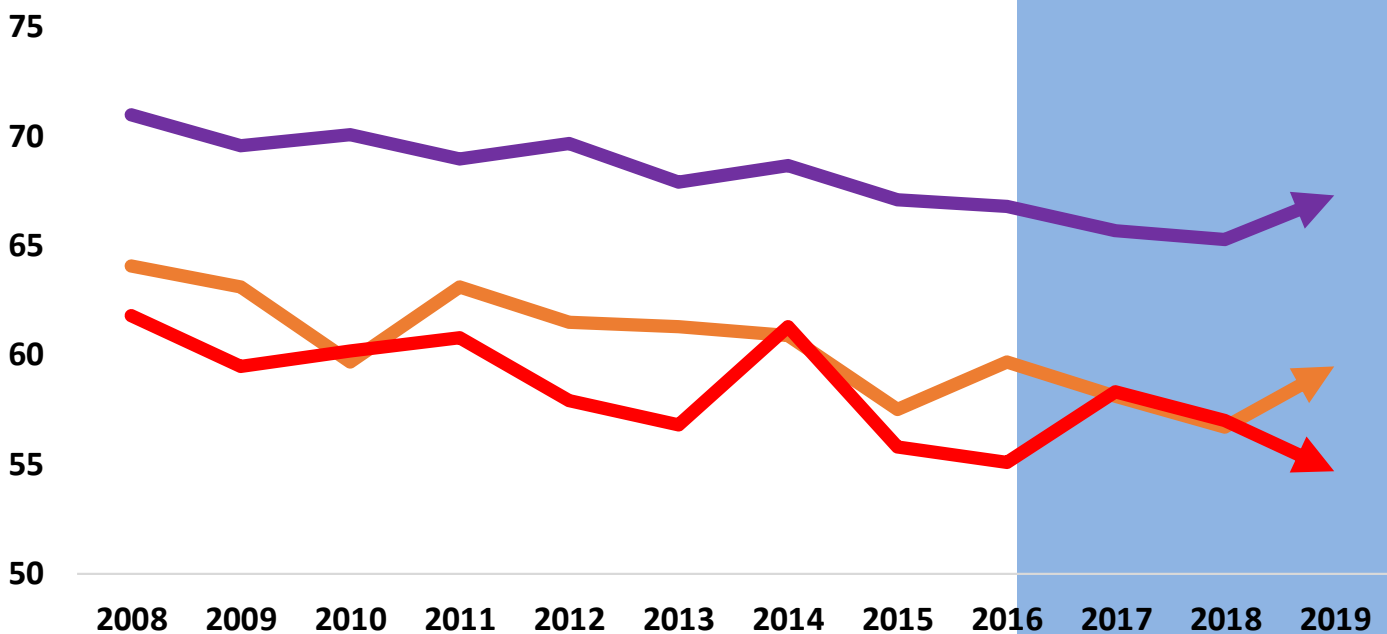




# Examining Labour Force Participation in Eastern Ontario



March  
2020

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## Summary

A ten-year decline in Eastern Ontario's labour force participation rate suggests a smaller proportion of the population is working or trying to work than a decade ago. Between 2008 and 2018, the labour force participation rate for the Eastern Ontario population age 15+ declined from 67.8 percent to 62.0 percent. This is concerning given that the region's employers are having great difficulty filling job openings, as evidenced by the 25,765 job vacancies in Q4 2018.

The objectives of this research are twofold: 1) determine the underlying cause(s) of labour force participation rate decline against the back drop of a growing population; and 2) identify opportunities and strategies to increase labour force participation in Eastern Ontario.

The research revealed that population aging is the primary reason the participation rate for the population age 15+ is declining in Eastern Ontario. The past decade and a half has seen the 'Baby Boomer' generation shift from age cohorts with traditionally high participation rates towards retirement age cohorts with much lower participation rates. This population shift into age cohorts with lower participation rates is causing overall participation rates to decline.

As of 2018, there were 706,000 Eastern Ontario residents age 15+ who were not in the labour force. While this is a large number, data obtained through the Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey revealed only 23,800 of these people wanted work. The small number of people who wanted work may partially be explained by the fact that 72.6 percent of the people not in the labour force were age 55 and over.

Increasing labour force participation in a region where the aging population is the primary cause of a declining participation rate presents a challenge that must be addressed with targeted efforts. Encouraging participation of those aged 55 to 64 presents the greatest opportunity for increasing labour force participation in Eastern

Ontario; only 61.5 percent of the people in this cohort are participating in the labour force compared to 66.7 percent in Ontario.

Other opportunities to improve labour force participation were identified by examining participation rates by age, gender and educational attainment in each of the 14 Census Divisions in Eastern Ontario, revealing different geographic and demographic targets.

Interviews and surveys were conducted across Eastern Ontario to better understand the challenges faced by those not participating in the labour force. The most common barriers included physical limitations, mental health and lack of skill, education or experience.

The combined results of data analysis, interviews and surveys of non-participants provided the specific rationale for each of the following recommendations to increase labour force participation:

1. Improve the participation rate of people with a Grade 12 diploma or less
2. Improve the participation of people with physical disabilities
3. Improve the participation rate of people with mental health challenges
4. Improve the participation rate of older workers
5. Employer shift from perpetual hiring to employee retention
6. Focus on regional workforce retention

## INTRODUCTION

A ten-year decline in Eastern Ontario's labour force participation rate suggests a smaller proportion of the population is working or trying to work than a decade ago. Between 2008 and 2018, the labour force participation rate for the population 15+ declined from 67.8 percent to 62.0 percent. This is concerning given that employers in Eastern Ontario's are having great difficulty filling job openings, as evidenced by the 25,765 job vacancies in Q4 2018.

The objectives of this research are twofold: 1) determine the underlying cause(s) of labour force participation rate decline against the back drop of a growing population; and 2) identify opportunities and strategies to increase labour force participation in Eastern Ontario. The research findings and recommendations will be shared with six workforce development organizations across Eastern Ontario to incorporate into local planning and workforce development actions.

