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Workforce
Planning BOARD
OF YORK REGION

LOCAL LABOUR MARKET REPORT

WORKFORCE TRENDS – IN YORK REGION

2025



About the Workforce Planning Board of York Region

The Workforce Planning Board of York Region (WPBoard) is a not-for-profit community-based organization established in 1999 by the Province of Ontario to identify local labour market issues in York Region and undertake projects or partnerships that would contribute to addressing local employment needs.

WPBoard is one of 25 independent non-governmental organizations located across the Province of Ontario and funded by Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development. A volunteer Board of Directors comprised of business and labour members from across the region provides governance for the Board.

The following 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 collected through surveys and discussions with employers and community stakeholders as well as analysis of a variety of local employment statistics, literature reviews and collaboration with employment service agencies, regional and municipal governments.

We would greatly appreciate your feedback on the Local Labour Market Plan 2025! Please complete this short follow-up survey to share your thoughts.

**2025
LOCAL LABOUR
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Our Labour Market Planning Process

A Resource to Inform

WPBoard acts as a resource to inform stakeholders including labour, employers, educators and other community groups about workforce development issues across the Region.

Review Current Labour Market

Review current labour market conditions using Canadian Business Counts, Labour Force Survey, Employment Ontario Data and 'WORK IN YORK' data and statistics.

Collect local labour market intelligence in key employment sectors across the Region.

Foster Local Partnerships

Foster local partnership activities with stakeholders that address issues and identified priorities.

Collaborate With Community

Organizations with which we collaborate throughout the year to identify and undertake actions to support the community's employment needs include:

- 360kids
- Bloor Door Support Services
- Employment Ontario Service Providers
- Literacy Councils and Skills Upgrading Centres across York Region
- Seneca Polytechnic
- Skills Training Centre
- United Way of Greater Toronto, Peel & York
- WCG – Service Systems Manager for York Region
- Women's Centre of York Region
- York Region Community & Health Services, Strategies & Partnerships – Human Services Planning Board / Newcomer Inclusion Table
- York Region Chambers of Commerce & Boards of Trade
- York Catholic District School Board
- York Region District School Board
- York Region Strategic and Economic Planning Group
- York University – President's Task Force – Markham Campus

Business - Characteristics

According to Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts provide information on active businesses by industry classification and employment-size categories. Because of the way they are compiled, the business counts cannot be used to measure the impact of the pandemic. The figures could include many of the businesses that have closed temporarily or permanently because of the pandemic. Permanently closed businesses will eventually be excluded once the businesses wind down and closeout procedures are completed and confirmed, a process that can take many months.

The counts are compiled from the Business Register and are based on the statistical concept of 'location', that is, each operating location is separately counted, including cases where one business comprises multiple locations. There are two general industrial classification categories:

- Classified: existing category for businesses which have received a NAICS code
- Unclassified: new category for businesses which have not received a NAICS code

The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) classifies business establishments for the purpose of collecting, analyzing, and publishing statistical data related to the North American economies. The NAICS industry codes define establishments based on the activities in which they are primarily engaged.

In 2024, York Region continued to grow economically, building on the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, the region saw continued improvement in the labour market, although growth across various industries and job sectors remained uneven. The focus on innovation and collaboration helped York Region maintain its position as a leading economic powerhouse in Ontario.

As of June 2024, there were a total of **57,460 businesses with employees** in York Region, of which 92% were Classified and 8% Unclassified.

A higher number of businesses with employees continued to remain active in the region during 2023 compared to the previous year. From June 2023 to June 2024 the number of businesses with employees **increased by 626**.

Figure 1 shows various components of these data series for York Region Census Division at two reporting periods: June 2023 and June 2024.

York Region Businesses With Employees June 2023 - June 2024

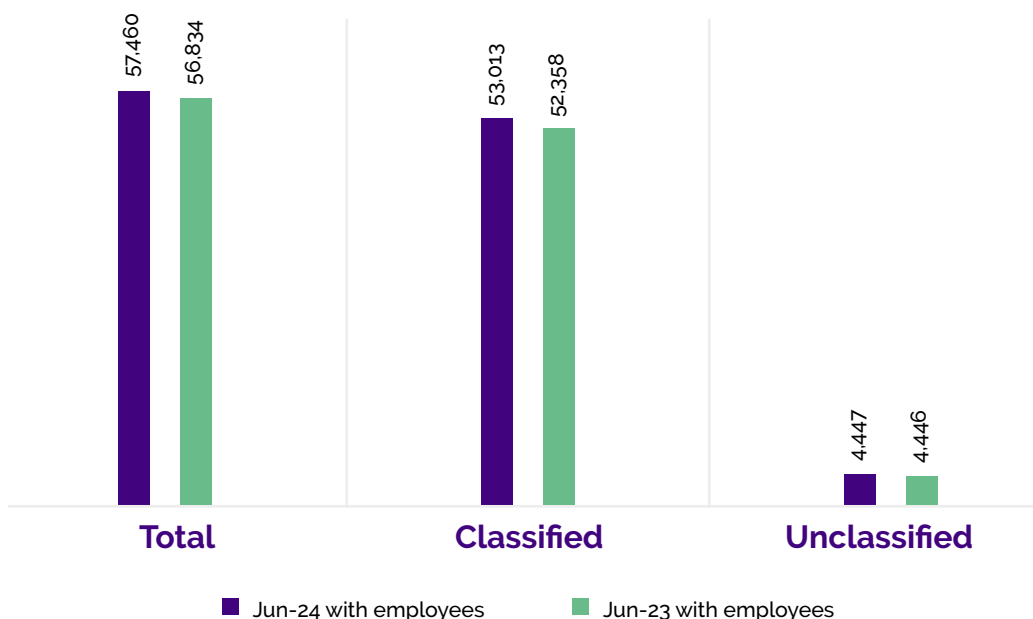


Figure 1

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts

York Region’s economy is mostly dominated by small and medium businesses that account for about 99% of the share of the total businesses. Most of these businesses are located in the City of Vaughan, City of Markham and the City of Richmond Hill. Between June 2023 and June 2024 almost all municipalities in York Region experienced growth in the number of businesses, except Newmarket.

Change in Number of Businesses with Employees by Municipality June 2023 - June 2024

Municipality	2024	2023	Absolute Change	Percentage Change
Vaughan	19,818	19,761	57	0.29%
Markham	16,073	16,064	9	0.06%
Richmond Hill	9,730	9,452	278	2.94%
Whitchurch-Stouffville	1,946	1,904	42	2.21%
Aurora	2,632	2,563	69	2.69%
Newmarket	3,318	3,370	-52	-1.54%
King	1,533	1,438	95	6.61%
East Gwillimbury	1,224	1,119	105	9.38%
Georgina	1,186	1,163	23	1.98%
TOTAL York Region	57,460	56,834	626	1.10%

Figure 2

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts

Key Insights

East Gwillimbury (9.38%) experienced the highest growth in business counts. Rapid population growth and new housing developments have created demand for retail and personal service businesses. East Gwillimbury's affordability compared to other regions contributes to its appeal.

King (6.61%) showed strong growth. King's growth is likely driven by its focus on agribusiness, niche industries, and increasing residential developments, which attract local services.

Richmond Hill (2.94%), Aurora (2.69%), and Whitchurch-Stouffville (2.21%) also demonstrated notable growth, aligning with suburban expansion trends.

- Richmond Hill's absolute growth of 278 businesses growth may stem from increasing population density and growing demand for services. Development of small businesses in sectors like healthcare, retail, and food services likely contributed.
- Aurora's business-friendly policies and proximity to major highways make it attractive for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Growth in professional services and light manufacturing is likely the contributor.
- Whitchurch-Stouffville, a semi-rural area is benefiting from urban spillover. New residential developments are driving demand for local services and small businesses.

Markham (0.06%) and Vaughan (0.29%) showed only slight increases.

- Known as a tech hub, Markham's low growth could indicate market saturation. Businesses may also face challenges with high commercial rent and competition.
- Vaughan is a mature economic hub with strong industrial, retail, and real estate sectors. The modest growth reflects market stabilization as much of its land is already developed.

Newmarket (-1.54%) is the only municipality showing a decline in business counts. The decline might be due to businesses relocating to other areas in the Region where location costs are more favorable.

Georgina's growth (0.02%) is modest but steady. It's driven by tourism-related businesses, as the area promotes Lake Simcoe as a key attraction.

The following table illustrates the percentage change in the number of businesses by different employee-size categories in the region.



Change in Number of York Region Businesses by Employee Size

June 2023 - June 2024

Number of Businesses				
Employees on Site	Jun-23	Jun-24	Absolute Change	% Change
1-4	36,130	36,525	395	1%
5-9	9,149	9,148	-1	0%
10-19	5,512	5,718	206	4%
20-49	3,792	3,748	-44	-1%
50-99	1,281	1,329	48	4%
100-199	604	602	-2	0%
200-499	279	298	19	7%
500+	87	92	5	6%
Total, with Employees	56,834	57,460	626	1%

Figure 3

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts

In comparing the data of Businesses with Employees the following trends become evident between June 2023 and June 2024.

Key Observations & Trends:

1. Growth in Small Businesses (1-4 Employees):

- Industries like **Food and beverage retailers**, **Health and personal care retailers**, and Transportation sectors (like Couriers and messengers) show significant growth in businesses with fewer than 5 employees, suggesting more entrepreneurial activity. This size category continues to dominate many industries.

