



# London Economic Region Labour Market Participation

Final Report  
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Elgin County Library  
Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board  
Elgin Workforce Committee  
Employment Sector Council  
Literacy Link South Central  
London Intercommunity Health Centre  
London Middlesex Housing Corporation  
Middlesex County Library  
Middlesex County Ontario Works  
Middlesex Workforce Committee  
Oxford County Library  
Oxford County, Human Services Department  
Oxford Workforce Development Partnership  
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Worktrends.ca

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## Executive Summary

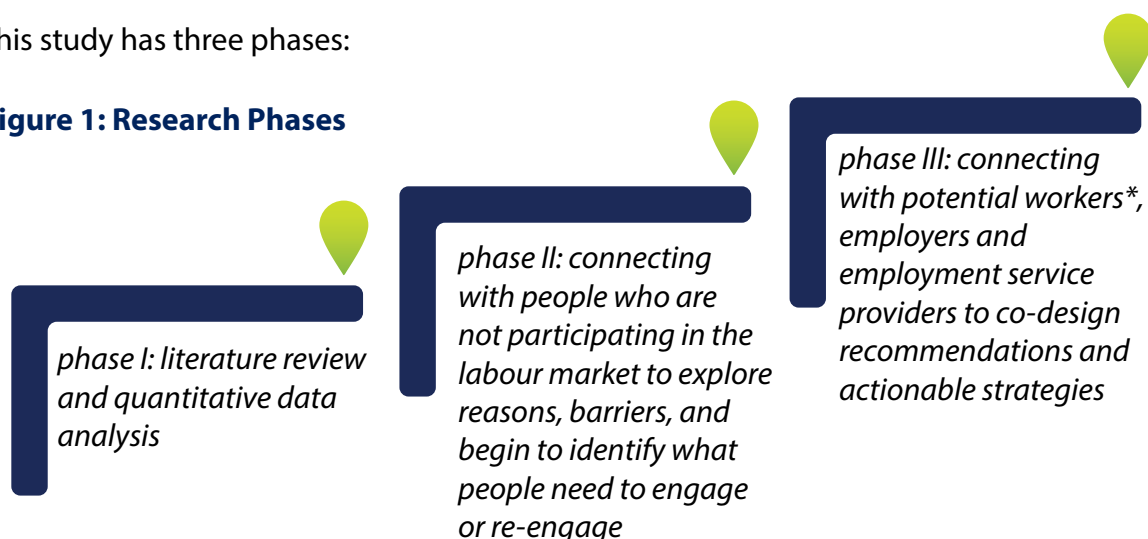
Recent research completed by the Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board and the Local Employment Planning Council (LEPC) identified an apparent disconnect between the labour market and employers. The labour market participation of prime age workers, age 25 to 54, in the London Census Metropolitan Area was observed to be declining while employers responding to the EmployerOne Survey identified a labour shortage in a range of occupations and industries.

In order to better understand the local situation and identify strategies for engaging and re-engaging labour market non-participants<sup>1</sup>, the LEPC commissioned the London Economic Region Labour Market Participation Study. Research questions to be answered by this study include:

- What are participation trends in the London Economic Region (which is broader than the London Census Metropolitan Area)?
- Who is participating and who is not?
- What are their reasons for not participating?
- What are barriers to participation and what can be done to remove or reduce these barriers?

This study has three phases:

**Figure 1: Research Phases**






\*potential workers includes individuals who currently are not participating in the labour market but who indicate that they want to work.

<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this report, a person is participating in the labour force if they are either working or actively looking for work. This definition is consistent with Statistics Canada's definition.

A report of the Phase I and Phase II findings was provided in October 2016. This final report includes updates to the Phase II findings from additional surveys, interviews and focus groups and the results of Phase III in this study.

## Comparing 2015 to 2005:

-  *Participation rate of 25 to 54 year olds dropped from 88.9% to 83.7%*
-  *20,600 fewer jobs, mostly full-time*
-  *20,700 fewer 25 to 44 year olds living in the region*

## Method and Limitations

The work was iterative. Findings and learnings from each phase informed the next phase. Phase I findings informed Phase II engagement strategies and tool development. Study recruitment approaches were monitored and adjusted as needed over the course of this phase to ensure diverse representation. Phase II findings informed solution development tools and approaches in Phase III.

### Phase I:

A search of Statistics Canada publications from 2010 on, North American literature obtained through an on-line search and locally developed grey literature yielded 17 relevant and unique studies and reports. Fourteen of these reports discuss participation of 25 to 54 year olds or participation of persons with disabilities.

Local administrative data for the London Economic Region (LER) was obtained from various Statistics Canada surveys including the Labour Force Survey, Job Vacancy and Wage Survey, and 2011 National Household Survey. Two Labour Force Survey custom tabulations were purchased to obtain data specific to the London Economic Region. Data limitations include: lack of current participation data for communities within the Economic Region; limited data on the participation of the Indigenous population; and lack of local data on the number of persons with disabilities and their labour market participation.

### Phase II:

Over a five month period, qualitative data in the form of narratives and personal experiences was gathered from 163 individuals through the completion of 125 survey questionnaires, 77 interviews, and 5 focus groups involving 41 individuals.

A targeted convenience sampling approach was taken with the support of community agencies and service providers. Although recruitment strategies included social media and post cards, personal connections proved to be the most effective.

### Phase III:

Focus groups were held with 6 employers and 8 employment service providers to share what had been learned about challenges to participation and ideas for what would help, for the purposes of additional perspectives. Following these sessions, all key informant data were collated and working documents were created for use at the Co-Design session that focused on developing actionable strategies. This two-hour session included: 9 individuals providing the perspectives of non-participants, 2 employers, and 5 employment & literacy service providers.

## Summary of Findings

### Phase I: Literature and Secondary Data

#### Participation trends

While declining participation is not unique to the LER, the rate of participation decline over the last 10 years is more significant than is seen in Canada, Ontario and other southern Ontario regions. The LER's 2015 participation rate is second lowest among southern Ontario regions and compared to Ontario. Within the Region, the largest declines in participation are seen among women particularly women age 25 to 44, among 45 to 54 year olds, and among those with high school education or less.

Economic, labour market and demographic trends contribute to participation trends. The London region has experienced relatively high unemployment rates and significant job loss, primarily in full-time jobs, over the last decade compared to other southern Ontario CMA's. The number of 25 to 44 year olds participating in the labour force has declined largely because of a decline in the size of that population. The decline in the male 25 to 44 labour force size is matched by the decline in this total population and almost half of the

### By the numbers:

42,200 non-participants  
age 25 to 54



30,200 are women



8,400 have landed  
immigrant status and  
7,800 of these are  
women



Up to 2,500 non-  
participants are  
Indigenous with most  
living off-reserve in  
London



18,500 have more than  
high-school education  
and 12,800 have a post-  
secondary certificate or  
diploma



38,200 report being  
unwilling to work or  
unable to work



**it is troubling that 30%  
of the 42,200 non-  
participants possess  
a post-secondary  
certificate or diploma.**

decline in the female 25 to 44 labour force is due to decline in the 25 to 44 female population. In 2015, there were about 6,000 vacant jobs and 10,500 unemployed workers in the labour force.

### **Who is Not Participating?**

As predicted by the literature, local data shows that non-participants are more likely to:

- Be female
- Be between 25 and 44 years of age
- Have lower education
- Have a disability, poor mental health, or poor health

Landed immigrants may be over-represented in the non-participant population though updated population data is needed to confirm this observation. Landed immigrants<sup>2</sup> accounted for almost 17% of the population in 2011, and accounted for almost 20% of non-participants in 2015.

The Indigenous population is more likely to have relatively more non-participants. Across Canada, the participation rate of Indigenous people age 25 to 54 in 2011 was at least 10 percentage points lower than the general population in this age group. Local First Nations data for 2011 for the population age 15+ confirms significantly lower participation.

At the County level, Elgin County has the lowest participation rate while Oxford has the highest.

When looking at the 42,200 people who were not participating in the labour force in the London Economic Region in 2015, almost 75% were female, 61% were between the ages of 25 and 44. One fifth of the female population aged 25 to 54 were not participating.

While non-participants are less likely to have post-secondary education, it is troubling that 30% of the 42,200 non-participants possess a post-secondary certificate or diploma.

The literature indicates that non-participation is also associated with longer term unemployment and being an immigrant female. Among

***In 2015, 92.7% percent of non-participants in the London Economic Region reported that they did not want work or were unavailable to work, a statistically higher proportion than across Ontario.***

***In the community, lack of transportation and affordable child care, discrimination, and not being able to connect with employers are challenges reported by many.***

<sup>2</sup> Landed immigrants includes people who are or have been landed immigrants in Canada and who have been granted the right to live in Canada permanently.

female immigrants, being a recent immigrant or having immigrated later in life, having more younger children, a spouse who is not working, English or French not being a first language, or coming from a source country with lower female participation rates all contribute to lower participation.

### *Reasons for Non-Participation*

Labour Force Survey data purchased for this study shows that the proportion of non-participants who do not want work or are unavailable to work is higher in the London Economic Region compared to Ontario. A growing proportion of non-participants report not wanting work or not being available to work. In 2015, 92.7% percent of non-participants in the London Economic Region reported that they did not want work or were unavailable to work, a statistically higher proportion than across Ontario.

### **Phase II: Voices of Experience – Barriers to Participation**



### **Voices of Experience: reasons for non- participation themes**

*Costs more to work  
than not to work when  
considering income  
earned versus personal  
and economic costs*



*Lack of access  
to resources like  
transportation,  
computers, phone, child  
care*



*Discrimination, racism  
and lack of respect in the  
workplace*



*Not having the  
experience, education  
and credentials expected  
by employers*



*Not having the right  
network or connections*



*The implications of  
having a disability, poor  
mental health or poor  
health*

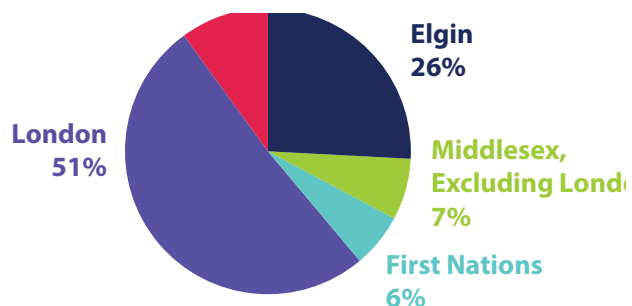


***“I look and look and  
look – I’m tired of being  
rejected”.***



## Attributes of Study Participants

**Figure 2: Area of Residence**

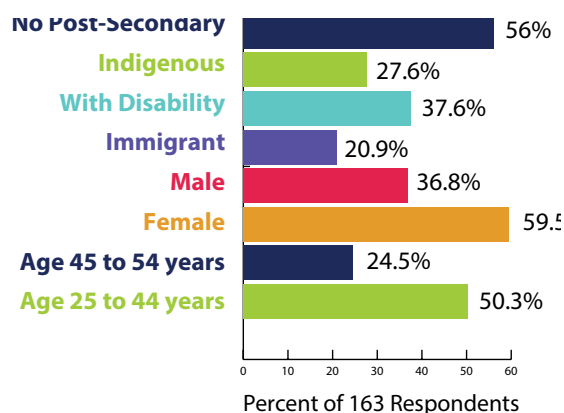


This study includes many diverse voices: there is urban, rural and Indigenous representation from each of the three Counties and First Nations Reserve. There is representation from each of the demographic groups of interest.

From the survey questionnaire, people identified the following as top barriers to looking for work and/or taking work if it was offered:

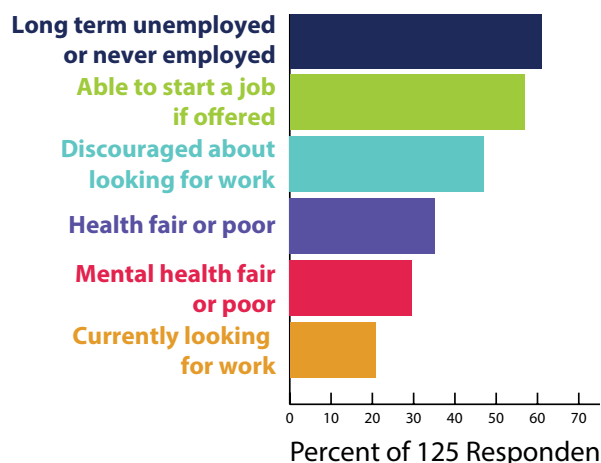
- Lack of transportation
- Not being successful in the past
- Lack of jobs or not qualified for jobs in the area
- Health or disability
- Family responsibilities
- Experiencing discrimination

**Figure 3: Demographic Attributes**



The stories that people told illustrate how interconnected reasons for non-participation can be. They illustrate that a combination of factors contribute to non-participation. In the community, lack of transportation and affordable child care, discrimination, and not being able to connect with employers are challenges reported by many. Individually, lack of experience and education, gaps in employment, and complicated life circumstances are challenges. Non-participants talked about the disincentive of working in situations where they experience a lack of respect or appreciation.

**Figure 4: Work-Related Attributes**



For some, the cost of working is too high – this can include people who find that working income is not worth the stress of



juggling work and life responsibilities, particularly if work is part-time and/or low wage, and if government transfers and benefits such health benefits are lost or reduced. For individuals with disability, poor health or mental health problems may make participation too difficult, particularly if the workplace does not provide suitable accommodations, or is not supportive or understanding. Again, the potential loss of drug benefits is a significant consideration. Among some immigrant populations, cultural considerations may play a role as it may not be acceptable for women to become employed before their spouses, and paperwork proving credentials may not be possible to obtain.

Discouragement may be the end result of the combination of factors. As one person states: “I look and look and look – I’m tired of being rejected”.

*“I look and look and look – I’m tired of being rejected”.*

### Phase III: What Can Be Done to Remove or Reduce the Barriers

This phase of the study built on what was learned from voices of experience in Phase II. A more in depth review and analysis of the stories and responses to open-ended questions about the aspects that stop people from looking for work and from working as well as the elements that would help was conducted. Focus groups were held with six employers and with eight employment service providers to review and provide feedback regarding the themes related to barriers to looking for, finding and keeping work. From these, a comprehensive listing of challenges and supports was compiled and themed into issue areas affecting labour market participation. These themes are listed below.

**Table 1: Issues Affecting Labour Market Participation**

Looking for Work	Taking and Keeping Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application Process</li> <li>• Lack of jobs, job quality – “not worth it”</li> <li>• Bias and prejudice</li> <li>• Education and qualifications</li> <li>• Experience and work history/Need experience to get work and need work to get experience</li> <li>• Transportation challenges</li> <li>• Lack of Connections</li> <li>• Family responsibility</li> <li>• Personal challenges like confidence, esteem, direction - “personal paralysis”</li> <li>• Work limiting conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work environment and culture</li> <li>• Job conditions – “not worth it”</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Family responsibility and child care</li> <li>• Workplace accommodations and work limiting conditions</li> <li>• Personal challenges</li> </ul>

## The Co-Design Session

As a way of gathering final feedback on potential recommendation and actionable items, a Co-Design session was held with previously engaged individual who had expressed willingness to be contacted for follow up, employers and employment service providers. The goal of the session was to collectively develop actionable strategies for selected issue areas based on the challenges and “what would help” information that had been collected.

## Recommendations from Study Participants

The following is a summary of the “things that would help” that emerged from the surveys, interviews and focus groups, along with recommendations made by co-design session participants. Similar to what was heard from individual stories; the recommendations illustrate the interconnectedness of the issue areas as they relate to labour market participation. Recommendations identified in one issue area can be seen to relate to other issue areas so there are instances of overlap and duplication. Overarching themes to the many suggestions from those not currently in the labour market include: having more humanity and compassion in the system, so that people who experience participation barriers feel supported, understood and valued.

It should be noted that inter-ministerial issues that were identified, such as service limitations resulting from provincial funding and reporting criteria, are beyond the scope of this report. These issues have been captured and recorded in a separate document for future consideration.

Suggestions to address **Application Process** barriers and challenges that can discourage people from looking for work include:

- Easy access to local job postings and job postings that are easy to understand
- Job fairs and being able to personally connect with employers and potential employers
- Mobile access to job postings and support to effectively use online resources for job searching and applying
- Access to a comprehensive suite of supports for people across three employability dimensions: career exploration/decision making, skills enhancement, and job search support

Suggestions to address issues associated with perceptions around **Job Availability, Job Quality** and whether or not work is “**Worth It**” include:

- Having a mobile friendly, easily searchable and locally-focused database of jobs that are available and mobile friendly job postings

- Informing and educating people about the supports that are available including things like benefit programs for people with low incomes
- Consider non-traditional employment such as “work from home” job opportunities, and
- Good job conditions like adequate wage, regular hours and advance scheduling of hours, access to benefits, and opportunities for growth.

With regards to **Bias and Prejudice, and Work Environment and Culture** study participants talked about strategies for individuals and employers, with employment service providers playing a key support role. Suggestions include:

- Leadership development through education and training for employers and employees to help employers identify and address biases and prejudices which may be personal or systemic, to provide guidance and direction for ways to show employees that they are valued and respected, and to provide strategies for developing and maintaining a positive workplace culture where everyone matters
- Providing supports to employers such as coaches and mentors to address bias, prejudice and unfriendly work environment
- Setting standards and a recognition program for welcoming and supportive workplaces
- Coaching and supporting individuals to be self-advocates and to communicate with employers effectively

To address issues related to **Qualifications & Education, Work History & Experience, and Connections** including not having enough and not having the right kind, study participants suggested the following:

- Having information about and access to a range of training and education that takes into account individual needs, gaps and interests, as well as meeting labour market needs. Key features include training that is student-centred and goal directed
- Ensuring that job requirements are realistic, identifying transferrable skills and qualifications, and providing opportunities for people to demonstrate their ability to do the job
- Strategies to connect people to employers, grow their network, and help them gain experience
- Strategies that individuals themselves can take like volunteering, just applying, upgrading their education and taking courses
- Job search support that goes beyond the resume to be more holistic and wrap-around

Suggestions related to the participation of people with **Work-Limiting Conditions and Health Issues** reflect the need to balance the realities of the impact that these conditions can have on an individual's work capacity and options with the needs of employers:

- Effective job matching to make sure the job fits with the person and the person fits with the job, including considering non-traditional work
- Supporting employers to know how to accommodate, and educating employers and other employees to help them gain understanding

For individuals experiencing **Personal Challenges and Family Responsibility challenges**, suggestions reflect the need to address issues that are internal to the individual such as lack of confidence, work ethic and self-esteem, and issues that are external to the individual such as language barriers, lack of child care, and criminal record:

- Personal supports to help people who are in a career exploration/decision-making stage, in transition, or contemplating a return to work. These can include things like support groups, peer support, personal growth and development opportunities
- Opportunities for people who are temporarily out of the workforce to stay connected, such as courses and skill-building
- Wrap-around and holistic approach to assessing the needs of individuals
- Work place accommodations like flexible scheduling
- Access to child care.

Although identified as one of the top barriers, there are few suggestions to address the issue of **Transportation**. An employer who provides transportation has found it to be a good investment, another noted that some organizations provide carpooling options while another employer notes that people “will work out” their transportation and has not found it to be an issue.

### The Take-Aways

An essential component of this study was creating actionable strategies and recommendations. Based on the learnings from this study (Phase I - III), 3 check-lists were created.

- Individuals seeking to enter/go back to work
- Employers seeking workers
- Service providers seeking ways to best support both potential workers and employers

These follow:



# Wanting to Return to Work?

## Here are some tips!

*A study was done on finding ways for people to return to work after noticing that in our area many people that are of working age are not working. We did some research, talked to many people in our region and also talked with employers and employment agencies.*

*From the study, here are some tips and a checklist that might help you as you think about getting back to work.*

## Getting Ready – Life Related

### Tips

- Find out what options are available to you if you are looking for work but are concerned with losing the supports you might be getting through social assistance. A local employment agency can help you as the programs change all the time
- Meet with people like you who have found work and ask them for their top 3 tips to finding and keeping work
- Consider all kinds of options including 'work from home/self-employment' options. Employment agencies might help you work through the options or visit your local small business centre. People there can also help you with your ideas
- Work with social service agencies if you need help with basic needs – there are many agencies that can help you with this so you can get the things you need as you look for work
- Think about ways you can get to work if you don't have a car. There are carpooling options in many communities. Some employers offer carpooling or cover some costs of transportation. Don't be afraid to ask about them
- Look into daycare options that might be available in your community. Communities often have a central database of daycare providers and they also know about subsidies. Seek them out.
- If you have a criminal record speak to an employment service provider who might be able to assist in this getting cleared or finding ways to explain it to a potential employer

### Check List

- ☐ I have contacted and am working with a local employment agency
- ☐ I know what supports are available if I start to work and move away from social assistance
- ☐ I have stable housing
- ☐ I have support to help me with basic needs
- ☐ I have ideas to deal with transportation if I get work
- ☐ I have a few options of how I will be able to get to work depending on where it is
- ☐ I know the carpooling options in my community
- ☐ I have a plan for affordable day care
- ☐ I have a plan to deal with my criminal record

## Getting Ready – Get Connected to an Agency

### Tips

- If you are not sure where to start, go to the library and they will help to connect you with an employment agency – these services are free and they have great programs!
- Talk to an employment counselor about work options. Consider all kinds of options including 'work from home/self-employment' options. Employment agencies might help you work through the options or visit your local small business centre. People there can also help you with your ideas
- Get help with your resume from an employment agency in your community. They are there to help and anyone can go and ask for help. There are many employment agencies that offer free training, services, mentoring. Sign up so you can learn about the work world today
- There are literacy centres in your community – places that can help you improve your reading and writing skills. Tell them what your plan is for work and they can help you with the language
- You may need some new clothes for interviews and work. There are places that are ready to help you with that. Your local employment service agency can help you with this

### Check List

- ☐ I have connected with an employment agency
- ☐ I have an updated version of my resume and I know how to change my resume to customize it for jobs I am applying for
- ☐ I have looked at options available in terms of "working from home" and "self-employment"
- ☐ I have contacted the small business centre
- ☐ I know the top 3-5 things employers are looking for in workers
- ☐ I have a mentor to help me find and keep work
- ☐ I have gotten feedback on my interview skills and feel more confident about interviewing
- ☐ I know where my literacy centre is at and I have gotten help learning work language
- ☐ I have clothes ready for my job interviews and for when I go out and meet people about work

## Learning about what is out there in terms of work?

### Tips

- If you are thinking of going back to school call the Local Employment Planning Council, they have a lot of good information about the labour market and might be able to help you determine what jobs will be available in the next while in your area
- Learn about the jobs that are available in your community and see how you can become qualified for those jobs.

### Check List

- ☐ I know 3-5 industries where they are looking for workers
- ☐ I know school/education options related to those 3-5 industries
- ☐ I am learning about these 3-5 industries

## Tell Others – Spread the Word & Get Support

### Tips

- Tell a friend you are thinking about going back to work and ask them if they will help you through listening, sharing ideas and supporting you. Having someone to talk to is really helpful in making the transition back to work
- Try to meet people in the field you are interested in. It's okay to ask for an 'information interview' to learn about a field or a company. People do this all the time
- Meet with people like you who have found work and ask them for their top 3 tips to finding and keeping work
- Get connected to your local community by joining groups (for example: school, community centres, faith groups) and start telling people you are looking for work
- Think about volunteering so you can show and grow your skills. Local employment service agencies or social service agencies can help you make the right connection
- Work hard to move past discouragement of not being able to find work, and find people to support you while you look for work. Having a person to support you make it easier to find work. There are groups in the community that you can join to support you.

### Check List

- ☐ I have a friend/family member who is supporting me as I look for work
- ☐ I have set up 1-3 information interviews to learn about jobs I might be interested in doing
- ☐ I have met with people who have found work and learned some tips
- ☐ I have joined a few new groups
- ☐ I am telling people that I am looking for work
- ☐ I am volunteering in an area related to where I want to work
- ☐ I am aware of how I can get past my discouragement
- ☐ I have someone I can talk to when I do get discouraged/angry

## Getting Related Experience

### Tips

- Think about volunteering in the field or in the organization you are interested in working for – this will help you out in getting a job
- Look for programs in your community to better understand "Canadian work expectations and work ethic"
- Think about how you can prepare to work by thinking from the view point of a business owner – what would you like to see in a new employee? What do you need to do to 'show off' these qualities?
- Think about working with "temp" agencies to get started. They have good connections and you can gain good work experience

### Check List

- ☐ I am volunteering in an area related to where I want to work
- ☐ I know 3-5 things about Canadian work expectations and work ethic
- ☐ I know how to tell an interviewer about my work ethic, motivation and promptness
- ☐ I am connected to a 'temp' agency



## Your Attitude

### Tips

- In our area, employers are finding it hard to find people to work. There are jobs out there – and employers are looking for candidates with the right attitude, who get to work on time and work hard. They are willing to train for the job.
- Work ethic – getting to job on time, working hard, having a good attitude, being respectful are things employers are really looking for – share that in your cover letter and get references that can give examples of how this is true for you
- Think like an employer – what would you like to see on a cover letter? Resume? When you are being interviewed? If you are not sure, ask others to see what they might tell you.
- Ask yourself: What can I do to be open, friendly, welcoming? How do I work on this?

### Check List

- ☐ I know how to tell an interviewer about my work ethic, motivation and promptness
- ☐ I know how to write my cover letter to tell businesses about my work ethic, my good attitude, my motivation and my hard work
- ☐ I have references that will tell businesses about my work ethic, my good attitude, my motivation and my hard work
- ☐ I have spoken to employers and know what they are looking for
- ☐ I have been working on being respectful, positive and friendly

## Applying

### Tips

- Make sure you have an updated resume and change your resume depending on the job you are applying for
- Find out, through your local papers or social media when there might be job fairs in your community. Take resumes with you and 'dress for success'. While there, talk to as many people as possible, let them know what you are looking for and give them your resume
- When working on your cover letter, make it specific and talk about your work experience and explain your gaps in your employment so they are not guessing as to why you have some years missing. If you aren't sure what to say about the gap, talk to an employment counselor or even an employer and get some ideas.
- If you are unable to get your qualification papers, explain this in the cover letter and detail your skills
- Just apply. Even if you don't have all of the qualifications, tailor your resume, explain why you really want to work there and apply! Many people are hired even if they don't have all the qualifications
- Follow up after applying - Call or send an email after applying to see if they received it and if you can meet with them to explain your skills and experience
- Be aware that employers can be overwhelmed by online applications. Visiting employers with your resume is still a good way to find a job. Don't be afraid to keep trying

### Check List

- ☐ I have an updated version of my resume and I know how to change my resume to customize it for jobs I am applying for
- ☐ I am ready to attend job fairs (I know when they are, I have my resume, I have the right clothes to wear, I know what I want to say)
- ☐ I know what my cover letter needs to say related to the years I did not work
- ☐ My cover letter explains why I really want the job
- ☐ My cover letter explain why I cannot get my paperwork for my qualifications and it explains the skill set I have
- ☐ I am sending emails or calling after I send my resume to follow up
- ☐ I keep trying by visiting places that I think I want to work to see if they have any jobs available

# Attracting Workers

## Here are some tips for employers!

*A study was done on finding ways for people to return to work after noticing that in our area many people that are of working age are not working or looking for work. We did some research, talked to many people in our region and also talked with employers and employment agencies.*

*Here are some tips from the study and a checklist that might help you as you think about attracting workers.*

## Work with an Employment Service Agency – Free of Charge!

### Tips

- Provide advice to employment agencies on the trends you are seeing in your industry
- Employment agencies can help you find the right person for the job – be specific on what type of individuals you are looking for

### Check List

- ☐ We have a strong working relationship with 1-2 employment service agencies and their job developers
- ☐ We provide very specific information regarding the type of workers our business needs

## Application Process

### Tips

- Consider hosting monthly “meet and greets” for people to come and ask questions, and drop off their resume. Make sure to advertise this day in the community.
- When possible, provide some feedback to those who did not get the job – for many it is very discouraging to continually apply and not get feedback
- Think critically about the qualifications that are required – are they necessary for the job?
- Consider using a skills test to prove qualifications in place of paperwork. Sometimes paperwork may be hard or impossible to obtain, particularly for people who come from other countries
- Consider a 2-step interview process (basic and then ‘on the job’) to see how well a person will do ‘on the job’

### Check List

- ☐ We will have and advertise a ‘meet and greet’ for people to drop-off their resumes and meet with us once a week/month
- ☐ We have a process in place so that those who have applied and those we have interviewed receive timely responses and where possible feedback about their interview
- ☐ We review our job postings from the perspective of ‘must have’ and ‘nice-to-have’ qualifications
- ☐ When a job allows, we provide a skills test to prove qualification if paperwork of qualification is hard to obtain
- ☐ Where it makes sense, we have moved to a 2-step interview process (basic and then “on the job” to determine a fit

## Getting the Word Out There

### Tips

- Post jobs on sites that are mobile friendly as most people are now accessing information over their smart devices and not computers
- Post your jobs on different sites so that more people can see what you are offering
- Advertise/ make it known that you are an employer that welcomes diversity
- Accept resumes that people bring in and advertise that people can bring in an application

### Check List

- ☐ We have checked to make sure all the sites we advertise on are mobile friendly
- ☐ We post our jobs on at least 3 different sites
- ☐ We will have and advertise a drop-in for people to drop-off their resumes and meet with us once a week/month

## Attracting & Keeping the Right Workers

### Tips

- Build a strong relationship with a local non-profit employment service agency. These agencies work with employers to assist them in getting the right person for a job
- Become more aware of the benefits of hiring internationally trained professionals; consider both international and national experience when hiring. There are employment service agencies that work with very qualified immigrants who can support you in this endeavour
- Consider the benefits of hiring a person with disabilities from the perspective of their strengths, skills and experience versus just seeing their disability. Work with an employment agency to help develop an accommodation plan that meets your needs.
- Learn about all the ways to subsidize accommodations for employees. Talk to your local employment service agency – they can direct you
- Consider ways to help people who have problems with transportation. Employer-sponsored or supported carpooling, employer-provided transportation like a van service, and employer-subsidized bus passes are some ways that others have used.
- Offer some benefits and pension

### Check List

- ☐ We know the different ways that we can be supported to accommodate employees with different disabilities
- ☐ We have a strong working relationship with 1-2 employment service agencies and their job developers
- ☐ We work with an employment agency that has expertise in working with people with disabilities, immigrants and Indigenous individuals
- ☐ If our business location or hours make it hard for people to get to work if they do not have a car, we have a variety of options to assist them (e.g. carpooling, bus passes, bus)
- ☐ Within our budget, we have benefits and pension to attract and retain employees

## Paying it Forward

### Tips

- Share your stories of successfully hiring immigrants, Indigenous people and people with disabilities
- Become a mentor to a person wanting to find work
- Consider offering volunteer/paid internship opportunities so people can get their Canadian experience and learn about your work. This may also be a great way for you to get to know a potential employee

### Check List

- ☐ We have shared our story of hiring immigrants, Indigenous people and people with disabilities with employment service agencies, other employers, our community and the media
- ☐ We have leaders and staff who have offered to be mentors to others (within our business) or for others who do not yet have work
- ☐ Where we can, we have volunteer/internship opportunities

## Retaining Workers

### Tips

- Where possible, provide a buddy/mentor for new employees so they get connected with your people and learn how to fit into your work culture
- Provide orientation and training to set up people for success; give people timely feedback so they feel they can correct their work as needed
- Create a culture where 'everyone matters'; many people stop working because they feel like they 'don't fit in'. Be sure to include temporary and part-time workers in your work culture activities
- Remember that appreciation and kind words go a long way (even small gestures make a big difference)
- Where possible, provide flexibility and consider sharing some staff with other organizations to back-fill as needed
- Learn about how to accommodate for mental health challenges and other disabilities
- Offer training on how to work in a diverse work culture

