Chatham-Kent Workforce Planning Board

2021 Local Labour Market Plan

December 2021

Prepared by:

Funded by:

Executive Summary

Chatham-Kent Workforce Planning Board (CKWPB) was created in 2009 to meet a local need in workforce planning. The Board's mandate is to **plan**, **facilitate**, and **advocate** for local workforce development.

As part of this mandate, the CKWPB prepares annual Local Labour Market Plans to present current labour market trends across the Municipality and outline opportunities to respond to labour market challenges in the coming year.

In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to have significant impacts on the labour market. In Ontario, over the year, we have seen an overall decrease in the number of cases of COVID-19, increasing vaccination rates, and as of October, the Province lifted capacity limits in certain settings. While Chatham-Kent saw approximately 5,550 people drop out of the labour force at the beginning of the pandemic, the number of people either employed or seeking employment recovered to pre-pandemic levels in early spring. Participation rates are now higher than pre-pandemic levels. More people of all ages and genders have re-entered the labour force.

In 2019, 44.8% of males 65 years and older were still active in the labour market in Chatham-Kent compared to 38.1% in Ontario (Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey). More youth aged 15-19 participated in the labour market in Chatham-Kent (44.9%) than in Ontario as a whole (39.1%). The only age/gender cohorts with sizeable differences in participation rates in 2019 compared to 2018 were females aged 25-29 and males aged 40-44. These numbers do not show impacts of the pandemic, which are discussed in a later section.

Annual labour market participation rates by age group (%) Chatham-Kent and Ontario, 2019
Significant difference indicated in bold (min. 2.5 percentage points)

Age groups	Total	Total	Females	Females	Males	Males
	ONT	CK	ONT	CK	ONT	CK
All age groups	68.4	65.5	63.9	60.3	73.4	71.2
15-19 years	39.1	44.9	39.9	44.4	38.4	45.2
20-24 years	86.1	86.8	85.5	85.2	86.8	88.3
25-29 years	**87.3**	**83.5**	**84.5**	**78.9**	90.1	88.2
30-34 years	85.5	83.4	81.0	78.2	90.4	88.5
35-39 years	85.2	85.0	80.5	80.6	90.4	89.9
40-44 years	85.4	83.9	81.5	81.2	89.8	**86.8**
45-49 years	85.7	85.2	82.5	82.9	89.2	87.8
50-54 years	84.3	82.9	81.5	81.7	87.3	84.0
55-59 years	79.9	77.3	76.3	75.0	83.6	79.5
60-64 years	68.2	67.2	62.4	62.1	74.5	72.6
65 years and older	28.9	33.4	21.2	23.7	38.1	44.8

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 11-10-0023-01

Businesses are continuing to pivot because of COVID-19, including providing online services where possible, using a hybrid approach to the workplace, and continuing to access government support programs.

Recognizing these challenges and longer-term labour market needs while also acknowledging the continued implications of the COVID-19 pandemic, this Plan identifies three priorities for the Workforce Planning Board in 2022:

1. Develop resources to support employers and job seekers
2. Foster local partnerships among employers, educators, and agencies
3. Enhance research of local labour market

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Introduction

Chatham-Kent Workforce Planning Board

Chatham-Kent Workforce Planning Board was created in 2009 to meet a local need in workforce planning. The Board's mandate is to **plan**, **facilitate**, and **advocate** for local workforce development. Workforce development is defined as "the development, retention, and recruitment of a wide range of skilled workers to meet the current and future economic and social development needs of Chatham-Kent." The board will work to identify where the jobs of the future will be coming from and ensure the Chatham-Kent workforce will meet these demands.

The board members are community leaders with a strategic outlook on the Municipality of Chatham-Kent as a whole in addition to ties to key sectors in energy, arts and culture, education, non-profit, community services, business, healthcare, and government.

Vision

Chatham-Kent's Workforce is an innovative, diversified global partner priding itself on continuous improvement.

Mission

Sector leaders providing innovative, dynamic and integrated strategic direction for stakeholders to provide globally competitive workforce.

CK Initiatives 2021

EmployerOne Survey: Annual survey asking employers to share their workforce stories to identify challenges and celebrate successes. This survey is being redesigned for January 2022.

Workforce Attraction & Promotion
Helps employers better understand where talent is going and where it is coming from. Supports employers and job seekers in the development of their workforce experience.

Community Resource Navigators: Job seekers can contact Community Navigators for employment assistance. The program is a partnership between Chatham-Kent Employment and Social Services and Chatham-Kent Public Libraries. The Community Navigators assist residents of Chatham-Kent with navigating systems (Housing, Education, Employment, and Income), working with technology, and connecting with supportive community services.

ChathamKentJobs.com: New consolidated job postings tool to help job seekers and employers. Chatham-Kent has joined 23 workforce planning regions across Ontario using the platform tool. The tool consolidates information from up to 40 popular job boards and presents postings to job seekers in one easy-to-use spot. For employers and other community groups interested in labour market data, the tool offers valuable labour market information.

Local Labour Market Report

The purpose of the Local Labour Market Plan (LLMP) is to present labour market trends in Chatham-Kent, assess current needs, and outline strategic actions to respond to current labour market challenges.

The LLMP is intended to support:

- **Residents** and job seekers in finding and maintaining employment
- **Education and employment organizations** in identifying gaps and trends in the local labour market
- **Employers** in accessing required labour pool and expanding business opportunities
- **Policy makers** in strategic planning and workforce investments

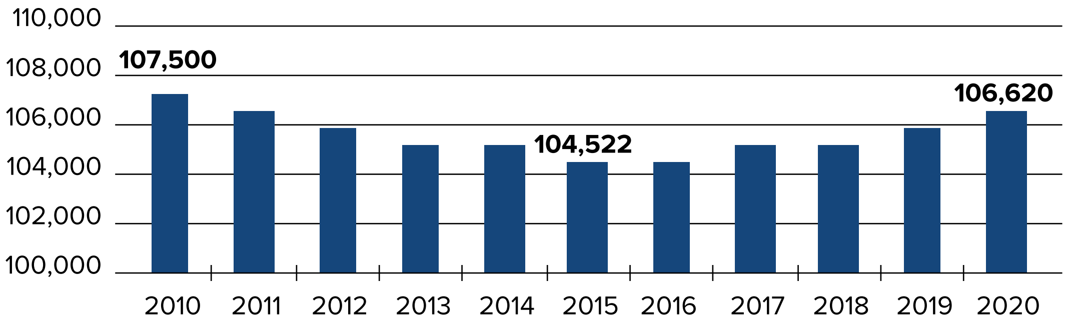
Our Community: Demographic Trends

Population Growth

Chatham-Kent's population has been relatively constant over the past ten years

Chatham-Kent's estimated population has increased slightly since 2015 (to stand at 106,620 in 2020), however it is estimated to remain slightly below 2010 levels (Statistics Canada, Population Estimates).

Estimated population by year, 2010-2020

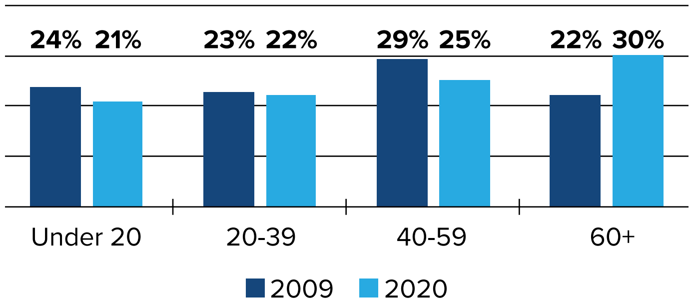


Source: Statistics Canada, Population Estimates

Adults aged 60 and over make up 30% of Chatham-Kent's population

In 2020, Chatham-Kent's older adult population age 60+ is estimated to have made up 30% of Chatham-Kent's entire population (32,712 people) (Statistics Canada, Population Estimates). This is significantly higher than in 2009, when older adults age 60+ accounted for 22% of the population.

Population by age group, 2009 and 2020



Source: Statistics Canada, Population Estimates

Chatham-Kent's population is aging, which is likely driving reductions in the labour force now and into the future

The largest increases in Chatham-Kent's population between 2016 and 2020 were in the 65-74 and 75-84 age ranges, coinciding with the aging of the Boomer generation. These are age ranges that people typically exit the workforce. Conversely, its largest decrease was in the 45-54-year-old age cohort. Of note, however, is that there has been growth in the 25-44 years cohort.

Population change by age group, 2016-2020

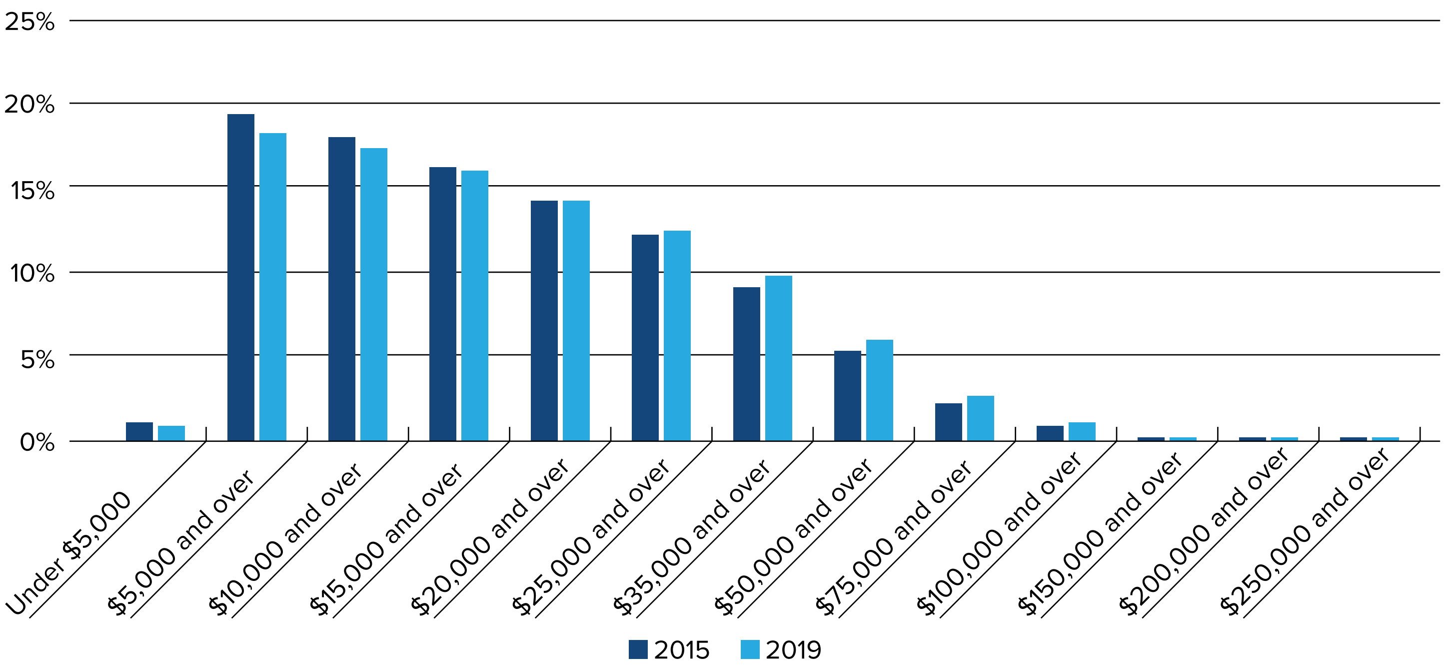
	0-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	Total
2016	16,929	12,228	11,566	11,503	14,604	16,429	12,032	6,409	3,071	104,771
2020	16,623	12,159	11,786	11,924	12,837	17,079	13,683	7,278	3,251	106,620
% Change	-1.8%	-0.6%	1.9%	3.7%	-12.1%	4.0%	13.7%	13.6%	5.9%	1.8%

Source: Statistics Canada, Population Estimates

Incomes have been rising

The most recent data that is available on incomes is from 2019, as it corresponds with tax filings. Overall, tax filers in Chatham-Kent have increased their incomes since 2015, which is promising for the community. The share of tax filers with incomes in each income range above $20,000 has increased, while the share of tax filers with incomes in the ranges below $20,000 have decreased.

Total income by tax filers for Chatham-Kent, 2015 and 2019

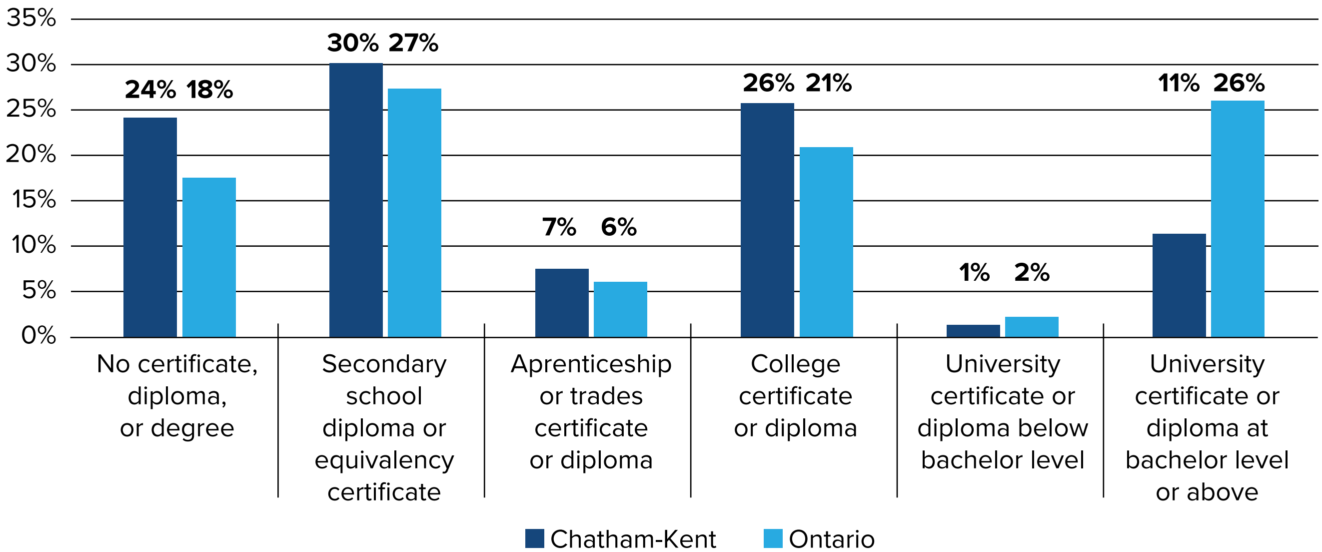


Source: Statistics Canada, "Tax filers and dependants with income by total income, sex and age", Table 11-10-0008-01.

Chatham-Kent's workforce has lower educational attainment than the provincial average, which can create challenges for employers in filling positions requiring university education

Some 76% of Chatham-Kent's population aged 25-64 have at least obtained a secondary school diploma, compared to 82% of Ontario as a whole (Statistics Canada, Census, 2016). Nearly a quarter (24%) of Chatham-Kent's population age 25-64 has not obtained any certificate, degree, or diploma. The population without a certificate, degree, or diploma is skewed to adults age 55 and over. The population without a certificate, degree, or diploma is 6% higher than the Ontario average of 18%. The percentage with college education is higher in Chatham-Kent (26% versus 21%), while the percentage with a university degree is lower (11% versus 26%). Chatham-Kent's educational attainment has not changed significantly since 2006.

Educational attainment Chatham-Kent vs Ontario, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada Census, 2016

Mobility and Migration

Between 2011 and 2020 Chatham-Kent saw a net migration of 250 people (Statistics Canada, “Components of population change by census division, 2016 boundaries, annual”, Table 17-10-0140-01.). The municipality has seen a relatively steady increase in Net Intra-Provincial migration and Net Non-Permanent Residents. Chatham-Kent has also seen higher levels of Net International Permanent Residents since 2016, compared to 2014 and 2015.

At the same time, Chatham-Kent has seen a decline in Net Interprovincial migration, suggesting that employees are potentially being attracted to other provinces.

Net migration, 2011-2020

	2011/ 2012	2012/ 2013	2013/ 2014	2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020
Net international permanent residents	94	104	93	6	51	135	104	98	82
Net interprovincial migration	-145	-161	-59	-167	26	74	11	-20	-23
Net intra-provincial migration	-440	-236	-179	-109	81	359	295	411	488
Net non-permanent residents	-20	-22	11	-21	260	124	295	83	341
Net total migrants	29	47	41	-51	10	46	30	54	44

Source: Statistics Canada, “Components of population change by census division, 2016 boundaries, annual”, Table 17-10-0140-01

Our Workers: Workforce Trends

The analysis in this section is based on annual data up to 2020 (2019 for income data and annual labour force participation rates by age). Monthly data for 2020 and 2021 has been reported for Chatham-Kent, where available. Some monthly data is not available for Chatham-Kent. This includes:

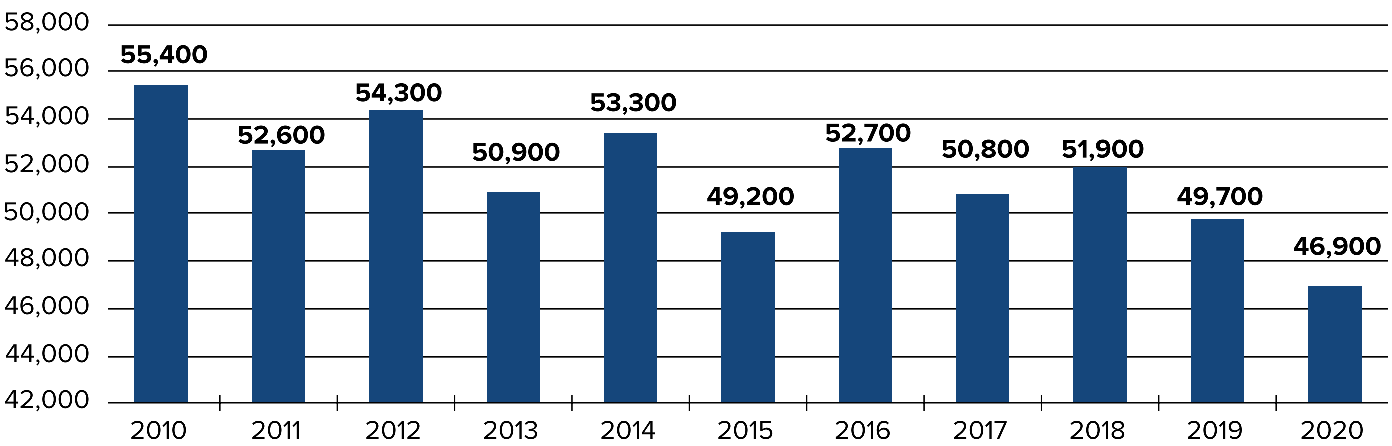
- data on full-time versus part-time employment;
- data by gender and age;
- data by industry.

For this data, we rely on data for the whole Windsor-Sarnia economic region.

Labour Force Characteristics

The size of Chatham-Kent's labour force has been on an overall downward trend over the past ten years, declining by 15%. It has declined steadily since 2018, from 51,900 in 2018 to 49,700 in 2019, and 46,900 at the end of 2020; a decline of 2,800 people between 2019 and 2020 (Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey). The labour force includes those actively employed or looking for employment.

