [The Daily: Canada leads the G7 for the most educated workforce, thanks to immigrants, young adults and a strong college sector, but is experiencing significant losses in apprenticeship certificate holders in key trades – statcan.gc.ca](#)

transferable skills (including literacy and essential skills or the [Skills for Success model](#)) as well as wraparound supports, such as child care, transportation, or work clothing. The pilot serves four groups: racialized and/or Indigenous women, women with disabilities, women from 2SLGBTQI+ communities, and women who have been unemployed for a long time. Applying a holistic model, the pilot also tests ways to help employers make the workplace more inclusive for women. When an employer is included in a funded project, the project works with them to improve access to employment, or retention in the workplace for one or more of the target groups. The pilot funded 25 projects and approximately 5,000 women were able to benefit from it before its end date on March 31, 2024.

The Government of Canada is investing up to \$41.6 million over four years, beginning in 2023–2024, in the [Canadian Apprenticeship Strategy’s Women in the Skilled Trades Initiative](#). This will support projects that aim to recruit and retain women apprentices in 39 eligible Red Seal trades, mainly in the construction and manufacturing sectors. Around 10,500 women are expected to benefit from this investment. This new investment continues the Government of Canada’s support for women in the skilled trades. It also builds on the success of previous measures, such as the Apprenticeship Incentive Grant for Women and the Women in Construction Fund. The Apprenticeship Incentive Grant for Women pilot, which ended in 2023, supported better economic outcomes for women by providing grants that encouraged them to enter, progress in, and complete apprenticeships in Red Seal trades. Apprentices who self-identified as women received over 12,600 grants, representing \$38.6 million in funding. The Women in Construction Fund was intended as a temporary measure under the Investing in Canada Plan. It invested \$10 million over three years to boost women’s participation in construction trades, where they have traditionally been underrepresented. Over this pilot program’s 2018–2022 timeframe, 2,245 women received support.

[Let’s Talk Science](#) (LTS) offers programs, services, and resources to help promote youth engagement in STEM. LTS incorporates teaching strategies for educators and volunteers that encourage girls to participate in relevant professional development opportunities. A program evaluation was conducted on LTS in 2021. The evaluation found that “LTS’s hands-on, inquiry-based approach is effective in reaching a diversity of youth, including girls, at-risk youth, and Indigenous youth.” It also found that program activities help ensure more girls and other underrepresented groups get interested in STEM from an early age. The most recent contribution is \$10 million over two years, starting in 2022–2023.

In 2022, Statistics Canada reported that only 6.3% of New Brunswick workers in the trades were women.<sup>67</sup> In the technology sector, only 33% of Atlantic Canada’s digital labour force were women as of 2022.<sup>68</sup> Trades & Tech Career Exploration for Girls events were established in 2009 to introduce girl students to the wide variety of career opportunities in the skilled trades and technology sectors. Since these events began, they have impacted

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<sup>67</sup> Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0335-02 Proportion of women and men employed in occupations, annual, inactive](#)

<sup>68</sup> Statistics Canada. (2022) [The Daily: Labour Force Survey, March 2022 – statcan.gc.ca](#)

over 6,600 New Brunswick students. During them, students heard from a wide variety of successful women mentors in careers such as nuclear energy, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), digital design, refrigeration and air conditioning repair, carpentry, and many more.

Nova Scotia Community College offers a free, 14-week pathway program titled [Women Unlimited](#). It empowers diverse women to explore a range of trades and technology programs, pursue specialized post-secondary education, and find meaningful careers in fields where they are typically underrepresented. The Nova Scotia Department of Advanced Education provides funding support to the college.

Ontario has made extensive investments to attract workers in the skilled trades through Ontario's Skilled Trades Strategy and the Skills Development Fund. Ontario's efforts have succeeded in achieving a historic increase in skilled trades apprenticeship registration, including a 28% increase in registration for women from June 2022 to June 2023.<sup>69</sup> Ontario is turning its attention to exploring ways to support retaining women in the skilled trades.

Through its new [Women in Skilled Trades Initiative](#), the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission is aiming to attract women to the skilled trades and help them earn a journey person accreditation. Funded in part by the Government of Canada's Canadian Apprenticeship Strategy, this initiative will provide women in eligible Red Seal trades with a rebate on their apprenticeship registration fee and Level 1 technical training tuition.

### ***Indigenous post-secondary education***

In 2019–2020, after new investments through the 2019 federal budget, Indigenous Services Canada began supporting post-secondary education strategies for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation students in Canada. Indigenous post-secondary education programming will particularly impact Indigenous women, as women tend to have higher education rates. This programming will also impact students with dependents, as it provides funding for programs, services, and wraparound supports, which may include accessibility supports and services for students with dependents.

[Career Exploration for Indigenous Youth](#) events are designed to address the unique barriers facing Indigenous youth in New Brunswick. The events aim to give them opportunities to explore a variety of interesting, in-demand career paths. Students receive career mentorship from Indigenous and non-Indigenous mentors who are working in a variety of sectors and understand the unique barriers facing Indigenous youth in New Brunswick. By sharing their stories and answering the students' questions, these mentors show that there are Indigenous people working in these fields and opportunities for students to also pursue a career in these in-demand sectors. These informal events provide a relaxed and culturally safe environment for everyone to exchange information. Focusing on and supporting Indigenous people in education and employment was deemed a priority

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<sup>69</sup> Government of Ontario (2023, June) [Ontario Attracts Historic Number of People to Skilled Trades – news.ontario.ca](#)

through Indigenous community engagement sessions held in response to the [National Inquiry's Calls for Justice](#). These events were first held in 2023, with close to 200 Indigenous youth participants. Two events are currently planned for 2024.

### ***International***

Canada's \$400 million in investments pledged in 2018, supporting the [G7 Charlevoix Declaration on Quality Education for Girls, Adolescent Girls and Women in Developing Countries](#), reached more than 4 million girls and women. Building on this, Canada launched a three-year international campaign, Together for Learning, in 2021. The campaign aimed to promote quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for children and youth who are refugees, or forcibly displaced and in a host community, with a focus on girls. Although the campaign ended in December 2023, Canada will continue to advance this priority and ensure that the most marginalized, especially girls and women, have access to safe, inclusive, and quality education and skills development.

## **RESPONDING TO GENDER GAPS DUE TO COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic magnified systemic and long-standing inequalities, with the crisis disproportionately impacting women and girls. Economic shutdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately impacted women, particularly young women, Indigenous women, visible minorities, and immigrants. This is mainly because women are concentrated in service-related jobs, such as the retail and hospitality sectors, which public health measures affected more severely. In addition, school and daycare closures impacted women's ability to participate in the labour force or continue their education, as they shouldered much of the increased unpaid domestic and care work.<sup>70</sup>

Canada took strong action to prevent the pandemic from rolling back progress or reversing women's hard-won gains. In June 2020, CARE recognized Canada as having the most gender-responsive plan to address COVID-19 globally.<sup>71</sup>

For example, the Government of Canada rolled out its [COVID-19 Economic Response Plan](#), which was designed to support those who needed it most, including women in all their diversity. Besides the actions described in Section 2, other examples of actions taken are described below.

Supports for accessible shelters and ELCC centres: The COVID-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on people with disabilities and has shed light on the number of Canadians that still face barriers to full inclusion in their communities and workplaces. The Government of Canada's [Enabling Accessibility Fund](#) invested in specific projects that make early learning and child care centres more accessible for people of all abilities, including children, parents, child care providers, and early childhood educators. In addition, the

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<sup>70</sup> Leclerc, K. (2020) [Caring for their children: Impacts of COVID-19 on parents - statcan.gc.ca](#)

<sup>71</sup> CARE. (2020, June 9) [Most Countries Fail to Include Women in Their COVID-19 Response Teams & Plans: Canada Leads the Pack in Gendered Response, Brazil Ranks the Worst - care.org.](#)

program supported shelters for people experiencing GBV by funding projects that make shelters more accessible for people with disabilities. Creating safer and more accessible environments particularly benefits women with disabilities.

The CCB in response to COVID-19: The Government of Canada recognized that young families in particular experienced unpredictable expenses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It provided a one-time enhancement of up to \$300 per child as part of the May 2020 CCB payment. The overall increase for families receiving the CCB was around \$550 on average. In addition, families entitled to the CCB received up to \$1,200 per child under the age of six in 2021 through the temporary CCB young child supplement.

Many seniors who receive the GIS and Allowance experienced financial hardships because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some experienced more challenges because of CERB or the Canada Recovery Benefit they received in 2020. These pandemic benefits reduced their GIS or Allowance benefits in July 2021, as they had raised their income. To relieve this financial hardship, the Government of Canada provided the one-time grant for GIS recipients who received pandemic benefits. This payment compensated seniors for the GIS/Allowance they had lost during the July 2021 to June 2022 payment period. To ensure this issue does not recur, the federal government amended the *Old Age Security Act*. Beginning in July 2022, federal pandemic benefits received in 2021 or later will be exempted from GIS and Allowance benefit calculations.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Canada also issued a one-time payment for people with disabilities. As women aged 15 and older (30%) are more likely than men (24%) to develop a disability, and they are more likely to develop a severe disability (43% for women, 39% for men), this payment was particularly helpful for women with disabilities.

Finally, the Government of Canada, through WAGE, launched a call for proposals called the [Feminist Response and Recovery Fund](#) in 2021. This \$100 million investment in systemic change projects aimed to support a feminist response to and recovery from the impacts of COVID-19, particularly for underrepresented women. Under the call for proposals, 237 projects received funding.

Canada was also a leading donor to the global COVID-19 response and a vocal champion for vaccine equity. Since February 2020, Canada contributed over \$3.5 billion to the global COVID-19 response. This included over \$2.1 billion for the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator, which has helped increase developing countries' access to COVID-19 tests, treatments, and vaccines. COVID-19's emergence underscored the need to reinforce and fulfill joint commitments by the international community to strengthen health systems and reinforce prevention, detection, emergency planning, and preparedness capabilities worldwide. Canada is committed to working with other countries and global health partners to act on the lessons learned from COVID-19.

## **COVID-19 and gender-based violence**

Many organizations providing GBV-related supports and services in Canada reported increased demand since the pandemic began. Others reported the opposite, raising concerns that those experiencing GBV could not access help. From 2020 to 2021, family violence increased by 3%, while non-family violence increased to a larger degree (+6%). However, compared with 2019 (the year before the pandemic), family violence was 4% higher in 2021, while non-family violence was 1% higher. The increase in family violence likely reflects people spending more time at home, often isolating from others, during the pandemic. Similarly, compared with 2020, the rate of IPV increased by 2% in 2021, while non-IPV increased by 6%. However, compared with 2019, IPV was 4% higher in 2021, while non-IPV was 2% higher.<sup>72</sup>

In 2020, as part of the COVID-19 Economic Response Plan, the Government of Canada provided emergency GBV funding for women's shelters, sexual assault centres, and other organizations providing supports to those experiencing GBV across the country. Since April 2020, the Government of Canada has invested in more than 1,400 women's organizations and shelter systems through the emergency GBV funding. More than 2 million people experiencing violence had a place to turn to because of this funding.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the demand for crisis hotline services significantly increased across Canada. The 2021 federal budget invested \$30 million over five years to [support crisis hotlines](#) across Canada. This would serve the urgent needs of more people in Canada who were experiencing GBV. This funding was distributed through Canadian provinces and territories. It supported crisis hotlines in offering more robust services, resources, and supports to prevent GBV from escalating.

## **COVID-19 Indigenous supports**

The Government of Canada introduced [the Indigenous Community Support Fund](#) in March 2020. It provided flexible funding to First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban/off-reserve Indigenous leadership and organizations to adopt Indigenous community-based solutions to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19's spread. Eligible activities included food security, perimeter security, personal protective equipment, mental health supports, and more. The flexible funding approach and respect for distinctions resulted in quicker, more efficient responses to the pandemic. This allowed communities to adopt their own community-based solutions to COVID-19, supporting self-determination.

The Government of Canada also enhanced subsidies through the Nutrition North program to support food security. It worked with the First Nations Finance Authority as well to establish an emergency fund to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. Subsidies from the Nutrition North program help women-led lone-parent families, who face higher rates of food insecurity than others do.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Statistics Canada. (2022) [The Daily – Victims of police-reported family and intimate partner violence in Canada, 2021 – statcan.gc.ca](#).

<sup>73</sup> Uppal, S. (2023) [Food insecurity among Canadian families - statcan.gc.ca](#)

### 3.3 Freedom from violence, stigma, and stereotypes

GBV disproportionately affects women and girls. Self-reported data collected in 2018 show that 44% of women reported experiencing some form of IPV in their lifetime (since age 15).<sup>74</sup> Three in ten (29%) women aged 15 to 24 reported having experienced at least one incident of IPV in the 12 months before the survey. This is more than double the proportion among women aged 25 to 34 or 35 to 44, and close to six times higher than that among women aged 65 or older.<sup>75</sup>

Groups that are at risk of GBV, or underserved when they experience these forms of violence, include Indigenous women and girls; Black and racialized women; immigrant and refugee women; 2SLGBTQI+ people; women with disabilities; and women living in northern, rural, and remote communities.

Self-reported data collected in 2018 show that Indigenous women (61%) were more likely to experience some form of IPV in their lifetime (since age 15) compared with non-Indigenous women (44%).<sup>76</sup> Overall, two-thirds (67%) of LGB+ women who had ever been in an intimate partner relationship had experienced at least one type of IPV since age 15 – significantly more than among heterosexual women (44%).<sup>77</sup> Transgender and gender-diverse people in Canada were significantly more likely than cisgender people to have been physically or sexually assaulted at least once since age 15 (59% versus 37% respectively).<sup>78</sup>

In 2019, women in rural areas of Canada's provinces experienced rates of IPV that were almost twice as high as among women in urban areas (860 versus 467 victims per 100,000 population). Rural women's rates were close to four times higher than those for men in these areas (246).<sup>79</sup> For rural IPV victims, feelings of isolation or being trapped due to IPV may be heightened due to remoteness, fewer available services, or trouble leaving the community.<sup>80</sup>

Among people who had ever been in an intimate partner relationship, more than half (55%) of women with disabilities reported experiencing some form of IPV in their lifetime (since age 15), compared to 37% of women without disabilities.<sup>81</sup> Among students at post-secondary institutions in Canada's provinces, almost one in seven (15%) women students

<sup>74</sup> Cotter, A. (2021) [Intimate partner violence in Canada, 2018: An overview - statcan.gc.ca](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/88-625-x/2021001/article/00001-eng.htm)

<sup>75</sup> Cotter, A. "Intimate partner violence in Canada, 2018: An overview."

<sup>76</sup> Heidinger, L. (2021) [Intimate partner violence: Experiences of First Nations, Métis and Inuit women in Canada, 2018 - statcan.gc.ca](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/88-625-x/2021001/article/00001-eng.htm)

<sup>77</sup> Jaffray, B. (2021) [Intimate partner violence: Experiences of sexual minority women in Canada, 2018 - statcan.gc.ca](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/88-625-x/2021001/article/00001-eng.htm)

<sup>78</sup> Jaffray, B. (2020) [Experiences of violent victimization and unwanted sexual behaviours among gay, lesbian, bisexual and other sexual minority people, and the transgender population, in Canada, 2018 - statcan.gc.ca](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/88-625-x/2020001/article/00001-eng.htm)

<sup>79</sup> Conroy, S. (2021) [Police-reported intimate partner violence in Canada, 2019](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/88-625-x/2021001/article/00001-eng.htm), in Juristat., Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2019., Section 3

<sup>80</sup> Women's Shelters Canada. (2020). "[Special issue: The impact of COVID-19 on VAW shelters and transition houses.](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/88-625-x/2020001/article/00001-eng.htm)" [Shelter Voices.](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/88-625-x/2020001/article/00001-eng.htm)

<sup>81</sup> Savage, L. (2021) [Intimate partner violence: Experiences of women with disabilities in Canada, 2018 - statcan.gc.ca](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/88-625-x/2021001/article/00001-eng.htm)



were sexually assaulted in the post-secondary setting at least once since their studies started. This was three times the proportion of men students who experienced that (5%).<sup>82</sup>

Among people who had ever been in an intimate partner relationship, 29% of women from an ethnocultural group labelled a visible minority reported experiencing some kind of psychological, physical, or sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime (since age 15). This is significantly less than among women who are not visible minorities (47%).<sup>83</sup>

In 2019, 4,518 seniors (aged 65 and older) experienced family violence in Canada. Among them, 2,613 were women, accounting for the majority of victims (58%). This meant higher rates of family violence among senior women than senior men (78 victims versus 65 per 100,000 population).<sup>84</sup>

## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AS A PRIORITY FOR CANADA

### Strategies and action plans

To address GBV, the Government of Canada has developed and launched two key initiatives.

Launched in 2017, [It's Time: Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence](#) (the Federal GBV Strategy) is a whole-of-government approach to ending GBV. It aims to reduce GBV and improve health, social, and justice outcomes for people who have experienced GBV. It encompasses all federal initiatives to prevent and address GBV. The strategy is supported by investments of \$800 million and \$44 million ongoing since 2017.

The Federal GBV Strategy is organized into three pillars: 1) prevention, 2) supporting survivors and their families, and 3) promoting responsive legal and justice systems. It also addresses gaps in supports for diverse groups. These include women and girls; Indigenous women and girls; Black and racialized women; immigrant and refugee women; 2SLGBTQI+ people; women with disabilities; and women living in northern, rural, and remote communities.

Initiatives funded by the Federal GBV Strategy include:

- the **Gender-Based Violence Program** to support GBV sector organizations in developing and applying promising practices to address gaps in supports for Indigenous and underserved groups of survivors in Canada;
- the **Gender-Based Violence Knowledge Centre**, a trusted source of timely, relevant, and high-quality GBV-related information and resources; and

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<sup>82</sup> Burczycka, M. (2020) [Students' experiences of unwanted sexualized behaviours and sexual assault at postsecondary schools in the Canadian provinces, 2019 - statcan.gc.ca](#)

<sup>83</sup> Cotter, A. (2021) [Intimate partner violence: Experiences of visible minority women in Canada, 2018 - statcan.gc.ca](#)

<sup>84</sup> Conroy, S. (2021) [Police-reported family violence against seniors in Canada, 2019](#), in Juristat, Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2019., Section 4

- **three national, recurring surveys** to establish baselines on how prevalent different forms of GBV are, provide a deeper understanding of GBV in Canada, and measure progress over time.

A [2023 evaluation of the Federal GBV Strategy's](#) ongoing rollout found that 17 out of 18 initiatives were on track. The evaluation recommended that WAGE keep leveraging the Gender-Based Violence Knowledge Centre's expertise to help coordinate action across the Government of Canada.

Building on the foundation the Federal GBV Strategy laid, the Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Ministers responsible for the Status of Women launched the 10-year [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#) in November 2022.<sup>85</sup> The National Action Plan is supported by an investment of \$539.3 million over five years to support provinces and territories in their efforts to end GBV within their jurisdictions. As of December 2023, bilateral agreements between the federal government and all 13 provincial and territorial governments have been announced.

The [National Action Plan](#) brings together the federal, provincial, and territorial governments' efforts. It envisions a Canada free of GBV, one that supports victims, survivors, and their families, no matter where they live. To address GBV's root causes, the plan is organized into five pillars: 1) supporting survivors and their families, 2) prevention, 3) a responsive justice system, 4) implementing Indigenous-led approaches, and 5) social infrastructure and an enabling environment. It also contains a foundation, which focuses on three main components: leadership, coordination, and engagement; data, research, and knowledge mobilization; and reporting and monitoring. The Federal GBV Strategy is the Government of Canada's contribution to the National Action Plan.

The [National Action Plan](#) recognizes that there must be coordinated and collaborative actions by the federal, provincial, and territorial governments. Each must work within its jurisdiction, in close partnership with victims/survivors, Indigenous partners, civil society, frontline service providers, municipalities, the private sector, and researchers.

The goals of the [National Action Plan](#) are to:

- i. engage everyone in Canada in changing the social norms, attitudes, and behaviours that contribute to GBV;
- ii. address the social and economic factors that contribute to and perpetuate GBV;
- iii. ensure anyone facing GBV has reliable and timely access to culturally appropriate and accessible protection and services; and

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<sup>85</sup> Gender-based violence is a priority issue for Québec, and it has made significant investments to end violence against women. Although it subscribes to the general objectives of the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence, Québec cannot adhere to it as it intends to retain full responsibility in this area within its territory. However, it expects to receive its fair share of federal funding, within the framework of a bilateral agreement that respects its autonomy, in order to support the programs, initiatives and services to end gender-based violence that it puts in place based on the needs on its territory.

- iv. improve the health, social, economic, and justice outcomes of those impacted by GBV.

The [National Action Plan](#) seeks to address the intersectional needs of diverse communities and populations, including those most at risk of GBV.

As part of the [bilateral agreements](#), provincial and territorial governments have set out actions that will be taken in their jurisdictions to prevent and address GBV. These provincial and territorial actions will be published annually throughout the agreements. This approach will keep provinces and territories responsive to the evolving needs of, and emerging issues for, GBV victims and survivors. To help prevent GBV across the country, provinces and territories must spend at least 25% of the federal funding under their agreements on increasing prevention efforts.<sup>86</sup> Finally, federal, provincial, and territorial governments are working together to monitor the results and impacts of actions through the [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#). A national report will be published each year to show progress, starting in fall 2024.

#### **Other provincial and territorial strategies and action plans:**

Several of Canada's provinces and territories have developed or are developing strategies and action plans to address GBV in their jurisdictions. Below are recent examples of these:

- [Safe and Supported: British Columbia's Gender-Based Violence Action Plan](#) (2023)
- Quebec's [2022–2027 Integrated Government Strategy to Counteract Sexual Violence and Domestic Violence, and to Rebuild Trust \(Integrated Strategy to Counteract Violence\)](#) (2022)
- [Creating a Culture of Care: A Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Adult Sexual Violence in Prince Edward Island](#) (2023)
- [Implementation Plan: Yukon's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit+ People Strategy](#) (2023)

[Ontario-STANDS](#): On December 6, 2023, Ontario released a cross-government, four-year action plan, Ontario-STANDS. The plan sets out decisive actions, prevention, empowerment, and supports to strengthen the province's GBV response and raise the focus on prevention, recovery, and responses to intimate partner and family violence. Ontario-STANDS aims to address GBV's root causes and supports survivors' healing and long-term needs. With a prevention-focused approach, the initiative aims to strengthen social protection systems, fostering collaboration among sector partners to identify and intervene with perpetrators early. This will ultimately ensure women and their children are safe.