### Approach

To better understand the decline in labour force participation, an analysis of Statistics Canada labour market data was undertaken. Additionally, surveys, interviews and focus groups were conducted to hear the reasons for and barriers to participation directly from those not participating in the labour force.

### Terminology

**Labour force participants** include people who are employed full-time or part-time and people who are unemployed. In order to be considered unemployed, a person must have actively looked for work in the past four weeks (of being surveyed).

The **labour force participation rate** is a measure of the labour force as a percentage of the population age 15 and older or any segment of that population.

**A person who is not in the labour force** is one who is unable or unavailable to work. It also includes persons who are without work and who had not actively looked for work in the past four weeks.

It is important to note that since the primary difference between an unemployed person and a person who is not in the labour force hinges on whether an individual is actively looking for work within the four-week period prior to being surveyed regarding their employment status, it is quite easy for a person to shift back and forth between being technically unemployed versus not participating in the labour force.

### Eastern Ontario Geography

Eastern Ontario is a large geographic area consisting of the following 14 Census Divisions:

- Frontenac
- Haliburton
- Hastings
- Kawartha Lakes
- Lanark
- Leeds and Grenville
- Lennox and Addington
- Northumberland
- Ottawa
- Peterborough
- Prescott and Russell
- Prince Edward County
- Renfrew
- Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry

Eastern Ontario also includes the following 3 Economic Regions:

#### 1. Kingston-Pembroke Economic Region

- Frontenac
- Hastings
- Lennox and Addington
- Prince Edward County
- Renfrew

## 2. Muskoka-Kawartha Economic Region

- Haliburton
- Kawartha Lakes
- Northumberland
- Peterborough
- Muskoka (note, Muskoka is not part of Eastern Ontario)

## 3. Ottawa Economic Region

- Ottawa
- Lanark
- Leeds and Grenville
- Prescott and Russell
- Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry

## CAUSE OF LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION DECLINE

A significant decline in Eastern Ontario's participation rate has been observed for the total population 15 years of age and older. Between 2008 and 2018 Eastern Ontario's participation rate declined from 67.8 percent to 62.0 percent.

As is common, reference to a community or region's participation rate refers to the population 15 years of age and older, but participation rates can also be observed for different age cohorts within Eastern Ontario. Insight into why the age 15+ participation rate declined is provided by examining age cohort data.

### Participation Rates by Age Cohorts

As illustrated in Table 1, participation rates vary greatly by age cohort. The 25 to 44 age cohort has the highest participation rate at 87.8 percent, followed by those aged 45 to 54 at 86.9 percent. Both of these age cohorts have participation rates significantly higher than the total (62.0 percent). Participation rates fall significantly for people aged 55 to 64 years and drop to only 14.0 percent for those 65 years of age and older. Essentially, as people get older, they are less likely to participate in the labour force.



**Table 1**  
**Participation Rates by Age Cohort**  
**Eastern Ontario**  
**2018**

Age Cohort	Eastern Ontario
15+	62.0%
15 to 24	64.3%
25 to 44	87.8%
45 to 54	86.9%
55 to 64	61.5%
65+	14.0%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey  
 The same table containing Economic Region data can be found in the appendix

### Eastern Ontario Participation Rates Compared to Ontario

For context, Table 2 shows a comparison of Eastern Ontario participation rates by age cohort compared to Ontario. The greatest difference between the two areas is in the 55 to 64 age cohort, where Ontario's participation rate is considerably higher than Eastern Ontario's. While Ontario has a higher overall 15+ participation rate, Eastern Ontario's participation rates are higher among the 15 to 24, 25 to 44 and 45 to 54 age cohorts.

**Table 2**  
**Participation Rates**  
**Eastern Ontario and Ontario**  
**2018**

Age Cohort	Ontario	Eastern Ontario
15+	64.5%	62.0%
15 to 24	60.2%	64.3%
25 to 44	85.8%	87.8%
45 to 54	85.1%	86.9%
55 to 64	66.7%	61.5%
65+	14.2%	14.0%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey  
 The same table containing Economic Region data can be found in the appendix

### Change in Participation Rates - 2008 to 2018

While Eastern Ontario's participation rate for the population age 15+ declined from 67.8 percent in 2008 to 62 percent in 2018, Table 3 reveals that participation rates in Eastern Ontario have increased in three different age cohorts: 45 to 54, 55 to 64 and 65 years of age and older. Furthermore, the 25 to 44 age cohort experienced merely a slight decline in its participation rate, from 88.7 percent in 2008 to 87.8 percent in 2018. Only the 15 to 24 age cohort experienced a notable participation rate decline.

**Table 3**  
**Change in Participation Rates**  
**Eastern Ontario**

Age Cohort	2008	2018	Percentage Point Change 2008 to 2018
15+	67.8%	62.0%	-5.8
15 to 24	68.1%	64.3%	-3.8
25 to 44	88.7%	87.8%	-0.9
45 to 54	86.2%	86.9%	0.7
55 to 64	58.5%	61.5%	3.0
65+	11.3%	14.0%	2.7

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

The same table containing Economic Region data can be found in the appendix

### Change in Population - 2008 to 2018

Since the number of people in the labour force is a function of both the participation rate and the population, it is also imperative to examine shifts in Eastern Ontario's population base.

While Eastern Ontario's population 15 years of age and older increased by 175,600 people between 2008 and 2018, the number of people aged 15 to 24-year declined by 27,800, the number of people aged 25 to 44-year decreased by 4,900 and the number of people aged 45 to 54 fell sharply by 53,400.

Eastern Ontario's overall population growth was clearly driven by a significant increase in people aged 55 and older. The population aged 55 to 64 increased by 89,900, and

the population aged 65 and over increased by a remarkable 171,900 people between 2008 and 2018.

