

workforce
WindsorEssex

**SKILLED TRADES FOR
NEWCOMERS**



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank everyone who contributed their time, ideas, and expertise to Skilled Trades for Newcomers.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Safa Youness

Local Board Project Coordinator & Research Analyst and WE LIP Project Assistant

Safa Youness is a Local Board Project Coordinator & Research Analyst and WE LIP Project Assistant at Workforce WindsorEssex. She holds a Masters Degree in Political Science from the University of Windsor and a Bachelors Degree in Human Rights & Human Diversity from Wilfrid Laurier University. Her experience during her studies in Windsor have cemented her passion for the region's diversity and culture. She is excited to utilize her research skills to contribute to the Windsor-Essex community through the Workforce WindsorEssex team.

ABOUT

Workforce WindsorEssex is a workforce and community development board. Our mandate is to plan, facilitate and advocate for regional workforce development, defined as the development, retention, and recruitment of a wide range of skilled workers to meet the current and future economic and social development needs of Windsor-Essex.

We are an experienced leader in the development of regional labour market tools, research and guides that save others time, money and effort. These resources, created in close coordination with employment, education and industry partners, are designed to help job seekers, employers, students & educators, as well as the community, make more informed labour market decisions using locally-responsive, data-rich and unbiased resources.



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www.workforcewindoressex.com



GET CONNECTED

Resources for Jobseekers



WEjobs

Submit your resume to our database
Sign up for job posting emails



WEsearch

Connect with local programs and services
Learn about apprenticeships and training



WEexplore

Find up-to-date job postings by profession
Discover career paths, profiles and blogs



WEmap

Explore jobs and services around the region

Resources for Students



WEdata

Request local statistics for projects
Access local labour market information



WEsearch

Learn more about apprenticeships
Connect with our Experiential Learning Hub



WEexplore

Find information on in-demand jobs
Discover career paths, profiles and blogs



WEmap

Explore jobs and services around the region





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PURPOSE

As of 2016, almost one in three trade certificate holders were aged 55 or older, likely nearing retirement. BuildForce Canada also notes that the Ontario construction industry will need over 100,000 additional workers to fill retirement gaps and growth in the industry.¹ As many newcomers have relevant experience when they arrive in Canada, with a recent Workforce WindsorEssex survey noting 15% of responding newcomers had skilled trades experience, they are a great fit to fill the talent pool for local employers.²

With apprenticeship registrations and completions remaining stagnant and low over the last few years in Windsor-Essex, more needs to be done to ensure that those interested in working in the trades are encouraged and supported to do so. With both a skills shortage and high newcomer unemployment rates, there are likely disconnects between newcomer jobseekers, employment support staff, and employers looking to hire. Identifying where there are disconnects, and how they can be resolved, will ensure that newcomers have opportunities for meaningful employment in the trades and are able to use past skills and work experience as well.

Over numerous consultations with employers in the skilled trades, it is clear that solutions for the low supply of skilled trades people are needed. This report will address the challenges and present opportunities to overcome these challenges faced by employers, newcomers with skilled trades experience and interest in the skilled trades, and the service providers who serve as intermediaries to facilitate these connections.





METHODOLOGY

This report relies on data collected by Statistics Canada, EMSI Analyst, the YMCA of Southwestern Ontario, and previous Workforce WindsorEssex reports and surveys. Additionally, data regarding the current state of the skilled trades industry and barriers to entry for newcomers was collected through various community consultations with skilled trades employers, service providing organizations (SPOs), and newcomers in the Windsor-Essex community.



Through various local SPOs, newcomers were provided online surveys available in English, French, Arabic, and Spanish. They were asked questions regarding their highest level of education attainment, language, interest and experience in the skilled trades, barriers to employment in the skilled trades and how they connect with employers.



Through online consultations and surveys, skilled trades employers were asked questions about the most significant challenges they are facing, if they are aware of or participate in any recruitment programs that include newcomers, their willingness to hire newcomers, barriers in doing so, as well as how they connect with newcomers.



SPOs were also consulted for this report and were asked questions regarding newcomer client interest and experience in the skilled trades, programs that support newcomers joining the local skilled trade workforce, and barriers they face as organizations as well as barriers their clients face in connecting with skilled trades employers.

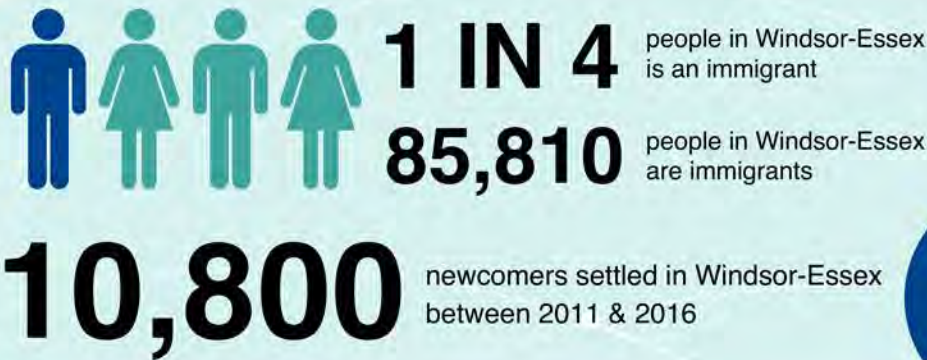
Data was provided through the WE Value Partnership, collected through their Settlement Assessment. While the data does include an overrepresentation of government assisted and convention refugees, it does provide a deeper understanding of some of the newcomers calling Windsor-Essex home. Please note, the term “newcomers” is used to describe those who have immigrated to Canada in the past five years. The data collected from the WE Value K2 system used the following data sets to collect the quantitative data for this report: Trade, Trade Code, National Occupational Classification (NOC), Entry Level of Education, and Trade Industry.





IMMIGRATION IN WINDSOR-ESSEX

Windsor-Essex has been fortunate enough to attract more than 2,500 immigrants per year on average over the past decade, allowing the region’s labour market to benefit more than many other mid-sized centres in Canada. It is important to note that there may have been a dip in immigration numbers due to pandemic border closures, but immigration is expected to return to previously seen numbers over the next few years. Nearly 40% of workers in the Transportation and Warehousing sector are immigrants and 30% of all workers in the region’s professional, scientific and technical services were not born in Canada.³ This is great news for the region and for the skilled trades specifically as we continue to face a growing talent shortage.



An immigrant refers to a person who is, or has ever been, a landed immigrant or permanent resident.

An newcomer is an immigrant to Canada who has been here for years or less.

Approximately 10,800 newcomers settled in Windsor-Essex between 2011 and 2016. As we have had consistent increases in immigration to the region in the last five years, this number is likely to be much larger when looking at recent years.



