



Canada Social Report
Provincial/Territorial
Policy Monitor

November 2010



CANADA SOCIAL REPORT



The [Caledon Institute of Social Policy](#) regularly scans provincial and territorial government websites in order to follow policy and program developments related to our core work and interests. A partial list includes: disability, education, health, housing, income security, poverty reduction, recreation, seniors and youth. This tracking is intended to inform our analysis of policy trends. Monitors can be searched on the Canada Social Report website by date, jurisdiction and category.

Newfoundland and Labrador

EDUCATION

Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training launch an Adult Literacy Campaign. Two phases will be implemented over four years. Phase one will use TV ads to promote strong literacy and essential skills. Phase two will include partnerships with groups and employers, and will encourage adult learners to participate in learning programs.

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/news/details.asp?id=20101101002>

HEALTH

Release of Gaining Ground: A Provincial Cancer Control Policy Framework for Newfoundland and Labrador and \$1.5 million in this fiscal year to support several new cancer control initiatives.

<http://www.releases.gov.nl.ca/releases/2010/health/1102n04.htm>

INCOME SECURITY

The Community Enhancement Employment Program provides funding to established community-based organizations to sponsor and manage employment projects. Workers can be employed for up to 420 hours in order to become eligible for Employment Insurance benefits. CEEP funding has been increased by \$4 million, adding to the \$4.6 million for the program announced in June, and the \$275,000 announced in October for employment support to assist fish plant workers displaced as a result of hurricane Igor. As many as 1,500 individuals may benefit from the additional employment assistance.

<http://www.releases.gov.nl.ca/releases/2010/ma/1112n05.htm>

Nova Scotia

COMMUNITY

Through the Nova Scotia Transit Research Incentive Program, \$340,000 will be divided up by 13 communities for projects that include software upgrades and feasibility studies for transit in rural and unserved urban areas.

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/news/details.asp?id=20101104006>

The new \$800,000 Voluntary Sector Professional Improvement Initiative program will help nonprofit and voluntary organizations better address their human resource needs. Funding comes through the Community Development Trust, a federal program originally designed to help communities experiencing economic challenges.

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/news/details.asp?id=20101104001>

DISABILITIES

Auditor General found problems with government services for persons with disabilities, provincial rental housing and government registries. Services for persons with disabilities program has been under review since 2002. While the Department of Community Services has made a number of improvements to the program, many review recommenda-



tions have not yet been fully implemented. A comprehensive plan for the future of the program has yet to be produced.

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/news/details.asp?id=20101117010>

EDUCATION

Adult Literacy Campaign launched (see NF/LA).

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/news/details.asp?id=20101101002>

SENIORS/CAREGIVING

Province announced \$1.85 million to expand the Caregiver Benefit and \$100,000 in the Personal Alert Assistance Program, making more seniors eligible for help. Eligible caregivers who receive income assistance will now have their benefits protected while they provide care for friends and family. The Personal Alert Assistance Program will provide up to \$480 per year to eligible seniors, 65 years of age or older, to purchase a personal alert assistance service.

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/news/details.asp?id=20101126006>

New Brunswick

EDUCATION

Adult Literacy Campaign launched (see NF/LA).

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/news/details.asp?id=20101101002>

Launch of a citizen engagement initiative on learning, called Learning: Everybody's Project. The process will unfold over 2011, leading to a forum and adoption of an action plan in early 2012. The process will be led by a team of three co-chairs and four other members.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2010.11.1743.html

THRONE SPEECH

Major themes included promoting job creation and economic development, changing the culture of government, addressing the province's fiscal crisis through responsible management of public finances, engaging New Brunswickers and enhancing education and health care.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2010.11.1787.html

New Brunswick's deficit is projected to reach \$820.4 million for fiscal 2010-11, with the net debt expected to total \$9.6 billion. The year-end projected deficit is \$71.6 million more than expected. Government spending grew \$142 million more than expected last year. The new government is instituting an immediate one percent budget cut between November and the end of March 2011, and inviting public input into its pre-budget consultations.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2010.11.1809.html

Prince Edward Island

EDUCATION

Adult Literacy Campaign launched (see NF/LA).

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/news/details.asp?id=20101101002>

The *Early Learning and Child Care Act* has been created in response to the development of the Preschool Excellence Initiative. Since a modernization of the early childhood sector has begun by ensuring equitable access to quality early learning and child care programs, there is also a need to modernize the act that governs this sector. Public input on the Act is now being solicited.

The original internet link to this item is no longer operational.

http://www.assembly.pe.ca/bills/pdf_first/63/4/bill-20.pdf

Québec

DISABILITY

Launch of the report *Living with Disability in Quebec under the Participation and Limitation Survey (PALS) 2006*.

The original internet link to this item is no longer operational.

<http://www.stat.gouv.qc.ca/statistiques/sante/etat-sante/incapacite/incapacite-quebec.pdf>

INCOME SECURITY

Employers with 10 or more employees have until December 31 to comply with the *Pay Equity Act*.

