CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
COMMISSION CANADIENNE DES DROITS DE LA PERSONNE

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY OVER THE YEARS:

Representation and Equality in the Workplace

Metropolis 2011

RDIMS # 481979

Canada

Outline

- Context
- Part one: Representation in the Workplace
- Part two: Equality in the Workplace
- Challenges
- Opportunity : The Human Rights Maturity Model

Annex:

1. Evolution of Employment Equity (EE) Over the Years
2. Trends in Average Salary

Context

- The purpose of the *Employment Equity Act* is to achieve equality in the workplace for members of the four designated groups. Equality in the workplace calls for:
  - fair representation in the workplace; and
  - access to the same opportunities or benefits within the organization.
- In 2010, the CHRC launched a study of the evolution of EE over the years in the federally-regulated sector (public and private sectors combined), which focused on:
  - part one: the representation of the designated groups in the workforce (i.e. trend analysis of the gap between representation and labour market availability); and
  - part two: opportunities or benefits within the organizations (i.e as demonstrated by the gap between the average salary of each of the designated groups and the average salary of all employees).

Part 1: Representation in the Workplace

- EE improved between 1992 and 2008: The gap between overall representation and availability of the designated groups, in the federally regulated workplace, reduced by 50% (see annex 1).
    - The Women's group is the only one that has seen a representation gap increase over the 16-year period.
        - The increased use of automated technology, which made some clerical positions obsolete, is one of the causes for the increase on the gap. This was particularly true in the banking sector, where representation of women declined the most.
    - Representation of members of visible minorities has more than doubled, almost closing the gap between representation and availability in 2008.
    - Representation of Aboriginal peoples has doubled between 1992 and 2008, reducing the gap between representation and availability.
    - Representation of persons with disabilities grew by 26% over the 16-year period, reducing the gap between representation and availability.

Part 2: Equality in the Workplace

- Between 1999 and 2008, equality was closer to being achieved within the federally regulated workplace, as demonstrated by the average salary.
  - Overall, the gap in average salaries between designated group employees and all employees was reduced by almost 50%.

- Except for members of visible minorities, all other designated groups have come closer to equality since 1999 (see Annex 2).
  - The Aboriginal peoples and the women groups have improved the most between 1999 and 2008.
  - The persons with disabilities group is the one closest to equality.
  - The salary gap between the members of visible minorities group and all employees has remained stable over the years.

Part 2: Equality in the Workplace

- Overall improvement to the average salary of the four designated groups, compared to all employees between 1999 and 2008, seem to indicate that employers have been successful in :
  - reducing systemic employment barriers; and
  - fostering an environment that has allowed the designated group members to obtain better positions within their organizations.
- However, improvement is still needed, in term of salary average, in order to achieve equality for designated groups.

EE Over the Years : Conclusion

- The study suggests that the EEA has made a positive contribution to:
  - Canadian society, which is now more inclusive;
  - members of the designated groups, who contribute more and more to the economic development of the country; and
  - employees in workplaces under federal jurisdiction, who work in a more respectful and inclusive environment.
- Although the situation has improved, the study also suggests that EE is still relevant and that there is still work to be done to fully achieve the goals of the Law.

Challenges

- Canada's evolving society has made the elimination of representation gaps more challenging:
  - The on-going growth in the population of members of visible minorities has lessened the impact of improvements achieved.
  - The increased use of automated technologies has reduced the need for clerical positions which are traditionally held by women.
  - As a result of technological advances and assistive technology in the workplace, fewer people declare that they need special accommodation.

Challenges

- The recent economic context has been difficult for many organizations. As a result, it has been more challenging for some organization to see the benefits of EE.
  - Studies have shown that businesses with solid diversity practices are also leaders in their field.
  - Demonstrating commitment to social responsibility is more conducive to employee retention. In many employment sectors, there is a high rate of employee turnover, which costs businesses millions of dollars a year.
  - Studies demonstrate that employees in diverse workplaces have higher rates of job satisfaction.

Challenges

EE profiles and challenges vary from the public to private sectors

- Public sector: In this sector, three of the four groups – women, Aboriginal peoples and persons with disabilities – were well represented in 2008. However, despite continuous growth in representation, members of visible minorities remained under-represented in the public sector, when compared to availability.

- Private sector: Members of visible minorities were well represented in the private sector in 2008. However, the three other designated groups are still under-represented. In fact, the share of jobs held by women has dropped by two percentage points since 1997. Aboriginal peoples and persons with disabilities have made some gains but remain under-represented, based on the 2006 Census.