This action plan is supported by Ontario's agreement with the federal government through the [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#). Announced in November 2023, the

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<sup>86</sup> Prevention is critical to ending violence and is one of the Federal GBV Strategy's three pillars – 1) prevention, 2) supporting survivors and their families, and 3) promoting responsive legal and justice systems – as noted above.

agreement provides Ontario \$162 million over four years to support the rollout of its action plan. The plan is based on five key pillars:

- Supporting the stabilization of critical programs
- Preventing GBV
- Improving transitions to recovery
- Supporting safety and reducing recurrence
- Promoting economic security

Over the next four years, the Ontario-STANDS cross-government action plan will be deployed to increase funding for service providers. This will enhance their ability to provide supports, expand initiatives that help stop GBV before it occurs, and provide training and employment opportunities for women so they can gain financial independence.

### **Human trafficking**

Human trafficking in Canada is often approached as a gendered crime with root causes tied to power imbalances, gender inequality, and discrimination.

In 2022, there were 528 police-reported incidents of human trafficking in Canada. This was down slightly compared to 2019, when police reported 546 incidents. However, due to its nature, this crime is likely underreported. The rate of human trafficking in 2022 also decreased from 2019 (1.4 incidents per 100,000 population in 2022 and 1.5 in 2019).<sup>87</sup> From 2012 to 2022, women and girls remained the vast majority (94%) of detected human trafficking victims, and 24% of all victims were under the age of 18. Conversely, the large majority (81%) of people accused of human trafficking were men and boys.<sup>88</sup> Between 2012 and 2022, the large majority (91%) of detected human trafficking victims knew their accused trafficker. A small proportion (8.8%) of victims were trafficked by a stranger. Notably, about one-third (34%) of human trafficking victims were trafficked by an intimate partner.<sup>89 90</sup>

Launched in 2019, the Government of Canada's [National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking](#) brings federal efforts together to address human trafficking in Canada under one strategic framework. It is supported by an investment of \$57.22 million over five years and \$10.28 million per year ongoing. Six federal departments and agencies share this investment: WAGE; the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada; Public Services and Procurement Canada; the Canada Border Services Agency; and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. Efforts of other federal partners, such as Global Affairs Canada, Justice Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and Employment and Social Development Canada, ensure the Strategy follows a whole-of-government approach. This approach is framed under the internationally recognized pillars

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<sup>87</sup> Heidinger, L. (2023) [Trafficking in persons in Canada, 2022 - statcan.gc.ca](#)

<sup>88</sup> Heidinger. "Trafficking in persons in Canada, 2022."

<sup>89</sup> This includes victims aged 15 and older who were victimized by current and former legally married spouses and common-law partners. It also includes victims aged 12 and older who were victimized by current and former partners, and other intimate relationships (i.e., people the victim had a sexual relationship with, but none of the other relationship categories apply).

<sup>90</sup> Heidinger. "Trafficking in persons in Canada, 2022."

of prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnerships, as well as a pillar for “empowerment.” The National Strategy also seeks to complement efforts at the local level. It continues to forge and maintain strong partnerships with provinces, territories, Indigenous partners, civil society, and the private sector to ensure a collaborative and coordinated national response.

The Government of [Ontario’s Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy](#) launched in March 2020. The Strategy will invest up to \$307 million over five years (2020–2025) on a comprehensive action plan to combat human trafficking and child sexual exploitation. It focuses on four key areas:

- Raising awareness of the issue
- Protecting victims and intervening early
- Supporting survivors
- Holding offenders accountable

This provincial government-wide strategy aims to raise awareness through training and public awareness campaigns, empower frontline service providers to prevent human trafficking and act early, support survivors through specialized services, and give law enforcement the tools and resources they need to hold offenders accountable. The strategy empowers survivors through specialized supports and services. It also gives priority to prevention efforts. This means taking measures against human trafficking before it occurs through efforts such as public awareness campaigns, community education, and training programs to address potential risk factors and vulnerabilities. Ontario remains committed to devoting efforts to prevent human trafficking.

In Saskatchewan, [the Protection From Human Trafficking Act](#) came into force in 2022. It provides civil remedies for victims and survivors of human trafficking, including a specific protection order against traffickers along with provisions for search warrants to find victims. It also created a new tort of human trafficking, which allows victims to seek compensation through civil action.

### ***International***

Canada has increased its capacity-building efforts to help strengthen migration and refugee protection systems. Where possible, it has also integrated gender considerations into project development to address women’s specific needs. For example, Canada provided capacity building to some countries in Africa and Asia to strengthen governance over borders and migration, as well as to combat human trafficking and migrant smuggling. In 2021–2022, Canada worked with the International Organization for Migration to provide Nigerian authorities equipment and training. This served to install the Migration Information and Data Analysis System in Lagos’ Murtala Muhammed International Airport and Abuja’s Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport. Nigerian authorities reported that, in 2021 alone, they were able to successfully prevent the trafficking of 100 girls through the Lagos airport thanks to this system.

## VIOLENCE AGAINST MARGINALIZED GROUPS

The [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#) is grounded in an intersectional approach. This approach considers historical, social, and political contexts and centres the unique experiences of people and/or groups in relation to their identity factors. As a result, the National Action Plan notes that some groups are at risk of GBV or underserved when they experience these forms of violence. These include Indigenous women and girls; Black and racialized women; immigrant and refugee women; 2SLGBTQI+ people; women with disabilities; and women living in northern, rural, and remote communities. Throughout the National Action Plan's five pillars and foundation, listed in the previous section, opportunities for action are outlined to reduce risks and improve support for these marginalized communities. Examples of some work done in Canada to date to address GBV against marginalized groups is outlined below.

### **Gender-based violence against Indigenous women and girls**

Statistics show that Indigenous women are overrepresented as victims of intimate partner homicides in Canada. While Indigenous women account for about 5% of all women in Canada, they accounted for 21% of all women killed by an intimate partner between 2014 and 2019. In 2020, 53 women, 11 of whom were Indigenous, were killed by their partner in Canada.<sup>91</sup>

In the past five years, Canada has taken joint actions to address violence against Indigenous women and girls, emphasizing a comprehensive and collaborative approach to tackling the systemic causes of this violence. On June 3, 2019, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls presented its [Final Report and 231 Calls for Justice](#). This took place before families; survivors; Indigenous leaders; and federal, provincial, and territorial governments at a televised closing ceremony in Gatineau, Quebec. These historic documents call for transformative legal, systemic, and social changes to redress the violence that Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people experience.

In response to this, the [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ People National Action Plan](#) in 2021 was launched. This National Action Plan, which centres around the National Family and Survivor Circle, was co-developed by:

- representatives of First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and Indigenous grassroots organizations;
- Indigenous, federal, provincial, and territorial governments; and
- Indigenous urban and 2SLGBTQI+ leaders.

It is a key component of a much broader effort to end the national crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people so that they are safe and free from violence, no matter where they live, work, or travel.

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<sup>91</sup> Statistics Canada. (2021). [Number and rate of victims of solved homicides, by gender, Indigenous identity and type of accused-victim relationship](#) (Table 35-10-0119-01).

The [Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ People](#) was released in June 2021 alongside the National Action Plan. It is the Government of Canada's contribution to the [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ People National Action Plan](#) and the much broader efforts to end this national crisis. It was developed in collaboration with families, survivors, Indigenous partners, and governments. This comprehensive approach, which includes over 20 federal departments and agencies, acknowledges the systemic issues fuelling violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. It aims to improve socioeconomic conditions, end all forms of violence, and ensure Indigenous rights are respected. It emphasizes the importance of Indigenous leadership and decision making in addressing these issues by ensuring that families and survivors remain at the heart of the federal government's work. On June 3, 2023, the Government of Canada released the second [Federal Pathway Annual Progress Report \(2022–2023\)](#).

Specific Government of Canada initiatives under the [Federal Pathway](#) include advancing the National Inquiry's Call for Justice 1.7, in 2023, by appointing the Ministerial Special Representative for the Government of Canada. The representative provides advice and recommendations, through engagement with survivors, families, and organizations, to create an Indigenous and human rights ombudsperson. In addition, Innovation Seven, an Indigenous organization, has been chosen to develop recommendations for a means of oversight to boost accountability and progress in ending violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. This is a tangible step in responding to survivors' and families' calls for more monitoring and accountability; the National Inquiry's Call for Justice 1.10; and a short-term priority of the 2021 [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ People National Action Plan](#).

The Fifth Report of the Government of Canada's Standing Committee on the Status of Women, [Responding to the Calls for Justice: Addressing Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls in the Context of Resource Development Projects](#), was released in December 2022. It included 15 recommendations and one observation to improve safety, security, and equitable benefits for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people in resource development. The 2024 federal budget provided funding to renew the Indigenous Advisory and Monitoring Committee for the Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion. This includes funding for their Socioeconomic Subcommittee's Temporary Work Camps and Influx of Workers Initiative. The initiative has been highlighted as a model responding to the five Calls for Justice on Extractive and Development Industries from the [Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#). It may be adapted to other natural resource projects.

The Government of Canada has announced several new investments for greater access to supports and services for Indigenous families, victims, and survivors of crime. In 2023, the Government of Canada announced funding of \$95.8 million over five years and \$20.4 million per year ongoing to expand support for families of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people, and Indigenous victims and survivors of crime.

Together, these new initiatives will increase access to services where gaps remain. This includes support for Indigenous victims of GBV, such as IPV and sexual violence.

In addition, Justice Canada has invested \$18 million over five years and \$4 million ongoing to support reviving the [Law Commission of Canada](#) and address challenges and barriers to justice for Indigenous people and racialized communities. The Commission would provide independent expertise, reviews, and law reform about gender-based violence. To do this, it would use the perspectives of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people as another step in addressing violence against marginalized groups of women and girls. The Commission will be responsive to issues such as systemic racism in the justice system, legal issues around climate change, establishing a new relationship with Indigenous Peoples, and rapid technological shifts in the world.

The [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#) recognizes that First Nations, Inuit, and Métis have distinct identities, cultures, traditions, languages, and intersectional identities (for example, Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQI+ people, Indigenous women with disabilities). They also experience violence differently from non-Indigenous people. The plan's development was shaped by over 1,000 recommendations through years of engagement with Indigenous partners and a wide range of stakeholders, including victims/survivors, frontline service providers, community leaders, experts, academics, and civil society. In turn, the [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#) includes a pillar specifically focused on implementing Indigenous-led approaches. It reflects the need to support Indigenous-led initiatives and community-based holistic approaches, services, and solutions that are culturally appropriate, honour Indigenous Peoples, and create safe spaces. At the core, there is a need to develop and support initiatives that break intergenerational cycles of trauma and violence, and create pathways with Indigenous communities to share information and resources; create and support prevention initiatives; support victims, survivors, and their families; and promote responsive social, health, and justice systems.

To help address high rates of GBV against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people, the Government of Canada invested \$55 million over five years, starting in 2021–2022, to support Indigenous women's and 2SLGBTQI+ organizations. This support helps them provide GBV prevention programs aimed at the root causes of GBV against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. This investment is a key federal initiative under the [Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQI+ People](#).

On June 21, 2023, the [UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan](#), developed by the federal government in consultation and cooperation with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis from across Canada, was released. The Action Plan provides a roadmap of concrete actions the Government of Canada will take, in partnership with Indigenous Peoples, to apply the principles and rights in the UN Declaration and make tangible advances on lasting reconciliation. Among its measures, the Action Plan further commits



the Government of Canada to continuing to apply the [Federal Pathway](#) to address the root causes of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people; developing a comprehensive violence prevention strategy to expand culturally relevant gender-based supports for Indigenous women, children, families, and 2SLGBTQI+ people facing GBV; and developing culturally appropriate solutions for people seeking to escape abusive environments.

Through measure 12, on natural resources, in the Shared Priorities chapter of the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan](#), Canada aims to partner with Indigenous communities and organizations, industry, other federal departments, and provinces and territories to develop and apply a strategy to:

- make Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people safer and more secure at all stages of resource project development;
- empower Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people to influence and equitably benefit from resource development through more participation across disciplines and occupations, in leadership positions, and throughout the supply chain; and
- partner and find paths with other federal departments to determine whole-of-government responses mitigating the impacts of resource development projects on Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

The Government of Canada has established a dedicated team to lead on developing and applying this measure. It has also begun foundational work to guide the application.

Addressing GBV against Indigenous women and girls has also been a priority among the provinces and territories. Examples of some these actions taken are noted below.

On October 4, 2023, the Government of New Brunswick released [Weaving Our Voices Together: New Brunswick's Path to Safety for Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People](#) in response to the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Weaving Our Voices Together contains 39 priority actions for government departments, with Women's Equality responsible for 7. The response resulted from analyzing the [National Inquiry's Calls for Justice](#) and determining actions by provincial departments to prevent violence against Indigenous women and girls. It also stems from engagement sessions and presentations with Indigenous communities; organizations; leadership; and the New Brunswick Advisory Committee on Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People.

A major achievement for gender equality in the Yukon in the last five years is the creation of [Changing the Story to Upholding Dignity and Justice: Yukon's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit+ People Strategy](#) and its [implementation plan](#). After tireless family activism and calls for justice on Indigenous women's disproportionate rates of murder and disappearance, the Government of Canada launched a formal national inquiry in 2016. Yukon families were the first in Canada to share their stories of lost loved ones and contribute to the national inquiry.

In response to the [National Inquiry's Final Report and Calls for Justice](#), the Yukon Advisory Committee on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit+ People developed a strategy to set out the Yukon's priorities. The Yukon Advisory Committee includes representatives from Indigenous leadership and the Yukon government, families who have lost loved ones, and Indigenous women's organizations. The Yukon Advisory Committee worked closely with Yukon First Nations, Yukon Indigenous women's groups, and family representatives to finalize Yukon's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit+ People Strategy. It was released on December 10, 2020, in a ceremony at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre.

In 2023, the Yukon Advisory Committee released an implementation plan outlining actions and milestones to achieve the strategy's goals. Through annual Accountability Forums, families and survivors come together with partners and contributors to discuss actions and progress on the plan. The second Accountability Forum was held in October 2023 in Whitehorse.

### **Gender-based violence against 2SLGBTQI+ people**

2SLGBTQI+ communities face further, particular forms of IPV, as well as added barriers to accessing supports. IPV against 2SLGBTQI+ people can combine with discrimination based on sexual orientation, sex characteristics, gender identity, and gender expression. For example, as well as physical and sexual assault, it may include threats of "outing," undermining a person's identity, or mocking. It may also include denying access to gender-affirming items and/or resources, such as binders, wigs, or clothing. The [2018 Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces \(SSPPS\)](#) found that IPV is more widespread among 2SLGBTQI+ people as well as Indigenous women, women with disabilities, and young women. In addition, 2SLGBTQI+ people, and especially 2SLGBTQI+ women, were far more likely to experience unwanted sexual behaviours at work, and 2SLGBTQI+ young adults were twice as likely to experience cyber victimization.<sup>92</sup> The [General Social Survey](#) also found that, in 2019, lesbian, gay, and bisexual people were twice as likely as the general population to be victims of violent crime. Bisexual people specifically were 10 times more likely. Sexual assaults accounted for 83% of all violent victimization incidents reported by bisexual people. This means their rate of sexual assault is 541 per 1,000 population – nearly 29 times higher than the rate among heterosexual Canadians (19 per 1,000). People who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or of another sexual orientation than heterosexual were about 1.5 times more likely than heterosexual people to have been physically or sexually assaulted at least once since age 15. They were also 2.5 times more likely to have experienced violence in public spaces.<sup>93</sup>

2SLGBTQI+ survivors of IPV also face compounded barriers to accessing IPV supports. Since most IPV resources are geared toward heterosexual relationships and cisgender women,

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<sup>92</sup> Jaffray, B. (2020). [Experiences of violent victimization and unwanted sexual behaviours among gay, lesbian, bisexual and other sexual minority people, and the transgender population, in Canada, 2018 - statcan.gc.ca.](#)

<sup>93</sup> Cotter, A. (2021) [Criminal victimization in Canada, 2019 - statcan.gc.ca.](#)

some 2SLGBTQI+ survivors do not know where to access information or resources. Survivors may be reluctant to disclose their experiences out of fear it will reflect poorly on 2SLGBTQI+ communities in general and fuel stigma and discrimination. Communities are often tight-knit, which is a barrier to accessing supports if perpetrators and survivors are part of the same communities. Histories of criminalizing and policing 2SLGBTQI+ communities mean that 2SLGBTQI+ survivors are less likely to report IPV. Most shelters and/or support organizations are designed for cisgender women, reducing access for trans women, men, and non-binary people.

The Government of Canada's regular funding toward ending GBV, including through the [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#), is used to address IPV against 2SLGBTQI+ people. In addition, the 2024 federal budget introduced \$273.6 million over six years, starting in 2024–2025, and \$29.3 million ongoing for [Canada's Action Plan on Combatting Hate](#). This includes new investments to support community outreach and law enforcement reform, tackle the rise in hate crimes, enhance community security, counter radicalization, and increase support for victims. These investments include \$12 million over five years for WAGE to fund projects aimed at combatting hate against 2SLGBTQI+ communities and \$3 million over two years, starting in 2024–2025, for WAGE to support security needs for Pride festivals.

### **Gender-based violence against newcomer women**

Gender-based violence disproportionately impacts women, and many federally funded settlement service organizations across Canada offer programming on violence prevention. These organizations have strong community partnerships in place with local transition houses, police, and key emergency services to ensure holistic programming for abuse survivors. Settlement service organizations provide culturally and linguistically appropriate counselling. They also offer support groups that help newcomer women get relevant information and understand the cycle of abuse. They help clients develop safety plans and build confidence, access medical and social services, and navigate the legal system. Other prevention activities include needs assessments, awareness and education about GBV, support groups to create connections, and women-only language classes.

Under the Federal GBV Strategy, the 2017 federal budget announced \$1.5 million over five years to deploy a settlement sector strategy on GBV. This would be done through a coordinated partnership of settlement and anti-violence sector organizations. The [Gender-Based Violence Strategy Partnership](#) is continuing through 2021 federal budget investments until 2026, with another \$2 million in funding for five years.

### ***International***

Canada is supporting the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. This global, multilateral grant-making mechanism supports efforts to prevent and end violence against women and girls. In 2019, Canada's contribution helped the trust fund support 79 civil society and mainly women-led organizations to deliver projects in 47 countries on preventing and ending violence against women and girls. This included projects focused on

violence against women and girls with disabilities. One of these projects is with the Nepal Disabled Women Association. They are working as part of a consortium to confront the growing violence against women and girls with disabilities in the country and to empower women and girls with disabilities to prevent violence and achieve justice.

## **PRIORITY ACTIONS IN CANADA TO ADDRESS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

Due to the priority that Canada places on addressing and ending GBV, many critical initiatives have been put in place over the past five years. Because of this, the initiatives below are just a sample of important actions. They have been grouped under the five pillars and the foundation of the [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#).

### **Initiatives in Pillar 1 – Support for victims, survivors, and their families**

GBV services provide critical, life-saving support and safe spaces. They deliver social, health, and community services that protect and empower victims and survivors, including women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. The safety and wellbeing of victims and survivors are at the centre of the [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#). They are recognized as the experts in their own personal experiences, with diverse backgrounds and needs.

As part of the 2021 federal budget, the Government of Canada announced over \$600 million in funding to build on work addressing GBV. Of this, \$112 million over five years was allocated for initiatives that help victims and survivors of sexual assault and IPV in making informed decisions about their own circumstances, reduce re-traumatization, increase confidence in the justice system's response to GBV, and improve support and access to the justice system. This includes:

- \$28.4 million over five years for provinces and territories to provide supervision services for parenting time and transfers to protect the safety and wellbeing of children and families;
- \$35 million over five years for projects that help IPV victims access and navigate the family justice system, and that improve justice system responses to this type of violence; and
- \$48.75 million over five years to ensure access to free legal advice and representation for survivors of sexual assault and IPV, including legal advice for victims involved in the criminal and family justice systems.

New Brunswick is working with Sexual Violence New Brunswick to support public post-secondary institutions (PPSIs) in detecting and assessing strengths and gaps in campus sexual violence services; designing and testing a model or models of service delivery on campus, in both official languages; enhancing the capacity to support survivors of campus sexual violence; and developing and applying a training strategy. A campus sexual violence advisor is in place at Women's Equality. The advisor will work with the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training, and Labour and PPSIs on building relationships with stakeholders, PPSIs' administration, student leaders, and service providers; determining

their ongoing role on sexual violence and accountability; and developing a funding model to address campus sexual violence.

The Government of New Brunswick is funding community-based sexual violence supports for survivors. Services are run by agencies that coordinate prevention and awareness initiatives; help survivors navigate the health, social, and justice systems; and develop a collaborative response to sexual violence at the community level. Accessible, affordable, and timely counselling specialized in sexual violence is a key aspect of the program.

In March 2024, Nunavut's Department of Justice conducted its first Victim Services Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner training session in Iqaluit. In total, 13 nurses from several Nunavut communities received comprehensive training and became certified in the specialized field of performing sexual assault examinations for victims of violence.

### ***Strengthening gun control and preventing access to firearms***

Since 2019, the Government of Canada has introduced new laws to help prevent firearm-related violence, including GBV. In 2022, the Government of Canada enacted legislation that expanded firearms licence background checks. In licence eligibility decisions, an applicant's entire life history can be reviewed rather than just the last five years. This allows older incidents of violence to be considered. Canada also [passed legislation](#) in December 2023 that sets out new laws to help limit firearms access when someone may be a risk to others. This includes an emergency prohibition order ("red flag" law) that can quickly and temporarily limit firearms access when there is a risk of harm. The red flag law is now in force, and other provisions will come into force later. These include new licence revocation measures. They will require that those suspected of committing domestic violence or stalking, or who are subject to a protection order, lose their firearms licence and firearms. Those convicted of domestic or family violence and those subject to a protection order will also be ineligible for a firearms licence. Other provisions include a licence suspension regime. Under it, a firearms licence must be suspended for up to 30 days when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a person is ineligible.

### **Initiatives in Pillar 2 – Prevention**

The [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#) emphasizes primary prevention approaches that address the root causes of GBV to stop violence before it occurs. Prevention work must happen in a range of contexts – in private spaces; public spaces; community spaces; workplaces; educational settings of all types, including post-secondary institutions; and online settings.

As the lead for the [National Strategy on Countering Radicalization to Violence](#), Public Safety's [Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence](#) (the Canada Centre) leads domestic efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism in Canada. This includes forms of extremist violence driven by gender. The Canada Centre's focus on preventing harmful behaviour and diverting people and groups away from violent

extremism aims to complement national security and criminal justice efforts, as well as broader initiatives to address harms like gender-based hate and violence.

One tool by which the Canada Centre does this work is the [Community Resilience Fund](#). It provides funding to better understand, and build domestic capacity to counter, radicalization to violence. One example of a Community Resilience Fund program focused explicitly on GBV is [White Ribbon Canada](#)'s Professionalizing the Practice: An Incel Radicalization Prevention Program, which launched in 2023. This project is designed to raise awareness and equip frontline practitioners with evidence-based training, tools, and collaboration opportunities. This will help them stop incel (involuntary celibate) violence before it begins, intervene when there are risk factors and warning signs, and support young men in getting the help they need to avoid joining – or to leave – the incel movement.

