

NLG — MAEST Labour Market Study

Final Report

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The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of its author(s) and not the official policy or position of the Government of British Columbia.



Nisga'a Lisims Government
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Canada



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Executive Summary

The Nisga'a Lisims Government secured funding from the Province of British Columbia's Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training to conduct a detailed review and analysis of labour market conditions, gaps, opportunities, and best practices in the Nass Valley region.

The findings from this labour market study will inform the priority training and employment activities of the Nisga'a Nation. More specifically, they will support Quality of Life initiatives for the Nisga'a Nation, and inform the work of Nisga'a Employment Skills and Training (NEST), a federally funded program to train Nisga'a citizens to achieve their labour market objectives. NEST's mandate is to help Nisga'a people thrive and succeed in a rapidly developing economy by helping citizens find meaningful, demand-driven employment. This work will also provide important information and insights for other local Indigenous Governments, organizations, and service providers charged with helping local and Indigenous clients achieve their labour market objectives, in addition to provincial and federal agencies. This work will equally benefit local employers and industry groups working in Northwest British Columbia, as the report provides insights on effective labour retention strategies for Indigenous people.

Overall, labour market conditions in the Nass Valley region continue to be impacted by the positive Final Investment Decision (FID) by LNG Canada, which is estimated to employ over 9,000 workers during peak construction. Current skill gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, observed across jurisdictions, will need to be addressed if the employment opportunities generated by LNG are to be accessed by the local population. Further, business owners in the region have highlighted an increasing difficulty in hiring and retaining qualified employees, but overall they continue to perceive the impacts of FID on their business as positive. Generally, in the coming decade, most job openings in the region will be coming from the need to replace retirees rather than from new jobs, or LNG-related employment.

Unemployment in the Nass Valley continues to be higher than provincial averages, despite a high participation rate. This disparity seems to indicate an active cohort looking for employment, and speaks to the existence of barriers preventing the local labour force from accessing or remaining in available job opportunities. Some of the major barriers identified by employees surveyed included legacies of systemic racism and discrimination, skill and job opportunity misalignment, cultural misunderstandings, and lack of public transportation or access to driver's licensing.

A series of recommendations are provided at the conclusion of this report.





Part A — Background & Context

Part A of this report explores the background and context of the Nisga'a Lisims Government as it relates to the economic and labour market conditions present on Nisga'a lands and in Northwest British Columbia. Specifically, Part A includes an introduction to Northwest British Columbia and the Nass Valley region, and an analysis of current and projected labour market conditions in the Nass Valley compared to Northwest British Columbia and the rest of the province.

1.0 Introduction

The Nisga'a Lisims Government (NLG) secured funding from the Province of British Columbia's Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training (MAEST) to conduct a detailed review and analysis of labour market conditions, gaps, opportunities, and best practices in the Nass Valley region.

The findings from this labour market study will inform the priority training and employment activities of the Nisga'a Nation. More specifically, they will support Quality of Life initiatives for the Nisga'a Nation, and inform the work of Nisga'a Employment Skills and Training (NEST), a federally funded program to train Nisga'a citizens to achieve their labour market objectives. NEST's mandate is to help Nisga'a people thrive and succeed in a rapidly developing economy by helping them find meaningful, demand-driven employment. This work's findings will also provide important information and insights for other local Indigenous Governments, organizations, and service providers charged with helping local and Indigenous clients achieve their labour market objectives, in addition to federal and provincial agencies. This work will equally benefit local employers and industry groups working in Northwest British Columbia (NWBC), as the report provides insights on effective labour retention strategies for Indigenous people.

Over the past several years, NLG has developed significant in-house analytical capacity, which it has applied throughout this study by independently executing the majority of the work plan, including the primary data collection activities. NLG contracted Big River Analytics Ltd. (BRA), a research and analytics firm based in Terrace BC that specializes in labour market research in the Indigenous context, to support the work in key areas of this report. This report is a demonstration of both NLG's internal capacity and effective use of external resources.

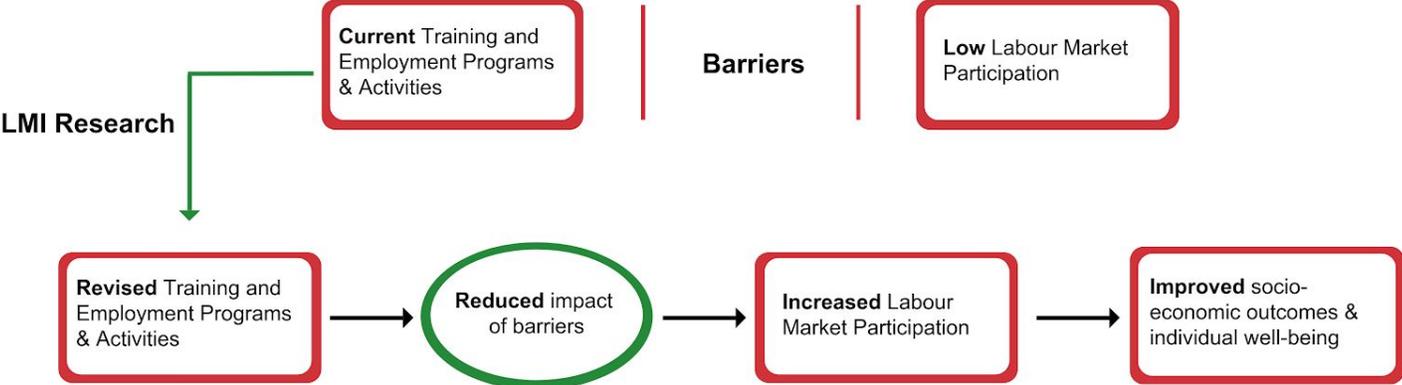
Figure 1 illustrates the theory of change guiding this labour market study. Labour market participation rates for the Indigenous population on Nisga'a lands in 2016 was 58.0 percent. In comparison, labour market participation for the total population in the North Coast Economic





Region was 65.1 percent, and 68.3 percent in BC as a whole.¹ Given this disparity, we expect barriers exist which are currently impacting labour market participation in the region, and further limiting the reach and effectiveness of training and employment programs offered in the region.² Labour market research conducted by the NLG and presented in this report will shed light on these barriers resulting in labour market gaps. This understanding will inform revised training and employment programs that will be better targeted and more effective in increasing labour market participation. In turn, this will translate into improved socio-economic outcomes and individual well-being for Nisga'a citizens.

Figure 1: Labour Market Information Report Theory of Change



Source: Big River Analytics Summary Visualization

¹ Statistics Canada. 2018a. *Nisga'a, NL [Census subdivision], British Columbia (table). Aboriginal Population Profile. 2016 Census.* Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-510-X2016001. Ottawa. Released July 18, 2018

² Including those programs offered by NEST.



1.1 Regional Context

Figure 2: Key Findings from Section 1.1 Regional Context

KEY FINDINGS

-  The economic narrative of NWBC is one of "boom and bust"
-  Natural resource sector is an economic driver, but exhibits limited long-term sustainability
-  October 2, 2018 — Positive FID by LNG Canada marks the beginning of another boom, of potentially unprecedented scale
 -  At its peak, the project will employ up to 9,000 workers
 -  Local employment organizations want to ensure local residents gain access to these employment opportunities
-  There is a growing concern that there will be labour shortages in the region, not only for LNG projects, but for all local employers

Source: Big River Analytics Summary Visualization

The economic narrative in NWBC's recent history is one of "boom and bust". The development and extraction of the region's natural resources has long been an economic driver that supports other service and supply sectors. Still, the peaks of economic activity have generally been short-lived. For example, at its peak in 1991, the forestry sector supported 2,270 jobs between Kitimat and Terrace, but following the rapid liquidation of forests in the nearby valley bottoms and middle-slopes through the 1990s and early 2000s, the industry has seen a significant decline. In 2016, an estimated 325 people worked³ in the forestry sector in Terrace and Kitimat combined.

Over the past eight years, the region has experienced other cycles of economic fluctuations. Starting in 2013 and reaching a peak in 2014-15, NWBC saw an influx of interest from industry related to LNG, mining, and the construction of the Northwest Transmission Line (NTL). Coupled with the Rio Tinto Alcan (RTA) modernization project, a multi-billion-dollar project in Kitimat, the increase of economic activity in the region saw housing prices surge, vacancy rates plummet, and labour shortages across the region. Once the RTA and NTL projects were completed in 2015 and the LNG boom failed to materialize in 2016 and 2017, regional labour markets loosened, vacancy rates increased, and housing prices fell.

³ Big River Analytics calculations based on the Census of the Population: 1991, 2016, Statistics Canada.





On October 2, 2018, LNG Canada announced a positive Final Investment Decision (FID) for the development of their Kitimat-based LNG export facility. Natural gas will be delivered to the facility through TC Energy’s (formerly TransCanada) Coastal GasLink (CGL) pipeline, a 670 km pipeline being constructed from Dawson Creek to Kitimat, BC. This announcement, paired with other major project developments in the region, indicates that the region is on the cusp of another boom, of potentially unprecedented scale.

The BC Labour Market Outlook (LMO, 2019 edition) reports potential labour shortages in the North Coast and Nechako region due primarily to an aging and retiring workforce, estimating an average annual 0.3 percent growth rate in the demand for workers. The 2019 LMO suggests that there will be 9,900 job openings expected over a 10-year forecast horizon, with 11 percent of those jobs attributable to economic growth, and with the majority of demand for jobs driven by the need to replace retirees.⁴

Given that the 2018 LMO did not include the LNG Canada or CGL projects in its projections, and that the employment growth rates in the 2019 LMO are lower than those presented in the 2018 LMO, we suspect that this latest edition of the LMO may underestimate the uptick in economic activity and employment growth the region will experience through the construction phase of the two major projects. Beyond the labour demand that will be created directly from the LNG-related projects, LNG-stimulated benefit agreements with local Indigenous governments/Nations will translate into significant economic opportunities for local communities. This generated wealth might further be amplified by the investments smaller businesses and First Nations will make into other projects. 2019 and 2018 LMO projections of economic growth may also downplay the role of the Port of Prince Rupert in stimulating job growth and demand, given the amount of expansion taking place in Prince Rupert, as well as the stimulus that has gone into revitalizing tourism in the region.⁵

As such, we anticipate a surge of activities across multiple sectors to drive regional labour demand. The evidence we have gathered to date through our primary data collection (see section 1.3 Data Sources) suggests employers are already starting to face difficulties in hiring and retaining employees to match demand. Our findings are corroborated by Redesign Rupert’s 2019 Labour Market Study, which, though exclusively focused on Prince Rupert, states that “all sectors of the Prince Rupert economy are challenged when recruiting skilled employees and it is anticipated that the problem will become more acute with the addition of major projects.”⁶

⁴ WorkBC, (2020). *Labour Market Outlook (2019-2029), North Coast & Nechako*. Retrieved from: <https://www.workbc.ca/Labour-Market-Information/Regional-Profiles/North-Coast-Nechako#view-full-profile>

⁵ Source: Nisga’a Tourism (2016), “Aam wil bakwsim (*We Welcome You*)”. Retrieved from: <http://www.nisgaatourism.com>

⁶ Redesign Rupert, (2019). *2019 Labour Market Study*. Retrieved from: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/56953d59d82d5e4a6a3ee499/t/5dea8e244fc5135240ed8a29/1575652913597/Prince+Rupert+Labour+Market+Study_2019+Final_compressed.pdf



In the medium term, tracking and understanding the anticipated boom of economic activity in the region following the FID will allow for the implementation of informed labour policies and programs throughout the project lifecycles. This will work to ensure that local citizens gain access to both short-term and long-term employment opportunities, and that local employers meet their employment needs. In the long term, and beyond the LNG-related projects, understanding labour market conditions in NWBC is critical to informing effective labour policies that will support the region in its development goals, including goals unrelated to the natural resource projects.

Beyond the cyclical industry that is the natural resource sector, it is critical to highlight that the employment goals of Nisga'a citizens are as varied and diverse as any other group of people. While some Nisga'a citizens look to work on the LNG project, many do not. NEST's mandate is to help Nisga'a people thrive and succeed in a rapidly developing economy by helping them find meaningful, demand-driven employment. To limit this labour market analysis to the natural resource sector or to the projected LNG boom would be to ignore the economic and employment goals of individual Nisga'a citizens and the diversity of the Nass Valley economy. This understanding will remain an anchoring force throughout this report.

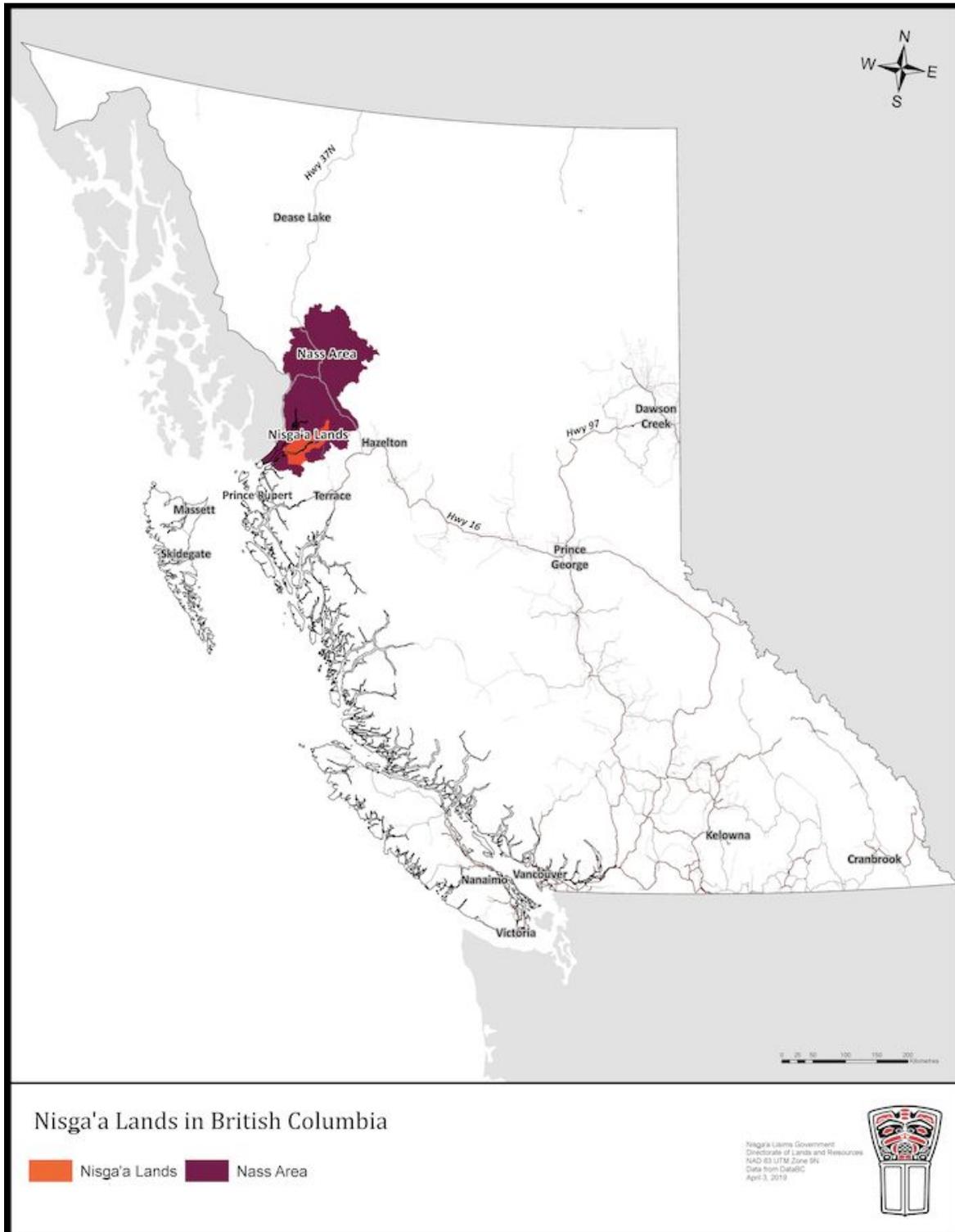
1.2 Nisga'a Nation Context

The Nisga'a Nation's territory is located on the Northwest Coast of British Columbia, in the Nass River Valley, northwest of Terrace (see Map 1).





Map 1: British Columbia and Nisga'a Lands in the Nass Valley



Source: Nisga'a Lisims Government Custom Map



K'ali Aksim Lisims (the Nass River) flows through a land of sacred mountains and dense forests on Canada's Pacific Coast. The Nisga'a people have lived in the Nass River Valley since before recorded time. Through the Nisga'a Final Agreement signed in 1998, Canada and British Columbia formally recognized Nisga'a ownership of 2,000 square kilometres of Nisga'a lands as well as mineral resources on or under those lands. Nisga'a lands offer tremendous potential for responsible, sustainable development as well as unique wilderness and cultural experiences for visitors.⁷

The Nisga'a Nation is a fully integrated part of NWBC's economy, where fishing and forestry are the primary economic drivers. In the Nass Region, resource industries are complemented by the government, education, and healthcare sectors. Significant transportation and infrastructure improvements have brought new jobs and skills, while tourism and telecommunications offer the promise of expanding and diversifying the economy.⁸

Much like the Canadian federal and provincial government systems, the Nisga'a Nation has both national and local governments. NLG is responsible for governance of the Nisga'a Nation as a whole and represents the Nisga'a Nation in intergovernmental relations. There are also four Nisga'a Villages — Gitlaxt'aamiks, Gingolx, Gitwinksihlkw, and Laxgalts'ap — that act through their Nisga'a Village Government in exercising their rights, powers and privileges, and in carrying out their duties, functions, and obligations relating to each village and its residents.⁹

As of May 2019, 1,492 Nisga'a citizens aged 15 and older lived on Nisga'a lands, and 4,408 Nisga'a citizens aged 15 and older lived off Nisga'a lands, in Terrace, Prince Rupert, the Lower Mainland/Vancouver Island (VI), or elsewhere in BC. Projections indicate that by 2029, the Nisga'a citizen population aged 15 years and older will increase by 86 people on Nisga'a lands and by 670 people off Nisga'a lands. Table 1 presents the current and projected Nisga'a population for citizens aged 15 years and older by location.

⁷ Source: Nisga'a Lisims Government (n.d). "About". Retrieved from: <https://www.nisgaanation.ca/about-10>

⁸ Source: Nisga'a Lisims Government (n.d). "Economic Development Department". Retrieved from: <https://www.nisgaanation.ca/economic-development-department>

⁹ Source: Nisga'a Lisims Government (n.d). "About". Retrieved from: <https://www.nisgaanation.ca/about-3>





Table 1: Projected Nisga'a Population Aged 15+ in May of 2019 - 2029, by Location

| Location | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| On Nisga'a Lands | 1,492 | 1,504 | 1,516 | 1,528 | 1,540 | 1,552 | 1,557 | 1,562 | 1,567 | 1,573 | 1,578 |
| Gitlaxt'aamiks | 607 | 611 | 615 | 620 | 624 | 628 | 631 | 633 | 636 | 639 | 641 |
| Gitwinksihlkw | 159 | 163 | 166 | 170 | 173 | 177 | 177 | 177 | 178 | 178 | 178 |
| Laxgalts'ap | 409 | 412 | 416 | 419 | 422 | 426 | 428 | 430 | 431 | 433 | 435 |
| Gingolx | 317 | 318 | 319 | 320 | 320 | 321 | 322 | 322 | 322 | 322 | 323 |
| Off Nisga'a Lands | 4,408 | 4,484 | 4,561 | 4,637 | 4,713 | 4,789 | 4,847 | 4,905 | 4,963 | 5,020 | 5,078 |
| Terrace | 1,434 | 1,472 | 1,509 | 1,547 | 1,584 | 1,622 | 1,652 | 1,682 | 1,711 | 1,741 | 1,771 |
| Prince Rupert | 1,489 | 1,506 | 1,522 | 1,539 | 1,555 | 1,572 | 1,584 | 1,596 | 1,608 | 1,620 | 1,631 |
| Lower Mainland/VI | 1,327 | 1,350 | 1,372 | 1,395 | 1,418 | 1,440 | 1,457 | 1,475 | 1,492 | 1,509 | 1,527 |
| Elsewhere in BC | 158 | 157 | 157 | 156 | 156 | 155 | 154 | 153 | 151 | 150 | 149 |
| Total in NEST Service Area | 4,415 | 4,481 | 4,547 | 4,613 | 4,679 | 4,745 | 4,792 | 4,839 | 4,886 | 4,933 | 4,980 |
| Total outside of NEST Service Area | 1,485 | 1,507 | 1,529 | 1,551 | 1,573 | 1,595 | 1,611 | 1,628 | 1,644 | 1,660 | 1,676 |
| Total | 5,900 | 5,988 | 6,076 | 6,165 | 6,253 | 6,341 | 6,404 | 6,467 | 6,530 | 6,593 | 6,656 |

Source: 2016 Census of Population, Nisga'a Nation Citizenship Registry/Database

1.3 Data Sources

Our primary data collection included interviews of over 102 employers and Nisga'a Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) Program clients in NWBC, and a 43-question labour market survey conducted with 55 Nisga'a employees.

