

# 2024-2025



# LOCAL LABOUR MARKET PLAN







## OUR MISSION

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To work collaboratively with community partners on the creation of innovative workforce development solutions that meet local labour market needs.

The Labour Market Group of Renfrew and Lanark (LMG) represents one of 26 workforce planning areas in the province of Ontario. Funded by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLTSD), we work to provide accurate and timely labour market information to employers, job seekers and organizations that use labour market data for strategic planning purposes. The group provides annual labour market reports that outline trends in the local labour force using statistical data from several sources, as well as intelligence gathered from local employers, economic development and employment agencies. We help facilitate community planning to address labour market issues and most importantly we partner with organizations and businesses to develop strategies that address the most pressing workforce development challenges in our region while also pursuing new opportunities. More information on our projects can be found on our website at [www.labourmarketgroup.ca](http://www.labourmarketgroup.ca).

## OUR VALUES

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**Caring   Respect   Integrity   Quality**



## OUR TEAM



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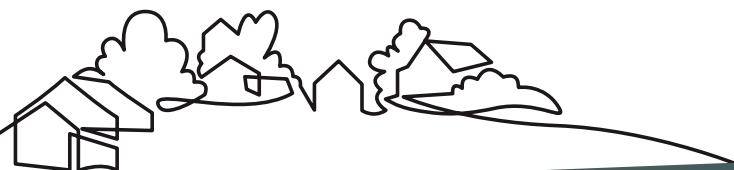
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Resiliency is probably the best word to describe the labour market in Lanark and Renfrew counties in the past year. While unemployment rates have been inching up, the region has not been met with significant layoffs. In fact, many employers have continued to hire despite economic uncertainty driven by a high cost of living, labour unrest, political uncertainty, changes in government policy on both sides of the Canadian-American border and housing shortages.

Inflation has been a major factor at bargaining tables where wages and job security have been negotiating issues. In Renfrew County, there were a number of strikes in 2024 including walkouts at Magellan Aerospace near Renfrew and at Garrison Petawawa. National and provincial work stoppages at Canada Post and LCBO stores impacted both regions and Renfrew County's Public and Catholic school boards were stricken by a prolonged contractual dispute with their school bus operators that kept buses off of local roadways for several weeks.

All of this is happening in the wake of a global pandemic that changed the way we work. It forced the door to open to more widely acceptable remote working arrangements, and now remote and hybrid working has created some relief to a decades long problem for Lanark and Renfrew counties. Businesses that can provide remote working opportunities

have a much larger labour pool to draw from, an effective response to combat an aging workforce and youth out-migration.

For employers who have front line positions that don't fit in the remote working sphere, more have turned to hiring temporary foreign workers or international students to fill these gaps. We spoke to many manufacturing and service sector employers who are now relying on foreign workers and international students to fill roles, but new federal government policy is curtailing this approach.

In January of 2024, the Immigration, Refugee, Citizenship Canada ministry announced it would cap the number of international students who would be eligible to study in Canada. IRCC subsequently narrowed what college programs international students could enroll in if they wanted to obtain a work permit upon graduating, focusing their choices on programs that aligned with national labour market needs.

Employers who have been hiring international graduates will be monitoring this situation closely, but already the impact is being felt across the post-secondary system. Several Ontario colleges have announced campus closures, layoffs and program suspensions as international enrolments are reduced. In Lanark County, Algonquin College has announced the planned closure of its Perth Campus in 2026, in part because of



the financial pressure resulting from the new restrictions on international student enrolments.

In our community consultations we continued to hear from stakeholders that many employers were still having difficulty hiring employees, but things were improving. This may be the result of more people being unemployed, creating more opportunities for employers to tap into a larger group of job seekers. If unemployment rates continue to rise, there will be more displaced workers exploring new opportunities.

We also heard about issues such as a shortage of childcare spaces, a higher number of employees struggling with mental health concerns and an ongoing concern about a lack of public transportation to support employee mobility. We learned about creative solutions being brought forward by employers such as offering flexible work shifts for parents, the increased use of artificial intelligence to solve labour shortages and incentives to attract employees such as signing bonuses and higher starting wages.

On the horizon is a change in government in the United States, Canada's largest trading partner. Concerns about hefty tariffs being placed on Canadian exports is worrisome to the manufacturing and soft wood lumber sectors which have relied on selling their products into the much larger American market. Also of concern for Renfrew County's

economy is the planned deployment of hundreds of soldiers from Garrison Petawawa to Latvia for six to 12-month tours of duty. Large deployments from the Base have historically impacted the local economy as it reduces the economic influence of the military until soldiers return home.



Artificial intelligence is becoming a tool that is being used more by businesses to improve efficiency. There are now several A.I. platforms to choose from and as people become more comfortable with the technology, it will continue to expand its influence on how we work. In the past year, the Labour Market Group of Renfrew and Lanark hosted two subject matter experts in this technology, Jared Lindzon and Amber MacArthur, both of whom provided advice to employers about the benefits and risks of utilizing artificial intelligence to improve organizational performance.



## REGION

Our Local Labour Market Planning report shares more information on the local intelligence that we gathered about the trends, opportunities and threats to our local labour market. This report is both a record of the conditions that exist in our region and a playbook for partnerships that will support labour market adjustment at a time when we are facing many challenges to recruit and retain the workforce that the region needs to ensure future economic and socio-economic prosperity.

We thank you for reading the report and would appreciate it if you would provide feedback to us so we can improve the report moving forward. Please take a few minutes to fill in our evaluation survey.

Thank you,  
The Labour Market Group  
of Renfrew and Lanark

[CLICK HERE TO TAKE OUR 2-MINUTE SURVEY](#)

*2024-2025 Local Labour Market Planning (LLMP) Report Satisfaction Survey*

## THE REGION WE SERVE AND HOW WE CAN HELP

The Labour Market Group of Renfrew and Lanark is a provincially funded research organization that supports local labour market planning. Administered by Algonquin College's Pembroke Campus, the LMG uses data to identify trends, opportunities, and threats to the region's labour force, and works collaboratively with many stakeholders to address labour market concerns.

Located in Eastern Ontario and bordering on the National Capital Region, the geographical footprint of Renfrew and Lanark counties covers a combined area of 10,679 km<sup>2</sup>, but the region is sparsely populated with significant distances between communities. The largest municipality in the region is the Town of

Petawawa, a growing military community that is now approaching a population of about 18,000 people, but most of the communities are smaller towns and villages that have populations of between 1,000 and 8,000 residents.

A drive through either county provides a picturesque perspective of all that the region has to offer, open spaces, rugged terrain, a network of lakes and rivers and an abundance of agricultural land and forests. At one time, farming was the key industry in the region, followed by manufacturing, but over time, technological advancements and global economic competition have changed the economic tapestry of the region. Many of the





New to the Frew event September 2024 in collaboration with Local Immigration Partnership of Renfrew and Lanark

factories that once operated in small towns like Renfrew and Perth have closed and places like Arnprior and Carleton Place are becoming bedroom communities of Ottawa, both experiencing a housing boom and population growth. Gradually, more newcomers are settling into the area, a necessity for a region that is rapidly aging, applying pressure on businesses and organizations to fill positions to meet their operational needs.

At the Labour Market Group, we monitor changes in the region's economy and its workforce. We pay attention to new initiatives that can drive labour market changes such as

the federal government's cap on international student enrolments and the activity levels of the Better Jobs Ontario program that aims to help people rejoin the workforce quickly by retraining in college programs that are less than one year in duration.

As a workforce planning group, we gather local intelligence on supply and demand issues when it comes to meeting the workforce needs of Lanark and Renfrew counties. We help build understanding and coordinate community responses, and we provide timely information to employers, municipalities and organizations that seek labour market information. The LMG is both a think tank and a facilitator that relies on data, local intelligence, and storytelling to help create a more unified effort to address workforce development needs in the rural areas that are part of its mandate.

*supporting  
local labour  
market  
planning*



## BACKGROUND

In the Province of Ontario, there are 26 Workforce Planning Boards, who are funded by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLTSD) to support labour market planning within the regions that they serve. Each board facilitates a local labour market planning (LLMP) process that identifies and prioritizes labour market issues. Once issues are identified, the Workforce Planning Board works with community partners, service providers and employers to develop a plan of action to meet the changing labour market needs of the community.

In place of a local planning board, the Labour Market Group of Renfrew and Lanark has delivered the LLMP process within our region since 2007. The LMG works collaboratively with dozens of service providers, community partners and employers. Each partner helps to provide effective local labour market intelligence and feedback on community projects so that we can better serve our communities within the region.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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

The work of the Labour Market Group of Renfrew and Lanark is administered by Algonquin College's Pembroke Campus. The LMG is a proud member of Workforce Planning Ontario.



## DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

### *Renfrew County – Demographic profile*

Renfrew County has a total population of 106,365 (2021 National Census). There are 9,045 people who identify as indigenous and 3,430 who identify as racialized. Between 2016 and 2021, there were 235 newcomers to Renfrew County.

The county is geographically the largest in Ontario, encompassing approximately 7,645 km<sup>2</sup>. Located in the heart of the Ottawa Valley, it stretches along the shores of the Ottawa River from the outskirts of Ottawa in the east to the northern tip of Algonquin Park's wilderness in the west. Renfrew County is home to over 900 pristine lakes and four major river systems. The county is highly diverse, ranging from wilderness areas, which make up half the county, to highly industrialized and developed areas with world class employers and facilities using the latest technology to deliver products and services.

The county hosts one of Canada's largest operational military bases in Garrison Petawawa and is also home to Canadian Nuclear Laboratories in Chalk River, a major employer in Ontario's robust nuclear sector.

The natural environment is unique and rural, lending itself to a wide range of outdoor and tourism activities. There are 18 municipalities in Renfrew County, including the independent City of Pembroke.

### *Lanark County – Demographic Profile*

Lanark County has a total population of 75,760 (2021 National Census). The indigenous population in Lanark County totals 3,245 while the racialized population sums up to 2,430. Lanark County's newcomer population between 2016 and 2021 totals 360 people.

The county is a geographically large and diverse region covering an area of 3,034 km<sup>2</sup>. Lanark County has two large rivers, the Mississippi and Rideau, which both flow into the Ottawa River. Located on the western boundary of Ottawa, Lanark County is the Maple Syrup Capital of Ontario. Comprised mostly of rural areas with pockets of urban activity, Lanark County advertises "a superior quality of life."

The county promotes having "the best of both worlds," having communities surrounded by the beauty of nature while still being only minutes away from world-class amenities in the nation's capital. There are nine municipalities in Lanark County, including the independent Town of Smiths Falls.



## RENFREW COUNTY

### Age Characteristics<sup>1</sup>:

Age groups	2021			2016			Change		
	Total	Men+	Women+	Total	Men+	Women+	Total	Men+	Women+
15+ population	89,515	44,555	44,955	85,920	42,555	43,365	4.18%	4.69%	3.67%
15 – 24	10,555	5,730	4,820	10,885	5,755	5,125	-3.03%	-0.43%	-5.95%
25 – 54	37,145	19,905	18,235	37,900	19,275	18,620	-1.99%	-1.91%	-2.07%
55+	41,815	18,840	19,955	37,135	17,510	19,625	12.60%	13.68%	11.62%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population

### Indigenous Identity and Racialized Population, 15+

Characteristics	2021			2016			Change		
	Total	Men+	Women+	Total	Men+	Women+	Total	Men+	Women+
Indigenous population	7,315	3,740	3,570	6,605	3,315	3,285	10.74%	12.82%	8.67%
Racialized population	2,655	1,295	1,360	1,935	955	980	37.20%	35.60%	38.77%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population

### Newcomers 15+

Age groups	Total Immigrants	2016-2021	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
15 to 24 years	205	25	0	0	0	0	10	15
25 to 44 years	1295	305	45	60	30	95	40	35
45 to 64 years	1705	45	10	20	15	0	0	0
65 years and over	2430	15	0	0	0	0	0	15

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population

## LANARK COUNTY

### Age Characteristics:

Age groups	2021			2016			Change		
	Total	Men+	Women+	Total	Men+	Women+	Total	Men+	Women+
15+ population	64,370	31,205	33,170	58,355	28,115	30,235	10.30%	10.99%	9.70%
15 – 24	6,745	3,490	3,260	7,085	3,680	3,405	-4.79%	-5.16%	-4.25%
25 – 54	25,520	12,605	12,925	24,345	11,830	12,525	4.82%	6.55%	3.19%
55+	32,095	15,115	16,985	26,915	12,605	14,310	19.24%	19.91%	18.69%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population

1. Statistics Canada uses a random rounding procedure to protect the confidentiality of Canadians' census data, which can result in apparent addition errors in community statistical profiles. This rounding affects

all values, leading to discrepancies that may distort the perceived total for categories such as 'Total population 15 years and over' and gender breakdowns. [Visit this website for more information.](#)





**Indigenous Identity and Racialized Population, 15+**

Characteristics	2021			2016			Change		
	Total	Men+	Women+	Total	Men+	Women+	Total	Men+	Women+
Indigenous population	2,645	1,225	1,415	2,090	1,015	1,075	26.55%	20.68%	31.62%
Racialized population	1,790	880	910	1,010	495	515	77.22%	77.77%	76.69%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population

**Newcomers 15+**

Age groups	Total Immigrants	2016-2021	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
15 to 24 years	135	50	35	0	0	15	0	0
25 to 44 years	820	220	60	30	35	45	35	15
45 to 64 years	1,550	80	35	15	0	30	0	0
65 years and over	2,320	10	0	0	0	10	0	0

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population

**MEDIAN AGE**

Region	Median Age (2016)	Median Age (2021)	DIFFERENCE
Renfrew County (3547)	44.8	45.2	0.4
Lanark County (3509)	48.2	48.8	0.6
Ontario	41.3	41.6	0.3

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population.