2. Stable Growth in Medium-Sized Enterprises (5-99 Employees):

- Many sectors, particularly **Manufacturing**, **Retail**, and **Transportation**, show steady or moderate growth in businesses with 5 to 99 employees. This reflects stable demand across mid-sized enterprises.

3. Larger Enterprises (100+ Employees):

- Larger businesses show minimal growth but some sectors, like **Truck transportation**, show an uptick in the **50+ employee** range, indicating expansion in medium-to-large businesses.

4. Declining Sectors:

- Miscellaneous retailers** experienced a decline in business numbers, specifically within the 1-4 employee size range.

Figure 4 profiles the number of businesses by industry and employee size range in firms with employees. Additionally, the following are highlighted:

- the total number of firms for each firm size category (Note: firms that did not make the top 3 list are not displayed in the table but are counted in the total number of firms)
- the sectors that make up the top 3 list for each firm size category and
- the ranking of each sector by the total number of firm with employees.

As of June 2024, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services topped the list, thus accounting for one of the largest industry sectors again. It should be noted that this sector is highly dominated by sole proprietors and businesses with 1-4 employees. Specialty Trade Contractors had a large presence in almost all size firm categories. Management of Companies and Enterprises was one of the second largest sector comprised of firms with 500+ employees followed by Local, municipal and regional public administration.

York Region – Number of Main Businesses by Industry and Employee Size Range December 2023

	1-4	5-9	10-19	20-49	50-99	100-199	200-499	500 +	Total, with employees	Rank
541 Professional, scientific and technical services	8,239	888	509	308	104	42	21	7	10,118	1
238 Specialty trade contractors	2,745	725	436	253	113	43	17	7	4,339	2
621 Ambulatory health care services	2,909	812	390	120	20	8	6	1	4,266	3
722 Food services and drinking places	892	876	739	494	111	42	4	0	3,158	4
561 Administrative and support services	1,403	433	282	163	66	43	23	2	2,415	6
445 Food and beverage retailers	376	203	104	55	44	32	13	0	827	15
551 Management of companies and enterprises	109	33	32	38	29	20	16	10	287	36
455 General merchandise retailers	114	31	54	14	10	9	19	1	252	40
913 Local, municipal and regional public administration	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	9	12	80
Unclassified	3,767	401	172	83	15	5	2	2	4,447	
Classified	32,758	8,747	5,546	3,665	1,314	597	296	90	53,013	
Total	36,525	9,148	5,718	3,748	1,329	602	298	92	57,460	

Figure 4

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts

Navigating Talent Attraction Challenges

Addressing Workforce Shortages In Early Childhood Education In York Region

York Region hosts numerous early childhood centers, including various types of facilities like EarlyON Child and Family Centers, as well as other licensed childcare centers. York Region is home to more than 68 licensed EarlyON centres and nearly 400 childcare centres that offer a combined total of over 37,000 licensed childcare spaces. This includes both center-based and home-based child care providers spread across the region.

This sector employs 4,685 people as of 2021 working in various licensed child care programs, including daycares, preschools, and other early learning settings. Early childhood educators and assistants (ECEs & ECAs) in York Region play a crucial role in shaping the development and education of young children.

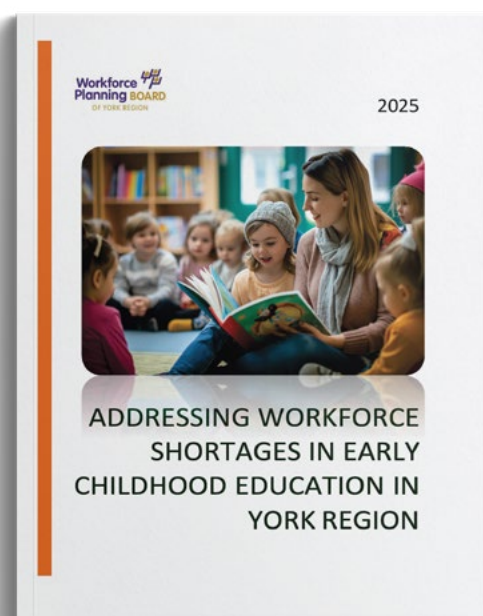
This study, conducted in the fall of 2024 includes a comprehensive environmental scan, about the working conditions, wages, retention rates and the evolving workforce challenges in the sector. It also includes information about the graduation rates for early childhood education (ECE) students in Ontario.

Further, an employer survey and on-on-one employer interviews have been undertaken to gather qualitative and quantitative data, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of both success stories and areas needing attention. This included employers of all size operations and from profit and non-profit environments.

Topics covered included hourly wages of ECE's and ECA's, frequency of hiring, quality of job candidates, and recruitment strategies. Availability of qualified staff, retention strategies and challenges as well as the impact of staff shortages on facility operations.

Key discussions focused on recommendations to address shortages of ECEs/ECAs, which included increased and standardized wages, retention bonuses, enhanced training to manage the rise in behavioral issues among children, expanding employment opportunities to ECEs trained in other provinces, and promoting early childhood education as a career option for Ontario high school students.

A strong childcare sector allows parents to work and contribute to the local economy knowing that their children are safe and well cared for resulting in a prosperous economy in York Region.



Labour Force Characteristics

Population Projections

This section presents population growth and projections for York Region and each of its census subdivisions, by age and gender, from the base year of 2024 to 2051.

The population of York Region was estimated to be 1,279,529 as of December 2024. The total population increased by 21,049 from 1,279,529 in January to 1,268,557 in December, indicating steady growth across the region. The population changes during this period offer insights into the potential labour force shifts and workforce planning needs.

Municipality	Jan 2024	Dec 2024	Net Change
Town of Aurora	65,682	66,187	505
Town of East Gwillimbury	40,196	41,647	1,451
Town of Georgina	51,362	52,468	1,106
King Township	28,801	29,403	602
City of Markham	361,438	365,051	3,613
Town of Newmarket	92,639	94,060	1,421
City of Richmond Hill	215,410	220,365	4,955
City of Vaughan	347,254	353,071	5,817
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville	55,698	57,277	1,579
York Region	1,258,480	1,279,529	21,049

Figure 5

Source: York Region

All municipalities show positive population growth between January and December 2024, suggesting overall population increase within the region.

- *City of Vaughan shows the highest increase, followed closely by City of Richmond Hill. This suggests these areas might be experiencing more significant development or migration.
- *King Township and Town of Aurora have relatively smaller population increases. This could be due to limited residential expansion or migration patterns. This highlights the need for tailored labour force retention strategies, including opportunities for small businesses and remote work.
- Aging populations in established municipalities like Aurora may require workforce investments in elder care, health care, and related services.

This population pyramid shows the estimated number of people of each age in York Region in 2024 and 2051 separately for males and females. These projections were published by the Ontario Ministry of Finance in October 2024.

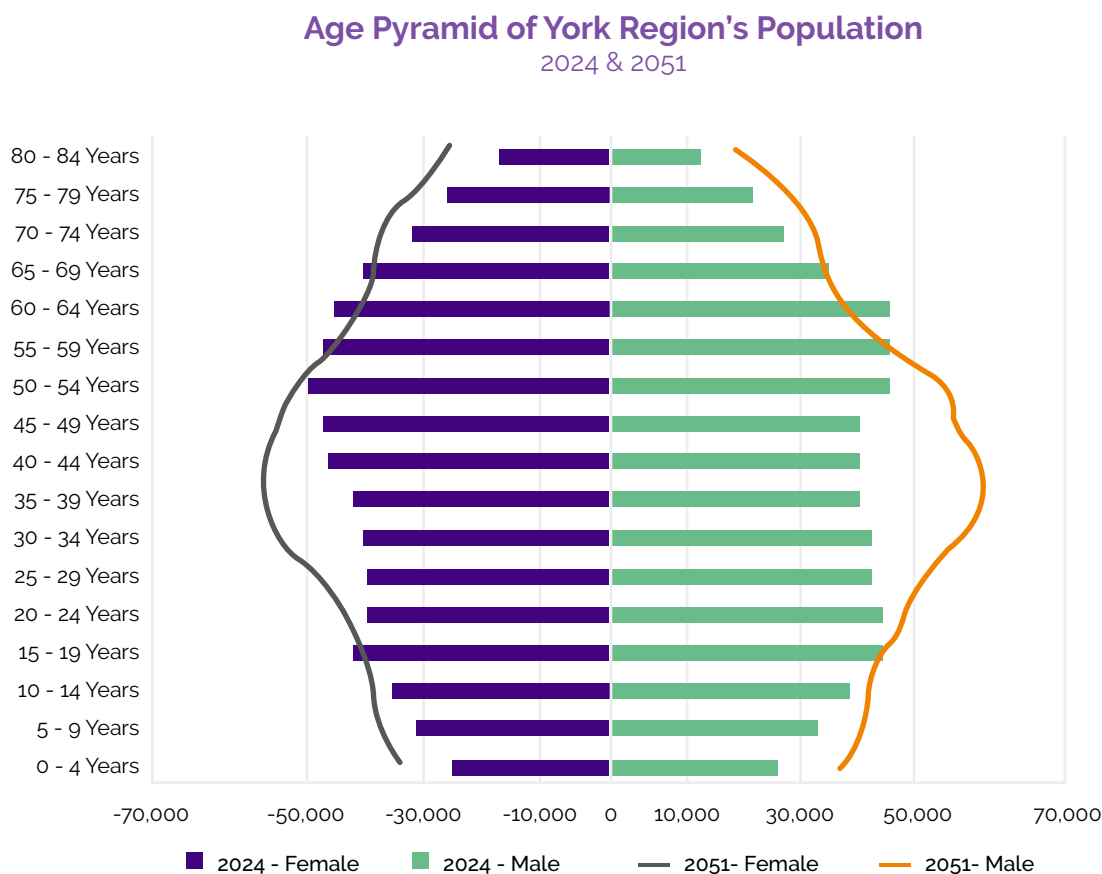


Figure 6

Source: Statistics Canada, Population estimates, July 1, by census division, 2021 boundaries. Ontario Ministry of Finance Population Projections.

