



MEETINGS AND NEWS

Ministers continue to take action to help Canadians get the skills they need for available jobs



Toronto, Ontario, November 21, 2014 – Labour market ministers from across Canada met today to build on their efforts to resolve labour market challenges and ensure that all Canadians can take advantage of economic opportunities. The Forum of Labour Market Ministers (FLMM) is co-chaired by the Honourable Jason Kenney, federal Minister of Employment and Social Development, and the Honourable Allen Roach, Prince Edward Island Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning.

“It’s great to see serious momentum developing on the skills agenda. The Forum of Labour Market Ministers plays a key leadership role in addressing the paradox of an economy that has too many people without jobs and too many jobs without people. Today, we made real progress on improving labour market information, harmonizing apprenticeship programs, helping new Canadians toward getting their credentials recognized and getting better bang for the taxpayers’ buck in job training programs.”

The Honourable Jason Kenney, Minister of Employment and Social Development, and co-chair of the FLMM.

“Provinces and territories across Canada are working together to ensure we have

programs and initiatives in place to further engage our employers, strengthen our workforce and provide the foundational skills that employees need across the country. We have had great discussions today, and the work we have agreed upon will support skills development and economic growth across Canada.”

The Honourable Allen Roach, Prince Edward Island Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning, and provincial-territorial co-chair of the FLMM.

Ministers agreed to work together on several important labour market issues, including:

Labour Market Development Agreements

Ministers shared the results of stakeholder consultations and discussed a range of federal and provincial-territorial proposals to ensure the Agreements remain aligned with labour market needs. More specifically, they agreed on the importance of employer engagement, accountability, adequate and stable funding and the benefits of helping people get back to work quickly.

Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDA) provide provinces and territories with approximately \$2.1 billion per year through Employment Insurance for programs that help Canadians develop skills and find work, and help employers find the workers they need. Provinces and territories use LMDA funding to operate employment and training programs that are tailored to the needs of regions and communities.

Canada Job Fund

Final agreements for the Canada Job Fund, which include the delivery of the Canada Job Grant (CJG),¹ have been signed by all provinces and territories. Ministers noted the progress to date on the implementation of the CJG as the vast majority of provinces and territories are now accepting applications from employers.

At this meeting, Ministers agreed to a plan for conducting a review of the CJG following the first year of implementation to learn from early results and determine whether and how the grant is meeting needs of employers, with a report, including key findings and recommendations, to be submitted to the FLMM in December 2015. This review will evaluate whether the Canada Job Grant program is meeting its objectives and if changes to the program parameters are necessary. In addition, Ministers discussed an approach to measure success of the Canada Job Fund Agreements and ensure the consistent reporting of the program results.

Apprenticeships

FLMM Ministers received a report on progress on the pan-Canadian initiative to harmonize apprenticeship programs for 10 Red Seal trades in 18 months, as directed in July 2014.² Ministers maintained their commitment to strengthen apprenticeship training in Canada and increase employer involvement in apprenticeship.

Ministers agreed to move forward by initiating discussions with industry related to priority occupations, including carpenter, welder and metal fabricator (fitter). The goal is to have mutual recognition to facilitate movement of apprentices of these priority occupations and alignment of apprenticeship training programs applied in most provinces and territories starting in September 2015. In keeping with industry consultations, it is expected that most jurisdictions will implement apprenticeship harmonization requirements for the next seven trades by January 2016.

Ministers also acknowledged further work on employer engagement to improve apprenticeship completion rates.

Labour Market Information

Increased collaboration between governments is necessary to support ongoing improvements to the quality and accessibility of labour market information (LMI).

Ministers endorsed *A Framework for Labour Market Information for Canada* that commits governments to jointly set priorities and continue to improve how they work together on LMI.

Ministers agreed to work together to improve the quality of data that supports instruments like the Job Bank and improve the LMI available about under-represented groups in the labour market. They also agreed to work together to provide Canadians with better access to a wide variety of LMI, including survey and administrative data. Ministers also tasked officials to develop clear recommendations for an approach to improve LMI in Canada that includes all labour market partners, both government and non-government, to be presented at their next meeting.

Foreign Qualification Recognition

Ministers endorsed a renewed multilateral approach—*An Action Plan for Better Foreign Qualification Recognition*—to better help new Canadians have their qualifications recognized faster.³ Governments heard from regulators and others on the continued need to work together to remove barriers. This plan focuses on improved pre-decision supports, including access to the first steps in assessment overseas, clearer communications and transition

supports to better ensure that the skills and experiences of newcomers are fully utilized in the Canadian labour market.

Labour Mobility

Ministers agreed to a common approach to more broadly share labour mobility information with Canadians, extending outreach to certified workers and interested stakeholders, as well as continuing work with regulatory bodies. As part of this approach, governments will provide more information online. Governments will also publish a report, *Labour Mobility at Work*, providing an update on the state of implementation of Chapter 7 (Labour Mobility) of the Agreement on Internal Trade.

The FLMM was established in 1983 as an intergovernmental forum to strengthen cooperation and strategic thinking on the labour market priorities of the provinces, the territories and Canada.

The next meeting of the FLMM is expected to take place in Québec in spring 2015.

This news release is available in alternative formats upon request.

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1 The Agreement between the Government of Quebec and the federal government does not include the implementation of the Canada Job Grant. Consequently, Quebec will act as an observer on the work relating to the review of the Canada Job Grant.

2 Considering the uniqueness of its apprenticeship system, Quebec will participate as an observer in apprenticeship harmonization efforts.

3 While the Quebec government has not endorsed the Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications, it supports its principles and agrees to share public reports already made to its citizens, notably those tabled at the National Assembly.