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Setting the Course: Navigating the North Superior Workforce in 2022–2023

2022–2023 Local Labour Market Plan

North Superior Workforce Planning Board

Written by:

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Limitations

The North Superior Workforce Planning Board recognizes the potential limitation of this local labour market report and will continue to seek out information in areas that require further analysis and action. The North Superior Workforce Planning Board assumes no responsibility to the user for the consequences of any errors or omissions. This document may be freely quoted and reproduced without the permission of North Superior Workforce Planning Board provided that North Superior Workforce Planning Board is acknowledged as the author of the document. The information presented in this report is current at the time of printing.

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About North Superior Workforce Planning Board

The North Superior Workforce Planning Board (NSWPB) is one of 26 Workforce Planning Boards covering four regions across Ontario. Mandated by the Province of Ontario, the role of the NSWPB is to identify, assess and prioritize the skills and knowledge needs of community, employers, and individual participants/learners in the local labour market through a collaborative local labour market planning process.

An active and broadly-based volunteer Board of Directors governs the affairs of the organization. First established in 1996, NSWPB is recognized by community, economic and municipal leaders as a "partner of choice" in the identification and implementation of local solutions to local labour market issues.

Workforce Planning Boards play a key role in the Province's goal of integrating its programs and services. Part of the ongoing strategy to achieve this goal is to first identify and then respond to the diverse regional and local labour market needs throughout the province.

Vision

Our human resource pool will be strategically aligned, competitively positioned, and progressively developed to meet future social and economic demands across Northwestern Ontario.

Mission

Connecting community partners to improve the quality of life in our communities through workforce development. The North Superior Workforce Planning Board will:

- Build a strategic workforce readiness plan;
- Create a dynamic, responsive process to satisfy current needs and prepare people for emerging labour market opportunities within a global economy; and,
- Leverage community alliances to maximize labour market capacity and competitiveness.

Mandate

Leading in the creation of innovative labour market solutions by:

- Providing authoritative and evidence-based research;
- Identifying employment trends;
- Targeting workforce opportunities; and,
- Initiating workforce development strategies.

NSWPB Board of Directors

Crystal Olson (Chair)
John DeGiacamo
David Farrell
John Hatton
Doris Rossi
Roger Shott
Owen Smith
Bert Johnson

Refer to Appendix A for complete list of communities

Workforce Planning Ontario

Land Acknowledgement

The North Superior Workforce Planning Board would like to acknowledge the First Peoples on whose traditional territories we live and work. We are grateful for the opportunity to have our office located on these lands and thank all generations of people who have taken care of this land.

The office of the NSWPB is in the City of Thunder Bay, which is on Robinson-Superior Treaty territory. The land is the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg and Fort William First Nation.

NSWPB's service area includes more than 40 communities, and each is home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples. NSWPB recognizes and appreciates the historic connection that Indigenous people have to these territories. We support their efforts to sustain and grow their nations. We also recognize the contributions that they have made in shaping and strengthening local communities, the province, and Canada.

Acknowledgements

Development of the 2022-2023 Local Labour Market Plan (LLMP) for the North Superior Workforce Planning Board catchment area has been made possible by the insights of many community actors. We greatly appreciate the individual and collective contributions of time, talent, and perspectives in creating our local plan that is representative of our current realities in the ever changing social and economic landscape.

The development of this report was done in partnership with Northern Policy Institute via the Northern Analyst Collective Program. Specifically, we would like to acknowledge Rachel Rizzuto (Research Manager) and Dr. Martin Lefebvre (Lead Policy Analyst) for this report. We would also like to acknowledge Samrul Aahad (Economist) for his data contributions.

We would also like to acknowledge our funder, the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (MLTSD) for supporting us in our efforts to address local labour market challenges and opportunities.

A Note on Data

2022 is an exciting year for data. Statistics Canada will be releasing a series of census datasets throughout the year that researchers, decision-makers, and *you* can use to understand what is going on in Ontario's northern regions and communities.

Now having said this, one of the limitations of this report is that where census data was used, it was based on 2016 data. This was done so as the data collection and writing of this report took place in December 2021 and January 2022. Furthermore, some indicators such as business counts were only available up to June 2021 at the time of data collection and writing. Nevertheless, armed with information gathered from the consultations as well as additional literature, the report provides a detailed picture of current trends and projections that NSWPB and others can utilize until more census data is released.

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Introduction

For some, the year 2022 means they will be attending a post-secondary institution to study electrical engineering or political science. For others, it means continuing to try to balance work with childcare responsibilities. And for some it may mean switching careers to open a business. These individuals and many more are at the heart of the local economy, and the choices they make impact decision-making.

Of course, planning is no easy task. For the North Superior Workforce Planning Board (NSWPB), their service area encompasses nearly 40 communities, including First Nations and three Métis communities (see Appendix A for a full list). While there may be areas where the needs and realities of these communities align, it is important to acknowledge and account for the differences.

This report is broken up into several sections, the first of which is the Local Labour Market Consultations, where expertise from a range of community actors provide insight on current labour market conditions and next steps. Following this section is a statistical breakdown of the labour force and employers in the NSWPB region. The third section focuses on the experiences of Employment Ontario (EO) service providers, and data on their EO programs. Finally, based on findings from the first three sections, the last section outlines action items for the NSWPB going forward.

The picture of the labour market we are left with is one in which the COVID19 pandemic is still an influencing reality and some issues that have persisted prior to the pandemic continue to be important such as Indigenous training and education, the need for quality data, or access hurdles for EO clients (e.g., digital, transportation). Still, there were elements of hope for future growth and recovery opportunities.

Labour Market Consultations

Throughout the month of December 2021 and early January 2022, various community actors were asked a series of questions, one of which was: "Looking ahead three years, what will a successful recovery and rebuild look like?" Some individuals countered, asking: what do they *think* it will look like or what do they *hope* it will look like? While a seemingly small distinction, it matters a great deal when it comes to planning.

This portion of the NSWPB Local Labour Market Plan aims to outline the results of several focus groups and interviews that took place in December 2021 and January 2022. The focus group and interview participants represented a wide variety of industries and areas of expertise such as immigration, municipal government, education, employment and training, business, and so on. Additionally, the individuals were located from around the Thunder Bay district, both large and small communities. Overall, the key goal was to provide a range of voices and perspectives that could speak to the current and future landscape of the labour market.

THINKING ABOUT TOMORROW, TODAY

To no one's surprise, the impact of COVID19 on the economy and labour market has manifested itself in various ways. The first is the noticeable shift in one's relationship to work, whether this be what individuals are looking for in a job or how they work (such as working from home if they can). Regarding the former, there are instances of people who do not want to go back to work due to the pandemic or what they value in a job.[1] Reasons why this may be the case could include current access to government benefits, working in a public- facing job being seen as risky, and longevity of a job (Dunstan 2021). Of course, it was highlighted that this mindset is not the same for all workers.

There has also been a demonstrated impact of the pandemic on females in the labour market. In a study by Statistics Canada, it was found that "the impact on year-over-year employment losses was consistently more severe for women than for men." (Grekou and Lu 2021). The service sector was primarily driving these losses and many women make up employment in that sector (ibid 2021). This impact on women in the workforce is likely not over. In a post-COVID19 scenario, it was estimated by McKinsey & Company that women, low-wage earners, and those without a post-secondary degree, are more likely to be disproportionately impacted by job displacements over the next several years (Lund et al 2021, 79).

