



Anti-Racism Toolkit

Myth Busting

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY *The Employment Equity Act* was introduced into law in 1995. In the last 25 years since the Act was passed, there have been some advancements, but many inequities still exist. Yet critics of EE will still argue that the employment equity initiatives are themselves violations of fairness and equity—against those with the privilege and advantage. These are myths, but need to be countered.

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY IS ALL ABOUT QUOTAS	EMPLOYMENT EQUITY MEANS HIRING UNQUALIFIED PEOPLE
FACT - Employment Equity does not involve setting hiring “quotas” which are fixed numerical requirements for hiring. It requires employers to analyze their work-force, and to set their own goals based on composition of the labour force as a whole. Organizations must put in place measures that will allow them to make progress on those goals over time. EE requires employers to take other steps to achieve a more equal workplace, including making their policies and practices more inclusive and removing discriminatory barriers.	FACT - Employment Equity does not impact on the employer’s ability to set qualifications for a job and require that all applicants meet those qualifications. The federal <i>Employment Equity Act</i> and the <i>Public Service Employment Act</i> both reflect this reality and recognize that qualifications and merit are concepts that incorporate employment equity rather than conflict with it.
EMPLOYMENT EQUITY IS “REVERSE DISCRIMINATION”	BECAUSE OF EMPLOYMENT EQUITY, THERE ARE NO MORE JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR WHITE APPLICANTS
FACT - The purpose of Employment Equity is to remove longstanding barriers to employment and career advancement for historically disadvantaged groups—Aboriginal peoples, women, people with disabilities, and visible minorities. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms and human rights laws recognize employment equity measures are necessary to create a more just society. Therefore, special measures are applied to equalize opportunities in the workplace, not to discriminate against one group or another. It is about “rebalancing the scales” and providing opportunities for qualified candidates who are often overlooked due to systemic barriers and implicit biases.	FACT - Employment Equity is about ensuring opportunities for all, not taking away opportunities from anyone. It’s to ensure that jobs are allocated fairly and equitably. Employment Equity measures do not mean that all new jobs are designed for equity group members – it simply means that they must have access to their fair share of job opportunities, and reducing the favouritism towards white male applicants.
EMPLOYMENT EQUITY WILL OCCUR NATURALLY, THERE IS NO REQUIREMENT FOR GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION.	
FACT - 25 years after Employment Equity was initiated, we know that discrimination exists and that barriers continue for women, Indigenous (Aboriginal) peoples, visible minorities and persons with disabilities (the four groups identified in the Act), as well as for other Racialized groups, such as LGBTQ2+ employees. These barriers will not disappear without intervention, because they have not done so.	

Visit the Department of National Defence [Anti-Racism Toolkit](#) on [canada.ca](#) for more information and resources.