

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF CANADA'S GREEN WORKFORCE

As the economy is growing and projects start increasing rapidly, the ageing population with its demographic shift is posing a significant challenge for our labour market. Higher levels of retirement and fewer young workers to join the workforce lead to the loss of seasoned workers with in-depth knowledge and experience, negatively impacting productivity. Industries and companies must embrace age diversity to thrive in the long run, and employers must attract, develop and retain talent across all age groups.

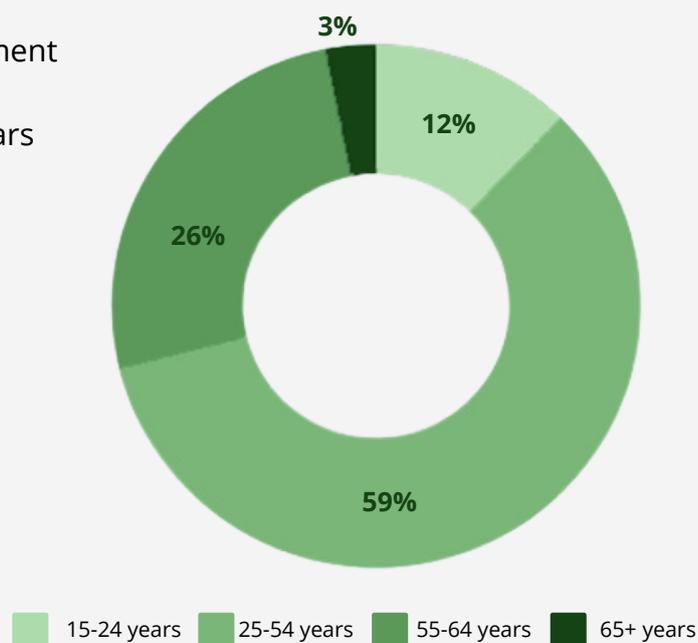
Understanding the current age diversity of Canada's environmental workforce is critical to developing an equitable and inclusive workforce. Of the 600 companies surveyed in early 2021, 458 employers from various industries, regions, sizes, and types reported the age distribution of the 53,350 environmental workers they employed¹.

OVERALL

While nearly 60% of the environmental workforce among survey respondents were in the core working age (25-54), almost 30% were aged 55+ compared to 49% and 36%, of the total working population from the latest available Census data². Coincidentally, our 10 year forecast suggests that nearly 30% of the environmental workforce could retire in the next decade, creating career progression opportunities for current and future workers³.

Despite efforts to increase youth employment in Canada's green economy, only 12% of environmental workers were under 25 years old compared to 15% based on the latest available Census data.

A concerted effort is required to encourage older workers to stay longer and to attract youth to green careers and to integrate them into meaningful employment. Efforts to transition intermediate workers to senior or leadership roles will also be beneficial.



