

Trends Opportunities & Priorities Report

LABOUR MARKET ISSUES IN PEEL HALTON DUFFERIN



PEEL-HALTON-DUFFERIN TRAINING BOARD

ABOUT THIS REPORT...

The Peel Halton Dufferin Training Board (PHDTB) is a non-profit, community-based organization that plays a leadership role in local labour force development. We are a catalyst in the community to study and help address labour market and training issues in the local area we serve.

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) and the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) are joint sponsors of this study of the labour force and labour market issues in Peel Halton Dufferin. The study was a highly research-intensive as well as interactive and consultative process, involving the Board and its key stakeholders across the area.

This report summarizes the local labour market and regional employment data, and defines key trends, opportunities and priorities relating to the labour market in Peel Halton Dufferin. This report will also be used by the Board, sponsors and community stakeholders as a source of labour market information as well as a Plan of Action for 2004/2005. It replaces the "Environmental Scan" that has been presented by the Board in previous years.

The research study consisted of an analysis of 2001 Census-based information specific to Peel Halton Dufferin, relevant secondary source materials, a Web-based survey completed by 197 stakeholders, personal interviews, and a major consultation meeting with key stakeholders from the area.

The Trends Opportunities & Priorities (TOP) Report was prepared by the Peel-Halton-Dufferin Training Board with the assistance of Global Reach Enterprises Inc.

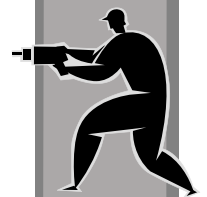


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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Peel Halton Dufferin Training Board (PHDTB) wishes to express its sincere gratitude to the many community stakeholders who participated in the online survey, personal interviews and community consultation meeting. The Board looks forward to working with these community partners to implement local solutions to key labour market issues.

The Board also wishes to acknowledge and thank the sponsors of this study, Human Resource Skills Development Canada and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. Without the guidance and support of these sponsors, this study could not have been undertaken.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the research findings of the Peel Halton Dufferin Training Board and the outcome of extensive community consultations with respect to the trends, opportunities and priorities in the local area relating to labour force and labour market issues and needs. The consultation process involved the following key steps:



1. Research and Analysis

The 2001 Census-based Profile, containing information specific to the Peel Halton Dufferin (PHD) area, was reviewed and analyzed. Secondary source research was also conducted independently.

2. Survey

A survey format was then formulated on the basis of all research and analysis undertaken. The survey questions were based on the key issues identified by the Census and secondary source research. A Trends, Opportunities and Priorities (TOP) Report Committee of the Peel Halton Dufferin Training Board was struck, involving three members of the Board of Directors, the Executive Director, and the Consultant. The key issues to go into the survey were decided upon jointly.

The survey form with identified issues was developed with the assistance of Cubeknox, a company that specializes in the technical aspects of Web-based surveys. The survey was posted on the Web. Over 400 community stakeholders were notified of the survey, and invited to complete it. One hundred and ninety-seven people (197) responded to the survey.

3. Personal Interviews

Personal interviews and consultations were conducted with 13 key stakeholder organizations, to obtain more qualitative information and unstructured comments with respect to key issues.

4. Analysis and Reporting

The Web-based survey results and key findings of the interview process were analyzed. A



report on Labour Market Issues in Peel Halton Dufferin was prepared, which summarized the secondary and primary research data and findings. The report was sent to stakeholders in advance of the major community consultations meeting.

5. Community Consultation Meeting

Invitations were sent to all stakeholders to attend a major community consultations meeting on September 22, 2004 at the Mississauga Convention Centre. A PowerPoint summary of the report was prepared as the basis for summarizing key issues and stimulating discussions among stakeholders on key issue areas. The community consultation meeting was attended by 74 key stakeholders. The meeting outlined and verified the findings of the primary and secondary source research analyses, and established key priorities and specific actions that can be taken by leading stakeholder organizations to address identified issues.

Participants were formed into issue-based focus groups. Each focus group was led by a facilitator, and reported to the entire audience in a plenary session, highlighting the major issues and suggested solutions. Participants self-selected the issue-areas they would like to be involved in to work towards specific solutions.

2.0 SUMMARY OF THE PHD LABOUR MARKET

The following information summarizes key information based on the 2001 Census-based profile prepared by *Regional Analytics* in April 2004 on behalf of the sponsors. The key findings for the Peel Halton Dufferin (PHD) area are as follows.

Population

The PHD population increased by 14.3% between 1996 and 2001, increasing from 1,231,855 in 1996 to 1,408,335 in 2001. 49% of the population was male and 51% female.

The demographic information shows that the population in PHD is aging far more rapidly than is the provincial population, with the magnitude of the differences becoming progressively larger as people got older.

Employment

The total number of people in the labour force in PHD in 2001 was 805,570, up from 692,995 in 1996. In 2001, women made up 47.2% of the total labour force, Visible Minorities 27.5%, Youth (15-24 years of age) 16.0%; Recent Immigrants (those who had come to Canada between 1996 and 2001) accounted for 6.0%, Francophones 1.9% and Aboriginals 0.4%. This is shown in Chart 1 below.

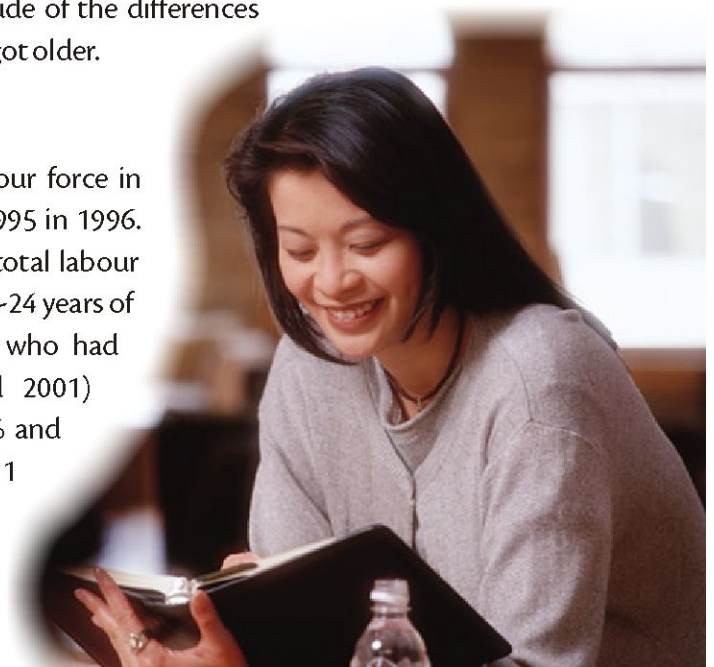
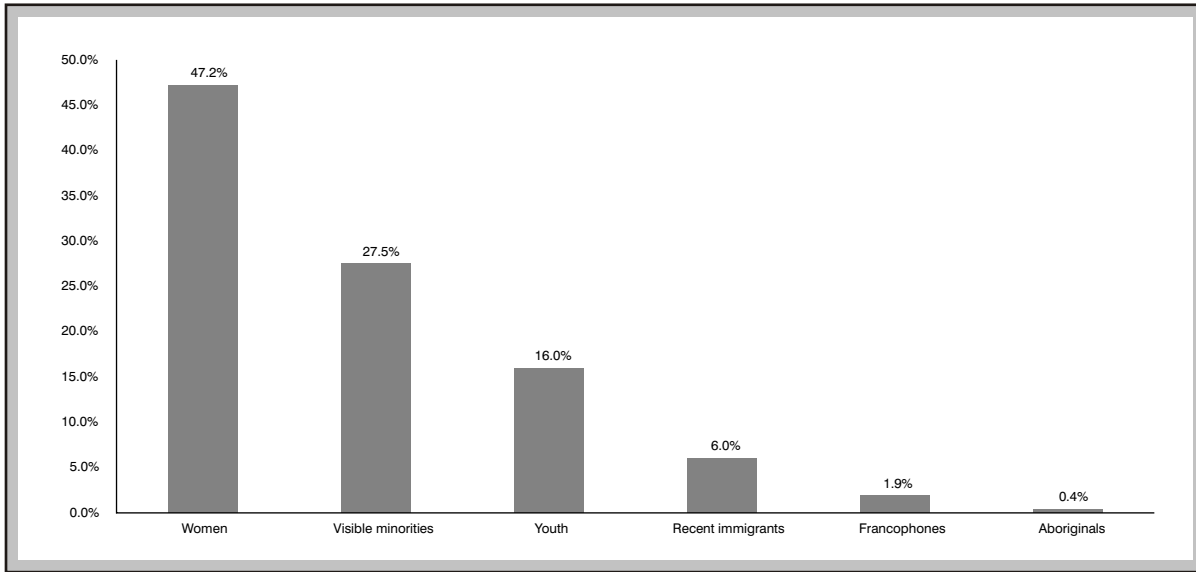


