

2025

2026

LOCAL LABOUR  
MARKET PLAN



# Acknowledgment

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# Glossary of Terms

## Geography

### County

An administrative region called an upper-tier municipality comprising member lower-tier municipalities:

- **Elgin County:** Town of Aylmer, Municipality of Bayham, Township of Malahide, Municipality of Central Elgin, Township of Southwold, Municipality of Dutton/Dunwich, Municipality of West Elgin.
- **Middlesex County:** Township of Adelaide Metcalfe, Township of Lucan Biddulph, Municipality of Middlesex Centre, Municipality of North Middlesex, Municipality of Southwest Middlesex, Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc, Municipality of Thames Centre, Village of Newbury.
- **Oxford County:** Township of Blandford-Blenheim, Township of East Zorra-Tavistock, Township of Norwich, Township of South-West Oxford, Township of Zorra, Town of Ingersoll, Town of Tillsonburg, City of Woodstock.

### Census Subdivision (CSD)

Lower-tier and single-tier municipalities. When available, data for the City of London is used.

### Census Division (CD)

Geographic regions combining upper-tier and single-tier municipalities:

- **Elgin CD:** Elgin County municipalities and the City of St. Thomas.
- **Oxford CD:** Oxford County
- **The Middlesex Census Division CD:** Middlesex County and the City of London. It is important to note that within the Middlesex CD, there are Indigenous communities, specifically the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee-Delaware Nation. However, the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation and Oneida Nation of the Thames did not grant permission for the census to be conducted on their territories. As a result, the census data does not reflect the Indigenous population from these two communities.

### Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)

A population centre combining adjacent municipalities with a total population above 100,000:

- **London CMA:** City of London, City of St. Thomas, Township of Adelaide Metcalf, Municipality of Middlesex Centre, Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc, Municipality of Thames Centre, Municipality of Central Elgin, Township of Southwold.

### Economic Region (ER)

A geographic grouping of Census Divisions:

- **London Economic Region:** Includes Elgin CD, Middlesex CD, and Oxford CD.

## Notes on Data Usage

When available and appropriate, Middlesex County and the City of London data are separated. This is done by removing London CSD data from Middlesex CD data to ensure rural perspectives are not diluted by urban centre statistics. However, CSD data is unavailable for most datasets.

## Labour Force Age Clusters

### Workforce Population

This refers to the population legally able to work, the population age 15 and older.

### Working Age (15–64 years old)

This involves the full range of individuals within the 15 to 64 age bracket who can participate in the labour force.

### Youth Workforce (15–24 years old)

This group comprises individuals between the ages of 15 and 24, who are more likely to be actively attending school, newly entering the workforce often with limited work experience.

### Core Workforce (25–54 years old)

This is generally considered the prime working-age group, with high levels of engagement with the labour force and gathering vast amounts of work experience.

### Pre-Retirement Workforce (55–64 years old)

This group includes individuals who have gathered significant amounts of experience in specific or multiple fields and are approaching retirement, with some considering career changes or phased retirement options.

### Older Workforce (65+ years old)

This cohort includes individuals who may continue to work beyond the traditional retirement age, often due to financial necessity or personal preference.

## About Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board

The Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board (EMO WPDB) is one of 25 independent non-governmental organizations across Ontario and funded by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development. EMO WPDB was established in 1997 to identify local labour market issues in the London Economic Region and undertake projects or support partnerships that contribute to addressing local employment needs.

A volunteer Board of Directors comprised of business and labour representatives across the region. Members represent the different Census Divisions and sectors, ensuring the work of EMO WPDB reflects the realities of the community.

### Process of the Report

The Local Labour Market Report is prepared annually to provide an overview of the current labour market and contains information on employment conditions. Local intelligence is gathered through surveys and consultations with employers and community stakeholders, an analysis of local reemployment statistics, and collaboration with local employment agencies, as well as regional and municipal governments.

Data sources in the report include: 2016 and 2021 Census, Labour Force Survey, EmployerOne 2024 Results, Canadian Business Counts, and other Statistics Canada and IRCC Data. When possible and appropriate, data is presented for varying geographic levels and dates based on data availability.

The data used for the report reflects the most recent data available. Time comparisons reflect a five-year period. That is when 2023 data is available, change will compare to 2018, if 2024 data is used it is compared to 2019. Data projections extend to 2030.

## Community Strategic Priorities, 2024 Updates

In 2022, community consultations across LER led to the development of the community action plan for 2022-2025. The plan unifies the work of the various workforce interest holders and service providers from the region. The priority areas are not the sole responsibility of the Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board (EMO WPDB) but rather act to guide the work of the various workforce-adjacent agencies and committees.

**The priority areas were defined as:**

1. Training for In-Demand Skills and Occupations
2. Enhancing Regional Workforce Efficiency and Service Delivery Using Labour Market Information
3. Workforce Attraction, Recruitment and Retention
4. Address Barriers to Labour Market Entry
5. Develop Workforce Support Services
6. Support SMEs and Job Creation
7. Expand Service Outreach in the Community
8. Improve Business Networking

The following activities were undertaken to address these priority areas. The reported activities do not reflect the entire scope of the work in the region but demonstrate some of the updates achieved in 2024.



### Training for In-Demand Skills and Occupations

*Skills for Success* continued to serve clients through local Literacy and Basic Skills Programs

The *Don Crich Skilled Trades Accelerator* is a newly established resource located at Fanshawe College's main campus to support skilled trade and apprenticeship programming.

MLITSD's *Level Up* Conference was held in London with support from OYAP and STO. Several interest holders participated in this event alongside employers to ensure that youth had the information they needed to consider when pursuing a career in the trades.

*Technically Training Group* attract youth into welding training with a parallel connection to Employment Services.

*Youth Opportunities Unlimited* provided training and wage subsidies to businesses willing to hire youth with barriers to employment.



## Enhancing Regional Workforce Efficiency and Service Delivery Using Labour Market Information

EMO WPDB shared the *EmployerOne 2024* Survey results with the community including a custom report on not-for-profit experiences in partnership with Pillar Nonprofit Network. The results from EOS 2023 and 2024 were added to the website's visualization.

WorkinMiddlesex.com launched an *apprenticeship* platform and has begun promoting and building awareness of the platform.

The EMO WPDB worked with the SSM to develop *LMI training* for the LRES network of employment services programs.



## Workforce Attraction, Recruitment and Retention

*WILL Employment Solutions' Newcomer Talent Retention Network (NTRN)* project wrapped up in March 2024. It focused on improving newcomer retention in regional workplaces by providing employers with resources, tools, and expert support to implement best practices for immigrant success. Key areas of focus included inclusive onboarding, HR support, work eligibility rules, intercultural competency training, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), and access to settlement services.

*Oxford Community Employment Services* works with employers to establish baseline skill sets and requisite skills and then trains job seekers to match or exceed requirements. Most of the activities within this program are tied to workforce attraction.

*WOWC's Western Ontario Workforce Strategy* is working to improve workforce retention and expansion in the rural communities of LER and the surrounding region.

*LRES* actively engages employers, interest holders and sectors at a system and program level. This work will continue to expand as integrated employment services move into year two.



## Address Barriers to Labour Market Entry

LRES has worked to build partnerships to better support job seekers from equity-denied groups, including understanding gaps and challenges.

Youth Opportunities Unlimited provided youth with access to Chromebooks to search and apply for jobs as well as complete workplace training and licenses.



## Develop and Enhance Workforce Support Services

WOWC and SCOR EDC have continued their *advocacy* on rural transportation at ROMA and AMO. WOWC also advocated for rural engagement on topics like transportation, long-term care, and childcare.

Middlesex County Connect and Inter-Community Transit Services are coming to the end of services, but the program will be extended with reserve funds. There is a five-year funding application submitted, and an approved evaluation study has been funded.

The Elgin St. Thomas Poverty Coalition engages employers in Elgin and St. Thomas about *living wage*. The wage was updated to \$19.50 for LER in 2024. EMOWPDB included living wage in the EmployerOne Survey to collect local information and generate conversations.

A local *discrimination reporting* and support system is in the early stages of development in partnership with United Way Elgin Middlesex, St. Thomas Elgin Local Immigration Partnership, London Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership and partners in Huron County. The City of London launched the Stop Tolerhating website with resources and a directory of reporting and crisis helplines.



## Support SMEs and Job Creation

EMO WPDB produced three of four *Beam on the Green* reports highlighting key aspects of the green economy, including emerging jobs, sector trends, employer needs, and new businesses. The topics were Renewable Energy, Green Vehicle Manufacturing and Waste Management and Recycling, the Green Building and Construction report will be launched in 2025.

Literacy Link South Central (LLSC) provides briefings and information to Fanshawe and Western to inform programming.

LLSC launched *Step Up and Succeed*, a resource for local employers that take on apprentices. EMO WPDB along with community partners held Embrace Skilled Trades, an event that informs SMEs of the available resources and support to hire apprentices.



## Expand Service Outreach in the Community

LRES as the SSM provides employment services across the region at 45 locations to ease the distance job seekers need to travel to access services. Additionally, they actively engage employers at a system and program level.

Oxford CES have and continue to run extensive multi-channel campaigns that are always adaptable to economic shifts and skill and workforce analytics. They also focus on engaging non-participating potential job seekers that engage older workers.

The Work in Middlesex platform is the hub for promotion of the County's employment services and supports, launching two specific campaigns in 2024. The *50 Jobs in Middlesex* video highlights local employers and the *Middlesex at Work series* highlights youth employment in the region.

Oxford CES local businesses - success stories are often integrated into our social media campaigns and WIO offers employers the opportunity to profile their unique attributes, differentiate themselves from the competition and attract talent that resonates with the employer focus and vision.



## Improve Business Networking

Improving access to the internet in rural regions is addressed through local collaborations. SWIFT 1.0 is now complete, surpassing its targets to expand internet connectivity in rural communities. SWIFT 2.0 has been funded and will continue its work in some of the hardest-to-reach areas in the region.

London Small Business Centre has been working for years to compile a comprehensive list of available resources for local entrepreneurs. Similar efforts have been mirrored in Strathroy, St. Thomas, Aylmer, Tillsonburg, Ingersoll, and Woodstock.

The *Young Entrepreneurs Initiative* of St. Thomas and Elgin has been growing its network and collaborating with other community supports to increase their impact on participants. This group provides peer-to-peer support and unique educational events that meet their members' needs.

In late 2023 LEDC released Employment Prospect reports showing that close to 40,000 workers will be needed to address growth, change, and retirements in London's key sectors: Information Technology, Health, Advanced Manufacturing (including Food Processing) and Construction sectors from 2023-2031. These reports identified projected numbers required by occupation, the likely source and mix of talent (new graduates, immigrants, and others) and some of the key considerations that require attention in ensuring this supply. This data is helpful for individuals making career choices, program development, and a variety of community initiatives among other uses. In 2024, over 1,500 individuals have been directly introduced to these reports, informing career choices, funding proposals, new program development, and policy development.

# Population and Demographic Trends

## Population Trends by Year

In 2023, nearly 800,000 people lived in the London Economic Region (LER), according to Statistics Canada population estimates. The region experienced 10.4% growth over five years from 2019, surpassing Canada’s growth of 6.6% and Ontario’s growth of 7.1%.

All three counties in the LER exceeded provincial and national averages, with Middlesex County leading at 11.0%, followed by Oxford County (10.1%) and Elgin County (7.5%).

### Population Counts and Change, by Geography, 2019-2023

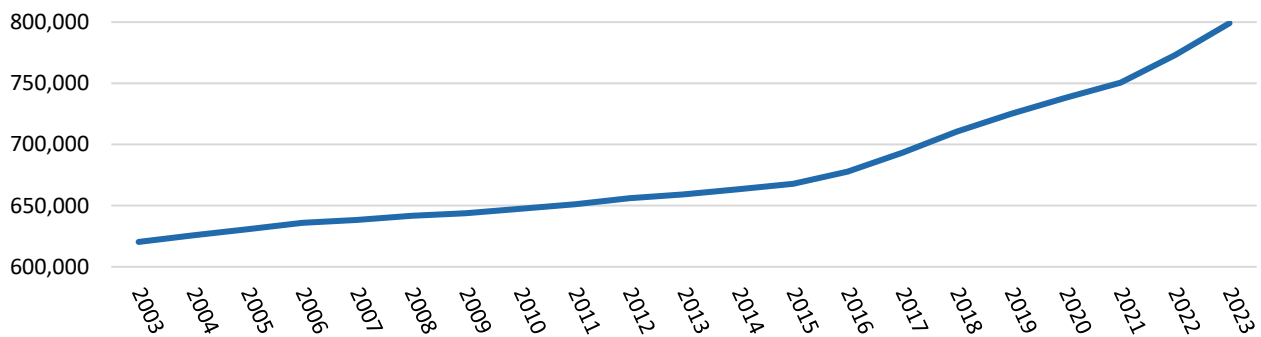
Geography	Population 2019	Population 2023	Change	Percent Change
Elgin	95,356	102,354	6,998	7.3%
Oxford	121,212	133,234	12,022	9.9%
Middlesex	508,594	563,544	54,950	10.8%
LER	725,162	799,132	73,970	10.2%

Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 17-10-0152-01 Population estimates, July 1, by census division, 2021 boundaries](#)

## Historical Growth Trends

The population of the LER has steadily increased over the past 20 years. From 2003 to 2015, annual growth remained modest, staying below 1%. Growth accelerated to 1–2% annually from 2015 to 2021. In 2023, growth peaked at 3.4%, marking the highest annual increase in two decades.

### Population by Year, LER, 2003-2023



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0152-01 Population estimates, July 1, by census division, 2021 boundaries

## Median Age

The population growth in the London Economic Region (LER) has contributed to a modest decrease in the median age, from 39.8 years in 2019 to 38.8 years in 2023. This decline outpaces changes at the national and provincial levels. Canada’s median age decreased by 0.1 years, from 40.7 to 40.6. Ontario’s median age decreased by 0.5 years, from 40.5 to 40.0.

The median age serves as a key indicator of a community's economic viability. A younger median age often reflects a larger active workforce and/or a growing population poised to enter the workforce, both of which are essential for sustained economic growth and vitality.

## Population by Age

Age pyramids are a valuable tool for understanding the composition of the current and future workforce. A narrowing base of the pyramid signals a declining birth rate—a trend evident in Canada, where fertility rates have fallen year over year. By 2024, the fertility rate reached 1.26 children per woman, the lowest for the second consecutive year, placing Canada among the “lowest-low” fertility countries.