**Local Intelligence**

Renfrew and Lanark Counties are experiencing shifts in the labor market due to an aging population. Significant expansions in long-term care facilities are underway in the region, including new buildings in Deep River and Smiths Falls and an expansion of Marianhill in Pembroke. This growth has resulted in an increased demand for healthcare professionals

across various occupations, particularly Personal Support Workers. The shortage of PSW’s has prompted the county of Renfrew to hire temporary foreign workers to help staff its Bonnechere Manor facility in Renfrew, and has also resulted in Algonquin College’s Pembroke campus adding more intakes for the PSW program.



RENFREW COUNTY



LANARK COUNTY



POPULATION CHANGE

Census Division	2016	2021	Population change
Renfrew County (3547)	102,394	106,365	+3.9%
Lanark County (3509)	68,698	75,760	+10.3%
Ontario	13,448,494	14,223,942	+5.8%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population.

**Local Intelligence**

While the region is aging, there are pockets of Lanark and Renfrew counties that have younger families who are struggling with securing daycare for their children. In Lanark County, Mississippi Mills Council has approved the Childcare Expansion Project, adding 78 new spaces this fall through the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care program, increasing capacity from 136 to 214 spaces to

address a waitlist of 425 children. Meanwhile, the newly opened Stella and Tots Childcare Centre in Carleton Place provides 49 much-needed spaces, though demand is still high, with 1,200 children on the waitlist. In Pembroke, the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board has announced it will open a new daycare centre at our Lady of Lourdes school in 2026 with 48 spaces available for children.







Allison and Christie played jeopardy with students at the Option Skilled Trades Fair 2024

WELCOME



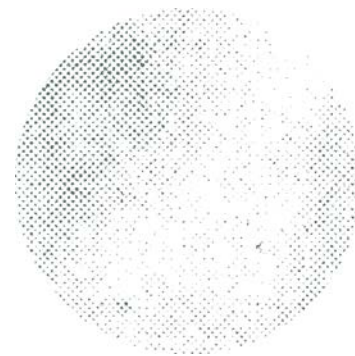
## MIGRATION CHARACTERISTICS

The following graph shows migration characteristics of Renfrew and Lanark counties compared to the province of Ontario between 2017 and 2022.

### Renfrew County

Age Group	In-migrants	Out-migrants	Net-migrants
0-17	4,722	4,319	403
18-24	2,953	2,529	424
25-44	8,979	8,260	719
45-64	5,586	2,996	2,590
65+	2,382	1,792	590
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,622</b>	<b>19,896</b>	<b>4,726</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Taxfiler



## Migration Characteristics 2017 to 2022

### In-Migrants

SCG	Place Name of SGC	Province of SGC	0-17 Years	18-24 Years	25-44 Years	45-65 Years	65+ Years	Total
3500	ONTARIO	ONTARIO	625,053	513,300	1,680,222	544,222	247,792	3,610,589
3547	RENFREW	ONTARIO	4,722	2,953	8,979	5,586	2,382	24,622

### Out-Migrants

SCG	Place Name of SGC	Province of SGC	0-17 Years	18-24 Years	25-44 Years	45-65 Years	65+ Years	Total
3500	ONTARIO	ONTARIO	501,858	341,084	1,132,919	502,543	236,972	2,715,376
3547	RENFREW	ONTARIO	4,319	2,529	8,260	2,996	1,792	19,896

### Net-Migrants

SCG	Place Name of SGC	Province of SGC	0-17 Years	18-24 Years	25-44 Years	45-65 Years	65+ Years	Total
3500	ONTARIO	ONTARIO	123,195	172,216	547,303	41,679	10,820	895,213
3547	RENFREW	ONTARIO	403	424	719	2,590	590	4,726

Source: Statistics Canada, Taxfiler



**Lanark County**

Age Group	In-migrants	Out-migrants	Net-migrants
0-17	3,869	2,453	1,416
18-24	1,659	1,808	-149
25-44	6,871	4,498	2,373
45-64	5,395	2,730	2,665
65+	3,038	1,758	1,280
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,832</b>	<b>13,247</b>	<b>7,585</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Taxfiler

**Migration Characteristics 2017 to 2022**

**In-Migrants**

SCG	Place Name of SGC	Province of SGC	0-17 Years	18-24 Years	25-44 Years	45-65 Years	65+ Years	Total
3500	ONTARIO	ONTARIO	625,053	513,300	1,680,222	544,222	247,792	3,610,589
3509	LANARK	ONTARIO	3,869	1,659	6,871	5,395	3,038	20,832

**Out-Migrants**

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3509	LANARK	ONTARIO	2,453	1,808	4,498	2,730	1,758	13,247

**Net-Migrants**

SCG	Place Name of SGC	Province of SGC	0-17 Years	18-24 Years	25-44 Years	45-65 Years	65+ Years	Total
3500	ONTARIO	ONTARIO	123,195	172,216	547,303	41,679	10,820	895,213
3509	LANARK	ONTARIO	1,416	-149	2,373	2,665	1,280	7,585

Source: Statistics Canada, Taxfiler



## DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

Migration characteristics describe the movement of people from one place to another, usually across a political boundary to establish a new residence. Migration can be international (between countries) or interregional (within countries). For many years, there has been a trend for people to leave rural areas and relocate to larger urban centres, primarily to secure employment. This trend cooled during the COVID-19 pandemic as more urban residents pursued opportunities to leave larger cities to live and work in smaller towns, however this trend has not continued at the same pace as more workers have returned to office environments.

In-migrants = New, incoming residents

Out-migrants = Current residents who have moved away.

In the 2021 National Census, the primary working age population (15 to 64) in the county represented 60.9% of the total population compared to 64.8% in the country. The fast growth of the senior population (65 and over) is the biggest concern for the labour market as the Census data shows that the number has now increased to 23.2% of the county's population. By comparison, Canada's proportion of seniors was 19% in 2016.

Traditionally, rural regions have experienced declining populations as youth migrate to larger cities, immigrants choose urban centres, and the general population experiences less births along with an aging population, but Renfrew and Lanark counties both experienced population increases over the last five years. The growth was more significant in Lanark

County which has benefitted from its proximity to the nation's capital, turning places like Carleton Place into bedroom communities for the City of Ottawa. Lanark County experienced a 10.3% increase in population from 2016 (68,698) to 2021 (75,760) compared to a 4.6% increase from 2011 to 2016. Renfrew County is experiencing slower population growth. Between 2016 (102,394) and 2021 (106,365), the population experienced a growth of 3.9%. This growth rate is lower than both the provincial average of 5.8% and the national average of 5.2% during the same time frame. However, it represents an increase from the growth rate of 1.1% observed between 2011 and 2016.

*Renfrew and  
Lanark counties  
experienced  
population  
increases over  
five years*

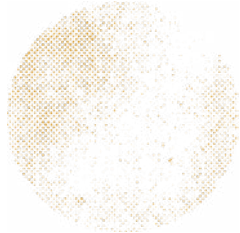




The County of Renfrew recently welcomed four international Personal Support Workers to Bonnechere Manor. On hand for the first day of orientation (from left) were Dean Quade, Bonnechere Manor Administrator; Chief Administrative Officer/ Clerk Craig Kelley; Renfrew County Warden Peter Emon; new recruits Fleury Dushime of Burundi; Achile Awashare of Nigeria;

Mavis Kissi of Ghana and Linda Samule-Uche of Nigeria; Councillor Michael Donohue, Health Committee Chair; Mike Blackmore, Director of Long-term Care and Greg Belmore, Manager of Human Resources.

[Visit the County of Renfrew's website](#)





## COMMUNITY UPDATES

### Local Immigration Partnership of Renfrew and Lanark

The Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) – Lanark & Renfrew is proud to be a key partner in the #ImmigrantsWork project, an exciting initiative led by World Education Services (WES) aimed at improving immigrant inclusion in Canada’s labor market. As one of five selected communities nationwide, we have worked closely with employers, service providers, and local stakeholders to co-design solutions that address the region’s unique labor market needs. The project, which focuses on fostering collaboration between employers and newcomer talent, has made significant strides, with all phases completed except for the final Employer Navigator tool, which is set to launch in the first half of 2025.

The Employer Navigator tool will aim to revolutionize how businesses in Lanark and Renfrew connect with immigrant talent. By completing a brief assessment, employers will receive a customized plan that addresses their unique challenges and provides guidance on recruiting, onboarding, and retaining international staff. A dedicated concierge team will offer personalized support to help employers navigate some of the specific obstacles faced when recruiting and integrating newcomer talent. This evolving plan will be updated as the needs of the business change, ensuring that employers have ongoing access to the resources and support they need.

Over the past year, we’ve made great progress in engaging the community. The project began with extensive partner outreach, gathering insights and building connections with key stakeholders including businesses, educational institutions, and government agencies. This collaborative approach led to the development of a project design that reflects the specific needs of employers in Lanark and Renfrew. Additionally, we have worked on gathering valuable data and mobilizing employers to ensure the Employer Navigator tool is designed with real-world feedback, making it a resource by employers, for employers.

In November of 2024, training modules 3 and 4 were offered to employers across the region and focused on bridging the gap between employers and newcomer talent for both temporary and permanent residents. During training modules 1 and 2, held earlier in 2024, employers shared their recruitment challenges and insights on how to better attract and retain immigrant workers, providing valuable input that will shape the final Employer Navigator tool. This tool will help employers address specific barriers to hiring newcomers, offering customized support through an easy-to-use, purpose-built platform.



Through the #ImmigrantsWork initiative, we are not only addressing current labor shortages but also investing in the future resilience of our workforce. With an aging population, Lanark and Renfrew, like many rural communities, faces significant demographic challenges. Immigrants bring vital skills and diversity that can help bridge these gaps and strengthen our economy. By focusing on immigrant inclusion, we are ensuring that our local labor market remains competitive, innovative, and sustainable for years to come.

The LIP – Lanark and Renfrew is excited to continue supporting the #ImmigrantsWork initiative and looks forward to the launch of the Employer Navigator tool in 2025.

This complimentary service will empower employers who are tapping into the immigrant talent pool and support in filling the labor market gaps in our communities, helping businesses and individuals thrive and grow.

[liplanarkrenfrew.ca/eastern-ontario-immigrant-attraction-retention-strategy](http://liplanarkrenfrew.ca/eastern-ontario-immigrant-attraction-retention-strategy)



Local Immigration Partnership  
Partenariat local pour l'immigration  
LANARK & RENFREW

*LIP– Lanark and Renfrew is funded by Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to bring together service providers, settlement agencies, community groups, employers, municipalities, and other key organizations to develop welcoming and inclusive communities for newcomers. In Lanark and Renfrew counties, the work of the Local Immigration Partnership is administered by Algonquin College – Pembroke Campus*



Fall Business and Leadership Conference 2024 Algonquin College

## Valley Heartland

by Amber Coville, Business Development and Program Officer

Lanark County continues to address local labour market challenges and foster community growth through innovative initiatives such as the Digital Land in Lanark Campaign and the Rural Community Inclusion Pilot Project, in partnership with Renfrew County.

The Digital Land in Lanark Campaign targeted skilled professionals in healthcare, trades, and other high-demand sectors, promoting Lanark County as an ideal place to live and work. The campaign engaged a total of 188 individuals, including 91 families, 3 couples, and 25 individuals, resulting in 96 employment referrals—32 direct referrals to local businesses and 64 referrals to local job postings. Additionally, it revealed key areas where newcomers needed support, including housing and employment, cited by 40% and 39% of respondents, respectively. Other significant needs included settlement support and community integration, both at 20%, demonstrating the importance of creating a welcoming and supportive environment for new residents.