- By 2051 all age groups will see an increase in population, reflecting overall growth.
- The potential increase is particularly noticeable in younger age groups (e.g., 0 to 4 years) and prime working age groups (20 to 49 years). The latter segment is the core of the labour force and is critical for economic growth. Growth in this group suggests potential labor market expansion but requires:
 - Reskilling and upskilling opportunities to meet evolving industry demands, particularly in tech, green energy, and advanced manufacturing.
 - Programs to support lifelong learning and career transitions.
 - Focus on work-life balance initiatives, particularly for women, to maximize workforce participation.
- The projected rapid growth in the senior population (65+ years) signals an aging workforce and increased reliance on health care and social services. The significant growth in the senior population compared to slower growth in the prime working-age population may increase the economic dependency ratio (number of dependents per working-age individual).

Workforce development efforts should focus on meeting the diverse needs of both urban and suburban populations, ensuring infrastructure, education, and employment opportunities are aligned with this growth. Urban centers will need to sustain their economic momentum with skilled talent, while suburban municipalities must balance residential expansion with infrastructure and workforce readiness. Tailored workforce strategies on increasing labour market participation rates across all demographics, including underrepresented groups like women and recent immigrants will be critical to support diverse sectors and address regional disparities.

Components of Population Change

The contributions of natural increase and net migration to population growth vary from year to year. While natural increase trends evolve slowly, net migration can be more volatile, mostly due to swings in interprovincial migration and variations in international migration. The current age structure of the population, natural increase, and the migratory movements in and out of the region are the main determinants of York Region's population changes.

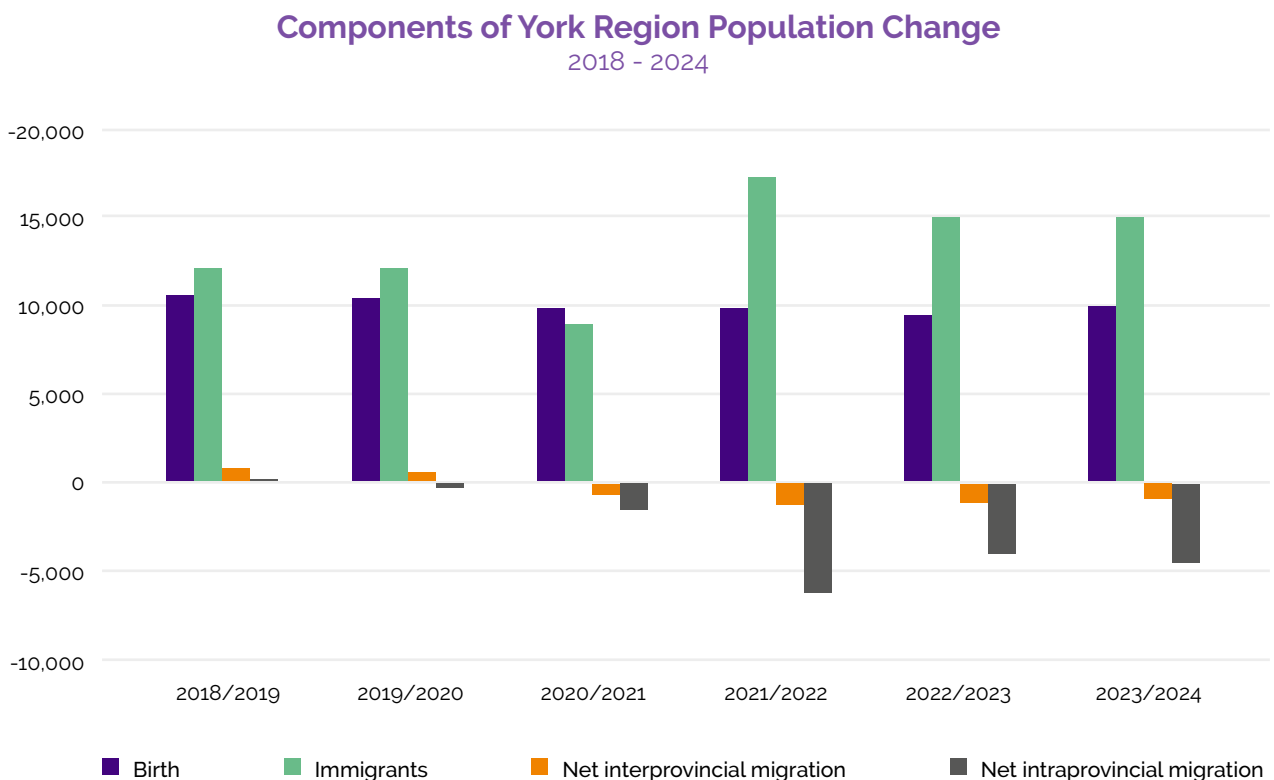


Figure 7

Source: Statistics Canada. Components of population change by census division, 2021 boundaries.

The chart illustrates the key components of population growth in the region from 2018 to 2024, showing trends for births, immigration, net interprovincial migration, net intraprovincial migration, and overall net population change. Here are the key observations:

- **Births:** The number of births has gradually declined between 2018 and 2023, with a slight increase in 2024. This indicates a downward trend in natural population growth.
- **Immigrants:** Immigration plays a significant role in population growth. While immigration dropped in 2020 during the pandemic, it rebounded strongly in 2021 and remained elevated through 2024. Immigration has been the most consistent contributor to the Region's population growth.
- **Net Interprovincial Migration:** The net interprovincial migration has been negative since 2020, indicating that more people are leaving the region for other provinces than moving in. This trend reflects housing affordability or other economic factors.
- **Net Intraprovincial Migration:** Similarly, intraprovincial migration (movement within the province) has been predominantly negative, with a sharp decline in 2021 and 2022. This suggests people are moving to other parts of the province, potentially for better affordability or opportunities.

Implications for Workforce Development:

- **Reliance on Immigration:** York Region's workforce will heavily depend on immigrants to fill labour gaps as natural population growth slows.
- **Addressing Outmigration:** The region must address factors driving negative interprovincial and intraprovincial migration, such as housing costs and job opportunities.
- **Ageing Population:** With declining birth rates, the long-term workforce sustainability will require policies that integrate immigrants effectively and promote retention in the region.



Labour Force Activity

Unemployment Rate

In the first quarter of 2024 the unemployment rate in York Region was relatively stable compared to the end of 2023, hovering slightly above 6%. This indicates a continuation of a stable labour market after the fluctuations seen in mid-2023. Then again, unemployment levels went up marginally, nearing 7.9%-8.1% in August and October respectively. The rates approached those of the Toronto CMA, with a smaller gap compared to previous years.

York Region, has traditionally maintained lower unemployment than Toronto CMA but the gap between York Region and Toronto CMA rates started to narrow in 2024. While York typically had slightly lower unemployment, its rates are converging with those of the broader Toronto CMA. This could indicate increased synchronization with the labour market dynamics of the GTA.