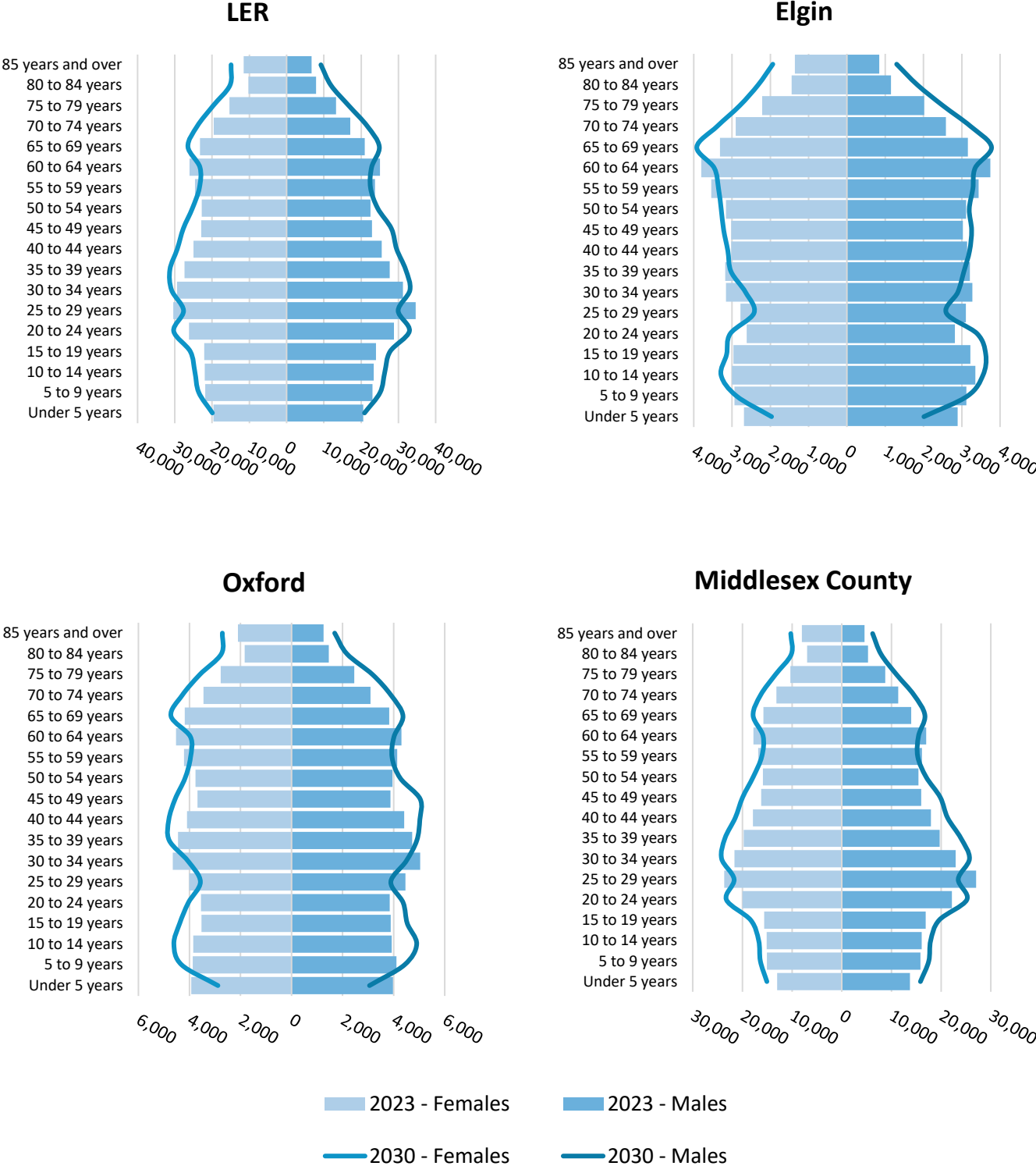
From 2023 to 2030, LER is expected to see minimal overall change in population composition. However, Elgin and Oxford Census Divisions project a shrinking under-five age cohort, while Middlesex shows a modest increase.

The Working Age Population (15–64) shows an initial decrease followed by a rebound, potentially due to economic migration—workers leaving the region early in their careers and returning later. There is a notable increase in the 20–24 age cohort highlighting opportunities to engage young workers entering the workforce.

The older age cohorts are experiencing significant growth, driven by longer life expectancy and the attraction of older or retired workers. Elgin County stands out with a columnar-shaped pyramid and the largest age group in the 50–64 range, emphasizing its aging population.

By analyzing these trends, the LER can better plan for workforce development, services for an aging population, and strategies to address declining birth rates. Age pyramids remain a critical tool for understanding and adapting to these demographic shifts.

Population Pyramids, by Geography, 2023-2030



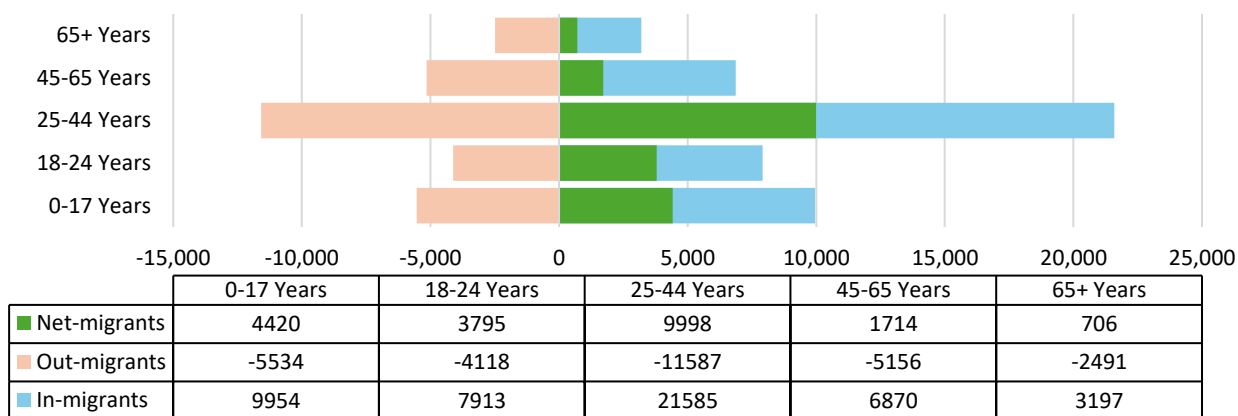
Source: "Demographic Tables". Lightcast, November 2024

## Migration

Migration is the primary driver of population growth in the London Economic Region (LER). According to tax filer data, the region experienced a net migration increase of 20,633 people in 2022, accounting for 91.4% of the total population change during that period.

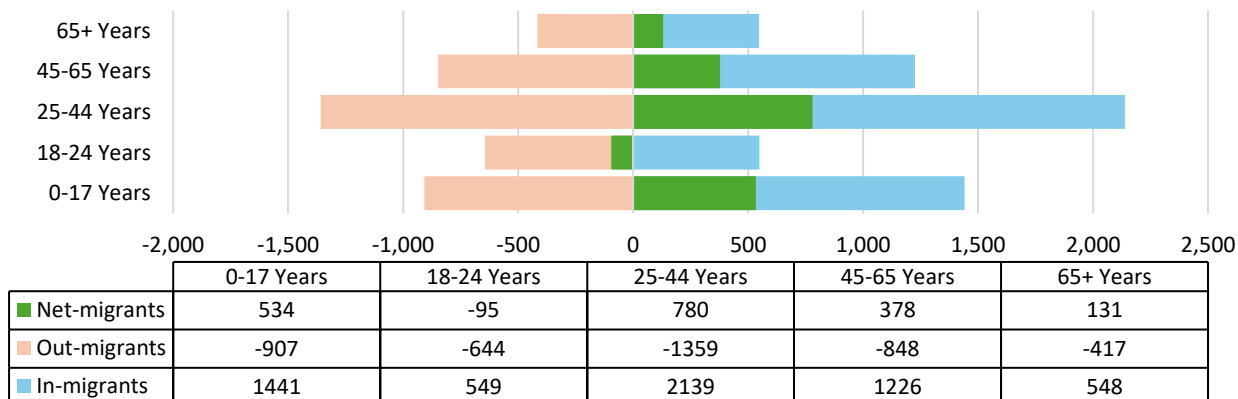
The reliance on migration<sup>1</sup> for population growth is even more pronounced at the Census Division level. In Oxford, Migration accounted for 97.6% of population growth.

**Migration, LER, 2021-2022**



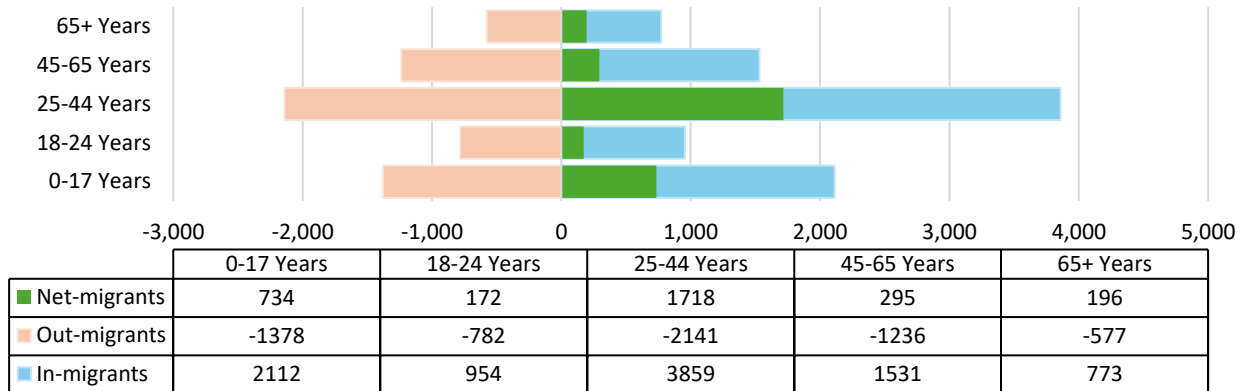
In Elgin, the largest migration gains are seen in the 25–44 age group, reflecting an influx of working-age individuals. Modest increases are observed in the 18–24 age group, although Elgin County experiences a net out-migration in this cohort.

**Migration, Elgin, 2021-2022**

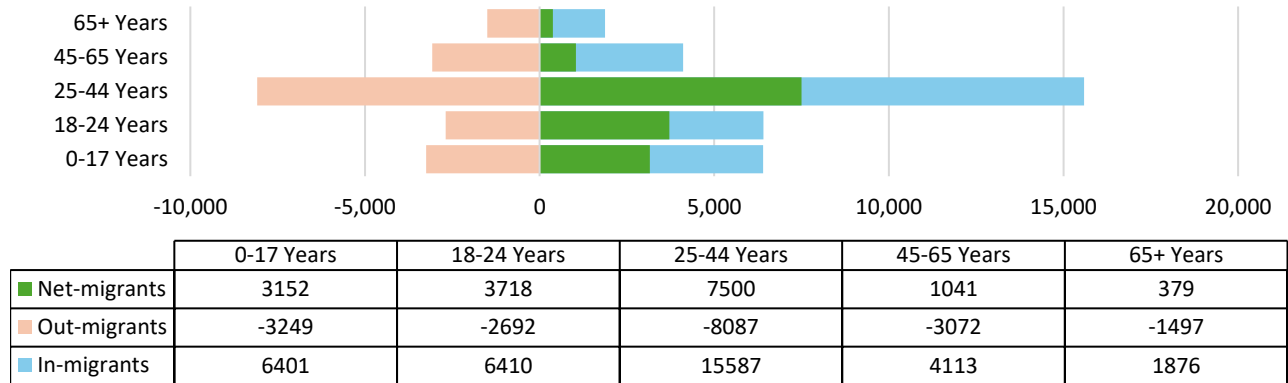


<sup>1</sup> Migration accounts for individuals who moved from another census division in the province, from another province, or outside of Canada.

### Migration, Oxford, 2021-2022



### Migration, Middlesex, 2021-2022



**Source:** Statistics Canada. 2022. MIG: *Migration Estimates, Tables B, 2021-2022*.Taxfiler (database). Community Data Program (distributor). Last updated May 30, 2024. Communitydata.ca (accessed November 8, 2024)

Net positive in-migration occurs when more people settle in a region than leave it. For the London CMA and the Ingersoll, Tillsonburg, and Woodstock CAs, this trend typically involves movement within Ontario rather than from other provinces. This suggests that the region has an opportunity to enhance its recognition across Canada to attract more residents.

### Top 10 Places in Canada, Outside of LER, with Positive Net Migration, London CMA, Census 2021

	IN	OUT	NET
Toronto (CMA), Ontario	7,089	3,808	3,281
Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo (CMA), Ontario	1,111	790	321
Hamilton (CMA), Ontario	766	549	217
Windsor (CMA), Ontario	722	537	185
Oshawa (CMA), Ontario	302	157	145
Montréal (CMA), Quebec	374	241	133
Winnipeg (CMA), Manitoba	277	152	125
Guelph (CMA), Ontario	268	173	95
Saskatoon (CMA), Saskatchewan	131	56	75
Regina (CMA), Saskatchewan	99	38	61

**Source:** Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0154-01 Interprovincial and intraprovincial migrants, by census metropolitan area and census agglomeration of origin and destination, 2021 boundaries

### Top 10 Places in Canada Outside of LER with Positive Net Migration, Ingersoll, Tillsonburg, Woodstock CA's, Census 2021

	IN	OUT	NET
Toronto (CMA), Ontario	1,480	404	1,076
Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo (CMA), Ontario	1,109	359	750
Hamilton (CMA), Ontario	226	110	116
Brantford (CMA), Ontario	262	198	64
Guelph (CMA), Ontario	128	85	43
Oshawa (CMA), Ontario	43	17	26
Vancouver (CMA), British Columbia	31	18	13
Winnipeg (CMA), Manitoba	25	15	10
Regina (CMA), Saskatchewan	10	1	9
Kingston (CMA), Ontario	12	4	8

**Source:** Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0154-01 Interprovincial and intraprovincial migrants, by census metropolitan area and census agglomeration of origin and destination, 2021 boundaries

Net negative in-migration occurs when more people leave a region than settle. For the London CMA and the Ingersoll, Tillsonburg, and Woodstock CAs, this trend often involves movement to smaller communities rather than larger CMAs and CAs, with a greater proportion of migration directed toward other provinces. This highlights the importance of smaller communities to individuals in the LER.

### Top 10 Places in Canada Outside of LER for Negative Net Migration, London CMA, Census 2021

	IN	OUT	NET
Area outside CMA and CA, Ontario	2,402	3,345	-943
Edmonton (CMA), Alberta	198	592	-394
Ottawa - Gatineau (CMA), Ontario/Quebec	378	670	-292
Calgary (CMA), Alberta	284	567	-283
Vancouver (CMA), British Columbia	307	469	-162
Halifax (CMA), Nova Scotia	155	270	-115
Area outside CMA and CA, New Brunswick	12	119	-107
Area outside CMA and CA, Nova Scotia	44	136	-92
Area outside CMA and CA, Alberta	54	124	-70
Fredericton (CMA), New Brunswick	26	73	-47

**Source:** Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0154-01 Interprovincial and intraprovincial migrants, by census metropolitan area and census agglomeration of origin and destination, 2021 boundaries

### Top 10 Places in Canada Outside of LER for Negative Net Migration, Ingersoll, Tillsonburg, Woodstock CA, Census 2021

	IN	OUT	NET
Area outside CMA and CA, Ontario	902	1,179	-277
Area outside CMA and CA, New Brunswick	7	87	-80
Area outside CMA and CA, Nova Scotia	20	80	-60
Area outside CMA and CA, Alberta	7	56	-49
Chatham-Kent (CA), Ontario	39	76	-37
Calgary (CMA), Alberta	25	59	-34
Greater Sudbury (CMA), Ontario	3	31	-28
Moncton (CMA), New Brunswick	3	26	-23
Norfolk (CA), Ontario	258	281	-23
Area outside CMA and CA, Newfoundland and Labrador	4	25	-21

**Source:** Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0154-01 Interprovincial and intraprovincial migrants, by census metropolitan area and census agglomeration of origin and destination, 2021 boundaries

Migration trends underscore the importance of attracting and retaining individuals, particularly in key working-age groups. Understanding these dynamics is critical for planning workforce development, housing, and community services.