On November 2, 2023, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador enacted the [Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol Act \(Clare's Law\)](#). It gives people who feel at risk of IPV a way to get information about their partners so they can make informed choices about their safety. There are two ways of sharing information:

- The Right to Ask means that members of the public can apply for the disclosure of information about their risk of interpersonal violence. In Newfoundland and Labrador, the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC) or the RCMP process applications, depending on where applicants live.
- The Right to Know is when a member of the RNC or RCMP proactively discloses information to a person at risk of IPV. If the police learn that someone is at risk of IPV by a current or former partner, the police may provide information directly to that person.
- The person at risk may not wish to speak with the police. This is their choice.

Through funding from the Department of Advanced Education, all Nova Scotia universities and Nova Scotia Community College have programs and services to prevent sexual violence on campus. For example, all universities and Nova Scotia Community College have Student Sexual Health and Safety Educators, who act as peer educators on campus. Students in these positions develop and promote education, awareness, and advocacy about sexual health and sexual violence prevention on their campuses. They also work with fellow Student Educators to create province-wide sexual violence prevention initiatives.

### **Initiatives in Pillar 3 – Responsive justice system**

GBV violates human rights and, in many cases, Canadian criminal law. In Canada, the justice system consists of criminal law and civil law, which includes family law. The justice system involves multiple players, including law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, lawyers, and victim service providers. All these players work to ensure the consistent application of laws and fairness to everyone involved.

In 2019, the former Bill C-75, *An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and other Acts and to make consequential amendments to other Acts*, made amendments that

strengthened criminal laws on IPV, with the goal of making victims safer. Among other things, this legislation:

- placed the burden to justify bail on the person charged with an IPV offence if they already have a conviction for IPV;
- required courts to consider whether an accused is charged with an IPV offence when deciding whether to release or detain them;
- clarified that strangulation, choking, and suffocation are a more serious form of assault, and that strangling, suffocating, or choking a person while sexually assaulting them is a more serious form of sexual assault; and
- made it possible to seek a higher maximum penalty in cases involving a repeat IPV offender.

New federal legislation on judicial education about sexual assault law and social context (the former [Bill C-3](#)) [came into force in May 2021](#). Through the former Bill C-3, the federal government sought to boost confidence in the criminal justice system, particularly among sexual assault survivors. It also aimed to promote a justice system where sexual assault cases are decided fairly, without the influence of myths and stereotypes, and where survivors are treated with dignity and compassion. Under this legislation, to be eligible for appointment to a provincial superior court, candidates must agree to take continuing education on matters related to sexual assault law and social context. This includes systemic racism and systemic discrimination. The former Bill C-3 also encourages the [Canadian Judicial Council](#) (CJC) to submit an annual report to Canada's Minister of Justice about seminars offered on matters related to sexual assault law and social context. Since Bill C-3 came into force, the CJC has provided the first of these annual reports. The CJC, which is made up of all federally appointed chief justices and associate chief justices in Canada, is responsible for setting professional development requirements for superior court judges.

In its report *Rebuilding Trust*, tabled on December 15, 2020, Quebec's Expert Committee for the Support of Victims of Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence recommended the creation of a specialized court for sexual and domestic violence. The *Act to create a court specialized in sexual violence and domestic violence* passed unanimously in the National Assembly on November 26, 2021. Since 2022, Quebec's Minister of Justice has announced specialized court pilot projects in 16 of the 36 existing judicial districts. Deployment across Quebec is planned by November 30, 2026.

Quebec's [Integrated Strategy to Counteract Violence](#) launched on June 20, 2022, presents Action 30, which calls "[to] conduct pilot projects for courts specialized in sexual violence and domestic violence, that include taking Indigenous realities into account." The specialized court's main goal is to rebuild victims' trust in the justice system, and to offer them integrated and tailored psychosocial and legal services from their first contact with the police. Training, support for victims, creating a specialized division for sexual and domestic violence, and refurbishing courthouses are the four pillars on which deploying the specialized court is based.

#### **Initiatives in Pillar 4 – Implementing Indigenous-led approaches**

Working with victims, survivors, and their families; Indigenous governments and partners; non-governmental organizations; provinces; and territories as well as working across federal institutions will help ensure a coordinated approach that supports lasting progress toward ending GBV against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people, no matter where they live.

The Government of Canada's [Family Violence Prevention Program](#), at Indigenous Services Canada and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, works with an Indigenous-led steering committee to create new shelters under the Indigenous Shelter and Transitional Housing Initiative. This will result in 38 emergency shelters and 50 transition homes across Canada, including in urban areas and the North, for Indigenous women, children, and 2SLGBTQI+ people escaping violence. To date, 47 proposals have been selected across Canada. This includes 25 emergency shelters and 22 transitional housing projects. Of these, 11 are Inuit-specific facilities selected by an Inuit-led steering committee.

This work continues to support the need for shelters, transition (second-stage) homes, and programming that respects distinctions to protect Indigenous women, children, and 2SLGBTQI+ people from GBV. This goal was outlined in the [Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#).

The Government of Canada also supports funding for community-driven proposals on family violence prevention projects and funding for culturally appropriate, community-driven prevention projects to raise awareness and focus on First Nations, Inuit, Métis, urban, and 2SLGBTQI+ people facing GBV. These include public awareness campaigns, conferences, workshops, stress and anger management seminars, and support groups.

As part of the NHS, the Government of Canada is also investing \$4 billion through [Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy](#). This Strategy provides funding directly to communities through the Designated Communities, Indigenous Homelessness, Rural and Remote Homelessness, and Territorial Homelessness streams.

- In addition, through the national Distinctions-Based Approaches stream, funding is provided to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis partners, including modern treaty holders. The funding helps them respond to the unique rights, interests, and circumstances of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- Funding is delivered at the local level, mainly through community entities such as municipal governments or not-for-profit organizations. They can select, approve, and manage projects based on the community's homelessness plan and priorities.
- A local or regional community advisory board is responsible for setting local priorities and recommending projects to the community entity for approval. This flexibility means communities can prioritize populations such as women, 2SLGBTQI+ people, and those who have experienced GBV for project funding.



The Government of Canada also provided \$27.1 million over three years, through the [Indigenous Courtwork](#) Program and the [Indigenous Justice Program](#), to support developing Indigenous-specific family court-worker services and an Indigenous-specific family mediation program. The Indigenous Courtwork Program helps Indigenous people who are navigating the family, child protection, and/or criminal justice systems, often at the same time. A courtworker will help them navigate these proceedings, including by connecting clients to culturally safe assistance and resources.

Manitoba has provided funding to [Clan Mothers Healing Village](#). This is a land-based initiative that provides culturally relevant programs for women, girls, Two-Spirit people, and transgender people who have experienced multigenerational trauma, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, and human trafficking. It incorporates traditional Indigenous healing and spiritual mentorship while encouraging individual growth through programming, training, and social enterprises. Funding has also supported running a skilled labour training initiative for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people who have experienced violence or sexual exploitation.

### **Initiatives in Pillar 5 – Social infrastructure and enabling environment**

“Social infrastructure” means health and social programs, services, and support, including childcare, long-term care, and GBV services. Social infrastructure investments can include supporting parents in taking leave; providing care support for children, families, seniors, and communities; providing socioeconomic benefits for those in need; providing wraparound services; increasing culturally and socially relevant, trauma- and violence-informed support and services, particularly for those in rural, remote, and northern areas; and providing a range of housing options.

Nunavut’s Department of Family Services has engaged in strategic partnerships with non-profit organizations, Inuit organizations, and territorial and federal government bodies to help create new women’s safety shelters across the territory. Presently, Nunavut oversees funding and provides operational support for six shelters serving women and children seeking refuge from violence. In line with its commitment to enhancing support services, Nunavut expects more women’s shelters to be created in Sanikiluaq, Gjoa Haven, Pangnirtung, and Baker Lake in the coming years. At the same time, transitional housing initiatives are planned to ease the transition from emergency shelters to longer-term housing spanning up to 24 months.

In applying the [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#), Ontario is investing \$18.7 million in 2023–2024 to help prevent and address GBV. This supports around 400 GBV service providers across the province to help them hire more staff, improve services, and increase their ability to provide services for women and children. Investments in the Women’s Economic Security Program and the Investing in Women’s Futures program will create more opportunities for women to build skills, gain employment, and become financially independent. This will enable them to leave violent situations. Wraparound

supports provided through these programs reduce barriers to women's participation and success. These supports may include transportation to and from training programs; support in finding child care; and referrals to mental health and wellbeing supports, legal support, counselling, and housing resources.

### **Initiatives within the foundation**

Achieving the shared vision of a Canada free of GBV that supports victims, survivors, and their families, no matter where they live, requires joint work by federal, provincial, and territorial governments; Indigenous organizations; GBV direct service providers; researchers; the private sector; and victims, survivors, and their families. Applying the [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#) requires a strong foundation based on these three components: leadership, coordination, and engagement; data, research, and knowledge mobilization; and reporting and monitoring.

Announced in 2020, the Atlantic Domestic Homicide Review Network was created to help prevent domestic homicides. It is the first regional review network of its kind in Canada. The four Atlantic provinces – New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island – have joined forces, with additional funding from the Government of Canada, to carry out this innovative approach. It includes:

- sharing information across jurisdictions on existing system responses and prevention efforts to learn and find best practices;
- creating a baseline study of trends and the current situation in Atlantic Canada; finding improvements in system responses to the factors leading to domestic homicide as well as shaping approaches to case reviews within each jurisdiction;
- promoting collaboration between government agencies, as well as providing a focal point for gathering input from non-government agencies and people; and
- promoting opportunities to hear from agencies and people whose work and lived experiences will provide important context in deciding priority areas for intervention to improve service delivery, particularly for vulnerable groups.

To date, data have been collected and are under analysis.

Finally, as part of applying the [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#), federal, provincial, and territorial governments are working together to monitor the results and impacts of actions through the National Action Plan's expected results framework. This framework fulfills a commitment made by federal, provincial, and territorial ministers responsible for the status of women through the National Action Plan. The commitment aims to develop a more fulsome expected results framework to monitor initiatives' outcomes and impacts. The framework also supports the goals of the National Action Plan's foundation.

### **International**

Canada works with Canadian, international, and local partners to build knowledge and capacity in developing countries to address lasting barriers to gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment. It also supports deploying strategies and programs – including

those of women's rights organizations and public institutions – to prevent and address sexual and gender-based violence, close gender gaps, and promote social change that fosters gender equality. In 2021–2022, Canada provided \$95 million, of which \$33 million was COVID-19 response funding, toward eliminating sexual and gender-based violence. This includes child, early, and forced marriage and female genital mutilation or cutting. The funding was provided as part of Canada's commitment to reaching \$700 million a year for sexual and reproductive health and rights by 2023–2024.<sup>94</sup>

## RESPONSES TO TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Based on 2018 statistics, groups that reported experiencing online harassment in the previous 12 months were 33% of women aged 15 to 24, 30% of Indigenous women, and 50% of bisexual women. Unwanted behaviours women most often experienced online included receiving unwanted sexually suggestive or explicit images or messages, or threatening or aggressive emails or messages. Women were also more likely than men to have been pressured to send, share, or post sexually suggestive or explicit images or messages.<sup>95</sup> In addition, in 2014, self-reported data showed that around 2.5 million women and men aged 15 and over reported having experienced cyberstalking in the previous five years. Women were more likely than men to self-report it (8% versus 6%, respectively). While information on cyberbullying in Canada is limited, self-reported data from Internet users aged 15 to 29 show that women were significantly more likely than men to have been cyberbullied and cyberstalked at some point between 2009 and 2014 (6.4% versus 4.1%). The same data show cyberbullying was more widespread among younger groups and within the lesbian, gay, and bisexual population.<sup>96</sup>

In 2018, self-reported data show that in Canada, one in four (25%) young adults aged 18 to 29 were victimized online.<sup>97</sup> Experiences of online victimization include receiving unwanted sexually suggestive or explicit images or messages (15%), and receiving aggressive or threatening emails, social media messages, or text messages (13%). Young women were more likely to be victimized online than young men were (32% compared to 17%). Members of the LGBTQ2+ community were also more likely to be victimized online (49% compared to 23%). First Nations people were more likely to report online victimization than non-Indigenous people were (46% compared to 26%).

Police-reported data show that women and girls of all ages are more likely than men and boys to experience online harassment in Canada.<sup>98</sup> In 2022, three-quarters (76%) of online criminal harassment victims were women. A similar proportion (73%) of people whose

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<sup>94</sup> Global Affairs Canada. (2023) [Report to Parliament on the Government of Canada's International Assistance 2021–2022](#).

<sup>95</sup> Cotter, A., & Savage, L. (2019) [Gender-based violence and unwanted sexual behaviour in Canada, 2018: Initial findings from the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces - statcan.gc.ca](#)

<sup>96</sup> Burlock, A., & Hudon, T. (2018) [Women and men who experienced cyberstalking in Canada - statcan.gc.ca](#)

<sup>97</sup> Hango, D. (2023) [Online harms faced by youth and young adults: The prevalence and nature of cybervictimization - statcan.gc.ca](#).

<sup>98</sup> Statistics Canada. (2024) Special request prepared for Justice Canada from the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

intimate images were distributed without consent were women. In contrast, women and girls accounted for one-fifth (20%) of online extortion victims.

As part of the Federal Strategy, WAGE has been leading an awareness campaign to increase youth awareness of GBV. The campaign has been focused on developing educational materials and web content, which have been shared with youth-serving organizations and young people across Canada. These materials provide youth in Canada with basic information on GBV and focus on supporting changes in behaviour and beliefs. Through joint work with youth-serving organizations, Canadian youth flagged the need for peer-to-peer learning, information on how to end GBV, and tools for supporting GBV survivors and victims. To meet these needs, WAGE is developing training modules, advertising campaigns, and school kits to support youth in their work to prevent GBV.

The campaign highlights that technology-facilitated violence is an often-dismissed form of GBV. Resources created to support campaign educate youth about online violence and provide guidance on where youth can find support for themselves or others. The advertising campaign for [It's Not Just](#) went live on December 4, 2023, and ran until March 31, 2024, on social media and websites typically used by youth to spread awareness and education.

On February 26, 2024, the Federal Minister of Justice introduced Bill C-63 in the House of Commons to create a new *Online Harms Act*. The bill would create stronger online protection for children and better safeguard everyone in Canada from online hate and other types of harmful content. The bill sets out a new vision for safer and more inclusive online participation. It would hold online social media platforms, including livestreaming and adult content services, accountable for their design choices that lead to spreading and amplifying harmful content on their platforms. It would also ensure that platforms are using mitigation strategies that reduce users' exposure to harmful content. In particular, the *Online Harms Act* would require services to remove (i) content that sexually victimizes a child or revictimizes a survivor, and (ii) intimate content posted without consent. The *Online Harms Act* would also require services to provide clear and accessible ways to flag harmful content and block users, adopt safety measures tailored for children, and adopt other measures to reduce exposure to seven categories of harmful content. The categories include content that promotes hatred, involves bullying children, or promotes self-harm among youth. The *Online Harms Act* would create the Digital Safety Commission of Canada and Digital Safety Ombudsperson of Canada, with administrative support from a digital safety office. The Commission would oversee and enforce the new regulatory framework. The Ombudsperson would act as a resource and advocate for users and victims. The bill also proposes changes to the *Criminal Code* and the *Canadian Human Rights Act* that would help combat hate speech and hate crimes based on sex, gender identity, and other grounds; provide better remedies for victims; and hold people accountable for spreading hatred. Finally, proposed changes to the *Mandatory Reporting Act* would support investigations into serious crimes linked to child pornography.

Through expanding the Federal GBV Strategy, the Government of Canada is investing \$1 million per year to deploy activities aimed at preventing and addressing bullying and cyberbullying among children and youth. Funding is being used to support deploying and evaluating community-based intervention projects; research to increase knowledge of what works to prevent bullying and cyberbullying; and developing an awareness campaign to inform parents, youth, caregivers, and educators about what they can do to prevent and address cyberbullying.

A core priority for the Government of Canada's [National Strategy on Countering Radicalization to Violence](#) is to prevent social media and other online platforms from being used as tools to incite violence, publish and share propaganda, and promote hatred. As lead on the National Strategy, Public Safety's [Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence](#) works with international allies and the tech sector, as well as experts and frontline practitioners across Canada, to prevent and counter violent extremism online. This includes forms of extremist violence driven by gender. For example, through the [Community Resilience Fund](#) grants and contributions program, the Canada Centre is supporting a four-year initiative addressing online hate led by the Young Women's Christian Association of Canada. The project, called [Block Hate: Building Resilience against Online Hate Speech](#), was launched in 2020. It aims to understand individual and collective experiences of online hate across Canada and develop community-generated, survivor-centric solutions, including narratives to challenge hateful discourses. Block Hate is designed to amplify these community-led solutions through empowering local communities with digital literacy training, and engaging with the information, communication, and technology sector to guide more effective responses to hateful speech and content on social media.

British Columbia launched the new [Intimate Images Protection Act](#) and new services to help people whose intimate images or videos have been shared without consent to get them off the Internet, stop their distribution, and seek financial compensation.

### **Human trafficking's connection to technology-facilitated gender-based violence**

In Canada, there is growing concern with the use of technology for human trafficking. Traffickers use different forms of technology to exploit their victims to a larger audience. They also use technology to network and connect to other traffickers. Canada recognizes the importance of supporting technology-based solutions to counter this crime, such as using digital forensics investigators in law enforcement who identify, extract, analyze, and preserve evidence on digital devices. These experts use their expertise to prosecute offenders who engage in human trafficking. Under [Canada's National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking](#) and in response to technology's greater presence in society, Public Safety Canada has used online platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram to amplify the awareness campaign [Human trafficking: It's not what it seems](#). Public Safety Canada has also used online platforms to offer stakeholder engagement webinars with technology-related subjects, including:

- cross-jurisdictional approaches and legal frameworks that promote coordination in the realm of the Internet, communications, and technology;
- awareness of the many technology formats used for human trafficking through recruitment, payment, and completion, including the use of cryptocurrency; and
- law enforcement advancements in technological tools and software to investigate cases and spot strategic trends for evidence-based solutions.

As well, Public Safety Canada co-leads the Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Working Group on Trafficking in Persons' Technology Subgroup. This is a forum for partners across Canada to come together to better understand the many uses of technologies and share knowledge on ways to use technology to prevent and address human trafficking.

### **Online child sexual exploitation**

Between 2014 and 2022, there were 15,630 incidents of police-reported online sexual offences against children and 45,816 incidents of online child pornography in Canada. Girls were overrepresented as victims for all offence types over the nine-year period. Most victims of police-reported online sexual offences against children were girls, particularly girls aged 12 to 17 (71% of all victims).<sup>99</sup>

The Government of Canada is committed to combatting the growing threat of online child sexual exploitation through the [National Strategy for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation on the Internet](#), launched in 2004. Public Safety Canada leads the National Strategy and works with strategy partners, such as [Justice Canada](#), the RCMP's [National Child Exploitation Crime Centre](#), the National Strategy's law enforcement arm, and the [Canadian Centre for Child Protection](#) (C3P), to protect children and combat online child sexual exploitation.

The Government of Canada expanded its commitment to combatting online child sexual exploitation through Budget 2022 with another \$41.6 million over five years and \$8.9 million ongoing. This funding builds on a Budget 2019 investment of \$22.4 million over three years to support key activities under the National Strategy that aim to increase prevention activities, raise awareness, reduce the stigma associated with disclosure, enhance Canada's ability to pursue and prosecute offenders, expand and share knowledge on the issue, and enhance collaboration among partners and stakeholders combatting this crime.

As part of the National Strategy's efforts, the Government of Canada also provides funding (\$15 million between 2019 and 2022 and \$24 million for 2022–2027) to enhance capacity within provincial and municipal Internet child exploitation (ICE) units. These specialized units are key in investigating and prosecuting online child exploitation cases, and in rescuing child victims. The funding for local ICE units continues to enable Public Safety Canada and the Government of Canada to collect and monitor more data on victims and

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<sup>99</sup> Savage, L. (2024) [Online child sexual exploitation: A statistical profile of police-reported incidents in Canada, 2014 to 2022 - statcan.gc.ca](#).

suspected offenders. In 2023–2024, reporting requirements will be adjusted to require ICE units to gather demographic data on victims and accused people if they can.

The National Strategy funds the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health to deliver programming aimed at people with a sexual interest in children to prevent child sexual exploitation. One component of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health’s project is an anonymous national phone line that provides prevention support to those at risk of offending, called Talking for Change.

The Government of Canada provides \$2.95 million per year to C3P, a charity dedicated to reducing child victimization by providing national programs and services to the public. C3P is responsible for operating [Cybertip.ca](https://www.cybertip.ca), a national tipline where Canadians can report suspected cases of online child sexual exploitation. C3P also manages [Project Arachnid](#), an automated web crawler that detects and processes tens of thousands of images per second and sends online service providers takedown notices to remove child sexual abuse material globally.

Canada also recognizes that digital industry engagement is key to eliminating online child sexual exploitation and abuse (OCSEA). It continues engaging with the Canadian digital industry to promote the *Voluntary Principles to Counter OCSEA* through a constructive dialogue focused on collaborative solutions to this growing threat. Canada also continues to collaborate with international partners on industry engagement. Partners include the North American Leaders’ Summit, Five Country Ministerial, and G7. Canada is also closely monitoring new trends, such as financial sextortion and using generative artificial intelligence to produce child sexual abuse material.

## **RESOURCING PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS TO ADDRESS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

Since 2017–2018, the Government of Canada, through WAGE, has invested over \$308.9 million in more than 730 projects to advance efforts to prevent and address GBV. Some significant investments under way that are flowing directly to organizations include:

- \$14 million over five years, and \$2 million ongoing, to support organizations in developing and adopting promising prevention or intervention practices for at-risk groups and human trafficking survivors – an investment under Canada’s [National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking](#); and
- an initial 2017 and 2018 investment of \$55 million over five years and \$12 million ongoing to support organizations under the Gender-Based Violence Program. This was further supported by a 2021 investment of \$105 million over five years to enhance the program for initiatives to engage men and boys, stop human trafficking, support at-risk groups and survivors, and provide support for testing and adopting best practices.

As mentioned in Section 2, with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Canada proactively mobilized an additional \$300 million in emergency funding to support over 1,400 organizations. These included women’s shelters, sexual assault centres, and

other organizations providing critical services to those experiencing GBV. This funding ensures the continuity of services and enhances the capacity of organizations that provide critical and often life-saving services and supports to those who experience GBV. Because of this funding, more than 4 million people experiencing violence had a safe place to go and access to supports across Canada.

Under the [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#), the Government of Canada provided \$539.3 million over five years, starting in 2022–2023, to support provinces and territories in their efforts to apply the National Action Plan in their jurisdictions. This funding is flexible in addressing each jurisdiction’s challenges, needs, and priorities under the plan’s five pillars and foundation, guiding the efforts to end GBV from coast to coast to coast.

