



**workforce**  
WindsorEssex

2023/2024

# LOCAL LABOUR MARKET PLAN

## WINDSOR-ESSEX

This Employment Ontario project is funded in part by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.

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Workforce WindsorEssex is a workforce and community development board whose mission is to lead regional employment and community planning for the development of a strong and sustainable workforce.

Workforce WindsorEssex is an experienced leader in the development of regional labour market tools, research, guides, and events that create positive change in the local labour market while saving others time and effort. These resources, created in close coordination with employment, education, and industry partners, are designed to help jobseekers, employers, students, and educators, as well as the community, make more informed labour market decisions using locally-responsive, data-rich, and unbiased resources.

To learn more about Workforce WindsorEssex and view our tools and resources, visit [www.workforcewindsor.essex.com](http://www.workforcewindsor.essex.com)



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## About the Author



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# Executive Summary

## Key Findings

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- The population of Windsor-Essex (excluding the Town of Essex) has increased 2% in 2022 from 404,368 in 2021 to 414,228. This drastic jump is likely caused by international immigration into our region, including immigrants, Temporary Foreign Workers, International Students, and Refugee Claimants. It is also likely that the relative affordability of local housing compared to other Ontario regions has brought new residents from other regions across the province.
- When looking at the increase in age groups of our local population over the last five years, we can see small increases in youth and those of working age. However, the 9% increase of those aged 55 and over is going to greatly impact our local labour force.
- The percentage of those earning a college or university education increased 2% to 45% of the population, while those earning a trades certificate dropped 1% to 6% of the population.
- The Ontario minimum wage increased to \$16.55 from \$15.50 in October 2023. The minimum wage is still below the living wage of \$18.65 for Windsor-Essex, which increased 9.3% from 2022.
- The most common industries that Employment Services (ES) clients previously worked in are Manufacturing, Accommodation and Food Services, Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Retail Trade. All of these industries are top employing industries for our region.
- While our number of new registrations and active apprentices grows annually, we still have not reached a number of new annual registrations that meets pre-pandemic numbers or outpaces retirements.
- A total of 45% of local employers surveyed felt positively about their ability to retain new employees, yet very few (22%) felt there was an availability of qualified workers. Less than half (37%) felt they had the ability to attract new employees. This low rate may be due to 24% and 51% of respondents feeling poor and fair respectively about the stability of the workforce.

# Recommendations

**1.**

## **Attracting Underrepresented Groups to the Skilled Trades**

There are many advantages to appealing to and accommodating youth, women, and newcomers in the skilled trades, so it is essential to educate employers on the resources and supports that are available to them and could improve their attraction and retention of new employees. The best methods to advocate to employers would be to connect employers with employment/settlement organizations to raise awareness of talent pipelines, present the business case on fixing the skills shortage through the workforce available to them, and promote cultural competency training and access to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) best practices. Developing a group approach, in which business owners can share their experiences with other business owners, will help to open a dialogue and share personal success stories.

**2.**

## **Improve Retention of Employees and Increase Use of Training Programs**

Streamlining resources for HR departments can lead to improved attraction and retention plans. Sharing best practices within an established network of HR departments could educate them on what the current workforce is seeking through shared testimonials and success stories. The best methods to creating this network could be through the establishment of an annual or bi-annual workshop or conference for HR departments. Alternatively, or in addition, an online network with shared resources and linked grants/funds could be created to link regional HR departments and centralize HR methods.

**3.**

## **Increased Attraction of High School Tech Teachers**

Community partners can advocate for solutions to attract high school tech teachers that may be currently out of their scope. For example, advocating for higher wages and better benefits and pensions to persuade skilled trades workers to transition to teaching. Moreover, they can advocate for the expansion of the Skills Development Fund capital program and the need for compensation during training and up-to-date machinery that teachers are familiar with. Since local post-secondary educational institutions are fully equipped with the latest technology and machinery, increasing connections between secondary and post-secondary can lead to collaborative training days and learning opportunities.

## **4. Improve Regional Attraction of New Talent**

To attract and retain residents, a shared story could be developed to highlight everything Windsor-Essex has to offer. Tapping into what makes Windsor-Essex unique, these traits should be compiled and shared on one online resource, utilizing visual media to better promote the region. Creating one website where other sites could be linked for more information, organized by areas of interest, will centralize the story that Windsor-Essex hopes to promote. It could also share links to housing and real estate to create a centralized location for renting and equally promote the local lower cost of living.

## **5. Reduce the Local Tech Brain Drain**

- Data has shown that companies that adopt a clear system of upward mobility improve employee retention. Demonstrating to students how and when they can change their role or take on more responsibility following a co-op placement highlights opportunities within the company and improves the onboarding process.
- The best method to create upward mobility is to look within the company when you're looking for talent and invest in the workforce you already have. Create internal pathways for growth and mentorship programs that facilitate and expedite advancement for new hires. Upskilling and reskilling programs can also prepare your employees for a future with your company.
- The best methods to attract students could be to develop more visual resources, such as a map of supports/pipeline opportunities, and activities, such as co-op fairs and information sessions from industry associations. There's benefit to developing a systematic outreach plan that can aid in spreading consistent information to all co-op students at one time.

## **6. Improve Retention in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector**

Create stronger supports for staff in the Tourism and Hospitality industry. This can include developing better access to transportation, offering employment benefits for part-time staff, and adapting work schedules to fit the flexibility needs of the employees. Increasing the awareness of full-time positions within the industry, highlighting pathways to growth, and promoting the value of developing transferable skills through part-time employment can also be included in advocacy projects. More employer participation in Ontario Tourism Education Corporation programs is also needed to use available resources to their full potential to support local jobseekers and current Tourism and Hospitality employees.



# Introduction

When consulting with those in the community, there is a reinvigorated sense of positivity in speaking about the Windsor-Essex region. The industry investments that have come to the region, the full return of cultural and community events, and the immensity of employment opportunities have led to a perceived higher quality of life for residents.

## Local Population

The population in Windsor-Essex has increased by 9,860 between 2021 and 2022.<sup>1</sup> Much of this growth is due to international immigration to our region balancing the loss of local residents to other regions. The inclusive community that we strive to create has led immigrants and newcomers in our region to grow their cultural communities and expand their networks locally. Windsor-Essex has a long history of providing valuable settlement services, receiving praise from both federal and provincial ministries. The settlement services in our community continue to be viewed as a best practice for other regions in the country, especially when working with asylum seekers and refugees that come to our community seeking a stable quality of life.

As our local population ages and more people relocate to Windsor-Essex from other regions in Canada, we are seeing changes in the landscape of our local labour force. Many sectors face retirements across our community and the needs of an aging population continue to place heavy demand on the Health Care and Social Assistance sector. The ongoing needs of emergency and home care health workers has led to many companies offering signing bonuses, non-compensation benefits, and higher wages to compete with employers across the border.<sup>2</sup> The aging workforce has also led to multiple generations in the workforce together. As skill shortages and high inflation deter early retirement, we are seeing many workplaces making adjustments to attract and retain talent born in more than five different decades. While pensions, benefits, and stable income remain as key retention strategies for pre-millennial generations, many born in the 1990s and later are seeking more schedule flexibility, work-life balance, and career navigation support.<sup>3</sup> The many strikes and union negotiations that took place in 2023, including the six-months-long strike of Windsor Salt workers, focused on job security, wage increases, and benefits enhancements. This is evidence that the needs of workers are evolving and will need to be reconciled by the employers or it may have an impact on the bottom line of local companies.<sup>4</sup>

[1] Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0135-01 Population estimates, July 1, by census metropolitan area and census agglomeration, 2016 boundaries

[2] Trevor Wilhelm, "Windsor Regional Hospital gives out \$750,000 in signing bonuses to attract nurses", Windsor Star, March 3, 2022, <https://windsorstar.com/news/local-news/windsor-regional-hospital-gives-out-750000-in-signing-bonuses-to-attract-nurses>

[3] Collinson, Catherine and Michael Hodin, "Best practices for engaging a multigenerational workforce", Harvard Business Review, October 17, 2023, <https://hbr.org/2023/10/best-practices-for-engaging-a-multigenerational-workforce>

[4] Unifor, "Unifor members ratify new contract with Windsor Salt", August 27, 2023, <https://www.unifor.org/news/all-news/unifor-members-ratify-new-contract-windsor-salt#:~:text=WINDSOR%E2%80%94The%20192%2Dday%20strike,with%20the%20employer%20this%20afternoon.>

# National and Provincial Changes

As of October 2023, the minimum wage is \$16.55 in Ontario.<sup>5</sup> While this year's increase from \$15.50 has been an additional support to many working in part-time or entry-level positions, the wage is still below the local living wage of \$18.65.<sup>6</sup> The growing inflation across the globe and the growing cost of housing (both ownership and renting) have impacted many residents' ability to support themselves and their families.<sup>7</sup> As the affordability of housing remains out of range for many, the lack of housing supply further limits the chances for relocation.

The lack of housing supply, while a challenge to many in our community, poses a greater threat in our ability to attract talent to our region to fill gaps in available skillsets, which is a main source of talent for our community. To increase the available workforce in Canada, the Express Entry program that provides priority to immigrants with in-demand skillsets and experience was expanded to now prioritize those with experience in trades, transport, agriculture, health care, and STEM.<sup>8</sup> We are also seeing many sectors and qualifying associations in the country removing the barrier of non-Canadian education credentials or work experience to increase newcomers' capacity to enhance our labour market with the skillsets and experience they bring to our country.<sup>9</sup>

New additions and amendments to the current Ontario curriculum at elementary and secondary levels will also have a positive impact on our local workforce and increase the capacity of high school graduates to meaningfully contribute to the local workforce. Changes include the requirement of a technology credit to increase exposure to skilled trades, the inclusion of digital literacy for those in elementary school, and the removal of streaming in grade 9 to decrease the perpetuation of non-academic barriers to success.<sup>10,11</sup>



[5] Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, "Ontario Raising Minimum Wage October 1 to Support Workers", Ontario Newsroom, September 29, 2023, <https://news.ontario.ca/en/statement/1003574/ontario-raising-minimum-wage-october-1-to-support-workers>.

[6] Ontario Living Wage Network, "2023 Rates", <https://www.ontariolivingwage.ca/rates>.

[7] CBC News, "41% of Windsor households find it difficult to meet financial needs, StatsCan survey says", November 7, 2023, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/windsor/windsor-households-financial-meet-needs-1.7020955>

[8] Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, "Canada launches new process to welcome skilled newcomers with work experience in priority jobs as permanent residents", Government of Canada, May 31, 2023, <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2023/05/canada-launches-new-process-to-welcome-skilled-newcomers-with-work-experience-in-priority-jobs-as-permanent-residents.html>.

[9] Amy Judd, "B.C. announces new rules to streamline international credential recognition", Global News, October 10, 2023, <https://globalnews.ca/news/10015489/bc-international-credentials-recognition/>.

[10] Katherine DeClerq, "New curriculums are coming to Ontario schools next month. Here's what you need to know", CTV News, August 28, 2023, <https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/new-curriculums-are-coming-to-ontario-schools-next-month-here-s-what-you-need-to-know-1.6537025>

[11] Vanessa Blintec, "More schools are having a hard time de-streaming Grade 9 students, survey suggests", CBC News, November 13, 2023, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ontario-de-streaming-survey-2023-1.7027067#:~:text=Ontario%20to%20end%20academic%20streaming%20in%20high%20schools&text=Ontario%20says%20it's%20following%20the,the%20pathway%20to%20higher%20education.>

# New Investments

Government investment in our community has had a positive impact not only on businesses that benefit directly, but businesses that benefit from the greater government attention our region has received in recent years. As ministers and ministry representatives come to learn more about our region, we have been able to spread the message of Windsor-Essex's resiliency, success, and local pride. Between June of 2022 and 2023, there has been a 9% increase in self-run businesses and a 3% increase in businesses with employees, totalling 25,500 and 12,170, respectively.<sup>12</sup> In addition to new business growth, progress on the Gordie Howe International Bridge has made the project more visible to the nearby communities as the view of the riverfront changes daily. The expansion of Highway 3 continues to better connect Windsor to Essex County and improves the commute of workers traveling between the County and the City. The ongoing improvements in many business centres of the community, including Amherstburg and Essex, have created greater curb appeal and main streets for residents and business owners.

New program investments have also come to our region to support those often underserved by traditional service providers. The Southwestern Ontario Black Entrepreneurship Network in Windsor is working to improve the capacity of Black business owners and entrepreneurs to grow their business and their professional networks. The Workforce WindsorEssex-led TeamWork Project has been able to increase capacity of local organizations serving migrant workers, as well as improve migrant workers' integration and connection to the community. The UHC - Hub of Opportunities fundraising efforts have resulted in a new Plentiful Harvest food rescue vehicle which will allow them to gather produce from local greenhouses and farmers, providing to those in our community facing food scarcity. These program investments, and the many more that have taken place in our community over the last year, support organizations working directly with those that need support and seek to increase their quality of life in Windsor-Essex.

As Windsor-Essex continues to emphasize its resiliency, our local labour market has responded with employment opportunities across all sectors in our region. It is therefore crucial that we ensure jobseekers and students are ready to take on these opportunities and succeed in the labour force. In-demand occupations and sectors can be found in Labour Force Overview with new training opportunities and investments mentioned throughout Promising Sectors.

To learn more about in-demand occupations and open employment opportunities, visit [workforcewindsorsex.com](https://workforcewindsorsex.com).

[12] Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts, June 2023.



# Methodology

A survey for employers was conducted in May 2023 to gather industry perspectives on talent availability, skill needs, regional capacity to support businesses, and the capacity of businesses to grow in our community. The survey was developed and promoted in partnership with Invest WindsorEssex and St. Clair College. The survey was completed by 83 respondents, 49% of which were in Windsor. The largest percentages of respondents were from the Manufacturing; Retail Trade; and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services sectors.

Consultations were held with employers, industry associations, community organizations, employment service providers, settlement service providers, secondary and post-secondary educational institutions, economic development organizations, and local municipalities. Consultations took place from August to November 2023, with over 60 consultations taking place in-person and virtually.

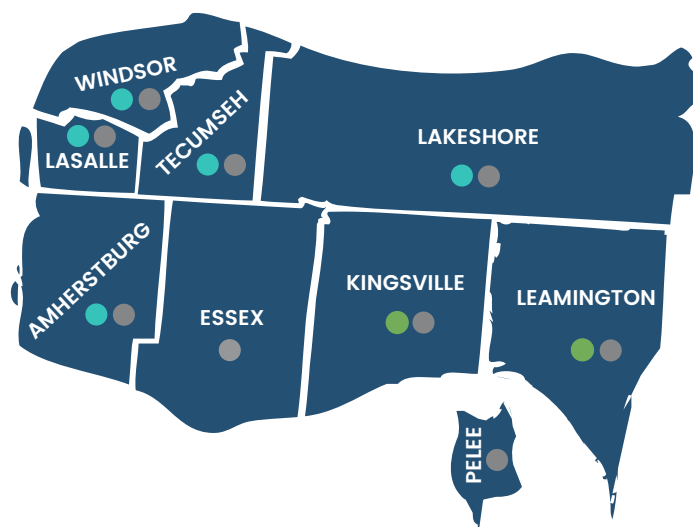
Additional consultations took place with the Workforce Advisory Committee, facilitated by Workforce WindsorEssex, to determine the relevant approaches and needs to address the priority issues identified based on the previous year's Local Labour Market Plan. Bi-monthly meetings were held to discuss the priority issues, opportunities for improvement, and potential solutions, as well as the role committee and community members can play in the proposed solutions. The solutions proposed by the committee identify short-term and long-term actions for the community, including best practices from other regions, considerations for implementing solutions in our community and with underserved groups, and advocacy initiatives to support each priority addressed. For more information on the community priorities and solution ideas identified, please see the Action Plan on page 91.



In addition to consultations, an environmental scan was conducted of new training programs, industry changes, and economic changes impacting recruitment and retention.

Data on the local labour force was collected through many sources, including the 2016 and 2021 Census by Statistics Canada, Workforce WindsorEssex job posting data, Canada Business Counts employer data, custom data from Statistics Canada, news articles and provincial research reports, and Employment Ontario data provided by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development.

In the report, there may be reference made to the geographies of “**Windsor CMA**”, “**Leamington CA**”, and “**Essex CD**”. Each of these is defined as follows:



#### LEGEND:

- **Windsor CMA** (Census Metropolitan Area): Includes the municipalities of Windsor, Tecumseh, Lakeshore, Amherstburg, and LaSalle.\*
- **Leamington CA** (Census Agglomeration): Includes the municipalities of Leamington and Kingsville.
- **Essex CD** (Census Division): Includes the municipalities of Windsor, Tecumseh, Lakeshore, Amherstburg, LaSalle, Essex, Leamington, Kingsville, and Pelee, essentially making up the entirety of “Windsor-Essex”.

**\*Please Note:**

As of 2021, Windsor CMA now includes the municipalities of Windsor, Tecumseh, Lakeshore, Amherstburg, LaSalle, Essex, Leamington, Kingsville, and Pelee. For the purposes of this report, we are referring to the 2016 boundaries when referencing Windsor CMA, which includes only the municipalities of Windsor, Tecumseh, Lakeshore, Amherstburg, and LaSalle.



# Our Community

# Population

## POPULATION OF WINDSOR-ESSEX, EXCLUDING TOWN OF ESSEX, 2018-2022

Geography	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Windsor (CMA), Ontario	348,304	352,538	353,572	351,213	359,672
Leamington (CA), Ontario	52,038	52,074	52,257	53,155	54,556
<b>Total</b>	<b>400,342</b>	<b>404,612</b>	<b>405,829</b>	<b>404,368</b>	<b>414,228</b>

Table 1. Population of Windsor-Essex, excluding Town of Essex from 2018 to 2022.<sup>13</sup>

The population of Windsor-Essex (excluding the Town of Essex) increased 2% in 2022 from 404,368 in 2021 to 414,228. Our local population has fluctuated over the last few years, including a decrease in 2021, and an almost 10,000 person increase now in 2022. This drastic jump is likely caused by international immigration into our region, including immigrants, Temporary Foreign Workers, International Students, and Refugee Claimants. It is also likely that the relative affordability of local housing compared to other Ontario regions has brought new residents from other regions across the province.<sup>14</sup>

## POPULATION OF WINDSOR-ESSEX, 2016-2021

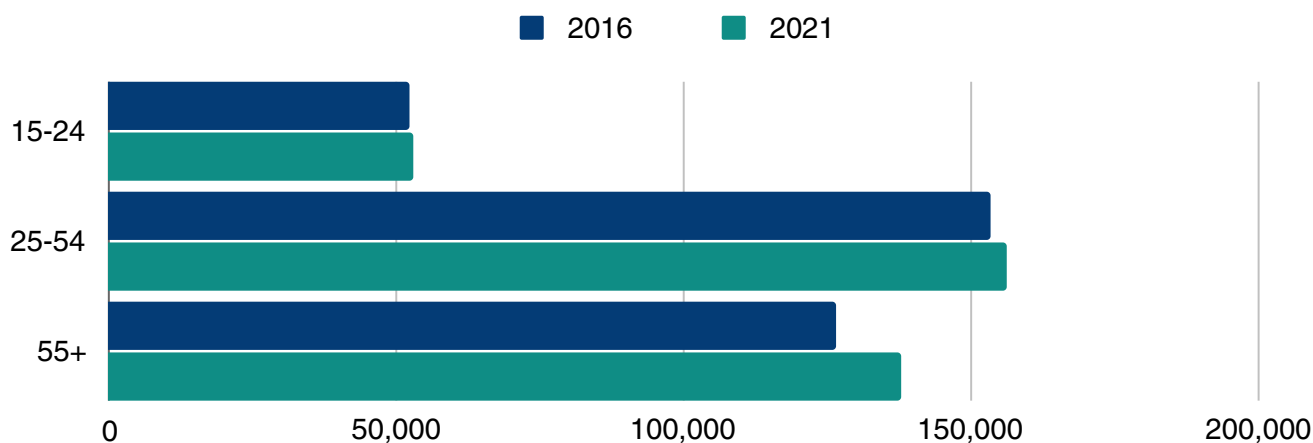


Figure 1. Population of Windsor-Essex, 2016-2021.<sup>15</sup>

[13] Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0135-01 Population estimates, July 1, by census metropolitan area and census agglomeration, 2016 boundaries

[14] Katerina Georjeva, "Windsor's real estate market is 'affordable' — but how affordable is it for Windsorites?", CBC News, March 5, 2023, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/windsor/windsor-affordable-how-affordable-for-windsorites-1.5929349>.

[15] Statistics Canada. 2023. (table). Census Profile. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released November 15, 2023.

## 2021 POPULATION OF WINDSOR-ESSEX BY AGE AND GENDER

Age	Men+	Women+	Total	Growth from 2016
15-24	27,695	25,260	52,960	1%
25-54	77,800	78,390	156,690	2%
55+	65,725	72,105	137,825	9%

Table 2. 2021 Population of Windsor-Essex by Age and Gender.<sup>16</sup>

When looking at the increase in age groups of our local population over the last five years, we can see small increases in youth and those of working age. However, the 9% increase of those aged 55+ will greatly impact our local community, specifically our local labour force. With over 30% of the population at or nearing retirement, the need for talent will continue to grow in our community, both to fulfill the labour shortage created from retirement and to fill the growing need for workers in Health Care and Social Assistance to care for our aging population. As one of the many sectors facing a talent shortage, Health Care and Social Assistance will continue to have a demand for nurses, personal support workers, social workers, home support workers, and medical administrative staff.

There has also been a 3% increase in those under 15 years old, which deepens the impact of the increasing shortage of Early Childhood Educators (ECEs). The talent demand for ECEs has resulted in limited childcare availability for those in our region, which in turn impacts the participation of parents in the labour force. From November 2022 to November 2023, there were 213 active job postings for ECEs from 66 different employers.<sup>17</sup> While much of the demand exists in the City of Windsor, there is growing demand in the County, specifically in Lakeshore, Amherstburg, and Tecumseh.



[16] Statistics Canada. 2023. (table). Census Profile. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released November 15, 2023.

