

## London-Middlesex

### Early Childhood Education Labour Market Study and Implementation Strategies

March 2023



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# Preface

Deloitte LLP was commissioned by the City of London to provide London-Middlesex with the Early Childhood Education Labour Market Study and Implementation Strategies.

The strategy was carried out over the period of June 2022 through February 2023. Community consultations was carried out from August to November 2022.

The analysis objectives of this strategy as described in the Request for Quote were to:

- ❖ Quantify the ECE staff supply and demand over the next five years in the English, French and Indigenous communities in London and the County of Middlesex
- ❖ Revisit the identified strategies and actions of the 2014 ECE Labour Market Research Study that could be implemented to alleviate the labour force shortage and improve the overall system
- ❖ Consult with stakeholders including, providers of licensed child care, school boards, colleges, ECEs and students on sector priorities and challenges
- ❖ Create a concrete plan that includes short-term and long-term strategies and action steps with timelines and updated list of champions to lead specific parts of the work in the community

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Observations are made on the basis of economic, industrial, competitive, and general business conditions prevailing as at the date hereof. In the analyses, we may have made assumptions with respect to the industry performance, general business, and economic conditions and other matters, many of which are beyond our control, including government and industry regulation.

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We believe that our analyses must be considered as a whole and that selecting portions of the analyses, or the factors considered by it, without considering all factors and analyses together, could create a misleading view of the issues related to the report. Amendment of any of the assumptions identified throughout this report could have a material impact on our analysis contained herein. Should any of the major assumptions not be accurate or should any of the information provided to us not be factual or correct, our analyses, as expressed in this report, could be significantly different.

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## How to Read and Use this Document

This document represents a technical analysis and strategic actions to advance sector priorities and address recruitment and retention challenges. As a tactical document, it provides direction that London-Middlesex, partners and stakeholders will undertake to will undertake to achieve desired results over a specific time. The actions are a prioritized starting point based on community input and research at a point in time. London-Middlesex is encouraged to treat this strategy as a fluid document, and adaptable to changing environments and emerging challenges and opportunities.

## A Note on Terminology

This report uses the term ‘Early Childhood Education’ when discussing the sector. ‘Early Childhood Educators,’ ‘ECEs’ or ‘early years staff’ are used interchangeably when referring to the sector labour force. ‘Registered Early Childhood Educators’ or ‘RECEs’ is used when referring to professionals with the protected title as set by the College of Early Childhood Educators.

Within London-Middlesex, the term “child care” has been replaced with the term “early learning and care.” Despite the importance of this shift in terminology, this report uses the term “child care” to maintain consistency with the literature emanating from the Child Care Human Resource Sector Council and to avoid any potential for ambiguity in the meaning of language throughout the report.

## Glossary of Acronyms

Throughout this strategy document, various acronyms and terminology been used. They are listed below for clarity.

Acronym	Description
CCFL	Carrefour Communautaire Francophone de London
CD	Census Division
CDP OYAP	Child Development Practitioner – Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program
CEWIL	Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning
CMSM	Consolidated Municipal Service Manager
CWELCC	Canada-Wide Early Learning & Child Care
DEI	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
ECE	Early Childhood Educators
ESDC	Employment and Social Development Canada
FCSS	Family Centre Service System
LCCN	The Licensed Child care Network
LEDC	London Economic Development Corporation
LLSC	Literacy Link South Central
MCED	Middlesex County Economic Development
MCSN	Middlesex Children’s Services Network
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoU	Memoranda of Understanding
MWDP	Middlesex Workforce Development Partnership
RECEs	Registered Early Childhood Educators
WPDB	Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning & Development Board
WSIB	Work Safety and Insurance Board



# Executive Summary

Early Childhood Education and educators are foundational to the health and development of children, families, businesses, and the economy. Investing more effectively in the sector is the priority strategy to improve the socio-economic prosperity of a community.

For several years, the Early Childhood Education sector, described as *“a workforce at breaking point”*<sup>1</sup>, has been facing a staffing crisis across London-Middlesex.

Attracting, recruiting, and retaining qualified Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) in regulated child care, in response to local demand, has been an ongoing challenge for communities in the area. This challenge has been made even more visible by the COVID-19 pandemic, which drew attention to existing constraints including insufficient staff, and funding, programming, and infrastructure gaps. The labour force shortages continue to be more acute in both French Immersion and Francophone programs and among marginalized groups, and rural communities in the area.

The research identifies a high turnover rate in the sector, particularly among Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs). Some of this dynamic could be attributed to labour force competition. Since the 2010 implementation of Full Day Kindergarten classes and school boards improved compensation packages, RECEs have sought employment in schools. Difficulties in recruiting and replacing for these positions has forced many centres and programs in the county to shut down. Before- and After-School Programs across the county face challenges when staffing for full-time and part-time employment opportunities. One of the key findings of this report is that RECE labour shortages are further amplified by the limited variety in available training formats and professional development opportunities.

Early Childhood Educators care for London-Middlesex’s most important residents – our young children and yet they struggle with low wages, a lack of competitive benefits and gaps in professional development.

Existing and potential sector professionals consulted as part of our strategy development identify that staffing shortages have caused significant demand and strain on the existing workforce. Staff identify work-life balance and burnout as challenges, which further jeopardizes retention.

Consultations with child care providers identify compensation as the dominant factor impacting recruitment and retention. The median ECE wage at \$20 an hour, while slightly higher than the living wage in London-Elgin-Oxford region, significantly affects job satisfaction rates. Further, wages in the sector are considered uncompetitive compared to other sectors and professions which require the same education and skills levels. Limited professional development or career progression training offerings, low value, and negative perception by the public and difficult working conditions (e.g., elevated levels of stress and significant workloads) add to the recruitment and retention challenge. Examinations by the Atkinson Centre also highlight the challenges of the sector, including it being deeply feminized and racialized, gendered and devalued<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario and Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care

<sup>2</sup> Emis Akbari, Kerry McCuaig, and Daniel Foster. 2020. Atkinson Centre. Early Childhood Education report.



## London-Middlesex's residents want access to quality, competent, and affordable childcare services.

The lack of affordable child care and challenges to access existing options have forced families to stay out of the care system or place their children in unlicensed care (unregulated settings and not staffed by qualified RECEs). The barriers to access affordable child care is prominent among underrepresented and culturally sensitive groups in the area, including, Indigenous peoples, immigrants and low-income individuals and families.

To address labour force challenges, increase child care spaces, support parents' return to the labour market and give families access to more affordable and high-quality child care options, the Government of Canada in collaboration with Provincial Governments approved the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) agreement in 2021.

This investment of 27 billion dollars over the next five years, will support sector development through four priority pillars, namely, quality, accessibility, affordability, and inclusivity.

Capitalizing on the momentum, the City of London, as the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) for the City of London and Middlesex County, retained Deloitte LLP to develop strategic actions that support the recruitment and retention of early years staff, while forging a more positive image and building a strong sector locally.

Deloitte LLP developed this strategy through publicly available data, secondary literature, and stakeholder consultations. It reflects a comprehensive focus on research and engagement with partners including sector employers, colleges, training and employment support organizations, and childcare facilities. Deloitte engaged with more than 250 individuals and organization representatives as part of the strategy development.

This Early Childhood Education Labour Market Study and Implementation Strategies is London-Middlesex's commitment to highlight the sector's contribution to the economy, improve support for Early Childhood professionals in the community and ensure programs do not fall behind due to workforce shortages.

The strategy is anchored by four strategic priorities (Figure 1), each with targeted actions. Collectively, they form the validated, strategic plan that supports the recruitment and retention of early years staff in London-Middlesex.

Figure 1: Strategic Priorities of the Early Childhood Education Labour Market Study and Implementation Strategies



The strategy emphasizes continued and strengthened engagement with partners including Middlesex Workforce Development Partnership, Fanshawe College, Collège Boréal, school boards, EarlyON Child and Family Centre, The Family Centre Service System (FCSS) Governance Committee, the Licensed Child care Network (LCCN), Middlesex Children's Services Network (MCSN), Strive and representatives from the Francophone and Indigenous communities, including La Ribambelle and Nshwaasnangong child care centres.

Our research acknowledges the workforce crisis that exists in both current and future demand for early child care educators. It places attention on the need to provide a favourable work environment for ECEs and position the profession as a sustainable and fulfilling career choice. ECEs need to be placed at the centre of decision making, valued and recognized for their contributions to children, families, and society.

Provincial and regional decision makers play a significant role in addressing the systemic issues that the sector faces, including uncompetitive wages, difficult working conditions, and perception of low value by public. While the strategy is designed to be implemented at the local level, the policy framework and proposed funding are defined at a provincial and federal level, which requires the need to engage and amplify the voices of our community to ensure a favourable and inclusive early childhood education system.



# Introduction

The City of London (“The City”), as the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager (CMSM) for the City of London and Middlesex County, retained Deloitte LLP, in June 2022 to undertake the research and develop this London-Middlesex Early Childhood Education Labour Market Study and Implementation Strategies.

The City has a pivotal role in the planning and development of additional capacity, maximizing affordability, and quality assurance within the provincial early years and child care system. This role affords the City a unique understanding of the issues (social, economic, demographic) that impact, influence and shape the community.

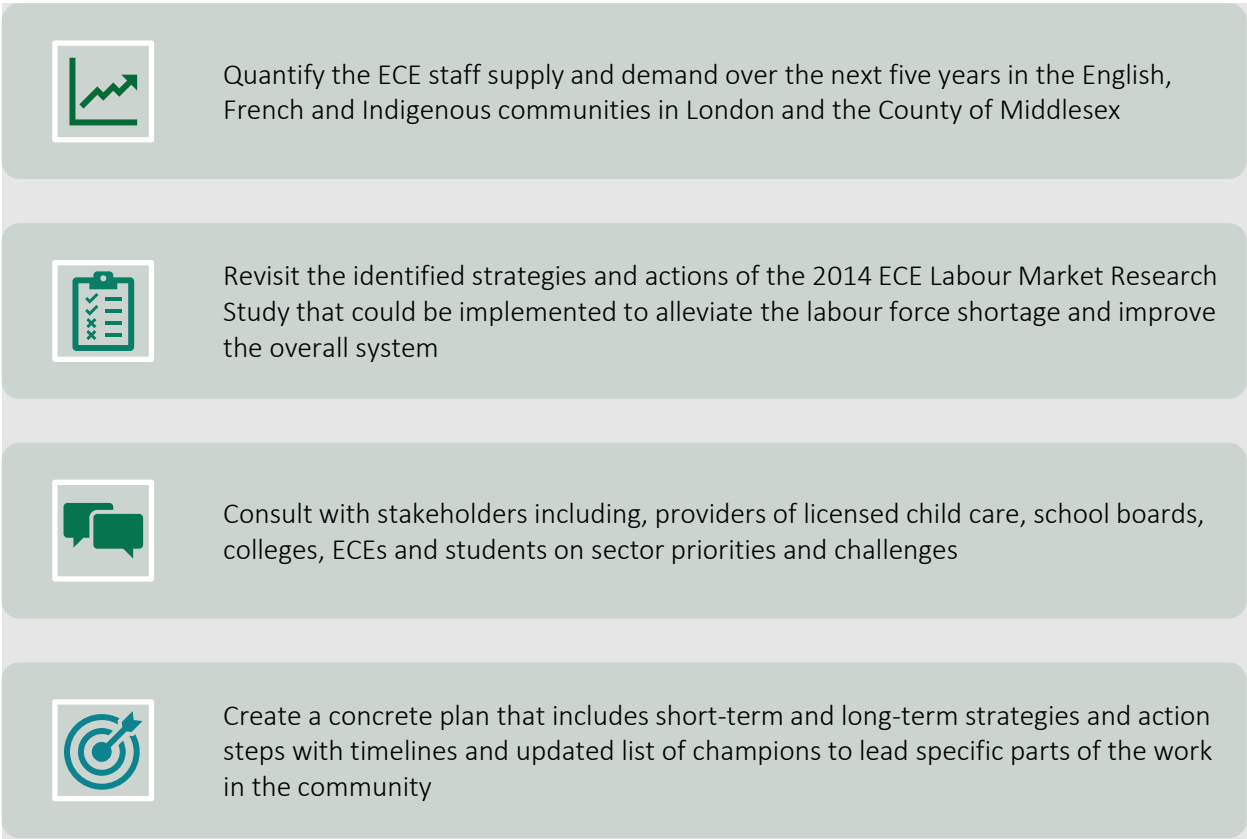
Building on the 2014 ECE Labour Market Research Study (provided by MDB Insight, acquired by Deloitte in 2022), this Early Childhood Education Labour Market Study and Implementation Strategies positions strategic actions that support the recruitment and retention of early years staff, while forging a more positive image and building a strong sector locally.