### Check List

- ☐ All new employees have someone in our business who acts as a 'buddy' or 'mentor'
- ☐ All new employees go through an orientation and are provided with timely and adequate training
- ☐ All new employees receive timely feedback so they can improve
- ☐ We work at creating a culture where 'everyone matters'. We have spoken to our employment service agency to assist us with this. All employees (including part-time and temporary) are included
- ☐ We have an intentional way of appreciating and thanking our staff
- ☐ Where we can, we provide flexible schedules
- ☐ Where we can, we share staff with other businesses for back-filling
- ☐ We have been trained on how to accommodate for mental health and other disabilities
- ☐ We have been trained on how to create a welcoming environment for a diverse work culture

# Supporting Workers & Employers

## *Here are some tips for Employment Service Providers!*

*A study was done on finding ways for people to return to work after noticing that in our area many people that are of working age are not working. We did some research, talked to many people in our region and also talked with employers and employment agencies.*

*Here are some tips from the study and a checklist that might help you as you think about supporting workers and employers based on our research and on what we heard.*

### Job Developers

#### Tips

- Provide employers with job posting sites that are mobile friendly
- Work with employers to create easy to understand, clear, and accurate job postings and to make sure that the qualifications they are asking for are really necessary
- Create and regularly update local job bank databases (people shared that they are outdated)
- Encourage employers to:
  - Post on a variety of sites, places
  - Have one day a week/month when people can drop off resumes and talk to someone at the company
  - Provide feedback regarding why people did not get a job
  - Develop skills test to prove qualifications in place of paperwork that may be hard or impossible to obtain
- Consider creating a 'job bank' of work from home options for individuals who may have trouble with transportation, regular work hours etc
- Spread the word about successful hires (international, people with disabilities)
- Share 'best practices' amongst all job developers with respect to hiring of people with disabilities, immigrants, newcomers and Indigenous people

#### Check List

- ☐ I know of the job posting sites that are mobile friendly and I provide this list to the employers I work with
- ☐ I coach employers to write job postings that accurately reflects the job and the actual qualifications needed to do the job
- ☐ All of our job bank databases are updated regularly
- ☐ When I work with employers I encourage them to:
  - Post on a variety of sites, places
  - Have one day a week/month when people can drop off resumes and talk to someone at the company
  - Provide feedback regarding why people did not get a job
  - Develop ways to test for skills if qualification are difficult to obtain (e.g. home country is at war)
- ☐ We have a 'job bank' of legitimate and reputable work from home possibilities. We share this list across employment service agencies and share it with our employment counsellors
- ☐ When I work with employers I share best practices and benefits of hiring Indigenous people, immigrants and people with disabilities
- ☐ We have a list of employers who are willing to share their experience hiring Indigenous people, immigrants and people with disabilities

## Employment Counsellors

### Tips

- Consider the person as a whole and think of all the supports they may need for work (think wraparound – personal, family, social, housing, physical, psychological etc)
- Coach individuals on what to do when they feel discouraged when they do not get a job or a call back
- Help people more fully understand what employers are looking for
- Provide information to individuals seeking information on how social assistance works when a person is working (there are many misconceptions/misunderstandings)
- Customize how you work with people to meet their needs, work from their strengths and acknowledge what they bring to the table
- Stay abreast of the job market to provide information to individuals on the growing sectors

### Check List

- ☐ I consider all of the person's reality when I work with an individual. We are working from a wraparound perspective in creating one plan for the individual/family
- ☐ I have learned best practices to coach people through discouragement. I work with people so they can develop a plan on how to work through discouragement
- ☐ I am up-to-date on what employers are looking for and I share this with people I work with
- ☐ I am up-to-date on the changes related to social assistance and the supports available for those who are wishing to return to work
- ☐ I have received training on how to work from a strengths-based perspective
- ☐ I am up-to-date on the job market and regularly learn about the jobs that are available in our community

## Training

### Tips

- Provide training and coaching to employers regarding hiring Indigenous individuals, immigrants, people with disabilities
- Provide ways that employers can mentor other employers or people seeking work
- Assist/support organizations through training and coaching in creating work cultures where 'everyone matters'. Many people stop working because they feel like they 'don't fit in'.
- Offer diversity training to employers to create work cultures where 'everyone matters'

### Check List

- ☐ We provide training modules to employers regarding hiring Indigenous individuals, immigrants, people with disabilities
- ☐ We invite employers to participate in mentoring opportunities and explain the benefits
- ☐ We provide training modules to employers regarding creating an inclusive and diverse work culture where 'everyone matters'

## Organizational Level

### Tips

#### Awareness

- Create a comprehensive social media and community strategy so people learn about your services – many people do not know where to go for help
- Ask yourself if the label you are using for your program might be a barrier – for example, people with a disability may not see themselves as disabled, and may not access a program labeled “for people with disabilities”

#### Access

- Offer different modalities to your services (online, one-on-one, group in neighbourhoods, evenings)
- Provide programs from 10am – 2pm so those with children (in daycare or school) can attend
- Provide drop-in option to assist people with specific questions

#### Re-entry

- Develop programs for parents who choose to stay at home when their children are young so that they can stay current and relevant – many people are afraid of being ‘left behind’ after being out of the workforce. Provide different times and modalities to accommodate caregivers and stay-at-home parents
- Provide ‘brush up’ courses for those wishing to return back to work after being away for some time (people are very nervous about no longer fitting in or not being up-to-date in their chosen field)

#### Supports

- Consider that many people who have tried hard to look for work and have not found it often experience discouragement and lack of confidence – implement best practices with your staff so they can support/coach people who experience this
- Strengthen the connection between essential skills, social services, community health, literacy, adult education and employment agencies to better meet individual needs (don’t focus on the resume when there are other things to address first). Many people require comprehensive supports as they look for and keep work. Go beyond referrals to services and move to creating One Family Service Plan for the whole family (being aware of how much each agency is asking a family to commit to)

### Check List

#### Awareness

- ☐ We have a strong social media and community strategy so people know about us, what we offer and know how to reach us
- ☐ We are careful with how we promote/advertise our programs so people are included (and don’t opt out due to the way we have advertised)

#### Access

- ☐ We have improved the hours that people can access our services (increase hours, location of service, online)
- ☐ We have some programs that we offer from 10am – 2pm
- ☐ We offer drop-in opportunities

#### Re-entry

- ☐ We target stay-at-home parents with our programs to build skills, stay current with the workforce and offer through different modalities

#### Supports

- ☐ We have provided best-practice in-service training for our staff to assist people in developing a plan to address discouragement
- ☐ We work from a wraparound perspective having one individual/family plan so that all service providers work as a team with the family



### **Diverse, Supportive and Welcoming Work Environments**

- Work with local business organizations (LEPC, Chamber) to develop a way to recognize employers who are welcoming and are creating a diverse workforce (hiring Indigenous, immigrants and people with disabilities). Many people stop working because they feel like they 'don't fit in'
- Ensure that the culture at your workplace is welcoming and caring. The support that staff feel will benefit your clients

### **Preparing the Workforce**

- Offer skills based training in areas that are of highest demand in our areas. Work with colleges to provide these options. People are not aware of the industries that are hiring and what they should be focusing on
- Offer programs that explain the "Canadian work systems" in a variety of modalities (online, group, one-one, mentoring, evening, midday etc)
- Offering training in collaboration or partnership with adult education and literacy partners – they are experienced at delivering task-based, student-centred, and goal-directed learning
- Consider offering employers training on how to support people in the workplace who have mental health challenges or other disabilities
- Consider how to incorporate gaming/gamifying as virtual environments to increase resilience and comfort with failure
- Make your offices a comfortable and welcoming place for jobseekers and potential jobseekers to come to

### **Transportation**

- Consider the role of employment service agencies in facilitating transportation solutions (can these be a shared responsibility across organizations and with employers)

### **Diverse, Supportive and Welcoming Work Environments**

- ☐ As a community, we are working at ways to recognize employers who promote inclusion and diversity in the workplace where 'everyone matters'
- ☐ We regularly demonstrate our appreciation to our own staff through a variety of fun and meaningful ways

### **Preparing the Workforce**

- ☐ As a community, we are developing a plan to cover all the skills based training needed to address the workforce demands in our community
- ☐ We offer training (in different modalities) about the "Canadian work systems"
- ☐ We work closely with adult education and literacy to develop and deliver individual-based learning plans
- ☐ We offer training to employers regarding mental health and other disabilities and how to support individuals
- ☐ We have incorporated gaming as another way to prepare people for the workforce
- ☐ We have introduced some small comforts that show people we want them to come to our office and use our resources

### **Transportation**

- ☐ We participate in solving transportation challenges (at the individual level, organizational level, employer level and community-wide level)

## A Few Best Practices from the Literature

*These resources complement what was learned from individuals, service providers and employers. This resource list is not intended to be comprehensive but to provide some “best practices” that were reviewed during the course of the study.*

Source	Best Practice
<b>Redekopp, D., Hopkins, S., Hiebert, B. for the Canadian Career Development Foundation. May 30, 2013.</b> “Assessing the Impact of Career Development Resources and Practitioner Support Across the Employability Dimensions” Project Number 011185188.	4 week self-guided and practitioner guided individualized program proved beneficial: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clients are given a thorough needs analysis to determine their employability need based on 4 dimensions (career exploration/ decision making, skills enhancement, job search and job maintenance)</li> <li>• Based on results an individualized resource guide is put together by experienced service provider who accesses best resources and puts them into a readable, logical and step-by-step package that clients go through over a 4 week period</li> </ul>
<b>Increasing Aboriginal Labour Market Participation: Making a case for Labour Market Intermediaries. September 5, 2012</b> Shauna MacKinnon. <a href="https://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/commentary/increasing-aboriginal-labour-market-participation">https://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/commentary/increasing-aboriginal-labour-market-participation</a>	Manitoba model: Developed with Manitoba employers and community based organizations (CBOs) familiar with the challenges Indigenous people face: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on the long established relationships between CBOs and the target population</li> <li>• Simplify relationships between employers and participating service organizations</li> <li>• Employ personnel dedicated to managing multiple referrals and services that any one individual may require</li> <li>• Establish a governance structure including representatives from employer groups, labour, education and training programs, Aboriginal CBOs and government institutions.</li> <li>• Dedicate resources to bring together the expertise that exists among community based service agencies.</li> <li>• Simplify relationships between government and CBOs by filtering information, reporting and expectations</li> </ul>
<b>BC Partners in Workforce Innovation: First Year in Review. April 2016. BC Centre for Employment Excellence</b> <a href="http://bcpartnerswin.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/BCWiN-early-findings.pdf">http://bcpartnerswin.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/BCWiN-early-findings.pdf</a>	Findings from the first year of an employment program that applies a human resources recruitment model to help meet workforce needs found that employers were engaged, and service partners were able to provide their clients with more job opportunities. The model has three steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate workforce needs to employers</li> <li>• Recruitment Specialist connects job ready candidates to employment</li> <li>• Service Agencies refer job ready candidates to recruitment specialists</li> </ul> <p>Four stage process through which recruitment specialists engages as the central point of communication between employers, service agencies and candidates.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Opportunity</li> <li>2. Recruitment</li> <li>3. Employment</li> <li>4. Follow-up</li> </ol>

Source	Best Practice
<p><b>Employers' Perspectives on Intermittent Work Capacity – What Can Qualitative Research Tell Us. March 25 2011</b></p> <p>Rosemary Lysaght, Terry Krupa, Allan Gregory  <a href="https://qshare.queensu.ca/Users01/lysaght/Rosemary/Employers'%20Perspectives%20-%20Final%20Report.pdf">https://qshare.queensu.ca/Users01/lysaght/Rosemary/Employers'%20Perspectives%20-%20Final%20Report.pdf</a></p>	<p><b>What Employers Say they Do or Have Done</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Predictability from the unpredictable-example – one workplace maintains a pool of casual workers who are ready each day to fill in; another hires an extra worker if absence seems likely; another described engaging the worker to keep a symptom diary to try and find patterns in flare ups and manage illness proactively</li> <li>• Build in a contingency plan – example: engaging worker, supervisor and sometimes co-workers to develop an “action Plan” – may involve personnel solutions like cross-training other employees, job sharing arrangements, setting up a buddy system so that the worker has someone to call if they can't make it in, and workload management</li> <li>• Workforce wellness strategies – taking actions to promote good physical and mental health, and build in worker control over their jobs, work-life and personal lives</li> <li>• Build cohesive, support workplaces – foster social connections between workforce members; sense of “family”</li> <li>• Working proactively with unions - one workplace meets annually to review types of claims filed for purposes of identifying emerging needs and changes in needed in order to better accommodate. They have a “Common Duty to Accommodate Framework” that outlines procedures</li> <li>• Education and outreach to relevant community organizations- employers spoke about reaching out to receive information about the health condition and to access training and other relevant resources</li> </ul> <p><b>Supports that Employers Say they Need</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education/Training – about legislation and duty to accommodate – knowing what to do, particularly for small business owners and supervisors. Supervisors also need training in recognizing problems in work capacity not brought forward by worker, workplace accommodation policies, anti-stigma, sensitivity and communication skills – training options include online webinars, self-paced instruction and single day workshops</li> <li>• Developing support networks/alliances – businesses sharing procedures, what they do</li> <li>• Disability management toolkit – that includes a layperson's summary of relevant legislation, structured guidelines, websites to consult and other resources – for large and small employers</li> <li>• Access to HR specialist – particularly for small business owners – eg. Having a hotline or group to consult when situations arise</li> </ul>

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## Introduction

The latest local labour market plan prepared by the Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board, “Moving the Plan Forward in Elgin, Middlesex & Oxford” (2016) notes that while the aging population can partially account for the declining participation trend, there are likely other important reasons. The report notes growing numbers of 25 to 64 year olds not participating in the labour force and a steady number of 15 to 24 year olds. The report speculates that these data suggest a growing number of discouraged long term unemployed individuals who are no longer looking for work.

Local research<sup>1</sup> shows an apparent gap between local participation rate trends and local employment opportunities. On the surface, there seems to be a disconnect in the system: employers are experiencing difficulty hiring people at the same that there is a growing pool of potential employees who are disengaged from the labour force. The 2016 EmployerOne Survey<sup>2</sup>, which reports on the experiences of 320 employers in the London Economic Region, provides the following data:

- 38% of employers said they had positions that were hard-to-fill<sup>3</sup> in the previous 12 months. This compares to 27% who reported this in the 2015 Employer One Survey
- The list of positions that are hard-to-fill includes many common titles falling under every occupational group, and range from entry level to managerial and professional
- The top reasons given for why the positions were hard-to-fill include:
- Not enough applicants
  - o Lack of qualifications (education level/credentials)
  - o Lack of technical skills
  - o Lack of motivation, attitude, or interpersonal abilities
  - o Lack of work experience
  - o Other reasons include: no applicants at all, unable to compete with other employers, lack of language requirements and inability to assess a foreign educational qualification of credentials

<sup>1</sup> Siman, E. *Hard to Fill Jobs: 2016. EmployerOne Survey Results. Labour Force Shortages in the London Economic Region. Prepared for the Local Employment Planning Council. 2016.* [http://www.worktrends.ca/sites/default/files/u82/HardToFillPositionsReport\\_2016EmployerOneSurvey.pdf](http://www.worktrends.ca/sites/default/files/u82/HardToFillPositionsReport_2016EmployerOneSurvey.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board. *Presentation of the EmployerOne Survey. 2016 Highlights. Presented by Emilian Siman, Data Analyst to the Community Research Data Group. June 21, 2016.*

<sup>3</sup> Defined as “job vacancies requiring a longer time to fill than normal”

The full report, “Hard to Fill Jobs: 2016 EmployerOne Survey Results”,<sup>4</sup> includes additional important details:

- Elgin County seems to have the largest relative percentage of employers experiencing hard-to-fill jobs followed by Oxford County and then Middlesex County
- Medium-sized businesses (employing 100 to 499 employees) may have the most difficulty and large businesses may have the least difficulty
- Employers who experienced difficulty hiring were most likely to report using online job boards/postings while employers who did not have difficulty hiring people were most likely to report using word of mouth/personal contact/referrals/informal networks.

As a result of this work, the Local Employment Planning Council commissioned the London Economic Region Labour Market Participation study. The research objectives of this study are to answer the following questions:

1. Who is participating in the labour force in the London Economic Region and who is not?
2. What factors contribute to participation and non-participation?
3. What are the implications of demographic and labour market trends on labour supply and potential shortages for 2020 in the Region?
4. What are the needs and opportunities to re-engage particular demographics in the labour force?
5. What strategies can address the identified needs to re-engage and continue to engage people in the labour force?

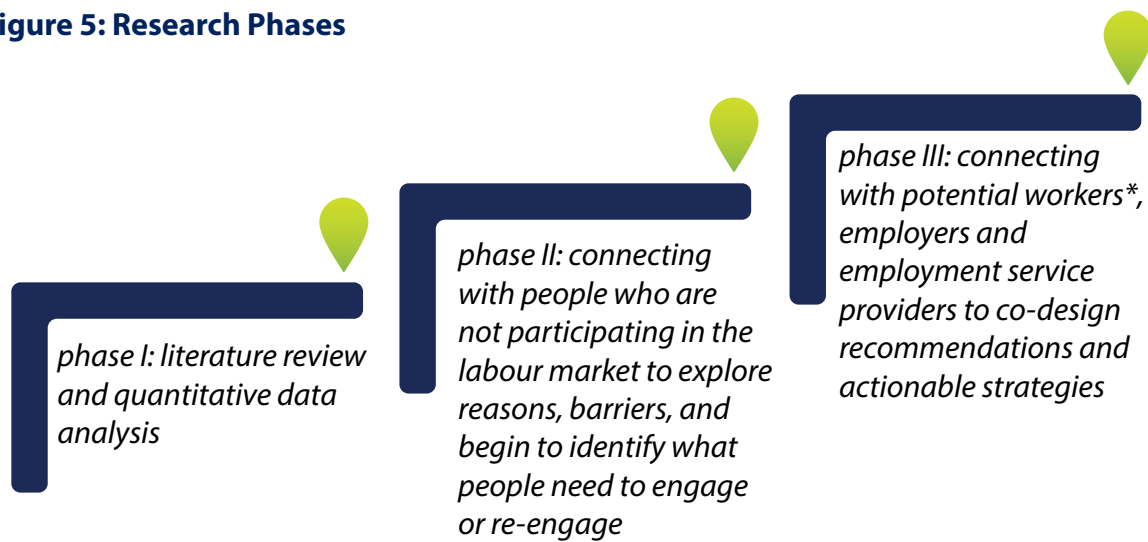
This study includes three phases, and involves review of literature and data, primary data gathering, and co-design of solutions. This document reports on the findings from Phase I and preliminary findings from Phase II. A final report will be completed in early spring 2017.

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<sup>4</sup> Siman, E. *Hard to Fill Jobs: 2016. EmployerOne Survey Results. Labour Force Shortages in the London Economic Region. Prepared for the Local Employment Planning Council. 2016.*



**Figure 5: Research Phases**



\*potential workers includes individuals who currently are not participating in the labour market but who indicate that they want to work.





## **Phase I Findings: Literature and Data Review**

## Phase I Findings:

### *Literature and Data Review*

This section aims to learn more about non-participation in the London Economic Region for the purposes of engaging/re-engaging people who are not participating in the labour force in an effort to address the employer-identified current and future local labour shortages with a focus on three subpopulations:

- 25 to 54 year olds (prime-age or core-age workers)
- Immigrants age 25 to 54
- Persons with disabilities
- Aboriginal people and communities

The main questions to be answered in the report of the findings from Phases I and II of the study are:

- Who is not participating?
- What are reasons for not participating?
- What are barriers to participation and what can be done to remove or reduce these barriers?

For the purposes of this study, non-participation is defined using Statistics Canada's definition: A person is not in the labour force if they were not actively participating in the labour force. A person is not actively participating in the labour force if they are: not employed and not looking for work, is unable to work or unavailable to work. It includes people who were without work and who had neither looked for work in the past four weeks nor had a job to start within four weeks of the survey reference period. The participation rate is by dividing the number of people actively participating in the labor force by the total number of people eligible to participate in the labor force (i.e. the population).

This section of the report summarizes selected literature and administrative data to provide a clearer picture of:

- Who is not participating in the labour force within the four populations of interest, and
- Potential reasons for non-participation.

***A person is not actively participating in the labour force if they are: not employed and not looking for work, is unable to work or unavailable to work.***

Administrative data sources include Statistic Canada's Labour Force Survey (LFS) and 2011 National Household Survey (NHS). The data included in this report is from publicly available sources, primarily Statistics Canada CANSIM tables and NHS tables, and LFS custom tabulations purchased for this study.

## Data Limitations:

The LFS excludes individuals living on reserves or settlements. The LFS, therefore, excludes an estimated 10 percent (470) of the working age (age 25 to 64) Aboriginal population living in the London Economic Region<sup>5</sup>. The most current data for Indigenous people and communities within the Economic Region is from the 2011 National Household Survey.

Where possible, data is reported for the London Economic Region. Some of the data is publicly available through Statistics Canada's CANSIM tables. Some is custom tabulation data purchased from Statistics Canada. Due to sample size, data suppression limits the amount of data available.

Data from the National Household Survey and the Labour Force Survey should not be compared. Where available, data from the Labour Force Survey is reported as it is more current.

## Section I: Literature Review

A scan of Statistics Canada research, supplemented by a search using various data bases and google scholar, and supplemented by additional local reports obtained through local networks was completed. This scan was not exhaustive and is intended to guide future information gathering. The following is a summarized annotated bibliography providing selected key findings.

**Table 2: Summary of Sources Identified by Population Group**

Population of Interest	Number of Sources Identified
25 to 54 Year Olds	8 Sources: 4 Canadian, 3 American, 1 Australian
Immigrants	2 Canadian
Aboriginal	1 Canadian
Persons with Disability	7 Sources: 4 Canadian (2 of which are based on data from the Canadian Survey on Disability), 2 American (1 of which is documented in the 25 to 54 section as well), 1 Australian

5 Based on 2011 census data.

## 25 to 54 Year Olds



**Aaronson, Stephanie et al. *Labor Force Participation: Recent Developments and Future Prospects. Brookings Papers on Economic Activity. Fall 2014.***

- The findings are based on U.S. labour market administrative data
- Lower participation rates are seen among less-educated prime-age men and women. Reasons include:
  - Polarization of the labour market – when workers employed in middle-type jobs become unemployed, some move into higher paying jobs and others move into lower-paying jobs. The increased pool of higher skilled workers competing for lower paying jobs has the ripple effect of displacing lower skilled workers leading some to drop out of the labour force
  - Discouragement is seen as a small contributing factor; however, it may be underestimated because of how it is calculated. The number of discouraged workers excludes those who choose to retire early, go to school, apply for disability or stay home to care for home and family



**Cai, Lixin. *The Relationship Between Health and Labour Force Participation: Evidence from a Panel Data Simultaneous Equation Model (Abstract). Labour Economics. Volume 17, Issue 1. January 2010. Pages 77-90.***

- This report examines panel data from Australia, exploring the relationship between health and labour force status
- The data confirms that general health is both a determinant and outcome of labour force participation with better health predicting higher likelihood of participation for both men and women
- The data shows, however, that labour force participation has a negative effect on men's health and a positive effect on women's health
- The author concludes that "poor health" is not used as a justification of non-participation





***Cheung, C. et al. Changing labour market participation since the great recession: A regional perspective (Bank of Canada). Discussion Paper 2015-2.***

- This paper analyses data from 2007 to 2014
- Over this time period, school, illness and family responsibilities have increased as reasons for not participating in the labour force
- Effects associated with “discouraged workers” have been negligible
- Provincial data shows that drops in participation rates for the population age 25 to 54 follow increases in unemployment rates: “Provinces where prime-age unemployment rates increased more between 2007 and 2012 tended to see greater drops in their participation rates between 2009 and 2014”

***“Provinces where prime-age unemployment rates increased more between 2007 and 2012 tended to see greater drops in their participation rates between 2009 and 2014”***



***DePratto, B. Falling Female Labour Participation: A Concern. Observation. TD Economics. October 24, 2014.***

- Since 2013 (to 2014), more than 70% of the decline in the participation rate is due to decreasing female labour force participation, with the most pronounced drop among women age 40 to 49
- Possible reasons:
  - Women affected by the declining employment and job cuts in female-dominated industries may be discouraged and choose to leave the labour force
  - An increase in the population of core-working age women was driven by immigrant women who tend to have lower participation rates, driving the overall participation rates down
  - Women in later stages in life may be more financially stable, making it more viable to leave the labour force in order to care for children (who they are having later in life)

***Since 2013 (to 2014), more than 70% of the decline in the participation rate is due to decreasing female labour force participation, with the most pronounced drop among women age 40 to 49.***



**Hall, R. & Petrosky-Nadeau, N. *Changes in Labour Participation and Household Income. Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. FRBSF Economic Letter. Economic Research. February 2016.***

- Research based on US data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation concludes that “the decline in participation among people of prime working age has been concentrated in higher-income households” (i.e. participation rates are lower in the top half of the income ladder)
- More research is needed to help understand underlying reasons



**Krueger, A. et al. *Are the Long-Term Unemployed on the Margins of the Labor Market? Brookings Papers on Economic Activity. Spring 2014. p 229 to 299***

Based on data from a variety of US administrative data sets:

- The longer workers are unemployed, the more likely they are to leave the labour market. “After 15 months, the long-term unemployed are more than twice as likely to have withdrawn from the labor force as to have settled into steady, full-time employment. And when they do exit the labor force, the unemployed tend to say that they no longer want a job, suggesting that many labor force exits could be enduring.” (p. 276)
- According to this report, mismatch between workers and the types of jobs available is not the main reason for a person remaining unemployed for a longer period of time
- Individual factors such as skills, motivation, self-esteem, and/or differential treatment by employers pushes people to the margins of the labour market
- Increasing participation and reducing long term unemployment requires an understanding of both the labour market and personal hurdles

***The longer workers are unemployed, the more likely they are to leave the labour market.***



***Paperny, A. M. Canadians Want Work. Why have so many stopped looking? Global News. February 10, 2015.***

- Across Canada, the participation rate for prime-working age (25 to 54) men is at its lowest (2014) and women's participation rate has been "stagnant since 2006"
- According to Ontario data, within two years of leaving Ontario Works for employment, almost half of people (45%) are back on
- Problems reported by individual interviewees include:
  - o Ontario Works treatment of Second Career funding as income resulting in a reduction of the monthly Ontario Works benefit amount
  - o Social assistance income reduction/deduction rules seen as punitive, making it "not worth it to work"
  - o Lack of affordable child care/lack of available subsidized care
  - o Discouraged – have education, applied at "hundreds" of places and "don't know where else to look"<sup>6</sup>

***According to Ontario data, within two years of leaving Ontario Works for employment, almost half of people (45%) are back on.***



***Wood, A., Accessibility of London Transit Services. An Employment Sector Council Research Brief. April 2015.***

- 244 job seekers served by employment service agencies in London in 2012 and 2013, 61 percent of whom were unemployed, completed a survey that examined their access to London Transit Commission's (LTC) transit services
- Almost 100 percent reported that they rely on the LTC for day-to-day activities
- Almost 2/3 said that they "missed out on a job opportunity because the worksite is not on a bus route" (p. 5)
- The other major concern identified is scheduling – bus schedules don't allow people to get to work on time and/or get home safely from work
- Recommendations from this report include:

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<sup>6</sup> Surveys submitted by 41 job seekers attending a London and Area Works job fair in 2016 identify that 31.7% of job seekers were unaware of the availability of free employment services in the community. Survey results provided by the London Economic Development Corporation.



- o “In order to better support employment, transit access should be increased to ensure that all Londoners can pursue job opportunities in their city.” (p. ii)
- o “Incentivize employers to provide support for their employees to use public transit... Innovative solution such as employer sponsored services, third party contracts, chartering services by employers or other alternatives (ride shares etc.) can also increase accessibility to transit.” (p. 10)



**Wyman, D. Recent Trends in Canada's Labour Force Participation Rate. Canadian Economic Observer. Archived Content. December 2012.**

- Participation rates for men and women (2008 to 2010) differ - Participation rates for men declined while women's increased
- The increase in women's participation rate “is often associated with the added worker effect, a temporary rise in labour force participation to smooth household income after a spouse's job loss”

## Immigrants



**Frank, K. and Hou, F. Source-country female labour force participation and the wages of immigrant women in Canada. Social Analysis and Modelling Division, Statistics Canada. January 2015.**

- This study examines the strong association between source-country female labour force participation rates and immigrant women's labour market activity in the host country. Key findings include:
  - o Higher participation rates are seen among women who:
    - Come from countries with high levels of female labour force participation and who come from a country whose official language is English or French
    - Have higher education, have been in Canada longer, and who immigrated when they were younger



- o Lower participation rates are seen among immigrant women who:
    - Have more young children
    - Immigrated when they were older
    - Have a non-working spouse
- “Results suggest that women from nations with high female labour force participation rates may navigate the host country’s labour market differently than other immigrant women”



***Morissette, R. & Galarneau, D. Labour Market Participation of Immigrant and Canadian-Born Wives, 2006-2014. Economic Insights. January 2016.***

- This study examines data for women age 25 to 54
- Canadian-born wives are more likely to participate in the labour market than immigrant wives, regardless of education while unmarried immigrant and Canadian-born women have similar labour market participation rates
- As age increases, the difference in participation rate decreases
- Participation rates are lower among recent immigrant women, younger immigrant women and female immigrants from Africa and Asia Potential reasons include: lower female to male participation ratios in the source country and having larger families. Lower wages received by immigrant women play a role, but to a lesser degree

### **Indigenous People and Communities**



***Centre for the Study of Living Standards. Aboriginal Labour Market Performance in Canada: 2007-2011. CSLS Research Report 2012-04. June 2012.***

- This report examine Aboriginal labour market performance in Canada from 2007 to 2011 using data from the Labour Force Survey and discusses the implications of future labour market developments for Aboriginal Canadians and for the labour market policies and programs
- A key limitation of the Labour Force Survey as a data source is the exclusion of people living on-reserve or settlement;
  - o “the LFS accounts for almost two thirds of the First

***Lower participation rates are seen among immigrant women who: have more young children, immigrated when they were older, have a non-working spouse.***

***Canadian-born wives are more likely to participate in the labour market than immigrant wives, regardless of education while unmarried immigrant and Canadian-born women have similar labour market participation rates.***

- Nations working age population and most, if not all of the Métis people" (19)
- o It does not "shed light on the labour market performance of the Aboriginal group that is likely performing the worst, namely First Nations people living on reserves." (9)
- Key data:
  - o In Ontario, 63.4% of Aboriginal people living off-reserve participate in the labour force,
  - o Across Canada, the highest participation is among people age 25 to 54 (76.2%) and the lowest among people age 55+ (37.6%)
  - o Females have lower participation rates than men (59.4% versus 69.3%)
- Lower education is associated with lower participation. Recommendations revolve around encouraging high school completion and post-secondary education, improving basic skills, encouraging youth to aspire towards occupations expected to experience above-average employment growth (sciences, professional, scientific and technical services) as well facilitating entrepreneurship

### **Persons with Disabilities**



**Aaronson, Stephanie et al. Labor Force Participation: Recent Developments and Future Prospects. Brookings Papers on Economic Activity. Fall 2014.**

- Lower participation rates are seen among less-educated prime-age men and women and persons reporting a disability
- The expansion of disability insurance (in the United States) is offered one reason for non-participation: "the probability that a nonparticipant who is disabled will also report being disabled a year later is greater than 70 percent and the probability that such a person will be in the labor force a year later is only 6 to 7 percent." (p. 19)





***Lanuzza, V., "The Consequences of Mental Illness on Labor Market Decisions" (2013). CMC Senior Theses. Paper 669.***

- This thesis paper uses data from the 2007 to 2011 National Health Interview Survey (U.S.) to examine the consequences of emotional and psychological problems on 4 aspects of labour market decisions, including labour market participation
- The evidence indicates that having a mental illness has an adverse effect on labour market participation
- Contributing factors include:
  - Lower educational attainment of persons with early onset mental illness
  - Higher risk of being fired
- One of the recommendations is for more of an emphasis on preparing the individuals to cope with demanding work schedules in addition to assisting them with entering the labor force



***Lindsay, S. Improving the Participation of Under-utilized Talent of People with Physical Disabilities in the Canadian Labour Market: A Scoping Review. Final Report. December 2013.***

- This research publication makes policy, program and employment program recommendations to promote the inclusion of people with physical disabilities in the workforce. Recommendations are targeted at vocational rehabilitation and employment service providers; employers; and business leaders and policy decision makers
- Three main recommendations include:
  - Service providers, inclusive of vocational rehabilitation and employment service providers: "need to have effective vocational skill development and employment programs" such as focusing on "matching the skill set of people with physical disabilities with the current labor market demands"
  - Improve employers' awareness and knowledge about workers with disabilities to remove "misconceptions about safety and productivity or the costs of accommodations"

***Improve employers' awareness and knowledge about workers with disabilities to remove "misconceptions about safety and productivity or the costs of accommodations"***

- o Improve sharing of knowledge and experiences between clients, service providers, and government “to promote inclusive programs and policies for employers, improve service delivery, and promote the dissemination of best practices.”



