

CHATHAM-KENT
WORKFORCE
PLANNING BOARD

2024 Local Labour Market Plan



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Workforce
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1 INTRODUCTION

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

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

2 SUMMARY OF LLMP FINDINGS

2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC, WORKFORCE AND INDUSTRY TRENDS

Category	Highlights
<p>Population</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continued growth in 2024 – 1% increase year-over-year. ● The population was 111,705 as of July 1, 2024. The last time the population was this high was 2006. ● The population has been growing modestly since 2016. ● The 2.2% growth among the 25-44 age group is encouraging that local workforce demand is being addressed. ● Immigrants, non-permanent residents and intraprovincial migrants continue to drive population growth. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ After intraprovincial migrants, non-permanent residents were the second highest source of population growth¹. ● The ‘natural’ population growth is worsening – 462 more deaths than births in 2024. ● There is considerable mobility within southwestern Ontario. The top five sources/destinations for migrants to/from Chatham-Kent are Windsor, London, Toronto, Sarnia and non-CMA/CA Ontario.
<p>Workforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The number participating in the CK workforce jumped in 2024 by 8.2% (+4,200). The last time there were this many people participating in the workforce was 2008. ● The unemployment rate increased to 7.9% as the workforce expanded faster than total employment (8.2% vs. 6.9%). ● In the past year there has been strong employment growth in the accommodation and food services sector (+4%), manufacturing (+3%) and transportation (+3%). ● Natural gas distribution sector employment dropped 10%. ● Women aged 25-34 in CK have a much lower workforce participation rate compared to the country overall. ● The number of social assistance recipients has increased in recent years and is now 52% higher than the country overall, relative to population size. ● Chatham-Kent employers used temporary foreign workers 3.5 times more than the province overall, adjusted for population size. ● The number of international PSE graduates in the CK workforce is growing every year (215 permits at the end of 2023). ● Housing starts dropped significantly in 2024 (294 versus an average of 470 in the previous four years).

¹According to Statistics Canada, non-permanent residents (NPRs) are persons who hold a study permit, a work permit, a minister’s permit or who are claiming refugee status. It also includes their non-Canadian born dependants living in Canada.

Category	Highlights
Job postings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The number of job postings dropped by 10% year-over-year². ● Job postings for nurses, early childhood educators, and licensed practical nurses are all up strongly along with food service supervisors and administrative officers. ● Job postings are down in a number of groups including labourers, retail salespersons, cashiers, truck drivers and home support workers. ● The top five occupational groups by number of job postings in 2024 were: nurses, food counter attendants, home support workers, retail salespersons and LPNs.
Workforce demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There will be nearly 3,000 jobs from growth demand between 2024 and 2031 and another 11,150 from replacement demand resulting in 14,130 jobs to be filled by 2031. ● The 1% annual population growth is not likely enough to address this demand (unless more local residents can be encouraged to join or stay in the workforce).
Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Median personal income is growing more slowly in CK compared to the country overall. ● The number of taxfilers reporting \$100,000+ income has increased by 70% over the 2017-2022 timeframe.
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The number of employer businesses continues to drop – down 1.8% between June 2023 and June 2024. ● Construction, agriculture, retail trade and wholesale trade declined. ● There were 10 more restaurants in 2024 compared to 2023. ● CK’s core industries are heavily reliant on export markets. Farming exports (within Canada and outside Canada) increased to \$1.1 billion in 2022 (up 78% over 10 years). ● Six different manufacturing sectors have seen 50% growth or more in export revenue.

²The 12 month period November 1st to October 31 2023 compared to the same period in 2024.

2.2 KEY INSIGHTS FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Category	Highlights
Job Seeker Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 48% of respondents were receiving income from Ontario Works. ● Over 20% spend at least 20 hours per week looking for work. ● Most were looking for a higher wage than their current or previous job (40%), but a large share was looking for flexible work or a different workplace culture. ● Non-government job search websites were the most used followed by government websites (e.g. CK Jobs). ● More than half had received job search support from Chatham-Kent Employment and Social Services (56%). ● The top assistance they would like to see: job trials to demonstrate their ability to do the job.
EmployerOne Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Survey respondents represented 15,400 employees or approximately 30% of all employment in Chatham-Kent. ● 86% of the workforce is back in the office or job site with a higher percentage in the coming year. ● Nearly 2,400 were separated from their employers in the past 12 months (15% of total employment). ● The employers combined to hire just over 2,500 new workers. ● 31% said that a lack of workers was a reason they turned down new business during the year. ● 26% reported that they had altered their business hours due to staffing shortages. ● Only 15% invested in technology to address staffing shortages. ● 44% of employers hired staff from outside CK during the year. ● Access to administrative talent had the most positive response with 47% rating access as good to excellent. ● Skilled labour was rated the lowest with 30% giving it a less than satisfactory rating. Technical skills were also rated low. ● 29% said relevant training is not offered locally. ● AI is expected to have an increasingly important role.
Stakeholder Insights - Employer and employer serving agency input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Immigrants and temporary foreign workers are playing a growing role in the workforce. ● International student numbers are down at St. Clair College Chatham Campus. ● Childcare, housing and the need to pay competitive wages are three top issues. ● Promoting workforce diversity (e.g. demographic) remains an important priority. ● We need to continue to focus on getting the data needed to make informed decisions.

2.3 EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO PROGRAM TRENDS AND INSIGHTS

Program	Highlights
Employment Service clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continued decline from 605 in 2022/23 to 425 in 2023/24. ● Persons with a disability accounted for 31% of clients. ● 56% of clients were male. ● The top layoff industries were manufacturing, accommodation and food services, retail trade and construction. ● At exit, 55% were employed, 4% unemployed, 9% in training, 16% other and 17% unknown.
Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 173 clients in 2023/24. 43% under the age of 25. ● Persons with a disability accounted for 38% of clients. ● 53% of clients were female. ● 44% had a goal of employment and 44% a goal of post-secondary education.
Better Jobs Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 31 clients, 84% of which were male. A majority being trained as transport truck drivers.
Integrated Employment Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 629 clients in 2023/24. ● Persons with a disability accounted for 54% of clients. ● 59% of clients were male. ● Nearly half (48%) were earning income from Ontario Works.
Apprenticeship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 638 active apprentices in 2023/24, up from 617 last year. ● The # of Certificates of Apprenticeship was not published. ● 93% of new apprentices were male. ● 49 new registrations were for Electrician - Construction and Maintenance. ● 23 were for Automotive Service Technician.
Canada Ontario Job Grant – Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 35 employers using this program in 2023/24. ● 77% of the employers were small (less than 50 employees). 49% used a private trainer while 40% used a Registered Private Career College. ● All employers reported an increase in trainee productivity and that the training met workforce needs.
Canada Ontario Job Grant – Participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 58 participants using this program in 2023/24, 71% male. ● 86% were currently employed (most full-time).

2.4 STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS (SUMMARY)

- The CK economy and workforce is reliant on exports to the United States. A local media report indicated that over 1,000 people in Chatham-Kent work for businesses that would be directly affected by United States 25 percent tariff on steel and aluminum including Sonoco Canada Corporation, MSSC Canada, Martinrea Metallic Canada, Dajcor, and Dana Canada Corporation³.
- The population is growing but not likely fast enough to support a growing workforce.
- The number of industries using immigrants and temporary workers is growing.
- The reduction in international students will harm college enrolment in CK.
- CK has a relatively large share of the population on social assistance.
- The participation rate among 25-34 year old women is well below the national level.
- The number of two parent families with children but only one employment income earner has increased significantly in recent years.
- Housing starts in CK are down (19% in 2024 vs 2023). London starts are up 90%, Windsor up 79% and Sarnia up 53%.
- Projections suggest there will be strong demand for jobs in health care, manufacturing, accommodation, and food services, transportation and warehousing through 2031.
- The manufacturing sector was responsible for a large share of layoffs even as it was responsible for many job vacancies.
- Apprentices are not staying long with employers after certification.
- Artificial Intelligence is emerging as a major disruptor of the workforce - 30% of EmployerOne respondents said it is already having an impact on their business and/or workforce.
- A lot of needed training is not offered in CK – 26% of firms said this was a barrier to them not providing training.

³<https://cknewstoday.ca/chatham/news/2025/02/11/over-1000-workers-in-ck-expected-to-be-directly-affected-by-new-us-tariffs>

3 CKWPB 2024 INITIATIVES

The 2024 LLMP included three priorities:

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

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

3.1 PRIORITY AREA 1: DEVELOPING RESOURCES TO SUPPORT EMPLOYERS AND JOB SEEKERS

Action	Outcomes/Work
<p>Track the website activity and identify opportunities for building visitation and awareness of ChathamKentJobs.com.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The entire chathamkentjobs.com platform has been re-branded and updated under the CK Jobs brand. In addition to the website rebuild, marketing has been increased through Facebook, Google, and Spotify. ● ChathamKentJobs.com job user data is tracked and shared by the Chatham-Kent Workforce Planning Board during presentations. ● The monthly CK LMI Newsletter promotes ChathamKentJobs.com
<p>Continue to host career expos and job fairs to connect and inform job seekers, employers, key stakeholders, and students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● After the success of the October 2023 Learning, Earning and Living CK Expo and Job Fair, a similar event will return in March 2025. The CKJobs Career Ignite Jobs Expo will engage job seekers with hands-on learning opportunities and a traditional job fair.
<p>Support activities and programs that position Chatham-Kent as a welcoming and inclusive community for all newcomers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Chatham-Kent Local Immigration Partnership continues to host CK Welcome Week on an annual basis. The 2024 celebration included 12 events across the Municipality, which engaged over 1,000 people. ● Taste of Chatham-Kent was launched in 2024 which coincided with CK Welcome Week and supported local ethno-cultural association celebrations and events ● Local cultural communities continue to host events throughout the year. ● The CK LIP Council, the CK LIP Immigrant Advisory Group, and the CK Welcome Network continue to serve as programs that help position CK as a welcoming community. ● Other events hosted by community partners include St. Clair College International Student Event, the Adult Language and Learning Welcome Event, Cultural ConneCKt, and What’s Brewing are examples of other events occurring in the Municipality related to this action item.

Action	Outcomes/Work
<p>Continue to produce and promote the Local Labour Market Plan to help employers, job seekers and key stakeholders for informed decision making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CKWPB hosted a Community Presentation in February 2024 to share findings from the LLMP. 104 people attended the event. ● LLMP Document is housed on the CKWorkforce.com Website and is distributed at local events. ● Community Attraction & Promotion share highlights from the LLMPD through community presentations. 14 presentations have occurred in 2024 that have highlighted these findings.

3.2 PRIORITY AREA 2: FOSTERING LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS AMONG EMPLOYERS, EDUCATORS, AND AGENCIES

Action	Outcomes/Work
<p>Work with CK Economic Development to connect local employers and educators they need to address workforce challenges. Put a particular focus on the larger employers as there has seems to have been some downsizing in recent years.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CK Economic Development Services hosts Manufacturing Tours with local school guidance counsellors to bring awareness to employment opportunities. ● The Employer Engagement Database connects Chatham-Kent employers and schoolboards to engage students on career exploration information and encourage them to plan for careers locally. The directory lists various ways that employers can engage with students by identifying their talent attraction needs, availability and preferred interaction methods (i.e. videos, workplace tours, in-class speaker sessions). ● Community Attraction and Promotion and Economic Development Services hosted the Ag Career Day for Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) classes in November with the Lambton Kent District School Board, St. Clair Catholic District School Board, and Conseil scolaire catholique Providence. Five larger employers in CK provided local students with workplace tours to help them better understand careers prospects in the agricultural sector which encourages them to stay or come back to Chatham-Kent to work and live.
<p>Connect international students with employers looking for part time workers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● St. Clair College provides career services(for all students not just international). It is run out of Windsor with staff coming to the Chatham campus one day per week. Students in Chatham can also book an appointment virtually to avoid travel. ● St. Clair College Career Services Department hosts job fairs to promote connections to employers. For example, they hosted a Health Care Career Fair on February 7th and on March 4, 2024, they hosted a job fair for DSW, ECE, CYC students. International students attended these fairs. ● St. Clair College has an International Students Ambassador Position. Among the many services/supports the position offers is helping international students find part-time jobs.

Action	Outcomes/Work
<p>Continue to participate in job fairs outside the community to attract workers to Chatham-Kent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In November 2024, Community Attraction and Promotion participated in the Canadian Immigrant Career Fair in Mississauga. ● Community Attraction and Promotion supports employers who participate in job fairs outside of the Municipality by providing community information to attract talent.
<p>Convene quarterly meetings of the Employment Service providers to encourage increased communication and support collaboration as they transition to the new model of delivery of employment services.</p>	<p>Employment Service providers have the opportunity to meet several times per year to communicate and collaborate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local providers meet bi-annually through the Windsor Regional Employment Network meetings ● Per a 2023 LLMP recommendation, the CK Workforce Planning Board convened a meeting with a group of local stakeholders who provide employment supports in the community. The first meeting was held in May 2024, and the second in November 2024. The group has agreed to meet bi-annually and focus discussions on what they're hearing and seeing in the community.
<p>Develop sector-based workforce development strategies in high demand sectors including manufacturing, health care, agriculture, transportation and retail.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Chatham-Kent Ontario Health Alliance Human Resources Working Group focuses on healthcare wide talent attraction and retention needs. This working group is supported by the Community Attraction & Promotion team at the Municipality of Chatham-Kent. ● The Physician Recruitment and Retention Task Force evaluates local physician demand, develops and implements strategies to sustain an integrated approach to recruitment and retention of Physicians. This Task Force consists of representatives from Family Health Teams, along with resource members from the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, the Chatham-Kent Ontario Health Team, Erie St. Clair LHIN, and the Chatham-Kent Health Alliance. ● The Early Childhood Educators Advisory Committee is comprised of community stakeholders working to address workforce shortages in the sector. The Committee uses multiple approaches, which includes advocacy work, to address the workforce shortages and to entice youth to look into career pathways in early years education.
<p>Develop a job transition program specific to the manufacturing sector.</p>	<p>Better Jobs Ontario provides supports for job seekers who have been laid off. In such a case a job seeker could speak with an Employment Ontario provider who could assess eligibility and help them with the application.</p>

Action	Outcomes/Work
<p>Explore opportunities to enhance and promote services for entrepreneurs</p>	<p>Through the EcDev Small Business Centre, clients have access to a wide range of consultation services, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No-cost one-on-one consultations to discuss their business ideas, stages of planning, and specific assistance they may require. ● Guidance on licenses, permits, registration, regulations, and other forms and documents required to start and build a business. ● Advice and support on preparing a business plan, including help working through any roadblocks in the planning process. ● Help with obtaining financing, preparing a cash flow, and understanding government programs and services that may be available. ● Insight and a formal review of their plans and presentations in order to be better prepared to work with lenders and investors. ● Direction on developing a marketing and communication plan to help them promote their business. ● Research and support for finding suppliers, equipment, and inventory they may need. ● Attendance and celebration of grand openings, and anniversary milestones. <p>Programs that have been offered this year include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Starter Company Plus, In March, and September 2024 ● Summer Company, from April to August 2024 ● Starter Company Networking event in August 2024 ● Summer Company Networking event in June 2024 ● Individual seminars with local entrepreneurs. I.e. Stephanie Simmons, “Is there a small business in you.” Or “Email Marketing,” with Jess Kroez. ● JA World of Choices, April 2024.



3.3 PRIORITY AREA 3: ENHANCING RESEARCH OF LOCAL LABOUR MARKET

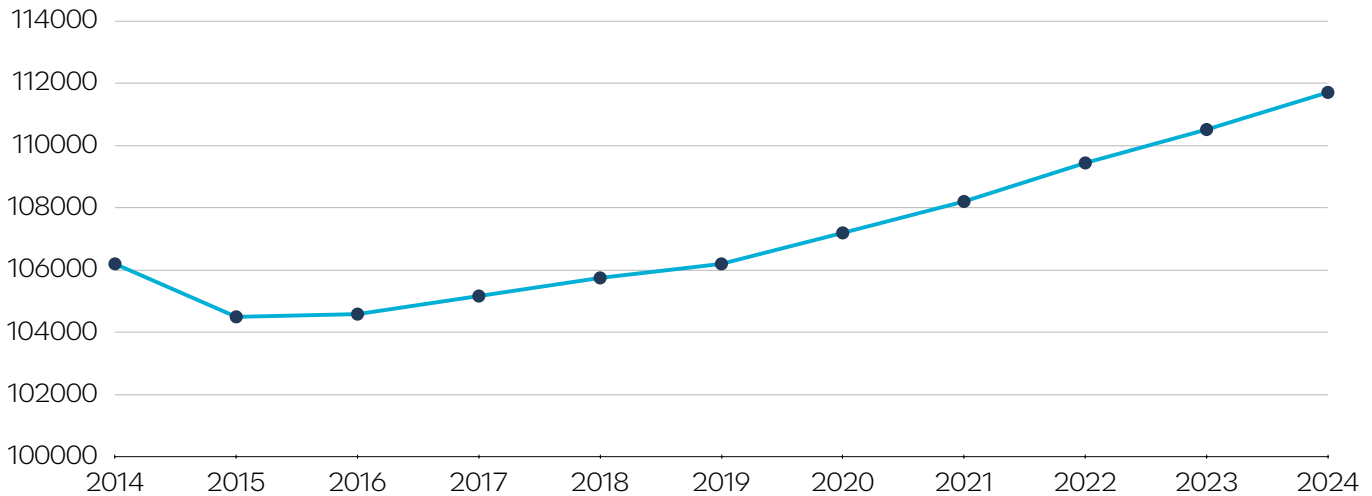
Action	Outcomes/Work
<p>Explore which sectors are using international workers and identify opportunities to expand the use of these workers for sectors facing labour shortages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The CK Workforce Planning Board released the International Student Talent in CK report in 2024 which researched local international student enrollment trends and assessed the opportunity to retain international students to meet local workforce demand. ● Community Attraction and Promotion hosted the ‘Supporting Employees from Work Permits to Permanent Residency’ webinar, which gave information on federal and provincial global talent programs. The webinar was marketed to employers that have current employee that they wished to retain and provide support in their process to permanent residency to ensure that they remained a part of their workforce.
<p>Explore the barriers employers face when accessing and hiring temporary foreign workers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The CK Local Immigration Partnership released the Assessing the Needs of Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) in the Agriculture Sector in 2024 which researched the use of the TFW program by local employers, and opportunities to retain migrant workers in Chatham-Kent.
<p>Compile information on available housing, childcare and other resources to support employers’ worker attraction efforts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The LivingCK.ca website is built around life in Chatham-Kent, with content covering the things most frequently asked by prospective or new residents, including child care, housing supports, and other lifestyle/daily living components. ● The LivingCK New Resident Guide is available in hard copy and downloadable PDF which provides links to key community information. Since its launch in 2022, the guide has had 744 downloads.
<p>Identify barriers to greater workforce participation by specific population segments including immigrants, two parent households where only one is employed, and individuals with disabilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In 2024, the CKWPB conducted an engagement and data-driven project to identify unique barriers faced by under-represented demographic groups, particularly people with disabilities and immigrants, in the Chatham-Kent labour force. The final report will be released early 2025 and provide recommendations to reduce these barriers. The goal is to build an understanding of existing labour pools and local skillsets that are either under-employed or not currently participating in the local labour market and provide recommendations to enhance equitable employment outcomes in Chatham-Kent.

4 POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

4.1 POPULATION TREND BY YEAR (ANNUAL)

The number of people living in Chatham-Kent⁴ has been on the increase since 2015 after several years of population decline. As of July 1, 2024, the population was an estimated 111,705. The growth rate has been modest averaging 1.0% per year between 2019 and 2024. The growth rate accelerated during and after the pandemic, with an average annual increase between 2020 and 2022 of 0.9%. In total, the population expanded by an estimated 1,192 people between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024. The last time there were this many people living in the community was 2006.

Figure 1: Population by year, Chatham-Kent



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

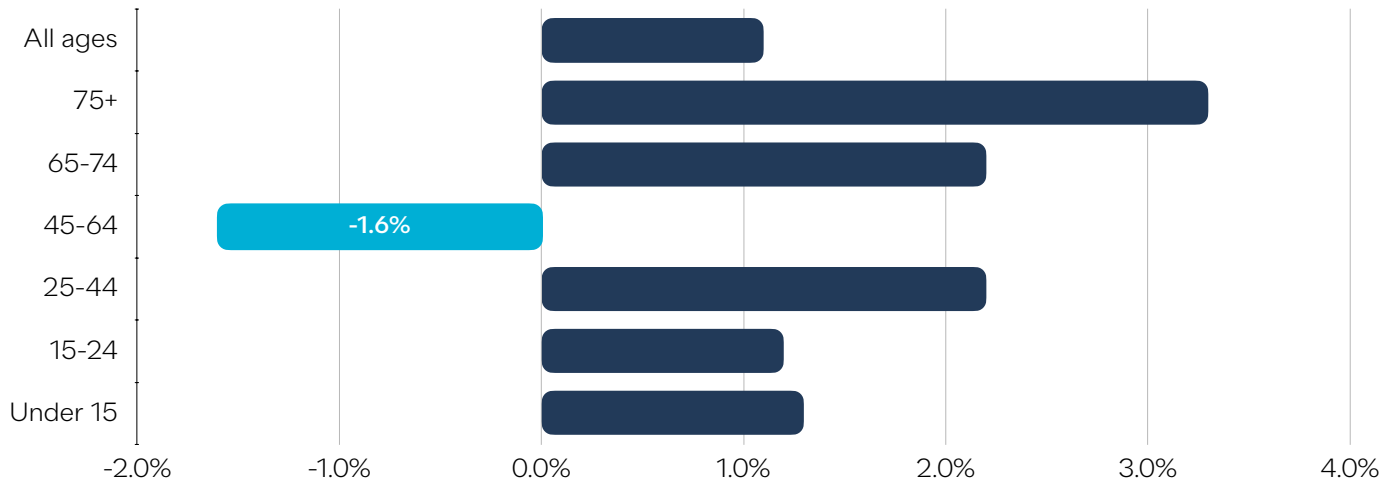
Chatham-Kent's population growth rate between 2023 and 2024 was 1.1%, less than the Windsor CMA⁵ (+3.2%) and the Sarnia CA (+2.1%) and the London CMA (+3.2%).

The population aged 25-44 is growing twice as fast as the population overall as shown in Figure 2. The decline in the population aged 45-64 is a continuing trend and represents a challenge for the workforce as developed further below. Among the peer communities, London, Sarnia and Windsor have seen faster growth among the young population (under 25).

⁴Statistics Canada publishes the same data for Chatham-Kent as a municipal unit, a Census Agglomeration and a Census Division. This is not the case for most municipalities in Canada.

