



OW/RAC

Ontario Workforce Recovery Advisory Committee

The Future of Work in Ontario

Findings and Recommendations from the Ontario
Workforce Recovery Advisory Committee

November 2021

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Message from the Chair of the Ontario Workforce Recovery Advisory Committee (OWRAC)

As chair on behalf of the Ontario Workforce Recovery Advisory Committee, I am pleased to submit the report on the future of work for Ontario.

The issues discussed in this report are central to determining the standard of living and quality of life for the people of Ontario for years to come. These issues touch on the intersecting trends of technological change, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the workforce's recovery. We considered the views of the many workers, businesses, stakeholders, academics and labour representatives we heard from and undertook an extensive consultation process that we have outlined in our report.

We thank the more than 700 individuals and organizations who provided their input orally and in writing during the consultation stage of the committee's work. The idea of the committee was very much to bring expertise to the table, listen and learn. With their contributions we accomplished all three objectives. Our report would not have been possible without the diverse, sincere and sage perspectives we had the privilege to encounter.

The committee especially thanks Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development, for launching this important exercise and for being a keen supporter of our work from the outset.

His office staff, especially Director of Policy Alexandra Rodgers, Senior Policy Advisor Vladislav Yakovlyev and Policy Intern Kofi Yeboah, have been remarkably open and patient, interacting with us and responding to the committee's requests ably and with good humour. We thank ministry officials, in particular David Beaulieu, Assistant Deputy Minister of Strategic Policy and David Carter-Whitney, Assistant Deputy Minister of Workforce Policy and Innovation, both with the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development. They and their teams provided the committee with an excellent technical and operational briefing at the start of our work and diligently addressed our follow-up queries.

Susan McArthur was the original chair of the Ontario Workforce Recovery Advisory Committee. Her yeoman's work in setting up the committee, providing it structure and direction, and leading the formative stages has endured through to the end of our mandate.

Finally, we thank the team at Ipsos for its help in providing research for this report, organizing the public consultations and assisting in drafting and producing the report.

While we acknowledge the input of everyone above, the views expressed in this report and any errors and omissions are solely those of the committee.



Rohinton P. Medhora, Chair
Ontario Workforce Recovery Advisory Committee

Introduction

The Changing Workforce and COVID-19

The world of work has been changing for decades, but no event has accelerated those changes more than the COVID-19 pandemic. The global workforce was transformed in short order as many workers in Ontario suddenly found themselves working from home, part of the largest shift to remote work ever.

A [Statistics Canada](#) paper estimates that in January of 2021, 32 per cent of Canadian employees aged 15 to 69 worked mostly from home. In 2016, the figure was just four per cent.

The time is right to review and modernize the laws governing work and the programs supporting the different types of workers as we emerge from COVID-19.

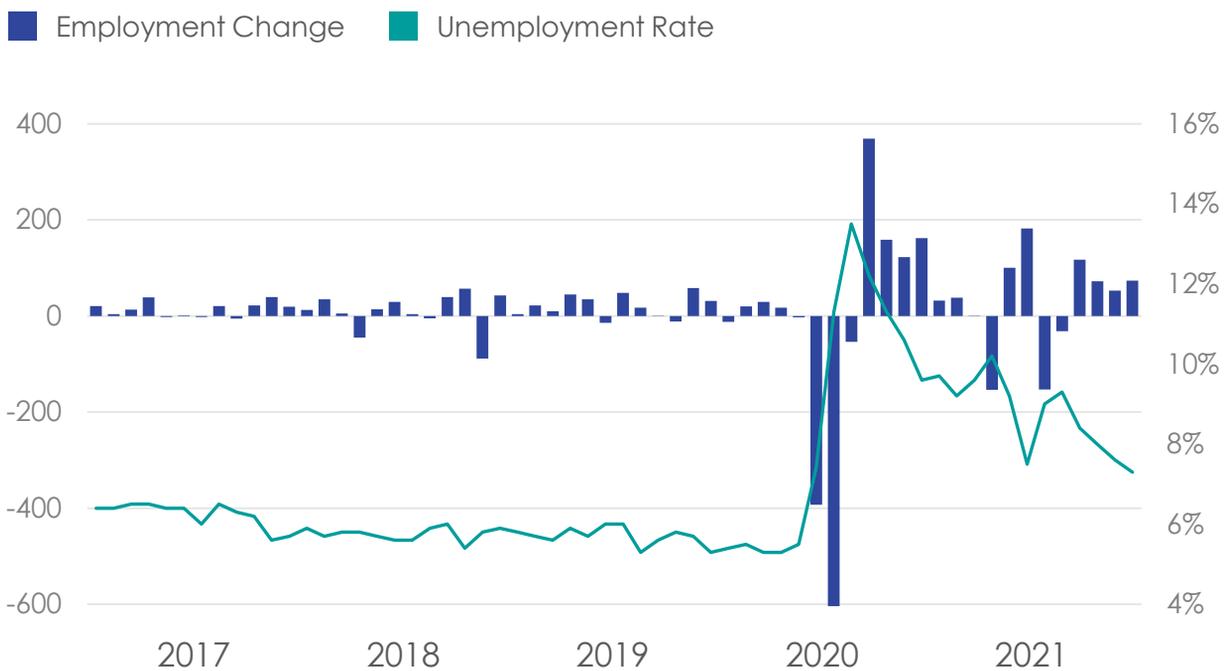
When COVID-19 began, Canadians quickly realized how much we rely on some workers – such as couriers, grocery store clerks and frontline health staff – to get us the goods and services we need. At the same time, essential workers faced new challenges, where just going to work could make them sick. Those in other sectors lost their jobs or were forced to rely on insecure work to make ends meet, even with generous support from government.



The pandemic also brought on a rapid technological transformation, as we became accustomed to video conferencing for school, doctor's appointments, meetings and simple social connections. Indeed, every consultation and stakeholder engagement conducted in preparing this report was done remotely. Even the Ontario Workforce Recovery Advisory Committee (OWRAC) itself met only virtually.

Ontario suffered an unemployment shock as well. While government aid helped to blunt some of the most severe effects of the pandemic, many people found themselves out of work, and some also suddenly lost their sense of self and an outlet for engaging with others. At the start of the pandemic, [Statistics Canada](#) shows Ontario's [unemployment rate](#) shot up into double digits before gradually beginning to recover.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE AND MONTHLY CHANGE [IN THOUSANDS]



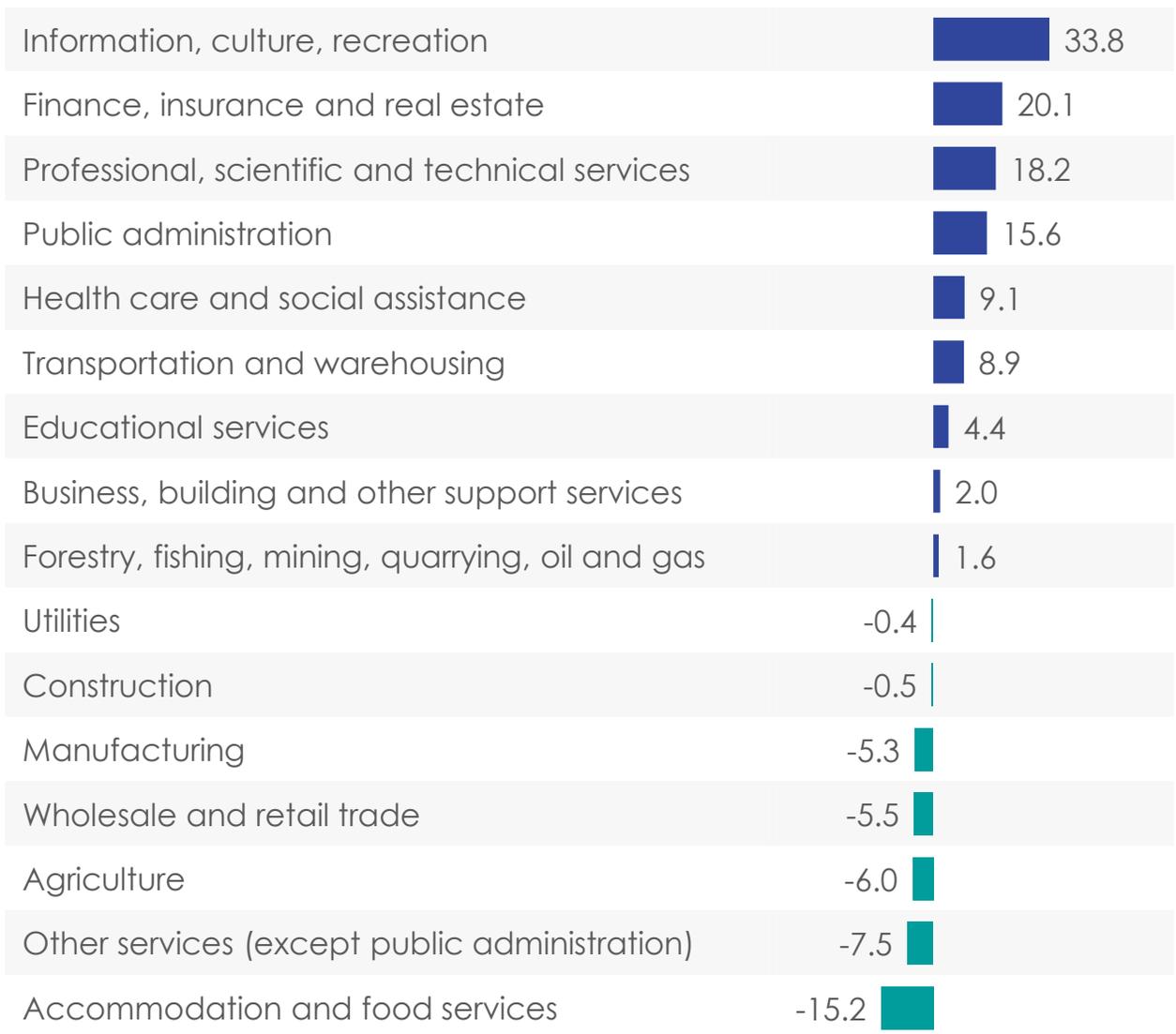
Source: October 2021, Statistics Canada

For those who continue to have jobs, COVID-19 has led to a reconsideration of what comes next. Some are quitting their jobs and making drastic career changes. According to an [Ipsos study](#), the pandemic could be leading to the “great resignation.” A [Forbes article](#) in May 2021 noted that many employees are considering a job switch post-pandemic, while a [McKinsey and Company report on the future of work from February 2021](#) [suggested](#) that “jobs with the highest physical proximity are likely to be the most disrupted.”

In September 2021, Ontario's unemployment rate stood at 7.3 per cent. Younger men (aged 15-24) have been hard hit by the pandemic, facing an unemployment rate of 15.3 per cent. While some sectors, such as information, culture and recreation, have started to recover, workers in severely affected sectors, such as accommodation and food services, agriculture, wholesale and retail trade, continue to face employment uncertainty.



MONTHLY EMPLOYMENT CHANGE BY INDUSTRY IN ONTARIO [%]



Source: September 2021, Statistics Canada

For others, COVID-19 has meant delaying retirement. A September 2021 [Ipsos survey](#) on behalf of the [Canadian Institute of Actuaries](#) found that nearly one-quarter (23 per cent) of working Canadians surveyed are delaying their own or their spouse's retirement.

A [separate survey](#) by [Mackenzie Investments](#) shows almost four in 10 working Canadians are not confident about the amount of money their retirement income will provide. While everyone faced challenges due to COVID-19, the pandemic has not been an even experience for workers across the board.

23%

of Canadians surveyed say they or their spouse are delaying retirement because of COVID-19.

69%

of those are delaying retirement say it is because they will need to work longer to amass enough retirement income.

36%

of working Canadians and 21% of retirees are not confident about much money their retirement will provide.

The problem is clear for the people of Ontario, and they almost unanimously believe that the province needs stronger labour supports and employee benefits for all workers. Four in five (80 per cent) say stronger supports are needed, rather than saying the current labour supports and benefits are sufficient (20 per cent). Only a slight majority (54 per cent) said that, for employers, Ontario is one of the best places in North America to find workers.

A high-quality health-care system (92 per cent), a high-quality education system (89 per cent) and incentives for lifelong learning and skills upgrading (86%) were seen as the most important things the government could focus on to make Ontario the best place to work.

Ontario is a top contender in the global labour market and is an excellent place to work.

While the disruption from the pandemic created challenges, the province is starting from a remarkable place of strength.

Accelerating technology and labour trends requires a close look at training models and labour policies to ensure that Ontario remains a destination of choice.

As the nature of work has changed, it is clear that the laws governing work and the programs supporting workers should be re-examined. This is why the Ontario government, through the Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development Monte McNaughton, convened an advisory committee on the future of work.



The Advisory Committee

In June 2021, Minister McNaughton announced the formation of the Ontario Workforce Recovery Advisory Committee, or OWRAC for short, and asked it to chart a course for the future of work in the post-pandemic world. He subsequently published an [op-ed](#) in the [National Post](#) on June 17, 2021, outlining his vision for our work as a committee.



Previously, we strove to find balance between our work lives and our personal lives. Those neat boundaries no longer exist.

Old models and thinking on both sides of the ideological divide no longer quite fit. Some on the left believe government should do it all. Some on the right believe government should do nothing. I believe that government should give people a hand up and spread opportunity more widely and fairly.

– Monte McNaughton, Ontario Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development

The advisory committee was appointed by Minister McNaughton with a mandate to provide recommendations on key areas of focus:

- 1 Economic recovery:** How do we make Ontario the top destination with a world-class workforce and talent supply?
- 2 Strengthening Ontario's competitive position:** In an increasingly remote, global and technologically advanced economy, how will we ensure that Ontario remains the best place in North America to recruit, retain and reward workers?

3 **Supporting workers:** How will we ensure that Ontario's technology platform workers benefit from flexibility, control and security?

The committee's mandate noted that "COVID-19 has brought on a historic disruption in the labour market that has permanently shifted the landscape of work." We (the committee) set out to address these changes and make recommendations on how best to secure the future of work for Ontario.

As an advisory committee, we were asked to provide the government with a way forward, including clear and actionable recommendations, along the lines of the three areas of focus identified by Minister McNaughton. Our work was supported by Ipsos and a team of dedicated public servants in the Ministry of Labour, Training, and Skills Development. We brought a broad range of experience and expertise to our work, including labour law, governance, academia and venture capital:

- **Mark Beckles**, vice-president of Social Impact and Innovation with RBC Corporate Citizenship, with more than 25 years of experience in financial services and extensive experience on boards of directors.
- **Vasiliki (Vass) Bednar**, executive-director of McMaster University's Masters of Public Policy in Digital Society, a Public Policy Forum fellow and an expert on regulatory structures needed to embrace the future of work.