In 2022–2023, the Government of Manitoba announced the launch of a new funding model for organizations funded through its Gender-Based Violence Program, including shelters, transitional housing, women’s resource centres, and specialized programs. It was clear from engagement with organizations funded through Manitoba’s Gender-Based Violence Program that funding levels were not enough to address staffing needs and demand for service. There was also significant inequity in how similar programs were being funded.

The new funding model uses a data-driven approach and was designed to address the need for increased capacity within organizations and to improve access to programming and supports. Included in the funding model’s design is consideration for regional differences and corresponding evidence-based risk factors. The new model is formula-based to ensure equitable amounts of funding for each cost centre, including operational expenses, salaries and benefits, and programming costs for all agencies in Manitoba’s Gender-Based Violence Program. In addition, there is a regional factor that takes into consideration increased costs in rural and northern places. This new funding model meant an increase of nearly \$8.5 million per year to support these organizations.

### ***Support to Indigenous organizations to address gender-based violence***

The Government of Canada has collaborated with national Indigenous women’s organizations to adopt whole-of-government relationship agreements. It has also been working to improve access to culturally safe services, with a focus on services for Indigenous women, 2SLGBTQI+ people, people with disabilities, and other marginalized groups who may experience intersecting discrimination. The 2021 federal budget committed \$55 million to increasing the capacity of Indigenous women’s and 2SLGBTQI+ organizations, helping them address the root causes of violence and deliver prevention programming in their communities.

The [Supporting Indigenous Women’s and 2SLGBTQI+ Organizations program](#) was designed to develop and support relationships based on trust and respect, and to empower Indigenous women’s and 2SLGBTQI+ organizations in decision-making processes. The program’s goals include engaging the grassroots in government legislative and policy



agendas, ensuring government policies reflect grassroots priorities, raising awareness of government policies among grassroots communities, and improving access to funding opportunities. Between 2021 and 2026, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada will have provided over \$33 million for projects, with over \$8 million in ongoing funding set aside to allow stable and longer-term project funding to support Indigenous women's and 2SLGBTQI+ organizations.<sup>100</sup>

### ***International***

Between 2018 and 2023, Canada provided more than \$380 million of international assistance to partners running projects that prevent and address sexual and gender-based violence. This includes harmful practices such as child, early, and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation/cutting.<sup>101</sup>

Along with this support and during the same period, the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives provided \$11,163,435 to 349 initiatives led by civil society organizations to address sexual and gender-based violence.

## **GENDER EQUALITY IN THE MEDIA**

The CRTC is the independent federal administrative tribunal that regulates and supervises broadcasting and telecommunications in the public interest. [The Broadcasting Act](#) grants the CRTC its regulatory powers. The Act states that the Canadian broadcasting system should, *"through its programming and the employment opportunities arising out of its operations, serve the needs and interests of all Canadians — including Canadians from Black or other racialized communities and Canadians of diverse ethnocultural backgrounds, socio-economic statuses, abilities and disabilities, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and ages — and reflect their circumstances and aspirations, including equal rights, the linguistic duality and multicultural and multiracial nature of Canadian society and the special place of Indigenous peoples and languages within that society."*

The CRTC's measures to achieve those goals include requiring licensed television and radio broadcasters to follow the [Canadian Association of Broadcasters' Equitable Portrayal Code](#) (2008). It ensures the equitable portrayal of all people in television and radio programming. The Code notably sets out rules to prevent the broadcasting of material that would be discriminatory, stereotypical, degrading, or stigmatizing to some people or groups, including because of their gender. The CRTC has also put in place methods to review and address complaints on this. Methods may be internal or through the [Canadian Broadcast Standards Council](#), a national self-regulatory organization.

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<sup>100</sup> Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada. (2023) [Projects funded through the Budget 2021 Initiative: Supporting Indigenous 2SLGBTQI+ organization - canada.ca](#)

<sup>101</sup> Global Affairs Canada. (2019 – 2024) [Canada's International Assistance Data - international.gc.ca](#)

### 3.4 Participation, accountability, and gender-responsive institutions

Promoting equality at all levels of leadership is essential to a fair and democratic society. It also leads to better decision making. Gender equality and diversity in leadership positions are also linked to better management, more availability of skilled employees, stronger employee engagement, and higher productivity. Despite progress, women, including diverse women, and gender-diverse people still face barriers to leadership and decision-making roles in Canadian society, including in politics. Historically, women have been underrepresented in Canadian politics. However, several initiatives have been launched in recent years to help support women and gender equality in public life and decision making.

#### PROMOTING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION

The Government of Canada continues to advance gender equality and diversity in all spheres of leadership and decision making, and has remained committed to a gender-balanced Cabinet since 2015. Women currently hold important ministerial positions, including Minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Treasury Board, and Minister of Foreign Affairs.<sup>102</sup> Among members of the federal parliament, 30.6% were women in 2022, up from 27% in 2018.<sup>103</sup> In addition, women make up more than half of federal public servants and more than half of all executives. Notably, Canada is the only G20 member that has achieved gender parity in public service executive positions.<sup>104 105</sup>

Historically, women have been underrepresented in Canadian politics, especially as members of Parliament. However, the House of Commons enacted new policies in 2019 to help remove barriers for pregnant members of Parliament by allowing them to take up to four weeks of leave at the end of their pregnancy. On top of this, the House agreed that new parents serving as members of Parliament could take up to 12 months of parental leave. Before this, members of Parliament that missed more than 21 days of sitting time, other than for illness or official business, had \$120 per day deducted from their pay.<sup>106</sup>

Efforts through the Government of the Northwest Territories' [Women in Leadership](#) initiative produced their first gender-balanced Legislative Assembly in 2019–2023. This was Canada's first and only gender-balanced legislative assembly, led by Canada's only sitting woman premier at the time. The Northwest Territories' previous Legislative Assembly, the 18th, had only 2 women among the 19 members. In the latest 2023 election of the 20th Legislative Assembly, 8 of the 19 seats went to women and 11 went to men, a slight imbalance. However, the Cabinet currently features four women and three men.

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<sup>102</sup> <https://www.pm.gc.ca/en/cabinet>

<sup>103</sup> Employment and Social Development Canada. (2023) [Canada's 2023 Voluntary National Review – A Continued Journey for Implementing the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals - Canada.ca](#)

<sup>104</sup> Privy Council Office. (2023) [Thirtieth Annual Report to the Prime Minister on the Public Service of Canada - Canada.ca](#)

<sup>105</sup> Global Government Forum. [Report – Women Leaders Index.](#)

<sup>106</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/parental-leave-commons-1.5175413>

### **Indigenous leadership**

Emphasizing the importance of Indigenous leadership and community involvement, the [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ People National Action Plan](#) stresses centring families and survivors in its development and application. Over 100 Indigenous women, 2SLGBTQI+ people, and other stakeholders contributed to the plan. They highlighted the need to reclaim sacred leadership roles and address the broader causes of violence, like racism and inequality.

The Supporting Indigenous Women's and 2SLGBTQIA+ Organizations program was designed to develop and support relationships based on trust and respect, and to empower Indigenous women's and 2SLGBTQI+ organizations in decision-making processes. The program's goals include engaging the grassroots in government legislative and policy agendas, ensuring Government of Canada policies reflect grassroots priorities, raising awareness of government policies among grassroots communities, and improving access to funding opportunities.

The Government of Canada provided \$36.3 million over five years, starting in 2021–2022, and \$8.6 million ongoing to support Indigenous women's and 2SLGBTQI+ organizations. This funding aims to ensure that the voices and perspectives of Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQI+ people are reflected in all aspects of decision making impacting their lives. In addition, the federal government provided \$20.3 million over five years to work with Indigenous partners to ensure monitoring tools would be adopted to measure progress and hold the government accountable.

The *Canada–Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) Accord*, signed in February 2019, formalizes a relationship process. It sets out how the Government of Canada and NWAC will work together to ensure the voices of Indigenous women in Canada are reflected in policy, programs, and legislation.

The *Canada–Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak Declaration*, signed in 2019, commits the parties to working together to advance the priorities of Métis Nation women and girls. This agreement will help to formalize the existing relationship with Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak and coordinate an approach to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of Métis Nation women and girls. This will be done by identifying policy priorities specific to their needs with federal departments. The declaration notes the need for an intersectional, culturally informed GBA Plus lens to advance these priorities.

Since 2017, Canada and Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada have partnered on important initiatives that support the priorities in the parties' memorandum of understanding. These include addressing socioeconomic gaps facing Inuit women and children, preventing violence and abuse, and promoting health and wellness. They have also partnered on initiatives focused on new and emerging issues, including youth issues and women's leadership.

Rights-based negotiations are one of the most tangible ways for communities to advance articles 3, 4, and 37 of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. Negotiating treaties, agreements, and other constructive arrangements contributes to the longer-term goal of ensuring Indigenous Peoples can advance their visions of self-determination and governance. This includes restoring women's roles in governance structures. Self-governing Indigenous Nations are best placed to take the further measures needed to support women in governance structures. These negotiations also support federal efforts to respond to the [National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' Calls for Justice](#) in aspects of governance, creating new opportunities for Indigenous women's and girls' perspectives.

The Government of Canada is currently engaged in over 173 active negotiation tables with Indigenous groups, including Indigenous women's organizations, across Canada. These negotiations are exploring new ways of working together to advance reconciliation and self-determination. The negotiation tables offer a framework for Indigenous groups to advance their unique priorities, interests, and needs, and to jointly design a process to address these through developing practical arrangements with Canada.

## **WOMEN'S ACCESS TO EXPRESSION AND DECISION MAKING IN THE MEDIA**

In recent years, the CRTC has put in place several measures to promote television production opportunities for women. In December 2018, the CRTC hosted the Women in Production Summit. At it, decision makers from Canada's largest English- and French-language public and private-sector broadcasters discussed finding lasting solutions to give women more access to key creative positions and production budgets in the Canadian television and film production sector. After the Summit, all participants agreed to work on a voluntary action plan tailored to their businesses and markets to address this issue. Every year since then, the seven largest Canadian broadcasters publish on their websites their action plan on progress toward achieving gender parity for their in-house and commissioned productions. All action plans are also linked on the [Gender parity page](#) of the CRTC website.

In addition, since 2019, the CRTC requires large English- and French-language Canadian broadcasting owners to file with the CRTC [annual production reports](#). The reports include information on broadcasters' efforts to commission programming made by women producers, directors, writers, cinematographers, and editors. In these reports, broadcasters must also list programs where women are the first and second lead performers.

In addition, in the [2022 licence renewal](#) for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC),<sup>107</sup> the CRTC granted an intersectionality credit against the CBC requirement for spending on Canadian independent programming produced by Indigenous people, racialized people, people with disabilities, and people who self-identify as 2SLGBTQI+ who also self-identify as

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<sup>107</sup> The CBC is the Canadian public broadcaster.

women. The CRTC also requires the CBC to file data on staffing positions that have a direct impact on programming diversity and programming decision making for women who self-identify as belonging to these communities.

The number of women serving as Governor in Council appointees has increased recently. Included in this increase are women in the [CRTC leadership](#) roles of Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer,<sup>108</sup> Vice-Chairperson of Broadcasting,<sup>109</sup> and regional commissioners. Women make up most of these appointments to the CRTC.

## **NATIONAL MACHINERY FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT**

Canada is a federated state and a constitutional monarchy comprised of 10 provinces and 3 territories. Under Canada's constitutional structure, legislative powers are divided between the federal and provincial governments. Through the Canadian Constitution, provincial and territorial governments have jurisdiction over education, administering justice, social services, and health care. Federal, provincial, and territorial governments take measures to support gender equality. This means that different aspects of the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* fall to different levels of government.

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* sets out the rights and freedoms that people across the country believe are necessary in a free and democratic society. This includes equality rights, as set out in section 15. The Charter is entrenched in the Canadian Constitution and takes precedence over other legislation. All laws, regulations, policies, and programs from all governments in Canada must be consistent with the Constitution as Canada's supreme law. Equality rights are protected within all levels of government in Canada by laws that forbid discrimination on several grounds, including gender. These laws apply to all public and private entities.

### **Gender equality in the federal government**

The former Office of the Coordinator, Status of Women, was established in the Privy Council Office in 1970 to address a recommendation in the [Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada](#). Since 1971, the Government of Canada has had a minister responsible for the status of women.

In 1976, the Office of the Coordinator, Status of Women, became a departmental agency funded by an annual budget approved by Parliament. The Office promoted equality for women and their full participation in the economic, social, and democratic life of Canada.

### **Department for Women and Gender Equality**

On December 13, 2023, WAGE celebrated the fifth anniversary of its creation through the [Department for Women and Gender Equality Act](#). This act formalized the important roles of WAGE, its minister, and the work to be done.

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<sup>108</sup> Appointed in 2023.

<sup>109</sup> Appointed in 2024.

WAGE advances gender equality, including economic, social, and political equality with respect to sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression. It promotes a greater understanding of the intersection of sex and gender with other identity factors. These include race, national and ethnic origin, Indigenous origin or identity, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic condition, place of residence, and disability. In 2021, the 2SLGBTQI+ Secretariat moved to WAGE from the Department of Canadian Heritage.

WAGE acts as a convener, knowledge broker, and capacity builder to advance gender equality. This includes such activities as shaping policy development and analysis; providing programs that build organizations' capacity to address systemic barriers to gender equality; conducting research, data collection, and analyses; and raising public awareness through outreach. WAGE also provides advice to the federal government to achieve its gender equality outcomes and goals, including advocacy for gender-based budgeting, helping to share expertise, and building capacity within the federal government for robust GBA Plus. WAGE also serves as a central point for sharing expertise across the country and with international partners.

### **Federal–provincial–territorial collaboration**

Advancing gender equality requires all levels of government in Canada to work together. All provincial and territorial governments have ministers responsible for the status of women. Some also have independent advisory committees on improving women's status and advancing gender equality.

The formal channel for gender-focused collaboration between the federal, provincial, and territorial governments is the [Federal–Provincial–Territorial Forum of Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women](#). Through the Forum, the ministers have met each year since 1982 to cooperate on policy questions, raise awareness of women's and girls' issues and concerns, and provide leadership in promoting women's equality. The Forum's work is currently advanced through five priority pillars:

- Economic participation and prosperity
- Education and skills development
- Leadership and democratic participation
- GBV and access to justice
- Poverty reduction, health, and wellbeing

FPT governments' work toward gender equality is complemented by a broad network of Canadian civil society organizations working to advance gender equality. These organizations collaborate with governments and advocate for further actions.

### ***Indigenous governments and advocacy organizations***

Canada actively engages with Indigenous groups, including in bilateral and trilateral meetings with federal, provincial, and territorial governments. Examples include the collaboration with Indigenous leaders to find joint priorities, co-develop approaches, and

monitor progress, such as meetings between the FPT Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women and National Indigenous Leaders and Representatives including - the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak / Women of the Métis Nation, the Métis National Council (MNC), NWAC, and Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada.

While joint priorities vary from forum to forum, several touch on issues of key importance to women's, girls', and gender-diverse people's wellbeing, including:

- adopting the [National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' Calls for Justice](#);
- applying the [UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#);
- adopting the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action;
- policing and community safety;
- reclaiming, revitalizing, and maintaining Indigenous languages;
- economic reconciliation;
- reforming Child and Family Services to ensure First Nations children's wellbeing;
- measures, including draft legislation, to address systemic discrimination in health care settings; and
- closing socioeconomic gaps in Indigenous communities (clean water, housing, etc.).

## OTHER TOOLS TO MAINSTREAM GENDER EQUALITY

[GBA Plus](#) is Canada's main tool for mainstreaming gender equality across sectors. GBA Plus is an analytical tool to support developing responsive and inclusive policies, programs, and other initiatives.<sup>110</sup> This is a process for understanding who is impacted by or will benefit from an initiative; determining how the initiative could be tailored to meet the diverse needs of the people most impacted; and foreseeing and mitigating any barriers to accessing or benefitting from the initiative.

Canada first committed to mainstreaming equality as part of its response to the 1995 *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* from the Fourth World Conference on Women. The analysis' original focus was mainly on gender differences (1995–2011), but it became more intersectional over time to reflect diversity within groups and to better understand how a unique combination of factors shape everyone's experience. In 2011, the Government of Canada added the "Plus" to GBA Plus as a visible reminder of the need to expand the analysis' scope to include a range of identity and structural factors, with a focus on their intersections. Robust and intersectional GBA Plus contributes to a range of government strategies and priorities. It is designed to help ensure that "no one is left behind"<sup>111</sup> by leveraging government policies (e.g., fiscal, social protection) to gradually achieve greater equality and promoting equity, fairness, and inclusion for all.

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<sup>110</sup> Women and Gender Equality Canada. [What is Gender-based Analysis Plus? – Canada.ca](#)

<sup>111</sup> "Leave no one behind" is a universal value and a foundational principle of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

A second mainstreaming tool the Government of Canada uses is the [Canadian Gender Budgeting Act](#). Parliament passed the Act in December 2018. It sets down gender budgeting<sup>112</sup> in the Government of Canada’s budgetary and financial management processes, ensuring that all measures adopted include a GBA Plus approach. This extends GBA Plus’s reach to examining tax expenditures, federal transfers, and the existing spending base.<sup>113</sup> The Act has three key requirements. First, it requires the Minister of Finance to table a report describing the impacts on gender and diversity of all new budget measures. Second, it requires the Minister of Finance to publish the analysis of impacts on gender and diversity of tax expenditures, such as tax exemptions, deductions, or credits, that the Minister considers appropriate. Finally, it requires the President of the Treasury Board to publicly report each year on gender and diversity impacts of existing Government of Canada programs that the President, in consultation with the Minister of Finance, considers appropriate. In line with the requirements of the [Canadian Gender Budgeting Act](#), the report on impacts includes summary information on the gender and diversity impacts of each new measure in the budget. The most recent impact report shows that adopting GBA Plus across federal programs has helped improve outcomes for Canadians. GBA Plus outcomes are also better integrated in other reporting by government departments and agencies, and most have taken steps to collect disaggregated data on government programs and to report on their gender and diversity impacts.<sup>114</sup>

Besides reports specifically on gender and diversity outcomes, Canada’s budgetary framework is also framed by the [Quality of Life Framework](#). It was designed to measure what matters most to Canadians. The Framework brings together economic, social, and environmental datasets to support evidence-based budgeting, decision making, and measuring Canadians’ quality of life. The Quality of Life Framework consists of 84 indicators, organized into a series of domains: prosperity, health, society, environment, and good governance. The Framework also includes two cross-cutting lenses that are applied across all of the domains: the [fairness and inclusion lens](#) (applied through GBA Plus) and the [sustainability and resilience lens](#).<sup>115</sup>

There are also several tools for interministerial coordination and government oversight to evaluate, monitor, and report on GBA Plus’s adoption across federal programs, initiatives, and policies. For example, in May 2022, Canada’s Auditor General released the results of its [third audit of GBA Plus](#). The audit highlighted achievements and flagged ongoing opportunities for improvement. In response to this report, the Government of Canada developed its [Management Response and Action Plan](#), tabled in November 2022 with concrete actions to address the areas for improvement.

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<sup>112</sup> Gender budgeting: A way for governments to promote equality in the budgeting process by conducting a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process, and restructuring revenues and expenditures to promote gender equality. Source: Adapted from Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the Council of Europe.

<sup>113</sup> Government of Canada. (2023) [Federal gender equality laws in Canada – international.gc.ca](#).

<sup>114</sup> Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. (2023). [2021–2022 Gender and diversity: Impacts of programs – Canada.ca](#).

<sup>115</sup> Department of Finance Canada (2023). [Budget 2023 Impacts Report – budget.canada.ca](#).



In addition, Canada's Senate, an appointed body with a mandate that extends beyond electoral cycles, has used their Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology to investigate adopting GBA Plus in the policy process, the barriers to its adoption, and how to support a more thorough intersectional analysis. The Committee heard from many witnesses, including the Auditor General, stakeholders from civil society, Indigenous organizations, academics, and federal government officials (including WAGE). This work led to a report, [All Together – The Role of Gender-based Analysis Plus in the Policy Process: reducing barriers to an inclusive intersectional policy analysis](#). It included concrete recommendations on how to overcome challenges to adopting GBA Plus.

Recommendations relate to the need for continued progress on branding, partnership/participation, ongoing action to address the Auditor General's recommendations, training, the timing of applying GBA Plus, resources, data, accountability, and finding ambassadors among senior leadership. The Government of Canada welcomes the Committee's efforts and insights and is considering measures to address these recommendations as part of efforts to enhance the framing, parameters, and infrastructure for robust and intersectional GBA Plus.

Besides sustaining its commitment to GBA Plus and to constantly improving Canada's approach to gender and equality mainstreaming, the Government of Canada has made strategic investments to ensure the availability of and access to meaningful intersectional evidence. For example, in 2018, the Government of Canada announced investments in the new Centre for Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics (GDIS) at Statistics Canada. In 2019, this Centre launched the [GDIS Hub](#), where all disaggregated data are housed, categorized, and made accessible in several analytical formats. In Budget 2021, the Government of Canada announced \$170 million for Statistics Canada to support the [DDAP](#).<sup>116</sup>

New Brunswick is home to at least 32,000 2SLGBTQI+ people and at least 2,100 Two-Spirit, transgender, non-binary, and gender-diverse people. To best serve the public, public sector employees need to be aware of diverse gender identities and sexual orientations and be inclusive of these realities. In 2021, there were 675 transgender men and 695 transgender women in New Brunswick. Eight hundred and fifteen people were non-binary. New Brunswick had the second-highest proportion (0.26%) of transgender men and the third-highest proportion (0.39%) of non-binary people aged 15 to 34 across Canada. To complement GBA Plus training, Women's Equality has developed a gender diversity inclusion (GDI) training session on transgender- and gender diversity-related topics. Launched in 2022, GDI training has been provided to around 2,700 public servants.

The Government of Canada has supported Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak, NWAC, and Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada in developing or updating their own Indigenous-first GBA Plus frameworks. The three organizations released their frameworks in 2019, 2020, and

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<sup>116</sup> Office of the Auditor General. (2022). [Report 3—Follow-up on Gender-Based Analysis Plus – oag-bvg.gc.ca](#)

2022 respectively. These frameworks, as well as ongoing engagement with these and other Indigenous partners, continue to shape the application of Indigenous culturally competent GBA Plus. This includes by applying it to developing, renewing, and evaluating policies, programs, and services in all sectors. Indigenous Services Canada established the GBA Plus Working Group with Indigenous partners in June 2023 to seek input and validate its approach, training, and tools on an ongoing basis, and to identify and advance key joint priorities on GBA Plus.

## **GENDER EQUALITY AND THE CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

The [Canadian Human Rights Commission](#) (CHRC) is Canada's federal equality commission. It operates independently from the federal government. It and the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) were created by the [Canadian Human Rights Act](#) (CHRA), Canada's federal equality law. Each of Canada's provinces and territories has its own equality commission and/or tribunal. Although the functions of these bodies vary, common functions include deciding or mediating complaints of discrimination brought under legislation in the commission's jurisdiction and developing and conducting human rights education and awareness initiatives.

