

**GOVERNMENT OF CANADA INTERIM RESPONSE  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND  
THE STATUS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

**INTERIM REPORT  
ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

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**PREFACE**

Meeting the challenges and opportunities of today's economy calls for a continuing investment in the skills of Canadians both young and old, and in the development of life-long learning. Canada can only realize its full potential if each individual has the capacity and the opportunity to achieve his or her learning goals.

Within today's knowledge-based global economy, the role of Canada's post-secondary education sector is increasingly important both to Canada's ongoing economic prosperity and to individual well being. As both conveyors of learning and generators of new knowledge and innovation, a strong post-secondary education sector is central to Canada's future economic growth. The overwhelming proportion of new jobs created in the 21<sup>st</sup> century – more than 70 percent of jobs created over the coming five years – will require a post-secondary degree, diploma or its equivalent. People who lack at least some level of post-secondary education are increasingly at risk of exclusion from the labour market, facing higher levels of unemployment, lower average wage rates, and higher vulnerability to lay-off.

Canada's accomplishments in education over the past 50 years have been remarkable. In 1996, as many as 60 out of every 100 people in our labour force had completed post-secondary education, compared to only 7 in 1941 and 16 in 1961. Today, Canada has the most highly educated labour force in the world, and one of the most extensive and complex networks of post-secondary institutions. A wealth of learning choices are available to the prospective learner, whether delivered on-line, on-site or through correspondence, by a university, community college, private vocational institute, university college or through an apprenticeship program.

Though highly successful to date, the nature of post-secondary education and the role of Canada's post-secondary institutions are changing. More dynamic labour markets, the increasing demand for higher skills, and demographic challenges which affect both the demands on the sector and its capacity to address future learning needs, mean that Canada cannot rest on the education achievements of the past. Like many other countries, it must take action to ensure its post-secondary sector meets the demands and expectations of the new knowledge and information based economy.

Many of the challenges faced by Canada's advanced learning community were identified by the Standing Committee in its Interim Report. The need to maintain broader post-secondary access for low-income students, aboriginal students and persons with disabilities, concerns regarding credit portability and learning efficiency, and the capacity of the sector to address future learning demands are concerns of the Government of Canada. Through such initiatives as the Canada Student Loan Program, the Millennium Scholarship Foundation, and funding to Granting Councils, the Government of Canada has demonstrated its commitment to learning access and post-secondary education quality, a priority that was confirmed in the most recent Speech from the Throne.

The challenges currently facing Canada's post-secondary sector are complex and multi-layered. It is clear that no one organization and no single initiative can have all the answers to these challenges or provide all required services. Building the most talented and skilled work force in the world must be a national effort. Success will require the collaboration and active involvement not only of government at all levels, but also of employers in the public and private sectors, organised labour, the voluntary sector, educators, and individual Canadians.

As the Committee noted in its report, 'Canada's post-secondary system is a broad and complicated area', a conclusion which is borne out by the scope and depth of issues identified by the Committee for future consideration. Part I of this response to the Standing Committee's Interim Report provides a brief discussion of the specific issues identified by the Committee, and suggests additional issues which the Committee may wish to consider in future. Part II provides general background regarding program evaluations, data access opportunities and Statistics Canada surveys, which could be drawn against to inform future Committee deliberations.

The Government of Canada would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Standing Committee on its work to date, and to encourage and support their deliberations in future. The Government of Canada commends the Committee's work to better understand the influences and the operation of Canada's post-secondary system, and to building a common base of understanding from which to develop future recommendations.

## **PART I – SPECIFIC COMMITTEE ISSUES**

### **Access and Mobility**

#### **A. Access to Post-Secondary Education**

The Standing Committee identified the following next-steps:

- *Study financial and non-financial barriers to access and mobility, particularly as they affect lower socio-economic groups, persons with disabilities, Immigrants, Aboriginals and rural residents.*

Ensuring equitable access to advanced learning opportunities has long been a concern of the Government of Canada. Initiatives such as the Canada Student Loans Program, the Canadian Millennium Scholarships Fund, and the Canada Study Grants were designed to address the financial barriers that often face learners from low-income families. As the Committee pointed out, however, financial barriers are not the only obstacles to individual participation in higher education and training.