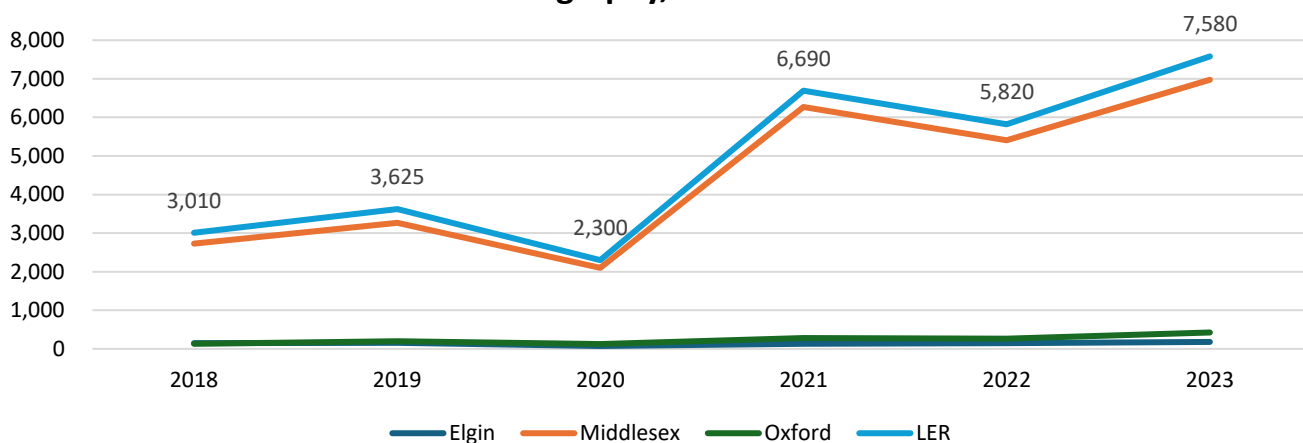
## Immigration – Permanent Residents

Migration into the London Economic Region (LER) consists of both domestic movement within Canada and the immigration of permanent residents (PRs) from outside the country.

Direct immigration into the region has increased in recent years, accounting for 25.8% of total migration in 2022. This includes individuals who name the region as their intended settlement destination upon arrival in Canada.

Direct immigration is most prevalent in Middlesex, representing 30.8% of total migration in 2022, largely due to London, a major Canadian city that attracts newcomers. In Elgin, immigration accounts for 8.2% of migration, reflecting a smaller share of international arrivals. Similarly, in Oxford immigration contributes 8.3% of migration, highlighting its more domestic-focused population growth.

**Admission of Permanent Resident by Intended Destination, by Geography, 2018-2023**



**Source:** IRCC, *Canada - Admissions of Permanent Residents by Census Division of Intended Destination, Age Group and Gender, 1998 – 2023*, Community Data Program (distributor). Last updated December 5, 2024. Communitydata.ca (accessed December 23, 2024)

The growing role of direct immigration, particularly in Middlesex and specifically in London, highlights the region's strong appeal to newcomers. In contrast, the smaller shares of immigration in Elgin and Oxford CD suggest opportunities to enhance their attractiveness to immigrants.

Looking ahead, changes to Canada's target immigrant admissions starting in 2025 may significantly impact the number of immigrants settling in the region. A potential decrease in admissions could affect Middlesex's ability to sustain its current growth and further challenge Elgin and Oxford counties in attracting newcomers.

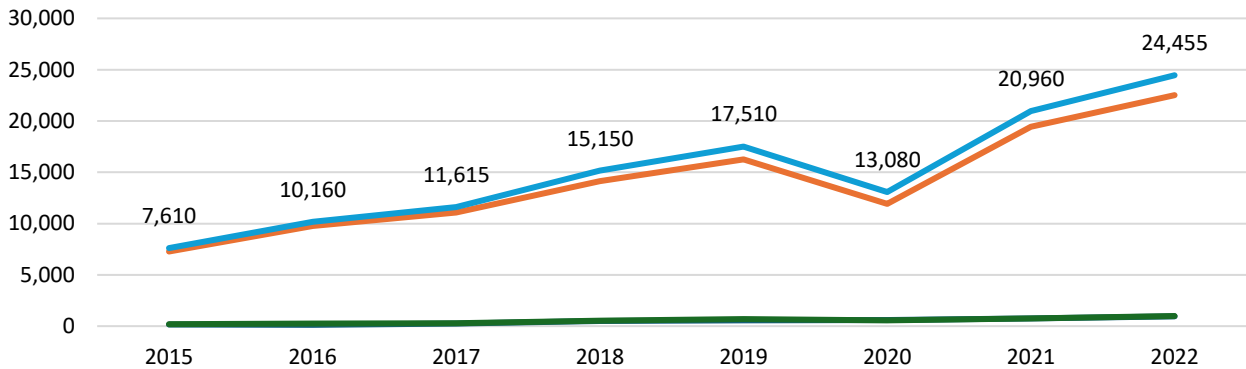
## Immigration - Temporary Residents

Temporary migrants, while not included in taxfiler migration figures, have a significant impact on the London Economic Region (LER). Temporary residents (TRs) arrive under various programs, including

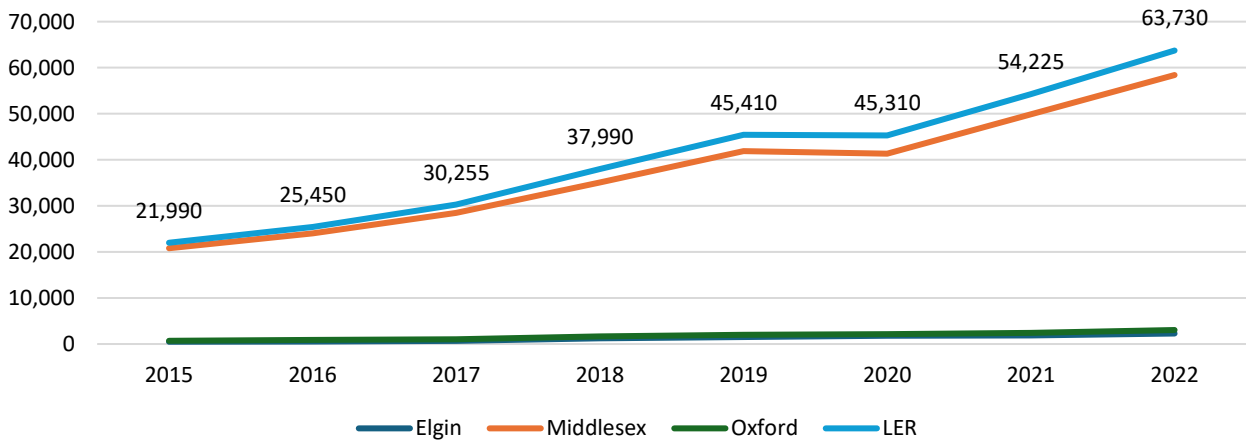
the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP), which addresses labour shortages; the International Mobility Program (IMP), which allows temporary workers with fewer restrictions; and Study Permits (SP), which are granted to individuals who come to study and may later apply for work permits.

The number of TR permits granted in the region has steadily increased, driven primarily by Middlesex County, particularly the City of London. In 2022, the total number of temporary residents across these programs in LER reached 24,455. Temporary residents play a vital role in the region’s workforce and educational institutions, particularly in Middlesex, highlighting their growing importance to the local economy and demographic landscape.

**Temporary Residents by Permit Year, by Geography, 2015-2022**



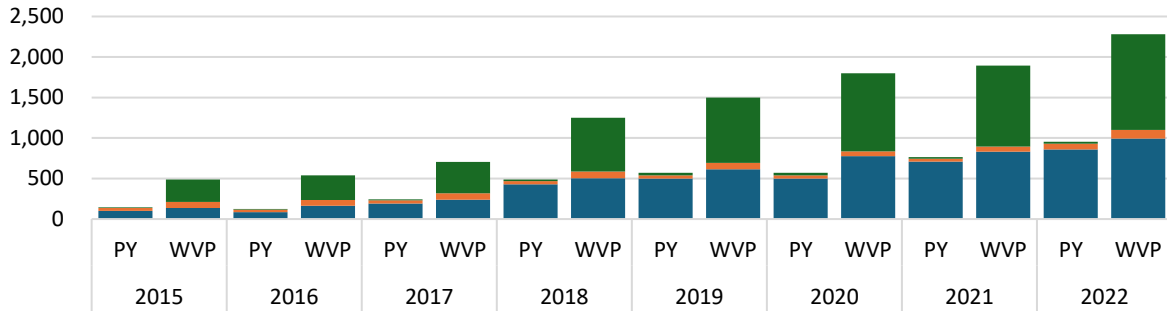
**Temporary Residents with Valid Permit, by Geography, 2015-2022**



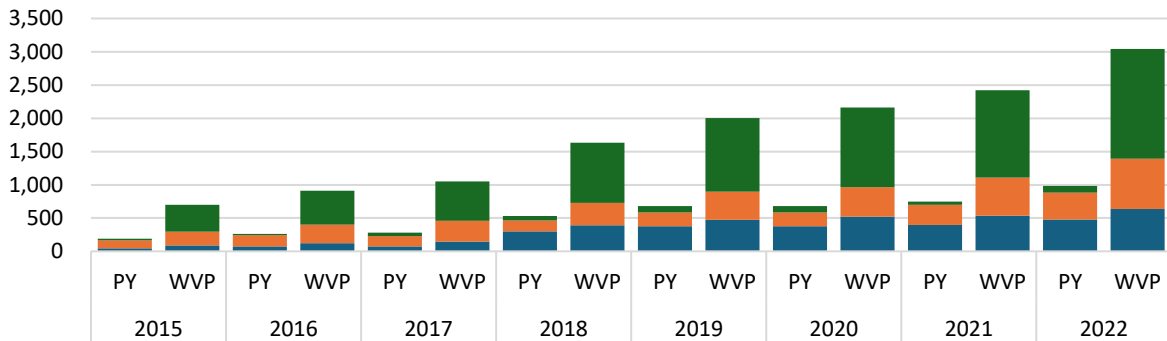
**Source:** IRCC, *IRCC Temporary Resident Admission Tables, Census Divisions and Census Subdivisions, 2015 to Oct 2023*, Community Data Program (distributor). Last updated September 30, 2024. Communitydata.ca (accessed December 27, 2024)

It should also be noted that some temporary residents (TRs) receive visas for more than a year. In the case of Study Permits, subsequent work permits can also be granted under the program, significantly increasing the number of TRs residing in the London Economic Region (LER) to 63,730 people in 2022.

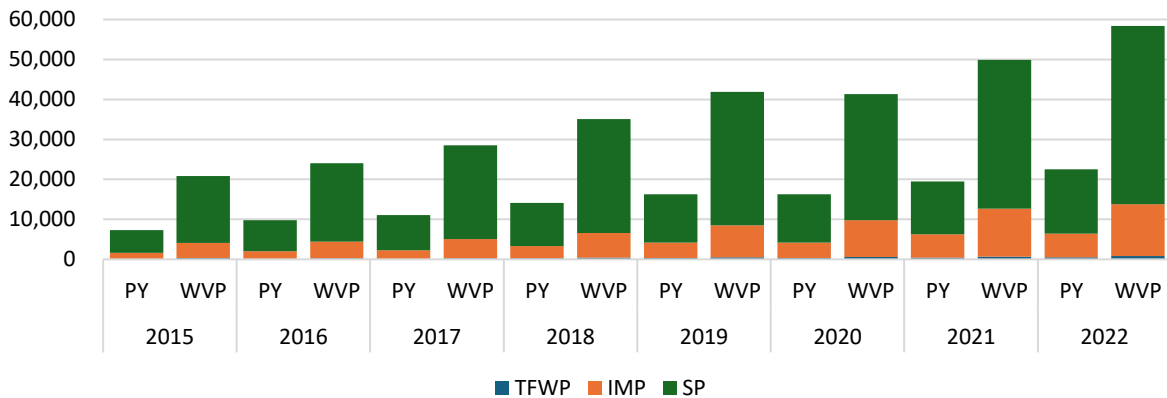
### Temporary Residents by Permit Year and With a Valid Permit, Elgin, 2015-2022



### Temporary Residents by Permit Year and With a Valid Permit, Oxford, 2015-2022



### Temporary Residents by Permit Year and With a Valid Permit, Middlesex, 2015-2022



TFWP IMP SP

**PY = Permit Year**

**WVP = With a Valid Permit**

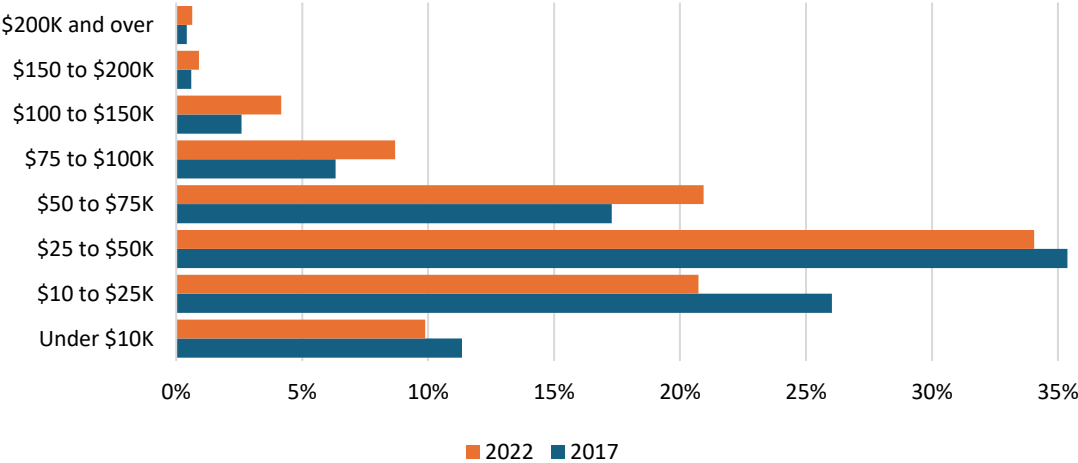
**Source:** IRCC, IRCC Temporary Resident Admission Tables, Census Divisions and Census Subdivisions, 2015 to Oct 2023, Community Data Program (distributor). Last updated September 30, 2024. Communitydata.ca (accessed December 27, 2024)

The composition of temporary residents by program varies across Census Divisions (CD) within LER. In Elgin CD, TRs are typically from the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP). Oxford CD has TRs from both the International Mobility Program (IMP) and the TFWP. In Middlesex County, there are comparatively fewer TRs from the TFWP and IMP, but a large and steadily growing representation from the Study Permit (SP) program, including post-graduate work permits.

In 2024, the Federal Government made significant changes to the temporary resident immigration programs across all streams. These changes are expected to have notable impacts on labour force participation, as well as on retail sectors, which may experience shrinking demand as a result.

### Income Trends

**Taxfiler Proportion by Income Cohort, LER, 2017 & 2022**



**Source:** Statistics Canada. I-07: Tax filers and dependants with income by after-tax income, sex and age groups, 2022. Taxfiler (database). Community Data Program (distributor). Last updated August 16, 2024. Comunitydata.ca (accessed December 10, 2024)

Between 2017 and 2022, the number of tax filers in the London Economic Region (LER) increased by 59,180 people (12%), reaching a total of 570,870 tax filers. An analysis of the composition of tax filers reveals that the proportion of tax filers in income cohorts of \$50,000 and less decreased, while the proportion of those in income cohorts above \$50,000 increased. Despite this shift, the largest income cohort, representing 34% of all tax filers, remains in the \$25,000 to \$50,000 range. The top income bracket of \$150,000+ represents just 1.5% of all tax filers in the region.

Between 2017 and 2022, the median income in the region rose by 17%, from \$33,260 to \$38,830. However, all communities in the region lagged behind the 21% rise in median income experienced across Canada during the same period. Only Oxford had a 2022 median income higher than the national average, despite Elgin, Oxford, and Middlesex having a higher median income in 2017.

The median income increase in the region slightly outpaced inflation. All Census Divisions in LER saw an increase in median income, with Elgin experiencing the largest increase, while the City of London saw the smallest change and continues to have the lowest median income in the region.

