



# **The Knowledge Imperative: Skills and Learning Challenges for the 21st Century**

**Peter Larose,  
Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC)**

**April 6, 2002  
Ottawa, Ontario**



**Human Resources  
Development Canada**

**Développement des  
ressources humaines Canada**

**Canada**



# Canada's Innovation Strategy

- *Achieving Excellence: Investing in People, Knowledge and Opportunity*
  - Creating and using knowledge as a national asset
  - Strengthening our science and research capacity
  - Building an innovation economy
- *Knowledge Matters: Skills and Learning for Canadians*
  - Investing in people as a country's most important resource
  - Strengthening skills and learning
  - Enhancing opportunities for all to participate



Human Resources  
Development Canada

Développement des  
ressources humaines Canada

Canada



## *Knowledge Matters: Skills and Learning for Canadians*

- Outlines Canada's skills and learning challenges
- Proposes national goals and milestones
- Sets out the Government of Canada's commitments
- Challenges stakeholders to help federal government find a common vision of **where we want to go** and to develop an **action plan** that includes us all



Human Resources  
Development Canada

Développement des  
ressources humaines Canada

Canada



# Three Key Drivers

## **Rising Skill Demands**

- the knowledge based economy is increasing the demand for higher level skills among all members of the workforce

## **Shifting Demographics**

- fewer new workers entering the labour force

## **Outdated Learning Systems**

- need to update learning systems to reflect learner and workplace realities





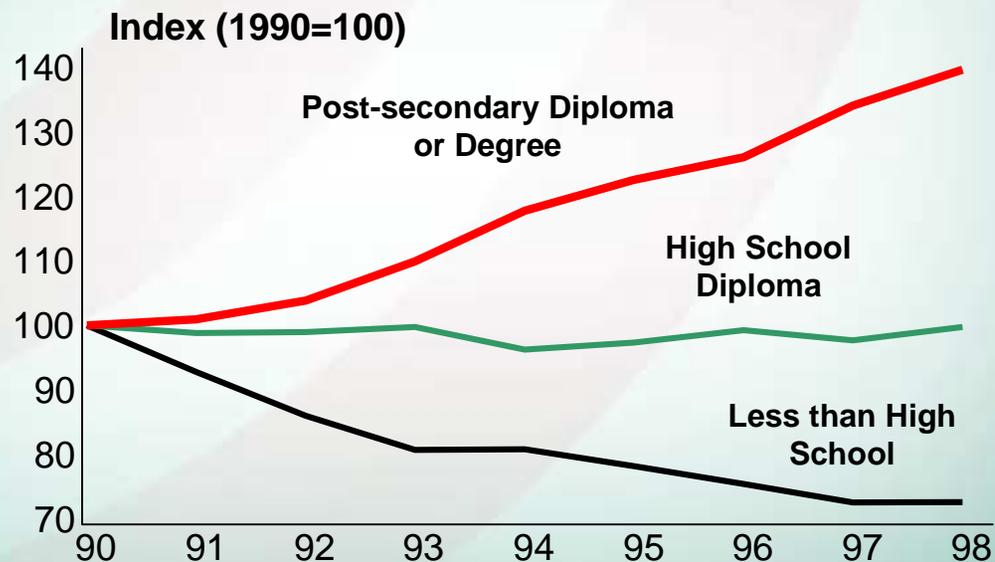
## Rising Skill Demands

- ⌚ The knowledge based economy is creating a demand for a more highly skilled and adaptable workforce
  - ⌚ rising demand for workers with post-secondary education
- ⌚ The need for continuous learning and skills upgrading
- ⌚ Many workers do not have the literacy skills needed by the knowledge economy
  - ⌚ limits both individual employability and future learning prospects
- ⌚ Low levels of employer support to workforce skills development in some countries



