



Unlocking Opportunities: Facilitating newcomer and refugee integration through credential evaluation

Land Acknowledgment

WES uses and participates in a land acknowledgment to recognize the enduring presence and resilience of Indigenous Peoples on Turtle Island. It is also a reminder that we are all accountable to these relationships. This is a first step in our collective progress toward truth and reconciliation.

WES acknowledges that it is on the traditional territory of many nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples, that is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples.

We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit.

Presenters



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Agenda

- I. Setting the Context
- II. World Education Services and Its Role
- III. WCG Services and Employment Ontario
- IV. Discussion

Trends Reshaping the Labour Market



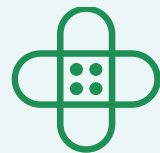
Demographics



Global Competition



Technology/
Automation



Lingering Impacts of
COVID-19



Talent Shortage

Canada's Immigration Targets 2024-2026



Source: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
[2024-2026 Immigration Levels Plan](#) as announced November 1, 2023

Newcomers Made Ontario Their Top Destination in 2023



44% of Canada's new immigrants



51% of study permit holders



52% of refugees resettled in Canada



>50% of recent immigrants are economic immigrants

Challenges Faced by Newcomers in Ontario

Immigrants in all major cities in Ontario earn **lower median wages** than non-immigrants

The overall unemployment rate in Canada in 2023 is **5.4%**, but the recent immigrant unemployment rate is **8.8%**

The number of refugees recorded in Toronto's shelter system has **increased by more than 600%** over the last two years

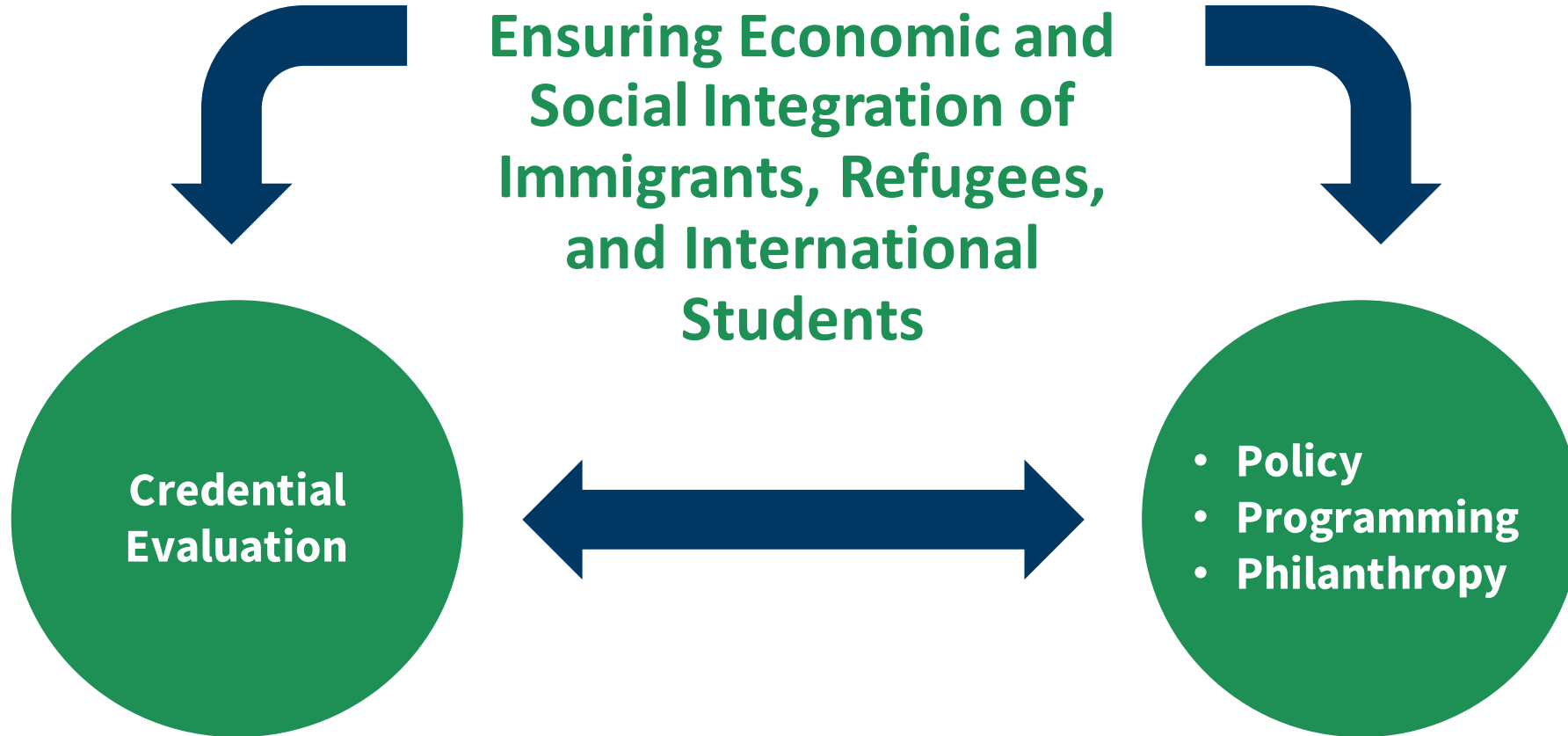
15.9% of core working age immigrants with a university degree were employed in a position requiring no more than a high school education

