




Canada Social Report
Provincial/Territorial
Policy Monitor

January 2011



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, Nova Scotia

No updates this month.

New Brunswick

INCOME SECURITY

Applications for the 2011 Low-Income Seniors' Benefit will be available mid-March, with payments issued to qualified seniors starting April 1. In 2010, more than 38,000 seniors received the \$400 benefit, resulting in more than \$15.3 million in payments.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2011.01.0060.html

POVERTY REDUCTION

Eight organizations have received approval by the Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation to establish regional community inclusion networks. The goal is to have 12 networks in operation by Summer 2011. Note: Region 2 – Greater Saint John / Sussex / Queens East / Kings East: Vibrant Communities Saint John.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2011.01.0066.html

Three advisory committees formed by the Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation to tackle key issues in the province's fight against poverty have held their first meetings. They focused on:

- i. Health benefits: committees will consult stakeholders to develop options for a prescription drug plan for uninsured residents by 2012 to ensure all families have access to necessary medications and are protected in the event of catastrophic illness.
- ii. Social assistance reform: committees will provide advice to the Department of Social Development about its work to change the province's rules-based social assistance system into an outcome-based system that encourages social assistance recipients to become self-reliant.
- iii. Social enterprise and community investment funds: committees will develop a policy framework on social enterprise and community investment funds within which community inclusion networks may work.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2011.01.0062.html

THRONE SPEECH

Premier's speech highlights five priorities areas for the government in 2011:

Budget – investment in education and health care and reducing the structural deficit; streamlining local government; learning and innovation; economic development (creation of a new agency called Invest NB); and stabilizing energy costs.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2011.01.0088.html



Prince Edward Island

No updates this month.

Québec

EDUCATION

School boards and CEGEPs will offer 22 new vocational and technical training programs. The institutions can now make these programs a permanent part of their curriculum. The programs will cost an estimated \$40 million to implement. Since the initial announcement of program authorizations in April 2010, 67 permanent and 60 provisional authorizations for programs of study have been issued.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

HEALTH

The *Fonds de la santé du Québec*, in partnership with the Department of Health and Social Services and Pfizer Canada, announced the first round of projects selected under the Pfizer-FRSQ-MSSS on chronic diseases. With \$5 million from Pfizer Canada, this grant program will evaluate chronic disease prevention and management initiatives and promote their implementation, as appropriate.

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

Page 6: <http://www.frqs.gouv.qc.ca/documents/11314/435468/recherche-sante-no46R.pdf/7b32b618-54ea-4e3c-87f0-ba7b516caa70>

INCOME SECURITY

Money paid to families for child assistance will increase by 1.27 percent on January 1, 2011 as a result of the indexation.

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

http://www.rrq.gouv.qc.ca/fr/programmes/soutien_enfants/paiement/Pages/paiement.aspx

Québec Pension Plan amounts will increase by 1.7 percent on January 1, 2011.

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

http://www.rrq.gouv.qc.ca/fr/programmes/regime_rentes/regime_chiffres/Pages/regime_chiffres.aspx

On January 1, 2011, the 2011 indexation will increase the eligibility threshold for free legal aid to \$13,007 and the maximum eligibility threshold for the contributory scheme to \$18,535 for single individuals.

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

https://www.barreau.qc.ca/pdf/medias/communiqués/20111212_declaration-aide-juridique.pdf

POVERTY REDUCTION

Québec has recovered all jobs lost during the recession, in addition to creating nearly 70,000. The average annual unemployment rate in Québec in 2010 (7.9 percent) was lower than Canada (8.0 percent), a first since labor force statistics were initiated in 1946.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

Ontario

No updates this month.

Manitoba

EDUCATION

The province is investing an additional 2.7 percent (\$30 million) in public schools, bringing the overall budget to \$1.14 billion, meeting its commitment to fund the public-school system at or above the rate of economic growth for the 12th straight year. For a fourth year, the Tax Incentive Grant will allow school divisions to increase expenditures while holding the line on property taxes. According to Statistics Canada, Manitoba is the only province where property taxes have remained relatively stable between 2000 and 2010.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2011-01-01&item=10741>

Saskatchewan, Alberta

No updates this month.

British Columbia

EMPLOYMENT

Job Options BC is a new \$15-million employment and skills training program that consists of four to six weeks of facilitated group work followed by an additional four to six weeks of work experience. It will prepare participants for new employment, or when appropriate, further training. When needed, graduates can also access up to six months of additional support. Funding to be renewed annually by the federal and provincial governments.

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

<https://www.workbc.ca/>

HOUSING

The province raised the home owner grant threshold by 10 per cent (for homes valued up to \$1.15 million) for 2011. The grant provides a maximum reduction in residential property taxes of \$570. An additional grant of \$275 may be available if the homeowner is 65 or over, has a permanent disability or is eligible to receive certain war veteran allowances.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010FIN0076-001622.htm

YOUTH

The new, 16-month \$3-million Youth Skills BC (YSBC) Workplace Pilot Program, funded under the Canada/BC Labour Market Agreement, will help approximately 650 youth. The program will enhance employability by improving and extending skills through practical experience and training. Employers will be able to hire up to three participants and can



receive up to \$2,000 per participant to offset the costs of providing on-the-job training.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2011RESD0001-000020.htm

Yukon Territory

POVERTY REDUCTION

Community Development Fund has awarded \$490,743 through its Tier 1 and Tier 2 intakes to 15 recipients, promoting long-term social and economic benefits. Tier 1 funding is available for requests up to \$20,000; Tier 2 funding is available for applicants requesting \$20,001 to \$75,000; and Tier 3 funding is available for requests over \$75,000.

<http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/11-006.html>

Northwest Territories, Nunavut

No updates this month.