

1 Career guidance to support the recovery in Canada

Canadian labour markets have been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has highlighted the importance of a skilled and resilient workforce that is able to navigate employment transitions. This chapter first provides an overview of the impact of the pandemic, as well as the longer-term trends of technological change, globalisation, population ageing and decarbonisation, on Canadian labour markets. It then reviews Canada's current performance in skilling adults. Finally, the chapter provides an outline of Canada's system of career guidance for adults, including how responsibility is shared, who the main providers are and how services are delivered.

Summary

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on output and employment was unprecedented, leading to record numbers of unemployed. But not all sectors and workers were affected in the same way. Industries that were able to switch to remote working and digital service provision were less impacted. The employment impact was greatest on young people, low-skilled and low-wage workers, women as well as minority groups, including Indigenous people. These groups have benefited from the employment recovery, but remain more vulnerable to reductions in working hours or employment losses resulting from new waves of infections.

Already prior to the pandemic, the demand for skills was changing due to technological adoption, population ageing, globalisation and decarbonisation. The pandemic has amplified ongoing trends that are putting certain groups of workers at risk of skills obsolescence and job automation. Adult learning, accompanied by career guidance, is a key policy lever to support the post-pandemic employment recovery. According to a growing body of international evidence, career guidance, which comprises a range of services that assist individuals to make well-informed choices about work and learning, has the potential to facilitate successful labour market transitions and to help counteract a long-term deepening of the divide between socio-economic groups.

Responsibility for adult career guidance, or career development as it is often called in Canada, is shared between different levels and areas of government. However, there is little strategic development of career guidance policy in Canada. The most common providers of career guidance to adults in Canada are provincially/territorially government-run employment services and private career guidance services. While the former are mostly targeted to unemployed workers, the latter can be costly for individuals, posing a challenge to a proactive, inclusive and lifelong approach to career guidance in Canada.

This chapter presents the current labour market context in Canada and provides an overview of the system of career guidance policy and provision for adults across provinces and territories. It highlights how structural changes in the demand for skills as a result of globalisation, technological change, population ageing and decarbonisation have been amplified by the COVID-19 crisis. In this context, adult skill development is more important than ever. There is growing evidence internationally that career guidance can motivate adults, and particularly those who are most vulnerable in the labour market, to access adult learning opportunities that will support their employability and their ability to adapt to labour market change (see Box 3.1).

In the context of this study, the term “career guidance” is used to refer to a range of services intended to assist individuals of all age groups to make well-informed educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers (see Box 1.1). While career guidance has traditionally focused on young people, this report focuses on services for adults who have already entered the labour market. To facilitate measurement, the focus is restricted to adults aged 25-64, while recognising that many adults stay in the labour market much later than age 64, and can continue to benefit from career guidance and learning opportunities well beyond age 64.

The analysis in this report draws from three sources: virtual interviews with Canadian stakeholders, a policy questionnaire that was completed by federal and provincial ministries of employment and provincial and territorial ministries of education, and the OECD Survey of Career Guidance for Adults (SCGA). The SCGA is an online survey that sheds light on the use, provision, inclusiveness, and quality of adult career guidance services across countries. In doing so, it fills an important information gap by creating an internationally-comparable source of data on the use of adult career guidance services. It was adapted to the Canadian context and implemented in Canada in June 2021, and, at the time of writing, had been carried out in nine other countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, New Zealand, France, Germany, Italy, and the United States). The Annex provides more details about the policy questionnaire and the SCGA methodology.

1.1. A changing labour market context

The severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment coincided with ongoing transformations in Canadian labour markets. This section discusses how the impact of the pandemic on the Canadian labour markets as well as other ongoing structural changes such as digitalisation, demographic change and decarbonisation, have been transforming the demand for skills.

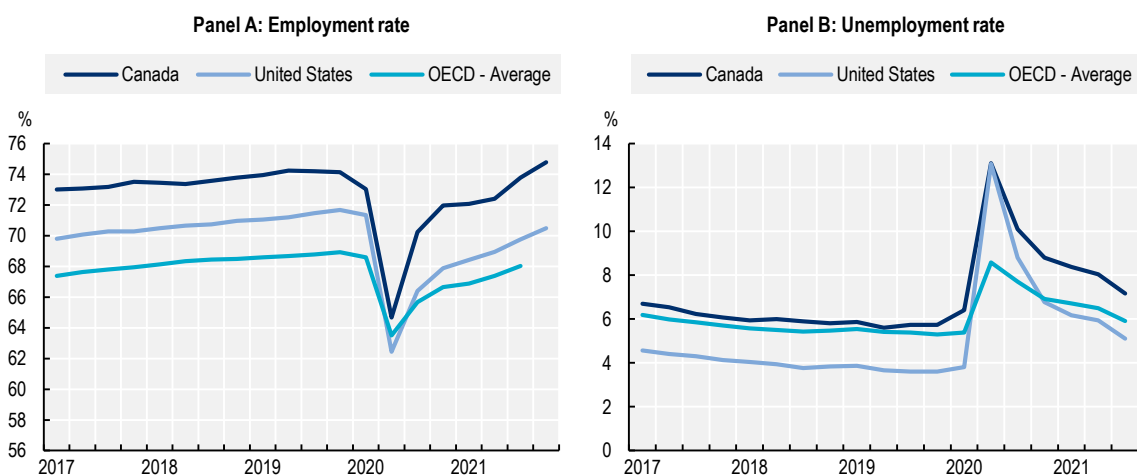
1.1.1. The COVID-19 crisis caused an unprecedented economic and employment shock

The COVID-19 pandemic led to an unprecedented economic and employment crisis in Canada and around the world. The measures to contain and mitigate the spread of the virus, combined with great uncertainty about the global outlook resulted in an immediate drop of economic activity. Similar to other OECD countries, real GDP dropped by 15% in Canada during the first wave of the pandemic, far exceeding the impact of the 2008/2009 global financial crisis. Economic output rebounded rapidly in the second half of 2020 and continued somewhat unevenly during 2021 (OECD, 2021^[1]).

Prior to the pandemic, the country had experienced a steady employment growth since 2009, with record-low unemployment of 5.7% in 2019 and tight labour market conditions. As a result of sanitary containment measures, in seasonally adjusted terms, the unemployment rate peaked at nearly 13.5%, and total employment losses from February to April 2020 amounted to 3 million. The initial lockdowns led to a sharp rise in long-term unemployment,¹ visible in the third quarter of 2020 (Statistics Canada, 2021^[2]). By November 2021, the unemployment rate had fallen to 6.1%, compared with 5.5% on average in the OECD, and just above its pre-pandemic levels (OECD, 2021^[3]). Long-term unemployment is falling, but at 24% remains above the pre-crisis level of 16% in February 2020 (Statistics Canada, 2022^[4]). Some softening of the labour market occurred in January 2022 as a result of the return of stricter public health measures in response to the surge in COVID-19 infections linked to the Omicron variant.

Figure 1.1. Employment and unemployment during the pandemic

Quarterly employment and unemployment rates, age 15-64, 2017-21



Note: The employment rate is defined as the employed population as a percentage of the working age population. The unemployment rate is defined as the unemployed population as a percentage of the labour force (active population). Labour force surveys in Canada and the United States classify temporary layoffs as being unemployed, in contrast to other OECD countries. As a result, those two countries saw sharper initial spikes in the rate of unemployment in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis.

Source: OECD (2021^[5]), "Labour market statistics", *Main Economic Indicators* (database), <https://doi.org/10.1787/data-00046-en> (accessed on 22 June 2021).

The initial impact of the COVID-19 fell more heavily on some sectors and regions than others in response to social distancing measures, the temporary drop in consumer demand for some goods and services, and disruptions in global markets and supply chains. Services that rely on face-to-face interactions, non-essential spending and international movement experienced a more direct impact of containment and mitigation measures. Indeed, the accommodation and food service sector as well as arts, entertainment and recreation recorded the greatest declines in output and employment. Statistics Canada data show that these industries continued to experience lower monthly output in October 2021 compared to pre-pandemic levels (Statistics Canada, 2022^[6]). Essential services, and those sectors which were able to adapt to the circumstances by shifting to telework or virtual service provision, saw a more moderate disruption of economic activity (Bank of Canada, 2021^[7]). The effects of COVID-19 also differed across regions and provinces, as a result of variation in health care capacity, containment measures, and reliance on industries and sectors that were deeply hit (Bank of Canada, 2021^[7]).

The federal and provincial governments in Canada adopted a range of programmes in order to help workers and firms through the crisis, to avoid layoffs and support the rehiring of employees. Examples of federal-level measures include: the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS), a temporary 75% wage subsidy for up to 24 weeks; easier access to credit for firms through a Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP); and the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) to support workers not covered or eligible for Employment Insurance (OECD, 2020^[8]). These measures are likely to have contributed to the strong employment recovery since the trough of the crisis in April 2020.

