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Welcome!

This number of *Horizons* looks at issues we expect to hear about during the 2001 National Policy Research Conference, *Bringing Communities Together.* As the world gets smaller, the communities we inhabit are undergoing all sorts of transitions. A growing diversity of immigrants from around the world has given rise to new kinds of ethno-cultural communities in Canada. Environmental stresses and strains have increased our interest in building sustainable communities. In various places throughout Canada, innovative communities have begun to offer us new solutions to old problems. This issue highlights the changing nature of communities and the emergence of new forms of community, including virtual communities. We hope it will provide a tool to reflect on ways of bringing communities together.

The World We Want

"The important thing to see here is the currents of desire beneath the pretty surfaces, the wishes and fantasies there facilitated. What do they point to? The sociological studies bear out something that philosophical inquiry can see without taking a survey. We are finally, happier not with more stuff but with more meaning: more creative leisure time, stronger connections to groups of friends, deeper commitments to common social projects, and a greater opportunity to reflect. In short, the life of the well-rounded person; including crucially the orienting aspect of life associated with virtuous citizenship. Nor is this basic social commitment something we should pursue for ourselves alone, a project simply to promote our personal happiness. At its best, it is an expression of commonality that creates something greater then the sum of its — let us be honest — often self interested and distracted members. It creates a community."

For more information, see: Kingwell, Mark. *The World We Want: Virtue, Vice and the Good Citizen.* Penguin Books, 2001.

Policy Reflections

"There is no finer investment for any community than putting milk into babies."

– Winston Churchill

Next Up!!!

The events of September 11 have thrust the matter of public safety back to the forefront of political debate. In the area of research, this leads to questions about the ability of our institutions to meet the new security challenges as well as their ability to restore the confidence of Canadians, which was shaken by these events. The next issue of *Horizons* will look at various aspects of the public safety question. If you know of any studies or programs that might be of interest to readers, please contact us by e-mail at horizons@prs-srp.gc.ca or call (613) 947-1956.

Canada

Executive Brief

Understanding Communities

COMMUNITIES: A MULTIFACETED REALITY?

What is a community? Why should we be interested in communities, and why are they important in the implementation of public policy in Canada? While

these questions may at first glance seem elementary, anyone who attempts to answer them will quickly realize that the concept of "community" does not lend itself to one rigid definition, but rather is perceived in different ways by different people. In the final analysis, then, a community is the product of the context that defines it.

The complexity and plurality of communities and the realities associated with them are what make them interesting. In a world that is changing at an ever-increasing pace, where even the most unforeseeable events can occur, it is important to take a close look at communities and see how they enable us to estab-

lish new points of reference. Communities are affected by change and must adapt to new circumstances, but they themselves are also agents of change and renewal.

The challenge for researchers and decision makers is to implement policies that will meet multidimensional challenges by ensuring the renewal of our institutions and maximizing the dividends derived from this renewal.

COMMUNITIES AT THE HEART OF CHANGE

To cope with change, citizens are increasingly looking to communities for innovative solutions. Whether they are innovative communities capable of generating new ideas, sustainable communities focussed on developing forward-looking management strategies, socio-cultural communities able to strengthen the social fabric in a multiethnic or multicultural context, or virtual communities where citizens interact in a world where physical boundaries do not exist, communities are an essential link to well-being.

Closer to home, discussions on the emergence of a North American community, though

not new, have taken on new meaning in the wake of the events of September 11. The issue of bilateral relations between Canada and the United States and multilateral relations among Canada, the United States and Mexico are being seen in a new light. Cities, the opportunities and challenges they present, are increasingly important as we question our collective ability to adapt. Will we have the ingenuity necessary to deal with these challenges and their long-term social, economic and environmental impacts? The answer to this question may depend on our ability to foster the creation of social and human capital and to expand the existing links between groups and individual Canadians across the country.

The complexity of these questions and their impact on the public policy development process calls for a multidisciplinary approach. The challenge for researchers and decision makers is to implement policies that will meet multidimensional challenges by ensuring the renewal of our institutions and maximizing the dividends derived from this renewal.

The Policy Research Initiative (PRI) will examine many of the important issues facing Canadians at the fourth National Policy Research Conference, *Bringing*

Communities Together. The conference will be an opportunity to make use of the research carried out as part of the PRI's three horizontal research projects (North American Linkages, Social Cohesion and Sustainable Development), while enabling researchers and decision makers to discuss emerging issues affecting communities both in Canada and elsewhere.

What is a community? It may be difficult, even impossible, to provide a simple answer to that question. Understanding this concept and its impact on the well-being of Canadians is nevertheless at the centre of the PRI's concerns. We hope that the *Bringing Communities Together* Conference will identify some solutions and remedy some of the shortcomings in key areas of research while emphasizing the importance of communities in the implementation of public policy in Canada.

Laura A. Chapman
Executive Director,
Policy Research Initiative

For more information on the *Bringing Communities Together* Conference, please consult the Sunrise and Sunset editions of *Horizons.*

Upcoming Events

DATE	EVENTS
JANUARY 30 - FEBRUARY 1, 2002	***Ready, Set, Go! Improving the Odds through Integrated Research, Policy and Practice*** (Ottawa) Human Resources Development Canada The Applied Research Branch is hosting a national dialogue conference entitled *Ready, Set, Go! Improving the Odds through Integrated Research, Policy and Practice* at the Ottawa Congress Centre from Wednesday, January 30th to Friday, February 1st, 2002. This conference will provide opportunities for us to talk with other researchers, policy makers and practitioners about key social issues facing Canada today. Throughout the conference, our focus will be on participation and dialogue: bringing policy and practice perspectives to the research presented, as well as exploring lifespan and cross-sectoral approaches to our work. Delegates will be able to influence future directions by giving their thoughts on the issues at hand, by discussing how findings apply to their own work and by helping to identify gaps. They will connect with others concerned about the same issues, brainstorm new ideas and build relationships. For more information, please visit the conference's web site at http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/readysetgo.
FEBRUARY 8-9, 2002	***Challenges to Governance in North America and the European Union*** (Ottawa) Carleton University Much rhetoric and public debate surrounds the concept of 'globalization.' Yet the dominant force for many countries, including Canada, is the move toward the formation of regional economic blocs. However, regionalization is much less well understood than globalization, and deserves much more serious attention by both scholars and policy makers. The two most prominent and powerful regional groupings, North America and Europe, represent two very different models of regionalization, but they both face some common challenges for governance. The conference will bring together prominent scholars from Europe and North America to explore different aspects of the dilemmas to governance posed by regionalization. The aim of the conference is to identify common themes and ways in which the regional or continental experience is raising new challenges for policy makers and academics alike. For more information, please contact Carleton University's Centre on North American Politics and Society at NorthAmerican Centre@carleton.ca.
FEBRUARY 15-16, 2002	***Diagnostics & Solutions: Is the Canadian Model of Health Care Sustainable?*** (Montreal) The McGill Institute for the Study of Canada Over the past thirty years, the health care system in Canada has been buffeted by public expectations, changing priorities in the balance of public and private interest and a radical transformation of almost every aspect of health delivery. This conference will inform participants and a wider public about many of these changes from role of hospitals to the real economics of health care provision. In addition, the conference will develop and share an improved knowledge base about the real issues at stake in health care reform. It will be a public forum for substantive debate about the problems and solutions facings specialists and citizens alike. For more information please visit the conference web site at http://www.arts.mcgill.ca/programs/misc/home.htm or contact Antonia Maioni, the Director and Conference Chair at (514) 398-4815.

Feature Columnist

Communities: *The Engines of Social Cohesion*

Social cohesion has been an ongoing policy research concern of the federal government since 1996 when it was recognised that changes from the "industrial age" to the "knowledge age" were having significant effects. These changes included those that we now associate with globalization and which have been acknowledged to have significant impacts on Canada as a whole and on our communities in particular. For example, changes associated with financial deregulation, new production systems, transportation and international trade agreements have resulted in firms becoming increasingly mobile and less place dependant. Similarly, there are changes in our communities in that many people have multiple foci of identity and an increasing diversity in perspective. Overall, there is a sense that the institutions and attitudes that have served as catalysts for cohesion, particularly at the level of the nation-state, are becoming less relevant as Canadian communities face the repercussions of globalization more directly. These are challenges that have been brought into stark relief by the events of September 11.

RESULTS OF CURRENT RESEARCH

Research carried out under the aegis of the Social Cohesion Network has taken a broad perspective reflecting the wide ranging interests of the 21 member departments. Guiding investigations has been the realization that there are many views on what is meant by social cohesion. However, the network has established a concept of social cohesion that is relevant to the Canadian context. It is based upon the willingness of individuals to cooperate and act together, and the acknowledgment that cooperation and collective action occurs at all levels of society. Further, it is recognised that social cohesion and basic liberal social values exist in a reciprocal and mutually reinforcing relationship. Freedom, equality, democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law are all predicated upon the willingness of individuals to cooperate together. The process of social cohesion provides the essential conditions for the continued development of these shared values. As Paul Bernard states, social cohesion depends upon "basic values that are inescapable as they

are difficult to categorize, such as liberty, equality and solidarity."[1] To maintain a cohesive society, a balance between these principles must be sustained.

Reviewing the research carried out by the Social Cohesion Network together with the results of the recent consultations, it is clear that, while many areas are increasingly well understood, some require further consideration. Research to date has been carried out under three themes: faultlines, axes of community identification and implications of changes in social cohesion.

THEME 1: FAULTLINES

Researchers have examined the nature and extent of the social and economic changes being experienced by Canadians, specifically the negative effects that are most often borne by the most vulnerable members of society. There are growing inequalities which have resulted, in part, from the effects of globalization, but which have also been exacerbated by the long-term effects of the 1990s restructuring of social programs. In addition, the Canadian population is increasingly diverse in terms of family, age structure, and ethno-cultural origins, for example. Whereas much research tends to look at these as single issues, research undertaken by the Social Cohesion Network has established that understanding real outcomes requires investigating the combined effects of social changes. It is in combination that the changes we observe pose the greatest challenges to social cohesion.

We have shown that there are persistent or growing income gaps linked to ethno-cultural diversity, with the situation of Aboriginal people, in particular, being one of the most pressing issues. Attitudes of young people are also significant in that they are more unhappy, less satisfied and less optimistic than older Canadians. Given the reciprocal relationship between social cohesion and income inequalities and economic exclusion, findings such as these are a cause for concern.

1. Bernard, Paul. "La Cohésion sociale: critique dialectique d'un quasi-concept?" *Lien Social et Politiques,* Vol. 41, pp. 47-59, 1999.

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THEME II: AXES OF COMMUNITY IDENTIFICATION

Canadians are strongly attached to Canada, but there are powerful competing attachments from both regions and localities. It is also apparent that for many Canadians traditional symbols such as the National Anthem and the flag no longer retain their preeminence as foci for identity. As sources of pride, these symbols are now being joined by concepts such as freedom and compassion and by Canadian institutions such as health care. In other words, Canadians are increasingly emphasizing the importance of social values and consequently the relevance of social citizenship.