The top five languages spoken at home in Windsor-Essex (that were not English or French) are:⁴

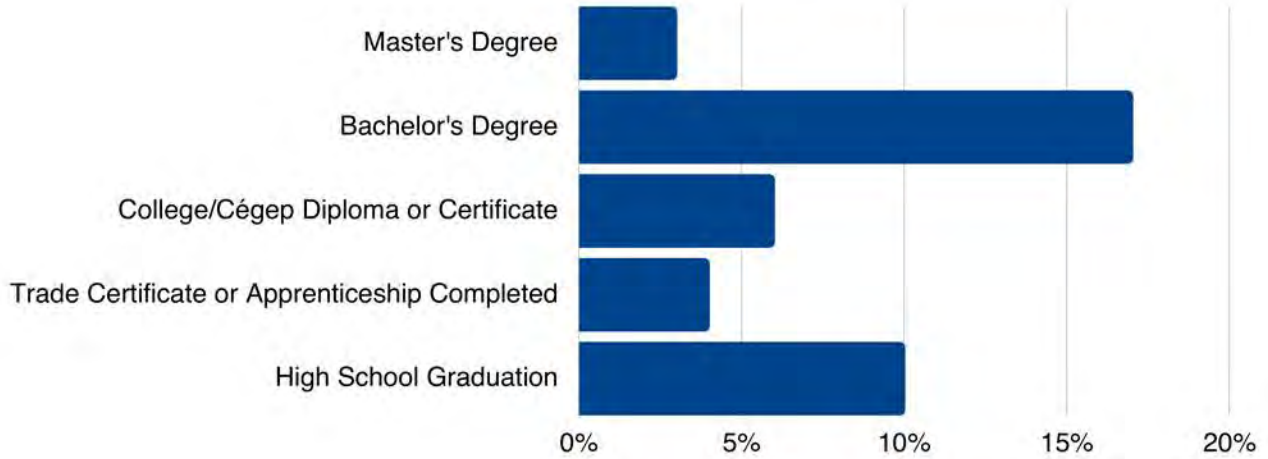
1. Arabic
2. Italian
3. Spanish
4. German
5. Serbo-Croatian

According to a previous Workforce WindsorEssex survey, 20% of newcomers surveyed reported they hoped to work in the skilled trades, with an additional 14% hoping to work in Manufacturing.⁵

3. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, "Economic Profile Series: Windsor, Ontario Spring 2019", LIP Data, February 2020.
 4. Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001
 5. Workforce WindsorEssex, "Newcomers: Your Skilled Workforce - An Employer's Guide", May 2018, (accessed August 10, 2022)

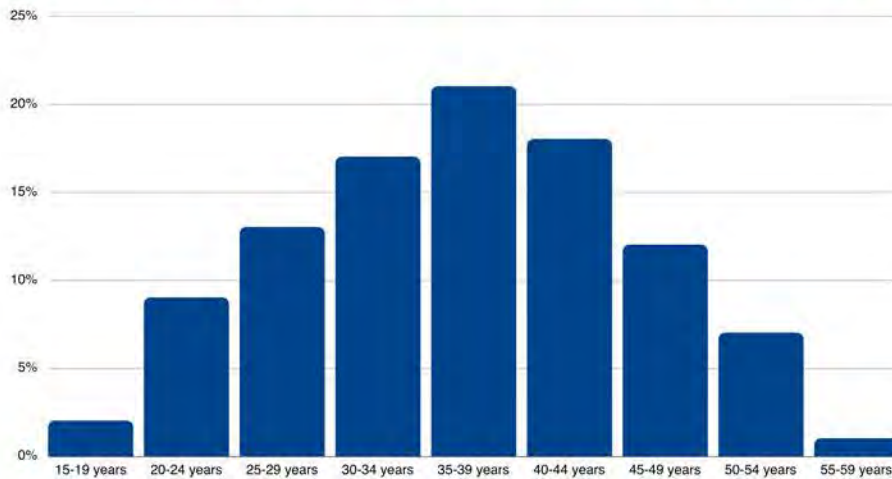


LEVELS OF EDUCATION OF NEWCOMERS



Most newcomers assessed between January 1, 2018 and July 29, 2022 indicated that their level of education was Bachelor’s degree, High school graduation, and College/ Cégep diploma or certificate. What this tells us is that the majority of newcomers have the education levels required in Ontario to be trained and find meaningful employment in the skilled trades sector.

NEWCOMERS WITH APPRENTICESHIP TRADES EXPERIENCE



The largest group of newcomers with skilled trades experience are aged between 35-39 years old (about 20%), which is ideal for certification as they likely have several years of experience in the skilled trades.⁶



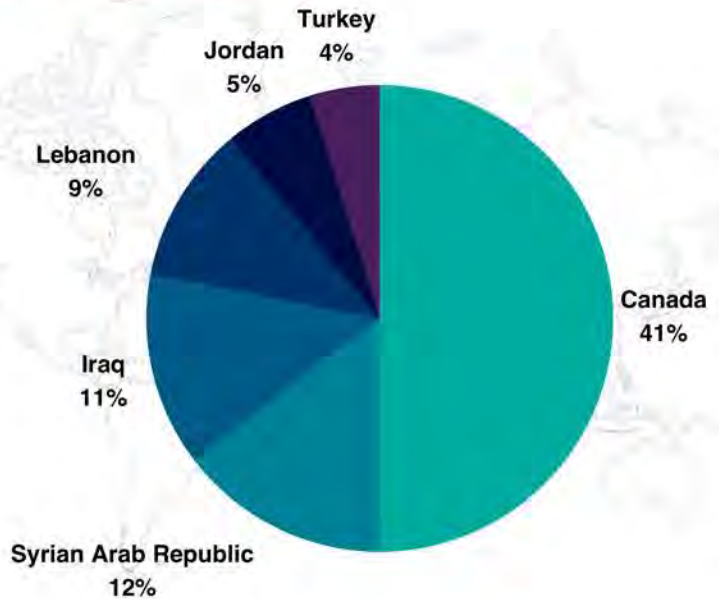


COUNTRY WHERE SKILLED EXPERIENCE GAINED

The top three countries where newcomers have gained their skilled trades experience are:

- Canada (41%)
- Syrian Arab Republic (12%)
- Iraq (11%)

This data is useful for employers considering training in first languages. Focusing on the Arabic language may be useful to employers seeking to utilize the pool of newcomers with skilled trades experience.



WHAT ARE THE SKILLED TRADES?

The skilled trade is a profession that involves working with your hands and requires specialized training, a particular skill set, and knowledge.⁷ The skilled trades are divided into the following sectors:



Construction:

Electricians, Carpenters, Plumbers, Welders, Painters, Heavy Equipment Operators, and more.



Transportation:

Automotive Service Technicians, Heavy-Duty Equipment Technicians, Motorcycle Technicians, and more.



Manufacturing and Industrial:

Parts and Vehicle Manufacturing, Product Manufacturing, Industrial Mechanics (Millwrights), Machinists, and more.



Services:

Cooks, Bakers, Hair Stylists, Landscape Horticulturists, and more.



The major projects in Windsor-Essex such as the Gordie Howe International Bridge and Stellantis-LG Energy Solution electric vehicle battery plant will require skilled trades workers such as:



WAGE
 Apprentice: \$18/hour
 Journeyman: \$30.25/hour

GENERAL MACHINIST (TRADE 429A, NOC 7231)

Machinists set up and operate a variety of machine tool to cut or grind metal, plastic, or other materials to make or modify parts or products with precise dimensions.