[17] Workforce WindsorEssex, 'Labour Market Insights Report', November 2023, [https://www.workforcewindsor.essex.com/lmi-report/?e8\\_page=snapshot&date=2023-11&region-type=regions&noc-version=2016](https://www.workforcewindsor.essex.com/lmi-report/?e8_page=snapshot&date=2023-11&region-type=regions&noc-version=2016).

## 2016-2021 POPULATION OF WINDSOR-ESSEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

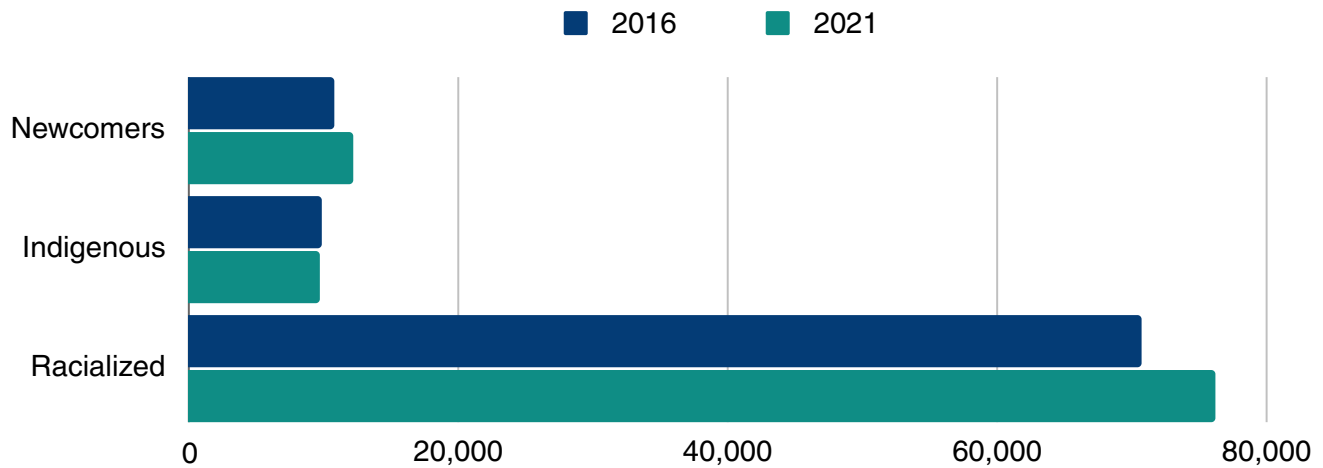


Figure 2. 2016-2021 Population of Windsor-Essex by demographic group.<sup>18</sup>

We have also seen growth in the local newcomer population and the population of racialized persons. Much of this growth is due to an increase in immigration to Canada since pandemic-related restrictions ended. These increases signify the need for culturally appropriate childcare and related services, including workers that speak languages other than English, have lived experiences reflective of the population they serve, and caregiver resources that reflect the diversity of our community. While there has been a small decrease in the number of Indigenous persons in our region, it remains important that caregiving services and caregiver supports are culturally responsive to our community, including diverse representation, information in multiple languages, and service providers with targeted services for diverse groups.

## TOTAL LABOUR FORCE BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

	Total	No Certificate	High School	Apprenticeship or Trades	College, CEGEP	University
Total, 2016	324,330	62,035	100,700	21,595	70,380	69,610
Total, 2021	346,975	60,960	109,620	19,740	73,205	83,450
Employed	171,710	14,555	48,095	9,760	44,485	54,815
Unemployed	31,990	3,760	13,490	1,805	6,970	5,960
Not in the Labour Force	143,280	42,645	48,030	8,180	21,750	22,675

Table 3. Total labour force by highest level of educational attainment over the past five years.<sup>19</sup>

[18] Statistics Canada. 2023. (table). Census Profile. 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released November 15, 2023.

[19] Statistics Canada, custom tabulation, 2021 Census of Population.

As our population has increased since 2016, we see this increase reflected in the number of those completing both a secondary school and post-secondary school education. However, the decrease in those obtaining a trades certificate is concerning amidst the growing skilled trades worker shortage. While the percentage of those with a college or university education increased 2% to be 45% of the population, those with a trades certificate dropped 1% to 6% of the population. While Windsor-Essex's rate of apprenticeship certification is 1% higher than the provincial rate, the industries and investments in our region rely on greater numbers of tradespersons available locally.<sup>20</sup> The concern for a lack of trades workers increases when looking at the 41% of persons with a trades certificate that are not in the labour force. This group is likely made up of retirees and/or persons no longer working due to age or physical limitations. The higher numbers of those unemployed with a post-secondary education likely include those that were unemployed due to the COVID pandemic that was still ongoing during 2021.

### NUMBER OF JOB POSTINGS BY EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENT

**4,321** Job Posts with no specified educational requirements.

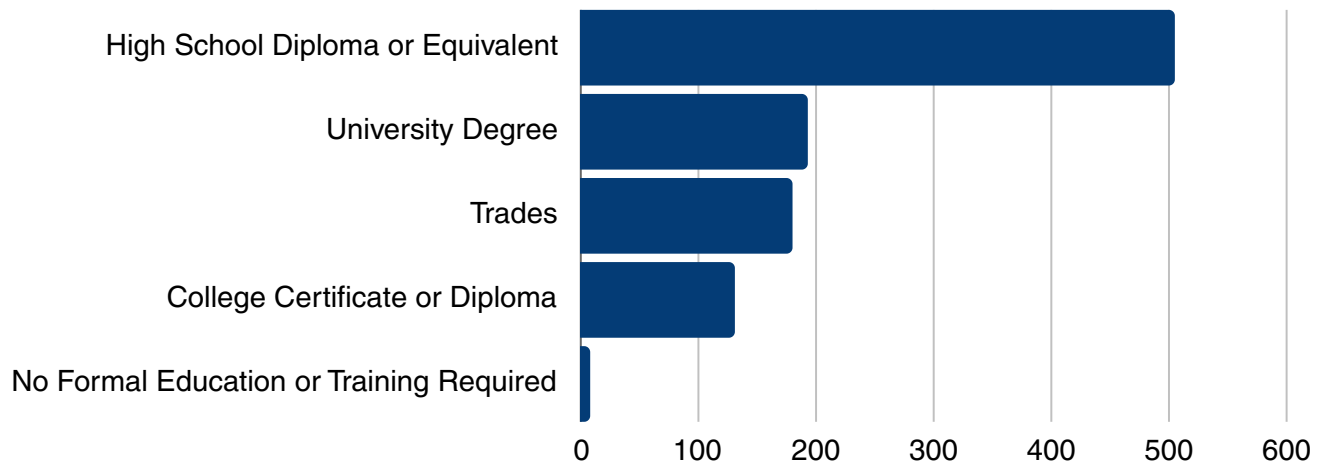


Table 4. Educational Requirements in Job Postings, October 2023.<sup>21</sup>

While the overall educational attainment for our region increased, we can compare the supply of those with a post-secondary education to the educational requirements of employers' job postings. As of October 2023, a strong majority of employers did not directly note an educational requirement for their open positions. The majority of those that did, however, were looking for candidates with at least a high school diploma, followed by those with a university degree, trades certificate, and a college diploma. With large Retail, Agriculture, and Manufacturing sectors in our region, it is not surprising that most open positions require a minimum of a high school diploma to apply. However, several employers noted through consultations that they often seek candidates with work experience and experience in the sector over high educational requirements.

[20] Statistics Canada, custom tabulation, 2021 Census of Population.

[21] Workforce WindsorEssex, 'Labour Market Insights Report', November 2023, [https://www.workforcewindsorsex.com/lmi-report/?e8\\_page=snapshot&date=2023-11&region-type=regions&noc-version=2016](https://www.workforcewindsorsex.com/lmi-report/?e8_page=snapshot&date=2023-11&region-type=regions&noc-version=2016).

## 2021 POPULATION EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

	No Certificate	High School Diploma	Apprenticeship	College, CEGEP	University
General Population	18%	32%	6%	21%	24%
Newcomer	31%	19%	3%	8%	38%
Indigenous	19%	35%	6%	25%	15%
Racialized	21%	26%	3%	15%	36%

Table 5. Educational Attainment by Specific Demographic Groups, 2021.<sup>22</sup>



When looking at the educational attainment of different demographic groups in our community, we can see a few trends. As many newcomers do not have proof of their educational credentials when they arrive in Canada, newcomers are the most likely to not possess any formal education credential (31%), however they are also the most likely to have a university degree (38%). With very few newcomers in our region having a high school diploma, a trades certificate, or college diploma as their highest level of education, they have the greatest dichotomy between no education and a university education. Indigenous persons have a large percentage of people with a high school diploma as their highest level of education (35%), yet also the largest percentage of college graduates (25%). They also have the highest percentage of trades certificate holders for an underserved group, matching the general population at 6%. Racialized persons' education rates overall align just below those of the general population, except for the 36% of racialized persons that have a university degree, 12% more than the rate for the general population.

[22] Statistics Canada, custom tabulation, 2021 Census of Population.

# Southwestern Ontario Black Entrepreneurship Network

WEtech Alliance is a part of a partnership led by Empowerment Squared to enhance services and build capacity to support Black business owners and entrepreneurs in the greater Hamilton and Windsor areas through the **Southwestern Ontario Black Entrepreneurship Network** (SWOBEN).<sup>23</sup> The organization is working in collaboration with members of the Windsor-Essex Black Entrepreneur and Professional Program Advisory Committee to support the successful execution of the project in the region, including local service delivery, networking, matchmaking and mentorship, promotional activities, hosting events and activities, supplying space, and connecting participants with affiliated services. The first cohort of 26 participants completed programming in early 2023, with networking events coordinated throughout the year to connect Black entrepreneurs in our community. Successes of the program include helping local entrepreneurs to navigate the ecosystem of support to tap into programming for racialized communities, as well as by connecting financial institutions with black entrepreneurs at their workplace to alleviate disconnection and improve success of receiving business loans. The program has also led to the creation of the Black Professional Networking Association, with the aim to empower and unite members through economic development, mentorship, advocacy, and professionalism.



[23] WEtech Alliance, <https://www.wetech-alliance.com/swoben/>.

# Income

## 2020 REGIONAL INCOME OVERVIEW

	Windsor-Essex	Windsor-Sarnia	Ontario
<b>Median Individual Employment Income</b> (income earned through employment by an individual)	\$32,800	\$32,400	\$38,000
<b>Median Individual Total Income</b> (total income earned by an individual from all income sources)	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$41,200
<b>Median Total Income of Household</b> (total income earned by all those living in a household from all income sources)	\$82,000	\$80,000	\$91,000

Table 6. Income Overview for Windsor-Essex, Windsor-Sarnia, and Ontario, as of 2020.<sup>24</sup>

## NUMBER OF TAX FILERS BY TOTAL INCOME GROUP

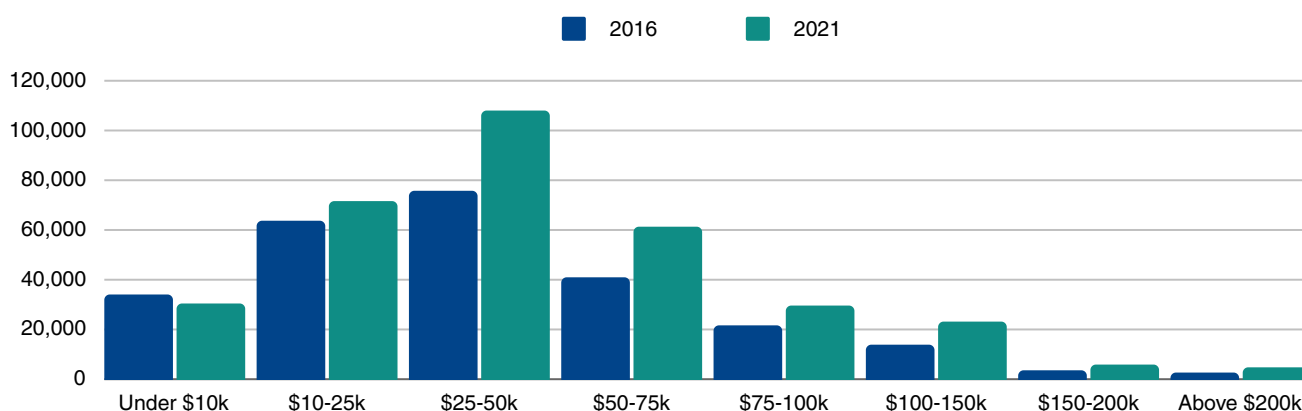


Figure 3. Number of tax filers by total income group over the past five years, Windsor CMA.<sup>25</sup>

[24] Statistics Canada. 2023. (table). Census Profile, 2021 Census of Population. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released November 15, 2023.

[25] Statistics Canada. Table 11-10-0008-01 Tax filers and dependants with income by total income, sex and age.

The overall income of our region has gone up since 2016. Since 2016, 32,260 individuals reported annual earnings of \$25,000-50,000, the income group that increased most over the past five years. However, based on percentage, the largest increase was for those earning above \$200,000 with an increase of 79% (or 2,100 people). The number of those earning less than \$10,000 decreased by 11%. As of 2021, the median employment income is \$32,800 and the median total income (including sources of income from government transfers) is \$40,000. The median total income of a household is \$82,000.

While these income increases benefit those in our community, the impacts of inflation and lessening purchasing power may limit capacity to put money back into our community. As the inflation rate in Canada peaked at 8.1% in June of 2022, we continue to see increases despite reaching a low of 2.8% in August 2023.<sup>26</sup> In line with increases in inflation, the Canadian bank rate reached 5.25% in August 2023.<sup>27</sup> The attempt to limit inflation through increased interest rates on bank lending may have curbed the increase in housing sales in Windsor-Essex, with the number of houses sold in October 2023 down 7.4% from the previous year and the average price of \$550,571 down 10.7% from the previous year.<sup>28</sup> While the number of new listings was 9.2% above the five-year average, home sales are down 28.4% from the five-year average.<sup>29</sup>

October 2023 brought some relief to many facing low-income as the Ontario minimum wage was increased to \$16.55 from \$15.50.<sup>30</sup> The Ontario government says the 6.8% increase in the minimum wage means up to \$2,200 more in workers' pockets every year. The minimum wage is still below the living wage of \$18.65 for Windsor-Essex, which increased 9.3% from 2022.<sup>31</sup> It is important that employers continue to properly compensate their workforce for their contributions to their companies, including with compensation and non-compensation benefits such as flexible scheduling, health and dental benefits, and paid time off.

[26] Statista, "Average inflation rate and bank rate in Canada from January 2018 to October 2023", Statista Research Department, November 22, 2023, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1312251/canada-inflation-rate-bank-rate-monthly/#:~:text=After%20May%202020%2C%20the%20inflation,four%20percent%20in%20August%202023.>

[27] Statista, "Average inflation rate and bank rate in Canada from January 2018 to October 2023", Statista Research Department, November 22, 2023, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1312251/canada-inflation-rate-bank-rate-monthly/#:~:text=After%20May%202020%2C%20the%20inflation,four%20percent%20in%20August%202023.>

[28] The Canadian Real Estate Association, "Windsor-Essex County MLS® home sales significantly below average in November", <https://creastats.crea.ca/board/wind.>

[29] The Canadian Real Estate Association, "Windsor-Essex County MLS® home sales significantly below average in November", <https://creastats.crea.ca/board/wind.>

[30] Josh Pringle, "Here's what you need to know about Ontario's minimum wage increase on Oct. 1", CTV News, September 29, 2023, <https://ottawa.ctvnews.ca/here-s-what-you-need-to-know-about-ontario-s-minimum-wage-increase-on-oct-1-1.6583288#:~:text=Sign%20up%20now%20for%20our%20nightly%20CTV%20News%20Ottawa%20newsletter&text=The%20minimum%20wage%20has%20increased,%2416.55%20an%20hour%20since%202020.>

[31] Ontario Living Wage Network, "2023 Rates", <https://www.ontariolivingwage.ca/rates>

# Leamington Housing Project

In August 2023, the **Municipality of Leamington** Council accepted a proposal for an attainable housing development at the former location of Leamington District Secondary School.<sup>32</sup> The proposal includes the development of two six-storey apartment buildings, totalling 200 units, and 105 townhome units. Apartment units will be accessible rental units and townhome units will be owned. The concept plan includes a central park area, a smaller parkette around the central mailbox, and a daycare building. Amico has partnered with Habitat for Humanity, ensuring 18 lots available to construct houses for families served by the organization. They have also partnered with the Bridge Youth Resource Centre and will provide rental units for the Bridge to purchase and rent out on an attainable housing basis. Construction is set to take three to five years, creating jobs for residential construction workers, engineers, and utilities service workers, as well as landscape workers, maintenance technicians, and ECEs later on.



[32] Lets Talk Leamington, "Attainable Housing Project", Municipality of Leamington, <https://letstalkleamington.com/leamington-affordable-housing-project>.

# Migration

## 2017–2022, WINDSOR-ESSEX NET MIGRATION

Net Migration	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022
Net Temporary Emigration	561	558	416	326	551
Net Interprovincial Migration	425	355	-217	-529	-1,237
Net Intraprovincial Migration	921	82	-1,779	-747	-203
Net Non-Permanent Residents	3,165	1,994	1,220	-1,336	7,793

Table 7. Windsor-Essex Net Migration, 2017-2022.<sup>33</sup>

Overall, Windsor-Essex has been successful in attracting immigrants, international students, and those that previously left Canada and have returned. However, in 2021-2022, Windsor-Essex was increasingly losing residents to other regions across the country, especially to other provinces. Many of those leaving the region are of working age, between 15 and 64 years old. However, this is also the age group in which we are gaining the most non-permanent residents. Like many indicators for our region, the available workforce of newcomers and international students in our region can support many of our local labour market challenges, including the need for specialized and skilled talent with previous work experience.

As migration increases toward our region following the pandemic, it is important that we have the capacity to house and meaningfully employ those coming to our community in order to retain them as qualified workers.



[33] Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0140-01 Components of population change by census division, 2016 boundaries

## WINDSOR-ESSEX MIGRATION CHARACTERISTICS BY AGE GROUP

	Immigrants	Net Temporary Emigration	Net Interprovincial Migration	Net Intraprovincial Migration	Net Non-Permanent Residents
<b>All Ages</b>	4,632	551	-1,237	-203	7,793
<b>0-14 Years</b>	887	114	39	711	112
15-24 Years	784	62	-588	-728	6,040
25-44 Years	2,395	243	-472	-526	1,601
45-64 Years	361	91	-93	132	8
<b>65 Years or Older</b>	200	37	-126	161	26

Table 8. Windsor-Essex migration characteristics by age group, 2021/22.<sup>34</sup>

## TOP 10 PLACES IN CANADA FOR POSITIVE NET MIGRATION TO WINDSOR

Geography of Origin	In	Out	Net
Toronto (CMA), Ontario	2,343	2,136	207
Winnipeg (CMA), Manitoba	117	1	116
Leamington (CA), Ontario	521	436	85
Saskatoon (CMA), Saskatchewan	78	37	41
Edmonton (CMA), Alberta	159	119	40
Oshawa (CMA), Ontario	81	57	24
Brantford (CMA), Ontario	47	33	14
Guelph (CMA), Ontario	69	56	13
Fredericton (CMA), New Brunswick	22	10	12
Regina (CMA), Saskatchewan	40	29	11

Table 9. Top 10 Places in Canada for Positive Net Migration to Windsor CMA, 2020/21.<sup>35</sup>

[34] Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0140-01 Components of population change by census division, 2016 boundaries

[35] Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0141-01 Interprovincial and intraprovincial migrants, by census metropolitan area and census agglomeration of origin and destination, 2016 boundaries. Release date: 2023-01-11

## TOP 10 PLACES IN CANADA FOR NEGATIVE NET MIGRATION TO WINDSOR-ESSEX

Geography of Destination	In	Out	Net
Area outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations, Ontario	692	1,141	-449
London (CMA), Ontario	318	553	-235
Wood Buffalo (CA), Alberta	26	188	-162
Ottawa - Gatineau (CMA), Ontario/Quebec	162	312	-150
Chatham-Kent (CA), Ontario	354	498	-144
Ottawa - Gatineau (CMA), Ontario part, Ontario	152	288	-136
Halifax (CMA), Nova Scotia	36	142	-106
Vancouver (CMA), British Columbia	124	206	-82
Area outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations, British Columbia	8	54	-46
Yellowknife (CA), Northwest Territories	0	29	-29

Table 10. Top 10 Places in Canada for Negative Net Migration to Windsor-Essex, 2020/21.<sup>36</sup>



[36] Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0141-01 Interprovincial and intraprovincial migrants, by census metropolitan area and census agglomeration of origin and destination, 2016 boundaries. Release date: 2023-01-11

# Non-Permanent Residents

## NON-PERMANENT RESIDENTS BY PLACE OF BIRTH

Place of Birth	# of Residents
India	3,535
China	830
Mexico	825
Nigeria	595
United States of America	285
Jamaica	280
Iran	270
Philippines	235
Lebanon	145
Iraq	130

Table 11. Non-permanent residents in Windsor-Essex by place of birth, 2021.<sup>37</sup>

## NON-PERMANENT RESIDENTS BY AGE

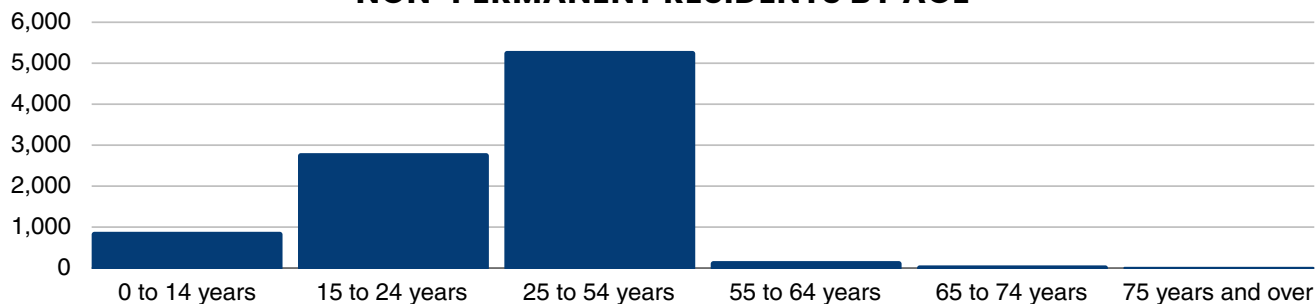


Figure 4. Non-permanent residents in Windsor-Essex by age, 2021.<sup>38</sup>

[37] Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0361-01 Non-permanent resident type by place of birth: Canada, provinces and territories, census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations with parts

