



Canada Social Report
Provincial/Territorial
Policy Monitor

May 2013



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.

New Brunswick

DISABILITY

\$180,000 over three years to buy sports equipment for persons with disabilities. Para New Brunswick will launch an Equipment Loan Service to provide provincial sports organizations, disability and recreation organizations, and municipalities the opportunity to borrow equipment to help ensure sustainable programming (e.g., multi-sport chairs, hockey sledges, hand cycles and boccia ramps).

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2013.05.0504.html

HEALTH

Release of a progress report on the Action Plan for Mental Health in New Brunswick 2011-18.

http://www.gnb.ca/0055/pdf/2013/Action-Plan_Progress-Report.pdf

Nova Scotia

EMPLOYMENT

The province, Register.com and the Nova Scotia Community College are joining forces create hundreds of well-paying, long-term jobs in south-west Nova Scotia. Register.com is part of Web.com, a provider of online services and Internet marketing solutions for small businesses. The company now employs about 430 people in Nova Scotia - 280 in Yarmouth and 150 in Halifax.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130531004>

GOVERNANCE

\$300,000 in funding from the Sustainable Transportation Strategy for the province's 14 rural transit organizations. The one-time, unconditional grant will be shared equally.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130531007>

HEALTH

Launch of an anti-bullying website that provides information tailored to four audiences: children and youth; parents and guardians; educators and schools; and community. The province is also creating a parent handbook on bullying and cyberbullying that will be distributed to parents and guardians of children in public schools at the start of the new school year.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130524005>

HEALTH

\$1,000,000 to launch a Peer Support Program to help people living with mental illness move from hospital back into the community. The announcement accompanies a first progress report of Together We Can, the province's first mental health and addictions strategy, released in 2012.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130531003>



HOUSING

Release of a 10-year housing strategy that represents a fundamental shift in the province's approach to affordable housing. Over the next 10 years, affordable housing and affordable home ownership will substantially increase and will focus on diverse communities with different housing and tenure types, income levels and family composition.

Highlights of the 10-year strategy include:

- Investing \$500 million over 10 years to support new and enhanced affordable housing projects and programs
- establishing innovative, affordable home ownership programs to help young people and families of modest income
- enhancing initiatives to support seniors and persons with disabilities to stay at home in their communities
- initiating new housing developments that support a mix of income levels and supports for independent living
- helping chronically homeless individuals move off the street and providing them with the supports they need to transition toward independence.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130506002>

Prince Edward Island

CHILDREN

Release of a new Directive on Educational Services for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. It includes a commitment to evidence-based practice, establishing qualifications for autism specialists and consultants, and outlines the respective roles and responsibilities of the department, school boards and school staff.

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/newsroom/index.php?number=news&newsnumber=8988&dept=&lang=E>

HEALTH

Announcement of a forthcoming Catastrophic Drug Program designed to assist people based on the cost of their drugs and their ability to pay.

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/newsroom/index.php?number=news&newsnumber=8990&dept=&lang=E>

Québec

CAREGIVING

Announcement of a \$15 million investment in palliative care; \$11 million will be used to develop palliative home care, including community support and training.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/quebec-announces-15m-for-palliative-care-1.1401378>

HEALTH

The province's blood bank services announced the establishment of a mother's milk bank. The initiative will require an initial investment of \$800,000 and an annual operating budget of \$500,000. The expected reduction in certain conditions affecting premature babies who are nourished with human milk are expected to result in an estimated annual savings of \$1.25 million.

<http://www.hema-quebec.qc.ca/publications/communiqués/archives/2013/communiqués/banque-publique-lait-printemps-2014.en.html>

INCOME SECURITY

On May 1, minimum wage was raised from \$10 to \$10.15 per hour. The minimum wage payable to employees who receive tips was increased from \$8.55 to \$8.75 per hour.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/quebec-s-minimum-hourly-wage-will-increase-to-10-15-1.1169019>

Announcement of four regulations governing the receipt of last-resort financial assistance. They are aimed at helping people benefit from labour market openings and improving their overall incomes. Special attention will be paid to young people. Emploi-Québec will intervene with youth welfare applicants under age 25, meeting with them at their first application for financial assistance and regularly monitoring their progress. In 2012, 2,500 young people under age 25 applied for financial assistance each month. Two-thirds of these applicants grew up in a family enrolled in a program of social assistance. The province is seeking to find better employment outcomes for this group, especially in light of the fact that 700,000 jobs are expected to be available in Quebec by 2016.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