(outpacing inflation slightly [Salary vs Inflation Calculator \(2024\) - LARi.ca](#))

### Median Total After-Tax Income, by Geography, 2017-2022

	2017	2022	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Canada	\$32,420	\$39,090	\$6,670	21%
LER	\$33,260	\$38,830	\$5,570	17%
Elgin	\$32,460	\$38,970	\$6,510	20%
Middlesex	\$33,000	\$38,310	\$5,310	16%
London	\$32,320	\$37,310	\$4,990	15%
Oxford	\$34,810	\$40,680	\$5,870	17%

**Source:** Taxfiler Table I-7C - Individual data - Taxfilers and dependents with income by after-tax income. Taxfiler (database). Community Data Program (distributor). Last updated August 16, 2024. Communitydata.ca (accessed

December 10, 2024)

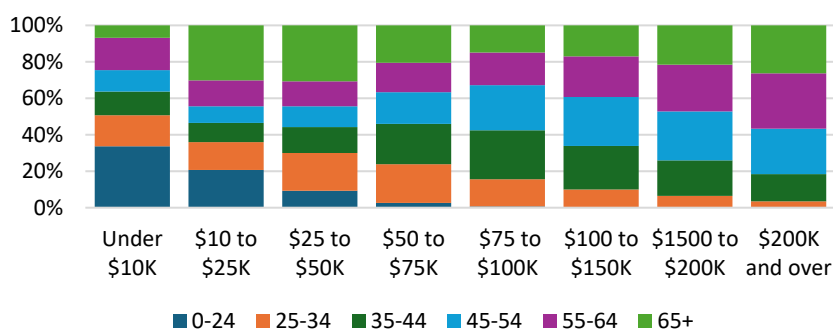
### Number of Taxfilers, LER, 2022

Age	Taxfilers and Dependents
0-24	64,870
25-34	103,120
35-44	94,540
45-54	81,230
55-64	88,890
65+	138,220
All Ages	570,870

**Source:** Taxfiler Table I-7C - Individual data - Taxfilers and dependents with income by after-tax income, 2022. Taxfiler (database). Community Data Program (distributor). Last updated August 16, 2024. Communitydata.ca (accessed December 10, 2024)

Examining tax filers by age reveals some interesting trends. The largest age cohort of tax filers is in the 65+ age group, representing 24.0% of the region's total. This cohort spans all income brackets but is particularly dominant in the \$200,000+ income bracket, where they account for 46.6% of tax filers.

### Proportion Income Bracket by Age Group, LER, 2022



Meanwhile, the under-24 age cohort is primarily represented in the lower income brackets, with 94% of this age group earning under \$50,000. The 25 to 34 and 45 to 54-year age cohorts show a steady increase in representation across all income brackets.

At the Census Division level, a decrease in income earners making under \$25,000 is observed in Elgin, Oxford, and Middlesex (excluding the City of London). The City of London saw a slight increase in tax filers in the lowest under \$10,000 category, while the \$10,000 to \$25,000 cohort saw a decrease. The City of London experienced the greatest growth in total tax filers, with an increase of 12%, slightly higher than the growth in the counties.

Although Elgin and the City of London saw a decrease in the proportion of tax filers in the \$10,000 to \$25,000 range, the proportion remains higher than the national average. Compared to Canada, all three CD's and the City of London have a lower proportion of income earners making over \$150,000.

**Tax Filers by Income Cohort, by Geography, 2017-2022**

Elgin					Oxford				
	2022	% of total	Change 2017-2022	LQ Can=1.0		2022	% of total	Change 2017-2022	LQ Can=1.0
Under \$10K	6,660	8.6%	-10%	0.85	Under \$10K	7,780	7.8%	-7%	0.77
\$10 to \$25K	16,200	21.0%	-15%	1.02	\$10 to \$25K	19,430	19.4%	-15%	0.94
\$25 to \$50K	27,500	35.6%	5%	1.09	\$25 to \$50K	36,020	35.9%	4%	1.10
\$50 to \$75K	17,050	22.1%	41%	1.10	\$50 to \$75K	23,380	23.3%	37%	1.16
\$75 to \$100K	6,610	8.6%	72%	0.92	\$75 to \$100K	8,780	8.8%	63%	0.94
\$100 to \$150K	2,520	3.3%	108%	0.64	\$100 to \$150K	3,660	3.7%	95%	0.71
\$150 to \$200K	450	0.6%	88%	0.48	\$150 to \$200K	700	0.7%	67%	0.57
\$200K+	300	0.4%	100%	0.41	\$200K+	470	0.5%	88%	0.49
<b>Total</b>	<b>77,290</b>		<b>10%</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>100,220</b>		<b>10%</b>	

Middlesex County					City of London				
	2022	% of total	Change 2017-2022	LQ Can=1.0		2022	% of total	Change 2017-2022	LQ Can=1.0
Under \$10K	4,880	8.0%	-12%	0.79	Under \$10K	37,000	11.2%	1%	1.10
\$10 to \$25K	10,770	17.6%	-16%	0.86	\$10 to \$25K	71,620	21.6%	-8%	1.05
\$25 to \$50K	19,510	31.9%	2%	0.98	\$25 to \$50K	110,900	33.5%	10%	1.03
\$50 to \$75K	14,260	23.3%	31%	1.16	\$50 to \$75K	64,500	19.5%	34%	0.97
\$75 to \$100K	6,960	11.4%	60%	1.23	\$75 to \$100K	27,140	8.2%	45%	0.88
\$100 to \$150K	3,470	5.7%	101%	1.11	\$100 to \$150K	14,100	4.3%	67%	0.83
\$150 to \$200K	720	1.2%	85%	0.96	\$150 to \$200K	3,240	1.0%	63%	0.80
\$200K+	530	0.9%	83%	0.91	\$200K+	2,360	0.7%	58%	0.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>61,100</b>		<b>11%</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>330,860</b>		<b>12%</b>	

Source: Taxfiler Table I-7C - Individual data - Taxfilers and dependents with income by after-tax income, 2022, 2017. Taxfiler (database). Community Data Program (distributor). Last updated August 16, 2024. Communitydata.ca (accessed December 2024)

## Workforce Trends

The workforce population is defined as the population that is legally eligible to work. In Canada, this includes individuals over the age of 15. Those who are actively looking for work or are currently employed are considered part of the labour force. After the age of 65, individuals who are eligible may begin receiving their Canadian pension, and some choose to retire and exit the labour force. However, they are still included in the workforce population (15+) counts.

### Annual Labour Force Statistics, LER, 2019-2024

	2024	1-year Change	5-year Change
Population 15+	661,600	3.9%	11.6%
Labour Force	429,700	3.8%	18.3%
Employment	402,800	2.9%	17.2%
Unemployment	26,900	20.6%	19.6%
Not in Labour Force	232,000	4.0%	1.1%
Unemployment Rate	6.3%	0.90	0.90
Participation Rate	64.9%	-0.10	3.60
Employment Rate	60.9%	-0.60	2.90

**Source:** Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0393-01 Labour force characteristics, annual](#)

According to Statistics Canada's annual Labour Force Survey, the number of people participating in the LER labour force increased by 3.8%, from 413,800 in 2023 to 429,700 in 2024. However, the growth in the 15+ population outpaced the growth in the labour force, resulting in a 0.1% drop in the participation rate. Over the past five years, the labour force has increased by 18.3%, from 363,300 in 2019. During this same period, the 15+ population grew by 11.6%, and the participation rate dropped by 3.6 percentage points. This long-term decline suggests that fewer people are actively seeking employment, possibly due to an aging population or a shift in attitudes toward work, with some individuals choosing to retire earlier or remain out of the workforce.

The unemployment rate increased by 0.9 percentage points, from 5.4% in 2023 to 6.3% in 2024. This is a notable rise, especially when considering the increase in the labour force and employment. The fact that more people are seeking work but not finding it may indicate a tightening labour market or a mismatch between available jobs and job seekers' skills.

Employment increased by 2.9% from 2023 to 2024, which is slightly lower than the 3.8% increase in the labour force. This suggests that while more people are entering the labour force, the growth in employment is not keeping pace. This could indicate challenges in job creation or a higher number of people entering the labour market who are unable to find work.

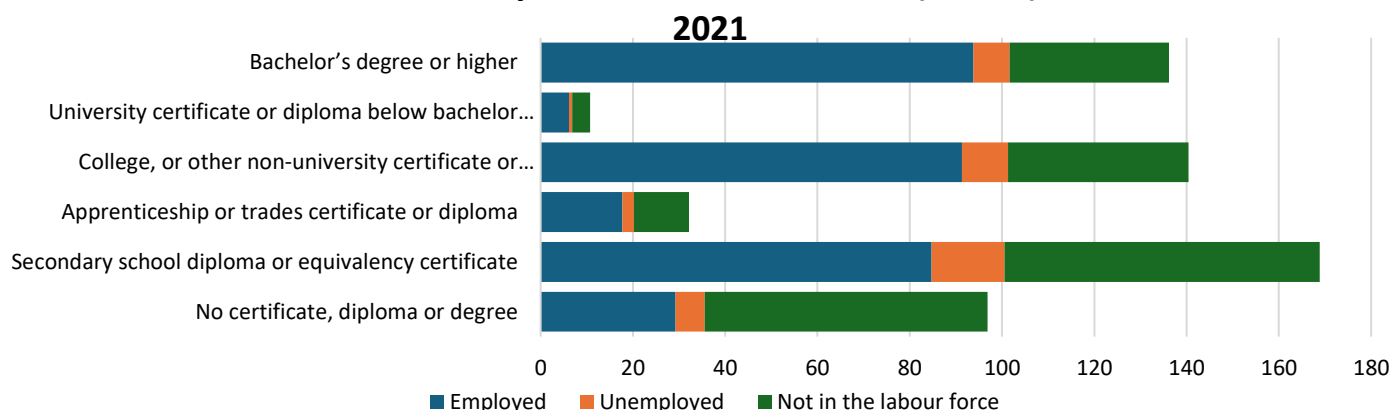
Individuals Not in Labour Force increased by 4.0% in 2024, with a total of 232,000 people not actively participating in the labour force. While this is a relatively small increase, it's notable because it suggests that some individuals may be exiting the labour force, possibly due to retirement, discouragement from not finding work or other factors.

These trends may signal a need for targeted strategies to improve job creation and reduce barriers to employment, especially as the population grows and ages.

## Education

Educational attainment has a clear impact on labour force status in the LER. Individuals with a secondary school diploma or equivalent represent the largest cohort in the region, making up 29% of the 15+ population. However, this group also has the highest proportion of individuals not participating in the labour market, with 40.4% (or 68,285 individuals) not engaged in work or seeking employment.

### Labour Force Status by Educational Attainment (x1,000), LER, Census



**Source:** Statistics Canada. [Table: 98-10-0400-01 Labour force status by highest level of education: Canada, provinces and territories, census divisions and census subdivisions.](#)

On the other hand, individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher are the most likely to participate in the labour force, with a participation rate of 74.6%. College graduates follow closely, with a participation rate of 72.2%.

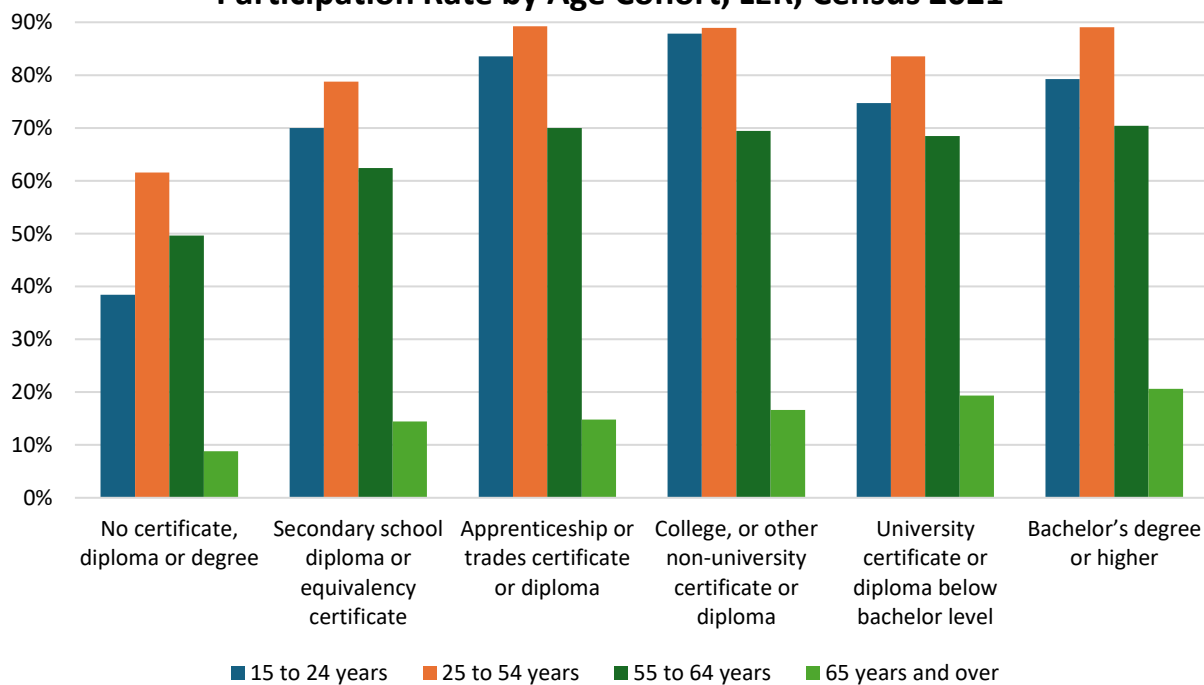
When examining the 25 to 54-year and 55 to 65-year age cohorts, the participation rates for individuals with apprenticeships, college, and university degrees converge, indicating similar labour force engagement across these educational groups. However, in the 65+ cohort, University graduates have the highest participation rate, while Apprentices have the lowest participation among the three groups.

### Labour Force Characteristics by Education Attainment, LER, Census 2021

Educational Attainment	LER				Canada	
	Workforce	In the Labour Force	Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate	Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate
No certificate, diploma or degree	96,835	35,555	36.7%	17.8%	36.3%	16.8%
Secondary school diploma or equivalent	168,840	100,555	59.6%	15.8%	59.5%	14.3%
Apprenticeship or trades certificate	32,140	20,220	62.9%	12.3%	68.3%	9.1%
College	140,375	101,310	72.2%	9.9%	71.1%	9.0%
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	10,700	6,810	63.6%	9.5%	67.2%	8.9%
Bachelor's degree or higher	136,175	101,630	74.6%	7.7%	77.3%	6.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>585,075</b>	<b>366,085</b>	<b>62.6%</b>	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>63.7%</b>	<b>10.3%</b>

Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 98-10-0400-01 Labour force status by highest level of education: Canada, provinces and territories, census divisions and census subdivisions](#)

### Participation Rate by Age Cohort, LER, Census 2021



Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 98-10-0400-01 Labour force status by highest level of education: Canada, provinces and territories, census divisions and census subdivisions](#)

## Workforce Breakdown by Demographic Characteristics

### Age Group

Between 2019 and 2023, the workforce population of the London Economic Region (LER) grew by 10.2%. The most significant growth was observed in the older workforce (aged 65+, growing by 14.8%) and the core workforce (aged 25 to 54, growing by 14.1%). The population growth was led by Middlesex (with a 10.8% increase), followed by Oxford (with a 9.9% increase), while Elgin experienced the least growth at 7.3%.

