



## **Bearing the Brunt: Prince Edward Island Fact Sheet**

### **Poverty**

- Poverty rate in 2007: 5%
- Child poverty rate in 2007: 4.7%
- PEI had the lowest poverty and child poverty rates in the country in 2007

### **Unemployment**

- PEI had one of the smallest increases in unemployment in the country (tied with New Brunswick), rising from 11.6% in October 2008 to 12% in October 2009
- However, PEI has the second highest unemployment rate in the country (behind Newfoundland and Labrador)
- The Atlantic provinces combined for a total loss of 8,800 jobs (0.8%) between October 2008 and October 2009

### **Employment Insurance**

- PEI had very high EI coverage throughout the recession, tied with Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia for second highest coverage in the country
- The Beneficiaries to Unemployed rate increased from 87.7% in October 2008 to 97.3% in October 2009

### **Social Assistance**

- Despite the high coverage of EI, PEI still saw a 6% increase in social assistance cases between October 2008 and December 2009
- In December 2009, there were 3,606 cases of Social Assistance
- The caseload climbed even higher in January 2010, rising to 3,660 cases (5,758 recipients)
- 47 of the recipients in January 2010 were children

### **Cost of living**

- Food prices increased 5.5% in 2009, compared to core inflation of -0.2%
- Prices for dairy (5.3%), fruit (7.4%), and vegetables (11.9%) all increased by more than 5%
- Average rent for a two-bedroom apartment rose 4.7% between October 2008 and October 2009, much higher than the national average of 2.3%

### **Bankruptcies**

- Bankruptcies increased 32.4% between the third quarter of 2008 and the third quarter of 2009

### **Food bank use**

- PEI was the only province in the country to see a decline in food bank use in March 2009, decreasing 6%
- However, 50% of food banks still reported an increase in demand in March 2009

- PEI food banks also reported significant increases post-March, partly because they were assisting people returning home from Western Canada
- 2,706 people needed to use a food bank in March 2009
- 36% of food bank users in PEI are children
- 20% of food bank users report employment income, much higher than the national average
- 19% of food bank users are EI recipients, which is the highest proportion in the country