

Intelligence MEMOS



From: Rosalie Wyonch
To: Concerned Canadians
Date: March 8, 2018
Re: **INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON OF GENDER BALANCE FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY**

Recently there has been a strong public and political focus on greater equality of women. Government policies and social awareness movements, such as #MeToo, #HeForShe and Catalyst, can help improve equality between men and women, especially in the workplace. Canada, however, falls behind international peers in terms of gender equity (See table).

The World Economic Forum's (WEF) [Global Gender Gap Report](#) ranks Canada 16th out of 144 countries and 9th out of the 14 peer countries I consider here. The ranking I present below for select high-income countries incorporates indicators of employment outcomes, representation in power and parity in education for women, some of which are not directly considered in the WEF report. This analysis indicates that women in Sweden, Australia, Denmark and five other countries show better outcomes than their Canadian counterparts on these variables. The employment ranking includes female entrepreneurship, gender pay equity, and employment in high skill jobs. Representation in power is measured by the percentage of female parliamentarians and female members of corporate boards for large publicly traded companies. Education considers the degree of gender parity by field of study and the percent of advanced STEM degrees held by women. Of all those considerations, the only domain where Canada ranks among the top half of countries is in female entrepreneurship.

Canada only ranks ninth out of 14 countries overall by these metrics of gender equity. One particular area where Canada falls behind is in representation, ranking ninth and 10th in representation on corporate boards and in Parliament, respectively. None of the countries considered reach parity on either of these fronts. Sweden – ranked the most equal for representation – still has not achieved parity, with 36 percent of board seats and 44 percent of parliamentary seats occupied by women.

Recent social movements highlight continuing inequities faced by women and recent government policies purport to address some of the causes. It is unlikely, however, that these actions will be enough to achieve the goal of equity and the recent federal budget [could have gone farther in removing barriers to participating in the workforce](#). This International Women's Day, it is apparent that no country can rest on its laurels.

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International Ranking of Gender Equity In Traditionally Underrepresented Domains

	Employment	Representation	Education	Overall
Sweden	8	1	7	1
Australia	1	8	4	2
Denmark	2	4	3	3
France	3	6	2	4
Finland	11	2	10	5
Netherlands	5	3	9	6
Germany	4	5	8	7
United Kingdom	10	7	1	8
Canada	6	9	6	9
United States	9	12	5	10
Ireland	7	11	12	11
Israel	13	10	11	12
South Korea	12	13	13	13
Japan	14	14	14	14

Sources: [Technical Notes for Individual Indicators](#), from [Canada's 2018 Innovation Policy Report Card](#). Data range from 2014-2017.