An ongoing research program looking at the relationship between culture and social cohesion has underscored the benefits of cultural participation. Cultural activities bring with them the possibility of finding accommodations in diverse societies and of building social capital. Closely related to cultural participation, voluntarism has the capacity to add to a sense of cohesion. Social cohesion research has shown that Canadians volunteer more than most other countries. However, increasingly, it is a small group of these volunteers that performs the greater part of volunteer hours, a trend that has the potential to undermine the positive effects of voluntary activity. The development of the information society also enables Canadians to connect to each other and participate in the civic life of the country. Nevertheless, as with the voluntarism, there are aspects of the distribution of connectivity that have negative effects. Foremost amongst these is the "digital divide" in which participation is prevented by social and economic inequalities. These and other observations, indicate that, while the conditions for a continuing cohesive society do exist, there are trends that require ongoing consideration.

THEME III: IMPLICATIONS OF CHANGES IN SOCIAL COHESION

In examining the implications of changes in levels of social cohesion, researchers have looked particularly at the consequences of its weakening. We have found that economic activity, the functioning of government, levels of health and of crime, for example, are negatively affected by declining levels of social cohe-

sion. In the case of first two issues, it is clear that trust plays a major part in that it tends to reduce transaction costs. This in turn encourages cooperative behaviour and exchange relationships. However, our research has also shown that the outcomes of weakening social cohesion are generally felt in the long term. There are significant, and unpredictable, time lags between phenomena thought to affect social cohesion and observable social change.

DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In terms of issues that need further research, reviewing the results of current research and the outcomes of a recent consultation process on social cohesion has highlighted several knowledge gaps.

- *Income Distribution.* The way in which Canada's communities are developing is most clearly reflected in the changes in income distribution. Understanding the effects of income distribution in terms of generational and group differences continues to be a central issue in understanding the process of social cohesion.

- *Diversity.* Canadian communities are increasingly diverse and, given that research has shown that a society in which dissent has been eliminated is one where social cohesion is under pressure, we need to understand how different values and attitudes can become a positive source for change.

- *Government Institutions and Inclusion.* Analysis of the effects of government activities on social cohesion is significantly underdeveloped. We need to understand the effectiveness of different models of governance.

- *Citizenship and Identity.* With the growing significance of global cultures, migration and transnationalism, Canadians now experience many more ways of belonging. How these ways of belonging develop and interact is a central issue in building an understanding of the process of social cohesion.

Examining these concerns in terms of their effects on Canadian communities will be central to understanding social cohesion. Further, these research gaps *have direct relevance to the situation of Aboriginal peoples in Canada today. Research is*

needed in order to understand the process of cohesion with respect to Aboriginal communities' interests in capacity building and self-realization. Finally, there is also an ongoing need to reinforce the intellectual framework for social cohesion. This will require understanding the interactions of social processes that contribute to social cohesion.

As the organizers of the 2001 National Policy Research Conference highlight in their invitation, "Communities are where citizens live. ... they provide the context in which people build the quality of life; they are where people experience change; and they are a source for stability and support in the face of change." Communities are, in a sense, the 'engines' of social cohesion. It is in these places that citizens have the opportunities to participate in many aspects of Canadian life. But they are also the places where the experience of poverty, exclusion and prejudice are most keenly felt. In light of the increased stresses being felt by Canadians following September 11, now more than ever, we need to address the faultlines and understand how to

strengthen the social fabric of our communities. We need to defend and reinforce our core values, promote participation and develop trust in each other and in our institutions. Research completed by the Social Cohesion Network indicates that understanding of the process of social cohesion at the scale of the community, in the form and content of relationships, even in the neighbourhood, is likely to make an important contribution in achieving these objectives. As Professors Ray Forrest and Ade Kearns suggest, these routine relationships are "arguably the basic building blocks of social cohesion — through them we learn tolerance, cooperation and acquire a sense of social order and belonging."[2]

Dick Stanley
Director,
Canadian Heritage

2   Forrest, Ray and Ade Kearns (2000), *Social Cohesion, Social Capital and the Neighbourhood,* Paper presented to Economic and Social Research Council Cities Programme — Neighbourhoods Colloquium, Liverpool, June 5-6.

Award Winners

Engaging Citizens

The winners of this year's Suzanne Peters Citizen Engagement Award are Dr. Richard Shillington, principal, Tristat Resources, and St. Christopher House. St. Christopher House, a multi-service neighbourhood centre, initiated the Community Undertaking Social Policy (CUSP) Project and Dr. Richard Shillington was the first CUSP "policy fellow" who spent eight weeks in St. Christopher House over the fall and winter of 2000-01. His focus was examining the impacts of cumulative

income policies on lower-income people.

The goals of the CUSP Project are to "ground" social policy in frontline and first-hand experience, to assist with disseminating social policy findings and recommendations with the people most affected, and to enhance the sensitivity and respect of policy experts for lower-income and disadvantaged people. Dr. Shillington spent much of the eight weeks in over 37 meetings and discussions with St. Christopher

House program participants, frontline staff, management, volunteers, community members and other community service agencies. His findings and those of the St. Christopher House community have been documented and disseminated widely.

For more on the Community Undertaking Social Policy Project undertaken by St. Christopher House and Dr. Richard Shillington, contact Maureen Fair at (416) 504-3535 x233 or maureenfa@stchrishouse.org or Richard Shillington at (613) 692-1551 or ers2@istar.ca.

2001 National Policy Conference's Learning Workshops

The first day of the National Policy Research Conference is unique in that it consists exclusively of Learning Workshops. Unlike the rest of the Conference that focuses on the results of research, the workshops introduce tools and methods that facilitate new research. This year's Learning Workshops cover a broad range of subject matter areas, reflecting the many dimensions of community: demographics, immigration and ethnicity, rural Canada and cities, the emerging impact of information and communications technologies and of E-government, community health, justice, social capital, children and youth in transition, volunteering, quality of life indicators, and the practice of community-level research and evaluation. These workshops are designed to enhance understanding of the information and tools available for conducting research on communities, as well as some of the innovative projects underway to make effective use of these resources. Some examples of what attendees can expect are:

MEASURING UP – QUALITY OF LIFE IN CANADIAN COMMUNITIES:

The Quality of Life Reporting System serves as a tool to identify and promote awareness of issues affecting quality of life in Canadian communities, to better target policies and resources aimed at improving quality of life, and to support collaborative efforts to improve quality of life. Attendees will learn about the construction and application of these indicators for 18 communities across Canada.

BRINGING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER THROUGH E-GOVERNMENT:

The workshop will explore key strategic and political challenges posed by e-government and will identify and frame core issues that confront governments. The presentation is based on the research that the Centre for Collaborative Government (CCG) is currently conducting through its Crossing Boundaries initiative. Attendees will learn how information and communications technologies are driving the transition toward a new "networking" model of government in Canada.

MEASURING SOCIAL CAPITAL:

Social capital is an evolving concept that describes how relationships, networks, norms and trust contribute to the better functioning of both individuals and society as a whole. This session will describe what data on specific aspects of social capital are already being collected by Statistics Canada, and a discussion will be initiated with participants on what might be collected by the General Social Survey in 2003. Attendees will gain an understanding of the relevance of social capital in every aspect of society.

COUNTING THE HOMELESS IN CANADA:

This workshop will describe the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS).

Using input from experts and the shelter community, HIFIS was developed to collect a range of longitudinal information about the people who use shelter services. Information collected on the shelter population includes: demographic characteristics, factors that contribute to homelessness, sources of income, and health status. The main objective of HIFIS is to become a supported and operational system available to shelters and communities across Canada.

DATA AND CRIME PREVENTION:

The National Crime Prevention Centre assists communities in developing and implementing community-based solutions to crime and victimization. The Canadian Center for Justice Statistics (Statistics Canada) has developed an analytical tool that combines crime and socio-demographic data at the Census sub-division level to aid in the assessment of risk and need in communities across the country that might benefit from crime prevention efforts. This session will discuss correlates of crime and crime trends at the community level.

The Learning Workshops will take place on the first day of the National Policy Research Conference on December 5. The schedule of the Learning Workshops and the following two days of the Conference is available at www.policyresearch.gc.ca/nprc-cnrp/.

PRI Update

A Reintroduction to the PRI

The Government of Canada's Policy Research Initiative (PRI) was created in 1996 by the Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet. The PRI works to strengthen the federal government's policy research capacity in order to deal with the increasingly complex issues facing Canada and Canadians. Its goal is to build a solid foundation of expertise and knowledge upon which sound public policy decisions can be based. Its work helps Canada to prepare for tomorrow's issues, today.

The PRI's vision and its everyday activities can be summarized in three words: *Knowledge, People, Community.* The PRI builds better policy knowledge by enhancing the skills and resources available to policy researchers, and by bringing them together as a community.

Public policy **knowledge** doesn't just come from within governments. Ideas can also begin with universities, research institutes, NGOs and other sources. The PRI encourages the creation and sharing of research from these areas. The PRI is focused on three Horizontal Research Projects that cut across the boundaries of disciplines and departments: *North American Linkages, Social Cohesion* and *Sustainable Development.* The PRI is encouraging researchers to ask:

• In the context of an increasingly integrated North America, what is necessary to maintain Canadians' well being?

The PRI's vision and its everyday activities can be summarized in three words: Knowledge, People, Community.

• What are some of the factors at the individual, community and societal levels that contribute to social inclusion?

• What are the challenges associated with implementing sustainable development?

Together with the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, the PRI has also pulled together a group of Aboriginal scholars who are examining the way indigenous knowledge can be applied to public policy. So far, the Aboriginal Scholars Project has identified governance, social cohesion, indigenous knowledge, women, and children and youth as its main research themes.

Another part of the PRI's mandate is to help recruit, develop and retain the right **people** for careers in policy research. We need a capable and diverse workforce with the capacity to develop and maintain the knowledge base needed for future government decision making.

The Policy Research Development Program, a unique recruitment opportunity for highly skilled postgraduates, is another of the PRI's projects. Outstanding graduate student work is recognized through the Graduate Student Speaker Series and the Student Ambassador Program. The PRI also helps to facilitate the placement of co-op students in policy research positions and provides information to public servants about policy research learning opportunities.

The PRI created the Canadian Policy Research Awards in 1998. These annual awards give us a chance to honour and celebrate the outstanding achievements of our colleagues in the policy research field. Awards are presented in six categories before one of the largest gatherings of the policy research community each year. Among the awards given is the Graduate Student Prize.

The PRI exists for the sake of the policy research **community,** a diverse group of people who are geographically dispersed but

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share common interests and goals. The PRI's projects help to create spaces—physical or intellectual spaces—where policy researchers, managers and analysts can come together. By connecting researchers to analysts and other federal public servants, the PRI seeks to encourage these decision makers to consider research results when developing new policies.

The PRI's community orientation stems from the fact that its goals complement those of many other policy research organizations. By working collaboratively, the PRI has been able to share in the benefits of many projects while also reinforcing the work of its partners. At times, the PRI has also been in a position to facilitate

partnerships among other people and organizations.

The annual National Policy Research Conference is a prime example of our community-building efforts. Since the first conference in 1998, it has become the event of choice in policy circles. This year's conference on Bringing Communities Together will be a meeting place for policy visionaries from across Canada.