Through the Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities initiative, the Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities, and Canada Study Grants, the Government of Canada addresses a number of the specific and unique barriers to advanced learning faced by persons with disabilities. In particular, access to post-secondary education for persons with disabilities is supported by Canada Study Grants, which provide resources for exceptional education-related costs such as specialized transportation to and from the educational institution, attendant care for studies, a reader, a tutor or a note-taker. Data addressing this issue will be available with release of data from Statistics Canada's Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS). Post-Secondary Education programs offered by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada – most of which are delivered directly by First Nations or their administering organizations – support increased participation and success among treaty/status Indians and Inuit students. Under these programs, assistance is provided not only to individual students (tuition fees, books, travel and living allowances, as applicable), but also to post-secondary institutions to support the development and delivery of special programs for and about aboriginal peoples.

Taken together, these programs and others like them address barriers as they affect components of the Canadian population that remain under-represented within Canada's learning community. We encourage the Committee in its efforts to better understand financial and non-financial barriers to post-secondary access, particularly as they affect lower socio-economic groups, persons with disabilities, immigrants, aboriginal persons and rural residents. Insights into learning barriers as they affect adults, and the potential impacts of new learning technologies on learning access, would also be welcome.

## **B. Mobility in Post-secondary Education**

The Standing Committee identified the following next-steps:

- *Follow closely the federal participation in federal-provincial negotiations concerning interprovincial mobility and portability in all aspects of the post-secondary education and training system with a view to strengthen the federal-provincial system to ensure access.*

While there are no federal-provincial negotiations concerning inter-provincial mobility and portability in Canada's post-secondary education system, facilitating the mobility of Canadians is one of the priorities for all governments under the Social Union Framework Agreement:

*"All governments believe that the freedom of movement of Canadians to pursue opportunities anywhere in Canada is an essential element of Canadian citizenship."*

More specifically, Section 2 of the Agreement commits governments to eliminate, within three years, any residency-based policies or practices which constrain access to, among other areas, post-secondary education and training, unless they can be demonstrated to be reasonable and consistent with the principles of the Agreement. Meeting this commitment will help ensure that Canadians have the ability to study anywhere in Canada without fear of losing access to programs and services.

Toward that end, there has been significant progress in facilitating the mobility of students across Canada:

- The 12 provinces and territories with loan programs (the Yukon Territory does not have a student loan program) now permit Canadian students to use their provincial-territorial loans for studies outside of their home province or territory. The Government of Canada will continue to work with provinces and territories to further encourage the mobility of students through the full portability of all forms of student financial assistance.
- The Government of Canada recognizes the work undertaken by universities and colleges to establish protocols for the inter-institutional transferability of academic credits. That said, the Government of Canada recognizes that there is still much progress that can be made on this front, and encourages greater co-operation among institutions in the integration of their educational programs.
- The Government of Canada recognizes the significant progress that has been made by provinces, territories and professional associations to recognize inter-provincial qualifications and will continue to work toward full compliance with the labour mobility provisions of the *Agreement on Internal Trade*.

For the Government of Canada, the recognition of prior learning – whether gained formally or informally; whether gained inside or outside of Canada – is a critical component in building a comprehensive learning system. A number of provinces have institutional structures in place which address the learning recognition needs of their residents. That said, there is a need for broader co-ordination and for research into learning recognition best practices.

## **Student Financing**

As recognized by the Standing Committee, more information is needed on the role of student financing in determining access to post-secondary education. The Government of Canada has an ongoing commitment to expand its research in this critical area of social policy. Over the next two years, through research initiatives led by Statistics Canada, we should have enhanced information on student debt levels, and on the role of student financial assistance in the advanced learning decision. Part II of this Response contains further information regarding upcoming information availability as it pertains to this issue.

### **A. The Canada Student Loans Program**

The Standing Committee identified the following next-steps:

- *Obtain more information regarding the role that student financing plays in determining access to post-secondary education and training.*
- *Gather more evidence on this matter, especially as it pertains to the financing needs of part-time learners, students with disabilities, Aboriginal students, immigrants and the loan and grant system in Quebec.*
- *Review the progress that we hope has been made by asking for reports on the unimplemented recommendations in the report, Ensuring Access: Assistance for Post-Secondary Students, especially those that deal with students that have additional needs, and in particular,*
- *To revise the current in-study earnings exemption that has received so much criticism during our hearings.*

In its 1997 report, *Ensuring Access: Assistance for Post-Secondary Students*, the committee made several recommendations to the Government of Canada as to how the Canada Student Loans Program could be revised so as to increase access to post-secondary education. Many of these recommendations have since been implemented.