Ontario

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The deficit for 2012-13 is now estimated to be \$9.8 billion, down \$5.0 billion from the 2012 Budget forecast. Key actions include:

- establishing a Youth Jobs Strategy of \$295 million over two years to create jobs and mentorship opportunities for about 30,000 youth, and promote entrepreneurship and innovation
- creating jobs through investments in infrastructure for public transit, roads, bridges, hospitals and schools
- reducing auto insurance rates by 15 percent on average for nine million drivers
- helping 46,000 more people receive home and community care
- increasing the Employer Health Tax exemption from \$400,000 to \$450,000 of payroll
- taking steps to transform social assistance by helping more recipients find jobs and improve their financial security.



<http://news.ontario.ca/mof/en/2013/05/a-budget-for-a-prosperous-and-fair-ontario.html>

SOCIAL FINANCE

The province has partnered with the Centre for Social Innovation, TD Bank Group, Microsoft Canada, Alterna Savings, KPMG and Social Capital Partners to launch the Ontario Catapult Microloan Fund. Social enterprises that help solve a social, environmental, cultural or economic problem (e.g., youth unemployment), may qualify for a loan of \$5,000 to \$25,000 and receive support services, including mentorship. The province is also launching a new Office for Social Enterprise led by Special Advisor Helen Burstyn. The office will promote social entrepreneurship, partnering with the private, nonprofit and public sectors to coordinate and expand the tools available to social entrepreneurs.

<http://news.ontario.ca/medt/en/2013/05/ontario-helps-social-enterprises-create-jobs-and-strengthen-communities.html>

YOUTH

Announcement of the Youth Jobs Strategy, which focuses on jobs, entrepreneurship and innovation:

- Ontario Youth Employment Fund – \$195 million over two years to create 25,000 new job opportunities; hiring incentives to employers for offering entry-level jobs
- Ontario Youth Entrepreneurship Fund – 3 actions: mentorship, seed stage capital, high school entrepreneurship outreach
- Ontario Youth Innovation Fund – \$10 million over two years to provide post-doctoral fellows with skills and experience to lead and manage industrial research, development and commercialization efforts. This new investment will build on the success of Mitacs, which has created 1,650 internships for graduate students and 111 post-doctoral fellowships in Ontario since 2008. Government will also allocate \$20 million over two years for the On Campus Accelerator Centres that will stimulate development of entrepreneurial activity in Ontario's universities and colleges.
- Business-Labour Connectivity and Training Fund – \$25 million over two years to support creative new pilot initiatives to bring together business, labour, educators and youth to better prepare young people to develop required skills.

More strategy details at: <http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/budget/ontariobudgets/2013/bk5.html>

35 new youth outreach workers will be hired in nine communities across the province. Partnering with 16 additional community agencies, the Youth Outreach Worker program supports young people where they

live and socialize. The new workers will identify at-risk youth, provide culturally appropriate mentorship and connect young people to the right services and supports. Youth outreach workers often come from the same neighbourhood and can share relevant life experiences with the young people they assist.

<http://news.ontario.ca/mcys/en/2013/05/helping-at-risk-youth-succeed.html>

The province announced the expansion of Summer Company, a program for helping students launch start-up companies. Spaces will increase to from 500 to 600 in 2013; further expansions are planned for 2014 and 2015. The program offers students ages 15 to 29 hands-on coaching, mentoring and up to \$3,000 to help launch businesses.

<http://news.ontario.ca/medt/en/2013/05/creating-opportunities-for-young-entrepreneurs.html>

Manitoba

HEALTH

A new Cancer QuickCare Clinic will be open weekdays, evenings and weekends to assist patients with cancer-related illnesses and complications during treatment such as pain, nausea, digestive issues and fatigue. A dedicated Cancer Helpline is also being established to answer questions for cancer patients and offer advice about how to access same-day care.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=month&item=17311>

The province is opening a new facility to better address addiction issues among young people. Staffed 24 hours a day with youth care workers, addictions specialists and nursing staff, the facility will include eight beds devoted to voluntary or involuntary stabilization services and two beds for youth held under the *Intoxicated Persons Detention Act*. It is expected the facility will serve more than 300 youth a year. Bringing treatment and short-term stabilization together in one location will encourage service integration and improved support for youth experiencing differing stages of addictions.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=month&item=17360>