Opportunity : The Human Rights Maturity Model

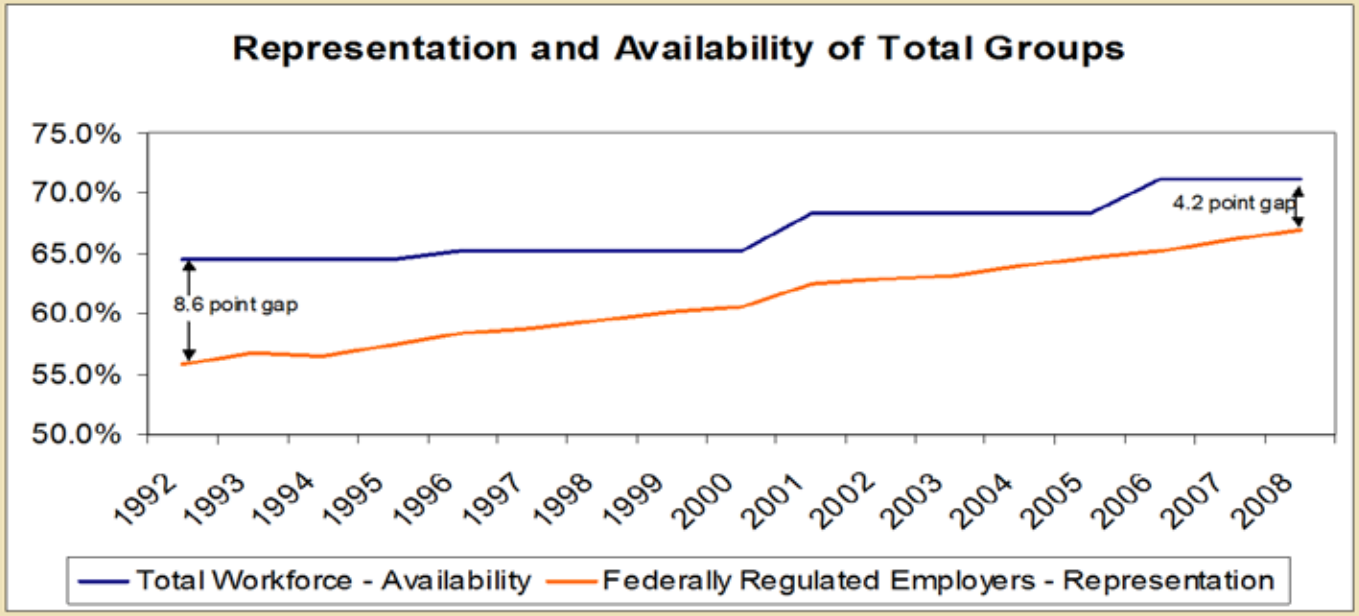
- The Commission has packaged its best practices, knowledge and expertise in the Human Rights Maturity Model. The first of its kind, the Maturity Model goes beyond the *why* and shows organizations *how* to create a positive self-sustaining workplace culture that encourages equality, dignity and respect. It is a roadmap toward greater human human rights competencies in the workplace.

- The Maturity Model supports, organizes and prioritizes already existing organizational initiatives. Recognizing that every organization is unique, the Maturity Model enables organizations to use different approaches to achieve the same goal.

- By combining the principles of employment equity with the Human Rights Maturity Model, organizations can maximize the tools at their disposal to prevent discrimination and promote a respectful and inclusive workplace.

