

There were approximately 10,882,000 people in the civilian labour force in Canada in 1978 (Table 7.1). Of that number, an estimated 9,972,000 persons were employed; 911,000 or 8.4% were unemployed. The proportion of the female population in the labour force increased from 40.2% in 1972 to 47.8% in 1978 (Table 7.2). Of approximately 7,479,000 males over 15 years of age in the population in 1972, 77.5% were in the labour force; in 1978 the participation rate was 77.9% of 8,531,000.

Government in relation to employment

7.1

Labour Canada

7.1.1

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; and conducting inquiries into important industrial questions upon which adequate information may not be available.

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

The industrial relations legislation applies to employers, employees and trade unions within federal jurisdiction. This does not include the federal public service but does include employees of Crown corporations and agencies. The department is responsible for conciliation and arbitration procedures in industrial disputes and for certain violations of legislation. 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.

The department promotes and protects the rights of the parties involved in the world of work, a working environment conducive to physical and social well-being, a fair return for effort, and 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.

Employment and Immigration Canada

7.1.2

The main objective of the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission (CEIC) is to further the attainment of national economic and social goals by realizing the full productive potential of Canada's human resources, while supporting initiatives of individuals to meet their economic needs and pursue satisfactory work. CEIC is also concerned with unemployment insurance and the admission of immigrants and non-immigrants in accordance with the economic, social and cultural interests of Canada. It administers the social insurance number program which is a key part of the administration of several income support programs and the income tax system. In