

HONESTLY, WE NEED *THIS* TO WORK.

**Changing the Narrative:
Gender Equality in SETT**

**Full Report
September 2025**



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Executive Summary

SETT workers are the backbone of a strong, economically independent nation. When women and gender-diverse people succeed in SETT, so too does Canada. Yet, we are far from achieving the gender equality that is often discussed. Let's bust the myth right now—gender equality does not exist in SETT, and this report serves as a call to action to address the structural barriers that perpetuate cultural inequalities in these fields.

Canada's economic future depends on SETT. These workers are the architects of innovation, the builders of infrastructure, and the drivers of technological advancement. But how can we achieve the workforce we need without funding the next generation of workers? The reality is that we face significant labour shortages in SETT, with over 100,000 skilled technical positions projected to be needed by 2028 and 250,000 digitally skilled roles required by 2025. These gaps represent a critical threat to our nation's economic stability and growth.

The underrepresentation of women and gender-diverse individuals in SETT is a glaring issue. Despite making up more than half of Canada's population, these groups remain marginalised in SETT careers. Structural barriers such as pay inequity, limited access to affordable child care, inflexible work schedules, and workplace harassment disproportionately impact them, creating a system that excludes rather than empowers. These barriers are deeply rooted in the structural frameworks that govern our workplaces and institutions. This report is about dismantling those structures to pave the way for true inclusion.

Education and training are the foundation of a thriving SETT workforce, yet Canada lacks a unified national strategy to prepare the next generation. Our curricula need modernisation, our apprenticeship programs need expansion, and financial support must be accessible to all who seek to enter these fields. Without these changes, we risk falling behind in both workforce readiness and our ability to retain talent.

Retention is another challenge we must address. Precarious employment, inconsistent accreditation processes, and gender-based violence and harassment at work are driving talented individuals out of SETT careers. Stronger legislative frameworks, workplace supports, and a commitment to equity are essential.

CCWESTT believe that equity is the pathway to equality. By applying an intersectional lens to policy and program design, we can ensure that underrepresented groups—women, Indigenous peoples, 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, immigrants, racialised workers and people with disabilities—have equitable access to SETT opportunities. This is not just about fairness; it's about building a workforce that reflects the diversity and complexity of Canada itself.

Canada's economic future depends on our ability to invest in SETT education, recruitment, and retention. This is our moment to act, to remove barriers, and to create a thriving, inclusive workforce that drives innovation and prosperity for all. At CCWESTT, we are committed to leading this charge, but we cannot do it alone. It will take coordinated action from governments, industries, and communities to make this vision a reality. Together, we can ensure that SETT becomes the backbone of Canada's economic success.

Acknowledgements

The Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology (CCWESTT) acknowledges that our greater science, engineering, trades, and technology (or SETT) community is situated on the ceded and unceded traditional territories of First Nation, Inuit, and Métis peoples from coast to coast to coast in what is known as 'Canada.' CCWESTT respects and affirms the inherent and Treaty Rights of all Indigenous Peoples and their relationships to these lands and will continue to honour the commitments to self-determination and sovereignty made to Indigenous Nations and Peoples. CCWESTT acknowledges the historical and present-day oppressions, including violence and genocide, of the original Peoples, their lands, and cultures. All must contribute to the healing and decolonising journey we share together to grow our society. CCWESTT fervently believes that SETT is enriched through collective relations and knowledge sharing, and is committed to helping enhance and build these relations.

CCWESTT encourages its staff, volunteers, and program members to become knowledgeable about the lands they are situated on and to assist in long-term collective relationships. It is up to all of us to understand how the land has and continues to nourish, heal, protect, and embrace us, and that we are each land stewards for the present and in the future. To learn more about the land you call home, visit <https://native-land.ca/>

Writing Statement

Canada's legislative structures are fundamentally colonial and patriarchal by design. The system works well for the people it was designed for, but it does not work for everyone. Established by settlers under the British Crown, these systems were never designed with the self-determination, sovereignty, or liberation of Indigenous Peoples or racialised communities in mind. Nor is the system neutral or equitable. From their inception, legislative systems were created by and for white, able-bodied, cisgender men of European descent, excluding Indigenous, Black, Brown, 2SLGBTQIA+, women and gender-diverse communities from decision-making, land stewardship, and legal recognition.

To describe Canada's legislative structures as "colonial" is not a metaphor — it is a material reality. Until Canada reckons with its colonial roots and reimagines its legislative structures through intersectional feminist, decolonial, and Indigenous-led frameworks, gender equality will remain an empty promise rather than a lived reality.

*This document was prepared with the assistance of Artificial Intelligence as a writing and editing partner.

Contextual Background

About CCWESTT

The Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology (CCWESTT) is a voluntary, non-profit national coalition of organisations and individuals who champion for a gender equitable, diverse, and inclusive Canadian SETT (science, engineering, trades and technology) sector. Established in 1992, CCWESTT collectively supports over 500,000 people in its network by building alliances and partnerships, acting as a resource hub, and advocating with a strong, unified voice. The long history of the Coalition, shared core values, collaborative efforts, and significant regional and national activities of member groups have provided a firm base from which CCWESTT has built a national voice for women and gender-diverse people in SETT to change, build, and lead policy and practice for a diverse workforce.

Purpose of This Report

CCWESTT presents this report as part of the project, “Changing the Narrative: An Advocacy Pathway for Systemic Change in SETT,” funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE), which builds upon CCWESTT’s successful Gender Inclusion in SETT initiatives, supporting and advocating for the advancement of women’s economic security. This work is a continuation of CCWESTT’s systemic change work for gender equity and equality in SETT, building on information gathered from both the CCWESTT [Gap Analysis Report](#) and [Resource Hub](#).

The project has three main objectives:

1. Scale efforts to change the narrative around workplace culture and identify current structural barriers within SETT working environments that limit the economic and professional success of SETT workers and companies.
2. Present the CCWESTT Canadian SETT Gender Equality Report Card, identifying gaps in legislation and inclusion strategies. Through facts and data, it is demonstrated that gender equality is lacking in SETT workplaces across Canada, paving the way for a national conversation on equitable change.
3. By understanding the existing gaps, the SETT community can collectively advocate for a national conversation about equitable change and promote systemic change at the company, organisational, and legislative levels.

This discussion is timely. With a national conversation on economic independence and prosperity, including breaking down interprovincial trade barriers, SETT workers play a key role in the national success. SETT workers deserve the same rights and protections within their working environments, regardless of where they choose to work in Canada.

Honestly, we need *this* to work.

Canada can achieve economic stability, growth, and innovation by investing in a robust science, engineering, trades, and technology (SETT) workforce—from recruitment to retention. With significant labour skills gaps to address, Canada must invest in education pathways that train current and future workers, support industries and infrastructure projects that rely on skilled labour, and strengthen legislative frameworks that ensure safe, thriving workplaces where all can succeed. To secure economic prosperity and innovation, governments must apply an intersectional lens that supports all Canadians in their diversity and complexity.

The current reality is that Canada’s SETT workforce does not reflect the diversity of working Canadians. Women and gender-diverse people make up more than 50% of the population, yet remain underrepresented in SETT. Canada must remove barriers such as limited access to affordable child care, insufficient care leave, inflexible schedules, pay inequity, and gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH) at work. These barriers disproportionately affect women, Indigenous peoples, new Canadians, 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, and people with disabilities. Legislative structures provide some workplace protections—such as Employment Standards, occupational health and safety, and human rights laws—but systemic inequities persist. Rights exist on paper, but weak enforcement, fear of reprisal, and sectoral silence allow inequities to continue across SETT sectors.¹ Workers also face precarious employment that falls through the cracks in current protections.²

Geography should not determine one’s access to SETT or workplace safety; yet the SETT landscape varies widely across Canada. Removing obstacles requires coordinated action, from individual interactions in the workplace to employer-created policies and legislative structures that governments design and enforce. This report examines legislative frameworks to identify systemic gaps and better understand the barriers underrepresented populations face in SETT. Equity IS the path to equality - in SETT and beyond.

The findings appear in the CCWESTT Canadian SETT Gender Equality Report Card, organised through three lenses: Pathways to Equality, SETT Recruitment, and SETT Retention. The report card also serves as an advocacy tool, helping workers understand their rights in the workplace and offering concrete recommendations for change.

Systemic Change Approach

CCWESTT systemic change projects utilise a systemic change model guided by a Theory of Change, operating on three levels: Scaling Out, Scaling Up, and Scaling Deep.

¹ Parahoo, R. (2025). Out of the Margins, accessed date: August 14, 2025.

(<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-2SLGBTQIA-in-SETT-in-Canada-Report.pdf>)

² Peel Institute of Research and Training & Family Services of Peel. (2025b). Precarious Employment, Worker Misclassification, and Gaps in Policy: A Review of the Literature, accessed date: August 14, 2025.

(<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Literature-Review-Precarious-Employment-in-Canada.pdf>)

Scaling out expands community engagement through two strategies:

- Boosting capacity, confidence, connectedness, and collaboration (the 4 C's)
- Partnering with SETT allies and leaders to drive advocacy and cultural change

Scaling Up tackles systemic reform:

- Amending laws, policies, and institutional rules to dismantle structural and societal barriers and advance gender equity in SETT workplaces.

Scaling Deep is a foundation, a base to build upon:

- Fostering mindset shifts by opening 'hearts and minds' to diverse cultural values and beliefs, laying the groundwork for inclusive relationships.

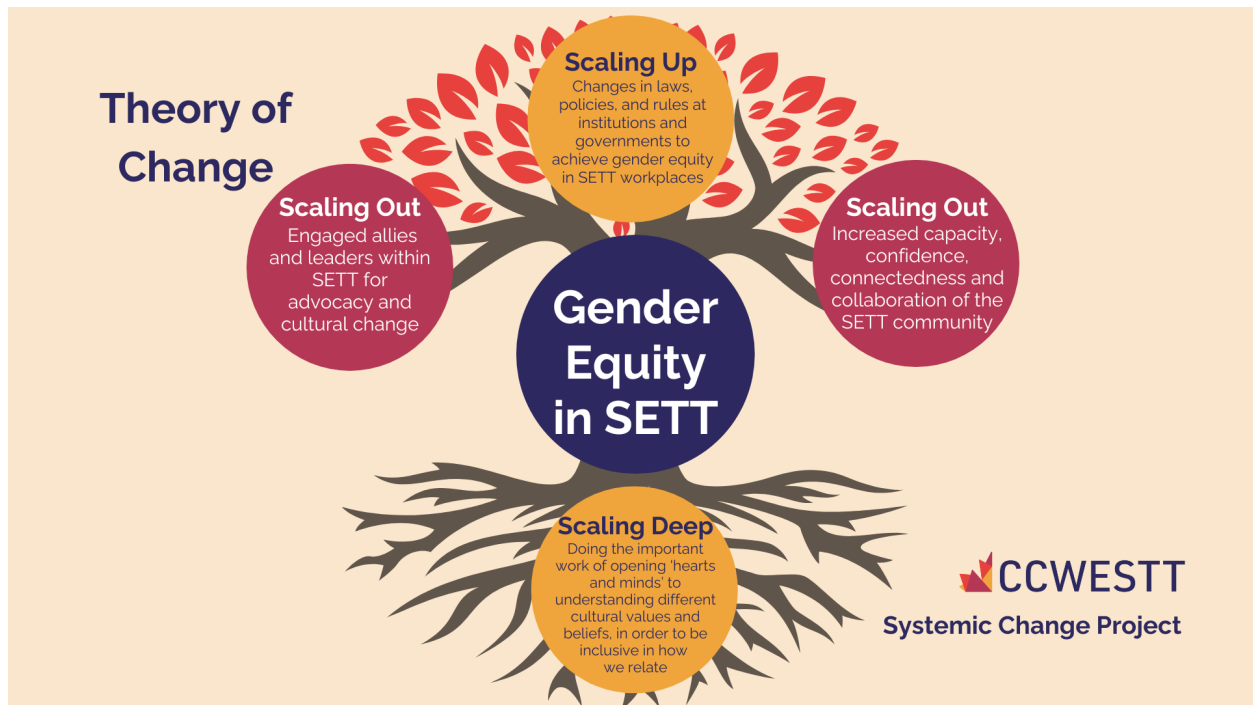


Fig 1. CCWESTT Systemic Change Projects: Theory of Change.

CCWESTT has incorporated all three levels of scaling into this project work.

The Canadian Structural Setting for SETT

Canada cannot reach its full economic and innovation potential without an educated, knowledgeable, and skilled workforce. Yet the nation still lacks a unified national strategy for success in SETT³—from education pathways to career longevity. Despite growing recognition of the importance of inclusion in SETT to reach these goals, women and gender-diverse people continue to experience systemic exclusion and unequal economic outcomes.⁴ The path to equality requires

³ Akhavan, D., Lanz, A. (2025). CCWESTT Systemic Change Report - STEM and Trades Initiatives Scan of jurisdictional funding in the past five years, accessed date: August 14, 2025.

(<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-SETT-in-Canada-A-Jurisdictional-Scan-Report.pdf>)

⁴ CCWESTT (2023). Gap Analysis Report, accessed date: August 8, 2025.

(https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/EN_Gap-Analysis_Final.pdf)

modernising legislation, embedding accountability, addressing work precarity and GBVH, while amplifying the voices of underrepresented individuals.

SETT: An Under-tapped Pathway to Equality

Success in SETT requires an ecosystem from recruitment to retention. The Canadian federal, territorial, and provincial (FTP) jurisdictions have implemented strategic SETT initiatives, spending hundreds of millions to help increase the number of underrepresented populations in SETT.⁵ ⁶ Yet, recruitment numbers remain low, and many leave due to working environments that do not work for them (both structurally and relationally). In addition, there has been an extensive body of gender equality recommendations, frameworks, and commitments (both domestic and international) that Canada has failed to implement.⁷ These efforts cost valuable time and money, but due to their fragmented nature, they never fully address the issues at hand. Meanwhile, many continue to lag behind in economic prosperity.

Women represent nearly half of Canada's workforce, yet continue to experience economic insecurity. According to Statistics Canada, in 2024, women accounted for 47.3% of the Canadian labour force,⁸ yet the gender wage gap was 16.3%, meaning women in Canada earned on average only 84 cents for every dollar men earned.⁹ Further, an intersectional analysis highlights ongoing disparities: Canadian-born women earned 9.2% less than their male counterparts, while Indigenous women earned 20.1% less, and immigrant women faced similarly significant gaps at 20.9%.¹⁰ Women with disabilities also face pronounced disadvantages, with an earnings gap exceeding 25% compared to men without disabilities and overrepresentation among low-income populations.¹¹ Additionally, 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals encounter notable wage disparities—for example, bisexual women earn 25% less than heterosexual men.¹² SETT careers offer pathways to economic security, but societal norms and systemic barriers can restrict access and participation.

⁵ Akhavan, D., Lanz, A. (2025). CCWESTT Systemic Change Report - STEM and Trades Initiatives Scan of jurisdictional funding in the past five years, accessed date: August 14, 2025.

(<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-SETT-in-Canada-A-Jurisdictional-Scan-Report.pdf>)

⁶ Fuke, Mary. (2025). Beyond the red seal: building an inclusive future for skilled trades in Canada, accessed date: August 14, 2025.

(<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Beyond-the-Red-Seal-Report.pdf>)

⁷Hewlett, L. (2025). SCALING UP: An assessment of the legislative frameworks, implementation frameworks, and strategic planning processes of Canada's federal-provincial-territorial (FPT) governments in comparison to the No. 1-ranked country, Iceland, accessed date: September 12, 2025.

(<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/00-National-Report-Card-00-MASTER-DOCUMENT-FINAL-2025-10-16-08h52.pdf>)

⁸ Statistics Canada. (2024). Labour Force Survey 2024 - Spotlight: Women in the Canadian Labour Market, accessed date: August 8, 2025. (<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/240308/dq240308a-eng.htm>)

⁹ Statistics Canada. (2024). Just the Facts, International Women's Day 2024, accessed date: August 8, 2025.

(<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-28-0001/2022001/article/00009-eng.htm>)

¹⁰ Statistics Canada. (2023). Intersectional perspective on the Canadian gender wage gap, accessed date: August 8, 2025 (<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/45-20-0002/452000022023002-eng.htm>)

¹¹LEAF. (2023). Gender and Poverty, accessed date: September 5, 2025.

(<https://www.leaf.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Gender-and-Poverty-Backgrounder.pdf>)

¹²Parahoo, R. (2025). Out of the Margins 2025, accessed date: August 14, 2025.

(<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-2SLGBTQIA-in-SETT-in-Canada-Report.pdf>)

Occupational Segregation and Underrepresentation in SETT

Historically, Canadians have perceived SETT fields as 'men's work'.^{13 14} Women are significantly underrepresented in most SETT occupations: accounting for fewer than 20% of Canada's professional engineers¹⁵, 12.6% as registered tradespeople¹⁶, and under 30% in the technology sector.¹⁷ Immigrant,¹⁸ racialised¹⁹ and Indigenous²⁰ women face compounded systemic barriers that exclude them from high-growth, high-wage SETT sectors.²¹ Gender-diverse people often remain invisible in data collection and equity strategies, resulting in their contributions and challenges being overlooked.²² The following chart illustrates occupational segregation in skilled trades.

Trades Apprenticeship Registrations 2023 - Female Identifying	CAN	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	PQ	NB	NS	PEI	NL	YK	NT	NV
Total major trade groups	12.2%	11.3%	11.9%	11.3%	15.4%	13.1%	12.4%	7.0%	8.8%	10.1%	8.7%	11.6%	5.6%	8.2%
Automotive service	6.3%	7.9%	10.0%	9.2%	5.0%	4.0%	1.0%	4.5%	7.0%	5.9%	5.3%	5.4%	5.0%	33.3%
Carpenters	6.3%	8.1%	8.5%	10.9%	4.8%	7.0%	4.8%	10.7%	9.6%	6.7%	9.7%	10.7%	3.8%	0.00%
Electricians	5.8%	8.7%	6.9%	6.1%	6.4%	4.6%	4.3%	5.6%	7.4%	5.3%	6.9%	14.6%	5.0%	12.5%
Electronics and instrumentation	7.8%	6.4%	6.3%	8.5%	0.0%	16.7%	7.6%	2.3%	10.5%	n/a	8.7%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Food service	41.4%	41.3%	46.7%	60.0%	68.3%	41.2%	40.0%	37.8%	44.3%	31.3%	40.0%	33.3%	66.7%	n/a

¹³ Bridges, D., Wulff E., Bamberry L., KrivokapicSkoko B. & Jenkins S. (2020) Negotiating gender in the male-dominated skilled trades: a systematic literature review, *Construction Management and Economics*, DOI: 10.1080/01446193.2020.1762906

¹⁴ McGuire L., Mulvey K.L., Goff E., Irvin M.J., Winterbottom M., Fields G.E., Hartstone-Rose A., Rutland A. (2020) STEM gender stereotypes from early childhood through adolescence at informal science centers. *J Appl Dev Psychol.* 2020 Mar-Apr;67:101109. doi: 10.1016/j.appdev.2020.101109. PMID: 32255884; PMCID: PMC7104893.

¹⁵ Engineers Canada. (2023). National Membership Information | Engineers Canada, accessed date: August 8, 2025. (<https://engineerscanada.ca/reports/national-membership-report/2023-national-membership-information>)

¹⁶ Statistics Canada. (2023). Canadian Apprenticeship Registrations and Certifications, accessed date: August 8, 2025. (<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/71-607-x/71-607-x2020016-eng.htm>)

¹⁷ ICTC. (2022). Gender Equity in Canada's Tech Ecosystem, accessed date: August 8, 2025. (<https://ictc-ctic.ca/reports/gender-equity-in-canadas-tech-ecosystem>)

¹⁸ Peel Institute of Research and Training & Family Services of Peel. (2025c). Recruitment Barriers to Immigrant and Refugee Employment in Canada's SETT Sectors: A Literature Review, accessed date: August 14, 2025. (<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Literature-Review-Immigrant-Refugee-SETT-Recruitment-Barriers-in-Canada.pdf>)

¹⁹ Spiteri, S., Olanipekun, P. (2025). Reassessing the Employment Equity Act: Structural Barriers to Racialized Women's Representation in SETT Professions, accessed date: August 14, 2025. (<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Reassessing-the-Employment-Equity-Act.pdf>)

²⁰ Gauthier, S. (2025). Toward Equity in SETT: a framework for Indigenous women's inclusion and success, accessed date: August 14, 2025. (<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Toward-Equity-in-SETT-A-Framework-for-Indigenous-Womens-Inclusion-and-Success-Report.pdf>)

²¹ Note: 2021 census numbers - Women account for just 14.8% of Red Seal workers (only 5.2% when service trades are excluded), and immigrants (19.2%), visible minorities (18.2%), and people with disabilities (13.8%) remain underrepresented compared to the overall workforce, while Indigenous participation has doubled to 5.8%. Source: Canadian Apprenticeship Forum. (2023). The demographics of the skilled trades workforce in Canada: Insights from the 2021 Census, accessed date: August 15, 2025. (<https://caf-fca.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/2023-census-Report-EN-2.pdf>)

²² Parahoo, R. (2025). Out of the Margins, accessed date: August 14, 2025. (<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-2SLGBTQIA-in-SETT-in-Canada-Report.pdf>)

Hairstylists and estheticians	85.9%	91.4%	81.2%	88.5%	87.0%	87.0%	89.2%	n/a	83.3%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	n/a
Heavy-duty equipment mechanics	4.5%	5.4%	4.8%	2.4%	2.2%	4.6%	3.0%	5.9%	5.6%	n/a	3.3%	33.3%	0.0%	11.1%
Heavy equipment and crane operators	4.3%	15.6%	3.2%	5.1%	0.0%	7.1%	1.9%	2.9%	10.0%	n/a	16.3%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Interior finishing	18.0%	17.1%	21.2%	10.0%	14.6%	8.6%	20.7%	15.4%	13.5%	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	50.0%	n/a
Landscape and horticulture technicians and specialists	29.9%	31.7%	40.0%	0.0%	31.3%	27.7%	30.0%	21.1%	33.3%	11.1%	100.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Machinists	6.5%	7.5%	4.5%	7.3%	2.8%	6.1%	7.0%	10.0%	3.4%	10.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Metal workers (other)	6.7%	8.5%	5.8%	5.7%	3.9%	4.2%	7.3%	7.5%	10.9%	n/a	13.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Millwrights	4.7%	3.9%	6.0%	4.8%	5.0%	5.2%	1.9%	3.5%	7.3%	n/a	6.7%	n/a	0.0%	n/a
Plumbers, pipefitters and steamfitters	4.1%	5.5%	6.6%	4.1%	3.3%	2.9%	2.2%	5.3%	5.5%	11.8%	6.2%	4.5%	5.3%	n/a
Refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics	2.4%	3.6%	3.0%	3.1%	3.6%	1.8%	1.5%	3.6%	5.1%	5.9%	2.7%	0.0%	n/a	n/a
Sheet metal workers	4.4%	7.0%	3.8%	1.6%	3.1%	2.8%	4.7%	2.3%	7.1%	n/a	13.3%	20.0%	n/a	n/a
Welders	11.3%	15.0%	12.4%	13.5%	8.4%	12.5%	4.3%	13.7%	16.0%	12.1%	12.8%	33.3%	0.0%	n/a

Chart 1: Apprenticeship Registrations in 2023 - illustrating occupation segregation, [Statistics Canada 2024](#)

Underrepresented groups encounter structural barriers that hinder success in both SETT recruitment and retention. Addressing this underrepresentation requires tackling the structural barriers in recruitment and education that shape who can access and succeed in SETT.

Barriers to Recruitment and Education

Access to SETT education varies widely, with students’ opportunities shaped heavily by geography and gender. Education is structured more like a ‘patchwork quilt,’ with each jurisdiction setting its own priorities, curriculum, and budgets.²³ These variations reinforce structural inequalities through inconsistent access, standards, and support across provinces and territories (e.g., lack of access in rural and remote areas, as well as uneven resource distribution within urban settings).²⁴ Across Canada, SETT curricula lack modernisation and must be updated to prepare a diverse future workforce,²⁵ prioritising cultural inclusivity and support for students

²³ Woolcott, L. (2025). Barriers (for women) in SETT education. In Barriers (for Women) in SETT Education, accessed date: August 14, 2025.

(<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Barriers-to-SETT-Education-in-Canada-Report.pdf>)

²⁴ Note: e.g. Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse people in Canada face serious and ongoing challenges in accessing education. Indigenous women often face extra challenges moving from high school to post-secondary education. Many are the first in their families to attend college or university and lack support navigating the system. Financial barriers, lack of child care, systemic discrimination, mental health services, and culturally safe supports are major barriers that also make it harder for them to succeed. Indigenous students who must travel from remote home communities for post-secondary education have additional burdens relating to travel, access to housing, and cultural disconnection. (Gauthier, 2025)

²⁵ Gauthier, S. (2025). Toward Equity in SETT: a framework for Indigenous women’s inclusion and success, accessed date: August 14, 2025.

(<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Toward-Equity-in-SETT-A-Framework-for-Indigenous-Womens-Inclusion-and-Success-Report.pdf>)

of all genders.²⁶ This is compounded at the post-secondary level, as publicly funded institutions lack capacity and financing to educate the current and future workforce,²⁷ which limits opportunities for new entrants to gain essential hands-on experience in SETT programs and apprenticeship pathways.²⁸ With an ageing SETT workforce, Canada needs a clear strategy and increased funding to effectively train the next generation of workers.

Despite these challenges, the retirement of 700,000 tradespeople by 2028 presents a significant opportunity to boost participation from underrepresented groups in SETT.²⁹ In 2023, women made up just 5% of on-site construction workers; Indigenous Peoples comprised 5.1% in 2021; and newcomers represented 19% in 2022, despite accounting for 27% of Canada’s overall labour force.³⁰ Canada also needs engineers to design and build infrastructure, develop innovative solutions, and drive technological advancements. By 2028, the country will face a shortfall of over 100,000 skilled technical workers—especially in engineering.³¹ Meanwhile, Canada’s digital economy will employ 2.26 million digitally skilled workers by 2025—about 11% of all jobs—and will require an additional 250,000 positions.³² With youth employment (ages 15–24) at 53.6% in July 2025³³—the lowest since November 1998 (excluding the COVID years)—establishing effective SETT pathways would benefit both young people and the broader workforce. Canada can only reach its full economic potential by equipping its workforce with the technology and artificial intelligence (AI) skills needed to address tomorrow’s challenges.

These next two charts show the current state of completion of SETT education pathways.

Postsecondary graduates, Woman+ %	CAN	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	PQ	NB	NS	PEI	NL	Territories
Physical and life sciences and technologies	61.4%	59.3%	60.3%	66.1%	61.9%	64.6%	58.0%	63.6%	64.9%	65.9%	57.1%	55.6%

²⁶ Parahoo, R. (2025). Out of the Margins, accessed date: August 14, 2025.

(<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-2SLGBTQIA-in-SETT-in-Canada-Report.pdf>)

²⁷ Universities Canada. (2024). Urgent action for our publicly-funded universities critical to Canada’s economic stability and growth, accessed date: August 8, 2025.

(<https://univcan.ca/news/urgent-action-for-our-publicly-funded-universities-critical-to-canadas-economic-stability-and-growth/>)

²⁸ Skills Council Canada. (2024). Overcoming the Skilled Trades Workforce Shortage: A Crucial Strategy for Canada's Economic Future, accessed date: August 12, 2025.

(<https://www.skillscouncil.ca/latest-news/overcoming-the-skilled-trades-workforce-shortage-a-crucial-strategy-for-canada-s-economic-future>)

²⁹ RBC. (2021). Powering Up: Preparing Canada’s skilled trades for a post-pandemic economy, accessed date: August 12, 2025. (<https://thoughtleadership.rbc.com/wp-content/uploads/Skilled-Trades-Report.pdf>)

³⁰ Buildforce Canada. (2024). Canada’s Construction Sector Is Poised To Grow Through 2033, accessed date: August 12, 2025.

(<https://www.buildforce.ca/en/press-release/canadas-construction-sector-is-poised-to-grow-through-2033/>)

³¹ Prolink. (2024). Engineering Talent Shortage: What This Means for Your Firm’s Future, accessed date: August 12, 2025. (<https://prolink.insure/engineering-talent-shortage-what-this-means-for-your-firms-future/>)

³² MRO. (2024). Canada will need 250k digitally skilled workers by 2025: ICTC study, accessed date: August 12, 2025.

(<https://www.mromagazine.com/2024/09/27/canada-will-need-250k-digitally-skilled-workers-by-2025-ictc-study/>)

³³ Statistics Canada. (2025). Labour Force Survey, July 2025, accessed date: August 12, 2025.

(<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/250808/dq250808a-eng.htm>)

Mathematics, computer and information sciences	31.6%	33.2%	28.2%	28.2%	31.9%	33.8%	26.5%	22.8%	32.9%	30.8%	35.7%	n/a
Architecture, engineering and related technologies	22.7%	20.2%	21.7%	20.7%	24.0%	23.5%	23.6%	14.4%	23.7%	19.8%	17.7%	18.2%
Agriculture, natural resources and conservation	60.9%	56.8%	61.9%	57.3%	53.5%	61.8%	66.1%	42.2%	66.1%	68.4%	51.0%	50.0%

Stats Can Women+: women (and/or girls), as well as some non-binary persons

Chart 3: Postsecondary graduates, by field of study, International Standard Classification of Education, gender - Canada, provinces and territories. [Statistics Canada 2022](#)

Trades Apprenticeship Certification 2023 - Female Identifying	CAN	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	PQ	NB	NS	PEI	NL	YK	NT	NV
Total major trade groups	10.3%	7.5%	12.0%	11.3%	14.9%	11.8%	9.7%	4.4%	4.7%	4.0%	5.8%	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%

Chart 2: Apprenticeship Certification in 2023, [Statistics Canada 2024](#)

Even when individuals overcome these recruitment and education barriers, structural challenges in retention and workplace conditions prevent many from building long-term SETT careers.

Retention Challenges and Job Precarity in SETT

Maintaining a stable SETT workforce is essential to Canada’s economic growth. However, structural barriers—from inconsistent accreditation to precarious job opportunities³⁴—hinder long-term retention and prevent the full use of skilled talent. Variations in jurisdictional legislation further fragment protection.

Credential recognition in SETT fields varies by province and territory,^{35 36} restricting professional mobility and preventing skilled workers from leveraging their qualifications nationwide. Immigrants and refugees encounter a maze of jurisdiction-specific credentialing processes, delaying their integration into SETT occupations. As a result, many newcomers end up in ‘survival jobs’ that underutilise their skills and qualifications, and even when they secure relevant roles, those positions are often precarious.

The rise of precarious employment in SETT sectors undermines workforce stability and has enduring impacts on retention. While some workers value the flexibility of precarious roles, these arrangements often exclude health benefits and caregiver

³⁴ Peel Institute of Research and Training & Family Services of Peel. (2025b). Precarious Employment, Worker Misclassification, and Gaps in Policy: A Review of the Literature, accessed date: August 14, 2025. (<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Literature-Review-Precarious-Employment-in-Canada.pdf>)

³⁵ Peltier-Huntley, J. (2025). Jurisdictional scan of Canadian SETT professional regulators, accessed date: August 14, 2025. (<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Canadian-Regulators-Landscape-Report.pdf>)

³⁶ Fuke, Mary. (2025). Beyond the red seal: building an inclusive future for skilled trades in Canada, accessed date: August 14, 2025. (<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Beyond-the-Red-Seal-Report.pdf>)

leave, and they block opportunities for skills advancement.³⁷ Misclassification of workers as independent contractors has also increased,³⁸ stripping them of Employment Standards protections and exposing them to unsafe conditions, pay gaps, and excessive hours. Beyond wage disparities, inequities also appear through practices like “quiet promotions,” where workers—especially those from marginalised groups—take on additional responsibilities without corresponding pay or recognition.³⁹ This instability shortens career longevity and depletes the pool of experienced SETT professionals. Fragmented occupational health and safety laws further compound these risks by leaving coverage gaps.

Women disproportionately experience harassment and bullying, which drives lower job satisfaction and higher stress.⁴⁰ Nearly 1 in 2 women (48%) and roughly 3 in 10 men (31%) reported harassment or sexual assault at work.⁴¹ Current OHS laws take a gender-neutral approach, failing to address the gendered nature of violence and harassment in workplaces. OHS laws are inconsistent across provinces and territories; some carve out industry-specific exemptions (e.g., mining), resulting in unequal protections for women in SETT.⁴² Without a modern definition of ‘workplace’ that includes GBVH protections, jurisdictions leave legal gaps that allow discriminatory cultures to thrive⁴³, particularly affecting racialised⁴⁴ and Indigenous women⁴⁵, as well as gender-diverse professionals.⁴⁶

Below you will find charts showing the current statistical representation of women in SETT occupations in Canada. Note, despite educational achievement in some science-related pathways, the occupational numbers illustrate attrition in all SETT paths.

³⁷ Spiteri, S. (2025b). Structural barriers in Canada’s care systems for women in science, engineering, trades and technology, accessed date: August 14, 2025.

(<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Canadian-Care-Related-Structures-Report.pdf>)

³⁸ Peel Institute of Research and Training & Family Services of Peel. (2025b). Precarious Employment, Worker Misclassification, and Gaps in Policy: A Review of the Literature, accessed date: August 14, 2025.

(<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Literature-Review-Precarious-Employment-in-Canada.pdf>)

³⁹ Spiteri (2025b)

⁴⁰ SSHRC/WAGE. (2023). Rising burden of gender-based violence at workplace in the digital era: a systematic review and meta-analysis, accessed date: August 8, 2025.

(https://sshrccrsh.canada.ca/societe-societe/community-communitaire/ifca-iac/evidence_briefs-donnees_probantes/gbv-vfq/nourouzi-eng.aspx)

⁴¹ Statistics Canada. (2024). Gender Results Framework: A new data table on workplace harassment, accessed date: August 8, 2025. (<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/240212/dq240212a-eng.htm>)

⁴² Hewlett, L. (2025). SCALING UP: An assessment of the legislative frameworks, implementation frameworks, and strategic planning processes of Canada’s federal-provincial-territorial (FPT) governments in comparison to the No. 1-ranked country, Iceland, accessed date: September 12, 2025.

(<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/00-National-Report-Card-00-MASTER-DOCUMENT-FINAL-2025-10-16-08h52.pdf>)

⁴³ Hewlett (2025)

⁴⁴ Peel Institute of Research and Training & Family Services of Peel. (2025). Gender-Based Violence and Harassment in Canadian Workplaces: A review and brief analysis of current legislation, policy, and strategic actions, accessed date: August 14, 2025.

(<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-GBVH-in-Canadian-Workplaces-Report.pdf>)

⁴⁵ Gauthier, S. (2025). Toward Equity in SETT: a framework for Indigenous women’s inclusion and success, accessed date: August 14, 2025.

(<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Toward-Equity-in-SETT-A-Framework-for-Indigenous-Womens-Inclusion-and-Success-Report.pdf>)

⁴⁶ Parahoo, R. (2025). Out of the Margins, accessed date: August 14, 2025.

(<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-2SLGBTQIA-in-SETT-in-Canada-Report.pdf>)

STEM Educated, working in STEM women+	CAN	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	PQ	NB	NS	PEI	NL	YK	NT	NV
STEM occupations	23.7%	23.3%	22.7%	25.0%	23.1%	24.7%	22.4%	22.9%	23.2%	26.0%	22.1%	28.2%	27.3%	12.0%
Science and science technology	47.8%	35.1%	31.3%	43.5%	33.7%	41.0%	41.6%	32.9%	31.8%	34.8%	29.2%	32.0%	42.9%	0.0%
- Physical and chemical sciences	44.7%	45.0%	38.9%	41.3%	55.2%	45.4%	44.1%	47.2%	40.6%	67.7%	55.6%	n/a	n/a	n/a
- Biological sciences	59.3%	56.2%	54.9%	50.2%	57.9%	60.8%	65.1%	51.3%	56.5%	46.7%	52.3%	50.0%	58.6%	50.0%
- General and integrated sciences	37.8%	35.1%	31.3%	43.5%	33.7%	41.0%	41.6%	32.9%	31.8%	34.8%	29.2%	32.0%	42.9%	0.0%
Engineering and engineering technology	17.5%	17.7%	17.8%	18.1%	15.9%	17.1%	17.9%	17.8%	15.9%	20.9%	17.7%	20.4%	13.5%	0.0%
- Engineering	16.2%	15.8%	17.1%	17.4%	14.3%	15.8%	16.9%	14.3%	15.0%	9.8%	15.5%	17.9%	10.0%	0.0%
- Engineering technology	19.1%	20.5%	19.1%	18.9%	17.4%	18.9%	18.8%	20.8%	16.9%	28.7%	20.2%	21.9%	17.4%	0.0%
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	25.4%	23.6%	25.3%	25.5%	25.2%	27.1%	22.6%	25.3%	26.1%	23.4%	25.0%	30.9%	31.8%	11.8%
- Mathematics and related studies	38.9%	36.6%	41.3%	39.0%	43.1%	39.5%	37.6%	35.9%	36.2%	30.0%	45.6%	55.6%	37.5%	50.0%
- Computer and information sciences	24.1%	22.6%	23.7%	24.2%	22.9%	25.9%	20.8%	24.5%	25.2%	23.0%	23.0%	26.1%	30.6%	0.0%
*STEM-related occupations	57.1%	56.8%	53.6%	47.9%	52.2%	57.6%	59.7%	61.5%	62.9%	57.8%	61.9%	61.3%	59.3%	55.2%

Stats Can Women+: women (and/or girls), as well as some non-binary persons

*STEM-related occupations refer to occupations requiring the application of knowledge and expertise from one or more fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) to perform central functions related to the occupation.

Chart 4: Occupations (STEM) by major field of study and highest level of education - Canada, provinces and territories. [Statistics Canada 2022](#)

For a complete list of STEM % by jurisdiction, see Appendix A.

Professional Registered Engineers - Women	CAN	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	PQ	NB	NS	PEI	NL	YK	NT	NV
Professional Engineers	15.0%	14.8%	15.8%	12.4%	13.6%	14.3%	16.7%	13.0%	14.0%	10.5%	15.6%	12.0%	11.3%	n/a

Chart 5: Registered Professional Engineers in Canada. [Engineers Canada 2023](#)

Trades Workforce Women+	CAN	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	PQ	NB	NS	PEI	NL	YK	NT	NV
Skilled Trades	15.3%	15.6%	14.8%	15.3%	13.5%	14.9%	16.2%	15.5%	14.8%	15.3%	15.0%	15.7%	11.1%	13.8%
Skilled Trades (minus Hairstylists and barbers; Estheticians, electrologists and related occupations)	10.6%	10.5%	10.4%	10.9%	9.4%	10.5%	11.1%	10.2%	10.1%	10.6%	10.4%	13.8%	9.5%	13.3%

Stats Can Women+: women (and/or girls), as well as some non-binary persons

Chart 6: Occupations (Trades) - Canada, provinces and territories. [Statistics Canada 2022](#)
For a complete list of Trade % by jurisdiction, see Appendix A.

These retention challenges reveal a deeper problem: Canada lacks consistent accountability mechanisms to ensure equity and safety across all SETT workplaces.

Accountability Gaps in SETT Safety and Inclusion

Initiatives such as Canada's 50-30 Challenge spurred organisations to pursue 50% gender parity and 30% equity-deserving representation in leadership, providing toolkits and best-practice resources nationwide.⁴⁷ Over 2,853 organisations have signed on, and resources remain available online. However, the initiative no longer recruits new participants and lacks any enforceable accountability measures. Voluntary diversity programs help, but without legal mandates, workplace safety and inclusion for SETT workers remain inconsistent. Only 6% of workers fall under federal OHS laws; the other 94% rely on varying provincial and territorial regulations.⁴⁸ As Canadian labour mobility grows, safety and inclusion standards must not default to the weakest jurisdiction. CCWESTT will publish a report card evaluating current legislation, highlighting gaps, and recommending actions for governments and employers to strengthen SETT worker safety, equity, and prosperity. This report card outlines the systemic reforms necessary to transform recruitment, retention, and accountability into a cohesive strategy for SETT success.