Source: [Ontario Immigrants; Refugees in shelter; Housing. Unemployment rate](#)

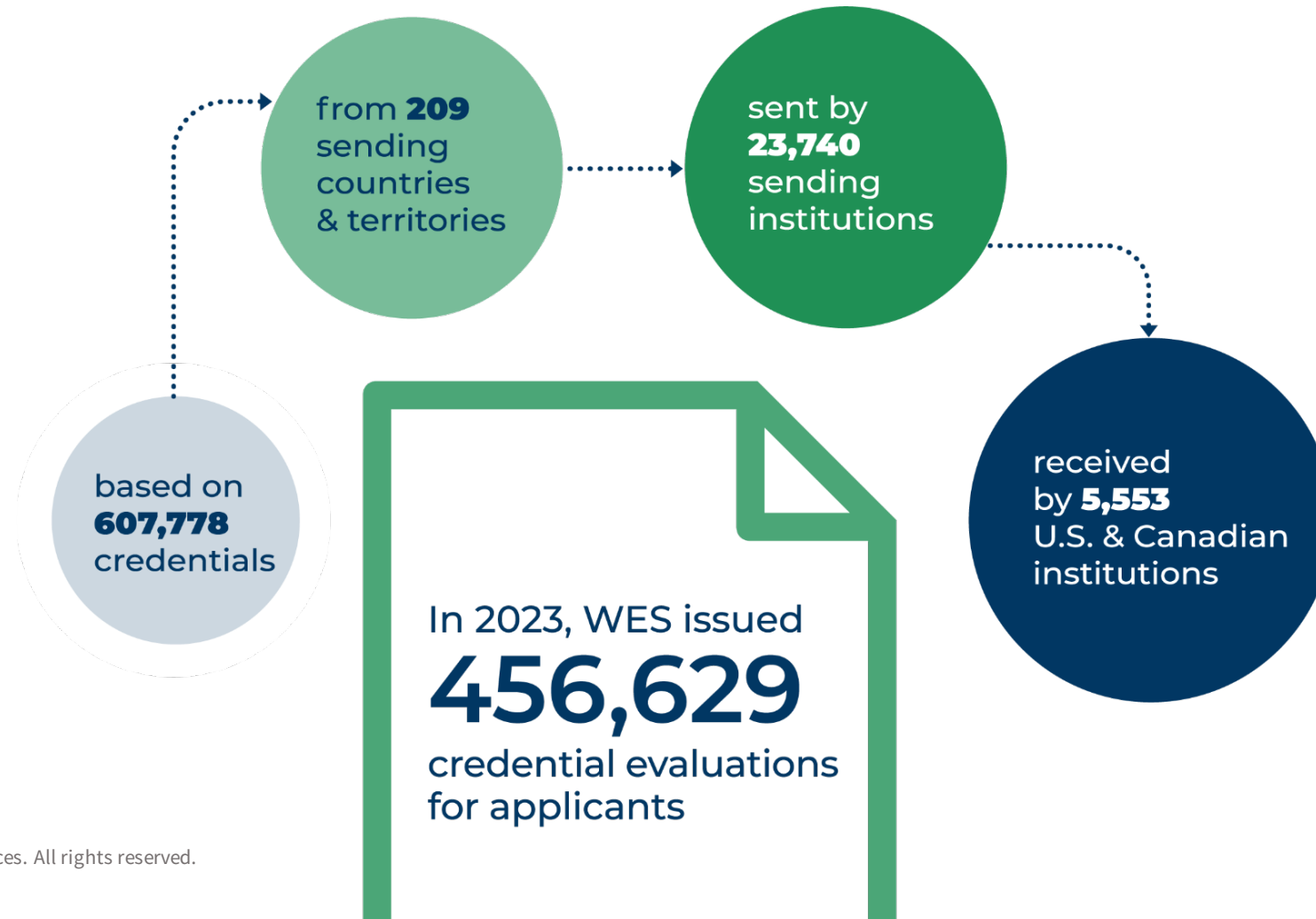


WES is a non-profit social enterprise that supports the educational, economic, and social inclusion of immigrants, refugees, and international students. From evaluating academic credentials to shaping policy, designing programs, and providing philanthropic funding, we partner with a diverse set of organizations, leaders, and networks to uplift individuals and drive systems change.

WES' Role

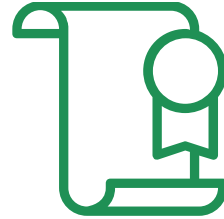


WES has provided more than 4 million individuals with a credential evaluation, a report that supports their educational and career goals in the U.S. and Canada



WES Credential Evaluation

What Is Credential Evaluation?



- **Compares** academic accomplishments to standards in Canada
- **Provides** a Canadian academic equivalency
- **Helps** institutions better understand internationally educated professionals' academic background

Information on accredited credential evaluation providers: <https://canalliance.org/en/>

Who Might Need a Credential Evaluation?

Individuals with international education considering:



Employment opportunities



An application for
permanent resident status



Licensure in a regulated profession



Enrollment in a post-
secondary institution

Types of Evaluation Reports



Document-by-Document (DxD)

Use: employment, first-year admissions



Course-by-Course (CxC)

Use: licensure, transfer credits, graduate school