Unemployment Rate York Region, Toronto CMA, Ontario

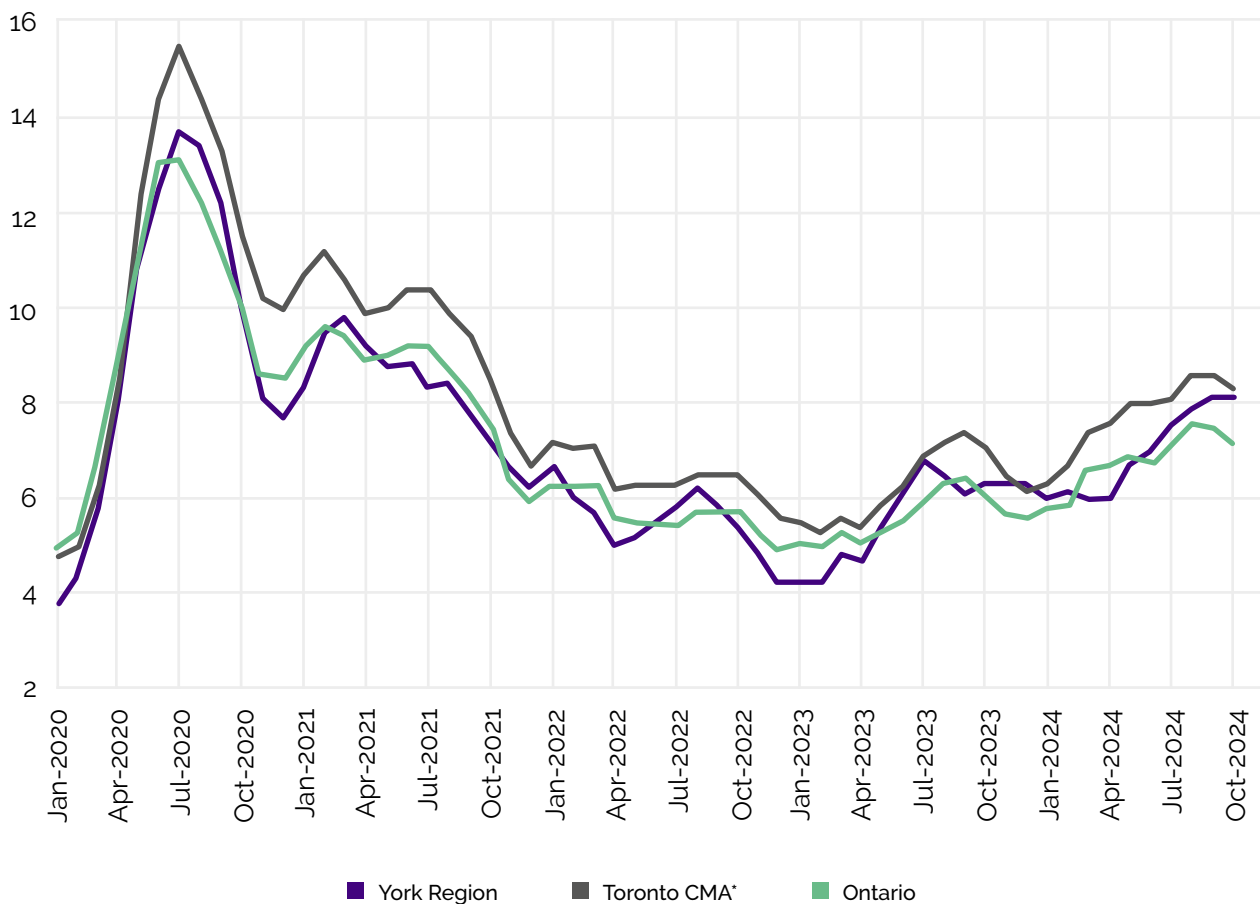


Figure 8

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Characteristics, 3-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality. *CMA – Census Metropolitan Area

Note: Reprinted from York Link

Several factors may explain why unemployment rates in York Region are aligning more closely with those of Toronto CMA in 2024:

Implications for Workforce Development:

- York Region has become more economically integrated with the GTA due to urban sprawl, improved transportation infrastructure (e.g., highways, public transit expansions), and shared labour markets.
- Workers in York Region increasingly commute to jobs in Toronto CMA, tying their employment outcomes to the broader Toronto economy.

Sectoral Alignment:

- York Region's economy is evolving to mirror the sectoral composition of the Toronto CMA, especially in tech, finance, and services. These industries tend to be sensitive to similar market conditions, reducing differences in unemployment rates.

Population Growth:

- York Region has experienced rapid population growth, leading to increased labour supply and competition for jobs. This growth may align unemployment trends more closely with those of the denser Toronto CMA.

Shift in Housing and Work Patterns:

- The post-pandemic hybrid work model has reduced the distinction between suburban (York) and urban (Toronto) job markets, with workers and employers being increasingly flexible about job locations.
- As Toronto CMA recovers economically, York Region's rates are naturally pulled closer.

Economic Challenges in 2024:

- Minor economic slowdowns or structural shifts in industries across the GTA in 2024 may have uniformly impacted York Region and Toronto CMA, contributing to the convergence.



Employment Insurance Beneficiaries

The following chart displays the number of beneficiaries who qualified for employment insurance benefits during the Labour Force Survey. The data presented here focuses on people who received regular EI benefits related to job loss. Regular EI benefits are paid to eligible individuals who lose their jobs and who are available for and able to work but cannot find a job.

York Region Employment Insurance Beneficiaries by Age Group
2024

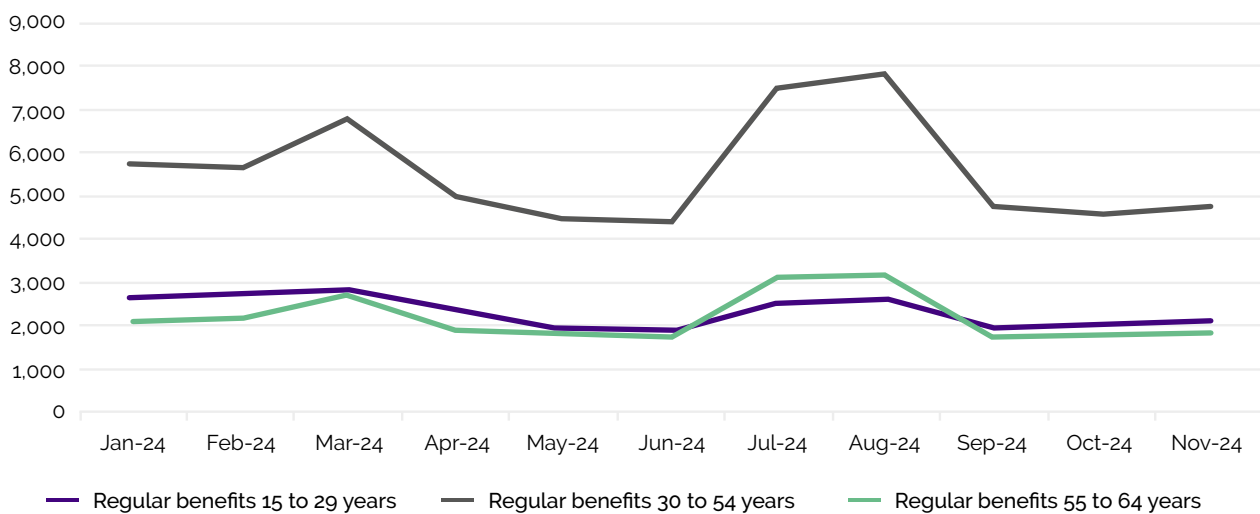


Figure 9

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Characteristics, 3-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality. *CMA – Census Metropolitan Area

Note: Reprinted from York Link

Overall Trends

1. Seasonal Fluctuations

- All age groups show a clear pattern of increased EI applications in March and July-August, likely due to seasonal and cyclical labour market changes.
- Declines during spring (April-June) suggest seasonal employment availability.

2. Age-Specific Patterns

- Younger workers (15-29 years) are most affected by temporary and seasonal job cycles.
- Workers aged 30-54 experience the highest EI application levels, reflecting their significant labour force participation.
- Older workers (55-64 years) show more stability, with smaller fluctuations but still affected by mid-year job market disruptions.

Employment Forecast

York Region establishes population and employment forecasts for the nine local municipalities to 2051. These forecasts are prepared using an integrated and comprehensive approach with infrastructure planning.⁵

Municipality		2031	2041	2051
Aurora	Population	71,900	79,600	85,800
	Employment	34,100	38,300	41,600
East Gwillimbury	Population	57,100	88,700	128,600
	Employment	16,500	27,500	44,300
Georgina	Population	56,500	65,500	70,500
	Employment	12,900	17,300	20,700
King	Population	38,200	56,900	66,400
	Employment	12,200	15,800	18,300
Markham	Population	416,300	496,700	618,000
	Employment	221,200	258,600	302,200
Newmarket	Population	98,900	107,200	118,500
	Employment	50,700	54,000	58,100
Richmond Hill	Population	251,900	284,100	320,400
	Employment	96,600	108,500	122,600
Vaughn	Population	398,600	479,200	576,200
	Employment	280,600	315,800	354,400
Whitchurch-Stouffville	Population	60,800	73,900	103,500
	Employment	20,200	24,000	28,400
York Region	Population	1,450,200	1,731,800	2,087,900
	Employment	745,000	859,800	990,600

Figure 10

Source: York Region Official Plan 2022



5. York Region Official Plan 2022

Hiring Demand

WORK IN YORK, a web-based platform that collects detailed information data from major online job search engines provides some insight into the hiring demand in York Region. This information should be interpreted with caution as it only identifies the trends.

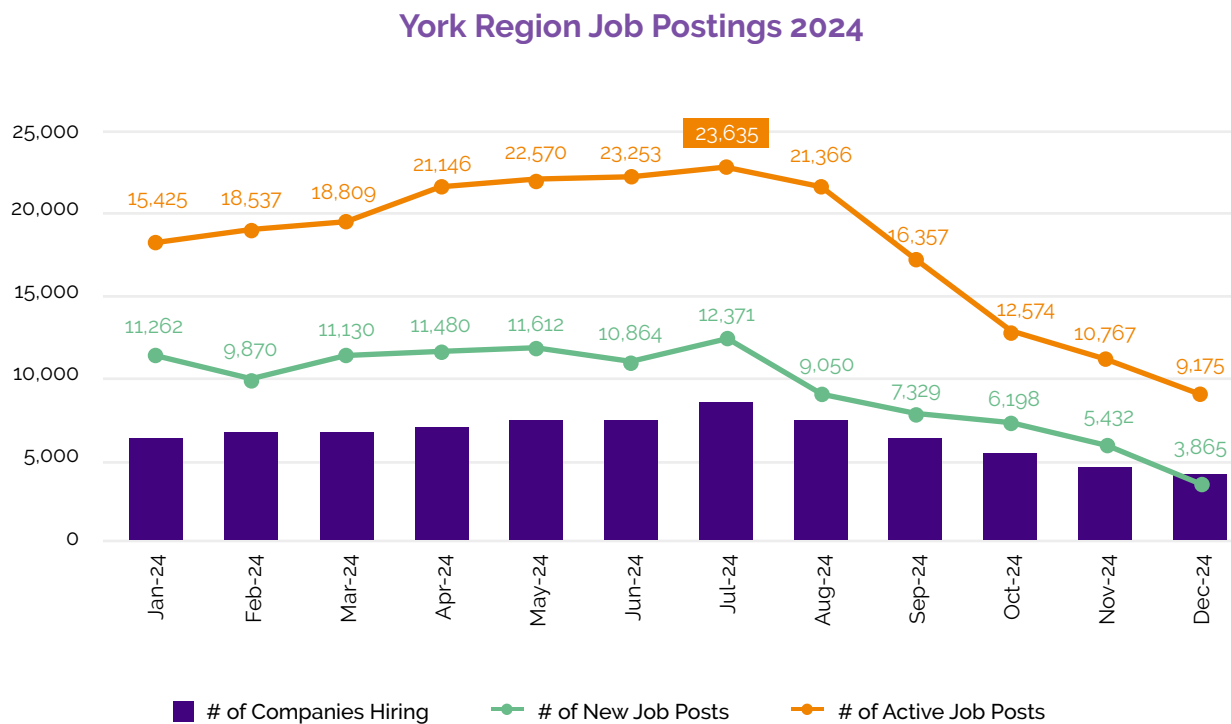


Figure 11
Source: Workforce Planning Board of York Region, WORK IN YORK

In 2024, the labour market wasn't as strong as before, although it started strong. Fluctuations in job postings are observed throughout the year:

Early 2024 (January to March):

- Job postings steadily increased during the first quarter, with **active job posts rising from 15,425 in January to 18,809 in March.**
- Companies hiring also rose, reflecting seasonal job creation, possibly for spring hiring campaigns in retail, construction, and other industries.

Peak Activity (April to July):

- Job postings peaked in **July 2024**, with **23,635 active job postings** and the highest number of companies hiring (8,383).
- This period is often associated with seasonal summer hiring, especially in hospitality, recreation, and retail.

Decline (August to December):

- From **August onward**, job postings and the number of companies hiring dropped significantly. By December, **active job postings fell to 9,175**, with only **4,140 companies hiring**.
- This represents a nearly **61% decrease in active job postings** from the peak in July.

Decline in Job Postings

The decline in job postings in York Region during 2024 can be attributed to several factors:

1. Seasonal Hiring Patterns

Job postings in York Region typically follow predictable seasonal trends. Industries like retail, hospitality, and construction create temporary positions to meet increased demand during summer. By late fall, demand decreases as businesses scale back hiring after the holiday season. Many industries halt recruitment during the last quarter as budgets are exhausted and business activity slows.

2. Economic Factors

Rising inflation and higher interest rates in 2024 may have caused businesses to adopt a cautious approach to hiring. Companies might be delaying growth plans or cutting costs due to fears of a potential economic slowdown. Retail and hospitality sectors are highly dependent on consumer spending, which may have been reduced due to economic pressures, leading to fewer job postings.

3. Automation and Digital Transformation

Many roles traditionally requiring human labour (e.g., retail salespersons, administrative assistants, customer service) are being replaced by automation and digital tools. Examples include:

- **Self-checkout systems** in retail.
- **Chatbots and automated customer service tools** replacing information services representatives.
- **Document management software** reducing the need for administrative roles.

These changes reduce the demand for entry-level and mid-skilled jobs, which are often among the most posted roles.

4. Shift to Remote and Hybrid Work

Remote work trends have altered the hiring landscape:

- Some companies consolidate operations or outsource roles to regions with lower costs, reducing local hiring.
- A focus on permanent remote work reduces postings for on-site roles, particularly in industries like administration, sales, and customer service.

5. Industry-Specific Declines

Retail Sector Decline:

Retail sales roles (e.g., NOC 6421 - Retail Salespersons) experienced a **41% drop in job postings**, reflecting the ongoing shift to e-commerce and reduced physical store activity.

Warehousing and Logistics:

Material handler roles (NOC 7452) declined by **55%**, likely due to supply chain disruptions and increasing automation in warehouses.

Customer Service Roles:

Job postings for customer service representatives (NOC 6552) dropped **57%**, reflecting the adoption of AI-driven customer support solutions.

6. Demographic and Labor Market Factors

With York Region's aging population, there may be fewer people in the working-age group, leading to lower turnover and reduced hiring needs in certain sectors. Some industries may struggle to attract qualified candidates, leading to unfilled roles rather than active job postings.

7. Competition from Neighbouring Regions

Proximity to Toronto and other parts of the GTA can impact York Region's job market. Skilled professionals might prefer opportunities in Toronto or Halton due to higher wages or greater career advancement prospects.

The decline in job postings in York Region during the latter half of 2024 reflects a combination of seasonal hiring patterns, economic challenges, technological shifts, and structural changes in the labour market. While the region continues to grow, businesses and job seekers alike face pressures to adapt to these evolving conditions.



Top In Demand Occupations (4-Digit NOC)

1. Retail salespersons and non-technical wholesale trade sales and account representatives
2. Office administrative assistants - general, legal and medical
3. Cashiers and other sales support occupations
4. Customer and information services representatives
5. Secondary, elementary and kindergarten school teachers
6. Food support occupations
7. Auditors, accountants and investment professionals
8. Nursing and allied health professionals
9. Administrative, property and payroll officers
10. Retail and wholesale trade managers

Source: Workforce Planning Board of York Region, WORK IN YORK

Top Hiring Sectors (2-Digit NAICS)

1. Retail trade
2. Health care and social assistance
3. Manufacturing
4. Professional, scientific and technical services
5. Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services
6. Accommodation and food services
7. Educational services
8. Finance and insurance
9. Wholesale trade
10. Construction

Source: Workforce Planning Board of York Region, WORK IN YORK

Top Hiring Municipalities

- City of Vaughan
- City of Markham
- Town of Richmond Hill
- Town of Newmarket
- Town of Aurora

Top 5 Skills Required

- Interpersonal Skills
- Communication
- Management
- Customer Service
- Organization

Source: Workforce Planning Board of York Region, WORK IN YORK

Trends Influencing Demand for These Skills

The top in-demand skills identified in York Region job postings reflect the needs of employers operating in a competitive and evolving economic environment.

1. Technological Advancements

While technology is automating repetitive tasks, employers increasingly prioritize human-centric skills like communication, management, and interpersonal abilities that cannot be easily replicated by machines.

2. Economic Growth and Population Expansion

York Region's growth as part of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) creates demand for a skilled workforce capable of handling the challenges of a dynamic economy, particularly in customer service, retail, and leadership roles.

3. Hybrid and Remote Work Environments

With many organizations adopting hybrid or remote work models, communication, organizational, and management skills are essential for maintaining productivity and collaboration across distributed teams.

4. Increased Focus on Customer Experience

Businesses recognize that superior customer service and positive client interactions are crucial for maintaining a competitive edge, further driving demand for related skills.

The high demand for these skills in York Region reflects a labour market that values adaptability, collaboration, and customer-centric abilities. Employers seek individuals who can drive operational success, maintain high-quality standards, and foster positive interactions, ensuring long-term organizational growth and resilience in a competitive environment.

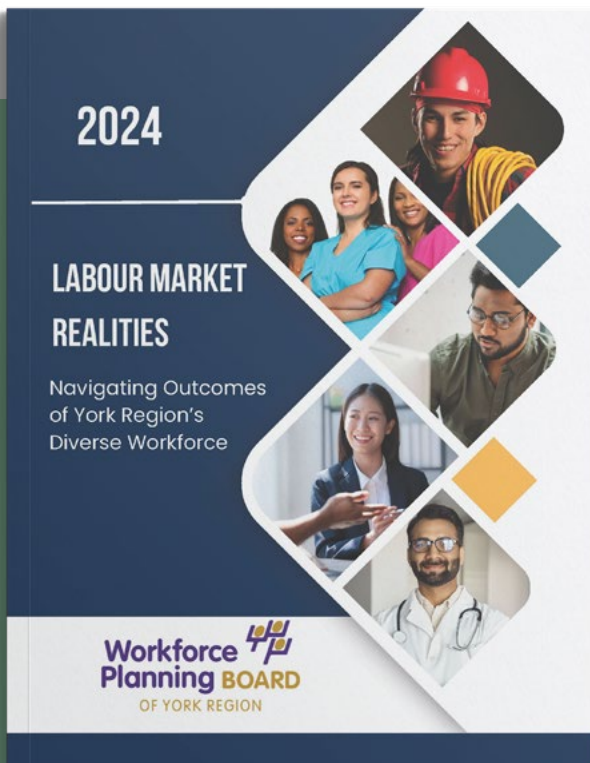
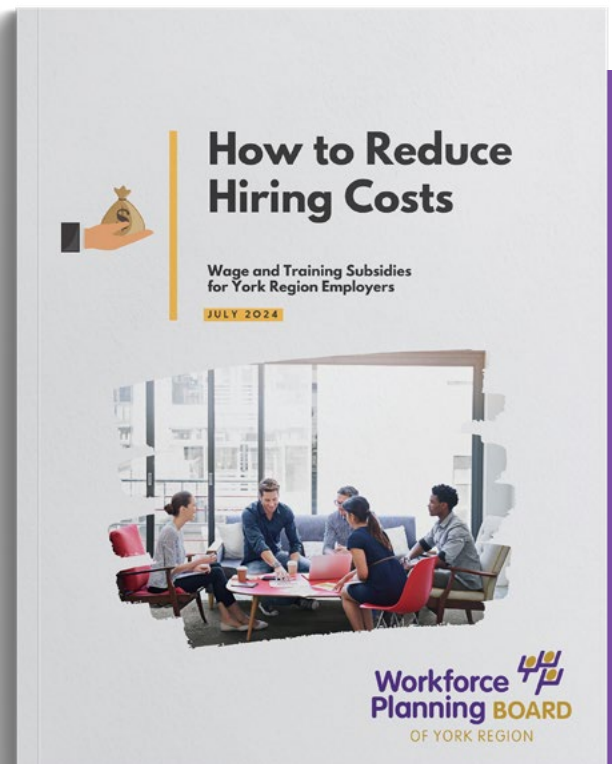


Resources for Employers

How to Reduce Hiring Costs

Navigating available tax credits, incentives, or training supports to help offset the financial costs of hiring new employees or training existing staff can be challenging and time consuming. WPCBoard has streamlined this process for employers by providing centralized access to the information needed to identify financial support to hire or advance talent for your organization. Utilizing the programs and incentives listed in this guide can help reduce costs associated with training apprentices, hiring youth, summer students, newcomers and other candidates. Additionally, Employment Ontario (EO) Employment Service Providers are available to support employers throughout the hiring process by listing job opportunities, suggesting qualified candidates, and providing incentive and wage subsidy information.

