



# **LOCAL LABOUR MARKET PLAN**

**Sarnia Lambton  
2023 -2024**

## Acknowledgments

The views expressed in this publication are the views of the Sarnia Lambton Workforce Development Board and do not necessarily reflect those of the Province.

The Government of Ontario and its agencies are in no way bound by any recommendations contained in this document.

### **Mission**

SLWDB is a diverse and dedicated organization, committed to identifying needs and facilitating solutions to attract, train and retain a viable workforce through community partnerships.

### **Vision**

Growing Sarnia Lambton's workforce for tomorrow's economy.

SLWDB leads Sarnia Lambton in its approach to workforce development and labour market planning. The team actively engages organizations and community partners in local labour market projects. SLWDB also conducts consultations with business owners throughout the year in order to identify needs and facilitate solutions to grow the local workforce.

### **Network**

SLWDB is one of 26 local planning board areas that make up Workforce Planning Ontario that are funded to conduct and disseminate local labour market research and engage community stakeholders in a planning process that supports local solutions to local issues.



This Employment Ontario project is funded in part by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.

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## Data Sources

This report combines data from a variety of sources to provide a relevant picture of the local labour market and economic conditions. It is a comprehensive report that is evidence-based and community-driven.

The sources consulted include:

- Canadian Business Counts
- Labour Force Survey
- Census Data
- Employment Ontario
- EmployerOne Survey
- Focus Groups & Community Consultations
- WISL: Work in Sarnia Lambton

SLWDB makes no representation or warranty, expressed or implied, as to the accuracy or completeness of the data referenced. In providing this material, SLWDB does not assume any responsibility or liability.

We invite your feedback on all publications produced by SLWDB. Additional information can be obtained by contacting:

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## Executive Summary

The Sarnia Lambton Workforce Development Board's Local Labour Market Plan (LLMP) is an annual, comprehensive report that seeks to inform the public, job seekers, service providers, and employers on the local labour market. This report brings together our research findings over the last year, including statistical data and input received through community consultations.

The local workforce remains a strong and vibrant workforce and has increased over the past year. Unemployment rates peaked at 17.9% in June 2020 but have been steadily improving. In 2023, it averaged at 7.1%. Job demand has been fluctuating, with health-related occupations having the lowest unemployment rate at 4.2%, and art, culture, sports, and recreation-related occupations having the highest at 25.1%.

In the face of these changes and global events that influence our economy, our Action Plan for 2024-2027 has been crafted to support growth in the workforce especially where there is the biggest need. The Action Plan focuses on five key areas:

- Recruitment and Retention
- Promotion of the Skilled Trades
- Supporting the Rural Workforce
- Supporting a Diverse Workforce
- Exploring the Clean Energy Sector

We hope that the information this report contains will help to inform our community partners and direct programming and workforce planning for the community. Our hope is that this report will encourage community discussions to identify opportunities and resolve gaps in the current workforce.

Sincerely,

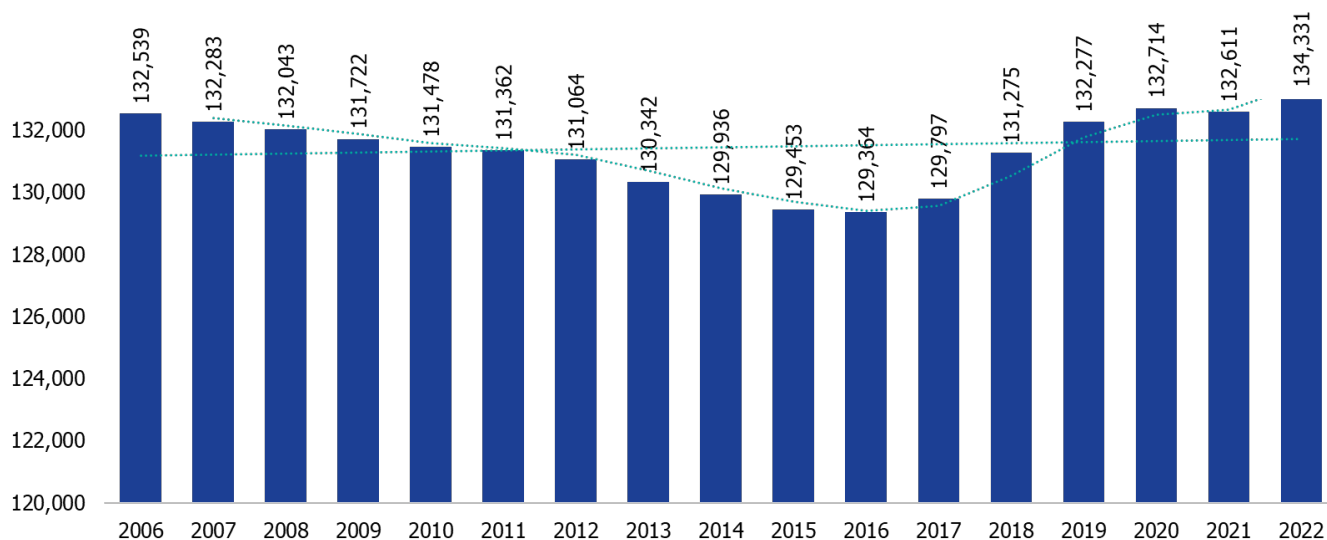
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# LOCAL POPULATION

Sarnia Lambton is located on the beautiful homeland that is the traditional territory of the Ojibwe, Potawatomi and Odawa First Nations of the Three Fires Confederacy, combining both urban and rural areas. There are 134,331 individuals residing in the region across 11 municipalities and three First Nations communities, with a steady growth in population since 2013. Approximately 49.5% of residents identify as male, while 50.5 identifies as female in the 2021 Census of Population.

The three First Nations communities include: Aamjiwnaang First Nation (2,575 registered, 903 on reserve), Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point (2,649 registered, 1,365 on reserve), and Walpole Island First Nation (4,997 registered, 2,321 on reserve)

**Figure 1: Population Trends (2013-2022)**



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0140-01 Components of population change by census division, 2016 boundaries.

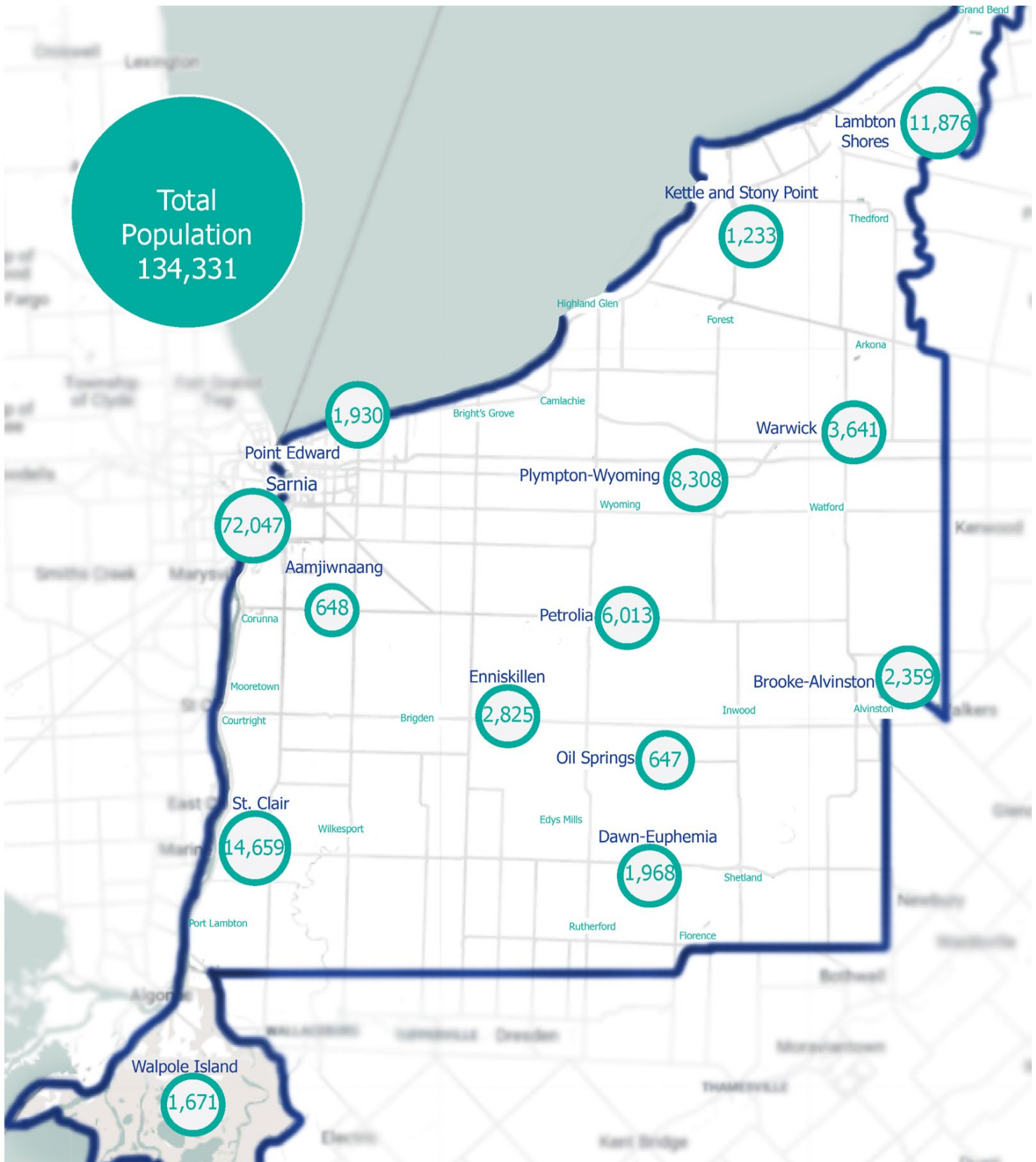
**Table 1: Demographic Data of First Nations Communities**

Category	Aamjiwnaang	Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point	Walpole Island
Registered Population	2,575	2,649	4,997
Residing on Own Reserve	903	1,365	2,321
Residing Off Reserve	1,591	1,254	2,650
2016 Census Population	639	1,011	1,589
2021 Census Population	648	1,233	N/A

Source: Government of Canada. Indigenous and Northern Affairs, First Nation Profile as of January 2024.