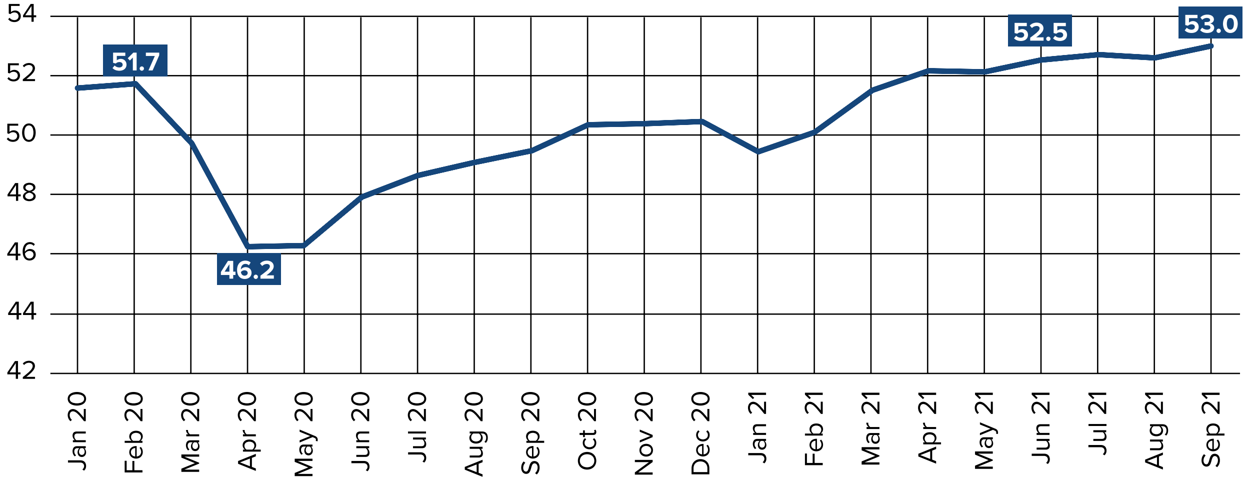
Annual labour force (persons), 2010-2020



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0102-01

Chatham-Kent saw approximately 5,550 people drop out of the labour force at the beginning of the pandemic, but the number of people either employed or seeking employment recovered to pre-pandemic levels in April 2021.

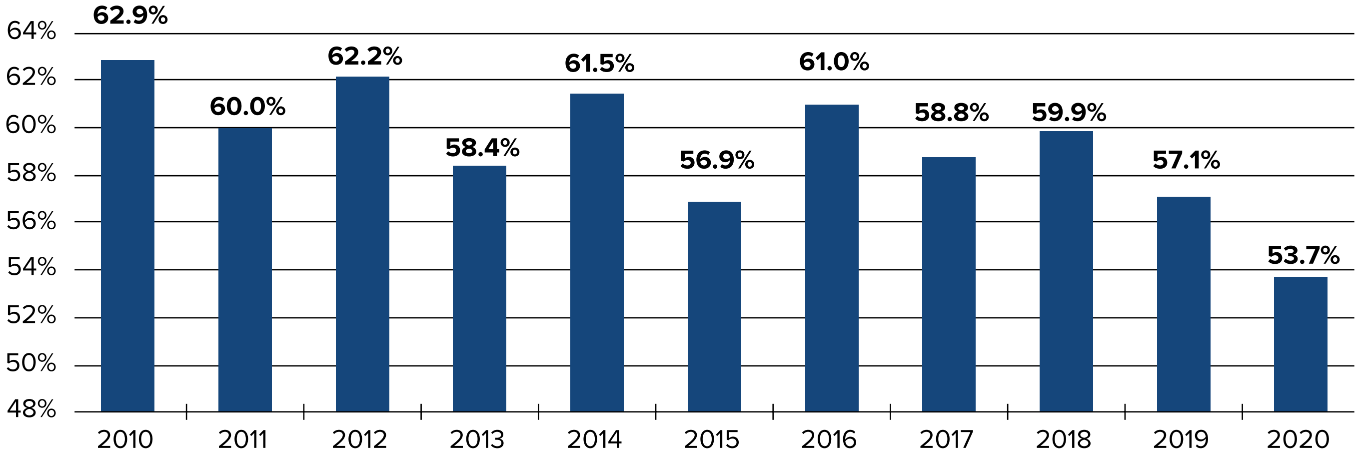
Labour force by month, March 2020-September 2021, unadjusted, Chatham-Kent (000s)



Source: Metro Economics 2021

Annual data shows labour force participation rates have also been declining. In 2020, 53.7% of the population aged 15 and over was in the labour force, compared to 59.9% in 2018 (representing 5,000 fewer people in the workforce) (Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0102-01).

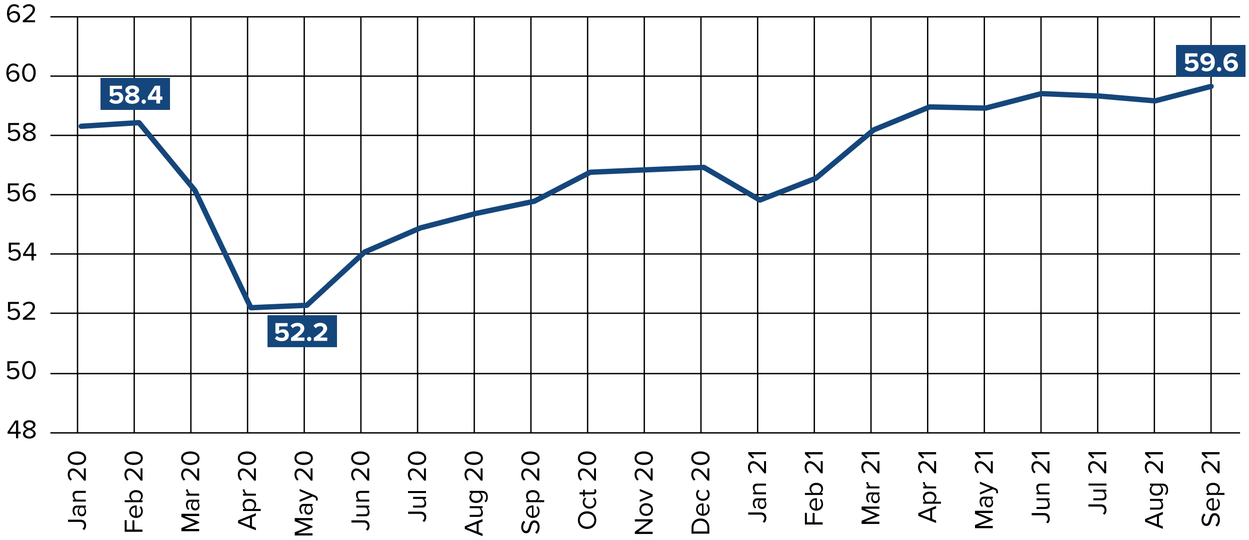
Annual labour force participation rate, 2010-2020



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0102-01.

Chatham-Kent's labour force participation dropped from 58.4% in February 2020 to 52.2% in April 2020, as a result of the pandemic. Participation rates have generally been trending upward since April 2020 and have been higher than pre-pandemic levels since April 2021.

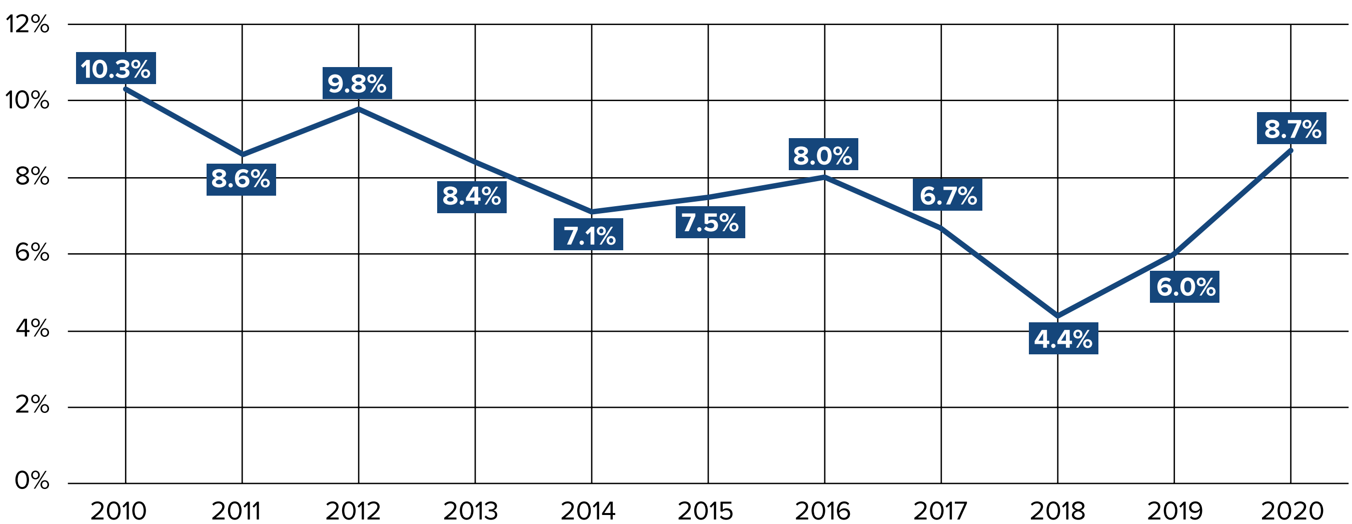
Labour force participation rates by month, March 2020-June 2021, unadjusted, Chatham-Kent (000s)



Source: Metro Economics 2021

The annual unemployment rate increased from 6.0% in 2019 to 8.7% in 2020 (Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey). The 2020 number is reflective of labour market challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

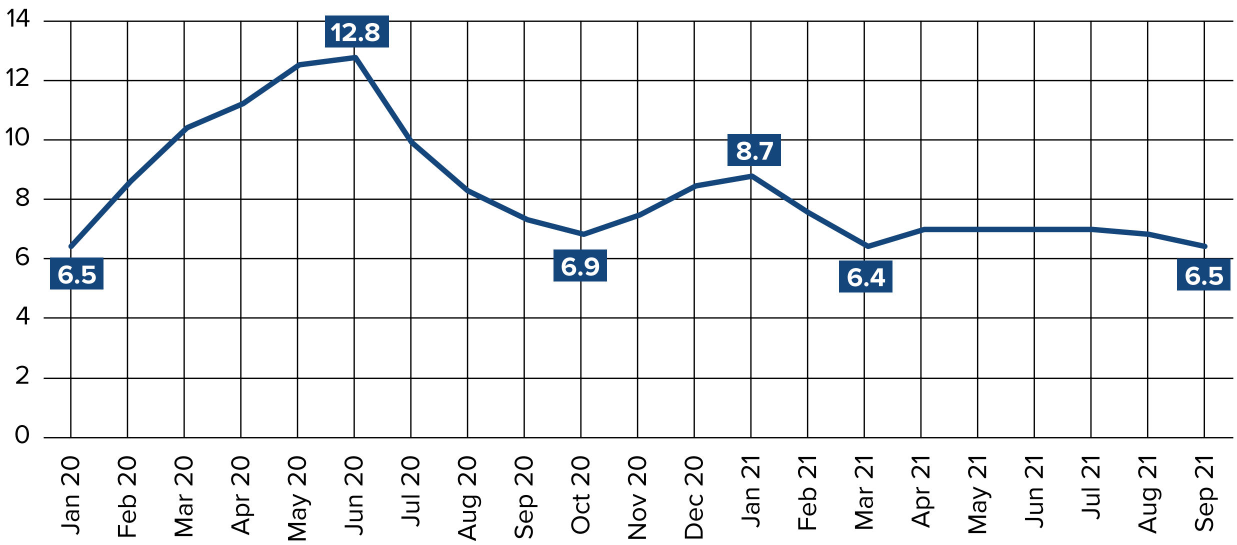
Annual unemployment rate, 2010-2020, Chatham-Kent



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0102-01

After peaking in June 2020, unemployment rates in Chatham-Kent fell consistently until November 2020 (Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey, 2021). Unemployment rates rose to 8.7% in January 2021, then fell to 6.4% in March 2021. In April to September 2021, unemployment rates hovered around 6.5%, similar to pre-pandemic levels.

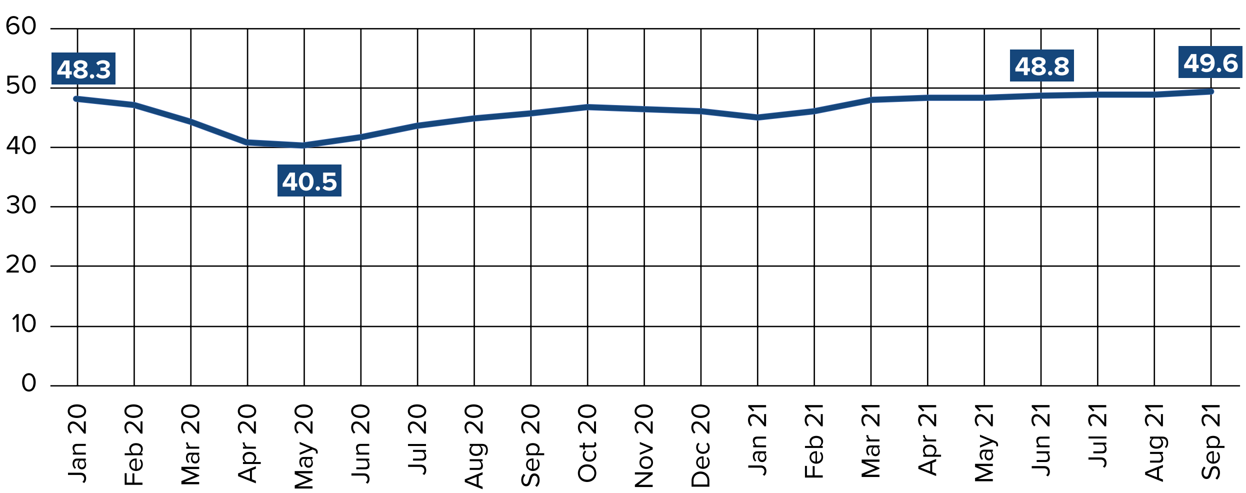
Unemployment rate, March 2020-June 2021, unadjusted, Chatham-Kent (%)



Source: Metro Economics 2021

Overall employment in Chatham-Kent recovered to pre-pandemic levels by March 2021 and continued to increase month-over-month to September 2021 (the latest available local data) (Statistics Canada, Labour Market Survey).

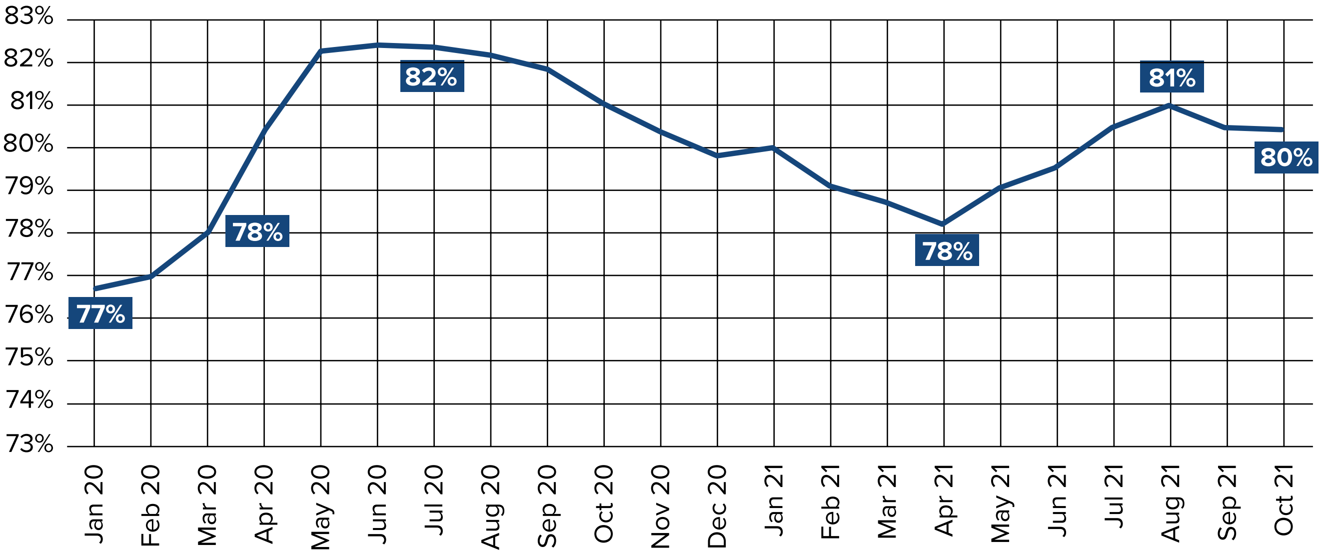
Employment by month, March 2020-June 2021, unadjusted, Chatham-Kent (000s)



Source: Metro Economics 2021

The percentage of overall employment in the Windsor-Sania economic region that has been full-time has consistently remained above January 2020 levels (Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey, 2021).

Percentage of employment that is full time, March 2020-October 2021, unadjusted, Windsor-Sarnia (000s)



Source: based on Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey, 2021

In 2019, 44.8% of males 65 years and older were still active in the labour market in Chatham-Kent compared to 38.1% in Ontario (Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey). More youth aged 15-19 participated in the labour market in Chatham-Kent (44.9%) than in Ontario as a whole (39.1%). The only age/gender cohorts with sizeable differences in participation rates in 2019 compared to 2018 were females aged 25-29 and males aged 40-44. These numbers do not show impacts of the pandemic, which are discussed in a later section.

Annual labour market participation rates by age group (%) Chatham-Kent and Ontario, 2019
Significant difference indicated in bold (min. 2.5 percentage points)

Age groups	Total	Total	Females	Females	Males	Males
	ONT	CK	ONT	CK	ONT	CK
All age groups	68.4	65.5	63.9	60.3	73.4	71.2
15-19 years	39.1	44.9	39.9	44.4	38.4	45.2
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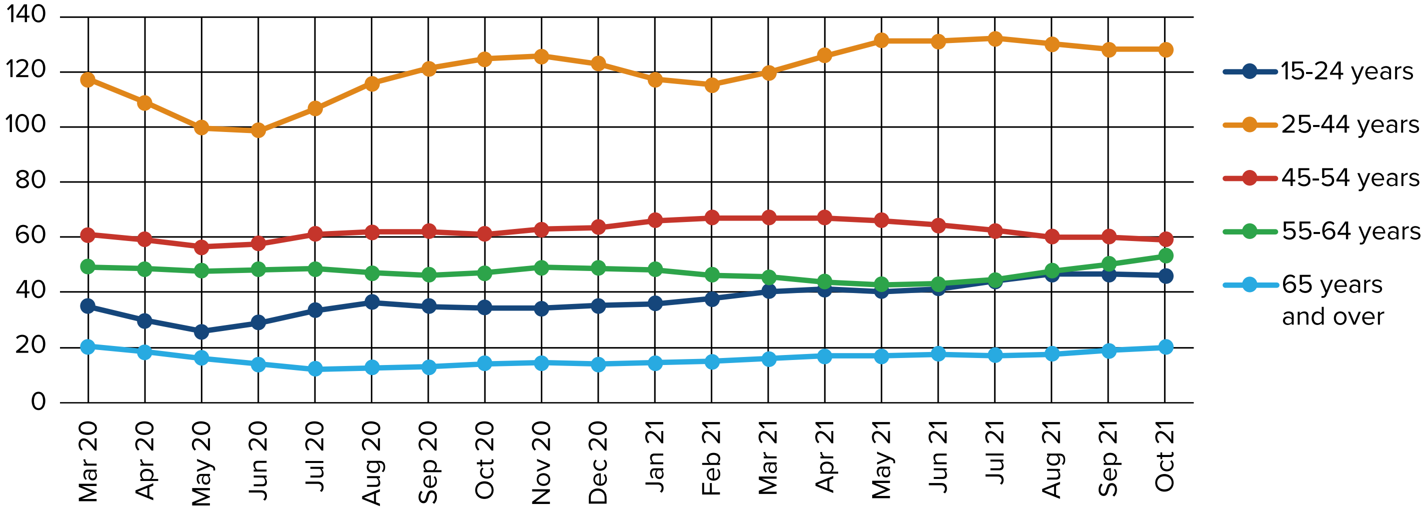
30-34 years	85.5	83.4	81.0	78.2	90.4	88.5
35-39 years	85.2	85.0	80.5	80.6	90.4	89.9
40-44 years	85.4	83.9	81.5	81.2	89.8	**86.8**
45-49 years	85.7	85.2	82.5	82.9	89.2	87.8
50-54 years	84.3	82.9	81.5	81.7	87.3	84.0
55-59 years	79.9	77.3	76.3	75.0	83.6	79.5
60-64 years	68.2	67.2	62.4	62.1	74.5	72.6
65 years and older	28.9	33.4	21.2	23.7	38.1	44.8

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 11-10-0023-01

Employment levels of 15- to 24-year-olds in the Windsor-Sarnia economic region has been increasing steadily since November 2020 and has been above March 2020 levels each month since December 2020 (Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey, 2021). The 25-to-44-year age cohort has seen the greatest fluctuations in employment throughout the pandemic, but employment in this age range has recovered quicker than older age cohorts and has been above March 2020 levels since March 2021.