Enhancing access was the underlying principle of the 1998 Canadian Opportunities Strategy, which introduced several policy changes that were in line with the committee's recommendations. These included the creation of the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation, a new Canada Study Grant for students with dependants, the Canada Education Savings Grant and tax-free

RRSP withdrawals for lifelong learning. The strategy also announced several debt management measures such as Extended Interest Relief, Debt Reduction in Repayment and a federal tax credit on student loan interest. Subsequent to the Canadian Opportunities Strategy, the Canada Student Loans Program tax exemption on scholarships and bursaries was increased from \$500 to \$3000, allowing students to take fuller advantage of financial awards. Data addressing this issue is currently available from Statistics Canada in The Post-Secondary Education Participation Survey (PEPS). Increasingly, income tax measures have been an important mechanism for addressing financial barriers to higher education and training. The tax measures introduced with the 1998 Opportunities Strategy added to an existing range of education related tax provisions which ease the costs of learning for both students and their families. In 2001, the value of education-related tax credits, exemptions and deductions will total \$1.3 Billion.

Recognizing that persons with disabilities face additional challenges when pursuing higher education, the Canada Student Loans program includes a number of provisions to address the specific needs of this population. Measures range from relaxed course load limits for both part-time and full-time loan eligibility, so as to encourage attendance, to special loan repayment provisions, including availability of a permanent disability benefit for disabled students with exceptional hardship. Direct financial assistance is also available in the form of a non-repayable grant to address exceptional education-related costs, including services provided by note-takers and interpreters, specialized transportation to and from the institution, and the acquisition of technical and technological support.

In the 2001 Speech from the Throne, the Government of Canada made a commitment to work with the provinces and territories and other partners toward a comprehensive labour market strategy for persons with disabilities. Access to post-secondary education will be examined as part of this work, which is currently underway.

The principle of increased access has been central to many of the changes made in the area of student financial assistance. The decision by the Government of Canada to directly finance the Canada Student Loans program, for example, has provided a number of opportunities to enhance the Canada Student Loans program, including the renewal of efforts to integrate federal and provincial student loans programs. Integration Agreements have been reached with Saskatchewan and Ontario. Within the context of these agreements, the Government of Canada is now in the process of reviewing some of its program policies, including the in-study earnings exemption. We look forward to sharing outcomes with the Committee.



## **B. Financial Support for Individuals in Trades Training**

The Standing Committee identified the following next-steps:

- *Examine the extent of the shortfall in income support for apprentices and others during periods of institutional training.*
- *Identify avenues for enhancing financial support, including measure to help alleviate the cost of tools and other equipment that are critical to the successful completion of training.*

The Government of Canada is interested in ways to promote apprenticeship and to remove barriers to completing programs once they have been entered. The question of adequate income during periods of institutional training is one that arises repeatedly. Responsibility for the costs of adult training is shared among the trainees, employers, and governments. The issue is how much should fall to each. Data addressing this and associated issues is available from Statistics Canada through the Registered Apprenticeship Information System (RAIS). The Government recognizes that the cost of purchasing tools can act as deterrent to pursuing training in fields where workers typically supply their own tools. The Government of Canada is considering how to address this issue. The Committee is uniquely placed to seek the views of all Canadians.

## **C. Incentives to Save for Higher Education and Training**

The Standing Committee identified the following next-steps:

- *Investigate the benefits of encouraging individuals to save for life-long learning and examine vehicles for encouraging individuals to invest in the acquisition of skills throughout their years in the workforce.*
- *Examine where other measures (such as grants) can ensure that those who cannot take advantage of these saving vehicles do not incur any disadvantage in gaining access to higher education.*

The Government of Canada is strongly committed to the importance of individuals taking the responsibility for investing in themselves. The 2001 Speech from the Throne indicated that the government would introduce mechanisms to allow workers to invest in their own skills development.

The government also has a longstanding commitment to ensuring that all Canadians have opportunities for education. It has always recognized that savings vehicles alone are unlikely to serve all individuals and therefore has additionally committed in the 2001 Speech from the Throne to improvements to the part-time loan program for those who have limited access to adequate financial resources.

Both initiatives identified in the 2001 Speech from the Throne recognize the importance of skills upgrading to the knowledge-based economy and the role of the government to make it easier for Canadians to finance life-long learning. The Government of Canada will continue to examine options for meeting these commitments. The Committee's work in examining associated measures could greatly enrich the policy debate.

