



Canada Social Report

# Federal Policy Monitor

January 2017



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.

#### DISABILITY

The Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada announced \$94,994 in funding for Disability Alliance BC to help Canadians with disabilities who are victims of crime navigate the criminal justice system. Funds will be used to create resources, including videos and graphic-enhanced information help sheets, on how the justice system works. In order to reduce barriers to access, these resources will be developed using sign language, captioning and accessible language. Funding will also contribute to the development of access and inclusion webinars, and will improve partnerships between the disability community and victim service providers.

[Link](#)

#### EMPLOYMENT

Statistics Canada reported that employment rose by 54,000 (+0.3 percent) in December, the result of gains in full-time work. The unemployment rate increased 0.1 percentage points to 6.9 percent, as more people participated in the labour market.

In the 12 months to December, employment gains totalled 214,000 or 1.2 percent, compared with a growth rate of 0.9 percent observed over the same period one year earlier.

[Link](#)

#### GOVERNANCE

The Parliamentary Budget Officer released *Expenditure Monitor 2016-17 Q2*. It reported that government expenditures for the first half of 2016-17 were \$136.5 billion, an increase of 3.7 percent over the same period last year. This growth lags the overall increase in budgeted spending (5.6 percent), owing to delays in implementing the government's economic priorities, in particular new infrastructure investments.

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#### HEALTH

The federal government and the Governments of the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon agreed to new targeted federal funding over 10 years for investments in home care and mental health care. The federal government will provide the Territories with a total of \$36.1 million in new financial support for health care.

To support better home care, including addressing critical home care infrastructure requirements, it will allocate:

- \$7.4 million for the Northwest Territories
- \$6.1 million for Nunavut
- \$6.2 million for Yukon.



Over the same period, it will support mental health initiatives with new funding of:

- \$6.1 million for the Northwest Territories
- \$5.1 million for Nunavut
- \$5.2 million for Yukon.

[Link](#)

The federal government and the Government of Saskatchewan agreed to new targeted federal funding over 10 years for investments in home care and mental health care. Over the next 10 years, the federal government will provide Saskatchewan with an additional \$348.8 million:

\$190.3 million for better home care including addressing critical home care infrastructure requirements  
\$158.5 million in support of mental health initiatives.

[Link](#)

The federal government and the Government of Prince Edward Island agreed to new targeted federal funding over 10 years for investments in home care and mental health care. Over the next 10 years, the federal government will provide Prince Edward Island with an additional \$45.1 million:

- \$24.6 million for better home care including addressing critical home care infrastructure requirements
- \$20.5 million in support of mental health initiatives.

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### INCOME SECURITY

In November, 574,500 people received regular Employment Insurance (EI) benefits, essentially unchanged from the previous month. Provincially, from October to November 2016, there were more EI beneficiaries in Alberta (+3.4 percent), Prince Edward Island (+1.3 percent) and Manitoba (+1.2 percent), while there were fewer in Quebec (-1.8 percent) and Ontario (-1.3 percent). There was little change in the other provinces. In the 12 months to November, the number of regular EI beneficiaries in Canada increased by 26,700 (+4.9 percent).

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### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The federal government is investing \$24.7 million to identify and address climate change-related impacts on infrastructure in First Nations communities on reserve. The First Nation Adapt program was created in partnership with First Nations communities, Tribal Councils, Indigenous organizations, provincial governments and other federal departments.

This new program provides direct funding to First Nations communities that are experiencing repeated and severe climate impacts linked to coastal erosion and sea level rise, flooding, forest fires and winter road conditions. Funded projects help local communities to acquire technical expertise and information that will help them adapt to potential impacts of climate change on their infrastructure.

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### LABOUR MARKET

Canadian employers reported 402,000 job vacancies in the third quarter, and the national job vacancy rate was 2.5 percent. Both the overall number of job vacancies and the job vacancy rate in the third quarter were little changed compared with the third quarter of 2015. However, there were notable changes among the provinces and territories. Vacancies rose in Ontario, Québec and British Columbia and fell in Alberta.

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### MENTAL HEALTH/YOUTH

A new study based on results of the 2012 Canadian Community Health Survey – Mental Health shows that 11 percent of 15- to 24-year-olds met the criteria for depression in their lifetime, and 7 percent experienced depression in the previous year.

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