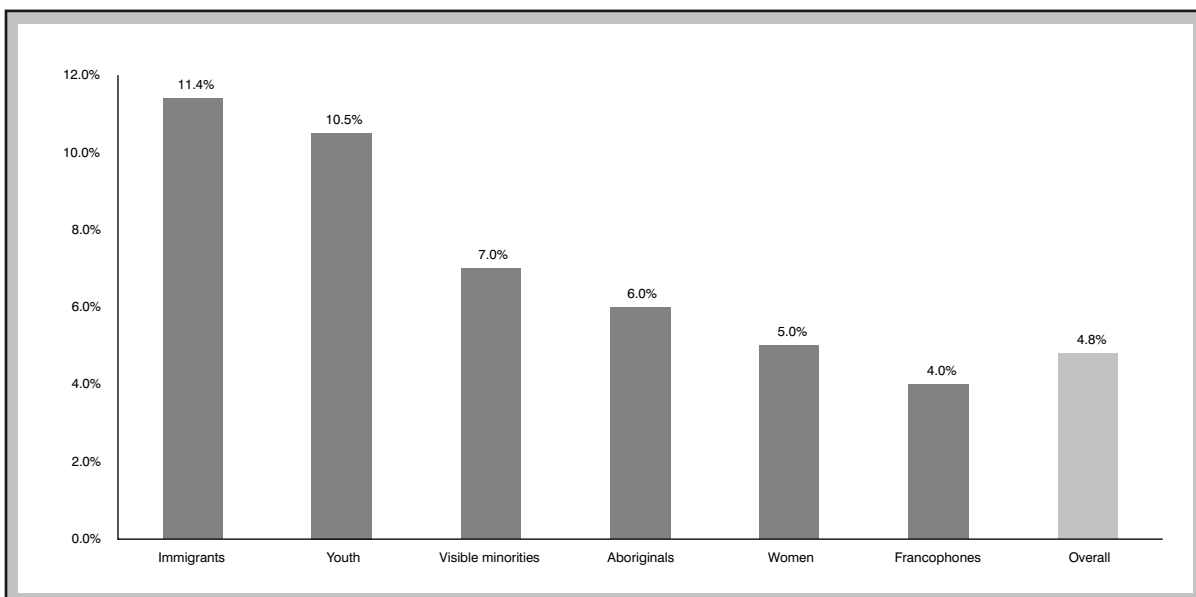
Chart 1
Composition of the Labour Force, PHD 2001



The labour force participation rate (73.2%) and employment rate (69.7%) improved slightly in 2001 compared to 1996, as they did across the province. Aboriginals, Visible Minorities and Youth all experienced a marked increase in employment rates, and marked decreases in the unemployment rate. However, Women and Youth had the lowest participation rates at 67% and 67.9% respectively. Visible Minorities experienced a substantial improvement in its employment rate between 1996 and 2001, going from 61.3% to 67%, and a decrease in the unemployment rate from 12.1% to 7%.

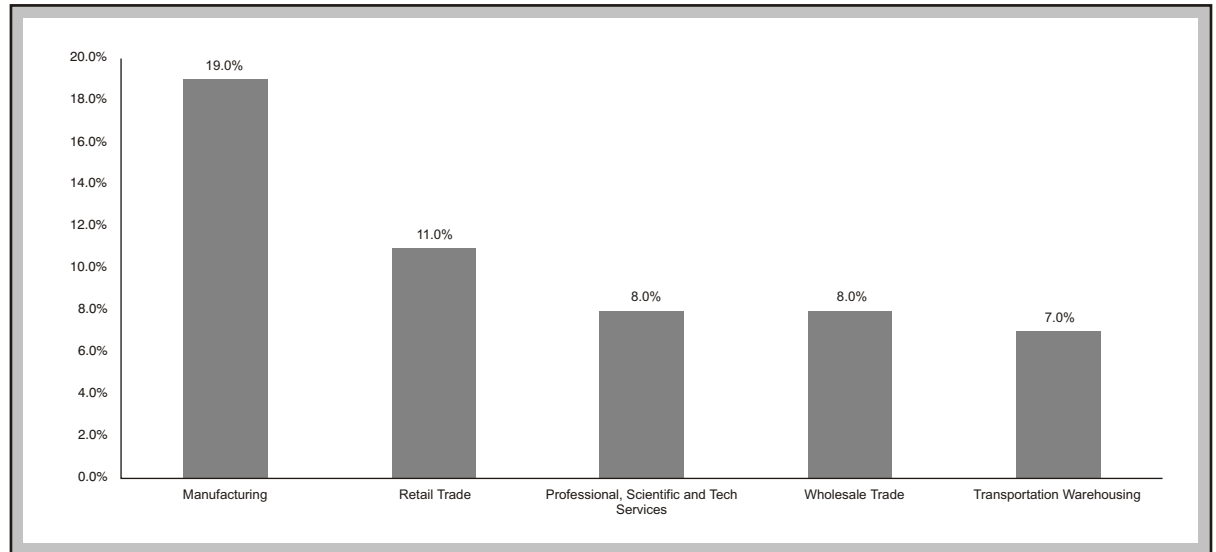
The overall unemployment rate in the area was 4.8%, with Recent Immigrants having the highest unemployment rate at 11.4%, followed by Youth at 10.5%, Visible Minorities at 7%, Aboriginals (6%), Women (5%), and Francophones (4%).

Chart 2
Composition of Unemployed, PHD 2001



As the following chart shows, the PHD area relies heavily on manufacturing industries for employment. Nearly one if five jobs is in the manufacturing sector.

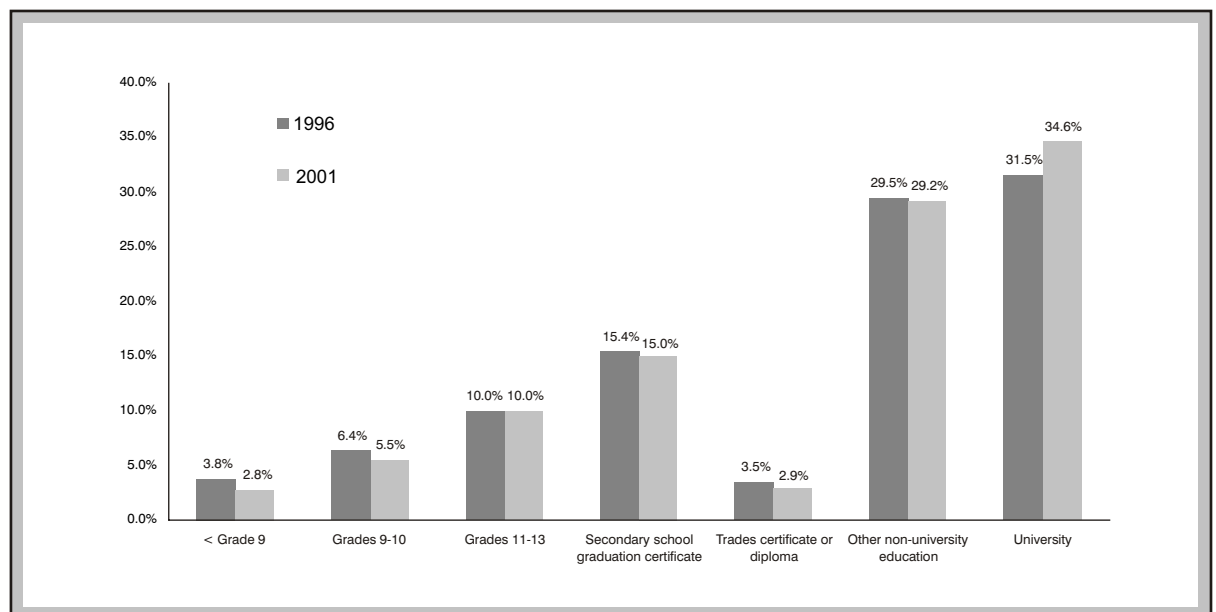
Chart 3
Largest Employers in PHD, 2001



Education and Skills

PHD's employed workforce was more highly educated than was Ontario's as a whole, and has experienced more growth in the higher educational attainment categories than did Ontario overall in the 1991-2001 period. Since 1991, at least, the PHD economy has consistently been more heavily invested in the knowledge-based occupations.

Chart 4
Educational Attainment in PHD 1996, 2001



Since 1991, the share of the employed labour force reporting a “Trades Certificate or Diploma” as the highest level of education attained decreased in PHD as it did across the province.

All groups except Youth have experienced an increase in the level of educational attainment since 1996 (using “University” as a proxy).

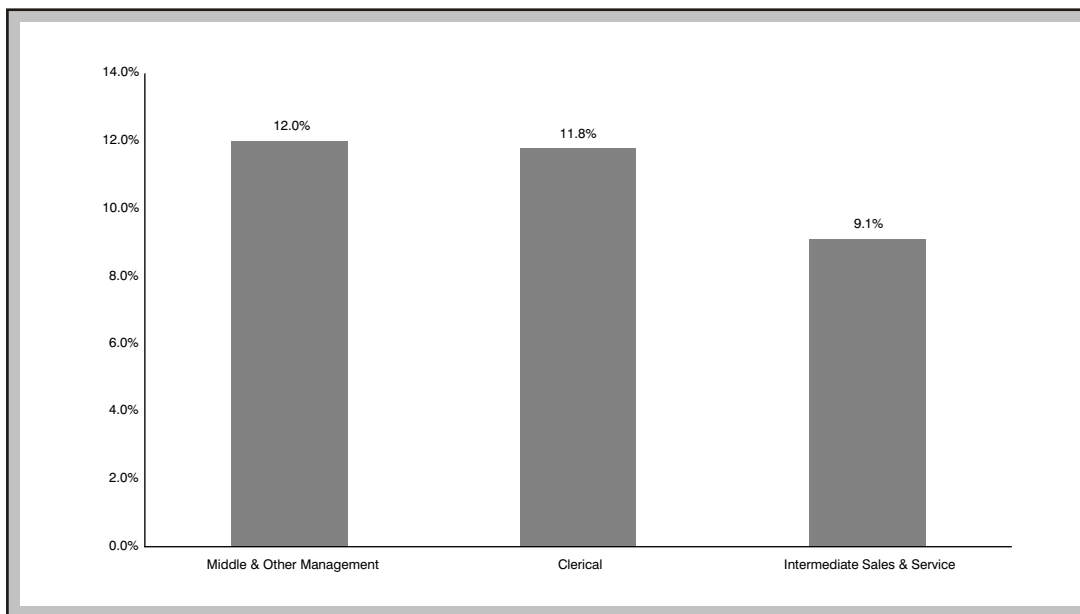
Immigrants who came to PHD between 1996 and 2001 had much higher levels of educational attainment than did those who migrated between 1991 and 1996. In 2001, 47.6% of immigrants reported “University” as their highest level of educational attainment, compared to 1996 when the share was 30.8%.