Our secondary data collection primarily relied on data from the 2016 Census of Population (the Census), the 2017 Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS), and the 2018/2019 Nisga'a Nation Household Survey (NNHS).

The APS is a national survey of First Nations people, Métis, and Inuit living in Canada. Generally, the APS takes place every five years in the year after the Census. The APS selects a random sample from the off-reserve population that self-identified in the Census as belonging to at least one Aboriginal group (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit), as well as those who reported having Aboriginal ancestry. Though not part of the target population, those with Aboriginal ancestry will indicate an Aboriginal identity on the APS about a third of the time. The APS and the Census do not include individuals living on-reserve or in some remote communities in the Arctic.

The Census of Population takes place every five years, in years ending in '1' and '6.' The most recent census was conducted in May 2016. The Census is the main source of data for specific groups such as lone-parent families, Indigenous peoples, immigrants, seniors, and language groups. The short-form questionnaire includes only basic questions about the date of birth, sex,



relationships of household members, languages spoken and understood, and first language learned. The short-form census aims to enumerate all residents of Canada. The long-form questionnaire enumerates a 25 percent sample of Canadian residents except for populations living on reserve where the long-form is essentially a census as the sampling rate is set at 100%. The 2016 long-form questionnaire includes additional questions on activities of daily living, sociocultural information, mobility, place of birth, education, labour market activities, and housing. The Census contains questions on Aboriginal identity (identifying with First Nations, Métis, or Inuk/Inuit), Aboriginal group one identifies with, Registered or Treaty Indian Status, Membership in a First Nation or Indian Band, Aboriginal ancestry, residence on or off reserve, and residence inside or outside Inuit Nunangat. The Census includes those living on reserve, however, in 2016 there were 14 incompletely enumerated reserves across Canada.

In the fall and spring of 2018/2019, the Nisga'a Nation as represented by the NLG, administered the Nisga'a Nation Household Survey (NNHS). The survey is a practical way of monitoring social and economic changes over time affecting the various subgroups of the Nation's population, such as Elders, children, urban dwellers, and women. As such, it provides a means of establishing baseline criteria and data to support NLG's understanding of and responses to the impact of the Nisga'a Final Agreement on the living conditions and quality of life of Nisga'a citizens. The NNHS was based on a rigorous sampling approach which included census data collected from residents of the Nisga'a Villages, as well as information randomly sampled from Nisga'a individuals living off Nisga'a lands.

The three tables below outline the sampling approach taken by NLG.

Table 2: Household Information for Nisga'a Villages/Communities with Response Rates

| Nisga'a Villages / Communities | No. of Households in the Village / Community | Total No. of Households Surveyed | % coverage of Households |
|--------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Gitlaxt'aamiks (New Aiyansh) | 264 | 125 | 47.3% |
| Gitwinksihlkw | 42 | 35 | 83.3% |
| Laxgalts'ap | 135 | 94 | 69.6% |
| Gingolx | 125 | 67 | 53.6% |

Source: Nisga'a Nation Citizenship Registry/Database

Table 3: Census Data for Nisga'a Villages/Communities with Response Rates

| Nisga'a Villages / Communities | Total No. of Individuals 18+ from the population list (N) | Total No. of Individuals 18+ where info was collected (Full Survey) | % of Coverage for 18+ |
|--------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------|
| Gitlaxt'aamiks (New Aiyansh) | 578 | 302 | 52.2% |
| Gitwinksihlkw | 147 | 110 | 74.8% |
| Laxgalts'ap | 394 | 220 | 55.8% |
| Gingolx | 301 | 152 | 50.5% |

Source: Nisga'a Nation Citizenship Registry/Database





Table 4: Random Sample N for Nisga'a Urban Locales/Communities with Response Rates

| Nisga'a Urban Locales / Communities (off Nisga'a Lands) | Total No. of Individuals 18+ from the population list (N) | Total No. of Individuals 18+ where info was collected (Full Survey) ¹⁰ | % of Coverage for 18+ | Sample Size in Random Selection from 18+ Individuals ¹¹ | No. of Individuals Surveyed from the random list 18+ | % of Coverage for 18+ from random list |
|---|---|---|-----------------------|--|--|--|
| Prince Rupert | 1,115 | 206 | 18.5% | 89 | 25 | 28.1% |
| Terrace | 917 | 166 | 18.1% | 88 | 39 | 44.3% |
| Vancouver | 840 | 150 | 17.9% | 87 | 15 | 17.2% |

Source: Nisga'a Nation Citizenship Registry/Database

While non-Nisga'a statistical agencies collect information to produce important information and reports about Nisga'a and other Indigenous peoples, NLG found it necessary to undertake its own household survey to supplement that information and produce more tailored, high quality, statistical data. Information collected from the NNHS complements and expands upon the understanding of statistical information being gathered by the other data sources mentioned and utilized for this report.

¹⁰ Note: Sampling in the urban centers employed a method of both convenient and random sampling.

¹¹ Note: 95% CL; 10%MoE; 50%RD



2.0 Current Labour Market Conditions in the Nass Valley and Surrounding Region

Section 2.0 of this report is a summary of current labour market conditions in the Nass Valley and NWBC in general. It is included to highlight current gaps in labour market conditions between the Nass Valley region, NWBC, and the rest of BC.

We can understand current labour market conditions in the Nass Valley and surrounding region first by identifying the state of local economic activity. Section 2.1 explores real estate indicators as a proxy for local economic activity. Next, labour force characteristics capture labour market participation in the region, including who, and the extent and type of participation. Finally, labour market characteristics including education, training, and employment gaps examine labour market disparities in finer detail.

Figure 3: Key Findings in Section 2.0 Current Labour Market Conditions in the Nass Valley and Surrounding Region

KEY FINDINGS

-  Data collected on real estate indicates increased on-the-ground activity since FID in Terrace, Prince Rupert, and Kitimat.
-  Employment rates have been improving slightly for Nisga'a communities in the north, but unemployment remains significantly higher than provincial averages.
-  Nisga'a citizens in the Nass Valley are employed in a wide variety of sectors, including education, law, and social, community and government services.
-  Data continues to highlight gaps in educational attainment between Nisga'a citizens and BC residents.

Source: Big River Analytics Summary Visualization

2.1 Real Estate

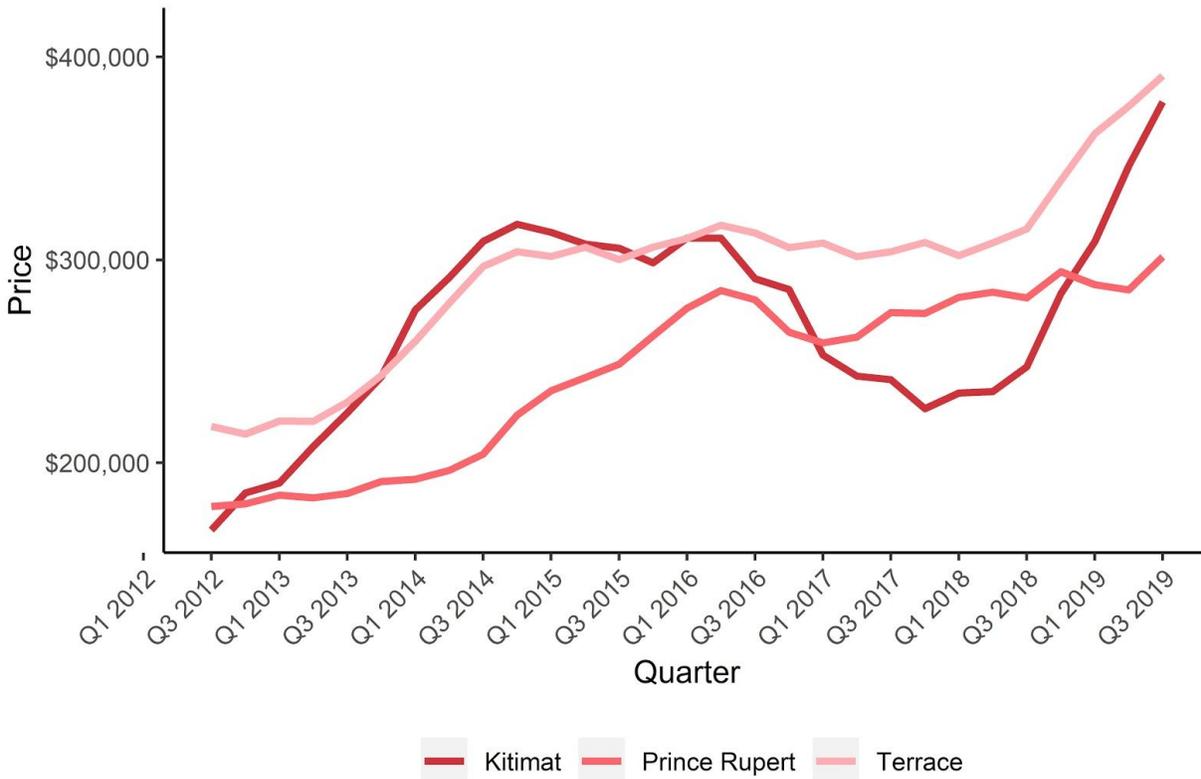
Real estate activity can be used as a proxy indicator for local economic activity, and can serve to highlight “boom and bust” economic cycles (see section 1.1 Regional Context). Since the positive FID by LNG Canada in Q3 2018, an uptick in economic activity in Terrace, Prince Rupert, and Kitimat can be quantified through real estate data.





Figure 4 presents housing prices in Terrace, Kitimat, and Prince Rupert over the past 10 years, demonstrating the ups and downs of local economic activity. Since the FID in Q3 2018, house prices in Kitimat and Terrace have increased significantly, whereas Prince Rupert has not seen prices increase to the same extent.

Figure 4: One-year Moving Average of Housing Prices in Kitimat, Prince Rupert, and Terrace, 2012 - 2019



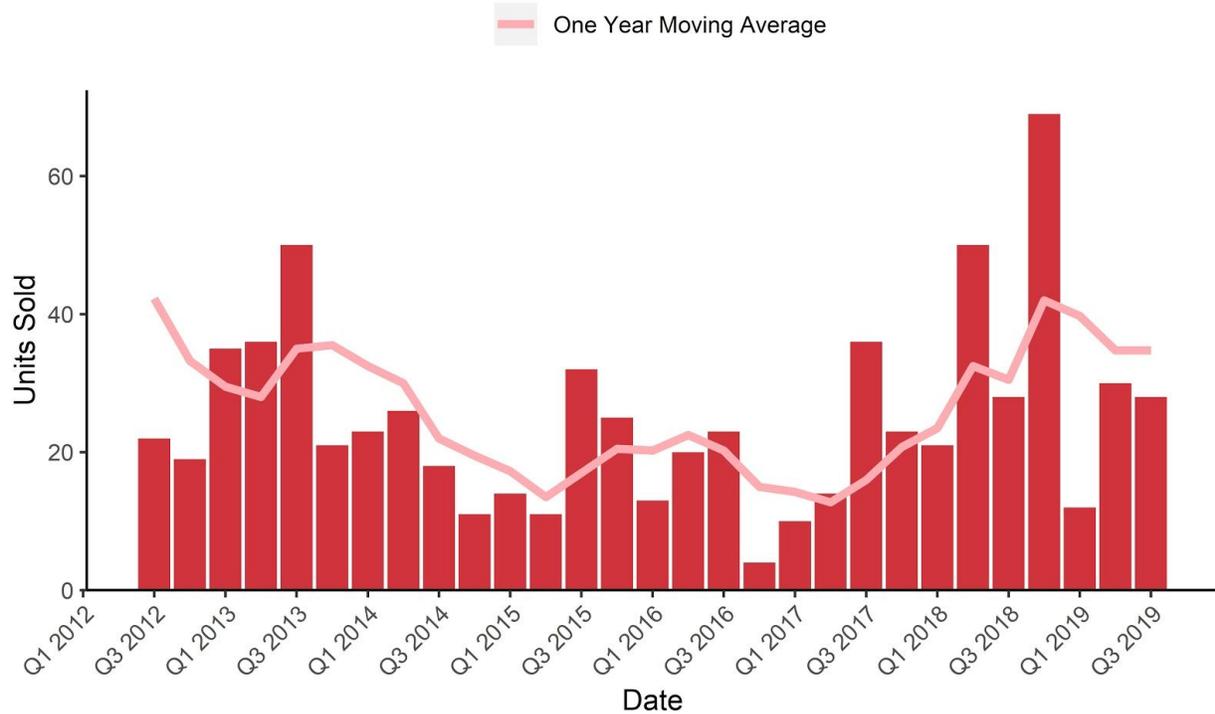
Source: BC Northern Real Estate Board, Big River Analytics calculations

In Kitimat, a record high average quarterly resale price of \$405,399 was recorded in Q2 2019. In Q3 2019, the average resale price of \$393,588 represents a 47.4% increase over Q3 2018, and a 2.9% decrease from Q2 2019.

In Q4 2018, the quarter immediately following the positive FID, a record 69 homes were sold in Kitimat (see Figure 5). Three times as many units sold in Q4 2018 relative to Q4 2017, and 146% more than in Q3 2018. In 2019, sales seem to have been relatively low, with just 12 units sold in Q1 2019, followed by 30 in Q2 2019, and 28 in Q3 2019.



Figure 5 - Housing Units Sold Per Quarter, Kitimat, 2012 - 2019



Source: BC Northern Real Estate Board, Big River Analytics calculations

2.2 Labour Force Characteristics

As part of the 2018/2019 NNHS, data was collected on labour force characteristics of those living in the seven communities where Nisga’a citizens predominantly reside, as presented in Table 5. Survey results found that 1,493 Nisga’a citizens were living on Nisga’a lands (Gitlaxt’aamiks, Laxgalts’ap, Gitwinkshilkw, Gingolx), compared to 4,469 Nisga’a citizens living off Nisga’a lands in Prince Rupert, Terrace, Vancouver, or elsewhere in BC. The labour force on Nisga’a lands totalled 772 people, compared to 2,730 people off Nisga’a lands.

On Nisga’a lands, the number of employed Nisga’a citizens amounts to 495 people, the employment rate stands at 33.2%, the unemployment rate is higher at 35.9%, and the participation rate is 51.7%.¹² Estimating the average unemployment rates for the entire Nisga’a Nation, both on and off Nisga’a lands, the Nation experiences unemployment at around 18 percent (see Table 5). This is well above the provincial average of 4.7 percent over the same

¹² Note: These 2018/2019 NNHS rates differ from 2016 Census data presented previously in this report (see Section 1.0 Introduction), as they present data for Nisga’a citizens on Nisga’a lands in 2018/2019, rather than data for the Indigenous population on Nisga’a lands in 2016.



time period.¹³ Since 2011, labour force indicators are improving, although again, there remains considerable work to be done to close the labour market gaps.

Table 5: Labour Force Rates 2018/2019 – Nisga’a Nation Household Survey

| Location | Total | Labour force | Employed | Unemployed | Participation rate | Employment rate | Unemployment rate |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| On Nisga’a Lands | 1,493 | 772 | 495 | 277 | 51.7% | 33.2% | 35.9% |
| Gingolx | 318 | 171 | 90 | 81 | 53.8% | 28.3% | 47.4% |
| Gitlaxt’aamiks | 608 | 325 | 233 | 92 | 53.4% | 38.3% | 28.3% |
| Gitwinksihlkw | 160 | 88 | 60 | 28 | 55.3% | 37.7% | 31.8% |
| Laxgalts’ap | 407 | 188 | 112 | 76 | 46.3% | 27.6% | 40.4% |
| Off Nisga’a Lands | 4,469 | 2,730 | 2,370 | 359 | 61.1% | 53.0% | 13.2% |
| Prince Rupert | 1,201 | 796 | 672 | 124 | 66.2% | 56.0% | 15.5% |
| Terrace | 982 | 585 | 488 | 97 | 59.5% | 49.7% | 16.6% |
| Vancouver | 910 | 509 | 481 | 28 | 55.9% | 52.8% | 5.5% |
| Elsewhere in BC | 1,376 | 840 | 730 | 111 | 61.1% | 53.0% | 13.2% |
| Total | 5,962 | 3,502 | 2,866 | 636 | 58.7% | 48.1% | 18.2% |

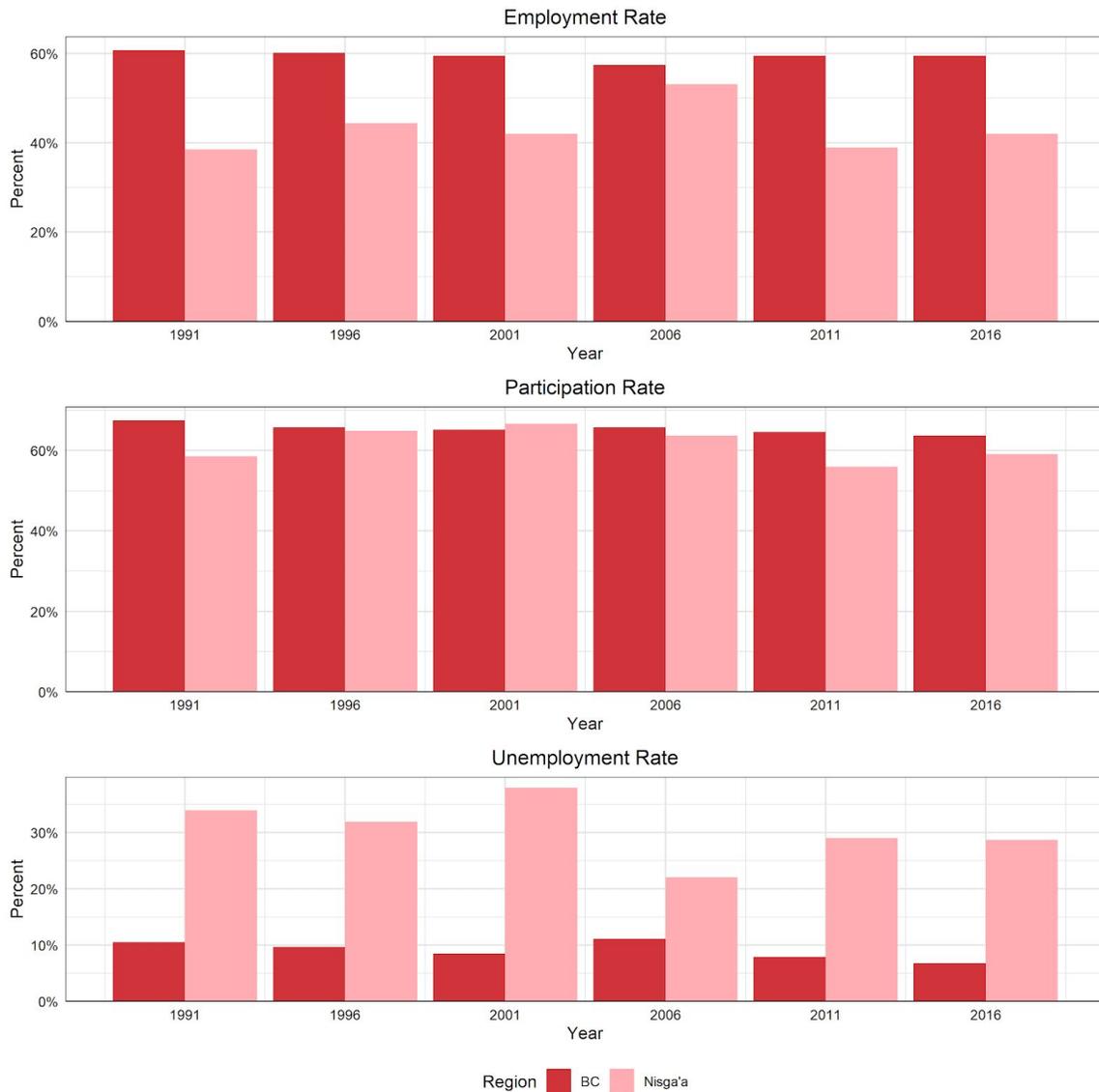
Source: 2016 Census of Population, Nisga’a Nation Citizenship Registry/Database

Overall, rates have been improving slightly for Nisga’a communities. Figure 6 provides a comparison of the Nisga’a labour market rates to BC’s. Overall, the Nisga’a Nation consistently displays higher unemployment rates than the rest of the province and lower employment rates, but participation rates have been comparable since 1991. For example, the Nisga’a Nation saw an improvement both in terms of the employment rate and the participation rate in 2016, relative to 2011. Nisga’a participation rates are approximately the same as BC as a whole. Between 2006 and 2016, the unemployment rate was fairly stable between 20% and 30%, although lower than the previous decade (between 30% and 40%).

