CHATHAM-KENT Workforce PLANNING BOARD

Chatham-Kent Workforce Planning Board

2023 Local Labour Market Plan

JANUARY 28, 2024

Prepared by Mellor Murray Consulting Inc. and Jupia Consultants Inc.

mellor murray CONSULTING

Jupia CONSULTANTS INC.

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

Canada EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO Ontario

Contents

1 – Introduction

The Chatham-Kent Workforce Planning Board (CKWPB) was established in 2009. The board plans, facilitates and advocates for local workforce planning, identifying jobs of the future to ensure the Chatham-Kent workforce will meet these demands and act as a catalyst to attract new industries and businesses to the region.

This Local Labour Market Plan (LLMP) is prepared annually to identify labour market trends in Chatham-Kent and to identify strategic actions to address labour market opportunities and challenges. The LLMP is intended to support residents seeking employment and assist employers to access the workforce they need to remain competitive.

1.1 – CKWPB 2022/23 Initiatives

The 2022 LLMP included three priorities:

1. Developing resources to support employers and job seekers.
2. Fostering local partnerships among employers, educators, and agencies.
3. Enhancing research of local labour market.

The following activities were undertaken in the past year to address these priority areas:

Resources for employers and job seekers

ChathamKentJobs.com The job posting site was promoted heavily through weekly social media posts, post cards, webinars, and presentations to internal and external job seekers and promotion at Learning, Earning and LivingCK Career Expo and Job Fair. The site had 29,844 users 59,963 session and 236,726 page views in 2023.

Learning, Earning and LivingCK Career Expo and Job Fair event held on October 18 & 19, 2023 featured over 50 employers with 880 job seekers and almost 2,500 students in attendance. Prior to the event, five employer capacity building webinars were hosted, which included intercultural and intergenerational workshops. LivingCK also provided bus transportation to 37 immigrants from outside the community to attend the Job Fair.

A welcoming and inclusive community Community Attraction & Promotion, along with many community partners, continues to prioritize efforts to build a welcoming and inclusive community. For example, the Chatham-Kent Local Immigration Partnership hosted the third annual Chatham-Kent Welcome Week, which engaged 600 Chatham-Kent residents in person, and another 2,000 residents virtually through 12 events and initiatives. Community Attraction and Promotion also developed 34 videos and supported 12 cultural events over the year. Community Attraction & Promotion also developed 34 videos and hosted 12 cultural events over the year.

2022 Local Labour Market Plan Over 100 people attended a community presentation of the 2022 Local Labour Market Plan. The document is available at the CKworforce.com website and distributed at all relevant events in Chatham-Kent. Highlights from the LLMP were shared through community presentations.

The CKWPB monthly newsletter included information on labour market trends, skills training, education, and workforce events. The newsletter gained 109 subscribers in its first year.

Local Partnerships

CK Community Leaders' Cabinet. CKWPB continued to support engagement with the working groups, local stakeholders, and employers.

Literacy and Basic Skills Partnership. Ongoing LBS programming through Adult Language and Learning, Lambton Kent District School Board and St. Clair College. Promotion of programs was shared regularly through the WPB newsletter and social media.

Shared Workforce Planning Board Initiatives: Continued engagement with Employment Ontario providers.

Employer and Sector-Based talent attraction and retention: Community Attraction and Promotion maintains partnerships with employers and continues sector-based talent attraction initiatives including the Child and Youth Planning Network, the Early Childhood Education Strategy, the Chatham-Kent Ontario Health Team's planning body, as well as providing Physician Recruitment support.

Research

Ensuring a Strong Talent Pipeline to Meet Workforce Demand This report identified causes of workforce shortages in Chatham-Kent and provided recommendations for local workforce development efforts.

International Student Talent in CK. This study focused on identifying workforce attraction and retention opportunities with the international student labour pool.

EmployerOne Survey. Results of the November 2022 survey are available on CKWorkforce.com. The 2023 survey was conducted in November 2023.

2 – Economic and Demographic Trend Highlights

Category	Highlights
Population	• The population has been increasing in Chatham-Kent and reached 109,051 as of July 1, 2022. Chatham-Kent's growth rate between 2019 and 2022 outpaced Windsor and Sarnia but lagged London and Leamington. • Driven by inward migration, the population under the age of 45 is growing again but not as fast as the 65+ population. The natural population growth rate continued to decline (246 more deaths than births in 2022). • Migration from elsewhere in Ontario is the main driver of population growth rising from negative a decade ago to a net 1,127 in 2022. Most of the inward population is young with the 0-14 group showing the fastest growth from net intraprovincial migration. • The number of permanent residents admitted to Chatham-Kent hit a new record in 2023 but compared to peers in southwestern Ontario, CK is attracting far less relative to population size. • There were fewer temporary foreign workers (TFWs) in 2023 but the number of industries using TFWs is expanding – restaurants are seeing a significant increase. • Along with trends in Ontario, housing starts have declined in 2023. Chatham-Kent has met Ontario projected housing targets to 2030. The mix of housing options (apartments, rentals, etc.) has been improving. • Based on annual taxfiler data, CK saw a 73% increase in higher income earners ($100,000+) and a fast decline (-16%) among those reporting less than $25,000/year. • Median personal income has been increasing at an average of 3.9% per year. • Among the population aged 25-64, the share with less than high school dropped 10% and the share with a university degree rose by 19% between 2016 and 2021.

Category	Highlights
Workforce	• According to the Labour Force Survey, average monthly employment in CK dropped by 2,800 in 2023 (a decline of 5%). This helped push up the unemployment rate to 6.8% after its record low of 4.3% in 2022. • The average monthly number of unemployed people increased by 46% in 2023 to 3,500. • CK was an outliner as Leamington, Sarnia, London, and Windsor all witnessed workforce and employment growth in 2023. However, the monthly Labour Force Survey data suggests that employment across the Windsor-Sarnia region was declining later in the year. • Although the data is lagged (most recent for 2021), CK is seeing more individuals 65+ in the workforce (+19% between 2016 and 2021). • The number of single earner families (families with two adults but only one earning employment income) rose sharply between 2018-2021, four times faster than the number of dual income families. • Self-employment is on the rise in Chatham-Kent particularly among older residents (19% increase in 65+ self-employed between 2016 and 2021). • There has been a modest decline in the number of unique job postings in 2023 compared to 2022. Occupations in the most demand are concentrated in food services, retail, health care, transportation, manufacturing, and agriculture. • Food services and health care job postings increased sharply while postings for labourers, material handlers, truck drivers and delivery drivers were down. • The vast majority of job postings were permanent (85%) and full time (76%) but the majority were offering below average wages. • An updated job demand forecast for CK shows there will be a need to fill nearly 17,600 jobs from replacement and growth demand between 2023 and 2031. Manufacturing and health care will be the top drivers of new employment through 2031 along with retail trade, transportation, and agriculture.

Category	Highlights
Industry	• There has been a 9% increase in employer businesses between 2019 and 2023 and a 13% increase in non-employer businesses. • The number of micro-businesses (1-4 employees) increased by 10%. • The number of large employers (500+) dropped by three. It looks like several large employers dropped below the 500 employee threshold and one pushed through into that employment level. • The construction sector saw the largest increase, adding 87 employer businesses over the four-year period. • There were 33 more manufacturers in the community in 2023 compared to 2019 and 20 more firms in the transportation and warehousing sector. • The retail sector increased by nine employer businesses and agriculture by eight. • Since the pandemic, there has been a sharp rise in the number of non-employer businesses in Chatham-Kent. • There were 964 more non-employer businesses in June 2023 compared to 2019. Real estate and agriculture saw the largest increases. This includes real estate agents that have no formal employment. The construction, health care, retail and administrative services also saw a considerable increase in non-employer businesses

3 – Population and demographic trends

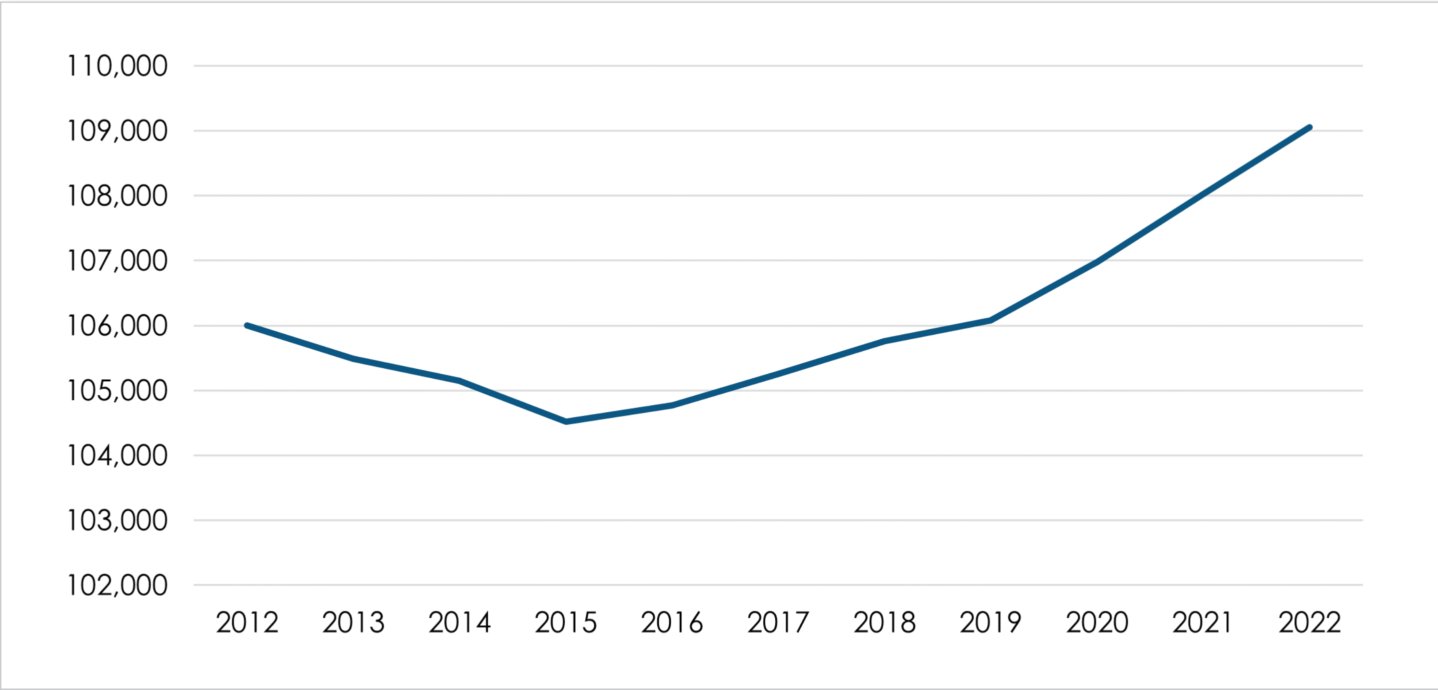
3.1 – Population trend by year (annual)

The number of people living in Chatham-Kent[1] has been on the increase since 2015 after several years of population decline. As of July 1, 2022, the population was an estimated 109,051. The growth rate has been modest averaging 0.6% per year between 2015 and 2022. The growth rate accelerated during and after the pandemic, with an average annual increase between 2020 and 2022 of 0.9%. In total, the population expanded by an estimated 1,021 people between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022[2]. The last time there were this many people living in the community was 2008. However, the current population is still below the high reached in 2005 of 112,463.

[1]Statistics Canada publishes the same data for Chatham-Kent as a municipal unit, a Census Agglomeration and a Census Division. This is not the case for most municipalities in Canada.

[2]As of January 2024, the population estimates for 2023 have not yet been published by Statistics Canada.

Figure 1: Population by year, Chatham-Kent

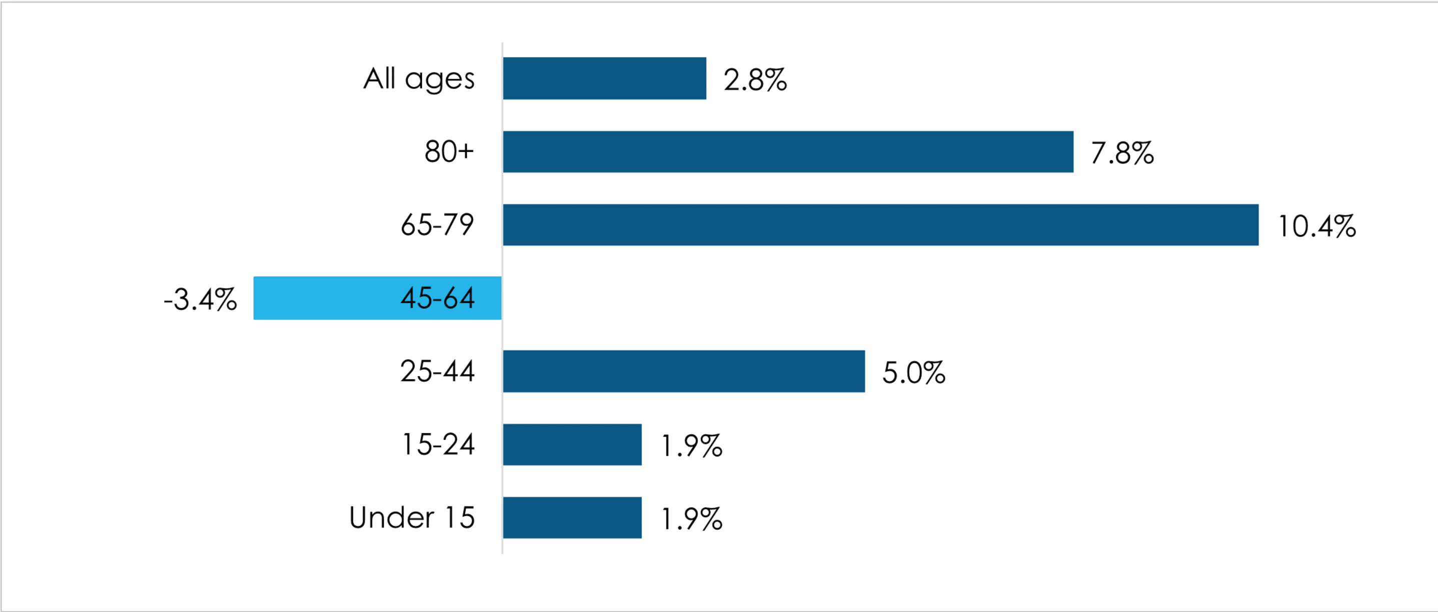


For the Census Agglomeration area. Source: Statistics Canada Table: 17-10-0135-01.

Chatham-Kent's population growth rate between 2019 and 2022 was 2.8%, higher than the Windsor CMA (+2%) and the Sarnia CA (+1.7%) but slower than the London CMA (+5.9%) and the Leamington CA (+4.8%).

The population under the age of 45 is growing again but not as fast as the population aged 65 and older as shown in Figure 2. The decline in the population aged 45-64 is a continuing trend and represents a challenge for the workforce as developed further below.

Figure 2: Population change by age group, 2019 to 2022, Chatham-Kent



For the Census Agglomeration area. Source: Statistics Canada Table: 17-10-0135-01.

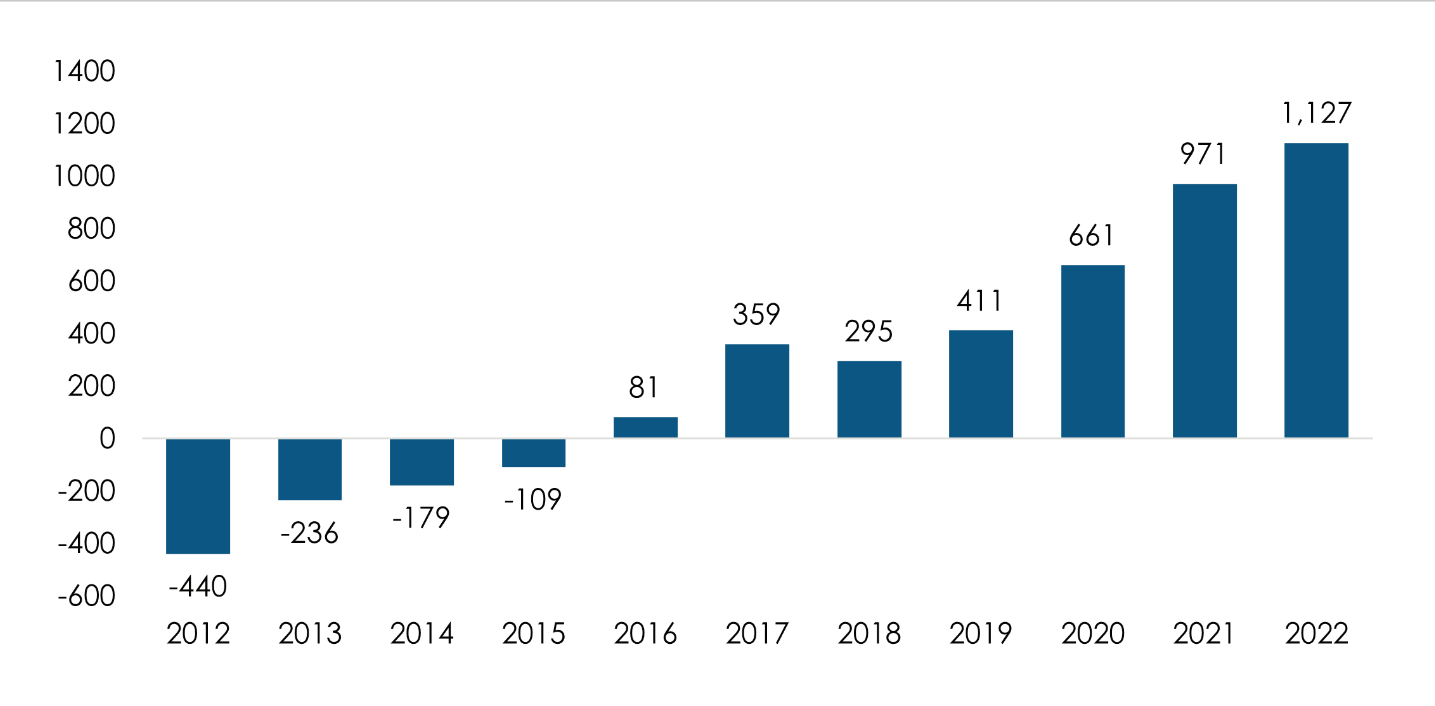
3.2 – Population change by source (annual)

The natural population growth rate continues to decline. A decade ago, there were more births than deaths in Chatham-Kent. As of 2022 there were 246 more deaths than births. The current age distribution of the population suggests this trend indicates that population growth will need to come from inward migration. According to Statistics Canada, the number of immigrants settling in Chatham-Kent has been rising and reached 271 between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022. The data for 2023 from Statistics Canada has not been published but the number of permanent resident admissions with Chatham-Kent as the intended destination published by IRCC is discussed further below.

Net intraprovincial migration has been the main source of population growth. The difference between the number of people moving in and out within Ontario has risen sharply. As shown in Figure 3, net intraprovincial migration went from negative (more moving out than in) a decade ago to 1,127 more moving in than out in 2022. Intraprovincial migration into Chatham-Kent accelerated after the pandemic[3].

[3]Note there could be immigrants in the intraprovincial migration data who were living elsewhere in the province before moving to Chatham-Kent.

Figure 3: Net intraprovincial migration by year, Chatham-Kent



For the Census Agglomeration area. Source: Statistics Canada Table: 17-10-0136-01.

Net interprovincial migration in 2022 was negative, with 229 more people moving out of Chatham-Kent than in during the year.

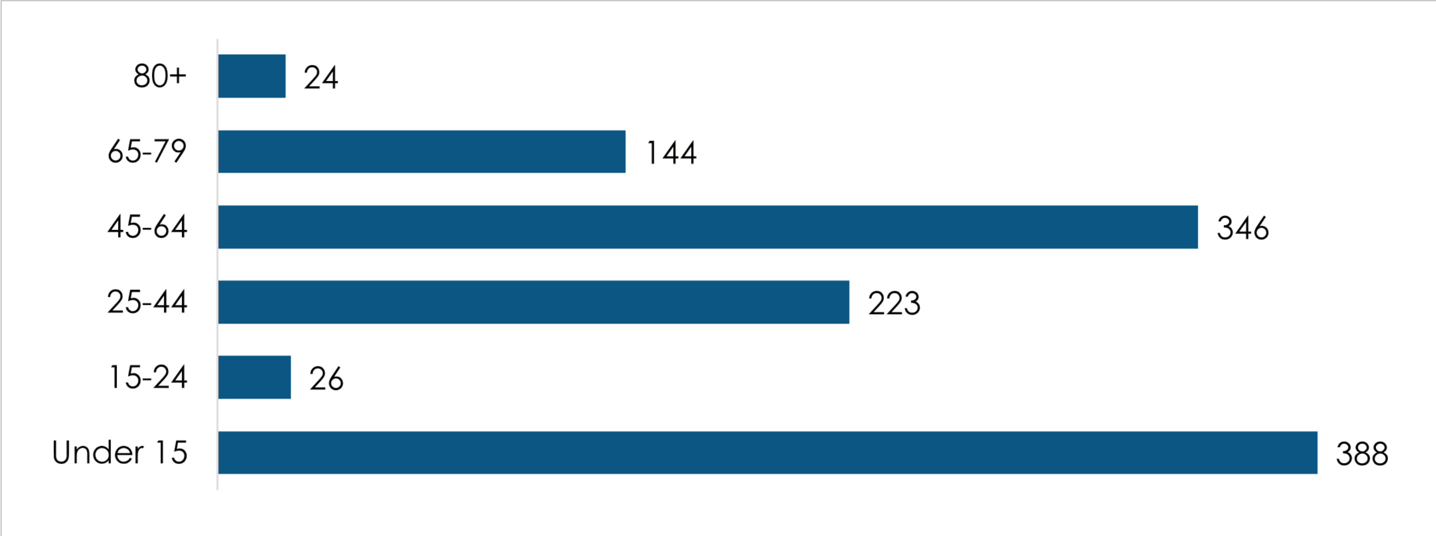
The other main source of population growth is net non-permanent residents. That number dipped from 325 in 2021 to 162 in 2022.

3.3 – Migration characteristics by age group (annual)

The immigrants moving to Chatham-Kent are relatively young compared to the non-immigrant population. In 2022, 79% were under the age of 35. In addition, most of the people moving to Chatham-Kent from other parts of Ontario are young, particularly families with children. In 2022, the under 15 population saw the fastest growth from net intraprovincial migration with 388 more individuals moving in than out in this age group (Figure 4). There was modest growth from the 65+ population but 87% of the total was under the age of 65.

Although a relatively small number overall, the region continues to lose more to other provinces in younger age groups (net interprovincial migration). In 2022, the population aged 15-34 dropped by 102 as a result of net interprovincial migration.

Figure 4: Net intraprovincial migration by age group, 2022, Chatham-Kent



For the Census Agglomeration area. Source: Statistics Canada Table: 17-10-0136-01.

Using the 2021 Census, a longer-term view of migration can be developed. Table 1 shows the in-migration and out-migration trends by age group over the five-year period 2016 to 2021. The in-migrants are those who were living in Chatham-Kent in 2021 that were not living in the municipality in 2016 and the out-migrants are those who living in Chatham-Kent in 2016 but were not living there as of the 2021 Census.

In total, there were 12,495 living in Chatham-Kent in 2021 aged 5 and older who were not living in the community five years previous.

Only 8,370 had moved out over the five-year period meaning the community had net in-migration over the five years of 4,125. The net migration rate was positive for each of the four age groups in the table.

The in- and out-migration rates show migration trends relative to the total population size in the age cohort. As would be expected, migration is highest among the young adult population with about one in five living in Chatham-Kent in 2021 having moved in over the previous five years and a similar share moving out. Among the 35-54 age group, there was as very strong in-migration rate as twice as many in that age group moved in versus moved out over the five-year period.

Table 1: Five-year migration trends by age group, Chatham-Kent

	Total	5-19 years	20-34 years	35-54 years	55+ years
Total in-migrants	12,495	1,925	3,540	3,260	3,780
Intraprovincial in-migrants	10,265	1,515	2,765	2,620	3,370
Interprovincial in-migrants	1,085	215	230	360	280
External in-migrants	1,135	190	550	265	120
Total out-migrants	8,370	1,360	3,310	1,675	2,025
Intraprovincial out-migrants	7,510	1,255	3,010	1,500	1,750
Interprovincial out-migrants	860	105	305	185	285
Net migration	**+4,125**	**+565**	**+230**	**+1,585**	**+1,755**
In-migration rate	13%	11%	21%	14%	9%
Out-migration rate	8%	8%	20%	7%	5%

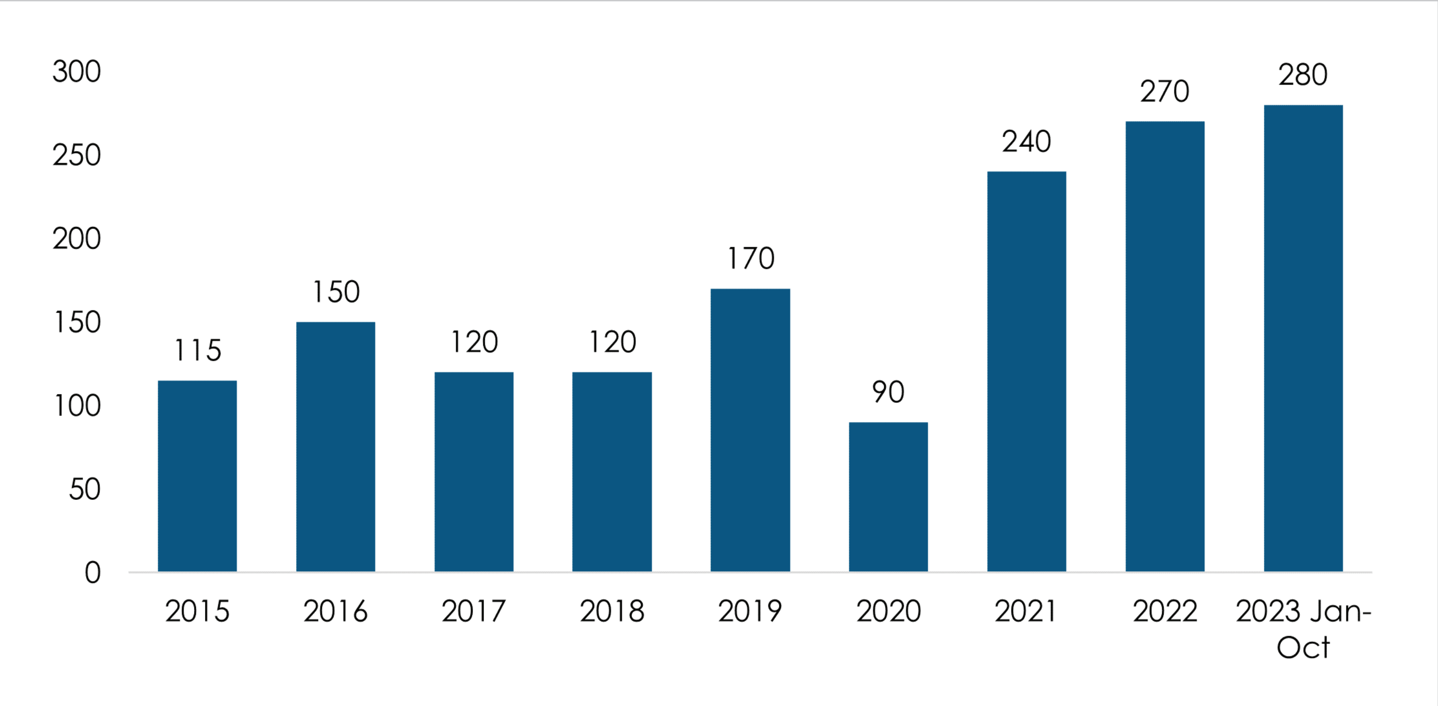
Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

3.4 – Immigration trends (annual)

Permanent resident admissions

The number of permanent residents directly settling in Chatham-Kent has been increasing in the past three years. As shown in Figure 5, in 2022 there were 270 permanent residents admitted to Canada with Chatham-Kent as their destination. Between January and October 2023, the number was up to 280 with two months left in the year.

Figure 5: Permanent resident admissions by year, Chatham-Kent



Source: IRCC

While the number of immigrants has been rising in recent years, relative to population size, immigrant flows into Chatham-Kent are well below many peer communities in southwestern Ontario. Table 1 shows the permanent resident admissions per 10,000 population in five municipalities in the region. Chatham-Kent is at the low end of permanent resident admissions compared to neighbouring municipalities. Of note, some immigrants move to the community after first having settled elsewhere in Ontario or Canada. These individuals are shown in the annual population data as interprovincial or intraprovincial migrants.

