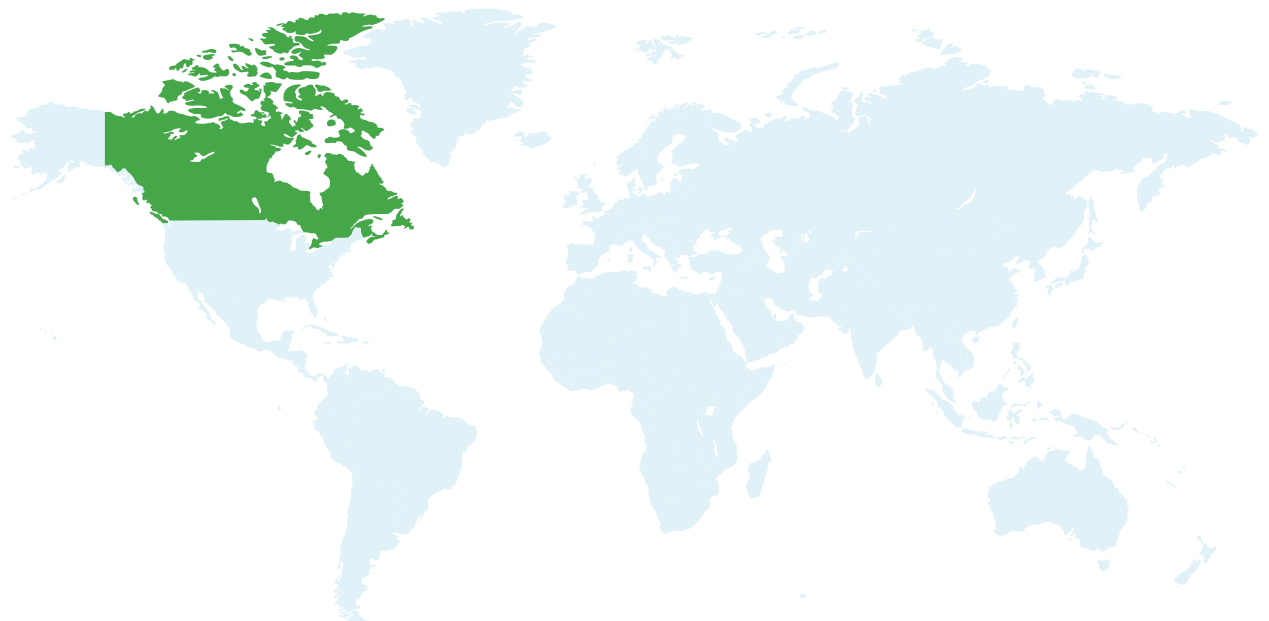


CANADA



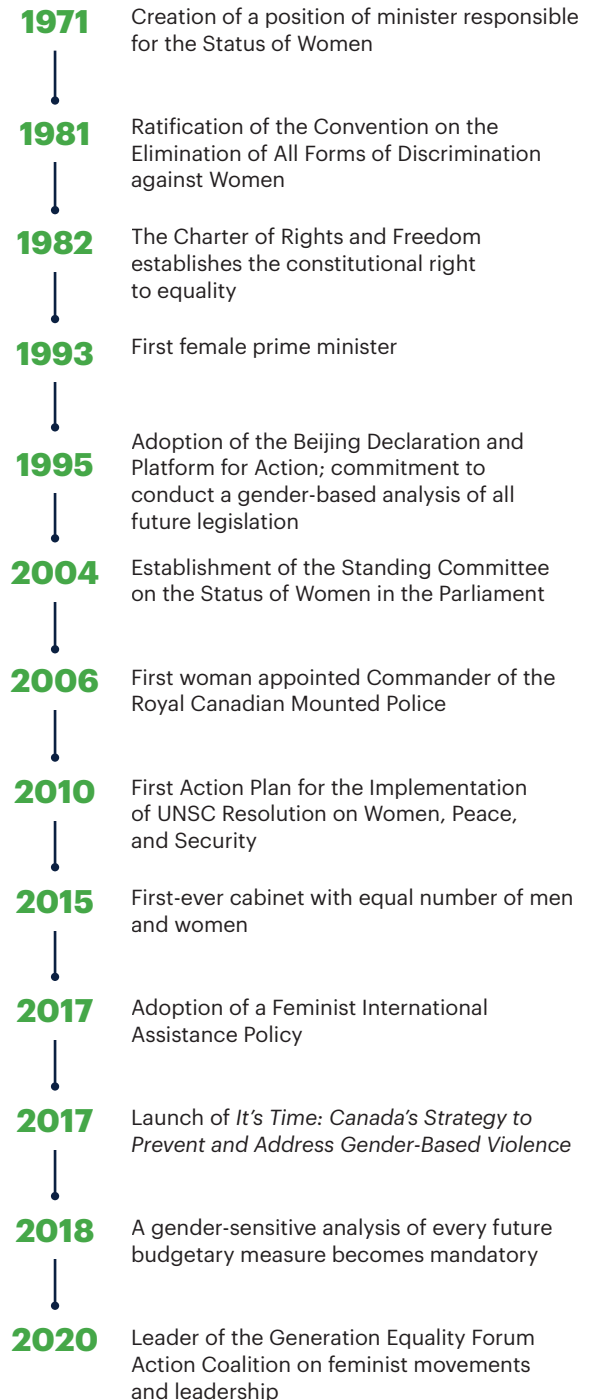
Gender equality, or having equal rights and opportunities regardless of gender, is a fundamental human right. It is also the foundation for a healthier, more productive, and more peaceful world.¹ Yet, with just 10 years left to fulfill the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2.8 billion girls and women live in countries failing or barely passing on gender equality-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).²

[The Generation Equality Forum](#) is a key moment to accelerate progress towards gender equality before 2030. In the lead up to the Forum, a set of six “Action Coalitions” — multi-stakeholder partnerships — are being developed to deliver tangible results on (1) gender-based violence (GBV), (2) economic justice and rights, (3) bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), (4) feminist action for climate justice, (5) technology and innovation for gender equality, and (6) feminist movements and leadership.