¹³ Statistics Canada (n.d). *Unemployment Rate, Participation Rate, and Employment Rate by sex, annual, inactive*. Table 14-10-0018-02. Ottawa.



Figure 6 - BC and Nisga'a Labour Force Characteristics



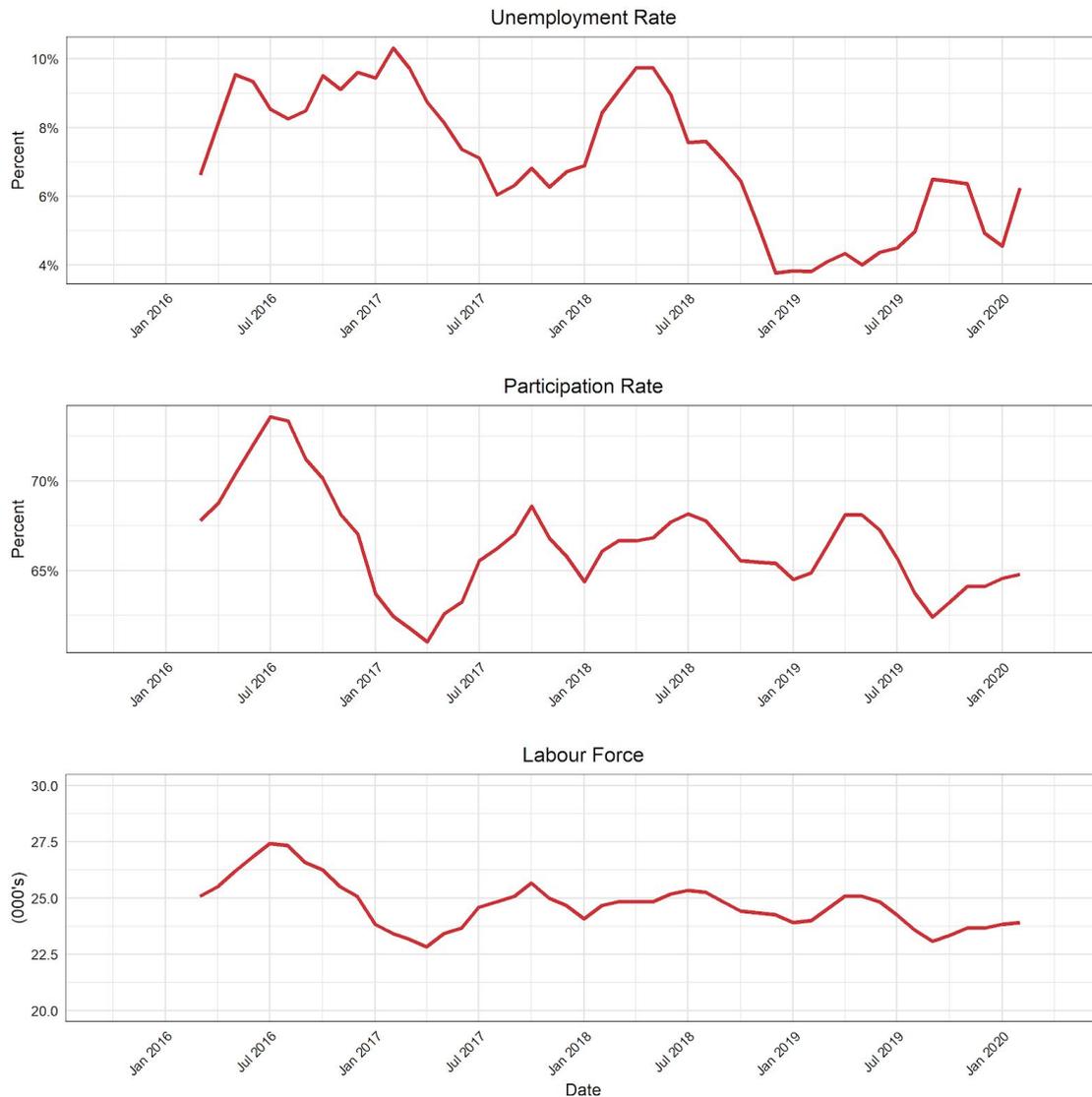
Source: Retrieved from NLG Quality of Life Presentation (2019)

Figure 7 presents labour force statistics for the North Coast region, which includes communities from Terrace and Kitimat in the south, Hazelton in the east, and Dease Lake in the north. Notably, the unemployment rate dropped 5.2 percentage points from Q2 2018 (9.0%) to Q4 2018 (3.8%), before increasing again in Q3 2019 (6.5%). As of February 2020, the unemployment rate sat at 6.2%. Overall, the unemployment rate throughout most of 2019 was markedly lower than the previous five years where the rate ranged between 6% and 10%. The participation rate in Q4 2019 (64.1%) was down slightly from Q4 2018 (65.4%). As of February 2020, the participation rate sat at 64.8%, closer to the lower end of the typical range observed



over the last five years (between 61% and 73%). The total labour force in Q4 2019 was down 2.4% relative to Q4 2018, but remains stable overall.

Figure 7: Labour Force Statistics, Monthly 3-Month Moving Averages, June 2014 - December 2019, North Coast Region



Source: Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey. Custom Tabulation.

Labour markets in NWBC are complex. Relative to the rest of BC, NWBC has historically experienced higher unemployment rates and lower employment rates, but comparatively high participation rates, which suggests an active cohort of people seeking employment.¹⁴

¹⁴ Source: Kudlyak, M. (First Quarter, 2013). "A Cohort Model of Labor Force Participation". *Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond Economic Quarterly*, Vol. 99 (1), pp. 25-43. Retrieved from:



We note that there are some limitations to results from the NNHS. First, we expect that unemployment has likely decreased since the reference period for the survey, attributable to the FID paired with generally reduced unemployment rates across British Columbia. Further, we note the reference period for the survey was the fall of 2018, with an overall uptick in the economic region since this point in time. Despite the likely decrease in unemployment since 2018, unemployment rates tend to be higher for Nisga'a citizens relative to provincial averages. NLG/NEST recognizes that substantial work remains to be done before seeing an improvement in local unemployment statistics for Nisga'a citizens.

Our research, including interviews and surveys (see Part B, Sections 4.0 and 5.0), provides context for Nisga'a Nation's relatively high unemployment rate. In particular, geography and the remoteness of worksites are a significant barrier for individuals who are seeking or trying to maintain employment, particularly given the widespread lack of driver's licencing services in the region. Additional barriers include skill disparity, a lack of confidence, and the legacy of cyclical and historic trauma. We note that discrimination continues to play a role in discouraging Indigenous workers from being hired locally. When data is contextualized by interview results, we can argue that tackling high unemployment requires a holistic understanding of the barriers facing Nisga'a citizens.

2.3 Employment Gaps

This section presents data from the 2016 Census of Population, the 2017 APS, and the 2018/2019 NHHS, highlighting labour market gaps in terms of the percentage of Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations employed in a given industry and at a given skill level. Table 6 presents the definitions for North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes at the two-digit level, while Table 7 provides definitions for National Occupational Classification (NOC) codes.

Skill levels are defined by the level of education generally required for the performance of duties in a given occupation, although the complexity and level of responsibility of a profession are also considered. Skill level A requires a university degree at the bachelor's level or higher. Skill level B requires two to three years of college or CEGEP, two to five years of apprenticeship, more than two years of on-the-job training and occupation-specific courses, or specific work experience. Skill level B also includes occupations with supervisory responsibilities, as well as professions with significant health and safety responsibilities. Skill level C requires completion of secondary school and some short courses, job-specific training, or two to five years of on-the-job training or work experience. Finally, skill level D requires a short work demonstration or on-the-job training, and no formal educational requirements.

https://www.richmondfed.org/~media/richmondfedorg/publications/research/economic_quarterly/2013/q1/pdf/kudlyak.pdf





Sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 provide an overview of employment gaps in skill level and occupation type between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous population.

Table 6: 2012 NAICS Code and Industry

| Industry Code | Industry Name | Industry Code | Industry Name |
|---------------|---|---------------|---|
| 11 | Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting | 53 | Real estate and rental and leasing |
| 21 | Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction | 54 | Professional, scientific and technical services |
| 22 | Utilities | 55 | Management of companies and enterprises |
| 23 | Construction | 56 | Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services |
| 31-33 | Manufacturing | 61 | Educational services |
| 41 | Wholesale trade | 62 | Health care and social assistance |
| 44-45 | Retail trade | 71 | Arts, entertainment and recreation |
| 48-49 | Transportation and warehousing | 72 | Accommodation and food services |
| 51 | Information and cultural industries | 81 | Other services (except public administration) |
| 52 | Finance and insurance | 91 | Public administration |

Source: Statistics Canada (2018). *North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Canada 2012*.

Table 7: NOC Code Explanation

| Occupational Categories | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 0 | Management occupations |
| 1 | Business, finance and administration occupations |
| 2 | Natural and applied sciences and related occupations |
| 3 | Health occupations |
| 4 | Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services |
| 5 | Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport |
| 6 | Sales and service occupations |
| 7 | Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations |
| 8 | Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations |
| 9 | Occupations in manufacturing and utilities |
| 10 | Unknown |

Source: Government of Canada (2020). *National Occupation Classification, Hierarchy and Structure, 2016*.

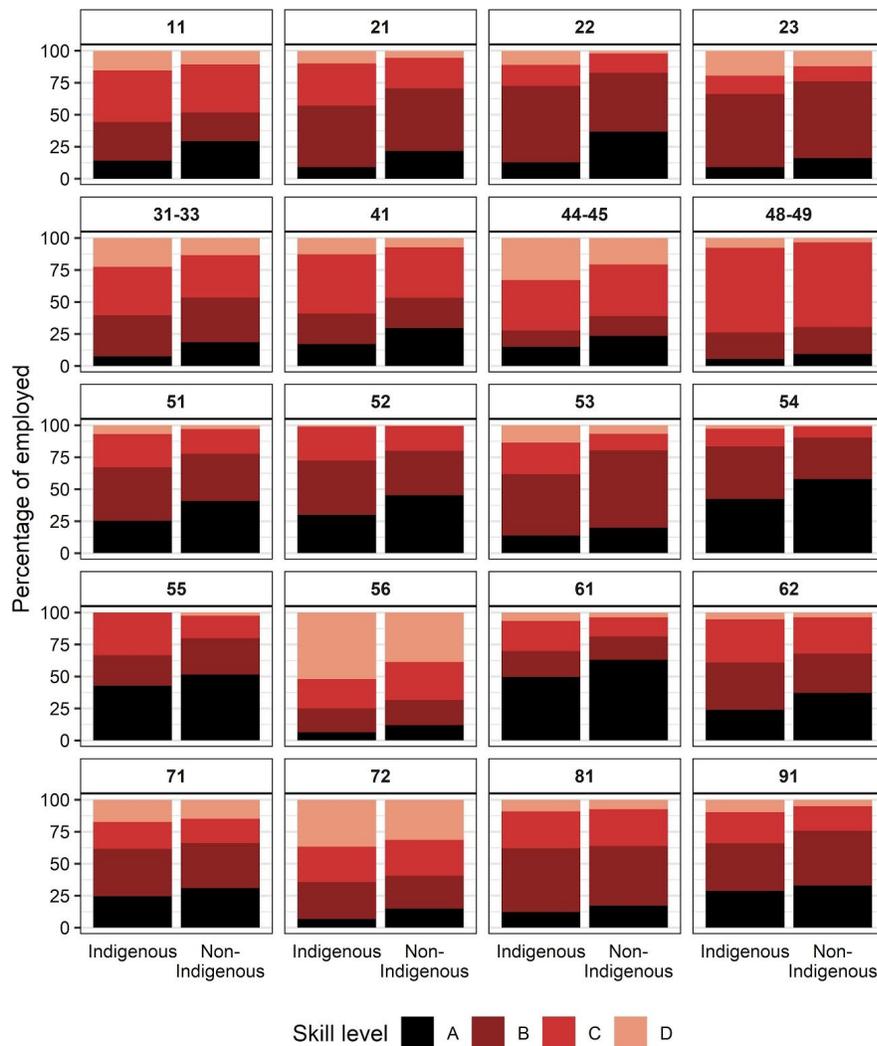




2.3.1 British Columbia

Speaking generally to the distribution of workers across skill levels and industries in BC, the largest gap between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous population is typically within skill level A. Figure 8 depicts these occupational skill level gaps in 2016. The employment gap at skill level A is particularly large in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (NAICS 11), utilities (NAICS 22), information (NAICS 51), professional, scientific, and technical services (NAICS 54), and health care and social assistance (NAICS 62). The cumulative skill gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations at skill level B, which is the percentage in each industry at skill level A or skill level B, is smaller in many industries. The gap narrows further still in the cumulative skill gap for level C in most industries.

Figure 8: Percentage of Employed Workers in Skill Level by 2-digit NAICS Code, Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Population, BC, 2016



Source: Nisga'a Quality of Life Framework Presentation (2019), Statistics Canada, 2016 Census.



2.3.2 North Coast

Tables 8 and 9 provide a snapshot of employment gaps for First Nations in the North Coast region in comparison to the non-Indigenous population, providing insight for NEST in planning employment training for Nisga'a citizens. In each table, the top five rows designate the occupations and industries that have an underrepresentation of First Nations. The bottom five rows of each table list the occupations or industries with an overrepresentation of First Nations peoples.

In the North Coast region, First Nations people are underrepresented in construction occupations, manufacturing occupations, and professional, scientific and technical services (NAICS 23, 31-33, and 54). This speaks to potential skill or education gaps in attaining these employment positions. Conversely, First Nations are overrepresented in administrative and support services (NAICS 757), accommodation and food services (NAICS 811), arts, entertainment and recreation (NAICS 798), agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (NAICS 427), and public administration (NAICS 839), particularly, Aboriginal public administration (NAICS 914).

Table 8: Employment Gaps by 2-digit NAICS Code, First Nation and Non-Indigenous Population, North Coast, 2016

| Code | Label | First Nations | Non-Indigenous | Employment Gap |
|-----------------|---|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| Top 5 | | | | |
| 62 | Health care and social assistance | 9.6% | 11.9% | 2.3% |
| 54 | Professional, scientific and technical services | 2.0% | 4.2% | 2.2% |
| 23 | Construction | 8.4% | 10.3% | 1.9% |
| 31-33 | Manufacturing | 6.6% | 8.1% | 1.4% |
| 52 | Finance and insurance | 0.4% | 1.8% | 1.4% |
| Bottom 5 | | | | |
| 757 | Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services | 5.3% | 3.8% | -1.4% |
| 811 | Accommodation and food services | 9.6% | 8.0% | -1.5% |
| 798 | Arts, entertainment and recreation | 3.2% | 1.7% | -1.5% |
| 427 | Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting | 6.9% | 4.0% | -2.8% |
| 839 | Public administration | 12.9% | 7.2% | -5.7% |

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census, Custom Tabulation.



Table 9: Employment Gaps by 3-digit NAICS Code, First Nation and Non-Indigenous Population, North Coast, 2016

| Code | Label | First Nations | Non-Indigenous | Employment Gap |
|-----------------|---|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| Top 5 | | | | |
| 331 | Primary metal manufacturing | 0.3% | 4.5% | 4.1% |
| 622 | Hospitals | 1.4% | 4.5% | 3.0% |
| 541 | Professional, scientific and technical services | 2.0% | 4.2% | 2.2% |
| 911 | Federal government public administration | 0.9% | 2.7% | 1.7% |
| 238 | Specialty trade contractors | 4.0% | 5.3% | 1.2% |
| Bottom 5 | | | | |
| 447 | Gasoline stations | 1.7% | 0.3% | -1.3% |
| 722 | Food services and drinking places | 7.1% | 5.4% | -1.6% |
| 114 | Fishing, hunting and trapping | 3.3% | 0.9% | -2.4% |
| 311 | Food manufacturing | 3.7% | 0.4% | -3.3% |
| 914 | Aboriginal public administration | 8.7% | 0.2% | -8.4% |

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census, Custom Tabulation.

2.3.3 Nass Valley

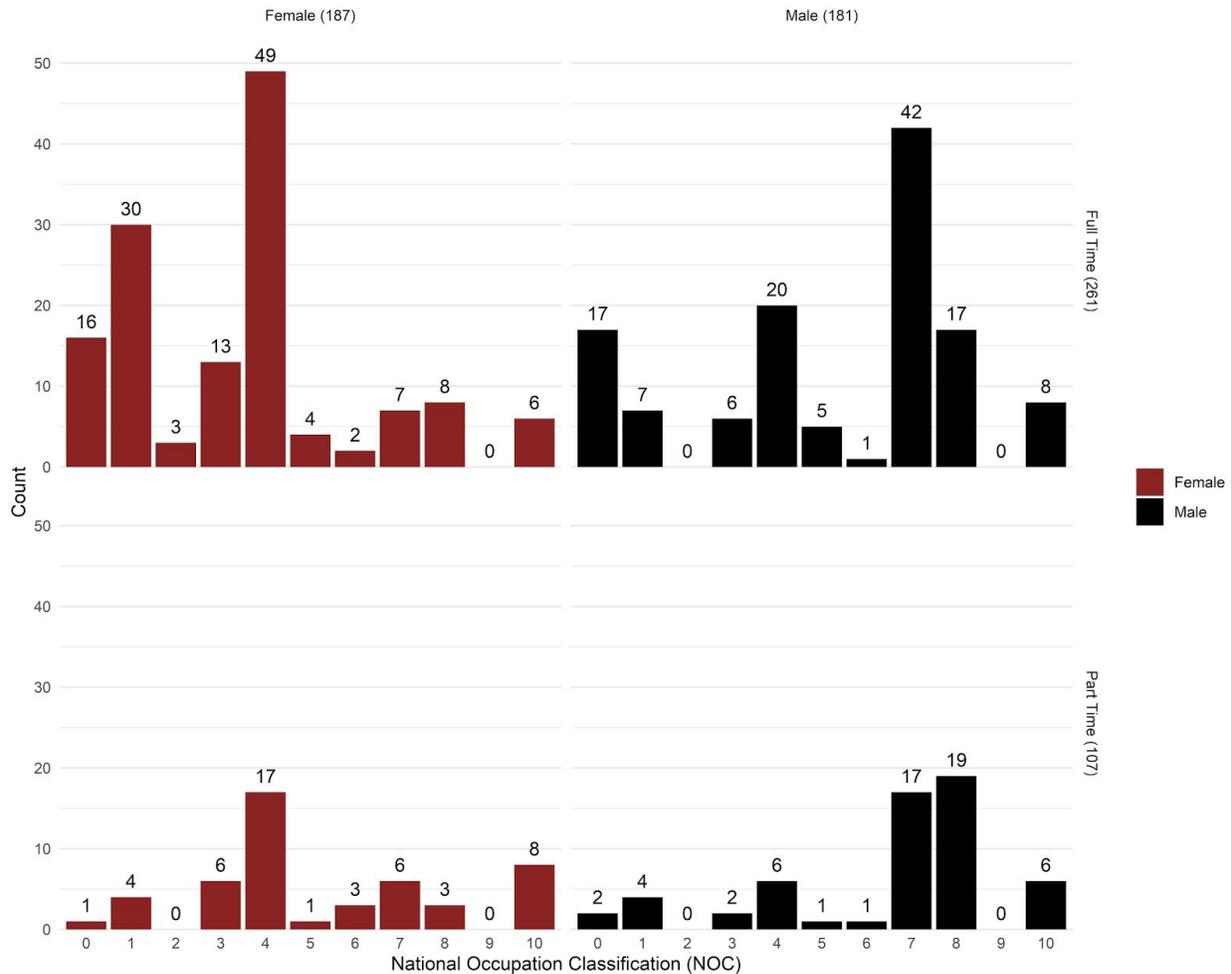
For the Nass Valley, a variety of sectors are represented by men and women employed full time and part time (see Figure 9). While 5.7% of women and 13.8% of men who work full time do so in the natural resource sector, the majority of Nisga’a citizens are employed in other sectors: 94.2% of women and 86.1% of men working full time in the Nass Valley are employed in sectors that are unrelated to the natural resource sector. For example, 35.5% of women and 16.2% of men are employed full time in education, law, and social, community, and government services (NOC 4).¹⁵ In contrast, slightly more men are employed full time in management occupations (NOC 0) relative to women (13.8% and 11.5%, respectively). Significantly more women are employed in business, finance, and administration occupations (NOC 1) than men (21.7% compared to 5.6%). Trades, transport, and equipment operations and related occupations (NOC 7) employ the most men in the region in a full time capacity. Similar results are mirrored when examining part time work, with women mostly employed in education, law and social, community and government services, and men largely employed in trades, transport and equipment operations and related occupations. These findings highlight the occupational diversity present in the region and demonstrate the variety of activity in the Nass Valley beyond natural resource development.