- **Kathryn Marshall**, an employment lawyer based in Toronto focused on employment law and civil litigation. Kathryn has experience handling complex employment matters involving Indigenous communities, government officials, political staff and unionized employees.
- **Susan McArthur**, a corporate director, venture capitalist and investment banker. Previously, Susan was a managing partner at GreenSoil Investments, a venture capital firm focused on investing in PropTech and Agro and Food Technology.
- **Rohinton P. Medhora**, president of the Centre for International Governance Innovation in Waterloo, Ontario, and chairperson of OWRAC. Rohinton sits on multiple boards, including the Commission on Global Economic Transformation.
- **Mark Quail**, a lawyer in private practice in Toronto on entertainment and technology-related matters. Mark's entrepreneurship includes the formation and operation of numerous record labels, a music-publishing administration company and an apps company.
- **Sean Speer**, assistant professor in public policy at the University of Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy and project co-director of the Ontario 360 project at the Munk School and the PPF Scotiabank fellow at the Public Policy Forum.

A Comprehensive Engagement Process

To inform our work, we considered a wide spectrum of views from Ontario residents, workers, labour groups, stakeholders, experts and organizations across Ontario, Canada and internationally. We spoke with different types of workers, including “gig workers” or “technology platform” workers, which includes people who drive for rideshare or courier companies. When we refer to gig workers here, we refer to someone who might be using a digital app to book jobs such as food delivery, and not to someone such as a journalist who takes on freelance writing assignments.

Our purpose was two-fold: to identify the main issues facing the future of work and to gain insights from as many people and organizations as possible. The number of issues turned out to be complex and wide ranging, and a consensus opinion on what to do about many of them is elusive. We needed to hear about the future of work from all sides. We have described our comprehensive engagement process below, which occurred between June and September 2021.

Written Submissions

The Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development accepted written submissions via email from June 17 until July 31, 2021. These were provided to Ipsos for analysis. Submissions were open to anyone who wished to write to the ministry about the future of work and we had a robust response. In total, the committee received more than 550 written submissions from organizations and individuals, some of which appeared similar in style and content, ranging from workers to labour unions to academics to businesses and associations.

The written submissions covered a wide variety of issues. We received direct input from many “gig” or “platform” workers concerned about how app-based services govern their performance and hours, and the need for a benefits package. We heard from CEOs and association presidents about the need for Ontario to modernize laws governing the workplace. We heard from small business owners and independent contractors and from labour unions focused on protecting and enhancing the rights of their members. While it is impossible to capture or act on all the advice we received, we thank everyone who took the time to write down their thoughts and opinions and send them to the committee for consideration. We read and considered the advice of everyone who contacted us.

Ipsos analyzed the written responses to identify themes and recommendations related to the committee's work, which we used to help inform our recommendations. This analysis was done through a careful examination of submissions, and Ipsos identified key recommendations and quotes for us to consider. A selection of quotes from the written submissions is included in this report and Appendix C lists organizations that submitted a written response. Quotes from written submissions have been edited for brevity and clarity.

Stakeholder Consultations

Working with Ipsos, and with help from the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, we identified more than 150 individuals and organizations to speak with directly. They were identified based on their own expertise, as well as the groups they speak for, their public profiles or history in offering insights on the future of work, and their credentials.

Between June and September 2021, we spoke at length with workers, union leaders, academics, experts and small and large business owners, among others. It was impressive and gratifying to see so many individuals and organizations willing to take the time to speak with us. To facilitate an open dialogue, we held a series of virtual stakeholder roundtables. The nature of these consultations spoke to the future of work as they were all conducted online with stakeholders.

Talking directly with these people led to a more robust conversation. We held discussions with workers so we could hear directly from those affected most by changes in the future of work. In addition, we held strategic one-on-one interviews, joint interviews and small meetings with recognized experts. Interviewees were also identified as the project progressed, based on previous discussions or secondary/supplementary research.

Each session included an introduction from Ipsos and a committee member, an outline of privacy and format, emphasizing “[Chatham House Rules](#)” to encourage open dialogue, and a series of questions posed by committee members.

We benefited greatly from the open and broad discussion among participants. Some issues raised included needed modifications to the Employment Standards Act, the definitions of precarious workers and independent contractors, and the need for workers to disconnect in the post-pandemic, work-from-anywhere environment. We also heard specific suggestions on topics such as Workplace Safety and Insurance Board insurance rates for employers, some of which are reflected in our recommendations.

We were limited by our mandate and by the sheer volume of recommendations and suggestions we received and, while it is impossible to address all of them in our report, we greatly appreciated the time and effort taken by participants to speak with us directly.

A total of six roundtable discussions, seven small meetings, 11 joint interviews and 54 individual interviews were conducted. Overall, the committee spoke with 164 people. All discussions were chaired by a member of the committee. Most sessions were recorded, with transcripts produced purely for internal analytical purposes. In cases where sessions were not transcribed or recorded at the request of the participants, we took detailed notes to ensure input was captured.

Ipsos analyzed the transcripts and recordings through a careful reading of comments made by participants and identified key themes and recommendations. For example, in a roundtable with workers, we received input from several ride-share and courier drivers about the importance of establishing some sort of benefits plan and examining how those workers are classified.

From the transcripts and recordings, Ipsos identified key recommendations and quotations. A selection of quotes is included in this report and the full list of organizations that consented to being identified can be found in Appendix C. Quotes from stakeholder consultations have been edited for brevity and clarity.

Public Opinion Survey

We also commissioned a survey of Ontario residents. Ipsos administered and fielded an online survey between July 27 and 30, 2021. A total of 2,003 people in Ontario aged 18 or older were interviewed. The data were weighted by standard demographic variables – age, gender, region and education – in accordance with census proportions. The precision of Ipsos online surveys is calculated via a credibility interval. In this case, the sample is considered accurate to within +/- 2.5 percentage points had all Ontario residents 18 years of age or older been surveyed. The survey is considered a representative, but not random, sample of the population. Throughout this report we refer to some key results from this survey, and the full results are available in Appendix B.



Sample Size

2,003 Ontarians



Field Dates

July 27-30, 2021



Methodology

Online Panel



Credibility Interval

± 2.5%

Public Media Scan

We conducted an extensive review of mainstream and social media between March and September 2021. Ipsos used artificial intelligence to find and classify news articles and social media posts from sources across Ontario and highlighted key trends.

To manage data coding and categorization by theme, Ipsos utilized proprietary machine-assisted processes to extract concepts from unstructured data based on coding, and coded media posts into themes. This artificial-intelligence-based process learns as it goes from the unstructured data to suggest pathways and data structures that can align with concepts and produce a codeframe.

Specifically, the AI-assisted process began by preparing data for topic modelling (figuring out a base set of categories or themes to start with). Common bigrams (pairs of words) were identified and grouped together (e.g., instead of having one topic for “portable” and one for “benefits,” Ipsos created one topic, “portable benefits”). A future work example could include “portable benefits,” where the preliminary topic modelling was then performed on media and social media posts. At this step, the entire set of media and social media posts was processed using a proprietary topic-modelling algorithm. The model “learned” by looking at each word in each document and determining which were more likely to occur together, thus creating the initial set of topics. A fixed number of topics was established. Once an optimal number of themes was determined, details of the topic modelling were provided as an output and a sentiment analysis was applied to determine whether the post was “positive” or “negative.” During the model testing, Ipsos utilized BERT, ELMo, CNN+RNN and other NLP (natural language processing) frameworks to derive themes and topics.

Recently, there has been more media coverage of portable benefits and classification of workers, as numerous international jurisdictions have introduced legislation tackling these questions. This report recognizes and references some of the legislation being introduced.

A summary of the results of the media scan is available in Appendix D.

Ipsos presented results of the media scan to the committee and to the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development for consideration.

Literature Review

Finally, we conducted an extensive review of previous work done on the future of work. We examined position papers, previous government reports and media and news articles from a variety of sources within Ontario, across Canada and internationally. For example, we looked at an extensive study by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) on the Future of Work. Some of the broad literature we reviewed dated back to before COVID-19, and we took this into account in our analysis. Throughout this report, we cite many of the external sources we relied on to reach our recommendations and conclusions.

Our Approach to Making Recommendations

Our recommendations are based on the feedback we received through the process outlined above, our review of existing research and statistics, and our own expertise.

We met frequently to go over recommendations and decide the best course of action. In the end, we came up with twenty-one (21) recommendations for the government across three broad themes.

We provided an interim report to Minister McNaughton and the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development midway through our process, and we maintained an open dialogue with the ministry throughout, while functioning independent of the government.

We also recognized that the future of work was evolving even as the committee completed its work. Recent reports of labour shortages added complexity to the problems we are facing.

According to recent research from the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC), 64 per cent of Canadian businesses say labour shortages are limiting their growth.



Even as the economy recovers from COVID-19, we learned that businesses are having difficulty finding workers. Fifty-five (55 per cent) of Canadian entrepreneurs say they are struggling to fill vacancies. According to the BDC, “The long-term decrease of the labour force growth and the recent effects of the pandemic have worsened the uneven impact of the labour shortage. The BDC further notes that “unemployment persists in some sectors, while labour scarcity persists in others.”

64%

of businesses say labour shortages are limiting their growth.

As reported by the National Post on Oct. 8, 2021, Statistics Canada noted that in July 2021 there were about 1.5 million unemployed Canadians, while employers needed to fill about 800,000 vacancies. There is a gap between matching willing workers and employers in need.

We included data points such as this in our thinking and, where possible, have cited external sources to validate our recommendations.



Building on Previous Work by the Ontario Government

We are not starting from square one. We also carefully considered work already done by the Ontario government as the province navigated the pandemic and the challenging transformation of the workforce. For example, the establishment of a new skills trades strategy by the province guided us. We looked at how Bill 288, the Building Opportunities in the Skilled Trades Act, enabled the government to wind down the College of Trades, which was replaced by Skilled Trades Ontario. Already the Ontario government has invested more than \$1 billion over four years, and new apprenticeship registrations have increased by 5.5 per cent as a result. Skilled Trades Ontario is expected to be operational at the beginning of 2022.

This, as well as other work the Ontario government has completed, serves as a foundation for our work as the committee charged with providing recommendations on the future of work.

Identifying Issues and Themes

The committee based its consultations and deliberations on the three areas of focus identified by Minister McNaughton, and our recommendations are organized around three themes based on those areas of focus. The themes are:

- 1 Ensuring that Ontario remains the best place in North America to recruit, retain and reward workers.
- 2 Supporting workers, especially platform workers, by ensuring they benefit from flexibility, control and security.
- 3 Making Ontario the top destination with a world-class workforce and talent supply.

We framed our recommendations around these themes and made sure our recommendations are actionable and clear – areas where the government can make immediate changes that will benefit workers quickly and in a meaningful and measurable way.

A major recurring theme was working from home. Although not all workers are able to do that, we know that close to half of Ontario residents either mostly or always (39 per cent) or sometimes (7 per cent) work from home.

46%

of Ontario residents say they sometimes, mostly, or always have been working from their own home since the pandemic started.

Remote work – what was once simply known as telework that applied only to a small portion of workers – is now a universal feature for many. Some workers, particularly highly skilled ones, have been able to transition to a work-from-home/ work-from-anywhere model with relative ease. This trend appears likely to continue for certain types of workers, as organizations adopt a hybrid model where employees spend some of their time working from the office and some working from home or elsewhere.

Businesses seem to agree. According to a [2021 Navigator report](#), 67 per cent of 2,000 businesses surveyed internationally say they “see remote working as crucial to growth,” while “77 per cent see a strong relationship between investing in the workforce and profitability.”

67%

of 2,000 businesses across the globe see remote working as crucial to growth.

Other types of employees have not had this opportunity. Gig workers, frontline workers - including health-care and retail workers - construction workers and building contractors, and even some types of office workers can perform their job only at a specified place of work. For these workers, regardless of skill level, the option to work from anywhere never existed.

One of the most enduring themes to emerge from COVID-19 will likely be where people work. The benefits and drawbacks of working from anywhere are broad, but not universal. Governments, organizations and companies will need to grapple with a need to balance flexibility with fairness, and accountability with productivity. Work from anywhere appears here to stay for now, but how it affects various types of workers will differ considerably. Some of our recommendations provide guidance on how the government can respond to the “work from anywhere” trend.

Another area we carefully considered was how existing legislation – particularly the Employment Standards Act – is, or should be, interpreted and enforced. We were more seized, however, with how legislation could be improved, modernized or simplified, rather than with how the government chooses to interpret and enforce laws already on the books. For that reason, we do not have specific recommendations around interpreting or enforcing existing laws. Where we did focus on legislation, it was on ways to improve and modernize the shape of future work.

Communicating Our Recommendations

Throughout this report we have included select points of data to assist the reader in understanding the context of our recommendations. We have also included a few “example workers” to give readers a better understanding of what type of worker the recommendation is targeting.

We have tried to adopt a narrative style, but all recommendations are backed by data, research and extensive consultation with stakeholders. These stakeholders included workers, particularly those engaged in the gig economy, or independent contractors. The future of work is moving rapidly, and the committee was tasked with keeping pace and providing recommendations to support the people of Ontario now. That is what we have done throughout this report.

A great deal more work remains. To that end, we urge the government to establish an annual process on the future of work. This could lead to a regular state-of-the-workforce report.

Finally, we thank the government, and in particular Minister McNaughton, for calling upon the committee to provide advice on how best to create a future of work that benefits Ontario employees – current and those to come – and employers alike.

Recommendations

Ensuring that Ontario Remains the Best Place in North America to Recruit, Retain and Reward Workers

Supporting Lifelong Learning, Skills Training and Workforce Development

Only 27 per cent of Ontario residents surveyed strongly agree they have the education or skills needed for a job where they want to live, and only 17 per cent say they know they can get the training or professional development opportunities to prepare them for the economy of the future.

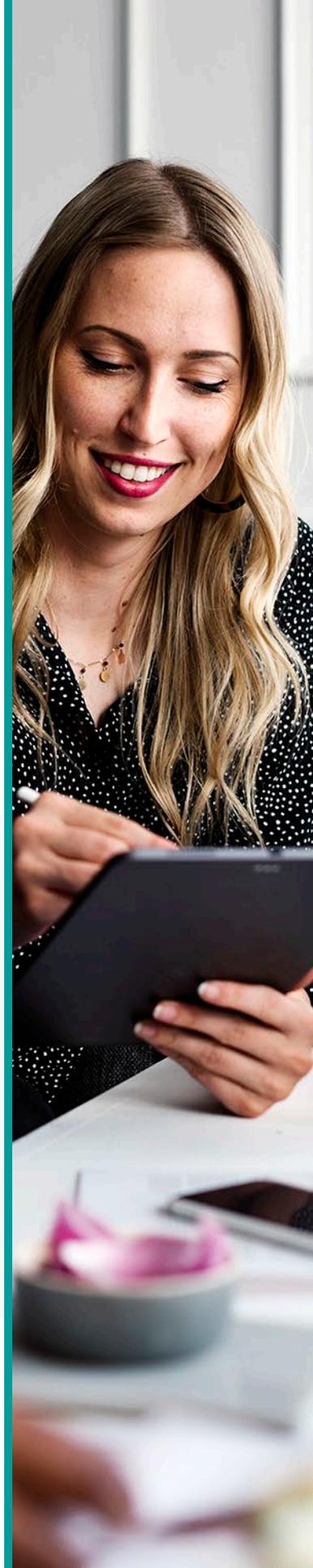
Ontario residents, strongly agree that they...

