

Report: Putting people to work will not be enough in Cochrane

New report brings to light several key trends that are projected to have a significant impact on the district moving forward

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NEWS RELEASE

NORTHERN POLICY INSTITUTE

The second installment of the *Northern Projections: Human Capital Series*, reveals a bright future for the Cochrane District hinges on much more than just a jobs strategy.

The new report, a partnership between Northern Policy Institute and the Northern Ontario Workforce Planning Boards, brings to light several key trends that are projected to have a significant impact on the district moving forward.

The Aboriginal population in Cochrane District is projected to rise by 34 percent in the next 25 years; the Aboriginal labour force by 26 percent over that same period. Currently, the Aboriginal population, especially on reserves, is notably under-represented in the labour market.

“Enhancing labour force participation rates among the Aboriginal population will be a key component to strengthening the local economy”, stated Julie Joncas, Executive Director of Far Northeast Training Board.

Similar to other regions in Northern Ontario, a declining and aging population is one of the most fundamental challenges facing the Cochrane area. Between 2002 and 2015 nearly 11,000 individuals moved out of the region, while in 2015, the district attracted only 33 immigrants. An aggressive and focused migration attraction effort is needed to slow down this trend.

Additionally, the report points to several opportunities that could provide the basis for targeted attraction efforts.

“The region has many opportunities and signs of growth linked to natural resources, writes authors, James Cuddy and Bakhtiar Moazzami.” For example, there is a large amount of arable land as well as a number of operational gold mines that remain a key source of employment and economic growth. In fact, from 2001 to 2011, the mining and oil and gas extraction industries grew by nearly 40 percent.”

There is also early indications that the knowledge economy may be taking hold in the area with small but positive changes in the areas of professional, scientific, and technical services; administrative and support, and arts, entertainment and recreation.

Based on these trends and opportunities, the report offers three key recommendations to promote the long-term sustainability of the district:

1. *Implement a well-rounded migration strategy* - It is important that the region seeks to enhance its population levels by implementing strong immigration strategies, in combination with strategies to attract domestic in-migrants.
2. *Enhance Aboriginal labour market participation* - Cochrane district should seek to enhance participation rates among the Aboriginal labour force population. This can be achieved by enhancing collaboration between municipalities, Aboriginal communities and industry; increasing education levels and access in rural areas; and connecting the population with important local services and programs that are available.
3. *Leverage industrial clusters to identify new opportunities* - The region should continue to build on its natural resource clusters, but at the same time, recognize the importance of economic diversification for smoothing out the cyclical nature of these industries.

The full report, *Northern Projections: Human Capital Series – Cochrane District*, is available on our websites:

Northern Policy Institute www.northernpolicy.ca

Algoma Workforce Investment Corporation www.awic.ca

Far Northeast Training Board www.fnetb.com

The Labour Market Group – Nipissing Parry Sound www.thelabourmarketgroup.ca

Northwest Training and Adjustment Board www.ntab.on.ca

North Superior Workforce Planning Board www.nswpb.ca

Sudbury and Manitoulin Workforce Planning Board www.planningourworkforce.ca

Northern Projections: Human Capital Series highlights all of the 11 districts in Northern Ontario, and is part of an ongoing, collaborative effort between the *Northern Policy Institute* and *Northern Ontario Workforce Planning Boards* to provide evidenced based advice for effective decision making in the region.

Reports examine past and present characteristics and trends in each district's economy in order to forecast future challenges and opportunities.

Source: https://www.timminstoday.com/local-news/report-putting-people-to-work-will-not-be-enough-in-cochrane-412445?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter