

# The Impact of COVID-19 on Marginalized Populations with a Focus on Employment in London

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## Executive Summary

This project aims to discern the impacts of COVID-19 on employment in London from March to December 2020, especially for immigrants and Indigenous populations. Upon performing detailed analyses of the labour force outcomes of immigrants and Indigenous populations on the provincial level as well as the local level, the team recognized that both groups experience differential impacts due to COVID-19. We will present recommendations in removing the employment barriers in the context of London.

## Definition of Marginalized Populations

Marginalized populations are groups and communities that experience discrimination and exclusion (social, political, and economic) because of unequal power relationships across economic, political, social, and cultural dimensions. In our analysis, populations of interest are Indigenous populations and immigrants in London CMA (London). Indigenous populations, which refers to people who self-identify as First Nations (North American Indian), Métis or Inuk (Inuit). In the London area, there was stronger growth in their population, with 12,070 reporting they identified with "Indigenous ancestry" — up from 8,425 in the 2011 census (ref1). Indigenous populations in London account for 2.5 per cent of London's total population<sup>1</sup>. On the other hand, Statistics Canada said the London area has an immigrant population — people not born in Canada — of about 94,690. Their percentage of the total population rose slightly from 18.8 to 19.5 per cent since the last census. That's below the national average of 21.9 per cent and way off the Ontario average of 29 per cent, which is pumped up by the huge immigrant influx to Toronto. Overall the London CMA has accepted about 1.3 per cent of all the immigrants coming to Canada, lagging behind Kitchener-Waterloo at 1.6 per cent and Hamilton at 2.3 per cent. Windsor's share was one per cent. Don Kerr, a professor and demographer at King's University College at Western University said London can take pride at being a welcoming city, but keeping those immigrants is a challenge because they tend to drift to larger cities where there are job opportunities and larger, existing communities from their homeland. "It's completely rational. You expect immigrants to settle in areas where they get support and make adaptation to Canada easier. Chain migration has been the history of Canada," said Kerr.

## Provincial Level

To get a thorough understanding of COVID-19's impacts on labour market outcomes of marginalized populations, monthly employment related indicators would be the most informative. Employment-related indicators include employment and employment rate, for which the prior measures the number of people who currently have a job while the latter measures the proportion of those people in the working age population. These two indicators, together with full-time and part-time employment, could provide an overview of the labour

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<sup>1</sup> Incompletely enumerated Indian reserve or Indian settlement. The area does not include areas such as the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation.

market and its compositions. While on the other hand, unemployment measures the number of people who do not have a job and those who have been looking for one during the past four weeks. Since our analysis compares pre-, during, and post-lockdown, which events do not apart by more than two months, unemployment related indicators may not be so accurate. However, it may still be informative at times. Other indicators such as the participation rate, which measures the proportion of people who are either employed or unemployed in working age population, may not be best suited for short-term analysis for a similar reason. Thus, in the majority of our analysis, employment related indicators are used. In specific, we used employment and employment rate since full-time and part-time analysis is not available for marginalized populations we are interested in.

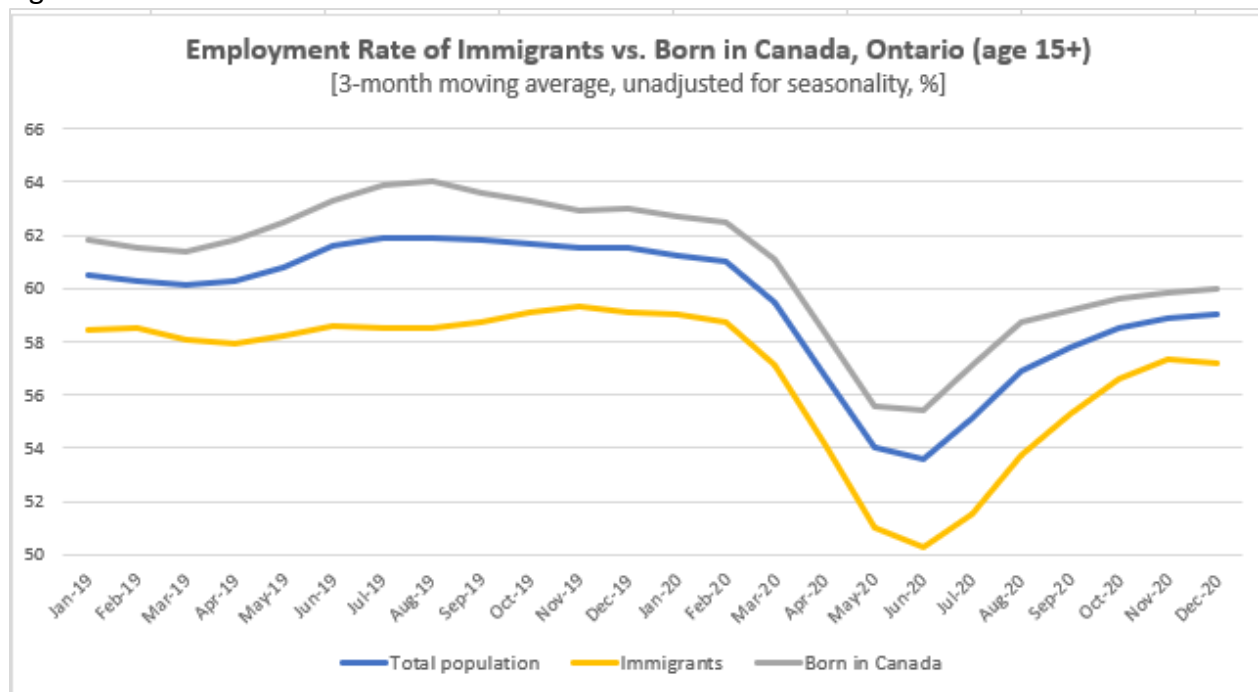
## **Immigrants**

During data collection for provincial level analysis of immigrants, the team used monthly data to extrapolate the impacts of COVID-19 before and after the lockdown at the provincial level, for which “before the lockdown” refers to Jan 2019 to March 2020, “during the lockdown” refers to March 2020 to May 2020, and “after the lockdown” refers to June 2020 to Dec 2020.

### **Before the Lockdown**

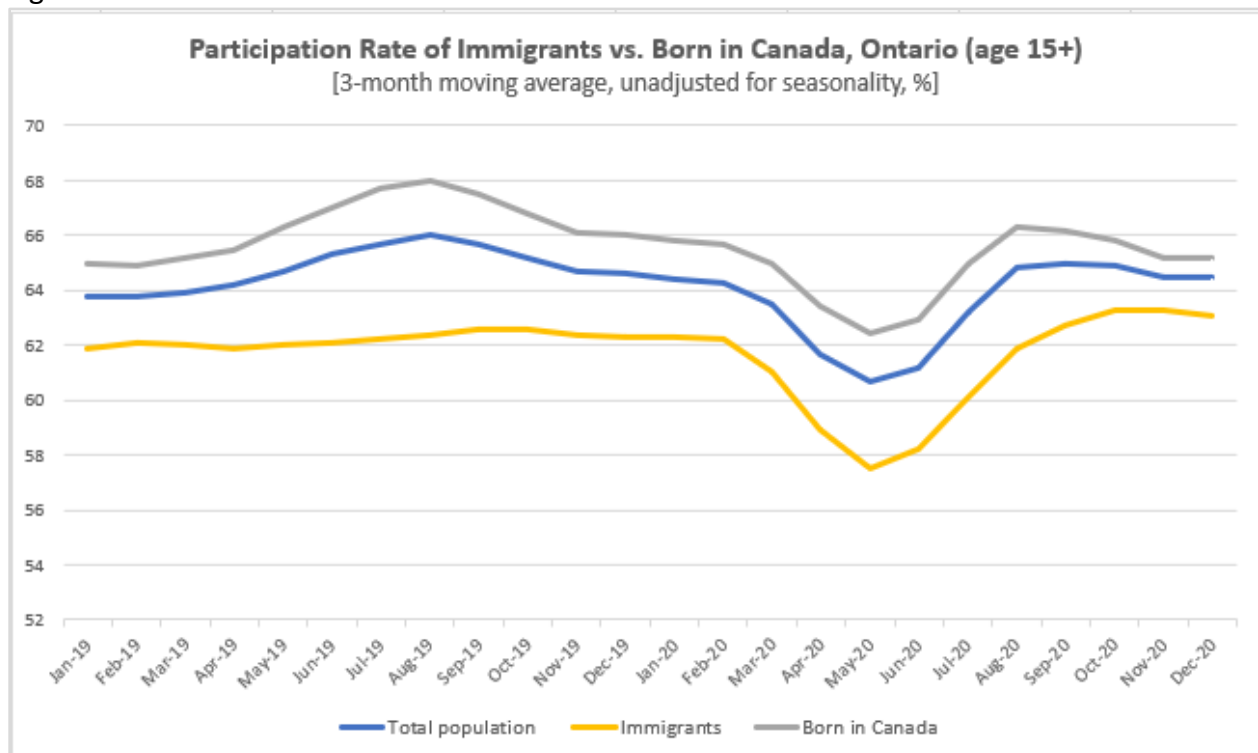
The employment rate of landed immigrants has been consistently below the total population and those born in Canada since Jan 2019, by 2.6 and 4.2 per cent, respectively. (Figure 1) Under the same time frame, we have observed a similar trend in the participation rate. Immigrants in Ontario experienced a lower participation rate than those born in Canada by 3.9 per cent. (Figure 2) Hence, before the lockdown, there is a significant gap in labour force outcomes between immigrants and non-immigrants in Ontario.

Figure 1



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0082-01 Labour force characteristics by immigrant status, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality

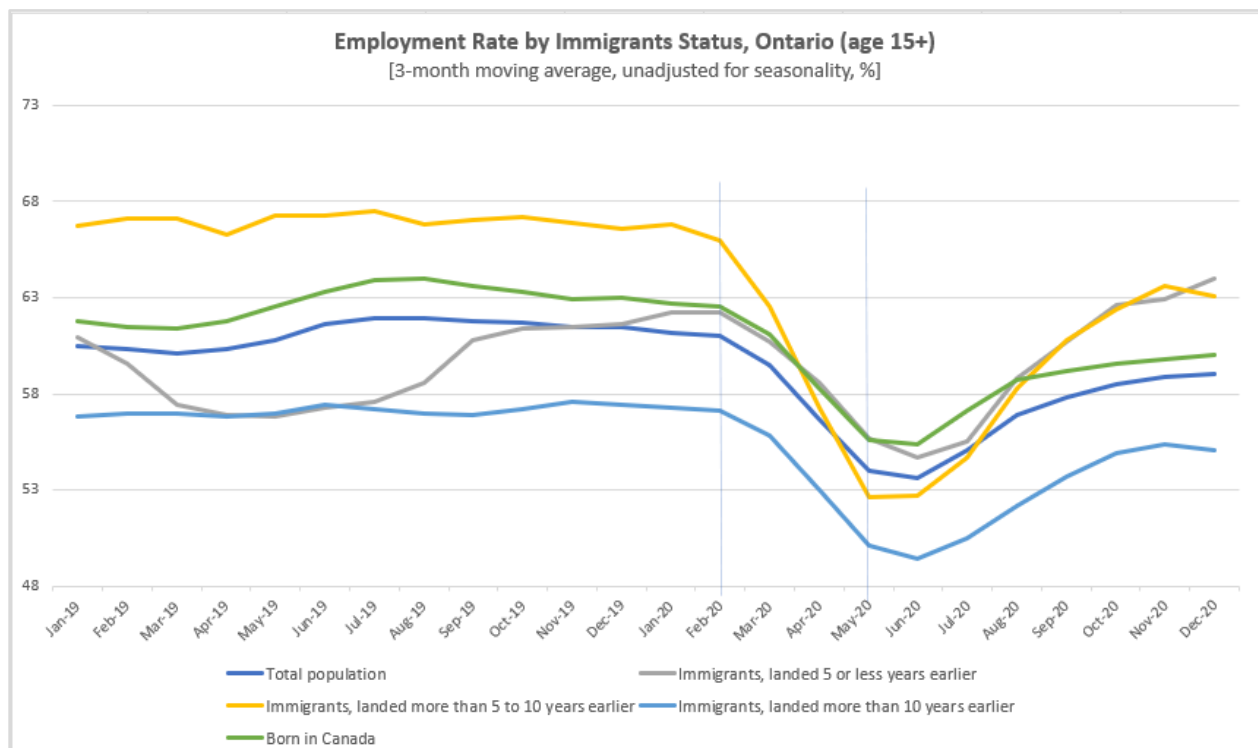
Figure 2



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0082-01 Labour force characteristics by immigrant status, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality

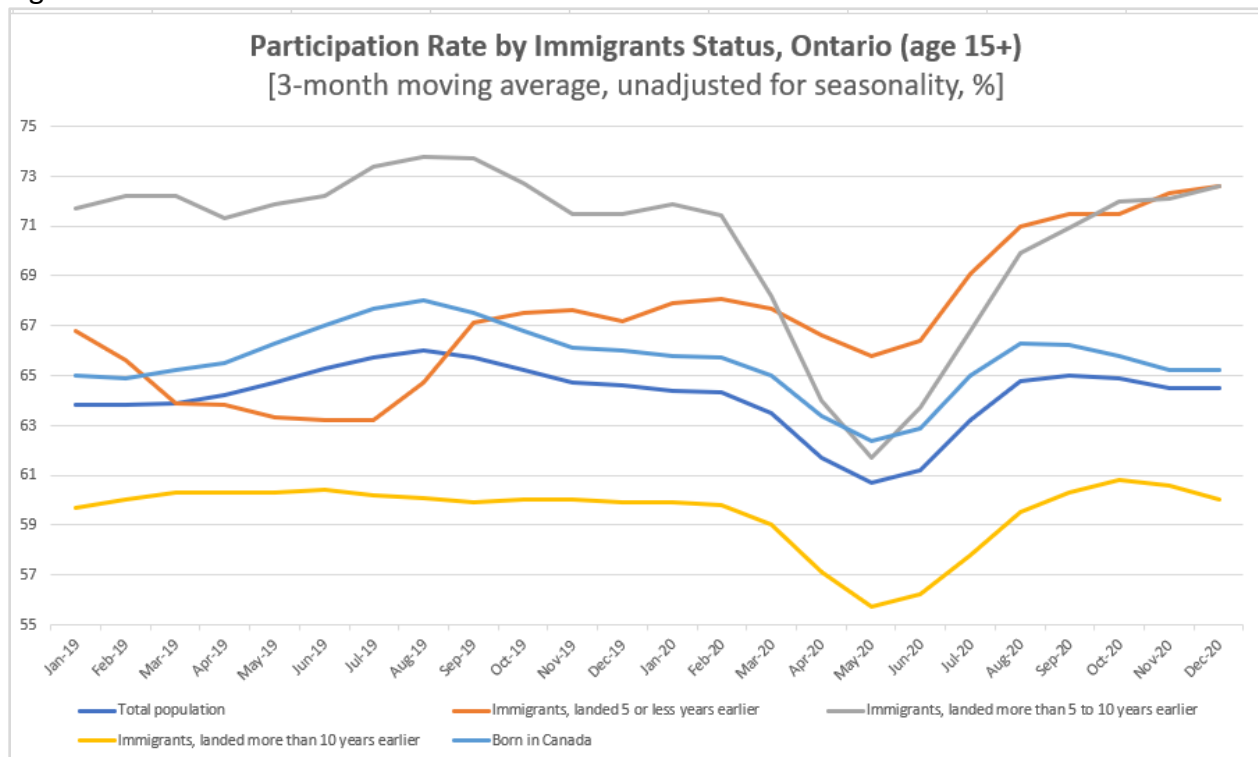
The team looked into separating immigrants into subgroups based on Immigrants status. Under immigrants status, three subgroups were segmented: immigrants landed five or less years earlier, immigrants landed more than 5 to 10 years earlier, and immigrants landed more than 10 years earlier. We found that employment outcomes are better among those who landed five or less years earlier. (Figure 3 & 4) However, even the best performing subgroup is experiencing a worse labour force outcome than those born in Canada. These findings proved that immigrants experience worsening employment outcomes than those born in Canada. Additionally, given the differentiated outcome observed amongst three immigrants subgroups, it is important to realize that employment policy and support programs shouldn't treat all immigrants the same. Immigrants in Canada could experience drastically different impacts from the pandemic.

Figure 3



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0082-01 Labour force characteristics by immigrant status, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality

Figure 4



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0082-01 Labour force characteristics by immigrant status, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality

### During the Lockdown

In March 2020, the lockdown caused both Immigrants and those born in Canada to experience a sharp decrease in the employment rate and participation rate. The impact magnitude on employment rate to both groups remains similar, no drastic change in the magnitude of the pre-existed gap on employment rate observed. However, immigrants experience a more significant decrease in participation rate during the lockdown. When combining findings from employment rate and participation rate, we found that the great equalizer effect was proved to be a flawed statement. Immigrants experience a more harsh impact from the lockdown, where the number of discouraged workers increased.

### After the Lockdown

During the relaxation of the lockdown, from the end of May to July 2020, the sharp decrease in the employment rate for those born in Canada started to flatten. It only dropped by 0.2% from May to June. On the other hand, immigrants experienced less of the flattened effect -- the employment rate declined by 0.7%, more than three times of those born in Canada. This has contributed to the widening gap of employment rate between the two groups observed. Research and studies have shown that marginalized populations are expected to experience a prolonged negative impact from the pandemic and a slower recovery period following the

economic recession. The pre-existed gap in the employment rate between immigrants and those born in Canada has widened significantly from 4% to 5.1% comparing to the start of the pandemic. Lastly, the participation rate of immigrants was found to be on a slower recovery than those born in Canada. The participation rate gap between immigrants and people born in Canada has widened to 4.4% by the end of August, comparing to 3.5% at the end of Feb. It only caught up to the pre-pandemic level by the end of September.