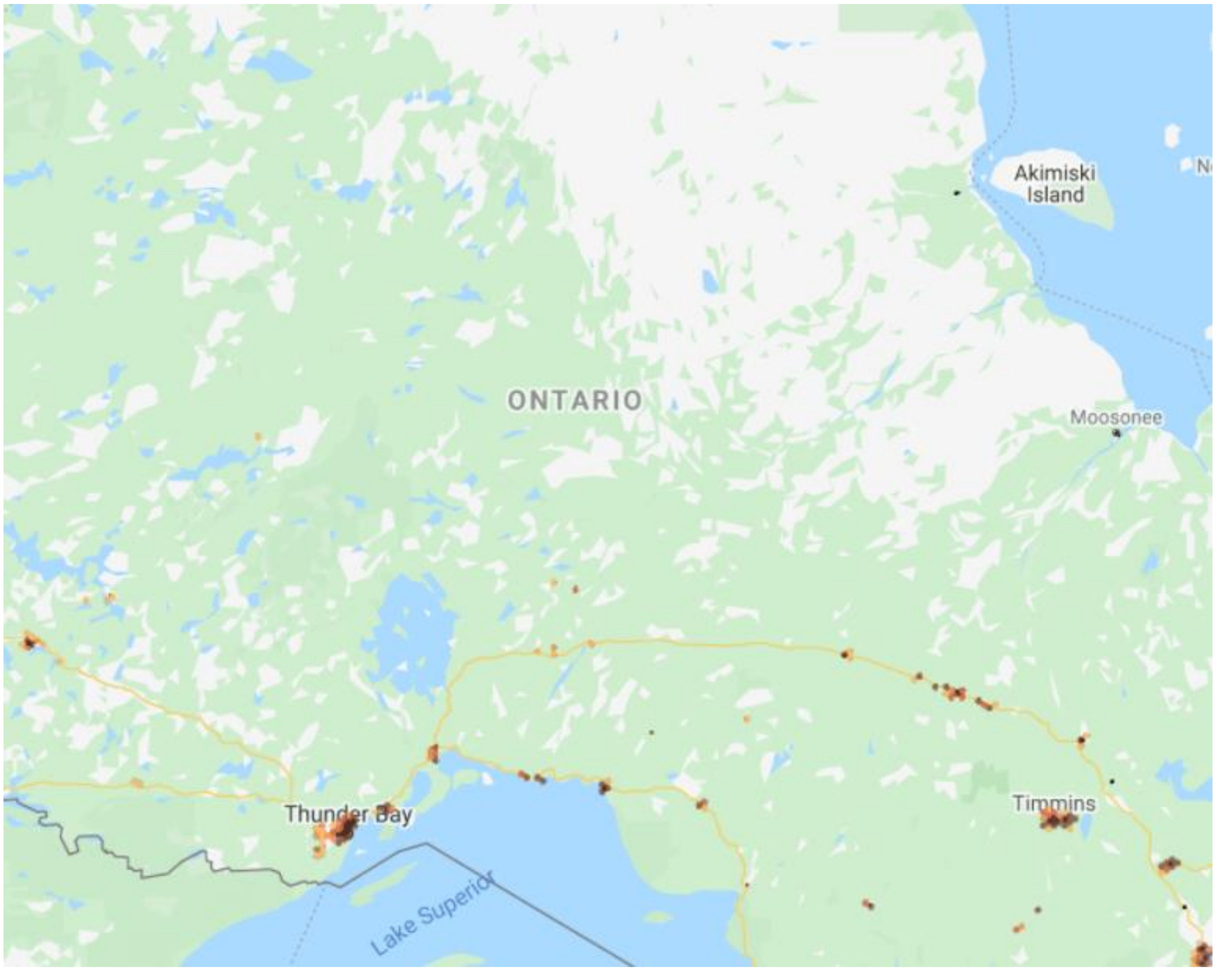
> **Recommendations**: Given the shift in an employee's relationship to work, it was proposed that an employer might, for example, build more inclusive incentive packages as a way to attract and/or retain workers. It's not always about the money. A second example is supporting employers as they adjust policies to better reflect the shifting work/life balance realities. McKinsey & Company offer up insight in this regard. They propose that businesses might think about what activities can be done remotely as opposed to what jobs can be done remotely. As well, defining metrics that measure employee satisfaction, connectedness, and other factors can help employers assess gaps and opportunities (Lund et al 2021, 100).
>
> The other recommendation was supporting female participation in the workforce, as well as parents and guardians in general. While there are numerous ways this could be done, one obvious way is childcare. According to Statistics Canada, "one in four parents and guardians who were using childcare and reported difficulty finding childcare said that the difficulty was specifically related to the pandemic." (Findlay and Wei 2021). One unique solution suggested was the creation of a day care centre for staff at the Sleeping Giant Brewery in Thunder Bay – which now has plans of opening a second centre (Dunick 2021).

[1] See Table 2 in "From Crisis to Recovery: How COVID-19 is Impacting Business in Thunder Bay (part 7)" (Champaigne 2021).

Another discussion point in the consultations was that of businesses, which can be likened to walking on a wire. While there may be growth in some communities, pandemic limitations are negatively impacting businesses. Some may not be able to afford the continuous closing and reopening. In the Thunder Bay COVID19 Business Impact Survey, the percentage of business respondents that indicated they had to close their business/organization temporarily was 35 per cent in May 2020, dropped to a low in the fall, and then shot up again to 33 per cent in April 2021 (Champaigne 2021, 11). Finally, it was stated that before pandemic-related funding reduces, businesses need to be ready.

Naturally, the consultation discussions also revolved around trends and issues in labour supply and demand. There are gaps in the workforce right now and they will likely continue in the future, barring any changes. This supply issue is the product of multiple sources such as retirements, lack of people wanting to fill jobs (could be due to type of work available, assistance provided by government during COVID, lack of interest in what is available based on their education and skills, etc.), or simply industry cycles. Additionally, it is one thing to have supply issues, but we also need to make sure that the labour force is appropriately engaged. For example, some may not have regular access to internet – an issue that is no stranger to Northern Ontario. There is an uneven distribution in the areas that have a 50/10 mbps connection – 50 mbps download and 10 mbps upload vs 5/1 mbps (see Figures 1 and 2). Finally, discussions made note of the influence of the transient workforce and the lack of skilled employees in some communities.

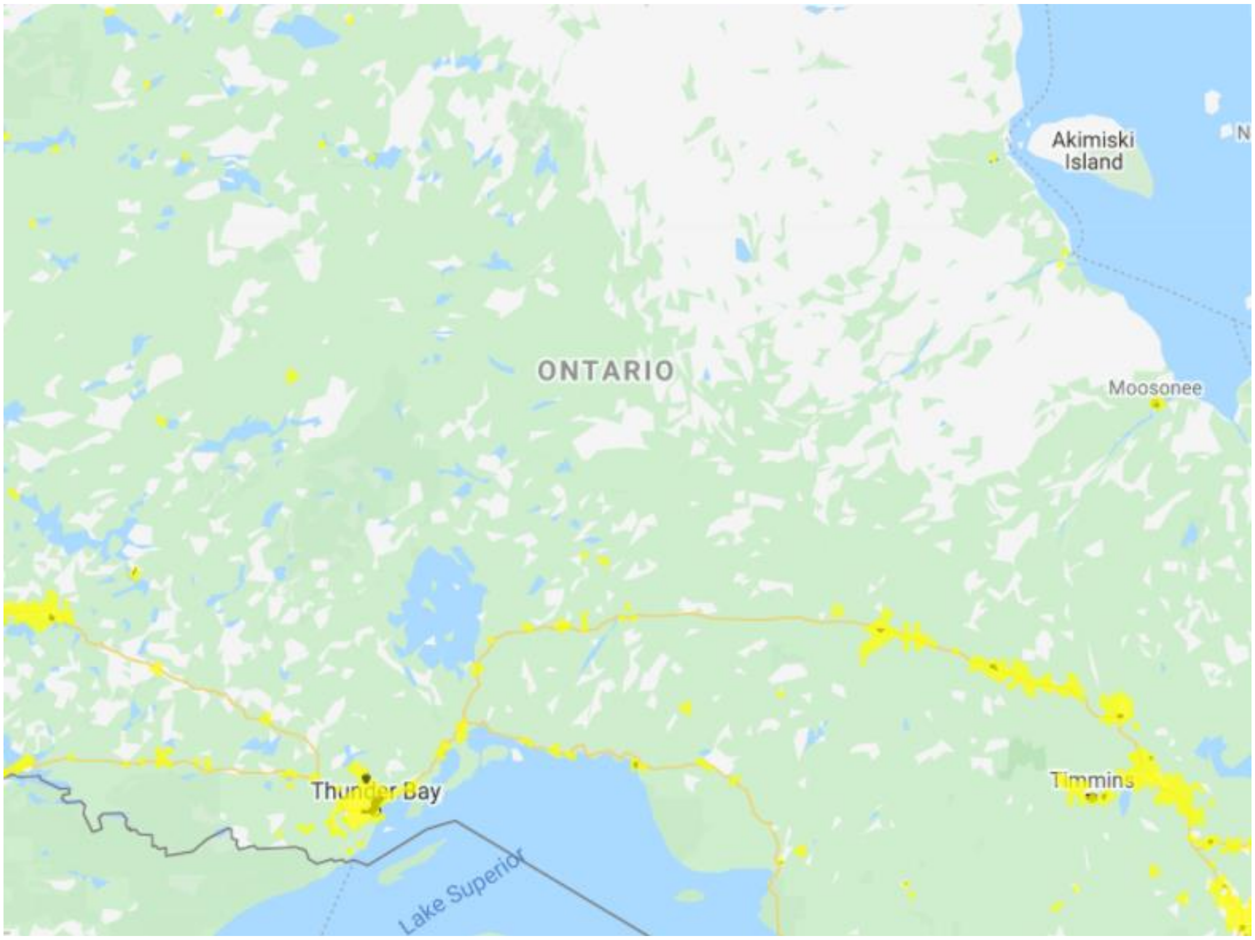
Figure 1: Current 50/10 mbps areas, Northern Ontario snapshot