Education: St. Clair College – General Machinist or Mechanical Technician (Precision Metal Cutting)

INDUSTRIAL ELECTRICIAN (TRADE 442A)

An Industrial Electrician lays out, inspects, assembles, installs, troubleshoots, repairs, and maintains electrical fixtures, apparatus, control equipment, and wiring for industrial electrical systems.

Education: St. Clair College – Industrial Electrician



WAGE
 Apprentice \$25.10/hour
 Journeyman: \$41.03/hour



WAGE
 Apprentice: \$19.00/hour
 Journeyman: \$34.00/hour

TOOL AND DIE MAKER (TRADE 430A)

A Tool and Die Maker designs, creates, repairs, and tests prototypes of production tools such as dies, cutting tools, jigs, fixtures, gauges, and specialty tools using various metals, alloys, and plastics.

Education: St. Clair College – Tool & Die Maker

ROBOTICS TECHNICIANS

Robotics Technicians program, troubleshoot, and maintain robots and automated production systems along with mechanical, hydraulic, and pneumatic equipment. They also assist in the application and design of robotic systems, their manufacturing, and testing.

Education: St. Clair College - Electromechanical Engineering Technician – Robotics



WAGE
 Apprentice: \$22.88/hour
 Journeyman: \$43.27/hour



WHAT IS AN APPRENTICESHIP AND WHY SHOULD I COMPLETE ONE?

An apprenticeship is a form of education where a skilled trade is learned through both in-class and on-the-job training. An apprentice works for an employer, learning the trade through work, and completes schooling on a full-time or part-time basis. It often takes two to five years to complete an apprenticeship, depending on the trade. While not all skilled trades jobs require you to complete an apprenticeship, there are many benefits to becoming certified in a trade, including higher wages, economic mobility, and increased employment opportunities.

BENEFITS OF APPRENTICESHIPS:



Get Paid While Training on the Job

Apprentices are paid for their work by their employer. Many apprentices will earn higher wages as they complete training milestone



Higher Salary When Certified as a Journeyperson

As of 2016, those in Windsor-Essex with a trade certificate have a median income of \$42,938 while those with a high school diploma have a median income of \$22,393.⁸



Stable Employment Opportunities in Canada

Industries that employ tradespeople are expected to grow 6% nationally in the next five years. In Windsor-Essex, the Gordie Howe International Bridge, Windsor/Essex Acute Care Hospital, and the electric battery plant projects will require thousands of tradespeople over the next decade.

KEY TERMS

Apprentice: An apprentice is an employee who works under the supervision of a certified journeyman to learn the skills of their trade. An apprentice has a signed training agreement with a sponsor.

Journeyman: A journeyman has completed all training requirements to be certified. They may act as a mentor to a registered apprentice in addition to working their trade.

Sponsor: A sponsor is the employer of an apprentice, who they have signed a training agreement with. The employer pays the apprentice during their training.



FIND APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITIES



TRAINING OPTIONS



SECONDARY STUDENTS

OYAP → Apprenticeship

The Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program is for grade 11 and 12 students to work as tradespeople while completing their secondary schooling. Some programs offer participants the potential to complete Level 1 of their trade by the time they graduate high school. Participants can complete their apprenticeship after graduating secondary school. These programs are helpful to secondary students who are looking to enter a career in the skilled trades and want to get a head start on their training.



NO TRADE EXPERIENCE

Pre-Apprenticeship → Apprenticeship

Pre-apprenticeship programs introduce one or more trades to students and offer short-term work placements for participants. Some programs offer participants the potential to complete Level 1 of their trade. These programs are helpful to those looking to learn more about a trade before beginning formal training.



WITH/WITHOUT TRADE EXPERIENCE

CODA or Apprenticeship – Co-op Diploma

Apprenticeship programs allow students to complete a college diploma simultaneously with an apprenticeship. Work placements are completed following schooling. These programs benefit those who want to obtain two levels of education in a shortened period of time. Those looking to work in a trade can start their apprenticeship once they are employed as an apprentice with a sponsor (employer to oversee your on-the-job training).



SKILLED TRADES IN WINDSOR-ESSEX

The demand for skilled trades is urgently increasing across the country, with projected vacancies in Ontario expected to reach 350,000 by 2025.

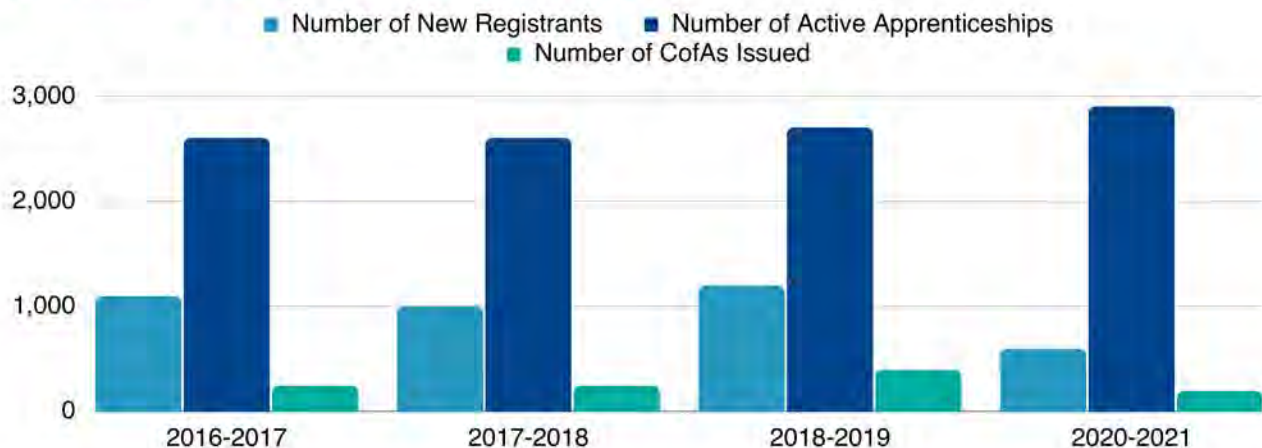
Windsor-Essex is poised to grow significantly in the coming years as well, with key projects such as the new Gordie Howe International Bridge, the Stellantis-LG Energy Solutions electric battery plant, the new Windsor/Essex Acute Care Hospital, and the expansion of Highway 3. This projected growth for the region requires many skilled trades workers, which we are in low supply of.

The skilled trades sector in Windsor-Essex is also in a strategically ideal location as it is one of the most important border crossings between Canada and the United States, with above average Transportation and Warehousing sectors. Windsor has more than twice as many employed in Manufacturing as a share of the workforce compared to the Canadian workforce overall, with specific strengths in transportation equipment and related manufacturing. In addition, the community has 30% more in Transportation and Warehousing when compared to the national workforce.⁹

Indeed, job demand reports compiled by Workforce WindsorEssex in July 2022 indicate the high demand for jobs in the skilled trades in the region.