Achieving the objectives of the Forum will not be possible without the right information and data. The consideration of public opinion is crucial for appropriate, inclusive, and timely policymaking. [Women Deliver](#) thus partnered with [Focus 2030](#) and the [Development Engagement Lab](#) to survey citizens’ attitudes and expectations on the six Action Coalitions in 17 countries.¹

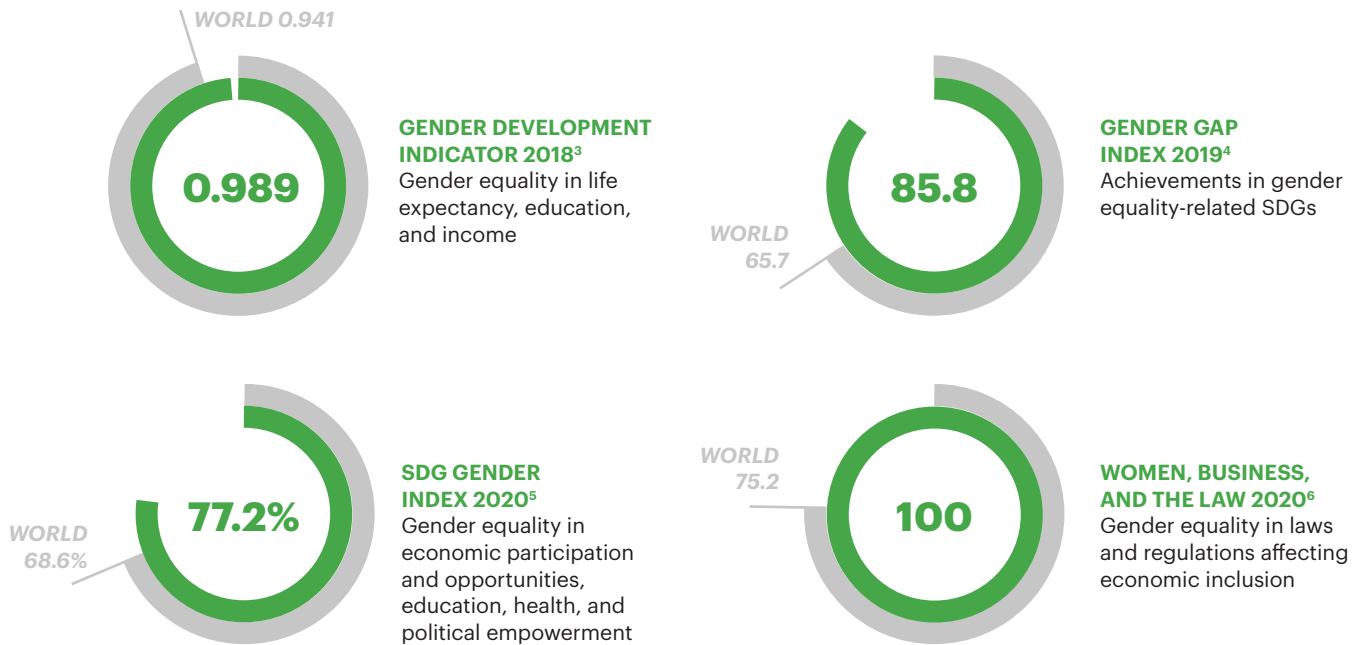
This document presents key results of the survey in Canada for each of the six Action Coalitions. It is intended to inform civil society’s actions and orient decision-makers towards gender equality topics that their citizens would like to see more engagement and investments in by governments.

FIGURE 1 MILESTONES FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN CANADA



¹ This note captures preliminary findings of a public perception survey on gender equality for Canada. This work is co-led by Women Deliver and Focus 2030. The survey was carried out in 17 countries: Argentina, Australia, Canada, China, Colombia, France, Germany, Great Britain, India, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, Switzerland, Tunisia, and the United States of America. It focuses on public perceptions on gender equality and the Generation Equality Forum Action Coalitions. Approximately 1,000 respondents in each country were surveyed in July/August 2020. Demographic data collected included: gender, age, income level, education level, last vote in national elections, and region of residency. In Canada, 1,006 respondents were surveyed, including 505 women, 499 men, and 2 respondents who identified “in another way.” Of the 1,006 respondents, 123 were aged 18 to 24, 330 were aged 25 to 44, 299 were aged 45 to 59, and 254 were aged 60 and older. To access additional findings for the 17 surveyed countries, including the full report and survey questionnaire, please visit: <http://womendeliver.org/citizens-call-for-a-gender-equal-world/>.

FIGURE 2 RESULTS IN KEY GENDER INDICES



TOPLINE SURVEY FINDINGS

Three out of four Canadians surveyed (76 percent) declare that gender equality is “important” to them personally. Females (82 percent), the youngest (aged 18 to 24, 87 percent), and non-white respondentsⁱⁱ (83 percent) particularly support the cause. For 61 percent of respondents, gender equality is “better” in Canada today than it was 25 years ago, whereas 27 percent feel it is “more or less the same,” and seven percent feel that it “worsened.” The feeling of stagnation is expressed by 33 percent of females, 33 percent of the respondents who received formal schooling but did not attend university, 32 percent of rural respondents, and 34 percent of lowest income respondents. Non-white respondents are almost three times more likely (14 percent) than white respondents (five percent) to feel that gender

equality has “worsened” in the country over the past 25 years.

