Active Labour Market Policy in Canada: Lessons From the Labour Market Development Agreements – January 18 2002

A Conference Hosted by the Canadian Policy Research Networks
Sponsored by Alberta Human Resources and Employment

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Participation in active labour market measures is an important step towards employment success for many Canadians. Training and skill development, business start-up assistance, career information, and job search and placement supports are some of the ways that Canadians get help to enter and strengthen their position in the job market.

The context and delivery of such programs have undergone considerable change over the past decade. Demographic, economic and technological trends have raised new opportunities and challenges. Moreover, the 1996 Employment Insurance (EI) Act introduced sweeping reforms to labour market policy in Canada, including how active measures are delivered to unemployed Canadians. Alberta was the first jurisdiction to sign a *Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA)* in December 1996, followed shortly by most other jurisdictions.

This conference will provide an opportunity to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing active labour market policies in Canada, to take stock of the LMDA experience, and to discuss best practices and innovative programming from across the country. Six sessions will feature presenters from a wide variety of backgrounds:

(1) The Changing Context of Labour Market Policy – international, national and provincial perspectives on the likely impact of trends, such as technological change, globalization and demographics, on active labour market policies in the next decade.

(2) Lessons Learned from the LMDAs - provincial and federal perspectives on lessons learned from the LMDA experience, including issues of governance, outcomes, accountability, challenges and future options.

(3) ***Training and Skill Development: LMDA and Other Initiatives*** - an examination of both LMDA-supported programs and other training and skill development initiatives, with discussion of program design and evaluation, client eligibility, examples of innovative programming, and future training and skill development needs.

(4) ***Achieving Full Labour Market Participation*** - the perspectives of Aboriginal people, social assistance recipients and persons with disabilities on challenges to labour market participation, and the design and success of programs intended to address these challenges.

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(5) ***Indicators Used to Assess Labour Market Outcomes*** - international, national and provincial experiences with indicators and evaluation criteria for assessing the effectiveness of active labour market programs.

(6) ***Future Challenges and Directions for Labour Market Policy*** - government, business and labour representatives will discuss future challenges and directions for active labour market policy in Canada.

The conference will be of interest to community organizations, labour, employers, researchers and those engaged in the design and delivery of active labour market programs.

There are only a few openings left for those interested in participating. For further information, please contact Grant Schellenberg, Director of the Work Network, by e-mail at gschellenberg@cprn.org

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