Educational Credential Assessment (ECA)

Use: Canadian Permanent Residency application

Overview of Evaluation Process



Step 1

wes.org/ca

Client creates account, submits an application, makes necessary payments, and receives a WES reference number



Step 2

Client refers to required documents resources; asks awarding institution to send documents directly to WES (via digital transmission or by mail)



Step 3

WES verifies the credentials, creates a report, and delivers it to the client and to specified institutional recipients

WES Website (wes.org/ca) – Required Documents

The screenshot shows the WES website interface. At the top, there are navigation links for 'Canada', 'English', and 'About WES'. The main navigation bar includes 'Credential Evaluations', 'Partners & Programs', 'Philanthropy', 'Publications', and 'Help'. A dropdown menu is open under 'Credential Evaluations', listing various options. A green arrow points to the 'Required Documents' option. Below the navigation, there is a large banner with a man's face and text: 'Track Your Status', 'Important for Applicants', and 'Learn More'. At the bottom of the banner, there are buttons for 'Compare My Degree' and 'Calculate My GPA'. Below the banner, a three-step process is outlined: 1. Submit your application and receive your WES reference number. 2. Read our document requirements and send in your documents. 3. We verify your credentials, create your report, and deliver it to your recipients. At the bottom, there are buttons for 'Learn More', 'Get Started', and 'Help'.