Table 2: Permanent resident admissions per 10,000 population, selected municipalities

	2022	2023 Jan-Oct
Chatham-Kent (MU), Ontario	25	26
Sarnia (CY), Ontario	37	41
Leamington (MU), Ontario	168	172
London (CY), Ontario	118	133
Windsor (CY), Ontario	144	132

Using municipal population as the base. Source: IRCC and Statistics Canada Table: 17-10-0142-01

Temporary foreign workers

In recent years Chatham-Kent employers have relied on temporary foreign workers (TFWs), particularly for the agriculture sector. In 2023 however, the use of TFWs declined both in absolute terms and as a share of the total used in Ontario during the year. In 2022, Chatham-Kent employers had an average of 610 TFWs approved per quarter (positions having received a positive Labour Market Impact Assessment). Through the first three quarters of 2023, the approval number dropped to 485 per quarter.

Most TFWs are agricultural labourers (general farm workers) but a growing number of firms are using TFWs in other sectors. For example, ConAgra had 127 TFWs approved for its food processing centre in Dresden.

The restaurant sector is increasing its use of temporary workers. In 2023 there were over 100 TFW positions approved in Chatham-Kent. Other sectors using some TFWs included health care and personal services.

3.5 – Housing and population growth

As shown in Table 2, there are a certain number of housing starts each year in Chatham-Kent even when the population is not growing or in slight decline. There are several factors that drive housing starts even without population growth. Most notably this involves adult children leaving their parents' home and moving into their own accommodations. In effect, the average number of persons per household declines. This can also involve other factors such as an increase in student housing or temporary worker housing. Between 2009 and 2015, the population of Chatham-Kent declined, and the community averaged 132 new housing starts per year.

The population has since started to increase, and housing starts have also increased significantly. There was a decline in the number of starts between 2022 and 2023. The price of housing in Chatham-Kent has been rising and without alignment between housing supply and demand, costs will continue to rise.

The other important factor in housing and population growth is the type of housing. In 2022, only 52% of new homes built were single family dwellings. This is an important development as a broader mix of housing is attractive to people looking to move into the community. Immigrants in particular, prefer to rent accommodation when they first arrive before deciding to purchase. If there are few options to rent, it will make it harder for Chatham-Kent to attract newcomers to Canada.

Finally, it is important to align housing development to household income levels. Section 3.6 documents the rise in higher income earners in the community but Section 4.6 also shows that the majority of jobs on offer in the community in 2023 had below average wages.

Table 3: Housing starts by year, Chatham-Kent

Year	Starts per year	Population	Population growth	Starts per 1,000 growth
2009	85	108,751		
2010	103	107,500	-1,251	N/A
2011	113	106,674	-826	N/A
2012	137	106,004	-670	N/A
2013	136	105,492	-512	N/A
2014	234	105,151	-341	N/A
2015	118	104,522	-629	N/A
2016	119	104,771	+249	478
2017	179	105,259	+488	367
2018	143	105,756	+497	288
2019	227	106,074	+318	714
2020	409	106,975	+901	454
2021	567	108,028	+1,053	538
2022	545	109,049	+1,021	534
Jan-Nov 2023	351	TBD	TBD	TBD

Source: Statistics Canada Table: 34-10-0155-01.

3.6 – Income trends

Tax filers by total income group

Table 3 shows the breakdown of taxfilers in Chatham-Kent by age group and income level. It also shows the percentage change in the number of taxfilers by income level and shows how the concentration of taxfilers by income level compares to the country overall using an index where the Canadian level is set at 1.00.

Among all age groups, the largest group of taxfilers is in the $25,000 to $50,000/year range. Compared to the country overall, there are 17% more in this cohort. The higher income cohorts show a larger spread with the country overall. Based on 2021 tax data, only 850 reported personal income of $200,000 or more.

The top three income cohorts saw growth in the number of taxfilers by 72%, 69% and 85% respectively between 2016 and 2021.

Table 4: Taxfilers by age and income cohort, Chatham-Kent

All age groups	#	% of total	% change 2016-2021	CAN=1.00
Less than $10,000	6,360	7%	-28%	0.86
$10,000-25,000	19,450	22%	-11%	1.07
$25,000-50,000	30,330	35%	+14%	1.17
$50,000-75,000	16,880	19%	+39%	1.03
$75,000-100,000	7,370	8%	+42%	0.82
$100,000-150,000	4,960	6%	+72%	0.72
$150,000-200,000	1,080	1%	+69%	0.58
$200,000+	850	1%	+85%	0.47
Total	87,280		+11%	

Source: Statistics Canada Table: 34-10-0155-01.

Among the under 25 age group, there has been a steep decline in the number of individuals reporting income under $10,000 between 2016 and 2021. Overall, there were 6% more taxfilers in this age group in 2021 compared to five years earlier. This increase is a positive trend given the number of taxfilers in this age group dropped from 11,600 in 2008 to a low of 8,820 in 2016 before starting a modest increase. As of 2021 there were 9,310 tax filers in the under 25 age cohort.

There was a 13% increase in the number of taxfilers age 25-34 between 2016 and 2021. There were strong gains among those in the higher income cohorts, from a relatively small base. The number of taxfilers age 25-34 earning between $50,000 and $75,000 rose by 63% over the five-year period.

There was a 16% increase in the number of taxfilers among the population aged 35-44, including a doubling of those reporting $100,000 or more in total income between 2016 and 2021. The big gap of high-income earners overall remains in this cohort.

The number of taxfilers in the age group 45-54 declined by 7% in the five-year period but this decline was concentrated in the lower income cohorts. Among those earning $100,000+, there was a 45% increase in just five years. Among the 55-64 year old taxfilers, there was an 8% increase between 2016 and 2021, with most of the increases concentrated in the higher income cohorts.

The 65+ cohort is the most well off relative to the country overall. While a smaller share earns $100,000 or more compared to the country, the gap is the lowest in this group. The number of taxfilers age 65+ reporting $75,000 in total income increased by nearly double between 2016 and 2021.

Table 5: Taxfilers by age and income cohort, Chatham-Kent (cont.)

0 to 24 years	#	% of total	% change 2016-2021	CAN=1.00
Less than $10,000	2,330	25%	-31%	0.86
$10,000-25,000	3,220	35%	-6%	0.98
$25,000-50,000	2,970	32%	+71%	1.14
$50,000-75,000	620	7%	+210%	1.17
$75,000-100,000	120	1%	N/A	1.00
$100,000-150,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
$150,000-200,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
$200,000+	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	**9,310**		**+6%**	

25 to 34 years	#	% of total	% change 2016-2021	CAN=1.00
Less than $10,000	720	6%	-27%	0.80
$10,000-25,000	2,010	16%	-24%	1.14
$25,000-50,000	4,850	40%	+8%	1.16
$50,000-75,000	2,880	24%	+63%	1.00
$75,000-100,000	1,120	9%	+87%	0.77
$100,000-150,000	520	4%	+126%	0.66
$150,000-200,000	100	1%	+150%	0.65
$200,000+	30	0%	+50%	0.30
Total	**12,230**		**+13%**	

35 to 44 years	#	% of total	% change 2016-2021	CAN=1.00
Less than $10,000	610	5%	-30%	0.86
$10,000-25,000	1,560	13%	-14%	1.15
$25,000-50,000	3,800	31%	+1%	1.21
$50,000-75,000	3,250	27%	+49%	1.16
$75,000-100,000	1,520	12%	+25%	0.80
$100,000-150,000	1,180	10%	+100%	0.74
$150,000-200,000	190	2%	+90%	0.49
$200,000+	120	1%	+140%	0.37
Total	**12,230**		**+16%**	

45 to 54 years	#	% of total	% change 2016-2021	CAN=1.00
Less than $10,000	730	6%	-39%	1.00
$10,000-25,000	1,660	14%	-35%	1.20
$25,000-50,000	3,390	29%	-12%	1.17
$50,000-75,000	2,690	23%	+10%	1.10
$75,000-100,000	1,430	12%	+6%	0.84
$100,000-150,000	1,340	11%	+43%	0.81
$150,000-200,000	290	2%	+53%	0.62
$200,000+	210	2%	+50%	0.45
Total	**11,740**		**-7%**	

Table 5: Taxfilers by age and income cohort, Chatham-Kent (cont.)

55 to 64 years	#	% of total	% change 2016-2021	CAN=1.00
Less than $10,000	1,430	9%	-20%	1.00
$10,000-25,000	3,250	20%	-8%	1.19
$25,000-50,000	4,890	30%	+6%	1.10
$50,000-75,000	3,240	20%	+19%	1.01
$75,000-100,000	1,580	10%	+33%	0.88
$100,000-150,000	1,110	7%	+54%	0.74
$150,000-200,000	300	2%	+50%	0.64
$200,000+	270	2%	+80%	0.53
Total	**16,070**		**+8%**	
65+	**#**	**% of total**	**% change 2016-2021**	**CAN=1.00**
Less than $10,000	530	2%	-12%	0.65
$10,000-25,000	7,760	30%	-1%	0.89
$25,000-50,000	10,420	41%	+30%	1.18
$50,000-75,000	4,220	16%	+50%	1.04
$75,000-100,000	1,580	6%	+98%	0.97
$100,000-150,000	780	3%	+95%	0.81
$150,000-200,000	200	1%	+100%	0.66
$200,000+	210	1%	+110%	0.56
Total	**25,700**		**+24%**	

Source: Statistics Canada Table: 11-10-0008-01.

Median income

The median personal income for all taxfilers in Chatham-Kent was $38,770 in 2021[4] (the most recent year for available data) or approximately 7% lower than the country overall. In the past five years, the median income has risen by an average of 3.9%, similar to the country overall. There was a large increase in 2020, likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic income support programs.

[4]the most recent year for available data

Table 6: Median personal income trends, Chatham-Kent

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Median personal income	$32,070	$33,400	$34,690	$35,500	$38,430	$38,770
Canada = 1.00	0.93	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.95	0.93
Annual percentage increase		4.1%	3.9%	2.3%	8.3%	0.9%

Source: Statistics Canada Table: 11-10-0008-01.

4 – Workforce trends

According to Statistics Canada's annual Labour Force Survey, the number of people participating in the Chatham-Kent labour force in an average month during 2023 dropped from 53,100 in 2022 to 51,500 in 2023, a decline of 2% (Table 7). Average monthly employment declined by 2,800 to 48,000 in 2023, a decline of 5%. The number of unemployed persons in an average month increased from a record low of 2,300 in 2022 to 3,500 in 2023, an increase of 52%.

The number of persons not participating in the workforce increased by 2,000 to 37,500 in 2023. This change pushed the labour market participation rate down to 57.9% and the employment rate to 53.9%. Except for the pandemic year in 2020, the last time the annual employment rate was this low was in 2015 when the employment rate was 53.3%. Engaging people who are not participating or are underemployed and addressing any barriers to employment will continue to be an important focus going forward.

The unemployment rate increased to 6.8% in 2023 after having declined to a recent record low of 4.3% in 2022.

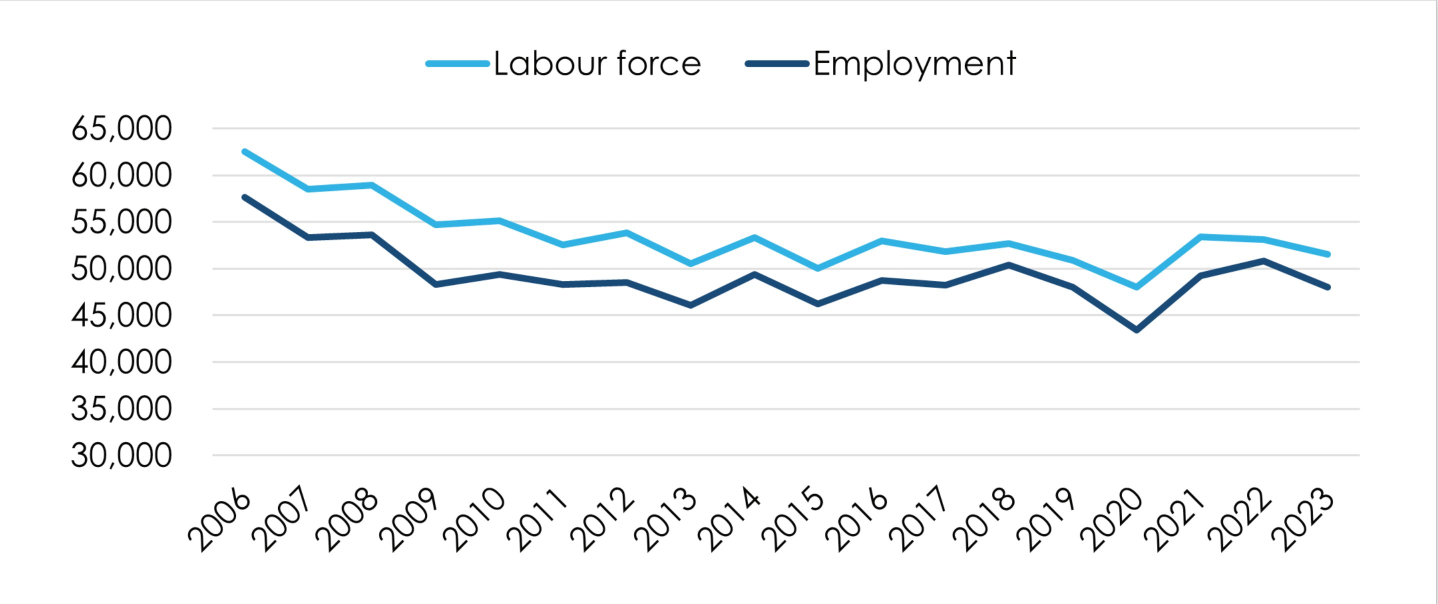
Table 7: Chatham-Kent annual labour force statistics, 2023

	2023	1 year change	5 year change
Population 15+	89,000	0%	+1%
Labour force	51,500	-3%	-2%
Employment	48,000	-6%	-5%
Unemployment	3,500	+52%	+46%
Not in labour force	37,500	+6%	+7%
Unemployment rate	6.8%	+2.5*	+2.2*
Participation rate	57.9%	-2.0*	-2.0*
Employment rate	53.9%	-3.4*	-3.4*

*Percentage point change. For the Census Agglomeration area. Source: Statistics Canada Table: 14-10-0391-01.

The longer-term trend in the size of the labour force and total employment in Chatham-Kent is shown in Figure 6. After a period of steep decline in the early to mid-2000s, the size of the workforce has remained in a narrow band of between 50,500 and 53,100 between 2013 and 2023 (except for the pandemic year).

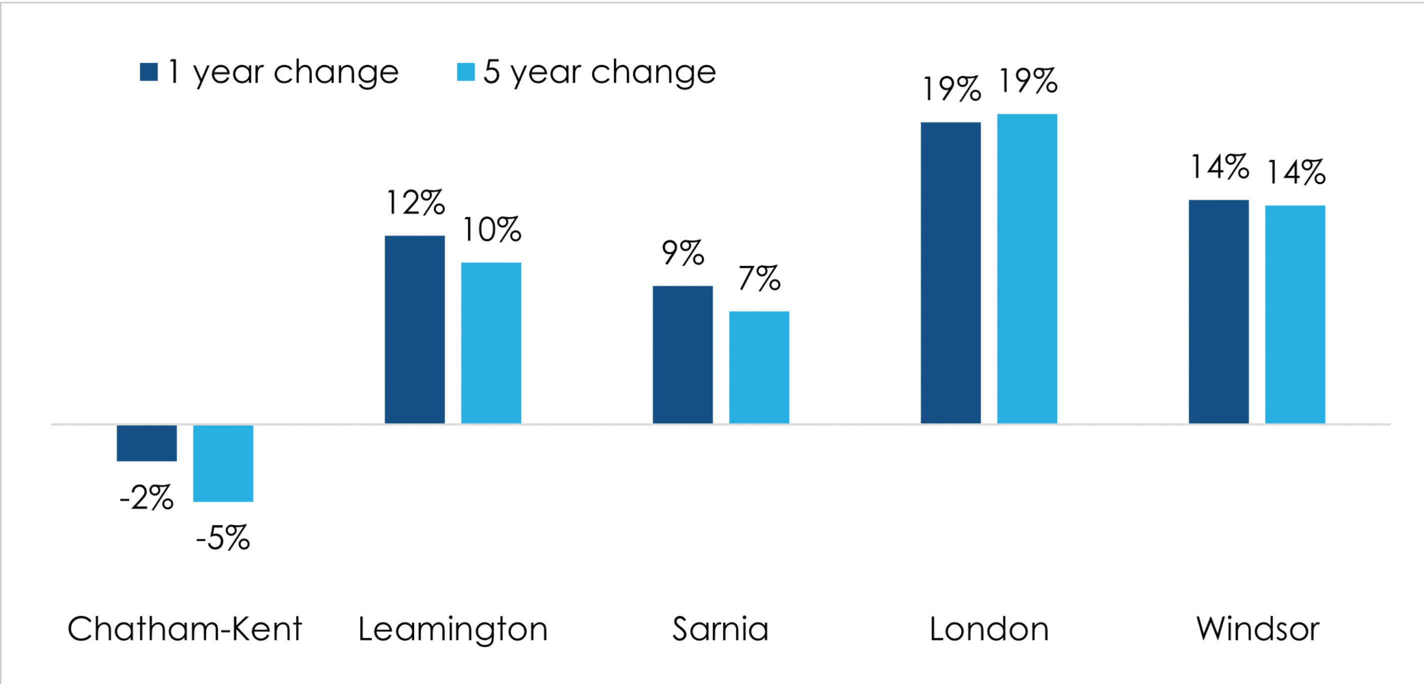
Figure 6: Chatham-Kent workforce and employment trends, 2006-2023



For the Census Agglomeration area. Source: Statistics Canada Table: 14-10-0391-01.

A comparison of labour force trends in Chatham-Kent to other Census Agglomeration (CA) and Census Metropolitan areas (CMA) in southwestern Ontario is found in Figure 7. In the past year, Leamington, Sarnia, London, and Windsor all witnessed growth in both the size of the workforce and total employment. The table also shows the five-year trend. The number participating in Chatham-Kent's workforce declined by 2% over the five-year period while rising strongly in the other four CMAs/CAs. Total employment was down 5% in Chatham-Kent while rising strongly in the other four urban centres.

Figure 7: Change in the size of the workforce and total employment, selected CMAs/CAs



For the Census Agglomeration and Census Metropolitan areas. Sources: Statistics Canada Tables 14-10-0391-01 and 14-10-0385-01.

Chatham-Kent has a slightly higher unemployment rate compared to its peers and the lowest participation and employment rates among the five CMAs/CAs. Sarnia and Windsor have witnessed modest increases in the unemployment rate while London's has declined slightly. The London labour market has been the strongest in recent years with a 19% growth, the lowest unemployment rate and the highest participation and employment rates.

Table 8: Annual labour force statistics, selected southern Ontario urban centres, 2023

	Labour force	1 year change	5 year change
Chatham-Kent	51,500	-3%	-2%
Leamington	31,500	+21%	+12%
Sarnia	50,600	+10%	+9%
London	323,900	+3%	+19%
Windsor	202,100	+7%	+14%

	Employment	1 year change	5 year change
Chatham-Kent	48,000	-6%	-5%
Leamington	29,600	+19%	+10%
Sarnia	47,300	+10%	+7%
London	306,800	+4%	+19%
Windsor	189,100	+8%	+14%
	Unemployment rate	**1 year change**	**5 year change**
Chatham-Kent	6.8%	4.6%	4.3%
Leamington	5.7%	N/A	N/A
Sarnia	6.5%	5.4%	6.7%
London	5.3%	5.7%	5.7%
Windsor	6.4%	6.1%	7.7%
	Participation rate	**1 year change**	**5 year change**
Chatham-Kent	57.9%	59.9%	59.9%
Leamington	62.4%	53.7%	67.1%
Sarnia	58.4%	53.9%	55.6%
London	66.1%	65.8%	61.7%
Windsor	63.9%	61.3%	61.2%

Table 8: Annual labour force statistics, selected southern Ontario urban centres, 2023 (cont.)

	Employment rate	1 year change	5 year change
Chatham-Kent	53.9%	57.3%	57.3%
Leamington	58.6%	51.2%	64.0%
Sarnia	54.6%	50.3%	52.7%
London	62.7%	62.0%	58.2%
Windsor	59.8%	56.6%	57.5%

For the Census Agglomeration and Census Metropolitan areas.Sources: Statistics Canada Tables 14-10-0391-01 and 14-10-0385-01.

4.1 – Employment by industry and occupation

Employment by industry

Table 9 shows employment in Chatham-Kent by industry as of the 2021 Census. Section 5 uses more recent business count data to elaborate on potential trends post-Census.

Using the highest level NAICS[5] aggregation, the top employment sectors in Chatham-Kent were:

- 62 Health care and social assistance with 6,670 workers.
- 31-33 Manufacturing with 6,250 workers.
- 44-45 Retail trade with 5,965 workers.
- 23 Construction with 3,915 workers.
- 11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting with 3,595 workers.
- 61 Educational services with 2,990 workers.
- 72 Accommodations and food services with 2,815 workers

Using Location Quotient (LQ) analysis which compares the local workforce to the national workforce based on employment intensity, the Chatham-Kent workforce is highly skewed towards agriculture and utilities. The high utilities sector LQ values is mainly due to one firm. Other sectors with an above average employment concentration include manufacturing, retail trade, health care, administrative and support services and accommodations and food services.

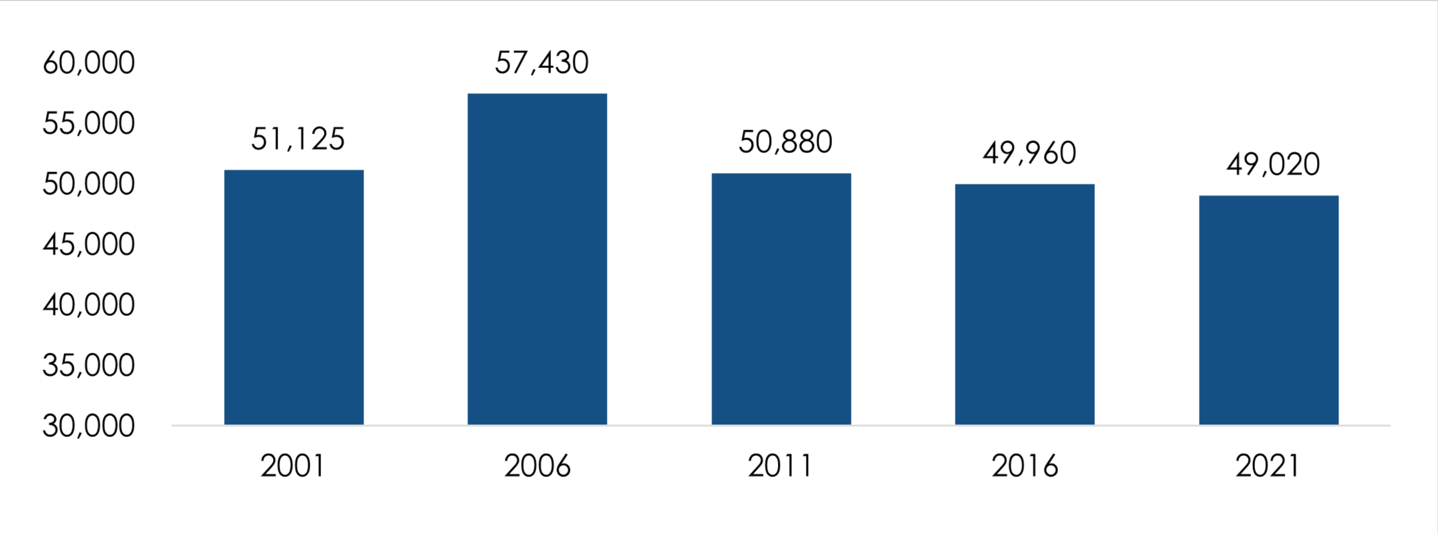
[5]NAICS is the North American Industrial Classification System.

Table 9: Employment by industry, 2-digit NAICS, Chatham-Kent, 2021

	Workforce	LQ value
Total workforce	**49,020**	
Industry - not applicable	**970**	
Employment by industry	**48,055**	
11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	3,595	3.24
22 Utilities	885	2.35
23 Construction	3,915	1.04
31-33 Manufacturing	6,250	1.59
41 Wholesale trade	1,570	1.01
44-45 Retail trade	5,965	1.09
48-49 Transportation and warehousing	2,265	0.90
51 Information and cultural industries	800	0.78
52 Finance and insurance	1,080	0.52
53 Real estate and rental and leasing	455	0.52
54 Professional, scientific and technical services	1,655	0.41
56 Administrative and support*	2,125	1.05
62 Health care and social assistance	6,670	1.07
71 Arts, entertainment and recreation	690	0.77
72 Accommodation and food services	2,815	1.02
81 Other services (except public administration)	2,005	0.98
91 Public administration	2,115	0.70

Census division. *includes waste management and remediation services. Mining Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

Figure 8: Workforce size by Census period, Chatham-Kent



Source: Statistics Canada

The influence of the 2020-2021 pandemic on employment varied by sector. As shown in Table 10, employment in the accommodation and food services sector was down 17% as was employment in the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector (from a smaller base). Employment in the real estate sector was also down but as shown in Section 5, seems to have come back strongly (based on business count data).

Overall, employment in Chatham-Kent has not increased much in recent years. Figure 8 shows the workforce size by Census period going back to 2001. After a surge between 2001 and 2006, workforce size dropped by 2011 and has remained similar since. This is consistent with the Labour Force Survey estimates discussed in Section 4.

Table 10: Employment by industry, 2-digit NAICS, comparison 2016 and 2021

	2016	2021	% change
Total workforce	**49,960**	**49,020**	**-2%**
Industry - not applicable	**1,150**	**970**	**-16%**
Employment by industry	**48,820**	**48,055**	**-2%**
11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	3,795	3,595	-5%
22 Utilities	995	885	-11%
23 Construction	3,285	3,915	+19%
31-33 Manufacturing	6,450	6,250	-3%
41 Wholesale trade	1,815	1,570	-13%
44-45 Retail trade	5,610	5,965	+6%
48-49 Transportation and warehousing	2,535	2,265	-11%
51 Information and cultural industries	755	800	+6%
52 Finance and insurance	1,130	1,080	-4%
53 Real estate and rental and leasing	550	455	-17%
54 Professional, scientific and technical services	1,465	1,655	+13%
56 Administrative and support*	2,500	2,125	-15%
61 Educational services	2,950	2,990	+1%
62 Health care and social assistance	6,160	6,670	+8%
71 Arts, entertainment and recreation	835	690	-17%
72 Accommodation and food services	3,375	2,815	-17%
81 Other services (except public administration)	2,190	2,005	-8%
91 Public administration	2,220	2,115	-5%

Census division. *Includes waste management and remediation services. Note: 2021 Census data were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic and should be used with caution. Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

The more detailed NAICS data shows where the Chatham-Kent workforce has a high concentration of workers compared to the country overall. Using 4-digit NAICS industries, Table 11 shows the industries with the highest concentration (based on a minimum of 400 workers). Natural gas distribution has the highest concentration of workers with nearly 15 times as many workers as the country overall relative to overall workforce size.

Other sectors in Chatham-Kent with high concentrations of workers include farming and greenhouse production, motor vehicle parts manufacturing, plastic products, business support services and nursing/residential care.

Chatham-Kent is a retail and services hub for a wider region as evidenced by the high concentration of employment in department stores, automobile dealerships, automotive repair, building supply dealers, etc.

Table 11: Employment by industry, highest LQ values, minimum 400 workers, 4-digit NAICS, Chatham-Kent

	Workforce	LQ value
2212 Natural gas distribution	515	14.94
1114 Greenhouse, nursery and floriculture production	740	6.73
3363 Motor vehicle parts manufacturing	1,255	6.63
1110 Farms (except greenhouses, nurseries, floriculture)	2,570	3.45
5614 Business support services	570	2.56
3261 Plastic product manufacturing	450	2.26
6230 Nursing and residential care facilities	2,125	1.87
4521 Department stores	520	1.78
4411 Automobile dealers	725	1.65
8111 Automotive repair and maintenance	730	1.58
4841 General freight trucking	845	1.43
2381 Foundation, structure, and building exterior contractors	400	1.23
9130 Local, municipal and regional public administration	1,070	1.23
4441 Building material and supplies dealers	465	1.22
2382 Building equipment contractors	1,060	1.14
7225 Full-service restaurants and limited service eating places	2,500	1.13
6111 Elementary and secondary schools	2,385	1.06

*Includes waste management and remediation services. Census division. Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

Employment by occupation

Chatham-Kent has over twice as many people working in natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations as the country overall and 86% more working in manufacturing and utilities occupations. The community has a larger share working in trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations and slightly more working in health occupations.

Table 12: Employment by occupation, 1-digit NOC, Chatham-Kent

	Work-force	% of total	CAN =1.00
Total workforce	49,020		
Occupation - not applicable	970	2.0%	0.78
0 Legislative and senior management occupations	285	0.6%	0.44
1 Business, finance and administration occupations	6,235	12.7%	0.74
2 Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	2,465	5.0%	0.61
3 Health occupations	4,175	8.5%	1.09
4 Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	4,940	10.1%	0.84
5 Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	655	1.3%	0.43
6 Sales and service occupations	12,025	24.5%	1.03
7 Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	10,110	20.6%	1.23
8 Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	3,110	6.3%	2.26
9 Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	4,050	8.3%	1.86

Note: 2021 Census data were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic and should be used with caution.