#### **D. Student Debt and Debt Relief**

The Standing Committee identified the following next-steps:

- *Update our information on student debt.*
- *Assess the effectiveness of the debt relief measures adopted in the 1998 budget.*
- *Examine the need for further support in this area such as the provision of needs-based grants and the desirability of new lending measures, for example, income contingent loans.*

As part of the 1998 Canadian Opportunities Strategy, an extended repayment period was introduced, as well as an extended interest relief period for those who remained in financial difficulty. Since the introduction of these measures, the uptake in Interest Relief has increased substantially. In 1997-98 (prior to the extension of Interest Relief) student borrowers accessed \$37.9 million in Interest Relief. This amount rose to over \$82.7 million in 1999-00.

In 1998 the Debt Reduction in Repayment Program for borrowers who have exhausted their Interest Relief options was introduced. For the 1999-00 fiscal year this measure provided \$483,840 in assistance. While the uptake on this program has increased over the years, the Government of Canada is presently reviewing ways to improve this measure in order for more students to benefit from it.

The planned evaluation of the revised Canada Student Loans program (discussed in more detail in Part II of this Interim Response) will examine the effectiveness of current debt relief measures, and the need for more support in the area of student debt and debt relief.

#### **E. Bankruptcy**

The Standing Committee identified the following next-steps:

- *Pursue in more detail the treatment of students by the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act.*
- *Hear the position of officials from HRDC and Industry Canada, the Department that is responsible for the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, to discuss the justification for this aspect of the law.*

As part of the 1998 Budget, it was announced that the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act* would be amended so as to extend the non-dischargeable period for student loans. Under current provisions, persons with either federal or provincial student loan debts who declare bankruptcy either while a student or within ten years of finishing their studies are not able to discharge (through the bankruptcy) either their outstanding student loan debt or associated interest owing. Provisions are available for discharging any remaining debt after the 10-year period has expired.

The purpose of this amendment was twofold. The primary objective was to ensure that students would take full advantage of expanded debt management measures before considering bankruptcy. In addition, the amendment also addressed concerns that existing default levels were jeopardising the integrity of the Canada Student Loans program and continued fund availability.

With respect to the first objective, new financial benefits were provided to students in the 1998 Budget. In particular, the 1998 Budget established a new and very large scholarship fund – The Millennium Scholarship Foundation – under the Canadian Opportunities Strategy. The Fund significantly increased non-repayable grants available to students, thereby reducing the need for students to borrow. The 1998 Budget also introduced new debt management measures for borrowers experiencing financial hardship under the Canada Student Loans program. New initiatives included more generous provisions for Interest Relief, potential extension of the loan amortization period, and provisions for debt reduction once the student is in repayment.

The amendment to the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act* also serves as an important program integrity measure. Canada Student Loans differ significantly from most private loans in that they are provided without security or guarantee. Rather than collateral, student loans obtained for the purpose of post-secondary education are based on current financial need and the expectation of future earnings. There were increasing concerns that the integrity of the Canada Student Loans program was compromised by a borrower's ability to discharge their Canada Student Loan before allowing an appropriate period to realize those earnings.

## **The Capacity to Educate and Train**

### **A. Federal Funding for Post-secondary Education and Training**

The Standing Committee identified the following next-steps:

- *Explore further how federal funding mechanisms for higher learning can be strengthened and how we can afford greater prominence to post-secondary education and training in the federal government while respecting provincial jurisdiction.*

- *Include an evaluation of the place of post-secondary education and training in the review of the Social Union Framework Agreement that will be undertaken by February 2002.*

The Government of Canada provides block funding to the provinces and territories through the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST). These funds are provided to help the provinces and territories carry out their responsibilities in terms of health, post-secondary education, social assistance, social services, and early childhood development. No special conditions are placed on the provincial use of CHST funds for post-secondary education. This approach recognizes provincial responsibilities in the area of post-secondary education, and respects their role in assessing and addressing education needs within their own jurisdiction. Most recently, for example, the Ontario government and its partners are investing \$1.8 billion in campuses across the province to meet the projected increase in demand for spaces in Ontario's colleges and universities. The 2000 budget provided a \$2.5 billion increase in the CHST – the fourth consecutive federal enhancement to the transfer. The total CHST (cash and tax transfers combined) will reach an all time high of almost \$34.0 billion in 2001-02.