WES Website (wes.org/ca) – Degree Equivalency

The screenshot displays the WES website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with options for 'Canada', 'English', and 'About WES'. A search icon, 'Sign In', and a 'Get an Evaluation' button are also present. The main header features the WES logo and a 'Credential Evaluations' dropdown menu. This menu is open, showing several categories: 'International Students, Immigrants & Job Seekers', 'For Academic Institutions', and 'For Refugees & Displaced Persons'. Under 'For Academic Institutions', the 'Degree Equivalency' option is highlighted with a green arrow. Below the menu, there is a large banner image of a smiling man with glasses. At the bottom of the banner, there are buttons for 'Compare My Degree' and 'Calculate My GPA'. Below the banner, a section titled 'Get your credential evaluation in three simple steps!' features a three-step process: 1. Submit your application and receive your WES reference number. 2. Read our document requirements and send in your documents. 3. We verify your credentials, create your report, and deliver it to your recipients. At the bottom of the page, there are 'Learn More' and 'Get Started' buttons, and a 'Help' button in the bottom right corner.



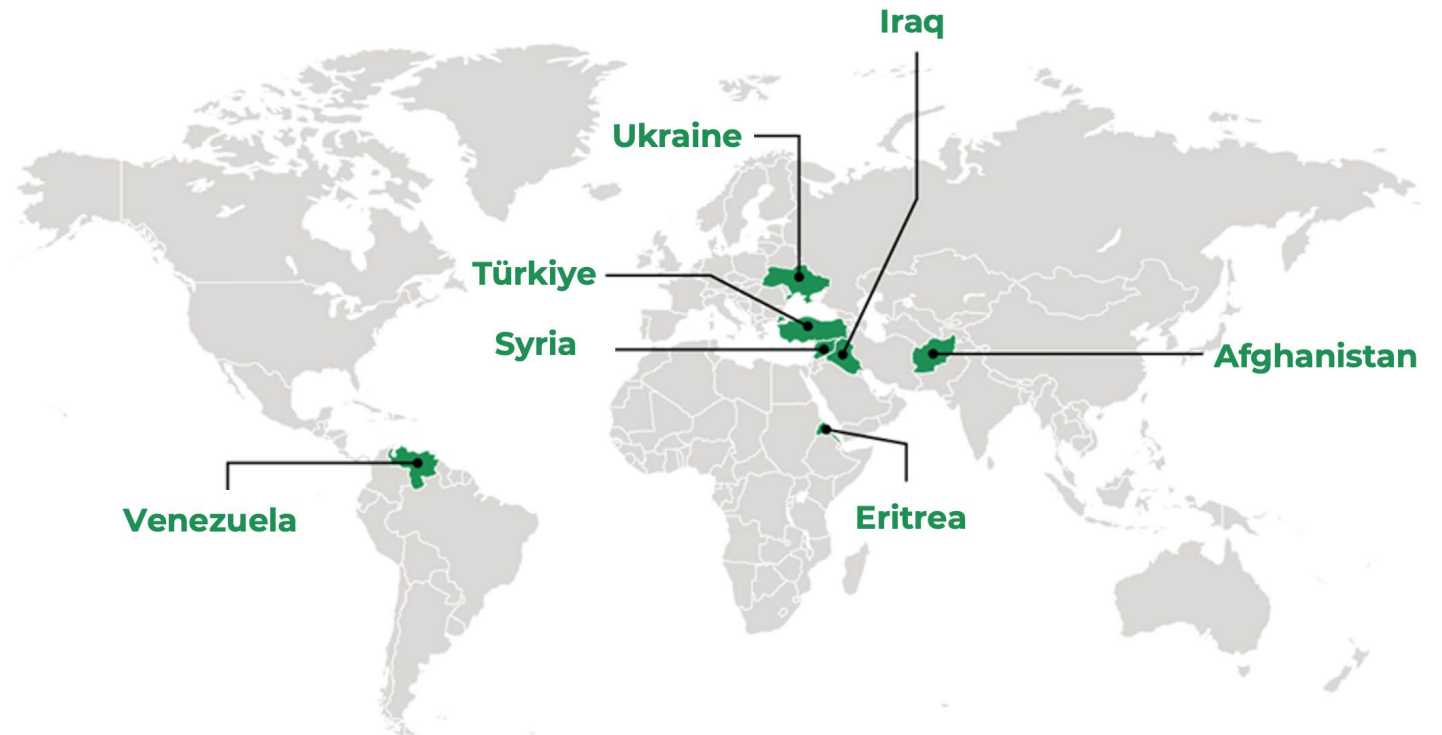
WES Gateway Program

Credential Assessment for Displaced People



WES Gateway Program Overview

- The **WES Gateway Program** assesses educational credentials of individuals who have been displaced because of adverse circumstances and have limited proof of their academic achievements.
- WES works with a network of **referral partners** to identify eligible individuals.
- Reports issued through the WES Gateway Program support applications for employment, education, licensure, and apprenticeships.
- Watch the [WES Gateway Program Video](#).



