

JULY 23, 2019 [CAUT News Article](#)

# New polling shows Canadians believe in post-secondary education, and so should our federal political parties

**(Ottawa – July 23, 2019)** Canadians believe post-secondary education (PSE) has a positive impact on themselves and the country as a whole, is more relevant today in our rapidly changing world, and makes us stronger in the face of new challenges, according to a [new national survey](#) conducted by Abacus Data for the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT).

With provincial and territorial ministers of education in Victoria July 24-25 for the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) meeting, the survey results are timely and of key relevance to their discussions on crucial PSE issues.

Findings include:

- A large majority (78%) of those surveyed view universities and colleges as having positive impacts on the direction of the country;
- Most Canadians believe PSE is more relevant than ever, with 70% agreeing that “it has never been more important to get a post-secondary education given the changes in the economy and society”;
- When told that Canada has the highest rate of residents with a post-secondary degree among comparable countries, two thirds (65%) of respondents feel it makes Canada a better place to live, a view that’s held across demographic, regional, and socio-economic groups. A majority of all political party supporters feel this way as well;
- 93% of Canadians would get a PSE if there were no tuition, indicating cost is a factor for lifelong learning.

“The survey also showed that Canadians are concerned about many issues such as climate change, our aging population, and growing economic and social inequality,” says CAUT executive director David Robinson. “In that context, Canadians clearly see the value of PSE in preparing students for the modern economy, training the next generation of problem solvers, conducting research, and introducing students to a wide range of viewpoints and perspectives.”

CAUT is calling on all federal political parties to support PSE the way most Canadians want the government to support it, by:

- Ensuring that every student who wants to go to college or university can go, regardless of their ability to pay (84%);
- Investing more in full-time post-secondary teaching positions (85%);
- Reducing class sizes at colleges and universities (64%);
- Eliminating post-secondary tuition entirely (61%).

“Post-secondary education makes Canada more united, stronger, and positioned to tackle the challenges we will face today and in the future,” Robinson says. “The federal government should support the sector and help make it stronger across the country.”

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\*Methodology – the survey was conducted online with 1500 Canadian residents aged 18 and over, from April 24-30. The margin of error for a comparable probability-based random-sample of the same size is +/- 2.53%, 19 times out of 20. The data were weighted according to census data to ensure that the sample matched Canada's population according to age, gender, educational attainment