Canada has a longstanding commitment to gender equality (Figure 1) and scores well on several metrics of parity (Figure 2). Yet, **53 percent of respondents think their government should do “more” to promote equality in the country.** This opinion is shared among young and low-income respondents. Nonetheless, across all socioeconomic groups of the population, a majority of respondents would like the Canadian government to be more involved. In addition, **53 percent of respondents believe it should seize the opportunity of the Generation Equality Forum to increase its funding for gender equality in Canada** (see section on financing below).

The COVID-19 pandemic has not overshadowed respondents’ desire for gender equality. In fact, 23 percent of respondents fear that

ⁱⁱ Acknowledging that girls and women belonging to ethnic minorities are often disproportionately affected by gender inequalities, the survey collected information on Canadian respondents’ self-identification to particular ethnic groups (Arab, Black, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Latin American, South Asian, Southeast Asian, West Asian, White, and other). However, data were not statistically significant and were aggregated into two broad analytical categories: white and non-white respondents.

inequality between women and men will rise as a consequence of the pandemic (28 percent of females and 18 percent of males). And overall, only 53 percent of respondents feel that the government's response to support people through the pandemic has met the needs of women and men equally. **Four in five respondents believe that women should be involved in all aspects of the global health response and recovery efforts.**

To advance gender equality in the country, **42 percent of surveyed respondents think the**

government should “reform laws to promote equality between women and men and end discrimination against women,” 28 percent would like the government to “focus on marginalized women to leave no one behind” (for example, ethnic minorities, LGBTQIA+ people, women with disabilities, Indigenous people, refugees, and migrants), and 27 percent stress the importance of “conducting regular reviews of progress in the pursuit of gender equality.”

FINDINGS RELATED TO THE GENERATION EQUALITY ACTION COALITION THEMES

FEMINIST MOVEMENTS AND LEADERSHIP

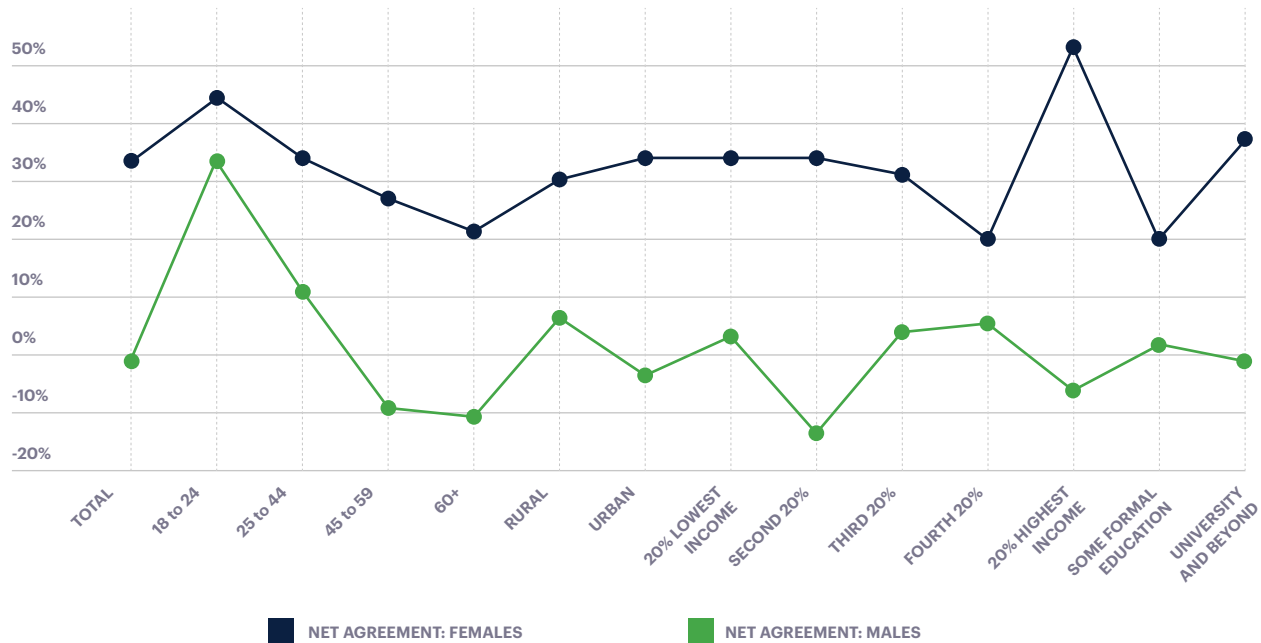
Canada has committed to be a leader on the Feminist Movements and Leadership Action Coalition.⁷ Close to half of respondents (47 percent) support this issue. In addition, for 23 percent of surveyed respondents, women are not equal to men in Canada because they “are not equally represented in politics.” It is the fifth most cited reason for gender inequality, after “different employment opportunities” (33 percent), “unpaid care, domestic work, and parental responsibilities” (32 percent), “religion and culture” (31 percent), and the different treatment of boys and girls growing up (27 percent). Yet, to advance gender equality in the country, **47 percent would like the Canadian government to “improve women’s participation and leadership in politics and cultural and social movements.” For respondents aged 18 to 24 (57 percent), this area is as important as eliminating gender-based violence and promoting equal economic rights opportunities.** And for non-white male respondents, improving women’s participation and leadership is the most important area (57 percent).