[38] Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0361-01 Non-permanent resident type by place of birth: Canada, provinces and territories, census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations with parts

## NON-PERMANENT RESIDENTS BY IMMIGRATION STATUS

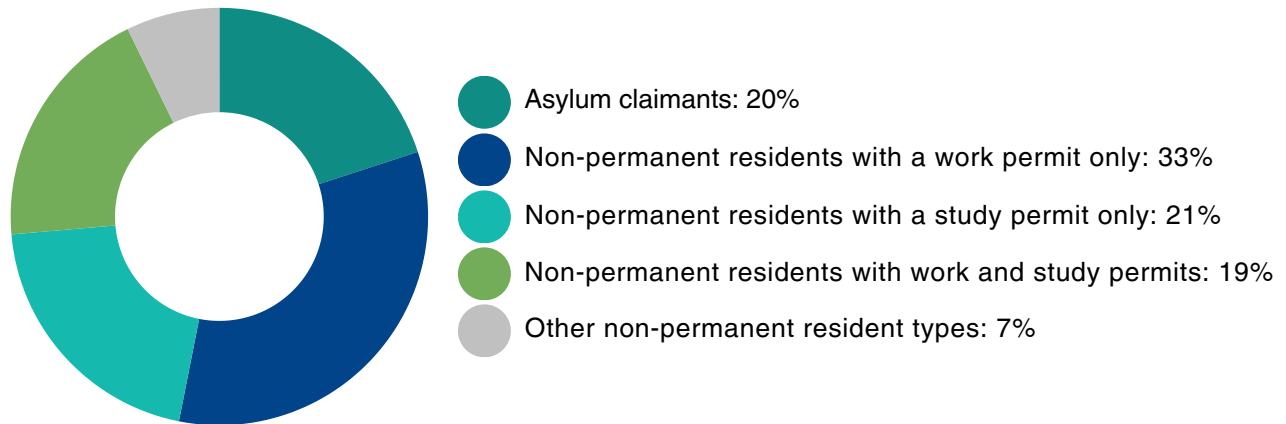


Figure 5. Non-permanent residents in Windsor-Essex by immigration status, 2021.<sup>39</sup>

## NON-PERMANENT RESIDENTS BY AGE AND IMMIGRATION STATUS

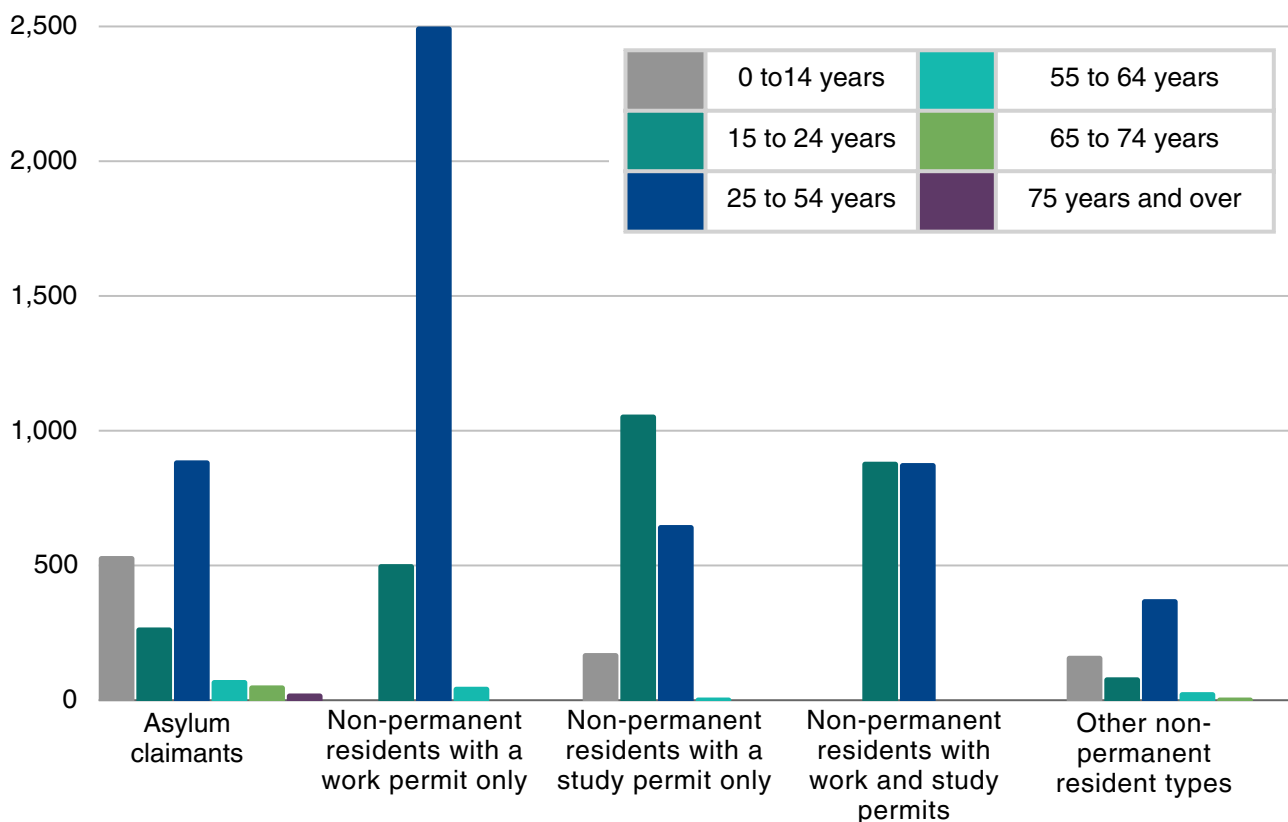


Figure 6. Non-permanent residents in Windsor-Essex by age and immigration status, 2021.<sup>40</sup>

[39] Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0361-01 Non-permanent resident type by place of birth: Canada, provinces and territories, census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations with parts

[40] Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0361-01 Non-permanent resident type by place of birth: Canada, provinces and territories, census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations with parts

## NON-PERMANENT RESIDENTS BY EDUCATION AND LABOUR FORCE STATUS

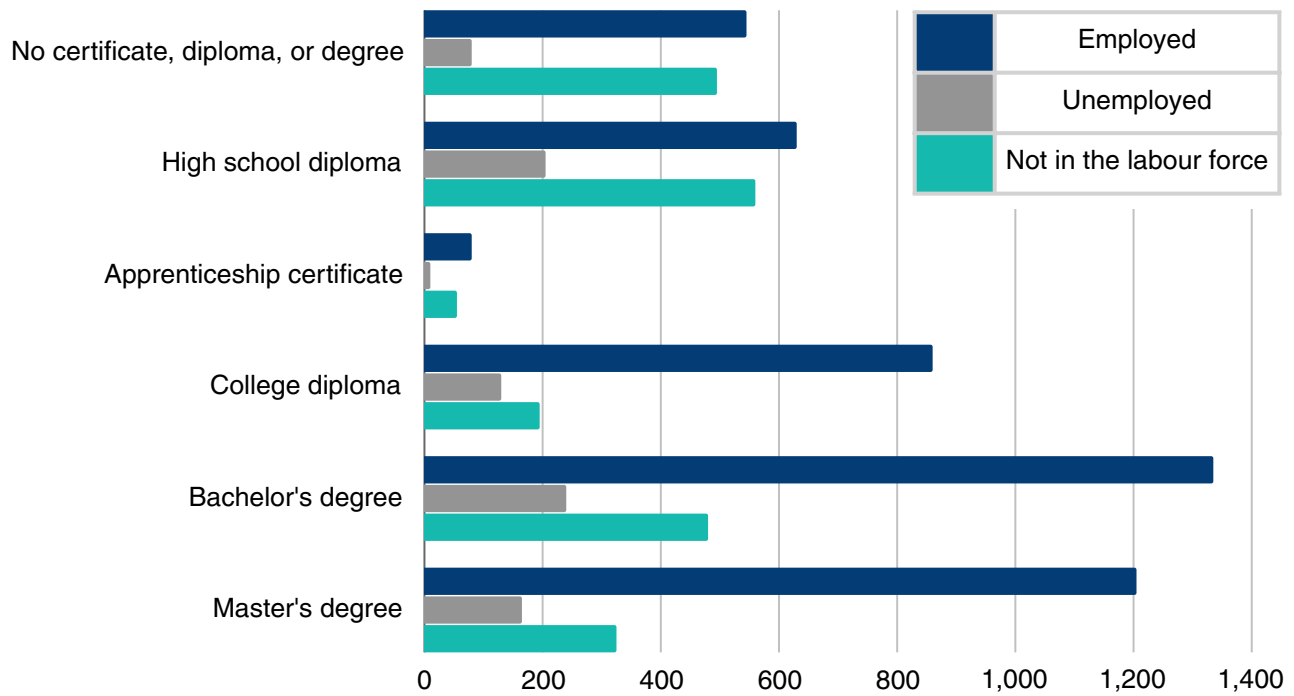


Figure 7. Non-permanent residents in Windsor-Essex by educational attainment and employment status, 2021.<sup>41</sup>



[41] Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0362-01 Immigrant status and period of immigration by first official language spoken, labour force status and highest level of education: Canada, provinces and territories, census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations with parts

## Asylum Seekers

Since late 2022, Windsor-Essex has welcomed over 1,600 asylum claimants to our community, 18% of whom are between the ages of 5 to 17, and 71% between 18 to 49 years old.<sup>42</sup> With over 55 nationalities represented and over 30 different languages spoken, there has been an ongoing need for coordination of resources through strong community collaboration. Much of this coordination has been supported by council member organizations of the **Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership**. Newcomer Settlement Providers, led by Multicultural Council of Windsor & Essex County, provided information sessions, including employment support in the hotels. In addition to the coordination of many service providers in our region, education supports for both children and adults have been provided by all four local school boards. Health care resources and services have been provided by the Windsor-Essex Ontario Health Team, the Mobile Medical Clinic, with non-emergency health care needs of those previously facing homelessness addressed by TMC Urgent Care. To support the high number of families with young children, the Comité Local en Immigration Francophone Windsor-Essex-Chatham-Kent (CLIF WECK) and the City of Windsor's Children's Services department provided EarlyOn programming onsite. They also led the collection of donations for essential needs and the expansion of the Connections – Be Back Soon program to provide short-term child-minding services at no cost so parents could attend medical, employment, or other related appointments. In addition to the coordination of many service providers in our region, best practices are now being shared with other regions across the province who are looking to Windsor-Essex for how to best serve asylum seekers in their regions.



[42] City of Windsor, IRCC Demographics Report.



# Employment Ontario

# Employment Services

## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES CLIENTS BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

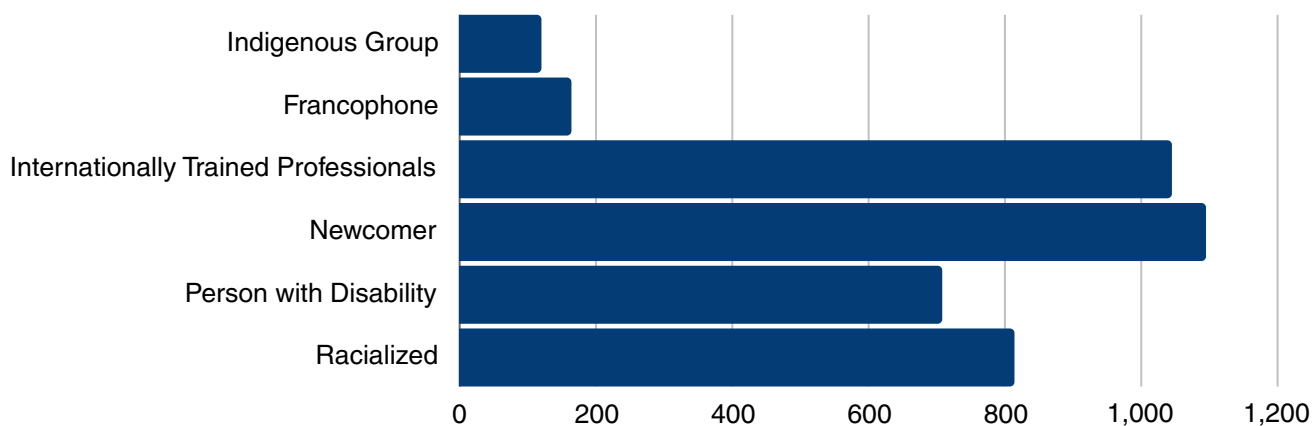


Figure 8. Windsor-Essex Employment Services Clients by demographic group, 2022/23.<sup>43</sup>

## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES CLIENTS BY AGE

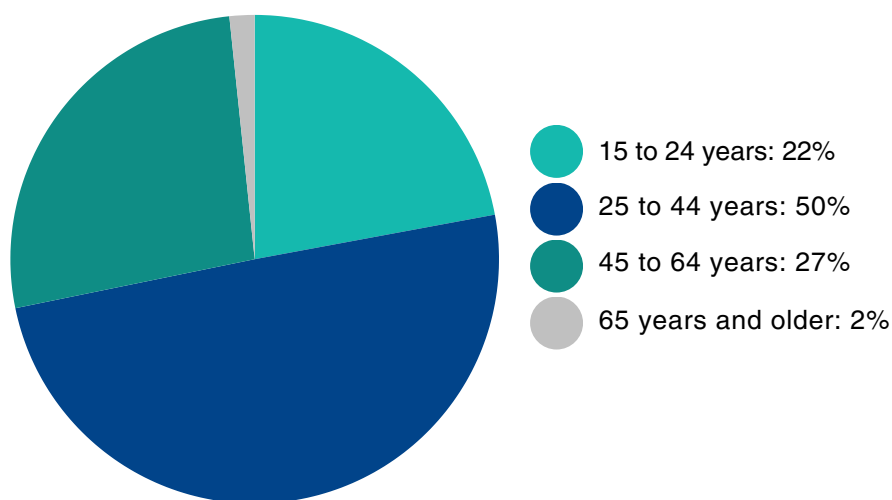


Figure 9. Windsor-Essex Employment Services Clients by age, 2022/23.<sup>44</sup>

[43] Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, Local Board Report, 2023.

[44] Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, Local Board Report, 2023.

## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES CLIENTS BY EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Industry	Past Employment	Employment At Exit
11: Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	190	19
22: Utilities	14	x
23: Construction	293	32
31: Manufacturing	148	17
32: Manufacturing	184	34
33: Manufacturing	584	71
41: Wholesale Trade	50	x
44: Retail Trade	386	39
45: Retail Trade	147	21
48: Transportation and Warehousing	117	14
49: Transportation and Warehousing	47	x
51: Information	52	x
52: Finance and Insurance	65	x
53: Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	44	x
54: Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	197	14
56: Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	390	41
61: Educational Services	126	12
62: Health Care and Social Assistance	388	34
71: Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	62	x
72: Accommodation and Food Services	435	56
81: Other Services (except Public Administration)	200	20
91: Public Administration	57	x

Table 12. Windsor-Essex Employment Services Clients by past employment and employment at exit, 2022/23.<sup>45</sup>

The most common industries that Employment Services (ES) clients previously worked in are **Manufacturing, Accommodation and Food Services, Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Retail Trade**. All of these industries are top employing industries for our region. While some of them, particularly **Manufacturing** and **Accommodation and Food Services**, have faced changes over the last few years, they remain top demand industries for workers to enter and build long-term careers. The chart shows that when exiting ES programming when employment has been secured, many clients find work in these sectors again. This suggests those that left an in-demand industry would benefit from upskilling programs to ensure their skillsets are meeting employer expectations, as well as employment skills training to ensure that jobseekers have both strong soft skills and social skills to be a good fit for a new workplace.

[45] Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, Local Board Report, 2023.

## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES CLIENTS BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

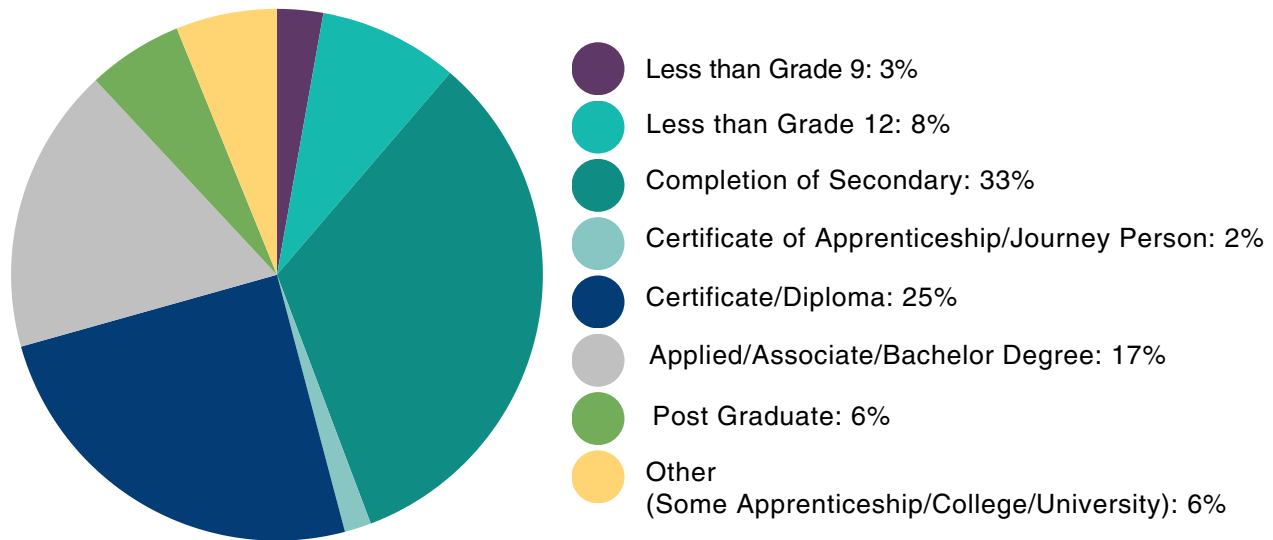


Figure 10. Windsor-Essex Employment Services Clients by educational attainment, 2022/23. <sup>46</sup>

As 11% of ES clients have less than a grade 12 education (including those with less than grade 9), it is important these clients receive both education upgrading and employment supports concurrently. While those with a lower education level will require their high school diploma to gain employment in many in-demand positions, it is important that they have the option to continue their employment support if they have capacity to allow them to gain meaningful employment as early as possible. While this approach may not be beneficial for all clients, their chances of re-entering the workforce successfully are higher the less time they spend unemployed.

Additionally, it is important to note that 50% of ES clients have completed post-secondary education, including 6% with a post-graduate degree. While much of employment preparation is focused on ensuring that clients have the skillsets to enter a specific field, this population would benefit most from soft skill training and increasing their connection to networks in their field of study. While many of these clients may have earned their education from a different country prior to moving to Canada, it is also important to note the many jobseekers that would benefit from provincial credential recognition or equivalency exam supports. This would help to ensure that jobseekers with in-demand skills and knowledge are able to gain meaningful employment in our community, a community that is facing a skills shortage across many industries.

[46] Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, Local Board Report, 2023.

## EMPLOYMENT SERVICE CLIENTS BY OUTCOME AT EXIT

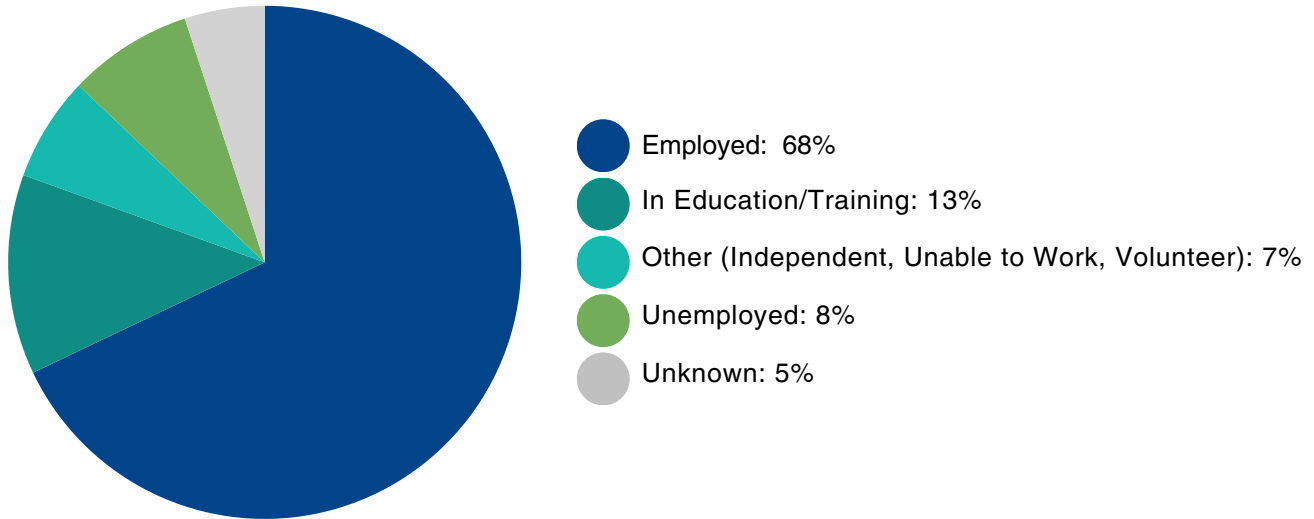


Figure 11. Windsor-Essex Employment Services Clients by outcome at exit, 2022/23.<sup>47</sup>

While 68% of ES clients exited services employed, there are 8% that left unemployed from services. This population is an important segment to look at when developing new ES programming to find what was missing from their service and why they chose to exit without employment. It is also important for ES providers to maintain contact with those that exit for education/training or other reasons as they may need support in the future or may benefit from part-time employment while working on other personal goals.



[47] Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, Local Board Report, 2023.