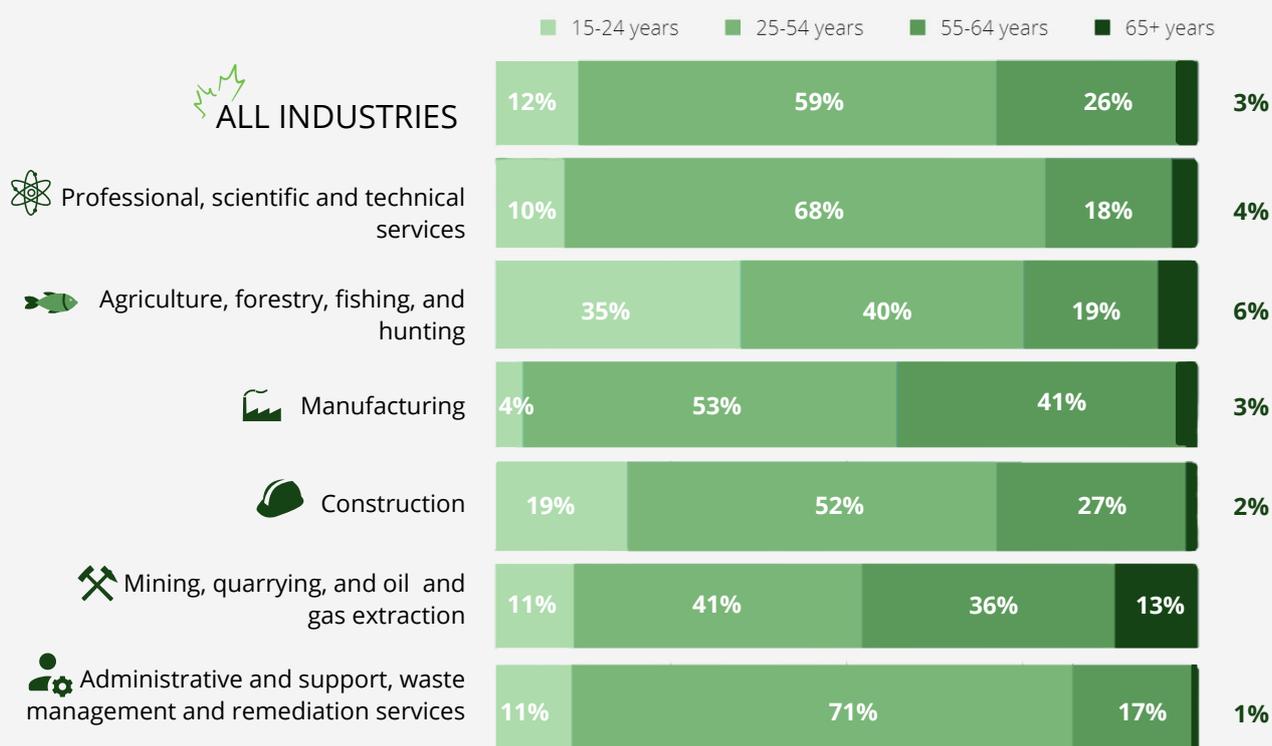
FOOTNOTES & REFERENCES

[1] Data may not represent the broader environmental workforce in Canada; it only reflects the distribution within the employer respondents.

[2] Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue nos. 98-400-X2016266 and 98-400-X2016286.

[3] ECO Canada's Environmental Labour Demand Outlook, 2020

BY INDUSTRY⁴



YOUTH (15-24 YEARS OLD)

Employer respondents from the Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting and Construction industries reported the highest proportion of their environmental workforce who were 15-24 years old at 35% and 19%, respectively.



OLDER WORKERS (55 YEARS AND OVER)



Mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction reported over 49% of their environmental employees belonging in this age bracket.

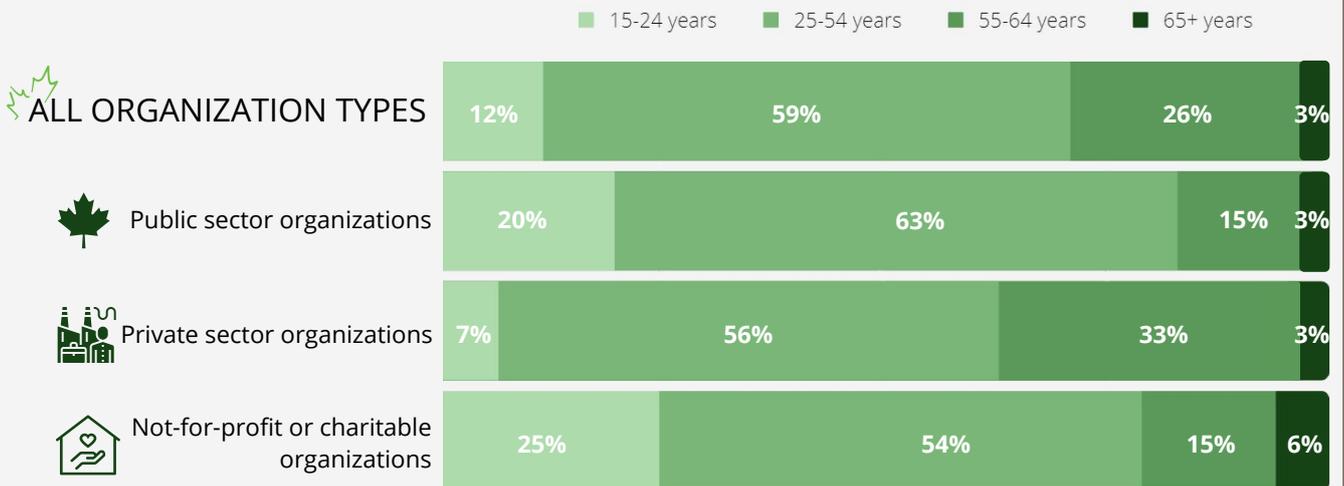


Manufacturing saw the second highest proportion of workers in the 55 years and over bracket at 44%. They also had the lowest proportion of employees in the youth age bracket at 4%.