Source: National Broadband Internet Service Availability Map, 2021.

Note: light orange >0% to 25%, burnt orange >25% to 50%, dark orange >50% to 75%, and brown >75% to 100%.

Figure 2: Current 5/1 mbps areas, Northern Ontario snapshot



Source: National Broadband Internet Service Availability Map, 2021.

Note: yellow >75% to 100%.

On the demand side of the equation, participants stated that they are seeing a current and/or future demand in several sectors such as childcare, construction, health care, and mining. However, it was noted by a participant that COVID19 has impacted youth trying to secure employment in some settings. In a 2020 youth survey by the Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin, it was found that 26 per cent of youth respondents stated that finding a job was more difficult now due to COVID (2020, 47). On that note, youth respondents also outlined several reasons that were holding them back from securing employment such as concerns about catching COVID19 (31%), lack of response from employers (24%), and either a lack of utilizing employment resources or not knowing they exist (46%) (ibid 2020, 45).

> **Recommendations:** There were several recommendations noted for addressing the supply and demand challenges, the first of which is focusing on the attraction and retention of labour. Initiatives such as the Rural and Northern

Immigration Pilot program, as well as the International and Community Matchmaker[2] run by the Association des francophones du Nord-Ouest de l'Ontario (AFNOO) can aid in this regard.

The second recommendation was industry specific, focusing on increasing medical graduates across Northern Ontario as opposed to solely relying on virtual health care. According to the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, Northern Ontario needs 325 physicians as of June 2021, 135 of whom need to be family physicians. Rural generalists were also noted as a particular need within this 325 (NOSM n.d.).

Several other recommendations were made such as supporting opportunities for post-secondary students, focusing on opportunities in the Indigenous space such as the projected population increases, prioritizing vulnerable groups, targeting barriers to employment, and encouraging inclusive workplaces.

The fourth major discussion point was on training the workforce, whether this be discussing opportunities in certain industries with youth or planning for future demand in jobs. There were a range of items discussed, such as: targeted demographics, appropriate planning, communicating opportunities, access and availability of training, potential industry shifts to provide opportunities, and current certification challenges.

In the post-pandemic scenario developed by McKinsey & Company, they estimated that across their eight focus countries[3], it was estimated that 107 million individuals may need to transition into another occupation by 2030 due to shifting occupational demands (Lund et al 2021, 83). Of the 17.1 million United States workers that may need to change occupations, 87 per cent would need to find a job in a different occupational category (ibid 2021, 86). Closer to home, the Ontario government and others have taken steps to retrain the workforce. For example, the Province committed to an additional $5 million to expand the Second Career program, while groups such as Lighthouse Labs developed the Ontario Web Developers Network which equips un/underemployed Ontarians with skills needed for the digital workspace (Ontario Government 2021; Lighthouse Labs n.d.).

Recommendations: Alongside subsidies to employers, there needs to be a continued focus on skill-building education. In addition to the investment the Province has made into the Second Career program, another initiative is the Skills Development Fund, which supports the training, retraining, and hiring of workers in Ontario (Ontario Government 2021). Also, in one of the consultations it was mentioned skill stockpiling may be occurring right now at the post-secondary level given enrolment levels. Continued support in this area is also critical.

[2] The International and Community Matchmaker was a pilot run by Northern Policy Institute from 2018 to 2019 in Northwestern Ontario. Given the success of the Northwest Matchmakers, the pilot was launched in Northeastern Ontario as well.

[3] China, France, Germany, India, Japan, Spain, United Kingdom, and the United States.

> The other recommendations noted were the need to start thinking outside the box when it comes to certification and licensing, and second, extending internship timeframes. For example, the current year-long internships with the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) could be two years. By extending the timeline, not only does this mean greater financial stability for the intern, but they are able to dive deeper into skills and experiences in a consistent space.

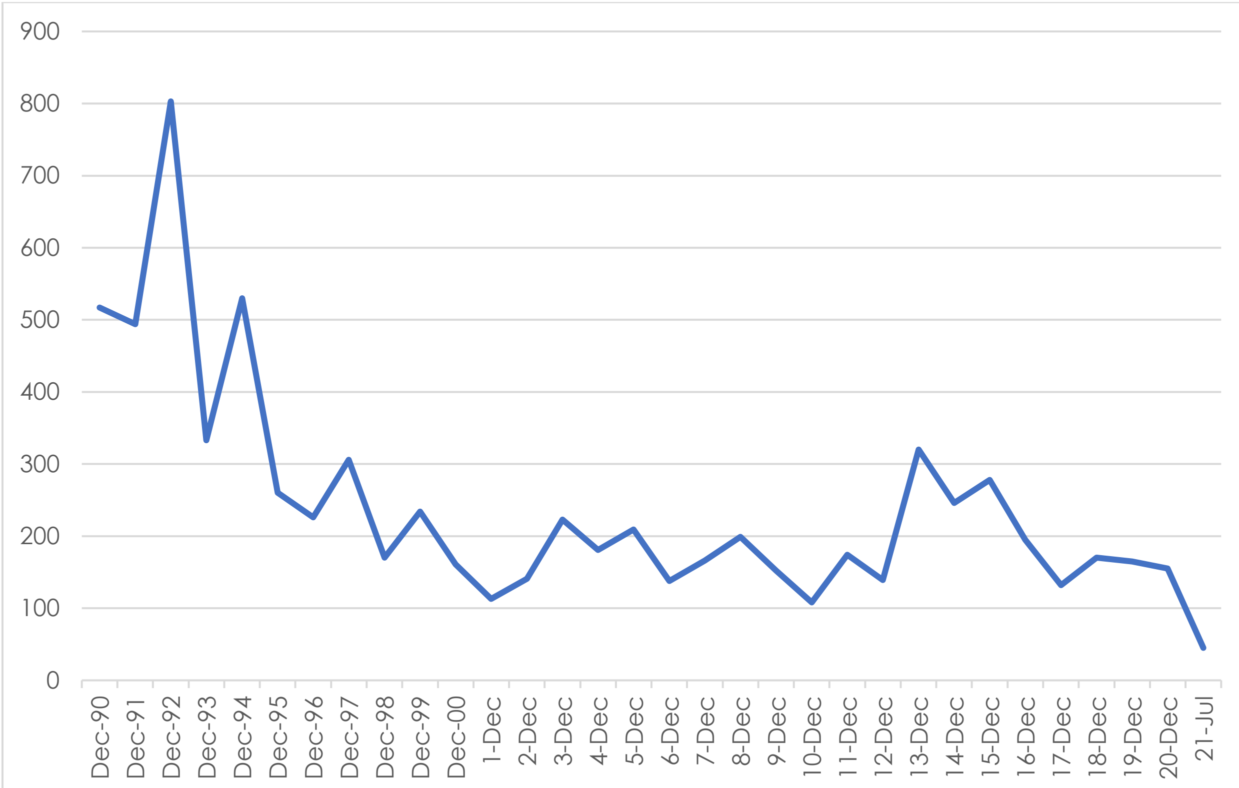
Finally, other topics that were brought up in the consultations included the impact of COVID19 on community engagement, supply chain concerns, and how not all industries were impacted by COVID19.