# Literacy and Basic Skills

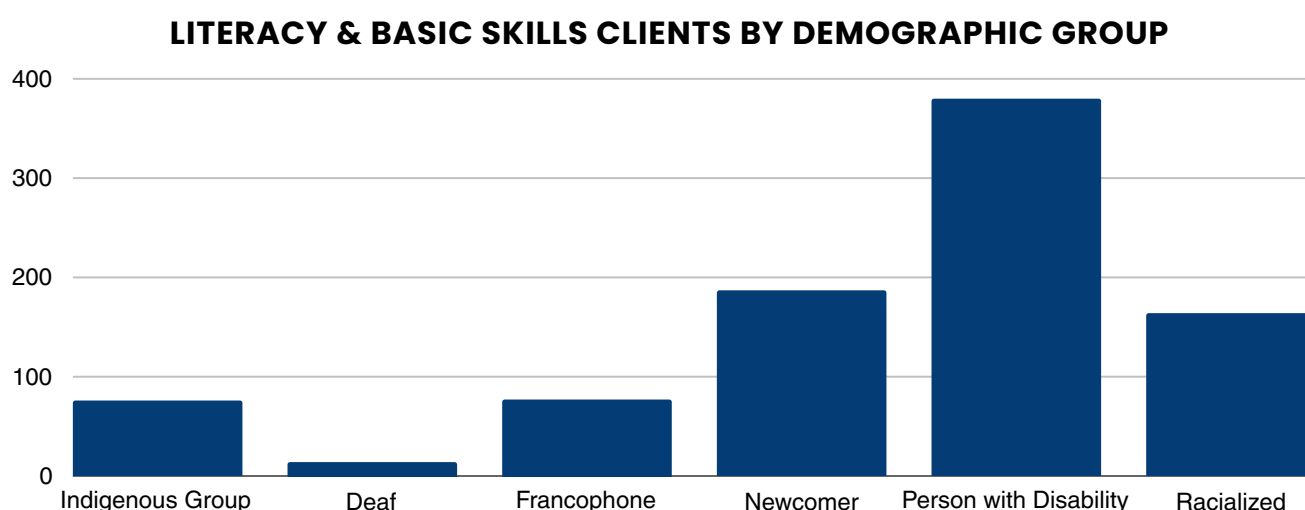


Figure 12. Windsor-Essex Literacy and Basic Skills Clients by demographic group, 2022/23.<sup>48</sup>

The above chart shows the demographics of Literacy & Basic Skills (LBS) participants, with many participants being racialized, a newcomer, and persons with a disability. To increase the rate of employment amongst LBS participants during and after training, ES needs to ensure that they have a support pipeline available for participants, including targeted supports for racialized persons and persons with a disability. Many ES programs are available for newcomers in our community, yet it is important for support workers to ensure that their services are both culturally appropriate as well as relevant to the needs of newcomers in our community. Additionally, while specific service providers offer targeted services for Indigenous persons or Francophones, it is important that all ES providers, including those outside of the Employment Ontario network, provide relevant and meaningful support to all represented groups in our community. It is also important that all services, supports, and resources are available in French as well, not just in targeted programming to Francophones.

[48] Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, Local Board Report, 2023.

## LITERACY & BASIC SKILLS CLIENTS BY LABOUR FORCE STATUS

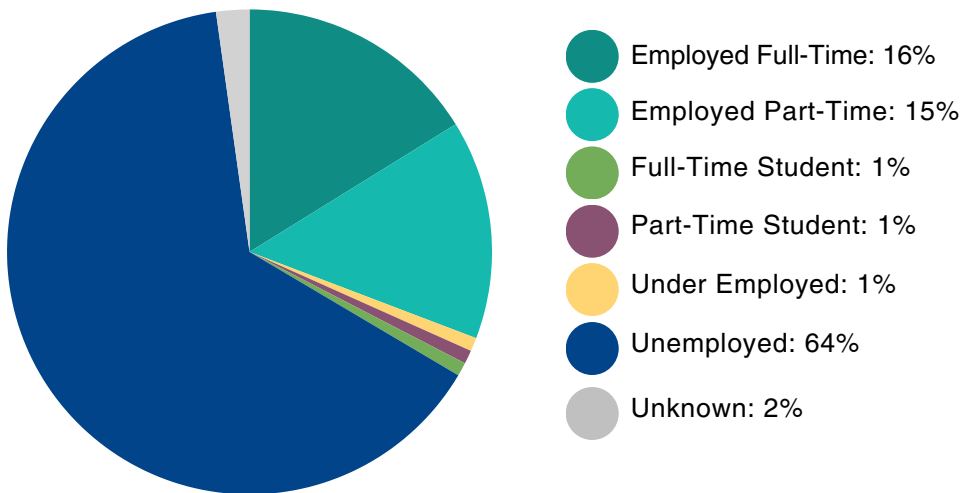


Figure 13. Windsor-Essex Literacy and Basic Skills Clients by labour force attachment, 2022/23.<sup>49</sup>

The above chart shows that while most LBS participants are unemployed, 31% of participants are employed while participating in training, including 16% who are employed full-time. While showing the capacity for participants to gain employment during their upskilling, it also shows the capacity for employers to support employees in upgrading their education and skills while remaining employed. This opportunity would support many jobseekers who are facing a challenge in gaining or maintaining employment while they continue their education upgrading. Some employers may also benefit from LBS training held onsite if they feel much of their workforce could benefit from LBS training. Not only will it upgrade the skillset capacity of their workforce, but it also shows employees that their employer is making an investment in their learning and development, increasing a sense of loyalty for their workforce.

## TOP TRAINING PROGRAMS OF BETTER JOBS ONTARIO PARTICIPANTS

Training Program	# of Participants
Transport Truck Drivers	112
Medical Administrative Assistants	14
Computer Network Technicians	13

Table 13. Top Training Programs of Better Jobs Ontario Participants, 2022/23.<sup>50</sup>

[49] Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, Local Board Report, 2023.

[50] Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, Local Board Report, 2023.

Better Jobs Ontario provides financial support to eligible participants that want to participate in short-term training in an in-demand occupation. The occupations that most participants of the Better Jobs Ontario program choose training for are Transport Truck Drivers, Medical Administrative Assistants, and Computer Network Technicians. All these occupations are in-demand in our region, and therefore are strong choices for those looking to change their career path later in life. Transport Truck Drivers is consistently in the list of Top 10 jobs most posted by employers in monthly reviews, while Medical Administrative Assistants and Computer Network Technicians align with the increasing demand for workers in Health Care and in Technology.

**Additional occupations that should be considered for future Better Jobs Ontario applications should include:**

- [Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses](#)
- [Home Support Workers, Housekeepers and Related Occupations](#)
- [Administrative Assistants](#)
- [Machinists and Machining and Tooling Inspectors](#)
- [Construction Millwrights and Industrial Mechanics](#)
- [Security Guards and Related Security Service Occupations](#)
- [Social and Community Service Workers](#)
- [Electrical and Electronics Engineers](#)
- [Accounting and Related Clerks](#)





# Employment Service Transformation

In 2023, the Government of Ontario announced that the Corporation of the City of Windsor and its consortium partner Workforce WindsorEssex would become the new Service System Manager (SSM) for the Employment Services Transformation across the Windsor-Sarnia catchment. This announcement, part of Phase 2 of the broader transformation, will see the integration of Ontario Works Employment Assistance and Ontario Disability Support Program Employment Supports into Employment Ontario to create one system starting January 1, 2024. The overall goal of the transformation is to implement innovative and efficient approaches to better connect individuals, including those in receipt of Social Assistance, Persons with Disabilities, Indigenous peoples, Francophones, Newcomers, Black and Racialized Individuals, and others who may have unique needs to achieve sustainable employment.

For the Windsor-Sarnia economic region, the SSM is referred to as the **Windsor Regional Employment Network (WREN)** and it will lead the network of service providers through the Integrated Employment Services system in order to create a clear path to employment for all jobseekers, including those who are at risk of long-term unemployment and who face systemic and other barriers to employment.



# Apprenticeship

# Apprenticeship

## WINDSOR-ESSEX APPRENTICESHIP 2018-2022

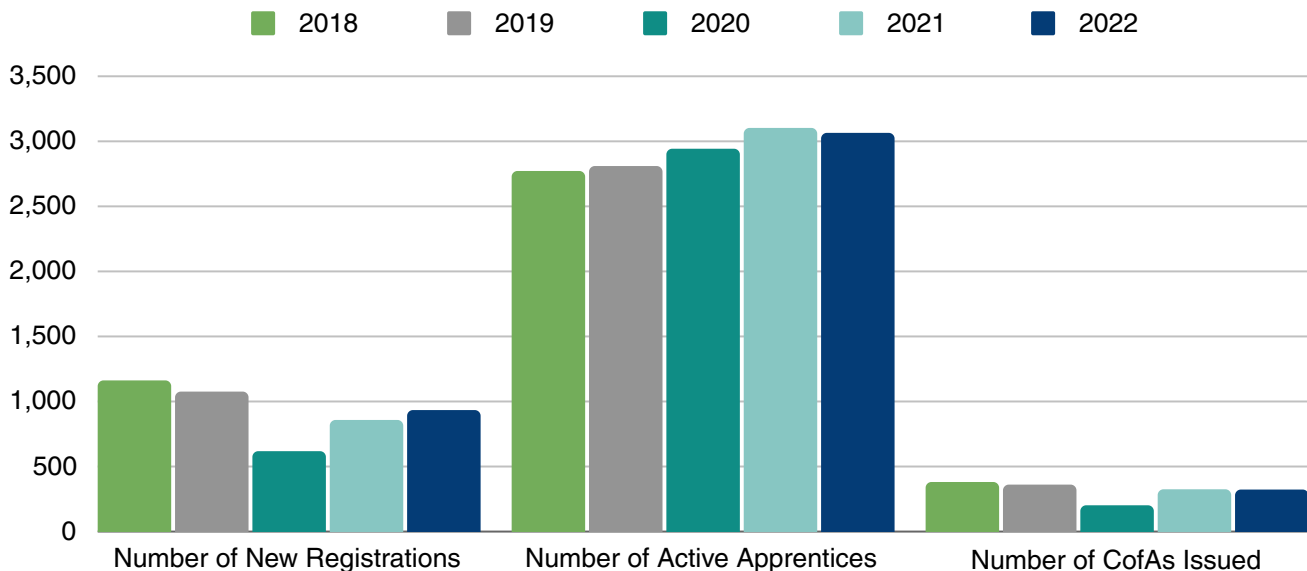


Figure 14. Windsor-Essex Apprenticeship, 2018/19-2022/23.<sup>51</sup>

The growing skilled trades shortage impacts the growth of not only local companies, but our region overall as local infrastructure projects face delays due to a lack of local supply of specialized talents. While the number of new registrations and active apprentices grows annually, the region still has not reached a number of new annual registrations that meets pre-pandemic rates or outpaces retirements. And while we have many active apprentices working through their workplace and in-class training, the lack of Certificate of Apprenticeships issued suggests that few are completing their apprenticeships in a timely manner. This may be due to a lack of hours gained in the workplace, issues in retaining employment, lack of in-class training available locally for their trade and level, a lack of understanding on how to obtain their certificate once training has been completed, or poor test performances. At the current rate of registration, it will take over eight years to replace those with a trade certificate currently not in the labour force (likely from retirement), yet in the next eight years the number of those retiring from the trades or moving into a less physically demanding role will continue to climb. The rate of registration needs to increase exponentially moving forward to keep up with retirements and the expanding demand needs of the industry to meet the province's expected need of 100,000 new skilled trades workers this decade.<sup>52</sup>

[51] Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, Local Board Report, 2023.

[52] "Ontario Investing over \$650,000 in Apprenticeship Training in Windsor," <https://andrewdowiemp.ca/ontario-investing-over-650000-in-apprenticeship-training-in-windsor/>

# Apprenticeship Investments

In September of 2023, it was announced that the Ontario government is investing over \$650,000 in **St. Clair College of Applied Arts and Technology** to enhance apprenticeship training and address the demand for skilled trades workers in Windsor-Essex.<sup>53</sup> The investment will support the college in acquiring modern equipment for training in areas such as General Machinist apprenticeship, Tool and Die, and Mould-making. The initiative is aligned with the government's broader \$1 billion investment in the skilled trades over three years to address labour shortages and make Ontario a prime location for work and family life. The funding aims to equip apprentices with quality tools and resources as they prepare for future employment in the skilled trades sector.



## NEW APPRENTICES BY AGE

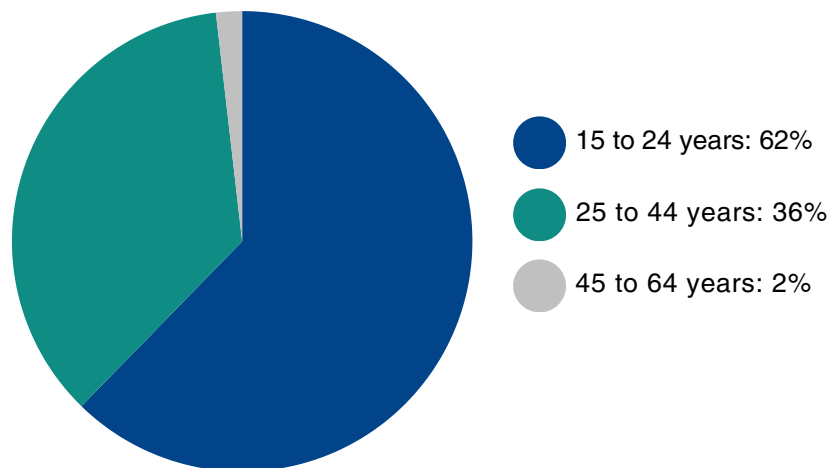


Figure 15. Windsor-Essex Apprenticeship by age of new registrants, 2022/23.<sup>54</sup>

[53] St. Clair College, "College Receives Over \$650,000 to Boost Apprenticeship Training", September 15, 2023, [48] Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, Local Board Report, 2023.

[54] Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, Local Board Report, 2023.

### NEW APPRENTICES BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

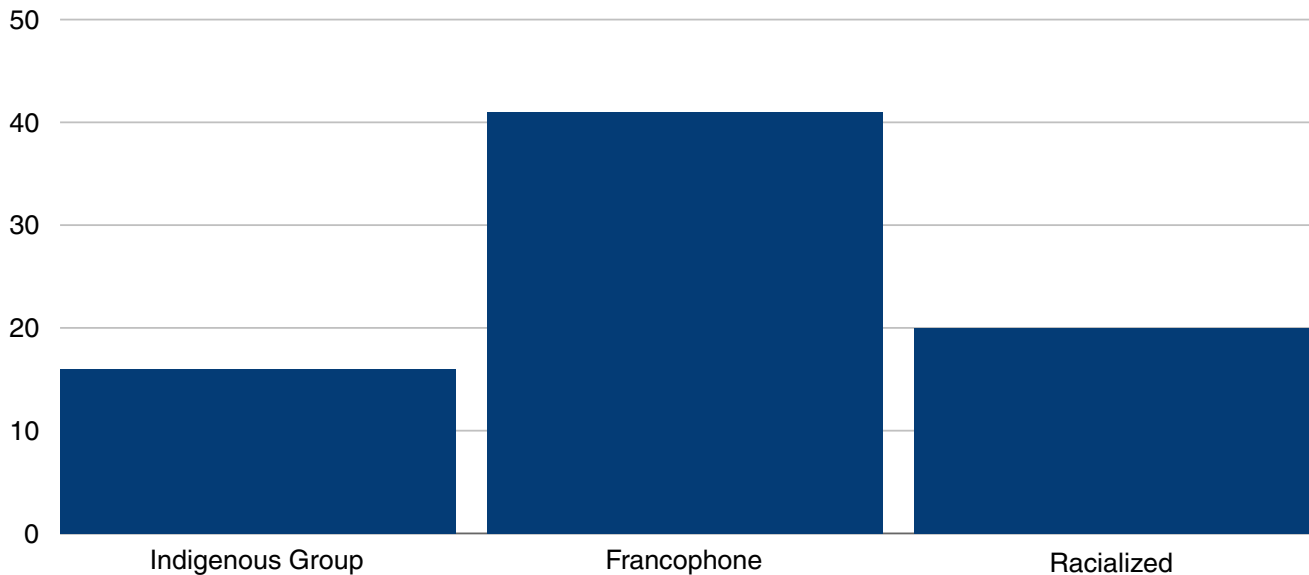


Figure 16. Windsor-Essex New Apprentice Registrants by demographic group, 2022/23.<sup>55</sup>

A positive in the apprenticeship data is the young age of new apprentices. With 62% of new apprentices under the age of 24, it is likely that a trade education was started directly following the completion of a high school diploma or shortly thereafter. With trades becoming more of an appealing post-secondary option for students, this new pipeline of apprentices gaining certificates and maintaining meaningful employment will positively impact the skilled trades shortage. They indirectly make a career in the skilled trades more appealing to other students and prove that it is not only a smart career choice, but also a viable post-secondary career education option.

While 36% of active apprentices are over the age of 24, we need to ensure that those no longer tied to an education or employment program are aware of how to enter a trade easily. We need to ensure that there is support for those looking to start a trade as a career change, or as a first career in Canada. The influx of newcomers to our region is a positive opportunity for the skilled trades industries to attract new workers, especially through the earn while you learn model that will appeal to those looking to find employment quickly and start their lives in Canada. While there are traditional options to enter the trades, we need to ensure that jobseekers are aware of the non-traditional options available to them, including completing a pre-apprenticeship for those looking to better understand or test out a trade and trade equivalency exams for those that have previously worked in a trade and are looking to get their Certificate of Apprenticeship in Ontario.

[55] Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, Local Board Report, 2023.

## TOP 20 TRADE REGISTRATIONS IN WINDSOR-ESSEX, 2022/23

Trade	New Registrants
<b><u>309A: Electrician - Construction and Maintenance</u></b>	169
<b><u>429A: General Machinist</u></b>	105
<b><u>310S: Automotive Service Technician</u></b>	83
<b><u>332A: Hairstylist</u></b>	62
<b><u>310T: Truck and Coach Technician</u></b>	47
<b><u>442A: Industrial Electrician</u></b>	47
<b><u>433A: Industrial Mechanic Millwright</u></b>	45
<b><u>403A: General Carpenter</u></b>	42
<b><u>306A: Plumber</u></b>	40
<b><u>420A: Ironworker - Structural and Ornamental</u></b>	40
<b><u>308A: Sheet Metal Worker</u></b>	35
<b><u>401A: Brick and Stone Mason</u></b>	28
<b><u>451A: Drywall, Acoustic and Lathing Applicator</u></b>	28
<b><u>450A: Construction Craft Worker</u></b>	27
<b><u>430A: Tool and Die Maker</u></b>	17
<b><u>313A: Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Systems Mechanic</u></b>	16
<b><u>415A: Cook</u></b>	16
<b><u>452A: Reinforcing Rodworker</u></b>	16
<b><u>309C: Electrician - Domestic and Rural</u></b>	13
<b><u>313D: Residential Air Conditioning Systems Mechanic</u></b>	13

Table 14. Top 20 New Trade Registrations in Windsor-Essex, 2022/23.<sup>56</sup>

### Additional in-demand trades that did not have more than 10 registrants include:

- **Heavy Duty Equipment Technician**
- **Mould Maker**
- **Powerline Technician**
- **Appliance Service Technician**
- **Horticultural Technician**

[56] Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, Local Board Report, 2023.

**1.**

## **PRIORITY #1:**

### **Attracting Underrepresented Groups to the Skilled Trades**

There are many barriers for newcomers, youth, and women who wish to enter the skilled trades. Women represent 50% of the workforce in Ontario, but they represent less than 10% of skilled tradespeople.<sup>57</sup> There is a lack of accessibility for women in the trades when it comes to work clothes and amenities, as they are forced to adapt to a work environment that has been historically designed for men. Immigrants account for 18% of apprentice certification holders, while newcomers account for 1%.<sup>58</sup> For newcomers, the biggest issue is credential recognition, as many relocate to Windsor-Essex with their degrees and ready to work. However, their degrees do not have direct counterparts to Canadian degrees, and they are often required to return to school and re-learn many of their existing qualifications. Language barriers are also present for many newcomers, suggesting the need for occupation and trade-specific language training programs for newcomers to increase their employability and rate of success in completing their apprenticeship training and schooling.

Attracting youth is also a priority due to persistent labour gaps in the skilled trades, and without garnering the interest of students, these shortages will continue.

Essential steps to combating this shortage can include accommodating and attracting staff and jobseekers, increasing accessibility for women in the trades, improving credential recognition for newcomers, and correcting the negative stigma surrounding skilled trades work by educating students and their parents at the elementary and secondary levels.



**Priority #1**  
Attracting  
Underrepresented  
Groups to the  
Skilled Trades  
**Solution**  
**PAGE 91**

[57] Jade Prevost-Manuel, "Company Culture Matters for Women Who Work in Manufacturing. Here's Why." CBC News, February 27, 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/london/company-culture-gender-parity-manufacturing-industry-ontario-1.5929922#:~:text=Women%20make%20up%20nearly%20half,workforce%2C%20according%20to%20Statistics%20Canada.>

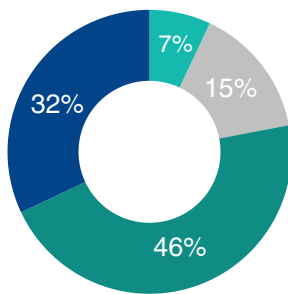
[58] Statistics Canada, custom tabulation, 2021 Census of Population.



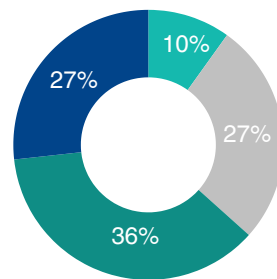
# Labour Force

# Overview

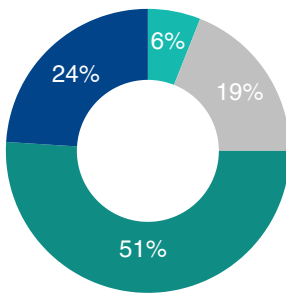
## AVAILABILITY OF QUALIFIED WORKERS



## AVAILABILITY TO ATTRACT NEW EMPLOYEES



## STABILITY OF WORKFORCE



## ABILITY TO RETAIN NEW EMPLOYERS

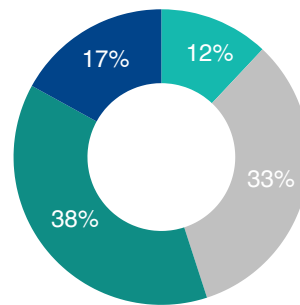


Figure 17. Employer Ratings from Windsor-Essex employer survey, May 2023.