¹⁵ Note: We can infer that this segment of the population is employed by the NLG, Nisga’a Valley Health, and School District 92, the region’s largest employers.





Figure 9: Occupational Categories (NOC) Employed Full Time and Part Time by Gender in the Nass Valley



Source: Nisga'a Nation Household Survey, 2018. Custom Visualization.

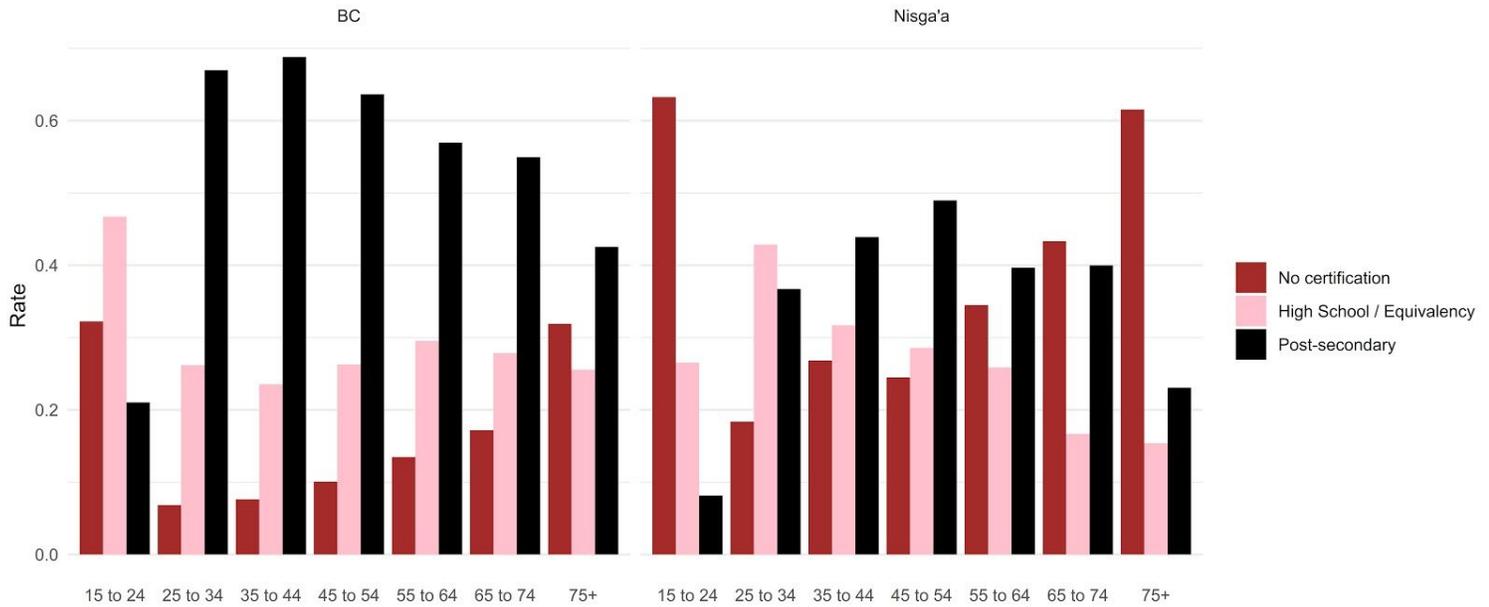
2.4 Education

Figure 10 presents education rates from the 2016 Census for the Nisga'a Nation and BC. We see that the 25 to 34 year-old cohort has acquired higher levels of education than any of the older Nisga'a cohorts, which may suggest a trend of increasing educational attainment for Nisga'a citizens over time. Nevertheless, citizens of the Nisga'a Nation continue to have substantially lower levels of educational attainment relative to the rest of the population of BC. For example, 67% of BC residents ages 25 to 34 have a postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree, compared to 37% of Nisga'a citizens of the same age category. Almost twice as many Nisga'a citizens ages 25 to 34 have a secondary school diploma or equivalency as their highest certificate compared to BC residents of the same age group.



The gap in educational attainment between Nisga'a citizens and the rest of the province serves to highlight the importance of NEST as a provider of essential skills training in the region.

Figure 10: Nisga'a Nation and BC Education Rates



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016242. Custom Visualization.

At the Nisga'a community level, the 2018/2019 NNHS captures subtle differences in education levels by community. Table 10 lists the definitions for education levels used in the NNHS. Table 11 presents education levels by community of Nisga'a citizens who participated in the survey.

Of the 395 respondents living in Gitlaxt'aamiks, 19.2% have a high school degree, 2.5% of respondents have an undergraduate degree, and 4.0% have a post-graduate or professional degree. Of the 143 respondents who live in Gitwinksihlkw, 23.7% reported having a high school degree, 2.0% an undergraduate degree, and 8.3% a post-graduate or professional degree. Of the 312 respondents living in Laxgalts'ap, 15.3% have a high school degree, 1.6% have an undergraduate degree, and 2.8% have a post-graduate or professional degree. Finally, 187 respondents live in Gingolx, of which 24.5% reported having a high school degree. No one in Gingolx reported having an undergraduate degree, with 1.0% reported having a post-graduate or professional degree.



Table 10: Education Level Definition

| Education Level |
|--|
| 0 Unknown |
| 1 No Formal Education |
| 2 Some High School |
| 3 High School |
| 4 On the job training, workshops and / or experience related to the occupation |
| 5 Apprenticeship, specialized training, vocational school training |
| 6 College/technical school (certificate/diploma) |
| 7 Undergraduate Degree |
| 8 Post-graduate degree or professional degree |
| 9 Child |

Source: Nisga'a Nation Household Survey, 2019

Table 11: Number of Nisga'a Citizens, by Education Levels and by Community (2019)

| Education Level | Gitlaxt'aamiks | Gitwinksihlkw | Laxgalts'ap | Gingolx | Prince Rupert | Terrace | Vancouver |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 0 | 14 (3.5%) | 3 (2%) | 16 (5.1%) | 5 (2.6%) | 15 (5.3%) | 3 (1.0%) | 10 (5.1%) |
| 1 | 8 (2%) | 6 (4.1%) | 4 (1.2%) | 8 (4.27%) | 0 (0.0%) | 1 (0.3%) | 6 (3.1%) |
| 2 | 49 (12.4%) | 21 (14.6%) | 64 (20.5%) | 44 (23.5%) | 60 (21.2%) | 29 (10.5%) | 21 (10.8%) |
| 3 | 76 (19.2%) | 34 (23.7%) | 48 (15.3%) | 46 (24.5%) | 73 (25.8%) | 48 (17.3%) | 36 (18.6%) |
| 4 | 51 (12.9%) | 6 (4.1%) | 22 (7.0%) | 19 (10.1%) | 6 (2.1%) | 18 (6.5%) | 4 (2.0%) |
| 5 | 17 (4.3%) | 5 (3.4%) | 9 (2.8%) | 12 (6.4%) | 11 (3.8%) | 24 (8.7%) | 16 (8.2%) |
| 6 | 78 (19.7%) | 19 (13.2%) | 52 (16.6%) | 18 (9.6%) | 29 (10.2%) | 34 (12.3%) | 33 (17.1%) |
| 7 | 10 (2.5%) | 3 (2.0%) | 5 (1.6%) | 0 (0.0%) | 4 (1.4%) | 12 (4.3%) | 16 (8.2%) |
| 8 | 16 (4.0%) | 12 (8.3%) | 9 (2.8%) | 2 (1.0%) | 9 (3.1%) | 6 (2.1%) | 6 (3.1%) |
| 9 | 76 (19.2%) | 34 (23.7%) | 83 (26.6%) | 33 (17.6%) | 76 (26.8%) | 101 (36.5%) | 25 (23.3%) |
| Total No of Participants | 395 (100%) | 143 (100%) | 312 (100%) | 187 (100%) | 283 (100%) | 276 (100%) | 193 (100%) |

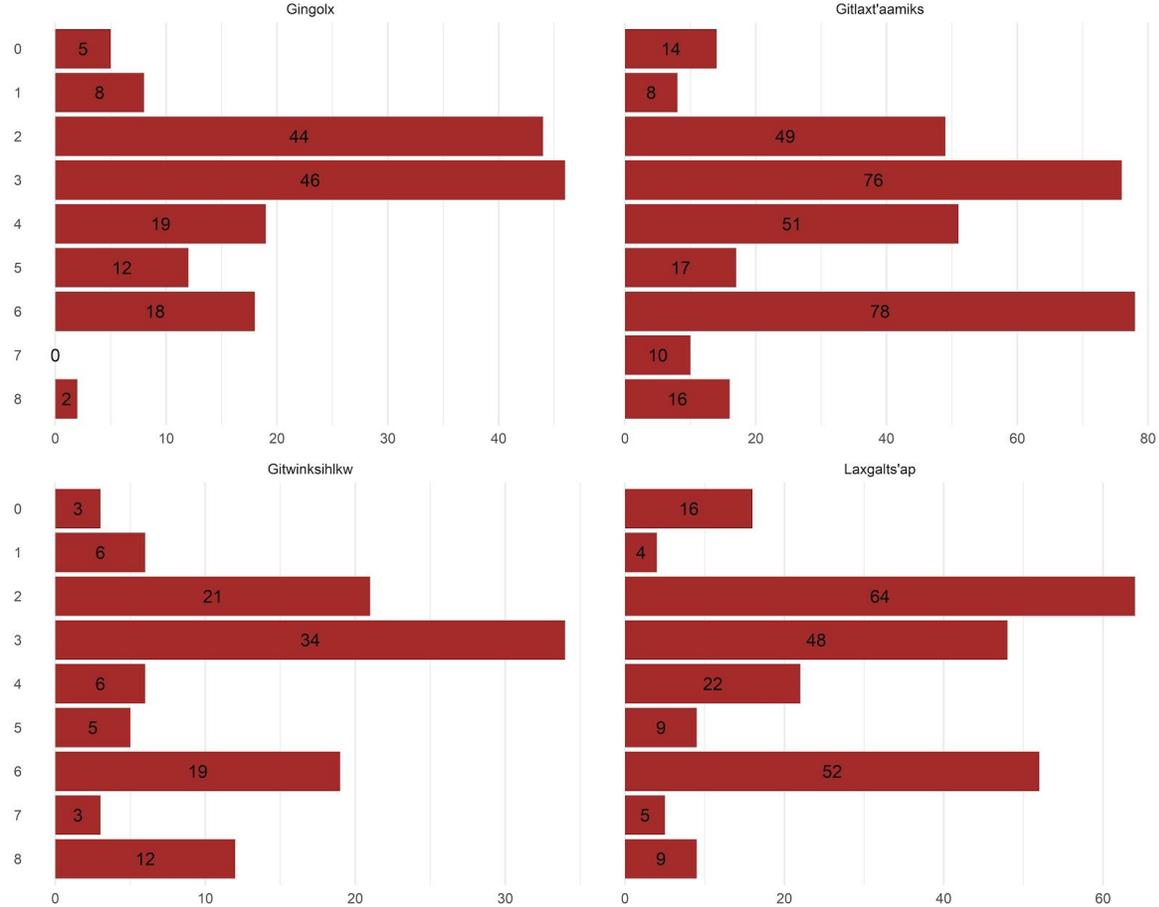
Source: Nisga'a Nation Household Survey, 2019. Custom Tabulation.

Note: Parentheses formatted as follows: Number of Nisga'a Citizens (Percentage of Total).

Figure 11 illustrates the distribution of participants by NNHS education level for the four villages. We note that the four villages display similar distribution patterns, with the majority of participants reporting some high school experience, a high school degree, or college or technical school certificate or diploma. On the job training, workshops, and experience related to the occupation was more variable between communities.



Figure 11: Distribution of Nisga'a Citizens, by Education Level and by Village (2019)



Source: Nisga'a Nation Household Survey, 2019. Custom Visualization.



3.0 Projected Labour Market Conditions in the Nass Valley Region

This section shows the projected differences between the labour market conditions in the Nass Valley relative to the rest of NWBC and BC, given the anticipated economic impacts of the LNG Canada projects in the region, and the broader economic development goals of the Nisga'a Nation beyond and outside of natural resource development. Labour market projections can be used by the local population and local organizations to develop policies and programs that ensure that the employment goals of their population are being met, that the concerns of their employers are being heard, and that the benefits of major development projects and employment opportunities are accessed by the local population.

In looking at labour market condition projections for the Nass Valley, we find that 90% of job openings in the region for the coming years will be due to a retiring workforce.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the impact of the current and projected major project developments for the area, including LNG and mining, to cite a few examples, cannot be understated.¹⁷ Major projects invariably require skilled labour, and the narrative in NWBC is that of a disconnect between the needs of employers for skilled labour and the existing labour pool.¹⁸ Beyond major projects, small businesses in other sectors have also reported frustration in their inability to find suitable candidates for entry-level jobs.¹⁹ Training programs, such as those offered by NEST or by major project employers, exist to address this disconnect and to ensure that Nisga'a citizens have access to professional pursuits that interest them.

¹⁶ Source: Ingenia Consulting, (2017). *Northwest Regional Human Resource Strategy: Summary of Findings*. Retrieved from: <http://ingenia-consulting.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Executive-Summary-HR-Report.pdf>

¹⁷ Source: Pretivm, (2014). *Brucejack Goldmine Project: Nisga'a Economic, Social, and Cultural Impact Assessment*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca/050/documents/p80034/101082E.pdf>

¹⁸ Source: Ingenia Consulting, (2017). *Northwest Regional Human Resource Strategy: Summary of Findings*. Retrieved from: <http://ingenia-consulting.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Executive-Summary-HR-Report.pdf>

¹⁹Source: Ingenia Consulting, (2017). *Northwest Regional Human Resource Strategy: Summary of Findings*. Retrieved from: <http://ingenia-consulting.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Executive-Summary-HR-Report.pdf>





Figure 12: Key Findings in Section 3.0 Projected Labour Market Conditions in the Nass Valley Region

KEY FINDINGS

-  Positive FID by LNG Canada for Kitimat-based export facility and CGL pipeline
 -  Peak construction will require up to 9,000 workers
-  Other major projects are simultaneously underway in the region, including Port of Prince Rupert, further impacting labour demand
-  Targeted employment and training opportunities can ensure the employment benefits of these projects go to Indigenous, local, and BC residents
 -  Currently there is an under-representation of First Nations in the labour force, in particular in skilled trades opportunities
-  Outside of major projects, a majority of job openings in the region over the next decade are expected to come from replacing workers

Source: Big River Analytics Summary Visualization

3.1 Labour Force Characteristics

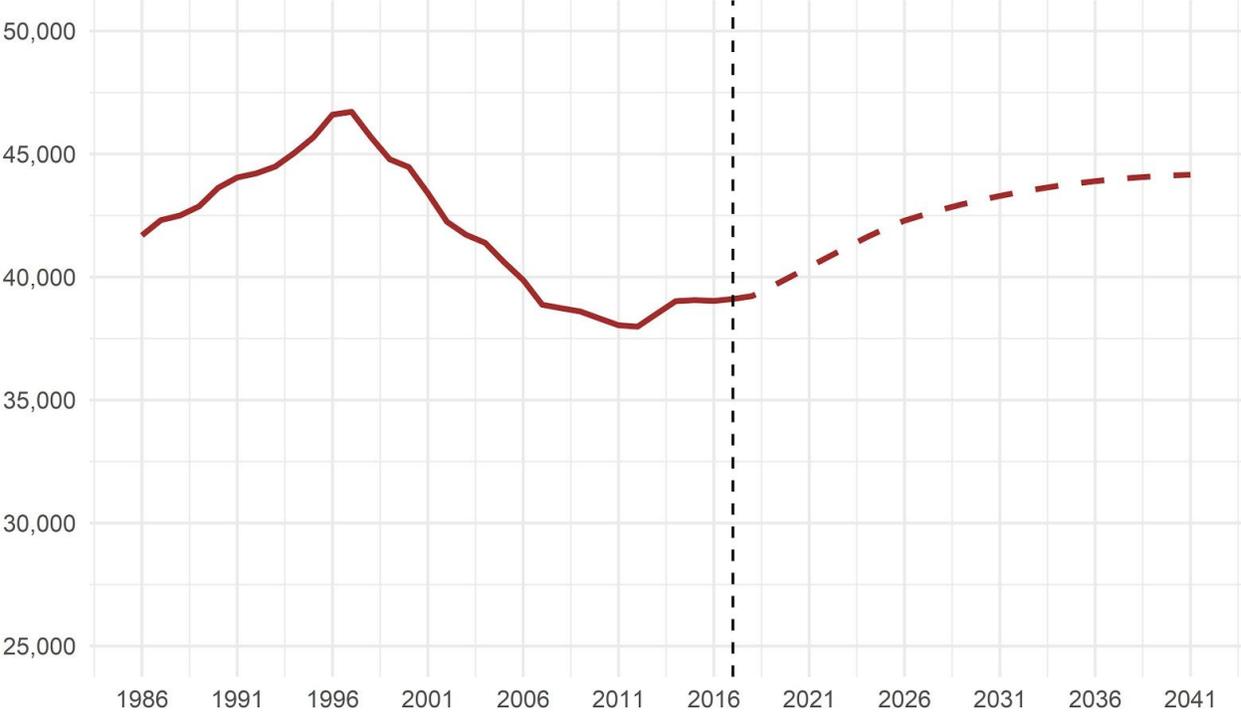
Figure 13 presents the population of the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine (RDKS) from 1986 to 2017, and population projections post 2017 to 2041. From the mid-1990s to 2017, the regional district experienced a general decline in population with pockets of growth. Terrace experienced growth as the city’s population increased for the first time in 25 years between 2011 and 2016 by 1.4% (157 people), whereas the population of Kitimat declined by 2.4% (204 people).²⁰

It is projected the RDKS population will continuously grow to 2041. Construction activity in 2017 suggests that growth is persisting and maturing in some areas within the RDKS. With the recent FID made by LNG Canada to develop the LNG export facility within the District of Kitimat, the industrial landscape of the region is to change substantially, which will have a major impact on the region’s demographics.

²⁰ Source: 2016 Census profiles of Terrace and Kitimat, Statistics Canada.



Figure 13: Population of the RDKS, 1986 – 2017, 2017 – 2041 (Projected)



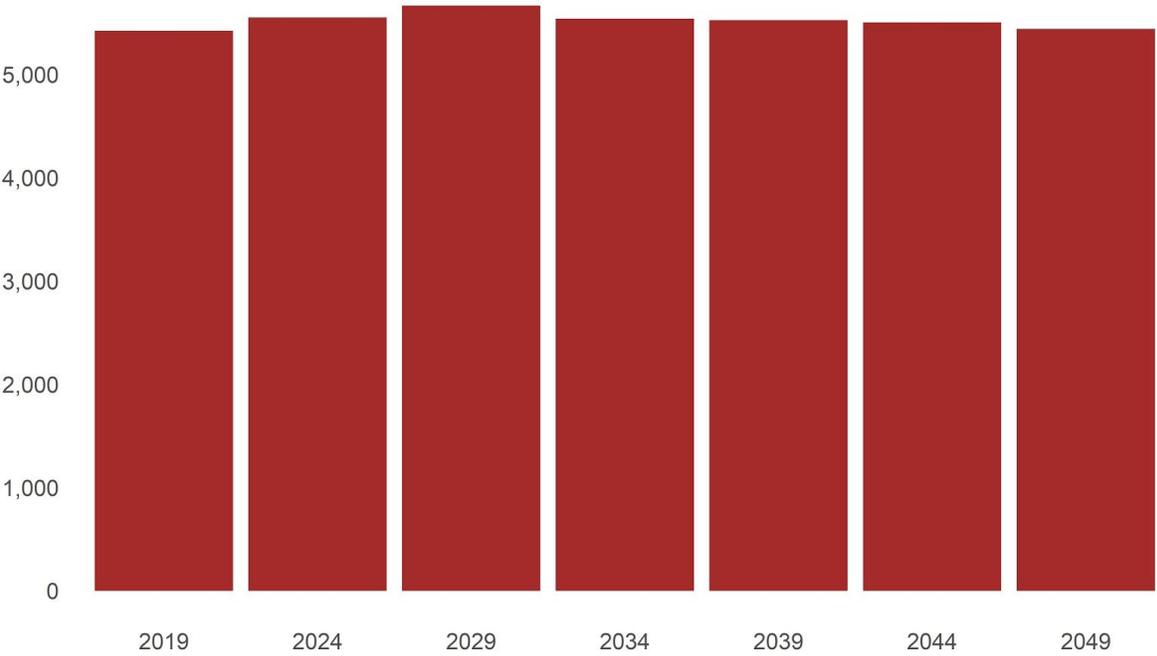
Source: Sub-Provincial Population Projections - P.E.O.P.L.E 2018, Produced by BCStats

Figure 14 shows the median estimates of Nisga'a working-age population projections from 2019 to 2049 in five-year intervals. Baseline data is from the Nisga'a Citizenship Registry, with the working-age defined as 16 to 64 years of age. The overall working age population is projected to remain relatively constant around 5,500. The working-age population in 2019 is 5,426, peaking in 2029 at 5,669, and declining in subsequent years.





