NIAGARA WORKFORCE PLANNING BOARD

WOMEN, MEN, AND WORK IN NIAGARA

2020

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an increased focus on gender equity in the labour force. While both men and women experienced significant employment loss, focus also turned to the disproportionate impact of employment losses for women compared to men, and the unequal employment gains and recovery for men compared to women. Alongside these impacts, women's labour force participation is back down to a rate seen around 1985[1].

Part of this conversation has also revolved around why the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic differ from previous economic downturns. In contrast to the 2008/2009 recession, the impact of COVID-19 has been significantly larger and has impacted different sectors of the economy[2] - for example, businesses operating in industries such as accommodations, retail trade, and information & cultural & recreation.

Together these characteristics and clear unequal impacts have prompted discussions around a "she-cession"[3], and addressing this labour force impact has been prioritized as a requirement for economic recovery. Locally, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce has published the "She-Covery Project" report as a way to outline strategies to promote economic recovery and employment equity[4].

The current report sheds light on gender-focused, local labour force data prior to the pandemic in addition to employment impacts resulting from the pandemic. It is our hope that these insights on the local population, in addition to specific local impacts, will help shape and inform the decisions made moving forward to support communities and individuals in Niagara.

Notably, this report aligns with the current priorities of Regional Council. In September of 2019, Niagara region joined the Coalition for Inclusive Municipalities and is now counted among 77 Canadian communities that are dedicated to building progressive policies that will accept all people as equal citizens. The Region also formed a Women's Advisory Committee which advises on policy development and actions across the region. These decisions from local government demonstrate clear priority for activities that actively promote gender equity. It is our hope that this report provides insight for all those striving towards gender equity in Niagara.

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1   RBC Economics, Pandemic Threatens Decades of Women's Labour Force Gains, July 16, 2020.
2   ibid.
3   Donald, F., Yalnizyan, A., & Galloway, M. (March 30, 2020). The Current [radio broadcast]. CBC. https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/the-current-for-march-30-2020-1.5514566.
4   Dessanti, C. (2020). The she-covery project: Confronting the gendered economic impacts of COVID-19 in Ontairo. https://occ.ca/wp-content/uploads/OCC-shecovery-final.pdf

ABOUT NWPB

Niagara Workforce Planning Board (NWPB) is one of 26 regional planning boards in Ontario making up the Local Boards Network, and one of 9 boards making up the Workforce Planning West Network.

NWPB is Niagara's trusted community partner, providing data and insight in support of a diverse and talented workforce that contributes to a prosperous community. Our work prepares the Niagara community for the workforce challenges and opportunities of today and the future.

OUR VISION

A diverse and talented regional workforce contributing to a prosperous community.

OUR MISSION

We support our local community organizations by:
- Bringing objective, accurate, and future-focused workforce research to enhance planning and decision making;
- Working in partnership across Niagara to address workforce development challenges and find solutions.

OUR VALUES

- *We listen*
- *We are collaborative*
- *We do the right thing*
- *We are community focused*
- *We are inclusive*
- *We are future aware*

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EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this project is to produce a Niagara Labour Market Report from a gendered perspective. A note on gender definitions: most gender data used in this report are derived from Statistics Canada. At present, Statistics Canada's surveys define gender along binary lines. These definitions are beyond NWPB's ability to control.

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased focus on gender equity in the labour force. While both men and women experienced significant employment loss, the impact on men and women has been disproportionate. These impacts are put into context when we consider that in 2019, the local labour force was **52.2%** men and **47.8%** women. Pre-pandemic employment indicators shows that more men than women are represented in full-time employment (**56.7%** vs **43.3%** respectively) and more women than men are represented in part-time employment (**65.5%** vs **34.5%**). Men also tend to have higher rates of participation, employment, and unemployment than women.

Educational data for the labour force show that more women than men report having a **college diploma** or **university degree** as their highest level of education. Census data show that the top three areas of study for Niagara's labour force were architecture, engineering, and related fields (**94.0%** men); business, management, and public administration (**62.6%** women); and health and related fields (**81.2%** women). These fields of study line up well with local employment trends. Throughout 2019 the top areas of work were 1) sales & service occupations; 2) trades, transport, & equipment operators; 3) business, finance, & administration occupations; 4) education, law & social community, & government occupations; and 5) health occupations.

Employment impacts due to the COVID-19 pandemic were large for both men and women. The initial employment decreases, however, were larger for women than men, and employment recovery since May 2020 was slower for women than men. Some occupations that were hard hit

comprise a workforce that is a majority women and represent large areas of local employment (e.g., sales and service occupations). In contrast, some occupations with employment recovery were areas where men tend to report employment (e.g., manufacturing and utilities). We can also examine type of employment (full- vs part-time). Overall, part-time work was more heavily impacted than full-time work throughout the pandemic. Some occupations that were impacted quite significantly include high levels of part-time work (e.g., sales and service occupations) and are still slowly recovering.

Moving forward, it is important to support re-entry to employment for workers that were displaced throughout the pandemic. Survey work conducted by NWPB provide insights from the local workforce on this topic. In 2019, we saw that two main factors that men and women considered most when seeking employment were **compensation** and **meaningfulness of work**. Barriers to finding employment throughout the pandemic included a lack of job posts/ opportunities in 1) a field of desired employment, 2) a geography of desired employment. NWPB anticipates continuing to update these data in future project work, and as Census 2021 data become available.

SECTION 1: NIAGARA'S POPULATION

To gain insight on any local labour market information – including gender representation and the impacts of COVID-19 on local employment – it is important to understand who lives and works in Niagara.

Over the past 14 years, Niagara has experienced fairly steady population growth (see Figure 1-1). In addition to overall population growth, the relative representation of men and women in Niagara has remained fairly stable across time.

FIGURE 1-1: NIAGARA REGION POPULATION GROWTH, 2006-2019[1]
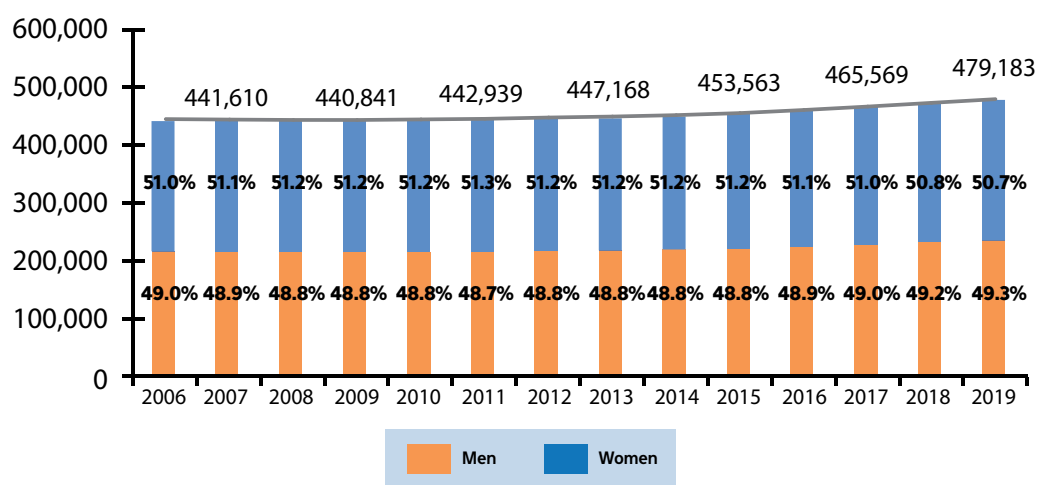
When we examine age characteristics of Niagara's population, in 2019 almost 64% of local residents were between the ages of 15 and 64 – the prime working age population. Of those aged 15 to 64, 50.2% are men and 49.8% are women.

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1   Source: Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0139-01 Population estimates, July 1, by census division, 2016 boundaries.

Specific insights on the local labour force (i.e., those aged 15 years and older) are available from Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey. These data shed light on individuals living in the St. Catharines-Niagara Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)[2].

When we look at labour force indicators from the Labour Force Survey, it is important to have a clear definition on what these indicators actually tell us. Table 1-2 defines the key labour market indicators that are used throughout the duration of this report.

TABLE 1-2: LABOUR FORCE INDICATOR DEFINITIONS[3]

	Definition
Employed	Any individual who either **has a job** or is **engaged in self-employment** is considered **employed**. Since no person aged 14 years or younger can legally work in Canada, the labour force survey only looks at people aged 15 years or older.
Unemployed	Any individual who is **neither currently employed** nor **engaged in self-employment**, but is actively **looking for work** is considered **unemployed**. This also **includes any individual who has been temporarily laid off**.
Labour force	The labour force is, quite simply, the **total of all employed and unemployed people**.
Not in the labour force	Anyone who is both **not employed** and **not looking for work** is considered to be **not in the labour force**. This includes **full-time students** or **retired individuals**. Anyone engaged in **unpaid family care** is also included in this category.
Participation rate	The percentage of a working age population (i.e. aged 15 years or older) that is in the labour force.
Employment rate	The percentage of a working age population that is employed.
Unemployment rate	The percentage of people **in the labour force** that is **unemployed**.

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2   This level of geography differs slightly from the Niagara region as it does not include Grimsby or West Lincoln. These exclusions are based on Statistics Canada definitions and are based on commuting patterns which places Grimsby in Hamilton's CMA and West Lincoln in non-CMA Ontario.
3   Source: Statistics Canada. "Guide to the Labour Force Survey, 2018". Retrieved from https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/71-543-g/71-543-g2018001-eng.htm.

These labour force indicators are outlined in Table 1-3. Though these data are for Niagara as a whole, we can also assess labour force indicators for men and women living in Niagara (see Figure 1-4).

TABLE 1-3: LABOUR FORCE INDICATORS, ST. CATHARINES-NIAGARA CMA, 2019[4]

Labour force indicators, 2019	Total
Labour force	211,800
Employment	199,600
Full-time employment	*154,700*
Part-time employment	*44,900*
Unemployment	12,200
Not in labour force	145,600

Figure 1-4 shows that, throughout 2019, the number of people in the labour force and the number of people reporting being employed was fairly evenly split in terms of representation of men and women. When we break employment down into full- and part-time employment, we start to see some gender differences.

FIGURE 1-4: LABOUR FORCE INDICATORS, ST. CATHARINES-NIAGARA CMA, 2019[5]
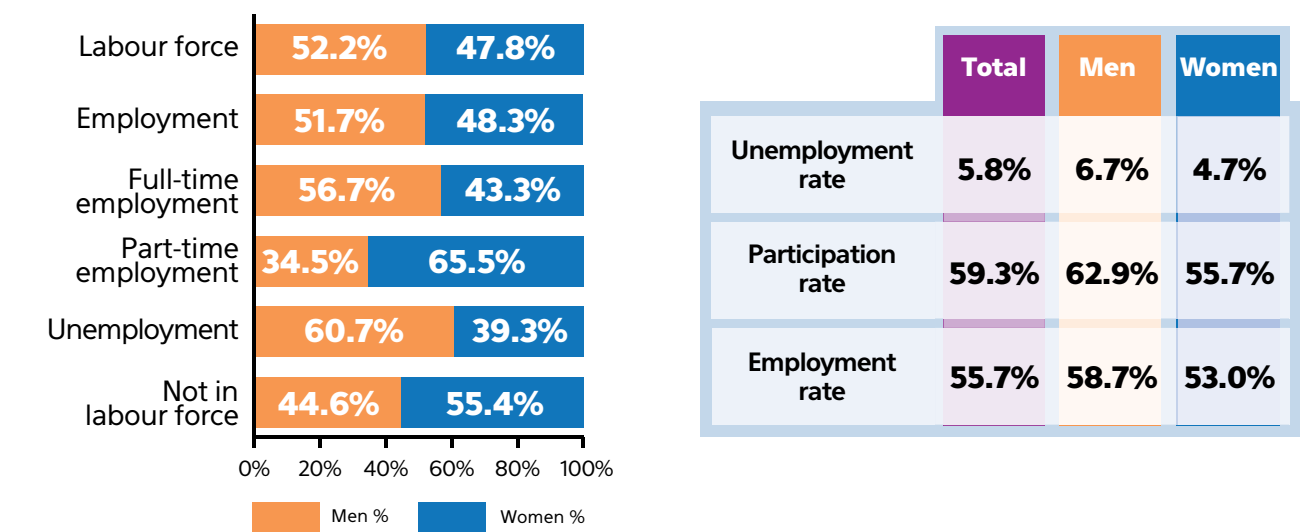
	Total	Men	Women
Unemployment rate	5.8%	6.7%	4.7%
Participation rate	59.3%	62.9%	55.7%
Employment rate	55.7%	58.7%	53.0%

4   Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey, Table: 14-10-0096-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0129).
5   Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey, Table: 14-10-0096-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0129).

Full-time employment in Niagara represented approximately 77.5% of all employment in 2019. Within full-time employment, 56.7% of full-time employment was reported by men while 43.3% was reported by women. Part-time employment in Niagara represented approximately 22.5% of all employment throughout 2019. However, gender breakdowns show that 34.5% of part-time employment was for men while 65.5% of part-time employment was for women.

Other key indicators show that the number of individuals reporting unemployment throughout 2019 tended to be men (60.7%) while individuals reporting that they were not in the labour force were more often women (55.4%). Together, these general trends result in unemployment, participation, and employment rates that are higher for men in Niagara than women.

These trends are similar to those we saw throughout 2019 in both Ontario and Canada as a whole (see Table 1-5).