Annex 1

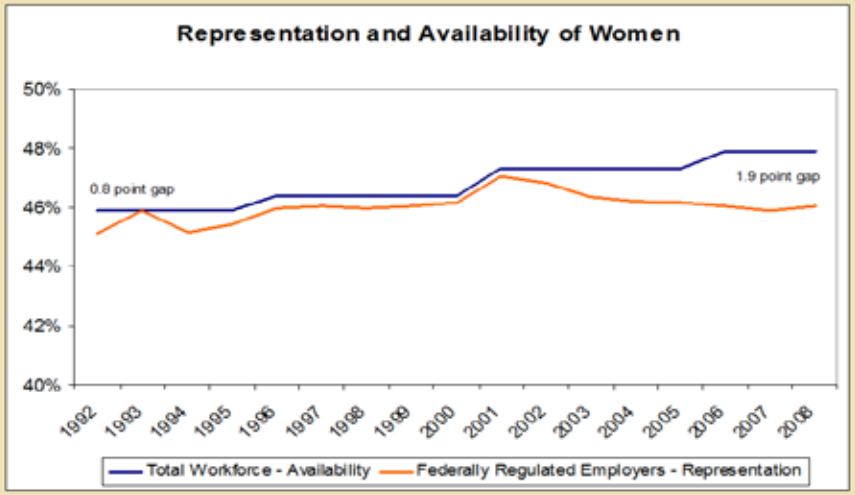
EE Progress Over the Years

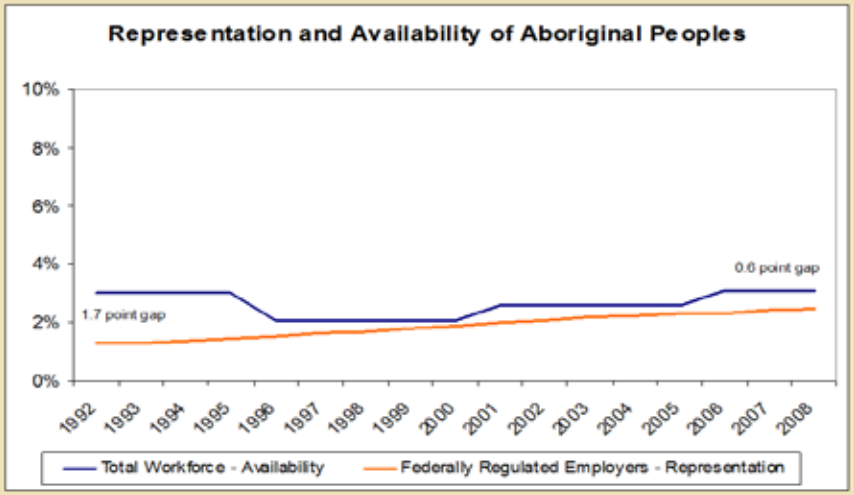


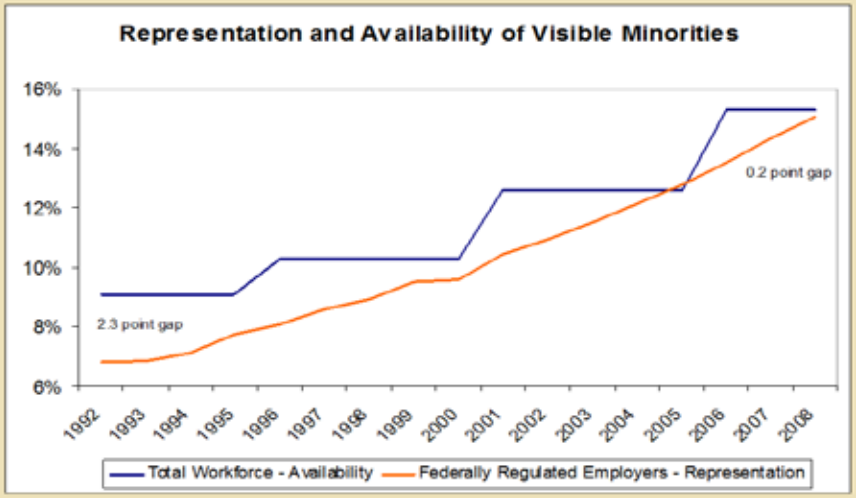
- Improvement in EE was achieved between 1992 and 2008: the gap between representation and availability in the federally regulated sector decreased
- All the EE groups are now better represented in the labour market than they were 15 years ago, except for the Women's group (see next page)