These and other workshops and events are complemented by a wide range of information products. PRI's newsletter, *Horizons,* covers the latest developments in policy research. We also publish *Isuma: Canadian Journal of Policy Research,* a multi-disciplinary, quarterly journal available in

print and at www.isuma.net. And our recently redesigned web site at www.policyresearch.gc.ca links you to the on-line world of policy research.

The PRI creates opportunities for policy researchers to work together, share research and learn from one another. Its efforts have helped to facilitate innovative research that has been influential in government circles thanks to its interdisciplinary approach. The PRI has not been alone in this effort. More and more people in Canada and around the world are beginning to recognize the importance of a strong government policy capacity. Working closely with its many partners, the PRI has been proud to contribute to this change.

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Climate Change

Canadians love to talk about the weather! After one of the warmest and driest summers that Canada has experienced in last few decades it is timely to devote an issue of *ISUMA: Canadian Journal of Policy Research* to future changes in average weather, or climate. The scientific consensus that the "balance of evidence suggests a discernable human influence on global climate" has led to international agreements to limit the anthropogenic emissions of gases that will cause future climate change. This issue of *ISUMA,*

edited by Dr. Gordon McBean, addresses what is known about the science of climate change (Weaver et al.), the role science has played in international policy process (Jim Bruce), the future impacts of climate on issues such as health (Last and Chiotti) and security (Hubert), strategies for enhancing Canadians' ability to adapt to climate change (Smith et al.), and the policy implications of international agreements to limit emissions of gases that cause climate change (LePreste and Dufault, Jaccard).

Feature Columnist

Rapid Urban Growth:
A Challenge for Sustainable Development

It is too late to declare sustainable urban development the first global challenge of the 21st century.

But it is clear that the future health of the earth's environment and the prosperity of its citizens will depend in large part on our ability to lay the groundwork for sustainable, liveable cities over the next 10 to 20 years.

> *...the future health of the earth's environment and the prosperity of its citizens will depend in large part on our ability to lay the groundwork for sustainable, liveable cities over the next 10 to 20 years.*

Already, urban sustainability is a major focus for policy makers and community leaders around the world, for reasons ranging from local economic and environmental pressures to a growing concern with public health. Under the federal Sustainable Cities Initiative (SCI), communities as diverse as Qingdao (China), Salvador (Brazil), Katowice (Poland), San José (Costa Rica) and Cordoba (Argentina) are getting hands-on experience with the transition to truly sustainable development. The SCI, which encourages public-private infrastructure investment to ease the pressures of urbanization, was inspired in large part by the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE).

In Canada as well, the pace of municipal infrastructure renewal is picking up, with funding from two green municipal funds managed by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), as well as the Infrastructure Canada program that was launched last year. Participating communities are helping to prove a point that has become a guiding principle for the National Round Table: that the economy is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the environment, not the other way around.

AN "URBAN TSUNAMI"

But urban sustainability is still an immense challenge. NRTEE member Mike Harcourt warns of an "urban tsunami" that could lead to unthinkable crowding and congestion, with disturbing implications for urban transportation, water and wastewater systems, energy production and use, and housing. In the next 25 years, he says, 63% of the global population will live in cities, and 2.4 billion people will be born in urban centres. In Canada, 90% of the population lived in rural communities in 1867; by 2000, 90% of Canadians were city-dwellers.

"The economic and social viability of the world's great cities is necessarily linked to their environmental sustainability," Harcourt told the Americana 2001 Environmental Technology Conference earlier this year. "As our cities ramp up the competition for investment and skilled labour, quality of life becomes a key decision point when highly coveted knowledge workers begin shopping around for the job of a lifetime. And many of the key determinants of quality of life — like clean air, clean water, efficient transit, and safe, well-planned neighbourhoods — fall squarely within a sustainable development agenda."

THE PIECES OF THE PUZZLE

In recent years, the NRTEE has supported original research dealing with several key pieces of the urban sustainability puzzle.

In the mid-1990s, the Round Table issued in-depth State of the Debate reports on the condition of Canada's municipal infrastructure (particularly water and wastewater systems), and on the reclamation of industrial "brownfield" sites. In 1998, the NRTEE's Sustainable Cities Program involved 670 Canadian companies and organizations in a study of 172 cities around the globe and set the stage for the Sustainable Cities Initiative.

The Round Table subsequently commissioned a May 2001 study of the global competitiveness of Canadian cities, in which the Federation of Canadian Municipalities raised alarms about the ability of local

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governments to raise revenue to match a dramatic change in their responsibilities over the past 150 years. In a conclusion that had a direct bearing on urban infrastructure and sustainability, the study noted that "municipal governments in Canada are heavily reliant on locally-generated revenues, have fewer levers to attract investment, and scant access to federal and provincial funds."

By contrast, the FCM found that municipalities in the United States and Europe can draw on a "treasure chest" of financing mechanisms, including:

- Legal authority for local self-government through Home Rule Charters in the US;
- Fiscal authority to engage in public-private partnerships;
- Access to sales and income tax revenue;
- Opportunities to leverage private sector investment through tax incentives;
- Access to permanent lending programs for infrastructure, like infrastructure banks and revolving funds.

In January 2001, the Round Table's Millennium Statement identified healthy urban environments as one of the four key challenges that Canadians will face in the next decade. Since March, a working group led by Harcourt has been mapping out the details of an urban sustainability program that will develop an alternative, coherent strategy for Canadian cities, based on the principles of sustainable development. Details were still taking shape as *Horizons* went to press. But there is some hope that the program will build on the NRTEE's growing specialty in ecological fiscal reform (EFR) to develop innovative policy instruments that support urban sustainability, livability and competitiveness.

The Round Table is also paying close attention to the massive business opportunities arising from what Harcourt calls the "urban century." Cities around the world are expected to spend US$1.6 trillion per year on infrastructure, and Canada is in a good position to capture a major share of that business. Domestically, the federal government can expect to play a

Bringing Stakeholders Together

In its work over the past decade, the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE) has developed a unique approach to consultation that brings together a wide cross-section of stakeholders to address contentious issues.

The Round Table itself, which is appointed by and reports to the Prime Minister, draws its members from business, labour, environmental organizations, academia and First Nations. Through its broadly-based task forces and expert meetings, the NRTEE creates a unique environment where participants can leave their prepared positions at the door, explore areas of common interest and concern, and seek consensus where possible on courses of action that will represent a "win" for all concerned. But most importantly, areas and sources of disagreement are also identified and their implications for policy explained.

In developing its internationally-acclaimed specialty in multistakeholder processes, the Round Table has recognized that the journey is often as important as the destination, if not more so. NRTEE members and other participants have come to place high value on the dialogue that goes on when representatives of different communities of interest come together to address an area of common concern.

The Urban Sustainability Working Group will be one of the most important programs the Round Table undertakes this decade, and the dialogue it generates will almost certainly be one of the widest ranging. The NRTEE will be counting on stakeholders from every level of government and every sector of society to help it address the key urban sustainability challenges facing Canada.

major role in the transition to urban sustainability, given its authority over airports, ports, railways and interprovincial transportation. These and other aspects of sustainable development are sure to occupy centre stage as the Prime Minister's Caucus Task Force on Urban Issues begins to explore a broader federal role in the life of Canada's cities.

A BROADER FOCUS

While cities are an important part of the picture at an event entitled *Bringing Communities Together,* the NRTEE has had considerable experience with many of the other issues that conference organizers have grouped under the broad heading of sustainable development:

- *Resource management:* The Task Force on Aboriginal Communities and Non-renewable Resource Development worked with Northerners to balance the economic, environmental and social dimensions of large-scale resource development and management.

- *Ecological footprints:* The Task Force on Conservation of Natural Heritage, building on a hugely successful national conference in Winnipeg last month, is developing a conservation framework that will strengthen protected areas and wildlife habitats, while meeting the needs of people who already use and occupy those landscapes.

- *Environmental risks:* The Task Force on Ecological Fiscal Reform has undertaken research on agricultural landscapes, transportation fuels and chemicals designated as "Track II" substances under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act.*

- *Economic development:* The National Round Table prepares an annual presentation to the Minister of Finance on greening the budget, and is developing a series of indicators to measure the progress of Canada's economy toward sustainability.

- *Adaptive management:* The NRTEE's National Forum on Climate Change assembled more than two dozen Order of Canada recipients to determine what Canadians should know about a major adaptive challenge — and what they can do about it.

David J. McGuinty
President & CEO,
National Round Table on the Environment
and the Economy

For more information, please visit the NRTEE's web site at: http://www.nrtee-trnee.ca.

Award Winners

Outstanding Research Contribution Awards

The 2001 winners of the Outstanding Research Contribution Awards all share a concern with sustainability and the need for prudent long-term thinking on the part of policy developers. Daniel Schwanen's research is on the sustainability of aspects of Canada's cultural policy in the light of existing and new trade agreements. William Robson focuses on the fiscal durability of our national health care-system, already stressed and soon to face the additional pressure of a rapidly aging society. Finally, Ann Dale looks extensively at global environmental challenges and the very uncertain future for humanity.

MAINTAINING A ROOM OF OUR OWN

In "A Room of Our Own: Cultural Policies and Trade Agreements" the IRPP's Daniel Schwanen argues that the strategy of excluding cultural industries from trade rules (as with NAFTA) leaves Canadian cultural policies vulnerable to the new technologies on the one hand and convergence between industries on the other. Moreover, the United States and other countries will continue to seek to include cultural industries in agreements such as the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). Canada's failure to deal could result in cultural and other industries losing access to export markets.

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In this context, Schwanen argues that Canada cannot hope to sustain its current stance on cultural policies. Rather we need to be more precise about our objectives. To help think through the aims of cultural policy he distinguishes among four potential public good aspects of culture: (1) as a source of information; (2) as a form of education; (3) as a way of preserving and generating social capital; and (4) as a new source for wealth. Then, "Canada should offer and secure a fundamental tradeoff between abandoning policies at home that are redundant from the standpoint of legitimate cultural objectives and gaining an international recognition for the right to foster a specifically Canadian choice, which is central to its goals."

The instrument to achieve this trade-off? Schwanen answers with a draft interpretive code for the inclusion of cultural policies in trade agreements that would direct dispute settlement panels on how to interpret trade agreements in the area of cultural goods.

The full report can be found at: www.irpp.org.

AVOIDING THE 'BUST'
In "Will the Baby Boomers Bust the Health Budget?" the C.D. Howe Institute's William B.P. Robson undertakes a study to determine the magnitude of the challenge of meeting the health care needs of Canada's aging population in the next forty years. Robson's modeling shows that the ability of provinces to meet the health care needs of their

populations varies in relation to estimates for regional economic growth. It also underlines that without proper planning by governments, the next generation of workers will be asked to pay a disproportionate and unequal share of the cost of providing health care for baby boomers. "Efforts to shift costs among generations," says Robson, "are not…defensible or conducive to sound policy."

To gauge the size of the challenges, the study combines population projections with figures for public health care spending by age group. Robson's projections show that the share of provincial incomes absorbed by health budgets will rise sharply from today's levels. Measured against GDP, the increase is from about 6 % in 2000 to 10 % in 2040; measured against provincial own-source revenues (assuming constant tax rates), the increase is from just over one-third to nearly 60 %. In present value terms, the increase in health's claim on the budget represents an unfunded liability of more than $500 billion — roughly the size of the net federal debt.

