FOUR COUNTY LABOUR MARKET PLANNING BOARD

LOCAL LABOUR MARKET PLAN

2021

This publication was prepared by Tingting Zhang.

Four County Labour Market Planning Board

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The Four County Labour Market Planning Board (Planning Board) is a community-directed, not-for-profit organization that specializes in providing labour market information for Bruce, Grey, Huron, and Perth counties. This report reflects input received from local employers and residents regarding the labour market situation in the four county area.

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FOUR COUNTY LABOUR MARKET PLANNING BOARD DIRECTORS AND STAFF

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PURPOSE

The purpose of the Local Labour Market Plan (LLMP) is to identify significant labour market issues in the four county area and set a strategic direction that addresses these issues and puts forth actions that will help improve identified labour market challenges. The outcome of the LLMP and its resulting initiatives is intended to support local residents who are looking for work in the job market, to help employees remain employed, and to assist employers with better access to the labour pool to be competitive in the global market.

DATA

The 2020-2021 LLMP uses both primary and secondary data to provide evidence and information for the community. The various sources that have been used in this document include:

- Labour Force Survey (LFS)
- Employment Ontario Program data
- Canadian Business Counts
- 2011 National Household Survey
- 2016 Census data
- Taxfiler data
- Statistics Canada data files

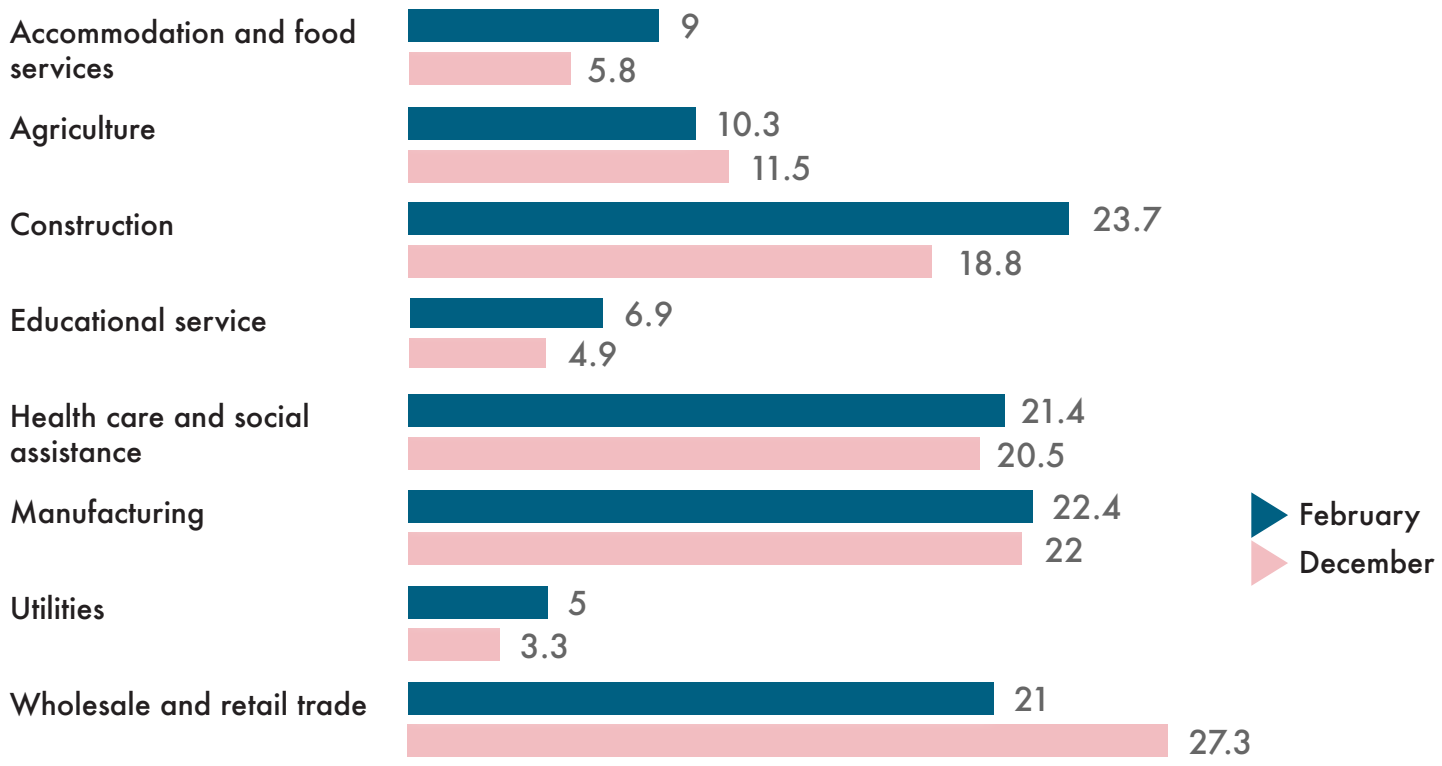
From the above data sources, this report uses the most current data available from 2020 while in some instances data from 2011 and 2016 is the most current available. The LLMP focuses on the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula Economic Region (ER) which comprises of Bruce, Grey, Huron and Perth counties.

LLMP STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Year 2020 was a special year as the Coronavirus (COVID-19) hit the economy unexpectedly. Businesses were shuttered, schools closed, and employees were pushed to work from home to manage the spread of the virus. It was clear that the economic impact of COVID-19 is unlike the impact of any recession Canada has experienced in the past. In early April, Statistics Canada reported that 3,100,000 Canadians experienced job loss or a reduction in hours due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Statistics Canada, 2020a). By June 2020, the federal government had reported that the employment of 5.5 million Canadians was impacted by the COVID-19 economic shutdown (Statistics Canada, 2020b). Locally, the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula ER saw unemployment rise from 5.9 percent in March to 9.6 percent in June 2020, with a corresponding decrease in the number of people employed in the region. From these statistics, it is evident that the labour demand was negatively impacted by the government-imposed lockdowns that have shut down specific sectors of the economy in order to manage the spread of COVID-19. On the other hand, the compulsory closing of childcare and schools has also limited the labour supply of households. As a result, both labour demand and supply were impacted by COVID-19, which was unprecedented in recent times.

Since the health restrictions were lifted in May, the employment of the four county area started to recover. Unemployment rate decreased gradually from 9.6 percent in June to 5.6 percent in December. Compared to February, several industries have rebounded fully in December while others still lagged behind. For instance, employment in Wholesale and retail trade exceeds the pre-COVID level as do the number of people working in Agriculture, 6,300 and 1,200 higher than February, respectively. Construction, however, still remained below its pre-COVID level (4,900 less than February), followed by Accommodation and food services and Utilities. In December 2020, the sectors with the largest percent employment gap were Accommodation and food services (-36 percent), Utilities (-34 percent), Educational service (-29 percent), and Construction (-21 percent).

CHART 1: EMPLOYMENT IN SELECTED INDUSTRIES COMPARED TO FEBURARY (IN THOUSANDS)



Source: Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey

As of August, all jobs that can be restored have been restored (Hagan, 2020). With the battle against COVID-19 ongoing, jobs that have not been restored may be harder to restore or may disappear altogether. Shockingly, the recent RBC report indicated that the long-term unemployment (27 consecutive weeks or more) in Canada “has surged by nearly 250 percent since the beginning of the pandemic” (RBC Thought Leadership, 2020a). According to the latest LFS report, “A total of 443,000 Canadians, or one-quarter (25.6 percent) of all the unemployed, had been continuously out of work for 27 weeks or more" (The Daily, 2020a). From previous findings, “workers who became unemployed as a result of previous economic downturns have experienced a range of long-term consequences, including long-term reduction in earnings” (The Daily, 2020a). As the RBC report mentioned, “Long periods of joblessness can have multiple consequences, including eroding skills and increasing the likelihood that affected workers drop out of the labour force altogether" (RBC Thought Leadership, 2020a). Therefore, workers who experience a prolonged period of joblessness due to COVID-19 may face many short-term and long-term challenges. The local labour market recovery depends largely on how quickly the permanently laid-off workers and those who have been jobless for extended periods find new work.

The severity of the second wave of COVID-19 that we are experiencing now may signal another employment decline. Localized mobility is continued along with strict requirements on personal protective equipment. Limits on personal interactions persist, including physical social-distancing requirements and restrictions on the size of gatherings. All of these can tell that the recovery of the local labour market will continue to be slow or even reverse and thus take some time to recuperate the remaining jobs lost.

SMALL BUSINESS RECOVERY

The initial impact of COVID-19 on local businesses was devastating. According to the local business surveys conducted by each county, most surveyed businesses in March indicated that the impact of COVID-19 was significant (Bruce County: 87 percent of businesses[1], Grey County: 80 percent[2], Huron County: 85 percent[3], and Perth County: 74 percent[4]). Many businesses shut down operations, laid off staff, or reduced operating hours as a result of COVID-19. According to the RBC report, small firms in five industries face the biggest challenge: accommodation and food services, arts and entertainment, non-essential retail, mining, oil and gas, and commercial real estate leasing. Firms in these sectors tend to have either high debt loads or low profit margins (RBC Thought Leadership, 2020b). They all require greater physical contact, which make them vulnerable to social-distancing policies. The report indicates that 80 percent of these businesses had already experienced revenue declines and two thirds have experienced a revenue decline of more than 50 percent" (RBC Thought Leadership, 2020b).

As the initial COVID-19 economic shutdown has changed to more limited and targeted public health measures, businesses started to reopen and rehire their employees. Since the end of May, many businesses have started to "adapt to the new reality by shifting to teleworking, reducing hours, laying off staff, applying for government funding or seeking rent relief" (Tam, Sood & Johnston, 2020). Also, according to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, "three quarters of small businesses have taken on debt as a result of COVID-19" (Canadian Federation of Independent Business, 2020). Even with government funding being accessible due to debts, some businesses especially in the hardest hit sectors such as Accommodation and food services had to shut down because of COVID-19. The permanent closures of local businesses are likely to disrupt the entire supply chain since "every business— from nail salon to e-commerce start-up— is a supplier to and/or customer of other firms" (RBC Thought Leadership, 2020c). Therefore, it is important to support local businesses to survive in this pandemic. Such support can be financial funding and marketing of buying local initiatives.

For the surviving businesses, they will continue need workers, supplies such as personal protect equipment, and financial support in order to survive in the second and future waves of COVID-19. It will take time and investment for them to expand their businesses and reposition themselves for a new economy that is more digital, virtual, and mobile than before (RBC Thought Leadership, 2020c). New businesses may also emerge to adapt to the new economy and eventually restore much of the lost capacity due to permanent closures. Both surviving and new businesses are crucial to the recovery of the local economy.

1 "Economic Impact of COVID-19 in Bruce County." Accessed April 2020. https://pub-brucecounty.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=9409

2 "Business Impact Surveys." Accessed May 2020. https://www.grey.ca/covid-19-resources/surveys

3 "Impacts of COVID-19 on Huron County Businesses- Survey Results." April 2020.

4 "COVID-19 in Perth County Measuring the Impact on the Business Community." Accessed May 2020. https://www.perthcounty.ca/en/doing-business/resources/files/COVID-19-in-Perth-County---Measuring-the-Impact.pdf

TELEWORKING IMPROVEMENT

COVID-19 has accelerated the speed of digitalization in how we work, live and shop. At the same time, it also broke the cultural and technological barriers that prevented remote work in the past. Ever since the March lockdown across Canada, people, except essential workers, were forced to work from home as a means of balancing employment with the need to protect health and safety. Although many people returned to the workplace as economies reopened in May, some still chose remote work (use interchangeably with telework) as the enforcement of social distancing measures remained. Statistics Canada's March 2020 Perspectives Survey Series found that 39.1 percent of people were teleworking during the last week of March (The Daily, 2020b). Gallacher and Hossain (2020) estimated that 41 percent of jobs in Canada can be performed remotely, implying workers had almost reached the maximum capacity of telework in March. Every sector of the economy obviously has various telework capacity. Sectors that have the highest amount of work that can be performed from home are Finance and insurance, Educational services, and Professional, scientific and technical services with over 75 percent of telework capacity (Deng, Morissette & Messacar, 2020). However, Agriculture, Accommodation and food services, Construction and Manufacturing have the least capacity of telework (between 4% and 20%). While these sectors represent four of the five top sectors in the four county area, their limited capacity of telework make them vulnerable during the pandemic. Other sectors such as Health care and social assistance and Public transportation have given limited choices to work remotely as well.

In order to adapt to this digital transformation, many business owners have invested to improve their online capabilities and equip their workforces to use digital tools such as video meetings. Those who have better online capabilities reported fewer declines in sales (Export Development Canada, 2020). With remote work, workers and firms are able to save commuting time and expenses. Though there is little evidence of the productivity gains or losses from switching to remote work arrangements, Verbanas-Rutgers (2020) found that "parents working from home were happier and more productive than those without kids". This was mainly caused by an increasing amount of childcare and housework that men could share while working from home. Even with these positive sides, remote work can come at a cost. For example, it is hard to maintain social ties online. Employees may feel a lack of belonging and team collaboration can be challenging as well. Some employees' productivity can also be challenged due to mental health, digital fatigue, and a lack of work-life balance. As a result, the benefits and drawbacks of remote work remains unclear.

Regardless, the pandemic has increased the demand for Internet resources in rural areas. Telework, telehealth, distance learning and online shopping have all surged due to COVID-19. However, most places, businesses and households in the four county area still face poor bandwidth for connectivity. Many local provides still rely on older and slower technologies and they "have limited incentives to increase effective network capacity as consumer demand for network resources grows over time" (Rajabiun, Hambly & Worden, 2020). Rajabiun, Hambly, and Worden (2020) has raised the concern around "growing rural-urban digital divide in broadband service quality and affordability, and potential widening of intra-rural and intra-urban service gaps". With low levels of digitalization and difficulties in accessing networks, the economic recovery of rural communities during and after COVID-19 may be hindered.

RETENTION AND ATTRACTION

POPULATION TREND

According to the 2016 Census data and Components of population change by census division data, we calculated estimated population for the four counties from 2015 to 2019 (Table 1). Over this time period, Grey and Huron counties experienced decreases in population while Bruce and Perth counties experienced increases. A decrease in population means that the total number of new births and immigrants cannot offset that of deaths and emigrants in the region. Therefore, it is important for Grey and Huron counties to attract people to their areas and retain their current residents.