TABLE 1-5: 2019 LABOUR FORCE INDICATORS, ST. CATHARINES-NIAGARA CMA, ONTARIO, CANADA[6]

Labour force characteristics	St.C-N CMA		Ontario		Canada	
	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %	Men %	Women %
Labour force	52.2%	47.8%	52.3%	47.7%	52.6%	47.4%
Employment	51.7%	48.3%	52.3%	47.7%	52.4%	47.6%
Full-time employment	56.7%	43.3%	55.8%	44.2%	56.3%	43.7%
Part-time employment	34.5%	65.5%	36.6%	63.4%	35.7%	64.3%
Unemployment	60.7%	39.3%	53.5%	46.5%	56.0%	44.0%
Not in labour force	44.6%	55.4%	42.5%	57.5%	43.0%	57.0%
Unemployment rate	6.7%	4.7%	5.7%	5.4%	6.0%	5.3%
Participation rate	62.9%	55.7%	69.6%	60.7%	70.1%	61.4%
Employment rate	58.7%	53.0%	65.7%	57.4%	65.9%	58.2%

These 2019 data should be treated as a baseline for any impacts seen from COVID-19. These data are important because they allow us to compare gendered impacts seen throughout the pandemic to the state of the local labour for prior to the pandemic. These pandemic-related impacts are outlined in Section 5 of this report.

SECTION 2: LABOUR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

While Section 1 outlined data on labour force indicators in Niagara, Section 2 provides more insight on characteristics of the labour force from a gendered perspective. Specifically, this section highlights:

- **Gender and age breakdowns**
- **Level of education for employed individuals in Niagara**
- **Participation, employment, and unemployment rates by level of education**
- **Fields of study for Niagara's labour force**

Data presented in Section 1 of this report outlined general labour force characteristics. When we examine specific age cohorts of the labour force, men are slightly more represented in each age cohort than women (see Figure 2-1).

FIGURE 2-1: LABOUR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS, ST. CATHARINES-NIAGARA CMA, 2019[7]

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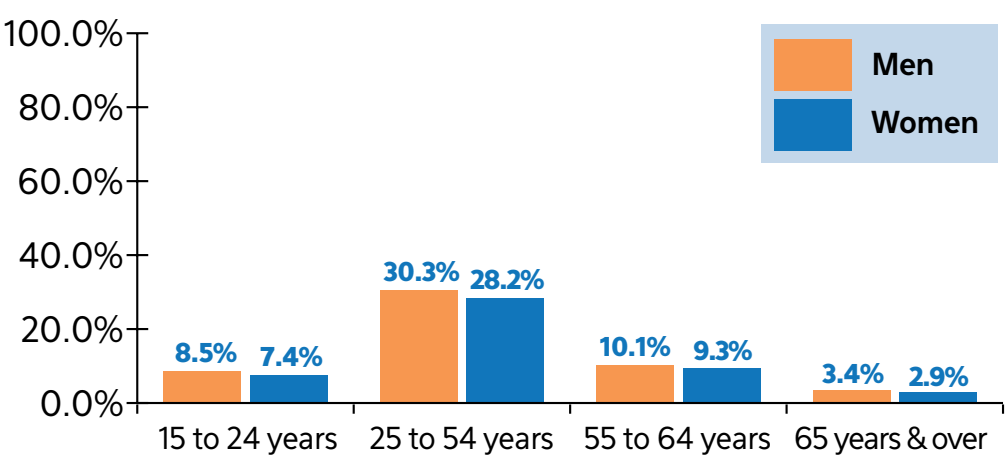
7   Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0096-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, annual (x 1,000).

Educational data for the local labour force are available from the 2016 census (see Figure 2-2). These data show that more men than women report having either no certificate, diploma, or degree; a high school diploma; or a trades certificate as their highest level of education. In contrast, more women than men reported having either a college diploma or a university degree as their highest level of education:.

FIGURE 2-2: LEVEL OF EDUCATION, EMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS LIVING IN NIAGARA, 2016[8]
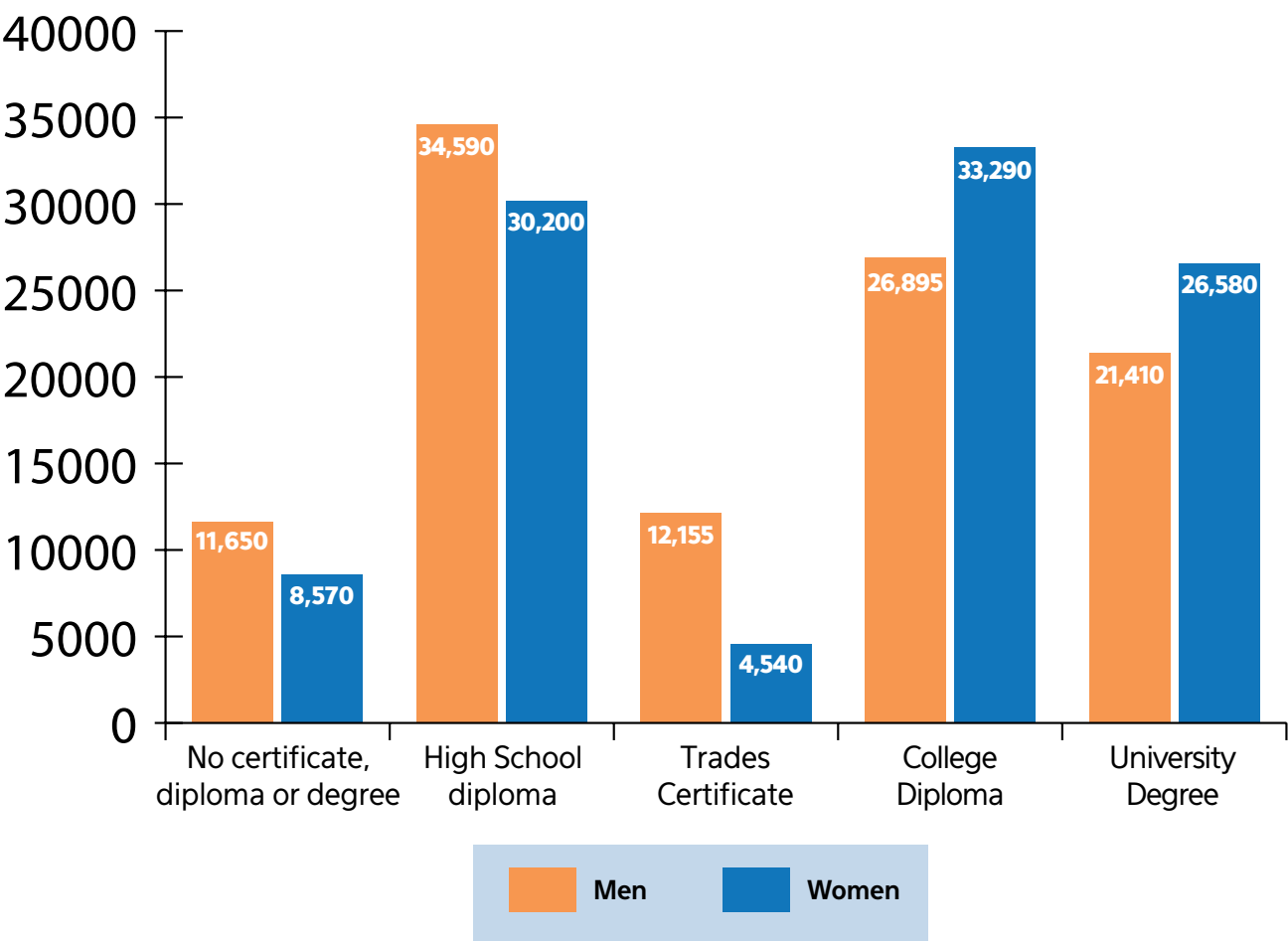
When we examine labour force indicators for individuals with these different levels of education, generally we see that the employment rate tends to increase with level of education. Figure 2-3 shows that women tend to report lower employment rates than men across all levels of education except for those with a university certificate, diploma, or degree.

8   Statistics Canada, 2016 Census, Niagara Census Division, Custom Tabulation.

FIGURE 2-3: EMPLOYMENT RATES, NIAGARA, 2015[9]
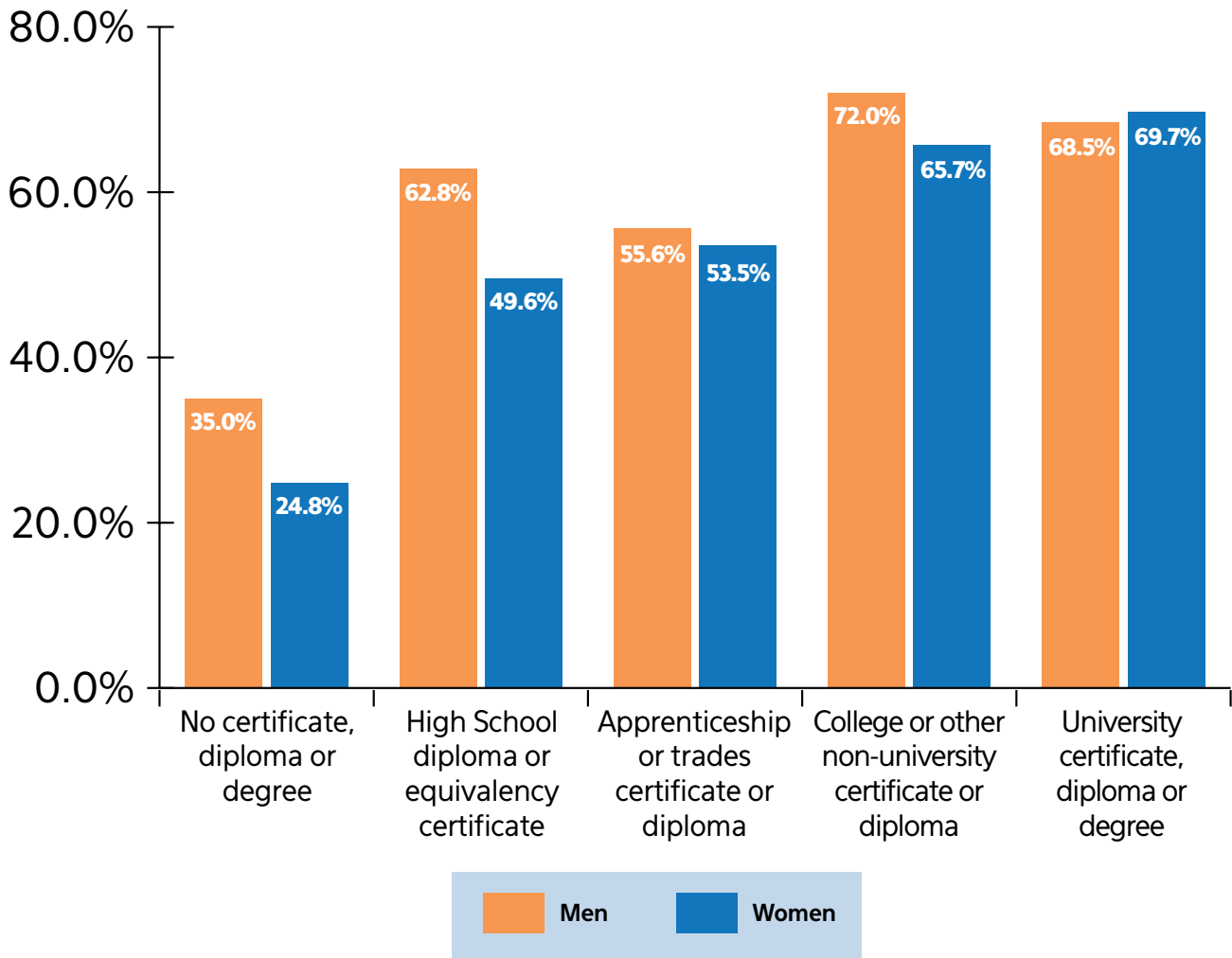
Thus far, these data indicate that while there is fairly equal representation of men (52.2%) and women (47.8%) in the local labour force, there are differences in the ways in which Niagara residents are engaged in the labour force. This is reflected in men having higher participation, employment, and unemployment rates than women. Potential reasons for these labour force differences are discussed throughout Section 6 of this report.

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9   Statistics Canada, 2016 Census, Niagara Census Division, Custom Tabulation.

SECTION 3: WORKFORCE EXPERTISE, AND OCCUPATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Part of understanding characteristics of the local labour force include knowing their educational backgrounds (see Section 2), but also their field of expertise and areas of employment.

Figure 3-1 outlines the major fields of study for Niagara's population aged 15 years and older. The top three areas in terms of educational background are:

- **Architecture, engineering, and related technologies**
- **Business, management, and public administration**
- **Health and related fields**

FIGURE 3-1: MAJOR FIELD OF STUDY, POPULATION 15 YEARS AND OLDER, NIAGARA, 2016[10]

Field of study	Population
Architecture; engineering; and related technologies	40,110
Business; management and public administration	35,290
Health and related fields	31,735
Social and behavioural sciences and law	20,810
Personal; protective and transportation service	15,685
Education	13,370
Humanities	9,415
Visual and performing arts; and communications technologies	6,610
Physical and life sciences and technologies	5,405
Mathematics; computer and information sciences	5,385
Agriculture; natural resources and conservation	3,920

Gender breakdowns for these major fields of study show that the majority of individuals with a background in architecture, engineering, and related studies are men (94.0%). In contrast, we see the largest share of individuals with backgrounds in business, management and public administration; and health and related fields are women (62.6% and 81.2% respectively).

When we compare the local labour force's areas of expertise to local employment, we see some themes emerge. Figure 3-3 shows that in Niagara, the largest areas of employment throughout 2019 were:

- **Sales and service occupations**
- **Trades, transport, and equipment operators**
- **Business, finance, and administration occupations**
- **Education, law and social community, and government occupations**
- **Health occupations**

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11   Source: 2016 census, Niagara region, custom data tabulation.