⁵Leamington is now part of the Windsor CMA.

Figure 2: Population change by age group, 2023 to 2024, Chatham-Kent



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

4.2 POPULATION CHANGE BY SOURCE (ANNUAL)

The natural population growth rate continues to be negative. A decade ago, there were more births than deaths in Chatham-Kent. In 2024 there were 146 deaths for every 100 births (463 more deaths than births). The current age distribution of the population suggests this trend indicates that population growth will need to come from inward migration. According to Statistics Canada, the number of immigrants settling in Chatham-Kent has been rising, with 293 arriving between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024.

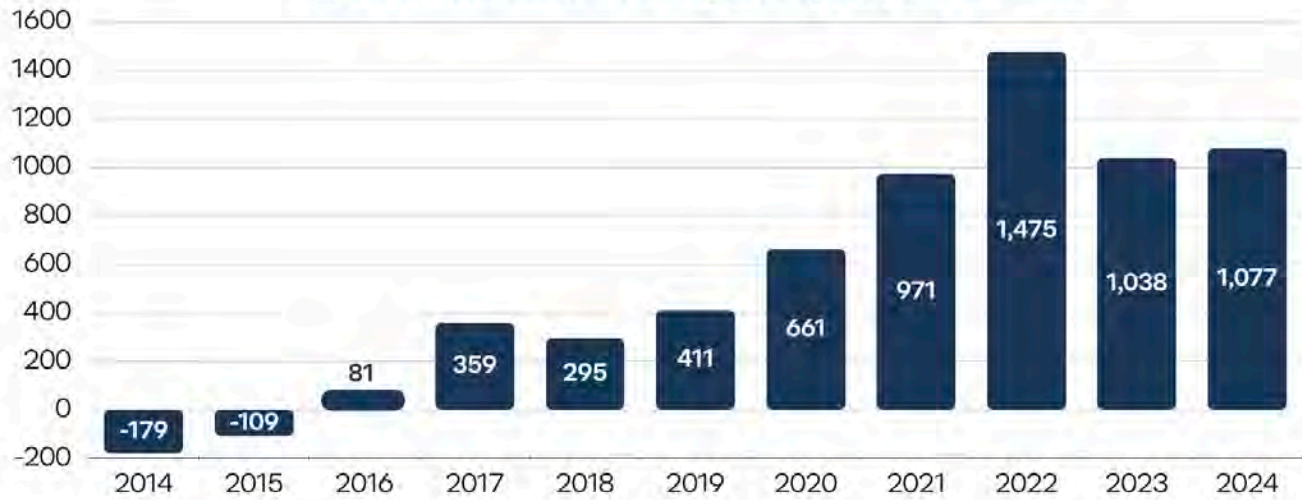
Net intraprovincial migration has been the main source of population growth in Chatham-Kent. The difference between the number of people moving in and out within Ontario has risen sharply. As shown in Figure 3, net intraprovincial migration went from negative (more moving out than in) a decade ago to 1,077 more moving in than out in 2024. Intraprovincial migration into Chatham-Kent accelerated after the pandemic⁶.

Net interprovincial migration in 2024 was negative, with 150 more people moving out of Chatham-Kent than in from other provinces during the year. The other main source of population growth is net non-permanent residents. That number dipped slightly from 503 in 2023 to 489 in 2024.

Still it is worth noting that non-permanent residents were the second highest source of population growth during the year.

⁶Note there could be immigrants in the intraprovincial migration data who were living elsewhere in the province before moving to Chatham-Kent.

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



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

Within Canada, where are the sources and destinations for migrants to/from Chatham-Kent? Statistics Canada tracks this migration but the data is lagged by one year. The most recent data is for the 2022-2023 year. The following table shows the top 10 sources of migrants to Chatham-Kent. The top source was Windsor with 960 in-migrants in a single year. London, rural Ontario, Sarnia and Toronto round out the top five.

The top destinations for people moving out of Chatham-Kent included Windsor (812), Toronto, London, rural Ontario (areas outside of CMAs/CAs), and Sarnia.

Table 1: Top 10 sources and destination for migrants to/from Chatham-Kent, 2022-2023

Moving from		Moving to	
Windsor (CMA)	960	Windsor (CMA)	812
Toronto (CMA)	594	London (CMA)	439
London (CMA)	477	Area outside CMAs/Cas (ONT)	392
Area outside CMAs/Cas (ONT)	417	Sarnia (CA)	229
Sarnia (CA)	216	Toronto (CMA)	220
Kitchener/Cambridge/Waterloo	209	Kitchener/Cambridge/Waterloo	84
Hamilton (CMA)	170	Gatineau, Quebec	55
Guelph (CMA)	69	Ottawa	53
St. Catharines - Niagara (CMA),	66	Hamilton (CMA),	51
Woodstock (CA)	59	Calgary (CMA), Alberta	49
Total	3915	Total	3103

Source: Statistics Canada Table: 17-10-0154-01.



4.3 MIGRATION CHARACTERISTICS BY AGE GROUP (ANNUAL)

The immigrants moving to Chatham-Kent are relatively young compared to the non-immigrant population. In 2024, 92% were under the age of 45. In addition, most of the people moving to Chatham-Kent from other parts of Ontario are young, particularly families with children. In 2024, the under 15 population saw the fastest growth from net intraprovincial migration with 335 more individuals moving in than out in this age group (Table 2). There was modest growth from the 65+ population but 89% of the total was under the age of 65.

Although a relatively small number overall, the region continues to lose more to other provinces in younger age groups (net interprovincial migration). In 2024, the population aged 15-44 dropped by 88 as a result of net interprovincial migration.

Table 2: Net intraprovincial migration by age group, 2023-2024, Chatham-Kent

	Under 15	15-24	25-44	45-64	65-74	75+	All
Immigrants	73	26	170	21	2	1	293
Net interprovincial migration	5	-42	-46	-44	-18	-5	-150
Net intraprovincial migration	335	-22	318	329	77	40	1077
Net non-permanent residents	89	205	174	19	2	0	489

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

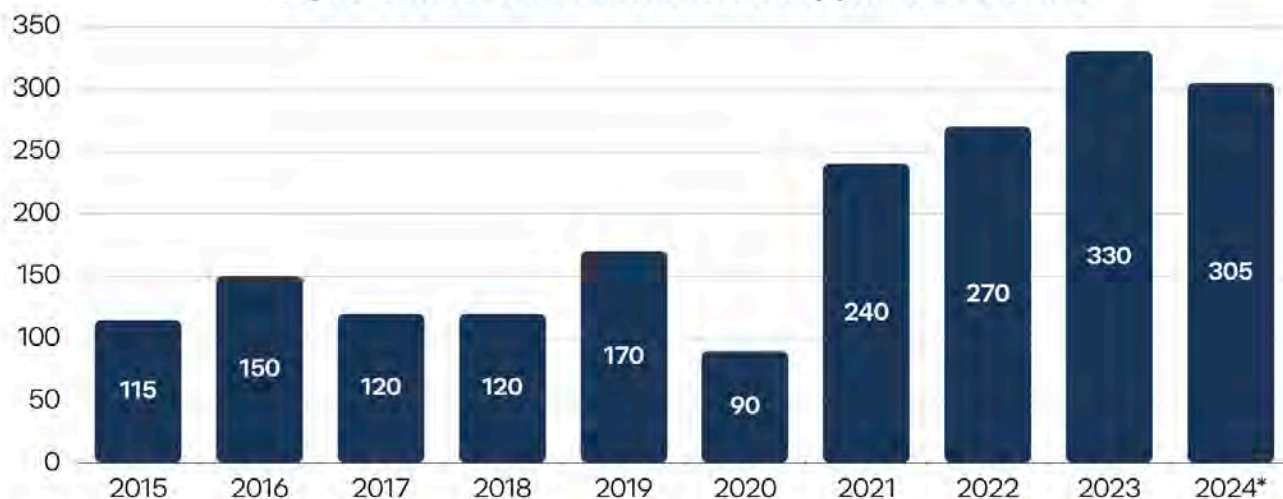
4.4 IMMIGRATION TRENDS (ANNUAL)

PERMANENT RESIDENT ADMISSIONS

Table 2 above includes the number of immigrants settling in Chatham-Kent between June 30, 2023 and July 1, 2024. The federal Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) publishes permanent resident admission data on a monthly basis.

The number of permanent residents directly settling in Chatham-Kent has been increasing compared to before the pandemic year of 2020. As shown in Figure 4, in the first 11 months of 2024 there were 305 permanent residents admitted to Canada with Chatham-Kent as their destination. That should result in an annual total similar to 2023.

Figure 4: Permanent resident admissions by year, Chatham-Kent



*at the end of November. Source: IRCC

While the number of immigrants has been rising in recent years, relative to population size, immigrant flows into Chatham-Kent are well below many peer communities in southwestern Ontario. Table 3 shows the permanent resident admissions per 10,000 population in four urban centres in the region. Chatham-Kent is at the low end of permanent resident admissions compared to neighbouring municipalities. Of note, some immigrants move to the community after first having settled elsewhere in Ontario or Canada. These individuals are shown in the annual population data as interprovincial or intraprovincial migrants.

Table 3: Permanent resident admissions per 10,000 population, selected municipalities

	Population	PR admissions*	PR admissions per 10,000 population
Chatham-Kent (CA)	111,705	305	27
Sarnia (CA)	108,636	315	29
London (CMA)	626,260	6,790	108
Windsor (CMA)	483,556	4,750	98

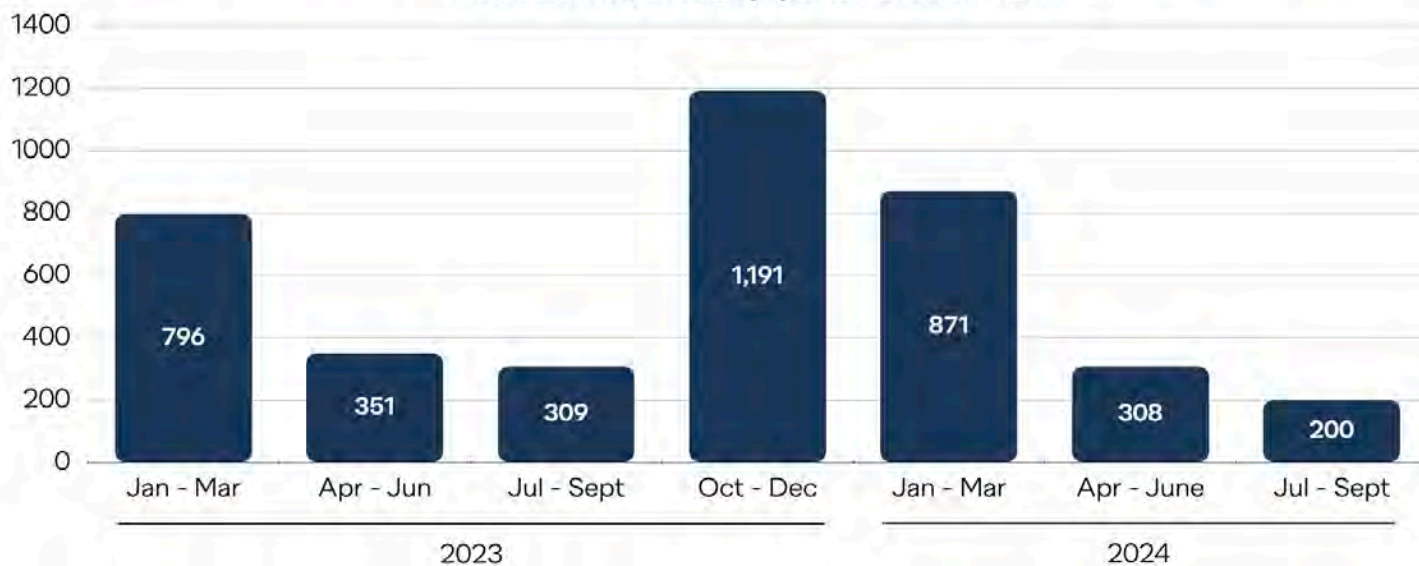
*January to November 2024.

Source: IRCC and Statistics Canada Table: 17-10-0142-01.

TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKERS

In recent years Chatham-Kent employers have relied on temporary foreign workers (TFWs), particularly for the agriculture sector. In the last few quarters, however, the use of TFWs declined both in absolute terms and as a share of the total used in Ontario during the year. In the first three quarters of 2023, there were an average of 485 Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) Positions on Positive Labour Market Impact Assessments (LMIAs) in Chatham-Kent. In 2024, the number dipped to 460 per quarter. In 2023, 3.1 percent of all TFW positions on positive LMIAs across Ontario were in Chatham-Kent, 3.5 times more than the province overall adjusted for population size.

Figure 5: Number of Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) Positions on Positive Labour Market Impact Assessments (LMIAs) by quarter, Chatham-Kent



Source: IRCC

POST-GRADUATE WORK PERMIT HOLDERS

According to IRCC, there were 215 work permit holders under post-graduate employment in Chatham-Kent at the end of 2023. However, as of November 2024, there were considerably less in the community compared to the previous several years.

TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKERS BY STREAM, OCCUPATION AND COMMUNITY

Table 4 shows the number of approved TFW positions in Chatham-Kent during the first three quarters of 2024 compared to the same period in 2023. There were slightly more positions approved in 2024 compared to 2023. There was a steep decline in the number of approved positions under the low wage stream⁷ made up by an increase in the primary agriculture stream.

The top occupations were related to farming including general farm worker and agriculture-related labourers. The restaurant sector had 37 approved positions in the first three quarters of 2024 down from 47 in the same period in 2023.

⁷Low-wage jobs are defined as those which pay below the median hourly wage for the province in which the job is based.

Table 4: Approved TFW positions in Chatham-Kent, comparison by timeframe selected municipalities

	Q1 to Q3 2023 combined		Q1 to Q3 2024 combined		% change in positions
	Program stream*	Approved Positions	Program stream*	Approved Positions	
High Wage	12	13	12	16	23%
Low Wage	38	263	33	110	-58%
Primary Agriculture	58	606	65	684	13%
Global Talent Stream	1	1	0	0	-100%
Permanent Resident Only	0	0	4	5	n/a
Total positions		883		815	-8%
OCCUPATION					
Labourers - Agriculture-related	-	221	-	409	85%
General farm worker	-	574	-	328	-43%
Restaurant related	-	47	-	37	-21%
Other	-	14	-	24	71%
Professional roles	-	17	-	10	-41%
Agricultural service contractors**	-	10	-	7	-30%

*# of approved employers.

**includes farm supervisors and specialized livestock workers

Table 4: Approved TFW positions in Chatham-Kent, comparison by timeframe selected municipalities

Q1 to Q3 2023 combined		Q1 to Q3 2024 combined		% change in positions	
Program stream*	Approved Positions	Program stream*	Approved Positions		
The TFWs were spread out across Chatham-Kent. Chatham had the most approvals followed by Blenheim, Thamesville and Wheatley.					
COMMUNITY					
Blenheim	-	143	-	162	13%
Bothwell	-	10	-	16	60%
Chatham	-	164	-	190	16%
Dresden	-	178	-	63	-65%
Mitchell	-	20	-	20	0%
Ridgetown	-	13	-	3	-77%
Thamesville	-	176	-	157	-11%
Tilbury	-	3	-	1	-67%
Wallaceburg	-	49	-	49	0%
Wheatley	-	127	-	154	21%

Source: IRCC

4.5 HOUSING AND POPULATION GROWTH

As shown in Table 4, there are a certain number of housing starts each year in Chatham-Kent even when the population is not growing or in slight decline. There are several factors that drive housing starts even without population growth. Most notably this involves adult children leaving their parents' home and moving into their own accommodations. In effect, the average number of persons per household declines. This can also involve other factors such as an increase in student housing or temporary worker housing. Between 2009 and 2015, the population of Chatham-Kent declined, and the community averaged 132 new housing starts per year.

The population has since started to increase, and housing starts expanded until 2022. There was a decline in the number of starts in 2023 and again in 2024. The price of housing in Chatham-Kent has been rising and without alignment between housing supply and demand, costs will continue to rise.

The other important factor in housing and population growth is the type of housing. Between 2006 and 2019, 85% of new homes built were single family dwellings. In the last few years, rental units and other types of housing is taking up a larger share.

This is an important development as a broader mix of housing is attractive to people looking to move into the community. Immigrants in particular, prefer to rent accommodation when they first arrive before deciding to purchase. If there are few options to rent, it will make it harder for Chatham-Kent to attract newcomers to Canada.

Finally, it is important to align housing development to household income levels. Section 4.6 documents the rise in higher income earners in the community but Section 5.7 also shows that the majority of jobs on offer in the community in 2024 had below average wages.



Table 5: Housing starts by year, Chatham-Kent

Year	Starts per year	Population	Population Growth	Starts per 1,000 growth
2009	85	108,751	-	-
2010	103	107,500	-1,251	N/A
2011	113	106,674	-826	N/A
2012	137	106,004	-670	N/A
2013	136	105,492	-512	N/A
2014	234	105,151	-341	N/A
2015	118	104,522	-629	N/A
2016	119	104,771	+249	478
2017	179	105,259	+488	367
2018	143	105,756	+497	288
2019	227	106,074	+318	714
2020	409	106,975	+901	454
2021	567	108,028	+1,053	538
2022	545	109,049	+1,021	534
2023	362	110,513	+1,073	337
2024	294	111,705	+1,192	246

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

4.6 INCOME TRENDS

TAX FILERS BY TOTAL INCOME GROUP

Table 6 shows the breakdown of taxfilers in Chatham-Kent by age group and income level. It also shows the percentage change in the number of taxfilers by income level and shows how the concentration of taxfilers by income level compares to the country overall using an index where the Canadian level is set at 1.00. The most recent data is for 2022 as it is based on annual tax filing data.

Among all age groups, the largest group of taxfilers is in the \$25,000 to \$50,000/year range. Compared to the country overall, there are 20% more in this cohort. The higher income cohorts show a larger spread with the country overall. Based on 2022 tax data, 1,310 reported personal income of \$200,000 or more, 41% less than the country overall. The top three income cohorts saw growth in the number of taxfilers by 61%, 56% and 92% respectively between 2017 and 2022.

Table 6: Taxfilers by age and income cohort, Chatham-Kent				
All age groups	#	% of total	% change 2017-2022	CAN=1.00
Less than \$10,000	7,300	8%	-10%	0.85
\$10,000-25,000	19,150	22%	-9%	1.09
\$25,000-50,000	29,160	33%	9%	1.21
\$50,000-75,000	17,220	19%	36%	1.02
\$75,000-100,000	8,110	9%	48%	0.85
\$100,000-150,000	5,540	6%	61%	0.72
\$150,000-200,000	1,310	1%	56%	0.59
\$200,000+	980	1%	92%	0.47
Total	88,770		13%	

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

Among the under 25 age group, there has been a steep decline in the number of individuals reporting income under \$10,000 between 2017 and 2022. Overall, there were 6% more taxfilers in this age group in 2022 compared to five years earlier. This increase is a positive trend given the number of taxfilers in this age group dropped from 11,600 in 2008 to a low of 8,820 in 2016 before starting a modest increase. As of 2022 there were 9,440 tax filers in the under 25 age cohort.

There was a 16% increase in the number of taxfilers age 25-34 between 2017 and 2022. There were strong gains among those in the higher income cohorts, from a relatively small base. The number of taxfilers age 25-34 earning between \$50,000 and \$75,000 rose by 59% over the five-year period.

There was a 19% increase in the number of taxfilers among the population aged 35-44, including a more than doubling of those reporting \$100,000 or more in total income between 2017 and 2022. Compared to the country overall, the big gap of high-income earners overall remains in this cohort. There are 66% less earning \$200,000 or more compared the share across the country.

The number of taxfilers in the age group 45-54 declined by 3% in the five-year period but this decline was concentrated in the lower income cohorts. Among those earning \$200,000+, there was a 71% increase in just five years. Among the 55-64 year old taxfilers, there was a 5% increase between 2017 and 2022, with most of the increases concentrated in the higher income cohorts.

The 65+ cohort is the most well off relative to the country overall. While a smaller share earns \$100,000 or more compared to the country, the gap is the lowest in this group (only 9% less). The number of taxfilers age 65+ reporting \$75,000 in total income increased by double between 2017 and 2022.

Table 7: Taxfilers by age and income cohort, Chatham-Kent

0 to 24 years	#	% of total	% change 2017-2022	CAN=1.00
Less than \$10,000	2,440	3%	-24%	0.84
\$10,000-25,000	3,330	4%	-3%	0.98
\$25,000-50,000	2,750	3%	47%	1.11
\$50,000-75,000	740	1%	174%	1.15
\$75,000-100,000	180	0%	200%	1.16
\$100,000-150,000	-	-	-	-
\$150,000-200,000	-	-	-	-
\$200,000+	-	-	-	-
Total	9,440		6%	

35 to 44 years	#	% of total	% change 2017-2022	CAN=1.00
Less than \$10,000	860	1%	16%	0.77
\$10,000-25,000	1,720	2%	-3%	1.00
\$25,000-50,000	3,500	4%	-5%	1.08
\$50,000-75,000	3,200	4%	37%	0.96
\$75,000-100,000	1,670	2%	36%	0.71
\$100,000-150,000	1,330	1%	90%	0.63
\$150,000-200,000	260	0%	117%	0.45
\$200,000+	160	0%	167%	0.34
Total	12,700		19%	

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

Table 7: Taxfilers by age and income cohort, Chatham-Kent

45 to 54 years	#	% of total	% change 2017-2022	CAN=1.00
Less than \$10,000	940	1%	-6%	0.90
\$10,000-25,000	1,690	2%	-28%	1.09
\$25,000-50,000	2,990	3%	-15%	1.09
\$50,000-75,000	2,660	3%	11%	0.96
\$75,000-100,000	1,490	2%	7%	0.76
\$100,000-150,000	1,420	2%	34%	0.71
\$150,000-200,000	360	0%	44%	0.59
\$200,000+	240	0%	71%	0.40
Total	11,790		-3%	

55 to 64 years	#	% of total	% change 2017-2022	CAN=1.00
Less than \$10,000	1,720	2%	2%	1.12
\$10,000-25,000	3,340	4%	-4%	1.40
\$25,000-50,000	4,210	5%	-8%	1.24
\$50,000-75,000	3,290	4%	18%	1.13
\$75,000-100,000	1,630	2%	30%	0.99
\$100,000-150,000	1,180	1%	33%	0.82
\$150,000-200,000	330	0%	18%	0.71
\$200,000+	260	0%	44%	0.52
Total	15,960		5%	

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

Table 7: Taxfilers by age and income cohort, Chatham-Kent

65+ years	#	% of total	% change 2017-2022	CAN=1.00
Less than \$10,000	450	1%	-22%	0.72
\$10,000-25,000	6,830	8%	-11%	1.09
\$25,000-50,000	11,460	13%	36%	1.44
\$50,000-75,000	4,390	5%	46%	1.25
\$75,000-100,000	1,850	2%	106%	1.23
\$100,000-150,000	900	1%	91%	1.00
\$150,000-200,000	230	0%	77%	0.81
\$200,000+	260	0%	136%	0.75
Total	26,370		24%	

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



MEDIAN INCOME

The median personal income for all taxfilers in Chatham-Kent was \$39,490 in 2022 (the most recent year for available data) or approximately 8% lower than the country overall. In the past two years, the median income has risen more slowly than previous years. There was a large increase in 2020, likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic income support programs.