This strategy is London-Middlesex’s commitment to highlight the sector’s contribution to the economy, improve support for Early Childhood professionals in the community and ensure programs do not fall behind due to workforce shortages.

The analysis objectives of this strategy as described in the Request for Quote is illustrated below.

Retain existing child care and early years workforce and grow number of qualified staff in the sector to ensure a more stable and high-quality early years and child care system

Figure 2: Report Analysis Objectives



## Methodology

The development process for the Early Childhood Education Labour Market Study and Implementation Strategies was a four-phase interconnected process that began in June 2022. The data collection and research for the work was supported by the City of London staff and a Steering committee comprised of representatives from the Municipality, Middlesex's ECE sector, Colleges, School Boards, Child Care Providers and representatives from the Francophone and Indigenous communities.

Figure 3: Methodology – Phases of Work



**Phase 2: Quantifying Supply and Demand** included a data analysis of the ECE labour market data supply and demand projections for London-Middlesex. The analysis was developed by *metroeconomics*, drawing on its community-based projection system. *metroeconomics* carried quantified the labour market data supply and demand projections through:

- ❖ a brief historical profile of economic and demographic trends of the area
- ❖ a five-year Base Case employment projection for the sector and related occupations as identified in the National Occupations Classification System
- ❖ a projection of the number of people likely to retire each year over the next decade from each occupation, based on data for 2016 regarding the number of people by age employed in the area. The data reflected recruitment pressures on the area by detailed occupation stemming both from expected economic changes and from expected retirements. Labour supply was highlighted for 2022 to 2027.

In addition to the labour market data supply and demand projections, Deloitte leveraged the Vicinity Jobs Labour Demand Reporting System to produce customized real-time data reports that reflects actual labour demand (as captured through on-line job postings by local employers). Data was produced by occupations as posted by local employers.

Phase 2 also included a desktop literature review of current labour force and sector trends, with particular attention to macro-trends and challenges that need to be considered to shape a sustainable and strong industry. Initiatives underway in London-Middlesex were also studied for applicability.

A ‘reflection’ session was facilitated with the Steering Committee, to gain input on the 2014 London-Middlesex Early Childhood Educator Labour Market Study. The Steering Committee provided input on the 10 actions/community priorities that were presented in the 2014 study, to identify the progress made and what remains a priority.

The 2014 London-Middlesex Early Childhood Educator Labour Market Study was developed by MDB Insight Inc. (which was acquired by Deloitte LLC in April 2022). The 2014 study was conducted in two discrete phases. Phase 1 focused on building a robust understanding of the current state of London-Middlesex ECE sector and projections of the total number of full time equivalent ECEs required to sustain the region’s early learning and care system until 2021. A key outcome of Phase 1 is the development of an evidence-based, action-driven strategy to strengthen the local ECE sector. Phase 2 of the study centered on the operationalizing and implementation of the strategy.

The results of Phase 2 were captured in the **Key Findings Report (#1) – Data & Research**, serving as **Supplementary Report I**<sup>3</sup>. The key findings of this research phase were presented to the Steering Committee in August 2022 and feedback incorporated for further research and analysis.

Stakeholder engagement (Figure 4), conducted as part of **Phase 3: Consulting with all Relevant Stakeholders** included:

- ❖ One-on-one stakeholder interviews with 16 stakeholders, including, child care and early years sector employers, colleges, private training organizations, apprenticeship programs, employment support organizations, and selected childcare facilities.
- ❖ Online survey with child care and early years sector employers and education and training institutions across London-Middlesex. The online open-link survey was launched on August 17<sup>th</sup> and ran until September 20<sup>th</sup>, receiving 52 responses, on a range of issues related to ECE labour market and talent supply.
- ❖ Online survey with qualified current and former Early Childhood Educators across London-Middlesex. The online open-link survey was launched on October 4<sup>th</sup> and ran until October 17<sup>th</sup>, receiving 210 responses, on a range of issues and factors that contribute to sector employment, satisfaction, and desertion

The results of Phase 3 were captured in the **Key Findings Report (#2) – Engagement Process**, serving as **Supplementary Report II**<sup>4</sup>. The key findings of this research phase were presented to the Steering Committee in November 2022 and feedback incorporated for further research and analysis.

**Phase 4: Development of ECE Study and Implementation Strategies**, began in November 2022. Two virtual focus groups were facilitated:

- ❖ Workforce partners (colleges delivering ECE programs, government representatives, intermediary agencies)
- ❖ RECEs, young graduates and current students

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<sup>3</sup> Provided as a separate document.

<sup>4</sup> Provided as a separate document.

The sessions offered important intelligence and local context and generated discussion on “what we know,” “where we want to go” and “how will we get there.”