27%

have the education or skills needed for a job where they want to live.

17%

can get the training or professional development opportunities they need.



Recent data on lifelong learning reflect various labour-market trends, including shifts in employer expectations for new employees, fast-paced technological changes and greater employee interest in ongoing competency and credentials building. A [2019 study](#) (pre-COVID) conducted by [Pearson](#) for the [International Consultants for Education and Fairs \(ICEF\)](#) revealed “a growing interest in shorter programs and lifelong learning.” In Canada, 37 per cent of respondents with post-secondary education said they would pursue trade or vocational training instead of a degree if they had to make the same choice again. These developments have led to rising interest in lifelong learning and an explosion of skills training programs, providers and courses.

Previous studies have addressed the question of lifelong learning and the future of work more broadly. The [Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy](#) proposed a [strategy for lifelong learning in Ontario](#) in 2017 and the Ontario government has focused on this issue as well. The Ontario government's [recent announcement of a micro-credential strategy](#) is a case in point. It reflects a growing recognition that there is a role for government to catalyze new training models and bring awareness and some semblance of quality assurance for employees and employers of the various offerings in the market.

This space between education and employment – what has been [described as the “messy middle”](#) by the [Public Policy Forum](#) – tends to involve short duration courses or training modules to expand or update a worker's skills to secure a new job or be more productive in their current one.

Some lifelong learners are jobseekers who may be drawing on income support programs or skills-training subsidies as they carry out their training. Others are already in the labour market and are looking to invest in upgrading their skills.

The question for policy makers is: how to reduce the messiness of the messy middle – including for marginalized and vulnerable Ontario residents – without undermining its dynamism and innovation?

Lifelong learning, skills training and workforce development were growing in policy importance before the pandemic, due to such labour-market trends as job polarization, automation risk and the tendency for people to have multiple jobs over the course of their careers. The Ipsos survey shows a majority of people believe Ontario's community colleges do well in preparing young people for jobs in Ontario (74 per cent), while just over half say Ontario's universities do a good job (56 per cent).

We believe supports should not discriminate by age and employers should be encouraged to provide workers with training closely related to their current job. The government should expand its current work on micro-credentials.



More on-the-job training is needed, where workers combine work with training and skill enhancement in a blended way, rather than in discrete chunks of working and going back to school.



We need a better strategy for the reskilling of talent. ... We need to rescale them into these high-demand fields, so you actually turn out the talent you're looking for. There are conversations around that. There's expanding the training credits that are available to employees themselves. I thought the (funding) should flow right to the employers. Here's some money for you to encourage you to train your people.

– Business stakeholder



RECOMMENDATION 1

Support funding for lifelong learning with no age restrictions, continue to promote development and recognition of micro-credentials and promote more on-the-job training.

Looking to Other Jurisdictions to Advance Lifelong Learning

Raising the province's policy ambition on lifelong learning will require drawing from the experiences of other countries as well as the multitude of approaches in other provinces and U.S. states. Literature suggests there is a range of training participation by country. An example is the [Ontario Skills Development Fund](#), which offers funding to organizations for projects addressing hiring, training and retaining workers – including apprentices – during COVID-19.

Ontario policymakers can also look to such countries as Germany, Sweden, Finland and Denmark, where between 20 and 30 per cent of the working-age population is [consistently involved in lifelong learning](#) courses and training at any given time. Although it may not be an apples-to-apples comparison, the Ontario government [reported](#) in 2017 that roughly 200,000 Ontario residents participate in adult education programs each year.

Action on lifelong learning will increase availability and retention of highly skilled workers and ensure that training is aligned with employer needs.



The German concept of awarding bachelor's degrees to those qualifying for the highest trades journeyman accreditation has merit and would assist in solving the skills gap in Ontario industry and mitigate 'blue collar/white collar' discrimination.

– Business stakeholder



Our experience ... is that when we give companies that challenge, can you be part of the solution, they clamoured to become part of the solution ... Companies want to be part of the solution. This is very similar to the German-Belgium apprenticeship reskilling system, where the big supply chains work together to reskill for the trades, but now can you do the same thing for these knowledge skills? Have the companies be part of the solution and I think that's a really interesting challenge.

– Academic

One way to think about where we could start is thinking about how can we turn our employment and training systems into hubs of high-quality career advice and guidance that work for all Ontarians that people would want to go to ... that's not what our employment and training systems now do. They incentivize people to get work and get to people work fast.

– Research organization



RECOMMENDATION 2

Build on Ontario's Skills Development Fund model, invest in new channels of career development beyond traditional educational institutions to include funding employers, professional associations and unions directly.

Improving Navigation of the Range of Skills Training Programs, Providers and Courses

In Ontario, public and private training providers use public funds to support accessibility, but we believe more needs to be done. Specifically, we believe that the government can help make these training programs even more accessible.

Early in the pandemic, in March 2020, the Ontario government launched a Workplace Development and Training Review, which explored how to prepare people for good jobs. Minister McNaughton noted that, "In a world of global competition and rapid technological change, it is essential that Ontario's workers and businesses remain competitive. That is why we will work closely with experts from the labour, training and education sectors and from employers to learn how we can ensure that Ontario has the talent to prosper today and in the future."

To further build on the work already done, the Ontario government should strive to continue to promote lifelong learning.



There may be a role for government to help establish navigation portals that can serve as single online windows. One platform could cover the spectrum of lifelong learning and skills training courses and programs, or multiple portals could be organized according to sectors or competencies. This could be outsourced to private-sector or non-profit organizations. The ministry might run a challenge-based competition to encourage companies and non-profits to put forward innovative models to improve people's ability to navigate the lifelong learning market.



RECOMMENDATION 3

Launch a challenge-based program to encourage private-sector providers and non-profit organizations to propose online solutions to help employees and employers navigate the province's increasingly complex marketplace of skills training programs, providers and courses.

Developing Lifelong Provincial Learning Benefits

Not all workers have equal access to lifelong learning. Some may not be part of the [Labour Market Development Agreements](#) or have access to other provincial programs or benefits. The recently announced [Ontario Jobs Training Tax Credit](#) is a good step, but its requirement that eligible training be provided by conventional educational institutions risks excluding the growing number of programs and courses delivered by industry associations, labour unions and other non-conventional training providers.



FOR EXAMPLE

Sam is a highly skilled worker who has persevered through their disability but now needs more training to keep up, especially with the shift to work from home. Sam wants the government to recognize the targeted training they do through support from their employer.

One option is to leverage the federal government's creation of an individualized [Canada Training Benefit](#) to provide an incremental provincial contribution for Ontario residents. This would be broadly similar to the way the Ontario government has leveraged the [Canada Worker Benefit](#) to provide incremental support to low-income people in the labour market.

Creative destruction has been described as “the dismantling of longstanding practices in order to make way for innovation.” The process of creative destruction is expected to continue to disrupt certain jobs while creating new ones. In fact, according to the MIT Study on the Future of Work, more than 60 per cent of jobs in 2018 did not exist in 1940.



Maybe we need better labour-market tools that actually help people figure out what skills they actually possess, because I think sometimes, we need to move away from degrees and certifications ... even when (people) want to change (their) career ... I think (they) pick up a lot of skills through training on the job and I think a lot of people aren't aware of the skills (they) gain through work experience rather than doing (a) certificate or something.

– Business stakeholder

The growing role of technology means this process may accelerate in the coming years. Ontario's lifelong learning, skills training and workforce development system should make it a priority to help those who have experienced dislocation in certain sectors and occupations to fill new positions in the parts of the economy that are growing and have labour demand. This transition is important for individuals and their families as well as for the economy as a whole.

There is no clear sense of how to do this at scale. The pandemic resulted in considerable job loss for the tourism industry – according to Statistics Canada, September 2021 saw a significant decrease of jobs in accommodation and food services in Ontario.

There are promising models operating in sectors and employers. A good example is the Ontario Tourism Education Corporation (OTEC), which was established in 1991 as a public-private partnership to provide targeted training for the hospitality and tourism industry. The OTEC model is effective in helping train dislocated workers for demand-driven opportunities in the hospitality and tourism industry. There may be an opportunity to learn from this model and its possible translation to other parts of the labour market.



RECOMMENDATION 4

Develop a provincial benefit that aligns with the Canada Training Benefit to help defray costs for individuals who wish to pursue lifelong learning opportunities.

Accounting for Soft Skills and Technical Skills in the Education, Skills Training and Workforce Development System

While the lifelong learning market has a plethora of technical skills courses and programs, there seems to be a gap in the system with respect to so-called “soft skills,” including practical skills and experience such as being an employee, working on a team and so on.

Educational stakeholders as well as employer groups and labour unions say this a big challenge, especially in the growing digital and service-based economy in which these soft skills are a major advantage for people and firms.



The data-driven economy requires a new set of skills and not just STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) but a combination of hard and soft skills, new occupations such as data stewards, as well as access to reliable and affordable digital infrastructure.

– Business stakeholder



A 2019 [report](#) called Navigator: Made for the Future, conducted on behalf of [HSBC](#) by research firm [Kantar](#), found that “47 per cent of Canadian respondents said their companies planned to spend more on training employees, and 42 per cent said they'd spend more on employee satisfaction and well-being,” according to [CBC News](#).

The Ontario government should continue to increase the supply of students seeking work-integrated learning opportunities by helping Ontario-based employers develop the capacity to accept a significant increase in student employees. This capacity-building support could come in different forms, including partial wage subsidies, grants or tax credits. The idea would be to help Ontario firms become partners in an ambitious strategy to expand work-integrated learning to as many workers as possible.



... I think unions and collective bargaining and this kind of collective process have been advantageous in many cases for acquiring for their members access to learning opportunities, grants, scholarships, paid time off or leave programs to allow them to further their education.

– Labour stakeholder



(The government should) support student internships in research and innovation to help generate, apply and transfer student knowledge and intellectual property to the private sector.

– Business stakeholder



RECOMMENDATION 5

Build on the federal government's efforts to expand learning on the job, by encouraging employers to ensure there are enough workplace learning opportunities.

Better Supporting Marginalized and Underrepresented Groups

The Ontario government has already done considerable work to better support marginalized and underrepresented groups. For example:

- In June 2021, the government announced the appointment of a task force on women and the economy.
- In July 2021, the government announced an investment to help youth start careers in construction.
- In August 2021, the government unveiled a similar program to help workers in the north. Also, that month, the government announced a new training program for young people in technology jobs in the Niagara region.
- In September 2021, the government announced additional investments in the Skills Development Fund.

Improving access to training programs and courses is a crucial step in closing gaps in labour-market outcomes relative to the rest of the population. Lifelong learning can help boost human capital and improve employment prospects.



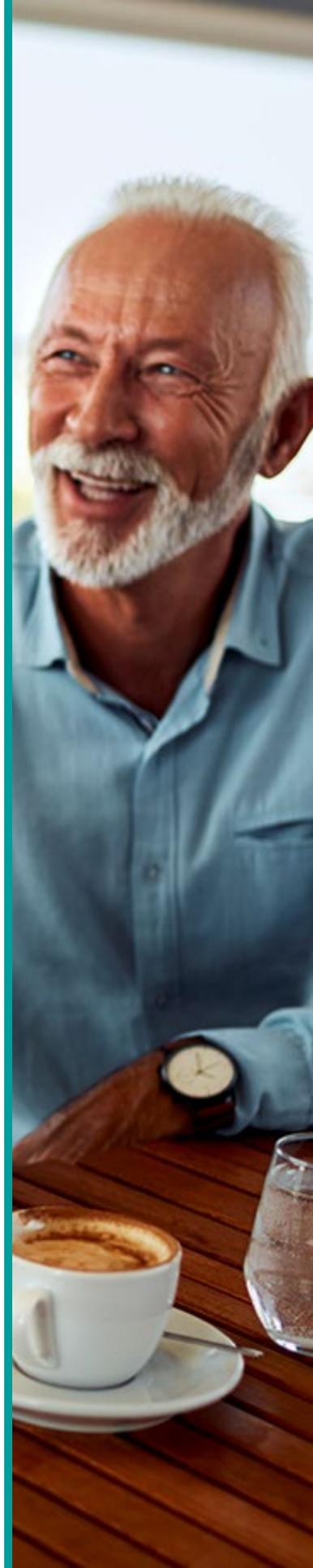
Programs and courses must be sensitive to the unique needs of marginalized and underrepresented groups.



FOR EXAMPLE

Charlie is an older worker who wants to make sure he has the skills needed to transition to a new career. He has spent the last 25 years working as a self-employed contractor, but due to COVID-19 his work opportunities have decreased. Because he is not eligible for Employment Insurance (EI) and not eligible to apply for Second Career, Charlie is looking for the government to support his transition to a new line of work through training and skills development.

Most of the Ontario government's skills training initiatives – including the [Second Career program](#) – target people with considerable work experience (for example, Employment Insurance recipients) and mostly exclude those with weak employment history, or those not eligible for Employment Insurance. This design risks excluding vulnerable and marginalized groups.



In July 2021, the Ontario government announced it is increasing financial support and simplifying the application process for the Second Career program, noting the changes would “make it easier for laid-off and unemployed workers to pursue training and start new and better careers.” However, not all workers are eligible for this program. While this announcement represented significant progress, we believe there is more to do.



RECOMMENDATION 6

Reform training programs, building on the recent announcement of the Second Career program, to better serve those with weak employment history, including vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Ensuring Lifelong Learning for Indigenous People

Another issue is the confusion and lack of clarity about the roles of the federal and provincial governments when it comes to lifelong learning and skills training for Indigenous people.

The role of different levels of government depends on whether it involves an on-reserve or off-reserve context. This can create a lack of accountability, finger pointing and greater complexity for communities and individuals. There should be room for the federal and Ontario governments to talk about greater collaboration, including sharing of best practices, leveraging pre-existing training models, and so on.



(The government should establish) a development fund, beyond COVID-19 recovery, targeting long-term Indigenous employment to address challenges to hiring, training or retraining workers, including apprentices.

– Business consultant





Everybody has this preconceived notion that Indigenous people get supported at a higher level than mainstream Canadians, when really, it's not the way that it works. Communities do get supported with education through their treaties, and they're supposed to be supported fully. (Ottawa's transfers) to communities only supports two maximum, of about 30 people, to go and be educated in post secondary. That leaves a vast majority of other students looking for what they're going to do to try to get educated, and I think that if we're looking at investing in the Indigenous community, that's one place where we have to find other mechanisms to ensure that everybody has the opportunity to be educated.

– Business consultant

A [study](#) by Employment and Social Development Canada looked at the educational achievement gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians, noting that “the existence of an educational achievement gap between Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit and Metis) and non-Indigenous Canadians is well documented ... Indigenous people are less likely to finish high school or their post-secondary studies than the non-Indigenous population in Canada.” An [article](#) in the [Toronto Star](#) in June 2021 noted that “Indigenous education is central to Canada’s COVID-19 recovery, noting that “only 61.6 per cent of Indigenous persons aged 15 and over obtained a high school diploma compared to 80.1 per cent of non-Indigenous persons.”

