




Canada Social Report
Provincial/Territorial
Policy Monitor

July 2014



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

EMPLOYMENT

Provincial and federal officials signed three agreements: Canada Job Grant, Targeted Initiative for Older Workers and Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities.

<http://www.releases.gov.nl.ca/releases/2014/aes/0704n03.aspx>

YOUTH

The province released \$744,000 for 39 organizations that operate engagement activities and learning opportunities for young people. The 2014 Grants to Youth Organizations program is aimed at helping youth develop self-reliance, leadership and citizenship.

<http://www.releases.gov.nl.ca/releases/2014/exec/0703n01.aspx>

New Brunswick

DISABILITY

The province approved a \$50,000 grant to Para NB for a pilot project that will make youth-adapted sport and recreation equipment available to students with disabilities. The funding will help Para NB purchase adapted equipment and devices for all students to engage in parallel sport and recreation in physical education. Items such as multi-sport wheelchairs and hockey sledges will then be made available through Para NB's provincial adapted Equipment Loan Service. Physical education specialists can borrow this equipment free of charge. Para NB will also offer professional development opportunities for physical education teachers who provide inclusive parallel sport and recreation activities.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2014.07.0872.html

GOVERNANCE

The provincial government has proclaimed a new *Procurement Act* designed to update public services goods and services purchasing practices and to give more opportunities to New Brunswick suppliers and entrepreneurs. The new Act comes into effect on October 15 and replaces the 40-year-old *Public Purchasing Act*.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2014.07.0956.html

HEALTH

A special infertility assistance fund has been created to provide a one time grant to help cover the costs of infertility treatment. Individuals can claim up to 50 percent of procedure costs and related pharmaceutical products, up to a maximum of \$5,000.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2014.07.0857.html



Nova Scotia

EDUCATION

The province released guidelines and criteria for a Hub School Model. The intent is to give parents and communities more options to work with boards to ensure schools remain an important part of the community.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20140721001>

INCOME SECURITY

The Nova Scotia Child Benefit income threshold rose from \$25,000 to \$26,000 on July 1. This increase adds about 1,300 more children into the program, bringing the provincial total to 40,000. Full benefits for families with incomes less than \$18,000 are:

- one child \$625 a year (\$52 monthly)
- two children \$825 a year (\$68 monthly)
- three children \$900 a year (\$75 monthly).

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20140630002>

Prince Edward Island

HEALTH

The new PEI Insulin Pump Program will allow parents or guardians of children and youth under age 19 who live with type 1 diabetes, and who meet the medical eligibility requirements, to apply for coverage that will assist with the costs associated with insulin pump therapy.

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/newsroom/index.php?number=news&newsnumber=9722&dept=&lang=E>

POVERTY REDUCTION

The 2014 Progress Report on the Prince Edward Island Social Action Plan was released, summarizing progress made in the last two years to support vulnerable citizens. Plans for year three include:

- implementing a new seniors home care modification program
- initiating an Integrated Service Delivery pilot in an Island school
- reviewing asset exemptions for social assistance
- increasing wages for early childhood educators
- increasing minimum wages
- covering supplies for children with type 1 diabetes
- increasing rates for children in care.

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/newsroom/index.php?number=news&newsnumber=9730&dept=&lang=E>

Québec

INCOME SECURITY

The *Voluntary Retirement Savings Plans Act* came into effect July 1. As of that date, the two million Quebec workers without access to a pension plan at work will be able to join an inexpensive, flexible group plan by means of payroll deductions or periodic installments.

<http://www.fil-information.gouv.qc.ca/Pages/Article.aspx?idArticle=2206272511>

Ontario

CHILDREN

The province re-introduced the *Child Care Modernization Act, 2014*. If passed, the legislation will strengthen oversight of the province's unlicensed child care sector, while increasing access to licensed child care options for families. It will also allow the province to immediately shut down a child care provider when a child's safety is at risk.

<http://news.ontario.ca/edu/en/2014/07/improving-the-safety-and-accessibility-of-child-care-1.html>

INCOME SECURITY

The province introduced the *Stronger Workplaces for a Stronger Economy Act, 2014*. It supports Ontario's Poverty Strategy and is designed to increase protections for vulnerable workers. If passed, the Act will:

- tie future minimum wage increases to the Consumer Price Index
- eliminate the \$10,000 cap on the recovery of unpaid wages and increasing the period of recovery from six and 12 months to two years for employees
- prohibit employers from charging fees and seizing personal documents like passports from temporary foreign workers
- make temporary help agencies and their clients liable for certain employment standards violations, helping to reduce the number of companies that hire individuals solely to work in unsafe conditions.