While demand continues to increase, registration for skilled trades apprenticeships have taken a significant dip between 2020 and 2021. Registration for apprenticeships dropped from 1,062 in 2018-2019¹⁰ to just 618 registrants in 2020-2021.¹¹ This dip in registration rates may be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has also affected training and education registration broadly.

APPRENTICESHIP REGISTRATION

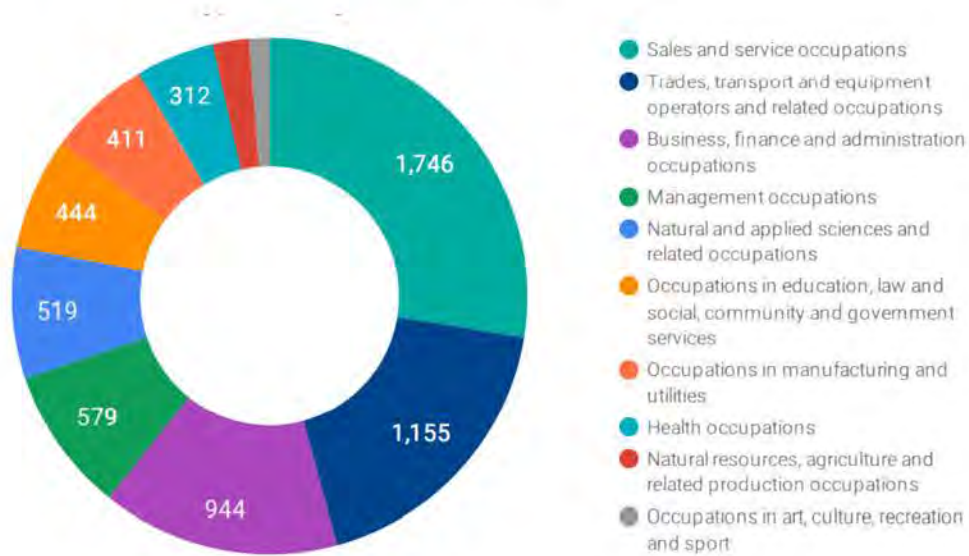


The above graph displays the number of new registrants, active apprentices, and Certificates of Apprenticeships issued between the years 2016 and 2021.



JOB POSTINGS BY JOB CATEGORY

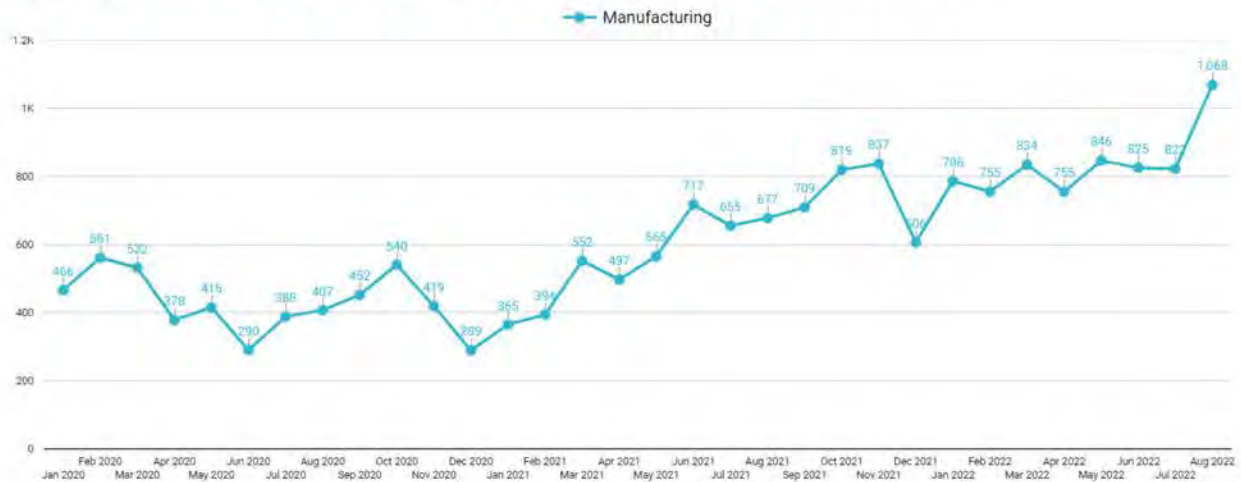
What broad occupational category is being recruited?



The above graph displays the high demand of jobs in the Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations category based on data collected by Workforce WindsorEssex using local job postings during July 2022.

DEMAND BY KEY SECTOR (WINDSOR-ESSEX)

How many job postings were active for at least 1 day this month by sector?



The above chart illustrates the continued increase in demand for jobs in the Manufacturing sector of the skilled trades during July 2022. Over the past two years, job postings for positions in the Manufacturing sector have nearly doubled.



NEWCOMERS IN THE SKILLED TRADES

Many newcomers to Canada have skilled trades experience. As mentioned earlier in the report, nearly 20% of newcomers assessed through the YMCA of Southwestern Ontario's WE Value Settlement Assessment have previous experience in the skilled trades. However, data collected through workforce planning boards across the province indicate that the level of participation of newcomers in the process of skilled trades apprenticeships and certification is staggeringly low.

INTEREST

Through surveys and consultations with newcomer populations facilitated by service provider organizations, we know that 66% of newcomers surveyed are interested in being employed in the skilled trades.

A total of 21% were interested in the Industrial sector, 21% were interested in Construction, 28% were interested in the Services sector, and 28% were interested in the Automotive industry. However, 73% felt they would need extra support or training to join the skilled trades workforce. This substantial number is no surprise as newcomers attempting to join the skilled trades face many barriers.





BARRIERS

Many newcomers to Canada are excited for a chance at a second start in life. This excitement quickly dissipates as they face many barriers to leveraging their skills and previous experience into starting their careers here. These barriers include:



Unclear processes for next steps:

There is no central system for all newcomers to access to support them in figuring out their next career steps. While there are many non-profit organizations that provide these services, not all newcomers are directed to these services or are aware these services exist. This further complicates and adds stress to newcomers trying to acclimate to a new culture, language, and labour market.



Language:

Language was the number one cited barrier for employment by newcomers, employers, and service providers. Training in a different language and learning to communicate with co-workers and management in that language is a daunting task. The lack of skilled trades training in languages other than English creates a limitation for those looking to begin their training while learning English concurrently.



Transportation:

Many newcomers surveyed indicated a reliance on public transportation. The region's already lacking transportation system does not offer routes to the industrial areas where many of the skilled trades jobs are located. The "Transit Master Plan" of 2019¹² aimed to address issues by extending hours of service for transit, growing the fleet and expanding the garage, and implementing the new route structure and network.

This plan has yet to be implemented to rejuvenate and expand the city's transit system.





Lack of certifications:

For newcomers with skilled trades experience in their country of origin, the process of equivalency is started with a Trade Equivalency Exam (TEA). The TEA application requires newcomers to provide sufficient evidence of experience and competency in the trade and is issued by Skilled Trades Ontario (formerly the Ontario College of Trades). Once approved, newcomers can then challenge the certifying exam to obtain their Certification of Qualification (C of Q), the final step in becoming a journeyperson. For many, they are ineligible or unable to take or pass the equivalency exam, leading them to begin an apprenticeship at Level 1.