FOOTNOTES

[4] Industries with 20 or more employer respondents are included in this fact sheet. Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

BY ORGANIZATION TYPE

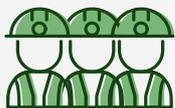
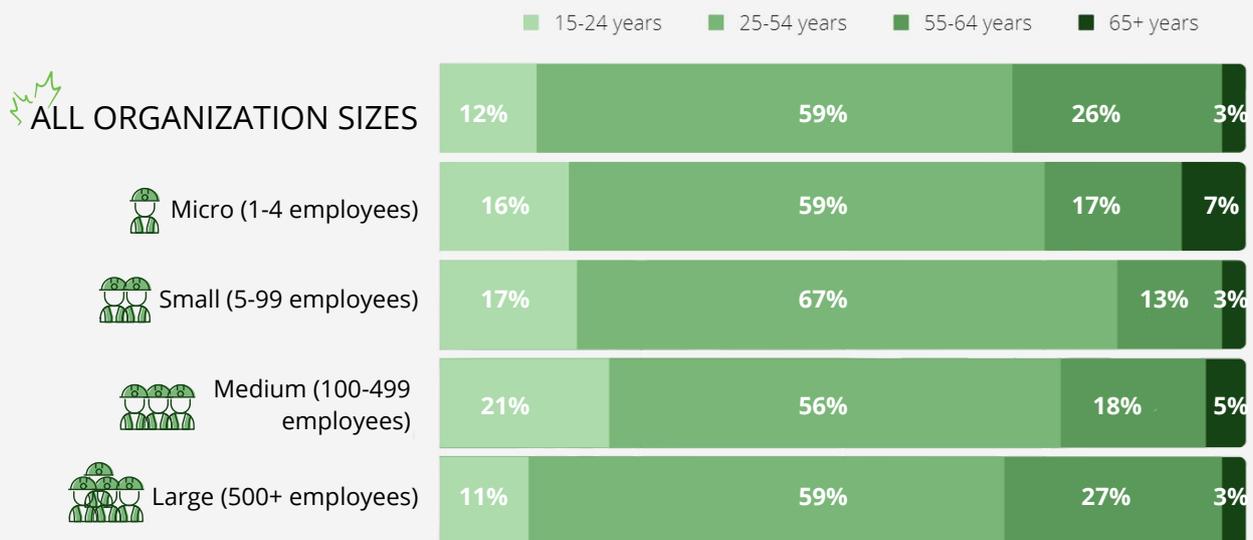


The not-for-profit sector or charitable organizations and Public sector organizations employed a larger proportion of green workers aged 15-24 at 25% and 20%, respectively—compared to 12% across all organization types.

Private sector firms saw a much larger proportion of employees aged 55-64 at 33% while Not-for-profit sector or charitable organizations had the largest proportion of environmental employees 65+ years at 6% of their workforce—compared to 3% across all organization types.



BY ORGANIZATION SIZE



Medium-sized firms had a higher than average proportion of their green workforce aged 15-24 at 21%.



Small-sized firms saw a larger proportion of their green workforce in the 25-54 range at 67%, compared to all organizations at 59%.



Micro firms had the highest proportion (7%) of employees aged 65+, or more than double the overall rate.

SUMMARY

Enhancing age diversity can help an organization reduce employee turnover and position itself as the “employer of choice”. In doing so, organizations can see a reduction in the costs arising from hiring and training new employees and an improvement in company performance.

Although competencies, behaviours and expectations tend to differ across generations, an organization can adopt the right HR strategies to leverage the individual strengths of its workforce and compete more effectively in the economy and the labour market.

Strategies include involvement in youth employment programs, such as those available through ECO Canada. These can help organizations hire young professionals at reduced costs all while benefiting from fresh ideas and helping kickstart new careers. Succession planning and personal development plans are among the HR Best Practices⁵ that can help attract and retain environmental workers and grow age diversity across the sector.

REFERENCES

[5] ECO Canada's HR Best Practices, 2012
 Data from ECO Canada's 2021 HR & Demographics Survey. View the methodology and other factsheets at eco.ca/new-reports/environmental-workforce-diversity-2021
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