In light of the above challenges, there were several external factors identified that play a role in the success of the labour market now and in the future:

HOUSING SUPPLY AND AVAILABILITY

Housing plays an important role not only in one's employment success (see Rizzuto 2020, 32), but can impact a community's ability to attract and retain potential workers. During COVID19, if you were in the market for a home, you had to move quick. In February 2021, national resales were at an all-time high, but inventory was limited (Khan, Bilyk, and Ackman 2021). This is certainly the case in the City of Thunder Bay where completions for all types of dwellings have gradually declined from 1990 to 2021 (less than 100 in July 2021) (Figure 3). Simultaneously, the average price of a home in Thunder Bay increased by 12.9 per cent from November 2020 to November 2021 (Figure 4).

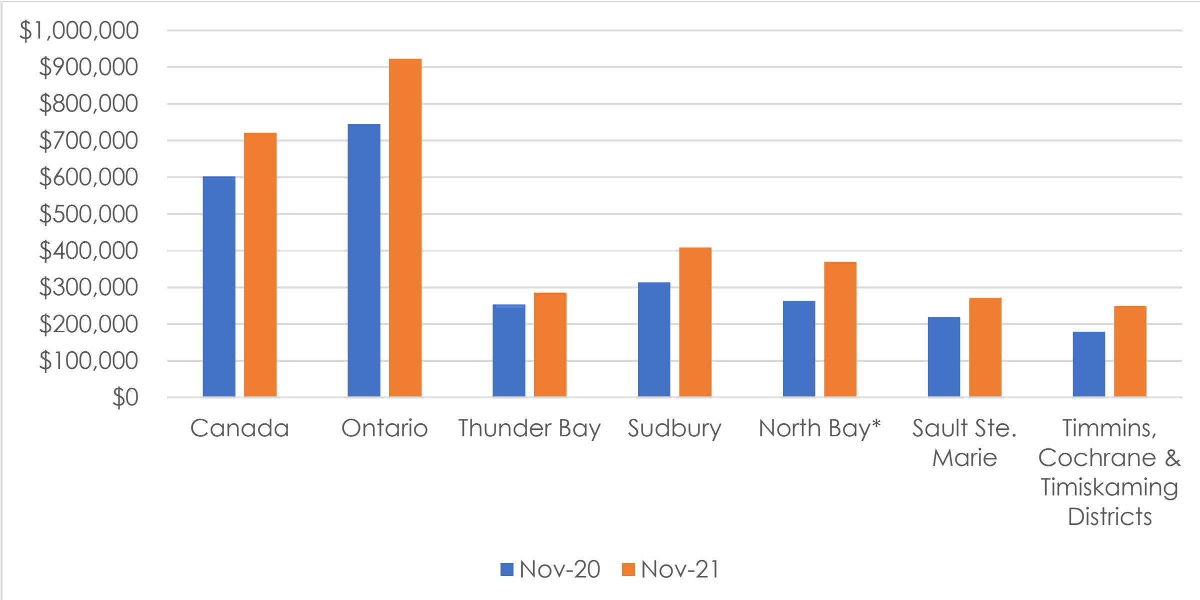
Figure 3: All Dwelling Type Completions for City of Thunder Bay, 1990-2021



Source: Author's calculations, CMHC Starts and Completions Survey.

Note: Data for all intended markets; all dwelling types: single, semi-detached, row, and apartment. Graph originally produced for Walleye Magazine, October 2021.

Figure 4: Home Prices across Northern Ontario, Ontario and Canada, 2020-2021



Source: The Canadian Real Estate Association, National Price Map.

Note: *Areas displaying MLS Home Price Index benchmark prices; all other areas display average prices.

MENTAL HEALTH AND GENERAL WELL-BEING

Burnt out.

Conversations around mental health and general well-being have strengthened during COVID19 and for good reason. In December of 2020, 38 per cent of Canadians rated their mental health as very good or excellent – it was 53 per cent in 2019 (Kronfli 2021, 4). Additionally, in 2021, 73 per cent of Ontario residents that were surveyed reported that they are experiencing some level of stress, and 63 per cent are worried about personal finances (ibid 2021, 7). Issues such as these can have significant consequences. In a report by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, it was outlined that these issues not only can strain health care resources, but it can also impact employers as productivity is hindered. As well, "without a healthy and productive workforce, business competitiveness will be undermined, with many organizations unable to fully contribute to their communities and the economy." (ibid 2021, 8).

As such, practices such as encouraging an open atmosphere, focusing on health as a part of the work culture, developing a mental health strategy in consultation with employees are important (ibid n.d., 11, 13).

POPULATION GROWTH

No discussion on the Northern Ontario labour market would be complete without acknowledging the impacts of the aging population. This trend is evidenced in the demographic dependency ratio (DDR), which is the number of workers to dependents (youth under 15 or seniors over 65). When one's population is retiring and not enough youth are entering the workforce to fill those jobs, the DDR increases. Ideally, one's DDR should be 2:1 – two workers for every one dependent. For the District of Thunder Bay, recent projections put the DDR at a high of 0.67 in the mid-2030s and then falling to 0.65 just after 2045 (see Figure 11). A DDR close to 0.5 is the goal. Encouraging newcomers and ensuring the domestic population is fully participating in the labour force will help ease this DDR.

In addition to attracting and retaining migrants, another trend that needs to be considered is the increase in the Indigenous population. It is projected that between 2015 and 2030, the total Indigenous population in the District of Thunder Bay will grow by 21.5 per cent (Moazzami 2019, 18). Drilling down to the working-age individuals, the District will see a 14.8 per cent rise during this time period (ibid 2019, 18). While this increase is good news, an important factor to consider is that educational achievement levels are lower for Indigenous peoples compared to the total population, which can impact future labour force productivity (ibid 2019, 20). As such, continuing to support educational pathways is critical.

DATA

Sitting down to crunch numbers is not a new concept, however, COVID19 has highlighted and underlined the need for quality data, particularly real-time data. It was noted in the consultations that having good data on hand is critical.

OTHER

In addition to the above topics, other items that were mentioned in the discussions included the importance of who is playing a role in the recovery.

Overall, the realities of today's labour market are a mix of old and new trends. However, what has not changed are the priorities to support employment, businesses, industry and so on for all communities in the NSWPB service area.