FIGURE 3-3: OCCUPATION DATA[12]

TOP 5 OCCUPATIONS OF EMPLOYMENT, NIAGARA 2019

Occupation	
Sales & service occupations	64,100
Trades, transport & equipment operators	31,600
Business, finance & administration occupations	24,800
Education, law & social, community & government	17,800
Health occupations	16,700
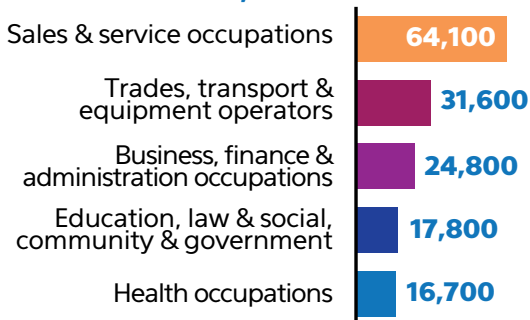
GENDER BREAKDOWN, ONTARIO 2019

Occupation	Men %	Women %
Sales & service occupations	46.2%	53.8%
Trades, transport & equipment operators	92.7%	7.3%
Business, finance & administration occupations	32.7%	67.3%
Education, law & social, community & government	29.8%	70.2%
Health occupations	21.4%	78.6%

Consistent with the educational data outlined in Section 2, more men than women report employment (and highest level of education) in trades occupations. Figure 3-3 shows that more women than men report employment in business and finances jobs and in healthcare-related employment which is consistent with the field of study data presented in Figure 3-2.

WORKFORCE INSIGHTS
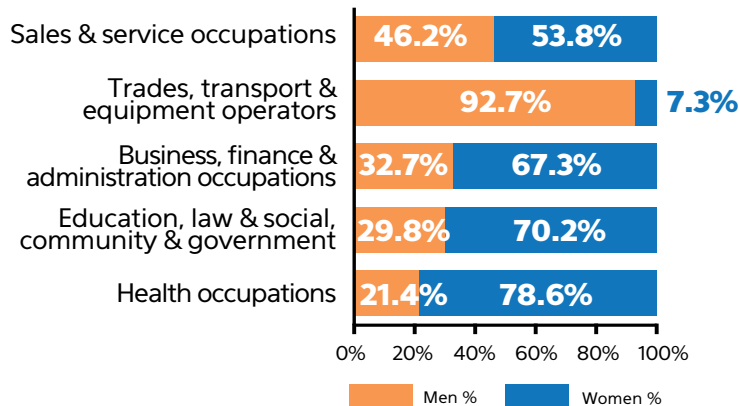
In 2019, NWPB conducted a Labour Market Insights survey. Part of this survey focused on individuals' experiences with alignment of their training and work.

While this survey is not necessarily a representative sample of all employed individuals in Niagara, these data do reflect the experiences of 141 employed Niagara residents (64% women).

How often is your job aligned with your education, training, or experience?
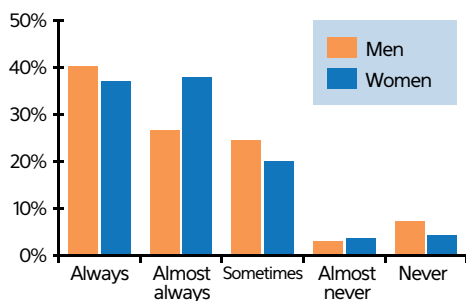
How important to you is using your education, training, or experience in your job?

Very Important

55.9% of men

58.2% of women

Important

44.1% of men

37.4% of women
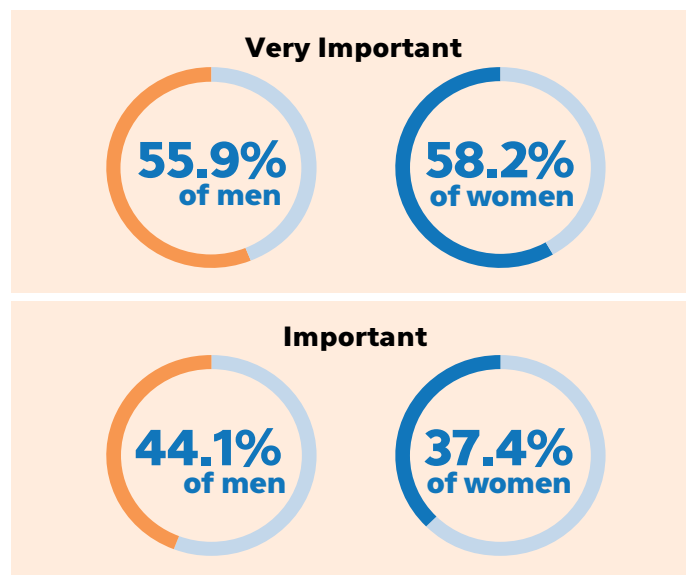
12   Sources: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0314-01 Employment by census metropolitan areas and occupation, annual (x 1,000)). Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0335-01 Labour force characteristics by occupation, annual. Note that 2019 gender breakdowns by occupation are available from provincial or national-level data only.

SECTION 4: OCCUPATION CHARACTERISTICS

While Section 3 outlined the field of study and occupations of employment for Niagara residents, Section 4 dives into the characteristics of these occupations in Niagara.

To reiterate, the top areas of employment in Niagara are in the following occupations:

- **Sales and service occupations**
- **Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations**
- **Business, finance, and administration occupations**
- **Education, law and social community, and government occupations**
- **Health occupations**

Figure 4-1, on the following page, outlines whether these jobs are typically part-time or full-time employment. These data show that the percentage of full- and part-time work tends to differ by occupation.

FIGURE 4-1: TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT, NIAGARA 2016 CENSUS[13]

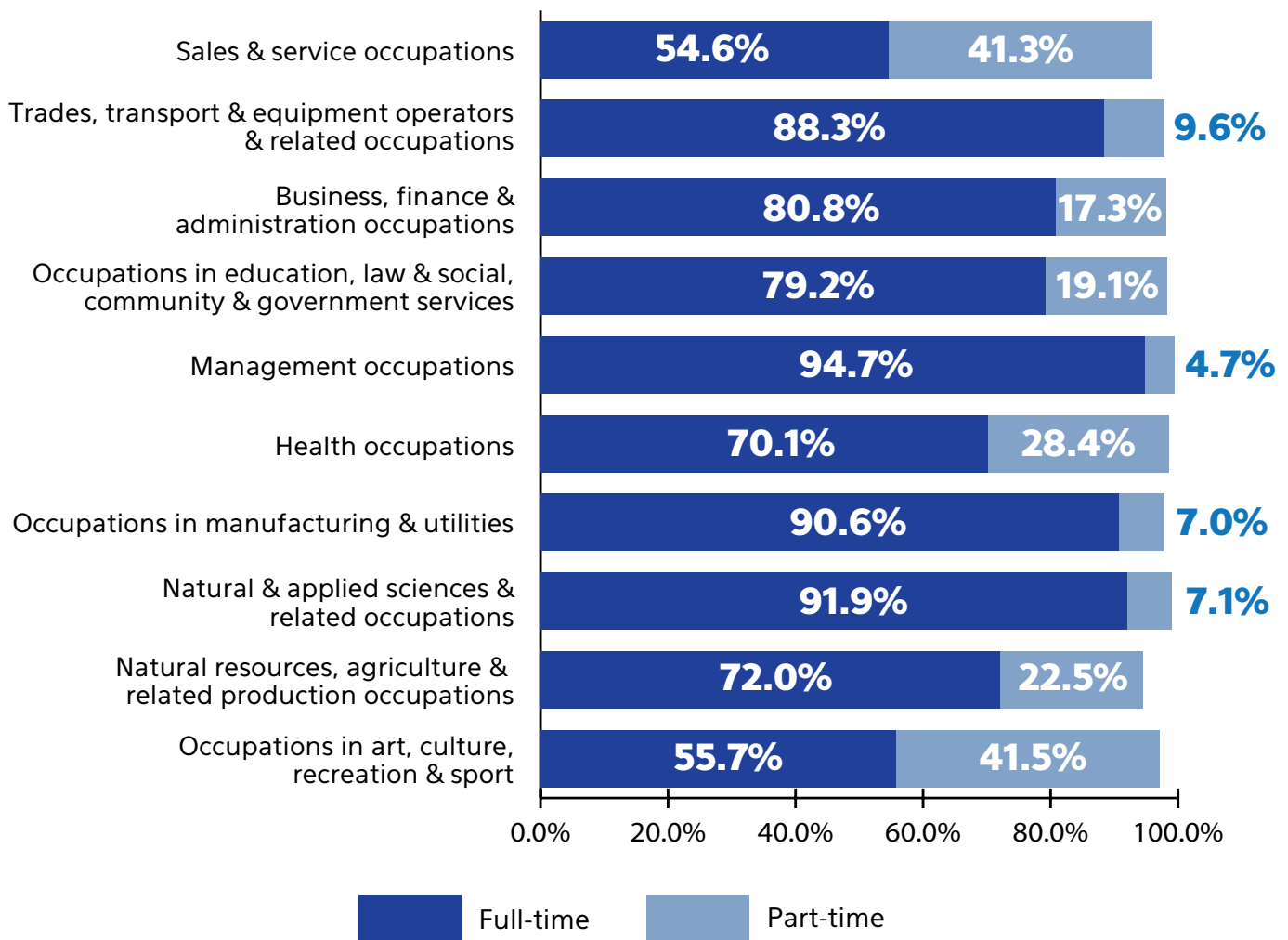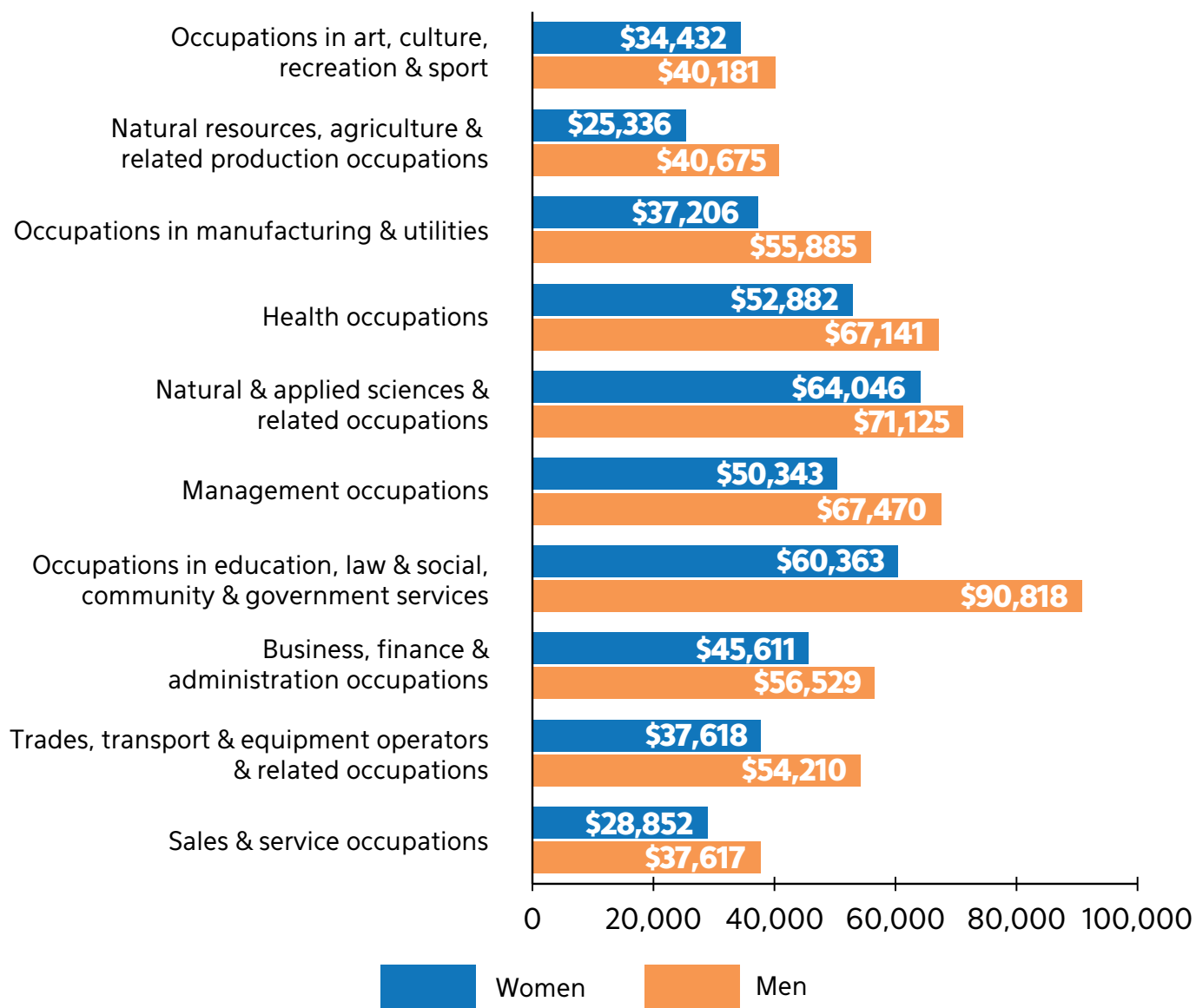| Occupation	Full-time	Part-time
Sales & service occupations	54.6%	41.3%
Trades, transport & equipment operators & related occupations	88.3%	9.6%
Business, finance & administration occupations	80.8%	17.3%
Occupations in education, law & social, community & government services	79.2%	19.1%
Management occupations	94.7%	4.7%
Health occupations	70.1%	28.4%
Occupations in manufacturing & utilities	90.6%	7.0%
Natural & applied sciences & related occupations	91.9%	7.1%
Natural resources, agriculture & related production occupations	72.0%	22.5%
Occupations in art, culture, recreation & sport	55.7%	41.5%

Figure 4-2 outlines median wages for individuals that reported full time employment throughout 2015. Across all occupations, we see that the median full-time income for men is higher than it is for women.

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13   Source: 2016 census, custom data tabulation. Note: percentages do not always equal 100% as some people reported they were employed but did not work in 2015.