Over the 10-year period combined, the median total income per person rose the same in Chatham-Kent as across the country (38%).

Table 8: Median personal income trends, Chatham-Kent					
	Median total income - Canada	% change	Median total income - Chatham-Kent	% change	Canada = 1.00
2012	\$31,320	-	\$28,670	-	0.92
2013	\$32,020	2.2%	\$29,340	2.3%	0.92
2014	\$32,790	2.4%	\$30,080	2.5%	0.92
2015	\$33,920	3.4%	\$31,380	4.3%	0.93
2016	\$34,420	1.5%	\$32,070	2.2%	0.93
2017	\$35,680	3.7%	\$33,400	4.1%	0.94
2018	\$36,760	3.0%	\$34,690	3.9%	0.94
2019	\$37,710	2.6%	\$35,500	2.3%	0.94
2020	\$40,630	7.7%	\$38,430	8.3%	0.95
2021	\$41,650	2.5%	\$38,770	0.9%	0.93
2022	\$43,090	3.5%	\$39,490	1.9%	0.92

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

5 WORKFORCE TRENDS

According to Statistics Canada’s annual Labour Force Survey, the number of people participating in the Chatham-Kent labour force in an average month during 2024 increased from 51,500 in 2023 to 55,700 in 2024, an increase of 8% (Table 9). Average monthly employment increased by 2,300 to 51,300 in 2024, a growth rate of 7%. The number of unemployed persons in an average month increased from a record low of 2,300 in 2022 to 3,500 in 2023 and then to 4,400 in 2024, an increase of 91% over the two-year period.

The number of adults not participating in the workforce decreased by 3,300 to 34,200 in 2024. This change pushed the labour market participation rate up to 62%, the highest participation rate in more than a decade. The employment rate was 57.1%, well above the 53.9% in 2023.

The unemployment rate increased to 7.9% in 2024 after having declined to a recent record low of 4.3% in 2022.

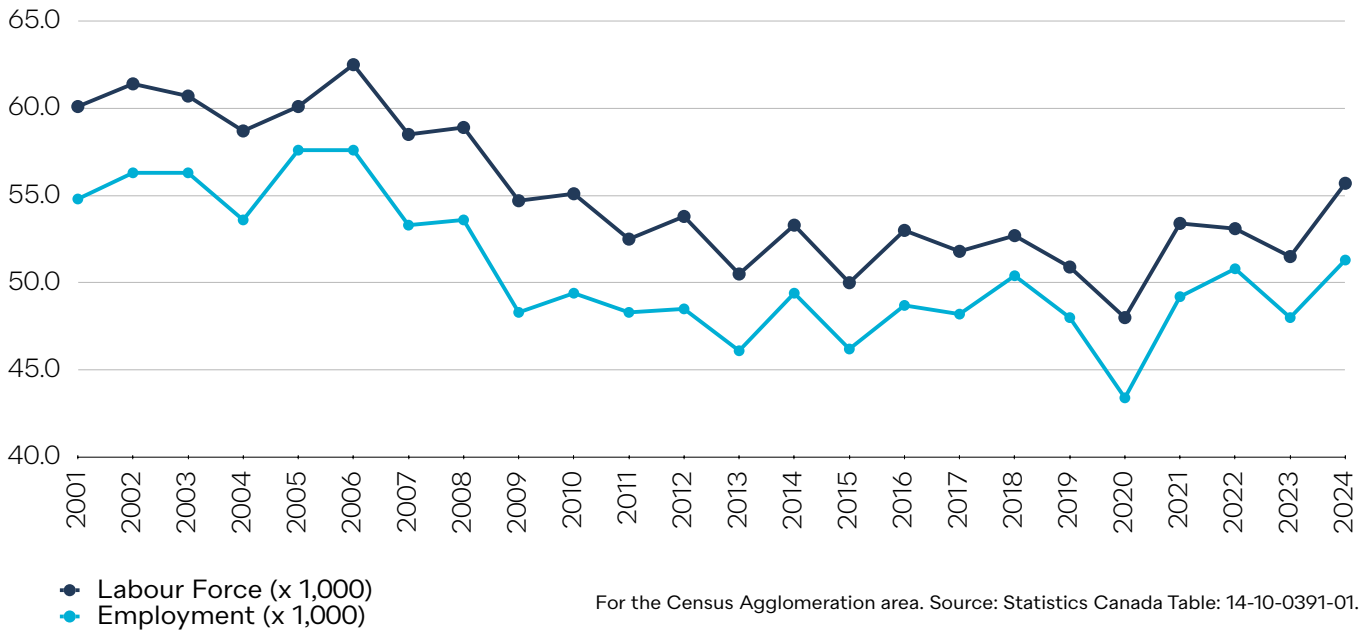
Table 9: Chatham-Kent annual labour force statistics, 2024

	2024	1 year change	5 year change
Population 15+	89,900	1.0%	1.8%
Labour force	55,700	8.2%	9.4%
Employment	51,300	6.9%	6.9%
Unemployment	4,400	25.7%	57.1%
Not in labour force	34,200	-8.8%	-8.8%
Unemployment rate	7.9	+1.1*	+2.4*
Participation rate	62.0	+4.1*	+4.4*
Employment rate	57.1	+3.2*	+2.7*

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

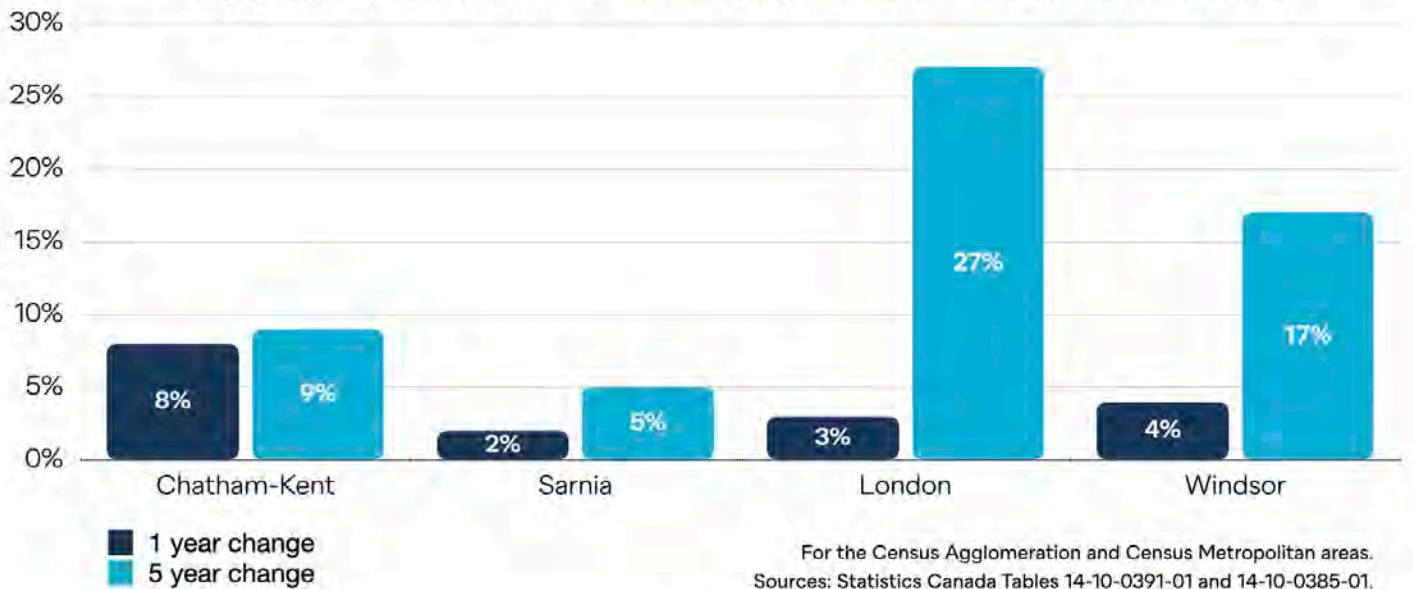
The longer-term trend in the size of the labour force and total employment in Chatham-Kent is shown in Figure 6. After a period of steep decline between 2006 and 2011, the size of the workforce has remained in a narrow band of between 50,500 and 53,100 between 2011 and 2023 (except for the pandemic year). In 2024, the size of the workforce increased to 55,700, the most since 2008.

Figure 6: Chatham-Kent workforce and employment trends, 2001-2024



A comparison of labour force growth in Chatham-Kent to other Census Agglomeration (CA) and Census Metropolitan Areas (CMA) in southwestern Ontario is found in Figure 7. In the past year, the workforce in Chatham-Kent increased faster than Sarnia, London, and Windsor. Over the past five years, Windsor and London had much faster growth in the number of people active in the workforce compared to Chatham-Kent.

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



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

Table 10: Annual labour force statistics, selected southern Ontario urban centres, 2024

	Unemployment rate	1 year ago	5 years ago
Chatham-Kent	7.9	+1.1	+2.4
Sarnia	6.4	-0.1	-0.9
London	6.6	+1.4	+0.9
Windsor	8.3	+2.1	+2.1

	Participation rate	1 year ago	5 years ago
Chatham-Kent	62.0	+4.1	+4.4
Sarnia	58.1	-0.3	+0.1
London	65.6	-0.7	+5.7
Windsor	64.2	+0.1	+2.6

	Employment rate	1 year ago	5 years ago
Chatham-Kent	57.1	+3.2	+2.7
Sarnia	54.5	-0.1	+0.7
London	61.2	-1.7	+4.7
Windsor	58.9	-1.2	+1.1

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

5.1 EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATION

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Table 11 shows employment in Chatham-Kent by two-digit NAICS industry. The research firm Lightcast provides detailed employment industry estimates for communities such as Chatham-Kent between Statistics Canada census periods. Using the highest level NAICS⁸ aggregation, the top employment sectors in Chatham-Kent were:

- Health care and social assistance with 7,520 workers.
- Manufacturing with 6,795 workers.
- Retail trade with 5,675 workers.
- Accommodation and food services with 4,065 workers.
- Construction with 3,720 workers.
- Educational services with 2,940 workers.
- Public administration with 2,705 workers.
- Transportation and warehousing with 2,510 workers.

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

- Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting: LQ = 2.95
- Utilities: LQ = 2.64
- Manufacturing: LQ = 1.70
- Accommodation and food services: LQ = 1.18
- Health care and social assistance: LQ = 1.17
- Wholesale trade: LQ = 1.08
- Retail trade: LQ = 1.07

The fastest growing industries by employment between 2023 and 2024 were accommodation and food services with a 3.9% growth rate, transportation and warehousing increased by 3.4%, manufacturing by 2.5% and arts, entertainment and recreation by 2.0%. The utilities sector continues to shed employment dropping six percent between 2023 and 2024.

⁸NAICS is the North American Industrial Classification System

Table 11: Employment by industry, 2-digit NAICS, Chatham-Kent, 2024

	Jobs	1 year change	5 year change	LQ value
Total employment	51,372	1.0%	4%	
Health care and social assistance	7,520	2%	12%	1.17
Manufacturing	6,796	3%	17%	1.70
Retail trade	5,674	0%	0%	1.07
Accommodation and food services	4,064	4%	15%	1.18
Construction	3,719	1%	17%	0.99
Educational services	2,941	0%	-7%	0.79
Public administration	2,704	0%	-4%	0.81
Transportation and warehousing	2,514	3%	27%	1.00
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	2,423	-1%	-9%	2.95
Wholesale trade	2,328	1%	3%	1.08
Administrative and support services*	2,210	-2%	-22%	0.90
Other services (except public administration)	1,614	-1%	-21%	0.78
Professional, scientific and technical services	1,608	0%	20%	0.39
Finance and insurance	1,130	2%	22%	0.50
Information and cultural industries	1,007	1%	13%	1.05
Utilities	857	-6%	-44%	2.64
Unclassified	798	1%	10%	0.93
Arts, entertainment and recreation	681	2%	21%	0.68
Real estate and rental and leasing	616	1%	-7%	0.59
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	143	5%	89%	0.26
Management of companies and enterprises	26	-7%	-36%	0.08

*includes waste management and remediation services.
Source: Lightcast.

The more detailed NAICS data shows where the Chatham-Kent workforce has a high concentration of workers compared to the country overall. Using 4-digit NAICS industries, Table 12 shows the industries with the highest concentration (based on a minimum of 400 workers).

Other telecommunications services now has the highest LQ value with 15.7 times as many workers as a share of total employment followed by natural gas distribution with over 13 times as many workers as the country overall relative to overall workforce size.

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

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



Table 12: Employment by industry, highest LQ values, minimum 400 workers, 4-digit NAICS, Chatham-Kent

Description	LQ value	2024 Jobs	1 year change
Other telecommunications	15.70	742	3%
Natural gas distribution	13.43	558	-10%
Agricultural supplies merchant wholesalers	12.53	552	4%
Metalworking machinery manufacturing	11.39	511	1%
Motor vehicle parts manufacturing	6.23	1,153	1%
Farms	3.28	2,145	-2%
Plastic product manufacturing	2.61	548	4%
Specialized freight trucking	2.49	599	6%
Business support services	2.45	526	-4%
Nursing care facilities	2.39	1,380	6%
Automobile dealers	1.89	740	1%
Department stores	1.87	548	1%
Home health care services	1.83	399	4%
Community care facilities for the elderly	1.67	577	-1%
Automotive repair and maintenance	1.51	580	-1%
General freight trucking	1.43	717	2%
Local, municipal and regional public administration	1.43	1,676	0%
Foundation, structure, and building exterior contractors	1.41	582	3%
Building material and supplies dealers	1.38	460	-1%
Full-service restaurants and limited-service eating places	1.36	3,613	4%

Source: Lightcast

EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION

Chatham-Kent has nearly twice as many people working manufacturing and utilities occupations as the country overall and 69% more working in natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations. The community has a larger share working in trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations and more working in health occupations.

Table 13 shows the change in employment by occupation over a one and five year time frame. Over five years, the community has seen strong growth in natural and applied sciences and related occupations, health occupations and occupations in manufacturing and utilities.

Table 13: Employment by occupation, 1-digit NOC⁹, Chatham-Kent, 2024

	Jobs	1 year change	5 year change	LQ value
Total employment	51,372	1%	4%	
Sales and service occupations	13,365	1%	1%	1.04
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	9,508	1%	8%	1.14
Business, finance and administration occupations	6,288	1%	5%	0.70
Health occupations	5,190	2%	12%	1.30
Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	5,140	0%	-4%	0.84
Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	4,920	2%	10%	1.91
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	3,083	1%	14%	0.65
Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	2,244	-1%	-13%	1.69
Unclassified occupation	798	1%	10%	0.93
Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	751	0%	-10%	0.51
Legislative and senior management occupations	85	1%	3%	0.54

⁹NOC is the National Occupations Code

Source: Lightcast

Table 14: Employment by occupation, highest LQ values, minimum 400 workers, 4-digit NOC, 2024

Occupation	Employment	LQ value
Machine operators and related workers in mineral and metal products processing and manufacturing	1,237	4.79
Agriculture, horticulture and harvesting labourers and related occupations	794	3.27
Mechanical, electrical and electronics assemblers and inspectors	703	3.11
Managers in agriculture, horticulture and aquaculture	834	2.71
Assisting occupations in support of health services	1,924	1.69
Machining, metal forming, shaping and erecting trades	805	1.67
Managers in manufacturing and utilities	412	1.55
Occupations in front-line public protection services	455	1.52
Nursing and allied health professionals	1,459	1.49
Labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities	570	1.48
Transport truck and transit drivers	1,562	1.46
Retail and wholesale trade managers	1,010	1.30
Automotive service technicians	537	1.29
Cooks, butchers and bakers	792	1.27
Building maintenance installers, servicers and repairers	428	1.26
Food support occupations	1,761	1.23
Cashiers and other sales support occupations	1,977	1.19
Trades helpers and labourers	403	1.18
Technical occupations in therapy and assessment	539	1.18
Secondary, elementary and kindergarten school teachers	1,543	1.17

Source: Lightcast

5.2 LABOUR FORCE BREAKDOWN BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

AGE GROUP

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

Table 15: Chatham-Kent workforce by age group

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

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.



VISIBLE MINORITY STATUS

Just under 7% of the Chatham-Kent workforce at the time of the 2021 Census self-identified as a visible minority. This was considerably less than the national share of 27%. Table 16 shows the breakdown by visible minority population and compares the share to the national level using an index.

Overall, there are 76% fewer persons self-identified as a visible minority in Chatham-Kent's workforce compared to the country overall (Index = 0.24). However, as a share of the total visible minority population, Chatham Kent has relatively more persons self-identified as Black, Southeast Asian and Latin American.

Table 16: Chatham-Kent workforce by visible minority status

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

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

GENDER

As of the Census, 53% of the Chatham-Kent workforce was male, and 47% was female. This was slightly skewed towards males compared to the country overall (52% male). Table 17 shows the breakdown by gender and age group compared to the national level using an index. In general, the Chatham-Kent workforce for both men and women has a higher share over the age of 55 and a higher share under the age of 25 compared to the country overall. Twenty-eight percent of women in the Chatham-Kent workforce were over the age of 55, 25% more on a relative basis than the country overall (Index=1.25).

Table 17: Chatham-Kent workforce by gender and age group

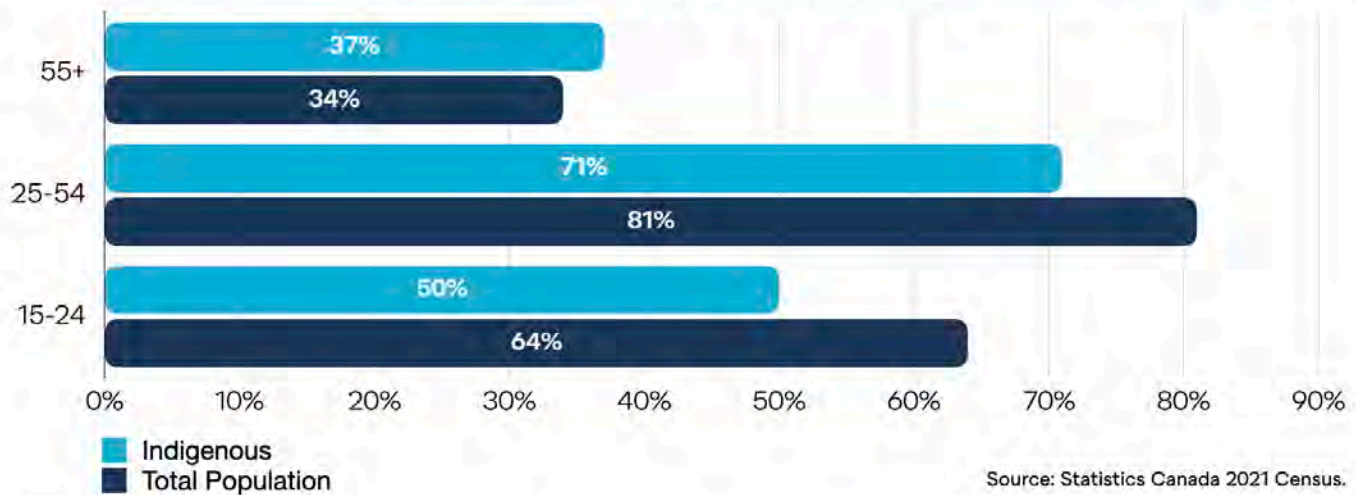
Males	Workforce	% of total	CAN=1.00	% change 2016-2021
15-24	3,850	15%	1.16	-2%
25-54	14,595	57%	0.90	0%
55+	7,315	28%	1.17	-2%
Total	25,760			-1%
Females	Workforce	% of total	CAN=1.00	% change 2016-2021
15-24	3,370	14%	1.09	-11%
25-54	13,555	58%	0.90	-4%
55+	6,330	27%	1.25	-1%
Total	23,255			-4%

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census

INDIGENOUS WORKFORCE

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

Figure 8: Labour market participation rate by age group and Indigenous status, Chatham-Kent

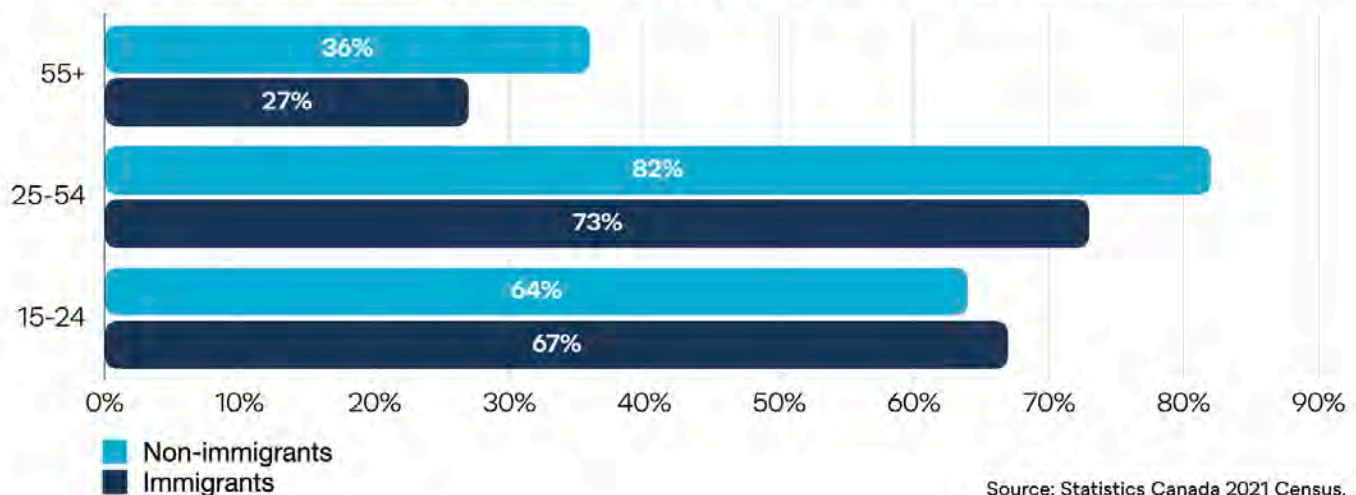


IMMIGRANT/NON-PERMANENT RESIDENTS

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

Immigrants in Chatham-Kent have a lower labour market participation rate among all three age groups except 15-24. Among the core aged group (25-54), 82% of non-immigrants participated in the workforce compared to 73% among the immigrant population in that age group.