At the end of 2021, with unemployment almost back to pre-pandemic levels, the employment recovery led to a substantial tightening in certain sectors. As the labour market conditions increasingly resemble those observed prior to the pandemic, they are likely to contribute to skills shortages across provincial, regional and local labour markets, as well as geographical mismatches between new job vacancies and the available workforce with relevant skills to fill them (Statistics Canada, 2021^[9]).

1.1.2. Certain groups were hardest hit by the pandemic, deepening existing divides in labour markets

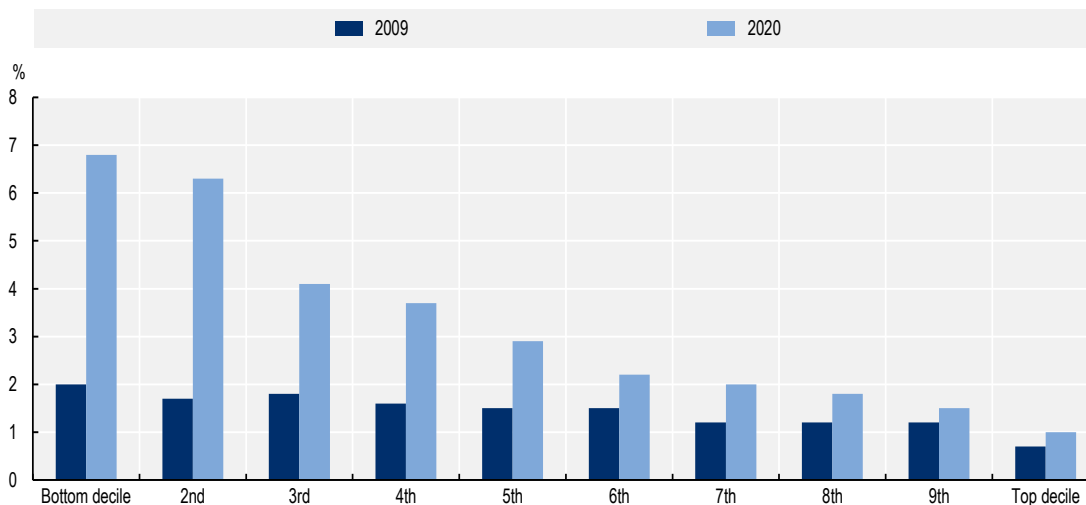
The employment contraction that followed the outbreak of the pandemic unevenly affected social and economic groups in Canada, deepening existing divides on Canadian labour markets. The greatest impacts were on young people, low-skilled workers, temporary employees and minority groups. Particularly hard-hit were young people under the age of 24, who accounted for 45% of the employment losses during 2020 (Statistics Canada, 2021^[2]). Moreover, minorities, including Indigenous people, experienced a greater economic impact from the crisis, and higher levels of unemployment, financial difficulties, and representation in low-wage jobs (Statistics Canada, 2021^[2]).

Labour force data from 2020 shows that women were more affected by initial employment losses than men, mainly due to their overrepresentation in the services sector. Women also saw a larger decrease in their paid hours than men, which might also be linked to them taking on additional care responsibilities during the closures of schools and childcare facilities. The recovery of female employment initially lagged behind that of male employment (LMIC-CIMT, 2021^[10]), but caught up towards the end of 2021.

In contrast to the global financial crisis of 2009, new layoffs in 2020 disproportionately affected individuals at the lower end of the wage distribution (Figure 1.2). Low-wage workers have also experienced a larger drop in working hours than their higher-earning counterparts during the COVID-19 crisis. Wages and educational attainment are strongly linked (OECD, 2020^[11]), and data suggests that low-skilled groups were overrepresented among those who became unemployed during the crisis.

Figure 1.2. Layoffs by wage group during COVID-19 and the financial crisis, Canada

Average monthly layoff rates of employees, by wage decile, 2009 and 2020



Note: Average month-to-month change from January 2020 to December 2020, all pairs of months for 2009.

Source: Statistics Canada (2021^[2]), *COVID-19 in Canada: A One-year Update on Social and Economic Impacts*, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-631-x/11-631-x2021001-eng.htm#a4> (accessed 10 October 2021).

While employment has nearly recovered to pre-pandemic levels on aggregate, the employment of some vulnerable groups may take longer to recover (OECD, 2021^[12]). Vulnerable groups often face numerous and intersecting employment obstacles, such as limited work experience, care obligations, low skills or health limitations. Previous crises have shown that economic downturns can have longer-term scarring effects on the employment outcomes of young people who enter the labour market during the time of crisis (Andrews et al., 2020^[13]; Bell and Blanchflower, 2011^[14]). It remains to be seen, at the time of writing, whether government measures such as additional funding for the Youth Employment and Skills Strategy will help to prevent such negative effects.

OECD analysis has shown an association between workers' vulnerability to technological change and the intensity with which the crisis hit them (OECD, 2021^[12]). In particular, workers whose skills and occupations were in low demand and at higher risk of automation prior to the pandemic were more likely to lose their jobs in 2020, while their higher-skilled peers were more likely to experience a reduction in working time, and a shift to remote working (OECD, 2021^[12]). Workers in jobs at a higher risk of automation might have experienced a weaker employment recovery and might be challenged to change their occupation, given the accelerated reorganisation of work and adoption of new technologies in the labour market since the onset of the crisis (OECD, 2021^[12]; McKinsey Global Institute, 2021^[15]).

1.1.3. The demand for skills was disrupted by COVID-19, but was already undergoing major changes before

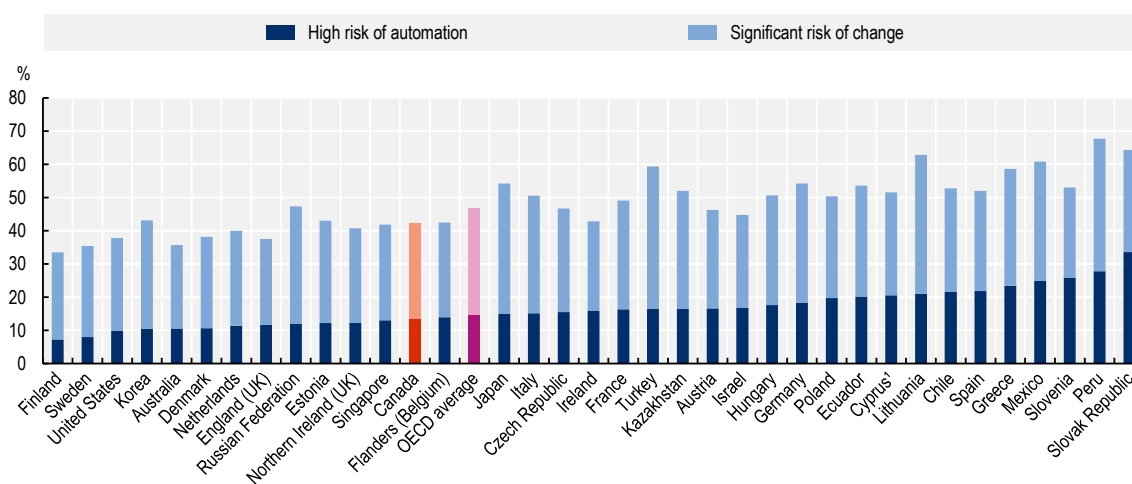
While overall the number of vacancies and new hires dropped during the pandemic, online vacancy data suggest that certain occupations and skills continued to be in high demand in Canada (OECD, 2021^[16]). Health care professionals such as physicians, nurses, pharmacists, epidemiologists, care assistants or technicians saw a particularly strong increase in demand in 2020. Among the skills most required during the pandemic were technical skills related to health and transversal skills, including communication, teamwork and customer service skills (OECD, 2021^[16]). Future-proof jobs in Canada will likely continue to require high levels of cognitive skills,

digital skills as well as social and emotional skills, including management, communication, leadership and self-organisation skills (OECD, 2020^[17]; 2019^[18]).

At the same time, labour markets were undergoing transformations even before COVID-19 due to technological change, globalisation, population ageing and the shift to a low-carbon economy. Preliminary evidence suggests that the pandemic has accelerated ongoing automation and the adoption of digital technologies, as many companies switched to remote working, started offering digital services, or transitioned to more digital business processes. While this change provided opportunities for many, workers in low-skilled occupations often were not able to telework, and are likely to face a higher risk of having obsolete skills due to digitalisation and automation (Nedelkoska and Quintini, 2018^[19]).

Figure 1.3. Jobs at risk of automation or significant change

Share of jobs at high risk of automation or significant change, percentage



Note: Jobs are at high risk of automation if the likelihood of their job being automated is at least 70%. Jobs at risk of significant change are those with the likelihood of their job being automated estimated at between 50 and 70%.

Source: OECD calculations based on the Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC, 2012); and Nedelkoska and Quintini (2018^[19]) "Automation, skills use and training", *OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers*, No. 202, <https://doi.org/10.1787/2e2f4eea-en>.