Building on this success, the Rural Community Inclusion Pilot Project is a collaborative effort between Lanark and Renfrew counties, funded by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) through the Rural Economic Development (RED) program. At the heart of this initiative is the shared Settlement and Recruitment Coordinator, whose role bridges the gap between local businesses in need of skilled talent and newcomers seeking opportunities.

This coordinator, funded until March 31, 2026, works closely with businesses to understand their talent needs and guides newcomers through a smooth transition, ensuring they are welcomed into the community. The program emphasizes fostering a thriving environment where businesses and individuals can grow together, making the counties more inclusive and resilient.

Together, these initiatives reflect Lanark County's dedication to aligning workforce attraction efforts with broader community development goals and creating a sustainable and inclusive future for all.



**Community Futures  
Development Corporation**

Valley Heartland





## The City of Pembroke

*by Heather Sutherland, Economic Development and Communications Officer*

The focus of 2024 in the City of Pembroke was business retention and expansion, and the continued look at service gaps in our region.

Understanding that businesses are facing many different challenges, the city looked for ways to provide support to help lessen the burden of operating a business. This included a variety of initiatives to try and support as many businesses as possible such as providing free professional-quality marketing images to partnering businesses, providing free access to fitness and mindfulness practices, providing fun and relaxed business networking opportunities, as well as financial support through our Community Improvement Plan.

The City of Pembroke launched a Business Retention and Expansion Project in the fall of 2024 to gain an in depth understanding of the successes and challenges of our small businesses (those with 10 staff or fewer) and our manufacturers. From this project will come an action plan to guide the City of Pembroke's economic development strategies moving forward in the coming years.

The City of Pembroke is a partner, along with the County of Renfrew, Town of Petawawa, and Township of Laurentian Valley, in the Mesa Warming Centre located in Pembroke.

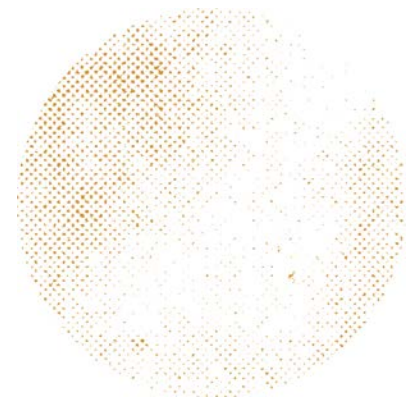
This centre provides a safe, warm space to take shelter from the cold, have access to washroom facilities, and connect with support workers 24/7.

In the past years, the City of Pembroke has also been working extensively on transit options within Pembroke. 2024 finished with a request for proposals for a three-year pilot project for an on-demand transit service in the city.



Two senior high school students participate in a team carpentry competition at the Options skilled trades fair in Pembroke, an event that has been promoting apprenticeship training to youth for more than 20 years.





## Renfrew County

*By David Wybou, Business Development Officer*

As we close 2024, the County of Renfrew continues to build on its reputation as a vibrant and resilient economic hub in Eastern Ontario. This past year has been marked by significant challenges, but also, achievements, strategic initiatives, and new opportunities that set a strong foundation for future growth.

**Challenges in 2024** included business slowdowns in retail and housing construction as well as the closure of Arnprior Aerospace in Arnprior. After 70 years, the once 900 worker strong manufacturer, shut down laying off its remaining 80 employees.

Residents and businesses already struggling with high interest and high prices, endured further community and economic turbulence with labour and contract disputes. Magellan Aerospace in Haley, with close to 360 employees, suffered through a 9-week long strike. Additionally, contract negotiations

broke down between the Renfrew County Joint Transportation Commission and school bus operators, over challenges arising from significant cost increases in recent years. The impasse cancelled school bus transportation for the first two months of the school year, challenging students, parents and employers.

**Economic Highlights in 2024** saw the continued redevelopment at Canadian Nuclear Laboratories (CNL) and Garrison Petawawa. CNL was granted approval for the construction of their Near Surface Disposal facility, a significant project to be built on-site.

The County of Renfrew hosted the Affordable Housing Summit, which brought together industry experts and developers with municipal government, opening a dialogue fostering critical relationships needed to grow affordable housing across the Renfrew County region.

EXPLORE





The County of Renfrew also hosted the Municipal Agriculture Economic Development and Planning Forum, which showcased the County's commitment to strengthening rural economies and highlighted local agriculture.

***Potential Challenges and Opportunities Ahead for 2025:***

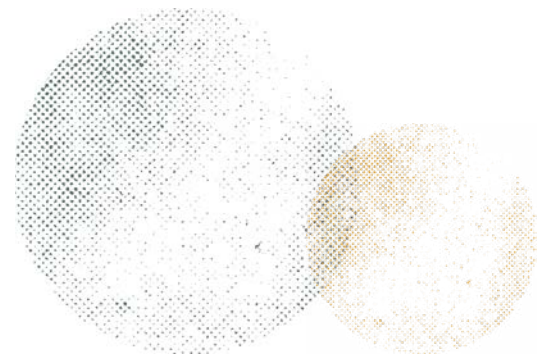
2025 presents both challenges and opportunities as we navigate a shifting economic and political landscape. A new administration federally in the United States has signalled the potential for sweeping tariffs on Canadian goods, which could have serious detrimental economic impacts in Renfrew County where our local forestry, agriculture and manufacturing sectors all have significant exports to the US. This is somewhat tempered by the fact that interest rates are falling, lowering borrowing costs for residents and businesses, allowing for greater spending and investment.

Affordable Housing remains a critical priority. Through partnerships with municipal, provincial, and federal agencies, and developers, the County will advocate for funding and innovative solutions to expand housing options.

After the completion of the overpass at Calabogie Road, continued construction of the 22.5-kilometer extension of Highway 417 between Arnprior and Renfrew has stalled. Advocacy for the extension of Highway 417/17 remains a top priority. This infrastructure improvement is essential to enhance safety, the transportation of goods and people, and to boost tourism. Highway 414/17 is a critical transportation artery of the Trans-Canada Highway, connecting Northern Ontario and the rest of Canada through our region to the Nation's Capital.

Looking ahead, The County of Renfrew will continue to engage with higher levels of government to advocate for policies and funding that advance regional priorities, including infrastructure, housing, community and health services, and support initiatives for businesses.

The County will promote, communicate and collaborate effectively to strengthen partnerships with local municipalities, First Nations, local businesses, and community organizations to align efforts toward shared community and economic goals.



## Local Labour Market Update: Temporary Foreign Workers

### *Adapting to Immigration Changes: A Closer Look at Renfrew County*

Hiring temporary foreign workers can be a gamble for employers. Driven by chronic shortages of labour, some employers in Lanark and Renfrew counties have chosen to invest in this approach to help solve their workforce gaps, but it's expensive and resource intensive and there is no guarantee they will be able to retain these workers if they do not receive permanent residency.

Recent changes to Canada's immigration policies have raised concern for employers who have been relying on temporary foreign workers (TFWs) as they have become essential for sustaining critical services and businesses. These federal reforms, which aim to address housing shortages and systemic pressures, introduce stricter requirements for programs like the Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) and work permits for TFWs, posing challenges for industries already grappling with staffing shortages.

### *The Long-Term Care Sector: Insights from Greg Belmore, Human Resources, County of Renfrew*

One of the sectors most affected by these changes is long-term care. In Renfrew County, long-term care homes have turned to TFWs to address chronic staffing shortages of Personal Support Workers. Greg Belmore, Human

Resource Manager for Renfrew County, says the hiring of TFW's has had a positive impact because it has taken away some of the pressure the county was facing in filling shifts, particularly at its Bonnechere Manor site in Renfrew.

Belmore highlighted that prior to moving towards the hiring of temporary foreign workers, the county was forced to rely on agency staff from other sites. This approach was not only costly—often tripling the usual rate and incurring additional expenses such as hotel accommodations—but it also disrupted the continuity of care, which is essential in long-term care (LTC) settings.

But opting to pursue temporary foreign workers was a major shift in practice, one that required a lot of work and a substantial financial investment. Belmore detailed the intensive recruitment process, which involved navigating two LMIAs, verifying language proficiency, and ensuring that foreign workers had the necessary support to settle in Canada. While the costs are substantial—Renfrew County invested \$160,000 to recruit 20 workers—the return on investment has been significant.

With fewer unfilled shifts and staff willing to work extended hours, there's less reliance on costly agency staff, and the care team is more consistent, which positively impacts resident



well-being. Moreover, morale has increased as workload distribution has improved, resulting in a more stable environment for residents.

“We’ve seen fewer unfilled shifts and a reduction in burnout among our regular staff,” Belmore added. The long hours and dedication of the foreign workers have helped stabilize their operations, but the process requires significant effort and resources to manage immigration paperwork, language barriers, and cultural integration.

***Small Business Perspectives: Tanya Bond of Tim Hortons***

The hospitality industry in Lanark County is another sector deeply reliant on TFWs, and franchisee Tanya Bond of Tim Hortons has taken innovative steps to ensure that she can continue to staff her restaurants effectively.

“For small businesses like mine, finding staff locally is a constant struggle,” Bond shared. International workers have been essential for keeping the business’ doors open and serving the community. To address barriers and attract workers, Bond has invested in creative recruitment and retention strategies, including purchasing homes that are used as rental units for employees. Affordable housing is one of the biggest challenges for foreign workers moving to rural areas like Lanark County, Bond

explained. By providing rental homes, they not only support our employees’ settlement but also create a sense of stability and belonging.

Bond also emphasized the broader contributions of foreign workers, noting their role in sustaining the region’s economy and enriching the local community. In her opinion, foreign workers don’t just fill jobs; they become part of our towns, shop locally, and help create a more diverse and vibrant community.

*fewer  
unfilled  
shifts, and  
reduction  
in burnout*





### *Adapting to the New Landscape*

The tightening of Canada's immigration policies presents a dual challenge for Renfrew and Lanark counties: addressing immediate labour shortages while planning for long-term workforce sustainability. Employers who have utilized temporary foreign workers underscore the need for proactive strategies to navigate these changes, from streamlining recruitment processes to enhancing settlement supports for newcomers.

As the counties adapt to this evolving landscape, collaboration between local businesses, municipalities, and support agencies will be critical. By prioritizing inclusivity and innovation, the region can continue to attract and retain the talent it needs to thrive.



A family explores the downtown core during a day of shopping in Pembroke.

## THINGS JOB SEEKERS SHOULD KNOW

**#1 In-Demand Jobs:** Local opportunities are plentiful in food service, retail, and healthcare, with high demand for roles like Registered Nurses (RNs) and Personal Support Workers (PSWs).

**#2 Free Training Opportunities:** You can boost your skills through free training programs offered by local Employment Service organizations and Literacy and Basic Skills providers. These include computer skills, soft skills, and Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) certifications. Training and Learning Centers in Lanark and Renfrew counties provide upskilling support, professional training, and free education programs that can help job seekers meet admission requirements for post-secondary programs.

**#3 Networking Matters:** Building local connections can unlock hidden opportunities. Attend job fairs, community events, and chamber of commerce meetings. Many jobs in the area are filled through word-of-mouth, so leveraging personal networks is a powerful strategy.

## THINGS EMPLOYERS SHOULD KNOW

**#1 Hiring Challenges:** According to our latest Employer Pulse Survey of 100 local employers, 59% faced difficulty hiring in the past year—a notable improvement from 73% the year prior. In addition, 74% have indicated they plan to hire in the next year demonstrating local resilience to inflationary pressures.

**#2 Youth Engagement:** Employers are increasingly exploring youth engagement strategies. They are actively participating in youth career fairs such as the Option Skilled Trades Fair in Pembroke, visits to high schools, and supporting high school students who enroll in the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP).

**#3 Temporary Foreign Workers:** Many local employers have successfully hired through the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, supported by the Local Immigration Partnership and the new Rural Community Inclusion Pilot Program. Unfortunately, recent policy changes introduced by IRCC may put limitations on the program.



## LOCAL EDUCATION ATTAINMENT SUMMARY

The charts below show the level of education attained by different age groups in Renfrew and Lanark counties in comparison to the Province of Ontario in 2021. Renfrew and Lanark counties have historically had strong economic bases comprised of the manufacturing, agriculture, and forestry sectors. This resulted in higher rates of attainment of apprenticeships, trades and college certificates, and lower rates of

university degrees obtained in every age group compared to provincial averages. However, the local economies of both regions are now relying more on government funded positions. Large employers like hospitals, long-term care centres, district school boards and the Canadian Armed Forces are among the larger public sector employers who employ thousands of workers.

