



8 Things To Know about Women & the Economy

BY ELLIE LANGFORD PARKS

1 *Women represent a growing economic force as business owners & employees.*

4 out of 5 businesses in Canada are started by women.

More than 821,000 women entrepreneurs (3x the 1985 total) now contribute more than \$18 billion to the economy annually.

In 1999, 55% of women aged 15 and over had jobs (1976: 42%), making up 45.7% of Canada's total workforce.

Women-owned and women-led businesses now surpass Canada's top 100 companies in job creation: 1.7 million jobs to 1.5 million.¹

2 *Women are increasingly prominent in management & in the professions.*

Women currently account for almost half the total workforce engaged as managers, doctors, dentists, and business and financial professionals.²

In 2002-03, nearly 11,000 women were full-time faculty members of Canadian universities, a rise of 50% over the 1990-91 academic year.

In 2001, women accounted for 30% of full-time academic university instructors and 56.4% of total university enrollment.³

3 *Women do most of the "invisible" work in the home that, while unpaid, is vital to our economy & quality of life.*

Women do two-thirds of the 2.5 billion hours of unpaid work performed in Canada annually.⁴

The value of household work performed annually in Canada ranged from \$210.8 billion to \$318.8 billion in 1992, or 30.6%-46.6% of the Gross Domestic Product.⁵

4 *Women predominate in nonprofit & voluntary organizations: the foundation of our communities.*

Nonprofit and voluntary organizations employed 2 million Canadians in 2003, and logged 2 billion volunteer hours.⁶

50-75% of nonprofit sector employees are women. 54% of all volunteers (80-90% in some sectors) are women.⁷

¹ *Women Entrepreneurs: Resources & Links Women Entrepreneurs - General* (Royal Bank of Canada, 2005).

² *Women in Canada 2000 - Highlights* (Statistics Canada, 2000).

³ *The Daily*, 24 February 2005 - *Study: The rising profile of women academics* (Statistics Canada, 2005).

⁴ *Canadian Social Trends* (Statistics Canada, 1996).

⁵ *Value of Household Work in Canada* (Statistics Canada, 1994).

⁶ Hill, Michael H. et al., *Cornerstones of Community: Highlights of the National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations - 2003 revised* (Statistics Canada, 2005), pp. 9-10.

⁷ Louise Mailloux, Heather Horak and Colette Godin, *Motivation at the Margins: Gender Issues in the Canadian Voluntary Sector* (Statistics Canada, for the Voluntary Sector Initiative Secretariat. March 31, 2002).

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Women are over-represented in non-standard (ie part-time, occasional, seasonal) & minimum wage employment.

Women form 70% of the part-time workforce in Canada.⁸

Women and youth account for 83% of Canada's minimum wage workers.⁹

Annual salaries have remained stagnant in much of the voluntary sector since 1990: as low as \$20,000 for daycare services and civic and social organizations; and \$27,000 for mental health/substance abuse services and social advocacy organizations.¹⁰



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Despite their increasing role in the paid workforce, women's wages & share of the national wealth remain well behind that of men.

Women employed full-time earn on average 73% of what men with full-time jobs earn (1997).¹¹

Women in Canada enjoy 63% of the disposable income that men do (2001).¹²

⁸ *Women in Canada 2000: A Gender-Based Statistical Report* (Statistics Canada, 2000), p. 103.

⁹ Marika Morris and Tahira Gonsalves, "Women & Poverty Fact Sheet: Third Edition, 2005" (Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, 2005), pp. 2-3.

¹⁰ Louise Mailloux, et al., *Motivation at the Margins*, op. cit.

¹¹ *The Daily*, 23 March 1998 - *Earnings of Men and Women*, Statistics Canada.

¹² "Canada's Response to the UN Questionnaire to Governments on Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and the Outcome of the Twenty-Third Special Session of the General Assembly (2000)."

¹³ *Women in Canada 2000*, op.cit., pp. 137, 259.

¹⁴ Morris and Gonsalves, op. cit., pp. 2-3.

¹⁵ Katherine Scott, "Women and the CHST: A Profile of Women Receiving Social Assistance in 1994" (Canadian Council on Social Development and the Centre for

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Women make up a disproportionate share of Canada's poor.

2.8 million Canadian women live in poverty, or nearly one in five (19%, compared to 16% of men).¹³ That includes one in four immigrant women (27%), and possibly two in five Aboriginal women (43%).¹⁴

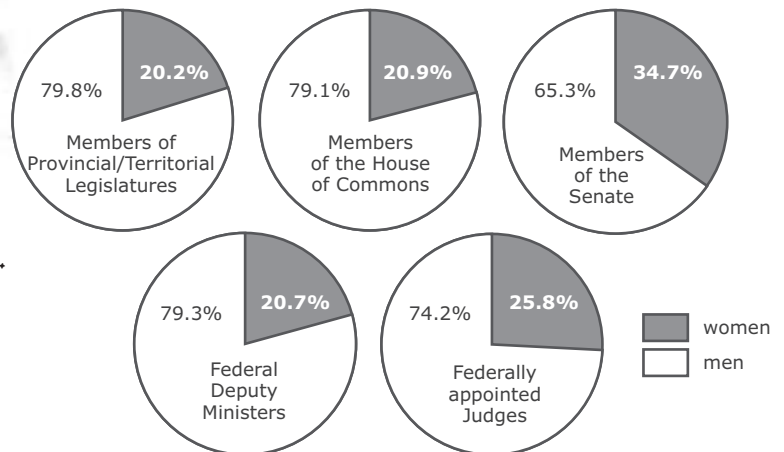
In 1994, women made up over half (54%) of adults living in families that draw social assistance.¹⁵

The average income of female lone-parent families is \$34,357 - 43% of the average income of 2-parent families and 71% of male lone-parent families.¹⁶

56% of lone-parent families headed by women had incomes below the low income cut-offs, as did 49% of senior women who lived alone.¹⁷

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Women remain very under-represented in our law-making and judicial institutions.¹⁸



International Statistics, March 1998), p. 17.

¹⁶ Glen Drover, *Women's Income and Poverty in Canada Revisited* (Canadian Association of Social Workers, 2004), p. 6.

¹⁷ *Women in Canada 2000 - Highlights*, op.cit.

¹⁸ *Women and Men in Canada: A Statistical Glance - 2003 Edition* (Status of Women Canada, 2003).



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