



Invitation to Attend the CSLS Seminar Series on Living Standards

Proposing a Guaranteed Basic Income for Prince Edward Island

Benoît Robidoux
3:30-5:00 PM
Tuesday, January 23, 2024
Karsh Room, Rideau Club
99 Bank Street, 15th floor
Ottawa, Ontario

(please note that the Rideau Club dress code requires men to wear a jacket)

To attend, please RSVP by January 19, 2024 to andrew.sharpe@csls.ca.

The idea of a guaranteed basic income (GBI) for all Canadians has been gaining greater interest in recent years, particularly following the pandemic, when government programs such as CERB, similar in some ways to a GBI, were temporarily introduced on a broad scale. Among other things, advocates of a GBI argue that it would simplify a confusing welfare system of overlapping programs while ensuring that no one falls through the gaps, while opponents point to the potential fiscal costs of a GBI and argue that the problem of poverty is too multifaceted to be solved by “a cheque from the government”.

In this presentation, Benoît Robidoux will discuss a proposal for a GBI in Prince Edward Island that was developed by a team of which he is one of the members (the details can be found here: <https://www.gbireport.ca>). The proposal would provide a GBI of 85 per cent of the poverty line, and the authors calculate that poverty would be dramatically reduced, while most PEI taxpayers would actually be better off under a cost-shared federal-provincial program.

Benoît Robidoux spent 35 years in the public service, most recently as Associate and then Senior Associate Deputy Minister of Employment and Social Development. Prior to this he spent 30 years at the Department of Finance, where he rose to the position of Assistant Deputy Minister of the Economic and Fiscal Policy Branch, responsible for overseeing the analysis and forecast of the country's economic and fiscal situation, including the coordination of the Budget Plan. Born in Saint-Donat, Quebec, Mr. Robidoux received a Bachelor's degree in economics in 1984 and an M.A. in economics in 1985, both from the Université du Québec à Montréal.