The recovery in the employment levels for adults aged 55 to 64 years and 65 years and over has taken longer, with employment levels for adults aged 55 to 64 years, and those 65 and over having only reached levels similar to March 2020 in September 2021 and October 2021, respectively (Statistics Canada, Labour Market Survey).

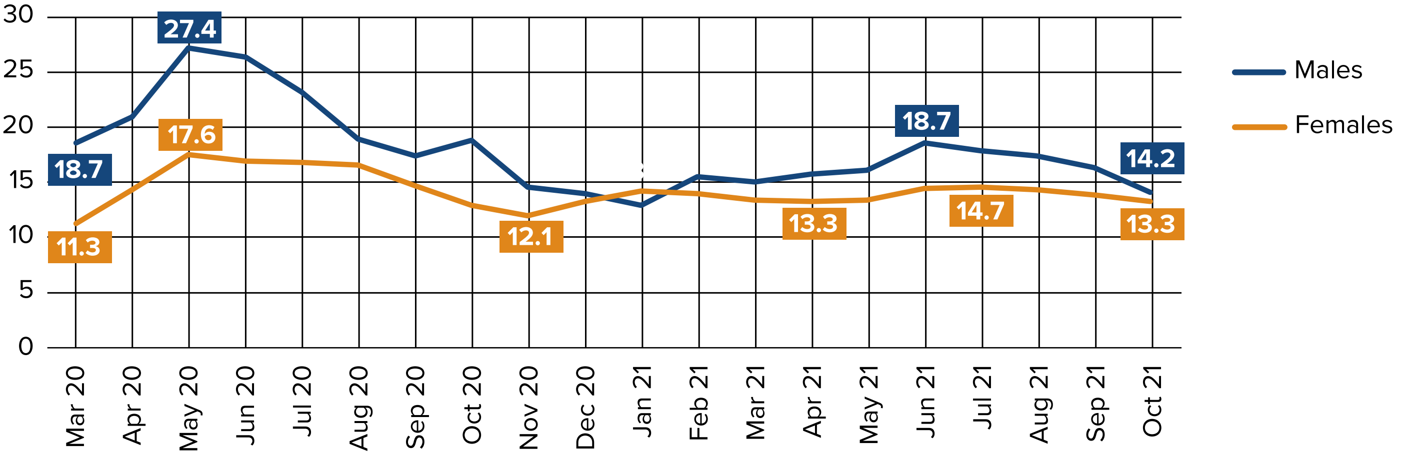
Employment by age, March 2020-October 2021, unadjusted, Windsor-Sarnia (000s)



Source: Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey, 2021

Unemployment rates have followed similar trends for both males and females in 2021.

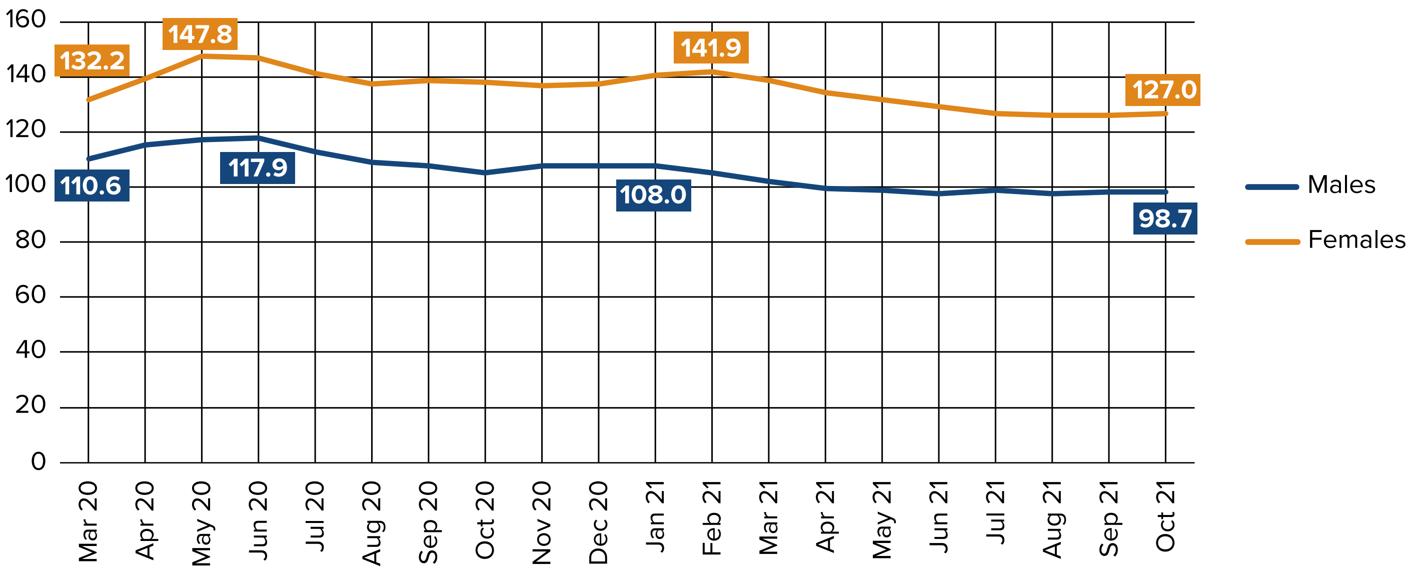
Unemployment by month, by gender, March 2020-October 2021, unadjusted, Windsor-Sarnia (000s)



Source: Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey, 2021

The number of people not in the labour force has followed similar trends for both males and females in 2021 (Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey, 2021).

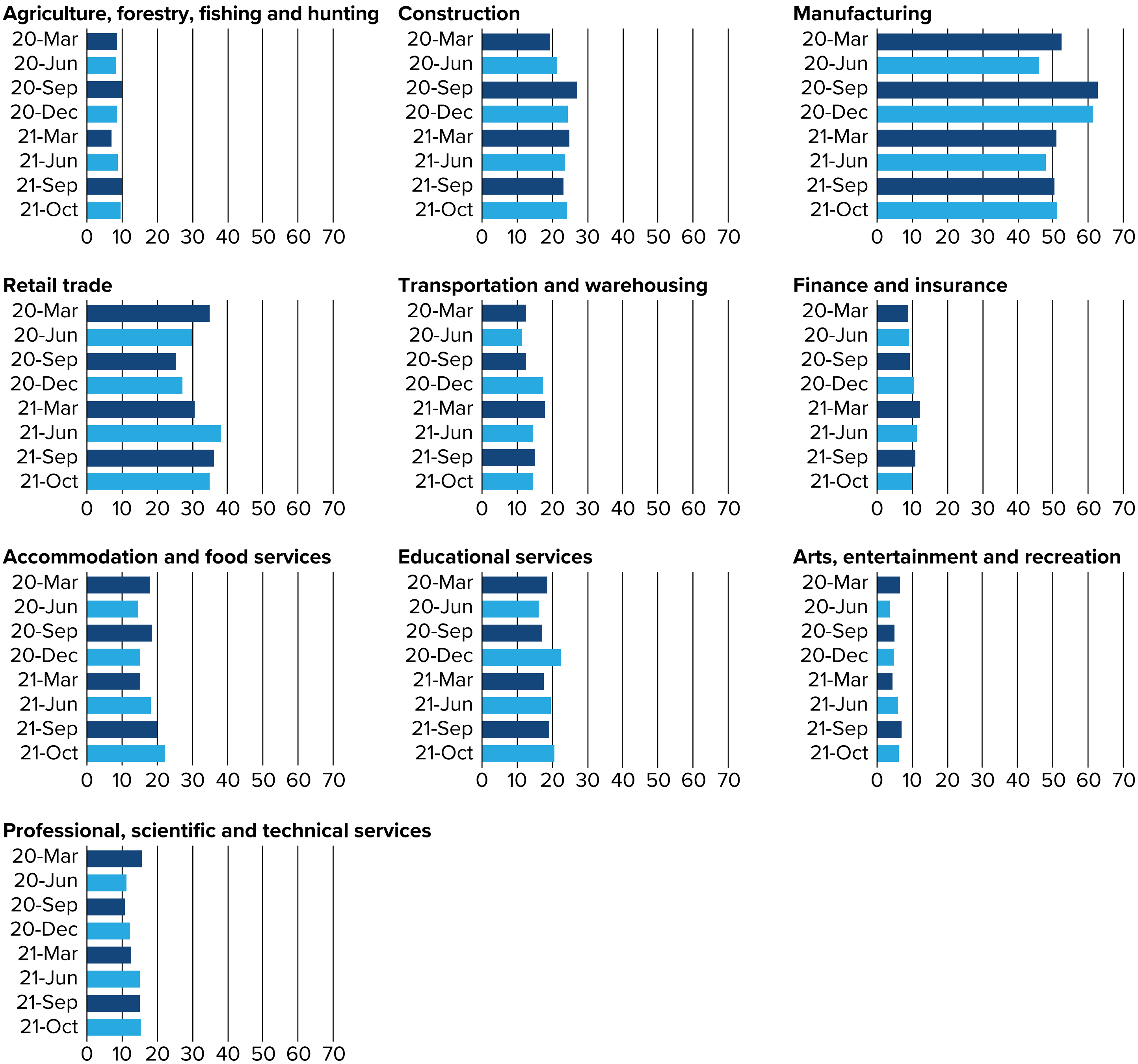
Not in the labour force by month, by gender, March 2020-October 2021, unadjusted, Windsor-Sarnia (000s)



Source: Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey, 2021

Employment in all the main industries in the Windsor-Sarnia economic regions has recovered to levels approximately equal to or above March 2020 (Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey, 2021). This includes originally hard-hit sectors of manufacturing; retail trade; professional, scientific and technical services; arts, entertainment and recreation; and accommodation and food services.

Employment, selected industries, March 2020-October 2021, unadjusted, Windsor-Sarnia (000s)



Source: Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey, 2021

Our Businesses: Local Industry Trends

Business Counts

Business counts data include businesses identified as "active" on the Business Register, Statistics Canada's internal listing of Canadian businesses. The data is compiled primarily from Canada Revenue Agency tax records. It should be noted that the counts may not yet fully reflect the impacts of the pandemic, as the resumption or permanent closure of businesses may not yet be fully processed and confirmed. The status of a business is only changed to "inactive" once tax accounts are formally closed or become dormant over an extended period.

Businesses are counted on the basis of the statistical concept of "location." Each operating location is separately counted, including cases where one business comprises multiple locations.

The following table shows a breakdown of employer business in Chatham-Kent in June 2020 and June 2021 by size. Losses were seen in small and medium-sized business categories (fewer than 100 employees). The number of businesses with 500 or more employees decreased by four, from nine businesses to five businesses. The number of businesses with 1-4 employees increased, as did the number of businesses with 100-199 employees.

Breakdown of businesses/locations by employment level, Chatham-Kent (2020, 2021)

	2020	2021	Changes 2020-2021		
# Without employees	7,241	7,253	12		
Total, with employees	3,052	2,993	-59	% of total 2020	% of total 2021
1-4	1,495	1,516	21	49%	51%
5-9	653	634	-19	21%	21%
10-19	455	418	-37	15%	14%
20-49	294	280	-14	10%	9%
50-99	87	78	-9	3%	3%
100-199	41	45	4	1.3%	1.5%
200-499	18	17	-1	0.6%	0.6%
500+	9	5	-4	0.3%	0.2%

Source: Statistics Canada Business Counts (June 2020, June 2021)

Chatham-Kent's economy saw a net loss of 59 employer business locations between June 2020 and 2021. The following table shows selected sectors of Chatham-Kent's economy that saw net gains and losses in the number of employer businesses and a breakdown by size.

There was one net loss in a manufacturing business with over 500 employees and one net loss in a retail business with 200-499 employees. There was a net gain of one agriculture business with 200-499 employees.

Change in number of employers, selected sectors, June 2020-June 2021

Sector	Net gains/ losses	Number of employees							
		1-4	5-9	10-19	20-49	50-99	100-199	200-499	500 +
Agriculture	-4	-4	-3	3	2	-3	0	1	0
Construction	+6	13	0	-6	-2	1	0	0	0
Manufacturing	0	1	3	-4	3	-3	1	0	-1
Retail	-22	-2	-16	-2	0	-1	0	-1	0
Professional Services	+3	0	2	1	-3	2	1	0	0
Finance and Insurance	+6	4	2	1	-1	0	0	0	0
Transportation and Warehousing	-3	-3	4	-4	-3	1	2	0	0
Accommodations	-1	-2	2	1	-2	0	0	0	0
Restaurants	-10	5	0	-10	-3	-2	0	0	0
Arts, Culture and Recreation	-6	-1	-4	-1	2	-2	0	0	0

Source: Statistics Canada Business Counts, June 2021

The largest losses in the number of businesses were in the Retail sector, with a net loss of 22 businesses. These businesses were primarily losses of food and beverage stores (-10), furniture and home furnishing stores (-5), and motor vehicle and parts dealers (-4). The second largest losses were seen in the Restaurant sector (-10). These two are sectors that have been hard hit by the pandemic across the country.

The Arts, Culture, and Recreation sector saw a net loss of six businesses. Three losses were in amusement, gambling and recreation industries, two were heritage institutions, and one was in performing arts, spectator sports and related industries (-1 firm).

The Finance and Insurance sector and the Construction sector each saw net gains of six businesses. While the number of insurance carriers and related businesses decreased by four, the number of securities, commodity contractor, and other financial investment firms increased by five. Three businesses were added related to funds and other financial vehicles, and two credit intermediation and related activities businesses were added.

Details on employer net gains and losses by subsector are shown in the following table.

Select subsector net gains and losses, June 2020-June 2021, employer businesses

Agriculture	
Net gains	**Net losses**
Animal production and aquaculture (1 firm)	Crop production (-2 firm) Fishing, hunting, and trapping (-1 firm) Support activities for agriculture and forestry (-3 firms)
Construction	
Net gains	**Net losses**
Construction of buildings (6 firm) Heavy and civil engineering construction (2 firms)	Specialty trade contractors (-2 firms)
Manufacturing	
Net gains	**Net losses**
Food manufacturing (2 firms) Beverage and tobacco product manufacturing (1 firm) Plastics and metal products manufacturing (1 firm) Primary metal manufacturing (1 firm) Electrical equipment, appliance, and component manufacturing (1 firm)	Wood product manufacturing (-1 firm) Fabricated metal product manufacturing (-1 firm) Transportation equipment manufacturing (-2 firms) Furniture and related product manufacturing (-1 firm) Miscellaneous manufacturing (-1 firm)
Retail	
Net gains	**Net losses**
Health and personal care stores (1 firm) General merchandise stores (1 firm) Miscellaneous store retailers (1 firm)	Motor vehicle and parts dealers (-4 firms) Furniture and home furnishing stores (-5 firms) Electronics and appliance stores (-1 firm) Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers (-1 firm) Food and beverage stores (-10 firms) Clothing and clothing accessories stores (-1 firm) Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores (-2 firms) Non-store retailers (-1 firm)

Professional services	
Net gains	**Net losses**
Professional, scientific, and technical services (3 firms)	
Finance and insurance	
Net gains	**Net losses**
Insurance carriers and related activities (4 firms)	Credit intermediation and related activities (-2 firms) Securities, commodity contracts, and other financial investment activities (-5 firms) Funds and other financial vehicles (-3 firms)
Transportation and warehousing	
Net gains	**Net losses**
Support activities for transportation (3 firms)	Truck Transportation (-4 firms) Transit and ground passenger transportation (-1 firm) Couriers and messengers (-1 firm)
Accommodations	
Net gains	**Net losses**
	Accommodation services (-1)
Restaurants	
Net gains	**Net losses**
	Food services and drinking places (-10 firms)
Arts, culture and recreation	
Net gains	**Net losses**
	Performing arts, spectator sports, and related industries (-1 firm) Heritage institutions (-2 firms) Amusement, gambling, and recreation industries (-3 firms)

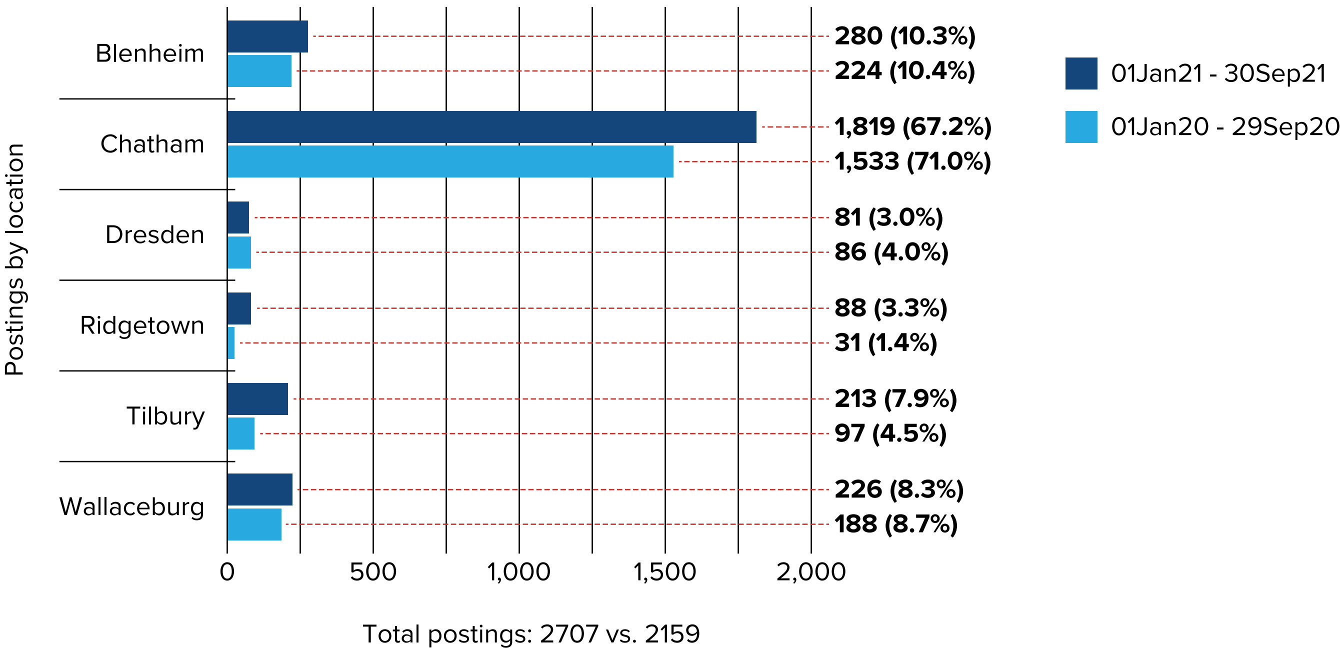
Source: Statistics Canada Business Counts (June 2021)

Job Posting Trends

Analysis of online job postings helps to identify changes in job tends and recruitment efforts. The analysis of job postings shows the number of times occupations were posted from January to September 2021, not the occupations that have been hired. Therefore, the results will differ from the in-demand occupations list developed from the employer survey.