How should policy makers respond? Not by ad hoc increases in federal spending through the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST) which "make media headlines look like the provincial key to the federal treasury." Rather, Robson suggests that we change the incentives from spending for today to better management of current resources, internal markets in service delivery, and by liberalizing the rules

governing the private purchase of health care.

In support of an environment in which such reforms would be possible, he proposes two new instruments: a Seniors Health Grant that would integrate demographic considerations into the CHST and a Seniors Health Account that would pre-fund the amount by which payments under a demographically sensitive CHST would exceed those under the current arrangement.

The full report can be found at: www.cdhowe.org.

TAKING A STEP BACK FROM THE EDGE
Royal Roads University Professor Ann Dale's book *At the Edge* begins with the admonition that "the implementation of sustainable development is the human imperative of our current century" and carefully outlines the ecological, social and economic dimensions of this imperative.

The ecological imperative refers to the everyday dependence of human societies upon healthy, diverse and stable ecological systems capable of delivering critical services. Included under the social imperative are poverty gender inequities, population growth and over-consumption. The economic imperative flows from the global addiction of industrial societies to growth. Dale argues that the more these three imperatives continue to diverge "the greater the likelihood of a convergence of worldwide human and natural system collapse."

Eyewitness

Examining Diversity in Canada

Helping to kick off Canada's Citizenship Week (October 15-21), Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), Canadian Heritage and the Policy Research Initiative hosted the workshop "Social Cohesion and Citizenship: How Diversity is Changing the Parameters of Belonging." The third in the Social Cohesion Network's 2001 Workshop series, this event provided valuable insight into the challenge diversity poses for a common sense of belonging. CIC's Alfred A. MacLeod, ADM, Strategic Directions and Communication situated the discussion in the context of on-going trends in Canada and new considerations raised by the events of September 11.

Canadian Heritage's Jean-Pierre Bourdeau presented research on the "Sense of Community Belonging in Canada" which provides a useful lens for examining the degree of social cohesiveness among diverse demographic groups. Using Statistics Canada's 1998 General Social Survey, the degree of belonging experienced by the general Canadian population was explored. From a sample size of 10,749, 62.7% of the total responses showed a strong sense of community belonging as compared to 27.8% who had a weak sense of community belonging, and 9.6% with neutral responses. Factors determining the degree of belonging were identified as volunteerism, communication, health, age, year of arrival and sport. These factors relate to, on a larger scale, Canadians' sense of citizenship.

Jane Jenson, of the Université de Montréal and the Canadian Policy Research Networks, in her presentation "The Changing Boundaries of Citizenship," traced the development of the concept of citizenship and focused on the challenge that diversity poses for a common sense of belonging. She defined citizenship as both a legal status and a relationship between state and citizens. As such, it is in constant redefinition, reacting to recognition practices and claims-making on the part of under-represented groups. The boundaries of who is and who is not a citizen are further defined by the interactive combination of three dimensions of citizenship: rights and responsibilities access to public institutions and the capacity to par-

ticipate in them, and belonging in terms of both formal membership and the feelings of belonging and identity.

Central to Keith Banting's (Queen's University) presentation "Social Citizenship, Diversity and Belonging" was the question of whether or not social programs help bind citizens and diverse communities of interest closer together. From a social citizenship perspective, citizenship is a set of social rights as distinct from political and legal rights. Banting presented evidence that a reciprocal relationship exists between social citizenship and an individual's sense of belonging. Therefore the more active one is as a citizen, the stronger one's sense of belonging to a community.

CHALLENGES OF DIVERSITY

Banting and Jenson conceptualized the challenges that diversity poses to the parameters of belonging to include four distinct areas:

- Cultural diversity due to immigration;
- Claims by national minorities;
- Other categorical claims for recognition (i.e. same-sex relationships); and
- Persistent social and economic inequalities among ethno-cultural and "racial" groups.

Social policy as a tool for integration can bring about feelings of fragmentation from both minority groups and majority groups. Banting cited potential challenges from minorities if social rights are perceived as instruments of cultural domination because they do not accommodate culturally distinct groups. Minorities have a stronger desire for social services that reflect their distinctiveness and allow for cultural expression, placing their emphasis on the construction of social policy with greater cultural sensitivity. Conversely, majority groups begin to retreat from society as they feel that benefits are increasingly flowing to members of minority groups and struggle to maintain a definition for society as a whole. Among the majority group's possible responses to new social policy are:

- Incorporation;

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- Welfare chauvinism; and
- Neo-liberalism due to growing levels of immigration.

FRAMEWORK FOR DIVERSITY

Jenson situated the challenges to our understanding of belonging in the "Management of the Canadian Diversity Model" which outlines four dimensions or sets of tensions:

- Uniformity vs. heterogeneity;
- Individual rights vs. collective rights;
- Symmetry vs. asymmetry; and
- Economic freedom vs. economic security.

Although, these dimensions provide some parameters along which we can locate and analyze our policy choices, there is a constant underlying tension begging for dialogue. Jenson concluded by drawing on the idea that decisions for choices in social policy are best defined by a mix of approaches, particularly in light of claims for categorical changes. Choices must be made depending on where we position ourselves. The Management of the Canadian Diversity Model would be a useful tool to help us articulate our options and analyze our decisions.

LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

Following the presentations, CIC's Rosaline Frith, DG, Integration led a round-table discussion. Dialogue centred around three questions: How do we help ensure that citizenship remains an *inclusive* concept that strengthens social cohesion, while, at the same time, mediating competing demands for rights and recognition from different groups? Should the concept of social citizenship play a stronger role in defining the rights and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship? How can the government help foster a sense of belonging among recent immigrants, best promote citizenship and help ensure that Canadians continue to welcome the changes resulting from increased diversity?

For copies of the presentations please contact Huyen Nguyen at (613) 947-3925 or h.nguyen@prs-srp.gc.ca.

Award Winners
Knowledge Brokering

The 2001 Canadian Policy Research Knowledge Broker Award has been awarded to the Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc. (CPRN). CPRN fosters integration in a world that is increasingly fragmented by discipline, jurisdiction, language and culture. It provides a neutral space, where diverse groups of people can reflect, collaborate and struggle with their differences in order to arrive at new understandings and to identify common ground.

Innovative knowledge synthesization, integration and dissemination are apparent throughout CPRN activities. For example, CPRN's Changing Employment Relationships Project offers a fresh approach for understanding Canada's new work realities, viewing Canadians' working conditions through the lens of employment relationships. This relational perspective augments the traditional approach to studying work and labour markets, giving policymakers and labour market analysts a new mental map for charting the contours of work in Canada's emerging "new economy." Its key contribution is to document why good employment relationships are important for workers, employers and public policy.

In effect, CPRN's has created a model of "real-time" knowledge exchange and exemplifies CPRN's motto of "Engaging wills to find ways." For more information about CPRN please visit their web site at www.cprn.org.

Looking Outward

Press Survey: *Renewed Identity Debate in France*

France, "one and indivisible," its "citizenship" nurtured by "republican values," buttressed by its "universalism," is convulsed by existential anxieties. It has been years since it so questioned its identity. Introspection has been prompted mainly by the need to build Europe and revived by the events of September 11. Within its borders, a new dialogue needs to be engaged with the country's large Arab and Moslem minority. This state of mind naturally conditions the general thrust of France's public policies and the scholarship around them.

Public intellectual debate in France is distinguished by very powerful resistance: history weighs heavily and conditions views of the shattering of identities and multicultural experimentation. Last winter the right-wing daily Figaro published a long series of articles on "France facing the rise of multiculturalisms." A few select excerpts convey the overall tone: "Since identity feeds on territory and affectivity (love and hate), multiculturalism, through spatial deterioration, deprives the identity seeker of a basic referent and major marker, his source of personal replenishment, thus putting him at risk of atrophy and amputation of a part of himself" (Joseph Yacoub).

"The rise of the peril of communities ... is gnawing at the Western democracies from within and ... gradually replacing, without resistance, the old totalitarian myths" (Alain-Gérard Slama).

Author Philippe Muray feels that "the age of riots that will have occupied the last centuries

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of the historical period is being succeeded by the age of packs. Euphemistically described as 'communities' and 'tribes,' they have no other way of confirming their existence in this time of general derealization and erasure of old identities than to call for repressive laws, stronger legislation and prohibitions. This is their fundamental rationale."

Some contributions to the series attempted a more open viewpoint but were clearly a minority. Demographer Michèle Tribalat accepts a "differentialist" school because "we still have to offer some compensation to the 'casualties of assimilation' by accepting their claim to an 'iden-

tity exception,' however contrary to the principle of equality it may be. This is a kind of consent to defeat." Jean-Pierre Mignard, editor of the moderate left-wing magazine *Témoin,* cautiously tells the readers of *Le Figaro*: "The communities are here and they will grow. They will be the allies of the nation and may even enrich it if the Republic engages in a permanent dialogue with them, without granting them special rights but eliminating social discrimination of all kinds, which is exactly what draws the communities into communitarism."

This fear of multiculturalism, confused with the term "communitarism," which has a strong pejorative connotation in France, tran-scends political allegiances. The old monthly *Monde des Débats* produced jointly by two left-wing publications, the daily *Monde* and weekly *Nouvel Observateur,* published an issue last January under the headline, "Must France be federalized?" Some prestigious minds made their thoughts known: former minister and current presidential candidate Jean-Pierre Chevènement, former socialist prime ministers Pierre Mauroy and Michel Rocard, and columnist Jacques Julliard, to mention a few.

"There is no cause for embarrassment at France's centralizing

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tradition as is fashionable nowadays," Julliard writes: "Admittedly, the resulting national culture has sometimes stifled regional cultures. But all in all it has created more than it has destroyed; it has helped to make France a major destination of the mind." And if "nations are henceforth condemned to federate in order to exist," we must never forget "that the national level has to be safeguarded as the essential sanctuary for shaping the collective will, i.e. as a political source." And always this fear of communitarism that "undermines the social homogeneity of the nation-state by claiming rights for the communities."

The spectre of France transformed into a federation of regions, echoing the Europe of Regions desired by some, is raised by former minister Jean-Pierre Chevènement along with the creation of a European Federation: "It means, in the absence of a European people, wanting a state that is unsupported by any real collective identity ... [and] would be vulnerable to regionalist and nationalist identities in a non-republican sense.... This is not a matter of denying the existence of cultural communities but of refusing to let them be political founders as such."

Former prime minister Pierre Mauroy is an ardent champion of decentralization but expends a lot of energy in his article to clarify: "I would have all it takes to be a regionalist. But I am not one. Why? Because ... tensions congregate in particularisms. Wars of identity ... are incredibly cruel. I have seen how, for our Belgian neighbours, the rift between Fleming and Walloon has widened since federalization: hostility, paralysis."

Other ideas and options are also being voiced in French society, less spectacularly but more and more present in the French intellectual landscape. Intellectuals and journalists, leaders of opinion in less media-oriented forums, agree to advance other approaches and participate in exchanges with other researchers elsewhere in the world, including Canadians.