<u>NEW PLAYERS ON THE FIELD? INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS</u>

When participants were asked about new industries and occupations that could emerge in the local economy, the responses were varied and covered multiple sectors – some of which are not new but are certainly growth areas to watch. Examples include tourism, information technology and e-commerce, mining, and health care. According to the Prosperity and Growth Strategy for Northern Ontario (PGSNO), sectors such as these are prime opportunities for growth. To illustrate, mining and tourism, as well as forestry, steel, and agriculture are shifting to a more knowledge-based and innovation-focused environment (Canada 2018, 7). In mining, this is evidenced by the use of battery-electric vehicles in underground mines, which has the positive effect of reducing greenhouse gases (Xavier 2021, 9). This shift in mining is something that can be marketed to youth to get them excited about the industry, as stated in the consultation. Another opportunity that was highlighted was the potential for Northwestern Ontario to be a hub – whether it be for a lithium processing plant or a nuclear plant.

One sector that ought to be discussed, particularly given its proliferation during COVID19, is e-commerce. While COVID19 has contributed to the displacement of workers, particularly in occupations that are more public-facing, such as restaurants, there is also growth happening in other occupational areas simultaneously. For example, a clothing store may choose to sell their products online thereby creating a demand for workers in warehouses and delivery (Lund et al 2021, 71).

In a report by the Information and Communications Technology Council, it was estimated that by the end of 2022, over 2 million individuals will be employed in the digital economy – a growth rate that is faster than various other sectors and the overall economy (ICTC 2020, 7). However, a potential impediment to this growth in Northern Ontario is our digital infrastructure.

And on this note, the consultation participants stated that there were barriers to consider in sectors such as health care. For example, while virtual care is a way to break down access barriers in Northern Ontario[4], it does not mean that health care professionals in communities are no longer needed. Industry examples such as this highlight the importance of recognizing that there are opportunities to take advantage of for Northern Ontario but that not all communities are the same. Thinking strategically about what barriers could hold some communities back from leveraging economic opportunities will help to lift human capital across the board – not just for the few.

Third, in the discussions, it was stated that it is important to support the labour market participation and capacity building of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous-led businesses/organizations. In a 2020 Ontario Aboriginal Business Survey by the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB), responses called attention to the factors that were important to Indigenous business growth including financing, innovation, internet connectivity, and institutional supports (37-44). In terms of financing, the survey found, among other things, that personal savings was the major source for start-up and ongoing financing, and that 37 per cent of the Indigenous female business owners reported having a harder time accessing equity and capital compared to males (23%) (ibid 2020, 37-38).

[4] See Newbery and Malette 2020; McMillan Boyles et al 2020; Health Quality Ontario 2017.

Locally, organizations such as the Anishnawbe Business Professional Association, the PARO Centre for Women's Enterprise, Anishinabek Employment and Training Services (AETS), and ORIGIN, are working to support Indigenous entrepreneurship and business development as well as equipping individuals with the know-how and training for labour market success.

Finally, other items discussed during the consultations included type of work (contract vs full-time) and the impact of remote work on local organizations.

Spotlight on Mining

Mining is an industry targeted for future opportunity, investment and recovery. The associated benefits of this are creating jobs in communities, new businesses, innovative practices, and possibly the creation of a hub for Thunder Bay. As well, given the pandemic, there are natural opportunities for the health care sector and mining to work together, particularly on the health care restrictions front.

However, there are several influencing factors to consider as part of encouraging growth in the industry. The first is making strong, tailored efforts into educating and communicating with the younger generation about industry opportunities and successes and thinking about what is holding back efforts so far. It was noted that industry as well as local government can be of assistance for education and recruitment.

A second and related point is to shift how education and training is delivered. For example, incorporating more training and mentorship into the industry, shifting industry thinking about qualifications, and encouraging cross-training so people have a wider set of skills. It was stated that progress still needs to be made on the training front. An additional point was made about the provincial government contributing by modernizing apprenticeships.

Third, some individuals in the younger generation may have a different relationship to work than the older generation. For example, one participant stated younger individuals may not be interested in a fly-in/fly-out lifestyle, which translates to a need for changes in training. They may also not want the same type of work as the older generation, which impacts succession planning if youth are choosing not to enter the mining workforce.

The fourth point is on staffing and recruitment. There were several points on this front, the first is that personnel will be needed to fill in-demand jobs now and in the future. Tied into this is who and from where is this labour supply coming. It was noted that some companies are having a difficult time finding people while others not so much. Furthermore, it was stated that attraction and retention involve multiple actors including mining companies. For companies, this could mean implementing fixed term contracts as opposed to full-time, as well as offering flexible hours.

An additional point on staffing and recruitment had to do with who is being recruited. Aside from the youth cohort, the growing Indigenous population presents an opportunity for companies. Targeting vulnerable groups as a part of recruitment efforts is also an option. On the first point, one observation from the consultations is that there are positive examples of Indigenous employment at mines, however, work still needs to be done on the engagement piece. As such, working with Indigenous communities was one of the stated roles that industry needs to carry out.

On a related note, it is important to think about the various types of jobs needed in a mine – contractors, engineering, construction, and so on. This ties into the first point about educating youth about the types of opportunities available in the industry.

As identified in the consultations, the workforce priorities identified align with the above – workforce training, youth recruitment, staffing, and attraction and retention. Other priorities were infrastructure investments – whether it be municipal or housing. Both of these can impact successful attraction and retention efforts. Additionally, it was stated that it is important to leverage the human capital from projects that are winding down.

Finally, while some specific roles were identified above, others were also highlighted. For companies, this included collaboration and engagement as well as focusing on basic infrastructure for retention. For the provincial government, its roles include workforce payroll and ensuring foundational infrastructure is in place so as not to impede projects moving forward. Additionally, organizations like the NSWPB operate locally and regionally, which is valuable, especially when bringing players together.

WE EACH HAVE A PART TO PLAY

The economic needs and realities of one community do not always translate to another. Indeed, the tools used, and the priorities identified, will vary. As such, the participants were asked: "When thinking about strengthening the economic health of communities, what is the role of: Government? Your organization/industry? Civil society? The public?"

The answers were varied, ranging from business supports, providing quality data, and addressing education and training gaps for Indigenous peoples to infrastructure investments, engagement, and wage subsidies – just to name a few. Despite this variety, there were some areas that overlapped between organizations such as attraction and retention, education and training, and collaboration/engagement. Finding alignments between actors can be beneficial as it could lead to collaborative projects and/or sharing of resources and information.

A second observation was the impact of certain roles on roles elsewhere. For example, investment in housing can support attraction and retention efforts, or supporting education and training may lead to a call for greater quality data. While these statements may seem obvious, they make an important point about knowing who does what and for whom. And this is where asset mapping can step in. An asset map is a tool that catalogues services, resources, and strengths in a given community (RHIhub n.d.). One example is the Vancouver Food Asset Map developed by Vancouver Coastal Health. In an interactive GIS map, a user can choose from a drop-down menu of services and resources in the community such as "Kitchen or Food Programs", "Free or Low-Cost Grocery Items", and "Neighbourhood Food Networks" (Vancouver Coastal Health n.d.). Closer to home, there is the 211 Ontario North program that maintains a more comprehensive list of assets across Northern Ontario communities –

Employment/Training, Homelessness, Youth, Indigenous Peoples, etc. (211 Ontario North n.d.).

WORKFORCE PRIORITIES MOVING FORWARD

To end each session, participants were asked the following: "From the perspective of your organization/industry, what are the short and medium-term workforce priorities going forward? Why?" The answers were grouped into six categories.

