



Canada Social Report

# Federal Policy Monitor

January 2014



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

The government is offering a one-time Personal Credit for educational programs and services to those who have received a Common Experience Payment under the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. Personal Credits are available for a range of educational programs and services, including those provided by universities, colleges, trade or training schools, Indigenous institutions of higher learning, or those related to literacy.

<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1390242652625/1390242951060>

British Columbia Supreme Court has approved, on consent of the parties to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, Canada's request that the operating period of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission be extended for a period of one year ending June 30, 2015. This additional year will allow the Commission sufficient time to fulfill its mandate, including writing its final report and receiving documents held at Library and Archives Canada.

<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1391096362751/1391096496572>

The federal government is investing in skills training for nearly 4,000 First Nations youth (ages 18 to 24) across Canada as part of the first set of proposals approved under the improved on-reserve Income Assistance Program. The initiative will provide personalized supports to First Nations youth from 70 communities across the country as they secure the tools needed to find meaningful employment and reduce their reliance on income assistance.

<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1391175217027/1391175302709>

#### DISABILITY

\$1.1 million in Saint Mary's University's Sobey School Business Development Centre, for a project that will give Canadians with disabilities in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and PEI the opportunity to work in local businesses applying their skills in jobs that match their education.

[Link](#)

#### EMPLOYMENT

Release of Statistics Canada's research paper *Wages, Youth Employment, and School Enrollment: Recent Evidence from Increases in World Oil Prices*. The study uses data from the Labour Force Survey and examines how employment rates and school enrollment rates of young men responded to the sharp growth in youth wages that was observed during the 2001-08 expansionary period.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/140113/dq140113-eng.pdf>

Announcement of an initiative to harmonize apprenticeship systems across the Atlantic region. The project will help standardize training, certification and standards, leading to increased availability of training, higher apprenticeship completion rates and increased labour mobility for apprentices across Atlantic Canada. Canada currently has 13 different



apprenticeship systems throughout the country with different requirements for training, certification and standards.

[Link](#)

## GOVERNANCE

Release of the Parliamentary Budget Officer's (PBO) *Expenditure Monitor: 2013-14 Q2*, a detailed review of federal program spending for the first six months of the 2013-14 fiscal year. Key points include:

i) Overall spending increased \$2.2 billion to \$124.6 billion, compared to the previous period in 2012-13 (a 1.8 percent increase). These results are consistent with the spending growth forecast in the November 2013 Update of Economic and Fiscal Projections. Direct program spending also grew, by \$500 million – a year-over-year increase of 1.2 percent.

ii) The PBO has not yet received complete service level data from federal departments and agencies, which is necessary to assess the fiscal sustainability of the Budget 2012 cuts. Almost 40 percent of programs' performance in 2012-13 cannot be evaluated due to in-year changes to targets, incomplete data or insufficient evidence.

iii) Within individual programs, the most notable increase pertains to the Public Safety Canada's Emergency Preparedness program activity, which increased spending from \$60 million to \$230 million in the first six months of 2013-14 (280 percent). This growth reflects contributions toward the \$4.1 billion federal liability associated with major flooding and rainstorm events in 2011 through 2013.

[http://www.pbo-dpb.gc.ca/files/files/Expenditure\\_Monitor\\_2013\\_14Q2\\_EN.pdf](http://www.pbo-dpb.gc.ca/files/files/Expenditure_Monitor_2013_14Q2_EN.pdf)

## HEALTH

Launch of the Government of Canada's anti-cyberbullying public awareness campaign, Stop Hating Online. The national campaign was designed to raise awareness among Canadians of the impact of cyberbullying and detail when this behaviour amounts to criminal activity.

<http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?mthd=tp&ctr.page=2&nid=808359&ctr.tp1D=1>

## HOMELESSNESS

The Canadian Mental Health Association's House of Hope project is receiving more than \$1 million in federal funding. The funding is delivered through the Homelessness Partnering Strategy, which assists Canadians facing homelessness, allowing them to focus on improving their health, social and employment situations. This project will help build eight transitional housing units and one storage space in Portage la Prairie as well as improve existing housing.

<http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?mthd=tp&ctr.page=2&nid=810099&ctr.tp1D=1>

## INCOME SECURITY

According to Statistics Canada's report on Employment Insurance (EI), there were 512,300 Canadians receiving regular EI benefits in November, virtually unchanged from October. The number of beneficiaries has been relatively stable since May 2013. Provincially, PEI, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick saw more individuals receiving regular EI benefits in November compared with October; there was little change in the other provinces. The change in the number of regular EI beneficiaries reflects various factors, including people becoming beneficiaries, people going back to work, and people who no longer receive regular benefits.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/140123/dq140123-eng.pdf>

## WOMEN

\$2.8 million in Status of Women Canada funding to support 14 Ontario-based projects to advance women in non-traditional occupations, increase economic options for women and improve prosperity for immigrant women.

[Link](#)

Justice Canada will spend \$361,200 over three years to support the Girls Action Foundation's project, "Building Bridges for Female Youth: National partnership project to address intimate partner violence and increase access to justice among marginalized young women." This pan-Canadian initiative is designed to improve access to justice for marginalized young women and girls who are victims of partner violence or at risk of becoming victims. It will offer women and girls educational workshops on the justice system and their legal rights, along with other tools to assist them when experiencing dating violence. The project focuses on peers and community organizations as sources of assistance that are simple for young women to access, establishing a sense of safety and trust.

[Link](#)

## YOUTH

\$5,207,212 in federal funding over five years for a new crime prevention program WrapED aimed at helping at-risk youth in Edmonton. Run by REACH Edmonton Council for Safe Communities, WrapED will provide comprehensive support and engagement to Aboriginal and refugee youth ages 12 to 17 who are most at risk of involvement with gangs. By promoting community involvement, education, and counselling, the project will help youth avoid gang crime-related activities, disengage from gangs, and increase cultural and community connections.

[Link](#)