



PUTTING WOMEN IN THE PICTURE:
BUILDING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ONTARIO'S LABOUR MARKET

Labour Market Partnership Agreements (LMPA)

What is an LMPA?

The Labour Market Partnership Agreement (LMPA) is a new type of federal-provincial partnership agreement and was first signed between Canada and Ontario in November 2005, simultaneous to the Canada-Ontario LMDA. The LMPA was created to help fill in gaps in the labour market and assist people who are ineligible for employment insurance acquire workplace skills. Currently, the only provinces to have an LMPA are Ontario, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

Why do we have LMPAs?

Programs that are currently run under LMDAs are focused primarily on EI-eligible clients. As such, many client groups are left out and have difficulty accessing services that will help them find and succeed in meaningful employment. The groups most affected are women, immigrants, and young people. The goals of the LMPA are to create an inclusive labour market by maximizing participation through removal of barriers and enhancing opportunities for skills development.

Who decides how the funding is spent?

This is a partnership agreement and as such, Ontario and the government of Canada create annual plans that seek to realize shared goals in labour market development through the identification and commitment to investment in priorities areas. Priority areas listed in the Ontario LMPA are apprenticeships, integration of immigrants, literacy and essential skills, workplace skills development, assistance for Aboriginals, and assistance to others facing labour market barriers (older workers, persons with disabilities and youth-at-risk).

Joint Priority Areas for New Federal Investment in Labour Market Development in Ontario	Funding (over 6 years)	Percentage of Overall Budget
Workplace Skills Development	476.5 M	36%
Labour Market Integration of Recent Immigrants	292.5 M	22%
Expanding Apprenticeships	268 M	19%
Literacy and Essential Skills	141 M	10%
Assistance to Others Facing Labour Market Barriers	100 M	7%
Assistance to Aboriginal Peoples	90 M	6%
TOTAL	1.3 Billion	100%

What does an LMPA mean for women?

The priority area “assistance to others facing labour market barriers” lists persons with disabilities, older workers and youth at-risk as target groups for more individualized service. The needs of women as a unique group are not specifically addressed in this priority area.

Women may be positively affected by investments in apprenticeships and workplace skills development, but in the absence of any gender-based analysis of the policy, there are no guarantees that the unique needs of women will be addressed.

Why use gender-based analysis?

Gender-based analysis compares how and why women and men are affected by policy issues and challenges the assumption that everyone is affected by policies, programs and legislation in the same way regardless of gender.ⁱ With a new LMPA, Ontario has the opportunity to make a commitment to integrate gender and equity considerations into labour market policy development so that women in Ontario will have equitable access to future training and employment programs.

When will Ontario's LMPA take effect?

The LMPA is a six year contract that was set to begin in the fiscal year 2005-2006. It should be noted that the agreement outlined a plan to have the spending commence at the beginning of the fiscal year 2006-2007 and total approximately 1.3 billion by the end of March, 2011. Once the funding outlined in the LMPA begins to flow from Ottawa to Ontario, federal transfers to the province under the LMPA will have an approximate value of \$300 million annually.

Identifying opportunities and challenges...

ACTEW is currently undertaking a policy research project entitled ‘Putting Women in the Picture: Building Equitable Access to Ontario’s Labour Market’ with the aim of building the capacity and sustainability of women’s training providers in communities across Ontario to continue to provide equitable access to women’s training and employment services. Specific emphasis will be placed on policy analysis and advocacy related to Ontario’s forthcoming LMPA. ACTEW welcomes your feedback on these and other issues. For more information, please contact:

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Source: Social Development Canada, *Canada-Ontario Labour Market Partnership Agreement*, at: <http://www.sdc.gc.ca/en/epb/lmd/lmda/ontario/partnership.shtml>

ⁱ See http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/pubs/gbaguide/gbaguide_e.html#1_2