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



AGE BREAKDOWN OF THE WORKFORCE BY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Table 18 shows the breakdown of the workforce in Chatham-Kent by age and demographic characteristic in comparison to the country overall. Thirty-two percent of the 4,500 people in the immigrant and non-permanent resident (NPR) workforce are over the age of 55 which is substantially more than the immigrant and NPR workforce across the country (41% higher). Across the three demographic groups, visible minority, immigrants and Indigenous, the workforce is older than the country overall. However, it also has a higher share under the age of 25 for each of these groups.

Table 18: Age breakdown by demographic characteristics, Chatham-Kent

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

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

5.3 LABOUR FORCE BY EDUCATION ATTAINMENT LEVEL

Table 19 shows the education attainment levels and related statistics for the population aged 25-64 living in Chatham-Kent. Highlights include:

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



Table 19: Educational attainment statistics, population aged 25-64, Chatham-Kent

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

T TOTAL M MALE F FEMALE

*or other non-university certificate or diploma
 **includes dentistry, veterinary medicine or optometry Source: Statistics Canada 2016, 2021 Census.

The workforce aged 15 and older is also profiled in the Census. Among those who were employed during the year, 14% had no formal education, 31% had a high school diploma, 7% obtained an apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma, 31% were college graduates and 16% were university graduates. As shown in Table 20, Chatham-Kent has a much higher share of the workforce with a college diploma (44% more in relative terms) but only about half the share with a university degree. There are considerably more individuals without any formal education compared to the country overall (53% more in relative terms).

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

Table 20: Educational attainment statistics, Chatham-Kent's workforce

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

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census.

5.4 EMPLOYMENT AMONG OLDER RESIDENTS

Chatham-Kent has a higher share of residents age 65+ who are active in the workforce. In 2022, one out of every three persons aged 65 and older reported employment income in their annual tax filing. The share of older workers has remained at 33% of the total for almost a decade. These older workers are an important group to address workforce demand particularly in part time and seasonal roles. There were nearly 1,660 more people aged 65 and older in the workforce in 2022 compared to 2017.

The number of persons aged 65 and older declaring self-employment income is also on the increase. In 2022, there were 2,830 with self-employment income up 17% over the previous five years.

5.5 FAMILIES AND WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION

The share of families with single-earners has been rising across Chatham-Kent in recent years. According to tax filling data, the number of single earner couple families (families with two adults but only one earning employment income) rose by 17% between 2017 and 2022 while the number of dual-earner couples only increased by 5% (Table 21). The number of lone parent families with employment income increased by 12%.

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

	2017	2022	% change
Dual-earner couple families	13,510	14,140	5%
Single-earner-male couple families	4,460	5,280	18%
Single-earner-female couple families	1,950	2,250	15%
Lone-parent families	3,180	3,550	12%

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

When children are added to the family structure, the pattern is similar (Table 22). The number of male single earner couple families (with children) increased by 14%. Female single earner couple families (with children) increased by 11%. As of 2022, 42% of all families with children had only one employment income earner up from 38% back in 2008.

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

Table 22: Family structure by workforce participation, families with children, Chatham-Kent

	2017	2022	% change
Dual-earner couple families	8,010	8,390	5%
Single-earner-male couple families	1,650	1,880	14%
Single-earner-female couple families	660	730	11%
Lone-parent families	3,180	3,560	12%

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

5.6 POTENTIAL UNDERUTILIZED SOURCE OF LABOUR

BY AGE GROUP

Overall, Chatham-Kent's workforce participation rate is five percent below the country overall. By age group and gender there are some differences particularly among young females. The workforce participation rate among women aged 25-34 is considerably below the national rate for women in that age group. This could be the result of challenges accessing childcare or some other barrier, or it could be a matter of personal choice.

Table 23: Workforce participation rate by age group (2022), Chatham-Kent

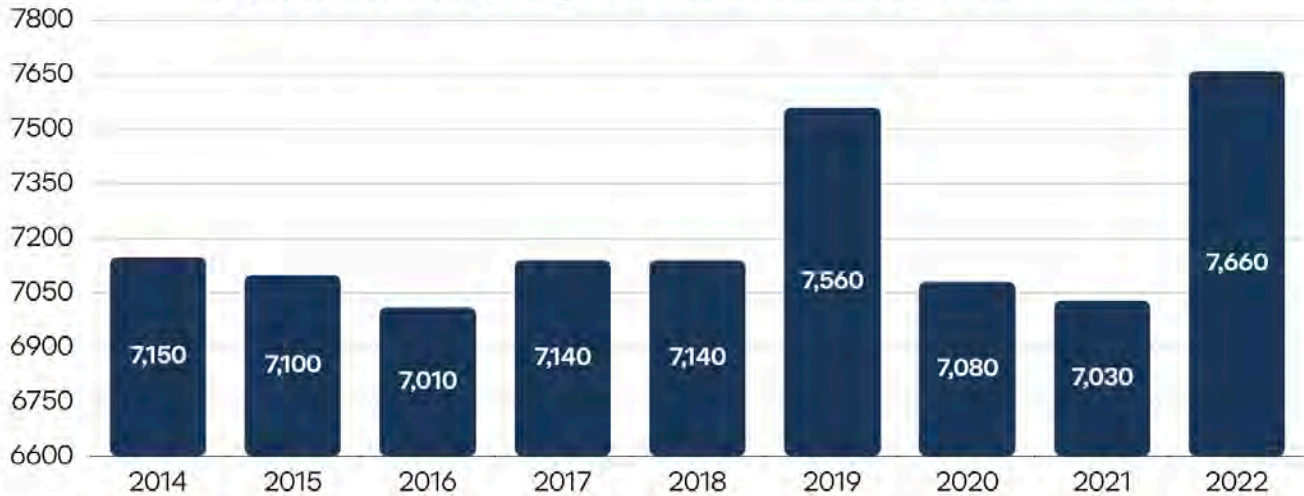
	Both Rate	CAN=1.00	Males Rate	CAN=1.00	Females Rate	CAN=1.00
All age groups	64.4	0.95	69.9	0.97	59.2	0.92
15 to 19 years	45.4	1.06	45.8	1.09	45.0	1.03
20 to 24 years	87.7	1.01	88.6	1.03	86.7	0.98
25 to 29 years	84.0	0.96	87.3	0.99	80.8	0.93
30 to 34 years	81.6	0.95	86.7	0.97	76.7	0.92
35 to 39 years	83.2	0.97	87.5	0.98	78.8	0.96
40 to 44 years	83.6	0.97	86.4	0.97	80.5	0.97
45 to 49 years	84.8	0.98	88.1	0.99	81.4	0.97
50 to 54 years	82.5	0.97	84.9	0.97	80.2	0.97
55 to 59 years	76.9	0.96	79.2	0.95	74.9	0.96
60 to 64 years	65.4	0.95	70.1	0.95	61.4	0.96
65 years and over	33.1	1.22	43.6	1.25	23.9	1.15

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

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE BENEFICIARIES

The number of persons living in Chatham-Kent and reporting social assistance benefits in their annual tax filing jumped to a level not seen in the past 20 years. A total of 7,660 reported receiving social assistance. Adjusted for population size, there are 52% more on social assistance in Chatham-Kent compared to the country overall. Is there potential for some of these folks to join the workforce? What are the barriers?

Figure 10: Number reporting social assistance income by year, Chatham-Kent



Source: Statistics Canada Table: 11-10-0007-01.

WORKERS COMPENSATION BENEFICIARIES

The number of persons living in Chatham-Kent and reporting workers compensation benefits in their annual tax filing has been increasing slowly in recent years. In 2016 there were 2,150 reporting WCB benefits and by 2022 the number was up to 2,330. Compared to the provincial level, there are 55% more receiving WCB benefits in Chatham-Kent, relative to population size.

5.7 JOB POSTINGS

ChathamKentJobs.com is the largest aggregator of job postings in the Chatham-Kent region. This section looks at trends in job postings in the area to highlight occupations that are in high demand and those for which there is increasing demand. The analysis looks at the 12-month period of November 1st, 2023 to October 31, 2024, compared to the previous 12-month period.

There were 9,200 unique job postings in the Chatham-Kent area between November 1st, 2023 to October 31, 2024, a 10% drop, down from 10,200 in the previous 12-month period. Table 23 shows the top 25 four-digit occupations by the number of unique job postings in Chatham-Kent in 2024 (November 1st, 2023 to October 31, 2024) compared to 2023 (November 1st, 2022 to October 31, 2023).

As shown in Table 24, the occupations in the most demand are concentrated in the food services, retail, health care, food services transportation and manufacturing. Registered nurses top the list with 566 job postings - up more than double compared to the previous year. The number of food counter attendants, kitchen helpers and related occupations job postings was the second highest with 349 but that was down by 20% year-over-year.

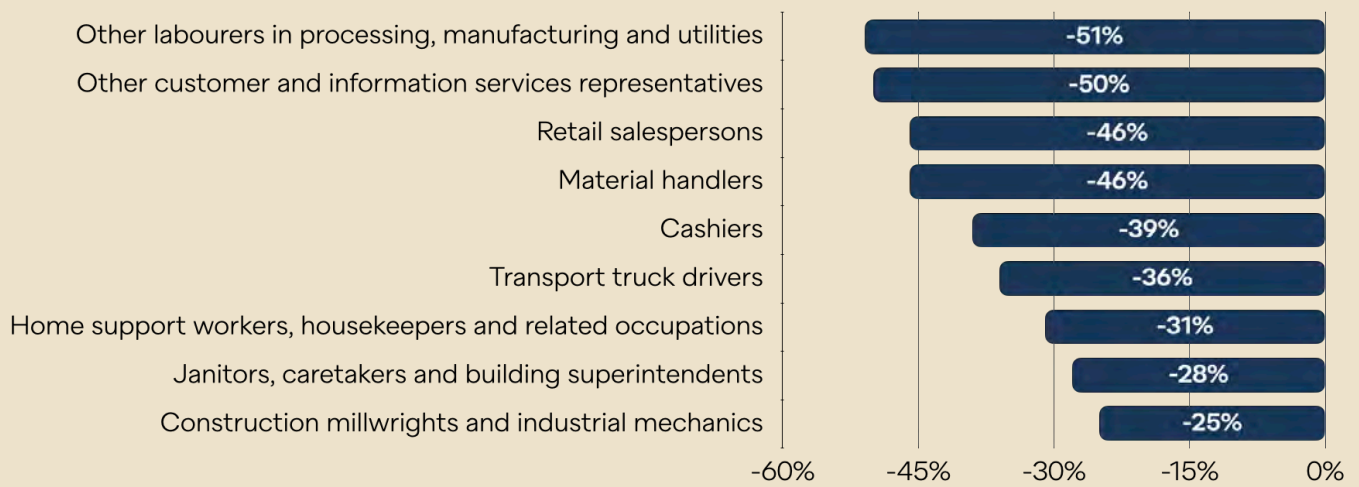
Other health related jobs in demand in the top 25 included home support workers with 295 postings (down 31%), social workers with 132 postings (-24%) and licensed practical nurses (also called registered practical nurses) with 252 postings (+23%).

The retail trade sector had multiple occupations in the top 25 including retail salespersons, store shelf stockers, clerks and order fillers, other sales related occupations, retail sales supervisors and cashiers.

Figure 11: Fastest increase in the number of job postings 2023 to 2024, Chatham-Kent



Figure 12: Fastest decrease in the number of job postings 2023 to 2024, Chatham-Kent



Source: ChathamKentJobs.com



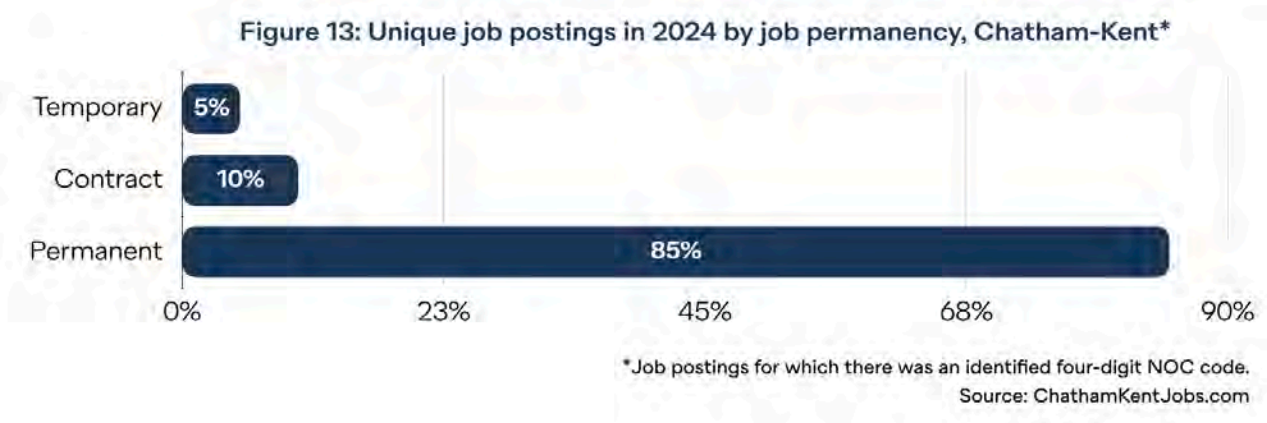
Table 24: Top 25 occupations by number of unique job postings and timeframe, Chatham-Kent*

NOC	Description	2024*	2023*	% change	Median hourly wage
3012	Registered nurses and psychiatric nurses	566	265	114%	\$40.49
6711	Food counter attendants, kitchen helpers and related support occupations	349	436	-20%	\$16.31
4412	Home support workers, housekeepers and related occupations	295	429	-31%	\$21.23
6421	Retail salespersons	288	538	-46%	\$19.37
3233	Licensed practical nurses	252	205	23%	\$30.26
6322	Cooks	162	180	-10%	\$17.08
6311	Food service supervisors	147	80	84%	\$18.20
9619	Other labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities	143	293	-51%	\$19.39
6552	Other customer and information services representatives	137	272	-50%	\$21.83
4212	Social and community service workers	132	173	-24%	\$27.66
1221	Administrative officers	120	79	52%	\$28.46
7511	Transport truck drivers	116	182	-36%	\$25.74
6622	Store shelf stockers, clerks and order fillers	114	131	-13%	\$16.84
6623	Other sales related occupations	111	86	29%	\$21.18
1241	Administrative assistants	101	115	-12%	\$36.89
7321	Automotive service technicians, truck and bus mechanics and mechanical repairers	95	80	19%	\$28.10
6733	Janitors, caretakers and building superintendents	92	127	-28%	\$21.00
6541	Security guards and related security service occupations	89	77	16%	\$21.50
4214	Early childhood educators and assistants	84	46	83%	\$21.29
7311	Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	82	109	-25%	\$35.11
6211	Retail sales supervisors	81	95	-15%	\$21.98
6731	Light duty cleaners	80	96	-17%	\$19.41
6611	Cashiers	76	125	-39%	\$16.42
5254	Program leaders and instructors in recreation, sport and fitness	76	62	23%	\$15.53
7452	Material handlers	74	136	-46%	\$22.91

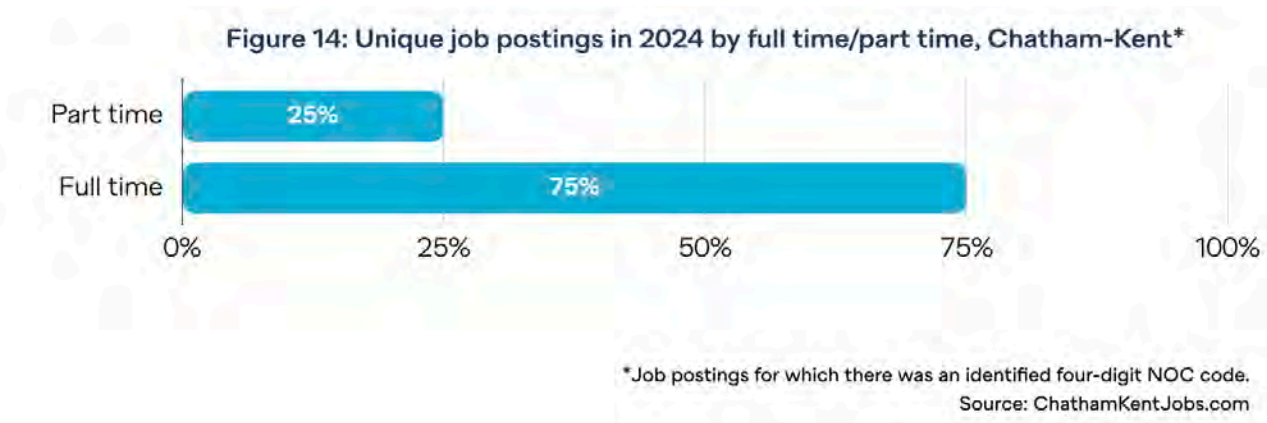
*2024=November 1, 2023-October 31, 2024. 2023=November 1, 2022-October 31, 2023.
 Job postings for which there was an identified four-digit NOC code.
 Source: ChathamKentJobs.com.

A majority of the top 25 occupations by number of job postings in 2024 offered below average wages. Only seven of the top 25 occupations offered above average wages (28%). The seven were: registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses, administrative assistants, construction millwrights and industrial mechanics, licensed practical nurses, administrative officers, automotive service technicians, truck and bus mechanics and mechanical repairers, and social and community service workers.

Most of the jobs on offer were permanent positions (85%). Contract employment made up 10% and temporary positions another five percent.

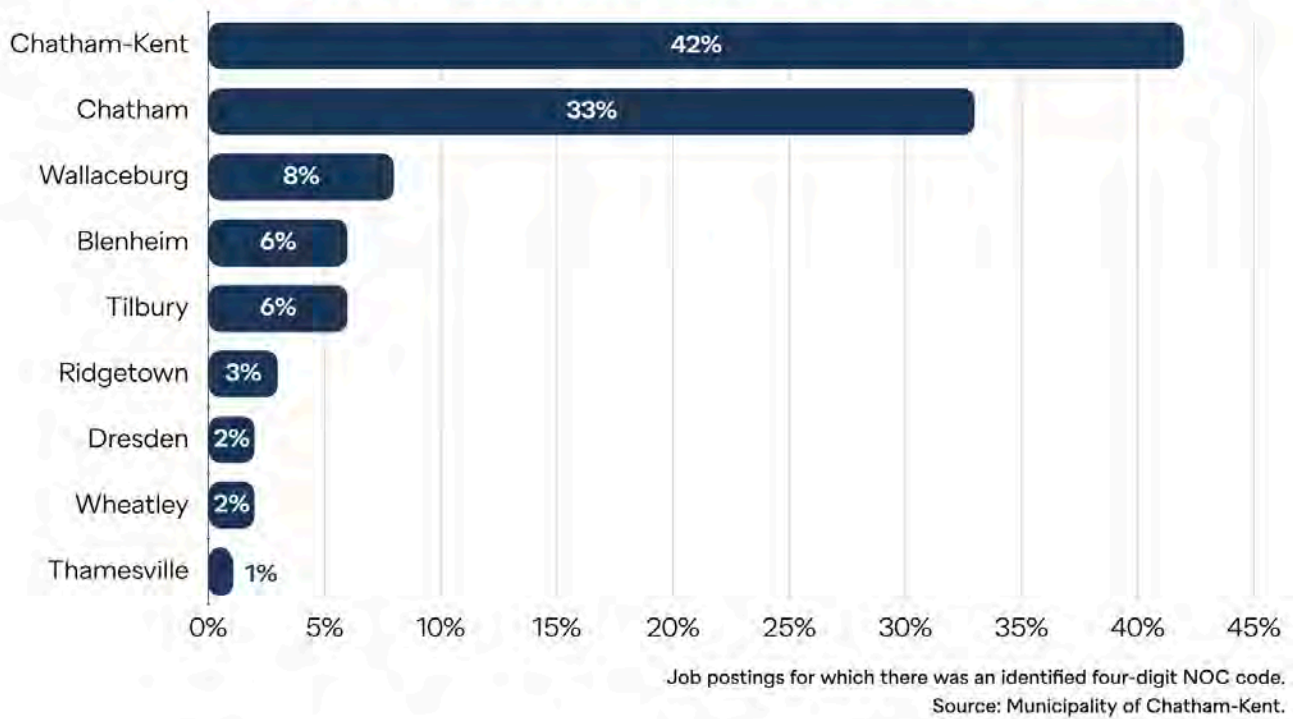


Seventy-five percent of all job postings in 2024 were for jobs offering full time work (Figure 14).



Forty-two percent of all job postings in 2024 listed Chatham-Kent as the location of the job. Another 33% indicated Chatham and 8% were in Wallaceburg (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Unique job postings in 2024 by location within Chatham-Kent



5.8 UPDATING FUTURE WORKFORCE DEMAND

In last year’s LLMP, the future workforce demand focus was industry-based. This year the report looks at workforce demand from an occupational base.

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

As shown in Table 25, Lightcast projects the workforce in Chatham-Kent will increase by a net 2,978 jobs between 2024 and 2031, a six percent growth rate. The table also shows the expected growth trajectory for the top 25 employment occupations as of 2024. Lightcast is projecting that the top occupational groups for growth in absolute terms will be assisting occupations in support of health services, nursing and allied health professionals, processing and manufacturing machine operators and related production workers, transportation occupations, support occupations in food, accommodation and tourism as well as professional occupations in applied sciences (except engineering).

