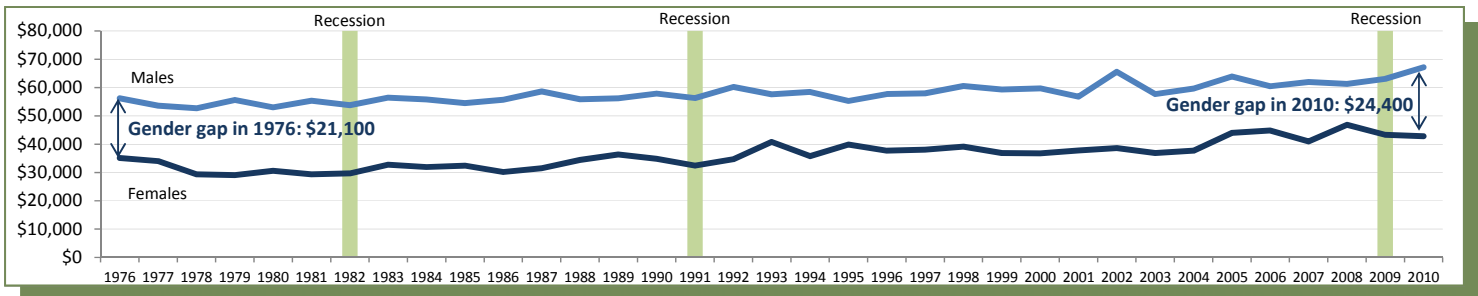


Key findings:

- ◆ Among full-time, full-year workers, the gap between men and women's pay was \$24,400 in 2010 and was larger than in 1976.
- ◆ Since 1993, all of the Hamilton CMA's net growth of full-time, full-year jobs has been due to women.
- ◆ Hamilton women's rising level of employment has become crucial to the strength of the local economy and prevented Hamilton's 2009 recession from being as severe as the 1990s recession.
- ◆ The majority of part-time or part-year workers in the Hamilton CMA are now men, and women were 47% of Hamilton's full-time, full-year workforce in 2010.
- ◆ The waitlist for a childcare fee subsidy in Hamilton has doubled in the last two years and now stands at more than 1,700 families.

Despite gains in protection from discrimination and pay equity since the 1970s, the gap between median full-time salaries paid to Hamilton's men and women has actually increased by \$3,300 to \$24,400 in 2010 (Chart 1). Over this period, women's full-time median income has risen from \$35,100 to \$42,800, compared to men's full-time median income which increased from \$56,200 to \$67,200 (adjusted for inflation). This gap has continued even with Hamilton women now attaining higher levels of education than men (In 2006, 51% of post-secondary educated residents were women, with higher rates for younger women)¹.

Chart 1. Median earnings of full-time, full-year workers, by gender, Hamilton Census Metropolitan Area, 1976-2010, Statistics Canada (Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Table 202-0103), adjusted for inflation using 2010 dollars.



There are two main factors driving this continuing phenomenon:

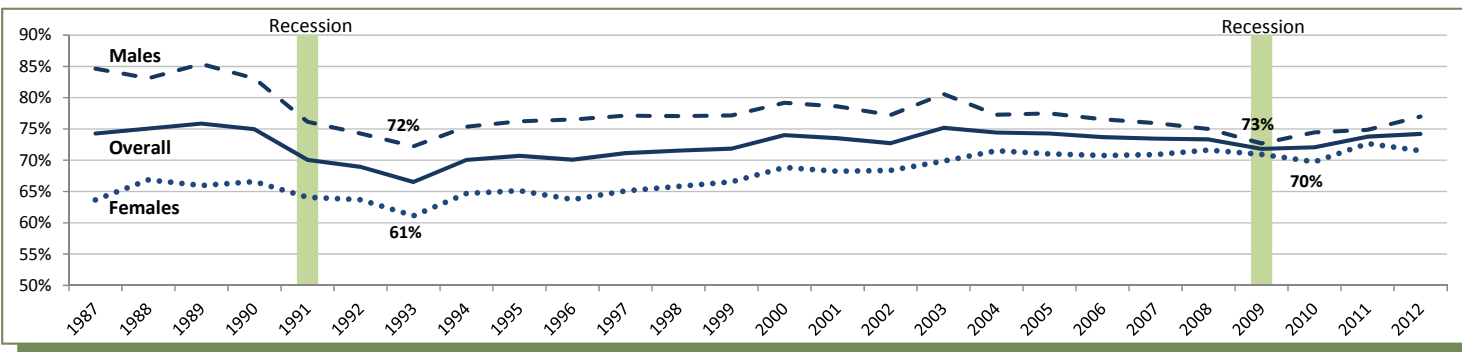
Pervasive gender segregation of the labour market. This segregation continues even as women join the workforce in equal numbers as men. Although a few fields are improving, gender segregation is the norm both between occupational categories (for example women are much more likely to be teachers than engineers) and within occupations (within teaching: women more likely to be elementary teachers than high school teachers; within engineering: more women are in environmental engineering and fewer are in mechanical or software engineering).

Employers continuing to devalue what has traditionally been seen as “women’s skills”. “The more a job is considered ‘women’s work,’ the less it pays,” explains the Canadian Women’s Foundation. The Quebec Pay Equity commission adds: “Certain jobs or professions engaged in by women often require skills that were considered an extension of the work done by women in the home: helping others, availability, meticulousness, etc. Because these aspects of the work were seen as “innately” female, they were ignored when came time to determine women’s salaries.” Although female-dominated occupations continue to be undervalued, women are leading full-time job growth in Hamilton. Since 1993, women have seen all of the net positive growth in the Hamilton CMA’s full-time, full-year jobs (30% increase for women, compared to 4% decrease for men)².