Next: Overview of the project methodology.

Methodology

CCWESTT presents this **report** and the **CCWESTT Canadian SETT Gender Equality Report Card** as a collaborative effort. In November 2024, CCWESTT issued a request for tender (RFT) and a request for knowledge keepers (RFK) to the broader SETT and advocacy community, seeking to recruit individuals or groups who would support this work as participatory researchers. A second RFK call was issued in February 2025.

The primary purpose of the RFT/RFKs was to conduct a policy analysis and research to gain knowledge of current structures/policies within Canadian jurisdictions that create barriers within SETT education pathways and working environments. The objective is to compare and contrast jurisdictions to identify leading practices and gaps in public policy.

RFT: The request for tender was designed by reviewing past community interactions (e.g., CCWESTT Gap Analysis Report, CCWESTT Policy Forum Reports - which can all be found in the [CCWESTT Resource Hub](#)) to compile a list of potential structural barriers identified by the CCWESTT SETT community. CCWESTT issued a call for research support to explore these potential structural barriers at the

⁴⁷ Government of Canada. (2025). 50-30 Challenge, accessed date: August 12, 2025.
<https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/ised/en/50-30-challenge-your-diversity-advantage>

⁴⁸CCOHS. (n.a.). Health and Safety Legislation in Canada, accessed date: August 12, 2025.
(<https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/legisl/legislation/intro.html>)

jurisdictional level in more detail.

Below is the list of barriers that CCWESTT included in the RFT call that researchers could consider applying for. The complete RFT application is available in **Appendix B**.

Theme 1: Government structural/policy-driven initiatives	
Topics to consider	SETT Initiatives: For the past 5-10 years, what SETT initiatives have the jurisdictions been funding?
	Future Planning: For the past 5-10 years, what initiatives have focused on sustainability and jobs within SETT?
Topics to consider	Budgeting: Have jurisdictions been designing/implementing feminist budgets?
	Community Benefit Agreements: Do jurisdictions take a holistic approach to government-funded projects?
Topics to consider	Educational Structures by Jurisdictions
	Primary/Secondary Education with regards to SETT
	Tertiary Education with regards to SETT, including upskilling
Topics to consider	Professional Regulations by Jurisdiction
	Apprenticeship, red seal accreditation
	Professional regulators responsibilities
Topics to consider	Care Structures across Canada and general unpaid labour
	Child care agreements, especially with regards to supporting SETT working environments
	Elderly Care
	Critical Illness
	The reliance on unpaid labour for critical social/economic prosperity
Topics to consider	Gender-Based Violence
	Jurisdictional agreements
	Legislation in place - e.g. Clair's Law
	Human Trafficking
	Justice systems for harassment and violence - within justifications and beyond
Topics to consider	Are we missing an important jurisdictional topic that creates barriers within SETT working environments, SETT Workers?

Theme 2: Labour laws, regulations and codes	
Topics to consider	Labour Laws
	Employment Standards Act

	Employee Equity Act
	Canadian Labour Code
	Human Rights Code
Topics to consider	Occupational Health and Safety OH&S
	Including topics such as mental health, bereavement, and PPE
	What industries are exempt from OH&S regulations? How does this affect SETT workers?
Topics to consider	Are we missing an important labour law, regulation or code that creates barriers within SETT working environments, SETT workers?

RFK: The request for knowledge was designed to bring an intersectional lens to the project by actively seeking community members who can provide perspectives from diverse intersectional experiences related to jurisdictional barriers.

Below is the list of intersectional lenses that CCWESTT included in the RFK call for researchers to consider applying. The complete RFK application is available in **Appendix C**.

Intersectional lens of interest to evaluate jurisdictional policies (federal/provincial/territorial)
Structures supporting/affecting Women
Structures supporting/affecting 2SLGBTQIA+
Structures supporting/affecting Indigenous Peoples
Structures supporting/affecting Refugees
Structures supporting/affecting those living with a Disability (visible and/or invisible)
Structures supporting/affecting Racialised People
Structures supporting/affecting Immigrants
Are we missing a traditionally underserved intersection?

Research Call Dissemination

CCWESTT promoted the RFT and RFK calls through its website and social media platforms (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn). The calls also reached nearly 1,100 subscribers via the CCWESTT News and Newsletter list and were circulated through partnership networks. The organisation also directly invited nonprofits and researchers whose work reflects intersectional, reflexive, and positionality-informed perspectives, helping ensure an inclusive analysis of Canadian legislative frameworks, FTP initiatives, and the broader SETT ecosystem. To support applicants in preparing their submissions, CCWESTT hosted an information session. In total, CCWESTT received 18 applications for the RFTs and 10 for the RFKs, with four groups applying for both. Applicants were evaluated based on their past research experience and the relevance of their positionality to this

work.

Twelve researchers/groups were selected through the RFT and RFK process to gather facts and data for this project. This participatory research was combined with an internal case study report. In total, eighteen research reports were created to help inform this project.

Data Gathering

CCWESTT Policy Analysis Report by author Lorraine Hewlett - **SCALING UP: An assessment of the legislative frameworks, implementation frameworks, and strategic planning processes of Canada's federal-provincial-territorial (FPT) governments in comparison to the No. 1-ranked country, Iceland**, presents a bold analysis of Canada's structural, legislative, and cultural barriers that hinder gender equality in Canada, comparing the progress to what Iceland has achieved. It assesses FTP governments using four criteria: legislative frameworks, implementation frameworks, and strategic planning processes.

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/00-National-Report-Card-00-MAS-TER-DOCUMENT-FINAL-2025-10-16-08h52.pdf>

Summary is available in **Appendix D**.

RFT Reports

The RFT reports provide a contextual overview of the current SETT ecosystem in Canada, offering recommendations for enhancing both recruitment and retention within SETT as well as examining the overall culture within SETT working environments. RFT report summaries are available in **Appendix E**.

Topics include:

- Jurisdictional barriers in SETT education
<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Barriers-to-SETT-Education-in-Canada-Report.pdf>
- Jurisdictional SETT initiatives 2020-2025
<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-SETT-in-Canada-A-Jurisdictional-Scan-Report.pdf>
- The Canadian regulators' landscape
<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Canadian-Regulators-Landscape-Report.pdf>
- The Canadian apprenticeship landscape
<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Beyond-the-Red-Sea-Report.pdf>
- Union structures and community benefit agreements
<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Canadian-Union-Structures-and-Community-Benefit-Agreements-Report.pdf>
- Jurisdictional sustainability initiatives 2020-2025
<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Future-Under-Siege.pdf>

- Canadian care-related structures
<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Canadian-Care-Related-Structures-Report.pdf>
- Canadian gender based violence and harassment (GBVH) structures
<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-GBVH-in-Canadian-Workplaces-Report.pdf>
- Gender budgeting
<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Gender-Budgeting-in-Canada-Report.pdf>
- Jurisdictional equity secretariats (e.g. WAGE offices)
<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Equity-Secretariats-Advocacy-and-SETT-Sector-Transformation-V3.pdf>
- Precarious employment and the misclassification of work
<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Literature-Review-Precarious-Employment-in-Canada.pdf>
- Shadow systems of care
<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Canadian-Shadow-Systems-of-Care.pdf>

RFK Reports

The RFK call was an opportunity for CCWESTT to incorporate an intersectional lens into this work. CCWESTT requested support from individuals/groups that could provide lived experience and cultural reflexive positionality to the topic of SETT and SETT working environments. Two calls were issued (November 2024, February 2025) in an attempt to capture a breadth of intersectional perspectives. CCWESTT collaborated with five research groups that provided reports. When direct involvement could not be recruited on an intersection of interest, CCWESTT found reliable reports to provide an inclusive lens. RFT report summaries are available in **Appendix F**.

Topics include:

- An Indigenous lens in SETT
<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Toward-Equity-in-SETT-A-Framework-for-Indigenous-Womens-Inclusion-and-Success-Report.pdf>
- A 2SLGBTQIA+ lens in SETT
<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-2SLGBTQIA-in-SETT-in-Canada-Report.pdf>
- Immigrant/refugee SETT recruitment barriers
<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Literature-Review-Immigrant-Refugee-SETT-Recruitment-Barriers-in-Canada.pdf>
- Immigrant/refugee SETT retention barriers
<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Literature-Review-Immigrant-Refugee-SETT-Retention-Barriers-in-Canada.pdf>

- An intersectional review of the Employment Equity Act - through an Indigenous, Racialised and Disability lens
<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Reassessing-the-Employment-Equity-Act.pdf>

Key intersectional knowledge supplemental report summaries are available in **Appendix G.**

- Changing Systems, Transforming Lives: Canada’s Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028 *Author - Government of Canada (2024)*
<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/combating-racism-discrimination/canada-anti-racism-strategy.html>
- Everyone’s Business: Accessibility in Canada Report from the Chief Accessibility Officer *Author - Government of Canada (2023)*
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/esdc-edsc/documents/corporate/reports/accessibility-disability/everyone-business/6472-ESDC-CAO-report-aoda-en.pdf>

The information gathered structures the **CCWESTT Canadian SETT Gender Equality Report Card**, which evaluates what is working and what needs improvement. The following section will discuss the Report Card themes and scoring.

CCWESTT Canadian SETT Gender Equality Report Card Structure

The internal report, RFTs, RFKs, and supplemental reports provide a contextual narrative of the current state of the SETT ecosystem from an intersectional and jurisdictional lens, as well as a policy analysis identifying best practices within Canada and beyond that work towards gender equality. These reports serve as the primary sources for the greater jurisdictional policy analysis audit of SETT in Canada. Key themes emerged from these 18 reports. The three main themes in this report card are:

- Pathways to Equality
- SETT Recruitment
- SETT Retention

Each of these themes was broken into two main categories. The first category in each theme is *legislative structures*. These structures encompass legislation and implementation frameworks, as well as outcomes from Canada’s federal, territorial, and provincial (FTP) jurisdictional levels of government. The second category within each report card theme was called *strategies for change*, which includes actionable efforts that the FTP jurisdictional governments have made to create change, such as strategic planning or forms of equity-style interventions.

Theme One

The first theme identified was *Pathways to Equality*. This section of the report card

will present legislative structures to create equality, including Human Rights legislation, as well as implementation frameworks such as the Human Rights Tribunal. This theme will also identify any strategies for change that have been implemented by the FTP governments, paying attention through an intersectional lens. This section of the report card is valuable to all Canadians, beyond SETT.

Theme Two

The remaining themes focus on the SETT journey. Theme two has been called *SETT Recruitment*. The report card identifies both legislative structures and strategies for change that the FTP governments have created that either support or hinder the progression into SETT, from early education to career path accreditation. This section also includes current FTP educational outcomes for the four main SETT categories - science, engineering, trades and technology.

Theme Three

The final theme of the report card is *SETT Retention*. This section includes legislative structures and strategies for change that shape the SETT working environment and the long-term retention of the SETT workforce. This section will be valuable to many people in the workplace setting, as the legislative structures and strategies presented here apply to most workplaces.

Report Card Scoring

Each theme's categories—legislative structures and strategies for change—include key topics (e.g., Education). These key topics were broken down into related public policy or outcome line-items.

The public policy line-items contained in this report card were selected based on whether this type of public policy has been implemented as a best practice (within Canada or another jurisdiction) toward gender equality overall or within SETT specifically (within Canada or outside of Canada). The outcome line-items focus on SETT education or SETT working environments in Canada. These line-item outcomes or policies (such as the creation of legislation, an implementation framework or steps/plans within a broader equity strategy) were evaluated at a jurisdictional level.

The jurisdictional key topic line-items were given either a **check mark** ✓ or a **NO** for each line-item. The report card will include a sourcing document to identify how the line item received its **check mark** ✓ or a **NO**. A **check mark** ✓ was given for a public policy line-item if proof could be found that the jurisdiction has done work on that topic (e.g., legislation, public announcement or statistics found on a government website identified by CCWESTT or a partnering researcher). A **NO** was given if the jurisdiction has not worked on this policy topic or if they have let the work expire (e.g., if a jurisdiction has repealed legislation, has not modernised their work, or has not renewed a strategy such as a strategic plan, the jurisdiction will no longer receive credit in the report card for that line-item).

Key topics received credit for the line-items marked with a **check mark** ✓, and each key topic was assigned a score average (e.g., three **check marks** ✓ out of five line-items = 60%). The key topics' scores were averaged to give each legislative structure and strategies for change category a score and grade. These two category scores were averaged to give each theme a score and grade. The three themes were averaged to provide each jurisdiction with a SETT Gender Equality Report Card final score and grade.

Jurisdictional SETT Gender Equality Report Card Final Grade

Grades based on Score
A+ = 90% +
A = 80-89%
B = 70-79%
C = 60-69%
D = 50-59%
F = 49% or lower

Final Grade Score Structure Illustration:

- Canadian FTP Jurisdiction Grade** (Grade/Score - average of Theme scores)
 - Theme: Pathways to Equality (Grade/Score - two categories are averaged)
 - Category: Legislative Structures (Grade/Score - Key Topic scores averaged)
 - Key Topics: (Grade/Score - based on Line-Item ✓ / total line-items)
 - Line-Items (public policy or outcomes - ✓ or **NO**)
 - Category: Strategies for Change (Grade/Score - Key Topic scores averaged)
 - Key Topics: (Grade/Score - based on Line-Item ✓ / total line-items)
 - Line-Items (public policy or outcomes - ✓ or **NO**)
 - Theme: SETT Recruitment (Grade/Score - two categories are averaged)
 - Category: Legislative Structures (Grade/Score - Key Topic scores averaged)
 - Key Topics: (Grade/Score - based on Line-Item ✓ / total line-items)
 - Line-Items (public policy or outcomes - ✓ or **NO**)
 - Category: Strategies for Change (Grade/Score - Key Topic scores averaged)
 - Key Topics: (Grade/Score - based on Line-Item ✓ / total line-items)
 - Line-Items (public policy or outcomes - ✓ or **NO**)
 - Theme: SETT Retention (Grade/Score - two categories are averaged)
 - Category: Legislative Structures (Grade/Score - Key Topic scores averaged)
 - Key Topics: (Grade/Score - based on Line-Item ✓ / total line-items)
 - Line-Items (public policy or outcomes - ✓ or **NO**)
 - Category: Strategies for Change (Grade/Score - Key Topic scores averaged)
 - Key Topics: (Grade/Score - based on Line-Item ✓ / total line-items)
 - Line-Items (public policy or outcomes - ✓ or **NO**)

Structure vs Strategy - Gender Equality Needs Both

Governments at all levels can use legislative structures and strategic initiatives to drive lasting societal transformation.

Legislative Structures

Structural change starts with legislation that (1) codifies rights and protections, (2) mandates compliance and penalties for violations, and (3) establishes grievance mechanisms.⁴⁹ Robust laws remain essential to correct societal power imbalances, particularly around gender-based violence and workplace safety.

When governments create legislation, they not only signal commitment but also codify obligations and provide individuals with clear legal avenues for justice. Legislative structures further define **how** laws operate through implementation frameworks such as commissioners, tribunals, ministries, and agencies—for example, Women and Gender Equality Canada. By requiring compliance, clear laws lay the groundwork for safe and inclusive SETT environments. At the same time, laws reflect the systems and people that produce them: Canada’s legal frameworks stem from Eurocentric, colonial traditions that can reinforce inequity (Gauthier, 2025; Lennon, 2025). To ensure legislation genuinely empowers those most affected, governments must ground strategic planning in broad consultation and meaningful participation.

Strategies For Change

Strategies play a critical role in driving societal change. Entities such as governments, organisations, and nonprofits can strategically design strategies to articulate a vision, engage communities, build partnerships, gather data, and test innovative ideas before passing legislation or changing practice. Well-crafted strategies can help shift “hearts and minds,” building a stronger and more inclusive culture. Many are created to meet commitments—whether campaign promises, organisational priorities, or international agreements. However, strategies are often non-binding, temporary, underfunded, and politically vulnerable. Without a clear purpose and direction, they risk becoming merely performative.

Strategies can take many forms, from one-off initiatives to formal strategic planning. The most effective approach integrates efforts into a comprehensive plan that sets priorities, coordinates actions, and aligns resources and investments. When grounded in evidence and accountability, strategic planning strengthens transparency and ensures more effective policy and program delivery. What remains essential is the political will—and the institutional commitment across governments, organisations, and civil society—to make these strategies durable and transformative.

⁴⁹ UNDP. (2017). Guidance Note UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (SES), accessed date: August 12, 2025. ([UNDP SES Supplemental Guidance Grievance Redress Mechanisms.pdf](#))

- Step 1: Stakeholder consultation
 - Step 2: Strategic plan
 - Step 3: Action plan
 - Step 4: Operational Plan
 - Step 5: Budget Plan
 - Step 6: Communications Plan
 - Step 7: Evaluation Plan
- (Repeat)

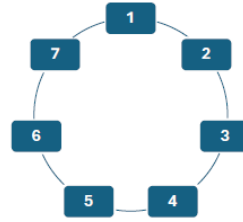


Fig 1. Strategic Planning Process. The steps and outcomes of proper strategic planning must be repeated until the long-term objectives are achieved.^{50 51} This process can happen at any level or scale, from government to companies to nonprofits.

When governments, organisations, and/or nonprofits design strategies to encourage safe and inclusive workplaces—such as Canada’s 50-30 Challenge—workplaces can choose to participate. These voluntary efforts can help spark cultural change, but their impact depends on commitment and follow-through. Ultimately, **strategies talk, but legislation has teeth**: laws provide enforceable protections, clear accountability, and real consequences when strategies fall short.

⁵⁰ CCWESTT. (2023). Gap Analysis Report, accessed date: August 8, 2025. (https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/EN_Gap-Analysis_Final.pdf)

⁵¹Hewlett, L. (2025). SCALING UP: An assessment of the legislative frameworks, implementation frameworks, and strategic planning processes of Canada’s federal-provincial-territorial (FPT) governments in comparison to the No. 1-ranked country, Iceland, accessed date: September 12, 2025. (<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/00-National-Report-Card-00-MASTER-DOCUMENT-FINAL-2025-10-16-08h52.pdf>)

CCWESTT Canadian SETT Gender Equality Report Card

Theme One: Pathways to Equality

Theme Grade	A	A	D	D	C	C	A	D	B	D	B	D	D	F
Theme: Pathways to Equality	87%	80%	52%	56%	68%	62%	80%	58%	71%	58%	73%	50%	50%	43%
Jurisdiction	CAN	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	PQ	NB	NS	PEI	NL	YK	NT	NV
Legislative Structures - Equality Score	75%	69%	44%	51%	65%	53%	80%	57%	62%	46%	65%	50%	50%	36%
Human Rights Legislation	100%	100%	100%	75%	100%	100%	100%	75%	75%	75%	100%	100%	100%	75%
Human Rights Legislation - protects employees from discrimination based on protected grounds	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Human Rights Legislation - Equality of women & men	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Human Rights Commission(er)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO
Human Rights Tribunal	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓
Intersectional Lens - Structures for Inclusion	57%	57%	14%	29%	29%	43%	57%	29%	43%	14%	29%	0%	0%	0%
Gender Equality Legislation	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Equal Representation Legislation	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Multiculturalism Acts and/or Policies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO
Anti-Racism Acts	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Indigenous Consent - Commitments to UNDRIP	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Accessibility Acts/Legislation	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO
Employment Equity Acts (Note: outdated language - includes women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities)	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Gender Equality Offices and Frameworks	67%	50%	17%	50%	67%	17%	83%	67%	67%	50%	67%	50%	50%	33%
Gender Budgeting using OECD Framework (over 50%)	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	✓	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO
Established Gender Equality Offices	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO
Established Gender Equality Advisory Council	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Office and/or Council established through legislation	✓	NO	NO	✓	✓	NO	✓	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓
• Office or Council - legislative oversight and authority towards gender equality	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
• GBA + use in policy design - partially or fully, NO given if GBA+ use unclear	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO

Strategies for Change - Inclusion	100%	90%	60%	60%	70%	70%	80%	60%	80%	70%	80%	50%	50%	50%
Disaggregate Data	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Disaggregate Data across jurisdictions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Intersectional Lens - Strategies for Inclusion	100%	80%	20%	20%	40%	40%	60%	20%	60%	40%	60%	0%	0%	0%
Gender Equality Inclusion - Equity strategies	✓	✓	NO	NO	✓	NO	✓	NO	NO	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO
Racial Inclusion - Equity Strategies	✓	✓	✓	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO
2SLGBTQIA+ Inclusion - Equity Strategies	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Indigenous Inclusion - Implementation of the TRC 94 Calls to Action, > 50% self-reported completion	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Persons with a Disability (PwD) Inclusion - Equity Strategies	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO

Discussion: Pathways for Equality Theme Overview

Within the *Pathways to Equality* theme, Canadian jurisdictions demonstrate that they value human rights in theory and in their structures, yet inequality persists in practice. Legislators must strengthen systems that support people across intersections of gender, disability, culture, and racial identity—because equity is the pathway to true equality. The *Strategies for Change* section highlights how strategic planning and coordination can drive better outcomes, with Iceland offering a leading example. This discussion examines both Canada’s progress and the gaps it must close to achieve genuine workplace and societal inclusion.

Legislative Structures - Equality

Key Topic - Human Rights

The Canadian journey to Human Rights Legislation spanned more than 50 years. **Saskatchewan** led by enacting the Saskatchewan Bill of Rights in 1947, and other jurisdictions followed, with the **Northwest Territories** establishing their act last in 2004 (Hewlett, 2025). Today, every jurisdiction (except **Nunavut**) maintains a Human Rights Commission(er)⁵² that declares equality in law and works to prevent discrimination on prohibited grounds such as sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, race, ethnicity, religion, and disability (Hewlett, 2025).

The CCWESTT report card credited all jurisdictions for enacting Human Rights Legislation, including equality of men and women (while acknowledging its binary

⁵² Note - The Canadian Human Rights Commission has the authority to investigate complaints related to employment equity and take appropriate actions against non-compliant employers. British Columbia dismantled its commission in 2002, re-establishing it in 2019 (Hewlett, 2025).

limitations), and for those who established Human Rights Commissions(er)s. Most jurisdictions also operate Human Rights Tribunals, which provide independent bodies to hear complaints of discrimination. While distinct, commissions and tribunals remain interconnected: commissions focus on education and mediation, while tribunals act as quasi-judicial bodies that issue binding rulings.⁵³

Both structures carry strengths and weaknesses. A central concern is that both rely on a complaint-driven model, which places the burden on individuals to report discrimination instead of imposing proactive legal duties on employers to prevent it (Hewlett, 2025). As Hewlett (2025) stresses, human rights legislation may guarantee “equality in law,” but it often fails to deliver “equality in fact,” as many workers continue to face discrimination and violence in their workplaces.

Key Topic - Intersectional Lens, Structures for Inclusion

Societies thrive when they embrace culture and identity. Governments strengthen inclusion by taking structural steps that support communities as workers navigate both professional and personal environments. The line-items under this key topic highlight legislation and policies that jurisdictions have developed through an intersectional lens.

Gender Equality and Equal Representation Through Legislation

Research consistently shows that gender equality strengthens economies.⁵⁴ Iceland offers a powerful example, ranking first as the most gender-equal country in the world for the past 16 years.⁵⁵ Persistent advocacy and decades of legislative reform contributed to this success, including the enactment of laws promoting gender equality and equal representation.

No Canadian jurisdiction has enacted gender equality legislation, as reflected in the CCWESTT report card. Quebec stands out as the only jurisdiction with legislation on equal representation, though its scope applies only to boards of directors for crown corporations (Hewlett, 2025).

Highlights of Iceland’s Legislative Frameworks (A Case Study)

On October 24, 1975, women in Iceland staged a nationwide strike known as Women’s Day Off. They refused to work, perform household chores, or provide care for children and the elderly. The country came to a standstill, and this action marked a watershed moment. In response, the government passed the first Gender

⁵³ Government of Canada. (2025). Department of Justice Cmarkinganada Minister's Transition Book, Organisations in the Justice Portfolio, accessed date: August 27, 2025.

(<https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/trans/transition/2019/tab5.html>)

⁵⁴Calviño, N. (2024). The Economic Power of Gender Equality, accessed date: August 28, 2025.

(<https://www.eib.org/en/stories/gender-equality-power>)

⁵⁵World Economic Forum. (2025). Global Gender Gap Report 2025 - Insight Report June 2025, accessed date: August 28, 2025. ([WEF GGGG 2025.pdf](#))

Equality Act in 1976, banning gender-based discrimination.

Lawmakers amended the Act in 1991 and updated Article 65 of the Constitution to guarantee equal rights for men and women. Real progress began in 2000, when Iceland introduced the Act on Equal Status and Equal Rights of Women and Men. This law expanded legal obligations, outlawed sexual harassment in workplaces, required gender-equality education, and mandated equal participation of women and men on government committees and boards.

In 2008, legislators strengthened the Act to address gender-based violence, harassment, and pay inequality. In 2009, Iceland banned the sex trade, declaring “women are not for sale,” and in 2010, it banned strip clubs and mandated 40% gender quotas on company boards. By 2021, women held about 42% of managerial roles and 40% of parliamentary seats.

On January 1, 2018, Iceland enacted the Act on Equal Status and Equal Rights Irrespective of Gender. This landmark law shifted the burden of proof in equal pay cases: companies with 25 or more employees must prove they pay everyone equally, verified by independent auditors, or face fines. In 2021, Iceland also expanded parental leave to 12 months, with equal division between parents (Hewlett, 2025).

The most recent milestone occurred on October 24, 2023, when about 100,000 women—including Prime Minister Katrín Jakobsdóttir—staged a full-day strike against wage disparities and gender-based violence. This action echoed the 1975 strike, underscoring that while Iceland leads globally, the fight for equality continues.⁵⁶ This tension reflects the Nordic Paradox: robust gender equality legislation coexists with troubling rates of gender-based violence, including in workplaces.⁵⁷

Despite these challenges, Iceland continues to sustain remarkable economic growth and development. Its female labour force participation rate stands at 70.3% (compared to 78.8% for men)⁵⁸, well above the global female average of 49% and close to the global male average of 73%.⁵⁹ Both rates exceed Canada’s participation levels—61% for women and 69.6% for men (aged 15–64).^{60 61} These outcomes

⁵⁶ Sigurdur, Davidsson, & Birkebaek, J. (2023, October 24). Icelandic women, including PM, strike for 24 hours over inequality. *Reuters*, accessed date: August 28, 2025).

(<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/icelandic-women-24-hour-strike-over-inequality-2023-10-24/>)

⁵⁷ Jonsdottir, S. D. et al. (2022). Risk factors for workplace sexual harassment and violence among a national cohort of women in Iceland: a cross-sectional study. *Lancet Public Health*, accessed date: August 28, 2025(<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2468266722002018>)

⁵⁸ Globalen LLC. (2024). *Iceland Female labor force participation - data, chart* *TheGlobalEconomy.com*, accessed date: August 28, 2025. (https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Iceland/Female_labor_force_participation/)

⁵⁹ International Labour Organization. (2024). The impact of care responsibilities on women’s labour force participation, accessed date: August 28, 2025. (https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/2024-10/GEDI-STAT%20brief_formatted_28.10.24_final.pdf)

⁶⁰ World Bank Group. (2025). Labor force participation rate, total (% of total population ages 15-64) (modeled ILO estimate), accessed date: August 28, 2025. ([Labor force participation rate \(% of population\) | World Bank Gender Data Portal](https://data.worldbank.org/SD/SL.TS.LF.PC))

⁶¹ Note - Although data on gender identity exists, Statistics Canada has not yet released labour force participation rates specifically broken out for non-binary or gender non-conforming individuals. Available labour market statistics

reflect Iceland’s active engagement in shaping workforce participation. Still, creating a genuinely inclusive and productive workforce requires labour considerations that extend beyond gender.

Canada’s approach to equality relies less on comprehensive legislation and more on overlapping frameworks, most visible in multiculturalism and anti-racism policies.

Multiculturalism vs Anti-racism

Jurisdictions demonstrate inclusion through both multiculturalism and anti-racism frameworks. The two are connected but distinct: multiculturalism affirms identity and fosters tolerance, while anti-racism directly confronts power imbalances and structural racism.

Canada has legislated multiculturalism for more than 50 years. In 1988, it became the first country in the world to enshrine multiculturalism in law through the Canadian Multiculturalism Act.⁶² **Saskatchewan** once again led the way in 1974, and within 20 years, every province had enacted its own acts or policies.⁶³ These frameworks aimed to support cultural diversity, inclusion, and respect for different heritages. The CCWESTT Report Card credited jurisdictions that established either multiculturalism legislation or policies (all jurisdictions except the three territories - **Yukon**, the **Northwest Territories** and **Nunavut**).

By contrast, only three jurisdictions have enacted anti-racism acts. **Ontario** passed the first in 2017⁶⁴, followed by **Nova Scotia** in 2022⁶⁵ and **British Columbia** in 2024.⁶⁶ Anti-racism legislation goes further than multiculturalism by embedding structural equity and dismantling systemic racism.⁶⁷ Both approaches can work in tandem, with anti-racism providing the foundation for systemic justice.

Indigenous Consent

Policymakers must actively uphold frameworks such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), ensuring that Indigenous and women’s rights are fully realised in practice—not merely acknowledged on paper.

remain grouped into traditional binary categories—male and female—often labeled within broader categories such as “men+” and “women+,” which may or may not include some non-binary respondents (Statistics Canada, 2024).

⁶²Government of Canada. (2024). About the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, accessed date: August 20, 2025. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/about-multiculturalism-anti-racism/about-act.html>)

⁶³ Brosseau, L., Dewing, M., Legal and Social Affairs Division, & Parliamentary Information and Research Service. (2009). Canadian multiculturalism. In *Library of Parliament Background Papers* (No. 2009-20-E). (<https://lop.parl.ca/staticfiles/PublicWebsite/Home/ResearchPublications/BackgroundPapers/PDF/2009-20-e.pdf>)

⁶⁴ People for Education. (2023). A progress report on anti-racism policy across Canada, accessed date: August 20, 2025. (<https://peopleforeducation.ca/report/a-progress-report-on-anti-racism-policy-across-canada/>)

⁶⁵ Government of Nova Scotia. (2022). Dismantling Racism and Hate Act, accessed date: August 20, 2025. (<https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/dismantling%20racism%20and%20hate.pdf>)

⁶⁶Government of British Columbia. (2024). Bill23-2024 Anit-Racism Act, accessed date: August 20, 2025. (<https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/bills/billsprevious/5th42nd:gov23-1>)

⁶⁷ Lei, L., Guo, S. (2022). Beyond multiculturalism: revisioning a model of pandemic anti-racism education in post-COVID-19 Canada. *Int. j. anthropol. ethnol.* 6, 1 . (<https://doi.org/10.1186/s41257-021-00060-7>)

British Columbia remains the only province to have legislated the UNDRIP, passing the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) in 2019 and releasing an action plan in 2022 (Gauthier, 2025). DRIPA compels provincial law to align with UNDRIP and affirms Indigenous rights, including the right to free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) (Lennon, 2025). Federally, Canada enacted Bill C-15 in 2021, committing to align laws with UNDRIP and issuing an action plan with progress reports.⁶⁸ Other jurisdictions—including the **Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Manitoba, and Quebec**—express support but rely on policy statements or negotiation frameworks rather than binding law. These efforts rarely integrate a gendered lens, despite frameworks such as the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Calls for Justice that demand attention to Indigenous women’s rights.

Despite these commitments, no jurisdiction fully implements UNDRIP or upholds FPIC (Lennon, 2025). Recent laws—such as the federal One Canadian Economy Act (Bill C-5) and **Ontario’s** Protect Ontario by Unleashing Our Economy Act (Bill 5)—have deepened concerns among Indigenous communities. Critics argue these frameworks sidestep meaningful consultation and risk undermining constitutionally protected rights (Gauthier, 2025; Lennon, 2025).

Just as Indigenous rights demand stronger legislative frameworks, so too does disability inclusion—a critical equity issue affecting more than one in four Canadians.

Accessibility Inclusion

For people with visible and non-visible disabilities, navigating the labour force presents real challenges. Yet accessible employment drives not only equality but also productivity, innovation, and economic inclusion—especially since more than one in four Canadians live with a disability.⁶⁹ The Accessible Canada Act (ACA), enacted in 2019, aims to make **Canada** barrier-free by January 1, 2040. It seeks to achieve this by proactively identifying, removing, and preventing barriers across seven priority areas: employment; the built environment (buildings and public spaces); information and communication technologies (ICT); communications (beyond ICT); procurement of goods, services, and facilities; the design and delivery of programs and services; and transportation (air, rail, road, and marine providers operating across provincial or international borders).⁷⁰

The ACA, however, applies only to organisations under **federal** jurisdiction—federal agencies, crown corporations, banks, airlines, telecommunications companies, and

⁶⁸ Government of Canada. (2025). Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, accessed date: September 4, 2025 (<https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/declaration/index.html>)

⁶⁹ Government of Canada. (2023). Everyone’s Business: Accessibility in Canada Report from the Chief Accessibility Officer – 2023, accessed date, August 28, 2025. (<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/esdc-edsc/documents/corporate/reports/accessibility-disability/everyone-business/6472-ESDC-CAO-report-aoda-en.pdf>)

⁷⁰ Government of Canada. (2022). Summary of the accessible Canada act, accessed date: August 28, 2025. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/accessible-canada/act-summary.html>)

interprovincial transportation providers.⁷¹ Most Canadians' daily experiences—such as education, healthcare, and employment—involve non-federal institutions, which fall outside the ACA's reach. Accessibility Service Canada provides detailed breakdowns of jurisdictional legislative structures (<https://accessibilitycanada.ca/>). Using this resource, CCWESTT awarded credit in the report card to the provinces of **British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador** for enacting accessibility legislation.⁷² **Prince Edward Island, Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut** lack standalone accessibility laws and instead rely on the complaint-based Human Rights model and civil society; these jurisdictions received a "NO" in the report card. **Alberta** has enacted limited legislation (e.g., service dogs, student financial assistance) and created the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities, but it has not adopted a comprehensive Accessibility Act. CCWESTT withheld credit from **Alberta** because this 'advocacy-based model' depends on a representative office rather than binding accessibility standards enforceable in the public or private sectors.

The solution requires binding federal standards under the ACA, harmonised provincial frameworks, and organisational culture change driven by training, consultation, targeted recruitment, and streamlined processes. Accessibility legislation removes barriers for persons with disabilities, but true workplace inclusion also demands proactive frameworks such as employment equity laws.

Employment Equity

The Parliament enacted the Employment Equity Act (EEA) in 1995 to address systemic discrimination in **Canada's** labour market, following the findings of the 1984 Royal Commission on Equality in Employment, led by Judge Rosalie Abella (Spiteri and Olanipekun, 2025). The Commission identified four groups—women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of 'visible minorities'—as facing significant barriers to employment due to entrenched discriminatory practices. The Act aimed to remove these barriers and ensure access to employment opportunities based on ability rather than attributed characteristics (Spiteri and Olanipekun, 2025).

The EEA established three programs: the Workplace Equity Program, which covers federally regulated industries and Crown corporations; the Legislated Employment Equity Program (LEEP), which applies to federally regulated private-sector employers; and the Federal Contractors Program, which covers private-sector employers with 100 or more employees who bid on federal contracts worth \$1 million or more.⁷³ Unlike human rights legislation, which remains largely reactive and complaint-driven, the EEA requires employers to take proactive measures to

⁷¹ARCH Disability Law Centre. (2025). Fact Sheet – What is the Accessible Canada Act (ACA)?, accessed date: August 28, 2025. (<https://archdisabilitylaw.ca/resource/fact-sheet-what-is-the-new-accessible-canada-act-aca/>)

⁷²Accessibility Services Canada. (2025). Accessibility Legislation in Canada, accessed date: August 28, 2025. (<https://accessibilitycanada.ca/>)

⁷³Government of Canada. (2025). About the Workplace Equity Program, accessed date: August 28, 2025. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/portfolio/labour/programs/employment-equity.html>)

identify and eliminate systemic barriers within their organisations and implement strategies to close representation gaps, making it a preventive rather than remedial tool (Spiteri and Olanipekun, 2025).

The program has achieved success in both employer participation and workforce representation among the four designated groups. Government reporting shows full compliance with reporting obligations, and employers have demonstrated strong awareness and implementation of the Act.⁷⁴ The federal public service also shows tangible progress: a 2024 Government of Canada report indicates that representation of the four designated groups has increased, with three groups surpassing their labour market workforce availability.⁷⁵

- Women: ~56.9% representation vs. 55.3% workforce availability
- Indigenous peoples: ~5.3% representation vs. 4.1% availability
- Visible minorities: ~22.9% representation vs. 22.7% availability
- Persons with disabilities: Improved to 7.9%, though still below 12.0% workforce availability as of March 2024

At the executive level, all groups meet or exceed workforce availability, with substantial progress for persons with disabilities (9.7% vs. 5.3% availability).

Despite these gains, the EEA has significant limitations. Spiteri and Olanipekun (2025) emphasise that its coverage remains narrow, applying only to federally regulated workplaces, which represent a small share of Canada's overall labour market. Most provinces lack comparable equity legislation, leaving many marginalised workers without systemic protections. **Quebec** is the only province with similar legislation, but its scope extends only to government-related bodies (Spiteri and Olanipekun, 2025).

Scholars also argue that the Act remains outdated and insufficiently responsive to contemporary understandings of equity. Its key weaknesses include:

- **Outdated terminology:** Language that no longer reflects current concepts of race, identity, or systemic discrimination.
- **Weak enforcement:** Limited monitoring and penalties that reduce employer accountability.
- **Neglect of intersectionality:** Failure to address how overlapping identities (e.g., race and gender, or disability and Indigeneity) compound systemic barriers.
- **Lack of disaggregated data:** Absence of subgroup-level data collection, which masks disparities within designated groups.
- **Exclusion of key communities:** Omission of 2SLGBTQIA+ people, immigrants, refugees, and Black workers as distinct equity categories.

⁷⁴ Government of Canada. (2019). Evaluation of the Employment Equity Programs - Final Report, accessed date: August 28, 2025.

(<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/reports/evaluations/employment-equity-programs.html>)

⁷⁵ Government of Canada. (2024). Employment Equity in the Public Service of Canada for Fiscal Year 2023 to 2024, Treasury Board of Canada Seceriat, accessed date: August 28, 2025.

(<https://www.canada.ca/en/government/publicservice/wellness-inclusion-diversity-public-service/diversity-inclusion-public-service/employment-equity-annual-reports/employment-equity-public-service-canada-2023-2024.html>)

- **Inadequate recognition of Indigenous Peoples:** Treatment of Indigenous Peoples as a single equity group, overlooking their distinct legal, political, and constitutional status as self-governing nations.
- **Lack of alignment with other legislation:** The outdated treatment of persons with disabilities does not align with the Accessible Canada Act.
- **Overemphasis on numbers:** Focus on meeting numeric targets rather than dismantling structural and cultural barriers to inclusion.

Together, these shortcomings undermine the EEA’s ability to deliver on its original promise: to advance workplace equity meaningfully and dismantle systemic discrimination across Canada’s labour market (Spiteri and Olanipekun, 2025).

The line items in this Key Topic of *Intersectional Lens – Structures for Inclusion* highlight both the progress Canadian jurisdictions have made in advancing workplace equity and the barriers that persist. To close these gaps, Canada needs a strong political will to establish governing bodies with the necessary authority and resources to design and enforce effective legislative frameworks.