All governments in Canada – federal, provincial, and territorial – have adopted legislation forbidding discrimination on several grounds in employment matters; the provision of goods, services, and facilities generally available to the public; and accommodation. This legislation applies differently from the constitutionally protected right to equality in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* since it provides protection against discrimination by people in the private sector, as well as by governments. Anyone in Canada has the right to submit a discrimination complaint to the CHRC under the CHRA. The CHRC's role is that of a screening body, meaning that it decides whether complaints have the basis for a human rights complaint under the CHRA. The CHRC has the authority to investigate discrimination complaints and, if it finds the complaint warranted, to refer the case to the CHRT to decide whether discrimination has occurred. The CHRC may also offer mediation and/or conciliation services to the parties, which can result in a settlement without being referred to the CHRT.

The CHRC has the authority to research, raise awareness, and speak out on matters linked to human rights in Canada. It is also responsible for representing the public interest, administering the law, and holding the federal government accountable on matters linked to equality rights. The CHRC provides information and resources on its website, such as webinars, publications, guides, and reports on a wide range of human rights topics, including discrimination, the duty to accommodate, harassment, and the evolution of human rights and their protection in Canada. The CHRC's annual report on its activities is tabled in Parliament.

As set out the CHRC's [2022 Annual Report](#), 46,600 people contacted the Commission that year. While most were helped without filing a complaint, the Commission accepted 763

complaints in 2022, 19% of which were related to discrimination based on sex.<sup>117</sup> Complaints based on sex were among the top three types of complaints from both Indigenous and Black people. Of the accepted complaints based on sex, 11% were dismissed, 12% were referred to the CHRT, 53% were dismissed on preliminary issues, and 23% were settled. The number of new complaints based on sex referred to the CHRT has remained fairly stable in recent years.<sup>118</sup>

In 2022–2023, the CHRC had an estimated budget of \$41,403,786. Of that budget, around \$7 million was spent on engagement and advocacy, \$12 million on complaints, and \$8 million on proactive compliance. Detailed budgetary information can be found in the Commission's [2022–2023 Departmental Results Report](#).

As part of its role in promoting human rights across Canada, the CHRC also works to support pay equity across federally regulated workplaces. The Office of the Pay Equity Commissioner, housed within the CHRC, is responsible for administering and enforcing Canada's federal [Pay Equity Act](#). The importance of this Act is outlined in Section 3.1.

In 2019, the Governor in Council appointed Canada's first federal Pay Equity Commissioner to the CHRC to administer and enforce the [Pay Equity Act](#). The Pay Equity Commissioner works closely with parties in federally regulated private- and public-sector workplaces to provide support and guidance on applying pay equity. In 2022, the Pay Equity Commissioner tabled her first [Annual Report to Parliament](#). It highlights several initiatives by the CHRC's Pay Equity Unit, including publications and developing online tools to help pay equity stakeholders better understand and meet their obligations. This includes, for example, developing the Pay Equity Portal, which allows parties to file applications with the Pay Equity Commissioner and exchange documents related to their case.

The Commission also continues to collaborate with federally regulated employers to ensure compliance with the federal [Employment Equity Act](#). This helps eliminate employment barriers in several workplaces for women, Indigenous people, people living with disabilities, and racialized people. More information on the Commission's activities to support employment equity can be found on its [website](#).

In 2022, the CHRC published [45 Calls for Inclusion](#) to urge Canadian governments and people in Canada to take concrete action on improving human rights for all. This includes five calls to end gender discrimination: end violence against Indigenous women and girls, close the gender wage gap in Canada, remove barriers to employment for trans and non-binary people, protect caregiving rights, and investigate sexual coercion and violence against federal prisoners.

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<sup>117</sup> The proportion of accepted complaints based on sex in previous years was 12% in 2021, 23% in 2020, and 20% in 2019. In addition, complaints based on sex are consistently the fourth-highest proportion of complaints accepted by the Commission, after disability (47%), race / colour / national or ethnic origin (31%), and religion (21%).

<sup>118</sup> The Tribunal received 23 new complaints based on sex in 2022, 26 complaints in 2021, 22 complaints in 2020, and 19 complaints in 2019. For more statistical information, see the CHRT's [annual reports](#).

### 3.5 Peaceful and inclusive societies

The world is witnessing what the UN Secretary-General has called “the reversal of generational gains”<sup>119</sup> on women’s and girls’ human rights. Anti-gender and anti-feminist movements are growing. Backlash against human rights is gaining traction within Canada and around the world, both online and in person. Indigenous women, girls, Two-Spirit, and gender-diverse people continue to face violence and insecurity in Canada due to the ongoing effects of colonialism. At the same time, women are on the front lines building peace. Their protection and meaningful inclusion in institutions and decision-making processes are not only worthy ends in themselves but also a means to enhance sustainable peace and security for all.

#### PROMOTING THE WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY AGENDA

The Government of Canada is committed to adopting the women, peace, and security (WPS) agenda through [Canada’s National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security](#). Its principles and themes include the importance of addressing sexual and gender-based violence; promoting women’s, girls’, and gender-diverse people’s rights, and supporting women’s participation in wellbeing- and peace-related processes.

In 2017, the Government of Canada launched [Canada’s second Action Plan for the Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security](#) (2017–2022). This action plan renewed Canada’s commitment to taking action to build, sustain, and promote peaceful and inclusive societies. In a 2023 follow-up to this, the Government of Canada presented [Foundations for Peace: Canada’s National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security \(2023–2029\)](#). Also known as “CNAP-3,” this third national action plan includes more commitments at the domestic level than previous action plans did. For example, it addresses systems and services that work to prevent and/or address sexual misconduct within DND and the CAF. It also targets the CAF’s efforts to foster an organizational culture that supports women’s recruitment, retention, and career progression and continued operational effectiveness. Other initiatives include making GBA Plus more institutionalized under a new enterprise approach and aligning principles, policies, and directives with the WPS agenda, as informed by GBA Plus and linked Government of Canada action plans.

#### ***Indigenous initiatives***

Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse people’s empowerment and participation in leadership roles are essential in advancing peace-related processes, as well as their rights and wellbeing. Many Indigenous women and gender-diverse people are leading the way in healing the wounds of colonization and addressing socioeconomic gaps, discrimination, and political marginalization. Their lived experiences, strength, and resilience, and the

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<sup>119</sup> United Nations (October 2022). [Annual report of the UN Secretary-General on women, peace, and security](#).

unique barriers they face due to the intersections of their Indigenous and gender identities, have fostered a deeper understanding of the challenges and injustices facing Indigenous communities, women, girls, and gender-diverse people.

The Government of Canada continues to actively align with the WPS Agenda for Indigenous women and girls, including by:

- ensuring that Indigenous rights are fulfilled in all departmental activities and the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan](#) is fulfilled;
- furthering the federal government's contribution (the [Federal Pathway](#)) to the 2021 Missing and [Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People National Action Plan: Ending Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People](#);
- applying culturally competent GBA Plus across all policies, programs, and initiatives, with particular attention to the intersectional analysis of Indigenous identity, gender, sexual orientation, race, location, disability, age, and socioeconomic status, among other characteristics;
- supporting Public Safety Canada in co-developing a legislative framework for First Nations policing and continuing to engage with Inuit and Métis on policing matters;
- supporting Justice Canada to address systemic discrimination and the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the justice system, including by developing an Indigenous justice strategy, in consultation and cooperation with provinces, territories, and Indigenous partners; and
- working with First Nations and provincial and territorial government partners to strengthen governance and service delivery for First Nations emergency preparedness, management, and recovery with Indigenous Services Canada and Public Safety Canada.

These initiatives complement the themes of three focus areas in Canada's third [National Action Plan on WPS](#): improving security, justice, and accountability; reducing sexual and gender-based violence; and inclusion. Many of these initiatives draw on existing federal action plans and/or domestic calls to action. These include the [Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People](#) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. The initiatives above also align with the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (notably article 22) and the SDGs in the UN's 2030 Agenda (notably Goal 5).

### **International**

The women, peace, and security agenda is a core element of Canada's feminist foreign policy and *Feminist International Assistance Policy*. Recognizing that gender equality is a foundation for peace, Canada applies the WPS agenda through its [National Action Plan on WPS](#) and across peace and security efforts. Canada is a global leader on WPS and a strong supporter of the 10 UN Security Council resolutions that form the agenda.

In 2019, Canada's first Ambassador for WPS was appointed. The position demonstrates Canada's commitment to WPS and increases the visibility and ambition of Canada's [National Action Plan on WPS](#). The Ambassador serves as a special advisor to ministers

whose departments have commitments in Canada's National Action Plan on WPS, and a high-level representative for Canada's global advocacy in this work.

Canada's WPS approach is unique among donor countries. The plan not only focuses on Canada's efforts internationally but adopts a broader definition of security to acknowledge the insecurity within Canadian borders, in particular for Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people. However, more and more action plans are taking this approach. Each partner department/agency – there were nine for the second Action Plan (2017–2022) – developed a publicly available implementation plan against which each partner reports annually.

In the past five years, Canada has also promoted the WPS agenda through engagement with the international defence community. This includes the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the UN, the Five Eyes, and other like-minded foreign defence and security organizations.

Of note, the CAF has partnered with the Ukrainian Armed Forces in their efforts to modernize gender policies and procedures in their military. This supports increasing diversity in their ranks and women's agency since Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Canada's support has also extended to the Ghana Armed Forces as part of Canada's ongoing support to the [Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations](#). The CAF had deployed Canadian Training Assistance Teams to Ghana on multiple occasions to contribute to Ghana's ongoing efforts to increase uniformed women's meaningful participation in UN peace operations.

As a participant in the Steering Committee for the Swedish Armed Forces' Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations, NATO's discipline head for gender in military operations, Canada advocates for WPS internationally. Canada provides CAF syndicate leaders and lecturers for the Gender Advisor and Gender Focal Point courses. A CAF Training Development Officer is posted to Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations. Canada also provides WPS subject matter expert contributions to course development, such as with the new online course on preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse in 2023. In 2022, DND/CAF and allies advocated for the inclusion of WPS in the updated NATO Strategic Concept, adopted by heads of government and state, at the NATO Summit in Madrid. It was one of Canada's priorities to have the WPS agenda and gender perspectives fully and meaningfully incorporated into NATO's Strategic Concept to emphasize the importance of integrating the WPS agenda across all of NATO's core tasks.

Canada signed the [Brasilia Declaration at the Conference of Defence Ministers of the Americas in 2022](#). The Declaration recognized the essential role women play in defence and security and committed to maintaining the Ad Hoc Working Group on WPS, to which Canada contributed panellists in the 2020–2022 cycle.

Canada has also made investments to support future engagements in promoting the WPS agenda. Notably, in fall 2022, Canada released the Indo-Pacific Strategy. Within it, DND and the CAF received \$7.6 million over five years for WPS training and capacity building in Malaysia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Singapore. The Military Training and Cooperation Program provides its member countries a wide range of training to enhance interoperability in peace support operations. The Military Training and Cooperation Program's Integration of Women and Gender Perspectives in the Armed Forces course is a valuable engagement tool. It increases participants' awareness of women, peace, and security; GBA Plus; and UN Security Council Resolution 1325 national action plans.

## **LEADERSHIP IN WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY**

In 2021, DND reported that over 50% of their public service executives were women. Women also maintained consistent attendance in the Joint Command and Staff Programme, which prepares selected senior officers of the Defence Team for command and staff appointments. Women made up 21.5% of all selected members in fiscal year (FY) 2021–2022 and 20% in 2022–2023. Canada has made visible improvements to increase the number of uniformed women deployed in international operations. It reports that 20.2% of the CAF's Regular Force officers deployed to UN peace support operations in 2022 were women. Similarly, data collected in 2023 reported that the percentage of women deployed (2.3%) was close to that of men (2.7%).

The Government of Canada has continued to work toward increasing women's recruitment, retention, and promotion as well as their representation in senior-level positions on peace and security. Canada's [second national action plan on women, peace, and security \(2017–2022\)](#) was a comprehensive plan to support women's full participation in peace and security efforts; to prevent, address, and fight impunity for conflict-related sexual violence; and to consolidate women's and girls' empowerment and advance gender equality, including in the world's most dangerous and complex conflicts. These efforts continue with the launch of CNAP-3 (2023–2029). Via CNAP-3, DND and the CAF will strengthen their application of the WPS agenda through their mission goals, covering internal institutional change on systems, structures, and culture, as well as domestic and international military operations. Canada has used several women-centric recruiting efforts, including online advertising campaigns and in-person events. For example, Canada launched an advertising campaign in October–December 2020, and again in January–March 2021. It garnered over 162 million impressions, over 400,000 web visits to the forces.ca page, and 3,099 "Start Application" clicks. The CAF has also invested in research over the last few years to understand and address women's barriers to the recruitment process.

The CAF is dedicated to removing employment barriers for women, visible minorities, Indigenous people, people with disabilities, and members of 2SLGBTQI+ communities. The CAF Employment Equity Plan 2021–2026 was created to increase the representation, inclusion, and participation of underrepresented groups across all levels of the organization, including in recruiting processes. Research has also been conducted, such as

through exit surveys and post-mission feedback, to discover major reasons for women leaving the CAF as well as to fix or mitigate any issues found. To further support these efforts, the CAF released its Retention Strategy in 2022 to target “unhealthy” attrition. DND and the CAF also created Chief Professional Conduct and Culture (CPCC), a new organization to unify, shape, and coordinate culture change efforts across the institution. After its creation in 2021, CPCC commissioned the Independent External Comprehensive Review on institutional policies, practices, and procedures in DND and the CAF. CPCC also committed \$236.2 million over five years to addressing sexual misconduct and GBV in the military, and to supporting survivors.

Efforts have also aimed at increasing the number of women at senior levels in DND’s and the CAF’s non-commissioned member and officer ranks and executive levels. Over the last five years, DND and the CAF have remained committed to reviewing their current processes and policies to improve the proportion of women selected for career development, promotion, and appointment to leadership roles and senior levels in the organization. One victory was launching the DND/CAF Executive Development Program in 2021. The program seeks to address employment equity and diversity gaps in the department’s most senior levels via recruitment and talent management initiatives.

### ***Indigenous leadership***

The Government of Canada’s priority is to work in full partnership with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis to continue building nation-to-nation, Inuit–Crown, and government-to-government relationships and support self-determination. This includes supporting Indigenous Peoples as they transition to self-government. This broad mandate gives the Government of Canada an opportunity to actively support the principles and aims of [Canada’s third National Action Plan on WPS](#). Many activities focus on socioeconomic and cultural factors that aim to improve peace and security for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people by ensuring they enjoy full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination. For example, CIRNAC engages with Indigenous partners, including women, to replace outdated policies with a new rights-based approach. As of March 2023, 186 discussion tables were advancing the self-determination of Indigenous Peoples, including women and girls. GBA Plus principles are considered in the negotiation process in many ways. These include whether a proposed provision for a self-government agreement or arrangement contains elements that might harm women, men, or other community subgroups (e.g., youth, elders, single parents, people with disabilities, 2SLGBTQI+ people). Indigenous groups are encouraged to apply these principles, but they are not bound by them.

### ***International***

Canada announced the [Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations](#) in 2017. The initial pilot lasted five years (2017–2022), and then a second pilot was launched for five more (2022–2027). The Initiative focuses specifically on advancing uniformed women’s meaningful participation in peace operations. Over the first pilot’s timeframe, total Elsie Initiative program spending (including grants and contributions) was \$39,460,058.



One big milestone was providing financial support to create the Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations Methodology. This rigorous and innovative tool was designed to be used by police, gendarmerie, and military institutions to determine existing barriers to women's meaningful participation. In 2022, DND and the CAF published their own [Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations Barrier Assessment](#). They have continued to actively address the barriers found through broader culture change initiatives ever since.

In the last five years, Canada has also successfully forged partnerships with the Ghana Armed Forces, the Senegalese Ministry of the Armed Forces, and the Zambia Police Service to find and share best practices. In addition, Canada created the Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women in Peace Operations, now managed by UN Women. The fund aims to incentivize and accelerate deploying more uniformed women in military and police roles to UN peace operations for an initial five years (2019–2024). The Military Training and Cooperation Program, founded in 1963, has had a critical role in building partner capacity and advancing defence diplomacy among 67 developing, non-NATO member countries in Africa, the Middle East, Asia, the Americas, and Europe. The Program's activities fall under the broad categories of language, staff officer, peace support operations, and professional development training.

In fall 2022, DND and the CAF dedicated \$15 million to provide winter clothing for the Ukrainian Armed Forces (parkas, boots, thermal layers). They ensured that models and sizes were ordered to accommodate the range of Ukrainian soldiers, including the 15% who are women. DND and the CAF directed companies to label each item very clearly by size and clothing type (men's/women's). This was done again in 2023, but with up to \$25 million. The CAF has trained around 40,000 Ukrainian military security personnel in battlefield tactics and advanced military skills since launching [Operation UNIFIER](#) in 2015. The CAF continued to offer support for capacity building during the invasion, training over 5,000 members of the Ukrainian Armed Forces in third locations on both basic and specialized skills. Canada engaged in deploying aircraft to help deliver Ukraine-bound military aid from both Canada and allied and partner countries. Since March 2022, aid delivered by the Air Mobility Detachment in Prestwick totalled over 15 million pounds.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY FOR HUMANITARIAN LAW AND WOMEN'S AND GIRLS' HUMAN RIGHTS**

Canada has remained committed to promoting and protecting women's and girls' human rights, gender equality, and women's and girls' empowerment in fragile, conflict, and post-conflict settings. In 2020, the Canadian Joint Operations Command led [Operation LASER](#), the CAF's response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Under the operation, military medical personnel and resources were deployed to key Canadian provinces and territories to save lives; help civilian authorities during the crisis; and maintain CAF readiness, effectiveness, and resilience.

Another example is Canada's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The CAF helped the many refugees and internally displaced people, most of whom were women and vulnerable groups. CAF personnel also supported the Ukrainian Armed Forces and the Ukrainian government to ensure the safety and human rights of refugees and internally displaced people. They targeted organized crime, human trafficking, and illegally recruiting girl and boy child soldiers to achieve this. The Defence Team leadership also continued to work with like-minded partners to promote human rights, advocate for advancing the WPS agenda in multinational forums, and ensure that gender perspectives are woven into daily activities. Lastly, DND and the CAF are committed to ensuring and enhancing a safe and inclusive work environment for all employees, including women deployed in armed and other conflicts, humanitarian action, and crisis responses. In the last five years, DND and the CAF have continued efforts to stop sexual misconduct and other harmful behaviours within DND and the CAF and to change the institutional culture so that all men, women, and gender-diverse people feel safe, respected, and included.

Preventing and addressing conflict-related sexual violence is a priority for the Government of Canada, as outlined in [Canada's National Action Plan on WPS](#) and the [Feminist International Assistance Policy](#). Conflict-related sexual violence must end. Canada is determined to be part of the solution, and is committed to working with survivors to ensure meaningful justice. Canada supports efforts to ensure a participatory approach and meaningful justice for victims and survivors across the world. This is a particular priority for Canada's engagement in Ukraine. That is why \$9.7 million in new funding was announced in June 2022 to advance justice and accountability for human rights violations in Ukraine, including conflict-related sexual violence.

### **Armed conflict and human trafficking**

Canada acknowledges that linkages to migration due to global conflicts could make people more vulnerable to labour and/or sexual exploitation. Examples of actions taken under Canada's [National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking](#) that help in these challenging times include:

- broadening the [human trafficking awareness campaign](#) and targeting transit points such as airports and ports of entry with information in highly visible areas;
- creating and sharing tools and resources for frontline community workers and law enforcement (fact sheets, information cards with Canada's national human trafficking 1-800 hotline, referral directory);
- making awareness and resource materials available in as many languages as possible, especially those of countries in conflict; and
- providing trauma-informed training for police and other workers in the criminal justice system.

The federal, interdepartmental Human Trafficking Taskforce is led by Public Safety Canada. It enables timely coordination and information sharing when shifts in global stability create

a need for surge capacity to support police services, frontline agencies, and workers supporting Ukrainian refugees' arrival.

To counter trafficking risks from migration, Employment and Social Development Canada runs the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, which issues temporary foreign work permits. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada also protects vulnerable, out-of-status foreign nationals who are victims of human trafficking by issuing temporary resident permits to legalize their temporary status. This gives the victim time to seek supports and decide their next steps while having legal standing and freedom from fear of deportation or legal action against them.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada also actively monitors temporary resident visas and the use of temporary special measures to reduce the risk that human traffickers might exploit special measures.

## **ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST GIRLS AND VIOLATIONS OF THEIR RIGHTS**

Like women, girls in Canada are impacted by unique gender inequities. For example, the rate of family violence was more than two times higher among women and girls (455) than among men and boys (215) in 2022.<sup>120</sup> Girls and young women were also the majority (58%) of hospitalizations for mental health disorders in 2020.<sup>121</sup>

### **Legal frameworks**

In July 2023, the Government of Canada launched the [Child Rights Impact Assessment \(CRIIA\) tool](#) and an accompanying [online course](#). Grounded in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, the CRIA tool is designed to help officials determine and consider all direct or indirect effects that a proposed law, policy, program, or other initiative could have on children. A CRIA recognizes that different children have diverse needs and lived realities. It can help officials understand initiatives' impacts on different groups of children, including girls. While mainly directed at federal officials, the CRIA tool and course are also available to the general public on the Department of Justice's website.

Recent amendments to the federal *Divorce Act* set out new factors for children's best interests that courts must consider when making decisions about parenting responsibilities. In addition, amendments to the *Divorce Act* now require courts to consider the impact of family violence on children's best interests when determining parenting arrangements, and they set out specific factors courts must consider. As part of analyzing children's best interests, allocating parenting time is subject to the primary consideration of children's safety, security, and wellbeing. In addition, the Government of Canada developed [resources for the public](#) and education and [training materials for family justice system professionals](#),

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<sup>120</sup> Statistics Canada. (2023) [The Daily - Trends in police-reported family violence and intimate partner violence in Canada, 2022](#)

<sup>121</sup> Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2022) [Children and youth mental health in Canada - cihi.ca](#)

including on the gendered and intersectional nature of family violence. This served to support the effective application of these new provisions on children's best interests.

In 2023, changes were made to the *Family Orders and Agreements Enforcement Assistance Act*, a federal law that helps with enforcing family obligations and investigating child abductions. These changes provide more tools to establish child support and enforce family obligations. They include important measures to address the potential for family violence. These changes also help reduce child and family poverty as well as the legal costs of getting financial information from a parent who fails to comply with their disclosure obligations, and the associated use of court resources.

Applying the 2007 Hague Child Support Convention in Canada provides parents with the means to get child and spousal support across international borders with more countries. It offers a forms-based process for getting support and relies on an established network of international administrative cooperation among participating states. The Convention came into force for Canada, Manitoba, and Ontario on February 1, 2024, and British Columbia on March 1, 2024.