Closing this gap can be achieved partially through greater clarity in the roles of various levels of government. We believe the Ontario government should partner with other levels of government to help close the education and achievement gap to improve outcomes for Indigenous people. Indigenous people must be involved in the process of developing solutions.



Investing in relevant, market-driven education, employment and training programs and pointing job seekers, youth, women, Indigenous people and newcomers to those in-demand pathways resulting in real jobs will be key.

– Business stakeholder

A white line-art icon of a megaphone with three curved lines above it representing sound waves, set against a dark blue background.

RECOMMENDATION 7

Partner with other levels of government to enhance lifelong learning, skills training and workforce development for Indigenous people.

Supporting Workers Who Fall Out of Traditional Benefits Programs

There is an opportunity for Ontario to be an innovator in designing and delivering a new type of portable benefits strategy tied to workers, not employers. Such a program could better support worker mobility. A recent [study](#) by Ipsos for [RBC Insurance](#) shows 38 per cent of Ontario residents say they realized in the past year that their employers' benefits program does not adequately meet their needs. Three in 10 respondents in the same study said they have no prescription drug coverage at all.

38%

of Ontario residents agree with the statement: this past year, I realized my employer's benefits plan does not adequately meet my health/ wellness needs.

67%

of Ontario residents agree with the statement: to attract and keep people in Ontario, it is important that we have government benefits available based on where they live, not for whom they work.

A [report](#) by the [Public Policy Forum](#) calls on federal and provincial governments to “conduct detailed analysis of the costs and benefits as well as the feasibility (economic, operational, technological, political, legal) of a portable benefits model.” Other jurisdictions are examining portable benefits programs. In the United States, on Sept. 28, a bill called the [Portable Retirement and Investment Account Act](#) was introduced in the U.S. Senate. It proposes creation of universal, portable retirement benefits accounts.



You know there are some costs to what we expect as consumers, and consumers maybe need to have a little bit more of a stake in this, and portable benefits are a really good example. One of the things that makes work precarious is that people don't have access to the forms of occupational welfare that are normally associated with employment, (such as) extended health benefits.

– Academic

(In New York state) they took a 2.5 per cent charge off each transaction. That money went to a fund that was on the state level, and it would pay out basically workers' compensation for independent contractors in New York state, for independent contractors who are drivers for New York state. That includes Uber drivers, it includes taxi drivers, it includes delivery and limousine, anyone who is an independent contractor, and that's specifically for workers comp. It's like this fund they get paid out in case there are issues for workers compensation, because a lot of independent contractors are outside of the purview of regular labour laws and receiving employment-based benefits.

– Academic

Portable benefits could help businesses attract workers and make their futures less uncertain. Sixty-seven per cent of Ontario residents surveyed by Ipsos agree that “to attract and keep people in Ontario, it is important that we have government benefits available based on where they live, not who they work for.”

A portable benefits program could increase benefit levels and access in areas such as pharmacare, life insurance, vision care and mental health services. Such a program would potentially incorporate a provincial skills training fund. One option might see portable benefits reside with the worker and be administered by an independent body, through government, the private sector or some combination.



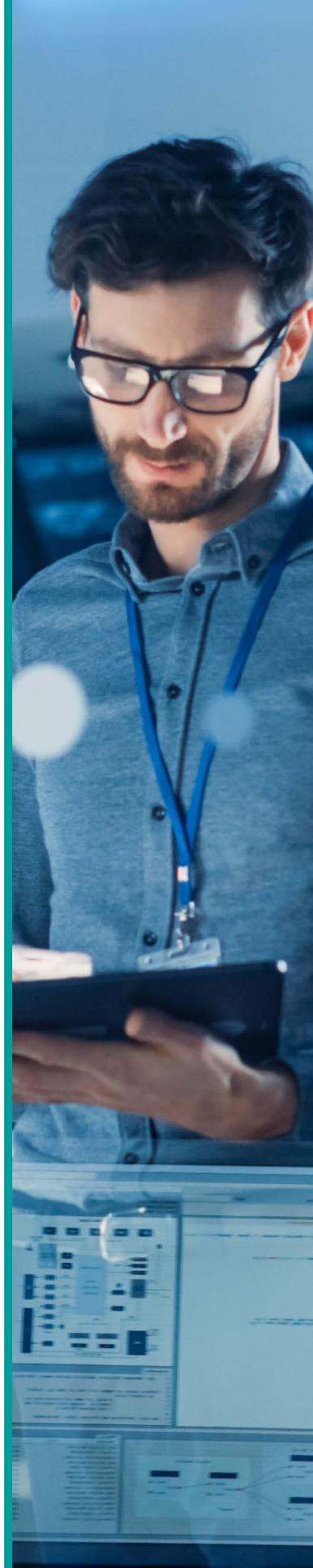
RECOMMENDATION 8

Appoint an expert to design and test a portable benefits program, where contributors could be employers, workers, and the government.

Addressing Jobs Gaps to Make Ontario More Competitive in High-Demand Sectors

There is a shortage of highly skilled technology workers in the health-care, digital, data, artificial intelligence, cyber and process automation sectors. Even before the pandemic, a number of industries faced shortages. According to the Canadian Immigration Law Firm (CANADIM) in 2019, there was also high demand for such skilled trades as electricians, welders and mechanics, but it was the highly skilled technology workers in IT, engineering, sales, health care and education where many of the shortages were occurring. Since the pandemic, these shortages have only increased.

Ontario businesses, from startups to small-and-medium-sized enterprises to multinationals, face an acute shortage of these highly skilled workers. Further, the pandemic has underscored that today's technology has decoupled geography from employment.



This has added additional competitive pressures on recruiting talent, since multinationals no longer require hires to relocate to head office, which put significant pressure on Ontario companies recruiting this type of talent. In British Columbia, an updated leadership competency model has been developed by the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) to try to address this issue.



RECOMMENDATION 9

Establish mandated competency-based accreditation to accelerate the availability of skilled workers based on the BCIT model, which would allow workers from other jurisdictions to enter the workforce more quickly.

Connecting Highly Skilled Workers to Jobs

The Province's current skills strategy is focused on attracting more youth to the trades, simplifying the apprenticeship system, and encouraging employer participation in apprenticeships. The promising start following the establishment of Skilled Trades Ontario can serve as a starting point to better address job gaps in specialized fields and the trades. Early evidence indicates that apprenticeship completion rates and rates of inclusion of females and minority groups such as francophones, Indigenous people and racialized groups, has increased since its establishment. Building out from this trend is central to increasing prosperity, making it broad-based and positioning Ontario to better participate in the new economy.



**FOR EXAMPLE**

Alasie is an Indigenous, highly skilled independent contractor new to the specialized trades. Alasie wants to match her skills with the right opportunities and would like the government to improve on the resources it currently offers to match workers like her with employers in need of her skills.

Ontario already has considerable resources for jobs and employment but could improve how jobs boards are offered.

**RECOMMENDATION 10**

Modernize existing job boards to make it easier to match employers searching for specialized skills with highly skilled workers across multiple jurisdictions.

Connecting Workers to Jobs Through Government Assistance

Many workers who operate on a project-by-project basis appreciate the flexibility and control of being matched to gig opportunities, but this flexibility should not come at the cost of basic employment rights. Alongside a legislative change that would modernize the Employment Standards Act, we advise the Province of Ontario to consider piloting a platform to better match supply and demand for gig work. This might start by covering a limited set of occupations or types of work, and if proven effective, be expanded to cover larger parts of the gig economy.

Before the pandemic, many cities were trying to make the work environment more “gig-worker friendly,” as noted in [this article](#) in [US News](#) from 2018. More recently, public agencies in the United Kingdom and the U.S. have launched citywide platforms for all sectors of gig work and the associated technology is open source. A public platform could reduce search costs and more effectively match individuals with timely opportunities for relevant paid work.





(For example,) you have a bunch of employees in a data trust, people in the data trust that can be queried in a safe way, because it's controlled by a university, or a collection of universities, or the government, or someone, that allows you to identify a cache of high potential people ... if you can, combine industrial policy with real information, (and) people, and link everything together.

– Business consultant

California is already considering how to address this issue through its Modern Markets for All initiative, which outlines how governments might participate in the task of creating online markets to respond to demands for services.



RECOMMENDATION 11

Pilot a virtual platform that matches supply and demand for various types of gig and contract work.

Taking the Whole Worker Into Consideration

Social infrastructure, such as affordable housing, essential worker housing, affordable and reliable access to high-speed internet, accessible and affordable child care and good public transit are foundational components of a resilient and healthy workforce. Our approach has been to consider the issues facing the future of work in Ontario in the context of the whole worker experience.

Due to the evolving nature of the labour market, the legislative and regulatory framework is not always harmonized. For example, because of the ambiguity in the definition of highly skilled knowledge workers in the Employment Standards Act, Workers Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) fees are not always aligned with the type of work being done.

We recognize these topics do not fall directly within our terms, or indeed within the policy purview of any single province. However, the prevalence of these issues in discussions prompted us to raise these points to provide the broader context of the discussion and to stimulate thinking and action with other levels of government.



The government should also explore opportunities to work with other jurisdictions that are grappling with similar issues, such as how to take the entire worker experience into account. For example, Australia recently released a future-of-work report. Working at the appropriate national and subnational levels of government, the Ontario government may wish to consider speaking with like-minded Organization of Economic Co-operation Development (OECD) countries on these important global challenges, even travelling to these regions when it is safe to do so, to gain a broader perspective.

A cabinet committee would be an ideal way to meet these challenges. This committee could be tasked with harmonizing the various pieces of legislation currently governing the workforce. Patterned on committees created by the Government of Canada and provincial governments, this committee would be the focal point for thinking and cross-government action.



RECOMMENDATION 12

Create a committee of cabinet, comprising four or five key ministers, to keep on top of matters related to workforce, competitiveness and fairness.

Supporting Workers, Especially Platform Workers, by Providing Greater Flexibility, Control and Security

Removing Barriers for Worker Mobility

Non-compete clauses can sometimes limit worker mobility, whether someone is working at a fast-food franchise or a large technology firm. The [Economic Policy Institute](#) published a [study](#) in 2019 that found non-compete clauses are harmful to both wages and competition. Although the data were American, the study found that between 28 per cent and 45 per cent of U.S. workers were subject to non-compete agreements. In Canada, these clauses can be difficult to enforce and do not generally hold up in court, they can be difficult to understand and can intimidate workers. Such clauses can prohibit people from advancing their careers. The Province may also consider whether there are common unfair contract terms that entrepreneurs or business owners face when acting as suppliers or vendors.





... focus on the clients as well, because a lot of times the head-hunting companies ... don't have any regulation around the clauses that are in those contracts. And one good example is the non-compete clauses that they have ... these head-hunting companies are going through the contract that can have cloud clauses that are ... wildly varying and a lot of them not in our best interest.

– Technology worker



RECOMMENDATION 13

Limit the use of non-compete clauses to specific intellectual property and eliminate blanket non-competes in law, to encourage innovation, worker mobility and competition.

Maintaining a Favourable Environment for Highly Skilled Knowledge Workers

A new class of well-compensated knowledge workers has emerged. These are often found in the IT, engineering, legal, finance and health-care sectors. They work on a project-by-project basis for banks, accounting firms, consulting firms, manufacturing firms and government. These workers tend to be socially secure and choose to work independently on a contract basis instead of as traditional employees. We were told they choose this work for three reasons: Flexibility to choose when to work and which projects to work on, the ability to do specialized work, and favourable tax treatment. Many of these workers are earning significant compensation and do not constitute a vulnerable workforce. They are, however, integral to economic growth and are key to success for many large and small companies.



Silicon Valley's migrating to Texas because Texas is standing there at the doorstep saying, 'Hey, we know how to do this.' We're going to market ourselves as one jurisdiction and Ontario isn't being quite as aggressive, and we think there's an opportunity to be.

– Business consultant

The Employment Standards Act does not currently recognize this type of independent contractor, so there is confusion as to how to classify these workers. The government should update the act to reflect the new reality of work.

The government should pay attention to flexibility and protections for employers and employees and consider gaps between the Canada Revenue Agency's definition of an employee and the definition laid out in the Employment Standards Act.



FOR EXAMPLE

Omar is a highly skilled knowledge worker who works as an independent contractor. He relocated to California after finishing his education in Ontario, but now wants to move back to Ontario to be closer to family. Omar is worried that if he moves back, he won't have the flexibility he has as an independent contractor in California. He wants the government to recognize his choice to be an independent contractor.

In addition, the criteria around this type of worker are unclear and rights to entitlements and protections, such as severance, are resulting in litigation in the courts. However, any uncertainty here is easier to handle for this class of workers because of the better balance in bargaining power between the entity retaining the services and the independent contractor when entering into contracts.



RECOMMENDATION 14

Create or clarify terms under which independent contractors are defined, for highly skilled workers who opt for this status for the flexibility.

Supporting Workers, Especially Platform Workers, by Ensuring They Benefit From Flexibility, Control and Security

A [Statistics Canada report from 2019](#) showed that one in 10 workers were employed in the gig economy and a 2019 report from [the Bank of Canada](#) found that 18 per cent of Canadians (excluding those who mention participating in informal paid work for fun/as a hobby) participated in the informal gig economy. A [recent report](#) from the [Labour Market Information Council \(LMIC\)](#) noted that Statistics Canada is working to develop a coherent framework for defining and collecting information on gig employment.



(Platform name) has a very strict control over us at work. When we signed up with (Platform name), we must submit our availability to the company. (Platform name) would assign us work shifts based on our availability. We are required to work at least 20 hours every two weeks. The pay rate system is very confusing.

– Gig worker



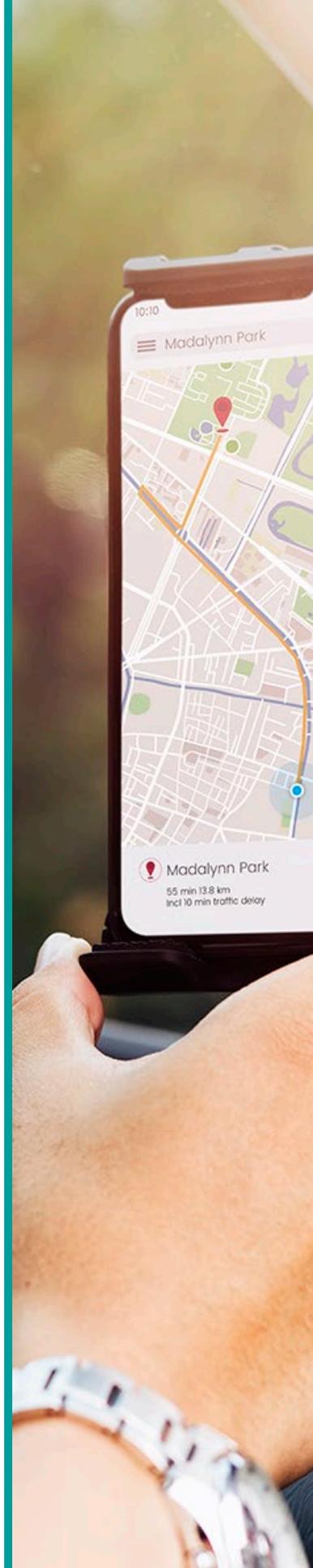
Many frustrated app-based workers said they lack basic employment protections and deserve more transparency and accountability from the algorithms that manage their work. This includes better understanding of how their work is evaluated, safety protections and ensuring control over their schedule.