Occupations

As the following chart shows, the top occupations were related to Middle and Other Management. This category includes financial managers, human resources managers, bank managers, etc.

Chart 5
Top Three Occupations in PHD, 2001



Relative to Ontario as a whole, PHD was more heavily concentrated in: “Senior Management Occupations” at 34%; “Clerical Occupations” at 23%; “Professional Occupations in Business and Finance” at 20%; “Middle and Other Management Occupations” at 18%; “Intermediate Occupations in Transport, Equipment Operation, Installation and Maintenance” at 15%.



Growth Occupations

Among the occupations that experienced the most rapid growth between 1991 and 2001 in PHD (as in Ontario) were: “Paraprofessional Occupations in Law, Social Services, Education and Religion” (223% growth in PHD and 124% growth in Ontario), followed by “Professional Occupations in Business and Finance” (114% growth in PHD and 85% growth in Ontario). Relative to Ontario as a whole, PHD was less heavily concentrated in occupations related to primary industry and “Professional Occupations in Primary Industry.”

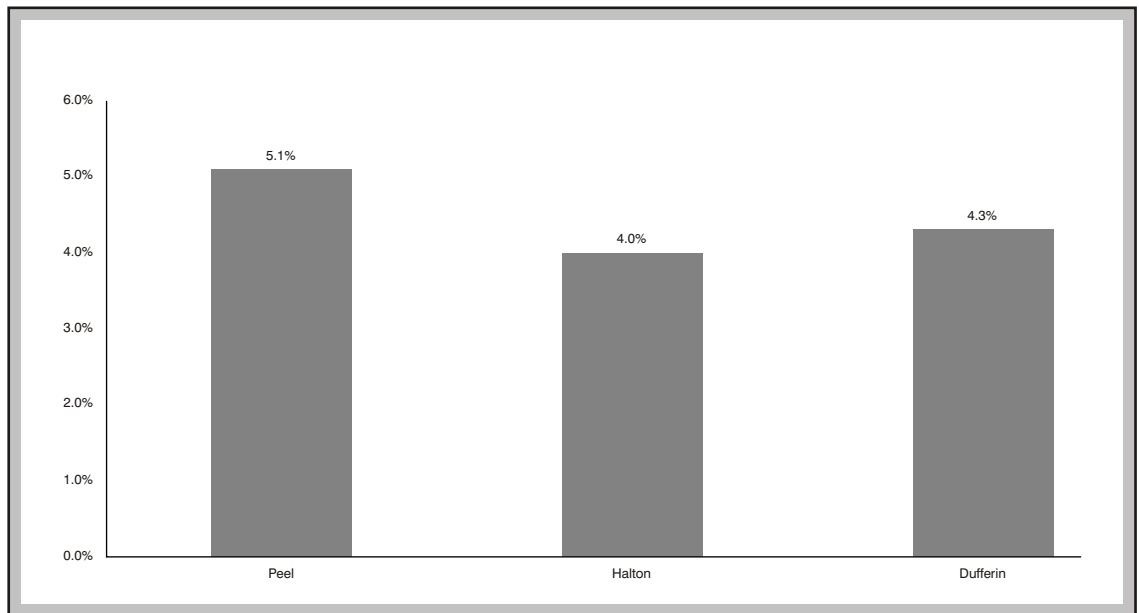
Job Location

71% of the PHD resident labour force actually worked in PHD in 2001, while another 23% worked in the Toronto Training Board area and 3% in the York South Simcoe Training Board area.

2.1 Regional Employment Data

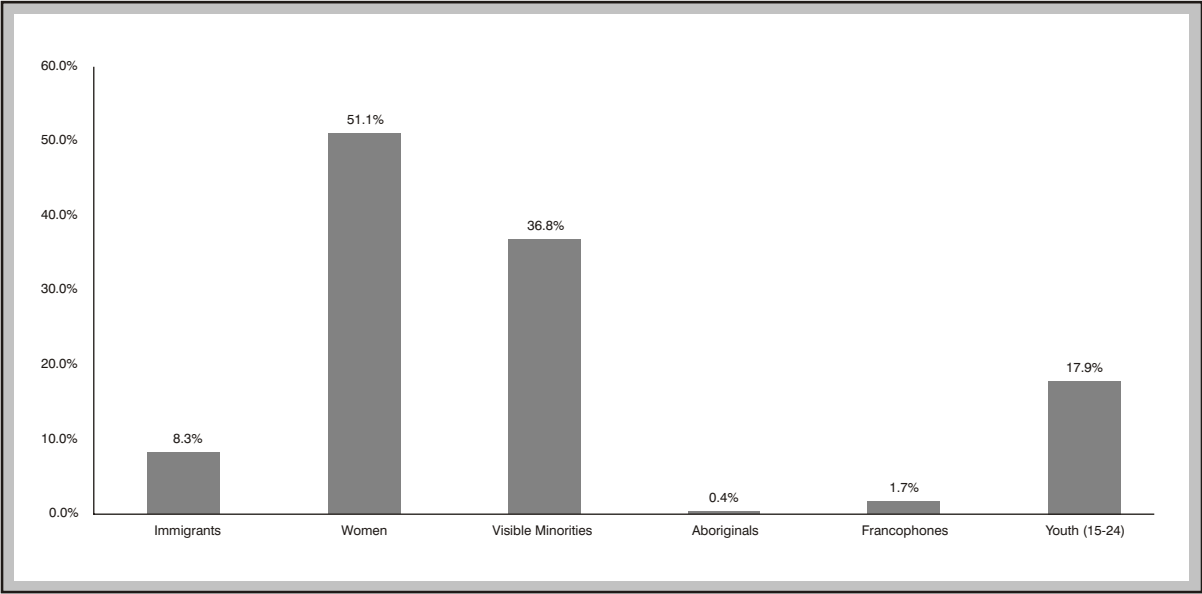
As shown below, the unemployment rates in 2001 varied by region, with Peel having the highest unemployment rate and Halton the lowest.

Chart 6
Unemployment Rate by Region



2.1.1 Peel

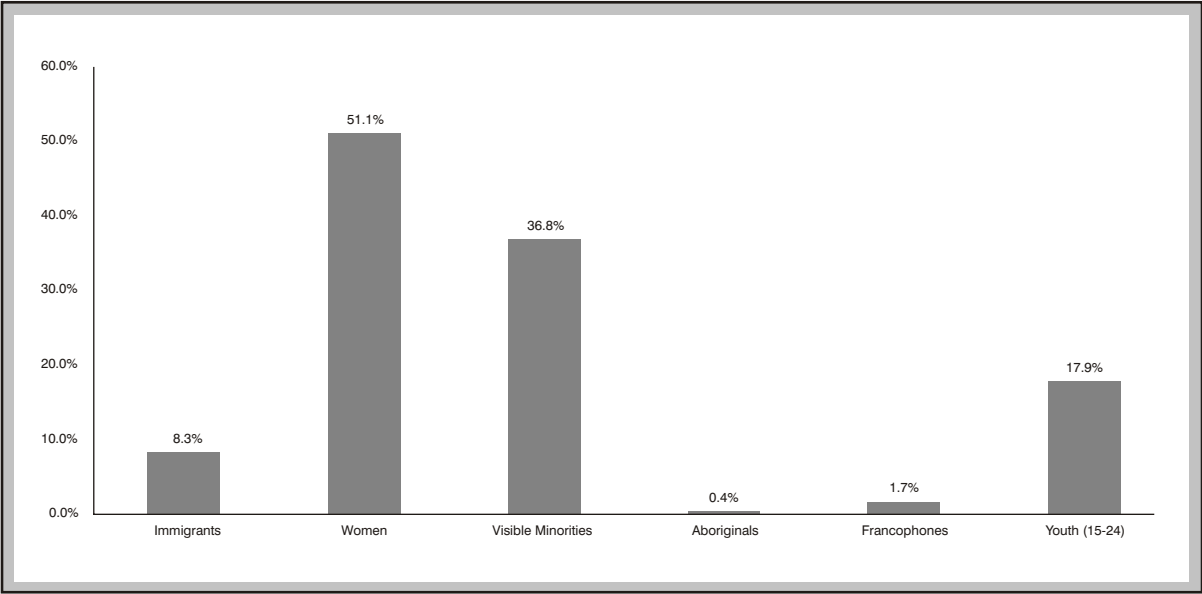
Chart 7
Composition of Peel Labour Force



- The unemployment rate was higher in Peel at 5.1% than the overall PHD area at 4.8%
- Recent immigrants exhibited the highest unemployment rate amongst all labour force components (11.6%).
- With the exception of Aboriginals, all labour force components exhibited higher unemployment rates than did the same components at the local board level.
- Youth exhibited the lowest participation rate amongst all labour force components (65.7%) and the lowest employment rate (58.6%).