According to OECD estimates based on data for 2012, 13% of jobs in Canada were at high risk of automation while an additional 30% approximately were at significant risk of change due to automation because many tasks, but not all, could be automated (Figure 1.3). The Advisory Council on Economic Growth estimates that almost a quarter of all tasks performed by Canadian workers could be displaced by technology by 2030 (2017^[20]). Given the acceleration of trends in remote work, digital business practices and automation during the pandemic, this number might have increased. In a 2021 publication, the McKinsey Global Institute predicts that 25% more workers than previously estimated will need to switch occupations (McKinsey Global Institute, 2021^[15]). While job losses due to technological change might well be offset by new jobs, emerging industries will require different skills and qualifications than those that are in decline. In particular, digital skills will likely be required in more jobs, and not only in those relating to information technology. From this perspective, upskilling and reskilling opportunities, as well as career guidance for workers to reorient themselves, are essential.

The ageing of the population is another long-term trend that puts pressure on Canadian labour markets and changes the demand for skills. The number of individuals aged 65 and over per 100 people of working age (20-64), is projected to almost double, from 26 in 2015 to 48 by 2050 (OECD, 2017^[21]). On the one hand, this will result in a shrinking workforce, while creating more demand for health and care services,

which is likely to put pressure on public budgets. On the other hand, older people might be able to remain in the workforce longer due to increases in life expectancy, emphasising the need for lifelong learning and access to skills training.

Finally, the transition to a low-carbon economy as a response to climate change and environmental pressures is likely to affect Canadian labour markets by displacing employment in the traditional energy sector and related fields. Canada has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 30% below 2005 levels by 2030 under the Paris Agreement, and has announced a target to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, together with 72 other countries. Reaching this goal requires reducing emissions in the energy sector, which accounted for 832 000 direct and indirect jobs in 2018, or 4.4% of total employment in Canada (Government of Canada, 2021^[22]). While the government foresees the clean energy transition creating up to 350 000 new jobs in the hydrogen sector across Canada (Government of Canada, 2020^[23]), up to 50-75% of workers currently employed in the oil and gas sector could be displaced, according to one estimate (Caranci, Fong and El Baba, 2021^[24]). This represents 312 000 to 450 000 lost jobs, two-thirds of which are located in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland and Labrador. Effective climate change mitigation will require a focus on jobs and skills, in particular to find ways that address geographically concentrated job displacement. While there might be no direct pathways for many people from declining industries to new employment opportunities in the clean energy sector, concerted efforts are required to facilitate the clean transition through skills, employment and community development strategies.

1.2. Skills and adult learning in Canada

While Canada has a highly educated population, it is not among the best performers in terms of the skills of adults. It has the highest share of adults with tertiary education (58% compared to the OECD average of 37%). However, the OECD Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) places the skills of Canadian adults above the OECD average, but below adults in the best-performing countries. An important share of the Canadian population (27%) has low proficiency in either literacy or numeracy, scoring at level 0 or 1 (OECD, 2019^[25]).

A part of the discrepancy between educational attainment and the skills proficiency of adults might be linked to weaknesses in Canada's adult learning system, and the skills development of adults over their lifetime. The Advisory Council on Economic Growth argued that while Canada has good systems to support initial educational attainment and to help those who are unemployed or retired, it lags behind in the institutional framework and assistance available for the skills development of the working-age population (Advisory Council on Economic Growth, 2017^[20]).

The following section briefly reviews Canada's performance on adult learning based on international comparisons.

1.2.1. Many adults in Canada continue to learn or train, but the system could be more inclusive

According to the OECD Priorities for Adult Learning dashboard,² Canada performs significantly above the OECD average in terms of the coverage and financing of adult learning, and the alignment of training with labour market needs. However, it performs comparatively poorly on inclusiveness (see Figure 1.4). In other dimensions measured by the dashboard (flexibility and guidance, financing, and perceived impact), Canada performs closer to the OECD average.

According to the data for 2012 from the OECD Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC), 52% of Canadian adults aged 16 to 65 participated in some form of adult learning, be it formal, non-formal, or both, over the course of one year. On average, this places Canada well above the OECD average (41%), albeit

below top-performing countries, including Denmark (59%), New Zealand (58%), or Finland (57%) (OECD, 2019^[25]). There are also regional differences with participation rates slightly below the OECD average in Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as Nunavut (Government of Canada and Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 2021^[26]).

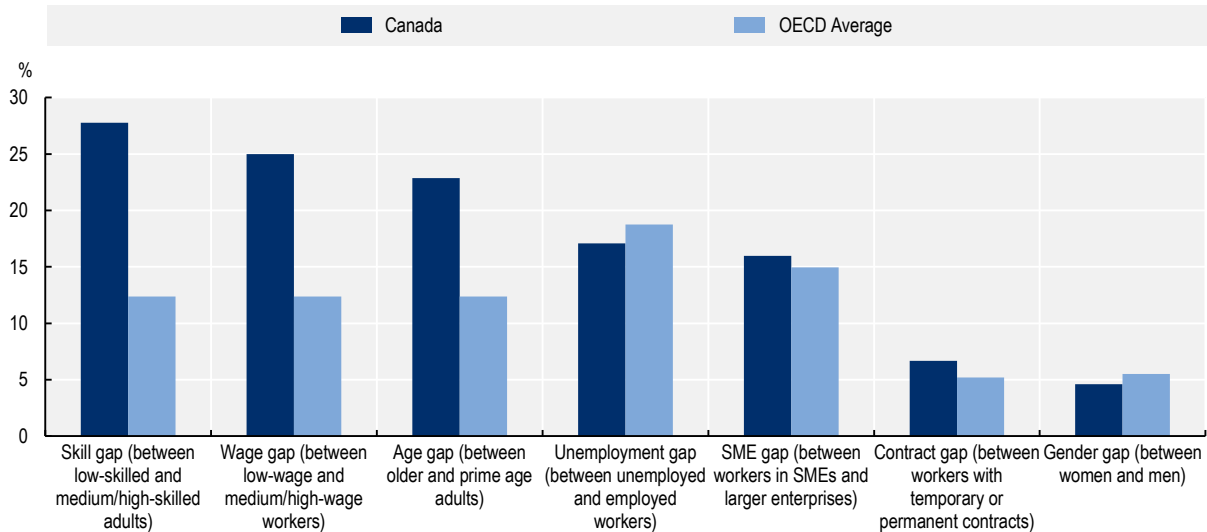
COVID-19 disrupted opportunities for upskilling and reskilling, and has likely affected the participation in adult learning temporarily. An international survey finds that training in firms and organisations was suspended for 86% of employees, 79% of apprentices, and 71% of interns or trainees in OECD countries. Workers in small and medium-sized enterprises were especially affected (ILO, 2021^[27]). Despite a swift policy response that included a federal-level wage subsidy for employers to retain apprentices, new registrations and certifications in skilled trades decreased in the first three-quarters of 2020 by 43% and 49% respectively, compared to the same period in 2019 (Statistics Canada, 2021^[2]).

Already prior to the pandemic, adults experienced barriers to participate in adult education and training. For almost one-third of Canadians who wanted to train but were unable to do so (30%), the main barrier cited was being too busy at work (OECD, 2020^[17]). Women reported being too busy at work less often, but were twice as likely as men to cite family responsibilities as an impediment. Women were also less likely to receive employer support than men, although this could partially be due to differences in the type of jobs by gender (Government of Canada and Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 2021^[26]). Other barriers were the costs of training (19%), unsuitable time and place of training (17%), or not having the right prerequisites (2%) (OECD, 2020^[17]).

As in other countries, participation in job-related adult learning in Canada correlates with factors such as age, skill level, wage, gender, minority or immigration background, and labour market status. Younger, higher-skilled and higher-earning individuals are more likely to participate in adult learning compared to their older, lower-skilled or low-income counterparts (see Figure 1.4). Gaps in participation also exist between Canadian-born adults and immigrants, women and men, as well as the Indigenous and non-Indigenous population, albeit to a smaller extent. Moreover, unemployed workers, those with temporary contracts or workers in small and medium-sized enterprises are less likely to participate in training than those who are employed, working in larger firms, or who have permanent contracts. The uneven participation in adult learning by different demographic groups means that educational and other inequalities are aggravated over the life course.

Figure 1.4. Participation gap in adult learning across demographic groups

Percentage point differences in training participation rates between groups, Canada and OECD



Note: Includes job-related formal and non-formal learning. The baseline varies across categories, e.g. low-skilled refers to all adults scoring at Level 1 or below in literacy and/or numeracy in PIAAC, low-wage refers to workers who earn at most two-thirds of the national median wage, temporary refers to workers in temporary contracts; workers in SMEs refers to workers in enterprises between 1 and 249 employees.

Source: OECD (2019^[25]), *The Survey of Adult Skills: Reader's Companion, Third Edition*, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/f70238c7-en>.