## **Indigenous Populations**

During data collection for provincial level analysis of Indigenous populations, unfortunately, Statistics Canada does not have disaggregated data in Ontario. Instead, data is available in eastern and central provinces, which includes the province of Ontario. Therefore, in our provincial level analysis, Indigenous populations refer to those who live in eastern and central provinces. In addition, provincial level data include only people living off reserves, so results may not accurately reflect labour outcomes of the Indigenous population.

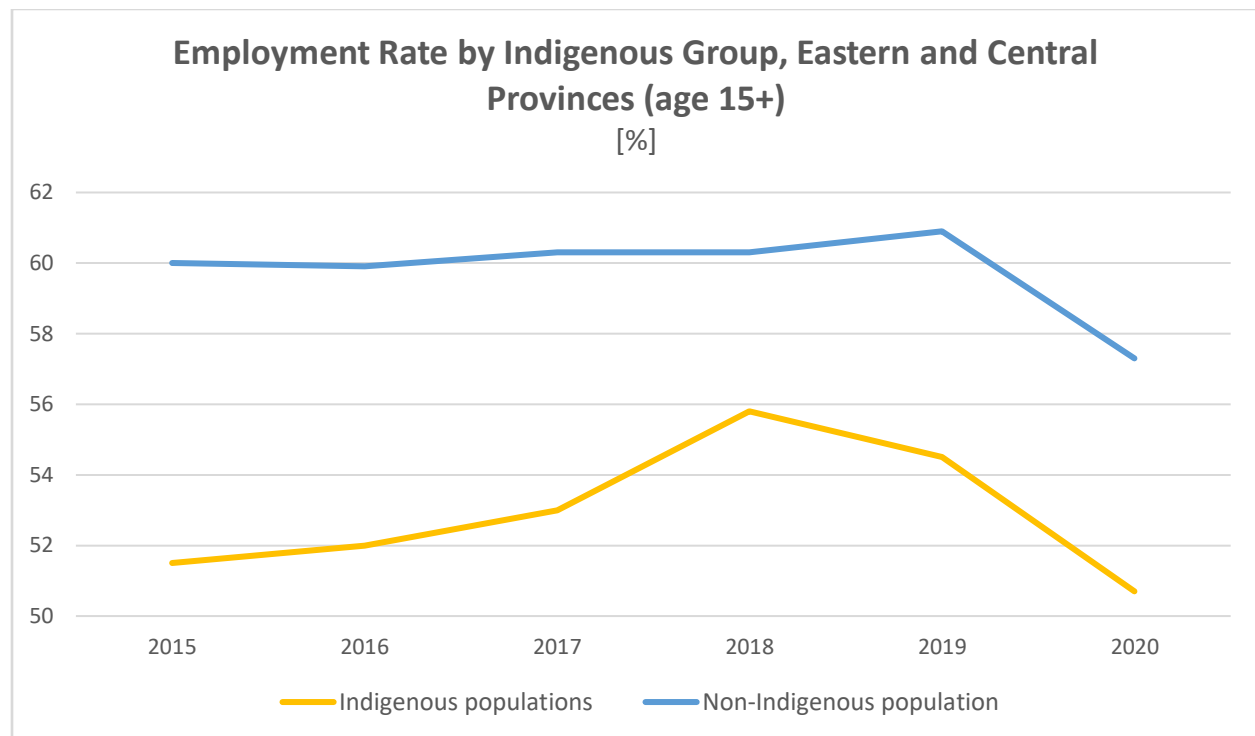
Provincial level data on Indigenous populations are also only available on an annual basis, which does not allow us to analysis the detailed impacts of COVID-19 before and after the lockdown. Instead, our analysis focus on annual labour market trend in eastern and central provinces for the past 6 years (5 years before the pandemic and 1 year during), for which “before the pandemic” refers to years 2015 to 2019, and “during the pandemic” refers to year 2020.

### **Before the Lockdown**

During the 5-year time frame before the pandemic, the employment rate of working age population of Indigenous people saw continuous increases (Figure 5). From 2015 to 2019, employment rate rose by 3%. Increase is significant, indicating that many more people are employed among the working age population. Further, we found that employment of Indigenous populations increased by 57,700 persons, which accounted for 20.6 per cent of the employment figure in 2019. During the same time frame, working age population of Indigenous people increased by 18.9 per cent. According to a report by Statistics Canada upon releasing the 2016 Census, the increase in population of Indigenous people are mainly due to changes in self-identification and longer life expectancy (Statistics Canada, 2017). It may be possible that the increase in employment may also include some employed people who newly self-identified as Indigenous, however the exact extend cannot be measured due to insufficient data. Comparing Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations, a gap in employment rate persisted. Although the increase in the employment rate of Indigenous populations narrowed the gap from 8.5% to 6.4%, the difference remains significant.



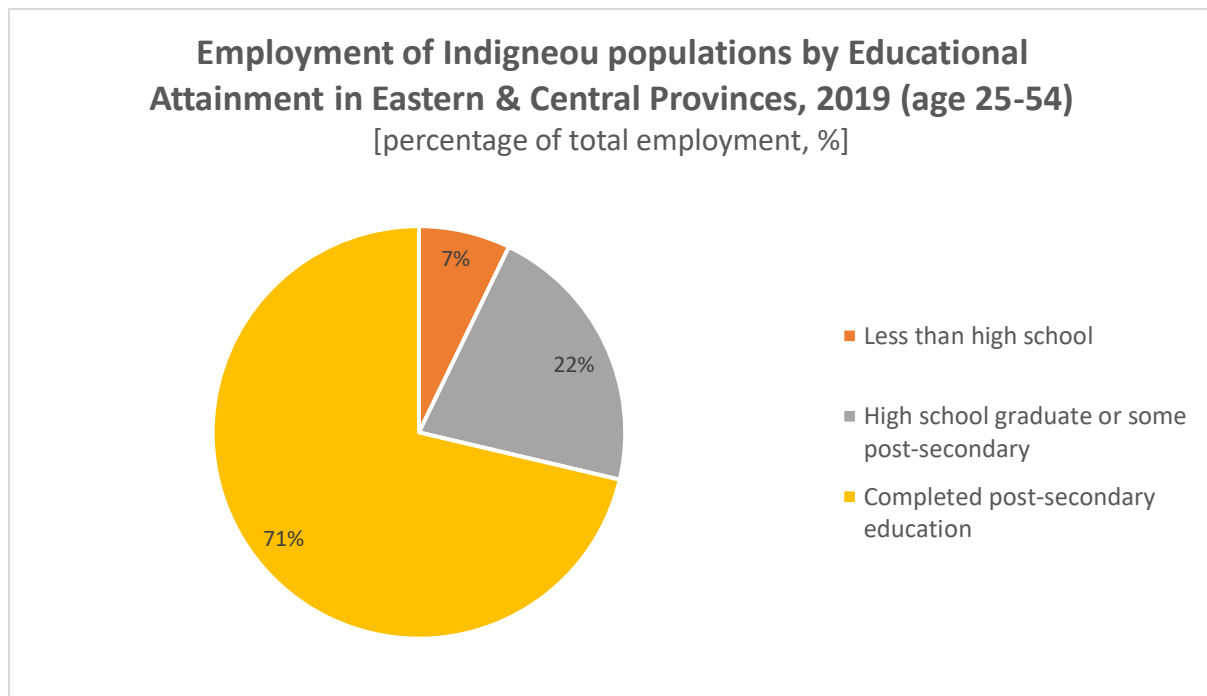
Figure 5



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0359-01 Labour force characteristics by Indigenous group and educational attainment