WES Gateway Program: Eligibility Requirements



Education

- ✓ Educated in one of the seven eligible countries* (other countries are considered case-by-case)
- ✓ Obtained at least a secondary school diploma



Documents

- ✓ Can produce at least one academic document (diploma or transcript)



WES Capacity

- ✓ Sufficient information for WES to assess the qualifications

**Limitations apply*

Referral Partners

62 partners across Canada.

Full list: wes.org/ca/gateway

Ontario partners:

- Toronto and GTA
- Kingston
- Northumberland County
- Hamilton
- Halton Region
- Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo
- London
- Windsor and Essex County
- Niagara
- Ottawa



WES Gateway Program Outcomes



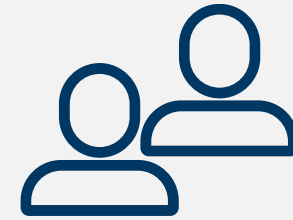
9,500+

applicants have received WES Gateway reports in Canada



250+

educational institutions, regulators, and employers have received WES Gateway reports



93%

of applicants found the program to be supportive of their goals

Credential evaluation reports support client applications for:

Employment

Allows employers to understand education attained in another country.

- **Recommendation for clients:** Include WES equivalency on résumé

Licensing

Education assessment is the first step. Other requirements: written and practical exams, working hours in specific roles.

- **Recommendation for clients:** Understand the requirements in their province

Education / Apprenticeship

Admission requirements include an assessment of prior education. Type of evaluation needed depends on school or program.

- **Recommendation for clients:** Connect with the school to understand requirements

Permanent Residency Application

An Educational Credential Assessment (ECA) is required.

- **Recommendation for clients:** Visit the [IRCC application portal](#) for more information

WES Free Tools and Resources



Social Impact

- [WES Gateway Program](#)
- [WES Mariam Assefa Fund](#)
- [Global Talent Bridge](#)
- [Global Talent Bridge Blog](#)
- [WES Advisor Blog](#)



WES Tools

- [WES Canada website](#)
- [Types of evaluation and fees](#) (includes processing times)
- [Required documents](#)
- [Degree equivalency](#)
- [How to Send Electronic Academic Records to WES](#)
- [iGPA calculator](#)
- [WES YouTube channel](#)



Integrated Employment Service Delivery



CONFIDENTIAL

About WCG

- Partnering to create sustainable employment outcomes over 30 years
- Offer Employment Services in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia
- Selected through a **competitive bid process to be the Service System Manager (SSM) for Peel, York and Ottawa Catchments**
- We work closely with over 55 service delivery providers and local partners in all three catchment areas
- Part of the APM Group enabling better lives globally

CONFIDENTIAL

We believe in the power of **WORK**
We know that work gives **hope**
strengthens families & fills hearts
Work *changes* lives

We believe in strengths
yours. mine. ours. We are better *together*
around the world and right at home
work makes the difference

