



Canada Social Report

Federal Policy Monitor

March 2013



CANADA SOCIAL REPORT



The [Caledon Institute of Social Policy](#) regularly scans for the release of federal government policies and programs that impact areas of interest, including income security, disabilities, health, housing, poverty reduction, recreation, seniors and youth.

Monitors can be searched on the Canada Social Report website by date and category.

ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

Launch of the [Indspire Institute](#). An on-line learning hub, it will house existing programs for Aboriginal youth and will introduce new programs focused on Indigenous success in Kindergarten to Grade 12.
<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1363359136989/1363359189833>

The Government of Canada, Government of Yukon, Yukon First Nations and the Council of Yukon First Nations have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to support the educational success of First Nation students in the territory. The MOU is a commitment by the parties to establish a partnership to improve First Nation student achievement in the Yukon and to develop an action plan which includes performance indicators that address common educational priorities. The parties agree to develop a long-term strategic action plan for a life-long learning process for First Nation students in the Territory, with a priority on the K-12 system. The plan also recognizes all aspects of life-long learning including early childhood development, post-secondary, adult education, skills development and labour market needs.

<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1363640351764/1363640780559>

Opening of new Stoney Nakoda Elementary School. The Stoney Tribe, located west of Calgary, consists of three First Nations: Bearspaw, Chiniki and Wesley.

<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1363793506737/1363793556753>

BUDGET

Federal Budget releases highlight three initiatives:

- the Canada Job Grant: could provide \$15,000 or more per person to ensure Canadians are getting the skills employers are seeking. Up to \$5,000 will be provided by the federal government, and that amount will be matched by the province/territory and the employer.
- a new Building Canada plan: the plan provides more than \$53 billion in investments for provincial/territorial and municipal infrastructure, including \$47 billion in new funding over 10 years, starting in 2014-15. Funding will be delivered through three key funds:
 - the Community Improvement Fund – \$32 billion to municipalities for projects such as roads, public transit and recreational facilities, and other community infrastructure
 - the new Building Canada Fund – \$14 billion to support major economic projects of national, regional and local significance across the country
 - the renewed P3 Canada Fund – \$1.25 billion for infrastructure projects through private-public partnerships.
- \$1.4 billion in tax relief for manufacturers and processors through a two-year extension of the temporary accelerated capital cost allowance for new investment in machinery and equipment, as well as:
 - \$1.4 billion in tax relief for manufacturers and processors through a two-year extension of the temporary accelerated capital cost allowance for new investment in machinery and equipment
 - \$225 million to expand and extend the temporary Hiring Credit for Small Business for one year
 - \$110 million over five years to increase support for small business owners, farmers and fishermen by increasing the



Lifetime Capital Gains Exemption to \$800,000 in 2014 and indexing the new limit to inflation
 - \$60 million over five years to help outstanding and high-potential incubator and accelerator organizations expand their services to entrepreneurs to encourage new business development.

Additional details at: <http://www.fin.gc.ca/n13/13-040-eng.asp>

Caledon Institute Budget response: *The Skilled Budget*
<http://www.caledoninst.org/Publications/PDF/1007ENG.pdf>

DISABILITY

Budget 2013 proposes specific measures to help people with disabilities in the workforce by:

- extending the Labour Market Agreements for Persons with Disabilities for one year and introducing a new generation of Agreements in 2014
- providing ongoing funding of \$40 million per year starting in 2015-16 for the Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities
- supporting the Enabling Accessibility Fund at a level of \$15 million per year to improve physical accessibility for people with disabilities
- announcing additional funding of \$7 million for the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, some of which will support research related to the labour market participation of persons with disabilities.

[Link](#)

EMPLOYMENT

Announcement of Skills Link funding to help youth overcome barriers to employment.

<http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=730269>

EDUCATION

Royal Assent of Bill C-28, the *Financial Literacy Leader Act*. The Act provides for the appointment of a Financial Literacy Leader within the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada. The Leader's mandate will be to collaborate and coordinate activities with stakeholders to contribute to and support initiatives that strengthen the financial literacy of Canadians.

<http://www.fin.gc.ca/n13/13-046-eng.asp>

GOVERNANCE

Negotiators have reached consensus on the terms for the devolution of lands and resource management from the Government of Canada to the Government of the Northwest Territories. The territorial government will become responsible for the management of onshore lands and the issuance of rights and interests with respect to onshore minerals and oil and gas. The agreement will also give it the power to collect and share in resource revenues generated in the Territory.

[Link](#)

Passage of Bill C-27, the *First Nations Financial Transparency Act*. The Act strengthens transparency and accountability by requiring First Nations to publish the annual audited consolidated financial statements they already prepare as well as a schedule of chiefs and councillors' salaries and expenses. The accounting standards are in line with other levels of government in Canada.

<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1364402651136/1364402733673>

HEALTH

The federal government announced financial support of the Canadian Cardiovascular Harmonized National Guidelines Endeavour (C-CHANGE), a two-phase project. In phase one, eight guideline organizations joined in 2011 to produce Canada's first harmonized cardiovascular disease (CVD) prevention and management guidelines for use in primary care. Phase two is a partnership of the federal government and the private and not-for-profit sectors. Together they will implement C-CHANGE as a nationally coordinated, harmonized and integrated strategy for the prevention and treatment of CVD by addressing risks such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity and diabetes.

http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fo-fc/mspphl-pppmvs_s11-eng.php

Seventeen projects, each valued in the range of \$3 million to \$13 million, have received funding as part of a genomics and personalized health competition, a Genome Canada-Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) partnership. The projects will focus on the application of genomics to tailor patient treatments and therapies in fields as diverse as epilepsy, autism, HIV/AIDS, cancer, cardiovascular disease, rare neurological diseases, and stroke.