Figure 4: Stakeholder engagement opportunities



Validation Sessions

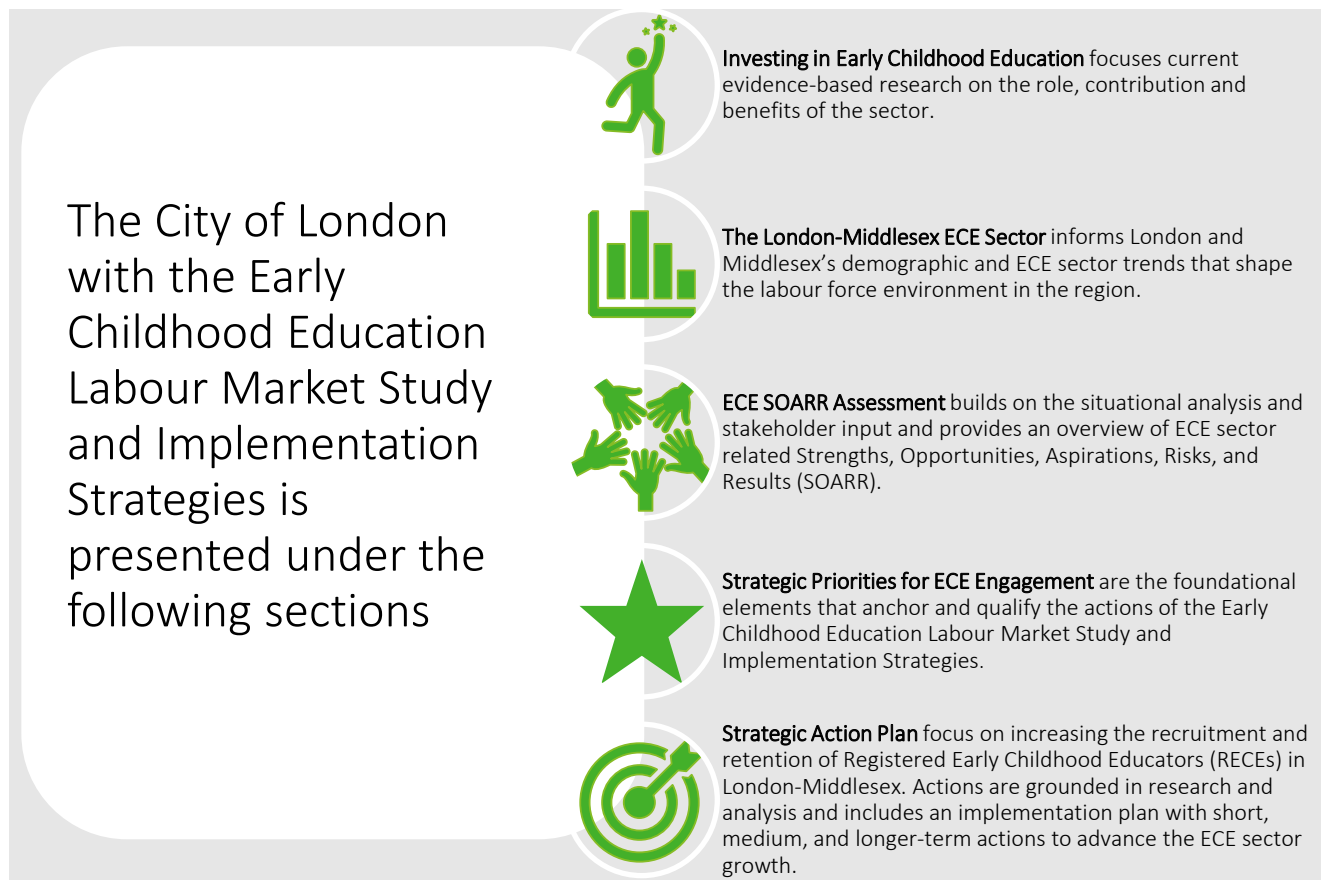
Two validation sessions were held in February 2023, one with the Steering Committee and the other with Community Workforce Partners. Through facilitated breakout sessions, sessions engaged stakeholders in a robust review of the draft strategy and informed the action plan. More than 25 partners, representing educators, training providers and workforce intermediaries and Steering Committee members, provided input to the draft strategy. Participants offered feedback on the emerging actions, potential leads and partners and timing for implementation. Input obtained from the stakeholders was used to refine the strategy to ensure that community priorities are accurately reflected and positioned for increasing the recruitment and retention of the recruitment and retention of early years staff.

A key success of the validation session was the buy-in inspired among the various participants including London Economic Development Corporation, Middlesex County, Elgin Middlesex Oxford Workforce Planning and Development Board, Fanshawe College, Employment Sector Council and Strive. While the City of London as the CMSM is envisioned at the center of this effort, strengthened partnerships are critical to success. The session enabled the identification of potential roles for these partners in successful strategy implementation.

Upon the completion of the validation session, the Strategy was refined, and finalized.

This report concludes the research and consultation undertaken to provide the City of London and Middlesex with the Early Childhood Education Labour Market Study and Implementation Strategies. It is presented under the following sections, as illustrated below.

Figure 5: Sections of this strategy report







# Investing in Early Childhood Education

Early childhood education is instrumental to the lifelong health and development of individuals and families. The contributions of the sector extend to the community level – building prosperity, strengthening the workforce and business environment, and supporting healthier and safer societies.

The highlights of the secondary literature review, focusing on the benefits of the sector for children and families, and the community, are described below. Please refer to the **Key Findings Report (#1) – Data & Research** for a comprehensive list of insights.