2.1.2 Halton

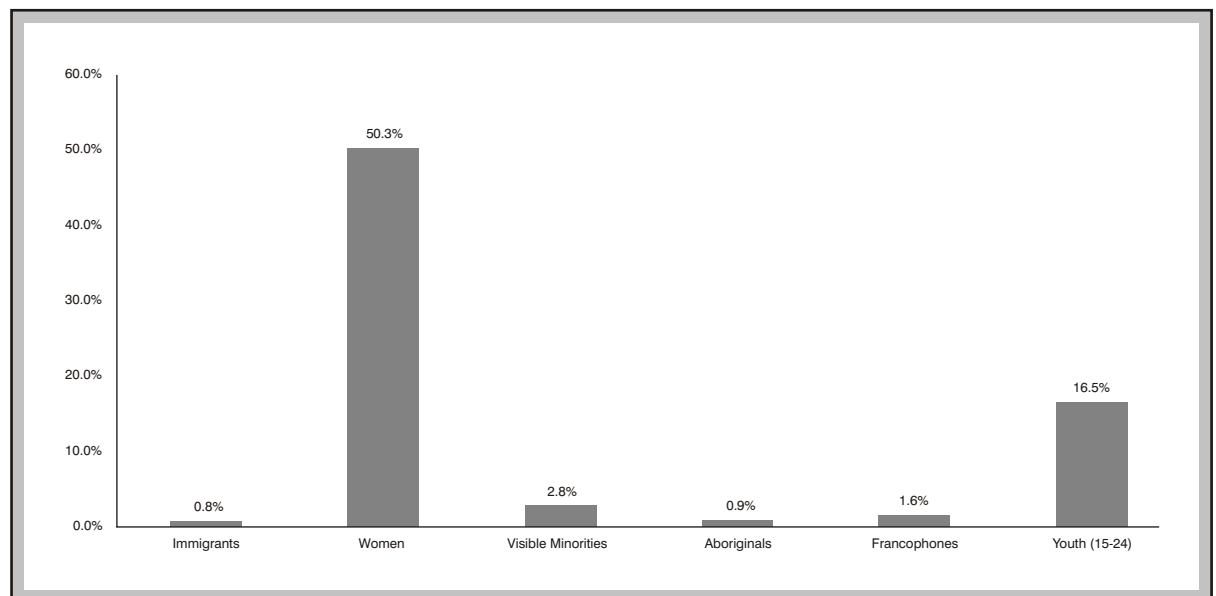
Chart 8
Composition of Halton Labour Force



- Halton had the lowest unemployment rate (4%) than did the total area (4.8%).
- Recent Immigrants and Youth had the highest unemployment rate at 9.9% each, although the unemployment rates were slightly lower in Halton than they were in the PHD area overall.
- Women and Francophones had the lowest unemployment rate among labour force components (both 4%), similar to their performance at the local board level.
- Aboriginals had the highest participation rate (77%) and the highest employment rate (71%).
- Women had the lowest participation rate (66%) and the lowest employment rate (63%) of all labour force components in the region.

2.1.3 Dufferin

Chart 9
Composition of Dufferin Labour Force



- Dufferin County had a lower unemployment rate (4.3%) than did the local board area as a whole (4.8%).
- Recent Immigrants and Youth had the highest unemployment rates of all labour force components at 11.9% and 11.2% respectively.
- The unemployment rate of Visible Minorities in Dufferin County (9%) was higher than the unemployment rate of Visible Minorities in the PHD area (7%)
- Francophones had the highest participation rate (80%) and the highest employment rate (78%)
- Recent immigrants had the lowest participation rate (65.6%) and the lowest employment rate (57.8%).



3.0 SURVEY FINDINGS

A quantitative, Web-based survey was undertaken by the Board to assess the perspectives of trends, opportunities and priorities of stakeholders in the Peel Halton Dufferin area. Over 400 stakeholders were invited to participate in this survey, of who 197 responded. A more limited, qualitative survey was also undertaken with key stakeholders, which consisted of personal interviews, to discuss experiences and perceptions of key trends and issues.

3.1 Quantitative Survey Results

Based on an analysis of the 2001 Census data specific to the PHD area as well as a variety of pertinent labour market and demographic studies, the Board identified a number of key labour market issues. Community stakeholder input was requested to validate and prioritize this preliminary labour market information, and additional input was invited.



Each issue was summarized with relevant background information provided. Respondents were asked to rate each issue on a scale of 1-5, with 1 representing “very low priority” and 5 representing “very high priority.” In summarizing the priorities, the following formula was used:

- Low = Very Low (1) + Low (2)
- Medium = Medium (3)
- High = High (4) + Very High (5)
- Percentages are calculated according to the total number of responses. Some percentages do not add to 100 as some stakeholders chose to skip the question.

In analyzing the information, certain filters were included to separate responses by stakeholder groups, which consisted of the following:

Stakeholder Groups*

Labour Union**	Business Employer	Community Agency	Education Training	Gov't	Other	Skipped Question	Total # *	Total # of Survey Respondents*
2	26	46	49	31	20	41	215	197

* **Note:** 18 respondents self-identified as belonging to > 1 stakeholder group.

** As there were only two labour/union respondents to the online survey, a special effort was made to interview more labour/union stakeholders, and this statistical under-representation has been compensated for in the personal interviews (qualitative findings).



Table 1
Summary of Responses
By All Regions and Stakeholder Groups

Legend

Highest Priority Issues

Priority (% of Total Respondents)				
Issue	Low	Med	High	Avg. (Max 5)
OLDER WORKERS				
FACT: The labour force of the PHD region is aging. By 2011, it is estimated that 41% of Canada's working-age population will be between the ages of 45-64, up from 29% in 1991. Data suggests that the PHD labour force is aging more quickly than the provincial labour force.				
Older workers face systemic barriers to hiring and retention of employment. Promotion of anti-discrimination policies with respect to older workers is needed.	6	35	58	3.73
It is important for all workers to upgrade their skills on a continual basis in order to remain productive. There are systemic barriers to older workers receiving training.	7	31	62	3.72
With the retirement of large segments of the workforce, there will be an increased need to facilitate the recognition of credentials of foreign workers as immigrants will become a source of skilled labour in the next decade. (* Note: This also relates to immigrants.)	5	15	80	4.17
The aging workforce will not impact all segments of the economy in the same way. There is a need to gain a greater understanding of the impact of retiring workers on the economy specific to PHD.	6	28	66	3.77
IMMIGRANTS AND FOREIGN TRAINED PROFESSIONALS				
FACT: Workforce growth relies on immigration. In 2001 immigration accounted for over 70% of workforce growth. Peel Municipality, in particular, welcomes a significant number of immigrants, with immigrants making up approximately 43% of the resident population of the area.				
It has been estimated that \$4-6 billion is lost annually to the Canadian economy as a result of unrecognized qualifications and that immigrants are among those who experience the most serious problems in achieving recognition of their learning. There are services in Ontario which evaluate foreign secondary and postsecondary qualifications. Many employers and immigrants are not aware of the Ontario credentials assessment agency. Promotion of these services to employers and immigrants is of growing importance.	3	14	82	4.17
Immigrants leave their home countries without accurate information about the occupational practices they will face when they come to Canada. Preparation and counseling of immigrants in their home country about these realities is an important requirement.	6	10	84	4.22
Computer and occupation-specific language skills are useful in helping foreign trained professionals obtain a job that makes use of their skills. Promotion of such community based training programs can facilitate the new immigrants' integration into the workforce and community	4	24	72	3.93
Promotion and development of programs to facilitate new immigrants gaining knowledge of Canadian workplace practices can significantly enhance the integration of new immigrant workers and entrepreneurs into the work community. These workplace practices include: (a) Code of ethics (b) Canadian legislated requirements (c) employment standards (d) occupational health and safety legislation (e) confidentiality expectations (f) organizational structures (g) protocols for communication with colleagues and clients.	2	22	76	4.02



Issue	Low	Med	High	Avg. (Max 5)
SKILLED TRADES				
FACT: Skilled worker recruitment, retention and skills development will be critical issues in the PHD labour market in the years ahead. Scarcity of skilled trades people will become more acute over the next decade in key sectors such as manufacturing, which is anticipating the retirement of 400,000 manufacturing sector workers in the next fifteen years.				
Negative attitudes on the part of youth, teachers and parents towards apprenticeship have resulted in a declining interest in youth to pursue careers in skilled trades. Increasing youth awareness of career opportunities in the various skilled trades is an important component in the strategy to address issues arising from today's graying workforce.	2	15	84	4.23
Lack of exposure in high school to trades work experience and industrial arts programs limits interest among students to pursue careers in skilled trades. Efforts within secondary schools to support and promote trades through counseling information programs and enhanced teacher awareness are necessary.	2	13	85	4.21
Low levels of support and limited participation in apprenticeship training by employers is a significant barrier to the placement of apprentices. Programs which promote evidence of positive return on investment in apprenticeship are needed to encourage employers to recognize the benefits of apprenticeship as a skills-development measure.	0.5	15	84	4.29
Participation by women in apprenticeship programs is growing at a rate twice that of their male counterparts. However evidence suggests that women continue to face systemic barriers to successful completion of apprenticeship programs and job placement. It is important to develop diversity training at the workplace level to promote increased participation by women in skilled trades and apprenticeship programs.	0.5	17	80	4.12
LITERACY				
FACT: As the "knowledge-based" economy becomes increasingly widespread, lack of acceptable literacy skills has become a major barrier to gaining and retaining employment. Illiteracy is a barrier for an estimated 20% of the Canadian population who lack basic literacy skills, and an estimated 40% who lack adequate literacy skills to function safely and effectively in the work environment.				
Peel, in particular, which receives a major percentage of Ontario's new immigrants annually, has experienced increasing demand to facilitate literacy programs focused on new immigrants to enable their integration into the work force and the community.	6	24	70	3.92
The number of youth at risk who lack basic literacy skills is increasing. The new "zero tolerance" policy and more rigorous curriculum which have been introduced into Ontario secondary schools in recent years have increased the number of youth who require literacy training but are not being served by any existing educational or social services structure.	4	18	78	4.10
Literacy agencies are receiving more clients who have barriers to learning. It is estimated that 30% of adult literacy learners in Ontario have learning disabilities which were not addressed or supported sufficiently within the school system. Agencies that provide literacy training to adults in PHD do not have sufficient funds to provide the resources required to address adults with learning disabilities.	5	26	68	3.95
Technological advances in the work place have driven demand for literacy skills to a broader spectrum of the work force. Skilled trades which previously required Grade 10 or equivalent are now demanding Grade 12. Literacy programs focused on upgrading for apprenticeship in skilled trades now must provide increased levels of training to accommodate increased levels demanded.	2	25	72	3.99
The majority of employers, social policy planners and community stakeholders are not aware of the extent of the literacy issue, nor of the barriers that lack of literacy brings to an individual's ability to function in the work environment. Increased awareness would be a significant benefit to expanding participation of literacy skills training in the workplace.	5	35	59	3.77