Difficulty in Document Procurement:

There are many reasons why newcomers with skilled trades experience from their home countries do not have the documentation Skilled Trades Ontario requires for certification for a tradesperson. Not all countries have divided their skilled trades into highly specialized categories like Canada has. In fact, most countries that newcomers are coming from organize their skilled trades into broader categories, further adding to the confusion faced by newcomers when trying to navigate their careers in Canada. Further, many newcomers may not have access to those documents due to failed governments, war, or natural disasters that make procuring such documents impossible.



Lack of Canadian work experience and references:

The initial barrier of language creates an added challenge of not being able to gain Canadian work experience or references. This may be due to implicit biases that those who cannot speak fluent English are not capable. It can potentially create a perpetual cycle of rejection of newcomers who cannot find the work experience to start their careers in the skilled trades.



Cultural taboos of skilled trade work:

For both immigrants and non-immigrants, the skilled trades are often thought of as a career of last resort. This is in part due to the emphasis most societies have on other licensed professions such as lawyers and doctors, and partly by the misconceptions of skilled trades jobs being conducted in unsanitary conditions. These misconceptions have also meant that people who identify as women are less likely to pursue careers in the skilled trades, further limiting the pool of people interested in or actively participating in the trades.

When asked about the barriers they have experience that have prevented them from being employed in the skilled trades, newcomers cited language (50%), lack of certifications (22%), no connections to employers (11%), and lack of Canadian work experience (11%) as the main barriers to employment in the skilled trades.



Language



Lack of Certifications



No Connections to Employers



Lack of Canadian Work Experience





HOW NEWCOMERS FIND WORK



FRIENDS/FAMILY



WORD OF MOUTH



RESEARCHING ON THE INTERNET/
WALKING IN AND APPLYING

The top methods newcomers used to find employment in Windsor-Essex was via connections through friends and family, word of mouth, and through research on the internet and walking in and applying. Creating large networks and means of connections for newcomers is the most effective method of gaining employment for newcomers. Employers would be wise to create deeper and more profound connections with newcomers in the region to better attract and retain employees.

While researching on the internet and walking in and applying for work are effective for many newcomers, this may not be as effective for those seeking employment in the skilled trades as job postings often list many requirements that newcomers may feel they do not meet. While many newcomers have interest and experience in the skilled trades, many do not have success when applying online or by walking in due to not having Canadian experience, confidence in their English language levels, and understanding of terminology used in the skilled trades.





SERVICE PROVIDERS AND THE SKILLED TRADES

Service providing organizations (SPOs) play a vital role in supporting newcomer populations as they adjust to their new home. They can serve as intermediary institutions between newcomers and employers in the skilled trades by providing language and soft-skills training, promoting the skilled trades among their clients, and facilitating connections between newcomer clients and skilled trades employers. There are several initiatives administered by service providers that should be taken advantage of by newcomers and employers.

INTEREST

All consulted services providers identified newcomer clients with experience and interest in joining the skilled trades. Many indicated a need for program development and supports for newcomers seeking to join the skilled trades. Some, such as those listed below, offered such programs.

CONNECTING WITH EMPLOYERS

Through consultations, SPOs indicated having varying degrees of connections with employers in the skilled trades. Thankfully, the Ontario Newcomer Trades Action Program (ONTAP), operated by the YMCA of Southwestern Ontario, is resuming in the coming months, which will help further increase connections between SPOs and employers.

A common theme among service providers was wanting employers to become more active in connecting with newcomers and stepping forward by coordinating skilled trades fairs, utilizing financial incentives for taking on newcomers with skilled trades, and becoming more familiar with the realities and barriers of joining the skilled trades as a newcomer.





CURRENT INITIATIVES



Women's Enterprise
Skills Training
of Windsor Inc.

Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor Inc. (WEST):



CNC Industrial Mechanic Millwright Pre-Apprenticeship

In partnership with St. Clair College and Unifor, WEST delivers this program to support low-income women who are unemployed or underemployed. Designed to meet current labour market shortages and skilled trades industry needs, this program encourages participants to complete Level 1 Industrial Mechanic Millwright Apprenticeship in-school curriculum, 70 hours of hands-on CNC Practical Skills with General Machinist concepts, and an eight-week industry placement.¹³ [Learn more and register for this program.](#)



Introduction to Construction and Craft Trades for Women (ICCTW)

This 18 week program is intended to facilitate the entry of women without prior experience or knowledge to the Construction, Craft Worker and Cement (Concrete) Finisher Trades. It provides 8 weeks in-class training including hands-on training and employment readiness as well as 10 weeks of paid industry work placement. To be eligible for this program, applicants must be 16 years of age or older, have a high school diploma, good math skills, G2 license, general computer knowledge, as well as a resident and legally able to work in Ontario.



Young Women in Leadership, Employment and Development (L.E.A.D)

This program helps prepare young women for employment by aiding in developing the skills, knowledge, and experience needed for employment. This program has been utilized by newcomer women to gain employment by providing a 10-week work placement, professional development workshops, certifications (WHMIS, CPR/First Aid), and various classes taught by industry experts.¹⁴ [Learn more about this program.](#)



ONTAP:

The Ontario Newcomer Trades Action Program (ONTAP) provides information and training related to opportunities in Ontario's skilled trades. Sessions are open to everyone and there is no cost to participate.¹⁵

To learn more visit: <https://www.ymcaswo.ca>

The YMCA of Southwestern Ontario is excited to be a part of a unique and important initiative called the Ontario Newcomer Trades Action Program, or ONTAP. With support from the Ministry of Labour Training and Skills Development, the YMCA of Southwestern Ontario will be one of five YMCAs in our province, leading the conversation with newcomers, community partners, and employers about the tremendous value that the skills trades add to our respective communities. ONTAP will also create and maintain essential resources, including skilled trades data and statistics, information sharing webinars, and much more, connecting eager newcomers with exciting skill trade employment opportunities.

FOR NEWCOMERS

Attend the ONTAP seminar to explore jobs and opportunities in the skilled trades.

- Learn about some of Ontario's 144 skilled trades, including: electrician, plumber, mechanic, welder, hairstylist and cook.
- Find out what employers are looking for when they are hiring.

FOR TRADES EMPLOYERS

ONTAP can help employers develop an effective workforce by learning to:

- Attract, train and retain newcomers as employees.
- Help internationally trained employees with their apprenticeship and trade equivalency assessment processes.

FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS

ONTAP is available to provide training to help advise clients on opportunities in the skilled trades in Ontario, foreign experience recognition processes, the labour market, as well as viable career pathways and alternatives careers.

The Power of Trades Program is a pre-employment training program for newcomers to Canada. During a 4-week in-class session, participants receive information and practical advice about finding and keeping a job in the skilled trades in Ontario.



15. YMCA of Southwestern Ontario, "The Ontario Newcomer Trades Action Program (ONTAP) Promotes the Skilled Trades as a Viable Career for Newcomers", (accessed August 17, 2022).