Looking at each county specifically, we find that the population of Bruce County gradually increased from 66,720 in 2015 to 67,041 in 2019. Grey County, however, experienced decreases in population from 91,730 in 2015 to 91,240 in 2019. The population of Huron County experienced a slight decrease first from 57,825 in 2015 to 57,804 in 2016, then an increase to 57,822 in 2017, and finally it decreased to 57,806 in 2019. In contrast, Perth County experienced steady increases in population from 75,175 in 2015 to 75,888 in 2019.

TABLE 1: POPULATION ESTIMATES, 2015-2019

Geography	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Ontario	13,242,160	13,374,564	13,485,266	13,627,435	13,776,069
Bruce County	66,720	66,812	66,882	66,959	67,041
Grey County	91,730	91,596	91,502	91,379	91,240
Huron County	57,825	57,804	57,822	57,808	57,806
Perth County	75,175	75,345	75,517	75,707	75,888

Note: Population (this year) =population (last year) +births –deaths +immigrations –emigrations
Source: Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0140-01 Components of population change by census division, 2016 boundaries

URBAN TO RURAL MOVING

Since remote work has become prevalent due to lockdowns and health restrictions, people have been motivated to move away from major metropolitan areas to places that are safer with higher quality of life. Some city dwellers have moved out of the cities to rural communities in the four county areas since March. This can be shown by the rising prices of housing in communities across the region such as Kincardine. With the battle against COVID-19 ongoing and public health measures being tightened again, these city dwellers may remain in the four county area for the next year. As a result, they can be a potential source to fill the local workforce gap. On the other hand, if employers in the four county area are open to remote work arrangements and have vacancies eligible for remote work, then they can actually employ people from other cities to fill long term vacancies.

Besides attraction, retention is also an important factor for local labour market development. In the past years, employers have reported various difficulties in hiring. One of them would be the issue of quits as a cost to their businesses. In 2019, the Planning Board reached out to local businesses with strong reputations for employee engagement and retention. Through in-depth interviews with employers and focus group discussion with local job seekers, we've identified the strategies and policies that are most effective when retaining employees. The top 10 identified strategies can be found on our Planning Board website[5].

5 https://www.planningboard.ca/2020-vision/employer-toolkit-retention-strategies/

OVERVIEW OF THE LABOR MARKET IN BRUCE, GREY, HURON AND PERTH COUNTIES

The labour market of 2020 experienced a different than usual situation with virus confinement measures being introduced in March. With this negative shock, the local economy in the four county area was undoubtedly affected. Total employment decreased from 154,600 in 2019 to 149,100 in 2020, a difference of 5,500 persons (Table 2). In particular, this decrease was mainly driven by part-time employment. Compared to 2019, there was a loss of 6,600 people employed part-time in 2020. Though full-time employment increased by 1,100 in 2020, it could not offset the loss in part-time employment, thus resulting in a decrease in total employment in the region.

TABLE 2: LABOUR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS (IN THOUSANDS, ANNUALLY)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Employment	145.5	149	155.8	154.6	149.1
Full-time employment	113.4	118.9	126.1	120.7	121.8
Part-time employment	32.1	30.1	29.8	33.9	27.3

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0090-01 Labour force characteristics by province, territory and economic region, annual

When we look at the monthly data, unadjusted for seasonality, we can see the employment of 2020 has been varied due to the confinement measures (Table 3). The total employment of the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula ER was 158,800 in January. In March, it started to decrease due to lockdowns until it reached the lowest of 140,800 in August. After August, employment has gradually increased to 152,600 in December, though still lower than the pre-COVID level. Overall, part-time jobs have been steadily recovered in Canada at a faster speed than full-time positions. The Stratford-Bruce Peninsula ER also experienced a faster recovery of part-time jobs than full-time jobs. Part-time employment in December was 32,100, which was 1,800 less than that in February (pre-COVID level). However, full-time employment in December was 120,500, which was 4,200 away from the pre-COVID level.

TABLE 3: LABOUR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS (IN THOUSANDS, MONTHLY)

	Employment, Ontario	Employment, Stratford-Bruce Peninsula	Full-time Employment, Ontario	Full-time Employment, Stratford-Bruce Peninsula	Part-time Employment, Ontario	Part-time Employment, Stratford-Bruce Peninsula
Jan-20	7,512.5	158.8	6,068.7	123.1	1,443.8	35.7
Feb-20	7,488.9	158.6	6,056.3	124.7	1,432.6	33.9
Mar-20	7,317.0	156.8	5,955.2	127.1	1,361.8	29.7
Apr-20	6,968.7	150.2	5,750.8	124.5	1,217.9	25.7
May-20	6,632.0	145.9	5,569.0	122.8	1,063.0	23.1
Jun-20	6,583.0	143.8	5,569.6	119.6	1,013.4	24.2
Jul-20	6,777.0	144.2	5,709.6	121.0	1,067.3	23.1
Aug-20	7,003.5	140.8	5,858.9	119.0	1,144.6	21.8
Sep-20	7,126.6	143.2	5,911.0	120.0	1,215.6	23.2
Oct-20	7,223.8	147.1	5,949.7	119.6	1,274.1	27.4
Nov-20	7,284.9	152.8	5,958.0	120.6	1,326.9	32.2
Dec-20	7,299.1	152.6	5,959.5	120.5	1,339.6	32.1

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0293-01 Labour force characteristics by economic region, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality, last 5 months

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

The annual unemployment rate of the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula ER has been relatively stable from 2016 to 2019, ranging from 3.7 percent to 4.8 percent (Table 4). Nevertheless, it increased to 7.2 percent in 2020, the highest in the past 5 years. Similarly, the provincial unemployment rate increased to 9.6 percent, the highest in the 2016-20 period as well. While this increase of the unemployment rate was largely driven by the impact of COVID-19, one could expect it to decrease when COVID-19 lifts its grip.

TABLE 4: UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, YEARLY (PERCENT)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Ontario	6.8	6.5	6	5.6	9.6
Stratford-Bruce Peninsula, Ontario	4.8	4.5	3.7	4.3	7.2

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0090-01 Labour force characteristics by province, territory and economic region, annual

Monthly, the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula ER saw unemployment rise from 5.9 percent in March to a peak of 9.6 percent in June 2020 (Table 5). Even though this was lower than the provincial level of 12.5 percent in June, it still shows the negative shock of COVID-19 on the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula ER. When public health restrictions were lifted in June, many businesses started to reopen and rehire their employees. After July, the local unemployment rate started to decrease, reaching 5.6 percent in December. Though this is still higher than the pre-COVID level, it could show a positive sign of slow recovery of the local economy.

TABLE 5: UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, MONTHLY 2020 (PERCENT)

	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20
Ontario	5	5.1	6.2	8.2	11	12.5	12.8	12.1	11	9.9	8.7	8.5
Stratford-Bruce Peninsula	4.1	4.9	5.9	8.1	9.3	9.6	8.6	8.7	7.9	6.4	5.4	5.6

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0293-01 Labour force characteristics by economic region, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality, last 5 months

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFICIARIES

Ever since COVID-19 started and its initial impact was felt in March, the Canadian government introduced Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) in order to give financial support to employed and self-employed Canadians who are directly affected by COVID-19. For people who were eligible for CERB, they may not apply for Employment Insurance (EI) at the same time. As a result, we can see fewer EI beneficiaries from June to September compared to last year. In October when CERB ended, people started to transition back to EI, resulting in an increase of EI beneficiaries from 2,580 in September to 8,430 in October (Table 6). In comparison with the number of EI beneficiaries in October 2019, 2020 had almost doubled beneficiaries. This increase may suggest that the region still had significantly more people not working than it did the same time last year. According to the LFS, a total of 8,800 people were unemployed in November in the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula ER. However, there were 9,020 EI beneficiaries at the same time. Part of the reason could be the temporary changes to eligibility rules introduced to the EI program in September 2020 (The Daily, 2020c). Therefore, more people were eligible for EI and benefited from it. Though the December EI statistics are not available at the time of writing this report, we can see local people's dependency on financial support as a result of COVID-19. The concern for this situation would be how long unemployed people need to rely on EI due to COIVD-19 and how to help them get a job in the future.

TABLE 6: EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFICIARIES (STRATFORD-BRUCE PENINSULA, ONTARIO)

	2019	2020
	# of People	# of People
January	6,680	7,240
February	6,800	6,910
March	6,900	7,510
April	5,290	7,200
May	4,240	5,300
June	4,270	3,800
July	5,710	3,360
August	5,560	3,080
September	3,950	2,580
October	4,260	8,430
November	4,720	9,020
December	5,620	N/A

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0343-01 Employment Insurance beneficiaries by economic region, monthly, unadjusted for seasonality

INDUSTRY CONDITION

In the past five years, the total employment of all industries have been steadily increasing until 2020 when the pandemic occurred. This is true for both the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula ER and Ontario as a whole. Employment in the goods-producing sector in the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula ER increased from 48,800 in 2016 to 58,700 in 2019 and then decreased to 56,800 in 2020 (Table 7). However, the employment trend of the services-producing sector has fluctuated in the past five years. Overall, it decreased from 96,700 in 2016 to 92,300 in 2020. Among all industries, people who were employed in Health care and social assistance increased the most by 6,500 over the 2016-2020 period. Accommodation and food services experienced the largest decrease in employment by 6,600 over the same time period.

TABLE 7: EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY (ANNUAL)

	Ontario					Stratford-Bruce Peninsula				
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total employed, all industries	6,999.6	7,128.0	7,242.4	7,452.6	7,081.4	145.5	149.0	155.8	154.6	149.1
Goods-producing sector	1,418.1	1,432.6	1,453.1	1,467.8	1,412.4	48.8	54.8	57.9	58.7	56.8
Agriculture	77.7	68.5	69.0	74.0	73.3	10.0	11.9	12.4	12.4	10.1
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	35.8	35.1	34.8	35.3	35.9	1.6	1.7	x	x	1.6
Utilities	49.5	47.2	56.6	54.7	50.7	4.2	4.8	6.6	6.6	3.7
Construction	503.7	512.5	525.1	542.8	520.8	13.7	15.9	18.0	16.6	18.5
Manufacturing	751.4	769.3	767.6	761.1	731.6	19.2	20.5	20.6	21.7	22.8
Services-producing sector	5,581.4	5,695.4	5,789.2	5,984.8	5,669.0	96.7	94.1	98.0	95.9	92.3
Wholesale and retail trade	1,033.2	1,068.9	1,074.2	1,098.4	1,038.9	23.6	22.2	25.1	23.3	21.9
Transportation and warehousing	327.2	341.4	379.1	403.0	361.0	5.4	4.9	7.4	6.1	5.1
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	555.3	560.5	563.9	588.2	607.9	7.3	7.2	6.3	4.6	6.1
Professional, scientific and technical services	594.6	629.0	637.8	682.8	679.2	4.3	6.9	5.3	6.4	7.1
Business, building and other support services	326.1	314.7	319.7	315.7	293.9	4.6	5.0	3.7	4.5	3.5
Educational services	502.8	497.1	521.2	548.7	521.3	7.8	7.4	7.1	8.3	6.0
Health care and social assistance	838.4	869.5	851.6	905.7	879.5	15.6	16.5	18.7	19.9	22.1
Information, culture and recreation	318.0	312.9	318.1	304.9	280.2	4.7	5.4	4.8	2.9	3.3
Accommodation and food services	456.8	454.3	468.2	457.8	340.5	13.1	9.4	10.7	9.4	6.5
Other services (except public administration)	276.1	275.9	290.4	299.9	278.0	6.2	5.9	5.8	5.7	5.4
Public administration	353.0	371.2	365.0	379.8	388.7	4.2	3.4	3.0	4.9	5.2

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0092-01 Employment by industry, annual, provinces and economic regions (x 1,000)

In 2020, the impact of COVID-19 on economic activity has been unprecedented and highly uneven across sectors. Obviously, the most affected jobs were tourism and travel, restaurants, education, arts, culture, recreation and sports, and various kinds of consumer goods. Accommodations and food services, Construction, Wholesale and Retail trade have been the top sectors contributing to the loss of employment in the four county area. Of the 14,800 jobs lost between February and June 2020, 10,900 were lost in these industries. Some of them rebounded when health restrictions were lifted since June while others still lagged behind. Compared to 2019, all industries experienced losses in employment except Construction, Manufacturing, Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing, Professional, scientific and technical services, Health care and social assistance, Information, culture and recreation, and Public administration. Though these increases in employment may show early signs of recovery in these industries, their future employment is still uncertain as new restrictions were introduced in early 2021. Compared to 2019, the biggest losses in employment were in Utilities and Accommodation and food services, at 2,900 each.

GENDER DIFFERENCES

As COVID-19 affected sectors differently, the extent to which COVID-19 has impacted individuals also varied. Since men and women are likely to be employed in different sectors of the local economy and carry different care responsibilities, they tend to face different labour demand shocks.

In terms of employment, both men and women faced decreases in their employment with the initial impact of the March shutdown. However, the employment of males recovered to 88,100 in December compared to the pre-COVID level of 88,900 in February. The employment of females in December was 64,500, which was still 5,200 less than that in February.

In terms of participation rate, men and women experienced different trends. The male participation rate increased from 71.7 percent in February to 73.4 percent in December (Table 8). Nevertheless, the female participation rate decreased from 60.9 percent in February to 55.2 percent in December. This implies that women's ability to continue in the labour market has been adversely affected due to COVID-19. Normally, women are responsible for the brunt of unpaid care work at home including childcare, elder care, domestic labour, and caring for sick relatives. When various health restrictions were introduced to combat the virus, the closing of childcare and change of school delivery method to e-learning have limited their ability to function as part of the local labour supply. As a result, many women chose to stay at home and take care of their children. One would expect the female participation rate to increase once COVID-19 is under control and no longer a threat to individuals. However, the concern would be how to attract these women back to the labour force and improve their skills to match the changes in labour market demand.