Figure 14: Nisga'a Working Age Population Projection, Median Estimates (Ages 15 to 64) 2019 – 2049



Source: Nisga'a Nation Citizenship Registry/Database. Custom Visualization.

Table 12 presents projections for 2025 of labour force characteristics for the Nisga'a working-age population, defined as 15 years of age and older. Compared to 2019, the working-age population ages 15 years and older will increase by 4.3% on Nisga'a lands by 2025, and by 10.0% off Nisga'a lands.

Tables 13 and 14 show forecasts for the Nisga'a population aged 15 years and older from 2019 to 2029, listing population size on and off Nisga'a lands and the proportion of this age group who are projected to be unemployed. Notably, the number of Nisga'a citizens who are unemployed is expected to grow through to 2029.





Table 12: Nisga'a Nation Labour Force Rates and Projections, Aged 15+, 2025, by Community

| Location | Population 15+ | | Labour force status | | | Labour force rates | | |
|---|----------------|---------------|---------------------|------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------|
| | 2025 | 6-year change | Employed | Unemployed | Not in the labour force | Employment | Unemployment | Participation |
| On Nisga'a Lands | 1,557 | 4.3% | 509 | 252 | 795 | 32.7% | 33.1% | 48.9% |
| Gitlaxt'aamiks | 631 | 3.9% | 204 | 102 | 325 | 32.4% | 33.2% | 48.5% |
| Gitwinksihlkw | 177 | 11.3% | 57 | 29 | 92 | 32.0% | 33.6% | 48.1% |
| Laxgalts'ap | 428 | 4.6% | 142 | 69 | 216 | 33.2% | 32.8% | 49.4% |
| Gingolx | 322 | 1.4% | 106 | 53 | 162 | 33.1% | 33.1% | 49.5% |
| Off Nisga'a Lands | 4,847 | 10.0% | 2,591 | 445 | 1,811 | 53.5% | 14.6% | 62.6% |
| Terrace | 1,652 | 15.2% | 852 | 174 | 626 | 51.6% | 16.9% | 62.1% |
| Prince Rupert | 1,584 | 6.4% | 793 | 169 | 622 | 50.1% | 17.6% | 60.8% |
| Lower Mainland/VI | 1,457 | 9.8% | 858 | 90 | 509 | 58.9% | 9.5% | 65.1% |
| Elsewhere in BC | 154 | -2.5% | 88 | 11 | 54 | 57.3% | 11.4% | 64.7% |
| Total in NEST Service Area | 4,792 | 8.5% | 2,154 | 595 | 2,043 | 45.0% | 21.7% | 57.4% |
| Total outside of NEST Service Area | 1,611 | 8.5% | 946 | 102 | 564 | 58.7% | 9.7% | 65.0% |
| Total | 6,404 | 8.5% | 3,101 | 697 | 2,606 | 48.4% | 18.4% | 59.3% |

Source: 2016 Census and the Nisga'a Nation Citizenship Registry/Database. Custom Tabulation.

Table 13: Projected Nisga'a Population, Aged 15+ in May of 2019 – 2029, by Community

| Location | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| On Nisga'a Lands | 1,492 | 1,504 | 1,516 | 1,528 | 1,540 | 1,552 | 1,557 | 1,562 | 1,567 | 1,573 | 1,578 |
| Gitlaxt'aamiks | 607 | 611 | 615 | 620 | 624 | 628 | 631 | 633 | 636 | 639 | 641 |
| Gitwinksihlkw | 159 | 163 | 166 | 170 | 173 | 177 | 177 | 177 | 178 | 178 | 178 |
| Laxgalts'ap | 409 | 412 | 416 | 419 | 422 | 426 | 428 | 430 | 431 | 433 | 435 |
| Gingolx | 317 | 318 | 319 | 320 | 320 | 321 | 322 | 322 | 322 | 322 | 323 |
| Off Nisga'a Lands | 4,408 | 4,484 | 4,561 | 4,637 | 4,713 | 4,789 | 4,847 | 4,905 | 4,963 | 5,020 | 5,078 |
| Terrace | 1,434 | 1,472 | 1,509 | 1,547 | 1,584 | 1,622 | 1,652 | 1,682 | 1,711 | 1,741 | 1,771 |
| Prince Rupert | 1,489 | 1,506 | 1,522 | 1,539 | 1,555 | 1,572 | 1,584 | 1,596 | 1,608 | 1,620 | 1,631 |
| Lower Mainland/ VI | 1,327 | 1,350 | 1,372 | 1,395 | 1,418 | 1,440 | 1,457 | 1,475 | 1,492 | 1,509 | 1,527 |
| Elsewhere in BC | 158 | 157 | 157 | 156 | 156 | 155 | 154 | 153 | 151 | 150 | 149 |
| Total in NEST Service Area | 4,415 | 4,481 | 4,547 | 4,613 | 4,679 | 4,745 | 4,792 | 4,839 | 4,886 | 4,933 | 4,980 |
| Total outside of NEST Service Area | 1,485 | 1,507 | 1,529 | 1,551 | 1,573 | 1,595 | 1,611 | 1,628 | 1,644 | 1,660 | 1,676 |
| Total | 5,900 | 5,988 | 6,076 | 6,165 | 6,253 | 6,341 | 6,404 | 6,467 | 6,530 | 6,593 | 6,656 |

Source: 2016 Census and the Nisga'a Nation Citizenship Registry/Database. Custom Tabulation.



Table 14: Projected Nisga'a Population, Aged 15+ and Unemployed in May of 2019 – 2029, by Community

| Location | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| On Nisga'a Lands | 252 | 252 | 253 | 253 | 253 | 253 | 252 | 251 | 250 | 249 | 248 |
| Gitlaxt'aamiks | 101 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 101 | 101 | 101 | 101 |
| Gitwinksihlkw | 27 | 27 | 28 | 28 | 28 | 29 | 29 | 29 | 29 | 29 | 28 |
| Laxgalts'ap | 70 | 70 | 70 | 70 | 70 | 70 | 69 | 69 | 69 | 68 | 68 |
| Gingolx | 54 | 53 | 53 | 53 | 53 | 53 | 53 | 52 | 52 | 51 | 51 |
| Off Nisga'a Lands | 416 | 420 | 425 | 430 | 434 | 439 | 445 | 450 | 456 | 461 | 467 |
| Terrace | 158 | 161 | 163 | 165 | 168 | 170 | 174 | 177 | 180 | 183 | 187 |
| Prince Rupert | 163 | 164 | 165 | 166 | 167 | 168 | 169 | 171 | 172 | 173 | 174 |
| Lower Mainland/VI | 83 | 85 | 86 | 87 | 88 | 89 | 90 | 91 | 92 | 93 | 94 |
| Elsewhere in BC | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 12 | 12 |
| Total in NEST Service Area | 573 | 577 | 581 | 584 | 588 | 592 | 595 | 599 | 602 | 605 | 609 |
| Total outside of NEST Service Area | 95 | 96 | 97 | 98 | 99 | 101 | 102 | 103 | 104 | 105 | 106 |
| Total | 668 | 673 | 678 | 683 | 688 | 693 | 697 | 701 | 706 | 710 | 715 |

Source: 2016 Census and the Nisga'a Nation Citizenship Registry/Database. Custom Tabulation.

3.2 Employment Gaps

As a reminder, peak construction for the LNG Canada facility, and the associated pipeline, is expected to require up to 9,000 workers.²¹ Construction of the LNG Canada and CGL projects is underway, concurrent with the construction of other major projects across BC including the Port of Prince Rupert's Fairview Phase 2B expansion. Understanding the labour gaps attributable to these projects at the local, regional, and provincial level requires an understanding of labour supply at each geography, and the labour demand across projects and sectors of the economy. Identifying labour gaps throughout the LNG Canada and CGL project horizons can help inform targeted employment and training opportunities to ensure employment benefits go to Indigenous, local, and BC residents.

According to the BC Major Projects Inventory (MPI), as of the first quarter of 2019, there are 963 major projects²² at various stages of development (proposed, under construction, completed, and on hold) with an estimated total capital cost of \$355.03 billion (B). Table 15 provides an overview of all major projects in BC by status for Q1 2019, with specific figures for LNG and natural gas-related projects, and changes in the number of major projects and their capital costs

²¹ The total peak workforce depends on the peak workforce required for each project and the relative timing of each project's workforce demand. We project a peak workforce of 3,200 for the CGL pipeline and 7,500 for LNG Canada. However, because the workforce for the CGL pipeline is expected to peak much earlier than for LNG Canada, the peak total workforce for the two projects is expected to be less than the sum of their peak workforces.

²² A major project is any project with an estimated capital cost of \$20 million or greater in the Lower Mainland - Vancouver area, or \$15 million or greater in the rest of BC.



relative to Q4 2018. Of the 963 projects, there are 524 proposed projects (\$205.77 B), 373 projects under construction (\$114.83 B), 13 completed projects (\$2.39 B), and 53 projects on hold (\$32.31 B). With an estimated combined capital cost of \$107.48 B, 28 of the major projects are categorized as LNG, LNG - Natural Gas Pipeline, Natural Gas Pipeline, or Natural Gas Processing projects.

Table 15: Summary of Major Projects in BC, Q1 2019

| Project Type and Status | Number of Projects | Change Since Q4 2018 | Estimated Capital Costs (\$B) | Change Since Q4 2018 (\$B) |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| All Major Projects | 963 | -14 | \$355.03 | -\$53.69 |
| Proposed | 524 | -8 | \$205.77 | -\$54.57 |
| Under Construction | 373 | 17 | \$114.83 | -\$0.55 |
| Completed | 13 | -21 | \$2.39 | +\$0.18 |
| On Hold | 53 | -2 | \$32.31 | +\$1.25 |
| LNG & NG Projects* | 28 | -4 | \$107.48 | -\$56.37 |
| Proposed | 21 | -2 | \$58.68 | -\$55.01 |
| Under Construction | 2 | -1 | \$42.20 | -\$0.17 |
| Completed | 1 | -1 | \$0.17 | -\$1.20 |
| On Hold | 4 | 0 | \$6.43 | \$0 |

Source: BC Major Projects Inventory, Q1 2019, and Q4 2018. Custom Tabulation.

*Includes projects categorized as LNG - Natural Gas Pipeline, Natural Gas Pipeline, or Natural Gas Processing.

In the North Coast region specifically, 40 projects were proposed as of March 2019, 5 projects under construction, 9 projects on hold, and 1 project completed, for a total of 55 projects (see Table 16).

Table 16: Summary of Major Projects in BC, by Development Region and Project Status, Q1 2019

| Development Region | Proposed | Construction Started | Completed | On Hold | Total |
|------------------------|------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Vancouver Island/Coast | 79 | 59 | 1 | 11 | 150 |
| Mainland/Southwest | 294 | 223 | 9 | 8 | 534 |
| Thompson/Okanagan | 43 | 57 | 0 | 6 | 106 |
| Kootenay | 10 | 14 | 0 | 4 | 28 |
| Cariboo | 18 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 24 |
| North Coast | 40 | 5 | 1 | 9 | 55 |
| Nechako | 14 | 1 | | 5 | 20 |
| Northeast | 27 | 11 | 2 | 9 | 49 |
| Total | 525 | 373 | 13 | 55 | 966 |

Source: BC Major Projects Inventory, Q1 2019. Custom Tabulation.

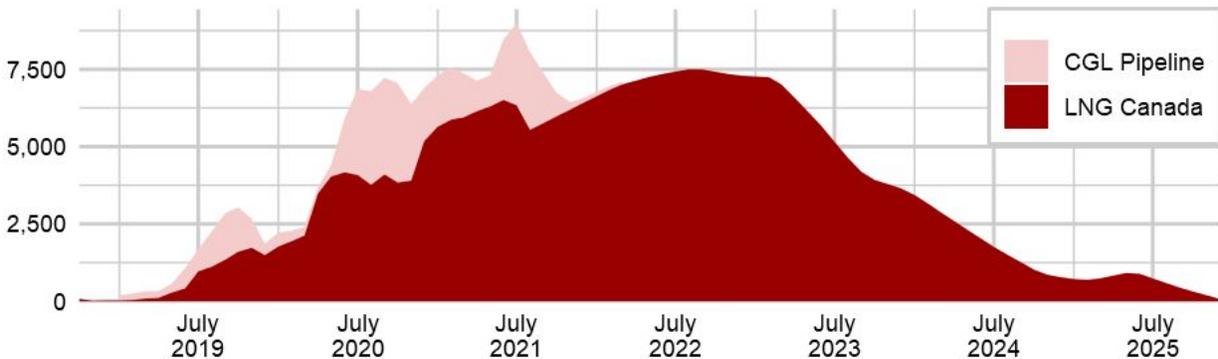


3.2.1 LNG-related Impacts²³

Of the major project developments in BC and in the North Coast, LNG is anticipated to have unprecedented impacts on the region, given the size of the project and its employment needs.

Total employment for the construction of the LNG Canada and CGL projects is expected to increase through mid-2021. At their peak (July 2021), these projects are expected to employ a total of around 9,000 workers.²⁴

Figure 15: Forecast Aggregate Project Demand



Source: Big River Analytics modelled projection of aggregate headcount project demand (*with permission*).

Notwithstanding the increase in economic activity in the region since the FID, labour gaps are projected to persist and increase throughout the LNG Canada projects, within the context of an already tight labour market and a retiring workforce.

LNG Canada has announced the adoption of a "hire local first" approach for both the construction and permanent operations phases of the project. The order of hiring preference is to first focus on the local area, then the rest of BC, and then the rest of Canada.²⁵ Peak construction should bring 9,000 jobs to the region, with an estimated 20,000 person-years in construction employment. Permanent operations are expected to bring 300 to 450 permanent jobs. Skilled jobs in trades are expected to be in particularly high demand during the construction phase. With current training, education, and labour gaps in mind (see Section 2.0), the local workforce may not currently be qualified to fill those positions. To assist in developing the local workforce, LNG Canada has begun investing in skills training and capacity building

²³ Note: The research included in section 3.2.1 ("LNG-related Impacts") was conducted by Big River Analytics for the BC Ministry of Jobs, Trade, and Technology.

²⁴ BRA anticipates the total peak workforce depends on the peak workforce required for each project and the relative timing of each project's workforce demand. BRA projects a peak workforce of 3,200 for the CGL pipeline and 7,500 for LNG Canada. However, because the workforce for the CGL pipeline is expected to peak much earlier than for LNG Canada, the peak total workforce for the two projects is expected to be less than the sum of their peak workforces.

²⁵ LNG Canada, (2020). *In the Community*. Retrieved from: <https://www.lngcanada.ca/about-lng-canada/social-investment-in-the-community/>



initiatives, developing long-term partnerships with local education and training facilities and hosting contracting, and employment networking sessions with local businesses.²⁶

As part of this commitment to hiring local labour, LNG Canada plans to create a \$1,000,000 LNG Canada Trades Training Fund.²⁷ This is administered by the BC Construction Association and will subsidise apprentice training and specialised training that is relevant to the LNG project. To ensure local businesses also benefit, all contracts and subcontracts valued over \$5,000,000 will require suppliers to show they will use local businesses to complete the work. As of 2019, LNG Canada was reporting that many of the projected jobs would not start for another 20 months, but that industry will keep stakeholders, such as NEST, apprised of specific job openings.²⁸

To date, key informants interviewed by Big River Analytics highlighted the underrepresentation of First Nations in the labour force, in particular in skilled trades opportunities related to both the LNG Canada and CGL Projects. In September 2019, key informants expressed growing concern that individuals who may have been trained in skilled trades had not yet connected with or been hired by contractors on either the LNG Canada or CGL projects.²⁹ For trained Indigenous workers, on-the-job work experience was identified as a barrier to employment and to advancing to higher levels of apprenticeship programs. First Nations are also grappling with transportation and housing as primary barriers to accessing employment — in particular for citizens living in communities further from population centers and planned work camps — as well as access to child care and drug test standards (see Part B, Section 5.0).

The provision of accurate information on mandatory training requirements, paired with proactive approaches to cross-cultural understanding within LNG Canada, may reduce the impact of some of the structural barriers Indigenous people face in accessing employment. This would increase the likelihood of labour gaps being addressed locally, and ensure that the economic gains and benefits of the LNG projects' reach Nisga'a citizens, and the residents of the Nass Valley and NWBC regions. It is important to understand the interplay between high participation rates in the region and lower educational attainment to highlight the fact that there is an active cohort of Nisga'a citizens looking for employment and unable to access it.

We further note that a number of employers interviewed in the Nass Valley region were turning their attention away from hiring local and Indigenous people to hiring through the 'Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) Program' as a direct response to some of the above-mentioned challenges with hiring locally. The TFW Program assists Canadian employers in filling their

²⁶ NEST is actively involved in these discussions through our employment advisors attending these events.

²⁷ LNG Canada, (2020). *Workforce Development*. Retrieved from: <https://www.lngcanada.ca/opportunities/workforce-development/>

²⁸ Source: Personal communication with Ruth Sulentich of LNG Canada.

²⁹ Note: Several local Nisga'a contractors interviewed in August 2019 also noted similar concerns. Source: Personal Communication, August, 2019, Adam Perry.





labour requirements when qualified Canadians and permanent residents are not available. The TFW Program is employer demand-driven and exists as an option for employers to address immediate skills and labour needs on a temporary basis.³⁰

3.2.2 Beyond LNG

It is important to note that although LNG and other projects will have a substantial effect on the labour market in NWBC, a majority of job openings in the next decade are expected to come from replacing workers. Further, while some Nisga'a citizens will want to work on the LNG project, many do not. The employment goals of Nisga'a citizens are as varied as any other population. This section examines labour market changes excluding the LNG and CGL projections, providing important insights into the relative job growth due to economic expansion and job replacement.

The BC 2019 LMO provides government estimates of labour market projections in the North Coast and Nechako region. According to this LMO, 9,990 job openings should occur between 2019 and 2029, with only 11.1% coming from new jobs due to economic growth, and 88.9% due to the replacement of retiring workers.³¹

Using 2018 LMO data, Table 17 highlights the 10 industries with the largest projected number of job openings in the North Coast and Nechako regions from 2018 to 2028, while Table 18 highlights the occupations with the largest projected number of job openings by skill level. These tables illustrate that many of the industries and occupations with the largest forecasted job openings are largely driven by replacement needs. For example, in the Construction industry, 1,350 of the job openings projected between 2018 and 2028 will come from replacement, and expansion will actually be negative. It is crucial to not overlook the diverse range of job openings expected in NWBC.

³⁰ Government of Canada, (2019). *What we heard: Primary Agriculture Review*. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/foreign-workers/reports/primary-agriculture.html>

³¹ Work BC, (2020). *BC Labour Market Outlook - North Coast & Nechako*. Retrieved from: <https://www.workbc.ca/Labour-Market-Information/Regional-Profiles/North-Coast-Nechako#bc-labour-market-outlook-for-this-region>



Table 17: Industries with Largest Projected Number of Job Openings, North Coast and Nechako Regions (2018-2028)

| Industry | Employment 2018 | Employment Growth (average annual %) | | | Job Opening 2018-2028 | | |
|---|--------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|-------------|-------|
| | | 2018-2023 | 2023-2028 | 2018-2028 | Expansion | Replacement | Total |
| Other retail trade (excluding cars and personal care) | 4150 | 2.2% | 0.5% | 1.4% | 600 | 770 | 1370 |
| Construction | 5890 | 8.8% | -8.6% | -0.3% | -230 | 1350 | 1120 |
| Repair, personal and non-profit services | 970 | 1.0% | 1.5% | 1.2% | 450 | 220 | 660 |
| Ambulatory health care services | 970 | 4.0% | 3.5% | 3.8% | 450 | 220 | 660 |
| Hospitals | 1390 | 2.2% | 1.8% | 2.0% | 310 | 270 | 580 |
| Food services and drinking places | 1990 | 1.9% | 1.1% | 1.5% | 330 | 250 | 580 |
| Wood product manufacturing | 2050 | 0.1% | -0.2% | 0.0% | -20 | 530 | 520 |
| Elementary and secondary schools | 2740 | 0.6% | -0.8% | -0.1% | -40 | 550 | 510 |
| Social assistance | 1640 | 2.0% | -0.5% | 0.7% | 120 | 310 | 440 |
| Truck transportation | 950 | 3.1% | 0.2% | 1.7% | 180 | 260 | 430 |

Source: BC Labour Market Outlook, 2018.