FIGURE 4-2: FULL-TIME MEDIAN EMPLOYMENT INCOME FOR MEN AND WOMEN, NIAGARA 2015[14]

Occupation	Women	Men
Occupations in art, culture, recreation & sport	$34,432	$40,181
Natural resources, agriculture & related production occupations	$25,336	$40,675
Occupations in manufacturing & utilities	$37,206	$55,885
Health occupations	$52,882	$67,141
Natural & applied sciences & related occupations	$64,046	$71,125
Management occupations	$50,343	$67,470
Occupations in education, law & social, community & government services	$60,363	$90,818
Business, finance & administration occupations	$45,611	$56,529
Trades, transport & equipment operators & related occupations	$37,618	$54,210
Sales & service occupations	$28,852	$37,617

14   Source: Statistics Canada census 2016, custom tabulation.

The characteristics on the previous page are important to understand, because it starts to allow us to see where gender breakdowns fall within occupations. When we consider the top three areas of employment, we see the following characteristics:

- **Sales & service occupations**
  - 64,100 Niagara residents were employed in these jobs in 2019
  - 54.6% of employment was for full-time work in 2015
  - Provincial gender breakdowns indicate that 53.8% of people employed in these jobs are women
  - Median income for full-time employment is lower for women than men

- **Trades, transport & equipment operators**
  - 31,600 Niagara residents were employed in these jobs in 2019
  - 88.3% of employment was for full-time work in 2015
  - Provincial gender breakdowns indicate that 92.7% of people employed in these occupations are men
  - Median income for full-time employment is lower for women than men

- **Business, finance, and administration**
  - 24,800 Niagara residents were employed in these jobs in 2019
  - 80.8% of employment was for full-time work in 2015
  - Provincial gender breakdowns indicate that 67.3% of people employed in these occupations are women
  - Median income for full-time employment is lower for women than men

A solid understanding of these occupational characteristics is important when examining the impacts of COVID-19 on local employment for men and women. Section 5 outlines the impacts of COVID-19 on local employment trends.

SECTION 5: COVID-19'S IMPACT
ON EMPLOYMENT — GENDER & AGE FOCUS

Every month, Statistics Canada releases data from the Labour Force Survey. These data allow us to examine changes in key labour force characteristics for Niagara. Given the current context of COVID-19, Figure 5-1 and Table 5-2 outlines monthly data for 2020 and compares them to trends seen in 2019.

Figure 5-1 shows that, compared to 2019, employment decreased between February and May 2020, and has been slowly increasing since May.

FIGURE 5-1: ST. CATHARINES-NIAGARA CMA, EMPLOYMENT COUNTS, 2019 AND 2020[15]
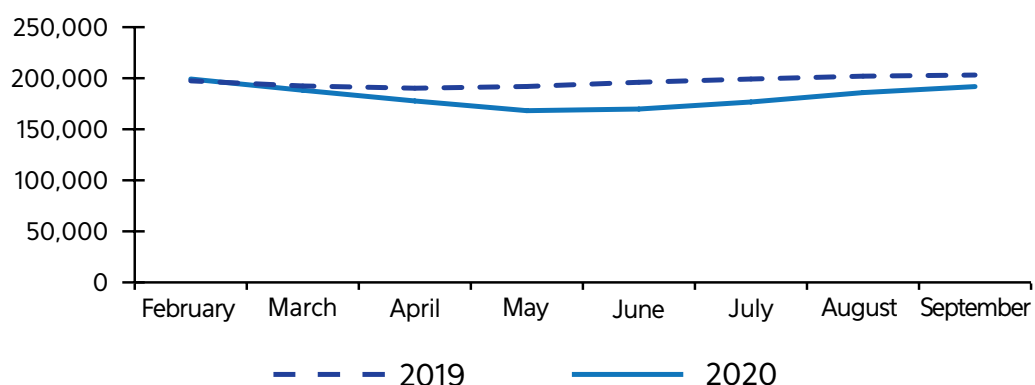
15 Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0095-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality.

Table 5-2 outlines 2019 and 2020 data for all key labour force indicators. The months of February, May, and September are used in for the following reasons:

- **February was the month prior to provincial and national shutdowns of non-essential businesses in 2020,**
- **May provides data which represent the start of business re-openings in 2020,**
- **September is the most recent data available at the time of this report.**

TABLE 5-2: ST. CATHARINES-NIAGARA CMA, CURRENT AND HISTORICAL TRENDS – SEASONALLY UNADJUSTED[16]

Labour force characteristics	2019			2020		
	February	May	September	February	May	September
Labour force	212,200	204,500	215,500	211,600	193,300	210,200
Employment	197,400	191,900	203,100	199,200	168,200	191,800
Full-time employment	153,200	148,200	158,300	152,900	132,600	150,000
Part-time employment	44,100	43,600	44,900	46,400	35,600	41,800
Unemployment	14,800	12,600	12,300	12,400	25,100	18,400
Not in the labour force	142.8	151.7	142,600	148,300	167,500	151,300
Unemployment rate	7.0%	6.2%	5.7%	5.9%	13.0%	8.8%
Participation rate	59.8%	57.4%	60.2%	58.8%	53.6%	58.1%
Employment rate	55.6%	53.9%	56.7%	55.3%	46.6%	53.1%

Table 5-3 outlines the monthly changes that were observed in 2019 and 2020. Together these data indicate the impacts of COVID-19 on employment within the context of 2019 trends. While in some instances the direction of change is the same, the magnitude of the changes seen in 2020 is much larger than trends experienced last year.

16   Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0095-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality.

TABLE 5-3: ST. CATHARINES-NIAGARA CMA, MONTHLY LABOUR FORCE CHANGES – SEASONALLY UNADJUSTED[17]

Labour force characteristics	2019					
	February - May		May - September		February - September	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Labour force	-7,700	-3.6%	11,000	5.4%	3,300	1.6%
Employment	-5,500	-2.8%	11,200	5.8%	5,700	2.9%
Full-time employment	-5,000	-3.3%	10,100	6.8%	5,100	3.3%
Part-time employment	-500	-1.1%	1,300	3.0%	800	1.8%
Unemployment	-2,200	-14.9%	-300	-2.4%	-2,500	-16.9%
Not in the labour force	8,900	6.2%	-9,100	-6.0%	-200	-0.1%
2020						
Labour force	-18,300	-8.6%	16,900	8.7%	-1,400	-0.7%
Employment	-31,000	-15.6%	23,600	14.0%	-7,400	-3.7%
Full-time employment	-20,300	-13.3%	17,400	13.1%	-2,900	-1.9%
Part-time employment	-10,800	-23.3%	6,200	17.4%	-4,600	-9.9%
Unemployment	12,700	102.4%	-6,700	-26.7%	6,000	48.4%
Not in the labour force	19,200	12.9%	-16,200	-9.7%	3,000	2.0%

Gendered breakdowns of the above data show that impacts on employment for men and women have not been equal. Figure 5-4 shows that both men and women experienced large employment decreases throughout 2020. However, employment decreases were larger for women between February and May, and employment recovery since May 2020 has been slower for women than it has been for men.

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17   Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0095-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality.

FIGURE 5-4: EMPLOYMENT IN ST. CATHARINES-NIAGARA CMA THROUGHOUT 2019 AND 2020[18]
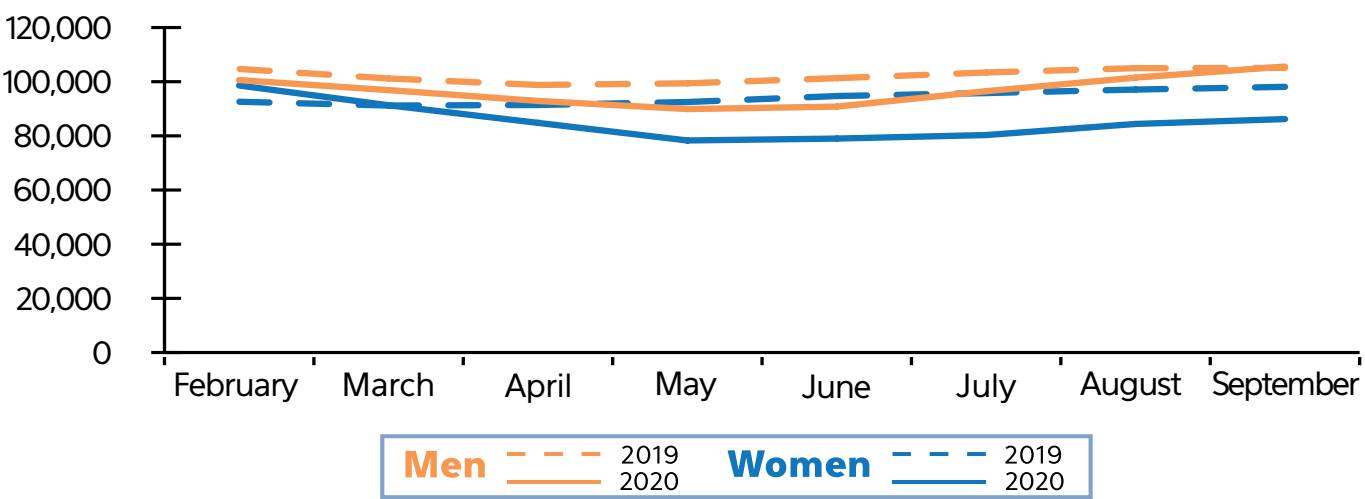

Table 5-5 outlines key labour market indicators for men and women throughout 2020. At the peak of the pandemic in May 2020, the number of people in the labour force decreased by 2.9% for men and 14.6% for women. The number of employed people decreased by 10.6% for men and 20.6% for women. The number of people reporting unemployment increased by 113.2% for men and 89.3% for women. Finally, the number of people not in the labour force increased by 5.7% for men and 19.6% for women.

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18   Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0095-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality.

TABLE 5-5: 2020 LABOUR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS, ST. CATHARINES-NIAGARA CMA[19]

Labour force indicators		February	May	September
Labour force	**Total**	**211,600**	**193,300**	**210,200**
	Men	107,500	104,400	115,500
	Women	104,100	88,900	94,600
Employment	**Total**	**199,200**	**168,200**	**191,800**
	Men	100,600	89,900	105,600
	Women	98,600	78,300	86,200
Unemployment	**Total**	**12,400**	**25,100**	**18,400**
	Men	6,800	14,500	9,900
	Women	5,600	10,600	8,500
Not in the labour force	**Total**	**148,300**	**167,500**	**151,300**
	Men	71,700	75,800	67,100
	Women	76,600	91,600	84,200
Labour force indicators		**Feb-May**	**May-Sept**	**Feb-Sept**
Labour force	**Total**	**-18,300**	**16,900**	**-1,400**
	Men	-3,100	11,100	8,000
	Women	-15,200	5,700	-9,500
Employment	**Total**	**-31,000**	**23,600**	**-7,400**
	Men	-10,700	15,700	5,000
	Women	-20,300	7,900	-12,400
Unemployment	**Total**	**12,700**	**-6,700**	**6,000**
	Men	7,700	-4,600	3,100
	Women	5,000	-2,100	2,900
Not in the labour force	**Total**	**19,200**	**-16,200**	**3,000**
	Men	4,100	-8,700	-4,600
	Women	15,000	-7,400	7,600

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19   Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0095-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality.

While Table 5-5 outlines the raw changes in these labour force indicators, Table 5-6 provides a breakdown of the share of change for each indicator. For example, when we look at the decrease in employment between February and May (-31,000 employed individuals), 65.5% of the decrease was experienced by women while 34.5% of the decrease was experienced by men.

TABLE 5-6. LABOUR FORCE INDICATOR CHANGES – SHARE OF CHANGE ATTRIBUTED TO MEN AND WOMEN, ST. CATHARINES-NIAGARA CMA[20]

Labour force indicators		Feb-May	May-Sept	Feb-Sept
Labour force	**Total**	**-18,300**	**16,900**	**-1,400**
	Men	-16.9%	65.7%	571.4%
	Women	-83.1%	33.7%	-678.6%
Employment	**Total**	**-31,000**	**23,600**	**-7,400**
	Men	-34.5%	66.5%	67.6%
	Women	-65.5%	33.5%	-167.6%
Unemployment	**Total**	**12,700**	**-6,700**	**6,000**
	Men	60.6%	-68.7%	51.7%
	Women	39.4%	-31.3%	48.3%
Not in the labour force	**Total**	**19,200**	**-16,200**	**3,000**
	Men	21.4%	-53.7%	-153.3%
	Women	78.1%	-45.7%	253.3%

While we see unequal impacts by gender, different age groups also experienced varying impacts of the pandemic. These data provide more insight into specific demographic groups that would likely benefit from policies and targeted strategies aimed to help with employment recovery.

Tables 5-7 and 5-8 outline gender and age impacts for employment and people not in the labour force - two indicators that have received substantial attention throughout the pandemic given their relevance to strategies for helping individuals return to work.

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20   Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0095-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality.

Table 5-7 shows us that much of the employment decrease in Niagara between February and May was experienced by women aged 25 to 54 (**37.4%**) and men aged 25-54 (**22.3%**). Employment increases between May and September were largely experienced by men aged 25-54 (**31.4%**) and 55-64 (**22.5%**).

Overall employment decreased between February and September. This trend was largely carried by three cohorts:

- **Women aged 15 to 24 (saw a decrease of 3,500 individuals in employment)**
- **Women aged 25 to 54 (saw a decrease of 8,600 individuals in employment)**
- **Women aged 65 years and older (saw a decrease of 3,100 individuals in employment)**

TABLE 5-7: EMPLOYMENT CHANGES – SHARE OF CHANGE BY GENDER AND AGE, ST. CATHARINES-NIAGARA CMA[21]

Labour force indicators			Feb-May	May-Sept	Feb-Sept
Employment		**15+ years**	**-31,000**	**23,600**	**-7,400**
	Men	15-24 years	-7.4%	9.7%	0.0%
		25-54 years	-22.3%	31.4%	6.8%
		55-64 years	-5.2%	22.5%	50.0%
		65+ years	0.3%	3.8%	13.5%
	Women	15-24 years	-14.8%	4.7%	-47.3%
		25-54 years	-37.4%	12.7%	-116.2%
		55-64 years	-6.8%	20.3%	36.5%
		65+ years	-6.5%	-4.7%	-41.9%

21   Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0095-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality.

