



Summary: Evaluation of the Canada-Alberta Labour Market Development Agreement



Program objectives

The Canada-Alberta Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) is a bilateral agreement between Canada and Alberta for the design and delivery of Employment Benefits and Support Measures (EBSMs). The objective of EBSMs is to assist individuals to obtain or keep employment.

The following benefits and measures are examined in the evaluation:

- **Foundational Learning Supports / Occupational Training** help participants obtain employment skills by giving them financial assistance that enables them to select, arrange and pay for classroom training
- **Workplace Training Program** helps participants obtain on-the-job work experience by providing employers with a wage subsidy
- **Self-Employment** provides financial assistance and business planning advice to participants to help them start their own business
- **Integrated Training Program** is a contract and tuition-based training with work-experience program. The program has a sub-component called Immigrant Bridging that helps skilled immigrants gain employment in their original occupation or a related occupation
- **Career Employment Assistance Services** help participants to prepare for, obtain and maintain employment. Services can include individual counselling, action planning, help with job search skills, job-finding clubs, job placement services, the provision of labour market information, and case management and follow-up
- **Labour Market Partnerships** aim to support an industry-led approach to human resource development tailored to **meet** the labour market needs of industry sectors



The LMDA investment

In fiscal year 2020 to 2021, Canada transferred nearly \$192.4 million to Alberta.



Evaluation objectives

Building on previous LMDA evaluation cycles, the aim of this evaluation is to fill in knowledge gaps about the effectiveness, efficiency, as well as design and delivery of EBSMs in Alberta.



Evaluation methodology

The findings are drawn from 7 separate evaluation studies that use a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, including:

- incremental impact analysis for participants who began an intervention between 2010 and 2012
- outcome analysis
- cost-benefit analysis (including savings to health care)
- key informant interviews with 43 Alberta program officials, contract services coordinators, training providers, and project holders
- questionnaires completed by provincial officials
- document and literature reviews



Key findings

Incremental impacts were produced for 2 programs: Foundational Learning Supports / Occupational Training, and Career Employment Assistance Services.

The incremental impacts are estimated for 2 types of EI claimants:



- active claimants are participants who started an EBSM intervention while collecting EI benefits
- former claimants are participants who started an EBSM intervention up to 3 years after the end of their EI benefits

Participation in Foundational Learning Supports / Occupational Training improved labour market attachment and reduced use of government income supports compared to similar non-participants. The program also improved the labour market attachment of most subgroups of participants. In the case of former claimant participants, it also reduced use of government income supports following participation.

Active claimants in Calgary as well as those in the rest of the province increased their incidence of employment relative to similar non-participants. Former claimants outside of Calgary improved their labour market attachment and reduced their dependence on government income supports.

A cost benefit analysis of Foundational Learning Supports / Occupational Training found that the benefits accrued by participants and the government exceeded the costs of investments over time.

Few statistically significant results were found for participation in Career Employment Assistance Services. However, participation in the program was found to increase use of government income supports.

The evaluation also found that:

- the Self-Employment program helps carefully selected participants to create employment for themselves by providing them with a range of services
- in Alberta the focus of Integrated Training is to assist participants in acquiring work experience, leading to the acquisition of new employment-related skills or the improvement in current skills
- after participating in Foundational Learning Supports / Occupational Training, apprentices increased their employment earnings and decreased their dependence on government income supports
- Alberta uses Labour Market Partnerships to assist employers, communities and/or

industries to address their labour force adjustment and human resource needs



Recommendations

The evaluation made 2 recommendations.

Recommendation # 1: Alberta is encouraged to share and discuss lessons learned, best practices and challenges associated with the design and delivery of programs and services. Discussions are encouraged with ESDC, at the bilateral or multilateral levels, as well as with service delivery network if necessary.

Recommendation # 2: Alberta is encouraged to pursue efforts to maintain and strengthen data collection provisions in support of reporting, performance measurement and data-driven evaluations at the national and provincial levels.