

# CMEC International Education and Engagement Strategy 2019–22



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Council of  
Ministers  
of Education,  
Canada

Conseil des  
ministres  
de l'Éducation  
(Canada)

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# INTRODUCTION

For many decades, Canada's provinces and territories have engaged on the international stage collectively through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). Collective action has allowed provinces and territories to advocate their positions on education, an area under their exclusive jurisdiction, at forums such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and to develop common positions on international education-related issues. More than ever, international policies, norms, and ideas have an impact on Canada, and CMEC's participation in international activities allows for provincial and territorial education interests to be fully articulated. As the world becomes ever more connected, it is imperative that CMEC be engaged on the world stage to ensure that provinces and territories are provided with information that assists them in strengthening and adapting their respective education systems to the global environment.





## INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT:



### Enhances the quality of education within Canada

Engaging in international dialogues and projects that align with provinces' and territories' shared priorities provides opportunities for CMEC to consider different points of view, learn from others' successful policies and practices, consider international evidence, and to bring these learnings back to enhance education work within provinces and territories.



### Helps to prepare students for the job market and to be engaged with the world

Today's students need high-level skills to navigate a complex international environment and be competitive in a globalized job market. Education systems must prepare students for these new requirements or risk leaving them behind. In addition to receiving a quality education in Canada, students have access to many opportunities to study abroad, which enables them to learn from others and develop invaluable intercultural skills.



### Contributes to Canada's competitiveness in international education

Maintaining Canada's strong reputation—built on expertise, leadership, and high student performance—helps us to stay competitive as an international study destination, which translates into significant economic, social, and cultural benefits. In addition to bringing economic benefits, international students can help to address demographic issues such as population decline as well as the need to diversify the countries from which we attract international students.



### Strengthens Canada's reputation as a global leader in education and CMEC's role as representative of provinces' and territories' educational interests on the international stage

Canada enjoys high standing on the world stage as a leader in education. It is important that Canada share its expertise in education, which not only helps other countries develop their policies and practices and build strong systems, but also provides opportunities to influence education globally. Upholding Canada's strong reputation has political benefits both at home and abroad.

**International education and engagement is one of four priorities identified in the CMEC Strategic Plan, 2017–21. The overall mission for the international priority is to facilitate strategic international dialogue and partnerships in education.**

Responsibility for engagement abroad is shared between the federal and provincial/territorial governments. Collectively, provincial and territorial governments collaborate with the federal government on international education via existing mechanisms, e.g., the Federal-Provincial Consultative Committee on Education-Related International Activities (FPCERIA).

While this document focuses on an international education and engagement strategy for CMEC, it does not constrain individual provinces and territories from pursuing their own interests in these two areas through, or outside, CMEC.

This strategy was developed based on the following **principles**:



**Education is the exclusive jurisdiction of the provinces and the territories.**



**CMEC has a leadership role in representing Canada's provinces and territories internationally in discussions of education issues. It positions provinces and territories as influential participants in discussions that shape the future of education in the world.**



**CMEC engages strategically with international organizations whose work aligns with the common policy priorities of provinces and territories as agreed upon through CMEC.**



**Engagement and information sharing with other parties is undertaken with a view towards complementarity and alignment, so as to avoid overlapping of efforts, and building trust and partnership, so as to realize shared goals.**



**CMEC promotes and advances the common goals and interests of the provinces and territories, while respecting the interests and autonomy of individual provinces and territories.**



**CMEC's work on the international stage does not replace the relationships developed and maintained by provinces and territories in accordance with their specific interests and priorities.**



The strategy groups CMEC’s international education and engagement activities under two overarching goals:

## Goal A:

# Canada is recognized as a global leader in education

As education is a provincial/territorial responsibility, their shared educational interests are communicated on the international stage chiefly by CMEC. CMEC represents the common interests of Canada’s provinces and territories at education-related international conferences, meetings, and other events of select multilateral organizations. In addition, CMEC also functions as a mechanism for provinces and territories to undertake activities, projects, and initiatives in areas of mutual interest at the international level.

### Objective A.1

**Canada’s provinces and territories are effectively represented at key international meetings and conferences, and are positioned as influential participants in discussions that shape the future of education in the world.**

#### Key actions:

- Review and identify key international meetings annually to strategically select those events and meetings that most align with provinces’ and territories’ shared priorities and that provide provinces and territories with the most benefit.
- Identify key issues related to provinces’ and territories’ shared priorities to be emphasized in the context of international discussions.
- Develop specific expected outcomes for each meeting.
- Ensure that promising practices identified at such meetings are brought back to provinces and territories.

### Objective A.2

**Pan-Canadian engagement in international education work related to issues of common interest to provinces and territories is facilitated and advanced.**

#### Key actions:

- Determine issues of common interest and develop work plans to address them, as necessary.

## Goal B:

# Strategic relationships in international education are developed and strengthened

International education brings significant social and economic benefits to Canada. Provinces and territories recognize there is value in working together to establish and maintain relationships with specific countries and regions. It is often the case that strategic market relations and engagement can achieve greater results when provinces and territories coordinate their activities.

### Objective B.1

**Facilitate relations with priority countries that reflect the shared interests and goals of provinces and territories, as well as demonstrate the collective and added value in working together.**

#### Key actions:

- Continue to strengthen relationships with priority countries.
- Identify key issues aligned with provinces' and territories' shared priorities that can be discussed with priority countries.
- Facilitate discussions with priority countries and opportunities for collaboration (e.g., memoranda of understanding).

### Objective B.2

**Identify and advance opportunities for strategic market engagement in new and emerging regions that reflect the shared interests of and benefits for provinces and territories.**

#### Key actions:

- Identify and target regions that have potential for international education.
- Commission forecasting reports, scans, and/or research, as appropriate, to support this objective.
- Share information and data, and analyze trends across the international-education sector, to support informed decision making and long-term planning.
- Identify engagement strategies for interested provinces and territories (e.g., market intelligence, joint missions, study permit approval programs).



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## Work plan and performance indicators

A detailed work plan addressing the objectives and key actions of the strategy will be developed and submitted for the approval of the Advisory Committee of Deputy Ministers of Education (ACDME) each year. The work plan will include performance indicators or examples of desired outcomes.



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