

Canada

WBL 2.0 legal frameworks score	WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks score	WBL 2.0 expert opinions score
90.0	97.5	N/A

Women, Business and the Law 2024 (WBL 2024) identifies barriers for women’s economic empowerment in three areas: women’s legal rights, policy instruments designed to support the implementation of these rights, and how these rights are realized in practice. For that purpose, three new *Women, Business and the Law 2.0* indexes are presented for ten indicators: (1) legal frameworks, (2) supportive frameworks, and (3) expert opinions. For the WBL 2.0 legal frameworks index, 40 questions are scored across the ten indicators for 190 economies. For the WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks index, 30 questions are scored across the ten indicators for 190 economies. Overall economy level legal and supportive frameworks scores are then calculated by taking the average of each indicator, with 100 representing the highest possible score. The WBL 2.0 expert opinions index is created for a total of 164 economies. Expert opinion scores are not available for Canada due to an insufficient number of responses received from this economy during data collection.

For Canada, data refer to the legal frameworks and supportive frameworks that are applicable to the main business city (Toronto). The scores for Canada are shown in the table below.

Women, Business and the Law 2024 2.0 indicator scores

										
WBL 2.0	Safety	Mobility	Workplace	Pay	Marriage	Parenthood	Childcare	Entrepreneurship	Assets	Pension
Legal frameworks score	50.0	100.0	75.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	75.0	100.0	100.0
Supportive frameworks score	75.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Expert opinions score	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A						

In summary, the **WBL 2.0 legal frameworks score** for Canada (90.0 out of 100.0) is higher than the global average (64.2) and higher than the High income: OECD regional average (84.9). When it comes to constraints on freedom of movement, laws affecting women’s pay, constraints related to marriage, laws affecting women’s work after having children, laws affecting childcare, laws affecting women’s property and inheritance and laws affecting the size of a woman’s pension, Canada obtains a perfect score (100.0 out of 100.0). As an example, one of the lowest scores for Canada is on the indicator measuring laws affecting women’s safety. To improve on the Safety indicator, Canada may wish to consider introducing legislation on femicide and introducing legislation on child marriage.

The **WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks score** for Canada (97.5 out of 100.0) is higher than the global average (39.5) and higher than the High income: OECD regional average (68.1). When it comes to supportive frameworks affecting freedom of movement, supportive frameworks affecting women’s decisions to work, supportive frameworks affecting women’s pay, supportive frameworks related to marriage, supportive frameworks affecting women’s work after having children, supportive frameworks affecting childcare, supportive frameworks related to women starting and running a business, supportive frameworks affecting women’s property and inheritance and supportive frameworks affecting the size of a woman’s pension, Canada obtains a perfect score (100.0 out of 100.0). As an example, one of the lowest scores for Canada is on the indicator

measuring supportive frameworks affecting women's safety. To improve on the Safety indicator, Canada may wish to consider putting in place special procedures for cases of sexual harassment.

WBL 2.0 legal frameworks data

QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
Safety		
Does the law address child marriage?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Does the law address sexual harassment?	Yes	Canadian Human Rights Act, Sec. 14(1) and (2); Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act, Secs. 1, 32.0.1 and 66; Ontario Human Rights Code, Secs. 7(2), 7(3), 9, 45.2, 46.1 and 46.2(1); Canada Labor Code, Part II, Secs. 122(1) and 125(1); Criminal Code, Secs. 4(8), 162.1 and 264(1) and (2)(b); Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act S.C. 2014, c. 31, Sec. 372(3)-(4)
Does the law address domestic violence?	Yes	Divorce Act, Secs. 2(1) and 7.8; Family Law Act, Secs. 24 and 46; Criminal Code, Arts. 271, 278 and 718.2(a)(ii)
Does the law address femicide?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Mobility		
Can a woman choose where to live in the same way as a man?	Yes	Family Law Act, Sec. 64
Can a woman travel internationally in the same way as a man?	Yes	Canadian Passport Order, Art. 5
Can a woman travel outside her home in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Do a woman and a man have equal rights to confer citizenship on their spouses and their children?	Yes	Citizenship Act, Art. 3(1)
Workplace		
Can a woman get a job in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Does the law explicitly prohibit discrimination in recruitment based on marital status, parental status, and age?	Yes	Ontario Human Rights Code, Sec. 5
Does the law prohibit discrimination in employment based on gender?	Yes	Ontario Human Rights Code, Secs. 5 and 23
Does the law allow employees to request flexible work?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Pay		
Does the law mandate equal remuneration for work of equal value?	Yes	Ontario Pay Equity Act, Sec. 6
Can a woman work at night in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Can a woman work in a job deemed dangerous in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Can a woman work in an industrial job in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Marriage		
Is the law free of legal provisions that require a married woman to obey her husband?	Yes	No applicable provisions could be located
Can a woman be "head of household" or "head of family" in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Can a woman obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man?	Yes	Divorce Act, Art. 8
Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Parenthood		
Is paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	Yes	Employment Insurance Act, Secs. 12(3)(a) and 12(4)(a) and 23
Are leave benefits for mothers paid solely by the government?	Yes	Employment Insurance Act, Sec. 22
Is paid leave available to fathers?	Yes	Employment Insurance Act, Secs. 12(4.01) and 23
Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	Yes	Ontario Human Rights Code, Secs. 5(1) and 10(2); Employment Standards Act, Sec. 53
Childcare		