**Figure 2: Sarnia Lambton Municipalities Population Estimates, 2021**

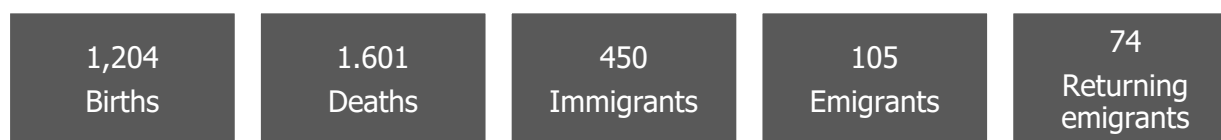


Source: Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0142-01 Population estimates by census subdivision, 2021 boundaries.

# POPULATION AND MIGRATION PATTERNS IN SARNIA LAMBTON

Over the past two decades, Sarnia Lambton has experienced a notable demographic shift, with an increase in older demographics and a decline in younger demographics. With an average age of 44, it surpasses Ontario's average of 41. From 2016 to 2021, all age groups except the 18-24 category saw net migration gains, highlighting a particular attraction for the 45-64 age bracket, as well as for the youngest and near-retirement populations. This resulted in an overall net increase of 4,111 migrants, indicating a growing preference for this region among various age groups, except young adults.

**Figure 3: Components of Population Growth (2017-2022)**



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0140-01 Components of population change by census division, 2016 boundaries. Release date: 2023-01-11.

**Table 2: Percentage Change in Age Groups (2001-2022)**

Age Group	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021	2022	% Change (2001-2022)
0 to 14 years	24,815	21,974	20,373	19,852	20,168	20,266	-18%
15 to 19 years	9,983	9,738	8,797	7,165	6,925	7,113	-29%
20 to 44 years	43,194	40,487	38,031	36,750	37,653	38,874	-10%
45 to 59 years	27,434	31,027	30,918	27,887	24,926	24,435	-11%
60 years and older	26,384	29,313	33,243	37,710	42,880	43,643	65%

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0140-01 Components of population change by census division, 2016 boundaries. Release date: 2023-01-11.

**Table 3: Migration Characteristics (2016-2021)**

Age Group	In-migrants	Out-migrants	Net-migrants
0-17	3,436	2,168	1,268
18-24	2,598	2,616	-18
25-44	6,397	5,499	898
45-64	4,286	2,559	1,727
65+	2,051	1,815	236
Total	18,768	14,657	4,111

Source: Statistics Canada, Taxfiler.



# EDUCATION IN SARNIA LAMBTON

In 2021, 15.7% of Sarnia Lambton's population held a university degree at the bachelor level or higher, which was lower than Ontario's average of 29.9%. However, a higher percentage of residents here held a certificate or diploma (28.4% compared to 20.3% in Ontario).

Overall, there has been an increase in the number of residents who have earned a certificate, diploma, or degree compared to 2016 suggesting a continued trend toward higher educational attainment. Additionally, Sarnia Lambton has a higher representation of apprenticeship or trades certificates or diplomas compared to Ontario.

**Table 4: Educational Attainment in Sarnia-Lambton vs. Ontario (2016 & 2021)**

2016		Education Level	2021	
Sarnia-Lambton	Ontario		Sarnia-Lambton	Ontario
16.8% 17,615	17.5% 1,935,355	No Certificate, Diploma, or Degree	14.6% 15,500	15.3% 1,799,890
29.4% 30,835	27.4% 3,026,100	Secondary (High) School Diploma or Equivalency Certificate	30.6% 32,520	27.2% 3,204,170
10.5% 11,075	6.0% 664,180	Apprenticeship or Trades Certificate or Diploma	9.2 % 9,955	5.0% 592,485
27.9% 29,275	20.8% 2,298,715	College, CEGEP, or Other Non-University Certificate or Diploma	28.4% 30,190	20.3% 2,389,205
1.3% 1,395	2.2% 242,005	University Certificate or Diploma Below Bachelor Level	1.4% 1,500	2.3% 268,480
14.1% 14,825	26% 2,872,085	University Certificate, Diploma, or Degree at Bachelor Level or Above	15.7% 16,710	29.9% 3,528,600

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 and 2021 Censuses. Custom table.

# ECONOMIC PULSE: LABOUR FORCE INSIGHT

## Industry Trends

Based on workforce size, the top industries include Healthcare and social assistance, Manufacturing, and Retail trade. Sarnia Lambton witnessed substantial growth across various industries, with Construction having the most growth (19.8%), followed by Mining and Oil (19.2%) and Real Estate (15.3%). Agriculture and Utilities also experienced growth by 11.7% and 10.5% respectively. Between 2016 and 2021, the Arts & Recreation industry had a decline of -56.2%, followed by Wholesale trade (-33.7%), and Other Services (-33.5%). The Management sector also experienced a downturn of -33.3%, as did the Information and Culture industry (-31%).

### Industries experiencing the largest growth:

- **+ 19.8%** Construction
- **+ 19.2%** Mining and Oil
- **+ 15.3%** Real Estate
- **+ 11.7%** Agriculture
- **+ 10.5%** Utilities

### Industries experiencing the largest decline:

- **- 56.2%** Arts & Recreation
- **- 33.7%** Wholesale
- **- 33.5%** Other Services
- **- 33.3%** Management
- **- 31%** Info and Culture

**Table 5: Workforce Changes by Industry in Sarnia Lambton and Ontario (2016-2021)**

Industry	Lambton 2016	Lambton 2021	Change 2016-2021 Lambton	Change 2016-2021 Ontario
Construction	4,910	5,880	↑ <b>19.8%</b>	↓ <b>-9.9%</b>
Mining, quarrying, oil & gas extraction	650	775	↑ <b>19.2%</b>	↓ <b>-9.7%</b>
Real estate, rental & leasing	750	865	↑ <b>15.3%</b>	↓ <b>-2.6%</b>
Agriculture, forestry, fishing & hunting	2,555	2,855	↑ <b>11.7%</b>	↓ <b>-2.5%</b>
Utilities	620	685	↑ <b>10.5%</b>	↓ <b>-8.4%</b>
Health care and social assistance	7,665	8,385	↑ <b>9.4%</b>	↓ <b>-10.4%</b>
Professional, scientific & technical services	2,730	2,785	↑ <b>2.0%</b>	↓ <b>-15.5%</b>
Educational services	3,580	3,555	↓ <b>-0.7%</b>	↑ <b>3.3%</b>
Finance and insurance	1,295	1,240	↓ <b>-4.2%</b>	↓ <b>-4.3%</b>
Public administration	2,315	2,210	↓ <b>-4.5%</b>	↓ <b>-3.4%</b>
Transportation & warehousing	2,460	2,335	↓ <b>-5.1%</b>	↓ <b>-7.5%</b>
Manufacturing	6,495	5,995	↓ <b>-7.7%</b>	↑ <b>8.3%</b>
Administrative and support	2,755	2,430	↓ <b>-11.8%</b>	↑ <b>9.1%</b>
Retail trade	6,490	5,630	↓ <b>-13.3%</b>	↑ <b>7.9%</b>
Accommodation and food services	4,330	3,090	↓ <b>-28.6%</b>	↑ <b>50.0%</b>
Information & cultural industries	565	390	↓ <b>-31.0%</b>	↑ <b>7.7%</b>
Management	45	30	↓ <b>-33.3%</b>	↓ <b>-52.9%</b>
Other services	2,835	1,885	↓ <b>-33.5%</b>	↑ <b>23.5%</b>
Wholesale trade	2,105	1,395	↓ <b>-33.7%</b>	↑ <b>12.8%</b>
Arts, entertainment & recreation	1,335	585	↓ <b>-56.2%</b>	↑ <b>55.8%</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 & 2021 Census. Custom Table.

## Occupation Trends Data

The top occupations in Sarnia Lambton includes Sales and service, Trades, transport, and equipment operators, Business, finance and administration, Occupations in education, law and social, community and government service, and Health. The workforce has expanded, with the labor force numbers rising from 105,015 to 106,375. This growth occurred despite a decrease in active labor force participants, dropping from 61,460 to 59,650 residents actively participating in the workforce. The occupations that experienced the largest increase in the unemployment rate between 2016 and 2021 included Art, culture, recreation, and sport (11.2% increase), Sales and service (9.8% increase), Manufacturing and utilities (3.7% increase), and Management occupations (2.3% increase).