Equipping adults with information and guidance about employment and training opportunities is an important part of adult learning systems. Career guidance can support adults in identifying reskilling and upskilling opportunities, and successfully manage employment transitions, which is especially important amid the economic recovery from COVID-19, and in the larger context of rapidly changing labour markets. A sharper focus on career guidance for adults in Canada could also support a more inclusive adult learning system by addressing inequalities in awareness of and knowledge about relevant training opportunities.

1.3. Career guidance for adults in Canada

Career guidance (or career development, as it is commonly known in Canada) assists individuals of all ages in making well-informed educational, training and occupational choices and in managing their careers (Box 1.4). For young people, it supports their decisions around higher education and training as well as their transitions into the labour market. Adults benefit from career guidance when they want to reskill or upskill, move to a new occupation or sector in the labour market, return to work after a prolonged absence or contribute to their communities through volunteering roles. While this is clearly the case for unemployed adults, it is also the case for employed adults, and particularly those whose jobs might be at risk of disruption from automation and other megatrends. In Canada, as elsewhere, career guidance for working adults receives less policy attention than career guidance for unemployed adults or for young people. This is a significant gap in the current context of changing demand for skills, when reaching out to workers ahead of job loss is crucial.

This section provides an overview of the system of career guidance for adults in Canada. It sheds light on the main institutions responsible for adult career guidance policy in Canada, how co-ordination is encouraged, who delivers career guidance to adults, and how the services are delivered (e.g. face-to-face or remotely).

Box 1.1. What is career guidance for adults?

This report uses the term ‘career guidance’ to refer to a range of services intended to assist individuals of all age groups to make well-informed educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers. In Canada, career guidance is predominantly known as *career development*, but the terms *career counselling* or *orientation professionnelle* are also in use.

Career guidance for adults can be distinguished from career guidance for young people in schools in various ways. First, adults have generally acquired skills through work experience that have not been formally validated. Effective career guidance for adults supports them in identifying employment and training opportunities that leverage these existing skills. Second, career guidance for adults is ideally sensitive to their more complex needs, including childcare and financial responsibilities. Third, having been out of school for longer periods, adults are generally less aware of training opportunities and more familiar with the labour market than are young people, and effective career guidance takes this into account.

There is a growing body of evidence, internationally, to support the claim that career guidance assists adults to strengthen skill development, facilitate labour market transitions and support a better match between the supply and demand of skills and labour (see Box 3.1 in Chapter 3 for a summary). Adults have varying levels of knowledge about labour markets and training opportunities, as well as varying abilities to plan their futures. Career guidance has the potential to level these inequalities and support the labour market inclusion of under-represented groups.

A variety of terminology is used across countries to refer to professionals who deliver career guidance. To retain consistency with previous publications, this report will use the term ‘career guidance advisor’ to refer to such professionals. In Canada, the term ‘career development practitioner’ is commonly used, and is generally associated with having received a professional certification.

Source: OECD (2004^[28]), *Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging The Gap*, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264105669-en>; OECD (2021^[29]), *Career Guidance for Adults in a Changing World of Work*, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9a94bfad-en>.

1.3.1. Responsibility for adult career guidance is shared in Canada

Adult career guidance in Canada is not the responsibility of any one ministry or one level of government. It is embedded in policies relating to employment services and skill development of adults. Employment services, which sometimes include career guidance, are the responsibility of the provinces and territories, which receive financial support from the federal government. Education and training policies, on the other hand, are under provincial mandate. Career guidance relating to upskilling and reskilling of adults, as well as for young people in schools, is therefore primarily a provincial responsibility.

Canadian provinces receive funding from the federal government (through Employment and Social Development Canada, ESDC) to design and deliver employment services under Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDA) and the Workforce Development Agreements (WDA). Career guidance is integrated into a number of employment services that are funded through such agreements. Besides career guidance, other examples of employment services include support in gaining work experience, improving job skills, job search assistance or starting a new business.

With the support of these federal-provincial transfers, Canadian provinces design programming to meet their local labour market needs. Programs and services delivered through LMDAs support Employment Insurance (EI) recipients and those who have paid into EI. Employment services are generally designed by the provincial

ministries of labour. In Ontario and Quebec, the provincial public employment service is also involved in designing employment services.

Provincial ministries of education have responsibility for career guidance programmes that support adults in selecting formal adult learning opportunities for upskilling and reskilling. In Ontario, for instance, the Ministry of Education's Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) policy for mature students has components of pathway/career planning embedded within it. The Ontario Ministry of Education's Creating Pathways to Success also offers an education and career planning programme for secondary students, including those who are adult learners. Similarly, career guidance initiatives are a component of Quebec's provincial reskilling programmes (*Programme de l'Aide pour la requalification et l'augmentation de la formation (PARAF)*, and *Programme pour la requalification et l'accompagnement en technologies de l'informations et communications (PRACTIC)*).

Neither the federal government nor any of the provinces have a stand-alone career guidance strategy for adults in place. However, four out of the seven provinces in the OECD policy questionnaire (Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec) reported having a career guidance strategy for adults that is part of a wider strategy related to employment or the development of skills. This is a common practice in other OECD countries as well. Provided they set out quantifiable targets and timelines, career guidance strategies that are embedded in wider strategies related to employment or skills development can be just as useful as stand-alone strategies. Such strategies can provide much-needed momentum and leadership when they are developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders, and can help to mobilise funding and promote system-wide co-operation.

1.3.2. Co-ordination between stakeholders is encouraged via working groups and information sharing

With responsibility for adult career guidance split between ministries and levels of government in Canada, strong co-ordination is essential to delivering services efficiently and reaching the labour market groups that would most benefit from it. Working groups are the primary means to facilitate federal-provincial co-ordination in Canada, while cross-ministerial co-ordination within provinces is facilitated by a combination of working groups and more informal co-operation. Professional career guidance organisations, like the Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling (CERIC) and the Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF), support the co-ordination of career guidance. Finally, non-governmental stakeholders engage in career guidance policy in various ways.

A number of working groups support federal-provincial co-ordination on issues related to adult career guidance, including information sharing and discussions about regulating the profession. Co-ordination between provincial-territorial governments and the Government of Canada on labour market issues happens through the Forum of Labour Market Ministers (FLMM) and its working groups. Provincial ministries also engage in bilateral and multilateral ways (through the FLMM) with publicly-funded stakeholders such as the Future Skills Centre and the Labour Market Information Council (LMIC). The LMIC is financed equally by the federal government and the provincial and territorial governments. For instance, provinces share labour market information via a federal/provincial LMI Committee. Moreover, there is co-ordination between the Government of Canada and provinces as part of the Workforce Development Agreements, e.g. the Canada-Saskatchewan Workforce Development Committee. Provinces and territories also co-ordinate together on educational questions through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), including on issues such as adult learning and foundational skills.

Cross-ministerial co-ordination within provinces is facilitated by a combination of working groups and informal co-operation. In New Brunswick, WorkingNB (the provincial public employment service) is represented on working groups and consulted regularly by the Department of Social Development and Department of Justice and Public Safety. In British Columbia, the Employer and Sector Partnerships branch within the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training develops and maintains partnerships with industry, non-profits, and other government bodies to ensure labour market programming is proactive. In Ontario, there is collaboration

between ministries that fund adult education and training services, adult language training services, employment services, and social assistance programs.³ In Quebec, there is inter-ministerial co-ordination⁴ on the development and implementation of national strategies or specific programs affecting the workforce or groups under-represented in the labour market. In Alberta, in addition to involving Alis (Alberta careers, learning and employment information) in steering and working groups, ministries also collaborate informally with one another to complete annual reports, business plans, and Labour Market Transfer Agreement (LMTA) reports.

A number of federal-level career guidance organisations across the country support co-ordination specifically on career guidance, as opposed to employment services or skills development more generally. CERIC is a pan-Canadian charitable organisation that advances education and research on career guidance. Its mission is to build awareness of the benefits of career guidance for social impact, and it does so through advocacy, webinars, an annual conference, and publications. Through its board and advisory committees, CERIC also engages with stakeholders across the country to address shared issues in career guidance. The CCDF is a non-profit centre of innovation and excellence for career guidance policy, research, development, and professional training. For instance, together with Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), they involved stakeholders nation-wide in the development of a renewed Canadian Competency Framework for Career Development Professionals and a harmonised approach to pan-Canadian professional certification (see Chapter 3). In addition to the above pan-Canadian bodies, some provinces have their own career guidance associations. The Career Development Association of Alberta, for example, provides a free bi-weekly newsletter and hosts an annual conference, which brings together employment and career practitioners, educators, human resource professionals, government staff and employers' and employee organisations.

Other non-governmental stakeholders are involved in various ways. Ontario has adopted a commissioning approach by engaging with external provider organisations, which plan, design and deliver employment services in their respective local areas following an outcome-based approach. These third-party organisations are commissioned to assess the needs of users in a specified area, to design services to meet those needs, and to choose an appropriate delivery mechanism, while making best use of available resources. In Nova Scotia, the Department of Labour and Advanced Education – Skills and Learning Branch also carries out commissioning activities, including launching Market Sounding Exercises to solicit feedback and promote innovation in the employment services delivery model, and holding bilateral meetings with individual vendors about the expected outcomes of the employment services delivery transformation.