The original internet link to this item is no longer operational.

http://www.ces.gouv.qc.ca/apropos/loi_06.asp

Ontario

CHILDREN

New Children's Activity Tax Credit will help parents with the cost of activities that encourage kids to become healthy and active. Parents can claim up to \$500 in eligible expenses for a credit of up to \$50 per child or up to \$100 for a child with a disability.

<http://www.news.ontario.ca/mof/en/2010/11/childrens-activity-tax-credit-passes.html>

EDUCATION

In September 2011, students from grades 4 to 12 will learn about financial literacy – saving, spending, investing and managing money.

<http://news.ontario.ca/edu/en/2010/11/financial-literacy-part-of-student-success-and-strong-economy.html>

HEALTH

The province is creating 25 nurse practitioner-led clinics as part of a plan to increase access to family health care. These clinics will be in operation by the end of 2012 and are expected to provide care to more than



40,000 patients who previously did not have a regular family health care provider.

<http://news.ontario.ca/mohltc/en/2010/11/nurse-practitioner-led-clinics.html>

\$15 million over three years for the establishment of the Ontario Brain Institute to link the province's top brain researchers with people who know how to commercialize ideas.

<http://www.news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2010/11/supporting-brain-research.html>

HOUSING

The federal and provincial governments announced \$15 million to fund six affordable housing projects for low-income seniors, low-income families and persons with disabilities in the Niagara Region.

<http://news.ontario.ca/mah/en/2010/11/niagara-region---governments-of-canada-and-ontario-celebrate-new-affordable-housing.html>

Introduction of *Strong Communities through Affordable Housing Act*. If passed, it would reduce barriers to affordable housing by:

- consolidating Ontario's housing and homelessness programs to give municipalities the flexibility to use funding to address local needs
- simplifying the rent-geared-to-income calculation process so that most tenants would declare their income only once a year; this change could allow them to use the extra money to improve their standard of living
- expanding affordable housing options by requiring municipalities to set policies that would allow second units in new and existing developments
- clarifying the roles and responsibilities of municipalities and the province to create stronger partnerships and greater accountability.

<http://www.news.ontario.ca/mah/en/2010/11/building-a-better-affordable-housing-system.html>

INCOME SECURITY

Fall economic statement highlights include:

- cuts to personal income taxes for 93 percent of taxpayers as of January 2010, an average tax cut of \$200 per year
- New Children's Activity Tax Credit will help parents with the cost of activities that encourage kids to become healthy and active. Parents can claim up to \$500 in eligible expenses for a credit of up to \$50 per child or up to \$100 for a child with a disability.
- proposed Ontario Energy and Property Tax Credit enhancement means more seniors would benefit from relief on energy costs and for property taxes. The OEPTC would provide up to \$1,025 for eligible seniors.
- Ontario Sales Tax Credit provides low- and middle-income households

with sales tax relief. The sales tax credit gives back up to \$260 per person, including children, or up to \$1,040 for a family of four.

- Ontario Child Benefit provides financial support for low-income families and reaches more than one million children each month. Currently the Ontario Child Benefit provides up to \$1,100 annually per child, increasing to \$1,310 by December 2013.

<http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/budget/fallstatement/2011/>

Since 2009, the Ontario Senior Homeowners' Property Tax Grant has been helping senior homeowners stay in their homes and pay their property taxes, providing up to \$500 per year. More than 600,000 senior homeowners will benefit over the next five years.

<http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/budget/fallstatement/2011/chapter5.html>

Introduction of Ontario Clean Energy Benefit, which would provide a 10 percent benefit to help consumers manage rising electricity prices for the next five years. In that period, residential electricity prices are expected to rise by 46 percent, after which price increases are expected to moderate.

<http://www.news.ontario.ca/mof/en/2010/11/ontario-introduces-electricity-cost-relief.html>

POVERTY REDUCTION

A review of the province's social assistance programs will run from January 2011 to June 2012. The review will examine social assistance and its relationship with other federal, provincial and municipal income security programs to gain a better understanding of how these programs, working together, can provide better outcomes for people.

<http://www.news.ontario.ca/mcss/en/2010/11/ontario-launches-comprehensive-social-assistance-review.html>

Manitoba

DISABILITIES AND SENIORS

Public discussions over the next few months will help the province design accessibility legislation to improve access for seniors and people with disabilities. The number of Manitobans with disabilities is expected to rise by 38 percent between 2006 and 2031, while the number of seniors is expected to increase by 43 percent in the next 20 years.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2010-11-01&item=10101>

EDUCATION

An investment of \$12.7 million in the Technical Vocational Initiative introduced is connecting students with cutting-edge technology, partnerships and the potential for future success in the high-tech sector.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2010-11-01&item=10163>



HEALTH

Province launches a six-point strategy to prevent domestic violence including an awareness campaign, programming to support at-risk families and a new website.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2010-11-01&item=10085>