“

This is a very hard job. It's very dangerous, on roads all day. I deliver by bike, and [using] a car, and walking, and when I'm doing it in a car, it's very dangerous, when you drive for long hours. I'm not able to maintain my car in a safe condition, which is putting my health and my family at risk, and that's because I don't get paid well.

– Gig worker

Across the world, jurisdictions are grappling with how to define gig workers. Some are moving to define them as independent contractors, while others are moving toward defining them as employees. For example, on February 19, 2021, a UK Supreme Court Ruling [found](#) that Uber drivers were workers and not independent contractors, although the [UK definition](#) of “worker” is different from the definition of “employee”.



Forbes speculated that America was not likely to follow suit and, indeed, in Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Examiner reports the state legislature has introduced a bill whereby “Drivers for ride-share businesses such as Uber and app-based delivery services such as DoorDash would be blocked from collecting workers’ compensation or unemployment benefits in Wisconsin under legislation that would define them as independent contractors rather than employees ... (this would) also “allow businesses to provide benefits to their drivers without classifying them as employees.” Massachusetts is considering similar legislation, according to WBUR, Boston’s National Public Radio news station. In Ontario, platform companies such as Uber, Handy, Instacart and Task Rabbit assert that people who access gig work on their platforms are independent contractors and therefore don’t fall under the Employment Standards Act.



Including dependent contractors under Ontario's Employment Standards legislation would help to ensure that basic minimum conditions are in place to protect performers.

– Labour stakeholder

Sixty-nine per cent of Ontario residents surveyed agree the province should treat gig or technology platform workers the same as traditional workers when it comes to employment benefits.

69%

of Ontario residents agree the province should treat technology platform or gig workers the same as traditional workers when it comes to employment benefits.

While an employee and an independent contractor are defined and recognized in the act, a third category of worker merits attention. This is the dependent contractor, and it falls between an employee and an independent contractor, where most app-based workers fall. These workers have been deemed dependent contractors as comprehensively detailed in the [Foodora case](#).

Under a proposed third category, some workers for platform-based apps would be considered dependent contractors while retaining some of the flexibility – such as time allocation across multiple employers and work hours – this type of work provides. This could be achieved through the Employment Standards Act, or elsewhere.



RECOMMENDATION 15

Create and recognize the dependent contractor category for gig or platform workers in the app-based space and give this category of worker basic employment rights, such as termination pay, minimum wage, minimum or core benefits, regular payment of wages, pay stubs for pay accountability and notice of termination with severance entitlement.

Increasing Transparency Around the Rules of Engagement for Platform Workers

People who engage with work through digital platforms must agree to contracts when signing on to work. These contracts are long and complicated and not easily understood. Contract terms change regularly and are unclear with respect to how much a worker will earn for a task, how a worker is being triaged in the queue and what – if any – deductions are being removed from their job fee.



I started working for (Platform name) in 2016 and every time, about every year or so, I've been told I've been given a new contract for the job I do for (Platform name). And every time, it's been posted on my app, and I've been told, 'You have two weeks to read it,' this massive, hundred, tens of pages document with lots of legal jargon that a lawyer would probably be able to interpret, but someone who just does food delivery work, it's not realistic for us to understand everything that's going on.

– Gig worker



FOR EXAMPLE

Lin drives for an app-based courier service while she goes to school part time to continue her education. Lin likes the flexibility of app work, but wants more certainty, including a better understanding of how the app is evaluating her performance. She wants the government to increase transparency.

In addition, the circumstances with respect to being flagged or fired by a platform can lead to a temporary or permanent suspension without proper explanation.

Following a legal challenge from the App Drivers & Couriers Union, an Amsterdam court ordered Uber to reinstate five UK drivers terminated by an automated process. The court ruled that ride-sharing companies were compelled to disclose data used to assign jobs, deduct earnings and suspend drivers, as well as provide more information on how their driver surveillance systems work.



It happened once that (Platform name) disciplined me, by suspending me from work, and ordered me to take training based on my work review and only resume my work after I completed the training provided. I had to pay for the training.

– Gig worker



RECOMMENDATION 16

Require gig platform companies operating in Ontario to provide basic, easy-to-understand, full disclosure and transparency on payment, work allocation and penalties, suspensions or pay deductions.

Increasing Transparency for Subcontracted Workers and Companies

There is a growing class of workers employed by agencies who consistently work for the same company but are not deemed to be employees, as they are hired by an intermediary. These agencies, or intermediaries, are not always subject to the same scrutiny as the companies for whom they provide subcontracted services. It is often not clear who assumes liability in the case of subcontracting, and this creates an opportunity for the company that is subcontracting services to benefit from cheaper provision of services, sometimes resulting from non-compliance of the subcontractor with existing employment standards.



FOR EXAMPLE

Food Inc. needs staff to clean its warehouse. It wants to secure these staff through Staffing Inc., a third-party agency. Food Inc. has a responsibility to ensure that Staffing Inc. is not misclassifying the workers they are providing to do the work for Food Inc. Both Food Inc. and Staffing Inc. would be responsible for ensuring this.



There is a clear opportunity for Ontario to take a leadership role and introduce the idea of worker fairness into the public dialogue. Barely half (51 per cent) of Ontario residents surveyed agree that current rules for work in Ontario do a good job of balancing the interests of both workers and employers. The provincial government would not be starting from scratch here. The Scottish government has developed a [Fair Work action plan](#) that sets out the key conceptual and operational issues. [Existing](#) fair labour certification schemes could provide the basis for one suited for Ontario.

Finally, it is worth noting that certain jurisdictions, including Scotland and the City of Toronto, have established a voluntary fair worker certification designation. The current trend with respect to environment, social and governance has focused largely on climate change and diversity and inclusion. There is an opportunity to add work fairness to the investment and work equation. This could take the form of a contract clause stipulating joint liability for non-compliance.



RECOMMENDATION 17

Require contracting companies to be transparent by stipulating that they comply with employment standards, specifically with respect to worker classification. Clear and unambiguous acknowledgement that liability compliance rests with both the contracting and the subcontracted company is needed.

Modernizing the Employment Standards Act

The Employment Standards Act has undergone numerous ad-hoc revisions over the years. While the Government of Ontario has offered a helpful guide to the revisions, many revisions and exemptions have been tied to specific issues, rather than to an overarching philosophy on the future of work.

Previous governments have failed to keep pace with the changing world of work by maintaining a modern and clear Employment Standards Act. With the rapid acceleration of change outlined in this report, the time to act is now. The government should take advantage of the opportunity to modernize the Act, so it is clearer and more relevant to today's world of work.



RECOMMENDATION 18

Simplify the exemptions section of the Employment Standards Act to make it easier to understand and enforce and more relevant to current and future workers.

Making Ontario the Top Destination With a World-Class Workforce and Talent Supply

Recognizing that Life-Work Balance has Become an Important Part of Compensation and Retention

The pandemic has made many reflect on what employees value in their lives, their relationships and their work. Today, when Ontario residents think about their dream job or career, Ipsos' survey showed they value a stable pay cheque most (60 per cent), good health and other support benefits (54 per cent) and a pension (50 per cent).

Other values are now emerging, including flexibility in workdays/hours (37 per cent), being in charge of one's schedule (32 per cent) and the ability to work from home (27 per cent) or anywhere in the world (27 per cent).

As the pandemic has worn on, a [CNBC article](#) in August 2021 in the U.S. argued the main reason people want to change careers is to have a better work-life balance. The Ipsos survey found 95 per cent of Ontarian residents agree employees should have the right to disconnect from their employer at the end of the day.



95%

of Ontario residents strongly (66 per cent) or somewhat (29 per cent) agree employees should have the right to disconnect from their employer at the end of the day.

**FOR EXAMPLE**

Chris is a single parent of three and, before COVID-19, Chris worked in an office. Since COVID-19, Chris has been working from home and wants to be able to disconnect in the evenings to focus on child care, but Chris's boss likes to send emails and requests at all hours of the day and evening. Chris wants the government to help make sure evenings are reserved for the kids.

We believe the government can take quick and decisive action on this finding, specifically by looking at such legislation as the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

RECOMMENDATION 19

Introduce the right to disconnect, which would protect workers' ability to balance personal obligations with work commitments, to foster a culture of life-work balance and emphasize Ontario's commitment to supporting mental health.

Supporting Work From Anywhere

The pandemic highlighted the decoupling of employment and geography for many workers. Ontario is well positioned to take advantage of this trend. In addition to attracting highly skilled workers from around the globe, there is an opportunity for the redistribution of talent within Ontario, away from major urban centres – where housing is expensive, and lifestyle is more challenging - to smaller towns. This could be a significant driver for regional development, but will require continued investment in broadband, health care, housing, transit and other services.



FOR EXAMPLE

Amin works remotely after relocating to Barrie, Ontario, during COVID-19, and has recently been asked to return to the office in Toronto full time. Amin likes the idea of being back in the office part time but enjoys the flexibility of working from home when it makes the most sense. Amin wants the government to ensure the infrastructure is in place for him to work from home on some days, while commuting to the office on other days.

People in Ontario want this freedom and flexibility as well. When asked about their dream job - either looking ahead if they have most of their working life yet to come or looking backward if they are finished or almost finished working – 63 per cent said they value the ability to work from home and 60 per cent said they value the ability to work anywhere. The ability to do this is conditional on reliable transportation networks and reliable bandwidth.



The more mature organizations need people to commute back and forth from Toronto to Kitchener-Waterloo. They're still going to have in-person meetings, and there still is going to be a need to do that in a more flexible way ... I also think transportation is not just business. It's leisure as well. If you're going to attract people to the province, if they're going to live in one region, they want to be connected easily, connected to Toronto, from a lifestyle perspective as well.

– Business consultant

The committee notes the government has already made progress on this issue. For example:

- In Budget 2020, the government announced close to \$1 billion in funding to improve broadband and cellular services as part of its Up to Speed: Broadband and Cellular Action Plan, aspiring to bring broadband to every community across Ontario, including those in rural areas and the north.
- To support work from anywhere, the government introduced Bill 257, the Supporting Broadband and Infrastructure Expansion Act, to connect more communities to reliable, high-speed internet more quickly.
- To support health care and telehealth, the government announced investments to expand virtual health care in Ontario to better reach those who need it most, and additional resources for virtual mental health and addictions support across the province.

- To support physical transportation infrastructure, the government announced increased GO Train services around Toronto.
- For those who commute by car, the government announced an expansion of Highway 427 and Highways 418 and 407 (near Toronto) and Highway 401 (near Kingston), as well as a transportation plan for northern Ontario.
- Ontario's "Up to Speed: Ontario's Broadband and Cellular Action Plan," which ensures that people and businesses have access to the high-speed internet and cellular services they need.



RECOMMENDATION 20

Develop fast and reliable transportation networks linking major cities with smaller communities where workers want to live. Enhance telehealth services so people who leave large urban centres can still access specialized health diagnostics/ care. Enable the installation of high-speed telecommunication networks.

Promoting the Ontario Brand Across the Globe

Ontario already enjoys significant reputational benefits worldwide. For example, according to the September 2021 World's Best Cities report on where to live, work, invest and visit, Toronto ranked 18th globally and outpaced all other Canadian cities by a significant margin. It is not just Toronto that is a desirable place to work, live and play. In 2021, Maclean's rankings of the best places to live in Canada featured three Ontario cities – St. Thomas, Belleville and Cornwall – in the top 10, all factors being equal.

Ontario is also well positioned on the technology front. The Scoring Tech Talent Report from CBRE, which ranks North America's top 50 tech talent markets, featured eight Canadian cities. Toronto and Ottawa were in the top 10. Toronto ranked fourth (it had cracked the top three in previous years), while Ottawa ranked eighth.

Toronto also recently ranked as the number one place in the world to work remotely, according to HR company Remote. Ottawa has emerged as a hub for technological innovation across North America.



Ontario is seen as a great place to study as well, producing the type of highly skilled, highly coveted workers that employers across the world are seeking. Hello Safe ranks Kingston as the third best place to study in Canada, with Toronto at number five, and Hamilton at number 10. Waterloo, London, Ottawa, St. Catharines and Guelph are all in the top 20.

There are clear advantages in terms of quality of life, investment opportunities, government supports and work. As Ontario residents ourselves, we know the strengths that Ontario brings to quality of life and employment opportunities. Thanks to strong and stable governance, our province is a destination of choice for many around the globe and there is more opportunity as we emerge from COVID-19.

The real value proposition here is a broader one – to leverage Ontario's high standard of living and quality of life, natural beauty, economic dynamism and good governance to create a virtuous circle around attracting talent, investment and job creation. This would help workers achieve their goals and help businesses meet the challenges of the transitioning economy, while supporting the growth of small, medium and large businesses.



(We should) make this a place where knowledge workers can work from anywhere. Have great Internet, be trained and be respected for their education and reducing bias for the diversity that we have to celebrate in our workforce.

– Business services consultant

Other jurisdictions around the world are introducing incentives to attract workers. Countries as diverse as Barbados, Bermuda, Estonia and Georgia have been offering long-term residency permits – with or without assistance for relocating - to workers in other countries. Some cities in the United States have been going further, offering cash payments and tax, homebuying and local purchase incentives to workers moving from other parts of the country.

Ontario residents aren't necessarily aware of the benefits the province offers due to investments made by the government, businesses and workers in the province's future. Only 54 per cent of respondents say Ontario is the best place to find workers in North America, while only 52 per cent say Ontario enjoys some of the best benefits in the world. We believe there is room to improve these numbers through an effort to brand Ontario and advertise the benefits the province offers.

AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT WORKING IN ONTARIO

For employers, Ontario is one of the best places in North America to find workers	54%
Workers in Ontario enjoy some of the best benefits in the world	52%
Ontario has enough highly skilled workers to meet the requirements of employers	51%
Ontario has the most talented workers in the world	49%
Ontario is best place to work in North America	49%
Ontario is the best place in the world to operate a business	44%

Source: OWRAC Survey

RECOMMENDATION 21

Develop an employment brand and communications strategy for domestic and international markets to promote Ontario as a desirable place to work and live.

Conclusions

During the course of our work as a committee, we heard a wide variety of perspectives. While there are some issues touching on work that go beyond the mandate of our committee, we feel our analysis and recommendations are a fair representation of the key issues facing Ontario residents and their government.

