



PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

Canadian language schools might never recover from COVID-19

From Vancouver to Halifax, March 26, 2020 - The country's largest association of language schools, Languages Canada, is sounding the alarm: without major financial assistance, a significant number of language schools in Canada will almost certainly close and possibly never reopen.

"We felt the impact of COVID-19 a little earlier than everyone else, as practically all of our clients are international students who come to Canada to learn English or French. Many students have left the country," said Gonzalo Peralta, Languages Canada's Executive Director. "Currently, all of our private sector members' [all SMEs] classes are empty, almost all of their employees have been laid off, and the bills keep piling up. We need substantial emergency help before it is too late and we have to rebuild everything from scratch."

International education in Canada is very much dependent on international relationships and promotion abroad. The losses the sector is currently suffering are just a taste of what's in store. These losses will also be felt in the tourism, hospitality and post-secondary education sectors, as hundreds of thousands of international students come to Canada for college and university programs each year.

"Currently, we have no income, when it should be the year's high season. In addition, since no one is promoting our schools abroad, there will almost certainly be no income for months to come. It is impossible for an SME to survive under these circumstances. We must act now, or we will have to rebuild the industry from its ruins," added Mr. Peralta.

Languages Canada is asking the federal government to provide special assistance for SME members' fixed costs. This aid will enable them to "hibernate" through the crisis and be ready to relaunch with vigor once the circumstances are more favorable.

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About Languages Canada

Languages Canada/ Langues Canada is a non-profit association representing over 216 language education programs. Canada's English and French language education sector is a critical segment of Canada's \$22 billion international education sector. These schools welcome over 150,000 international students each year and employ more than 9,000 people.

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