The previous bulletin in this series (*Recession Impacts: Employment*) showed that men in the Hamilton CMA are much less likely to be employed full-time, full-year than three decades ago. In 2010, nearly the same proportion of men and women were working full-time, full-year (46% and 43% respectively)². The feminization of the workforce, including the full-time workforce, has occurred without any equivalent increased financial valuation of many female-dominated occupations. The lower pay for the growing female workforce has a detrimental effect on overall incomes, and may be one of the factors leading to a general stagnation of incomes across Ontario. If women working full-time, full-year were paid on average the same as men, overall average individual annual incomes would be more than \$6,500 higher in the Hamilton CMA in 2010².

In addition to the essential contribution that women's employment makes to their families, working women have also become crucial to the strength of Hamilton's economy. Women's continuously rising level of employment in the last 15 years was what prevented the Hamilton CMA from experiencing in 2009 as severe a recession as in the early 1990s. Because of women's contributions to the economy, overall employment rates dipped only slightly in the 2009 recession (Chart 2). But for Hamilton men, the lowest point of the 2009 recession was barely 1 percentage point higher than in 1993, when men's working age employment rate sank to 72%.

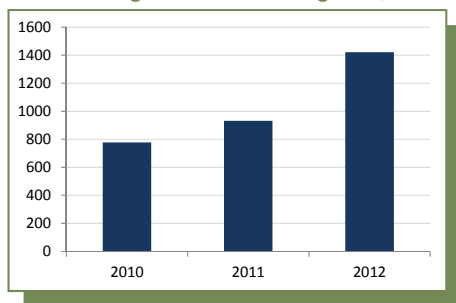
Chart 2. Proportion of population aged 15-64 who are working (full- or part-time), by gender, Hamilton Census Metropolitan Area, 1987-2012, Statistics Canada (Labour Force Survey, Table 282-0110)



In 2010, for the first time in the Hamilton CMA, the majority of part-time, part-year workers were men (about 77,000 male part-time or part-year workers, compared to about 70,000 females). There are still slightly more male than female full-time, full-year employees in the Hamilton CMA, but the gap is narrowing quickly: 47% of full-time, full-year workers in 2010 were women, compared to 44% across Ontario. (In 1976, 31% of Hamilton CMA's full-time, full-year workers were women, compared to 29% across Ontario.)²

A challenge for many women is that changes in the labour market are not yet compensated by changes in women and men's sharing of home and childcare responsibilities. In 2009, women were still providing twice as much unpaid childcare and performing 50% more unpaid housework as men³.

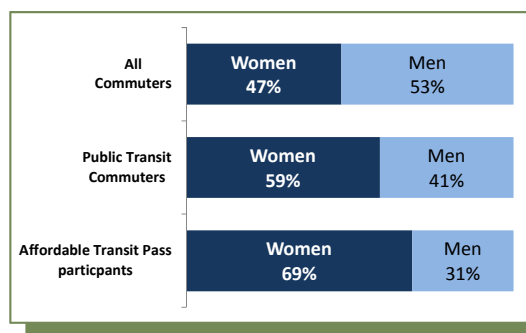
Chart 3. Number of families on the childcare fee subsidy waiting list, city of Hamilton, 2010-2012 (monthly data averaged for annual figures)



Investing in early childhood education is a key way that governments can both ease the "double burden" for women and allow even more women to join the workforce and help grow the economy. "Canada is an international laggard on child care. Our expenditures on child care as a percentage of GDP are the lowest among OECD countries. Despite what amounts to a social revolution in the lives of women since 1970, early learning and child care services in Canada today remain an inadequate patchwork that does not offer choice," reports the YWCA of Canada. In Hamilton, there are only enough regulated childcare spaces for 19% of children under age 6. Hamilton's waiting list for a childcare fee subsidy has doubled in two years (Chart 3), and in 2013 stands at a record level of over 1,700 families. Only Ontario's low-income families are eligible for the provincially-funded childcare fee subsidy program, but the funding barely covers half of children under six living in poverty. In contrast, evidence from Quebec shows that a universal childcare subsidy program helps all families with their costs of childcare, pays for itself and returns \$1.47 in provincial and federal taxes and savings for every \$1 in costs⁴.

Transit funding is also an issue that disproportionately affects women, including women looking for work or travelling to their jobs (Chart 4). While 47% of commuters are women, this rises to 59% among public transit commuters. Of the 4,800 participants in the City of Hamilton's Affordable Transit Pass program for the city's working poor, 69% have been women. This program's future is in jeopardy due to provincial cuts to financial supports for social assistance recipients. The City of Hamilton's recently adopted transit strategy *Rapid Ready: Expanding Mobility Choices in Hamilton* lays out a plan for \$30 million per year in increased investments in transit and related infrastructure, which if funded would help women across the city.

Chart 4. Gender analysis of transit commuters, city of Hamilton, (2006 Census and data provided by City of Hamilton)



¹ Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

² Based on Statistics Canada, Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Table 202-0103.

³ Statistics Canada, General Social Survey

⁴ Institute of Public Policy Research summary of research from Pierre Fortin, Department of Economics, UQAM, available at: <http://www.ippr.org/juncture/171/9501/lessons-from-quebecs-universal-low-fee-childcare-programme>