Social partners are not explicitly involved in the development of career guidance policies in most provinces, with the exception of Quebec and Nova Scotia. In Quebec, the Labour Market Partners Commission (*La Commission des Partenaires du marchés du Travail*, CPMT) is made up of representatives from trade unions, employer groups, the educational community, community organisations and government agencies. Among other things, it is involved in assuring a good match between available training and the demands of the labour market, by advising the Minister of Labour, Employment and Social Solidarity of Quebec (*Ministre du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale*). In Nova Scotia, the public employment service works with employers and with Industry Sector Councils to support employers in building an industry-led approach to human resource development, including the attraction, retention and training of employees.

Overall, the methods used to facilitate co-ordination of career guidance policy in Canada – working groups, information sharing, conferences – are similar to those used in other OECD countries (OECD, 2021^[29]), though some countries use additional co-ordination mechanisms. Dedicated bodies in Australia, Ireland, and Norway are involved in co-ordinating career guidance across ministries and levels of government (Box 1.2). The arms-length nature of such bodies, as well as their dedicated budgets and mandate, can make them more impartial than government and effective at engaging stakeholders in policy development and implementation. They do not, however, tend to have power to directly influence policy making on career guidance, such as setting professional standards. In many OECD countries, legislation supports co-ordination by enshrining the right to career guidance into law (OECD, 2021^[29]). For instance, Norway recently adopted legislation which requires county municipalities to offer career guidance services to all citizens living in the country, and refugees now have a duty and a right to participate in career guidance when attending an introduction programme.

Box 1.2. International examples of bodies dedicated to co-ordination of career guidance

National Career Institute in Australia

The National Career Institute (NCI) was established in 2019 to ensure that people have access to authoritative and accurate careers information, regardless of their age or employment status. The NCI was originally envisioned as a policy and research body, but has taken on more of an operational role during COVID-19, providing telephone career support to youth. Through its websites (YourCareer.gov.au, Training.gov.au, and myskills.gov.au), NCI disseminates labour market information produced by the National Skills Commission. Both the NCI and the National Skills Commission receive funding through the Australian Government. In addition to disseminating labour market information, the NCI also supports co-ordination through partnership grants, which fund collaborative and innovative career interventions by employers, training providers, schools and community organisations.

National Centre for Guidance in Education in Ireland

The Irish National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE) is an agency of the Department of Education. It has responsibility to support and develop high-quality guidance practices in all areas of education (including for adults) and to inform national guidance policy. The centre works with key stakeholders including the public employment service (INTREO), Education Training Boards and schools to provide guidelines, support innovations, organise continuing professional development for career guidance advisors and carry out national surveys on guidance practice and needs. NCGE hosts the National Forum on Guidance twice per year to support communication, co-operation and collaboration across the various guidance sectors in Ireland. It also represents Ireland in discussions at the European Commission about career guidance policy and practice.

Skills Norway

Skills Norway (*Kompetanse Norge*) is the directorate for lifelong learning in Norway in the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. Next to skills and adult learning, it is responsible for the strategic leadership of career guidance policy, with the aim of strengthening co-operation and co-ordination among stakeholders, widening access to vulnerable groups, and increasing the quality of lifelong guidance services. Skills Norway established the National Unit for Lifelong Guidance as a national centre to develop and co-ordinate guidance policy and implementation, and to share knowledge and resources. Skills Norway also chairs a National Forum for Career Guidance, the Future Skills Needs Committee, and a number of other expert committees. Skills Norway has recently launched a national digital career guidance service, and developed a national quality framework for career guidance services across sectors.

Source: OECD (2021^[29]), *Career Guidance for Adults in a Changing World of Work*, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9a94bfad-en>; European Commission (2020^[30]), "Lifelong guidance policy and practice in the EU: trends, challenges and opportunities", <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/4dfac3fa-7a0b-11ea-b75f-01aa75ed71a1/language-en> (accessed 9 September 2021).

1.3.3. The most common providers of career services for adults in Canada are government-run employment services and private career guidance services

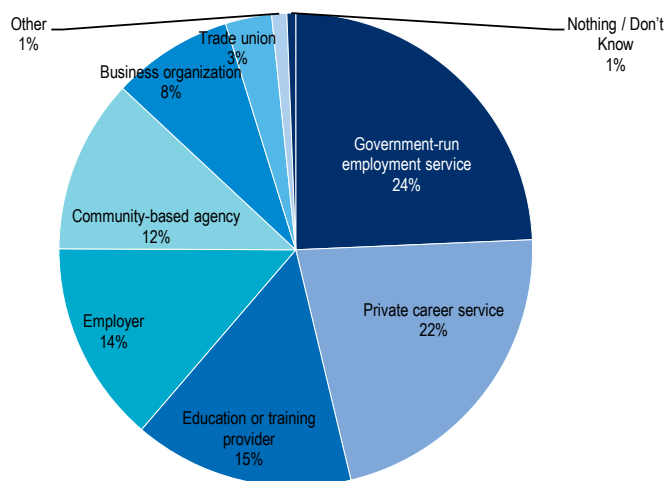
Comparisons between Canada and other countries in the SCGA must factor in differences in the main survey question. The Canadian version of the SCGA online survey asked adults, "In the past five years, have you used a career service?" This question differs from the question asked of adults in other countries

that participated in the survey: “In the past five years, have you spoken to a career guidance advisor?” Career service is a broader term than career guidance. Despite this difference, the rest of the report will draw international comparisons using the online survey data.

The SCGA finds that career guidance in Canada, as in other OECD countries, is delivered by a range of providers (Figure 1.5). Nearly a quarter of adults (24%) report having used a career service through a government-run employment service provider. Another 22% used a private career service, such as a career coach. About 15% of adult users consulted a career service offered through an education and training institution (e.g. school, college, university), while 14% received career services from their employer. Adults also received career service from community-based agencies (12%), business organisations (8%), or trade unions (3%), although these are more minor players. The provider landscape in Canada looks very similar to other OECD countries included in the online survey.

Figure 1.5. Career guidance is delivered by a range of providers in Canada

Share of all adults who used a career service over the past five years, by provider



Note: Data refer to the last time the respondent spoke to a career guidance practitioner, and is an average across all provinces and territories in Canada. The repose “other” includes providers such as Website/online career services.

Source: OECD 2020/2021 Survey of Career Guidance for Adults (SCGA).

Government-run employment services

Providing nearly a quarter of all career services, government-run employment services are managed at the provincial level in Canada. Often adults come to these services through another programme, like Social Assistance or Employment Insurance. Government-run employment services are called something different in each province, i.e. Employment Ontario, Nova Scotia Works, WorkBC, Emploi-Québec, Saskatchewan-Canada Career and Employment Service Centres, Alberta Works, Manitoba Jobs & Employment Centres, WorkingNB, Newfoundland and Labrador Employment Centres, and PEI Career Development Centres.⁵

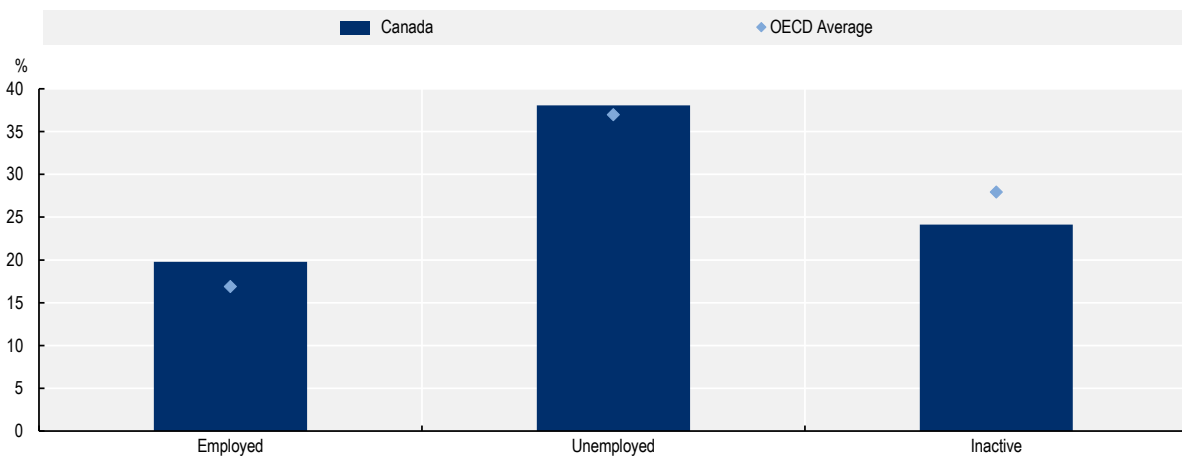
The career services offered by government-run employment services are typically job matching services targeted at unemployed people, rather than career guidance. Job matching has the goal of quickly placing jobseekers into employment. Though career guidance can help jobseekers to find jobs, it ideally takes a more holistic approach where skills, knowledge and abilities are thoroughly assessed, and the individual’s motivations and constraints are taken into account when designing career development plans. Unlike job matching, the measure of success of career guidance is not only whether a person finds a job, but could also include any number of milestones towards greater employability and personal well-being: acquiring new skills to manage

their career, feeling more positively about their labour market prospects, identifying and/or enrolling in a relevant training opportunity, or acquiring sustainable employment in an occupation they enjoy.