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT DATA

### Renfrew County

2021

Labour force status	Total	In the labour force	Employed	Unemployed	Not in the labour force
No certificate, diploma or degree	14,200	4,805	4,140	665	9,395
High (secondary) school diploma or equivalency certificate	28,720	16,345	14,550	1,800	12,370
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	6,455	3,835	3,485	350	2,625
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	23,520	15,750	14,535	1,215	7,770
University	13,510	9,230	8,740	490	4,350





2016

Labour force status	Total	In the labour force	Employed	Unemployed	Not in the labour force
No certificate, diploma or degree	15,645	5,795	5,115	680	9,845
High (secondary) school diploma or equivalency certificate	25,770	16,265	14,815	1,450	9,500
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	7,395	4,570	4,280	295	2,825
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	21,170	15,210	14,375	830	5,965
University	12,840	8,855	8,455	400	3,985

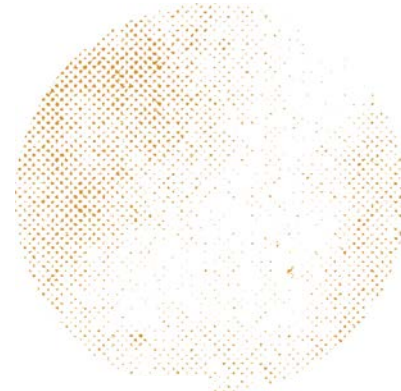
CHANGE

Total	In the labour force	Employed	Unemployed
-9.23%	-17.08%	-19.06%	-2.20%
11.45%	0.49%	-1.79%	24.13%
-12.71%	-16.08%	-18.57%	18.64%
11.10%	3.55%	1.11%	46.38%
5.22%	4.23%	3.37%	22.50%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population.

LEARNING





## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT DATA

*Lanark County*

2021

Labour force status	Total	In the labour force	Employed	Unemployed	Not in the labour force
No certificate, diploma or degree	9,120	3,540	3,025	510	5,580
High (secondary) school diploma or equivalency certificate	18,895	10,875	9,730	1,150	8,015
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	4,485	2,770	2,465	300	1,720
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	17,775	11,655	10,875	780	6,115
University	12,435	8,315	7,915	405	4,125

2016

Labour force status	Total	In the labour force	Employed	Unemployed	Not in the labour force
No certificate, diploma or degree	9,560	3,685	3,250	440	5,875
High (secondary) school diploma or equivalency certificate	16,405	9,930	9,115	815	6,475
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	4,645	2,895	2,750	145	1,750
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	16,255	11,740	11,180	560	4,515
University	10,010	6,680	6,425	255	3,330



**CHANGE**

Total	In the labour force	Employed	Unemployed
-4.60%	-3.93%	-6.92%	15.90%
15.18%	9.52%	6.75%	41.10%
-3.44%	4.32%	-10.36%	106.89%
9.35%	-0.72%	-2.73%	39.29%
24.23%	24.48%	23.19%	58.82%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population.

**Local Intelligence**

International student enrolments have been growing at Algonquin College’s two regional campuses in Perth and Pembroke in recent years. New restrictions on international students brought forward by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada could impact this trend as the federal government looks to lower the number of international students entering the country and limit what programs will qualify for post-graduate work permits. IRCC has identified key labour

market needs in the country, asking colleges to map their programs against these sectors. As a result, international students who desire to stay in Canada will have few program choices to consider.

In January of 2025, Algonquin College announced it would recommend to its board of governors that its Perth Campus close in August 2026. The campus has operated in Perth since 1970 and is primarily known for its heritage trades programming.



## ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

### Employment by Municipalities

#### Renfrew County

Census Subdivision Name	2023 Jobs	2024 Jobs	Mean Wages/Job
Petawawa	9,129	9,124	\$63,016
Pembroke	8,448	8,491	\$51,153
Renfrew	5,450	5,578	\$47,598
Arnprior	4,987	5,041	\$50,635
Deep River	3,733	3,790	\$81,400
Laurentian Valley	3,058	3,053	\$52,911
Whitewater Region	2,147	2,208	\$51,023
Madawaska Valley	1,628	1,660	\$45,932
McNab/Braeside	1,252	1,284	\$61,852
Bonnechere Valley	982	999	\$45,887
Greater Madawaska	667	693	\$44,432
Horton	592	612	\$53,037
Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards	463	472	\$55,997
Laurentian Hills	438	384	\$82,603
North Algona Wilberforce	270	274	\$52,859
Pikwakanagan	262	271	\$41,291
Admaston/Bromley	207	197	\$62,471
Brudenell, Lyndoch and Raglan	148	150	\$45,023

Source: © 2024 Lightcast (lightcast.io)

#### Local Intelligence

Municipalities represent some of the largest employers in the region and are currently facing recruitment challenges in specific occupations. The Labour Market Group conducted a special consultation to gather insights from this sector, revealing that

the roles of DZ drivers, civil engineers, planners, registered nurses, personal support workers, and food service personnel are particularly difficult to fill. Additionally, several opportunities were identified, including job sharing and local training initiatives.



## Lanark County

Census Subdivision Name	2023 Jobs	2024 Jobs	Mean Wages/Job
Carleton Place	7,699	8,039	\$53,303
Smith Falls	6,677	6,826	\$51,005
Perth	6,403	6,520	\$50,885
Mississippi Mills	5,080	5,163	\$59,657
Drummond/North Elmsley	2,301	2,315	\$70,379
Lanark Highlands	1,093	1,123	\$66,076
Montague	935	948	\$66,215
Tay Valley	546	549	\$70,553
Beckwith	475	473	\$60,216

Source: © 2024 Lightcast (lightcast.io)

### Local Intelligence

Canada is currently experiencing a rising unemployment rate, while the average hourly wage stands at nearly \$35, with variations across different sectors and regions. Elevated inflation rates are influencing labor negotiations, leading to work stoppages as unionized employees advocate for wage increases that align with the cost of living. For instance, over 350 members of Local 4820 of the United Steelworkers recently completed a nine-week strike at Magellan Aerospace,

successfully securing a three-year contract that includes a 4.6% wage increase along with enhancements to their pension and benefits. Additionally, in Petawawa, 75 members of the Public Service Alliance of Canada concluded a three-month strike at the Petawawa Garrison, agreeing to a three-year contract featuring a 13.75% wage increase. This situation reflects a broader trend in Ontario, which has seen significant strikes at organizations such as LCBO and Canada Post.

Source: Haimma, Sherri, (2024, January 16) Magellan Aerospace Workers return to Halet Plant after accepting five-year contract. [Renfrew Today](#).

# INVESTMENTS



## HIGHEST PAYING INDUSTRY

### Renfrew County

Industry	2023 Wages Per Worker
Professional, scientific and technical services	\$101,835
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	\$98,012
Utilities	\$96,067
Public administration	\$72,920
Management of companies and enterprises	\$72,848
Wholesale trade	\$63,304
Construction	\$62,336
Educational services	\$61,478
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	\$57,545
Manufacturing	\$57,069

Source: © 2024 Lightcast (lightcast.io).

### Lanark County

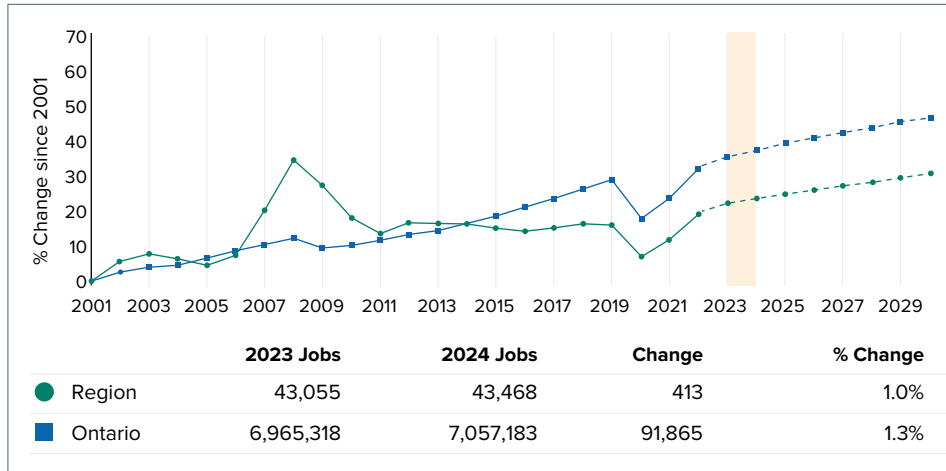
Industry	2023 Wages Per Worker
Utilities	\$101,578
Professional, scientific and technical services	\$86,128
Public administration	\$83,467
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	\$81,974
Wholesale trade	\$73,338
Information and cultural industries	\$69,472
Manufacturing	\$67,463
Finance and insurance	\$67,293
Construction	\$63,322
Manufacturing of companies and enterprises	\$60,833

Source: © 2024 Lightcast (lightcast.io).





## REGIONAL TRENDS – RENFREW COUNTY



Source: © 2024 Lightcast (lightcast.io).

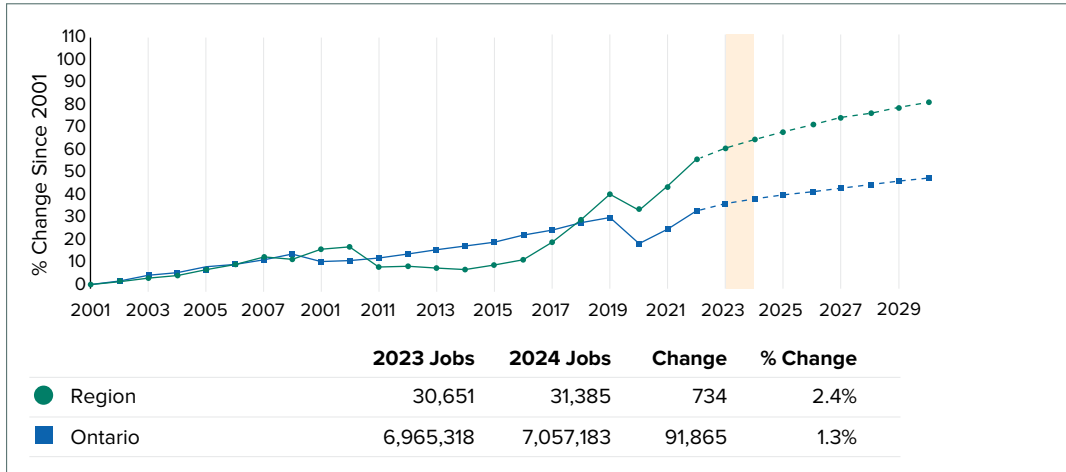
Total Renfrew County jobs: 43,468; Averages wages per job: \$55,931

### Jobs by industry – Renfrew County

Industry	Unique Postings (January 2024 – December 2024)
44-45 Retail trade	541
62 Educational services	487
72 Professional, scientific and technical services	386
54 Accommodation and food services	342
56 Public administration	244
91 Healthcare and social assistance	243
61 Finance and insurance	209
31-33 Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services	206
52 Manufacturing	160
41 Wholesale trade	152

Source: © 2024 Lightcast (lightcast.io).

## REGIONAL TRENDS – LANARK COUNTY



Source: © 2024 Lightcast (lightcast.io).

Total Lanark County jobs: 31,385; Averages wages per job: \$55,701

### Jobs by industry – Lanark County

Industry	Unique Postings (January 2023 – December 2023)
44-45 Retail trade	497
62 Accommodation and food services	292
72 Health care and social assistance	247
56 Educational services	243
54 Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services	236
61 Professional, scientific, and technical services	204
31-33 Manufacturing	184
52 Finance and insurance	143
23 Construction	125
91 Information and cultural industries	82

Source: © 2024 Lightcast (lightcast.io).

#### Local Intelligence

Challenges related to transportation have been consistently highlighted during our community consultations, but more rural municipalities are trying to address this issue by introducing public transit systems.

In Renfrew County, the city of Pembroke has approved a new on-demand transit service for city residents that will launch in the summer of 2025. The three -year pilot project is expecting ridership of 1200-1700 rides per month. A similar on demand service has been launched in Lanark County, serving



the Almonte and Carleton Place areas and an inter-municipal shuttle service was launched in January 2025 to serve the Highway 17 corridor

between Deep River and Ottawa. Additionally, Renfrew County council is set to release its Master Transportation Study soon.