Table 25: Projected growth in employment by top 25 occupations, 2024-2031, Chatham-Kent

Description	2024 Jobs	2031 Jobs	% change
All occupations	51,372	54,350	6%
Retail salespersons and non-technical wholesale trade sales and account representatives	2,043	2,092	2%
Support occupations in food, accommodation and tourism	2,030	2,175	7%
Sales support occupations	1,977	2,037	3%
Processing and manufacturing machine operators and related production workers	1,962	2,173	11%
Assisting occupations in support of health services	1,924	2,282	19%
Professional occupations in education services	1,820	1,820	0%
Transportation occupations	1,566	1,761	12%
Nursing and allied health professionals	1,459	1,716	18%
Middle management occupations in retail and wholesale trade and customer services	1,447	1,449	0%
Administrative occupations	1,345	1,409	5%
Technical maintenance trades	1,280	1,341	5%
Retail sales and service supervisors	1,184	1,269	7%
Support occupations in cleaning and related services	1,168	1,219	4%
Helpers and labourers	1,088	1,152	6%
Assemblers and inspectors in manufacturing	1,083	1,126	4%
Harvesting, landscaping and natural resources labourers	1,075	1,140	6%
Occupations in services	1,058	1,115	5%
Paraprofessional occupations in legal, social, community and education services	1,017	1,035	2%
Office, court, and data support occupations	957	986	3%
Technical occupations in health	936	1,031	10%
Occupations in customer, information and protective services	917	881	-4%
Technical trades contractors and supervisors	914	895	-2%
Middle management occupations in production and agriculture	845	657	-22%
Technical industrial trades	805	832	3%
Professional occs. in applied sciences (except engineering)	803	908	13%

Source: Lightcast

Table 26 shows a projection of workforce demand based on replacement and growth components. Replacement demand assumes 65% of workers age 55+ in the top 25 employment occupations in 2024 will have exited the workforce by 2031. In total, the community will need to fill over 14,100 jobs from replacement and growth demand. When including both growth and replacement demand, there are clear occupational groups that stand out. Transportation, health service, administrative, retail and manufacturing occupations will require significant new entrants between now and 2031. The potential for change in these key occupations in Chatham-Kent highlights the need for a targeted focus of future workforce initiatives.

Table 26: Projected workforce demand by two-digit NOCS, 2024-2031, Chatham-Kent

	Growth demand	Replacement	Total demand
All occupations	2,980	11,150	14,130
Transportation occupations	190	540	730
Assisting occupations in support of health services	360	260	610
Administrative occupations	60	540	600
Sales support occupations	60	500	560
Processing and manufacturing machine operators and related production workers	210	330	540
Retail salespersons and non-technical wholesale trade sales and account representatives	50	460	510
Nursing and allied health professionals	260	230	490
Support occupations in food, accommodation and tourism	150	230	370
Middle management occupations in retail & wholesale trade	-	340	350
Support occupations in cleaning and related services	50	290	350
Assemblers and inspectors in manufacturing	40	260	300
Occupations in services	60	220	280
Technical maintenance trades	60	210	280
Office, court, and data support occupations	30	210	240
Retail sales and service supervisors	80	160	240
Professional occupations in applied sciences	110	120	230
Helpers and labourers	60	160	220
Harvesting, landscaping and natural resources labourers	70	150	220
Technical trades contractors and supervisors	-20	220	200
Middle mgmt occupations in production and agriculture	-190	390	200
Professional occupations in education services	-	190	190
Technical industrial trades	30	150	170

Source: Growth demand from Lightcast. Replacement demand estimate developed by Jupia Consultants Inc. Numbers rounded.

6 INDUSTRY TRENDS

6.1 BUSINESS COUNTS BY EMPLOYMENT LEVEL

The number of employer business establishments in Chatham-Kent declined slightly between June 2023 and June 2024 according to Statistics Canada's business counts. This was after growth in the number of employer business establishments between June 2022 and June 2023 (up 2.9%).

The number of non-employer businesses¹⁰ also dropped from 8,262 in June 2023 to 8,061 in June 2024, a 2.4% decrease.

Employer businesses (public and private sectors) declined by 1.8% year over year. There were fewer small businesses in June 2024 compared to a year earlier. The number with 100 or more employees remained the same.

Table 27: Business counts by employment level, Chatham-Kent

	June 2024		June 2023		% change
	#	% of total	#	% of total	
Without employees	8,061	-	8,262	-	-2.4%
Total, with employees	3,282	-	3,341	-	-1.8%
Micro 1 to 4 employees	1,620	49%	1,678	50%	-3.5%
Small 5 to 99	1,597	49%	1,598	48%	-0.1%
Medium 100-499	58	2%	58	2%	0.0%
Large 500+	7	0%	7	0%	0.0%

Source: Statistics Canada business counts, June 2023, and June 2024.

EMPLOYER BUSINESSES BY INDUSTRY

Between June 2023 and June 2024, the construction sector declined by 28 employer businesses, the agriculture and forestry sector by 24, retail trade by 14 and wholesale trade by six. The accommodation and food services sector expanded by 11 and the real estate sector added seven.

¹⁰To be included in the counts data, a non-employer needs to have reported at least \$30,000 in annual income in their annual tax filing with the Canada Revenue Agency.

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

NAICS		June 2023	June 2024	# change	% change
11	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	390	366	-24	-6%
21	Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	9	10	1	11%
22	Utilities	11	10	-1	-9%
23	Construction	461	433	-28	-6%
31-33	Manufacturing	187	185	-2	-1%
41	Wholesale trade	128	122	-6	-5%
44-45	Retail trade	437	423	-14	-3%
48-49	Transportation and warehousing	155	151	-4	-3%
51	Information and cultural industries	33	34	1	3%
52	Finance and insurance	114	115	1	1%
53	Real estate and rental and leasing	120	127	7	6%
54	Professional, scientific and technical services	180	177	-3	-2%
55	Management of companies and enterprises	16	15	-1	-6%
56	Administrative and support*	131	130	-1	-1%
61	Educational services	19	22	3	16%
62	Health care and social assistance	292	297	5	2%
71	Arts, entertainment and recreation	33	32	-1	-3%
72	Accommodation and food services	188	199	11	6%
81	Other services (except public administration)	308	303	-5	-2%
91	Public administration	9	8	-1	-11%
	Unclassified	120	123	3	2%
Total	Employers	3,341	3,282	-59	-2%

*Includes waste management and remediation services. Source: Statistics Canada business counts, June 2023 and June 2024.

Table 29 shows the industries that saw an increase in total employer businesses between June 2023 and June 2024. There were 10 more full-service restaurants and limited-service eating places, seven more general freight trucking (long distance), five more in 'all other crop farming', four more plumbing, heating and air-conditioning contractors, four more interior design services and four more offices of physicians.

Table 29: Change in business counts by detailed industry, employers, Chatham-Kent

		June 2023	June 2024	# change
72251	Full-service restaurants and limited-service eating places	161	171	10
48412	General freight trucking, long distance	35	42	7
11199	All other crop farming	36	41	5
23822	Plumbing, heating and air-conditioning contractors	41	45	4
54141	Interior design services	1	5	4
62111	Offices of physicians	95	99	4
81211	Hair care and esthetic services	32	36	4
53111	Lessors of residential buildings and dwellings	51	54	3
53121	Offices of real estate agents and brokers	20	23	3
62441	Child day-care services	32	35	3
	Unclassified	120	123	3
44711	Gasoline stations with convenience stores	16	19	3

Source: Statistics Canada business counts, June 2023 and June 2024.

Table 30 shows the industries that witnessed a decline in total employer businesses between June 2023 and June 2024. There were 12 fewer residential building construction firms in 2024, nine fewer soybean farming, eight less general freight trucking firms (local focus), six less roofing contractors and six less 'other building finishing contractors.

Table 30: Change in business counts by detailed industry, employers, Chatham-Kent

NAICS		June 2023	June 2024	# change
23611	Residential building construction	108	96	-12
11111	Soybean farming	38	29	-9
48411	General freight trucking, local	35	27	-8
23816	Roofing contractors	19	13	-6
23829	Other building finishing contractors	23	17	-6
23899	All other specialty trade contractors	38	32	-6
54121	Accounting, tax preparation, bookkeeping and payroll services	50	44	-6
11115	Corn farming	45	40	-5
11119	Other grain farming	61	57	-4
54111	Offices of lawyers	33	29	-4
81299	All other personal services	11	7	-4
44719	Other gasoline stations	13	9	-4
11141	Food crops grown under cover	22	19	-3
32199	All other wood product manufacturing	5	2	-3
52391	Miscellaneous intermediation	10	7	-3
81111	Automotive mechanical and electrical repair and maintenance	41	38	-3
45111	Sporting goods stores	8	6	-3
45399	All other miscellaneous store retailers	25	23	-3

Source: Statistics Canada business counts, June 2023 and June 2024.

6.2 CHATHAM-KENT'S EXPORTS-FOCUSED ECONOMY

Chatham-Kent's economy is heavily reliant on exports. The exports data estimated by Lightcast in Table 31 below is based on exports outside the community. This can mean elsewhere in Ontario, Canada and beyond. Many of the exports-focused industries in Chatham-Kent sell into the United States market. Manufacturing sectors including motor vehicle parts manufacturing, motor vehicle manufacturing, spring and wire product manufacturing, metalworking machinery manufacturing, among others will be impacted by the recently announced U.S. steel and aluminum tariffs.

The community's economic growth in recent years, including employment growth, has been tied to export industries. Farm exports, motor vehicle-related, chemicals and transportation have all seen growth in revenue.

Table 31: Selected industries by export values (\$Million), Chatham-Kent

INDUSTRY		2012	2022	% change
1110	Farms	\$636.3	\$1,131.8	78%
3363	Motor vehicle parts manufacturing	\$953.0	\$929.6	-2%
3132	Fabric mills	N/A	\$389.7	n/a
3326	Spring and wire product manufacturing	\$45.5	\$314.9	592%
3335	Metalworking machinery manufacturing	\$138.5	\$267.5	93%
3251	Basic chemical manufacturing	\$174.9	\$219.3	25%
3261	Plastic product manufacturing	\$114.0	\$194.0	70%
4842	Specialized freight trucking	\$53.0	\$171.1	223%
3339	Other general-purpose machinery manufacturing	\$97.4	\$155.0	59%
3361	Motor vehicle manufacturing	\$76.1	\$133.0	75%

Source: Lightcast

7 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INSIGHTS

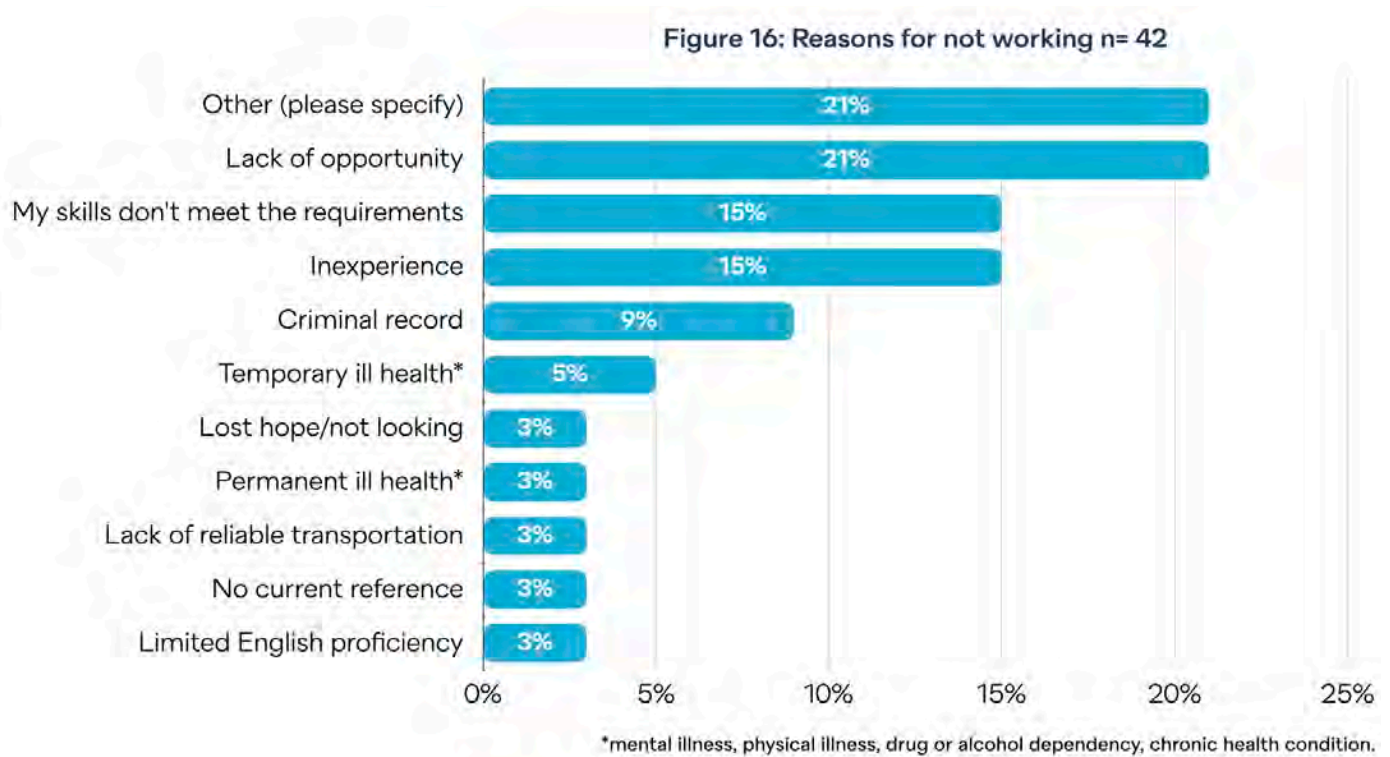
Extensive community engagement provided some additional context and insights to the economic and demographic analysis. The Local Labour Market Plan includes results of a job seeker survey, focus group meetings with members of the Chatham-Kent Workforce Planning Board and local employment support agencies, as well as highlights from the 2024 EmployerOne Survey.

7.1 JOB SEEKER SURVEY

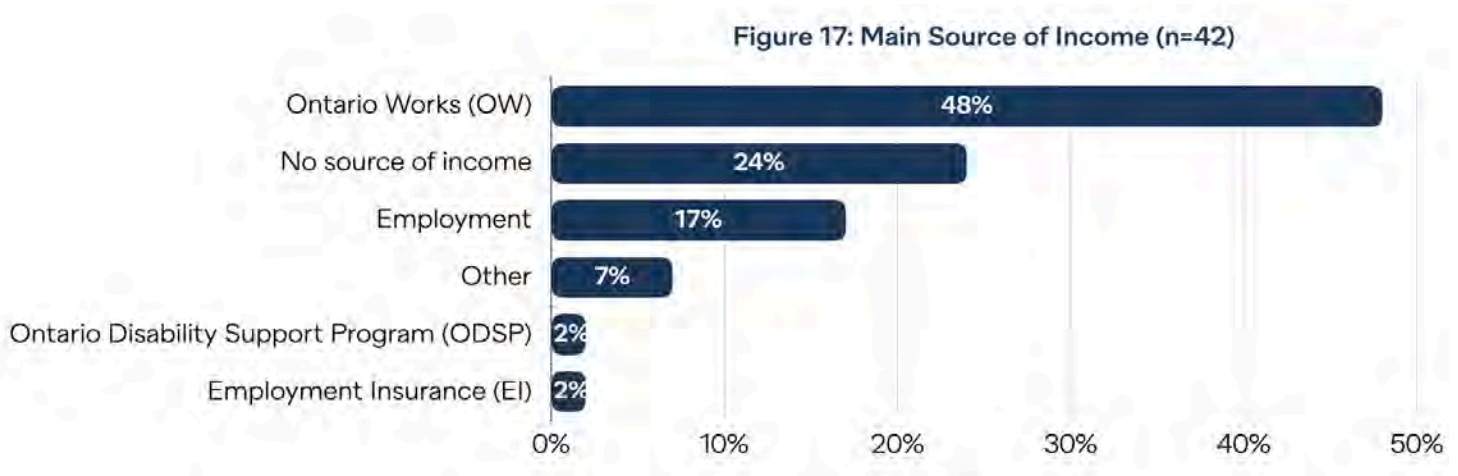
A survey of individuals seeking employment was conducted in October and November 2024. It was shared by employment agencies to their clients/networks. The survey garnered 44 responses from a range of ages with the most in the 25-39 age cohort. Most (73%) heard about the survey from CK Jobs (Municipality of Chatham-Kent).

Who responded		
Job Seeker Category	Notes	
Gender	Female	64%
	Male	34%
	Gender non-binary	(2%)
Residence	Chatham	86%
Age	15 to 18 years	0%
	19 to 24 years	16%
	25 to 39 years	47%
	40 to 54 years	30%
	55 to 64 years	7%
	65+	0%
Status in Canada	Canadian citizen	83%
	Permanent resident/temporary	17%
Other characteristics	Persons with a disability	20%
	Indigenous	7%
	Newcomer	7%
Education	No certificate or diploma	7%
	High school or equivalent	44%
	College	33%
	Apprenticeship	0%
	Some university (but not completed a degree)	2%
	University degree (Bachelors degree)	9%
	University degree above a bachelors	5%
Employment Status	75% of the survey participants were not currently working. Of those respondents not working, 63% were currently looking for work in the next 12 months. Two were not employed but had an employment offer.	

The most common reason for not working, according to the respondents, was a lack of opportunity (21%) followed by not having the skills required for the available roles (15%). Inexperience and having a criminal record were also top responses. Nine percent were either temporarily or permanently ill. Among the 'other' responses were newcomer, changing careers, moving from caregiving, and waiting to hear back.



Of the respondents that were not currently working, nearly one in four (24%) reported that they had no source of income, other referenced sources of income were Ontario Works (48%) and employment income (17%).



Of those who were working, the top industries were accommodation and food service, other services, healthcare and social assistance and administration and support.

Of those job seekers that were currently working, over half were working full time at 30 or more hours per week. Nearly half (46%) were permanent employees while 31% were temporary workers and 23% were on contract.

The employed survey responders reported that they had been with their current employer for a relatively short period with all employed there for less than five years. All but one reported a Chatham work location.

The most common mode of travel to work was to drive themselves (67%) with a reported commute of under 15 minutes (71%). Sixty-seven percent of the respondents reported that they had a reliable vehicle for work purposes.

Most of the working respondents reported earning an hourly wage of less than \$18.50/hour (63%). Two reported earning an hourly wage of \$40/hour or more.

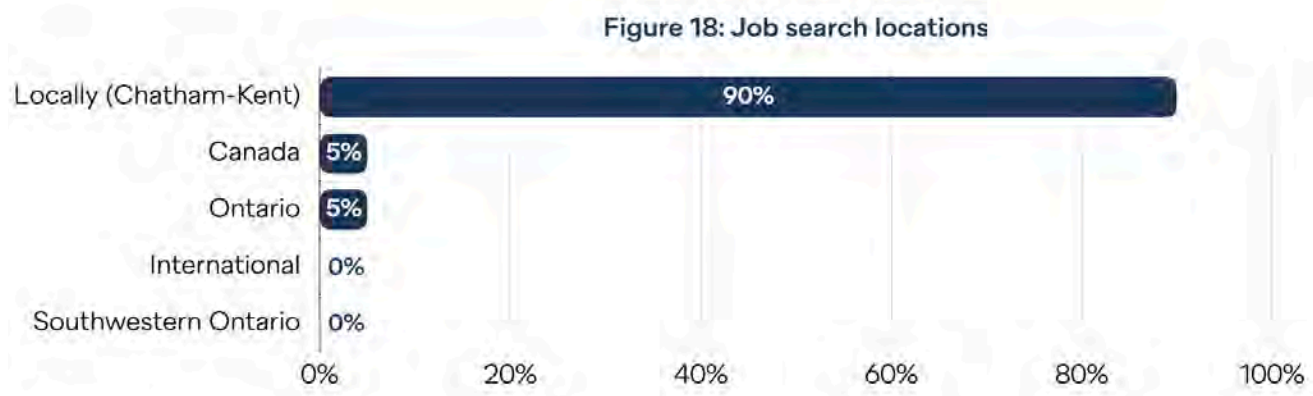
Half of the 16 working respondents believed their current hourly wage was not aligned with their job requirements and responsibilities.

Only half the employed respondents reported receiving non-wage benefits or perks from their employer. The three most mentioned were a wellness program (19%), flexible working hours (25%) and health and dental benefits (31%).

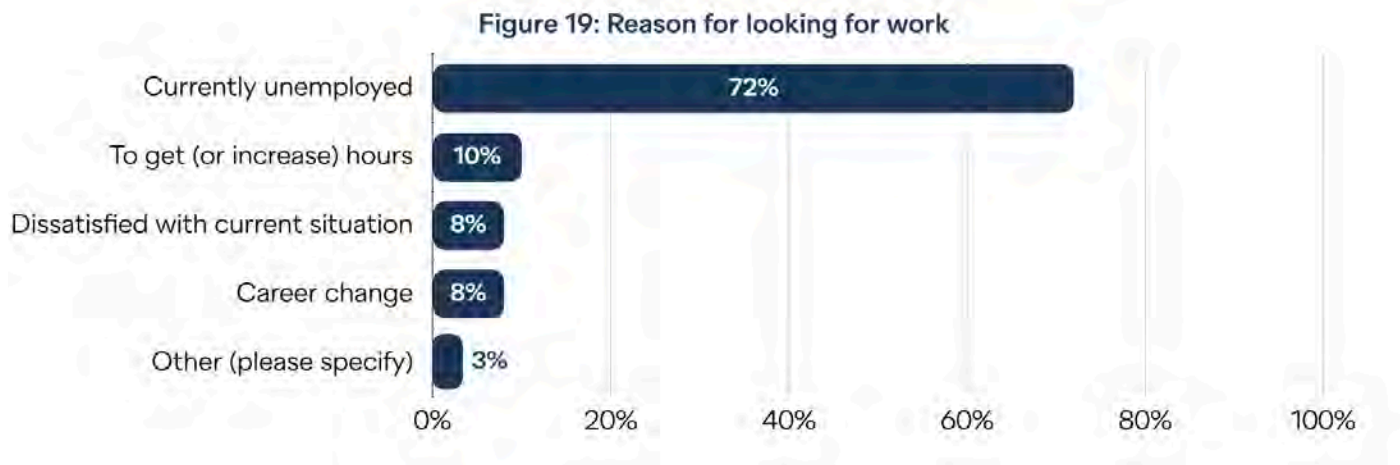
Forty-five percent of employed respondents indicated their employer provides training or employee development opportunities.

When asked what the employer could do to retain these jobs seekers, the most common response was increasing wages (40%), followed by offering flexible work schedules, offering different shifts and changing the workplace culture.

