



Canada Social Report

Federal Policy Monitor

December 2015



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.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Parliamentary Budget Officer released an assessment of the government's fiscal outlook. On balance, the outlooks for the budgetary balance between 2015-16 and 2018-19 are similar. Finance Canada projects budget deficits averaging \$2.7 billion a year while PBO projects budget deficits averaging \$2.9 billion.

However, for the fiscal years 2019-20 and 2020-21, the government projects budget surpluses of \$1.7 billion and \$6.6 billion, respectively, while PBO projects deficits of \$4.6 billion and \$4.2 billion, respectively. Relative to gross domestic product (GDP), the difference in outlooks amounts to 0.3 percentage points in 2019-20 and 0.4 percentage points in 2020-21.

The difference in budgetary balance projections over 2017-18 to 2020-21 stems from the government's more optimistic outlook for revenues from personal and corporate income taxes, as well as the Goods and Services Tax.

http://www.pbo-dpb.gc.ca/en/blog/news/EFOU_Dec2015

COMMUNITIES

In 2013, the total amount of donations that Canadians made to charitable and non-profit organizations was \$12.8 billion, an increase of 23 percent over 2004. Donations by primary donors – the 10 percent of individuals who donate the most money in a given year – represented 66 percent of total donations in 2013. The contribution of these primary donors was up, and accounted for most of the increase in the total amount of donations made from 2004 to 2013. During this period, the total donations made by primary donors rose 30 percent, from \$6.4 billion to \$8.4 billion. By contrast, the contribution of other donors increased 11 percent, from \$3.9 billion in 2004 to \$4.4 billion in 2013. In 2013, primary donors gave \$1,150 or more during the year.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/151216/dq151216b-eng.htm>

DEMOGRAPHICS

Statistics Canada released population estimates for the third quarter of 2015. Canada's population was estimated at 35,985,800 on October 1, 2015, up 134,000 from July 1, 2015. The country's population growth rate was 0.4 percent in the third quarter, similar to the rate observed for that quarter in 2014. International immigration is the main source of population growth. By jurisdiction, population growth declined in Yukon (from +0.4 percent to -0.4 percent), and slowed in Nunavut (from +0.5 percent to +0.3 percent) and Alberta (from +0.6 percent to +0.5 percent).

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/151216/dq151216e-eng.htm>

DISABILITY

Data from the *2012 Canadian Survey on Disability* revealed that about 3.8 million Canadians ages 15 years and older, or 13.7 percent of the population, reported having a disability and 160,500 (0.6 percent of Canadian adults) were identified as having a developmental disability. The most prevalent underlying developmental conditions reported on the



survey were autism, cerebral palsy and Down syndrome. The occurrence of developmental disability was highest among those between the ages of 15 and 24 at 1.2 percent and decreased with age to 0.4 percent among those 65 and older. Developmental disabilities frequently co-occurred with other types of disabilities. More than 9 in 10 persons with developmental disabilities also reported at least one other type of disability.

Adults with developmental disabilities had overall lower levels of educational attainment than persons without disabilities. The employment rate of working age adults ages 15 to 64 with developmental disabilities was 22.3 percent, less than one-third of the rate for people without disabilities (73.6 percent), and the lowest employment rate of any disability type. Even when employed, this group had a lower median employment income compared with those who did not report any disability. Canadians with developmental disabilities were more likely than those without any disability to rely on government transfers as their major source of income (71.9 percent versus 18.7 percent).

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/151203/dq151203b-eng.htm>

Statistics Canada reported that, in 2012, 10.1 percent of Canadians ages 15 to 64 – 2,338,200 individuals – reported a difficulty or impairment because of a long-term condition or health problem that limited their daily activities. Of the 2,338,200 working age people with disabilities in Canada, 1,057,100 were employed (45.2 percent), 125,700 were unemployed (5.4 percent) and 1,155,500 were not in the labour force (49.4 percent).

Employment rates differed depending on type of disability. People with developmental, cognitive and mental health-related disabilities face greater employment challenges than people with sensory or physical disabilities.

Of the 1,155,500 working-age people with disabilities who were not in the labour force, those who stated they would look for work in the next year, and those who had previously been employed or were students in 2012 were considered as potential workers. Thus, the potential worker population with disabilities was estimated at 411,600, which included unemployed (125,700), future job seekers (175,200) and other potential workers with disabilities (110,800).

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/151203/dq151203a-eng.htm>

Data from the *2012 Canadian Survey on Disability* on the income characteristics of Canadians with disabilities are now available in the Canadian Socioeconomic Information Management System (CANSIM).

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/151203/dq151203c-eng.htm>

According to a report released by the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC), between 2009 and 2013, 41,728 discrimination complaints were filed with human rights commissions and tribunals across Canada.

Of those, 49 percent (20,615 complaints) were filed on the grounds of disability.

The data, compiled nationally for the first time, confirm a trend observed at the federal level for several years: Disability-related complaints consistently represent a high proportion of discrimination claims. Fully inclusive workplaces and accessible services are not yet a reality for persons with disabilities in Canada.

These numbers do not provide a full picture. According to stakeholders, several barriers prevent persons with disabilities from bringing forward a complaint. Many do not have the resources or support to do so, as is often the case with disadvantaged groups in Canada. The CHRC is looking at how it can adapt services to improve access to human rights justice for persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups.