# Those without skills are falling behind

## Employment Growth by Highest Level of Education Attained



Source: Industry Canada compilations based on Statistics Canada (LFS) data



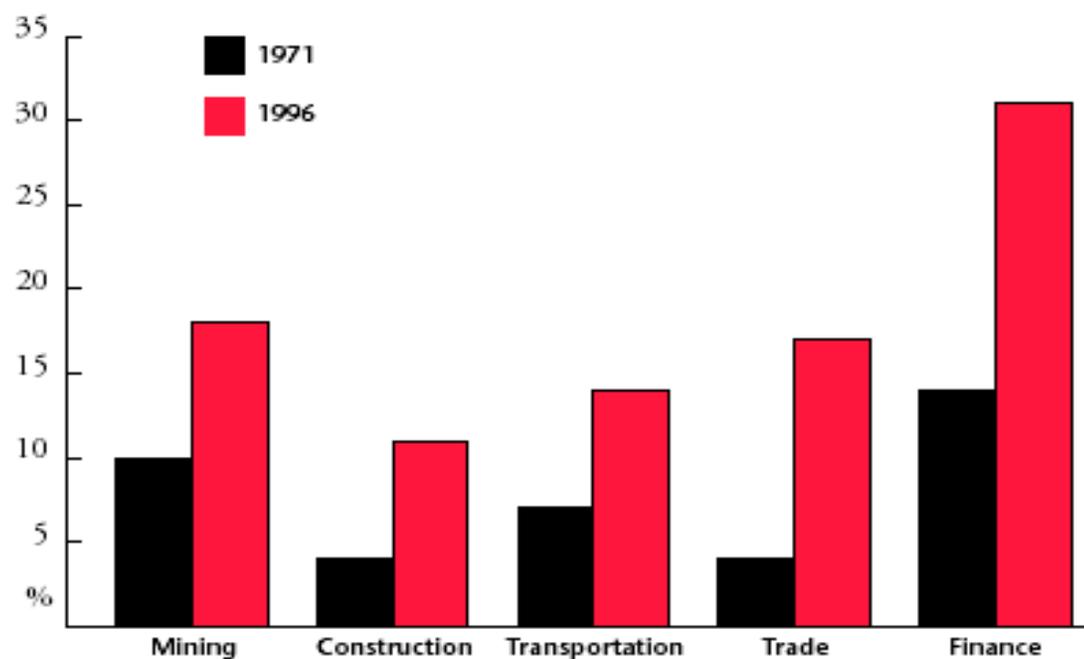
Human Resources  
Development Canada

Développement des  
ressources humaines Canada

Canada

## Skill Requirements Keep Rising Across All Sectors

*Knowledge and Management Jobs  
as a Share of Total Employment, 1971-96*



Human Resources  
Development Canada

Développement des  
ressources humaines Canada

Canada



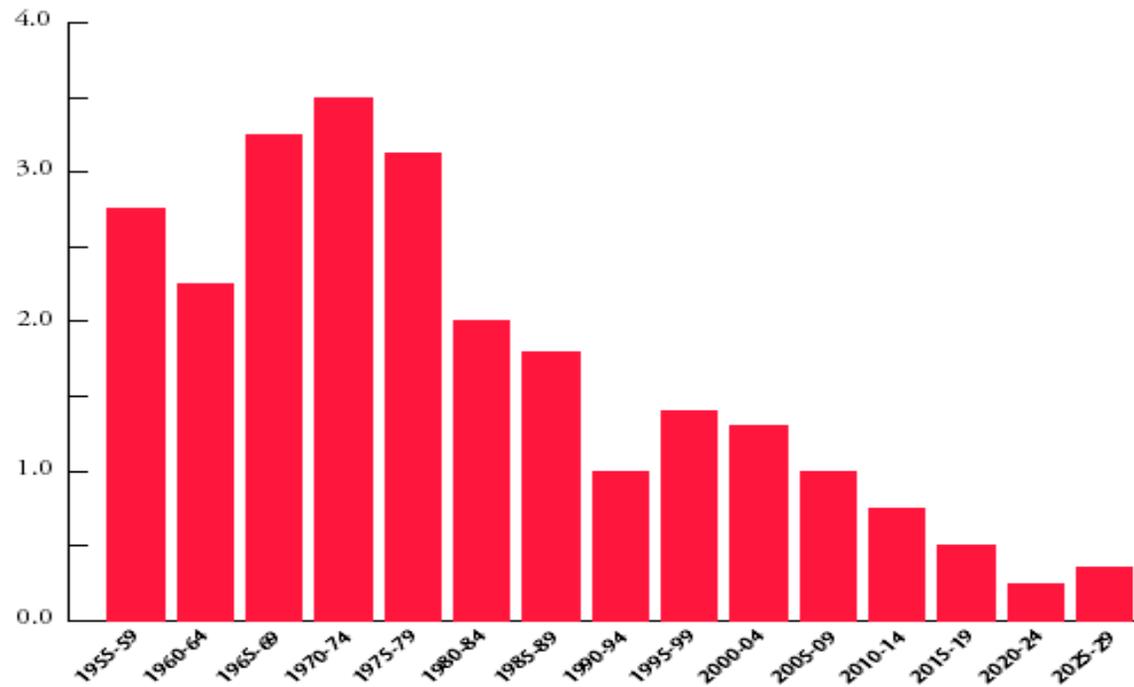
# Shifting Demographics

- ⌚ Looming demographic crunch
  - ⌚ slower workforce growth due to smaller youth cohort
  - ⌚ in most industrialized countries, much of the workforce of 2015 is already out of school and in the labour market
  
- ⌚ With fewer new workers, it is increasingly important that the potential labour force be fully mobilized:
  - ⌚ older workers - extending their opportunity to contribute to economic growth;
  - ⌚ low-skilled workers and members of groups traditionally underrepresented in education and employment - for example persons with disabilities, Aboriginal populations, youth, recent immigrants



## Labour Force Growth Will Slow

Average annual growth rate of labour force, 1955-59 to 2025-29



Sources: Historical data from Statistics Canada; projection from Applied Research Branch, HRDC, using the demographic projection model PMEDS-D



Human Resources  
Development Canada

Développement des  
ressources humaines Canada

Canada



# Our Learning Systems Must be Strengthened

- ⌚ Canada's existing learning systems are strong
- ⌚ But they need to be strengthened to ensure they can respond effectively to the challenges and opportunities of the knowledge-based economy
- ⌚ Adult learning is the least developed piece of Canada's learning infrastructure
- ⌚ It is critical in light of our need to upgrade the skills of millions of adult Canadians.