## LOCAL LABOUR MARKET CONDITIONS

### EMPLOYERS BY FIRM SIZE RANGE AND INDUSTRY

#### Renfrew County

2-Digit Industry	Without Employees	Micro (1 – 4)	Small (5 – 99)	Medium (100 – 499)	Large (500+)
11 – Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	694	86	32	1	0
21 – Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	9	5	1	0	0
22 – Utilities	40	5	4	0	0
23 – Construction	563	245	176	4	0
31-33 – Manufacturing	91	37	66	8	0
41 – Wholesale Trade	62	27	38	0	0
44-45 – Retail trade	261	148	287	6	0
48-49 – Transportation and warehousing	137	41	31	1	0
51 – Information and cultural industries	50	20	24	1	0
52 – Finance and insurance	268	28	62	0	0
53 – Real estate and rental and leasing	1480	87	24	0	0
54 – Professional, scientific and technical services	432	130	58	1	2
55 – Management of companies and enterprises	43	1	10	1	0
56 – Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	166	54	50	1	1
61 – Educational services	69	9	13	1	2
62 – Health care and social assistance	408	151	131	12	1
71 – Arts, entertainment and recreation	98	9	23	1	0
72 – Accommodation and food services	151	61	183	1	0
81 – Other services (except public administration)	377	188	92	1	0
91 – Public administration	0	0	20	7	1

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts June 2024





## Lanark County

2-Digit Industry	Without Employees	Micro (1 – 4)	Small (5 – 99)	Medium (100 – 499)	Large (500+)
11 – Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	387	36	17	0	1
21 – Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	2	1	3	0	0
22 – Utilities	17	1	1	0	1
23 – Construction	500	262	156	0	1
31-33 – Manufacturing	85	38	51	5	0
41 – Wholesale Trade	50	29	23	0	0
44-45 – Retail trade	206	121	192	8	0
48-49 – Transportation and warehousing	80	15	19	2	0
51 – Information and cultural industries	50	12	7	0	0
52 – Finance and insurance	223	35	35	0	0
53 – Real estate and rental and leasing	1174	71	13	0	0
54 – Professional, scientific and technical services	611	183	52	0	0
55 – Management of companies and enterprises	39	0	5	0	0
56 – Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	167	55	42	0	0
61 – Educational services	60	8	6	0	0
62 – Health care and social assistance	342	84	111	9	0
71 – Arts, entertainment and recreation	87	15	13	1	0
72 – Accommodation and food services	82	32	126	0	0
81 – Other services (except public administration)	317	142	84	1	0
91 – Public administration	1	1	8	6	0

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts June 2024

Employers are categorized by their workforce's size and range from owner-operated establishments without employees to businesses with over 500 employees. The table shows the number of employers in Renfrew and Lanark Counties in June 2024. The table categorizes employers by their

workforce, with most businesses in Renfrew and Lanark counties falling into categories of less than 50 employees. In June 2024, Renfrew County had 8,008 employers while Lanark County had 6,443 employers. Both regions are relatively consistent in terms of percentages with the rest of Ontario.



## TOTAL EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION

(Labour Market Group of) Renfrew and Lanark	2021	2016	Change	% Change
Total Employed Population	79,795	79,760	35	0.04%
0 Legislative and senior management occupations	9,970	9,115	855	9.38%
1 Business, finance, and administration occupations	10,420	10,245	175	1.71%
2 Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	5,595	5,005	590	11.79%
3 Health occupations	6,770	6,070	700	11.53%
4 Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	11,990	12,375	-385	-3.11%
5 Occupations in art, culture, recreation, and sport	1,505	1,775	-270	-15.21%
6 Sales and service occupations	15,265	17,355	-2,090	-12.04%
7 Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	13,610	13,010	600	4.61%
8 Natural resources, agriculture, and related production occupations	1,660	1,585	75	4.73%
9 Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	3,005	3,220	-215	-6.68%

Source: Statistics Canada

*Renfrew and  
Lanark counties  
consistent  
with the rest  
of Ontario*

## FASTEST GROWING INDUSTRIES

### Renfrew County

Industry	2023 Jobs	2024 Jobs	2023 wages per job
Accommodation and food services	4,055	4,260	\$22,119
Health care and social assistance	6,550	6,668	\$51,452
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	2,304	2,359	\$57,545
Manufacturing	2,873	2,902	\$57,069
Arts, entertainment and recreation	725	752	\$17,233
Wholesale trade	881	903	\$63,304
Finance and insurance	739	758	\$53,869
Real estate and rental and leasing	423	437	\$46,921
Transportation and warehousing	827	837	\$44,527
Other services (except public administration)	943	950	\$44,413

Source: © 2024 Lightcast (lightcast.io).

### Lanark County

Industry	2023 Jobs	2024 Jobs	2023 wages per job
Healthcare and social assistance	4,395	4,517	\$50,405
Accommodation and food services	2,538	2,649	\$21,638
Public administration	3,601	3,711	\$83,467
Manufacturing	2,336	2,407	\$67,463
Retail trade	4,338	4,397	\$30,576
Other services (except public administration)	1,188	1,242	\$45,264
Professional, scientific and technical services	1,829	1,872	\$86,128
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	1,493	1,536	\$50,546
Information and cultural industries	519	540	\$69,472
Arts, entertainment and recreation	704	725	\$35,089

Source: © 2024 Lightcast (lightcast.io).

The preceding tables show the fastest growing industries according to place of work status at the 2-digit NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) classification in Renfrew and Lanark counties. The tables show the change in jobs in each industry from 2023 to 2024. The fastest growing industries in

Renfrew County are accommodation and food services, healthcare and social assistance, and administrative and support, waste management and remediation services. In Lanark County, the fastest-growing industries are healthcare and social assistance, accommodation and food services, and public administration.





## LARGEST OCCUPATIONS

### Renfrew County

Occupation	2023 Jobs	2024 Jobs	% Change	2023 Median Hourly Wages
Sales and service support occupations	5,210	5,290	2%	\$16.59
Technical trades and transportation officers and controllers	3,789	3,828	1%	\$32.82
Professional occupations in law, education, social, community and government services	3,214	3,225	0%	\$41.90
Sales and service representatives and other customer and personal services occupations	2,811	2,813	0%	\$17.72
General trades	1,966	2,020	3%	\$24.36
Administrative and financial support and supply chain logistics occupations	1,877	1,856	-1%	\$22.79
Professional occupations in natural and applied sciences	1,809	1,795	-1%	\$41.37
Retail sales and service supervisors and specialized occupations in sales and services	1,775	1,821	3%	\$23.33
Technical occupations related to natural and applied sciences	1,638	1,619	-1%	\$32.12
Professional occupations in health	1,625	1,648	1%	\$42.90

Source: © 2024 Lightcast (lightcast.io).

### Local Intelligence

On February 1, newly inaugurated President Trump announced immediate 25% tariffs on all Canadian goods, prompting the Canadian government to impose retaliatory tariffs on \$30 billion worth of U.S. goods, with further increases planned in three weeks. The news sparked concerns about job losses, business

closures, and rising costs. However, within 24 hours, Trump paused the tariffs for 30 days, temporarily easing tensions. While the full impact remains uncertain, these developments could significantly affect Renfrew and Lanark counties. The Labour Market Group (LMG) will monitor the situation closely and collaborate with partners to support those most affected.

Source: [CBC News Trump Tariffs](#) and [CBC News Trudeau Speaks Tariffs](#)

LOCAL



## Largest Occupations

### Lanark County

Occupation	2022 Jobs	2023 Jobs	% Change	2022 Median Hourly Wages
Sales and service support occupations	3,611	3,709	3%	\$16.57
Professional occupations in law, education, social, community and government services	2,509	2,546	1%	\$44.74
Professional occupations in natural and applied sciences	2,261	2,330	3%	\$47.47
Sales and service representatives and other customer and personal services occupations	2,174	2,221	2%	\$19.92
Technical trades and transportation officers and controllers	1,908	1,950	2%	\$33.03
Administrative and financial support and supply chain logistics occupations	1,357	1,376	1%	\$23.14
Professional occupations in finance and business	1,332	1,372	3%	\$38.53
Retail sales and service supervisors and specialized occupations in sales and services	1,162	1,196	3%	\$24.32
Professional occupations in health	1,113	1,143	3%	\$41.99
Administrative occupations and transportation logistics occupations	1,030	1,057	3%	\$28.48

Source: © 2024 Lightcast (lightcast.io).



David Coletto a pollster who founded Abacus Data speaks on rural Canadian perspectives to a group of municipal leaders hosted by LMG

**Largest Occupations**

**Ontario**

Occupation	2023 Jobs	2024 Jobs	% Change	2023 Median Hourly Wages
Sales and service support occupations	639,133	645,597	1%	\$16.68
Sales and service representatives and other customer and personal services occupations	567,056	572,146	1%	\$20.18
Professional occupations in law, education, social, community and government services	534,043	539,533	1%	\$44.39
Professional occupations in natural and applied sciences	473,004	481,186	2%	\$46.30
Technical trades and transportation officers and controllers	452,292	457,544	1%	\$34.61
Professional occupations in finance and business	372,469	381,505	2%	\$38.84
Administrative and financial support and supply chain logistics occupations	360,684	361,161	0%	\$22.82
Retail sales and service supervisors and specialized occupations in sales and services	261,143	266,773	2%	\$24.78
Administrative occupations and transportation logistics occupations	260,281	263,573	1%	\$26.86
Machine operators, assemblers and inspectors in processing, manufacturing and printing	256,715	258,644	1%	\$22.66

Source: © 2024 Lightcast (lightcast.io).



## TOP 25 OCCUPATIONS BY NUMBER OF JOB POSTINGS

Occupational data is taken from analyzing job posting data in real time. The advantage is that we can follow occupational changes as they are happening in our community. However, there are limitations to this data which needs to be kept in mind. We have found that certain occupations in the utilities, trades and forestry sectors may be underrepresented in this data. This may be due to the way NOC codes are applied to these occupations, for example,

inconsistencies in job titles or it may be due to where these jobs are posted. We can use this data to get a better understanding of the occupational breakdown proportions in our community. In Renfrew and Lanark counties, we can see that sales and service occupations are the largest group, with 2 - 3 times as many workers in sales and service than there are workers in trades or healthcare.

### Renfrew County

NOC 4	2023 Jobs	Median Annual Wages
6410 – Retail salespersons and non-technical wholesale trade sales and account representatives	427	\$36,225
6520 – Food support occupations	230	\$33,071
4220 – Paraprofessional occupations in legal, social, community and education services	223	\$53,304
3130 – Nursing and allied health professionals	171	\$83,574
6440 – Customer and information services representatives	167	\$39,748
6531 – Cleaners	143	\$41,433
6202 – Service supervisors	140	\$46,334
6320 – Cooks, butchers and bakers	131	\$35,408
4410 – Home care provider occupations	127	\$41,944
1410 – Office support and court services occupations	125	\$45,088
1120 – Human resources and business service professionals	120	\$73,093
4122 – Secondary, elementary and kindergarten school teachers	116	\$97,467
1110 – Auditors, accountants and investment professionals	105	\$87,176
1310 – Administrative, property and payroll officers	102	\$55,259
1311 – Office administrative assistants – general, legal and medical	101	\$51,195
4310 – Assisting occupations in education	101	\$49,885



NOC 4	2023 Jobs	Median Annual Wages
6510 – Cashiers and other sales support occupations	98	\$31,676
1001 – Administrative services managers	95	\$101,135
3310 – Assisting occupations in support of health services	88	\$50,061
6003 – Managers in food service and accommodation	84	\$47,364
7240 – Machinery and transportation equipment mechanics (except motor vehicles)	77	\$69,724
2130 – Civil and mechanical engineers	75	\$92,876
6002 – Retail and wholesale trade managers	75	\$72,943
3120 – Therapy and assessment professionals	73	\$90,539
7330 – Transport truck and transit drivers	71	\$45,360

Source: © 2024 Lightcast (lightcast.io).

## Lanark County

NOC 4	2023 Jobs	Median Annual Wages
6410 – Retail salespersons and non-technical wholesale trade sales and account representatives	382	\$41,099
6520 – Food support occupations	179	\$34,453
1120 – Human resources and business service professionals	148	\$78,392
6440 – Customer and information services representatives	148	\$45,154
6320 – Cooks, butchers and bakers	132	\$36,237
6202 – Service supervisors	126	\$44,145
1310 – Administrative, property and payroll officers	111	\$62,741
6531 – Cleaners	107	\$40,965
3130 – Nursing and allied health professionals	104	\$82,790
4220 – Paraprofessional occupations in legal, social, community and education services	96	\$51,932
1110 – Auditors, accountants and investment professionals	95	\$82,529
6002 – Retail and wholesale trade managers	95	\$74,718
1410 – Office support and court services occupations	94	\$45,436
4122 – Secondary, elementary and kindergarten school teachers	92	\$93,738
1001 – Administrative services managers	90	\$118,809
6510 – Cashiers and other sales support occupations	82	\$32,082
4410 – Home care provider occupations	71	\$46,031

*Top 25 occupations (NOC 4) by number of regional job postings and corresponding wages*

Lanark County

NOC 4	2023 Jobs	Median Annual Wages
4310 – Assisting occupations in education	67	\$49,895
1311 – Office administrative assistants – general, legal and medical	65	\$55,512
7330 – Transport truck and transit drivers	64	\$48,343
3310 – Assisting occupations in support of health services	61	\$47,487
6003 – Managers in food service and accommodation	54	\$51,849
2130 – Civil and mechanical engineers	37	\$89,849
7240 – Machinery and transportation equipment mechanics (except motor vehicles)	29	\$73,090
3120 – Therapy and assessment professionals	20	\$93,168

Source: © 2024 Lightcast (lightcast.io).