Does the law establish the provision of center-based childcare services?	Yes	Child Care and Early Years Act of 2014, Secs. 2, 49, 51, 54 and 61; Ontario Regulations 137/15 under Child Care and Early Years Act of 2014, Sec. 1 and Schedule 1
Does the law establish any form of support for families for childcare services?	Yes	Ontario Regulation 138/15 (Funding, Cost Sharing and Financial Assistance), Secs. 8-10; Ontario Regulations 137/15 under Child Care and Early Years Act of 2014, Sec. 77.1; Official Website of Ontario, Child Care Fee Subsidy; Income Tax Act, Sec. 63; Official Website of Ontario, Child Care Tax Credit
Does the law establish any form of support for nonstate childcare providers?	Yes	Ontario Regulation 138/15 (Funding, Cost Sharing and Financial Assistance), Sec. 7; Official Website of Toronto, Service Agreements for Early Years Programs; Official Website of Ontario, Canada-Ontario Early Years and Child Care Agreement; Corporate Tax Act of Ontario, Sec. 13.2
Does the law establish quality standards for the provision of center-based childcare services?	Yes	Ontario Regulations 137/15 under Child Care and Early Years Act of 2014, Secs. 7, 8, 24(5), 53, 54, 58(1) and Schedule 1; Early Childhood Educators Act of 2007, Secs. 6(1) and 7; Official Website of Ontario
Entrepreneurship		
Can a woman undertake entrepreneurial activities in the same way as a man?	Yes	Family Law Act, Sec. 3; Business Corporations Act, Art. 5
Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to credit based on gender?	Yes	Canadian Human Rights Act, Arts. 3 and 5
Does the law prescribe a gender quota for corporate boards?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Does the law include gender-sensitive procurement provisions for public procurement processes?	Yes	Ethical Procurement Certification, Art. 4; Supply Manual, Sec. 4.45
Assets		
Do a woman and a man have equal administrative power and ownership rights to immovable property, including land?	Yes	Family Law Act, Sec. 5(3); Land Titles Act, Sec. 30; Canadian Human Rights Act, Sec. 3(1) and (5); Constitution, Art. 15
Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets?	Yes	Succession Law Reform Act, Secs. 46-47
Do male and female surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	Yes	Succession Law Reform Act, Secs. 46-47
Does the law provide for the valuation of nonmonetary contributions?	Yes	Family Law Act, Sec. 5(7)
Pension		
Are the ages at which a woman and a man can retire with full pension benefits the same?	Yes	Pension Benefits Act of 1990, Sec. 35(1)
Are the ages at which a woman and a man can retire with partial pension benefits the same?	Yes	Pension Benefits Act of 1990, Secs. 41(1) and 74(1.3)(c)
Is the mandatory retirement age for a woman and a man the same?	Yes	No applicable provisions could be located
Are periods of absence due to childcare accounted for in pension benefits?	Yes	Canada Pension Plan of 1985, Sec. 48(2)

WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks data

QUESTION	ANSWER	SOURCE
Safety		
Has the government developed comprehensive mechanisms to address violence against women?	Yes	Sexual Harassment in Employment (Fact Sheet), Ontario Human Rights Commission; Legal Aid Ontario; Ontario Network of Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centres; Improving Access to Justice for Canadians Through Judicial Training on Intimate Partner and Family Violence in the Family Justice System
Are special procedures in place for cases of sexual harassment?	No	Insufficient evidence located