A comparison with 2016 data has not been included because in the 2016 Census NOC 0 was included all workers in Management Occupations. In the 2021 Census, NOC 0 includes just those working in Legislative and senior management occupations and other management is shown in the other occupational groups.

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

Table 13: Employment by occupation, highest LQ values, minimum 400 workers, 4-digit NOC[13]

Occupation	Workforce	LQ value
9420 Mechanical, electrical and electronics assemblers and inspectors	1,275	4.86
8510 Agriculture, horticulture and harvesting labourers and related	625	3.91
8002 Managers in agriculture, horticulture and aquaculture	1,395	3.22
8412 Workers in agriculture and fishing occupations	415	3.01
7210 Machining, metal forming, shaping and erecting trades	895	1.94
9510 Labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities	1,195	1.81
7241 Automotive service technicians	745	1.58
4220 Social and community service workers	685	1.48
3210 Technical occupations in therapy and assessment	625	1.46
7511 Trades helpers and labourers	845	1.46
7330 Transport truck and transit drivers	1,665	1.40
8512 Logging, forestry, landscaping and other related labourers	425	1.37
3310 Assisting occupations in support of health services	1,585	1.31
6520 Food support occupations	1,745	1.31
3130 Nursing and allied health professionals	1,165	1.31
6440 Customer and information services representatives	1,040	1.29
7320 Building maintenance installers, servicers and repairers	550	1.28

*Includes waste management and remediation services. Census division. Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

[6]NOC is the National Occupations Code

4.2 – Labour force breakdown by demographic characteristics

Age group

As of the 2021 Census, 28% of the Chatham-Kent workforce was age 55 or older. On a relative basis, the share of the populate age 55 and over was much larger compared to the country overall (Index=1.21). Chatham-Kent also has a relatively larger share of its workforce under the age of 25, although only 15% of the total is in this age group.

Table 14: Chatham-Kent workforce by age group

	Workforce	% of total	CAN=1.00	% chance 2016-2021
15-24	7,225	15%	1.13	-3%
25-54	28,150	57%	0.90	-5%
55+	13,650	28%	1.21	+6%
Total	**49,025**			

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

Visible minority status

Just under 7% of the Chatham-Kent workforce in the 2021 Census self-identified as a visible minority. This was considerably less than the national share of 27%. Table 15 shows the breakdown by visible minority population and compares the share to the national level using an index. Overall, there are 76% fewer persons self-identified as a visible minority in Chatham-Kent's workforce compared to the country overall (Index = 0.24). However, as a share of the total visible minority population, Chatham Kent has relatively more persons self-identified as Black, Southeast Asian and Latin American.

Table 15: Chatham-Kent workforce by visible minority status

Visible Minority	#	% of total	CAN=1.00	% chance 2016-2021
Total Workforce 2021	**49,020**			
Total visible minority population	**3,260**	**6.7%**	**0.24**	**+59.4%**
South Asian	725	1.5%	0.19	+130%
Chinese	180	0.4%	0.08	+16%
Black	1,155	2.4%	0.57	+31%
Filipino	175	0.4%	0.12	+59%
Arab	155	0.3%	0.19	+63%
Latin American	285	0.6%	0.31	+128%
Southeast Asian	250	0.5%	0.46	+61%
West Asian	50	0.1%	0.10	+233%
Korean	75	0.2%	0.25	+15%
Japanese	35	0.1%	0.27	-13%
Visible minority, n.i.e.	30	0.1%	0.12	+50%
Multiple visible minorities	140	0.3%	0.37	+133%
Not a visible minority	45,760	93.3%	1.28	-5%

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

Gender

As of the Census, 53% of the Chatham-Kent workforce was male, and 47% was female. This was slightly skewed towards males compared to the country overall (52% male). Table 16 shows the breakdown by gender and age group compared to the national level using an index. In general, the Chatham-Kent workforce for both men and women has a higher share over the age of 55 and a higher share under the age of 25 compared to the country overall. Twenty-eight percent of women in the Chatham-Kent workforce were over the age of 55, 25% more on a relative basis than the country overall (Index=1.25).

Table 16: Chatham-Kent workforce by gender and age group

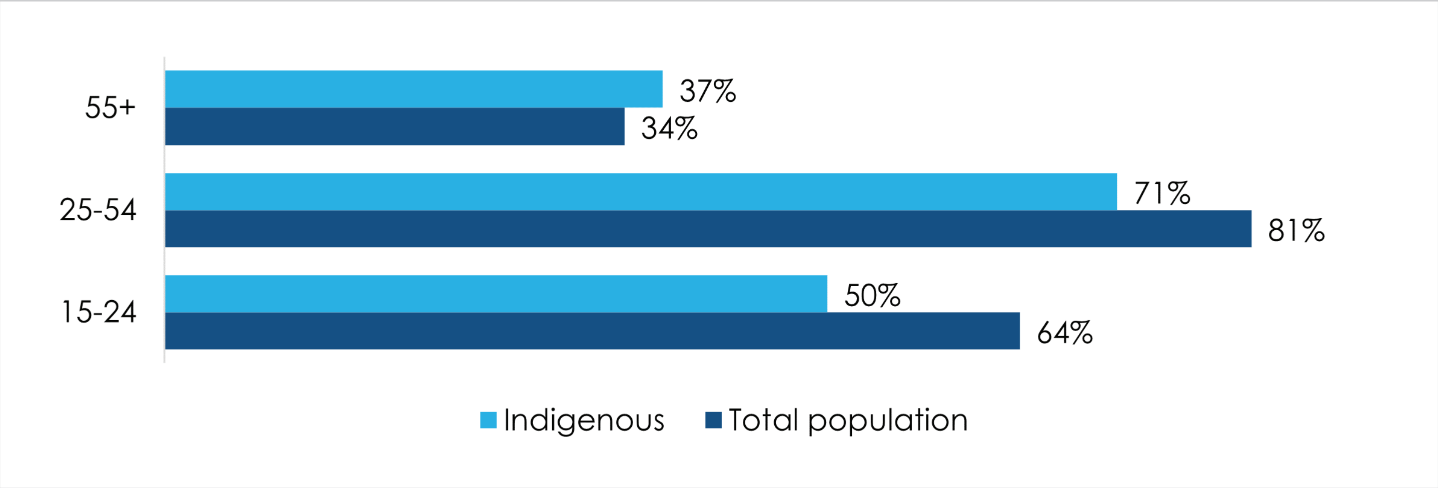
Males	Workforce	% of total	CAN=1.00	% change 2016-2021
15-24	3,850	15%	1.16	-2%
25-54	14,595	57%	0.90	0%
55+	7,315	28%	1.17	-2%
Total	**25,760**			**-1%**
Females	**Workforce**	**% of total**	**CAN=1.00**	**% change 2016-2021**
15-24	3,370	14%	1.09	-11%
25-54	13,555	58%	0.90	-4%
55+	6,330	27%	1.25	-1%
Total	**23,255**			**-4%**

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

Indigenous workforce

As of the 2021 Census there were 1,900 persons with Indigenous identity active in the Chatham-Kent workforce. The Indigenous population had a 56% participation rate compared to 57% among the population overall. There was a wider gap in the participation rate among the core aged workforce (25-54). The participation rate of the Indigenous population age 25-54 was 71% compared to 81% among the population overall. Among the young workforce aged 15-24, the Indigenous population had a lower participation rate of 50% compared to 64% of the total population.

Figure 9: Labour market participation rate by age group and Indigenous status, Chatham-Kent



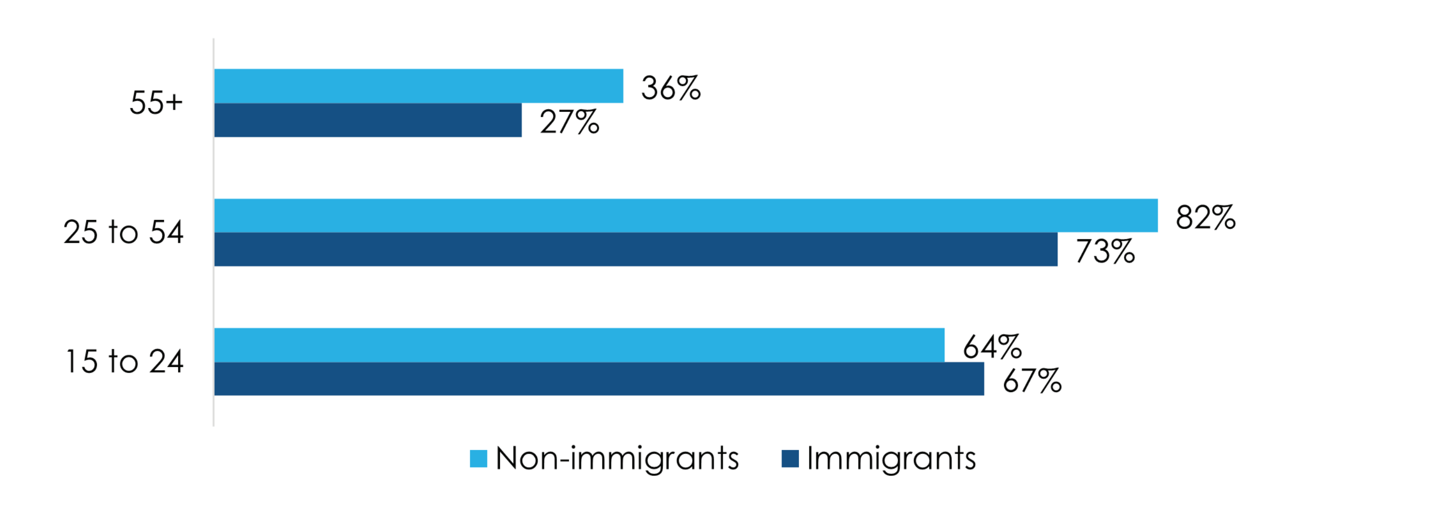
Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

Immigrant/non-permanent residents

There were 4,400 immigrants and non-permanent residents in the Chatham-Kent workforce as of the 2021 Census (4,070 immigrants and 430 non-permanent residents). Chatham-Kent had 68% fewer immigrants and 73% fewer non-permanent residents as a share of the total workforce, compared to the country overall.

Immigrants in Chatham-Kent have a lower labour market participation rate among all three age groups. Among the core aged group (25-54), 82% of non-immigrants participated in the workforce compared to 73% among the immigrant population in that age group.

Figure 10: Labour market participation rate by age group and immigrant status, Chatham-Kent



Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

Age breakdown of the workforce by demographic characteristics

Table 17 shows the breakdown of the workforce in Chatham-Kent by age and demographic characteristic in comparison to the country overall. Thirty-two percent of the 4,500 people in the immigrant and non-permanent resident (NPR) workforce are over the age of 55 which is substantially more than the immigrant and NPR workforce across the country (41% higher). Across the three demographic groups, visible minority, immigrants and Indigenous, the workforce is older than the country overall. However, it also has a higher share under the age of 25 for each of these groups.

Table 17: Age breakdown by demographic characteristics, Chatham-Kent

All workers	Workforce	% of total	CAN=1.00	% change 2016-2021
15-24	7,225	15%	1.13	-3%
25-54	28,150	57%	0.90	-5%
55+	13,650	28%	1.21	+9%
Total	**49,025**			**+2%**
Visible Minorities	**Workforce**	**% of total**	**CAN=1.00**	**% change 2016-2021**
15-24	605	19%	1.28	+98%
25-54	2,040	62%	0.89	+46%
55+	620	19%	1.21	+80%
Total	**3,265**			**+60%**
Immigrant and NPR*	**Workforce**	**% of total**	**CAN=1.00**	**% change 2016-2021**
15-24	480	11%	1.21	+109%
25-54	2,585	57%	0.84	+8%
55+	1,435	32%	1.41	+6%
Total	**4,500**			**+13%**
Indigenous	**Workforce**	**% of total**	**CAN=1.00**	**% change 2016-2021**
15-24	340	18%	1.01	+11%
25-54	1,170	62%	0.97	+11%
55+	390	21%	1.11	+30%
Total	**1,900**			**+14%**

*NPR = non-permanent resident. Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

4.3 – Labour force by education attainment level

Table 18 shows the education attainment levels and related statistics for the population aged 25-64 living in Chatham-Kent. Highlights include:

- The Chatham-Kent population 25-64 has a much higher share with a college diploma compared to the country overall, 31% have a college diploma (46% more than the country overall in relative terms).
- The share with both college diplomas and with apprenticeship/trades training declined between Census periods.
- The Chatham-Kent population has considerably fewer individuals with a university degree but the gap with the country overall is shrinking. Between 2016 and 2021, there was a 22% increase in the 25-64 age group in Chatham-Kent with a university degree compared to a 15% increase across the country.
- The share of the 25-64 population without any formal education (less than high school) declined by 10% between 2016 and 2021 but is still at 14% of the population (17% of males). This is significantly higher than the country overall.
- Men are far more likely to have apprenticeship/trades education (10% compared to only 3% among the female population) but women are far more likely to have college (37% compared to 25%) and university education (19% versus 12%).
- The share of the 25-64 population with advanced degrees is well below the national level but has been rising in recent years except for those with degrees in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or optometry. According to the 2021 Census there were 160 residents with these degrees in 2016 up from 150 in 2021. The population with these degrees is likely rising among the 65+.

Table 18: Educational attainment statistics, population aged 25-64, Chatham-Kent

	2021 % of total			Canada = 1.00			% change 2016-2021		
	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F
No certificate or diploma	14%	17%	12%	1.46	1.52	1.38	-10%	-9%	-13%
High school only	31%	34%	28%	1.34	1.39	1.29	+3%	+8%	-2%
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	55%	49%	60%	0.82	0.76	0.86	+1%	-2%	+4%
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	6%	10%	3%	0.67	0.75	0.52	-16%	-14%	-20%
College*	31%	25%	37%	1.46	1.34	1.54	-3%	-3%	-2%
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	2%	1%	2%	0.48	0.51	0.45	+21%	+9%	+32%
Bachelor's degree or higher	16%	12%	19%	0.47	0.42	0.51	+19%	+12%	+24%
Bachelor's degree	12%	9%	14%	0.54	0.46	0.61	+19%	+7%	+27%
University certificate or diploma above bachelor level	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	0.54	0.64	0.48	+22%	+56%	+3%
Degree in medicine and related**	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.34	0.44	0.27	-5%	-14%	+9%
Master's degree	2.2%	1.9%	2.5%	0.30	0.28	0.31	+20%	+17%	+22%
Earned doctorate	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.19	0.20	0.18	+33%	+35%	+30%

T = Total, **M** = Male, **F** = Female
*or other non-university certificate or diploma **includes dentistry, veterinary medicine or optometry
Source: Statistics Canada 2016, 2021 Census.

The workforce aged 15 and older is also profiled in the Census. Among those who were employed during the year, 14% had no formal education, 31% had a high school diploma, 7% obtained an apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma, 31% were college graduates and 16% were university graduates. As shown in Table 19, Chatham-Kent has a much higher share of the workforce with a college diploma (44% more in relative terms) but only about half the share with a university degree. There are considerably more individuals without any formal education compared to the country overall (53% more in relative terms).

The pattern for the core workforce aged 25-54, is similar to that of the overall workforce except there are more university graduates (21%) and more college graduates (36%). In fact, the intensity of college educated workers is even more pronounced in this age group. There are 60% more college graduates in relative terms compared to the country overall.

Table 19: Educational attainment statistics, Chatham-Kent's workforce

	Aged 15+		Aged 25-54	
Educational Attainment	**% of total**	**Canada = 1.00**	**% of total**	**Canada = 1.00**
No certificate, diploma, or degree	14%	1.53	9%	1.47
High (secondary) school diploma or equivalency certificate	31%	1.27	27%	1.38
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	7%	0.70	6%	0.64
College or other non-university certificate or diploma	31%	1.44	36%	1.60
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	2%	0.52	2%	0.52
Bachelor's degree or higher	16%	0.49	21%	0.53

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

4.4 – Employment among older residents

Chatham-Kent has a higher share of residents age 65+ who are active in the workforce. In 2021, one out of every three persons aged 65 and older reported employment income. The share of older workers has remained at 33% of the total for almost a decade. These older workers are an important group to address workforce demand particularly in part time and seasonal roles. There were nearly 1,750 more people aged 65 and older in the workforce in 2021 compared to 2016.

The number of persons aged 65 and older declaring self-employment income is also on the increase. In 2021, there were 2,830 with self-employment income up from 2,380 in 2016 (+19%).

4.5 – Families and workforce participation

The share of families with single-earners has been rising across Chatham-Kent in recent years. According to tax filling data, the number of single earner couple families (families with two adults but only one earning employment income) rose by 16% between 2018 and 2021 while the number of dual-earner couples only increased by 4% (Table 20). The number of lone parent families increased by 5%.

Table 20: Family structure by workforce participation, Chatham-Kent

	2018	2021	% change
Dual-earner couple families	13,380	13,980	4%
Single-earner-male couple families	4,500	5,230	16%
Single-earner-female couple families	1,940	2,260	16%
Lone-parent families	3,220	3,370	5%

Source: Statistics Canada Table 11-10-0028-01.

The number of male single earner couple families increased by 19%, even faster than all families with children over the three-year period. The number of dual-earner couple families increased only modestly. As of 2021, 42% of all families with children had only one employment income earner up from 38% back in 2008.

This trend could reflect a lack of childcare options (or the economics of childcare) or inflexibility on the part of employers and could indicate a barrier to desired workforce participation.

Table 21: Family structure by workforce participation, families with children, Chatham-Kent

	2018	2021	% change
Dual-earner couple families	7,980	8,330	+4%
Single-earner-male couple families	1,630	1,940	+19%
Single-earner-female couple families	660	740	+12%
Lone-parent families	3,230	3,380	+5%

Source: Statistics Canada Table 11-10-0028-01.

4.6 – Job postings

ChathamKentJobs.com is the largest aggregator of job postings in the Chatham-Kent region. This section looks at trends in job postings in the area to highlight occupations that are in high demand and those for which there is increasing demand. The analysis looks at the 12-month period of October 1st, 2022, to September 30, 2023, compared to the previous 12-month period.

There has been an effort in 2023 to limit the number of duplicate jobs in the data which could result in some discrepancies in comparing the 2023 data to 2022 data. Despite this condition, a review of the data provides good insight into occupational demand trends in Chatham-Kent.

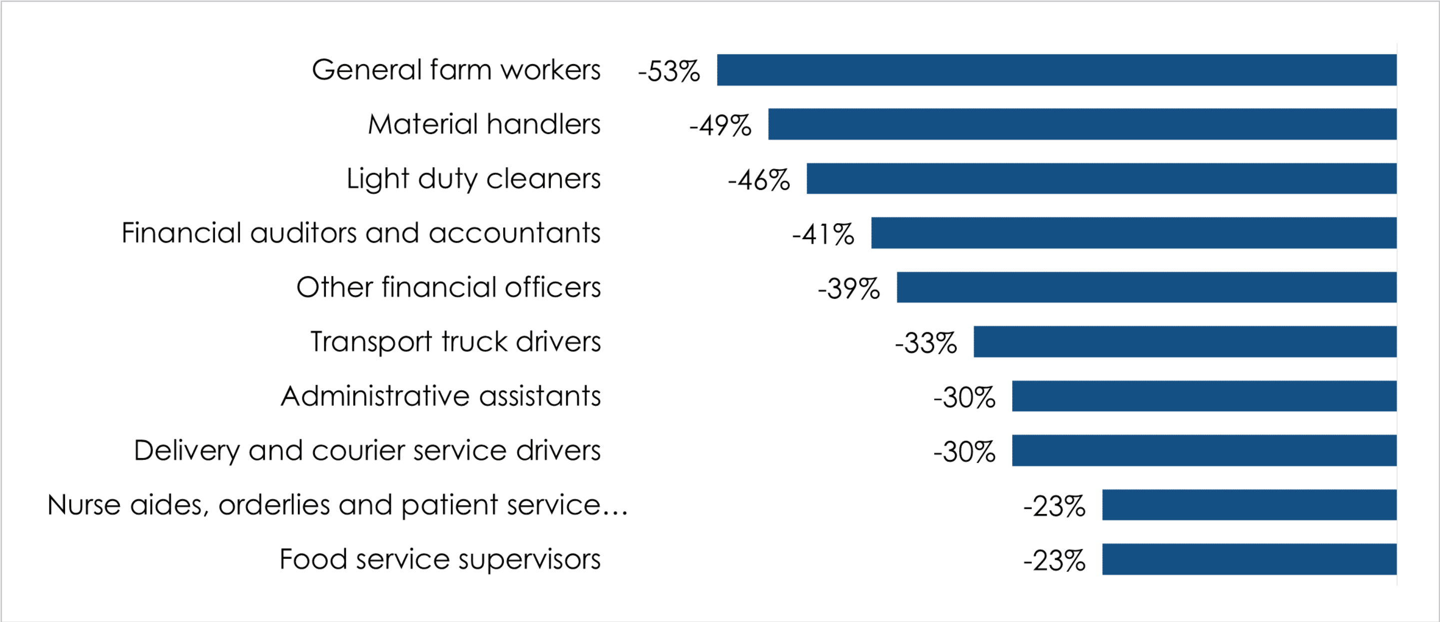
There were over 10,200 unique job postings in the Chatham-Kent area between October 1st, 2022, and September 30, 2023, a 10% drop, down from 11,300 in the previous 12-month period. Table 22 shows the top 25 four-digit occupations by the number of unique job postings in Chatham-Kent in 2023 (October 1, 2022-September 30, 2023) compared to 2022 (October 1, 2021-September 30, 2022).

As shown in Table 22, the occupations in the most demand are concentrated in the food services, retail, health care, transportation, manufacturing, and agriculture sectors. Retail salespersons tops the list but the total in 2023 was down 16% compared to the previous year. The number of food counter attendants, kitchen helpers and related occupations job postings jumped by 29% year over year.

The number of registered nurse and licensed practical nurse job postings almost doubled year over year. Other health related in the top 25 included home support workers (up 16%), social workers (+26%) and nurses aides (-23%).

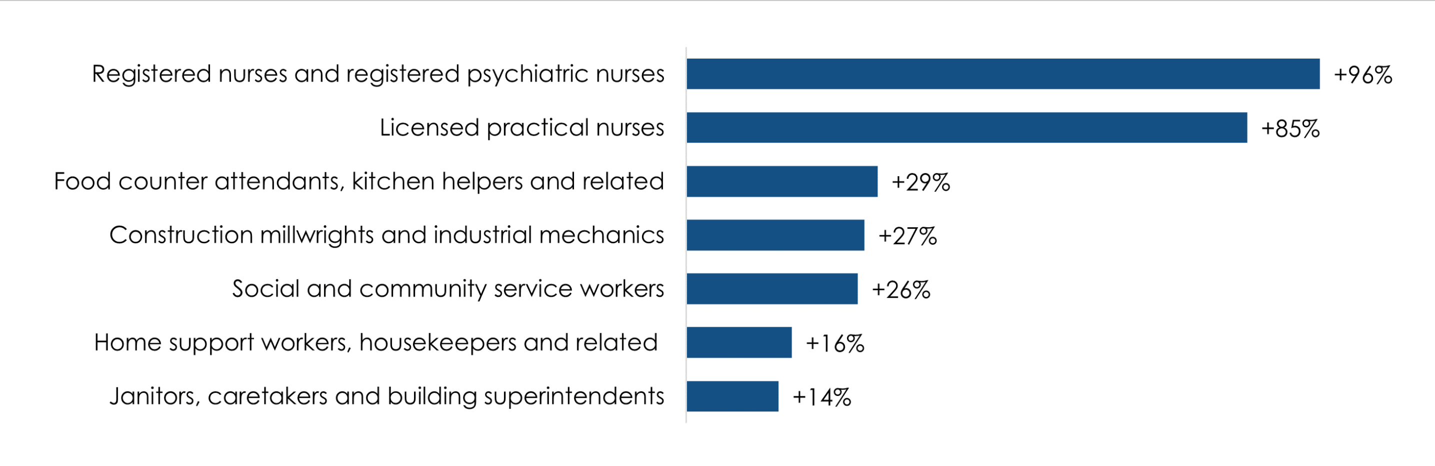
Labourer job postings and general farm worker job postings were both down in 2023 as were most job postings related to the transportation and warehousing sector. The number of postings for truck drivers was down 33%. Figure 11 shows the fastest decrease in the number of job postings year over year while Figure 12 shows occupations with the fastest increase in postings from 2022 to 2023.

Figure 11: Fastest decrease in the number of job postings 2022 to 2023, Chatham-Kent



Source: ChathamKentJobs.com.

Figure 12: Fastest increase in the number of job postings 2022 to 2023, Chatham-Kent



Source: ChathamKentJobs.com.

Table 22: Top 25 occupations by number of unique job postings and timeframe, Chatham-Kent*

NOC Description	NOC	2023	2022	% change
Retail salespersons	6421	538	641	-16%
Food counter attendants, kitchen helpers and related	6711	458	356	+29%
Home support workers, housekeepers and related	4412	440	379	+16%
Other customer and information services representatives	6552	302	361	-16%
Other labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities	9619	301	322	-7%
Registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses	3012	247	126	+96%
Licensed practical nurses	3233	204	110	+85%
Transport truck drivers	7511	192	286	-33%
Cooks	6322	180	183	-2%
Social and community service workers	4212	178	141	+26%
Material handlers	7452	139	270	-49%
Cashiers	6611	138	163	-15%
Store shelf stockers, clerks and order fillers	6622	131	130	+1%
Delivery and courier service drivers	7514	128	182	-30%
Janitors, caretakers and building superintendents	6733	124	109	+14%
Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	7311	116	91	+27%
Administrative assistants	1241	112	159	-30%
General farm workers	8431	110	232	-53%
Other financial officers	1114	97	158	-39%
Other sales related occupations	6623	97	123	-21%
Light duty cleaners	6731	96	179	-46%
Retail sales supervisors	6211	89	93	-4%
Food service supervisors	6311	85	110	-23%
Nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates	3413	83	108	-23%
Financial auditors and accountants	1111	82	140	-41%

*2023=October 1, 2022-September 30, 2023. 2022=October 1, 2021-September 30, 2022.
Job postings for which there was an identified four-digit NOC code. Source: ChathamKentJobs.com.

A majority of the top 25 occupations by number of job postings in 2023 offered below average wages. The average wage for all job postings (where wage information was provided) was $48,400. Only seven of the top 25 occupations offered above average wages (28%).

Table 23: Top 25 occupations by number of unique job postings and wage level, Chatham-Kent*

NOC Description	NOC	Average annualized wage	Above/below average
Retail salespersons	6421	$41,200	Below
Food counter attendants, kitchen helpers and related	6711	$31,600	Below
Home support workers, housekeepers and related	4412	$31,700	Below
Other customer and information services representatives	6552	$35,000	Below
Other labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities	9619	$36,900	Below
Registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses	3012	$94,000	Above
Licensed practical nurses	3233	$68,900	Above
Transport truck drivers	7511	$64,400	Above
Cooks	6322	$35,300	Below
Social and community service workers	4212	$50,700	Above
Material handlers	7452	$37,500	Below
Cashiers	6611	$33,800	Below
Store shelf stockers, clerks and order fillers	6622	$33,200	Below
Delivery and courier service drivers	7514	$44,000	Below
Janitors, caretakers and building superintendents	6733	$37,900	Below
Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	7311	$72,200	Above
Administrative assistants	1241	$43,300	Below
General farm workers	8431	$30,800	Below
Other financial officers	1114	$75,000	Above
Other sales related occupations	6623	$69,000	Above
Light duty cleaners	6731	$34,300	Below
Retail sales supervisors	6211	$41,900	Below
Food service supervisors	6311	$33,800	Below
Nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates	3413	$34,600	Below
Financial auditors and accountants	1111	$58,500	Above

Job postings for which there was an identified four-digit NOC code. Annualized wage shows the average for full time, full year workers. Not all job postings provided wage information. Approximately 76% of all job postings were for full time jobs in 2023. Source: ChathamKentJobs.com.

