

Ontario's Care Economy:

An assessment of provincial care policy

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| About ONN

CONNECT, STRENGTHEN AND ADVOCATE WITH AND FOR THE NONPROFIT SECTOR IN ONTARIO



Why does ONN care about the care economy?

- Most care sectors in Ontario are entirely nonprofit and/or public sector driven.
- Care economy frame captures feminization and racialization of care labour.
- ONN's policy agenda captures much of the issues.

Ontario Care scorecard origin story

- Lots of energy + appetite to advance care economy public policy after the pandemic. But the political moment in Ontario felt like it had passed, but concerns were mounting.
- There was an identified need to build credible evidence and research:
 - 2021: Care Policy Scorecard was developed by multiple organizations around the globe.
 - 2023: Oxfam Canada adapted the tool at the federal level but cited its limitations given most care policies are in the provincial and territorial jurisdiction.
- Merits of the score card
 - Practical tool that provided evidence and information - It measures and tracks government progress and commitments on policies that have a direct impact on unpaid and paid care
 - Draws on the 5R Framework to outline key components of a care-enabling public policy environment.
 - Systematic and holistic: Consists of a set of policy indicators and questions to assess progress across relevant public policy areas for unpaid and paid care work.
- **ONN's fundamental question:** What is the state of care policy in Ontario?
- **Theory of change:** If we can capture the state of care policy, with a credible, third-party tool, AND build an Ontario Care Economy network, we can engage in powerful collective advocacy.

CARE POLICY SCORECARD

A tool for assessing country progress towards an enabling policy environment on care



Ontario's care economy score card

ONTARIO'S CARE ECONOMY

An assessment of
provincial care policy

Key terms

Scorecard

Key findings

How to build a careFULL
Ontario

Resources

The care system in Ontario is in crisis.



Section 1

Unpaid care work

Policy area	Indicators	Percentage	Degree of transformation
1.1. Care-supporting physical infrastructure	1.1.1. Clean water	47	3
	1.1.2. Clean air	9	1
	1.1.3. Household electricity	62	4
	1.1.4. Connectivity infrastructure	0	0
	1.1.5. Public transportation	21	2
	1.1.6. Housing	0	0
1.2. Care services	1.2.1. Public health care services	50	3
	1.2.2. Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) services	52	3
	1.2.3. Residential Long-Term Care	20	1
	1.2.4. Homecare	28	2
	1.2.5. Developmental disability services	52	3
	1.2.6. Mental health and psychiatric services	17	1
	1.2.7. Physical disability services	33	2
	1.2.8. Gender-based violence services	33	2
	1.2.9. Homelessness and housing services	23	2
	1.2.10. Addiction services	27	2
1.3. Care-related social protection benefits	1.3.1. Cash transfer policies related to care: Caregiver Benefit	0	0
	1.3.2. Cash transfer policies related to care: ODSP	43	3
1.4. Care-supporting workplaces	1.4.1. Paid sick leave	35	2
	1.4.2. Equal paid parental leave	48	3
	1.4.3. Flexible working	37	2

Section 2

Paid care work

Policy area	Indicators	Percentage	Degree of transformation
2.1. Labour conditions and wage policies	1.1.1. Minimum wages for paid care workers	43	3
	1.1.2. Gender wage gap and equal pay for equal work	33	2
	1.1.3. Working hours	38	2
2.2. Workplace regulations	1.2.1. Health and safety in the workplace	57	3
	1.2.2. Gender-based discrimination, harassment and violence in the workplace	47	3

Care policies in Ontario are not transformative

The scoring and analysis reveal that care policies in Ontario are not transformative. This means that policies do not transform the unequal and gendered distribution of care work or correct the devaluation of care and care work.

Some care policies meet the immediate needs of Ontarians, but most are unable to reach all demographics, and none of them are designed to address issues of gender inequality, gaps in care, and systemic exclusion.