Job postings in Chatham-Kent from January to September 2021 were up 25% from the same period the year before (Vicinity Jobs). Postings were up most significantly in Ridgetown and Tilbury, and up substantially in Blenheim, Chatham, and Wallaceburg.

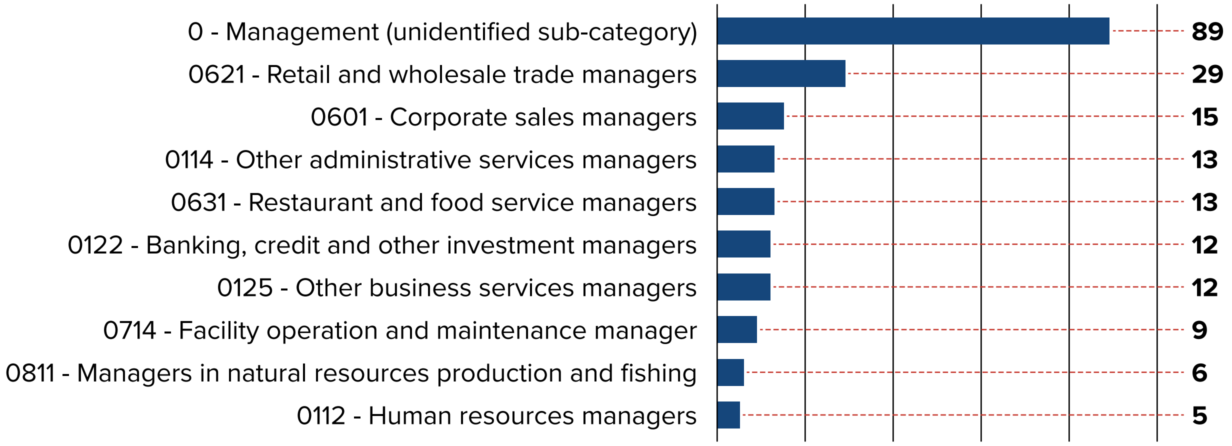
Job postings by community, Chatham-Kent, January-September 2020 and 2021



Source: Vicinity Jobs

The top ten postings by occupation were as follows.

Top ten postings by occupation



Source: Vicinity Jobs

Stakeholder Insights

As part of the research activities to support the development of the 2021 Local Labour Market Planning Document, consultations were held with local stakeholders. Consultations included interviews with local Employment Ontario services providers and agencies working with job seekers in Chatham-Kent, and two surveys: one with employers and a second with job seekers and residents. Key findings from these activities are shared below.

Stakeholder Interviews

Fourteen interviews with local Employment Ontario service providers and agencies working with job seekers in Chatham-Kent were held in September and October 2021. Conversations were aimed at hearing stakeholder perspectives on current labour market trends, challenges facing both job seekers and employers, and the continued impacts of COVID-19 on the labour market.

- Adult Language and Learning
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce
- Chatham-Kent Employment and Social Services
- Chatham-Kent Community Attraction & Promotion
- College Boreal
- Community Living
- Contact North
- Goodwill Career Centre
- Job Worx
- Lambton Kent District School Board
- St. Clair Employment
- St. Clair College
- Tri County Literacy

Feedback from these conversations is described below.

Postings are Currently Exceeding Workers

A core message from stakeholders is that there are “more jobs than people” and that this trend spans almost all sectors.

> “All sectors are impacted right now.”

> “Trends have flipped upside down from three to four years ago.”

While all stakeholders agree that the demand is across sectors, some point to higher demand in some areas:

- Healthcare, PSWs
- Manufacturing
- Skilled trades
- Security and policing
- Truck driving
- RECE
- Construction
- Food service

Another area of growing interest, described by interview participants, is in the greenhouse industry.

> “We are getting postings now from all over the Province and even across Canada.”

> “We have employers calling us every day.”

Job Stability is a Concern for Workers in Some Sectors

A lack of job stability in some sectors was emphasized as a concern for workers by interview participants. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the instability of the service and tourism sectors, for example, and many workers are looking to develop other skills and/or are moving into another, more stable, job. Other current challenges for workers in these sectors include low salaries, no guaranteed hours, no benefits, and a lot of contract positions also leaving workers with low job security. Many of these challenges were also present pre-COVID.

There is also a sense, described by some interview participants, that some workers continue to feel uncertain entering the workforce again; while employers are opening up and people are hiring, there is uncertainty regarding the future of the COVID-19 pandemic.

> "Some restaurants have closed or had to reduce hours because they do not have the staff."

> "Help wanted signs everywhere right now."

Vaccine Requirements are a Barrier for Some

Interview participants describe vaccine requirements as a further barrier to employment. Some people are losing their job because of recent double-vaccination requirements of employers.

> "One of our clients was offered a job but was not hired because they were not vaccinated."

Employers are Making Changes

In response to recent challenges in finding workers, some businesses are making changes such as asking for part-time workers and providing more flexibility of hours. Some stakeholders describe employers expanding their recruiting area, some are more willing to take apprentices, and there seems to be more openness to hiring newcomers and a willingness to train.

Many Employers Turning Away Work

Another trend identified by stakeholders is that, because of shortages in employees, some businesses are not able to take on new work or expand businesses. While there are many opportunities right now to expand, the human resources are just not there.

> "Trend is hindering employers' ability to bid on new work, or take on new projects, because of a lack of resources."

Shift Away from Front-Line Jobs

As noted, some people are choosing to leave the service, food industry, and hospitality sectors due to the recent instability. Others are also choosing to leave front-line positions such as healthcare. Stakeholders suggest that there is burnout and some people are just realizing this type of work is not for them. Interview participants in education and training note an increase in demand for computer skills and technology courses.

Stakeholders note that the COVID-19 pandemic has really showcased the ability of people to work remotely, which is a challenge for sectors/firms that want people to work in the community.

> "People are looking at making a shift, getting better paying office-type jobs and leaving restaurants."

Other areas seeing a demand for further training right now include:

- Technology including data analytics and cyber security
- Battery manufacturing and electric car design
- RECE
- Health sector
- Office admin
- Numeracy/math

One interview participant also noted that they are attracting younger learners (currently the average age is 29 whereas it was 40 prior to COVID-19).

Some People Choosing Not to Enter Labour Market

Many of the interview participants believe that there are some people choosing not to enter or re-enter the labour force at the moment. Reasons include continued fear of COVID-19 and increased anxiety about entering the labour market, lack of childcare, and current income supports. Several stakeholders indicated that there are some people who are choosing not to work and are instead choosing to accept the Canadian Emergency Relief Benefit (CERB) payments. Daycare was another challenge both in terms of access (i.e., lack of daycare spots), in particular for people working shiftwork, and in terms of costs.

Stakeholders do feel that, with CERB ending, more people will get back into the labour force.

Virtual Pivot

Agencies and educational institutions have had to pivot to largely virtual training and coaching through the pandemic and most are continuing to offer services online or have a hybrid model in place currently.

> "Programs are taking different approaches; some are looking at continuing virtual options."

Interview participants highlight that the virtual pivot really showcased that, where people did not have digital skills, they were often getting left out. Some people did not have access to the Internet, and some did not have a computer. This was a particular challenge for Walpole Island First Nation and Delaware Nation at Moraviantown.

> "Digital divide is clear."

Mental Health and Addictions are Barriers to Employment

Some conversations noted that there are many people struggling with mental heath and addiction challenges. Some people have low self-esteem, many are also lower income.

> "We see people coming in who don't think they can get a job, and leave knowing they can – this is very powerful."

More Doors Opening for People with Disabilities and Newcomers

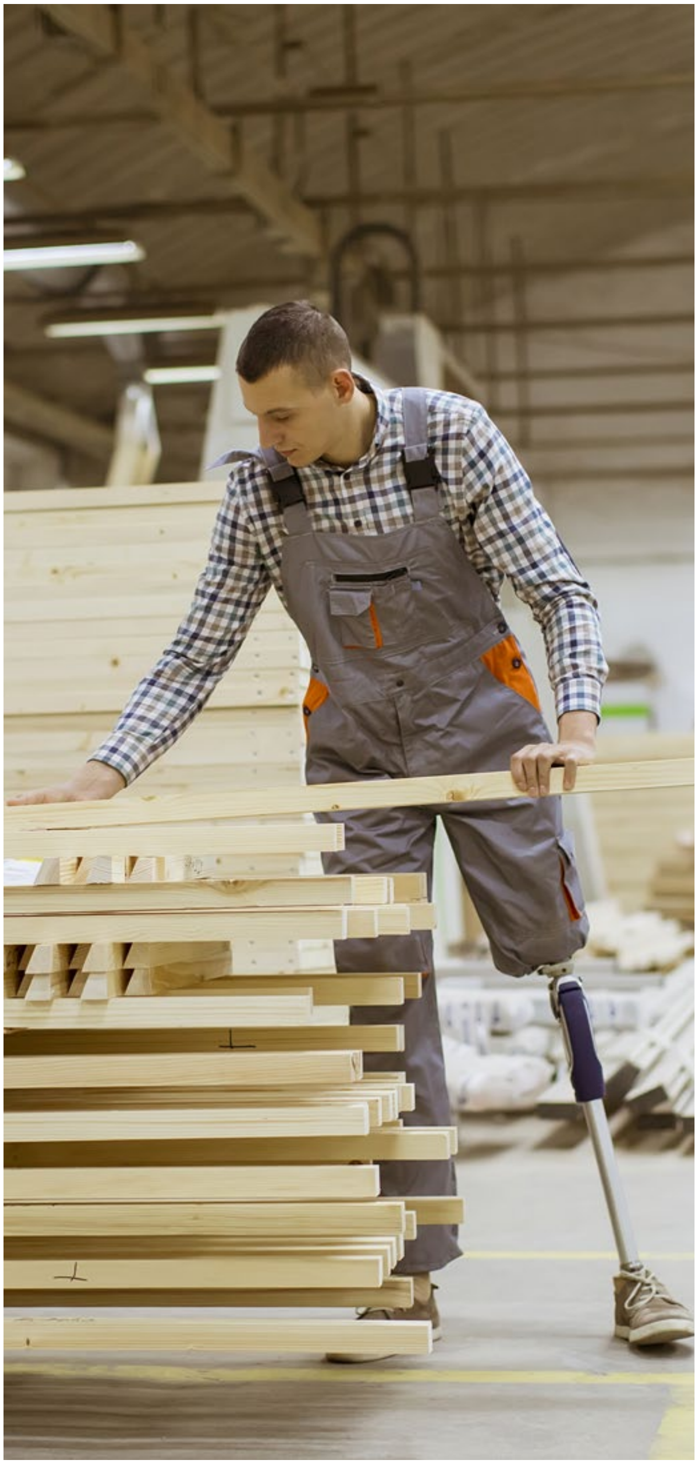
Stakeholders highlight that for some of their more vulnerable clients, there are more options available today and their clients are getting placed quickly in good paying jobs. Stakeholders describe that, in the past, perhaps there was more hesitancy to hire someone that may need more initial support, but today there is a greater openness to hiring people with special needs.

> "For the first time in a long time, we are in a position of being able to place people immediately. We are now advertising for job seekers."

> "Really opened the door for the people we work with. Really positive feedback from employers."

Seniors Coming Back to Work

Some stakeholders expressed that they are seeing more and more seniors coming back to work. The cost of living is going up and many need to work to cover bills and buy food.



Stakeholder Ideas

Based on the trends discussed with local stakeholders, a number of potential opportunities emerged, including:

- Enhancing and Creating Partnerships
  - Need for more awareness of what partners are doing.
  - Greater connection between schools and businesses.
  - Education in primary schools (Grade 7 and 8) to get students thinking about jobs in sectors that have labour shortages.
  - Sharing information on labour market trends with agencies.
- Sharing and Promoting Local Opportunities
  - Greater promotion of employment centres so people can get connected.
  - More promotion/education of skilled trades.

> "There is a perception that this work is less meaningful, where in fact income is often higher than other sectors and hours of work are more attractive."

  - Having "job tours" to show job seekers different types of employment.
  - Single point of access for job seekers.
- Providing Flexibility and Incentives in Labour Market
  - Need for employers to "take a deep dive" and examine opportunities to provide flex hours, benefits, RRSP matching, daycare, incentives, and other ways to meet the current employment needs of workers.
- Supporting Job Seekers
  - Need strategies to support people with mental health challenges.
  - Still a need for soft skills development.
  - Providing a living wage.
  - Need to support people who are hesitant to re-enter the workforce.
- Planning for Future
  - More succession planning.

> "Many people are still fearful of leaving the house and getting back into the workforce."

> "Some companies are just working short-staffed, people are working extra hours and double shifts, making good money but getting tired."

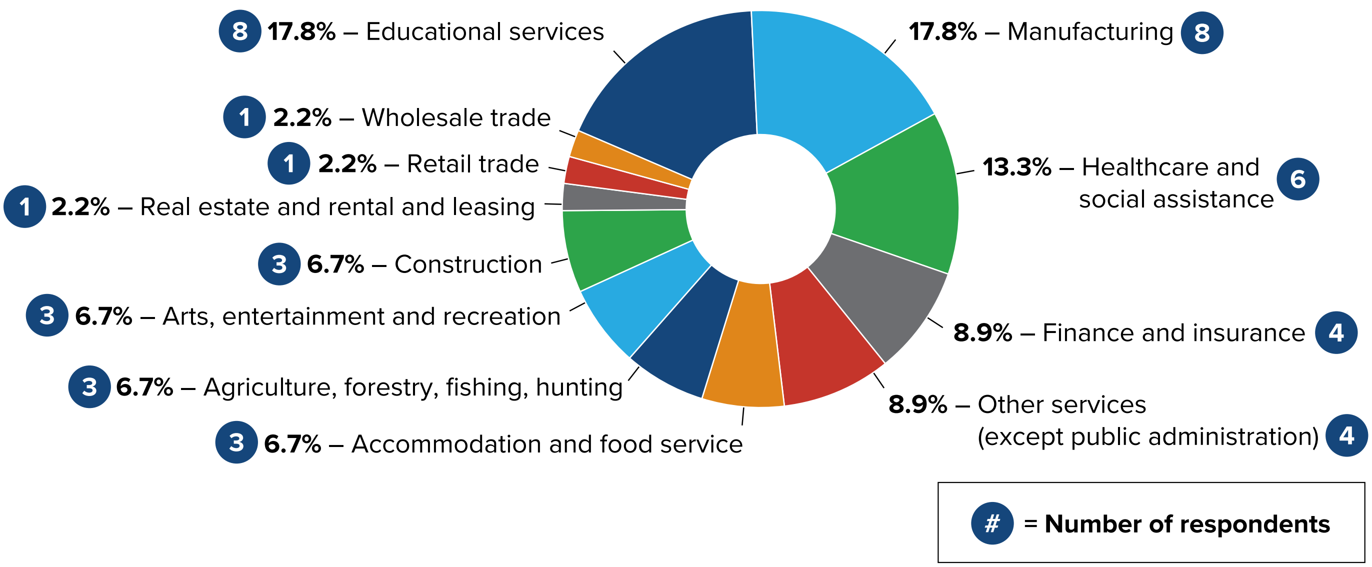
Business Labour Market and COVID-19 Impact Survey

A survey of Chatham-Kent employers was conducted in the summer of 2021 about the labour market and impacts of the pandemic. The survey was distributed to employers via a link on the Chatham-Kent Workforce Planning Board website, direct email to local employers, and through social media channels. The survey received 45 responses from businesses in Chatham-Kent. Key findings of the survey are outlined below.

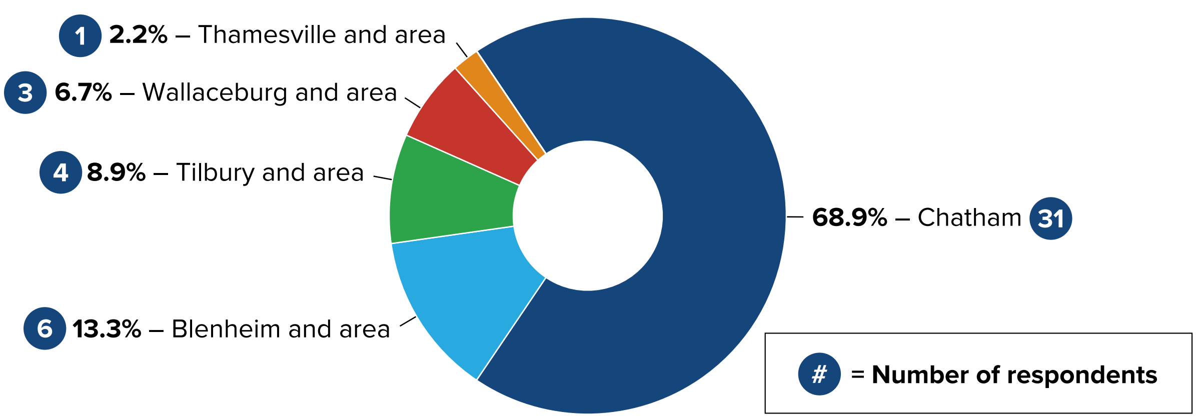
Who Responded

Only sectors, communities, and organization types with respondents have been shown in the graphs.

