

Promoting employment among older workers and persons with disabilities

ASEAN, Japan Ministry of Health Labour and Welfare and WAPES

November 9, 2016



Inclusive growth and incentives to work

- Canada's agenda for economic growth and innovation depends on its workforce
- Unless we address barriers to entering the workforce, we will hold back our economy
- We need to support worker adaptability to ensure that those who lose their jobs due to innovation are not left behind
- We also need to ensure Government policies do not create disincentives to work



Untapped potential

- Job openings are rising due to economic growth and to retirements – new entrants will not fully meet the growing need
- We have underused resources who could fill the gaps
 - Indigenous people
 - Youth
 - Older workers
 - Persons with Disabilities
- We need to better harness the skills and knowledge within these groups



A cooperative approach

- Under Canada's division of powers, the Government of Canada provides funding to provinces and territories (P/Ts) for labour market programming via transfers
- Programming is designed and delivered by P/Ts to meet regional needs
- Cooperative model is successful, efforts being made to build on the collaborative instruments we have and better align efforts





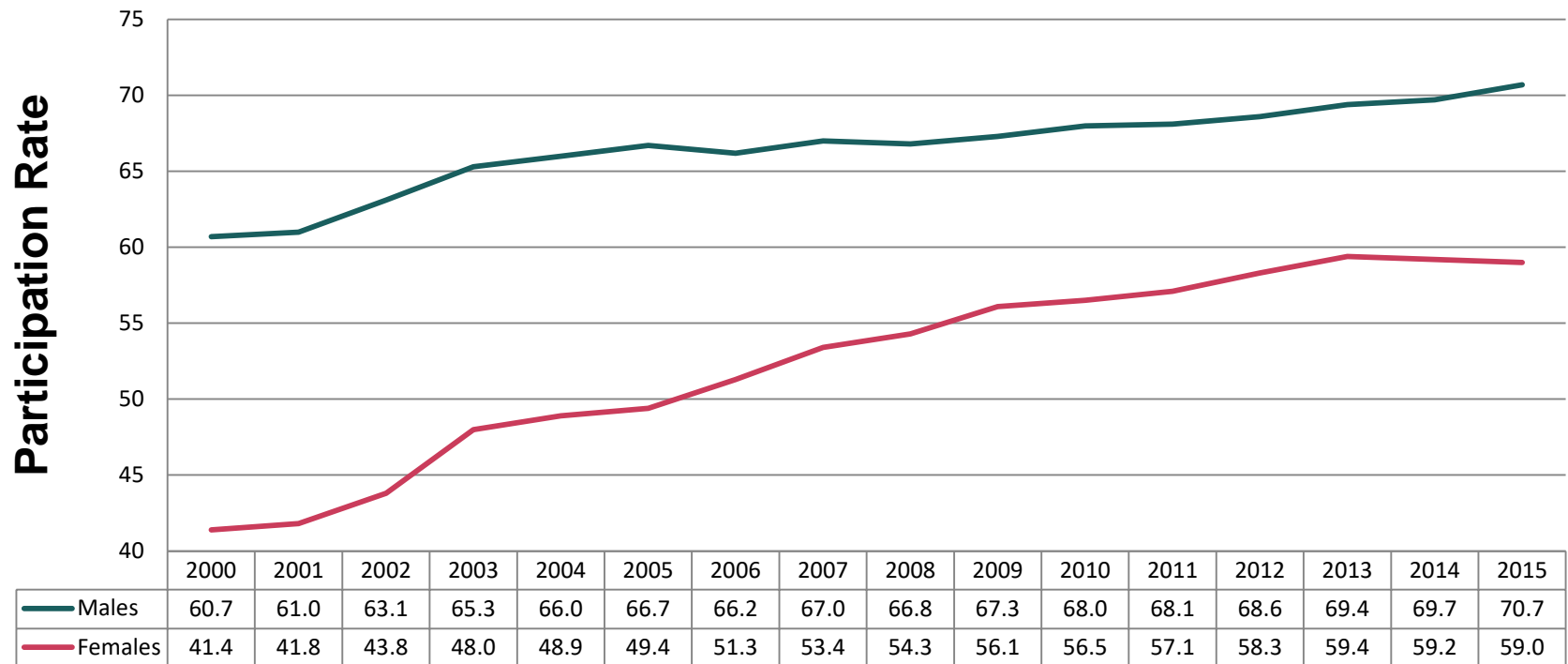
Older Workers

- Older workers (55-64) now represent a larger share of the workforce than those aged 15-24 (age when Canadians typically enter the labour market)
- Joint priority to make the most of their experience, knowledge and capacity to continue working, even past age 65



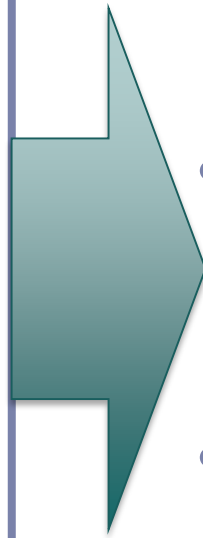
Rising labour force participation

Older Workers (Aged 55 to 64)



Drivers of older workers' participation

- ✓ Improved health and life expectancy
- ✓ Higher levels of education