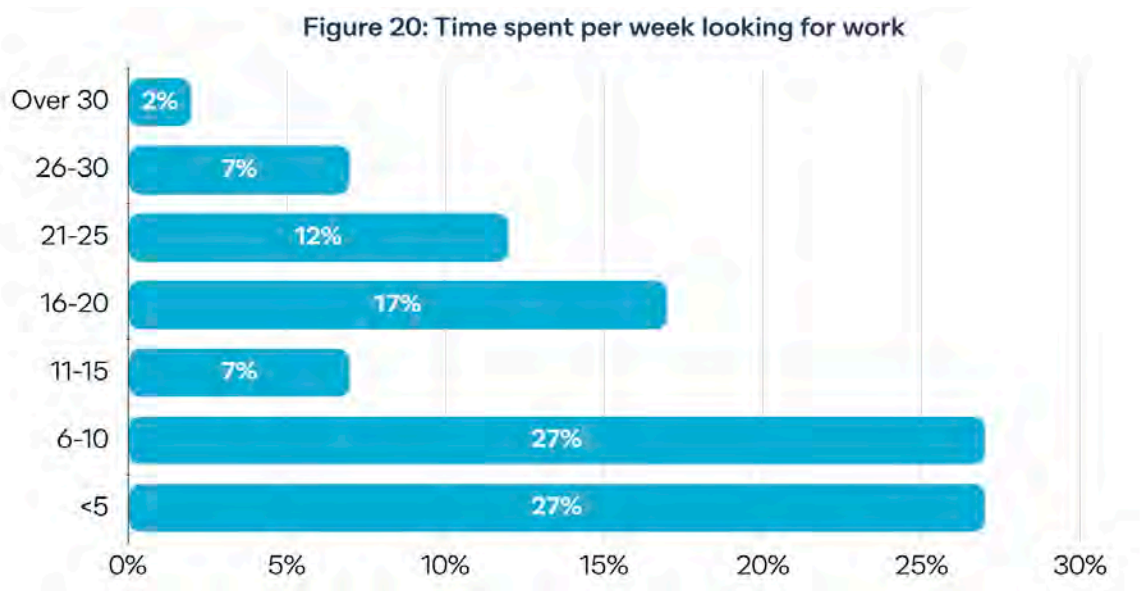
The largest share of respondents said they were looking for work in Chatham-Kent (90%), with only five percent reported looking anywhere in Ontario and elsewhere in Canada.



In addition to the respondents that were currently unemployed (72%), the reasons working respondents reported looking for work included increasing hours (10%), dissatisfied with the current situation (8%) and changing careers (8%).

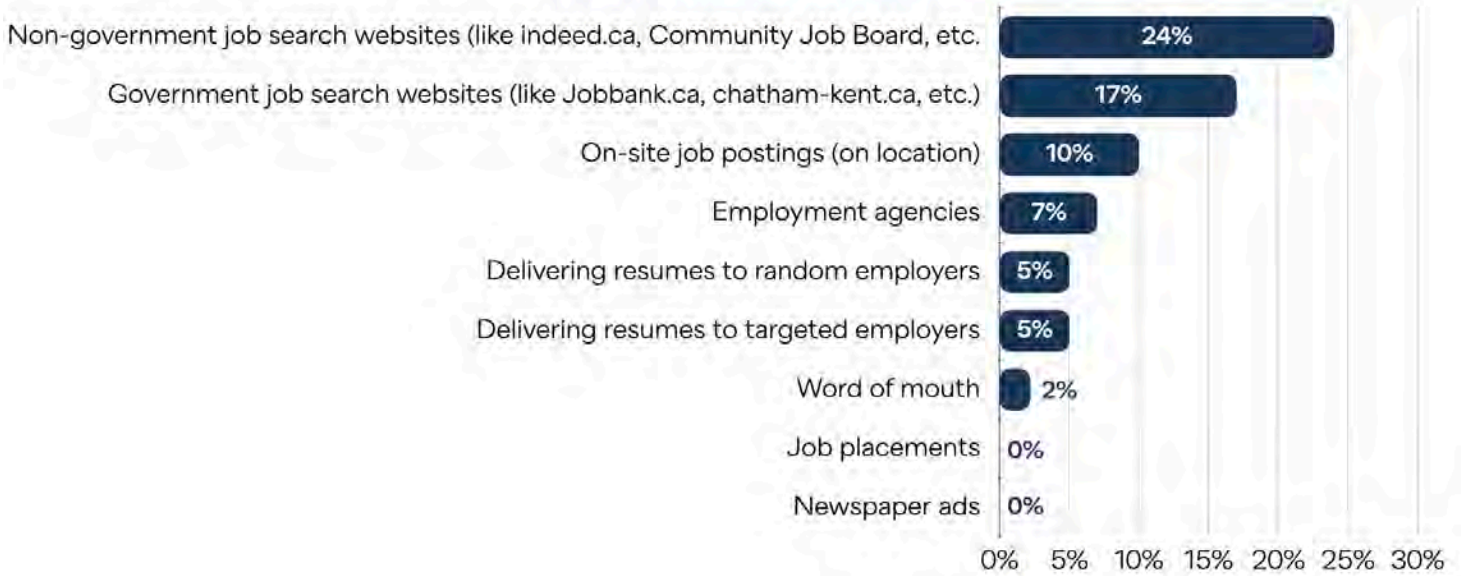


On average the largest share of respondents reported spending less than five hours per week job hunting or 6-10 hours. Twenty one percent of respondents spent at least 21 hours per week hunting for a new job.



The most common job search methods included non-government job search websites (24%), government websites (17%) and on-site job postings (10%).

Figure 21: Job Search Methods

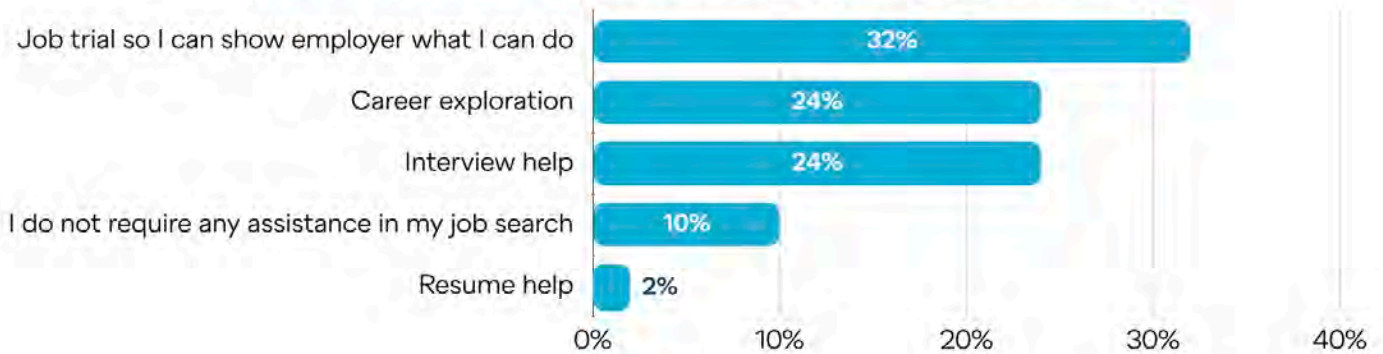


When asked about their biggest frustrations when looking for work, the top responses were (in order): can't find job opportunities, can't get an interview, my skills don't meet requirements, and got the interview but didn't get the job.

More than half of the respondents reported that they had received job search support from Chatham-Kent Employment and Social Services (56%). The only other source of job search support came from Community Living (JobWorkx).

When asked about the type of job search assistance required the most common answers were job trials (32%), career exploration (24%) and interview help (24%).

Figure 22: What kind of assistance would help you in your job search?

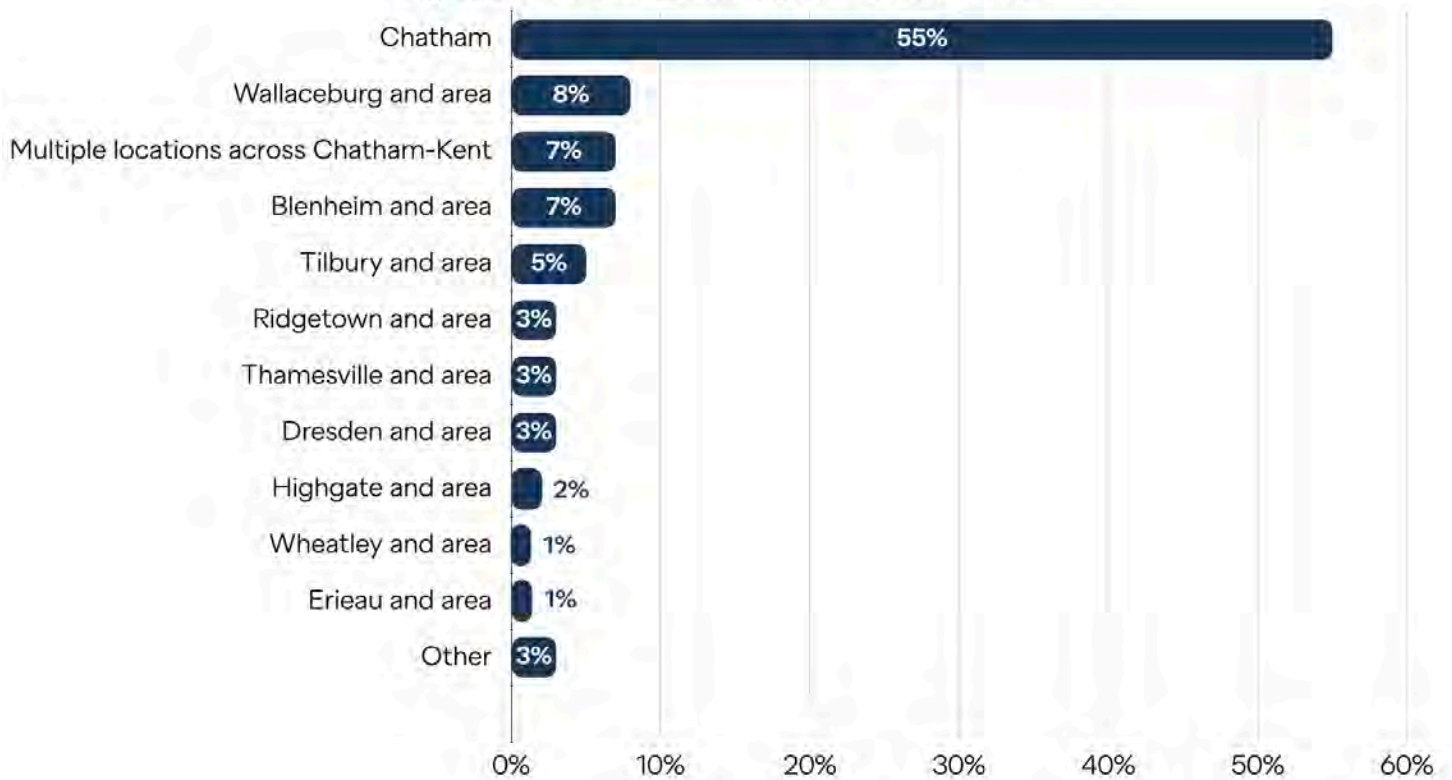


7.2 EMPLOYER ONE SURVEY

The EmployerOne Survey was open to Chatham-Kent employers in November 2024. A total of 148 responses were collected¹¹. Highlights of the survey are included below.

More than half the respondents had businesses located in Chatham (55%), followed by Wallaceburg and area (8%), multiple locations in Chatham-Kent (7%), Blenheim (7%), Tilbury (5%) and Ridgetown (3%).

Figure 23: Business Location within Chatham-Kent



¹¹Not all employers answered all questions. The percentage shares relate to the number of answers except where noted.

Most of the survey respondents were for-profit businesses (83%) with 17% in the not-for profit or government sectors. Twenty-three percent were reporting from the company head office while another 21% represented branch locations. The majority (56%) were independent stand-alone businesses.

Figure 24: Organization Type

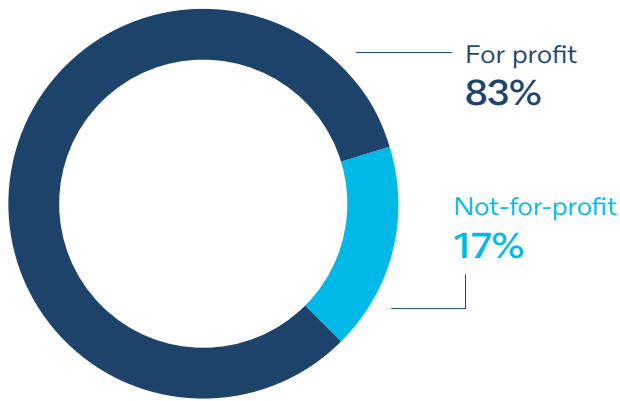


Figure 25: Head office or branch location



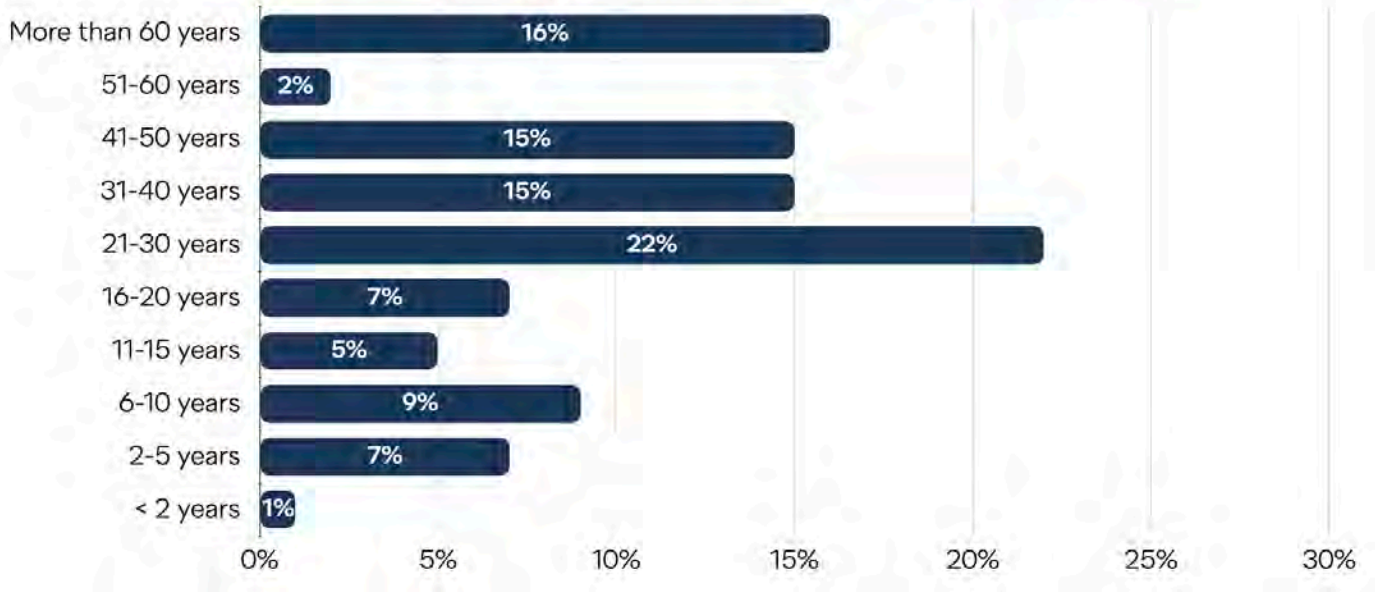
The largest share of respondents was in the manufacturing sector (20%). The next top five sectors were other services (11%), construction (11%), retail trade (10%), health care and social assistance (8%), and professional, scientific, and technical services (8%).

Table 32: EmployerOne respondents by sector

Sector	#	% of total
Manufacturing	29	20%
Other services (except public administration)	17	11%
Construction	16	11%
Retail trade	15	10%
Healthcare and social assistance	12	8%
Professional, scientific, and technical services	12	8%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	10	7%
Educational services	7	5%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	6	4%
Accommodation and food service	5	3%
Finance and insurance	5	3%
Wholesale trade	3	2%
Administration and support, waste management, and remediation	2	1%
Public administration	2	1%
Real estate and rental and leasing	2	1%
Transportation and warehousing	2	1%
Utilities	2	1%

Many of the responding businesses had long histories in Chatham-Kent. One in five had been in operation between 21 and 30 years and 16% had been in operation more than 60 years.

Figure 26: Breakdown of employers by age of establishment



In total, the survey respondents represented just under 15,400 employees or approximately 30% of all employment in Chatham-Kent. The average employment per respondent was 104 employees. The size of employer ranged from just two employees to more than 1,600.

On average the respondents reported that 71% of their workforce was classified as full time and another 19% was part time. Seasonal and contract workers represented 7% and 3% of the workforce respectively.

The age distribution of the average employer in the survey is similar to the average across the community with 53% of all workers over the age of 40 and 17% under the age of 25.

Approximately 86% of the workforce was hired from within Chatham-Kent with another 11% coming from another community in Canada. Just 3% of the workforce was hired from outside of Canada.

Figure 27: Breakdown of average employer by workforce type (%)

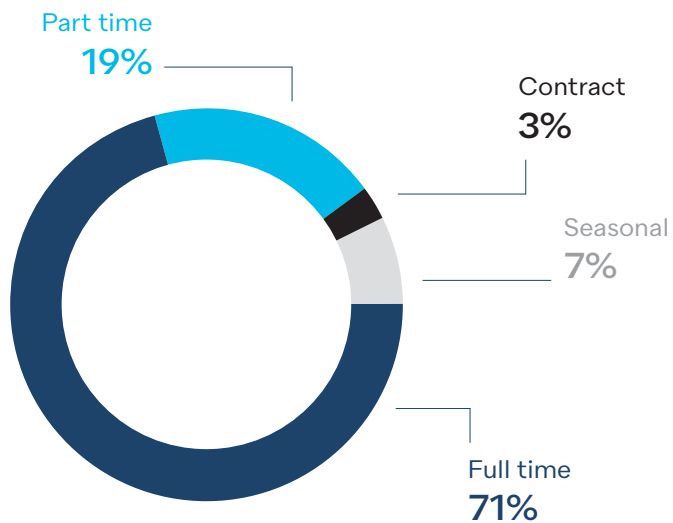
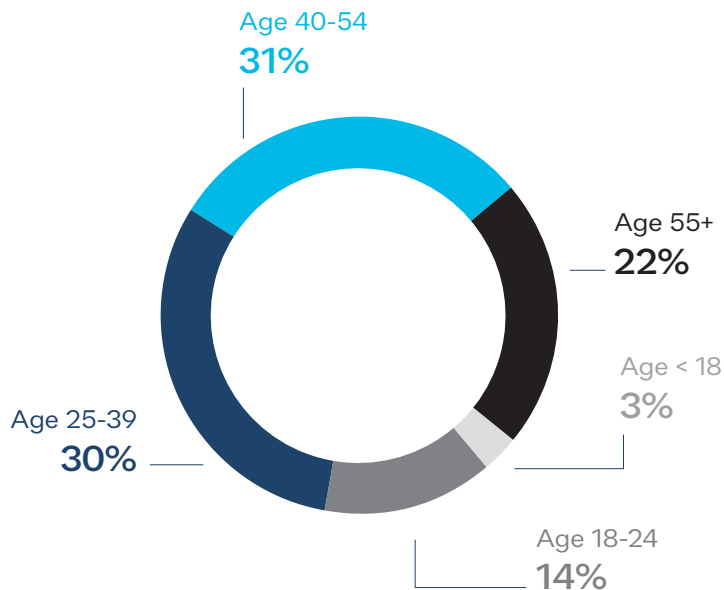


Figure 28: Age breakdown of the average employer in the survey



Based on the EmployerOne survey, most of the workforce is working in-office or onsite (86%) with 10% working in a hybrid arrangement with some days at home and some at the office. The remaining 4% work remotely. Nine percent of businesses indicated they expect more employees moving back to in-office/on-site work in the coming year.

Figure 29: Remote work profile of the average employer

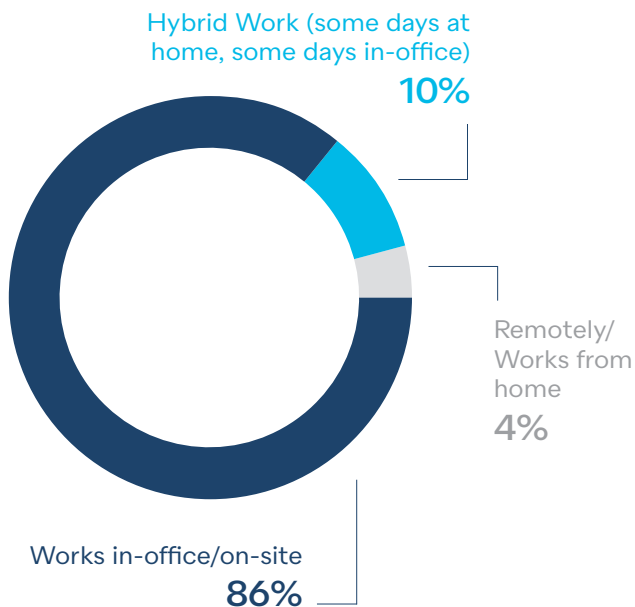
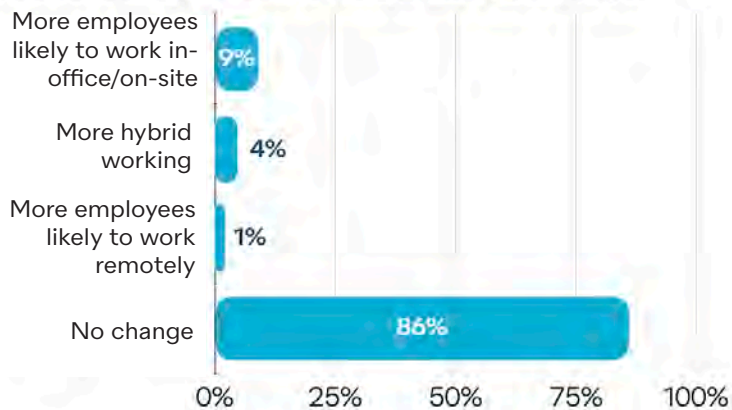


Figure 30: Change in remote work in the upcoming year



Between November 1, 2023, and October 31, 2024, 76% of the employers experienced some separations. Separations mean that an employee has stopped working for any reason such as: retirements, dismissals, permanent layoffs, temporary layoffs, or quits. In total, 2,364 separations occurred or an amount equivalent to 15% of the entire workforce of the combined businesses. Employers were asked to write in the main causes of separation. Retirement was the most mentioned followed by termination, resignation, seasonal work and employees moving away from the community.

Employers were asked to approximate what percentage of those who quit left the organization for a job opportunity outside Chatham-Kent. Seventeen percent of employers indicated that at least 11 percent of employees that left the organization moved outside the community.

% of quitters	# of firms	% of total
0%	49	33%
1-10%	21	14%
11% - 25%	3	2%
26% - 50%	6	4%
51% - 75%	4	3%
76% - 100%	12	8%
No answer	53	36%

Thirty-one percent of the employers surveyed said that a lack of workers was a reason they turned down new business during the year. More than a quarter of respondents (26%) reported that they had altered their business hours due to staffing shortages.