**Table 6: Workforce Changes by Occupation for Sarnia Lambton and Ontario, 2016-2021.**

	Sarnia 2016	Sarnia 2021	Ontario 2016	Ontario 2021	% Change Sarnia	% Change Ontario
Management	6,130	6,615	790,875	897,595	↑ 8%	↑ 13%
Business, finance & administration	7,300	6,825	1,124,765	1,150,215	↓ -7%	↑ 2%
Natural, applied sciences & related	3,935	3,890	516,115	24,045	↓ -1%	↓ -95%
Health	4,640	5,420	447,045	24,620	↑ 17%	↓ -94%
Education, law & social, community & government services	5,865	5,705	831,340	849,345	↓ -3%	↑ 2%
Art, culture, recreation & sport	1,070	895	225,715	223,645	↓ -16%	↓ -1%
Sales & service	14,690	12,765	1,632,080	1,510,455	↓ -13%	↓ -7%
Trades, transport & equipment operators & related	11,230	11,115	927,825	967,055	↓ -1%	↑ 4%
Natural resources, agriculture & related production	1,675	1,595	113,400	104,285	↓ -5%	↓ -8%
Manufacturing & utilities	3,480	3,400	361,450	335,440	↓ -2%	↓ -7%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 & 2021 Census. Custom Table.

**Table 7: Occupation Unemployment Rate Changes for Sarnia Lambton and Ontario, 2016-2021.**

	Sarnia 2016	Sarnia 2021	Ontario 2016	Ontario 2021	% Change Sarnia	% Change Ontario
Management	2.1%	4.5%	2.6%	5.3%	↑ 2.4%	↑ 2.7%
Business, finance & administration	4.4%	5.3%	4.4%	6.6%	↑ 0.9%	↑ 2.2%
Natural, applied sciences & related	4.1%	4.5%	4.0%	4.5%	↑ 0.4%	↑ 0.5%
Health	2.8%	4.2%	2.3%	3.7%	↑ 1.4%	↑ 1.4%
Education, law & social, community & government services	4.2%	5.1%	3.8%	6.4%	↑ 0.9%	↑ 2.6%
Art, culture, recreation & sport	14.0%	25.1%	8.0%	16.0%	↑ 11.1%	↑ 8.0%
Sales & service	7.4%	17.2%	6.7%	19.0%	↑ 9.8%	↑ 12.3%
Trades, transport & equipment operators & related	8.3%	8.8%	6.6%	9.7%	↑ 0.5%	↑ 3.1%
Natural resources, agriculture & related production	11.3%	11.0%	10.1%	11.3%	↓ -0.3%	↑ 1.2%
Manufacturing & utilities	5.3%	9.0%	6.9%	11.8%	↑ 3.7%	↑ 4.9%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 & 2021 Census. Custom Table.

# LABOR MARKET DYNAMICS

Labour Force Survey data highlights shifts in employment patterns between 2013 and 2022. Sarnia Lambton's workforce aged 15+ hovered around 109,000 while the labour participation rate decreased from 61.1% to 57.7%, indicating a contracting workforce, possibly due to an aging population. Employment rates dropped in 2020, reflecting the pandemic's impact, but showed recovery to 58.8% in 2022. Unemployment, which peaked at 11.6% in 2020, improved to 6.5% by 2022, signaling a return to pre-pandemic levels. These labour market changes, while challenging, also present opportunities for innovation and development of new economic sectors.

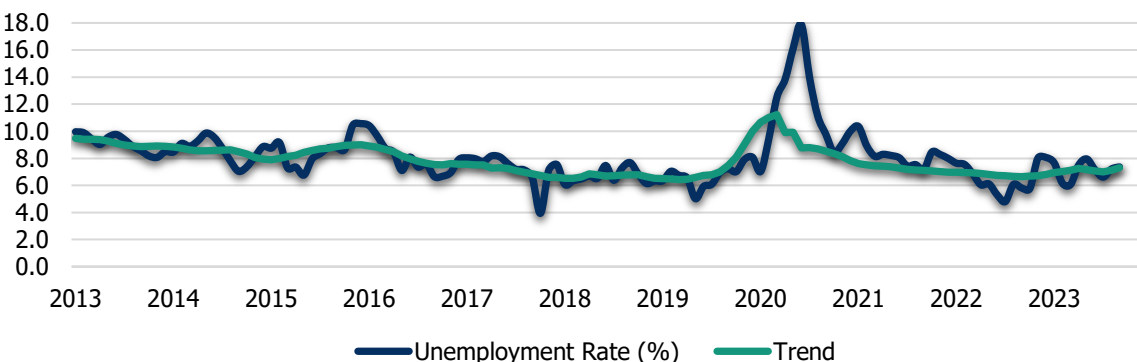
Sarnia Lambton experienced seasonal shifts in the unemployment rates from July 2022 to June 2023. The unemployment rates increased in the colder months, indicating a trend that might be tied to seasonal employment patterns in sectors like agriculture and tourism. This seasonal shift is less pronounced compared to other regions. Visit [www.slwdb.org](http://www.slwdb.org) for monthly labour force statistics.

**Table 8: Labour market information for Sarnia Lambton, 2013-2023**

Annual Averages	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Source Population 15+	108.5	108.3	107.9	107.7	107.8	108.6	109.3	109.6	109.4	109.0
Participation Rate (%)	61.1	61.4	61.3	60.7	60.2	60.1	59.5	54.5	57.5	57.7
Labour Force	66.3	66.5	66.2	65.4	64.9	65.3	65.0	59.7	62.9	62.9
Employed	60.3	60.8	60.5	60.2	60.2	60.9	60.6	52.9	57.7	58.8
Unemployed	6.0	5.7	5.7	5.2	4.7	4.4	4.4	6.9	5.2	4.1
Unemployment Rate (%)	9.1	8.6	8.6	8.0	7.3	6.7	6.7	11.6	8.2	6.5

Source: Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey, 2013-2023. Estimates calculated by Metro Economics (Note: Estimates for source population, labour force, employed and unemployed are in thousands of persons).

**Figure 4: Unemployment Rate (%) Sarnia Lambton, 2013 - 2023**



Source: Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey, 2013-2023. Estimates calculated by Metro Economics.



# BUSINESS PROFILE

Sarnia Lambton is home to 11,328 businesses with the majority (68%) operating without any employees. Businesses without employees are largely in Real Estate, Rental and Leasing and Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting industries. Sarnia Lambton's business landscape is primarily driven by micro-sized businesses (1-4 employees) and small businesses (5-99 employees), which operate in the Construction and Retail trade sectors. Medium-sized businesses (100-499 employees) are primarily within the Manufacturing and Health Care and Social Assistance sectors. Meanwhile, large businesses (500+ employees) are predominantly in the Construction and Public Administration industries.

**Table 9: Industry Breakdown of Businesses**

Industry sector (2-Digits NAICS)	Employees					Total Employees	% of Total Businesses
	No Employees	Micro 1-4	Small 5-99	Medium 100-499	Large + 500		
11 - Agriculture	1985	142	97	1	0	2,225	19.64%
21 - Mining	28	12	12	0	0	52	0.46%
22 - Utilities	43	2	10	1	0	56	0.49%
23 - Construction	539	242	230	9	2	1,022	9.02%
31-33 - Manufacturing	91	38	97	15	2	243	2.15%
41 - Wholesale Trade	93	57	105	2	1	258	2.28%
44-45 - Retail Trade	279	176	341	7	0	803	7.09%
48-49 - Transportation & Warehousing	258	64	64	2	1	389	3.43%
51 - Information & Cultural	38	21	17	0	0	76	0.67%
52 - Finance & Insurance	459	51	84	0	0	594	5.24%
53 - Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	2073	130	34	4	0	2,241	19.78%
54 - Professional, Scientific & Tec. Services	556	162	92	4	0	814	7.19%
55 - Management of Companies	64	5	5	0	1	75	0.66%
56 - Administrative Support	181	61	60	7	0	309	2.73%
61 - Educational Services	44	16	21	0	2	83	0.73%
62 - Health Care & Social Assistance	388	172	212	14	1	787	6.95%
71 - Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	89	14	32	0	0	135	1.19%
72 - Accommodation & Food Services	120	39	221	3	0	383	3.38%
81 - Other Services	420	192	147	2	0	761	6.72%
91 - Public Administration	2	2	13	3	2	22	0.19%

Source: Statistics Canada, June 2023.



## Income and Employment Type Analysis by Occupation

In 2021, occupations with the highest median income included those in Business, finance, and administration, Natural and applied sciences, and Manufacturing and utilities. Occupations with the lowest median income were in Art, culture, recreation and sport occupations, Sales and service, Natural resources, and Agriculture. Approximately 59% of those employed worked full-time. Part-time occupations were moderately higher in the Art, culture, recreation, and sport, Sales and service, and Agriculture occupations.