### **Violence against children**

Canada recognizes that all children have the right to be protected from violence. Through several investments, including [Preventing Gender-Based Violence – the Health Perspective](#), the Government of Canada is supporting programs that prevent youth dating violence and child abuse, and that equip health professionals to recognize and respond safely to GBV. In addition, through Preventing and Addressing Family Violence – the Health Perspective, the federal government is supporting projects to deliver and test interventions that promote safe relationships and prevent family violence.

In 2019, the Government of Canada published [Canada's Road Map to End Violence Against Children](#) to accelerate efforts toward preventing violence against children. The Road Map provides an overview of Canada's current legislation, policies, and programs to prevent and address violence against children. It also proposes further opportunities for action.

### **Indigenous initiatives**

Over the last five years, Canada has taken significant steps to eliminate discrimination and protect the rights of Indigenous youth, including Indigenous girls. Actions have focused on enhancing educational opportunities, providing health services tailored to Indigenous youth's needs, and supporting culturally relevant programs for empowerment and leadership development. For example, the [Federal Pathway to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ People](#) was released in June 2021. It affirms that measures will be taken to support Indigenous-led education and awareness activities for Indigenous children, youth, and families, and to improve and expand support and services to Indigenous children, families, and communities based on their unique histories, cultures, and circumstances. Several initiatives under the Federal Pathway are currently being applied with Indigenous partners, including launching the [Support for the](#)

[Wellbeing of Families and Survivors of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People Contribution Program](#). It funds projects that provide assistance and services for the healing journeys of Indigenous family members and survivors who have lost loved ones due to violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people. In addition, the Government of Canada has made, and continues to make, many reforms to the First Nations Child and Family Services Program (FNCFS) since the CHRT found the program to be discriminatory in 2016. Indigenous Services Canada has been working with partners to reform the FNCFS Program, [reduce the number of Indigenous children in care](#), and improve the wellbeing of children and their families. The FNCFS Program began offering the Community Well-Being and Jurisdiction Initiatives Program in 2018. This is a unique funding stream that First Nations can access directly to expand the availability of prevention and wellbeing initiatives that address community needs, and to support First Nations in developing and applying jurisdictional models. Eligible activities under this funding stream include developing and deploying culturally appropriate parenting programming.

### ***International***

#### **Child, early, and forced marriage**

Canada is an international leader in global efforts to end child, early, and forced marriage, both at the UN General Assembly and the Human Rights Council. Canada, together with Zambia, co-leads an important biennial resolution on child, early, and forced marriage at the UN General Assembly. The most recent resolution was adopted by consensus at the General Assembly in fall 2022, with 125 co-sponsors from all regions of the world. The 2022 resolution highlighted the urgency of accelerating action to end child, early, and forced marriage for the most marginalized girls and women, including those in humanitarian settings and those with disabilities. The 2020 resolution was adopted by consensus, with 114 co-sponsors from all regions of the world. It reflected the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on rates of child, early, and forced marriage and on efforts to end the practice.

Canada supports the UN Population Fund and UN Children's Fund (UNFPA-UNICEF) Global Programme to End Child Marriage. It promotes teenage girls' rights to avert marriage and pregnancy and enables them to reach their goals through education and alternative pathways. In recent years, Canada's support to the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage enabled it to adapt its programming to the COVID-19 crisis. Between 2020 and 2022, more than 13 million girls aged 10 to 19 participated in at least one of the Global Programme's targeted programs, and more than 450,000 girls could enrol or remain in formal and informal education. During the same period, over 50 million people participated in dialogue on the consequences of, and alternatives to, child marriage.

#### **Child labour**

The Government of Canada strongly condemns forced and child labour. It stands committed to upholding international labour standards and human rights, and it has carried out several initiatives in the past five years. This includes the [labour provisions in](#)

[Canada's recent free trade agreements](#), which include a commitment to ending child labour.

In January 2024, the [Fighting Against Forced Labour and Child Labour in Supply Chains Act](#) (Supply Chains Act) came into force. The Supply Chains Act requires some entities and government institutions to report publicly on measures taken to reduce the risk that forced or child labour is used by them or in their supply chains. Public Safety Canada is responsible for rolling out this Act. The Supply Chains Act also amends the *Customs Tariff* to ban imports of goods made, in whole or in part, by forced or child labour. The Government of Canada recognizes that the Supply Chains Act may be an important first step, but more is needed. To that end, the Government of Canada committed, as part of the 2023 and 2024 federal budgets, to introducing legislation in 2024 to help remove forced labour from Canadian supply chains and strengthen the import ban on goods produced using forced labour.

### 3.6 Environmental conservation, protection, and rehabilitation

Environmental crises and climate change are not gender-neutral.<sup>122</sup> Globally, women and girls are among those most impacted by these threats, as they amplify existing vulnerabilities and gender inequalities and pose unique threats to women's and girls' livelihoods, health,<sup>123</sup> and safety.<sup>124</sup> Canada is no different, and because of this, taking a gender-responsive and inclusive perspective in responding to climate change is critical.

Women are more likely to experience domestic violence due to extreme events such as flooding. Women who experience post-flood violence are more likely to report depression.<sup>125</sup>

Indigenous women in particular have experienced the effects of climate change directly for generations. They have also been leaders in conserving the environment: for example, among some Indigenous Peoples, women are the traditional "water carriers." Their knowledge and unique experiences greatly contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation in their communities.<sup>126</sup>

The Government of Canada appreciates that women and girls can be and are powerful agents of change, and that they should play critical roles in environmental conservation, protection, and rehabilitation. Because of this, empowering women to be more involved in climate actions and policy is a priority for Canada.

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<sup>122</sup> UN Women. (2022) [Explainer: How gender inequality and climate change are interconnected](#)

<sup>123</sup> In 2021, an emergency room physician in Nelson, British Columbia, clinically diagnosed a 70-year-old woman as suffering from "climate change" – <https://www.timescolonist.com/bc-news/bc-doctor-clinically-diagnoses-patient-as-suffering-from-climate-change-4723540>

<sup>124</sup> Health Canada. (2022). [Health of Canadians in a Changing Climate: Advancing our Knowledge for Action – changingclimate.ca.](#)

<sup>125</sup> Health Canada.

<sup>126</sup> Environment and Climate Change Canada (2024) [Gender-based Analysis Plus](#), in 2024-2025 Departmental Plan

## CLIMATE ACTION

### **Clean growth and climate change mitigation**

As climate-related initiatives are adopted, efforts are taken to minimize and avoid, as much as possible, impacts on vulnerable groups. These include women, seniors, people with lower incomes or in marginalized communities, people with disabilities, Black and other racialized groups, and Indigenous people. Due consideration is given to factors that may impede or undermine these groups' experience in the transition to a low-carbon economy. Released in 2022, [Canada's 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan](#) included GBA Plus, which is published in [Annex 7](#). The Government of Canada will continue to conduct GBA Plus for each policy and program to maximize benefits for those most impacted by the harms of climate change.

As part of a broader Government of Canada strategy on climate action in farming, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Agricultural Clean Technology program aims to create an enabling environment for developing and adopting clean technology. This will help drive the changes required to achieve a low-carbon economy and promote sustainable growth in Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector. The Adoption Stream supports buying and installing commercially available clean technology or equipment upgrades that will reduce greenhouse gas, fertilizer, and methane emissions. The Adoption Stream may provide another 10% on the cost-share ratio if the majority of the business (more than 50%) is owned by one or more underrepresented groups, including women. This program flexibility is designed to reduce barriers to accessing modern climate-smart technologies for women farmers and other underrepresented and marginalized groups in the sector to support [Canada's strengthened climate plan](#).

With the Canadian Arctic warming at three or more times the global rate, climate change is expected to put communities in the North at risk. This reality aligns with local Inuit culture, where everything is interconnected, and climate change affects many aspects of preserving Inuit livelihood, safety, health, and wellbeing. Results of a [case study](#), completed in Nunavut by Anna Bunce and Dr. James Ford with McGill University's Department of Geography, determine and describe Inuit women's vulnerabilities and capacity to adapt to changing climate conditions in the North.

The Government of Nunavut has taken steps to ensure that the importance of women's involvement in addressing climate change is taken into consideration. For example, the Nunavut Climate Change Youth Advisory Committee – the Government of Nunavut's youth voice on climate change – is currently made up of seven women and two men. This also corresponds with local efforts that have increased the number of women graduating from the Nunavut Arctic College's Environmental Technology Program.

## CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND DISASTER MITIGATION

In June 2023, Canada released its first-ever [National Adaptation Strategy](#), which sets forth a shared path for a more climate-resilient Canada. It calls on all infrastructure stakeholders to align their vision for climate-resilient infrastructure systems. One of the Strategy's guiding principles is addressing and minimizing social, gender, racial, and intergenerational inequities. As the Government of Canada continues to deliver infrastructure investments, it will advance the Strategy's goals, objectives, and principles. This includes the objective that "infrastructure decisions prioritize benefits for marginalized populations and communities at highest risk of climate change impacts." The Strategy's direction to integrate gender and broader equity considerations will guide future policy making on climate-resilient infrastructure for decades to come.

### **Disaster mitigation**

To make the country's infrastructure more resilient, Infrastructure Canada works with federal partners, such as Public Safety Canada, in a whole-of-government approach with provinces, territories, cities, communities, and national Indigenous organizations and communities. Efforts to enhance resilience include enabling Canada's communities, including marginalized communities who are often most at risk, to become more resilient in the face of a changing climate through better planning, data and evidence, and investments.

The Government of Canada's Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF) is one way of enhancing resilience by supporting public infrastructure projects designed to mitigate current and future climate-related risks and disasters, such as floods, wildland fires, and droughts. DMAF investments are expected to reduce or avoid the high costs of service disruption and damages, as well as improve the resilience and quality of life of vulnerable groups who are disproportionately affected, including women.

Wildland fire management: The Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC), a not-for-profit corporation owned and operated by the federal, provincial, and territorial wildland fire management agencies, developed the [CIFFC Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Framework](#) in 2021. In 2022, CIFFC hosted a seven-session webinar series focused on skills-based training in equity, diversity, and inclusion as well as intercultural competency, conflict resolution, and human rights. This webinar series was open to all CIFFC member agencies.

Women and non-binary people have traditionally been underrepresented on wildfire teams across the country. In 2021, the Government of the Northwest Territories began offering [extra firefighter training](#) specifically targeted to these groups. The intent is to offer the same training while providing a space for people who may have been discouraged from the field in the past to see themselves in rewarding careers in wildfire management.



### ***Indigenous communities***

Canada's approach to crisis response in Indigenous communities, particularly on women, emphasizes culturally sensitive support, enhancing safety, and improving health and social outcomes. Initiatives often involve collaboration with Indigenous leaders and organizations to ensure responses are community-led and respect traditional practices. Efforts include addressing GBV, providing health care and mental health support, and ensuring access to safe housing and emergency services. These actions aim to strengthen resilience, promote healing, and uphold the rights and dignity of Indigenous women and communities during crises. The Government of Canada funds crisis support resources for those affected by GBV, including a support hotline. Survivors, family members, and those affected by the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls can access mental health counselling, emotional support, community-based cultural support services, and some assistance with transport costs. Mental health counselling is provided by professionals, such as psychologists and social workers, who are registered in their province or territory and enrolled with Indigenous Services Canada.

### ***International***

Canada is co-leading the development of a wildland fire international mentorship program. The program includes participation from Mexico, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand, with a focus on providing leadership opportunities and development for women in fire.

Canada continued support to the International Model Forest Network (IMFN), the world's largest network dedicated to sustainable landscape governance. The IMFN Secretariat at Natural Resources Canada's Canadian Forest Service advanced [RESTAURacción: Wildfire Restoration in Latin America](#). In response to widespread wildland fires in Latin America in 2019 and 2020, the Government of Canada launched RESTAURacción in 2020, with \$2.5 million to support collaborative forest landscape restoration in model forests across the Latin American Model Forest Network. RESTAURacción is funded by Global Affairs Canada and led by the Canadian Forest Service through the IMFN Secretariat. Delivering on Canada's commitment at the 2019 G7 Leaders' Summit, RESTAURacción aims to advance women's leadership in restoring post-fire and degraded landscape ecosystems, plan and cost post-fire restoration, and promote longer-term investments in sustainable land use. Canada's overall investment in RESTAURacción is now over \$8 million.

Aligned with Canada's feminist foreign policy, Canada is leading an inclusive approach to disaster risk governance that accounts for the needs of vulnerable people within Canada and globally. Canada contributes to international efforts to help vulnerable countries and people in the face of escalating climate-related disasters, as storms, droughts, and floods are becoming more frequent and intense. Canada, along with the Vulnerable Twenty Group, the Group of Seven, and other supporting countries, has funded the Global Shield against Climate Risks. It aims to facilitate pre-arranged protection against climate and disaster-related risks for vulnerable people and countries, allowing for better protection for losses and damages worsened by climate change.

Within the Americas and Caribbean, Canada's \$15 million contribution to the [Climate Change Action for Gender-Sensitive Resilience project](#) (2018–2022) helped to further integrate gender equality and human-rights-based approaches into disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, and environmental management frameworks and interventions. This was achieved by finding and addressing gaps to ensure equal access for men and women across nine Caribbean countries.

Canada's \$8.2 million contribution (2018–2023) to the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency has improved comprehensive disaster management in the Caribbean region, with a focus on people in vulnerable situations, particularly women and girls. In addition, the Government of Canada has committed to contributing more than \$2.5 million to build on the momentum of the Sendai Framework's Midterm Review. This will strengthen gender equality and women's empowerment in disaster risk reduction by funding the Latin America and Caribbean Women's Network for Disaster Risk Reduction.

## **CLEAN ENERGY**

The Government of Canada has incorporated measures into the design of [Canada's Greenhouse Gas Offset Credit System](#) to address potential barriers for Indigenous communities and organizations. For example, low-income households, which are more likely to be headed by sole women parents and disproportionately include people with disabilities or mental illnesses, recent immigrants, and Indigenous people, may be more vulnerable to pollution pricing due to socioeconomic inequalities. This is because spending on carbon-intensive goods makes up a larger share of their expenses. In addition, some of these groups and people may not be able to access the targeted measures to lessen the disproportionate impacts of pollution pricing.

### ***International***

To ensure the low-carbon energy transition is equitable and inclusive, the Government of Canada leads [Equal by 30](#). This globally recognized campaign has over 200 signatories worldwide. It encourages voluntary commitments by both public- and private-sector organizations to work toward equal pay, equal leadership, and equal opportunities for women and other marginalized groups in the clean energy sector by 2030. In 2021, Canada developed a [reporting framework](#) to create a baseline of gender-disaggregated data for the sector. In 2023, Canada released a [self-assessment tool](#) for signatories to track progress on inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility in the energy workforce.

## **SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

In November 2018, the Government of Canada sponsored the Canadian Institute of Forestry's initiative to develop the Gender Equality in Forestry National Action Plan. For the past six years, the [Free to Grow in Forestry initiative](#) has advanced the representation of women and other underrepresented groups in the forest sector. To do this, it has collected

and analyzed data; created pathways for women to advance in the forest sector; and advocated for, promoted, and reported on progress toward gender equality. The initiative, the first of its kind, continues to support the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women, Indigenous people, and new Canadians in Canada's diverse and dynamic forest sector. In addition to this, the Canadian Forest Service created the [Canadian Forest Sector Workforce Diversity undergraduate supplement](#) in 2020. This award was developed in partnership with the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. It was designed to incentivize students from underrepresented groups to pursue forest-related research and careers. This is especially important in light of Canada's forest sector transformation, which will create new jobs and provide an opportunity for a renewed focus on diversity. Since 2020, 90 supplements totalling \$450,000 have gone to students across Canada, with nearly 70% supporting women in forest research. This supplement has been renewed, with plans to increase funding and expand the eligibility criteria to reach new student groups.

The [Canadian Minerals and Metals Plan \(CMMP\)](#) was first released in 2020. It highlights the need to take action for gender equality, find strategies to increase the number of women and visible minorities, and advance Indigenous participation in mining, particularly for Indigenous women. As a partnership across the Government of Canada, provinces, territories, industry, Indigenous communities, and other stakeholders, the CMMP set a target of 30% of the mining sector workforce being women by 2030. The [Canadian Critical Minerals Strategy](#), released in 2022, echoed this commitment. The CMMP has supported several initiatives to help achieve this target, including the following:

- The Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada released [Gender Diversity and Inclusion: A Guide for Explorers](#) in 2019 to help companies understand issues and adopt efforts on gender, diversity, and inclusion (association).
- The Mining Association of Canada's [Towards Sustainable Mining: Equitable, Diverse, and Inclusive Workplaces Protocol](#) was released in 2023. It was the mining sector's first comprehensive standard focused on improving performance in equity, diversity, and inclusion (association).
- Mining workshops were organized to raise awareness of gender equity issues, and a mining career youth awareness strategy and a career ambassador program were created in partnership with the Mining Industry Human Resources Council.
- [A local procurement checklist](#) was released in March 2024 to boost Indigenous procurement and business activities so Indigenous people, especially Indigenous women, can play a bigger role in the mining services and supply sector (with industry stakeholders and Indigenous partners).
- The Canadians of Mining social media campaign was launched in May 2024 to highlight the variety of people and career opportunities in the mining sector, with the goal of attracting more women and youth (pan-Canadian).

The provinces and territories have supported other initiatives focused on women in mining. For example, Yukon's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit+ People Strategy includes a focus on making work for women in mining safer and more

secure. Action item 3.4 is “Eliminate violence related to development projects in both workplaces and communities. Increase the workforce capacity, mitigate negative impacts, and improve the positive benefits for Indigenous women, girls and Two-Spirit+ people and Yukon communities.”

Saskatchewan Polytechnic’s [Women in Trades and Technology](#) program supports women to succeed in non-traditional careers, including mining. The program works with instructors, employers, professionals, and non-profits to build a curriculum for camps, workshops, and mentorship programs. These will teach women valuable skills, encourage women to think about different career options, and address barriers that may limit women in trades and technologies.

### ***Indigenous initiatives***

The Northern Participant Funding Program supports Indigenous Peoples and other northerners to meaningfully participate in impact assessments and related regulatory processes for major infrastructure and resource development projects in Canada’s three northern territories. The Program’s focus on Indigenous Peoples meaningfully participating in environmental governance on development projects on or near their land helps to ensure they have the financial resources to amplify their voices during impact assessments and regulatory processes. The Program specifically requests, during both the proposal phase and annual reporting, information about steps taken to ensure that planned activities incorporate the views of women, 2SLGBTQI+ people, youth, elders, people with disabilities, people of colour, or people affected by colonial institutions or intergenerational trauma. It also requests information on the different effects the project being assessed might have on these groups.

Canada will continue to support impact assessments on major development and infrastructure-related development projects. It will do this by working with and supporting First Nations to conduct environmental reviews of projects on reserves as per section 82 of the *Impact Assessment Act*. It will also provide specialized support and guidance to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada and other federal authorities for designated projects undergoing an impact assessment that could impact Indigenous communities. In fact, in conducting impact assessments, the Government of Canada has a legislative requirement to apply GBA Plus. Using GBA Plus in impact assessments helps determine who a project impacts and how diverse groups (including women and girls) may experience a project’s impacts differently. A GBA Plus lens is key to all project activities, including the planning, design, rollout, and monitoring phases.

Canada is also working with First Nations organizations and communities to advance a multi-phased approach to addressing gaps in environmental protection on reserves. This initiative aims to recognize First Nations’ lawmaking authority and promote related capacity development measures to develop, monitor, and enforce environmental protection measures on reserves.

## SECTION 4: NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND PROCESSES

Flexible, sustainable, and dedicated support to women's and 2SLGBTQI+ rights organizations, feminist movements, and civil society organizations who are at the forefront of intersectional approaches to improving gender equality in Canada is critical. Particularly at the community level, these organizations play an important role in raising social awareness and mobilizing communities to change laws, attitudes, social norms, and practices. Indigenous Peoples, advocacy groups, community-based organizations, and civil society continue to lead and champion human rights and address socioeconomic challenges, poverty, transparency, and accountability.

### GENDER EQUALITY AND CANADA'S 2030 AGENDA STRATEGY AND ACTIONS

The Government of Canada takes a whole-of-government approach where all federal ministers, departments, and agencies are responsible for advancing gender equality. Canada, like all other UN member countries, made a commitment to applying the 2030 Agenda and working toward achieving each of the SDGs by 2030. Since the 2030 Agenda's adoption, Canada has continued to create a solid foundation for progress on the SDGs.

[Moving Forward Together: Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy](#) was released in 2021. The National Strategy encourages all Canadians to find ways to act individually and collectively to advance the SDGs and ensure that no one is left behind. By fostering partnerships and collaboration on a range of issues, including equity, poverty reduction, gender equality, climate change, and affordable housing, Canada is advancing the SDGs in partnership with whole-of-society stakeholders. This will build a more prosperous, healthy, and sustainable future for all.

The National Strategy also aims to accelerate progress for those left furthest behind. These include Indigenous people; racialized and religious minorities; the 2SLGBTQI+, disability, and official language minority communities; and other groups in vulnerable situations.

Efforts have been made to better understand the linkages and relationships between the SDGs. The 2030 Agenda recognizes the central role that achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls plays in achieving all 17 SDGs. This is why it is not only a stand-alone goal (SDG 5) but also one that is integrated into all 17 SDGs' targets and indicators. Sustainable development cannot be achieved if half of humanity continues to be left behind.

The Sustainable Development Goals Funding Program is now in place to advance progress on the 2030 Agenda. Through this program, the Government of Canada is investing up to \$59.8 million over 13 years (2018–2019 to 2030–2031). Funding will:

- raise awareness and improve knowledge of the SDGs;
- develop new partnerships; and
- advance innovative approaches to drive sustainable development forward.

To date, the SDG Funding Program has provided \$22 million to support 131 projects helping to advance the 2030 Agenda. Since 2020, the program has also funded three national Indigenous organizations – the AFN, ITK, and the MNC – to ensure Indigenous voices, views, and traditional knowledge are reflected in the Government of Canada’s work to advance the SDGs. This funding is supporting national and local events, youth-focused policy activities, SDG mapping projects, learning tools, research, policy briefs, and reports.

In addition, in 2023, Canada submitted its second Voluntary National Review on Canada’s achievements and experiences advancing the 2030 Agenda since the baseline assessment in Canada’s first Voluntary National Review, in 2018. The review assesses Canada’s achievements and challenges since 2018 across all SDGs, with a focus on five goals: No Poverty (SDG 1), Quality Education (SDG 4), Gender Equality (SDG 5), Climate Action (SDG 13), and Partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17).