TABLE 8: EMPLOYMENT AND PARTICIPATION RATE BY GENDER (MONTHLY 2020)

	Employment (x1000)			Participation rate (Percent)		
	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female
Jan-20	158.8	86.3	72.4	66	69.7	62.1
Feb-20	158.6	88.9	69.7	66.4	71.7	60.9
Mar-20	156.8	87.3	69.5	66.3	72.7	59.8
Apr-20	150.2	84.7	65.4	65	73.2	56.6
May-20	145.9	83.1	62.9	64.1	72.9	55
Jun-20	143.8	81.5	62.3	63.3	72	54.6
Jul-20	144.2	80.9	63.2	62.7	70.7	54.8
Aug-20	140.8	77.6	63.2	61.4	69.2	53.7
Sep-20	143.2	79.1	64	61.9	70	54
Oct-20	147.1	82.7	64.4	62.6	71.7	53.7
Nov-20	152.8	87.5	65.3	64.3	73.2	55.4
Dec-20	152.6	88.1	64.5	64.3	73.4	55.2

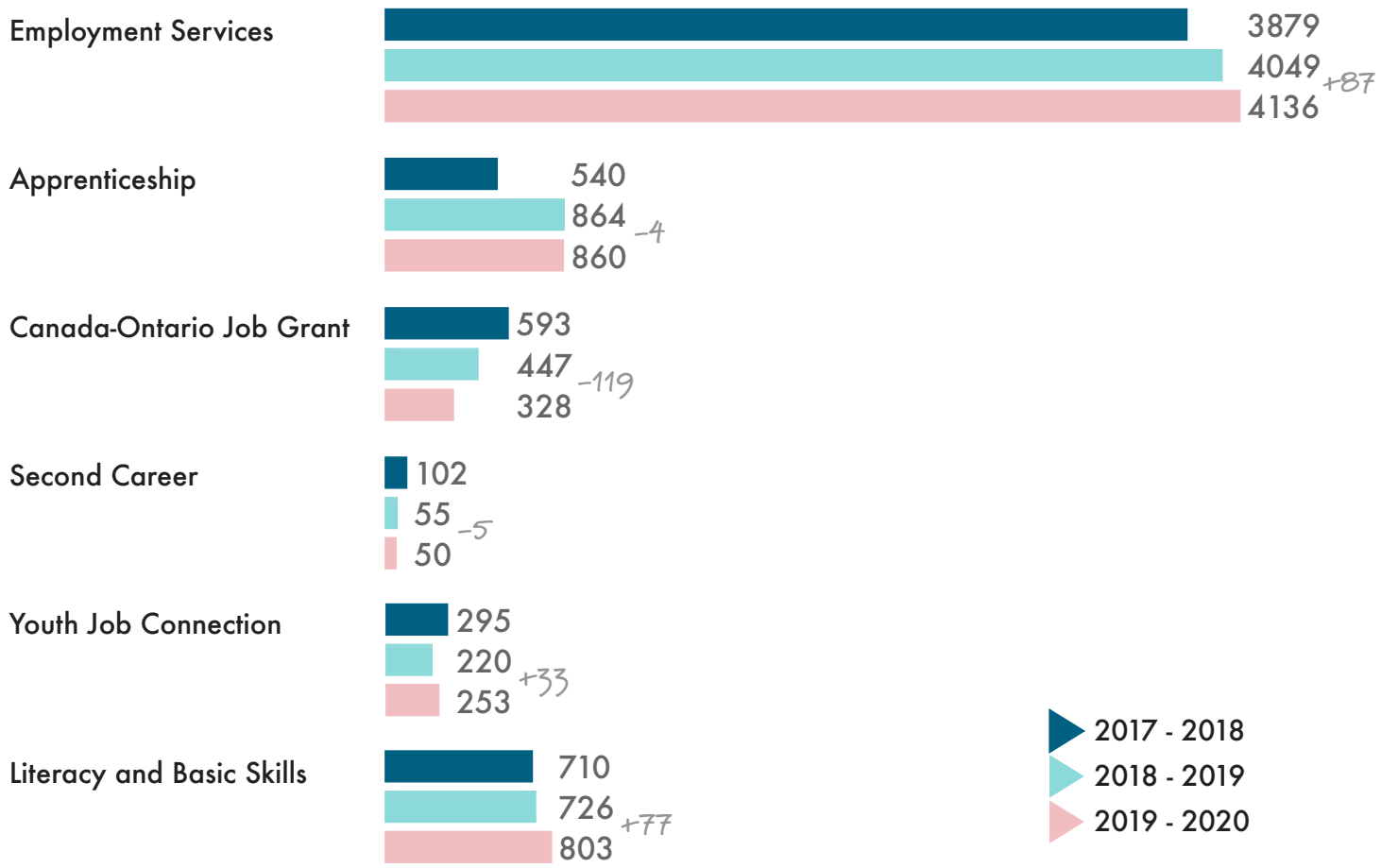
Source: Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey.

EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO PROGRAM DATA OBSERVATIONS

Employment Ontario (EO) provides a variety of programs to help clients get the training, skills, and experience they need to succeed in the changing labour market. This is not only important for job seekers with their job search but also for employers who look for the right candidates with the right skills. This report uses the 2020 program data from the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development to analyze the performance of EO's six programs in 2019-2020 in order to provide any insights to both EO providers and non-EO organizations with their execution of local labour market plans (see Chart 2).

From Chart 2, we can see that all EO programs have served a total of 6,430 clients in 2019-2020, 69 more clients than that in 2018-2019. Among all programs, the Canada-Ontario Job Grant experienced the greatest decline of 119 clients, which might be explained by the change of program delivery in August 2019. However, the increased number of clients from Employment Services and Literacy and Basic Skills greatly offsets this decrease, resulting in a total increase of 69 clients.

CHART 2: EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO PROGRAMS

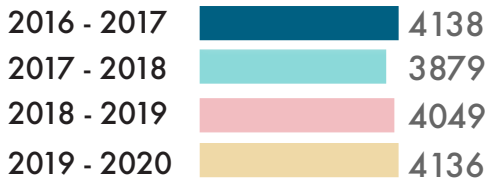


Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

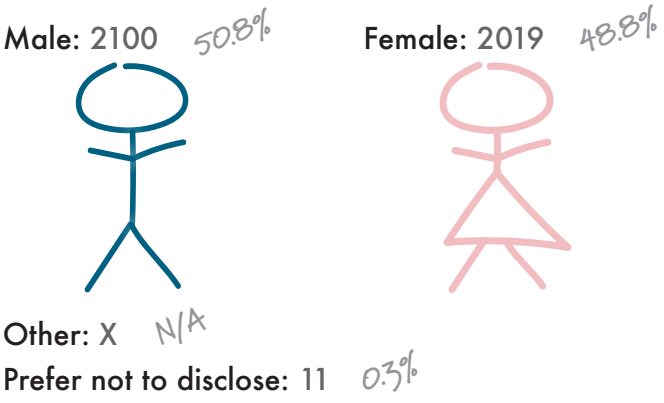
Employment Services offers various resources and supports to individuals who need help with their employment and skills-upgrading. Over the 2019-2020 period, it served 87 more clients compared to last year. The total number of clients was 4,136, which went back to the 2016-2017 level (Chart 3). This increase shows that the 2019-2020 period experienced more unemployed people seeking help with their employment needs in the four county area. The gender distribution of all clients is relatively equal, with 48.8 percent female clients and 50.8 percent males (Chart 4).

CHART 3: NUMBER OF ASSISTED SERVICE CLIENT, EMPLOYMENT SERVICES



Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

CHART 4: CLIENTS BY GENDER, EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

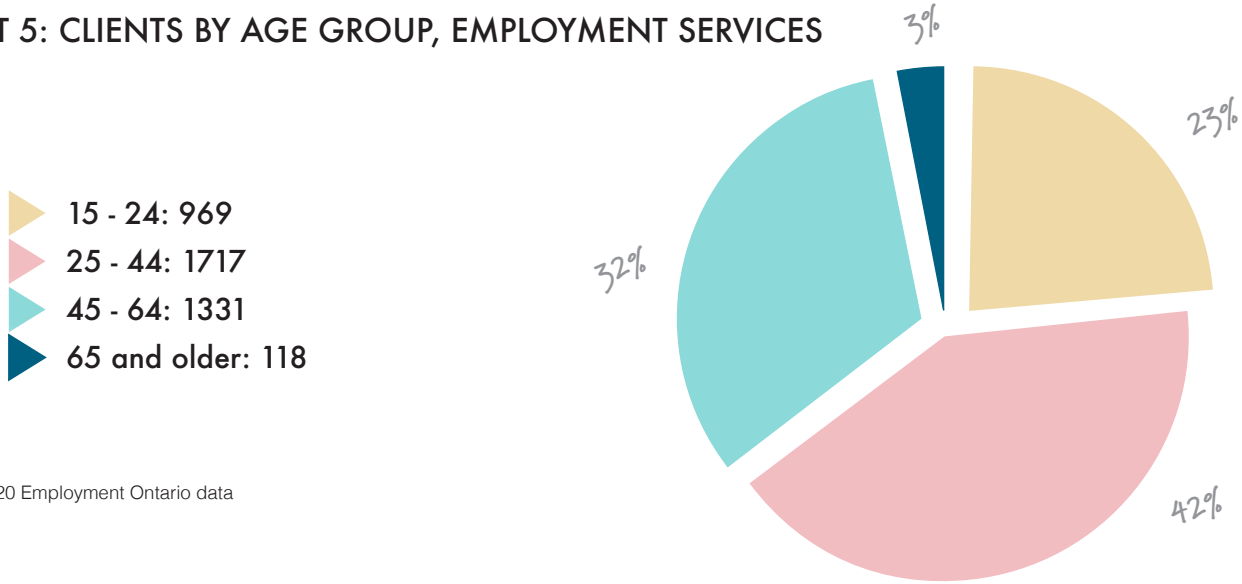


Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

Note: For confidentiality concerns, any data counts lower than 10 participants have been suppressed and is marked with an "X". As a result, they are not included in the following gender/age breakdown. The same method pertains to the entire report.

Chart 5 shows the distribution of Employment Services clients by age cohort, providing more insight about how the program serves the local community. Same as the last year, clients aged 25-44 years old represent the main client group (comprising 42 percent of total clients), followed by the 45-64 age group.

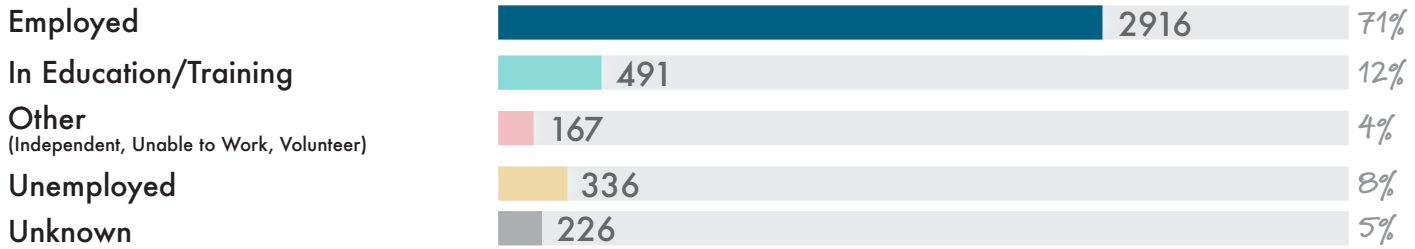
CHART 5: CLIENTS BY AGE GROUP, EMPLOYMENT SERVICES



Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

The outcome of the Employment Services program (Chart 6) is also consistent to the previous year's result: 71 percent of clients gained employment and 12 percent of them were in education or training. With only 8 percent of clients still unemployed, we can say the Employment Services program has successfully served clients to meet their needs in our region.

CHART 6: OUTCOME AT EXIT SUMMARY, EMPLOYMENT SERVICES



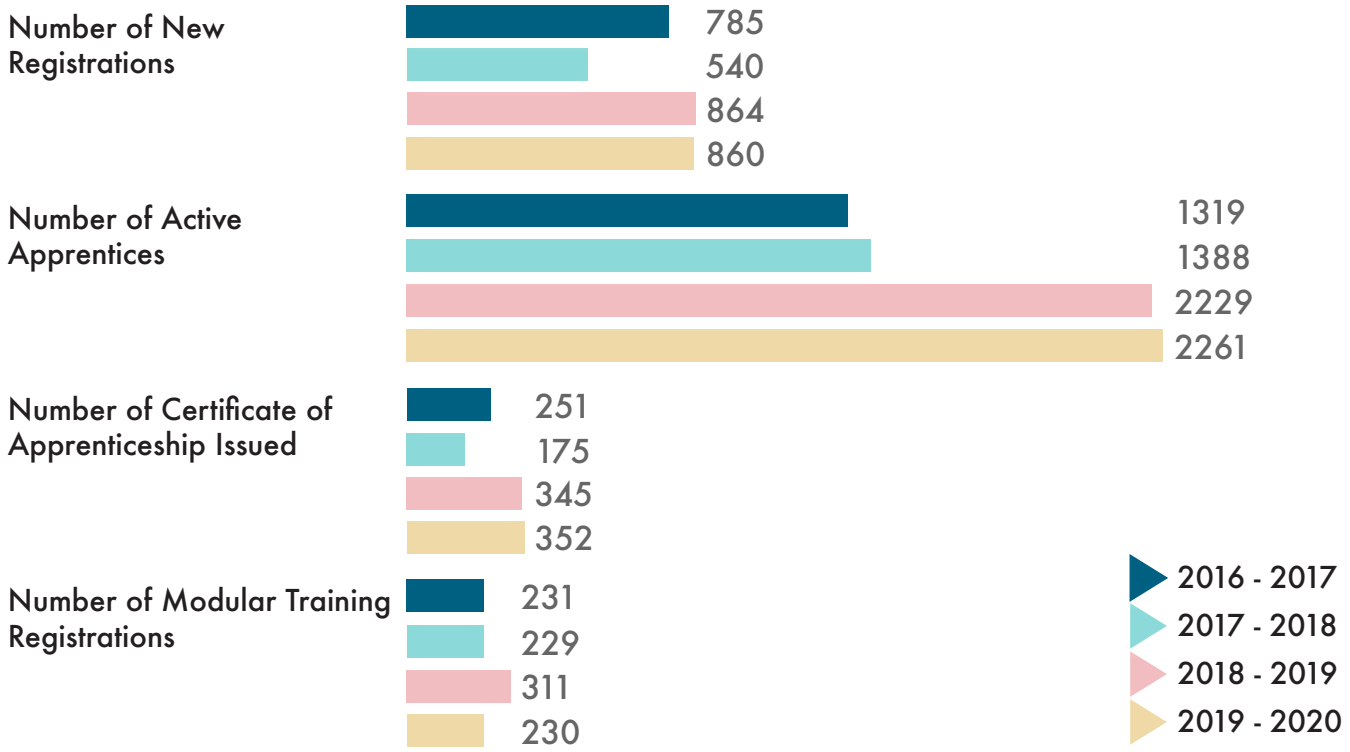
Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

APPRENTICESHIP

The Apprenticeship program provides people with both on-the-job and in-school training in skilled trades so that they can be certified and work in the trade of their interest. Based on the EO data, the Apprenticeship program received 860 new clients, similar to the last year. There were, in total, 2,261 active apprentices in our region in 2019-2020, an increase of 942 compared to three years ago (Chart 7). This implies that the Apprenticeship program in the four county area has successfully attracted more people to skilled trades.