- **Data**: Alongside communicating data to groups such as employers, several participants were focused on data collection and analysis to fill in data gaps.
- **Engagement and Communication**: Whether it be simply communicating the services an organization can offer to their community, or engaging with communities to encourage buy-in, etc.
- **Infrastructure**: Municipal infrastructure and housing were noted priorities. On the housing front, as mentioned earlier, is critical for the attraction and retention of individuals in communities. It can also play an important role in one's job success.
- **Building a Strong Labour Force**: Several participants made note that there is a need to address the current and future labour market supply and demand issues. With respect to demand, this referred not only to occupational demand, but to the need of matching skills to jobs in demand. In relation to this, active and appropriate attraction and retention steps need to be made. Finally, several participants discussed a focus on training, whether it be helping students transition into the workforce, the need for holistic training, stabilizing industry training models, or ensuring we are training local individuals over relying heavily on a transient workforce.
- **Supporting Businesses:** Given the changing relationship that some people are having to the workforce, there is a need to think about how employers can best manage this transition. Additionally, how can we work on expanding monetary supports beyond a handful of sectors, and can we support employers through an asset map and assist them with pandemic policies?
- **Planning:** Developing strategic plans and conducting regular assessments to measure progress.

Overall, the consultations highlighted that while the COVID19 pandemic brought about some new developments, there are some recurring issues and trends that have been a part of the labour market policy landscape for some time. However, this is not to say that these areas have been ignored. They are layered and tie into other factors. Take for example Indigenous education and training gaps. Organizations like AETS or ORIGIN are working to support progress, but there are unique barriers that contribute to the issue such as access to reliable internet, education delivery, reliable funding, and gaps in the coordination of and access to services and programs (Grewal 2018, 6-8).

As outlined in the Action Item section of the report, engagement with key players through these consultations, as well as in other instances, are important for identifying trends and growth areas for the labour market and economy in general. These discussions can also help fill in knowledge gaps and provide context to statistical data.

Economic and Labour Market Data

As mentioned in the consultations, good and reliable data is critical. With it, communities, organizations, governments, and individuals can make informed decisions – whether it be a student wondering about future in demand jobs or a municipality measuring the economic impact of a mill. The data in this section focuses on a range of indicators, from population estimates and employment rates to occupational breakdowns by sex. These indicators can provide insight into the labour market and what next steps NSWPB can take.

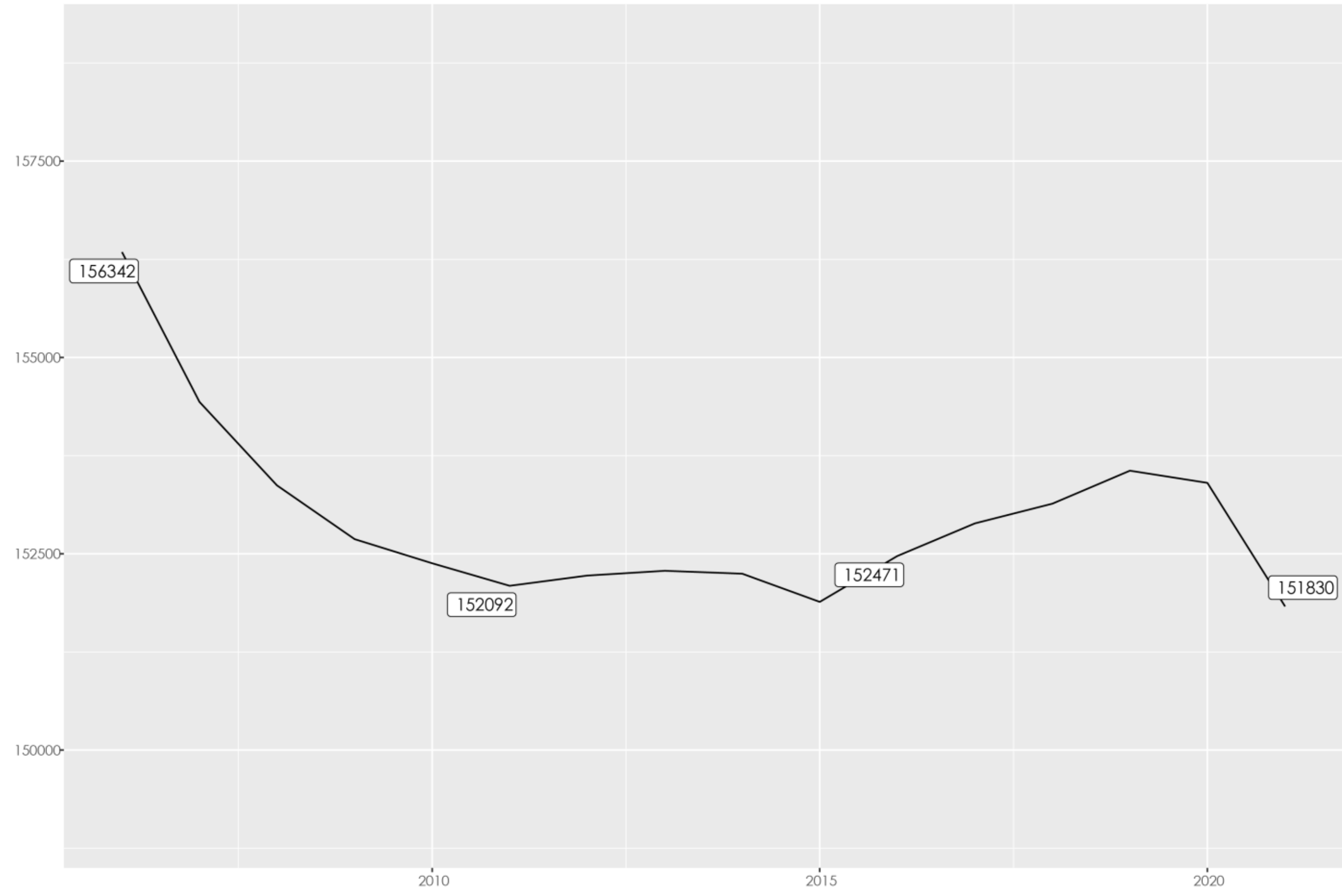
POPULATION

Figure 5 below illustrates the total annual population estimates of the communities within the NSWPB region. Compared to the previous Local Labour Market report by NSWPB[5], the population has declined recently despite a gradual increase since 2015. This decline can be traced to influences of migration flows (Figure 6).

Regarding the Indigenous population, in 2016 the total stood at 21,755 (Statistics Canada 2017). Unfortunately, the updated census population estimates for Indigenous peoples in Canada won't be available until September 2022 (Statistics Canada 2021).