**Table 10: Income and Employment Type by Occupation**

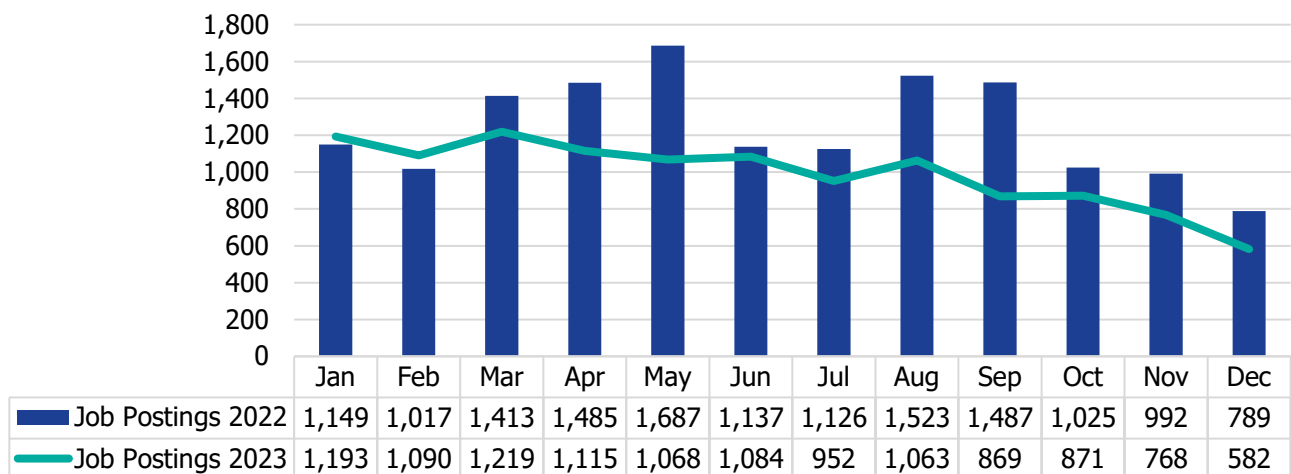
	Median Income	Employed Full-time	Employed Part-time
0 Management Occupations	\$103,000	4,660	1,415
1 Business, Finance, and Administration Occupations	\$44,800	3,955	2,230
2 Natural and Applied Sciences and Related Occupations	\$87,000	2,710	925
3 Health Occupations	\$44,000	2,565	2,355
4 Education, Law, Social, Community and Gov. Services	\$50,400	3,340	1,800
5 Art, Culture, Recreation, and Sport Occupations	\$12,000	300	315
6 Sales and Service Occupations	\$18,400	3,865	5,850
7 Trades, Transport, and Equipment Operators and Related	\$52,000	5,355	4,190
8 Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Related Production	\$20,800	575	660
9 Manufacturing and Utilities Occupations	\$67,000	2,090	900
Total	\$33,200	29,420	20,645

Source: Statistics Canada 2021 Census. Custom Table.

# WISL: WORK IN SARNIA LAMBTON

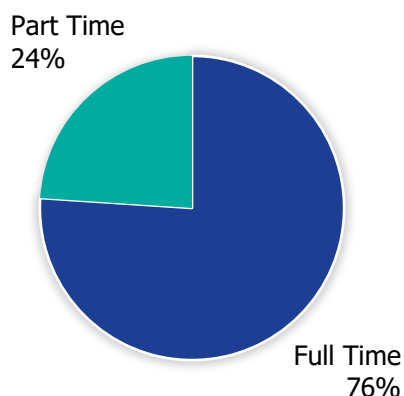
Work in Sarnia Lambton (WISL) is an online job board and platform operated by SLWDB that connects employers and job seekers in Sarnia Lambton to various tools and resources. WISL provides local job demand data with key information, including the total number of job postings, as well as job posting information on occupations, industries, locations by municipalities, job boards, and skills required for available jobs in Sarnia Lambton. Job posting counts across many industries fluctuate month-to-month. Over the past year WISL collected a total of 12,646 active job posts from 2,207 companies. There has been an increase in job posting counts in comparison to the previous year, with an average job posting length of 28.7 days.

**Figure 5: Job posting counts by Month**

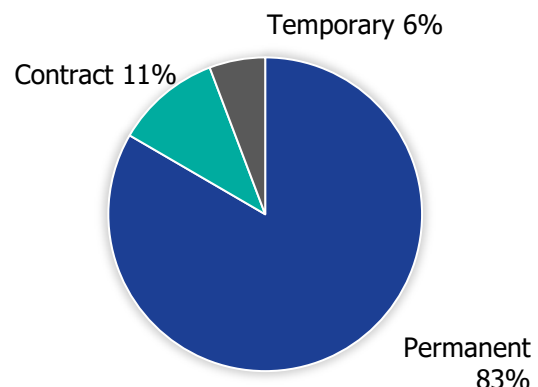


Source: Sarnia Lambton Workforce Development Board (WISL), 2023 Data.

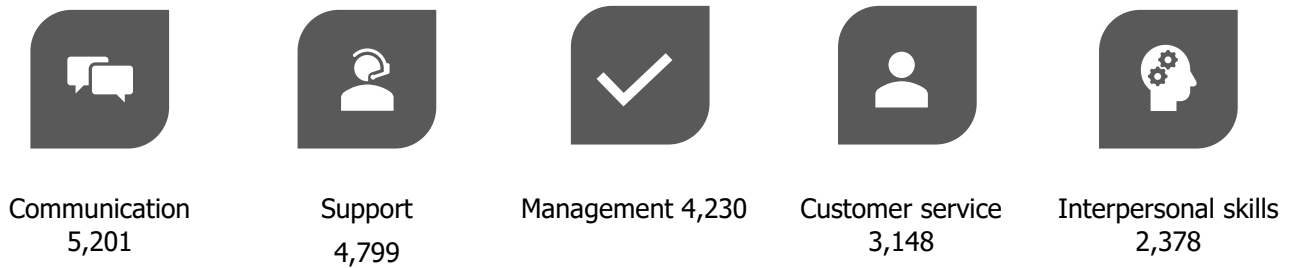
**Figure 6: Job Duration**



**Figure 7: Job Type**



**Figure 8: Top Five Skills Demanded by Employers**



**Table 11: Annualized Full-Time Salary by Occupation in Sarnia Lambton**

	Job postings	Annualized Full-Time Salary (CAD)
Retail salespersons	801	\$39,400
Home support workers, housekeepers & related occupations	431	\$31,701
Other customer & information services representatives	388	\$39,760
Registered nurses & registered psychiatric nurses	356	\$89,322
Retail & wholesale trade managers	306	\$54,059
Administrative assistants	275	\$46,180
Social & community service workers	263	\$51,717
Cooks	243	\$36,725
Transport truck drivers	243	\$77,869
Automotive service technicians, truck & bus mechanics	186	\$78,353
Food counter attendants, kitchen helpers & related support occupations	185	\$35,526
Security guards & related security service occupations	183	\$36,171
Licensed practical nurses	176	\$76,807
Material handlers	172	\$44,141
Light duty cleaners	170	\$36,079
Janitors, caretakers & building superintendents	146	\$42,083
Food & beverage servers	127	\$32,282
Retail sales supervisors	121	\$41,790
Receptionists	116	\$41,156
Early childhood educators & assistants	113	\$39,580
Delivery & courier service drivers	110	\$44,599
Facility operation & maintenance managers	106	\$64,812
Inspectors in public, environmental health & occupational health & safety	106	\$70,664
Construction trades helpers & laborers	99	\$47,197
Program leaders & instructors in recreation, sport & fitness	98	\$40,603

Source: Sarnia-Lambton Workforce Development Board (WISL), 2023 Data.

**Table 12: Job Postings in Sarnia Lambton by NAICS Code**

Industry Title	Combined Count of Companies
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,834
Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services	1,200
Retail Trade	1,608
Public Administration	1,038
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	666
Accommodation and Food Services	595
Other Services (except Public Administration)	400
Transportation and Warehousing	749
Finance and Insurance	364
Construction	341

Source: Sarnia Lambton Workforce Development Board (WISL), 2023 Data.




**BROWSE JOBS IN SARNIA LAMBTON  
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# EMPLOYERONE SURVEY

The EmployerOne Survey is an annual survey by SLWDB that collects information directly from local employers to address the local workforce's needs and identify trends. This report provides job seekers and employers with data on local hiring trends and recruitment methods for future and career planning.

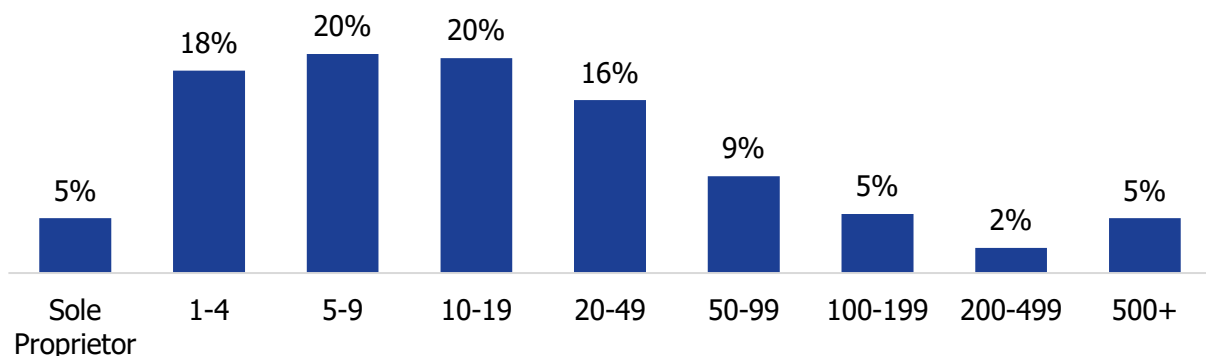
The survey was created to address challenges faced by employers, such as recruitment, retention, and hard-to-fill positions. It also aims to address the challenges faced by small businesses and sole proprietors. In 2023, we received input from 263 local employers, with a larger representation from those in Retail trade, Healthcare and social assistance, and Construction.