Issue	Low	Med	High	Avg. (Max 5)
MENTAL HEALTH				
FACT: Disability costs due to employee mental illness are increasing. Mental health claims have overtaken cardiovascular disease as the fastest growing category of disability costs in Canada. Negative stereotypes about mental illness often encourage workers to conceal symptoms and not to seek early treatment, thereby increasing the risk of long-term disability				
Early detection and treatment of mental health problems reduces the likelihood that the mental health problem will become chronic. Many employers do not recognize the significant benefits such as reduced absenteeism and higher productivity to be gained from investment in employee programs for early detection and appropriate treatment of mental health illness. Promoting mental health workplace programs and policies will benefit workers and employers.	7	32	61	3.82
PRIORITY ISSUES				
I believe the following additional issues are high priority and need to be addressed by the labour market partners, including government, employers, workers' representatives and community organizations.				
There is a need:				
• To promote development of effective strategies and publicize best practices for recruitment of older workers.	3	37	60	3.84
• To promote skills training opportunities designed specifically for older workers.	4	34	62	3.80
• To promote to employers the realizable benefits to be gained by training of older workers.	5	27	68	3.88
• To undertake sector specific studies and analysis of the sectors which are major employers in PHD to gain a greater understanding of the impact of retiring workers on the economy of PHD.	11	29	60	3.70
• To develop occupational fact sheets relevant to PHD labour market requirements which would include up-to-date information on licensing requirements and labour market conditions in PHD that could be made available via the Internet for new and prospective immigrants.	9	26	65	3.77
• To promote to PHD employers and immigrants the Ontario accreditation facilities to support immigrants to obtain appropriate recognition of their foreign credentials.	4	16	81	4.09
• To promote community-based computer and occupation-specific language skills training designed specifically for new immigrants to facilitate their integration into the workplace and community.	6	31	64	3.82
• To promote and develop programs to facilitate new immigrants to gain knowledge of Canadian workplace practices such as Canadian work ethics relevant legislation work protocols and practices.	5	27	69	3.92
• For programs which promote careers in skilled trades and apprenticeship programs to change perceptions and attitudes about apprenticeship and trades among the youth students and parents.	3	15	81	4.13
• To develop programs for PHD high schools teachers and counselors to promote the advantages of skilled trades careers.	4	19	78	4.03
• To develop programs for PHD employers to promote advantages of supporting apprenticeship-training programs.	2	20	77	4.18
• To develop diversity training programs for workplace levels to support increased participation by women in apprenticeship programs and skilled trades.	6	28	65	3.79
• To promote awareness of literacy skills training and best practices to employers and other community stakeholders.	6	32	61	3.76
• To facilitate the development of workplace literacy training programs.	11	35	54	3.59
• To facilitate the development of literacy programs designed for youth at risk in apprenticeship training.	6	31	62	3.85

Issue	Low	Med	High	Avg. (Max 5)
PRIORITY ISSUES (Con't)				
• To facilitate the development of ESL training programs specifically for new immigrants.	10	28	62	3.77
• To identify community-based initiatives to address literacy skills training for adults with learning disabilities.	6	33	61	3.72
• To promote and facilitate the development of programs to promote benefits of mental health awareness and treatment programs to employers and workers.	7	35	58	3.72

As Table 1 indicates, the vast majority of respondents considered all issues outlined to be of medium to high priority. Using an arbitrary indicator of an issue average “4” or above (out of 5), the issues of greatest concern to all regions and stakeholder groups are those relating to Immigrants and Foreign Trained Professionals, Skilled Trades, and Youth and Literacy. All other issues and priorities, however, also ranked highly across the region.

The data were also sorted by region within the PHD Training Board area. A summary of the key findings is outlined below in Table 2, which breaks out the issues and priorities by region within the Training Board area.

Table 2
Summary of Responses by Region

Legend

Highest Priority Issues

Regional Average (Max. 5)			
Issue	Peel	Halton	Dufferin
OLDER WORKERS			
Older workers face systemic barriers to hiring and retention of employment. Promotion of anti-discrimination policies with respect to older workers is needed.	3.79	3.77	3.09
It is important for all workers to upgrade their skills on a continual basis in order to remain productive. There are systemic barriers to older workers receiving training.	3.81	3.46	3.45
With the retirement of large segments of the workforce, there will be an increased need to facilitate the recognition of credentials of foreign workers as immigrants will become a source of skilled labour in the next decade. (* Note: This also relates to immigrants.)	4.44	4.13	3.36
The aging workforce will not impact all segments of the economy in the same way. There is a need to gain a greater understanding of the impact of retiring workers on the economy specific to PHD.	3.81	3.74	3.64
IMMIGRANTS AND FOREIGN TRAINED PROFESSIONALS			
It has been estimated that \$4-6 billion is lost annually to the Canadian economy as a result of unrecognized qualifications and that immigrants are among those who experience the most serious problems in achieving recognition of their learning. There are services in Ontario, which evaluate foreign secondary and postsecondary qualifications. Many employers and immigrants are not aware of the Ontario credentials assessment agency. Promotion of these services to employers and immigrants is of growing importance.	4.44	4.0	3.67
Immigrants leave their home countries without accurate information about the occupational practices they will face when they come to Canada. Preparation and counseling of immigrants in their home country about these realities is an important requirement.	4.41	3.98	3.83





Issue	Peel	Halton	Dufferin
IMMIGRANTS AND FTPS (Con't)			
Computer and occupation-specific language skills are useful in helping foreign trained professionals obtain a job that makes use of their skills. Promotion of such community based training programs can facilitate the new immigrants' integration into the workforce and community	4.08	3.70	3.92
Promotion and development of programs to facilitate new immigrants gaining knowledge of Canadian workplace practices can significantly enhance the integration of new immigrant workers and entrepreneurs into the work community. These workplace practices include: (a) Code of ethics (b) Canadian legislated requirements (c) employment standards (d) occupational health and safety legislation (e) confidentiality expectations (f) organizational structures (g) protocols for communication with colleagues and clients.	4.14	3.98	3.67
SKILLED TRADES			
Negative attitudes on the part of youth, teachers and parents towards apprenticeship have resulted in a declining interest in youth to pursue careers in skilled trades. Increasing youth awareness of career opportunities in the various skilled trades is an important component in the strategy to address issues arising from today's graying workforce.	4.26	4.0	4.42
Lack of exposure in high school to trades work experience and industrial arts programs limits interest among students to pursue careers in skilled trades. Efforts within secondary schools to support and promote trades through counseling information programs and enhanced teacher awareness are necessary.	4.26	4.08	4.42
Low levels of support and limited participation in apprenticeship training by employers is a significant barrier to the placement of apprentices. Programs which promote evidence of positive return on investment in apprenticeship are needed to encourage employers to recognize the benefits of apprenticeship as a skills-development measure.	4.26	4.30	4.42
Participation by women in apprenticeship programs is growing at a rate twice that of their male counterparts. However evidence suggests that women continue to face systemic barriers to successful completion of apprenticeship programs and job placement. It is important to develop diversity training at the workplace level to promote increased participation by women in skilled trades and apprenticeship programs.	4.18	4.10	4.33
LITERACY			
Peel, in particular, which receives a major percentage of Ontario's new immigrants annually, has experienced increasing demand to facilitate literacy programs focused on new immigrants to enable their integration into the work force and the community.	4.15	3.68	3.64
The number of youth at risk who lack basic literacy skills is increasing. The new "zero tolerance" policy and more rigorous curriculum which have been introduced into Ontario secondary schools in recent years have increased the number of youth who require literacy training but are not being served by any existing educational or social services structure.	4.11	4.05	4.25
Literacy agencies are receiving more clients who have barriers to learning. It is estimated that 30% of adult literacy learners in Ontario have learning disabilities which were not addressed or supported sufficiently within the school system. Agencies that provide literacy training to adults in PHD do not have sufficient funds to provide the resources required to address adults with learning disabilities.	3.99	3.85	4.17
Technological advances in the work place have driven demand for literacy skills to a broader spectrum of the work force. Skilled trades which previously required Grade 10 or equivalent are now demanding Grade 12. Literacy programs focused on upgrading for apprenticeship in skilled trades now must provide increased levels of training to accommodate increased levels demanded.	4.03	3.85	4.25
The majority of employers, social policy planners and community stakeholders are not aware of the extent of the literacy issue, nor of the barriers that lack of literacy brings to an individual's ability to function in the work environment. Increased awareness would be a significant benefit to expanding participation of literacy skills training in the workplace.	3.86	3.70	3.91