**Olesen, Sarah C. et. al. *Mental Health Affects Future Employment as Job Loss Affects Mental Health : Findings from a Longitudinal Population Study*. *BMC Psychiatry* 2013, 13:144. <http://biomedcentral.com/1471-244X/13/144>**

- Workforce participation is a key feature of public mental health and social inclusion policies across the globe. Benefits are believed to reflect a combination of material (e.g. income) and psychological outcomes, such as social roles and status, social networks, sense of pride.
- Inclusive societies are characterized by adequate social, educational and economic participation and policies attempt to bring about greater inclusiveness and harness the benefits of workforce participation. (1)
- This longitudinal study of 20 to 55 year olds in Australia simultaneously examines and contrasts relative effects of unemployment on mental health and mental health on employment status
- The study found evidence that mental ill health (as measured by the Mental Health Inventory – MHI-5) is both a determinant of (risk factor for) lower labour force participation as well as a consequence of unemployment.
- The authors’ review of existing studies found that, when considered together, a number of studies suggest that “the impact of poor mental health on labour-force participation is not limited to severe mental illness” (p. 2)
- The cyclical relationship between poor mental health and non-participation suggests that responses to support participation must include:
  - o Addressing the barriers to employment that people with existing mental health problems require
  - o More interventions for individuals experiencing mental health issues in general, and
  - o Programs to reduce mental health problems in the general community

***Existing studies found that, when considered together, a number of studies suggest that “the impact of poor mental health on labour-force participation is not limited to severe mental illness” .***



***Regional Roundtable in Burnaby B.C. Labour Market Participation of People with Disabilities: Regional Roundtable in Burnaby, B.C. April 2013***

- Participants at this government-led roundtable provided their perspective and experience related to employment programs and services
- While not directly stated, the inference is that lower employment outcomes and marginalization particularly when the economy is weaker may contribute to lower participation
- According to participants, best practices include:
  - Assistive devices, longer term on-the-job coaching, informed referrals from employment counsellors
  - “employment programs...work best when they are individualized, have a peer support or group discussion component, and provide employers with pre-screened, qualified, job-ready candidates”
  - Job-readiness programs in colleges
  - Partnerships between high schools and employment services to help transition students with disabilities into the labour force
  - Supporting social enterprises that employ people with disabilities



***Till, M. et. al. A Profile of the Labour Market Experiences of Adults with Disabilities among Canadians aged 15 years and older, 2012. Canadian Survey on Disability, 2012. Statistics Canada. December, 2015***

- This report further explores the results of the Canadian Survey on Disability published in December 2014, providing information about the employment barriers encountered by working age people with disabilities (age 15 to 64), the types of accommodations needed and whether these needs are met, job search barriers, perceptions of discrimination, and labour force discouragement
- Labour market outcomes for people with disabilities are affected by:
  - The region’s local context, including its current economic situation. Persons with disabilities are impacted more than people without disabilities
  - The type of disability: persons with sensory or physical disabilities experience fewer employment challenges than do people with development, cognitive and mental health-related disabilities
- Job search barriers for potential workers (17.6% of people with disabilities) include:
  - Few jobs available in the local area
  - Inadequate training or experience
  - Unsuccessful in past attempts to find work
  - Expected employment income less than current income
  - Prevented by family responsibilities



- o Other reasons include experiencing discrimination in the past, loss of additional supports, accessibility issues while applying for work, lack of specialized transportation, discouraged by family/friends
- Modified work hours are a key accommodation supporting people with disabilities to participate in the labour force



***Turcotte, M. Persons with Disabilities and Employment. Insights on Canadian Society. December 2014.***

- 55% of 25 to 64 year olds with a disability participated in the labour force compared to 84% of people without a disability
- They are “more likely to be discouraged from looking for work” (p. 4)
- Discrimination and lower education may be contributing factors





## Summary of Literature Review Key Findings

### General Trends

- Participation rates among core or prime working age people have been declining in the United States and Canada
- In Canada, from 2008 to 2010, participation rates for men declined while women's increased
- Since 2013, most of the decline in Canada has been due to decreasing participation rates among women, particularly 40 to 49 year olds with growth in the female immigrant population being significant contributor to this decline
- An inverse relationship between unemployment rate and participation rate is seen in Canada: Increases in the unemployment rate over a five year period were followed two years later by a five year period of declining participation with greater increases in unemployment rate associated with greater declines in participation rate
- In the United States, data identifies that declining participation is concentrated in higher income households

### Attributes Associated with Lower Participation

- Lower participation in the labour market is seen among people with the following attributes:
  - o Lower education
  - o Long term unemployment (e.g. over 15 months). Research in the United States concludes that longer term unemployment may be due more to individual factors like motivation, self-esteem than a mismatch between workers and the types of jobs available
  - o Females
  - o Recent immigrant females particularly those with one or more of the following attributes:
    - lower education
    - immigrated later in life
    - married
    - non-working spouse
    - has more young children
    - comes from a country whose official language is not English or French, or from a source country with lower female labour force participation rates
  - o Having a disability, particularly mental illness

- o Having poor health or poor mental health
- o Indigenous, particularly if living on-reserve, being female and having lower education

### Potential reasons for non-participation

- Economic and labour market factors including:
  - o High unemployment in the region and lack of availability of local jobs
  - o A polarized labour market that marginalizes lower skilled workers
- Difficulty accessing work:
  - o Immigrant women who come from source countries with lower female participation rates may have more difficulty navigating Canada's labour market compared to women who come from countries with higher female labour force participation
  - o Public transportation that does not meet service needs may prevent people from applying for jobs
  - o Not having adequate training or experience
  - o Being refused a job due to discrimination: Employers may have misconceptions and lack of knowledge with respect to having employees with disabilities
- Cost of working:
  - o The expectation of being financially worse off working as compared to receiving social assistance due to the potential loss of benefits and financial aid (housing, medication, transportation) and general lower income (Canadian data)
  - o Lack of affordable child care
- Personal choices:
  - o School, illness and family responsibilities are the main reasons given by Canadians for not participating in the labour force
  - o Older women who experienced job loss may have the financial means to exit the labour market
- While discouragement is identified as a small contributing factor by both the U.S. and Canadian literature, the data may under-report this reason as it excludes workers who leave to retire early, go to school, apply for disability or stay home, some of whom may be discouraged.
  - o Persons with disability, longer term unemployed and older women who experienced job loss due to declining employment in female-dominated

industries in Canada may be more likely to leave the labour market due to discouragement

- Sources of discouragement may include:
  - o Not knowing where else to look after submitting “hundreds” of applications;
  - o Lack of previous success in finding employment
  - o Individual factors such as motivation and self esteem
  - o Differential treatment by employers for people with long term unemployment, mental illness or disability

### **Potential Supports Needed to Increase Labour Market Engagement**

The literature provided some population specific suggestions for encouraging and supporting labour market participation:

- Encouraging and supporting education, particularly for Indigenous and persons with disability
- Addressing transportation needs of employees and potential employees
- Gaining an understanding of personal hurdles to participation among long term unemployed
- Specific to disabilities, recommended supports to participation found in the literature include:
  - o Improving employer awareness and knowledge to address misconceptions about safety, productivity and costs of accommodations that may prevent or discourage an employer from hiring a person with a disability
  - o Available and accessible mental health services and supports including availability of services for persons experiencing mental health issues as well as programs supporting good mental health in the general community
  - o Partnerships between high schools and employment services to help transition students Promoting and sharing of best practices and experiences between employment service providers, their clients, employers and government
  - o Employment service supports including:
- Individualized employment programs with a peer support component for persons with disabilities
- Workplace accommodations for persons with disability particularly modified or reduced work hours, job-readiness training for jobs in current demand, job coaching
- Providing people with mental ill health or mental illness, with the preparation they need to cope with work schedules once they get a job

## **Section II: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey and National Household Survey Data**

## Section II: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey and National Household Survey Data

### Introduction

This section of the report examines administrative data provided through Statistics Canada. The main questions answered in this section of the report are:

1. What are the local participation rate trends?
2. What are some possible explanations for the observed trends?
3. What are participation rates across the London Economic Region?
4. Who is not participating in the labour force?
5. Is there a difference between the education profile of non-participants and unemployed participants?
6. What are some reasons for non-participation in the labour force?

### Data Reported and Data Sources

Data reported in this section comes from Statistics Canada surveys including: Labour Force Survey, Job Vacancy and Average Wage Survey, 2011 National Household Survey and the Canadian Survey on Disability. Two custom tabulations of Labour Force Survey data specific to the London Economic Region was purchased from Statistics Canada. All other data is publicly available through CANSIM tables.

Data Source	Data Reported
Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Table 282-0123	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Historic Participation Rates of the Population Age 15+ for Canada, Ontario, and the following Economic Regions: London, Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie, Hamilton-Niagara Peninsula, and Windsor-Sarnia</li></ul>
Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Tables 282-0102, 282-0129 and 282-0002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employment levels and Participation Rates of 25 to 54 Year Olds for Canada, Ontario, and Census Metropolitan Areas: Hamilton, St. Catharines-Niagara, Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo, Guelph, Windsor, and London</li><li>• Participation figures for Immigrants, Ontario</li></ul>
Job Vacancy and Average Wage Survey, CANSIM Table 285-0001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Job Vacancy Rates and Average Offered Hourly Wages for Ontario and Economic Regions: London, Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie, Hamilton-Niagara Peninsula, and Windsor-Sarnia</li></ul>

Data Source	Data Reported
National Household Survey, 2011, 2011 National Household Survey, Table 99-012-X2011055 and Community Profiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation Figures for 25 to 64 Year Olds by Census Subdivision</li> <li>Participation Figures for Indigenous People and Communities</li> </ul>
Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation 0716_02 Table 1.IVT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employment levels and Participation Figures for 25 to 54 Year Olds by Age, Gender, Education and Immigrant Status for the London Economic Region and Ontario</li> </ul>
Canadian Survey on Disability CANSIM Tables 115-0005 and 115-007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation Rates for Adults with Disabilities for Ontario</li> <li>Employment Barriers and Limitations for Persons with Disabilities for Ontario</li> </ul>
Labour Force Survey, Custom Tabulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reasons for Not Looking for Work by Gender, Age Group and Immigrant Status for London Economic Region and Ontario</li> </ul>

## The London Economic Region: Overview of Population and Geography

The London Economic Region, population 678,230 in 2016, includes Middlesex, Oxford and Elgin Counties. These Counties encompass 23 Census Subdivisions. The London Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) also falls within the LER. The CMA accounts for 76% of the Economic Region's population age 25 to 54. As the map shows, the CMA, outlined in dark border, excludes portions of Middlesex, Elgin and all of Oxford.

Labour Force Survey data for the CMA often serves as a proxy for the LER as CMA level data is more readily available. In the interests of ensuring that all areas are represented, Labour Force Survey data for the London Economic Region was purchased for this study<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> A future study for consideration is a comparison between the CMA level data and the Economic Region data to determine whether or not regular access to Economic Region data is warranted and should be pursued with Statistics Canada and/or through the Community Data Program.

**Figure 6: London Economic Region**



Source 1: Map created by Emilian Siman, Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board

**Table 3: Census Subdivisions and Population, London Economic Region<sup>8</sup>**

	# of Census Subdivisions	2016 Population Age 25 to 54
Elgin	8	33,453
Middlesex	12	194,399
Oxford	8	42,880
London Economic Region (LER)	23	270,732
London CMA, estimate	8	205,756

### In 2011<sup>9</sup>:

- 16.7% of the LER's population age 25 to 54 were immigrants, 80% of whom lived in Middlesex County.
- 2.1% identified as Aboriginals with 75% living in Middlesex County. Middlesex County includes three Indigenous communities; Chippewas of the Thames First Nation 42, Munsee-Delaware Nation 1, and Oneida 41.
- The Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board estimates that there are 85,300 working age adults with disabilities living in the LER.

<sup>8</sup> Ontario Ministry of Finance. *Ontario Population Projections Update, 2015–2041. Table 13: Southwestern Ontario and its census divisions, population by five-year age group, 2015–2041 — reference scenario. Spring 2016.*

<sup>9</sup> Statistics Canada. 2013. *National Household Survey (NHS) Profile. 2011 National Household Survey. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-004-XWE. Ottawa. Released September 11, 2013.*



## Local Participation Rate Trends, 2005 to 2015

### Research Questions

1. What is the overall participation trend of 25 to 54 year olds for the London Economic Region?
2. How does London's trend compare to other geographic areas?
3. What are age and gender trends across the Region?

### Highlights

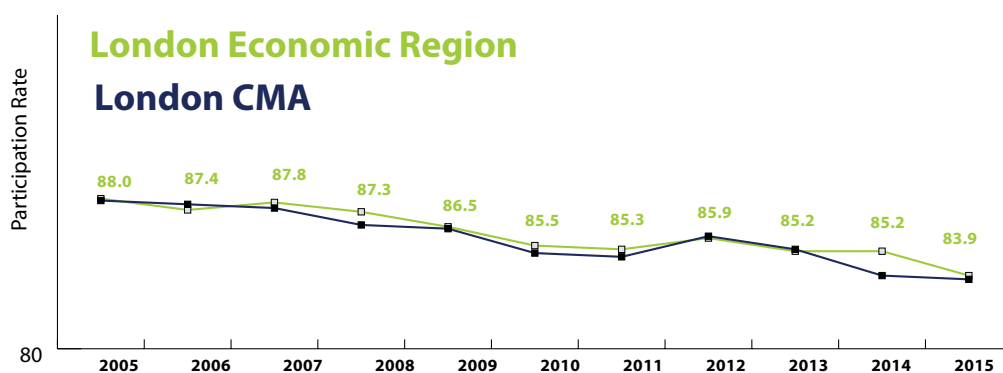
- The 25 to 54 year old participation rate for the London Economic Region dropped from 88.0% in 2005 to 83.9% in 2015
- From 2005 to 2015, the London Region's downward participation trend for the population age 15+ and, more narrowly, for the core working age population age 25 to 54, has been greater than other selected regions. London region's participation rate dropped from being in the top three in 2005 to second lowest in 2015
- Participation rates for 45 to 54 year olds have been consistently lower than rates for 25 to 44 year olds though 25 to 44 year olds show more variability which may reflect greater vulnerability to economic fluctuations
- Participation rates among females consistently are lower than male participation rates and have dropped more than among males, particularly among women age 25 to 44

### Findings

#### *Participation Trend, London Economic Region and London CMA, 25 to 54 Year Olds*

The 25 to 54 year old participation rate for the London Economic Region dropped from 88.0% in 2005 to 83.9% in 2015. This trend is comparable to the trend for the London CMA, with CMA rates being slightly lower.

**Figure 7: Participation Rates, 25 to 54, London ER and London CMA Participation rate**



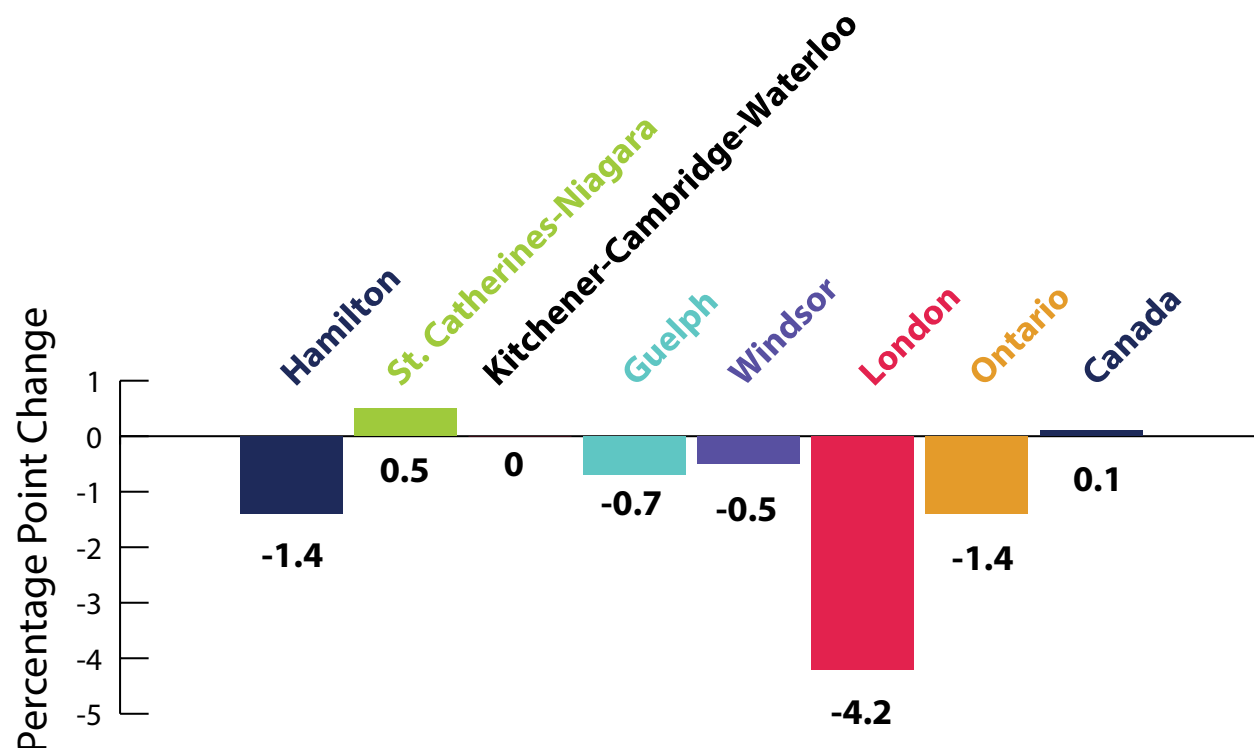
Source 2: London ER derived from Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation 0716\_02 Table 1.IVT; London CMA from Statistics Canada. Table 282-0129

### *Participation rate trends of the population age 25 to 54, Ontario and Selected Census Metropolitan Areas*

Labour Force Survey data for this age group for the Economic Regions is available for purchase from Statistics Canada, however, for the purposes of comparing participation rates of 25 to 54 year olds, publicly available CMA level data is used as a proxy. This proxy is considered reasonable – a comparison of London Economic Region data with London CMA data shows that the participation rate trend for the CMA is similar to the trend for the Economic Region.

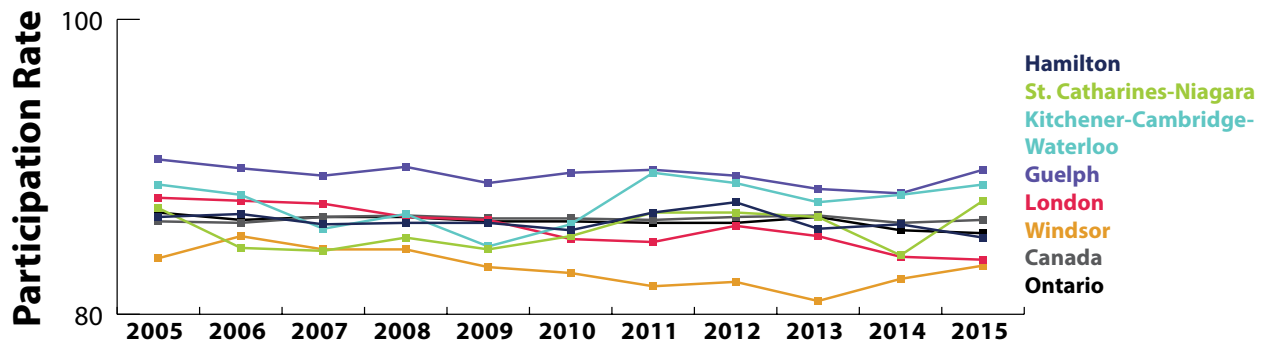
Looking more closely at the 25 to 54 age group, CMA level data shows that the participation rate for the London CMA shows a different trend compared to other southern Ontario CMA's, Ontario and Canada. Since 2012, the London CMA participation rate has declined each year. Hamilton's participation rate also shows a downward trend, however, Hamilton has a higher participation rate than London. From 2005 to 2015, the participation rate in the London CMA dropped by 4.2 percentage points from 87.9% to 83.7%.

**Figure 8: Change in Participation Rates, Population Age 25 to 54, 2005 to 2015, CMA, Ontario, Canada**



Source 5: Derived from Statistics Canada. Tables 282-0129 and 282-0002.

**Figure 9: Participation Rates, 25 to 54 Year Olds, Selected CMAs, Ontario and Canada**



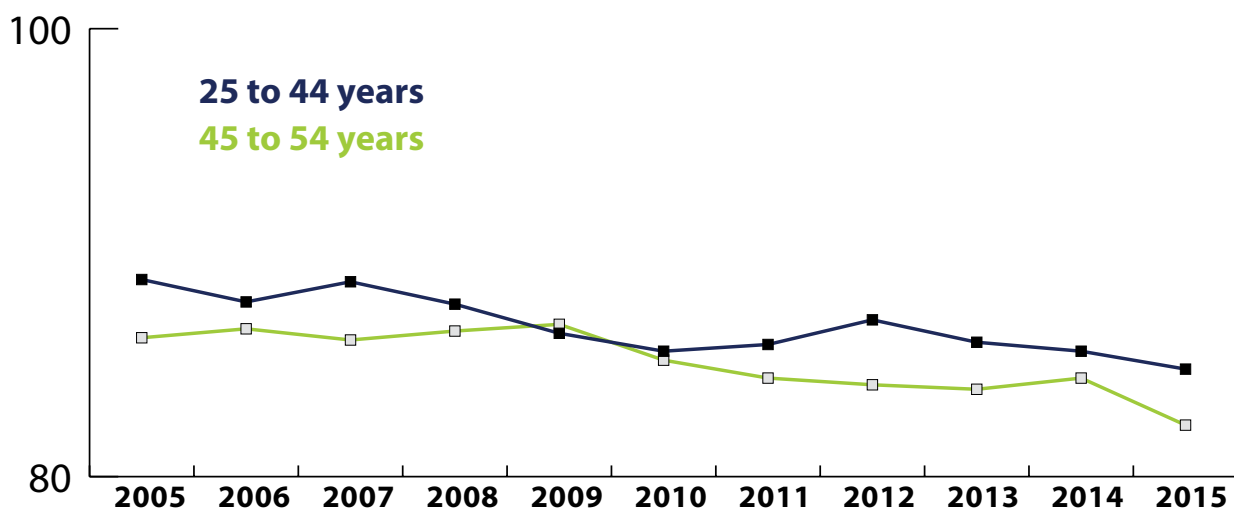
Source 6: Statistics Canada. Tables 282-0129 and 282-0002.

### Trends in Participation Rate by Age

Participation rates have dropped similarly for 25 to 44 year olds and 45 to 54 year olds. From 2005 to 2015, participation rates dropped 4.7 percent (4.1 percentage points) for 25 to 54 year olds though the following differences are observed:

- Participation rates for 45 to 54 year olds tend to be lower
- Participation rates for 45 to 54 year olds fluctuate less

**Figure 10: Participation Rates by Age**

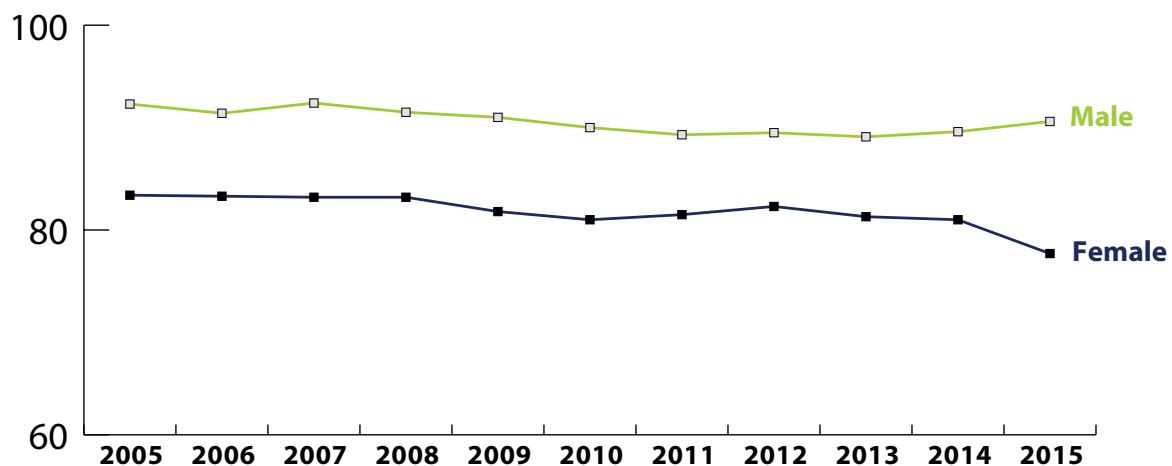


Source 7: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation 0716\_02 Table 1.IVT

### Trends in Participation Rate by Gender

Participation rates among females consistently are lower than male participation rates. Female participation rates have dropped more than male rates. From 2005 to 2015, participation among females dropped by 6.9 percent (5.8 percentage points), while rates from males dropped by 1.9 percent (1.8 percentage points).

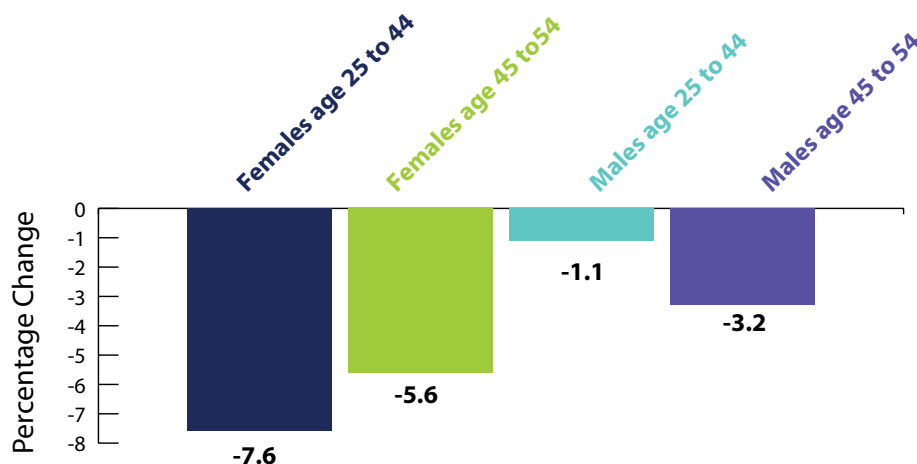
**Figure 11: Participation Rates by Gender**



Source 8: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation 0716\_02 Table 1.IVT

Looking at both gender and age, a comparison of 2005 to 2015 data shows that the biggest drop in participation is among women age 25 to 44, followed by females age 45 to 54, then males age 45 to 54, with the lowest drop among males age 25 to 44.

**Figure 12: Percent Change in Participation Rate, 2005 to 2015**



Source 9: Derived from Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation 0716\_02 Table 1.IVT

## Factors Driving Regional Participation Trends

### Research Questions:

1. What economic factors may be driving the Regional participation trend?
2. What does the Regional current job market look like and how does it compare to other areas?
3. What are the population trends and what impact do they have on participation rate?

### Highlights

The Region's relatively steep decline in participation may be explained by economic and demographic factors:

- Regional decline in participation from 2009 on was preceded by a comparatively steep climb in the unemployment rate from 2007 to 2012
- The Region experienced a significant decline in employment, particularly in full-time employment. Across the Economic Region, 20,600 jobs were lost from 2005 to 2015 with 15,000 of those lost in the CMA
  - o Based on current job vacancy data, the London Economic Region continues to experience a depressed job market compared to most other areas in southern Ontario
- Participation in actual numbers declined for 25 to 44 year olds largely due to the fact that this population declined by 20,700 from 2005 to 2015, largely due to a decline in the size of the male population. The decline in population accounts for:
  - o Almost half of the labour force participation decline among women age 25 to 44
  - o Almost all of the labour force participation decline among men age 25 to 44
- Among 45 to 54 year olds, the decline in participation rate is due to the fact that population for that age increased more than labour force participation increased
- The current economic and labour market situation may contribute to the declining population of 25 to 44 year olds. If current trends continue, existing employers may continue to experience difficulty hiring as the labour force shrinks due to declining population and opportunities for economic and employment growth may be hampered.

## Findings

### *Economic Factors*

Some possible explanations for the difference in London's trend compared to other areas are explored using data from the Labour Force Survey. The following trends and comparisons are examined:

- Unemployment rates
- Employment Losses/Gains

The results suggest that the Region's relatively steep participation rate decline may be explained by a comparatively steep upward unemployment rate trend and its significant decline in total employment, particularly full-time employment.

Based on Cheung's<sup>10</sup> finding that higher Provincial unemployment rates from 2007 to 2012 are associated with lower participation rates from 2009 to 2014, an examination of CMA level participation rates and unemployment rates was completed. The results suggest that Regional participation trends may be driven in large part by the rapid increase in the Regional unemployment rate.

- Statistical analysis of CMA level unemployment rate data for 25 to 54 year olds from 2007 to 2012 and participation rate from 2009 to 2014 show that lower unemployment rates among 25 to 54 year olds between 2007 and 2012 are related higher participation rates among 25 to 54 year olds between 2009 and 2014<sup>11</sup>. Based on this relationship, London CMA's relatively low five-year-average participation rate (85.3%) can be explained in large part by its relatively high five-year-average unemployment rate (6.7%).

*London CMA's relatively low five-year-average participation rate (85.3%) can be explained in large part by its relatively high five-year-average unemployment rate (6.7%).*

<sup>10</sup> Cheung, C. et al. *Changing labour market participation since the great recession: A regional perspective* (Bank of Canada). Discussion Paper 2015-2.

<sup>11</sup> The value of R is -0.961. The value of R<sup>2</sup> is 0.9235. This result is significant at  $p < .01$ . Social Science Statistics on-line statistics calculator.

- A comparison of the “line of best fit” trend lines, shows that London’s unemployment rate trend between 2007 and 2012 is the steepest compared to other areas, i.e. increased over time the most quickly, followed by St. Catharines-Niagara. Windsor’s unemployment rate trended downward over this time.<sup>12</sup>

It is generally accepted that rising participation rates reflect increased optimism about the job market. Job losses and job gains from 2005 to 2015 for the London CMA were compared to other CMA’s to determine the extent to which local experience differs from the other areas. The results suggest that pessimism may contribute as this area has experienced significant job loss over the last 10 years.

**20,600 jobs were lost in the London Economic Region: 19,900 of these were full-time and 800 of these were part-time.**

- London CMA’s employment level decreased the most in absolute numbers and rate of decline was second to Windsor’s:
  - o 15,600 full-time jobs were lost from 2005 to 2015 in the London CMA, at a rate of 1.0% per year
  - o 20,600 jobs were lost in the London Economic Region: 19,900 of these were full-time and 800 of these were part-time<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> Caution: this analysis assumes a linear trend when, in fact, unemployment rates peaked in 2009 and have declined since, with St. Catharines-Niagara, London and Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo experiencing a slight increase in 2013.