**Table 4**  
**Change in the Population**  
**Eastern Ontario**

Age Cohort	2008	2018	Population Change 2008 to 2018
15+	1,683,900	1,859,500	175,600
15 to 24	283,300	255,500	-27,800
25 to 44	546,500	541,600	-4,900
45 to 54	330,500	277,100	-53,400
55 to 64	253,500	343,400	89,900
65+	270,100	442,000	171,900

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

The same table containing Economic Region data can be found in the appendix

Table 5 further illustrates the increase of those age 55 and older as a percentage of the total population in Eastern Ontario between 2008 and 2018. Specifically, the proportion of the Eastern Ontario population aged 55 to 64 years old increased from 15.1 percent in 2008 to 18.5 percent in 2018. The population 65+ had the most significant increase, from 16.0 percent in 2008 to 23.8 percent in 2018. In total, just over 42 percent of the population in 2018 was 55 years of age or older.

**Table 5**  
**Age Cohort as Percent of Total Population**  
**Eastern Ontario**

Age Cohort	2008		2018	
	Total Population	Percent of Total Population	Total Population	Percent of Total Population
15+	1,683,900	100.0	1,859,500	100.0
15 to 24	283,300	16.8	255,500	13.7
25 to 44	546,500	32.5	541,600	29.1
45 to 54	330,500	19.6	277,100	14.9
55 to 64	253,500	15.1	343,400	18.5
65+	270,100	16.0	442,000	23.8

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

The same table containing Economic Region data can be found in the appendix

## Effect on the Labour Force

Changes in the participation rate and the population affect the number of people participating in the labour force. For example, even though the participation rate of those aged 45 to 54 increased between 2008 and 2018, the fact that the population declined by 53,400 resulted in a 44,100 decrease in the number of people in the labour force. Details are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6**  
**Effect on the Labour Force**  
**45 to 54 Age Cohort**  
**Eastern Ontario**

	2008	2018	Change 2008 to 2018
Population #	330,500	277,100	-53,400
Participation Rate %	86.2%	86.9%	+0.7
Labour Force #	284,891	240,799	-44,100*

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

\*Number has been rounded

Table 7 shows how change to both the participation rate and the population affected the number of people in the labour force in each age cohort. For example, the 44,100 decline in the labour force of those aged 45 to 54 was entirely driven by a decrease in the population. The 62,800 increase in the labour force among those aged 55 to 64 was primarily driven by population growth (52,630), with an increase in the participation rate contributing 10,300 people to the labour force.

**Table 7**  
**Reason the Labour Force Changed**  
**Eastern Ontario**  
**2008 to 2018**

	Change in Labour Force Increase/Decrease 2008 to 2018	Amount Due to Population Change Increase/Decrease	Amount Due to Participate Rate Change Increase/Decrease
<b>Eastern Ontario</b>			
15 Years Plus	12,000	2,660	9,590
15-24 Years	-28,800	-18,940	-9,710
25 – 44 Years	-9,300	-4,350	-4,870
45 – 54 Years	-44,100	-46,030	1,940
55 – 64 Years	62,800	52,630	10,300
65 Years Plus	31,400	19,350	11,930

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Custom Table  
The same table containing Economic Region data can be found in the appendix

## Key Findings

Population aging is the primary reason the 15+ participation rate is declining in Eastern Ontario. The past decade and a half have seen the ‘Baby Boomer’ generation shift from age cohorts with traditionally high participation rates towards retirement age cohorts with much lower participation rates. This population shift is causing overall participation rates to decline.

The population 55 and older accounted for 31.1 percent of the population 15+ in 2008 increasing to 42.3 percent in 2018.

Encouraging participation of those aged 55 to 64 presents the greatest opportunity for increasing labour force participation in Eastern Ontario; only 61.5 percent of the people in this cohort are participating in the labour force compared to 66.7 percent in Ontario.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND STRATEGIES TO INCREASE LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION

Increasing labour force participation in a region where the aging population is the primary cause of low participation rates presents a challenge that must be addressed with targeted efforts. Understanding the barriers to participation for those who indicate their desire to work will help to direct these efforts.

### Not in the Labour Force but Wanted Work

As of 2018, there were 706,000 Eastern Ontario residents age 15 and older who were not in the labour force. While this is a significant number, data obtained through the Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey revealed only 23,800 of these people wanted work. This represents just 3.4 percent of the people not in the labour force. Looking back over the past decade, the proportion of non-participants who wanted work never exceeded six percent.

The small proportion and number of people who wanted work may partially be explained by the fact that 72.6 percent of the people not in the labour force were age 55 and over, and 53.9 percent were 65 years of age and older.

**Table 8**  
**Not in the Labour Force but Wanted Work**  
**Eastern Ontario**  
**2018**

	<b>Number of people #</b>	<b>Percent of people %</b>
Total Not in the Labour Force	706,000	100.0%
<b>Not in the Labour Force but Wanted Work</b>	<b>23,800</b>	<b>3.4%</b>
Not in the Labour Force and Did Not Want Work	682,300	96.6%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Although this group of 23,800 is not a vast labour pool, it is worthwhile helping these people enter or re-enter the labour force, particularly as the competition for workers among regions across Ontario intensifies.

### Reasons Not in the Labour Force

Initiatives aimed at helping people enter the labour force should be informed by understanding the reasons *why* people are not in the labour force. The Labour Force Survey also provides statistical insight into the reasons people were not in the labour force. Of the 23,800 people in Eastern Ontario who were not in the labour force but wanted work, illness and going to school were the top two reasons people were unable to enter the labour force. Details are presented in Table 9.

**Table 9**  
**Reasons Not in the Labour Force**  
**Eastern Ontario**  
**2018**

	Number of people #
Illness	6,800
Personal/family responsibilities	3,200
School	6,400
Awaiting recall or discouraged	2,500
Other	4,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,800</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

It is reasonable to assume that those attending school and those who are not in the labour force due to personal or family responsibilities may return to the labour force at some point in the future.

## Where to Focus by Census Division

The research revealed that, as a whole, those aged 55 to 64 in Eastern Ontario have a substantially lower participation rate than in Ontario (61.5 percent versus 66.7 percent). That said, there are significant differences from Census Division to Census Division with respect to participation rates by age, gender and educational attainment. This means that there is merit in location-specific initiatives. The research identifies for each Census Division within Eastern Ontario prioritized groups on which to focus efforts to increase labour force participation.

Using the 2016 Census, areas where the participation rates were very low were compiled. “Very low” is defined as at least 5 percentage points lower than in Ontario. Instances where this is the case are identified below.