Annex 1

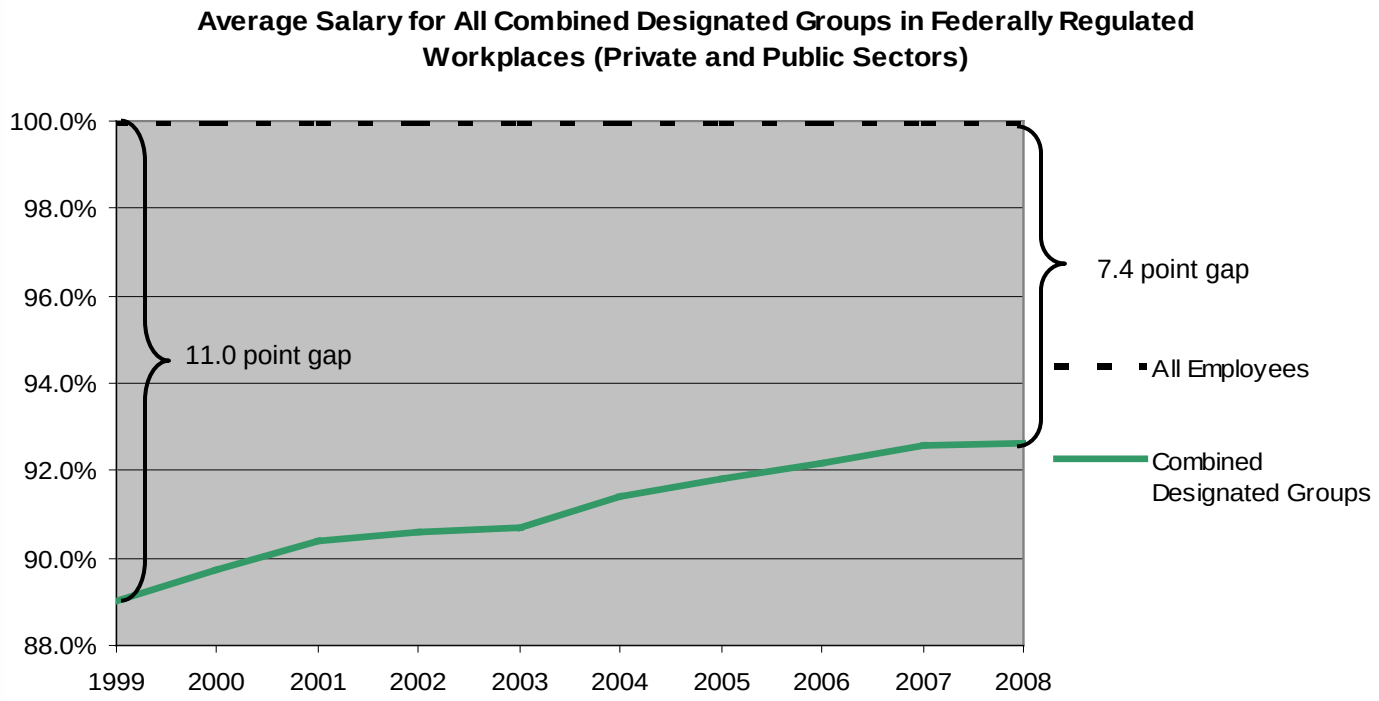
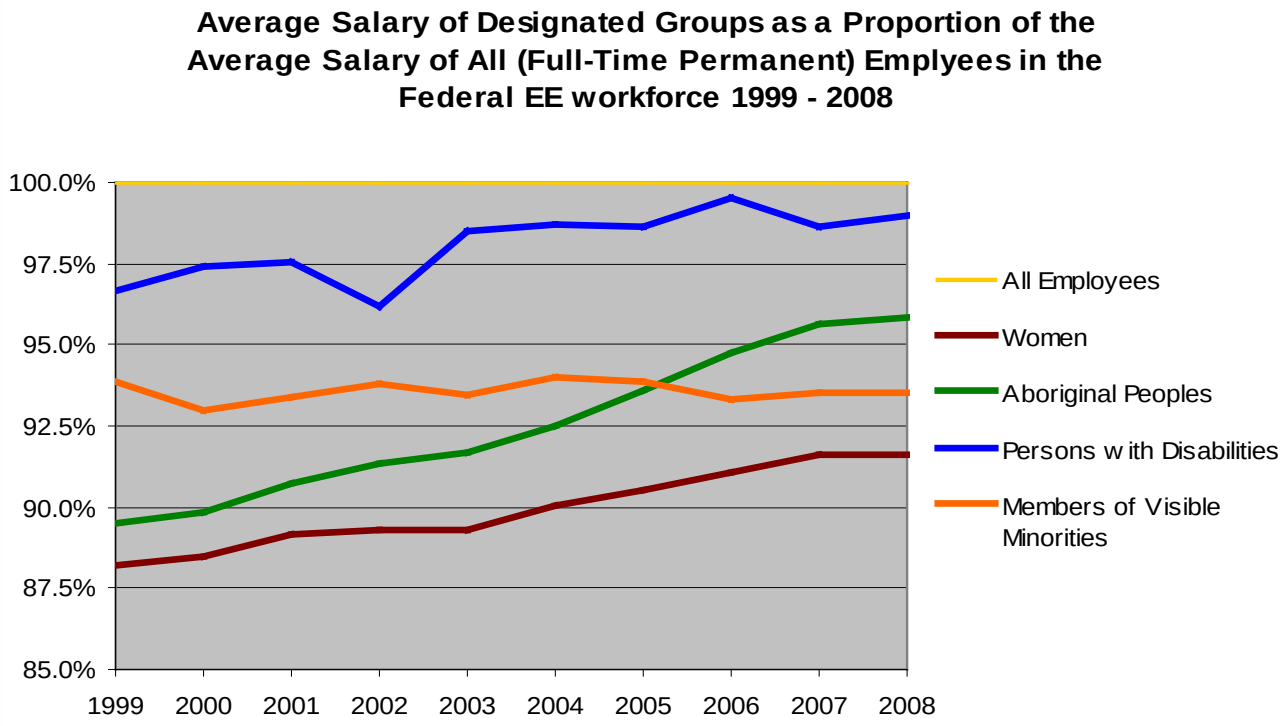
Progress Over the Years by EE Group







Annex 2: Trend in Average Salary



Annex 2: Trend in Average Salary