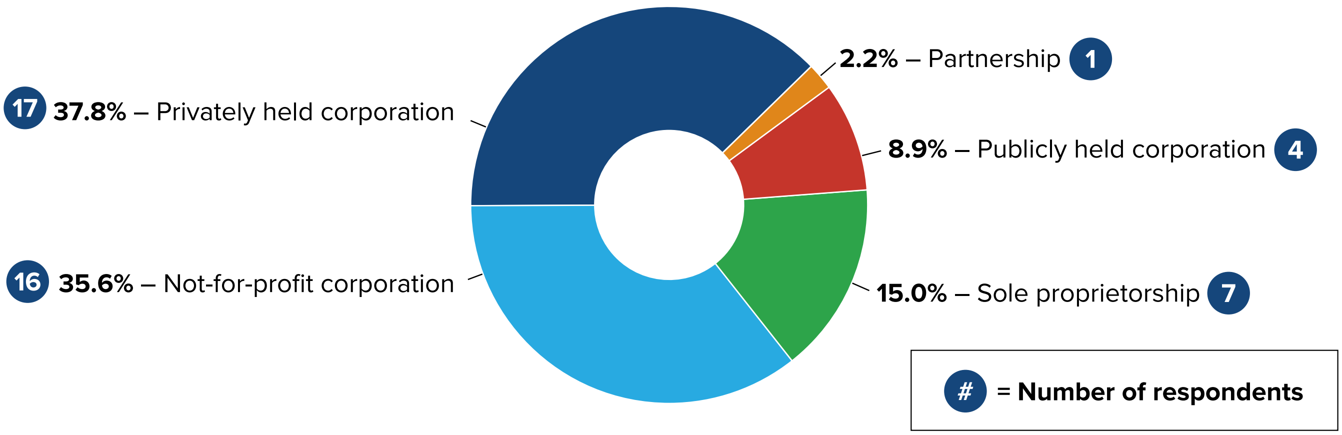
Number of respondents by sector



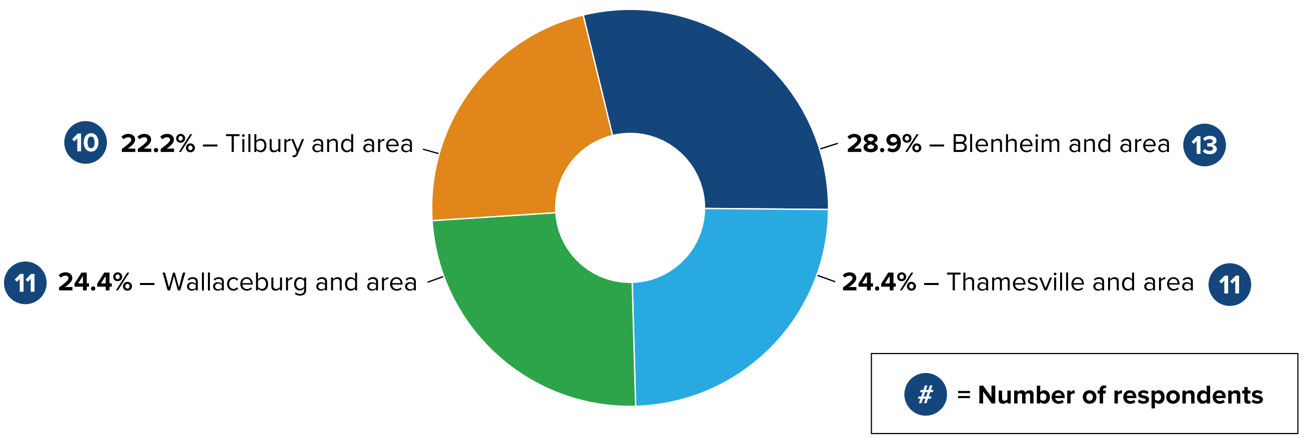
Physical location of organization within Chatham-Kent



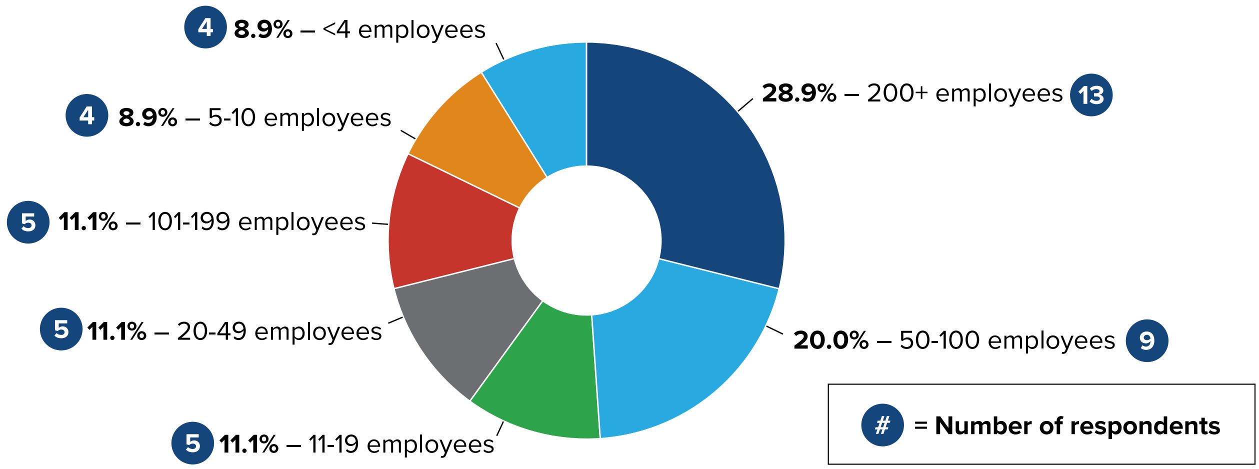
Structure/type of organization



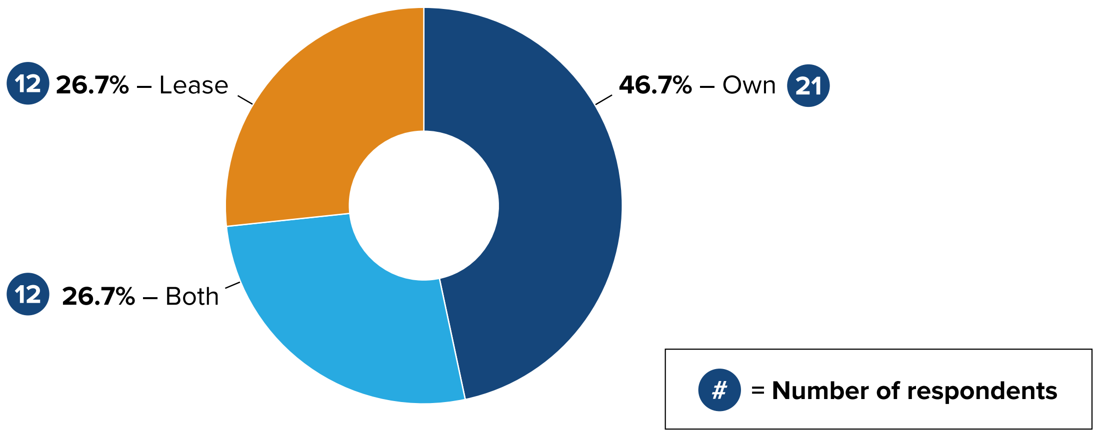
Ownership and locations



Number of employees



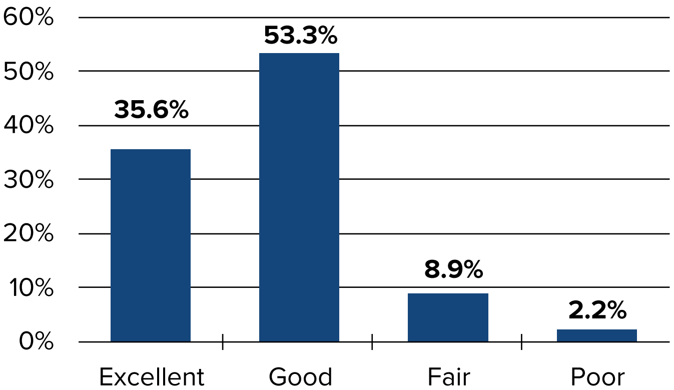
Own vs lease facilities



Impression of Chatham-Kent and Business Plans

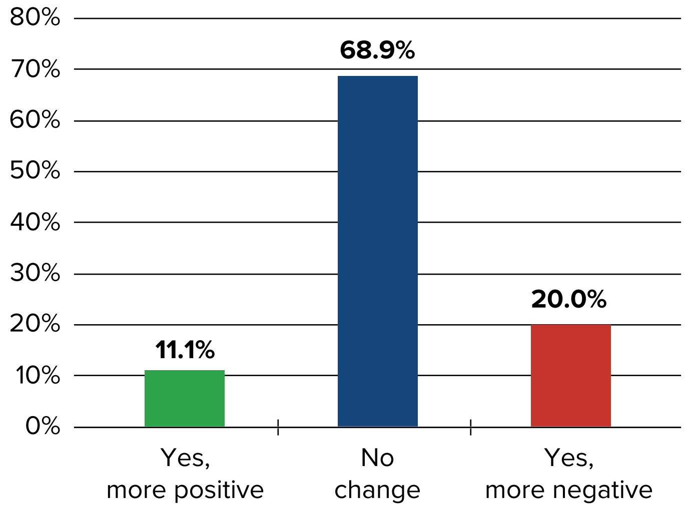
The vast majority (89%) of respondents had either an excellent or good general impression of Chatham-Kent as a place to do business.

General impression of this community as a place to do business



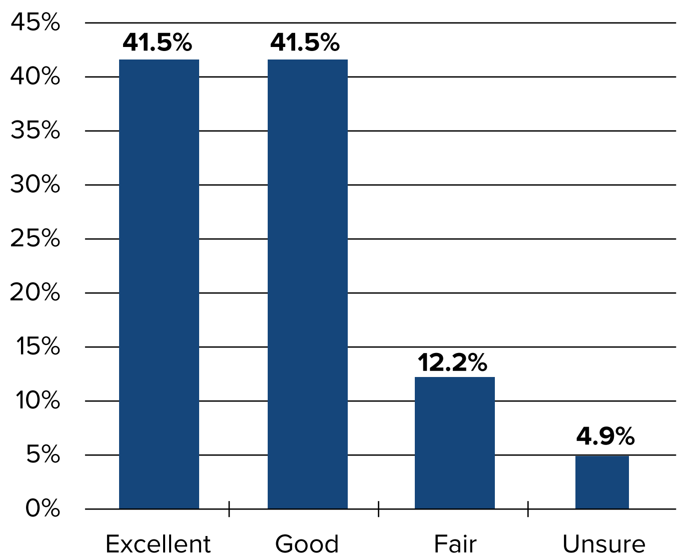
In June 2021, most did not report a change in attitude about doing business in Chatham-Kent compared to last year. Eleven percent reported a more positive attitude, while 20% reported a more negative attitude.

Change in attitude about doing business in Chatham-Kent, compared to last year



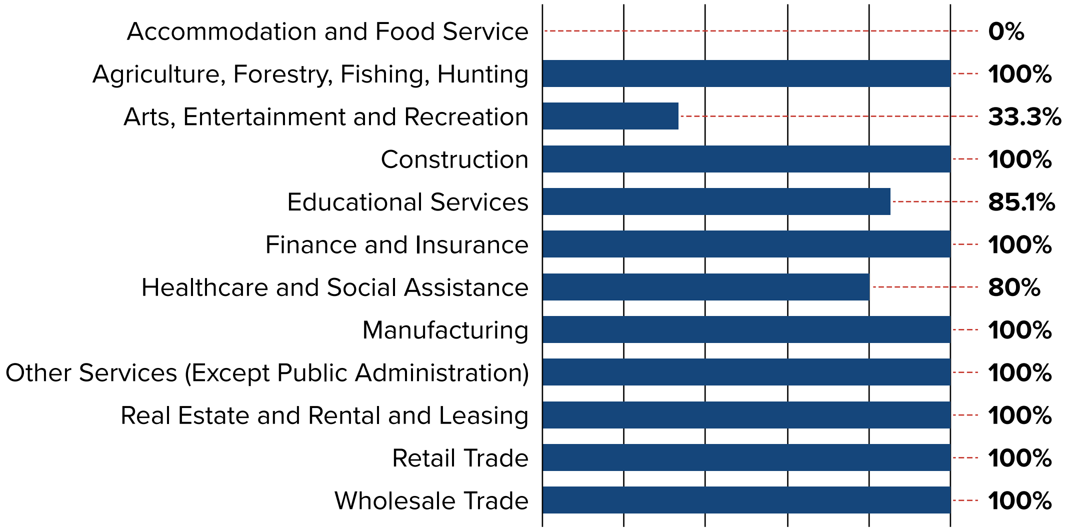
The vast majority had a positive outlook for their industry, with 41.5% reporting an excellent outlook and an equal percentage reporting a good outlook.

Respondents' outlook for their industry



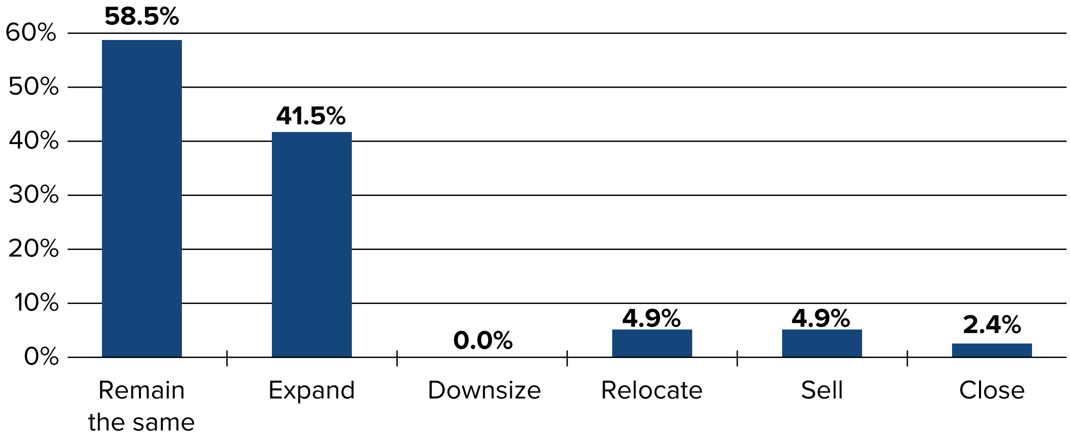
Businesses in the accommodation and food service sector were the primary survey respondents who were not positive about the outlook of their industry.

Percent of respondents reporting excellent to good outlook for their industry by industry



Some 41.5% of respondents reported that their business plans to expand over the next 18 months. Another 4.9% reported that they plan to relocate, 4.9% reported that they plan to sell, and 2.4% reported that they plan to close.

Business plans over the next 18 months



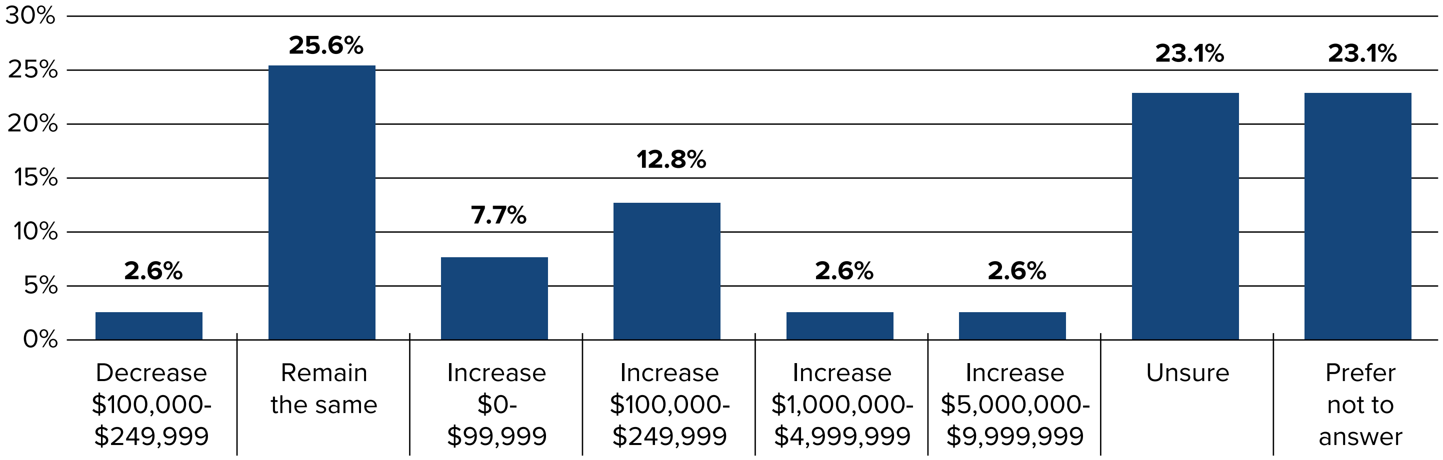
Industries that were most likely to anticipate expansion over the next 18 months were:

- Real Estate and Rental and Leasing;
- Wholesale Trade;
- Retail Trade;
- Manufacturing, and;
- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting.

Other industries where businesses were planning to expand were arts, entertainment and recreation; construction; finance and insurance; and healthcare and social assistance.

Approximately one-quarter (25.6%) of businesses reported that they anticipated an increase in sales in the next year. Most anticipated moderate sales increases, but a couple anticipated either between $1- and $5-Million or between $5- and $10-Million.

Anticipated change in annual sales in next year



Businesses that anticipated at least a $100,000 increase in sales in the next year were in the following industries:

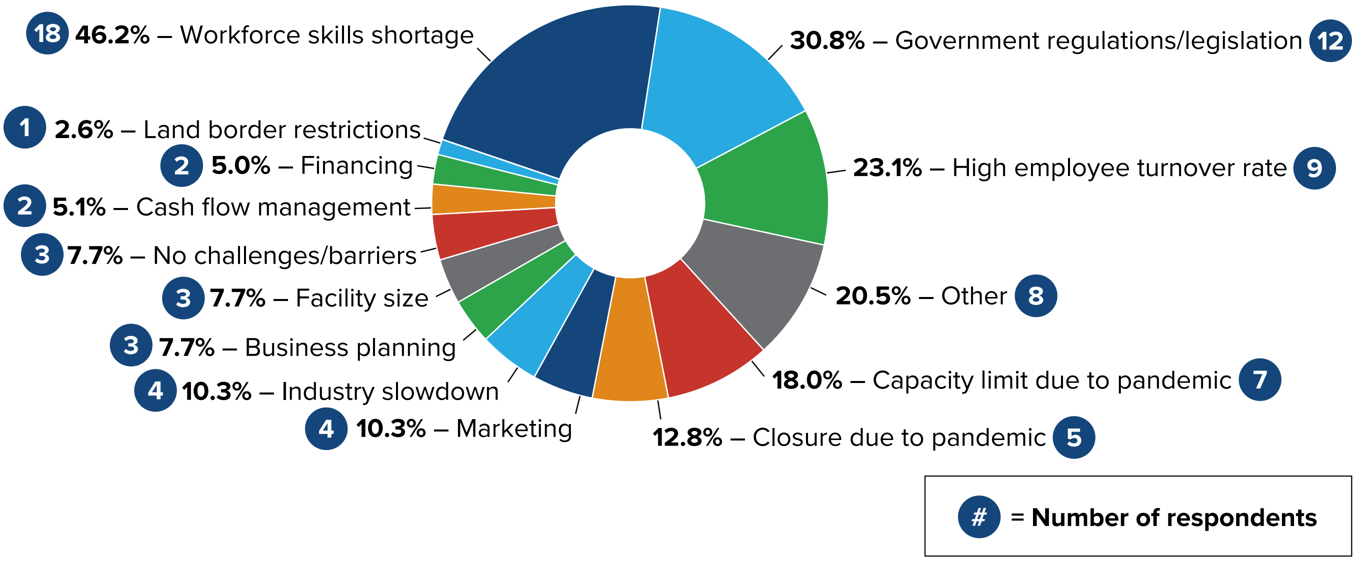
- Manufacturing (2)
- Construction (2)
- Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (1)
- Retail Trade (1), and;
- Finance and Insurance (1).

Current Challenges

The most reported challenges or barriers to growth were workforce skills shortages. This was followed by government regulations/legislation, a high turnover rate, capacity limits, and closures due to the pandemic.

Respondents reporting skills shortages were from the following sectors: Healthcare and Social Assistance, Accommodation and Food Services, Educational Services, Manufacturing, Construction, and Finance and Insurance.

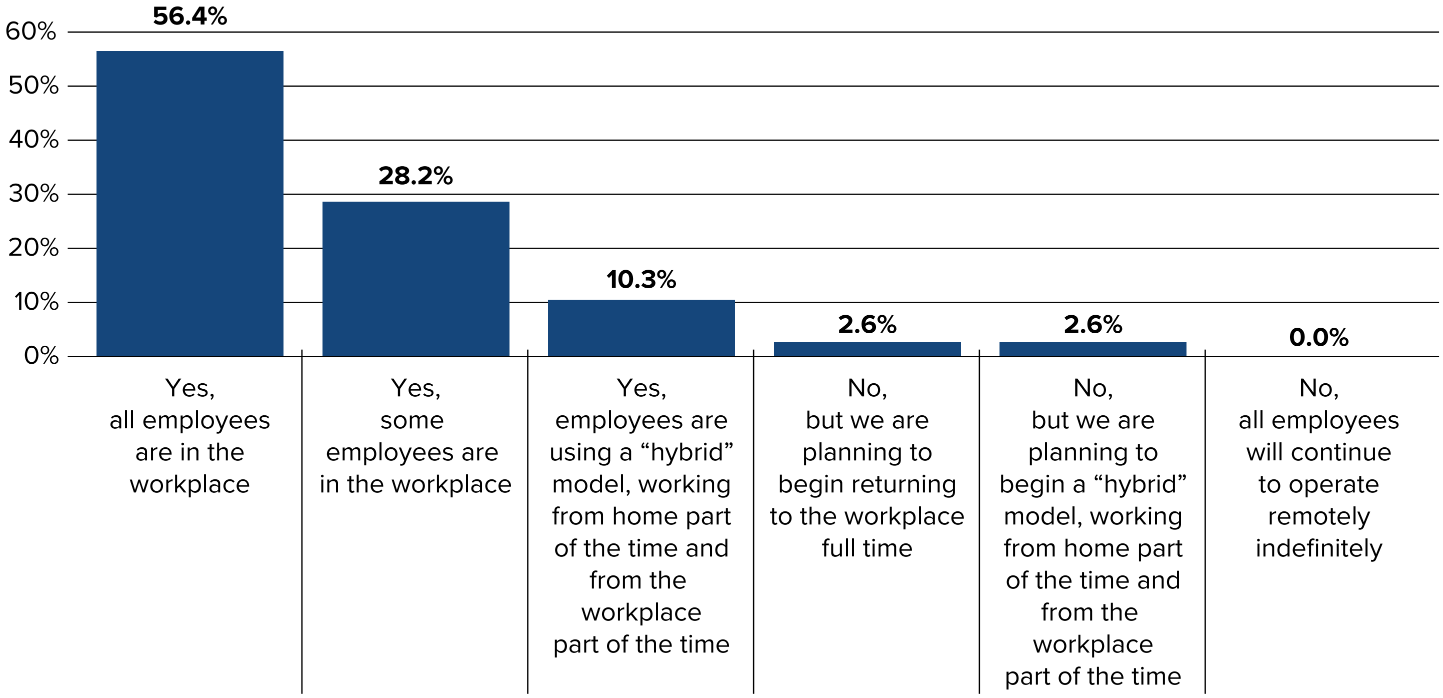
Challenges or barriers to growth that respondents' organizations are currently experiencing



Responses to COVID-19

As of July 2021, over half of survey respondents (56.5%) had all employees working at the workplace. Another 28.2% had some employees in the workplace, while 10.3% were using a hybrid model, working from home part of the time and the workplace part of the time. Few respondents reported that they hadn't yet done so, but planned to begin returning to the workplace full time or to a hybrid model.