UHC - Hub of Opportunities:

Ready to Work: This program provides participants the opportunity to receive certifications in Service Excellence, Smart Serve, National Food Safety, WHMIS training, and Kitchen Skills. Additionally, participants will receive training concerning MS Word, Outlook, the Internet, as well as Canadian Workplace Essentials. In order to participate in this program, you must have Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) Level 4+, be 18 years and older, and a Permanent Resident or a Convention Refugee.¹⁶ Visit <https://www.uhc.ca> to learn more.



New Canadians' Centre of Excellence Inc.:

Immigrants With Occupation Related Knowledge (iWORK) Program for Construction: This four-week course focuses on specific English language related to construction jobs, materials and equipment, job application and resume, interview tips, health and safety, WHMIS, and the Employment Standards Act. In order to be eligible for enrollment, you must have a minimum of CLB 2 in Listening and Speaking and be a Permanent Resident, Protected Persons or Persons in Canada who have received initial approval for their application from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.¹⁷ [Learn more about this course here.](#)



Tomorrow's Trades:

Tomorrow's Trades is a 12-week experiential learning program that helps prepare participants to start their careers in the Construction sector of the skilled trades. This program provides hands-on experiences, industry recognized training and certification, personal protective equipment, and basic hand tools needed to become a high-quality apprentice.¹⁸ Details about how to join this program can be [found here.](#)



SKILLED TRADES EMPLOYERS

CURRENT STATE

A quick scan of the industry and various consultations with skilled trades employers paints a picture of a booming industry struggling to find employees. Across the board, all employers consulted reported having difficulty attracting, hiring, and retaining staff. Many employers have cited the lack of marketing of skilled trades careers, the rise of remote work, and stringent certification processes as the primary reasons they are having difficulty in hiring and retaining staff in the skilled trades sector.

Interestingly, many reported that less than 10% of their employees were newcomers.

CONNECTING WITH CANDIDATES

In line with the top methods newcomers use to find employment, word of mouth and referrals by friends and family members were the top methods employers used to connect and employ newcomers. While these methods have their benefits, employers that are not already connected with organizations or newcomer jobseekers will find difficulty in sharing existing career opportunities, making it tough to fill positions with newcomer candidates who are willing and ready to work.

BARRIERS

While all employers indicated a strong willingness to hire newcomers with skilled trades experience, all have cited language and transportation as major barriers to doing so. The common grievance is the difficulties of training newcomers who do not have a strong grasp on speaking, reading, or writing in English. Beyond language, the issue of lack of personal transportation options among the newcomer populations becomes a problem for employers as well due to the fact that many manufacturing jobs are in locations that do not connect to the public transportation system. Additionally, Construction sector jobs require a personal vehicle in order to access the often-remote working locations.

Employers also cited the cost of training and hiring apprentices as a general barrier. Another barrier to employing newcomers discussed by employers was the lack of knowledge about the programs and incentives offered by service providers through government funding to hire on newcomer apprentices. The reason cited for not taking advantage of these programs was lack of resources to do so.



EMPLOYER BEST PRACTICES



Collaborating with service providers that work with newcomer populations:

Going out to places where newcomers are present, such as service providers and religious or cultural institutions, and marketing the career opportunities available at your organization



Reducing unconscious biases in the hiring process:

Prioritizing the hiring of newcomers. This can be achieved by discussing and setting a target number of newcomers to be hired in your organization.

Introducing diversity training to employees and hiring managers, by

- blacking out the names of candidates so hiring is solely based on qualifications,
- providing training on how to conduct culturally appropriate interviews. Some beneficial practices to employ during the interview process is using plain language, giving newcomers ample time to answer questions, and providing interviewees with feedback once the interview is over so they can learn from the process .

These practices have the potential of reducing biases during the hiring process, cultural barriers in the workplace, and encouraging cultural exchange in the workplace.



3



Hiring personnel or employees who can help translate on site to ease newcomers into the workplace and help them better understand the tasks and processes needed to conduct their work:

Some employers consulted cited the hiring of employees fluent in both English and the language other newcomer hires spoke as an effective way to overcome the language barrier in training.

4



Provide opportunities for language training for newcomer employees:

Connect with service providing organizations such as WEST or the YMCA of Southwestern Ontario who can provide language training to current employees, allowing them to work while continuing their language training.



RECOMMENDATIONS

NEWCOMERS:

- Continued efforts to increase CLB levels and attending programs that help with soft skills development is the first step for any career in Canada, and will surely be helpful in your search for employment in the growing skilled trades sector.
- Join programs that assist in familiarizing newcomers with Canadian work culture and resume building such as those offered by WEST of Windsor Inc, Unemployment Help Centre - Hub of Opportunities, and the YMCA of Southwestern Ontario.
- Join a pre-apprenticeship or trades exposure program. The exposure to a trade in a low pressure environment can allow you to learn about what trade interests you and how you can begin future training for your career.
- Attend in-person job fairs so that employers can meet you and hear about your experience or qualifications in person.
- If you know someone who works in a trade, ask if they can refer you to their employer. If you don't know someone, ask your service provider or employment worker if they can connect you with other clients that are working in the trades.





RECOMMENDATIONS

SERVICE PROVIDERS:

- Create a central, streamlined program in collaboration with industry experts and education institutions as a starting point for newcomers to assess their existing skills and guide them into apprenticeships and/or education paths through the college or university. Additional educational and language support specifically around skilled trades training for such a program is strongly recommended. Looking to the YMCA's K2 system, which is a central database used to house information from newcomer client's initial assessments, could be useful in developing such a program.
- Improve connections with hiring employers by reaching out to learn more about the positions they need filled and skills they are expecting from candidates. Follow up with employers that have hired past clients, or gain feedback from employers that have not hired clients after an interview. Gaining their perspective is important to gain long-term connections with employers and allow you to advocate for your clients as candidates.
- Further collaboration with industry to develop programs that facilitate newcomers in their equivalency process and in their efforts to join the skilled trades.
- Continue to promote the skilled trades to your clients, highlighting the employment, financial, and social benefits to a career in the skilled trades.





RECOMMENDATIONS

EMPLOYERS:

- **Language:** While language courses are offered by SPOs and local school boards, the language used in the specific skilled trades sectors may not often be the focus of these programs. Offering language classes for newcomers or hiring someone who is fluent in the language of the majority of prospective newcomer employees will help in the training and onboarding process, further facilitating in the employment and retention of newcomers in the skilled trades.
- **Workplace Culture:** Ensure that your company is prepared to hire and retain newcomer staff by creating social opportunities for staff to meet and interact, making all staff more engaged in the workplace. Making sure that your company is a supportive environment for all staff will create more positive and long-term outcomes for staff.
- **Broadening the Scope:** Connect with newcomer communities and start conversations about the importance of the skilled trades as well as the many benefits of starting or continuing a career in the skilled trades. These connections are available through various SPOs serving the newcomer populations in Windsor-Essex, including those mentioned earlier in the report. Connect with youth programs and schools as well to share about career opportunities to those graduating high school and planning their next steps.
- **Transportation:** Considering the lack of routes to areas where skilled trades businesses operate, consider coordinating with other businesses in the area to arrange for company vehicle pick-up/drop-off points or a shuttle bus arrangement. Arranging for transportation to pick up where public transportation ends would make it considerably easier for newcomers and other staff who do not have personal vehicles to access these places of work.