To improve girls’ and women’s participation and leadership, **35 percent of respondents believe the government should “support women’s political leadership and participation,”** with respondents aged 60 and older especially in favor (41 percent), and **33 percent believe that Canada should “achieve equal representation of women in politics** (for example, in legislative and government bodies).” Female respondents are particularly in favor of the latter (37 percent, compared to 29 percent of male respondents), as well as respondents aged 60 and older (40 percent, compared to 31 percent among other age groups). Another commonly cited measure (29 percent) is to **“achieve equal representation of women on boards of companies.” Surprisingly, only 15 percent of respondents mention the importance of “funding feminist movements and other women’s political, cultural, and social movements.”** However, this average hides a disparity: for both male and female respondents, support for this measure is high among the youngest and decreases with age. Non-white female respondents are twice as likely as their white counterparts to cite this measure (29 percent and 13 percent, respectively).

FIGURE 3 OPINIONS ON GENDER QUOTAS



Imposing gender quotas, that is, having a proportion of seats for women in all political decision-making bodies, is a good way to advance gender equality in Canada



The net agreement rate is obtained by subtracting the proportion of respondents who disagreed from the proportion of respondents who agreed. Deltapoll survey conducted online using the quota method. Results analyzed by Focus2030. Survey conducted between July 24, 2020 and August 3, 2020 among a representative sample of 1,006 adults in Canada. Weighted data - Margin of error: $\pm 3\%$. For more information on the methodology: [Focus2030.org](https://focus2030.org).

Respondents aged 18 to 24 highlight particular priorities: 38 percent would like their government to “support women’s participation in peace processes and as human rights defenders” (compared to 22 percent of the general population of respondents), and 33 percent stress the importance of “funding feminist movements and other women’s political, cultural, and social movements.”

In 2015, the Prime Minister appointed a gender-balanced federal cabinet for the first time.⁸ Since 2019, 29 percent of the Members of Parliament are women.⁹ There are no legislated quotas or other temporary measures to promote female political participation in Canada.¹⁰ **The majority of respondents believe that imposing gender**

quotas would be a good way to advance equality, although male respondents aged 45 and older are reluctant (Figure 3).

In addition, Canada is engaged in supporting girls’ and women’s leadership. In 2018, the country announced a USD 100 million investment over five years to increase funding to support women’s organizations.¹¹

ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND RIGHTS

For 61 percent of respondents, achieving equal economic rights and opportunities between women and men is one of the three most important areas the government should focus on to improve gender equality in the country. Achieving equal economic rights and

opportunities between women and men is the first preoccupation of almost a quarter of respondents (24 percent), and especially of women (29 percent ranked it first, compared to 18 percent of men).

One in three respondents believes that **gender inequalities in Canada mainly stem from unequal economic opportunities**. Indeed, 33 percent of respondents declare one of the main reasons why women are not equal to men in the country is because of disparate “*employment opportunities*,” and 32 percent declare it is because “*unpaid care, domestic work, and parental responsibilities are not shared equally between men and women*.” Women are especially likely to identify the latter (40 percent, compared to 25 percent of males). **The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated pre-existing inequalities in unpaid work**: 41 percent of females declare they have spent more time “*doing household work*” during this time, and 19

percent note that time “*dedicated to the care of others has increased*” (compared to 32 percent and 14 percent of males, respectively).

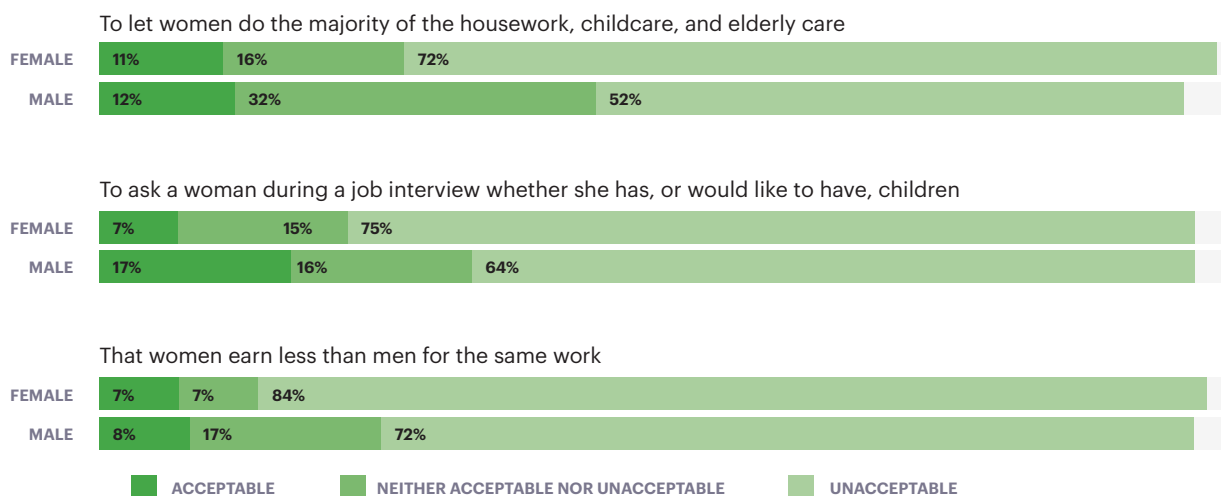
In order to advance women’s broader economic opportunities and decision-making powers, a majority of surveyed respondents across all socioeconomic groups think the government should “**achieve equal pay for women and men**” (49 percent).ⁱⁱⁱ Support for this measure increases with age and is particularly high among female and male respondents aged 60 and older (68 percent and 61 percent, respectively). This is followed by “**preventing violence and sexual harassment in the workplace**” (39 percent), with more than half of females and males aged 60 and older citing this measure. **For 29 percent of respondents, and 36 percent of non-white women, the government should also “guarantee social protection and decent working conditions for women working in low-paying jobs** (for

ⁱⁱⁱ Respondents were asked to select up to three options for government action within each Action Coalition theme.