In conclusion we offer a few thoughts:

First, we recognize that the policy agenda on a subject as complex as this one is daunting. While each recommendation stands on its own, several recommendations reinforce each other. Choices will need to be made as to which recommendations to act on and what changes should be made first. We cannot let perfection be the enemy of the good. Acting early on even a few of the recommendations in this report will leave the people of Ontario better off.

Second, the committee considered several issues that go beyond the authority of the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development. They are shared with other jurisdictions and/or go beyond provincial jurisdiction.

Many – such as infrastructure development and designing portable benefits schemes – are apparent in this report. There are questions – for example, about immigration policy, definitions for, and the measurement of, the workforce, and corporate taxation – which we have not addressed because in our judgment they fall outside our mandate.

Third, the committee suggests the government look at other jurisdictions for ideas, best practices and collaboration. The issues we confronted in writing this report are vast, global and not easily solved. Government officials should interact with their counterparts in other provinces and countries regularly and systematically, to remain on the cutting edge in this fast-paced area of policy.

Lastly, the committee advises that the government continue this important work and establish an annual process to measure the views of provincial residents, assess trends in the labour market and policies to address them, and provide statistics for key employment indicators, thus producing a state-of-the-workforce report.

In closing, we reiterate our thanks to Minister McNaughton for tasking us with this important work and to the many individuals and organizations who took the time to speak with us or write in with their comments. There is much to do, and much has already been done by the Ontario government, but we believe this report and its recommendations represent a good start to clear and meaningful progress for everyone in the province.

Appendix A – Recommendations in Brief

Ensuring that Ontario Remains the Best Place in North America to Recruit, Retain and Reward Workers

Recommendation 1: Support funding for lifelong learning with no age restrictions, continue to promote development and recognition of micro-credentials and promote more on-the-job training.

Recommendation 2: Build on Ontario's Skills Development Fund model, invest in new channels of career development beyond traditional educational institutions to include funding employers, professional associations and unions directly.

Recommendation 3: Launch a challenge-based program to encourage private-sector providers and non-profit organizations to propose online solutions to help employees and employers navigate the province's increasingly complex marketplace of skills training programs, providers and courses.

Recommendation 4: Develop a provincial benefit that aligns with the Canada Training Benefit to help defray costs for individuals who wish to pursue lifelong learning opportunities.

Recommendation 5: Build on the federal government's efforts to expand learning on the job, by encouraging employer programs to ensure there are enough workplace learning opportunities.

Recommendation 6: Reform training programs, building on the recent announcement of the Second Career program, to better serve those with weak employment history, including vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Recommendation 7: Partner with other levels of government to enhance lifelong learning, skills training and workforce development for Indigenous people.

Recommendation 8: Appoint an expert to design and test a portable benefits program, where contributors could be employers, workers and the government.

Recommendation 9: Establish mandated competency-based accreditation to accelerate the availability of skilled workers based on the BCIT model, which would allow workers from other jurisdictions to enter the workforce more quickly.

Recommendation 10: Modernize existing job boards to make it easier to match employers searching for specialized skills with highly skilled workers across multiple jurisdictions.

Recommendation 11: Pilot a virtual platform that matches supply and demand for various types of gig and contract work.

Recommendation 12: Create a committee of cabinet, comprising four or five key ministers, to keep on top of matters related to workforce, competitiveness and fairness.

Supporting Workers, Especially Platform Workers, by Providing Greater Flexibility, Control and Security

Recommendation 13: Limit the use of non-compete clauses to specific intellectual property and eliminate blanket non-competes in law, to encourage innovation, worker mobility and competition.

Recommendation 14: Create or clarify terms under which independent contractors are defined, for highly skilled workers who opt for this flexibility.

Recommendation 15: Create and recognize the dependent contractor category for gig or platform workers in the app-based space and give this category of worker basic employment rights, such as termination pay, minimum wage, minimum or core benefits, regular payment of wages, pay stubs for pay accountability and notice of termination with severance entitlements.

Recommendation 16: Require gig platform companies operating in Ontario to provide basic, easy-to-understand, full disclosure and transparency on payment, work allocation and penalties, suspensions or pay deductions.

Recommendation 17: Require contracting companies to be transparent by stipulating that they comply with employment standards, specifically with respect to worker classification. Clear and unambiguous acknowledgement that liability compliance rests with both the contracting and the subcontracted company is needed.

Recommendation 18: Simplify the exemptions section of the Employment Standards Act to make it easier to understand and enforce and more relevant to current and future workers.

Making Ontario the Top Destination with a World-Class Workforce and Talent Supply

Recommendation 19: Introduce the right to disconnect, which would protect workers' ability to balance personal obligations with work commitments, to foster a culture of life-work balance and emphasize Ontario's commitment to supporting mental health.

Recommendation 20: Develop fast and reliable transportation networks linking major cities with smaller communities where workers want to live. Enhance telehealth services so people who leave large urban centres can still access specialized health diagnostics/care. Enable the installation of high-speed telecommunication networks.

Recommendation 21: Develop an employment brand and communications strategy for domestic and international markets to promote Ontario as a desirable place to work and live.

Appendix B – Public Survey Questionnaire

OWRAC Survey on the Future of Work

Ipsos conducted a survey of Ontario residents on behalf of the committee on the future of work. See the methodology section of this report for details on sampling and methodology. The results below do not include demographic questions.

1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about yourself?

	Total Agree	Total Disagree
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
I am confident that I have the education or skills needed to have a job that I want where I live.	73%	27%
I am confident that I will be able to find and maintain a job that I am satisfied with where I live.	68%	32%
I know I can get training or professional development opportunities to prepare me for the economy of the future.	66%	34%
I have the technological and computer skills needed to operate my own business.	59%	41%
The COVID-19 pandemic has made me reconsider the type of job I want to do in the future.	44%	56%
If I could work remotely, I'm likely to move somewhere else from where I am living today.	43%	57%

...continued

	Total Agree	Total Disagree
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
I am interested in training or business support to start a small business.	37%	63%
I have found it hard to keep up with bills and payments because of the COVID-19 pandemic.	35%	65%
I am worried about my job security because of the COVID-19 pandemic.	33%	67%
I am worried about my job security because of changing technology.	30%	70%

2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Total Agree	Total Disagree
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Ontario's community colleges do a good job of preparing young people for jobs in Ontario.	74%	26%
Ontario should make it as easy as possible for skilled immigrants to move here from other countries.	65%	35%

...continued

	Total Agree	Total Disagree
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Young people are right to expect that they will find a good paying and secure job in Ontario.	57%	43%
Without too much difficulty a person can find an apprenticeship or training for a skilled trade in Ontario.	57%	43%
Ontario's universities do a good job of preparing young people for jobs in Ontario.	56%	44%
Ontario has the right policies to ensure skilled immigrants can integrate into the workforce effectively.	53%	47%
The current rules for work in Ontario do a good job of balancing the interests of both workers and employers.	51%	49%
Ontario's government has policies to help employers prepare for technological changes that could threaten or create jobs.	48%	52%
We have the right rules in place in Ontario to make sure workers can have a good work life balance.	47%	53%

3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following about the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic?

	Total Agree	Total Disagree
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
People who work from home should have the right to disconnect from their employer at the end of each working day.	95%	5%
Ontario should ensure that remote workers have the same rules and regulations as people who work in a workplace.	90%	10%
The workplace has changed permanently due to COVID-19 and Ontario needs to update employment regulations.	89%	11%

[DO NOT ASK IF RETIRED]

6A. Which best describes how you were working just before the pandemic started early last year?

	Total
Base: All Respondents excluding those who retired	(n=1406)
I mostly or always worked in an office away from my home	43%
I mostly or always worked away from my home, not in an office	24%

...continued

	Total
Base: All Respondents excluding those who retired	(n=1406)
I mostly or always worked from my own home	9%
Sometimes I worked at home and sometimes away from home	6%
I was not working just before the pandemic	18%

6B. Which best describes how you are working now?

	Total
Base: All Respondents exclude those who retired	(n=1181)
I mostly or always work in an office away from my home	27%
I mostly or always work away from my home, but not in an office	27%
I mostly or always work from my own home	39%
Sometimes I work at home and sometimes away from my home	7%

6C. And in which of these ways would you prefer to work once the pandemic is over?

	Total
Base: All Respondents excluding those who retired	(n=1181)
I would prefer to work completely from home	29%
I would prefer to work completely away from home	21%
I would prefer to work from home more than I used to do	19%
I would prefer to work from home about as much I used to do	8%
I would prefer to work from home less than I used to do	3%
Other	1%
Don't know	3%
Not applicable (the nature of my job means I don't have a choice where I have to work)	16%

[DO NOT ASK IF RETIRED]

4. When you think about your dream job or career (either looking ahead if you have most of your working life yet to come or looking backward if you are finished or almost finished working) which of the following do you value the most? Use a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means 'Do Not Value At All' and 7 means 'Value a Great Deal'.

	Total Value	Neutral	Total Do Not Value
Base: All respondents excluding those who retired	(n=1406)	(n=1406)	(n=1406)
Knowing that I have a stable pay cheque	92%	5%	3%
Having good health and other support benefits	90%	6%	4%
Having interesting work to do	88%	7%	5%
Flexibility in my workdays/hours	84%	11%	6%
Knowing that I will have a pension when I retire	84%	9%	7%
Being in charge of my schedule	81%	13%	6%
Minimizing my personal risk	79%	14%	7%

...continued

	Total Value	Neutral	Total Do Not Value
Base: All respondents excluding those who retired	(n=1406)	(n=1406)	(n=1406)
Getting to do a wide variety of different activities	76%	15%	8%
Ability to work from home	63%	16%	21%
Working for a big and stable organization	62%	20%	18%
Ability to work from anywhere in the world	60%	16%	23%
Being my own boss	57%	21%	22%

[ASK IF WORKING]

7A. To what extent are you able to learn and develop skills needed for the jobs of the future through your current employer?

	Total
Base: Those who are working	(n=1062)
Top 2 Box (Net)	68%
Very much (4)	25%
Somewhat (3)	44%
Bottom 2 Box (Net)	32%
Very little (2)	21%
Not at all (1)	10%
Mean	2.8

Assessment of Current Reputation, Responsibility and Priorities

Thinking of all the various issues and priorities that the provincial government should focus on moving forward in the recovery from the pandemic, what priority do you think each of the following issues should have? Use a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means 'a very low priority' and 7 means 'a very high priority?'

	Total High Priority	Neutral	Total Low Priority
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Improving the long-term care system for seniors in Ontario	92%	5%	4%
Improving the health care system in Ontario	91%	6%	3%
Improving the education system in Ontario	88%	8%	4%
Ensuring adequate and affordable housing in Ontario	87%	8%	5%
Ensuring that Ontario has enough highly skilled workers to meet the requirements of employers	86%	9%	5%
Ensuring that workers in Ontario enjoy some of the best benefits in the world	86%	10%	5%

...continued

	Total High Priority	Neutral	Total Low Priority
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Ensuring that Ontario is best place to work in North America	82%	13%	6%
For employers, ensuring that Ontario is one of the best places in North America to find workers	82%	12%	5%
Ensuring that Ontario is the best place in the world to operate a business	80%	14%	6%
Ensuring that Ontario has the most talented workers in the world	75%	16%	9%

8A. And, thinking of all the various issues and priorities that the provincial government should focus on moving forward in the recovery from the pandemic, what priority do you think each of the following issues should have? Use a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means 'a very low priority' and 7 means 'a very high priority.'

	Total High Priority	Neutral	Total Low Priority
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Getting the economy back on track and more people working in Ontario	89%	8%	3%
Training workers to find good paying jobs that are in demand by employers in Ontario	88%	8%	4%
Dealing with poverty and social inequality in Ontario	82%	10%	7%
Dealing with crime and violence in Ontario	82%	11%	8%
Dealing with social issues like racism and discrimination in Ontario	76%	10%	14%
Dealing with government deficits/debt in Ontario	74%	14%	12%
Fighting climate change in Ontario	74%	12%	14%

...continued

	Total High Priority	Neutral	Total Low Priority
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Lowering taxes in Ontario	73%	13%	14%
Increasing the number of childcare spaces in Ontario	73%	15%	12%

6. To what extent would you describe Ontario today regarding the following statements? Use a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means 'does not describe at all' and 7 means 'describes completely'.

	Total High Priority	Neutral	Total Low Priority
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
For employers, Ontario is one of the best places in North America to find workers	54%	30%	17%
Workers in Ontario enjoy some of the best benefits in the world	52%	26%	22%
Ontario has enough highly skilled workers to meet the requirements of employers	51%	28%	22%
Ontario has the most talented workers in the world	49%	31%	20%

...continued

	Total Describes	Neutral	Total Does Not Describe
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Ontario is best place to work in North America	49%	28%	22%
Ontario is the best place in the world to operate a business	44%	32%	23%

7. How much responsibility do you think each of the following organizations should have to ensure that the following are true? Use a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means 'no responsibility at all' and 7 means 'a great deal of responsibility'.

The Federal Government	Total Responsible	Neutral	Total Not Responsible
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Ensuring that Ontario has enough highly skilled workers to meet the requirements of employers	73%	17%	11%
Ensuring that workers in Ontario enjoy some of the best benefits in the world	72%	17%	11%
For employers, ensuring that Ontario is one of the best places in North America to find workers	70%	19%	11%

...continued

The Federal Government	Total Responsible	Neutral	Total Not Responsible
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Ensuring that Ontario is the best place in the world to operate a business	69%	19%	12%
Ensuring that Ontario is best place to work in North America	68%	19%	12%
Ensuring that Ontario has the most talented workers in the world	67%	19%	14%

The Provincial Government	Total Responsible	Neutral	Total Not Responsible
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Ensuring that workers in Ontario enjoy some of the best benefits in the world	82%	12%	6%
Ensuring that Ontario is best place to work in North America	81%	13%	6%
Ensuring that Ontario has enough highly skilled workers to meet the requirements of employers	81%	12%	6%
Ensuring that Ontario is the best place in the world to operate a business	81%	14%	5%

...continued

The Provincial Government	Total Responsible	Neutral	Total Not Responsible
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
For employers, ensuring that Ontario is one of the best places in North America to find workers	81%	13%	6%
Ensuring that Ontario has the most talented workers in the world	78%	15%	8%

Local or Municipal Government	Total Responsible	Neutral	Total Not Responsible
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Ensuring that Ontario is the best place in the world to operate a business	64%	22%	14%
Ensuring that Ontario has enough highly skilled workers to meet the requirements of employers	63%	20%	17%
Ensuring that Ontario is best place to work in North America	62%	23%	15%
For employers, ensuring that Ontario is one of the best places in North America to find workers	62%	21%	17%

...continued

Local or Municipal Government	Total Responsible	Neutral	Total Not Responsible
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Ensuring that workers in Ontario enjoy some of the best benefits in the world	62%	21%	17%
Ensuring that Ontario has the most talented workers in the world	57%	23%	19%

Business or the Private Sector	Total Responsible	Neutral	Total Not Responsible
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Ensuring that workers in Ontario enjoy some of the best benefits in the world	80%	12%	8%
Ensuring that Ontario is best place to work in North America	76%	15%	9%
Ensuring that Ontario is the best place in the world to operate a business	72%	18%	10%
For employers, ensuring that Ontario is one of the best places in North America to find workers	72%	17%	11%

...continued

Business or the Private Sector	Total Responsible	Neutral	Total Not Responsible
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Ensuring that Ontario has the most talented workers in the world	69%	19%	12%
Ensuring that Ontario has enough highly skilled workers to meet the requirements of employers	69%	19%	12%

Labour Unions	Total Responsible	Neutral	Total Not Responsible
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Ensuring that workers in Ontario enjoy some of the best benefits in the world	74%	16%	10%
Ensuring that Ontario is best place to work in North America	67%	19%	14%
Ensuring that Ontario has enough highly skilled workers to meet the requirements of employers	66%	18%	16%
For employers, ensuring that Ontario is one of the best places in North America to find workers	64%	20%	16%

...continued

Labour Unions	Total Responsible	Neutral	Total Not Responsible
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Ensuring that Ontario has the most talented workers in the world	62%	20%	19%
Ensuring that Ontario is the best place in the world to operate a business	62%	21%	17%

Making Ontario the Top Destination With a World-Class Workforce and Talent Supply.