We think here, for example, of Professor Alain Dieckoff, of the Centre d'études et de recherches internationales, whose *La Nation dans tous ses États-Les identités nationales en mouvement,* published by Flammarion in 2000, is especially stimulating and speaks of the search for a new citizenship that encompasses both identities and the need to rethink the political structures of present-day nation-states. He is in contact with Canadian researchers Will Kymlicka, Wayne Norman and Daniel Weinstock, to mention

only these few. Colloquia are organized with rewarding results. The remarks by economist Elie Cohen in *La Tentation hexagonale, la souveraineté à l'épreuve de la mondialisation,* published by Fayard in 1996, are extremely interesting as well. Also worth mentioning is Michel Wievorka from the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) and his latest book, *La différence,* published by Balland.

The magazine *Les Temps modernes* devoted its September-October-November 2000 issue to "Sovereignty." Articles worth mentioning include one by political scientist Paul Alliès (also a regional elected representative from southeastern France) "Souverainistes versus fédéralistes: la controverse française," which provides a remarkable synthesis and offers avenues to solutions that open new vistas onto deliberative politics, the search for an alternative to sovereignty. Yet he admits himself that "these prospects ... remain fairly meaningless in the French debate, as if fated to break against the solidity of the historical national model that looms on the horizon of our thinking about sovereignty. Yet they represent an inescapable option."

Marc Berthiaume
Political Attaché,
Canadian Embassy, Paris

Canadian Connections

Opportunities 2000 is a regional partnership of businesses, community organizations, governments and individuals working together to reduce poverty in Waterloo Region. It was developed to create practical and effective solutions to Canada's poverty crisis by relying on community leadership, assisting local players in the development of projects that create new income or employment opportunities for people living in poverty, and conducting original research into poverty and poverty-reduction strategies, as well as broadly disseminating these findings. To learn more about this innovative, community-based approach to poverty reduction visit http://www.op2000.org.

The Law Commission of Canada, in partnership with Fair Vote Canada, has launched an initiative on electoral reform. The Commission intends to encourage public dialogue on alternatives to the current voting system. Specific projects include a study of the experiences of other nations that have engaged their citizens in voting system reform initiatives; a constituencies forum to solicit public input on the issue, and a proposal on how Canadian citizens can best be engaged in civic education, deliberation and decision-making processes related to voting system reform. To learn more or participate, visit http://www.lcc.gc.ca/en/themes/gr/er/index.html.

The Community Economic Development Technical Assistance Program (CEDTAP) is a bilingual, pan-Canadian program that helps community organizations, rural and urban, to access the technical assistance they need to promote inclusive local development, employment and entrepreneurship. CEDTAP was designed to address the urgent need for capacity development within those Canadian communities experiencing unacceptably high levels of unemployment, poverty and social disintegration by supporting training, infrastructure development, documentation of experience and replication of successful approaches. To learn more of the scope of CEDTAP activities and the innovative ways it works with communities and practitioners visit www.carleton.ca/cedtap.

The Electronic Commons/L'Agora Électronique is a national, not-for-profit online web space dedicated to the exchange of information, opinions and resources by and for all Canadians. This citizen-led initiative is working to reduce digital divides by asserting the role of civil society on the Internet, teaching how to use new media, ensuring universal access to online knowledge and creating opportunities for human development. The web site www.ecommons.net, currently in a six-month development period, provides access to the *Netizen News* and numerous discussion fora.

Cooperatives: Solutions to 21st Century Challenges is a new report released by the Cooperatives Secretariat in partnership with the Canadian Co-operatives Association and the Conseil Canadien de la Coopération. This report presents successful examples from the 10 000 cooperatives in Canada which provide jobs for 150 000 people in both rural and urban regions. *Cooperatives* outlines their contribution to local development, economic stability, Aboriginal peoples' economic development, entrepreneurship, inclusiveness, innovation and youth training and employment. To learn more about this innovative sector visit http://www.agr.ca/policy/coop/oct01/21st_e.pdf.

The 2001 *Situation Report* of **Conseil de la science et de la technologie du Québec** explores the regional dimensions of innovation. Through a comparison of indicators measuring several regions, the report highlights scientific and technological factors of success and the role of government policy in fostering innovation. The report recommends targeting three main objectives: have each region define its own needs and strategies, ensure that government initiatives are adapted to regional needs, and apply new tools for improving the knowledge of regional innovation systems. To learn more, visit http://www.cst.gouv.qc.ca/ftp/Conjoncture2001/Chap_3_ang.pdf.

From the Cyberzone

http://www.unesco.org/most/bpikreg.htm

The Centre for International Research and Advisory Networks in co-operation with UNESCO's Management of Social Transformations Programme has established a database of best practices on indigenous knowledge. It contains examples of successful projects illustrating the use of this type of knowledge in the development of cost-effective and sustainable survival strategies, covering Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. Searches can be done by region, topic or methodology and an index of the institutions involved. Analysis offered includes discussion of strengths and weaknesses as well as potential for replication.

http://www.progressive.gov.se/ec_intro.asp

In June, policy makers and experts from the Canada and the other 14 member countries in the Progressive Governance network discussed "Best Practices in Progressive Governance." The focus of the conference was practical, progressive approaches to seven different policy areas: health-care, active welfare, drug-related crime, multiculturalism, sustainable environment, social inclusion (specifically the digital divide) and the international social compact. Reports on national experiences of best practices in these areas are available on the web site.

http://www1.oecd.org/tds/leed/what.htm

The OECD's Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) Programme is responsible for identifying and assessing innovations in job creation, entrepreneurship and local development. LEED focuses on the exchange of knowledge on best practices and on the lessons learned from these experiences, both to help with new policies and to increase the scale and effectiveness of existing ones. It brings together the private, public and non-profit sectors to improve public policy, monitor current practices, and propose new methods for the growth of self-employment and entrepreneurship as a means of local economic development and job creation.

http://www.iresco.fr/labos/grass/themes.htm

The Groupe de Recherche et d'Analyse du Social et de la Sociabilité (GRASS) is a research unit shared by the Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) and Université Paris 8 and housed by the Institut de recherche sur les sociétés contemporaines (IRESCO). Encompassing the relationships between public policy and the transformation of social skills, the research area covered by GRASS revolves around five themes: social policy and citizenship, family policy and identity, risk management policy, employment and youth integration, and culture and public life.

Who Is Afraid of the State?

Is the government becoming less powerful? Is it in retreat vis-à-vis a proliferation of non-governmental agencies, multinational corporations, and international organizations? The essays in this collection argue that — contrary to some private-sector populists — the state is in the best position to lead in making policy in a rapidly changing world and should retain and refine this responsibility. Examining the interaction of government, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector,

the contributors show that government, far from being stagnant, is in a constant state of transformation and revitalization. It may work to prepare citizens for changes that often seem inevitable and sometimes it challenges, even resists, the directions or modes of such change. It remains an important — perhaps the most crucial — actor in the governance process.

For more information, see Gordon Smith and Daniel Wolfish (eds.). *Who Is Afraid of the State?* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001.

Feature Columnist

For Innovative Communities Buttressed by Imaginative Policies

Three major changes are converging to strengthen the linkages of communities with public policy: first, paving the way, a substantial renewal of the vision of economic development at the local and regional levels; then, in support, just as substantial a renewal of public policies favouring local and regional development; and lastly, an unsuspected renewal of the procedures for engaging policies

of support to community and regional development. This article looks at these three issues in turn to highlight three proposals: 1) communities and regions are becoming active players in their own economic development; 2) the traditional, business-oriented policies of support to community and regional development are now tied to policies that also look to supporting regional systems; 3) the government agencies' economic and technological consultants take a proactive rather than a reactive role when introducing policies and more and more regional development

policies are implemented by third parties rather than government agencies directly.

A RENEWED VISION OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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A renewed vision of local and regional economic development has emerged as we have better grasped the implications of a simple but basic premise: though economic competition is worldwide, economic development is local and regional.

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The traditional view of local and regional economic development sees *development as an event.* Development takes concrete form in events in the sense that it results from decisions taken by politicians and investors who come from outside the local community. This view of development assigns a passive role to the region and local players whose main function is to develop their regional resources and "angle for" investment projects from governments.

The public policies associated with this traditional view are generally traceable to labour adjustment policies and policies to support declining industries or beleaguered businesses. The only truly regional policies used by the supporters of the traditional thinking have to do with promoting their regions' attractions, generally natural resources. Another feature of these policies is that they target individual businesses. All in all, the traditional view sees development as an event from outside where the region is passive and policies sustain individual businesses.

Two main factors have helped to elicit a new vision of regional development: the exemplary success of some regions and a revitalized understanding of the regional development process. The turnaround in the situations of a number of declining regions that have become exemplary successes in terms of regional development, in northern Italy for example, has stirred the imaginations of policy makers and researchers. Closer to home, the economic and industrial development of the Beauce region of Quebec is another instance of exemplary success that inspires policy makers and researchers. Many other exemplary cases could be mentioned.

The second factor that has sparked a renewal of vision has to do with our understanding of economic development. A growing

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number of experts and decision makers have come to make a clear distinction between two complementary phenomena: 1) competition occurs at the planetary level but 2) economic development occurs at the regional level. The difference between these two phenomena has generated a renewed perception of comparative advantages which, contrary to the traditional vision, is not now based solely on new combinations of various forms of physical capital but on the deployment of knowledge. So it is that the increase in the knowledge pool and the arrival of communications technologies that make codified knowledge accessible almost instantly to everyone, everywhere on the planet have had the effect of highlighting the importance of tacit knowledge as a production factor and the fact that the sharing of tacit knowledge among individuals and organizations depends on the social context.

This way of seeing things assumes that knowledge is embedded in networks and communities and social capital is an essential ingredient for understanding regional economic development. Social capital helps to reduce the costs of researching and analysing information and making decisions as well as the costs of implementing and monitoring the decisions made.

Table 1: Analysis of four types of regional environment		
Synthetic networking indicator		
Synthetic learning indicator	Weak networks	Strong networks
Low learning level	No environment No innovation (1)	potentially innovative environment (2)
High learning level	Innovation without an environment (3)	Innovative environment (4)

*(Adapted from Maillat, 1992)

This renewed vision of regional development has prompted the experts to perceive regions as developmental players rather than passive reservoirs or resources, to see regional development as a process rather than an event — in short, to speak of innovative environments, learning regions and learning by interaction.

A RENEWED VISION OF POLICIES OF SUPPORT TO REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Analyses of the networks among regional players and learning patterns are useful for pinpointing the situations of the regions and imagining policies of regional support. These findings enable us to use two synthetic indicators to describe the targets of policies to support adjustment and innovation in regional environments:

- a synthetic networking indicator that measures the organizational dimensions, cohesiveness and variety of networks;
- a synthetic learning indicator that measures the creation of innovation, skills and know-how in a regional environment.

Combining the logics of networking and learning enables us to distinguish four types of regional environment (Table 1).