### **Frontenac**

#### **Males:**

- Age 20 and older without a secondary school diploma
- Aged 20 and older with a university degree
- Age 45 and older with an apprenticeship certificate

#### **Females:**

- Age 25 to 44 without a secondary school diploma
- Age 45 and older with a secondary school diploma or a university degree

### **Haliburton**

#### **Males:**

- Age 20 and older without a secondary school diploma
- Age 20 to 24 with an apprenticeship certificate or university degree
- Age 25 to 44 with a secondary school diploma
- Age 45 and older at all educational levels

#### **Females:**

- Age 20 to 24 with a university degree
- Age 25 to 44 with an apprenticeship certificate
- Age 45 and older at all educational levels



### **Hastings**

**Males:**

- Age 20 and older without a secondary school diploma
- Age 45 and older at all education levels

**Females:**

- Age 25 to 44 without a secondary school diploma or with an apprenticeship certificate
- Age 45 and older with a secondary school diploma or university degree

### **Kawartha Lakes**

**Males:**

- Age 20 to 24 without a secondary school diploma
- Age 45 and older at all educational levels

**Females:**

- Age 20 to 24 without a secondary school diploma
- Age 45 and older with post-secondary education

### **Lanark**

**Males:**

- Age 20 to 24 without a secondary school diploma
- Age 45 and older with a secondary school diploma or with a university degree

**Females:**

- Age 20 to 24 with an apprenticeship certificate
- Age 25 to 44 without a secondary school diploma
- Age 45 and older with a university degree

### **Leeds and Grenville**

**Males:**

- Age 20 to 44 without a secondary school diploma
- Age 45 and older with a university degree

**Females:**

- Age 45 and older with post-secondary education

### **Lennox and Addington**

#### **Males:**

- Age 20 and older without a secondary school diploma
- Age 20 to 24 with an apprenticeship certificate or university degree
- Age 45 and older with a college diploma or university degree

#### **Females:**

- Age 20 to 44 without a secondary school diploma
- Age 25 to 44 with a secondary school diploma
- Age 45 and older with a university degree

### **Northumberland**

#### **Males:**

- Age 20 to 44 without a secondary school diploma
- Age 45 and older at all educational levels

#### **Females:**

- Age 45 and older at all educational levels

### **Ottawa**

#### **Males:**

- None

#### **Females:**

- Age 25 to 44 without a secondary school diploma

### **Peterborough**

#### **Males:**

- Age 20 and older without a secondary school diploma
- Age 45 and older at all educational levels

#### **Females:**

- Age 45 and older at all educational levels except those with a university degree

### **Prescott-Russell**

#### **Males:**

- Age 45 and older with a university degree

#### **Females:**

- Age 20 to 24 without a secondary school diploma or with an apprenticeship certificate

**Prince Edward County****Males:**

- Age 25 and older without a secondary school diploma
- Age 45 and older at all educational levels

**Females:**

- Age 25 and older with an apprenticeship certificate
- Age 45 and older at all educational levels

**Renfrew****Males:**

- Age 45 and older with a college diploma or university degree

**Females:**

- Age 20 to 24 without a secondary school diploma
- Age 45 and older with a college diploma or university degree

**Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry****Males:**

- Age 20 to 24 without a secondary school diploma
- Age 45 and older with a university degree

**Females:**

- Age 20 to 44 without a secondary school diploma
- Age 45 and older with a university degree

While there is some variation from region to region, analysis of the demographic cohorts with very low levels of labour force participation points to a few groups with consistently very low levels of participation:

- Males and females without a secondary school diploma, often age 44 or younger
- Males and females with a secondary school diploma, often age 45 and older
- Males and females with post-secondary education, often age 45 and older

## INTERVIEWS AND SURVEYS OF NON-PARTICIPANTS IN EASTERN ONTARIO

Along with analysis of the data pertaining to labour force participation in Eastern Ontario, speaking with non-participants across the region contributed to our understanding of barriers to participation as well as targeted strategies that may alleviate those barriers.

From August to December 2019, a series of interviews, focus groups and surveys were conducted across Eastern Ontario reaching a total of 291 people. Of the 291, 168 had not worked for one year or more. It is this group that we focused on in order to understand factors contributing to low levels of labour force participation.

As Table 10 illustrates, the 168 non-participants, referred to as respondents for the purpose of this report, were relatively evenly split by gender and age; 48.8% male and 51.2% female.

**Table 10**  
**Gender and Age of Respondents not in the Labour Force for One Year or More**  
**Eastern Ontario**  
**2019**

	Male		Female	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
20 - 24	22	26.8	17	19.8
25 - 44	24	29.3	31	36.0
45 and older	36	43.9	38	44.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>		<b>86</b>	

**Table 11**  
**Educational Attainment of Respondents**  
**Eastern Ontario**  
**2019**

Educational Attainment	Number	Percent
Less than secondary school	58	34.7
Secondary school diploma	46	27.5
Apprenticeship Certificate	3	1.8
College Diploma	24	14.4
University Degree	36	21.6
No response	1	0.6

Table 11 provides the educational attainment of respondents. Sixty-two percent of those who had not been employed for one year or more did not have post-secondary education.

Of these 168 respondents, 140 (83.3%) wanted to work. Table 12 identifies barriers cited by these individuals. In some cases, multiple barriers were identified.

**Table 12**  
**Barriers to Employment as Identified by Respondents**  
**Eastern Ontario**  
**2019**

<b>Barrier</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Physical limitations	46	27.4
Mental health	41	24.4
Lack of skills, education, experience	37	22.0
Unsuccessful job search	24	14.3
Not the right fit or work schedule	22	13.1
Need Canadian experience, language	17	10.1
Caregiving	15	8.9
Ageism	10	6.0
Transportation	9	5.4
Does not want/need to at this time	6	3.6
Criminal record	6	3.6
Wages too low	3	1.8
Unsure	3	1.8

As our review of data for each census division revealed, the groups in Eastern Ontario with consistently significant rates of non-participation are those without a secondary school diploma, those with a secondary school diploma (only) and adults aged 45 and older with post-secondary education.