Opening of a Mental Health Crisis Response Centre (CRC) in Winnipeg. It will accommodate at least 10,000 patient visits and will be closely linked with Health Sciences Centre Emergency Room. Currently, 10,000 people visit Winnipeg emergency rooms for mental health crises, with less than 15 percent requiring hospitalization. More than 35 CRC mental health professionals will provide services such as integrated mental health assessment, crisis intervention and mental health crisis treatment. They will also connect patients to key resources for appropriate follow-up care as needed.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=month&item=17383>



Saskatchewan

DISABILITIES

The province is developing a Disability Strategy which will focus on priority areas specified in the Plan for Growth: accessibility, affordability and availability of housing; transportation; employment; education; support for community inclusion; and support for caregivers. Other priorities may emerge during the consultation process. The strategy is expected to be released by Fall 2014.

http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/Publications_Centre/SocialServices/Saskatchewan-Disability-Strategy.pdf

10,000 people will receive increased monthly benefits through the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) program, effective June 1, 2013. Beginning with a first increase in June 2012, the government committed to raising average SAID benefits over four years by \$100 per month for individuals in residential care, \$350 a month for singles living independently and \$400 per month for couples. Effective June 2013, monthly SAID benefits for single individuals in independent living arrangements will rise by \$50. Couples will receive a \$60 monthly increase, and the benefit for persons in residential care will rise by \$20 per month.

<http://www.publications.gov.sk.ca/details.cfm?p=67166>

HEALTH

Announcement of an interministerial action plan to address the issues of mental health and addictions. Sectors of government involved include Health, Social Services, Education, Corrections and Policing, and Justice. The action plan and accompanying recommendations are set to be complete by fall 2014.

<http://www.publications.gov.sk.ca/details.cfm?p=66943>

YOUTH

First Nations and Métis youth will have an opportunity to participate in a dialogue on education and employment challenges, and identify the types of supports they believe would be most helpful in achieving their goals. Aboriginal Youth Task Force plan to visit 12 communities to gather input.

<http://www.publications.gov.sk.ca/details.cfm?p=66907>

Alberta

ABORIGINALS

Passage of Bill 19, the *Métis Settlements Amendment Act, 2013*. The Act is meant to strengthen governance, accountability and sustainability in Alberta's Métis Settlements.

<http://alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=341057F72E5CC-0FDD-FC0A-8ECF2F52F0037A3B>

CHILDREN

Announcement of the appointment of 84 community, business and agency leaders to the Premier's Council on Alberta's Promise. The appointments are in effect until March 31, 2016. Alberta's Promise

works with businesses by providing information and support to facilitate financial and in-kind investments to agencies and communities at a local level to support children and youth programs and initiatives. The term of Alberta's Promise was recently extended through 2018 in the recently passed *Children First Act*, which supports the health, safety and success of Alberta's children.

<http://humanservices.alberta.ca/departement/16660.html>

EDUCATION

Changes to the education system announced, including a new dual credit strategy, changes to diploma exams, a new high school flexibility program and updated provincial assessment test. The dual credit strategy allows students to pursue apprenticeship and postsecondary courses while in high school.

http://www.albertadualcredit.ca/sites/default/files/dc_strategy_call_to_action.pdf

FAMILIES

Healthy U 5&1 food and activity experiments are available through an interactive website, a mobile application and experiment kits that will be distributed to schools and at public events this spring and summer.

<http://www.healthyalberta.com/>

GOVERNANCE

Launch of an Open Data Portal aimed at increasing transparency of government business, promoting economic opportunity and increasing citizen involvement in government.

<http://alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=34228EBCE8B-FB-DF9E-DB03-5A12207311B0B317>

INCOME SECURITY

Alberta's general minimum wage will rise by 2.1 percent on September 1 representing an increase from \$9.75 per hour to \$9.95 per hour. There will be no change to the liquor server minimum wage, which will remain at \$9.05 per hour. The 20-cent increase to the general minimum wage is based on a formula initiated by government in 2011. The formula links possible growth to an average of the annual increases in Average Weekly Earnings and the Consumer Price Index in Alberta.

<http://alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=34239F677C8D6-C6B2-F6D2-3E3257F0F2132F57>

British Columbia, Yukon Territory, Northwest Territories and Nunavut

No updates this month.