Table 5-8 outlines changes in the number of people reporting that they are not in the labour force (i.e., they are not employed and are not looking for work). Most of the increase between February and May was experienced by women aged 65 years and older (28.1%), women aged 15 to 24 (20.3%), and men aged 65 years and older (16.1%). While we saw the overall number of people not in the labour force decrease between May and September, two demographic cohorts experienced contrasting increases: women aged 65 years and older (17.9%) and men aged 25 to 54 (1.2%).

Overall changes between February and September showed an increase in the number of people not in the labour force. This trend was largely carried by three cohorts:

- **Men aged 25 to 54 (saw an increase of 900 individuals not in the labour force)**
- **Women aged 25 to 54 (saw an increase of 200 individuals not in the labour force)**
- **Women aged 65 years and older (saw an increase of 8,300 individuals not in the labour force)**

TABLE 5-8: NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE CHANGES – SHARE OF CHANGE BY GENDER AND AGE, ST. CATHARINES-NIAGARA CMA[22]

Labour force indicators			Feb-May	May-Sept	Feb-Sept
Employment		15+ years	19,200	-16,200	3,000
	Men	15-24 years	7.3%	-30.2%	-116.7%
		25-54 years	3.6%	1.2%	30.0%
		55-64 years	-4.7%	-2.5%	-43.3%
		65+ years	16.1%	-23.5%	-23.3%
	Women	15-24 years	20.3%	-29.0%	-26.7%
		25-54 years	11.5%	-12.3%	6.7%
		55-64 years	17.7%	-21.6%	-3.3%
		65+ years	28.1%	17.9%	276.7%

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22   Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0095-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality.

These labour force changes are likely due to a variety of reasons including occupation/industry of employment, type of employment (full-time vs part-time), and non-work responsibilities. Section 6 provides insight on the multiple factors that may contribute to these trends.
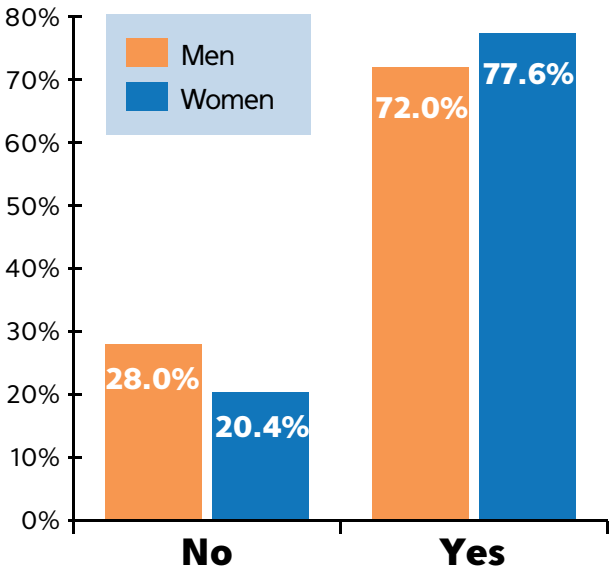
WORKFORCE INSIGHTS

In 2020, NWPB conducted a Labour Market Insights survey. This survey assessed a variety of employment impacts related to COVID-19.

While this survey is not necessarily a representative sample of all employed individuals in Niagara, these data do reflect the experiences of 193 employed Niagara residents (66.8% women).

Did you experience any employment loss between January 2020 and June 2020?

Yes, experienced some form of employment loss

41.0% of men

38.0% of women

No employment loss

59.0% of men

62.0% of women
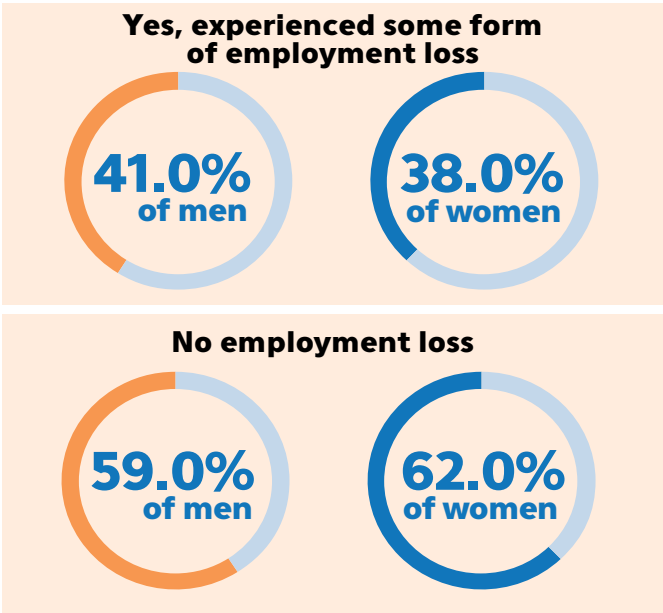
Was this employment disruption related to COVID-19?

Men
Women

No: 28.0% (Men), 20.4% (Women)
Yes: 72.0% (Men), 77.6% (Women)

SECTION 6: DIVING INTO THE UNEQUAL IMPACTS OF COVID-19

Section 5 showed that the impacts of COVID-19 on employment and labour force involvement for men and women have not been equal. Section 6 outlines a variety of factors that may contribute to these differences.

EMPLOYMENT - OCCUPATION

One factor that relates to impacts on employment are the occupations and/or industries in which individuals report employment. Table 6-1 outlines employment trends for occupations that

- **Made up at least 5% of local employment in 2019, and**
- **Experienced an employment decrease of 20% or more between February and May 2020 (red cells), and/or**
- **Experienced an employment increase of 20% or more between May and September 2020 (green cells)**

TABLE 6-1: EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION, MEN AND WOMEN[23]

Occupation	Year	St. Catharines-Niagara CMA, 2020					Ontario, 2019	
		Feb	May	Sept	Feb-May	May-Sept	Male %	Female %
Sales & service occupations	2020	62,500	48,800	51,400	-13,700	2,600	1.6%	5.4%
	2019	62,800	59,600	69,500	-3,200	9,900	2.9%	5.4%
Trades, transport & equipment operators & related occupations	2020	30,700	22,700	25,200	-8,000	2,500	3.3%	6.8%
	2019	32,700	28,400	31,400	-4,300	3,000	1.6%	5.4%
Occupations in manufacturing & utilities	2020	9,300	7,700	12,700	-1,600	5,000	2.9%	5.4%
	2019	9,100	10,100	10,300	1,000	200	3.3%	6.8%

These data indicate the following trends:

- **Sales & service occupations**
  - Employment decrease between February and May 2020 is over four times larger than the decrease seen in 2019
  - September 2020 employment has not recovered to September 2019 levels
  - Annual provincial data indicate the workforce is majority *women*

- **Trades, transport & equipment operators**
  - Employment decrease between February and May 2020 is almost double that seen in 2019
  - September 2020 employment has not recovered to September 2019 levels
  - Annual provincial data indicate the workforce is majority *men*

- **Manufacturing & utilities**
  - Employment decrease between February and May 2020 contrast the increases seen in 2019
  - September 2020 employment surpassed September 2019 employment
  - Annual provincial data indicate the workforce is majority *men*

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23   Sources: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0313-01 Employment by census metropolitan areas and occupation, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality (x 1,000). Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0335-01 Labour force characteristics by occupation, annual.

Together, insight on the three occupations highlighted on the previous page shed some light on areas where employment gains and losses occurred between February and September, and that some employment gains were in occupations where the majority of employment is seen by men.

WORKFORCE INSIGHTS

In 2020, NWPB conducted a Labour Market Insights survey. This survey assessed a variety of employment impacts related to COVID-19.

While this survey is not necessarily a representative sample of all employed individuals in Niagara, these data do reflect the experiences of 193 employed Niagara residents (66.8% women).

Individuals with employment loss between January and June 2020, industry of work:

Women:
- Other services (except public administration)
- Arts, entertainment and recreation
- Accommodation and food service
- Educational Services
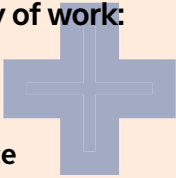
Men:
- Accommodation and food service
- Other services (except public administration)
- Arts, entertainment and recreation
- Manufacturing

Individuals with no employment loss between January and June 2020, industry of work:

Women:
- Health care and social assistance
- Other services (except public administration)
- Public administration
- Educational Services

Men:
- Retail trade
- Construction
- Other services (except public administration)
- Professional, scientific, and technical services

EMPLOYMENT — FULL AND PART-TIME WORK

In addition to the occupation of employment, type of employment within these occupations is important. Overall, local data indicate that individuals working part-time experienced larger proportional employment decreases than individuals working full time (see Table 6-2).

TABLE 6-2: FULL- AND PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT FOR MEN AND WOMEN, ST. CATHARINES-NIAGARA CMA, 2020[24]

Labour force indicators		Feb	May	Sept	Feb-May	May-Sept	Feb-Sept
Full-time employment	**Total**	**152,900**	**132,600**	**150,000**	**-13.3%**	**13.1%**	**-1.9%**
	Men	85,300	77,200	90,300	-9.5%	17.0%	5.9%
	Women	67,600	55,400	59,700	-18.0%	7.8%	-11.7%
Part-time employment	**Total**	**46,400**	**35,600**	**41,800**	**-23.3%**	**17.4%**	**-9.9%**
	Men	15,400	12,700	15,300	-17.5%	20.5%	-0.6%
	Women	31,000	22,900	26,400	-26.1%	15.3%	-14.8%

However, these data can be broken down by occupation and gender at a provincial level as well. Figures 6-3 through 6-5 outline full- and part-time employment impacts for the most impacted occupations outlined above.

Figure 6-3 indicates that men and women working full time in sales and services saw similar employment decreases between February and May (17.3% and 17.6% respectively), and a slow subsequent increase. Between February and May, however, part time workers experienced a 46.6% (men) and 40.3% (women) employment decrease. While employment has steadily increased since May, it has not reached pre-pandemic levels.

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24   Source: Statistics Canada, Table 14-10-0095-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality (x 1,000).

FIGURE 6-3: FULL- AND PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT FOR MEN AND WOMEN, SALES AND SERVICE OCCUPATIONS, ONTARIO 2020[25]
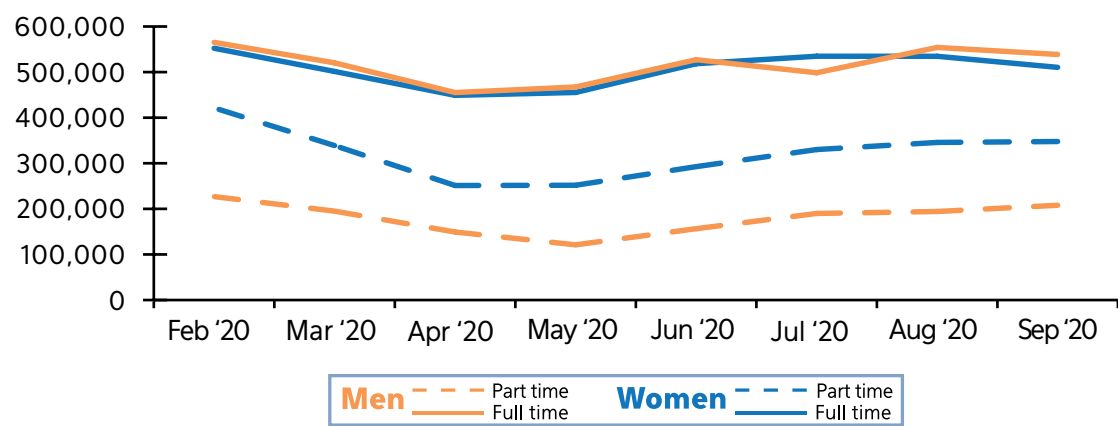

Figure 6-4 outlines these same data for trades, transport, and equipment operators. The majority of employment for this occupation is full time, with men making up the majority of the workforce in this occupation. Men working full or part-time experienced employment decreases between February and September (-1.3% and -8.2% respectively). In contrast, women experienced employment increases during this same period (43.9% increase for full time and 53.3% increase for part time).
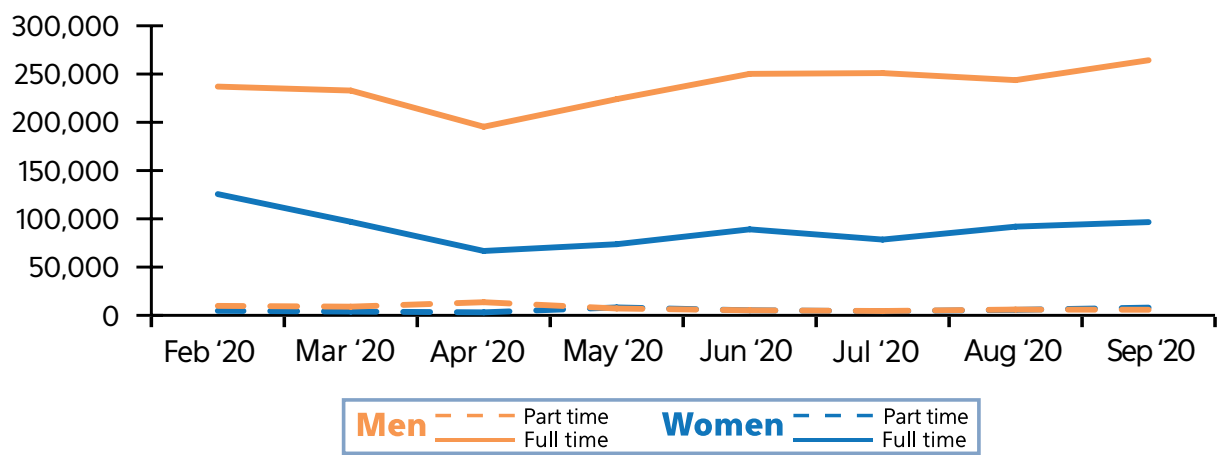
FIGURE 6-4: FULL- AND PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT FOR MEN AND WOMEN, TRADES, TRANSPORT AND EQUIPMENT OPERATORS, ONTARIO 2020[26]

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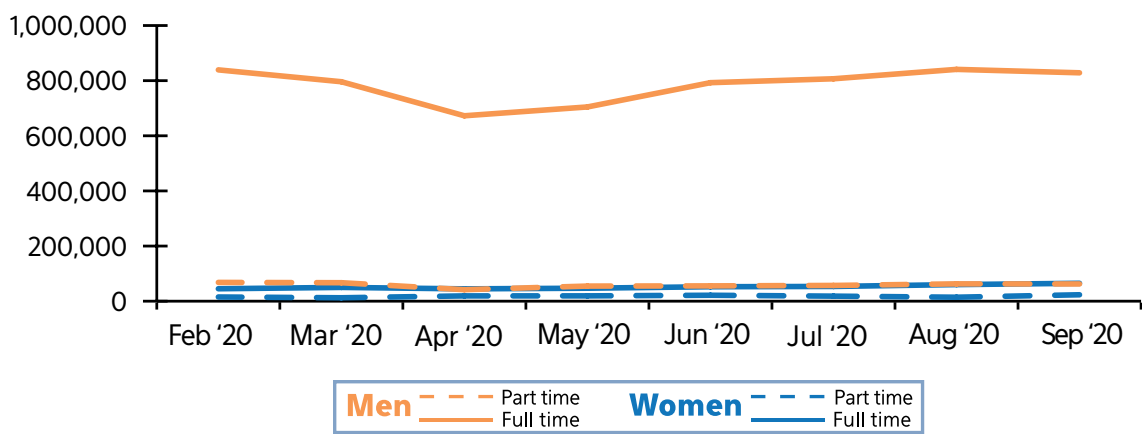
25   Source: Statistics Canada, Labour force characteristics by occupation, monthly, unadjusted for seasonality (x 1,000), Table: 14-10-0296-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0141).