[Click Here for Full Guide](#)



Labour Market Realities Navigating Outcomes of York Region's Diverse Workforce

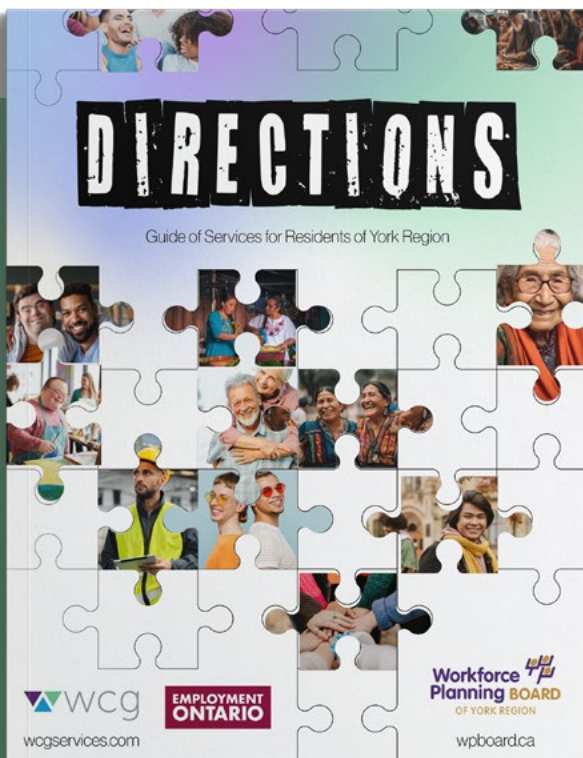
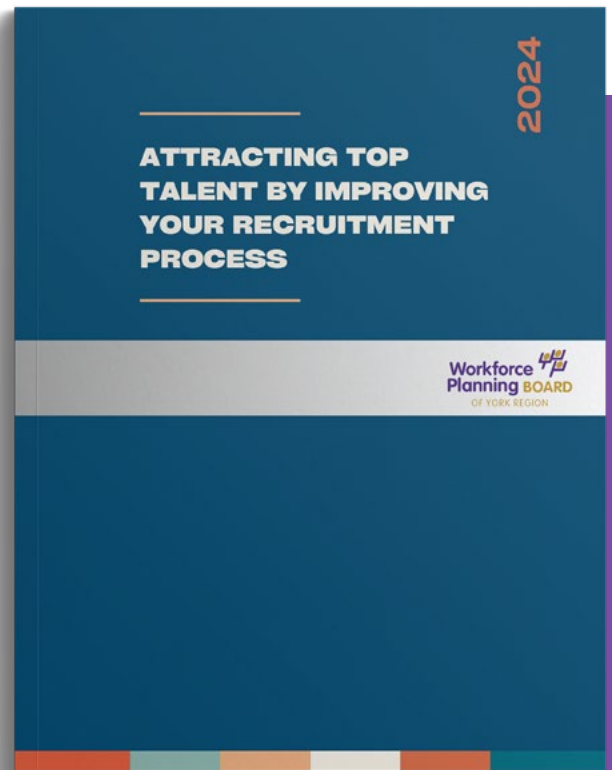
A report that examines the labour market circumstances and outcomes among different population categories of York Region residents using 2021 Census data. The population groups are based on Statistics Canada BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and people of colour) categories. Population groups included: Indigenous persons; South Asians; Chinese; Black; Filipino; Arab; Latin American; Southeast Asian; West Asian; Korean; and not racialized persons. There is also separate analysis for males and females in each category examining levels of educational attainment for the adult working age population. The report also compares for each of the population groups their average employment income, the proportion of immigrants who earn their university degree in Canada and highlights higher employment concentrations of population groups by industry sector.

[Click Here for Full Report](#)

Attracting Top Talent By Improving Your Recruitment Process

Unsuccessful hires are costly in terms of time and resources spent. Attracting the right talent to your business is a key component to its growth. As someone who is deeply invested in the success of your business, whether you are a CEO, a departmental manager, an HR person or any other hiring decision influencer, you are always looking for better ways to hire smarter. WPCBoard has created this 5-part eBook on the latest trends and techniques to adjust your recruitment strategy and improve your recruitment process. By integrating these strategies into your recruitment process, you not only attract top candidates but also create a more engaging and supportive work environment.

[Click Here for Full Guide](#)



DIRECTIONS Guide of Services for Residents of York Region

DIRECTIONS was developed for adults in York Region seeking services and support. Priority groups include seniors, people with disabilities, immigrants, and newcomers, indigenous, and the 2SLGBTQ+ Community. Information on services includes health services, bereavement and loss, family planning, education and employment support, legal information, and financial support.

[Click Here for Full Guide](#)

Employment Services & Support in York Region



Figure 12

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Job Skills | 10. VPI Working Solutions |
| 2. ACCES Employment | * 11. Achev |
| * 3. Canadian Hearing Services | * 12. ACCES Employment |
| * 4. March of Dimes Canada | 13. JVS Toronto Employment Source Markham |
| 5. RNC Employment Services | 14. Job Skills |
| 6. Job Skills | 15. VPI Working Solutions |
| 7. YMCA Richmond Hill Employment | 16. Thornhill Employment Hub |
| 8. Next-Steps Employment Centre | * 17. Corbrook |
| 9. COSTI Employment Services | 18. Centre Francophone Du Grand Toronto |

* Employment services for job seekers with disabilities

Employment Services and Support in York Region

This section provides information and analysis of client data released by the of Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development in 2024 and offers insights into client demographics and outcomes between April 2023 and March 2024. Please note that the client data and analysis is provided at the York Census Division level.

The 2024 data reveal a positive trajectory in Employment Ontario services in York Region, with significant growth across most demographics and marginalized groups. By prioritizing reskilling, inclusivity, and addressing economic needs, the program stands out as a vital support system in an ever-changing labour market. Strategic adjustments should address gaps for seniors and leverage opportunities to deepen engagement with marginalized communities.

Highlights

- **9,806** residents were serviced by Employment Ontario Service Provider Offices in 2023-2024, an increase by 1,836 clients (+23%), indicating higher program participation. This growth indicates:
 - Increased demand for employment-related services due to economic factors such as layoffs or job market changes.
 - Improved outreach efforts targeting underserved communities.
- **210** clients from the **Better Jobs Ontario, Literacy and Basic Skills** as well as **Apprenticeship** programs received one-on-one assistance regarding their job search.
- Compared to the previous reporting period, there was a significant increase in the utilization of services by individuals in the Prime Working Age group (25-44). This demographic saw the highest growth rate, approximately 35%, likely due to:
 - Career transitions or reskilling needs.
 - Increased focus on supporting mid-career individuals, especially in high-demand sectors.
- The share of male clients using the services was slightly higher than females, but compared to the previous 2021-22 reporting period, 31% more males used the services. The significant increase in male clients suggests:
 - Greater economic disruption in traditionally male-dominated industries (e.g., manufacturing, construction, transportation) due to structural changes or economic downturns.
 - Men might be seeking support for transitioning into emerging industries or addressing skill gaps to remain competitive in the job market.
 - Historically, men have been less likely to use employment services, so this growth could indicate a shift in perceptions of EO programs as valuable and accessible.