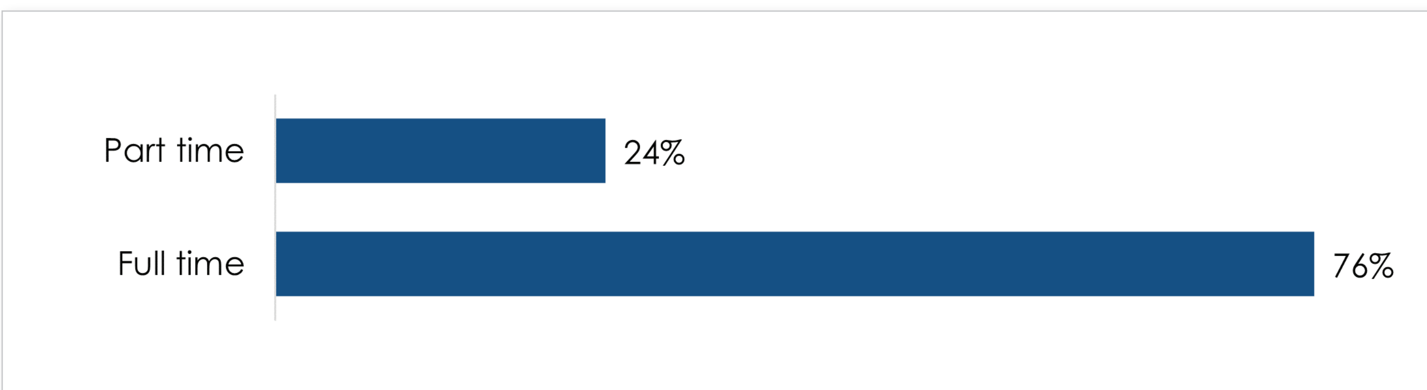
Most of the jobs on offer in 2023 were permanent jobs (85%). Only 10% were contract jobs and 4% were temporary jobs (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Unique job postings in 2023 by job permanency, Chatham-Kent*

Job postings for which there was an identified four-digit NOC code. Source: ChathamKentJobs.com.

Seventy-six percent of all job postings in 2023 were for jobs offering full time work (Figure 14).

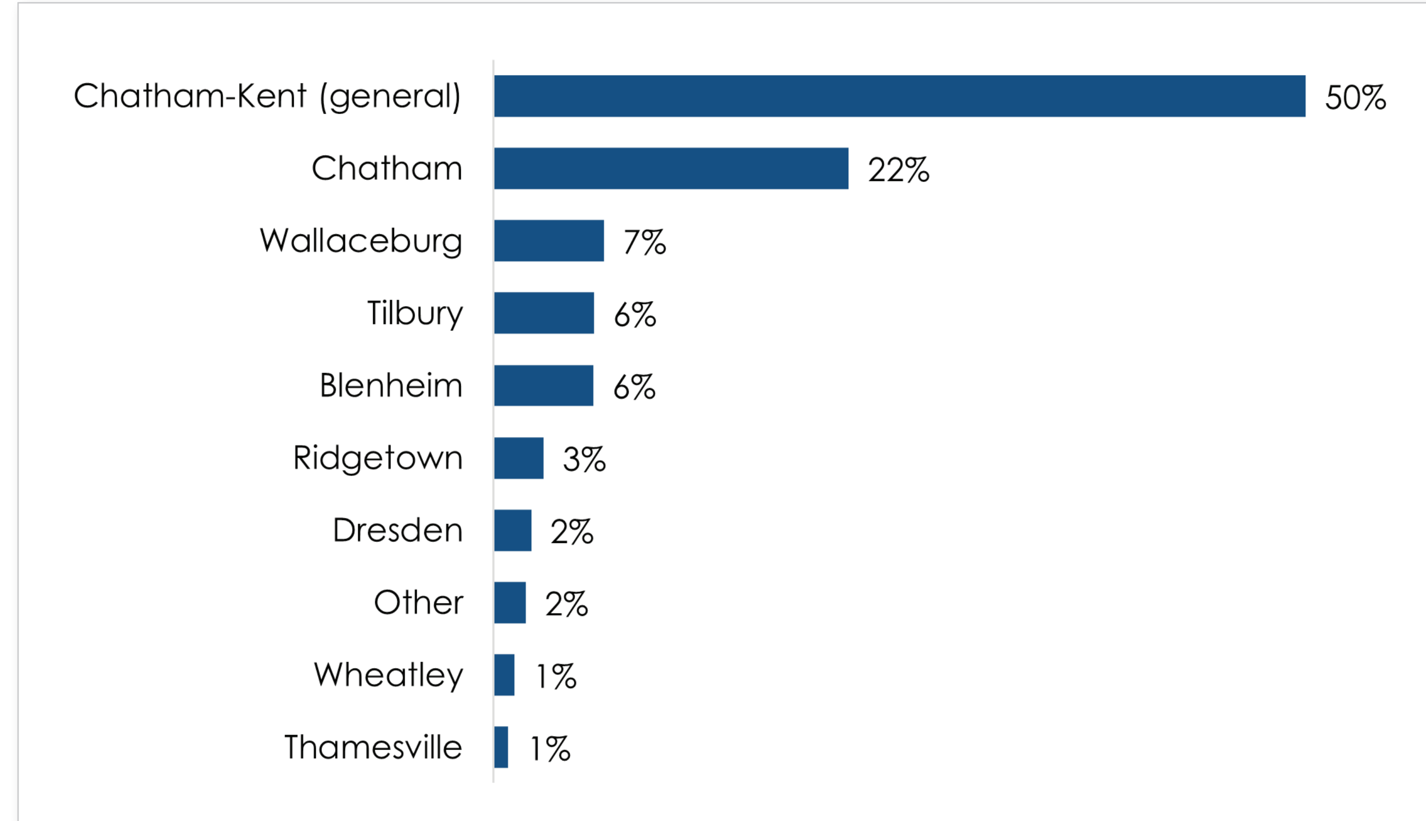
Figure 14: Unique job postings in 2023 by full time/part time, Chatham-Kent*



Job postings for which there was an identified four-digit NOC code. Source: ChathamKentJobs.com.

Half of all job postings in 2023 listed Chatham-Kent as the location of the job. Another 22% indicated Chatham and 7% were in Wallaceburg (Figure 14).

Figure 15: Unique job postings in 2023 by location within Chatham-Kent



Job postings for which there was an identified four-digit NOC code. Source: Municipality of Chatham-Kent.

4.7 – Updating future workforce demand

Projecting future workforce demand at the local level is challenging for a variety of reasons including the unpredictability associated with industrial shifts, deployment of technology, productivity, etc. However, it is important to consider potential changes in workforce demand to support workforce development efforts. This section covers the expected increase in employment by industry in the community using estimates provided by the data provider, Lightcast, for OMAFRA. Lightcast projects employment growth through 2031 by top-level and detailed industry groups.

As shown in Table 24, Lightcast projects the workforce in Chatham-Kent will increase by a net 3,800+ jobs between 2023 and 2031, a 7% growth rate. The fastest growing sectors, by absolute increase in employment, will be heath care and social assistance (+874), manufacturing (+706), accommodation and food services (+641), transportation and warehousing (+622) and construction (+313). On a percentage change basis, the fastest growing sectors will be mining, transportation and warehousing, arts, entertainment, and recreation as well as accommodation and food services. Lightcast is projecting that personal services, agriculture and utilities will shed workers through 2031.

Table 24: Projected growth in employment by two-digit NAICS industry, 2023-2031, Chatham-Kent

NAICS	Description	2023–2031 # Change	2023–2031 % Change
11	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	(163)	(6%)
21	Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	36	26%
22	Utilities	(172)	(17%)
23	Construction	313	9%
31-33	Manufacturing	706	11%
41	Wholesale trade	62	3%
44-45	Retail trade	97	2%
48-49	Transportation and warehousing	622	23%
51	Information and cultural industries	35	3%
52	Finance and insurance	128	12%
53	Real estate and rental and leasing	30	5%
54	Professional, scientific and technical services	161	9%
55	Management of companies and enterprises	(5)	(18%)
56	Administrative and support*	195	8%
61	Educational services	87	3%
62	Health care and social assistance	874	12%
71	Arts, entertainment and recreation	121	18%
72	Accommodation and food services	641	16%
81	Other services (except public administration)	(47)	(3%)
91	Public administration	18	1%
X0	Unclassified	73	9%
Total		**3,814**	**7%**

Red text indicates a decrease
*includes waste management and remediation services. Source: Lightcast.

It is important for workforce development organizations to consider the impacts of technology, productivity, and other factors. For example, Lightcast is projecting a significant increase in transportation and warehouse sector workers even as new technologies such as driverless vehicles, artificial intelligence and robotics are supposed to transform the sector in the future. As of 2024, driverless vehicles are not expected to start impacting the trucking sector until into the 2030s. If Chatham-Kent, does not have the talent to meet workforce demand in the transportation and warehouse sector, these jobs could move to other communities in southern Ontario.

Table 25 shows an updated projection of workforce demand based on replacement and growth components. Replacement demand assumes 80% of workers age 55+ in the sectors as of the 2021 Census will have exited the workforce by 2031. Manufacturing and health care will be the top drivers of new employment through 2031 along with retail trade, transportation, and agriculture. In total, the community will need to fill nearly 17,600 jobs from replacement and growth demand.

The potential for change in these key sectors in Chatham-Kent highlight the need for a sector-based focus of future workforce initiatives.

Table 25: Projected workforce demand by two-digit NAICS, 2023-2031, Chatham-Kent

	Replacement	Growth	Total demand
11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	1,750	-163	1,587
21 Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	60	36	96
22 Utilities	190	-172	18
23 Construction	820	313	1,133
31-33 Manufacturing	1,590	706	2,296
41 Wholesale trade	530	62	592
44-45 Retail trade	1,900	97	1,997
48-49 Transportation and warehousing	1,000	622	1,622
51 Information and cultural industries	200	35	235
52 Finance and insurance	260	128	388
53 Real estate and rental and leasing	310	30	340
54 Professional, scientific & technical services	560	161	721
55 Management of companies & enterprises	-	-5	(5)
56 Administrative and support*	650	195	845
61 Educational services	580	87	667
62 Health care and social assistance	1,360	874	2,234
71 Arts, entertainment, and recreation	200	121	321
72 Accommodation and food services	510	641	1,151
81 Other services (except public administration)	700	-47	653
91 Public administration	420	18	438
Industry - not applicable	160	73	233
Totals	13,750	3,814	17,564

*Includes waste management and remediation services.
Source: Growth demand from Lightcast. Replacement demand derived by Mellor Murray Consultants and assumes 80% of the workforce 55+ as of 2021 will exit the workforce by 2031.

5 – Industry trends

Business counts by employment level

The number of business establishments in Chatham-Kent increased between 2019 and 2021. The number of non-employer businesses[7] increased from 7,298 in June 2019 to 8,262 in June 2023, a 13% increase.

Employer businesses (public and private sectors) increased by 9% over the four-year period. There was growth among all sizes of establishments except the largest firms with 500+ employees. There were three less firms reporting 500+ employees in June 2023 compared to June 2019. Large employers in four sectors that dropped out of the 500+ employment range including businesses in natural gas distribution, employment placement agencies, community colleges and other provincial government administration. Because there has been an increase in the number of employers in the 200-499 employee level, it is likely these large employers have downsized but not left the community. One firm in the chocolate and confectionary manufacturing sector was added to the largest employers (500+ employees).

[7]To be included in the counts data, a non-employer needs to have reported at least $30,000 in annual income in their annual tax filing with the Canada Revenue Agency.

Table 26: Business counts by employment level, Chatham-Kent

	June 2023		June 2019		% change
	#	% of total	#	% of total	
Without employees	8,262		7,298		+13%
Total, with employees	3,341		3,075		+9%
Micro 1 to 4 employees	1,678	50%	1,524	50%	+10%
Small 5 to 99	1,598	48%	1,489	48%	+7%
Medium 100-499	58	2%	52	2%	+12%
Large 500+	7	0%	10	0%	-30%

Source: Statistics Canada business counts, June 2019, and June 2023.

Employer businesses by industry

There has been a moderate increase in the number of employer businesses in Chatham-Kent since 2019. There were 266 more employer businesses[8]. The construction sector saw the largest increase adding 87 employer businesses over the four-year period. There were 33 more manufacturers in the community and 20 more firms in the transportation and warehousing sector.

Retail added a net nine employer businesses and agriculture added eight. Information and culture was the only sector to see a decline in employer businesses, dropping from 35 firms in 2019 to 33 in 2023.

[8]A single company can own more than one business location in a community. E.g., a chain of coffee shops would be shown in the business counts data as individual business establishment.

Table 27: Business counts by industry, employers, Chatham-Kent

	June 2019	June 2023	# change	% change
Total, all industries	3,075	3,341	266	9%
Unclassified	114	120	6	5%
Sub-total, classified	2,961	3,221	260	9%
11 - Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	382	390	8	2%
21 - Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	9	9	0	0%
22 - Utilities	9	11	2	22%
23 - Construction	374	461	87	23%
31-33 - Manufacturing	154	187	33	21%
41 - Wholesale trade	125	129	4	3%
44-45 - Retail trade	427	436	9	2%
48-49 - Transportation and warehousing	135	155	20	15%
51 - Information and cultural industries	35	33	-2	-6%
52 - Finance and insurance	117	114	-3	-3%
53 - Real estate and rental and leasing	131	120	-11	-8%
54 - Professional, scientific and technical services	155	180	25	16%
56 - Administrative and support*	113	131	18	16%
61 - Educational services	18	19	1	6%
62 - Health care and social assistance	240	292	52	22%
71 - Arts, entertainment and recreation	35	33	-2	-6%
72 - Accommodation and food services	185	188	3	2%
81 - Other services (except public administration)	288	308	20	7%
91 - Public administration	7	9	2	29%

*Includes waste management and remediation services. Source: Statistics Canada business counts, June 2019 and June 2023.

Growth in non-employer businesses

There has been a sharp rise in the number of non-employer businesses in Chatham-Kent since the pandemic. There were 964 more non-employer businesses in June 2023 compared to June 2019[9]. Real estate and agriculture, two sectors which traditionally have a large number of non-employers, saw the largest increases. This includes real estate agents that have no formal employment. The construction, health care, retail and administrative services also saw a considerable increase in non-employers. There were 37 fewer non-employer firms in the finance and insurance sector in June 2023 compared to June 2019.

[9] To be included in the counts data, a non-employer needs to have reported at least $30,000 in annual income in their annual tax filing with the Canada Revenue Agency.

Table 28: Business counts by industry, non-employers, Chatham-Kent

	June 2023	June 2019	# change	% change
Total, non-employers	7,298	8,262	964	+13%
53 - Real estate and rental and leasing	1,397	1,758	361	+26%
11 - Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	2,112	2,458	346	+16%
23 - Construction	443	497	54	+12%
62 - Health care and social assistance	239	285	46	+19%
44-45 - Retail trade	235	270	35	+15%
56 - Administrative and support*	147	177	30	+20%
54 - Professional, scientific and technical services	339	362	23	+7%
81 - Other services (except public administration)	372	390	18	+5%
48-49 - Transportation and warehousing	476	492	16	+3%
61 - Educational services	31	39	8	+26%
51 - Information and cultural industries	29	36	7	+24%
72 - Accommodation and food services	84	91	7	+8%
22 - Utilities	62	68	6	+10%
71 - Arts, entertainment and recreation	68	71	3	+4%
55 - Management of companies and enterprises	68	67	(1)	-1%
31-33 - Manufacturing	125	115	(10)	-8%
52 - Finance and insurance	360	323	(37)	-10%

*includes waste management and remediation services. Source: Statistics Canada business counts, June 2019 and June 2023.

6 – Community Engagement Insights

Extensive community engagement provided some additional context and insights to the economic and demographic analysis. The Local Labour Market Plan includes results of a job seeker survey, stakeholder interviews, a focus group meeting with the Chatham-Kent Community Leaders' Cabinet Employment Working Group and highlights from the 2023 EmployerOne Survey.

6.1 – Job Seeker Survey

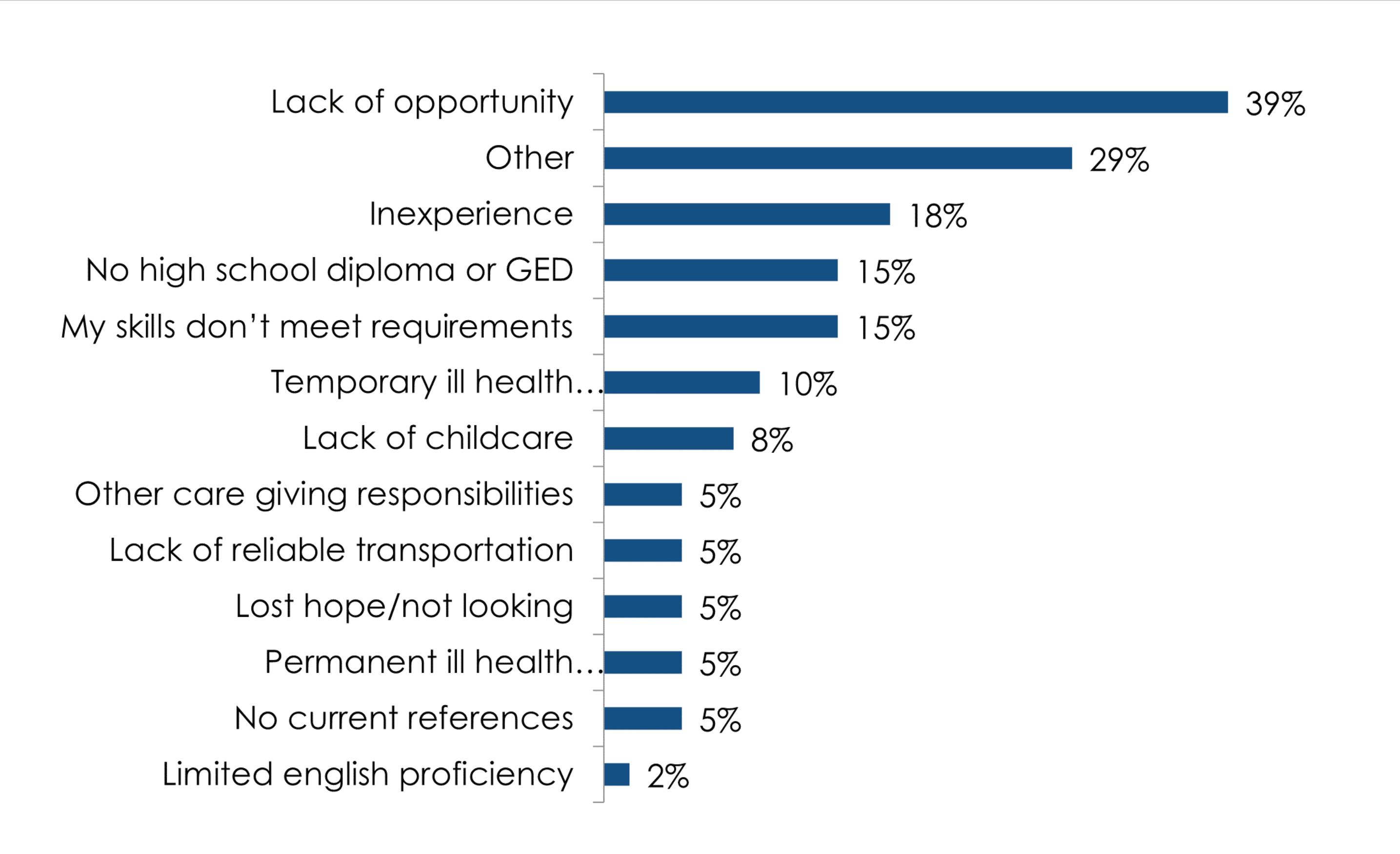
A survey of individuals seeking employment was conducted between September 20 and October 20, 2023. The survey garnered 104 responses, of which 92 were collected in the days following the Learning, Earning and Living CK Career Expo and Job Fair held on October 18 and 19, 2023. Of note, a large number of respondents were high school age which could be expected to influence the findings (35% of respondents were between age 15 to 18).

Who responded:

Job Seeker Category	Notes
Gender	Female 62%, Male 35%
Residence:	Chatham 65% followed by Blenheim (9%) , Wallaceburg (6%), Dresden (6%)
Age:	25 to 39 (29%), 15 to 18 (35%), 40 to 54 (20%)
Status in Canada	Canadian citizen (77%), permanent resident (13%)
Education	high school 25%, college 24%, university bachelor's degree 24%, no certificate or diploma 14%
Employment Status	63% of the survey participants were not currently working. Of those respondents not working, 94% were currently looking or planning to look for work in the next 12 months.

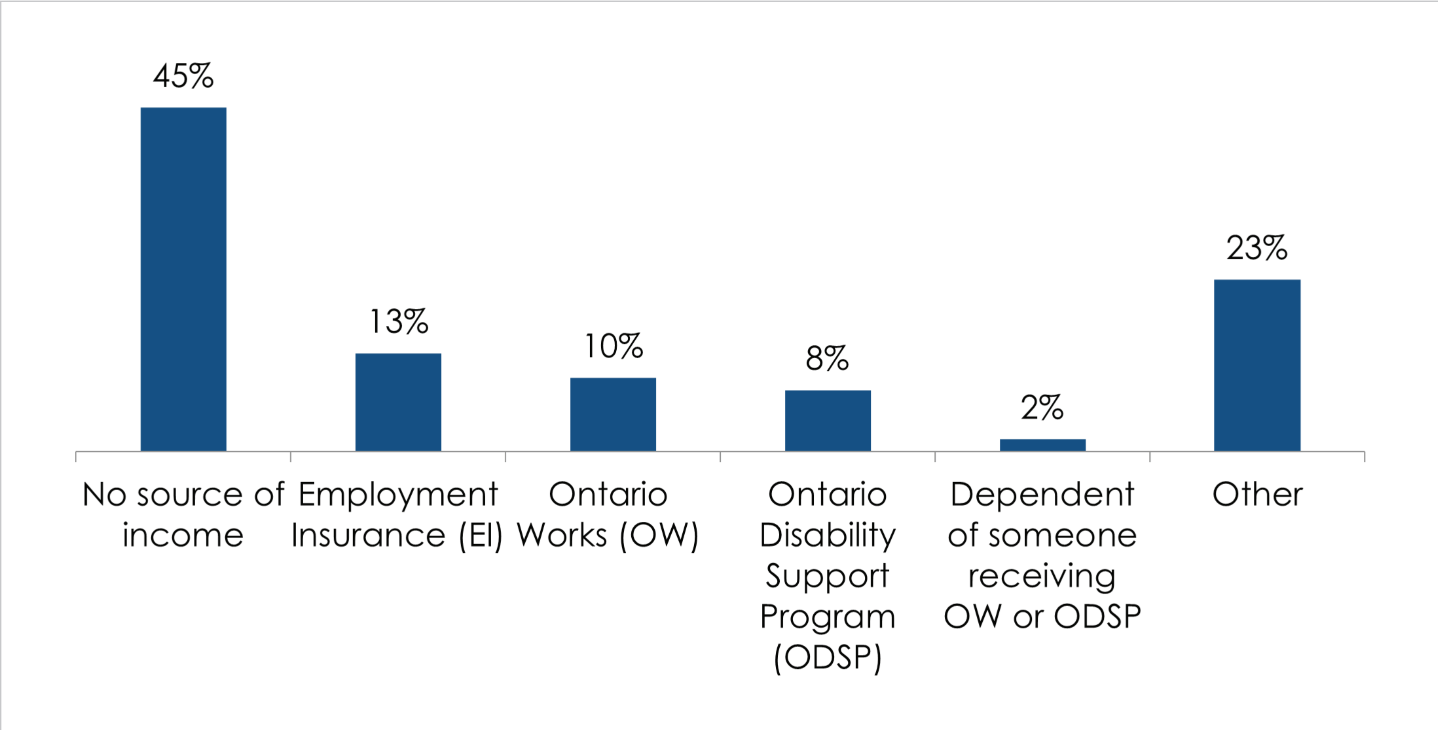
The most common reason for not working, according to the respondents, was a lack of opportunity (39%), followed by inexperience (18%). The lack of a high school diploma and not having the skills required for the available roles were each identified by 15% of respondents (reflective of the number of high school age respondents).

Figure 16: Reasons for not working n= 62



Of the respondents that were not currently working, almost half (45%) reported that they had no source of income, other referenced sources of income were Employment Insurance (13%), Ontario Works (10%) and Ontario Disability Support Program (8%).

Figure 17: Main Source of Income (n=62)



Of those job seekers that were currently working, 61% were working full time at 30 or more hours per week and the remainder (39%) were working under 29 hours a week. Just over half 53% were permanent employees while 18% were temporary workers, 16% were on contract and 13% were seasonal workers.

The employed survey responders reported that they had been with their current employer for a relatively short period with 41% reporting between one and five years and 36% with the current employer for less than one year. Just over three quarters (77%) reported a Chatham work location.

The most common mode of travel to work was to drive themselves (75%) with a reported commute of under 15 minutes (64%) or 15 to 29 minutes (21%). Seventy percent of the respondents reported that they had a reliable vehicle for work purposes.

Figure 18: Time employed with current employer

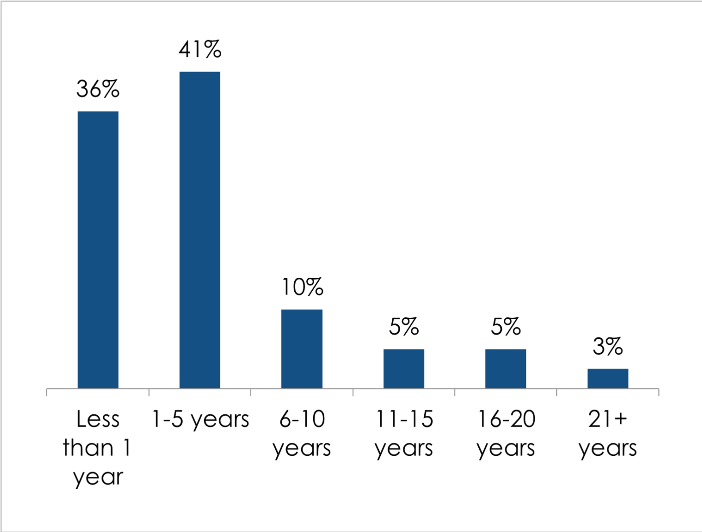
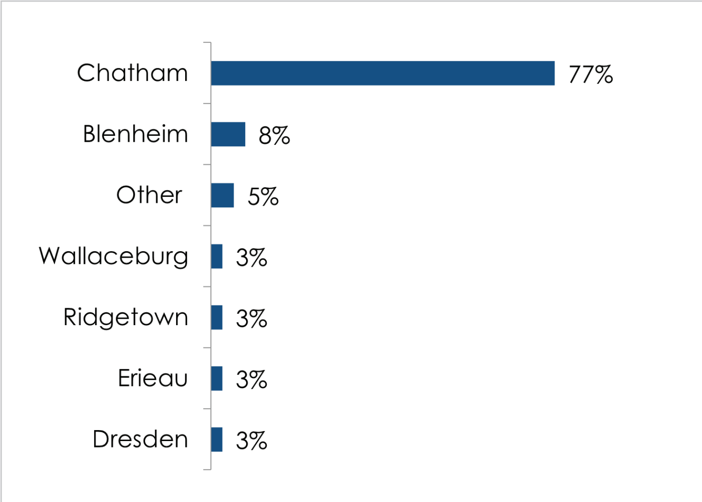


Figure 19: Work location



Most of the respondents received an hourly wage (79%) compared to 21% who received a salary. There was an equal number of respondents reporting an annual salary of between $30,000 and $59,999 and between $60,000 and $99,999. One quarter of the respondents receiving a salary had an annual salary of $100,000 or over.

