The Changing Nature of Work

A number of forces are impacting the labour market, including the aging population, technological change, and globalization. These are leading to: 1) slower labour force growth and labour/skills shortages, 2) an increasing premium for high-skill workers and 3) new forms of employment. While continued change is expected, there is considerable uncertainty regarding its pace and the extent of disruption on jobs and wages.

Key Drivers of Change

Technology & Globalization

Large risk of automation but estimates vary from modest to dramatic

Workers performing routine tasks more at risk of automation, especially those with low skills

Automation will also have potential impacts on wages

Key Considerations

These drivers will likely continue to affect Canada’s labour market, yet the impacts are unclear:

- Most workers will remain employed, but the nature of work may change
  - Upskilling and reskilling will be key to adapt to change
- Some jobs will become safer, more flexible and less physically-demanding
- Some workers could be displaced
- Income support and retraining programs may be required
- All workers will require transferrable skills
  - Training will need to focus on skills which complement technology

Aging will further constrain the supply of workers

- Technology, immigration, and wage increases may help to mitigate

Policies and programs need to be robust and adaptable to multiple scenarios