

Key Skilled Trades Measures

Team Canada Strong (Flagship Skilled Trades Initiative)

- The federal government launched Team Canada Strong, a nationwide effort to recruit, train, and hire 80,000–100,000 new skilled trades workers by 2030–31.
- The program is designed to address chronic labour shortages in construction, infrastructure, energy, housing, and industrial projects, while also responding to elevated youth unemployment rates.

\$6 Billion Investment Over Five Years

- The update proposes approximately \$6 billion over five years dedicated to skilled trades recruitment, training, and retention.
- Funding supports the entire trades pipeline—from early exposure and recruitment, through apprenticeships, to Red Seal certification.

Accelerated Pathways to Red Seal Certification

- A major goal is to cut the time required to become Red Seal-certified by up to 50%, by streamlining training, harmonizing requirements, and reducing administrative barriers.
- The federal government will work with provinces and territories (which keep jurisdiction over apprenticeships) to modernize and speed up certification pathways.

Expanded Apprenticeship Financial Supports

- Introduction of a new weekly apprenticeship grant of \$400, paid during in-class technical training, worth up to \$16,000 per apprentice over the life of an apprenticeship.
- These payments are provided on top of Employment Insurance, improving income stability and completion rates for apprentices.

Employer Incentives to Hire and Train Apprentices

- Employers will be eligible for wage subsidies of up to \$10,000 per apprentice to support first-year hiring, training, and retention.
- This is intended to reduce cost barriers for small and medium-sized contractors and encourage more apprenticeship placements.

Youth-Focused Recruitment (Ages 15–30)

- Team Canada Strong prioritizes young Canadians aged 15–30, offering paid, entry-level, trades-related work experience that ladders directly into apprenticeships.
- The policy responds to youth unemployment levels that remain significantly higher than the national average.

Alignment With Major Infrastructure and Housing Builds

- Skilled trades investments are explicitly linked to delivering housing supply, nation-building infrastructure, clean energy, and industrial projects supported elsewhere in the update.
- The government frames skilled trades as essential to turning capital investment plans into built, on-the-ground results.

Long-Term Workforce Risk Acknowledged

- The update notes Canada will need up to 1.4 million new skilled trades workers by 2033, driven by retirements and economic growth.
- Canada Strong positions skilled trades as a structural economic priority rather than a short-term labour market intervention.

Bottom Line

The Spring Economic Update 2026 positions skilled trades as a central pillar of Canada Strong, combining large-scale funding, faster certification, stronger apprentice income supports, and employer incentives—all tied directly to housing, infrastructure, and industrial delivery.

For Members looking for more information, please connect with
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