Issue	Peel	Halton	Dufferin
MENTAL HEALTH			
Early detection and treatment of mental health problems reduces the likelihood that the mental health problem will become chronic. Many employers do not recognize the significant benefits such as reduced absenteeism and higher productivity to be gained from investment in employee programs for early detection and appropriate treatment of mental health illness. Promoting mental health workplace programs and policies will benefit workers and employers.	3.74	3.90	4.25
PRIORITY ISSUES			
I believe the following additional issues are high priority and need to be addressed by the labour market partners, including government, employers, workers' representatives and community organizations.			
There is a need:			
To promote development of effective strategies and publicize best practices for recruitment of older workers.	3.82	3.95	4.0
To promote skills training opportunities designed specifically for older workers.	3.81	3.79	3.83
To promote to employers the realizable benefits to be gained by training of older workers.	3.97	3.95	3.58
To undertake sector specific studies and analysis of the sectors which are major employers in PHD to gain a greater understanding of the impact of retiring workers on the economy of PHD.	3.82	3.64	3.42
To develop occupational fact sheets relevant to PHD labour market requirements which would include up-to-date information on licensing requirements and labour market conditions in PHD that could be made available via the Internet for new and prospective immigrants.	3.90	3.54	3.50
To promote to PHD employers and immigrants the Ontario accreditation facilities to support immigrants to obtain appropriate recognition of their foreign credentials.	4.26	3.95	3.42
To promote community-based computer and occupation-specific language skills training designed specifically for new immigrants to facilitate their integration into the workplace and community.	4.04	3.51	3.83
To promote and develop programs to facilitate new immigrants to gain knowledge of Canadian workplace practices such as Canadian work ethics relevant legislation work protocols and practices.	4.09	3.82	3.67
For programs which promote careers in skilled trades and apprenticeship programs to change perceptions and attitudes about apprenticeship and trades among the youth students and parents.	4.16	4.08	3.92
To develop programs for PHD high schools teachers and counselors to promote the advantages of skilled trades careers.	4.10	3.92	4.08
To develop programs for PHD employers to promote advantages of supporting apprenticeship-training programs.	4.10	4.26	4.33
To develop diversity training programs for workplace levels to support increased participation by women in apprenticeship programs and skilled trades.	3.82	3.82	3.83
To promote awareness of literacy skills training and best practices to employers and other community stakeholders.	3.92	3.54	3.67
To facilitate the development of workplace literacy training programs.	3.75	3.46	3.83
To facilitate the development of literacy programs designed for youth at risk in apprenticeship training.	3.96	3.85	3.92
To facilitate the development of ESL training programs specifically for new immigrants.	3.96	3.51	3.83
To identify community-based initiatives to address literacy skills training for adults with learning disabilities.	3.82	3.72	4.0
To promote and facilitate the development of programs to promote benefits of mental health awareness and treatment programs to employers and workers.	3.82	3.76	3.58
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	73	40	12



The stakeholder groups responding to the survey are broken down by region, as follows:

Respondent Stakeholder Groups by Region*

Region	Labour Union	Business Employer	Community Agency	Education Training	Government	Other
Peel	0	12	25	20	15	9
Halton	1	8	9	11	6	6
Dufferin	0	3	2	6	2	2

*Note: Several respondents self-identified as belonging to > 1 stakeholder group.

3.1.1 Stakeholder Group Issues and Priorities

The survey also showed that the key issues (with an average ranking of at least 4 out of 5) by Stakeholder Groups are as outlined below.

Table 3
Top Priority Issues by Stakeholder Group (All Regions)

Stakeholder Group						
Issue	Business Employer	Community Agency	Education Training	Govt	Labour	Other
OLDER WORKERS						
Older workers face systemic barriers to hiring and retention of employment. Promotion of anti-discrimination policies with respect to older workers is needed.	√				√	
It is important for all workers to upgrade their skills on a continual basis in order to remain productive. There are systemic barriers to older workers receiving training.					√	√
With the retirement of large segments of the workforce, there will be an increased need to facilitate the recognition of credentials of foreign workers as immigrants will become a source of skilled labour in the next decade. (* Note: This also relates to immigrants.)	√	√	√	√	√	√
The aging workforce will not impact all segments of the economy in the same way. There is a need to gain a greater understanding of the impact of retiring workers on the economy specific to PHD.						
IMMIGRANTS AND FOREIGN TRAINED PROFESSIONALS						
It has been estimated that \$4-6 billion is lost annually to the Canadian economy as a result of unrecognized qualifications and that immigrants are among those who experience the most serious problems in achieving recognition of their learning. There are services in Ontario, which evaluate foreign secondary and postsecondary qualifications. Many employers and immigrants are not aware of the Ontario credentials assessment agency. Promotion of these services to employers and immigrants is of growing importance.	√	√	√	√	√	√



Issue	Business Employer	Community Agency	Education Training	Govt	Labour	Other
IMMIGRANTS AND FTPS (Con't)						
Immigrants leave their home countries without accurate information about the occupational practices they will face when they come to Canada. Preparation and counseling of immigrants in their home country about these realities is an important requirement.		√	√	√	√	√
Computer and occupation-specific language skills are useful in helping foreign trained professionals obtain a job that makes use of their skills. Promotion of such community based training programs can facilitate the new immigrants' integration into the workforce and community		√	√			
Promotion and development of programs to facilitate new immigrants gaining knowledge of Canadian workplace practices can significantly enhance the integration of new immigrant workers and entrepreneurs into the work community. These workplace practices include: (a) Code of ethics (b) Canadian legislated requirements (c) employment standards (d) occupational health and safety legislation (e) confidentiality expectations (f) organizational structures (g) protocols for communication with colleagues and clients.		√	√	√		
SKILLED TRADES						
Negative attitudes on the part of youth, teachers and parents towards apprenticeship have resulted in a declining interest in youth to pursue careers in skilled trades. Increasing youth awareness of career opportunities in the various skilled trades is an important component in the strategy to address issues arising from today's graying workforce.	√	√	√	√	√	√
Lack of exposure in high school to trades work experience and industrial arts programs limits interest among students to pursue careers in skilled trades. Efforts within secondary schools to support and promote trades through counseling information programs and enhanced teacher awareness are necessary.	√	√	√	√	√	√
Low levels of support and limited participation in apprenticeship training by employers is a significant barrier to the placement of apprentices. Programs, which promote evidence of positive return on investment in apprenticeship, are needed to encourage employers to recognize the benefits of apprenticeship as a skills-development measure.		√	√	√	√	√
Participation by women in apprenticeship programs is growing at a rate twice that of their male counterparts. However evidence suggests that women continue to face systemic barriers to successful completion of apprenticeship programs and job placement. It is important to develop diversity training at the workplace level to promote increased participation by women in skilled trades and apprenticeship programs.		√	√	√	√	√



Issue	Business Employer	Community Agency	Education Training	Govt	Labour	Other
LITERACY						
Peel, in particular, which receives a major percentage of Ontario's new immigrants annually, has experienced increasing demand to facilitate literacy programs focused on new immigrants to enable their integration into the work force and the community.		√	√		√	
The number of youth at risk who lack basic literacy skills is increasing. The new "zero tolerance" policy and more rigorous curriculum which have been introduced into Ontario secondary schools in recent years have increased the number of youth who require literacy training but are not being served by any existing educational or social services structure.		√	√		√	√
Literacy agencies are receiving more clients who have barriers to learning. It is estimated that 30% of adult literacy learners in Ontario have learning disabilities, which were not addressed or supported sufficiently within the school system. Agencies that provide literacy training to adults in PHD do not have sufficient funds to provide the resources required to address adults with learning disabilities.		√	√		√	√
Technological advances in the work place have driven demand for literacy skills to a broader spectrum of the work force. Skilled trades, which previously required Grade 10 or equivalent, are now demanding Grade 12. Literacy programs focused on upgrading for apprenticeship in skilled trades now must provide increased levels of training to accommodate increased levels demanded.		√	√			√
The majority of employers, social policy planners and community stakeholders are not aware of the extent of the literacy issue, nor of the barriers that lack of literacy brings to an individual's ability to function in the work environment. Increased awareness would be a significant benefit to expanding participation of literacy skills training in the workplace.			√		√	√
MENTAL HEALTH						
Early detection and treatment of mental health problems reduces the likelihood that the mental health problem will become chronic. Many employers do not recognize the significant benefits such as reduced absenteeism and higher productivity to be gained from investment in employee programs for early detection and appropriate treatment of mental health illness. Promoting mental health workplace programs and policies will benefit workers and employers.		√				√
PRIORITY ISSUES						
I believe the following additional issues are high priority and need to be addressed by the labour market partners, including government, employers, workers' representatives and community organizations.						

Issue	Business Employer	Community Agency	Education Training	Govt	Labour	Other
There is a need:						
To promote development of effective strategies and publicize best practices for recruitment of older workers.	√					
To promote skills training opportunities designed specifically for older workers.					√	√
To promote to employers the realizable benefits to be gained by training of older workers.		√			√	
To undertake sector specific studies and analysis of the sectors which are major employers in PHD to gain a greater understanding of the impact of retiring workers on the economy of PHD.						√
To develop occupational fact sheets relevant to PHD labour market requirements which would include up-to-date information on licensing requirements and labour market conditions in PHD that could be made available via the Internet for new and prospective immigrants.						
To promote to PHD employers and immigrants the Ontario accreditation facilities to support immigrants to obtain appropriate recognition of their foreign credentials.		√	√	√	√	√
To promote community-based computer and occupation-specific language skills training designed specifically for new immigrants to facilitate their integration into the workplace and community.		√	√			
To promote and develop programs to facilitate new immigrants to gain knowledge of Canadian workplace practices such as Canadian work ethics relevant legislation work protocols and practices.		√	√			
For programs which promote careers in skilled trades and apprenticeship programs to change perceptions and attitudes about apprenticeship and trades among the youth students and parents.	√	√	√	√	√	√
To develop programs for PHD high schools teachers and counselors to promote the advantages of skilled trades careers.	√	√	√		√	√
To develop programs for PHD employers to promote advantages of supporting apprenticeship-training programs.	√	√	√	√		√
To develop diversity training programs for workplace levels to support increased participation by women in apprenticeship programs and skilled trades.						√
To promote awareness of literacy skills training and best practices to employers and other community stakeholders.			√		√	
To facilitate the development of workplace literacy training programs.			√			
To facilitate the development of literacy programs designed for youth at risk in apprenticeship training.		√	√			
To facilitate the development of ESL training programs specifically for new immigrants.		√	√			
To identify community-based initiatives to address literacy skills training for adults with learning disabilities.		√				
To promote and facilitate the development of programs to promote benefits of mental health awareness and treatment programs to employers and workers.		√				



3.2 Qualitative Survey Results

The Web-based survey invited participants to provide comments on innovative training and employment initiatives and to identify other high priority training and labour market issues in the area. Sixty people (30% of respondents) provided useful comments in this regard, particularly with respect to programs and agencies that are working to address key issues identified.

Older Workers

Several respondents recognized the value and lauded the work of:

- The Halton and Peel Professional Executive Network (“HAPPEN”), a networking support group focused on reducing the time required for older experienced managers, executives and business professionals to regain employment. This program is recognized by several stakeholders for its effectiveness in supporting older workers in transition.
- Skills Training and Reintegration Targeting Unemployed Professionals (“STARTUP”).