Table 18: Occupations with Largest Projected Number of Job Openings, North Coast and Nechako Regions (2018-2028)

| Skill Level | NOC | Occupation Title | Employment 2018 | Expansion 2018-2028 | Replacement 2018-2028 | Total Job Openings 2018-2028 |
|-------------|------|---|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| 0 | 0621 | Retail and wholesale trade managers | 1140 | 150 | 270 | 410 |
| | 0821 | Managers in agriculture | 250 | 20 | 70 | 90 |
| | 0631 | Restaurant and food service managers | 240 | 40 | 50 | 90 |
| | 0714 | Facility operation and maintenance managers | 160 | 30 | 50 | 80 |
| | 0632 | Accommodation service managers | 170 | 20 | 60 | 80 |
| Skill Level | NOC | Occupation Title | Employment 2018 | Expansion 2018-2028 | Replacement 2018-2028 | Total Job Openings 2018-2028 |
| A | 3012 | Registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses | 440 | 110 | 80 | 180 |
| | 4032 | Elementary school and kindergarten teachers | 940 | -10 | 170 | 160 |
| | 4031 | Secondary school teachers | 500 | -10 | 100 | 90 |
| | 4152 | Social workers | 220 | 20 | 40 | 70 |
| | 4021 | College and other vocational instructors | 180 | -- | 50 | 50 |
| B | 6322 | Cooks | 700 | 120 | 120 | 240 |
| | 4212 | Social and community service workers | 690 | 90 | 140 | 230 |
| | 7311 | Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics | 660 | 30 | 170 | 200 |
| | 1311 | Accounting technicians and bookkeepers | 570 | 40 | 150 | 190 |
| | 1221 | Administrative officers | 470 | 40 | 150 | 190 |



| Skill Level | NOC | Occupation Title | Employment 2018 | Expansion 2018-2028 | Replacement 2018-2028 | Total Job Openings 2018-2028 |
|-------------|------|--|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| C | 7511 | Transport truck drivers | 1220 | 100 | 330 | 430 |
| | 6421 | Retail salespersons | 1450 | 200 | 210 | 420 |
| | 7521 | Heavy equipment operators (except crane) | 670 | 60 | 190 | 250 |
| | 1411 | General office support workers | 640 | 60 | 150 | 210 |
| | 3413 | Nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates | 400 | 100 | 80 | 180 |
| D | 6733 | Janitors, caretakers and building superintendents | 870 | 70 | 220 | 290 |
| | 6611 | Cashiers | 790 | 120 | 110 | 230 |
| | 6731 | Light duty cleaners | 570 | 70 | 120 | 190 |
| | 6622 | Store shelf stockers, clerks and order fillers | 580 | 80 | 100 | 180 |
| | 6711 | Food counter attendants, kitchen helpers and related support occupations | 700 | 120 | 60 | 180 |

Source: BC Labour Market Outlook, 2018.

3.3 Education

In Section 2.0, we considered the education gaps between Nisga'a citizens and BC residents, by age category and educational attainment. Further, we've highlighted the resulting gaps in employment, with Nisga'a citizens and First Nations people generally under-represented in higher skill-level jobs, including jobs that will be created through the LNG project. Improving the education outcomes of Nisga'a citizens lies at the heart of NEST's mission, as it can ensure that Nisga'a citizens gain access to the higher-paid employment, and jobs that align with their interests and employment goals.



Part B — Findings from Primary Data

Part B of this report examines findings from our primary data collection. Part B includes labour market gaps as reported by employers local to the Nass Valley region, barriers to labour market participation as identified by both employers and employees in the region, and best practices in hiring, training, and retaining NEST employees. It harnesses findings from the literature conducted as an interim deliverable of this project, as well as findings collected from four case studies.

4.0 Labour Market Gaps as Reported by Local Employers

Section 4.0 draws from our primary data collection and presents labour market gaps in the Nass Valley region as reported by local employers. It serves to highlight the experiences of employers in the region.

Figure 16: Key Findings in Section 4.0 Labour Market Gaps as Reported by Local Employers

KEY FINDINGS

-  1/2 of business owners contacted felt their business was positively impacted by LNG
-  Businesses in the region are finding harder to hire and retain workers
-  Workers are being drawn to LNG-related occupations
-  A survey of Nisga'a Nation employers conducted by NEST found that:
 -  61% currently employ Nisga'a citizens, largely in lower-skilled occupations
 -  60% anticipate an expansion of their staff in the next 3 years
 - Most are extremely concerned about the availability of skilled and unskilled labour in the region

Source: Big River Analytics Summary Visualization



4.1 LNG and CGL Impacts on Businesses

Our research findings indicate that the economic impact of the LNG projects is twofold for businesses operating in the region: First, businesses are experiencing increased demand for their services. Second, employers are finding it more and more challenging to find and retain workers. For example, the construction of camps and the demand for workers in these camps (including housekeepers, cooks, cleaners, and other maintenance staff) has led to local competition for employees in the food and beverage sectors. This is further exacerbated by the need to replace a retiring workforce. The competition for skilled workers is fueling a degree of discontent and animosity amongst employers. It is estimated that this is just the start of increased activity in the region, indicating the risk of substantial labour shortages as development of LNG projects intensifies.

In September, June, and December 2019, Big River Analytics Ltd. (BRA) asked business owners in the Nass Valley region to highlight difficulties in finding and retaining staff.³² Survey data and the associated figures are generated from BRA (with permission and inclusion for this report), as supports to NLG and NEST’s research in understanding current labour market realities. Figures 18-21 below are from primary research by BRA on the impacts of LNG in the region. This research complements our primary findings about the current “squeeze” felt by local employers as employees leave for better opportunities because of LNG and construction along the CGL corridor.

It was noted that there were instances of labour being drawn from other sectors to work in LNG-related occupations, resulting in increased competition for both workers seeking higher wages offered by the projects and with new businesses seeking LNG related contracts. BRA notes that in September 2019, there is increased evidence of tight local labour market conditions and secondary labour market impacts. In December 2019, business owners in Kitimat and Terrace cited positive changes to their businesses as a result of the LNG Canada and CGL projects, including increased demand from contracts related to the projects and indirect impacts from increased economic activity from migration to the region. Nearly half of business owners surveyed (43.6%) indicated that their business was very, or somewhat, positively impacted by the LNG Canada and CGL projects (see Figure 17).

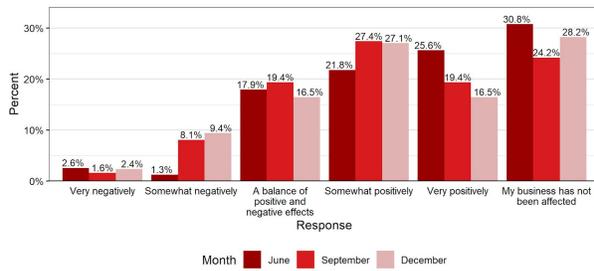
Of businesses who employed more than 1 person, 23.7% indicated in December 2019 that one or more staff had left to pursue opportunities related to LNG Canada or CGL, compared to 32% who reported the same in September (see Figure 18). Specifically, BRA asked local businesses to identify the biggest challenge they face today, and noted that 43% of respondents listed finding and retaining staff as an issue. Adapting to meet increasing business demands was highlighted as a concern by 15.1% of businesses (see Figure 19). Of the business owners that

³² The following work is shared with permission by BRA and helps substantiate our findings.



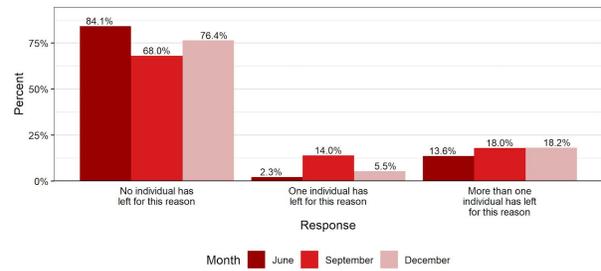
were hiring in the last three months, 75.6% found it somewhat, or a lot more difficult to hire staff relative to the previous year (Figure 20). No business owners have found it less difficult to find staff than the previous year. When all business owners were asked more generally about the local labour market, there were concerns over their ability to find and retain employees. The major reasons given were competition with LNG Canada and housing shortages.

Figure 17: Overall Impacts of LNG Canada and CGL Projects on Business in the Last Three Months



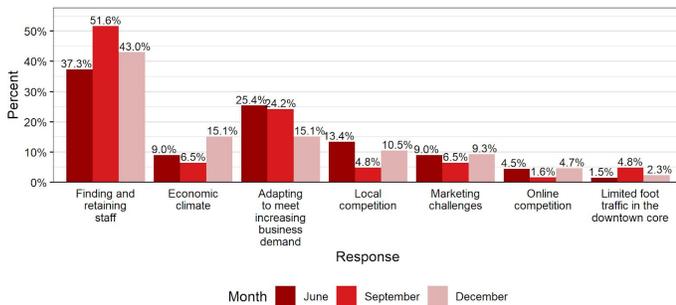
Total Respondents, June: 78
 Total Respondents, September: 62
 Total Respondents, December: 85
 Source: Big River Analytics

Figure 18: Employees Leaving for Opportunities at LNG Canada and CGL Projects



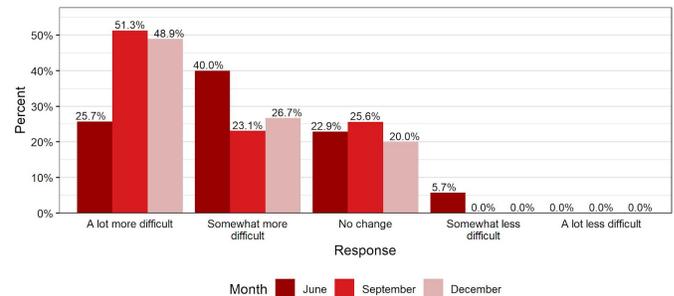
Total Respondents, June: 78
 Total Respondents, September: 62
 Total Respondents, December: 85
 Source: Big River Analytics

Figure 19: Biggest Challenges Facing Businesses Today



Total Respondents, June: 78
 Total Respondents, September: 62
 Total Respondents, December: 86
 Source: Big River Analytics

Figure 20: Relative Difficulty in Finding Staff in the Last Three Months Relative to 2018



Total Respondents, June: 33
 Total Respondents, September: 39
 Total Respondents, December: 43
 Source: Big River Analytics



4.2 Labour Market Survey Findings: Nisga'a Nation Employers

NEST conducted a labour market survey with 100 employers who are past and current partners of NEST in NWBC investigating gaps, opportunities, and best practices in attracting, recruiting, employing, and retaining Indigenous employees, including Nisga'a citizens.

This survey highlighted that employers both in and outside the LNG value chain are extremely concerned about the availability of skilled and unskilled workers in the NWBC region. Note that this includes both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous talent pools. Employers in the region are worried that the local labour supply will become even tighter in the next few years, given a retiring workforce and the ramping up of construction for the LNG Canada export facility project in Kitimat and the Coastal GasLink pipeline across northern BC.

Given the regional labour market in NWBC, we categorized employers as follows:

1. Employers directly in the LNG Canada value chain: LNG Canada, its engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contractor, JGC Fluor BC LNG Joint Venture (JFJV), TC Energy and its Coastal GasLink Pipeline project;
2. sub-contractors and suppliers in the LNG Canada value chain;
3. construction companies and suppliers requiring the same types of skilled workers as the first two categories; and,
4. employers in the region otherwise impacted by the LNG Canada project (export facility and pipeline) including retailers or other service companies.

Of the participant employers, 33% are located in Terrace, 26% are located in Kitimat, and 20% are located in Prince Rupert. We found that 28% conduct business in the accommodations and food services Sector, 16% conduct business in the retail trade sector, and 10% conduct business in the public administration sector. An estimated 14,672 employees work within the 100 participants interviewed, of which 27% work in management occupations, 19% work in sales and service occupations, 18% work in business, finance and administration occupations, 13% work in trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations, and 0.5% work in art, culture, recreation, and sport.

Of the 100 employers surveyed, 61% reported they currently employ Nisga'a citizens, 17% said they do not currently employ Nisga'a Citizens, 8% said they are unsure if they employ Nisga'a citizens, and 14% did not provide a response. Table 19 presents the top 10 occupations in which Nisga'a citizens are currently employed by participant employers.



Table 19: Top 10 Occupations Currently Employed by Nisga'a Citizens

| Occupation type filled by Nisga'a Employees ³³ | No. of Respondents |
|--|--------------------|
| Administration Clerks | 10 |
| Labourers | 9 |
| Housekeeping, Janitorial, Maintenance, and Journey Persons | 8 |
| Customer Service | 6 |
| Accounting & Related Clerks | 4 |
| Heavy Equipment Operators | 4 |
| All Jobs | 3 |
| Cashier | 3 |
| Front Desk/ Reception | 3 |
| Server | 3 |
| Total | 53 |

Source: NEST Labour Market Survey.

When asked about anticipated changes in the number or type of their employees over the next 3 years, 67% of participants answered that they anticipate a change, 12% of participants answered that they do not anticipate a change, 5% of participants were unsure, and 16% of participants did not provide a response. Of those 67 respondents that anticipate a change, 20 respondents anticipate expansion with an increase in their staff, and 7 respondents anticipate the expansion to be influenced by LNG (see Table 20).

Table 20: Summary of Participant Responses — “How do you anticipate your number and/or types of employees to change in the next 3 years?”

| Anticipated Change | No. of Respondents |
|--|--------------------|
| Expansion - influenced by LNG | 7 |
| Expansion - increased seasonal growth | 1 |
| Expansion - increase services | 6 |
| Expansion - increase staff | 20 |
| Expansion - based on tourism | 2 |
| Expansion - local economic growth | 1 |
| Expansion - due to economic growth, although workers are being "poached" leaving less qualified people | 2 |
| Expansion - 5-10% built into hiring Indigenous | 1 |
| Same | 2 |

³³ Note: Multiple responses were permitted for this question.



| Anticipated Change | No. of Respondents |
|--|--------------------|
| Same - hire subcontractors if needed, no new staff | 1 |
| Decrease - retirement family business | 1 |
| Unsure - unpredictable | 3 |
| N/A | 20 |
| Total | 67 |

Source: NEST Labour Market Survey.

Governments, Indigenous communities, and employers in the LNG value chain all have high expectations for employment of the local population, specifically Indigenous populations, in LNG-related construction work over the next 5 years. There is also an expectation, to a smaller extent, for employment following this time period. It is critical that planning and support be available for employers impacted by the LNG project, and for these supports to continue when with further investment in the region.



5.0 Barriers to Labour Market Participation in the Region

This section explores barriers to labour market participation in the Nass Valley region, as identified by local employers and employees who participated in our survey. It serves to contextualize the data we've presented throughout this report.

Figure 21: Key Findings in Section 5.0 Barriers to Labour Market Participation in the Region

KEY FINDINGS

 Barriers to labour market participation in NWBC are multi-faceted, and include:

-  Legacy of systemic racism and discrimination
-  Lack of driver's license
-  Skill and job opportunity misalignment
-  Competing priorities and cultural misunderstandings

 Training programs delivered by NEST or by employers need to consider these barriers to be successful

-  Cost, time, and personal or family responsibilities were identified as the primary reasons training was not undertaken by First Nations in BC

Source: Big River Analytics Summary Visualization

NWBC faces numerous challenges to the successful delivery of Indigenous employment and training programs, including sparse population density, variable digital and physical connectivity, transportation barriers, variable essential skills levels, a legacy of systemic racism and discrimination, capacity and resource constraints, and language and cultural barriers.³⁴ These and other challenges create barriers to labour market participation in the region, and contextualize current unemployment rates. This added nuance to quantitative information allows for the development and implementation of more relevant and effective programming (see Figure 1: Theory of Change).

³⁴Johnston, N. and Ashwell, J. (2018). Indigenous recruitment, retention and community outreach in the Canadian natural resource sector. Technical report, Centre for the Study of Living Standards. & Jones, M. E. C. (2017b). *The Intergenerational Legacy of Indian Residential Schools*. PhD thesis, Queen's University.



NEST programs play an important role in helping Nisga'a citizens overcome barriers to labour market participation. NEST is continually improving their service delivery, taking into account the latest labour market information and undertaking primary research, such as this project, to develop an understanding of the best practices in the delivery of employment and training services.

Two labour market surveys were conducted by NEST to identify employment experiences, as well as gaps, opportunities, and best practices in attracting, recruiting, employing, and retaining Indigenous employees, including Nisga'a citizens. The first was conducted with 100 employers who are past and current NEST partners in NWBC, and the second was conducted with 55 Nisga'a employees. What follows is a summary of identified barriers to labour market participation in the region, identified through analysis of survey results. Figure 22 presents a visualization of recurring barriers to labour market participation of survey respondents.

Figure 22: Recurring Barriers to Labour Market Participation

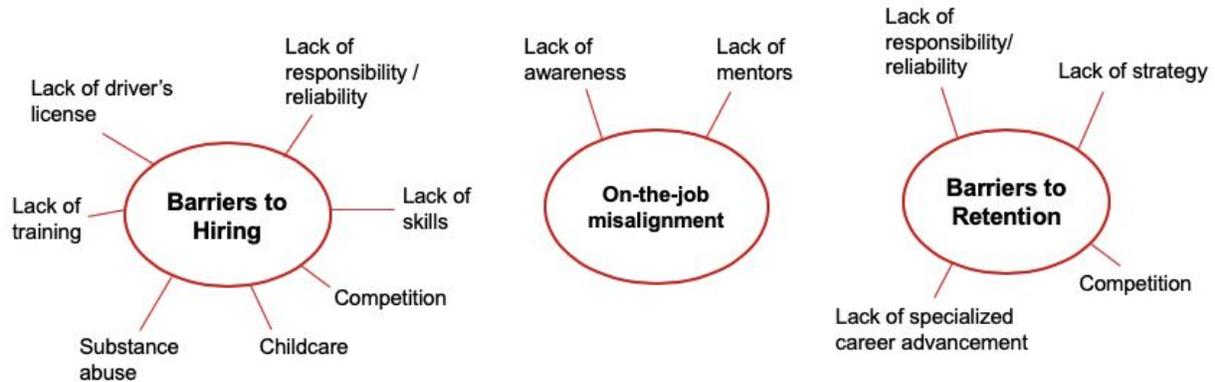


Source: NEST Labour Market Surveys, Big River Analytics Summary Visualization



5.1 Employer Perspectives

Figure 23: Summary of Employer Perspectives on Barriers to Labour Market Participation



Source: NLG Employer Interviews 2019, Big River Analytics Summary Visualization

Barriers to Recruitment & Hiring

Of 26% of employer respondents, “lack of a driver’s license” and “lack of responsibility and/or reliability” were identified as the top barriers in trying to recruit and/or hire Indigenous peoples. Employers also identified “lack of education/training”, “lack of communication skills”, “addictions”, “attitude, and performance”, “work ethic and lack of follow-through”, “lack of childcare”, “competition from other employers”, and “lack of basic and essential skills such as numeracy, literacy, and personable skills” as some of the biggest challenges in hiring locally.

On-the-job Misalignment

Of the employers surveyed, 30% said they enlist mentors, job coaches, or Elders to support Indigenous workers on-the-job. Employers indicated a reticence in asking employees to self-identify their ethnic background, thereby impacting their ability to offer tailored resources to Indigenous staff. Half of the employers interviewed were not aware of the TRC and its Calls to Action, 30% had reflected on the principles of the UNDRIP, and 28% said that they have reflected on the TRC and its Calls to Action by providing cultural awareness training and support at the workplace.

Barriers to Retention

Less than half of employers (42%) had retention strategies tailored specifically to the needs of Indigenous employees, with 17% having not provided a response. Employers identified “shortage of applicants”, “issues accommodating family, culture, and personal needs”, “lack of life skills”, “reliability and responsibility”, and “losing skilled co-workers to other employers” as retention challenges. Most employers do not offer career progression or advancement



opportunities tailored for their Indigenous employees, or provide career planning for Indigenous employees.