**MEDIAN INCOME**

Renfrew County

Income Statistics	Median Amount
Total income	\$42,000
Market income	\$36,800
Employment income	\$39,200
Wages, salaries and commissions	\$42,400
Net self-employment income	\$3,240
Investment income	\$600
Private retirement income	\$21,400
Market income not included elsewhere	\$2,000
Government transfers	\$10,200
Old Age Security pension (OAS) and Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)	\$7,650
Old Age Security pension (OAS)	\$7,650
Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) and spousal allowance	\$3,760
Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Quebec Pension Plan (QPP) benefits	\$8,300
CPP/QPP - Retirement benefits	\$7,650
CPP/QPP - Disability benefits	\$11,900
CPP/QPP - Survivor benefits	\$3,920
Employment Insurance (EI) benefits	\$5,760





## Renfrew County

Income Statistics	Median Amount
EI – Regular benefits	\$5,480
EI – Other benefits	\$4,960
Child benefits	\$5,640
Federal child benefits	\$5,440
Provincial and territorial child benefits	\$1,250
Other government transfers	\$1,340
Social assistance benefits	\$10,900
Workers' compensation benefits	\$5,600
Canada workers benefits (CWB)	\$616
Goods and Services Tax (GST) credit and Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) credit	\$695
Government transfers not included elsewhere	\$860
After-tax income	\$38,000
Income taxes	\$6,120
Net federal income tax	\$4,400
Provincial and territorial income taxes	\$2,160

Source: Statistics Canada

## Lanark County

Income Statistics	Median Amount
Total income	\$44,400
Market income	\$38,400
Employment income	\$38,800
Wages, salaries, and commissions	\$41,600
Net self-employment income	\$3,600
Investment income	\$850
Private retirement income	\$23,800
Market income not included elsewhere	\$1,680
Government transfers	\$10,400
Old Age Security pension (OAS) and Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)	\$7,650
Old Age Security pension (OAS)	\$7,650
Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) and spousal allowance	\$3,600
Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Quebec Pension Plan (QPP) benefits	\$8,600
CPP/QPP - Retirement benefits	\$8,100

## Median Income

### Lanark County

Income Statistics	Median Amount
CPP/QPP - Disability benefits	\$12,100
CPP/QPP - Survivor benefits	\$3,560
Employment Insurance (EI) benefits	\$5,880
EI – Regular benefits	\$5,480
EI – Other benefits	\$5,680
Child benefits	\$5,200
Federal child benefits	\$5,040
Provincial and territorial child benefits	\$1,180
Other government transfers	\$1,250
Social assistance benefits	\$10,800
Workers' compensation benefits	\$4,600
Canada workers benefits (CWB)	\$592
Goods and Services Tax (GST) credit and Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) credit	\$685
Government transfers not included elsewhere	\$810
After-tax income	\$39,600
Income taxes	\$6,360
Net federal income tax	\$4,600
Provincial and territorial income taxes	\$2,280

Source: Statistics Canada

### Local Intelligence

In Ontario, 52.8% of households facing food insecurity rely on employment as their primary source of income, underscoring that having a job does not guarantee the ability to meet basic needs. Factors such as precarious employment, part-time work, and low wages play a significant role in

this issue. As unemployment rates steadily rise, the demand for employment services, including programs like Better Jobs Ontario, is increasing. Fortunately, local unemployment rates (Renfrew County 4% and Lanark County 3.9%) are below the Ontario rate of 7.6%, the highest it's been since May 2014.

Source: [Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit \(2024\) Addressing Food Insecurity in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark.](#)



## TOP 10 BUSINESSES BY EMPLOYEE SIZE RANGE

The tables provide a comprehensive snapshot of the business landscape in Renfrew and Lanark counties, focusing on the number of employers and their employee size across various industries as of June 2024. In Renfrew County, the real estate and rental and leasing sector is leading with a total of 1,591 employers while the construction industry is following with 988 businesses. In Lanark County, the

real estate sector remains strong with 1,258 employers, with construction again being a significant contributor (919 employers). Other sectors like retail trade, professional, scientific and technical services, and health care and social assistance have a robust distribution of businesses. The data illustrates a vibrant small business environment and diverse economic activity in both counties.

### Renfrew County

Industry	Without employees	Total, with employees	1 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 19	20 - 49	50 - 99	100- 199	200- 499	500 +
53 – Real estate and rental and leasing	1480	111	87	17	5	2	0	0	0	0
23 – Construction	563	425	245	108	47	15	6	3	1	0
44-45 – Retail trade	261	441	148	131	91	47	18	4	2	0
62 – Health care and social assistance	408	295	151	37	52	27	15	9	3	1
81 – Other services (except public administration)	377	281	188	67	17	7	1	1	0	0
11 – Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	694	119	86	17	8	5	2	0	1	0
54 – Professional, scientific and technical services	432	191	130	33	13	9	3	1	0	2
72 – Accommodation and food services	151	245	61	65	63	42	13	1	0	0
52 – Finance and insurance	268	90	28	17	32	10	3	0	0	0
56 – Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	166	106	54	28	13	9	0	0	1	1

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts June 2024.

BUSINESS





**Top 10 Employers by 2-digit Industry**

**Lanark County**

Industry	Without employees	Total, with employees	1 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 19	20 - 49	50 - 99	100- 199	200- 499	500 +
53 – Real estate and rental and leasing	1174	84	71	9	3	1	0	0	0	0
23 – Construction	500	419	262	89	43	20	4	0	0	1
54 – Professional, scientific, and technical services	611	235	183	28	14	9	1	0	0	0
44-45 Retail trade	206	321	121	80	65	33	14	7	1	0
81 – Other services (except public administration)	317	227	142	52	20	10	2	1	0	0
62 – Health care and social assistance	342	204	84	41	37	24	9	4	5	0
11 – Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	387	54	36	9	5	3	0	0	0	1
72 – Accommodation and food services	82	158	32	44	39	35	8	0	0	0
52 – Finance and insurance	223	70	35	8	20	7	0	0	0	0

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts June 2024.

**Local Intelligence**

Despite the challenges posed by economic pressures, the Lanark-Renfrew region has experienced significant business growth throughout the region, much of it in the food and hospitality sector. Small businesses, defined as those with fewer than 30 employees, constitute over 85% of employers in Renfrew and Lanark, indicating strong economic resilience. New establishments, including restaurants and quick-service food vendors, are continually emerging in the area, such as a Boston Pizza

in the Town of Renfrew that has created over 60 new jobs and Chuck’s Restaurant in Pembroke which hired a similar number of people. Additionally, other well known franchises continue to expand into smaller communities with Starbucks opening in Arnprior, Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen in Pembroke, and Taco Bell in Petawawa. Furthermore, a variety of unique local businesses, including retail shops, fresh beverage bars, and tourism-related ventures, are also flourishing.



## EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO CLIENT DATA

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD) has made Employment Ontario data available to complete this Local Labour Market Planning Report. The Labour Market Group of Renfrew and Lanark applies this data

to make a comparative analysis using the baseline information of the 2023-24 fiscal year. This information is useful to anyone working in employment, literacy or economic development for comparative analysis and program planning.

### Employment Service Clients by Age Group in Renfrew and Lanark Counties

EMPLOYMENT SERVICE	c. Clients by Age Group	a. 15-24	317
EMPLOYMENT SERVICE	c. Clients by Age Group	b. 25-44	751
EMPLOYMENT SERVICE	c. Clients by Age Group	c. 45-64	562
EMPLOYMENT SERVICE	c. Clients by Age Group	d. 65 and older	79

Source: 2023-2024 Local Board Data Suppressed Revised

### Literacy and Basic Skills Learners by Age Group in Renfrew and Lanark Counties

LITERACY AND BASIC SKILLS	c. Clients by Age Group	a. 15-24	170
LITERACY AND BASIC SKILLS	c. Clients by Age Group	b. 25-44	257
LITERACY AND BASIC SKILLS	c. Clients by Age Group	c. 45-64	168
LITERACY AND BASIC SKILLS	c. Clients by Age Group	d. 65 and older	116

Source: 2023-2024 Local Board Data Suppressed Revised

In Renfrew and Lanark counties there were 74 internationally trained individuals out of 1,710 employment service assisted clients<sup>2</sup>.

In Renfrew & Lanark counties there are:

**1,710 Employment Service Assisted Clients,**  
**712 Literacy & Basic Skills Learners.**

Source: 2023-24 Local Board Data Suppressed Revised.

2. Assisted client numbers do not reflect the total number of clients visiting Employment Ontario Providers. Unassisted clients are not included.



The percentage of Employment Service (ES) clients with no source of income continues to represent a significant portion of the total clientele within our region (693). The financial strains on clients challenge service providers

## TOP 2 SOURCES OF INCOME FOR EMPLOYMENT SERVICE CLIENTS

### Renfrew-Lanark

Ontario Works	269
Employment Insurance	202

### Ontario

Ontario Works	17,463
Employed	8,652

Source: 2023-24 Local Board Data Suppressed Revised.

to provide sufficient training support with limited funding. On the other hand, 30.65% of Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) learners in 2023-2024 listed employment as their top source of income.

## TOP 2 SOURCES OF INCOME FOR LITERACY AND BASIC SKILLS LEARNERS

### Renfrew-Lanark

Employed	217
Ontario Disability Support Program	84

### Ontario

Employed	15,136
Ontario Works	7,247

## LITERACY & BASIC SKILLS TOP 3 LEARNER GOALS

### Renfrew and Lanark counties

Employment	327
Secondary School Credit	146
Postsecondary	118

Source: 2023-24 Local Board Data Suppressed Revised.

### Ontario

Postsecondary	17,149
Employment	15,166
Independence	6,194

Source: 2023-24 Local Board Data Suppressed Revised.

## HIGHEST AGE DISTRIBUTION OF BETTER JOBS ONTARIO PROGRAM CLIENTS

### Renfrew and Lanark counties

Clients by Age Group	15-24	14
Clients by Age Group	25-44	40
Clients by Age Group	45-64	24
Clients by Age Group	65 and older	-

Source: 2023-24 Local Board Data Suppressed Revised.

### Ontario

Clients by Age Group	15-24	256
Clients by Age Group	25-44	1922
Clients by Age Group	45-64	1192
Clients by Age Group	65 and older	31

Source: 2023-24 Local Board Data Suppressed Revised.





## Employment Service Clients by Educational Level in Renfrew and Lanark counties

Highest Level of Education	Renfrew/Lanark	Ontario
Less than Grade 9	16	1,500
Less than Grade 12	206	8,666
Completion of Secondary	700	27,289
Certificate of Apprenticeship/Journey person	32	1,045
Certificate/Diploma	512	21,315
Applied/Associate/Bachelor's Degree	144	19,164
Postgraduate	33	10,396
Other (Some Apprenticeship/College/University)	67	5,128

Source: 2023-24 Local Board Data Suppressed Revised

## APPRENTICESHIP FACTS FOR RENFREW AND LANARK COUNTIES

**76 Certificates of Apprenticeship Issued**

**218 Modular Training Registrations**

**247 New Registrations**

**934 Active Apprentices**

Source: 2023-24 Local Board Data Suppressed Revised

## Top Exit Outcomes for Employment Service Clients

Outcome at Exit Summary	Renfrew/Lanark
<b>Employed</b>	1,106
Employed Full-Time	584
Employed Part-Time	244
Employed Other	174
<b>In Education/Training</b>	196
In Education	68
In Training	128
<b>Unemployed</b>	177

Source: 2023-24 Local Board Data Suppressed Revised

Outcome at Exit Summary	Ontario
<b>Employed</b>	58,478
Employed Full-Time	34,361
Employed Part-Time	11,276
Employed Other	8,660
<b>In Education/Training</b>	12,928
In Education	4,641
In Training	8,287
<b>Unemployed</b>	8,497

Source: 2023-24 Local Board Data Suppressed Revised



## EMPLOYMENT SERVICE CLIENTS - TOP 3 EMPLOYED OUTCOME OCCUPATIONS (NOC)

### Renfrew and Lanark Counties

1. Sales and service support occupations
2. Helpers and labourers and other transport drivers, operators and labourers
3. General trades

### Ontario

1. Sales and service support occupations
2. Sales and service representatives and other customer and personal services occupations
3. Helpers and other labourers and other transport drivers, operators and labourers

## EMPLOYMENT SERVICE CLIENTS - TOP 3 EMPLOYED OUTCOME OCCUPATIONS

### Renfrew and Lanark Counties

1. Retail trade
2. Health care and social assistance
3. Accommodation and food services

### Ontario

1. Retail trade
2. Health care and social assistance
3. Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services

## TOP 3 TRADES FOR NEW APPRENTICESHIP REGISTRATIONS

### Renfrew and Lanark Counties

1. Automotive service technician
2. General carpenter Electrician – construction and maintenance
3. Electrician – construction and maintenance

### Ontario

1. Electrician – construction and maintenance
2. Automotive service technician
3. General carpenter

Source: 2023-24 Local Board Data Suppressed Revised.