Table 13 provides the barriers most often cited by the 58 respondents who have not worked in one year or more and who did not possess a secondary school diploma.

**Table 13**  
**Top barriers to labour force participation for those without a secondary school diploma**  
**Eastern Ontario**  
**2019**

<b>Barrier</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Mental health	20	34.5
Lack of skills, education, experience	18	31.0
Physical limitations	12	20.7
Unsuccessful job search, need for targeted services	10	17.2

It is important to note that 55 percent of those without a secondary school diploma are aged 15 to 24.

Table 14 provides the top barriers to participation for the 74 individuals aged 45 and older who have not worked for one year or more.

**Table 14**  
**Top barriers to labour force participation for individuals aged 45 and older**  
**Eastern Ontario**  
**2019**

<b>Barrier</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Physical limitations	31	41.9
Can't find the right fit or work schedule	16	23.0
Mental health	12	16.2
Lack of skills, education and experience	12	16.2

It is important to note that 54 percent of non-participants aged 45+ have post-secondary education.

Finally, respondents were asked what activities or services they believe would assist them in re-entering the labour market. The most commonly cited actions were:

**Skills training**, including:

- Training for in-demand jobs;
- Assistance in changing jobs/careers including adapting existing skills to new opportunities;
- Computer literacy.

**Support for people with health issues**, including:

- Employment programs for people with mental health challenges and physical limitations;
- Help employers hire people with health concerns;
- Provide counsellor support for those with mental health issues.

**Positive Work Environment**

- Employers make workplaces more welcoming, respectful and safe.

**Flexible work schedules:**

- Implement work schedules that meet family and personal needs.

**Job Search services:**

- Job search services tailored to meet specific barriers.

**Integrating newcomers:**

- Programs providing skills training, certifications and Canadian work experience.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Analysis of labour market data for Eastern Ontario revealed that, as a result of a rapidly aging population and comparatively low rates of labour market participation, re-engaging individuals aged 55 to 65 is necessary to increase labour market participation in Eastern Ontario.

Analysis of data for each census division within the region identified that those without a secondary school diploma and those age 45 and older were the two groups with consistently low levels of participation across the region.

Surveys, interviews and focus groups conducted with those not participating in the labour force resulted in a series of six recommendations.

## RECOMMENDATION # 1: Improve the participation rate of people with a Grade 12 diploma or less

### RATIONALE:

- 61.0% of the job vacancies in Eastern Ontario do not require post-secondary education\*
  - 28.1% of job vacancies in Eastern Ontario require Grade 12 only
  - 32.9% require less than Grade 12.
- 48.9% of job vacancies require one-year employment experience or less.\*
- All Census Divisions in Eastern Ontario have one or more demographic groups of non-participants who do not have a secondary school diploma.
- Ten of the fourteen also have demographic groups of non-participants with a secondary school diploma but no post-secondary education.
- 58 of 168 participants in our Eastern Ontario inquiry did not have a secondary school diploma. Of these, 55% were aged 15 to 24.

### EXAMPLES OF LOCAL ACTIONS:

- Ensure that those with a Grade 12 diploma or less are aware of the large and diverse number of job opportunities available.
- Promote the value of work showing how entry-level jobs can be the doorway to continuous learning pathways and careers that can be accessed through experiential learning.
- Encourage employers to adopt practices that demonstrate the value of ALL members of the team – both when recruiting and in the day-to-day work environment.
- Ongoing promotion of existing Employment Ontario programs that support earning an Ontario Secondary School Grade 12 diploma or equivalent.

\* See Appendix for statistics specific to Eastern Ontario Economic Regions.



## RECOMMENDATION # 2: Improve the participation of people with physical disabilities

### RATIONALE:

- As identified in Table 15, 61,500 people made a decision to leave their job in 2018. Of these, 7,200 (8.3%) did so due to illness or disability.

**Table 15**  
**Reasons for Leaving Jobs**  
**Eastern Ontario**  
**2018**

	Number of people (#)	Percent of people (%)
<b>Job leavers</b>	<b>61,500</b>	<b>70.8</b>
Own illness or disability	7,200	8.3
Personal or family reasons	4,100	4.7
Going to school	24,500	28.2
Dissatisfied	4,200	4.8
Retired	20,000	23.0
Other reasons	1,600	1.8
<b>Jobs losers</b>	<b>20,500</b>	<b>23.6</b>
Permanent layoff	20,500	23.6
Temporary layoff	0	0.0
Have not worked in last year	537,200	--
Never worked	86,900	--
<b>Total Job leavers and losers</b>	<b>82,000</b>	

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada, Custom Labour Force Survey

- Of the 23,800 people currently not participating in the labour force in Eastern Ontario but who indicate they would like to work, 6,800 identify illness as their barrier (See Table 9).
- While data is not available for Eastern Ontario, as of March 2017, 353,183 individuals rely on Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) funds – an annual increase of 4.6%. Forty percent of recipients are collecting funds as a result of a physical disability and the number collecting increased 2.4% since March 2016.
- Of the 168 individuals responding to our inquiry in Eastern Ontario, 46 (27.4%) were not working because of physical limitations. Of those 45 and older, 31 (42%) experienced physical limitations.

**EXAMPLES OF LOCAL ACTIONS:**

- Promote availability of programs and services to employers and individual with disabilities that will support access to accommodations, skills development, wage subsidies, etc.
- Programs linking people with disabilities to the labour force vary throughout Eastern Ontario. Communication between workforce development boards to identify programs and services that are available locally and how to establish these services locally would contribute to greater service consistency.
- Expansion and improved promotion of the Supported Employment Program (MLTSD) for people with complex barriers to employment as a result of physical disabilities, mental impairment or developmental disability.

**RECOMMENDATION # 3: Improve the participation of people with mental health challenges****RATIONALE:**

- Of the 353,183 individuals relying on Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) funds as of March 2017, 199,899 or 60% of recipients are collecting funds as a result of mental disability. The number collecting this stipend as a result of mental illness increased 4.9% since March 2016.
- Of the 168 individuals responding to our inquiry in Eastern Ontario, 41 or almost one in four were not working as a result of mental health challenges.
- Of those without a secondary school diploma, mental health challenges were the leading cause of non-participation in the labour force.
- Given that almost one in three jobs going unfilled in Eastern Ontario do not require a secondary school diploma and there are significant numbers of non-participants in the region who lack post-secondary education, it is important that people struggling with mental health become engaged with the workforce.