In the survey for employers, employers were asked to rank the above four characteristics of the region. Of responding employers, 45% felt positively about their ability to retain new employees, yet very few (22%) felt there was an availability of qualified workers. Further, less than half (37%) felt they had the ability to attract new employees. This low rate may be due to 24% and 51% of respondents feeling poor and fair respectively about the stability of the workforce. At the time of the survey, there were 13,300 people unemployed in our region looking for work, suggesting a misalignment between the positions and skillsets in demand by employers and the interests of jobseekers.

## TOP 25 OCCUPATIONS BY NUMBER OF LOCAL JOB POSTINGS

NOC Code	National Occupation Classification (NOC) Label	Posting Count	2022 Median Hourly Wages	2022 Median Wages
64100	<u>Retail Salespersons and Visual Merchandisers</u>	266	\$15.31	\$31,839.87
65102	<u>Store Shelf Stockers, Clerks and Order Fillers</u>	166	\$14.42	\$29,987.13
75101	<u>Material Handlers</u>	112	\$20.80	\$43,254.98
65201	<u>Food Counter Attendants, Kitchen Helpers and Related Support Occupations</u>	106	\$14.67	\$30,504.02
21301	<u>Mechanical Engineers</u>	100	\$40.38	\$83,982.10
60020	<u>Retail and Wholesale Trade Managers</u>	99	\$36.03	\$74,944.37
63200	<u>Cooks</u>	90	\$15.87	\$32,999.65
64409	<u>Other Customer and Information Services Representatives</u>	81	\$18.67	\$38,826.67
73300	<u>Transport Truck Drivers</u>	80	\$25.27	\$52,561.80
13100	<u>Administrative Officers</u>	76	\$24.11	\$50,143.34
21310	<u>Electrical and Electronics Engineers</u>	74	\$46.54	\$96,799.07
13110	<u>Administrative Assistants</u>	65	\$23.49	\$48,869.28
75110	<u>Construction Trades Helpers and Labourers</u>	64	\$22.76	\$47,345.70
31301	<u>Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses</u>	60	\$38.57	\$80,228.79
95109	<u>Other Labourers in Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities</u>	60	\$17.64	\$36,695.49
62020	<u>Food Service Supervisors</u>	58	\$17.03	\$35,421.45
42201	<u>Social and Community Service Workers</u>	54	\$27.97	\$58,184.70
72100	<u>Machinists and Machining and Tooling Inspectors</u>	51	\$28.40	\$59,081.15
62010	<u>Retail Sales Supervisors</u>	50	\$19.98	\$41,568.28
54100	<u>Program Leaders and Instructors in Recreation, Sport and Fitness</u>	46	\$14.59	\$30,340.94
32101	<u>Licensed Practical Nurses</u>	44	\$28.22	\$58,688.81
65310	<u>Light Duty Cleaners</u>	43	\$17.64	\$36,694.94
10010	<u>Financial Managers</u>	42	\$47.42	\$98,625.10
90010	<u>Manufacturing Managers</u>	42	\$48.00	\$99,845.10
14200	<u>Accounting Technicians and Bookkeepers</u>	41	\$25.40	\$52,834.18

Table 15. Top 25 occupations by number of regional job postings and corresponding wages, Nov. 2023.<sup>59, 60</sup>

[59] Workforce WindsorEssex, 'Labour Market Insights Report', November 2023, [https://www.workforcewindsor.essex.com/lmi-report/?e8\\_page=snapshot&date=2023-11&region-type=regions&noc-version=2016](https://www.workforcewindsor.essex.com/lmi-report/?e8_page=snapshot&date=2023-11&region-type=regions&noc-version=2016).

[60] Lightcast, 2023.

## NUMBER OF BUSINESSES BY NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

2-Digit North American Industry Classification (NAIC) Label	Without employees	1-4	5-99	100-499	500+	Total, with employees
<b>11 - Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting</b>	1,350	112	175	34	3	324
<b>21 - Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction</b>	6	2	5	1	0	8
<b>22 - Utilities</b>	99	7	11	1	0	19
<b>23 - Construction</b>	1,855	807	623	12	0	1,442
<b>31-33 - Manufacturing</b>	423	193	460	69	8	730
<b>41 - Wholesale Trade</b>	306	153	248	7	2	410
<b>44-45 - Retail Trade</b>	1,053	617	925	34	1	1,577
<b>48-49 - Transportation and Warehousing</b>	2,293	844	196	12	1	1,053
<b>51 - Information and Cultural Industries</b>	135	44	53	2	0	99
<b>52 - Finance and Insurance</b>	1,476	197	207	6	1	411
<b>53 - Real Estate and Rental and Leasing</b>	6,978	407	99	2	0	508
<b>54 - Professional, Scientific and Technical Services</b>	2,131	667	301	6	0	974
<b>55 - Management of Companies and Enterprises</b>	221	26	30	2	0	58
<b>56 - Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services</b>	788	221	211	15	2	449
<b>61 - Educational Services</b>	202	39	54	1	5	99
<b>62 - Health Care and Social Assistance</b>	1,407	679	625	38	4	1,346
<b>71 - Arts, Entertainment and Recreation</b>	273	43	87	3	0	133
<b>72 - Accommodation and Food Services</b>	412	166	678	14	1	859
<b>81 - Other Services (Except Public Administration)</b>	1,295	622	392	3	0	1,017
<b>91 - Public Administration</b>	2	3	13	10	2	28

Table 16. Total number of employers and distribution by firm size range and industry.<sup>61</sup>

## FIVE-YEAR EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION

NOC	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
	Persons (x 1,000)				
<b>Management Occupations</b>	9.6	12.5	10.7	10	10.5
<b>Business, Finance and Administration Occupations, Except Management</b>	21.2	23.9	20.9	20.5	26.1
<b>Natural and Applied Sciences and Related Occupations, Except Management</b>	10.7	9.5	11.5	14.9	13.6
<b>Health Occupations, Except Management</b>	14.6	14.2	14.8	16.8	18.1
<b>Occupations in Education, Law and Social, Community and Government Services, Except Management</b>	17.3	15.8	14	17.6	15.5
<b>Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport, Except Management</b>	2.8	3.4	3.1	3.7	2.9
<b>Sales and Service Occupations, Except Management</b>	40.2	42.4	31.2	41.2	40.1
<b>Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and Related Occupations, Except Management</b>	28.2	29.8	28	26.4	31.5
<b>Natural Resources, Agriculture and Related Production Occupations, Except Management</b>	2	2.3	1.7	1.7	1.7
<b>Occupations in Manufacturing and Utilities, Except Management</b>	19.9	17.8	16.3	15.3	14.8

Table 17. Windsor CMA employment by 1-digit NOC (2016), 2018-2022.<sup>62</sup>

[61] Canadian Business Counts (June 2023)

[62] Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0419-01 Employment by occupation, census metropolitan areas, annual

## FIVE-YEAR EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

NAIC	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
	Persons (x 1,000)				
<b><u>Agriculture</u></b>	2.1	2.5	1.7	x	x
<b><u>Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Quarrying, Oil and Gas</u></b>	x	x	x	x	x
<b><u>Utilities</u></b>	x	x	x	x	x
<b><u>Construction</u></b>	8.8	11.4	12.8	11	11.6
<b><u>Manufacturing</u></b>	41.4	36.7	37	33.6	35.8
<b><u>Wholesale and Retail Trade</u></b>	22.3	22.8	18.7	23.6	23
<b><u>Transportation and Warehousing</u></b>	6.6	8.6	6.9	9.3	9.7
<b><u>Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental and Leasing</u></b>	6.1	11.2	8.2	11.1	9.3
<b><u>Professional, Scientific and Technical Services</u></b>	7.9	6.9	8.2	10.5	10
<b><u>Business, Building and Other Support Services</u></b>	4.9	6.5	5.2	4.2	6.2
<b><u>Educational Services</u></b>	13	11	9.8	11.4	12.5
<b><u>Health Care and Social Assistance</u></b>	22.8	22.4	19.1	25.6	24.8
<b><u>Information, Culture and Recreation</u></b>	4.3	7.1	3.4	4.6	5.5
<b><u>Accommodation and Food Services</u></b>	13	12.1	9	10.8	10.4
<b><u>Other Services (Except Public Administration)</u></b>	6.6	5.4	4.4	5.8	6.9
<b><u>Public Administration</u></b>	5.8	5.9	6.4	5.7	6.7

Table 18. Windsor CMA employment by 2-digit NAICS, 2018-2022.<sup>63</sup>

[63] Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0384-01 Employment by industry, census metropolitan areas, annual (x 1,000)

# Underserved Groups

## LABOUR FORCE CHARACTERICS BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

	Total Population (Over 15 Years Old)	Indigenous Identity	Racialized Population	Newcomers (2016-2021)	Immigrants (2011-2015)
Percent of Population Over 15 Years Old	100%	3%	22%	4%	3%
Total - Labour Force Status	346,975	9,730	76,205	12,200	9,765
In the Labour Force	203,690	5,780	45,245	6,805	5,570
Employed	171,710	4,695	36,910	5,495	4,665
Employed Part-Time	67,170	2,090	16,250	2,360	2,155
Employed Full-Time	93,980	2,310	16,660	2,495	1,995
Unemployed	31,990	1,080	8,335	1,310	910
Participation Rate	59%	59%	59%	56%	57%
Unemployment Rate	16%	19%	18%	19%	16%
Employment Rate	49%	48%	48%	45%	48%
Median Employment Income	\$32,800	\$ 27,400	\$ 25,400		

Table 19. Labour Force characteristics in Windsor-Essex by demographic group, 2021. <sup>64</sup>

When looking at the impact of diverse groups in the labour force, we see that participation rates for all designated groups have a similar, if not equal, rate to the general population. However, while these groups have an equal interest and capacity to participate in the labour force, they face higher unemployment rates than the general population, except for immigrants that arrived in Canada between 2011 and 2015.

[64] Statistics Canada, custom tabulation, 2021 Census of Population.

# Newcomers and Immigrants

Newcomers that have immigrated to Canada between 2016 and 2021 have the hardest time joining the labour force and gaining employment. This is likely due to the multiple barriers that newcomers face when looking for employment, including transportation, language, and credential recognition, in addition to the challenges that come with moving to a new country, typically related to community, finance, education, and health care needs. The low unemployment rate of immigrants that migrated earlier show that newcomers do eventually play a larger role in the local labour force over time, likely once their basic needs and community integration needs are met. With the ongoing skills shortage facing many sectors in our community, it is imperative that employers look to those in our immigrant population as the available workforce, arriving in our community with education, work experience, and in-demand skillsets. It is also important to note that the majority of recent immigrants work in part-time employment. While part-time employment plays a strong role in our local tourism, food service, and social assistance sectors, more support needs to be provided to immigrants looking to gain full-time employment.

Newcomers are a large percent of the available workforce that needs to be better incorporated into the skilled trades. Immigrants make up 18% of those with a trades certificate in our region, yet newcomers make up only 1% of certificate holders.<sup>65</sup> Completing an apprenticeship is a beneficial education path for those that are looking to start or return to post-secondary education, while earning an income during training. Trades employers should develop connections with newcomer serving organizations that can support their hiring needs. Additional language training services should provide occupation-specific language training to improve newcomers' employability in the trades.

# Racialized Persons

Racialized persons work almost equally in part-time and full-time employment. Comparatively, only 39% of the general population works in part-time employment. While part-time work often provides more flexibility for workers that have caregiving responsibilities or are attending school, it is often tied to lower wage positions. In 2021 racialized persons earned \$25,400, while the general population earned a median income of \$32,800. Some of the discrepancy in earnings may be due to the disproportional impact on employment faced by the BIPOC community during the pandemic that was still ongoing in 2021 yet shines a light on the ongoing lack of equal pay amongst people of colour.

[65] Statistics Canada, custom tabulation, 2021 Census of Population.

# Indigenous Persons

Making up 3% of the local population over the age of 15 in 2021, Indigenous persons have an unemployment rate of 19%, slightly higher than the general population at 16%. While this rate is inflated from the pandemic that was ongoing in 2021, it does highlight the higher unemployment rate facing Indigenous persons, while having the same participation rate as the general population at 59%. While part-time workers make up 39% of the working general population, part-time workers make up 45% of working Indigenous persons. More targeted supports and opportunities need to be provided to support these workers in gaining full-time and in-demand positions. These positions may include Machinists, Transport Truck Drivers, Educational Assistants, Bookkeepers, and Cooks.

# Persons with Disabilities

In 2017, over 25% of the Windsor CMA population had a self-identified disability.<sup>66</sup> There are a variety of disabilities that a person can have, including physical, intellectual, developmental, or a learning disability. While persons with disabilities can receive employment support through all Employment Ontario service providers, as well as through local service providers that specifically support those with disabilities, including **Community Living, Assisted Living Southwestern Ontario (ALSO)**, and **Insight Advantage**, many struggle to gain and retain meaningful employment. In 2021, the median income for persons with a disability in Ontario was \$33,800, while those without a disability had a median income of \$44,200.<sup>67</sup> There are additional organization collaborations that seek to encourage employers to hire persons with disabilities, including the **Windsor Essex Employment Group (WEEG)**, a committee dedicated to assisting individuals with disabilities in finding and maintaining meaningful employment by increasing awareness among employers to support them in their hiring needs. WEEG actively participates in local community information sessions and job fairs, hosting booths to provide information and resources to members in the community. In addition to its regular activities, WEEG organizes events such as Employer Breakfasts and Employer Lunch and Learn forums, where local employers learn about the benefits of hiring persons with disabilities.

St. Clair College offers the **Community Integration Through Cooperative Education (CICE)** program, designed to provide individuals with developmental disabilities and significant learning challenges the opportunity to experience college life, pursue post-secondary education, and develop skills for employment. Students engage in courses specific to the CICE program, with support from a Learning Facilitator. The program includes core curricula covering communications, job and life skills, and human relations, and students can choose elective academic courses from various programs. Work placements are incorporated to help students develop vocational skills and community involvement, with the goal of enabling graduates to transition to part-time or full-time employment.

[66] Statistics Canada, Table 13-10-0750-01 Persons with and without disabilities aged 15 years and over, census metropolitan areas.

[67] Statistics Canada, Table 11-10-0087-01 Distribution of market, total and after-tax income of individuals by disability status

# Youth

## YOUTH JOB CONNECTION PARTICIPANTS BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

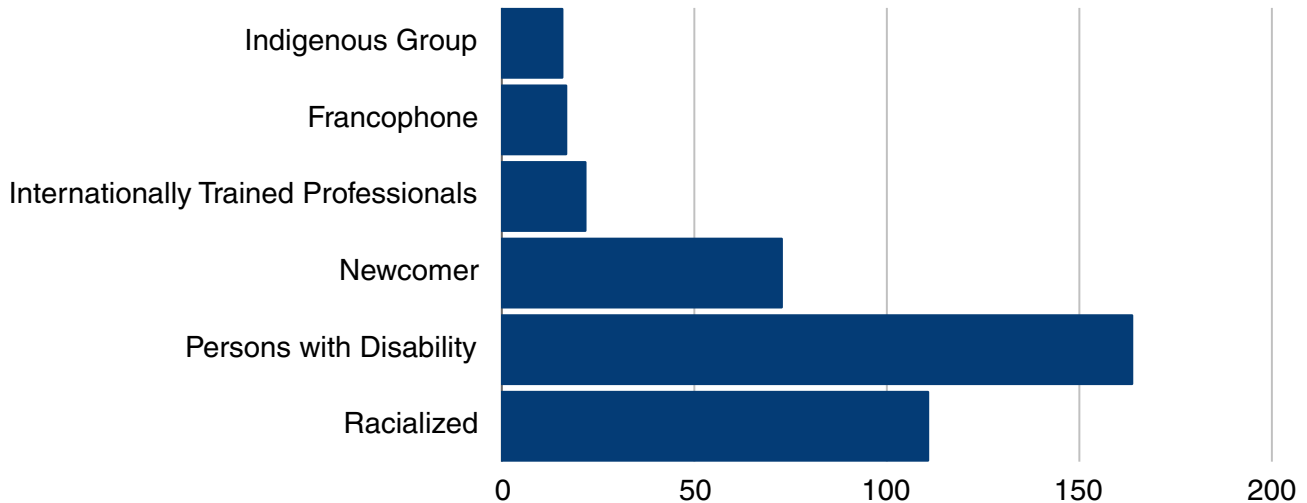


Figure 18. Windsor-Essex Youth Job Connection Participants by demographic group, 2022/23.<sup>68</sup>

Youth Job Connection (YJC) is an employment program for youth that have previously not held a first job. The program provides training to prepare youth for employment and coordinates placements for participants to gain work experience. The participants are often those facing barriers to employment, which is highlighted by the demographic groups that participants belong to, including persons with disabilities, racialized and newcomer youth, and those that have education experience from outside of Canada. The rate of participation by diverse youth experiencing barriers highlights the need for both broadened youth supports and targeted supports for youth facing multiple or systemic barriers to seeking employment opportunities, especially as this program will no longer be funded independently but rolled into the broader Integrated Employment Services model. Many youth in Windsor-Essex face barriers in finding their first job, especially newcomer youth and youth living in low-income neighbourhoods. **ProsperUs** is focused on addressing these challenges in their identified priority neighbourhoods, including West Windsor, Downtown Windsor, and Leamington.

Those aged 15-24 comprise 15% of the local population, but often face an unemployment rate that is double that of the general population.<sup>69</sup> In September 2023, the youth unemployment rate was 17.7%, while the general population was at 6.7%.<sup>70</sup> The youth participation rate was 62.9%, relatively close to the 64.1% for the general population, highlighting the challenge for youth is less of a disinterest in the labour force and more of a challenge in gaining meaningful employment.<sup>71</sup> As of March 2023, those aged 20-24 enrolled as full-time and part-time students had participation rates of 49.2% and 85.6%, respectively, while non-students had a participation rate of 90.5%.<sup>72</sup>

[68] Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, Local Board Report, 2023.

[69] Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0021-01 Unemployment rate, participation rate, and employment rate by type of student during school months, monthly, unadjusted for seasonality

[70] Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0378-01 Labour force characteristics, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality

[71] Ibid.

[72] Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0021-01 Unemployment rate, participation rate, and employment rate by type of student during school months, monthly, unadjusted for seasonality

The high participation rates of students suggest they require employment to sustain their lifestyle while in school, though the 80.4% employment rate for non-students and 81% of employment for part-time suggests that youth not in education full-time still face some challenges in gaining employment.<sup>73</sup> Targeted supports for NEET youth (not in employment, education, or training) are needed to serve those often left out of traditional career services or employment supports to connect them with social and professional networks to help find meaningful employment.

## International Students

With over 100,000 international students studying across Ontario, Windsor-Essex is familiar with the employment challenges faced by the thousands of students that come to our community each year to attend post-secondary schooling.<sup>74</sup> In 2023, 33% of St. Clair College's 16,000+ student enrollment is from international students.<sup>75</sup> While new residence and housing facilities are being built, the lack of employment prospects for international students, whether for school-related work placements or full-time employment after graduation, continues to be a long-term challenge in our region.<sup>76</sup> Many students and graduates struggle with not having Canadian work experience on their resumes, impacting their opportunities to find long-term employment in Canada to sustain their work visas following graduation. As international students are only able to work 20 hours per week while they are in school, the demand for part-time employment is quickly growing. International students are a large portion of the available workforce and are responsible for 10% of the national demand for affordable housing, and as Canada seeks to fill our workforce needs with immigration efforts, it is important that those seeking training in Canada are rewarded with meaningful employment that supports regional employment needs.<sup>77</sup> Employers with part-time positions available for students should look to connect with local educational institutions and ES providers that can connect them with students ready and looking for work. Canada has recently increased the income requirement for international students for 2024, with prospective students now needing to show they have access to \$20,635 instead of the \$10,000 requirement previously in place, in addition to paying travel and tuition.<sup>78</sup>

[73] Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0021-01 Unemployment rate, participation rate, and employment rate by type of student during school months, monthly, unadjusted for seasonality

[74] Joe Friesen, "Ontario colleges are fuelling unprecedented growth in international students", The Globe and Mail, September 2, 2023, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-international-students-ontario-colleges-enrolment>.

[75] Rich Garton, "St. Clair College enrolment hits record high", CTV News, September 28, 2023, <https://windsor.ctvnews.ca/st-clair-college-enrolment-hits-record-high-1.6581533>

[76] Taylor Campbell, "University breaks ground on new, much-needed \$60M residence", Windsor Star, June 20, 2023, <https://windsorstar.com/news/local-news/university-breaks-ground-on-new-much-needed-60m-residence>

[77] Joe Friesen, "Ontario colleges are fuelling unprecedented growth in international students", The Globe and Mail, September 2, 2023, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-international-students-ontario-colleges-enrolment>.

[78] The Canadian Press, "Federal government hikes income requirement for foreign students, targets 'puppy mill' schools", CBC News, December 7, 2023, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/liberals-double-income-requirement-foreign-students-1.7052387>.