Recent federal budgets have reaffirmed the Government of Canada's commitment to removing financial and non-financial barriers to PSE through funding increases and initiatives designed to make PSE more accessible. The Government of Canada invests heavily in indirect support to post-secondary education, including the provision of student financial assistance, support to institution-based research and innovation, and tax measures to make post-secondary education more affordable for students and their families. In 2000/2001, taking into account both spending and tax measures, this investment surpassed \$4.5 billion dollars.

February 4, 2002 marks the third anniversary of the signing of the Social Union Framework Agreement (SUFA) by all first Ministers except Quebec. Section 7 of the Agreement states:

*By the end of the third year of the Social Union Framework Agreement (SUFA), governments will jointly undertake a full review of the Agreement and its implementation and make appropriate adjustments to the Framework as required. This review will ensure significant opportunities for input and feedback from Canadians and all interested parties, including social policy experts, private sector and voluntary organizations.*

The SUFA is about working in partnership with the provinces and territories. In that spirit, the three-year review of SUFA should be conducted in partnership with them, as envisaged by SUFA.

The federal government is working with interested provincial and territorial governments to agree on a process for the review, including how to best engage Canadians in the review itself. The Government of Canada's objective is to

launch and complete the review in a timely fashion, respecting the SUFA commitment.

## **B. Potential Skill Shortages Among Educators and Trainers**

The Standing Committee identified the following next-steps:

- *Study ways of enhancing teaching and training capacity in the years to come.*
- *Review the budgets of research granting councils with a view to augmenting support for graduate students.*
- *Review the role of the federal government in promoting trades training and the retention of those in the system to ensure that they attain journeyman status.*

The Government of Canada is concerned about possible shortages of faculty training personnel. It is not only a matter of how many individuals are available to instruct Canada's learners, but also the manner in which learning resources are employed. Through new electronic and communications technologies, and with better understanding of alternative pedagogies, are there alternative ways of addressing faculty and learning needs? These alternative approaches may also have positive benefits for those who are generally underrepresented in the post-secondary student population, for example – adults, persons with disabilities, or rural students.

With a view to balancing the needs of institutions with those of Canadian and permanent resident academics, Human Resources Development Canada, with the agreement of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, recently eliminated the two-tier policy for advertising of academic positions, allowing universities/university colleges to advertise for all positions simultaneously in Canada and abroad.

The Government has a strong interest in, and commitment to, the skilled trades as an important element of being competitive in the knowledge-based economy. Current activities under the Red Seal Program through the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF) and many Sector Councils are designed to encourage participation in the skilled trades, to encourage broader student access, and to enable inter-provincial student and journeyman mobility. The role these trades play in our economy and the quality of jobs they offer to Canadians is often not fully appreciated. The demographics of some skilled trades is of concern, with many experienced workers expected to retire over the next ten years and too few replacements coming along. Recognizing that apprenticeship is an area of provincial responsibility, the federal government is working with all apprenticeship stakeholders and labour market partners on ways to overcome the problems faced by the trades. The government looks forward to Committee suggestions on how this could be further facilitated or improved.

## **PART II – UPCOMING PROGRAM EVALUATIONS AND SURVEYS**

In its Interim Report, the Standing Committee identifies the specific higher education and training access issues that it intends to examine in depth. To inform these discussions, the following is a general discussion of upcoming Government of Canada program evaluations, Statistics Canada surveys, data opportunities and their availability, all of which can be drawn against to address the issues as identified.

### **HRDC Program Evaluations**

Human Resources Development Canada's Evaluation and Data Development Directorate provides relevant, reliable, objective and timely information on the efficiency and effectiveness of HRDC programs. The last full evaluation of the Canada Student Loans program was completed in 1997. Evaluation findings and recommendations were instrumental in subsequent policy and program redesign.

The Directorate has planned an extensive range of evaluation activities in the 2001-2005 period to assess the impact of recent Canada Student Loans program changes. These include:

- Formative Evaluation – to be conducted in 2001-02 to focus on issues related to program relevance, the linkages between stated program objectives, design and delivery, as well as any early indications of program results linked to implementation of reforms;
- Two Accessibility surveys – the first to be carried out in 2001-02 to establish a baseline measure of post-secondary access; the second in 2004-2005 to assess the accessibility impacts – on part-time learners, students with disabilities, Aboriginal students, and immigrants – of recent program changes;
- Summative Evaluations – the first evaluation, in 2002-2003, will address short-term program impacts such as the extent to which the program has reached those most in need; the second evaluation, scheduled for 2004-05, will examine issues related to medium-term program impacts such as participation in and completion of post-secondary education among beneficiaries.