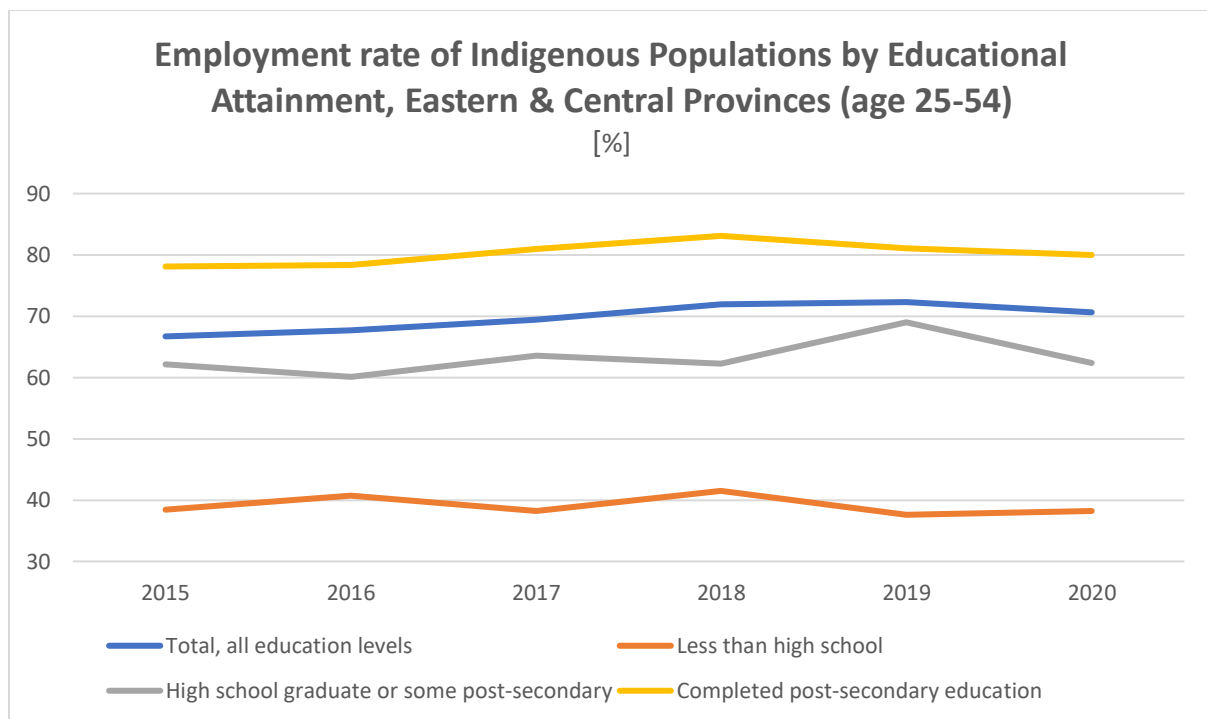
Further separating Indigenous populations into subgroups by educational attainment and focuses on the prime working age group, we found that employment outcomes are better among the higher educated (Figure 6). In 2019, the employment of Indigenous people who have high school education or above accounted for 93 per cent of total employment, further, 71 per cent of total employed have completed post-secondary education. Employment rate by educational attainment shows a similar result. The employment rate of those who completed post-secondary education surpassed the overall employment rate by 8.8% in 2019 (Figure 7). The subgroup having the lowest employment rate is those who have less than high school education attainment. Their employment rate is persistently low, at around 38%. Further focusing on growth, there appears to be an increase in appetite for higher education among Indigenous populations, and their employment outcomes seem to be better. The population of Indigenous people who completed post-secondary education has been increasing from 2015 to 2019, and so has their employment. Although influenced by changes in self-identification of Indigenous people that contribute to persistent increases in the overall population, trends reflect educational preferences of the overall Canadian population to an extent.

Figure 6



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0359-01 Labour force characteristics by Indigenous group and educational attainment

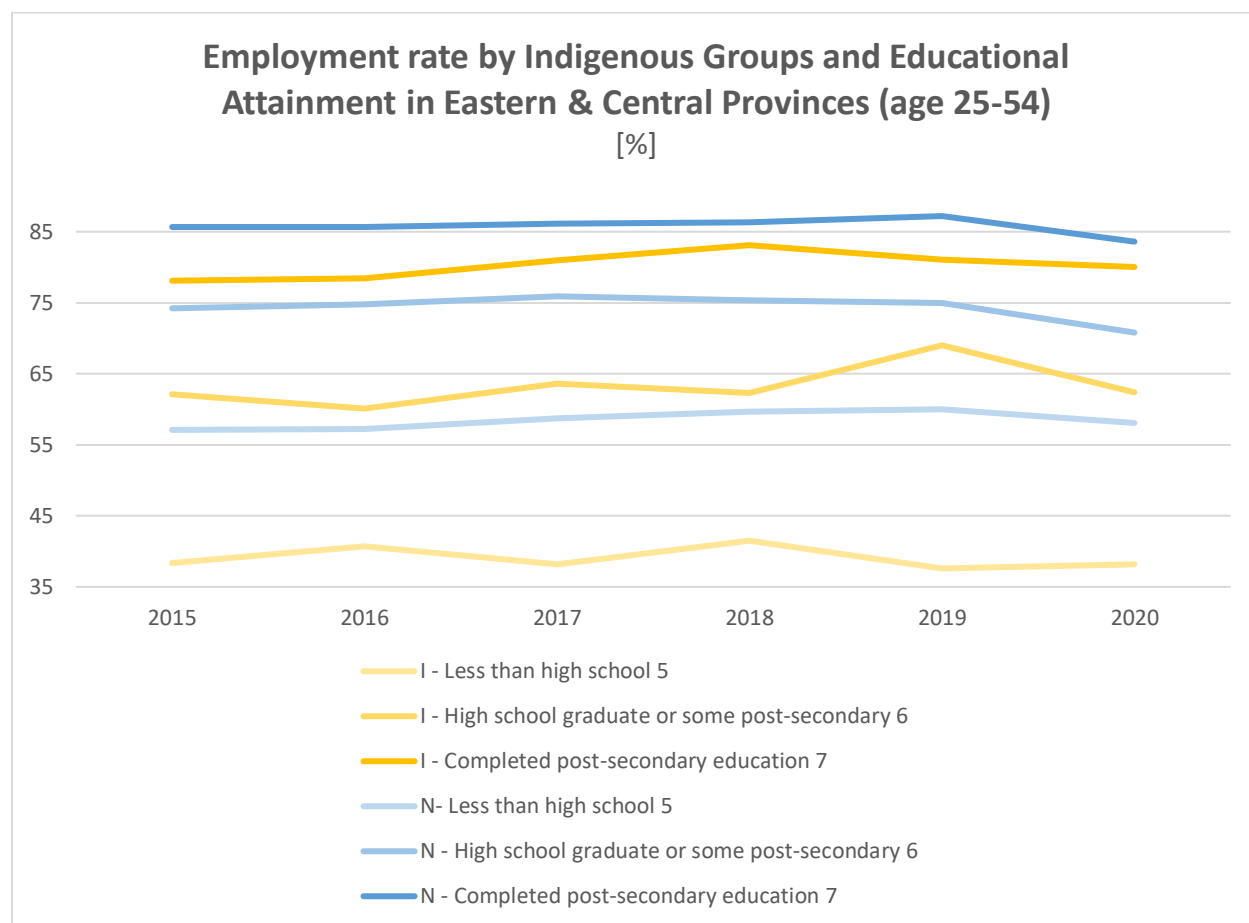
Figure 7



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0359-01 Labour force characteristics by Indigenous group and educational attainment

Among the same subgroups and same age range, comparing Indigenous populations with non-Indigenous populations, we found that employment rate gaps exist for every educational group (Figure 8). The most significant gap was found in the group with less than high school education, for which the employment rate of Indigenous populations was 22% lower than that of the non-Indigenous populations. Looking at the graph, we found that the employment rate trend of Indigenous populations having high school or some post-secondary education falls in close proximity with that of the non-Indigenous populations who have less than high school education. This pattern is also present even in higher educational groups. It would seem that the employment environment is harder for Indigenous populations, for which they have to be more educated to achieve similar outcomes as non-Indigenous populations.

Figure 8



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0359-01 Labour force characteristics by Indigenous group and educational attainment

## During the Lockdown

Due to insufficient data, we were not able to carry out separate analyses analyzing the labour market outcomes before, during, and after the initial lockdown. Instead, we focus on the comparison of 2019 to 2020. From 2019 to 2020, the employment rate of Indigenous populations fell by 3.8% (Figure 5). Although non-Indigenous populations experienced a drop of similar magnitude, Indigenous populations started from a base much lower. As shown on the graph, the employment rate of Indigenous populations has been increasing from 2015 to 2019, but the cumulative increase was quickly diminished by the drop in 2020.

Analyzing the employment rate of people in different subgroups of educational attainment, at prime working age, we found that the impact of the pandemic was felt the hardest by people with high school or some post-secondary education (Figure 7).

Although limited data do not allow for more detailed provincial level analysis, some inferences could be made based on report findings on the national level. In 2020, working age population of Indigenous people in eastern and central provinces accounted for 46 per cent of the total working age population, so results would be representative. Statistics Canada (2020) conducted a labour market analysis on Indigenous populations living off reserves in Canada who age 15 and above, the analysis was from December 2019 to August 2020. There are three main findings and all of them suggest that labour market impacts on Indigenous populations were greater. Results from the employment trend shown that, although labour market impacts among Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations were similar early in the pandemic, recovery up to the three-month period ending in August 2020 has been slower among Indigenous populations. Analysis on occupation-based impacts also suggests that Indigenous populations are more likely to be employed in occupations that are more vulnerable to lockdowns, such as Sales and Services, Trades, and Transport. Lastly, analysis of the unemployment rate by age group found that youth were more greatly impacted than older adults. Since Indigenous populations have a younger demographic, they, again, may be facing greater challenges. Even though these results do not directly measure impacts on Indigenous people in eastern and central provinces, they addressed pronounced challenges that could occur in every province. It may be positive to conclude that the pandemic and lockdown differentially impact indigenous populations on the provincial level.