In addition, the number of Certificates of Apprenticeship issued also increased slightly in 2019-2020. However, the number of people who registered for modular training decreased dramatically to 230 from 311 in 2018-2019. Most of the modular training is provided "in response to skills needs and health and safety concerns, mainly in the mining and forestry sectors, and in crane-operation and commercial vehicle maintenance" (EO Data Report Guide, 2020). A decrease in modular training registrations may indicate a decreased interest in these skilled trades among last year's clients.

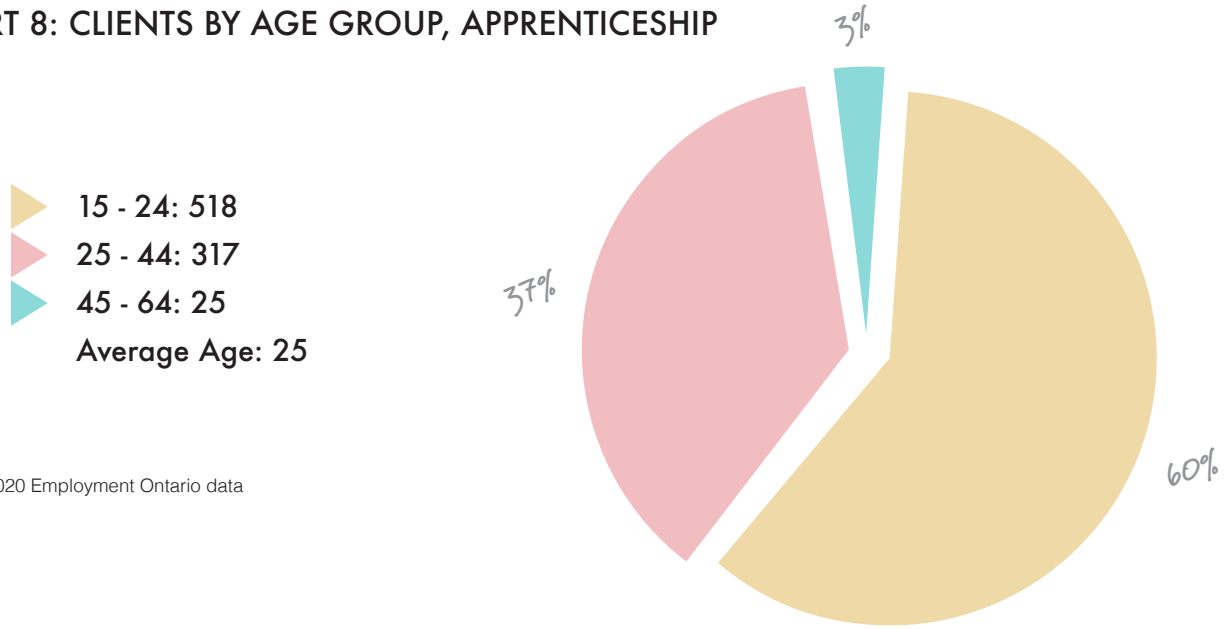
CHART 7: NUMBER OF CLIENTS, APPRENTICESHIP



Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

The average age of new registered apprentices is 25 years old, one year younger than the previous year. This fact shows that a younger demographic has joined the skilled trades in 2019-2020, thus bringing the average age down. Among all clients, 60 percent were aged 15-24 years old, a six percentage increase than last year (Chart 8). Having more and more young people get trained and prepared for work is a good sign to the local labour market since they can fill in the growing skill gap caused by an aging skilled trades workforce.

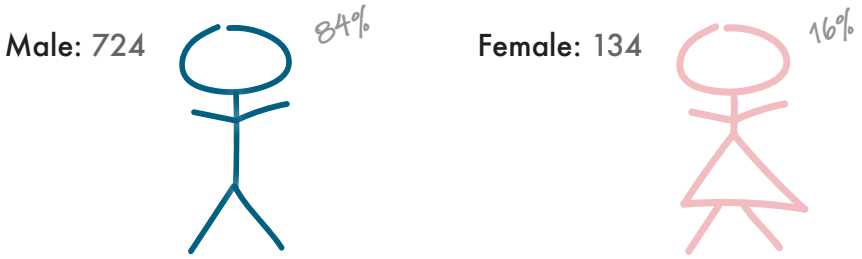
CHART 8: CLIENTS BY AGE GROUP, APPRENTICESHIP



Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

Unsurprisingly, 84 percent of Apprenticeship program clients were male while only 16 percent were female. The gender imbalance in skilled trades, shown by these data, suggests that continued efforts of promoting skilled trades to women as a career choice are needed.

CHART 9: CLIENTS BY GENDER, APPRENTICESHIP



Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

The top 10 skilled trades that clients registered in 2019-2020 is listed below. Most of them were similar to the previous year's result with different rankings. There were more clients registered as sheet metal workers than before, which replaced child development practitioner and ranked as one of the top 10 trades for the first time.

TABLE 9: TOP 10 REGISTERED TRADES, APPRENTICESHIP

Electrician - Construction and Maintenance	127
Automotive Service Technician	95
General Carpenter	94
Plumber	64
Cook	60
Truck and Coach Technician	59
Industrial Mechanic Millwright	56
Welder	28
Hairstylist	27
Sheet Metal Worker	25

Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

CANADA-ONTARIO JOB GRANT

The Canada-Ontario Job Grant (COJG) offers non-repayable grants to help employers, individually or in groups, train their employees and invest in their workforce. The COJG is available to all kinds of businesses with short-term training needs.

According to the 2019-2020 EO data, the participating employers of COJG increased slightly from 100 in 2018-2019 to 104 in 2019-2020 (Chart 10). However, it was lower than the 2017-2018 level of 138 participating employer. One reason for this decrease could be attributed to the change of program delivery that was implemented in August 2019.

Among all 104 employers who applied for the COJG, 81 were small business with less than 50 employees. With the majority of businesses as small businesses and most of COJG funds were granted to businesses under 100 employees, these data indicate that the local community needs have been met. It also conveys that small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) have been aware of their training needs and optimize the use of the COJG grant. As the Coronavirus (COVID-19) hit the local economy in March, many businesses were struggling in survival and many employees started working from home if possible. During this period, SMEs struggled more than larger companies with financial liquidity and debts. According to the survey result of Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB), small business owners were “taking on large debt loads and dipping into personal savings to weather the prolonged business disruption” (CFIB, 2020). Statistics Canada also found that small businesses had a higher probability than businesses with more than 100 employees to experience revenues down by 40 percent or more from April 2020 compared to April 2019. Therefore, small businesses need more access to financing due to COVID-19. It is important to increase the awareness and benefits of the COJG program among local employer especially SMEs. SMEs should also be aware of their training needs along with financial incentives for training (OECD, 2020). Based on EO providers’ feedback, they have continually promoted the availability of COJG support to the community and they have seen a very steady interest in COJG from local employers during this COVID time.

CHART 10: NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS, CANADA-ONTARIO JOB GRANT

Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

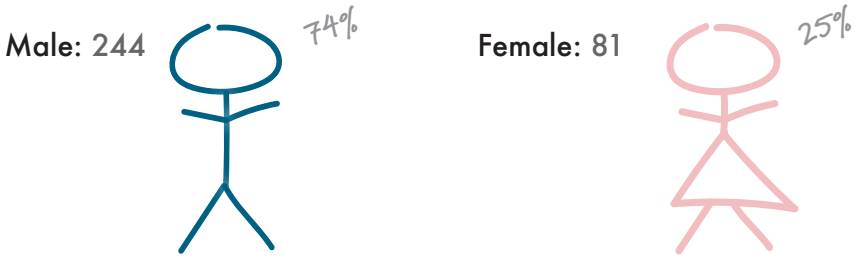
TABLE 10: EMPLOYEE SIZE RANGE, CANADA-ONTARIO JOB GRANT

	NUMBER OF COJG EMPLOYERS		
	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020
Less than 50	100	68	81
50 - 150	25	22	-
151 - 300	-	-	-
Total	138	100	104

Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

Even though the number of COJG participating employers increased, the number of participants decreased significantly from 447 in 2018-2019 to 328 in 2019-2020. This could be caused by a higher participation rate of SMEs this year, thus having less employees to participate. Among these clients, 74 percent of them were male while 25 percent were female, a lower female participation rate than last year.

CHART 11: CLIENTS BY GENDER, CANADA-ONTARIO JOB GRANT



Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

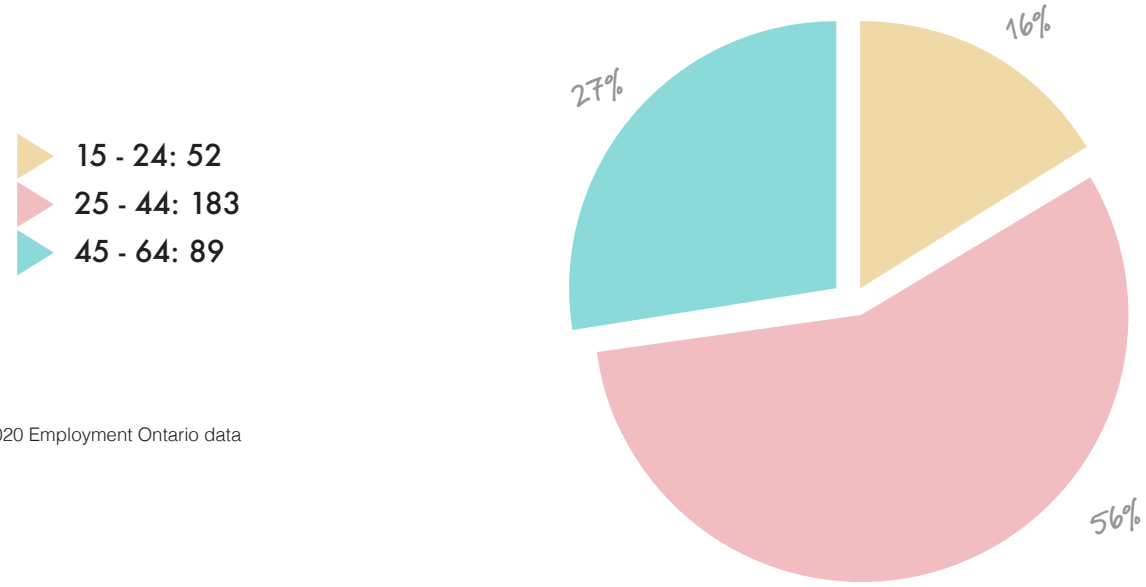
With the COJG program, 96 percent of employers reported an increase in trainee productivity. This is a higher rate than last year of 91.4 percent. However, only 96 percent of employers stated that training met workforce needs while last year there was a 100 percent satisfaction rate. Even so, these outcomes still indicate the effectiveness and usefulness of the COJG program to both employers and employees.

CHART 12: OUTCOME AT EXIT SUMMARY, CANADA-ONTARIO JOB GRANT

Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

The age composition of COJG clients is demonstrated below. Employees aged 15-24 years old accounted for 16 percent of COJG clients in 2019-2020. According to the EO providers, employers have reported that this younger cohort is highly mobile and tend to leave the job more frequently than other age cohorts, therefore, they may be hesitant to invest in this age group. From the table, we can also see that half of the COJG clients were in the 25-44 age group. As the economy is developing especially with COVID-19, this group of workers may demand more training on their technical or other essential skills to meet the changing need of skills in the labour force. For this reason, we could anticipate an increase in COJG clients in this age group next year.

CHART 13: CLIENTS BY AGE GROUP, CANADA-ONTARIO JOB GRANT



Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

SECOND CAREER

Second Career provides services to help laid-off unemployed workers transition into high-skilled, in demand occupations in the local labour market by acquiring new skills. However, the number of Second Career clients decreased again from 55 in 2018-2019 to 50 in 2019-2020, a half of clients in 2017-2018 (Chart 14). This declining trend has been five years since 2016.

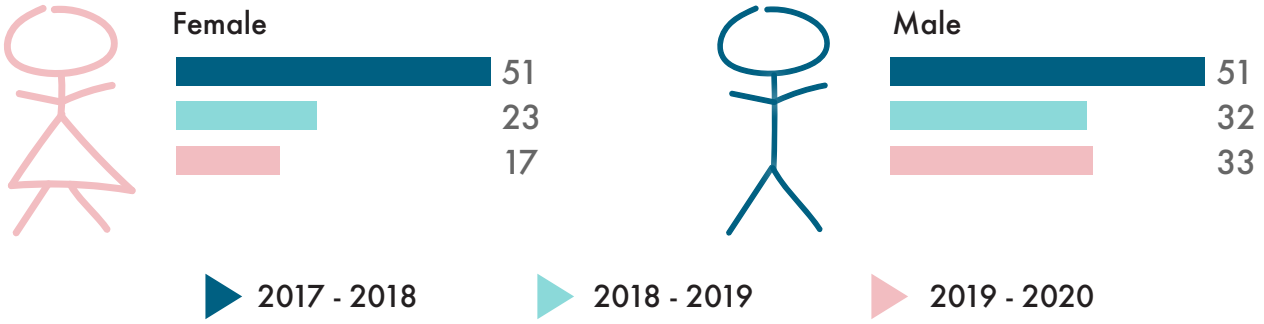
EO providers indicated that this decrease in clients could be attributable to the low unemployment rate with readily available jobs in the market. As a result, clients tend to choose the fastest route to employment rather than waiting for their application for Second Career to be approved.

CHART 14: NUMBER OF CLIENTS, SECOND CAREER

Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

The number of female clients also decreased from 23 to 17 this year while male clients increased slightly (Chart 15).