Cell 1 represents a region where networks are undeveloped and learning levels low. The resources of several Canadian regions could be close to this situation. The transition from a situation where there is no environment or innovation calls for action on the networking variable and the learning variable. Cell 2

represents a situation where the networks are strong but learning is weak. Here are potentially innovative regions. Canadian regions where industrial structures are highly diversified exemplify this situation. The transition from a potentially innovative environment to an innovative environment could be achieved by acting on the learning variable. Cell 3 represents a situation with high levels of learning but little networking. This is a situation where innovation is taking place without an environment. It points to our metropolitan areas. This type of situation calls for a policy of regional leadership that attempts to develop connections and values to consolidate the links among players. Cell 4 expresses the case of a region where networking and learning indicators are high. It is a typical example of an innovative environment. This example is useful for showing the target our policies of regional support should be aiming at.

All in all, the ultimate objective of the policy crafters is to analyse regional situations and then develop public policies that are likely to get the regions moving gradually from Cells 1, 2 or 3 towards Cell 4, i.e. toward an innovative environment. What exactly are the distinctive features of these policies? There are no universal policies that can cover this variety of situations.

The traditional policies of support to regions that tended to target individual businesses in a philosophy of supporting production inputs are eclipsed by more recent policies that now target the regional environment in a philosophy of supporting innovative ability. Table 2 very schematically summarizes the picture that Claire Nauwelaers and René Wintjes (2000) ended up with in their assessment of 40 instruments to support innovation introduced in 11 European regions. The results of their assessment suggest that regional support policies should be custom made to respond to the wide variety of starting situations.

The recent policies intended to enhance the interface between businesses and the players in their environments and upgrade

Table 2: Classification of programs to support innovation and innovative environments	
Cell A's policy instruments target businesses by emphasizing production inputs: • traditional instruments; • examples: subsidized training, recruitment, R&D, etc.; • conclusion: instruments are overused.	Cell B's policy instruments support businesses by supporting the development of innovative abilities: • proactive instruments; • examples: coaching of businesses, innovative centres, strategic intelligence, etc.; • instruments are interesting when a there is a low concentration of innovative firms in a given region.
Cell C's policy instruments look to the regional environment by supporting production inputs: • instruments foster co-operation; • examples: planned R&D alliances, university-industry R&D projects, collective techology transfer centres; • instruments useful for fostering knowledge sharing among businesses in one region.	Cell D's policy instruments look to the regional environment by supporting the development of innovative ability: • instruments foster innovation; • examples: proactive knowledge brokers, support to cluster, networks, regional development plans, etc.; • instruments underused; • instruments to be introduced folowing the introduction of the policy instruments from Cells B and C.

*Adapted from Claire Nauwelaers and René Wintjes (2000)

the infrastructures businesses rely on bear, the experts say, significant implications:

- Government intervention increasingly tends to use an interactive approach that emphases the creation of networks, clusters, partnerships and horizontal cooperation generally.

- Government intervention increasingly tends to rely on enhanced knowledge of the business context, and especially the regional context that accommodates R&D, the use of advanced technologies and innovation in manufacturing products and processes.

- Government intervention increasingly tends to use the regional social and institutional infrastructure relied on by businesses as a lever to stimulate innovation at the regional level.

- Government intervention attempting to stimulate innovation increasingly tends to perceive the region as a strategic location for introducing new forms of governance for innovation.

A RENEWED VISION OF WAYS OF INTRODUCING POLICIES TO SUPPORT REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A review of programs to support regional development suggests that the introduction of new forms of regional governance for innovation tends to place the emphasis on four main objectives:

- Creating or building a consensus among regional players by organizing activities that culminate in the formulation of regional innovative strategies.

- Creating or strengthening such social values as trust and mutuality to allow networks, clusters and regional cooperatives for innovation to emerge.

- Creating or regionally adjusting programs to strengthen abilities to assimilate new technologies and, more generally, information in individual firms as well as collectively through interactions among firms and the other regional players in their shared environment.

- Upgrading the social and institutional infrastructure firms rely on for R&D, advanced technologies and innovation.

These distinctive features of these policies have the effect of transforming the role of program officials and government agencies. Until very recently, the traditional role of economic development consultants in government agencies was to wait passively to be contacted by the clients of the programs they were responsible for implementing. Nowadays, Canada Economic Development's Strategic Regional Initiatives program, for example, relies on thinking that requires its consultants to take a highly proactive role in a process to get players in the region where they are working to actively cooperative. And ongoing initiatives in a number of European countries as well as here in Canada suggest that policies to support regional development increasingly tend to be introduced, not directly by government agencies, but through economic intermediaries. These intermediary agencies sign contracts with government agencies mandating them to introduce policies to support networking and learning. A large number of regional agencies promoting economic development, innovation and technology transfers across Canada are currently introducing government policies based on mandates handed to them by government organizations.

CONCLUSION:

The renewal of perspectives that assign much more proactive roles to the regions and the economic and technological development consultants in government agencies is combining with the implementation of government policies to support regional development through economic intermediaries that are mandated to promote networking and learning in their regional environments to singularly complicate our evaluation and accounting as regards policies to support regional development. This will be the price to be paid for getting policies that are likely to equip the various Canadian regions with specific comparative advantages in the knowledge economy where competition is worldwide while development is regional. The combination of innovative communities and imaginative policies already promises a community life that will call for much adjustment from both parties.

Réjean Landry
Laval University

Research Brief

Standardization — *A Horizontal Policy Instrument*

Like most countries in the global trading system, Canada has long recognized that standards are a significant aspect of the marketplace framework. Standards provide a basis for trade negotiations, provide competitive muscle to international commerce, complement or replace regulation, connect Canadians with the world, maintain Canada's pace with the evolving knowledge economy and can provide innovative solutions that have the potential to position Canadian industry as world leaders.

International standardization has been an essential element in the process of globalization that has vastly augmented the mobility of people, goods and services around the globe. The principal figure in voluntary international standardization is the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), a worldwide federation of national standards bodies established to facilitate international coordination and harmonization of standards.

The designated member of ISO in Canada is the Standards Council of Canada. The Standards Council's mandate is to promote efficient and effective voluntary standardization in Canada. This work is accomplished through the National Standards System (NSS),

a network of people and organizations that develop, promote and implement standards in Canada.

PARTNERSHIPS

The NSS both relies on and helps to establish strong partnerships between the public and private

Incorporating standardization into public policy is not merely a good idea — it is an obligation of various treaties and trade agreements.

sectors. This is particularly evident when it comes to standardization's growing role as an instrument of government policy.

Federal and provincial governments frequently make the use of standards mandatory by reference or incorporation in their legislation. In other cases, governments turn to the private sector to ensure that some public interest is met, relying on industry to maintain management and production processes that reduce the risk of harm to the public. Standardization is often a central element of such processes.

Standardization offers a number of advantages to policy makers. Standards are the product of an open development process, which relies on arriving at agree-

ment through consensus. This produces requirements that are technically feasible and acceptable to most stakeholders. In most industrialized countries, standardization has also brought about a well-developed and effective conformity assessment infrastructure. As a result, compliance with standards-based regulatory initiatives tends to be high, and the cost of monitoring and enforcement can be contained.

Standardization has relevance to vital issues such as climate change and implementation of the Kyoto protocol, and information technology security and privacy, to name a few. Canada wields significant influence in forums where these issues are discussed. ISO, for example, has its technical committee on environmental management systems (responsible for the ISO 14000 series of environmental management system standards) and an ad hoc group on climate change, both of which are managed by Canadians. There is growing recognition that the national effort to meet Canada's obligations under the Kyoto Protocol could, in part, include the work undertaken in these forums.

Incorporating standardization into public policy is not merely a good idea — it is an obligation of

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various treaties and trade agreements. As a signatory to the WTO's agreement on technical barriers to trade (TBT), Canada is committed to eliminating trade barriers by invoking international standards wherever possible. Here at home, the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) calls for the removal of internal trade barriers by the use of national standards, *de facto* national standards or international standards. The standards provisions of the AIT call for parties to use the NSS wherever practicable and to develop standards where an appropriate standard does not exist.

SECTORAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES TO GOVERNMENTS

The effective use of standardization as an instrument of public policy will require significant change in the way in which governments approach standards-related issues.

For example, there is currently no overarching discipline, applied at the national level, that ensures policy coordination between regulators relying on standards and trade negotiations hinging on regulatory requirements. Harmonization requirements are, therefore, not solidly entrenched in Canada, in stark contrast to the strong legally binding systems set up in Europe.

A 1999 federal-provincial-territorial symposium on standards issues facing Canadian governments concluded that governments should look at internal coordination in order to brace themselves for external cooperation. Two of the symposium's key recommendations in this respect were:

- The Standards Council and standards development organizations, in cooperation with governments, should examine the potential for organizing standards committees on sectoral lines. This would provide greater opportunities to consider issues from a strategic standpoint for a given sector. Specific, limited-term, sectoral committees could be established as appropriate in areas of strategic standards interest for Canada in order to further test this mechanism.

- All governments should look into internal coordination to allow a more complete range of government interests to be brought to committees.

Canada's standards system is premised upon a public-private partnership — not merely between the federal public and private sectors, but also between the private sector and federal, provincial and territorial governments, as well as non-governmental interests. Hence, in the ongoing evaluation of public policy, both federal and provincial-territorial governments will need to evaluate roles, responsibilities and infrastructures that build consensus in industry sectors. Each industry has its own character and the challenge for governments is to guide them toward achieving the common good of all Canadians.

Investment in standardization is an investment in maintaining and enhancing Canada's place in the world, not an overhead cost. Developing a cohesive approach to sectoral strategies to standardization rests largely with the federal government, in partnership with the Standards Council of Canada, provinces and territories, industry and other stakeholders.

Loise De Silva
Standards Council of Canada

For more informataion, please contact Loise De Silva by phone at (613) 238-3222 or by e-mail at ldesilva@scc.ca.

Media Award Finalists

Mary Janigan
The Wealth Gap
Maclean's
August 28, 2000

Are Canada's rich getting richer as the poor get poorer? Is the middle-class disappearing? These are the questions Mary Janigan asks in "The Wealth Gap." Here is an excerpt from the article:

"After adjusting for inflation, the 1998 average income of Canadian families from earnings, investments and private pensions finally surpassed its previous peak in 1989: it hit $55,224, up from $54,508. But, amid the prosperity, there was a startling increase in inequality — as the wealthy increased their share of that income at the expense of almost everyone else. 'There is a long-run, ongoing trend toward increasing inequality,' observes Queen's University economist Charles Beach. 'I am saddened. Sure, there is a bigger pie — but it is being distributed less equally.'

"The problem is so worrisome that, behind the scenes, income inequality has become *the* big issue in government and academic circles. No one can agree on the cause — because there are many factors, ranging from technological change to declining union membership. No one can agree on the solution — because everyone is uneasily aware that many people like Herron need complex responses that include both money *and* targeted training. But, after the release in June of a Statistics Canada report on 1998 incomes, everyone can agree the problem is unsettling — and probably growing."