Immigrants and Foreign Trained Professionals

Several stakeholders supported the work of programs, agencies, and initiatives such as:

- Job Connect.
- COSTI's workshops on Canadian Workplace Culture offered to newcomers looking for job search assistance as well as life skills for immigrant women, which includes helping newcomers to understand the communications and cultural differences relating to business.
- ICNSS, a pilot agency with Citizenship and Immigration to develop enhanced language training curricula.
- CareerBridge.
- CLTA's on-site workplace training, including job-related language upgrading and training, training in Canadian workplace practices, cultural nuances, etc., and the Newcomer Information Centre.
- Co-op programs for foreign trained professionals.
- Adult learning programs to enhance newcomers' language skills, knowledge of the Canadian workplace and volunteer work experience through co-operative education programs for foreign-trained professionals, such as that offered by the Brian J. Fleming Catholic Adult Learning Centre and St. Gabriel (part of the Dufferin-Peel Catholic district School Board).
- Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters (CME) business cases for hiring internationally trained workers, which provide guidance and inspiration for businesses to hire and invest in new immigrants.



Youth

- Job Connect and Job Opportunities for Youth (JOY).
- Wage subsidy programs.
- Apprenticesearch.com, HIEC's award-winning website that helps connect employers and apprentices; profiles information and access points to the skilled trades for parents, students, youth, educators, etc.; and provides links to community partners with a role to play in the skilled trades.
- Pre-apprenticeship Training Program for Youth, offered by the YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington.
- CIBC Youthvision Program Pre-Apprenticeship Program Secondary Teen Education Program.

Skilled Trades

- Halton Apprenticeship Advisory Council for initiating the Honour Roll program recognizing employer excellent in support of skilled trades.
- Bay Area Science and Engineer Fair and Halton Skills Olympics.
- Halton Industry Education Council.
- Apprenticesearch.com.
- MTEC's workshops to orientate people to opportunities/occupations in the skilled trades and assistance with selection.
- Landscape Ontario's training programs for entry level positions.
- Center for Skills Development and Training's LINC, ESL, pre-apprenticeship training and career services programs.

Mental Health

- Mental Health Works, an employer training and awareness program with respect to mental health in the workplace.

3.3 Personal Interview Results

Several key stakeholders were contacted for in-depth interviews to obtain their opinions on the priority issues and trends they perceive in the community today. Thirteen comprehensive interviews have been completed to date. The issues were independently identified by the respondents. There is a close matching of issues to those outlined in the online survey. The major themes that emerged from this interview process are outlined below.

Skilled Trades

There are continuing concerns about shortages of people in the skilled trades, and the ability to attract young people to training and apprenticeship programs. Several stakeholders feel that good progress has been made in recent years to interest and involve youth, and the participation of young women has increased.

However, there is major concern about the shortage of companies willing to hire pre-apprentices and apprentices. This problem is particularly acute in the manufacturing sector. Many small firms are reluctant to hire apprentices, as employee loyalty tends to be weak. Large firms are reluctant to hire



apprentices due to high perceived costs.¹ Apprentices trained in smaller companies often leave once the training is completed to work for larger companies that pay higher salaries. There is a perception of corporate raiding of trained people, with the major beneficiaries being large companies. Although employee loyalty generally is seen to be weak, there is a perception that new immigrants have a higher sense of corporate loyalty, and are therefore considered to be of high value in terms of apprenticeship and other training provided by employers.

Although many companies continue to complain about the lack of skilled trades people, there is a strong perception that very few are willing to train them. Some stakeholders see this as a fault of business, reflecting short-term thinking, a lack of corporate leadership and short-sighted human resources planning and management.

Immigrants

Many significant stakeholders point to a need to invest in immigrants and foreign trained workers. Attempts are being made to promote more awareness of the mutual benefits (to employers and employees) of hiring and training new immigrants. There is widespread stakeholder concern, among business and training organizations, as to how to communicate most effectively with the business community on this, and other, key issues.

There is an increasing need for the recognition of foreign training credentials, and at least for some mechanism by which employers can standardize-test the skills of new immigrants. This process needs to be expedited, and immigrants need to be informed of the process. As an example, there are more new immigrants coming into programs in Oakville. They need special help to integrate them into the workforce in any capacity. There are cultural and communications barriers. They need enhanced language training, as well as community orientation assistance and work-related training.

Literacy

Literacy is a broad term that means different things to different people. Basic literacy does not seem to be a critical issue at this time, but **enhanced** literacy certainly is. There are perceptions that the business community is not aware of literacy issues in the workplace. Some large companies, considered model employers, are involved in lifelong learning and provide essential skills programs in-house. Emphasis is being placed on English as a second language (improving English skills in general), and programs to acclimatize new immigrants to the Canadian context: culture, social and workplace norms. Enhanced language training for new immigrants is now starting to be offered and is direly needed.

Youth at Risk

There are major concerns across the PHD area among all stakeholder groups about the high number of youths who do not complete high school, due to more rigorous curriculum requirements, zero tolerance policies, and other reasons. In an economy that increasingly requires



¹ It was reported that some large business associations value the cost of apprenticeship training much higher than do training institutions.



specialized knowledge, skills and training, there are no mid to high level jobs available to high school dropouts. The welfare and future of school dropouts are of serious concern. The need was identified to improve awareness about career pathways, as the educational system tends to be university-centric. Knowledge and communication of other options and alternative career choices and benefits need to be improved to provide youth with more choices. In addition, there needs to be more recognition of prior learning assessments and credentials received during the course of education, and the value of those accreditations in the workplace. Youth who do not complete high school need more guidance and servicing to help them make the transition to the workplace.

Concerns about the ability to access funding support programs for youth, including internship opportunities, youth in transition, and other needs, were also voiced by several stakeholders. The program application process, particularly at the federal level, is considered to be difficult, with onerous guidelines and restrictions in place. Community organizations involved in youth issues need assistance to cope with the requirements. Many needs are going unmet. Innovative ideas and trust are being sidelined or severely compromised. High levels of frustration and discouragement are being experienced by community organizations attempting to secure relevant program funding.

Mental Illness

There are also concerns about the effects of all types of mental illness, including those related to stress, on the workplace. Stress is a major issue in society today, and is affecting workplace performance and productivity. This problem is particularly acute with the unemployed, women and new immigrants. A more coordinated approach to providing mental health services to youth, adults, new immigrants and other segments of society, is required.

Other

Engaging Employers

Concerns were also expressed about the difficulty in communicating with, and engaging, industry in regard to labour force development issues and initiatives. There is a perceived need for more, and improved, dialogue among employers, educators and community organizations to improve understanding of industry's needs and to match employers to relevant organizations capable of addressing identified issues. There is a feeling that business needs to become more engaged in the entire labour force development process.

Community Consultations

The desire for more community consultations and better communications, within and between regions, was identified. Such consultations will ensure that all relevant stakeholders: (a) know what already exists in the community, what the “best practices” are, and what does not need to be duplicated or re-invented; (b) share ideas and create synergies that lead to the development and implementation of solutions; and (c) understand what initiatives have been funded recently, and therefore what is “funding-worthy.” There was also an expressed need for a community program/initiative audit that outlines all programs and initiatives that exist, by region, related to labour force development and issues.



Regional Issues

Some stakeholders, particularly outside of Peel Region, feel that broad community studies and consultations tend to focus on the issues prevalent in Peel, and do not reflect the situation and needs in their particular region. Each of the regions is distinct from the others, and the regional distinctions tend to be obscured in geographically broad-based studies.

4.0 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING

The community consultation meeting was attended by 74 key stakeholders. The meeting outlined and verified the findings of the primary and secondary source research analyses, and established key priorities and specific actions that can be taken by leading stakeholder organizations to address identified issues.



At the time of conference registration, participants were asked to choose the issue area they would like to join for focus group discussions. There were seven issue areas established in advance for the focus group discussions:

- Older “Experienced” Workers
- Immigrants and Foreign Trained Professionals
- Skilled Trades
- Literacy
- Mental Health
- Youth at Risk
- Other

Following the PowerPoint presentation, and providing the opportunity for stakeholders to identify other issues, participants were formed into their focus groups. Each focus group was led by a facilitator, who had been briefed in advance on the structure, methodology and session goals. Each group then reported to entire audience in a plenary session, highlighting the major issues and suggested solutions.

Also at the time of registration, each participant was given three red stickers to mark three solutions/activities that they believe to be the most important to be actioned in 2004/2005, along with two yellow stickers to record their name/organization and post to activities for which they would like to be the **lead** organization, and three green stickers to record their name/organization



and post to activities in they would like to **partner**. Following the presentations by all focus group/workshop leaders, the issues were taped to the walls of the room. Participants were then invited to use their stickers to identify key issues and those which they would be willing to lead or partner on to take action and work towards a solution.

The Trends, Opportunities and Priorities (TOP) Planning Charts, outlined below, reflect the results of the Web-based survey, the personal interviews and, most importantly, the Community Consultation Meeting. It is clear that, based on all of the research, there are major issues with respect to Immigrants and Foreign Trained Professionals, Skilled Trades, Literacy, Youth, Older Workers and Business Engagement. More study is required in each issue area to achieve the degree of specificity demanded by the TOP process.

The Peel Halton Dufferin Training Board recommends that task groups be formed related to each issue area identified, involving the lead partner and willing participants identified, to examine the issues in greater detail and devise a detailed plan of action with timelines and reporting accountability.



4.1 Key Issues Identified

The following key issues have been distilled on the basis of the Web-based survey results, personal interviews, as well as the community consultation meeting.

ISSUE: SUPPORT FOR IMMIGRANTS AND FOREIGN TRAINED PROFESSIONALS

Workforce growth relies on immigration. In 2001 immigration accounted for over 70% of workforce growth. Peel Municipality, in particular, welcomes a significant number of immigrants, with immigrants making up about 43% of the resident population of the area.