<http://news.gc.ca/web/article-eng.do?mthd=tp&crtr.page=2&nid=728619&crtr.tp1D=1>

HOMELESSNESS

\$70,000 from the Homelessness Partnering Strategy will enable the Lawson Health Research Institute to review the housing and health outcomes of services provided under the London, Ontario Community Addiction Response Strategy (CAREs). CAREs was designed to combat homelessness through partnerships among local businesses, service providers and all orders of government. The results will be compiled in a final report that will be useful for other communities as they develop strategies to tackle homelessness.

<http://news.gc.ca/web/article-eng.do?mthd=tp&crtr.page=3&nid=726289&crtr.tp1D=1>

Homeward Trust Edmonton will distribute Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) funding of \$19.4 million to local organizations. The funds will help provide stable and affordable housing, as well as support services, to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Edmonton, including Aboriginal people. \$16.7 million of the total is from



HPS Designated Communities funding, and \$2.7 million is from HPS Aboriginal Homelessness funding.

[Link](#)

The Prince Rupert Aboriginal Community Services Society is distributing \$120,000 of Homelessness Partnering Strategy funding to local organizations. The funding will support projects in that are focused on capital investments, client services, partnership development and data management.

[Link](#)

\$461,000 from the Homelessness Partnering Strategy to the Council of Yukon First Nations. The Council will distribute the funds to local organizations for the development of housing and support services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Yukon.

[Link](#)

\$118,000 from the Homelessness Partnering Strategy to the Nelson CARES Society in Nelson, BC. The society will distribute funding to local organizations to support projects focused on client services, partnership development and data management. They will also include projects that meet Aboriginal needs.

[Link](#)

HOUSING

Mathieu Laberge, Deputy Chief Economist at CMHC, reports that the trend in total housing starts continued to moderate in February. Moderation in economic fundamentals in the second half of 2012 led to more modest housing demand.

<http://www.schl.ca/en/corp/hero/here/2013/2013-03-08-0816.cfm>

INCOME SECURITY

The Auditor General of Canada reports that while the Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment ensures that residents have reasonable access to income security, it does not follow applicable requirements when delivering these programs. It does not make full use of existing monitoring and auditing provisions to ensure that programs are delivered in a consistent manner by regional offices and community service centres across the Northwest Territories. Better training and support for client service officers are needed to ensure that they follow procedures and deliver programs according to requirements. The audit also found that the Department does not sufficiently use the data it collects on its income security programs to analyze program performance and adjust programming. The Report "Income Security Programs in the Northwest Territories—Department of Education, Culture and Employment" is available on the Office of the Auditor General of Canada Web site.

http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/mr_20130307_e_37891.html

As of March 24, 2013, parents who fall ill or become injured while receiving parental benefits may be eligible for EI sickness benefits with the new provisions under the Employment Insurance Act. Originally announced as part of the Helping Families in Need Act, this new measure could benefit up to 6,000 individuals per year.

[Link](#)

Release of *The Fiscal Monitor, January 2013*. Highlights:

- January 2013: Budgetary deficit of \$0.4 billion - There was a budgetary deficit of \$0.4 billion in January 2013, compared to a surplus of \$1.9 billion in January 2012. Revenues decreased by \$0.8 billion, or 3.6 percent, reflecting decreases in income tax revenues and excise taxes and duties. Program expenses increased by \$1.7 billion, or 8.9 percent, largely reflecting an increase in major transfers to other levels of government. Public debt charges decreased by \$0.2 billion, or 9.8 percent.
- April 2012 to January 2013: Budgetary deficit of \$13.4 billion - For the first 10 months of the 2012-13 fiscal year, the budgetary deficit stood at \$13.4 billion, compared to a deficit of \$14.1 billion reported in the same period of 2011-12. Revenues were up \$4.6 billion, or 2.3 percent, reflecting higher income tax revenues, excise taxes and duties, and Employment Insurance (EI) premium revenues. Program expenses were up \$5.5 billion, or 2.9 percent, reflecting increases in major transfers to persons and other levels of government and direct program expenses. Public debt charges were down \$1.6 billion, or 6.2 percent.

<http://www.fin.gc.ca/fiscmon-revfin/2013-01-eng.asp>

RECREATION

\$233,363 from the federal Healthy Living Fund to Recreation New Brunswick. In addition to training after school hours (ASH) leaders, the New Brunswick After-School Hours Initiative: NB PLAYS! will develop an ASH toolkit, deliver a variety of workshops, establish partnerships and an ASH provincial working group to support and coordinate the ASH initiative across the province, especially in Aboriginal and low-income communities.

http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/fs-fr/2013_0314f-eng.php

SENIORS

The federal New Horizons for Seniors Program will provide \$180,000 to the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia to develop educational resources that will help health care professionals better understand elder abuse, including financial fraud. Through on-line educational tools or workshops, health care providers in Nova Scotia will learn how to identify possible cases of elder abuse, as well as how to help seniors and their families. The resources will be shared with other organizations across Canada.

[Link](#)