## Benefits for Children and Families and Communities

- ❖ The sector plays a significant role in **supporting children to be ready to learn**. As the first professionally facilitated learning experience for children, it encourages early reading, counting, motor skills, and creativity, as well as social and communication skills. Early childhood education **enables children to be successful in school, providing them** with the skills and experiences that they need to learn effectively in a classroom<sup>5, 6</sup>.
- ❖ Early childhood education and educators provide **safe and enriching environments** during a critical time in a child's development, identifying and meeting the spoken and unspoken needs of families.
  - Evidence shows that the sector also **supports healthy social and emotional development** during the early years of life, with a lifelong positive impact<sup>7</sup>. for example, language development or behavioural support, are most effective when implemented early in life.
  - Early learning experiences **build empathy and resilience** in children, for the benefit of individuals and society<sup>8</sup>.
- ❖ Early childhood educators are instrumental in **strengthening family supports systems** and facilitating learning access for families. These positive impacts extend to **children and families' futures**, as research shows they positively impact on intergenerational trauma and incarceration rates<sup>9</sup>.

## Economic Benefits of Early Childhood Education

- ❖ The early childhood education sector is an **important part of the Canadian economy**. As per Statistics Canada data, the sector contributed more than \$15 billion to the economy in 2016<sup>10</sup>.
  - The sector also **supports job creation in all other sectors of the economy**. When child care is available, parents and caregivers can seek jobs, and work and be more productive in their jobs and throughout their careers. This, in turn, allows for increased household incomes and economic spending in the community. Also, businesses can operate efficiently as they have a full workforce complement.

“Child care is not just a social policy—it is an economic policy, too. Affordable, high-quality child care will grow our economy, allow more women to enter the workforce, and help give every Canadian child the best start in life.”

- Federal Budget 2021

<sup>5</sup> [The Effects of Universal Pre-K on Cognitive Development - Developmental Psychology, 2005](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Cumulative classroom quality during pre-kindergarten and kindergarten and children's language, literacy, and mathematics skills – Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 2019](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Social and Emotional Development in Early Learning Settings - National Conference of State Legislatures, 2019](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Early Social-Emotional Functioning and Public Health: The Relationship Between Kindergarten Social Competence and Future Wellness – American Journal of Public Health, 2015](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Descriptive Data on Head Start Children and Families from FACES 2019: Fall 2019 Data Tables and Study Design - OPRE Report 2021-77, 2021](#)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/36-28-0001/2021008/article/00006-eng.htm>

- Early education **has a high return on investment**; benefit-cost ratios show that for every \$1 invested, the return is between \$2 to \$7.<sup>11,12</sup>
- ❖ Broader **socioeconomic benefits** are derived from higher rates of labour market participation, better outcomes for children who receive early childhood education, and reduced spending on social supports<sup>13</sup>.
- ❖ Evidence suggests that investment in early childhood education can **reduce the need for special needs education** and result in cost savings as it is easier and cheaper to help children overcome learning challenges earlier in life<sup>14</sup>.
- ❖ Investment in early childhood education can also **promote equality**.
  - While many parents lack access to care, the issue is most acute for lower income families. Data from Statistics Canada<sup>15</sup> shows that approximately 43% of families with mothers outside of the labour market in 2017 had an income below \$36,000.
  - Children from lower income families also face greater challenges in skills development in primary and secondary education.
- ❖ Research shows that **investment in child care results in 10% increase in participation of women** with young children in the labour force<sup>16</sup>. Also, providing child care in the workplace decreases employee absences by 20-30% and reduced turnover by 37-60%<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> Emis Akbari, Kerry McCuaig, and Daniel Foster. 2020. Atkinson Centre. Early Childhood Education report.

<sup>12</sup> Deloitte. April 2021. Early Learning and Childcare as Key Economic Infrastructure.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid*

<sup>14</sup> Deloitte. April 2021. Early Learning and Childcare as Key Economic Infrastructure.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2021001/article/00007-eng.htm>

<sup>16</sup> [Descriptive Data on Head Start Children and Families from FACES 2019: Fall 2019 Data Tables and Study Design - OPRE Report 2021-77, 2021](#)

<sup>17</sup> [Descriptive Data on Head Start Children and Families from FACES 2019: Fall 2019 Data Tables and Study Design - OPRE Report 2021-77, 2021](#)





# The London-Middlesex ECE Sector

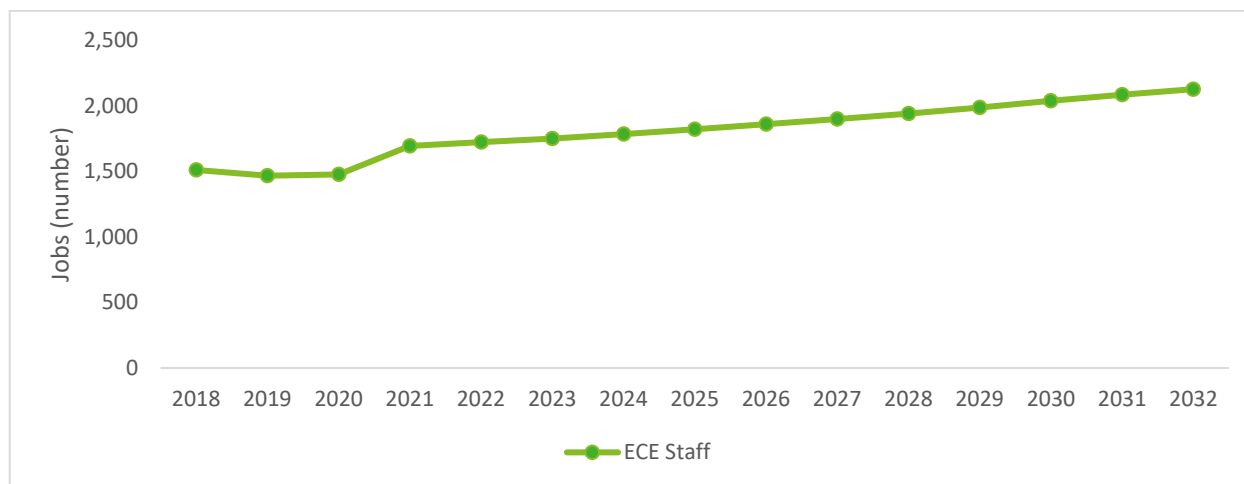
London-Middlesex's early childhood education workforce is an important part of the economy, representing 10% of all occupations in the education, law and social, community and government services. Moreover, early years professionals support the labour force attachment of workers in all sectors of the economy.