Just as employment equity laws address workplace barriers, gender budgeting demonstrates how fiscal frameworks can embed equality at the systemic level.

Key Topic - Gender Equality Offices and Frameworks

Gender Budgeting

Canada has achieved a notable success in advancing gender equality through gender budgeting. This proactive, process-oriented approach integrates gender considerations into all stages of budget decision-making to achieve more equitable fiscal outcomes (Woolcott, 2025b). This approach promotes transparency, addresses gender gaps, and strengthens socioeconomic equality.

The **federal** government advanced this work through the Gender Results Framework (GRF), the Canadian Gender Budgeting Act, and the requirement for Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+)⁷⁶ in budget measures (Woolcott, 2025b). Internationally, Canada leads the way, ranking first among 38 countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 's 2023 gender budgeting assessment (Woolcott, 2025b).

Across Canada, all 14 jurisdictions have adopted some form of gender budgeting; however, the depth and effectiveness of implementation vary widely.

Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, British Columbia, and Quebec

⁷⁶ Note - Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) is a robust analytical tool and process used across the Government of Canada to develop policies, programs, and initiatives that are both responsive and inclusive to diverse populations. GBA+ helps policymakers understand *who is affected by a given initiative*, how best to meet their differing needs, and how to minimize barriers to accessing benefits. The “Plus” emphasizes that analysis goes beyond sex and gender, incorporating factors such as age, disability, education, ethnicity, socio-economic status, geography, race, religion, culture, and sexual orientation. Source: Government of Canada. (2024). What is Gender-based Analysis Plus, accessed date: August 29, 2025.

(<https://www.canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/gender-based-analysis-plus/what-gender-based-analysis-plus.html>)

stand out for their advanced practices, earning recognition in the CCWESTT report card (Woolcott, 2025b). In contrast, many jurisdictions fall behind due to the absence of specific and measurable gender equality plans, which diminishes the effectiveness of gender budgeting efforts. Some governments also adopt a limited scope, focusing narrowly on issues such as child care or gender-based violence, rather than embedding gender analysis across all areas of policy and spending (Woolcott, 2025b). Woolcott (2025b) highlights that **Manitoba's** 2023/24 budget serves as a cautionary example, as its tax cuts were projected to widen gender-based income inequality, thereby exacerbating the gender pay gap. These gaps highlight the need for budget processes that are explicitly linked to gender equality outcomes, including measures to achieve equal pay.

Without strong advocacy, weak accountability undermines progress, as governments often sideline civil society, apply transparency inconsistently, and expose initiatives to political shifts (Woolcott, 2025b). Strengthening gender budgeting requires a strong political will to establish robust internal processes and well-resourced gender equality offices.

Gender Equality Offices

Legislation under the theme of *Pathways to Equality* exposes significant gaps in oversight for supporting inclusion in Canada. Governments could make greater progress by showing stronger political will to establish departments with the authority not only to develop but also to enforce gender equality and other inclusive legislation. Ideally, jurisdictions would harmonise these efforts to ensure consistent application across the country. However, under Canadian federalism, each of the fourteen FPT jurisdictions must address gender equality within its own sphere of responsibility (Hewlett, 2025).

Jurisdictions have adopted varied approaches,⁷⁷ creating dedicated offices, ministries, secretariats, or directorates that report to Parliament through a Minister. Although these structures differ in size, mandate, and authority, they serve as essential vehicles for delivering gender-based programming, conducting policy analysis, and leading public education and engagement initiatives (Carnegie, 2025). Unlike Iceland, Canada's gender equality offices remain comparatively underpowered, lacking strong legislative oversight and binding enforcement powers (Carnegie, 2025; Hewlett, 2025). These offices and their mandates also face political vulnerability—as seen in March 2025, when Canada's WAGE office briefly lost its departmental status (Carnegie, 2025).

Based on the work of Carnegie (2025) and Hewlett (2025), the CCWESTT Report Card recognises jurisdictions that have implemented formal gender equality office structures, awarding additional credit when these entities are supported through legislation. Currently, four jurisdictions operate gender equality directorates: the governments of **Canada, Manitoba, Ontario, and Yukon**. Among them, only the

⁷⁷ Note - some jurisdictions have expanded their approach beyond women through an intersectional lens, such as WAGE Canada (Women and Gender Equality Canada), Women and Gender Equity Manitoba (WAGE MB), Status of Women and Inclusion Branch in Alberta, Gender Equity Office in British Columbia, etc. (Carnegie, 2025)

federal government and **Manitoba** have enacted legislation to formally establish their directorates, thereby granting a stronger mandate and greater institutional stability. The remaining jurisdictions (excluding **Nunavut**) maintain gender equality offices or secretariats, though only **Saskatchewan** and **Nova Scotia** have enshrined these in law. **Alberta**, while it continues to support a gender equality office, no longer provides this structure with a statutory foundation. The province once upheld a robust legislative framework for women's equality, but dismantled these structures in 1996 and has yet to reinstate them.⁷⁸

Gender Equality Advisory Council

In addition to formal offices, several jurisdictions also maintain Gender Equality Advisory Councils⁷⁹ which serve in a consultative role by offering non-binding recommendations to government leaders. Nine jurisdictions currently uphold such councils, with **Quebec** and **Nunavut** having legislated their creation. Still, unlike Iceland, no Canadian jurisdiction has granted either gender equality offices or advisory councils the legislative authority or oversight powers necessary to effect systemic change.

GBA + Use in Policy Design

The integration of GBA+ into policymaking is a critical measure of whether governments embed equity considerations across systemic design, as it ensures that policies account for how they affect diverse groups differently. Carnegie (2025) assessed how jurisdictions apply GBA+ in policy development. Through this analysis, CCWESTT gave the jurisdictions a checkmark if they demonstrated partial or complete integration of GBA+ in their policymaking processes, and marked them with a 'NO' if their use of GBA+ was unclear or absent.

Equality in Canada is achievable. What Canada needs is the political will to lead, design, and implement strategic planning and partnerships, ultimately advancing legislative reforms that foster a culture of equity and inclusion where everyone can thrive in the workplace. The following section evaluates current inclusion-related strategies for change in Canada.

⁷⁸ Note - Alberta once had a strong tradition of legislated women's equality structures, beginning with the Alberta Women's Bureau (1928), which coordinated women's organizations, collected data, and supported community education. Over the decades, the Bureau evolved through successive acts (1942, 1966, 1970, 1980), eventually becoming the Women's Secretariat (1986), with a mandate to influence government policy, conduct research, and raise awareness, alongside the creation of the Alberta Advisory Council on Women's Issues. However, by 1996 the Secretariat was disbanded, marking the end of Alberta's legislated gender equality institutions. Today, the Status of Women and Inclusion Branch exists within the Ministry of Arts, Culture and Status of Women, but unlike its predecessors, it was not created through legislation and lacks statutory protection (Hewlett, 2025).

⁷⁹ Note - The United Nations established the Commission on the Status of Women in 1946, inspiring Canada to create its own structures, beginning with the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in 1967, which recommended national and provincial advisory councils. By the early 1970s, most provinces and territories (except British Columbia) had established such councils, though many were later weakened or dismantled by budget cuts. In contrast, Iceland's 1975 women's strike led to the passage of the 1976 Gender Equality Act and the creation of a Gender Equality Council and Directorate, both of which remain legally entrenched and empowered. While Canadian advisory councils influenced policies on issues such as housing, wages, and gender-based violence, they were never given the legal authority or permanence seen in Iceland and other European countries (Hewlett, 2025).

Strategies for Change - Inclusion

Governments can use strategies to articulate a vision, engage communities, collect data, and test innovative ideas before enacting legislation. Yet, too often, government-led strategies remain non-binding, temporary, underfunded, and politically vulnerable, weakening their impact (CCWESTT, 2023). The CCWESTT Gap Analysis (2023) cautions that without a clear purpose and direction, such strategies risk becoming performative.

CCWESTT cautions that not all initiatives achieve genuine inclusion. The CCWESTT Report Card evaluates jurisdictions through an intersectional lens, recognising those that demonstrate real strategic direction supported by government commitments, structures, and accountability. The following section highlights key intersectional strategies across Canadian jurisdictions, beginning with the use of disaggregated data.

Key Topic - Disaggregate Data

One of the strongest examples of an inclusion strategy is Statistics Canada's use of data. For more than 100 years, the **federal** government has collected comprehensive information under the Statistics Act,⁸⁰ producing detailed portraits of Canadian society across employment, labour, demographics, health, housing, and education. Policymakers, researchers, and the public rely on these datasets to make informed decisions.

The Disaggregated Data Action Plan (DDAP) drives this work as a multi-year, well-funded, government-wide strategy. The plan sets clear objectives, defines methodologies, and establishes measurable outcomes.⁸¹ Canada stands out internationally for its systematic collection and sharing of equity-focused, disaggregated data. Although Statistics Canada collects the data federally, the datasets include provincial and territorial breakdowns, making it the only standardised national source for jurisdictional comparisons. For this reason, the CCWESTT Report Card credited all provinces and territories for access to and use of these datasets.

Statistics Canada expanded its commitment through the Gender, Diversity, and Inclusion Statistics (GDIS) Hub, a central portal for equity-focused, disaggregated, and intersectional data.⁸² The Hub delivers interactive dashboards, searchable catalogues, and publications covering women, Indigenous peoples, racialised communities, persons with disabilities, immigrants, and 2SLGBTQIA+ populations. By making diversity data accessible and linking it with Gender-Based Analysis Plus

⁸⁰Canadian Government. (2025). Justice Laws Website - Statistics Act, accessed date: August 31, 2025. (<https://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/S-19/FullText.html>)

⁸¹Government of Canada. (2025). Disaggregated Data Action Plan, accessed date: August 31, 2025. (<https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/trust/modernization/disaggregated-data>)

⁸² Statistics Canada. (2025). The road to the 2026 Census, accessed date: September 1, 2025. (<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2026/road-enroute/index-eng.cfm>)

(GBA+), the Hub strengthens evidence-based and inclusive policymaking.⁸³ Dashboards cover key policy domains, including:

- [Education & Skills Development](#)
- [Economic Participation & Prosperity](#)
- [Leadership & Democratic Participation](#)
- [Gender-Based Violence & Access to Justice](#)
- [Poverty Reduction, Health & Well-Being](#)
- [Other relevant gender-related indicators, such as earnings, wages and non-wage benefits](#)

In preparation for the 2026 Census, Statistics Canada published a consultation report highlighting the need for more inclusive identity data.⁸⁴ It followed with ten fact sheets and technical reports outlining content changes.⁸⁵ Key changes include a new question on sexual orientation, expanded questions on ethnic and cultural origin, and more nuanced questions on Indigenous identity.

Collecting disaggregated data directly connects to strategies for inclusion. The following section examines how jurisdictions have applied intersectional approaches to design and implement these strategies.

Key Topic - Intersectional Lens - Strategies for Inclusion

The CCWESTT Report Card credits jurisdictions that advance inclusion through an intersectional lens. Many have introduced action plans or strategic frameworks, but CCWESTT emphasises that governments must strengthen these initiatives by transforming them into comprehensive and robust strategic planning processes.

Gender Equality - Equity Strategies

The Government of Canada launched the Gender Results Framework (GRF) in Budget 2018 as part of a broader initiative that includes the GDIS Hub and gender budgeting.⁸⁶ The GRF sets out Canada's vision for gender equality and affirms its commitment to the United Nations' 2030 Agenda and [17 Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#).⁸⁷ It directly advances SDG 1: No Poverty, SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being, SDG 4: Quality Education, SDG 5: Gender Equality, SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, and SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals.

Under the GRF, the **federal** government identified six priority areas:

⁸³ Government of Canada. (2025). Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Hub, accessed date: August 31, 2025. (<https://www.statcan.gc.ca/hub-carrefour/gdis-sgdi/index-eng.htm>)

⁸⁴ Statistics Canada. (2024). 2026 Census of Population Content Consultation Results: What we heard from Canadians, accessed date: September 1, 2025. (https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2024/statcan/92-137-x2024001-eng.pdf)

⁸⁵ Statistics Canada. (2025). The road to the 2026 Census, accessed date: September 1, 2025. (<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2026/road-enroute/index-eng.cfm>)

⁸⁶ Government of Canada. (2021). Gender Results Framework, accessed date: September 1, 2025. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/gender-equality/gender-results-framework.html>)

⁸⁷ Government of Canada. (2025). Sustainable Development Goals Information Hub, accessed date: September 1, 2025. (<https://www144.statcan.gc.ca/sdg-odd/index-eng.htm>)

- [Education and skills development](#)
- [Economic participation and prosperity](#)
- [Leadership and democratic participation](#)
- [Gender-based violence and access to justice](#)
- [Poverty reduction, health and well-being](#)
- [Gender equality around the world](#)

The CCWESTT Report Card acknowledges Canada’s progress with the GRF and GDIS Hub, which strengthens equity-focused policymaking by providing granular, intersectional data. However, these initiatives do not align with the scope of jurisdictions like Iceland, which combines evidence-based approaches and strategic planning with legally binding structures and gender-responsive budgeting, resulting in enforceable, system-wide change (Hewlett, 2025). Hewlett (2025) also notes that Canada has not maintained a strategic planning process for gender equality since 1995. A key misalignment for these gender equality initiatives (and other federally organised strategies, such as the 50-30 challenge)⁸⁸ is the chronic underfunding of WAGE Canada, which limits its ability to provide authoritative oversight and complete coordination of gender equality and inclusion efforts across government departments.

The CCWESTT Report Card recognises four other jurisdictions for advancing gender equality strategies:

- **Manitoba** developed a four-year strategic plan to advance equality for Indigenous women, girls, two-spirit, and gender-diverse people.⁸⁹
- **Quebec** has maintained a consistent strategic planning process since the 1990s, with the current plan in effect from 2022 to 2027.⁹⁰
- **Newfoundland and Labrador** has produced departmental business plans for Women and Gender Equality since 2017.⁹¹
- **Prince Edward Island** earned recognition for the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women’s Equality Report Card, which tracks the province’s progress toward gender equality.⁹²

By contrast, Hewlett (2025) highlights that the **Northwest Territories**, **Saskatchewan**, and **Ontario** have undertaken gender equality initiatives in the past. Still, their lack of recent action left them unrecognised in the CCWESTT Report

⁸⁸ Note: The 50–30 Challenge, launched in 2020 by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED), was a voluntary initiative aimed at increasing gender parity and representation of equity-deserving groups in leadership. Source: Government of Canada. (2025). The 50–30 Challenge: Your Diversity Advantage, accessed date: September 1, 2025. (<https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/ised/en/50-30-challenge-your-diversity-advantage>)

⁸⁹Government of Manitoba. (n.d.). Mino’Ayaawag Ikwewag All Women Doing Well. , accessed date: September 1, 2025. (<https://www.gov.mb.ca/wage/docs/mino/minoayaawag-ikwewag.pdf>)

⁹⁰Government of Quebec. (2022). GOVERNMENT STRATEGY FOR GENDER EQUALITY, accessed date: September 1, 2025. (<https://cdn-contenu.quebec.ca/cdn-contenu/adm/org/SCF/publications/plans-strategiques/STR-strategie-equalite-femme-homme-2022-2027-EN-SCF.pdf>)

⁹¹ Government of Newfoundland. (2023). Business Plan Women and Gender Equality 2023-2026, accessed date: September 1, 2025. (<https://www.gov.nl.ca/exec/wqe/files/WGEBusinessPlan2023-26.pdf>)

⁹² PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women. (2024). 2026 EQUALITY REPORT CARD ASSESSMENT MODEL, accessed date: September 1, 2025. (<https://peistatusofwomen.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/WEB-2026-Equality-Report-Card-Assessment-Model.pdf>)

Card.

British Columbia has taken a comprehensive approach. The BC Public Service is developing a three-year Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy—*Where We All Belong*—set to launch in Fall 2025.⁹³ The strategy explicitly includes persons with disabilities, alongside Indigenous, racialised, 2SLGBTQIA+, and immigrant communities, and embeds equity into core government operations through leadership training, inclusive hiring, accessibility targets, and learning pathways. **British Columbia** is also co-developing a new corporate EDI strategy with equity-deserving and rights-holding groups, also scheduled for launch in Fall 2025. These efforts institutionalise systemic change and strengthen accountability, earning **British Columbia** intersectional recognition in the CCWESTT Report Card.

Jurisdictions have taken more action on anti-racism than on many other equity fronts.

Racial Inclusion - Equity Strategies

On June 8, 2024, the **federal** government launched *Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy: Changing Systems, Transforming Lives (2024–2028)*,⁹⁴ committing \$110.4 million to combat systemic racism and discrimination. The community-driven plan coordinates over 70 federal initiatives across justice, housing, healthcare, immigration, and employment, while investing more than \$70 million in local, community-led projects. Justice Canada complemented this effort with its *Anti-Racism Policy* in March 2024,⁹⁵ embedding an anti-racism analytical framework into all departmental policy, legal, and program development.

At the jurisdictional level, several provinces have advanced anti-racism strategies.

- **British Columbia** and **Nova Scotia**⁹⁶ were recognised for equity frameworks that integrate anti-racism into broader inclusion efforts.
- **Ontario** launched *Building a Stronger and More Inclusive Ontario*⁹⁷ in August 2023, investing \$132.5 million to set measurable goals and strategies that confront systemic racism across provincial programs.
- **Prince Edward Island** introduced its first *Anti-Racism Action Plan*

⁹³Government of British Columbia. (2025). Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy for the BC Public Service, accessed date: September 4, 2025. (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/careers-myhr/about-the-bc-public-service/diversity-inclusion/diversity-inclusion-strategy>)

⁹⁴Government of Canada. (2024). Changing Systems, Transforming Lives: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028, accessed date: September 4, 2025. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/combating-racism-discrimination/canada-anti-racism-strategy.html>)

⁹⁵Government of Canada. (2024). Justice Canada's Anti-Racism Policy Equality for all: Embrace diversity and inclusion, eradicate racism, accessed date: September 4, 2025. (<https://canada.justice.gc.ca/eng/abt-apd/policy-politique.html>)

⁹⁶Government of Nova Scotia. (2024). Equity and Anti-Racism Strategy, accessed date: September 4, 2025. (<https://novascotia.ca/just/publications/docs/equity-and-anti-racism-strategy.pdf>)

⁹⁷Government of Ontario. (2023). Building a Stronger and More Inclusive Ontario: Ontario's Anti-Racism Strategic Plan, accessed date: September 4, 2025. (https://files.ontario.ca/ar-2001_ard_report_tagged_final-s.pdf)

(2023–2028)⁹⁸ in June 2023, steered by a new Anti-Racism Office. The plan focuses on three pillars: building inclusive culture and community cohesion, improving representation of racialised and Indigenous peoples in leadership, and embedding anti-racism analysis into legislation and programs. It aims to improve social, economic, educational, and health outcomes while institutionalising equity across provincial structures.

- **Alberta** rolled out *Taking Action on Racism: Building Momentum*,⁹⁹ which expands equitable access to government services and programs by combining new initiatives with existing ones.
- **Newfoundland and Labrador** has not yet launched a formal strategy, but it continues consultations through its Ministerial Committee on Anti-Racism to inform a plan.¹⁰⁰

Other provinces and territories have not adopted comprehensive anti-racism strategies—hence their absence in the CCWESTT Report Card, although some have taken steps in key areas:

- **Quebec’s** *Groupe d’action contre le racisme* (2020)¹⁰¹ delivered 25 concrete recommendations targeting police, housing, employment, and education.
- **Manitoba** created a *Disrupting Racism Steering Committee* and an action plan¹⁰² to guide anti-racism policies within its health system.
- **New Brunswick** appointed a *Commissioner on Systemic Racism*¹⁰³ to conduct public consultation and review government practices across multiple sectors.
- In **Yukon, Northwest Territories** and **Nunavut**, anti-racism work appears within Indigenous reconciliation, health, or education frameworks as opposed to stand-alone plans.

These strategies matter because they move beyond symbolic commitments. They embed accountability, measurable actions, and systemic change across institutions. Jurisdictions that invest in coordinated and resourced strategies not only confront racism directly but also strengthen economic and social resilience by ensuring full participation of racialised and Indigenous communities, including immigrants and refugees.

By contrast, Canadian jurisdictions have done far less strategic work to address systemic inequities facing 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

⁹⁸Government of Prince Edward Island. (2024). Anti-Racism Action Plan, accessed date: September 4, 2025.

(<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/executive-council-office/anti-racism-action-plan>)

⁹⁹ Government of Alberta. (2024). Taking Action on Racism: Building Momentum, accessed date: September 4, 2025. (<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/albertas-anti-racism-action-plan>)

¹⁰⁰Government of Newfoundland. (2024). Engagement to Inform the Work of the Ministerial Committee on Anti-Racism, accessed date: September 4, 2025.

(<https://www.engagenlarchive.ca/engagement-initiatives/antiracism-engagement>)

¹⁰¹Government of Quebec. (2020). Racism in Quebec: Zero Tolerance, accessed date: September 4, 2025.

(https://cdn-contenu.quebec.ca/cdn-contenu/politiques_orientations/Groupe_action_racisme/RA_GroupeActionContreRacisme_AN_MAJ.pdf)

¹⁰² Government of Manitoba. (n.d.). Racism, Disrupted, accessed date: September 4, 2025.

(<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/about/racism-disrupted/steering-committee-and-action-plan/>)

¹⁰³ Government of New Brunswick. (2021). Commissioner on systemic racism, accessed date: September 4, 2025.

(<https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/csr-crs/en.html>)

2SLGBTQI+ Inclusion - Equity Strategies

Most jurisdictions have not yet developed comprehensive strategic or action plans for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. Strategic planning requires political will, sustained funding, and public accountability—all of which remain vulnerable to political pressures. As a result, governments often default to piecemeal initiatives, such as anti-discrimination laws, equity portals, or targeted grants, rather than implementing long-term, binding strategies. Legislation provides a foundation of rights, but only strategic work—collecting data, transforming workplace culture, enforcing protections, and delivering targeted programs—turns those rights into a lived reality for 2SLGBTQIA+ professionals in SETT (Parahoo, 2025).

Canada launched its first-ever *Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan* in August 2022.¹⁰⁴ The plan commits \$100 million over five years to bolster community organisations, improve data collection, expand access to services, and combat discrimination at home and abroad in a systemic and accountable manner. By 2025, the government had invested over \$250 million into improving equality for 2SLGBTQI+ communities as part of this effort.

Canada also led globally by collecting transgender and non-binary data in the 2021 Census. While Statistics Canada continues to refine standards for sexual orientation, sex at birth, and gender identity in consultation with communities, the 2026 Census still excludes gender expression.

At the jurisdictional level, three provinces stand out for their sustained, structured approaches:

- **Nova Scotia** is actively developing a provincial 2SLGBTQI+ action plan through public consultation under its Equity and Anti-Racism Strategy.¹⁰⁵
- **British Columbia** earned CCWESTT recognition for integrating 2SLGBTQI+ inclusion in its *Where We All Belong* strategy and maintaining a centralised Gender Equity & 2SLGBTQI+ resource portal.¹⁰⁶
- **Quebec's** long-standing *Bureau de lutte contre l'homophobie et la transphobie* has guided action plans since 2008; its current 2023–2028 iteration includes 44 funded measures, clear accountability, and cross-ministry implementation.¹⁰⁷

Other provinces and territories have taken smaller steps—such as targeted grants,

¹⁰⁴ Government of Canada. (2022). *Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan 2022*, accessed date: September 1, 2025. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/free-to-be-me/federal-2slgbtqi-plus-action-plan/federal-2slgbtqi-plus-action-plan-2022.html>)

¹⁰⁵ Government of Nova Scotia. (2024). *2SLGBTQIA+ Action Plan Engagement*, accessed date: Sept. 4, 2025. (<https://news.novascotia.ca/en/2024/05/31/2slgbtqi-action-plan-engagement>)

¹⁰⁶ Government of British Columbia. (2025). *Gender Equity & 2SLGBTQIA+ resources*, accessed date: September 4, 2025. (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/gender-equity/resources>)

¹⁰⁷ Government of Quebec. (2023). *UN QUÉBEC ENGAGÉ POUR L'INCLUSION, LE RESPECT DES DROITS et LE BIEN-ÊTRE DES PERSONNES de LA DIVERSITÉ SEXUELLE et de GENRE PLAN D'ACTION GOUVERNEMENTAL de LUTTE CONTRE L'HOMOPHOBIE et LA TRANSPHOBIE 2023-2028*, accessed date: September 4, 2025. (<https://cdn-contenu.quebec.ca/cdn-contenu/adm/gouv/homophobie-transphobie/PL-plan-action-homophobie-transphobie-2023-2028-BLCHT.pdf>)

health initiatives, or education sector supports—but none have developed comprehensive, long-term frameworks comparable to those in **Quebec, British Columbia, or Nova Scotia**. These fragmented approaches resemble early-stage inclusion work seen in anti-racism and Indigenous reconciliation but fall short of the strategic planning needed to deliver systemic change.

Indigenous Inclusion - Equity Strategies

Jurisdictional anti-racism strategies often acknowledge Indigenous peoples, but governments must go further to meet Truth and Reconciliation commitments. Indigenous women in particular face intersecting barriers rooted in colonialism, systemic racism, gender bias, and socio-economic inequities (Gauthier, 2025). The MMIWG Calls for Justice and requires governments to explicitly adopt a gendered and intersectional approach to policy.¹⁰⁸

Progress on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action has largely stalled. The **federal** government has self-reported the implementation of 69 of the Calls, but provinces are lagging: **Ontario** has adopted 16, **British Columbia** has adopted 15, and **Manitoba** has adopted 12. All other jurisdictions remain under 10 (Gauthier, 2025). These Calls demand accountability not only from governments but also from civil society and industry, including specific efforts to reduce barriers for Indigenous women in science, engineering, trades, and technology (SETT).

Gauthier's report "[Toward Equity in SETT: a framework for Indigenous women's inclusion and success](#)" maps out both the Calls to Action and the Calls to Justice from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. It clearly outlines accountability at jurisdictional, institutional, and individual levels, providing a roadmap for systemic change.¹⁰⁹

Persons with a Disability (PWD) Inclusion - Equity Strategies

With accessibility legislation now in place across most provinces, governments prioritise binding standards over strategic planning. This focus may explain why relatively few jurisdictions pursue stand-alone disability strategies, especially since many accessibility acts are still relatively recent (2013–2024).

Canada took a landmark step on October 7, 2022, by launching its first Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP),¹¹⁰ a coordinated, whole-of-government blueprint to

¹⁰⁸National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. (2019). *Reclaiming power and place: The final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*, accessed date: September 4, 2025. (<https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>)

¹⁰⁹ Gauthier, S. (2025). *Toward Equity in SETT: a framework for Indigenous women's inclusion and success*, accessed date: August 14, 2025. (<https://ccwestt-cfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Toward-Equity-in-SETT-A-Framework-for-Indigenous-Womens-Inclusion-and-Success-Report.pdf>)

¹¹⁰ Government of Canada. (2022). *Canada's Disability Inclusion Action Plan, 2022*, accessed date: September 4, 2025. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/disability-inclusion-action-plan/action-plan-2022.html>)

enhance inclusion for the 22% of Canadians (approximately 6.2 million people) who identify as having a disability. The DIAP organises its work under four strategic pillars: Financial Security, Employment, Accessible and Inclusive Communities, and A Modern Approach to Disability. It grounds its approach in principles such as “Nothing Without Us,” a human rights-based framework, and intersectionality.

At the jurisdictional level, three provinces stand out for their sustained and structured approaches:

- **Quebec** advanced its response with *For a Quebec that Is Rich in All Its Talents: National Strategy for the Employment Integration and Retention of Persons with Disabilities (2019–2024)*.¹¹¹ The plan includes 33 measures, ranging from employer awareness campaigns and school-to-work transitions to clearly assigned implementation responsibilities.
- **Newfoundland and Labrador** emphasised inclusion through its 2012–2018 strategy *Access. Inclusion. Equality.*, grounded in principles such as “Nothing About Us Without Us” and dignity in service delivery.¹¹² This framework fostered collaboration among government, business, and the community, informing the province’s *Accessibility Act (2021)*, which mandates public-sector accessibility plans backed by enforcement and governance mechanisms.
- **Ontario** enacted the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* in 2005, setting a target of full accessibility by 2025.¹¹³ The AODA establishes standards in customer service, employment, information and communications, transportation, and the built environment. It also requires organisations to publish multi-year accessibility plans and comply with progressive benchmarks, functioning as a long-term roadmap even if not framed as a “strategy.”

Other provinces—including **Manitoba** (2013), **Nova Scotia** (2017), **British Columbia** (2021), **New Brunswick** (2024), and **Saskatchewan** (2023)—have enacted accessibility acts that embed strategic elements such as mandated accessibility plans, advisory committees, or province-wide targets. While not always presented as formal strategies, these laws institutionalise planning and accountability.

Alberta, by contrast, relies on the Office of the Advocate for Persons with Disabilities (established in 2017). The Advocate provides advice, education, and systemic advocacy, but the province lacks binding accessibility standards, effective enforcement mechanisms, and a province-wide strategic plan. For this reason,

¹¹¹Government of Quebec. (2022). *For a Quebec that Is Rich in All Its Talents: National Strategy for the Employment Integration and Retention of Persons with Disabilities (2019–2024)*, accessed date: September 4, 2025. (https://cdn-contenu.quebec.ca/cdn-contenu/adm/min/emploi-solidarite-sociale/publications-adm/rapport/STRAT_s_nph_2019-2024_bilan-2022_MTESS.pdf)

¹¹²Government of Newfoundland. (2012). Provincial Advisory Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, accessed date: September 4, 2025. (<https://www.assembly.nl.ca/business/electronicdocuments/ProvincialAdvisoryCouncil2012-13ActivityReport.pdf>)

¹¹³Government of Ontario. (2012). About Assessability Laws, accessed date: September 4, 2025. (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/about-accessibility-laws>)

CCWESTT once again did not award **Alberta** credit in the 2023 Report Card, emphasising that an advocacy-based model cannot replace enforceable legislative frameworks.

Prince Edward Island, Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut remain further behind. Without stand-alone accessibility legislation, they continue to depend on Human Rights Codes and civil society to address barriers. This reactive, complaint-driven model highlights the uneven progress of accessibility inclusion across Canada, where some jurisdictions incorporate accessibility into enforceable law, while others rely on individual advocacy.

Canada has made significant progress by enacting human rights legislation, accessibility acts, anti-racism frameworks, and initiatives promoting gender equality. Several jurisdictions also demonstrate leadership through the implementation of targeted strategies and action plans. Yet progress remains uneven, fragmented, and often politically vulnerable. Protections and supports vary widely across provinces and territories, resulting in Canadians experiencing very different levels of inclusion depending on where they live and work. This patchwork undermines fairness, creates barriers to mobility, and slows national progress toward equity. Too often, governments rely on complaint-driven systems or short-term strategies that lack binding authority, stable funding, or clear accountability.

To move beyond symbolic commitments and deliver measurable change, Canada must adopt stronger, coordinated frameworks that connect legislation with strategy. The following recommendations build on the lessons learned in this section, charting a pathway for governments, institutions, and industries to consistently embed equity and inclusion across the country.

Recommendations for Systemic Change – Pathways to Equality

To close the gap between rights in law and equity in practice, governments must adopt stronger, coordinated approaches that embed inclusion into every stage of policymaking and service delivery. The following recommendations chart concrete steps jurisdictions can take to advance systemic change:

- **Shift to Proactive Approaches:** Replace reactive, complaint-based systems with robust strategic planning processes developed through an intersectional lens. Ensure that these strategies serve as precursors to binding legislation, creating enforceable commitments rather than temporary initiatives. Develop holistic, budgeted, and integrated approaches that recognise women, Indigenous peoples, racialised communities, persons with disabilities, immigrants, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people as full contributors to society and the economy.
- **Establish Designated Equality Directorates:** Create or strengthen gender equality and inclusion directorates (as opposed to offices, secretariats, and/or councils) in every jurisdiction (e.g., WAGE Manitoba). Anchor them in legislation, provide sustained funding, and grant authority to oversee

strategic planning, enforce workplace inclusion standards, and ensure accountability.

- **Apply GBA+ Across All Policy Development:** Mandate the systematic use of Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) in all policy and program design. Require directorates to ensure policies reflect the lived realities and input of the communities they serve.
- **Enact Gender Equality Legislation:** Following Iceland’s example, legislate gender equality in every jurisdiction. Embed requirements for strategic planning, gender-responsive budgeting, and measurable outcomes within law to make equality commitments binding and enforceable.
- **Expand Gender Budgeting Nationwide:** Leverage existing federal tools—including the Gender Results Framework (GRF), Statistics Canada’s Gender, Diversity, and Inclusion Statistics (GDIS) Hub, and GBA+ training—to strengthen gender budgeting in all provinces and territories. Use budgets not only as fiscal tools but as levers for equity.
- **Develop 2SLGBTQIA+ Strategic Plans:** Support systemic change by moving beyond piecemeal initiatives. Each jurisdiction should create and resource long-term strategic plans for 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion in workplaces and communities, backed by measurable targets and transparent reporting.
- **Enact Anti-Racism Legislation:** Build on existing multiculturalism frameworks by legislating anti-racism strategies in every jurisdiction. Establish measurable commitments to dismantle systemic racism in justice, education, healthcare, housing, and employment.
- **Harmonise Accessibility Frameworks:** Align provincial and territorial Accessibility Acts with the federal Accessible Canada Act to ensure consistent, enforceable accessibility standards across Canada. Require all public- and private-sector organisations to comply with these standards.
- **Modernise and Expand Employment Equity Laws:** Extend the Employment Equity Act across all jurisdictions. Update language, expand beyond the four designated groups, and integrate intersectional analysis. Broaden coverage so all Canadians—not only those in federally regulated industries—benefit from equitable access to the labour market.
- **Strengthen Infrastructure Planning and Consultation:** Require meaningful, transparent engagement with Indigenous governments, equity-deserving groups, and civil society in all major infrastructure and economic planning. Ensure these projects generate equitable employment and procurement opportunities.

Theme Two: SETT Recruitment

Theme Grade	B	C	D	D	C	C	C	D	C	C	C	D	C	C
Theme: SETT Recruitment	71%	68%	57%	57%	68%	61%	60%	53%	64%	61%	64%	56%	60%	60%
Jurisdiction	CAN	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	PQ	NB	NS	PEI	NL	YK	NT	NV
Legislative Structures Recruitment Path	75%	75%	67%	67%	75%	75%	67%	67%	75%	75%	75%	70%	70%	70%
SETT Education Path	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
SETT is included in the K-12 curriculum	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Member of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Accredited Post-secondary, Polytechnic, Technology, Trades Institutes	--	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship (CCDA)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Apprenticeship Regulation Legislation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Red Seal program - interprovincial certification	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SETT Education Outcomes - Women+ >30%	50%	50%	33%	33%	50%	50%	33%	33%	50%	50%	50%	40%	40%	40%
Physical and life sciences and technologies 30%+	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mathematics, computer and information sciences 30%+	✓	✓	NO	NO	✓	✓	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a
Architecture, engineering and related technologies 30%+	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Agriculture, natural resources and conservation 30%+	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Trades Apprenticeship Registrations 30%+	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Trades Apprenticeship Certifications 30%+	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Strategies for Change - Recruitment	67%	60%	47%	47%	60%	47%	53%	40%	53%	47%	53%	42%	50%	50%
STEM Strategic Planning, Financial Commitment	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Robust Strategic Plan Processes (4 out of 6), including:	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
• Public Consultation	N	N	N	N	N	✓	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
• Strategic Plans	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
• Action Plans	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
• Budget Plans	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
• Communication Plans	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
• Evaluation Plans	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

Financial commitments to STEM recruitment through initiatives	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Trades Strategic Planning, Financial Commitment	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Robust Strategic Plan Processes (4 out of 6), including:	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
• Public Consultation	N	N	N	N	N	✓	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
• Strategic Plans	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
• Action Plans	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
• Budget Plans	✓	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
• Communication Plans	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
• Evaluation Plans	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Financial commitments to trade workforce development programs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Leveraging Economic Potential - Emerging Strategies	100%	80%	40%	40%	80%	40%	60%	20%	60%	40%	60%	25%	50%	50%	
Union Structures - an employment equity pathway															
Union Labour Legislation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Union Certification - Union certified if a threshold (e.g., ≥50% - ≥65%) of workers sign union cards (no vote required)	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Union Coverage Rate >30% of the workforce	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	NO	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Government Economic Stimulus															
Community Benefit Agreements/Impact and Benefit Agreements - Including employment equity paths	✓	✓	NO	NO	✓	✓	NO	NO	✓	NO	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓
Equity measures in SETT included in Sustainability planning	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO

Discussion: SETT Recruitment Theme Overview

Within the *SETT Recruitment* theme, the *legislative structures* category shows promising potential in education pathways and initiative funding in SETT, but outcomes remain limited. The *Strategies for Change* section explains that jurisdictions such as Germany, Lithuania, and Australia demonstrate how strong strategic planning and coordination can improve results. This discussion highlights what has been working well in Canada and identifies areas where the country needs to improve to strengthen SETT recruitment through effective structures and strategies.

Legislative Structures - Recruitment

Key Topics – SETT Education Path and SETT Education Outcomes

SETT Education Path

Canada lacks a national approach to education, including in SETT—a reality that sets it apart from most other nations (Woolcott, 2025b). Although all 14 jurisdictions offer SETT at both primary and secondary levels¹¹⁴, inclusion varies, and rural and remote areas face infrastructure and resource barriers to SETT education. Canada’s decentralised education system creates inconsistent SETT policies and frameworks across jurisdictions. As a result, 14 governments enact legislation, set policy, and establish budgetary frameworks¹¹⁵ for education (Woolcott, 2025). This fragmented structure impacts governance, implementation, and the monitoring/evaluation of education, as well as the collection and utilisation of education data.

One of Canada’s structural strengths is the Council of Ministers of Education (CMEC), which coordinates across jurisdictions. However, CMEC could do more to ensure curricula reflect current thinking on scientific literacy, update learning outcomes, and adopt pedagogical approaches that value diversity, promote inclusion, and advance equity in SETT (Woolcott, 2025).