<sup>13</sup> Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation 0716\_02 Table 1.IV.T. Labour force survey estimates by highest level of educational attainment, sex and age groups for Ontario and economic region 3560-London, 1990-2015 annual averages.



**Table 4: Net Change in the Number of Employed Workers Age 25 to 54, 2005 to 2015**

	Actual Change 2005 to 2015	Year over Year Change (%)
Hamilton CMA	-7,700	-0.3%
St. Catharines-Niagara CMA	-1,500	-0.12%
Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo CMA	+11,600	+0.64%
Guelph CMA	+8,000	+1.45%
London CMA	-15,000	-0.86%
Windsor CMA	-12,400	-1.08%
London Economic Region	-20,600	-0.95%

Source 10: Derived from Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey CANSIM Table 282-0129 and custom tabulation 0716\_02 Table 1.IVT

The detailed data, analysis, and calculations are provided in the Appendix. Statistical Analysis of Economic Factors Contributing to London's Participation Trend.

### Current Job Market<sup>14</sup>

Since January 2015, Statistics Canada has been reporting on employer-provided job vacancy and wage data at the Economic Region level. This survey is done to provide information on labour market demand, and is intended to support decision-making by job seekers, students, employers, and policy makers. It also may be used by employment program service providers, education and training, and workforce development agencies to inform local programming and priorities.

- On average, London's 2015 job vacancy rate is the lowest, along with Windsor-Sarnia
- In the first quarter of 2016, London's job vacancy rate of 2.1 percent is lower than in the first quarter of 2015, when it was 2.4 percent. Note that the first quarter of 2016 is lower for all areas except Windsor-Sarnia
- In terms of actual numbers of job vacancies, in 2015, London averaged almost 6,300 job vacancies per quarter, about 400 more than Windsor-Sarnia and about 10,000 fewer than Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie and Hamilton-Niagara Peninsula
- In the first quarter of 2016, employers reported 5,890 job vacancies, almost 200 more vacancies than in the first quarter of 2015.

Detailed job vacancy data is available in the Appendix.

### **Population and Labour Force Trends<sup>15</sup>**

Mathematically, participation rate is driven by the number of people in the labour force as the numerator and the population as the denominator. The data shows that both the labour force size and population decreased and that the decline in the size of the labour force size is greater than population decline. From 2005 to 2015:

- The total number of unemployed people in the Region increased from 45,900 to 52,700:
  - The number of people in the labour force decreased 242,600 to 219,600, an annual decline of 0.93%
    - All of the decline can be attributed to 25 to 44 year olds and primarily males
- The number of 25 to 54 year olds in the London Economic Region declined from 275,700 to 261,800, an annual decline of 0.5%
  - This is due to a decline in the size of the population age 25 to 44; in 2015, there were 20,700 fewer 25 to 44 year olds in the LER compared to 2005, mostly due to a decline in the male population

Looking more closely at age and gender, it is evident that local labour force participation trends vary by age and gender:

- Among 45 to 54 year olds, participation rate decline is due to the fact that population for that age increased more than labour force participation increased
- Among 25 to 44 year olds, declining population is a sizable contributor to declining labour force participation. The decline in population accounts for:
  - Almost half of the labour force participation decline among women age 25 to 44
  - Almost all of the labour force participation decline among men age 25 to 44

***Among 25 to 44 year olds, declining population is a sizable contributor to declining labour force participation.***

<sup>15</sup> Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation 0716\_02 Table 1.IV.T. Labour force survey estimates by highest level of educational attainment, sex and age groups for Ontario and economic region 3560-London, 1990-2015 annual averages.

**Table 5: Comparing Change in Participation and Population by Age and Gender**

	Change in Labour Force Participation		Change in Population	
	#	%	#	%
Females age 25 to 44	(10,400)	(13.3%)	(5,800)	(6.3%)
Females age 45 to 54	1,200	3.4%	4,100	9.4%
Males age 25 to 44	(14,700)	(16.3%)	(14,900)	(15.3%)
Males age 45 to 54	1,100	2.9%	2,600	6.2%

Source 11: Derived from Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation 0716\_02 Table 1.IVT

## Participation Rates Across the Region

### Research Questions:

1. What are participation rates in communities within the London Economic Region?
2. What are participation rates of populations defined by the following variables:
  - o Landed Immigrants
  - o Identify as Indigenous
  - o Presence of Disability

### Highlights

- Within the Economic Region and for the population age 25 to 64, Oxford County has the highest participation rate and Elgin County has the lowest, based on 2011 National Household Survey data.
- Based on NHS data, specific communities with low participation rates in comparison to their respective counties include:

Oxford County (81.8%)	Middlesex County (79.5%)	Elgin County (77.9%)
Tillsonburg (76.8%) Woodstock (80.4%)	Chippewas of the Thames First Nation 42 (55.6%) Munsee-Delaware Nation 1 (56.2%) Southwest Middlesex (76.7%) London, City (79.2%) Adelaide Metcalfe (79.3%)	Bayham (74.8%) Aylmer (75.5%) St. Thomas (76.9%) West Elgin (77.6%)

- Data for working age landed immigrants in the Economic Region is not available for this report. Based on Ontario level data, the participation rate of landed immigrants age 25 to 54 is declining due to population growth that exceeds growth in the size of the labour force. The participation rate of landed immigrants is 5 percentage points lower than participation rate of Canadian born individuals
- Data for the working age Indigenous population living off-reserve is not available
- Local participation rate data for persons with disabilities is not available. Based on data for Ontario, participation rates for persons between ages 25 and 64 and with disabilities ranged from 56% to 68%

## Findings

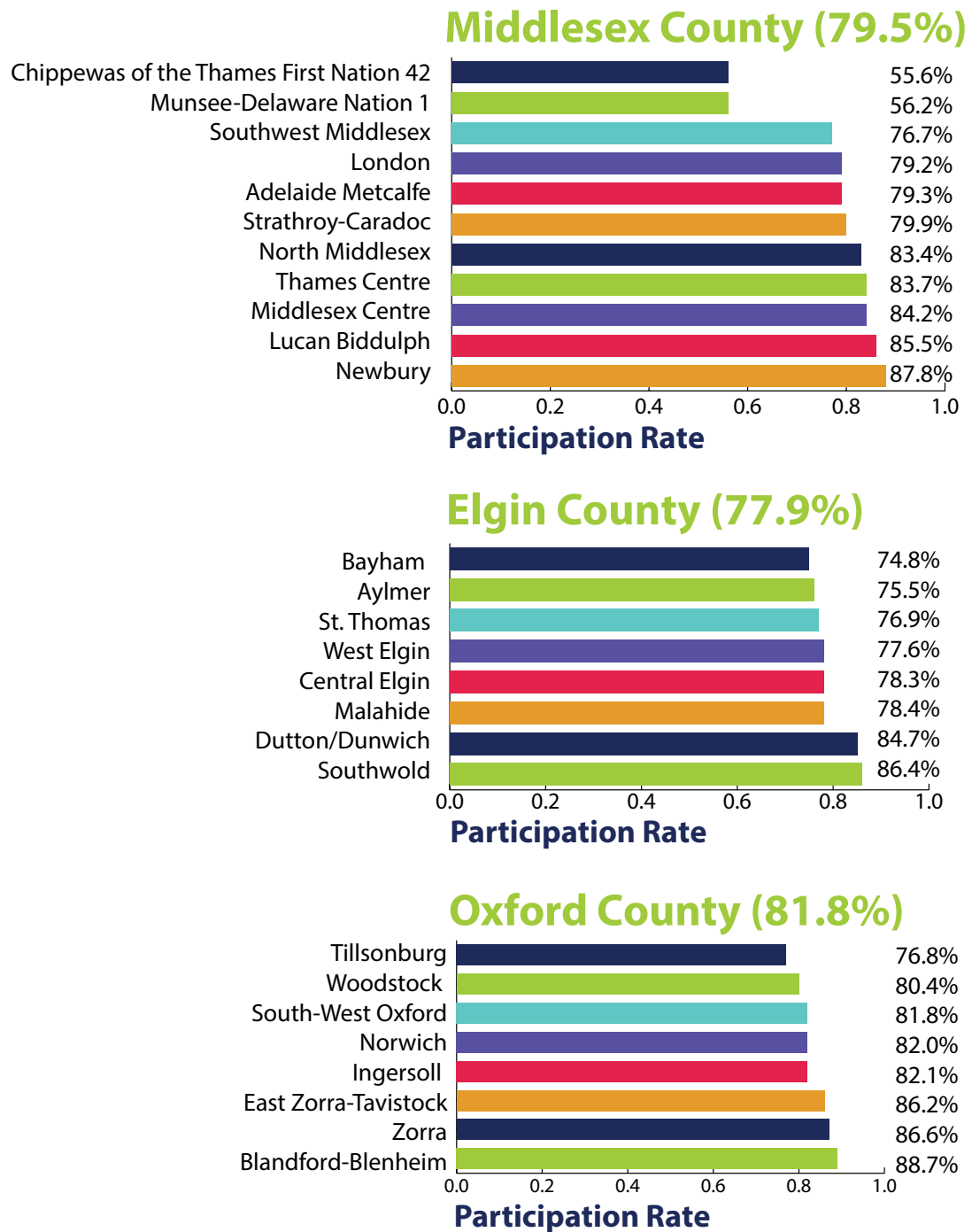
### *Participation Rates of 25 to 64 Year Olds by Geography*

Local participation rate data for the working age population age 25 to 64 for communities within the Economic Region are provided through the National Household Survey, 2011 Profiles<sup>16</sup>. Based on participation trends for the Region as a whole, the reported 2011 participation rates are likely higher than current participation rates.

- The participation across Elgin County (NHS, 2011) was 77.9%. Within Elgin, Aylmer, Bayham, St. Thomas and West Elgin had participation rates lower than the County's.
- The participation rate across Middlesex County (NHS, 2011) was 79.5%. This data excludes residents of the Oneida 41 Reserve as no data is available. Within Middlesex, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation 42, Munsee-Delaware Nation 1, Southwest Middlesex, the City of London and Adelaide Metcalfe had participation rates lower than the County's.
- The participation rate across Oxford County (NHS, 2011) was 81.8%. Within Oxford, Tillsonburg and Woodstock had participation rates lower than the County's.

<sup>16</sup> Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey, Table 99-012-X2011055 (public access) – rounding applied according to Statistics Canada rules

**Figure 13: Participation Rates by LER Community**



Source 12: Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey, Table 99-012-X2011055

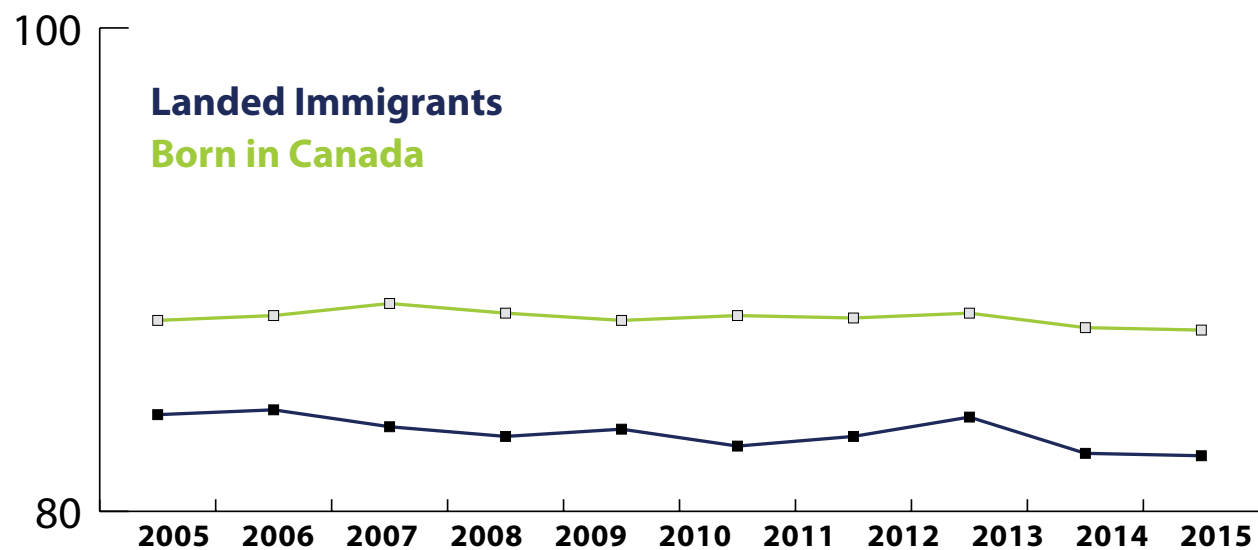
### Landed Immigrant Status

Labour Force Survey data for Ontario is used to compare participation trends of landed immigrants with people born in Canada. Local data is not available for this report. Landed immigrant refers to people who are, or have been, landed immigrants in Canada and who have been granted the right to live in Canada permanently.

Compared to Canadian born 25 to 54 year olds in Ontario, the participation rate of landed immigrants age 25 to 54:

- Is an average of 5 percentage points lower
- Declined more over the last 10 years

**Figure 14: Participation Rates, Landed Immigrant and Canadian Born 25 to 54 Year Olds, Ontario**



Source 13: Statistics Canada. CANSIM Table 282-0102

These differences are due to differences in labour force size and population growth. The size of the landed immigrant labour force grew less than the population of landed immigrants. This contrasts with the Canadian born working age population where both the size of the labour force and the population shrunk.

## Indigenous Population

Participation rate data on Indigenous people and communities is limited. Data is available from the 2011 National Household Survey Aboriginal Population Profile for Indigenous people living off-reserve in Woodstock, London, St. Thomas, and Strathroy.

As previously reported, participation rates of Indigenous population age 25 to 64 and living on-reserve in the London Economic Region is at least 20 percentage points lower than in any other community in the Region.

Data for the Indigenous population living off-reserve is available for the population age 15+. As the table shows, participation rates for the Indigenous population age 15+ living off-reserve are similar and in some cases higher than the general population. However, the Indigenous population tends to be younger than the general population so participation figures are less affected by the aging population. Participation rates for 15+ among the general population are quite significantly lower than participation rates of the working age population.

**Table 6: Participation Rates of Population Age 15+**

	Indigenous, Off-Reserve			General Population		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Woodstock CA	62.2	72.7	53.7	64.5	71.3	58.1
London, City	63.5	70.5	57.9	65.1	69.1	61.5
St. Thomas	60.9	75	49.2	62.2	67.3	57.5
Strathroy	75.6	87.5	71.4	63.4	67.4	59.6

Source 14: Statistics Canada. 2013. National Household Survey (NHS) Aboriginal Population Profile.

As identified previously in this section, the participation rates of the working age Indigenous population living on-reserve are lower than participation rates of the working age population living in communities across the LER.

## Persons with Disabilities

Local participation rate data for persons with disabilities is not available. In Ontario, 2012 participation rates for persons with disabilities ranged from 56% to 68%. Similar to persons without disability, the highest participation rates were among the 35 to 44 year olds for both males and females.



**Table 7: Participation Rates for Adults with Disabilities, Ontario**

	Male & Female	Females	Males
25 to 34 years	56.4	65.1	55.6
35 to 44 years	68.4	66.9	69.2
45 to 54 years	57.9	57.8	58.1
55 to 64 years	42.8	37.7	47.9

Source 15: Statistics Canada. CANSIM Table 115-0005.

## Description of Labour Market Non-Participants in the London Economic Region

### Research Questions:

1. How many people are not participating in the labour force?
2. Who is not participating in the labour force by:
  - o Age and gender
  - o Immigrant status
  - o Indigenous
  - o Living with disability

### Highlights

- In 2015, 42,200 people age 25 to 54 were not participating in the labour force
  - o 25,800 are age 25 to 44
  - o 30,200 are female
  - o 8,400 are landed immigrants
  - o 18,500 have some post-secondary education or higher; 12,800 have a post-secondary certificate or diploma
- Women, particularly women between the ages of 25 and 44 are over-represented among non-participants; about 23% of all core working age women were non-participants
- 80% of non-participants with landed immigrant status were women
- Landed immigrants may be over-represented among non-participants, however, updated population data is needed to confirm this
- Local data on the number of non-participants age 25 to 54 who are Indigenous is not available; roughly 2,500 Indigenous people age 15+ were not participating. Over half live in London and over half are female.
- Calculations by the Elgin Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board, based on Ontario data suggest that a very large proportion of non-participants may have a disability

## Findings:

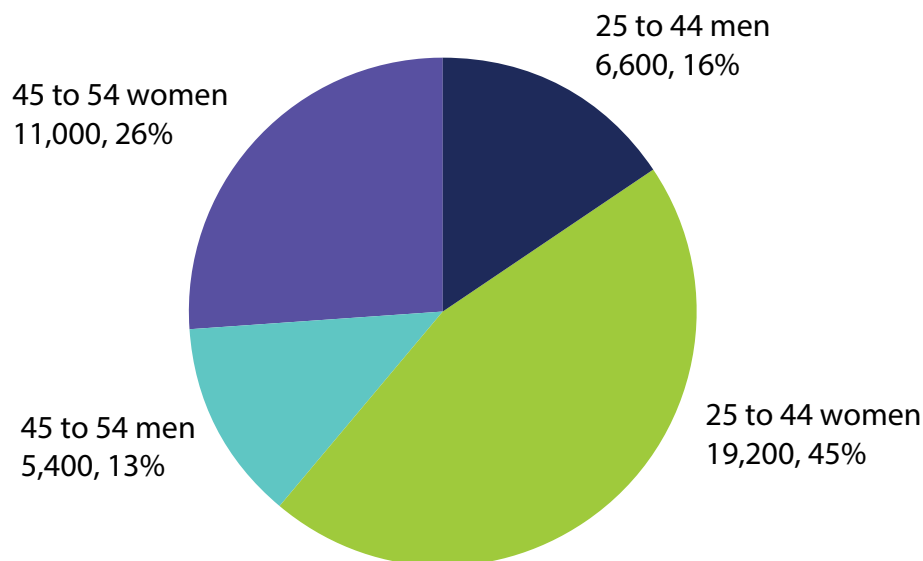
In 2015, 42,200 people age 25 to 54 year old were not participating in the labour force in the London Economic Region<sup>17</sup>.

### Gender and Age

- 71.6% of non-participants are women; 63.5% of female non-participants are age 25 to 44
  - Women account for 51.5% of the population age 25 to 54 and account for 71.6% of non-participants
- 22.4% of women between the age of 25 and 54 is not participating compared to 9.4% of men
- Considering only age, 61.1% are age 25 to 44

**22.4% of women between the age of 25 and 54 is not participating compared to 9.4% of men.**

**Figure 15: Number of Non-Participants, Age, Gender**



Source 16: Statistics Canada, Labour force survey, custom tabulation S0616\_15.ivt.

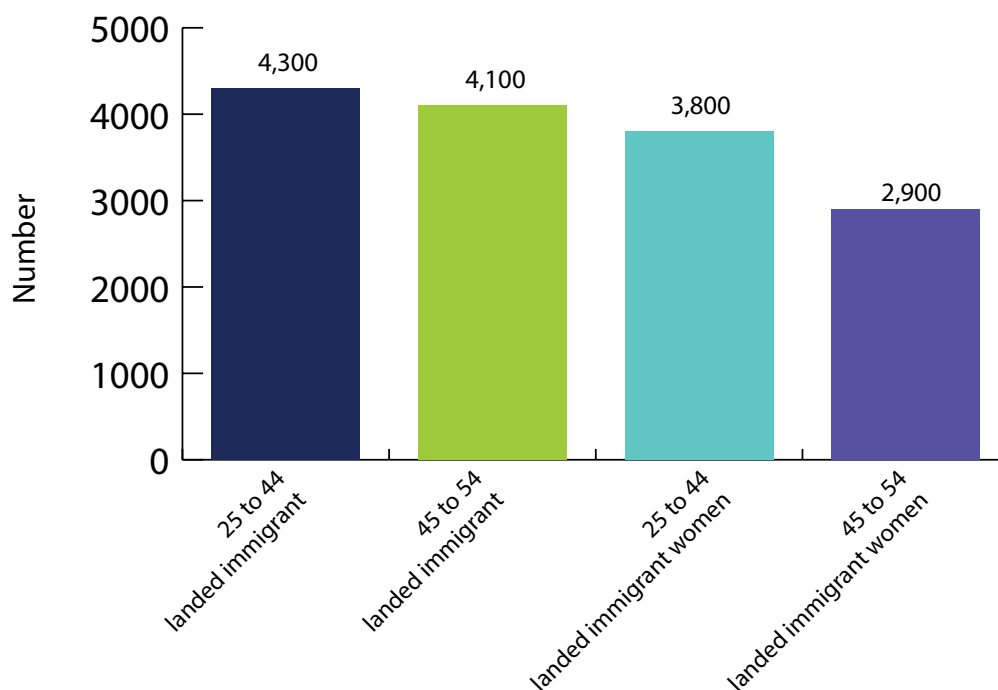
<sup>17</sup> Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation 0716\_02 Table 1.IVT

### Immigrant Status

In 2015, 8,400 persons age 25 to 54 with landed immigrant status<sup>18</sup> did not participate in the labour force. It is possible that landed immigrants are somewhat over-represented among non-participants; however, updated population data is needed to confirm this observation.

- Landed immigrants accounted for 16.7% of the population age 25 to 54 in 2011
- In 2015, landed immigrants age 25 to 54 accounted for 19.9% of non-participants
- Among foreign born non-participants, 79.8% are women, over half of whom are age 25 to 44

**Figure 16: Number of Non-Participants with Landed Immigrant Status**



Source 17: Statistics Canada, Labour force survey, custom tabulation S0616\_15.ivt.

<sup>18</sup> Landed immigrant refers to a person "who is or has ever been a landed immigrant or permanent resident. This person has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Some immigrants have resided in Canada for a number of years, while others have arrived recently. Some immigrants are Canadian citizens, while others are not."

## Indigenous

Approximately one-third of the Aboriginal Identity population age 15+ (2,490 people) did not participate in the labour force. Of these, two-thirds (1,690) were female. Most non-participants live in London (1,880).

**Table 8: Number of Indigenous Age 15+ Who are Non-Participants**

	Total	Male	Female
<b>Chippewas of the Thames First Nation 42</b>	330	150	180
<b>Woodstock CA</b>	185	60	125
<b>London, City</b>	1,880	700	1,185
<b>St. Thomas</b>	220	60	160
<b>Strathroy</b>	55	15	40

Source 18: Statistics Canada. 2013. National Household Survey (NHS) Aboriginal Population Profile

## Persons with Disabilities

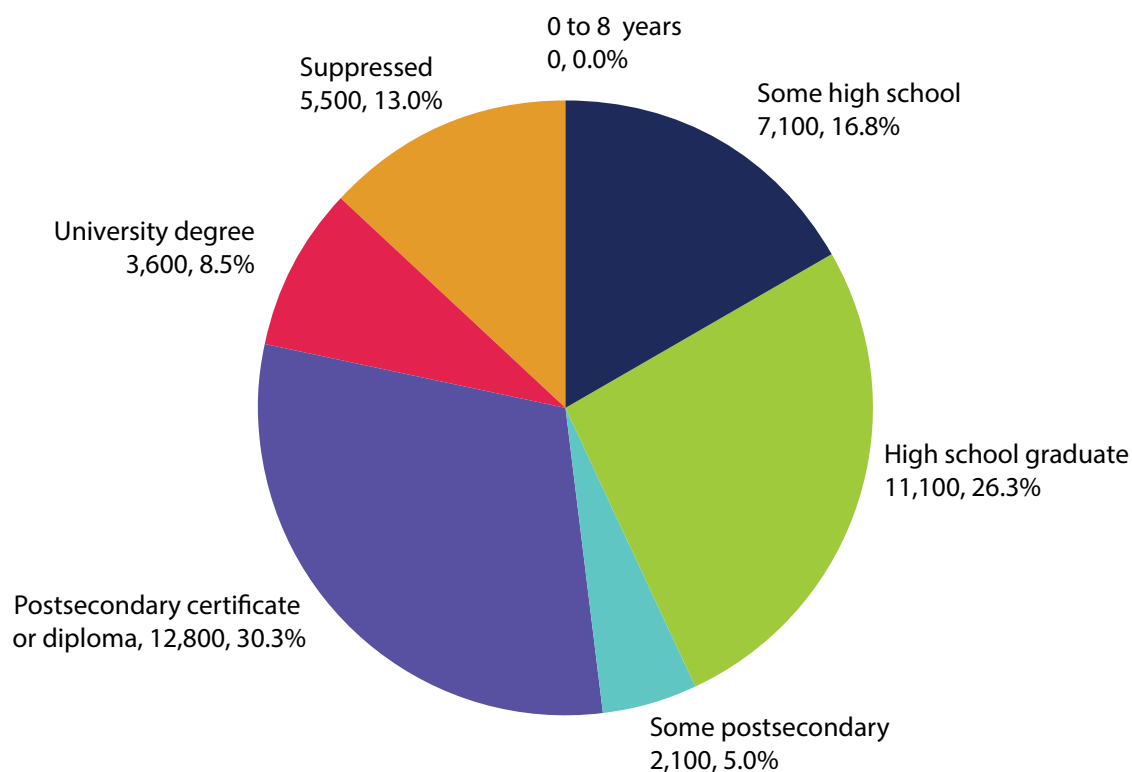
Calculations completed by the Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board estimate that about 40,400 of the estimated 85,300 working age adults with disabilities living in the London Economic Region are not participating in the labour force.

## Education

Education data is suppressed for 5,500 of non-participants.

All education levels are represented among non-participants. It is estimated that, in the London Economic Region 18,500 (44%), non-participants have some education beyond high school. Most non-participants with post-secondary education attained a post-secondary certificate or diploma for university degree. Just over one quarter of non-participants is a high school graduate. One sixth have less than high school.

**Figure 17: Non-Participants by Level of Education Attained**



Source 19: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation 0716\_02 Table 1.IVT



## A Closer Look at the Role of Education in Participation

### Research Questions

1. How has the educational profile of non-participants changed over the last ten years?
2. What percent of “non-participating” have not attained some level of postsecondary education, and how does this compare to participating and not employed (i.e. unemployed)?

Data Limitation: due to sample size, some educational attainment data is suppressed.

### Highlights

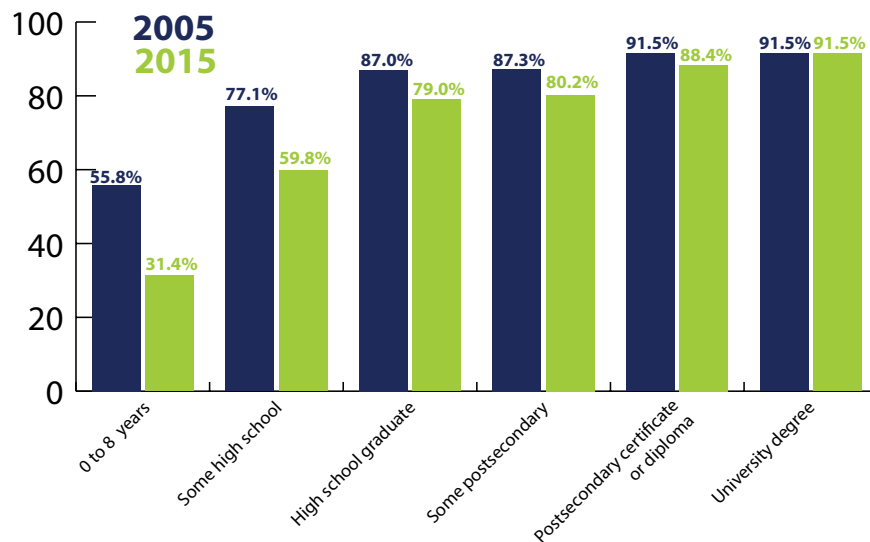
- The extent to which the education profile of non-participants age 25 to 54 in the London Economic Region has changed from 2005 to 2015 is difficult to assess due to data suppression.
- People with lower levels of education were less likely to be participating in 2015 compared to 2005. Participation rates of people with a post secondary certificate or diploma or a university degree were similar in 2005 and 2015.
- Higher education is associated with higher participation.
- The education profile of non-participants in the labour market differs from unemployed labour market participants, with fewer non-participants having some post-secondary education compared to the population that is unemployed and looking for work
- Lower education is related to non-participation:
  - o More non-participants have high school education or less as their highest level of education attained compared to the general population and compared to unemployed individuals who were looking for work

### Findings

#### Education Trends

Comparing 2005 to 2015 participation rates by highest level of education attained shows that participation rates dropped the most among people with lower education:

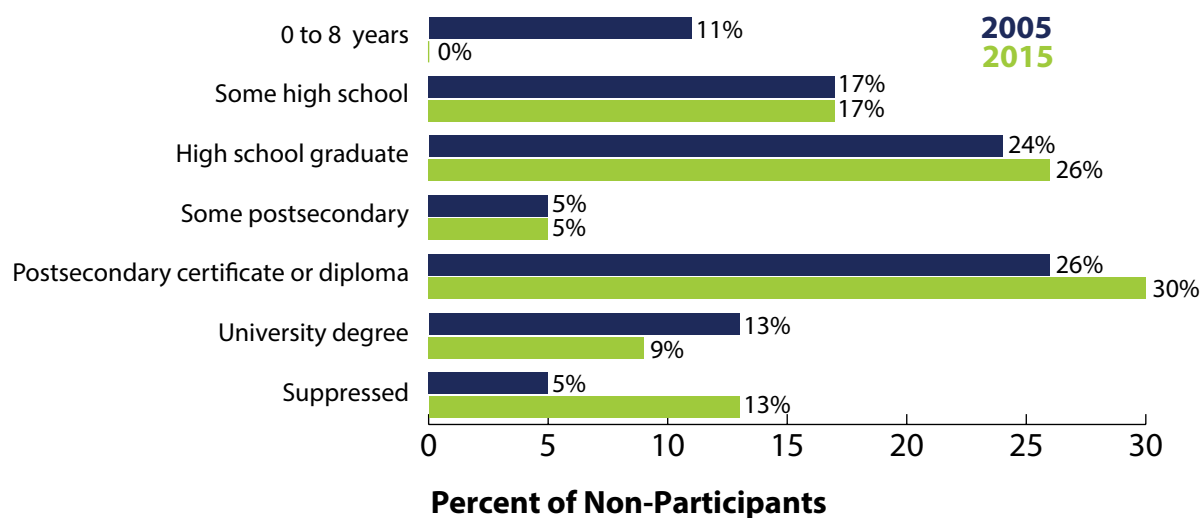
**Figure 18: Participation Rates by Highest Level of Education Attained, London Economic Region, 2005 and 2015**



Source 20: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation 0716\_02 Table 1.IVT

In terms of the educational profile, there is some suggestion that persons with higher education account for a higher proportion of non-participants in 2015 compared to 2005, however, the comparison should be made cautiously due to a higher rate of data suppression in 2015.