SENIORS

Seniors abuse line will soon be available 24-7 with expanded services.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2010-11-01&item=10245>

THRONE SPEECH

Building Manitoba's skilled workforce, preserving and building on services for families such as health care, education and training, and enhancing public safety will be the main areas of work in the current legislative session. Areas of social policy focus include:

- creation of a Manitoba Youth Corps that will focus on mentoring opportunities and direct job experience for young people
- launch of a consultation process to enable parents to help their children excel through plain-language report cards, standardized in-service days and improved student attendance
- new initiatives to help combat bullying in schools
- expansion of child care spaces
- new pension plan for child-care workers to be implemented December 1.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2010-11-01&item=10181>

Saskatchewan

EDUCATION

\$885,000 to implement 18 new pre-kindergarten programs in ten communities. This brings the total number of programs implemented since November 2007 to 75, a 45 percent increase. With the 18 new programs, there are now 230 pre-kindergarten programs in Saskatchewan, benefiting approximately 3,680 children.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

Alberta

COMMUNITY

Proposed Municipal Sustainability Strategy would encourage community engagement to help address local sustainability issues. It includes a self-assessment toolkit for municipalities and inventory of resources to help promote sustainable governance in communities. It outlines ways

to increase collaboration between different levels of government with the help of a transparent review process.

The original internet link to this item is no longer operational.

[http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$Department/deptdocs.nsf/all/csi12110/\\$-FILE/Rural-Initiatives-2010-report.pdf](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$Department/deptdocs.nsf/all/csi12110/$-FILE/Rural-Initiatives-2010-report.pdf)

The *Victims Restitution and Compensation Payment Act*, a fund created in 2008 from the forfeiture and sale of criminal property, is being used to provide grants to victims' groups and crime prevention projects. The Alberta Council of Women's Shelters has received \$150,000 from the first stream of grants from the fund to launch a pilot project called Making Amends: Supporting Survivors of Domestic Violence in Rural Alberta.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

Victims Restitution and Compensation Payment Act is also funding programming for at-risk youth.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

FAMILIES

Updates to the *Family Law Act* regarding parentage of children born using assisted human reproduction to ensure certainty about the status of their legal parents. Updates also abolish the status of illegitimacy and clarify that, in most cases, parents are the guardians of their children if they have shown the intention to assume responsibility for them.

The original internet link to this item is no longer operational.

https://justice.alberta.ca/programs_services/families/Documents/familyLawActAmendments.pdf

HEALTH

Becoming the Best: Alberta's 5-Year Health Action Plan provides direction for the provincial health care system over the next five years. Some highlights include:

- 60 percent wait time reduction for hip surgery
- 70 percent wait time reduction for access to radiation oncologists for patients
- faster treatment at emergency departments (90 percent of patients to be treated and admitted to hospital within eight hours; 90 percent of patients to be treated and released within four hours)
- more spaces for continuing care (68 percent increase in the number of people moved out of a hospital bed and into a community care setting)
- an emphasis on wellness to keep Albertans healthy (32 percent increase in child immunization rates).

<http://www.health.alberta.ca/initiatives/5-year-health-action-plan.html>



SENIORS

The first of its kind in Canada, the Alberta government has developed an Aging Population Policy Framework to help meet the needs of an aging population.

The original internet link to this item is no longer operational.

<http://www.seniors.alberta.ca/documents/Aging-Population-Framework-2010.pdf>

Release of *Addressing Elder Abuse in Alberta: A Strategy for Collective Action*. The strategy builds on existing and ongoing efforts in preventing family violence and bullying, and on the policy directions set out in the Aging Population Policy Framework.

<http://www.seniors.alberta.ca/documents/ElderAbuse-Strategy.pdf>

British Columbia

EDUCATION

Representatives of BC First Nations, Urban Aboriginal and Métis peoples have come together to administer a \$5-million fund aimed at strengthening and expanding early childhood development programs and services to their children and families.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010CFD0026-001393.htm

EMPLOYMENT

By 2019, British Columbia will have more than a million job openings. Release of a new provincial strategy, *Skills for Growth: British Columbia's Labour Market Strategy to 2020*.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010RESD0006-001476.htm

HEALTH

Province releases "Healthy Minds, Healthy People" – a 10-year plan to address mental health and substance use with a focus on prevention of problems, early intervention, treatment and sustainability.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010HSE RV0063-001350.htm

HOUSING

More than 30 communities have submitted plans for a total of 1,400 additional shelter spaces when extreme weather alerts are activated this winter.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010PS SG0066-001418.htm

INCOME SECURITY

BC Government's Executive Council has decided to suspend a planned 15 percent reduction in personal income tax rates for the first \$72,000 of personal income.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010PR EM0200-001428.htm

Yukon Territory

COMMUNITIES

A new \$50,000 NGO Training Fund will expand customized training opportunities for Yukon's nonprofit sector by enabling individual organizations to hire their own trainer.

<http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/2010/10-207.html>

Northwest Territories, Nunavut

No updates this month.