Canada’s gender-equality-related SDG ambitions are eliminating GBV and harassment, gender equality in leadership roles and at all levels of decision making, Canadians sharing responsibilities within households and families, Canadians living free of discrimination, and reducing inequalities. As outlined in the [Voluntary National Review](#), Canada has a long-standing commitment to gender equality. It is taking concrete action to ensure women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people can thrive in all aspects of life. In 2022, Canada ranked 25th globally according to the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Report,<sup>127</sup> which tracks progress toward closing gender gaps through cross-country comparisons. While progress has been made, critical barriers remain to the full participation of women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people in Canada’s economic, social, and democratic life. To address these, Canada will continue efforts to advance gender equality and take concrete action to ensure women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people are valued and empowered. This includes efforts supporting people to have control over their own lives, fully participate as decision makers in their homes and societies, and contribute to and benefit from development and prosperity equally. The initiatives that Canada has taken since 2018 are outlined in the Voluntary National Review and included throughout this document.

## **GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING**

Gender budgeting is a foundational element of the Government of Canada’s strategy to improve equality and diversity in Canada. Parliament passed the [Canadian Gender Budgeting Act](#) in December 2018, enshrining the Government of Canada’s commitment to decision making that considers policies’ impacts on all types of Canadians. The Act requires the federal Minister of Finance to report to Parliament on the gender and diversity impacts of

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<sup>127</sup> The World Economic Forum. (2022) [Global Gender Gap Report 2022](#)

all new and existing budget measures,<sup>128</sup> whether as part of the budget or shortly afterwards.

In line with these commitments, the [2019 federal budget's Gender Report](#) included comprehensive GBA Plus summaries for each new budget measure. In addition, the Gender Statement took stock of where Canada stands on equality and included government actions at the time to fix disparities. Following the approach in the 2019 and 2021 federal budgets, a Statement and Impacts Report accompanied the 2022, 2023, and 2024 federal budgets. The [Statement and Impacts Report](#) takes stock of where Canada is currently on equality and provides a summary of the gender, diversity, and quality of life impacts for each budget measure.

Gender budgeting in Canada is also supported by the [GRF](#), which was also introduced in Budget 2018. The GRF represents the Government of Canada's vision for gender equality, highlighting the key issues that matter most to Canadians. It is a whole-of government tool designed to track how Canada is currently performing against its gender equality priorities and goals, with matching indicators to track developments toward these goals. Each budget proposal is assessed on whether it is expected to advance one of the GRF's six pillars. Measures that are expected to advance a pillar are tagged appropriately.

The 2022, 2023, and 2024 federal budgets each included impact summaries for over 200 budget measures. The summaries illustrated how decisions were expected to impact several demographic groups across intersecting factors such as gender, income level, and age. Where applicable, impact summaries also highlighted measures expected to advance the [GRF](#). The 2022, 2023, and 2024 federal budgets also included a [Statement on Gender and Diversity](#), which used a dashboard of key statistics to summarize the status of gender equality in Canada. In the 2023 and 2024 federal budgets, this dashboard was developed with Statistics Canada to highlight newly available data from the Disaggregated Data Action Plan.

The reporting component of the Government of Canada's gender budgeting approach is the Statement and Impacts Report. This is done for all the new measures announced in the federal budget. These impacts reports are then aggregated to show what budget investments look like from a gender and diversity perspective. This analysis is presented across several formats, such as the target population of budget measures. This looks at what percentage of investments target all Canadians; specific regions and sectors; or specific populations, such as Indigenous people, people with disabilities, or Black and racialized people. Budget measures are also assessed from a gender, income, and generational perspective (as shown in the charts in Appendix B).

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<sup>128</sup> This survey response is focused on new measures – i.e., the incremental new spending (including new tax expenditures) that is proposed in the annual federal budget. The [Canadian Gender Budgeting Act](#) also applies to:

1. the broader range of existing spending, with reporting in departmental results reports – see, for example, the Gender-Based Analysis Plus section of this report: [Gender-based analysis plus – Canada.ca](#); and
2. existing tax expenditures, in the annual Report on Federal Tax Expenditures – see, for example, [Report on Federal Tax Expenditures – Concepts, Estimates and Evaluations 2023: part 8 – Canada.ca](#).

Since 2022, Prince Edward Island's Interministerial Women's Secretariat has been dedicated to applying Gender and Diversity Analysis to all new budget initiatives as part of the provincial government's budget management plan process. In 2024, Gender and Diversity Analysis was applied to over 300 new initiatives.

### ***International***

Canada is a leader among the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries on gender budgeting. It has consistently promoted empowerment and advancing opportunities for women and girls around the world as part of its international assistance policy. In the budget, measures that are significant in their scope to advance gender equality around the world are tagged under the Gender Results Framework and reported on once results are available. Here are some examples of measures that have advanced gender equality around the world highlighted in the 2024 federal budget:

- In 2019, Canada launched a 10-year commitment to advance the health and rights of women and girls around the world (2020–2030). As part of this effort, Canada committed to increasing its global health funding to an average of \$1.4 billion each year, starting in 2023. Of this, \$700 million will be dedicated to sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- In 2021, Canada provided \$165 million in humanitarian aid to address the life-saving needs of those affected by conflict and natural disasters around the world. Canada's gender-responsive approach to humanitarian action aims to address the specific needs and priorities of people in vulnerable situations, particularly women and girls. For example, Canada supported 51.5 million people, 28 million of which were women and girls, in 40 countries and territories through the Central Emergency Response Fund.
- Canada has adopted a feminist approach to environment and climate action, including in delivering its \$5.3 billion commitment on international climate finance from 2021–2022 to 2025–2026. For example, Canada's climate finance is helping small-scale farmers in Latin America and the Caribbean – including thousands of women – to adopt practices and technologies that help them adapt to climate change and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

### **STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION IN THE *BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION* AND 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

As in previous national reviews of progress on the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, Canada's report reflects input from all 13 provincial and territorial governments representing Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Northwest Territories, Nova Scotia, Nunavut, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Saskatchewan, and Yukon. It also reflects input from 21 Government of Canada departments and agencies. All Canadian jurisdictions regularly engage with a wide range of organizations, stakeholders, and the private and voluntary sectors to shape and coordinate



efforts on advancing gender equality across the country. The initiatives included in this report reflect that engagement and collaboration.

For the first time, the Government of Canada engaged with the organizations that make up the group of national Indigenous leaders and representatives. They provided their reflections on the achievements, challenges, and setbacks for gender equality and Indigenous women's and girls' empowerment in Canada. Their input has informed several sections on Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people throughout this report.

Finally, as in the past, a broad network of Canadian women's and other equality-seeking organizations has begun a separate review process to produce a parallel report. Their report will be submitted to UN Women in preparation for the Beijing+30 process. Women's rights and gender equality organizations have reviewed Canada's progress in meeting the Beijing Platform's goals every five years since 1995. The most recent review was [Unfinished Business: A Parallel Report on Canada's Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#). This year's group is building on the network of organizations established for Beijing+25.

As noted above, Canada has developed and applied [Moving Forward Together: Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy](#). It states the importance of a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to achieving the 2030 Agenda and SDGs.

The Government of Canada advances the National Strategy at the federal level through a coordinated application across the federal government. It does this by determining the roles and responsibilities of federal departments and agencies. Horizontal leads have mandates and responsibilities that cut across the SDGs. Their role is to integrate cross-cutting goals into the Government of Canada's work on advancing the 2030 Agenda. Cross-cutting goals include:

- supporting the core principle of leaving no one behind by advancing gender equality, empowering women and girls, and advancing diversity and inclusion;
- advancing reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples by working in partnership to support Indigenous voices, views, and traditional knowledge and highlighting Indigenous partners' accomplishments; and
- ensuring cohesive policies within Canada's international efforts, and between international and domestic efforts, to support advancing the SDGs.

Since 2020, the SDG Funding Program has also supported three national Indigenous organizations – the AFN, ITK, and the MNC – to ensure Indigenous voices, views, and traditional knowledge are reflected in Canada's work to advance the SDGs.

As part of its commitment to transparency and accountability, Canada committed to reporting annually on the progress made toward fulfilling the 2030 Agenda and advancing the SDGs. This regular reporting keeps the public informed of progress and encourages ongoing dialogue and engagement with stakeholders on sustainable development priorities and challenges.

Statistics Canada and Employment and Social Development Canada work closely to ensure that Canadians are accurately informed on the progress of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs. This includes holding regular meetings to review several targets and indicators. Statistics Canada plays a crucial role in the monitoring process through its publicly available data hub, which reports on [the Canadian Indicator Framework \(CIF\)](#) and [the Global Indicator Framework](#). The CIF was developed collaboratively with federal departments and agencies to reflect national priorities. It set out 31 Canadian ambitions and 76 indicators to monitor and measure Canada's progress toward achieving the 17 SDGs. Statistics Canada collects, collates, analyzes, and shares data for regular monitoring and progress reporting on both the Global Indicator Framework and the CIF. These data form the foundation for Canada's tracking and reporting on its SDG progress, ensuring a data-driven approach to decision making and policy development. The [GDIS Hub](#), led by Statistics Canada, is the primary platform for all gender-, diversity-, and inclusion-related data.

The Government of Canada also supports hosting an annual national conference, [Together | Ensemble](#), dedicated to tracking progress on the SDGs. This conference serves as a platform for diverse stakeholders, including the private sector, academia, government, and civil society, to come together and discuss Canada's sustainable development challenges. By fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing, Together | Ensemble promotes a collective effort toward achieving the SDGs and encourages active participation from all sectors of society.

## **CANADA'S IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN**

Canada ratified CEDAW in 1981. CEDAW requires state parties to end discrimination in women's enjoyment of civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights by ensuring women's equal access to and equal opportunities in political, public, economic, and social life. It requires discrimination to end in education, marriage and family relations, health and employment, and preventing exploitation and trafficking. It also grants women equality with men before the law.

Global Affairs Canada submitted [Canada's 10th report under the Convention to the UN](#) in July 2022. Canada's 10th report was prepared with input from WAGE and key federal departments as well as provincial and territorial governments based on the List of Issues Prior to Reporting that the CEDAW Committee gave Canada.

This latest report focuses on key measures adopted in Canada to enhance the Convention's application between Canada's last appearance before the Committee on October 25, 2016, and December 2021. The report responds to a list of issues provided by the Committee. It includes three annexes. They provide 1) information on the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on women in Canada and measures governments adopted to mitigate its impact, 2) data and statistics on women's current situation in Canada, and 3) data on the number of women living under the official poverty line by province.

The report addresses most of the Committee's questions. It refers the Committee to more information Canada recently provided to them and other human rights treaty bodies as well as in Canada's Common Core Document.

Specific key issues in [Canada's 10th CEDAW report](#) include:

- initiatives that improve access to legal aid and services across provinces and territories;
- an update on WAGE becoming an official department in 2018;
- the availability of information to combat harmful practices such as female genital mutilation;
- new legislation to help prosecute perpetrators of sexual assault;
- developing the [National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence](#);
- applying recommendations from the [National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#);
- the [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People National Action Plan](#);
- types of services provided to human trafficking victims;
- measures helping women access decision-making positions in elected and appointed bodies; and
- measures helping women access the labour market.

On February 7, 2024, the Permanent Mission of Canada to the UN and World Trade Organization in Geneva received an invitation to present Canada's 10th report at CEDAW's 89th session. The session is scheduled to be held from October 7 to 25, 2024, at the UN Office at Geneva.

In close partnership with Canadian Heritage and Global Affairs Canada, WAGE is now preparing a Canadian delegation to present the report during Canada's appearance at the 89th session. Provincial and territorial representatives have also been invited to take part in the delegation.

## SECTION 5: DATA AND STATISTICS

### CANADA'S PROGRESS ON NATIONAL GENDER STATISTICS

Over the past five years, the Government of Canada has worked on improving data availability and analyses within the six key areas required to advance gender equality, as outlined in the [GRF](#). In addition, to make data on GBV more available, the Government of Canada, through collaboration between Statistics Canada and WAGE, funded several surveys and initiatives in the last five years. These included the 2018 SSPPS, the 2019 Survey on Individual Safety in the Postsecondary Student Population, the 2020 Survey of Sexual Misconduct at Work, and the Femicide Information System.

The gender-related homicide/femicide project is an ongoing project to develop a comprehensive national picture of the state of femicide/gender-related homicide in Canada. It involves doing a thorough review and analysis of multiple data sources with help from subject matter experts across the country. So far, two of the five expected [Juristat](#) bulletins<sup>129</sup> have been released. They have introduced key terms, concepts, indicators, and trends, as well as important data on court outcomes and gender-related incidents. The aim is to fill data gaps on classifying some homicides as gender-related and change homicide narratives to better understand the characteristics of gender-related homicides. Thanks to this work, the Government of Canada will be better positioned to report on femicide if the term is officially recognized and defined.

The [SSPPS](#) is one of the most important Canadian surveys on experiences and impacts of GBV and harassment in Canada. This survey collects information on experiences of GBV victimization and unwanted sexual behaviours that many Canadians face while in private and public spaces, online, and in the workplace. All levels of government, academics, and not-for-profit organizations expect to use the results to provide a more complete picture of GBV and better understand the nature and extent of victimization, perceptions of safety, and attitudes toward the criminal justice system.

To help end such violence, data from this survey are used to shape the federal government's work on GBV, including program and policy development decisions, and to support research in the field of GBV. Some data will also enable comparisons with international data sources. Since victimization is not always reported to the police, understanding experiences through a self-report survey is crucial to filling a knowledge gap not found in any other nationally representative survey.

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<sup>129</sup> The Juristat bulletin provides in-depth analysis and detailed statistics on a variety of topics and issues related to justice and public safety. Topics include crime; victimization; homicide; civil, family, and criminal courts; and correctional services. Issues on community safety and perceived safety are also covered. The publication is intended for those interested in Canada's justice and public safety systems as well as those who plan, create, run, and evaluate programs and projects on justice and public safety.

There have been more than 20 analytical products released using data from cycle 1 of the [SSPPS](#). It has provided data that shape policies and programs to prevent and address GBV and to support survivors and their families at the national, provincial, territorial, and local levels. There is no single experience of IPV, and different groups have different experiences, which call for different types of interventions and supports for victims and survivors. Besides measuring violence and unwanted experiences of inappropriate sexual behaviour, data from the SSPPS can also monitor Canadians' perceptions and attitudes toward GBV and, more broadly, gender equality in Canada. For example, reports show that women and men tend to believe in gender equality and that GBV is not acceptable. However, most women and about half of men tend to believe that reports of sexual assault are almost always true.

To add to these quantitative data, the Government of Canada, starting in 2023, is also investing in community-based research to build knowledge and help address the needs of underserved communities in Canada's GBV sector. The action-oriented, qualitative research will help to improve services for at-risk and underserved groups. These include Black and racialized women; immigrant, refugee, and newcomer women; women with disabilities; Indigenous women; and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

From a health perspective, efforts are being made to ensure that all women, girls, Two-Spirit people, and gender-diverse people in Canada can access culturally safe, trauma-informed, non-stigmatizing, and high-quality health care. This care must reflect and respect their unique intersectional identities, no matter who they are or where they live.

[Canada is the first country to provide census data on transgender and non-binary people.](#) After new sex and gender standards were released in 2018, Statistics Canada revised the [variables "gender of person" and "sex at birth of person"](#) in 2021. Gender and sex at birth questions were added to several national surveys. The 2021 Census of Population included, for the first time, a question on gender and the clarifier "at birth" on the sex question. This allowed all cisgender, transgender, and non-binary people to report their gender. Including these questions addresses an important information gap on gender diversity (see [Filling the gaps: Information on gender in the 2021 Census](#), [2021 Census: Sex at birth and gender – the whole picture](#), and [Sex at birth and gender: Technical report on changes for the 2021 Census](#)). These data can be used by public decision makers; employers; and providers of health care, education, justice, and other services to better meet the needs of all men and women – including transgender men and women – and non-binary people in their communities.

### **Collection and modernization of data and concepts for gender-based inequality in unpaid work and care**

Statistics Canada continues to modernize its approach to collecting and producing social statistics, with notable progress on measuring unpaid work and care.

For the seventh time in almost 40 years, Canada collected its [Time Use Survey](#) (TUS) in 2022. Advancements in data collection included developing a self-administered electronic questionnaire and using the *International Classification of Activities for Time-Use Statistics* (developed by the UN Statistical Division) for international comparability. The 2022 TUS also collected information on both respondents' sex at birth and their gender, along with sexual orientation, so the data could be disaggregated. Finally, to improve measurements of unpaid work and care, the 2022 TUS added questions on child care and teleworking.

Data from Canada's TUS are critical to updating the gender equality indicator for [SDG 5.4.1](#). TUS data will also be used to analyze gender inequalities through partnerships with WAGE as well as other stakeholders. Finally, TUS data can be used to [recognize and economically value unpaid work for macroeconomic accounts](#).

### **Expansion of the GDIS Hub; launch of the Sex, Gender and Sexual Orientation Hub and Social Inclusion portal; and release of analytical products**

The [GDIS Hub](#), first launched in 2018, brings together Statistics Canada's products on gender, diversity, and inclusion in Canada, as well as information on gender statistics in the international context. Since 2020, Statistics Canada has updated and expanded the GDIS Hub. It now connects to the new [Sex, Gender and Sexual Orientation Hub \(SGSO\)](#), launched in 2021. The SGSO portal is specifically dedicated to monitoring and reporting on the [GRF](#) indicators, and it includes data and analyses on gender and 2SLGBTQI+ people. Statistics Canada continues to update both the GDIS and SGSO hubs as new data, analytical products, and resources become available. Statistics Canada also engages with diverse groups of data users to understand their experiences, ensure the hubs are meeting their needs, and get their feedback on the hubs' functionality and information availability. In addition, Statistics Canada launched a Social Inclusion portal linked to [Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy](#) and the Centre for GDIS. This portal brings together key statistical information from several data sources on the inclusion (or exclusion) of ethnocultural groups and immigrants in Canada. The data can also be disaggregated by other sociodemographic characteristics and geography.

### **Deployment of Canada's first nationally representative surveys on gender-based violence and its impacts**

As part of Canada's Federal GBV Strategy, WAGE and the Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics at Statistics Canada have worked together since 2018 to deploy Canada's first nationally representative surveys on GBV. This collaboration has produced three surveys that were in the field between 2018 and 2020: the [SSPPS](#), [the Survey on Sexual Misconduct at Work](#), and the [Survey on Individual Safety in the Postsecondary Student Population](#). They were designed to measure GBV in Canada at large and in specific groups. For more information and a detailed list of published reports on these surveys, please see Appendix B.

## **Indigenous-led data strategies**

The Government of Canada launched the Indigenous Data Sovereignty initiative as part of the measures in line with the [UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan](#). The Government of Canada supports Indigenous data sovereignty and Indigenous-led data strategies through legislative, regulatory, and policy options. These aim to help ensure that First Nations, Inuit, and Métis have sufficient, sustainable data capacity to control, manage, protect, and use their data. This will help them provide effective services to their people, tell their own stories, participate in federal decision-making processes, and achieve their visions for self-determination.

The Government of Canada's Indigenous-Led Data Research Projects program funds innovative Indigenous-led approaches to improving data methodologies specific to missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. This includes initiatives that work to develop qualitative distinctions or identity-based indicators, address existing methodological gaps for groups who are underserved or underrepresented in data work, or define safety through Indigenous ways of understanding. These projects will ultimately work to improve existing data and expand data on missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. In spring 2022, around \$1 million in funding was announced for 19 projects through CIRNAC's Indigenous-Led Data Research Projects program. In December 2023, over \$13 million in funding for 31 Indigenous-led projects was announced to work toward ending violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

## **PRIORITIES FOR CANADA'S NATIONAL GENDER STATISTICS**

The Government of Canada continues to prioritize strengthening national gender statistics by launching initiatives to increase GBV data collection, support research on women's health, and mobilize knowledge from existing and future surveys and measures. Through these projects and other ongoing research initiatives, the Government of Canada is continuing efforts to fill important knowledge, data, and research gaps on GBV and gender equality in Canada.

The Government of Canada will launch the second cycle of the [SSPPS](#). Data collection will occur over several months between 2024 and 2025, with findings to be reported in 2026. The second cycle of the SSPPS will include several analytical improvements, including a larger sample size and targeted oversampling for better disaggregated intersectional analyses. Specifically, the survey will target more youth (aged 15 to 24); non-binary, gender-diverse, and transgender people; and First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. Repeating the survey will also allow changes to be observed over time in the extent and nature of Canadians' experiences of victimization and unwanted sexual behaviours in private and public spaces, online, and in the workplace.

The Government of Canada, through WAGE and in collaboration with other federal departments, is also working to update a 2012 research report on the cost of GBV, *An Estimation of the Economic Impact of Spousal Violence in Canada, 2009*.

The 2012 report was groundbreaking in its scope and methodology. It reported that a comprehensive estimate of the economic impact of spousal violence in Canada was \$7.4 billion in 2009, or \$10.1 billion if adjusted for 2023 inflation. Estimating the economic impact of a social phenomenon such as GBV, a process known as costing, provides a critical piece of evidence to show the size of GBV's impacts on society and the cost to Canadians. Gender-based violence impacts people, families, and communities. It also places an intense burden on the health, social, and justice systems in Canada. When such costing information is used together with other research, it helps to inform decision makers on how to effectively allocate resources and informs interventions that may have the most impact.

Although the 2012 report was the first of its kind in Canada, it is now outdated and was limited in its focus on spousal violence. Plans for an updated study, to be published in 2025, will expand the definition of IPV to include the relationships of those who are dating, former intimate partners, or partners who do not live together. The update will also increase the types of GBV to include non-intimate partner sexual assault, gender-related homicide, and attempted gender-related homicide. The report will be able to highlight changes over the last decade.

## **MONITORING GENDER IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN CANADA**

To support Canada's domestic fulfillment of the SDGs, a national strategy ([Moving Forward Together: Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy](#)) has been developed. Developing a Canada-specific indicator framework was an opportunity to create a set of indicators that aligns more closely with Canada's domestic priorities on sustainable development.

The CIF encompasses the 17 goals and adds 31 Canadian Ambitions, which were developed by federal departments. To report on these Ambitions, Statistics Canada has developed 76 indicators that monitor progress on the National Ambitions and targets. The CIF lays the foundation for Canada to track and report on its progress on the 17 SDGs in the Canadian context. Canada has established the [Canadian Indicator Framework for the Sustainable Development Goals Data Hub](#), where it reports progress to date in achieving Canada's goals.

While 36 indicators include data that can be disaggregated by gender/sex, only two gender-specific indicators are included in [Moving Forward Together: Canada's 2030 Agenda National Strategy](#). The two gender-specific indicators are under Goal 5 – Gender Equality: the proportion of leadership roles held by women and the proportion of women and girls aged 15 and older subjected to physical, sexual, or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the last 12 months. There is also one gender-specific indicator in Goal 10: the median hourly wage ratio (which measures the wage gap, to be moved under



Goal 5 during the current CIF strategic review). Of the remaining indicators without gender/sex disaggregation options, several are either indicators at the national/regional/municipal levels rather than the individual level or not directly related to humans.