**Figure 19: Education Levels of Non-Participants, 2005 and 2015**



Source 21: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation 0716\_02 Table 1.IVT



### Comparing Education Levels of Unemployed Individuals and the General Population

Due to data suppression, education level data is limited for labour market non-participants and for unemployed individuals. For this reason, Ontario data is included for comparison. The table below summarizes data for the London Economic Region and Ontario. Based on the data available, compared to other groups, non-participants:

- are more likely to have less than high school education or to be high school graduates
- are less likely to have gone on to some type of post-secondary education or to have attained a post-secondary certificate or university degree

**Table 9: Population by Education Attained**

	London Economic Region			Ontario	
	Non-participants	Unemployed & participating	General population	Non-participants	Unemployed & participating
<b>Less than high school</b>	16.8%	Not available	8.7%	17.3%	8.2%
<b>High school</b>	26.3%	18.1%	20.4%	27.0%	23.3%
<b>Some post-secondary</b>	5.0%	Not available	20.4%	6.6%	6.2%
<b>Post secondary certificate</b>	30.3%	25.7%	42.3%	25.6%	33.0%
<b>University</b>	8.5%	14.3%	21.9%	23.6%	29.4%
<b>Data suppression</b>	13%	41.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Column Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source 22: author's calculations based on custom tabulation data

## Reasons for Non-Participation

### Research Questions

1. What are the reasons for non-participation?
2. Have reasons for not participating changed over time?

### Highlights

- The top reason for non-participation was: “did not want to work or not available to work” In 2015, 38,200 or 92.7% of people between the ages of 25 and 54 in the London Economic Region did not want to work or were not available to work. This is statistically higher than Ontario’s rate of 89.4%
- In 2015, 3,000 people age 25 to 54 wanted to work but did not look for work. The circumstance of not being in the labour force but wanting to work was worst between 2009 and 2013 with over 10% of non-participants in the London Economic Region wanting to work but not looking for work
- Women between the ages of 25 and 44 made up just over half of the 3,000 people who want to work but did not look for work
- Data identifying potential reasons for wanting to work but not looking for work is limited for the London Economic Region, however, data from Ontario and the Canadian Survey on Disability helps to inform potential reasons:
  - o School
  - o Illness
  - o Personal and family responsibilities
  - o “Other”, though details on what is included in this is not available
- Top reasons vary by age, gender and immigrant status
- Discouragement was given by 5% of Ontario non-participants who wanted to work as the reason for not looking for work
- Additionally, top barriers and limitations to employment identified by persons with disabilities relate to discouragement:
  - o Inadequate training or experience,
  - o Lack of availability of jobs locally
  - o Past attempts unsuccessful

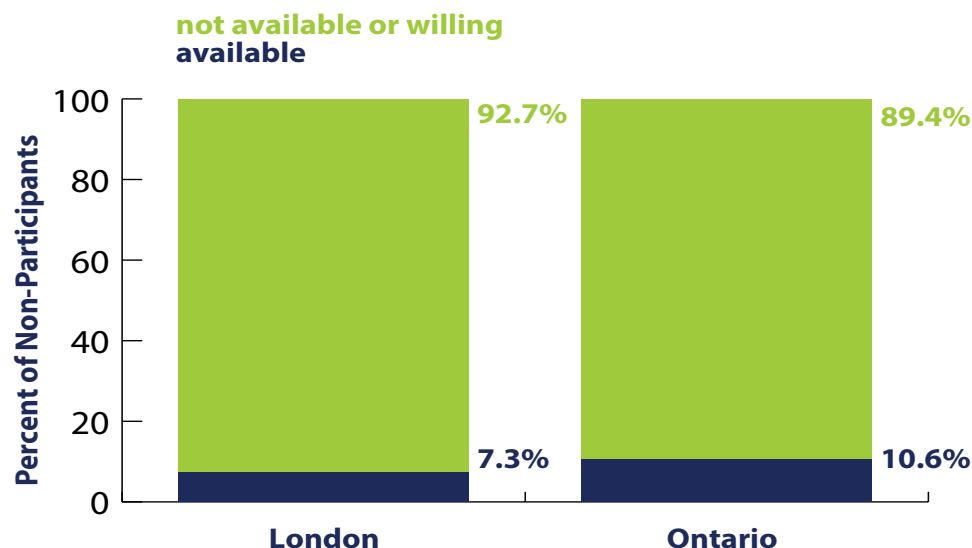
## Findings

### *Want Work versus Don't Want Work or Not Available*

In 2015, 38,200 or 92.7% of people between the ages of 25 and 54 in the London Economic Region did not want to work or were not available to work. This is statistically higher than Ontario's rate of 89.4%<sup>19</sup>.

The number of people between age 25 and 54 not participating in the labour force but wanting to work was highest in 2011 (5,500) in the London Economic Region. In 2015, there were 3,000 people who wanted to work but did not look for work. The number of non-participants who wanted to work increased after 2008 until 2011 while the number not wanting to work or not available shows fairly steady growth. The circumstance of not being in the labour force but wanting to work was worst between 2009 and 2013 with over 10% of non-participants wanting to work.

**Figure 20: Non-Participants by Availability to Work, 2015**



Source 23: Statistics Canada, Labour force survey, special tabulation 20616\_15.ivt

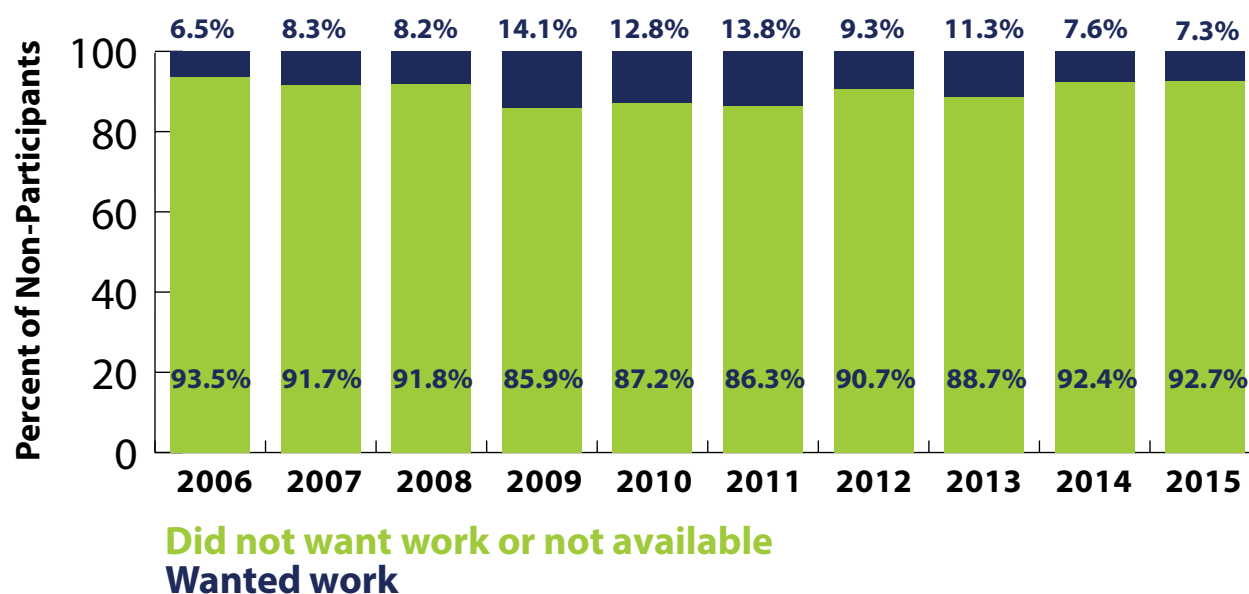
<sup>19</sup> The chi-square statistic is 6679398381.6315. The p-value is < .00001. The result is significant at  $p < .05$ . Calculated using online calculator: <http://www.socscistatistics.com/tests/chisquare2/Default2.aspx>

**Table 10: Number of 25 to 54 Year Olds Not in the Labour Force in the London Economic Region by Desire and Availability to Work**

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Did not want work or not available	31,800	29,700	30,200	31,800	34,100	34,500	33,000	35,200	35,200	38,200
Wanted work	2,200	2,700	2,700	5,200	5,000	5,500	3,400	4,500	2,900	41,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>34,000</b>	<b>32,400</b>	<b>32,900</b>	<b>37,000</b>	<b>39,100</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>36,400</b>	<b>39,700</b>	<b>38,100</b>	<b>41,200</b>

Source 24: Statistics Canada, Labour force survey, special tabulation 20616\_15.ivt

**Figure 21: Not in Labour Force by Availability to Work, London Economic Region**



Source 25: Statistics Canada, Labour force survey, special tabulation 20616\_15.ivt

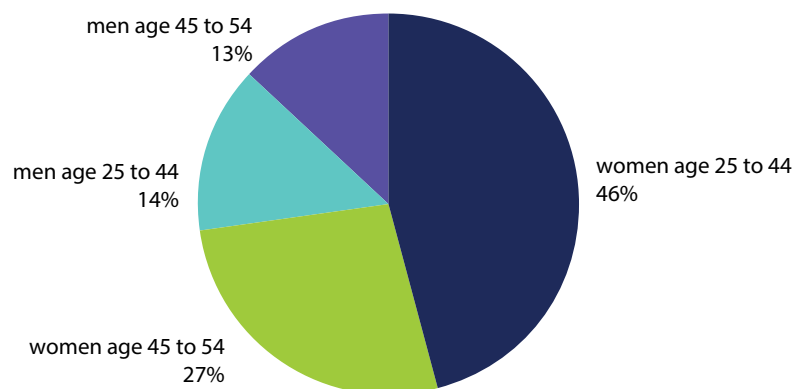
### **Not Available or Does Not Want Work**

In the London Economic Region, non-participants who are not willing or available to work are predominantly:

- Women (73%)
- Between the ages of 25 and 44 (60%)

Non-participants with landed immigrant status account for one quarter (7,800) of non-participants who were not available or did not want work.

**Figure 22: Non-Participants Not Willing or Not Available to Work, by Gender and Age, London Economic Region, 2015**



Source 26: Statistics Canada, Labour force survey, special tabulation S0616\_15.ivt

### **Want Work but Did Not Look for Work**

For those who want to work but are not looking for work, Statistics Canada reports on the following reasons for not looking for work:

- Illness
- Wanted work, reason - personal/family responsibilities
- Wanted work, reason - school
- Wanted work, reason - awaiting recall/reply
- Wanted work, reason - discouraged
- Wanted work, reason – other<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Examples of reasons coded as “other” are not available.

Due to figures below 1,500 (the reporting threshold for Statistics Canada), data for the London Economic Region is limited:

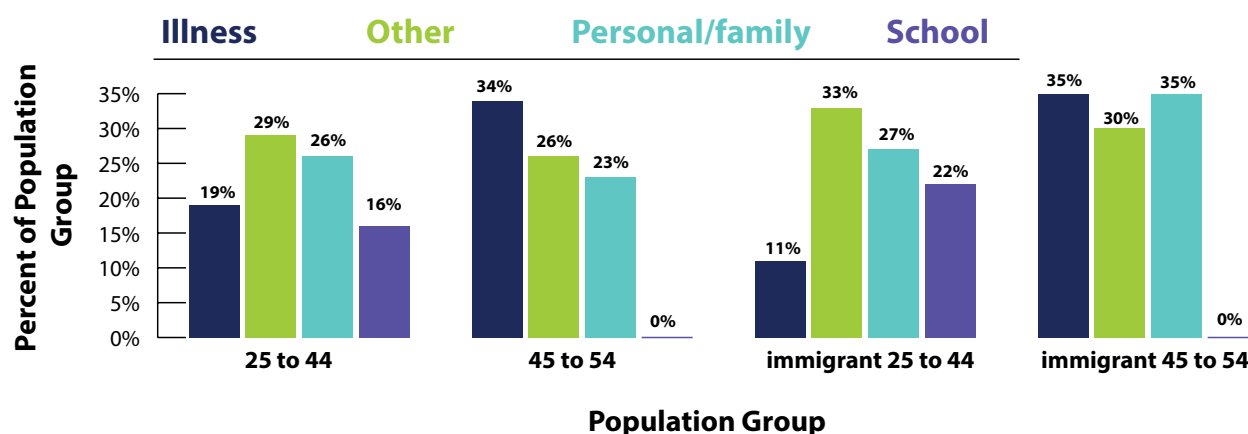
- 53% of the people of the 3,000 people who want to work but did not look for work were women between age 25 and 44
- 25 to 54 year old non-participants who wanted to work account for 34.5% of all non-participants age 15+ who wanted to work

The top reasons for not looking for work, among people age 15+ in the London Economic Region are: “school” (30%) and “other” (30%). Women were more likely to identify “school” and men were more likely to identify “other”.

More fulsome information is available using Ontario data. Across Ontario, among 25 to 54 year olds, top reasons for not looking for work vary somewhat according to age and immigrant status:

- Personal illness is a top reason for 45 to 54 year olds
- Other is the top reason for 25 to 44 year olds
- School ranks higher as a reason for 25 to 44 year old immigrants compared to others
- Personal and family responsibilities ranks higher as a reason for immigrants age 45 to 54 compared to others
- 45 to 54 year olds were most likely to say they were discouraged, with 8.2% giving this reason. Overall, 5% of people age 25 to 54 who want to work but did not look identify being discouraged as the reason for not looking

**Figure 23: 25 to 54 Year Old Non-Participants Who Want to Work by Top Reasons for Not Looking for Work, Ontario, 2015**



Source 27: Statistics Canada, Labour force survey, special tabulation S0616\_15.iwt

### *Possible Reasons, Canadian Survey on Disabilities*

Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability (2012) provides some insight into limitations and barriers to employment for adults with disabilities. Data is available for Ontario for people age 25 to 64. According to this data, the top barriers and limitations to work for 25 to 44 year olds are:

- Inadequate training or experience
- Lack of availability of jobs locally
- Family responsibilities
- Past attempts unsuccessful
- Other reasons

A detailed table showing the percent of people with disabilities identifying specific limitations by age breakdown is provided in the appendix.

## Summary

### **Participation Trends in the London Economic Region**

Across the Region and the London CMA, labour market participation rates of 25 to 54 year olds fell from 88% in 2005 to 83.9% in 2015, a larger drop compared to Ontario, Canada, and other southern Ontario CMAs. Trends differ for different population groups:

- Participation rates declined overall
- Participation rates declined more for women than for men
- The actual number of people participating declined for men and women age 25 to 44 but increased for men and women age 45 to 54
- Participation rates declined for people with some post secondary education or less but remained the same for people with a post secondary certificate or diploma or university degree
- Provincially, the participation rate of landed immigrants declined more than the participation rate of Canadian born 25 to 54 year olds
- Provincially, the actual number of immigrants participating in the labour force increased while the number of Canadian born participants decreased

### **Factors Contributing to Participation Trends**

Local economic and population factors contribute to participation trends. The rapid increase in the unemployment rate and the loss of 20,600 jobs, most of which are full-time drive some of the declining participation. Declining population contributes to the decline in participation of 25 to 44 year olds in the London Economic Region and to the decline in participation among Canadian born individuals.



While the size of the 45 to 54 year old labour force in the London Economic Region and the immigrant labour force across Ontario increased, the population of these groups increased more resulting in declining participation rates.

### Participation Across the Region

Across the Region, Elgin County has the lowest participation rate of 25 to 64 year olds at just below 78% in 2011, the most recent data available. Participation in Middlesex County is slightly higher at almost 80% and in Oxford County, participation is almost at 82%. These figures may be higher than the current reality based on the Region's continued downward trend in participation since 2011. Women, persons with disabilities and Indigenous people have lower participation rates. Communities with the highest rates of non-participation include:

- Chippewas of the Thames First Nation 42 and Munsee-Delaware Nation 1
- Tillsonburg and Woodstock in Oxford County
- Aylmer, Bayham, St. Thomas and West Elgin in Elgin County
- Adelaide Metcalfe, Southwest Middlesex, and London in Middlesex County

### Non-Participants in the London Economic Region

Of the 42,200 non-participants age 25 to 54 in the LER:

- 30,200 of non-participants age 25 to 54 were women, mostly between the ages of 25 and 44
- 8,400 of non-participants are landed immigrants
- Roughly 2,500 Indigenous people age 15+ were not participating in 2011
- Based on estimates based on Ontario data, a significant number are likely to have disability
- 18,500 have some post-secondary education and one-third have a post-secondary certificate or diploma

Women are far more likely to be non-participants compared to men in general. This is true for the general population, landed immigrants, Indigenous people and persons with disabilities. Non-participants are more likely to have attained a lower level of education.

*Women are far more likely to be non-participants compared to men in general. This is true for the general population, landed immigrants, Indigenous people and persons with disabilities.*

## Reasons for Not Participating

Not wanting to work or not being available to work has historically been the top reason for not participating in the London Economic Region. In 2015, 38,200 people representing 92.7% of non-participants did not want to work or were not available. Details on reasons for this are not available. This is statistically higher than Ontario.

Data on reasons for not looking for work is limited for the 3,000 people in the London Economic Region who said they wanted to work but did not look for work. Using data from the London Economic Region, Ontario and the Canadian Survey on Disability, possible reasons for non-participation include:

- School
- Illness
- Personal and family responsibilities
- “Other”, though details on what is included in this is not available
- Additionally, persons with disabilities identified as top barriers things that relate to discouragement:
  - o Inadequate training or experience,
  - o Lack of availability of jobs locally
  - o Past attempts unsuccessful
- Discouragement was given by 5% of Ontario non-participants as the reason for not looking for work. The literature suggests that discouragement may be more of a factor for long term unemployed, lower skilled workers, and persons with disabilities

Additionally, from the literature, reasons may include:

- Being unemployed for a long period of time
- Employer practices and beliefs about long term unemployed and persons with disabilities may contribute to discouragement
- Perception/experience that the cost of working is too high – unable to get subsidized child care, loss or reduction of social assistance benefits
- The opportunity to retire early or receive disability benefits may be preferable to working for personal reasons, particularly for older workers and women who lost work due to job cuts in female-dominated sectors with financial ability to choose not to participate, at a time when personal challenges like caregiving responsibilities and health concerns increase
- For married immigrant women, difficulty navigating the labour market, being with a spouse who is not working, and/or having to care for young children may prevent them from participating
- Individual factors such as lack of motivation and self-esteem
- Having a disability, mental illness or poor mental health
- Not knowing where to look
- Transportation challenges

## **Phase II: Connecting with Non-Participants**

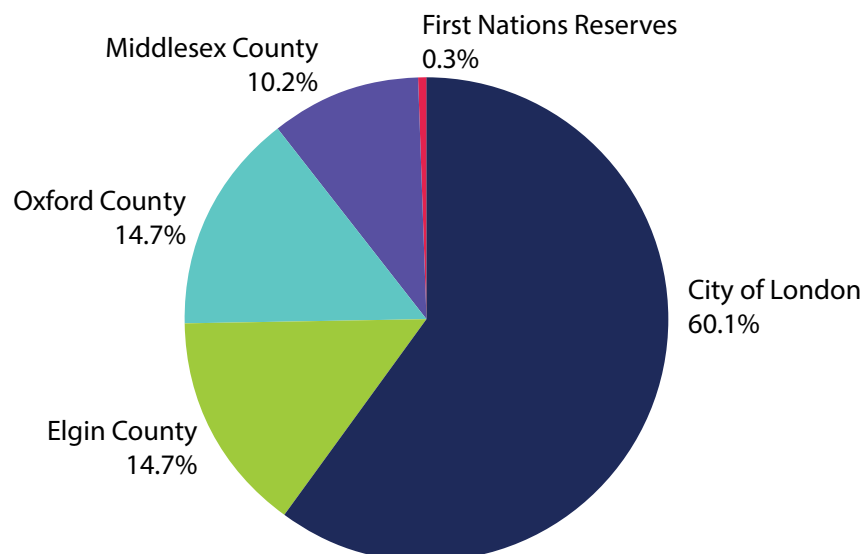
## Phase II: *Connecting with Non-Participants*

An integral part of this project is connecting with local labour market non-participants from Elgin, London, Middlesex and Oxford in order to better understand the various reasons for non-participation, and to begin to get a sense of what people need to support engagement/re-engagement. This section of the report provides a preliminary review of the primary data gathered in phase II of this study. A more in-depth analysis will be provided as part of the phase III report which will be released in early 2017.

### Target Population and Sampling

Originally, this study aimed to reach 200 individuals between the ages of 25 and 54 with current or recent non-participation experience. This figure was arrived at by first assuming a geographically stratified random sample at a 90% confidence level and a 10% confidence interval. Using a base figure of 68 individuals per County, total sample distribution was adjusted to reflect the distribution of non-participants across the three Counties, First Nations, and the City of London.

**Figure 24: Distribution of 25 to 64 Year Old Non-Participants, 2011**



Source 28: Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey, Table 99-012-X2011055

## Engagement Strategies

Engagement of individuals follows a selective sampling method approach that is purposive and seeks diversity in opinion and experience, using convenience sampling methods. Efforts were made to ensure age and gender representation, as well as representation from the populations of particular interest: Indigenous people on and off-reserve; persons with disability; and immigrants.

- An on-line survey, housed on <http://worktrends.ca/> was distributed through multiple social media channels as well as being promoted through the distribution of business cards. The survey was available effective early July 2016. Personal invitations to complete the survey were made by the project team as well as community partners. Individuals who were interviewed were provided with a business card with the survey link and asked to pass the card on to a friend or family member.
- Focus groups and on-site interviews were conducted throughout the Region beginning in August 2016. Community partners were approached to support the recruitment of individuals for these focus groups and interviews, or to provide opportunities for engagement.
- Recruitment of individuals and promotion of the survey and engagement activities was supported by many individuals and various networks, organizations, and community agencies, including the Local Employment Planning Council; Middlesex, Elgin and Oxford County libraries; Ontario Works offices; London Middlesex Housing Corporation; London's Poverty Research Centre; the Employment Sector Council of London and Middlesex; the Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board; the Centre for Research in Health Equity and Social Inclusion; Literacy Link South Central; Workforce Tables; Community Health Centres; Employment Services agencies; various Neighbourhood Resource Centres; Indigenous communities, and the Community Developers Network.

## Learnings

1. This population is hidden and difficult to reach and the topic of whether a person is actively looking for work requires some time of 'trust' building before the topic can be broached.
2. On-line survey – the survey is a valuable complement to the focus groups and interviews as it provided complementary information to the focus groups and interviews. However, the online survey on its own would not have captured the depth of understand or reach that was made possible through focus groups and interviews. Additionally,
  - o The filter question: "Are you actively looking for work" may have resulted in the filtering out of people who could have contributed their personal experience with any difficulties they have participating in the labour force.
  - o Community partners suggested that the survey questionnaire may have been difficult for individuals with low literacy to complete.
3. Significant effort was made to recruit and engage individuals for focus groups and interviews.
  - o The support of the LEPC and workforce development committees and networks, were critical to recruiting individuals to participate. Presentations were made throughout the Region to introduce the study and the reason for the study to organizational decision-makers and front line staff to obtain their support in promoting the study, providing advice on incentives and approaches, and identifying and creating face-to-face opportunities.
  - o Communications materials were created to help inform community partners and staff. These include a one-page flyer providing an overview of the study, frequently asked questions, and speaking points that could be used by staff extending personal invitations to clients to participate in the study.
  - o Where possible, focus group participants and interviewees were invited to also complete the survey questionnaire – this was sometimes done as a guided interview and sometimes done independently, depending on circumstance.
  - o Many of the focus groups took advantage of naturally occurring groups like coffee groups and support groups. While this was convenient, it also presented some challenges such as not necessarily fitting the target population however we found that the information provided was still valuable, consistent and enhanced what others' experience.

## Methods and Tools

**Table 11: Engagement Method and Tools**

Engagement Method	Description of Information Gathering Tool
Survey	<p>The survey included three main sections.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. About You: 9 closed ended questions</li> <li>2. Work and labour force participation - related questions – 4 closed ended questions</li> </ol> <p>Statistics Canada's questionnaires including the Labour Force Survey, Canadian Community Health Survey, and Canadian Survey on Disability were referenced to guide the development of the closed-ended questions and answer categories. The final survey questionnaire includes the recommendations provided by Local Employment Planning Council.</p> <p>Sections 1 and 2 were completed by 125 respondents including the majority of focus group participants and interviewees.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Labour force participation needs and solutions questions – 6 open ended questions: 4 of these adopted the methodology of posing a question in the form of a statement that requires the respondent to complete the statement. This is intended to help focus the responses provided.</li> </ol>
Survey Semi-structured interview and focus group guides	<p>Section 3 of the survey formed the basis for semi-structured interviews conducted with individuals and in focus group format. Early administration of the original survey tool identified the complexity of the needs and solutions, and highlighted the need for flexibility in eliciting responses that individuals identified as "most significant" or "most important" to them.</p>



## Sample Size

This report includes the responses and experiences of 163 people between the age of 25 and 54 with current or recent non-participation experience:

- 45 online survey respondents
- 77 interviewees – 51 interviewees between the ages of 25 and 54 also completed the full survey questionnaire
- 41 focus group participants, 5 of whom were above age 54

## Sample Description

### Area of Residence and Demographics

**Table 12: Voices of Experience Sample Description**

Attribute	# Represented and Percent of Total
Respondents by Geography	
Elgin	43 – 26.4%
Middlesex, excluding London	12 – 7.4%
First Nations	9 – 5.5%
London	83 – 50.9%
Oxford	16 – 9.8%
Unknown area	1 – 0.6%
Attributes (# and % of 163 people. Figures do not tally to 163 due to missing data )	
25 to 44	82 – 50.3%
45 to 54	40 – 24.5%
Female	97 – 59.5%
Male	60 – 36.8%
Immigrant*	34 – 20.9%
Disability*	47 – 37.6%
Indigenous	45 – 27.6%
Less than post-secondary education attained	70 – 56.0%

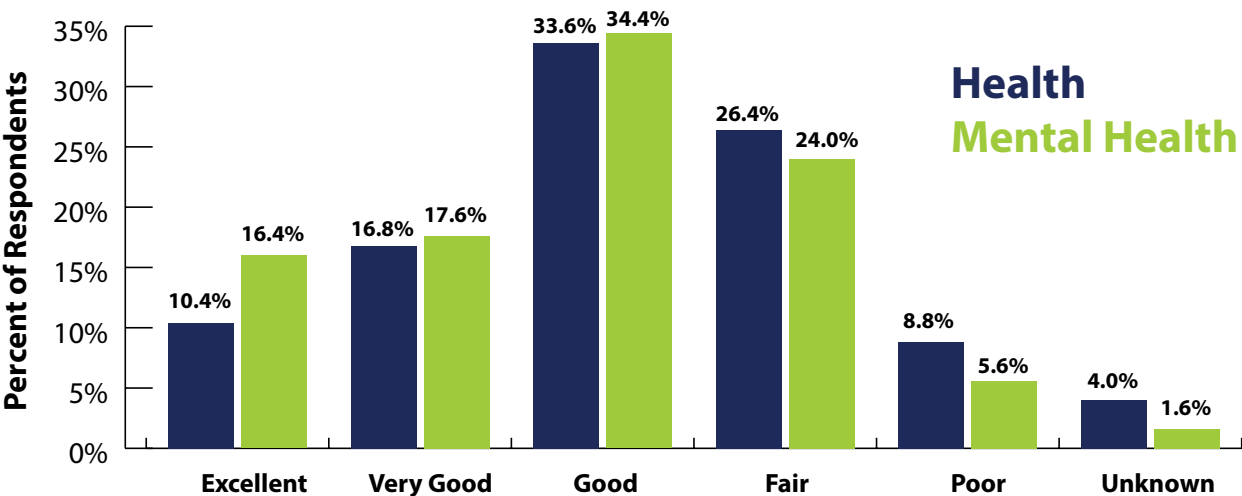
Health, Mental Health and Disability

The literature identified a relationship between health, mental health, disability and participation – lower participation is associated with poorer health, poorer mental health and disability. The health and mental health questions asked by Statistics Canada in the Canadian Community Health Survey were included in the survey of non-participants.

Overall, the majority of respondents identified their health and their mental health as “good”, “very good” or “excellent”.

The survey included the question: “Do you have a disability?”. A total of 37.6% self-reported as having a disability.

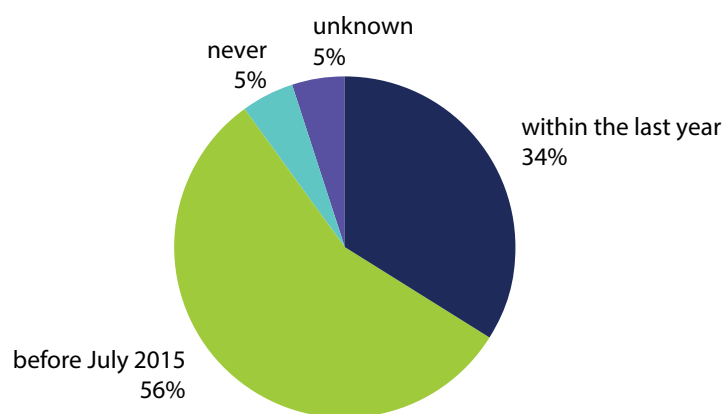
Figure 25: Self-Reported Health and Mental Health Status (n=125)



## Long Term Unemployed

The literature identified that long term unemployment is associated with non-participation. The survey questionnaire asked respondents when they had last worked. Just over half had long term unemployment and a small percentage had never been employed.

**Figure 26: When Last Worked**



*"Sometimes my PTSD acts up real bad",*

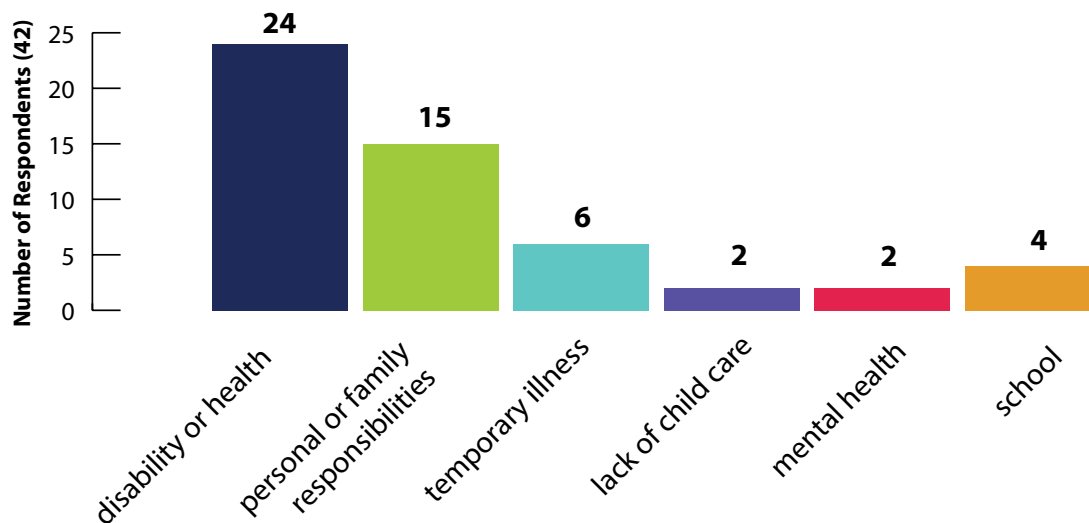
## Ability to Start Work

Respondents were asked "Could you have started a job last week if a job for you was available?" Multiple responses were permitted. This question is similar to one of the questions asked by Statistics Canada as part of the Labour Force Survey. Just over half, 56.8%, said "yes", they could have started work. A few people added caveats like:

- "Sometimes my PTSD acts up real bad", and
- "But I have mobility issues that have become a barrier for me"

Disability or poor health is the main reason for not being able to start work followed by personal or family responsibilities.

