

■ Rewrite the report to EEC by April 1, 91

DESIGNATED GROUP POLICY

1. Introduction

The designated groups - women, Aboriginal people, visible minorities, and persons with disabilities - are so designated by the Government of Canada because they are characterized by conditions of disadvantage in the labour market. All four groups experience a higher unemployment rate, a lower labour force participation rate, and a lower average income from employment than the rest of the Canadian working population. In addition, members of these groups tend to be segregated in a limited range of occupations and levels within occupational groups.

2. Context

This Designated Group Policy reflects the federal government's commitment to the building of an equitable society. Canada is a participant in various international anti-discrimination covenants and human rights declarations. Domestically, this commitment is strongly reflected in public policy, as evidenced by the Employment Equity Act and Federal Contractors Program at the federal level and significant activities in equal pay initiatives undertaken in various provincial jurisdictions.

The commitment of Employment and Immigration Canada (EIC) to eradicate the disadvantages of the designated groups is also rooted in the awareness that the marginal position of these groups in the labour market represents a diminished level of productivity which impedes Canada's economic growth and healthy stature in a competitive world economy. Indeed, an effectively functioning labour market is not achievable until the designated groups can be developed, with other workers, to their full productive potential.

EIC works for equity for the designated groups on three separate but inter-related fronts. The first is through the administration of the Employment Equity Act which binds certain categories of employers to undertake a prescribed program of human resource planning directed at eliminating inequities for the designated groups in their respective workforces. Secondly, the Commission itself, as employer, acknowledges its responsibility to achieve equity within its own workforce.

The third front consists of the way EIC assists its clientele and partners with a continuum of programs for the improved functioning of the labour market. This latter front is the focus of this Designated Group Policy.

3. Objective

The chief objective of the Designated Group Policy is to facilitate adjustments required for the effective functioning of the labour market by eliminating the barriers preventing the full productive contribution of the designated groups. Achievement of this objective in any significant manner will be marked by a corresponding diminishment in one or more of the adverse conditions for the respective group.

In practical terms, therefore, and in reference to equity issues, the objectives of this policy are:

To achieve for each designated group:

- a decline of the unemployment rate of the group (to that of the rest of the population);
- an increase in the labour force participation rate of the group (to that of the rest of the population);
- an increase in the average income from employment for the group (to that of the rest of the population); and
- increased participation of the group in a wider range of occupations and levels within occupational groups.

The objectives of this policy will not constitute a set of additional priorities to be balanced with other competing priorities of EIC. Instead, they will comprise a qualitative dimension governing the way EIC meets its priorities and accomplishes its objectives in the labour market; that is, in ways which contribute to equity for the designated groups.

4. Policy

The Commission will serve its clientele and carry out its role in the labour market in ways which contribute to the reduction of the conditions of disadvantage for the designated groups.

The Commission will maintain this commitment in all arrangements with other stakeholders and labour market partners.

The Commission will seek the collaboration of appropriate designated group associations in the planning, design, and implementation of any service or program intervention intended to affect the employability of workers in the labour market.

The Commission's collaboration, technical expertise, and financial incentives may support the labour market activities of other agencies, employers, workers, groups, and individuals which are consistent with this policy. Conversely, the assistance of the Commission will be withheld from any activity which detracts from equity for the designated groups.

5. Implementation Principles

All programs, services, and activities of EIC, whether conducted directly, through intermediaries, or in collaborative relationships, will be included in the scope of this policy. Exceptions - activities which hinder or detract from the objectives of this policy - are prohibited since they are not consistent with EIC's vision for the labour market.

EIC cannot build an equitable labour market alone. It is especially by the collaboration of employers that this and any other of EIC's labour market goals can be realized. The support and participation of all labour market partners and stakeholders is actively sought and encouraged.

Equity in Employment does not propose to treat everybody in the same manner, but rather to effect specific changes in the labour market by treating certain people in different ways.

Although the objectives are identical for all four designated groups, the approaches to implementation of this policy should vary according to wide ranges of geographic, social, and cultural factors as well as different prevailing economic conditions from area to area.

CECs will be required to exercise the full range of flexibility and authority in planning and implementing measures to achieve the objectives of this policy.

The labour market situation of the designated groups as well as the employment needs of clients in general are best met by a continuum of program and service interventions based on the determined needs of individuals.

It will be necessary to identify individual members of designated groups in order to base service decisions and implement special measures not generally available to other clientele, as well as to monitor the achievement of results and plan services and programs.

Priority in service must be given to clientele with needs within the range of EIC capability and reasonable efficiency.

Service tools and mechanisms compatible with this policy will be required.