- ✓ Later labour force entry, with more years spent in school
- ✓ Desire for continued social interaction
- ✓ Financial reasons



- Participation rate grew from 51% to 65%, between 2000-2015
- Among older women participation increased by 17.6 percentage points
- Among older men participation increased by 10 percentage points

Addressing employment barriers

- Mismatch of experience or skills with jobs available
- Financial disincentives
- Employer perceptions/work arrangements
- Discrimination

- + Employment supports; training for in-demand jobs; work experience
- + Changes to Old Age Security, Canada Pension Plan
- + Hiring incentives for employers, projects to recruit and retain
- + Prohibited mandatory retirement, awareness



Successful approach – Employer focus

- **Issue** Long-tenured workers now unemployed because of decline in traditional forestry and wood products sector
- **Approach** Build on existing skills and the specific needs of employers - training largely set in a woodworking factory to expose the participants to the tools, machines and operating processes they would need to work with in the new industry – paired with help with job search, computer use, and decision-making
- **Impact** Many participants found work with local employers





Image: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/business/taxes/registered-disability-savings-plans-why-don-t-more-have-them-1.1042380>



Persons with Disabilities

- Federal Task Force on Disability Issues led a series of extensive public consultations across the country in 1996
 - “Equal Citizenship for Canadians with Disabilities: The Will to Act”
- More recently, an additional focus on role of employers
 - 2012 Panel on Labour Market Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities
 - 2013 Canadian Employers Disability Forum