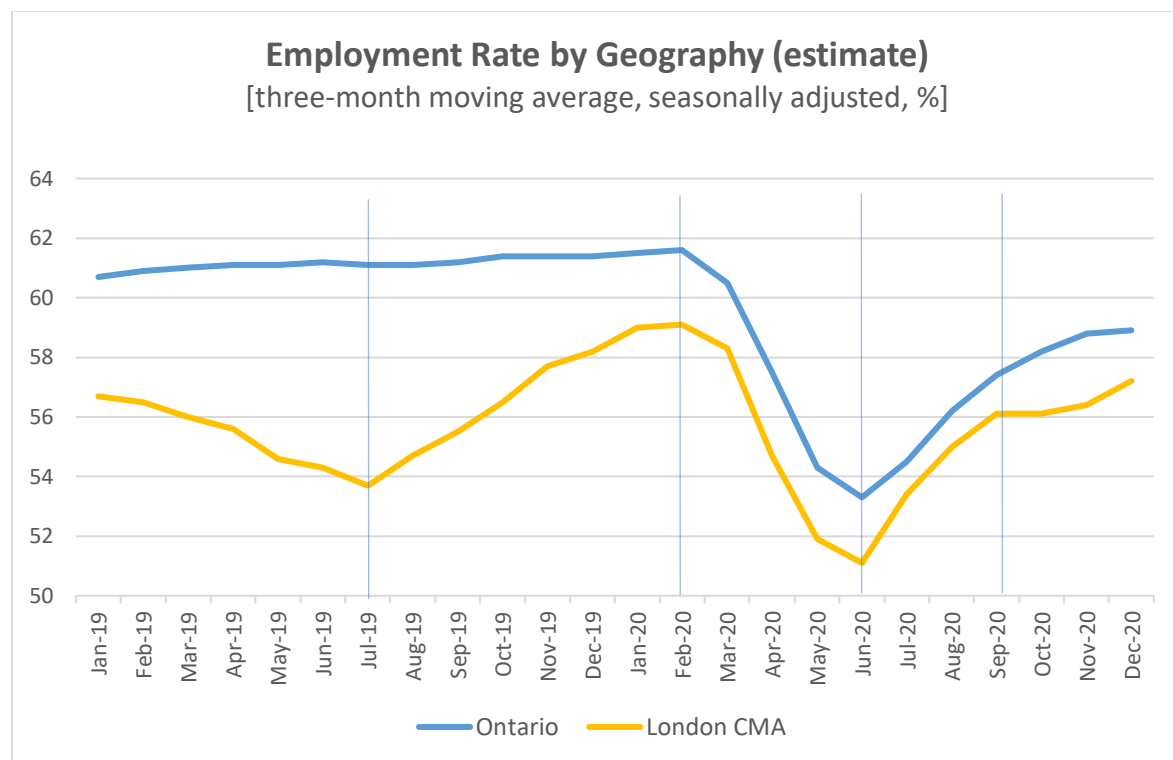
## Local Level

### **Overview of London**

Before narrowing our scope to analyze the impacts of COVID-19 on immigrants and Indigenous populations in London, we first analyze impacts on London residents overall. Unlike data for marginalized populations, data for the general populations are much more complete. In our analysis, we will discuss employment outcomes as well as industry performance. Findings mainly serve as benchmarks for later analysis on Indigenous populations and immigrants in London.

During the first half of 2019, the employment rate was falling relatively fast, which was contributed by falls in employment while working age population was rising (Figure 9). Such finding was not promising. There were more people of working age in London yet fewer are employed. Starting from June 2019, the employment rate was on an upward trajectory and data behind the statistics shown that employment has risen by 25,000 persons. This increase was contributed by the city's actions in boosting London's labour market outcomes, which has proven to be successful. The employment rate in London is persistently below that in Ontario and this change in policy effectively shortens the gap in employment rate between London and Ontario. By the end of 2019, the two differ by 3.2%.

Figure 9



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0380-01 Labour force characteristics, three-month moving average, seasonally adjusted

After the pandemic, the employment rate saw declines in March 2020 and continued until May, during the initial lockdown. The employment rate dropped by 7.2% from March to May, and employment dropped by 29,000 persons (The London Free Press, 2017). Decrease in employment was most significant in occupations greatly constrained by social distancing, such as Sales and Services, Trades and Transport-related professions.

After the relaxation of lockdown in May and June 2020, employment conditions were gradually recovering, yet had still not fully recovered to pre-lockdown level by the end of 2020. In specific, the employment rate rose back to 57.2% and employment rose by about 25,000 persons. Unfortunately for employments in Sales and Service occupations, recovery was not significant, which seems plausible given that health hazards' concern remains.

Overall, London was impacted hard by the initial lockdown. While relaxation was in place, conditions are getting better and approaching pre-lockdown levels.

## **Method of Analysis**

Upon examining the impact of COVID-19 on immigrants and Indigenous populations at the provincial level. The team wanted to narrow down our analysis scope to London and identify London-specific impacts. However, there are no monthly data available on immigrants and Indigenous populations on labour force outcomes. Hence the team decided to perform the analysis using 2016 Census data as well as Immigrants and Indigenous people's provincial data to draw inferences on London-specific impact.

The disaggregated data in London created obstacles to examine the full impact scope. We were only able to find data related to the employment rate on immigrants and Indigenous populations in London from 2016 Census results. As shown in the definition of variables, the calculation of employment rate, unemployment rate, and participation rate requires different data. These measurements are not convertible. As a result, this analysis will only focus on the employment rate of immigrants and Indigenous populations.

We decided to extrapolate the employment rate for both immigrants and Indigenous populations by using data on employment by industry. 2016 Census data provided the employment number of immigrants and Indigenous people in different industries in London ER, classified under the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). By comparing the employment number of immigrants and Indigenous populations to each industry's total employment number, we derived the percentage of immigrants and Indigenous people working in different industries. Next, we use these percentages calculated and multiply the total number of employments of each industry in Ontario from Jan 2019 to Dec 2020. This calculation provided us with estimations of the number of immigrants and Indigenous populations employed in different industries in London on a monthly basis. Upon estimating the monthly employment number of immigrants and Indigenous populations in London, we estimated the working age population for immigrants and Indigenous populations in London based on 2016 Census. Lastly, the monthly employment rates for immigrants and Indigenous people were computed using total number of immigrants/Indigenous populations employed divided by working age population of immigrants/Indigenous populations.

The analysis was conducted under three assumptions.

1. The proportion of immigrants and Indigenous people working in these industries remains the same.
2. The compound annual growth rates (CAGR) of working age population for immigrants and Indigenous people were estimated based on the total population growth of immigrants and Indigenous populations in Ontario since Jan 2016. By substituting the number to the equation below, we estimated the 2019 CAGR and 2020 CAGR for London immigrants' working age population to be 1.85% and 1.60%, respectively, and the 2019 CAGR and 2020 CAGR for London Indigenous populations' working age population to be 4.10% and 3.98%, respectively.

CAGR Calculation:

$$\left( \frac{\text{Ending Value}}{\text{Beginning Value}} \right)^{\frac{1}{\text{number of years}}} - 1$$

2019 CAGR:

$$\left( \frac{\text{Working age population of immigrants/Indigenous populations on Dec 2019}}{\text{Working age population of immigrants/Indigenous populations on Dec 2016}} \right)^{\frac{1}{2019-2016}} - 1$$

2020 CAGR:

$$\left( \frac{\text{Working age population of immigrants/Indigenous populations on Dec 2020}}{\text{Working age population of immigrants/Indigenous populations on Dec 2016}} \right)^{\frac{1}{2020-2016}} - 1$$

3. Employees who work in the same industry experience the same level of impact from the pandemic. While we don't think this argument is correct, given the lack of disaggregated data, the team wasn't able to come up with an estimate on the differential impact in different industries. Hence, for this analysis, we decided to hold this factor fix.

