



2021 Federal Pre-Budget Submission

August 7, 2020

Summary of Recommendations:

Recommendation 1: That the government provide funding to support newcomer employment, settlement & language services across Canada, including assistance for international students

Recommendation 2: That the government provide funding for programs to improve women's economic security

Recommendation 3: That the government continue to invest in youth training and skills development including, sector-specific skills and technical training, experiential learning, work placements and networking/mentorship opportunities

About Centre for Education & Training

Centre for Education & Training (TCET) is the leading provider of integrated employment, newcomer and language services in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Our hub model leverages shared technology, services and locations to maximize funding dollars and efficiently deliver programs to our clients. In 2019, TCET provided service to over **110,000 individuals** at our **9 sites** and many itinerant locations in the GTA and through our national and international online services. TCET develops and operates programs with funding from a variety of government sources and private corporations.

We get Canadians working. We combine our employment expertise and deep relationships with over 3,000 employers to connect our clients with jobs.

- Over **25,000 job seekers** received 1-on-1 job search assistance and counselling
- Supports include resume assistance, interview preparation, skills upgrading, networking, job fairs and loans to support foreign credential recognition
- Our Youth Job Programs connect young people with jobs, with special emphasis on youth facing multiple barriers to employment
- Over **8,000 youth** gained skills for career development and participated in employment programs

Our Newcomer Information Centres (NICs) are the trusted, first stop for newcomers. We pair information and referral services with individual counselling, Care for Newcomer Children, and workshops, to help people settle successfully in Canada.

- Over **11,000 newcomers** received information referral services and support in Ontario
- Information counsellors converse with clients in **23 languages**
- Clients can access individual counselling, information referral and employment services
- NICs provide information about credential evaluation, healthcare, banking, housing, Canadian citizenship, legal and social services, and recreation and community programs
- Mobile Information Counsellors reach clients at itinerant locations which include libraries, community centres, cultural associations and places of worship
- Commissioner for Oaths, youth programs, Senior's Circle, and child minding are also available

We help immigrants learn English or French. Our industry-recognized language assessment experts and online instructors enable our clients to learn an official language to settle into Canadian society.

- Nearly **24,000 one-on-one language assessments** are conducted annually across the GTA
- Convenient, online language self-assessments are accessed by more than **44,000 immigrants** and potential immigrants across **197 countries** each year

- We provide online English language training (LINC) for rural, remote and isolated clients across Canada. This includes individual weekly sessions with an instructor via phone or video conference
- We operate the HARTS database to track all language assessment, referral and training provided by over **150 organizations** in Ontario (reports and data generated are used by the Ontario and Canadian governments for reporting and planning).
- We are recognized experts in the development of language assessment tools and language assessor training across Canada

Our locations include:

- 7700 Hurontario Street, Unit 601, Brampton, ON
- 263 Queen Street East, Unit 14, Brampton, ON
- 90 Burnhamthorpe Road West, Suite 210, Mississauga, ON
- 50 Burnhamthorpe Road West, Suite 300/410, Mississauga, ON
- 7420 Airport Road, Suite 104, Mississauga, ON
- 690 Dorval Drive, Suite 100, Oakville, ON
- 1099 Kingston Road, Suite 240, Pickering, ON
- 420 Hwy 7, East #204B, Richmond Hill, ON
- 1090 Don Mills Road, Suite 406, Toronto, ON
- 595 Parliament Street, Main Floor, Toronto, ON
- + 30 Itinerant Sites
- + Online Services Globally

Recommendations:

Centre for Education & Training would like to emphasize the necessity of continuing to include community-serving organizations like TCET in the COVID-19 response and economic recovery plan. We recommend that the Federal Government provide funding to support Newcomers and International Students, Women and Youth in the 2021 Federal Budget.

Newcomers and International Students

Recent data has revealed that newcomers, refugees and temporary foreign workers face additional barriers when coping with the challenges associated with COVID-19. In the city of Toronto, more than 80% of infected individuals identified as racialized, while making up only 52% of the city's population.

There are many complex factors associated with this challenge including:

- Communal housing facilities
- Overcrowded housing
- Housing far from work
- Car pooling
- Public transit use
- Inter-generational living
- Lack of English or French knowledge
- Work in health care, manufacturing, agriculture¹

According to Statistic Canada, 49% of immigrants reported that they were "very" or "extremely" concerned about their own health, compared with 33% of the Canadian-born. In addition, 36% of immigrants reported that the crisis would have a "major" or "moderate" impact on their finances, compared with 26% of Canadian-born.² Before COVID-19, recent immigrants already experienced an income gap of 37% compared to non-immigrants.³

In 2019, TCET assisted over **56,000 newcomer clients** through our programs and services.