SETT educational pathways extend beyond secondary school, with provinces offering accredited post-secondary options, including universities, colleges, technology schools, trades institutes, and polytechnics. As education is a provincial and territorial responsibility, CCWESTT awarded credit to all jurisdictions in the report card. Despite this range of advanced education opportunities, many students face significant barriers, including high tuition costs and relocation expenses. Others face limited opportunities because of underdeveloped math and reading skills.¹¹⁶ Students who could benefit from financial aid encounter additional barriers, as Canada lacks large-scale, national scholarship programs beyond regional offerings. Short-cycle financing often prevents students from completing programs without significant debt (Akhavan & Lanz, 2025).¹¹⁷

SETT Education Outcomes

¹¹⁴ Note: Although education at all levels is primarily a provincial/territorial responsibility, the Canadian Government has designated responsibility for education in certain specific circumstances, such as Indigenous elementary and secondary education for First Nations communities living on reserve, delivered primarily through Indigenous Services Canada and in partnership with First Nations. *Source*: Government of Canada (2025). Elementary and Secondary Education Program, accessed August 14, 2025. (<https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1450708959037/1531319458607>)

¹¹⁵ Note: In the 10 year data presentation (2012/2013-2021/2022) inflation-adjusted per-student education spending in public schools has increased nationally and in seven of the ten provinces. Only Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Newfoundland and Labrador saw decreases in their inflation-adjusted per-student spending over the ten-year period; with Alberta having the lowest per-student funding in public schools. Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Manitoba, Ontario, and British Columbia all increased education spending in public schools beyond what was required to account for enrolment and price changes. *Source*: Fraser Institute. (2024). Education Spending in Public Schools in Canada, 2024 Edition, accessed date: August 14, 2025. (<https://www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/education-spending-in-public-schools-in-canada-2024.pdf>)

¹¹⁶ Frenette, M. (2007). Why Are Youth from Lower-income Families Less Likely to Attend University? Evidence from Academic Abilities, Parental Influences, and Financial Constraints, accessed date: August 15, 2025. (<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11f0019m/11f0019m2007295-eng.pdf>)

¹¹⁷ Note - On April 22, 2025, the Government of Ontario announced that it will be investing \$750 million in STEM programs at colleges and universities to prepare thousands of university and college students for critical jobs in STEM. (<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1005800/ontario-protecting-workers-and-jobs-by-investing-in-postsecondary-education>)

Education outcomes show that education path choices remain gendered. Canada has achieved gender parity in graduation rates for the physical and life sciences, as well as in agriculture, natural resources, and conservation, earning report card credit in both areas. However, architecture, engineering and related technologies, and mathematics, computer, and information sciences still lag behind. Canada could achieve greater success through apprenticeship-style programs that link education to employment, as apprenticeships provide the most effective means of connecting learning to the workplace.¹¹⁸ Woolcott (2025) recommends expanding the polytechnic model, more common in **Quebec**, which emphasises technical, applied, hands-on learning. Akhavan & Lanz (2025) highlight Australia and Lithuania as models for strategy development, demonstrating how substantial funding and accountability measures have advanced women in STEM and trades. Canada could draw on these examples to inform its own strategic planning.¹¹⁹

These education outcomes directly connect to Canada's apprenticeship system, which serves as the primary bridge between training and employment — yet remains underutilised and fragmented. The system also reflects persistent biases from parents¹²⁰ and educators, who tend to steer students toward university-level programs and away from trades and technology (Woolcott, 2025; CAF, 2025). These biases influence how students perceive their opportunities, whether in the workforce, trades, college programs, or at university. Canada must do more to present trades as a viable and valuable path to economic success, especially for underrepresented groups. For those who do choose trades, Canada provides accreditation pathways.

At the heart of Canada's skilled trades workforce lies the apprenticeship model, an industry-driven approach that combines on-the-job training with classroom instruction, ultimately leading to certification (Fuke, 2025). Federal and provincial governments share responsibility for apprenticeships and skilled trades, assisting

¹¹⁸Note: There are now many more highly qualified graduates than jobs with matching requirements, a condition called underemployment or over-qualification. Canada has one of the most underemployed labour forces in the world. Prior to the era of industrialization and mass schooling, most work-related learning occurred on the job from others who had already mastered it. In countries with well-established skilled trades apprenticeship systems, like Germany, these systems became integrated with emerging school systems. We (Canada) are producing plenty of potential knowledge workers through our universities and colleges, but without effective linkage to apprenticeship experience, many skills are wasted: nearly 50 percent of clerical, sales and service workers in Canada are now underemployed and their skills are unrecognised by their employers. Source: Livingstone, D.W, Raykov, M. (2020). The Great Canadian Training Gap Transforming the apprenticeship system, published in EdCanNetwork, accessed date: August 15, 2025. (<https://www.edcan.ca/articles/the-great-canadian-training-gap/>)

¹¹⁹ Strong success example: Australia's funding landscape for women in STEM is characterised by substantial national scholarship programs, targeted grants for systemic change, and incentives for industry participation. These initiatives combine financial support with mentoring, leadership development, and a strong focus on diversity and inclusion, aiming to address both individual and structural barriers for women and girls in STEM fields (Australian Government, 2019).

Lithuania offers a mix of national and international funding opportunities for women in STEM, with a strong emphasis on scholarships, mentoring, educational reform, and support for entrepreneurship. Much of the funding and programming is delivered through partnerships with European Union initiatives, ensuring Lithuanian women benefit from both local and multinational resources aimed at closing the gender gap in STEM and trades (OECD, 2019). (Akhavan & Lanz, 2025).

¹²⁰ Canadian Apprenticeship Forum. (2025). Parent perceptions of careers in the skilled trades: Insights from Alberta parents, accessed date: August 15, 2025. (https://caf-fca.org/research_reports/parent-perceptions-of-careers-in-the-skilled-trades-insights-from-alberta-parents/)

individuals, registered apprentices, and employers. CCWESTT awarded credit to all jurisdictions in the report card for maintaining apprenticeship pathways and participating in the Red Seal program, which provides interprovincial certification through the Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship.

Despite these structures, the apprenticeship system struggles. Only 36% of apprentices complete their programs.¹²¹ For every 100 apprentice registrations in Canada, only 12 are women, and of those, approximately four complete their apprenticeship (Fuke, 2025). Germany provides a striking contrast: about half of Germans in their 30s have completed an apprenticeship.^{122 123} Canadian jurisdictions could strengthen their outcomes by adapting elements of the German model through strategic planning, educational support, and collaboration.

Low completion rates are not only a matter of participation but also of structure: Canada's fragmented apprenticeship system, with inconsistent regulations and accreditation across jurisdictions, discourages persistence and limits mobility. Apprenticeship paths and certification processes differ across provinces and territories, as each Apprenticeship Act identifies which trades it regulates.¹²⁴ This lack of coordination creates barriers to certification and mobility. For example, although Canada recognises 54 Red Seal trades, **Ontario** regulates more than 140 trades, not all of which carry Red Seal endorsement (Fuke, 2025). Jurisdictions also differ on whether trades are compulsory or voluntary. In some provinces, certification is optional, while in others it is required for workers to practice, creating barriers to mobility (Woolcott, 2025). As Canada works to reduce interprovincial trade barriers, a more consistent and coordinated path to certification would benefit workers, employers, and the economy.

SETT recruitment success in Canada is achievable. Canada needs the political will to design and implement strategic planning and partnerships that make education pathways effective for students, educators, and employers alike.

Strategies for Change - Recruitment

Key Topics – Strategic Planning, Financial Commitment

¹²¹ Canadian Apprenticeship Forum. (2024). Apprenticeship Registration Trends and Completion Rates, accessed date: August 16, 2025. (<https://caf-fca.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/2024-04-UTIP-report-FN.pdf>)

¹²² Note: In Germany, most of these (trades exposures) start at high school age, with extensive information about a wide range of occupations – and placements into them – available through school-related agencies and networks of employers. The vast majority of apprenticeships are completed and most lead to permanent jobs. On the other hand, Germans in their 30s are only about half as likely as Canadians to have university or college completion. It could be argued that many Germans are being denied opportunities to reach their full educational potential by early selection into specific occupations, however effective their apprenticeships are. Source: Livingstone, D.W, Raykov, M. (2020). The Great Canadian Training Gap Transforming the apprenticeship system, published in EdCanNetwork, accessed date: August 15, 2025. (<https://www.edcan.ca/articles/the-great-canadian-training-gap/>)

¹²³ Note: This trades model in Germany has had strong support from the public, despite these efforts, there has been limited female participation in trades - yet they have reached 34%. (Fuke, 2025).

¹²⁴ Note - the [Employment and Social Development Canada \(ESDC\)](#) in partnership with the [Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship \(CCDA\)](#) maintains the [Ellis Chart](#) website - There is an Ellis Chart for each of the 300+ trades designated in Canadian provinces and territories. Information for each trade is categorised by province and territory so that it can be compared. It includes the availability of apprenticeship training, certification, and the participation in the [Red Seal Program](#). It also provides basic information about apprenticeship and certification requirements in each province and territory. (Fuke, 2025).

Jurisdictions have allocated significant funding (\$100s of millions+) to women in SETT programs.¹²⁵ CCWESTT awarded all jurisdictions credit for initiative funding in the report card. Governments have provided funding through diverse mechanisms, including the Federal Women’s Program, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) chairs and grants, apprenticeship supports, and funding for non-profit organisations (Akhavan & Lanz, 2025). For women in trades specifically, the **federal** government has committed substantial resources in its budgets through the Canadian Apprenticeship Strategy.¹²⁶

Despite these investments, outcomes have not improved significantly. Canada must pursue systemic change to achieve large-scale success. Currently, a lack of cohesive coordination and a centralised framework weakens impact. Funding is distributed across multiple agencies and programs, which results in limited transparency, accountability, and evaluation (Akhavan & Lanz, 2025). Advocacy groups, including CCWESTT, have critiqued the Apprenticeship Strategy for lacking robust strategic planning and evaluation mechanisms. Without this crucial feedback loop, Canada cannot strengthen efforts or accelerate change. Without cohesive strategic planning and evaluation, even significant investments cannot overcome the systemic barriers in education pathways and apprenticeship completion.

SETT Strategic Planning Processes

Canada needs a National Strategy for Women in SETT—covering both STEM¹²⁷ and skilled trades¹²⁸—with robust strategic planning processes. This strategy must include public consultation with SETT stakeholders, a renewable 5–10 year strategic plan, accompanying action plans, a budgetary support plan, communications, and evaluations—repeating the cycle. Provinces and territories must participate by creating jurisdictional strategies. The report card scores reflect Canada’s current lack of this type of planning.

¹²⁵ Note: For a list of jurisdictional funding initiatives, please refer to Akhavan & Lanz (2025).

¹²⁶ Note: Large quantities of tax payer funds have been allotted by the federal government through the Canadian Apprenticeship Strategy - through budgetary planning. For eg., in December 2024, the Government of Canada announced it is investing nearly \$1 billion annually in apprenticeship support.

(https://search.open.canada.ca/gpnotes/record/esdc-edsc%2CFWDOL_Dec2024_001) There has been no accompanying communication(s) or final evaluation report(s). (Hewlett, 2025).

¹²⁷ Note: Ontario was mentioned in the report card for their work through public consultations. As mentioned earlier in this report, they recently dedicated significant funding for STEM education.

The Government of Canada, provinces and territories have never created, and there is no evidence that they plan to develop or implement a national strategic plan, communication plan(s), action plan(s), evaluation plans(s), and budget plan(s) to coordinate the efforts to FTP governments to achieve gender equality in the trades for women, girls, and gender-diverse people in Canada. (Hewlett, 2025)

¹²⁸ Note: Ontario was mentioned in the report card for official public consultations for women in trades recruitment. The Government of Canada, provinces and territories have never created, and there is no evidence that they plan to develop or implement a national strategic plan, communication plan(s), action plan(s), evaluation plans(s), and budget plan(s) to coordinate the efforts to FTP governments to achieve gender equality in the trades for women, girls, and gender-diverse people in Canada. (Hewlett, 2025)

Canada could learn from Lithuania¹²⁹ and Australia,¹³⁰ which created a National Strategic Plan for Women in STEM. Canada must move beyond one-off funding announcements toward substantial investments in scholarships and tuition reductions, mentorship programs, expanded apprenticeship pathways, and partnerships with educational institutions, unions, and employers. Governments must also broaden support to underrepresented groups, including Indigenous and rural women, while addressing wage disparities, fragmented funding, and the absence of standardised accountability measures (Fuke, 2025).

The research identified emerging strategies that Canada can embed in its planning frameworks to enhance recruitment and build a reliable workforce.

Key Topic – Leveraging Economic Potential: Emerging Strategies

Strengthening SETT recruitment also requires recognising the critical role of unions and community benefit agreements/impact and benefit agreements (CBAs/IBAs) in shaping workforce pathways and ensuring equitable access to employment. Canada continues its journey toward national economic security, with sustainability and infrastructure building at the core. The “One Economy” concept will demand large-scale initiatives, significant taxpayer investment, and a highly skilled workforce. This moment presents an opportunity to increase youth enrollment in SETT, expand skill development and certification, and grow SETT employment, driving stronger economic outcomes.

The report card evaluated the jurisdictional legislative structures that incorporate emerging strategies, such as robust union frameworks, CBAs/IBAs (Core Firm, 2025), and inclusive SETT integration within sustainability planning (Lennon, 2025). All of these strategies begin with recruitment pathways, such as unions.

Union Structures - An Employment Equity Pathway

Skilled workers gain certification through multiple pathways, with workplace training at the centre of the accreditation process. Unions have long provided strong apprenticeship opportunities, supporting accreditation pathways. While union membership has traditionally centred on skilled trades—from construction to nursing—unions could expand into other high-demand SETT labour development areas. Union structures rest on legislative frameworks; the report card highlights the **federal** government, **British Columbia**, and **Quebec** as leaders. These frameworks could be adapted to support training in professional sectors such as engineering (Core Firm, 2025). By contrast, professional engineers belong to

¹²⁹ Note: Lithuania combines EU-backed structural change funding, mentorship and fellowship programs, and increasing data-driven oversight to promote gender equity in STEM and trades. As part of its gender equality agenda, the National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2015-2021 was approved by the Lithuanian government in 2015 where the Action Plan for 2018-2021 lays out the implementation of the Programme. “It sets out concrete actions, implementation deadlines, responsible institutions, state budget allocations for each action, and assessment criteria. Almost all ministries are included in the implementation of the Action Plan where all priorities are enshrined” (OECD, 2019). (Akhavan & Lanz, 2025).

¹³⁰ Note: Australia has strengthened their accountability mechanisms to support women in STEM and trades through data-driven project evaluation and proposed central oversight to ensure sustained progress. (Australian Academy of Technological Sciences & Engineering [ATSE], 2023). (Akhavan & Lanz, 2025).

provincial or territorial regulatory associations, which uphold high professional standards but play a limited role in recruitment and training (Peltier-Huntley, 2025).

Government Economic Stimulus

CBAAs have emerged as another key tool. Unions and CBAAs often work together to influence public infrastructure development, workforce participation, equitable growth, and community wealth-building. Unions provide workforce infrastructure, while CBAAs ensure equity outcomes such as inclusive hiring, training, and supplier diversity.¹³¹ CBAAs prioritise local hiring, apprenticeship targets, supplier diversity, and community investments, benefitting marginalised groups such as women, Indigenous peoples, and racialised workers (Core Firm, 2025). These formal agreements have an opportunity to provide provisions for equal pay and pay transparency. Unionised provinces with higher labour standards, such as **British Columbia** and **Ontario**, more often embed CBAAs into public infrastructure mandates, using union capacity to achieve workforce equity targets. In provinces with lower or uneven standards, such as **Alberta**, **Saskatchewan**, and **Prince Edward Island**, unions and CBAAs often fill policy gaps by providing prevailing wage protections, no-strike clauses, and targeted hiring (Core Firm, 2025). Emerging frameworks in **Manitoba** and **Newfoundland and Labrador** now pilot inclusive procurement and local training mandates through infrastructure projects. In the territories—**Yukon**, the **Northwest Territories** and **Nunavut**, Indigenous governments and communities have pioneered hybrid models—such as socio-economic monitoring agreements and IBAs—that emphasise local employment, cultural inclusion, and capacity-building (Core Firm, 2025).

Momentum has also grown at the federal level. In June 2024, the Government of Canada tied Investment Tax Credits to labour conditions and community benefits, requiring the payment of prevailing wages, adherence to apprenticeship ratios, and local hiring (Core Firm, 2025). This marked the most significant federal intervention in decades, tying infrastructure spending to labour equity. Canada’s Building Trades Unions (CBTU) praised the move and called for broader adoption across all federal procurement and provincial partnerships.

Despite progress, Canada must do more to embed CBA/IBA structures into sustainability planning. Current sustainability policies remain inconsistent across jurisdictions, with most relying on voluntary measures rather than binding regulations (Lennon, 2025). This inconsistency creates uncertainty for workers in transitioning industries, many of whom have or need SETT skills. Lennon (2025) reports that most provinces and territories lack comprehensive plans to support workers moving into green economies, offering inadequate training, income security, and equity measures. Policies often treat Indigenous Peoples as stakeholders rather than rights-holders, undermining Indigenous sovereignty and limiting Indigenous-led solutions (Lennon, 2025). To address these gaps, Lennon (2025) recommends legislating transparency and accountability for equity outcomes in sustainability policy initiatives, requiring regular public reporting on progress

¹³¹ Note: CBAAs are implemented as private agreements, public procurement mandates, or hybrid models, with varying levels of enforceability and stakeholder involvement. (Core Firm, 2025).

toward gender equity, and integrating GBA+ audit requirements into climate-related procurement, grants, and policy evaluations. This aligns with the principles of pay transparency by mandating the public disclosure of equity outcomes, including employment outcomes.

Throughout the SETT recruitment theme, Canada repeatedly misses the opportunity to apply Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) in policy design and implementation. This omission persists in sustainability planning, where gender-diverse and equity-deserving groups continue to be structurally excluded from climate governance and workforce development (Lennon, 2025).

Taken together, these findings show that while Canada has invested significantly in SETT recruitment, progress will remain limited without systemic reform. The following recommendations outline a path forward.

Recommendations for Systemic Change - SETT Recruitment

- **Adopt a National Strategy for Women in SETT:** Launch a renewable 5–10 year strategy (covering both STEM and trades) with clear targets, budget allocations, evaluation mechanisms, and coordinated federal–provincial–territorial action.
- **Coordinate Education and Training Pathways:** Strengthen federal leadership and empower CMEC and CCDA to remove systemic barriers, align curricula, and link primary, secondary, and post-secondary SETT education with apprenticeship and accreditation.
- **Guarantee Equity of Access:** Expand rural and remote training opportunities, establish a national scholarship and bursary fund for equity-deserving groups, and fund wraparound supports (including child care, housing, relocation, and mentorship) to increase apprenticeship completion rates.
- **Standardise Apprenticeship and Trade Accreditation:** Establish a harmonised national framework for apprenticeship accreditation and certification, aligned with Red Seal, to reduce interprovincial inconsistencies and strengthen labour mobility.
- **Mandate GBA+ Across Recruitment and Training:** Require the systematic application of Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) in all SETT recruitment initiatives, apprenticeship programs, infrastructure projects, and sustainability planning.
- **Leverage Unions and CBAs/IBAs for Workforce Growth:** Partner with unions to expand apprenticeship pathways and extend equity frameworks to professional sectors such as engineering. Embed CBAs/IBAs in infrastructure and sustainability projects to drive inclusive hiring, accreditation, and community wealth-building.

- **Align Policies for Nation-Building:** Develop clear interprovincial policies on unions, regulatory bodies, and CBAs to reduce fragmentation, ensure consistent enforcement, and reconcile CBA criteria with trade rules. Position SETT recruitment within Canada's nation-building agenda by tying labour mobility, certification, and equity outcomes to infrastructure investment and economic integration.
- **Ensure Accountability:** Mandate transparent reporting, monitoring, and stakeholder engagement across all recruitment initiatives to track outcomes, identify gaps, and drive continuous improvement for workers, employers, and the broader communities.

Theme Three: SETT Retention

Theme Grade	B	C	D	F	D	D	C	C	D	D	F	D	D	F
Theme: SETT Retention	73%	62%	52%	48%	52%	58%	61%	62%	58%	59%	49%	58%	54%	47%
Jurisdiction	CAN	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	PQ	NB	NS	PEI	NL	YK	NT	NV
Legislative Structures Retention - Workplace	78%	46%	52%	52%	57%	59%	52%	54%	52%	61%	57%	53%	49%	44%
SETT Occupation Gender Distribution - Women+	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%
Science and science technology occupations >30%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Engineering and engineering technology occupations >30%	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Mathematics, computer, and information sciences occupations >30%	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
STEM-related occupations* >30%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Trades workforce >30%	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Equal Pay	85%	15%	15%	8%	62%	69%	62%	38%	46%	62%	69%	31%	31%	0%
Human Rights Legislation - equal pay (women & men)	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	NO	✓	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO
Employment Standards (ES) Legislation - equal pay (men & women)	✓	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO
Pay equity laws include sexual orientation and gender identity (not binary language)	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Pay Transparency (PT) Legislation	NO	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO
- Or provisions in ES Legislation (n/a if PT legislation is comprehensive)	✓	n/a	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	✓	n/a	NO	NO	NO
Pay Equity Legislation	✓	NO	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO
• Proactive (not just reactive)	✓	NO	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO
• Pay Equity Commission(er)	✓	NO	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	NO
• Pay Equity Tribunal (Gov't Canada - Human Rights Tribunal covers this)	HRT	NO	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓	NO	NO	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO
• Public service workers	✓	NO	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO
• Para-public service workers	✓	NO	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO
• Private Sector workers	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
• Equal Pay Confirmation	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO
• Equal Pay Certification and/or Equal Pay Symbol	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)	67%	60%	73%	53%	60%	53%	27%	60%	40%	67%	47%	67%	40%	40%
OHS Legislation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
OHS Harmonised (jurisdiction has not carved out protections for a specific industry, i.e. mining)	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	NO

Modern workplace definition (including all: virtual workplaces, remote work, and travel to and from worksites)	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Harassment (defined) (Mainstream OHS)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sexual Harassment (defined) (Mainstream OHS)	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Bullying (defined) (Mainstream OHS) (note - not defined in nuclear, or mining for BC)	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Violence (defined) (Mainstream OHS)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Psychological safety (& injury) (defined) (Mainstream OHS)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	NO	NO	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓
OHS Mainstream - Policies & Prevention Plans include all: Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Bullying and Violence	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	✓	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO
OHS Mainstream - Employers are obligated to train include all: Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Bullying and Violence	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO
On-site complaint process - all worksites	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	NO
Applies to 3rd parties - all worksites	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Toilets Facilities - all worksites	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
OHS Mainstream - Toilet Facilities include all: Toilet paper, Soap & water, Hand-drying equipment, Menstrual product disposal, Cleanliness	✓	NO	✓	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Disclosure & Monitoring of Workplace Harassment and Violence	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Precarious Work	100%	67%	33%	33%	33%	67%	33%	33%	33%	33%	33%	33%	33%	33%	33%
Employment Standards Legislation - Minimum legal working conditions, tied to employee status	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Misclassification of work: explicit legislation, burden is on the employer to prove, strongly enforced	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Legislation for portable benefits to support non-standard employment	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
GBVH Legislation	75%	25%	50%	75%	50%	25%	50%	50%	50%	100%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Employment Standards Legislation - Violence and Harassment Provisions	✓	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Employment Standards Legislation - Domestic Violence Leave	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Domestic Violence Legislation	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Non-disclosure Agreements Legislation	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Care Structures Legislation	100%	67%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	67%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Human Rights Legislation - Pregnant individuals are protected	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Employment Standards Legislation - Maternity, Parental Leave	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Employment Standards Legislation - Caregiver Leave	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Strategies for Change - Retention	68%	78%	51%	44%	47%	57%	70%	70%	63%	56%	42%	62%	59%	51%
GBVH Strategic Planning	100%	100%	33%	33%	33%	67%	100%	67%	67%	67%	33%	67%	67%	33%
National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence (NAPGBV) - Bilateral Agreement reached (Note: Quebec - provincial strategy, federally funded)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Workplace-related actions part of NAPGBV financial commitments	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
GBVH Robust Strategic Plan Processes (4 out of 6), including:	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	NO
· Public Consultation	✓	✓	✓	N	✓	N	✓	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N
· Strategic Plans	✓	N	✓	N	✓	✓	✓	N	N	✓	N	✓	✓	N
· Action Plans	✓	✓	N	N	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	N	✓	✓	N
· Budget Plans	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
· Communication Plans	✓	✓	N	✓	N	✓	✓	N	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	N
· Evaluation Plans	✓	N	N	N	N	N	✓	N	✓	N	N	N	N	N
Early Learning and Child Care Landscape and Agreements	43%	43%	71%	43%	43%	43%	71%	71%	57%	57%	43%	50%	50%	50%
Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Initiative - Bilateral Agreements between Canada/Provinces/Territories	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Included: Workforce Shortage supports	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Included: \$10/day - reached or 2026 formally committed target	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Included: Program makes flexible/extended Hours standard	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Included: Program funding includes overnight care	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
% of Children in Child care Deserts is less than 50%	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO
% of Children in Before/After School Care greater than 50%	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	n/a	n/a	n/a
Violence Leave - Employment Standards - Best Practice	40%	80%	50%	50%	60%	60%	50%	50%	60%	40%	40%	70%	60%	70%
Baseline - Employee domestic violence leave	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Best Practice: Employee – access leave due to violence affecting a dependent child	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Best Practice: Employee (as caregiver) – access leave due to violence affecting a protected adult	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓
Best Practice: Job Protection	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓
Best Practice: No work period eligibility requirement	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Best Practice: Short-term leave (5 days	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	✓	NO	✓	✓	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓

unpaid, 5 days paid)															
Best Practice: Long-term leave (15 weeks+, unpaid)	NO	✓	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓	
Best Practice: Long-term leave (up to 104 weeks in cases of serious bodily injury resulting from a criminal offence)	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	
Best Practice: No verification requirements or documentation from an authorised professional	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	
Best Practice: No leave if the DV offender is also an employee	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓	
Care Structures - Employment Standards - Best Practice	90%	90%	50%	50%	50%	60%	60%	90%	70%	60%	50%	60%	60%	50%	
Pregnancy, Maternity, Adoption, Parental Leave - Job-protected, unpaid leave following the birth or adoption of a child, minimum 16 weeks	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Parental/Child care leave (37+ weeks)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Best Practice: No continuous employment required for EI eligibility	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	
Compassionate Care Leave (Adult) (16 to 28 weeks)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Best Practice: No continuous employment required for EI eligibility	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	✓	NO	✓	NO	✓	✓	NO	
Critical Illness Leave (Adult) (16 to 17 weeks)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Best Practice: No continuous employment required for EI eligibility	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	
Best Practice: Direct caregiver income support (stand-alone program)	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	
Critical Illness Leave (Child) (36-37 weeks)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Best Practice: No continuous employment required for EI eligibility	✓	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	✓	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	

Discussion: SETT Retention Theme Overview

Within the *SETT Retention* theme, the *legislative structures* category highlights the need for robust laws that ensure workplace safety and support the entire worker. This includes advancing equal pay, addressing gender-based violence, reducing precarity by creating stable working conditions, and guaranteeing access to care structures. The *Strategies for Change* section demonstrates what can be achieved when Canada acts in a coordinated way and underscores the importance of harmonisation across jurisdictions. Taken together, this discussion highlights both the areas where Canada has made real progress and the gaps that must be addressed to strengthen retention in SETT through effective structures and strategies.

Legislative Structures Retention - Workplace

Key Topic - SETT Occupation Gender Distribution

Despite decades of policy commitments and organisational efforts to improve equity, women and gender-diverse people remain deeply underrepresented across most science, engineering, trades, and technology (SETT) occupations in Canada. The CCWESTT Report Card confirms stark gender disparities in male-dominated sectors—particularly in skilled trades, engineering, and specific technology fields—where systemic barriers continue to limit access, retention, and advancement.

While there are modest gains in fields such as health technology and life sciences, the overall trend reveals persistent structural issues. For example, women represent 34% of the educated STEM workforce, yet only 21% work in STEM occupations (Akhavan & Lanz, 2025). This gap highlights a persistent “leaky pipeline,” where trained women either do not enter or do not remain in the fields for which they are qualified.

In the skilled trades, the situation is similarly concerning. As Gauthier (2025) notes, women’s success in these sectors often depends more on personal networks and individual resilience than on coordinated, systemic support—highlighting the absence of robust institutional pathways for advancement. This is echoed by tradeswomen who report that “women still have to work harder than men to prove they belong” and that career progression often relies on finding a “supportive journey person or employer willing to take a chance” (Fuke, 2025, p. 29). These informal supports reflect a broader failure to build durable, inclusive training-to-employment pipelines. Even when women do progress in their careers, their technical experience can become invisible in national data systems. According to Peltier-Huntley (2025), occupation data collected by Statistics Canada and classified under the National Occupational Classification (NOC) system maintained by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) is often lost when individuals are promoted into management roles. A woman who once worked as an engineer or tradesperson may now be recorded simply as “management,” erasing her prior technical background and diminishing the visibility of women’s contributions in SETT (Peltier-Huntley, 2025).

These data limitations not only undermine transparency and accountability but also make it difficult to evaluate the impact of equity initiatives. Disaggregated data analysis—by race, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and immigration status—is essential to ensure that gender equity initiatives are also intersectionally inclusive. Without this lens, policies risk serving only the most privileged women and overlooking the compounded disadvantages faced by others.

The everyday conditions within SETT workplaces further compound these systemic barriers to access and advancement. Research shows that women—especially those in skilled trades—frequently encounter unsafe, exclusionary, and hostile environments that erode long-term career sustainability. Common challenges include harassment, isolation, ill-fitting personal protective equipment (PPE), limited hands-on training, and inadequate access to clean, accessible bathroom facilities (Spiteri, 2025). These conditions not only drive attrition but also point to broader gaps in workplace standards and enforcement mechanisms. Yet retention is good

for business and worth the effort. Recent studies estimate that employee replacement costs for turnover can range from approximately 40% to 200% of annual salary, depending on skill level, role criticality, and ramp-up time.^{132 133}

An Immigrant and Refugee Perspective

Despite ongoing labour shortages in SETT sectors, highly trained immigrants and refugees face systemic exclusion at multiple points along the employment pathway. Entry is frequently blocked by the devaluation of international credentials, costly and time-consuming re-credentialing, and employer-imposed “Canadian experience” requirements—barriers that disproportionately affect newcomers (PIRT & FSP, 2025c). PIRT & FSP (2025c) acknowledge that these challenges are further compounded by exclusion from professional networks, bias in hiring, and intersectional discrimination, particularly targeting racialised, Muslim, and immigrant women. Although bridging programs are intended to support newcomers’ transition into the workforce, they are often underfunded or uneven in quality, and broader settlement supports remain too weak to meet the scale of need (PIRT & FSP, 2025c).

Even after gaining entry, many immigrants and refugees continue to face ongoing challenges to achieving career stability and advancement. Structural challenges such as licensing delays and the need to accept low-wage “survival jobs” can derail long-term goals (PIRT & FSP, 2025d). PIRT & FSP (2025d) suggest that policy mismatches often fail to reflect the realities of immigrant settlement, and relational barriers—including microaggressions, bias, and exclusion from informal mentorship—further restrict upward mobility. At the individual level, language barriers, mental health pressures, care responsibilities, and gender role expectations can also limit progression. These barriers start early: immigrant youth often face systemic disadvantages during the transition from education to employment, weakening the SETT pipeline before careers even begin (PIRT & FSP, 2025c).

Such realities raise urgent questions about the effectiveness and inclusivity of core labour protections, particularly in the areas of equal pay and occupational health and safety legislation—two critical policy levers with the potential to mitigate both material and cultural risks in SETT environments. The rise of precarious employment compounds these concerns, as well as insufficient protections against gender-based violence and harassment, and inconsistent enforcement of existing labour standards.

While some progress has been made—particularly in supporting pregnant workers through human rights legislation and Employment Standards—Canada’s current framework still falls short in providing the comprehensive, equity-centred protections required to foster safe, fair, and inclusive workplaces across the SETT sectors.

¹³² Payactiv. (2025). The Cost of Replacing an Employee In Business, accessed date: September 10, 2025. (<https://www.payactiv.com/blog/cost-of-replacing-an-employee/>)

¹³³ Gallup. (2024). 42% of employee turnover is preventable but often ignored, accessed date: September 10, 2025. (<https://www.gallup.com/workplace/646538/employee-turnover-preventable-often-ignored.aspx>)

Key Topic - Equal Pay

Pay Equity and Pay Transparency

Gender pay gaps persist as a significant feature of labour markets worldwide, including in Canada. Despite legislative progress, significant disparities continue across marginalised groups, as outlined earlier in this report. Addressing these inequities requires both pay equity and pay transparency. **Pay equity** ensures equal pay for work of equal value, correcting the systemic undervaluation of women's and gender-diverse work. **Pay transparency** makes wage data visible to employees and the public, revealing inequities that would otherwise remain hidden. As Hewlett (2025) notes, "*there is no pay equity without pay transparency.*"

Equal Pay - A Fragmented Path

Yet Canada's legislative landscape is fragmented. Some jurisdictions have pay equity laws, while others have introduced pay transparency rules; however, only a few combine both in proactive and enforceable ways. For example, **Ontario's Pay Equity Act** applies to public, para-public, and private-sector employers above a specific size, but the province lacks a comprehensive pay transparency framework. Additionally, **Ontario** does not have equal pay in its Human Rights Code. Recent amendments to the *Employment Standards Act*—which will require salary ranges in job postings starting in January 2026¹³⁴—may improve bargaining power for job seekers. However, as Hewlett (2025) and others argue, this change does little for current employees who lack access to wage comparison data.

British Columbia takes a different approach through its *Pay Transparency Act*, which mandates public reporting of wage gaps and protects employees who share or discuss their pay (Hewlett, 2025). But without a pay equity law, workers in B.C. may see wage gaps without access to a legal mechanism for redress. As Hewlett (2025) stresses, what matters is not the legislative form but whether frameworks are comprehensive, proactive, and enforceable.

At the **federal** level, the *Pay Equity Act* (2018, in force since 2021) requires federally regulated employers with 10 or more employees to develop, maintain, and update pay equity plans, replacing the previous complaints-based system (Hewlett, 2025). This legislation emerged from a 16-year legal battle led by the Public Service Alliance of Canada, which resulted in \$3 billion in retroactive pay for its members.

As Hewlett (2025) outlines, provinces and territories across Canada show uneven or weak coverage when it comes to pay equity and pay transparency legislation:

- **Newfoundland and Labrador** has legislated both pay equity and pay transparency for public-sector employers. However, Hewlett (2025) notes

¹³⁴ Government of Ontario. (2023). Ontario to Require Employers to Disclose Salary Ranges and AI Use in Hiring, accessed date: August 6, 2025. (<https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1003758/ontario-to-require-employers-to-disclose-salary-ranges-and-ai-use-in-hiring>)

that the province's framework excludes private-sector workers, lacks a clear timeline for expansion, and was developed with limited consultation.

- **Prince Edward Island** has introduced basic pay transparency requirements through its *Employment Standards Act*, including the requirement to include salary ranges in job postings and protections for employees who discuss wages. However, it lacks a comprehensive, proactive pay equity law for the private sector. The existing *Pay Equity Act* applies only to select public-sector employers, leaving most workers without access to pay equity protections.
- **New Brunswick** applies a proactive pay equity law only to the public sector. In the private sector, workers must rely on the general requirement for equal pay for equal work found in the *Employment Standards Act*. The province has no formal pay transparency legislation. The Human Rights Code also does not include equal pay.
- **Alberta** lacks both pay equity and pay transparency legislation. There is no law requiring fair compensation for work of equal value, nor is there a mandate for employers to disclose salary ranges or prohibit pay secrecy. The only existing measure is the *Public Sector Compensation Transparency Act*, which requires disclosure of salary and severance for high-earning public officials (the “sunshine list”). However, it excludes broader wage practices and private-sector employers.
- **Quebec** stands out with one of the strongest pay equity regimes in North America. The *Pay Equity Act* applies proactively to public and private employers with 10 or more employees and requires ongoing compliance reviews. However, Quebec lacks a dedicated pay transparency law, resulting in gaps in disclosure.
- **Manitoba** and **Nova Scotia** have limited pay equity laws, primarily applicable to public or para-public sectors. Neither province has implemented standalone pay transparency legislation. **Nova Scotia** also lacks equal pay provisions in its Human Rights Code.
- **Saskatchewan** offers limited pay protections through its *Human Rights Code*, which requires equal pay for substantially similar work—defined as work performed under similar conditions with comparable skill and effort. However, it lacks explicit pay equity or pay transparency legislation. This complaint-based system has been widely criticised as ineffective, and the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission has called for a dedicated Pay Equity Commission.
- **Yukon** has no dedicated pay equity or pay transparency legislation. The *Yukon Human Rights Act* mandates equal pay for equal work, regardless of gender or other protected characteristics. However, it does not require proactive employer measures, such as salary disclosures, pay audits, or protections for employees who discuss wages.
- The **Northwest Territories** maintains a narrow pay equity framework, which applies only to select public-sector employees, as outlined in the *Public Service Act* and the Equal Pay Commissioner. It has no pay transparency law, and while the *Human Rights Act* prohibits discriminatory compensation practices, it relies on a complaints-based model rather than proactive enforcement.

- **Nunavut** lacks both pay equity and pay transparency legislation, leaving workers in the territory without legal protection against gender-based wage disparities.

Despite advancements in pay equity legislation, significant gaps remain in how equity is defined and operationalised. These oversights are especially pronounced in SETT sectors, where occupational segregation and limited union protections—particularly for engineers and technical workers—heighten income insecurity (Core, 2025; Spiteri, 2025). Additionally, most existing laws still rely on binary gender frameworks, overlooking the realities of intersecting forms of discrimination (Parahoo, 2025). Parahoo (2025) advocates for an expanded approach—one that incorporates race, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity, along with robust, disaggregated data collection to better reflect Canada's evolving labour force.

Internationally, Iceland offers a compelling model. Since 2017, employers with 25 or more employees have been legally required to obtain Equal Pay Certification through independent audits, prove compliance with equal pay standards, and update gender equality plans. Non-compliance results in daily fines, and oversight is carried out by the Gender Equality Directorate and Equal Pay Council (Hewlett, 2025). The model shifts the burden of proof from employees to employers and ensures transparency through certification.

Canada can close its wage gaps—but only with consistent, proactive, and inclusive action. Researchers call for national pay equity and transparency legislation, expanded definitions of equity, mandatory identity-based data collection, and accountability mechanisms such as Equal Pay Certification. Harmonising these efforts across all jurisdictions is essential to achieving fair compensation for all.

While achieving equal pay is a critical step toward workplace equity, it is only one part of the broader effort to improve conditions for all workers. Economic security cannot be separated from physical and psychological safety—especially for women and other equity-deserving groups who are overrepresented in precarious, high-risk, and male-dominated occupations. To build safer, more inclusive workplaces, strong occupational health and safety (OHS) frameworks are essential. These laws not only reduce physical hazards but also help address the structural risks that disproportionately affect marginalised workers.

Key Topic - Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

Canada's OHS legislation emerged from worker resistance to unsafe conditions, most notably during the 1974 uranium miners' strike in Elliot Lake.¹³⁵ This pivotal event led to the establishment of the Ham Commission, which introduced the Internal Responsibility System (IRS)—the principle that both employers and

¹³⁵Windsor Occupational Health Information Service. (2025). The History of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, accessed date: September 7, 2025. (<https://wohis.org/history/>)

workers share responsibility for maintaining safe workplaces.¹³⁶ These recommendations became the foundation of modern OHS laws, beginning with **Ontario's** Occupational Health and Safety Act in 1978. Today, Part II of the Canada Labour Code applies to roughly 10% of workers in federally regulated sectors such as telecommunications, banking, and transportation, while the remaining 90% fall under provincial or territorial frameworks.¹³⁷ Across all jurisdictions, workers are guaranteed three fundamental rights: the right to know about workplace hazards, the right to participate in health and safety decisions, and the right to refuse unsafe work. These protections have prevented countless injuries and fatalities, yet more than 1,000 Canadians still died from work-related causes in 2022¹³⁸—underscoring why they are especially vital for equity-deserving groups overrepresented in precarious, high-risk jobs (PIRT & FSP, 2025).

Employer Responsibilities and the Right to Refuse Work

Statistics gathered by Hewlett (2025) and others underscore the profound impact of workplace harm on equity-deserving groups. Nearly half of all women workers (48%) have experienced workplace harassment or sexual assault. The most commonly reported behaviours are inappropriate sexualised conduct (44%), followed by discriminatory treatment (20%) and sexual assault (13%) (Spiteri, 2025b). Among 2SLGBTQ+ workers, 62% have faced sexual harassment or violence, with 56% reporting gender identity-based abuse and 35% reporting incidents related to sexual orientation (Parahoo, 2025). Workers with disabilities report the highest rates—76% have experienced harassment or violence, and 55% have faced sexual harassment. Indigenous workers also face extreme risks, with 79% reporting harassment or violence and 48% reporting sexual harassment. Regional data shows that more than 60% of African-Canadian workers in Nova Scotia face race-based harassment, though national race-disaggregated data is lacking. Immigrant women report harassment or assault at a rate of 35%, compared to 20% for immigrant men. Even Canadian-born men are not immune—36% have experienced workplace harassment or assault. Workers aged 25 to 34 also report a high rate of exposure, with 60% of women and 39% of men in this age group reporting such experiences.