[Link](#)

EMPLOYMENT

In October, 539,700 people received regular Employment Insurance (EI) benefits, down slightly from September (-3,300 or -0.6 percent). Provincially, there were fewer EI beneficiaries in Ontario (-1.8 percent), Québec (-1.5 percent), Nova Scotia (-1.5 percent) and New Brunswick (-1.2 percent). In Alberta, the number of people receiving EI benefits continued to increase, up 3.1 percent in October. There was little change in the remaining provinces. On a year-over-year basis, the total number of EI beneficiaries was up 40,900 or 8.2 percent.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/151217/dq151217a-eng.htm>

Statistics Canada reported that job vacancy data from the *Job Vacancy and Wage Survey (JVWS)* for the first and second quarters are now available in CANSIM. The JVWS provides the number of job vacancies, by occupation, in an economic region on a quarterly basis. Additional information is also presented by occupation, such as the proportion of job vacancies in full- and part-time positions, the distribution of vacancies by level of education and experience, the proportion of vacancies per occupation that are difficult to fill and the average pay or hourly wage for new vacancies.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/151221/dq151221d-eng.htm>

INCOME SECURITY

Employment and Social Development Canada announced the benefit amounts for the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Old Age Security (OAS) effective January 1, 2016. CPP benefits will increase by 1.2 percent for those already receiving CPP benefits. For 2016, the maximum CPP retirement benefit for new recipients age 65 will be \$1,092.50 per month, an increase of \$330 for the year compared to the 2015 maximum CPP retirement benefit. The new CPP rates will be in effect until December 31, 2016. CPP benefits are revised once a year, in January, based on changes over the 12-month period (November 2014 to Octo



ber 2015) in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which is the cost-of-living measure used by Statistics Canada.

OAS benefits, which consist of the basic OAS pension, the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) and the Allowance, will increase by 0.1 percent for the first quarter of 2016 (January to March). As of January 1, 2016, the basic OAS pension will increase from \$569.95 to \$570.52 per month. OAS benefits are also based on the CPI, but are reviewed quarterly (in January, April, July and October) and revised as required to reflect increases in the cost of living as measured by the CPI. Although OAS and CPP benefits are not indexed at the same time, they are both adjusted with the cost of living over a given year.

[Link](#)

The federal government will reduce the 22 percent personal income tax rate to 20.5 percent. Single individuals who benefit will see an average tax reduction of \$330 every year, and couples who benefit will see an average tax reduction of \$540 every year. To help pay for this middle class tax cut, the motion includes provisions to create a new top personal income tax rate of 33 percent for individual taxable incomes in excess of \$200,000. The motion also contains provisions to return the Tax-Free Savings Account annual contribution limit to \$5,500 from \$10,000. The proposed tax changes would take effect on January 1, 2016, and for subsequent taxation years.

The government also announced plans to introduce proposals in the Budget to create a new Canada Child Benefit. Payments under the new Canada Child Benefit would begin in July 2016. The government also intends to introduce legislative amendments to repeal income splitting for families with children (not pension income splitting) for the 2016 and subsequent taxation years.

<http://www.fin.gc.ca/n15/15-086-eng.asp>

The *Canadian Income Survey* reports that Alberta, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland and Labrador, all resource-rich provinces, saw their median family after-tax incomes grow the most from 2000 to 2013. Ontario was the lone province to experience median family income growth substantially lower than the national average. During the post-2000 period, median after-tax incomes rose for economic families and persons not in an economic family, with the growth being shared by those with lower and higher incomes.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/151217/dq151217c-eng.htm>

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The federal government announced the launch of a national inquiry to address the high number of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

<http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=1023999&tp=1>

The federal government announced that it will cease all discretionary compliance measures related to the *First Nations Financial Transparency Act* and will reinstate funding withheld from First Nations under these measures. It will also suspend any court actions against First Nations who have not complied with the Act. In partnership and consultation with First Nations, Inuit and the Métis Nation, the government will conduct a review of the laws to ensure that the Crown is fully executing its obligations in accordance with its constitutional and international obligations.

<http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=1024739&tp=980>

Statistics Canada announced the release of *Aboriginal Statistics at a Glance*. The report is a compilation of data on First Nations, Métis and Inuit populations covering a variety of topics. Each subject is illustrated with a chart presenting key indicators, a plain language definition of the indicator and links to related data tables and published articles. There are two editions of *Aboriginal Statistics at a Glance*. The first edition was released on June 21, 2010. The second edition, released today, includes updated data on the key indicators.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/151224/dq151224b-eng.htm>

MENTAL HEALTH

The government announced the release of a report by the Mental Health Joint Task Force. This body was established in March 2015 with membership from the Government of Canada and the Public Service Alliance of Canada to address mental health issues in the workplace. Aligning with the National Standard on Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace, the Task Force report provides recommendations on renewed leadership, engagement and education on the issue of mental health. It also considers training and workplace practices, communication and promotion, and accountability.

<http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?mthd=tp&crtr:page=2&nid=1023009&crtr:tp1D=1>

Statistics Canada announced the release of the December 2015 issue of *Megatrends*. The periodical examines the movement of women into the workplace and its effect on the composition of Canada's labour market.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/151217/dq151217d-eng.htm>