Figure 31: Turned down growth opportunities due to lack of employees

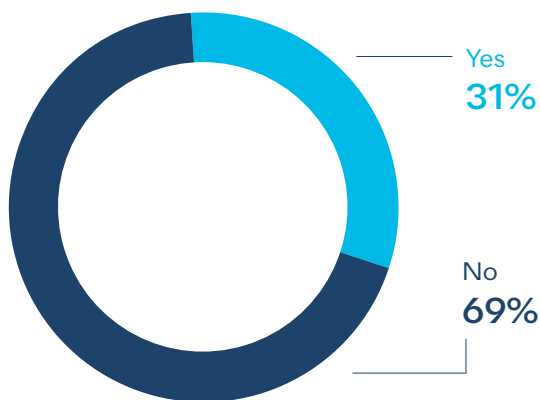
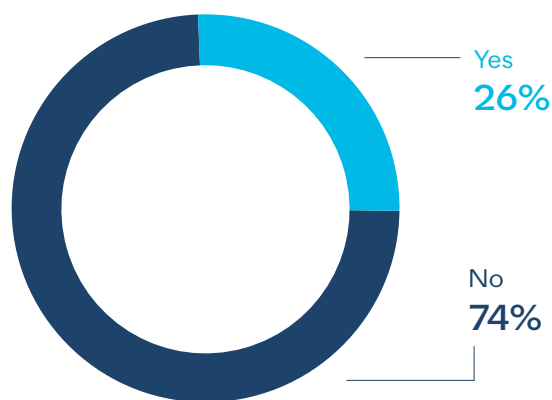


Figure 32: Had to alter business hours due to staffing shortages



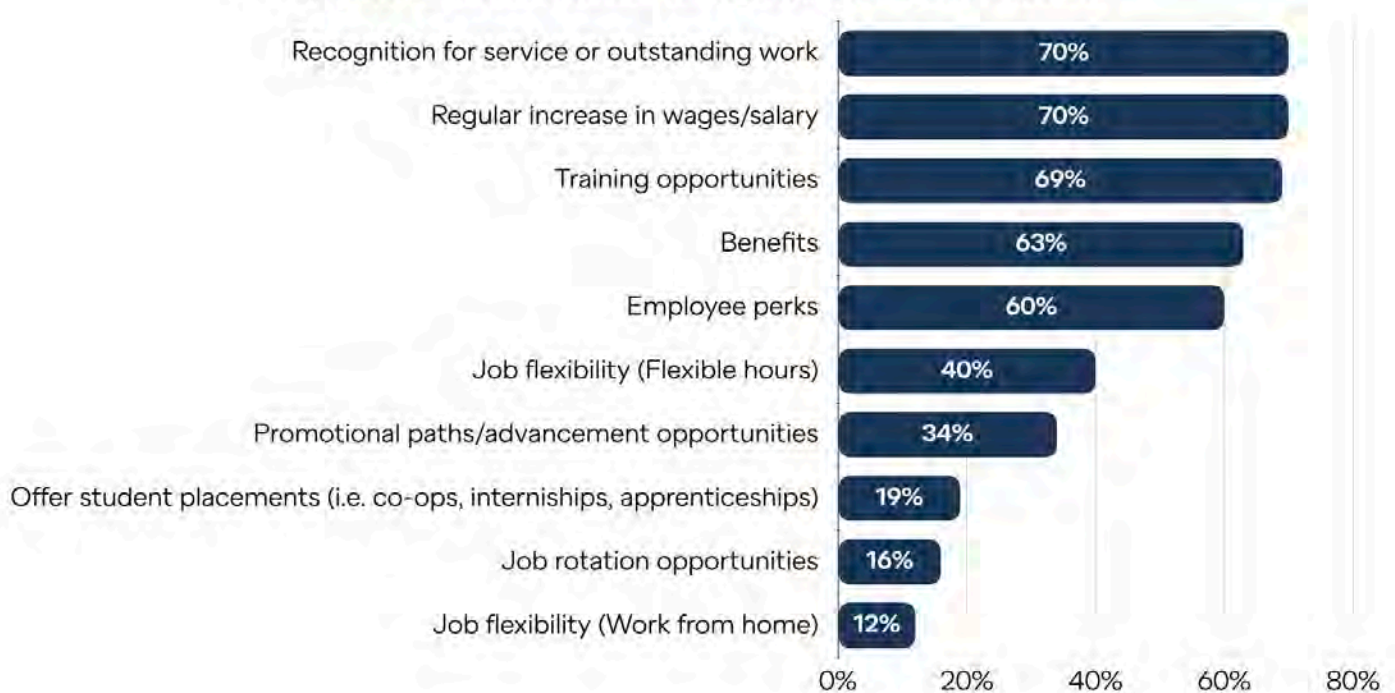
Only 15% invested in technology to address staffing shortages. Only 18 individual companies provided a description of their investment. The two main investment areas were automation and the use of information technology.

The survey asked if the employers complete exit interviews. Only 50% of the organizations responding to the survey do exit interviews.

Of the 146 organizations in the survey that answered this question, just under half (46%) indicated that employee retention is a concern for their organization. The top five reasons why retention is a concern were: 1) high competition for workers, 2) pay is less than industry standard or offered by competitors for similar roles, 3) too few hours available (i.e. part-time positions), 4) undesirable hours of work (i.e. shift work or rotating shifts) and 5) low pay roles (i.e. minimum wage).

Companies use a wide range of tools to encourage retention. Figure 33 shows the top strategies used to support employee retention. The top five are 1) regular increases in wages/salary, 2) recognition for service or outstanding work, 3) training opportunities, 4) other benefits and 5) employee perks. Only two of the responding organizations said they offer child care support.

Figure 33: Employee retention strategies, percentage of responses



Above it was reported these 148 employers collectively saw just under 2,400 separations during the year. The organizations were also asked about new hires. Over the 12-month period, they combined to hire just over 2,500 new workers, only offsetting the separations but only marginal net growth in employment.

A total of 43 organizations reported hiring new post-secondary graduates in the past 12 months and another 37 (25%) reported hiring new residents to Chatham-Kent (meaning they came from somewhere in Canada outside of the community). Eight percent hired immigrants and another five percent hired temporary foreign workers.

Table 34: Sources of new employees in 2024

	Employers hiring	% of total
Recent post-secondary graduates (meaning they graduated from a post secondary training program in the last 2 years)	43	29%
New residents to Chatham-Kent (meaning they came from somewhere in Canada outside of CK)	37	25%
Immigrants (meaning they came from another country)	12	8%
Persons with disabilities	11	7%
Recent international student graduates	9	6%
Temporary Foreign Worker	8	5%

Under-represented groups are those categories of Chatham-Kent residents who may participate at lower proportions in the labour market compared to the overall average, for example, persons with disabilities or immigrants who have only recently arrived in Canada. Employers were asked about the challenges facing the organization when considering recruiting job candidates from under-represented groups.

The top reported challenge was how to assess their skills or certification/education followed by how best to find and recruit these individuals and not knowing what resources we can access to better receive these employees.

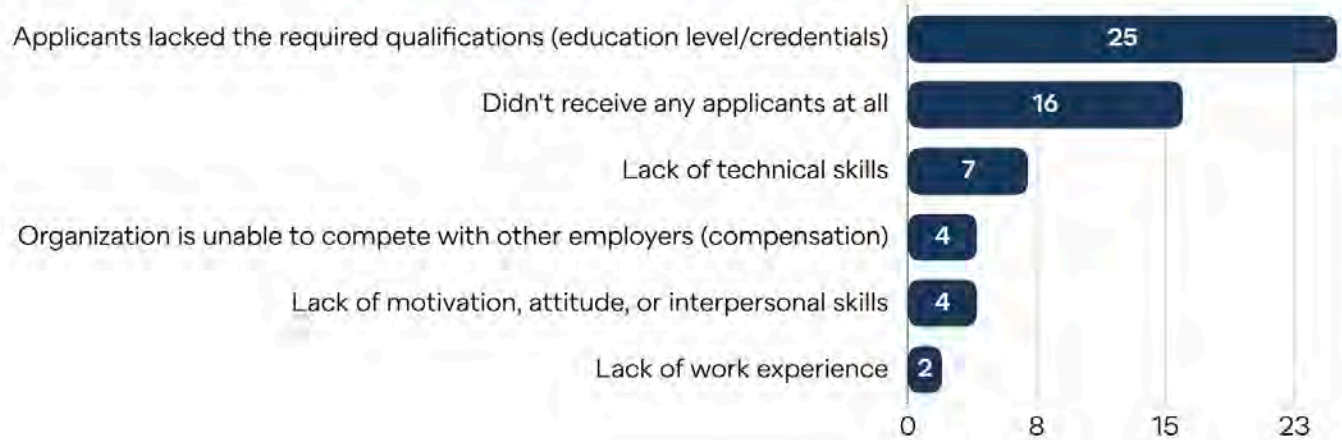
Table 35: Percentage of employers indicating challenges hiring specific under-represented groups

Assessing their skills or their certification/education	41%
How best to find and recruit these individuals	39%
Not knowing what resources we can access to better receive these employees	23%
Uncertain how our current employees will interact with these new workers	19%
Uncertain about the skills of our managers and supervisors, including cultural understanding, to manage these new workers	17%
How best to provide accommodations or meet their needs	16%

When asked if the organizations had any vacant positions that were hard to fill from November 1, 2023 to October 31, 2024, 42 percent said yes. Over 100 individual occupations were listed but the number listed multiple times included automotive technicians, CNC Machinists, controls engineer, electrical engineer, electrician, general labourer, HVAC installer, maintenance, mechanic, millwright, registered early childhood educator, registered nurse and tool and die makers.

When asked to provide the main reason why the position(s) were hard to fill, the top three responses were 1) applicants lacked the required qualifications, 2) didn't receive any applicants at all, and 3) lack of technical skills.

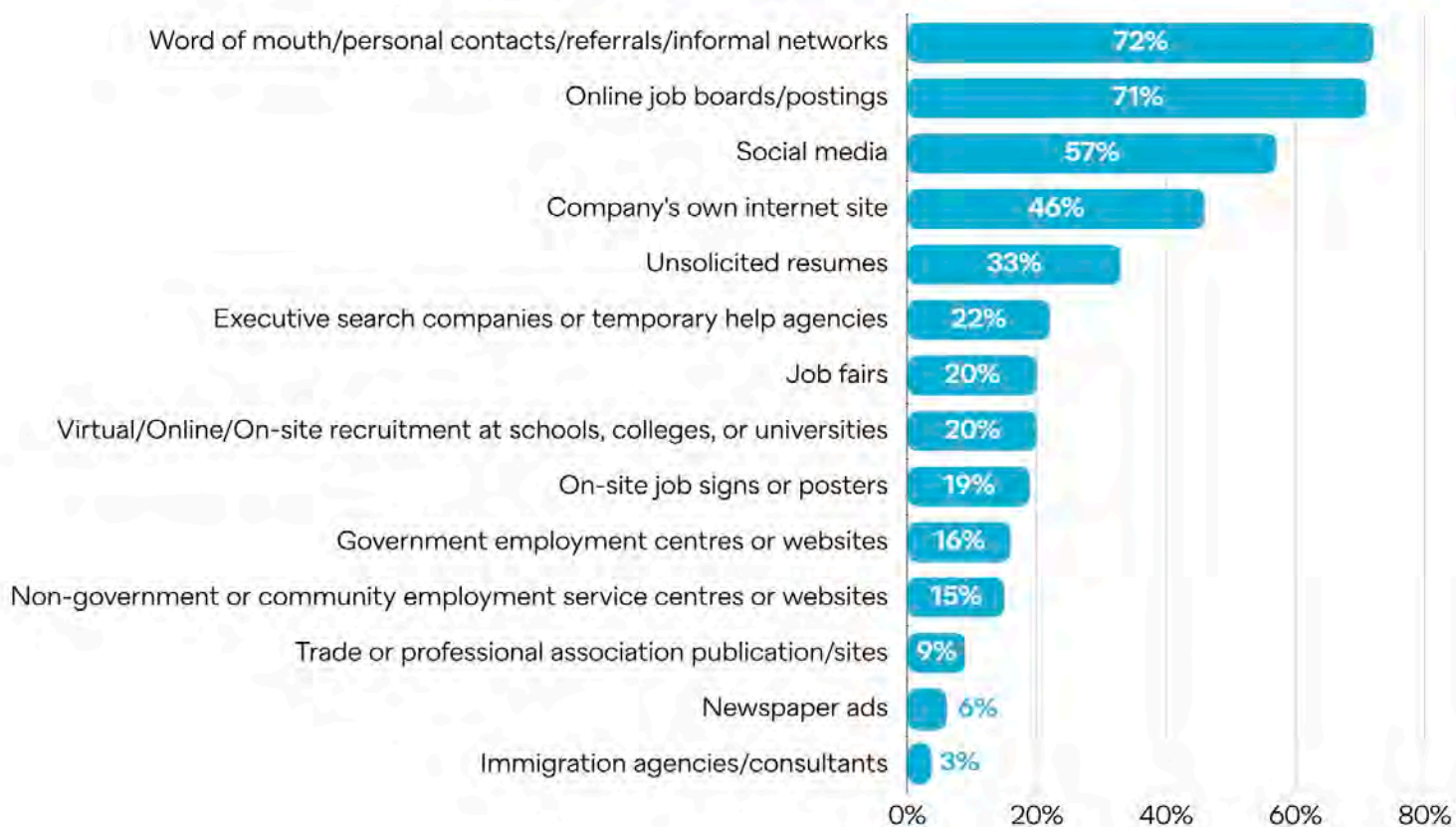
Figure 34: Top reasons why jobs were hard to fill in 2024



The top cited recruitment methods employers used included:

- Word of mouth/personal contacts/referrals/informal networks
- Online job boards/postings
- Social Media
- Company's own internet site
- Unsolicited resumes

Figure 35: Top recruitment methods



When asked to describe the geographic areas targeted for recruitment, 98% hire locally and another 33% recruit province-wide. Among the 138 employers that answered this question, only 6.5 percent were recruiting across Canada and only 1.4 percent internationally.

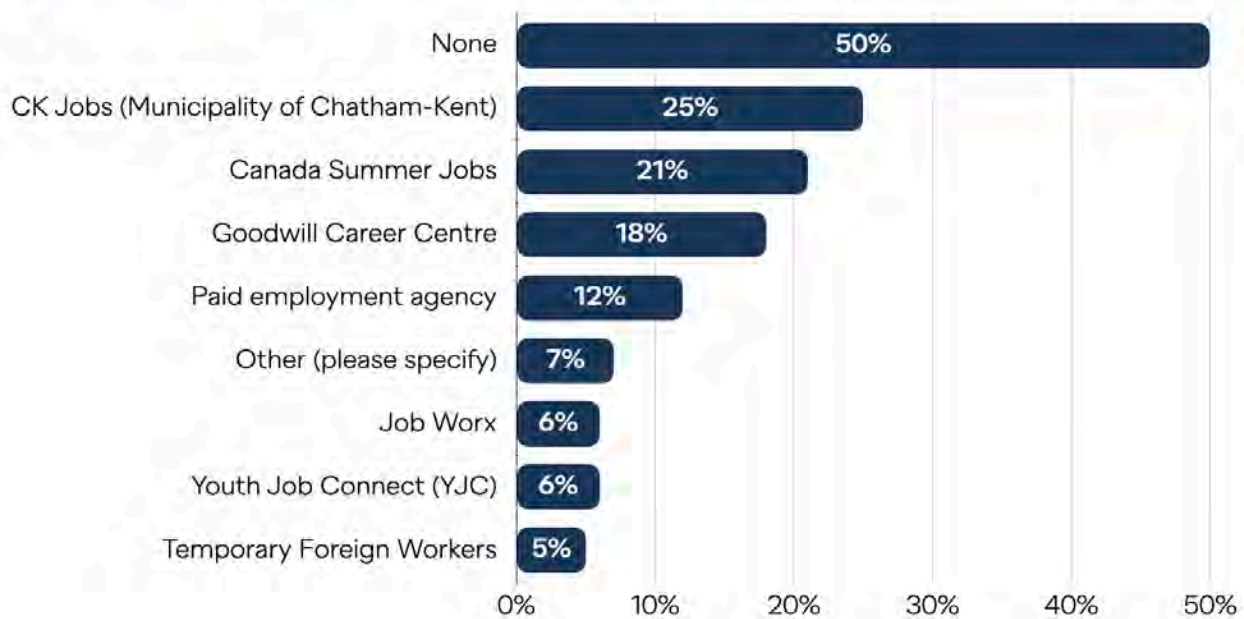
Survey respondents were asked if they have any policies or practices in place that encourage hiring from a list of population and demographic groups. As shown in Table 36, 68 percent had no specific policies or practices.

Table 36: Share of employers with policies or practices to encourage hiring

None - we do not have specific policies or practices to hire from targeted populations	73%
People with disabilities	13%
Women	13%
First Nations, Metis, or Inuit	12%
Recent Graduates	11%
Visible Minority (someone, other than an Indigenous person, who is non-white in colour or race, regardless of place of birth)	10%
LGBTQ2SIA+ people	10%
Newcomers and Immigrants to Canada	10%
Youth (Under age 29)	9%
Older workers (Over age 55)	7%

The EmployerOne survey asked about the use of employment agencies or government hiring programs over the previous 12 months. Half (50%) said they hadn't used any program. The top accessed was CK Jobs (Municipality of Chatham-Kent) followed by Canada Summer Jobs, the Goodwill Career Centre and private sector employment agencies.

Figure 36: Share of respondents accessing employment agencies or government hiring programs



HIRING PLANS

Does your organization plan to hire in the next 12 months (i.e., November 1, 2024 to October 31, 2025)? Seventy-one percent of respondents indicated they will be hiring in the next 12 months.

SOFT SKILLS TRAINING

Do you require assistance with soft skills training for your workforce? (example: professional attitude, work ethic, etc.) Thirty-eight percent answered no - we provide soft skills training required, 34% responded no - we are able to find talent with the skills needed and another 14% said they were unsure. Thirteen percent said the lack of soft skills is a challenge to hiring the right talent.

RATING THE AVAILABILITY OF QUALIFIED WORKERS

Respondents were asked to rate the availability of qualified workers and access to talent in Chatham-Kent. Access to administrative talent had the most positive response with 47% rating access as good to excellent (with 24% answering N/A). Skilled labour was rated the lowest with 30% giving it a less than satisfactory rating. Technical skills were also rated low.

Table 37: Rating the availability of qualified workers in Chatham-Kent

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Less than satisfactory	N/A
General Labour	6%	31%	29%	14%	19%
Skilled Labour	3%	21%	27%	30%	19%
Management	3%	26%	20%	19%	32%
Professional	5%	27%	22%	16%	30%
Administrative	7%	40%	21%	8%	24%
Technical	2%	21%	23%	21%	32%

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/TRAINING

Excluding the required training (WHMIS, AODA, onboarding, Health and Safety), 77% percent of respondents indicated they provided/supported professional development or training opportunities for their employees last year. The top reason to offer professional development or training was “to improve retention within the organization” followed by to become more competitive in the market and to adapt to technological changes.

CHALLENGES/BARRIERS TO PROVIDING ONGOING TRAINING

Respondents were asked to indicate the greatest challenges/barriers to providing ongoing training and education to employees in the last nine months. The top five responses were cost of training (58%), relevant training is not offered locally (29%), lack of awareness of existing training programs (26%), losing trained employees to other businesses (24%) and loss of productivity during training time (24%).

SKILLS FOR SUCCESS

Skills for Success (essential skills) are the skills needed for work, learning and life. They are the foundation for learning all other skills and help people evolve with their jobs and adapt to workplace change. They include: reading, numeracy, writing, digital, problem solving, communication, collaboration, adaptability, and creativity & innovation. Surveyed organizations were asked if they have entry-level employees that lack essential or foundational skills for the job. Thirty-four percent of respondents said that some entry-level employees lacked some essential skill. Problem solving was the top essential skill that is lacking (25% of employers) followed by communications (24%), adaptability (12%), numeracy (11%) and writing (10%).

When asked, one in three organizations (34%) said they would be interested in learning more about essential skills training in their workplace or a partnership with local upgrading programs.

APPRENTICESHIP

Thirty-seven firms had a total of 107 apprentices on the payroll in the past 12 months. When asked how many apprentices do they expect to have over the next year, the number increases to 119. Respondents were asked how long on average do apprentices stay with their organizations after receiving accreditation and 58% said less than one year.

TECHNOLOGY/ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

When asked if technology/A.I. had an impact on their business and workforce in the past 12 months, 30% said yes. Looking forward to the next five years, the share expecting it to have an impact jumped 44%. When asked to write in how technology/A.I. will impact their business, most of the answer were positive and related to business process improvement (recruitment, customer relationships, etc.) or manufacturing/warehouse automation. Nearly 50% of surveyed employers use some form of related new technology today. The top mentioned included the AI bots such as Chat GPT and Claude.

GREEN/CLEAN ECONOMY

Thirty-two percent of survey respondents say they are working to adapt to the green/clean economy (they were provided the following examples: policies, training, grants, technology advancement, etc.). When asked for specifics, responses included energy efficiency, EV usage, better waste management. Looking toward the future, respondents were asked if they foresee their business activities and/or workforce changing or supporting the green / clean economy in the next five years. One in three respondents (33%) said yes with another 34% saying they are unsure.

7.3 CHATHAM-KENT WORKFORCE PLANNING BOARD AND EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS MEETINGS

On November 5, 2024 consultations were held with the Chatham-Kent Workforce Planning Board and a number of organizations providing Employment Supports in the community. The current state of the workforce was discussed at these meetings including trends in the types of clients being served. The employment supports organizations included:

- Community Attraction and Promotion, MCK
- Employment and Social Services, MCK
- Economic Development, MCK
- Adult Language and Learning
- Tri-County Literacy Network
- Lambton Kent District School Board
- YMCA
- Lambton College
- Community Living of Chatham-Kent

A few key highlights from these meetings included:

- Immigrants and temporary foreign workers are taking up a larger share of the workforce in recent years.
- International student numbers are down at St. Clair College.
- Childcare continues to be a barrier although there is work being done to address this. The availability of early childhood educators is a challenge.
- The other barriers to recruiting and retaining workers in Chatham-Kent as identified by the meeting participants continue to be access to housing, comparatively lower wage levels, competition from urban centres, and a lack of full-time, permanent employment.
- Chatham-Kent will need to attract more people to the region to fill gaps in the workforce. We need to leverage Chatham-Kent's quality of life and affordable housing (relative to other regions).
- There needs to be more work done to align workforce supply and demand. This implicates local post-secondary institutions, but also efforts to provide training and attract people to the region.
- Promoting workforce diversity remains an important priority. The demographic makeup of the workforce is changing and more employers need to make this a focus.
- We need to continue to focus on getting the data needed to make informed decisions.
- Enhancing the quality of life via investments in recreation and other community infrastructure is important if we want to attract and retain talent in the community.