As in other OECD countries, unemployed adults in Canada are more likely to use career services from government-run employment services than are employed adults. The SCGA found that use of career services offered by government-run employment services is higher among the unemployed than among the employed population (Figure 1.6). Still, employed adults in Canada do use government-run employment services, and more so than in other OECD countries. For the most part, government-run employment services are restricted to adults who are eligible for Employment Insurance in Canada, which restricts most employed adults. But there are exceptions – including some government-funded employment programmes in Alberta, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Quebec – where certain types of career services are available to all adults, regardless of employment status.

Figure 1.6. Use of government-run employment services in Canada, by employment status

Share of adult users who received career guidance from the government-run employment services, by employment status



Note: Employment status when the respondent last spoke to a career guidance advisor.

Source: OECD 2020/2021 Survey of Career Guidance for Adults (SCGA).

Expanding public employment services (PES) to employed adults is a common trend across OECD countries, including Austria, Belgium (Flanders), Germany, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Japan, Hungary, Lithuania, and the United States (OECD, 2021^[29]). The intention is that expanding the PES to support employed individuals can provide support for impending disruptions. Shifting from a reactive to a more proactive approach requires building the capacity of employment counsellors to serve a broader client base. Germany's public employment service is currently piloting an initiative to build capacity to develop a more proactive and lifelong approach towards career guidance that targets employed workers (Box 1.3). The public employment service in Flanders (Belgium) provides an example of differentiated career services for employed versus unemployed adults (Box 1.3).

Where employed adults are eligible for government-run employment services in some provinces in Canada, they are generally eligible for a narrower set of services than unemployed adults. For instance, employed workers are eligible for employment services through Nova Scotia Works, but support does not include career guidance counselling. Clients are grouped into four streams (A, B, C and D) according to the intensity of the employment barriers they face. Those with the least barriers have access to less intensive support, such as online information, self-assessments or seminars. Such streaming of employment services is common across

OECD countries (including Austria, Greece, the Netherlands and Ireland) and can reduce costs while ensuring that the limited number of employment counsellors spend their time efficiently with adults who have the greatest need. At the same time, this approach also means that employed adults often miss out on access to publicly-subsidised career guidance services.

A common limitation of career guidance provided by public employment services is that it is not well integrated with the adult education and training system. This makes it difficult for employment counsellors at the PES to make good recommendations about training opportunities.

Box 1.3. Extending PES career guidance to employed workers

Germany

As the main provider of career guidance in Germany, the Federal Employment Agency is responsible for delivering guidance services to both young people and adults. For young people, the guidance focuses on their transitions from school to VET, university or work. For adults, the guidance focuses on their transitions from job to job. The 2019 Skills Development Opportunities Act reinforced the entitlement of employed adults to receive free career guidance services through the Federal Employment Agency.

As part of the Lifelong Career Guidance programme (*Lebensbegleitende Berufsberatung, LBB*), the Federal Employment Agency aims to complement current job placement services with career guidance that supports career planning and decision-making over the course of an individual's working life. It also aims to facilitate the up- and re-skilling of adults in order to meet labour market demands.

After a piloting phase, the nation-wide rollout of the programme was in progress at the time of writing, in co-ordination with the relevant ministries at the federal state level. The nationwide rollout included the hiring or retraining of staff to create 450 new LBB advisors in the first three years of the project (2020-22). LBB will not be set up in all local offices, but each labour market region will have a team of 10-20 LBB staff, who can be placed in local offices within the labour market region.

Flanders (Belgium)

The Flemish public employment service (VDAB) facilitates access to career guidance for both unemployed and employed adults. Every citizen, regardless of employment status, can visit the VDAB regional office. Unemployed adults have access to free guidance and training to help them overcome obstacles to employment. Employed and self-employed workers can apply to VDAB for career guidance vouchers, which offer four hours of subsidised career guidance with a mandated career coaching centre of their choice. Individuals have the right to two vouchers (i.e. 8 hours in total) every six years. Consisting of conversations, exercises, and checklists, the career guidance service results in a personal development plan. If training is needed to reach the client's career ambitions, then the career guidance counsellor will help the client identify specific training and inform them about the availability of training vouchers to finance the training.

Source: OECD (2021^[31]), *Continuing Education and Training in Germany*, <https://doi.org/10.1787/1f552468-en>; Dauth et al. (2018^[32]), *Qualifizierungschancen und Schutz in der Arbeitsversicherung*, IAB-Stellungnahme 15/2018, <http://doku.iab.de/stellungnahme/2018/sn1518.pdf>.

Private providers

About 22% of adult users of career guidance in Canada go through a private provider. Some adults are directed to private providers via the provincial public employment service, which often subcontracts services to private providers (more on the public procurement and accountability systems in Chapter 3). Employed adults who are not eligible for subsidised career guidance via the public employment service, or who do not perceive these services as meeting their needs, may consult private providers of their own initiative. Due to high cost, career guidance delivered by private providers is less accessible to lower-income adults.

Regulating quality among private providers is a challenge. A key issue raised during interviews with Canadian stakeholders is that anybody can call themselves a career guidance advisor or career coach without necessarily having the competences necessary to perform the job. Currently, five provinces out of 13 provinces and territories have a professional certification for career guidance practitioners that is grounded in the Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners. To obtain the professional certification, career guidance advisors must demonstrate a combination of relevant education and experience: either a Master's degree in an area related to career development plus one year of work experience in a career development role; or relevant work experience of up to 5 years for those with little or no relevant formal education. Chapter 3 will introduce Canada's federal-level certification initiative developed by the career development profession, and discuss its advantages and disadvantages.

Education or training provider

Some 15% of Canadian adult users reported receiving career guidance from an education or training provider, such as a university or a college. Adult learners may consult career guidance from a university or college when they are considering enrolling in an education or training programme, during the programme itself, and once they've graduated and need support applying what they've learned and progressing in future learning and work.

With education and training being a provincial responsibility, career guidance in education and training institutions is managed either at the provincial, local or institution level. This can result in heterogeneity in the availability and quality of services, which is equally the case across OECD countries.

A benefit of receiving career guidance from an education or training provider is that they can make concrete suggestions about particular training programmes and their availability. A possible disadvantage of career guidance provided by education or training providers, however, is that they may be biased towards recommending programmes that are available at their particular institution. Project GOAL in Europe attempted to overcome this limitation by offering unbiased education guidance at a one-stop service. The idea was that adults could be supported in choosing the most appropriate course among all adult education courses in the country, rather than from only one institution (see Box 2.2 in Chapter 2 for more details).

Employers

Another 14% of adult users reported receiving a career guidance service offered by their employer. In Canada, as elsewhere, few companies offer career guidance services to their employees. Where services are offered, they tend to be outplacement services that employers offer to mitigate legal risks, or focused on key high-potential or "talent" groups, such as the high-qualified or best performers. Large firms are more likely to offer career guidance than smaller firms. Much career guidance offered within firms is job- or company-specific, and focuses on how the individual could progress within the firm, while trying to avoid poaching risks. In Quebec, employers with an annual payroll exceeding CAD 2 million are required by law to invest 1% of their payroll into training activities or else pay into a fund managed by the Labour Market Partners Commission (*La Commission des Partenaires du marchés du Travail*, CPMT), which uses the money to promote employment, adaptation and integration into the workforce, as well as worker mobility.

France and Japan have programmes to encourage more career guidance within firms. These initiatives have the goal of extending career guidance to a wider group of adults, and to support more regular access to career guidance over the course of an employee's career. A common criticism with such programmes is that employers have an interest in keeping the employee within their firm (and managers have an incentive to keep them within their unit), which could undermine the quality of the guidance they provide.

Box 1.4. Public programmes to promote employer-sponsored career guidance

France

The Labour Code in France requires that employers have a professional interview (*entretien professionnel*) every two years with all employees. The mandatory meeting is intended to help the worker consider the prospects for professional development and training.

Japan

In recent years, the Japanese Government has been encouraging companies to offer career guidance to their employees via “self-career docks”. With self-career docks, companies set up opportunities for workers to receive regular career consultations throughout their careers. This includes both individual counselling and group counselling in career seminars. Interested employers can receive support in setting up and delivering the self-career docks. For instance, the government commissions nationally certified career counsellors to visit the firm to assist with implementation. Career guidance may be provided by an employee who is a qualified career consultant, by a government-commissioned consultant, or by an external consultant outsourced by the company. Until 2018, employers who introduced the self-career dock system received a government subsidy.