Education Levels of Clients at Intake

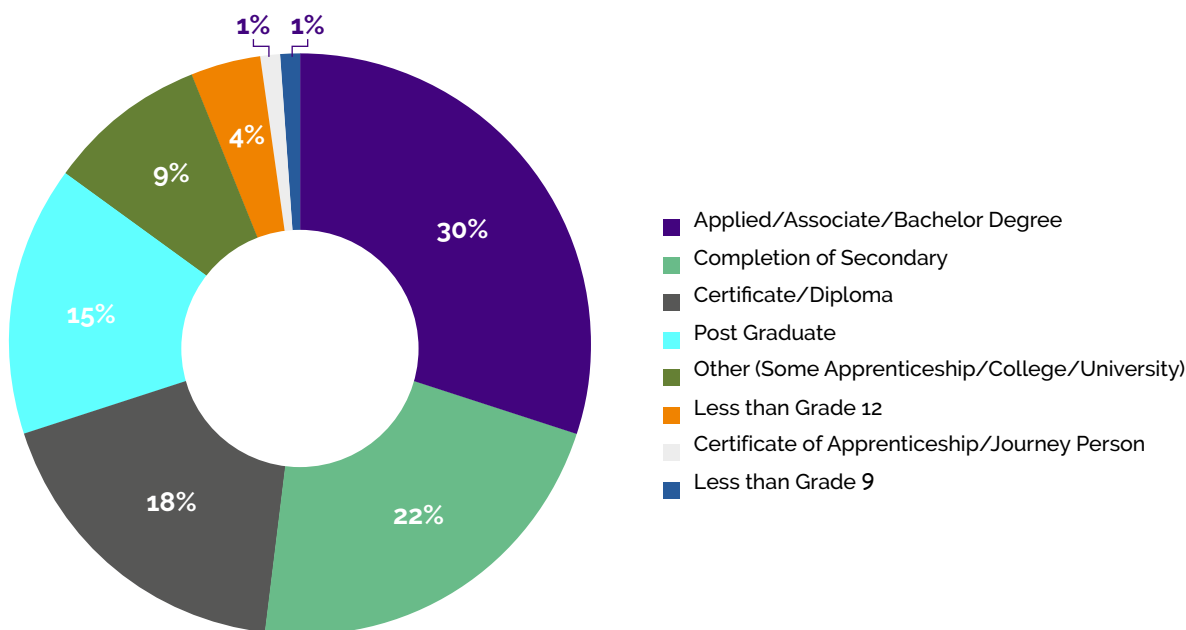


Figure 13

Source: Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development

- The high number of clients with a degree can be related to the increase in the number of Newcomers that are using the employment services in order to enter the labour market.
- Demand for services among those who had completed Secondary School increased. During 2023-2024 about **44%** more clients of this group requested assistance, reflecting a need for more than basic qualifications in today's job market.

Income Sources of Clients Using Employment Ontario (EO) Services

- Overall, the trends indicate a growing reliance on integrated employment services across various demographic groups, with particularly sharp increases among Ontario Works recipients and those on ODSP. The significant increase in Ontario Works (OW) clients using Employment Ontario (EO) services can be attributed to a combination of factors:
 - **Growing Economic Hardship:** Economic challenges, such as job losses, reduced income, and increased living costs, may have driven more OW recipients to seek employment services to improve their financial stability.
 - **Success in Connecting OW Recipients with Employment Services:** The integrated employment services model, which combines social assistance and employment services, has likely played a crucial role. This model aims to provide holistic support, helping individuals stabilize their lives and move towards employment and independence.
 - **Integrated Employment Services Transformation:** The transformation has made employment services more efficient, streamlined, and outcomes-focused.

Designated Groups

- The number of **Racialized** groups using employment services saw a notable growth compared to the previous period, suggesting a substantial push to engage these communities. This increase could be attributed to targeted outreach programs or demographic shifts in the region. Additionally, this might also be the result of more individuals self-reporting as racialized groups, potentially due to heightened awareness, changes in identification practices, or shifts in social dynamics encouraging people to acknowledge and report their racial identities.
- Similarly, **76% more Persons with Disabilities** used these services, reflecting improved accessibility or program adjustments to meet their needs.

Clients by Designated Groups

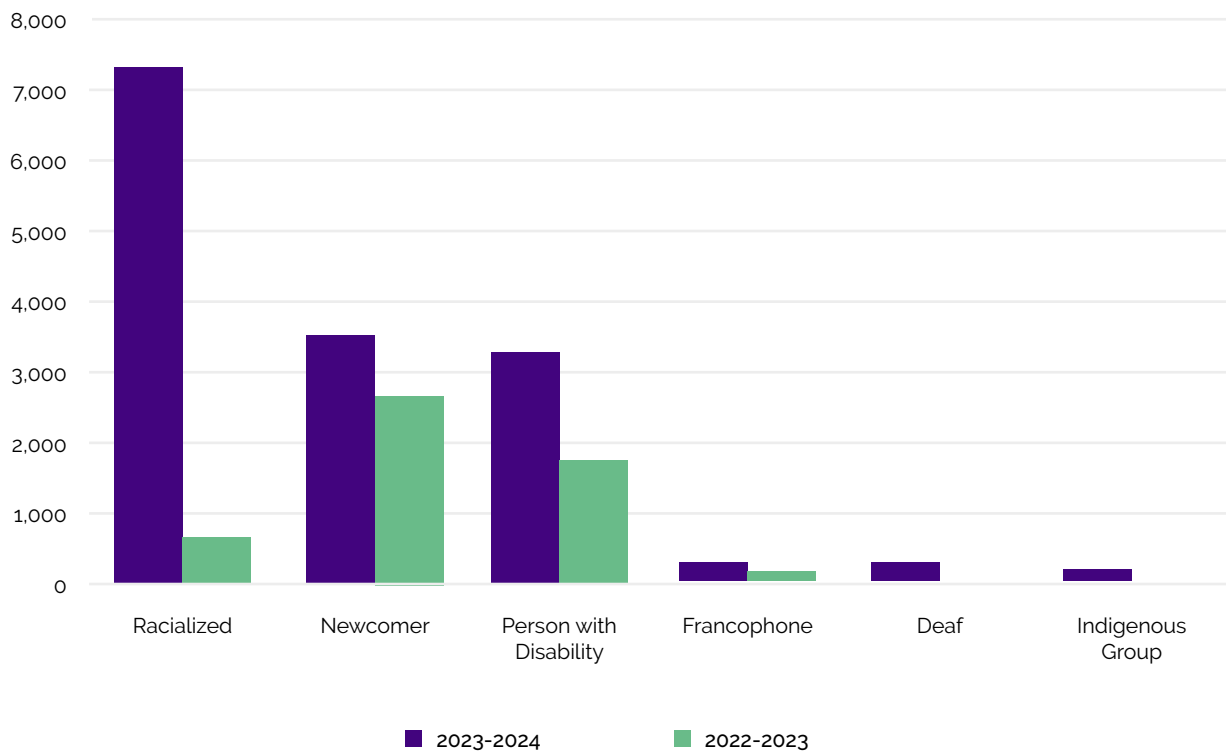


Figure 14

Source: Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development

Canada-Ontario Job Grant

- **168 employers** received the Canada-Ontario Job Grant (the Job Grant). This grant provided direct financial support to individual employers to train a total of 152 employees. 78% of employers were small businesses employing less than 50 employees and 22% employed 50-150 employees. The outcomes were quite positive, and all employers reported that training met their workforce needs.

Apprenticeship

- There were **14,385 Active Apprentices** during 2023-2024, an increase of about 7.9% compared to 2022-2023. Meanwhile close to **6.4% more Certificates of Apprenticeship** were issued as compared to the previous period as the number of New Registrations decreased by almost 3.5%. The number of registrants for modular training also increased by 16.4%. The average age of apprentices at registration was 27 years old versus 28 years old in the previous period. The number of apprentices decreased by 22% for 45-64 age group, almost 0.6% for 15-24 age group and 3.5% for 25-44-years old apprentices.
- Apprenticeship continues to be dominated by males that made up 88% of the total number of apprentices.
- 85 % of the apprentices had completed Secondary Education.
- Racialized followed by Persons with Disabilities as well as Francophones had large numbers of representation amongst the designated groups of apprentices.

Below is a list of Top 10 New Registrations in Trades. It becomes evident that the list of trades that got the highest number of new registrants remained more or less the same compared to the previous period.

Trades - Top 10 New Registrations York Region	
2023-2024	2022-2023
Electrician - Construction and Maintenance	Electrician - Construction and Maintenance
General Carpenter	General Carpenter
Sprinkler and Fire Protection Installer	Automotive Service Technician
Automotive Service Technician	Sprinkler and Fire Protection Installer
Drywall, Acoustic and Lathing Applicator	Plumber
Heat and Frost Insulator	Child Development Practitioner
Child Development Practitioner	Drywall, Acoustic and Lathing Applicator
Construction Craft Worker	Construction Craft Worker
Plumber	Hairstylist
Hazardous Materials Worker	Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Systems Mechanic

Figure 15
Source: Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development



WORK IN YORK

All-In-One Interactive Toolkit

Designed for:

Job seekers, employers, employment services providers as well as training and skills development practitioners to better understand York Region's labour market.



JOB SEARCH TOOLS

- Job Board
- Job Map
- My Job Portal
- Work From Home Job Board



CAREER DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

- Career Library
- Career Explorer
- Job & Training Events



COMMUNITY DATA TOOLS

- Talent Map
- Sector Map
- Sector Library



This project is funded by the Government of Ontario



Moving Forward: 2025-26 Action Plans

Priority 1: Under-Employment of Youth

- The province is facing a "historic" labour shortage, with about 300,000 jobs. Demographic shifts and high retirement rates are fueling demand and an ever-growing need to recruit and train more people in the skilled trades.
- Skilled trades in Ontario employ 1.3 million people.
- One in five job openings in the Province of Ontario are expected to be in the skilled trades by 2026.
- The retirement of the baby boom generation (1946-1964) is leaving a significant gap in the workforce, with fewer young people entering the trades to replace them.
- Due to a long-running push for people to attend university instead of college has resulted in a lack of trades people. The bias towards university, combined with myths about the nature of skilled trades jobs (dirtier or lower paying) has meant that many current tradespeople can't keep up with demand for their services.
- Greater awareness of skilled trades is a current priority of the Ontario government.
- Parents identified the most common barriers facing individuals interested in pursuing apprenticeship were related to lack of awareness of the skills trades and their pathways.