How important are each of the following to ensure that Ontario is the best place to work? Use a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means 'not at all important' and 7 means 'extremely important'.

	Total Important	Neutral	Total Not Important
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
A high-quality health care system	92%	6%	2%
A high-quality education system	89%	8%	3%
Incentives for life-long training and skills upgrading for workers	86%	10%	4%

...continued

	Total Important	Neutral	Total Not Important
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Affordable broadband high-speed Internet access for all of Ontario, including rural areas	85%	11%	5%
Affordable housing	84%	9%	7%
Higher wages for people	83%	12%	4%
Has an innovative economy	83%	13%	4%
A convenient and affordable public transit system	82%	11%	7%
Ensuring gender pay equity	82%	11%	7%
Ensuring diversity and inclusion in the workplace	77%	13%	10%
Affordable childcare	75%	14%	11%
Has low personal income taxes	74%	16%	10%
Is welcoming to immigrants from other regions and countries	68%	16%	16%

9. What, if anything else, do you feel is important to ensure that Ontario is the best place in the world to work?

	Total
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)
Higher wages for people	9%
Benefits/ incentives (insurance, paid sick leave, pension, etc.)	7%
Work-life balance/ flexibility	4%
Affordable housing	4%
Better working conditions/ workers' rights/ policies/ regulations	4%
More jobs/ employment	4%
Lower taxes (personal & corporate)	4%
Equity/ equality/ fair treatment	3%
Affordable cost of living	3%
Incentives for life-long training and skills upgrading for workers	3%
A high-quality health care system	3%
Better government (honest, not corrupt, legislation, fiscal management, etc.)	3%
Safe and sustainable communities for people to live in	3%
Ensuring pay equity	2%

...continued

	Total
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)
Better treatment to employees/ worker support/ appreciation	2%
Ensuring diversity and inclusion in the workplace	2%
4 day working week/ shorter work week	2%
Lesser regulations/ bureaucracy/ red tape	2%
Safe workplace	2%
Affordable childcare	1%
Job security/ stability	1%
Has an innovative economy	1%
Affordable/ free education	1%
More incentives to attract businesses to the province	1%
Prioritize/ employ Canadians/ locals first	1%
A high-quality education system	1%
Reliable/ convenient public transit system	1%
Access to good childcare	1%
Access to high-quality/ more housing	1%
Income supplement/ financial assistance/ social services	1%

...continued

	Total
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)
Better infrastructures/ public services	1%
Is welcoming to immigrants from other regions and countries	1%
Get rid of Doug Ford/ current government	1%
Have good/ hard working/ skilled workers	1%
Eliminate/ improve unions	1%
Affordable broadband high-speed Internet access for all of Ontario, including rural areas	1%
Addressing climate change/ having healthy environment	1%
Support small businesses	<1%
Other affordability mentions	<1%
Acknowledge foreign training/ credentials/ experience of immigrants	<1%
Hire people based on their skills, not on ethnicity	<1%
Affordable public transit system	<1%
Other	7%
Nothing	16%
Don't know	17%

13a. When it comes to ensuring that Ontarians have the technical skills needed for today's economy, which 1 of the following 2 options do you think we need more?

	Total
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)
More training provided to workers by business	61%
More training for workers provided by government	39%

13b. When it comes to ensuring that Ontarians have the technical skills needed for today's economy, which 1 of the following 2 options do you think we need more?

	Total
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)
Stronger labour supports and employee benefits for all workers	80%
The current labour supports, and benefits are sufficient	20%

14. How important are each of the following to ensure that Ontario has the most talented workers in the world? Use a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means 'not at all important' and 7 means 'extremely important.'

	Total Important	Neutral	Total Not Important
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Ensuring that Ontarians have access to training and education programs to ensure that they are ready for the future economy.	88%	9%	3%
Ontario should have a registered training program so people can get a tax break as they invest in their own training throughout their lives.	85%	10%	5%
Ontario should invest more in retraining programs for current workers.	83%	13%	5%
Ontario should invest more in elementary and high-school education.	81%	12%	6%
The Ontario government should develop an online platform so people can match their expertise with employers who need those talents.	80%	14%	7%

...continued

	Total Important	Neutral	Total Not Important
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
People who work for multiple employers at the same time should have the same rights and benefits as people who work for only one company.	78%	13%	9%
Ontario should invest more in colleges and universities.	76%	14%	9%
Personal income taxes should be lowered.	74%	14%	13%
Ontario should financially support people who want to take time off to upgrade their skills to get a better job.	72%	16%	13%
Ontario should bring in more new immigrants with specific skills and advanced education backgrounds that are in demand from employers.	57%	18%	25%

15. What, if anything else, do you feel is important to ensuring that Ontario has the most talented workers in the world?

	Total
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)
Ensuring that Ontarians have access to training and education programs to ensure that they are ready for the future economy	17%
Better wages/ pay equality	6%
Better benefits/ incentives	4%
Affordable education/ training	3%
Encourage/ value trades education/ skills	2%
Paid training/ apprenticeships	2%
Lower taxes/ tax breaks	2%
Jobs/ opportunities	2%
Free education/ training	2%
Bring in more new immigrants with specific skills and advanced education	2%

...continued

	Total
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)
Get rid of current government/ have a better government/ less bureaucracy	2%
Other education/ training mentions	1%
Affordable housing	1%
Affordable cost of living	1%
Ontario should invest more in post-secondary education (colleges, universities)	1%
Ontario should invest more in elementary and high-school education	1%
Other affordability/ economy mentions	1%
Ontario should financially support people who want to take time off to upgrade their skills to get a better job	1%
Job security	1%
Diversity/ inclusion	1%
Education/ training for Canadian citizens before immigrants	1%

...continued

	Total
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)
Better work life balance (more vacation, flexible schedule, etc.)	1%
Prioritize/ employ locals/ Canadian first	1%
Hire workers based on skills/ qualifications	1%
Support/ incentives for businesses/ attract more businesses	1%
Better workers right/ protection	1%
Better treatment/ support for employees	1%
Equality/ fair treatment	1%
Other employment/ workplace mentions	1%
Ontario should invest more in retraining programs for current workers	1%
Recognize education/ training/ experience from other countries	1%
Stop immigration/ bringing in people from other countries	1%
Better support (financial, social, etc.)	1%

...continued

	Total
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)
High quality healthcare system	1%
Other services/ programs mentions	1%
Employers should support/ invest on workers training courses	1%
Make it a safe place to live and work	1%
Improve/ remove unions	<1%
Other immigration mentions	<1%
Better immigration policies/ support	<1%
Government and businesses should work together	<1%
Good childcare system	<1%
Other	6%
Nothing	19%
Don't know	23%

Ensuring That Ontario Remains the Best Place in North America to Recruit, Retain and Reward Workers.

16. How important are each of the following to ensure that Ontario is the best place in the world for employers to recruit and retain workers? Use a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means 'not at all important' and 7 means 'extremely important'.

	Total Important	Neutral	Total Not Important
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Ontario should change the way work is regulated to address the increase in remote and technology-based work	71%	20%	8%
Small business taxes should be lowered	70%	18%	12%
Ontario should guarantee a certain level of income for all individuals	68%	14%	17%
Ontario should provide financial subsidies to small businesses to hire workers	67%	18%	15%
Ontario should provide financial subsidies to large businesses to hire workers	37%	25%	38%
Corporate taxes should be lowered	34%	20%	46%
Ontario should not increase the minimum wage	32%	14%	53%

17. What, if anything else, do you feel is important to ensure that Ontario is the best place in the world for employers to recruit and retain workers?

	Total
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)
Better (living) wage/ pay	8%
Better benefits/ incentives (unspecified)	8%
Better education/ training	8%
Ontario should increase the minimum wage	3%
Lower personal/ income taxes	3%
Equality/ fair treatment	3%
More jobs/ opportunities	2%
Pay equity/ fair wages	2%
Hire qualified/ skilled workers	2%
Other employment/workplace mentions	2%
Affordable cost of living	2%
Affordable housing	2%
Ontario should guarantee a certain level of income for all	1%
Good working conditions/ workers' rights/ better treatment	1%
Allow foreign trained professionals to do their work here	1%

...continued

	Total
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)
Get rid of labour unions	1%
Paid sick days/ time off	1%
Good work life balance/ flexibility	1%
Better/flexible working hours	1%
Better health benefits	1%
Priority for Canadian workers/students	1%
Higher corporate taxes	1%
More childcare options	1%
Ontario should provide financial subsidies to small businesses to hire workers	1%
Better healthcare	1%
Affordable education/ training	1%
Paid training/ apprenticeships	1%
Job security/ stability	1%
Change of government	1%
Better rules/regulations	1%
Less government involvement/ red tape/ bureaucracy	1%

...continued

	Total
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)
Crime control/ safer community	1%
Corporate/ business taxes should be lowered	<1%
More support (financial assistance, social services, etc.)	<1%
Other services/programs	<1%
Other tax mentions	<1%
Diversity and inclusion	<1%
Adequate housing	<1%
Other affordability mentions	<1%
Access to healthcare system	<1%
Offer pension	<1%
Better infrastructures/ public services	<1%
Other education/training mentions	<1%
Other	8%
Nothing	16%
Don't know	23%

Ensuring Ontario's Technology Platform Workers Have Flexibility, Control and Security in the Work They Do.

Awareness of Technology Worker Concept

18. How knowledgeable are you with the following types of jobs?

	Total Knowledgeable	Total Not Knowledgeable
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Tech worker or technology platform worker	45%	55%
'Gig' Worker	37%	63%
Anywhere jobs	39%	61%

19. As you may know, a Tech Worker or Technology Platform Worker is where technology has allowed individual workers to perform one-off tasks for consumers or companies who need those services.

Some examples of this trend include drivers for ride-hailing services like Uber or Lyft; people who perform deliveries through services like Skip the Dishes or Amazon; or people who perform tasks through services like TaskRabbit.

These workers typically do not follow a set schedule, get paid as they pick up assignments from customers instead of receiving an hourly wage or salary. How familiar are you with this type of employment?

	Total
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)
Total familiar	57%
Very familiar (4)	13%
Somewhat familiar (3)	44%
Total unfamiliar	43%
Not very familiar (2)	29%
Not at all familiar (1)	14%

20. As you may know, a 'Gig' Worker is a person who works temporary jobs typically in the service sector as an independent contractor or freelancer. How familiar are you with this type of employment?

	Total
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)
Total familiar	55%
Very familiar (4)	14%
Somewhat familiar (3)	42%
Total unfamiliar	45%
Not very familiar (2)	28%
Not at all familiar (1)	17%

[ONLY ASK IF CURRENTLY EMPLOYED]

21. Would you consider yourself currently employed in any of the following job categories?

	Total
Base: Currently Employed	(n=1062)
Tech or Technology Worker	17%
Gig Worker	16%

22. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following about your job as a technology or 'gig' worker?

	Total Agree	Total Disagree
Base: Coded Yes at Q21	(n=274)	(n=274)
I have flexibility to work only when I want	69%	31%
I am satisfied with my job	76%	24%
I have job security	57%	43%
I feel that I am protected by Ontario's employment laws	52%	48%
I make enough money to support a reasonable lifestyle	58%	42%

23. Based on what you know about Tech Workers or Technology Platform Workers, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following about these types of jobs?

	Total Agree	Total Disagree
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Should be covered under the same labour laws and regulations as full-time workers.	75%	17%
Are great for people who want a flexible schedule.	79%	13%
Let companies take advantage of workers.	51%	34%
Are a good option for older people who don't want to work full-time anymore.	71%	19%
Place too much of a financial burden on workers.	48%	33%
I would pay more for products or services provided by technology or 'gig' workers to ensure that they have better working conditions	48%	39%
Are a good entry-level job for people who are entering the workforce.	60%	29%
Are the kind of jobs you can build a career out of.	37%	50%

24. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each statement about Ontario's Technology Platform or 'gig' workers?

	Total Agree	Total Disagree
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Ontario should treat technology platform or 'gig' workers the same as traditional workers in terms of employment regulations and labour protections.	75%	14%
Ontario should treat technology platform or 'gig' workers the same as traditional workers in terms of employment benefits.	69%	19%
Ontario's labour laws should protect people who get jobs as technology platform or 'gig' workers while they move from job to job	71%	16%
Ontario should guarantee a certain minimum level of income for technology platform or 'gig' workers.	62%	25%
To attract and keep people in Ontario it is important that we have government benefits available based on where they live not who they work for.	67%	19%
In the very near future people are going to be able to do many jobs from anywhere in the world.	69%	15%

...continued

	Total Agree	Total Disagree
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Ontario should guarantee a certain minimum length of employment for technology platform or 'gig' workers for job security.	56%	27%
Technology platform or 'gig' workers and people working for multiple employers at the same time are more common.	61%	16%
Within my lifetime we will have as many technology platform or 'gig' workers as we will full time employees.	53%	23%
Currently, tech platform or 'gig' workers have the same, benefits and labour protection as traditional workers in Ontario.	18%	54%

25. And, to what extent do you agree or disagree with each statement about Ontario's technology platform workers?

	Total Agree	Total Disagree
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
Ontario's technology platform or 'gig' workers have flexibility in their employment	69%	16%
Ontario's technology platform or 'gig' workers have control over their employment	49%	35%
Ontario's technology platform or 'gig' workers have security in their employment	23%	59%

26. What, if anything else do you feel is important to ensuring that Technology Platform Workers in Ontario have flexibility, control, and security in the work they do?