HRDC would be pleased to share the results of program evaluations with the Standing Committee as they become available.

### **Research Data Centres**

The Research Data Centres (RDC) program is part of a joint initiative by Statistics Canada, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the Canadian Foundation for Innovation (CFI) and selected universities to help strengthen Canada's social research capacity and to support the policy research community. Research Data Centres create an environment that fosters relevant research, while maintaining confidentiality and security. Centres are located in

nine universities across the country - Dalhousie (opening October 2001), University of New Brunswick (opening December 2001), Université de Montréal (open), University of Toronto (opening October 2001), McMaster University (open), University of Waterloo (opening October 2001), University of Calgary (open), University of Alberta (open) and University of British Columbia (open). They are secure Statistics Canada environments operated under the privacy and confidentiality provisions of the Statistics Act and staffed by a Statistics Canada employee at all times.

### **Select Statistics Canada Survey Availability**

Statistics Canada undertakes a range of surveys, which touch on issues, related to individual access to higher education and training. These surveys are briefly discussed in the following.

**Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)** – An international study of reading, mathematics and science achievement among 15 year-olds, undertaken through the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The survey provides international comparisons of the level and distribution of student achievement, and provides information with which to investigate how performance relates to individual, school and institutional factors.

The first cycle of PISA was administered in 2000, with reading as the major assessment domain. In Canada, this first cycle was integrated with the Youth in Transition Survey, with preliminary survey results available during the first half of 2002. The project is funded by HRDC, and is conducted in partnership with the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, and provincial and territorial ministries and departments of education. The next two PISA assessments will focus on mathematics in 2003 and science in 2006.

**Youth in Transition Survey (YITS)** – a longitudinal survey designed to provide policy-relevant information about school to work transitions and factors influencing pathways between education, training and work. A cohort of youth aged 15 and of youth aged 18-20 were introduced in 2000. The first release of YITS data will be in January 2002.

The 2000 YITS/PISA study collected background information from 15-year-old students, their parents and school administrators, and from youth aged 18 to 20. The survey will provide information on a wide range of variables that are expected to directly influence observed learning outcomes (including education, system structure, family socio-economic status, parental involvement, students' aspirations and planning, barriers and PSE financing plans). Information is also collected on activity limitations and mobility. Sample sizes are large enough to yield reliable estimates for both official languages within each province.

**The National Graduates Survey (NGS)** – provides precise national and provincial estimates of school to work transitions, labour market outcomes, mobility, and debt and loan repayment of post-secondary graduates by field of study and by level of certification. This level of detail is available from no other data source. Sample design includes the international mobility of graduates to the US.

NGS survey results are currently available for the classes of 1982, 1986, 1990, and 1995, with data collection both two and five years after graduation. The next cohort will be the class of 2000, with data collection in the spring of 2002, and data release in November 2003.

**Registered Apprenticeship Information System (RAIS)** - obtains information on the number of apprentices registered in each province and territory from Ministries responsible for apprenticeship. RAIS gathers data annually on the number of individuals by gender that register, discontinue, successfully complete and receive certificates in registered apprenticeship program over a calendar year. Certificate information is obtained apprentices and trades persons receiving provincial and Red Seal qualifications in their designated trades.

Since 1991 RAIS has been requesting individual record information on each apprentice concerning, not only the above, but also their age, sponsorship, date of registration, time of completion, in-class and on-the-job credits, reason for leaving the program and prior trade certification.

**The Post-Secondary Education Participation Survey (PEPS)** – a planned annual survey to measure post-secondary accessibility and retention. The PEPS will provide basic indicators of annual trends in secondary school completion, post-secondary accessibility (particularly by family socio-economic status), student persistence at the post-secondary level, the role played by student financial aid, and the adequacy of student financing assistance. This annual data will allow monitoring of the impact of economic, social and government policy change and suggest areas requiring further investigation.

The PEPS will be administered for the first time in 2002, as a supplement to the Labour Force Survey. The target population is restricted to those most likely to be considering participation in or withdrawal from post-secondary education. This includes young adults between the ages of 18-24 (17-24 in Quebec). It is anticipated that preliminary PEPS data will be available in early 2003.

**The Financial Information of Universities and Colleges Survey (FIUC)** - done in partnership with the Canadian Association of University Business Officers for more than twenty years. For that reason, across the country, the survey is commonly known as the CAUBO survey.