26   Source: Statistics Canada, Labour force characteristics by occupation, monthly, unadjusted for seasonality (x 1,000), Table: 14-10-0296-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0141).

Figure 6-5 outlines employment trends for manufacturing and utility jobs. The majority of employment in these occupations is seen by men. While employment generally decreased between February and May (save for women working part time), data indicate subsequent employment increases. In September, employment counts surpassed levels seen in February only for men working full time, and women working part time.

FIGURE 6-5: FULL- AND PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT FOR MEN AND WOMEN; MANUFACTURING AND UTILITIES, ONTARIO 2020[27]

27   Source: Statistics Canada, Labour force characteristics by occupation, monthly, unadjusted for seasonality (x 1,000), Table: 14-10-0296-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0141).

The above data show that full- and part-time employment were impacted in different ways throughout the pandemic. To gain insight on some of the impacts of working part time, the Labour Force Survey provides individuals' reasons for working part time. Generally, these data include the following reasons for working part time:

- **Own illness**
- **Caring for children**
- **Other personal or family responsibilities**
- **Going to school**
- **Personal preference**
- **Other voluntary reasons**
- **Business conditions, did not look for full-time work in last month**
- **Business conditions, looked for full-time work in last month**
- **Could not find full-time work, did not look for full-time work in last month**
- **Could not find full-time work, did look for full-time work in last month**

To examine how frequently these reasons are reported by the labour force, we calculated the percentage of responses that fell into each category for every month starting in January, 2017. We then averaged these data to see the typical percentage of individuals that indicate each of the following reasons for working part time. To compare 2020 to historical trends, we compared monthly averages between 2017 and 2019 to monthly averages throughout 2020. We also examined whether these reasons differed for men and women.

Monthly data between **January 2017 and December 2019** indicate that the top reasons men age 25-54 worked part time were (see Table 6-6):

- **Business conditions, did not look for full-time work;**
- **Personal preference;** and
- **Going to school.**

Trends for 2020 indicate that the top reasons men age 25-54 worked part time were:

- **Business conditions, did not look for full-time work** (though the response rate for this item was higher in 2020 than 2019)**;**
- **Other voluntary reasons;** and
- **Personal preference.**

TABLE 6-6: REASONS FOR PART-TIME WORK, MEN AGE 25-54, ONTARIO 2017-2020[28]

Reason for part-time work	2017-19 Monthly Average	2020 Monthly average
Business conditions, did not look for full-time work in last month	21.2%	27.4%
Personal preference	17.5%	12.4%
Going to school	15.9%	10.0%
Business conditions, looked for full-time work in last month	11.5%	8.4%
Could not find full-time work, looked for full-time work in last month	7.3%	6.2%
Own illness	7.2%	6.2%
Other voluntary reasons	5.8%	15.4%
Caring for children	5.3%	5.6%
Could not find full-time work, did not look for full-time work in last month	4.4%	4.2%
Other personal or family responsibilities	3.9%	4.5%

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28   Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0028-01 Part-time employment by reason, monthly, unadjusted for seasonality (x 1,000).

Monthly data between **January 2017 and December 2019** indicate that the top reasons women age 25-54 worked part time were (see Table 6-7):

- **Caring for children;**
- **Personal preference;** and
- **Business conditions, did not look for full-time work in last month.**

Trends for 2020 indicate that the top reasons women age 25-54 worked part time were:

- **Caring for children;**
- **Business conditions, did not look for full-time work in last month;** and
- **Personal preference.**

TABLE 6-7: REASONS FOR PART-TIME WORK, WOMEN AGE 25-54, ONTARIO 2017-2020[29]

| Reason for part-time work	2017-19 Monthly Average	2020 Monthly average
Caring for children	25.9%	25.9%
Personal preference	21.0%	16.4%
Business conditions, did not look for full-time work in last month	14.9%	17.3%
Going to school	7.5%	6.8%
Business conditions, looked for full-time work in last month	6.7%	5.8%
Other personal or family responsibilities	6.5%	7.2%
Could not find full-time work, looked for full-time work in last month	5.2%	3.4%
Own illness	4.6%	4.6%
Could not find full-time work, did not look for full-time work in last month	4.2%	3.7%
Other voluntary reasons	3.4%	9.0%

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29   Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0028-01 Part-time employment by reason, monthly, unadjusted for seasonality (x 1,000).

EMPLOYMENT – HOURS WORKED

In addition to type of employment, the Labour Force Survey provides information on the number of hours worked by individuals each month. Figure 6-8 outlines the number of people typically reporting that they work 0 hours, part time (1-29 hours/week), or full time (30+ hours/week). An individual who is employed but working zero hours may be on vacation, sick leave, taking an approved leave of absence, or some other form of employer authorized leave – paid or otherwise. Alternatively, these data can also reflect an individual who is "on call" but did not receive any hours from an employer. It is important to note that an individual who has been laid off **would not** be counted as an employee working zero hours.

Figure 6-8 shows that the number of people working 0 hours between February and May 2020 saw a much larger increase than what we see historically. Both men and women saw a significant increase in the number of people reporting "0 hours worked" between February and March, 2020. Though this indicator also increased during this period in 2019, the magnitude was not as large.

## FIGURE 6-8: 0 HOURS WORKED, MONTHLY CHANGE, MEN AND WOMEN, ONTARIO 2017-2020[30]
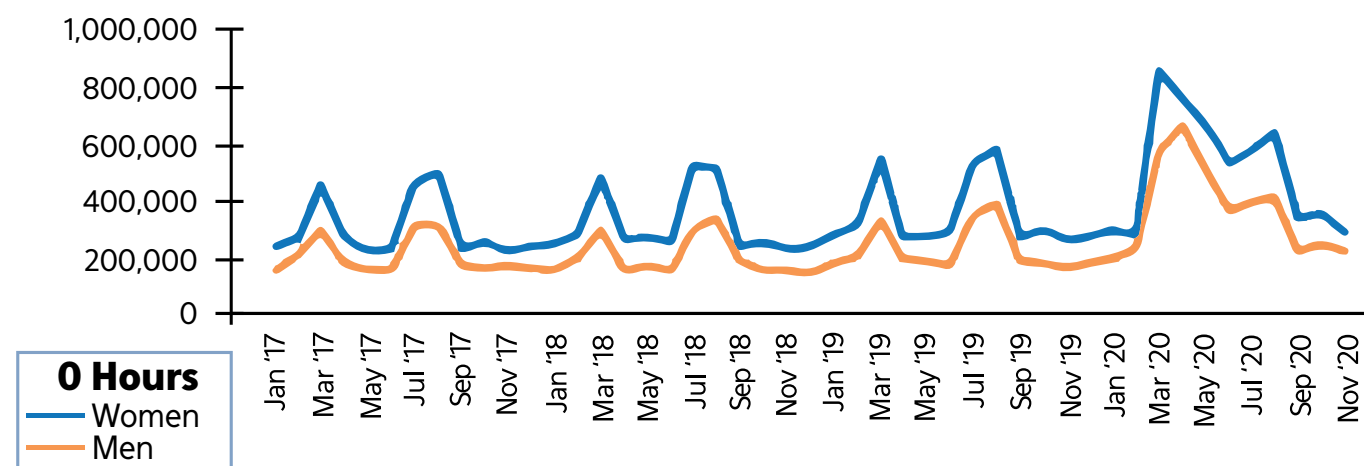
Year	Gender	Jan-Feb	Feb-Mar	Mar-Apr	Apr-May	May-June	June-July	July-Aug	Aug-Sept
2019	Men	14.8%	55.0%	-37.9%	-5.2%	-7.1%	89.7%	11.8%	-48.8%
	Women	10.7%	72.4%	-48.9%	0.8%	5.9%	76.9%	9.5%	-51.3%
2020	Men	16.4%	136.1%	14.3%	-23.2%	-27.3%	9.8%	3.0%	-44.0%
	Women	-4.4%	191.3%	-10.9%	-12.2%	-19.9%	10.1%	9.7%	-45.3%

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30   Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0032-01 Actual hours worked by job type (main or all jobs), monthly, unadjusted for seasonality (x 1,000).

When we look at part time hours (see Figure 6-9), we see that the number of people reporting part-time hours decreased more between February and March 2020 than what we see historically.

## FIGURE 6-9: PART-TIME WORK, MONTHLY CHANGE, MEN AND WOMEN, ONTARIO 2019-2020[31]
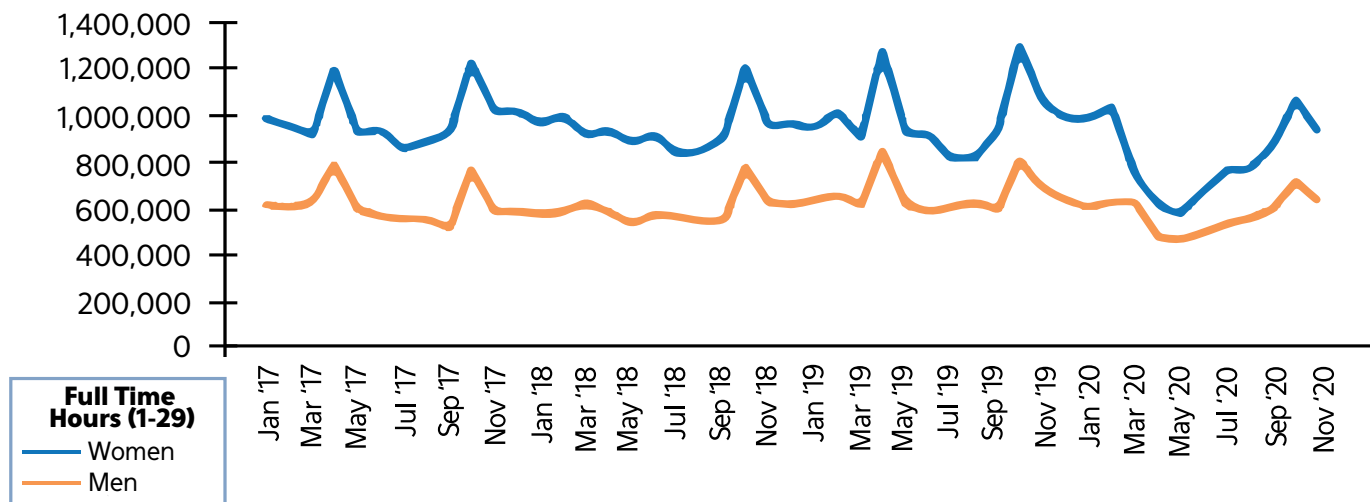
| Year	Gender	Jan-Feb	Feb-Mar	Mar-Apr	Apr-May	May-June	June-July	July-Aug	Aug-Sept
2019	Men	3.7%	-7.2%	38.6%	-26.7%	-5.7%	3.4%	3.1%	-4.0%
	Women	7.4%	-11.1%	40.5%	-27.4%	-1.1%	-10.7%	-0.7%	15.0%
2020	Men	3.1%	-0.4%	-23.4%	-3.8%	7.1%	8.0%	3.3%	8.0%
	Women	4.6%	-28.2%	-16.7%	-7.5%	18.5%	12.6%	0.5%	13.0%

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31   Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0032-01 Actual hours worked by job type (main or all jobs), monthly, unadjusted for seasonality (x 1,000).

Figure 6-10 shows that the number of people working full-time hours between February and March saw a much larger decrease than what we tend to see historically.