FIGURE 4 ATTITUDES ON WOMEN’S ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION



HOW ACCEPTABLE OR UNACCEPTABLE DO YOU PERSONALLY THINK THE FOLLOWING THINGS ARE:



Deltapoll survey conducted online using the quota method. Results analyzed by Focus 2030. Survey conducted between July 24, 2020 and August 3, 2020 among a representative sample of 1,006 adults in Canada. Weighted data - Margin of error: ± 3%. For more information on the methodology: [Focus2030.org](https://focus2030.org).

example, domestic help, agriculture, or textile workers).” It is estimated that 25 percent of employed women in Canada (15 percent of men) receive low pay, (i.e., earn less than two-thirds of the country’s median hourly earnings).¹² And 27 percent of respondents cite the government’s responsibility to “increase the number of women in leadership roles (in business, politics, etc.)” and to “achieve equal access to education and professional training for women and men.”

Gender inequalities in the economic sphere are linked with the persistence of attitudes possibly limiting women’s economic empowerment opportunities. Male respondents more often report those (Figure 4). The survey also reveals that 20 percent of female respondents feel they are “not paid as much as their male counterparts where they work” and that 18 percent “did not have the same access to promotion opportunities as their male peers.” In 2019, the gender pay gap in Canada was estimated at 12 percent.¹³ In 2018, the government passed a [Pay Equity Act](#), under which employers are required to examine their compensation practices and ensure that women and men working in federally regulated workplaces with more than 10 employees receive equal pay for work of equal value.¹⁴ This act is yet to come to fruition. The government also amended the legislation to better protect women from harassment and violence in federal workplaces.¹⁵

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

For 26 percent of respondents, the first area the government should focus on in order to improve equality between men and women in Canada is ending gender-based violence (GBV) (for example, online harassment, sexual assault, forced and child marriage, or female genital mutilation). It is one of the top three priorities for 59 percent of respondents and 61 percent of females and 55 percent of males.

This finding is not surprising as, in Canada, the rate of family violence against women is nearly double the rate for men.¹⁶ Young

women, women living with a disability, lesbian or bisexual women, and Indigenous women are disproportionately affected by GBV.¹⁷ And according to 2014 statistics, 70 percent of spousal violence remains unreported to the police.¹⁸

Over two-thirds of respondents, male and female, reject harmful gender norms linked with the persistence of GBV.

For example, 70 percent of men and 83 percent of women believe a woman can refuse sexual intercourse with her partner; 68 percent of men and 75 percent of women do not think that a woman should always obey her partner; and 79 percent of men and 82 percent of women find it “unacceptable” to whistle at a woman in the street or to touch a woman without her consent.

To address the issue of GBV, respondents across all socioeconomic categories agree on the actions to be prioritized. A large majority (61 percent) think the government should “**increase accountability for physical and sexual crimes against women**” (Figure 5). Among both male and female respondents, support for this measure increases with age. The second most cited action to end GBV is the “**funding of programs to support women who have experienced violence**” (40 percent), followed by “ending traditional practices that are harmful to girls and women,” such as child marriage and female genital mutilation (38 percent).

In 2017, the government launched [It’s Time: Canada’s Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence](#), the first federal strategy to prevent and address gender-based violence. It is based on three pillars: prevention, support for survivors and their families, and the promotion of responsive legal and justice systems.¹⁹

FIGURE 5 CITIZENS' PRIORITIES TO END GBV



IN ORDER TO FIGHT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, WHICH, IF ANY, OF THE ACTIONS BELOW DO YOU THINK YOUR GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE?

Increase accountability for physical and sexual crimes against women

61%

Fund programs to support women who have experienced violence

40%

End traditional practices that are harmful to women and girls

38%

Tackle online violence against women

31%

Combat economic exploitation of women

27%

Address the unequal balance of power between women and men at home

25%

Don't know

8%

None

3%

Deltapoll survey conducted online using the quota method. Results analyzed by Focus2030. Survey conducted between July 24, 2020 and August 3, 2020 among a representative sample of 1,006 adults in Canada. Weighted data - Margin of error: $\pm 3\%$. For more information on the methodology: [Focus2030.org](https://focus2030.org).

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

In order to advance equality between women and men in Canada, **one in three surveyed respondents believe the government should “invest in technology to improve women’s access to health services, education, and economic opportunities.”** For half of respondents, this could be achieved through the **provision of “equal opportunities for girls and women to study and work in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).”** Respondents of all socioeconomic groups agree on this prioritized action, which relates to the second most cited action: “addressing barriers preventing girls and women

from accessing, designing, and developing technology” (38 percent).