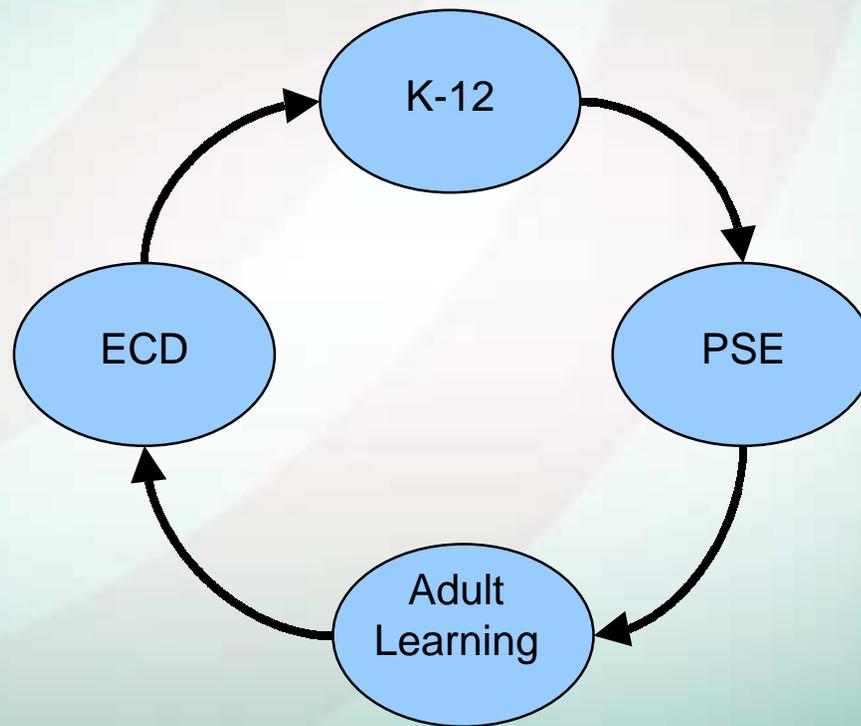


Human Resources  
Development Canada

Développement des  
ressources humaines Canada

Canada

# The Overall Learning System is Inter-Connected





# Milestones

- Canada among the top three countries in math, science, and reading achievement
- By 2010, 65% of immigrants have post-secondary education
- Within five years, increase the number of adult male and female learners from all segments of society by one million
- Within 5 years, businesses increase by one-third their annual investment in training per employee



