



Canada Social Report  
Provincial/Territorial  
Policy Monitor

February 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

*No updates this month.*

## Nova Scotia

### EDUCATION

French-speaking families can now access speech-language support for preschool children. Nova Scotia Hearing and Speech Centres will

increase speech language services and focus on preventing communication disorders in young children through parent workshops and training for early childhood educators and other caregivers.

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/news/details.asp?id=20110201007>

## New Brunswick

*No updates this month.*

## Prince Edward Island

### INCOME SECURITY

Minimum wage will increase in three phases:

- \$9.30 per hour effective June 1, 2011
- \$9.60 per hour effective October 1, 2011
- \$10.00 per hour effective April 1, 2012.

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

<http://srv116.services.gc.ca/dimt-wid/sm-mw/rpt2.aspx?lang=eng&dec=5>

## Québec

### HEALTH

Creation of Health Directorate specifically for cancer. It will coordinate services and resources to reduce treatment delays and monitor changing patient needs.

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

<http://www.agencess12.gouv.qc.ca/fr/rapportdspcancer/consulter-le-rapport-en-ligne/prevenir-les-cancers-tous-ensemble-les-references/>

### SENIORS

Upcoming implementation of the "Aging in Place" plan for integrated services for seniors, including more support at home and more spaces in intermediate- and long-term care facilities.

<http://www.fil-information.gouv.qc.ca/Pages/Articles.aspx?aiguillage=ajd&type=1&idMenuitem=1>

## Ontario

### INCOME SECURITY

After seven consecutive increases, the Ontario minimum wage rate will remain at \$10.25 per hour in 2011, the highest provincial minimum wage in Canada. It has increased by 50 percent with annual increases in the last seven years. These increases outpaced inflation in part to make up for a nine-year minimum wage freeze between 1995 and 2004.

<http://news.ontario.ca/mol/en/2011/02/2011-minimum-wage-rate-set--highest-of-canadian-provinces.html>



## Manitoba

No updates this month.

## Saskatchewan

### CHILD CARE

In addition to an increase in start-up grants for school-age spaces from \$308 to \$615 per child, Tuition Reimbursement Grants will increase from \$150 per individual course to \$500 and from \$450 to \$1,500 for the Early Childhood Orientation course equivalent to an Early Childhood Educator I. Early childhood educators working in a licensed setting can also apply for a Professional Development Support Grant to assist with the costs of attending in-province professional development opportunities taking place between September 1, 2010 and March 15, 2011.

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

[http://www.esdc.gc.ca/en/reports/resp\\_promoters/elearning/sask.page](http://www.esdc.gc.ca/en/reports/resp_promoters/elearning/sask.page)

### DISABILITIES

People with disabilities who are clients of the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) program and the Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP) will benefit from an increase to earnings exemptions, effective February 1, 2011. Inheritance exemptions for SAID clients are also being raised. Earnings exemption limits will increase by \$100 per month for single persons with disabilities, and by \$125 per month for childless couples with disabilities. There is no increase for clients with disabilities who have children, as these households have access to the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement, which provides benefits that already exceed those permitted through earnings exemptions. An estimated 540 people with disabilities will benefit from the earnings exemption increases. Inheritance exemptions for SAID clients are also being raised to \$100,000 per household to reduce inconsistencies in the treatment of inheritance income.

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

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/live/personal-and-family-support/financial-assistance/income-support-for-people-with-disabilities>

### HEALTH

\$133.1 million in spending announced for health infrastructure and access improvements. The province will now pay 80 percent of the cost of regional health projects like long term care facilities; a 65 percent increase in support. Increases include \$49.3 million for design and construction of 13 long-term care facility redevelopment projects, \$105 million to support physician recruitment and retention, and \$10 million to support an increased number of physician services.

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

### HOUSING

The province is leading the development of a comprehensive housing strategy, which will be released at the end of June 2011. It will be developed by Saskatchewan Housing Corporation in coordination with stakeholders in the housing industry, including rural and urban municipalities,

home builders and developers, real estate organizations, chambers of commerce and community-based organizations across Saskatchewan. The goal of the strategy is to strengthen the province's affordable housing system in the short term and give it a solid foundation for the future.

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

[http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/Publications\\_Centre/SocialServices/April-2012-Update-Housing-Strategy-for-Saskatchewan.pdf](http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/Publications_Centre/SocialServices/April-2012-Update-Housing-Strategy-for-Saskatchewan.pdf)

## Alberta

### BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- forecast GDP growth of 3.3 per cent in 2011, averaging 3.2 percent from 2012-2014
- \$39 billion forecast expense in 2011-12; \$35.6 billion forecast revenue in 2011-12
- \$3.4 billion forecast deficit in 2011-12; forecast return to surplus in 2013-14
- savings in Sustainability Fund to offset deficits.