There is an urgent need to better integrate immigrants and foreign trained professionals into the Canadian/regional workforce at levels that suit their training and experience.

PRIORITY: HIGH

NEXT STEP/PROPOSED ACTION

- Promote the recognition of the credentials of foreign workers by means of a marketing and awareness campaign.
- Educate employers and immigrants about the existing services that evaluate foreign qualifications. Form an employer consortium to enable a focal point for awareness campaign.
- Ensure Immigration Canada personnel abroad prepare and counsel immigrants in their home countries about Canadian occupational practices.
- Promote and develop programs to help new immigrants gain knowledge of Canadian workplace practices.
- Advocate the development of incentive funding to employers to provide work experience, and encourage mentoring and volunteer placements.

LEAD PARTNERS

Center for Language Training & Assessment

PARTICIPANTS

Audmax Inc., Brampton Neighbourhood Services & Resource Centre; Caledon Community Services; Catholic Cross Cultural Services; Dufferin Peel Adult Learning Center (St. Gabriel Site); Job Skills; John Howard Society of Peel Halton; Sheridan College.

TIMELINES

2-4 months

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Better employer understanding of the skills and training of immigrants and foreign trained professionals; better evaluation and hiring practices.
- A greater number of job placements.



ISSUE: SHORTAGE OF SKILLED TRADES

Skilled worker recruitment, retention and skills development will be critical issues in the PHD labour market in the years ahead. Scarcity of skilled trades people will become more acute over the next decade in key sectors such as manufacturing, which is anticipating the retirement of 400,000 manufacturing sector workers in the next fifteen years.

There is a need for more skilled trades people in the workforce, to reduce barriers to youth and to encourage more employers to hire apprentices.

PRIORITY: HIGH

NEXT STEP/PROPOSED ACTION

- Increase youth awareness of career opportunities in skilled trades by exposing them in the school system to benefits and opportunities, and enhancing teacher and counselor awareness.
- Ensure stakeholders better understand the details of employer tax credits to hire apprentices and, if appropriate, encourage more employers to hire apprentices through support for tax credits
- Increase awareness of short and long-term investment in training by forming an employer consortium to advocate effectively on hiring apprentices and increasing marketing/awareness of the competitive advantages of training. This includes using Economic Development Offices and local Industry Education Council and industry/business associations to coordinate and share best practises.
- Prepare a toolkit for employers on how to get involved in training opportunities, and the benefits to be realized.
- Promote the participation of women in skilled trades through workplace diversity training.

LEAD PARTNERS

Halton Business Development; Halton Industry Education Council, Sheridan College (Skilled Trades)

PARTICIPANTS

Caledon Community Services; Centre for Skills Development & Training Employer Liaison & Information; Halton Business Development; Georgian College Dufferin County; Job Skills; Peel Halton District School Board; John Howard Society of Peel-Halton; Sheridan College; YMCA.

TIMELINES

2-4 months

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- More youth entering skilled trades.
- More employers hiring youth and apprentices.
- More women entering skilled trades.



ISSUE: LITERACY

As the “knowledge-based” economy becomes increasingly widespread, lack of acceptable literacy skills has become a major barrier to gaining and retaining employment. Illiteracy is, according to some sources, a barrier for an estimated 20% of the Canadian population who lack basic literacy skills, and an estimated 40% who lack adequate (or enhanced) literacy skills to function safely and effectively in the workplace.

There are increasing numbers of youth and immigrants/foreign trained professionals requiring basic and enhanced literacy skills and training to meet the growing labour demand. Using level of education attained as a rough proxy for literacy, there are disproportionately high percentages of Visible Minorities, Immigrants and Francophones who have less than grade 9 education (7.1%, 7.0%, 6.0% respectively), compared to other labour force components.

PRIORITY: MEDIUM

NEXT STEP/PROPOSED ACTION

- Encourage HRSDC to emphasize literacy and skills training.
- Take advantage of the Movement for Literacy of Canada's Literacy Action Day to lobby and educate locally, using the local media, Boards of Trade and focusing on what business, government and the community can do.
- Literacy programs to integrate new immigrants into the work force and community.
- Funding programs for adults with learning disabilities.
- Advocate continuing education programs in Francophone school boards in South-Central Ontario.

LEAD PARTNERS

Peel Halton Dufferin Adult Learning Network

PARTICIPANTS

Sheridan College; Peel Adult Learning Center; Sheridan College LBC/CS; Georgian College, Dufferin County; Caledon Community Services; PHD Training Board; Le College du Savoir; Peel Adult Learning Center.

TIMELINES

2-4 months

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Higher levels of literacy among Youth, Visible Minorities, Immigrants/foreign trained professionals and Francophones.



ISSUE: YOUTH AT RISK (15-30 years of age)

The number of youth at risk who lack basic literacy skills is increasing. The new “zero tolerance” policy and more rigorous curriculum which have been introduced into Ontario secondary schools in recent years have increased the number of youth who require literacy training but are not being served by an existing educational or social services structure.

There are growing numbers of youth who do not have the literacy, skills and training required to participate meaningfully in the knowledge-based economy.

PRIORITY: MEDIUM-HIGH

NEXT STEP/PROPOSED ACTION

- Resurrect the Peel Halton Dufferin Youth Council
- Initiate a targeted public awareness strategy and campaign
- Establish a Peel Industry Education Council

LEAD PARTNERS

Halton Industry Education Council; YMCA Youth at Risk Program

PARTICIPANTS

Audmax Inc.; Center for Education & Training; Community Youth Services; Georgian College; Job Skills; John Howard Society of Peel Halton; Peel District School Board; Region of Peel, Social Services; YMCA.

TIMELINES

2-4 months

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Improved levels of literacy among youth
- Council(s) to address youth issues
- Increased public awareness



ISSUE: AGING WORKFORCE

The labour force of the PHD region is aging. By 2011, it is estimated that 41% of Canada's working age population will be between the ages of 45-64, up from 29% in 1991. Data suggests that the PHD labour force is aging more quickly than the provincial labour force.

Older/experienced workers are the larger (and growing) part of the PHD workforce. Special initiatives and programs are required to retain, re-employ and re-invest in experienced workers.

PRIORITY: MEDIUM-HIGH

NEXT STEP/PROPOSED ACTION

- Develop strategies and publicize best practices for the recruitment of older workers. Build employer awareness of issues related to "experienced" workers.
- Promote anti-discrimination policies.
- Develop programs and funding for people re-entering the workforce, and special funding programs for experienced workers.
- Offer funding incentives for employers to hire older workers.
- Conduct a study on issues related to experienced workers.

LEAD PARTNERS

Centre for Education & Training; Pro Training Ltd.

PARTICIPANTS

Brampton Neighbourhood Services & Resource Centre; Caledon Community Services; Centre for Language Training & Assessment; Halton & Peel professional Executive Network.

TIMELINES

3-6 months.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Programs and funding are available to support initiatives related to supporting older workers in the workforce.
- A study is conducted to investigate this issue in greater depth and develop recommendations based on research.
- Employers become more sensitive to the value of older workers and retain/retrain more and use them productively.



ISSUE: MENTAL HEALTH

Disability costs due to employee mental illness are increasing. Mental health claims have overtaken cardiovascular disease as the fastest growing category of disability costs in Canada. Negative stereotypes about mental illness often encourage workers to conceal symptoms and not to seek early treatment, thereby increasing the risk of long-term disability.

Many employers do not recognize the significant benefits to be gained from investment in employee programs for early detection and appropriate treatment of mental health illness.

PRIORITY: LOW

NEXT STEP/PROPOSED ACTION

- Promote mental health workplace programs and policies in the workplace by producing and distributing information (e.g., brochure) on the effect of mental health in the workplace - particularly problems related to common problems such as depression, addiction and grief.

LEAD PARTNERS

Centre for Language Training & Assessment

PARTICIPANTS

TIMELINES

2-4 months

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Increased employer awareness of mental health issues and their effect on workplace productivity, and of the support programs and systems that are available to employers and workers.



ISSUE: BUSINESS/EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Stakeholders find it difficult to communicate effectively with employers to define and discuss key labour force issues and solutions. Without their engagement in the process, little progress can be made.

PRIORITY: HIGH

NEXT STEP/PROPOSED ACTION

Determine strategy and best practices for stakeholders to communicate with and engage employers effectively in the identification/awareness of key labour force issues and in devising solutions which the business community can support.

LEAD PARTNERS

TBD by the Peel Halton Dufferin Training Board

PARTICIPANTS

Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters; Halton Industry Education Council; The Bay Area Learning Centre.

TIMELINES

2-4 months

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Greater business involvement in labour force-related issues and solutions, leading to meaningful results and resolution of issues.



5.0 STUDY REFERENCES

Documents and Sites

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Organizations

Audmax Inc. Maxcine Telfer.

Burlington Economic Development Corporation. Cindy Porter

Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters. Mena Falcone Johnstone, Director, HR Policy.

City of Mississauga. Bonnie Dowhaniuk, Business Development, and Susan Amring, Business Attraction.

Greater Dufferin Area Chamber of Commerce. Waldo Henderson.

Halton Industry Education Council. Kelly Hoey, Executive Director.

Human Resources Development Canada. Al Marco.

Labour Action Centre. Pat Wright, Executive Director.



PHD Adult Learning Network. Michael Johnny, Executive Director.

Region of Peel. Robert Freeman, Community Development Officer, Homelessness & Housing Initiatives.

Sheridan College. Don Wiles, Associate Dean, Science & Technology Apprenticeship Training.

The Bay Area Learning Centre. Kathy Mills, Executive Director.

The Regional Municipality of Halton. Elaine Holding, Business Development Officer.



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Peel-Halton-Dufferin Training Board

La Commission de formation
de la main-d'oeuvre de
Peel-Halton-Dufferin

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