Employees working at the workplace



Some 30.8% of respondents reported adding a new product or service related to the pandemic. Examples include:

- Adapting programs to meet the needs of the community, e.g., emergency child care
- Online ordering and delivery
- Virtual therapy and meetings
- Virtual outreach programming with in-person door-to-door drop-offs
- Healthcare pandemic supply warehouse for hospitals in the region
- Plastic components for ventilator units
- Virtual programming.

Impact of COVID-19

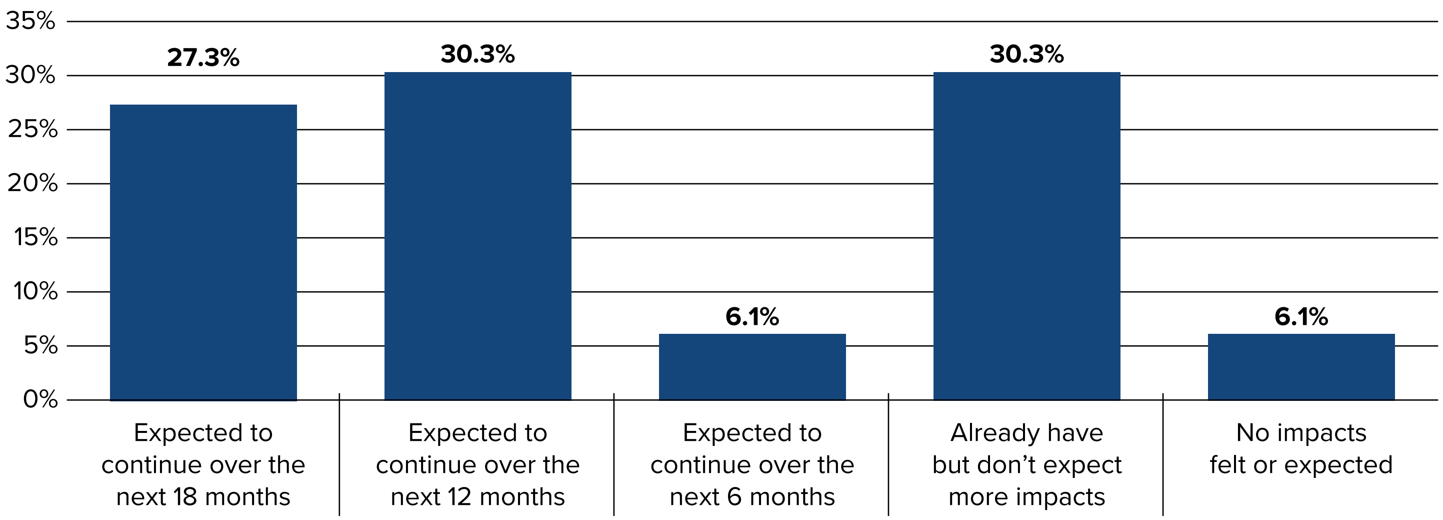
Over one-third (36.8%) of business reported that they have put in place new business strategies for the next 1-5 years in light of the pandemic. Another 23.7% reported that they had not yet done so, but they are working on developing new business strategies.

Development of new business operations for the next 1-5 years in light of COVID-19

Answers	%	#
Yes, we have put in place new business strategies	36.8%	14
Not yet, we are working on developing new business strategies	23.7%	9
No, we want to develop new business strategies but do not know how/do not have the resources	2.6%	1
No, we will not be developing new business strategies	36.8%	14

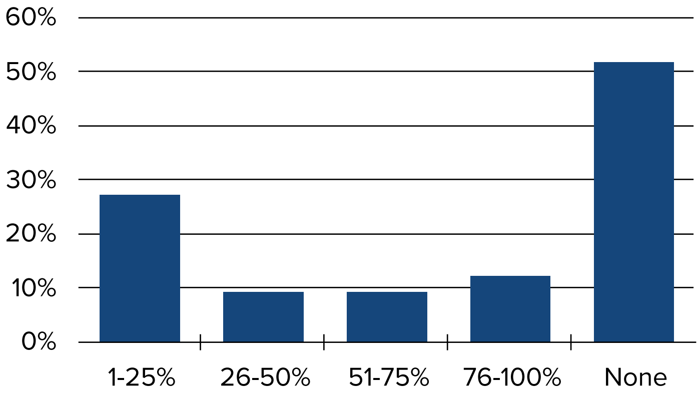
Most survey respondents (63.7%) expected impacts on their business as a result of the pandemic to continue into the future. Many expected this to continue for a relatively long period of time, with 30.3% expecting these to continue of the next 12 months and 27.3% expecting these to continue over the next 18 months.

Anticipate feeling the impact of COVID-19 on their business



No respondents reported having to lay off any employees permanently as a result of the pandemic. However, nearly half reported having to lay off employees temporarily as a result of the pandemic. Some 27.3% had to lay off 1-25% of their employees, 9.1% had to lay off 51-75% of their employees, and 12.1% reported having to lay off 76-100% of employees.

Percentage of workforce had to lay off temporarily as a result of COVID-19



Common impacts on businesses currently include employee absences because they are looking after children; disruptions in services, supplies or materials they depend on to run their business; drop in revenues, business or leads, and; employee absences due to voluntary self-isolation.

Current impacts on businesses

Employee absences because they are looking after children	**69.7%**
Disruptions in services, supplies or materials we depend on to run our business	**45.5%**
Drop in revenues, business or leads	**39.4%**
Employee absences due to voluntary self-isolation	**39.4%**
Reduces operational efficiencies	**30.3%**
Employee absences due to encouraging staff to work from home (staff are still working)	**21.2%**
Employee absences because they are caregiving to others who are ill	**21.2%**
Increase in demand for our products or services	**18.2%**
Increase in revenues, business or leads	**12.1%**
Decrease in demand for our products or services	**12.1%**
Increased public fear is causing customers to avoid our location, projects or services	**12.1%**
Employee layoffs due to economic uncertainty or unstable revenues	**9.1%**
Unable to move or ship our goods due to disrupted supply chains	**3.0%**

Common serious and moderate issues reported by businesses included challenges recruiting employees that are needed to allow the organization to grow, challenges recruiting employees to replace employees who are absent or who have separated from the organization, and worker absences.

Issues for businesses

Issue	Serious issue	Moderate issue	Somewhat of an issue	Not an issue	Not applicable
Accessing PPE	3.2%	12.9%	12.9%	71.0%	0.0%
Workers feeling unsafe	3.2%	6.5%	45.2%	45.2%	0.0%
Work refusals	9.7%	0.0%	19.4%	67.7%	3.2%
Worker absences	18.2%	21.2%	24.2%	36.4%	0.0%
Challenges recruiting employees that are needed to replace employees who are absent or who have separated from the organization	48.4%	16.1%	12.9%	16.1%	6.5%
Challenges recruiting employees that are needed to allow the organization to grow	53.1%	13%	12.5%	12.5%	9.4%

Importance of Government Programs

Businesses were asked how important various government support programs are for their business.

Approximately two-thirds of business respondents reported that the following programs were either extremely important or very important for their business:

- Create resources for employees that must self-isolate
- Tax credits and cuts
- Consider bigger economic stimulus package
- Cut interest rates

Over half reported that the following programs were either extremely important or very important for their business:

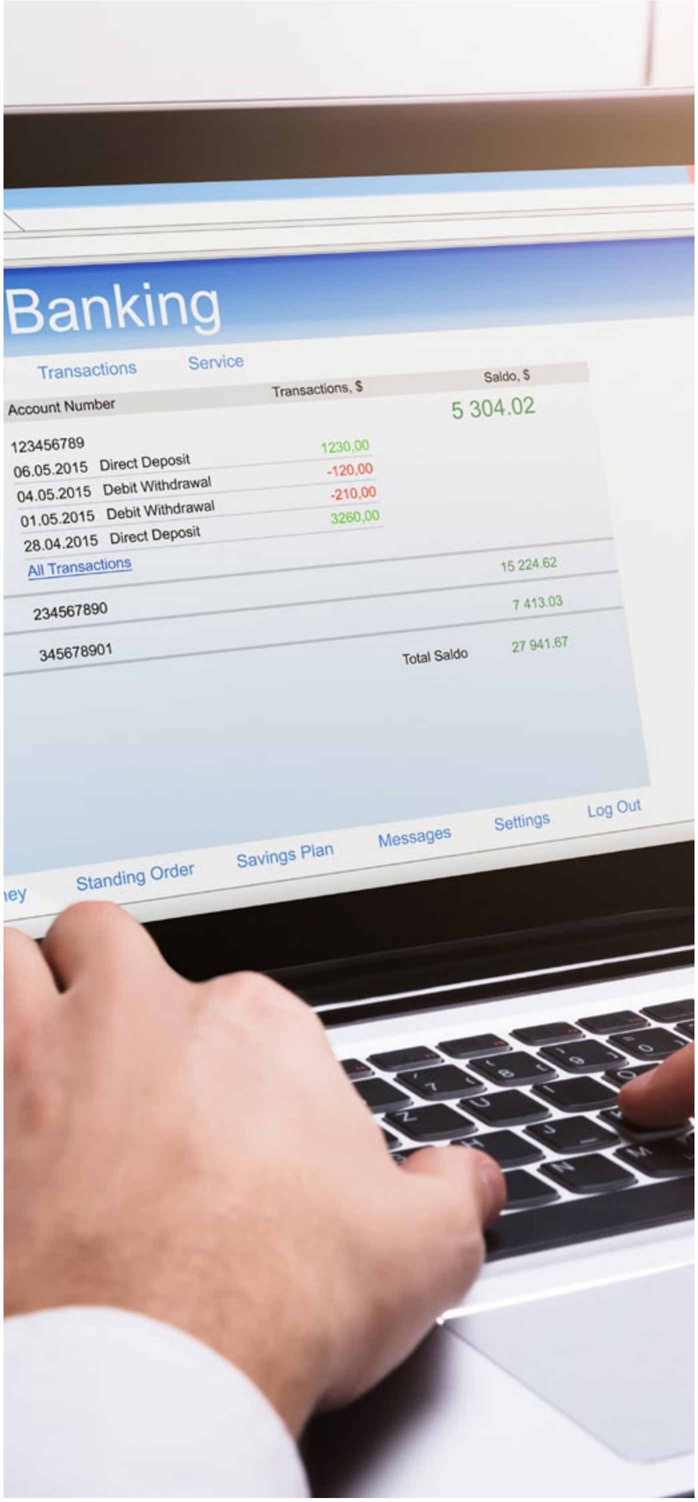
- Provide funding and incentives for technology to support staff working remotely
- Provide resources for employees that will get laid off
- Enhance EI access or wage replacement for employees
- Be more flexible around timelines for tax remittances (eliminate late penalties)

Government support programs	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Not at all important	Total
Cut interest rates	13.8%	13.8%	37.9%	10.3%	24.1%	3.2%
Consider bigger economic stimulus package	13.3%	10.0%	43.3%	16.7%	16.7%	3.1%
Work with banks/lending institutions to offer zero-interest loans, loan guarantees or lines of credit	10.0%	6.7%	26.7%	26.7%	30.0%	3.6%
Be more flexible around timelines for tax remittances (eliminate late penalties)	13.3%	6.7%	36.7%	23.3%	20.0%	3.3%
Provide funding and incentives for technology to support staff working remotely	16.7%	13.3%	30.0%	23.3%	16.7%	3.1%
Allow for delayed municipal property tax payments without penalty	6.7%	3.3%	23.3%	36.7%	30.0%	3.8%
Provide business advisory and technical guidance	3.3%	10.0%	26.7%	33.3%	26.7%	3.7%
Provide incentives for import-export of essential supplies	6.7%	0.0%	20.0%	26.7%	46.7%	4.1%
Speed up government payments (to vendors, contractors, etc.)	0.0%	13.3%	30.0%	20.0%	36.7%	3.8%
Suspend loan payments	6.7%	0.0%	16.7%	26.7%	50.0%	4.1%
Tax credits and cuts	10.7%	10.7%	46.4%	17.9%	14.3%	3.1%
Provide resources for employees that will get laid off	13.3%	10.0%	30.0%	20.0%	26.7%	3.4%
Enhance EI access or wage replacement for employees	16.7%	6.7%	30.0%	20.0%	26.7%	3.3%
Create resources for employees that must self-isolate	13.3%	16.7%	40.0%	13.3%	16.7%	3.0%
Provide more clarity and consistency around essential workers crossing the border	10.3%	13.8%	13.8%	17.2%	44.8%	3.7%

The most common business supports respondents reported receiving were Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) Program (46.7%), Canada Summer Jobs (24.1%), and Canadian Emergency Business Account (CEBA) (21.4%).

The common supports that businesses are aware of and interested in, but have not yet received, were Student Work Placement Program, and Government of Ontario's Workplace PPE Supplier Directory.

Most respondents were not aware of the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP) (71.4%), nor the Digital Main Street. Approximately half of respondents were not aware of the Rapid Response Platform (PPE Supply Directory); Government of Ontario's Workplace PPE Supplier Directory; and Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF), offered by FEDDEV Ontario.

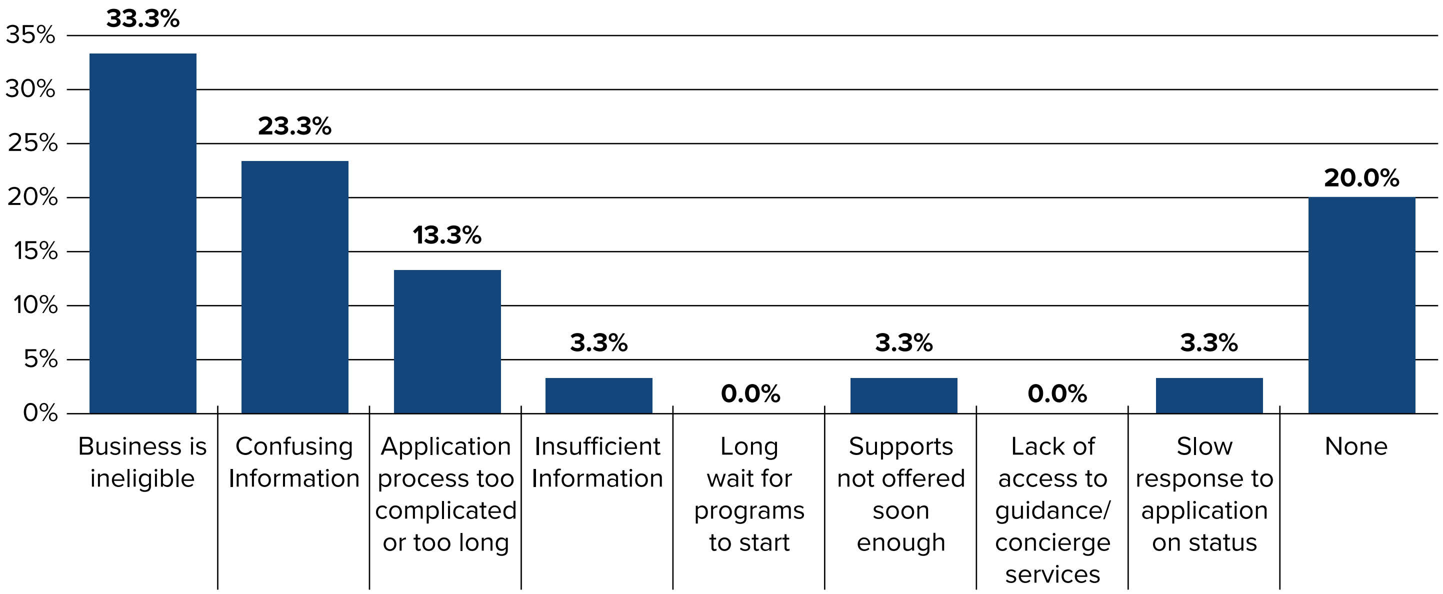


Use of business supports (COVID and other business supports)

	Applied, waiting confirmation	Aware and interested	Aware but not interested	Business is ineligible	Currently receiving or have received support	Not aware of this program
Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) Program	0.0%	3.3%	10.0%	26.7%	46.7%	13.3%
Canadian Emergency Commercial Rental Assistance (CECRA)	0.0%	0.0%	29.6%	33.3%	7.4%	29.6%
Canadian Emergency Business Account (CEBA)	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	28.6%	21.4%	25.0%
Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF) offered by FEDDEV Ontario	0.0%	3.7%	14.8%	33.3%	0.0%	48.2%
Student work placement program	0.0%	17.9%	28.6%	10.7%	14.3%	28.6%
Canada Summer Jobs	3.5%	6.9%	34.5%	10.3%	24.1%	20.7%
Rapid Response Platform (PPE Supply Directory)	0.0%	7.1%	25.0%	14.3%	3.6%	50.0%
Government of Ontario's Workplace PPE Supplier Directory	0.0%	10.7%	25.0%	7.1%	7.1%	50.0%
Ontario Small Business Support Grant	3.6%	7.1%	14.3%	32.1%	7.1%	35.7%
Digital Main Street	0.0%	3.6%	14.3%	17.9%	0.0%	64.3%
Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP)	3.6%	3.6%	14.3%	7.1%	0.0%	71.4%

One-third of respondents reported ineligibility as a barrier to their business accessing government supports. Nearly one-quarter (23.3%) reported that confusing information was a barrier.