Pierre Trudel
The Negative Perception of Aboriginal Rights
Le Devoir
June 23, 2001

"Between political and media crises, the two commonest arguments that make aboriginal rights difficult and irritating are these. First, aboriginal rights are perceived as being contrary to the general philosophy of human rights. These would seem to be rights that create inequality at the expense of other Canadians. Considering the contemporary importance of the idea of equal rights as the basis of the meaning of citizenship and official source of the social bond, an apparent exception to the rule is especially irritating inasmuch as it contradicts the ideological underpinnings of the social bond. (The situation is comparable for 'positive discrimination' pursuant to employment equity laws: in both cases the majority sometimes sees its interests as threatened by rights that look like privileges.)

"The other problem lies in the perception of aboriginal rights as partaking of anarchy. There is concern about recognition of more and more miscellaneous rights that would be increasingly complicated to take into account. This perception may change in view of the history of aboriginal special status, which shows us that these "complications" have to some degree always existed. Who, just a few decades ago, could have imagined the numerous, differing and complex collective agreements that govern our labour relations today? This comparison helps to relativize the perception that aboriginal rights are unrealistic. Their inclusion in the debate over the nature of Canadian federalism and the right of peoples helps to get closer to the objective of neutrality about these rights."

Stephen Hume
An Energy Odyssey
Vancouver Sun
June 2, 2001 to June 16, 2001

In his 21-part energy series, Stephen Hume investigates the economic, social and political ramifications of the quest for fossil fuel in Canada, Mexico and the United States. The following is an excerpt from "Petroleum is far more pervasive than we think: Like it or not, petroleum makes our modern world possible" which was printed on June 9, 2001:

"Everyone knows that petroleum is the strategic resource of the day. Armies have fought over it. Empires have failed for want of it. It's one of the first things rationed in times of national crisis. And everybody curses when prices go up.

"Environmentalists say we should use less of it, but every year the number of cars that burn it increases and we use more of it.

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Across Canada

New Coop Program Showcases Tomorrow's Leaders

Carleton University is announcing a new co-operative education initiative in connection with its **Bachelor of Public Affairs and Policy Management (BPAPM)** program. The BPAPM program, developed in 1999 through Carleton's **Arthur Kroeger College of Public Affairs,** is a unique and comprehensive program designed in conjunction with an advisory committee chosen from the public, private and voluntary sectors. The curriculum emphasizes academic excellence in public affairs and policy management, as well as practical, policy-oriented skills development. The program focus is dynamic and visionary, and features:

- A "core" curriculum that is central to public affairs and policy development… to provide the foundation from which students build their theoretical knowledge and concrete skill sets.

- A substantive examination of organizations and processes — across all sectors of civic society — that both impact and are impacted by public policy… to prepare students for active roles in government, private companies, voluntary or non-profit organizations, and NGO's or international organizations.

- An interdisciplinary blend of courses that offers a rich and broad perspective on public policy issues… to emphasize the significance of understanding policy development in terms of its historical, economic, sociological, legal and political contexts.

- A choice of one area of specialization from seven possible fields (**Communication and Information Technology Policy; Development Studies; Human Rights; International Studies; Social Policy; Strategic Public Opinion and Policy Analysis; and Public Policy and Administration**) after first year… to allow students to add to their generalist skills and training an area of specialization that best suits their career goals.

"No similar program exists in Canada," says Eileen Saunders, the Director of the College. "This is a unique opportunity for individuals in government, private industry, the voluntary sector, international organizations or NGO's, to take advantage of the superlative academic performance, energy, enthusiasm, innovative viewpoints, and current knowledge and relevant skill sets that these students can offer employers."

Whatever the organization: a government department, with one clear mandate and mountains of research material to review; a private corporation, looking to revamp its internal policy, but needing to examine best practices; a policy research institution, with various projects on the go and too few researchers; a voluntary organization, working on new strategic direction, with few human and financial resources to do so…

The BPAPM coop program offers organizations a host of student capabilities including: research techniques and methodologies and sound research skills, strategic planning, policy analysis, program evaluation, critical-thinking and problem-solving abilities, and outstanding writing and communication skills.

For more information, visit www.carleton.ca/co-op or contact Kathleen Hickey at (613) 520-2600, ext. 2221, kathleen_hickey@carleton.ca

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PRI Update

The Aboriginal Scholars Project:
A Quiet Revolution in Aboriginal Policy Research

Seventeen months ago a small group of Aboriginal researchers, seeking to contribute new perspectives on Aboriginal policy research, met for the first time in Ottawa. One year later, a third meeting of this project, sponsored by the Policy Research Initiative, was attended by representatives of twelve federal departments, each interested in what the Aboriginal researchers could contribute to their respective policy interests.

On Friday, December 7, team leaders of the Aboriginal Scholars Project (ASP), a new horizontal research initiative created to offer a new approach to Aboriginal policy research, will present their initial findings in a workshop at the National Policy Research Conference. The team leaders — David Newhouse of Trent University; Larry Chartrand of the University of Ottawa; Dawn Martin-Hill of McMaster University; Jo-ann Archibald of the University of British Columbia; and Leroy Little Bear of the University of Lethbridge — will be accompanied on the panel by Marlene Brant-Castellano, Professor Emeritus at Trent and former Co-Director of Research of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. She and Gail Valaskakis, former Dean of Arts and Science at Concordia University and Director of Research at the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, are Co-Chairs of the Aboriginal Scholars Project. The research team also

includes Alexina Kublu of Nunavut Arctic College, who will contribute Inuit perspectives to the policy research topics.

The Policy Research Initiative (PRI) launched the ASP in June 2000 with the cooperation of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation. The ultimate objective of the Aboriginal Scholars Project is to build a widening network of Aboriginal researchers who will work in partnership with government researchers to articulate indigenous knowledge perspectives on policy issues. An equally important goal of the ASP is to widen the knowledge base of the government of Canada by providing comprehensive indigenous knowledge analyses of policy issues.

This innovative undertaking was inspired in large part by the Trends Project, a three-year research initiative sponsored by PRI in which Dawn Martin-Hill participated. She recognized the efficacy of a project similar to Trends which would be devoted to Aboriginal policy research. The new initiative represents a shared conviction among the Aboriginal Scholars that research conducted from an indigenous knowledge perspective is an important complement to the findings of more conventional research and that, woven together, these approaches can inspire insightful policy interventions.

The ASP is working in partnership with an inter-

departmental committee of government researchers that will generate research on mutually-recognized policy priorities. Participating departments include Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Statistics Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Justice Canada, Health Canada, Human Resources Development Canada, the Office of the Solicitor General, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Status of Women Canada, and others.

At the September 2000 ASP meeting, a research framework was established which emphasizes the development of an indigenous knowledge perspective on policy research issues. Five interrelated themes were identified: governance, social cohesion, indigenous knowledge, women, and youth. In June 2001, literature reviews on these themes began as part of a process to develop terms of reference for these new research initiatives.

The terms of reference, which are being developed by the scholars with support from the PRI, will consider findings from the literature reviews and input from the PRI and other government departments. Through the literature reviews, the scholars will develop indigenous knowledge perspectives on trends in their respective areas of research and identify relevant knowledge gaps. The work will be vetted by a peer review committee composed of

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Brant-Castellano, Valaskakis, and Dan Beavon, Director of Strategic Research and Analysis, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

At a meeting in late October, the five scholars submitted progress reports outlining the early findings of the literature reviews. With respect to governance, David Newhouse's report focuses on strategies for capacity building, emerging Aboriginal institutions, models of self-government and accountability to Aboriginal constituencies. Researching social cohesion, Larry Chartrand is investigating

a range of topics, including Aboriginal-non-Aboriginal relationships, isolation and exclusion, the urban Aboriginal experience, concepts of community, Aboriginal membership issues, and legal and demographic trends. The indigenous knowledge literature review under Leroy Little Bear will describe the concept of indigenous knowledge in relation to cultural lenses, ethics and teachings, and the significance of indigenous and intellectual property rights. Dawn Martin-Hill is researching topics related to Aboriginal women, including questions concerning single parenting,

access to housing in urban areas, supports for women in the justice system, and employability issues. Finally, Jo-ann Archibald's review on the subject of children and youth relates to issues of identity, belonging, education, health and homelessness.

Once the terms of reference have been finalized, a general RFP will be developed and issued in early January, and the next round of new research initiatives will be announced in February.

For more information on the Aboriginal Scholars Project, please contact Jeff Frank at (613) 947-3905 or j.frank@prs-srp.gc.ca.

Governing the Environment

Are we on the verge of a global environmental catastrophe, or is a modest revision of environmental policy all that is necessary to ensure our safety and prosperity? *Governing the Environment* considers both scenarios, and those between the two extremes, in its examination of current trends and challenges in managing environmental issues.

This collection of seven essays, authored by leading Canadian academics, examines different aspects of the relationship between government and environmental issues. The volume focuses on Canadian contributions and innovations in the field, but it is of relevance to audiences around the world.

Parson's introductory essay sets the stage for the complex discussions to follow. He provides background by sketching the Canadian institutional context for environmental protection: by

describing the major pollutant burdens and the state of natural resources, and by summarizing the most salient policy issues. His conclusion elaborates on four major themes emerging from the work. These are the achievement of 'adaptive management'; the challenge of building effective government and interjurisdictional capacities for managing the environment; the need for networks to share responsibility more effectively without overlapping tasks; and finally, the real challenge to state authority that these undertakings represent.

This work is written for a multidisciplinary academic audience, encompassing students and teachers of advanced environmental studies and Canadian public policy.

For more information, see Edward A. Parson (ed). *Governing the Environment.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001.

Feature Columnist

Virtual Community in "Real Life"

DEBATING THE EFFECTS OF VIRTUAL COMMUNITY

The rapid evolution of the Internet means that an Internet year is like a dog year: at least seven times as fast as normal human time. This makes it especially desirable to forecast the future, as it will soon become the present, and then the past. But only a few would place any confidence in such forecasts.

Can people find community in the Internet? The debate fills the Internet, the airwaves, and especially the print media. Those on either side of this debate assert that the Internet either will create wonderful new forms of community or will weaken and destroy community. Their statements of enthusiasm or criticism leave little room for the moderate, mixed situations that may be the reality.

This debate has reeked heavily of punditry, presentism, and parochialism. Pundits make deductive pronouncements about the utopian or dystopian effects of the Internet on community, without reference to evidence. Consistent with the present-oriented ethos of computer users, pronouncements are made as if people and scholars had never worried about community before the Internet arose. There is little sense of history. Too many analysts treat the Internet parochially, as an isolated phenomenon, without taking into account how online interactions fit with other aspects of people's lives. People bring to their online interactions such baggage as their gender, cultural milieu, socioeconomic status and off-line connections with others.

While the debate continues, the number of Internet users continues to grow, in North America and abroad. The fact that the rate of growth is now slowing may indicate a plateauing effect, with the percentage of North American Internet users stabilizing at over 60 percent of adults, at least for the short term.

IS THE INTERNET INCREASING COMMUNITY?

Utopians have claimed that the Internet provides new and better ways of communication. Enthusiasts hail the Net's potential for making connections without regard to race, creed, gender or geography. One strain of thought celebrates dense, bounded village-like groups. Some go even further seeing the Internet as not only enhancing community but also transforming it, by creating new forms of interaction. In this scenario, video screens have become magic communicators enabling people to use online discussion groups, chat rooms, and the like to make meaningful contact around the world with new-found comrades.