# Labour Force Survey Trends

## LABOUR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS IN WINDSOR CMA, 2018-2023

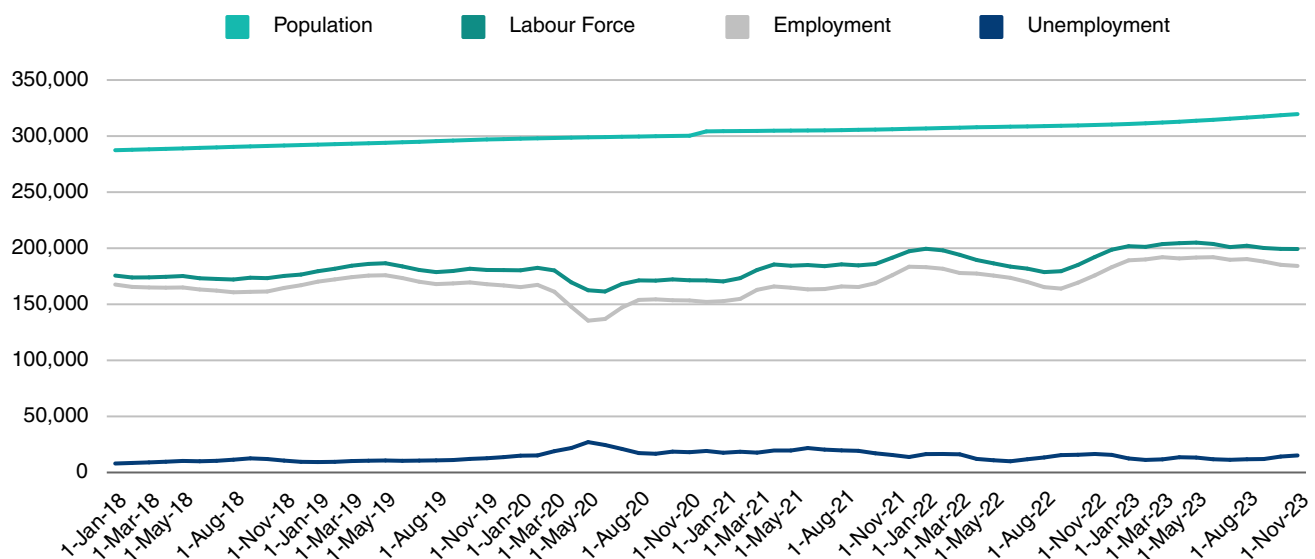


Figure 19. Labour Force Characteristics in Windsor CMA, 2018-2023.<sup>79</sup>

The Windsor CMA has seen consistent increases to its population, a result of international immigration balancing the loss of residents to other regions. Following the pandemic, we are seeing strong consistency in our local employment rate as well. While we still see seasonal fluctuations in unemployment, and some peaks during large temporary layoff periods (such as due to manufacturing facility retooling), Windsor CMA has seen greater balance with the rest of the province. Historically, we have faced trends of having the highest unemployment rate in the country for months on end, in the last year we have seen that trend end with large investments coming to our region. Business relocation to the region, local business expansion, and new innovations leading to greater business demand have all led to increases and more variety in employment in our region. As many businesses are facing talent demands for qualified workers, there are more opportunities than ever for jobseekers and career changers to find meaningful and stable employment in our region.

[79] Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0287-01 Labour force characteristics, monthly, seasonally adjusted and trend-cycle, last 5 months

**2**

## **PRIORITY #2:**

### **Improve Retention of Employees and Increase Use of Training Programs**

In a survey of Canadian business conditions, more than one in four businesses claimed to have experienced challenges retaining employees, and an American survey conducted in 2018 found that 38% of employees quit within their first year. The survey also found that 77% of the reasons why employees leave are preventable by the employer, the biggest reasons being a lack of career development opportunities and a poor work-life balance. Improving the onboarding process and offering training support has proven to combat attrition within the first year. Moreover, adopting clear routes for advancement within the company, flexible work schedules, and upskilling opportunities has improved work-life balance and counters the feeling of stagnation in one's career.



**Priority #2**  
Retention,  
Upskilling, and  
Training Support  
**Solution**  
**PAGE 93**



**Industries**

# Industries

This section provides updates for Windsor-Essex's largest and/or most promising sectors. This data was compiled using data specific to this region through Statistics Canada's Canadian Business Counts<sup>80</sup> data to determine number of businesses and employee size range; Statistics Canada for number of annual employees;<sup>81</sup> Lightcast<sup>82</sup> data for industry and occupation statistics and projections; Workforce WindsorEssex<sup>83</sup> data for job postings and employers; and consultations with community partners for trends, highlights, and industry-related education.



[80] Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts, June 2023.

[81] Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0384-01 Employment by industry, census metropolitan areas, annual (x 1,000).

[82] Lightcast, 2023.

[83] Workforce WindsorEssex, 'Labour Market Insights Report', November 2023, [https://www.workforcewindsor.essex.com/lmi-report/?e8\\_page=snapshot&date=2023-11&region-type=regions&noc-version=2016](https://www.workforcewindsor.essex.com/lmi-report/?e8_page=snapshot&date=2023-11&region-type=regions&noc-version=2016).

## Caldwell Businesses

The [Caldwell First Nation](#) gas bar, Caldwell Gas & Variety, boasts 16 pumps and has become one of Southwestern Ontario's largest gas stations, drawing customers with lower fuel prices just outside Leamington since its April 1, 2023 opening.<sup>[84]</sup> This venture not only offers more affordable fuel, but also signifies the beginning of economic sustainability for the First Nation community, which gained official status in 2020. Community leaders Mary and Ian Duckworth are optimistic that the opening of these new businesses will lead to greater opportunity for self-sufficiency and self-determination for residents of the Caldwell First Nation.

The Caldwell First Nation marked a significant milestone in their journey of economic reconciliation by opening the Caldwell First Nation Marina near Leamington in 2023.<sup>[85]</sup> The marina is already gaining popularity among local fishers and Caldwell anglers due to its proximity to fish-rich waters and its sheltered location. About half of the available spaces for the 2023 season are already reserved, with plans to offer discounted outdoor amenities to community members and competitive prices to the greater Leamington community. This project is part of a larger effort to create economic sustainability, including a conservation boardwalk, vineyard, and affordable housing units.



[84] Chris Campbell, "Caldwell First Nation celebrates opening of new gas bar and convenience store", CTV News, April 10, 2023, <https://windsor.ctvnews.ca/caldwell-first-nation-celebrates-opening-of-new-gas-bar-and-convenience-store-1.6349393>.

[85] Chris Campbell, "We're going to keep moving forward": Caldwell First Nation Marina open for business", CTV News, May 2, 2023, <https://windsor.ctvnews.ca/we-re-going-to-keep-moving-forward-caldwell-first-nation-marina-open-for-business-1.6380921>.



# Agriculture

**1,518**  
POSTINGS

Active job postings  
from Jan-Dec 2023

## NAICS CODE: **11**

- JUNE 2023 TOTAL BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYEES: 324
- CHANGE IN NUMBER OF BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYEES JUNE 2022-JUNE 2023: -14
- TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN 2022: <1,000
- TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN 2023: 1,700
- PROJECTED INDUSTRY JOB GROWTH (2023-2028): 6%
- INDUSTRY EMPLOYERS:
  - Mastronardi Produce Limited
  - Nature Fresh Farms
  - Belwood Poultry Ltd.
  - Highline Mushrooms
  - Mucci Farms Ltd.
- IN-DEMAND JOBS:
  - General Farm Workers
  - Material Handlers
  - Nursery and Greenhouse Workers
  - Harvesting Labourers

# Industry Trends, Highlights, and Updates

- The total greenhouse area in the province increased by 27.8%, which was 4.6% above the national rate.<sup>86</sup> In 2021, farms in Ontario reported 204.2 million square feet of greenhouse area, up from 159.8 million square feet in 2016.<sup>87</sup> While we see a drop in the number of agriculture businesses locally, including greenhouses, greenhouse size grew 35% between 2016 and 2021, at 10,590,342 metres squared.<sup>88</sup> The ever-growing sector will need both domestic workers and Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs) to sustain the demand for food internationally.
- Workforce WindsorEssex was one of several organizations that received funding under the Government of Canada's Migrant Worker Support Program. Through the **TeaMWork Project**, Workforce WindsorEssex works to support over 8,000 TFWs in Windsor-Essex, Chatham-Kent, and Sarnia-Lambton.<sup>89</sup> The project is intended to increase migrant workers' understanding of their rights and responsibilities while working in Canada, and educate about available information, resources, and supports. Through work with local grassroots organizations already supporting migrant workers to build their capacity and facilitate coordinated approaches to providing service to this population, the TeaMWork Project aims to foster a more welcoming community for migrant workers and improve their health, safety, and quality of life in Canada.



[86] Zong Jia Chen, "Ontario is an agricultural powerhouse that leads in many farming categories", Statistics Canada, June 15, 2022, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/96-325-x/2021001/article/00006-eng.htm>

[87] Zong Jia Chen, "Ontario is an agricultural powerhouse that leads in many farming categories", Statistics Canada, June 15, 2022, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/96-325-x/2021001/article/00006-eng.htm>

[88] Essex Region Conservation Authority, "Expanding greenhouse sector in Essex County, ON and downstream water quality degradation", August 2023, [https://essexregionconservation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Kingsville-Leamington-Nutrient-Project\\_2012-2022-Report.pdf](https://essexregionconservation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Kingsville-Leamington-Nutrient-Project_2012-2022-Report.pdf)

[89] Employment and Social Development Canada, "Government of Canada protects and empowers temporary foreign workers in Southwestern Ontario through the Migrant Worker Support Program", Government of Canada, December 19, 2022, <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2022/12/government-of-canada-protects-and-empowers-temporary-foreign-workers-in-southwestern-ontario-through-the-migrant-worker-support-program.html>

- The decrease in the number of younger and middle-aged operators has led to an aging farm operator population.<sup>90</sup> While succession planning becomes a greater importance for farm operations in recent years, the need for those to succeed the businesses is the main barrier for operational sustainability.
- St. Clair College now offers a two-year **Greenhouse Technician** program for those interested in a career in the sector, with some training taking place in Leamington greenhouses for hands-on learning. The program is marketed to those looking for careers in Greenhouse Production, Assistant and Head Growers, Pest Management Specialists, Supervisors, Managers, or Logistics.
- Recent changes were made to **Canada's Express Entry** system to provide priority to skilled newcomers with work experience in agriculture and agri-food jobs.<sup>91</sup> In partnership with the Agri-Food Pilot, the changes provide a pathway to permanent residence for experienced, non-seasonal workers in specific industries and occupations. Prioritized occupations include Contractors and Supervisors in Landscaping, Grounds Maintenance and Horticulture Services, Agricultural Service Contractors and Farm Supervisors, and Butchers.



[90] Zong Jia Chen, "Ontario is an agricultural powerhouse that leads in many farming categories", Statistics Canada, June 15, 2022, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/96-325-x/2021001/article/00006-eng.htm>

[91] Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, "Canada announces first-ever category-based selection invitations for newcomers with work experience in agriculture and agri-food", Government of Canada, September 27, 2023, <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2023/09/canada-announces-first-ever-category-based-selection-invitations-for-newcomers-with-work-experience-in-agriculture-and-agri-food.html>.



# Construction

**1,561**  
POSTINGS

Active job postings  
from Jan-Dec 2023

## NAICS CODE: **23**

- JUNE 2023 TOTAL BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYEES: 1,442
  - CHANGE IN NUMBER OF BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYEES JUNE 2022-JUNE 2023: +145
  - TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN 2022: 11,600
  - TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN 2023: 10,000
  - PROJECTED INDUSTRY JOB GROWTH (2023-2028): 6%
- 
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• INDUSTRY EMPLOYERS:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Fluor Canada Ltd.</li><li>◦ Amico Infrastructures</li><li>◦ LiUNA 625</li><li>◦ Empire Roofing Corporation</li><li>◦ Fortis Group</li></ul></li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• IN-DEMAND JOBS:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ <u>Construction Trades Helpers and Labourers</u></li><li>◦ <u>Construction Managers</u></li><li>◦ <u>Carpenters</u></li><li>◦ <u>Roofers and Shinglers</u></li></ul></li></ul> |
|--|---|

# Industry Trends, Highlights, and Updates



- Construction of the Gordie Howe International Bridge continues to progress. As of the latest update provided by the Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority, over 4,400 individuals have received training to access and work on the bridge site. Construction work will peak over the next year as the bridge towers are nearing completion and the bridge deck construction is underway, beginning to span over the Detroit River.<sup>92</sup> Over 100 stay cables have been installed of the total 216 stay cables required for the entire bridge. At the Canadian Port of Entry, construction on all 11 structures is occurring with each in different stages. While professional roles have been filled, much demand exists for trades workers, specifically those with specialized skills for bridge or large infrastructure projects such as crane operators. There is also a demand for bilingual French speakers to support project operations and management.
- While housing starts across the country have seen an overall increase in September of 2023, housing starts in Windsor-Essex for the same period are down year-over-year by a total of 75% across all home types.<sup>93</sup> Single-detached home starts are faring slightly better than other home types, seeing a decrease of only 43% as compared to September of 2022.<sup>94</sup> To accommodate for this shift, industry leaders point to surplus demand during the pandemic, paired with high interest rates and reactive shifts in policy across the big six Canadian banks, causing prospective home builders to be priced out of the market. This shift may pose difficulties for the City of Windsor's commitment to build 13,000 homes in the community by 2031;<sup>95</sup> however, a relative cooling of the post-COVID market has brought the average sale price of homes in the community down slightly, which could ultimately help reconcile some of the difficulties that residents of Windsor-Essex are experiencing in considering a new build. Housing development, whether for single-detached homes or large condo buildings, leads to continuous employment for many in the construction trades, specifically creating demand for Carpenters, Bricklayers, Electricians, Drywall Installers, Concrete Finishers, Plumbers, Roofers, and Framers.

[92] Windsor Detroit Bridge Authority

[93] CMHC, "Housing starts trend upward in September", October 18, 2023, <https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/media-newsroom/news-releases/2023/housing-starts-trend-upward-in-september>.

[94] CMHC, "Housing starts trend upward in September", October 18, 2023, <https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/media-newsroom/news-releases/2023/housing-starts-trend-upward-in-september>.

[95] Melanie Kentner, "The new normal: Why housing starts are declining in Windsor-Essex", CTV News, July 28, 2023, <https://windsor.ctvnews.ca/the-new-normal-why-housing-starts-are-declining-in-windsor-essex-1.6498276#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20CMHC%2C%20in,year%20or%20135%20per%20month>.

- Construction began in June 2023 to expand Highway 3 from Essex to Leamington.<sup>96</sup> The construction work includes drainage improvements and culvert installation and extension, realignment and intersection modifications along the highway, and reconstruction and resurfacing of existing lanes. The construction work is creating employment for many skilled workers, including Construction Craft Workers, Heavy Equipment Operators, and Civil Engineers. A direct benefit of the project will be the enhanced traffic movement and improved movement of goods and people across the region, while indirectly the improved traffic will increase the opportunities for cross-regional commuting for employment.
- Recent changes were made to **Canada's Express Entry** system to provide priority to skilled newcomers with work experience in skilled trades.<sup>97</sup> These changes help address labour shortages that support an identified economic goal by inviting candidates with specific work experience or French language ability to apply for permanent residence. Prioritized occupations include Carpenters, Plumbers, Welders, Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanics, Electricians, and Construction Millwrights.



[96] Infrastructure Ontario, "Highway 3 Widening Project", <https://www.infrastructureontario.ca/en/what-we-do/projectssearch/highway-3-widening-project/>.

[97] Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, "Canada announces the first-ever Express Entry invitations for newcomers with experience in the trades", Government of Canada, August 1, 2023, <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2023/08/canada-announces-the-first-ever-express-entry-invitations-for-newcomers-with-experience-in-the-trades.html>.



# Education

**856**  
POSTINGS

Active job postings  
from Jan-Dec 2023

## NAICS CODE: 61

- JUNE 2023 TOTAL BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYEES: 99
- CHANGE IN NUMBER OF BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYEES JUNE 2022-JUNE 2023: +6
- TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN 2022: 12,500
- TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN 2023: 14,800
- PROJECTED INDUSTRY JOB GROWTH (2023-2028): 5%
- INDUSTRY EMPLOYERS:
  - University of Windsor
  - St. Clair College of Applied Arts & Technology
  - Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board
  - Greater Essex County District School Board
  - Conseil scolaire catholique Providence (Ontario)
- IN-DEMAND JOBS:
  - Secondary School Teachers
  - Elementary School and Kindergarten Teachers
  - College and Other Vocational Instructors
  - University Professors and Lecturers

# Industry Trends, Highlights, and Updates

- There is currently a shortage of qualified Childcare and Early Years sector workers, specifically of registered early childhood educators (RECEs) and assistants available to staff the sector. It is predicted that within the next five years alone, Ontario will need an additional 16,000 daycare workers to help staff spaces.<sup>98</sup> There will also be an increased demand for qualified staff due to the implementation of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Childcare system, allowing the average cost for licensed childcare programs serving children under the age of six to be \$10.00/day by 2025. Many employers in the region are experiencing difficulties recruiting and retaining qualified candidates to fill available jobs. The City of Windsor is currently running their **Windsor Essex Registered Early Childhood Educators initiative** to promote careers as RECEs to fill the local talent shortage and support those currently working in the sector with professional development and qualification upgrading.<sup>99</sup> Comprehensive and long-term workforce strategies will need to be developed in Ontario and in the Windsor-Essex region to ensure childcare operators are able to navigate current and predicted future talent shortages.
- As of January 2024, starting wages for new and current RECEs within the Canada-wide Early Learning and Childcare system were raised to \$23.86/hour.<sup>100</sup> This new hourly rate will bring them in line with the starting wages of school board-employed RECEs, helping to narrow the gap and create interest in the profession.



[98] City of Windsor and Workforce WindsorEssex, "ECE Job Demand Report".

[99] City of Windsor, "Windsor Essex Registered Early Childhood Educators", <https://www.citywindsor.ca/residents/socialservices-/Childrens-Services/Windsor-Essex-Registered-Early-Childhood-Educators-WERECE/Pages/default.aspx>.

[100] Gagandeep Kaur Sekhon, "New Ontario Minimum Wage Increase for ECEs Starting in 2024", Immigration News Canada, November 19, 2023, <https://immigrationnewscanada.ca/new-ontario-minimum-wage-for-eces-2024/#:~:text=On%20November%2016%2C%202023%2C%20Minister,RECEs%20from%20%2420%20to%20%2423.86.>

- In 2022, The United Way/Centraide Windsor-Essex County's **ProsperUs** project launched its first set of solutions available to elementary school students, extending their existing **On Track for Success program** to accommodate the younger age group. This initiative will provide their keystone wraparound supports for students across Windsor-Essex to ensure that they have the skills and resources needed to transition successfully straight through from elementary to secondary school and onward. Students will continue to get access to services including tutoring; individualized support; social and recreational activities; and volunteer, career, and social mentoring opportunities. Also available is a healthy in-school meal program in priority schools and mental health supports.
- In the 2023-2024 school year, the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board will begin an Electric Vehicle (EV) training initiative with Specialist High School Major students and related courses.<sup>101</sup> The initiative will include the building of an EV through an 18-week build each semester. The hands-on initiative will support students' understanding of the mechanics, design, and programming of EVs, and increase their interest in the related careers in-demand in our region.
- Beginning in September 2023, several changes were implemented in Ontario schools for the 2023-2024 academic year.<sup>102</sup> Students in Grades 1 to 9 will experience a revamped language curriculum, emphasizing digital literacy, and Grade 10 students will replace the computer studies course with Digital Technology and Innovations in the Changing World, focusing on computational thinking, technological innovation impacts, cybersecurity, and coding skills. Mental health modules will be introduced for Grades 7 and 8, offering strategies to manage stress and recognize mental health issues. Starting in September 2024, Ontario students entering Grade 9 will be required to take a technological education credit as part of their graduation requirements, aimed at guiding them toward careers in a skilled workforce. Students can choose from a variety of classes in the technological education curriculum, covering areas such as construction, transportation, manufacturing, computer technology, hospitality, and communications. Additionally, Ontario secondary schools have moved away from streaming in their grade 9 curriculum to mitigate the negative effects streaming has had on underserved students.

[101] Windsor Essex Catholic District School Board, "St. Anne takes delivery of new EV", December 14, 2023, [https://www.wecdsb.on.ca/about/news/st\\_\\_anne\\_takes\\_delivery\\_of\\_new\\_e\\_v](https://www.wecdsb.on.ca/about/news/st__anne_takes_delivery_of_new_e_v).

[102] Katherine DeClerq, "New curriculums are coming to Ontario schools next month. Here's what you need to know", CTV News, August 28, 2023, <https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/new-curriculums-are-coming-to-ontario-schools-next-month-here-s-what-you-need-to-know-1.6537025>.

## Open Doors

In response to the ProsperUs-facilitated solution design for their Cradle to Career strategy, Workforce WindsorEssex developed the **Open Doors initiative**. Open Doors is a campaign and online platform that identifies employers that have the interest and capacity to welcome students for placement, co-op, or experiential learning opportunities, and/or who can make themselves available for presentations, tours, or informative interviews. The platform streamlines co-op exploration by standardizing experiential learning opportunity profiles, connecting students with a peer mentor in their career of interest, and building a campaign to highlight employer engagement and commitment. Interested placement host, tour hosts, or speakers can register at [workforcewindsor.essex.com/open-doors-registration](https://workforcewindsor.essex.com/open-doors-registration).



**3.****PRIORITY #3:****Increased Attraction of High School Tech Teachers**

There is an ongoing shortage of high school tech teachers in the region. The most prominent recruitment issue is having to convince skilled trades workers to transition to a different career that will likely pay them less than their current roles. In addition to lower wages, tech teachers often face a more negative environment where they are treated as less important than other faculties. There is also a match-up issue, where the schools have a lack of machinery that correlates with the teacher's area of expertise, forcing tech teachers to teach trades they aren't completely familiar with. Maintaining well-funded and up-to-date facilities for staff, as well developing a standardized curriculum, would help to create a consistent work environment to attract tech teachers.