Figure 20: Employed paid by hourly wage/salary

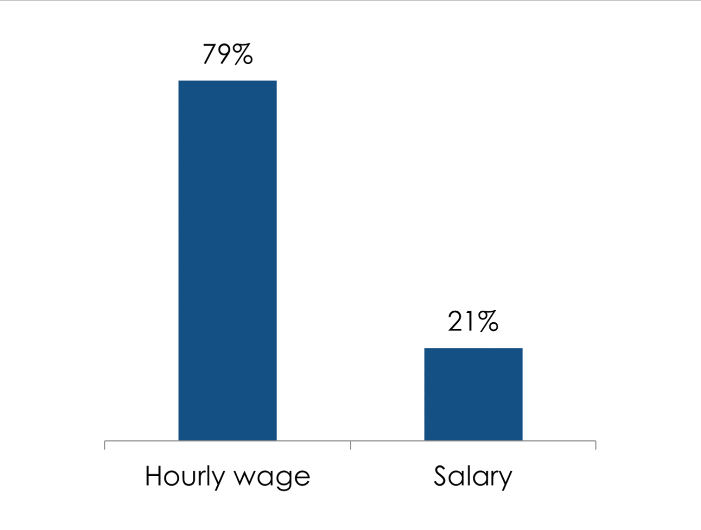
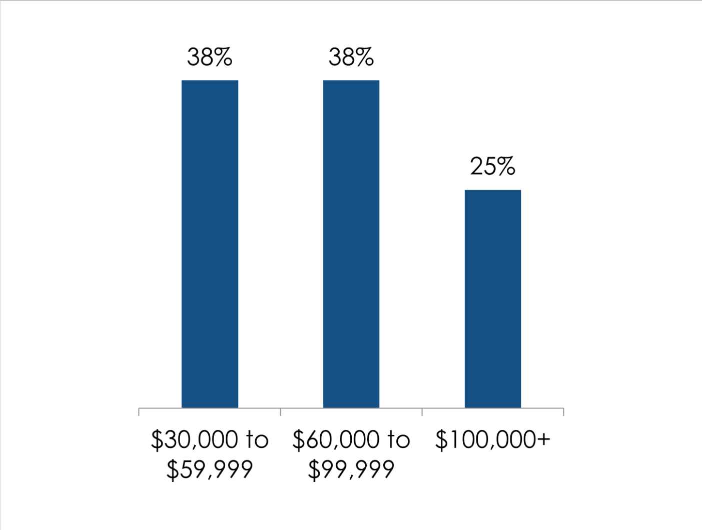
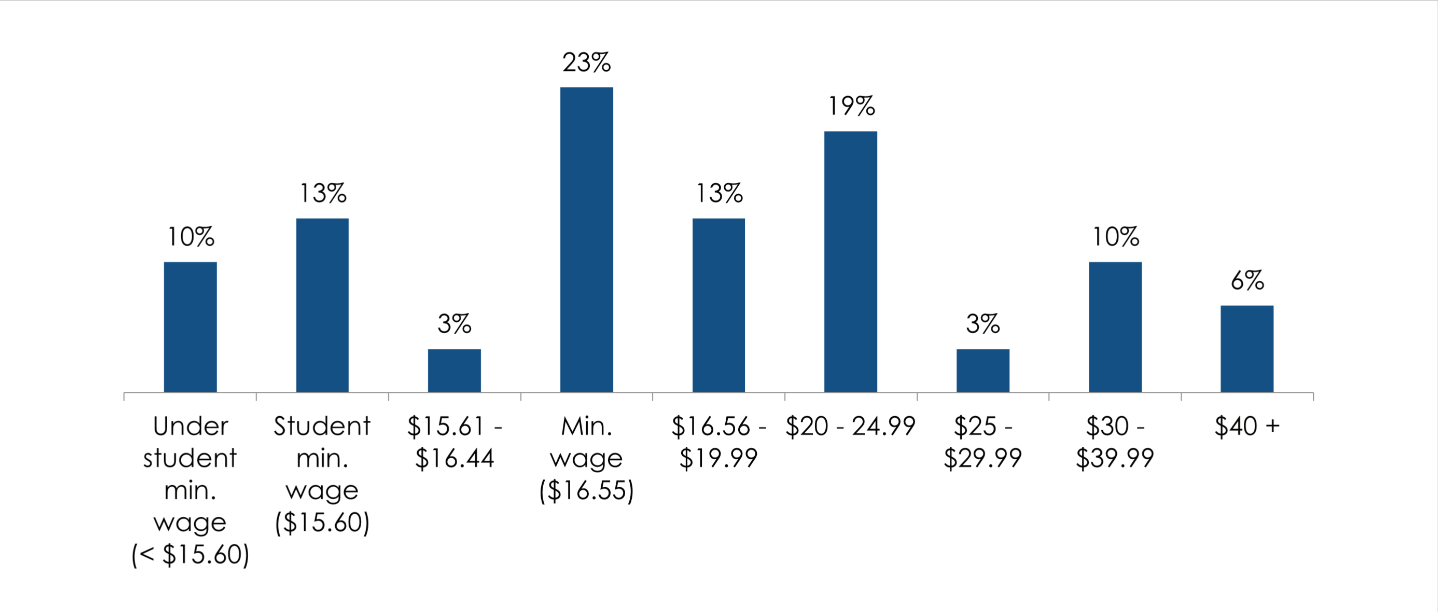


Figure 21: Annual salary



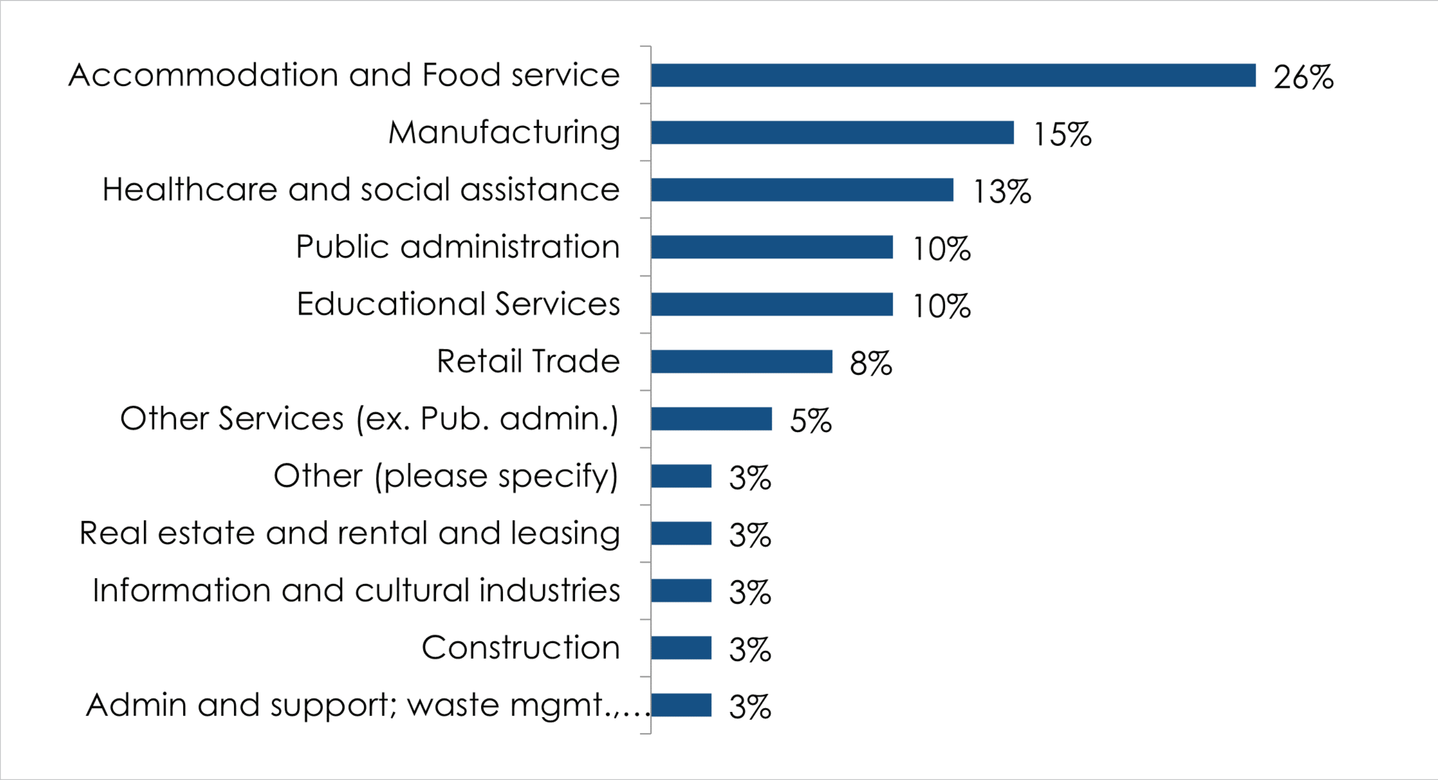
Half of the respondents receiving an hourly wage were receiving minimum wage or lower.

Figure 22: Hourly Wage



One quarter of the employed job seekers were employed in accommodation and food service (26%) followed by manufacturing (15%), health care and social assistance (13%), public administration (10%) and educational services (10%).

Figure 23: Currently employed by industry sector



The employed respondents were receiving several different benefits or perks including flexible working hours for over half (56%). Health and dental benefits were provided for 50% and 47% respectively. Other benefits included retirement contributions (36%), life insurance (36%) and paid sick days (31%). The majority (69%) of employers offered training and employee development opportunities.

Figure 24: Benefits / perks provided by current employer

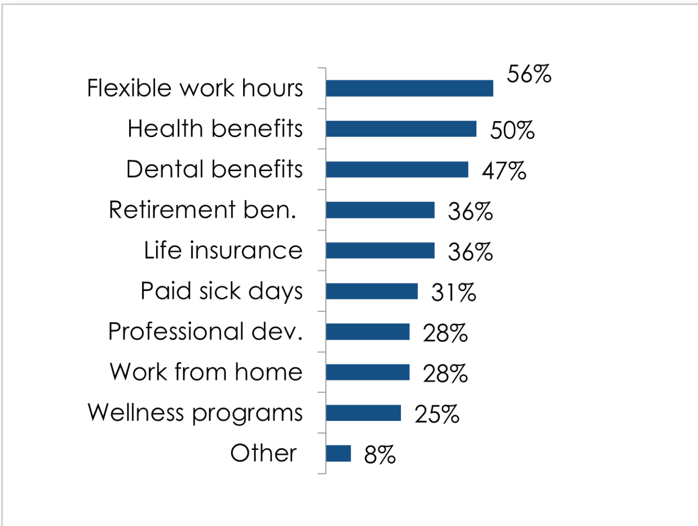
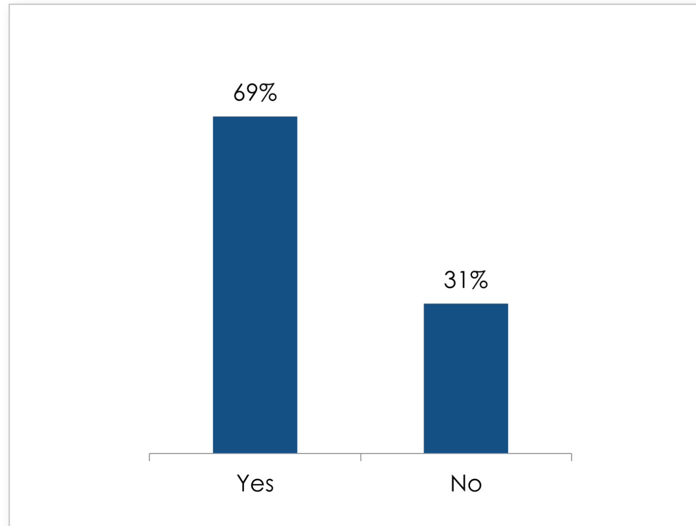


Figure 25: Training and employee development offered by employer



When asked what the employer could do to retain these jobs seekers, the most common response was increasing wages (45%), followed by offering flexible work schedules (29%), providing opportunities to take on more responsibility (21%) and providing or improving benefits (21%).

Figure 26: What could the employer do to retain you?

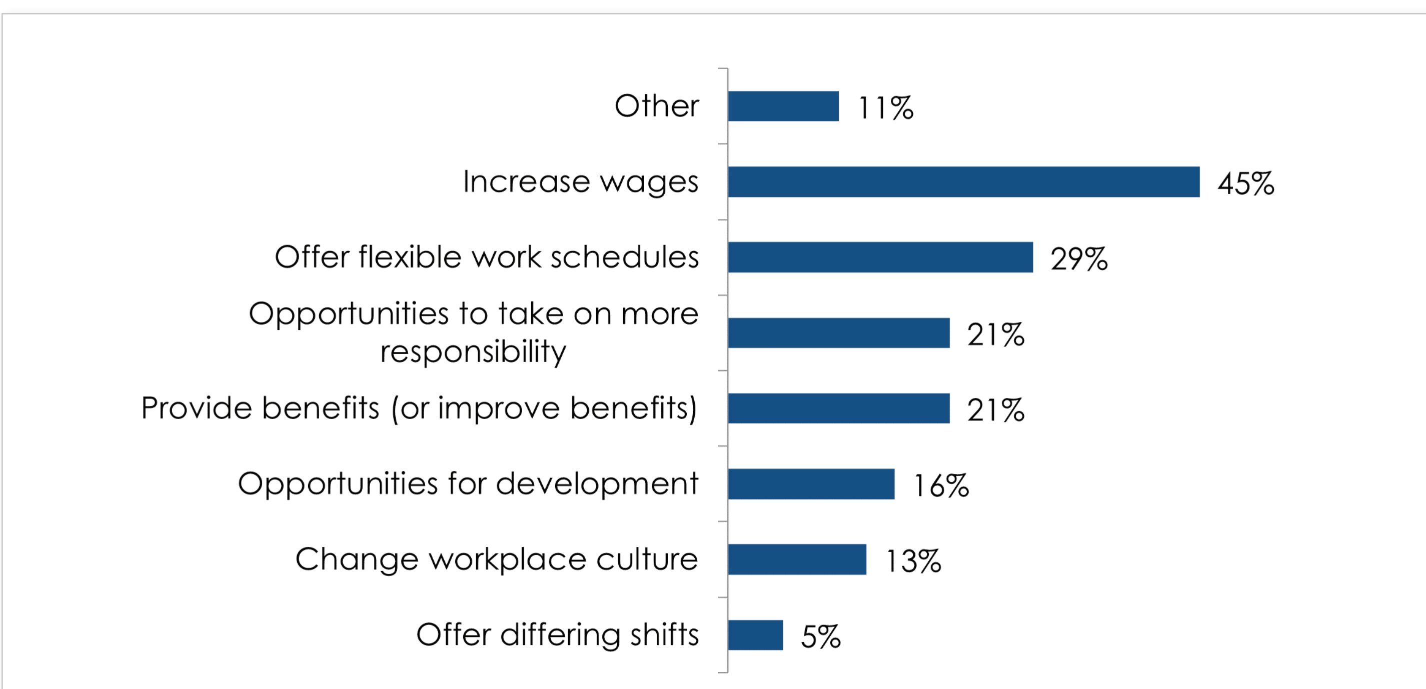


Figure 27: Share of participants looking for work currently or in the next 12 months.

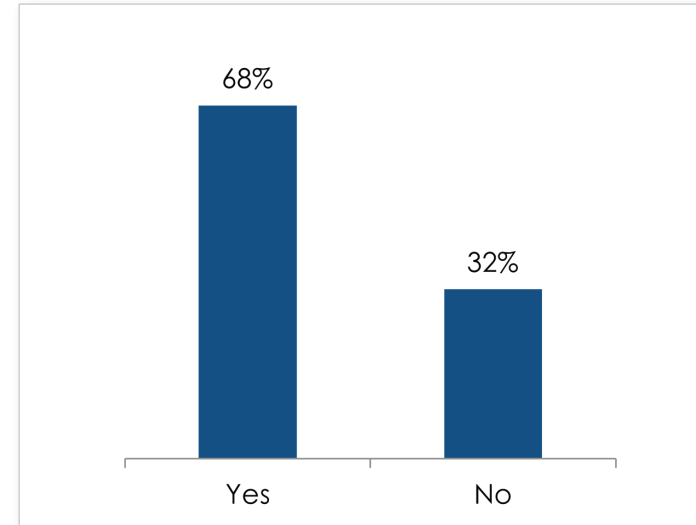
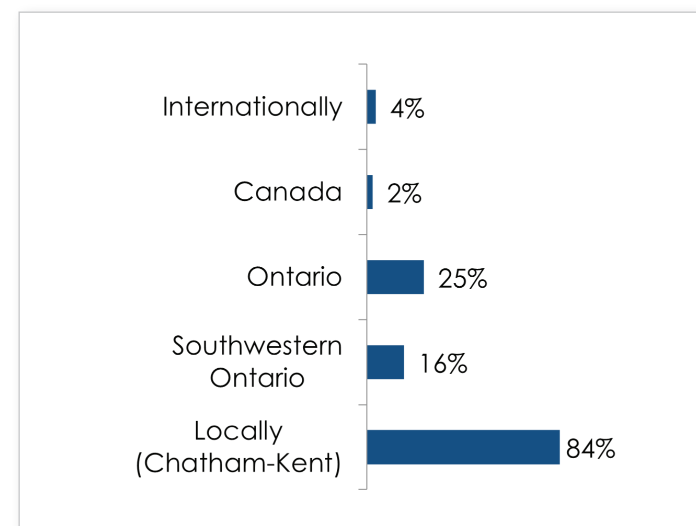


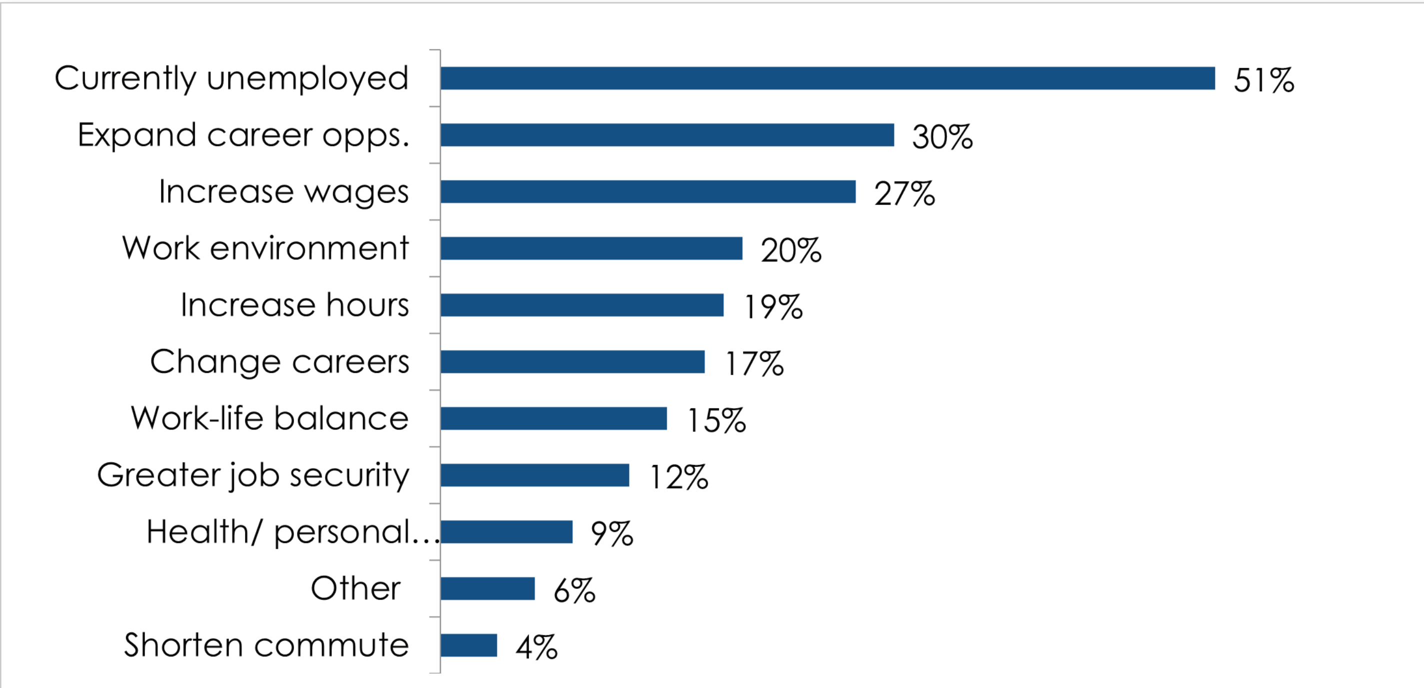
Figure 28: Job search locations



The largest share of respondents said they were looking for work in Chatham-Kent (84%), with 16% of respondents said they were looking throughout Southwestern Ontario and 25% reported looking anywhere in Ontario.

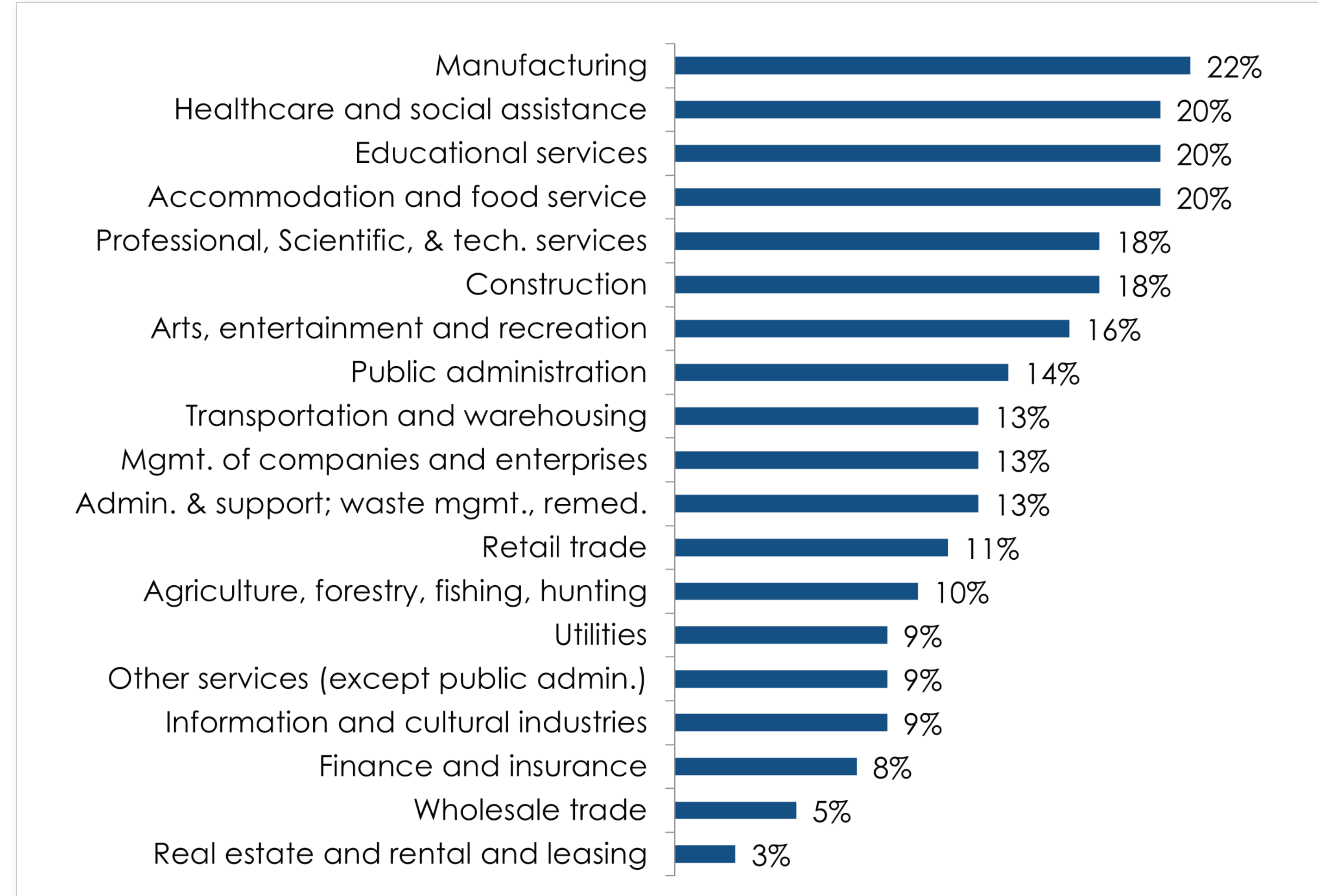
In addition to the respondents that were currently unemployed (51%), the reasons respondents reported for looking for work included expanding career opportunities (30%), increasing wages (27%) improving the work environment (20%), increasing hours (17%) and changing careers (17%).

Figure 29: Reason for looking for work



The desired sectors for work were evenly spread. The top seven desired sectors were in order: manufacturing (22%), health care and social assistance, educational services and accommodation and food service (each at 20%), professional, scientific, and technical services and construction (each at 18%) and arts, entertainment, and recreation (16%).

Figure 30: Desired sector for employment



On average the largest share of respondents reported spending up to five hours per week job hunting. The most commonly reported frustrations when looking for work were: not being able to find job opportunities, followed by not being able to get an interview (33%) and not having the skills required for the role (22%).

The most common job search methods included the government job search websites (49%), word of mouth (45%) Chatham-Kent Jobs and non-government websites (i.e. Indeed and the community job board) (40%). Other job search techniques included delivering resumes to targeted employers, on site job postings (24%) delivering resumes to random employers (without specific targets) (20%) and employment agencies (19%).

Figure 31: Average hours a week spent job hunting

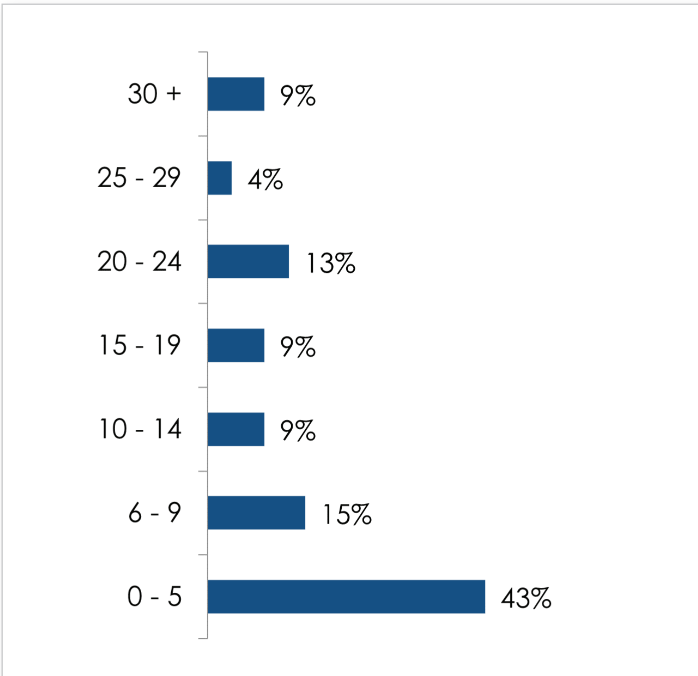


Figure 32: Biggest frustrations when looking for work

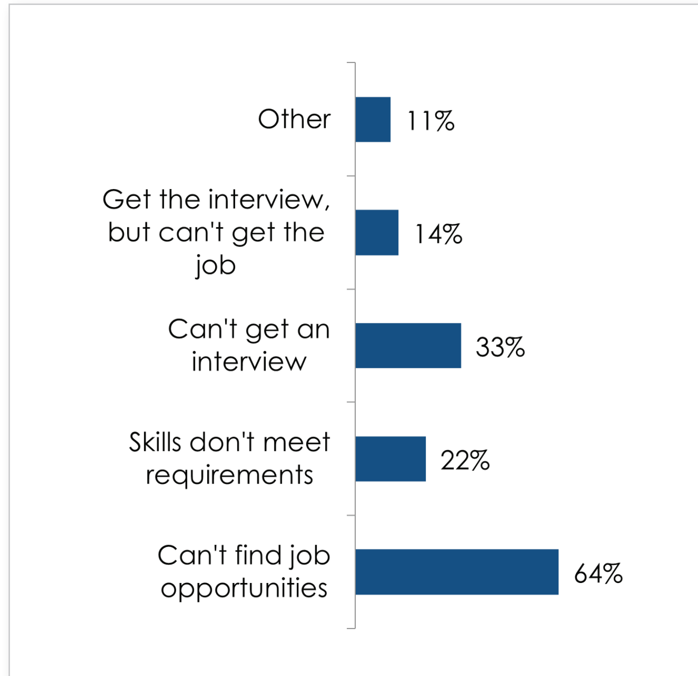
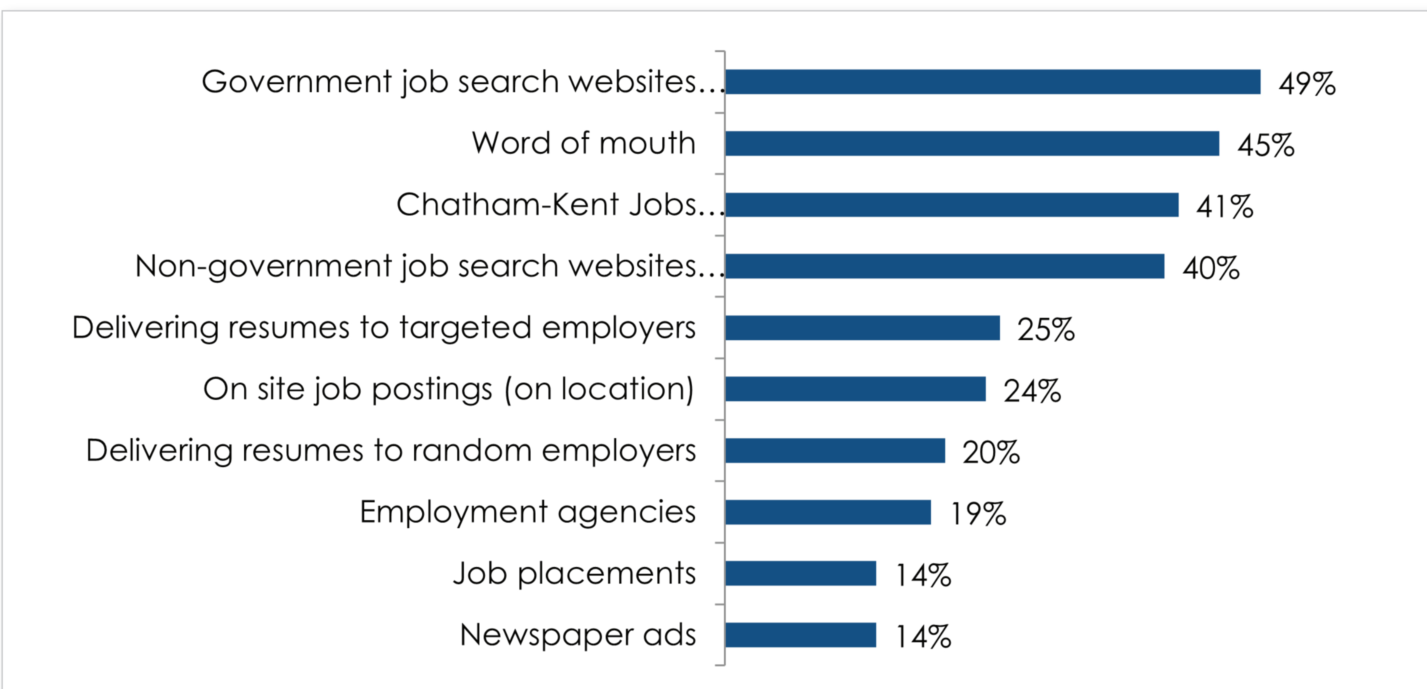