**Figure 27: Reasons Unable to Start Work if Job Available**



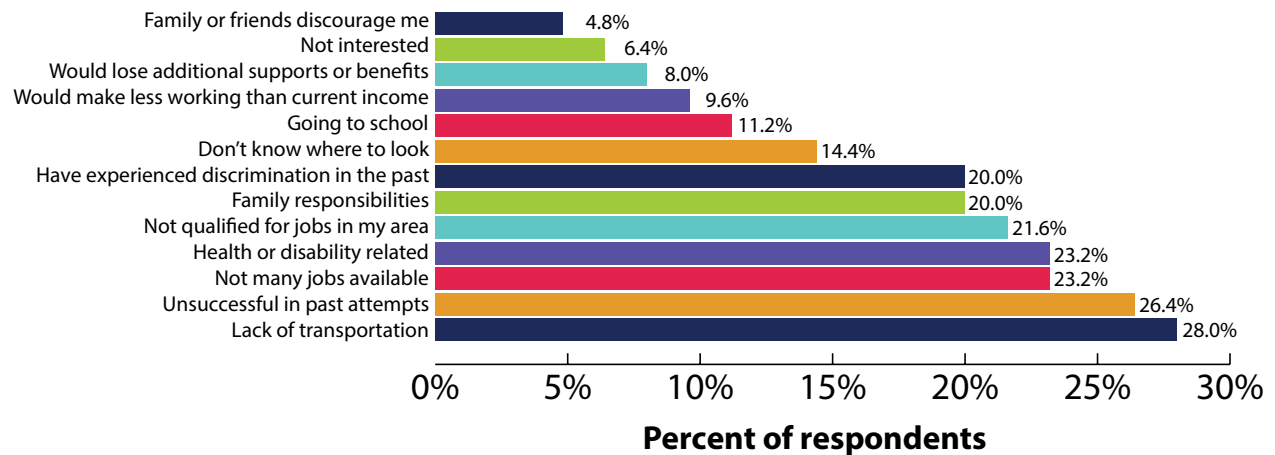
Some people provided additional information about specific health barriers affecting their participation:

- Problems with mobility
- Back problems
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Bi-polar
- Anxiety
- Schizophrenia

### **Reasons for Not Looking for Work**

The survey questionnaire asked “What are the main reasons you did not look for work?”. Multiple responses were permitted. 26 people or 20.8% said they were looking for work. Lack of past success and lack of transportation are the top reasons for not looking for work. Lack of jobs, health or disability, lack of qualifications, family responsibilities and experience of discrimination are also among the top reasons. Some individuals who identified family responsibilities specified child care as the reason for not looking for work.

**Figure 28: Reasons for Not Looking for Work**



Other reasons given by a small number of respondents include:

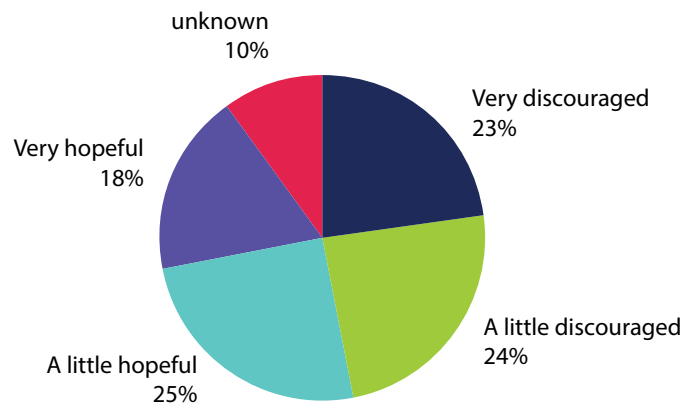
- Lack of accommodation
- Mental health and addictions
- Criminal record
- School

### How Feel About Looking for Work

Data from Ontario suggests that a small proportion of non-participants have left the labour market due to being discouraged. Some literature suggests that discouragement could be under-reported. The survey questionnaire asked: "How would you describe how you feel about looking for work?". Responses were provided by 84 individuals.

Almost half of respondents said they feel either "a little" or "very discouraged" with respect to looking for work.

**Figure 29: How Do You Feel About Looking for Work**



## Labour Force Participation: Challenges and Needs: Preliminary Themes

People were asked to share things that make it hard to look for work, to take work and to keep work. They were asked what would help them. They were asked to describe what is getting in the way of them working or looking for work.

Preliminary theming of the stories provided in the focus groups and interviews was completed in October 2016 through a process of data review by the four project team members who conducted the interviews and facilitated the focus group. Each member was asked to provide their impression of the themes that they were hearing and to identify “what stood out” and “key insights”. These initial impressions were scanned in comparison to the documented responses and discussion notes to arrive at preliminary themes. Many of the stories shared illustrate that reasons for non-participation are complex and often involve a combination of internal and external factors. A sampling of stories, situations and quotes are presented to illustrate the things that people shared.

### Weighing the Options: Work isn’t Worth It

- Women 25 to 44 talked about choosing to stay home with their young children: The stress of having to juggle work, children and child care, in a job market that does not provide regular or full-time work isn’t worth it.
- For people with lower income, the potential income earned from working is weighed against costs like reduced housing subsidy and decrease in child tax benefit, and the additional cost of child care and transportation, and the associated stress of not being much better off financially.

- “I can’t find full time or work with steady hours in my field. While it was ok to do contract and supply work before having children, it is too difficult now because how would I arrange child care at the last minute? I can afford to stay home and I prefer to while my kids are young.”
- One woman’s story: I want to go back to work when my kids are in school. I have been out of work so long, I am not sure if I am up to speed on the changes that have happened. I would like to have refresher training and that would help build my confidence. I would have to have a job that I can walk to or take transit to because I don’t drive. Right now, I want to stay at home. It isn’t worth it for me to work because my stress would go up but my income would not. In my line of work, a lot of work is part time, with unsteady hours and shift work. It would be really hard to make care and transportation arrangements for my children. My child tax credit would go down and my housing rent would go up. I would have less time with my kids. It’s not financially worth it to work.

### Lack of Resources

Difficulty accessing resources like transportation, computers and phones make it hard to look for work and to take work:

- “I had no more minutes left on my prepaid phone so I missed a call for an interview”
- “I struggle with online applications. Trying to email resumes is hard. Computer access (Atlohsa, Library, OW) is far away from where I live.”
- “no transportation...I can’t apply for jobs that are too far away”
- “I can’t afford proper equipment like work boots”
- “Transportation is a big barrier. I had to pass up on a job because the buses couldn’t get me there early enough. I have a worker at WOTCH and he is very supportive and gives good advice.”
- “We aren’t given enough to live on while looking for work, so it actually keeps us from opportunities.”
- “I have three kids and daycare is not always available. It’s not cheap either.”

*“I can’t find full time or work with steady hours in my field. While it was ok to do contract and supply work before having children, it is too difficult now because how would I arrange child care at the last minute? I can afford to stay home and I prefer to while my kids are young.”*



## Discrimination and Racism

Immigrants, Indigenous people, and persons with disabilities identified experiences where they felt discriminated against and where discrimination prevented them from getting work or continuing to work.

- “There’s a lot of judgement. You are discriminated against because of your race. It makes you not want to go back out.”
- “I’ve done everything I have been asked to do to get job-ready in Canada. Everything. Now you have to talk to employers, they need to do their part to accept us, give us a change.”
- “I have a severe disability and have lost jobs in the past because I am considered a safety risk. I have felt discriminated against and judged by employers and coworkers. I wish more employers had more understanding”
- Coworkers would say things about me being Native like ‘you people are always getting drunk’. My one co-worker thought she could hit me and throw things at me.”
- “Discrimination is one of the biggest things. When I go in to give a resume I get racist comments.”
- “My last employer won’t let me come back because they won’t accommodate.”

*“I had no more minutes left on my prepaid phone so I missed a call for an interview”*

**Reflections from Indigenous interviews:** Many respondents shared stories of times they have been discriminated against because of the Indigenous identity when applying for jobs or while working. Some also listed it as the main reason they had left past jobs. As individuals shared their stories, the weight of this specific barrier felt heavier than some of the other challenges they faced. Individuals were emotional when sharing these stories, some crying. While a few offered solutions like Indigenous Cultural Competency training for employers, there was a strong sense of hopelessness about how to resolve the racism they consistently face in the workplace.

**Reflection from immigrant/newcomer interviews:** Many respondents expressed a strong desire to work, to do what it takes to be prepared for Canadian employment and to contribute to society. However, many expressed tremendous discouragement because their efforts to prepare and find work have not resulted in employment. As one participants stated, “after five years and no success, you can’t

bear more rejection so you stop looking.” Participants also shared their frustration hearing that there are jobs that are not being filled as they believe they are ready to fill these jobs but feel as though they do not have access to them. Having to apply on line is not equivalent to access as no one had been successful through this application approach. Respondents discussed the challenge of building the social network in Canada which they know is an important way of finding work. Many expressed great desire to work and longed for the chance to do so, however, they shared their loss of ‘faith’ in the Canadian system after countless of unsuccessful attempts to try to find work. As one participant stated, “Canada is where we come to bury our degrees.”

### Experience and Education Expectations of Employers, and Long Term Unemployment

Not having experience, being out of the workforce for long periods of time, and not having the education needed were situations that many talked about. Refugees and immigrants coming from countries with great unrest talk about the impossibility of getting the paperwork they need to prove their education and credentials.

- “Employers want you to have experience but where do we get that experience? I am volunteering to try and get some.”
- “My education is my biggest problem. I don’t have the education and training I need for the jobs that are available.”
- “I have been out of work so long, it would help to have refresher training to build my confidence and get up to speed.”
- “How do I account for long gaps in my resume?”
- “I am disabled. There are few jobs I am able to do and the rest, I lack the qualifications or experience”
- “I quit my full-time job to be a stay at home mom almost four years ago. I have done before and after school care ever since. I want to go to school to be a holistic nutritionist but am afraid to spend the money that my family needs. What if I end up failing at this?”
- One man’s story: The focus on experience is quite a problem. You have to be a candidate that’s already perfectly suited for the position otherwise you be hired – and considering the amount of competition they afford to look for that candidate. There’s not much a focus on training employees in-house for the job they want to do.

*Coworkers would say things about me being Native like ‘you people are always getting drunk’. My one co-worker thought she could hit me and throw things at me.”*

- Closely tied to lack of experience is the challenge of connecting with employers to even be considered for employment. People talked about difficulties making connections and getting in the door:
- “Getting noticed...You apply and you don’t get calls”
- “It would help to be able to talk to an employer before applying because not everything is in the job description”
- “Back home I had a lot of connections. Here I have nothing. How do I get connected? I thought it wasn’t like this in Canada”

### **Mental Health, Health, Disability and Complicated Life Situations**

From the stories that people shared it seems that more people experience health, mental health or disability concerns than is suggested by the survey responses. There is also some evidence that a number experience complicated life situations that may contribute to non-participation in the labour force.

- “Fatigue. I have dementia. I feel pain, attacked, have a hard time focusing.”
- “I have social anxiety. At first my employer accommodated me by having me work in the back. I loved it. Then we got a new manager that said I had to do everything. I couldn’t handle the pressure so I got fired. Now I can’t find anyone willing to accommodate me.”
- “My last employer won’t let me come back because they won’t accommodate.”
- “I’m dealing with court and doctors and I’m on sick leave due to depression and stress”
- One man’s story: There’s a general timidity, a fear & awkwardness that comes with being blind & deaf and searching for a job. There is a limited number of jobs that might accommodate your handicap, and it’s clear that most employers are not interested, even those that are face a long process of training & re-tooling the work environment.

*“I quit my full-time job to be a stay at home mom almost four years ago. I have done before and after school care ever since. I want to go to school to be a holistic nutritionist but am afraid to spend the money that my family needs. What if I end up failing at this?”*

### **Discouragement**

As noted earlier in this report, just over half of respondents identified feeling “a little” or “very discouraged” about looking for work. The following quotes illustrate some of the situations and experiences that

led to discouragement:

- “I’ve done everything I was told to do, I had my resume done professionally by Canadian standards, I have volunteered, I’ve made connections. Still I send resumes and I don’t even get a response back. Nothing! After 5 years, I don’t want to try anymore.”
- “I hear stories about how hard it is to find work, I’m with my kids right now, I feel like my skills are just fading away, no one is going to want to hire me after my kids have grown and I try to find work”
- One woman’s story: Jane applied to 2,500 jobs in the past two years and has only received two interviews, neither of which led to a job offer. She has four years of post-secondary education, a disability that can be easily accommodated for the type of work she is looking for, and accesses many local services and supports in London. Jane says: “You can only not get a job for so long. You apply and you don’t get calls.”

***“My last employer won’t let me come back because they won’t accommodate.”***

## Respect

This theme broadly includes the need many respondents identified to having strong relationships in the workplace. Some identified this as wanting to have a place to work where they felt respected by their coworkers. Some identified this as wanting to be acknowledged for good work from supervisors. Others spoke more broadly to just wanting to be treated like a valued human no matter how entry level the work or task.

Respondents in some cases would rather be unemployed than work someplace they weren’t respected. Some shared stories of leaving jobs because of poor management, bad relationships with coworkers or instances where they felt they were mistreated or disrespected.

“I hate feeling taken advantage of.”

***“I’ve done everything I was told to do, I had my resume done professionally by Canadian standards, I have volunteered, I’ve made connections. Still I send resumes and I don’t even get a response back. Nothing! After 5 years, I don’t want to try anymore.”***

## Summary

The experiences of 163 individuals are shared through a combination of 125 survey questionnaires, 5 focus groups, and 77 individual interviews.

Based on 125 survey questionnaires:

- There is a broad representation of people from across the Region, by gender, age group, education and immigrant status. Just over one quarter of individuals are Indigenous and just over one-third report having a disability. About three quarters of people report their health and mental health to be “excellent”, “very good” or good.
- Almost two thirds could be classified as “long term unemployed” or “never employed”. Just over half say they could take work if it were available and one fifth said they were looking for work. Almost half said they feel a level of discouragement with regards to looking for work.
- Top reasons for not being able to take a job if it were offered include: disability or health issues and personal or family responsibilities
- Top reasons for not looking for work include: lack of transportation, lack of past success in job searching, lack of jobs in the area, health or disability problems, not being qualified for jobs that are available, family responsibilities, and experiencing discrimination in the past.

*“You can only not get a job for so long. You apply and you don’t get calls.”*

Preliminary themes emerging from the narratives include references to many of the factors for non-participation that are identified in the literature and the available administrative data. The narratives provide additional context that illustrate that a combination of factors contribute to non-participation:

- “Working is not worth it”: parents of young children and lower income individuals weigh the cost of child care, transportation, and loss of benefits and subsidy against income received and the additional stress of juggling work and home.
- “Lack of resources”: lack of access to transportation, computers, and affordable child care are barriers to participation.

- “Discrimination, racism and lack of respect”: people reported not being to get employment because of a disability, being Indigenous or being an immigrant. Across the board, people talked about lack of respect and appreciation as being significant factors that make it difficult to work.
- “Lack of experience, education, credentials, or long term unemployment”: employers are said to be unwilling to provide people with opportunity or training. People wonder how they are supposed to get experience; they wonder about on-the-job training; and they wonder how to deal with gaps in their resume. For immigrants, obtaining the paperwork needed to prove credentials may not be possible.
- “Lack of connections”: people find it difficult and frustrating not to be able to connect with employers, with having to apply on-line, and with not hearing back from employers.
- “Mental health, health, disability and complicated life situations”: for many, dealing with personal issues and circumstances can make looking for work and working challenging. Having understanding employers who are willing to make accommodations would help with participation.
- “Discouragement”: sending out resumes, doing “all the right things”, and not getting work is discouraging and frustrating.



## **Phase III: Co-Designing Recommendations and Strategies**



## Phase III: Co-Designing Recommendations and Strategies

Phase III of this study builds on what was learned from individuals, and involved the engagement of employment service providers and employers. This phase included the following activities:

- Further analysis of the things that stop people from working or looking for work, and of the things that would help
- Focus group and an interview with 6 diverse employers held November 25, 2016
- Focus group with 8 employment service providers held December 9, 2016
- Co-Design Session on Actionable Strategies including 2 employers, 9 potential workers, and 5 employment & literacy service providers held February 16, 2017.

The focus groups with employers and employment service providers included sharing the findings of Phases I and II of the study. These key informants were asked for their perspectives and reactions to what was presented, as well as to provide their ideas and thoughts with regards to the participation challenges and needs that people experience and what would help address these.

The findings of the additional analysis and focus group sessions were collated and themed for each of the two main categories of interest: Looking for Work, and Taking and Keeping Work. The following table lists the issue themes in each category. Some issue areas appear in both lists.





**Table 13 : Issues Affecting Labour Market Participation**

Looking for Work	Taking and Keeping Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Application Process</li><li>• Lack of jobs, job quality – “not worth it”</li><li>• Bias and prejudice</li><li>• Education and qualifications</li><li>• Experience and work history/Need experience to get work and need work to get experience</li><li>• Transportation challenges</li><li>• Lack of Connections</li><li>• Family responsibility</li><li>• Personal challenges like confidence, esteem, direction - “personal paralysis”</li><li>• Work limiting conditions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work environment and culture</li><li>• Job conditions – “not worth it”</li><li>• Transportation</li><li>• Family responsibility and child care</li><li>• Workplace accommodations and work limiting conditions</li><li>• Personal challenges</li></ul>

Working documents were created for selected issue areas for use in the co-design sessions. Each working document included:

- Issue area title
- List and description of the identified challenges and “what would help” organized by key informant group (individuals, employers, service providers)
- A blank column for Recommendations.

## Co-Design Session

Following these sessions, all key informant data were collated and working documents for selected issue areas were created for use at Co-Design session that focused on developing actionable strategies. This two-hour session included: 9 individuals providing the perspectives of non-participants, 2 employers, and 5 employment & literacy service providers.

The purpose of the co-design session was to bring key stakeholders together to collaboratively:

- Identify what the most important challenges are within each issue area
- Identify what would be most helpful
- To make recommendations for actionable strategies

Session participants were asked to provide feedback for the pre-assigned topics below.

**Table 14 : Issues Affecting Labour Market Participation**

Table 1	Table 2	Table 3
Application process	Lack of jobs/perception that is not worth it	Bias and prejudice
Work limiting conditions	Work environment/culture	Lack of connections
Experience and work history	Education and qualifications	Family responsibility

Documented recommendations were then reviewed and general themes were identified with related recommendations summarized to describe the themes.

*“I look and look and look – I’m tired of being rejected”.*



# Looking for Work

## Looking for Work Application Process

Challenges	What would help from surveys, interviews and focus groups	Co-design session recommendations
<p><b>Challenges with Technology</b></p> <p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not having computer</li> <li>Difficulty with online job postings and job applications</li> </ul> <p>Employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Although they accept drop-in applications, they don't get many</li> </ul> <p>Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technology is a barrier for certain clients</li> </ul> <p><b>Job Postings</b></p> <p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job postings not clear</li> <li>Job boards not updated</li> </ul> <p>Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service providers say that employers don't always know what they need or how to articulate it</li> </ul> <p><b>Discouraging not to hear back:</b></p> <p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demoralizing to not hear back from employers</li> <li>Employers say it can be difficult to reply to all applications, particularly for small companies and entry level jobs</li> <li>Employers would like ideas on how to make application process better</li> </ul>	<p><b>Job Postings and Job Fairs</b></p> <p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advertising of jobs in multiple media</li> <li>Data base of local job postings; job boards at physical locations; job postings that accurately reflect job description, qualifications needed</li> <li>Job fairs and advertising of job fairs</li> </ul> <p>Employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use multiple job posting outlets and different formats</li> </ul> <p>Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional day job fair</li> </ul> <p><b>Technology</b></p> <p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to computer</li> </ul> <p>Encouragement and Support</p> <p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>hearing back from employers once you apply</li> <li>"Businesses who are hiring must share their story"</li> </ul> <p>Employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Could make the application process friendlier for applicants – for example, have a recruiter on-site available to talk to applicants on scheduled dates</li> <li>Employers believe that they do a good job with application process, identifying requirements, screening</li> </ul>	<p><b>Job Postings and Job Fairs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More information about what's available</li> <li>A website, for agencies like this, London employment access –</li> <li>Job fairs can be overwhelming and not always effective</li> <li>Job postings are too long</li> </ul> <p><b>Technology</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Way of agency helping you to give you a computer</li> <li>One single website that links to job search engines and networking like Indeed, LinkedIn</li> </ul> <p><b>Connecting with Employment Agencies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make connections with Employment Agencies</li> <li>Refer job seekers to employment service providers</li> </ul> <p><b>Job Search Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge of what employers are looking for with interview questions: under qualified, over qualified, different qualified</li> <li>Be prepared to ask for help and step out of comfort zone to try new things – e.g. networking volunteering</li> <li>Job-seekers need to be taught how to talk to employers, articulate their skills, qualifications, interview, network, etc.</li> <li>How to address long gaps in employment</li> <li>Identifying jobs that people are qualified and ready to do</li> <li>Need to figure out how to deal with overqualified/ under qualified/differently qualified</li> <li>How to walk in and drop off a resume with an employer</li> </ul>

Challenges	What would help from surveys, interviews and focus groups	Co-design session recommendations
<p>Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How are people applying? – how many are auto-applying through job boards like Indeed – these generate many applications which is a problem for employers and are generic applications – not that effective.</li> <li>How improve work application process with employers</li> </ul> <p><b>Accommodation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need to look at how First Nations' people apply</li> </ul> <p><b>Job Search Support</b></p> <p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not knowing about jobs</li> <li>Not knowing where to look or how to start</li> </ul> <p>Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"a lot of times focus is on the act of writing resumes" – not the right focus</li> <li>Online resources return overwhelming results and are hard to navigate. There are better ways to identify what you are qualified to do.</li> <li>Many employment agency clients have no idea how to start looking for work or applying</li> <li>Job seekers not attached to employment service providers who could help them</li> <li>People need help learning about available jobs, growing their skills, searching effectively for open jobs and understanding what those jobs require (understanding job postings)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Job Search Support</b></p> <p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help knowing where to look for jobs and navigating websites, help with writing resume and cover letters, online applications and interviews</li> </ul> <p>Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs to be more wraparound – conversations around what are the gaps for you, what are experience and qualifications gaps</li> <li>People need their resume analyzed for why it is not working and how to effectively apply for jobs</li> <li>Have a recruiter on-site for one day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help making connections for those who aren't connected and/or intimidated/have additional challenges like mental illness</li> <li>Dealing with issues and concerns like pay, job security, getting to work and transportation, other barriers</li> <li>Need to be your own advocate</li> </ul> <p><b>The Resume</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resume is only the first but important key to finding a job</li> <li>Add more "Canadian" information by enrolling to an online or college program</li> <li>Target the resume to the job</li> <li>Look for ways to gain experience and make connections – example: volunteering</li> <li>Drop-off resume – receptionist may say "great person"</li> </ul> <p><b>Employer Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Someone who can walk into the job</li> </ul> <p><b>Accommodation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employers could call the employees, go to them when asked</li> <li>Educate employers on subsidies</li> <li>More open and welcoming interview process – 2 stages with the first being a basic interview about the workplace – builds level of comfort</li> </ul>

## Lack of Jobs, Job Quality/Perception that It is Not Worth It

Challenges	What would help from surveys, interviews and focus groups	Co-design session recommendations
<p><b>Job Availability</b> Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jobs not available</li> <li>Jobs that accommodate not available</li> </ul> <p>Employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having a hard time filling factory jobs – it doesn't look like people are looking for those</li> </ul> <p>Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employers are in a hiring phase/there are jobs</li> </ul> <p><b>Can't Afford to Take the Jobs that are Available</b> Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jobs are part-time, not enough hours, don't pay enough or are mandatory overtime</li> <li>Increased stress</li> <li>Anticipation that will be worse off – cost of child care, loss of benefits, income deduction from social assistance</li> <li>Can't afford to pay work-related expenses</li> <li>Fear that if lose ODSP, then hard to get back on if health takes a turn</li> </ul> <p>Employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>True that certain occupations don't pay enough especially if have a family (example: in manufacturing, roofing) - would like to pay more but can't</li> </ul> <p>Service Providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work is less secure, less predictable</li> </ul> <p><b>Attitude and Perception</b> Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are people caught up in their "anger against the system"?</li> <li>Are people relying on past excuses to not find work?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowing that jobs are available</li> </ul>	<p><b>Job Availability- Online Access to Postings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To give people better access to job postings, make job applications and postings. Many people don't have computers &amp; laptops</li> <li>Service provider websites also need to be mobile friendly</li> <li>Have an easily searchable on-line data bank of local jobs – one that accurately and precisely labels the location of the job. For example, existing job bank is not that helpful. To search for a job in Oxford, you have to look under London</li> <li>To support internet access, need community hot spots</li> <li>Connect any jobseeker to an employment agency</li> </ul> <p><b>Attitude and Perception</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognize people's needs: for example communicate with job seekers by text as it is the least costly option Need pre-employment programs like Targeted Initiative for Older Workers and programs that provided subsidy for costs like transportation and child care</li> </ul> <p><b>Making Work "Worth It"</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep raising minimum wage and make it a living income based on family households</li> <li>Offer more vacation time</li> <li>Inform and educate about what is available for them – example: letting people know about Trillium Drug Benefit program, drug and extended health coverage for social assistance recipients who gain employment – one way could be a transition team in the community</li> </ul> <p><b>Job Creation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate "work from home" type jobs – there are probably a lot and Employment Service Providers could help look into these</li> </ul>

Challenges	What would help from surveys, interviews and focus groups	Co-design session recommendations
<p><b>Areas of prejudice and bias</b></p> <p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Age, gender, racial, physical appearance, marital status, Indigenous, disability/need for accommodation</li> <li>Feel passed over due to having a foreign name</li> </ul> <p>Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have had experience with employer who was looking for athletes to hire because of the perceived attributes they bring</li> <li>At what point in the process are job seekers disclosing that they have a disability</li> </ul> <p><b>Employer barriers</b></p> <p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employers need to open doors - see ability not disability; accept foreign work experience, credentials</li> </ul> <p>Employers ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there a network similar to JobMatch for non-new Canadians</li> </ul>	<p><b>Employer Attitude/Changing Mindsets</b></p> <p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More open-minded employers and employers willing to open their doors</li> <li>Educate employers to respect, accept, appreciate skills that immigrants bring</li> </ul> <p>Employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once our company experienced difficulty filling positions, we championed internally, the recruitment and hiring of qualified newcomers</li> <li>Need to have champions – both within an organization and to reach out to employers</li> <li>Even more difficult to engage Indigenous people</li> </ul> <p>Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need champions within the workplace</li> <li>If employers are having trouble filling jobs, and there are prospective employees who would need accommodations (example, short hours for single parents) could job-sharing be an option?</li> </ul> <p><b>Best Practices</b></p> <p>What employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connecting managers to a mentoring program offered through WIL employment connections and London Middlesex Immigrant Partnership</li> <li>We use JobMatch Network</li> <li>Cultural and diversity training</li> </ul>	<p><b>Changing Employer Mindsets</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with employers who don't use employment services might have most effect</li> <li>Employers sharing success stories with honesty – for example, first I saw a disability, then I saw the skills and hired</li> <li>Why don't employers educate themselves now?</li> <li>Recognize that employers want to minimize risk when hiring – need to hire people that will work out</li> </ul> <p><b>Addressing Feeling of Lack of Compassion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coach employers to become aware of and acknowledge workplace biases, prejudices (includes hiring, policy, practices) – example: flexibility to accommodate single parent who can start working after 9:30</li> <li>It can be hard for job seekers to get to employment service provider offices to meet Job developers – scheduling and transportation barriers – could Job Developers meet jobseekers at times and locations that are convenient to them like they meet employers?</li> </ul> <p><b>Mitigating Bias and Prejudice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with individuals experiencing bias or prejudice to recognize it and to mitigate it</li> <li>Language is biggest barrier for immigrants – English as a Second Language</li> <li>Become involved in the community to establish references – the Rotary club can be a good starting point</li> <li>Addressing costs to get extra certifications</li> <li>Identifying transferable skills and marketing people skills</li> </ul>



## Education & Qualifications

Challenges	What would help from surveys, interviews and focus groups	Co-design session recommendations
<p><b>Requirement for Canadian education and qualifications:</b> Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foreign education and certification is not accepted</li> <li>Hard to get Canadian certification</li> </ul> <p><b>Not having required education and qualifications:</b> Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not having the right education</li> <li>Not having grade 12</li> <li>"I get discouraged by the list of qualifications"</li> </ul> <p>Employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wondering what is stopping people with post-secondary education from participating – mismatch?</li> <li>Requirements can be way of managing the number of applications</li> <li>Are people studying what the labour market needs?</li> </ul> <p>Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When look at post-secondary group, is it an institutional problem?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access to Training and Education:</b> Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More advertising about training</li> <li>Run English as a Second Language (ESL) classes from 10 to 2</li> <li>Education that is affordable</li> <li>"having facility just for First Nations when doing education creates a comfort zone"</li> </ul> <p>Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen connection between essential skills, literacy, adult education and see Employment Ontario as an education and employment service - otherwise people get caught in a cycle of applying and resume writing when what they really need is upgrading, education, literacy</li> </ul> <p><b>Types of Education and Training</b> Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upgrading: getting "up to speed" after long time out of the labour force - both a necessity and a confidence builder – for example, computer based documentation; skills upgrading; evening courses; helping women upgrade</li> <li>On the job, computer skills, offered by businesses/employers, English language skills</li> <li>Individualized training that builds on strengths and matches the jobs available</li> <li>Getting GED</li> <li>"Can [employers] teach you and then hire you?"</li> </ul> <p>Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a place for adult education sector which follows principles of task-based learning and student-centred goal directed learning</li> <li>Need one-off flexible programs that gives them skills like customer service and retail</li> </ul> <p><b>Realistic Job Requirements:</b> Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulate educational aspect of job –requirements</li> </ul> <p>Employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Challenge requirements posted: does this position need such high qualifications?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Realistic Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>So many jobs have education requirements that they don't need</li> <li>Job developers can ask employers "do you usually need that?"</li> <li>Requirements can also be a way of filtering out best matched experience skill level</li> <li>Challenge of being overqualified/underqualified</li> <li>Identify transferrable skills and qualifications</li> </ul> <p><b>Encouraging People to Upgrade</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social assistance programs could offer incentives such as increasing social assistance benefits or providing a bonus if go back to school</li> <li>Low cost or no cost training with opportunity to volunteer or intern</li> </ul> <p><b>Connecting Employers and People</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide people with opportunity to skills and share experience</li> <li>Employment service providers have funding that can incentivize employers to take people on that they might not otherwise</li> <li>Employment Service Providers can incentivize employers to take people on, making the connection between employer and individual</li> <li>Agencies being able to make referrals and recommendations</li> <li>Information interviews help people find out what education and qualifications are needed</li> <li>Volunteering helps – it is easy to find – the library is where people tend to start looking for volunteer opportunities</li> </ul>

Challenges	What would help from surveys, interviews and focus groups	Co-design session recommendations
<b>Expectations and Requirements</b> Individuals said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foreign experience not accepted</li> </ul> Employers said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there a mismatch between what the labour market is demanding vs. what they are graduating with?</li> <li>Work ethic is hard to find</li> </ul> <b>Lacking Experience or the Right Experience</b> Individuals said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of experience or the right experience</li> </ul> Employers said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hard to find qualified individuals</li> </ul> Service providers said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many graduates end up working in a field not related to their degree or they give up looking for work</li> </ul> <b>Employment History and Transitions</b> Individuals said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long term unemployment</li> <li>Large gap in employment – e.g. mothers who stay home with children when young. May no longer be qualified or not feel qualified to re-enter labour force in field trained for due to things like increasing reliance on technology, legislation and policy changes</li> <li>This can result in lack of confidence</li> <li>Resumes not up to standard</li> </ul>	<b>Opportunities to Gain Experience</b> Individuals said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need help getting experience, opportunities to gain experience, job placements, volunteer opportunities</li> </ul> Employers said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sign up with temp agency to get experience – have ended up hiring people who came through a temp agency</li> </ul> Service providers said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-op experiences in school</li> </ul> <b>Proving Qualifications and Skill</b> Individuals said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What about skills test to prove qualifications especially if can't get paperwork (may not be able to because my country is at war)</li> <li>Need more help getting the certifications</li> </ul> Employers said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate with staff to determine whether or not posted qualifications are actually needed</li> </ul> <b>Just Apply</b> What employers said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work ethic more important than experience for jobs that can train people for</li> <li>Will hire people with no or limited experience for entry level work and/or for jobs where can do on the job training</li> </ul> <b>Employment History and Transition</b> Employers said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you have long term unemployment, gaps, talk about life experience – explain gaps in employment in cover letter</li> </ul>	<b>Access to Training</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advertise what is available – skills training Second Career, agencies that can facilitate placement, Service Canada's job training programs, etc.</li> <li>Employers may need to invest more in training – this is normal in times of skill shortages</li> <li>"Brush up" programs must be low cost or no cost!!!</li> </ul> <b>Types of Training</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide opportunities for paid experience, training</li> <li>Training for jobs that would/should be coming up</li> <li>Canadian Employment training</li> <li>Skills training</li> </ul> <b>Gaining Experience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enrol in college or attend programs to improve knowledge of Canadian system</li> <li>Volunteer work</li> </ul> <b>Supporting people</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and recognize transferable skills from previous employment</li> <li>Assisting in success in all aspects of employment – workplace mentor can help</li> <li>Immigrant people need to be supported to find and learn Canadian system – and experiences</li> <li>Networking opportunities</li> <li>Mock interviews</li> <li>Job fair opportunities</li> <li>Focus on resume is not helpful – get different opinions on what is right from different service providers and seems to be based on personal preference; focus needs to be broader – "help me figure out what job am I qualified to do, and what should I be targeting"</li> <li>Compassion – navigating the system is degrading &amp; some service provider practices, such as different ideas about resumes, can be discouraging</li> </ul>