CAUBO collects data on the revenue and expenditures of universities and community colleges, the tuition and living costs for university students, and information on research expenditures. CAUBO has been conducted annually since 1972/73. It is a census of all major public universities and university-



colleges in Canada that grant degrees. In 2001/2002 the survey frame included 145 institutions.

**The University and College Academic Staff Survey (UCASS), The Annual Community College Educational Staff Survey (ACCESS)** - annual surveys that collect data on full and part-time teaching staff in degree-granting institutions and community colleges. The information collected on individuals relates to gender, date of birth, position, years of teaching experience, status, salary, principal subject taught, language capability, employment relationship, etc. The surveys of full-time faculty have been in place for approximately thirty years and are able to provide basic planning information.

**The National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY)** – is a longitudinal survey of the critical factors influencing child development and well being. The survey collects information on children, their parents, their school teachers and their school administrators, covering subject areas of family functioning and parenting, child health and development, education, behaviour, relationships and interaction with the community, socio-economic background, demography, as well as direct measures of children's skills.

The NLSCY was first introduced in 1994 and is administered every two years. The fifth survey cycle will be conducted in 2002-03 with a total sample size of 35,000 to 40,000 children, including about 15,000 children from the original longitudinal panel. For this cycle, the maximum age of participating children is 19. This cycle will explore issues related to post-secondary participation, such as post-secondary access. The age of retirement of panel participants is forecast to be 25.

**The Survey of Approaches to Educational Planning (SAEP)** – is the first survey conducted by Statistics Canada to collect detailed information about how Canadians prepare for their children's post-secondary education, including both financial and non-financial preparation. SAEP was conducted in October 1999 as a supplement to the Labour Force Survey, with results released in April 2001. An enhanced SAEP is being planned for implementation in October 2002.

**The Adult Education and Training Survey (AETS)** – measures adult participation in formal education and training activities, both in terms of incidence and training intensity. The AETS examines who provides training, who pays for it, training delivery mode, barriers to training participation, and participant views of training value. The AETS is a supplement to the monthly Labour-Force Survey (LFS). Combined with the socio-economic variables of the LFS, the AETS yields rich information on trends in adult learning participation, and the personal factors affecting the training decision. Survey data is currently available for 1991, 1993 and 1997. The next survey is being planned for 2003.

**Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey (ALL)** – being developed to meet the need for internationally comparative information on the distribution in the adult population of a range of skills thought to be important to social and economic

success. This interest was stimulated by analysis of data from the 1994 International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS), which revealed a need to measure the link between a series of life skills (including but going beyond literacy), education and occupation. ALL will assess the performance of adults in the areas of literacy, numeracy and problem solving. It will also examine certain components of computer familiarity and teamwork.

The International portion of the survey is co-managed by Statistics Canada, the National Center for Educational Statistics in the United States (NCES) and the OECD. The main assessment will be in the fall of 2002, with release of the International Comparative report in September 2004.

**Enhanced Student Information System (ESIS)** – under which post-secondary institutions or coordinating bodies will provide Statistics Canada student-level data extracted from their administrative data systems, as well as data describing the programs and course offerings of the institution. Contents of the ESIS database were developed in consultation with institutions and education stakeholders, to respond to policy and planning needs in the field of post-secondary education and the transition to the labour market. ESIS addresses the shortcomings found in existing administrative surveys of post-secondary enrolment and graduation that have been in place for many years.

Information needs addressed by ESIS include: course and programs offerings of post-secondary institutions, systematically coded to allow for comparisons by level of PSE both nationally and internationally; student enrolments over a twelve-month period, improving on the current snapshot view; enrolment in co-op education; scholarships and bursaries; mode of delivery, including e-learning; and foreign student enrolments. ESIS will also provide measures of the effectiveness of the educational system, such as completion rates, time required to complete, persistence and retention; student mobility between institutions and geographically, and granting of transfer credits between fields of study, institutions and levels of PSE. Results from ESIS will be released beginning in 2003.

**Census of Population** – the Census provides demographic, social, economic and cultural information on the Canadian population, including landed immigrants, refugee claimants and persons in Canada on student visas or work permits. Education data are collected via the 20% sample, for the population aged 15 and over excluding institutional residents.