FIGURE 6-10: FULL-TIME WORK, MONTHLY CHANGE, MEN AND WOMEN, ONTARIO 2019-2020[32]
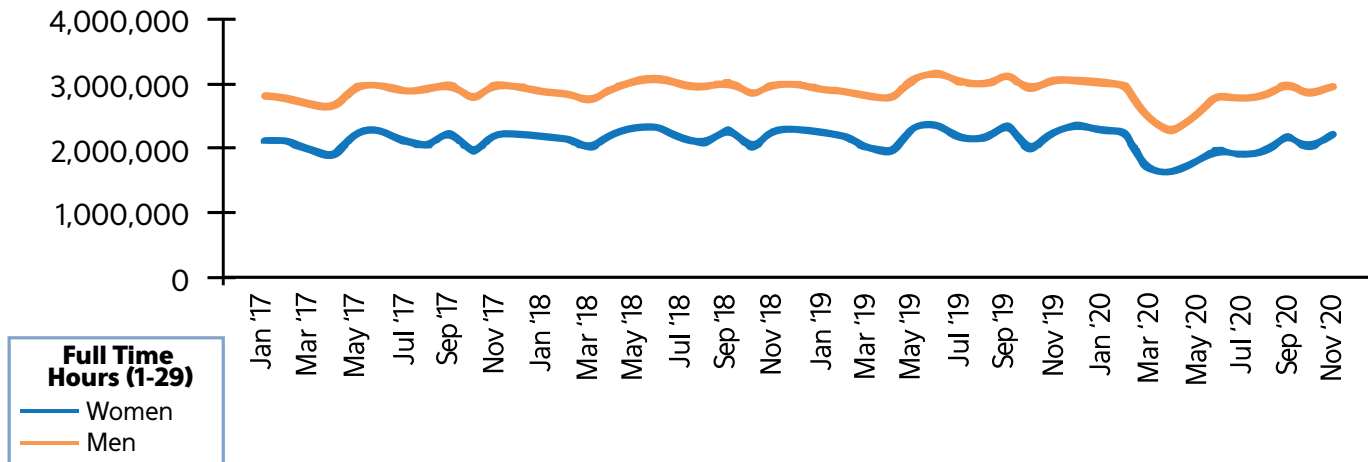
| Year	Gender	Jan-Feb	Feb-Mar	Mar-Apr	Apr-May	May-June	June-July	July-Aug	Aug-Sept
2019	Men	-1.2%	-2.3%	-1.8%	12.0%	1.9%	-4.7%	-1.2%	5.6%
2019	Women	-3.1%	-7.5%	-3.1%	21.2%	0.7%	-8.9%	-0.8%	9.3%
2020	Men	-1.0%	-16.2%	-10.3%	9.5%	14.4%	-1.9%	1.3%	6.6%
2020	Women	-1.9%	-24.4%	-4.7%	8.9%	11.5%	-2.7%	1.0%	13.6%

WORKFORCE INSIGHTS

In 2020, NWPB conducted a Labour Market Insights survey. This survey assessed a variety of employment impacts related to COVID-19.

While this survey is not necessarily a representative sample of all employed individuals in Niagara, these data do reflect the experiences of 193 employed Niagara residents (66.8% women).

Experienced some form of employment loss between January 2020 and June 2020:

41.0%
of men

38.0%
of women
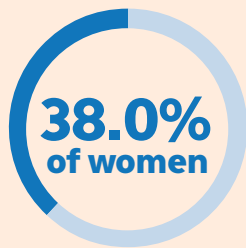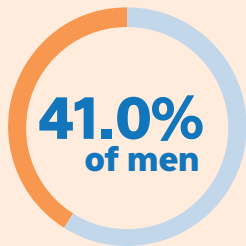
Nature of the employment loss
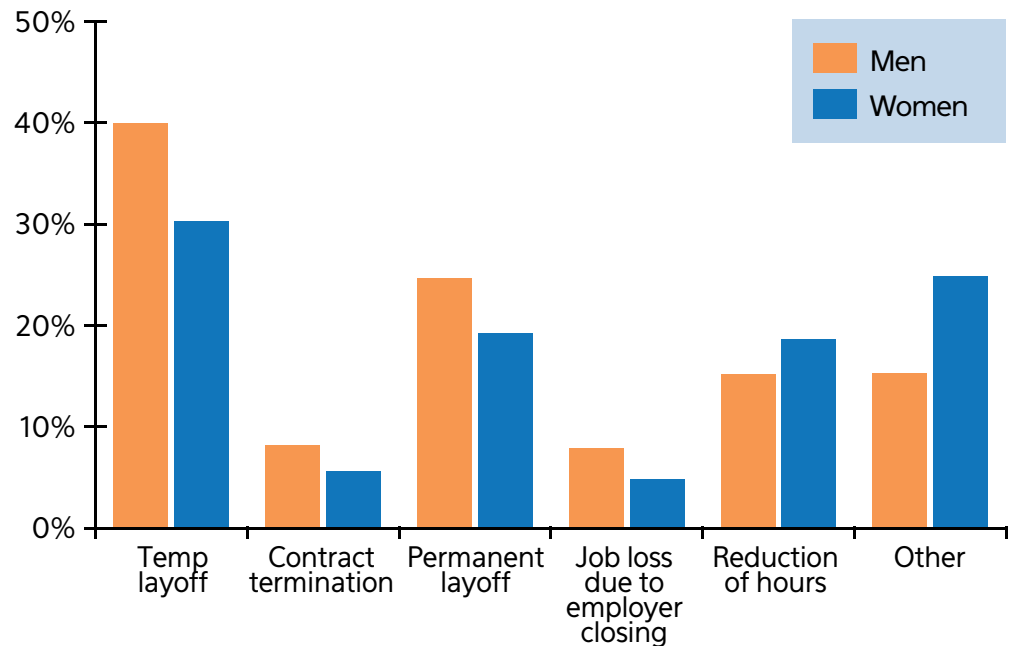
Other reasons included: physical and mental health, childcare, company reducing staff, closures due to non-essential services.
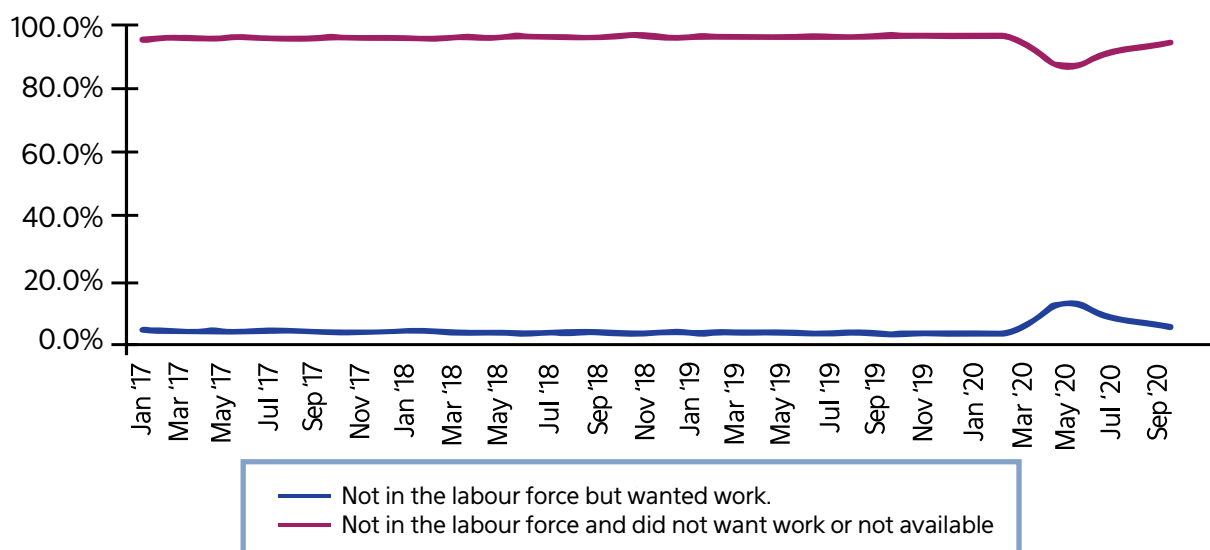
NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE

Section 5 outlined data showing that increases in people reporting that they were not in the labour force tended to be in the following cohorts:

- **Women aged 65 years and older (saw an increase of 8,300 individuals not in the labour force)**
- **Men aged 25 to 54 (saw an increase of 900 individuals not in the labour force)**
- **Women aged 25 to 54 (saw an increase of 200 individuals not in the labour force)**

Local data on **reasons** for not being in the labour force are not available. However, these insights are available at a provincial level. Figure 6-11 outlines the historical and current data on the number of individuals reporting that they are not in the labour force. These data are split into two groups: people not in the labour force that **do not** want to work, and people not in the labour force that **do** want to work. Generally, most people that are not in the labour force do not want to be in the labour force. However, in early 2020 we saw an increase in the number of individuals reporting they weren't in the labour force but did want to work – a trend seen for both men and women.

FIGURE 6-11: PEOPLE NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE, ONTARIO 2017-2020[33]

Legend:
— Not in the labour force but wanted work.
— Not in the labour force and did not want work or not available

33   Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0127-01 Reason for not looking for work, monthly, unadjusted for seasonality (x 1,000).

Table 6-12 outlines the reasons why people may be not in the labour force, but **do want to work**. To examine the relative importance of these reasons, we calculated the percentage of responses that fell into each category for every month starting in January, 2017. We then averaged these data to see the typical percentage of individuals that indicate each of the following reasons for not working. To compare 2020 to historical trends, we created a monthly average for January 2017-December 2019, and a second average for January-September, 2020.

Compared to 2017-2019, 2020 saw higher responses for individuals reporting that they were not in the labour force because they were awaiting recall/reply. This is consistent with the number of temporary layoffs that occurred throughout early 2020 with closures of non-essential businesses and services.

FIGURE 6-12: REASONS NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE, ONTARIO 2017-2020, PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS[34]

Not in the labour force but wanted work — reasons	Total Labour force, 15+ years Monthly average		Men, 25-54 years Monthly average		Women, 25-54 years Monthly average	
	2017-19	2020	2017-19	2020	2017-19	2020
Illness	20.7%	14.6%	32.5%	19.5%	21.1%	14.2%
Personal/family responsibilities	18.4%	13.0%	14.0%	9.6%	38.5%	27.8%
School	26.0%	15.4%	8.4%	5.6%	10.5%	5.2%
Awaiting recall/reply	6.1%	19.5%	12.4%	26.3%	6.8%	19.8%
Discouraged*	5.3%	9.4%	8.4%	8.4%	6.9%	6.4%
Other reason	23.5%	28.2%	30.6%	31.8%	21.7%	29.0%

Historically, the top reasons for not being in the labour force for men aged 25 to 54 historically have oscillated between *illness* and *other reasons*. However, throughout 2020, other reasons and *awaiting recall/reply* increased compared to historical trends.

For women aged 25 to 54, historically the top reasons for not being in the labour force have been *personal/family responsibilities* followed by either *illness* or *other reasons*. Throughout 2020, *other reasons* increased in terms of proportion of responses, in addition to *awaiting recall/reply*.

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34   Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0127-01 Reason for not looking for work, monthly, unadjusted for seasonality (x 1,000).
         * Since 1997, discouraged searchers are defined as those persons who reported wanting to work at a job or business during reference week and were available but who did not look for work because they believed no suitable work was available.

SECTION 7: BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

While Section 6 provided insights on reasons why we tend to see unequal shifts in terms of employment impacts from COVID-19, Section 7 starts looking towards ways to engage the labour force. The data used throughout this section come from NWPB's 2019 and 2020 Labour Market Insights surveys. While these data are not representative of the entire Niagara labour force, they do represent the experiences of individuals that responded to these surveys.

ATTRACTION AND RETENTION

In 2019, NWPB conducted the first Labour Market Insights Survey. Part of this survey assessed what particular factors attract individuals to a job, and what factors are important in employee retention. Though these are not necessarily barriers to employment, these data shed light on potential factors that may be barriers for employers in terms of attracting and retaining employees.

Table 7-1 outlines the top factors individuals value when looking for a job, or considering a job offer. The top three factors throughout 2019 were:

WOMEN	MEN
• Compensation • Non-compensation benefits • Meaningfulness of work	• Compensation • Meaningfulness of work • Alignment of work to education, training, and/or experience

TABLE 7-1: TOP 5 FACTORS ABOUT A JOB OFFER THAT ARE CONSIDERED MOST IMPORTANT, NWPB LMI 2019

Job Offer	Men			Women		
	Count	Percent of Responses	Percent of People	Count	Percent of Responses	Percent of People
Compensation	32	20.4%	65.3%	64	18.3%	55.2%
Non-compensation benefits (health benefits, vacation time, flexibility)	21	13.4%	42.9%	59	16.9%	50.9%
Meaningfulness of work	26	16.6%	53.1%	57	16.3%	49.1%
Alignment of work to education, training, and/or experience	25	15.9%	51.0%	44	12.6%	37.9%
Location of employer	22	14.0%	44.9%	38	10.9%	32.8%

When we asked individuals about retention factors, the most common retention factors were:

WOMEN
- Personal satisfaction in work
- Culture of dignity and respect in the workplace
- Feeling valued by co-workers and managers

MEN
- Personal satisfaction in work
- Potential for advancement and promotion
- Regular increases to compensation and benefits

TABLE 7-2: TOP JOB CHARACTERISTICS FOR RETENTION, NWPB LMI 2019

Job Offer	Men			Women		
	Count	Percent of Responses	Percent of People	Count	Percent of Responses	Percent of People
Personal satisfaction in work	31	19.3%	63.3%	71	20.3%	61.2%
Culture of dignity and respect in workplace	19	11.8%	38.8%	60	17.2%	51.7%
Feeling valued by co-workers and managers	22	13.7%	44.9%	56	16.0%	48.3%
Regular increases to compensation and benefits	24	14.9%	49.0%	46	13.2%	39.7%
Level of autonomy in position	17	10.6%	34.7%	40	11.5%	34.5%
Potential for advancement and promotion	26	16.1%	53.1%	31	8.9%	26.7%

These data show that while compensation and other benefits are valuable to attracting employees, retention is valued more towards workplace culture and satisfaction in the work one does.