London-Middlesex's Early Childhood Educators provide day-care services and pre-kindergarten educational programs for infants or children. ECEs plan, organize and implement programs for children between the ages of infancy and 12 years while ECE assistants provide care for infants and preschool- to school-age children under the guidance of ECEs.

## Employment, Wages and Demographic Profile

As per *metroeconomics*' data (Figure 6), following job losses due to COVID-19 pandemic, employment in London-Middlesex's ECE sector has recovered. As of 2022, the sector employed approximately 1,722 ECE staff. London-Middlesex's ECE is further projected to grow, adding 404 ECEs by 2032, reaching over 2,100 professionals.

Figure 6: ECE Staff, Occupations, London-Middlesex, 2018-2032



Source: *metroeconomics*

London-Middlesex's shows a lower-than-average supply of jobs compared to the national average. The national average<sup>18</sup> for an area this size is 3,140 employees. This lower-than-average supply of jobs could be driven by several factors. This may be due to the lack of sufficient operators in the region or not enough job openings within existing operators. For those in the community seeking employment in the sector, this makes it more difficult to gain employment.

Earnings within the sector are low in London-Middlesex. The national median salary for Early Childhood Educators and assistants is \$31,288, compared to \$30,462 in London-Middlesex<sup>19</sup>. The sector is among the lowest paid in the broader economy when compared to other jobs requiring similar education and experience<sup>20</sup>.

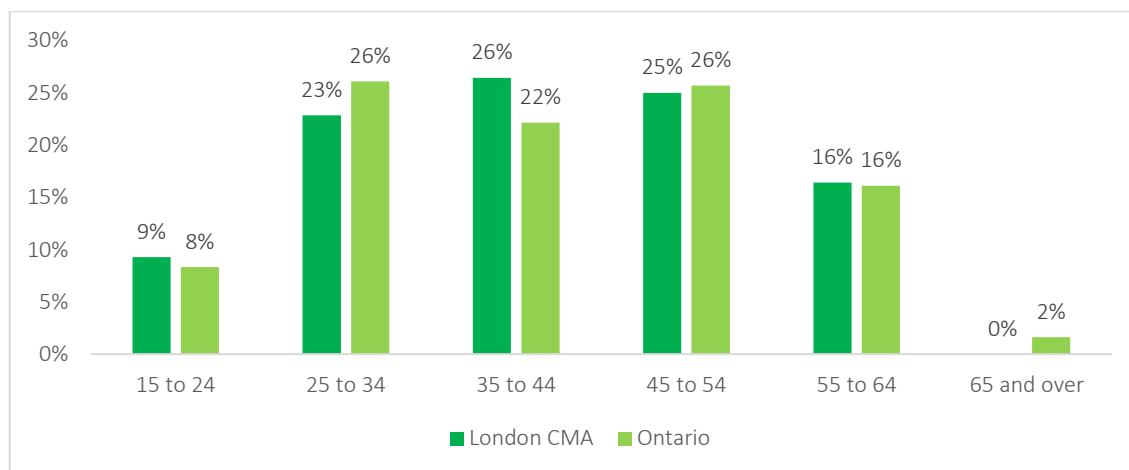
<sup>18</sup> National average values are derived by taking the national value for Early Childhood Educators and assistants and scaling it down to account for the difference in overall workforce size between the nation and the area. The value represents the national average adjusted for region size.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Emis Akbari, Kerry McCuaig, and Daniel Foster. 2020. Atkinson Centre. Early Childhood Education report.

As illustrated in Figure 7, when considering the demographic profile, the majority of London CMA's ECE workers are either between 35 to 44 years (26%) or 45 to 64 years (25%) of age. It is important to recognize that London-Middlesex, like communities across Canada is aging. The labour market challenges that the sector currently faces, will only compound as the large population segment of baby boomers continue to retire.

Figure 7: Early Childhood Educators and Assistants, Class of worker by Age groups, London CMA, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population.

## Early Childhood Education Female Labour Participation

The share of female labour participation in Canada's economy has ebbed and flowed in recent years.

The 'She-cession' was prevalent throughout 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic as many women opted to leave the workforce given a lack of child care options or, were disproportionately in sectors that were exposed to downturns. Labour force participation fell to its lowest at 56.7%, like levels seen in 2002, during the recession<sup>21</sup>.

Recent employment data from the Labour Market Information Council, is assuring, as jobs recovery for women in Canada has been strong and ahead of men's recovery, since 2021<sup>22</sup>. However, challenges remain as across the economy, women continue to be under-represented, underutilized and face barriers to and in employment. Key barriers include the earnings gap, social norms related to gendered occupation roles, discrimination in the workplace and the unbalanced sharing of family responsibilities.

These barriers are also evident in the Early Childhood Education sector as workers of early learning and care are feminized and racialized. An analysis conducted by Atkinson

<sup>21</sup> Atkinson Centre. April 2022. Canada's Children Need a Professional Early Childhood Education Workforce

<sup>22</sup> Labour Market Information Council. March 2022. Women in Recovery: COVID-19 and Women's Labour Market Participation.

Centre for Society and Child Development shows that educating and caring for young children is deeply gendered and devalued<sup>23</sup>.

As over 95% of all London-Middlesex's ECES and assistants are women, it is highly necessary that significant investments are made in policy and program reform to address these institutionalized gender-based barriers that women face. These could include:

- ❖ Providing a favourable and inclusive work environment for women
- ❖ Increasing job opportunities, providing training and career progression offering and enabling access to opportunities
- ❖ Supporting competitiveness through skilling, upskilling, and reskilling opportunities
- ❖ Placing women at the center of decision making about strengthening and improving the environments in which they work

Addressing barriers to training and employment for women in this sector could also support the increased labour force participation of women and parents across all other sectors. According to an Atkinson Centre report, 41% of parents who could not secure child care decided to postpone their return to work<sup>24</sup>. Deloitte's research further identifies that investing more effectively in the care economy could help address Canada's labour force shortage<sup>25</sup>.