These figures reflect more than isolated incidents—they reveal systemic failures in workplace protections. For workers from underrepresented groups, effective OHS legislation serves as a vital enforcement tool—allowing governments to hold

¹³⁶ Government of Ontario. (2020). Internal Responsibility System, accessed date: September 7, 2025. (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/final-report-mining-health-safety-and-prevention-review/internal-responsibility-system>)

¹³⁷ Government of Canada. (2024). Overview of the parts of the Canada Labour Code and how they apply to your workplace, accessed date: September 7, 2025. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/workplace/federally-regulated-industries/canada-labour-code-parts-overview.html>)

¹³⁸ Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada. (2023). *National Work Injury, Disease and Fatality Statistics (2022 data)*, accessed date: September 8, 2024. (<https://awcbc.org/files/publications/National-Work-Injury-Disease-and-Fatality-Statistics-2020-2022.pdf>)

employers accountable and mandating action to prevent harassment, bullying, and violence. This is particularly critical in SETT workplaces, where structural risks are amplified (Hewlett, 2025), as women and gender-diverse people in male-dominated fields like trades, transportation, and equipment operation are especially vulnerable to inappropriate sexualised behaviour (PIRT & FSP, 2025).

Most provinces and territories do not require employers to protect workers from retaliation when they report harassment or participate in investigations (PIRT & FSP, 2025). Few mandate that employers provide information on available support services, such as medical, psychological, or legal resources (Hewlett, 2025; PIRT & FSP, 2025). Although violence and harassment are recognised as workplace hazards, the right to refuse unsafe work seldom applies in these cases. Jurisdictions such as **Ontario** offer limited exceptions, but its narrow legal definition of “violence” restricts applicability (Hewlett, 2025).

Across Canadian jurisdictions, OHS laws impose several core responsibilities on employers. These include maintaining workplaces free from both physical and psychological harm; conducting hazard and risk assessments; developing written prevention policies and training programs; responding to incidents using trauma-informed approaches; providing secure and confidential reporting mechanisms; and applying disciplinary measures where necessary (Hewlett, 2025). Some provinces also mandate employer action when domestic violence poses a potential workplace risk, particularly in remote or isolated settings.

Despite these legal obligations, significant gaps remain across jurisdictions. As presented in the CCWESTT gender equality report card, **Alberta** leads in overall OHS legislation, though its definitions could still benefit from modest updates. No province or territory has adopted a thoroughly modern or inclusive definition of “workplace.” Most rely on outdated language that fails to account for remote work, fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) arrangements, mobile job sites, and virtual offices (Hewlett, 2025; PIRT & FSP, 2025). Similarly, definitions of “injury” often exclude psychological harm, despite robust neurological evidence confirming its validity. Key terms—such as harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, and violence—are inconsistently defined across Canada. Current OHS frameworks in Canada also rarely make explicit reference to sexual orientation or gender identity as grounds for harassment, leaving 2SLGBTQIA+ workers without explicit legislative protections (Parahoo, 2025). While a few provinces explicitly prohibit bullying, none offer a comprehensive, cross-cutting definition (Hewlett, 2025). **Quebec** makes some headway by referencing “psychological harassment” and “sexual violence” (PIRT & FSP, 2025). **Alberta** and **New Brunswick** stand out for including domestic violence in their definitions of workplace violence. **Ontario** goes further by requiring employers to act when made aware of domestic violence risks, including in remote

work settings. However, most jurisdictions still lack comparable provisions, despite growing evidence of the impact domestic violence can have on workplace safety (Hewlett, 2025).

The widespread use of gender-neutral language in OHS legislation further limits its effectiveness. While designed to promote inclusivity, this approach often obscures the power imbalances at the root of gender-based violence and harassment, making it harder to address systemic discrimination (PIRT & FSP, 2025).

OHS Harmonisation

While most Canadian jurisdictions have harmonised occupational health and safety (OHS) frameworks, **British Columbia**, the **Northwest Territories**, and **Nunavut** remain notable outliers, operating under less integrated systems that carve out specific industries (Hewlett, 2025). These industry-specific OHS laws exacerbate disparities, particularly in high-risk sectors such as mining and the oil and gas industry. In the **Northwest Territories** and **Nunavut**, for example, the *Mine Health and Safety Act* provides significantly weaker protections. It omits any reference to harassment, bullying, or violence, addressing only vague behaviours like “horseplay” or “practical jokes” (Hewlett, 2025). Employers in these jurisdictions are not required to offer training or investigate related complaints. Similarly, onshore oil and gas operations in the **Northwest Territories** are governed by a fragmented combination of federal and territorial rules—what Hewlett (2025) describes as an “unsatisfactory hybrid.” This patchwork framework leaves substantial gaps in protection for workers, particularly those in remote and male-dominated work environments.

Training and Prevention Plans

Beyond definitions, prevention strategies are a critical test of how well jurisdictions operationalise their OHS obligations. Training and prevention planning for harassment, sexual harassment, bullying and violence also show troubling inconsistencies. **Alberta**, **New Brunswick**, **Prince Edward Island** and **Yukon** have relatively cohesive legislative frameworks (Note: **Prince Edward Island** could enhance its training plans). However, in most provinces, prevention plans are only required after incidents involving serious physical harm, neglecting the widespread impact of psychological abuse. Many jurisdictions do not mandate training at all, especially in high-risk sectors like mining. Where training is required, it tends to prioritise regulatory compliance over practical strategies to prevent and respond to harmful behaviours (Hewlett, 2025; PIRT & FSP, 2025).

Complaint Mechanisms

Even when prevention fails, workers must have access to safe, reliable avenues to report harm. Complaint mechanisms remain uneven across Canada. While most jurisdictions received credit in the CCWESTT Gender Equality Report Card for having some form of reporting process, these mechanisms are often limited in scope (Hewlett, 2025). Many rely on informal or on-site employer procedures, and few legally require confidential or clearly defined channels. Only the Canada Labour Code establishes detailed internal complaint resolution procedures. As a result, workers in most jurisdictions still lack consistent access to safe and reliable avenues to report workplace harm (PIRT & FSP, 2025).

Third-party Protections

Protections involving third-party interactions remain vague. Although most jurisdictions reference third-party risks, few explicitly extend coverage to *all* contractors, suppliers, clients, customers, or guests—groups that can be both victims and perpetrators of violence and harassment. Similarly, few jurisdictions recognise how domestic or intimate partner violence can affect the workplace, despite strong evidence linking such violence to workplace safety and productivity concerns (Hewlett, 2025).

Workplace Infrastructure (Toilets and Sanitation)

Hewlett (2025) highlights that basic workplace infrastructure remains inadequate in many settings—particularly for women and gender-diverse workers. While most Canadian jurisdictions set general standards for toilet facilities, few mandate menstrual hygiene provisions such as disposal bins or access to sanitary products. In **Ontario**, for example, OHS legislation requires toilet access, but does not specify that workplaces must provide clean sit-down toilets or facilities for menstrual hygiene disposal. In the mining sector of the **Northwest Territories** and **Nunavut**, regulations go even further in lowering the bar—permitting the use of a mere “sealable container that can be used as a toilet.” These minimal standards fail to meet basic expectations for health, safety, and dignity, especially for women and gender-diverse people working in remote or male-dominated environments. The absence of harmonised standards across jurisdictions contributes to significant inequities, leaving some workers with protections and infrastructure that others lack entirely. These omissions in introductory hygiene provisions undermine not just comfort and safety, but also equity in workplace participation.

Disclosure and Monitoring of Workplace Harassment and Violence

Finally, transparency and accountability are undermined by the lack of consistent monitoring requirements in OHS legislation. Only the **federal** government, **British Columbia**, and **Manitoba** require employers to conduct ongoing reporting or make

data on workplace harassment and violence publicly available (PIRT & FSP, 2025). In most other jurisdictions, OHS legislation does not mandate public disclosure, workplace assessments, or regular data collection related to harassment and violence. Without this kind of system-wide oversight, policymakers and employers lack the necessary information to address systemic risks and improve workplace safety outcomes.

Gaps in equal pay and OHS protections are further compounded by the rise of precarious work and the misclassification of workers—factors that significantly undermine legal protections, reduce employer accountability, and leave many without access to the fundamental rights and benefits typically afforded under both Employment Standards and OHS legislation.

Key Topic - Precarious Work

Precarious employment has grown substantially in Canada, now encompassing 20–30% of the workforce (PIRT & FSP, 2025b). These non-standard workers include part-time, temporary, seasonal, contract, and gig work—forms of non-standard employment that frequently lack stability, benefits, and legal safeguards. PIRT & FSP (2025b) present that this shift has been driven by globalisation, automation, the rise of the service sector, and declining unionisation. The impact is uneven: women make up 60% of precarious workers, compared to 40% who are men, while racialised and immigrant women are overrepresented in low-paid, insecure roles (PIRT & FSP, 2025b). By late 2022, 871,000 Canadians were working in gig jobs—many of whom lacked access to the fundamental rights afforded to standard employees (PIRT & FSP, 2025b).

Employment Standards and Work Misclassification

Although **every province, territory, and the federal** government maintains some form of Employment Standards Act (Hewlett, 2025), these protections apply only to individuals who are legally classified as “employees.” Independent contractors and self-employed workers fall outside the scope of these laws—unless they can prove they’ve been misclassified. This legal distinction creates a significant loophole, enabling employers to avoid obligations such as minimum wage, paid leave, and termination protections. As PIRT & FSP (2025b) emphasise, misclassification is a key mechanism through which precarious workers are routinely denied the rights and protections their job duties clearly warrant.

Canada relies heavily on a complaints-based system, which discourages many precarious workers from coming forward due to fear of retaliation (PIRT & FSP, 2025b). Penalties for non-compliance are minimal, inspections are limited, and legal exemptions persist. As a result, many workers are left without meaningful recourse when their rights are violated. PIRT & FSP (2025b) identify that the consequences are severe: wage theft, mental and physical health challenges, financial instability, and exclusion from professional advancement opportunities. Women and gender-diverse people in SETT fields face even greater risks, often experiencing

layoffs, job insecurity, and barriers to retention (PIRT & FSP, 2025b).

Portable Benefits

Canada's Employment Insurance (EI) system¹³⁹—initially designed for long-term, full-time employment—no longer reflects the realities of today's diverse workforce. Many non-standard workers struggle to qualify because of insufficient hours or exclusion based on job classification. In response, policy experts and advocates have called for the adoption of portable benefits—a model that follows the individual rather than being tied to a single employer (PIRT & FSP, 2025b). In September 2026, the **federal** government launched a pilot under its Personal Support Worker (PSW) Retirement Savings Innovation Program,¹⁴⁰ enabling PSWs to build portable retirement savings. As PIRT & FSP (2025b) highlight, adapting such models to the broader Canadian context could modernise the labour framework and ensure that all workers, regardless of classification, have access to the social protections they need.

Governments across Canada have begun to respond. CCWESTT's Gender Equality Report Card recognises **British Columbia, Ontario, and Canada** (federal jurisdictions) for their leadership in addressing worker misclassification and gig-work protections.

- The **federal** government took a significant step forward with Bill C-69 (Budget Implementation Act, 2024, No. 1), which came into force on June 20, 2024. Amendments to the Canada Labour Code introduced a legal presumption that any worker paid by an employer is considered an employee of that employer. This shifts the burden of proof onto the employer to demonstrate otherwise and prohibits the misclassification of workers as a means of avoiding statutory obligations. The updated law also introduces a formal complaint mechanism to help misclassified workers assert their rights.¹⁴¹
- In **British Columbia**, the Labour Statutes Amendment Act, 2023 (Bill 48), along with new regulations that came into force on September 3, 2024, now treats app-based ride-hail and delivery workers as employees under the Employment Standards Act. These workers are entitled to a minimum wage of \$20.88 per hour of engaged time, vehicle expense reimbursements, workers' compensation coverage, tip protections, deactivation safeguards,

¹³⁹ Dixon, S. (2025). *4 changes to EI you need to know!*. Workers Action Centre, accessed date: September 8, 2025. (<https://workersactioncentre.org/temporary-changes-to-ei/>)

¹⁴⁰Note: In September 2026, the The federal government launched a pilot under its Personal Support Worker Retirement Savings Innovation Program, investing over \$29.9 million to support Common Wealth Pension Services Inc. in helping more than 5,000 personal support workers build retirement savings. The initiative offers incentives to open retirement accounts and match contributions, aiming to generate over \$40 million in savings and inform future policy improvements. PSWs would fall under the Statistics Canada NOCs Variant STEM B category. Source: Government of Canada. (2025). Government of Canada funds retirement savings project for personal support workers, accessed date: September 8, 2025. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2025/09/government-of-canada-funds-retirement-savings-project-for-personal-support-workers.html>)

¹⁴¹Government of Canada. (2024). Misclassification- IPG-105, accessed date: September 8, 2025. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/laws-regulations/labour/interpretations-policies/misclassification.html>)

and transparent pay reporting requirements.¹⁴²

- **Ontario** has adopted a more limited approach. The Working for Workers Act, 2021, introduced the Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act, 2022, which took effect on July 1, 2025.¹⁴³ This legislation establishes a new category of "dependent contractors" and provides minimum protections for digital platform workers—regardless of whether they are classified as employees under the Employment Standards Act (ESA). **Ontario's** ESA also prohibits misclassification: under Section 5.1, any worker who meets the legal definition of an employee must be treated as one, regardless of the terms of their contract.¹⁴⁴

Despite these significant advances, precarious workers across the country still face significant gaps in protection due to outdated legal definitions, inadequate enforcement, and exclusion from the social safety net. A truly modern labour framework must move beyond traditional employment models and extend core rights to all workers—regardless of how their job is categorised. As the employment landscape continues to shift, Canada's policy responses must keep pace to ensure that no worker is left behind.

This is particularly urgent when it comes to preventing and addressing gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH) in the workplace. Precarious and marginalised workers—especially women, gender-diverse individuals, and racialised workers—often face heightened exposure to harassment, with fewer pathways to report it and less protection from retaliation (PIRT & FSP, 2025). A robust and inclusive labour strategy must therefore go beyond economic standards to also confront the cultural and interpersonal harms that undermine safety and equity in SETT workplaces.

Key Topic - GBVH Legislation

Workplace violence and harassment laws in Canada are not uniform, and this patchwork undermines safety and equity in workplaces where women and equity-deserving groups are underrepresented. In SETT, where hierarchical structures, remote job sites, and male-dominated environments are common, uneven protections mean risks of GBVH are compounded rather than reduced.

Employment Standards Legislation - Violence and Harassment

OHS laws in every jurisdiction require employers to prevent and address violence/harassment. However, most Employment Standards (ES) statutes still do **not** spell out enforceable anti-violence/harassment duties as baseline employment rights (PIRT & FSP, 2025). Only the Government of **Canada (federal), Saskatchewan, Quebec,** and **Prince Edward Island** embed such provisions in

¹⁴²Government of British Columbia. (2024). Gig workers, accessed date: September 8, 2025. (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/employment-standards-advice/gig-worker-engagemen>)

¹⁴³Government of Ontario. (2025). Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act, 2022, accessed date: September 8, 2025. (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/22d07>)

¹⁴⁴Government of Ontario. (n.d.). Your guide to the Employment Standards Act, accessed date: September 8, 2025. (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/your-guide-employment-standards-act-0>)

ES law; **Saskatchewan** is the only jurisdiction that assigns explicit ES responsibilities to employers, supervisors, and workers, strengthening day-to-day accountability. In sectors like SETT—where many women work outside of unions in small firms, apprenticeships, or contracts—having ES-level rights and an ES complaints route is materially easier to use than OHS or human rights pathways.

Domestic and Family Violence Leave

All 14 jurisdictions in Canada now provide legislated leave related to domestic, family, and/or sexual violence. These leaves are generally intended to allow workers to seek medical care, counselling, or victim services support, legal assistance, or relocation. While job protection is common, it is not uniform across all jurisdictions (PIRT & FSP, 2025). This baseline coverage represents a legitimate national policy success and is noted as such in the CCWESTT gender equality report card.

Standalone Domestic Violence Acts

In addition to leave entitlements, many provinces and territories have enacted standalone legislation addressing domestic or family violence. These statutes typically provide for a range of civil protection orders—such as emergency intervention orders, exclusive possession of the home, or restraining orders—designed to keep survivors safe without requiring criminal charges (Hewlett, 2025). According to Hewlett (2025), jurisdictions with such legislation include the **federal** government, as well as **Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut**. By contrast, **Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia** rely on broader family-law frameworks rather than dedicated domestic violence statutes.

These laws operate alongside Employment Standards frameworks, reinforcing that violence is not only a private matter but also a workplace and societal issue. For workers—particularly women in SETT sectors—standalone Acts can make timely protections more accessible, strengthening their ability to remain safe and employed.

Taken together, leave and protection orders demonstrate that Canada can design effective prevention and response tools; the next challenge is closing the accountability gap created by non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) in workplace harassment cases.

Non-disclosure Agreement Legislation

Prince Edward Island remains the only jurisdiction with enforceable restrictions on the misuse of non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) in harassment and misconduct cases, through its Non-Disclosure Agreements Act, 2022.¹⁴⁵ The Act requires NDAs to be survivor-initiated, subject to independent legal advice, and limited in duration,

¹⁴⁵Government of Prince Edward Island. (2022). *Non-Disclosure Agreements Act*, accessed date: September 8, 2025.

(https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/legislation/n-03-02-non-disclosure_agreements_act_2.pdf)

with penalties for misuse.

Elsewhere, multiple provinces attempted but failed to enact similar protections — not for lack of political recognition, but because bills were repeatedly derailed by prorogation or dissolution of legislatures. For example, British Columbia introduced Bill M215 in 2023, but it died after first reading when the session was prorogued. Ontario put forward Bill 124 in 2023, which also stalled after prorogation.¹⁴⁶ Manitoba advanced Bill 225 to the committee stage before prorogation halted progress. Saskatchewan (Bill 613, 2023) and Nova Scotia (Bill 144/13, 2022) likewise introduced NDA bills, but neither was enacted before their legislatures were dissolved. At the federal level, Bill S-261 (the *Can't Buy Silence Act*) was introduced in the Senate in 2023 to regulate NDAs in federally regulated workplaces, but it too was stalled by prorogation.¹⁴⁷

This pattern demonstrates that NDA misuse has been squarely on the legislative radar since at least 2022, but repeated interruptions have left survivors without protection in most of Canada. In SETT workplaces — often small, hierarchical, or project-based — the impact is acute. Survivors may be pressured into silence as a condition of settlement, unable to warn colleagues or regulators.¹⁴⁸ Hewlett (2025) emphasises that the misuse of NDAs perpetuates power imbalances, shielding perpetrators and institutions while undermining the autonomy of survivors.

While protecting workers from violence and harassment is critical, true gender equity also requires recognising and supporting the reproductive and caregiving responsibilities that disproportionately affect women and gender-diverse individuals. The following section explores how human rights and Employment Standards legislation shape workers' access to maternity, parental, and caregiving leave—and how these policies support or undermine gender equity in the workplace.

Key Topic - Care Structures Legislation

Across Canada, legal frameworks aim to support workers balancing paid employment with caregiving responsibilities. These protections are essential for achieving gender equity, as women remain more likely than men to bear the weight of unpaid care work. This factor significantly affects their economic outcomes over time (Spiteri, 2025b). Together, Human Rights and Employment Standards (ES) frameworks provide a dual structure of protection—but they do not always function cohesively. As Spiteri (2025b) observes, legal entitlements are only part of the equation. Workers also need access to information, institutional support, and financial security to take advantage of those rights. Without coordinated enforcement and broader social protections, even well-designed laws may fail to

¹⁴⁶ McAfee, Janis D. & Parhar, Manjot K. (2023). *Non-Disclosure Agreements in cases of abuse, discrimination, or harassment*, accessed date: September 8, 2025.

(<https://www.dolden.com/non-disclosure-agreements-in-cases-of-abuse-discrimination-or-harassment/>)

¹⁴⁷ Murphy, Murray L., Mack, Katharine. & Profit, Kate. (2025). *Non-Disclosure Agreements: A sword or a shield?*, accessed date: September 8, 2025.

(<https://www.stewartmckelvey.com/thought-leadership/non-disclosure-agreements-a-sword-or-a-shield/>)

¹⁴⁸ McCarville, Ryan. (2022). *P.E.I. Non-Disclosure Agreements Act – 3 key facts for employers*, accessed date: September 8, 2025.

(<https://www.mcinniscooper.com/publications/p-e-i-non-disclosure-agreements-act-3-key-facts-for-employers/>)

close the care equity gap. At the same time, as Spiteri (2025) emphasises in her review of shadow systems of care, even strong statutory frameworks do not eliminate the unpaid and often invisible caregiving responsibilities that fall disproportionately on women. Elder care, nonprofit involvement, and other forms of unpaid labour continue to absorb systemic gaps in Canada's care infrastructure, reinforcing inequities outside the reach of formal legal protections. Drawing on insights from Spiteri (2025, 2025b), this reality reinforces the importance of strong legal protections during pregnancy, maternity, parental, and caregiving periods.

Historical Context

Spiteri (2025b) traces Canada's coordination of care-related leave to federal EI reforms beginning in the 1970s. In 1971, 15 weeks of maternity benefits were first introduced; in 1990, parental benefits were added; in 2001, parental benefits were extended to 35 weeks (raising total paid time to ~50 weeks); and by 2017, an "extended" option allowed up to 61 weeks of parental benefits (about 18 months including maternity) at a lower rate, with more flexibility on start dates. Quebec established its own, more generous Quebec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP) in 2006. Provinces and territories then aligned their Employment Standards Acts to ensure job protection during EI/QPIP-covered periods, resulting in unusual policy consistency across jurisdictions.

While every jurisdiction provides statutory care-related leaves—maternity, parental/adoptive, compassionate care, and critical illness—these provisions mean little if workers cannot access EI benefits. EI caregiving streams require at least 600 insured hours in the past 52 weeks and medical certification, which systematically excludes many precarious, part-time, seasonal, or contract workers (Spiteri, 2025b). For women in SETT—whose employment often features non-linear entry points and contract-based work—this barrier is especially acute.

Women and equity-deserving groups shoulder a disproportionate share of unpaid care—child care and increasingly elder care—driving reduced hours, stalled advancement, and exits from the labour force (Spiteri, 2025, 2025b). Canada's ageing demographics will intensify these pressures over time. These impacts are well-documented across the care literature and in the SETT context, as reviewed by Spiteri (2025b).

Human Rights Protections

Human Rights legislation in every Canadian jurisdiction prohibits workplace discrimination based on family status, and in most cases, pregnancy. These laws require employers to accommodate workers during pregnancy and throughout caregiving responsibilities, protecting against unfair treatment in hiring, advancement, or dismissal. However, **British Columbia** and **Prince Edward Island** do not explicitly include "pregnancy" as a protected ground in their statutes. Instead, these jurisdictions rely on broader categories such as "sex" or "family status." According to Spiteri (2025b), this lack of specificity may limit clarity for both workers and employers, creating uncertainty in enforcement—particularly for

equity-deserving groups that face multiple, intersecting barriers, such as those related to race, disability, or immigration status.

Access to these human rights protections also depends on whether workers understand their rights and can pursue remedies. As Spiteri (2025b) emphasises, enforcement often relies on individual complaints, legal literacy, and supportive employer practices. In low-wage and non-unionised sectors, where fear of retaliation or job loss is high, many workers may not be in a position to advocate for accommodations—even when the law requires them.

Employment Standards - Leave Entitlements and Job Protection

In parallel, ES legislation across Canada provides workers with the right to take maternity, parental, and caregiving leave without losing their jobs, ensuring job protection during these periods. However, the details of eligibility and duration vary by jurisdiction (Spiteri, 2025b). Additionally, as Spiteri (2025b) notes, these leaves are typically unpaid, and workers must qualify for EI to receive income support during their time away from work. These workers, who are disproportionately women and other equity-deserving individuals, often fall through the cracks despite being legally entitled to leave. This creates a significant gap between statutory rights and economic reality, where only those in stable employment can fully benefit from legal protections.

In unionised environments, collective agreements may provide enhanced leave benefits, pay during leave, or more robust grievance mechanisms beyond the statutory minimums (Core Firm, 2025). However, as Spiteri (2025b) points out, many workers in non-unionised, low-wage, or precarious sectors lack access to this kind of collective representation—further limiting the real-world impact of legislative frameworks designed to support caregivers.

Retention success in Canada’s SETT sectors is within reach. A jurisdictional analysis reveals that promising strategies and best practices already exist across the country—in GBVH strategic planning, Early Learning and Child Care Agreements, and Employment Standards leaves. Realising robust, coordinated policy creation, however, requires political will and inter-jurisdictional collaboration. Canadian workers should not face a patchwork of protections determined by geography. Harmonising efforts across provinces and territories would help ensure that workplace safety and access to care are consistent, equitable, and reliable—no matter where people live or work.

Strategies for Change - Retention

Key Topic - GBVH Strategic Planning

National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence

As emphasised throughout this report, strategic planning drives systemic change. Canada’s experience with the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence

(NAPGBV, 2022) shows the capacity for coordinated, cross-jurisdictional planning. The plan established a national framework with five pillars—prevention, survivor support, responsive services, justice system improvements, and Indigenous-led approaches—and worked with provinces and territories to enter into bilateral agreements with the federal government (PIRT & FSP, 2025).

Bilateral Agreements and Structures

According to PIRT & FSP (2025), all jurisdictions signed bilateral agreements under NAPGBV, though not uniformly or promptly. Alberta signed later than most (October 2023) and, at the time of reporting, had not submitted a public implementation plan. Quebec did not align formally with NAPGBV but maintained its own independent provincial strategy, receiving federal funds through a separate agreement. These exceptions illustrate that while Canada has the machinery for coordinated planning, uneven commitment across jurisdictions undermines national cohesion.

Workplace-Related Commitments

While the NAPGBV framework explicitly names “Jobs and the workplace” as a priority area, only four jurisdictions—the **federal** government, **British Columbia**, **New Brunswick**, and **Quebec**—have embedded workplace-related GBVH measures in their published actions (PIRT & FSP, 2025). Examples include:

- **British Columbia:** integrating GBV mitigation into environmental assessments and mandating compliance training for industrial workcamps.
- **New Brunswick:** prioritising workplace training and awareness in Year 1 actions.
- **Quebec:** advancing employer education and workplace safety interventions under its independent plan.
- **Federal** government: incorporating workplace measures into federally regulated sectors.

The remaining provinces and territories did not include workplace-specific commitments in their public implementation plans (PIRT & FSP, 2025).

GBVH Strategic Plan Processes

Hewlett (2025) notes that jurisdictions have taken steps through the NAPGBV process, but approaches remain fragmented, inconsistent, and often unsustainable. Many rely on outdated or expired action plans, and few treat workplaces as central sites of GBVH prevention and intervention. Within NAPGBV, jurisdictions retain broad discretion and are under no obligation to include workplace-specific actions; as a result, many treat GBVH as a private issue rather than a structural one. Without mandatory workplace-focused measures and strong national coordination, the process risks remaining symbolic rather than transformative (Hewlett, 2025). The CCWESTT Gender Equality Report Card echoes these findings, awarding strategic planning credit only to jurisdictions that meet four of six key criteria.

Canada's NAPGBV demonstrates that when political will aligns with intent, governments can design coordinated national strategies. Yet the uneven implementation—bilateral agreements of varying strength, workplace actions in only a handful of jurisdictions, and inconsistent robustness—shows that capacity for planning does not always translate into transformative change. For retention in SETT sectors, where unsafe workplaces drive women and equity-deserving workers out, the absence of consistent, workplace-specific GBVH planning remains a critical barrier.

Key Topic - Early Learning and Child Care Landscape and Agreements

Unpaid care is not only a private burden but also a foundational economic driver. In Canada, its value is estimated at \$97.1 billion annually, and unpaid household work accounts for 37.2% of nominal GDP (2019) (Spiteri, 2025). Without recognising and supporting this contribution, policy frameworks risk undervaluing the labour that sustains the formal economy. For women and equity-deserving groups in SETT—who are disproportionately concentrated in precarious, non-standard work—the lack of accessible, high-quality childcare undermines both retention and long-term career sustainability. Addressing these disparities requires not only sustained federal investment but also strong provincial and territorial action to ensure affordability gains are matched by availability, so access does not depend on geography.

Canada made significant strides with the launch of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) initiative in 2021 and the passage of Bill C-35 in 2024, both of which aimed to ensure \$10/day, high-quality, inclusive care. Yet substantial gaps remain: as of 2024, only six provinces and territories had achieved the affordability goal (**Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Nunavut, and Yukon; Quebec** was already under \$10/day prior to CWELCC), and nearly half of Canadian children still lived in “child care deserts,” where regulated spaces fall far short of demand (Spiteri, 2025b). Shortages are most acute in rural and remote areas. Moreover, the system remains designed around a 9–5 schedule, leaving women in SETT—who often work shifts, travel frequently, or hold non-standard hours—without viable options. Spiteri (2025b) advocates for urgent investment in non-standard-hour care, expansion into rural and industrial regions, on-site childcare in workplaces, and the integration of childcare into training and apprenticeship pathways.

Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care - Bilateral Agreements

Historically, Canada lacked a national child-care system. Federal governments attempted several times (in 1984, 1986, and 1993) to create one, but these efforts failed, leaving provinces and territories to manage child care through a fragmented, market-based approach (Spiteri, 2025b). By 2021, parent fees were among the highest in the OECD, driving the creation of CWELCC to ensure affordability, accessibility, high quality, and inclusivity.

To secure its future, the federal government passed **Bill C-35, *An Act respecting early learning and child care in Canada***, which received royal assent in March 2024.

The Act commits Ottawa to sustained funding, transparent goals, and accountability through regular reporting to Parliament, alongside the establishment of a new National Advisory Council on Early Learning and Child Care (Spiteri, 2025b).

Every province and territory has signed onto the agreements, but progress varies according to regional histories and capacities. All jurisdictions are investing in workforce training (early childhood education ECE) and wage support to address shortages. The \$10/day target is expected to be reached nationwide by 2026, though rollout is uneven. Larger provinces—such as **Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick**—struggle with scale, demand, and educator shortages. In the North, remoteness and limited infrastructure make expansion particularly difficult. As a result, lower fees do not always translate into available spaces, leaving many families in deserts even as the \$10/day goal comes into effect (Spiteri, 2025b).

Jurisdictional Highlights (Spiteri, 2025b):

- **Newfoundland and Labrador**—Reached \$10/day by mid-2024; investing in spaces and workforce support.
- **Prince Edward Island**—\$118 million over five years; \$10/day achieved January 2024; anchored in Early Years Centres with wage grids and training.
- **Nova Scotia**—Fees halved, expanding spaces; on track for \$10/day by 2026; workforce wage and professional development included.
- **New Brunswick**—Fees reduced 50% by 2023; \$10/day by 2026; investments in designated Early Learning Centres and workforce supports.
- **Quebec**—Maintains long-standing \$8.35/day low-fee system; asymmetrical \$5.96 B agreement; ongoing workforce supports.
- **Ontario**—Signed March 2022; \$10/day by 2026; significant fee reductions but uneven rollout; raised RECE wages to \$23.86/hr with annual increases.
- **Manitoba**—Achieved \$10/day by 2023; workforce supported through a wage grid and development programs.
- **Saskatchewan**—\$996 million agreement; \$10/day achieved April 2023; ECE wages raised by up to \$2.50/hr.
- **Alberta**—\$3.8 billion agreement; \$10/day by 2026; 68,700 new spaces; free Level 1 ECE training and wage top-ups.
- **British Columbia**—Building on 10-a-Day ChildCareBC; CWELCC supports fee cuts, new spaces, and \$6/hour wage enhancements.
- **Yukon**—Achieved \$10/day in 2021; funds stabilise access; ECE wage supports included.
- **Northwest Territories**—\$51.1 million agreement; prioritises affordability in remote communities; workforce supported through the ECE Retention Incentive.
- **Nunavut**—\$10/day by 2023; funding expands spaces in Inuit communities, supporting the workforce through a wage scale with Northern Allowances.

Early Learning and Child Care Landscape - Child Care Deserts

A childcare desert is a postal code area where more than three children under six

compete for every licensed childcare space (Spiteri, 2025b). Nearly half of Canadian children live in child care deserts, although rates vary significantly. The CCWESTT Gender Equality Report Card awarded credit to provinces and territories where fewer than 50% of children are in deserts. **Prince Edward Island** (4%) and **Quebec** (11%) perform best nationally. **New Brunswick** (29%) and **Nova Scotia** (47%) also fall below the 50% threshold and receive credit, though gaps remain.

By contrast, deserts are widespread in **Ontario** (53%), **Alberta** (61%), **British Columbia** (64%), and **Manitoba** (76%). The problem is most acute in **Newfoundland and Labrador** (79%) and **Saskatchewan** (92%), where regulated care is virtually inaccessible. In the North, deserts are nearly universal, found in the **Northwest Territories** (80–90%), **Nunavut** (90–100%), and **Yukon** (60–70%). These disparities underscore that, while affordability has improved under CWELCC, space creation has not kept pace with demand—particularly in rural, remote, and northern regions (Spiteri, 2025b).

Early Learning and Child Care Landscape - Before- and After-School Care

The CWELCC initiative primarily targets children under six, leaving school-age care underdeveloped and uneven. Before- and after-school programs remain fragmented and poorly aligned with the needs of working parents—especially women in SETT who require extended coverage for non-standard schedules (Spiteri, 2025b). Families face the “school-age gap,” the hours between school dismissal and the end of the workday. According to Statistics Canada’s Survey on before- and after-school Care (2022), 28% of parents using such programs reported difficulty accessing them, mainly due to lack of spaces (68%) and high costs (53%). These barriers forced parents to cut hours, alter schedules, or decline job opportunities, directly undermining workforce participation and retention (Spiteri, 2025b). The CCWESTT Gender Equality Report Card awarded credit only to **Quebec** and **New Brunswick**, where more than 50% of children participate in before- and after-school care.

Program provision varies widely across Canada (Spiteri, 2025b). Spiteri (2025b) found that **Quebec** integrates school-age care into its public education system for children aged 4–12, providing structured entitlement. **Ontario** offers mixed provision through school boards, non-profits, and private providers, but access remains inconsistent. **Manitoba** permits school-run programs that do not require licensing, resulting in quality gaps. In the Maritimes, **Nova Scotia** and **New Brunswick** leave many families reliant on informal or community-based options, while **Prince Edward Island** licenses school-age centres through its Early Years Centre model; access outside urban areas is limited.

In Western Canada, **Saskatchewan**, **Alberta**, and **British Columbia** include school-age programs in their frameworks but rely heavily on non-profits and community organisations, with limited coordination. **British Columbia’s** program has reduced fees, but regulated before- and after-school care remains harder to access than full-day early learning. **Newfoundland and Labrador** has expanded regulated care under CWELCC, but dedicated school-age programs remain limited, particularly in rural areas.

The territories face the most significant shortages. **Yukon** includes regulated school-age programs within its licensed system, but provision is sparse outside Whitehorse. In the **Northwest Territories** and **Nunavut**, programs are minimal, leaving families in remote and Indigenous communities with long-standing gaps (Spiteri, 2025b).

Flexible/extended Hours, Overnight Care

Across Canada, child-care services remain tied to standard daytime schedules, leaving workers with shifts, travel, or overnight duties—common in SETT—without viable coverage (Spiteri, 2025b). The report calls on governments to license centres offering early, late, and weekend hours, but CWELCC funding has not systematically addressed this gap. **Alberta** stands alone in referencing flexibility, pledging that its expansion will include both non-profit and private programs offering options such as drop-in or overnight care. No other jurisdiction contains such provisions, leaving this an urgent area for policy innovation (Spiteri, 2025b).

Jurisdictions can also be strategic in how they design protections. Building on the discussion of care and safety, the final Key Topic sections turn to Employment Standards legislation, focusing on leaves for domestic violence and caregiver responsibilities.

Key Topic - Violence Leave - Employment Standards - Best Practice

In policy design, strategy matters. While every jurisdiction in Canada now provides ES leave related to domestic violence, only some extend eligibility to include family, interpersonal, or sexual violence. For consistency, this report refers to these ES leave provisions collectively as **Violence Leave**. The following best-practice models are adapted from PIRT & FSP (2025).

Baseline Provision

Employee—access leave due to domestic violence (DV). **Every jurisdiction** in Canada now provides some form of job-protected leave for workers experiencing domestic or intimate-partner violence.

ES Violence Leave Best Practices

- *Employee—access leave due to violence affecting a dependent child.* Covered in **British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island**; **not** in **Quebec**.
- *Employee (as caregiver)—access leave due to violence affecting a protected adult.* Provided in **British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nunavut, Yukon**; **not** provided **federally, New Brunswick, Ontario, Quebec, Northwest Territories**.
- *Job protection.* Three jurisdictions—**Canada** (federal), **New Brunswick**, and

Yukon—do not explicitly provide any stipulations related to job protection. The other 11 jurisdictions include specific job protections (e.g., reinstatement to the same or comparable position). **Quebec caveat:** despite protections, an employer may dismiss, suspend, or transfer an employee if the consequences or repeated absences “constitute good and sufficient cause.”

- *No work-period eligibility requirement.* **British Columbia** and **Quebec** have no qualifying period (credited in the report card). Notably, the federal jurisdiction has a qualifying period for paid days only; **Nunavut** and **Yukon** use mixed thresholds (three months paid/one month unpaid). Most others require tenure for all forms of employment.
- *Short-term leave (5 days unpaid, 5 days paid).* Most jurisdictions follow this best practice. **Prince Edward Island** and **Newfoundland and Labrador** have a similar structure (3 paid + 7 unpaid). **Alberta** and **Quebec** provide unpaid leave only.
- *Long-term leave (15 weeks+, unpaid).* Offered by **British Columbia, Ontario, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Yukon.** Above-baseline: **Quebec** (up to 26 weeks, or 104 weeks for serious injury), **Manitoba** (17 weeks), and **New Brunswick** and **Nova Scotia** (16 weeks each).
- *Long-term leave (up to 104 weeks in cases of serious bodily injury resulting from a criminal offence).* Only jurisdiction: **Quebec.**
- *No verification requirements or documentation from an authorised professional.* **Yukon** explicitly bars employers from requiring third-party verification for domestic or sexualised violence leave (“No proof is required”); an employer may at most ask for a notice form. **Alberta** and **New Brunswick** are also identified by PIRT & FSP (2025) as jurisdictions with no verification requirement, whereas other jurisdictions allow verification upon employer request.

Jurisdictions that adopt broader definitions and embed survivor-centred best practices align more closely with victim needs and reduce inequities across regions (PIRT & FSP, 2025). Harmonising these standards would create greater consistency for workers, ensuring that protection, once again, does not depend on geography.

Key Topic - Care Structures in Employment Standards - Best Practice

Care Leave as a Strategic Success

Strategic design matters in Employment Standards, and care leave shows how coordinated policy can create consistent protections across jurisdictions. Unlike violence leave—where uneven definitions and fragmented coverage leave workers with different entitlements depending on where they live—care leave in Canada is a rare case of harmonisation. Every jurisdiction recognises that workers require time away from employment to give birth, adopt, or care for seriously ill family members, and that these protections are fundamental to equity and retention (Spiteri, 2025b).

