



Canadian Association of Postdoctoral Scholars
Association Canadienne des Stagiaires Post-doctoraux

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2013 Survey of Canadian Postdoctoral Scholars (Press Release)

The Canadian Association of Postdoctoral Scholars / l'Association canadienne des stagiaires post-doctoraux (CAPS-ACSP) is pleased to release the report from the [2013 Survey of Canadian Postdoctoral Scholars](#), conducted in collaboration with [Mitacs](#), between March and April, 2013.

Postdoctoral scholars, or postdocs, are individuals who have recently completed a doctoral or equivalent degree and are in a temporary period (1 to 5 years) of mentored research or scholarly training. As early-career researchers, postdocs are extremely important to the development of Canada's knowledge-based economy.

The 2013 Survey report presents a comprehensive and up-to-date view of Canadian postdocs, capturing the experiences of 1830 individuals working at 130 universities, hospitals, government laboratories, and private companies across Canada and abroad. This impressive response amounts to roughly 20% of all Canadian postdocs!

Canadian postdocs work in diverse research fields and have diverse backgrounds. Half of the survey respondents completed their highest academic degree outside Canada. Men and women are nearly equally represented (53% and 47%, respectively). The average Canadian postdoc is in his or her early thirties and married or in a common-law relationship. One in three also has dependent children.

Nearly two thirds of the respondents earn less than \$45,000 annually. Canadian postdocs have generally poor access to employment benefits such as employment insurance, extended health and dental coverage or accessible and affordable childcare. These findings paint a picture of postdocs as highly skilled workers who are facing increasing family responsibilities while working in a demanding environment without the benefits of a steady career or an adequate compensation.

The status of postdocs varies greatly between institutions and sometimes even within a single institution. They may be classified as employees, students, independent contractors or trainees. Nearly half of all respondents are dissatisfied with their current classification. A shared concern among all Canadian postdocs is the limited availability of career development opportunities and postdoc-specific training. The varied classification of postdoc positions makes it challenging to resolve basic administrative issues and implement best practice guidelines for improving conditions for postdoctoral scholars.

Based on the survey results, CAPS-ACSP believes that addressing the issues of postdoctoral compensation, status, and career development is essential to supporting the continuing research excellence in Canada.

Dr. Silvia Vilches, Chair, CAPS-ACSP
Dr. Kalin Penev, Vice-Chair Communications, CAPS-ACSP

E-mail: survey@caps-acsp.ca