Overall, the workforce age composition in LER mirrors Canada's, though LER has a larger youth workforce (with an index of 1.06). When it comes to older workers, 21.8% of LER's workforce is aged 65 or older, which is slightly lower than the Canadian proportion (index 0.98). However, Elgin (index 1.11) and Oxford (index 1.01) have higher proportions of older workers compared to the national average.

**Workforce by Age Cohort and Region, LER, 2019-2023**

	Age Cohort	2023 Workforce	% change 2019-2023	% of CD Workforce	Index CAN=1.0	% of LER Workforce
Elgin	15 to 24 years	11,629	3.5%	13.8%	0.96	1.7%
	25 to 54 years	37,204	7.0%	44.1%	0.92	5.6%
	55 to 64 years	14,532	3.5%	17.2%	1.12	2.2%
	65 years +	20,993	15.9%	24.9%	1.11	3.1%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>84,358</b>	<b>7.3%</b>			<b>12.6%</b>
Oxford	15 to 24 years	14,112	3.4%	14.4%	1.01	2.1%
	25 to 54 years	44,995	12.3%	45.9%	0.96	6.7%
	55 to 64 years	16,730	0.6%	17.1%	1.11	2.5%
	65 years +	22,179	15.0%	22.6%	1.01	3.3%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>98,016</b>	<b>9.9%</b>			<b>14.7%</b>
Middlesex	15 to 24 years	74,670	5.9%	15.7%	1.10	11.2%
	25 to 54 years	234,049	15.7%	49.3%	1.03	35.0%
	55 to 64 years	67,740	0.3%	14.3%	0.92	10.1%
	65 years +	98,290	14.5%	20.7%	0.93	14.7%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>474,749</b>	<b>10.8%</b>			<b>71.0%</b>
LER	15 to 24 years	101,110	5.2%	15.1%	1.06	15.1%
	25 to 54 years	322,364	14.1%	48.2%	1.01	48.2%
	55 to 64 years	99,461	0.8%	14.9%	0.96	14.9%
	65 years +	145,739	14.8%	21.8%	0.98	21.8%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>668,674</b>	<b>10.2%</b>			

Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 17-10-0152-01 Population estimates, July 1, by census division, 2021 boundaries](#)

Although the older workforce (aged 65+) represents 21.8% of the LER workforce, only 15% of this group participated in the labour force in 2021, which is slightly lower than Canada's rate of 15.8%. Additionally, this group had an unemployment rate of 12%, which is slightly higher than the region's overall rate of 11.8%.

Conversely, the pre-retirement workforce (aged 55 to 64) had a 65% participation rate, representing nearly 63,000 people who may be preparing to retire.

The youth workforce (aged 15 to 24) has an unemployment rate that is twice as high as the regional average, and it performs worse than the Canadian rate.

### Labour Force Characteristics by Age Group, LER, Census 2021

Age Cohort	LER				Canada	
	2021 Workforce	In the Labour Force	Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate	Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate
15 to 24 years	86,930	54,225	62.0%	22.6%	60.3%	19.5%
25 to 54 years	273,780	230,085	84.0%	9.8%	85.6%	8.3%
55 to 64 years	97,095	62,935	65.0%	9.7%	66.1%	9.6%
65 years+	127,275	18,840	15.0%	12.0%	15.8%	13.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>585,075</b>	<b>366,085</b>	<b>62.6%</b>	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>63.7%</b>	<b>10.3%</b>

Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 98-10-0400-01 Labour force status by highest level of education: Canada, provinces and territories, census divisions and census subdivisions](#)

### Gender

Similar to Canada, the London Economic Region (LER) has a slightly higher proportion of women in the workforce compared to men. Between 2019 and 2023, the male workforce population (men+) increased by 11.6%, outpacing the female workforce population (women+), which grew by 9.7%. This growth has helped close the gender gap in the region's workforce. Overall, the proportion of women in the LER workforce is slightly higher than that of Canada, with an index of 1.01.

### Workforce by Gender and Region, by Geography, 2019-2023

	Gender	2023 Workforce	% Change 2019-2023	% of CD Workforce	Index	% of LER Workforce
					CAN=1.0	
Elgin	Men+	41,878	8.5%	49.6%	0.99	6.26%
	Women+	42,480	7.4%	50.4%	1.01	6.35%
Oxford	Men+	54,728	10.3%	49.9%	1.00	8.18%
	Women+	54,839	9.0%	50.1%	1.00	8.20%
Middlesex	Men+	235,272	12.5%	49.6%	0.99	35.18%
	Women+	239,477	10.3%	50.4%	1.01	35.81%
LER	Men+	331,878	11.6%	49.6%	0.99	49.63%
	Women+	336,796	9.7%	50.4%	1.01	50.37%

Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 17-10-0152-01 Population estimates, July 1, by census division, 2021 boundaries](#)

Although women make up 50.4% of the region's workforce, only 58.0% of women were participating in the labour force in 2021, which is slightly lower than the Canadian rate of 59.4%. Additionally, the unemployment rate for women in LER was 13%, higher than the region's overall unemployment rate of 11.8%. In contrast, the male workforce had a 67.4% participation rate and a 10.8% unemployment rate.

### Labour Force Statistics by Gender, LER, Census 2021

Gender	LER				Canada	
	2021 Workforce	In the Labour Force	Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate	Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate
Men+	285,305	192,290	67.4%	10.8%	67.7%	9.9%
Women+	299,780	173,785	58.0%	13.0%	59.8%	10.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>585,075</b>	<b>366,085</b>	<b>62.6%</b>	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>63.7%</b>	<b>10.3%</b>

Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 98-10-0400-01 Labour force status by highest level of education: Canada, provinces and territories, census divisions and census subdivisions](#)

### Population Groups

Selected population groups have been identified as priorities for workforce integration support by the province or region. While additional groups may be considered priorities by specific service partners, they are not included in this overview. It is important to note that there may be overlap among these population groups. Therefore, the numbers presented cannot be summed and should be evaluated independently.

**Workforce by Population Group, by Geography, 2019-2023**

	Population Group	2021 Workforce	% Change 2016-2021	% of County Workforce	Index	% of LER Workforce
					CAN=1.0	
<b>Elgin</b>	Indigenous <sup>2</sup>	1,610	5.6%	2.1%	0.49	0.3%
	Racialized <sup>3</sup>	3,220	80.9%	4.2%	0.17	0.6%
	Immigrants <sup>4</sup>	10,920	72.5%	14.3%	0.58	1.9%
	Newcomers <sup>5</sup>	615	38.2%	0.8%	0.24	0.1%
	Francophone <sup>6</sup>	1,130	24.2%	1.5%	0.07	0.2%
<b>Oxford</b>	Indigenous	2,190	42.2%	2.2%	0.52	0.4%
	Racialized	6,720	160.5%	6.8%	0.28	1.1%
	Immigrants	13,665	130.1%	13.9%	0.52	2.3%
	Newcomers	1,140	192.3%	1.2%	0.35	0.2%
	Francophone	1,425	18.8%	1.5%	0.07	0.2%
<b>Middlesex</b>	Indigenous	9,745	17.3%	2.4%	0.55	1.7%
	Racialized	94,105	60.0%	22.9%	0.93	16.1%
	Immigrants	110,805	79.6%	27.0%	1.01	18.9%
	Newcomers	14,750	62.0%	3.6%	1.09	2.5%
	Francophone	8,635	14.4%	2.1%	0.09	1.5%
<b>LER</b>	Indigenous	13,545	19.1%	2.3%	0.54	2.3%
	Racialized	104,045	64.7%	17.8%	0.72	17.8%
	Immigrants	135,390	83.1%	23.1%	0.87	23.1%
	Newcomers	16,485	65.8%	2.8%	0.86	2.8%
	Francophone	11,190	15.8%	1.9%	0.08	1.9%

**Source:** Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0436-01 [Labour force status by visible minority, highest level of education and immigrant status: Canada, provinces and territories, census divisions and census subdivisions with a population 5,000 or more.](#)

Statistics Canada. *Target group profile of the Francophone population, Census, 2021(database). Community Data Program (distributor). Last updated November 12, 2024. Communitydata.ca (accessed December 23, 2024)*

<sup>2</sup> Indigenous - Refers to individuals who identify as First Nations (North American Indian), Métis, and/or Inuk (Inuit), as defined by the Canadian Constitution and recognized under the Indigenous population categories.

<sup>3</sup> Racialized - Refers to individuals who identify with a racial or population group other than white, often used to describe groups experiencing systemic racial discrimination.

<sup>4</sup> Immigrants - Refers to individuals who were born outside of Canada without Canadian citizenship and have immigrated as permanent residents and/or subsequently acquired Canadian citizenship.

<sup>5</sup> Newcomers - Refers to immigrants who have been living in Canada for five years or less, a term often used in settlement services and immigration contexts.

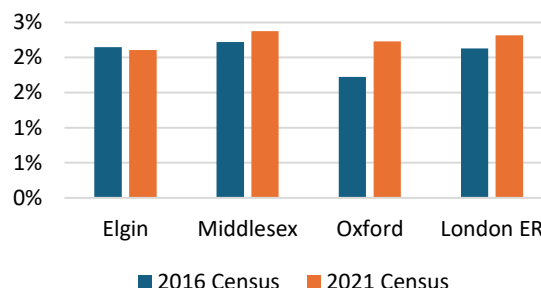
<sup>6</sup> Francophone - Refers to individuals who identify French as their first official language spoken, mother tongue, language most often spoken at home, or a combination of these factors.

### Indigenous Population

In 2021, the census reported that 13,545 people aged 15+ with an Indigenous identity were living in the London Economic Region (LER), representing 2.3% of the total population. This marks a 19.1% increase from the previous census in 2016.

It is important to note that there were enumeration issues during the census, as permission was not granted to conduct the census on two local reserves. As a result, the figures may not fully represent the Indigenous population on reserves within the region. However, the census data includes Indigenous Peoples living off-reserve in LER, which would contribute to the reported population figures.

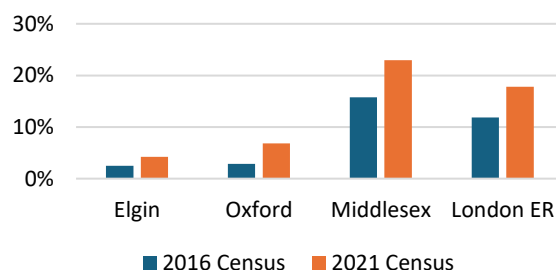
**Indigenous Population, Age 15+, by Geography, Census 2016, 2021**



### Racialized

Between 2016 and 2021, the London Economic Region (LER) saw a significant increase in the racialized workforce population, with a 64.7% growth. All counties in the region experienced growth in this demographic, with Oxford seeing the largest increase at 160.5%, followed by Elgin with an 80% growth. However, the proportion of racialized individuals in the region remains significantly smaller compared to Canada, with an index of 0.72. Elgin (index = 0.17) has the smallest proportion, followed by Oxford (index = 0.28), and Middlesex (index = 0.93).

**Racialized Population, Age 15+, by Geography, Census 2016, 2021**



*Source: OneHub Repository, Table T5\_POR\_CD for Census 2016 and Table 1A and Table 4A for Census 2021*

### Racialized Individuals by Group, LER, Census 2021

	Oxford	Elgin	Middlesex	London	LER
South Asian	2,810	595	440	21,425	25,270
Arab	145	220	135	15,215	15,715
Black	1,195	770	350	12,360	14,675
Latin American	555	480	345	10,780	12,160
Chinese	305	235	225	10,245	11,010
Southeast Asian	495	280	100	4,790	5,665
Filipino	415	350	160	4,695	5,620
West Asian	125	40	80	4,215	4,460
Korean	145	65	95	3,540	3,845
Visible minority, n.i.e.	240	60	60	1,650	2,010
Japanese	90	60	40	545	735
<b>Total</b>	<b>6520</b>	<b>3155</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>89,460</b>	<b>101,165</b>

*Source: Census 2021 Target group profile of the visible minority population, Census, 2021*

*Immigrants*

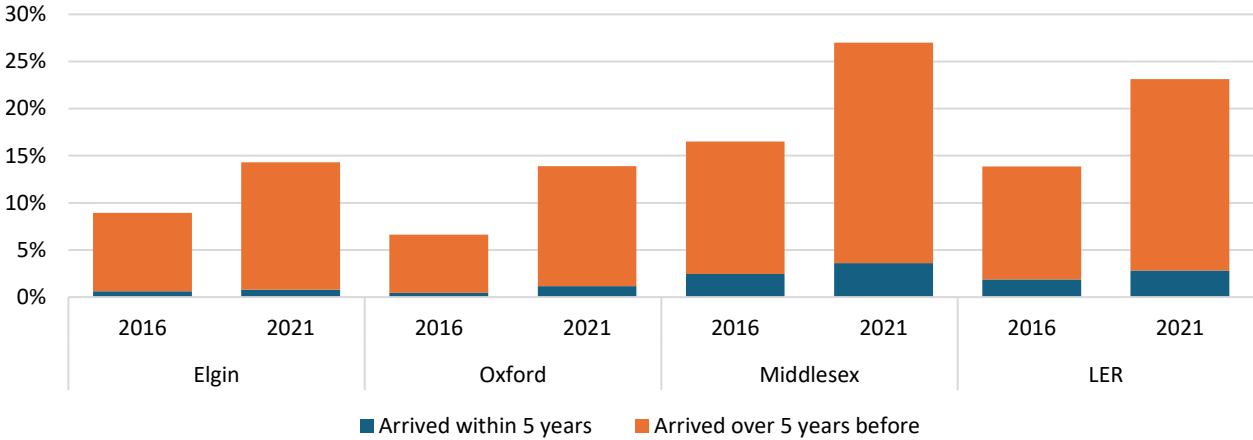
Between 2016 and 2021, the immigrant population in the London Economic Region (LER) increased by 83.1%, while the number of newcomers grew by 65.8%. The faster growth of immigrants compared to newcomers is attributed to secondary migration into the region.

Despite this growth, both immigrants (index = 0.87) and newcomers (index = 0.86) remain proportionally smaller in LER compared to Canada. Middlesex County has immigration levels comparable to the national average (index = 1.01), while Elgin County (index = 0.58) and Oxford County (index = 0.52) show much lower representation.

Despite historically lower migration, immigrants now represent a significant portion of the workforce in LER, comprising 23.1% of the workforce.

With significant overall growth despite lower historic migration, immigrants are an important workforce population group as they represent 23.1% of the LER workforce.

**Proportion Immigrant Population, by Arrival Period, Age 15+, by Geography, Census 2016, 2021**



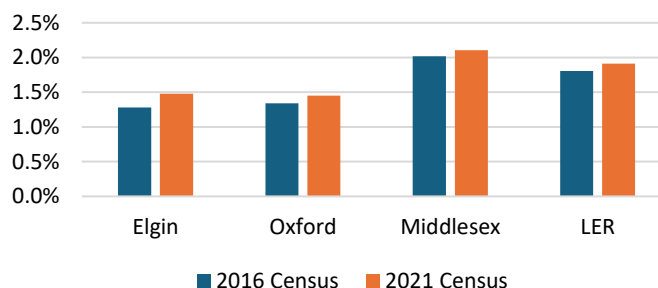
Source: OneHub Repository, Table T5\_POR\_CD for Census 2016 and Table 1A and Table 4A for Census 2021

### Francophones

In 2024, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) designated the City of London as one of the new Francophone communities joining the 14 communities in the initiative. While there are cuts to the overall immigration estimates, Francophone immigration continues to be a priority in the country and will increase annually.

Between 2016 and 2021, the francophone<sup>7</sup> population in LER increased by 15.8% to 11,190 people.

