



Canada Social Report

Federal Policy Monitor

September 2016



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.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Statistics Canada reported that, according to preliminary estimates, Canada's population was 36,286,425 on July 1, 2016, an increase of 437,815 or 1.2 percent during 2015-16. In absolute numbers, such an increase has not been recorded since 1988-89 (+485,034). This acceleration in population growth was attributable mainly to the record number of immigrants (320,932).

[Link](#)

DISABILITY

The federal government has invited national not-for-profit organizations with a focus on disability to apply for funding through the 2016 Social Development Partnership Program – Disability Component call for proposals. Eligible national disability organizations are invited to submit funding proposals for projects that identify, develop and test promising practices and tools promoting the social inclusion of people with disabilities.

[Link](#)

EDUCATION

Canadian full-time students in undergraduate programs paid, on average, \$6,373 in tuition fees for the 2016-17 academic year, 2.8 percent higher than the 2015-16 average (\$6,201). This increase was smaller than the 3.2 percent rise in tuition fees recorded in 2015-16. Undergraduates in NL (\$2,759) and Québec (\$2,851) continued to pay the lowest average tuition fees in Canada. Undergraduate students in Ontario (\$8,114) paid the highest average tuition fees in 2016-17, followed by undergraduates in Nova Scotia (\$7,218) and Saskatchewan (\$7,177).

[Link](#)

EMPLOYMENT

Regular Employment Insurance (EI) beneficiaries in Canada totalled 575,200 in July, up 4.4 percent from the previous month. This unusual month-to-month increase can be explained by EI legislative changes that came into effect in July 2016. While some of these changes affect all regions across Canada, eligible claimants located in 15 EI regions that posted significant increases in unemployment received additional weeks of EI regular benefits.

[Link](#)

FAMILIES

The September issue of Statistics Canada's *Canadian Megatrends* reported that, while the vast majority of stay-at-home parents in Canada are women, increasingly more Canadian fathers are stay-at-home parents. In 1976, there were 1.5 million families with a stay-at-home parent. The father was the stay-at-home parent in 1 in 70 of these families. By 2015, the number of families with a stay-at-home parent had declined to 0.5 million, and 1 in 10 of these families had a stay-at-home father. In 2015, stay-at-home fathers accounted for 18 percent of stay-at-home parents in the Atlantic provinces – the highest proportion of all



regions. The lowest proportion was in Alberta (6 percent). [Link](#)

GOVERNANCE

Having announced in January the winding down of the political activities audit program, the government has begun a process to engage the charitable sector in clarifying the rules governing political activities.

[Link](#)

The Parliamentary Budget Officer released *Expenditure Monitor 2016-17 Q1*, which found that government expenditures for the first three months of 2015-16 were \$62.9 billion, an increase of 5.7 percent over the same period last year (\$59.5 billion). The additional spending is focused on Direct Program Spending, almost entirely as higher grants and contributions to outside entities.

[Link](#)

HEALTH

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) hosted a Canadian Pain Research Summit where researchers, clinicians, partners, charities, patients and policymakers will create a national agenda to help CIHR Institutes develop new funding opportunities for pain research. Through Canada's Strategy for Patient Oriented Research, CIHR and its partners have also created a Chronic Pain Network that specializes in directing new research, training researchers and clinicians, increasing access to care for chronic pain sufferers, and speeding up the translation of the most recent research discoveries into care of patients.

[Link](#)

HOMELESSNESS

The federal government announced two calls for proposals under the Innovative Solutions to Homelessness funding stream of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS). Small- and large-scale projects will focus on addressing the needs of Indigenous Canadians, youth, women fleeing violence and veterans.

[Link](#)

INCOME SECURITY

The Parliamentary Budget Officer released *Fiscal Analysis of Children's Benefits*.

[Link](#)

Canada's governments have reached an historic agreement to strengthen the Canada Pension Plan (CPP). The agreement will increase the share of annual earnings that Canadians will get in retirement from one-quarter to one-third. This means individuals making \$50,000 a year over their working life will receive about \$16,000 per year in retirement instead of today's \$12,000. It will also increase the point at which this new one-third replacement rate will reach a maximum of 14 percent, which is projected to be equal to \$82,700 in 2025. Canadians making \$80,000

a year over their working life will get a third of that per year in retirement from the CPP. [Link](#)

The government tabled the *27th Actuarial Report on the Canada Pension Plan*. It concludes that the existing CPP is on a sustainable financial footing at its current contribution rate of 9.9 percent for at least the next 75 years. CPP legislation requires that an actuarial report be prepared every three years to support federal and provincial finance ministers, as joint stewards of the CPP, in conducting financial state reviews of the Plan.

[Link](#)

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The Governments of Canada and Ontario and the Chapeau Cree First Nation settled one of the first Treaty Land Entitlement Claims in Ontario. The settlement, which is the result of an unfulfilled Treaty 9 entitlement, includes \$21.5 million in financial compensation from Canada and about 4,000 square hectares of provincial Crown land from Ontario. Ontario is also contributing \$350,000 in financial compensation. Under the settlement, the Chapeau Cree First Nation can apply to the Government of Canada to have the lands added to its reserve in northern Ontario. The land and financial compensation will meet current and future social and economic needs of the community.

[Link](#)

LABOUR MARKET

Statistics Canada reported that, following a decline in July, employment edged up in August (+26,000 or +0.1 percent). The unemployment rate rose 0.1 percentage points to 7.0 percent, as more people participated in the labour market. Compared with 12 months earlier, employment increased by 77,000 (+0.4 percent), with all of the gains in part-time work. Over the same period, the total number of hours worked fell slightly (-0.4 percent).

[Link](#)

A Statistics Canada study of overqualification, skills and job satisfaction reported that, in 2012, 12 percent of workers ages 25 to 64 who had a university degree reported that they were in a job requiring no more than a high school education (i.e., they were overqualified). Another 19 percent said that their job required a college education, and 69 percent said that their job required a university education.

Among overqualified university graduates, 47 percent had lower levels of literacy. This figure compared with 18 percent of university graduates who reported that their job required a university education. Lower levels of literacy indicate that individuals may be less able to integrate information across multiple sources, and may be only able to undertake tasks of limited complexity.

[Link](#)



MENTAL HEALTH

Veterans struggling with mental health issues will receive skills training and support to obtain and retain employment. The Mood Disorders Society of Canada will receive \$2.9 million in funding from the Government of Canada's Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities for its Transitions to Communities program. Veterans Affairs Canada will contribute in-kind support to the project in the form of promotion, expertise and advice.

The program will provide employment assistance services to vulnerable veterans who struggle with mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, or operational stress injuries (e.g., post-traumatic stress disorder). This initiative will complement existing programs that Veterans Affairs Canada offers to Veterans to assist in the transition to civilian life and employment.

[Link](#)

POVERTY REDUCTION

The federal government announced the Tackling Poverty Together Project, which will inform the development of new Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy. Case studies in Saint John, Trois-Rivières, Toronto, Winnipeg, Yellowknife and Tisdale will provide a regional perspective for the work.

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