## Education Pipeline

As of 2019, London-Middlesex produced 1,455 post-secondary graduates from five program classification groups that could lead to employment in the Early Childhood Education sector. Most graduates were from the University of Western Ontario (51%) and Fanshawe College of Applied Arts and Technology (48%), while Brescia University College accounted for 1% of all completions.

As illustrated in Figure 8, most graduates were from the human development, family studies and related services program group, with more than 700 completions in 2019 alone. This program classification includes graduates of human development and family studies, adult development and aging, family systems, child development, family, and community services and child care and support services management.

From 2015 to 2019, London-Middlesex saw more than 3,200 graduations in this classification group, offering a strong potential talent supply<sup>26</sup>. Fanshawe College accounted for all graduates of this discipline. Graduates of the teacher education and professional development, represent another potential supply for the sector, with more than 1,700 graduations between 2015 and 2019.

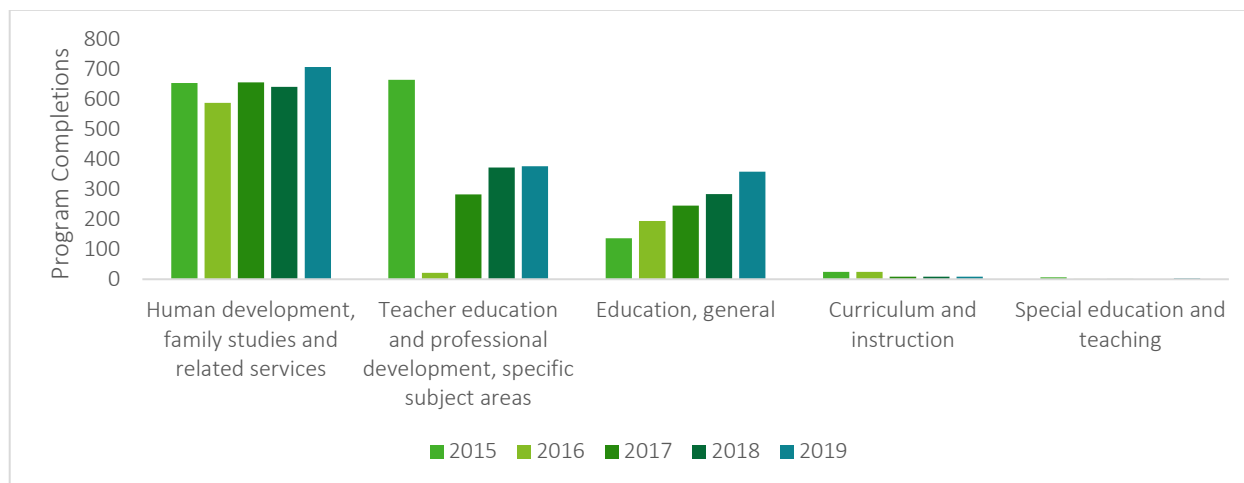
<sup>23</sup> Atkinson Centre. April 2022. Canada's Children Need a Professional Early Childhood Education Workforce.

<sup>24</sup> Atkinson Centre. April 2022. Canada's Children Need a Professional Early Childhood Education Workforce.

<sup>25</sup> Deloitte. September 2022. Understanding Canada's Labour Shortage.

<sup>26</sup> It should be noted that this CIP also include programs in adult development and ageing, family systems and other human development areas and do not reflect the supply for the ECE sector alone.

Figure 8: Program Completions by Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP)<sup>27</sup>, London-Middlesex, 2015-2019

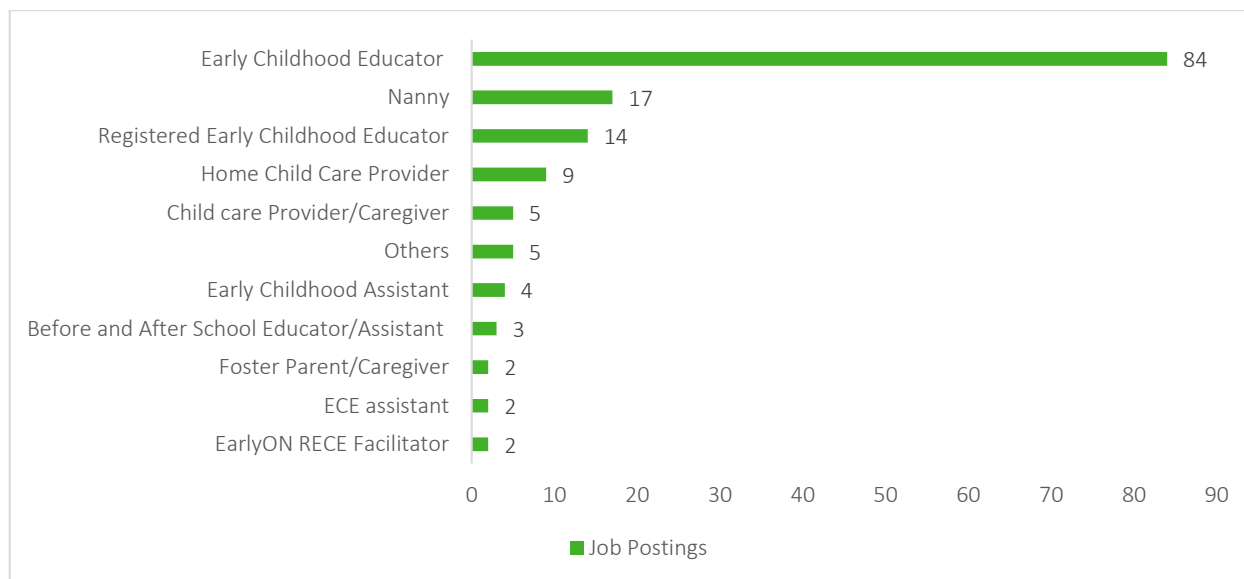


Source: Lightcast Q3 2022 Data Set

## Job Postings

As illustrated in the figure below, London-Middlesex saw 147 Early Years and Child Care job postings between January and November 2022<sup>28</sup>. Most job postings were for ECEs and RECEs. Most of these job postings were in London.