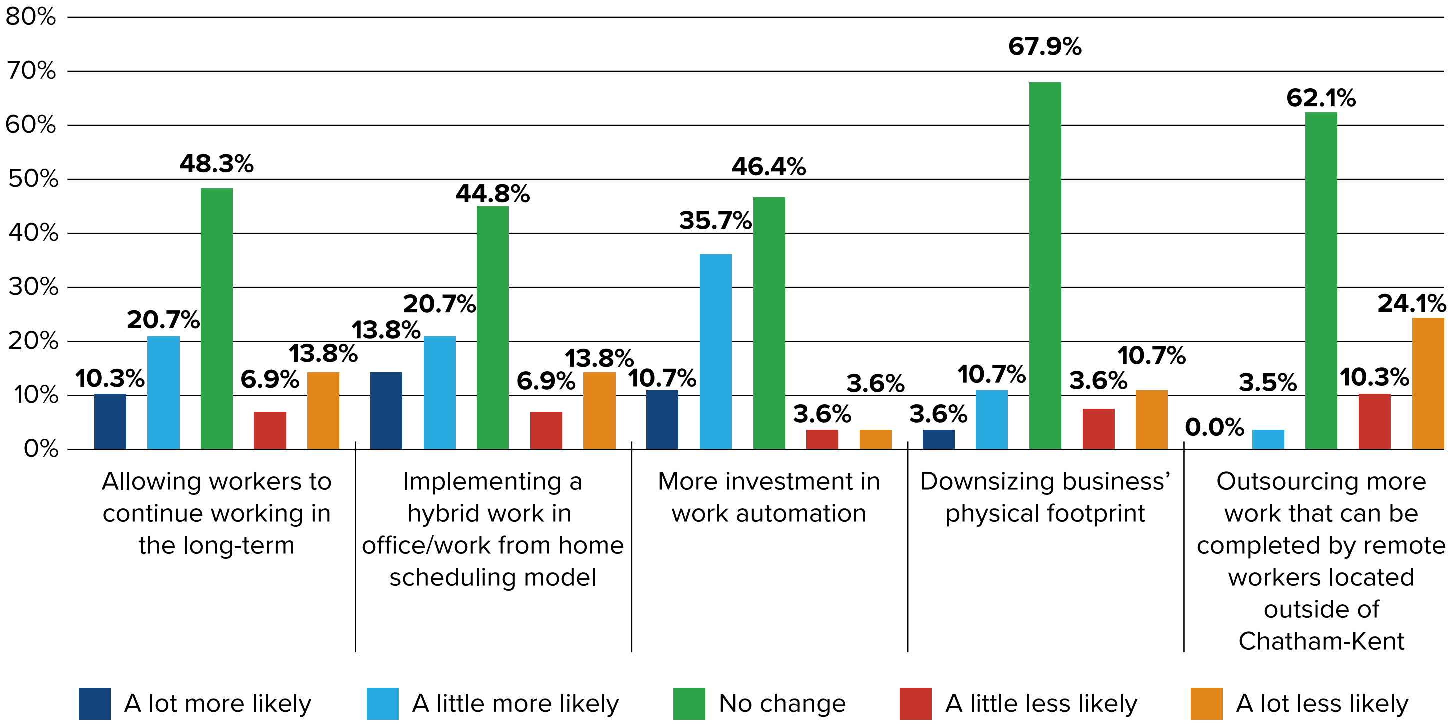
Barriers in accessing business supports (% of respondents reporting barriers)



Business Changes

Many businesses (46.4%) reported that they were at least a little more likely to consider more investment in work automation in light of the pandemic. Approximately one-third (34.5%) reported that they were at least a little more likely to implement a hybrid work in office/work from home scheduling model, and one-third (31.0%) reported that the were at least a little more likely to allow workers to continue working from home long-term.

Increase likelihood of business considering various changes



Workforce Separations and Hires

Survey respondents reported 671 workforce separations in 2020. The reported separations include those related to the pandemic but are not exclusively related to the pandemic. The average business reported 24 separations.

Workforce separations in 2020

Separation type	Number of respondents reporting this type of separation	Number of separations
Quits	19	151
Retirements	8	19
Temporary layoffs (due to work shortage or situational decline)	14	351
Permanent layoffs (due to work shortage or situation decline)	2	4
Dismissals	10	64
Other (including sick, compassionate and parental leaves)	14	82

Survey respondents reported 384 hires in 2020, 28% of which were full-time hires.

Hires in 2020

Hire type	Number of respondents reporting this type of hire	Number of hires
Full-time hire	18	109
Part-time hire	12	108
Seasonal hire	8	77
Contract hire	8	90

Between January 2020 and May 31, 2021, the most frequent positions that respondents hired for were casual staff to fill staff illness and vacations, cooks, educators, construction workers, admin support and assistance, summer jobs, and welders.

The majority of survey respondents (62.1%) reported that their organization has experienced challenges with retention.

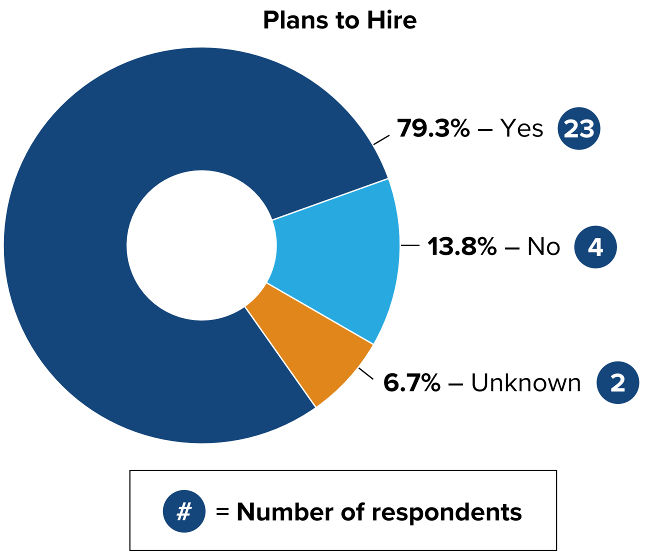
Approximately two-thirds (67.9%) of respondents reported that they had a difficult time filling at least some positions. The most frequently reported positions that were difficult to fill were mental health workers, labourers, cooks, and educators.

Top reported reasons for difficulty in filling positions were: not enough qualified candidates; transportation; childcare and wages; no one available, and; no motivation to return to work due to government incentives to stay home.

Anticipated Hires

As of July 2021, 79.3% reported plans to hire between July and December 2021.

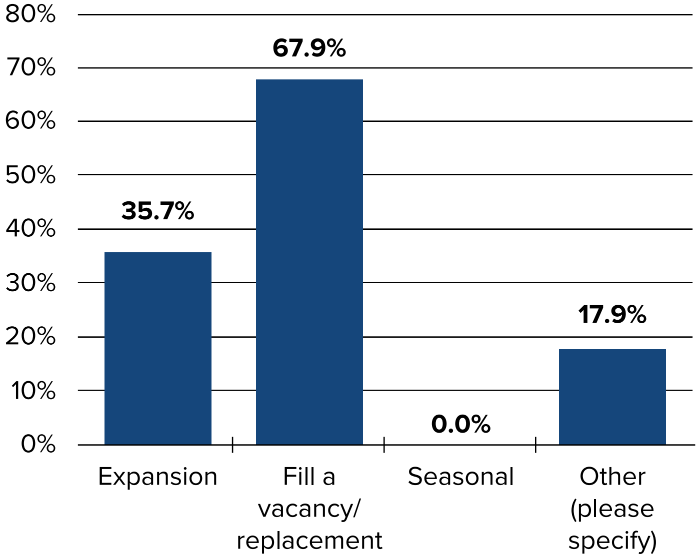
Plans to hire between July and December 2021



Top positions that respondents anticipated hiring were welders, industrial painters, programmer/operators, construction labourers, cooks and registered early childhood educators/teaching assistants.

The majority (67.9%) of planned hires were to fill a vacancy/replace another employee, while 35.7% were related to expansion.

Reasons for Planned Hires



Business Factors

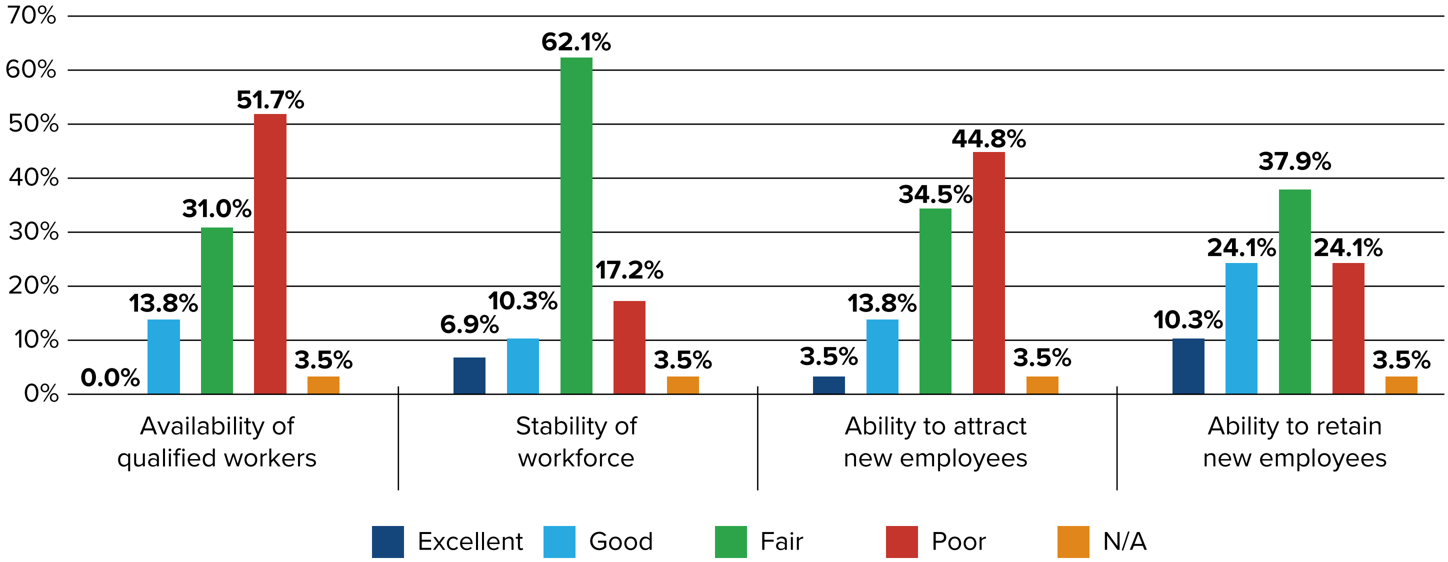
No respondents rated the availability of qualified workers at excellent. Nearly 14% rated availability as good and 31% rated availability as fair. More than half rated availability of qualified workers as poor.

Most (79.3%) reported the stability of the workforce as at least fair, including 10.3% that reported it to be good and 6.9% that reported it to be excellent.

Most respondents rated ability to attract new employees as fair to (34.5%) to poor (44.8%).

Perception of ability to retain new employees was mixed. Just over 10% reported this to be excellent, 24.1% reported this to be good, while 37.9% reported this to be fair, and 24.1% reported ability to retain new employees to be poor.

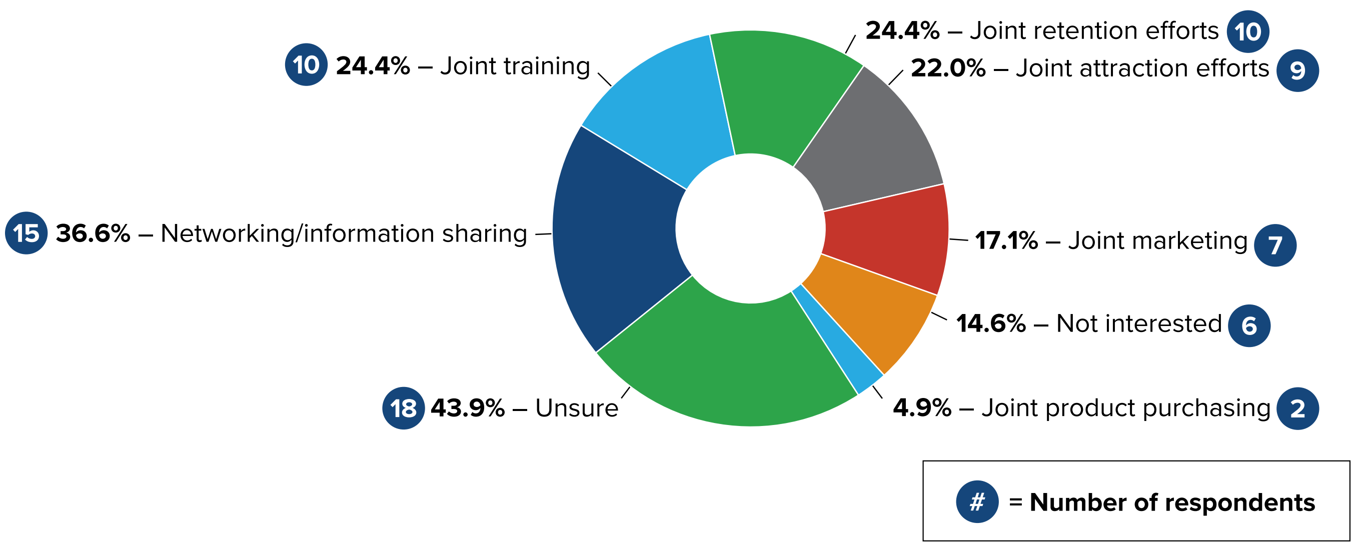
Rating of factors in Chatham-Kent for their business needs



Interest in Working Co-operatively on Workforce Solutions

Respondents were most interested in working co-operatively with other businesses in the community to pursue networking/information sharing, joint training, joint retention efforts, and joint attraction efforts.

Respondents interested in working co-operatively with other businesses in the community to pursue various workforce solutions



Jobseeker Survey

A survey was conducted of Chatham-Kent job seekers in the summer of 2021 about their job searches. The survey was distributed via a link on the Chatham-Kent Workforce Planning Board website, direct email to Employment Ontario agencies as well as partners in education and training, and through social media channels. The survey received ten responses.

- 30% of respondents reported that they were currently job searching and another 10% reported that they planned to soon. The top reason for their job search was an increase in income. Other reasons included looking for different types of work, job dissatisfaction, changing fields, and overqualified to work in their current position.
- The most common aspect that job seekers were looking for in employment was a flexible work schedule. This was followed by increased wages, a healthy workplace culture, opportunities for development, and opportunities to take on higher levels of responsibility.
- Job seekers' biggest frustrations when looking for work were not being able to find job opportunities and not being able to get an interview. Other frustrations included that their skills don't meet the job requirements, and that they can get an interview but can't get the job.
- The most common forms of assistance that job seekers thought would help them in their job search were interviewing techniques and skills upgrades. Some also reported that they could benefit from résumé help and career exploration.

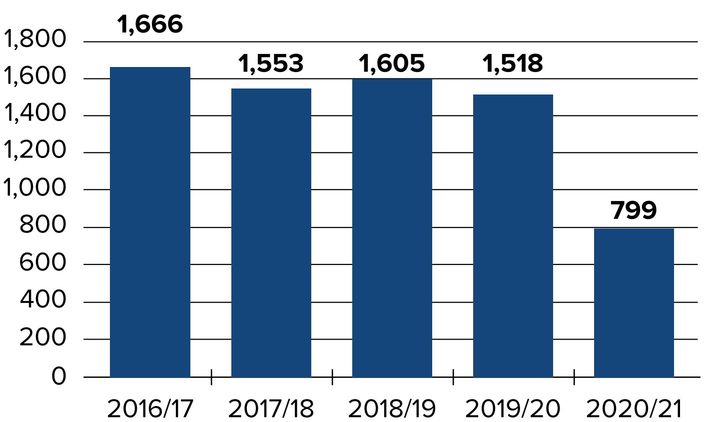
Employment Ontario Services

The Chatham-Kent Workforce Planning Board was provided with client data for those accessing Employment Ontario services during the reporting period of 2020-2021. The scope of Employment Ontario services includes employment services, second career, literacy and basic skills, and apprenticeships. The programs have been developed to connect clients with opportunities to engage in the local workforce. Analysis of this data provides some insights to year-over-year trends and outcomes of individuals accessing Employment Ontario services. The data reported and presented reflects closed cases for the given fiscal year, which runs from April 1 to March 31. A closed case refers to a client's service plan closure.

Employment Services

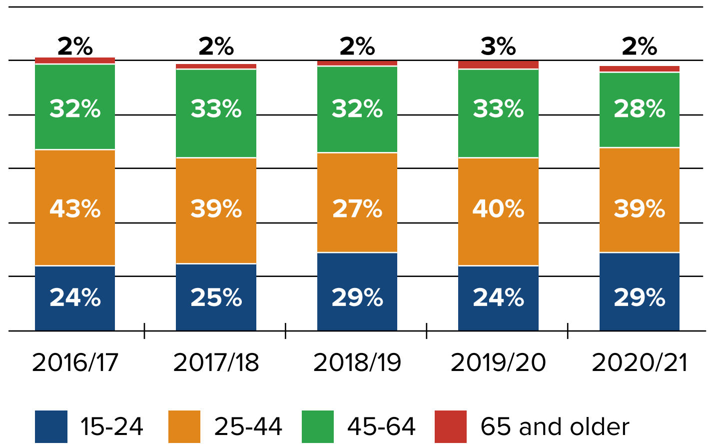
Employment services includes a variety of resources, supports and services to support the career needs of individuals and employers to help Ontario residents find sustainable employment. In 2020/21, Employment Ontario agencies provided employment services to 799 clients in Chatham-Kent. The number of clients served dropped by over half (52.6%) from the previous year (2019/20) (2020-21 Local Board Data).

Number of employment services clients served in Chatham-Kent, 2017/18-2020/21



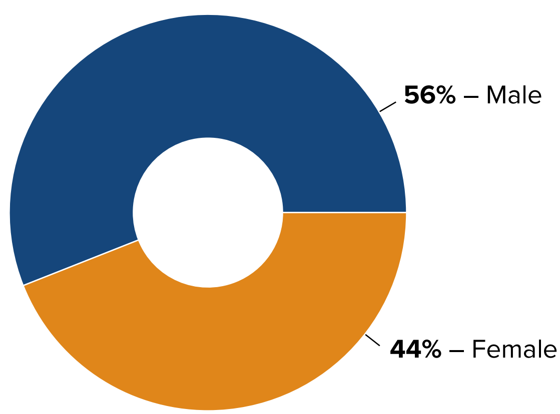
In 2020/2021, seniors (65 years and older) made up 2% or lower of total clients served (2020-21 Local Board Data). Youth aged 15-24 accounted for 29%. The largest group were age 25 to 44, representing 39% of all clients. Another 28% of clients were age 45-64. This was a drop of 5% from the previous year.

Employment services clients served by age, 2016/17-2020/21



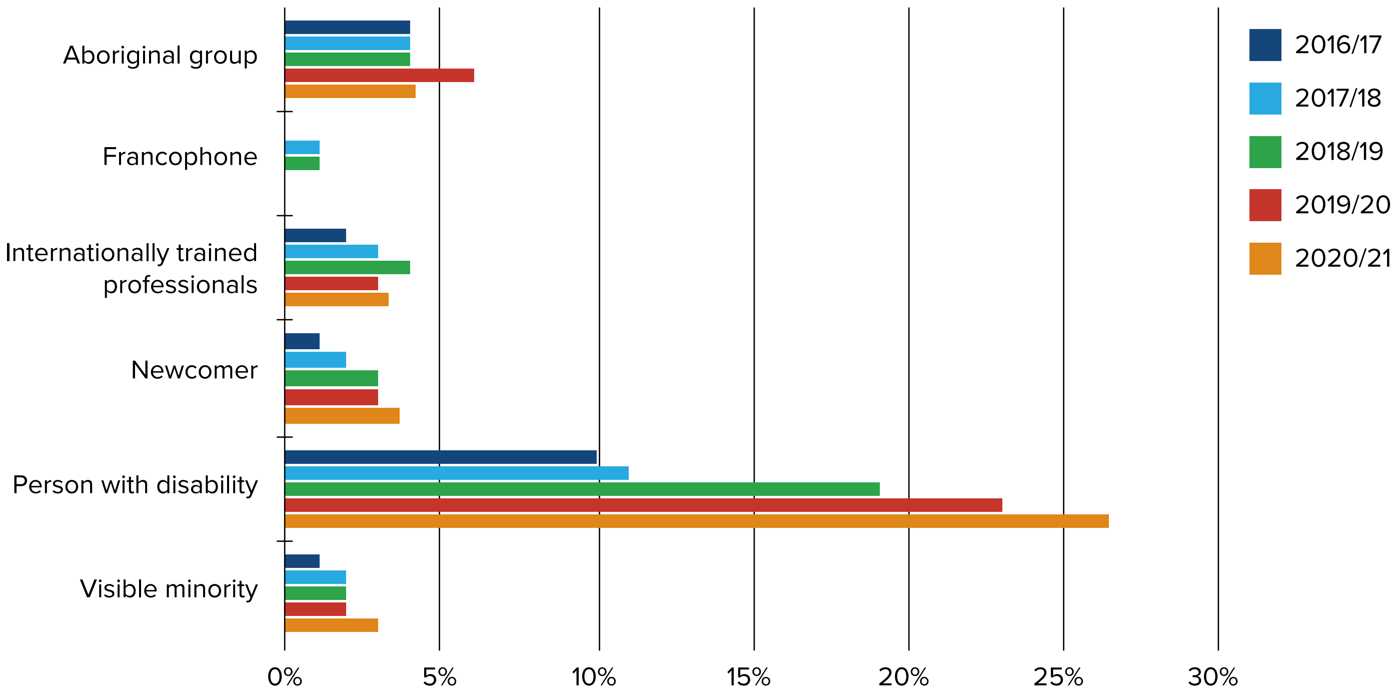
Over half (56%) of clients served identified as male, while 44% identified as female (2020-21 Local Board Data Suppressed).