Figure 1: How Ontario care indicators scored by their degree of transformation

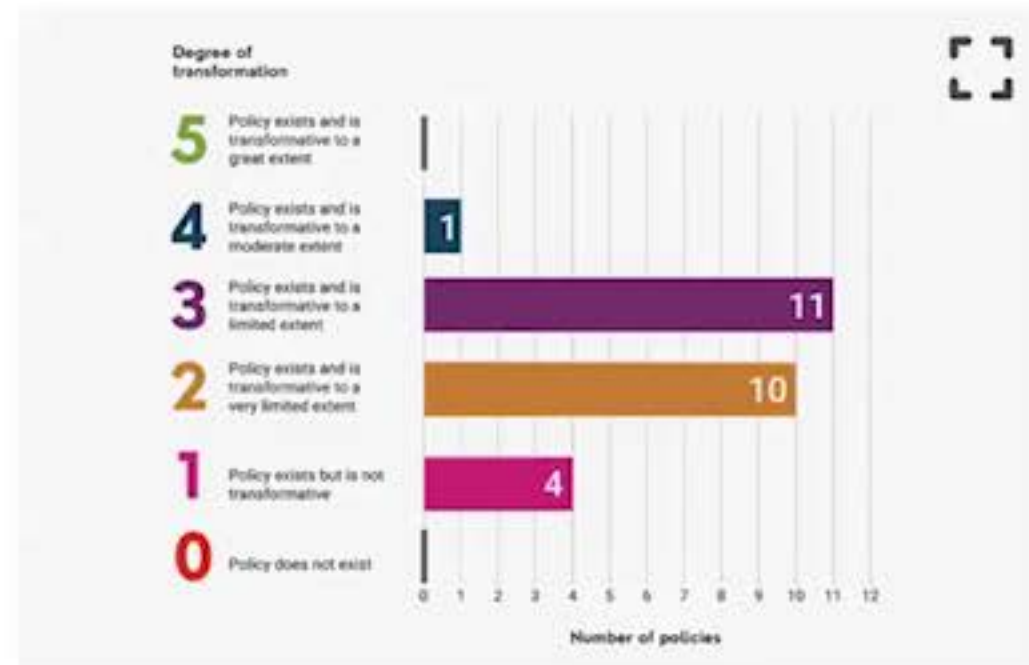
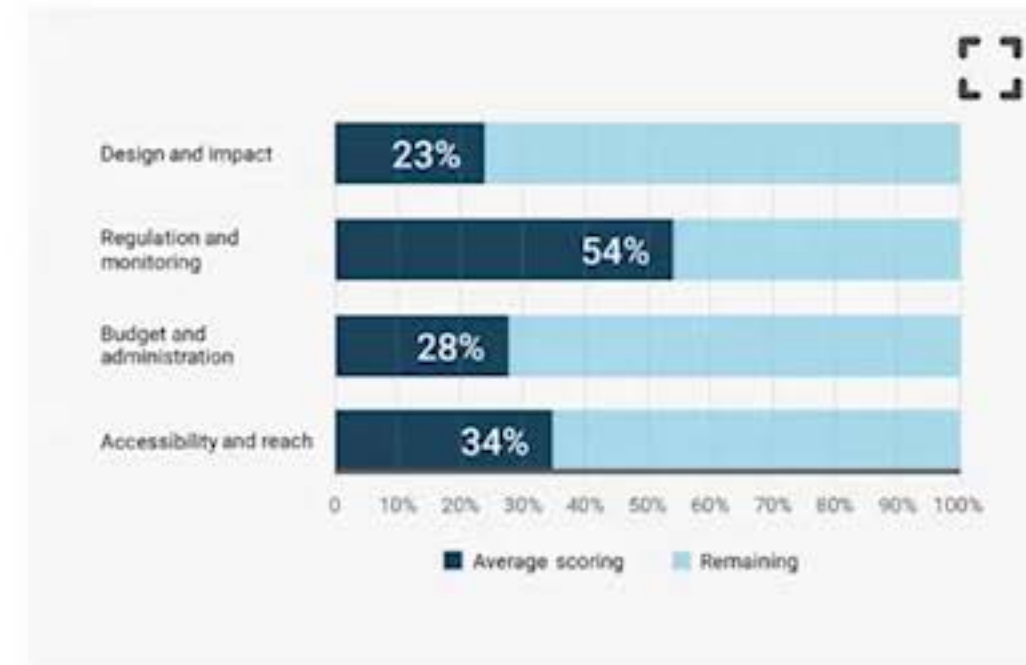


Figure 2: Average scores by main assessment criteria categories





Key findings: Why care policies in Ontario are failing

- 1** Care systems are operating at unsustainable levels
- 2** Housing precarity and cost of living create high care needs that cannot be met by the current system
- 3** Strong physical infrastructure enables good care, but deregulating and privatizing it creates a greater burden of care
- 4** Privatization of care services undermines the essential delivery of nonprofit services
- 5** Punishment and criminalization are the response to care needs when the appropriate services and support are not available
- 6** Weak employment legislation leaves care workers vulnerable to workplace abuse and exploitation

How to build a careFULL Ontario

We need a careFULL Ontario now. While the crisis in care is urgent, it can be solved with collective action that advances policy solutions for the public good.

Valuing care work means investing in structural change and material support, not just performative appreciation or gratitude.

Building a careFULL Ontario requires public policy to be care-informed and care-centred, including policies focused on the care economy itself.



Move away from criminalization and towards public policy that centres care



Recognize care-enabling physical infrastructure as a key component of care



Decent work for care workers



Bolster the care economy



Take profit out of care



large divisions in improving the well-being of Ontarians.

We invite nonprofits, workers, and their allies to advocate for a healthy care economy. Together, let's build a careFULL Ontario.

Resources

Download the Scorecard research report

English

French

**Amplification package
(coming soon)**

**Download the Scorecard
template**

English

French

**Request the full Scorecard
data**

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