CONCLUSION

With many workers aging out of the skilled trade workforce and registration and completion rates for apprenticeship decreasing, the skilled trades sectors are reaching a near crisis point. While efforts are underway by provincial and federal governments to encourage and fast-track training for Canadian citizens, the newcomer population can serve as an additional resource to help aid in this concerning situation.

Through various community consultations, barriers to newcomer employment in the skilled trades, including language, transportation, and stringent certification processes, were identified by newcomers, employers, as well as SPOs. For newcomers with skilled trades experience, the capacity to find work in the skilled trades in a new country and work culture can be understandably difficult.

Improved connections between all community stakeholders are needed to ensure that all jobseekers are supported to meaningful employment and that our skills shortage is filled with qualified and talented candidates. Attention to the equivalency process for newcomers with skilled trades experience is also highly recommended. As it stands, registration for many pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeship programs require CLB level 5 or higher. Focus on support for education, particularly regarding literacy and comprehension of skilled trades specific language is recommended.

Collaboration between employers and community stakeholders such as SPOs and education institutions is already underway through current community initiatives. However, further collaboration between these parties is recommended in order to better facilitate and encourage newcomers with skilled trades experience in starting their careers in Windsor-Essex.





RESOURCES FOR APPRENTICES

Apprenticeship Completion Bonus (non-Red Seal):

This \$2,000 taxable cash grant is available to those who are out of high school and have completed their training in a non-Red Seal trade

Apprenticeship Completion Grant (ACG):

This is a taxable cash grant for registered apprentices who complete their apprenticeship training and obtain their journeyman certification in a designated Red Seal Trade.

Apprenticeship Grants:

See all the financial incentives that are available for apprentices.

Apprenticeship Incentive Grant (AIG):

This is a taxable cash grant of \$1,000 per year/level. There is a maximum amount of \$2,000 for apprentices. This is available to apprentices who have completed their first year and second year or level of an apprenticeship program in a Red Seal trade.

Apprenticeship Incentive Grant for Women (AIG-W):

This is a relatively new incentive to support women to enter, progress, and complete their trainings in Red Seal trades. This is a taxable cash grant of \$3,000 per year/level up to a maximum amount of \$6,000 per person.

Apprenticeship Scholarship:

The government provides up to \$1,000 for apprentices who are required by their employers to undertake additional academic training to participate in a specific trade.

Canada Apprentice Loan:

Apprentices can apply for interest free loans to help cover expenses or support their families during periods of technical training.

Employment Ontario:

Assistance when beginning your apprenticeship and job search.

Literacy and Basic Skills:

Find assistance and local programs for Literacy and Basic Skills classes.

Loans for Tools:

Apprentices have the ability to take an interest free loan of \$800 to buy tools that are necessary for their apprenticeship.



OYAP:

Start your apprenticeship training in grade 11 and graduate high school with your Level 1 training completed.

Red Seal Trades:

Certification to work in other provinces without retraining.

St. Clair College pre-apprenticeship program:

Pre-apprenticeship program

Starting an Apprenticeship:

Find out, step by step, how to begin an apprenticeship in Ontario.

Tomorrow's Trades:

Learn about multiple construction trades and earn certifications to help in gaining employment in the sector through 12 weeks of paid training.

Tradesperson's Tools Deduction:

This provides employed tradespeople with an annual deduction of up to \$500 to cover the cost of new tools necessary for their trades.

Tuition Tax Credit:

You may be eligible for a tuition tax credit if you had to pay examination fees to allow you to practice in your trade in Canada.

Women's Enterprise Skills Training (WEST):

Pre-apprenticeship program





RESOURCES FOR EMPLOYERS

Apprentice Employer Signing Bonus:

This is a bonus of up to \$2,000 for employers who hire, register, and train an apprentice.

Apprentice Job Creation Tax Credit (Red Seal Trades Only):

This is a non-refundable tax credit that equals to 10% of the eligible salary/wages that is payable to apprentices with respect to employment.

Apprenticeship Training Tax Credit:

This is applicable to employers who have apprentices that registered in an apprenticeship program on or before November 14, 2017. Employers will continue to be eligible to receive the Apprenticeship Training Tax Credit for these apprentices for up to 36 months.

Canada Ontario Job Grant (COJG):

This grant provides direct financial support to employers who would like to purchase training for their apprentices.

Co-operative Education Tax Credit:

Employers may be eligible for this if they hire a student enrolled in a co-operative education program at a recognized Ontario university or college. There is a maximum credit of \$3,000 per work placement.

Employer Apprentice Completion Bonus:

Employers are eligible for a cash grant once their apprentices have completed all required trainings (classroom and on-the-job) and have received their final certifications (this could be the Certification of Apprenticeship or Certificate of Qualification).

Employment Ontario:

Support and incentives to hire an apprentice.

Graduated Apprenticeship Grant For Employers (GAGE):

When an employer registers an apprentice in an eligible trade, they are automatically enrolled for this. Employers will receive payment each time their apprentice successfully completes a level of training.

Hiring an Apprentice:

Find out, step by step, how to begin hosting an apprentice in Ontario.



RESOURCES FOR EMPLOYERS

Hiring and Training Incentives:

Financial Incentives for hiring an apprentice.

NeCTAR:

Hire an apprentice and build your business.

ONTAP:

Promotion and resources for connecting with newcomer populations.

RESOURCES FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS



Becoming a Certified Tradesperson in Ontario, Facilitator's Guide and all Handouts, Activities, and Presentations:

NeCTAR provides guides and programming outlines for service providers to conduct with their newcomer clients.

ONTAP:

Ontario Newcomer Trades Action Program is currently being administered by the YMCA of Southwestern Ontario.



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APPENDIX

The data collected concerning the skilled trades experience of newcomers by the YMCA of Southwestern Ontario using their “K2: Pathways to Settlement” program categorized the listed trades, trade codes, entry level of education, and trade industries. These qualifiers were used to identify the skilled trades experience newcomers assessed between January 1, 2018 and July 29, 2022 have.