### Francophone Population, Age 15+, by Geography, Census 2016, 2021



**Source:** Statistics Canada. *Target group profile of the Francophone population, Census, 2021(database). Community Data Program (distributor). Last updated November 12, 2024. Comunitydata.ca (accessed December 23, 2024)*

## Labour Force Characteristics

### Labour Force Characteristics by Population Groups, ER, Census 2021

Population Group	LER				Canada	
	2021 Workforce	In the Labour Force	Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate	Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate
Indigenous	13,555	8,150	60.1%	17.0%	59.5%	15.1%
Immigrant	127,605	70,070	54.9%	12.7%	62.4%	11.2%
Racialized	104,030	68,010	65.0%	15%	68.0%	12.50%
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>585,075</b>	<b>366,085</b>	<b>62.6%</b>	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>63.7%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>

**Sources:** Statistics Canada. [Table 98-10-0425-01 Highest level of education by Indigenous identity and labour force status: Canada, provinces and territories, census divisions and census subdivisions with a population 5,000 or more](#)  
 Statistics Canada. [Table 98-10-0436-01 Labour force status by visible minority, highest level of education and immigrant status: Canada, provinces and territories, census divisions and census subdivisions with a population 5,000 or more](#)  
 Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0087-01 Labour force characteristics of immigrants by educational attainment, annual](#)

Examining the labour force statistics of these three groups and comparing to LER and Canada provide some useful insights.

The participation rate of Indigenous Peoples in the LER workforce is 60.1%, slightly higher than the national average of 59.5% but lower than LER’s participation rate. Additionally, the unemployment rate for Indigenous peoples in LER (17.0%) is notably higher than both the regional (11.8%) and national (15.1%) averages, suggesting that Indigenous peoples may face greater barriers to employment.

<sup>7</sup> People are considered francophone if they indicated they selected French as their first official language, mother tongue, or language spoken most often at home.

Immigrants in LER have a participation rate of 54.9%, which is significantly lower than the national average of 62.4%. The unemployment rate for immigrants in LER is 12.7%, which is higher than the national rate of 11.2%. This indicates that while the immigrant population is growing, they may face challenges in securing employment in the region.

Racialized individuals in LER have a higher participation rate (65.0%) compared to both Indigenous peoples and immigrants, though it is still lower than the national average (68.0%). Meanwhile, the unemployment rate for racialized individuals in LER is 15.0%, which is higher than the regional average of 11.8% and the national average of 12.5%, suggesting that racialized individuals may also face employment challenges.

### *Immigrant Participation by Age Cohort and Census Division*

Examining the immigrant participation rates by County and age cohort provides more information on the 8.8% variance to LER.

In the youth workforce (15 to 24 years), Elgin County has an immigrant participation rate of 58%, slightly lower than the regional average of 60.3%. Middlesex County has a significantly lower participation rate of 48.1%, while Oxford County stands out with a higher rate of 67%, surpassing the regional average. This indicates that participation is higher in Oxford and lower in Middlesex compared to the overall region.

### **Labour Force Characteristics for Immigrant Population by Age Cohort, by Geography, Census 2021**

Age Cohort	In the Labour Force				
	Immigrant				Total
	Elgin	Oxford	Middlesex	LER	LER
15 to 24 years	290	345	4,375	5,010	54,225
25 to 54 years	3,360	4,565	38,215	46,140	230,085
55 to 64 years	1,205	1,465	11,410	14,080	62,935
65 years+	525	645	3,655	4,825	18,840
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,385</b>	<b>7,025</b>	<b>57,660</b>	<b>70,070</b>	<b>366,085</b>
	Participation Rate				
15 to 24 years	58.0%	67.0%	48.1%	49.5%	60.3%
25 to 54 years	78.6%	82.4%	77.8%	78.3%	85.6%
55 to 64 years	66.2%	64.1%	66.5%	66.2%	66.1%
65 years+	13.2%	12.8%	12.9%	12.9%	15.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>58.0%</b>	<b>52.6%</b>	<b>55.6%</b>	<b>54.9%</b>	<b>63.7%</b>

**Source:** Table 98-10-0436-01 Labour force status by visible minority, highest level of education and immigrant status: Canada, provinces and territories, census divisions and census subdivisions with a population of 5,000 or more.

For the core workforce (25 to 54 years), Elgin County's immigrant participation rate is 78.6%, which is below the regional average of 85.6%. Middlesex County has a participation rate of 77.8%, also lower than the regional average, while Oxford County has a participation rate of 82.4%, slightly below the regional average. This shows that all counties, except Oxford, have lower participation rates compared to the region in this age group.

In the pre-retirement workforce (55 to 64 years), the participation rates are relatively consistent across the counties, with Elgin County at 66.2%, Oxford County at 64.1%, and Middlesex County at 66.5%. These rates are very close to the regional average of 66.1%, indicating little variance in participation in this age group.

For the older workforce (65+ years), immigrant participation is low across all counties and the region. Elgin, Oxford, and Middlesex counties all have a participation rate of 12.9%, which is below the regional average of 15.8%. This is consistent with the general trend of low participation among older workers who are more likely to retire.

## Employment by Industry

The distribution of employment across industries provides valuable insight into the economic landscape of the LER region. Using the 2-digit NAICS (North American Industry Classification System)<sup>8</sup>, the top industries employing the largest number of workers were identified as follows:

- Healthcare with 60,200 workers
- Wholesale and retail trade with 52,400 workers
- Manufacturing with 55,100 workers
- Construction with 34,800 workers
- Educational Services with 28,000 workers
- Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate with 27,100 workers
- Professional, scientific and technical services with 26,800 workers

Using location quotient (LQ) indexing to compare the proportion of workers locally to Canada, LER has a regionally specific Agriculture and Manufacturing sector.

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<sup>8</sup> NAICS refers to the North American Industry Classification System

**Employment by Industry NAICS-2, x1000, LER, 2018, 2023**

Industry (NAICS)	2018	2023	Change	% Change	Location Quotient CAN=1.0
<b>Total employed, all industries (000's)</b>	<b>342.6</b>	<b>391.5</b>	<b>48.9</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>1.00</b>
<b>Goods-Producing Sector</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>103.5</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>17.6%</b>	<b>1.29</b>
11 Agriculture	6.4	11	4.6	71.9%	2.21
22 Utilities	1.7	2.2	0.5	29.4%	0.73
23 Construction	26.1	34.8	8.7	33.3%	1.13
31-33 Manufacturing	53.1	55.1	2	3.8%	1.57
<b>Service-Producing Sector</b>	<b>254.6</b>	<b>288.0</b>	<b>33.4</b>	<b>13.1%</b>	<b>0.93</b>
41 Wholesale and Retail Trade	56.1	52.4	-3.7	-6.6%	0.91
48-49 Transportation and Warehousing	16.1	19.7	3.6	22.4%	0.99
52-53 Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	20.3	27.1	6.8	33.5%	1.01
54 Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	17.5	26.8	9.3	53.1%	0.74
56 Business, Building and Other Support Services	15	15.2	0.2	1.3%	1.13
61 Educational Services	26.2	28.0	1.8	6.9%	0.96
62 Health Care and Social Assistance	48.5	60.2	11.7	24.1%	1.16
71 Information, Culture and Recreation	10.2	12.6	2.4	23.5%	0.77
72 Accommodation and Food Services	22.8	20.8	-2	-8.8%	0.95
81 Other Services (except public administration)	12.8	11.5	-1.3	-10.2%	0.77
91 Public Administration	9.2	13.7	4.5	48.9%	0.60

**Source:** Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0392-01 Employment by industry, annual (x 1,000)

Between 2018 and 2023, LER experienced an overall employment growth of 14.3%. This growth was driven by significant expansions in key industries, including Agriculture, which grew by 71.9%; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, which expanded by 53.1%; and Public Administration, which increased by 48.9%. The Health Care and Social Assistance sector also saw substantial workforce growth, with an increase of 11,700 people.

Despite overall growth, some industries experienced declines during this period. Other Services contracted by 10.2%, Accommodation and Food Services decreased by 8.8%, and Wholesale and Retail Trade shrank by 6.6%. This data underscores the dynamic nature of the LER region's economic landscape, with significant growth in certain sectors offset by challenges in others.

## Employment by Occupation

Using the 1-digit NOC, the top occupations in LER were:

- Sales and service occupations, except management with 80,400 workers
- Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations with 65,500 workers
- Business, finance and administration occupations with 58,800 workers

Using location quotient (LQ) indexing to compare the proportion of workers locally to Canada, LER has a regionally specific manufacturing occupations group.

### Employment by Occupation NOC, x1000, LER, 2018 & 2023

National Occupational Classification (NOC)	2018	2023	Change	% Change	Location Quotient
<b>Total employees, all occupations</b>	<b>342.6</b>	<b>391.5</b>	<b>48.9</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>1.00</b>
0 Management occupations	21.9	37.2	15.3	69.9%	0.97
1 Business, finance and administration occupations, except management	49.1	56.8	7.7	15.7%	0.90
2 Natural and applied sciences and related occupations, except management	19.4	27.6	8.2	42.3%	0.81
3 Health occupations, except management	27.7	38.2	10.5	37.9%	1.25
4 Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services, except management	35.6	42.8	7.2	20.2%	0.95
5 Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport, except management	7.4	8.4	1	13.5%	0.68
6 Sales and service occupations, except management	84.9	80.4	-4.5	-5.3%	0.94
7 Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations, except management	59.5	65.5	6	10.1%	1.11
8 Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations, except management	7	7.1	0.1	1.4%	1.03
9 Occupations in manufacturing and utilities, except management	30	27.6	-2.4	-8.0%	1.69

**Source:** Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0420-01 Employment by occupation, economic regions, annual

Between 2018 and 2023, LER experienced notable growth in several occupational groups. Management occupations increased by 69.9%, Natural and Applied Sciences and Related Occupations grew by 42.3%, and Health Occupations expanded by 37.9%. However, some occupations saw declines during this period, with Sales and Service Occupations decreasing by 5.3% and Manufacturing and Utilities Occupations contracting by 8%.

### Job Postings

A large count of jobs can indicate occupation growth or churn. Job posting data does not account for posts that result in multiple hires, and therefore rate data skews to occupations that are more likely to have unique posts. There were 45,355 unique job postings in 2024 in LER, a 2.7% increase from 2023.

**Top 25 Job Postings, NOC-4, Number of Posts and Wages, LER, 2024**

NOC	Occupation	Unique Postings from Jan 2024 - Dec 2024	Change Unique Postings 2023-2024	Median Annual Wages
6410	Retail salespersons and non-technical wholesale trade sales and account representatives	3,420	5.7%	\$43,535
6520	Food support occupations	1,339	13.2%	\$32,712
6440	Customer and information services representatives	1,331	3.2%	\$43,757
1120	Human resources and business service professionals	1,287	-12.6%	\$72,736
4220	Paraprofessional occupations in legal, social, community and education services	1,213	-2.3%	\$46,541
1410	Office support and court services occupations	1,114	19.3%	\$45,832
6320	Cooks, butchers and bakers	1,078	19.4%	\$35,041
1310	Administrative, property and payroll officers	1,050	6.0%	\$58,798
3130	Nursing and allied health professionals	1,006	-10.8%	\$88,133
6202	Service supervisors	989	30.0%	\$46,297
7330	Transport truck and transit drivers	940	-11.2%	\$48,815
7510	Longshore workers and material handlers	911	-10.9%	\$45,092
1001	Administrative services managers	902	-3.7%	\$111,900
6002	Retail and wholesale trade managers	889	0.0%	\$72,662
4410	Home care provider occupations	805	8.2%	\$39,490
6531	Cleaners	802	1.1%	\$39,468
1440	Supply chain logistics, tracking and scheduling coordination occupations	767	7.3%	\$50,107
1311	Office administrative assistants - general, legal and medical	763	6.1%	\$50,835
1110	Auditors, accountants and investment professionals	755	-9.3%	\$73,563
3310	Assisting occupations in support of health services	685	-8.5%	\$47,001
6003	Managers in food service and accommodation	591	39.4%	\$48,449
6441	Security guards and related security service occupations	533	-6.0%	\$39,736
6510	Cashiers and other sales support occupations	510	12.1%	\$32,470
9510	Labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities	501	-3.3%	\$40,950
7241	Automotive service technicians	489	24.1%	\$60,157
	<b>Total Across All Occupations</b>	<b>45,355</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>\$58,119</b>

Source: "Job Posting Table". [Lightcast](#), January 2025

Sales and service occupations (NOC 6) had the greatest concentration of posts in the top 25 overall.

#### Highest Growth Occupations:

- Managers in food services (+39.4%)
- Service supervisors (+30.0%)
- Automotive service technicians (+24.1%)

#### Biggest Declines:

- Human resources and business service professionals (-12.6%)
- Transport truck and transit drivers (-11.2%)
- Longshore workers and material handlers (-10.9%)

The three occupation categories with the highest number of job postings had a median annual income below the overall median income for all job postings (\$58,119). Additionally, 18 of the top 25 occupations offered incomes below this median, accounting for 74% of the jobs among the top postings.

## Industry Trends

### Business Counts by Size

The data highlights significant growth in business activity in the London Economic Region, particularly among businesses without employees and large employers. The number of businesses without employees increased by 24%, rising from 45,914 to 56,907. Among businesses with employees, the Business Counts data for June 2024 reveals a total of 22,470 businesses in the London Economic Region, reflecting a 10% overall increase and an addition of 1,955 businesses compared to 2019.

Within the category of businesses with employees, 54.5% are classified as micro-businesses with 1-4 employees, which experienced a 13% increase. Small businesses, with 5-99 employees, account for 43.2% of the total. Medium businesses, employing 100-499 people, make up 2.0%, while large businesses with 500 or more employees constitute 0.3%. Notably, large employers experienced the most substantial growth, with a 41% increase, representing the addition of 20 new employers.

This data underscores the robust expansion of business activity in the region, particularly among the smallest and largest employers.

When examining the census divisions within the London Economic Region, the growth in businesses varied significantly. The City of London experienced the largest increase in businesses without employees, rising by 29%, while Elgin County recorded the lowest increase at 15%.

For businesses with employees, Oxford led the growth with an 18% increase, followed by Middlesex County at 15%. Elgin and the city of London both saw lower increases than the regional average, with growth rates of 9% and 2%, respectively.

### Business Counts by Firm Size, LER, 2019-2024

	June 2019		June 2024		% Change
	#	% of total	#	% of total	
Without Employees	45,914		56,907		24%
Total with Employees	20,515		22,470		10%
Micro (1-4)	10,874	53.0%	12,242	54.5%	13%
Small (5-99)	9,165	44.7%	9,704	43.2%	6%
Medium (100-499)	427	2.1%	455	2.0%	7%
Large (500 +)	49	0.2%	69	0.3%	41%

Source: Community Data Program, Canadian Business Count, July 2024

Elgin experienced the most significant growth in large employers, with a 67% increase, followed by Middlesex County at 50%. Middlesex County also recorded a notable 19% increase in medium-sized employers, highlighting its strong performance in this category.

### Business Counts by Firm Size, by Geography, 2019-2024

	Elgin					Oxford				
	2019		2024		% change	2019		2024		% change
	#	%	#	%		#	%	#	%	
Without Employees	5,926		6,836		15%	8,075		9,974		24%
Total with Employees	2,552		2,778		9%	3,739		4,413		18%
Micro (1-4)	1,427	56%	1,498	54%	5%	1,944	52%	2,531	57%	30%
Small (5-99)	1,081	42%	1,233	43%	14%	1,706	46%	1,788	41%	5%
Medium (100-499)	41	2%	42	2%	2%	82	2%	84	2%	2%
Large (500 +)	3	0%	5	0%	67%	7	0%	10	0%	43%

	Middlesex without London					London				
	2019		2024		% change	2019		2024		% change
	#	%	#	%		#	%	#	%	
Without Employees	5,813		7,112		22%	24,804		31,974		29%
Total with Employees	2,215		2,548		15%	11,541		11,738		2%
Micro (1-4)	1,294	58%	1,494	59%	15%	5,946	52%	6,536	56%	10%
Small (5-99)	888	40%	1,014	40%	14%	5,292	46%	5,521	47%	4%
Medium (100-499)	31	1%	37	1%	19%	266	2%	288	2%	8%
Large (500 +)	2	0%	3	0%	50%	37	0%	51	0%	38%

Source: Community Data Program, Canadian Business Count, July 2024

### Business Counts by Industry

The overall increase in businesses in the London Economic Region masks notable variations across industries. Goods-producing sectors experienced a modest growth of 6% while service-producing sectors saw a more robust increase of 10.7%.

