

**Active Labour Market Policy in Canada: Lessons from the Labour Market  
Development Agreements**

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**Policies and Institutional support for Lifelong Learning In  
Canada**

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Structure

- 1.) Why Lifelong Learning?
- 2.) What is Lifelong Learning?
- 3.) Lifelong Learning for whom?
- 4.) What is needed?
- 5.) Implications for public policy and private strategy.

## **Why Lifelong Learning?**

- **The economic imperative**
- **Education and life chances**
- **Civic Literacy and participation**

## **What is Lifelong Learning?**

- **Lifelong**
- **Life–wide**
- **‘Learning’ instead of ‘education’**

## **Lifelong Learning for Whom?**

- **Lifelong learning for the better qualified**
- **Polarization**
- **Lifelong Learning for all**

# Canada - a highly educated or a deeply polarized society?

**LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND FUNCTIONAL LITERACY\*  
IN SELECTED COUNTRIES, 1995**

	Educational attainment				Percentage of population aged 25-64 by level of functional literacy			
	<i>Not completed high school</i>	<i>High school</i>	<i>Non-university tertiary</i>	<i>University</i>	<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>	<i>Level 4/5</i>
Canada	25	28	30	17	19	25	32	24
United States	14	50	8	25	24	25	32	20
Germany	16	61	10	13	10	33	39	19
Netherlands	39	39	a	22	11	27	43	19
Sweden	25	46	14	14	7	19	40	35

\*document reading

a. The category does not exist for the Netherlands

Source: Rubenson & Schuetze (2000), based on OECD 1997; OECD 1998

References:

OECD. (1997). Literacy skills for the knowledge society. Paris: OECD.

OECD. (1998). Education at a Glance - OECD indicators. Paris: OECD.

Rubenson, K., & Schuetze, H. G. (2000). Lifelong learning for the knowledge society: Demand, supply, and policy dilemmas. In K. Rubenson & H. G. Schuetze (Eds.), Transition to the knowledge society: Policies and strategies for individual participation and learning, (pp. 355 - 376). Vancouver: UBC (Institute for European Studies).

# **What is required ?**

**to further and cultivate lifelong learning in Canada?**

## From Individuals

- Motivation
- Foundations

## From Schools

- Alternative curricula for the more practically-gifted and minded
- 'Applied' curricula
- 'Alternation' education and training
- Improved counseling for non-academic education/training and careers

## From Post-Secondary Education Institutions

- Relevant (continuing) education and training courses/programs
- More flexible delivery methods, scheduling, support for adult learners
- Prior learning assessment and recognition

# **What is required ?**

**to further and cultivate lifelong learning in Canada? (contin.)**

## **From Employers**

- Learning opportunities for all at and through the workplace
- Workplace organizations enabling learning/using skills
- Other workplace practices to foster “learning culture”

## **From Governments**

- Introduce learning-enhancing tax rules
- Offer a comprehensive financing system
- Take responsibility and action for creating/reinforcing a vibrant, sustainable adult education system, including outreach programs, literacy education.
- Strike sustainable partnerships with non-profit, non-governmental organizations (e.g. voluntary sector, community groups, non-education institutions) to offer learning opportunities for the least qualified, hard-to-reach, difficult-to-motivate individuals
- Build more institutionalized bridges between schools and the world of work

# **Implications** **for Public Policy and Private Strategy**

- 1) Government should leave to “Market Forces” what they can do best, but a “Lifelong Learning for all” strategy can not be realized if it is left to the market alone.**
  
- 2) Lifelong Learning is more than just in-time training for changing jobs. However, even just-in-time training requires a workforce that has the foundations for further learning.**
  
- 3) Labour Market Training has been largely unsuccessful because it is often too narrowly defined.**



## **Implications (contin.)**

**4) Canadian society is highly polarized with respect to knowledge and skills required to operate in a knowledge-based economy and society. Coordinated government policy must seriously address this problem to avoid growing disparities in terms of employment, income, and participation in social and civic life.**

**5) Competitiveness in global markets requires more sustained efforts**

**on the part of employers to offer learning opportunities to all their employees, independent of actual skills gaps,**

**on the part of governments to provide incentives, both financial and non-financial, to those employers who offer such opportunities.**