BARRIERS TO OBTAINING EMPLOYMENT

In addition to assessing attraction and retention strategies, the LMI survey also examined barriers to employment. These data reflect the experiences of people who were actively searching for employment but were unable to find work throughout 2019. The top three barriers for men and women were:

- **Lack of job posts/opportunities in field of desired employment**
- **Lack of job posts/opportunities in geography of desired employment**
- **Lack of job posts/opportunities at desired level of compensation**

In 2020, NWPB conducted the second Labour Market Insights Survey. These data reflect the experiences of individuals that had lost employment between January and June 2020, had tried to find new employment, but were unsuccessful (see Table 7-3 on page 52). The top three barriers for women were lack of job posts/opportunities:

- **in a field of desired employment**
- **in a geography of desired employment**
- **at desired level of compensation**

The top three barriers for men were:

- **Lack of job posts/opportunities in geography of desired employment**
- **Lack of job posts/opportunities in field of desired employment**
- **Lack of training/education for available jobs**

TABLE 7-3: TOP 5 BARRIERS WHILE SEARCHING FOR WORK, NWPB LMI 2020

Job searching barriers	Men			Women		
	Count	Percent of Responses	Percent of People	Count	Percent of Responses	Percent of People
Lack of job posts/ opportunity in field of desired employment	6	19.4%	37.5%	18	30.5%	66.7%
Lack of job posts/ opportunity in geography of desired employment	8	25.8%	50.0%	11	18.6%	40.7%
Lack of job posts/ opportunity at desired level of compensation	3	9.7%	18.8%	11	18.6%	40.7%
Lack of training/ education for available jobs	5	16.1%	31.3%	6	10.2%	22.2%
Lack of transportation	4	12.9%	25.0%	4	6.8%	14.8%

Both of these surveys indicate common results in terms of the difficulties individuals experienced when looking for work. Overall, these difficulties stemmed from a lack of posts or opportunities in individuals':

- **Desired field of employment**
- **Desired geography of employment**
- **Desired level of compensation**

SECTION 8: EXISTING SUPPORTS AND WORKPLACE CULTURE

The 2020 Labour Markets Insight survey served as a preliminary examination into the use of micro-credentialing in the workforce, but also its use and support in the workplace. Further, this year's survey also included a mental health module in which individuals were able to indicate workplace resources that are available to them.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Figure 8-1 outlines the percentage of individuals that pursued micro-credentialing training over the last year. Just over three quarters of participants had not engaged in this form of training. Generally, we see similar response patterns for men and women respondents.

## FIGURE 8.1: MICRO-CREDENTIAL TRAINING OVER THE PAST YEAR, 2020 LMI SURVEY
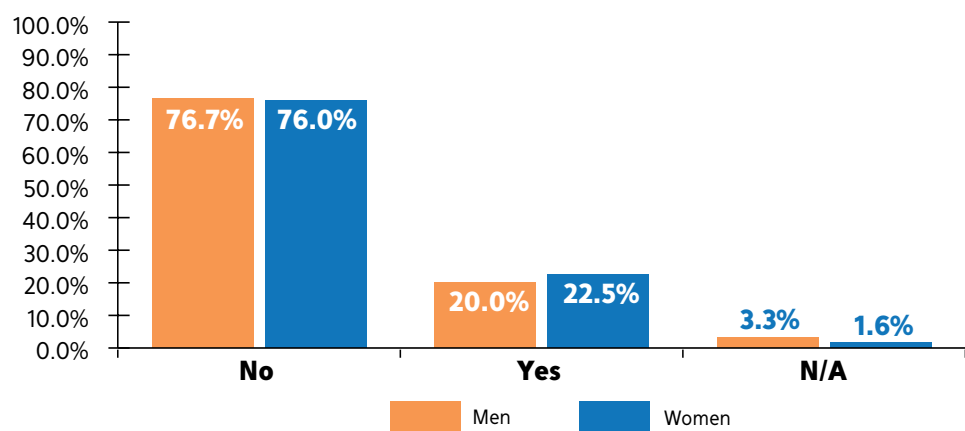
When we examine costs for training, the majority of individuals did not incur any personal expenses for the courses they took. When we examine costs covered by employers, more men than women had employers that covered costs of training, though the reasons for this difference is not known (see Figure 8-2).

FIGURE 8.2: COSTS INCURRED FOR TRAINING, 2020 LMI SURVEY
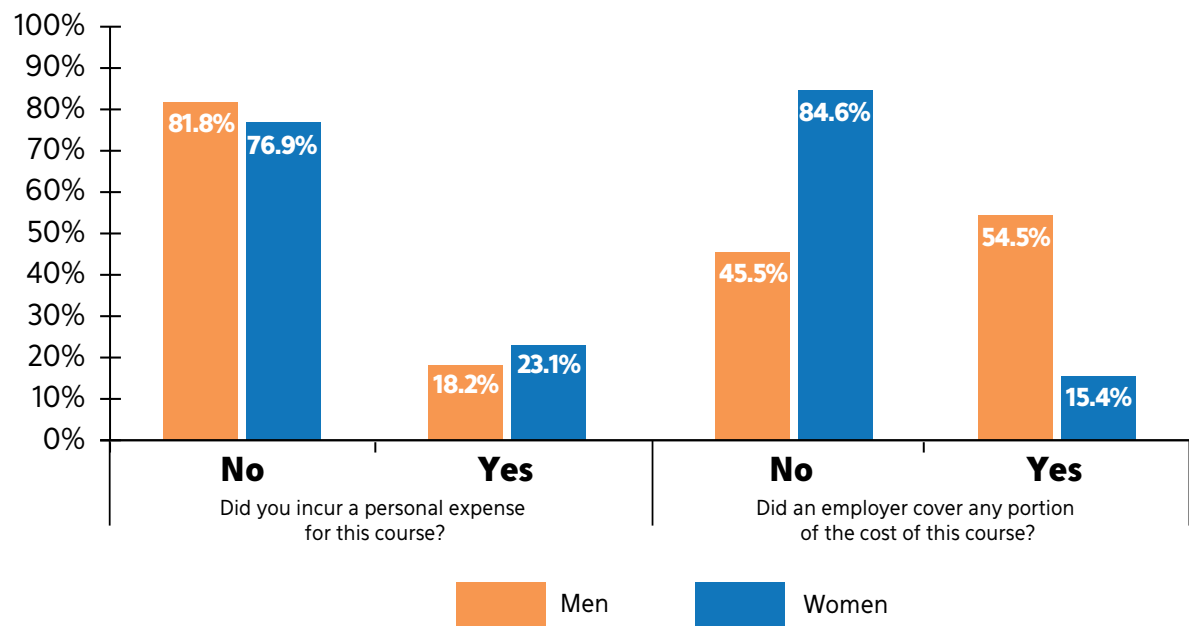
Many individuals indicated that they had not engaged in micro-credential training. Figure 8-3 outlines the reasons why individuals had not previously used this form of professional development. Responses in other strongly indicated that individuals did not know these programs were a form of training that was available or existed.

FIGURE 8.3: REASONS FOR NOT ENGAGING IN MICRO-CREDENTIAL TRAINING, 2020 LMI SURVEY
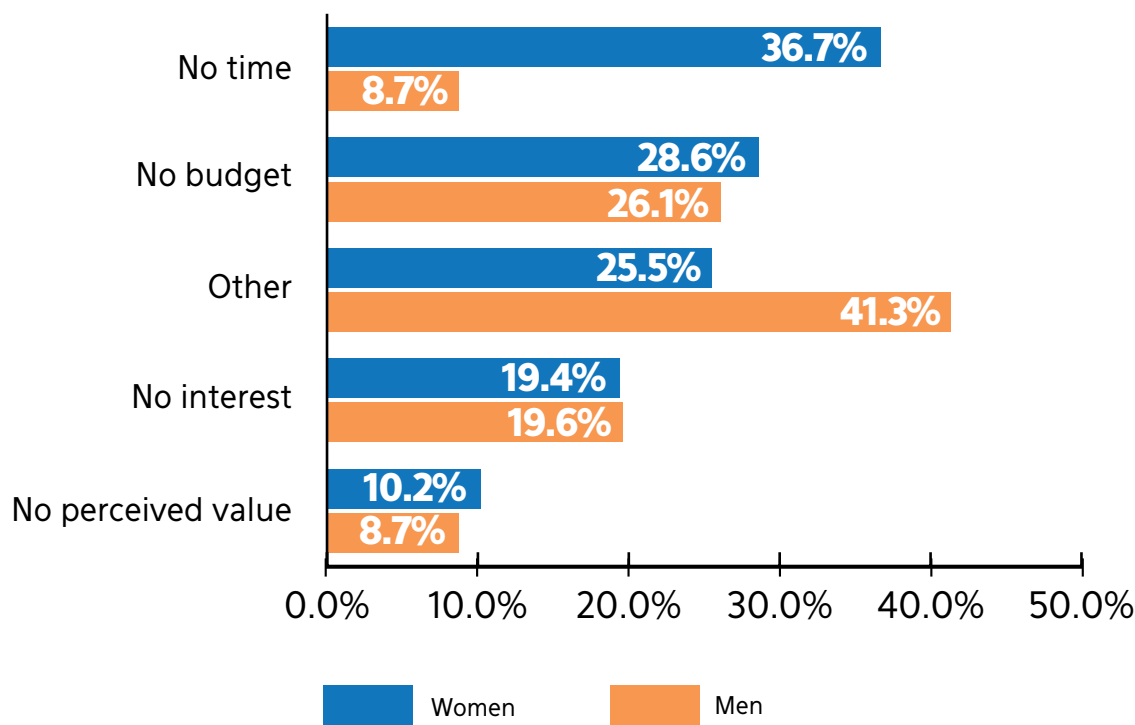
WORKPLACE RESOURCES

In addition to training, workplaces may have other resources available for their employees. The LMI survey also asked individuals what type of mental health resources are available at their workplace. These data are valuable to have as recent work by Morneau Shepell has indicated that mental health difficulties and stress have increased throughout the course of the pandemic[35].

Results from Morneau Shepell's November 2020 report showed that, while employees were generally positive in their assessment of employer handlings of changes to the pandemic (e.g., the way business is conducted, flexible work hours, work from home policies, etc.), psychological health has consistently been lower than pre-pandemic levels, with women experiencing more difficulties than men. Given the prevalence of mental health difficulties and the increase in these employee experiences, it is important to assess what resources are available to the local workforce.

Results from the 2020 LMI survey indicated that the most common workplace support was employee assistance programs (see Table 8-4).

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35   Morneau Shepell (November 2020). The Mental Health Index Report, Canada, November 2020.
        Retrieved from https://www.morneaushepell.com/sites/default/files/assets/paragraphs/resource-list/
        canadamhinovember2020final2_0.pdf.

TABLE 8-4: WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES, 2020 LMI SURVEY

Workplace Supports for Mental Health	Men			Women		
	Count	Percent of Responses	Percent of People	Count	Percent of Responses	Percent of People
Employee assistance program (EAP) / other similar program	11	16.4%	18.0%	62	19.1%	48.1%
Policies relating to alternative work arrangements (e.g., work from home)	7	10.4%	11.5%	38	11.7%	29.5%
Policies relating to return to work accommodation	7	10.4%	11.5%	37	11.4%	28.7%
Staff education and training sessions around mental health	6	9.0%	9.8%	37	11.4%	28.7%
Policies relating to leave of absence	9	13.4%	14.8%	34	10.5%	26.4%
Policies relating to flexible work hours	6	9.0%	9.8%	29	9.0%	22.5%
Support for mental wellbeing (e.g., stress management training/coaching)	4	6.0%	6.6%	28	8.6%	21.7%
Mental health and wellbeing strategy	5	7.5%	8.2%	21	6.5%	16.3%
Unsure/I don't know	6	9.0%	9.8%	11	3.4%	8.5%
We do not have any of these resources	4	6.0%	6.6%	7	2.2%	5.4%
Mental health training for managers		0.0%	0.0%	9	2.8%	7.0%
Child and/or elder care assistance		0.0%	0.0%	6	1.9%	4.7%
Policies relating to job sharing	1	1.5%	1.6%	3	0.9%	2.3%
Other (please specify)	1	1.5%	1.6%	2	0.6%	1.6%
Total Responses	*67*			*324*		
Total People	**61**			**129**		

CONCLUDING REMARKS AND NEXT STEPS

On September 9, 2020 the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub, Ted Rogers School of Management, and the Diversity Institute, released a report entitled, **The She-Covery Project: Confronting the Gendered Economic Impacts of COVID-19 in Ontario**. In this report, the authors propose a 5-point strategy to cope with the effects of the pandemic. These strategies included:

- **Ensuring child-care is accessible and affordable during and after the pandemic**
- **Investing in training and reskilling to ensure women's participation in jobs that are traditionally dominated by men**
- **Supporting women entrepreneurs**
- **Supporting work arrangements that are flexible and align with individuals' daily obligations**
- **Ensure women are involved in decision-making conversations and that a diverse lens is used when creating policies**

These recommendations include actions at both the provincial and federal levels of government with measureable outcomes. Local action planning, however, also requires a measure of understanding of the local population and specific local effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is our hope that the data outlined in the current report help to shape these local conversations around pandemic recovery.

In addition to this report, NWPB conducted multiple projects throughout the 2020-2021 fiscal year highlighting the nature of local employment impacts. Projects with a particular focus on employment impacts for men and women included:

- A **blog series** focused on presenting gender-focused data snapshots for the general public
- A special report with Brock University's Niagara Community Observatory entitled, **The economic impact of COVID-19 on Niagara women in the workforce**
- An Ontario Labour Market Partnership (OLMP) project funded by the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development conducted across the nine western-region Ontario planning boards. Locally, **this project examined the impact of women's employment, labour force involvement, and the relationships to the local tourism industry**, which also was hard hit throughout the pandemic.

FUTURE WORK

This report provides data from both publically available data sets and from workforce-facing data collected by NWPB. One area of future research is to examine gender equity from an employer perspective. The goals of this work include examining:

- **The percentage of local businesses and businesses sizes that are women owned (i.e., women own 51% or more of the business)**
- **Programs & initiatives aimed to increase equity or inclusion among employees**
- **Percentages of operating budgets dedicated to staff training**

Future work by NWPB aims to build off the current report in an intentional manner. These strategies include:

- **Continual gender-focused data updates aligning with the monthly releases of Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey**
- **An updated comprehensive report as 2021 Census data become available**
- **Inclusion of gender-focused data in NWPB's labour market reports**
- **Incorporating lenses of diversity representing other equity-seeking groups in reporting, where data are available (e.g., newcomers to Canada, youth)**

Any questions about this report can be directed to NWPB's CEO, **Vivian Kinnaird** (**vivian@niagaraworkforce.ca**)