

Canadian Coalition
of Community-Based
Employability Training

Canada's Voice for the
Employment and Training Sector



Coalition canadienne
des organismes communautaires
en développement de l'employabilité

La voix de l'employabilité
au Canada

House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance - 2017 Federal Budget Consultations

The Canadian Coalition of Community-Based Employability Training (CCCBET) is a national affiliation of provincial social profit employment and training associations aligned with CCCBET's vision that "all people have access to local community-based services that support their pursuit of meaningful employment and social inclusion." Our focus is primarily on employment and training services, while recognizing the critical role that "wraparound" services provide particularly for marginalized groups.

Local community-based agencies:

- Address employment barriers and speed the transition to employment and economic independence including both recently displaced and long term marginalized populations
- Work closely with local employers individually and collectively to serve their skill requirements and candidate essential skills
- Understand labour market gaps and supply/demand needs in our communities and provinces
- Connect with other community resources to enhance the effectiveness of government services for individuals with barriers to employment.

Our member agencies across Canada deliver over half of provincially-managed employment services that are funded through the federal-provincial Labour Market Development Agreements, the Canada Job Fund Agreements and TIOW. Government funding leverages corporate and earned income revenues to support collaborations and entrepreneurial endeavours with other community/business partners and resources.

We recognize that despite Canada's solid economic potential, the development and employment of tomorrow's workforce still leaves many populations un/under-tapped, particularly youth, older workers, aboriginals, persons with disabilities and newcomers. Business recognizes this is wasted talent, but needs an active partnership with government and social profit employment service providers to close the skills gap. We can be part of the solution to help those individuals contribute to the economy of Canada.

While federal budgets often focus on expenditures, income measures are equally important. Leakage of social capital via corporate tax exemptions, tax avoidance/evasion and an income tax system that has lost much of its progressivity constrains the scope of federal leadership. A return to fair-share principles based on ability to pay should restore social balance and reduce social inequity based on income.

Summary of Recommendations

The 2017 federal budget should provide:

1. A national framework for planned investment in employment and economic development guided by broadly accepted outcomes and performance measures. Such framework, including a national strategy to align education and training with the skills needed in the labour market, to be developed and guided by the Forum of Labour Market Ministers with advisors from business, social profit (nonprofit) organizations/umbrella groups, educational institutions and organized labour.
2. Increased investment in research for innovative practices, labour market information, and more effective supports for the unemployed, responsive to regional labour markets.
3. Accelerated infrastructure investments with a majority federal share and incorporating requirements for community benefit/local hiring and training, particularly for marginalized persons. Piggy backing skills training programs with major infrastructure and economic development projects would result in a greater return on investment by expanding the available skilled worker population while addressing longstanding infrastructure deficits that hold back economic growth.
4. Greater flexibility for federally supported provincial/territorial employment and training programs to achieve labour market outcomes while enabling innovative program designs that serve both mainstream candidates as well as those 'Not Yet Job Ready'.
5. Immediate steps to implement a federal minimum wage of \$15.00/hour with annual COLA increase and annual increments for all direct employees and those on federal contracts for goods and services by 2019.

Specific Recommendations

- Accelerated upfront funding under Building Canada Fund and related infrastructure funds with at least one-third of total multi-year funds to be committed in 2017-18 and subject to community benefit/local hire conditions.
- In addition to phased increments in federal minimum wage to \$15.00/hour by 2019, that the federal government take a leadership position with provincial/territorial peers to develop a strategy for implementing a Living Wage nation-wide.
- Aggressive steps and appropriate monetary resources be taken to close tax avoidance/off-shore tax havens and recoup taxes owing of profits earned in Canada and reinvestment of half of the recovered funds in social/economic programs and civil society initiatives.
- The federal corporate income tax be incrementally restored to at least the average rate of our OECD peers by 2019 and tax exemption provisions be rigorously scrutinized to achieve direct economic benefits and positive impacts on social equity, along with a similar review of personal income tax rates and exemptions.

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CCCBET supports employment services based on reliable and comprehensive labour market information, increased labour market mobility and efficient employment services that recognize the continuum of needs. CCCBET can be a valuable ally and partner, offering its expertise in any national stakeholder advisory body that will be established even before the federal budget is approved. CCCBET has a vested interest in getting it right, in doing it well and in being accountable. We owe this both to today's workers and business, and tomorrow's.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Kothringer'.

Ed Kothringer, President

CCCBET Members

FIRST 1 WORK

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isans | Immigrant Services
Association of Nova Scotia