Policy Gaps and Future Needs

Spiteri (2025b) identifies strategies to address gaps in access and adequacy of leave benefits, reminding that EI caregiving benefits are crucial but hinge on insured-hours thresholds and medical certification. This design disadvantages many precarious, seasonal, and contract workers common in SETT, limiting practical access even where job protection exists. As Canada ages, these pressures will intensify: the share of Canadians 65+ is projected to rise from 18.5% (2021) to 25.9% (2068), and the 85+ population is expected to more than triple—from 871,000 to 2.3 million—while most seniors remain in private homes, keeping eldercare needs largely outside institutions (Spiteri, 2025b). Spiteri (2025b) states that women already shoulder most unpaid eldercare (about 23% provide adult care), so the caregiving load—and associated career disruption—will grow without policy attention.

The **federal** government, **British Columbia** and **Quebec** lead the way in policy structures for care leave. Next are the Baseline policies (apply across all jurisdictions) and jurisdictional Best Practices, provided by Spiteri (2025b).

- *Pregnancy, Maternity, Adoption, Parental (job-protected, unpaid)*. Every jurisdiction guarantees at least 16 weeks of job-protected, unpaid leave following birth or adoption (start dates and exact maternity/adoption durations vary modestly by jurisdiction).
- *Parental/Child-Care Leave*. All jurisdictions provide parental/child-care leave; most are 37+ weeks and commonly 61–63 weeks when shared. **Nunavut** lists 37 weeks (max 52). **Quebec**, via QPIP, provides up to 65 weeks of coverage.
- *Compassionate Care Leave (Adult)*: Available nationwide; typically 27–28 weeks (**Quebec**: 16–27; **Nunavut**: 17).
- *Critical Illness Leave (Adult)*: Provided in all jurisdictions, typically 16–17 weeks.
- *Critical Illness Leave (Child)*: Provided in all jurisdictions; up to 36–37 weeks (e.g., **Alberta** 36; most others 37).

Best-practice access features (jurisdictions waiving service-time rules)

- *No continuous employment required—Parental/Child-Care Leave*: **Federal** government, **British Columbia**, **Quebec**, **New Brunswick**, **Nova Scotia**.
- *No continuous employment required—Compassionate Care (Adult)*: **Federal** government, **British Columbia**, **Ontario**, **New Brunswick**, **Prince Edward Island**, **Northwest Territories**, **Yukon**.
- *No continuous employment required—Critical Illness (Adult)*: **Federal** government, **British Columbia**, **New Brunswick** (not specified).
- *No continuous employment required—Critical Illness (Child)*: **Federal** government, **British Columbia**, **New Brunswick** (none specified). Other jurisdictions require 30–180 days.

- *Direct caregiver income support (stand-alone program): Nova Scotia*—Caregiver Benefit Program.

This picture is incomplete without the “shadow infrastructures” of care—non-profits, volunteers, and unpaid family labour that absorb gaps left by public systems. These feminised, precarious forms of work further constrain women’s ability to sustain SETT careers even when formal entitlements exist.

Bottom line: where governments coordinate—as with care leave—protections are consistent and durable; where frameworks are fragmented—as with violence leave or child care—coverage gaps undermine safety and stability for SETT workers. For women and equity-deserving groups in SETT—who disproportionately face precarious work, caregiving responsibilities, and exposure to harassment—policy alignment is a precondition for sustainable careers. Canada has shown, through EI-linked care leaves and coordinated child-care agreements, that national frameworks can drive systemic change when political will aligns with strategic design. Extending this approach—by harmonising violence-leave provisions, closing child-care deserts, and embedding GBA+ in all policy processes—would strengthen retention, reduce inequities, and ensure that SETT workforces can thrive.

Recommendations for Systemic Change - SETT Retention

- **Legislate Protections Against GBVH:** Enact stand-alone workplace legislation on gender-based violence and harassment in every jurisdiction, harmonised with federal Bill C-65. Ensure binding prevention policies, transparent reporting, and survivor-centred support are mandatory across all workplaces. Draw on best-practice models—such as Prince Edward Island’s *Non-Disclosure Agreements Act, 2022*—to strengthen enforcement and accountability.
- **Strengthen OHS Standards Nationally:** Align provincial and territorial Occupational Health and Safety Acts with modern federal standards. Close gaps by mandating protections for psychological safety, inclusive PPE, and gender-sensitive health standards. Update definitions of “workplace,” “injury,” and “violence” to reflect contemporary realities, including remote work, fly-in-fly-out arrangements, and domestic-violence risks.
- **Guarantee Equitable Pay and Benefits:** Legislate comprehensive pay transparency and pay equity across all jurisdictions. Require proactive reporting disaggregated by gender identity, race, disability, and immigration status, with enforcement powers and penalties for non-compliance. Extend equitable access to pensions, caregiving leave, and health benefits to precarious and contract workers through portable-benefits models.
- **Streamline Credentialing and Labour Mobility:** Establish national agreements to recognise foreign and interprovincial credentials in SETT.

Create transparent, consistent pathways for internationally trained professionals and apprentices, reducing delays and eliminating systemic bottlenecks that disproportionately affect women, Indigenous peoples, and immigrants.

- **Embed Inclusive Workplace Culture:** Require large employers and public-sector organisations to publish multi-year equity action plans that address mentorship, leadership pipelines, and career progression for equity-deserving groups. Tie eligibility for public procurement and major funding to demonstrable progress on inclusion benchmarks and intersectional audits.
- **Invest in Wraparound Supports for Retention:** Fund child care, elder care, transportation, and mental-health supports to reduce attrition among women and equity-deserving workers. Prioritise investment in rural and remote regions, resource projects, and workplaces with non-standard schedules, including overnight and extended-hour care.
- **Institutionalise Accountability:** Establish independent monitoring bodies at both the federal and provincial levels with the authority to audit compliance with laws related to equity, accessibility, and safety. Require annual public reporting, jurisdictional comparisons, and sector-wide progress updates to increase transparency, incentivise performance, and build public trust.
- **Enhance Data Collection and Visibility:** Collaborate with Statistics Canada to enhance public reporting on pay, promotion, retention, and workplace safety, utilising intersectional and disaggregated data. Ensure that the technical contributions of women’s and equity-deserving groups remain visible even after they progress into management roles, preventing the erasure of their experience in national datasets.
- **Integrate GBA+ into Policy Design:** Require all new labour, OHS, and equity legislation to undergo Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+). This ensures policies reflect the lived realities of Indigenous, racialised, immigrant, disabled, and 2SLGBTQIA+ workers in SETT rather than defaulting to gender-neutral frameworks that obscure systemic inequities.
- **Embed Retention in Workforce and Economic Strategies:** Tie retention reforms directly to Canada’s national agendas—including the clean-energy transition, infrastructure investment, and immigration strategy. Position equity and retention as essential to solving labour shortages, reducing turnover costs, and strengthening Canada’s competitiveness in global markets.

SETT Gender Equality Report Card Final Scores

Jurisdiction	Overall Grade	Pathways to Equality	SETT Recruitment	SETT Retention
Canada	B	A	B	B
British Columbia	B	A	C	C
Alberta	D	D	D	D
Saskatchewan	D	D	D	F
Manitoba	C	C	C	D
Ontario	C	C	C	D
Quebec	C	A	C	C
New Brunswick	D	D	D	C
Nova Scotia	C	B	C	D
Prince Edward Island	D	D	C	D
Newfoundland and Labrador	C	B	C	F
Yukon	D	D	D	D
North West Territories	D	D	C	D
Nunavut	D	F	C	F

Conclusions

Canada’s long-term economic independence, innovation, and prosperity depend on the full participation of women and equity-deserving groups in science, engineering, trades, and technology (SETT). Yet systemic barriers—ranging from unsafe workplaces and pay inequities to fragmented credentialing systems and inadequate care supports—continue to limit access, retention, and advancement. Despite progress in certain areas, the persistence of fragmented policies, uneven enforcement, and outdated frameworks undermines both equity and Canada’s ability to meet urgent labour shortages in SETT.

To move forward, Canada must treat SETT retention not as a siloed equity issue but as a cornerstone of economic growth, workforce development, and nation-building. This requires harmonised laws, coordinated national planning, and a clear accountability structure that ensures measurable progress. Building on lessons from the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence and the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreements, the country has shown that inter-jurisdictional collaboration is possible when political will aligns with strategy. The same approach is now urgently needed in SETT.

Next Steps: Value Proposition

Economic Prosperity: Investing in SETT education, recruitment, and retention is vital to driving Canada’s economic growth. A diverse and skilled SETT workforce will fuel innovation, strengthen industries, and ensure long-term economic stability.

Fluidity of SETT Workers: Streamlining credentialing processes and improving labour mobility will enable SETT workers to move seamlessly across jurisdictions, maximising their contributions to Canada’s infrastructure, technology, and trades sectors.

Safety in the Workplace: Strengthening workplace protections, including legislation addressing gender-based violence and harassment, occupational health and safety standards, and equitable pay frameworks, will create environments where all SETT workers can thrive without fear of discrimination.

Intersectional Equity: Addressing systemic barriers through an intersectional lens will ensure targeted support for Indigenous peoples, racialised communities, 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, immigrant workers, and people with disabilities, creating a genuinely inclusive SETT workforce.

Accountability and Transparency: Robust monitoring, reporting, and enforcement mechanisms are crucial for tracking progress and ensuring compliance with equity and safety standards.

Wraparound Supports: Affordable child care, elder care, housing, and mental health services are critical to reducing attrition and improving retention for underrepresented groups in SETT.

Nation-Building Through SETT: Leveraging SETT workers as a cornerstone of Canada’s nation-building agenda—including infrastructure projects, sustainability planning, and economic integration—will drive inclusive growth and innovation.

Strategic Planning and Coordination: Cohesive, long-term strategic planning at both national and jurisdictional levels, with renewable plans, clear targets, budget allocations, and evaluation mechanisms, is essential for sustained progress.

Canada’s economic future depends on investing in SETT education, recruitment, and retention. This is the moment to act—to remove barriers, foster inclusion, and create a thriving workforce that drives innovation and prosperity for all. CCWESTT is committed to leading this charge, but success will require bold leadership, coordinated action, and sustained commitment across governments, industries, and communities. Together, we can ensure that SETT becomes the backbone of Canada’s economic success.

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Appendixes

Appendix A

Statistics Canada NOCs Variant STEM A	STEM occupations refer to occupations which generate advancements and create innovations through the application of knowledge and expertise from one or more fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), as a central function of the occupation.													
Women+ % - National Occupational Classification (NOC) 2021	CAN	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	PQ	NB	NS	PEI	NL	YK	NT	NV
Total STEM A	23.7%	23.3%	22.7%	25.0%	23.1%	24.7%	22.4%	22.9%	23.2%	26.0%	22.1%	28.2%	27.3%	12.0%
Science and science technology	47.8%	35.1%	31.3%	43.5%	33.7%	41.0%	41.6%	32.9%	31.8%	34.8%	29.2%	32.0%	42.9%	0.0%
- Physical and chemical sciences	44.7%	45.0%	38.9%	41.3%	55.2%	45.4%	44.1%	47.2%	40.6%	67.7%	55.6%	n/a	n/a	n/a
21100 Physicists and astronomers	22.4%	22.5%	18.2%	20.0%	0.0%	22.3%	21.6%	33.3%	35.3%	n/a	50.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a
21101 Chemists	48.6%	51.9%	40.5%	47.1%	61.5%	48.9%	48.1%	50.0%	44.0%	67.7%	57.1%	n/a	n/a	n/a
21109 Other professional occupations in physical sciences	35.0%	28.6%	47.1%	0.0%	n/a	40.4%	28.1%	n/a	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
- Biological sciences	59.3%	56.2%	54.9%	50.2%	57.9%	60.8%	65.1%	51.3%	56.5%	46.7%	52.3%	50.0%	58.6%	50.0%
21110 Biologists and related scientists	59.3%	56.2%	54.9%	50.2%	57.9%	60.8%	65.1%	51.3%	56.5%	46.7%	52.3%	50.0%	58.6%	50.0%
- General and integrated sciences	37.8%	35.1%	31.3%	43.5%	33.7%	41.0%	41.6%	32.9%	31.8%	34.8%	29.2%	32.0%	42.9%	0.0%
20011 Architecture and science managers	45.9%	50.2%	42.8%	45.6%	48.4%	47.9%	41.6%	40.0%	41.1%	36.4%	40.9%	0.0%	60.0%	0.0%
21102 Geoscientists and oceanographers	26.8%	26.6%	24.6%	26.1%	37.2%	29.6%	27.6%	14.3%	22.9%	0.0%	26.6%	42.1%	33.3%	0.0%
21103 Meteorologists and climatologists	25.5%	20.0%	16.7%	0.0%	66.7%	30.2%	23.3%	75.0%	16.7%	n/a	28.6%	n/a	n/a	n/a
21112 Agricultural representatives, consultants and specialists	40.5%	21.0%	39.0%	50.0%	26.5%	31.8%	51.6%	33.3%	54.5%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a
Mathematics, computer and information sciences	25.4%	23.6%	25.3%	25.5%	25.2%	27.1%	22.6%	25.3%	26.1%	23.4%	25.0%	30.9%	31.8%	11.8%
- Mathematics and related studies	38.9%	36.6%	41.3%	39.0%	43.1%	39.5%	37.6%	35.9%	36.2%	30.0%	45.6%	55.6%	37.5%	50.0%
21210 Mathematicians, statisticians and actuaries	45.8%	47.0%	41.5%	47.2%	49.1%	47.5%	42.5%	34.8%	46.2%	100.0%	72.7%	n/a	0.0%	0.0%
21211 Data scientists	29.8%	27.6%	33.3%	25.8%	34.3%	30.7%	27.7%	31.0%	16.7%	66.7%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a
21223 Database analysts and data administrators	40.5%	40.0%	45.7%	40.6%	40.3%	41.2%	38.0%	38.5%	40.2%	13.3%	43.9%	55.6%	50.0%	100.0%
- Computer and information sciences	24.1%	22.6%	23.7%	24.2%	22.9%	25.9%	20.8%	24.5%	25.2%	23.0%	23.0%	26.1%	30.6%	0.0%
20012 Computer and information systems managers	25.8%	22.8%	23.6%	25.2%	20.0%	27.5%	24.5%	27.4%	29.0%	17.2%	28.6%	0.0%	22.2%	0.0%
21220 Cybersecurity	19.0%	20.3%	22.5%	18.8%	10.4%	20.0%	16.3%	22.0%	13.2%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a

specialists															
21221 Business systems specialists	45.5%	46.3%	46.4%	45.3%	47.6%	45.5%	41.2%	54.5%	48.0%	70.6%	50.0%	100.0%	n/a	n/a	
21222 Information systems specialists	27.7%	27.7%	25.5%	23.9%	25.5%	29.1%	26.1%	21.9%	29.7%	26.7%	27.5%	35.3%	36.8%	0.0%	
21230 Computer systems developers and programmers	18.5%	18.8%	19.5%	27.1%	24.1%	23.1%	12.8%	18.3%	29.1%	21.3%	17.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
21231 Software engineers and designers	18.1%	17.4%	15.9%	13.2%	20.6%	19.6%	14.4%	16.4%	15.4%	21.7%	15.9%	50.0%	n/a	n/a	
21232 Software developers and programmers	18.6%	18.3%	16.2%	19.9%	16.3%	20.7%	15.3%	17.0%	14.9%	13.5%	16.4%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	
21234 Web developers and programmers	24.4%	22.9%	24.9%	25.8%	21.5%	26.1%	22.0%	29.4%	25.2%	18.9%	18.9%	0.0%	33.3%	n/a	
Engineering and engineering technology	17.5%	17.7%	17.8%	18.1%	15.9%	17.1%	17.9%	17.8%	15.9%	20.9%	17.7%	20.4%	13.5%	0.0%	
- Engineering	16.2%	15.8%	17.1%	17.4%	14.3%	15.8%	16.9%	14.3%	15.0%	9.8%	15.5%	17.9%	10.0%	0.0%	
20010 Engineering managers	18.3%	19.5%	17.7%	13.7%	18.0%	18.0%	19.3%	20.3%	19.5%	0.0%	21.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
21300 Civil engineers	19.0%	17.7%	19.4%	20.2%	15.6%	18.6%	21.4%	17.4%	15.8%	5.3%	16.5%	13.0%	14.3%	0.0%	
21301 Mechanical engineers	10.8%	12.0%	11.9%	10.3%	8.5%	10.6%	10.4%	4.2%	10.3%	13.6%	13.3%	33.3%	0.0%	n/a	
21310 Electrical and electronics engineers	12.3%	11.5%	13.5%	16.1%	13.4%	12.9%	10.7%	12.3%	11.5%	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	40.0%	n/a	
21311 Computer engineers (except software engineers and designers)	12.4%	11.9%	13.7%	12.0%	5.8%	12.7%	12.2%	11.5%	11.6%	0.0%	15.8%	n/a	0.0%	n/a	
21320 Chemical engineers	30.4%	30.8%	26.4%	26.5%	57.7%	32.5%	34.0%	12.8%	32.0%	42.9%	40.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	
21321 Industrial and manufacturing engineers	22.5%	20.6%	22.4%	20.0%	17.2%	21.7%	24.9%	29.6%	26.8%	40.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	
21322 Metallurgical and materials engineers	19.6%	28.1%	19.2%	28.6%	0.0%	17.3%	18.3%	33.3%	22.2%	n/a	44.4%	n/a	n/a	n/a	
21330 Mining engineers	16.2%	14.5%	17.4%	25.0%	11.8%	15.6%	16.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	100.0%	0.0%	n/a	
21331 Geological engineers	20.6%	21.6%	20.9%	18.5%	15.8%	17.7%	24.6%	23.1%	0.0%	n/a	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	
21332 Petroleum engineers	17.5%	14.3%	17.7%	19.4%	0.0%	11.9%	15.8%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	27.1%	n/a	n/a	n/a	
21390 Aerospace engineers	13.7%	14.3%	0.0%	n/a	15.6%	11.4%	15.8%	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	
21399 Other professional engineers	20.6%	13.3%	20.4%	42.9%	46.2%	22.2%	34.3%	18.2%	12.8%	0.0%	9.2%	n/a	n/a	n/a	
- Engineering technology	19.1%	20.5%	19.1%	18.9%	17.4%	18.9%	18.8%	20.8%	16.9%	28.7%	20.2%	21.9%	17.4%	0.0%	
22100 Chemical technologists and technicians	50.7%	46.3%	45.2%	57.1%	43.6%	49.5%	56.0%	39.4%	46.5%	50.0%	35.3%	0.0%	100.0%	n/a	
22101 Geological and mineral technologists and technicians	19.8%	21.0%	20.4%	19.4%	20.5%	17.3%	21.1%	10.7%	8.0%	n/a	26.4%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	

22110 Biological technologists and technicians	51.7%	48.5%	53.4%	51.2%	52.1%	54.6%	52.4%	49.4%	48.6%	50.0%	41.5%	36.4%	57.1%	0.0%
22220 Computer network and web technicians	15.8%	17.3%	15.4%	15.7%	13.8%	17.8%	12.8%	17.0%	14.9%	21.3%	20.4%	24.0%	11.8%	0.0%
22222 Information systems testing technicians	36.2%	34.6%	43.7%	17.6%	41.0%	42.3%	28.0%	47.5%	29.4%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a
22300 Civil engineering technologists and technicians	19.7%	21.7%	22.3%	17.9%	17.9%	19.0%	18.9%	17.6%	13.4%	23.1%	22.4%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%
22301 Mechanical engineering technologists and technicians	6.9%	6.1%	6.2%	6.2%	8.1%	6.3%	7.9%	10.9%	6.7%	8.3%	9.5%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a
22302 Industrial engineering and manufacturing technologists and technicians	20.2%	20.1%	18.7%	15.2%	16.9%	17.7%	26.2%	25.0%	17.7%	0.0%	41.2%	n/a	n/a	n/a
22310 Electrical and electronics engineering technologists and technicians	11.1%	15.5%	11.4%	9.5%	8.3%	11.1%	9.7%	6.7%	12.2%	19.0%	10.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Women+: women (and/or girls), as well as some non-binary persons

n/a - STEM workforce has neither men or women+ in that jurisdiction.

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0405-01 Occupation by major field of study (STEM and BHASE, detailed): Canada, provinces and territories <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=9810040501>

Statistics Canada NOCs Variant STEM B	STEM-related occupations refer to occupations requiring the application of knowledge and expertise from one or more fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) to perform central functions related to the occupation.													
Women+ % - National Occupational Classification (NOC) 2021	CAN	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	PQ	NB	NS	PEI	NL	YK	NT	NV
Total STEM B	57.1%	56.8%	53.6%	47.9%	52.2%	57.6%	59.7%	61.5%	62.9%	57.8%	61.9%	61.3%	59.3%	55.2%
10030 Telecommunication carriers managers	30.1%	29.7%	29.0%	38.1%	30.9%	31.2%	26.5%	41.0%	30.4%	0.0%	40.9%	0.0%	n/a	0.0%
12113 Statistical officers and related research support occupations	58.0%	56.7%	63.2%	56.3%	55.9%	56.9%	62.3%	42.1%	64.0%	0.0%	50.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a
21111 Forestry professionals	20.8%	22.6%	32.0%	30.0%	0.0%	19.1%	16.6%	17.6%	13.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a
21120 Public and environmental health and safety professionals	46.7%	44.0%	41.2%	45.6%	43.5%	50.0%	51.4%	43.8%	42.9%	47.8%	41.4%	33.3%	40.0%	33.3%
21200 Architects	37.9%	33.0%	31.5%	35.5%	34.7%	35.7%	46.4%	34.6%	33.8%	75.0%	13.3%	28.6%	40.0%	0.0%
21201 Landscape architects	48.4%	44.8%	29.7%	50.0%	68.8%	48.0%	56.9%	0.0%	33.3%	n/a	50.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a
21202 Urban and land use planners	43.6%	48.6%	40.4%	38.2%	36.6%	46.1%	38.8%	32.2%	44.4%	0.0%	26.8%	58.3%	75.0%	42.9%
21203 Land surveyors	9.3%	6.8%	7.9%	6.7%	7.0%	6.4%	13.8%	12.0%	6.0%	0.0%	12.5%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%
21233 Web designers	42.3%	45.8%	45.1%	51.4%	40.7%	43.4%	35.7%	34.5%	36.5%	62.5%	35.7%	n/a	0.0%	n/a
22111 Agricultural and fish products inspectors	46.9%	36.4%	33.3%	38.0%	47.7%	46.8%	62.2%	54.5%	54.5%	45.5%	55.6%	n/a	n/a	n/a

Statistics Canada NOCs Variant STEM B	STEM-related occupations refer to occupations requiring the application of knowledge and expertise from one or more fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) to perform central functions related to the occupation.													
Women+ % - National Occupational Classification (NOC) 2021	CAN	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	PQ	NB	NS	PEI	NL	YK	NT	NV
Total STEM B	57.1%	56.8%	53.6%	47.9%	52.2%	57.6%	59.7%	61.5%	62.9%	57.8%	61.9%	61.3%	59.3%	55.2%
22112 Forestry technologists and technicians	22.3%	27.4%	27.1%	27.3%	29.2%	22.7%	19.3%	4.9%	10.0%	16.7%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a
22114 Landscape and horticulture technicians and specialists	32.8%	31.5%	32.6%	30.3%	25.9%	25.1%	48.8%	24.4%	29.4%	23.8%	11.8%	66.7%	n/a	n/a
22210 Architectural technologists and technicians	39.7%	36.3%	41.4%	29.5%	36.2%	37.7%	45.2%	43.5%	38.5%	40.0%	17.6%	0.0%	n/a	n/a
22211 Industrial designers	38.9%	41.2%	39.2%	41.2%	28.6%	40.4%	36.8%	0.0%	52.4%	n/a	40.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a
22212 Drafting technologists and technicians	30.8%	28.0%	30.4%	30.6%	30.1%	27.5%	36.4%	20.2%	32.7%	27.3%	27.6%	50.0%	0.0%	n/a
22213 Land survey technologists and technicians	16.4%	20.0%	9.2%	0.0%	15.0%	10.4%	22.9%	0.0%	14.7%	n/a	0.0%	n/a	0.0%	n/a
22214 Technical occupations in geomatics and meteorology	36.3%	45.2%	31.0%	34.9%	34.8%	37.9%	30.4%	32.5%	34.7%	33.3%	24.2%	41.7%	25.0%	28.6%
22221 User support technicians	26.8%	24.3%	28.0%	25.8%	30.6%	28.9%	23.0%	25.2%	29.6%	31.2%	22.5%	0.0%	18.2%	0.0%
22230 Non-destructive testers and inspectors	8.6%	9.5%	9.4%	10.1%	6.5%	5.9%	7.9%	3.6%	16.3%	0.0%	12.2%	n/a	n/a	n/a
22231 Engineering inspectors and regulatory officers	30.3%	29.7%	25.8%	22.2%	30.0%	28.3%	37.8%	24.4%	42.9%	0.0%	17.4%	0.0%	n/a	0.0%
22232 Occupational health and safety specialists	39.4%	40.9%	40.1%	36.2%	33.3%	39.2%	39.3%	34.3%	40.2%	36.4%	43.8%	62.5%	60.0%	0.0%
22233 Construction inspectors	17.0%	18.9%	17.4%	18.3%	13.4%	14.2%	21.3%	11.4%	11.4%	29.4%	18.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
22303 Construction estimators	17.3%	15.7%	18.8%	9.3%	8.7%	16.3%	22.2%	9.3%	10.5%	0.0%	19.6%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a
22312 Industrial instrument technicians and mechanics	4.7%	4.7%	3.4%	4.4%	0.0%	7.5%	5.3%	6.7%	10.3%	0.0%	4.1%	n/a	n/a	n/a
30010 Managers in health care	75.3%	74.8%	77.0%	76.7%	78.4%	75.7%	71.7%	79.0%	79.8%	79.3%	76.8%	90.0%	87.5%	60.0%
31100 Specialists in clinical and laboratory medicine	43.7%	42.0%	39.8%	40.9%	33.7%	43.5%	50.3%	37.8%	46.5%	27.8%	41.6%	66.7%	0.0%	100.0%
31101 Specialists in surgery	32.5%	29.2%	31.1%	33.8%	34.6%	31.9%	38.5%	27.0%	21.7%	37.5%	40.0%	n/a	0.0%	n/a
31102 General practitioners and family physicians	50.0%	45.0%	49.0%	44.0%	42.9%	48.7%	56.0%	52.3%	50.3%	51.3%	50.0%	80.0%	60.0%	66.7%
31103 Veterinarians	64.8%	62.9%	59.9%	68.4%	71.1%	63.7%	67.4%	78.3%	69.7%	66.7%	66.7%	40.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Statistics Canada NOCs Variant STEM B	STEM-related occupations refer to occupations requiring the application of knowledge and expertise from one or more fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) to perform central functions related to the occupation.													
Women+ % - National Occupational Classification (NOC) 2021	CAN	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	PQ	NB	NS	PEI	NL	YK	NT	NV
Total STEM B	57.1%	56.8%	53.6%	47.9%	52.2%	57.6%	59.7%	61.5%	62.9%	57.8%	61.9%	61.3%	59.3%	55.2%
31110 Dentists	42.3%	37.8%	36.9%	39.8%	35.7%	42.5%	50.0%	35.8%	48.7%	41.7%	40.7%	50.0%	66.7%	n/a
31111 Optometrists	58.8%	47.7%	50.9%	48.8%	52.3%	58.7%	71.5%	47.4%	56.3%	100.0%	37.5%	n/a	n/a	n/a
31112 Audiologists and speech-language pathologists	93.5%	91.0%	94.3%	94.5%	95.1%	92.3%	96.3%	88.5%	90.9%	87.5%	100.0%	85.7%	100.0%	n/a
31120 Pharmacists	61.8%	58.5%	61.0%	67.8%	55.2%	58.9%	67.5%	66.7%	73.6%	73.0%	55.9%	60.0%	50.0%	n/a
31121 Dietitians and nutritionists	95.6%	91.8%	96.2%	95.1%	98.0%	95.3%	95.9%	100.0%	97.7%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
31201 Chiropractors	39.9%	33.8%	31.9%	45.3%	23.5%	41.6%	49.3%	40.9%	41.7%	60.0%	41.7%	n/a	n/a	n/a
31202 Physiotherapists	72.3%	68.7%	73.3%	72.8%	72.1%	71.2%	77.0%	67.0%	69.1%	67.9%	79.0%	100.0%	66.7%	66.7%
31203 Occupational therapists	91.4%	89.6%	89.5%	89.7%	92.6%	91.3%	92.8%	97.7%	90.1%	90.0%	84.1%	50.0%	87.5%	n/a
31204 Kinesiologists and other professional occupations in therapy and assessment	70.3%	66.4%	80.1%	76.8%	71.7%	75.2%	56.2%	74.1%	76.3%	0.0%	82.4%	100.0%	100.0%	n/a
31209 Other professional occupations in health diagnosing and treating	73.8%	74.7%	69.5%	63.2%	68.8%	72.1%	75.5%	72.7%	80.8%	100.0%	60.0%	100.0%	n/a	n/a
31300 Nursing coordinators and supervisors	89.7%	89.5%	88.1%	92.8%	84.3%	92.8%	85.3%	90.2%	94.1%	100.0%	87.5%	100.0%	100.0%	66.7%
31301 Registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses	90.5%	89.8%	91.9%	92.2%	88.6%	90.9%	88.6%	94.0%	92.2%	93.4%	92.4%	90.4%	89.5%	87.1%
31302 Nurse practitioners	91.6%	93.4%	89.3%	88.1%	85.4%	92.3%	92.9%	91.7%	95.7%	80.0%	90.3%	100.0%	66.7%	100.0%
31303 Physician assistants, midwives and allied health professionals	81.0%	81.3%	92.0%	60.0%	76.1%	78.2%	85.3%	100.0%	91.3%	n/a	66.7%	100.0%	n/a	n/a
32100 Opticians	70.4%	67.2%	81.1%	87.5%	84.5%	60.4%	77.6%	82.7%	65.5%	40.0%	68.4%	n/a	n/a	n/a
32101 Licensed practical nurses	89.7%	87.9%	91.6%	93.7%	87.6%	89.0%	89.0%	90.7%	94.3%	96.7%	89.9%	100.0%	75.0%	100.0%
32102 Paramedical occupations	38.0%	38.7%	41.0%	40.1%	40.9%	37.0%	35.6%	39.8%	33.3%	41.2%	42.1%	53.8%	20.0%	n/a
32103 Respiratory therapists, clinical perfusionists and cardiopulmonary technologists	75.0%	62.4%	75.0%	71.2%	69.7%	69.9%	84.5%	77.0%	74.6%	83.3%	65.5%	n/a	n/a	n/a
32104 Animal health technologists and veterinary technicians	92.0%	90.3%	93.8%	86.5%	77.5%	93.4%	91.9%	97.9%	92.1%	93.1%	95.7%	83.3%	n/a	n/a
32109 Other technical occupations in therapy	82.7%	80.9%	86.7%	82.3%	80.2%	81.1%	84.0%	83.6%	78.2%	88.9%	87.5%	87.5%	60.0%	n/a

Statistics Canada NOCs Variant STEM B	STEM-related occupations refer to occupations requiring the application of knowledge and expertise from one or more fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) to perform central functions related to the occupation.													
Women+ % - National Occupational Classification (NOC) 2021	CAN	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	PQ	NB	NS	PEI	NL	YK	NT	NV
Total STEM B	57.1%	56.8%	53.6%	47.9%	52.2%	57.6%	59.7%	61.5%	62.9%	57.8%	61.9%	61.3%	59.3%	55.2%
and assessment														
32110 Denturists	38.4%	32.1%	34.7%	29.4%	14.3%	34.5%	45.9%	0.0%	50.0%	n/a	33.3%	n/a	n/a	n/a
32111 Dental hygienists and dental therapists	96.9%	94.8%	96.0%	96.0%	97.2%	97.6%	97.2%	96.7%	98.1%	90.9%	96.2%	100.0%	100.0%	n/a
32112 Dental technologists and technicians	42.3%	32.5%	47.3%	50.0%	32.5%	39.6%	51.5%	36.4%	59.4%	n/a	44.4%	n/a	n/a	n/a
32120 Medical laboratory technologists	80.0%	76.6%	84.4%	85.7%	82.7%	76.7%	81.1%	85.7%	84.5%	86.4%	79.2%	0.0%	80.0%	0.0%
32121 Medical radiation technologists	78.8%	74.6%	81.9%	86.3%	73.8%	75.8%	81.9%	90.3%	80.8%	94.1%	77.6%	66.7%	100.0%	100.0%
32122 Medical sonographers	86.0%	84.7%	83.9%	88.1%	92.9%	86.0%	87.3%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	70.6%	n/a	n/a	0.0%
32123 Cardiology technologists and electrophysiological diagnostic technologists	81.4%	81.5%	76.8%	90.0%	78.3%	79.2%	83.6%	96.0%	94.1%	80.0%	76.9%	n/a	n/a	n/a
32124 Pharmacy technicians	86.5%	83.3%	89.6%	87.2%	83.8%	84.6%	87.2%	93.2%	91.4%	100.0%	91.0%	88.9%	66.7%	100.0%
32129 Other medical technologists and technicians	64.0%	56.2%	46.2%	56.3%	56.3%	54.3%	78.1%	42.9%	50.0%	40.0%	45.5%	n/a	n/a	n/a
41400 Natural and applied science policy researchers, consultants and program officers	49.6%	49.6%	46.1%	49.4%	48.1%	50.7%	49.4%	45.9%	54.4%	50.0%	47.5%	56.8%	52.8%	38.5%
80010 Managers in natural resources production and fishing	10.8%	12.5%	10.3%	8.9%	11.1%	11.4%	8.4%	5.4%	5.5%	0.0%	13.3%	33.3%	27.3%	n/a
80020 Managers in agriculture	27.8%	38.9%	29.0%	24.9%	22.6%	29.2%	25.8%	21.1%	27.5%	17.2%	12.2%	44.8%	100.0%	n/a
80022 Managers in aquaculture	17.1%	18.3%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	30.0%	16.7%	10.7%	0.0%	19.0%	36.4%	n/a	n/a	n/a
82020 Supervisors, mining and quarrying	4.8%	4.4%	7.7%	3.9%	2.9%	4.1%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.8%	50.0%	22.2%	n/a
83120 Fishing masters and officers	1.7%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a
90010 Manufacturing managers	21.8%	23.2%	17.9%	17.3%	14.8%	21.6%	23.7%	23.4%	23.8%	29.7%	22.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
90011 Utilities managers	20.1%	23.0%	17.9%	21.3%	16.7%	20.2%	22.1%	22.0%	20.3%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
92010 Supervisors, mineral and metal processing	5.8%	8.5%	3.6%	6.9%	8.6%	5.2%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a
92011 Supervisors, petroleum, gas and chemical processing and	17.5%	14.0%	10.4%	9.5%	15.8%	20.9%	25.2%	16.7%	13.8%	20.0%	15.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Statistics Canada NOCs Variant STEM B	STEM-related occupations refer to occupations requiring the application of knowledge and expertise from one or more fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) to perform central functions related to the occupation.													
Women+ % - National Occupational Classification (NOC) 2021	CAN	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	PQ	NB	NS	PEI	NL	YK	NT	NV
Total STEM B	57.1%	56.8%	53.6%	47.9%	52.2%	57.6%	59.7%	61.5%	62.9%	57.8%	61.9%	61.3%	59.3%	55.2%
utilities														
92012 Supervisors, food and beverage processing	33.0%	40.3%	29.2%	25.8%	26.4%	35.7%	27.9%	38.4%	35.7%	35.3%	33.3%	n/a	n/a	n/a
92013 Supervisors, plastic and rubber products manufacturing	19.7%	9.6%	10.9%	0.0%	39.1%	21.3%	19.4%	0.0%	15.0%	n/a	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a

Women+: women (and/or girls), as well as some non-binary persons

n/a - STEM-related workforce has neither men or women+ in that jurisdiction.