6. Resources

The key resource issue is not how much to expend on equity objectives instead of other strategic priorities, but rather how to use the available resources to achieve the strategic priorities in ways which contribute to equity for the designated groups.

A commitment to equity in employment includes a commitment to adopt the special measures necessary to do business in this way. Any additional cost is to be considered a cost of doing business equitably, and the expense is to be directly attributable to the cost of providing an effective service to these groups of clients.

7. Roles

CECs are required to:

- a) identify the designated groups in the area; that is, those groups which are disadvantaged in the local labour market;
- b) provide for the collaboration of designated groups and other labour market partners in the planning and implementation of the continuum of program and service interventions affecting workers;
- c) incorporate into the Planning Process the plans and strategies required for the achievement of this policy's objectives; determine the nature and intensity of needed program and service interventions and the most effective delivery vehicles;
- d) arrange the delivery of services and programs of the CEC and undertake any necessary special measures so that all client service priorities are met in ways which contribute to the equity objectives of the respective designated groups;

Regions are required to:

- a) provide any necessary support and assistance to CECs and any other points of service delivery, so that client service priorities are met in ways which achieve the equity objectives of the respective designated groups.

- b) actively seek and secure the collaboration of appropriate regional/provincial/territorial associations, organizations, and agencies in the planning and implementation of measures consistent with EIC's strategic and equity objectives;
- c) ensure that all direction and guidance to CECs and any other points of service delivery is consistent with equity objectives;
- d) review the annual plans and achievements of CECs and any other points of service delivery for their contributions to the equity objectives.

National Headquarters is required to:

- a) establish, in consultation with regions, appropriate performance measures and annual national goals to mark progress in the four objectives of this policy;
- b) ensure that all policies, programs, services, plans, communications, and materials are consistent with and support this policy;
- c) lead, in collaboration with designated groups and with regions, the development of global approaches and strategies for the achievement of the objectives of this policy;
- d) develop, in consultation with the regions, the work instruments, staff training, public information, and any other national mechanisms or tools necessary to support and assist the regions in the implementation of this policy;
- e) review annual plans and achievements of regions for their contributions to the equity objectives.

8. Responsibility

Managers in the Employment Activity at all levels are responsible for the conduct of their respective roles in the implementation of this policy.

Specific reference to the four equity objectives for each of the designated groups will be included in the operational plans of each CEC and possibly discussed with the respective regional designated group consultant. The global plan with respect to the equity objectives for each designated group will be described in the Summary Operational Plan of each region and will be reviewed by the designated group Senior Advisors at NHQ.

The operational plan of each manager in the Employment Activity will include a reference to the anticipated contribution of the incumbent to the equity objectives in the pursuit of other objectives and planned activities.

The annual performance appraisal of each manager in the Employment Activity will include specific substantiated comment on the manager's contribution to equity for the designated groups as outlined in the operational plan.

9. Performance Measures

Any significant achievement in the elimination of inequities for the designated groups will be shown by a corresponding change in one or more of the conditions indicating their disadvantage. Therefore, success in the implementation of this policy for any of the designated groups will be measured by:

- a) a decline of the unemployment rate of the group (closer to that of the rest of the population);
- b) an increase in the labour force participation rate of the group (closer to that of the rest of the population);
- c) an increase in the average income from employment for the group (closer to that of the rest of the population); and
- d) increased participation of the group in a wider range of occupations and levels within occupational groups.

2. restricts it to occu. level group

As Statistics Canada provides comprehensive information relative to the above four main measures with respect to designated groups through the Census of Canada only every five years, EIC will thoroughly review all aspects of this policy in periods coinciding with the release of the Census data.

Additional, more frequent indicators of progress must be developed and used, which relate to the respective main measures listed above. For each of the designated groups, such indicators could be:

- a) re: employment *(entry into training?)*
 - "found work" following training, in the follow-up survey;
 - "found work" in the Claimant Re-employment Strategy;
 - "assisted into employment" through any kind of special measure or community-based program.

b) re: labour force participation

- "number of designated group members served" in:
 - Service Needs Determination interviews
 - Group Information Sessions;
 - Self-serve mechanisms;
 - Community-based programs.

c) re: income level

- "approximate income level" determined by occupational designation of "found work",
 - following training, in the follow-up survey;
 - in the Claimant Re-employment Strategy;
 - in any "assisted into employment" situation.

d) re: occupational segregation

- occupational designation of training;
- occupational designation of any "found work" situation, whether following training, participation in the Claimant Re-employment Strategy, or any kind of "assisted into employment" situation.

(Note: the patterns of occupational under-representation of women, aboriginal people, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minority groups can be easily established; these would be the target occupations for the purpose of this policy.)