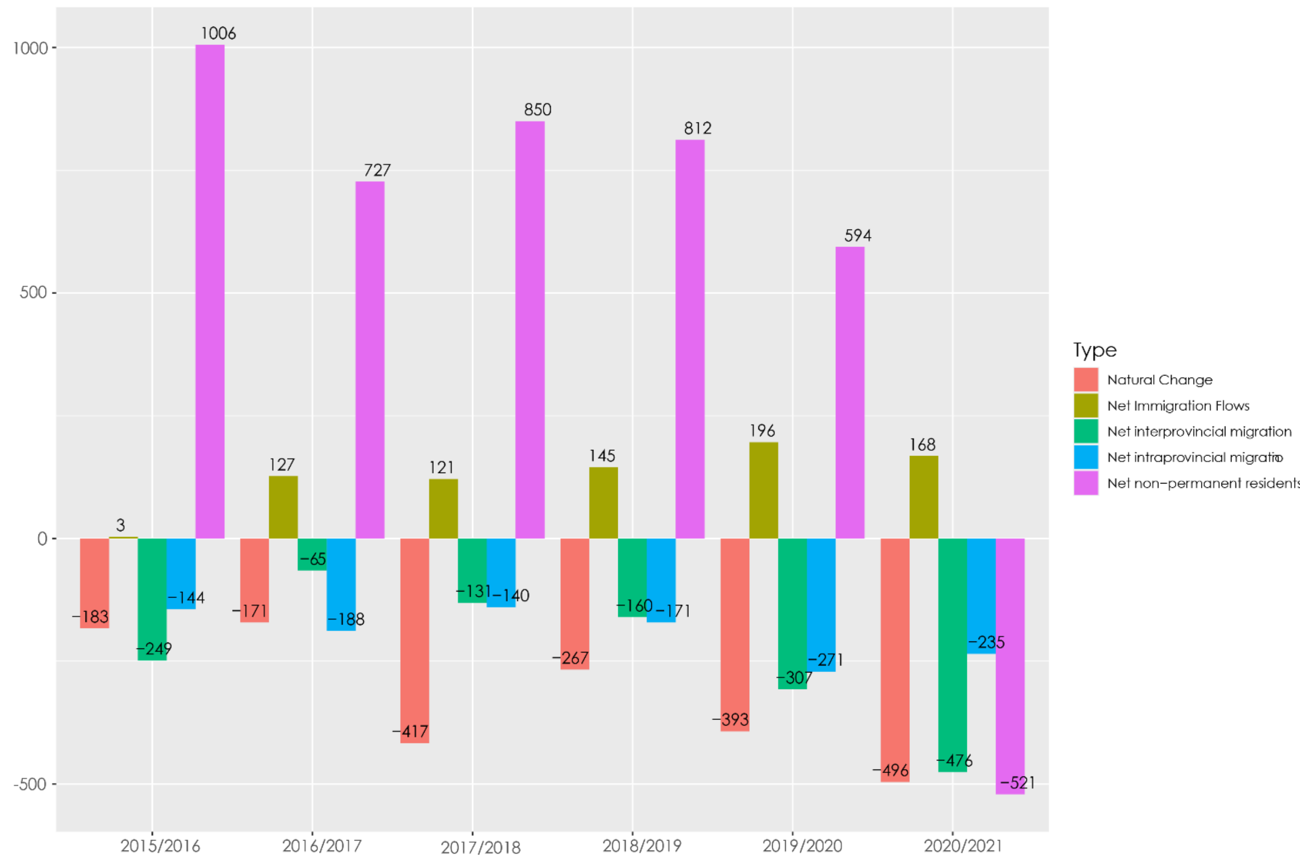
[5] See "On the Road to Recovery: Becoming A Superior Workforce post COVID-19" (NSWPB 2021).

Figure 5: Annual Population Estimates of the NSWPB Region, 2006-2021



Source: Author calculations, Population estimates, July 1, by census subdivision, 2016 boundaries Table: 17-10-0142-01.
Note: Data for Thunder Bay District minus Osnaburgh and Ojibway Nation of Saugeen plus Ring of Fire communities.

Figure 6: Components of Population Growth, Thunder Bay District, 2015-2021



Source: Author calculations, Components of population change by census division, 2016 boundaries Table: 17-10-0140-01.

On the topic of immigration, an interesting observation is the percentage of each immigration generation who live in the Thunder Bay area. In other words, are the newcomers that come to Thunder Bay first, second or third generation? From 2001 to 2016, the majority were third generation or more (73 per cent in 2016) while only a comparatively smaller percentage of people were first generation (9 per cent in 2016). What this indicates is that from 2001 to 2016, first generation immigrants were less interested in coming to Thunder Bay (Statistics Canada, various census).

Of new immigrants that do come to Thunder Bay, most are temporary residents – those holding a study or a work permit. Nevertheless, we see a steady increase of those with temporary status and permanent resident admissions.

Table 1: Study Permit and Work Permit Holders for Work Purposes by Intended Destination, 2013-2019

District	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Thunder Bay	935	930	1,115	1,480	1,930	2,570	2,725
Northwestern Ontario	1,295	1,270	1,470	1,815	2,390	3,050	3,190
Ontario			125,970	153,535	184,100	205,970	231,870

Source: IRCC, CDO, Temporary Residents, January 31, 2020 Data; Canada - Study permit holders by province/territory of intended destination, gender and year in which permit(s) became effective, January 2015 - July 2021. IRCC, July 31, 2021; Canada - Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) work permit holders by province/territory of intended destination and year in which permit(s) became effective, January 2015 - July 2021. IRCC, July 31, 2021.

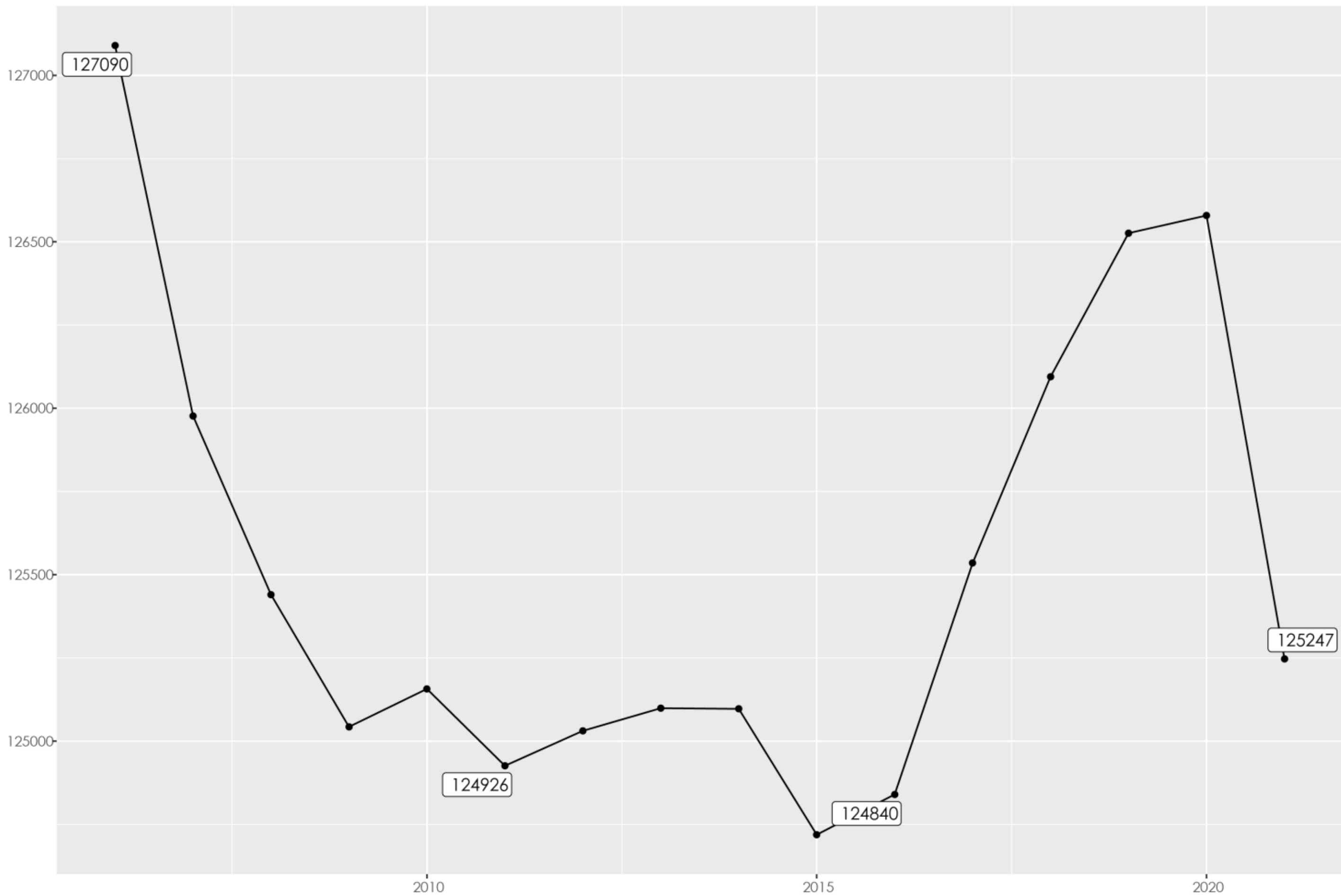
Table 2: Admissions of Permanent Residents by Intended Destination, 2013-2019

District	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Thunder Bay	125	140	160	295	240	330	420
Northwestern Ontario	170	210	230	385	330	420	520
Ontario			103,625	110,035	111,955	137,440	153,395

Source: IRCC, CDO, Permanent Residents, January 31, 2020 Data; Canada - Admissions of Permanent Residents by Province/Territory of Intended Destination and Immigration Category, January 2015 - July 2021. IRCC, July 31, 2021.