	Total
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)
Fair/ better/ minimum wages/ income	8%
Good benefits (paid sick leave, pensions, vacation pay, etc.)	7%
Should have regulations/ laws to be mandated/ followed	5%
Ensure workers safety/ protection	4%

...continued

	Total
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)
Protect workers' rights/ ensure they are not taken advantage of	3%
Job security/ stability	3%
Ability to join unions	2%
Contracts/ clear working conditions	2%
Equality/ fair treatment/ same rights with other workers	2%
Flexible hours/ schedule	2%
Education/ training/ continuous learning	2%
Not familiar/ need more information to comment	2%
Have enough job opportunities/ demand of their services	1%
Communication between worker and employer/ give workers a say	1%
Lower taxes/ taxes payment	1%
Guarantee a number of hours	<1%

...continued

	Total
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)
Provide them with adequate/ updated resources/ tools	<1%
Get rid/ lessen admin fees/ cost should be shouldered by employers	<1%
Support/ better support	<1%
Nothing	20%
Other	8%
Don't know	36%

27. Now, thinking about how Ontario can ensure that technology platform workers have flexibility, control and security in the work they do. Which of the following is closest to your own opinion?

	Total
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)
Full time employees make long-term commitments to their employers and therefore should get better benefits and support under the law than 'gig', technology platform, or part-time workers.	50%
'Gig', technology platform, and part-time workers are becoming the new workforce and we need to adjust our laws to ensure they are well supported, get the same benefits as full time employees in Ontario.	50%

27A. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following?

	Total Agree	Neutral	Total Disagree
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
It is essential that all businesses are regulated using the same rules, whether they are part of the 'gig' or technology worker economy or not.	28%	23%	8%
The 'gig' or technology worker economy encourages entrepreneurial behavior and is a positive thing for our society.	13%	37%	13%

...continued

	Total Agree	Neutral	Total Disagree
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
The 'gig' or technology worker economy is the future and shouldn't be hindered by unnecessary regulation.	9%	37%	27%
Regulations on traditional businesses should be relaxed so that they can compete with companies in the 'gig' or technology worker economy.	8%	39%	23%
The 'gig' or technology worker economy is a serious threat to jobs in traditional businesses.	8%	39%	27%

28. How much responsibility should the following organizations have in ensuring Ontario's tech platform or 'gig' workers have flexibility, control and security? Use a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means 'no responsibility at all' and where 7 means 'a great deal of responsibility'.

	Total Responsible	Neutral	Total Not Responsible
Base: Total Respondents	(n=2003)	(n=2003)	(n=2003)
The provincial government	76%	16%	8%
Businesses or the private sector	69%	21%	10%
The federal government	68%	19%	13%
Local or municipal government	58%	25%	17%
Labour unions	57%	22%	21%

[ASK ONLY IF EMPLOYED]

28. Which of the following describes how you usually get paid for the work you do?

	Total
Base: Employed	(n=1062)
I am paid on a weekly basis	13%
I am paid on a bi-weekly basis	73%
I get paid on the same day that I work	2%
I get paid after each activity that I complete, when I drive someone or deliver something, etc.	3%
I often get paid several months after I have completed a contract or task for someone.	4%
Other	6%

Appendix C – Organizations We Heard From

1. Written Submissions

Organizations are listed alphabetically; individuals are not listed. There were 437 written submissions received from individuals.

ORGANIZATION

Addmore Group

Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA)

AllRoads Chrysler Jeep Ram Dealers

Arbor Memorial Inc.

Association of Municipalities of Ontario

Ban Partners

Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic

Bayshore Healthcare

C.D. Howe Institute

Canadian Association of Counsel to Employers

Canadian Council for Youth Prosperity

Canadian Disability Foundation

Canadian Federation of Independent Business

Canadian Labour Congress

Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters

Canadian Payroll Association

Canadian Union of Postal Workers

Canadian Union of Public Employees

Canadian Union of Skilled Workers

Cavalluzzo LLP

CCS Professional Services

Centre for Future Work

Centre for International Governance Innovation

Chemistry Association of Canada

Clancy and Company LLP

Cofomo

College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading

Colleges Ontario

Community Benefits Networks (joint submission)

Conference Board of Canada

Cornershop Technologies Canada

Council of Ontario Universities

Council of Agencies Serving South Asians

CPA4IT

D2L

Direct Sellers Association

Don Valley Community Legal Services

DoorDash

Durham Community Legal Clinic

Eagle Professional Resources

Fairness Commissioner

Feed Ontario

First Work Ontario

Gig Workers United

Gowan Consulting

Hamstra Carpet One

Heart 2 Heart First Aid

Herzing College

Home Hardware

Horticultural Trades Association

Human Resources Professionals Association

IBA Braiding

Independent Contractors and Businesses Association

Information and Communications Technology Council

Intercast Staffing

IT Connex

Individual scholars (joint submission)

Individual rabbis (joint submission)

Kensington Capital Partners

London Chamber of Commerce

MADD Canada

Merit National

Mitacs

Multiple Healthcare workers and Indigenous leaders

National Association of Canadian Consulting Businesses

National Association of Catholic Nurses Canada

National Ballet School

Nexus Systems

Ontario Association of Certified Engineering Technicians and Technologists

Ontario Caregiver Organization

Ontario Chamber of Commerce

Ontario Community Support Association

Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Ontario Creates

Ontario Dental Association

Ontario Federation of Labour

Ontario Masonry Training Centre

Ontario Mining Association

Ontario Non-profit Network

Ontario Nurses' Association

Ontario Professional Hairstylists Association

Ontario Public Service Employees Union

Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation

Ontario Society of Professional Engineers

Ontario Trucking Association

Ontario Window Cleaning Association (OWCA)

Open Trust Consulting

Osler LLP

Oxford Learning Centres

Passive House Canada

Pay Equity Office of Ontario

Peggy Sattler Opposition Critic

Procom

Progressive Contractors Association

Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario

Redwood Group

Residential Construction Council of Canada

RIWI

Ryerson University Young Workers

SALCO CSALC OCASI (joint submission)

SEIU Healthcare

SI Systems

SkipTheDishes

Society of United Professionals

Sundiata Warren Group Inc.

SuperCom Industries

TechNation

Tham Surveying Ltd

The AIM Group

The Staffing Connection

Toronto and York Region Labour Council

Toronto Region Board of Trade

Tourism Industry Association of Ontario

Tre'dish

TriOS College

Tundra Technical Solutions

Uber

UFCW Canada

Unifor

United Steelworkers

University of Waterloo

W5 Resources

WIL Employment Connections

William John Young Professional Corporation

Workers Health and Safety Legal Clinic

Workforce WindsorEssex

World Education Services

Youth Employment Services

YMCA Ontario

YWCA Toronto

Zencorp Mechanical

2. Roundtables, One-on-One Interviews, Joint Interviews and Small Meetings

Organizations and individuals are listed alphabetically. The committee also held six roundtables, including with gig workers and highly skilled workers, who are not individually listed here.

ORGANIZATIONS

Alberta Forest Products Association

Apathy is Boring

Arcelormittal Tubular Products Canada

Automotive Aftermarket Retailers of Ontario

Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association

Bethesomm Inc.

Beyond Jobs

Black Business and Professional Association

Blueprint

Brookefield Global Integrated Solutions

Canada Life

Canada Life Financial

Canadian American Business Council

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

Canadian Chamber of Commerce

Canadian Council for Aboriginal Affairs

Canadian Council for Youth Prosperity

Canadian Federation of Independent Business

Canadian Union of Postal Workers

Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association

Cardus

Center for Growth and Opportunity

Centre for International Governance Innovation

Chic Geek

City of Kitchener

City of Waterloo

Civic Action

Communitech

Compass Group Canada

Councilor of Canadian Innovators

CPA4IT

D2L

DDN-Netzwerk

Delvinia

Dexter Group

Digital Gurus

Digital Mainstreet

Direct Sellers Association of Canada

DoorDash

Economic Blueprint Institute

End Wave

Excel HR

Flextrack

FreshBooks

Future Skills Centre Ryerson

FutureFit AI

Gap Inc

General Motors

Gig Workers United

Goldblatt Partners

Google Canada

Winston Kassim Consulting

Infosecpro

INNIO Group

Jam Café

Kids Code Jeunesse

Lais Hotel Properties Ltd.

Landscape Ontario Horticultural Trades Association

Lock Docs

Magnet Forensics

McMaster University

Mirvish Productions

Mitacs

MM4A non-profit

More Women in Workforce // Pay Equity Commission

Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy (University of Toronto)

National Association of Canadian Consulting Businesses

Next Generation Manufacturing Canada

Ontario Federation of Labour

Ontario Long Term Care Association

Ontario Medical Association

Ontario Tourism Education Corporation

Open Policy Ontario

Parkdale Community Legal Services

People for Education

PricewaterhouseCoopers

Procom

Public Policy Forum

Purolator

Queen's University

Retail Council of Canada

Ridefair Toronto

Riipen

River Run Centre

Ruptivate

Ryerson University

S.I. Systems

Simon Fraser University

Skills Canada

Social Capital Partners

Spotify

Stellantis

Strategy Corp

Strategy Council

Students Commission

Taking It Global

Tealbook

Team Windmill

Television Ontario

Telus

Tim Hortons/ Wendys

Tourism Industry Association of Ontario

Tre'dish

Uber Canada

uMusic

United Food and Commercial Workers Canada

University of Toronto

University of Waterloo

Western University

Windmill Microlending

Workers Action Centre

Workforce Development Board

Workforce Windsor-Essex

Workplace Safety and Prevention Services

York University

YMCA

YWCA

Youthful Cities

INDIVIDUALS

Jake Hirsch Allen

Rakesh Juneja

Alison Loat

Kimberly Morrison

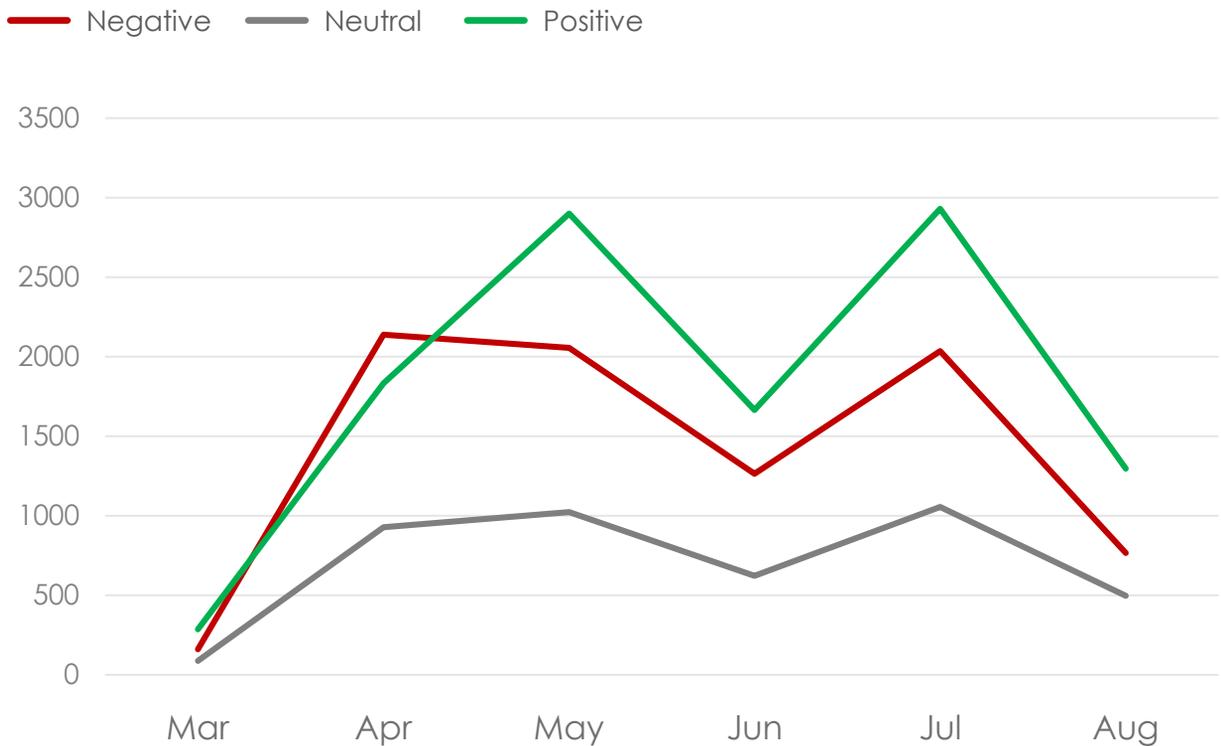
Jamie Noble

Arthur Sweetman

Appendix D – Media Analysis Results

Ipsos conducted a media analysis for OWRAC. The analysis suggested that traditional media stories were by far most prominent in April, when the committee was formed, and were focused primarily on paid sick leave, a topic that died down considerably over the summer.

VOLUME OF COVERAGE AND SENTIMENT



Source: March to August 2021, Ipsos RAD Team

Traditional news articles were split evenly between positive and negative (37 per cent each), with about 24 per cent classified as neutral.

Ipsos' media scan found the future of work was a prominent topic of conversation on social media, especially in the spring, as Ontario began to emerge from COVID-19. We found that much of the discussion was positive, as social media commentators expressed optimism about how the new, post-pandemic work world could be organized. The freedom to work from anywhere and the emergence of a hybrid model of working part time at home and part time at an office was seen by many on social media as an opportunity for a new way of working. Social media posts were most prominent in May and July and were 45 per cent positive, compared with 37 per cent negative and 17 per cent neutral.

SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENTARY ON THE FUTURE OF WORK [MONTHLY]

	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Total
March	84	40	192	316
April	2,254	887	1,849	4,990
May	2,332	1,114	3,052	6,498
June	1,267	621	1,716	3,604
July	2,253	1,129	3,003	6,385
August	938	563	1,594	3,095
Total	9,128	4,354	11,406	24,888
Per cent	37%	17%	46%	100%

We also found very little discussion in traditional media about specific future-of-work issues - such as defining precarious workers or ensuring that lifelong learning is supported - facing Ontario, Canada and the world. Many things mentioned by stakeholders, such as modernizing the Employment Standards Act or modifying the definition of an independent contractor, are simply not being talked about widely in the media.

Appendix E – OWRAC Terms of Reference

Ontario Workforce Recovery Advisory Committee

Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development established the Ontario Workforce Recovery Advisory Committee (OWRAC) to provide recommendations to shape the future of work in our province. Minister McNaughton further outlined his vision for the future of work and his reasons behind naming the OWRAC in an [op-ed in the National Post](#) on June 17, 2021. Further information about OWRAC can be found [here](#).

The committee's mandate was to provide recommendations to position Ontario as the best place in North America to recruit, retain and reward workers.

The committee led consultations and provided recommendations to the Ontario government that address the complexities and opportunities caused and/or accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, including:

- changes in technology
- the growth of “work from anywhere” employment
- the significance of skills development in the global labour market

The committee led recommendations on the future of work, focused on three pillars:

1. **Economic recovery:** How to make Ontario the top jurisdiction with a world-class workforce and talent supply?
2. **Strengthening Ontario's competitive position:** In an increasingly remote, global and technologically advanced economy, how will we ensure that Ontario remains the best place in North America to recruit, retain and reward workers?
3. **Supporting workers:** How to ensure Ontario's technology platform workers benefit from flexibility, control and security?