Employment services clients served by gender



Just over a quarter (26%) of Employment Service clients were persons with a disability (2020-21 Local Board Data Suppressed). Another 4% had Indigenous identities, 4% were newcomers, 3% were internationally trained professionals, and 3% were visible minorities. All of these designated groups represented slightly higher percentages of the total clients than previous years, with the exception of that are part of the "Aboriginal Group[1]".

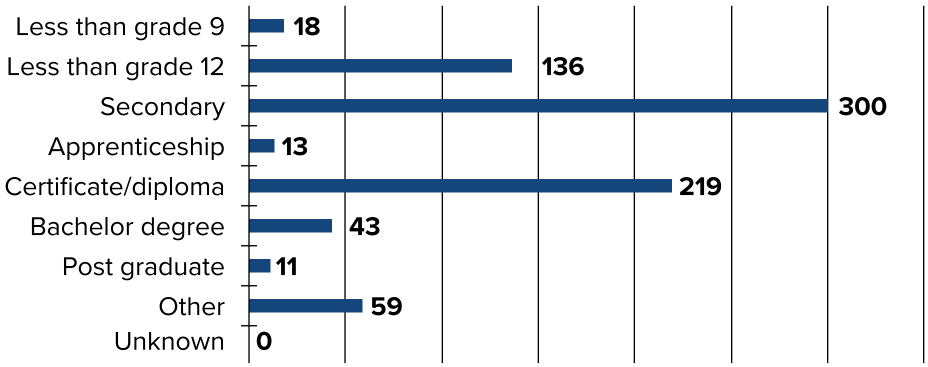
Employment services clients served by designated groups



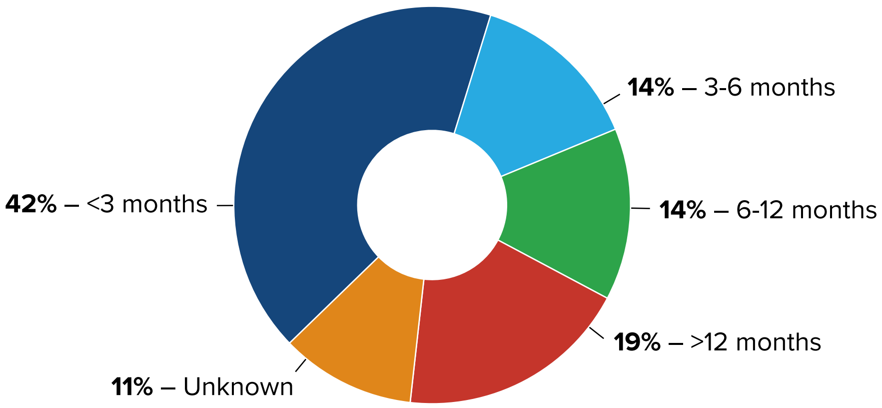
Nearly half of Employment Services clients had a post-secondary education. In 2020/21, 43.2% of clients had at least a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree (2020-21 Local Board Data) (2020-21 Local Board Data Suppressed). 37.5% of clients had a secondary school diploma, but no post-secondary education, while 19.2% of clients had not finished high school.

[1] The term "Aboriginal Group" was used rather than "Indigenous Identities" to be consistent with the terminology used by Employment Ontario.

Employment services clients served by highest level of education

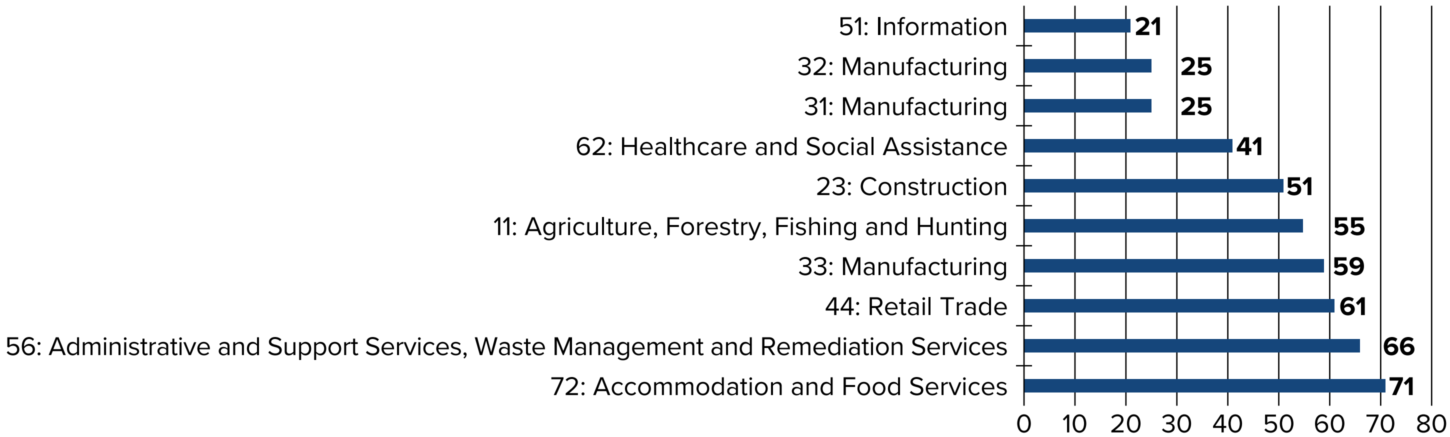


Almost all clients experienced time out of employment/training. In 2020/21, nearly half (42%) of clients experienced less than three months off from employment/training and 19% experienced time out for over a year (2020-21 Local Board Data).



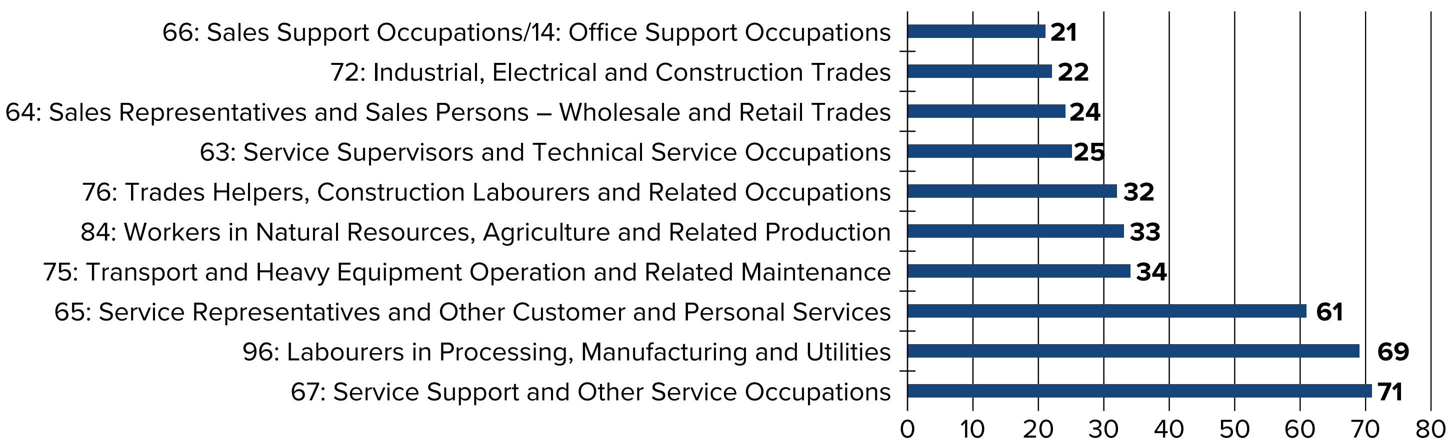
The number one industry that Employment Services clients had experienced layoffs from in 2020/21 was 72: Accommodation and Food Services, with 71 clients experiencing layoffs (2020-2021 Local Board Data). The second was 56: Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remedies, with 66 clients experiencing layoffs, followed by 44: Retail Trade (61 layoffs) and 33: Manufacturing (59 layoffs).

Top ten layoff industries, 2020-2021



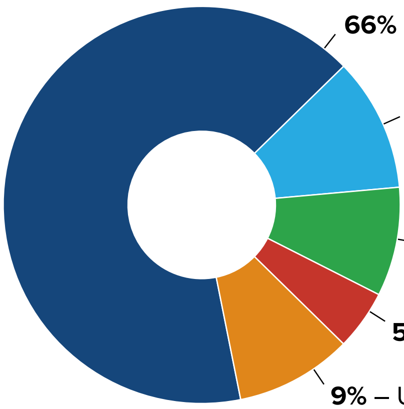
In 2020/21, the number one layoff occupation of Employment Services clients was 67: Service Supports and Other Service Occupations, with 71 clients laid off (2020-2021 Local Board Data). This was closely followed by 96: Labourers in Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities (69 clients), and 65: Service Representatives and Other Customer and Personal Services.

Top ten layoff occupations



The majority of Employment Services clients became employed at the time of the exit summary. The client results stated that 59% of clients became employed, while 12% are in education or training (2020-2021 Local Board Data). Only 8% were unemployed at the exit summary.

Outcome at exit summary



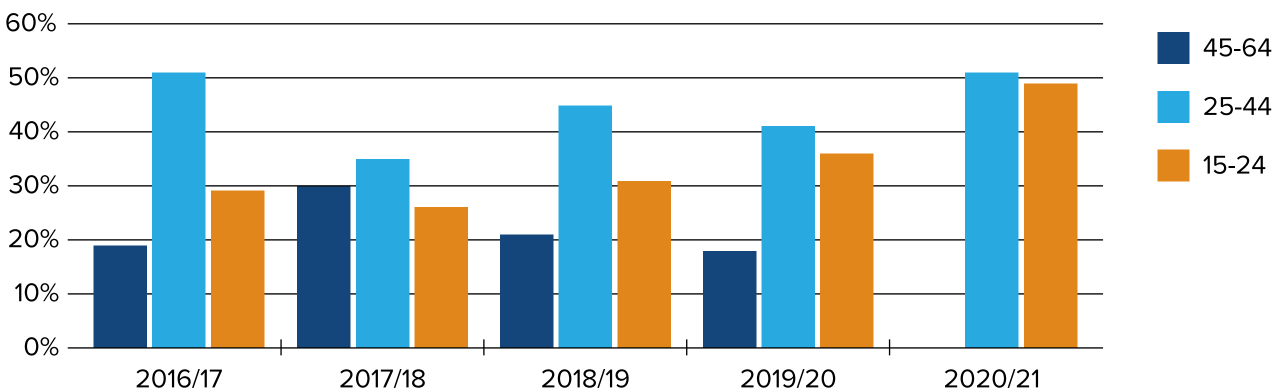
Literacy and Basic Skills

The Literacy and Basics Skills program helps adults develop and apply communication, numeracy, interpersonal and digital skills to achieve their goals, including employment, post-secondary education, apprenticeship, secondary school and independence.

There were 109 Literacy and Basics Skills clients in 2020-21. This number is down from 162 in 2019-20.

In 2020-21, 15-24- and 25-44-year-olds represented larger shares of Literacy and Basics Skills clients than they had in recent years (2020-2021 Local Board Data). Data on clients aged 45-64 was suppressed due to the small numbers.

Literacy and basic skills of clients by age group

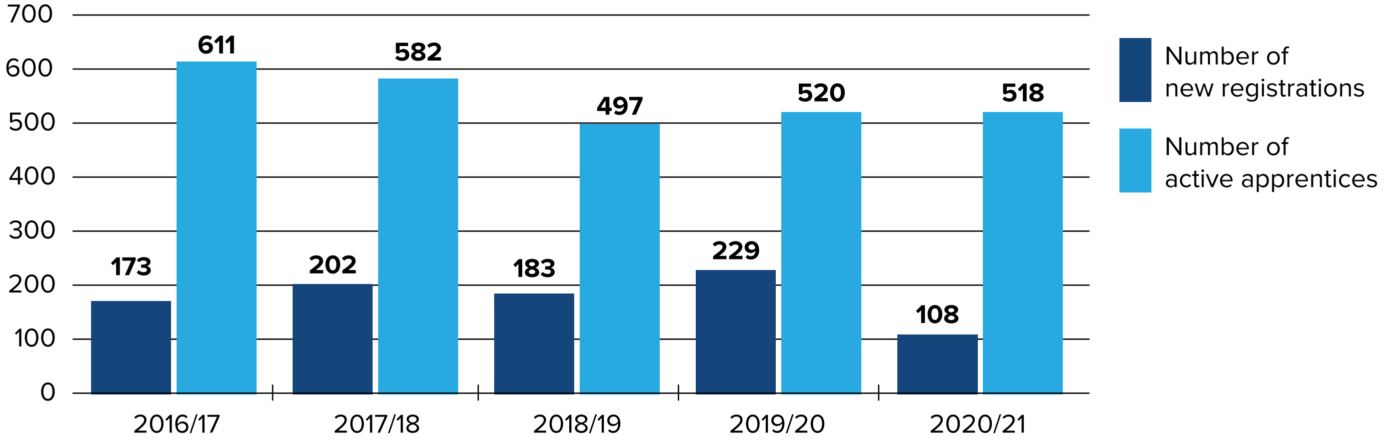


Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a combination of on-the-job training and classroom learning leading to a trade credential. Apprentices take classes and receive paid on-the-job training with an employer under the direction of experienced workers.

The number of new apprentice registrations was lower (108) in 2020/21 compared to each of the previous four years (2020-2021 Local Board Data).

New and active apprenticeships



Key Findings

- Chatham-Kent's population has been relatively constant over the past ten years, with some more recent growth, and will continue to see an aging population; with approximately 30% of the current population over the age of 60. This aging population will likely continue to drive reductions in labour market.
- In 2019, 44.8% of males 65 years and older were still active in the labour market in Chatham-Kent, compared to 38.1% in Ontario.
- As with communities across Ontario, businesses in Chatham-Kent have experienced severe impacts because of the pandemic. There have been losses in the number of businesses over the past year, with the retail and restaurant sectors hit particularly hard.
- Most businesses responding to the survey on impacts of the pandemic expected impacts on their business to continue into the future. Nevertheless, the vast majority had a positive outlook for their industry.
- Employment has returned to pre-pandemic levels. This includes hard-hit sectors of retail trade; arts, entertainment and recreation; and accommodation and food services.
- More people of all ages and genders have re-entered the labour force.
- Employment organizations report more interest from employers in hiring people with disabilities and newcomers.
- Employers continue to find it difficult to recruit and retain workers and report workforce skills shortages as a key challenge. Some further report being unable to expand business because of a lack of employees. While there is demand across all sectors, stakeholders point to higher demand in healthcare, manufacturing, skilled trades, security/policing, and construction.
- Challenges to entering or re-entering the workforce, as described by stakeholders and job seekers, include access to daycare, vaccine requirements, lack of career path, continued uncertainty surrounding the pandemic, lack of flexible work schedule, and current income supports. Instability of some sectors (tourism, food service) is also creating challenges as workers in these sectors are looking at more stable sectors and/or opportunities to upgrade or develop new skills.
- Employers identified several in-demand positions, including welders, industrial painters, programmer/operators, construction labourers, cooks, and registered early childhood educators/teaching assistants.
- Businesses are continuing to pivot because of COVID-19, including providing online services where possible, using a hybrid approach to the workplace, and continuing to access government support programs.
- The number of clients served by Employment Services in Chatham-Kent dropped by over half (52.6%) from the previous year (2019/20).

Recommendations

Industries in Chatham-Kent, as with communities across the world, have experienced severe impacts as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

While employment levels have improved, and are at pre-pandemic levels, businesses across the board face challenges in recruiting employees; some having to close doors permanently, some having to reduce services or hours of operation, and some unable to expand their business because of a lack of human resources. Boomers retiring, lack of population growth, hesitancy of workers to re-enter the labour force, and a lack of access to daycare and transportation for job seekers are all creating challenges for employers.

The following recommendations recognize the current and longer-term labour market needs while acknowledging the continued implications of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Priorities:

1. Develop resources to support employers and job seekers
2. Foster local partnerships among employers, educators, and agencies
3. Enhance research of local labour market

Moving Forward in Chatham-Kent: Actions (2022)

Priority 1: Develop Resources to Support Employers and Job Seekers

Actions

1. Develop a long-term communications strategy to create and sustain awareness of, and promote utilization of, chathamkentjobs.com. The strategy should include developing promotional materials and tools for employers, local agencies, and job seekers. Videos, webinars, and "live" training should also be considered.
2. As part of the implementation of chathamkentjobs.com, support employers in establishing digital postings and creating their digital footprint.
3. Host Chatham-Kent Career Discovery Expo with participation from local schools, businesses, and agencies. A Career Expo can provide opportunities for students and young residents to learn about career options and pathways, and to hear from local business leaders.

4. Create digital literacy workshop series for job seekers and new workers to develop digital literacy and essential skills necessary for their employment. Training workshops should be created in partnership with local skills development organizations. Topics for workshops and resources could include Microsoft Office, Photoshop, and video creating software, LinkedIn, job searching, creating digital footprint, and avoiding online fraud. Training could focus on various population groups such as youth, seniors, people living with disabilities, and newcomers.
5. Share results from 2021 Local Labour Market Report with stakeholders.

ChathamKentJobs.com

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent and the CK Workforce Planning Board have launched a new consolidated job postings tool to help job seekers and employers. The tool is www.ChathamKentJobs.com and it is a one-stop location for finding job postings and career information in Chatham-Kent. Chatham-Kent has joined 23 workforce planning regions across the province that are now using the platform tool.

Priority 2: Foster Partnerships Among Employers, Educators, and Employment Agencies

Actions

1. Increase participation of local businesses, educators, and employment agencies in existing local networks, and provide additional opportunities for access to information and discussions. This local network should provide opportunities for regular (i.e., monthly) opportunities to connect; share information, discuss challenges, and define actions.
2. Design and implement workshop series to share information, stories, and best practices on current employer challenges. Workshops could be used to create short webinars/ videos to be used as ongoing community resources.
3. Identify opportunities, in partnership with businesses and schools/training centres, to increase participation in co-operative and intern programs.

Priority 3: Enhance Research on Labour Market Conditions

Actions

4. Conduct research on barriers, challenges and opportunities to entering and remaining in the local labour market in order to build an understanding of the potential causes of workforce shortages (labour shortage, skills shortage, or wage differences) and to help focus local workforce development efforts.
5. Engage with newcomers, employers, the Local Immigration Partnership, and other identified stakeholders on needs of newcomer workers.

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

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

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The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of Employment Ontario or the Government of Ontario.

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