The Census provides sample sizes large enough to yield reliable estimates for target groups such as visible minorities, religious groups, immigrants, and persons with disabilities, and for analysis at low geographic levels. There are an extensive number of characteristics available for cross-tabulation, including labour and income data, demographic variables, ethnic background, mother tongue, place of birth, and citizenship. A strength of the Census is its accuracy and historical consistency.

Education data collected include: the highest grade of secondary or elementary school attended; completed years of post-secondary education; enrolment in education in the previous nine months; all post-secondary certificates, diplomas or degrees ever obtained; and the major field of study of the highest post-secondary qualification. Education content from the 2001 Census will be released in March 2003.

**Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS)** – designed to provide comprehensive information on the socio-economic conditions of aboriginal peoples, carried out following the 1991 and 2001 Census'. The 2001 adult questionnaire has a full section on education, including highest level of education attained, factors that might have influenced the educational outcome (for example school location and the presence/absence of aboriginal "content"), reasons for non-completion of elementary or high school, and for post-secondary education, issues such as distance education and financial assistance. The children's questionnaire focuses on the attitude, behaviour and achievements/difficulties experienced at school. Results will be available in July 2003.

**National Population Health Survey (NPHS)** – designed to collect information related to the health of the Canadian population. The first cycle of data collection began in 1994, and continues every second year thereafter. The survey collects not only cross-sectional information, but also data from a panel of individuals at two-year intervals. The household component includes household residents in all provinces, with the principal exclusion of populations on Indian Reserves, Canadian Forces Bases and some remote areas in Quebec and Ontario.

The NPHS permits ongoing examination of differences in educational participation and attainment between the disabled and non-disabled populations.

**The Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS)** – builds on the Health and Activity Limitation Survey, conducted following the 1986 and 1991 Censuses of Population, in response to recommendations of the Special Parliamentary Committee on persons with disabilities for a long-term strategy to generate comprehensive data on persons with disabilities. It is designed to identify Canadians with disabilities, to determine what activity limitations they experience, and to identify the barriers they face in everyday life.

Data is collected on: the nature and severity of disabilities; the use of and need for technical aids, social services and social support; barriers faced by persons with disabilities; the impact of disability on employment and social participation; disability impacts on education, including the need for modified course load, the accessibility of buildings or programs, use of assistive devices or services, and interruption of education. Data will be released in March 2003.

**The Labour Force Survey (LFS)** – a monthly survey of Canadians aged 15 and older in all ten provinces. The survey provides both basic labour force statistics (such as unemployment rate, occupation and industry) and basic socio-economic data such as respondent age, level of educational attainment and marital status. The LFS identifies full-time and part-time students by level of education. The survey provides detailed, historical information regarding, for example, labour market outcomes and earnings of the adult population by level of education.

**The General Social Survey (GSS)** – provides data on social trends to monitor changes in the living conditions and well being of Canadians over time, and to provide immediate information on specific social policy issues of current or emerging interest.

The GSS program, established in 1985, conducts telephone surveys from a respondent sample selected from across the 10 provinces. The GSS is recognized for its regular collection of cross-sectional data that allows for trend analysis, and for its capacity to test and develop new concepts that address emerging issues. Each survey cycle contains a core topic, focus or exploratory questions, along with a standard set of socio-demographic questions, including educational attainment. Education, work and retirement were core GSS topics in 1989 and 1994, permitting analysis of such issues as secondary school completion and access to post-secondary education by family socio-economic status. In 2000 the GSS focussed on access to and use of information technology, including the development of computer skills and the use of ICT for student educational purposes. Survey results were released in June 2001.

**Survey of Household Spending (SHS)** – an annual survey collecting detailed information on household spending. The survey is based on a sample of approximately 23,000 households, drawn from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) sampling frame and representative of Canada's ten provinces (excluding the institutional and on-reserve populations).

Detailed information is collected about expenditures for consumer goods and services, changes in assets and debts, mortgages and other loans, and annual income. Information on education expenditure includes spending on supplies, books, and tuition fees, by post-secondary or other education level. Demographic variables (e.g., household type, age of reference person) are also collected. The most recent data available from this survey references the 1999 calendar year.

**Survey of Financial Security (SFS)** - provides a comprehensive picture of the net worth of Canadians. Information was collected on the value of all major financial and non-financial assets and on the money owing on mortgages, vehicles, credit cards, student loans and other debts. The survey permits examination of assets, debts, and net worth by level of educational attainment, by age and by occupation. The survey is also a source of information on the incidence and size of student loan debt by family variables such as age or occupation of the major income earner.