The majority of the businesses with employees, (87%) indicated they had hired an employee in 2022, with an estimated total of 4,512 new hires by 216 organizations. Respondents also reported 1,058 separations, a decrease from the previous year where respondents reported 4,684 separations (n=272 responses). Industries that experienced the largest number of separations include Healthcare and social assistance (26%), Retail trade (19%), Manufacturing (11%), and Construction (10%).

Retention remained a concern for 48% of employers, and similarly 56% of respondents indicated they had a succession plan in place to accommodate projected growth and/or retirements over the next 3 to 5 years. The top industries that indicated a concern for retention included Healthcare and social assistance (15%), Other services (except public administration) (12%), Accommodation and food services (11%), Construction (9%) and Retail trade (9%).

In line with previous years' survey results, employers reported having difficulty filling positions, mainly in Retail trade, Other services (except public administration), and Healthcare and social assistance. The full report can be accessed at <https://www.slwdb.org>.

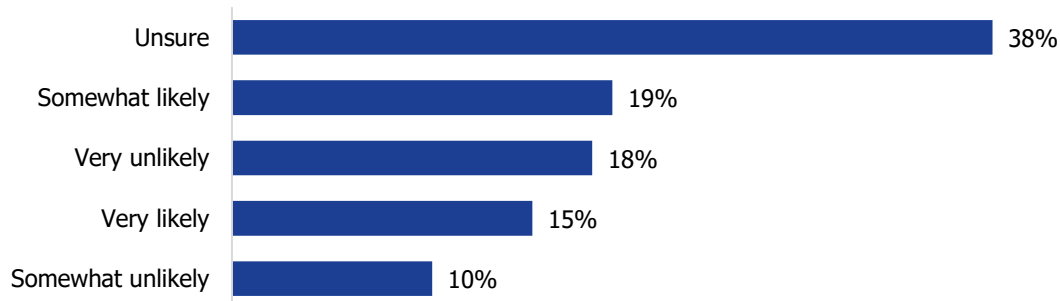
**Figure 9: Business size categorization of survey respondents**





Unique to last year's survey was a question on the likelihood of hiring international talent. The top industries that were most likely to hire international talent was Accommodation and food services (17%), Other services (except public administration) (12%), and Healthcare and social assistance (11%), while the industries that reported they are least likely to hire international talent were Mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction (0%), Real estate and rental and leasing (0%), and Utilities (0%).

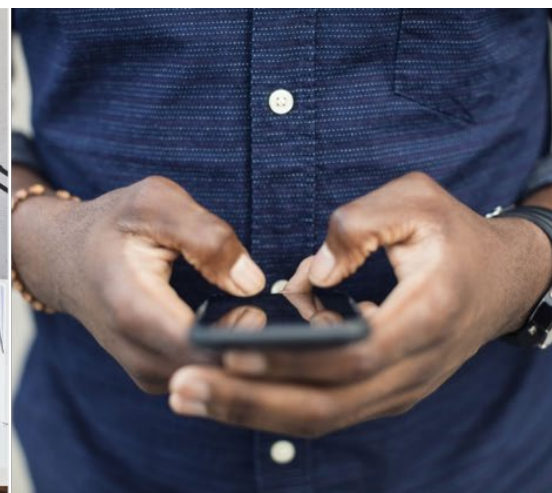
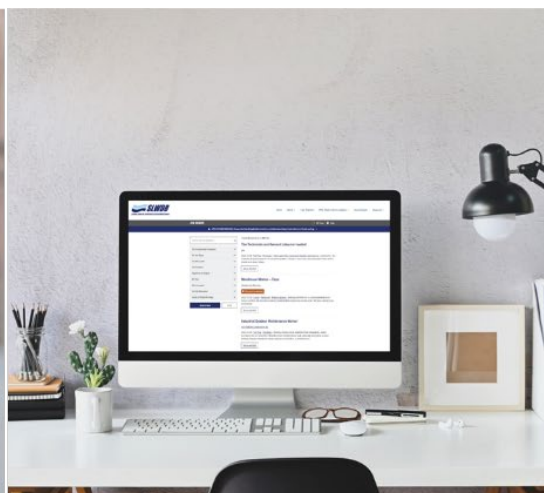
**Figure 10: Likelihood of local employers hiring international talent in 2023**



The top recruitment methods identified included word of mouth, personal contacts, or informal networks, followed by online job boards and social media. Survey results from the last year indicated that the top recruitment method used by local employers was online job boards. In the recruitment process, employers indicated that they often sought candidates who demonstrated self-motivation and the ability to work effectively without close supervision, a strong work ethic, reliability, teamwork and interpersonal skills, and a commitment to providing outstanding customer service.

Retention remained a concern for 48% of employers, and similarly 56% of respondents indicated they had a succession plan in place to accommodate projected growth and/or retirements over the next 3 to 5 years. Strategies used by local employers to encourage retention:

- Regular increase in salary
- Recognition for service and/or outstanding work
- Employee "perks" (i.e., discounts on merchandise, company-branded clothing, etc.)
- Training opportunities
- Job flexibility (i.e., work from home arrangements, flex time, job sharing)
- Clear promotional paths or advancement opportunities
- Regular increases in benefits
- Job rotation opportunities





# EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO PROGRAMS

Employment Ontario service providers play a crucial role in supporting job seekers, workers, and employers throughout Ontario. The data and statistics presented in this section pertain to the period between 2022 and 2023, and they are sourced from the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training, and Skills Development's 2022-2023 Employment Ontario Data for Local Boards.

These data elements provide the foundation for local boards and regional networks to engage in evidence-based discussions with Employment Ontario service providers and non-Employment Ontario organizations. These discussions focus on addressing local challenges, including issues related to skills, service gaps, overlaps, and underserved populations in Sarnia Lambton. The collaborative efforts of Employment Ontario service providers, local boards, and regional networks aim to develop strategies and actions that effectively address these localized issues.

For more detailed information regarding Employment Ontario programs, please refer to the Government of Ontario's website at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/employment-ontario>.

Employment Ontario Programs that ran in the past year include:

- Employment Service
- Apprenticeship
- Canada Ontario Job Grant
- Youth Job Connection
- Literacy and Basic Skills
- Ontario Employment Assistance Service
- Better Jobs Ontario

## Employment Ontario Consultations

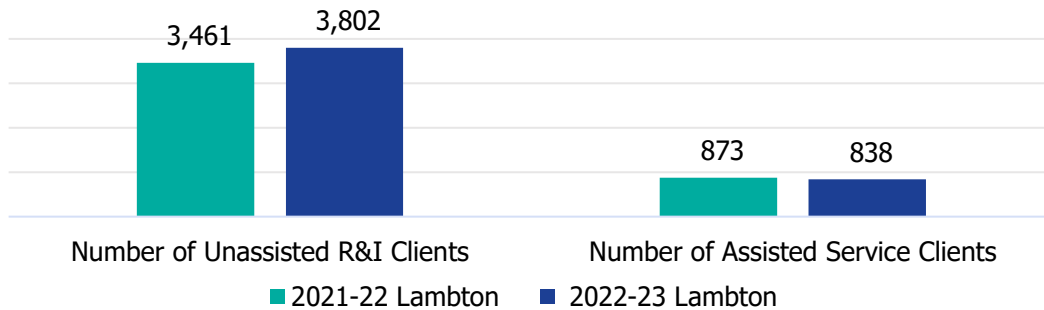
SLWDB connects monthly with our Employment Ontario community partners. As providers of direct employment support to both job seekers and employers the Employment Ontario providers offer an insight that reflects the direct needs of the workforce. Themes the Employment Ontario providers have noted included:

- The importance of continuing to offer math and literacy supports for those entering or completing an apprenticeship.
- Training on digital skills and soft skills are key objectives and a need in the local community.
- Burnout and retention are key barriers for social service organizations.
- Community partnerships among EO organizations and other community stakeholders give EO providers the opportunity to support the community with a diverse range of needs.
- A diverse range of clients are seeking services, both on the job seeker and employer side. Newcomers, both domestic and international, and small, medium, and large employers require support to find qualified employment/candidates.

## Employment Services

Employment Services offer a diverse range of resources and support for local individuals and employers, addressing personal career and employment goals as well as local skilled labor needs. In the fiscal year 2022-2023, Employment Services assisted 838 clients and provided resources and information to 3,802 unassisted clients, a slight decrease compared to the previous year.

**Figure 11: Number of Clients Employment Services**



Source: Employment Ontario Programs, Government of Ontario, 2023.

Employment Services experienced an increase in client numbers from the previous year, maintaining a consistent demographic composition in terms of age and gender. Notably, 37% of clients reported having no income, relying on supports such as Ontario Works (OW), Employment Insurance (EI), the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), or their employment earnings, with a decrease in clients depending on EI. Most clients possessed an educational level beyond high school, though 14% had not completed secondary education. Regarding gender distribution, 46% of clients identified as female, 53% as male, and 1% as trans, other, or preferred not to disclose. Clients were distributed among the following age groups: 25% were aged 15-24, 45% were aged 25-44, 28% were aged 45-64, and 1% were aged 65 and older.

A considerable 40% of the client base identified as disabled and 13% as Indigenous, figures that are substantially higher than the provincial average in Ontario which are 15% and 5% respectively. There was also a growing number of internationally trained professionals and newcomers, representing 7% and 6% of clients, respectively. Additionally, a smaller segment of clients included francophones, deaf individuals, and members of racialized groups.