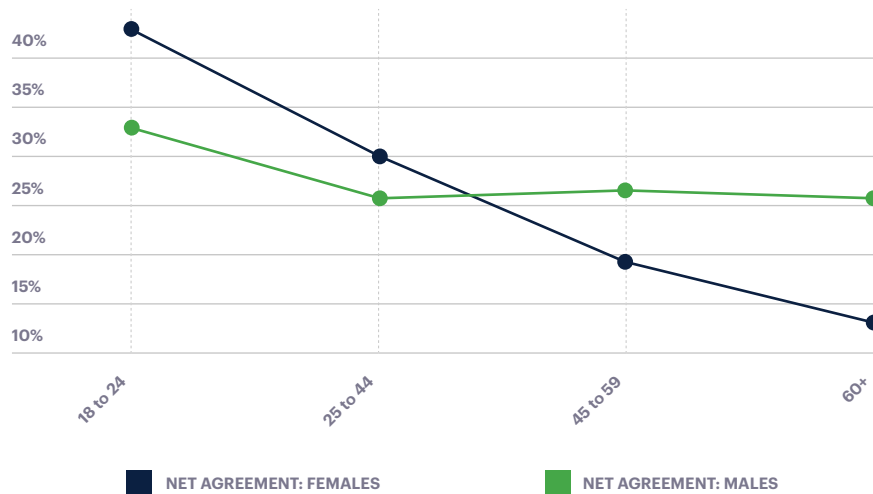
Canadian girls and women are underrepresented in STEM fields of study, which translates to their lesser participation in STEM-related occupations. In 2017, they represented 25 percent of students enrolled in information and communication technologies programs in tertiary education and 21 percent of students in engineering, manufacturing, and construction programs.²⁰ As a result, in 2018, only 24 percent of workers in natural and applied sciences careers, including scientists and engineers, were women.²¹ Government initiatives to promote girls’ and women’s participation in technology and innovation include [the CanCode program](#), which

FIGURE 6 FEAR OF ONLINE ABUSE



IN GENERAL, WHERE DO YOU, OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW, PERSONALLY FEEL AT RISK OF ASSAULT AND HARASSMENT?

Online (for example, on social media)



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supports initiatives that provide educational opportunities to Canadian youth for coding and digital skills development and has a target of at least 50 percent of female participants.²²

Additionally, **37 percent of respondents stress the importance of “increasing safety of digital spaces for girls and women (for example, preventing harassment or abuse of women online).”** While the same proportion of female and male respondents declare they, or someone they know, feel at risk of “online” assault and harassment (26 percent), women aged 18 to 24 are disproportionately affected (Figure 6).

BODILY AUTONOMY AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

Approximately **one in three surveyed respondents (29 percent) declare that protecting girls’ and women’s SRHR should be**

one of the governmental priorities to advance gender equality in Canada. Support for SRHR is relatively more common among female (32 percent) than male respondents (25 percent) and decreases with age, with 38 percent of respondents aged 18 to 44 citing it as one of the three most important areas for gender equality, compared to 20 percent of those aged 45 and older. **To improve SRHR, 35 percent of respondents believe the government should “increase access to accurate information, including sexual education in schools”** (Figure 7). Support for this action increases with age, from 25 percent of the youngest group of respondents to 46 percent of the oldest. In Canada, the provision of sexuality education is a provincial concern, and all provinces have a formal sexuality education program except Quebec, where it is integrated into other subjects.²³ In addition, 34 percent of respondents stress the importance of **“increasing access to sexual health**

services (for example, prevention, testing, and treatment options for sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS).” Respondents aged 18 to 24 particularly emphasize this priority (42 percent).

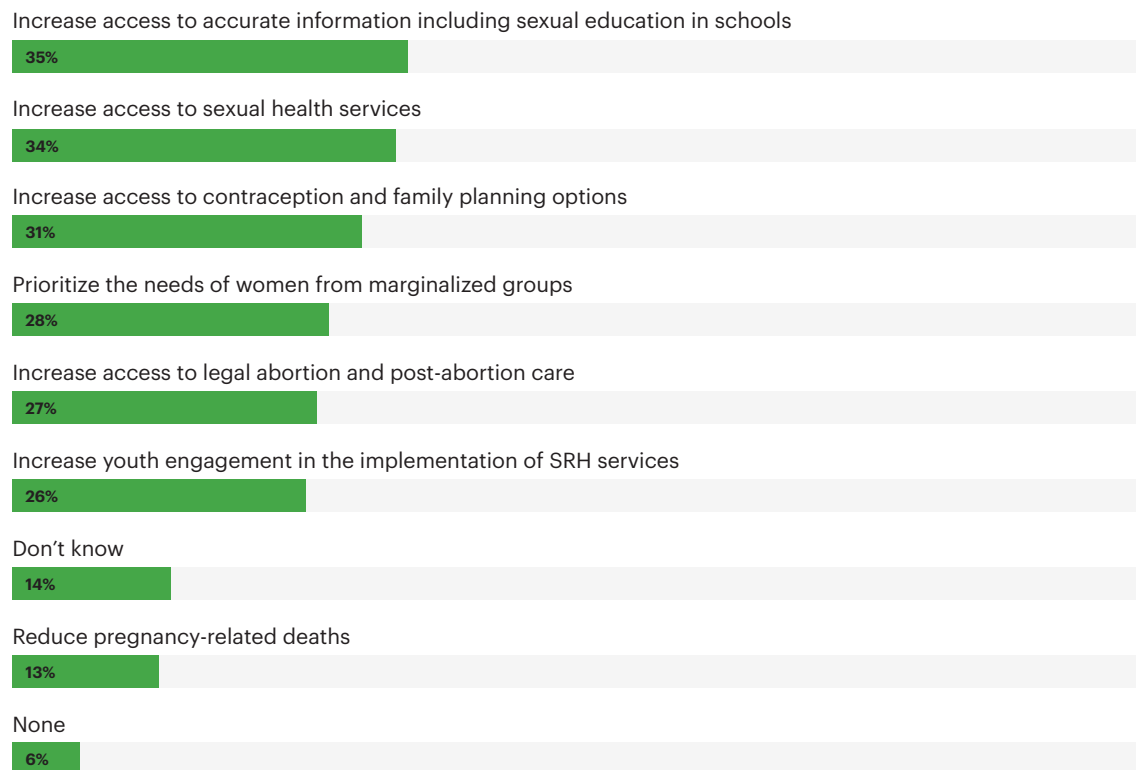
Additionally, **31 percent of respondents highlight the importance of “increasing access to contraception and family planning options,”** especially women of reproductive age (43 percent of those aged 18 to 24 and 38 percent of those aged 25 to 44). One in 10 female respondents declare ever having had “difficulty accessing their chosen method of contraception” (up to 19 percent of those