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0405-01 Occupation by major field of study (STEM and BHASE, detailed): Canada, provinces and territories <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=9810040501>

Trades Workforce National Occupation Classification 2021 Women+	CAN	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	PQ	NB	NS	PEI	NL	YK	NT	NV
Total: Skilled Trades	15.3%	15.6%	14.8%	15.3%	13.5%	14.9%	16.2%	15.5%	14.8%	15.3%	15.0%	15.7%	11.1%	13.8%
Total: Skilled Trades (minus NOC Hairstylists and barbers; Estheticians, electrologists and related occupations)	10.6%	10.5%	10.4%	10.9%	9.4%	10.5%	11.1%	10.2%	10.1%	10.6%	10.4%	13.8%	9.5%	13.3%
14401 Storekeepers and partspersons	21.5%	21.8%	28.4%	21.4%	13.9%	22.8%	19.5%	14.0%	17.2%	17.4%	17.7%	17.6%	0.0%	66.7%
62200 Chefs	25.9%	22.6%	23.8%	24.5%	32.1%	25.8%	30.0%	38.0%	26.0%	36.8%	24.0%	30.8%	31.3%	0.0%
62201 Funeral directors and embalmers	48.0%	51.8%	56.3%	45.7%	41.2%	49.3%	47.2%	30.0%	41.0%	0.0%	33.3%	100.0%	0.0%	n/a
63200 Cooks	41.3%	42.0%	39.0%	45.6%	44.6%	37.5%	42.9%	54.0%	41.3%	49.7%	51.8%	53.7%	47.2%	73.3%
63201 Butchers - retail and wholesale	12.1%	16.0%	19.8%	20.6%	16.3%	12.6%	9.8%	15.2%	7.7%	42.9%	18.8%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a
63202 Bakers	64.3%	65.5%	67.1%	66.4%	65.9%	65.2%	58.0%	66.7%	66.4%	69.2%	66.9%	72.7%	33.3%	100.0%
63210 Hairstylists and barbers	82.8%	80.2%	83.8%	92.8%	88.1%	80.0%	83.7%	88.9%	86.1%	94.2%	92.9%	63.6%	90.0%	100.0%
63211 Estheticians, electrologists and related occupations	90.5%	90.6%	90.2%	89.9%	90.2%	90.2%	90.9%	93.0%	88.3%	84.8%	91.1%	100.0%	66.7%	n/a
63221 Upholsterers	27.9%	25.9%	32.7%	22.7%	31.3%	23.7%	35.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	0.0%	n/a
72100 Machinists and machining and tooling inspectors	4.5%	1.2%	1.8%	0.0%	2.1%	4.2%	6.8%	3.5%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a
72101 Tool and die makers	4.9%	6.6%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%	15.5%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a
72102 Sheet metal workers	2.3%	3.3%	3.3%	2.0%	5.0%	1.3%	2.0%	8.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.1%	0.0%	n/a	n/a
72103 Boilermakers	2.6%	5.7%	1.7%	7.1%	0.0%	2.6%	1.9%	3.4%	0.0%	n/a	8.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a

72104 Structural metal and platework fabricators and fitters	2.9%	2.0%	0.0%	6.7%	0.0%	2.7%	6.0%	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	0.0%
72105 Ironworkers	2.1%	2.5%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	2.4%	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%	3.4%	n/a	n/a	n/a
72106 Welders and related machine operators	4.7%	4.4%	3.1%	3.5%	2.5%	6.3%	4.7%	2.8%	3.9%	4.9%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
72200 Electricians (except industrial and power system)	2.5%	4.1%	3.5%	1.9%	1.2%	1.6%	2.5%	2.0%	3.3%	2.2%	2.3%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%
72201 Industrial electricians	1.9%	2.2%	1.9%	1.5%	0.0%	1.5%	2.7%	0.0%	3.1%	0.0%	5.1%	n/a	0.0%	n/a
72202 Power system electricians	3.5%	5.9%	0.0%	7.7%	7.1%	4.5%	3.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
72203 Electrical power line and cable workers	1.8%	1.2%	2.5%	1.8%	0.0%	1.1%	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
72204 Telecommunications line and cable installers and repairers	3.7%	2.8%	2.4%	0.0%	4.8%	3.6%	5.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
72205 Telecommunications equipment installation and cable television service technicians	8.1%	5.9%	7.1%	12.0%	8.6%	9.1%	7.4%	11.1%	6.1%	23.8%	4.1%	0.0%	28.6%	0.0%
72300 Plumbers	1.7%	2.1%	2.5%	1.1%	1.6%	0.9%	2.1%	2.0%	1.6%	4.9%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
72301 Steamfitters, pipefitters and sprinkler system installers	2.1%	2.5%	2.8%	2.6%	0.0%	1.5%	1.3%	2.9%	1.4%	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a
72302 Gas fitters	3.3%	2.4%	2.8%	10.8%	6.8%	2.9%	8.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	0.0%	n/a
72310 Carpenters	2.3%	2.3%	3.5%	4.1%	2.2%	2.3%	1.9%	1.3%	2.1%	2.5%	1.3%	6.0%	0.0%	0.0%
72311 Cabinetmakers	9.0%	7.1%	10.6%	11.4%	12.9%	7.3%	10.5%	7.5%	9.6%	0.0%	9.4%	n/a	66.7%	n/a
72320 Bricklayers	1.0%	1.2%	0.9%	3.2%	0.0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.9%	n/a	n/a	n/a
72321 Insulators	7.3%	10.2%	9.8%	6.5%	6.6%	4.3%	8.3%	5.4%	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a
72400 Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	1.7%	1.4%	1.4%	2.1%	2.4%	1.8%	1.4%	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%	5.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
72401 Heavy-duty equipment mechanics	1.1%	0.8%	1.6%	0.7%	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	7.4%	0.0%	0.0%
72402 Heating, refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics	1.8%	2.1%	2.1%	1.8%	3.0%	1.7%	1.3%	2.0%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a
72403 Railway carmen/women	2.9%	0.0%	4.3%	0.0%	5.5%	1.6%	7.5%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
72404 Aircraft mechanics and aircraft inspectors	6.3%	4.9%	3.8%	9.3%	7.0%	5.4%	8.5%	8.3%	7.5%	7.5%	2.7%	28.6%	10.0%	0.0%
72405 Machine fitters	5.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	7.8%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
72406 Elevator constructors and mechanics	1.1%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a
72410 Automotive service technicians, truck and bus	1.9%	1.8%	2.4%	1.6%	1.1%	1.8%	2.0%	1.0%	1.7%	1.2%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

mechanics and mechanical repairers															
72411 Auto body collision, refinishing and glass technicians and damage repair estimators	4.8%	4.6%	4.8%	4.6%	6.3%	5.3%	4.5%	4.0%	4.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	
72420 Oil and solid fuel heating mechanics	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	0.0%	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
72421 Appliance servicers and repairers	3.1%	1.8%	6.7%	6.3%	5.0%	1.9%	3.2%	0.0%	7.1%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	
72422 Electrical mechanics	3.7%	5.7%	6.5%	0.0%	11.8%	6.2%	2.9%	11.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	
72423 Motorcycle, all-terrain vehicle and other related mechanics	2.5%	5.2%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	0.0%	n/a	0.0%	n/a	
72429 Other small engine and small equipment repairers	1.5%	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	0.0%	0.0%	
72500 Crane operators	2.4%	4.4%	3.1%	2.6%	0.0%	1.8%	1.6%	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	
72501 Water well drillers	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
72999 Other technical trades and related occupations	10.0%	12.1%	11.7%	15.8%	5.3%	10.8%	8.4%	3.8%	7.7%	0.0%	4.9%	n/a	n/a	n/a	
73100 Concrete finishers	2.2%	4.2%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	13.8%	n/a	n/a	n/a	
73101 Tilesetters	4.2%	3.1%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	8.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	
73102 Plasterers, drywall installers and finishers and lathers	4.4%	5.1%	5.6%	3.7%	3.3%	3.0%	5.9%	2.1%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	
73110 Roofers and shinglers	1.9%	3.0%	2.2%	1.3%	0.0%	1.3%	1.9%	3.2%	3.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	
73111 Glaziers	2.4%	0.5%	2.7%	4.7%	5.4%	3.1%	2.5%	8.7%	0.0%	n/a	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	
73112 Painters and decorators (except interior decorators)	17.3%	18.4%	21.4%	25.5%	12.6%	14.8%	20.2%	6.9%	12.2%	7.1%	17.1%	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%	
73113 Floor covering installers	3.4%	4.2%	3.4%	2.5%	3.3%	3.3%	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	
73200 Residential and commercial installers and servicers	4.6%	4.0%	5.5%	4.6%	5.1%	4.3%	5.1%	2.4%	4.4%	4.5%	11.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
73201 General building maintenance workers and building superintendents	8.7%	7.8%	8.3%	7.0%	5.6%	10.6%	7.6%	7.2%	7.9%	9.8%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%	5.8%	
73202 Pest controllers and fumigators	10.7%	12.5%	12.9%	25.7%	21.1%	7.8%	9.4%	11.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	0.0%	n/a	
73209 Other repairers and servicers	6.3%	6.8%	6.1%	7.8%	5.9%	6.4%	6.2%	6.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	
73300 Transport truck drivers	4.3%	3.7%	4.4%	4.4%	3.3%	3.7%	5.7%	2.8%	2.5%	0.9%	3.9%	10.8%	8.8%	10.1%	
73301 Bus drivers, subway operators and other transit operators	31.7%	19.7%	39.6%	42.1%	23.5%	34.9%	28.0%	36.6%	26.2%	28.2%	25.3%	35.0%	35.7%	50.0%	
73310 Railway and yard	6.4%	6.5%	8.1%	4.5%	5.2%	7.5%	3.9%	0.0%	25.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	

locomotive engineers														
73311 Railway conductors and brakemen/women	5.6%	6.4%	5.7%	2.8%	2.8%	6.7%	5.2%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
73400 Heavy equipment operators	4.5%	4.9%	9.2%	5.2%	5.4%	2.8%	2.1%	1.4%	2.3%	0.0%	3.3%	13.9%	4.5%	6.7%
73401 Printing press operators	14.5%	14.1%	18.9%	12.1%	8.8%	15.7%	13.4%	6.1%	7.4%	66.7%	50.0%	n/a	0.0%	n/a
73402 Drillers and blasters - surface mining, quarrying and construction	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	n/a

Women+: women (and/or girls), as well as some non-binary persons

n/a - trade workforce has neither men or women+ in that jurisdiction.

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0593-01 Class of worker by occupation unit group, labour force status, age and gender: Canada, provinces and territories, census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations with parts

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=9810059301>

Appendix B

Request for Tenders Form

– Request for Tenders for Policy Analysis & Research Support –

1.0 Assignment Overview

The Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology (CCWESTT; www.ccwestt.org) is looking for policy analysts and researchers to support the project team for the CCWESTT **Changing the Narrative: An Advocacy Pathway for Systemic Change in SETT** project.

Applications will be accepted in both English and French. The primary language of the project team is English.

2.0 Background

CCWESTT is a national coalition of organisations and individuals who champion a gender-equitable, diverse, and inclusive Canadian science, engineering, trades and technology sector. We build alliances and partnerships, act as a resource hub, and advocate with a strong, unified voice.

CCWESTT has received funding from Women and Gender Equality Canada to undertake the project *Changing the Narrative: An Advocacy Pathway for Systemic Change in SETT*.

Project Summary:

CCWESTT will scale its successful Gender Inclusion in Science, Engineering, Trades and Technology (SETT) project to help advance women's economic security. Knowledge gained from CCWESTT Systemic Change Events, Resource Hub, and Gap Analysis Report will be scaled to populations both inside and outside the SETT community. Scaling these efforts will create a central resource for the Canadian status of gender equality in SETT. Objectives are designed to inspire the SETT community to advocate for systemic change at the company, organisation, and legislative levels. This will be achieved by:

1. Expanding community and connectedness: to host Systemic Change Forums for the SETT community (virtual/in-person).
- 2. Reporting the data: create a Gender Equality Report Card on SETT working environments by Federal/Provincial/Territorial jurisdictions.**
3. Changing the narrative: launch a Gender Equality in SETT Advocacy Campaign. CCWESTT partners will use this report card in an advocacy campaign to reach strategic and influential connections in industry, government, and beyond.

This project scaling is designed to change the narrative around workplace culture and, through facts and data, show that gender equality does not exist in SETT

workplaces across Canada, opening the way for a national conversation for equitable change.

3.0 Scope

Purpose of policy analysis and research

The primary purpose of this policy analysis and research is to gain knowledge of current structures/policies within Canadian jurisdictions that create barriers within SETT working environments. The objective is to compare and contrast jurisdictions to identify best practices and gaps in public policy. The information gathered will be used for the *Changing the Narrative: An Advocacy Pathway for Systemic Change in SETT* project's second objective:

Reporting the data: create a Gender Equality Report Card on SETT working environments by Federal/Provincial/Territorial jurisdictions.

4.0 Project outcomes:

The analysis and research will be communicated through:	
Written report	Each topic will be used for a chapter/section for the project's final report.
Community Presentations	CCWESTT will encourage selected individuals/groups to formally present their findings to CCWESTT and the greater SETT community. If you are unable to present CCWESTT to present your work on your behalf.
The Report Card	Topics to be evaluated by jurisdiction, identifying best practices and gaps across Canada. This information will be used in the CCWESTT report card and will be available as part of a collective advocacy tool.

5.0 Topics for Consideration

Topics to be explored through the lens of SETT (science, engineering, trades and technology) working environments and/or SETT workers, evaluating current government jurisdictional policies or lack of policies (federally/provincially/territorially).

Topic(s) for tender:

Theme 1: Government structural/policy-driven initiatives	
Topics to consider	SETT Initiatives: For the past 5-10 years, what SETT initiatives have the jurisdictions been funding?
	Future Planning: For the past 5-10 years, what initiatives have focused on sustainability and jobs within SETT?
Topics to	Budgeting: Have jurisdictions been designing/implementing

consider	feminist budgets?
	Community Benefit Agreements: Do jurisdictions take a holistic approach to government-funded projects?
Topics to consider	Educational Structures by Jurisdictions
	Primary/Secondary Education with regards to SETT
	Tertiary Education with regards to SETT, including upskilling
Topics to consider	Professional Regulations by Jurisdiction
	Apprenticeship, red seal accreditation
	Professional regulators responsibilities
Topics to consider	Care Structures across Canada and general unpaid labour
	Child care agreements, especially with regard to supporting SETT working environments
	Elderly Care
	Critical Illness
	The reliance on unpaid labour for critical social/economic prosperity
Topics to consider	Gender-Based Violence
	Jurisdictional agreements
	Legislation in place - e.g. Clair's Law
	Human Trafficking
	Justice systems for harassment and violence - within justifications and beyond
Topics to consider	Are we missing an important jurisdictional topic that creates barriers within SETT working environments, SETT Workers?

Theme 2: Labour laws, regulations and codes	
Topics to consider	Labour Laws
	Employment Standards Act

	Employee Equity Act
	Canadian Labour Code
	Human Rights Code
Topics to consider	Occupational Health and Safety OH&S
	Including topics such as mental health, bereavement, and PPE
	What industries are exempt from OH&S regulations? How does this affect SETT workers?
Topics to consider	Are we missing an important labour law, regulation or code that creates barriers within SETT working environments, SETT workers?

6.0 Qualifications of the policy analyst/researcher - tender can be from an individual and/or groups

- Background in policy analysis and/or research
- Experience in the application of Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+), intersectional approaches
- Strong writing and analysis skills, excellent communication skills - experience in presenting research to a variety of stakeholders
- Ability to work strategically and collaboratively with others
- Ability to work well under pressure with tight deadlines
- Ability to understand and interpret data analysis of large datasets and trends, utilizing econometric and/or other statistical methods
- Asset: Experience in SETT (science, engineering, trades and technology) working environments
- Asset: Experience with multivariate statistical methods, survey research and/or quantitative/qualitative/ research, design and analysis

7.0 Timeline

- The request for tender will be open until end of day December 2, 2024
- Selection of analysts/researchers and the scope of work will be chosen through December 2024, early January 2025
- Project timeline January 15 - June 30th, 2025
- CCWESTT will ask for updates once a month to ensure that the topic(s) analysis and research are on course and within line with the systemic change project objectives
- Final reports will be due July 15, 2025
- July - September 2025 CCWESTT will work with the analysts/researchers to align the topics to the report card format
- Report card launch - Fall 2025, analysts/researchers will be invited to formally present their findings to the CCWESTT and SETT communities

8.0 Budget

Please submit a budgetary cost with your tender, including fees and taxes. CCWESTT is open to suggestions on how to maximize the consultancy value by topic(s), collaborations etc.

9.0 To apply

Please fill out the online form by end of day on December 2, 2024.

[Request for Tender Form](#)

10.0 Information session and questions

CCWESTT will host an information session on November 6, 2024. To register for this session, please see our link on the CCWESTT website.

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/gender-equality-report-card/>

Please use the following email address for any questions.

research@ccwestt.org

Appendix C

Request for Knowledge Keepers form

– Request for Knowledge Keepers –

1.0 Assignment Overview

The Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology (CCWESTT; www.ccwestt.org) is looking for Knowledge Keepers to support the project team for the CCWESTT **Changing the Narrative: An Advocacy Pathway for Systemic Change in SETT** project.

Applications will be accepted in both English and French. The primary language of the project team is English.

2.0 Background

CCWESTT is a national coalition of organisations and individuals who champion a gender-equitable, diverse, and inclusive Canadian science, engineering, trades and technology sector. We build alliances and partnerships, act as a resource hub, and advocate with a strong, unified voice.

CCWESTT has received funding from Women and Gender Equality Canada to undertake the project *Changing the Narrative: An Advocacy Pathway for Systemic Change in SETT*.

Project Summary:

CCWESTT will scale its successful Gender Inclusion in Science, Engineering, Trades and Technology (SETT) project to help advance women's economic security. Knowledge gained from CCWESTT Systemic Change Events, Resource Hub, and Gap Analysis Report will be scaled to populations both inside and outside the SETT community. Scaling these efforts will create a central resource for the Canadian status of gender equality in SETT. Objectives are designed to inspire the SETT community to advocate for systemic change at the company, organisation, and legislative levels. This will be achieved by:

1. Expanding community and connectedness: to host Systemic Change Forums for the SETT community (virtual/in-person).
- 2. Reporting the data: create a Gender Equality Report Card on SETT working environments by Federal/Provincial/Territorial jurisdictions.**
3. Changing the narrative: launch a Gender Equality in SETT Advocacy Campaign. CCWESTT partners will use this report card in an advocacy campaign to reach strategic and influential connections in industry, government, and beyond.

This project scaling is designed to change the narrative around workplace culture and, through facts and data, show that gender equality does not exist in SETT

workplaces across Canada, opening the way for a national conversation for equitable change.

3.0 Scope

Purpose of the knowledge request

The primary purpose of this request is to gain knowledge of how current structures/policies within Canadian jurisdictions create barriers within SETT working environments from an intersectional lens. The objective is to compare and contrast jurisdictions in order to identify best practices and gaps in public policy. The information gathered will be used for the *Changing the Narrative: An Advocacy Pathway for Systemic Change in SETT* project’s second objective:

Reporting the data: create a Gender Equality Report Card on SETT working environments by Federal/Provincial/Territorial jurisdictions.

4.0 Project outcomes:

The knowledge will be communicated through:	
Written report	Each topic will be used for a chapter/section for the project’s final report.
Community Presentations	CCWESTT will encourage selected individuals/groups to formally present their findings to CCWESTT and the greater SETT community. If you are unable to present CCWESTT to present your work on your behalf.
The Report Card	Topics to be evaluated by jurisdiction, identifying best practices and gaps across Canada. This information will be used in the CCWESTT report card and will be available as part of a collective advocacy tool.

5.0 Topics for Consideration

CCWESTT is seeking Knowledge Keepers with lived experience in an intersecting identity/identities and policy analysis skills to evaluate current government jurisdictional policies or lack of policies (federally/provincially/territorially) that affect SETT working environments and/or SETT workers.

Intersectional lens of interest to evaluate jurisdictional policies (federal/provincial/territorial)
Structures supporting/affecting Women
Structures supporting/affecting 2SLGBTQIA+
Structures supporting/affecting Indigenous Peoples
Structures supporting/affecting Refugees
Structures supporting/affecting those living with a Disability (visible and/or

invisible)
Structures supporting/affecting Racialised People
Structures supporting/affecting Immigrants
Are we missing a traditionally underserved intersection?

6.0 We seek Knowledge Keepers (individuals and/or groups) with a background in:

- Policy analysis and/or research
- Experience in the application of Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+), intersectional approaches
- Strong writing and analysis skills, excellent communication skills - experience in presenting research to a variety of stakeholders
- Ability to work strategically and collaboratively with others
- Ability to work well under pressure with tight deadlines
- Ability to understand and interpret data analysis of large datasets and trends, utilizing econometric and/or other statistical methods
- Asset: Experience in SETT (science, engineering, trades and technology) working environments
- Asset: Experience with multivariate statistical methods, survey research and/or quantitative/qualitative/ research, design and analysis

7.0 Timeline

- The request for Knowledge Keepers will be open until end of day December 2, 2024
- Selection of Knowledge Keepers and the scope of work will be chosen through December 2024, early January 2025
- Project timeline January 15 - June 30th, 2025
- CCWESTT will ask for updates once a month to ensure timelines are on course and within line with the systemic change project objectives
- Final reports will be due on July 15, 2025
- July - September 2025 CCWESTT will work with the Knowledge Keepers to align the topics to the report card format
- Report card launch - Fall 2025, Knowledge Keepers will be invited to formally present their findings to the CCWESTT and SETT communities

8.0 Budget

Please submit a budgetary cost with your tender, including fees and taxes. CCWESTT is open to suggestions on how to maximize the consultancy value, collaborations etc.

9.0 To apply

Please fill out the online form by end of day December 2, 2024

[Request for Knowledge Keepers Form](#)

10.0 Information session and questions

CCWESTT will host an information session on November 6, 2024. To register for this session, please see our link on the CCWESTT website.

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/gender-equality-report-card/>

Please use the following email address for any questions.

research@ccwestt.org

Appendix D

(Summary created through assistance from Adobe Acrobat Generative AI Assist - to review full report, please see the provided link)

Summary of Document: SCALING UP An assessment of the legislative frameworks, implementation frameworks, and strategic planning processes of Canada's federal-provincial-territorial (FPT) governments: A comparison to the No. 1-ranked country, Iceland

Author - Lorraine Hewlett, CCWESTT.

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/00-National-Report-Card-00-MASTER-DOCUMENT-FINAL-2025-10-16-08h52.pdf>

The 2025 Scaling Up report evaluates Canada's progress toward achieving gender equality in Science, Engineering, Trades, and Technology (SETT). It compares Canada's federal, provincial, and territorial (FPT) legislative frameworks, implementation frameworks, and strategic planning processes to Iceland, the global leader in gender equality. The report highlights systemic barriers, identifies best practices, and provides over 90 recommendations to accelerate progress toward gender equality in Canada.

Key Learnings:

1. **Canada's Declining Global Ranking:** Canada has fallen from 1st place in 1995 to 32nd in 2025 in global gender equality rankings, highlighting the need for urgent action.
2. **Underrepresentation in SETT:** Women and gender-diverse individuals remain significantly underrepresented in SETT professions, with women comprising only 5% of the trades workforce and 15% of professional engineers.
3. **Iceland as a Model:** Iceland has maintained its #1 ranking for 16 years due to robust legislative frameworks, mandatory pay equity certification, and strategic planning processes.
4. **Legislative Gaps in Canada:** Many FPT jurisdictions lack proactive pay equity legislation, pay transparency laws, and gender equality legislation. Occupational health and safety (OHS) laws are outdated and fail to address harassment, bullying, and violence effectively.
5. **Implementation Challenges:** Gender equality directorates in Canada are underfunded and under-empowered, and there is a lack of accountability mechanisms to enforce existing commitments.
6. **Strategic Planning Deficiencies:** Most FPT jurisdictions lack comprehensive strategic plans and action plans for achieving gender equality, particularly in SETT. Quebec is the only province consistently developing such plans.

Critical Issues Identified:

1. **Pay Inequity:** Women in SETT earn significantly less than men, with systemic barriers like the lack of pay transparency and proactive pay equity legislation.
2. **Workplace Harassment and Violence:** Women in SETT face high rates of harassment, bullying, and violence, exacerbated by inadequate OHS legislation.

3. **Lack of Representation:** Women are underrepresented in leadership roles, trades, and STEM fields, with no legal mandates for gender parity in decision-making bodies.
4. **Insufficient Data and Accountability:** The absence of robust data collection and evaluation mechanisms hinders progress tracking and policy effectiveness.
5. **Fragmented Efforts:** The lack of coordination between federal, provincial, and territorial governments results in inconsistent policies and missed opportunities for systemic change.

Recommendations for Systemic Change:

1. **Legislative Reform:** Enact proactive pay equity legislation in all FPT jurisdictions, requiring employers to submit proof of compliance. Implement pay transparency laws to expose and address wage gaps. Modernize OHS legislation to include comprehensive definitions of harassment, bullying, and violence, and mandate employer accountability. Pass gender equality legislation mandating strategic planning, data collection, and public consultation.
2. **Empower Gender Equality Directorates:** Provide directorates with enforcement authority, legislative oversight, and adequate funding. Establish gender equality tribunals to handle complaints efficiently and affordably.
3. **Strategic Planning:** Develop and maintain national and provincial/territorial strategic plans and action plans for gender equality in SETT, with clear timelines, measurable goals, and budget allocations. Ensure public consultation and stakeholder engagement in the planning process.
4. **Workplace Culture Transformation:** Mandate gender equality strategies for employers, unions, and municipal governments. Require inclusive workplace policies, such as proper toilet facilities and safety equipment for women in trades.
5. **Data and Accountability:** Establish a national network of gender equality experts to monitor progress and publish annual assessments. Require annual progress reports and final evaluations for all strategic plans and action plans.
6. **Leadership and Representation:** Enact legislation requiring gender parity on boards of directors for crown corporations and publicly funded organisations. Increase funding for mentorship and leadership programs for women in SETT.
7. **Combat Gender-Based Violence:** Develop and implement comprehensive strategies to prevent and eliminate gender-based violence, including workplace harassment and domestic violence.
8. **Community Benefits Agreements:** Mandate CBAs for all publicly funded infrastructure projects to prioritize hiring women, Indigenous workers, and other underrepresented groups.

Achieving gender equality in SETT requires bold, systemic changes. By adopting Iceland's best practices—proactive legislation, empowered institutions, and robust strategic planning—Canada can close the gender gap, improve workplace conditions, and unlock the full potential of its workforce. The time for action is now.

Appendix E

Request for Tender Report Summaries

(Summaries created through assistance from Adobe Acrobat Generative AI Assist - to review full reports, please see the provided links)

Summary of Document: Barriers (for Women) in Science, Engineering, Trades and Technology (SETT) Education

Author - Leslie Woolcott from Leslie Woolcott Consulting

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Barriers-to-SETT-Education-in-Canada-Report.pdf>

The document explores barriers to SETT education in Canada, focusing on structural, jurisdictional, and gender-based challenges between 2015 and 2025. It highlights the complexity of SETT education due to Canada's federalism, diverse provincial/territorial systems, and the lack of a national approach. Women remain underrepresented in SETT fields, with significant gaps in apprenticeship registrations, STEM enrollments, and graduation rates. The report emphasises the need for systemic change to address structural barriers and improve gender equity in SETT education.

Key Learnings:

1. **Gender Disparities:** Women make up 12.2% of apprenticeship registrations and 38.9% of STEM enrollments, but only 8% of skilled trades workers.
2. **Federalism Challenges:** Canada's decentralised education system leads to inconsistent SETT policies and frameworks across jurisdictions.
3. **Structural Barriers:** These include limited coordination, outdated resources, and biases favouring university-level programs over trades and technology.
4. **Effective Practices:** Programs such as Ontario's Specialist High Skills Major and Alberta's Registered Apprenticeship Program provide pathways for SETT education, but they are not uniformly implemented across Canada.

Critical Issues Identified:

1. **Gender Inequity:** Persistent underrepresentation of women in SETT fields due to systemic and structural barriers.
2. **Coordination Gaps:** Lack of alignment between federal, provincial, and territorial SETT education policies.
3. **Outdated Resources:** Tools like the Red Seal and Ellis Chart websites are poorly designed and lack accessibility.
4. **Curriculum Limitations:** Variability in SETT-related curriculum across jurisdictions, with limited integration of equity and diversity.
5. **Access Challenges:** Rural and remote areas face infrastructural and resourcing barriers to SETT education.

Recommendations for Systemic Change:

1. **Create a National Strategy for Education:** Conduct in-depth studies on gendered barriers in SETT enrollment, completion, and employment, complemented by international comparisons.
2. **Enhance Coordination:** Improve the Red Seal and Ellis Chart websites to serve as a national hub for trades-related education information.
3. **Strengthen CMEC:** Empower the Council of Ministers of Education Canada to address structural barriers and develop a strategic plan for gender equity in SETT.
4. **Curriculum Updates:** Review and update the 1997 Common Framework of Science Learning Outcomes to reflect current thinking on equity and diversity.
5. **Intersectional Analysis:** Encourage Engineers Canada and similar organisations to adopt systemic approaches to address gender-based barriers.
6. **Educator Development:** Build SETT educators' capacity to integrate equity into teaching through professional development and performance reviews.
7. **Evaluate Quebec's Model:** Study Quebec's vocational/CEGEP programs and polytechnical institutions for potential application nationwide.
8. **Strengthen Pathways:** Develop stronger connections between secondary and post-secondary SETT education to ensure equitable access.
9. **Map Effective Practices:** Identify and evaluate programs supporting women and diverse communities in SETT fields.
10. **Refine Metrics:** Enhance the SETT Post-Secondary Education Participation Score and explore its application in labour force participation analysis.

These recommendations aim to address systemic barriers, improve gender equity, and create a cohesive national approach to SETT education.

Summary of Document: CCWESTT Systemic Change Report - STEM and Trades Initiatives Scan of Jurisdictional Funding in the Past Five Years

Authors - Damineh Akhavan and Anja Lanz from Global Women in STEM

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/SETT-in-Canada-a-Jurisdictional-Scan-Report.pdf>

The report highlights systemic efforts to advance gender equity in SETT across Canada from 2020 to 2025. It provides a comprehensive scan of federal, provincial, and territorial funding initiatives aimed at recruitment, retention, and career advancement for women and gender-diverse individuals.

Key Learnings:

Key findings include significant investments in scholarships, mentorship programs, and industry partnerships, but also persistent gaps such as underrepresentation, wage disparity, fragmented funding, and lack of standardised accountability measures. International comparisons with Australia and Lithuania reveal that while Canada offers extensive multi-level funding, it lacks the coordinated national strategy seen in Australia and the EU-backed structural reforms in Lithuania.

Critical Issues Identified:

1. **Underrepresentation and Retention:** Women account for only 21% of STEM occupations despite holding 31% of STEM post-secondary qualifications. Wage disparities and workplace challenges further hinder retention.
2. **Fragmented Funding:** Funding is dispersed across multiple agencies without cohesive coordination, resulting in inefficiencies and limited transparency.
3. **Short-term Funding Cycles:** Many programs lack long-term funding, which impacts retention and career progression.
4. **Regional Disparities:** Uneven access to funding across provinces and territories, with significant gaps in graduate-level scholarships and larger-scale initiatives.
5. **Accountability and Transparency:** The lack of standardised reporting and disaggregated data limits the ability to evaluate outcomes and ensure the equitable distribution of resources.

Recommendations for Systemic Change:

1. **Create a National Strategy for SETT:** Establish a centralised framework to align federal, provincial, and territorial efforts for systemic change.
2. **Enhanced Accountability Mechanisms:** Implement standardised reporting, independent oversight, and transparent evaluation frameworks to ensure sustained progress.
3. **Disaggregated Data and Transparency:** Collect and report data broken down by gender, region, and discipline to monitor progress and identify gaps.

4. **Funding Parity Across Regions:** Harmonise provincial scholarship systems and ensure equitable access to funding nationwide.
5. **Long-term Funding Cycles:** Develop funding models that support women from early education through career progression and re-entry into the workforce.
6. **Retention-Focused Support:** Develop integrated strategies that address workplace challenges, mentorship, and re-entry programs to retain women in STEM and trades.
7. **Cross-Sector Collaboration:** Foster partnerships between academia, industry, government, and community organisations to co-create scalable solutions.

By addressing these critical issues and implementing the recommendations, Canada can build a more inclusive and sustainable STEM and trades ecosystem, ensuring equitable opportunities for women and gender-diverse individuals.

Summary of Document: Jurisdictional Scan of Canadian SETT Professional Regulators

Author - Jocelyn Peltier-Huntley from *Prairie Catalyst*

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Canadian-Regulators-Landscape-Report.pdf>

The report maps legislation and regulatory practices across federal, provincial, and territorial jurisdictions related to SETT professions, examining the roles, responsibilities, and practices of professional regulatory bodies to ensure public safety, ethical practice, and professional standards.

Key Regulatory Framework Components:

1. Acts & Regulations:

- *Acts* establish the legal authority for regulating professionals.
- *Regulations* detail governance, discipline, and operational practices.
- In provinces like BC and Alberta, new governance acts cover multiple professions but haven't resulted in unified regulatory bodies.

2. Bylaws and Codes of Ethics:

- Often created by internal councils or boards.
- Mandate behavioural expectations, often covering harassment and discrimination.
- Enforcement includes penalties such as suspension or revocation of the license.

3. Continuous Professional Development (CPD):

- Increasingly mandatory, tied to equity and inclusion training.
- A key tool for shifting culture and attitudes in SETT professions.

Critical Issues Identified:

- 1. Challenges:** Harmonisation of standards across jurisdictions, addressing labour market needs, and supporting diversity and inclusion within the professions.
- 2. Conflict of Interest:** Self-regulation can create a problematic dual role (governing and advocating), limiting the ability to truly champion gender equity.
- 3. Data Deficiency:**
 - There's a significant lack of disaggregated data (race, gender, identity) among regulators.
 - Statistics Canada's classifications often erase professional identities (e.g., engineers are sometimes classified as "managers" after being promoted).

Recommendations for Systemic Change:

- 1. Create SETT Member Advocacy Societies:** Distinct from regulators, these would advocate for the retention and advancement of women and marginalised professionals, while gathering equity data. (Eg, OSPE and BCSEG)

2. **Mandate Disaggregated Data Collection:** Partner with Statistics Canada to ensure tracking of profession, identity, and A crucial role in meaningful analysis and policy reform.
3. **Model Transparency & Anti-Bias Governance:** Promote structures with external accountability and public oversight

Summary of Document: Beyond the Red Seal: Building an Inclusive Future for Skilled Trades in Canada

Author - Mary Fuke from Purple Cat Consulting

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Beyond-the-Red-Seal-Report.pdf>

Canada's apprenticeship system has strengths like the Red Seal Program and targeted initiatives for underrepresented groups. However, systemic challenges such as gender disparity, fragmented systems, and low completion rates require structural reforms. By addressing these issues and learning from global best practices, Canada can create a more inclusive and resilient skilled trades workforce.

Key Learnings:

1. **The Importance of Skilled Trades:** Skilled trades are vital to Canada's infrastructure, economy, and innovation, supported by a complex apprenticeship system that combines on-the-job training with classroom instruction.
2. **Canada's Apprenticeship System Is Innovative But Needs Better Coordination:** Shared governance between federal and provincial governments, with programs like the Red Seal Program promoting national standards and labour mobility. Programs like **Women in Skilled Trades**, **Build Together**, and **Union Training Innovation Program (UTIP)** are promising but need scaling.
3. **Barriers to Participation:** Women and underrepresented groups face challenges such as gender bias, limited mentorship, harassment, and a lack of employer awareness.
4. **International Comparison:** Canada's system is industry-driven and offers multiple pathways; however, completion rates and gender equity lag behind those of countries like Germany and Australia.
5. **Interprovincial Mobility Challenges:** Uneven recognition of credentials, family responsibilities, isolation, and inconsistent child care support hinder women's mobility in the trades.

Critical Issues Identified:

1. **Gender Disparity:** Women represent only ~14% of apprenticeships, with low completion rates (~36%) compared to men (~46%). Barriers include harassment, lack of mentorship, and limited access to non-traditional trades.
2. **Fragmented Provincial Systems:** Differences in designated trades and apprenticeship requirements across provinces create confusion and hinder the mobility of workers.
3. **Low Completion Rates:** Completion rates for apprenticeships continue to be a systemic issue, impacting workforce development.
4. **Equity in Hiring:** Persistent gender bias and informal hiring practices disadvantage women and underrepresented groups.

Recommendations for Systemic Change:

1. **Cross-Provincial Support:** Enhance interprovincial coordination to ensure workers have access to community resources prior to relocating.
2. **Credential Recognition:** Standardise and publicise credential alignment across provinces to help non-Red Seal workers and apprentices navigate mobility.
3. **Accessible Child care:** Create a national child care strategy tailored to mobile workers, including on-site or shared child care near workplaces.
4. **Equity in Hiring:** Advance national reforms to combat workplace harassment and create inclusive, gender-responsive job sites in both unionised and non-unionised trades.

Summary of Document: Environmental scan and comparative analysis of union structures and Community Benefit Agreements across different Canadian

Author - Akeena Legall from Core Firm

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Canadaian-Union-Structures-and-Community-Benefit-Agreements-Report.pdf>

This comprehensive jurisdictional scan examines the interaction between union structures and Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs) across Canada's provinces and territories, aiming to drive equitable infrastructure development. It evaluates union density, labour protections, and the presence and effectiveness of CBAs or similar agreements, such as Impact Benefit Agreements (IBAs) and Socio-Economic Monitoring Agreements (SEMAS). The goal is to identify patterns and gaps in embedding workforce equity, local hiring, and community investment into infrastructure projects.

Key Findings and Understandings of Unions and CBAs:

1. **Union and CBA Interplay:** Unions and CBAs often work in tandem, with unions providing workforce infrastructure and CBAs extending their impact to equity outcomes, such as inclusive hiring and training.
2. **Union Density and CBA Feasibility:** Higher union density (e.g., Quebec, Newfoundland) correlates with stronger institutional capacity for implementing CBAs, while provinces with low union density (e.g., Alberta) rely on CBAs to fill policy gaps.
3. **CBA Formats:** CBAs are implemented as private agreements, public procurement mandates, or hybrid models, with varying levels of enforceability and stakeholder involvement.
4. **Equity Outcomes:** CBAs prioritise local hiring, apprenticeship targets, supplier diversity, and community investments, benefiting marginalised groups, including women, Indigenous peoples, and racialised workers.
5. **Federal Momentum:** The 2024 federal policy tied Investment Tax Credits to prevailing wage and apprenticeship requirements, marking a significant shift toward equity-driven infrastructure spending.

Critical Issues Identified:

1. **Fragmentation:** The lack of consistent provincial policies results in uneven CBA adoption and enforcement across jurisdictions.
2. **Union Exclusion in Professional Sectors:** Engineering professionals, often un-unionised, are excluded from CBA-linked benefits, heightening their vulnerability.
3. **Cost and Implementation Challenges:** Provinces like British Columbia face criticism for cost overruns and rigid frameworks that limit contractor participation and Indigenous inclusion.

4. **Trade Agreement Conflicts:** In Saskatchewan, CBA criteria have clashed with interprovincial trade agreements, creating legal and policy barriers.
5. **Data and Accountability Gaps:** Limited public reporting on CBA outcomes hinders transparency and effectiveness.

Recommendations for Systemic Change:

1. **Mandate CBAs in Federal and Provincial Projects:** Require CBAs with enforceable equity targets for all major infrastructure projects.
2. **Expand CBA Scope:** Include professional sectors, such as engineering, in CBA frameworks to address systemic exclusion.
3. **Strengthen Policy Alignment:** Develop clear provincial policies to reduce fragmentation and ensure consistent enforcement.
4. **Support Workforce Development:** Unions and CBAs could be a path to fund apprenticeship and mentorship programs for underrepresented groups, including women, 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, and racialised workers.
5. **Enhance Accountability:** Implement robust monitoring, reporting, and stakeholder engagement mechanisms to track CBA outcomes.
6. **Adapt Trade Agreements:** Reconcile CBA criteria with interprovincial trade rules to avoid legal disputes while promoting local benefits.

These findings and recommendations highlight the need for a cohesive, equity-driven approach to unions and CBAs, ensuring infrastructure investments deliver inclusive and sustainable community benefits.

Summary of Document: Futures Under Siege - A Jurisdictional Analysis of Canadian Sustainability Policy in the context of Gender Equity, Indigenous Sovereignty, and Climate Justice.

Author - Aleyah-Erin Lennon from Truth & Bloom Strategies

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Future-Under-Siege.pdf>

"Futures Under Siege" is a jurisdictional analysis of Canadian sustainability policy, examined through the lenses of gender equity, Indigenous sovereignty, and climate justice. The report assesses federal, provincial, and territorial laws and policies to determine how they address sustainable and inclusive development in Canada — particularly within the SETT sectors.

Key Learnings: Critical Issues for Workers

1. **Fragmented Climate Commitments:** Canada's sustainability policies are inconsistent across jurisdictions, with most frameworks relying on voluntary measures rather than binding regulations. This creates uncertainty for workers in transitioning industries.
2. **Gender and Equity Gaps:** Gender-diverse and equity-deserving groups continue to be structurally excluded from climate governance and workforce development. Few policies integrate Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) or address systemic barriers in SETT sectors.
3. **Weak Indigenous Inclusion:** Indigenous sovereignty and jurisdiction are systematically undermined, with most policies treating Indigenous Peoples as stakeholders rather than rights-holders. This limits opportunities for Indigenous-led solutions and co-governance.
4. **Underdeveloped Just Transition Frameworks:** Most provinces and territories lack comprehensive plans to support workers transitioning to green economies. Training, income security, and equity measures are insufficiently addressed.
5. **Economic Risks of Climate Injustice:** Weak climate policies and regressive legislation (e.g., Bill C-5, Bill 5) pose a threat to economic stability, workforce readiness, and Canada's global competitiveness.

Recommendations for Systemic Change

1. **Legislate Binding Climate Targets:** Adopt enforceable emissions reduction goals with standardised evaluation metrics and independent oversight to ensure accountability and clarity for workers in transitioning industries.
2. **Mandate Intersectional Gender Equity:** Revise all climate instruments to include disaggregated data collection, enforceable gender equity targets, and funding for gender-diverse leadership in SETT sectors.
3. **Uphold Indigenous Jurisdiction:** Fully implement UNDRIP and Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) in climate governance, ensuring Indigenous Nations are recognised as co-governors and rights-holders.

4. **Develop a Federal Just Transition Framework:** Establish a cross-cutting plan to support workers in SETT industries through retraining, income security, and inclusive leadership pathways. Align labour, climate, and innovation strategies to prioritise equity-deserving groups.
5. **Integrate Disaggregated Data and Monitoring:** Build a robust data infrastructure to track equity outcomes across SETT sectors, ensuring transparency and responsive policy adjustments.
6. **Repeal Regressive Legislation:** Remove laws like Bill C-5 and Bill 5 that weaken environmental protections and Indigenous rights, and strengthen environmental review mechanisms to align with net-zero commitments.

Worker-Centric Impacts

- **Job Security:** Binding climate targets and just transition frameworks will provide clarity and stability for workers in industries undergoing green transformation.
- **Equity in Opportunities:** Gender-responsive and Indigenous-led policies will ensure historically marginalised groups can access training, leadership roles, and economic benefits in the green economy.
- **Skills Development:** Investments in retraining and education will prepare workers for emerging roles in clean energy, infrastructure, and technology sectors.
- **Economic Resilience:** Proactive climate action will mitigate risks to industries and supply chains, fostering long-term competitiveness and workforce readiness.

