

Employment equity

The purpose of the *Employment Equity Act* is to achieve equality in the workplace and to correct inequities experienced by women, Aboriginal persons, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities.¹¹ As employment equity-designated groups, women, Aboriginal persons, and members of visible minorities are slightly under-represented within DFAIT. However, representation of persons with disabilities is adequate within the Department. Hiring levels among employment equity-designated groups are relatively low. If the trend continues, the under-representation of the designated groups will increase over the next few years, due largely to the relative increase in representation of members of visible minorities and Aboriginal people in the workforce.¹²

Highlights

- The imbalance in representation of women and Aboriginal persons is most evident in the EX group, where the number of women and Aboriginal persons is below workforce availability (61 and 13 respectively).
- The CS group has the lowest representation of members of visible minorities, with a shortfall of 16.
- The FS group has the lowest representation of persons with disabilities, with a shortfall of 8.

Implications

According to the *Human Resources Environmental Scan for the Public Service of Canada*, immigrant workers accounted for some 70% of recent labour force growth. In addition, by 2011, they may be the sole contributors to this growth, with the result that workforce availability of members of visible minorities will continue to increase.¹³ There should also be an increase in the availability of Aboriginal persons over the next few years, since their population is younger and is growing twice as fast as the rest of the population.¹⁴ The Department should renew and reactivate its employment equity plan to reduce the current imbalance in representation and take into account the availability of target groups in the future labour force. The Department might also develop a strategy containing specific employment equity objectives for a set period of time. One such objective could target representation of employment equity-designated groups at the management level. This objective could be met through such initiatives as the *Leadership*

¹¹ Employment Equity Act (<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/E-5.401/index.html>)

¹² The Human Resources Environmental Scan for the Public Service of Canada (http://www.hrma-agrh.gc.ca/hr-rh/hrp-prh/hrespst-aerhfpc_e.asp)

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.