Continued government investment in priority areas:

- \$545 million (6 percent) increase to Alberta Health Services as part of five-year funding commitment introduced in Budget 2010
- \$257 million increase in support for school boards
- \$62 million increase to operating grants to post-secondary institutions
- \$39 million operating increase for children and youth programs, including child intervention services, child care and family support for children with disabilities
- \$6.6 billion for public infrastructure in 2011-12, part of \$17.6 billion over the next three years for the Capital Plan.

<http://budget2011.alberta.ca/>

### MUNICIPALITIES

After managing various tracts of land throughout the province since the 1930s and 1940s, the province will transfer more than 84,000 acres to municipalities in a continued effort to support local decision-making. The tracts being transferred were once private lands that have been under provincial management because of tax forfeiture.

<http://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=29851ED214D54-A0EE-3226-9D12B0AE2624CF13>

## British Columbia

### BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

Budget 2011 provides the Ministry of Health Services with a \$605-million increase in 2013-14 to sustain front-line service delivery; \$65



million over three years to the Ministry of Social Development for income assistance for individuals and families in need; and \$150 million to the Contingency Vote in 2011-12 to address unforeseen issues and provide flexibility for the new Premier and next executive council.

[http://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2011/newsrelease/2011\\_News\\_Release.pdf](http://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2011/newsrelease/2011_News_Release.pdf)

## CHILDREN

*Family Roots*, a new report produced by the Ministry of Children and Family Development, details the challenges, goals and priorities of families and how these have changed over the past few decades. The report is the province's first step in establishing a comprehensive baseline of government programs and services supporting children, youth and families, upon which the success of future actions and investments will be measured.

[http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news\\_releases\\_2009-2013/2011CFD0004-000067.htm](http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2011CFD0004-000067.htm)

## EDUCATION

The province signed a \$28.5 million contract with Shelter Industries to design, construct and install 138 modular classrooms in 25 BC school districts. School districts are receiving additional funding to cover the costs of site preparation, installation, equipment and supplies for each of their new classrooms.

[http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news\\_releases\\_2009-2013/2011EDUC0011-000123.htm](http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2011EDUC0011-000123.htm)

\$150 increase announced in the monthly subsidy rate to the "Young Parent Programs," allowing parents a greater opportunity to receive their high school diploma. The enhanced monthly subsidy rate will increase from \$850 to \$1,000 per child, effective March 1, 2011. Funding for the programs is estimated at more than \$1.7 million annually – \$400,000 in child care operating funding and \$1.3 million for child care subsidies. Along with the increased subsidy rate, the programs will also receive a one-time payment that will enable organizers to invest in additional resources to meet program demands.

[http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news\\_releases\\_2009-2013/2011CFD0006-000081.htm](http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2011CFD0006-000081.htm)

## HOUSING

The province will contribute an estimated \$3 million to help create a housing and health centre to address homelessness in Chilliwack.

[http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news\\_releases\\_2009-2013/2011PSG0015-000121.htm](http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2011PSG0015-000121.htm)

## INCOME SECURITY

Until March 4, 2011 an independent panel will review and report on the pros and cons of the HST and returning the PST/GST.

[http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news\\_releases\\_2009-2013/2011FIN0009-000112.htm](http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2011FIN0009-000112.htm)

## SENIORS

Legislation giving adults more options when making their own plans in the event of incapacity comes into force September 1, 2011. The legislation will provide simple, cost-effective planning options through advance directives, enduring powers of attorney and representation agreements. Advance directives allow adults to plan decisions about health care treatment while they are still capable. They are provided access to health care professionals if the person becomes incapable.

[http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news\\_releases\\_2009-2013/2011AG0001-000100.htm](http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2011AG0001-000100.htm)

## Yukon Territory

### BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

Targeted investments announced for a variety of health, housing, education and public safety projects. Plans to institute the findings of the Yukon Health Care Review and the "Taking the Pulse" report, as well as the development of a poverty reduction and social inclusion plan were also announced.

[http://www.finance.gov.yk.ca/pdf/budget/English\\_-\\_Budget\\_Highlights\\_2010-2011.pdf](http://www.finance.gov.yk.ca/pdf/budget/English_-_Budget_Highlights_2010-2011.pdf)

### POVERTY REDUCTION

The Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition released *A Home for Everyone: A Housing Action Plan for Whitehorse*. Developed through workshops, research and input from community members, the Plan focuses on information and ideas that will provide more and better housing options for all Whitehorse residents. It can be found at:

<http://www.yapc.ca/assets/files/a-home-for-everyone.pdf>

## Northwest Territories

### BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

Social policy measures announced outlined include \$39 million in measures aimed at reducing the cost of living; \$29 million for programs directed at programs in education, health care, housing and policing services; and \$30 million to support community development in the areas of safety and security, stronger program service delivery in and improvements in small community employment opportunities.

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

<http://www.gov.nt.ca/newsroom/budget-address>

## Nunavut

*No updates this month.*