

There were approximately 10,308,000 people in the civilian labour force in Canada in 1976 (Table 8.1). Of that number, an estimated 9,572,000 persons were employed; 736,000 or 7.1% were unemployed. The proportion of the female population in the labour force increased from 39.4% in 1971 to 45.0% in 1976 (Table 8.2). Of approximately 7,332,000 males over 15 years of age in the population in 1971, 77.3% were in the labour force; in 1976 the participation rate was 77.7% of 8,303,000.

## The government in relation to labour

8.1

### Labour Canada

8.1.1

The Canada Department of Labour (Labour Canada) was established by the Department of Labour Act (RSC 1970, c.L-2). The minister of labour's responsibilities include: collecting, digesting and publishing statistical and other information relating to labour conditions; conducting inquiries into industrial questions upon which adequate information may not be available; issuing monthly *The Labour Gazette* and *La Gazette du Travail* which give a perspective on the entire work-related scene.

The minister is responsible for the Canada Labour Code, in effect since July 1971, including sections on fair employment practices, labour standards, safety of employees, and industrial relations. The minister also administers acts covering fair wages and hours of work, and compensation for government employees and also for merchant seamen. The minister reports to Parliament on behalf of the Canada Labour Relations Board and the Merchant Seamen Compensation Board.

The industrial relations legislation applies to employers, employees and trade unions within federal jurisdiction. The department is responsible for conciliation procedures in industrial disputes; investigating complaints of unfair labour practices, refusals to bargain and violations of legislation, processing union applications for certification and decertification, and conducting representation votes. It determines wage rates and hours of work for federal government contracts for construction or supplies, and promotes improved industrial relations through union-management consultation and by preventive mediation through industrial relations consultants. The department administers assistance granted to workers in automotive manufacturing and a benefits program for displaced workers in textile and clothing, and footwear and tanning industries.

Reorganization of the department began in 1974-75. Its role is to promote and protect the rights of the parties involved in the world of work, a working environment conducive to physical and social well-being, and a fair return for efforts; and in all cases to ensure equitable access to employment opportunities. Reorganization included decentralization into five regions, with headquarters in Moncton, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver.

The department maintains records of labour legislation in the provinces and in other countries and provides liaison between the International Labour Organization and federal and provincial governments.

### Canada Employment and Immigration Commission

8.1.2

The commission recruits and develops manpower resources in line with the needs of the economy. The prime goal of Canada's manpower policy is to contribute to the country's economic and social goals by making the best use of its work force. The commission's domestic field activities are carried out in 10 regions through more than 400 manpower and 97 immigration centres.

Broad objectives of the commission are: to provide an effective employment service for both workers and employers; to help workers attain their full potential through counselling or referral to training programs; to assist employers in recruiting skilled