These changes are essential to creating a sustainable, inclusive economy that supports workers while addressing the climate crisis.

Summary of Document: Structural Barriers in Canada's Care Systems for Women in Science, Engineering, Trades and Technology

Author - Suzanne Spiteri from Spiteri Research & Consulting

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Canadian-Care-Related-Structures-Report.pdf>

The document examines structural barriers in Canada's healthcare systems that disproportionately affect women in SETT. It highlights challenges in maternity and parental leave, child care, elder care, and caregiving benefits, emphasizing how these systems fail to align with the realities of SETT professions. Women in SETT face unique obstacles due to non-standard work schedules, male-dominated workplace cultures, and systemic undervaluation of caregiving responsibilities. These barriers contribute to underrepresentation, higher attrition rates, and career stagnation for women in SETT fields.

Key Issues identified:

1. Maternity and Parental Leave:

- Eligibility criteria for parental leave often exclude women in SETT due to non-linear career paths and precarious employment.
- Lack of employer-provided top-ups and wage replacement disproportionately affects low-income and early-career women.

2. Child Care:

- Child care systems are designed for 9-to-5 schedules, excluding women in SETT who work non-standard hours, including overnight shifts or field placements.
- Child care deserts in rural and industrial areas limit access for women in trades and engineering roles.
- School-age care gaps and a lack of flexible or extended-hour options exacerbate challenges.

3. Elder Care and Caregiving Benefits:

- EI caregiving benefits require 600 insured hours, excluding many SETT workers in seasonal or contract-based roles.
- Unpaid caregiving leaves create financial penalties, forcing women to choose between income stability and caregiving responsibilities.
- Absence of return-to-work or re-skilling programs for caregivers leads to skill gaps and career setbacks.

4. Workplace Culture:

- Male-dominated environments often resist caregiving accommodations and perpetuate gender bias, harassment, and undervaluation of women's contributions.

Recommendations for Systemic Change:

1. Maternity and Parental Leave:

- Reform eligibility criteria to include non-standard workers and reduce insured hour requirements.

- Establish sector-specific top-up programs for SETT employers to supplement government benefits.
 - Mandate wage and career protection during leave to prevent penalties like stalled promotions or de-skilling.
2. **Child Care:**
- Expand non-standard hour child care options, including overnight and weekend care.
 - Prioritise funding for child care in rural and industrial areas to address child care deserts.
 - Offer tax credits or grants to employers for on-site or nearby workplace child care.
 - Integrate subsidised child care into SETT training and apprenticeship programs.
3. **Elder Care and Caregiving Benefits:**
- Amend EI caregiving benefits to accommodate non-standard employment patterns.
 - Introduce paid caregiving leave at the provincial level with wage replacement or employer top-ups.
 - Develop national return-to-work programs for caregivers, including re-skilling and credential renewal.
 - Scale Nova Scotia's Caregiver Benefit Program across other provinces.
4. **Workplace Culture:**
- Implement gender equity reporting requirements to track leave uptake and post-leave outcomes.
 - Promote leadership accountability to foster inclusive and supportive workplace environments.

To enable women in SETT to balance professional and caregiving responsibilities without compromising their careers, Canada must redesign its care systems through a gender- and sector-conscious lens. Addressing these systemic barriers is crucial for creating equitable workplaces, retaining talent, and ensuring the full participation of women in high-demand STEM fields.

Summary of Document: Gender-Based Violence and Harassment in Canadian Workplaces

Author - Sarah Costantini from Peel Institute of Research and Training

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-GBVH-in-Canadian-Workplaces-Report.pdf>

Women in SETT face systemic challenges that exacerbate their vulnerability to gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH) in Canadian Workplaces. Addressing these issues requires comprehensive legislative reform, workplace-specific policies, and a shift toward gender-responsive approaches. By implementing these recommendations, Canada can create safer, more equitable workplaces for women in SETT.

Key Learnings:

1. **Higher Risk of GBVH:** Women in SETT face increased risks of GBVH due to male-dominated workplace cultures and power imbalances.
2. **Prevalence of GBVH:** GBVH disproportionately affects women in SETT, with higher rates of sexual harassment, intimidation, and exclusionary behaviours.
3. **Workplace Exemptions:** Many SETT workplaces, such as mining and oil and gas, are exempt from violence prevention provisions, leaving women vulnerable.
4. **Lack of Gender-Responsive Policies:** Current occupational health and safety (OHS) legislation takes a gender-neutral approach, failing to address the gendered nature of violence and harassment in SETT workplaces.

Critical Issues Identified:

1. **Inconsistent Legislation:** OHS legislation varies across jurisdictions, leading to inequitable protections for women in SETT.
2. **Exemptions in High-Risk Workplaces:** SETT workplaces often fall under exemptions, limiting the application of violence and harassment prevention policies.
3. **Gender-Neutral Approach:** The lack of recognition of GBVH in workplace policies ignores the systemic and gendered dimensions of violence.
4. **Barriers to Reporting:** Fear of retaliation, lack of clear reporting procedures, and absence of designated impartial representatives deter women from reporting GBVH.
5. **Limited Training:** Training programs often focus on compliance rather than addressing systemic issues like unconscious bias, power dynamics, and gender discrimination.

Recommendations for Systemic Change:

1. **Mandatory Violence and Harassment Policies:** Require all SETT workplaces to develop and implement violence and harassment prevention policies, including risk assessments and reporting procedures.

2. **Gender-Responsive Legislation:** Reform OHS legislation to adopt a gender-responsive approach, explicitly addressing GBVH and systemic power imbalances.
3. **Expand Workplace Coverage:** Remove exemptions for high-risk workplaces, such as mining and oil & gas, to ensure comprehensive protection.
4. **Proactive Risk Assessments:** Implement regular risk assessments that consider gender-specific risks and workplace diversity.
5. **Comprehensive Training:** Develop training programs that go beyond compliance, focusing on systemic issues such as unconscious bias, gender discrimination, and collective responsibility.
6. **Support Mechanisms:** Implement financial and job protection measures for survivors, ensuring access to counselling and leave without fear of retaliation.
7. **Strengthen Reporting Systems:** Require workplaces to designate impartial third-party representatives for receiving complaints and ensure confidentiality protections.
8. **Adopt ILO C-190:** Fully enforce the International Labour Organisation's Violence and Harassment Convention No. 190 to create a gender-responsive framework for addressing GBVH.

The document underscores the urgent need for coordinated efforts to address gender-based violence and harassment in Canadian workplaces. By closing policy gaps, enhancing enforcement, and fostering inclusive environments, Canada can make significant strides toward safer and more equitable workplaces.

Summary of Document: Gender Budgeting In Canada

Author - Leslie Woolcott from Leslie Woolcott Consulting

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Gender-Budgeting-in-Canada-Report.pdf>

Gender budgeting is a proactive, process-oriented approach to achieving equitable fiscal policy outcomes by integrating gender and intersectional analysis considerations into all stages of budget decision-making. It promotes government transparency and equitable outcomes.

Importance:

- Supports data-driven, outcome-focused decision making.
- Reduces gender gaps in pay, reliance on social programs, and unpaid care work.
- Drives innovation: nations practising gender budgeting often see stronger GDP growth and higher labour participation rates among women.

Key Learnings:

1. **Federal Leadership:** Canada's federal government has made significant strides in gender budgeting, including the introduction of the Gender Results Framework (GRF), the Canadian Gender Budgeting Act, and the implementation of mandatory Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) for budgetary measures. Canada scored the highest in a 2023 OECD report on gender budgeting.
1. **Provincial and Territorial Variations:** The implementation of gender budgeting varies significantly across provinces and territories. Newfoundland, New Brunswick, and British Columbia lead in implementation, while others, such as Ontario, Alberta, and Manitoba, show limited progress or focus on reactive approaches to women's issues.
2. **Challenges in Data and Capacity:** Despite progress, gaps persist in the collection of disaggregated data, capacity-building, and monitoring/reporting, as highlighted by Canada's auditor general and the OECD.

Critical Issues Identified:

1. **Lack of Cohesive Plans:** Many provinces and territories lack specific, measurable plans for achieving gender equality, which limits the effectiveness of gender budgeting.
2. **Reactive vs. Proactive Approaches:** Several jurisdictions focus on traditional women's issues (e.g., child care, violence) rather than adopting integrated, proactive approaches to gender equity.
3. **Sustainability and Accountability:** Gender budgeting efforts are often vulnerable to political shifts, and accountability mechanisms are often weak in many jurisdictions.

4. **Engagement with Civil Society:** Canada's federal government scored low in engaging with civil society, which is crucial for transparency and inclusiveness.

Recommendations for Systemic Change:

1. **Federal Enhancements:**

- Strengthen the GRF by framing goals that are specific and measurable.
- Increase consultation and engagement with civil society and constituent groups, especially for major infrastructure projects.

2. **Provincial and Territorial Improvements:**

- Utilise federal tools like GBA+ training and Statistics Canada's data hubs to enhance gender budgeting processes.
- Develop specific, measurable plans for achieving gender equality, drawing inspiration from federal and Quebec models.
- Adopt robust, integrative, whole-of-government approaches, including legislation to enhance accountability and sustainability.

3. **Capacity Building:**

- Ensure all ministers and deputy ministers carry responsibility and accountability for advancing gender equity.
- Invest in training, data collection, and monitoring tools to support the effective implementation of initiatives.

4. **Shift to Proactive Approaches:**

- Move from addressing narrow women's issues to integrated approaches that envision women as full, capable contributors to society.

By adopting these recommendations, Canada's jurisdictions can transition from fragmented, reactive efforts to systemic, sustainable approaches that advance gender equity and socioeconomic well-being.

Summary of Document: Feminist Public Policy in Action - A Strategic Look at Equity Secretariats, Advocacy, and SETT Sector Transformation

Author - Jamie Carnegie from Jamie Carnegie Consulting

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Equity-Secretariats-Advocacy-and-SETT-Sector-Transformation-V3.pdf>

Through a first-person reflective and jurisdictional scan, this report examines the evolution of gender equity offices across Canada, their mandates, organisational structures, and advocacy strategies. The scan highlights the importance of embedding gender equity into government systems, budgets, and decision-making processes, while addressing challenges such as gender-based violence (GBV), economic inequities, and systemic exclusion.

Key Learnings:

1. **Evolution of Gender Equity Offices:** Offices have expanded their mandates to include intersectional equity, 2SLGBTQI+ inclusion, and anti-racism initiatives. Federal leadership through Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE) has catalysed progress, but provincial and territorial offices vary in capacity and influence.
2. **Impact of GBV National Action Plan (GBV NAP):** The plan has driven funding and policy innovation, enabling provinces and territories to develop localised strategies and partnerships.
3. **Structural Challenges:** Offices face uneven resourcing, limited legislative authority, and political vulnerability, which hinder systemic change.
4. **Relational Leadership:** Trust-based relationships between ministers, public servants, and community organisations are critical for advancing equity goals.
5. **Gender Budgeting:** Effective gender budgeting integrates equity into all sectors, including infrastructure and economic development, but remains politically vulnerable.

Critical Issues Identified:

The gender equity office model helps governments to tackle topics such as:

1. **Economic Inequities:** Persistent wage gaps and employment precarity for Indigenous, racialised, and disabled women.
2. **Gender-Based Violence:** High rates of GBV, especially in rural and Northern regions, with inconsistent data collection limiting policy responses.

Despite the critical role these offices can play within government:

3. **Political Vulnerability:** Equity offices are susceptible to budget cuts and shifting political priorities.
4. **Fragmented Implementation:** A lack of coordination between departments often leads to the ineffective execution of strategies.
5. **Systemic Exclusion:** Gender-diverse individuals face barriers in supports, including in employment, healthcare, and housing.

Recommendations for Systemic Change:

1. **Embed Equity into Core Government Functions:** Position gender equity offices close to decision-making structures like Treasury Board and Cabinet committees to ensure influence over budgets and policies.
2. **Strengthen Legislative Mandates:** Enshrine gender equity objectives in legislation to provide stable mandates and accountability mechanisms.
3. **Expand Gender Budgeting:** Apply gender-based analysis across all sectors, including infrastructure and economic development, to address systemic inequities.
4. **Enhance Transparency:** Publish detailed reports on staffing, budgets, and program outcomes to improve accountability and public trust.
5. **Foster Relational Leadership:** Build trust-based relationships between government leaders and community organisations to ensure policies are grounded in lived experiences.
6. **Leverage Procurement:** Use public contracts to incentivise equity in SETT sectors, including workforce representation and anti-harassment training.
7. **Support Intersectional Data Collection:** Invest in disaggregated data to inform responsive and inclusive policy solutions.
8. **Sustain Advocacy:** Advocate persistently for equity, aligning proposals with existing frameworks, such as the GBV NAP and Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Systemic change requires embedding equity into government systems, leveraging relational leadership, and aligning advocacy with existing priorities.

Summary of Document: Precarious Employment, Worker Misclassification, and Gaps in Policy

Author - Sarah Costantini from Peel Institute of Research and Training

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Literature-Review-Precarious-Employment-in-Canada.pdf>

This literary review examines the evolving employment landscape in Canada, with a focus on precarious employment, non-standard employment, worker misclassification, and gaps in the enforcement of employment standards. Key impacts include financial instability, wage theft, lack of worker voice, limited protections, health risks, and occupational injuries. The gig economy and worker misclassification are identified as major contributors to precarious employment. Enforcement gaps in employment standards and systemic issues such as racial stratification and harassment are also discussed.

Key Learnings:

1. **Precarious Employment:** Defined by instability, insecurity, and lack of social benefits, precarious employment disproportionately affects marginalised groups, including women, racialised individuals, and immigrants.
2. **Gig Economy:** While offering flexibility, gig work often lacks protections, benefits, and income security, with racialised workers overrepresented in low-paying roles.
3. **Worker Misclassification:** Misclassifying workers as independent contractors deprives them of their legal protections and benefits, while benefiting employers through reduced costs.
4. **Enforcement Gaps:** Employment standards enforcement is reactive, individualised, and under-resourced, leading to widespread violations and limited deterrence for employers.
5. **Health and Safety Risks:** Precarious employment increases risks of mental health issues, workplace injuries, and chronic stress.

Critical Issues Identified:

1. **Lack of Comprehensive Definitions:** Ambiguity in defining "employee" and "employer" excludes many workers from protections.
2. **Exemptions and Special Rules:** Patchwork standards create inequities and foster exploitative conditions.
3. **Enforcement Challenges:** Complaints-based systems deter workers from reporting violations due to fear of retaliation and power imbalances.
4. **Racial Stratification:** Employment standards enforcement fails to address systemic racism, disproportionately affecting racialised workers.
5. **Social Safety Net:** Current systems inadequately support workers who are precariously employed, especially those in non-standard roles.

Recommendations for Systemic Change:

1. **Develop a Common Understanding:** Establish a unified definition of precarious employment that incorporates job security, compensation, and working conditions.
2. **Clarify Employment Definitions:** Expand or redefine "employee" and "employer" to include gig workers and independent contractors.
3. **Strengthen Enforcement:** Shift from reactive to proactive enforcement, increase penalties for violations, and allow anonymous and third-party complaints.
4. **Enhance Social Safety Nets:** Introduce portable benefits, revise Employment Insurance eligibility criteria, and explore universal income support programs.
5. **Address Racial Inequities:** Implement non-colour-blind enforcement strategies to tackle systemic racism in precarious employment.
6. **Enhance Data Collection:** Develop comprehensive, longitudinal data tracking of precarious employment and misclassification to inform policy decisions.
7. **Support Worker Voice:** Create channels for individual and collective worker representation, including partnerships with community organisations.
8. **Regular Legislative Reviews:** Conduct recurring reviews of employment standards legislation to ensure it remains current and adaptable to evolving work arrangements.

Systemic change is necessary to address the increasing prevalence of precarious employment and its detrimental effects on workers. By redefining employment relationships, strengthening enforcement, improving social protections, and addressing inequities, Canada can create a more inclusive and secure labour market.

Summary of Document: Shadow Systems of Care: Unpaid Care Work and the Leaky Pipeline for Women in SETT

Author - Suzanne Spiteri from Spiteri Research & Consulting

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Canadian-Shadow-Systems-of-Care.pdf>

The document explores the impact of unpaid care work, particularly eldercare, on women's participation in SETT careers in Canada. The "leaky pipeline" phenomenon describes the steady decline in women's representation in SETT careers due to systemic challenges, including caregiving demands, workplace discrimination, and lack of supportive policies. It highlights the gendered burden of care, the economic value of caregiving, and the structural barriers women face in SETT fields. Women disproportionately shoulder unpaid care responsibilities, which limit their career progression, workforce participation, and financial security.

Key Learnings:

1. **Gendered Burden of Care:** Women perform significantly more unpaid care work than men, contributing to societal well-being but limiting their economic opportunities.
2. **Economic Value of Caregiving:** Unpaid care work contributes \$97.1 billion annually to Canada's economy, yet remains undervalued in policy and economic systems.
3. **Impact on SETT Careers:** Caregiving responsibilities, particularly those related to eldercare, disrupt women's career progression, leading to reduced workforce participation, planned career breaks, and higher attrition rates in SETT fields.
4. **Structural Barriers:** Women in SETT face challenges such as unsafe workplaces, lack of child care support, and gender discrimination, which exacerbate the effects of unpaid care work.

Critical Issues Identified:

1. **Eldercare Overlooked:** While child care has received some attention, eldercare remains underexplored despite its growing importance due to Canada's ageing population.
2. **Workplace Incompatibility:** SETT careers often lack flexibility and support for caregivers, making it difficult for women to balance professional and caregiving responsibilities.
3. **Intersectional Inequities:** Racialised women, immigrant women, and women with disabilities face compounded barriers in both caregiving and SETT careers.
4. **Nonprofit Sector Challenges:** Women dominate the nonprofit sector, often in precarious roles, further marginalising their contributions to the economy.

Recommendations for Systemic Change:

1. **Policy Reform:** Develop inclusive policies that recognise and support unpaid care work, such as subsidised child care, eldercare programs, and caregiver tax credits.
2. **Flexible Work Options:** Encourage SETT employers to offer flexible schedules, remote work opportunities, and paid caregiving leave to accommodate caregivers.
3. **Workplace Support:** Address gender discrimination, enhance workplace

safety, and offer resources such as affordable child care and eldercare services.

4. **Intersectional Approach:** Design policies that account for the unique challenges faced by marginalised groups, including racialised and immigrant women.
5. **Public Investment:** Increase funding for social services and nonprofit organisations to reduce reliance on unpaid care work and support caregivers.
6. **Awareness and Advocacy:** Promote public awareness of the economic and societal value of unpaid care work to drive cultural and institutional change.

By addressing these systemic issues, Canada can enhance gender equity, retain skilled talent in SETT fields, and strengthen its workforce resilience.

Appendix F

Request for Knowledge Keepers Report Summaries

(Summaries created through assistance from Adobe Acrobat Generative AI Assist - to review full reports, please see the provided links)

Summary of Document: Toward Equity in SETT: A Framework for Indigenous Women's Inclusion and Success

Author - Sarah Gauthier from Prairie Catalyst Consulting

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Toward-Equity-in-SETT-A-Framework-for-Indigenous-Womens-Inclusion-and-Success-Report.pdf>

The report examines systemic barriers and opportunities for Indigenous women's inclusion in SETT in Canada. Indigenous women face intersecting challenges rooted in colonialism, systemic racism, gender bias, and socio-economic inequities. The report leverages national frameworks like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Calls for Justice, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) to propose actionable solutions.

Key Learnings:

1. **TRC 94 Calls to Action Progress:** The report provides a snapshot of the number of calls to action each jurisdiction has completed. Though Canada has addressed over 50%, the provinces/territories have a long way to go.
2. **Underrepresentation:** Indigenous peoples make up 5% of Canada's population but are significantly underrepresented in SETT fields, with Indigenous women facing compounded barriers.
3. **Systemic Barriers:**
 - o **Racism and Discrimination:** Persistent exclusion in education and workplaces.
 - o **Educational Inequities:** Eurocentric curricula and lack of culturally safe environments.
 - o **Economic Challenges:** Poverty, lack of child care, and logistical issues for remote communities.
 - o **Gender and Cultural Expectations:** Stereotypes and a lack of Mentorship.
4. **Violence and Marginalisation:** Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals experience disproportionate violence, further compounding their exclusion.
5. **Policy Gaps:** Fragmented programs and a lack of sustained funding hinder progress.

Critical Issues Identified:

1. **Colonial Legacies:** Mistrust in education systems and intergenerational trauma.

2. **Lack of Representation:** Few Indigenous mentors and role models in SETT.
3. **Threats to Progress:** Political resistance to equity initiatives and legislative developments undermining Indigenous rights.
4. **Environmental Vulnerabilities:** Resource extraction disproportionately affects Indigenous women.

Recommendations for Systemic Change:

1. **Resource Hub:** CCWESTT should maintain an updated online hub with resources on Indigenous women in SETT.
2. **Framework Adoption:** Utilise TRC Calls to Action and MMIWG Calls for Justice to inform advocacy and systemic change efforts.
3. **Progress Reporting:** Publish regular updates on the implementation of relevant Calls to Action and Calls for Justice.
4. **Culturally Responsive Programs:** Develop initiatives that integrate Indigenous knowledge systems and mentorship.
5. **Policy Advocacy:** Push for sustained funding, equitable education, and workplace reforms to address systemic barriers.
6. **Intersectional Approach:** Address the unique needs of Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals through tailored programs and policies.

The task is monumental, but the message of the report is one of *hope* as well as urgency: by listening to survivors, heeding the Calls for Justice, and acting with courage and compassion, Canada can finally begin to **rectify generations of injustice**.

Summary of Document: Out of the Margines - 2SLGBTQIA+ Professionals Navigating SETT and Skilled Trades in Canada (2020-2025)

Author - Rosheeka Parahoo from RP Research & Consulting

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-2SLGBTQIA-in-SETT-in-Canada-Report.pdf>

The report examines the employment experiences of 2SLGBTQIA+ professionals in SETT sectors from 2020 to 2025. It highlights systemic barriers such as wage gaps, underrepresentation, workplace harassment, and the impact of domestic violence on employment. Despite legal protections and policy advancements, equity for 2SLGBTQIA+ professionals remains incomplete, with significant gaps between policy and practice.

Key Learnings:

1. **Persistent Wage Gaps:** Bisexual women earn 25% less than heterosexual men, and 50% of trans and non-binary professionals report incomes under \$30,000 despite high education levels.
2. **Underrepresentation:** Queer and gender-diverse professionals are drastically underrepresented in trades and senior STEM roles.
3. **Harassment and Violence:** 73% of gender-diverse professionals report workplace harassment, and queer women face compounded sexism and homophobia.
4. **Legal Enforcement Gaps:** Rights exist on paper, but weak enforcement and fear of reprisal hinder progress.
5. **Domestic Violence Impact:** Queer and trans survivors face elevated rates of intimate partner violence, which disrupts employment and limits access to inclusive support.

Critical Issues Identified:

1. **Pay Equity:** Current laws focus on binary gender comparisons and fail to address disparities based on sexual orientation or gender identity.
2. **Workplace Culture:** Many 2SLGBTQIA+ professionals conceal their identities due to hostility, leading to isolation or exit from SETT sectors.
3. **Harassment and Safety:** Legal protections against workplace harassment are unevenly implemented, leaving many workers vulnerable.
4. **Domestic Violence:** Rigid workplace structures and a lack of inclusive support exacerbate risks for survivors, impacting job stability.

Recommendations for Systemic Change:

1. **Data Collection:** Require identity-specific labour market data to guide interventions and track income, advancement, and retention.
2. **Pay Equity Expansion:** Broaden pay equity legislation to address wage gaps linked to sexual orientation and gender identity.

3. **Inclusive Workplace Policies:** Embed 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion into occupational health and safety (OHS), domestic violence leave, and leadership pipelines.
4. **Anti-Harassment Measures:** Mandate sector-specific anti-harassment training and tie public funding to inclusive workplace audits.
5. **Survivor Support:** Ensure benefit packages include mental health and crisis support tailored to queer and trans survivors, and develop confidential reporting pathways.
6. **Policy Alignment:** Coordinate human rights protections, pay equity, OHS, and domestic violence leave across federal and provincial levels.
7. **Workplace Transformation:** Move beyond compliance to embed an inclusive culture through leadership accountability, zero-tolerance enforcement, and inclusive benefits.

Bottom Line:

The report underscores the need for bold action to close equity gaps for 2SLGBTQIA+ professionals in SETT sectors. By aligning data, advocacy, and workplace culture, Canada can move from theoretical inclusion to practical, systemic change.

Summary of Document: Recruitment Barriers to Immigrant and Refugee Employment in Canada's SETT Sectors - A Literature Review

Author - Sarah Costantini from Peel Institute of Research and Training

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Literature-Review-Immigrant-Refugee-SETT-Recruitment-Barriers-in-Canada.pdf>

The document highlights systemic barriers faced by immigrants and refugees in accessing employment recruitment in Canada's SETT sectors. Despite arriving with high levels of education and expertise, many skilled newcomers face challenges such as credential devaluation, Canadian experience requirements, exclusion from professional networks, and intersectional discrimination based on gender, race, and religion. Key finding: These barriers result in underemployment and a loss of human capital, limiting Canada's ability to fully leverage immigrant talent in SETT fields.

Critical Issues Identified:

1. Structural Barriers:

- Devaluation of foreign credentials and complex, costly re-credentialing processes.
- Persistent informal expectations for Canadian work experience despite formal policy changes.
- Misalignment between immigration selection processes and labour market needs.

2. Relational Barriers:

- Exclusion from professional networks and informal hiring channels.
- Implicit biases and microaggressions from employers, questioning immigrants' qualifications and adaptability.
- Lack of mentorship and sponsorship opportunities for career advancement.

3. Intersectional Challenges:

- Immigrant women, especially those who are racialised or visibly Muslim, face compounded discrimination in hiring and workplace inclusion.
- Gendered and racialised biases limit employment and promotion opportunities.

4. Policy Limitations:

- Inconsistent implementation of reforms, such as the removal of Canadian experience requirements.
- Underfunded and poorly tailored bridging programs.
- Symbolic multiculturalism policies have a limited practical impact on employment outcomes.

Recommendations for Systemic Change:

1. Credential Recognition Reform:

- Simplify and standardise the credential recognition process to reduce costs and delays.
 - Develop transparent and equitable evaluation criteria for foreign qualifications.
2. **Employer Training and Accountability:**
 - Implement mandatory training for employers on unconscious bias and inclusive hiring practices.
 - Establish accountability mechanisms to enforce equitable hiring and promotion practices.
 3. **Networking and Mentorship Programs:**
 - Create targeted programs to connect immigrants with professional networks and mentors in SETT fields.
 - Encourage sponsorship initiatives to promote the career advancement of immigrants.
 4. **Intersectional Solutions:**
 - Address workplace discrimination through anti-racism and gender equity policies.
 - Tailor support programs to meet the unique needs of immigrant women and other marginalised groups.
 5. **Policy Alignment and Enforcement:**
 - Align immigration selection criteria with actual labour market demands.
 - Strengthen the enforcement of reforms like the removal of Canadian experience requirements.
 - Increase funding for bridging programs and ensure they are tailored to specialised fields like engineering and technology.
 6. **Information Accessibility:**
 - Provide reliable, tailored pre- and post-arrival information to help immigrants navigate professional integration in SETT sectors.

Achieving meaningful inclusion requires coordinated efforts across government, accreditation bodies, employers, and educational institutions, with a focus on dismantling structural and relational barriers and ensuring equitable opportunities for all skilled newcomers.

Summary of Document: Retention Barriers to Immigrant and Refugee Employment in Canada's SETT Sectors - A Literature Review

Author - Sarah Costantini from Peel Institute of Research and Training

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Literature-Review-Immigrant-Refugee-SETT-Retention-Barriers-in-Canada.pdf>

The document reviews barriers to employment retention for immigrants in Canada's SETT sectors. Despite high qualifications, many immigrants face underemployment, skill underutilisation, and career stagnation due to structural, relational, and individual-level challenges. These barriers persist even after initial entry into the labour market, affecting long-term retention and economic integration.

Key Learnings:

1. Structural/Systemic Barriers:

- Credential recognition and licensing issues hinder immigrants from accessing jobs that align with their qualifications.
- Survival jobs lead to skill erosion and hinder career progression.
- Policy gaps, including misalignment between immigration policies and employer expectations, exacerbate underemployment.

2. Relational Barriers:

- Workplace discrimination, microaggressions, and employer bias limit career advancement.
- Exclusion from professional networks and mentorship opportunities restricts growth and retention.

3. Individual-Level Barriers:

- Language proficiency impacts job performance, integration, and career mobility.
- Mental health challenges and caregiving burdens disproportionately affect immigrant women.
- Gender roles and unfamiliarity with Canadian workplace culture hinder career progression.

4. Early Pipeline and Education Access Barriers:

- Immigrant youth face systemic inequalities in accessing STEM education and mentorship.
- Transitioning from education to employment is obstructed by weak industry collaboration and lack of culturally responsive career support.

Critical Issues Identified:

- 1. Credential Recognition:** Non-recognition of foreign qualifications leads to underemployment and career stagnation.
- 2. Workplace Discrimination:** Bias and exclusionary practices limit immigrants' ability to thrive in SETT sectors.
- 3. Policy Disconnects:** Immigration policies often fail to align with labour market needs, resulting in inefficiencies in integration.

4. **Gendered and Intersectional Barriers:** Immigrant women face compounded challenges due to gender roles, caregiving responsibilities, and workplace discrimination.
5. **Leaky Pipeline:** Immigrant youth struggle to transition from education to employment due to systemic barriers.

Recommendations for Systemic Change:

1. **Credential Recognition and Licensing:**
 - Reform licensing regimes to reduce barriers and promote interprovincial mobility.
 - Strengthen foreign credential recognition systems and employer awareness of credential assessments.
2. **Policy Alignment:**
 - Improve coordination between immigration and integration systems.
 - Align immigrant selection criteria with labour market needs.
3. **Workplace Equity:**
 - Develop anti-discrimination policies and train hiring teams on recognising and addressing unconscious bias.
 - Promote diversity and inclusion initiatives to enhance and transform workplace culture.
4. **Mentorship and Networking:**
 - Create mentorship programs led by racialised peers.
 - Expand upskilling opportunities and professional networking initiatives.
5. **Language and Cultural Integration:**
 - Enhance language training programs for newcomers.
 - Provide workplace integration supports tailored to specific fields.
6. **Education and Early Pipeline Support:**
 - Invest in culturally inclusive SETT curricula and mentorship programs for immigrant youth.
 - Strengthen school-to-work transition programs, including internships and employer partnerships.

Addressing employment retention barriers requires a multi-level approach targeting structural, relational, and individual challenges. Effective policy and practice must focus on equitable integration, workplace inclusion, and early-stage support to ensure immigrants can thrive in SETT sectors. Without systemic change, Canada risks losing skilled immigrants to other countries, undermining its narrative as a land of opportunity.

Summary of Document: Reassessing the Employment Equity Act - Structural Barriers to Intersectional Representation in SETT Professions

Authors - Suzanne Spiteri and Peace Olanipekun

<https://ccwestt-ccfsimt.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2025-Reassessing-the-Employment-Equity-Act.pdf>

The document critically examines the Employment Equity Act (EEA) in Canada through an intersectional lens, highlighting the Act's historical context, implementation challenges and persistent shortcomings. The report provides recommendations for reform to promote workplace equity - with a focus on marginalised groups, including women, Indigenous Peoples, racialised communities, persons with disabilities, immigrants, refugees, and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals.

Key Learnings

1. **Historical Context:** The EEA was enacted in 1986 to address systemic discrimination but has faced criticism.
2. **Outdated Terminology:** Terms like "visible minority" and "Aboriginal" are obsolete and fail to reflect contemporary understandings of race and identity.
3. **Intersectionality:** The EEA lacks an intersectional framework, failing to account for overlapping identities and systemic discrimination.
4. **Lack of Disaggregated Data:** The absence of subgroup-level data within equity-deserving groups obscures the nuanced barriers and experiences faced by these groups.
5. **Weak Enforcement Mechanisms:** Limited penalties for non-compliance hinder the Act's effectiveness in achieving equity goals.

Critical Issues

1. **Limited Scope:** The EEA applies only to federally regulated sectors, leaving most of Canada without comprehensive employment equity legislation.
2. **Outdated Definitions:** Current terminology homogenises diverse communities and fails to address specific barriers faced by subgroups, e.g., Anti-Black racism and Indigenous sovereignty are insufficiently addressed.
3. **Lack of Intersectionality:** The EEA does not adequately address the complex realities of individuals with multiple marginalised identities.
4. **Exclusion of Key Groups:** Immigrants, refugees, and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals are not formally recognised as equity-deserving groups under the EEA.
5. **Align Disability Definitions:** The Disability category is outdated and does not align with the current Accessible Canada Act.
6. **Need for Disaggregated Data:** Aggregated data can mask disparities within subgroups, thereby perpetuating systemic inequalities.
7. **Weak Enforcement:** Employers face minimal penalties for noncompliance, reducing the Act's effectiveness.

8. **Inclusion, not Quotas:** Overreliance on numeric targets neglects structural and cultural barriers.

Recommendations for Systemic Change

1. **Update Terminology:** Replace outdated terms like "visible minority" and "Aboriginal" with precise, inclusive language.
2. **Adopt an Intersectional Framework:** Revise the EEA to reflect overlapping identities and systemic discrimination.
3. **Create Distinct Equity Categories:** Introduce standalone categories for Black workers, 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, and immigrants/refugees.
4. **Recognise Indigenous Sovereignty:** Distinguish Indigenous Peoples as self-governing entities in equity legislation.
5. **Align Disability Definitions:** Use a social model of disability aligned with the Accessible Canada Act.
6. **Mandate Disaggregated Data Collection:** Require subgroup-level data to identify nuanced barriers within equity-deserving groups.
7. **Strengthen Enforcement Mechanisms:** Enhance monitoring and implement penalties for non-compliance.
8. **Focus Beyond Numeric Targets:** Incorporate qualitative assessments to address structural and cultural barriers.

These reforms aim to foster substantive workplace inclusion and eliminate systemic discrimination, ensuring equitable opportunities for all marginalised groups.

Appendix G

Key intersectional knowledge supplemental report summaries

(Summaries created through assistance from Adobe Acrobat Generative AI Assist - to review full reports, please see the provided links)

Summary of Document: Changing Systems, Transforming Lives: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028

Author - Government of Canada (2024)

<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/combating-racism-discrimination/canada-anti-racism-strategy.html>

Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024-2028, *Changing Systems, Transforming Lives*, builds on the previous strategy to address systemic racism and promote equity, diversity, and inclusion. It focuses on removing barriers in employment, education, health, housing, justice, and immigration systems, while empowering marginalised communities. The strategy is informed by extensive community engagement and evidence-based research, aiming to achieve systemic change across federal institutions.

Key Learnings:

1. **Systemic Racism in Education and Employment:** Racialised and Black populations face barriers in accessing equitable education pathways and employment opportunities, leading to wage gaps and underrepresentation in leadership roles.
2. **Intersectionality:** Racism intersects with other forms of oppression, such as sexism, ableism, and homophobia, amplifying its impact on education and career outcomes.
3. **COVID-19 Impact:** The pandemic exacerbated racial inequities, particularly in terms of financial stability, access to education, and employment opportunities.
4. **Public Awareness:** Events like the murder of George Floyd and the discovery of unmarked Indigenous graves have heightened recognition of systemic racism in Canada.

Critical Issues Identified:

1. **Employment Barriers:** Racialised and Black populations experience higher unemployment rates, wage gaps, and exclusion from professional networks despite comparable education levels.
2. **Education Inequities:** Racialised and Indigenous students face systemic barriers in accessing quality education, leading to limited career opportunities.
3. **Underrepresentation in Leadership:** Marginalised groups are underrepresented in managerial and leadership roles across industries.

4. **Economic Disparities:** Persistent gaps in earnings and wealth among racialised populations hinder economic empowerment.

Recommendations for Systemic Change:

1. **Economic Empowerment:**

- Expand programs such as the Black Entrepreneurship Program and the 50-30 Challenge to increase representation in leadership and employment.
- Address systemic barriers in federally regulated industries to ensure equitable access to jobs and managerial roles.
- Provide targeted funding for skills development and inclusive workplace initiatives.

2. **Education Pathways:**

- Support initiatives that promote equity in education access and outcomes for racialised and Indigenous students.
- Fund programs that integrate anti-racism education into schools and workplaces to foster inclusive environments.
- Develop partnerships with community organisations to provide mentorship and career guidance for marginalised youth.

3. **Data and Accountability:**

- Improve data collection and disaggregation to track racial disparities in education and employment outcomes.
- Use evidence-based research to inform policy changes and measure progress in closing equity gaps.

The strategy emphasises collaboration with communities, evidence-based policymaking, and institutional accountability to dismantle systemic racism. By addressing critical issues in education pathways and employment systems, it aims to empower working-age individuals and create a more inclusive Canada.

Summary of Document: Everyone's Business: Accessibility in Canada Report from the Chief Accessibility Officer

Author - Government of Canada (2023)

<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/esdc-edsc/documents/corporate/reports/accessibility-disability/everyone-business/6472-ESDC-CAO-report-aoda-en.pdf>

The report highlights the progress and challenges in creating a barrier-free Canada under the Accessible Canada Act (ACA). It emphasises the importance of accessibility in education pathways and employment, focusing on systemic changes needed to remove barriers for persons with disabilities (PwDs). The ACA aims to proactively identify, remove, and prevent barriers, with a goal of achieving a barrier-free Canada by 2040.

Key Learnings:

1. **Mandatory Accessibility Training:** Building awareness through mandatory training is crucial for identifying barriers and taking effective action. Training should be diverse, involve PwDs, and be customised to specific audiences across all levels of organisations.
2. **Employment Commitments:** The federal government committed to hiring 5,000 new employees with disabilities by 2025, addressing the gap in representation of PwDs in the workforce.
3. **Representation in Programs:** CBC/Radio-Canada is increasing representation of PwDs in programming, including initiatives like AccessCBC and shows addressing disability topics.
4. **Procurement and Accessibility:** Statistics Canada identified barriers in procuring accessible goods and committed to training 100% of procurement staff to ensure accessibility in purchases.

Critical Issues Identified:

1. **Barriers in Employment:** PwDs face challenges in recruitment, retention, and workplace accommodations due to negative attitudes, long wait times, and inconsistent knowledge of accommodations.
2. **Lack of Awareness:** Many barriers remain unidentified due to insufficient understanding of diverse disabilities, including non-visible and episodic disabilities.
3. **Data Gaps:** Organisations often lack data on PwDs, hindering the ability to measure progress and address barriers effectively.
4. **Funding Challenges:** Accessibility is often deprioritised due to budget constraints, despite its necessity for inclusion.

Recommendations for Systemic Change:

1. **Mandatory Accessibility Education:** Implement mandatory training for all employees in public and private sectors, focusing on disability inclusion, unconscious bias, and accessible design.

2. **Dedicated Accessibility Funding:** Ensure sustained funding for accessibility initiatives, treating them as essential investments rather than optional expenses.
3. **Centralised Accommodation Processes:** Streamline workplace accommodations to reduce wait times and improve consistency across sectors.
4. **Data Collection and Analysis:** Develop standardised methods to collect and analyse data on PwDs, ensuring their experiences are included in decision-making processes.
5. **Integration in National Strategies:** Embed accessibility in national strategies for housing, transportation, and education to ensure systemic change across all priority areas.