Employers spoke to retention challenges in the face of intensifying job competition, and made references to inappropriate hiring practices by larger employers in the region, further exacerbated by the inability to compete with their higher wages.

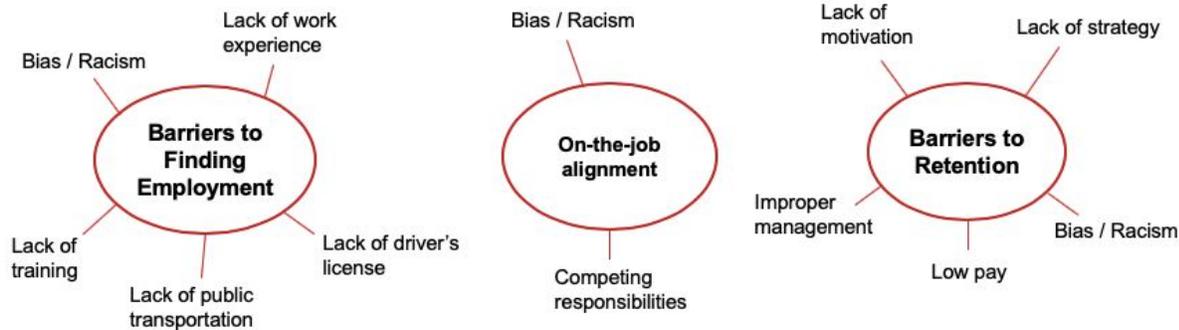
Employers expressed a desire for support in learning best-practices for human resources (HR). Larger firms indicated it would be helpful if the Province hosted regional meetings or workshops to share HR strategies and ideas with the goal of highlighting the collective ways companies can strategize to attract and retain skilled workers. Several small to mid-sized companies noted the importance of sharing HR strategies, policies, and other working materials regarding local Indigenous employee retention.

The need for improved HR software to assist managers in scheduling and rescheduling staff to time slots for work was identified. Employers commented on the hyperactive “juggling” required to meet the expectations and demands workers have for flexibility in their shifts. Software and IT support could potentially alleviate some of these inefficiencies.

Given the breadth of barriers identified, we note that several of the employers interviewed (over 30%), many with Nisga’a employees, did not know, or simply forgot, about the support services NEST provides to employers and employees. One benefit of this research was the opportunity to connect employers directly to NEST’s employer advisors who work to support Nisga’a clients in finding employment. This research led to communication with NEST’s head office in Gitlaxt’aamiks (New Aiyansh) whereby employers were reminded of supports for existing clients. Employers were reminded that they could reach out to NEST and NEST’s employment advisors for a pool of potential applicants.

5.2 Employee Perspectives

Figure 24: Summary of Employee Perspectives on Barriers to Labour Market Participation



Source: NLG Employee Interviews 2019, Big River Analytics Summary Visualization



Barriers to Recruitment & Finding Employment

Of the employee participants interviewed, 18% had experienced bias or racism as a barrier to employment, 15% identified “lack of driver’s license” as a challenge, and 15% listed “lack of training”. “Lack of work experience” was selected by 13% of participants. Lack of regularized public transportation and substance abuse were also referenced as barriers. Participants further indicated a desire to work outside of the resource sector.

It is evident that there is a need for essential skills training (e.g. reading and writing, resume writing, computing skills, industry training such as occupational first aid, food safe, WHIMS), but on-the-job training is perceived as intimidating (e.g. lack of sensitivity to working with Indigenous people). Online training modules, or coursework, within industry are often described in negative terms such as “boring”, “outdated”, or “not effective”, especially for those working in the retail sector.

Networking was identified by employees as a critical factor in finding suitable employment. Participants suggested that having a network of peers is important in hearing about local job opportunities. Social media (Facebook and LinkedIn in particular) was reported as instrumental in establishing local networks in the North, ultimately leading to employment.

On-the-job Misalignment

Interviewees referred to persistent inequity, stereotyping, and sentiments of racism across all sectors and within all levels of organizations as a primary barrier to employment. Interviewees further noted family responsibilities as a barrier to working on sites far from their communities.

Barriers to Retention

Over half of participants (64%) indicated they have access to mentorships, job coaches, or other supports at their workplace, and only 38% of participants work at an organization that doesn’t have a targeted strategy to retain Indigenous employees.

When asked about the challenges their organizations face in retaining Indigenous employees, 16% of participants responded “none”, 13% responded “low pay”, and 9% referred to “lack of motivation”. “Improper management”, “lack of respectful behaviour in the workplace”, and “lack of skills and qualifications” were also mentioned, among others.





6.0 Best Practices in Hiring, Training, and Retention of NEST Clients

Section 6.0 summarizes findings from a literature review and case studies, focusing on best practices in hiring, training, and retention of NEST clients. This section is included to guide NEST in the revision of its programming, and in the development of new programming to prepare for anticipated regional labour market developments.

There are significant opportunities in NWBC for Indigenous workers. The abundance of natural resources in the region has the potential to create jobs in forestry, hydro, mining, mineral processing, and most recently, LNG.³⁵ Over several decades, a number of firms in the energy and natural resource sectors have made notable, concerted, and successful efforts to increase Indigenous employment within their organizations. Rio Tinto Alcan is one example which is both topically and geographically relevant; Syncrude and Manitoba Hydro are other pertinent examples. Lessons to be learned from the experiences of these initiatives include the importance of cross-cultural understanding within an organization in improving employment retention. Their work suggests that building informal networks within Indigenous communities, and taking a proactive role in the training of Indigenous workers, can offer significant returns.

6.1 Literature Review Findings

Figure 25: Key Findings of Section 6.1 Literature Review Findings

KEY FINDINGS

-  Higher cost interventions, such as skills development training, yield the highest returns in the long-run

-  Increasing awareness and understanding of Indigenous cultures is critical to improved relationships between industry and First Nations

-  Increasing Indigenous employment in NWBC requires a coordinated effort and a firm commitment from all stakeholders

-  The provision of incentives work – even if small. Support with childcare, food and travel vouchers, or a bonus for completing course work translates into better success rates and lower rates of attrition

Source: Big River Analytics Summary Visualization

³⁵ WorkBC, 2018.



The literature review conducted as part of this research surveyed the most recent literature of behavioural science in education and training, the evaluation of labour market strategies in Canada, stated needs for Indigenous labour market programs in Canada, and best practices for recruitment and retention of Indigenous employees in Canada in the resource sector. The behavioural science literature can help with the design of new service delivery methods and new programs for NEST, especially when combined with technology such as internet-connected computers and smartphones. For instance, informational nudges, the provision of mentors, and adaptable goal-setting methods could be integrated into a web application similar to those used by many other educational institutions.

The most recent evaluations of Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) in Canada, both for the general population and specific Indigenous populations, highlight certain effective labour market interventions. ALMPs exist within the scope of NEST’s mandate, and can be as simple as job search assistance, or as complex as a fully guided education-apprenticeship-employment model. The most common ALMPs are job search assistance, essential skills training, formal classroom training, on-the-job-training, targeted wage subsidies, hiring bonuses, targeted employment, re-employment bonuses, and direct job creation. The evidence suggests that the higher cost interventions, such as skills development training, yield the highest returns in the long-run. Targeted wage subsidies are also an effective strategy for shorter-term gains in employment and employment income.

Increasing awareness and understanding of Indigenous cultures is also critical to improved relationships between industry and First Nations, and leads to improved retention rates. A clear and culturally relevant message from senior management defining a firm’s commitment to Indigenous employment, and building a network within the regional Indigenous community, will foster better employment outcomes for Indigenous people.

Increasing Indigenous employment in NWBC requires a coordinated effort and a firm commitment from all stakeholders; Indigenous government, provincial and local government, NEST, Indigenous communities, local businesses, and Indigenous people themselves. Adopting a holistic approach to Indigenous employment that includes a commitment to education programs, training, funding community projects, and reliable support systems within organizations are crucial to success.

Literature Review findings indicate considerable evidence that, for ALMPs to be successful, the needs and characteristics of the target group(s) need to be carefully considered during the design and delivery of an intervention.³⁶

³⁶ Martin, J. and Grubb, D. (2001). What works and for whom: a review of OECD countries’ experiences with active labour market policies. Working Paper Series 2001:14, IFAU - Institute for Evaluation of Labour Market and Education Policy. & Brown, A. J. and Koettl, J. (2015). Active labor market programs - employment gain or fiscal drain? *IZA Journal of Labor Economics*, 4(1):1-36.





Further findings show that:

1. Provision of incentives work – even if small. Support with child care, food and travel vouchers, or a bonus for completing course work translates into better success rates and lower rates of attrition.
2. Investment in training programs is not enough. Coordination and support from industry are critical. Further, Indigenous ownership in industrial projects, either as a lead employer or as a co-employer, translates into improved training and employment outcomes for Indigenous people.
3. Increasing awareness and understanding of Indigenous cultures is critical to improved relationships between industry and First Nations.
 - Training which takes into account culture and geographic realities can empower more extended success for clients to complete training programs (specific examples suggests this also translates into improved employment outcomes).
2. Networks, Impact and Benefit Agreements (IBAs), creating jobs that appeal to Indigenous workers, cultural accommodations, adapting company culture, a formal corporate vision statement, and community outreach in the recruitment and retention of Indigenous workers were all found to be important and effective.

6.2 Case Study Findings

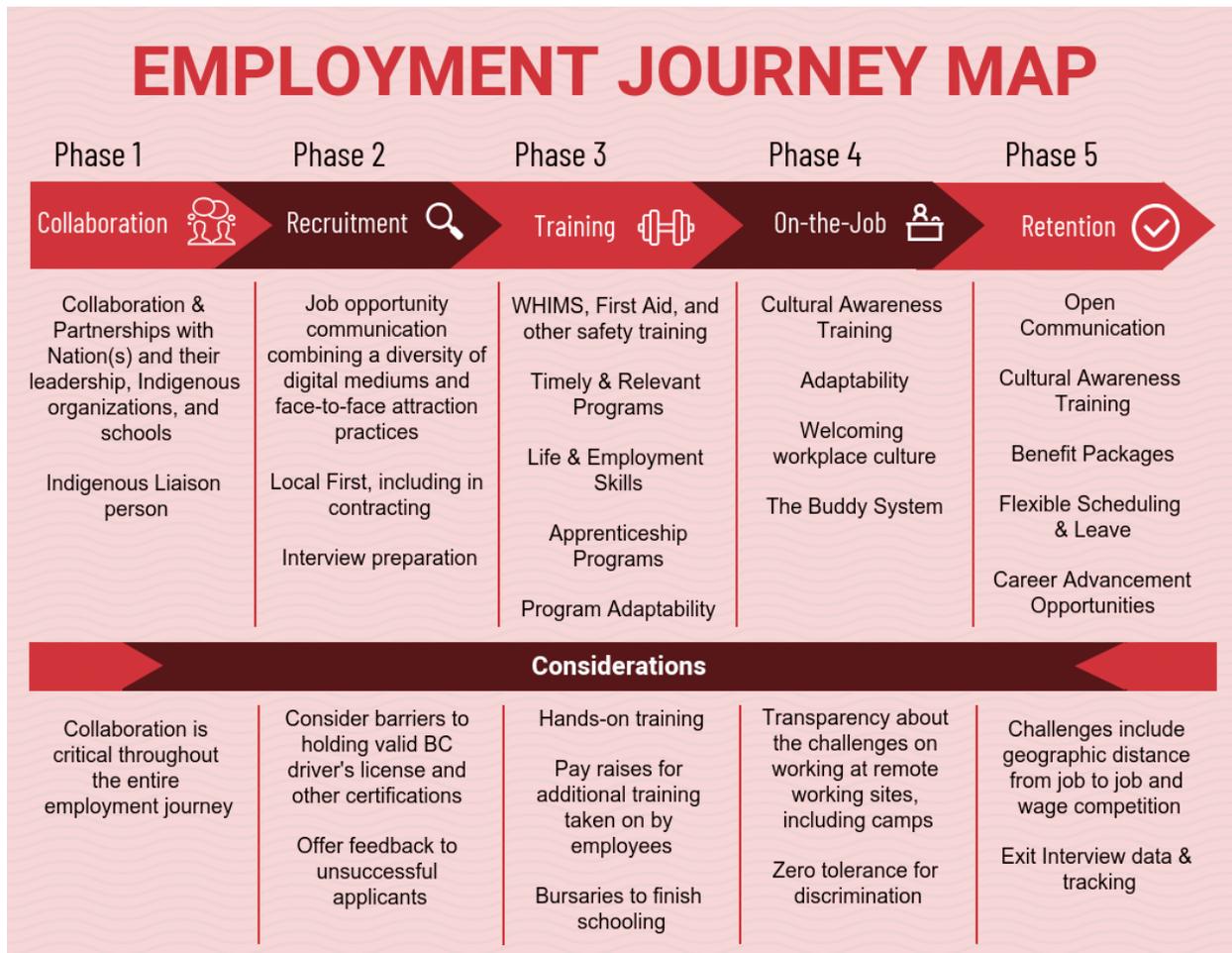
Four case studies were undertaken with four leading employers and organizations in the region, selected based on their long-term commitment to NLG and the NEST goal of supporting regional development and employment opportunities for Indigenous people. Of these four case studies, three included best practices for hiring, training, and retention of NEST clients, and are explored in subsections below.

Figure 26 presents a summary map of best practices throughout the “employment journey”, as described by the employers featured in the case studies. It begins with Phase 1, focused on collaboration, and continues through Phase 2 to 4 — recruitment, training, and on-the-job — before concluding in retention, Phase 5. Note that these phases are neither insular nor one-directional, and activities in each phase feed into each other.





Figure 26: Key Findings in Section 6.2 Case Study Findings



Source: NLG Case Study Interviews, Big River Analytics Summary Visualization

6.2.1 Case Study 1 - Pretium Resources Inc. (Pretivm)

Pretium Resources Inc. (Pretivm) operates the Brucejack Gold Mine (the Mine), an underground gold and silver mine located 65 kilometers north of Stewart in Northwest BC.

Pretivm's training and employment programs reflect a commitment to making local and Indigenous employment a priority, actively engaging with educational and training institutions and other organizations to enhance the capacity of Indigenous, local, and regional residents to obtain employment at the Mine. To reach its goal of maximizing employment for Northwest BC residents and Indigenous groups, Pretivm not only employs people in a broad range of full-time and seasonal employment jobs, but also works with its contractors to support local and Indigenous hiring.



Pretivm’s best practices to maximize the recruitment, training, and retention of prospective Indigenous workers are summarized below.

Recruitment

1) Interview Preparation

With NEST, Pretivm staff have walked prospective Nisga’a employees through a practice, or “mock”, interview process. These practice interviews gave Nisga’a candidates a chance to be coached on their general interview skills.

2) Communicating Job Opportunities

Diversity of medium is key in communicating job opportunities, including:

- Career Fairs;
- Presentations to high school students and colleges;
- Panel discussions at the Association for Mineral Exploration’s annual Round-Up conference in Vancouver to talk about the Project and Indigenous employment opportunities;
- Available positions at the Mine posted in multiple locations and on several different media platforms, including:
 - Pretivm’s webpage;
 - Social media: Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter;
 - Employment search platforms: Indeed.ca, WorkB.C.;
 - Mining and environmental association websites; and
 - Websites specifically targeting Indigenous job seekers.

3) Feedback to Applicants

For Indigenous candidates who do not receive an interview, or who are not offered a position, the Community Relations Manager ensures that feedback is provided in order to better position the candidate for future applications.

4) Collaboration with Indigenous Employment and Training Staff

Pretivm has worked closely with the Nisga’a Nation and NEST to develop informal collaborative plans that identify employment and training opportunities for Nisga’a citizens. Pretivm’s Community Relations staff actively engage with Nisga’a representatives (and with other First Nations) to identify training needs, learning gaps, and employment challenges.

Training

1) Timely & Relevant Programs





Pretivm works with Indigenous leaders and employment and training officers, including NEST and Tahltan Works, to identify employment opportunities, match them with suitable candidates, and develop training and skills development initiatives that meet the needs of the Mine and build capacity in these communities.

The goal is to increase the number of Indigenous, local, and regional residents with the specific skill sets required by the Mine, thereby enhancing local to regional employment and broader economic development.

2) Life and Employment Skills

Pretivm supports employment and training organizations and community colleges to design programs that enhance community life skills including time management, financial literacy, and nutrition. Pretivm also provides a range of on-the-job training programs at the Mine that allow all employees to gain technical and supervisory skills needed to take on more responsibilities.

3) Apprenticeship Programs: In development.

4) Adaptability

Pretivm provides pre-employment counselling for new hires to discuss individual learning needs and styles. Where appropriate, on-the-job training incorporates experiential learning (i.e., learning by doing).

5) Communication

Clear, accessible communication that explains the purpose and objectives of the training program, and how course content might be applied in actual situations in the workplace and elsewhere, is paramount.

Retention

1) Communication

To improve retention, Pretivm encourages open communication between managers and employees so that issues and concerns can be identified early and addressed. Pretivm's Community Relations Manager is transparent about the challenges of working at the Mine, including rotation work (2 weeks on, 2 weeks off) and communicates this information to applicants throughout the recruitment process.

2) The Buddy System

The buddy system has worked well to help new employees feel at home. It pairs more experienced staff with new employees to help coach and mentor them in work life at the Mine.





3) Cultural Sensitivity

Pretivm is exploring how to get Indigenous Elders more involved in providing cultural support for members of its workforce. Pretivm provides cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity training for all of its new hires. It has a zero-tolerance discrimination policy.

4) Employee Benefits

Pretivm offers:

- Access to an employee assistance program, which provides counselling, support for life skills (e.g., budgeting, household planning, parenting), and other assistance to both workers and their families;
- Inclusive medical and dental coverage;
- \$500 per month travel allowance;
- Human resource counselling and flexibility for employees that need to ask for extended bereavement or other leaves; and
- Adapted Bereavement Policy that better accommodates employees in mourning.

6.2.2 Case Study 2 - Progressive Venture Constructions (PVC)

Progressive Ventures Construction (PVC or Progressive) is the largest and most prevalent construction company in NWBC. It is a stable, safe, well-respected local and private business that is family-owned, operating since 1972 in NWBC and the Yukon from Prince George to Haida Gwaii and Bella Coola to the Arctic Ocean. Made up of general contractors, project managers, design-build contractors, and construction managers, it is responsible for the coordination and management of a variety of construction projects. President and General Manager, Darcy McKeown says, “Each and every employee is dedicated to providing our clients the highest quality workmanship on time and within budget.”

Recruitment

When planning projects on or near First Nations land or partnerships with First Nations, one of the first actions taken by Progressive is to reach out to the Nation(s), its leadership, and its economic development office and/or corporation to identify Indigenous individuals ready and interested in employment or self-employment. PVC uses as many local resources as possible, including local employees, contractors, suppliers, and self-employed proprietors.

PVC posts all of its jobs in partnering First Nations’ employment offices. It finds the most effective recruitment method is to approach communities through face-to-face interaction. PVC is also involved in:

- Attraction practices (e.g., school visits, speaking opportunities, career fairs, social media, engaging youth);
- Networking and engaging with Indigenous communities and organizations;



- Employment of an Indigenous liaison person (Business Development Manager);
- Ensuring cultural awareness among employees involved in attraction and recruitment processes; and
- Providing ongoing advertising to maintain top-of-mind awareness for job seekers.

Some of the qualities Progressive looks for are “mature, responsible people who are professional and positive” and “people who are good natured and can participate as a member of a team.” Certifications that are often required for various positions include: a valid B.C. Driver’s license, current first aid certification, current hearing test, WHMIS, fall protection, confined spaces entry, forklift training, and aerial platform training.

The biggest barrier to employment of Indigenous people directly through Progressive’s projects is mobility related to the significant geographic distances from job to job. PVC often works in remote areas and employees must move from project to project, often to different parts of Northern BC. While the company may have a significant number of Indigenous employees on a project, when the project is complete and they are offered employment on subsequent projects in another area, employees often decline as they do not want to leave their community and their families³⁷.

Training

PVC encourages and supports its employees with continuing education including, Certificate of Recognition courses for supervisory and management personnel, Gold Seal Certification, and Construction Management courses. The company currently has numerous apprentices registered with ITA for their journeyman carpenter designation, with numerous carpenters having completed their designation over the years. PVC estimates that it currently has approximately 60 labourers, apprentices, and journeymen.

Progressive provides new entrants with company policy, safety, job-specific, and site-specific training. As well as hiring for fit, Progressive ensures a good match or fit between new employees and an appropriate supervisor. The Progressive supervisor is responsible for providing oversight, on-the-job training, informal mentoring, and helping employee development.