8 EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO PROGRAM CLIENTS

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

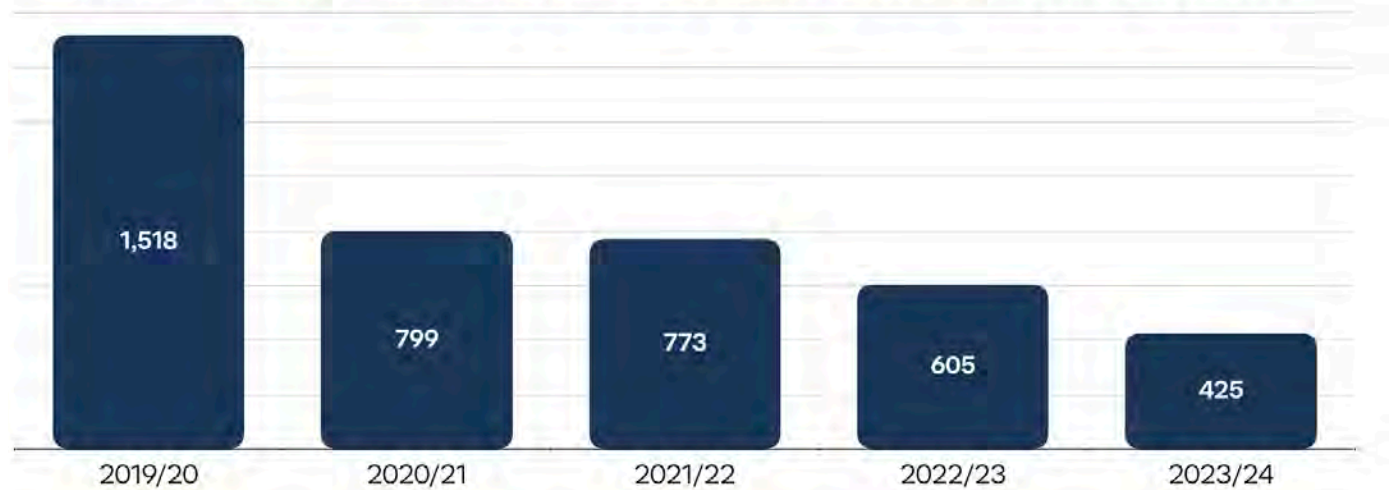
- Canada Ontario Jobs Grant (COJG)
- Employment Service (ES)
- Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS)
- Ontario Employment Assistance Service (OEAS)
- Better Jobs Ontario (BJO)
- Youth Job Connection (YJC)
- Youth Job Connection Summer (YJC-S)
- Apprenticeship (APPR)
- Integrated Employment Services (IES)

Client data is submitted by the Employment Ontario service providers into the Employment Ontario Information System – Case Management System (EOIS-CaMS). Apprenticeship data was extracted from the EOIS Apprenticeship Application (APPR). Data counts lower than 10 participants have been suppressed to ensure confidentiality.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICE CLIENTS

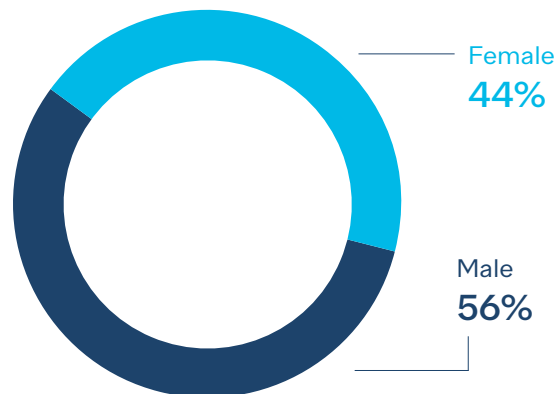
The number of Employment Service Clients has continued to decline since the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020/21 and now sits at 425 clients served in the 2023/24 fiscal year.

Figure 37: Number of Employment Services Clients Served in Chatham-Kent 2019/20 to 2023/24



There are more male clients (56%) than female clients (44%).

Figure 38: Employment Services Clients Served by Gender, 2023/24



While the number of clients has declined, the share of clients served by age has remained relatively consistent over the years with the largest share of clients served (43%) between ages 25 and 44. Twenty-five percent were under 25, 28% were between 45-64 and only 3% were 65+.

The number of racialized, newcomer and internationally trained clients has gradually increased over the years but still represents under 6% each. The number of individuals identifying as Indigenous has remained relatively consistent between 4 and 6% of all clients (4% in 2023/24). The most significant change has been in the number of clients with a disability which has grown from 10% of the client base in 2016/17 to 30% in 2023/24. These data suggest an opportunity to identify and address the barriers to employment for individuals with a disability.

Table 38: Number of clients by designated group (2023/24)

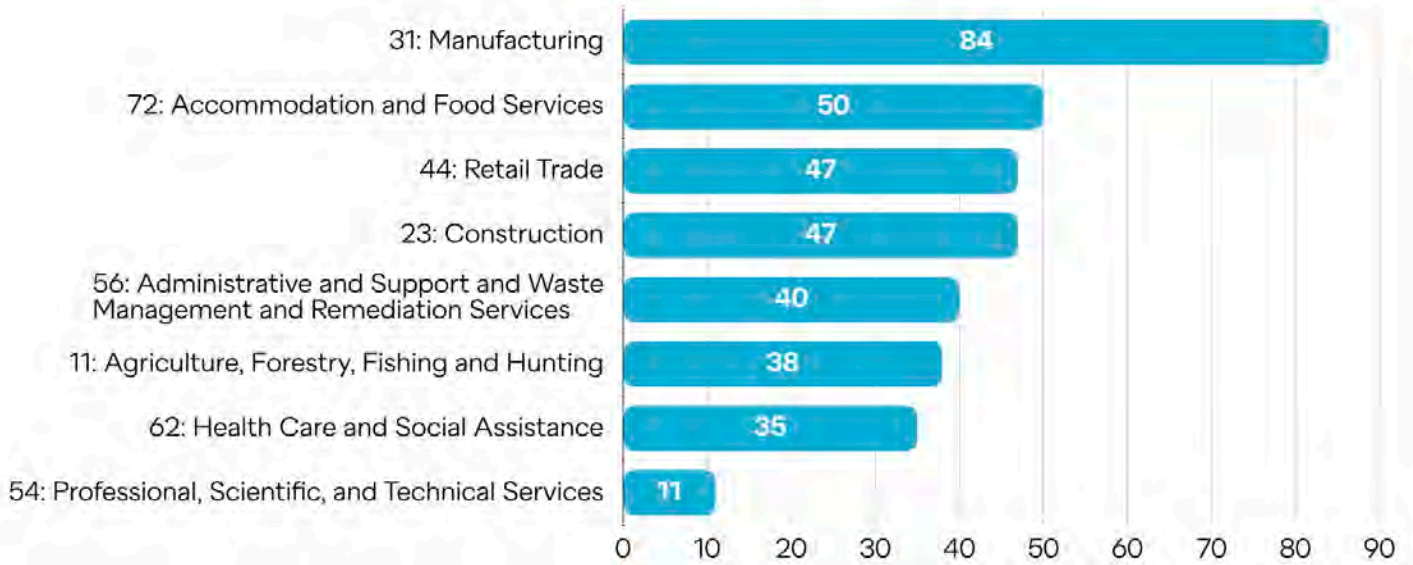
	Clients	% of total
Person with Disability	129	31%
Newcomer	27	6%
Internationally Trained Professionals	23	6%
Racialized	22	5%
Indigenous Group	16	4%

The largest share of clients (42%) had completed secondary school and 25% have a certificate or diploma. Fifteen percent have not completed high school and 7% of clients have a bachelor’s degree.

Of the 361 clients that were unemployed, 45% were out of employment or training for less than three months, 18% between three and six months and 14% between six and twelve months. One quarter of the clients were out of employment for more than 12 months.

The top layoff industries for employment service clients were manufacturing, accommodation and food services, retail trade, construction and administrative and support services. The combined number of clients previously employed in some form of manufacturing is well above any other layoff industry.

Figure 39: Top Layoff Industries 2023/24



The top five layoff occupations are 1) labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities, 2) sales and service support occupations, 3) helpers and labourers and other transport drivers, operators and labourers, 4) sales and service representatives and other customer and personal services occupations, and 5) general trades.

At the exit summary, 55% of Employment Services clients were employed at the exit summary and 9% continued in education and training. Sixteen percent were classified as 'other' (e.g. independent, unable to work, volunteer), four percent were unemployed and 17% were unknown.

Figure 40: Outcome at Exit Summary



LITERACY AND BASIC SKILLS (LBS) CLIENTS

There were 172 Literacy and Basic Skills clients in 2023/24 (93 new and 79 carry-over). The most clients were aged 15 to 24 (43%), followed by 25 to 44 (40%) and 45-64 (16%). Over half of the Literacy and Basic Skills clients are female (53%).

Figure 41: CK Literacy and Basic Skills Learners by Age

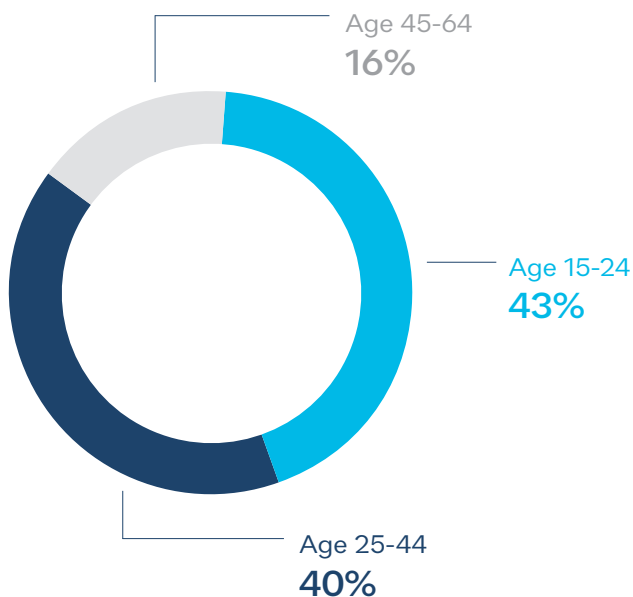
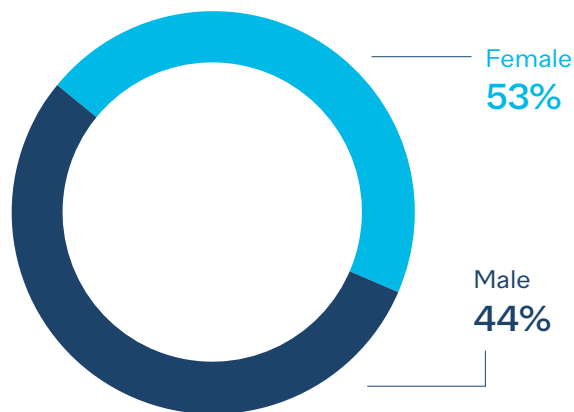


Figure 42: Literacy and Basic Skills Learners by Gender



The majority of Literacy and Basic Skills learners were unemployed (60%) while 28% were employed part time. Notable designated groups included persons with disabilities (38%), racialized (12%) and members of an Indigenous group (12%).

The Learners' goal paths include 44% were seeking employment and another 44% were in the program to ultimately attain post-secondary education. Table 39 shows the learners' progress by detailed goal path. Among those seeking full-time employment, 31% of clients have hit the goal.

Table 39: Learners' goal path and progress		
A	% of Apprenticeship Goal Path of Employed Full Time Labour Force Attachment	N/A
B	% of Employment Goal Path of Employed Full Time Labour Force Attachment	31%
C	% of Independence Goal Path of Employed Full Time Labour Force Attachment	15%
D	% of Post Secondary Goal Path of Employed Full Time Labour Force Attachment	54%
E	% of Secondary School Credit Goal Path of Employed Full Time Labour Force Attachment	N/A
F	% of Apprenticeship Goal Path of Employed Part Time Labour Force Attachment	N/A
G	% of Employment Goal Path of Employed Part Time Labour Force Attachment	13%
H	% of Independence Goal Path of Employed Part Time Labour Force Attachment	2%
I	% of Post Secondary Goal Path of Employed Part Time Labour Force Attachment	81%
J	% of Secondary School Credit Goal Path of Employed Part Time Labour Force Attachment	4%

BETTER JOBS ONTARIO

The Better Jobs Ontario program helps unemployed and laid-off people get training for jobs that are “in-demand”. The program had 31 clients in Chatham-Kent during 2023/24. Eighty-four percent were males and 42% were aged 25-44 (another 39% were aged 45-64). Fifty-two percent were collecting Employment Insurance and 55% had been out of work for less than three months. Due to privacy issues, most of the detailed program data was not published but 21 (68%) of the clients were being trained as transport truck drivers.

INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

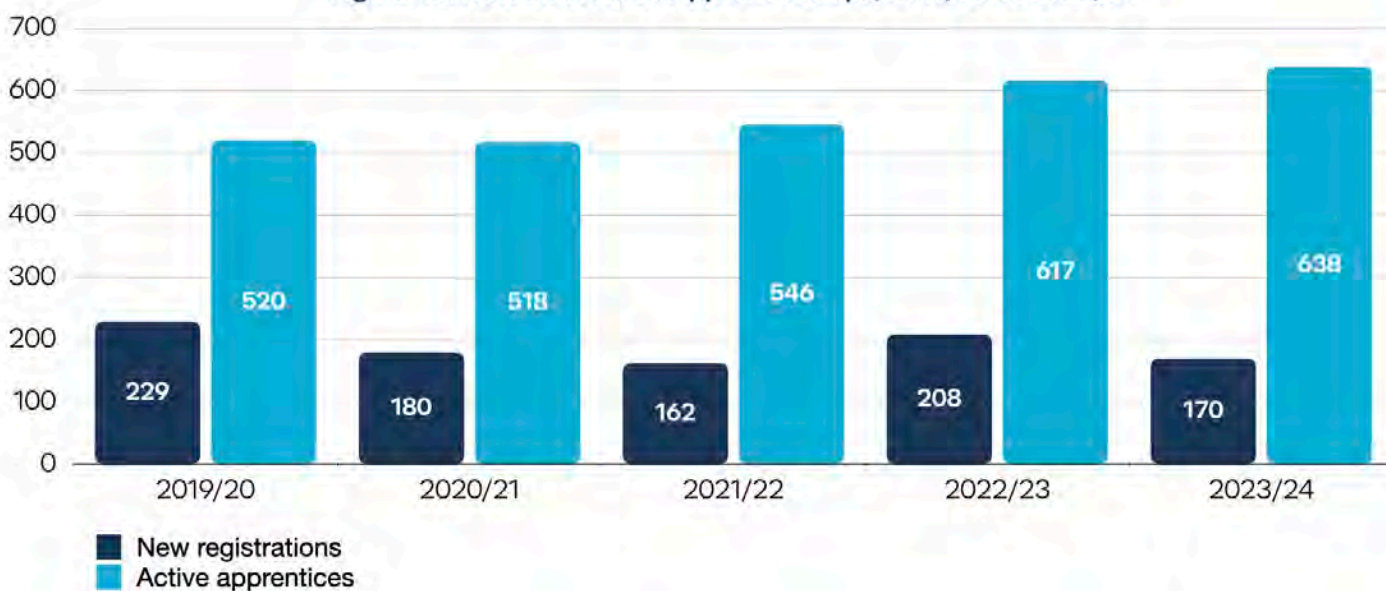
The Integrated Employment Services program provides a wide variety of supports to job seekers looking for work including resume development, counselling, matching with retraining programs, etc.. There were 629 clients of Integrated Employment Services in 2023/24. Over half (52%) were aged 25-44, another 22% were aged 15-24 and the rest were aged 45-64. Fifty-nine percent were male. Twenty-one percent had not completed high school, 40% had a high school diploma and the rest had some form of post-secondary training. Fifty-four percent of clients were persons with a disability, 11% were racialized, 8% Indigenous and 3% Francophone.

Forty-eight percent were earning income from Ontario Works, 13% from the Ontario Disability Support Program and 10% from the Employment Insurance program. Seventeen percent reported no source of income.

APPRENTICESHIP

The number of active apprentices increased in 2023/24. There were 638 active apprentices in Chatham-Kent in the 2023/24 and 170 new registrations compared to 617 and 208 respectively in 2022/23. The number of Certificates of Apprenticeship was not published. While much of the data was suppressed for privacy reasons, 49 new registrations were for Electrician - Construction and Maintenance and 23 were for Automotive Service Technician.

Figure 43: New and Active Apprenticeships, 2019/20 to 2023/24



CANADA ONTARIO JOB GRANT – EMPLOYER

There were 35 employers using this program in 2023/24. Most of the employers were small (less than 50 employees) (77%). Forty-nine percent used a private trainer while 40% used a Registered Private Career College. All employers reported an increase in trainee productivity and that the training met workforce needs.

CANADA ONTARIO JOB GRANT – PARTICIPANT

There were 58 participants using this program in 2023/24, half between the ages of 15-24 and the other half between the ages of 25-44. Seventy-one percent were male. Eighty-six percent were currently employed (most full-time).

9 STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE 2025 PLAN

Theme	Consideration
The CK economy is reliant on exports to the United States.	The threats of tariffs and countervailing tariffs creates a lot of uncertainty for CK exporters. Any major tariff program could lead to increased unemployment. In the longer run, with or without tariffs, the uncertainty could lead to CK companies investing in the United States.
The population is growing but not likely fast enough to support a growing workforce.	The CK population is growing but given the expected number of retirees and the demand for workers to address new growth, it is likely the population will need to grow in the 2%+ range. The population would not need to grow faster if more of the existing adult population could join or stay in the workforce. Potential action: Continue to focus on supporting population growth through talent attraction and retention efforts.
The number of industries using immigrants and temporary workers is growing.	CK uses TFWs at 3.5X the national level. The federal government's curtailment of immigrants and temporary workers could harm local industries in the years ahead. Potential action: Continue to engage with employers and make the case for immigrants and TFWs in CK.
The reduction in international students will harm college enrolment in CK.	International students have been an important source of labour both during their studies and post-graduation. After graduation at least some stayed on to work in the community (there were 210 work permit holders under post-graduate employment in CK as of December 31, 2023). The federal government's curtailment of international students could have a significant impact on the workforce in the years ahead. Potential action: Making the case for more international students with our partners using hard data and employer feedback.
CK has a relatively large share of the population on social assistance.	Are there potential workforce participants in this group? What skills development and other supports would help? Potential action: Engage with this population to determine opportunities.
The participation rate among 25–39-year-old women is well below the national level.	Is this related to childcare or other factors? Potential action: Supports that lead to a boost in workforce participation among this group.
The number of two parent families with children but only one employment income earner has increased significantly in recent years.	This could be because of challenges with workforce participation such as a lack of childcare (an issue in the EO survey data) or other barriers. Potential action: Identify ways to help boost workforce participation rates.
Housing starts are down.	A lack of housing starts (and housing appropriate to various household income levels) will be a natural barrier to population growth.
Projections suggest there will be strong demand for jobs in health care, manufacturing, accommodation, food services, transportation and warehousing through 2031.	Many of the top vacant jobs today are in these same sectors. Potential action: Develop sector-specific workforce development plans.

Theme	Consideration
<p>The manufacturing sector was responsible for a large share of layoffs even as it was responsible for many job vacancies.</p>	<p>Manufacturing is still projected to have the largest demand for workers through 2031.</p> <p>Potential action: Consider mechanisms to support manufacturing workers shifting from firms laying off workers to those hiring workers.</p>
<p>Apprentices are not staying long with employers.</p>	<p>58% of EmployerOne respondents said that after receiving accreditation apprentices are staying less than one year. This is a disincentive for employers to support apprenticeships. Potential action: More research to understand this trend and look for solutions.</p>
<p>Artificial Intelligence</p>	<p>Less than half of EmployerOne respondents expect AI to impact their business in the next five years. Potential actions: Further research into existing AI use, better understanding anticipated opportunities, and workforce skills needs projected. Also, programming to educate employers about the impacts and opportunities associated with AI.</p>
<p>A lot of needed training is not offered in CK.</p>	<p>Twenty-nine percent of EmployerOne respondents indicated some relevant training is not offered locally, and 26% indicated there is a lack of awareness of existing training programs. Potential action: Educate employers about existing training programs and look to fill gaps.</p>

10 RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

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

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

DEVELOPING RESOURCES TO SUPPORT EMPLOYERS AND JOB SEEKERS

- Continue to develop resources to support employers and job seekers. This can include continued career expos and job fairs and producing and promoting labour market information to help employers, job seekers, and key stakeholders to make informed decisions.
- Continue to attract immigrants to Chatham-Kent to help address workforce demand. Recent changes made by the federal government will significantly curtail both the number of permanent residents and international students coming to Ontario – both of these have played an increasingly important role in the community’s growth in recent years.
- Encourage more international student enrolment at the St. Clair College campus and also focus on retention and integration of new graduates into the local workforce.
- Develop a campaign to expose our employers to the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) to support workforce optimization and productivity.
- Develop sector-based workforce development strategies in high demand industries including manufacturing, health care, agriculture, transportation and retail.

FOSTERING LOCAL PARTNERSHIP AMONG EMPLOYERS, EDUCATORS, AND AGENCIES

- Work with CK Economic Development, local Chambers of Commerce, and local employer bodies to connect local employers and educators to supports they need to address workforce challenges.
- Continue to focus on developing experiential learning opportunities for students and recent graduates. Among job seekers surveyed for the development of this LLMP, the top mentioned area of needed support was access to experiential learning (to show potential employers what they could do).

ENHANCING RESEARCH ON THE LOCAL LABOUR MARKET

- Conduct a survey of trade-exposed companies to assess potential tariff impacts and look for ways to support them moving forward. The Chatham-Kent economy is highly exposed to potential U.S. tariffs and potential countervailing tariffs.
- Develop a ‘target’ population growth rate tied to future workforce demand (replacement and growth demand). The Chatham-Kent population is growing but not likely fast enough to meet the needs of a growing workforce. A target population growth rate would help inform future housing demand and the future demand for the provision of public services.
- Complete an inventory of training opportunities locally and look for gaps. Promote the training opportunities to local employers. In the EmployerOne survey a fairly large share of employers said that training was not available locally or they didn’t know what was available.
- Continue to monitor housing starts in the community and ensure partners understand the link between housing availability, population growth and addressing workforce demand.
- Continue to monitor employee ‘turnover’ in the community. The EmployerOne survey found an annual ‘turnover’ rate of 15% (15,400 employees, 2,400 separations). Statistics Canada’s Labour Force survey reported that 10% of the workforce in 2024 left their employer (for all reasons).



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