**EXAMPLES OF LOCAL ACTIONS:**

- Advocate that services dealing within mental health are adequately funded and that service providers are given the resources necessary to support those with mental health issues.
- Ensure employers have the tools necessary to hire and retain individuals with mental health challenges within their workplace.
  - Assess proven programs like “Talk Today” instituted between the Canadian Mental Health Association and the Canadian Hockey League for its application to the work environment.

**RECOMMENDATION # 4: Improve the participation rate of older workers****RATIONALE:**

- There are more than 1.85 million people in Eastern Ontario age 45 and older. Participation rates of people in this age cohort are strong at 86.9%. However, only 61.5% of those aged 55 to 65 are participating in the labour force as compared to 66.7% in Ontario.
- With the exception of Ottawa, all Census Divisions in Eastern Ontario have groups of individuals age 45 and older with post-secondary education who have very low participation rates.
- Of the 168 individuals responding to our Eastern Ontario inquiry who had not worked for one year or more, 74 (44%) were age 45 and older. 54 percent of these non-participants have post-secondary education.
- Aside from physical limitations, the greatest barrier to employment was finding the right ‘fit’ which most often meant offering a work schedule or work conditions that met their needs.

**EXAMPLES OF LOCAL ACTIONS:**

- Encourage employers to consider scheduling flexibility before an existing employee leaves their workplace and when recruiting new employees.
- Encourage employers to consider the benefit of adapting work conditions including part-time or contract work and/or facilitating working from home in order to access the considerable knowledge and experience provided by older workers.
- Work with employers to understand and implement practices that improve multi-generational relationships in the workplace and to consider workplace mentorship programs between generations.
- Re-introduce Employment Ontario Targeted Initiative for Older Workers. Provide targeted job search assistance including computer skills training for evolving online job search practices.

**RECOMMENDATION # 5: Employer shift from perpetual hiring to employee retention****RATIONALE:**

- In Eastern Ontario, there were 61,500 people who made the decision to leave their job in 2018 and 20,500 who lost their job in the same year as a result of permanent lay-off (See Table 15).
- The US-based Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) estimates it costs 6 to 9 months' wages to replace a salaried employee.
- Canadian Business Magazine (2015) puts the estimate a 40% of an employee's salary. For a person earning \$48,000.00 per year, an average employee turnover costs approximately \$18,000.00.
- It's difficult to track the true cost because it is based on elements that are often not quantified. An analysis completed by Deloitte included the cost of recruiting

and hiring; onboarding and training costs; lost productivity; lost engagement of existing staff; and customer service errors.

- Training that would assist employers improve recruitment and retention was the leading strategy to increase labour force participation as identified by 36% of 25 employment service providers, health care, educators and economic developers consulted.
- Those who participated in our study commonly cited the need for workplaces that were welcoming, respectful and safe.

#### **EXAMPLES OF LOCAL ACTIONS:**

- Profile local business success stories highlighting how a positive work environment attracts new employees and reduces employee turnover.
- Promote the return on investment that comes with a focus on employee retention measures including positive leadership, employee recognition and incentives, innovative scheduling options, etc.

#### **RECOMMENDATION # 6: Focus on regional workforce retention**

##### **RATIONALE:**

- While labour force retention may seem dissimilar to increasing participation rates, successful efforts to increase the participation rate could easily be undone if the workforce moves away. Table 16 identifies the number of members of the labour force who left each Eastern Ontario Census Division between 2011 and 2016. While the number of people leaving a Census Division *may* be offset by people moving into an area, the first rule of marketing is to hold onto the customers you already have. The same principle applies to the labour force.

**Table 16**  
**Number of Members of the Labour Force**  
**Leaving Eastern Ontario Census Divisions 2011 to 2016**

Census Division	Number Leaving
Frontenac	17,110
Haliburton	580
Hastings	8,485
Kawartha Lakes	4,930
Lanark	4,035
Leeds and Grenville	5,605
Lennox and Addington	3,115
Northumberland	4,995
Ottawa	54,470
Peterborough	8,505
Prescott and Russell	6,030
Prince Edward County	1,680
Renfrew	7,470
Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry	5,285

Source: Statistics Canada National Household Survey 2011 and Census 2016

#### **EXAMPLES OF LOCAL ACTION:**

- Conduct research to better understand each region's ability to attract workers – as well as its propensity to lose workers. The analysis should consider how movers affect the local supply of labour including by age cohort, educational attainment, occupation and the origin and destination of movers.
- Based on this analysis, develop an evidence-based workforce retention strategy to complement efforts to improve labour force participation.

## APPENDIX

**KINGSTON-PEMBROKE ECONOMIC REGION****Kingston-Pembroke Economic Region  
Participation Rate by Age Cohort  
2018**

Age Cohort	Kingston-Pembroke
15+	56.7%
15 to 24	68.1%
25 to 44	83.7%
45 to 54	82.1%
55 to 64	60.5%
65+	12.8%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

**Kingston-Pembroke Economic Region  
Participation Rate by Age Cohort  
Comparisons  
2018**

Age Cohort	Ontario	Eastern Ontario	Kingston-Pembroke
15+	64.5%	62.0%	56.7%
15 to 24	60.2%	64.3%	68.1%
25 to 44	85.8%	87.8%	83.7%
45 to 54	85.1%	86.9%	82.1%
55 to 64	66.7%	61.5%	60.5%
65+	14.2%	14.0%	12.8%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

**Kingston-Pembroke Economic Region  
Change in Participation Rate by Age Cohort  
2008 - 2018**

Age Cohort	2008	2018	Percentage Point Change 2008 to 2018
15+	64.1%	56.7%	-7.4
15 to 24	66.7%	68.1%	1.4
25 to 44	86.3%	83.7%	-2.6
45 to 54	83.5%	82.1%	-1.4
55 to 64	56.2%	60.5%	4.3
65+	12.4%	12.8%	0.4