<http://news.ontario.ca/mol/en/2014/07/supporting-ontarios-vulnerable-workers.html>

THRONE SPEECH

Social policy-related highlights from the Throne Speech include:

- introduction of Experience Ontario to help recent high school graduates gain work experience
- extension of the Youth Jobs Strategy to put more young people on a fulfilling career path
- provision of more postsecondary spaces for students
- institution of full-day kindergarten across the province in September 2014.



The province also plans to create the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan and to introduce a new poverty reduction strategy.

<http://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2014/07/speech-from-the-throne-build-ing-ontario-up.html>

Manitoba

HOUSING

The governments of Canada and Manitoba announced the joint investment of an additional \$104 million over five years to create more affordable housing for individuals and families across the province. The funding will be delivered through an extension to the Investment in Affordable Housing agreement (IAH). On July 4, 2011, the two governments announced an IAH agreement with a combined investment of \$62 million for the 2011-14 period. This new agreement extends the original agreement for 2014-19.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=32005&post-ed=2014-07-29>

Saskatchewan

SENIORS

Starting July 1, 2014, seniors with low incomes will see increases to the benefits they receive through two programs: the Personal Care Home Benefit (PCHB) and Seniors Income Plan (SIP). Increases to the PCHB will help 800 seniors with the costs of living in a licensed personal care home. The maximum monthly income for inclusion in the program will increase by \$75, from \$1,875 to \$1,950. Approximately 15,000 senior citizens who require financial assistance under the Seniors Income Plan will also receive an increase to their benefits. Maximum monthly benefits will rise from \$250 to \$260 for single individuals and from \$215 to \$225 for each member of a couple household. Since 2007, the government has nearly tripled the maximum SIP benefits from \$90 to \$260 for singles and from \$72.50 to \$225 for each member of a couple household.

<http://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2014/june/27/senior-benefits>

Alberta

CHILDREN

Alberta launched a Twitter-based mentorship campaign to support children and youth in care. The #8000mentors campaign is designed to attract more mentors, particularly from Aboriginal and ethno-cultural communities, that can share important cultural experiences and community connections with young people of similar backgrounds. The province will give \$365,000 to three community agencies in Edmonton,

Calgary and Red Deer to attract, train and match mentors with children and youth in care.

<http://alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=3683781675A4A-D780-18D3-19DEA646D376960A>

HEALTH

The province will provide \$165,000 over three years to the Eating Disorder Support Network of Alberta. The network will focus on offering support in a non-clinical setting to help individuals and their families return to their regular day-to-day lives.

<http://alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=36876E987456D-A456-COD1-715D6AD09567EAE5>

INCOME SECURITY

The *Employment Pension Plans Act (2012)* takes effect September 1. The Act affords more flexibility to private sector pension plans, improves their long-term stability and encourages the establishment of new plans.

<http://alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=36875E8AF-5C4A-B6A0-F222-C5A1CDF25E02BD24>

RECREATION

The renewed Alberta Sport Plan takes a collaborative approach to make the province a national leader in sport and realize the positive impact of sport on people and communities.

<http://alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=3689148E78B87-C5BF-09B9-27C2A-FBDF40066CB>

British Columbia

ABORIGINALS

The First Nations Health Authority and the Ministry of Health released the first edition of the *BC Elders' Guide*. Based on the BC Seniors' Guide, it offers information on provincial and federal programs and community and local resources, with sections on health, lifestyle, housing, transportation, finances, benefits, safety and security, and other services. The guide includes Elder advice on successful aging and addresses the importance of nurturing spirit through engagement in community life.

<http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2014/07/new-guide-supports-the-health-of-aboriginal-and-first-nations-elders.html>

Yukon Territory

COMMUNITY

The Yukon government awarded more than \$206,000 to 15 community organizations for the improvement of facilities and equipment, conference and forum hosting, and infrastructure development.

http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/14-172.html#U8_lFvidWMI

Northwest Territories

No updates this month.

Nunavut

No updates this month.