Among the industries, transportation and warehousing showed the most significant growth, with a 66.4% increase, adding 707 businesses. Public administration also expanded substantially, growing by 31% with the addition of 13 new businesses.

### Business Counts by Industry (NAICS-2), With Employees, LER, 2015-2024

	# June 2019	# June 2024	# Change	% Change
<b>Total</b>	20,515	22,470	1,955	9.5%
Unclassified	949	1,039	90	9.5%
<b>Sub-Total, Classified</b>	<b>19,566</b>	<b>21,431</b>	<b>1,865</b>	<b>9.5%</b>
Goods-Producing Sectors	4,716	4,997	281	6.0%
11 - Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1,215	1,159	-56	-4.6%
21 - Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	29	25	-4	-13.8%
22 - Utilities	20	18	-2	-10.0%
23 - Construction	2,517	2,815	298	11.8%
31-33 - Manufacturing	935	980	45	4.8%
Service-Producing Sector	14,850	16,434	1,584	10.7%
41 - Wholesale Trade	899	862	-37	-4.1%
44-45 - Retail Trade	2,546	2,585	39	1.5%
48-49 - Transportation and Warehousing	1,065	1,772	707	66.4%
51 - Information and Cultural Industries	206	203	-3	-1.5%
52 - Finance and Insurance	767	734	-33	-4.3%
53 - Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	833	912	79	9.5%
54 - Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	1,693	1,879	186	11.0%
55 - Management of Companies and Enterprises	102	86	-16	-15.7%
56 - Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services	813	897	84	10.3%
61 - Educational Services	193	216	23	11.9%
62 - Health Care and Social Assistance	2,423	2,828	405	16.7%
71 - Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	273	253	-20	-7.3%
72 - Accommodation and Food Services	1,204	1,312	108	9.0%
81 - Other Services (except public administration)	1,791	1,840	49	2.7%
91 - Public Administration	42	55	13	31.00%

**Source:** Statistics Canada. Canadian Business Counts, with employees.

In contrast, some industries experienced declines. The management of companies and enterprises sector shrank by 15.7%, losing 16 businesses. Similarly, the region's two smallest industries contracted, with utilities declining by 10% (a loss of 2 companies) and mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction shrinking by 12.8% (losing 4 businesses).

These trends highlight the uneven growth across sectors, with notable gains in transportation and warehousing and challenges in smaller and specialized industries.

The business landscape in the London Economic Region reveals diverse trends across different business sizes and industries over the past five years.

### *Micro Businesses*

Micro-businesses have generally experienced sustained growth, driven primarily by the Transportation and Warehousing industry, which saw consistent increases before, during, and after the pandemic. The Construction and Healthcare and Social Assistance industries also exhibited mild but steady growth during this period. However, the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting industry experienced a notable decline, with business counts dropping by nearly 10% in 2022 compared to 2019, and the sector has yet to recover.

### *Small Businesses*

Small businesses initially experienced a dip in 2022 but rebounded strongly in 2023, exceeding pre-pandemic levels. The Healthcare and Social Assistance industry played a significant role in this recovery, showing the highest increases in both absolute numbers and percentage growth. While no major losses were observed for this category, minor declines occurred in the Transportation and Warehousing and Real Estate and Rental and Leasing industries.

### *Medium Businesses*

The number of medium-sized businesses (100-499 employees) declined by 20 between 2020 and 2021 but rebounded in 2022 and surged by 5.9% (+25 businesses) in 2023 compared to pre-pandemic levels. Since then, the total has remained steady. Medium businesses in the Construction industry faced a temporary loss of two companies in 2020 but quickly rebounded with new entries, ultimately exceeding pre-pandemic levels. Industries such as Real Estate and Rental and Leasing, as well as Accommodation and Food Services, demonstrated consistent growth with marginal increases. However, the Management of Companies and Enterprises and Administrative and Support, Waste Management, and Remediation Services industries showed significant declines, with the latter losing five medium-sized businesses between 2023 and 2024.

### *Large Businesses*

Large businesses experienced remarkable growth, with a 37% increase in 2024 compared to 2019, despite the pandemic causing a loss of five employers in 2021. The Manufacturing industry led this growth by adding six large businesses over five years, followed by the Healthcare and Social Assistance and Construction industries, which each added at least three large businesses. Notably, the Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services industry doubled its number of large businesses during this period. However, the Accommodation and Food Services industry faced significant challenges, losing three major employers in 2020, leaving only one large employer in this sector by 2024.

These trends highlight the resilience and adaptability of businesses in the region, with strong recoveries in most sectors and notable growth in key industries, despite challenges faced during the pandemic.

**Business Counts by Industry (NAICS-2), Without Employees, LER, 2019-2024**

	# June 2019	# June 2024	# Change	% Change
<b>Total</b>	<b>45,914</b>	<b>56,907</b>	<b>10,993</b>	<b>23.9%</b>
Unclassified	4,710	5,609	899	19.1%
<b>Sub-Total, Classified</b>	<b>41,204</b>	<b>51,298</b>	<b>10,094</b>	<b>24.5%</b>
<b>Goods-Producing sectors</b>	<b>9,998</b>	<b>11,326</b>	<b>1,328</b>	<b>13.3%</b>
11 - Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	5,100	5,498	398	7.8%
21 - Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	35	33	-2	-5.7%
22 - Utilities	140	138	-2	-1.4%
23 - Construction	4,005	4,866	861	21.5%
31-33 - Manufacturing	718	791	73	10.2%
<b>Service-Producing Sector</b>	<b>31206</b>	<b>39972</b>	<b>8766</b>	<b>28.1%</b>
41 - Wholesale Trade	750	675	-75	-10.0%
44-45 - Retail Trade	1,960	2,125	165	8.4%
48-49 - Transportation and Warehousing	2,675	4,682	2,007	75.0%
51 - Information and Cultural Industries	309	370	61	19.7%
52 - Finance and Insurance	2,912	2,745	-167	-5.7%
53 - Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	10,025	14,358	4,333	43.2%
54 - Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	3,748	4,444	696	18.6%
55 - Management of Companies and Enterprises	486	426	-60	-12.3%
56 - Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services	1,250	1,679	429	34.3%
61 - Educational Services	424	479	55	13.0%
62 - Health Care and Social Assistance	2,699	3,583	884	32.8%
71 - Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	556	652	96	17.3%
72 - Accommodation and Food Services	469	535	66	14.1%
81 - Other Services (except public administration)	2,936	3,215	279	9.5%
91 - Public Administration	7	4	-3	-42.9%

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Businesses without employees in the London Economic Region exhibited similar patterns of variation across industries as those with employees. The overall 24% increase in businesses without employees was driven by a 13.3% rise in goods-producing sectors and a 28.1% increase in service-producing sectors.

The Transportation and Warehousing industry experienced the most significant growth, adding 2,007 businesses, a remarkable 75% increase. Real Estate and Rental and Leasing also saw substantial expansion, with a 43.2% rise, adding 4,333 enterprises.

In contrast, some industries faced declines. Public administration recorded the largest proportional decrease, shrinking by 42.9% with the loss of 3 businesses. The Management of Companies and Enterprises sector also contracted significantly, losing 60 businesses, a 12.3% decline.

These trends reflect both the dynamic growth in certain industries and the challenges faced by others, emphasizing the diverse trajectories of business activity within the region.

## Community Insights

### EmployerOne

Employers in the London Economic Region have consistently emphasized, over the past decade, that the shortage of relevant talent in the candidate pool is the biggest challenge plaguing their workforce. The yearly Employer One Survey has been used to assess employer perceptions and realities about various workforce issues, and it has consistently revealed that the quality of available workers remains one of the toughest challenges. Over the past three years, only about three in ten employers rated the availability of qualified workers as either “Good” or “Excellent.”

The survey, which includes close to 400 employers annually across multiple sectors of the London Economic Region's economy, has consistently shown that an overwhelming majority of employers engage in hiring activity each year. However, more than half of all separations reported in the most recent survey were due to employees quitting for several reasons, including better remuneration. Employers have also faced challenges with hard-to-fill positions, particularly in highly skilled and trade occupations, with some roles remaining vacant for months or even years.

Employers have repeatedly stated their preference for word-of-mouth recruitment through personal contacts as their primary hiring method. This indicates that employers favor candidates who have demonstrated their abilities through contacts familiar to the employer, rather than those without such connections.

Regarding talent sourcing, more than 90% of employers indicated that they primarily hire all of their workforce locally within the London Economic Region. The second most common source of talent was from outside the London Economic Region but within Canada. While some employers reported hiring employees from abroad, this number remains minimal.

Efforts toward continuous training and professional development are integral to maintaining a thriving workforce. More than four in five employers who participated in the 2024 Employer One Survey indicated that they provided or supported professional development or training opportunities for their employees. Furthermore, half of these employers either fully or partially funded these professional development or training activities.

Apart from the highly competitive labour demand environment, which some employers have identified as a significant challenge hindering their ability to hire ideal candidates, other pressures, such as anticipated retirements, are compounding the problem. A recent focus group discussion facilitated by the Institutional Research unit of Fanshawe College and the London Economic Development Corporation engaged sector leaders on various labour market push-and-pull factors.

The resulting report<sup>9</sup> highlighted that retirements are expected to be the largest contributor to job openings between 2023 and 2031 across four in-demand sectors: Health, Advanced Manufacturing,

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<sup>9</sup> [Employment Prospects 2023-31 Outlook for the London Economic Region](#)

Construction, and Information Technology. The top occupations projected for retirement and subsequent job openings include:

- Transport truck drivers: 1,737 projected retirements
- Nurse aides, orderlies, and patient service associates: 1,068 projected retirements
- Registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses: 910 projected retirements
- Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics: 634 projected retirements
- Home building and renovation managers: 586 projected retirements

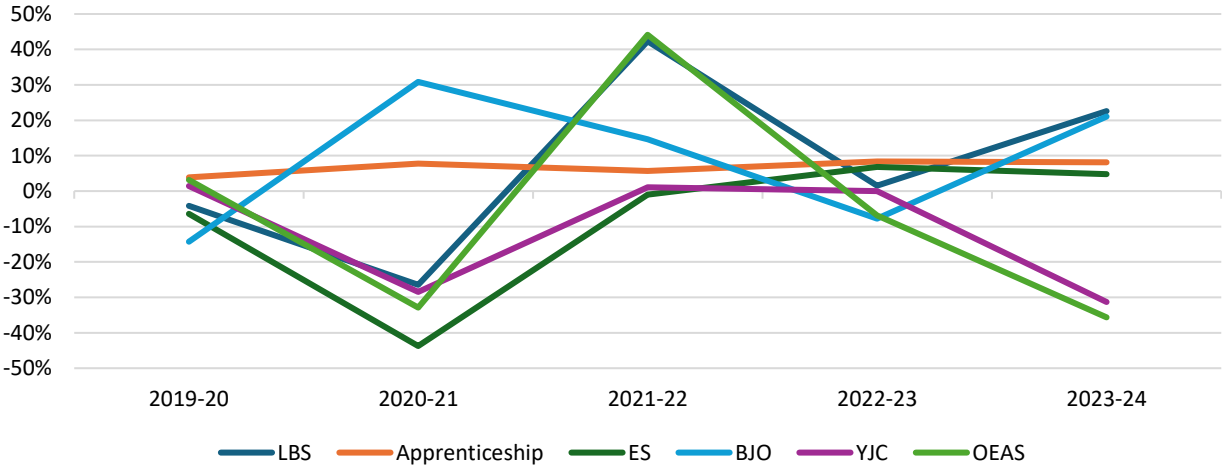
### Employment Ontario Programs

Employment Ontario Programs are the suite of programs funded by the Ontario Ministry of Labour Immigration Training and Skills Development (MLITSD) to support improved employment outcomes. Including:

- Literacy and Basic Skills
- Apprenticeship (APPR)
- Employment Services (ES)
- Ontario Employment Assistance Program (OEAS)
- Canada Ontario Jobs Grant (COJG)
- Better Jobs Ontario (BJO)
- Youth Jobs Connection (YJC)
- Youth Jobs Connection – Summer (YJC-S)

The data for this section comes from the Employment Ontario Information System - Case Management System (EOIS-CaMS) and the EOIS Apprenticeship Application. For the LER, annual data reflects 2023-2024. Range data snaps 2019/2020-2023/2024. Data counts lower than 10 have been suppressed for confidentiality.

Yearly Change in Clients for LER by Program



The annual change in client enrolment highlights growth or decline across programs. Negative data points indicate lower enrolment compared to the previous year, while positive points signify growth. APPR is the only program to experience consistent, albeit modest, growth from 2019–20 to 2023–24.

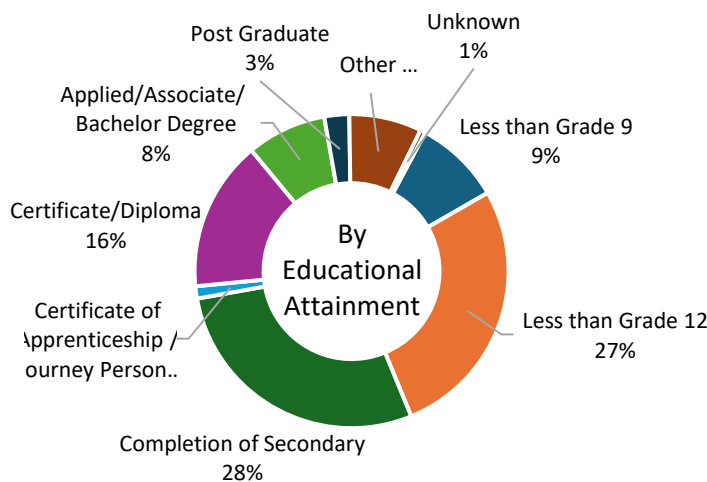
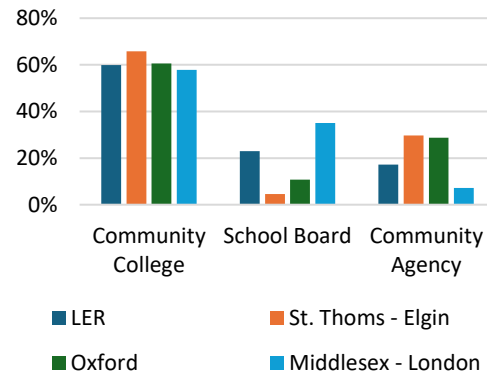
In 2020–21, enrolment in ES, LBS, YJC, and OEAS decreased due to COVID-19, while APPR and BJO saw growth. YJC rebounded in 2021–22 but has since tapered off. LBS has fluctuated between growth and decline, whereas ES began modest growth in 2022–23 and continues to increase. Conversely, OEAS enrolment has declined over the past two years.

### Literacy and Basic Skills

Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Services help adults develop and apply foundational skills like communication, numeracy, interpersonal and digital skills to support their transition to employment, apprenticeship, secondary or post-secondary education, and increased independence. In 2023-2024, the program served 2,299 unique clients, comprising 1,641 new learners and 658 carry-over learners. Notably, the number of new clients has surpassed pre-COVID levels, while carry-over clients have decreased.