In Progressive’s experience with employing Indigenous workers, it has learned that:

- Utilizing a markedly more gradual approach to gaining trust and building relationships is important with First Nations and Indigenous community members; and
- In general, Indigenous people prefer a more hands-on, experiential, and verbal approach to learning and training.

³⁷ This is a recognized challenge in northern communities as many Indigenous families depend on one another on a daily basis—particularly if the one who is expected to leave for work elsewhere is the one who drives, or is the primary caregiver for children or the elderly.



Retention

PVC's retention practices that apply to Indigenous staff include:

- Ensuring a good fit from the start between the applicant and company to increase job satisfaction;
- Recognition of traditional cultural needs and interests of individual Indigenous workers and their communities;
- Bereavement policies that are cognizant of Indigenous culture in terms of necessary leave times;
- Recognition that new-to-employment Indigenous employees may need cultural support on intake and as they progress within the company;
- Creating a welcoming workplace culture; and
- Implementing an informal mentoring or buddy program, including support from elders in local communities.

Progressive has experienced some challenges in Indigenous staff retention. The company has faced barriers to Indigenous retention when moving to new locations from project to project, as these employees often cannot, or do not want to leave their community and family to relocate elsewhere. Indigenous communities and families also have certain cultural and traditional needs placing commitments upon them in certain seasons. Whether for fishing, hunting, mushroom harvesting, family or clan feasts, and other events, Indigenous workers need flexibility in their work schedule to allow short absences at certain times of the year. Being sensitive to and aware of these needs enables Progressive managers to anticipate such scheduling needs and to work with the employee, the community, and company staff to accommodate these needs.

Progressive's Business Development Manager asserts that the company cannot compete with major projects like the LNG Canada project with respect to wages: "They and sub-contractors on the project are paying \$10 to \$20 per hour more." Therefore, Progressive endeavours to compete on other factors that are valued by employees:

- More enticing career opportunities (e.g., in apprenticeships, technologies, supervisory and management);
- Freedom to advance within the company;
- Quality training;
- Interesting project work;
- Work within a strong team environment;
- Community connections;
- A good benefits package; and
- Flexible scheduling.



This includes being part of a welcoming organization and supporting Indigenous employees and others to address their cultural, community, and family needs³⁸.

6.2.3 Case Study 3 - Prince Rupert Lawn & Garden

Prince Rupert Lawn & Garden provides yard services, a plant shop, and a garden center. The company also addresses the need for food security in the Prince Rupert area by providing community members with locally grown and healthy produce.

Recruitment

Prince Rupert Lawn & Garden continues to plan for expansion and hiring of more Indigenous employees, including Nisga'a citizens. Local employment is favoured, and preference is given to applicants of Nisga'a and those of First Nations ancestry.

As standard practice, Prince Rupert Lawn & Garden posts job opportunities for a few days internally before advertising publicly. Advertising mediums include a bulletin board, social media, and a text alert notification sent to registered members, prior to opportunities being posted on public job boards or online. Networking and social media are some of the more effective methods Prince Rupert Lawn & Garden has used to attract local Nisga'a employees.

Where possible, Prince Rupert Lawn & Garden partners with NEST and Hecate Strait Employment Development Society (HSEDS) to recruit those who have participated in recent job-skills related programming. Prince Rupert Lawn & Garden utilizes the following attraction and recruitment strategies:

- Visiting schools for speaking opportunities, participating in career fairs, leveraging social media to engage youth, including use of a Facebook page and word-of-mouth outreach;
- Providing career counselling and career planning for Indigenous youth, students, and employees;
- Targeted advertising to Indigenous people;
- Networking and engaging with Indigenous communities and organizations;
- Engaging specific Indigenous labour force groups (e.g., youth, girls, women, and persons with disabilities);
- Partnerships with:
 - post-secondary educational institutions (public, private, and Indigenous-controlled);
 - Indigenous, municipal, provincial, and federal government departments;
 - other gardening/landscaping companies and other companies supporting Indigenous hiring;
- Culturally relevant and sensitive hiring processes (i.e., application, interviewing, and onboarding);

³⁸ Throughout the research NLG heard of similar incentives offered by employers to encourage employee retention given the recent competition from LNG Canada and other new projects offering higher wages.





- Cultural awareness training for employees involved in attraction and recruitment processes; and
- Pre-employment training to increase Indigenous capacity and readiness for employment.

Training

The company incorporates training that builds upon a person’s career goals. Management encourages employees to develop career aspirations and goals within the company or beyond. As new opportunities emerge within the organization as it matures, current employees are encouraged to develop their skills and knowledge base and take on further roles and responsibilities. Prince Rupert Lawn & Garden has hired two full-time, year-round Indigenous persons in the last three years.

Prince Rupert Lawn & Garden is developing its gardening repertoire and has hired skilled staff, apprentices, and gardeners to raise awareness and knowledge about planting and growing on the North Coast of BC. The apprenticeship model which makes space for partnerships between youth and elderly, is an aspect of the training program which has encouraged knowledge transfer. Management is committed to connecting youth with the elderly, and/or to facilitate knowledge transfer from those with more advanced gardening experience and training to novices. This practice of sharing—facilitated by intergenerational connection (although not quite formalized or structured fully yet into training modules)—has shown early signs of fostering better skills acquisition and shared learning to cope with stress and day to day adversities. For example, between the generations there is shared encouragement to learn new things and build skills required to cope with trauma and suffering.

Prince Rupert Lawn & Garden provides staff training for basic job requirements, such as certifications for WHMIS, First Aid (Levels 1 and 2), other safety training, and certain training modules and educational programs specific to gardening at the center. The company has regular meetings to talk about the responsibilities of the workplace, fosters respectful workspaces, and discusses safety and expectations of employees such as reliability and following through on commitments. Management also promotes employees proactively taking on ideas for planning and developing the center in unique and creative ways.

By partnering with NEST, HSEDS, and the New Relationship Trust, several bursary programs have been offered for Prince Rupert Lawn & Garden employees to access funding to complete their education. Such training is not required for specific jobs at the center, but training is approved by the employer as a way of supporting life-long learning to empower its own staff. Staff are also encouraged to take time for other training, such as voluntary self-guided courses online, which help build capacity by supporting employee development and expanding interpersonal skills, such as dealing with difficult customers or co-workers. Other important training includes: essential skills training, driver training, and resumé and interviewing skills development.





Retention

In an aim to promote better retention practices, Prince Rupert Lawn & Garden offers a number of strategies to retain its Indigenous employees, including:

- Offering flexible leave options (e.g., bereavement, traditional/cultural responsibilities such as for a “stone moving ceremony”, funerals, and family responsibilities);
- Recognition that lack of a high school diploma does not render a person unable to engage in meaningful work;
- Recognition that new-to-employment Indigenous employees may need cultural support;
- Regularly scheduled pay raises (i.e., three months, six months, one year);
- Creating a welcoming workplace culture for Indigenous people;
- Recognition that previous work experience may have been more lenient;
- Building Indigenous awareness among management staff;
- Providing cross-training in various departments such as in the store, greenhouse, and nursery;
- Ensuring that its entire workforce has taken cultural awareness training;
- Implementing a mentor and buddy program that includes support from elders;
- Conducting exit interviews to ensure any issues that may have led to an employee leaving are not repeated; and
- Offering pay raises tied to additional training (e.g., \$0.50 - \$1.00 per hour extra for obtaining a driver’s license).



Part C — Recommendations

Part C of this report covers our preliminary recommendations and subsequent NEST committee recommendations. The preliminary recommendations (Section 7.0) were informed by engagement and interviews with our employment advisers, conducted throughout the course of this work. A subsequent meeting on the findings of this research took place with NEST in December, informing NEST committee recommendations (Section 8.0).

7.0 Preliminary Recommendations

7.1 Recruitment

7.1.1 Job Search Assistance & Program Awareness Recommendations

- 1) Encourage better connections between Nisga'a Lisims Government, the four (4) Nisga'a villages (Gitlaxt'aamiks, Gingolx, Gitwinksihlkw, and Laxgalts'ap), NEST, and employers to network together at local job fairs, or create similar events which stimulate local opportunity³⁹.
- 2) Develop NEST radio ad campaigns to run on the local radio (CFNR) throughout the year. Use ads on radio to promote employer info events that take place throughout the year.
- 3) Provide incentives and “nudges” for Nisga'a clients to attend job fairs and employer events, and promote prizes and winners on social media.
- 4) Increase awareness of NEST's programs and services by diversifying social media channels, digital communications, updating the website and/or keeping the Facebook page up to date and active with new posts.
- 5) Support NEST's brand awareness with print outreach materials including posters, handouts, success stories, pull up banners, and “swag” (travel mugs, pens, stickers, clothing, magnets, etc.).
- 6) Create an online template for capturing NEST success stories (powerful imagery) – e.g. online videos have been very successful and encouraging to previous clients who take motivation from their peers.
- 7) Introduce LinkedIn to broaden social reach to employers – include and add new employers to the region to NEST's network (track connections, posts, shares, and stories).

³⁹ In September 2017, NEST hosted a local job symposium and employment and information fair in Laxgalts'ap (Greenville) at the Laxgalts'ap Community Centre. Over 30 employers, educators and training providers attended and the event galvanized the networking opportunities available to many employers and (prospective) employees alike. Based on this research a similar event would serve the practical need to prompt further connections. See, <http://nisgaaworks.ca/2017/08/11/nesi-employment-information-fair/>.



7.1.2 Networking Recommendations

Networking and relationship building are critical to cultivating patience, respect, and opportunities to engage Indigenous people in the workplace. There is a need for more inclusionary ways to connect employers to employees in the Northwest.

- 1) Continue offering job and career fairs, and hosting community events and symposiums with activities for families and children to communicate opportunities. Build from the successes of these events – e.g. learning from what works from each scheduled event.
- 2) Support the inclusion of ISETs and other Indigenous focused training providers (Indigenous Governments) at regional economic development events and job fairs – similar in scope to that of Minerals North⁴⁰, a colloquium to support opportunities in the mining sector.
- 3) Promote events throughout the year that focus on participation and engagement.
- 4) Host more employment fairs, including single-employer information sessions, which are seen as equally advantageous as hosting or attending larger employment fairs (given cost implications for hosting larger events by NEST and as individualized employer information sessions can generate more in-depth conversations about specific sectors of interest for Nisga'a clients).
- 5) Encourage the Province to facilitate, co-sponsor, or fund, municipal, regional, and industry development colloquiums to share in local employment opportunities and major project development updates.
 - a) Note: It was felt that more information sharing opportunities could be planned and held to help assist local employers and ISETs plan for major project developments on the horizon⁴¹.

7.1.3 Training & Education Recommendations

The Literature Review findings show that having youth programs lead into post-secondary and apprenticeship programs sponsored by regional employers can create a direct path to employment, and create a positive reinforcement cycle as intermediary goals are met.

Training that connects youth to resource development, major project developments, economic development, one's culture and place should be encouraged. This training empowers and encourages growth and learning opportunities for further career advancement with employers that understand the importance of one's cultural identity and community. NEST has engaged in certain work along these lines and LNG Canada and others offering similar programming should be supported⁴².

⁴⁰ <https://www.mining.bc.ca/minerals-north-2019>

⁴¹ Another idea was to support the connection between the BC ATEAM – and major project proponents in regional terms – E.g. in gathering these groups together to learn and share in best-practice with industry (<https://ca.linkedin.com/in/bc-a-team-203674116>).

⁴² In the past, NEST has provided programming in resources management to connect clients to the resource sector and industry. This programming encouraged 'back to the land' type training which incorporated cultural wellbeing and



- 1) Coordinate with School District 92 to plan and execute workshops on essential job skills readiness coaching. Speak with students candidly about expectations in the workforce.
- 2) Communicate the need to obtain a driver's licence and have driver's training early on in school. This could include students taking a mock driver's test at 14 or 15 years of age.
- 3) Communicate the need to obtain a driver's licence and have driver's training early on in school.
 - a) Start driver's training in schools with early testing and mock drills, whether they be written tests or in-car driving lessons. Youth should be educated early on regarding the importance of driving and driving safely.
- 4) Encourage access to early learning tutorial classes (online and free classes for parents and families) to have their children upgrade their numeracy and literacy. Provide incentives for those students who finish modules and encourage others to try to take them.
- 5) Support work-life balance workshops in schools early on about taking care of oneself (e.g. help students avoid behaviours that led to addictions). Provide counselling and access to available services.
- 6) Educate students about the impacts of habits such as little sleep or unhealthy eating on performance in school and on the job.

7.1.4 Transportation Recommendations

- 1) A more comprehensive look at local transportation routes and the support for public transportation should be undertaken. This includes an analysis of the current routes, times, costs, and the potential to stimulate certain entrepreneurialism by encouraging businesses to fill transportation gaps.
- 2) A thorough market analysis of what consumers would pay in the North for transportation should be undertaken (potentially by the Province) to understand how to encourage more reliable ways to move about communities for work. This is particularly important in the wake of Greyhound terminating its services, the rising costs of fuel, and the high prices people pay for rideshares, as noted by interviewees.

7.2 On-the-Job Alignment

7.2.1 Development of Materials

- 1) Local ISET agreement holders in the area should work alongside other Indigenous support services to co-develop materials to offer employers relevant information on the benefits (and supports) in the regional area.

empowerment models as alternative ways to help clients gain confidence and stamina in seeking work while learning about training in the resource sector (See the BladeRunner's program on NEST's Facebook Page - <https://www.facebook.com/NEST360/>. See also, LNG Canada is a proud supporter of the Outland Youth Employment Program (OYEP) – (<https://www.lngcanada.ca/>))



- 2) Assistance by the Province in the provision of materials to company staff on the supports offered to the various Indigenous groups in regional locations. This recommendation is in direct response to our interviews with new employers/(sub)-contractors entering the region who may be unfamiliar with the various supports offered on the role of ISETs (NEST, TRICROP), the supports offered by Nisga'a Valley Health, Kermode, Skeena Development, Work BC, Coast Mountain College, etc.

7.3 Retention

7.3.1 Mentorship Recommendations

- 1) Keep fostering mentorship opportunities to ensure apprentices can be supported by leaders in the field.
 - a) Continue networking opportunities within the trades sectors (ITA and training colleges) or with industry and larger scale developments (e.g. the mining sector, port authority, oil and gas and energy sectors, and forestry).
 - b) Develop regional support mechanisms for apprenticeships to gain on the job experience (ideally work placements either in the short or longer term).



8.0 NEST Committee Recommendations

Beyond the recommendations from employees and employers presented in Section 7.0, a committee of stakeholders and NEST staff met December 13, 2019 to discuss the labour market findings. The following recommendations are a result of this meeting.⁴³

8.1 Relationships & Communication as Critical to Recruitment and Retention

The sentiment in the region is that there is still considerable “lip service” paid by employers suggesting that they are actively hiring Indigenous people in the region. The committee spoke to the reality that many employers overlook local candidates and are not sincere in their efforts to work with Indigenous Governments, local First Nations, and agencies to find suitable local hires to fill the labour market demands of the region.

For employers that are making an effort (i.e. working through certain challenges to bolster regional employment), significant gains are being made in recruiting and retaining Indigenous employees. Employers that encourage apprenticeship opportunities and provide mentors and mentorship programming (such as Pretivm) have made substantial gains in retaining Indigenous, specifically Nisga’a, employees. Other local employers hoping to work with NEST more closely are encouraged to engage with NEST’s employment advisors to find responsive candidates ready for work.

The committee acknowledged the importance of benefit agreements to ensure Nisga’a citizens are hired locally. They applauded the efforts of establishing these agreements between employers and the Nation. Tangible results could be quantified by the current benefit agreements the Nation has. For example, the Pretivm agreement states that 32 Nisga’a must be employed, but in actuality there are over 50 Nisga’a working there. Agreements also prompt further opportunities and efforts on the part of employers to try innovative strategies to retain Nisga’a staff, including employers transporting their workers to site, or training or mentorship programs as pilot programs. The committee also suggested the importance of following up with employers who have benefit agreements in order to ensure these relationships were being honored.

Ultimately, it was felt that relationships matter. Companies with sincere and supporting communication strategies that honour agreements with the Nisga’a Nation are the most effective. Companies that collaborate with NEST, and work in tandem to move forward in a positive way see the greatest returns in retention.

⁴³ The recommendations described herein are in no particular order. These summary highlights were compiled from detailed notes that followed this meeting.





8.2 Invest in Foundational Skills

8.2.1 Driver’s training

Driver’s training was noted as paramount for Nisga’a clients to find and retain work. The committee explained that important adjustments have been made to driver’s training to ensure it better meets Indigenous needs (i.e. patience in training, supports such as traveling to rural locations where clients are, providing a vehicle as All Nations Driving Training does), however, there is still a shortage of effective trainers in the region.

8.2.2 Financial literacy

Employment advisors (EAs) and others attending the meeting suggested that supporting clients with budgeting and financial literacy skills would assist with the management of paychecks. This was considered particularly relevant for those on rotational work, where budgeting is required for stints of time off work. TD bank and other banking institutions have previously supported NEST with budgeting programs, and it was suggested that developing additional programming on this topic would be beneficial.

8.2.3 Providing relevant occupational training and the trades

The committee felt that one-on-one training was critical to identifying the needs of clients. Connecting one’s aptitude, employment goals, and specific training tied to an occupation are key. Trades training remains relevant, particularly given the projected increase in activity and work generated through major project developments. EAs noted that several of their clients still desire to work in the trades, and that their clients achieve significant income and satisfaction working in this sector. Notwithstanding, the committee acknowledged the diversity in the occupational opportunities NEST clients desire or wish to pursue.

8.3 The Need for Child Care

The lack of appropriate child care was identified as a major barrier for NEST clients looking for employment. Given the long distances to commute to work for many in the Nass Valley (and surrounding area), clients with job opportunities had to consider leaving home before 7:00am and returning home late in the evening. This is problematic when child care providers do not offer extended hours before 8:30am or after 4:30pm. Without extended hours offered by child care service providers, parents may turn down job opportunities or reduce working hours in order to care for their children, putting additional financial stress on families.

The committee highlighted the lack of early childhood educators (ECEs) as a contributing factor to the lack of child care regionally. Child care service providers in the region often operate under-capacity as recruiting and retaining ECEs is a challenge due to low pay, burnout, limited opportunities for professional development, insufficient supports and resources to care for





children with diverse needs, and understaffing. Informal and unlicensed child care arrangements are often sought out due to the cost and inaccessibility of child care.⁴⁴

As was noted by employer interviews, NEST clients were cognizant of finding employment with employers that were flexible to the needs of their children’s care (e.g. “I’m looking for work with Nisga’a Lisims Government because they are flexible to the needs of our culture and my childcare realities”).

8.4 Invest in Essential Skills Development

The committee ultimately recognized the importance of essential skills training,⁴⁵ including literacy and numeracy. Essential skills were considered more broadly, however, there was recognition that many clients require other kinds of strategies to improve their self-esteem and confidence. For instance, EAs described that supporting client’s overall essential skills abilities extends to offering them other referral support to mental health workers, family counselling, or addictions counsellors. Supporting clients through the multiple barriers they face requires a multi-pronged approach that prioritizes essential skills, including aspects of cultural teachings.

EAs further noted that clients continue to fail the drug tests made compulsory by employers, as part of a condition of employment. It was felt that more resources were required for substance abuse referrals to professionals that could help with trauma, addictions and life coaching.

Employers who acknowledge that Nisga’a employees may face multiple barriers to employment, and are able to support time off to manage these issues, are taking the right steps to help their employees. It was suggested that this proactive approach has a longer term retention impact, whereby employees remain more connected to the company. It was stated further research was warranted and should be pursued.

8.5 Prepare and Forecast an Approach to New Opportunities

The committee recognized the importance of responding to changes resulting from major project developments in the area (e.g. LNG, mining, and forestry challenges). There was a shared sentiment to be less reactive and more proactive, keeping well-informed to changing market trends and the need for appropriate training. The committee suggested the importance of research and collaboration to understand emerging and local markets, and to respond to these changes in the local economy by focusing on training to address needs. Ultimately their recommendation centered around diverse training that addresses skills gaps across a diverse occupational spectrum.

⁴⁴ Information supported by the City of Terrace Community Child Care Needs Assessment and Space Creation Action Plan, prepared by Big River Analytics Ltd. for the City of Terrace (used with permission).

⁴⁵ Source: Government of Canada, (2020). “The Office of Literacy and Essential Skills”, retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/essential-skills.html>





Appendix

A1 Primary Data Collection Instruments

Titled “Labour Market Information Research Tools”.

A2 Summary PowerPoint Presentation

Titled “Labour Market Gaps Research: Overview and Preliminary Recommendations”.

