



# Summary: Evaluation of the Canada-British Columbia Labour Market Development Agreement



## Program objectives

The Canada-British Columbia Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) is a bilateral agreement between Canada and British Columbia 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:

- **Training Services** help participants obtain employment skills by giving them financial assistance in order to attend classroom training.
- **Wage Subsidy Work Experience Placement** helps participants obtain on-the-job work experience by providing employers with a wage subsidy.
- **Self-Employment** assists participants in creating employment for themselves by providing them with a range of services including assistance with business plan development, counselling, coaching and mentoring, entrepreneurial training and workshops.
- **Job Creation Partnerships** support projects that provide eligible participants with opportunities to gain meaningful work experience while providing community benefit.
- **Employment Assistance Services** support individuals as they prepare to enter or re-enter the workforce or assist them to find a better job. Services can include counselling, action planning, job search skills, job-finding clubs, job placement services, case management and follow-up, and the provision of labour market information.
- **Labour Market Partnerships** assist employers, communities or economic

sectors and regions to address their labour force adjustments and human resource needs.

- **Research and Innovation** funds research and innovative projects to explore and assess untried and untested approaches to addressing specific labour market issues.



## The LMDA investment

In fiscal year 2020 to 2021, Canada transferred approximately \$324 million to British Columbia.



## 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 British Columbia.



## Evaluation methodology

The findings are drawn from 8 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 33 British Columbia representatives, service providers, agreement holders and key stakeholders
- Questionnaires completed by provincial officials





- A survey of Self-Employment participants in British Columbia
- Document and literature reviews

## Key findings

Participation in most EBSMs improved labour market attachment and reduced dependence on government income supports compared to similar non-participants.

With some exceptions, Training Services, Wage Subsidy Work Experience Placement, and Employment Assistance Services interventions benefit female, male, and youth participants. Where participant numbers were sufficient to enable statistically significant incremental impact analysis, these programs also improved the labour market outcomes of older, Indigenous, recent immigrant, and visible minority participants.

Participants in the north and south regions, as well as those in Vancouver and Victoria increased their labour market attachment. With the exception of participants in Victoria, they also reduced their use of government income supports.

The benefits of participating in Training Services, accrued by participants and the government, exceeded the costs of investments over time.

The evaluation also found that:

- Based on a survey of participants in the Self-Employment program, 45% of program participants launched a business during program participation that was still in operation in winter 2020 (between 2 to 4 years after program completion). What is more, 74% of all participants maintained or improved their level of income compared to the pre-program period.
- After participating in Training Services, apprentices increased their employment earnings and decreased their use of government income support.

- British Columbia used Job Creation Partnerships to address various barriers to employment and the labour market needs of subgroups of individuals, employers, and communities.
- British Columbia uses the Labour Market Partnerships program to assist employers, communities and industries to address their labour force adjustments and human resource needs.
- The Research and Innovation support measure was used by British Columbia to fund labour market research and demonstration projects.



## Recommendations

The evaluation made 2 recommendations.

**Recommendation # 1:** British Columbia 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:** British Columbia 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.