## Immigrants and Indigenous Populations

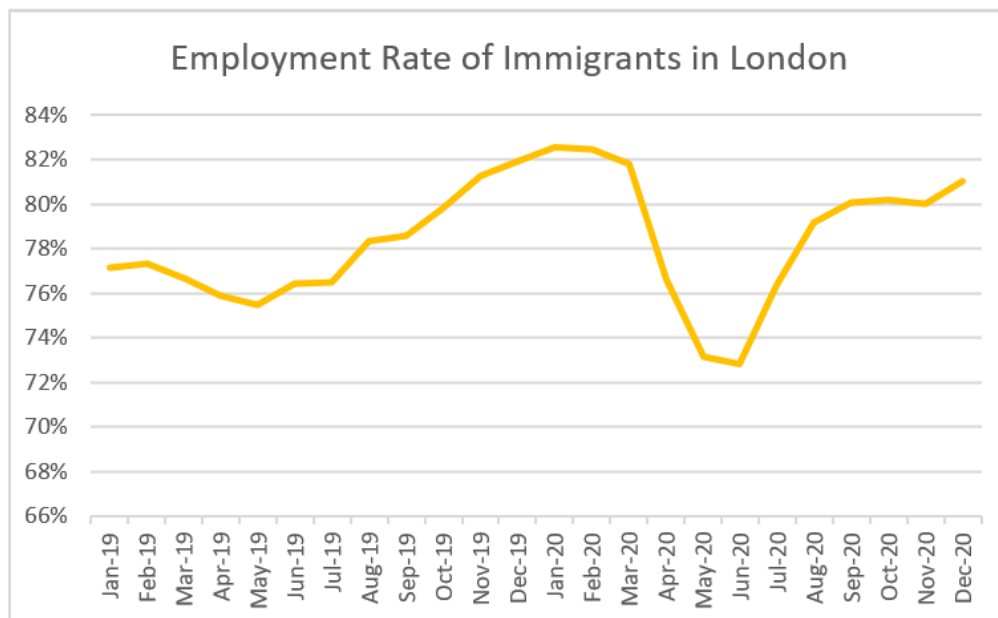
The trend on immigrants' employment rate is shown below (Figure 10). There was a sharp decrease in the employment rate since the start of the pandemic in March 2020. This declining momentum persisted till the end of June 2020, which is the relaxation period of the lockdown. Similarly, Indigenous populations' employment rate followed the same trend (Figure 11). However, from the analysis, Indigenous populations' employment rate has been declining since the start of 2020. The lockdown accelerated the decrease in Indigenous populations' employment rate. Their employment rate started to recover at the end of June 2020, the same time immigrants in London began to see a growth in the employment rate. However, by the end of December 2020, neither immigrants nor the Indigenous populations' employment rates recovered to their pre-pandemic level. By analyzing the trends in employment rate, we could only conclude the partial effect of the lockdown on immigrants and Indigenous populations. In order to analyze the full impact scope, we would need to examine the participation rate of each

group. One consideration behind analyzing the participation rate is to verify whether the increase in employment was caused by an increase in employment or a shrink in the labour force. There are two potential rationales behind a shrink in the labour force: an increase in the number of discouraged workers or an increase in the mortality rate among people in the labour force. While there is a lack of data available for the team to perform deep dives, we suspect that both situations could occur due to COVID-19 and the lockdown.

The analysis returned a reasonable employment rate of Indigenous populations. However, the estimated average employment rate of immigrants is 18% higher than the employment rate of the overall population in London, which flagged some irregularities in the data. Upon analyzing the data, the team summarized two potential causes of this high employment rate.

1. We assumed the proportion of immigrants working in all industries remained the same since 2016. However, in this fast-evolving economy, the percentage of immigrants employed in each industry could experience significant changes in the past four years. The team was unable to incorporate these changes into our analysis due to the data collection barriers.
2. Immigrants have higher participation rates from fewer retirees than the non-immigrant population, as stated in the report “New immigrants performing better in Canadian labour market” (Thevenot, 2020).

Figure 10



Source: Statistics Canada.

\* Due to the lack of disaggregated local data, the team estimated the employment rate of immigrants and Indigenous populations based on Provincial and 2016 Census data.



Figure 11

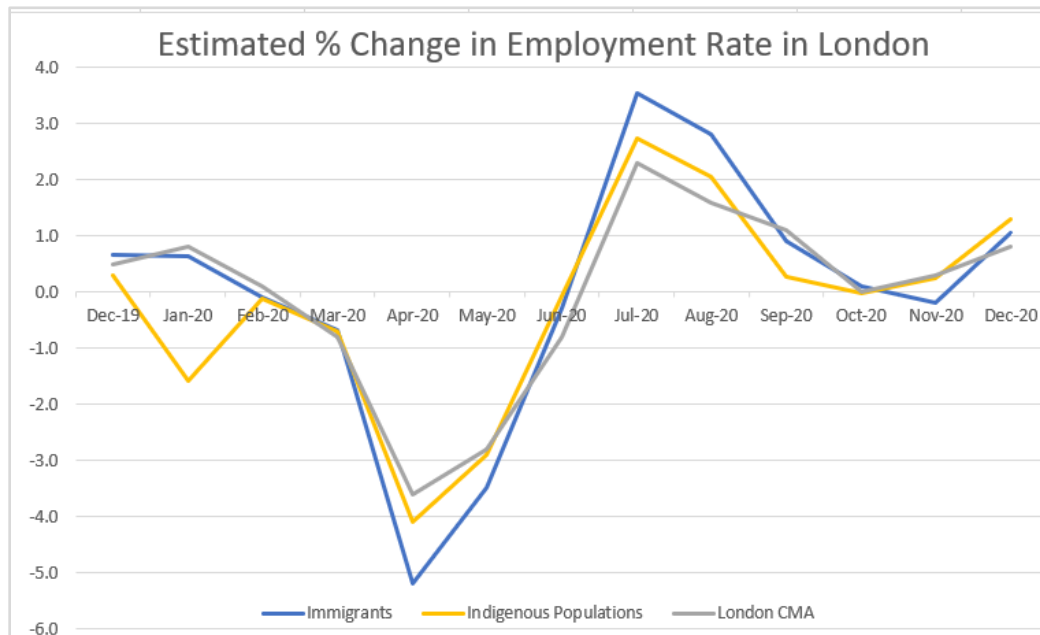


Source: Statistics Canada.

\* Due to the lack of disaggregated local data, the team estimated the employment rate of immigrants and Indigenous populations based on Provincial and 2016 Census data.

Given the discrepancy in data for the employment rate of immigrants, we decided to use the per cent change in employment rate to examine whether immigrants and Indigenous populations are experiencing differential impacts on employment in London. As shown in Figure 12, immigrants and Indigenous populations experience a more significant decrease in per cent change in employment rate since the start of the lockdown. This implies the differential impacts on employment experienced by immigrants and Indigenous populations in London.

Figure 12



Source: Statistics Canada.

\* Due to the lack of disaggregated local data, the team estimated the employment rate of immigrants and Indigenous populations based on Provincial and 2016 Census data.

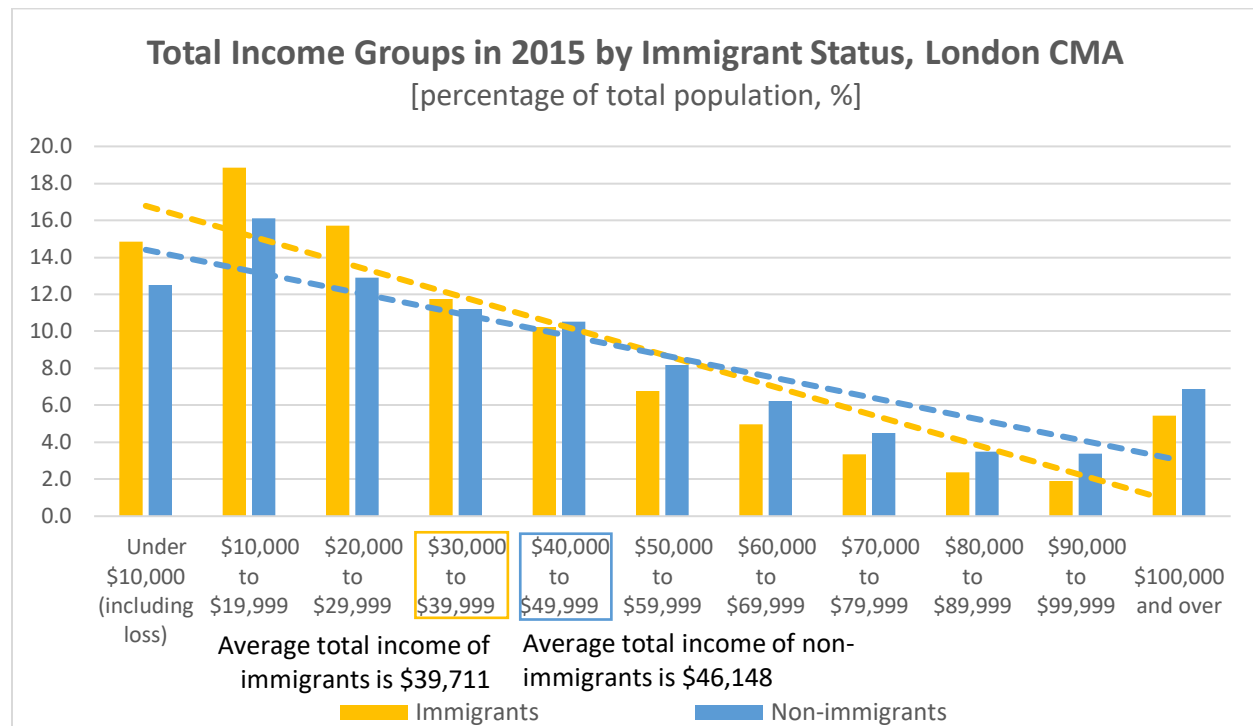
## Finances

Research has shown that people who are economically poorer generally experience greater challenges from loss of work hours or employment during broad social distancing (Mongey et al., 2020). Using 2016 Census data, we conducted an income analysis on immigrants and Indigenous populations in London and findings suggest differential impacts from unemployment would be expected. This result, together with results from analysis on employment conditions, provide strong evidence of poorer labour market outcomes of Indigenous populations and immigrants in London.