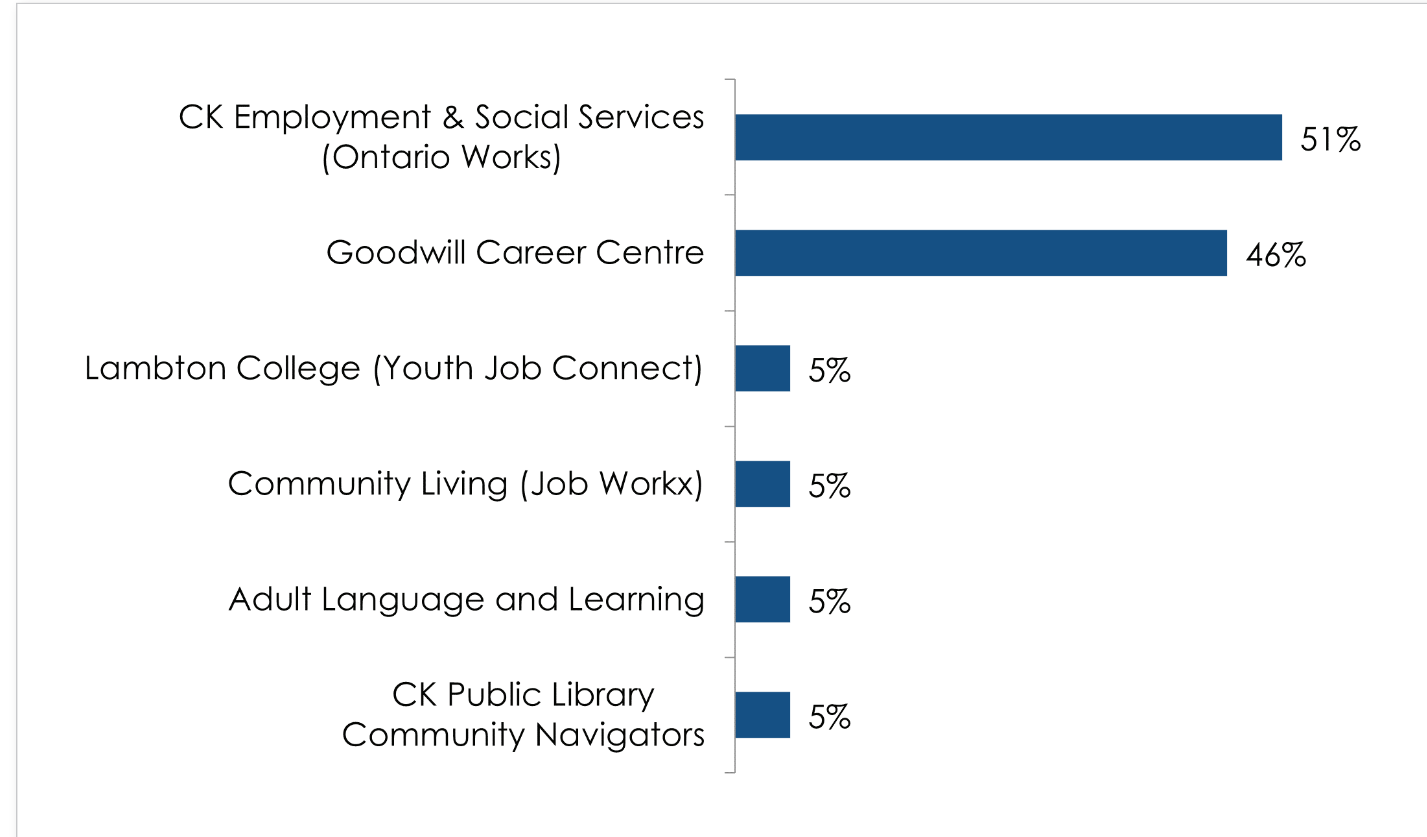
Figure 33: Job Search Methods



Slightly more than half of the respondents reported that they had received job search support from Chatham-Kent Employment and Social Services (51%) followed closely by the Goodwill Career Centre (46%).

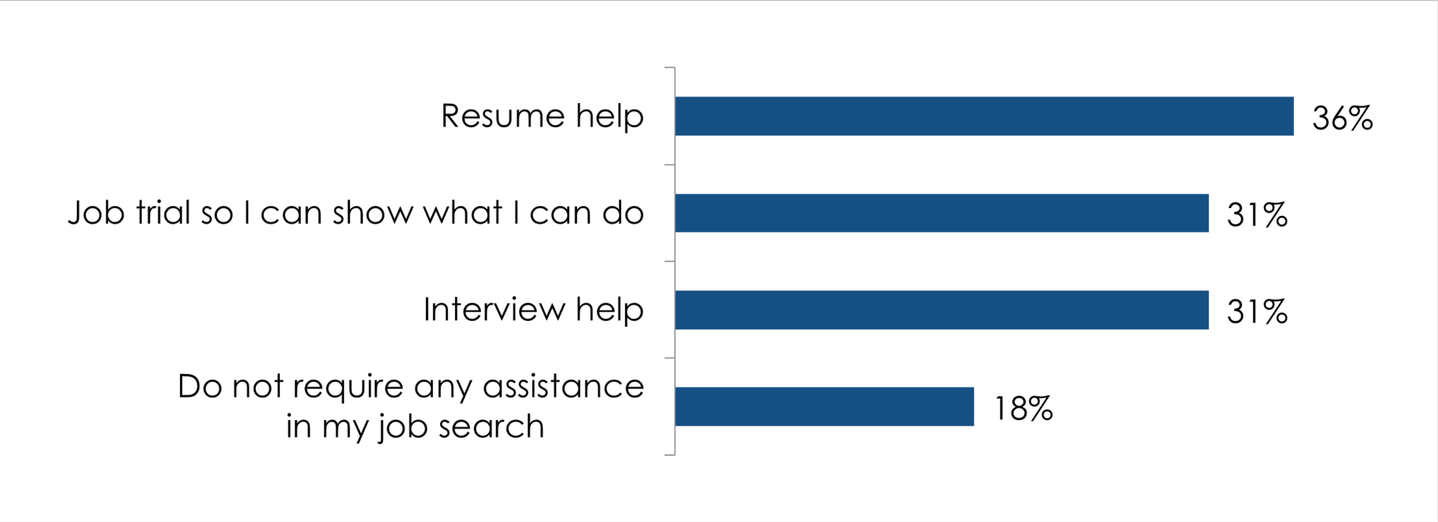
Other less frequently referenced supports including Lambton College (Youth Job Connect), Community Living (JobWorkx), Adult Language and Learning and CK Public Library Community Navigators (each at 5%).

Figure 34: Job search assistance received in last 12 months



When asked about the type of job search assistance required the most common answers were resume help (36%), job trials (31%) and interview help (31%).

Figure 35: What kind of assistance would help you in your job search?

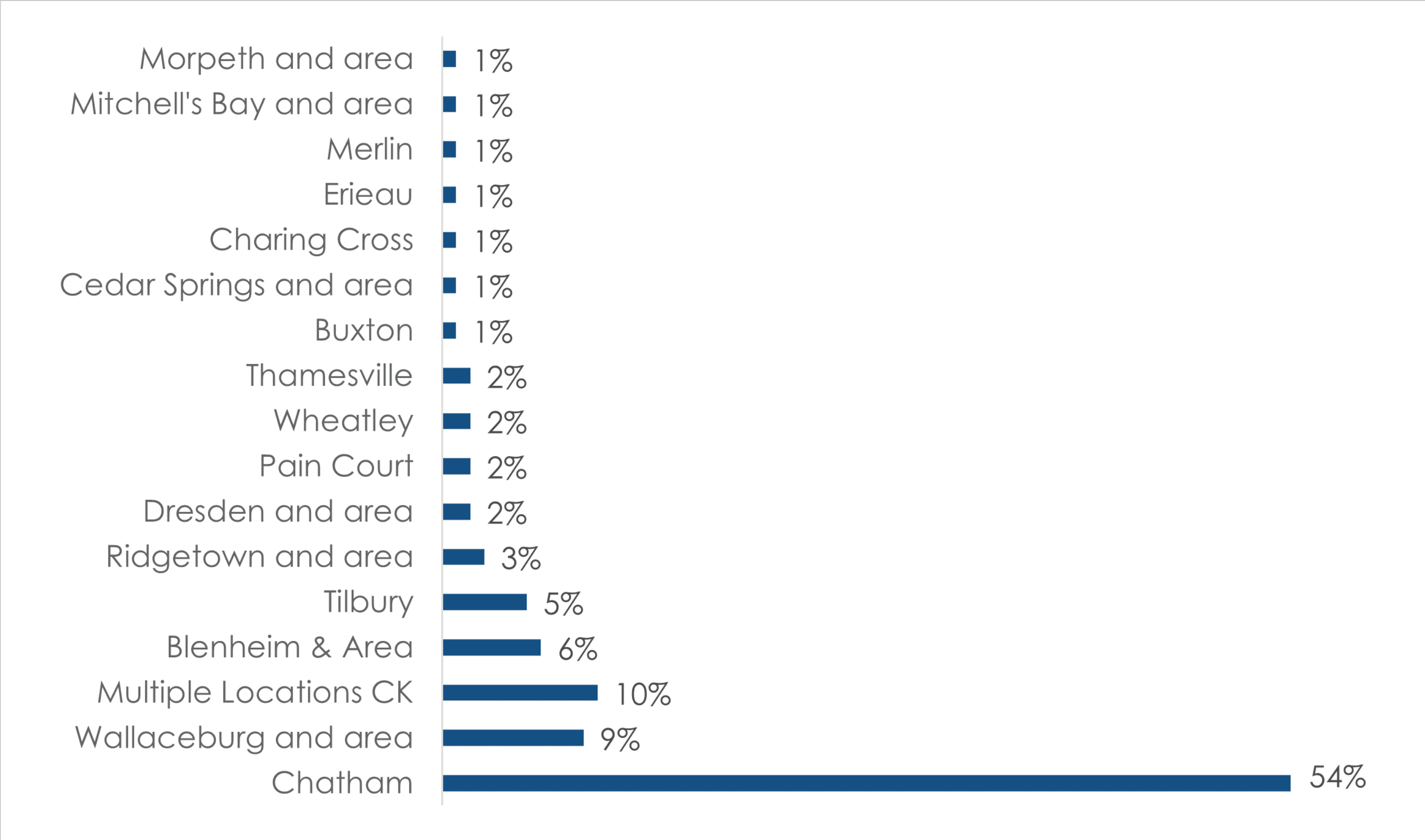


6.2 – EmployerOne Survey

The EmployerOne Survey was open to Chatham-Kent employers from October 26 to November 30, 2023. A total of 112 employers responded, representing a workforce of 11,151 employees in the community. Highlights of the survey are included below.

More than half the respondents had businesses located in Chatham (54%), followed by multiple locations in Chatham-Kent (10%), Wallaceburg and area (9%) Blenheim (6%), Tilbury (5%) and Ridgetown (3%).

Figure 36:Business Location within Chatham-Kent



Most of the survey respondents were for profit businesses (84%) with 16% in the not-for profit sector. Eighty-one percent were reporting from the company head office while another 19% represented branch locations.

Figure 37: Organization Type

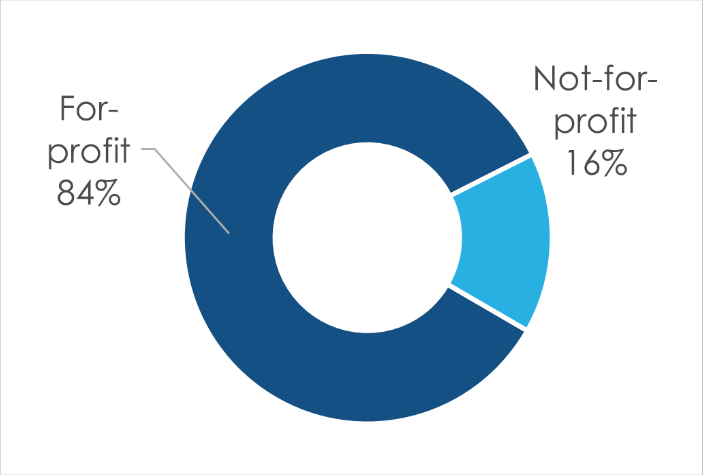
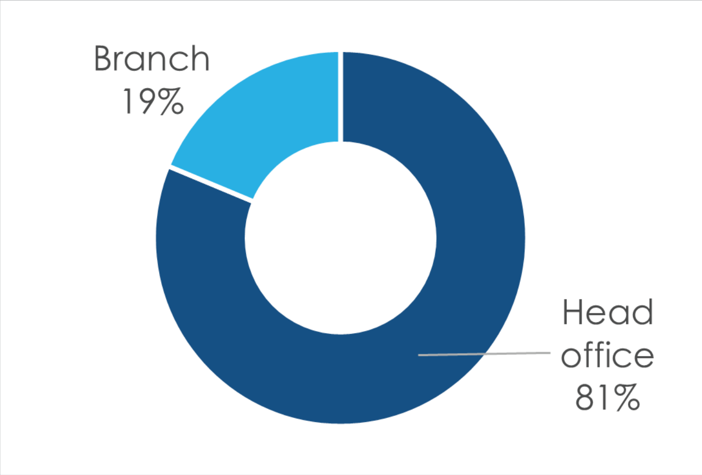
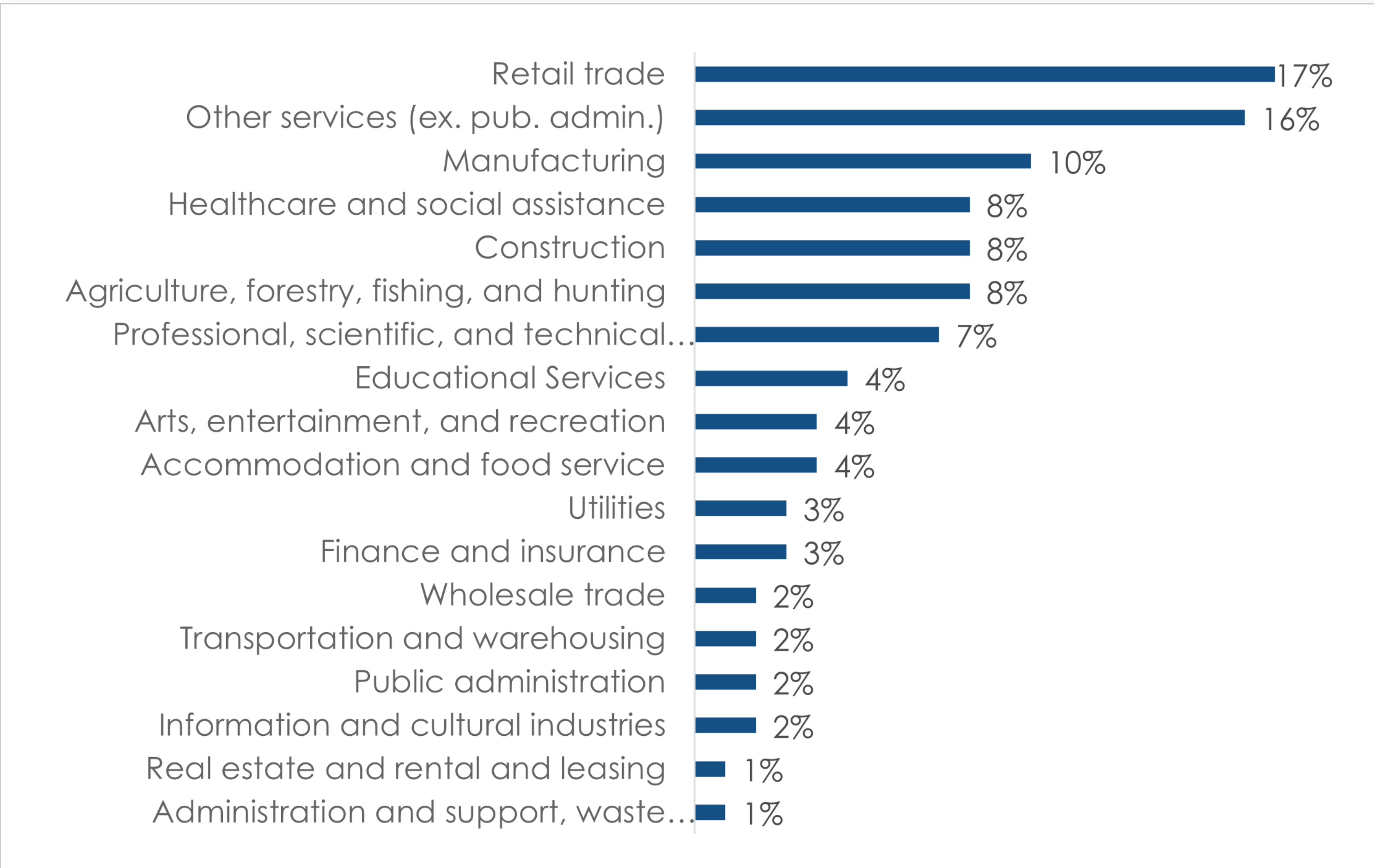


Figure 38: Head office or branch location



The largest share of respondents was in the retail sector (17%). The next top five sectors were other services (16%), manufacturing (10%), health care and social assistance (5%), construction (5%) and agriculture, forestry fishing and hunting (5%).

Figure 39: Respondents by Sector



Many of the responding businesses had long histories in Chatham-Kent. One in five had been in operation between 21 and 30 years and 17% had been in operation more than 60 years.

On average the respondents reported that 67% of their workforce was classified as full time and another 23% was part time. Seasonal and contract workers represented 6% and 4% of the workforce respectively.

Approximately 88% of the workforce was hired from within Chatham-Kent with another 10% coming from another community in Canada. Just 2% of the workforce was hired from outside of Canada.

Figure 40: What % of your workforce is classified as full time, on average?

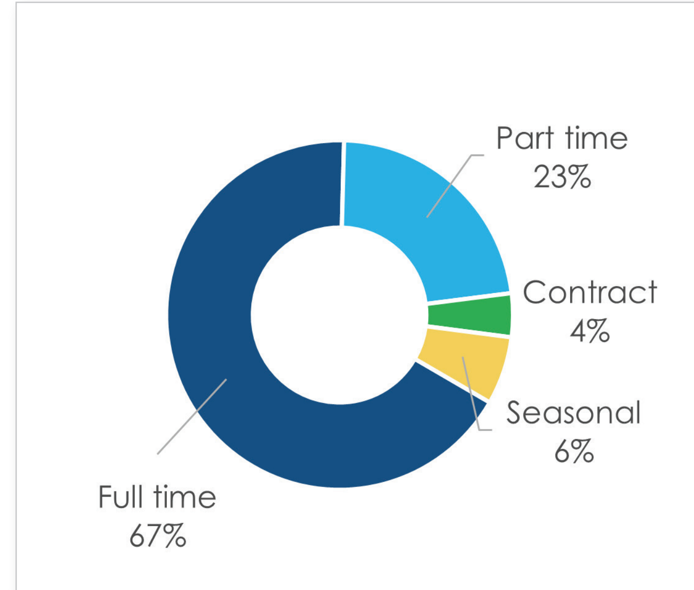
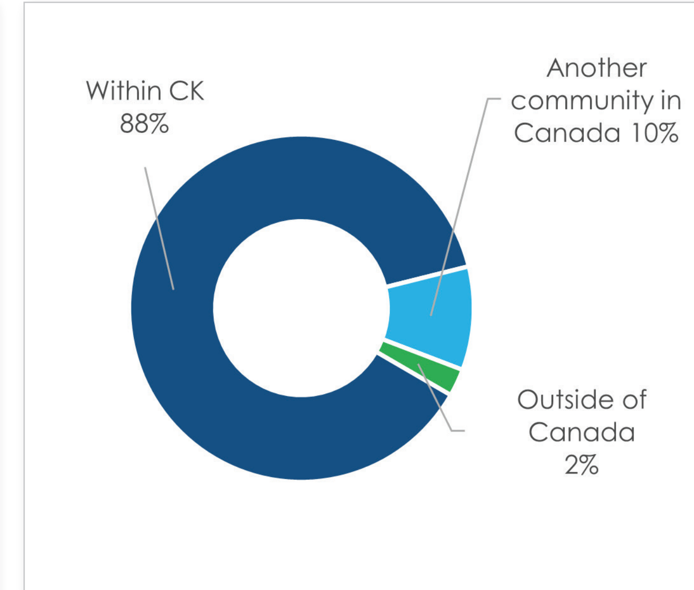


Figure 41: What percentage of your workforce was hired from which location?



Based on the EmployerOne survey, most of the workforce is working in-office or onsite (85%) with 8% working in a hybrid arrangement with some days at home and some at the office. The remaining 7% work remotely.

Figure 42: What percentage of your workforce works remotely?

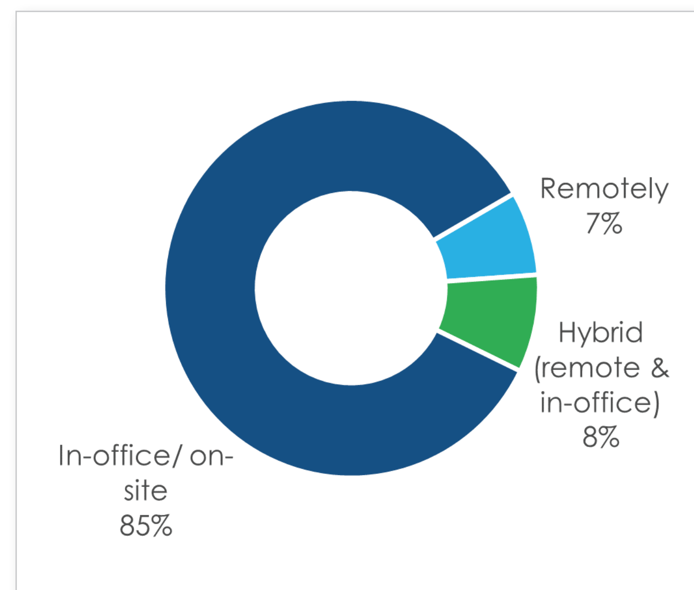
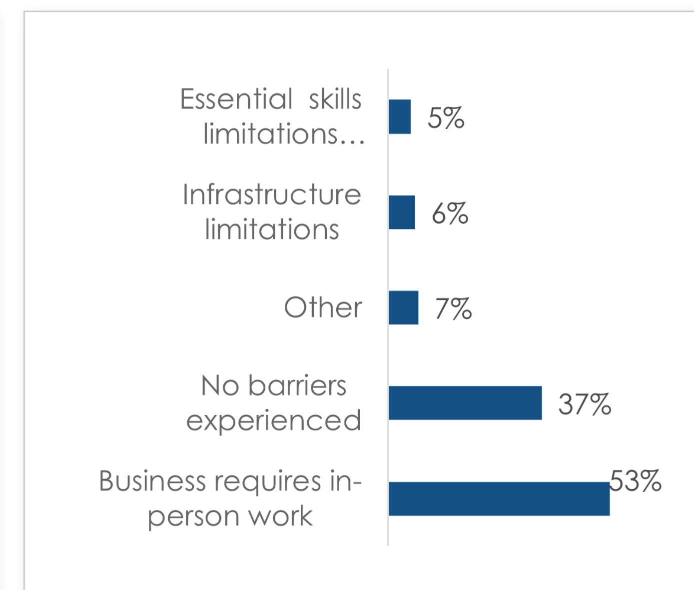


Figure 43: Barriers to supporting a hybrid workplace.



COVID-19 continues to have an impact on 24% of the businesses, including workforce shortages and increased sick time for employees.

Between November 1, 2022, and October 31, 2023, 72% of the businesses experienced some separations and slightly more (78%) hired employees during the same period.

Sixty percent of the employers surveyed said that employee retention was a concern for their organization. Almost a quarter of respondents reported that they had altered their business hours due to staffing shortages.

Figure 44: Does COVID-19 continue to have an impact on your business needs and workforce?

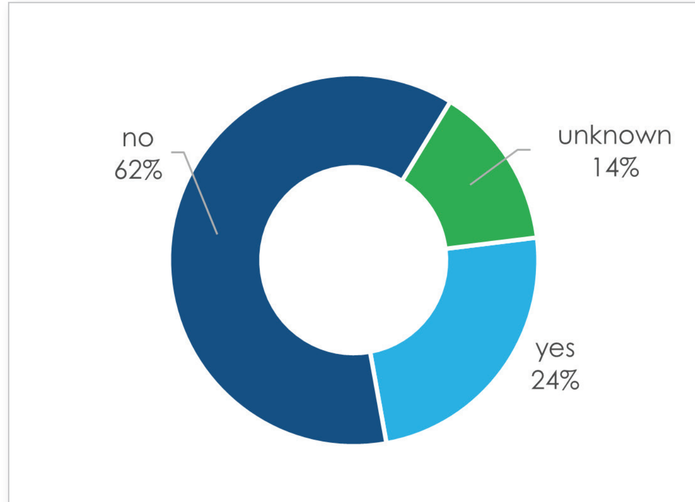


Figure 45: Is employee retention a concern for your organization?

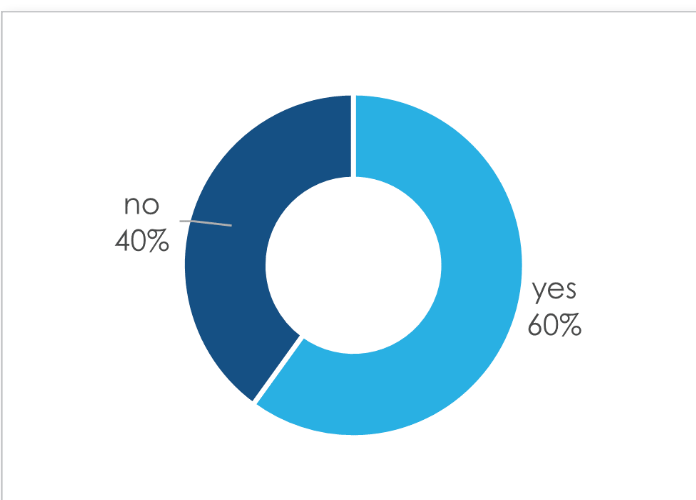
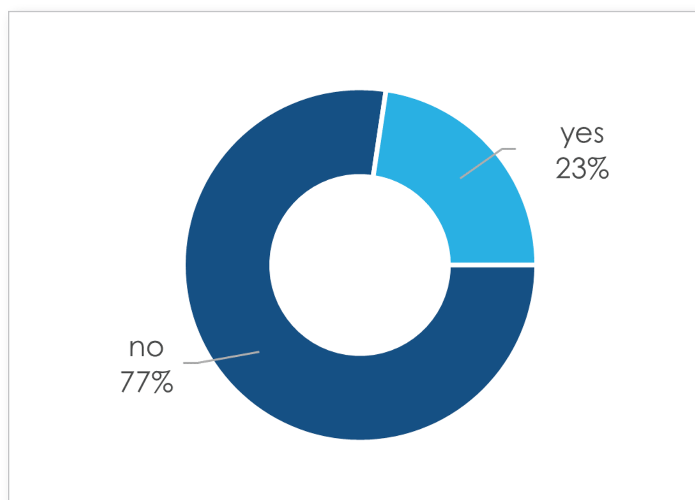


Figure 46: Have you had to alter business hours due to staffing shortages?



They reported that there was high competition for workers. Some of the challenges the employers were facing included the undesirable hours of the work (i.e. shift work or rotating shifts), too few hours of work in part time positions, not being able to compete with wages offered by competitors, roles that had low pay, the lack of benefits and the lack of housing in the community that employees could afford.

More than half of all respondents indicated they had vacant positions that were hard to fill. The main reasons cited included applicants that lacked the required qualifications, not receiving enough or any applicants at all, and a lack of technical skills among the applicants.

When asked about childcare and its impact on the ability to attract and retain talent in the past year, 10% reported the lack of childcare was preventing existing employees from returning to work and 11% reported that the lack of childcare limits access to a broader talent pool.