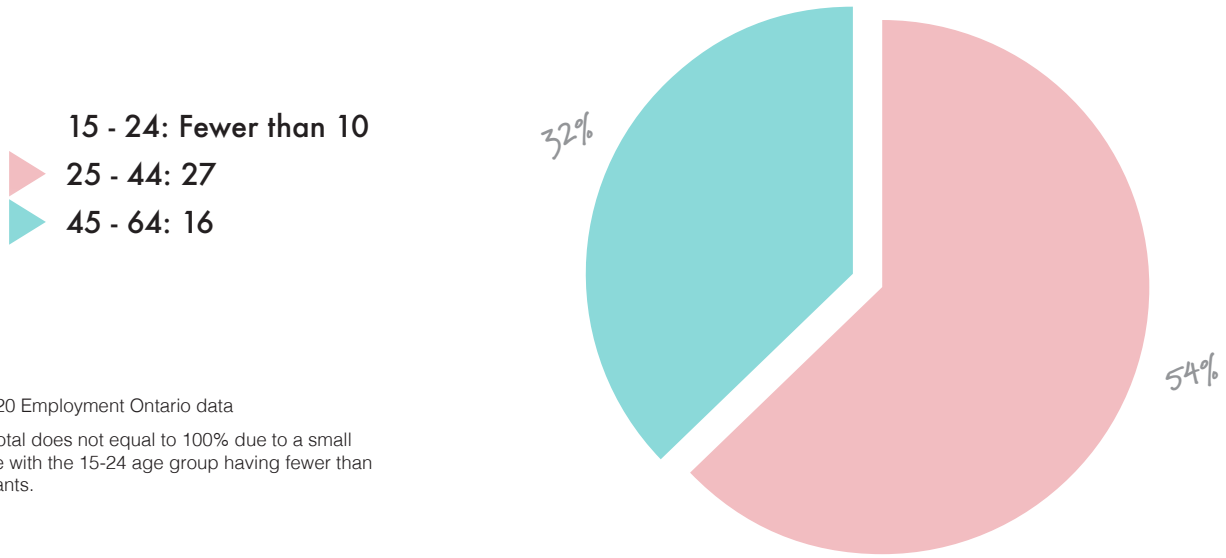
CHART 15: CLIENTS BY GENDER IN NUMBERS, SECOND CAREER



Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

The table below shows the age composition of Second Career program. The highest proportion of clients fell into the 25-44 age range, representing 54 percent of Second Career clients. This finding implies that the main working force (aged 25-44 years old) needs more help with transitioning into high-skilled, in demand occupations.

CHART 16: CLIENTS BY AGE GROUP, SECOND CAREER



Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

Note: The total does not equal to 100% due to a small sample size with the 15-24 age group having fewer than 10 participants.

According to the program outcome data (Chart 17), only 46 percent of clients gained employment. One third of clients still remained unemployed, indicating the challenges faced by Second Career clients who transition into high-skilled, in-demand jobs. The rest of clients were in education/training or other categories such as independent work and volunteer work. Because of COVID-19, automation is changing local labour markets in Canada to a higher degree. Based on the findings from the OECD Summer Outlook, 50 percent of jobs in Stratford-Bruce Peninsula were estimated to be at high risk of automation. Under such circumstances, it would be more difficult for laid-off and older unemployed workers to find a job.

CHART 17: OUTCOME AT EXIT SUMMARY, SECOND CAREER

Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

LITERACY AND BASIC SKILLS

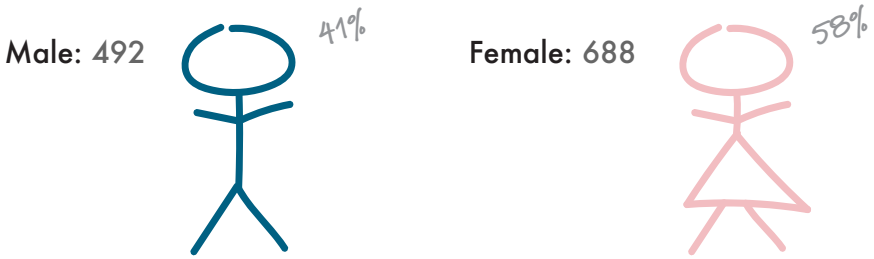
The Ontario Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) program assists adults who face various barriers to learning to develop and apply essential skills such as communication, numeracy, interpersonal and digital skills so that they can transition to employment, postsecondary, apprenticeship or achieve other goals. There is no cost associated with this program and the program is available to all local residents.

The number of LBS in-person new learners increased from 726 in 2018-2019 to 803 in 2019-2020, an increase of 77 learners (Chart 18). The Literacy Network indicated that they have lost 40 percent of new learners in the first 6 month of 2020 due to COVID, so it will not be surprising that next year's data will be different. Among all clients (including a total of 1,187 both new and carry-over learners), 58 percent of them were female and 41 percent were male (Chart 19). The LBS program is the only EO program that has a higher female participation rate.

CHART 18: NUMBER OF IN-PERSON LEARNERS, LITERACY AND BASIC SKILLS

Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

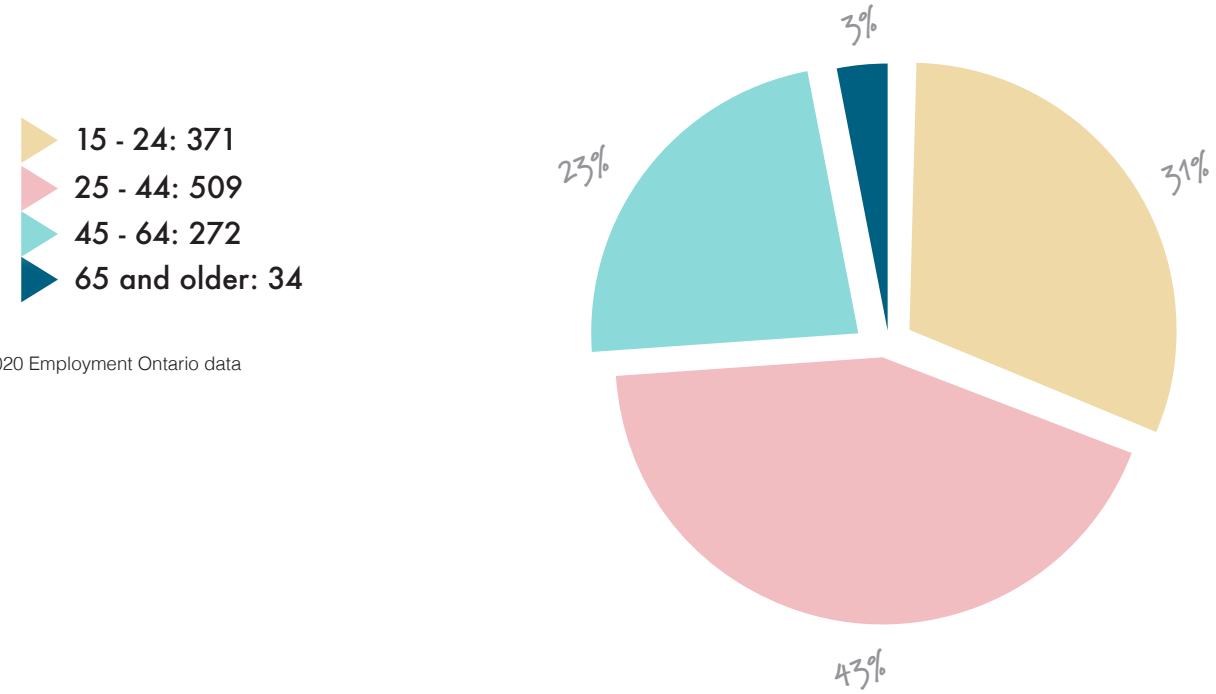
CHART 19: CLIENTS BY GENDER, LITERACY AND BASIC SKILLS



Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

Chart 20 demonstrates the age composition of LBS program. The highest proportion of clients fell into the 25-44 age range, representing 43 percent of LBS clients. Such findings imply that adults aged 25-44 years old tend to face more barriers to learning and thus have a higher need for essential skills development.

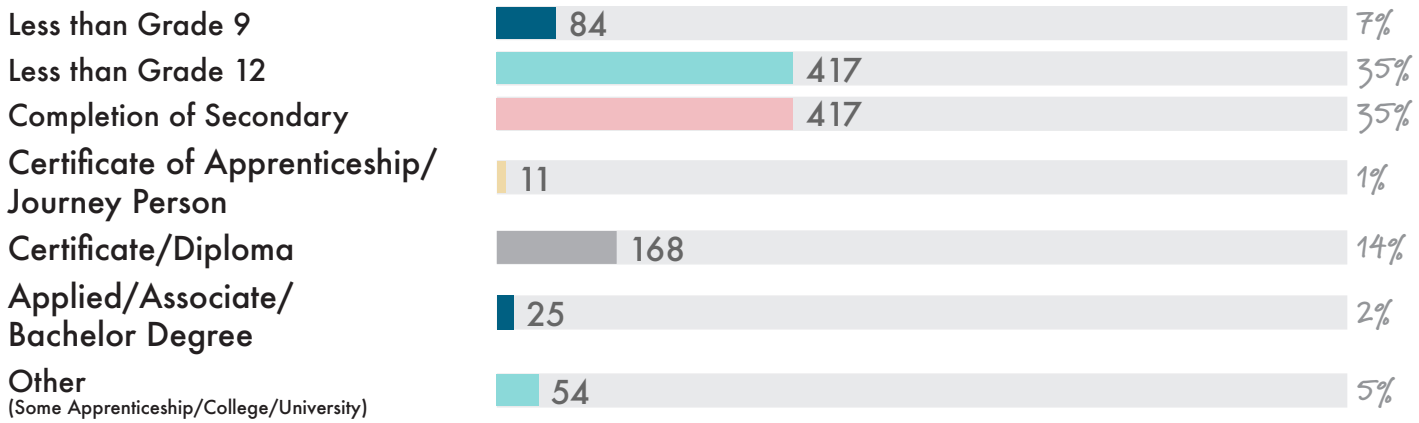
CHART 20: CLIENTS BY AGE GROUP, LITERACY AND BASIC SKILLS



Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

Looking at how the number of clients relates to their educational attainment (Chart 21), we can find that 42 percent of clients reported their highest educational attainment to be less than grade 12. This is reasonable as people who have lower educational attainment tend to have higher needs with their essential skills development in order to adapt to the changing demand for skills in the labour market.

CHART 21: CLIENTS BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, LITERACY AND BASIC SKILLS



Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

YOUTH JOB CONNECTION

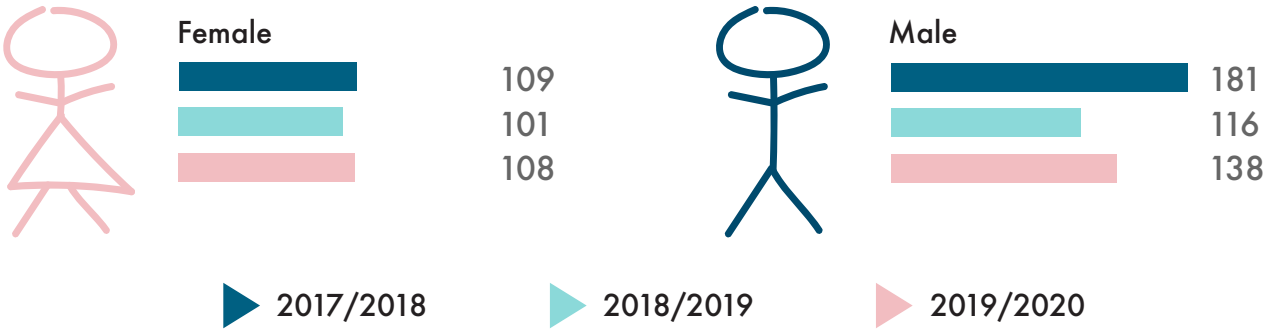
The Youth Job Connection (YJC) program provides more intensive supports to youth aged 15 to 29 to help them overcome different barriers to employment. The program is designed to help these youth find employment and participate in education and training.

Different from last year's trend, the number of YJC clients increased from 220 in 2018-2019 to 253 in 2019-2020 (Chart 22). This increase was mainly driven by a higher registration rate of male clients (Chart 23).

CHART 22: NUMBER OF CLIENTS, YOUTH JOB CONNECTION

Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

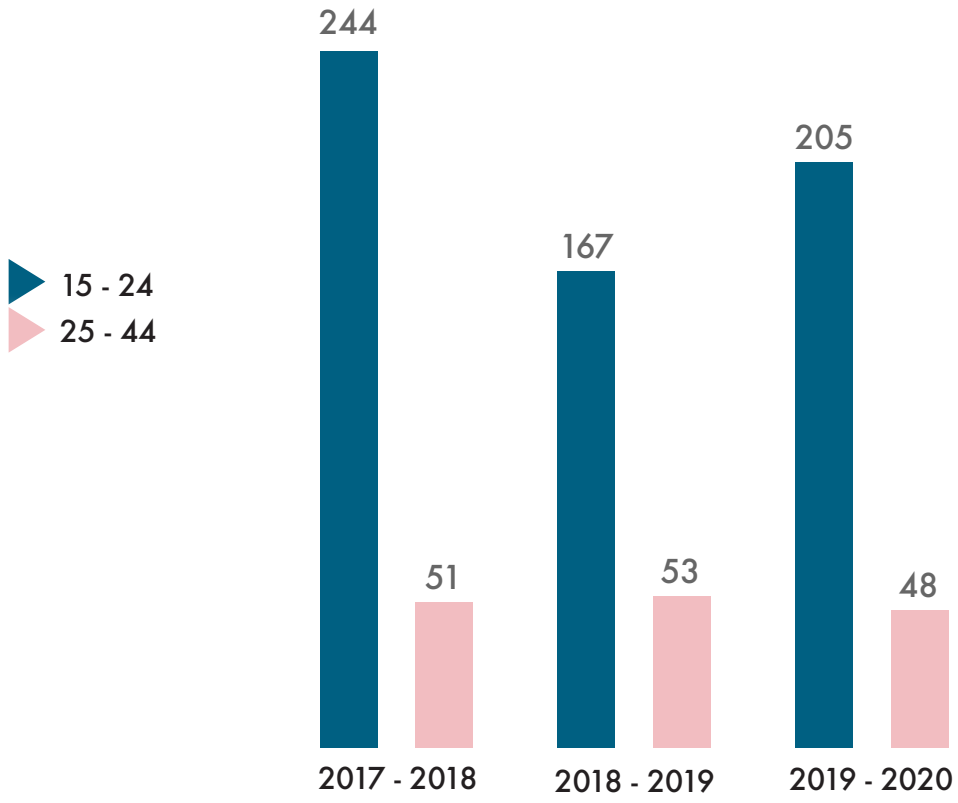
CHART 23: CLIENTS BY GENDER IN NUMBERS, YOUTH JOB CONNECTION



Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

With respect to age, the majority of YJC clients (81 percent) were less than 25 years old. There is an increase of 38 clients in this age group compared to last year. As the youth unemployment rate was always high in the region, it suggests that the YJC program is important to local youth who are struggling to find work.