Recommendation 1:

To help restart the Canadian economy, as it recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, we recommend that the Federal Government provide an increase in funding to support newcomer employment, settlement & language services across Canada, including assistance for international students.

- Language is a vital component in ensuring successful settlement, integration and safety. If immigrants do not feel confident in speaking either of Canada's two official languages, they may experience further barriers, as exhibited in the findings above. In addition to currently funded programs and services, recent immigrants may benefit from occupation-specific training to assist in higher-risk or essential workplaces.

¹ Professor Lori Wilkinson, University of Manitoba / Canada Research West, May 2020.

² <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/200501/dq200501a-eng.htm>

³ Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016210.

- Information referral services provided virtually and in-person will continue to help newcomers with their immediate needs.
- Prior to COVID-19, many skilled immigrants dealt with challenges of under-employment and earned far below their potential. As a result of the pandemic, these challenges are now amplified. Support for sector-specific programs like the Foreign Credential Recognition Program will provide much-needed support for skilled immigrants.
- International students are not currently eligible for services funded by Immigration, Refugees Citizenship Canada. Recently, there has been an increased demand for employment supports and language assessments for international students who are looking to further their studies or to apply for citizenship.

Immigrants bring skills, education, valuable experience that are in demand by Canadian employers; immigration offers a blend of rich cultures and diversity and that enriches Canadian society. It is critical to recognize these valuable contributions during the economic recovery plan.

Women

Women have faced a majority of the job losses during the pandemic compared to their male counterparts. Employment among women with toddlers or school age children fell 7% between February-May compared to the decline of 4% among fathers of children the same age. Single mothers were even more significantly impacted with employment among this demographic down 12%, compared to a 7% decline among single fathers.⁴

Despite absorbing 51% of job losses in March and April, women accounted for only 45% of job gains in May and June. Furthermore, in June, employment levels among female workers in low-wage jobs had reached only 74.8% of their February levels, versus 84.7% for their male counterparts, almost a 10% difference.⁵ Women have been slower to rebound as the economy opens.⁶

In 2019, TCET served over **47,000 women** through our multiple program and service offerings. TCET has experience developing specialized women's employment preparation workshops focused on action planning, networking, skill-building, volunteering, and work pathways, counselling for life-long learning, supported women's entrance to employment through development of work placement opportunities and networking/job shadowing activities. We provided opportunities for newcomer women to build awareness of their needs, concerns and abilities among the mainstream culture.

In 2019, TCET began offering the federally-funded Career Pathways for Visible Minority Newcomer Women pilot project, conducting essential skills assessments, upskilling, building professional portfolios as well as working with local employers to facilitate direct entry into the labour market.

⁴ RBC Economics

⁵ Statistics Canada

⁶ RBC Economics

Recommendation 2:

Support for **Women** must be a key component of the Federal Government's economic recovery plan.

- TCET recommends additional support to improve women's economic security, including making the Career Pathways for Visible Minority Newcomer Women pilot project permanent.

Youth

Youth employment has been hit particularly hard because of COVID-19, with impacts to industries that hire young workers and the loss of summer employment. The unemployment rate for youth aged 15 to 24 years of age rose from 10% in February to 29% in May.⁷ For youth still pursuing education, the pandemic is likely to result in continued inequalities upon graduation.⁸

TCET has experience working with and supporting youth, providing service to nearly **27,000 youth** in 2019.

Recommendation 3:

TCET recommends that the Federal Government further invest in youth training and skills development as part of its COVID-19 response and economic recovery plan.

- This includes increased sector-specific skills and technical training, experiential learning, work placements and networking/mentorship opportunities.

Conclusion

Centre for Education & Training is proud to support over 110,000 clients each year through our programs and services. We thank the Government of Canada for the continued investment and partnership.

In summary, we ask you to consider:

- providing further funding to support newcomer employment, settlement & language services across Canada, including assistance for international students
- providing further funding for programs to improve women's economic security and
- investing more funds to support enhanced youth training and skills development including, sector-specific skills and technical training, experiential learning, work placements and networking/mentorship opportunities

We thank you for the opportunity to participate in this important consultation.

⁷ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/45-28-0001/2020001/article/00063-eng.htm>

⁸ <https://www.corporateknights.com/channels/leadership/future-proofing-economy-investing-canadas-youth-covid-19-15948122/>