Figure 47: Did your organization have any vacant positions that were hard to fill? (Nov 1 22 to Oct 31 23)

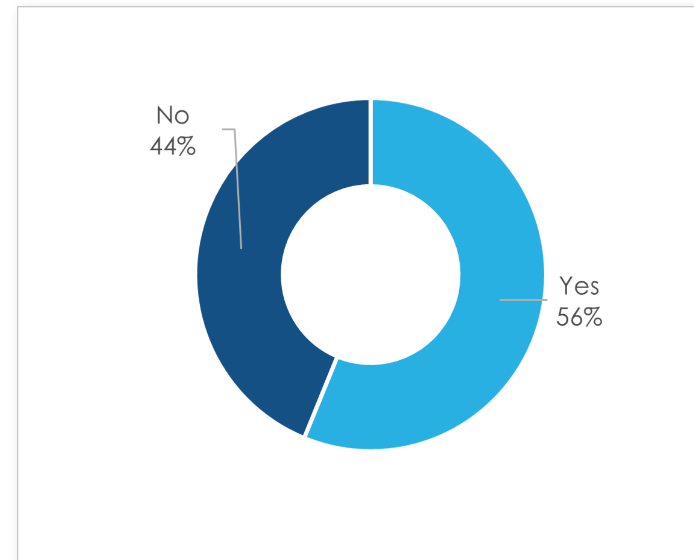
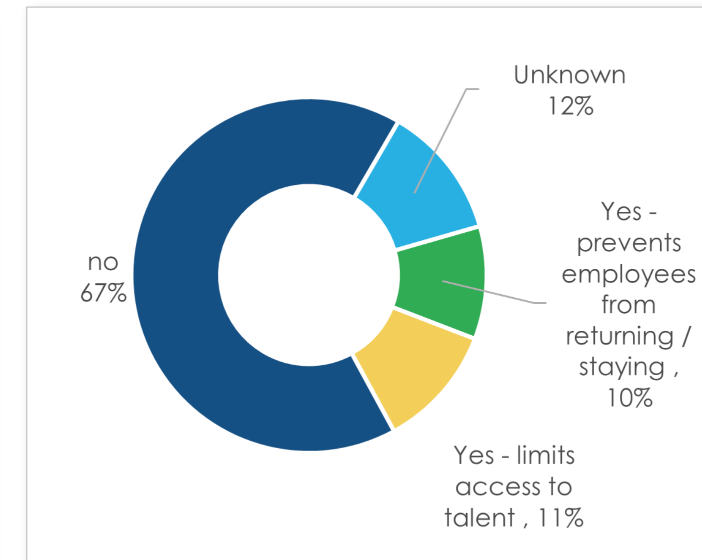


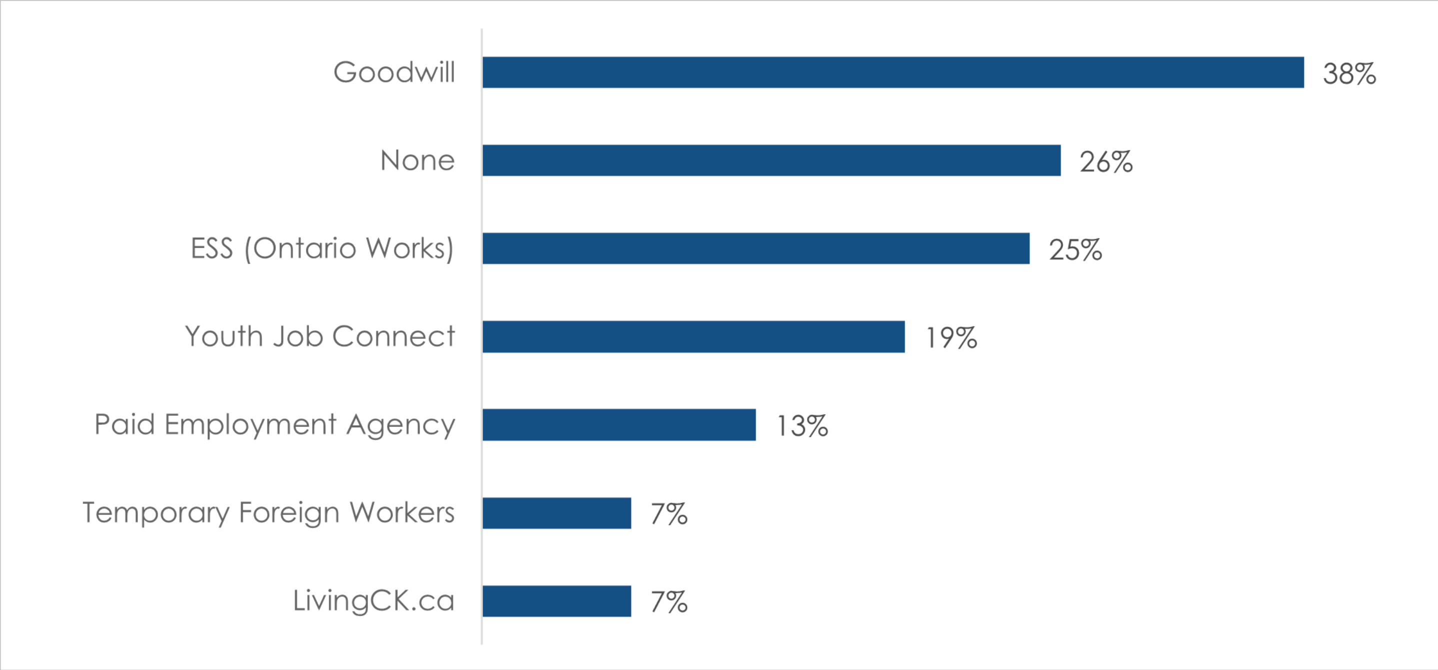
Figure 48: Has access to childcare impacted your ability to attract/retain talent in the past year?



More than one third of respondents (38%) indicated they had accessed support from Goodwill Career Centre, followed by Ontario Works (25%) and Youth Job Connect (19%).

Other supports included paid employment agencies (13%), temporary foreign workers (5%) and LivingCK.ca (5%).

Figure 49: Employment agency/ government programs accessed.



6.3 – Interviews

Interviews with Employment Ontario service providers and other community agencies that work with job seekers in Chatham-Kent were held in November 2023.

Representatives from the following organizations provided their insights on current labour market trends, the challenges facing job seekers and employers and the supports to address those challenges.

- Adult Language and Learning
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce
- Chatham-Kent Economic Development
- Chatham-Kent Employment and Social Services
- Chatham-Kent Community Attraction and Promotion
- Community Living Chatham-Kent - JobWorkx
- Community Living Wallaceburg
- Lambton Kent District School Board
- St. Clair College
- Tri County Literacy

The key themes from these interviews are listed below:

Client Challenges

Some clients are facing extreme poverty or other related issues which limits their capacity to adapt and focus on finding and maintaining work. Many clients are missing key qualifications for the jobs that are available. A lack of transportation (including public transit) limits where and when they can work.

The inflexibility of employers was also referenced as a barrier to finding employment including employers requiring Canadian job experience and no history in hiring individuals with disabilities.

Some of the individuals consulted expressed concerns about the change in Employment Services delivery effective January 1, 2024. They are anticipating some disruption as job seekers and service providers navigate a new system. They also are concerned about the perceived loss of specialized services that address the unique needs of their clients.

Securing and retaining employment

The stakeholders reported that job seekers need assistance with job readiness. Job seekers require training in written and verbal communication, digital and financial literacy and technology and computer skills to be successful on the job. Some job seekers require soft skills and socialization supports, while others need assistance in adapting to new work environments. For some newcomers to Canada, English language training is also needed.

The stakeholders reported that job seekers need job coaching to adapt to the expectations of the workplace. Individuals living in poverty need referrals to the appropriate services to address the related emotional and financial issues. They also said that virtual training for job seekers would make the training more accessible. Providing an inclusive work environment and providing training on diversity and respect for others were also referenced.

Employer Challenges

The stakeholders said that staffing shortages continues to be an issue for employers. Employers are reporting issues finding qualified staff. They are seeking individuals with workplace literacy and problem-solving skills. They said that employers are facing an aging workforce and addressing the change in the work expectations of younger workers. Employers are also concerned about the potential for an economic slowdown in 2024.

Employer Supports

Employers particularly need assistance with programs that are geared towards entry level workers, including assisting them to get to work. They are looking for assistance with finding apprentices.

Employers need help with diversity training and inclusion initiatives. They also need assistance with onboarding new hires with welcoming supports like an employment navigators and other training in the workplace. Because many of the businesses are short staffed, they cannot afford to take time away from the employees' regular work activity to provide training.

6.4 – Employment Working Group Meeting

The Chatham-Kent Community Leaders' Cabinet Employment Working Group held a workshop on October 26, 2023, to discuss workforce development in the region. When asked to describe the current state of workforce development in Chatham-Kent the participants used words such as "coordinated," "diverse," and "changing competition." They also emphasized the need for a progressive research base, better coordination, and addressing local training gaps. Participants felt that the workforce environment was evolving and challenging but had potential to support growth and positive change.

When envisioning the future of workforce development, meeting participants expressed a desire for alignment of skills with employer demand. They also described a desire for balance, responsiveness, and sustainability. They emphasized the importance of being agile, innovative, and embracing diversity to meet the region's evolving needs.

The main barriers to recruiting and retaining workers in Chatham-Kent as identified by the workshop participants included access to housing, lower wage levels, competition from urban centers, and a lack of full-time, permanent employment. Childcare, limited employment opportunities for partners, and work-life balance were also highlighted, along with the need to combat racism and to provide clear pathways for employment.

The participants also identified a variety of opportunities for attracting and retaining workers including leveraging Chatham-Kent's quality of life, a growing and thriving region, establishing flexible employer policies, and supporting entrepreneurship. Affordable housing (relative to other regions), innovation, strong social supports, and the friendly nature of the community were also seen as assets.

Looking ahead, the participants said that the workforce development priorities for Chatham-Kent in the next five years should include improving primary care services, ensuring inclusive and accessible services, addressing housing issues, and investing in retention strategies. Data-driven decision-making, alignment with council priorities, and nurturing relationships to retain international students were also deemed essential. Economic growth and the revitalization of public spaces were seen as important drivers for attracting and retaining talent in the region.

7 – Employment Ontario Program Clients

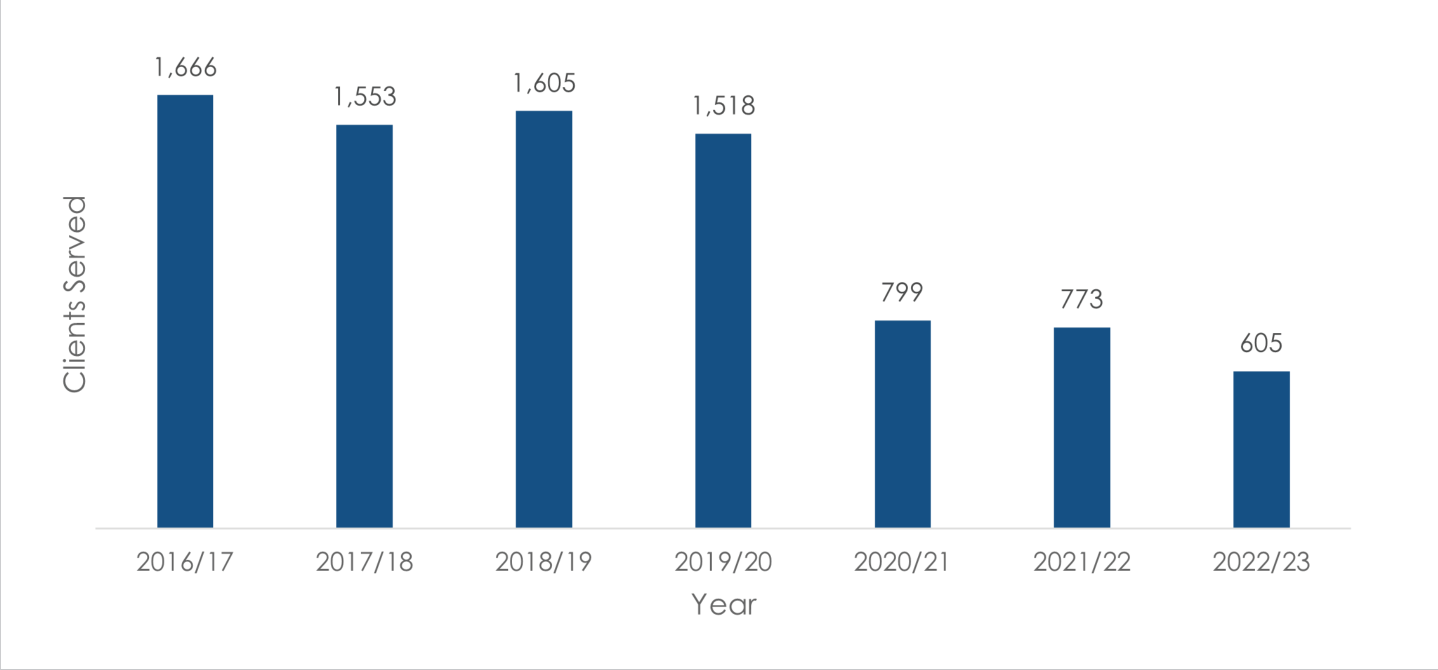
This section provides a summary of client data for those individuals accessing the following Employment Ontario programs:

- Canada Ontario Jobs Grant (COJG)
- Employment Service (ES)
- Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS)
- Ontario Employment Assistance Service (OEAS)
- Better Jobs Ontario (BJO)
- Youth Job Connection (YJC)
- Youth Job Connection Summer (YJC-S)
- Apprenticeship (APPR)
- Integrated Employment Services (IES)

Employment Ontario Program client data was extracted from the "Employment Ontario Information System – Case Management System (EOIS-CaMS). Apprenticeship data was extracted from the EOIS Apprenticeship Application (APPR). Data counts lower than 10 participants have been suppressed to ensure confidentiality.

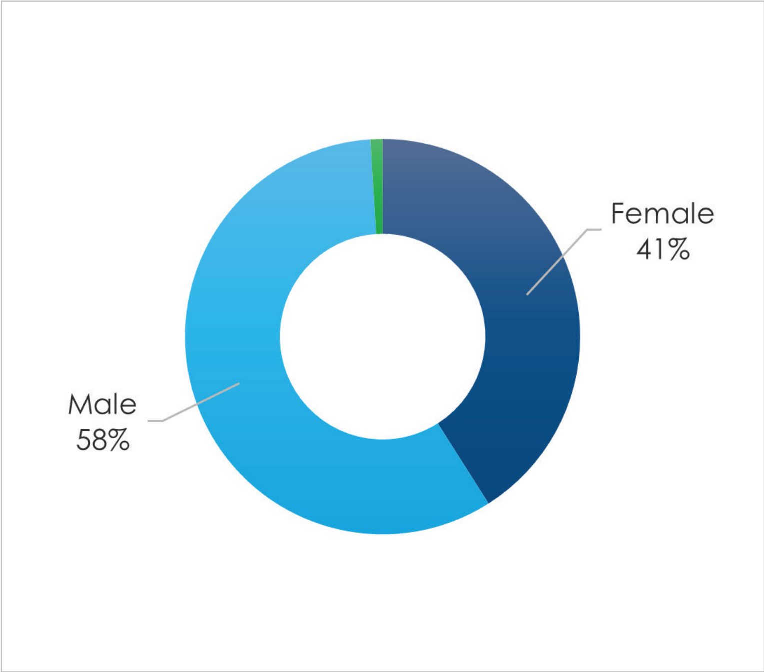
The number of Employment Service Clients has continued to decline since the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020/21 and now sits at 605 clients served in the 2022/23 fiscal year.

Figure 50: Number of Employment Services Clients Served in Chatham-Kent 2016/17 to 2022/23



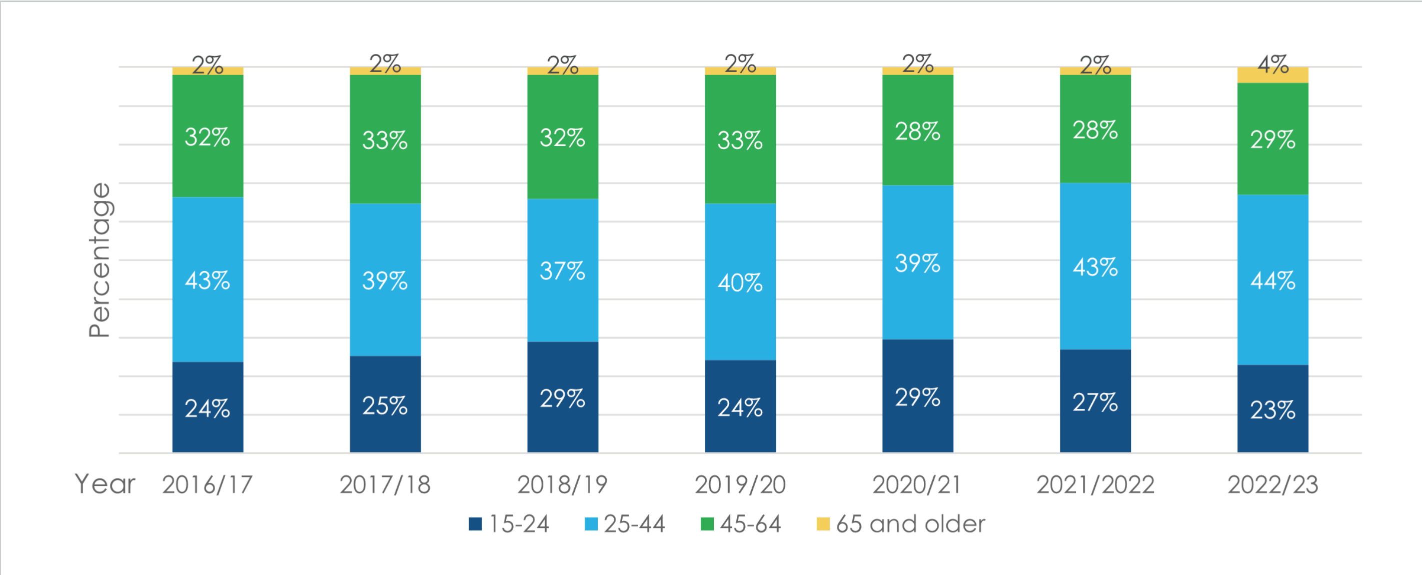
There are more male clients (58%) than female clients (41%).

Figure 51: Employment Services Clients Served by Gender, 2022/23



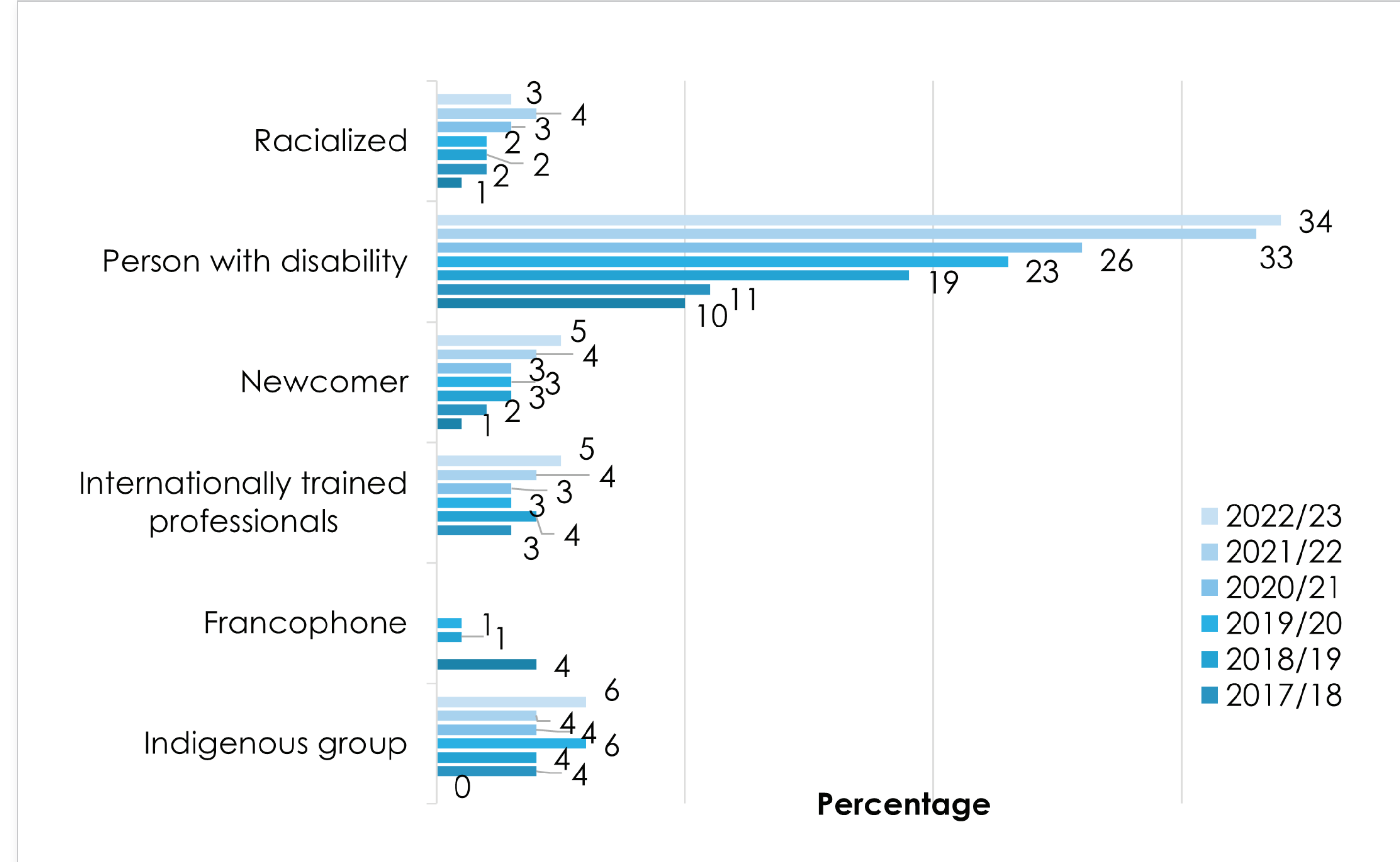
While the number of clients has declined the share of clients served by age has remained relatively consistent over the years with the largest share of clients served (44%) between ages 25 and 44.

Figure 52: Employment Services Clients Served by Age, 2016/17 to 2022/23



The number of racialized, newcomer and internationally trained clients has gradually increased over the years but still represents under 5% each. The number of individuals identifying as Indigenous has remained relatively consistent between 4 and 6% of all clients. The most significant change has been in the number of clients with a disability which has grown from 10% of the client base in 2016/17 to 34% in 2022/23. These data suggest an opportunity to identify and addressing the barriers to employment for individuals with a disability.

Figure 53: Employment Services Clients Served by Designated Groups



The largest share of clients (44%) had completed secondary school and 29% have a certificate or diploma. Almost one in five clients have not completed high school and 7% of clients have a bachelor's degree.

Most clients were out of employment or training for under one year including 45% under three months, 15% between three and six months and 14% between six and twelve months. One quarter of the clients were out of employment more than 12 months.

Figure 54: Employment Services Clients Served by Highest Level of Education

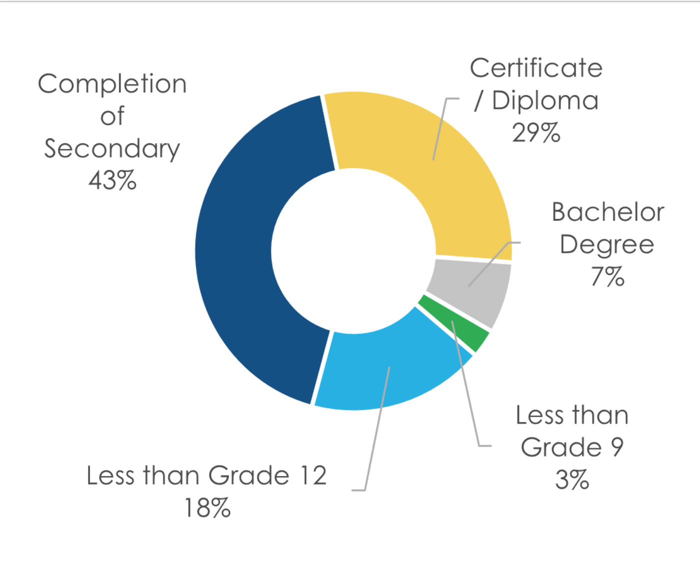
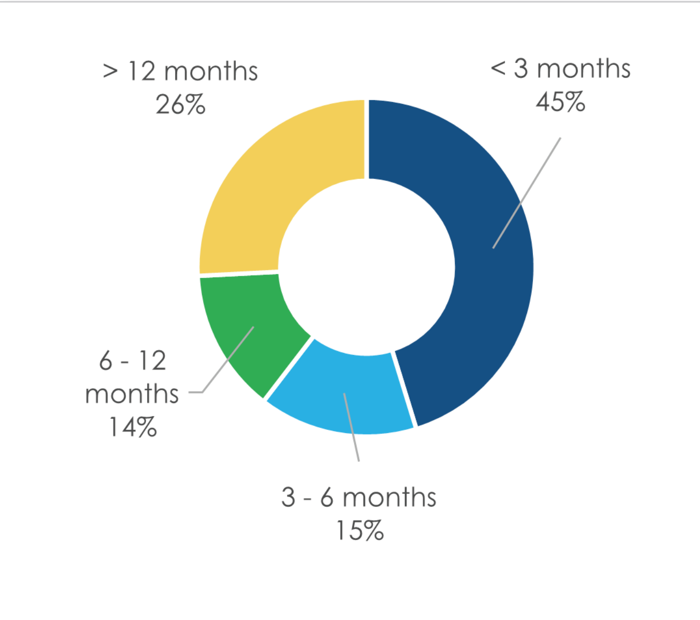
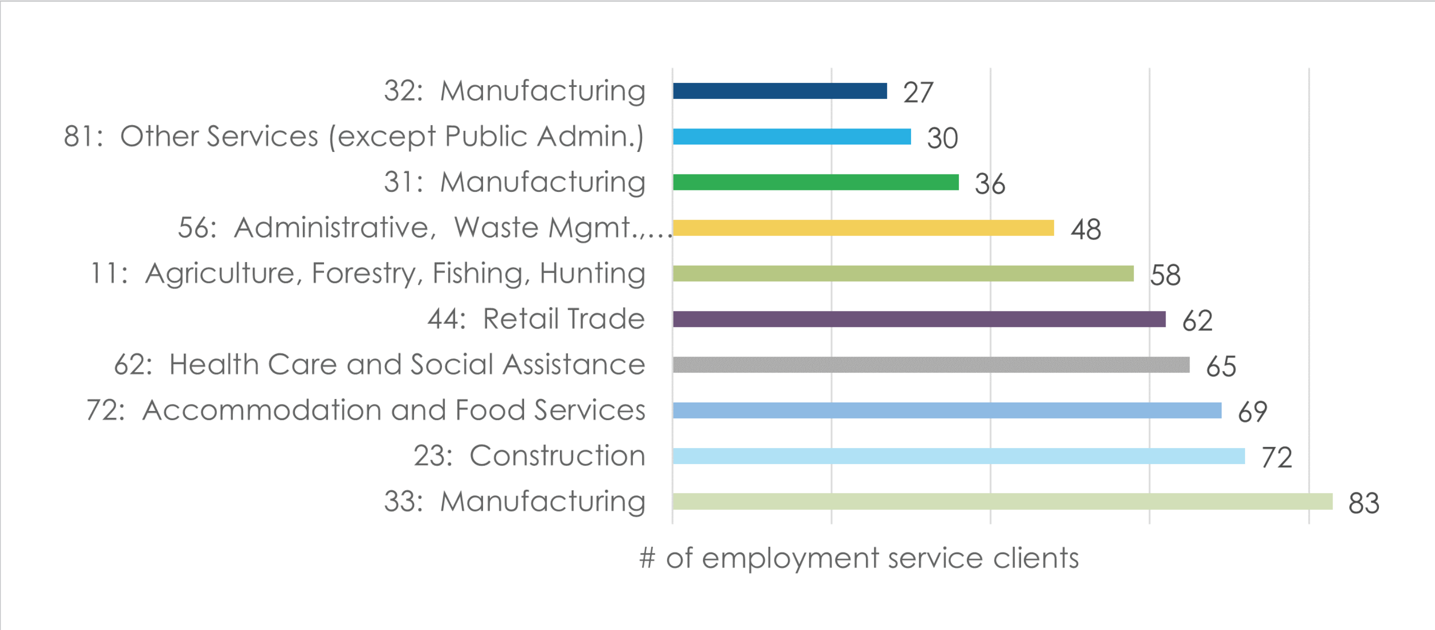


Figure 55: Length of time out of employment / training



The top layoff industries for employment service clients were 33: Manufacturing (food, beverage, tobacco, textile, apparel, leather, and allied products), 22: Construction, 72: Accommodation and food services, 62: Health care and social assistance and 44: Retail trade. The combined number of clients previously employed in some form of manufacturing is double that of any other layoff industry. The top three layoff occupations are concentrated in manufacturing and construction and include labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities, trades helpers, construction and maintenance and transport, heavy equipment operation and maintenance.