Since 2020, the Japanese Government has set up “Career Development Support Centers” in various parts of the country to promote the use of self-career docks. The Career Development Support Centers hold free introduction seminars for firms, covering topics like how to set up the self-career dock, how frequently to offer guidance, and what content to offer. Consultants from the Career Development Support Center also visit individual companies that are struggling to introduce the system (e.g. SMEs) to provide technical assistance.

Source: OECD (2021^[29]), *Career Guidance for Adults in a Changing World of Work*, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9a94bfad-en>.

Community-based agency

About 12% of employers receive career guidance from a community-based agency. As with private providers, community-based agencies are sometimes subcontracted by the provincial public employment service to offer career guidance services. For instance, Nova Scotia Works, the public employment service in Nova Scotia, consists of 17 community-based employment service providers across the province. Similarly in Quebec, the provincial government subcontracts the delivery of public employment services almost entirely to community-based employment centres. A key advantage of community-based employment service providers is that they are on the ground, can easily make referrals to local resources through their networks, and know the needs of the local population.

Business organisations and trade unions

Delivery of career guidance by business organisations is relatively uncommon in Canada, as elsewhere. Only 8% of Canadian adults receive career guidance from a business organisation (such as the Chamber of Commerce or an Industry Sector Council), which is just above the share in other countries (7% of adults).

The Manitoba Ministry of Education and Training funds the Sector Council Programme, which supports organisations in key sectors to develop and deliver workforce training. Such organisations also inform both youth and adults about jobs and careers in their sector, both in schools and through social media.⁶ In Nova Scotia, 15 industry sectors access provincial funding through the Sector Council programme, which supports sector councils to drive an industry-led approach to human resource development. In particular, the programme equips small-and-medium-sized businesses with access to expertise and resources in attracting, retaining and training employees.

Involvement of trade unions in career guidance is low across OECD countries (only 5% of adults use career guidance provided from trade unions), and is particularly low in Canada (only 3% of adults). This partially reflects low and declining union membership among employees across OECD countries, though in many countries, union services depend on coverage in collective bargaining agreements rather than membership.⁷ In some OECD countries, trade unions provide career guidance directly. The Icelandic Confederation of Labour has developed an Education and Training Service Centre which co-ordinates the development of career guidance services in co-operation with accredited education providers, and individuals belonging to certain target groups receive free guidance. Unionlearn, which is the learning and skills organisation of the Trade Union Congress in the United Kingdom, has Union Learning Representatives who offer information, advice and guidance, as well as carry out skills assessments and link learners with training.

1.3.4. Face-to-face delivery of career guidance was already less prevalent in Canada prior to the pandemic

According to the SCGA, 25% of adults who received career guidance services in Canada in the last five years received them face-to-face, while 75% used remote alternatives like videoconference (21%), telephone (20%), online chat (18%), instant messaging (16%) or website/online resources (1%) (Table 1.1). Compared to other countries in the survey, Canadians used face-to-face guidance much less (25% versus 54%) and remote alternatives much more (75% versus 46%). This may reflect that face-to-face services are less available in Canada relative to other countries, perhaps due to the geographic challenges of servicing such a large country.

There is a mismatch between how Canadians receive career guidance and how they would prefer to receive it (Table 1.1). In particular, Canadians would prefer to receive more face-to-face service, and less remote service. Close to 40% of Canadian adults said they would prefer to receive career guidance face-to-face (compared to only 25% who did). About 60% said they would prefer remote alternatives (compared to 75% who did).⁸ Preferences are very similar across countries.

Table 1.1. Actual and preferred modes of service delivery in Canada and the OECD

Share of adult users of career guidance, by mode of actual and preferred service delivery

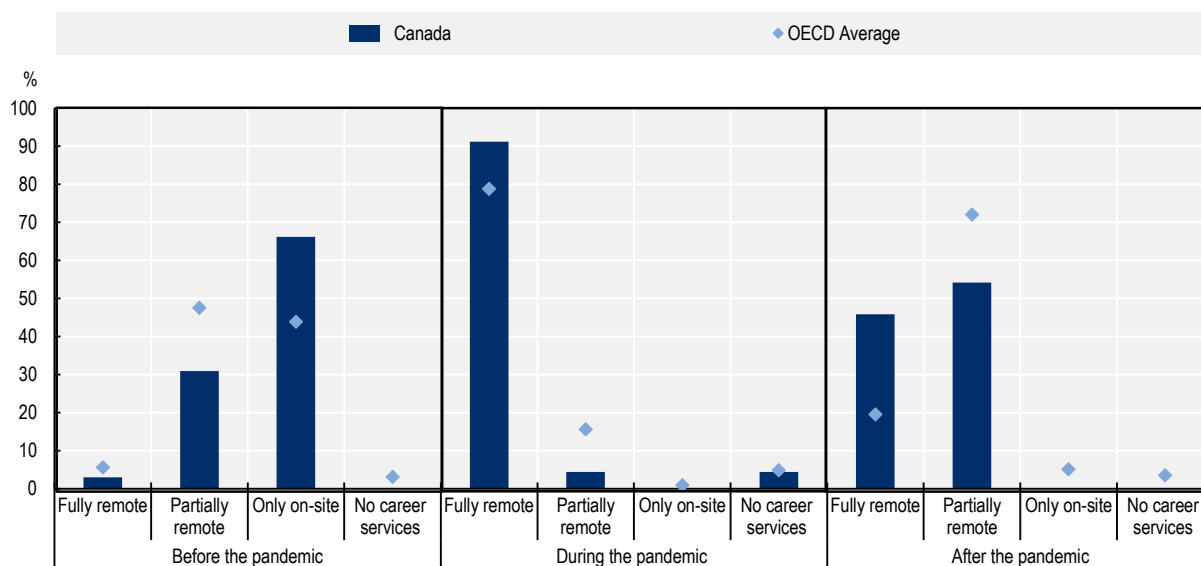
	Canada		OECD	
	Actual	Preferred	Actual	Preferred
Face-to-face	24.9	39.1	54.2	43.1
Remote alternatives:	75.1	60.9	45.8	56.9
Videoconference	20.6	7.6	10.3	4.8
Telephone	19.5	9.6	18.4	8.0
Online chat	17.6	8.7	12.0	9.2
Instant messaging	15.6	7.9	4.9	10.3
Website/ online resources	1.1	23.8	-	24.3

Note: The option “website/online resources” was added to the survey for Canada, and was not included for the other countries.
Source: OECD 2020/2021 Survey of Career Guidance for Adults (SCGA).

Remote delivery became even more prevalent in Canada during the pandemic. An international survey of career guidance practitioners sheds light on how service delivery of career guidance adapted during the pandemic (Figure 1.7). Before the pandemic, career guidance services in all countries, including Canada, were generally offered either on-site with some remote services or only on-site, with no remote services. During the pandemic, social distancing requirements made in-person services impossible, and providers had to move towards fully remote delivery. The percentage of respondents in Canada who report that career guidance was delivered fully remotely jumped from 3% prior to the pandemic to 90% during the pandemic. Even after exiting out of lockdowns, respondents predicted that fully and partially remote delivery would be more frequent than before the pandemic. This suggests that there may be a permanent increase in remote delivery even once the economy fully reopens.

Figure 1.7. Career guidance delivery during COVID-19

Share of respondents by main reported delivery channel of career guidance services



Note: The international survey was conducted in June 2020. Respondents were mainly career guidance practitioners, but also included managers of guidance services, representatives of professional associations or policy officials. Some variation may be due to differences in the timing of policy responses to the pandemic. "After the pandemic" refers to respondents' own projections about how service delivery will change post-pandemic.

Source: Cedefop, European Commission, ETF, ICCDPP, ILO, OECD and UNESCO (2020^[33]), *Career Guidance Policy and Practice in the Pandemic. Results of a Joint International Survey*, <https://doi.org/10.2801/318103>. Based on author's own calculations.

Remote delivery of career services has its advantages and disadvantages. It has the capacity to extend delivery of career guidance to adults living in rural and remote parts of the country, where in-person services may not be available. Indeed, limited access to career guidance in rural and remote regions of Canada was one of the key challenges identified by experts in the OECD policy questionnaire. However, adults in rural and remote regions may lack adequate telephone or internet connections, or the digital skills to be able to use online services effectively. In the OECD policy questionnaire, the Saskatchewan provincial government identified digital literacy as a key challenge to providing career guidance services. Developing tools to assess and develop the digital literacy of clients could support better remote delivery.

Assessment and recommendations

Career guidance for adults has the potential to support the recovery from the pandemic by facilitating employment transitions and reskilling. With responsibility for designing career guidance programmes falling mainly to provinces, this can help to tailor services to meet local needs. That said, there could be a case for more pan-Canadian co-ordination on quality standards, professional certifications, and career guidance legislation.

