

International welfare

6.5.8

Canada is actively involved in the social development activities of the United Nations, particularly with the executive board of UNICEF and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development on the development of social indicators, income transfer policy and the role of women in the economy.

Federal and provincial departments and agencies participate in the work of several international voluntary organizations. These include the International Council on Social Welfare, International Social Services and the International Union of Family Organizations.

Program information is exchanged on social affairs with UN agencies, the Council of Europe, the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, the Overseas Development Institute and social affairs departments in other countries.

Canadian officials engaged in social security participate in the International Social Security Association and the social security program of the International Labour Organization. For some years, Canada has had observer status at meetings of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security. Informal discussions on the possibility of bilateral agreements in social security have been held with the United Kingdom, Italy and the United States. The Department of National Health and Welfare arranges for the training in Canada of UN Fellowship recipients, foreign students and government officials when recommended by their governments.

Federal-provincial cost-sharing programs

6.6

Canada Assistance Plan

6.6.1

The Canada Assistance Plan, 1966, was designed in consultation with the provinces as a comprehensive public assistance measure for supporting the integration and improvement of provincial and municipal assistance programs and encouraging the development and extension of welfare services which would lessen, remove or prevent the causes and effects of poverty, child neglect or dependence on public assistance. Under agreements with the provinces and territories, the federal government contributes 50% of sharable costs of provincial and municipal expenditures for public assistance and welfare services. Through the plan, Canada also shares in the cost of work activity projects designed to improve the employability of persons who have unusual difficulty in finding or retaining jobs or in undertaking job training.

The only eligibility requirement specified under the Canada Assistance Plan for individuals or families applying for assistance under provincial programs is that of need, *regardless of its cause*, and determined through an assessment of budgetary requirements as well as of income and resources. A province must not require previous residence to be a condition of eligibility for assistance. Rates of assistance and eligibility requirements are set by the province so that they may be adjusted to local conditions and the needs of special groups. The provinces are required to establish procedures which enable applicants and recipients to appeal decisions relating to the provision of assistance.

Assistance includes any form of aid to, or on behalf of, persons in need for the purpose of providing basic requirements such as food, shelter, clothing, fuel, household and personal necessities; special items necessary for the safety, well-being, or rehabilitation of a person in need; non-insured health care services; and maintenance in a home for special care such as a home for the aged, a nursing home or a child care institution.

Welfare services, which include counselling and assessment, casework, rehabilitation services, community development and day care, homemaker and adoption services, are provided to persons in need or to persons who are likely to become in need if they do not receive these services. The federal government