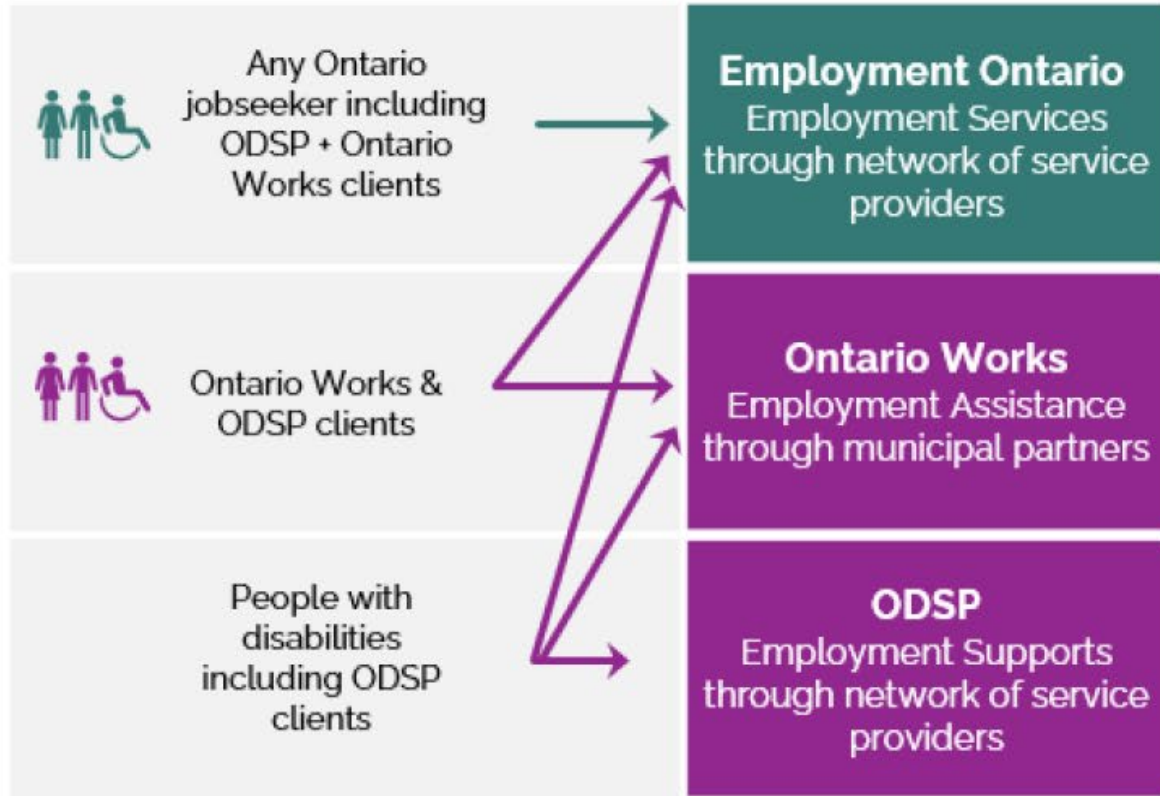
We **WORK** hard, we lead the way
& we *Raise* the bar
We believe in *dreams*,
possibilities & **RESULTS.**

We strive for **growth**
& we *bring our hearts* TO WORK
For each other, for the people we serve.
WE DO ALL OF THIS SO THAT OTHERS CAN.

Integrating Employment Services

Pre-transformation State of Employment Services

- Operated without cross-system planning and coordination through over 500 contracts.
- Unclear client pathways and service duplication



Employment Services Transformation

- **One window access** to an integrated service model.
- **Design and delivery** responsibilities for employment services and supports shifts from the ministry to SSMs.