In 2015, 96.2 per cent of immigrants are receiving total income, which includes income received from employers, self-employment and any type of monetary benefit. Compare to others born in Canada, this proportion was slightly higher, (0.3 per cent). Immigrants received a total annual income of \$39,711 on average, which is \$6,437 less than that of others born in Canada. Further, distribution of immigrants by income groups reflects that greater proportion of immigrants are receiving low income comparing to others born in Canada, and at the same time, fewer immigrants are in high income groups (Figure 13). Considering that immigrants have a younger demographic, the income difference could be contributed, in part, by varied levels of seniority in employment. Lastly, distribution of annual total income within immigrants is sparser than that within people born in Canada, such disparity could further contribute to differentiations in unemployment.

It is clear that the majority of immigrants is on the poorer end of economic spectrum, according to Mongey (2020), they are at greater risk of unemployment during the initial lockdown, as well as later when operation of firms emphasizes social distancing.

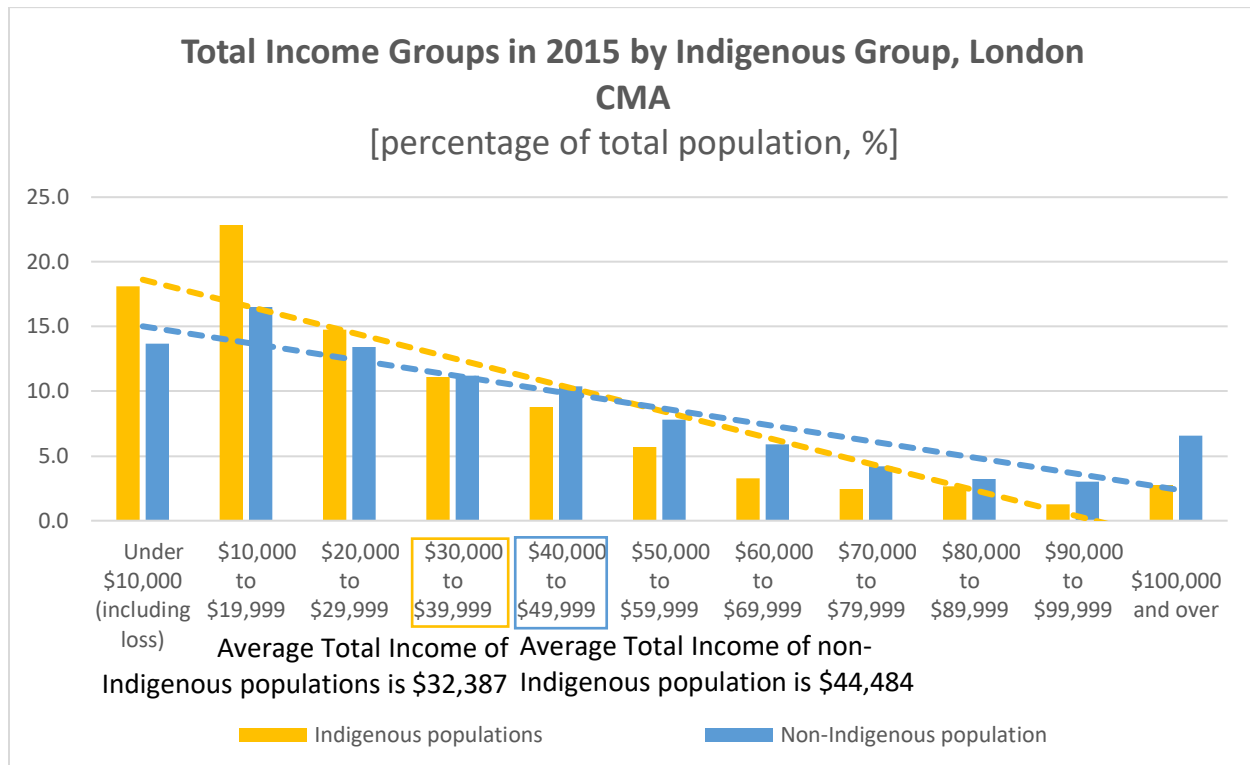
Figure 13



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016197.

A similar result for Indigenous populations could also be concluded. In 2015, 93.6 per cent of Indigenous individuals were receiving total income. Compare to non-Indigenous populations, this proportion did not short by too much (2.3 per cent). However, the average annual total income received by Indigenous populations was far less than that of non-Indigenous populations, at \$32,387, whereas non-Indigenous people received \$44,484, which is 1.37 times that. Further investigating in income distribution, a greater proportion of Indigenous populations are receiving low incomes and disparities in income within the population is more significant than non-Indigenous populations (Figure 14). This finding is similar to that of immigrants for a valid reason, both population demographics happen to be younger and less experienced in the workplace, thus may lead to lower salaries. Although differentiation still exists, condition of Indigenous populations appears to be worse than that of immigrants.

Figure 14



Source: Statistics Canada. 2018. Aboriginal Population Profile. 2016 Census.

Nonetheless, differentiation in the income of Indigenous populations and immigrants introduces additional challenges in unemployment. Government should be held accountable to ensure equity in their living standards.

## Financial Support

Actions are taken by government bodies to assist those who suffer from unemployment during COVID-19, such as the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), reliefs on Employment Insurance (EI) regular benefits, and Temporary Emergency Benefit of Ontario Works. Our analysis attempt to estimate the amount of financial assistance an average-incomed immigrant/Indigenous person could receive, assuming that he or she is eligible.

If an individual is eligible for the CERB, he or she can receive \$2,000 for four weeks or up to four periods. The CERB is solely for pandemic emergencies introduced in March 2020 and ended later in December. Assuming an an immigrant or an Indigenous person is eligible, the maximum total amount he or she could receive is \$8,000 during the 16-week period.

The CERB did not set many restrictions on eligible recipients, someone could receive the CERB while on EI regular benefit, however its benefit pays for a shorter period and less benefit amount compared to EI regular benefit. EI regular benefit provides financial assistance to unemployed people for involuntary reasons, and regular benefit amount depends on average income during employment and length of employment. Temporary reliefs have been made to EI regular benefit to mitigate the high unemployment rate. The 1-week unpaid waiting period may be waived for someone who is eligible, minimum hours for eligibility were reduced, and regular benefit has increased. We estimated the regular benefit amount that could be received by eligible London immigrants and Indigenous people using their average income in 2015 (from the 2016 Census). Before the relief, an eligible immigrant could receive \$417 per week for 14 weeks, which now amounts to \$5,837 in total. After the relief, this same person could receive \$500 per week for 26 weeks, which now amounts to \$13,000. On the other hand, an eligible Indigenous person could receive \$333 per week for 14 weeks (\$4,733 in total) before the relief and then \$500 per week for 26 weeks (\$13,000 in total) after<sup>2</sup>. It may be surprising to find the drastic difference in benefits, which was mainly the extended payment length. Since the length of payment was calculated based on the unemployment rate in London, for which it spiked by 7% due to the pandemic and lockdown, the increase is less surprising and even reflects labour market outcomes. Nonetheless, an increase in benefit from around \$5,000 to \$13,000 is quite significant and would be especially helpful for immigrants and Indigenous populations in London, whose population experienced greater unemployment and prolonged recoveries.

Other than the above-mentioned benefits offered by the federal government, the Government of Ontario offers Ontario Works, which helps people to get a job and provides financial assistance to eligible recipients. If qualified, \$733 per month could be granted to cover basic needs and shelters. In March and April 2020, the Temporary Emergency Benefit was launched. It provides a one-time discretionary benefit for those who are receiving financial assistance in that two months. Singles are eligible for a maximum of \$100, while families are eligible for \$200. Different from the CERB and EI regular benefit, financial assistance of Ontario Works requires recipients to be employed, so a person cannot be receiving all three benefits at the same time.

For an immigrant or an Indigenous person who is eligible for both the CERB and EI regular benefit in 2020, he or she could receive a total of \$21,000 before benefits exhaust. Although this amount may be sufficient in the short term, it is still essential and risk-resilient to find a job. London has many employment support programs built specifically for immigrants and Indigenous populations. The chart below summarizes the institutions and programs they provide.