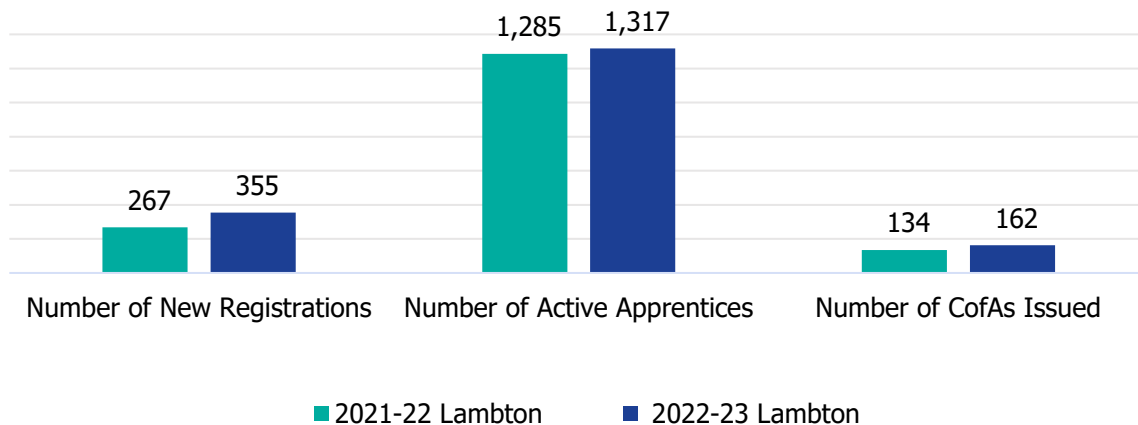
Labour force connection was similar to past years, with 84% unemployed and 4% underemployed; the majority had been jobless for over three months. Major layoffs occurred in industries like construction, accommodation and food services, healthcare and social assistance, and retail trade. Affected occupations ranged from trades helpers, service support, sales, office support, transport, administrative, legal, and educational support to manufacturing labourers.

The majority of Employment Services' clients had been unemployed for various lengths of time: 34% for less than three months, 13% between three to six months, 12% for six to twelve months, and 27% for more than twelve months. However, outcomes were positive, with 67% gaining employment (54% full-time), 11% pursuing education or training, and the rest unemployed, independent, unable to work, or volunteering.

## Apprenticeship Programs

In the 2022-2023 period, there were 267 new apprenticeship registrations, reflecting an increase compared to the previous year's 242. The number of active apprentices reached 1,317, and 162 Certificates of Apprenticeship (CoA) were issued. Interestingly, the age demographic saw a slight shift, with a rise in younger participants, highlighting a growing interest in trades. Notably, the trades of Steamfitter and General Carpenter experienced significant registration increases. Ongoing efforts to promote gender diversity in the trades industry continued, with discussions aimed at understanding and addressing barriers, while emphasizing the importance of support and fostering inclusive workplaces.

**Figure 12: Number of Apprenticeship Program Clients, 2022-2023**



Source: Employment Ontario programs, Government of Ontario, 2023.

The apprenticeship program saw a 33% increase in new registrants and a 21% increase in Certificates of Apprenticeship, despite a 41% drop in modular training enrollment. Predominantly male, 88% of applicants were men, and 12% were women, with the majority aged 15-44, including 9% indigenous. Most had finished high school, and trade registration distribution remained consistent, with 42% of new apprentices under 25, and 58% between 25-64.

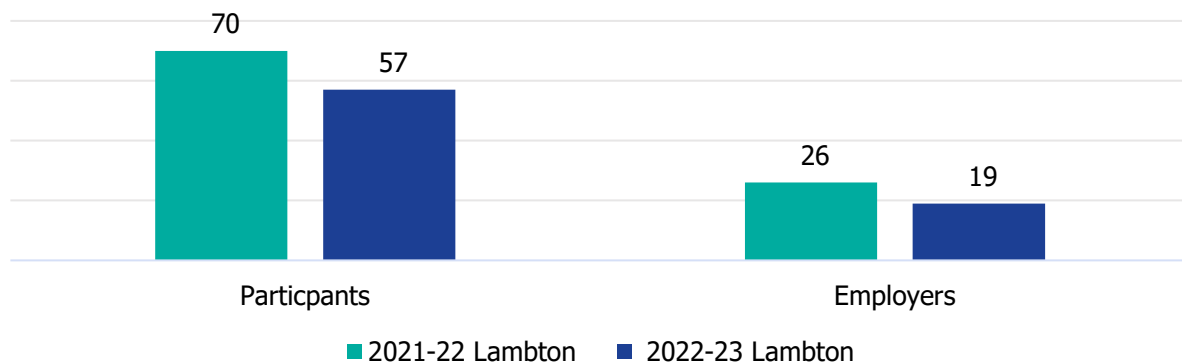
In the 2022-2023 period, the number of new apprentices joining the program varied by trade. The breakdown is as follows:

- 69 new Steamfitter apprentices (a 103% increase compared to the previous year)
- 62 new General Carpenter apprentices (a 148% increase compared to the previous year)
- 44 new Construction Craft Worker apprentices
- 29 new Electrician apprentices
- 26 new Automotive Service Technician apprentices
- 22 new Truck and Coach Technician apprentices
- 17 new Painter and Decorator apprentices

## Canada Ontario Job Grant (COJG)

The Canada Ontario Job Grant (COJG) provides employers the opportunity to invest in their workforce through direct financial support to employers who wish to invest in training for their employees. The program provided training opportunities to 19 employers and 57 participants during the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

**Figure 13: Number of Program Clients, 2021-2022 versus 2022-2023**



Source: Employment Ontario programs, Government of Ontario, 2023.

The Canada Ontario Job Grant experienced a decline in both participant and employer numbers from the previous year, aligning with a broader provincial trend. Participant numbers fell to 57 across 19 employers, with a 23% decrease in female participation, notably lower in Sarnia Lambton (21%) compared to Ontario's 38%. The vast majority (86%) of participants were primarily funded through employment, predominantly full-time (82%). Although designated groups such as Indigenous peoples, Internationally Trained Professionals, Newcomers, Persons with Disabilities, and Racialized individuals were part of the program, specific numbers were undisclosed due to each group having fewer than 10 members. Remarkably, 100% of participants found employment after the program, 96% in full-time roles.

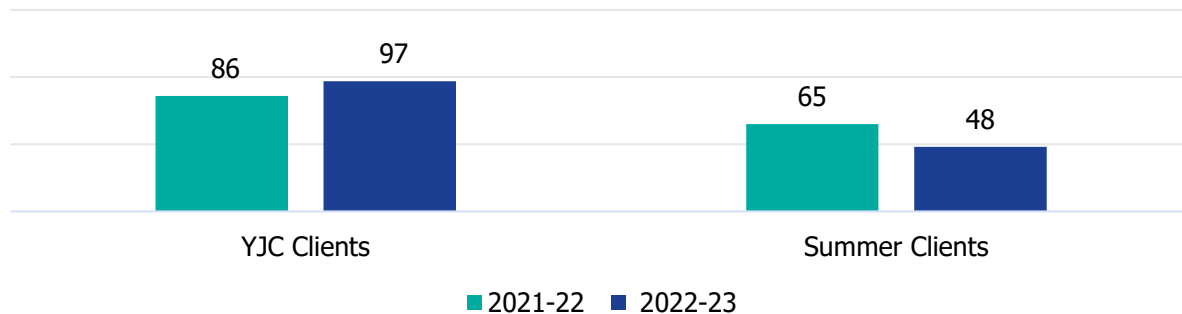
On the employer side, there was a 27% reduction in participation, with 68% of the 19 participating employers having fewer than 50 employees. Despite this, all reported a boost in trainee productivity and affirmed that the training aligned with workforce needs. Participants showed a broad age range, with 8% aged 15-24, 67% aged 25-44, and 25% aged 45-64. The program concluded with a 100% employment rate among participants, highlighting its effectiveness despite reduced numbers and gender disparity in participation.



## Youth Job Connection (YJC)

The Youth Job Connection (YJC) provides intensive supports beyond traditional job search and placement opportunities to youth ages 15 to 29. The programs aim to support youth in employment, education or training, and who also experience a range of barriers to employment. Participation in the summer program is calculated separately. There were 97 YJC clients take part locally, an increase from previous years, although there was a dip in summer participation.

**Figure 14: Number of YJC Clients (2021-2022 versus 2022-2023)**



Source: Employment Ontario programs, Government of Ontario, 2023.

The majority of clients were aged 15-24 in both the regular and summer programs. During the summer, 40% of clients had less than a grade 12 education, a decrease from 73% the previous year, while the regular program saw 32% with the same education level. Male representation in the program was higher at 58%, compared to females at 38%, and those identifying as trans or other at 4%. Most clients had no income, with 27% dependent on Ontario Works.

There was a higher representation of clients identifying as having a disability (70%) compared to the Ontario (30%). Additionally, 11% of clients identified as Indigenous. Breaking down by age, 81% of clients were aged 15-24 and 19% were aged 25-44. For education levels, 32% had less than a grade 12 education, and 58% had completed secondary education.

