



Canada Social Report
Provincial/Territorial
Policy Monitor

August 2016



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. 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

LABOUR MARKET

New Brunswick's Economic Growth Plan: Why growth is imperative was released, part one of a plan to accelerate economic growth and job creation. The plan outlines five main themes:

- people – growing the provincial workforce
- innovation – growing capacity for idea generation and innovation
- capital – growing private-sector investment
- infrastructure – fostering investment from the public and private sectors in strategic infrastructure
- agility – fostering agility and nimbleness in the public sector and across the economy.

[Link](#)

Nova Scotia

No updates this month..

Prince Edward Island

No updates this month.

Québec

CAREGIVING

The Québec government announced several expenditures aimed at strengthening the province's home care system. A financial assistance package of \$22.2 million will support seniors who wish to remain in their homes as long as possible. Annual aid of \$8.1 million will be allocated to improve the Financial Assistance for Domestic Help Services Program. This announcement is part of the 2016-17 Budget, where an additional \$60 million was provided for home care. The funds will pay for 600,000 hours of activities such as housekeeping, meal preparation, shopping and clothing care. Compensation rates for the payment of services will rise between \$1/hour and \$4.50/hour.

The government will also provide \$12.5 million to the Federation of Cooperatives of home help services and Québec Health to operate a training project for home care attendants. This investment will allow 4,500 employees working in social economy enterprises (EESAD) in home care to offer new personal assistance services. EESAD will also receive \$1.6 million to support the implementation of best business practices in 102 EESAD operations.

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Ontario

CHILDREN

The province has re-committed to building a high-quality, accessible and affordable early years and child care system that supports choice and flexibility for parents and promotes healthy development for children. It will:

- put in place a renewed and coordinated system of Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres to better serve families and communities
- ensure that child care policies align with government efforts in such areas as addressing the gender wage gap
- work with the federal and provincial and territorial governments on a national early learning and child care framework.

[Link](#)

DISABILITY/EDUCATION

The province announced steps to strengthen supports for students who are deaf or hard of hearing, blind or have low vision, deafblind or have severe learning disabilities. Based on consultations held in spring 2016 with students, families and education and community partners, over the coming year the province will:

- keep all provincial and demonstration schools open
- pilot intensive reading intervention projects in school boards to increase the availability and responsiveness of supports for students with severe learning disabilities in their local communities
- establish a reference group to provide guidance and input on strengthening supports for students who are deaf or hard of hearing
- pursue legislative changes to transfer the governance structure of Centre Jules-Léger to the 12 French-language school boards to better support French-language students.

[Link](#)

EDUCATION

Ontario is investing an additional \$120 million to re-fit schools across Northern Ontario, bringing the total investment for school repairs for the region to \$300 million over the next two years. The \$300 million in funding for northern schools will help school boards repair roofs, update air exchange units, and modernize electrical and plumbing systems. It will also help improve parts of schools that directly impact students' daily lives, including walls, flooring, ceilings and playing fields. The funding to repair and renew Northern schools is part of a province-wide investment of \$2.7 billion over two years. This is \$1.1 billion more than the government initially allocated.

[Link](#)

HEALTH

Ontario is spending \$16 million to give patients quicker access to care in hospital emergency rooms across the province. It will provide funding to 20 municipalities for 300,000 dedicated emergency room nursing hours at 49 hospitals this year.

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WOMEN

The province has released the final report from the Gender Wage Gap Steering Committee and will address key recommendations by:

- increasing income transparency in the Ontario Public Service by making salary data publicly available by gender
- requiring gender-based analysis in the government policy process
- appointing an Associate Minister of Education, Responsible for Early Years and Child Care to build a system of affordable, accessible and high-quality early years and child care programs
- providing employers with resources including training materials on anti-discrimination and developing other education products for employees.

[Link](#)

Manitoba

HEALTH

A universal hearing screening program for all Manitoba newborns is being implemented in all regional health authorities as of September 1, 2016.

[Link](#)

HOUSING

More than 1,000 northern Manitobans will receive additional support through the Rent Assist program, following an increased investment of \$7 million in Budget 2016.

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Saskatchewan

No updates this month.

Alberta

FAMILIES

The government is implementing a private member's bill that makes it easier for victims of domestic violence to flee abuse. Survivors of family violence now can end a tenancy agreement early, without financial penalty, by presenting their landlord with a certificate verifying that they are at risk. The *Residential Tenancies (Safer Spaces for Victims of Domestic Violence) Amendment Act* came into effect on August 8, 2016.

[Link](#)



HEALTH

The Government of Alberta and the Alberta Medical Association have reached a tentative agreement that recognizes a shared responsibility to provide quality health care in a financially sustainable framework.

[Link](#)

British Columbia

No updates this month.

Yukon Territory

EDUCATION

A new three-year education agreement between the territorial government and the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun outlines joint communication and participation on curriculum development, school programming and staffing. Priorities identified in the agreement include extracurricular activities, experiential learning, student achievement, a greater focus on Northern Tutchone culture and language, and an increased number of pathways to graduation for local students.

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Northwest Territories

HEALTH

On August 1, 2016, the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority began operations. Prior to that date, the system was made up of eight separate authorities. The new system will be informed by Regional Wellness Councils – groups that will provide input and advice at the regional level that will inform care and services delivered territorially.

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Nunavut

No updates this month.