

# Building a Safer and More Competitive Tourism Sector Through Gender Equity

For Policy Decision Makers



CANADIAN CENTER  
FOR WOMEN'S  
EMPOWERMENT

CENTRE CANADIEN  
POUR L'AUTONOMISATION  
DES FEMMES



## Why this matters

Tourism is one of Canada's largest employers of women. It also provides jobs across urban, rural, remote, and northern communities.

The sector has flexible work arrangements, multiple entry points into employment, and opportunities for career mobility that can be essential for women rebuilding financial independence. This flexibility can be life-changing for women experiencing gender-based violence (GBV), including economic abuse, and who are seeking economic security.

**BUT** structural barriers, including precarious employment, workplace harassment and limited advancement opportunities, continue to undermine women's economic security in the sector.

## What we found

Our research identified several opportunities for policy action:

- Women remain concentrated in lower-paid and less secure hospitality occupations.
- Leadership positions continue to be disproportionately occupied by men.
- Seasonal, part-time, and unpredictable employment can increase economic vulnerability.
- Workplace harassment and violence remain significant concerns in customer-facing environments.
- Flexible scheduling can support women managing caregiving responsibilities and those responding to GBV.
- Mentorship, leadership development, and supportive workplace cultures improve retention and advancement.

## Policy opportunities

Governments can support the tourism sector by:

- Strengthening workplace prevention and response to GBV and economic abuse.
- Supporting leadership pathways for women through training, mentorship, and skills development.
- Encouraging flexible scheduling and quality employment practices, when possible.
- Investing in employers' capacity to build trauma-informed and safe workplaces.
- Integrating gender equity objectives into tourism workforce strategies and economic development initiatives.

A stronger tourism workforce depends on ensuring women can participate safely, advance equitably, and achieve long-term economic security - especially during moments of difficulty, including facing GBV.

Read the **full report** for how policy decision-makers can improve gender equity in the hospitality sector.