Challenges	What would help from surveys, interviews and focus groups	Co-design session recommendations
<p>Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People transitioning back into work after a gap may not feel like they have the skills or may not have the skills to re-enter labour force</li> <li>• Do agencies really know how to help educated and experienced workers make the transition or fundamental personal change after a job loss – like thinking about becoming an entrepreneur for example, or dealing with a perceived loss of status?</li> </ul>	<p>Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need wraparound resume services, a more holistic approach to all of the services we offer people</li> <li>• Develop programming that helps people transition back into the work force after a gap or job loss (example, mothers)</li> <li>• “Brush up” programs could be offered by colleges or adult education programs</li> </ul> <p><b>Best Practices</b></p> <p>Employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have practice of 2 stage hiring process – interview, then observe “on the floor” performance - good for both applicant and employer (best practice)</li> <li>• Hire using phased in salary – regular increases in first 18 months based on performance</li> </ul>	<p><b>What Employers Want</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work ethic – but how is it identified and is it rewarded when it is found</li> <li>• People who are accountable</li> <li>• People who show up on time and show willingness to work</li> <li>• People with skill – when there is a skill gap, the employer has to invest &amp; small companies don’t have the resources</li> </ul> <p><b>Advice to Employers, Employment Service Providers and Applicants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employers and employment service providers could give more advice to candidates about what to include in application</li> <li>• Applicants can follow up with employer after an interview</li> <li>• Applicants can send in more than one resume, sometimes the first one gets overlooked or filed. Don’t get discouraged if you did not get an interview the first time</li> <li>• Applicants can advocate for themselves</li> <li>• Employers can be open to foreign experience</li> <li>• Employers need to make job postings clear</li> </ul> <p><b>System Limitations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry funding requirements with respect to who can be served by what program limits agency flexibility in meeting individual needs</li> <li>• Funding needed to develop programming to help people back into the workforce</li> </ul>

## Lack of Connections

Challenges	What would help from surveys, interviews and focus groups	Co-design session recommendations
<p><b>Personal network</b> Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Who you know” is what matters</li> <li>• Immigrants have lost their network – hard having to cold call</li> </ul> <p><b>Community support</b> Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agencies are disconnected from clients</li> <li>• Not having a job counselor</li> </ul> <p>Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People are unaware of all the services and networks to help them (e.g. Techalliance)</li> </ul> <p><b>Connecting Employers and People</b> Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Former employers gone – no references</li> <li>• Not able to connect directly with employers</li> </ul> <p>Employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep thinking there are lots of job fairs, networking events, online job fairs, but these can be intimidating</li> <li>• Job boards don't always work – where else can we go to find job seeker match?</li> </ul> <p>Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we better communicate/ facilitate communication between employer and potential worker?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Personal network</b> Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having friends and social supports, connections</li> <li>• Volunteer</li> </ul> <p>Employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer</li> </ul> <p><b>Community support</b> Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any agency that is familiar with a person can help make connections, provide guidance</li> <li>• Can agencies provide referrals and recommendations, act as reference</li> <li>• Agency support to help people engage in the community, connect with an employer,</li> <li>• Help getting feedback from employer for reason not successful in getting a job that applied for</li> <li>• Agencies need to have a better connections with clients</li> </ul> <p><b>Connecting Employers and People</b> Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to communicate with potential employers</li> </ul> <p>Employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with service provider (CCLC/Board of Ed) to do group mentoring around business skills</li> <li>• Maybe employers could be personally available to people looking for work</li> <li>• Have had good success from Employment Agencies and have hired from them</li> </ul> <p>Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment services providers need to get the word out that they are able to help employers and job seekers (connections, EO agency wage top ups, job trials)</li> <li>• Important for employment agencies to have a relationship with employers – what do you need? We can help? Need to develop this</li> </ul>	<p><b>Compassionate system</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More humanity in the system</li> <li>• Look for transferable skills and ask about them in interviews and applications</li> <li>• Recognize stress that being unemployed is stressful and interviews are stressful</li> </ul> <p><b>Connecting employers and people</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate non-stressful meetings between job seekers &amp; employers just to talk to each other – can be one on one information meetings or larger informal gatherings where employers are available to answer people's questions and employers can meet people who are at various stages of contemplating, preparing for, or looking for work</li> <li>• Employers are looking for talent</li> </ul>

## Work Limiting Conditions (health, mental health, disability, illness)

Challenges	What would help from surveys, interviews and focus groups	Co-design session recommendations
<p><b>The condition itself</b> Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complications and challenges associated with conditions, such as needing accommodations, limited in types of jobs can take, and doctor's appointments</li> <li>Addictions</li> </ul> <p><b>Problems with work</b> Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work causes flare ups and stress</li> <li>Prejudice against hiring people with disability</li> <li>Employers don't accommodate</li> </ul> <p>Employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having physical ability to do the job is a requirement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having better health</li> </ul> <p><b>Services that support</b> Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Services like ATN Access in London – an agency that provides assessment, skills upgrading and personal development services to help people with disabilities achieve their employment, educational and quality of life goals</li> <li>Services that don't focus on the disability but help people identify and build on their strengths, and work around limitations</li> </ul> <p>Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does labeling a program as "for people with disabilities" limit who participates? (do people identify with having a disability?)</li> </ul> <p><b>Awareness</b> Service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing awareness of mental health illness or disability</li> </ul>	<p><b>Access to medical and extended health benefits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benefits for full-time and part-time work</li> </ul> <p><b>Help for Individuals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help individuals to become more accepting and become more aware of their own abilities</li> <li>Get the help needed "now"</li> <li>Treat people as individuals, and don't make assumption about abilities, disabilities, et cetera</li> </ul> <p><b>Job-Matching</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make sure good fit between person, job and employer</li> <li>Look at work and employers that lend themselves to non-traditional workforce</li> </ul> <p><b>Help for Employers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help employers know how they can accommodate</li> </ul>

### Challenges to Looking for Work

#### Internal to the individual

Individuals said:

- Lack of confidence, self esteem
- Lack of direction
- “If you really want to work, there is work”

Employers said:

- Do people really want to work?
- Lack of motivation big factor – there is work if you want it
- Hard to find people with the proper work ethic, good attitude, no family problems, drug or alcohol addictions that get in the way of work

Service providers said:

- Challenge of personal paralysis – “how do I do...?” “how do I get to work?” – no transitional program to coach this
- Negative impact that intergenerational poverty can have on expectations, motivation,
- Seeing that students are less resilient and need more hand holding – increasingly ask “tell me the steps” and “tell me what you want me to do”. Won’t take initiative, fear of failure. Feel this is a reflection of what they have been taught.

#### External to individual

Individuals said:

- Criminal record
- Language barrier
- Poor interview skills

Service providers said:

- How do we encourage wrap around approach to assessing and working with individuals to happen more?
- Staff need to have a better understanding of barriers people are presenting with and service better

### What would help from surveys, interviews and focus groups

#### Personal support:

Individuals said:

- Help figuring out direction – courses like Colours
- Support person and groups that encourage, provide guidance, help with connections, go along on interviews: “Women’s unemployment centre has been very good. Helped with confidence and mental aspects”; Support groups like LEADS
- Criminal record pardon
- Building self-confidence, self-esteem and motivation

Service providers said:

- Think there needs to be a lot of stabilization for people in vulnerable sector – best practice – case worker does a warm hand off (to employment agency?) when person says they are ready to look for work
- Need to teach people that it is ok to fail, to try things so that when they get to the workplace they don’t need to be told the steps along the way - Incorporating gaming/gamifying opportunities. Failure is part of games and this is a good way to help increase resiliency and comfort with failure
- Need to name issues that people have - Maybe the role of employment service providers is trying to figure out why individuals have a difficult time getting to work on time/motivation/work ethic and to provide wrap around support tailored to individual

#### Access to resources:

Individuals said:

- Access to community resources like clothes for interviews, workshops, computers
- Having a place to live (stable housing, not being homeless)
- Job counselor and coach - having someone to check in with to stay connected to the process. Someone to send you job postings and help you stay accountable; “having supports you trust at employment centres”
- Personal support – provide guidance, help with connections, encourage
- Life skills and coaching – what to wear, how to present yourself, what to do and not do,
- Help understanding employer expectations

## Family Responsibility

Challenges to Looking for Work	What would help from surveys, interviews and focus groups
<b>Culture and Personal Choice</b> Individuals said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural expectations that man gets job first and that woman stays home with children. Begin to feel left behind, lose confidence and wonder if entering back to work will be possible</li> <li>• Desire to stay home with children</li> <li>• Complicated family situations</li> <li>• Caregiver for parent</li> </ul> <b>System and service gaps</b> Individuals said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child care not available, too expensive</li> </ul> Service providers said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services only offered during business and school hours</li> </ul>	<b>Personal and System Supports</b> Individuals said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child care</li> <li>• Courses/ways to stay connected while raising children; courses/skills building/ESL while kids are at school (e.g. 10am - 2pm)</li> <li>• Services near my house</li> </ul> Service providers said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with women while 'staying at home' to not lose their skills</li> </ul> <b>Accommodations</b> Individuals said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible work hours for parents</li> </ul> Service providers said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible services</li> </ul>

## Transportation

Challenges to Looking for Work	What would help from surveys, interviews and focus groups
Individuals said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not having transportation</li> <li>• Not able to drive</li> <li>• Cost of transportation</li> <li>• "You can't apply for jobs that are too far away"</li> </ul> Employers said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is a big issue in the construction/roofing industry – bus schedule is inconvenient and not practical with long and hard work day</li> <li>• Not a big issue – people "work it out"</li> </ul> Service providers said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficult when employment service providers say there is a job that requires driving, transportation</li> </ul>	<b>Providing transportation</b> Individuals said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help paying costs - Having a bus pass, having a gas card</li> <li>• Employment services or employers provide transportation that pick up and take to work at a certain time</li> </ul> Employers said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do help with transportation: have supervisors pick people up and drop them off. Have found this to be a good investment that helps with employee retention and productivity</li> <li>• Best practice: in Waterloo Region –workers go to central location and then employers bus them to work</li> </ul> <b>Eliminate transportation issue:</b> Individuals said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local jobs that don't have to deal with transportation</li> </ul> Employers said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During application process, ask if transportation will be an issue</li> </ul> Service providers said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have been creative in offering services in multiple locations</li> </ul>

# Taking and Keeping Work

## Work Environment/Culture

Challenges	What would help from surveys, interviews and focus groups	Co-design session recommendations
<p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor leadership, management</li> <li>Workers not feeling valued</li> <li>Not knowing what work expectations are</li> <li>Unfriendly workplace – management not supportive, poor relations with coworkers including discrimination and bullying, lack of understanding and empathy related to work limiting conditions</li> </ul> <p>Employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need better understanding of how Indigenous people work</li> <li>Poor work relations and unfriendly workplace - Nature of the workforce – more likely to say and do things that aren't acceptable, usually related to their own experience and situation</li> </ul> <p>What service providers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an implied “us” and “them” between worker and employer. But really is a symbiotic relationship and people need to understand this</li> </ul>	<p><b>Leadership</b></p> <p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better communication</li> <li>Show “appreciation for a job well done”</li> <li>Trained management</li> <li>“friendly work environment”</li> <li>Employer vigilant for workplace issues among staff</li> </ul> <p>Employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Best practice: company does regular things intended to show workers they are valued - pizza lunch, birthday lunch, pay raises</li> <li>It is employer’s job to set culture, have open communication and act on issues</li> <li>Good environment encourage people to stay</li> </ul> <p><b>Training</b></p> <p>What employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural and diversity training – one workplace had someone who taught about ways to better accommodate Indigenous workers</li> <li>Best practice: in auto manufacturing provide training to supervisors on valuing people and treating them properly</li> </ul> <p><b>Attitude</b></p> <p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Having a positive attitude. You have to be bigger than people’s ignorance about you”</li> </ul>	<p><b>Leadership – culture of everyone matters</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Events like food events are fun - don’t forget to include part time and temporary workers</li> <li>Kind words, appreciation and positive feedback</li> <li>Get to know each other’s names, make eye contact</li> <li>Encourage two way communication</li> <li>Regular communication about key indicators/work performance</li> </ul> <p><b>Accessible training for employers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural, diversity and personality dimension training</li> <li>Agencies can go to small businesses to deliver the training</li> </ul> <p><b>Supportive workplaces:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a space for employees to gather</li> <li>Mental health days, flexible work days</li> <li>Support small business by organizing an employee-sharing model for small businesses so they have a pool of trained staff who can fill in when someone is sick</li> </ul> <p><b>Create an employer recognition program for welcoming workplaces</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set standards</li> <li>Employer recognition for achieving standards like stickers that can go on business windows</li> </ul>

## Job Conditions, Not Worth It to Work

Challenges	What would help from surveys, interviews and focus groups
<p><b>Personal Cost</b> Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal cost of working too high - Young parents who look at what would earn against personal values, cost and availability of child care, stress of juggling; Persons with disability who look at health impact, potential loss of secure income and benefits</li> </ul> <p><b>Job conditions</b> Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No benefits</li> <li>Hours – irregular, inconsistent, split shifts, long, early starts, not enough</li> <li>Level of pay and lack of benefits</li> <li>Poor treatment by customers</li> <li>Lack of on the job training</li> </ul> <p>Employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Big problem is that pay is not enough – start at \$15/hour (manufacturing, entry level); if come in through a temp agency, pay starts at \$12/hour</li> <li>Entry level – manufacturing - Practice to hire on for 6 month contract, pay raise, next 6 months, pay raise... pending availability, hire on full time and pay raise again but maximum pay is still below \$20</li> <li>Hours are a problem in retail and customer service</li> </ul>	<p>Employers and individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stability</li> <li>Benefits</li> <li>Good pay, bonuses</li> <li>Regular hours</li> <li>Opportunity for growth, training and education</li> </ul>

## Transportation

Challenges	What would help from surveys, interviews and focus groups
<p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Trying to get from reserve into London for a 7 am start was hard. I need reliable transportation".</li> <li>Lack of transportation, lack of vehicle, don't drive</li> <li>Cost</li> </ul> <p>Employer said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"without [employer provided pick up and drop off] it would be almost impossible to get people to come to work on time and be reliable"</li> <li>Not a big issue - "In my experience most people figure it out"</li> </ul>	<p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having someone to pick up and drop off</li> <li>Transportation – access to it, being able to afford it</li> <li>Rely on ride from friend/coworker</li> </ul> <p>Employer best practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have supervisors pick people up and drop them off</li> <li>Have helped people get license and provide financial support for insurance</li> </ul>

## Workplace Accommodations & Work Limiting Conditions

Challenges	What would help from surveys, interviews and focus groups
<p><b>Lack of Accommodations</b></p> <p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employer not willing to accommodate meaningfully</li></ul> <p>Employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do accommodate if get hurt at work but it can be hard to tell if it is a workplace injury - no obligation to accommodate otherwise</li></ul> <p><b>Impact of Having a Condition</b></p> <p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Symptoms sometimes aggravated by work</li><li>• Seen as a safety risk</li><li>• Limits occupation options</li></ul> <p>Employers said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Being physically able is a job requirement</li></ul> <p><b>Reality of Living with a Condition</b></p> <p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Types of conditions: illness, mental, physical, headaches</li><li>• “Having a disability. Even with the best of intentions you can’t guarantee your body will cooperate or that employers will cooperate”</li><li>• Managing condition or illness takes time and energy</li></ul>	<p><b>Accommodations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Flexible schedule</li><li>• Flexibility in regards to standing or sitting for long periods of time</li><li>• Decent hours that don’t interfere with epilepsy patterns</li></ul> <p><b>Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Workplace orientation on specifics of disability – what it is, how it impacts, ways to accommodate</li><li>• Understanding of mental health issues</li></ul>

## Family Responsibility & Child Care

Challenges	What would help from surveys, interviews and focus groups
<p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Need for affordable child care</li><li>• Caregiver for ill parent</li><li>• Parents of young children</li><li>• Complicated family situation</li></ul>	<p><b>Access to child care</b></p> <p>Individuals said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Help with kids school transportation and daycare”</li><li>• Child care that is affordable/subsidized</li><li>• Before and after school care</li></ul> <p><b>Accommodations and incentives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employer incentives to hire</li><li>• Flexible schedule</li></ul>



## Personal Challenges

Challenges	What would help from surveys, interviews and focus groups
<b>Work Ethic and Attitude</b> Individuals said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Getting there and doing the same thing every day”</li><li>• “Getting up and making sure you are on time”</li><li>• General motivation</li></ul> Employers said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hear from HR managers that there are a lot of people who are looking for work, but not a lot who want to do it – end up hiring people who are already working</li><li>• Getting good employees is hard – we are hiring less experienced people with right work ethic and training – screen for this in interview (no details on how screening is done)</li></ul> <b>Skills and Qualifications</b> Individuals said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Language</li><li>• Lack of skill</li></ul>	<b>Internal drivers</b> Individuals said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Being ready to return to work</li><li>• Having supportive family and friends, a network; having a positive attitude; getting up and getting to work on time; staying confident and believing in yourself</li></ul> Employers said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Think it comes down to motivation and commitment, good attitude –getting to work on time, not calling in sick too often, bathroom breaks – can only give people so many chances</li></ul> <b>External supports</b> Individuals said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Going back to school</li><li>• Funding to cover costs of new job</li><li>• Encouragement</li><li>• Having a job coach</li></ul>

## The Take-Aways

An essential component of this study was creating actionable strategies and recommendations. Based on the learnings from this study (Phase I - III), 3 check-lists were created:

- Individuals seeking to enter/go back to work
- Employers seeking workers
- Service providers seeking ways to best support both potential workers and employers.

These are included in the following section.

## Take-Aways

# Wanting to Return to Work?

## Here are some tips!

*A study was done on finding ways for people to return to work after noticing that in our area many people that are of working age are not working. We did some research, talked to many people in our region and also talked with employers and employment agencies.*

*From the study, here are some tips and a checklist that might help you as you think about getting back to work.*

## Getting Ready – Life Related

### Tips

- Find out what options are available to you if you are looking for work but are concerned with losing the supports you might be getting through social assistance. A local employment agency can help you as the programs change all the time
- Meet with people like you who have found work and ask them for their top 3 tips to finding and keeping work
- Consider all kinds of options including 'work from home/self-employment' options. Employment agencies might help you work through the options or visit your local small business centre. People there can also help you with your ideas
- Work with social service agencies if you need help with basic needs – there are many agencies that can help you with this so you can get the things you need as you look for work
- Think about ways you can get to work if you don't have a car. There are carpooling options in many communities. Some employers offer carpooling or cover some costs of transportation. Don't be afraid to ask about them
- Look into daycare options that might be available in your community. Communities often have a central database of daycare providers and they also know about subsidies. Seek them out.
- If you have a criminal record speak to an employment service provider who might be able to assist in this getting cleared or finding ways to explain it to a potential employer

### Check List

- ☐ I have contacted and am working with a local employment agency
- ☐ I know what supports are available if I start to work and move away from social assistance
- ☐ I have stable housing
- ☐ I have support to help me with basic needs
- ☐ I have ideas to deal with transportation if I get work
- ☐ I have a few options of how I will be able to get to work depending on where it is
- ☐ I know the carpooling options in my community
- ☐ I have a plan for affordable day care
- ☐ I have a plan to deal with my criminal record

## Getting Ready – Get Connected to an Agency

### Tips

- If you are not sure where to start, go to the library and they will help to connect you with an employment agency – these services are free and they have great programs!
- Talk to an employment counselor about work options. Consider all kinds of options including ‘work from home/self-employment’ options. Employment agencies might help you work through the options or visit your local small business centre. People there can also help you with your ideas
- Get help with your resume from an employment agency in your community. They are there to help and anyone can go and ask for help. There are many employment agencies that offer free training, services, mentoring. Sign up so you can learn about the work world today
- There are literacy centres in your community – places that can help you improve your reading and writing skills. Tell them what your plan is for work and they can help you with the language
- You may need some new clothes for interviews and work. There are places that are ready to help you with that. Your local employment service agency can help you with this

### Check List

- ☐ I have connected with an employment agency
- ☐ I have an updated version of my resume and I know how to change my resume to customize it for jobs I am applying for
- ☐ I have looked at options available in terms of “working from home” and “self-employment”
- ☐ I have contacted the small business centre
- ☐ I know the top 3-5 things employers are looking for in workers
- ☐ I have a mentor to help me find and keep work
- ☐ I have gotten feedback on my interview skills and feel more confident about interviewing
- ☐ I know where my literacy centre is at and I have gotten help learning work language
- ☐ I have clothes ready for my job interviews and for when I go out and meet people about work

## Learning about what is out there in terms of work?

### Tips

- If you are thinking of going back to school call the Local Employment Planning Council, they have a lot of good information about the labour market and might be able to help you determine what jobs will be available in the next while in your area
- Learn about the jobs that are available in your community and see how you can become qualified for those jobs.

### Check List

- ☐ I know 3-5 industries where they are looking for workers
- ☐ I know school/education options related to those 3-5 industries
- ☐ I am learning about these 3-5 industries

## Tell Others – Spread the Word & Get Support

### Tips

- Tell a friend you are thinking about going back to work and ask them if they will help you through listening, sharing ideas and supporting you. Having someone to talk to is really helpful in making the transition back to work
- Try to meet people in the field you are interested in. It's okay to ask for an 'information interview' to learn about a field or a company. People do this all the time
- Meet with people like you who have found work and ask them for their top 3 tips to finding and keeping work
- Get connected to your local community by joining groups (for example: school, community centres, faith groups) and start telling people you are looking for work
- Think about volunteering so you can show and grow your skills. Local employment service agencies or social service agencies can help you make the right connection
- Work hard to move past discouragement of not being able to find work, and find people to support you while you look for work. Having a person to support you make it easier to find work. There are groups in the community that you can join to support you.

### Check List

- ☐ I have a friend/family member who is supporting me as I look for work
- ☐ I have set up 1-3 information interviews to learn about jobs I might be interested in doing
- ☐ I have met with people who have found work and learned some tips
- ☐ I have joined a few new groups
- ☐ I am telling people that I am looking for work
- ☐ I am volunteering in an area related to where I want to work
- ☐ I am aware of how I can get past my discouragement
- ☐ I have someone I can talk to when I do get discouraged/angry

## Getting Related Experience

### Tips

- Think about volunteering in the field or in the organization you are interested in working for – this will help you out in getting a job
- Look for programs in your community to better understand "Canadian work expectations and work ethic"
- Think about how you can prepare to work by thinking from the view point of a business owner – what would you like to see in a new employee? What do you need to do to 'show off' these qualities?
- Think about working with "temp" agencies to get started. They have good connections and you can gain good work experience

### Check List

- ☐ I am volunteering in an area related to where I want to work
- ☐ I know 3-5 things about Canadian work expectations and work ethic
- ☐ I know how to tell an interviewer about my work ethic, motivation and promptness
- ☐ I am connected to a 'temp' agency

## Your Attitude

### Tips

- In our area, employers are finding it hard to find people to work. There are jobs out there – and employers are looking for candidates with the right attitude, who get to work on time and work hard. They are willing to train for the job.
- Work ethic – getting to job on time, working hard, having a good attitude, being respectful are things employers are really looking for – share that in your cover letter and get references that can give examples of how this is true for you
- Think like an employer – what would you like to see on a cover letter? Resume? When you are being interviewed? If you are not sure, ask others to see what they might tell you.
- Ask yourself: What can I do to be open, friendly, welcoming? How do I work on this?

### Check List

- ☐ I know how to tell an interviewer about my work ethic, motivation and promptness
- ☐ I know how to write my cover letter to tell businesses about my work ethic, my good attitude, my motivation and my hard work
- ☐ I have references that will tell businesses about my work ethic, my good attitude, my motivation and my hard work
- ☐ I have spoken to employers and know what they are looking for
- ☐ I have been working on being respectful, positive and friendly

## Applying

### Tips

- Make sure you have an updated resume and change your resume depending on the job you are applying for
- Find out, through your local papers or social media when there might be job fairs in your community. Take resumes with you and 'dress for success'. While there, talk to as many people as possible, let them know what you are looking for and give them your resume
- When working on your cover letter, make it specific and talk about your work experience and explain your gaps in your employment so they are not guessing as to why you have some years missing. If you aren't sure what to say about the gap, talk to an employment counselor or even an employer and get some ideas.
- If you are unable to get your qualification papers, explain this in the cover letter and detail your skills
- Just apply. Even if you don't have all of the qualifications, tailor your resume, explain why you really want to work there and apply! Many people are hired even if they don't have all the qualifications
- Follow up after applying - Call or send an email after applying to see if they received it and if you can meet with them to explain your skills and experience
- Be aware that employers can be overwhelmed by online applications. Visiting employers with your resume is still a good way to find a job. Don't be afraid to keep trying

### Check List

- ☐ I have an updated version of my resume and I know how to change my resume to customize it for jobs I am applying for
- ☐ I am ready to attend job fairs (I know when they are, I have my resume, I have the right clothes to wear, I know what I want to say)
- ☐ I know what my cover letter needs to say related to the years I did not work
- ☐ My cover letter explains why I really want the job
- ☐ My cover letter explain why I cannot get my paperwork for my qualifications and it explains the skill set I have
- ☐ I am sending emails or calling after I send my resume to follow up
- ☐ I keep trying by visiting places that I think I want to work to see if they have any jobs available

## Attracting Workers

### *Here are some tips for employers!*

*A study was done on finding ways for people to return to work after noticing that in our area many people that are of working age are not working or looking for work. We did some research, talked to many people in our region and also talked with employers and employment agencies.*

*Here are some tips from the study and a checklist that might help you as you think about attracting workers.*

## Work with an Employment Service Agency – Free of Charge!

### Tips

- Provide advice to employment agencies on the trends you are seeing in your industry
- Employment agencies can help you find the right person for the job – be specific on what type of individuals you are looking for

### Check List

- ☐ We have a strong working relationship with 1-2 employment service agencies and their job developers
- ☐ We provide very specific information regarding the type of workers our business needs

## Application Process

### Tips

- Consider hosting monthly “meet and greets” for people to come and ask questions, and drop off their resume. Make sure to advertise this day in the community.
- When possible, provide some feedback to those who did not get the job – for many it is very discouraging to continually apply and not get feedback
- Think critically about the qualifications that are required – are they necessary for the job?
- Consider using a skills test to prove qualifications in place of paperwork. Sometimes paperwork may be hard or impossible to obtain, particularly for people who come from other countries
- Consider a 2-step interview process (basic and then ‘on the job’) to see how well a person will do ‘on the job’

### Check List

- ☐ We will have and advertise a ‘meet and greet’ for people to drop-off their resumes and meet with us once a week/month
- ☐ We have a process in place so that those who have applied and those we have interviewed receive timely responses and where possible feedback about their interview
- ☐ We review our job postings from the perspective of ‘must have’ and ‘nice-to-have’ qualifications
- ☐ When a job allows, we provide a skills test to prove qualification if paperwork of qualification is hard to obtain
- ☐ Where it makes sense, we have moved to a 2-step interview process (basic and then “on the job” to determine a fit

## Getting the Word Out There

### Tips

- Post jobs on sites that are mobile friendly as most people are now accessing information over their smart devices and not computers
- Post your jobs on different sites so that more people can see what you are offering
- Advertise/ make it known that you are an employer that welcomes diversity
- Accept resumes that people bring in and advertise that people can bring in an application

### Check List

- ☐ We have checked to make sure all the sites we advertise on are mobile friendly
- ☐ We post our jobs on at least 3 different sites
- ☐ We will have and advertise a drop-in for people to drop-off their resumes and meet with us once a week/month

## Attracting & Keeping the Right Workers

### Tips

- Build a strong relationship with a local non-profit employment service agency. These agencies work with employers to assist them in getting the right person for a job
- Become more aware of the benefits of hiring internationally trained professionals; consider both international and national experience when hiring. There are employment service agencies that work with very qualified immigrants who can support you in this endeavour
- Consider the benefits of hiring a person with disabilities from the perspective of their strengths, skills and experience versus just seeing their disability. Work with an employment agency to help develop an accommodation plan that meets your needs.
- Learn about all the ways to subsidize accommodations for employees. Talk to your local employment service agency – they can direct you
- Consider ways to help people who have problems with transportation. Employer-sponsored or supported carpooling, employer-provided transportation like a van service, and employer-subsidized bus passes are some ways that others have used.
- Offer some benefits and pension

### Check List

- ☐ We know the different ways that we can be supported to accommodate employees with different disabilities
- ☐ We have a strong working relationship with 1-2 employment service agencies and their job developers
- ☐ We work with an employment agency that has expertise in working with people with disabilities, immigrants and Indigenous individuals
- ☐ If our business location or hours make it hard for people to get to work if they do not have a car, we have a variety of options to assist them (e.g. carpooling, bus passes, bus)
- ☐ Within our budget, we have benefits and pension to attract and retain employees



## Paying it Forward

### Tips

- Share your stories of successfully hiring immigrants, Indigenous people and people with disabilities
- Become a mentor to a person wanting to find work
- Consider offering volunteer/paid internship opportunities so people can get their Canadian experience and learn about your work. This may also be a great way for you to get to know a potential employee

### Check List

- ☐ We have shared our story of hiring immigrants, Indigenous people and people with disabilities with employment service agencies, other employers, our community and the media
- ☐ We have leaders and staff who have offered to be mentors to others (within our business) or for others who do not yet have work
- ☐ Where we can, we have volunteer/internship opportunities

## Retaining Workers

### Tips

- Where possible, provide a buddy/mentor for new employees so they get connected with your people and learn how to fit into your work culture
- Provide orientation and training to set up people for success; give people timely feedback so they feel they can correct their work as needed
- Create a culture where 'everyone matters'; many people stop working because they feel like they 'don't fit in'. Be sure to include temporary and part-time workers in your work culture activities
- Remember that appreciation and kind words go a long way (even small gestures make a big difference)
- Where possible, provide flexibility and consider sharing some staff with other organizations to back-fill as needed
- Learn about how to accommodate for mental health challenges and other disabilities
- Offer training on how to work in a diverse work culture

### Check List

- ☐ All new employees have someone in our business who acts as a 'buddy' or 'mentor'
- ☐ All new employees go through an orientation and are provided with timely and adequate training
- ☐ All new employees receive timely feedback so they can improve
- ☐ We work at creating a culture where 'everyone matters'. We have spoken to our employment service agency to assist us with this. All employees (including part-time and temporary) are included
- ☐ We have an intentional way of appreciating and thanking our staff
- ☐ Where we can, we provide flexible schedules
- ☐ Where we can, we share staff with other businesses for back-filling
- ☐ We have been trained on how to accommodate for mental health and other disabilities
- ☐ We have been trained on how to create a welcoming environment for a diverse work culture