**Priority #3**  
Attraction Of High  
School Tech  
Teachers  
**Solution**  
**PAGE 94**



# Health Care and Social Assistance

**5,552**  
POSTINGS

Active job postings  
from Jan-Dec 2023

## NAICS CODE: 62

- JUNE 2023 TOTAL BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYEES: 1,346
- CHANGE IN NUMBER OF BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYEES JUNE 2022-JUNE 2023: +79
- TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN 2022: 24,800
- TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN 2023: 29,700
- PROJECTED INDUSTRY JOB GROWTH (2023-2028): 8%
- INDUSTRY EMPLOYERS:
  - Windsor Regional Hospital
  - Chartwell Retirement Residences
  - BELFOR Canada
  - Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare
  - Seasons Retirement Communities
- IN-DEMAND JOBS:
  - Home Support Workers, Housekeepers and Related Occupations
  - Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses
  - Licensed Practical Nurses
  - Social and Community Service Workers

# Industry Trends, Highlights, and Updates

- Following the launch of the **Windsor-Essex Youth Wellness Hub** in March 2022, a permanent location has been secured in Windsor.<sup>103</sup> As one of 22 provincially-funded youth hubs across Ontario, children and youth can visit the hub to connect to convenient and free mental health, substance use, and primary care services in a safe, youth-friendly space. There are also supports to help connect and transition youth that have more specialized and intensive care needs to the right supports and services in the community. Virtual supports are also available for youth across the region.
- As a result of the pandemic, the **Windsor-Essex Ontario Health Team Mobile Clinic** created a model for crisis response in high-priority neighbourhoods, emphasizing its potential for replication in other regions across the province.<sup>104</sup> Launched with \$400,000 from the \$1.2 million High Priority Community funding, the mobile clinic operates through the Windsor-Essex Ontario Health Team and collaborates with 45 health care partners to provide mental health, addiction, and dental services. The clinic, part of an initiative that originated during COVID, has already demonstrated success during its 12-week soft launch, redirecting individuals from emergency rooms to community care and building trust within the community. With between five and seven staff on hand for each trip to communities and organizations in need, it alleviates the burden on emergency health care providers to serve those with acute care needs, mental health, addiction, or dental health needs. Employment opportunities are created through the initiative, alleviating some of the demand in emergency services and hospitals, while supporting those in our community that may face health-related barriers to employment.



[103] Trevor Wilhelm, "Windsor-Essex youth hub celebrates grand opening of permanent location", Windsor Star, November 13, 2023, <https://windsorstar.com/news/local-news/windsor-essex-youth-hub-celebrates-grand-opening-of-permanent-location>.

[104] Bob Bellacicco, "Mobile health clinic with mental health, addiction and dental support an "exceptional model", CTV Windsor, September 28, 2022, <https://windsor.essex.cmha.ca/news/mobile-health-clinic-with-mental-health-addiction-and-dental-support-an-exceptional-model/>

- As of March 2022, there were 44,000 people in Windsor-Essex without a family doctor. As the shortage of family physicians grows locally, many look to family health teams to receive a more wraparound service and limit impacts on care when physicians leave the region or retire.<sup>105</sup> In February 2023, the province announced \$30 million to be allocated to the creation of 18 new primary care teams supported by 1,200 family physicians. To better serve residents in Windsor-Essex, both short-term and long-term strategies are needed to serve our growing population, including those with diverse backgrounds and needs, and increasing our available workforce and workers' capacity.
- Demand from local hospitals led to 1,049 job postings from December 2022 to November 2023.<sup>106</sup> Over 250 of these postings were for Registered Nurses, followed by 70 postings for Managers in Health Care, and 65 postings for Medical Radiation Technologists. Over 200 of the positions sought Francophone candidates.



## **PRIORITY #4:**

### **Improve Regional Attraction of New Talent**

Windsor-Essex is experiencing a talent shortage and consistent labour gaps, which are further strained by the relocation of local residents. A study on migration reveals that young people are very likely to leave small cities or rural areas for the expansive educational and employment opportunities in urban centres, and 75% of those who leave never move back.<sup>107</sup> To attract residents from other regions and retain our current talent, Windsor-Essex must develop a regional plan that highlights the value of moving and staying in our region. Increasing community activities and beautification projects, promoting attributes that are specific to Windsor-Essex (such as our proximity to the border and relatively lower cost of living), and fostering a sense of community for newcomers are strong approaches to attracting new, old, and current residents.

**Priority #4**  
Improve Regional  
Attraction of  
New Talent  
**Solution**  
**PAGE 95**

[105] Sanjay Maru, "Surge in Windsor-Essex residents without family doctor reinforces calls for health teams", CTV Windsor, March 2, 2023, <https://windsor.ctvnews.ca/surge-in-windsor-essex-residents-without-family-doctor-reinforces-calls-for-health-teams-1.6296362>.

[106] Workforce WindsorEssex, "Labour Market Insights Report", November 2023, [https://www.workforcewindsorsex.com/lmi-report/?e8\\_page=snapshot&date=2023-11&region-type=regions&noc-version=2016](https://www.workforcewindsorsex.com/lmi-report/?e8_page=snapshot&date=2023-11&region-type=regions&noc-version=2016).

[107] Statistics Canada. "Canada's large urban centres continue to grow and spread." 2023.



# Information Communications Technology

**3,244**  
POSTINGS

Active job postings  
from Jan-Dec 2023

## NAICS CODE: 517, 518, 541

- JUNE 2023 TOTAL BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYEES: 1,026
- CHANGE IN NUMBER OF BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYEES JUNE 2022-JUNE 2023: +46
- TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN 2022: 10,000<sup>108</sup>
- TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN 2023: 11,400<sup>109</sup>
- PROJECTED INDUSTRY JOB GROWTH (2023-2028): 6%
- INDUSTRY EMPLOYERS:
  - KPMG LLP
  - TransForm Shared Service Organization
  - MC3 Manufacturing Inc.
  - MOBIA Technology Innovations Inc.
  - Valiant TMS
- IN-DEMAND JOBS:
  - **Electrical and Electronics Engineers**
  - **Mechanical Engineers**
  - **Financial Auditors and Accountants**
  - **Industrial and Manufacturing Engineers**

[108] Reflects employment of NAIC 54

[109] Reflects employment of NAIC 54

# Industry Trends, Highlights, and Updates

- WEtech Alliance created the **Campaign 557** initiative in response to the return of 557 tech workers to our region. Campaign 557 seeks to create a thriving tech ecosystem where new professionals, entrepreneurs, and students can connect, share resources, and leverage collective knowledge.<sup>[110]</sup> The campaign will work to foster connections and collaboration among tech workers and entrepreneurs who have recently relocated to (or back to) our region.
- As new investments come to our region to support many industries, we are seeing greater investment and relocation from international companies looking to join the supply chains in Windsor-Essex. Israeli company StoreDot has partnered with Flex-N-Gate to begin producing battery cells that can recharge capacity in minutes.<sup>[111]</sup> The partnership will allow for scaling and commercializing of battery cells, with connection to original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and others in the local supply chain for the automobility sector. Partnerships like these will not only bring more jobs to our region but will also drive more innovation and technological advancement to our region. Building up our local technology sector will indirectly benefit those looking to grow a tech start-up in Windsor-Essex and bring greater financial investment to companies in our community.



[110] WEtech Alliance, "A Campaign Connecting New Tech Workers and Entrepreneurs in Our Region", <https://www.wetech-alliance.com/557campaign/>.

[111] Dave Waddell, "Windsor firm partners to build 'extreme-fast charging' e-vehicle batteries", Windsor Star, October 10, 2023, <https://windsorstar.com/news/local-news/extreme-fast-charging-battery-firm-partners-with-windsors-flex-ion-battery-centre>.

- Windsor-based tech company **Picsume** launched in June 2023, looking to serve hourly workers and students looking for work in small and medium businesses.<sup>112</sup> The company has developed proprietary technology using artificial intelligence that directs candidates and employers to each other using a variety of filtering tools, building profiles of themselves (including videos), in very specific ways that streamline the vetting process. The platform's automation seeks to increase connections between jobseekers and businesses without the heavy burden on those without designated human resource departments.

## 5.

### **PRIORITY #5: Reduce the Local Tech Brain Drain**

Over the past few years, Windsor-Essex has faced a constant challenge with the migration of local tech talent to other regions. The problem has been exacerbated by the rise of remote work and Windsor's proximity to the U.S. border. Due to a lack of local competitive wages, and what those have described as a lack of a local tech network, Windsor tech talent has been seeking work elsewhere, creating a persistent tech brain drain. The tech sector is an essential industry in Windsor-Essex, and a loss of talent will lead to retention issues and labour gaps within the sector.

**Priority #5**  
Tech Talent  
Brain Drain  
**Solution**  
**PAGE 96**

[112] Dave Waddell, "Windsor tech firm looks to change way Canadians enter workforce", Windsor Star, June 26, 2023, <https://windsorstar.com/news/local-news/windsor-tech-firm-looks-to-change-way-canadians-enter-workforce>.



# Manufacturing

**5,208**  
POSTINGS

Active job postings  
from Jan-Dec 2023

## NAICS CODE: 31,32,33

- JUNE 2023 TOTAL BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYEES: 730
- CHANGE IN NUMBER OF BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYEES JUNE 2022-JUNE 2023: +28
- TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN 2022: 35,800
- TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN 2023: 35,500
- PROJECTED INDUSTRY JOB GROWTH (2023-2028): 2%
- INDUSTRY EMPLOYERS:
  - Hiram Walker & Sons Distillery
  - CenterLine (Windsor) Limited
  - Flex-N-Gate Corporation
  - Stellantis
  - Omni Tool Ltd.
- IN-DEMAND JOBS:
  - Industrial Engineering and Manufacturing Technologists and Technicians
  - Construction Millwrights and Industrial Mechanics
  - Other Labourers in Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities
  - Machining Tool Operators

# Industry Trends, Highlights, and Updates

- University of Windsor's Continuing Education offers a new course in **EV Powertrain Systems**, aiming to provide training in high-demand skills.<sup>[113]</sup> Divided into two parts, the course covers the fundamentals of vehicle architectures, dynamics, and powertrain sizing in the first part, while the second part delves into power electronic architecture, control of motor drives, energy storage, charging, and testing of EV powertrains. The course targets professionals, career changers, and students seeking a competitive advantage in the rapidly growing field of EV technology.
- In November of 2022, a new Labour Action Centre was established in Windsor to support nearly 300 Unifor Local 195 members who lost their jobs after Syncreon Automotive closed that year.<sup>[114]</sup> The centre, funded by the Ontario Government and Unifor Local 195, provides comprehensive support for former Syncreon workers in seeking new employment, retraining, and skills upgrading. The Ontario Government also extended funding for the existing Unifor Local 444 Stellantis Action Centre to assist unemployed and underemployed workers until at least November 2023, with hopes that operations will be extended into 2024. Both centres offer essential resources and support for workers in their transition back to the workforce, including job fairs, job search supports, short-term training, and peer networks.



[113] University of Windsor, "Course promises foundational knowledge in electric vehicle powertrain systems", September 26, 2023, <https://www.uwindsor.ca/dailynews/2023-09-25/course-promises-foundational-knowledge-electric-vehicle-powertrain-systems>.

[114] Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, "Ontario Supporting Auto Workers in Windsor", Ontario Newsroom, November 25, 2022, <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1002518/ontario-supporting-auto-workers-in-windsor>.

- In fall 2023, the Greater Essex County District School Board participated in a pilot program, Ontario Vehicle Innovation Network / Ontario Council for Technology Education Future Forward Program that allowed students from grades 6-12 the opportunity to explore projects and careers in the automotive and automobility industries. There were eight secondary and 32 elementary teachers who also participated in the program where approximately 500 students were able to explore hands-on projects and visit the OVIN navigator tool to explore opportunities in the automotive and automobility sectors.
- In November 2023, Invest WindsorEssex launched **EVCareers.ca**, a new talent attraction tool designed to connect jobseekers with employers in the Windsor-Essex EV sector.<sup>115</sup> EV Careers will support the region's growing EV sector by connecting jobseekers with local employers and providing them with all the resources and information they need to build successful careers in this growing industry. This initiative is part of the \$7.7 million investment FedDev Ontario has made since 2021 to establish a world-class automobility accelerator and support the long-term growth of the EV sector in the Windsor-Essex region. The website allows people to research a career and understand what training, education, and upskilling programs are available — as well as fund resources and how to access them. The site is complemented by Workforce WindsorEssex's new **EV Careers Pathway Guide** that outlines transferable skills and upskilling needs for those with experience in traditional auto manufacturing to move into an EV-related career.
- In January 2024, an investment of over \$7.3 million was announced for two projects through the Canadian Apprenticeship Strategy's Union Training and Innovation Program (UTIP) – Innovation in Apprenticeship Stream, through the Government of Canada.<sup>116</sup> **Build a Dream** will receive over \$4 million over 2 years to support underrepresented apprentices improve their leadership and team building, and technical skills. **Women's Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor Inc.** (WEST) will receive more than \$3 million over four years for their SMART for Women project to help up to 400 unrepresented apprentices to progress and succeed in their apprenticeships, through math refresher courses, training enrollment support, and wrap-around supports.



[115] CBC News, "Website devoted to EV careers in southwestern Ontario is live", November 15, 2023, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/windsor/ev-website-sector-1.7029325>

[116] Dave Waddell, "Windsor agencies land \$7.3M in federal funding for skilled trades", Windsor Star, Jan 24, 2024, <https://www.iheartradio.ca/am800/news/federal-government-invests-2-3m-in-build-a-dream-to-help-recruit-support-women-in-red-seal-trades-1.20095370>.

## Build a Dream

**Build a Dream** received over \$2.3 million in funding from the federal government's Women in Skilled Trades Initiative. The Building Supportive Networks and Inclusive Workplaces for Women in the Red Seal Trades project is a four-pronged approach that includes career coaching, leadership development, research-based strategies, and a supportive community.



## Manufacturing Day

**Manufacturing Day** is a North America-wide initiative aimed at sharing technology and career opportunities in modern manufacturing with high school students. Workforce WindsorEssex, in partnership with Invest WindsorEssex and Canadian Association of Mold Makers, coordinated this year's 9th annual MFG Day. It was our biggest yet, with the participation of over 1,000 students across all four school boards and 100 jobseekers from local employment service providers. Through the participation of 19 local manufacturers, with 21 locations, each group of students and jobseekers had the opportunity to engage in hands-on activities and experience a day in the life at three unique locations. Participants got to experience the diversity of manufacturing in Windsor-Essex, while employers had the opportunity to connect with the future workforce during this lively event.





# Tourism and Hospitality

**2,774**  
POSTINGS

Active job postings  
from Jan-Dec 2023

## NAICS CODE: 711, 712, 713, 721, 722

- JUNE 2023 TOTAL BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYEES: 992
  - CHANGE IN NUMBER OF BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYEES JUNE 2022-JUNE 2023: +9
  - TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN 2022: 15,900<sup>[117]</sup>
  - TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN 2023: 19,500<sup>[118]</sup>
  - PROJECTED INDUSTRY JOB GROWTH (2023-2028): 9%
- 
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• INDUSTRY EMPLOYERS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Beach Grove Golf &amp; Country Club</li> <li>◦ McDonald's Corporation</li> <li>◦ Caesars Windsor</li> <li>◦ Art Gallery of Windsor</li> <li>◦ Industry Dance Co.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IN-DEMAND JOBS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <u>Food Counter Attendants, Kitchen Helpers and Related Support Occupations</u></li> <li>◦ <u>Cooks</u></li> <li>◦ <u>Food Service Supervisors</u></li> <li>◦ <u>Food and Beverage Servers</u></li> <li>◦ <u>Program Leaders and Instructors in Recreation, Sport and Fitness</u></li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
|---|--|

[117] Reflects employment of NAIC 51, 71, and 72.

[118] Reflects employment of NAIC 51, 71, and 72.

# Industry Trends, Highlights, and Updates

- In April of 2023, Ojibway Shores was officially transferred to Parks Canada, establishing Ojibway National Urban Park.<sup>[119]</sup> This is an excellent step for residents of Windsor-Essex as it ensures that the land will be transferred into nationally protected urban greenspace for shared use and enjoyment within the community. The park is being expanded with an additional acre of land adjacent to the Ojibway Prairies, which was purchased in partnership with Parks Canada. The provincial government also announced its intention to transfer Ojibway Prairie Provincial Park lands to Parks Canada, adding 64 more hectares to the national urban park. The park is now in the planning phase, a culmination of 20 years of local efforts to ensure that Ojibway Park falls under protected status. Windsor-Essex residents can look forward to a protected greenspace that will not only serve as a place for locals to enjoy and connect with nature, but also contribute to the reduction of air, water, and noise pollution. The park will support employment for bilingual workers, positions in environmental resource management and protection, and in park management.
- Nearly 900,000 organizations applied for and received a Canada Emergency Business Account loan during the COVID pandemic.<sup>[120]</sup> The federal program offered up to \$60,000 in interest-free loans to help businesses and non-profits survive related shutdowns and slowdowns. While extensions to forgiveness periods and full loan repayment have been provided since its inception, many small businesses fear the impact of repaying their loans in the next three years will have on the life of their business. Many business-supporting organizations, including the **Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce**, have advocated for local businesses to gain an extension for the qualifying partial loan forgiveness period. While one-fifth of businesses have repaid their loans nationally, those facing post-COVID recovery challenges are impacted the most. Local businesses need greater coordinated support to ensure their businesses survive after they pay back their loans, specifically those that operate seasonally.



[119] Bob Bellacicco, "New national urban park in Windsor moves closer to becoming a reality", CTV News, April 17, 2023, <https://windsor.ctvnews.ca/new-national-urban-park-in-windsor-moves-closer-to-becoming-a-reality-1.6358614>.

[120] Nojoud Al Mallees, "Small businesses still hoping for CEBA loan forgiveness extension as time runs out", CTV News, November 7, 2023, <https://www.ctvnews.ca/business/small-businesses-still-hoping-for-ceba-loan-forgiveness-extension-as-time-runs-out-1.6634098>.

- Many businesses and residents in the community were inspired by the full return of community and cultural events this past year, including Art in the Park, the Ruthven Apple Fest, and the Festival of Guest Nations. While some events returned in the summer of 2022, the positivity that residents felt peaked in 2023. Many small businesses were able to take full advantage of festivals, markets, and fundraisers throughout the 2023 season, reinvigorating their business revenue and community excitement for social activities and community collaboration.



**6.**

## **PRIORITY #6: Improve Retention in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector**

The Tourism and Hospitality industry has faced constant recruitment and retention issues. Due to the seasonality of the industry, full-time positions and employment benefits are not usually offered, meaning the sector often has difficulty attracting the necessary staff. The primary causes of high turnover in the industry are a lack of flexibility, limited opportunities for growth, a toxic work environment, and a lack of recognition. Advertising jobs in Tourism and Hospitality as a means to developing transferable skills and promoting co-op placements to students, who are usually more amenable to part-time work, could fill these shortages. Moreover, offering support for staff, such as affordable childcare or a flexible work schedule, could attract staff that are looking for part-time work in an accommodating environment.

**Priority #6**  
Tourism and  
Hospitality Staff  
Attraction  
**Solution**  
**PAGE 98**



# Transportation and Warehousing

**1,197**  
POSTINGS

Active job postings  
from Jan-Dec 2023

## NAICS CODE: **48,47,49**

- JUNE 2023 TOTAL BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYEES: 1,053
- CHANGE IN NUMBER OF BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYEES JUNE 2022-JUNE 2023: +58
- TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN 2022: 9,700
- TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN 2023: 7,200
- PROJECTED INDUSTRY JOB GROWTH (2023-2028): 8%
- INDUSTRY EMPLOYERS:
  - U-Haul
  - Laser Transport Inc.
  - Challenger Motor Freight Inc.
  - UPS Canada
  - Canada Post-Postes Canada
- IN-DEMAND JOBS:
  - **Automotive Service Technicians, Truck and Bus Mechanics and Mechanical Repairers**
  - **Bus Drivers, Subway Operators and Other Transit Operators**
  - **Janitors, Caretakers and Building Superintendents**
  - **Transport Truck Drivers**

# Industry Trends, Highlights, and Updates

- Amazon's Windsor Fulfillment Centre is set to be approximately 50% larger than initially announced, now reaching close to 300,000 square feet to accommodate future requirements.<sup>121</sup> Originally slated for construction in May 2022, the project was delayed due to a slowdown in the online shopping boom caused by the COVID pandemic. The centre is expected to be operational in the fourth quarter of 2024, providing 300 jobs, a mix of full-time and part-time positions, with an additional 125 to 150 delivery driver positions. Employment levels will increase during peak times like Christmas and Prime Day, offering seasonal opportunities. The facility, located in the Grand Central Business Park on the former Chrysler Pillette Road Truck Assembly Plant site, will serve as a last-mile delivery site for orders shipped from Amazon's larger distribution warehouses.
- **Canada's Express Entry** system now provides priority to skilled newcomers with work experience in the Transport sector.<sup>122</sup> By prioritizing the invitation of skilled newcomers with work experience in transport occupations, Canada aims to meet the increasing demand for talent and fill key positions that contribute to the nation's economic growth and advancement. Prioritized occupations include Transport Truck Drivers; Water Transport Engineer Officers; Air Pilots, Flight Engineers and Flying Instructors; Aircraft Mechanics and Aircraft Inspectors; and Managers in Transportation.
- **Convoy Technologies**, based in Indiana, is opening a new plant in Tecumseh to shorten their supply chain so they can deliver products to customers faster and for less money.<sup>123</sup> Convoy Technologies makes cameras, monitors, and accessories to provide cloud-based telematics services and artificial intelligence-powered driver training systems for heavy-duty on- and off-road vehicles. The new Canadian operations created 50 jobs once the company was at full production in fall of this year.

[121] Dave Waddell, "Enlarged Amazon Fulfillment Centre expected to be operational in late 2024", Windsor Star, August 28, 2023, <https://windsorstar.com/news/local-news/enlarged-amazon-fulfillment-centre-expected-to-be-operational-in-late-2024>.

[122] Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, "Canada announces first-ever category-based selection invitations for newcomers with work experience in transport", Government of Canada, September 18, 2023, <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2023/09/canada-announces-first-ever-category-based-selection-invitations-for-newcomers-with-work-experience-in-transport.html>.

[123] Dave Waddell, "Convoy Technologies to locate in Tecumseh's Oldcastle industrial area", Windsor Star, June 13, 2023, <https://windsorstar.com/news/convoy-technologies-to-locate-in-tecumseh-s-oldcastle-industrial-area>.

A blue-tinted photograph of a desk setup. On the left, a laptop is open, showing a dark screen. To its right is a white mug. Further right is a tablet device. In the top center, a small potted plant sits on the desk. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the desk and a chair. The overall tone is professional and modern.

# Recommendations

# Review of Previous Recommendations

1.

## PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION:

Businesses should continue to collaborate with local educational institutions to offer hard skill development, soft skill development, onsite training, and online training to retain current employees, promote career growth, and recruit future employees.