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<sup>2</sup> The actual benefit amount depends on individual cases, which could be higher. See Exhibit for detailed calculation

Category	Institution - Program	Mission	Cost
Job Search Programs/ Resources - Specifically for Newcomers	Cross Cultural Learning Center - Job Search Workshop Program	Prepare newcomers for the job search process and give them tools they will need to succeed	N/A
	WIL Employment Connections - Employment preparation for Internationally Trained Individuals	Develop personal Employment Action Plans to achieve individual employment and career goals	Free for people who are unemployed and seeking work
	IMMPLOY - Mentorship Programs	Connect immigrant job seekers with regional business leaders through occupation and industry specific networking and events	N/A
	IMMPLOY - Job Match	Provides employers across Southwestern Ontario coordinated access to qualified Canadian newcomer talent. Provides Job Seekers the opportunity to learn about the types of skills employers are seeking, increased knowledge of regional labour markets, and preparation for interviews and evaluate job offers through Job Match Postings	N/A
International Students	Fanshawe College	Help students find part-time employment during studies, and also future career preparation	Free
	Brescia/Huron/King's University College	Provide information about programming, activities, events, and other valuable resources for international students and other interested individuals	Free
	Western University	Geared at assisting students with their job search process, and how to apply for off-Campus and post-graduation work permits.	Free
Employment Geared Education and Language Programs	Collège Boréal	Programs for internationally educated Francophone professionals in Supply Chain and Logistics, Health System Navigator, Management and Leadership	Program fees apply
		Enhanced Language Training for newcomers to improve immigrants' language skills.	Program fees apply
	Fanshawe College	Specialized Courses center around Workplace Communication Skills	Program fees apply
	Thames Valley District School Board Adult Education	Specialized Courses center around English for Employments	Program fees apply
	London District Catholic School Board	Offer adult education through the Centre for Lifelong Learning, which has programs in ESL (English as a Second Language), LBS (Literacy and Basic Skills), IILP (International & Indigenous Languages Program) and Summer School	Program fees apply

	Second Career	Provide financial assistance on tuitions for persons who have been laid off or who are looking for a new career, funded by the Government of Ontario.	Free
Academic Credential Evaluations and Assessments	Access Centre for Regulated Employment	Information and application assistance to internationally trained individuals seeking licensure or related employment in Ontario's regulated professions. This also includes accessing the Internationally Trained Worker Loan Program provides, and counselling for alternative Employment pathways	N/A

Programs are mainly designed to provide job seekers the opportunity to learn about the types of skills employers are seeking, increased knowledge of regional labour markets and preparation for interviews. Many institutions also provide one-on-one employment consultation and professional document assistance free of charge. While lockdown was in effect, most of the institutions continue to operate virtually. Although this limits access for certain people, especially for Indigenous people living on reserves, the virtual operation seems to be the only viable strategy in this special time. Most institutions are non-profit organizations funded by various government bodies, including the Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada, the Government of Ontario and the City of London.

There are statistics measuring usages of benefits and support programs, however, they are either non-disaggregated for people who are interested in or not to be disclosed to the public. Reflected by the above calculated figures, it would seem that immigrants and Indigenous populations are provided assistance despite employment status, however the actual degree of assistance could not be visualized without more data.

## Summary and Data Recommendation

Immigrants and Indigenous populations are impacted more greatly due to the pandemic and lockdown, in London and in higher geographical levels. Although the initial lockdown affected everyone similarly, differential impacts emerged later on. Their disadvantaged financial conditions prior to the pandemic made them more likely to suffer from losses of employment and labour market evidence has also reflected a slower recovery.

The federal government has provided additional financial support to people in need. According to our estimation, eligible immigrants and Indigenous populations in London could receive an amount much higher compare to the pre-COVID19 level. However, there is no disaggregated data to reflect on the actual amount received and therefore to evaluate the effectiveness of programs.

Many inferences and assumptions are made based on provincial level data and many of them are not recent. (See chart summarized below for data availability.) To propose viable

strategies in helping to remove employment barriers for marginalized populations, we would need to have a more thorough and up-to-date understanding of difficulties they go through, and current data do not support such analysis. Thus it is recommended for the city and Statistics Canada to provide or release local disaggregated data.

List of Major Data Gaps								
	Provincial (Immigrants - Ontario, Indigenous - Eastern and Central Provinces)				Local (London CMA)			
	by Immigrant		by Indigenous		by Immigrant Status		by Indigenous Group	
	Monthly data	Annual data	Monthly data	Annual data	Monthly data	Annual data	Monthly data	Annual data
Unemployment Rate	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓ (2016 Census)	X	✓ (2016 Census)
Employment Rate	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓ (2016 Census)	X	✓ (2016 Census)
Participation Rate	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓ (2016 Census)	X	✓ (2016 Census)
Employment Income Statistics	X	✓ (2016 Census)	X	✓ (2016 Census)	X	✓ (2016 Census)	X	✓ (2016 Census)
Full-time Employment	✓	X	X	✓ (2016 Census)	X	X	X	X
Part-time Employment	✓	X	X	✓ (2016 Census)	X	X	X	X
Employment by Occupation	X	✓ (2016 Census)	X	✓ (2016 Census)	X	✓ (2016 Census)	X	✓ (2016 Census)
Population	✓	✓	✓	✓ (2016 Census)	X	✓ (2016 Census)	X	✓ (2016 Census)

Source: Statistics Canada.

## Exhibit

### Calculation of Regular Benefits

Weekly income = (Gross annual income / Number of work weeks)

Immigrants:  $\$39417/52 = \$758.02$

Indigenous people:  $\$31963/52 = \$614.67$

Weekly benefits = Average weekly income x (Basic benefit rate (55%))

Immigrants:  $\$758.02 * 0.55 = \$416.91$

Indigenous people:  $\$614.67 * 0.55 = \$338.07$

Benefits on the period = Weekly benefits x Number of payable weeks

Before the pandemic and relief



Immigrants: ~\$417/week for 14 weeks = \$5,837

Indigenous people: ~\$338/week for 14 weeks = \$4,733

(14 weeks based on minimum insurable hours (700) and regional unemployment rate (5.6%))

#### After the pandemic and relief

Immigrants: \$500/week for 26 weeks = \$13,000

Indigenous people: \$500/week for 26 weeks = \$13,000

(26 weeks based on minimum insurable hours (120+300) and regional unemployment rate (13.1%))

## Definitions of Variables

1. Working age population (WAP): people age 15 and up
2. Prime working age: people who age 25 to 54
3. Number in the Labour force = number employed + number unemployed
4. Unemployment: number of people who:
  - a. Were without work but had looked for work in the past four weeks ending with the reference period and were available for work;
  - b. Were on temporary layoff due to business conditions and were available for work; or
  - c. Were without work, had a job to start within four weeks of the reference period and were available for work.
5. Employment: number of people who:
  - a. Had paid work either as an employee or were self-employed;
  - b. Did unpaid family work, unpaid family work is defined as work contributing directly to a farm, business or professional practice owned and operated by a related member of the household;
  - c. Had a job but were absent from work due to illness or disability, personal or family responsibilities, vacation or labour dispute;
  - d. Were not at work because of their work schedule (e.g. shift work); or
  - e. Were not working because they were self-employed and had no work available.
6. Employment rate = employment / WAP
7. Unemployment rate = unemployment / Labour Force
8. Participation rate = Labour Force / WAP
9. Immigrant status
  - a. Immigrants, landed 5 years or less earlier
  - b. Immigrants, landed more than 5 to 10 years earlier
  - c. Immigrants, landed more than 10 years earlier

- d. Landed immigrants: total of the three above
- 10. Aboriginal group: Aboriginal group refers to whether the person is First Nations (North American Indian), Métis or Inuk (Inuit). These are the three groups defined as the Aboriginal peoples of Canada in the Constitution Act, 1982, Section 35 (2). A person may be in more than one of these three specific groups.  
Note:
  - a. 2016 Census data is not available for 14 incompletely enumerated Indian reserves and Indian settlements. However, the impact of the missing data for higher-level geographic areas (Canada, provinces and territories, census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations) is very small.
  - b. Data of people living on territories or on-reserves are not included in Labour Force Survey
- 11. London CMA: The London CMA includes the municipalities of London, St. Thomas, as well as Thames Centre, Middlesex Centre, Strathroy-Caradoc, Adelaide Metcalfe, Central Elgin and Southwold.

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## Disclaimer

This project was developed and is made available by an undergraduate student from the Economics Department of Western University for educational purposes. The analysis is based on statistics from the Labour Force Survey and 2016 Census sourced from Statistics Canada. Although best efforts are made to ensure that all information is accurate and up to date, some unintended errors may occur, and the results may reflect nonresponse bias of sample data and assumptions made. We also acknowledge that the analyses are based solely on statistical data and were not informed by direct advice or feedback from members of the immigrant and indigenous communities. Consequently, the findings could contain errors and not accurately reflect the lived experiences of these communities.

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