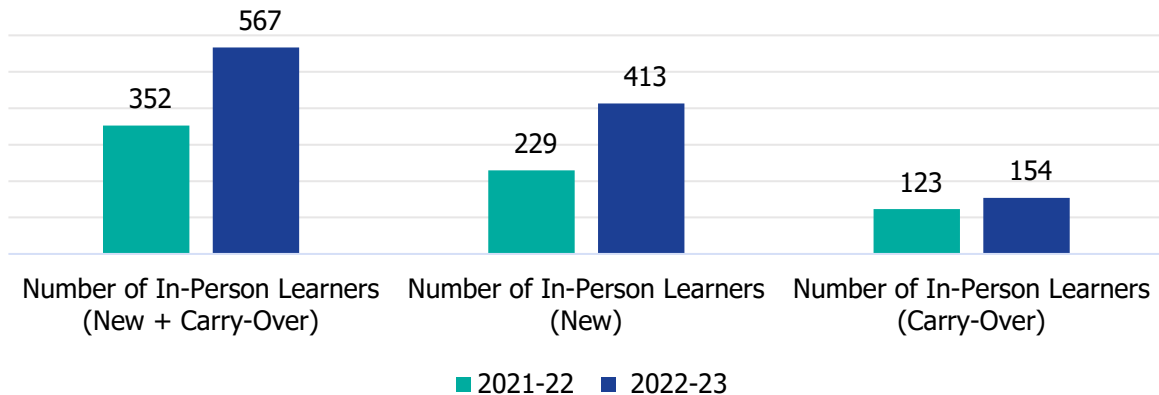
## Better Jobs Ontario Program

The Better Jobs Ontario program provides eligible applicants with skills training for in-demand jobs and financial support. Participants qualify if they have been laid-off and have not been working or have been unemployed for six months or longer and were part of a low-income household. Although there is no data available for Sarnia Lambton, the program witnessed the participation of 3,064 individuals in prominent regions such as Ottawa, Toronto, Essex, Peel, Waterloo, Hamilton, and Middlesex during the fiscal year 2022-2023.

## Literacy and Basic Skills

The Literacy and Basic Skills program is a vital contributor to enhancing foundational skills and employability. This report provides insights into the program's performance and key statistics during the 2022-2023 program year.

**Figure 15: Number of In-Person Learners (2021-2022 versus 2022-2023)**



Source: Employment Ontario programs, Government of Ontario, 2023.

The Literacy and Basic Skills program offered services to 567 clients, including 413 new clients, and 154 carrying over from the previous fiscal year. Female representation was high at 63%, while males accounted for 36%, and a smaller percentage identified as trans or other. Learner representation from designated groups was stable, predominantly among those with disabilities. Among the designated groups, 44% of learners identified as having a disability, which is higher than the 30% in Ontario, and 15% were Indigenous, compared to Ontario's 12%. Racialized individuals represented 3% of learners, against 18% in Ontario, and newcomers were at 2%, compared to Ontario's 17%.

The age breakdown showed 35% of learners were aged 15-24, 49% were 25-44, and 15% were 45-64. When it came to educational attainment, 7% had less than a grade 9 education, and 40% hadn't completed grade 12, up from a previous 17% representation. Those who had completed secondary education made up 32%, and 13% had a certificate or diploma, down from a previous 21%.

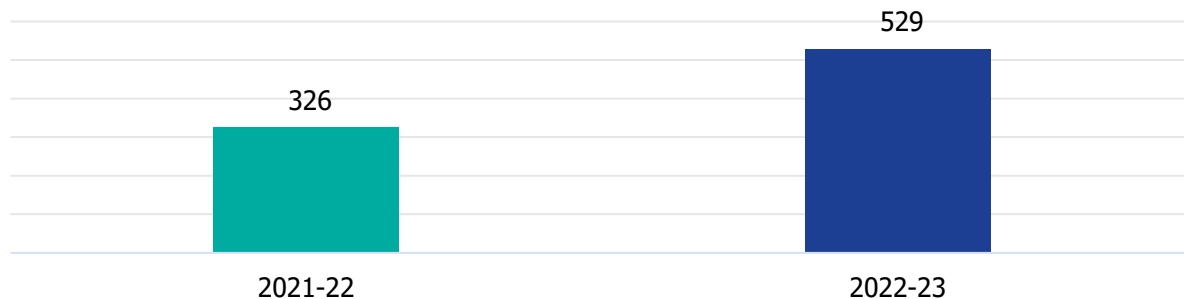
There was a slight decline in the number of employed learners. A variety of income sources were reported: 34% of learners had employment income, and 20% had no source of income, with the rest relying on various supports such as Ontario Works, ODSP, EI, or others. Referrals to the program came primarily from structural or formal sources, but informal referrals through word of mouth and media were also significant.

The goals of learners varied, with a higher proportion aiming to obtain secondary school credits and fewer seeking employment as their goal path compared to Ontario averages. The breakdown of learners' goal paths was 37% for postsecondary, 37% for secondary school credits (significantly higher than Ontario's 14%), 17% for employment (lower than Ontario's 37%), 6% for apprenticeship, and 3% for independence.

## Ontario Employment Assistance Service Overview

Ontario Employment Assistance Services helps people connect with a variety of employment programs. It also has services to help people prepare for and find a job. During the 2021-2022 fiscal year, the OEAS program provided services to 529 clients.

**Figure 16: Number of Clients (2021-2022 versus 2022-2023)**



Source: Employment Ontario programs, Government of Ontario, 2023.

The majority of clients, 76%, were unemployed, 12% were employed, and 10% underemployed. The primary age range was within the core working groups, with a slightly higher female representation at 53% versus males at 47%, and a smaller percentage identifying as trans. Clients with disabilities formed the largest designated group at 56%.

Newcomers accessed services more than the previous year and more than the Ontario average, highlighting a trend of increased local service usage by this group. The educational attainment of clients was diverse: 30% held a certificate or diploma, and 28% had completed secondary education. In terms of income sources, 41% had none, which exceeded the Ontario average. The remaining clients' income sources included 16% with employment income and 12% relying on Ontario Works.

Age distribution showed 19% of clients were aged 15-24, nearly half, 49%, were 25-44, and 27% were 45-64. Within designated groups, 15% of clients were newcomers, which was higher than Ontario's 5%, and 6% identified as Indigenous. These figures indicate the OEAS's significant role in assisting a diverse range of clients, particularly those with disabilities and newcomers.



# COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

As we began our 2023/2024 fiscal our aim was to connect with a diverse range of key stakeholders in the Sarnia Lambton community. These stakeholders provided a level of expertise and insights that only those working directly with employees and job seekers can offer. The experiences and insights shared help us better understand our labour market data, which we share with students, job seekers and the public.

Consultations were conducted throughout 2023-2024 in person, over the phone and virtually. There were also two consultation days where we headed out to the communities of Grand Bend and Petrolia, to further understand employer challenges and successes in the more rural areas of Sarnia Lambton.

## **SLWDB staff also participated in the following committees over the past year:**

- Business and Economic Taskforce
- Chamber of Commerce Young Professionals
- Collective Leadership Employment Services
- Early Childhood Educators Workforce Development Taskforce
- Famous Five Sarnia Lambton Speaker Series
- Francophone Immigration
- Immigration Task Force
- Lambton Farm Safety
- Lambton Wellness at Work
- Partners Active in Resource Sharing
- Sarnia Lambton Industrial Alliance
- Sarnia Lambton Local Immigration Partnership
- Sarnia Lambton Local Immigration Partnership Employment Committee
- Sarnia Lambton Social Services Network
- Sarnia Lambton Social Services Network's Recruitment and Retention Committee
- Southwest Apprenticeship Network
- Visions of Harmony
- Workforce Planning Ontario
- Workforce Planning West

## **As we reflect on the consultations held with key stakeholders throughout the Sarnia Lambton community, we see the following trends reflected consistently in these conversations:**

- Workforce Recruitment and Retention
- Housing and transportation
- Aging population
- Supply Shortages
- Soft Skills and Digital Literacy

## **Workforce Recruitment and Retention**

Over the past number of years, retention and recruitment have been identified as key challenges for Sarnia Lambton employers. Again, this year retention and recruitment were identified as key challenges. This is true, despite the local unemployment rate having declined since hitting highs of 7.5% and 8% in April and May, respectively. Businesses, especially small and medium-sized businesses, from a variety of sectors indicated that they have struggled to fill positions with candidates with the required skills. Some of the industries that continue to experience difficult challenges with recruitment and retention are Healthcare and social assistance and occupations in the skilled trades. We heard from those in the childcare, healthcare and social assistance fields that turnover has been particularly acute.

Throughout the consultations in the more rural areas of Sarnia Lambton, Employers also indicated that they have hard-to-fill positions due to a lack of candidates with the necessary qualifications. They added that a lack of transportation and affordable housing is detrimental to growing and maintaining the rural workforce. Innovative strategies, like offering co-op placements and targeted youth programs, were noted as effective measures. However, a reliance on temporary foreign workers was identified in sectors struggling to retain domestic staff, signalling a potential gap in meeting local employment needs. Emphasis on training programs to bridge skill and interest gaps was highlighted as a successful approach. Community-led initiatives were recognized for their role in facilitating better access to job opportunities.

## **Housing and Transportation**

Broadly, all employers continue to highlight the need for more housing and transportation. Although this trend spans multiple industries, stakeholders suggested it is heightened in the more rural areas of Sarnia Lambton. Additionally, it was suggested that a lack of housing and transportation are impacting the workforce and population growth as a whole. Housing and transportation challenges for the growing immigrant population were also discussed, along with the need for more inclusive employment opportunities. Some sectors heavily relied on immigrant labor, particularly for manual jobs, indicating a potential gap in the domestic workforce.