# Supporting Workers & Employers

## *Here are some tips for Employment Service Providers!*

*A study was done on finding ways for people to return to work after noticing that in our area many people that are of working age are not working. We did some research, talked to many people in our region and also talked with employers and employment agencies.*

*Here are some tips from the study and a checklist that might help you as you think about supporting workers and employers based on our research and on what we heard.*

### Job Developers

#### Tips

- Provide employers with job posting sites that are mobile friendly
- Work with employers to create easy to understand, clear, and accurate job postings and to make sure that the qualifications they are asking for are really necessary
- Create and regularly update local job bank databases (people shared that they are outdated)
- Encourage employers to:
  - Post on a variety of sites, places
  - Have one day a week/month when people can drop off resumes and talk to someone at the company
  - Provide feedback regarding why people did not get a job
  - Develop skills test to prove qualifications in place of paperwork that may be hard or impossible to obtain
- Consider creating a 'job bank' of work from home options for individuals who may have trouble with transportation, regular work hours etc
- Spread the word about successful hires (international, people with disabilities)
- Share 'best practices' amongst all job developers with respect to hiring of people with disabilities, immigrants, newcomers and Indigenous people

#### Check List

- ☐ I know of the job posting sites that are mobile friendly and I provide this list to the employers I work with
- ☐ I coach employers to write job postings that accurately reflects the job and the actual qualifications needed to do the job
- ☐ All of our job bank databases are updated regularly
- ☐ When I work with employers I encourage them to:
  - Post on a variety of sites, places
  - Have one day a week/month when people can drop off resumes and talk to someone at the company
  - Provide feedback regarding why people did not get a job
  - Develop ways to test for skills if qualification are difficult to obtain (e.g. home country is at war)
- ☐ We have a 'job bank' of legitimate and reputable work from home possibilities. We share this list across employment service agencies and share it with our employment counsellors
- ☐ When I work with employers I share best practices and benefits of hiring Indigenous people, immigrants and people with disabilities
- ☐ We have a list of employers who are willing to share their experience hiring Indigenous people, immigrants and people with disabilities

## Employment Counsellors

### Tips

- Consider the person as a whole and think of all the supports they may need for work (think wraparound – personal, family, social, housing, physical, psychological etc)
- Coach individuals on what to do when they feel discouraged when they do not get a job or a call back
- Help people more fully understand what employers are looking for
- Provide information to individuals seeking information on how social assistance works when a person is working (there are many misconceptions/misunderstandings)
- Customize how you work with people to meet their needs, work from their strengths and acknowledge what they bring to the table
- Stay abreast of the job market to provide information to individuals on the growing sectors

### Check List

- ☐ I consider all of the person's reality when I work with an individual. We are working from a wraparound perspective in creating one plan for the individual/family
- ☐ I have learned best practices to coach people through discouragement. I work with people so they can develop a plan on how to work through discouragement
- ☐ I am up-to-date on what employers are looking for and I share this with people I work with
- ☐ I am up-to-date on the changes related to social assistance and the supports available for those who are wishing to return to work
- ☐ I have received training on how to work from a strengths-based perspective
- ☐ I am up-to-date on the job market and regularly learn about the jobs that are available in our community

## Training

### Tips

- Provide training and coaching to employers regarding hiring Indigenous individuals, immigrants, people with disabilities
- Provide ways that employers can mentor other employers or people seeking work
- Assist/support organizations through training and coaching in creating work cultures where 'everyone matters'. Many people stop working because they feel like they 'don't fit in'.
- Offer diversity training to employers to create work cultures where 'everyone matters'

### Check List

- ☐ We provide training modules to employers regarding hiring Indigenous individuals, immigrants, people with disabilities
- ☐ We invite employers to participate in mentoring opportunities and explain the benefits
- ☐ We provide training modules to employers regarding creating an inclusive and diverse work culture where 'everyone matters'

## Organizational Level

### Tips

#### Awareness

- Create a comprehensive social media and community strategy so people learn about your services – many people do not know where to go for help
- Ask yourself if the label you are using for your program might be a barrier – for example, people with a disability may not see themselves as disabled, and may not access a program labeled “for people with disabilities”

#### Access

- Offer different modalities to your services (online, one-on-one, group in neighbourhoods, evenings)
- Provide programs from 10am – 2pm so those with children (in daycare or school) can attend
- Provide drop-in option to assist people with specific questions

#### Re-entry

- Develop programs for parents who choose to stay at home when their children are young so that they can stay current and relevant – many people are afraid of being ‘left behind’ after being out of the workforce. Provide different times and modalities to accommodate caregivers and stay-at-home parents
- Provide ‘brush up’ courses for those wishing to return back to work after being away for some time (people are very nervous about no longer fitting in or not being up-to-date in their chosen field)

#### Supports

- Consider that many people who have tried hard to look for work and have not found it often experience discouragement and lack of confidence – implement best practices with your staff so they can support/coach people who experience this
- Strengthen the connection between essential skills, social services, community health, literacy, adult education and employment agencies to better meet individual needs (don’t focus on the resume when there are other things to address first). Many people require comprehensive supports as they look for and keep work. Go beyond referrals to services and move to creating One Family Service Plan for the whole family (being aware of how much each agency is asking a family to commit to)

### Check List

#### Awareness

- ☐ We have a strong social media and community strategy so people know about us, what we offer and know how to reach us
- ☐ We are careful with how we promote/advertise our programs so people are included (and don’t opt out due to the way we have advertised)

#### Access

- ☐ We have improved the hours that people can access our services (increase hours, location of service, online)
- ☐ We have some programs that we offer from 10am – 2pm
- ☐ We offer drop-in opportunities

#### Re-entry

- ☐ We target stay-at-home parents with our programs to build skills, stay current with the workforce and offer through different modalities

#### Supports

- ☐ We have provided best-practice in-service training for our staff to assist people in developing a plan to address discouragement
- ☐ We work from a wraparound perspective having one individual/family plan so that all service providers work as a team with the family

### **Diverse, Supportive and Welcoming Work Environments**

- Work with local business organizations (LEPC, Chamber) to develop a way to recognize employers who are welcoming and are creating a diverse workforce (hiring Indigenous, immigrants and people with disabilities). Many people stop working because they feel like they 'don't fit in'
- Ensure that the culture at your workplace is welcoming and caring. The support that staff feel will benefit your clients

### **Preparing the Workforce**

- Offer skills based training in areas that are of highest demand in our areas. Work with colleges to provide these options. People are not aware of the industries that are hiring and what they should be focusing on
- Offer programs that explain the "Canadian work systems" in a variety of modalities (online, group, one-one, mentoring, evening, midday etc)
- Offering training in collaboration or partnership with adult education and literacy partners – they are experienced at delivering task-based, student-centred, and goal-directed learning
- Consider offering employers training on how to support people in the workplace who have mental health challenges or other disabilities
- Consider how to incorporate gaming/gamifying as virtual environments to increase resilience and comfort with failure
- Make your offices a comfortable and welcoming place for jobseekers and potential jobseekers to come to

### **Transportation**

- Consider the role of employment service agencies in facilitating transportation solutions (can these be a shared responsibility across organizations and with employers)

### **Diverse, Supportive and Welcoming Work Environments**

- ☐ As a community, we are working at ways to recognize employers who promote inclusion and diversity in the workplace where 'everyone matters'
- ☐ We regularly demonstrate our appreciation to our own staff through a variety of fun and meaningful ways

### **Preparing the Workforce**

- ☐ As a community, we are developing a plan to cover all the skills based training needed to address the workforce demands in our community
- ☐ We offer training (in different modalities) about the "Canadian work systems"
- ☐ We work closely with adult education and literacy to develop and deliver individual-based learning plans
- ☐ We offer training to employers regarding mental health and other disabilities and how to support individuals
- ☐ We have incorporated gaming as another way to prepare people for the workforce
- ☐ We have introduced some small comforts that show people we want them to come to our office and use our resources

### **Transportation**

- ☐ We participate in solving transportation challenges (at the individual level, organizational level, employer level and community-wide level)

## A Few Best Practices from the Literature

*These resources complement what was learned from individuals, service providers and employers. This resource list is not intended to be comprehensive but to provide some “best practices” that were reviewed during the course of the study.*

Source	Best Practice
<b>Redekopp, D., Hopkins, S., Hiebert, B. for the Canadian Career Development Foundation. May 30, 2013.</b> “Assessing the Impact of Career Development Resources and Practitioner Support Across the Employability Dimensions” Project Number 011185188.	4 week self-guided and practitioner guided individualized program proved beneficial: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clients are given a thorough needs analysis to determine their employability need based on 4 dimensions (career exploration/ decision making, skills enhancement, job search and job maintenance)</li> <li>• Based on results an individualized resource guide is put together by experienced service provider who accesses best resources and puts them into a readable, logical and step-by-step package that clients go through over a 4 week period</li> </ul>
<b>Increasing Aboriginal Labour Market Participation: Making a case for Labour Market Intermediaries. September 5, 2012</b> Shauna MacKinnon. <a href="https://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/commentary/increasing-aboriginal-labour-market-participation">https://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/commentary/increasing-aboriginal-labour-market-participation</a>	Manitoba model: Developed with Manitoba employers and community based organizations (CBOs) familiar with the challenges Indigenous people face: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on the long established relationships between CBOs and the target population</li> <li>• Simplify relationships between employers and participating service organizations</li> <li>• Employ personnel dedicated to managing multiple referrals and services that any one individual may require</li> <li>• Establish a governance structure including representatives from employer groups, labour, education and training programs, Aboriginal CBOs and government institutions.</li> <li>• Dedicate resources to bring together the expertise that exists among community based service agencies.</li> <li>• Simplify relationships between government and CBOs by filtering information, reporting and expectations</li> </ul>
<b>BC Partners in Workforce Innovation: First Year in Review. April 2016. BC Centre for Employment Excellence</b> <a href="http://bcpartnerswin.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/BCWiN-early-findings.pdf">http://bcpartnerswin.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/BCWiN-early-findings.pdf</a>	Findings from the first year of an employment program that applies a human resources recruitment model to help meet workforce needs found that employers were engaged, and service partners were able to provide their clients with more job opportunities. The model has three steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate workforce needs to employers</li> <li>• Recruitment Specialist connects job ready candidates to employment</li> <li>• Service Agencies refer job ready candidates to recruitment specialists</li> </ul> <p>Four stage process through which recruitment specialists engages as the central point of communication between employers, service agencies and candidates.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Opportunity</li> <li>2. Recruitment</li> <li>3. Employment</li> <li>4. Follow-up</li> </ol>

Source	Best Practice
<p><b>Employers' Perspectives on Intermittent Work Capacity – What Can Qualitative Research Tell Us. March 25 2011</b></p> <p>Rosemary Lysaght, Terry Krupa, Allan Gregory  <a href="https://qshare.queensu.ca/Users01/lysaght/Rosemary/Employers'%20Perspectives%20-%20Final%20Report.pdf">https://qshare.queensu.ca/Users01/lysaght/Rosemary/Employers'%20Perspectives%20-%20Final%20Report.pdf</a></p>	<p><b>What Employers Say they Do or Have Done</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Predictability from the unpredictable-example – one workplace maintains a pool of casual workers who are ready each day to fill in; another hires an extra worker if absence seems likely; another described engaging the worker to keep a symptom diary to try and find patterns in flare ups and manage illness proactively</li> <li>• Build in a contingency plan – example: engaging worker, supervisor and sometimes co-workers to develop an “action Plan” – may involve personnel solutions like cross-training other employees, job sharing arrangements, setting up a buddy system so that the worker has someone to call if they can't make it in, and workload management</li> <li>• Workforce wellness strategies – taking actions to promote good physical and mental health, and build in worker control over their jobs, work-life and personal lives</li> <li>• Build cohesive, support workplaces – foster social connections between workforce members; sense of “family”</li> <li>• Working proactively with unions - one workplace meets annually to review types of claims filed for purposes of identifying emerging needs and changes in needed in order to better accommodate. They have a “Common Duty to Accommodate Framework” that outlines procedures</li> <li>• Education and outreach to relevant community organizations- employers spoke about reaching out to receive information about the health condition and to access training and other relevant resources</li> </ul> <p><b>Supports that Employers Say they Need</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education/Training – about legislation and duty to accommodate – knowing what to do, particularly for small business owners and supervisors. Supervisors also need training in recognizing problems in work capacity not brought forward by worker, workplace accommodation policies, anti-stigma, sensitivity and communication skills – training options include online webinars, self-paced instruction and single day workshops</li> <li>• Developing support networks/alliances – businesses sharing procedures, what they do</li> <li>• Disability management toolkit – that includes a layperson's summary of relevant legislation, structured guidelines, websites to consult and other resources – for large and small employers</li> <li>• Access to HR specialist – particularly for small business owners – eg. Having a hotline or group to consult when situations arise</li> </ul>

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## Appendix

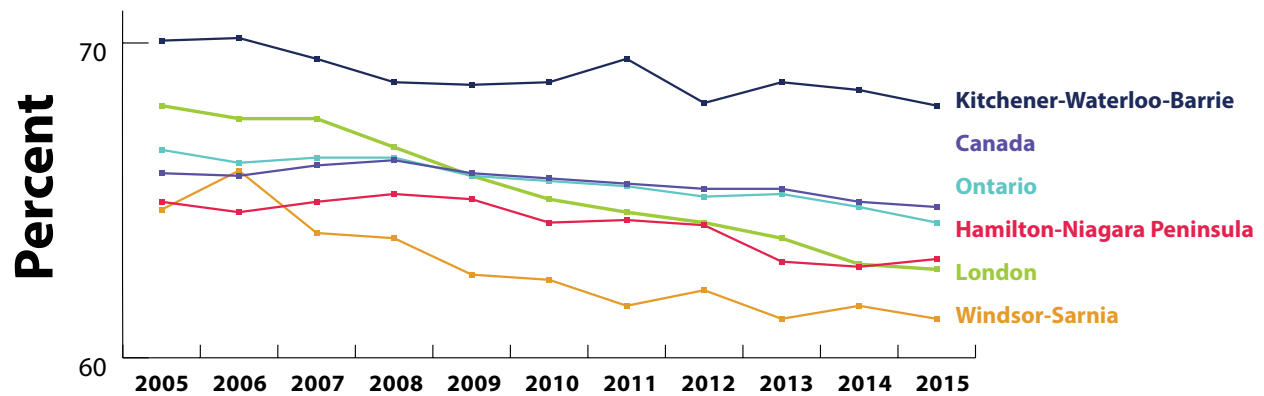
## Appendix 1. Communities in the London Economic Region

County	London CMA includes	Communities in the Economic Region but not in the CMA
Elgin County	Central Elgin Southwold St. Thomas	Bayham Malahide Aylmer Dutton/Dunwich West Elgin
Middlesex County	Adelaide Metcalfe City of London Middlesex Centre Strathroy-Caradoc Thames Centre	Newbury Southwest Middlesex Chippewas of the Thames First Nation 42 Munsee-Delaware Nation 1 Oneida 41 North Middlesex Lucan Biddulph
Oxford County		Norwich Tillsonburg (CA) South-West Oxford Ingersoll (CA) Zorra East Zorra-Tavistock Woodstock (CA) Blenheim

## Appendix 2. Participation Rate Trends of the Population Age 15+, Canada, Ontario and Selected Economic Regions

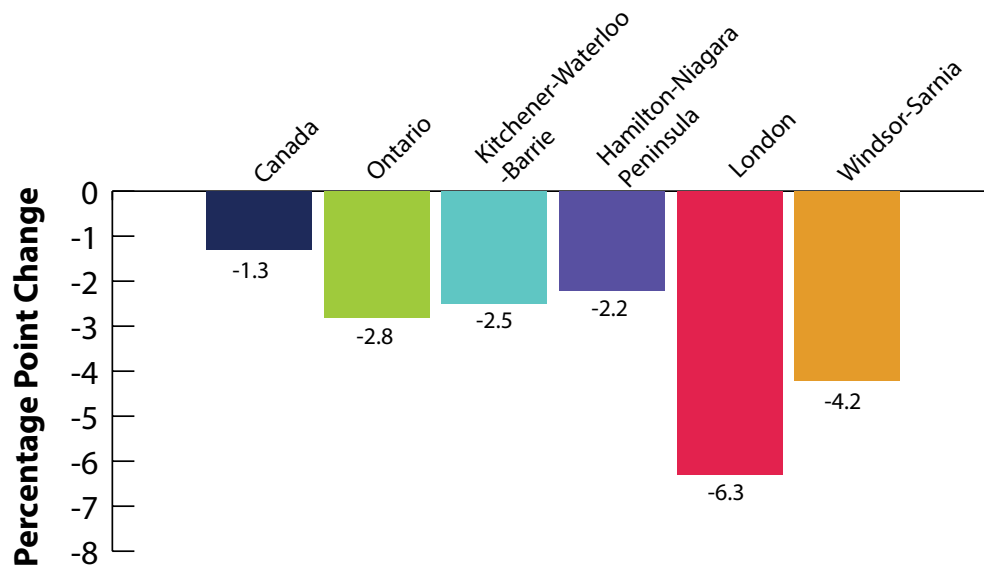
Overall, for the population age 15+, London's participation in the labour market for the last ten years has declined dramatically, hitting a low point in 2015. From 2005 to 2015, the London Economic Region's overall participation rate declined more steeply and more consistently compared to other economic regions in southern Ontario and compared to Ontario and Canada. During this period, London's participation rate dropped from 69.7% to 63.4%. This drop of 6.3 percentage points is the largest compared to the other regions. In 2015, London's participation rate was higher only than Windsor-Sarnia's rate of 61.5%, and just below Hamilton-Niagara's rate of 63.8%.

**Figure: Participation Rates, Age 15+ by Economic Region**



Source 3: Statistics Canada. Table 282-0123 - Labour force survey estimates (LFS), by provinces, territories and economic regions based on 2011 Census boundaries, annual

**Figure: Change in Participation Rate, Population Age 15+, 2005 to 2015**



Source 4: Derived from Statistics Canada. Table 282-0123 - Labour force survey estimates (LFS), by provinces, territories and economic regions based on 2011 Census boundaries, annual

### Appendix 3: Statistical Analysis of Economic Factors Contributing to London's Participation Trend

**Test 1:** Is there a correlation between the 2007 to 2012 unemployment rates of the comparison communities and the 2009 to 2014 participation rates?

**Calculation:**

1. The average unemployment rate for 2007 to 2012 was calculated for each of the areas
2. The average participation rate for 2009 to 2014 was calculated for each of the areas
3. The results were entered into an on-line correlation calculator

**Table 11: Average Unemployment and Participation Rates for 25 to 54 Year Olds**

	Unemployment Rate 2007 to 2012	Participation Rate 2009 to 2014
Hamilton CMA	5.716667	86.38333333
St. Catharines-Niagara CMA	7	85.68333333
Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo CMA	5.8	87.48333333
Guelph CMA	5.1	89.06666667
London CMA	6.666667	85.26666667
Windsor CMA	8.9	82.23333333
Ontario	6.416667	86.21666667
Canada	6.083333	86.48333333

*Derived from Tables 282-0129 and 282-0002*

**Result 1:** The results show that lower unemployment rates among 25 to 54 year olds between 2007 and 2012 go with higher participation rates among 25 to 54 year olds between 2009 and 2014<sup>1</sup>.

**Conclusion 1:** Based on this relationship, London CMA's relatively low five-year-average participation rate (85.3%) can be explained in large part by its relatively high five-year-average unemployment rate (6.7%). More exploration is needed to determine why London's participation rate changed the most dramatically, particularly as Windsor's five-year-average figures are worse than London's. As well, St. Catharines-Niagara's five-year-average unemployment rate is higher than London's but its participation rate is also higher.

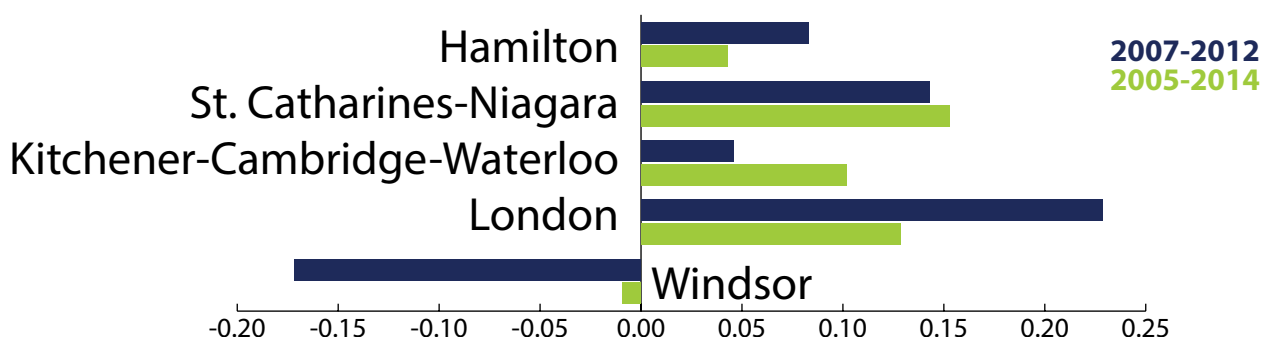
<sup>1</sup> The value of R is -0.961. The value of R2 is 0.9235. This result is significant at  $p < .01$ . Social Science Statistics on-line statistics calculator.

**Test 2:** Did London's year over year unemployment rate increase more quickly compared to other areas?

**Calculation 2:** The slope of each CMA's unemployment rate trend line from 2007 to 2012 was calculated. Canada and Ontario are excluded from this analysis.

**Results 2:** Based on a comparison of the "line of best fit" trend lines, the graph shows that London's unemployment rate trend between 2007 and 2012 is the steepest, i.e. increased over time the most quickly, followed by St. Catharines-Niagara. Windsor's unemployment rate trended downward over this time. Extending the time period to 2005 to 2014, St. Catharines-Niagara's unemployment rate trend is somewhat steeper than London's.

**Figure : Slope of Unemployment Rate Trends Lines for 25 to 54 Year Olds**



**Conclusion 2:** Unemployment rate year over year trends suggest that London's relatively steep participation rate decline may be explained by a comparatively steep upward unemployment rate trend, however, further exploration is needed to determine what else may help explain why London's participation rate declined more significantly than St. Catharines-Niagara's.

**Caution:** this analysis assumes a linear trend when, in fact, unemployment rates peaked in 2009 and have declined since, with St. Catharines-Niagara, London and Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo experiencing a slight increase in 2013.

**Test 3:** Participation rates are believed to improve when people feel positively about the job market. How does London's employment level compare to other areas?

**Calculation 3:** Growth in total employment from 2005 to 2015 is compared for southern Ontario CMA's.

**Results 3:** London's employment level decreased the most in absolute numbers and rate of decline was second to Windsor's. For London, 15,600 full-time jobs were lost from 2005 to 2015, at a rate of 1.0% per year.



	Actual Change 2005 to 2015	Year over Year Change (%)
<b>Hamilton CMA</b>	-7,700	-0.3%
<b>St. Catharines-Niagara CMA</b>	-1,500	-0.12%
<b>Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo CMA</b>	+11,600	+0.64%
<b>Guelph CMA</b>	+8,000	+1.45%
<b>London CMA</b>	-15,000	-0.86%
<b>Windsor CMA</b>	-12,400	-1.08%

#### Appendix 4: Job Vacancy and Wage Survey

Geography (2)	Q1 2015	Q2 2015	Q3 2015	Q4 2015	Q1 2016
Job vacancy rate = # vacant jobs/# vacant jobs + # of occupied jobs					
Ontario	2.6	2.9	2.6	2.4	2.3
Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie, Ontario [3540]	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.6	2.2
Hamilton-Niagara Peninsula, Ontario [3550]	2.9	3.1	2.5	2.3	2
London, Ontario [3560]	2.4	2.6	2.4	2.1	2.1
Windsor-Sarnia, Ontario [3570]	2.1	2.7	2.1	2.6	2.2
# of vacant jobs					
Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie, Ontario [3540]	15,660	17,680	16,695	14,765	12,430
Hamilton-Niagara Peninsula, Ontario [3550]	16,320	20,630	15,130	13,540	10,930
London, Ontario [3560]	5,705	6,925	6,655	5,860	5,890
Windsor-Sarnia, Ontario [3570]	4,920	6,220	5,230	6,960	5,830

Statistics Canada. Table 285-0001 - Job Vacancy and Wage Survey (JVWS), job vacancies, job vacancy rate and average offered hourly wage by economic region, unadjusted for seasonality, quarterly (number unless otherwise noted)

**Appendix 5: Labour Force and Population Data for the London Economic Region: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, custom tabulation 0716\_02 Table 1.IVT**

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Labour Force</b>											
Females	113.8	114.1	114.4	111.6	110.5	109.6	112.8	109.9	109.6	110.1	104.6
25 to 44 years	78.2	75.9	75.1	69.7	72	69.9	73.9	71.4	70.7	70.3	67.8
45 to 54 years	35.6	38.2	39.3	41.9	38.5	39.7	38.9	38.5	38.9	39.8	36.8
Males	128.6	127.7	126.8	124.2	125.6	120.5	119.6	120.5	118.3	115.6	115
25 to 44 years	90.3	86.8	84.6	80	82.2	79.3	77.8	78.7	75.1	72.9	75.6
45 to 54 years	38.3	40.9	42.2	44.2	43.4	41.2	41.8	41.8	43.2	42.7	39.4
Male & Female	242.6	241.8	241.3	235.7	236.2	230.1	232.4	230.5	227.9	225.7	219.6
25 to 44 years	168.6	162.7	159.8	149.7	154.3	149.2	151.7	150.2	145.8	143.2	143.4
45 to 54 years	74.0	79.1	81.5	86.0	81.9	80.9	80.7	80.3	82.1	82.5	76.2
<b>Population</b>											
Females	136.4	137	137.5	134.2	135.1	135.3	138.4	133.6	134.8	135.9	134.7
25 to 44 years	92.8	90.9	89.7	84.2	88.4	86.6	90.9	85.9	86.6	86.8	87
45 to 54 years	43.6	46.1	47.8	50	46.7	48.7	47.5	47.7	48.2	49.1	47.7
Males	139.3	139.7	137.3	135.7	138	133.9	134	134.6	132.7	129	127
25 to 44 years	97.1	94.5	90.4	86.4	90.3	87.6	85.9	86.8	83	80.4	82.2
45 to 54 years	42.2	45.2	46.9	49.3	47.7	46.3	48.1	47.8	49.7	48.6	44.8
Male & Female	275.7	276.7	274.8	270.1	273	269.1	272.3	268.2	267.5	264.9	261.8
25 to 44 years	189.9	185.4	180.1	170.7	178.6	174.2	176.7	172.7	169.6	167.2	169.2
45 to 54 years	85.8	91.3	94.7	99.4	94.4	94.9	95.6	95.5	97.9	97.7	92.6
<b>25 to 54, Combined (Authors' Calculation)</b>											
labour force	242.6	241.8	241.3	235.7	236.2	230.1	232.4	230.5	227.9	225.7	219.6
population	275.7	276.7	274.8	270.1	273	269.1	272.3	268.2	267.5	264.9	261.8
participation rate	88.0%	87.4%	87.8%	87.3%	86.5%	85.5%	85.3%	85.9%	85.2%	85.2%	83.9%
Total unemployed – in the labour force and not in the labour force	45.9	47.3	45.5	47.7	56.9	55.9	55.2	51.5	53.6	51.3	52.7

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Participation Rates</b>											
<b>Females</b>											
25 to 44 years	84.3	83.5	83.7	82.8	81.4	80.7	81.3	83.1	81.6	81	77.9
45 to 54 years	81.7	82.9	82.2	83.8	82.4	81.5	81.9	80.7	80.7	81.1	77.1
<b>Males</b>											
25 to 44 years	93	91.9	93.6	92.6	91	90.5	90.6	90.7	90.5	90.7	92
45 to 54 years	90.8	90.5	90	89.7	91	89	86.9	87.4	86.9	87.9	87.9
<b>Male &amp; Female</b>											
25 to 44 years	88.8	87.8	88.7	87.7	86.4	85.6	85.9	87	86	85.6	84.8
45 to 54 years	86.2	86.6	86.1	86.5	86.8	85.2	84.4	84.1	83.9	84.4	82.3
<b>Not in the labour force (x 1,000)</b>											
Females	22.6	22.9	23.1	22.7	24.6	25.8	25.6	23.7	25.2	25.7	30.2
25 to 44 years	14.6	15.1	14.6	14.6	16.4	16.8	17	14.5	15.9	16.5	19.2
45 to 54 years	8	7.8	8.5	8.1	8.2	9	8.6	9.2	9.3	9.2	11
Males	10.7	12.1	10.4	11.6	12.3	13.4	14.3	14.1	14.4	13.4	12
25 to 44 years	6.8	7.7	5.7	6.4	8	8.3	8.1	8.1	7.9	7.5	6.6
45 to 54 years	3.9	4.4	4.7	5.2	4.3	5.1	6.2	6	6.5	5.9	5.4
Male & Female	33.2	34.9	33.5	34.3	36.9	39.2	40	37.8	39.6	39.3	42.2
25 to 44 years	21.4	22.7	20.3	21	24.4	25.1	25.1	22.6	23.8	24.1	25.8
45 to 54 years	11.8	12.2	13.2	13.3	12.5	14.1	14.9	15.2	15.8	15.2	16.4
<b>Unemployed and in the labour force (x 1,000)</b>											
Females	3.7	5.5	3.4	5.8	6.7	6.6	6.5	6.7	6	5.2	3.2
25 to 44 years	3.7	4	3.4	4	4.8	4.3	4.5	4.5	4.1	3.3	3.2
45 to 54 years	0	1.5	0	1.8	1.9	2.3	2	2.2	1.9	1.9	0
Males	7.6	6.9	7.3	7.6	13.2	10	8.6	6.9	8	6.9	4.6
25 to 44 years	5.7	5	5.3	5.1	9.4	6.7	5.9	4.5	5.8	5.1	4.6
45 to 54 years	1.9	1.9	2	2.5	3.8	3.3	2.7	2.4	2.2	1.8	0
Male & Female	12.7	12.4	12	13.4	20	16.7	15.2	13.7	14	12	10.5
25 to 44 years	9.4	9	8.7	9.1	14.2	11	10.4	9.1	9.9	8.4	7.9
45 to 54 years	3.3	3.4	3.3	4.3	5.8	5.7	4.8	4.6	4.1	3.6	2.6

## Appendix 6: Statistical Analysis – Reasons for Non-Participation

1. Is London's distribution of want to work/don't want work or not available different from Ontario's?

**Null hypothesis:** want to work/don't want to work profile is independent of geography

**Alternative hypothesis:** want to work/don't want work profile is dependent on geography

The chi-square statistic,  $p$ -value and statement of significance appear beneath the table. Blue means you're dealing with dependent variables; red, independent.

Results						
	want to work	don't want, not available				Row Totals
London	3000 (-870.29) [-20097.34]	38200 (2074.44) [629113.48]				41200
Ontario	87200 (1329.62) [5545726.24]	735000 (80.94) [6673243639.25]				822200
Column Totals	90200	773200				863400 (Grand Total)

The chi-square statistic is 6679398381.6315. The  $p$ -value is  $< .00001$ . The result is significant at  $p < .05$ .

## Appendix 7: Employment Barriers and Limitations, Persons with Disabilities, Ontario by Age, Limitations and Barriers, Percent of People with Disabilities by Age Breakdown

	25 to 44	45 to 64
Expected income less than current	13.2	11.8
Lose additional supports	11	22.5
Lack of specialized transportation	5.2	F
Family responsibilities	17.8	F
Past attempts unsuccessful	16.9	27.5
Family and/or friends discourage	F	F
Experienced discrimination	7.5	10.7
Training and/or experience not adequate	23.4	24.8
Few jobs available locally	21.3	24.2
Accessibility issues	F	F
Other reason	17.1	29.7

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 115-0007 - Limitations and barriers to employment for adults with disabilities, by age group, Canada, provinces and territories, occasional (number unless otherwise noted), CANSIM (database)



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