aged 25 to 44), and three percent had “difficulty accessing abortion and post-abortion care” (up to six percent of those aged 18 to 24). In Canada, the state covers access to some contraceptive methods for public sector employees, economically disadvantaged women, and Indigenous women.²⁴ Abortion is legal and available on request, although gestational limits varies by provinces and territories.²⁵

FIGURE 7 CITIZENS' VIEWS ON SRHR



IN ORDER TO IMPROVE WOMEN'S SRHR, WHICH, IF ANY, OF THE ACTIONS BELOW DO YOU THINK YOUR GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE?



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FEMINIST ACTION FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

When asked about the most important issues facing their country at the present time, 28 percent of surveyed respondents mention “climate change and the environment,” after the highly topical issues of “the economy” (56 percent), “global diseases and pandemics” (53 percent), and other “health” issues (38 percent). However, just 16 percent of respondents think “promoting women’s participation in climate change action,” as a governmental responsibility, is key to advance gender equality in the country. This proportion is stable across socioeconomic groups, with interest decreasing with age (Figure 8).

Respondents of all characteristics agree on the first action necessary to promote women’s efforts to respond to climate change (43 percent): **foster the “training and hiring of women in jobs related to climate change,”**

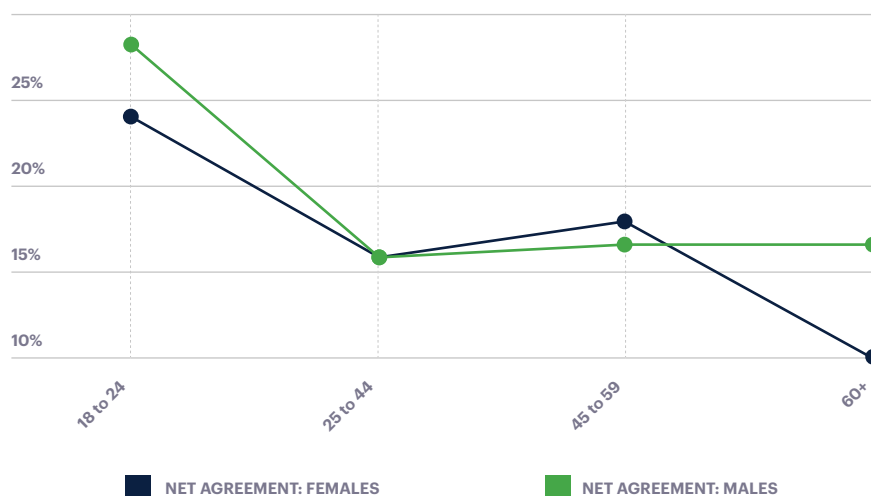
such as clean energy and technology. Respondents also emphasize the need to “increase girls’ and women’s participation in the development of solutions to tackle climate change” (36 percent) and to “increase funding for women-led organizations that are working to fight climate change” (27 percent).

Canada is a party to [the United Nations Framework on Climate Change](#), [the Kyoto Protocol](#), and [the Paris Agreement](#). The country has recognized that girls and women are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change and is supporting the inclusion of women in international climate change decision-making.²⁶ Canada played an important role in adopting [the Gender Action Plan during the 23rd Conference of Parties \(COP\)](#) in 2017. In 2019, 54 percent of Canadian delegates to the COP25 were women.²⁷

FIGURE 8 INTEREST IN FEMINIST ACTION FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE



Promote women’s participation in climate change action is one of the top 3 priorities



Deltapoll survey conducted online using the quota method. Results analyzed by Focus 2030. Survey conducted between July 24, 2020 and August 3, 2020 among a representative sample of 1,006 adults in Canada. Weighted data - Margin of error: ± 3%. For more information on the methodology: [Focus2030.org](https://focus2030.org).

FINANCING FOR GENDER EQUALITY

When asked about the most important issues facing their country at the present time, only six percent of respondents identify “inequality between men and women,” as compared with “the economy” (56 percent), “global diseases and pandemics” (53 percent), and “health” (38 percent). Young respondents are much more likely to state that gender inequalities (13 percent) and “racism and other forms of discrimination against minorities” (44 percent) are among the most important issues in Canada than the rest of the population (5 percent and 19 percent, respectively).

