

Tourism Sector Summary



23,977
workers

19.6% of total*



2,520
businesses

11.4% of total*



29
education programs

4.7% of total*



17,767
available jobs

21.7% of total*

**Refers to total across six priority sectors (manufacturing; health care; professional, scientific, and technical; tourism; agriculture and agri-food; and construction).*

Key Takeaways

The tourism workforce in Simcoe County comprised 23,977 workers (2021), predominantly within full-service restaurants and limited-service eating places, other amusement recreation industries, and traveler accommodation.^{1,2} Between 2015-21, the number of businesses increased by 443, but the workforce declined by 1,976 workers.^{3,4,5} It is likely that the pandemic was a major contributor to these losses, and a large contingent of those who left the workforce were international students who were forced to return home. Attracting these students to the county and to tourism roles was a priority for many of the businesses that were surveyed. Additionally, stakeholders shared that individuals working within the sector were doing so as part-time work and were not necessarily interested in a career within the sector on a long-term basis.

Most tourism businesses surveyed reported that they planned to expand their business operations 2023-28; this planned expansion, however, coincided with a gap in available workers for leadership and middle management roles.⁶ The broader shortage of workers for entry-level jobs was also an immediate challenge, which was compounded by the competition from other sectors for this pool of workers.

Tourism education and training was under-represented relative to the size of the workforce. This lack of educational programming, however, was consistent with the emphasis on on-the-job training for most tourism jobs. While the lack of training requirements allowed for a large pool of job applicants, the sector's low-wage jobs made retention a challenge. Offering workers long-term career pathways and additional education opportunities could be a way for employers to help address this challenge.

Tourism Sector Recommendations

Recommendation	Potential Implementation Partners (Examples)		Implementation Complexity		
	Lead	Support	Low	Medium	High
Co-develop and execute (with education and training partners) communication related to existing tourism-related training programs to workforce and industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-secondary institutions Regional Tourism Organization 7 Tourism Simcoe County County of Simcoe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development Board and Literacy Network (SMWDBLN) 	✓		
Host a Tourism Summit with the goal of co-developing strategies to strengthen employee retention and engagement. Include sector experts in the Summit (such as Tourism HR Canada) to facilitate discussion and share knowledge broadly among Simcoe’s key tourism stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County of Simcoe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Tourism Organization 7 Tourism Simcoe County Tourism stakeholders 	✓		
Work with post-secondary institutions to further embed sector-specific foundational (soft) skills development among the current and future workforce in Tourism. A recent report by the Hospitality Workers Training Centre (HWTC) can act as a foundation for conversations and determining next best steps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-secondary institutions Regional Tourism Organization 7 Tourism Simcoe County County of Simcoe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SMWDBLN 		✓	

Source: Stiletto Analysis

1 NAICS Business Counts, Simcoe Census Division, Statistics Canada, 2021
 2 Stiletto Analysis, 2022
 3 NAICS Business Counts, Simcoe Census Division, Statistics Canada, 2021
 4 NAICS Business Counts, Simcoe Census Division, Statistics Canada, 2015
 5 Stiletto Analysis, 2022
 6 Stiletto Analysis, 2022

About the Study
 The 2022 County of Simcoe Labour Market Research Study examined workforce, industry / business, and education assets in the six priority sectors of manufacturing; agriculture and agri-food; tourism; professional, scientific, and technical services; health care; and construction. The study identified how the County of Simcoe could build on strengths and harness opportunities to strengthen its labour market and promote long-term prosperity.