Figure 9: Job Postings, ECE sector, London-Middlesex, January 2022 - November 2022



Source: Vicinity Jobs Labour Demand Reporting System

<sup>27</sup> The Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) classifies instructional programs according to field of study. The classification provides a detailed description of each instructional program class together with illustrative examples of the types of instructional programs found in that class.

<sup>28</sup> Vicinity Jobs Labour Demand Reporting System



The Middlesex Census Division, which includes the City of London, saw a decline in job postings for ECEs and assistants between 2018 and 2022. This may be a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, where many people who were required to work remotely chose to care for their children at home, reducing the demand for ECE workers. Many centres were also temporarily shut down, profoundly impacting early childhood employment.

### **French and Indigenous Job Postings**

- ❖ Between January 1st, 2018, to May 31st, 2022, nine jobs were posted, for early childhood educators and assistants, requiring French language. This is approximately 2.6% of all job postings for this period.
- ❖ French language requirements were also required for home child care provider positions; 8 job postings in total, representing 3.1% of all job postings for this period.
- ❖ Indigenous job postings (those specific for indigenous workers) represented 2.3% of all ECE job postings in Middlesex and 1.6% of all home childcare providers jobs postings in the Census Division<sup>29</sup>.
- ❖ Of these, the Middlesex Census Division, saw a total of eight job postings for Indigenous ECEs, and four job postings for Indigenous home child care providers.<sup>30</sup>

### **Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (CWELCC) Allocation**

- ❖ In alignment with the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care agreement, the government of Ontario released the Access and Inclusion Framework and Notional Space Targets in December 2022.
- ❖ As per the allocation, a total of 2,080 new licensed child care spaces are to be created in the City of London between 2022 and 2026 for children aged 0 to 5 years<sup>31</sup>; 582 in school-based space and 1,498 in community-based space.
- ❖ This would require an addition of approximately 390 RECEs in the city of London to respond to the demand increase of the CWELCC.

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<sup>29</sup> Indigenous LMI platform, advanced by Vicinity Jobs and Fleming College

<sup>30</sup> January 1, 2018, to May 31, 2022

<sup>31</sup> Ministry of Education, Early Years and Child Care Division; Access and Inclusion Framework and Notional Space Targets. Dec 2022.

## Quantifying Supply and Demand

The Middlesex Census Division is one of the most rapidly growing communities in Ontario, far exceeding the provincial population growth rate. The community has achieved strong rates of net in-migration, especially from people aged 20 to 39 years, which has contributed to the fast overall growth in population.

Population projections and the ongoing demand (job postings) by employers of child care services point to a rapidly growing need for quality child care services in London-Middlesex.

As tabulated in Figure 10, *metroeconomics* projects that the number of children under 12 years of age will increase by 23% over the next 10 years – an increase of more than 16,900 children. London is expected to account for about 85% of that anticipated growth.

Examining the current state of child care in London-Middlesex, shows that as of 2021, only 22% of London’s children under 12 years old received child care, in Middlesex that rate was even lower at 6.4%. In comparison, in 2020, 41% of Ontario’s children between 0 to 5 years received care<sup>32</sup>. Research suggest that the lower rate of child care access may be because of several factors, including location, a lack of sufficient options, characteristics of the individual providing care, hours of operation, affordable cost, program characteristics and ability to meet child’s special needs, or no available option<sup>33</sup>.

The 2021 data also indicates that each ECE staff person in London supported an average of 9.169 child care spaces, while each staff person in the rest of Middlesex supported an average of 3.246 spaces.

Assuming the population projections for persons 0 to 12 prevail in London-Middlesex, between 2023 to 2032, the demand for ECEs in London-Middlesex’s are projected to grow. The data as illustrated in Figure 10, shows that the number of staff for the area will reach 2,126 in 2032 up from 1,694 in 2021. This indicates that there could be a supply of workers to participate in the sector.

The population projections also suggest that the total number of required licensed child care spaces for the entire area could need increase by almost 3,300 by 2032 to meet the needs of a larger community. These spaces can be expected to require qualified staff to operate effectively. To meet this need, the region needs to educate and hire more than 430 additional qualified ECEs over the next 10 years.

The projected staff increase, and the potential graduate pipeline could be leveraged for sector growth. This requires targeted strategies for the attraction, retention, and readiness of ECEs.

<sup>32</sup> Use of early learning and child care arrangements, children aged 0 to 5 years. Table: 42-10-0004-01.

<sup>33</sup> Early Learning and Child Care for Children aged 0 to 5 years: A Provincial/Territorial Portrait

Figure 10: ECE Spaces and Workers in Middlesex and London to 2032

Characteristics	2021 Actuals	Projected needs in 2032	% Change 21- 32
<b>Population 0 to 12 Years</b>			
London	59,983	77,041	28%
Rest of Middlesex	12,836	13,595	6%
<b>Licensed CC Spaces</b>			
Spaces London	13,258	17,028	28%
Spaces Rest of Middlesex	805	872	8%
<b>Penetration Rates (%)</b>			
London	22.10%	22.10%	0%
Rest of Middlesex	6.30%	6.40%	0.10%
<b>Staff</b>			
London ECE Staff	1,446	1,857	28%
Rest of Middlesex Staff	248	269	8%
<b>Spaces per Staff</b>			
London	9.169	9.169	0%
Rest of Middlesex	3.246	3.246	0%

Source: *metroeconomics*