Trade	Trade Code	NOC	Entry Level of Education	Trade Industry
Wooden Boat Rebuilder	211W	7271	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Welder	456A	7237	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Architectural Glass and Metal Technician	424A	7292	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Brick and Stone Mason	401A	7281	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Cement (Concrete) Finisher	244G	7282	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Concrete Pump Operator	637C	9414	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Construction Boilermaker	428A	7234	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Construction Craft Worker	450A	7611	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Construction Millwright	426A	7311	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Drywall Finisher and Plasterer	453A	7284	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Drywall, Acoustic and Lathing Applicator	451A	7284	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Electrician-Construction and Maintenance	309A	7241	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Electrician- Domestic and Rural	309C	7241	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Exterior Insulated Finish Systems Mechanic	455A	7611	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Floor Covering Installer	448A	7295	10	Apprenticeship Trades
General Carpenter	403A	7271	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Hazardous Materials Worker	253H	7452	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Heat and Frost Insulator	253A	7293	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Heavy Equipment Operator-Dozer	636C	7521	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Heavy Equipment Operator-Excavator	636B	7521	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Heavy Equipment Operator- Tractor Loader Backhoe	636A	7521	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Hoisting Engineer- Mobile Crane Operator 1	339A	7371	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Hoisting Engineer- Mobile Crane Operator 2	339C	7371	10	Apprenticeship Trades



Trade	Trade Code	NOC	Entry Level of Education	Trade Industry
Hoisting Engineer- Tower Crane Operator	339B	7371	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Ironworker-Generalist	420B	7236	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Ironworker- Structural and Ornamental	420A	7236	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Native Residential Construction Worker	296A	7611	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Painter and Decorator- Commercial and Residential	404C	7294	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Painter and Decorator- Industrial	404D	7294	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Plumber	306A	7251	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Powerline Technician	434A	7244	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Precast Concrete Erector	244K	7236	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Precast Concrete Finisher	244L	7282	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Systems Mechanic	313A	7313	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Reinforcing Rodworker	452A	7236	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Residential (Low Rise) Sheet Metal Installer	308R	7233	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Residential Air Conditioning Systems Mechanic	313D	7313	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Roofer	449A	7291	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Sheet Metal Worker	308A	7233	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Sprinkler and Fire Protection Installer	427A	7252	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Steamfitter	307A	7252	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Terrazzo, Tile and Marble Setter	241A	7283	10	Apprenticeship Trades
Bearings Mechanic	615A	7311	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Cabinetmaker	438A	7272	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Composite Structures Technician	267G	9522	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Computer Numerical Control (CNC) Programmer	670C	2233	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Die Designer	670D	2232	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Draftsperson – Mechanical	614A	2253	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Draftsperson – Plastic Mould Design	614B	2253	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Draftsperson – Tool and Die Design	614C	2253	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Electric Motor System Technician	446A	7333	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Electrical Control (Machine) Builder	617A	9524	12	Apprenticeship Trades



Trade	Trade Code	NOC	Entry Level of Education	Trade Industry
Elevating Devices Mechanic	636E	7318	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Entertainment Industry Power Technician	269E	2241	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Facilities Mechanic	255W	714	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Fitter — Assembler (Motor Assembly)	661H	9522	12	Apprenticeship Trades
General Machinist	429A	7231	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Hydraulic/Pneumatic Mechanic	277Z	7315	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Industrial Electrician	442A	7242	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Industrial Mechanic Millwright	433A	7311	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Instrumentation and Control Technician	447A	2243	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Light Rail Overhead Contact Systems Linesperson	207S	7512	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Locksmith	259L	7384	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Machine Tool Builder and Integrator	435B	7316	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Metal Fabricator (Fitter)	437A	7235	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Mould Designer	670E	2232	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Mould Maker	431A	7232	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Mould or Die Finisher	277M	7232	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Optics Technician (Lens and Prism Maker)	225A	9537	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Packaging Machine Mechanic	609C	7311	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Pattern Maker	443A	7384	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Precision Metal Fabricator	200G	7233	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Pressure Systems Welder	456P	7237	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Process Operator — Food Manufacturing	246T	9461	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Process Operator — Power	246R	9232	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Process Operator — Refinery, Chemical and Liquid Processes	246F	9613	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Process Operator — Wood Products	246W	8241	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Pump Systems Installer	263F	7311	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Railway Car Technician	268R	7314	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Relay and Instrumentation Technician	288R	2243	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Roll Grinder/Turner	602H	9423	12	Apprenticeship Trades



Trade	Trade Code	NOC	Entry Level of Education	Trade Industry
Ski Lift Mechanic	297A	7311	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Surface Blaster	278B	7372	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Surface Mount Assembler	630B	9523	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Tool and Cutter Grinder	602C	9417	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Tool and Die Maker	430A	7232	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Tool and Gauge Inspector	239B	7231	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Tool/Tooling Maker	630T	7232	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Industrial Electrician	442A	7242	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Industrial Mechanic Millwright	433A	7311	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Instrumentation and Control Technician	447A	2243	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Light Rail Overhead Contact Systems Linesperson	207S	7512	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Locksmith	259L	7384	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Automotive Glass Technician	274L	7322	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Automotive Painter	410N	7322	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Automotive Service Technician	310S	7321	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Heavy Duty Equipment Technician	421A	7312	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Marine Engine Technician	435B	7532	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Motive Power Machinist	410K	7231	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Motorcycle Technician	310G	7334	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Powered Lift Truck Technician	282E	2232	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Recreation Vehicle Technician	690H	7384	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Small Engine Technician	435A	7335	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Tire, Wheel and Rim Mechanic	295A	7535	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Transmission Technician	310D	7321	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Truck and Coach Technician	310T	7321	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Truck-Trailer Service Technician	310J	7321	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Turf Equipment Technician	421C	2225	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Aboriginal Child Development Practitioner	620B	4212	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Agricultural — Dairy Herdsperson	640D	8252	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Agricultural — Swine Herdsperson	640S	8252	12	Apprenticeship Trades



Trade	Trade Code	NOC	Entry Level of Education	Trade Industry
Appliance Service Technician	445A	7332	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Arborist	444A	2225	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Assistant Cook	415B	6322	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Baker	423A	6332	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Baker-Patisier	423C	6332	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Chef	415C	6321	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Child and Youth Worker	620A	4212	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Child Development Practitioner	620C	4212	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Cook	415A	6322	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Developmental Services Worker	620D	4212	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Educational Assistant	620E	4413	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Electronic Service Technician	416E	2242	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Hairstylist	332A	6341	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Horse Groom	600H	6563	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Horse Harness Maker	219D	9445	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Horticultural Technician	441C	2225	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Information Technology – Contact Centre Customer Service Agent	634E	6552	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Information Technology – Contact Centre Sales Agent	634D	6552	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Information Technology – Contact Centre Technical Support Agent	634A	6552	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Information Technology – Hardware Technician	634B	2241	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Information Technology – Network Technician	634C	2281	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Institutional Cook	415D	6322	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Micro Electronics Manufacturer	630A	9523	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Native Clothing and Crafts Artisan	296B	5244	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Network Cabling Specialist	631A	2147	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Parts Technician	240P	1522	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Pool, Hot Tub and Spa – Installer	237T	7441	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Pool, Hot Tub and Spa – Service Technician	237S	7441	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Retail Meat Cutter	245R	6331	12	Apprenticeship Trades



Trade	Trade Code	NOC	Entry Level of Education	Trade Industry
Special Events Coordinator	297B	1226	12	Apprenticeship Trades
Utility Arborist	444B	7522	12	Apprenticeship Trades

HOW DID WE DO?

We invite your feedback on all publications produced by:



workforcewindsoressex.com
880 N Service Rd #201, Windsor ON N8X 3J5
226-674-3220 | info@workforcewindsoressex.com

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WindsorEssex

880 North Service Road, Unit 201
Windsor, Ontario N8X 3J5
Telephone: 226-674-3220
Email: info@workforcewindsorsex.com

Ontario 

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