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

**Kingston-Pembroke Economic Region  
Change in Population by Age Cohort  
2008 - 2018**

Age Cohort	2008	2018	Population Change 2008 to 2018
15+	365,400	383,800	18,404
15 to 24	60,300	49,500	-10,800
25 to 44	108,100	103,200	-4,900
45 to 54	70,900	50,300	-20,600
55 to 64	58,700	69,200	10,500
65+	67,500	111,600	44,100

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

**Kingston-Pembroke Economic Region  
Age Cohort as Percent of Total Population**

Age Cohort	2008		2018	
	Total Population	Percent of Total Population	Total Population	Percent of Total Population
15+	365,400	100.0	383,800	100.0
15 to 24	60,300	16.5	49,500	12.9
25 to 44	108,100	29.6	103,200	26.9
45 to 54	70,900	19.4	50,300	13.1
55 to 64	58,700	16.1	69,200	18.0
65+	67,500	18.5	111,600	29.1

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

**Kingston-Pembroke Economic Region  
Source of Labour Force Change  
2008 – 2018**

	Change in Labour Force Increase/Decrease 2008 to 2018	Amount Due to Population Change	Amount Due to Participation Rate Change
15 Years Plus	-16,500	-17,240	730
15-24 Years	-6,500	-7,200	690
25 – 44 Years	-6,900	-4,230	-2,680
45 – 54 Years	-17,900	-17,200	-700
55 – 64 Years	8,900	5,900	2,980
65 Years Plus	5,900	5,490	450

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Custom Table



**Kingston-Pembroke Economic Region  
Number and Proportion of Job Vacancies  
Q4 2018**

	<b>Number of Job Vacancies #</b>	<b>Proportion of Job Vacancies %</b>
Full-time Jobs	2,640	57.8
Part-time Jobs	1,930	42.2
<b>Total Job Vacancies</b>	<b>4,570</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Job Vacancy and Wage Survey

**Kingston-Pembroke Economic Region  
Job Vacancies: Minimum Level of Education Sought  
Q4 2018**

<b>Minimum Level of Education Sought</b>	<b>Number of Job Vacancies #</b>	<b>Proportion of Job Vacancies %</b>
No minimum level of education sought	1,525	33.3
High school diploma or equivalent	1,250	27.3
Apprenticeship or trade certificate or diploma	365	8.0
College, CEGEP and other non-university certificate or diploma	935	20.5
University certificate or diploma below bachelor's level	200	4.3
Bachelor's degree	240	5.2
University certificate or diploma above bachelor's degree	60	1.3
<b>Total Job Vacancies</b>	<b>4,575</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Job Vacancy and Wage Survey

**Kingston-Pembroke Economic Region  
Job Vacancies: Minimum Level of Experience Sought  
Q4 2018**

<b>Minimum Level of Experience Sought</b>	<b>Number of Job Vacancies #</b>	<b>Proportion of Job Vacancies %</b>
Less than 1 year	2,570	56.2
1 year to less than 3 years	1,410	30.8
3 years to less than 5 years	280	6.2
5 years to less than 8 years	280	6.2
8 years or more	35	0.8
<b>Total Job Vacancies</b>	<b>4,575</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Job Vacancy and Wage Survey

## MUSKOKA-KAWARTHAS ECONOMIC REGION

### Muskoka-Kawarths Economic Region Participation Rate by Age Cohort 2018

Age Cohort	Muskoka-Kawarths
15+	57.0%
15 to 24	61.3%
25 to 44	86.1%
45 to 54	91.0%
55 to 64	59.4%
65+	18.6%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

### Muskoka-Kawarths Economic Region Participation Rate by Age Cohort Comparisons 2018

Age Cohort	Ontario	Eastern Ontario	Muskoka-Kawarths
15+	64.5%	62.0%	57.0%
15 to 24	60.2%	64.3%	61.3%
25 to 44	85.8%	87.8%	86.1%
45 to 54	85.1%	86.9%	91.0%
55 to 64	66.7%	61.5%	59.4%
65+	14.2%	14.0%	18.6%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

### Muskoka-Kawarths Economic Region Change in Participation Rate by Age Cohort 2008 - 2018

Age Cohort	2008	2018	Percentage Point Change 2008 to 2018
15+	61.8	57.0%	-4.8
15 to 24	65.7	61.3%	-4.4
25 to 44	90.2	86.1%	-4.1
45 to 54	84.0	91.0%	7.0
55 to 64	57.3	59.4%	2.1
65+	8.9	18.6%	9.7

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

**Muskoka-Kawarthas Economic Region  
Change in the Population by Age Cohort  
2008-2018**

Age Cohort	2008	2018	Population Change 2008 to 2018
15+	312,000	334,400	22,400
15 to 24	44,900	37,700	-7,200
25 to 44	80,900	76,200	-4,700
45 to 54	60,500	43,200	-17,300
55 to 64	58,600	72,700	14,100
65+	67,100	104,700	37,600

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

**Muskoka-Kawarthas Economic Region  
Age Cohort as Percent of Total Population**

Age Cohort	2008		2018	
	Total Population	Percent of Total Population	Total Population	Percent of Total Population
15+	312,000	100.0	334,400	100.0
15 to 24	44,900	14.4	37,700	11.3
25 to 44	80,900	25.9	76,200	22.8
45 to 54	60,500	19.4	43,200	12.9
55 to 64	58,600	18.8	72,700	21.7
65+	67,100	21.5	104,700	31.3

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

**Muskoka-Kawarthas Economic Region  
Source of Labour Force Change  
2008 – 2018**

	Change in Labour Force Increase/Decrease 2008 to 2018	Amount Due to Population Change	Amount Due to Participation Rate Change
15 Years Plus	-2,200	-12,050	9,920
15-24 Years	-6,400	-4,730	-1,660
25 – 44 Years	-7,400	-4,240	-3,120
45 – 54 Years	-11,500	-14,530	3,020
55 – 64 Years	9,600	8,080	1,530
65 Years Plus	13,500	3,360	10,160

