

## *Abstracts*

HIGGINS, B., and D.J. SAVOIE: "Comparing Australian and Canadian Regional Development Policy: Lessons for Canada". One might assume that Australia and Canada would adopt a similar approach to regional development policy. Both countries are large, resource-rich, thinly settled, industrialized and affluent. Both are Westminster-style parliamentary democracies with federal constitutions. In fact, there are sharp differences in the way the two countries pursue regional development. Australia has concentrated its efforts on small regions with local community leaders responsible for planning and implementing measures. The central government has developed sophisticated data bases of local economic circumstances. Central government and state officials only play a support role in promoting regional development.

In Canada, the opposite is true. The emphasis has been on equity, on attenuating regional disparities and on province-wide programming through broadly defined federal-provincial agreements. Federal and provincial officials play a key role in defining and implementing various measures. The paper concludes by pointing to a number of important lessons to be learned for Canadian policy from the Australian experience.

HEAPS, T., J.M. MUNRO, and C.S. WRIGHT: "Simulation of the Optimal Structure of a Regional Transport System". This paper uses simulation techniques to explore the optimal configuration of a railway branchline system serving an agricultural region. The simulation uses a location-theoretic model which incorporates cost and demand relationships in the markets for grain production and transportation. The design of the model is based on certain characteristics of the Prairie region of Western Canada. The paper presents the results of simulation experiments of several possible transportation and production policies under different market types (perfect competition, farmer monopoly, railway monopoly, social monopoly) and their effects on the structure of the grain transport system and the performance of the grain industry. The paper also examines the effects of world grain price levels and relative costs of different modes of transport.

KLEIN, K.K., S.N. KULSHRESHTHA, B. STENNES, G. FOX, W.A. KERR and J. CORMAN: "Transportation Issues in Canadian Agriculture II:

Analysis of the Western Grain Transportation and Feed Freight Assistance Acts". Several policy options to change the Western Grain Transportation and Feed Freight Assistance Acts were evaluated. A change from subsidized to full compensatory freight rates for prairie farmers would cause small decreases in production of export grains and small increases in production of beef and pork in western Canada. Total economic welfare would be increased by about \$250 million per year. Only minor impacts would occur in secondary industries. In the case of Feed Freight Assistance, it was found that payment of the subsidy to end users would remove some of the distortions that the present policy causes. However, changes in either of these government programs would cause economic losses to particular groups of producers.

STABLER, J.C., and M.R. OLFERT: "Multicomunity Partnerships in Rural Development: An Alberta Case Study". Local, provincial, and federal initiatives have been taken in recent years to reverse or halt the process of "rural decline", a phrase that encompasses some or all of the rural economic and demographic changes occurring as part of the global, national, and regional restructuring process.

Many approaches have been tried but few have subsequently been formally assessed. In this study an attempt is made to provide a comprehensive economic appraisal of efforts made to rejuvenate a rural area in Alberta. The development area, now one of the federal government's Community Futures associations, had its origin as an experimental provincial initiative in 1972. Although funding agencies have changed, the organizational structure has altered, and the geographic area expanded, a formal development initiative has been continuously in place since 1972.

The Alberta initiative provides a unique opportunity to study the way in which national and regional economic influences impact on local economies, the importance of the way in which the development region is delineated, and the organizational framework used to address local and regional economic development efforts.

An assessment and interpretation of the successes and failures of this initiative will, hopefully, provide a base of information that will prove useful in designing future rural and regional development programs.

JANKOWSKI, W.B. and B. MOAZZAMI: "Commodity Price Fluctuation, Exchange Rate and Employment in Northern Ontario". The main objective of this paper is to examine the validity of the hypothesis that changes in the level of employment in Northern Ontario can, to a large extent, be explained by variation in the Northern Ontario commodity export prices and exchange rates. Using the international prices for Northern Ontario's major commodity exports, we first construct a regional composite price index. We show that variability of this composite price index and exchange rate have been responsible for about 80 percent of the variation of employment in Northern Ontario.

Finally, we estimate the long-run elasticities of employment in Northern Ontario with respect to the international prices of its major export commodities and exchange rates. The result of this study provides strong support for the hypothesis that growth of employment in Northern Ontario is tightly linked to market opportunities for resource commodities.