The planned actions can be seen in the chart on the next page.



Actions planned, underway or updated

Action	2024-2025 Activities	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated and executed a Skilled Trades tour for 50 co-op, guidance and alternative education educators from both YRDSB and YCDSB to inform and increase understanding of this pathways so their knowledge can be shared with students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visited a heavy equipment company, a glass manufacturing company and a private career college that offers certification in hairdressing, aesthetics, skin care, medial laboratory technician and more. Promoted the Pathway to Careers in Skilled Trades guide to educators as a resource. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased exposure of a variety of trades in service, motive power, and industrial sectors. Provided a better understanding of pathways to careers in trades. Increased linkages to co-operative education opportunities, training and employment in York Region.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In partnership with YRDSB & YCDSB, participated in the Fast Track to the Workplace event for students not moving on to post secondary or apprenticeship after high school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoted WORK IN YORK to students and parents to increase their awareness of in-demand jobs in the local labour market. Increased awareness of career opportunities in the trades by promoting Careers in Skilled Trades which provides information on over 140 skilled trades in Ontario. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of career pathways and entrepreneurial opportunities that exist for students interested in pursuing a career in the trades to 300 students and their parents.

2025-2026 Activities

Action	Proposed Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize and execute day-long industry tour in York Region for teachers, guidance counselors and co-op teachers to increase awareness of careers in skilled trades and connections to local training centres and employers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YRDSB, YCDSB Training Centres Employers that hire skilled trades people



Priority 2: Employer Discussion & Engagement

- York Region, like many areas in Ontario and across Canada, is experiencing significant challenges related to skilled trades shortages. A substantial portion of the current skilled trades workforce is approaching retirement age and certain trades in York Region are experiencing more acute shortages. This trend could exacerbate labour shortages if not addressed.
- There is a noticeable decline in the number of young individuals entering skilled trades. Employers in York Region have expressed concerns about the declining interest among youth in pursuing trades.
- The rapid integration of new technologies in various industries has increased the skill requirements for many trades. Employers report that technological changes are elevating the complexity of tasks, necessitating continuous up-skilling and training. This evolution can deter potential entrants who may feel unprepared or lack access to necessary training programs.

Actions planned, underway or updated

Action	2024-2025 Activities	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer Webinar. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize and execute an employer webinar. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlighted changes to employment law that employers should be aware of.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a user-friendly guide that supports employers in their talent acquisition efforts by providing access to wage and training subsidies available to businesses in York Region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support employers' efforts to hire staff for their business by creating a user-friendly resource that highlights hiring and training subsidies in a number of areas for employers to access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial support for employers to hire the talent that their business requires.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An electronic resource on recruitment strategies for employers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps employers stand out to job seekers and attract the talent they need by creating a resource of recruitment strategies that appeal to job seekers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase employers' awareness on strategies to attract top talent in today's labour market.

2025-2026 Activities

Action	Proposed Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A report that analyzes and identifies the current and projected shortages in skilled trades within York Region. The research will focus on employer perspectives about skilled trades occupations experiencing shortages, the industries most affected, demographic trends, training and education pathways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • York Region Employers • Skilled Trades Ontario • York Region District School Board • Employment Ontario

Priority 3: Dissemination of Labour Market Knowledge through a Digital Media Strategy

- York Region is a region of 1.2 million residents, and over 615,000 local jobs.
- York Region is the third largest business centre in Ontario with 57,000 employer businesses supporting a diverse economy.
- Seventy-three percent of residents have a post-secondary education, age 25-64.
- The employment market continues to be challenging for employers to find talent with the right skills.
- A strategic marketing plan has been developed and will continue to be implemented to support the connection between job seekers and employers looking to hire the talent they need.

Actions planned, underway or updated

Action	2024-2025 Activities	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WPBoard continued to utilize a strategic digital marketing plan using social media platforms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WPBoard focused on outreach through a number of social media channels to inform job seekers and employers about tools and resources accessible on the WPBoard website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase brand recognition and reputation. • Increase website activity and visits. • Build capacity and trust with the audience. • Link job seekers and employers to community partners that can support their goals.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued promotion of WORK IN YORK job finding and career development tools to job seekers / clients of community partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Partners include Welcome Centre Job Search Workshops, York Bridging Programs, Women's Centre of York Region and Skills Upgrading Centre, YRDSB, YCDSB and Employment Ontario. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing awareness of WIY tools and resources that will support job seeker's employment goals and career pathways.

2025-2026 Activities

Action	Proposed Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WPBoard will continue to execute a digital marketing plan to increase awareness of the local labour market by driving our audiences to the WPBoard website by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Facebook campaign designed to target the mature audience that utilizes this platform and is looking for employment. - Launch a TikTok platform to effectively reach the Gen Z job seekers utilizing short reels to share bite-sized advice on resume optimization, cover letter writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A

Priority 4: Addressing Potential Labour Shortages - Expanding and Promoting WORK IN YORK Job Finding and Career Development Tools

- A healthy labour market is key to the economic health and prosperity of the region.
- Supporting clients in their job search by promoting tools to help them make informed decisions about their employment goals and increase successful employment.
- Collaborating with our Employment Ontario partners and community partners to organize and promote these demonstrations will increase local labour market knowledge and support the creation of long term employment for job seekers.

Actions planned, underway or updated

Action	2024-2025 Activities	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted an environmental scan for Early Childhood Educators (ECE) shortages in York Region to examine the various factors that contributed to the shortage of professionals in the field of early childhood education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The analysis identified trends and challenges and help inform strategies to address the shortage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of this in-demand occupation will help community partners develop strategic plans to promote and train job seekers for these roles.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoted the WORK in YORK job finding and career development tools, the Training Board and the Personal Job Portal to job seekers and career changers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executed a series of live demonstrations of the WORK in YORK job finding and career development tools, the training board and introduction of the Personal Job Portal allowing job seekers to streamline their job search. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of available training programs that support the development of skill sets to achieve desired employment outcomes. • Awareness of the Personal Job Portal to increase effectiveness in their job search.

2025-2026 Activities

Action	Proposed Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize and execute a series of live demonstrations of the WORK IN YORK job finding and career development tools that focus on the desired occupations of job seekers, career changers and new grads. This tool also supports Career Counsellors and Job Developers from Employment Ontario in their role to help clients find employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Ontario Service Providers • Literacy and Skill Upgrading Centres • Welcome Centres • Women's Centre • York University

Priority 5: Integration of Newcomers in the Labour Market

- York Region continues to experience an increase in immigrants.
- 47.8% of residents in York Region were born outside of Canada compared to the rest of Ontario at 42.5%.
- Recent immigrants account for 83.4% of the growth of the region's population.
- The population of York Region is diverse and includes people speaking over 120 languages and representing more than 230 distinct ethnic origins.
- The top three countries of origin for recent immigrants in York Region are China, Iran and India.

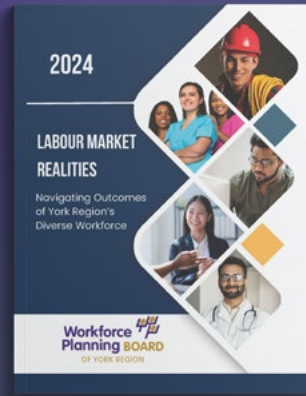
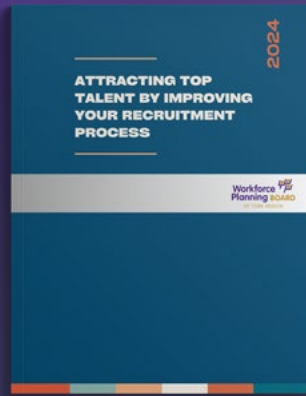
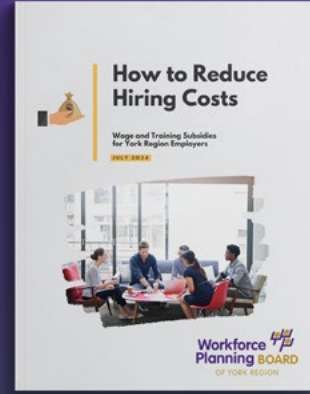
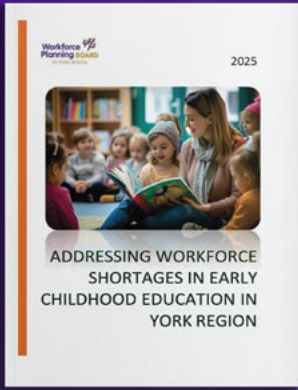
Actions planned, underway or updated

Action	2023-2024 Activities	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key advisor on actions that support the integration of newcomers in York Region: Community Planning Council, Local Immigration Planning Group, Newcomer Employability Panel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributing member to the economic prosperity pillar of the refreshed newcomer plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote immigrant talent and resources to local employers to recruit and retain newcomers.

2025-2026 Activities

Action	Proposed Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue as a contributing member of the Human Services Planning Council (HSPC) and the Newcomer Inclusion Table (NIT) of York Region – both key components of the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • York Region Community & Health Services, Strategies & Partnerships (who hold the contract for the LIP through IRRC) • Economic Strategy Planning and Economic Development, Corporate Services York Region • Employment Ontario Service Providers • Markham External Advisory Committee - York University • Community Stakeholders





LOCAL LABOUR MARKET REPORT

WORKFORCE TRENDS – IN YORK REGION

2025