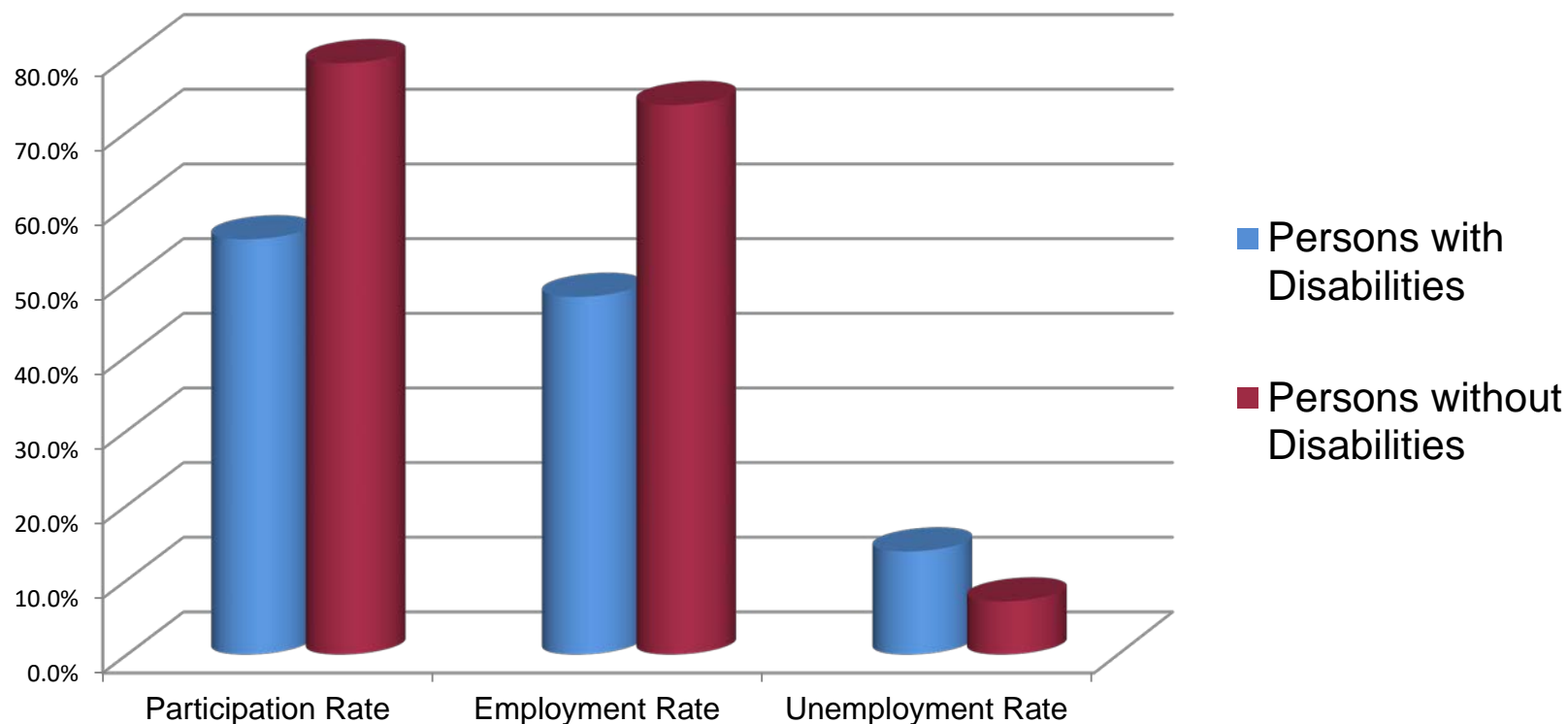


Adults with a Disability

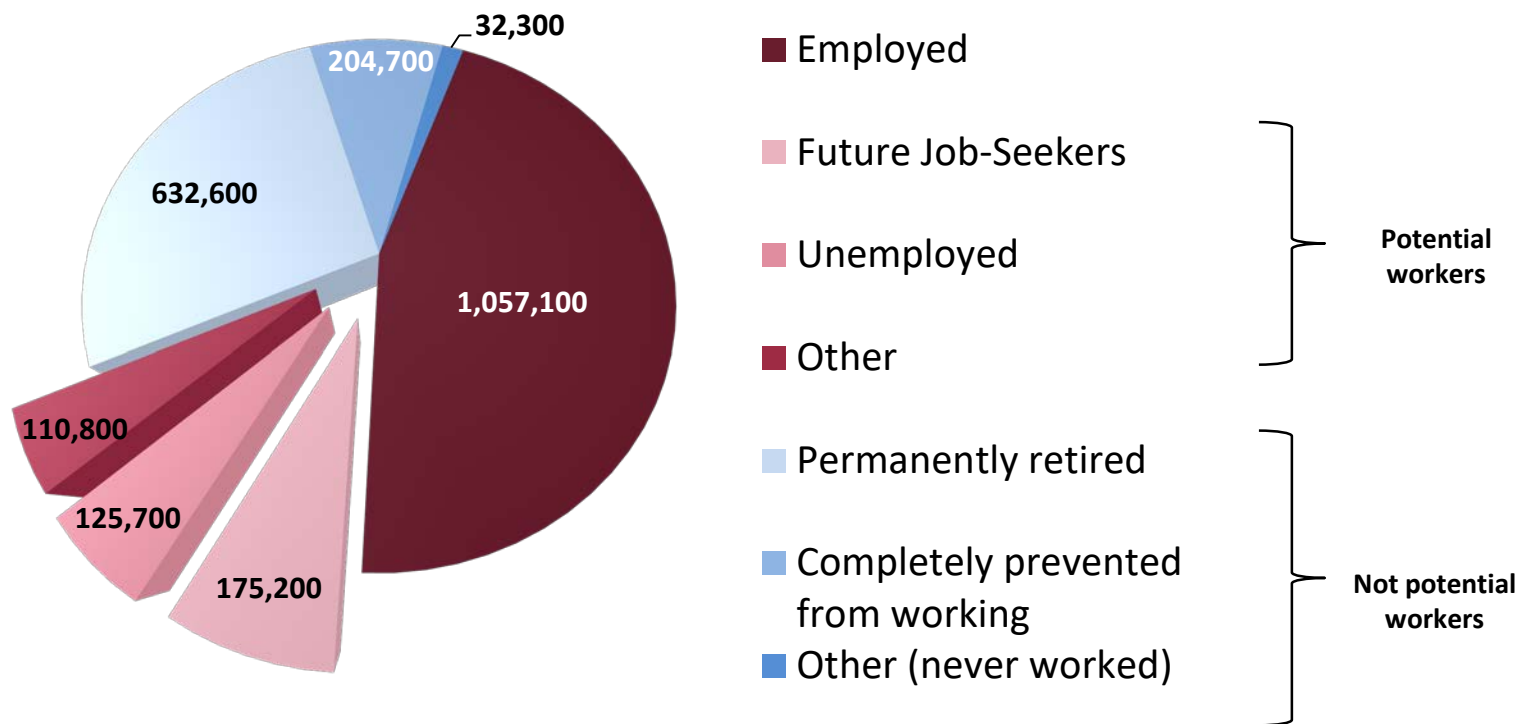
- Approximately 10% of the population aged 15-64
 - Daily activity limited due to long-term condition or health-related problem
 - 66% have mild to moderate disabilities
- Well over half have postsecondary qualifications and many can, and do, work



Labour market outcomes are lower



...more PWD could potentially work



Addressing employment barriers

- Lack of experience or workplace skills
- Employers don't know how to reach PWD
- Workplace access
- Discrimination

- + Pre-employment supports; training for in-demand jobs; hands-on work experience; hiring incentives for employers
- + Job Bank option to self-identify as a PWD-friendly employer
- + Information on and support for workplace modifications
- + Legislation, awareness raising



Successful Approach – Competitive employment

- **Issue** Intense competition for skilled and unskilled employees in restaurant sector
- **Approach:** Hires PWD for meaningful and competitively paid positions and enroll them in on-going education and training programs - 137 employees - managers, production, logistics, front-line staff; does not accept subsidies
- **Impact:** 35% turnover compared to 75% industry average; zero absenteeism (for 35 workers in 2011)



Advantages of labour market participation by older workers and PWD

For society

- Support economic growth
- Foster civic engagement

For government

- Increase tax revenues
- Reduce pressure on public finances (e.g., health care, pensions)

For businesses

- Fill job openings
- Address skills shortages
- Keep skilled workforce
- Help with mentoring and knowledge transfer

For individuals

- Promote well-being
- Support social inclusion
- Fulfill financial needs
- Prepare for a secure retirement



Inclusion and equal treatment

“We have a duty to help eliminate the systemic barriers that persist in our society, and we will work with the provinces, territories and others to make sure that all Canadians have equality of opportunity.”

- Statement by Prime Minister Trudeau on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, December 3, 2015



Thank you

Ramona McDowell

ramona.mcdowell@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca