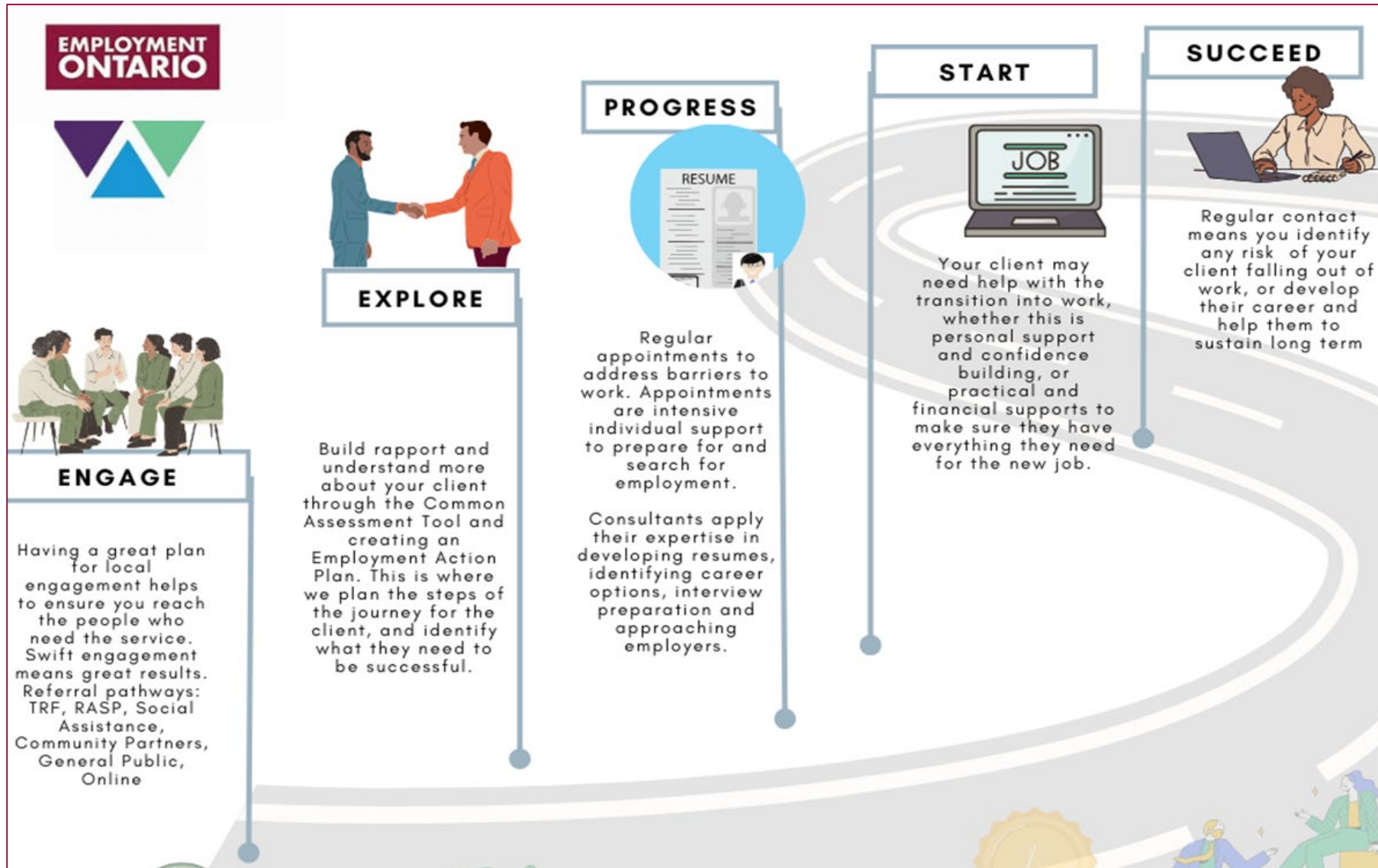
Partnership with Municipalities

**PEEL
REGION**

**YORK
REGION**

**OTTAWA
REGION**

EO Service Delivery Model



Clients are supported throughout their journey to sustainable employment

Employment Related Financial Supports

Eligible clients may access funds to address temporary barriers to participation in employment or employment-related activities, including (but not limited to):

Transportation (e.g., bus ticket, day/week/monthly pass, Presto, tires, driver's license renewal, taxi/Uber ride, driver's abstract, etc.)	Work clothing or clothing such as uniforms, work boots	Grooming needed for employment or employment-related activities/interview (e.g., haircut, personal hygiene items)	Special equipment and supplies (e.g., pre-apprenticeship kit, hard hat, goggles, software, ergonomic equipment, etc.)	Certification Charges (e.g., First Aid/CPR, Smart Serve, Safe Food Handling, NORCAT, etc.)
Short-term training costs (e.g., books, materials, workplace safety, vulnerable sector screen, criminal record check, driver's abstract, etc.)	Emergency or infrequent childcare	Language skills assessment and academic credential assessment (e.g., CLB, ESL, TOEFL, GED Test)	Translation of international academic documents	Interpreter/Translator (provided a SPN staff cannot support)

The list is not inclusive and is intended to give examples of the types of supports available.

Client Success Story

Join us in celebrating Chibuzor's remarkable transformation and witness firsthand the impact of his journey!



Q&A Session