Human Resources  
Development Canada

Développement des  
ressources humaines Canada

Canada



# Post Secondary Education



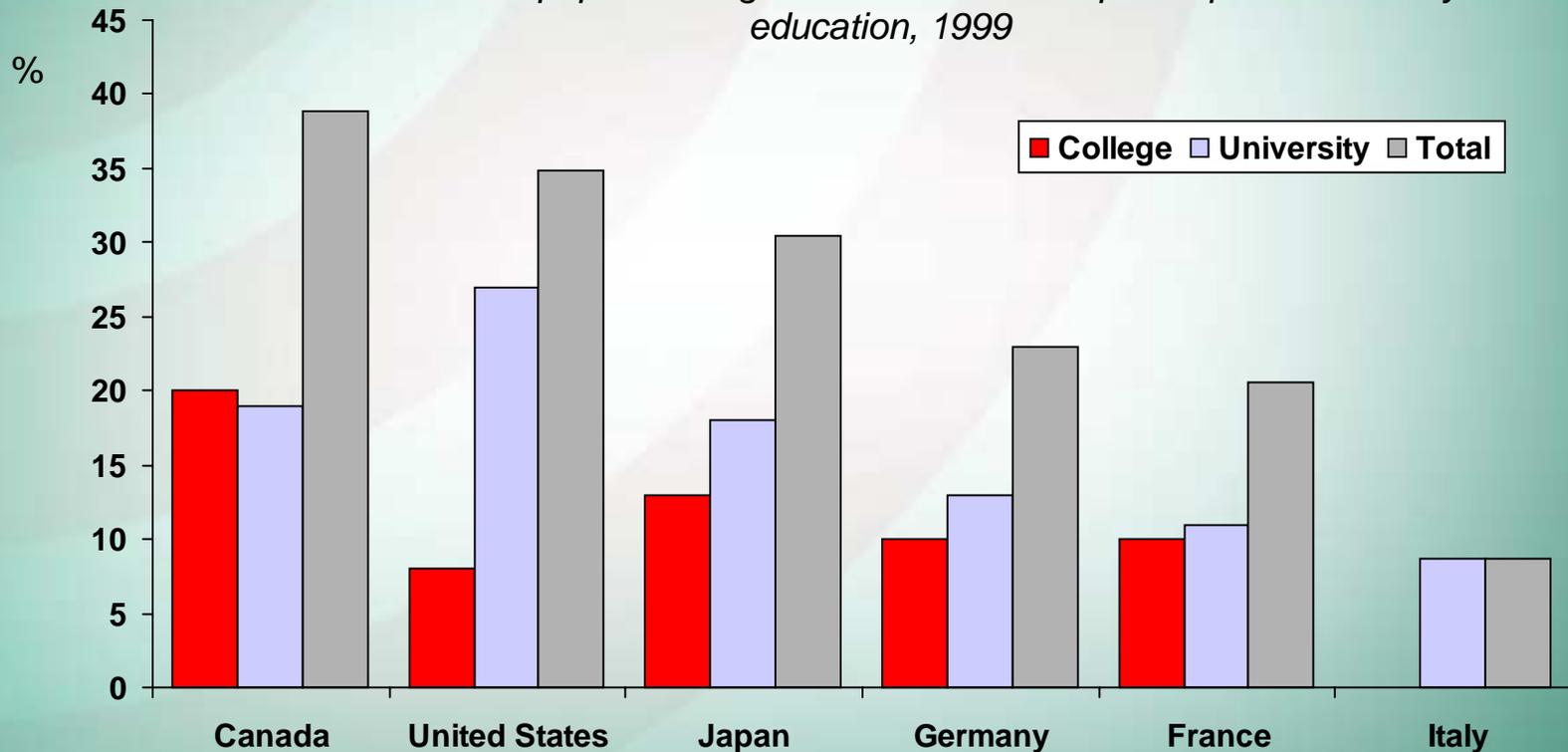
Human Resources  
Development Canada

Développement des  
ressources humaines Canada

Canada

# Canada has the highest proportion of working age people with PSE in the world

*Percent of the population aged 25 to 64 with completed post-secondary education, 1999*



Source: OECD: Education at a Glance-2001



Human Resources  
Development Canada

Développement des  
ressources humaines Canada

Canada



# Current Trends in PSE

## **Enrolment**

- Overall enrolment rates have flattened through the 1990's
- Canada's education advantage is diminishing as other countries raise their college and university participation rates
- Need to ensure that participation rates grow at the rate needed to sustain growth in the KBE

## **Access and Participation**

- Aboriginals, persons with disabilities
- Low-income families
- Part time enrolments and participation of adults





# Current Trends in PSE

## Meeting New Demands

- Demand for PSE is expected to increase by more than 20 percent by 2015.
- PSE institutions face a number of challenges, from maintaining facilities to recruiting faculty

## Responsiveness

- Innovation in education
- Recognition of prior learning



Human Resources  
Development Canada

Développement des  
ressources humaines Canada

Canada



# What is the Government of Canada doing now?

- Provides block funding through the Canada Health and Social Transfer
- The Canada Student Loans Program provided grants and loans to approximately 450,000 in 1999-2000
- Provides grants and scholarships to help those in need access PSE
  - Canada Study Grants
  - Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation
  - Canada Education Savings Grants
- Student financial assistance a fundamental lever to support access and participation
- The system must respond to increasing demands and address gaps



Human Resources  
Development Canada

Développement des  
ressources humaines Canada

Canada



# What we need to do

## Goal:

- ⌚ All qualified Canadians have access to high-quality post secondary education.

## Milestones:

- ⌚ 100% of high school graduates have the opportunity to participate in some form of post-secondary education (PSE).
- ⌚ Over the next decade, 50% of 25 - 64 year olds, including an increased proportion from at-risk groups, have a PSE credential
- ⌚ Over the next decade, double the number of apprentices complete certified programs
- ⌚ Increase admission of Masters and Ph.D. students by 5% per year through 2010





## How the Government of Canada could contribute

- Increase part time loans and grants to encourage the greater PSE participation of adult learners to 'learn while they earn'
- Examine the role of programs such as Canada Study Grants to promote greater access to PSE for Canadians from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Explore actions which can support the critical role played by community colleges
- Explore with provinces and territories how best to enhance the mobility of students and adult learners
- Encourage more Canadians to work in the skilled trades



Human Resources  
Development Canada

Développement des  
ressources humaines Canada

Canada



# What's Next?

## ***Roll-out over the next 12 -24 months:***

- Roundtables on national goals and milestones, and possible actions
- Best practices workshops
- Continuous dialogue: what works
- Individual stakeholder engagement



Human Resources  
Development Canada

Développement des  
ressources humaines Canada

Canada