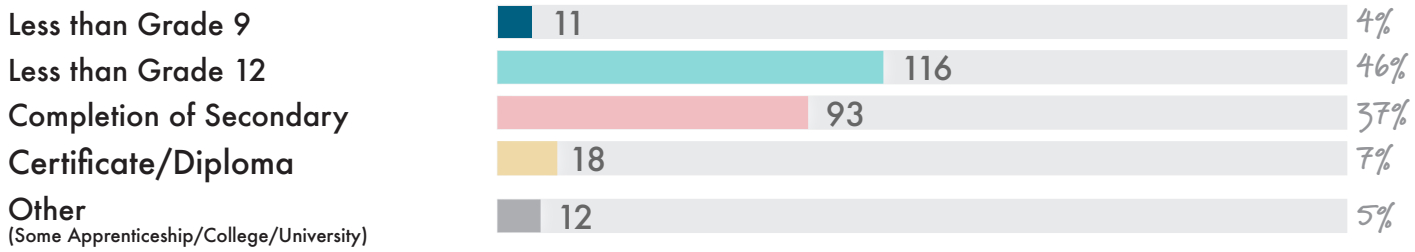
CHART 24: CLIENTS BY AGE GROUP IN NUMBERS, YOUTH JOB CONNECTION



Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

Among 250 YJC clients who reported their educational attainment, 93 completed their secondary education while 116 had less than a grade 12 education and 11 had less than a grade 9 education (Chart 25). As most job postings require at least a high school diploma or equivalent, it will be particularly difficult for these youth to find a job. One EO provider added, “Youth may be racialized, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit, or queer (LGBTTQ), Indigenous, recent immigrants, or living with disabilities and mental health issues. In addition, youth may be facing some combination of other challenging life circumstances, including living in poverty, poor or lack of labour market experience, low levels of education and literacy, in conflict with the law, or low motivation.” Therefore, it is important for YJC program providers to continually serve youth through targeting their needs and equipping them correspondingly in order to ensure their employment needs are being met.

CHART 25: CLIENTS BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, YOUTH JOB CONNECTION



Source: 2020 Employment Ontario data

BRUCE COUNTY

BUSINESS CONDITIONS

Because of COVID-19, all businesses in Canada continue to face challenges from both demand and supply sides. Many businesses were closed temporarily or permanently. The June 2020 business counts data collected information on local businesses between January and June 2020. However, these data do not measure the negative impacts of COVID-19 on local businesses as it can take several months for businesses that close permanently to complete their closeout procedures (The Daily, 2020d). We expect that by June 2021, business counts may better reflect business closures due to the pandemic. The aggregate numbers below present a relatively stable trend when compared to last year.

The total number of classified businesses in Bruce County increased by 10 from 6,585 in 2019 to 6,595 in 2020[6] (Table 11). The majority of businesses in Bruce County were owner-operated (71 percent), which decreased the most among all businesses sizes[7]. However, this decrease was offset by the increase of businesses with employees, especially by businesses with 20 to 49 employees. There were 27 businesses that had more than 100 employees, an increase of 1 business compared to the previous year.

TABLE 11: NUMBER OF BUSINESSES, BRUCE COUNTY

Employee Size Range	June 2019	June 2020	Changes	Percent of Total (June 2020)
0[8]	4,707	4,698	-9	71%
1 - 4	1,045	1,056	11	16%
5 - 9	400	392	-8	6%
10 - 19	232	234	2	4%
20 - 49	143	160	17	2%
50 - 99	32	28	-4	<1%
100+	26	27	1	<1%
Total	6,585	6,595	10	100%

Source: 2020 Canadian Business Counts

6 Statistics Canada advises cautious interpretation of period-to-period changes in the counts since they can be impacted by administrative or methodological changes in the underlying Business Register data. Therefore, we assume there are no administrative or methodological changes when we compare this year's Business counts data with last year's.

7 New criteria for identifying inactive businesses were used for the business count methodology beginning in December 2019. The extent to which this influences the local business count numbers is not certain.

8 Businesses with 0 employees include the self-employed, i.e. those who do not maintain an employee payroll, but may have a workforce which consists of contracted workers, family members or business owners. These also include employers who did not have employees in the last 12 months.

The table below indicates the top ten industries in Bruce County. In June 2020, Professional, scientific and technical services was ranked as the leading industry in Bruce County with 217 employers, followed by Specialty trade contactors with 195 and Food services and drinking places with 114.

TABLE 12: TOP 10 3-DIGIT NAICS INDUSTRIES BY EMPLOYEE SIZE RANGE - JUNE 2020

541 - Professional, scientific and technical services	217
238 - Specialty trade contractors	195
722 - Food services and drinking places	114
112 - Animal production and aquaculture	110
621 - Ambulatory health care services	86
236 - Construction of buildings	79
531 - Real estate	78
445 - Food and beverage stores	68
813 - Religious, grant-making, civic, and professional and similar organizations	66
811 - Repair and maintenance	62

Source: 2020 Canadian Business Counts

MIGRATION CHARACTERISTICS

Between 2013 and 2018, Bruce County attracted 14,533 people from other areas while losing 12,210 people with a net gain of 2,323 new residents (Table 13). Among all age groups, people aged 45-64 migrated the most to Bruce County with a net gain of 1,665, followed by 0-17 and 25-44 age cohorts. However, people aged 18-24 migrated the most out of the county with net loss of 390. A net loss of this age group is common in the area due to the lack of post-secondary institutions. The consideration would be how to motivate and attract them back to Bruce County to work after graduation. Interestingly, Bruce County was the only county that lost people aged 65+ by 300.

TABLE 13: MIGRATION CHARACTERISTICS, BRUCE COUNTY, 2013 - 2018

Age Group	In-migrants	Out-migrants	Net-migrants
0 - 17	3,001	2,036	965
18 - 24	1,388	1,778	-390
25 - 44	4,162	3,779	383
45 - 64	4,063	2,398	1,665
65+	1,919	2,219	-300
Total	14,533	12,210	2,323

Source: Statistics Canada, Taxfiler

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

According to the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS), 14,455 people in Bruce County attained a Secondary school diploma or equivalency certificate, followed by 13,560 who attained a College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma. The smallest group by educational achievement was people who had a University certificate or diploma below bachelor level. Similarly, the 2016 Census data reported that 14,885 people in Bruce County attained a Secondary school diploma or equivalency certificate, followed by 14,690 who attained a College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma. The latter experienced the highest increase of 1,130 compared to 2011. Among all levels of educational attainment, fewer people had No certificate, diploma or degree, Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma and University certificate or diploma below bachelor level, a decrease of 540, 195, and 325, respectively.

TABLE 14: HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, BRUCE COUNTY

	2011	2016	Change
Total - Highest certificate, diploma or degree	54,855	55,970	1,115
No certificate, diploma or degree	11,620	11,080	-540
Secondary (high) school diploma or equivalency certificate	14,455	14,885	430
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	6,170	5,975	-195
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	13,560	14,690	1,130
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	1,560	1,235	-325
University certificate or degree (bachelor and above)	7,495	8,105	610

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 NHS and 2016 Census

OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Looking at the Occupational Characteristics in 2011, Bruce County had most of its workforce employed in Sales and service occupations (22 percent), followed by Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations (17 percent) (Table 15). Ontario also had most people working in Sales and service occupations (24 percent), however, its second largest occupation category was Business, finance and administration occupations (17 percent). In 2016, the top 5 occupational composition in Bruce County stayed the same. Compared to 2011, all occupations in Bruce County experienced increases except Management occupations, Business, finance and administration occupations and Occupations in manufacturing and utilities. Overall, there was an increase of 130 Bruce County workers between 2011 and 2016.

TABLE 15: OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS (BY 1-DIGIT NOC CODE), BRUCE COUNTY

	2011				2016			
Occupations	Ontario	Percent	Bruce	Percent	Ontario	Percent	Bruce	Percent
All occupations	7,251,570	100%	36,760	100%	7,579,080	100%	36,890	100%
0 Management occupations	807,125	11%	4,880	13%	830,930	11%	4,490	12%
1 Business, finance and administration occupations	1,233,325	17%	4,705	13%	1,223,460	16%	4,355	12%
2 Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	522,275	7%	1,875	5%	545,440	7%	2,035	6%
3 Health occupations	415,080	6%	2,060	6%	471,905	6%	2,355	6%
4 Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	874,895	12%	3,325	9%	904,555	12%	3,465	9%
5 Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	242,280	3%	770	2%	265,375	4%	895	2%
6 Sales and service occupations	1,727,430	24%	8,195	22%	1,821,080	24%	8,470	23%
7 Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	927,145	13%	6,245	17%	994,020	13%	6,560	18%
8 Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	124,590	2%	1,475	4%	131,435	2%	1,565	4%
9 Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	377,415	5%	3,225	9%	390,880	5%	2,705	7%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 NHS and 2016 Census

AVERAGE EMPLOYMENT INCOME

The average employment income in Bruce County in 2011 was $62,360, which was slightly higher than the provincial level of $61,496 (Table 16). The highest occupational pay fell into Natural and applied sciences and related occupations with an average of $91,482, followed by Occupations in manufacturing and utilities at $88,059. In 2016, the average employment income in Bruce County increased to $68,647, similar to the provincial level of $68,628. Compared to 2011, all occupations in Bruce County experienced increases in average employment income except Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport and Sales and service occupations. The largest percentage increase in average employment income was in Natural resources, agriculture and related occupations, at 45 percent.

TABLE 16: AVERAGE EMPLOYMENT INCOME, BRUCE COUNTY

	2011		2016		Percentage change between 2011 & 2016	
Occupations	Ontario	Bruce	Ontario	Bruce	Ontario	Bruce
Total - Occupation - National Occupational Classification (NOC)	$61,496	$62,360	$68,628	$68,647	12%	10%
0 Management occupations	$87,806	$59,316	$98,810	$67,555	13%	14%
1 Business, finance and administration occupations	$57,499	$54,315	$66,605	$61,498	16%	13%
2 Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	$75,215	$91,482	$83,901	$108,257	12%	18%
3 Health occupations	$69,844	$67,176	$70,603	$67,188	1%	0%
4 Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	$70,506	$62,302	$78,104	$68,632	11%	10%
5 Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	$47,466	$40,062	$51,143	$36,197	8%	-10%
6 Sales and service occupations	$40,730	$47,480	$45,692	$44,456	12%	-6%
7 Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	$50,471	$62,018	$56,256	$62,600	11%	1%
8 Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	$40,510	$24,096	$48,256	$35,050	19%	45%
9 Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	$48,810	$88,059	$53,515	$111,411	10%	27%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 NHS and 2016 Census

GREY COUNTY

BUSINESS CONDITIONS

Because of COVID-19, all businesses in Canada continue to face challenges from both demand and supply sides. Many businesses were closed temporarily or permanently. The June 2020 business counts data collected information on local businesses between January and June 2020. However, these data do not measure the negative impacts of COVID-19 on local businesses as it can take several months for businesses that close permanently to complete their closeout procedures (The Daily, 2020d). We expect that by June 2021, business counts may better reflect business closures due to the pandemic. The aggregate numbers below present a relatively stable trend when compared to last year.

The total number of classified businesses in Grey County increased from 11,709 in 2019 to 11,742 in 2020, which was mainly driven by an increase of businesses with 1- 4 employees (Table 17). The majority of businesses are still owner-operated (69 percent), which decreased the most among all business sizes. There were 71 business with 100 or more employees, an increase of 4 compared to the previous year. This increase of large businesses was the biggest among all four counties, implying a potential increase of job opportunities for local residents.

TABLE 17: NUMBER OF BUSINESSES, GREY COUNTY

Employee Size Range	June 2019	June 2020	Changes	Percent of Total (June 2020)
0	8,127	8,084	-43	69%
1 - 4	1,997	2,039	42	17%
5 - 9	772	798	26	7%
10 - 19	437	430	-7	4%
20 - 49	247	257	10	2%
50 - 99	62	63	1	1%
100+	67	71	4	1%
Total	11,709	11,742	33	100%

Source: 2020 Canadian Business Counts

Table 18 highlights the top ten industries in Grey County. In June 2020, Grey County had Specialty trade contactors as the leading industry with 396 employers, followed by Professional, scientific and technical services with 285, and Ambulatory health care services with 245.

TABLE 18: TOP 10 3-DIGIT NAICS INDUSTRIES BY EMPLOYEE SIZE RANGE - JUNE 2020

238 - Specialty trade contractors	396
541 - Professional, scientific and technical services	285
621 - Ambulatory health care services	245
722 - Food services and drinking places	192
236 - Construction of buildings	183
561 - Administrative and support services	162
531 - Real estate	145
813 - Religious, grant-making, civic, and professional and similar organizations	135
112 - Animal production and aquaculture	128
811 - Repair and maintenance	121

Source: 2020 Canadian Business Counts

MIGRATION CHARACTERISTICS

Between 2013 and 2018, Grey County attracted 23,113 people from other areas and lost 18,693 with a net gain of 4,420 new residents (Table 19). The 18-24 age cohort was the only cohort to experience a net loss, at 431 people. This is caused by the reason of the lack of the post-secondary institutions in the local area. The consideration still remains as how to motivate and attract these teenagers back to Grey County to work and stay after graduation. Similar to Bruce County, the 45-64 age cohort contributed the most to the net gain of residents by 2,376. The experience of this cohort is valuable to the local workforce. With a low unemployment rate and many job vacancies, it is important to motivate them to work and contribute to the local economy.

TABLE 19: MIGRATION CHARACTERISTICS, GREY COUNTY, 2013 - 2018

Age Group	In-migrants	Out-migrants	Net-migrants
0 - 17	4,883	3,550	1,333
18 - 24	2,446	2,877	-431
25 - 44	6,587	5,630	957
45 - 64	6,172	3,796	2,376
65+	3,025	2,840	185
Total	23,113	18,693	4,420

Source: Statistics Canada, Taxfiler

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

According to the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS), 22,325 people in Grey County attained a Secondary school diploma or equivalency certificate, followed by 17,105 people who had No certificate, diploma or degree (Table 20). The smallest group by educational attainment was people who had a University certificate or diploma below bachelor level, at 2,090. The 2016 Census data showed the same trend, with most people holding a Secondary school diploma or equivalency certificate as 22,395. Compared to 2011, all levels of educational attainment experienced increased except Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma and University certificate or diploma below bachelor level. With an increase of 1,400 people attaining a University certificate or degree (bachelor and above), the overall educational attainment has improved in Grey County over the five-year period.