### **Challenges**

Canada faces two challenges in collecting data to report on SDG results by gender:

- Many survey instruments used to collect data for the Canadian Indicator Framework only collect data by sex, not gender. Most of these instruments will be updated in future cycles so that gender is collected rather than sex.
- Response rates are declining in an environment where more detailed data are needed.

### **DATA DISAGGREGATION IN CANADA**

The [DDAP](#) is a whole-of-government approach led by Statistics Canada to support governmental and societal efforts to address known inequalities and promote fair and inclusive decision making. More representative data are being gathered than ever before. This means more results can be broken down into categories such as gender, age, income, and geographic region to better understand the experiences of diverse groups that may have otherwise been missed.

Major Canadian surveys, such as the Census of Population (2021) or the Labour Force Survey (LFS), provide data disaggregated by income, gender, age, migratory status, geographic location, education, marital status, sexual orientation, Indigenous identity, housing, labour, language, and commuting.

For years, Statistics Canada has been providing Canadians with big-picture statistics on a variety of topics impacting people across the country. However, the big picture can hide key differences in specific groups' experiences. The [DDAP](#) is an initiative for Statistics Canada to continue answering the call of Canadians seeking detailed data to address gender gaps, racism, and other systemic barriers.

The [DDAP](#) supports Statistics Canada's efforts to keep finding and filling data and knowledge gaps across its programs. This leads to more representative data collection and enhanced statistics on diverse populations by collecting, analyzing, and sharing more disaggregated data than ever before. Disaggregated data are data that have been broken down into categories (e.g., gender, age, income, geographic region) to better understand diverse groups' experiences and potentially reveal important insights between and among different groups that may have otherwise been missed. Much of the disaggregated data and analyses from these surveys are available on the [GDIS Hub](#).

The sections below highlight the achievements of some key projects funded under the [DDAP](#).

## Labour force data

Since FY 2021–22, improvements have been made to the LFS. Examples include an ongoing series of monthly LFS supplementary surveys to collect data on topics that cover survey respondents' intentions to leave their job, willingness to relocate for work, and balancing work and family responsibilities. These supplementary questions are disaggregated to provide a picture of diverse groups' experiences in the labour market. In April 2022, the agency also increased the LFS' sample size by 25%, with a focus on increasing the sample in Canada's largest municipalities. For the first time, Statistics Canada has been able to provide policy makers with employment information for members of racialized groups. Data tables providing estimates of labour force characteristics by [racialized group](#) and [region](#) were released in September 2022.

More enhancements were made to the LFS in 2022–2023, including more indicators on quality of employment for diverse groups in Canada. Specifically, data on child care and career challenges parents face, financial difficulties households face with high inflation, and the number of Canadians working through digital platforms were collected. The new Labour Market and Socio-economic Indicators (LMSI) survey, a supplement to the LFS, was also deployed to collect data about labour, support payments, and unmet health care needs, and to monitor people's and families' economic wellbeing. Data from the LMSI and the Canadian Income Survey were integrated to provide 12 months of LFS data on people with disabilities. These disaggregated data will be released every year. This improved coverage enabled detailed analyses on [the labour market characteristics of people with and without disabilities in 2022](#).

## Health indicators

In September 2021, a further sample of 50,000 units was added to the Canadian Community Health Survey to allow further disaggregation. The [first release](#) with the new sample provides analytical insights into the self-rated mental health of racialized, immigrant, Indigenous, and 2SLGBTQI+ groups across Canada during the pandemic.

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the agency was able to collect more detailed data on Canadians' health. It released more detailed results on [COVID-19 vaccination intentions](#) as well as mental health status. The Canadian Community Health Survey continued to increase its sample size in FY 2021–22 to advance analytical insights into the mental health of diverse groups across Canada during the pandemic.

Disaggregated data from the Canadian Community Health Survey were used to develop a variety of products, including [social inclusion indicators for Canada's ethnocultural groups](#), [food security indicators](#), and data on [access to a regular health care provider](#).

## Canadian survey on business data

The Canadian Survey on Business Conditions (CSBC) enables detailed data and forward-looking analyses to be published on businesses owned by women, racialized groups, immigrants, and Indigenous people. From April 2021 to March 2022, the CSBC played a vital

role in helping governments understand the key economic issues that businesses were facing. Detailed data are published for all provinces and territories and the [20 largest census metropolitan areas](#).

In FY 2022–23, data tables on the average percentage of women and men in management positions were released for the [first quarter of 2023](#). Data tables on the number of private-sector businesses disaggregated by majority ownership were also released for the [second quarter of 2022](#), [third quarter of 2022](#), [fourth quarter of 2022](#), and [first quarter of 2023](#). All other data tables released were crossed with majority ownership variables, including majority ownership by women, Indigenous people, immigrants to Canada, 2SLGBTQI+ people, and members of racialized groups.

## SECTION 6: CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

As noted in the report, the last five years have been marked by instability on many fronts. This affected progress on gender equality in Canada. However, the FPT governments worked together and with partners, especially during the pandemic, to put the country in a better position to keep advancing gender equality. One notable lesson from the last five years is the importance of engagement and collaboration. It is through working together that Canada was better able to address the deep-rooted and complex challenges to achieving gender equality. In this context, the 2023 theme for Canada’s Gender Equality Week<sup>130</sup> was United for Gender Equality: Stronger Together. Collaboration among the FPT governments, engagement with Indigenous organizations, on-the-ground work with civil society stakeholders, and global partnerships have made for stronger and more inclusive progress on gender equality in Canada. This will continue to define Canada’s approach to advancing gender equality into the future.

Canada’s ongoing and forward-looking priorities to advance gender equality are detailed throughout this report. They will guide actions over the coming years to help deliver on Canada’s commitments, including on the 2030 Agenda and the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*.

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<sup>130</sup> Gender Equality Week results from the passing of Bill C-309, the [Gender Equality Week Act](#), which received Royal Assent on June 21, 2018. This legislation designates the fourth week in September as Gender Equality Week.

## APPENDIX A

### List of abbreviations/acronyms

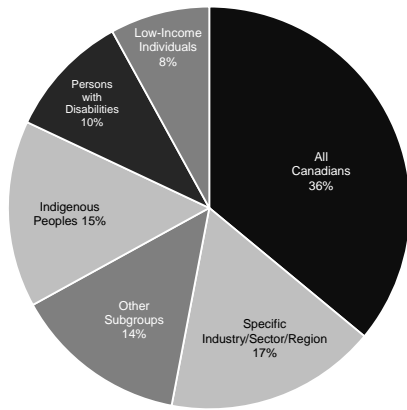
2SLGBTQI+	Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and other people who identify as part of sexually and gender-diverse communities. The “2S” at the front recognizes Two-Spirit people as the first 2SLGBTQI+ communities.
AFN	Assembly of First Nations
BYBT	Boost Your Business Technology program stream
C3P	Canadian Centre for Child Protection
CAF	Canadian Armed Forces
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CCB	Canada Child Benefit
CEDAW	<i>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women</i>
CERB	Canada Emergency Response Benefit
CHRC	Canadian Human Rights Commission
CHRT	Canadian Human Rights Tribunal
CIF	Canadian Indicator Framework
CIFFC	Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre
CJC	Canadian Judicial Council
CNAP-3	Canada’s third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security
CPCC	Chief Professional Conduct and Culture
CPP	Canada Pension Plan
CRIA	Child Rights Impact Assessment
CRTC	Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission
CSBC	Canadian Survey on Business Conditions
DDAP	Disaggregated Data Action Plan
DMAF	Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund
DND	Canada’s Department of National Defence
EEA	<i>Employment Equity Act</i>
EI	Employment Insurance
ELCC	Early learning and child care
FCC	Farm Credit Canada
GBA Plus	Gender-Based Analysis Plus
GBV	Gender-based violence
GDIS	Gender, diversity, and inclusion statistics
GIS	Guaranteed Income Supplement

GRF	Gender Results Framework
GYBO	Grow Your Business Online program stream
IAC	Innovation Asset Collective
ICE	Internet child exploitation
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMFN	International Model Forest Network
IP	Intellectual property
IPV	Intimate partner violence
ITK	Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LMSI	Labour Market and Socio-economic Indicators
LTS	Let's Talk Science organization
MMIWG	Missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls
MNC	Métis National Council
NACCA	National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NHS	National Housing Strategy
NWAC	Native Women's Association of Canada
OCSEA	Online child sexual exploitation and abuse
ODSP	Ontario Disability Support Program
PPSI	Public post-secondary institution
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RNC	Royal Newfoundland Constabulary
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SGSO	Sex, Gender and Sexual Orientation Hub
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SSPPS	Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces
STEM	Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
TUS	Time Use Survey
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WAGE	Women and Gender Equality Canada
WPS	Women, peace, and security

## APPENDIX B

### Examples of analyses from the federal budget's *Statement and Impacts Report on Gender, Diversity, and Inclusion*

Chart 3  
**Share of Budget 2024 Investments by Target Population**  
 (\$ value of measures\*)

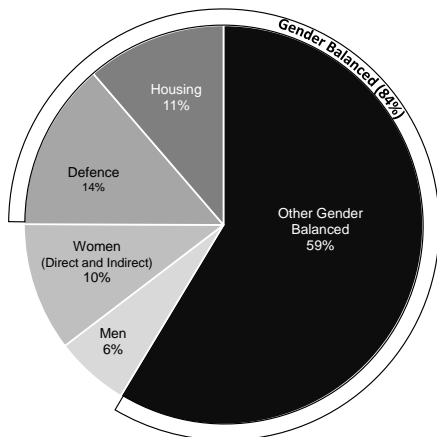


\*Excluding revenue and savings measures

[Budget 2024: Statement and Impacts Report on Gender, Diversity, and Inclusion \(canada.ca\)](#), page 30

Over a third (36%) of the 2024 federal budget's measures are targeted at all Canadians. The remaining share is targeted at specific groups. Indigenous measures account for 15% of the 2024 federal budget's targeted investments. The share of 2024 measures targeted at people with disabilities is about 10%, while 8% and 14% of the 2024 federal budget measures target low-income people and other subgroups respectively. The share of measures that target specific industries, sectors, and regions accounts for 17% of the 2024 federal budget measures.

Chart 4  
**Share of Budget 2024 Investments by Gender**  
 (\$ value of measures\*)



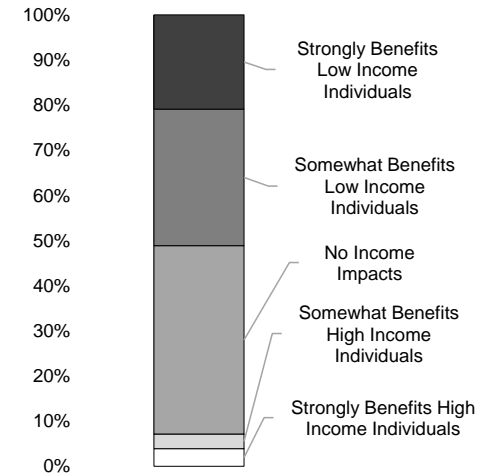
\*Excluding revenue and savings measures

[Budget 2024: Statement and Impacts Report on Gender, Diversity, and Inclusion \(canada.ca\)](#), page 31

A significant share of measures (84%) in the 2024 federal budget are considered "gender-balanced" – that is, they are not expected to disproportionately benefit either men or women. The share of 2024 federal budget measures that directly and indirectly benefit women is about 10%. The share of measures that directly benefit men is 6%. This reflects their overrepresentation in cases of homelessness, the criminal justice system, and immigration detention.

**Chart 6**  
**Expected Income Distribution Benefits**

(\$ value of measures\*)



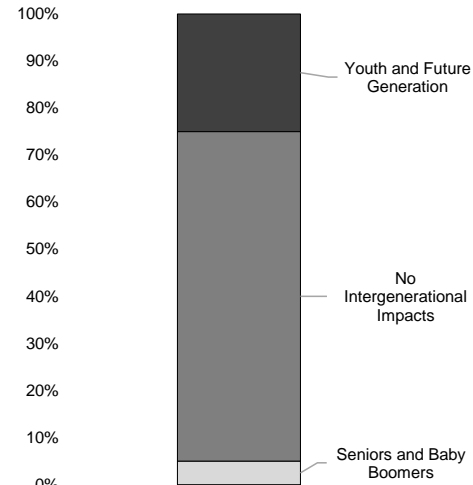
\*Excluding revenue and savings measures

[Budget 2024: Statement and Impacts Report on Gender, Diversity, and Inclusion \(canada.ca\)](#), page 35

A substantial proportion of measures in the 2024 federal budget (about 50%) will benefit lower-income Canadians.

**Chart 7**  
**Expected Intergenerational Impacts**

(\$ value of measures\*)



\*Excluding revenue and savings measures

[Budget 2024: Statement and Impacts Report on Gender, Diversity, and Inclusion \(canada.ca\)](#), page 36

While most new Budget 2024 measures are expected to benefit Canadians across all generations, a large share of investments respond to a changing Canadian population – baby boomers are getting older, and immigration is boosting numbers among younger generations. This response involves making key investments to help ensure a good quality of life for all Canadians, particularly young people. At least a quarter of new investments in Budget 2024 are expected to benefit youth and future generations.

## APPENDIX C

### List of published reports related to three surveys: the Survey of Safety in Private and Public Spaces, Survey on Sexual Misconduct at Work, and Survey on Individual Safety in the Postsecondary Student Population

#### 1. [Survey of Safety in Private and Public Spaces \(SSPPS\)](#)

- [Victimization of First Nations people, Métis and Inuit in Canada](#)
- [Violent victimization and perceptions of safety: Experiences of First Nations, Métis and Inuit women in Canada](#)
- [Women's experiences of victimization in Canada's remote communities](#)
- [Intimate partner violence: Experiences of First Nations, Métis and Inuit women in Canada, 2018](#)
- [Intimate partner violence: Experiences of visible minority women in Canada, 2018](#)
- [Intimate partner violence: Experiences of young women in Canada, 2018](#)
- [Intimate partner violence in Canada, 2018: An overview](#)
- [Intimate partner violence: Experiences of sexual minority men in Canada, 2018](#)
- [Intimate partner violence: Experiences of sexual minority women in Canada, 2018](#)
- [Intimate partner violence: Experiences of women with disabilities in Canada, 2018](#)
- [Vulnerabilities related to COVID-19 among LGBTQ2+ Canadians](#)
- [Gender-based violence: Sexual and physical assault in Canada's territories, 2018](#)
- [Experiences of violent victimization and unwanted sexual behaviours among gay, lesbian, bisexual and other sexual minority people, and the transgender population, in Canada, 2018](#)
- [Gender-based violence: Unwanted sexual behaviours in Canada's territories, 2018](#)
- [Safe Cities profile series: Key indicators by census metropolitan area](#)
- [Perceptions related to gender-based violence, gender equality, and gender expression](#)
- [Gender-based violence and unwanted sexual behaviour in Canada, 2018: Initial findings from the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces](#)

#### 2. [Survey on Sexual Misconduct at Work \(SSMW\)](#)

- [Workers' experiences of inappropriate sexualized behaviours, sexual assault and gender-based discrimination in the Canadian provinces, 2020](#)

#### 3. [Survey on Individual Safety in the Postsecondary Student Population \(SISPSP\)](#)

- [Experiences of unwanted sexualized and discriminatory behaviours and sexual assault among students at Canadian military colleges, 2019](#)
- [Students' experiences of unwanted sexualized behaviours and sexual assault at postsecondary schools in the Canadian provinces, 2019](#)
- [Students' experiences of discrimination based on gender, gender identity or sexual orientation at postsecondary schools in the Canadian provinces, 2019](#)



The data Statistics Canada collects provides levels of government, stakeholders working in the GBV sector, and others with crucial, up-to-date information. This helps shape policies, programs, and services to prevent GBV and support victims, survivors, and their families.

The key indicators from these three surveys are listed below:

INDICATOR	SOURCE
<b>Incidents reported to police:</b> % of sexual assault survivors who reported incident to police (most serious incident only)	SSPPS
<b>Incidents reported to police:</b> % of LGBTQ2 people aged 15 and older who reported experiences of violent victimization to police (most serious incident only)	SSPPS
<b>Victim blaming:</b> % of people experiencing physical or sexual violence in the past 12 months who were made to feel that they were to blame for the incident by victim services, by identity factors (most serious incident only)	SSPPS
<b>No services used, unsupported:</b> % of population aged 15 and older who self-reported being sexually assaulted in the past 12 months, by identity factors, who reported that they did not use any available services to get help because they felt unsupported (most serious incident only)	SSPPS
<b>Services used, positive outcome:</b> % of population aged 15 and older who self-reported being sexually assaulted in the past 12 months, by identity factors, who reported contacting or using any services to get help and had a positive outcome because of this contact (most serious incident only)	SSPPS
<b>Employment levels:</b> % of Indigenous 2SLGBTQQIA+ people who are permanently employed compared to non-Indigenous LGBTQ2 people and the general Canadian population	SSPPS
<b>Inappropriate behaviours, workplace:</b> % of LGBTQ2 people reporting having frequently experienced, seen, or heard unwanted behaviours while in the workplace or at work-sanctioned events that were personally directed at them	SSPPS
<b>Inappropriate behaviours, workplace:</b> % of LGBTQ2 people reporting having frequently personally experienced, seen, or heard unwanted behaviours while in the workplace or at work-sanctioned events	SSPPS
<b>Inappropriate behaviours, public:</b> % of LGBTQ2 people who reported having frequently experienced, seen, or heard unwanted behaviours while in public places that were directed at them personally	SSPPS
<b>Cyber violence:</b> % of people who experienced online/cyber violence	SSPPS
<b>Physical, sexual, and psychological violence:</b> % of population aged 15 and older who self-reported being sexually assaulted in the past 12 months, by identity factors	SSPPS

<b>Physical, sexual, and psychological violence:</b> % of population aged 15 and older who suffered psychological/emotional abuse in the past 12 months, by identity factors	SSPPS
<b>Physical, sexual, and psychological violence:</b> % of people subjected to physical, sexual, or psychological violence	SSPPS
<b>Physical, sexual, and psychological violence:</b> % of LGBTQ2 people aged 15 and older who experienced physical or sexual assault in the past 12 months	SSPPS
<b>Physical, sexual, and psychological violence:</b> % of population aged 15 and older who self-reported experiencing intimate partner violence in the past 12 months, by identity factors	SSPPS
<b>Health:</b> % of intimate partner violence victims who report good, very good, or excellent health, by identity factors	SSPPS
<b>Behaviour change:</b> % of population aged 15 and older who experienced a sexual assault in the past 12 months and said they did not change their behaviour as a result, by identity factors	SSPPS
<b>Behaviour change:</b> % of sexual assault survivors reporting social isolation (staying home at night, avoiding people and places) as a result of victimization	SSPPS
<b>Attitudes toward GBV:</b> % of people reporting agreement and/or disagreement with attitude and behaviour statements related to gender-based violence	SSPPS
<b>Attitudes toward LGBTQ2 communities:</b> % of people reporting disagreement with attitude and behaviour statements that contribute to exclusion of LGTBQ2 communities	SSPPS
<b>Physical, sexual, and psychological violence:</b> Proportion of Indigenous women and girls subjected to physical, sexual, or psychological violence, by Indigenous identity	SSPPS
<b>Child victims of violence:</b> % of population who self-reported childhood maltreatment (before age 15), by type of maltreatment	SSPPS
<b>Post-secondary qualifications:</b> % of post-secondary qualification holders by sex, gender, and sexual orientation	SSPPS
<b>Situation in which assault/behaviour occurred:</b> % who experienced sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at work, by circumstances of that behaviour (e.g., in a meeting, at a work party) (most serious incident only)	SSMW
<b>Relationship to perpetrator:</b> % who experienced sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at work, by relationship to perpetrator (most serious incident only)	SSMW
<b>Impacts of experiences:</b> % of those who experienced sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at work who experienced negative impacts on work performance / career	SSMW

<b>Reporting/disclosure:</b> % of those who experienced sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at work who reported or disclosed to someone in authority, by type of authority	<b>SSMW</b>
<b>Reporting/disclosure, actions taken:</b> % who experienced sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at work who reported or disclosed to someone in authority, by actions that person or office took	<b>SSMW</b>
<b>Reporting/disclosure, actions taken, satisfaction:</b> % who experienced sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at work who reported or disclosed to someone in authority, by satisfaction with actions taken in response	<b>SSMW</b>
<b>Bystander intervention, as target of assault/behaviour:</b> % who experienced sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at work in others' presence	<b>SSMW</b>
<b>Bystander intervention, as target of assault/behaviour, type of response:</b> % who experienced sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at work in others' presence, by actions bystanders took	<b>SSMW</b>
<b>Bystander intervention, as witness of assault/behaviour:</b> % who witnessed sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at work	<b>SSMW</b>
<b>Bystander intervention, as witness of assault/behaviour, type of response:</b> % who witnessed sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at work, by actions respondent took	<b>SSMW</b>
<b>Bystander intervention, as witness of assault/behaviour, reason for response:</b> % who witnessed sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at work, by reason for taking action or not taking action	<b>SSMW</b>
<b>Attitudes toward place of work:</b> Respondents' attitudes toward the training and enforcement on workplace sexual assault / unwanted behaviours that exists at their workplace	<b>SSMW</b>
<b>Situation in which assault/behaviour occurred:</b> % who experienced sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at school, by circumstances of that behaviour (e.g., in a class, at a social event)	<b>SISPSP</b>
<b>Relationship to perpetrator:</b> % who experienced sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at school, by relationship to perpetrator	<b>SISPSP</b>
<b>Impacts of experiences:</b> % of those who experienced sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at school who experienced negative impacts on school performance / career	<b>SISPSP</b>
<b>Reporting/disclosure:</b> % of those who experienced sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at school who reported or disclosed to someone in authority, by type of authority	<b>SISPSP</b>
<b>Reporting/disclosure, actions taken:</b> % who experienced sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at school who reported or disclosed to someone in authority, by actions that person or office took	<b>SISPSP</b>

<b>Reporting/disclosure, actions taken, satisfaction:</b> % who experienced sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at school who reported or disclosed to someone in authority, by satisfaction with actions taken in response	<b>SISPSP</b>
<b>Bystander intervention, as target of assault/behaviour:</b> % who experienced sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at school in others' presence	<b>SISPSP</b>
<b>Bystander intervention, as target of assault/behaviour, type of response:</b> % who experienced sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at school in others' presence, by actions bystanders took	<b>SISPSP</b>
<b>Bystander intervention, as witness of assault/behaviour:</b> % who witnessed sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at school	<b>SISPSP</b>
<b>Bystander intervention, as witness of assault/behaviour, type of response:</b> % who witnessed sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at school, by actions respondent took	<b>SISPSP</b>
<b>Bystander intervention, as witness of assault/behaviour, reason for response:</b> % who witnessed sexual assault / unwanted behaviours at school, by reason for taking action or not taking action	<b>SISPSP</b>
<b>Attitudes toward school:</b> Respondents' attitudes toward the training and enforcement on sexual assault / unwanted behaviours that exists at their school	<b>SISPSP</b>