

Canada and the G20: Employment, Education and the Future of Work

G20 President Argentina hosted a series of ministerial meetings September 5–7, 2018 in Mendoza, Argentina, under the theme Future of Work. During the three days, education ministers and employment ministers held joint sessions and met separately.

Canada supports the outcomes of the ministerial meetings. Preparing our citizens with the skills and education they need for the changing nature of work will ensure we can create the well-paying jobs of the future, continue to grow our economy, strengthen the middle class and help those working hard to join it.

Canada actively promotes policy coordination between multiple levels of government, social partners, and education and labour-market institutions to help workers get the skills, training and opportunities they need to succeed.

Canada also supports the development of policies that foster STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) skills, particularly among women and girls, along with digital and soft skills. Strong foundational skills enable the workforce to adapt and be more resilient to the changing nature of work. Furthermore, Canada encourages early-childhood development, and high-quality education in safe, inclusive and equitable environments.

Meeting of education ministers

Throughout their meeting, education ministers highlighted the importance of:

- early-childhood education in the development of foundational and soft skills;
- teacher training to improve education quality;
- a whole-of-government approach to curriculum development;
- reviewing education investments, including international financing.

At the end of the meeting, the ministers issued a declaration. Canada is pleased to note that the declaration included the concepts of at least 12 years of quality education for girls, safe learning environments and work-integrated learning.

Joint meeting of education and employment ministers

This meeting marked the first time that education and employment ministers met jointly in the G20 context. The ministers discussed:

- skills development that responds to labour markets;
- policy coordination among education, labour and employment institutions;
- policies that facilitate transition from school to work.

The ministers highlighted the importance of promoting lifelong learning and greater collaboration among employment and education ministries, and educational institutions and businesses, to ensure that policies and programs respond more appropriately to the changing nature of work.

At the end of the meeting, the ministers issued a short declaration that included guidelines on skills for an inclusive future of work, emphasizing the need to promote a holistic, inclusive and lifelong learning approach in skills development policies that respect human rights, the need to support robust education and training systems that promote access to better jobs, and the key role of strong foundation skills in acquiring other essential skills, such as digital skills.

Meeting of employment ministers

Employment ministers focused their discussions on:

- technological change and labour-market transformation;
- non-standard forms of and informal employment;
- strengthening social protections;
- gender equality;
- the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market.

At the end of the meeting, the ministers issued a declaration focused on improving the integration of vulnerable and under-represented groups in labour markets, encouraging formalization and decent work, promoting access to social-protection systems and other topics.