The program operates through three main access points: community colleges, school boards, and community agencies. Community colleges are the largest providers, serving 60% of clients, followed by school boards at 23% and community agencies at 17%. At the county level, service distribution varies significantly. School board services are more prevalent in Middlesex-London (35%) compared to Oxford (11%) and Elgin-St. Thomas (5%).

LBS Clients by Access Point, LER, 2023-2024

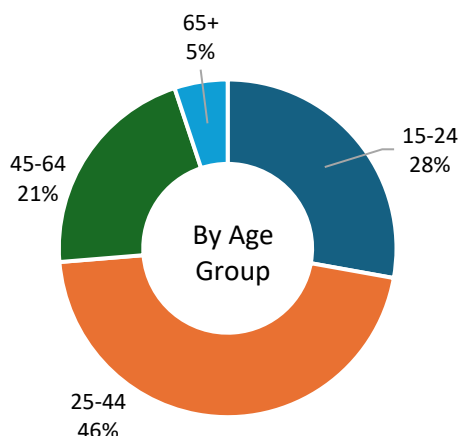


Conversely, community agencies play a larger role in Elgin-St. Thomas (30%) and Oxford (29%) than in London (17%).

The educational background of LBS clients reflects diverse needs, with 64% having completed secondary school or less, while 35% have higher education. Regarding demographics, 53% of clients are female, 45% male, 1% transgender, and 1% undisclosed. Male enrollment has increased at a higher rate, narrowing the gender gap. Among designated groups, 25% of clients disclosed a disability, 14% identified as newcomers, 8% as racialized,

and 6% as Indigenous.

The age distribution of clients highlights that the 16-44 age group represents 46% of all learners. Although all age groups saw increased enrolment, the 65+ cohort, which accounts for 5% of clients, nearly doubled from the previous year. Notably, 60% of clients in this age group are from Oxford County.



LBS learners pursue a range of goals. Employment remains the most common goal, cited by 34% of clients, marking a 90% increase from the previous year. Post-secondary education, the second most common goal at 29%, experienced a slight decline (-6%). Secondary school credit (13%) saw an 18% increase, while independence (13%) rose significantly by 66%. Apprenticeship (10%) declined by 24%.

These trends underscore the critical role of LBS services in addressing the varied needs of individuals across different demographics,

educational backgrounds, and geographic areas within the region.

## Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship (APPR) programs combine on-the-job and in-school training for employment in a skilled trade to support their successful certification into their trade of choice.

In LER, there has been a steady increase in Active Apprentices over the years, reaching 5284 in the 2023-2024 year. Despite the overall growth, there was a 6% decrease in new registrants over the previous year.

Due to the nature of the program, Apprenticeship participants have lower overall educational attainment than other EO programs. In the region 78% have completed their secondary education while the remaining 22% have less than grade 12.

There was a 9% drop in male participants from the previous year, however they account for 81% of all new participants. Meanwhile, female participants account for 18% of the new registrants but their registration increased 13% from the previous year. Individuals that identified as other represent the remaining 1% of the program participants.

New apprenticeship registrants had a low disclosure of representation in designated groups. Racialized participants represented 3%, Francophone 2%, Indigenous 1%, and persons with disabilities 1%.

Participants in the program were primarily 15-24 years (53%), 25-44 (43%), with a small portion in the 45-64 year range (4%).

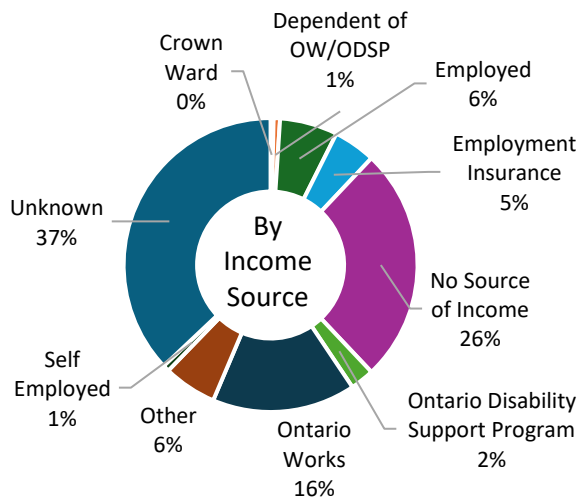
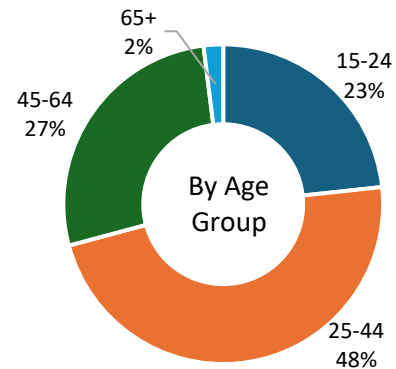
Apprentices are registered in 23 programs, 44% are in the construction sector (Electrician, construction craft worker, and plumber), 21% in Motive power sector (Automotive service technicians, and truck and coach technicians), 21% in service sector (horticulture technicians, hairstylists, and child development workers), and 15% in industrial sector (millwrights and industrial electricians).

## Employment Services

Employment Services (ES) offers a range of resources, supports and service components to respond to the career and employment needs of individuals on a path to higher skill training and employment and the skilled labour needs of employers.

There have been large system changes to the Employment Services program through the formation of the London Regional Employment Services. 2023-2024 represents the first year with these changes in place for LER.

In LER, ES served 6,740 unique clients in 2023-2024, a modest 4.8% increase. As expected, most were unemployed (83.9%). 13.3% of the clients were employed; under-employed (4.3%), part-time (4.1%), full-time (4.0%), and 1% were self-employed. Finally, 2.8% were students, 2.2% were full time and 0.6% part time.

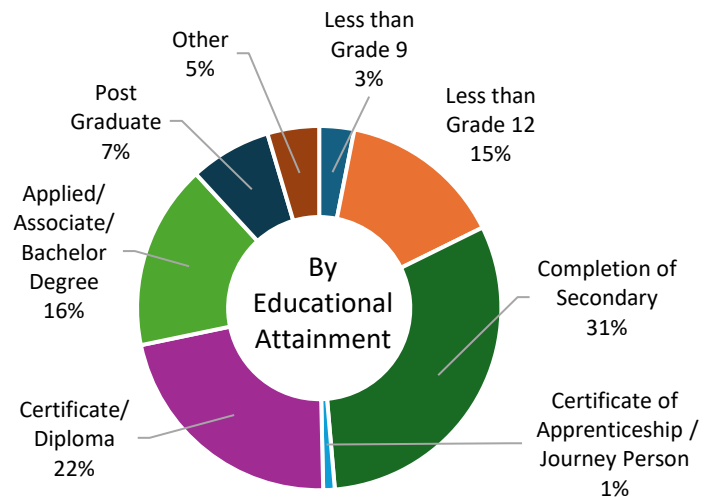


Most clients (58.8%) had a source of income. The largest group (25.1%) received support from Ontario Works (OW), an increase of 19.3% from the previous year, 4.2% were recipients of Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), and 1.1% were dependants of someone receiving OW or ODSP. There were also 7.4% of clients receiving EI.

The largest client age cohort are the 25–44-year-olds (48%), this group saw a modest increase from the previous year. The 45–64-year-olds were the second largest cohort (27%) however, their participation shrank from the previous year. Although the 15-24 year cohort (23%) was just over a quarter of the clients, this group grew by 25% from the previous year. The 65+ cohort was the smallest (2%), shrinking 14% from the previous year.

Males represent 52.1% of the clients, increasing 10% from the previous year. Females shrank 2% and represent 46.5% of the clients. Trans and Other clients represent 1%.

Employment service clients identified with a variety of designated groups. Almost a quarter of the clients (23%) disclosed disabilities, and 1% disclosed they were deaf. Another 23% were internationally trained, and 22% were newcomers. A modest 9% of clients were racialized, 4% Indigenous, and 2% Francophone.

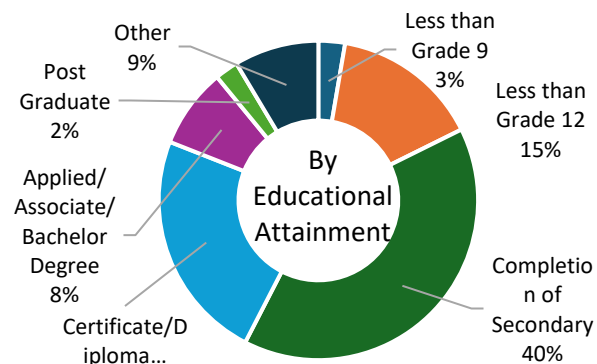


Almost half (48.6%) of the ES clients completed secondary school or less, increasing by 7.8% from the previous year. Clients with less than grade 12 had the largest growth, at 13.4% from the previous year. Individuals with a certificate/degree represented 22.1% of the clients and individuals with applied/associate/bachelor's degrees represented 16.4% of the clients. Apprentices were the smallest group, representing 1% of the clients.

### Ontario Employment Assistance Program

In LER, OEAS served 603 clients, falling 35.6% from the previous year and sinking below the 2020-2021 levels.

The 25-44 age remains the largest client group, despite a 37.7% decrease. There were no clients in the 65+ age group. There are slightly more males that access the program, however, their participation dropped quicker than the female participation, moving access closer to gender parity.



Most (74.5%) of the OEAS clients had a source of income. Almost half (48.8%) accessed ODSP, 11.1% accessed OW, 3.1% received EI and 7.2% were employed.

Many (71.5%) of the clients identified as a person with disabilities, and 3% identified as deaf. Another 10.3% identified as racialized, 3.6% as indigenous and 3.5% as a newcomer.

## Better Jobs Ontario

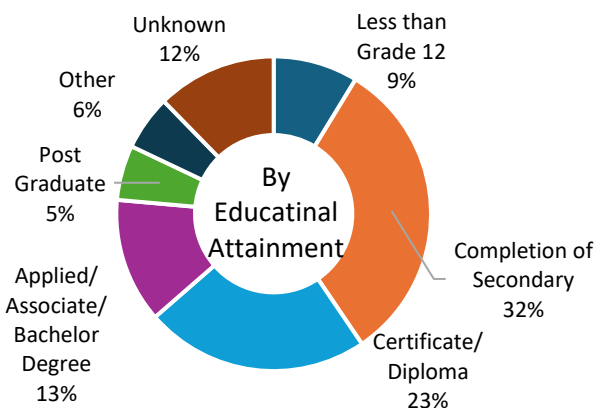
Better Jobs Ontario (BJO), formerly called Second Career, is an application-based grant program to support unemployed individuals who have been laid off or come from low-income households to access vocational skills training.

In LER, there has been an upward trend in BJO registration over the years reaching 201 registrants in 2023-2024. There was a 21.1% increase in program participants from the previous year's enrollment.

The growth in the program is due to an increase in male enrolment. Male participants represented 64.5% of the clients in 2023-2024, whereas in 2018 they were 48.6%.

This program was developed to re-skill individuals, and clients are primarily in the 25-44 year range. However, 7% of the clients were in the 15-24 age cohort, the 2<sup>nd</sup> occurrence in 6 years. There were no clients in the 65+ age cohort over the past 6 years.

BJO clients have a range of educational attainments. The largest group, (32%) has a secondary education, and 41% have post-secondary education or higher. This is in line with the program design.



As expected, 39% of participants had no income source, 27% received income from OW and 26% were on EI, the remaining 9% received income from other sources. There is a shifting trend in the length of time out of work, in 2023-2024 there were more clients unemployed for 12 months (26%) than under 3 months (19%), this is the first time this group was not the largest. There was also an increase of clients out of work for an unknown amount of time (21%).

## Youth Jobs Connection

Youth Jobs Connection (YJC) and Youth Jobs Connection – Summer (YJC-S) programs provide intensive support like pre-employment training, placements, mentorship, and work or education support for youth with complex barriers to employment. The 2023-24 year was the final year the program will be offered.

In LER, the YJC and YJC-S have been shrinking with 316 in the YJC and 235 in YJC-S. This program is for youth, the YJC has 15% of the participants in the “over-24 years”, while all others are in the 15-24 year group. There is an even split between male and female participants.

Both streams of the program had representation from designated groups. The YJC program included people with disabilities (46%), racialized (15%), Newcomers (11%), and Indigenous (5%). The YJC-S program included racialized individuals (37%), people with disabilities (29%), Newcomers (22%), and Francophone (9%)

## Community Strategic Priorities Recommended Actions

The recommended actions are built on the previous Strategic Plan and updated to reflect progress and changes in the region. The actions are meant to guide the work of local workforce interest holders including but not limited to: Employment Ontario programs, Economic Development Offices, Chambers of Commerce, Small Business Centres, School Boards and Academic Institutions, Municipalities and a local government.

### Apprenticeship and Skilled Trades Development

- Highlight and promote apprenticeship opportunities for individuals considering careers in skilled trades.
- Create and promote regional hubs for apprenticeship registrations.
- Create experiential learning programs to reduce the time between application and placement (e.g., SAO, SDF, Pre-Apprenticeship, Micro-credentials).
- Advocate for the assessment and redesign of skilled trades educational programs (e.g., admission criteria, journey-person-to-apprentice ratios).

### Workforce Engagement and Development

- Increase local awareness of regional labour market needs for in-demand skills and occupations, labour supply-demand balance by industry, barriers to employment and workforce outcomes.
- Increase the number of job fairs and community networking events.
- Improve dissemination of labour market information to equity-seeking groups.
- Develop marketing strategies to re-engage unemployed individuals with employment services.
- Develop educational and professional training programs for in-demand skills and occupations (e.g., cybersecurity, IT, digital literacy).
- Increase access to upskilling, including soft skills, digital literacy, numeracy, conflict resolution, problem-solving, and critical thinking.
- Develop transportation solutions for rural communities to improve access to jobs and services.

### Economic Development and Entrepreneurship

- Develop a centralized hub for services and funding resources for regional entrepreneurs.
- Organize and increase the impact of business networking activities.
- Showcase local business successes and highlight local strengths like local suppliers and other workforce strategies
- Continue the expansion of internet connectivity in rural areas.

## Supporting Youth and Vulnerable Populations

- Create targeted initiatives to re-engage older workers (e.g., part-time roles, mentoring, consulting).
- Generate innovative ways to connect with youth (e.g., hands-on training, summer jobs, robotics challenges).
- Promote and enhance youth services that connect young people with the labour market.
- Improve access to digital literacy programs and internet tools that support vulnerable populations.
- Engage equity-seeking groups (e.g., Indigenous, visible minorities, women, youth) in workforce development projects.
- Offer multi-language employment services to support diverse populations.

## Equity, Inclusion, and Advocacy

- Engage landlords and employers in discussions on anti-discrimination practices.
- Develop a platform for workers to report workplace discrimination.
- Advocate for increased access to translation and interpretation services at regional employment service providers.
- Advocate for reduced processing times for temporary foreign workers.
- Advocate for living wages, benefits, and pension programs, incentivizing participation through recognized badges (e.g., Better Business Bureau, working wage employer).
- Advocate for fair access to housing and jobs, free of discrimination.

## Labour Market Research and Employer Engagement

- Engage employers, industry groups, and professional associations to review and align hiring criteria with needs and remove unnecessary barriers in job postings (e.g., high school diploma or minimum experience requirements).
- Develop and promote attraction, recruitment, and retention best practices by industry, using successful regional examples.
- Engage employers in offering upskilling opportunities to improve retention
- Collaborate with placement agencies to strengthen links between job seekers and employers.