Figure 56: Top 10 Layoff Industries 2022-23

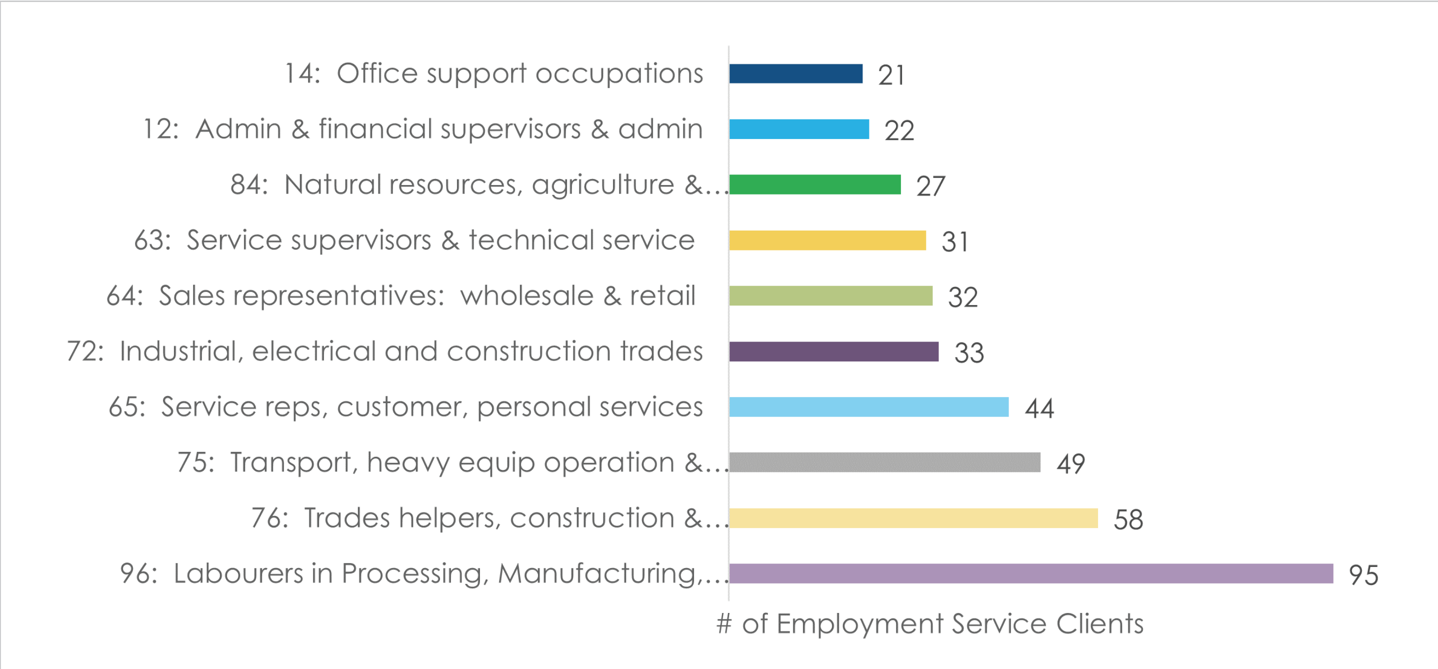


31: Manufacturing includes food, beverage, tobacco, textile, apparel, leather and allied product manufacturing

32: Manufacturing includes wood products, paper, printing, petroleum and coal, chemical, plastics, and not metallic mineral product manufacturing

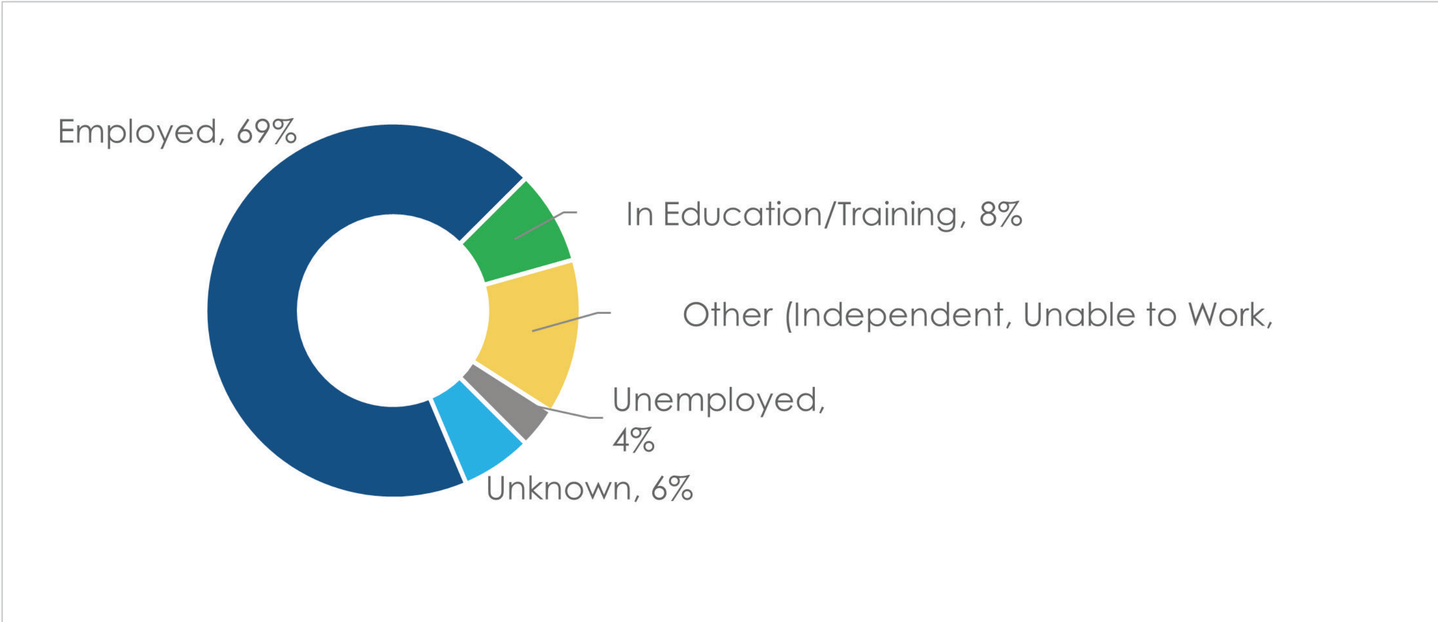
33: Manufacturing includes primary metal, fabricated metal products, machinery, electrical equipment, appliance and components, transportation equipment, furniture, and related products

Figure 57: Top 10 Layoff Occupations



Seven out of ten Employment Services clients were employed at the exit summary and 8% continued in education and training and only 4% were unemployed at the exit summary.

Figure 58: Outcome at Exit Summary



Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) clients

There were 138 Literacy and Basic Skills clients in 2022-23. The majority of clients were age 15 to 24 (51%), followed by 37% age 25 to 44. Twelve percent of the learners were age 45 to 64 age group. Over half of the Literacy and Basic Skills clients are female (57%).

Figure 59: CK Literacy and Basic Skills Learners by Age

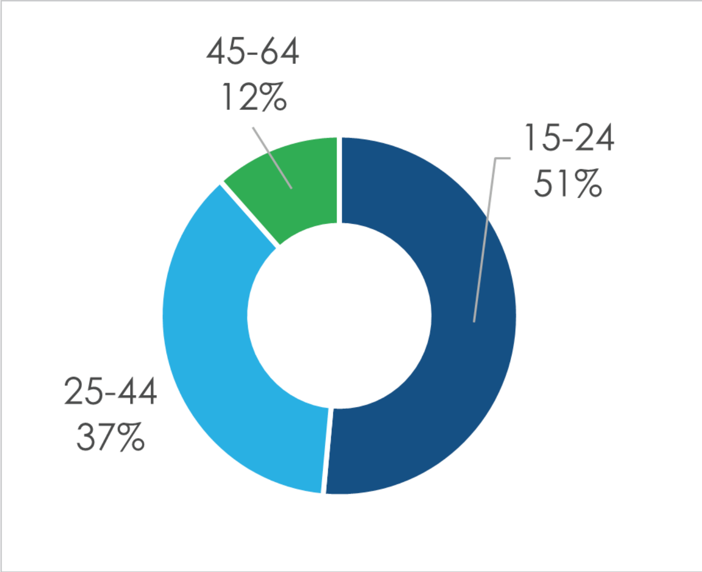


Figure 60: Literacy and Basic Skills Learners by Gender

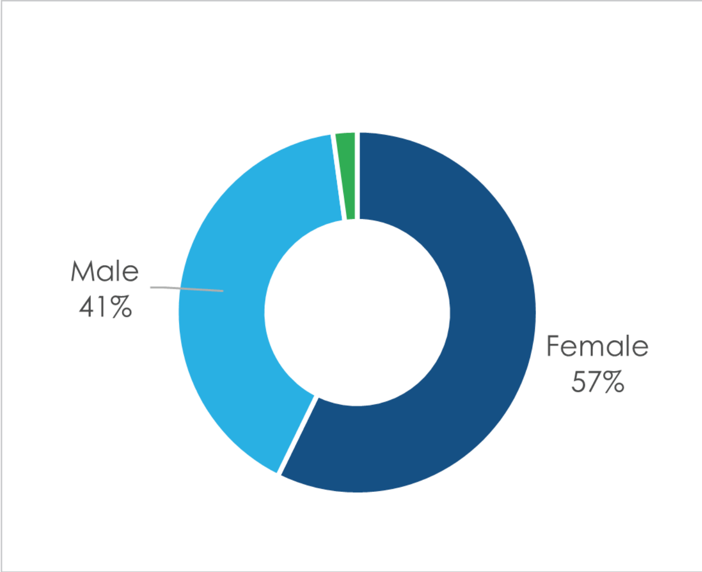
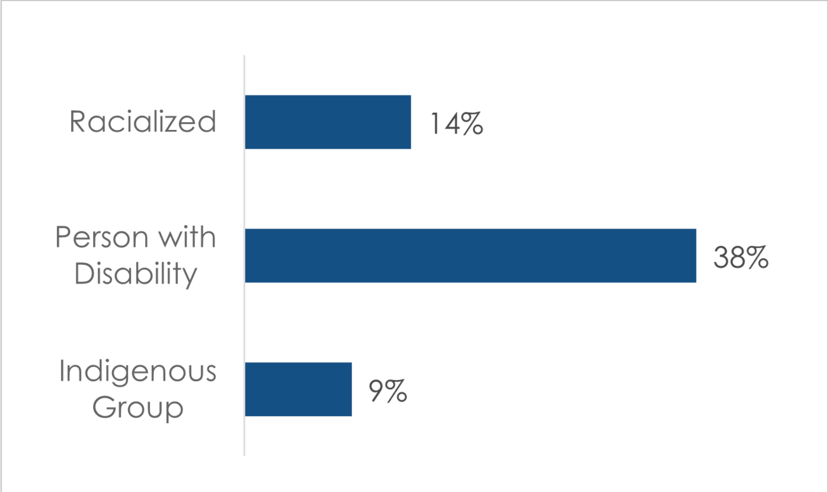


Figure 61:Literacy and Basic Skills learners by designated groups

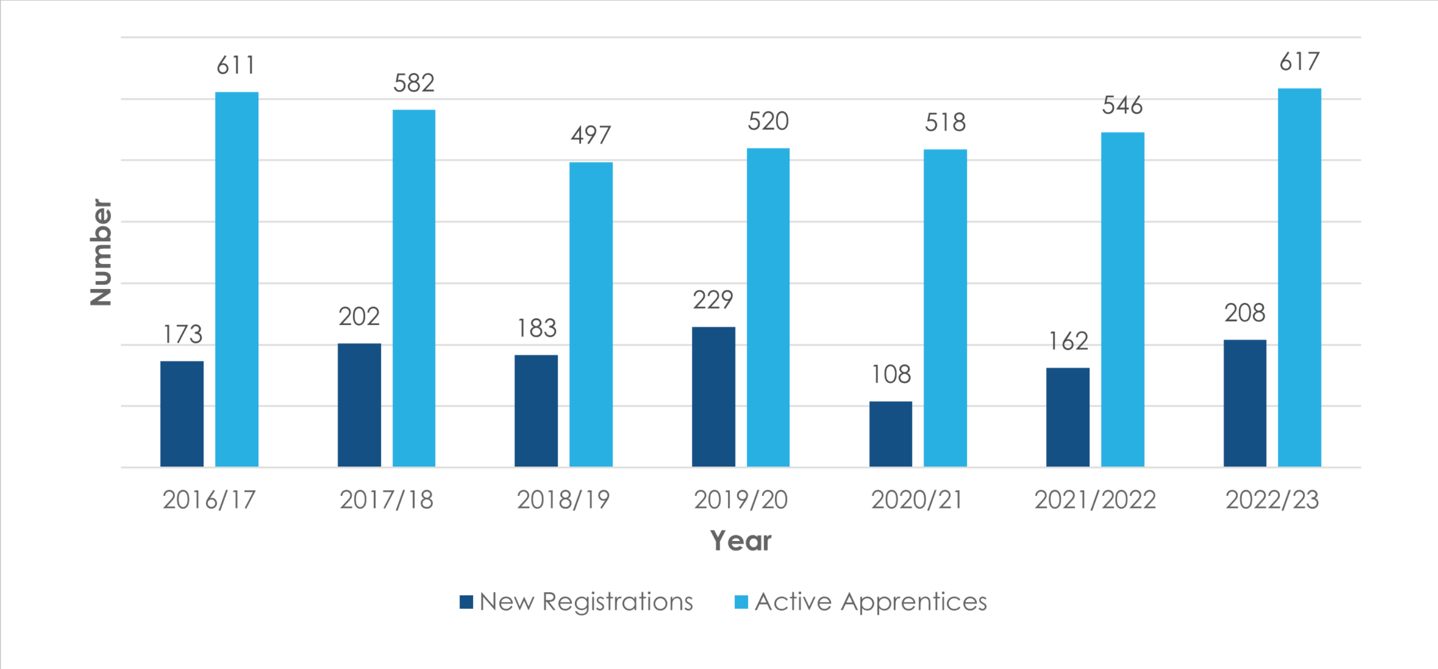


The majority of Literacy and Basic Skills learners were unemployed (61%) while 32% were employed part time. Notable designated groups included persons with disabilities (38%), racialized (14%) and members of an Indigenous group (9%).

Apprenticeship

The number of new and active apprentices increased in 2022/23.There were 617 active apprentices in Chatham-Kent in the 2022-23 and 208 new registrations up from 546 and 162 respectively. A total of 83 Certificates of Apprenticeship were issued over the fiscal year.

Figure 62: New and Active Apprenticeships, 2016/17 to 2022/23



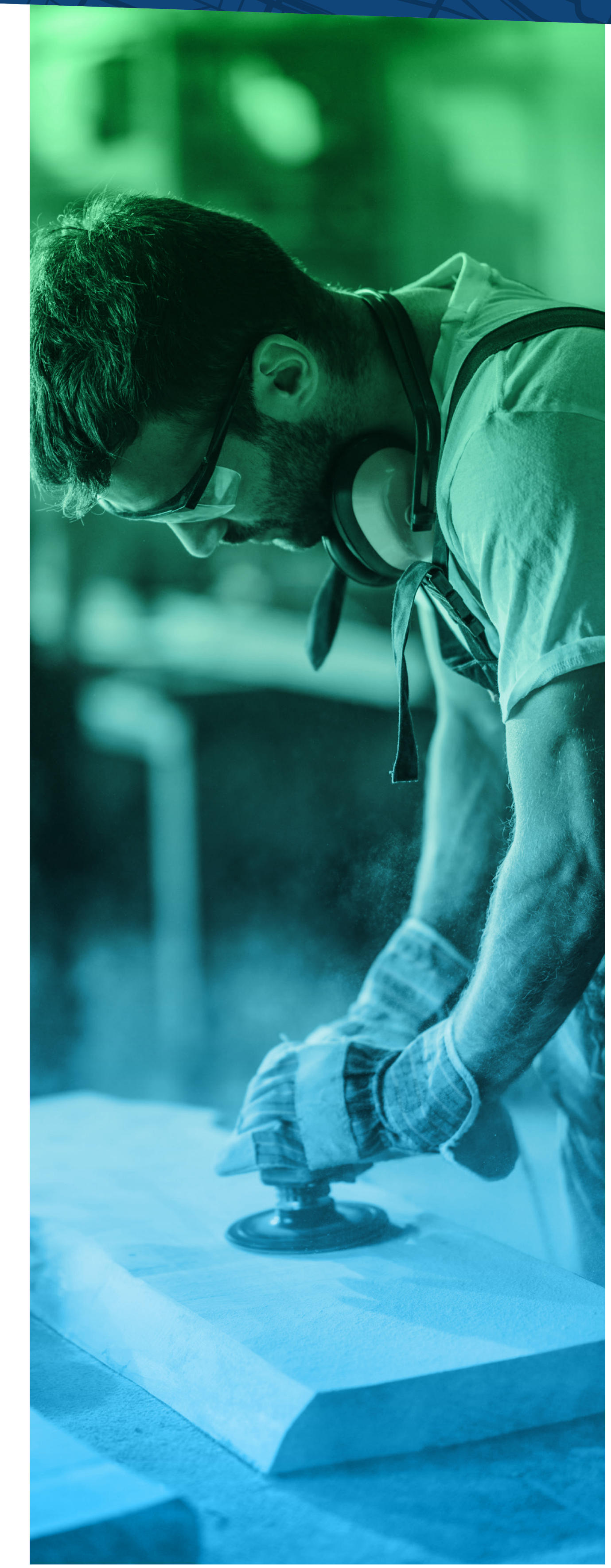
8 – Key Findings

Employment Service clients

- The number of clients accessing employment services has declined since COVID-19.
- The largest share of clients is between 25 and 44 years old with 58% male and 41% female.
- One out of five clients has not completed secondary school.
- Designated groups of Employment Service Clients - a growing share identified as having a disability, increasing from 10% of the clients in 2016/17 to 34% in 2022/23.
- Transportation is a barrier to getting to work for some clients.
- Poverty is a barrier for some clients. These individuals need supports to address the issues related to living in poverty before they will be able to effectively seek and retain employment.
- Employment Service clients need assistance with job readiness including written and verbal communication, digital and financial literacy and soft skills and socialization.
- Changes in the delivery of Employment services in Chatham-Kent that took effect on January 1, 2024, has created some concerns among employment service delivery agencies including the potential for disruptions in service, lack of awareness by clients on how to access services and the failure to leverage the expertise with specialized agencies to address the specific needs of employment Ontario clients. A referral system is required.
- Top lay off industries were manufacturing/ construction and accommodation and food.
- The top lay off occupations were labourers in processing, manufacturing, and utilities; trades helpers in construction and maintenance; and transportation and heavy equipment operation and maintenance.
- Apprenticeship numbers have increased after several years of little to no growth. There were 617 active apprentices and 208 new apprentices in 2022/23.

Job Seeker survey

- The top reasons for not working were a lack of opportunity followed by inexperience, the lack of a high school diploma and not having the skills required for the available roles.
- Half of the job seekers currently working were receiving minimum wage or lower. The employed job seekers said that their current employer could retain them by increasing wages, offering flexible work schedules, providing opportunities to take on more responsibility, provide or improve benefits, provide opportunities for development, and change the workplace culture. While most job seekers were looking for work in Chatham-Kent one in four said they were also looking for employment anywhere in Ontario.
- The most commonly used job search methods, in order, are government jobs search websites, word of mouth, Chatham-Kent Jobs site, non-government jobs search websites, delivering resumes to targeted employers and on-site job posting.
- Job seekers would like assistance with resumes, job trials and interviews.



EmployerOne survey

- A large majority of the respondents' workforce was hired from within Chatham-Kent. Eighty-five percent of the workforce works onsite.
- Employee retention is a concern for 60% of employers. One quarter have had to alter business hours due to staffing shortages. More than half of the employers had vacant positions that were hard to fill in the past year.
- The most recently cited reasons for hard to fil roles was applicants that lacked the required qualifications, insufficient number of applicants or, in many cases, no applicants at all and a lack of technical skills.
- One in 10 employers said a lack of childcare was preventing existing employees from returning to work.
- COVID-19 has continued to have an impact on one in four businesses including workforce shortages and increased sick time for employees.

9 – Strategic Considerations

Theme	Considerations
The number of industries using temporary workers is growing.	Now includes food services, health care, manufacturing – not just agriculture. At the same time the federal government is talking about restricting the number of temporary workers that are brought into Canada each year. Potential Action: Explore the needs of industries that are hiring temporary foreign workers.
The number of individuals participating in the CK workforce declined in 2023	The monthly regional labour force data for Windsor-Sarnia indicates a modest decline in employment between December 2022 to December 2023. The number of job vacancies regionally dropped 41% in Q3 2022 to Q3 2024. This could indicate a broader regional economic slowdown is underway. Potential Action: Monitor and regularly report on business conditions that could indicate an economic slowdown.
The number of two parent families with children but only one employment income earner has increased significantly in recent years.	This could be because of challenges with workforce participation such as a lack of childcare (an issue in the EO survey data) or other barriers. Potential action: Identify ways to help boost workforce participation rates.
There were three less large employers in 2023 compared to 2019.	There are a small group of private sector firms that account for the bulk of employment in export-focused industries. Only 47 firms in CK have 100+ employees. It is vital that these key employers continue to be engaged regularly to assess workforce needs. Potential action: Continue to engage with large firms on an ongoing basis to ensure their workforce needs are identified and efforts taken to help ensure they can attract the talent they need in the community.

Theme	Considerations
The number of non-employer businesses and self-employed people is on the rise.	There were nearly 1,000 more non-employer businesses in June 2023 compared to June 2019. The number of persons aged 65+ declaring self-employment income is up +19% between 2016-2021. Self-employed persons play an important role in the regional economy. The CK Economic Development Small Business Centre (SBC) has put concerted effort into supporting entrepreneurs locally through programs such as the Starter Company, Summer Company and seminars/webinars focused on helping people start or grow their small business. Last year the SBC helped over 350 new business start-ups. The mandate of the SBC is to support small businesses through coaching and mentoring. Potential action: Continue to support small startup businesses.
Projections suggest there will be strong demand for jobs in health care, manufacturing, accommodation, and food services, transportation and warehousing through 2031.	Many of the top vacant jobs today are in these same sectors. Potential action: Develop sector-specific workforce development plans.
Job search websites are now the primary way people search for jobs but nearly half indicated word of mouth was still a top way to search.	Potential action: Encourage employers to make better use of word of mouth including bonuses for referrals that get hired, etc.
26% of Employment Services clients were out of work/not in training for more than a year.	Potential action: identify strategies to address longer term, structural unemployment among this segment of the workforce.

Theme	Considerations
The manufacturing sector was responsible for a large share of layoffs even as it was responsible for many job vacancies.	Manufacturing is projected to have the largest demand for workers through 2031. Potential action: Consider mechanisms to support manufacturing workers shifting from firms laying off workers to those hiring workers.

10 -Recommended Actions

The recommended actions build on the actions of the previous Local Labour Market Plans with three priority areas.

1. Developing resources to support employers and job seekers.
2. Fostering local partnership among employers, educators, and agencies.
3. Enhancing research on the local labour market.

Actions

Developing resources to support employers and job seekers.

- Track the website activity and identify opportunities for building visitation and awareness of ChathamKentJobs.com.
- Continue to host career expos and job fairs to connect and inform job seekers, employers, key stakeholders, and students.
- Support activities and programs that position Chatham-Kent as a welcoming and inclusive community for all newcomers.
- Continue to produce and promote the Local Labour Market Plan to help employers, job seekers and key stakeholders for informed decision making.

Fostering local partnership among employers, educators, and agencies

- Work with CK Economic Development to connect local employers and educators they need to address workforce challenges. Put a particular focus on the larger employers as there has seems to have been some downsizing in recent years.
- Connect international students with employers looking for part time workers.
- Continue to participate in job fairs outside the community to attract workers to Chatham-Kent.
- Convene quarterly meetings of the Employment Service providers to encourage increased communication and support collaboration as they transition to the new model of delivery of employment services.
- Explore opportunities to enhance and promote services for entrepreneurs.
- Develop sector-based workforce development strategies in high demand sectors including manufacturing, health care, agriculture, transportation and retail.
- Develop a job transition program specific to the manufacturing sector.

Research

- Explore which sectors are using international workers and identify opportunities to expand the use of these workers for sectors facing labour shortages.
- Explore the barriers employers face when accessing and hiring temporary foreign workers.
- Compile information on available housing, childcare and other resources to support employers' worker attraction efforts.
- Identify barriers to greater workforce participation by specific population segments including immigrants, two parent households where only one is employed, and individuals with disabilities.

How Did We Do?

The Chatham-Kent Workforce Planning Board thanks all stakeholders whose insights informed the contents of this report. We invite your feedback on all publications produced by the Chatham-Kent Workforce Planning Board.

www.ckworkforcedev.com

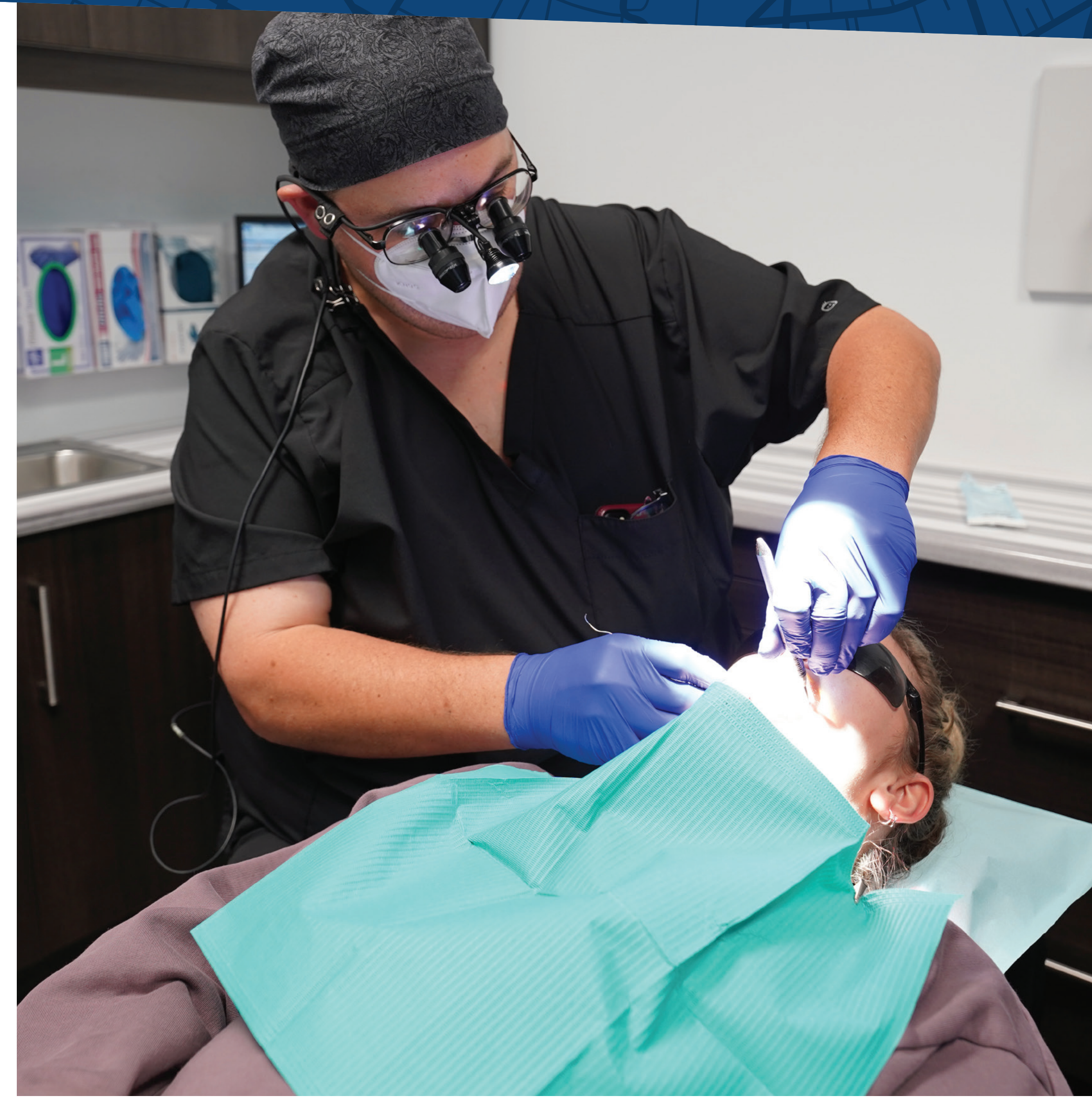
25 Creek Road Chatham, ON N7M 5J3

519.436.3299

ckworkforce@chatham-kent.ca

CKWPB is committed to ongoing research to enhance local labour market planning in the Chatham-Kent region.

CKWPB assumes no responsibility for its use or for the consequences of any errors or omissions. The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of **Employment Ontario or the Government of Ontario**.



CK WORKFORCE PLANNING BOARD
P: 519.436.3299
E: ckworkforce@chatham-kent.ca
W: www.ckworkforcedev.com

CHATHAM-KENT
workforce
PLANNING BOARD