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Custom Table

**Muskoka-Kawarthas Economic Region  
Number and Proportion of Job Vacancies  
Q4 2018**

	Number of Job Vacancies #	Proportion of Job Vacancies %
Full-time Jobs	2,210	56.7
Part-time Jobs	1,690	43.3
<b>Total Job Vacancies</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Job Vacancy and Wage Survey

**Muskoka-Kawarthas Economic Region  
Job Vacancies: Minimum Level of Education Sought  
Q4 2018**

Minimum Level of Education Sought	Number of Job Vacancies #	Proportion of Job Vacancies %
No minimum level of education sought	1,455	37.3
High school diploma or equivalent	1,115	28.6
Apprenticeship or trade certificate or diploma	295	7.6
College, CEGEP and other non-university certificate or diploma	545	14.0
University certificate or diploma below bachelor's level	85	2.1
Bachelor's degree	190	4.8
University certificate or diploma above bachelor's degree	215	5.5
<b>Total Job Vacancies</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Job Vacancy and Wage Survey

**Muskoka-Kawarthas Economic Region  
Job Vacancies: Minimum Level of Experience Sought  
Q4 2018**

Minimum Level of Experience Sought	Number of Job Vacancies #	Proportion of Job Vacancies %
Less than 1 year	2,440	62.6
1 year to less than 3 years	940	24.1
3 years to less than 5 years	295	7.6
5 years to less than 8 years	185	4.8
8 years or more	40	1.0
<b>Total Job Vacancies</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Job Vacancy and Wage Survey

**OTTAWA ECONOMIC REGION****Ottawa Economic Region (ER)  
Participation Rate by Age Cohort  
2018**

Age Cohort	Ottawa ER
15+	65.3%
15 to 24	63.8%
25 to 44	89.3%
45 to 54	87.3%
55 to 64	62.6%
65+	12.4%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

**Ottawa Economic Region  
Participation Rate by Age Cohort  
Comparisons  
2018**

Age Cohort	Ontario	Eastern Ontario	Ottawa ER
15+	64.5%	62.0%	65.3%
15 to 24	60.2%	64.3%	63.8%
25 to 44	85.8%	87.8%	89.3%
45 to 54	85.1%	86.9%	87.3%
55 to 64	66.7%	61.5%	62.6%
65+	14.2%	14.0%	12.4%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

**Ottawa Economic Region  
Change in Participation Rate by Age Cohort  
2008 - 2018**

Age Cohort	2008	2018	Percentage Point Change 2008 to 2018
15+	71.0%	65.3%	-5.7
15 to 24	69.3%	63.8%	-5.5
25 to 44	89.1%	89.3%	0.2
45 to 54	87.8%	87.3%	-0.5
55 to 64	60.0%	62.6%	2.6
65+	11.8%	12.4%	0.6

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

**Ottawa Economic Region  
Change in the Population by Age Cohort  
2008-2018**

Age Cohort	2008	2018	Population Change 2008 to 2018
15+	1,006,500	1,141,300	134,800
15 to 24	178,100	168,300	-9,800
25 to 44	357,500	362,200	4,700
45 to 54	199,200	183,600	-15,600
55 to 64	136,300	201,500	65,200
65+	135,400	225,700	90,300

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

**Ottawa Economic Region  
Age Cohort as Percent of Total Population**

Age Cohort	2008		2018	
	Total Population	Percent of Total Population	Total Population	Percent of Total Population
15+	1,006,500	100.0	1,141,300	100.0
15 to 24	178,100	17.7	168,300	14.7
25 to 44	357,500	35.5	362,200	31.7
45 to 54	199,200	19.8	183,600	16.1
55 to 64	136,300	13.5	201,500	17.7
65+	135,400	13.5	225,700	19.8

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

**Ottawa Economic Region  
Source of Labour Force Change  
2008 – 2018**

	Change in Labour Force Increase/Decrease 2008 to 2018	Amount Due to Population Change	Amount Due to Participation Rate Change
15 Years Plus	30,600	33,510	-2,860
15-24 Years	-16,000	-6,790	-9,260
25 – 44 Years	4,900	4,190	720
45 – 54 Years	-14,600	-13,690	-920
55 – 64 Years	44,300	39,130	5,240
65 Years Plus	12,000	10,670	1,350

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Custom Table

**Ottawa Economic Region  
Number and Proportion of Job Vacancies  
Q4 2018**

	Number of Job Vacancies #	Proportion of Job Vacancies %
Full-time Jobs	11,540	66.7
Part-time Jobs	5,755	33.3
<b>Total Job Vacancies</b>	<b>17,295</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Job Vacancy and Wage Survey

**Ottawa Economic Region  
Job Vacancies: Minimum Level of Education Sought  
Q4 2018**

Minimum Level of Education Sought	Number of Job Vacancies #	Proportion of Job Vacancies %
No minimum level of education sought	5,500	31.8
High school diploma or equivalent	4,885	28.2
Apprenticeship or trade certificate or diploma	1,170	6.8
College, CEGEP and other non-university certificate or diploma	2,595	15.0
University certificate or diploma below bachelor's level	845	4.9
Bachelor's degree	1,815	10.5
University certificate or diploma above bachelor's degree	490	2.8
<b>Total Job Vacancies</b>	<b>17,300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Job Vacancy and Wage Survey

**Ottawa Economic Region  
Job Vacancies: Minimum Level of Experience Sought  
Q4 2018**

Minimum Level of Experience Sought	Number of Job Vacancies #	Proportion of Job Vacancies %
Less than 1 year	8,635	49.9
1 year to less than 3 years	4,805	27.8
3 years to less than 5 years	1,675	9.7
5 years to less than 8 years	1,805	10.4
8 years or more	380	2.2
<b>Total Job Vacancies</b>	<b>17,300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Job Vacancy and Wage Survey



Centre for Workforce Development  
11 Bay Bridge Rd., Belleville, ON K8P 3P6  
613-969-0720 Fax 613-969-0719  
info@cfwd.ca www.cfwd.ca



Paul Knafelc  
President, Community Benchmarks Inc.  
pknafelc@sympatico.ca  
905-892-9742