- Federal, provincial and territorial governments should co-ordinate, possibly through the Forum of Labour Market Ministers or another body designated with this co-ordination role, to develop a strategy for adult career guidance in Canada. Such a strategy, which could be part of wider strategies on adult skill development and/or employment services, could help to mobilise funding and promote system wide co-ordination.

The main providers of career guidance for adults in Canada are provincial government-run employment services, though these tend to focus on the needs of jobseekers, while employed adults are eligible for only a narrow set of services. Expanding service provision to employed adults could more proactively support job transitions.

- Strengthen the capacity of the provincial government-run employment services to create proactive career guidance opportunities for adults in employment at risk of job loss or with poor career prospects.
- Improve co-operation between training providers, government-run employment services and employers with the objective of supporting the provision of impartial career and training guidance for adults.

Canadian adults use face-to-face career guidance considerably less than adults in other countries, despite having a preference for more of this type of service delivery. Remote delivery became even more prevalent during the pandemic, and could potentially extend delivery of career guidance to adults living in rural and remote parts of the country. However, it requires good internet connection and digital skills, and may not be as effective as face-to-face guidance at delivering employment and education outcomes.

- Government-run employment services should continue to offer a mix of face-to-face and remote guidance services, but expand face-to-face provision to meet client demand as sanitary conditions improve.

References

- Advisory Council on Economic Growth (2017), *Learning Nation: Equipping Canada's Workforce with Skills for the Future*, <https://www.budget.gc.ca/aceg-ccce/pdf/learning-nation-eng.pdf>. [20]
- Andrews, D. et al. (2020), "The career effects of labour market conditions at entry", *OECD Productivity Working Papers*, No. 20, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/29c11c75-en>. [13]
- Bank of Canada (2021), *Our COVID-19 response: Navigating diverse economic impacts*, <https://www.bankofcanada.ca/2020/06/our-covid-19-response-navigating-diverse-economic-impacts/> (accessed on 21 July 2021). [7]
- Bell, D. and D. Blanchflower (2011), "Young People and the Great Recession", *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, Vol. 27/2, pp. 241-267, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/43744473.pdf> (accessed on 7 February 2022). [14]
- Brown, A. et al. (2020), *Lifelong guidance policy and practice in the EU: trends, challenges and opportunities*, European Commission, Publications Office of the European Union, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2767/91185>. [30]
- Caranci, B., F. Fong and Y. El Baba (2021), *Don't Let History Repeat: Canada's Energy Sector Transition and the Potential Impact on Workers*, TD Bank Group, <https://economics.td.com/esg-energy-sector> (accessed on 28 June 2021). [24]
- Cedefop et al. (2020), *Career Guidance Policy and Practice in the Pandemic. Results of a Joint International Survey*, <https://doi.org/10.2801/318103>. [33]
- Dauth, C. et al. (2018), *IAB Stellungnahme Qualifizierungschancen und Schutz in der Arbeitslosenversicherung*, Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung, <http://doku.iab.de/stellungnahme/2018/sn1518.pdf>. [32]
- Government of Canada (2021), *Energy and the economy*, Energy and the economy, <https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/science-data/data-analysis/energy-data-analysis/energy-facts/energy-and-economy/20062> (accessed on 28 June 2021). [22]
- Government of Canada (2020), *Hydrogen Strategy for Canada: Seizing the Opportunities for Hydrogen*, https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/sites/nrcan/files/environment/hydrogen/NRCan_Hydrogen%20Strategy%20for%20Canada%20Dec%2015%202200%20clean_low_accessible.pdf. [23]
- Government of Canada and Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (2021), *Adult Learning and Foundational Skills: Findings from the first cycle of the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)*, https://www.cmec.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/422/PIAAC_2012_%20Adult_Learning_and_Foundational_Skills_in_Canada_EN.pdf. [26]
- ILO (2021), *Skilling, upskilling and reskilling of employees, apprentices & interns during the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings from a global survey of enterprises*, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/documents/publication/wcms_794569.pdf. [27]

- LMIC-CIMT (2021), *Women in Recessions: What Makes COVID-19 Different? LMI Insight Report no. 39*, <https://lmi-cimt.ca/publications-all/lmi-insight-report-no-39/> (accessed on 23 July 2021). [10]
- McKinsey Global Institute (2021), *The future of work after COVID-19*, <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/the-future-of-work-after-covid-19> (accessed on 23 January 2022). [15]
- Nedelkoska, L. and G. Quintini (2018), “Automation, skills use and training”, *OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers*, No. 202, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/2e2f4eea-en>. [19]
- OECD (2021), “An assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on job and skills demand using online job vacancy data”, *OECD Policy Responses to Coronavirus (COVID-19)*, <https://doi.org/10.1787/20fff09e-en> (accessed on 3 August 2021). [16]
- OECD (2021), *Career Guidance for Adults in a Changing World of Work*, Getting Skills Right, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9a94bfad-en>. [29]
- OECD (2021), *Continuing Education and Training in Germany*, Getting Skills Right, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/1f552468-en>. [31]
- OECD (2021), *Labour market statistics. Main Economic Indicators (database)*, <https://doi.org/10.1787/data-00046-en> (accessed on 22 June 2021). [5]
- OECD (2021), *OECD Economic Surveys: Canada 2021*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/16e4abc0-en>. [1]
- OECD (2021), *OECD Employment Outlook 2021: Navigating the COVID-19 Crisis and Recovery*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5a700c4b-en>. [12]
- OECD (2021), *OECD Labour Force Statistics*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/23083387> (accessed on 18 October 2021). [3]
- OECD (2020), *Education at a Glance 2020: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/69096873-en>. [11]
- OECD (2020), *Preparing for the Future of Work in Canada*, OECD Reviews on Local Job Creation, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/05c1b185-en>. [8]
- OECD (2020), *Workforce Innovation to Foster Positive Learning Environments in Canada*, Getting Skills Right, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/a92cf94d-en>. [17]
- OECD (2019), *OECD Skills Outlook 2019 : Thriving in a Digital World*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/df80bc12-en>. [18]
- OECD (2019), *The Survey of Adult Skills: Reader's Companion, Third Edition*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/f70238c7-en>. [25]
- OECD (2017), *Pensions at a Glance 2017: OECD and G20 Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/pension_glance-2017-en. [21]
- OECD (2004), *Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264105669-en>. [28]

- Statistics Canada (2022), *Gross domestic product (GDP) at basic prices, by industry, monthly*, [6]
<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3610043401> (accessed on
 21 January 2022).
- Statistics Canada (2022), *Labour Force Survey, December 2021*, [4]
<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220107/dq220107a-eng.htm> (accessed on
 21 January 2022).
- Statistics Canada (2021), *COVID-19 in Canada: A One-year Update on Social and Economic Impacts*, [2]
<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-631-x/11-631-x2021001-eng.htm#a4>
 (accessed on 23 June 2021).
- Statistics Canada (2021), *Labour Force Survey, November 2021*, [9]
<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/211203/dq211203a-eng.htm> (accessed on
 23 January 2022).

Notes

¹ Statistics Canada defines long-term unemployment as the share of unemployed people who have been unemployed for 27 weeks or more.

² <https://www.oecd.org/employment/skills-and-work/adult-learning/dashboard.htm>.

³ Namely, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Colleges and Universities, Ministry of Labour Training and Skill Development and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services.

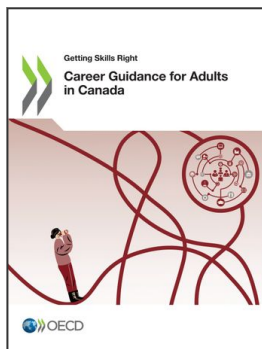
⁴ Le MTESS, le ministère de l'Éducation (ME) et le ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur (MES), le ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation et de l'Intégration (MIFI) et le ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation (MEI),

⁵ OECD Policy Questionnaire and "Federalism in Action: the Devolution of Canada's Public Employment Service 1996-2015."

⁶ www.gov.mb.ca/wd/ites/is/associations.html.

⁷ According to the [OECD Trade Union dataset](#), 15.8% of employees were members of a union in 2019, down from 20.9% in 2000. In Canada over the same time period, union membership declined from 28.2% to 26.1%.

⁸ The sub-group of Canadian adults who received guidance remotely but would have preferred to receive it face-to-face (28% of remote users) did not look significantly different from other users of career guidance in terms of age, gender, education or whether they lived in cities or rural areas.



From:
Career Guidance for Adults in Canada

Access the complete publication at:
<https://doi.org/10.1787/0e596882-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2022), "Career guidance to support the recovery in Canada", in *Career Guidance for Adults in Canada*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/89fd8035-en>

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document, as well as any data and map included herein, are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area. Extracts from publications may be subject to additional disclaimers, which are set out in the complete version of the publication, available at the link provided.

The use of this work, whether digital or print, is governed by the Terms and Conditions to be found at <http://www.oecd.org/termsandconditions>.