TABLE 20: HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, GREY COUNTY

	2011	2016	Change
Total - Highest certificate, diploma or degree	76,340	77,895	1,555
No certificate, diploma or degree	17,105	17,395	290
Secondary (high) school diploma or equivalency certificate	22,325	22,395	70
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	7,915	6,810	-1,105
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	16,720	18,190	1,470
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	2,090	1,515	-575
University certificate or degree (bachelor and above)	10,190	11,590	1,400

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 NHS and 2016 Census

OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

According to 2011 NHS data, Grey County had the most people working in Sales and service occupations (23 percent), followed by Trades, transport and equipment operators (18 percent) and related occupations and Business, finance and administration occupations (13 percent). Ontario had the same top 3 occupational categories in a different order. In 2016, the occupational composition in Grey County stayed the same. Compared to 2016, the largest increase in employment was in Occupations in manufacturing and utilities with 345 while workers in Business, finance and administration occupations decreased the most with 600. Overall, there was a decrease of 35 Grey County workers between 2011 and 2016.

TABLE 21: OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS (BY 1-DIGIT NOC CODE), GREY COUNTY

	2011				2016			
Occupations	Ontario	Percent	Grey	Percent	Ontario	Percent	Grey	Percent
All occupations	7,251,570	100%	51,740	100%	7,579,080	100%	51,705	100%
0 Management occupations	807,125	11%	6,260	12%	830,930	11%	6,230	12%
1 Business, finance and administration occupations	1,233,325	17%	6,850	13%	1,223,460	16%	6,250	12%
2 Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	522,275	7%	1,810	3%	545,440	7%	1,855	4%
3 Health occupations	415,080	6%	3,765	7%	471,905	6%	3,930	8%
4 Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	874,895	12%	5,170	10%	904,555	12%	5,245	10%
5 Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	242,280	3%	1,370	3%	265,375	4%	1,570	3%
6 Sales and service occupations	1,727,430	24%	12,000	23%	1,821,080	24%	11,835	23%
7 Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	927,145	13%	9,215	18%	994,020	13%	9,065	18%
8 Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	124,590	2%	2,085	4%	131,435	2%	2,145	4%
9 Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	377,415	5%	3,230	6%	390,880	5%	3,575	7%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 NHS and 2016 Census

AVERAGE EMPLOYMENT INCOME

The average employment income in Grey County in 2011 was $48,364, which was much lower than the provincial level of $61,496 (Table 22). Those working in health occupations received the highest employment income with an average of $65,149, followed by Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services with an average of $61,752, and Natural and applied sciences and related occupations with an average of $58,888. In 2016, the average employment income in Grey County increased to $54,407, still lower than the provincial level of $68,628. Compared to 2011, all occupations in Grey County experienced increases in average employment income except Health occupations and Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations. The largest employment income change was in Natural and applied sciences and related occupations, with an increase of $14,182. The largest percentage increase in average employment income was in both Natural resources, agriculture and related occupations and Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport, at 24 percent.

TABLE 22: AVERAGE EMPLOYMENT INCOME, GREY COUNTY

	2011		2016		Percentage change between 2011 & 2016	
Occupations	Ontario	Grey	Ontario	Grey	Ontario	Grey
Total - Occupation - National Occupational Classification (NOC)	$61,496	$48,364	$68,628	$54,407	12%	12%
0 Management occupations	$87,806	$52,299	$98,810	$60,304	13%	15%
1 Business, finance and administration occupations	$57,499	$44,932	$66,605	$53,383	16%	19%
2 Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	$75,215	$58,888	$83,901	$73,074	12%	24%
3 Health occupations	$69,844	$65,149	$70,603	$64,604	1%	-1%
4 Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	$70,506	$61,752	$78,104	$72,834	11%	18%
5 Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	$47,466	$29,088	$51,143	$36,083	8%	24%
6 Sales and service occupations	$40,730	$33,046	$45,692	$40,504	12%	23%
7 Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	$50,471	$49,112	$56,256	$51,300	11%	4%
8 Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	$40,510	$32,231	$48,256	$27,769	19%	-14%
9 Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	$48,810	$42,686	$53,515	$47,481	10%	11%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 NHS and 2016 Census

BUSINESS CONDITIONS

Because of COVID-19, all businesses in Canada continue to face challenges from both demand and supply sides. Many businesses were closed temporarily or permanently. The June 2020 business counts data collected information on local businesses between January and June 2020. However, these data do not measure the negative impacts of COVID-19 on local businesses as it can take several months for businesses that close permanently to complete their closeout procedures (The Daily, 2020d). We expect that by June 2021, business counts may better reflect business closures due to the pandemic. The aggregate numbers below present a relatively stable trend when compared to last year.

The total number of classified businesses in Huron County decreased from 9,691 in 2019 to 9,665 in 2020. This decrease was largely driven by a decrease of owner-operated businesses and businesses with 10-19 employees. Other business sizes all experienced increases in business counts. The majority of businesses in Huron County were owner-operated, representing 74 percent of total businesses. There were 46 businesses with 100 or more employees, an increase of 3 compared to the previous year.

TABLE 23: NUMBER OF BUSINESSES, HURON COUNTY

Employee Size Range	June 2019	June 2020	Changes	Percent of Total (June 2020)
0	7,174	7,123	-51	74%
1 - 4	1,333	1,344	11	14%
5 - 9	510	517	7	5%
10 - 19	383	369	-14	4%
20 - 49	198	211	13	2%
50 - 99	50	55	5	1%
100+	43	46	3	<1%
Total	9,691	9,665	-26	100%

Source: 2020 Canadian Business Counts

Table 24 shows the top ten industries in Huron County. In June 2020, the leading industry in Huron County was Animal production and aquaculture with 285 employers, followed by Specialty trade contactors with 204 and Crop production with 139.

TABLE 24: TOP 10 3-DIGIT NAICS INDUSTRIES BY EMPLOYEE SIZE RANGE - JUNE 2020

112 - Animal production and aquaculture	285
238 - Specialty trade contractors	204
111 - Crop production	139
541 - Professional, scientific and technical services	134
722 - Food services and drinking places	122
236 - Construction of buildings	111
811 - Repair and maintenance	98
813 - Religious, grant-making, civic, and professional and similar organizations	96
621 - Ambulatory health care services	92
531 - Real estate	78

Source: 2020 Canadian Business Counts

MIGRATION CHARACTERISTICS

Between 2013 and 2018, Huron County attracted 10,532 people from other areas while losing 9,828 to other regions with a net gain of 704 new residents (Table 25). The 18-24 age cohort experienced a net loss of 484 people, followed by the 25-44 age cohort with a net loss of 343. The latter group is the main work force of the region while the former is the future work force to the region. So it is crucial to retain these cohorts and attract them back to Huron County. Similar to other counties, the 45-64 age cohort contributed the most to the net gain of residents by 974. While this cohort is a valuable asset to the local economy with their experiences, it is important to provide opportunities for them to join the local workforce and use their skills.

TABLE 25: MIGRATION CHARACTERISTICS, HURON COUNTY, 2013 - 2018

Age Group	In-migrants	Out-migrants	Net-migrants
0 - 17	2,269	1,847	422
18 - 24	1,133	1,617	-484
25 - 44	2,896	3,239	-343
45 - 64	2,694	1,720	974
65+	1,540	1,405	135
Total	10,532	9,828	704

Source: Statistics Canada, Taxfiler

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

According to the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS), 13,570 people in Huron County attained a Secondary school diploma or equivalency certificate, followed by 12,585 people who had No certificate, diploma or degree (Table 26). The smallest group by educational achievement was people who had a University certificate or diploma below bachelor level, at 1,005. The 2016 Census data demonstrated the same trend, with most people holding a Secondary school diploma or equivalency certificate as 13,790. Compared to 2011, people who attainted No certificate, diploma or degree decreased the most by 845 while people who attainted a College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma increased the most by 1,100. With such a decrease in No certificate, diploma or degree, it is clear that Huron County has improved its overall educational attainment over the five-year period.

TABLE 26: HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, HURON COUNTY

	2011	2016	Change
Total - Highest certificate, diploma or degree	47,815	47,870	55
No certificate, diploma or degree	12,585	11,740	-845
Secondary (high) school diploma or equivalency certificate	13,570	13,790	220
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	5,130	4,590	-540
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	10,525	11,625	1,100
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	1,005	835	-170
University certificate or degree (bachelor and above)	5,010	5,295	285

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 NHS and 2016 Census

OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Based on 2011 NHS data, most people in Huron County worked in Sales and service occupations (20 percent), followed by Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations (19 percent) and Management occupations (14 percent). Differently, the province had Business, finance and administration occupations as its second largest occupational category. In 2016, the top 3 occupational categories in Huron County remained the same and they all experienced increases. Compared to 2016, the largest decrease in employment in Huron County was in Occupations in manufacturing and utilities at 370, followed by Health occupations at 275, and Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services at 240. These decreases, which could not be offset by increases of employment in other occupations, resulted in an overall decrease of 530 workers in all occupations.

TABLE 27: OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS (BY 1-DIGIT NOC CODE), HURON COUNTY

	2011				2016			
Occupations	Ontario	Percent	Huron	Percent	Ontario	Percent	Huron	Percent
All occupations	7,251,570	100%	33,850	100%	7,579,080	100%	33,320	100%
0 Management occupations	807,125	11%	4,625	14%	830,930	11%	4,755	14%
1 Business, finance and administration occupations	1,233,325	17%	4,080	12%	1,223,460	16%	3,875	12%
2 Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	522,275	7%	955	3%	545,440	7%	960	3%
3 Health occupations	415,080	6%	2,210	7%	471,905	6%	1,935	6%
4 Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	874,895	12%	3,215	9%	904,555	12%	2,975	9%
5 Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	242,280	3%	515	2%	265,375	4%	535	2%
6 Sales and service occupations	1,727,430	24%	6,820	20%	1,821,080	24%	7,055	21%
7 Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	927,145	13%	6,480	19%	994,020	13%	6,500	20%
8 Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	124,590	2%	2,440	7%	131,435	2%	2,590	8%
9 Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	377,415	5%	2,510	7%	390,880	5%	2,140	6%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 NHS and 2016 Census

AVERAGE EMPLOYMENT INCOME

In 2011, the average employment income in Huron County was $47,487, which was much lower than the provincial average of $61,496 (Table 28). Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services received the largest employment income with an average of $75,725, followed by Natural and applied sciences and related occupations at $68,696, and Health occupations at $57,899. In 2016, the average employment income in Huron County increased to $52,904, which was still lower than the provincial level of $68,628. Compared to 2011, all occupations in Huron County experienced increases in average employment income except Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services and Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport. The largest employment income change was in Natural and applied sciences and related occupations with an increase of $13,088, followed by Occupations in manufacturing and utilities with an increase of $11,658. The largest percentage increase in average employment income was in Natural resources, agriculture and related occupations, at 41 percent.

TABLE 28: AVERAGE EMPLOYMENT INCOME, HURON COUNTY

	2011		2016		Percentage change between 2011 & 2016	
Occupations	Ontario	Huron	Ontario	Huron	Ontario	Huron
Total - Occupation - National Occupational Classification (NOC)	$61,496	$47,487	$68,628	$52,904	12%	11%
0 Management occupations	$87,806	$46,550	$98,810	$51,943	13%	12%
1 Business, finance and administration occupations	$57,499	$46,167	$66,605	$54,804	16%	19%
2 Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	$75,215	$68,696	$83,901	$72,793	12%	6%
3 Health occupations	$69,844	$57,899	$70,603	$58,165	1%	0%
4 Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	$70,506	$75,725	$78,104	$61,755	11%	-18%
5 Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	$47,466	$35,908	$51,143	$31,457	8%	-12%
6 Sales and service occupations	$40,730	$32,969	$45,692	$41,434	12%	26%
7 Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	$50,471	$47,536	$56,256	$56,054	11%	18%
8 Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	$40,510	$31,754	$48,256	$44,842	19%	41%
9 Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	$48,810	$38,589	$53,515	$50,247	10%	30%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 NHS and 2016 Census

PERTH COUNTY

BUSINESS CONDITIONS

Because of COVID-19, all businesses in Canada continue to face challenges from both demand and supply sides. Many businesses were closed temporarily or permanently. The June 2020 business counts data collected information on local businesses between January and June 2020. However, these data do not measure the negative impacts of COVID-19 on local businesses as it can take several months for businesses that close permanently to complete their closeout procedures (The Daily, 2020d). We expect that by June 2021, business counts may better reflect business closures due to the pandemic. The aggregate numbers below present a relatively stable trend when compared to last year.

Perth County experienced a slight decrease in the total number of classified businesses. There were 9,251 businesses in 2020 compared to 9,285 businesses in 2019 (Table 29). The majority of businesses were owner-operated (70 percent), followed by businesses with 1 to 4 employees. Among all businesses, those with 20-49 employees experienced the biggest increase over the last year. There were 62 businesses with 100 or more employees, a decrease of 3 businesses compared to the previous year.

TABLE 29: NUMBER OF BUSINESSES, PERTH COUNTY

Employee Size Range	June 2019	June 2020	Changes	Percent of Total (June 2020)
0	6,524	6,495	-29	70%
1 - 4	1,367	1,349	-18	15%
5 - 9	582	586	4	6%
10 - 19	405	395	-10	4%
20 - 49	254	273	19	3%
50 - 99	88	91	3	1%
100+	65	62	-3	1%
Total	9,285	9,251	-34	100%

Source: 2020 Canadian Business Counts

Table 30 demonstrates the top ten industries in Perth County. In June 2020, Specialty trade contactors was the leading industry in Perth County with 262 employers, followed by Animal production and aquaculture with 242 and Crop production with 180.