The utopian argument usually contains the following elements:

- Digital computer networks convey more information per second than analog telephone networks.

- The Internet can restore community by providing a meeting space for people with common interests, overcoming limitations of space and time. Online communities can promote open, democratic discourse, allow for multiple perspectives, and mobilize collective action.

- Computer networks combine the potentially wide reach of broadcast networks with the personalized communication of telephone networks. They provide:
  1) Personal communications between one or multiple friends;
  2) Within-network broadcasts;
  3) Public address announcements to strangers.

Thus the Internet affords the face-to-face equivalent of private tête-à-têtes, group schmoozes and public gatherings. Many community-enhancing experiences use the Internet in all of these ways.

Although early accounts focussed on the formation of online "virtual" communities, it has become clear that most relationships formed in cyberspace continue in physical space, leading to new forms of community characterized by a mixture of online and offline interactions. Moreover, online interactions fill communication gaps between face-to-face meetings. The Internet thus enhances the tendency for many ties to be nonlocal — connected by cars, planes,

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phones and now computer networks. Although a developing phenomenon worldwide, nonlocal community is probably most prevalent in North America, where people move frequently and sometimes far-away; family, friends, former neighbours and work-mates are separated by many miles; and many immigrants keep contact with friends and relatives in their homelands.

IS THE INTERNET DECREASING COMMUNITY?

Unlike the enthusiasts, critics worry that life on the Internet can never be meaningful or complete. This stems from beliefs that:

- The low social presence of text-based online interactions are inherently inferior to face-to-face, in-the-flesh interactions and even to phone conversations.

- Nevertheless, and somewhat contradictorily, people will get so engulfed in a simulacrum virtual reality that meaningful contact will wither.

- Hence virtual community will divert people from "real life" community.

- To the extent to which virtual community does exist, it will be specialized, transitory and weakly connected.

THE INTERNET ADDS AND EVEN MULTIPLIES COMMUNITY

We now have evidence, where five years ago we had hunches and anecdotes. A score of articles in *The Internet in Everyday Life* provide variations on a single theme.[1] The Internet is increasing community, and to some extent transforming it:

- It is almost as easy to send a message to 10 friends as it is to contact one.

- Group aliases allow people to contact 100 or more friends by typing a single word.

- E-mail discussion groups and real-time chat groups provide specialized audiences — and some respondents — in the hundreds and thousands.

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1. The book is co-edited by Barry Wellman and Caroline Haythornthwaite, and will be published by Blackwell Publishers in 2002.

- Many online ties are palpable, supportive relationships. The Internet is useful both for maintaining strong ties of intimacy and weaker ties of acquaintanceship.

- Rather than being exclusively online or in-person, many community ties are complex dances of face-to-face encounters, scheduled meetings, two-person telephone calls, e-mails to one person or several, and broader online discussions among those sharing interests.

The increases in community interaction are happening because as such Internet use develops, other forms of community maintain their strength. Both face-to-face and telephone interactions continue at the same pace, except that now they are supplemented, arranged and followed-up by e-mail, instant messaging, discussion groups, internet telephone (especially important in developing countries) and the like. Thus, heavy Internet users add sizeable amounts of online interaction to their "real life" interactions.

This increase in the extent of community interaction happens with friends and relatives, and with strong and weak ties. Although face-to-face and telephone contact continue, they are complemented by the Internet's ease in connecting geographically dispersed people and organizations bonded by shared interests. Moreover, despite the glorification of the global village, most e-mail messages are exchanged between people who live within the same metropolitan area. Our NetLab calls this combination of global reach with intensified local interaction "glocalization."

The Internet not only adds onto existing interpersonal community interactions, it may multiply some aspects of civic interaction. The more people participate in voluntary organizations online, the more they participate offline, and vice-versa.

This evidence that the Internet is supplementing and increasing other forms of community means that the Internet may finally be providing the basis

for community that Robert Putnam called for in *Bowling Alone.* This positive effect of the Internet on community may have increased in recent years because of network scale. As more people go online, there are more people to connect with. As more organizations develop web sites and other Internet tools, they encourage existing members to become more involved.

What of the 1998 report that use of the Internet increased alienation and depression? It seems that this was a short-term result of study participants being newbies: newcomers to computers and the Internet. The same researchers now report that these same participants have increased their community interactions and decreased their depression and alienation.

Are there any negative effects of Internet use? One study suggests that the Internet may lessen interaction within the household. Are people now looking at their screens more than their spouses? Are people now playing with the web more than with their children?

THE RISE OF NETWORKED INDIVIDUALISM

The traditional communities of pastoralist nostalgia have been densely-knit, village-like structures composed of socially similar members. Their composition and structure gave them the communication capacity to coordinate and control the supply of supportive resources to needy community members. But they had less access to outside resources and less scope for innovation.

Contemporary communities (nowadays supported by the Internet) rarely resemble preindustrial villages, for they are socially diverse, sparsely knit and well-connected to the outside world. These are only partial communities that do not command a person's full allegiance. Rather, each person is a limited member of multiple communities such as kinship groups, neighbourhoods and friendship circles. These heterogeneous, low-density communities do not control members and resources as well as community villages do, for disgruntled participants can always shift their attentions to other arenas. Yet multiple, ramifying networks expose each commu-

nity member to a more diverse set of social worlds, with heterogeneous, non-redundant sources of information and social support. These external ties make them better at getting new resources from the outside.

These changes mean that people find community in networks, not groups. They have moved away from traditional communities to glocalized networks, where they interact intensively at home and at a work site but have many important ties outside. The Internet is now supporting a further continuing trend towards "networked individualism." In such milieus, the individual functions autonomously, with home bases becoming less important. Such a situation maximizes both maneuverability and uncertainty.

This change to networked individualism is embedded in the more encompassing shift to networked societies. In networked societies, boundaries are permeable, interactions are with diverse others, connections switch between multiple networks, and hierarchies can be flatter and recursive. The change from groups to networks can be seen at many levels. Trading and political blocs have lost their monolithic character in the world system. Organizations form complex networks of alliance and exchange rather than cartels, and workers report to multiple peers and superiors. Management by multiply-connected network is replacing management by hierarchal tree and management by two-dimensional matrix. In such societies, communities are far-flung, loosely bounded, sparsely knit, and fragmentary. Most people operate in multiple, thinly connected, partial communities as they deal with networks of kin, neighbours, friends, workmates and organizational ties. Rather than fitting into the same group as those around them, each person has his/her own "personal community." In short, while virtual community is facilitating community, it is affording changes in the kinds of communities in which Canadians interact. We haven't lost community, but we are living in changed communities, on and off line.

Barry Wellman
Director, NetLab, Centre for Urban and
Community Studies,
University of Toronto

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Outstanding Research Contribution Awards
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Much of the analysis in *At the Edge* is directed to policy makers and is informed by the author's extensive experience in the federal public service. This experience is applied to a detailed consideration of the "systemic failure" of governments to adequately respond to the overwhelming evidence of the imperative for sustainable development. She locates this failure in the current structure of institutions that function according to the logic of "solitudes, silos and stovepipes" resulting in a gridlock which weakens policy implementation by all levels of government.

The analysis in *At the Edge* does not allow for easy resolution or policy prescriptions, however the book does conclude with a call for a government-wide "Reconciliation Framework" combined with a commitment for more open dialogue and responsive governance systems. By applying her new model for governance to the collapse of the cod fisheries, her book shows how this tragedy of the commons might have been avoided.

At the Edge (University of British Columbia Press, 2001) can be ordered from: www.ubcpress.ubc.ca.

Media Award Finalists
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"We know it drives the economy, that it's the foundation of our transportation system, that without it a lot of us wouldn't get to work and that even if we got there, without the electricity it generates, the computers, telephones and photocopiers on which we work would be dead lumps of silicon, plastic and transistors.

"Doctors' diagnoses would be radically altered without the electronic equipment that lets them see into our bodies, record the activity of our brains and hearts, make soundscapes of unborn babies — and a trip to the dentist might be a very different experience indeed.

"These things seem obvious. Yet the intrusion of petroleum is far more pervasive than most of us think, especially in the humdrum patterns of our everyday lives."

Dan Gardner
Losing the War on Drugs
Ottawa Citizen
September 5 – 17, 2000

In a series of articles Dan Gardner argues that our current posture on the war on drugs is untenable and counter-productive. From the White House to Colombia and the Prohibition era to the present day, Gardner takes readers across time and space in an extensive examination of the negative consequences of the war on drugs. His series sheds new light on an old problem for policy makers throughout North America: when is prohibition appropriate?

The following is an excerpt from "Why the War on Drugs has failed: Billions spent, but drugs still sold, used" an article published on September 5, 2000:

"Today, the historical memory that saved the United States from Prohibition is lost. In North America, it has been seven, eight or nine decades since drugs such as cocaine and opium were criminalized by a handful of activists informed mainly by bad science and racist myths. We have had drug prohibition so long, we've forgotten where it came from. We've had it for so long, we can't imagine anything else. We have been fighting the war on drugs so long that the terrible damage the war causes seems unfortunate but unavoidable — if it is acknowledged at all.

"We aren't asking ourselves what Americans asked in 1933: Does the criminal prohibition of a drug do more harm than good?"

Award Winners

Career Achievement Award

The Career Achievement Award recognizes individuals who have demonstrated a dedication to the development and advancement of policy research throughout their career. The award is presented to leaders and innovators individuals whose work has made a significant contribution to the advancement of both knowledge and policy research capacity in Canada.

This year's recipient, Robert Lacroix, has made (and continues to make) significant contributions to the advancement of policy research in Canada as a researcher, a university administrator and as a leader in many research and policy organizations and committees. He is an expert in the economics of human resources and innovation. His numerous books, articles and conference presentations have considerably influenced the development of his field of expertise.

Rector of the Université de Montréal since 1998, Lacroix has also served the Université as Dean of the Department of Economic Sciences, Chair of the Centre de recherche et développement en économique and Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. He founded the Centre for Interuniversity Research and Analysis of Organizations (CIRANO) and served as its Chair and Director

General from 1994 to 1998. This centre, which quickly gained an international reputation for excellence, has also become a model for university research centres promoting liaisons with and transfers of knowledge between the public and private sectors.

Lacroix has been an active supporter and promoter of policy research in a variety of capacities over his career. These include: Vice-President of the Canadian Economic Association; President of the Association des économistes québécois; Member of the advisory committee on Economic Growth of the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research; Director on the board of the Institute for Research on Public Policy; and many others. He has served on: the board of directors of FCAR, the Quebec government fund that supports university research initiatives; the Business Committee for the Economic Recovery of Montréal; the Comité d'orientation du Centre d'étude sur l'Emploi et la Technologie (CETECH), a study and research centre on employment and technology which answers to Emploi-Québec: the Advisory Committee, Academic Affairs of the Institute of Canadian Bankers; and the Executive Committee of the Foundation for Educational Exchange Between Canada and the United States (Fulbright Commission).

Dr. Lacroix was elected a member of the Royal Society of Canada in 1989; he was named a Member of the Order of Canada in 2000 and Officier of the Ordre national du Québec in 2001.

In this issue