## **Aging Population**

Throughout the consultations, the stakeholders expressed concern that the “working age” population is not growing at the rate needed to support future business and community growth. When we reflect on the population numbers from the 2021 Census, we see there is in fact an increase in the population aged 60 and older (a shift of 65%), whereas the population 15 to 59 has decreased. Employers suggested that the current and future job demand in highly skilled professions will be especially impacted by this population trend.

## **Supply Shortages**

Businesses, especially in the retail sector, faced challenges in stocking and adapting inventory due to supply chain disruptions. This necessitated frequent adjustments to sourcing strategies and highlighted the need for more resilient supply chains. Adaptive measures like diversifying suppliers and keeping abreast of changing consumer trends were common. However, this area remains a concern, indicating a need for more robust strategies to tackle future supply issues.

## **Soft Skills and Digital Literacy**

A gap in soft skills, such as interpersonal abilities, was identified across various sectors. Additionally, the demand for digital literacy and skills training was prominent, reflecting a shift towards more technology-dependent work environments. Some sectors responded by integrating digital skills training into their programs, but further comprehensive training in soft skills was noted as a way to help address this gap.



# 2024-2027 ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan for 2024-2027 addresses several gaps highlighted in local statistical data and through community consultations. The Action Plan focuses on the following priorities:

- Priority 1: Recruitment and Retention
- Priority 2: Promotion of the Skilled Trades
- Priority 3: Supporting the Rural Workforce
- Priority 4: Supporting a Diverse Workforce
- Priority 5: Exploring the Clean Energy Sector

## Priority 1: Recruitment and Retention

SLWDB's 2022 EmployerOne Survey results show that employers use a diverse range of strategies to try to support retention including salary increases (21%) and employee recognition (19%). Despite this, over half (52%) of respondents reported that retention is a concern for their business.

Through consultations, SLWDB has identified that employers are increasingly interested in hiring from a more diverse candidate pool. For example, employers expressed interest in hiring newcomers and international students.

### 2023-2024 Activities

- In 2023, SLWDB played an active role in the Southwest Apprenticeship Network, a committee of 26 local organizations devoted to promoting skilled trades as a first choice career option. SLWDB lead the development and delivery of the Employer Awards to celebrate employers who excel in apprenticeship.
- SLWDB shared labour market data and job demand data in several community forums including Youth Job Connect sessions (N= 4) and two Immigration Task Force community meetings.
- SLWDB participates in several committees that address local recruitment efforts, including the Business and Economic Taskforce, the Early Childhood Educators Workforce Development Taskforce, the Sarnia Lambton Local Immigration Partnership's Employment Committee, and the Immigration Taskforce.

### 2024-2026 Activities

- SLWDB will develop and run five community presentations to promote the job demand data collected through the WISL Tools and received from Statistics Canada.
- SLWDB will participate in two local job fairs to promote our labour force data and WISL job tools.
- Supporting the work of two action-based task force groups (ECE and Immigration).
- Creating and sharing five Job Demand reports in high demand sectors like the skilled trades and health care and social assistance.

**2026-2028 Activities**

- SLWDB will create and share the existing supports for in-demand careers, identify gaps and create supports that address them.
- SLWDB will continue to support the on-going work of local Employment Ontario providers by promoting their training events and directing employers and job seekers we connect with to seek out EO services.

## **Priority 2: Promotion of the Skilled Trades**

SLWDB's 2022 EmployerOne Survey results show that many local organizations who hire in the skilled trades indicated a concern for recruitment and retention. This, coupled with the aging population, will impact the many skilled trades that are already in-demand. Through our research in 2021 and 2023 consultations with local stakeholders (employers, school boards, and Lambton College) we identified several trades that are highly in-demand in Sarnia Lambton. It is expected this demand will continue to grow as retirements occur and large-scale commercial and residential construction projects move ahead.

**2023-2024 Activities**

- In 2020 SLWDB, in collaboration with Lambton College, brought together 26 community partners to form the Southwest Apprenticeship Network (SWAN). On March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, the SWAN held an Employer Gala to celebrate employers who excelled in apprenticeship. SLWDB lead the planning and delivery of this event which successfully promoted skilled trades and celebrated local employers that promote apprenticeships.
- SLWDB participated in a planning committee, PAIRS, to bring together local employers hiring in the trades and the school boards. An employer recognition breakfast was planned but was cancelled due to low registrations.

**2024-2026 Activities**

- SLWDB will continue to collect data on retention and succession planning through the annual EmployerOne Survey and identify the skilled trade industries with the highest need for training in best practices for recruitment. This data will be shared with our email list of 589 members and in three community presentations of Employer One data.
- SLWDB will continue to promote the work of the SWAN. SLWDB will continue to lead the planning and delivery of the annual Employer Awards Gala.
- SLWDB will continue to promote the trades to under-represented groups such as women and newcomers to Canada in two community presentations.

**2026-2028 Activities**

- SLWDB will work to consult annually with 15-20 employers/unions in the skilled trades. By maintaining and growing these networks we can continue to connect employers and potential apprentices to EO support and the local Ministry office.
- SLWDB will continue to support the efforts of the Sarnia Lambton Industrial Alliance (SLIA). A large collection of organizations that support small and medium employers who hire across many skilled trades.

## Priority 3: Supporting the Rural Workforce

In 2023/2024 SLWDB embarked on research to explore the current and future workforce needs of the agriculture-based workforce. Through this work, key challenges and action-based solutions were identified. Some of the issues outlined by key stakeholders were the difficulty filling labor-intensive positions, the lack of farm-based experience of candidates, and concerns for workforce numbers in the future. Additionally, due to innovations currently utilized and projected for the future, it was recommended that local training be centred around providing basic farm knowledge as well as advanced digital training.

### 2023-2024 Activities

- In 2023, SLWDB participated in a Lambton County farm tour. This provided the opportunity to visit four local agricultural-based businesses and hear the issues impacting their business.
- SLWDB sits on the Lambton Farm Safety Board which promotes protection of the local agriculture workforce through community initiatives and training.

### 2024-2026 Activities

- SLWDB will continue to share and present data to the agriculture community and provide two community presentations.
- SLWDB will work to connect with 15-20 rural employers to help them better understand their training needs and how to access employment support in the community and identify gaps that exist.
- SLWDB will host two rural consultation days to provide employers the space to share their concerns and help create actionable solutions.

### 2026-2028 Activities

- SLWDB will work to connect with local post-secondary institutions to support an alignment of employer needs and programming.

## Priority 4: Supporting a Diverse Workforce

At just under 60% currently, Sarnia Lambton has one of the lowest participation rates in the province. This suggests there is a large population of potential employees not working. In our 2023 research to promote inclusive hiring we heard in interviews with 12 employers that the benefits of hiring a diverse workforce extend beyond just “filling a position.” Hiring a diverse range of employees, including those in under-represented groups (international students, newcomers, and those identifying in minority groups), brings a wealth of new experiences and exposure to current staff and clients/customers. There is untapped potential in this demographic and it could create growth in the local workforce numbers and help fill in-demand fields such as healthcare and social assistance.

### 2023-2024 Activities

- SLWDB led a monthly meeting of leaders in employment services. We heard from our partners who support people with disabilities, and we promote the important work they do in the community.
- Our research identified the benefits of hiring people with disabilities and dispelled some of the myths that exist surrounding hiring this demographic. Three videos of local employers were created and shared on YouTube.
- SLWDB participated in a consultation session on the Local Immigration Partnership’s strategy to support newcomers to Sarnia Lambton.
- SLWDB supported the launch of the Local Immigration Partnership’s Welcome App, which provides newcomers with access to local resources, including employment information and support.
- SLWDB continues to participate in the Sarnia Lambton Local Immigration Partnership monthly committee meetings.

**2024-2026 Activities**

- SLWDB will aim to share labour force data, specifically related to a diverse workforce, with the Immigration Task Force and in two community presentations.
- SLWDB will support an employer event to introduce employers to the benefits of recruiting a diverse workforce.
- SLWDB will continue to support the work of Workforce Windsor Essex with the TeamWork Project: Together Empowering Access for Migrant Workers Outreach, Resources and Knowledge, a project to support migrant workers in Essex, Kent and Lambton counties.

**2026-2028 Activities**

- SLWDB will create a list of resources to support persons with disabilities and other special support needs for the community.
- SLWDB will support the on-going work of the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus Workforce as they work to identify and pilot transportation solutions for rural employers.

## **Priority 5: Exploring the Clean Energy Sector**

Over the past two years, several large-scale projects have been announced in Sarnia Lambton. From battery recycling to the development of a hydrogen hub, the advancements have led to the need to explore the workforce needs further. By exploring the workforce needs we can assess whether additional training programs should be developed to accommodate the need for new skills development. This will place Sarnia Lambton in a better position to grow in the clean energy sector alongside the rest of Ontario.

**2023-2024 Activities**

- Partnered with Workforce Planning West (a collaboration between nine Workforce Planning Boards operating in the area between Lake Erie and Lake Huron) to explore and create the framework for a multi-site research project to explore the workforce needs of the green economy.
- Created a summary report for the Windsor Regional Employment Network to highlight the research currently underway in the green/clean energy sector and the current job postings in this sector.

**2024-2026 Activities**

- Explore the needs of this diverse workforce through consultations with 10 key stakeholders in the clean energy sector.
- Develop a list of recommendations to promote growth in the NOC codes that capture this workforce.

**2026-2028 Activities**

- Partner with stakeholders in the education sector to discuss the training capacity and the future training needs to support the workforce.



**SARNIA LAMBTON WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

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