

## **Health Policy and Federalism 2001**

In collaboration with the governments of Brazil and Mexico, the Forum organized two workshops on health policy and federalism in October 2001. The Brazilian workshop was organized at the request of then federal health minister and leading presidential candidate José Serra. This first session took place in São Paulo from 15-16 October, 2001, and the second workshop took place in Mexico City on 18 October.

The workshops built on a comparative study of health care reforms in federal countries produced by the Institute of Intergovernmental Relations at Queen's University. The participants in both workshops included practitioners from both countries' ministries of health, academics from various universities and research institutes, and post-graduate students. As well, international experts provided a comparative analysis of the health systems in European countries, Canada, the United States, Australia, Mexico, and Brazil.

During the workshops, participants heard about the lessons learned by various federal countries as they implemented health care reforms. They evaluated the merits of various policies and programs designed to increase the efficiency of health care provision and administration. They also looked at practical ways to implement the principles of good federal governance as they apply to health care. The practitioners, during the free discussions, exchanged ideas on how to overcome their day-to-day challenges in trying to make federalism serve the needs of their often overwhelmed health care systems.