

# CILNews



## Introducing CILNews

Welcome to the first issue of CILNews, the newsletter of the Canadian International Labour Network. This first issue is being widely circulated – please let us know if you would like to remain on our mailing list by emailing us or by mailing or faxing the form at the bottom of page 2. Future issues will feature brief accounts of CILN research, profiles of CILN researchers and news of data initiatives, as well as providing regular information on CILN seminars and conferences.

CILN, the Canadian International Labour Network, is a collaborative research venture between the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and McMaster University, with additional funding being provided by the Universities of British Columbia and Toronto and by Human Resources Development Canada. The budget for the five-year project is almost \$2 million, of which \$1.24 million has been awarded by the SSHRC, through its Major Collaborative Research Initiative (MCRI) competition. Peter Kuhn, Professor of Economics at McMaster University, is the project's principal investigator.

The theme of CILN's research is "Labour Market Institutions and Outcomes: A Cross-National Study." Its investigations will focus on the effects of labour-market laws and institutions (e.g., labour legislation, unions, unemployment insurance) on labour-market outcomes (e.g., the distribution of wages, the level and structure of unemployment, and the distribution of resources within the family). The network's research strategy is to link Canadian experts in economics, political science, industrial relations and sociology with researchers working on the same questions in other developed countries, allowing the detailed examination of large-scale statistical databases on more than one country at a time.

More than any other single factor, success or failure in the labour market determines the material well-being of most individuals today. In a period of rapid labour market change associated with changing technology and globalization of markets, many basic labour market programs are being re-evaluated and questioned. This makes it extremely important to understand how labour markets work, and how their functioning is affected by public policy.

Labour markets in developed countries today share many broad features, but also operate in quite different legal and institutional environments. Potentially different aspects of their legal environments include the levels and kinds of labour relations and labour standards legislation, and income support programs. Potentially different aspects of the institutional environment include the industrial relations system, the education and training system, and the formal and informal networks connecting firms within and across economic sectors. Because of these many differences, as well as the broad underlying similarities in labour markets across developed countries, much can be learned about the effects of institutions and laws on labour markets from a cross-national analysis.

## Three projects

The overall initiative is divided into three broad project areas, each directed by a member of McMaster's Department of Economics. Martin Browning is responsible for leading the investigation of "Labour-Market Institutions and Family Welfare." Stephen Jones heads the group investigating "Labour-Market Institutions and Unemployment." Finally, the topic "Labour-Market Institutions and Wages and Job Quality" is directed by Peter Kuhn.

## CILN researchers

Each CILN project involves a research team of faculty members, senior researchers in the public sector, and graduate students. Faculty researchers number more than 40 and are drawn from many countries and different disciplinary backgrounds, including economics, sociology, political science and labour studies.

A major aspect of the project is the strong link it will forge between research and graduate student training. To this end, support will be provided in the form of research fellowships for a total of 15 students each year, based at McMaster University, the University of British Columbia and the University of Toronto.

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Additionally, CILN funds will support a post-doctoral fellow resident at McMaster. The first fellow will be Kelly Bedard, currently at Queen's University. Her main research interests include the links between education and wages.

## Conferences

Three major conferences are planned over the five year period, including an initial conference to be held in Burlington, Ontario, in September, 1996. A preliminary program is currently posted at the CILN website (details of which are given below) and updates will also be posted there.

## Seminar series

CILN plans an active workshop series, occasional public lectures, and a program to bring visiting researchers to McMaster. To date, Coen Teulings (University of Amsterdam) and Bob Gregory (Australian

National University) have visited McMaster for short research visits. Both presented seminars and Gregory gave the first CILN Public Lecture to an interdisciplinary audience. Recent seminars are listed below.

April 18 David Green (UBC) "Trends in Earnings Inequality among Self-Employed."

April 30 Coen Teulings (University of Amsterdam) "A Generalized Assignment Model of Workers to Jobs for the US Economy."

May 1 Coen Teulings (University of Amsterdam) "Corporatist Wage Setting in Models of Surplus Sharing."

May 8 Kelly Bedard (Queen's University) "School Quality and The Distribution of Male Earnings in Canada."

June 18 Bob Gregory (Australian National University) "The Relationships between the

Macro-Economy and the Growth of Disadvantaged Neighborhoods: The Australian Experience."

*CILN Public Lecture* June 20 Bob Gregory (Australian National University) "The Economic Progress of Women in a Regulated Labour Market."

## CILN website

The CILN website is

<http://www.socsci.mcmaster.ca/~ciln/>

It already contains the latest version of the conference program, links to all CILN members on the web, a growing working paper archive and links to other related sites. Future plans include access to international comparative data as well as enhancement of the existing pages.

## To stay in touch

If you would like to remain on the CILNews mailing list, we ask that you contact us by email, fax or mail so that we can establish an active mailing list. CILNews is planned for publication twice a year, in July and December.

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