TABLE 30: TOP 10 3-DIGIT NAICS INDUSTRIES BY EMPLOYEE SIZE RANGE - JUNE 2020

238 - Specialty trade contractors	262
112 - Animal production and aquaculture	242
621 - Ambulatory health care services	180
541 - Professional, scientific and technical services	168
722 - Food services and drinking places	135
236 - Construction of buildings	104
813 - Religious, grant-making, civic, and professional and similar organizations	100
111 - Crop production	84
531 - Real estate	82
811 - Repair and maintenance	81

Source: 2020 Canadian Business Counts

MIGRATION CHARACTERISTICS

Between 2013 and 2018, Perth County attracted 15,116 people from other areas and lost 13,207 to other regions, resulting a net gain of 1,909 new residents (Table 31). The 18-24 age cohort was the only cohort to experience a net loss, at 350 people. Seeing this loss is common to the area due to the lack of post-secondary institutions. The consideration would be how to motivate and attract these youth back to Perth County to work and stay. Similar to other counties, the 45-64 age cohort contributed the most to the net gain of residents by 745. While this cohort can contribute to the local workforce with their experiences, it is important to offer opportunities for them in order to grow the local economy.

TABLE 31: MIGRATION CHARACTERISTICS, PERTH COUNTY, 2013 - 2018

Age Group	In-migrants	Out-migrants	Net-migrants
0 - 17	3,456	2,805	651
18 - 24	1,956	2,306	-350
25 - 44	5,230	4,785	445
45 - 64	2,854	2,109	745
65+	1,620	1,202	418
Total	15,116	13,207	1,909

Source: Statistics Canada, Taxfiler

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

According to the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS), 17,875 people in Perth County attained a Secondary school diploma or equivalency certificate, followed by 15,535 people who had No certificate, diploma or degree (Table 32). The smallest group by educational achievement was people who had a University certificate or diploma below bachelor level, at 1,275. The 2016 Census data revealed a similar breakdown, with the most people holding a Secondary school diploma or equivalency certificate, at 18,980. Compared to 2011, people who attainted an Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma decreased the most at 1,115 while people who attainted a College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma increased the most at 1,760. With more people holding a University certificate or degree (bachelor and above) in 2016, it is evident that Perth County has enhanced its overall educational attainment between 2011 and 2016.

TABLE 32: HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, PERTH COUNTY

	2011	2016	Change
Total - Highest certificate, diploma or degree	59,825	61,425	1,600
No certificate, diploma or degree	15,535	14,665	-870
Secondary (high) school diploma or equivalency certificate	17,875	18,980	1,105
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	5,835	4,720	-1,115
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	11,890	13,650	1,760
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	1,275	1,065	-210
University certificate or degree (bachelor and above)	7,415	8,350	935

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 NHS and 2016 Census

OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

According to 2011 NHS data, Perth County had the highest percentage of its workforce in Sales and service occupations (22 percent), followed by Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations (18 percent) and Business, finance and administration occupations (Table 33). Ontario had the same top 3 occupational categories in a different order. In 2016, the top 3 occupational categories in Perth County remained the same while Sales and service occupations experienced the largest decrease of 470. Compared to 2016, the largest increase of workers in Perth County was Occupations in manufacturing and utilities at 940, followed by Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations at 460, and Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations at 180. These increases greatly offset the decreases in employment in other occupations, resulting in an overall increase of 1,050 workers in all occupations.

TABLE 33: OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS (BY 1-DIGIT NOC CODE), PERTH COUNTY

	2011				2016			
Occupations	Ontario	Precent	Perth	Percent	Ontario	Percent	Perth	Percent
All occupations	7,251,570	100%	44,855	100%	7,579,080	100%	45,905	100%
0 Management occupations	807,125	11%	5,275	12%	830,930	11%	5,370	12%
1 Business, finance and administration occupations	1,233,325	17%	5,930	13%	1,223,460	16%	5,715	12%
2 Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	522,275	7%	1,630	4%	545,440	7%	1,755	4%
3 Health occupations	415,080	6%	2,935	7%	471,905	6%	2,710	6%
4 Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	874,895	12%	3,895	9%	904,555	12%	3,890	8%
5 Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	242,280	3%	1,170	3%	265,375	4%	1,325	3%
6 Sales and service occupations	1,727,430	24%	9,920	22%	1,821,080	24%	9,450	21%
7 Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	927,145	13%	8,005	18%	994,020	13%	8,185	18%
8 Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	124,590	2%	1,835	4%	131,435	2%	2,295	5%
9 Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	377,415	5%	4,270	10%	390,880	5%	5,210	11%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 NHS and 2016 Census

AVERAGE EMPLOYMENT INCOME

The average employment income in Perth County in 2011 was $48,443, which was much lower than the provincial level of $61,496 (Table 34). All occupations in Perth County had a lower average employment income than the provincial level. In 2016, the average employment income in Perth County increased to $53,319, which was still lower than the provincial level of $68,628. Compared to 2011, all occupations in Perth County experienced increases in average employment income except Health occupations. The largest employment income increase was in Natural and applied sciences and related occupations at $11,264, followed by Management occupations at $9,782. The largest percentage increase in average employment income was in Business, finance and administration occupations, at 20 percent.

TABLE 34: AVERAGE EMPLOYMENT INCOME, PERTH COUNTY

	2011		2016		Percentage change between 2011 & 2016	
Occupations	Ontario	Perth	Ontario	Perth	Ontario	Perth
Total - Occupation - National Occupational Classification (NOC)	$61,496	$48,443	$68,628	$53,319	12%	10%
0 Management occupations	$87,806	$50,236	$98,810	$60,018	13%	19%
1 Business, finance and administration occupations	$57,499	$43,698	$66,605	$52,375	16%	20%
2 Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	$75,215	$59,296	$83,901	$70,560	12%	19%
3 Health occupations	$69,844	$67,791	$70,603	$59,299	1%	-13%
4 Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	$70,506	$59,600	$78,104	$64,658	11%	8%
5 Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	$47,466	$45,236	$51,143	$53,521	8%	18%
6 Sales and service occupations	$40,730	$38,589	$45,692	$40,314	12%	4%
7 Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	$50,471	$49,782	$56,209	$54,916	11%	10%
8 Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	$40,510	$29,554	$48,256	$29,654	19%	0%
9 Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	$48,810	$44,052	$53,515	$49,163	10%	12%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 NHS and 2016 Census

ACTION PLAN 2020-2021 UPDATE

Annually the Planning Board engages in community collaborative initiatives. Below is an update on what we have accomplished over the 2020-21 period.

EMPLOYERONE TOP 5 EMPLOYMENT SECTOR RETROSPECTIVE

Goals	Activities
Analyze key EmployerOne variables for the last 3-6 years for the top 5 employment sectors in the four county region Five sector reports, highlighting EmployerOne changes over time including focus group feedback	• Analyze data and create reports for each of the top 5 employment sectors • Host focus group session(s) with employers to discuss trends and future forecasting by sector • 6 reports: Agriculture, Construction, Retail Trade, Healthcare and social assistance and Manufacturing and Executive Summary
Staff Lead: Sarah Pelton/Dianne Harrison	Status: Completed by March 31, 2021

CAREER PLANNING LABOUR MARKET RESOURCE

Goals	Activities
Labour Market Educator Resource Creation and distribution of labour market research tools to be utilized by local teachers and employment coaches to assist students and individuals with career research.	• Design interactive activities and lesson plan for vetting by partners in education and Employment Ontario services • Equip local Career Coaches and Co-op educators with resources to assist students with exploring labour market trends and recognizing their importance for career research • Finalize resource for use by the general public
Staff Lead: Melissa Avedesian/Sarah Pelton	Status: Completed by March 31, 2021

PRECARIOUS EMPLOYMENT RESEARCH

Goals	Activities
A clearer understanding of the impact of precarious employment in the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula region. A clearer understanding of who is affected by precarious employment in the region. This information will be used for planning services and supports to precariously employment people in the region.	• Identify, purchase and analyze data • Draft report for vetting by partners • Final report identifying the impacts of precarious employment on the region
Staff Lead: Sarah Pelton/Melissa Avedesian	Status: Completed by March 31, 2021 and available on the Planning Board website

COVID-19 WORKER IMPACT STUDY

Goals	Activities
Infographic final report (March 2021) focusing on responses from two surveys designed to understand the impact of COVID-19 on workers and job seekers in our region. Supporting data will be gathered through research (Statistics Canada releases) as needed	• Distribute surveys throughout the region • Analyze data • Roll-up data for final report distribution
Staff Lead: Sarah Pelton/Melissa Avedesian	Status: Completed by March 31, 2021 and available on the Planning Board website

ACTION PLAN 2021-2022

Below is a list of initiatives that have been proposed to the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development to address the priorities identified through activities and research across the region.

PRECARIOUS LIVING SERIES

Goals	Proposed Activities
This new project proposes to work with these previously identified groups in order to explore the relationship between employment characteristics and other variables related to precarious employment and its impact on our communities.	• Development of case scenarios to highlight the connections between precarious employment and key socioeconomic components • Focus Groups sessions • Production of Precarious Living Series • Launch series and final report
Staff Lead: TBD	Status:

LABOUR MARKET DIFFERENCES BY GENDER – IMPACT OF COVID-19

Goals	Proposed Activities
The project will identify key variables indicating a difference between men's and women's labour force participation, as a result of COVID-19. Identifying the extent to which women's workforce participation has been impacted by the pandemic may help us further understand the overall economic recovery of the S-BP region. A further exploration of sectors in which women's participation in the labour force has been significantly impacted may yield information regarding which sectors could be targeted when identifying opportunities for recovery (i.e., participation rate # increases, part-time to full-time, etc.)	• Analyze labour market composition and engagement by gender • Focus Groups sessions • Final report
Staff Lead: TBD	Status:

connect2JOBS LABOUR MARKET ANALYSIS

Goals	Proposed Activities
This project will analyze these fluctuations by examining our connect2Jobs website postings in 2020/21 (timeframe unclear, given that we didn't have postings pre-COVID). Changes will be explored based on the following: • In-demand occupations • In-demand skills • Full-time vs. part-time postings • Geographical changes (more or fewer postings in certain regions, perhaps?) • Skill Gap/Occupation Gap: Job search and job demand reports - comparison	• Gather and analyze data from connect2JOBS • Vet findings with community stakeholders • Finalize report
Staff Lead: TBD	Status:

BUSINESS COUNTS – COVID-19 IMPACTS

Goals	Proposed Activities
Report analyzing business count changes in 2020, identifying factors correlating with business closures in our region (such as business size, industry, location). The report would also look at the percentage of business closures by industry, and gender breakdown for employment in each industry.	Analysis of business counts changes, by county and industry, with attention to closures resulting from COVID. • Total business counts 2020-21 • Changes is business composition: business size, number of owner-operator businesses, etc. • Final Report
Staff Lead: TBD	Status:

LONG RANGE ACTION ITEMS

Through surveys, consultations and data analysis, insights into the challenges and opportunities in the regional labour market were highlighted. The tables below outline recommendations by employers for possible solutions. These initiatives will serve as a basis of the Planning Board's ongoing work and development of strategic activities in the coming months.

RECOMMENDATIONS

STAKEHOLDER: EMPLOYERS

1. PAYING COMPETITIVE WAGES AND BENEFIT PACKAGES

Half of employers surveyed indicate that employers need to pay a decent wage and a good benefit package to their employees in order to increase the number of apprentices and journeypersons in high-demand trades. With better compensation, wages and benefits, the attractiveness of occupations in skilled trades will increase, especially towards potential employees.

2. BETTER WORKING ENVIRONMENTS WITH SOLID TRAINING

Half of employers surveyed also think flexible working hours and good workplace environments would also work to induce apprentices and journeypersons. With more respectful and inclusive workplaces, apprentices tend to commit more to the training. Also, the employers suggest that local businesses should take OYAP students and register them as apprentices. If employers are willing to take on apprentices and provide the necessary training for that trade, these apprentices will become experienced tradespeople that benefit their businesses in the future. According to Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (2016), "Offering high-quality training and a positive learning environment attracts additional apprentices through word of mouth" (p. 20).

3. MORE MARKETING TO THE YOUNGER GENERATION

Lastly, marketing is critical in the skilled trades as many students are not interested in trades. The most popular recruitment methods employers use are social media such as Indeed and Facebook and word of mouth to local shop teachers, co-op teachers or families. However, one employer said, "Employers should be out in public such as career fairs or public events to promote their trades". Therefore, the employers also should consider attending job fairs and talking to students directly about their trades and career paths. In this way, students can get firsthand information from people working in the specific trades.

STAKEHOLDER: THE GOVERNMENT

1. OFFERING LOCAL TRAINING OPTIONS OR MORE SPOTS IN TRADES SCHOOLS

18 percent of employers think that the government should provide more local apprenticeship training or more variety of trades training. While many communities do not have local schools and public transportation is not available, apprentices need to attend trade schools far away and pay for accommodations. One employer said, “Training needs to happen at the right time of the year. Training needs to happen locally (our apprentices are always having to go to the city, that's costly and they are away from their families). The wait time for a schooling offer is too long. Schooling should be offered locally”. If local training delivery agencies are approved and available, employers will no longer need to worry about the timing of schools and loss of productivity during school periods. This will save employees much time and money as well.

2. CHANGING PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS JOBS IN SKILLED TRADES

Perceptions and stigmas towards trades are often difficult to change or eliminate. The government plays a significant role in raising awareness of career options and income possibilities in skilled trades. From our Employer Engagement Survey, 18 percent of employers think that the government should promote trades more to the public and provide the right information about trades and apprenticeship. They also suggest that marketing campaigns should reach youth earlier and educate schools better about the value of a career in the trades. 18 out of 25 employers who attended the focus group discussions also think it is important to educate students about skilled trades, especially at high school level. They suggest schools should provide more technical classes, increase exposure of trades, and promote trades as a desirable career option for students.

3. PROVIDING MORE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR BOTH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES

Other than promotion, 17.5 percent of employers surveyed suggest that the government should provide wage subsidies and tax credits for employers to help them to pay extra training and incentivize apprentices. These financial help can motivate employers to provide good wages and benefits for their employees as sponsoring an apprentice can be costly.

4. OTHER SUGGESTIONS FROM EMPLOYERS

- Many employers also think the government can release housing or transportation constraints so that people will choose to move to the four county area and stay. Ideally, the government can make the four counties an appealing place to live and work.
- The employers also mentioned the need of apprenticeship staffs in the four county area. Apprentices need administrative assistance from the government staffs on what needs to be done. This applies to employers as well. While enforcement officers always penalize employers for their mistakes, the employers indicate that they would prefer suggestions and ways to improve so they may avoid making mistakes in the future.

- It is also notable that the rural setting plays an important role on skilled trades in the four county area. While much of the training is done using the internet, poor cellular and internet service in the county area place tradespeople at a disadvantage position in the beginning. Therefore, the government needs to take the rural context into consideration when relevant programming is made to help the in-demand skilled trades in the four county area.

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