



Canada Social Report

Federal Policy Monitor

May 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.

EMPLOYMENT

\$1.1 million to fund the Science Horizons Youth Internship Program. Organizations that have been awarded Science Horizons funding will offer post-secondary graduates hands-on experience working full-time on environmental projects in internships lasting a minimum of six months. This program supports the key priorities of the National Conservation Plan.

<http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?mthd=tp&crtr.page=5&nid=849739&crtr.tp1D=1>

Statistics Canada reports that in March, 509,800 people received regular Employment Insurance (EI) benefits, little changed from February. The number of beneficiaries has been relatively stable since May 2013, following a long-term downward trend that began in the summer of 2009. The number of people receiving benefits in March was down in Prince Edward Island, British Columbia, New Brunswick and Saskatchewan, while it increased in Quebec. There was little change in the other provinces.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/140522/dq140522-eng.pdf>

GOVERNANCE

The Auditor General's Spring 2014 report examines a number of different areas, including public sector pension plans and the expansion of federal correctional facilities, which illustrate how important it is for government to consider both the long and short term perspectives in its planning.

http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/mr_20140506_e_39384.html
Report link: http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl_oag-_201405_e_39319.html

Release of *The Fiscal Monitor* for March 2014. There was a budgetary deficit of \$6.7 billion in March 2014, compared to a deficit of \$8.0 billion in March 2013. Revenues increased by \$2.4 billion, or 10.7 percent, reflecting increases in most revenue streams. Program expenses increased by \$1.1 billion, or 3.9 percent, while public debt charges decreased by \$1 million.

<http://www.fin.gc.ca/fiscmon-revfin/pdf/2014-03-eng.pdf>

The Parliamentary Budget Office releases a paper entitled *Demystifying the Mandate of the Parliamentary Budget Officer*.

[Link](#)

HEALTH

Launch of a comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan for federal offenders that addresses their serious mental health needs. The Action Plan for federal offenders contains five pillars which are: timely assessment, effective management, sound intervention, ongoing training, and robust governance and oversight. As a key component of the intervention pillar, an agreement in principle was announced between the federal government and the Royal Ottawa Health Care Group for a pilot



project that would expand the government's capacity to meet the needs of offenders with the most complex mental health needs. As part of the pilot project, The Royal's Brockville Mental Health Centre in Ontario will provide bed space to treat women offenders with serious mental health needs. This provincial mental health centre, along with L'*Institut Philippe Pinel* in Montreal and the East Coast Forensic Hospital in Dartmouth are part of an effort to enhance the Correctional Service of Canada's capacity to effectively treat offenders with serious mental health needs through agreements with provincial healthcare systems.

[Link](#)

\$16.1 million in federal funding over three years will support 34 projects across the country aimed at preventing and reducing illicit and prescription drug abuse among youth ages 10 to 24.

<http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?mthd=index&crtr.page=1&nid=850779>

Investment of \$112.9 million for 14 projects across the country that will improve access to health services for English-speaking communities in Quebec and French-speaking communities outside of Quebec. The projects will support the training and integration of more bilingual health care professionals in national language minority communities; strengthen health networks across the country; and implement new projects to expand access to health services in the minority national language. These services are being funded under the Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013-2018: Education, Immigration, Communities.

[Link](#)

INCOME SECURITY

Voluntary commitments have been secured from Canada's eight largest banks to enhance low-cost bank accounts and offer no-cost accounts with the same features as low-cost accounts to a wider range of eligible consumers. No-cost accounts will be available to youth, students, seniors qualifying for the Guaranteed Income Supplement, and Registered Disability Savings Plan beneficiaries. The voluntary guidelines take effect January 15, 2015.

<http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?mthd=tp&crtr.page=1&nid=851529&crtr.tp1D=1>

Parliamentary Budget Office releases *Revenue and Distribution Analysis of Federal Tax Changes: 2005-2013*.

http://www.pbo-dpb.gc.ca/files/files/Tax_Report_Presentation_EN.pdf

SENIORS

The federal government signed an administrative memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the President of the China National Committee on Ageing to share information on seniors' issues. The MOU will allow both countries to share information on research and best practices.

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