## ONGOING WORK IN THE COMMUNITY:

University of Windsor's Continuing Education is offering a new course in **EV Powertrain Systems**, aiming to provide training in high-demand skills, based on industry feedback. The course targets professionals, career changers, and students seeking a competitive advantage in the rapidly growing field of EV technology.



## 2.

## PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION:

Post-secondary institutions should change the promotion and tenure measurements to integrate student career success and experiential learning into teaching, course, and program requirements. This will ensure students in post-secondary education have meaningful engagement with their field of study and possible careers, allowing for real workplace experience during schooling and preparing students for their post-graduation career.

## ONGOING WORK IN THE COMMUNITY:

Starting in late 2022, the Canadian Career Apprenticeship Initiative funded a partnership between the University of Windsor and Invest WindsorEssex to implement the Windsor-Essex Career Apprenticeship Program (WECAP). WECAP connects upcoming FAHSS grads with Windsor-Essex County employers for early-career apprenticeship opportunities that provide mentorship, skill development, and the ability to contribute to the growth and development of the organization. Following graduation, students will begin a one-year paid placement with their matched employer.

## 3.

## PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION:

Employers should continue to take advantage of the Skills Development Fund (SDF) provided by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development to help support the skilled trades and technical occupations. This fund was created to provide relief to industries that experienced challenges and barriers to hiring, training, and retaining the labour force.

## ONGOING WORK IN THE COMMUNITY:

Women's Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor Inc. (WEST) received funding through the SDF to provide an Electrical Pre-Apprenticeship Program for women.<sup>124</sup> The **Electrical Pre-Apprenticeship Program** is offered in partnership with St. Clair College and Unifor Local 444. This program provides participants with the necessary foundational and technical skills along with wraparound supports needed to gain sustainable employment in the skilled trades sector. The program provides employers and journey persons with Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion training to help create and implement retention strategies for women's inclusivity in the skilled trades.

[124] Women's Enterprise Skills Training, <https://www.westofwindsor.com/electrical-pre-apprenticeship-program-for-women/>

**4.**

## **PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION:**

Research suggests that increased childcare subsidies are a globally tested policy choice that may narrow the unemployment gap for self-identifying women and caretakers. Accessible childcare relieves some barriers for women who are displaced out of the workforce as a result of being a primary caregiver. OneHSN, Windsor and Essex County's Childcare Registry, acts as a central space for access to childcare programs and subsidies. Programs like OneHSN have the potential to bring Windsor-Essex closer to gender parity in the labour force.

## **ONGOING WORK IN THE COMMUNITY:**

The **Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care** (CWELCC) system was announced in 2022.<sup>125</sup> The initiative allows the average cost for licensed childcare programs serving children under the age of six to be \$10/day by 2025. This will enable more families to afford licensed childcare.

To address the present shortage of RECEs, the City of Windsor implemented the **WERECE campaign**, focused on empowering, engaging, and enhancing the ECE workforce across the region.<sup>126</sup> The campaign serves to highlight that registered ECEs are qualified, creative, dedicated, and in-demand. The strategy includes a campaign to promote careers as ECEs, mentorship and professional development for those working in the industry, and retention of current staff.



[125] Ontario, "Canada-Ontario early years and child care agreements", <https://www.ontario.ca/page/canada-ontario-early-years-and-child-care-agreement>

[126] City of Windsor, "Windsor Essex Registered Early Childhood Educators", <https://www.citywindsor.ca/residents/socialservices-/Childrens-Services/Windsor-Essex-Registered-Early-Childhood-Educators-WERECE/Pages/default.aspx>

**5.**

## **PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION:**

Childcare solutions, like EarlyON and Family Centres, are needed to ensure that women's participation in the labour force improves in a sustainable and meaningful way. If Canada and Ontario can agree on a childcare framework that injects new financial resources into the system while increasing the number of spaces, families and employees would benefit from enhanced access while employers would benefit from new talent in the labour pool.

## **ONGOING WORK IN THE COMMUNITY:**

In November 2023, the Ministry of Education announced a rise in the starting hourly minimum wage for RECEs from \$20 to \$23.86.<sup>[27]</sup>

This increase in the Ontario minimum wage for beginner RECEs makes their pay match the new Ontario living wages in all the provincial regions, except for the Greater Toronto Area. This salary raise builds on the province's measures, which included the implementation in 2022 of a new wage floor for RECEs working in settings participating in the CWELCC system, as well as yearly \$1/hour wage increases beginning in 2023.

**6.**

## **PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION:**

Employers should continue collaborations with local educational institutions to promote and pair interested students with experiential learning opportunities through programs such as co-op or the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program. Providing onsite training, and now increased online training, will help employers recruit future employees, promote careers in their respective sectors, and help retain current employees.

## **ONGOING WORK IN THE COMMUNITY:**

Workforce WindsorEssex developed the **Open Doors** initiative, a campaign and online platform that identifies employers that have the interest and capacity to welcome students for placement, co-op, or experiential learning opportunities, and/or who can make themselves available for presentations, tours, or informative interviews. The platform streamlines co-op exploration by standardizing experiential learning opportunity profiles, connecting students with a peer mentor in their career of interest, and building a campaign to highlight employer engagement and commitment.

[127] Gagandeep Kaur Sekhon, "New Ontario Minimum Wage Increase for ECEs Starting in 2024", November 17, 2023, <https://immigrationnewsCanada.ca/new-ontario-minimum-wage-for-ec-es-2024/#:~:text=On%20November%2016%2C%202023%2C%20Minister,RECEs%20from%20%2420%20to%20%2423.86.>

**7.**

## PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION:

Dialogue between employers and local educational institutions regarding the creation of opportunities for students to participate in apprenticeships and co-op programs is highly recommended. Interested employers can also take part in group sponsorships to partner with other employers to share training responsibilities of apprentices.

## ONGOING WORK IN THE COMMUNITY:

Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board and St. Clair College have been working together to provide guidance counsellors with a better understanding of what a career in the trades entails.<sup>128</sup> Counsellors have participated in hands-on learning workshops at the college to gain experience working with machines and visiting job sites.

**8.**

## PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION:

There is demand for occupation-specific language training for newcomers to improve retention once employed. Service Providers should look to offer language training at employer locations as well for newcomers employed that need continued language upgrading.

## ONGOING WORK IN THE COMMUNITY:

South Essex Community Council developed [Agri-food Sector Project](#) English curriculum to support language training, increasing capacity for employers in the sector to deliver employment-focused language and settlement support.



[128] Katerina Georgieva, "With skilled trades workers in high demand — young students and guidance counsellors are part of the solution", CBC News, May 25, 2023, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/windsor/skilled-trades-workers-in-demand-young-students-part-of-solution-1.6841238>.



# Action Plan

These priorities and solutions were identified and developed by a Workforce Advisory Committee, organized by Workforce WindsorEssex. The committee met four times over six months to discuss the priorities identified during the 2023 LLMP Action Plan Event. Through the committee, comprised of local employers, educational institutions, municipalities, and service providers, we began by refining the list of community issues that should be prioritized over the next few years. With additional research and insights on barriers and best practices provided by Workforce WindsorEssex, the committee then brainstormed solutions to these priorities, organized in short-term, long-term, and advocacy categories. Channeling different perspectives with a wide range of community partners allowed us to validate our solutions and identify the resources and key players needed to enact these solutions in a short-term and tangible way.

## **1. PRIORITY #1: ATTRACTING UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS TO THE SKILLED TRADES**

There are many barriers for newcomers, youth, and women who wish to enter the skilled trades. Women represent 50% of the workforce in Ontario, but they represent less than 10% of skilled tradespeople.<sup>129</sup> There is a lack of accessibility for women in the trades when it comes to work clothes and amenities, as they are forced to adapt to a work environment that has been historically designed for men. Immigrants account for 18% of apprentice certification holders, while newcomers account for 1%.<sup>130</sup> For newcomers, the biggest issue is credential recognition, as many relocate to Windsor-Essex with their degrees and ready to work. However, their degrees do not have direct counterparts to Canadian degrees, and they are often required to return to school and re-learn many of their existing qualifications. Language barriers are also present for many newcomers, suggesting the need for occupation and trade-specific language training programs for newcomers to increase their employability and rate of success in completing their apprenticeship training and schooling.

[129] Jade Prevost-Manuel, "Company Culture Matters for Women Who Work in Manufacturing. Here's Why." CBC News, February 27, 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/london/company-culture-gender-parity-manufacturing-industry-ontario-1.5929922#:~:text=Women%20make%20up%20nearly%20half,workforce%2C%20according%20to%20Statistics%20Canada>.

[130] Statistics Canada, custom tabulation, 2021 Census of Population.

Attracting youth is also a priority due to persistent labour gaps in the skilled trades; without garnering the interest of students, these shortages will continue. Essential steps to combating this shortage can include accommodating and attracting staff and jobseekers, increasing accessibility for women in the trades, improving credential recognition for newcomers, and correcting the negative stigma surrounding skilled trades work by educating students and their parents at the elementary and secondary levels.

## **SOLUTION:**

### **How to advocate to employers**

There are many advantages to appealing to and accommodating youth, women, and newcomers in the skilled trades, so it is essential to educate employers on the resources and supports that are available to them and could improve their attraction and retention of new employees. The best methods to advocate to employers would be to connect employers with employment/settlement organizations to raise awareness of talent pipelines, present the business case on fixing the skills shortage through the workforce available to them, and promote cultural competency training and access to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) best practices. Developing a group approach, in which business owners can share their experiences with other business owners, will help to open a dialogue and share personal success stories. The key players would be employment service providers, assessment centres, industry associations, and HR departments.



## 2.

## **PRIORITY #2: IMPROVE RETENTION OF EMPLOYEES AND INCREASE USE OF TRAINING PROGRAMS**

In a survey of Canadian business conditions, more than one in four businesses claimed to experience challenges retaining employees,<sup>[131]</sup> and an American survey conducted in 2018 found that 38% of employees quit within their first year.<sup>[132]</sup> The survey also found that 77% of the reasons why employees leave are preventable by the employer, the biggest reasons being a lack of career development opportunities and a poor work-life balance.<sup>[133]</sup> Improving the onboarding process and offering training support has proven to combat attrition within the first year. Moreover, adopting clear routes for advancement within the company, flexible work schedules, and upskilling opportunities has improved work-life balance and counters the feeling of stagnation in one's career.

### **SOLUTION:**

#### **Regional information sharing for HR best practices leading to shared resources**

Streamlining resources for HR departments could lead to improved attraction and retention plans. Sharing best practices within an established network of HR departments could educate them on what the current workforce is seeking through shared testimonials and success stories. The best methods to creating this network could be through the establishment of an annual or bi-annual workshop or conference for HR departments. Alternatively, or in addition, an online network with shared forms, resources, the testimonials of longtime employees, and linked grants/funds could be created to link regional HR departments and centralize HR methods. The key players in the development of a regional information sharing program would be HR departments and industry associations, but it should be open to managers and business owners as well for companies with small or no HR departments.

[131] Statistics Canada. 2022. Canadian Survey on Business Conditions, fourth quarter of 2022.

[132] Thomas F. Mahans, Danny Nelms, Christopher Ryan Bearden, Brantley Pearce. "2019 Retention Report." Work Institute. 2019.

[133] Thomas F. Mahans, Danny Nelms, Christopher Ryan Bearden, Brantley Pearce. "2019 Retention Report." Work Institute. 2019.

# 3.

## **PRIORITY #3: INCREASED ATTRACTION OF HIGH SCHOOL TECH TEACHERS**

There is an ongoing shortage of high school tech teachers in the region. The most prominent recruitment issue is having to convince skilled trades workers to transition to a different career that will likely pay them less than their current roles. In addition to lower wages, tech teachers often face a more negative environment where they are treated as less important than other faculties. There is also a match-up issue, where the schools have a lack of machinery that correlates with the teacher's area of expertise, forcing tech teachers to teach trades they aren't completely familiar with. Maintaining well-funded and up-to-date facilities for staff, as well developing a standardized curriculum, would help to create a consistent work environment to attract tech teachers.

### **ADVOCACY**

Community partners can advocate for solutions to attract high school tech teachers that may be currently out of their scope. For example, advocating for higher wages and better benefits and pensions to persuade skilled trades workers to transition to teaching. Moreover, they can advocate for the expansion of the Skills Development Fund expenditure program, and the need for compensation during training and up-to-date machinery that teachers are familiar with. Since local post-secondary educational institutions are fully equipped with the latest technology and machinery, increasing connections between secondary and post-secondary can lead to collaborative training days and learning opportunities. It would also help to acknowledge the cultural stigma that is associated with tech teachers who often begin teaching without the same degrees as other teachers, which results in a negative work environment for tech teachers.



# 4.

## **PRIORITY #4: IMPROVE REGIONAL ATTRACTION OF NEW TALENT**

Windsor-Essex is experiencing a talent shortage and consistent labour gaps, which are further strained by the relocation of local residents. A study on migration reveals that young people are very likely to leave small cities or rural areas for the expansive educational and employment opportunities in urban centres, and 75% of those who leave never move back.<sup>134</sup> To attract residents from other regions and retain our current talent, Windsor-Essex must develop a regional plan that highlights the value of moving and staying in our region. Increasing community activities and beautification projects, promoting attributes that are specific to Windsor-Essex (such as our proximity to the border and relatively lower cost of living), and fostering a sense of community for newcomers are strong approaches to attracting new, old, and current residents.

### **SOLUTION:**

#### **Shared story for regional attraction**

To attract and retain residents, a shared story could be developed to highlight everything Windsor-Essex has to offer. Tapping into what makes Windsor-Essex unique, these traits should be compiled and shared on one online resource, utilizing visual media to better promote the region. Creating one website where other sites could be linked for more information, organized by areas of interest, will centralize the story that Windsor-Essex hopes to promote. It could also share links to housing and real estate to create a centralized location for renting and equally promote the local lower cost of living. The key players to establishing this network would be municipalities, economic development boards, chambers of commerce, educational institutions, and Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island (TWEPI). Developing a binational committee with these players would ensure that the shared story being presented is harmonious and that branding is consistent.



[134] Statistics Canada. "Canada's large urban centres continue to grow and spread." 2023.

## 5.

## PRIORITY #5: REDUCE THE LOCAL TECH BRAIN DRAIN

Over the past few years, Windsor-Essex has faced a constant challenge with the migration of local tech talent to other regions. The problem has been exacerbated by the rise of remote work and Windsor's proximity to the U.S. border. Due to a lack of local competitive wages, and what those have described as a lack of a local tech network, Windsor tech talent has been seeking work elsewhere, creating a persistent tech brain drain. The tech sector is an essential industry in Windsor-Essex, and a loss of talent will lead to retention issues and labour gaps within the sector.

### SOLUTION #1: Pathfinding for students following co-op placements, showing how they can continue a career with the company or sector

Data has shown that companies that adopt a clear system of upward mobility improve employee retention. Demonstrating to students how and when they can change their role or take on more responsibility following a co-op placement highlights opportunities within the company and improves the onboarding process. According to a survey of over 13,000 employees in various countries, 41% of employees left their previous job due to a lack of career development.<sup>135</sup>

The best method to create upward mobility is to look within the company when you're looking for talent and invest in the workforce you already have. Create internal pathways for growth and mentorship programs that facilitate and expedite advancement for new hires. Upskilling and reskilling programs can also prepare your employees for a future with your company. Key players to developing a pathfinding program for students and staff are career services and HR departments.



[135] Michael B. Horn, "Employers Helping Employees Make Career Progress Can Combat Quiet Quitting," *Forbes*, October 21, 2022, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelhorn/2022/10/20/employers-helping-employees-make-career-progress-can-combat-quiet-quitting/?sh=f1a22e140113>

## **SOLUTION #2:**

### **Career navigator/career advisor to broaden student interest. Increase student connection to career services and industry**

Career navigators and advisors exist to guide students; however, they are constantly undervalued and underused. To help these services realize their full potential, methods should be adopted to broaden student interest and ensure that they are tapping into the resources that are available to them. The best methods to attract students could be to develop more visual resources, such as a map of supports/pipeline opportunities, and activities, such as co-op fairs and information sessions from industry associations. In addition, it would help to develop a systematic outreach plan that can aid in spreading consistent information to all co-op students at one time. The key players to developing more interactive supports for students are career/co-op services that can better highlight educational and employment opportunities, as well as industry associations that can better outline pathfinding in the industry.



6.

## PRIORITY #6: IMPROVE RETENTION IN THE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY SECTOR

The Tourism and Hospitality industry has faced constant recruitment and retention issues. Due to the seasonality of the industry, full-time positions and employment benefits are not usually offered, meaning the sector often has difficulty attracting the necessary staff. The primary causes of high turnover in the industry are a lack of flexibility, limited opportunities for growth, a toxic work environment, and a lack of recognition.<sup>136</sup> Advertising jobs in tourism and hospitality as a means to developing transferable skills and promoting co-op placements to students, who are usually more amenable to part-time work, could fill these shortages. Moreover, offering support for staff, such as affordable childcare or a flexible work schedule, could attract staff that are looking for part-time work in an accommodating environment.

### SOLUTION:

#### Regional information sharing for HR best practices leading to shared resources

Though there are few short-term solutions that community partners can currently enact, they can begin by advocating for approaches that may currently be out of their scope. For example, creating stronger supports for staff in the Tourism and Hospitality industry. This can include developing better access to transportation, offering employment benefits for part-time staff, and adapting work schedules to fit the flexibility needs of the employees. Increasing the awareness of full-time positions within the industry, highlighting pathways to growth, and promoting the value of developing transferable skills through part-time employment can also be included in advocacy projects. More employer participation in Ontario Tourism Education Corporation programs is also needed to use available resources to their full potential to support local jobseekers and current Tourism and Hospitality employees.



[136] "8 Causes of Employee Turnover in Hospitality." Harver. 2023. <https://harver.com/blog/causes-of-employee-turnover-in-hospitality/>



# Conclusion

When looking toward the next three years, it is important for Windsor-Essex to focus on talent development of the existing available workforce, with attraction of specialized talent from across the globe. Prioritizing the available workforce, including many newcomers, immigrants, and international students, allows us to develop the talent we need in our region amongst those that have already chosen to live and work in Windsor-Essex. Our population increased over 10,000 between 2021 and 2022, showcasing the interest to move to Windsor-Essex. We should be rewarding those that come to our community by meaningfully employing them in our growing industries. It is also important to develop sustainable short-term and traditional education and training programs to ensure that students are consistently graduating with in-demand skills, and so career changers can take full advantage of employment in our top sectors.

While focusing on the existing talent pool in Windsor-Essex will alleviate the need for large-scale recruitment, it does not change the housing shortage that exists in our region. Whether we are looking to bring in new talent or retain our current talent, we need to be able to provide affordable and accessible housing for all income levels in our community. As an affordable cost of living attracts new residents from across Canada, we need to ensure that we can house our current residents, including both homeowners and renters, at a reflective affordability for incomes in our region.

To further sustain our workforce, including the inclusion of working parents, we need to increase the number of childcare spots available in our community. As the demand for RECEs increases, so too does the capacity for childcare. The new financial incentives available for childcare cannot be fully taken advantage of if there is not full capacity for all that need it.

As new investments come to our region, bringing greater attention to our community from government and media, we need to capitalize on this opportunity to grow our Automobility sector and its value chain. Being a leader in the EV space, including production, research and development, and education, will ensure that Windsor-Essex's employment is no longer at the whim of the auto industry but instead at the helm. Without creating a vacuum effect of other industries, we need to create a talent pipeline locally that can directly educate, train, support, and employ our available and future workforce. Developing training for EV specialized skills will ensure that our workforce is not only qualified for current demand but sustainable for future demand in the sector.

Windsor-Essex has the potential for a strong future. It is important that priorities are followed and that those seeking employment are supported to begin a meaningful career in our community.

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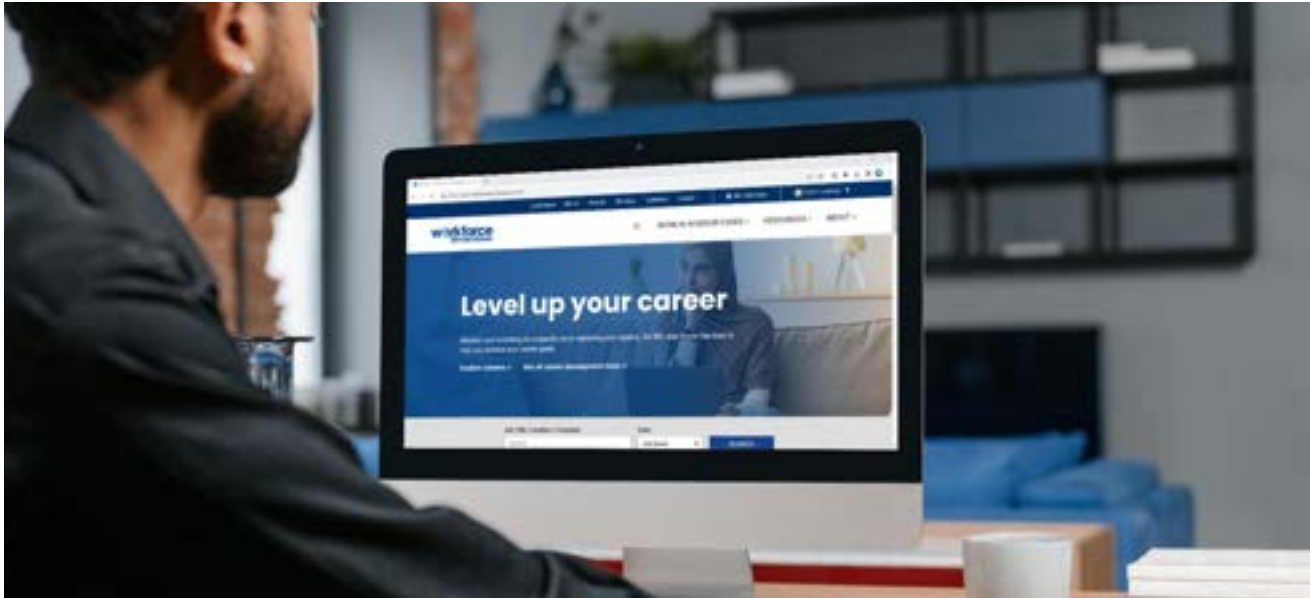
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