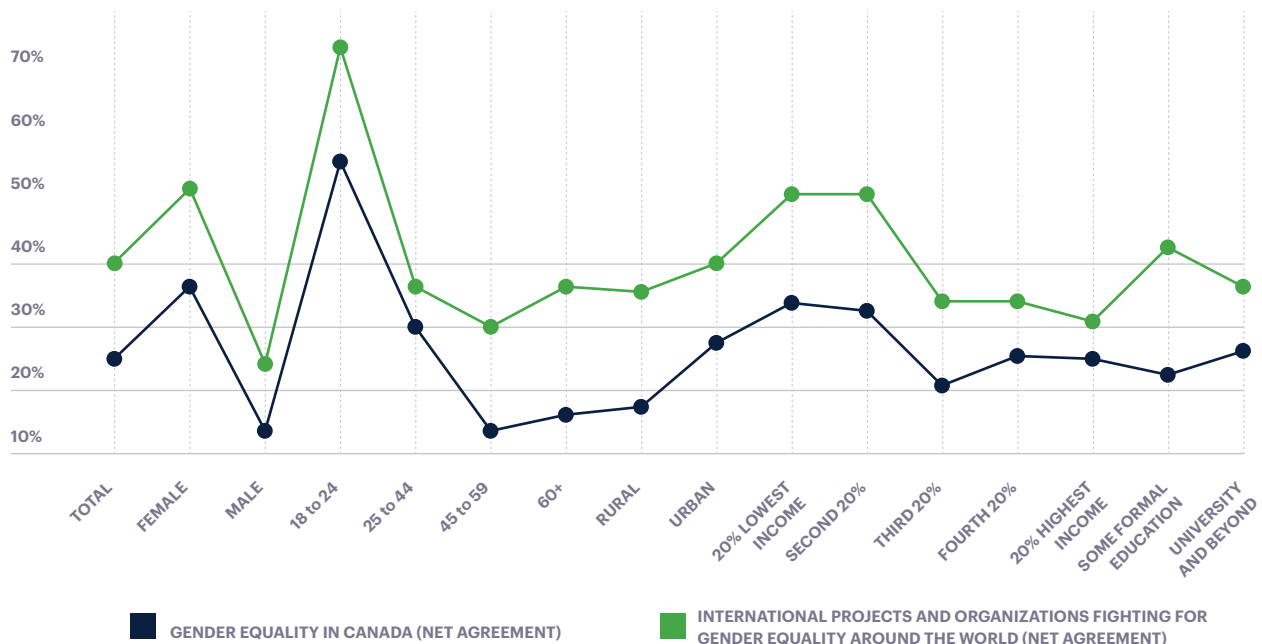
However, the survey reveals that **53 percent**

of respondents (60 percent of females and 44 percent of males) **believe their government should increase its funding for gender equality in Canada.** This measure is particularly popular among respondents aged 18 to 24 (78 percent, compared to 49 percent of respondents aged 25 and older) and among those belonging to the two lowest income quintiles (60 percent, compared to 50 percent among the three highest income quintiles). Twenty-four percent of respondents think the government should consider “the needs and interests of girls and women when developing government spending budgets,” a proportion stable across all socioeconomic categories. The [2018 Canadian Gender Budgeting Act](#)

FIGURE 9 NET SUPPORT FOR INCREASED GENDER EQUALITY FUNDING



ON THE OCCASION OF THE GENDER EQUALITY FORUM, MY GOVERNMENT SHOULD INCREASE ITS FUNDING FOR...



The net agreement rate is obtained by subtracting the proportion of respondents who disagreed from the proportion of respondents who agreed. Deltapoll survey conducted online using the quota method. Results analyzed by Focus2030. Survey conducted between July 24, 2020 and August 3, 2020 among a representative sample of 1,006 adults in Canada. Weighted data - Margin of error: ± 3%. For more information on the methodology: [Focus2030.org](https://focus2030.org).

makes gender budgeting a required step in the federal government's budgetary and financial management processes.²⁸

Respondents also support their government investing in gender equality internationally, although to a slightly lesser extent than domestically (Figure 9). **Fifty-one percent of respondents think that achieving gender equality is essential to end poverty in all countries, and 44 percent believe the government should increase its funding for international projects and organizations fighting for gender equality around the world.** Support for more investments in

gender equality abroad decreases with age, with 66 percent of respondents aged 18 to 24 in favor compared to 36 percent of those aged 45 and older. In 2017, Canada adopted a feminist foreign assistance policy, which integrates a gender-responsive perspective in all its international policies and programming.²⁹ Canada is a member of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC), and in 2018, it committed 93 percent of its bilateral allocable aid to gender equality and women's empowerment as either a principal or significant objective (up from 87 percent in 2017), compared with the DAC country average of 42 percent.³⁰

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ➔ **Support women's participation in decision-making bodies in the political and economic spheres through, for example, the introduction of transitional gender quotas and the funding of women's movements.**
- ➔ **Close persistent gender gaps in the economy. Ensure legislation on equal pay and violence and sexual harassment in workplaces is enforced in practice.** Sign and ratify [the International Labour Organization's Convention C190](#) on eliminating violence and harassment in the world of work. Although Canada's laws grant women the same rights as men to participate in the economy, gender gaps persist.
- ➔ **Put in place a full-funded national action plan on violence against women, with an intersectional lens.** This plan must harmonize the planning process to provide a roadmap to eradicate GBV for all. The response to the recommendations of the [National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#) must be in the hands of Indigenous women and Indigenous legal experts.
- ➔ **Provide access to SRHR regardless of place of residence.** Ensure universal access to contraception and other sexual health services through, for example, subsidization at the federal level.
- ➔ **Promote girls' and women's engagement in STEM and other traditionally male-dominated fields of study.**
- ➔ **Implement targeted awareness-raising activities on harmful gender norms to engage a larger proportion of the population, such as older men, which the survey found to be more likely to be in support of harmful gender norms compared to the rest of the population.**
- ➔ **Commit to sustained official development assistance dedicated to gender equality, with a particular focus on funding for women's movements and women-focused civil society organizations.**

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