### Local Intelligence

In Renfrew County, a Warming Centre has now operated in Pembroke for the past two years to support the region’s homeless population. The growing need to support vulnerable populations, including homeless people and those addicted to drugs, has led the County of Renfrew to launch its Mesa

initiative, a community initiative that involves emergency service and social workers to help rebuild lives.

Lanark County’s Homeless Response Team made great strides last year. They received 116 new referrals to their by-name list and successfully housed 62 individuals. The team distributed 120 essential backpacks and



475 gift cards, supported 341 people through after-hours assistance, and allocated over \$618,000 to help 1,356 households avoid eviction or secure housing. An additional \$126,000 funded the Mobile Crisis Response

Team, and a successful Rural Homelessness Conference showcased their “Housing First” approach and commitment to client empowerment.

## EMPLOYER PULSE SURVEY

### *Employer Pulse Survey Highlights*

The Employer Pulse Survey, conducted over 18-weeks from September 2024 to January 2025, provided crucial insights that confirmed assumptions by the Labour Market Group (LMG). These assumptions were derived from unemployment data analysis, employment service office activity, local intelligence from community consultations, and job posting trends across various platforms. Based on feedback from the previous year, the survey included new questions about hiring practices involving underrepresented groups, such as newcomers, youth, and seniors.

[Employer Pulse Survey Full Report](#)

### Survey Participation

A total of 100 employers responded to the survey:

- **Location:** 61.22% were from Renfrew County, 29.59% from Lanark County, and 9.18% from surrounding areas.

### Business Profile

- **Industries Represented:**
  - Education: 12.24%

- Healthcare: 11.22%
- Tourism/Hospitality: 10.2%
- Manufacturing/Utilities: 9.18%
- **Sector:** 52.04% private sector, 47.96% public sector.
- **Size:** Most businesses (31.63%) employed fewer than 10 people, while 29.59% had over 100 employees.

### Hiring Trends

- 62.65% reported difficulty hiring, with 40.74% struggling to fill both full-time and part-time roles.
- Recruitment strategies included:
  - Increasing starting wages: 45.12%
  - Flexible work options (remote/hybrid): 34.15%
  - Professional development opportunities: 30.49%
  - Comprehensive benefits packages: 23.17%
- 45.12% hired individuals who immigrated to Canada in the past five years.
- 74.39% hired summer students.





## EMPLOYER PULSE SURVEY (cont'd)

### Employee Turnover

- 40.24% experienced retirements.
- 50% reported employees leaving for competitors.
- 74.03% plan to hire in the coming year.

### Social Challenges

- Lack of affordable housing affected 24.39% of businesses.
- Inadequate public transportation impacted 35.37% of employers' recruitment and retention efforts.
- Limited childcare availability affected 24.39%.

### Workplace Conditions

- Key hiring challenges included:
  - Lack of applicants: 42.68%
  - Inadequate work experience: 39.02%
  - Poor job search skills: 35.37%
  - Insufficient educational qualifications: 30.49%
- 41.46% of businesses offered hybrid or remote work options.



LMG attends the Pembroke Multicultural Festival

MARKET



## 2025-2026 PLAN OF ACTION

The following is a brief summary of the business plan objectives of the Labour Market Group of Renfrew and Lanark for the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

### PROJECT ONE:

#### LOCAL LABOUR MARKET PLANNING (LLMP) REPORT

##### *Project Description*

The Local Labour Market Planning report will be a summary of what is happening in the local labour market in Lanark and Renfrew counties. The report will include an overview of labour market changes and will identify challenges and opportunities to address the workforce needs of the region. The report will pull data from many sources that will be supplemented by an engaging storytelling to allow organizations to better understand the local labour market. The LLMP will be a planning tool for the community and a roadmap that shares the current state of the labour market but also highlights actions that are being taken to address issues or pursue new opportunities.

##### *Measurable Outcomes*

The LLMP will receive a Continuous Improvement Performance Management Score (CIPMS) of 90% or better from community stakeholders who utilize the report.

##### *Issue/Priority*

It is important to provide accurate and timely labour market information for Renfrew and Lanark counties service providers, municipalities, employers and job seekers. The annual LLMP provides a current state of the local labour market.

##### *Key Partners*

Regional employers, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development agencies, Community Futures programs, Algonquin College, District School Boards and other educational and training centres, Business Associations, Municipalities and Employment Ontario partners.

### PROJECT TWO:

#### REVISED EMPLOYER PULSE SURVEY

##### *Project Description*

The refinement of our Employer Pulse Survey allows us to gather local intelligence from employers in Renfrew and Lanark counties. The survey report contains current, locally mined labour market information and local intelligence that will give job seekers and community partners more insight into opportunities and challenges within our labour market. We will produce a comprehensive survey to measure the amount of labour



### 2025-2026 PLAN OF ACTION (cont'd)

market activity happening in our region by identifying trends and evaluating them against the employer pulse surveys that we have issued for the past three years. This information will inform labour market planning in our region.

#### **Measurable Outcomes**

100 employers will participate in the employer pulse survey and the Continuous Improvement Performance Management Score (CIPMS) will exceed 90% satisfaction from those who access the information contained in the survey.

#### **Issue/Priority**

The labour market continues to be very volatile. While we have known about an aging population for many years and its impact on the local labour market, new variables include an increase in remote and hybrid work, the introduction of artificial intelligence in the workplace, increased pressure on unions to secure higher wages to address the rising cost of living, the deployment of a large number of soldiers from Garrison Petawawa to Latvia for lengthy tours of duty, and the potential for layoffs if the United States follows through on imposing significant tariffs on Canadian exports.

#### **Key Partners**

The Labour Market Group of Renfrew and Lanark, Regional Employers, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development agencies,

Community Futures Programs, Algonquin College, District School Boards and other educational and training centres, Business Associations, Municipalities and Employment Ontario partners.

### PROJECT THREE:

#### LABOUR MARKET BULLETINS

##### **Project Description**

Provide local labour market intelligence to the broader communities of Lanark and Renfrew counties more frequently through a quarterly LMI Bulletin to allow for better labour market understanding and planning.

##### **Measurable Outcomes**

The broader community of employers, service providers, municipalities, etc. will have access to accurate and timely labour market data to allow them to plan and adjust to local labour market conditions. A Continuous Improvement Performance Management Score (CIPMS) will exceed 85% satisfaction from those who receive and read the quarterly LMI bulletins.

##### **Issue/Priority**

The labour market is very volatile. There has been an increase in strike activity as unions pursue higher wages to battle the high cost of living; threatened tariffs by the United States on Canada has the potential to cause layoffs in our region; artificial intelligence is being used more in the workplace; Garrison Petawawa





will be deploying about 1,000 soldiers to Latvia having a significant economic impact on Renfrew County. All of these happenings affect the labour market and by providing a quarterly bulletin we can keep our communities up to date on these happenings.

### **Key Partners**

Employers, Employment Services providers, Algonquin College, Renfrew County Catholic District School Board, Renfrew County District School Board, Garrison Petawawa Transition Centre, United Way East Ontario, Literacy and Basic Skills service deliverers.

## **PROJECT FOUR:**

### **SERVICE COORDINATION**

#### **Project Description**

Plan and deliver up to three service coordination activities to support Municipalities, Economic Development agencies, Employment Ontario service providers, school boards and other interested parties who are impacted by local labour market conditions through their work with job seekers and employers.

#### **Measurable Outcomes**

A Continuous Improvement Performance Management Score (CIPMS) will exceed 90% satisfaction from those who participate in service coordination activities led by the LMG.

#### **Issue/Priority**

The labour market is always changing. In our area, there are several factors that are contributing to a more turbulent labour force in the coming year. These include the deployment of up to 1,000 soldiers from Garrison Petawawa to Latvia, a growing number of work stoppages as unions seek higher wage increases and job security, the potential threat of tariffs on Canadian exports to the United States that could result in significant layoffs in some sectors including manufacturing and forestry, the impact of more artificial intelligence being used in the workforce, etc. Our service coordination activities are designed to respond to the local labour market intelligence that we gather by monitoring and doing research into these trends.

#### **Key Partners:**

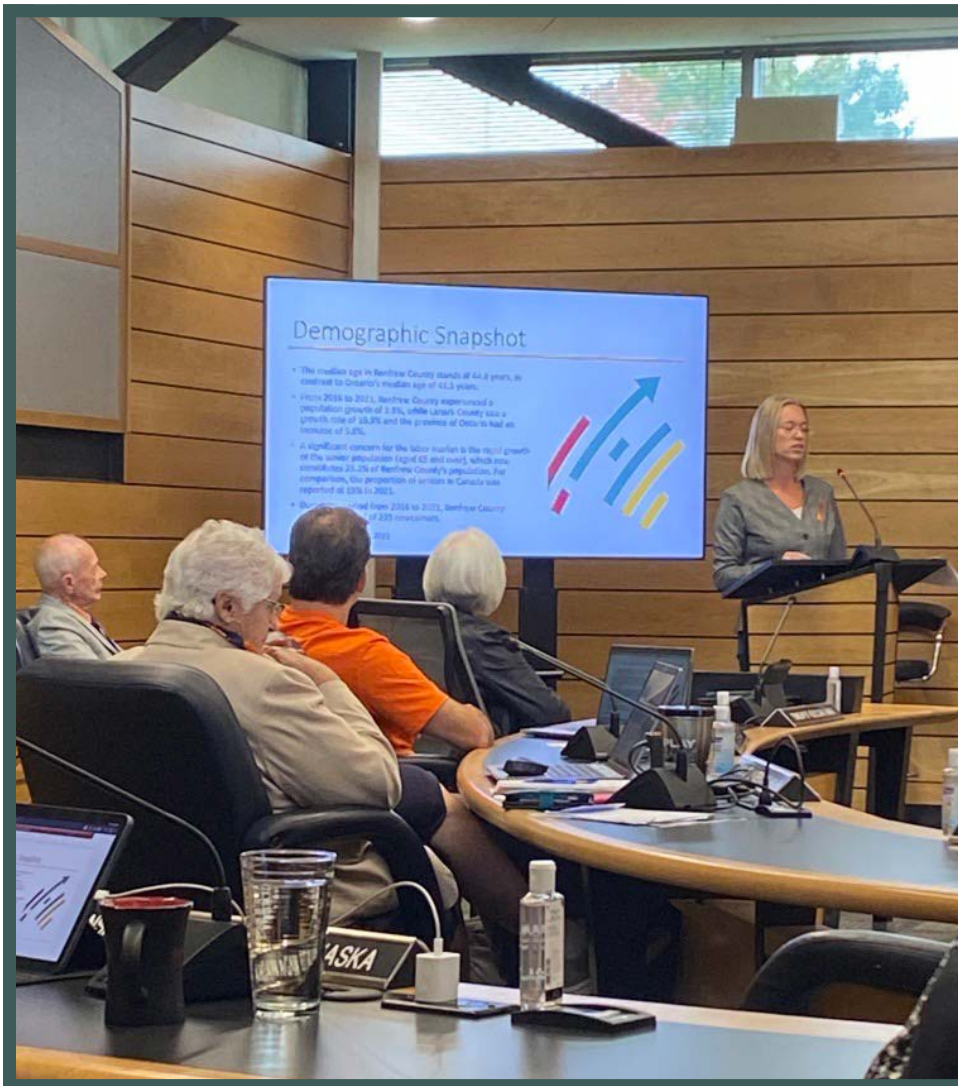
Employment Ontario service providers, Ontario Works, Economic Development Offices, Algonquin College, Renfrew County District School Board, Renfrew County Catholic District School Board, United Way East Ontario.

## COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

The Labour Market Group of Renfrew and Lanark held four community consultations in the Fall of 2024. The sessions, three in person and one virtual, were well attended and offered insight into the challenges local employers were having with both attracting

and retaining employees. The consultations also considered the education and training needs of employers and community factors that impacted the labour market.