Is a government entity responsible for monitoring and implementing national services, plans and programs addressing violence against women?	Yes	Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth; Gender Results Framework
Is an annual budgetary allocation devoted to violence against women risk mitigation, prevention, and response programs?	Yes	2022-23 Departmental Plan, Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth
Mobility		
Are passport application processes the same for a woman and a man?	Yes	Passport application form
Are the application processes for official identity documents the same for a woman and a man?	Yes	ID application procedures
Does a current policy or plan explicitly consider the specific mobility needs of women in public transportation?	Yes	2022-23 Gender Based Analysis Plus; Transport Canada Development Plan 2022-2023
Workplace		
Does a specialized body receive complaints about gender discrimination in employment?	Yes	Ontario Human Rights Code, Secs. 5, 32 and 34
Has the government published guidelines on nondiscrimination based on gender in recruitment?	Yes	Human Rights at Work 2008 Third Edition 5: Interviewing and making hiring decisions
Has the government published guidelines on flexible work arrangements?	Yes	Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety Flexible Work Arrangements
Pay		
Are pay transparency measures or enforcement mechanisms in place to address the pay gap?	Yes	Ontario Pay Equity Act, Secs. 12, 13 and 25
Have sex-disaggregated data on employment in different industries or sectors been published?	Yes	Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metal and Sustainable Development: Women and the Mine of the Future. A Gendered Analysis of Employment and Skills in the Large-Scale-Mining Sector: Canada; Statistics Canada: Table 14-10-0023-01 Labour force characteristics by industry
Marriage		
Is there a fast-track process or procedure for family law disputes?	Yes	Family Law Act, Art. 47.2(1)
Are there specialized family courts?	Yes	Family Court at the Ontario Court of Justice
Is legal aid available for family law disputes?	Yes	Legal Aid Program; Legal Aid Ontario
Parenthood		
Is it possible to apply for maternity benefits through a single government application process?	Yes	Employment Insurance Act, Sec. 22
Are incentives in place to encourage fathers to take paternity leave on the birth of a child?	Yes	Employment Standards Act 2000, Sec. 74
Have sex-disaggregated data on unpaid care work been published?	Yes	Statistics Canada: The value of unpaid childcare and paid employment by gender: What are the impacts of the low-fee universal childcare program?
Childcare		
Is there a publicly available registry or database of childcare providers?	Yes	Official Website of the Ministry of Education of Ontario
Is there a clearly outlined application procedure to request financial support from the government for childcare services by parents?	Yes	Ontario Regulation 138/15 (Funding, Cost Sharing and Financial Assistance), Secs. 9-10; Official Website of Ontario, Child Care Fee Subsidy, Official Website of Toronto, Application for Fee Subsidy
Is there a clearly outlined application procedure to request financial support from the government for childcare services by nonstate childcare providers?	Yes	Official Website of Toronto, Service Agreements for Early Years Programs
Has the government published any reports on the quality of childcare services?	Yes	Official Website of Ontario Ministry of Education
Entrepreneurship		
Have sex-disaggregated data on business activities, entrepreneurship, or women-owned businesses been published?	Yes	Statistics Canada - Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics Hub
Are government-led programs supporting female entrepreneurs providing access to finance and training, coaching, or business development?	Yes	Women Entrepreneurship Strategy; Thrive Venture Fund for Women; Women entrepreneurs in Ontario
Does a current national government plan or strategy focus on women's access to financial services?	Yes	The Women Entrepreneurship Strategy (WES)



Assets

Are mechanisms or incentives in place to encourage women to register immovable property (including joint titling)?	Yes	Family Law Act, Sec. 18-20; Conveyancing and Law of Property Act, Sec. 40
Are awareness measures in place to improve women's access to information about marital and inheritance rights?	Yes	Government of Canada, "Rights of Women" webpage; Government of Ontario, "Dividing property when a marriage or common law relationship ends" webpage
Have anonymized sex-disaggregated data on property ownership been published?	Yes	Statistics Canada

Pension

Are incentives in place to increase women's retirement benefits?	Yes	Canadian Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP)
Is a procedure in place for pension beneficiaries to challenge the decisions of the competent authority regarding their benefits?	Yes	Canada Pension Plan Regulations, Sec. 74.1; Department of Employment and Social Development Act, Secs. 44(1) and 64