[The full report can be accessed here.](#)



The Labour Market Group presented a labour market update to Renfrew County Council September 2024



## APPENDIX A:

### COMMUNITY PARTNERS

[Community Employment Services –  
Pembroke](#)

[Community Employment Services – Perth  
Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation](#)

[Canadian Career Academy](#)

[County of Renfrew, Ontario Works](#)

[County of Lanark, Ontario Works](#)

[Enterprise Renfrew County, Pembroke](#)

[Garrison Petawawa](#)

[Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills  
Development](#)

[Ontrac Employment Resource Services](#)

[PMFRC Employment Services](#)

[Renfrew County Community Futures  
Development Corporation](#)

[Renfrew County District School Board](#)

[Training & Learning Centre](#)

[Upper Canada District School Board](#)

[Valley Heartland Community Development  
Corporation](#)

[Arnprior Economic Development](#)

[Pembroke Economic Development](#)

[County of Renfrew, Economic Development  
& Natural Resources](#)

[Local Immigration Partnership](#)

PARTNERS





## APPENDIX B:

### INFORMATION SOURCES

[Statistics Canada \(2021 and 2016 Census, 2011 National Household Survey, Canadian Business Patterns\)](#)

[Algonquin College - Pembroke](#)

[Algonquin College - Perth](#)

[County of Lanark Website](#)

[County of Renfrew Website](#)

[Lightcast Analyst Tool](#)

### Participants in 2024 Community Consultations

Christa Vernier - The McCluskey Group

JoAnn McIntyre - Roseburg Forest Products

Brent Dick - Community Employment Services

Linda Alexander - Lanark County

Kelly Hollihan - Upper Ottawa Valley Chamber of Commerce

Marcie Campbell - Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley

Ray Bonenberg - Mapleside Sugar Bush

David Wybou - Renfrew County

Peter Irish - Community Employment Services

David Unrau - City of Pembroke

Kim Field - Canada Career Academy

Amber Coville - Valley Heartland Community Futures Development Corporation

Robert Probert - Canada Career Academy

Jennifer Scott - Lanark County

Lindsay Crawford - Lanark Lodge Long Term Care

Lisa Benoit - Community Employment Services

Mariana Grushkovyk - Thomas Cavanagh Construction Limited

Phelicia Servais - Thomas Cavanagh Construction Limited

Connie McIntosh - Perth Long Term Care

Brettan Ingimundson - Kilmarnock

Tamarra Winter - Upper Canada District School Board

Mandy Hewitt - Centennial Truss

Peri-Ann Echlin - Perth Long Term Care

Andy Fierens - Mr. Chipper

Alex Harris - Renfrew County District School Board

Melissa Friske - Renfrew County District School Board



Krista Recoskie - Renfrew County District School Board

Cyndy Phillips - Renfrew County Community Futures Development Corporation

Melissa Marquardt - Renfrew County

Sara Lecuyer - Ontrac: Employment Resource Center

Andra Bettencourt - White Lake Marina

Roderick Morgan - RPM-Academy

Jeff Levesque - Township of Greater Madawaska

Carolyn Courville - Canadian Hearing Services

Anne Coleman - Ontario Living Wage Network

Erin Edwards - Safariland

Chris Grimshaw - Serco North America

Scott Hamilton - Renfrew County

Andrea Holden - Renfrew County District School Board

Kathy Innocente - Valley Manor Inc.

Heather Inwood-Montrose - Renfrew County

Cindy James - Small Business Advisory Centre

Kelley Jaros - Town of Arnprior

Jodi Lackey - Leaps and Bounds Children's Centre

Paloma Mazer - Perth Chamber of Commerce

Jackie Morrison - CHEO

Lara Mylly - ConnectWell Community Health - Lanark

Charlene Pineda - WCG Services

Laura Pirie - Community Living Renfrew County South

Sue Rupert - The Training & Learning Centre

Rikki Rintoul - Lanark County

Sophia Rosenberg - Canadian Nuclear Laboratory

Sue Rupert - The Training & Learning Centre

Heather Tatton - Renfrew County District School Board

Kerri Barlow - Town of Smiths Falls

Sarah Richer - Township of Bonnechere Valley

Maggy Houle - Petawawa Military Family Resource Centre (PMFRC) Employment Services

## APPENDIX C:

### STATISTICS DATA DEFINITIONS

**Business Pattern Data:** The Canadian Business Patterns database provided by Statistics Canada identifies the number of business establishments (employers) within a Census Division (CD). The database also identifies the number of employers by detailed industry and for nine different employee size ranges. Canadian Business Pattern data is available every six months (June and December) with an approximate five-week time lag for release.

**Census Division (CD):** Group of neighbouring municipalities joined together for the purposes of regional planning and managing common services (such as police or ambulance services). These groupings are established under laws in effect in certain provinces of Canada. Census division (CD) is the general term for provincially legislated areas (such as county, municipalité régionale de comté (MRC) and regional district) or their equivalents. In other provinces and the territories where laws do not provide for such areas, Statistics Canada defines equivalent areas for statistical reporting purposes in cooperation with these provinces and territories. Census divisions are intermediate geographic areas between the province/territory level and the municipality (census subdivision).

**Census Metropolitan Area (CMA):**

A census metropolitan area (CMA) or a census agglomeration (CA) is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centered on a population centre (known as the core).

A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000, based on data from the current Census of Population Program, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core based on adjusted data from the previous Census of Population Program. A CA must have a core population of at least 10,000 also based on data from the previous Census of Population program. To be included in the CMA or CA, other adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from data on place of work from the previous Census Program.

**Economic Region (ER):** An economic region (ER) is a grouping of complete census divisions (CDs), with one exception in Ontario, created as a standard geographic unit for analysis of regional economic activity. Economic Regions enable reliable labour force estimates for areas that are too small on their own, so they are grouped with neighbouring regions.

**Employed person:** refers to those who, during the reference period, had a labour force status of 'employed.' That is, those who, during the reference period (a) Did any work at all at a job or business, that is, paid work in the context of an employer-employee relationship, or self-employment. This also includes persons who did unpaid family work, which is defined as unpaid work contributing directly to the operation of a farm, business or professional practice owned and operated by a related member of the same household; or (b) Had a





job but were not at work due to factors such as their own illness or disability, personal or family responsibilities, vacation or a labour dispute. This category excludes persons not at work because they were on layoff or between casual jobs, and those who did not then have a job (even if they had a job to start at a future date).

**Employment Rate:** Refers to the number of persons employed in the week of Sunday, May 2 to Saturday, May 8, 2021, expressed as a percentage of the total population aged 15 years and over.

**Lightcast:** Lightcast turns labour market data into useful information that helps organizations understand the connection between economies, people, and work. Using sound economic principles and good data, they build user-friendly services that help educational institutions, workforce planners, and regional developers (such as WIBs, EDOs, chambers, utilities) build a better workforce and improve the economic conditions in their regions.

**Feed-in tariff:** A Feed-in tariff, or FIT rate is the premium paid by a utility to its consumers for excess power generated by their solar, wind or alternative energy system. Feed-in tariffs are used by the government as an incentive for consumers to adopt newer, cleaner, renewable energy sources.

**Industrial Sectors:** The industrial sectors described in Indicator 1 and the 4-digit industries referred to in Indicators 2 and 4 refer to the classification into which all economic activity is placed. See NAICS below. Industry (based on the 2002 North American Industry

Classification System [NAICS]) refers to a generally homogeneous group of economic producing units, primarily engaged in a specific set of activities. An activity is a particular method of combining goods and services inputs, labour and capital to produce one or more goods and/or services (products). In most cases, the activities that define an industry are homogeneous with respect to the production processes used.

**Labour Force:** Refers to persons who, during the week of Sunday, May 2 to Saturday, May 8, 2021, were either employed or unemployed. Labour force = Employed + Unemployed. Previously, in other census cycles, early enumeration was conducted in remote, isolated parts of the provinces and territories in the months leading up to the May enumeration. Because of COVID-19, there was no early enumeration for the 2021 Census. Collection procedures – especially in collective dwellings and remote, northern, First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities – were redesigned to ensure the census was conducted in the best possible way, using a safe and secure approach.

**Labour Market Challenges:** A challenge refers to the possibility that there is an imbalance in demand and supply of labour [including skills, occupation and education]. A challenge by its very nature offers both a “problem” and an “opportunity”. An unemployed or underemployed worker is a wasted resource and a problem. However, that worker’s potential is also an opportunity to be deployed elsewhere.



## APPENDIX D:

### LOCAL LABOUR MARKET CONSULTATIONS

This document contains insights from community consultations held between Fall 2024 and Winter 2025, organized by the Labour Market Group of Renfrew and Lanark to better understand and address the challenges facing the local labour market. These consultations created spaces for meaningful conversations, allowing participants to discuss trends, opportunities, and frontline issues impacting employers and employees.

Four community consultations took place—three in-person sessions in Carleton Place, Renfrew, and Pembroke, and one virtual session—with over 57 participants representing diverse sectors, including manufacturing, healthcare, and education. This work was guided in part by our Lanark-Renfrew Local Labour Market Working Group and will inform an action plan to address key labour market challenges.

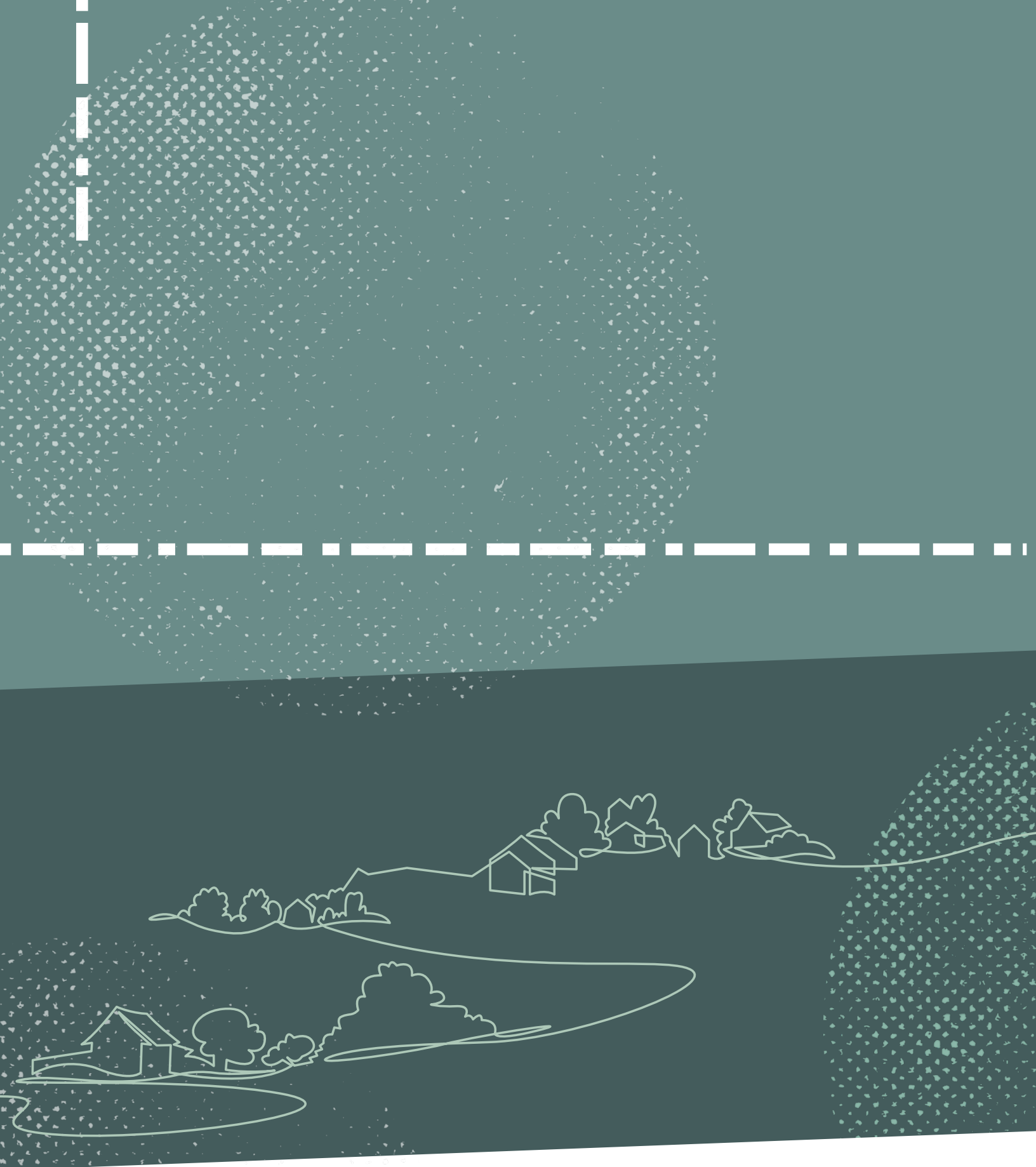
[The full report can be accessed here.](#)

*trends,  
opportunities,  
and frontline  
issues*









**THE LABOUR  
MARKET GROUP**  
OF RENFREW & LANARK