Figure 7 shows a similar trend to Figure 5. Given how the City of Thunder Bay is the largest city in the District (and second in all of Northern Ontario), this is no surprise. What is interesting is that we do not see this dramatic drop replicated in the next ten largest communities in the Thunder Bay District (Figure 8). Of course, that is not to say that the loss of residents, whether it be due to age or out-migration, does not have some impact on smaller communities.

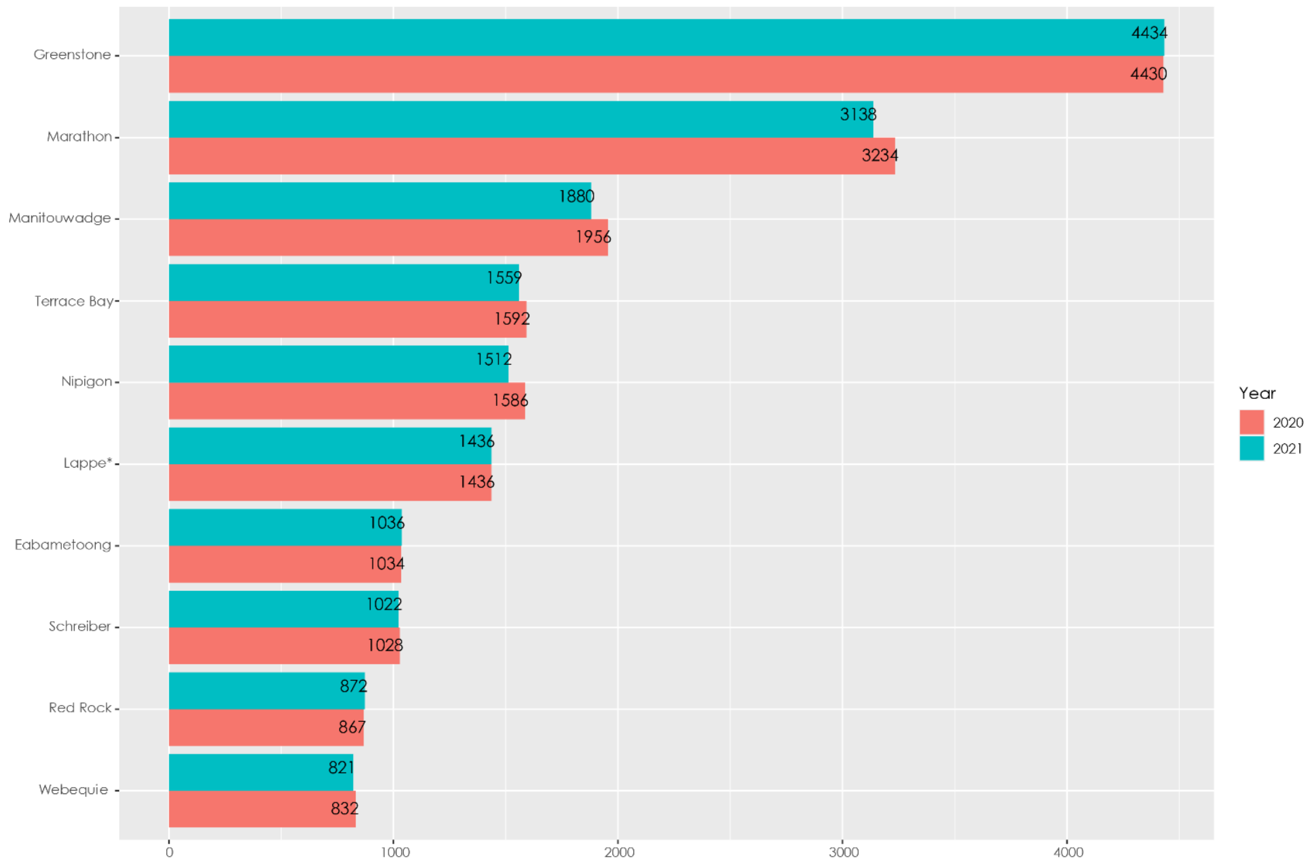
Figure 7: Annual Population Estimates of Thunder Bay Census Metropolitan Area, 2006-2021



Source: Author calculations, Statistics Canada Table 17-10-0135-01.

Note: A census metropolitan area "is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more must live in the core." (Statistics Canada 2018).

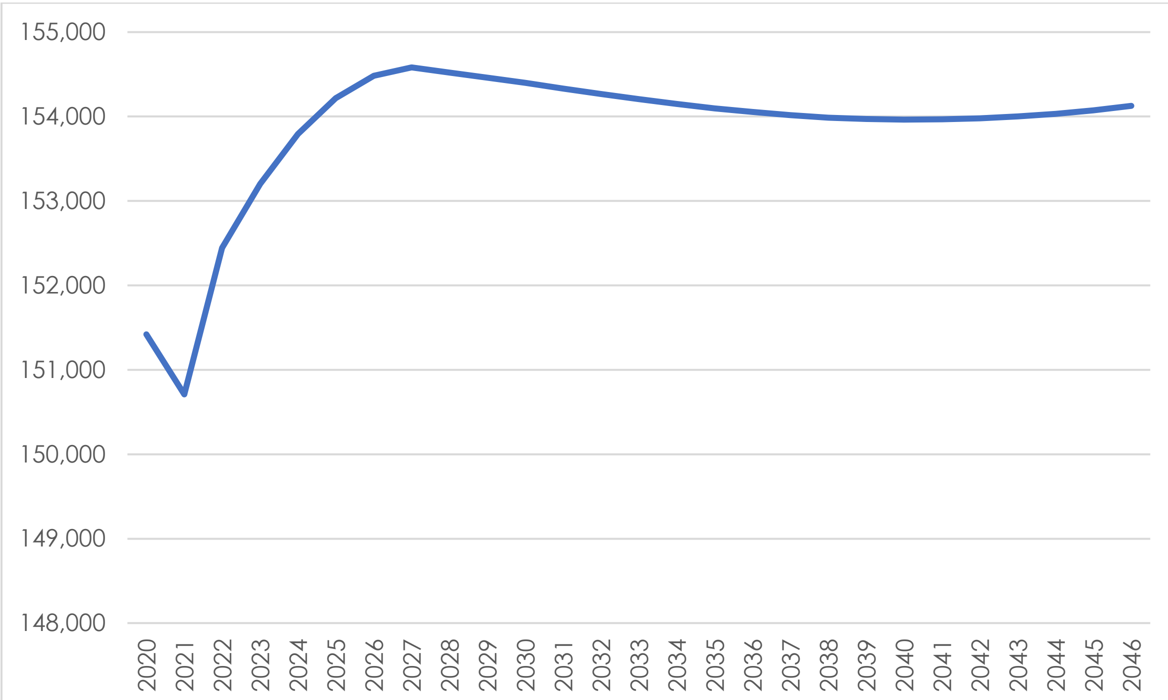
Figure 8: Population Estimates of the 10 Largest Communities Outside of the City of Thunder Bay, 2020-2021



Source: Population estimates, July 1, by census subdivision, 2016 boundaries Table: 17-10-0142-01.

Now, it doesn't appear that the overall slump will last for long. In Figure 9 we see a sharp increase for the District starting in 2022. This could be due to resumption of migration flows into the area as COVID19 hampered this as shown in Figure 6 (Ontario Government 2021b). Similar upward growth is expected in the other two Northwestern Ontario districts of Rainy River and Kenora. However, unlike Thunder Bay, these two Districts do not level off (Ontario Government 2021c).

Figure 9: Population Projections for the District of Thunder Bay, 2020-2046

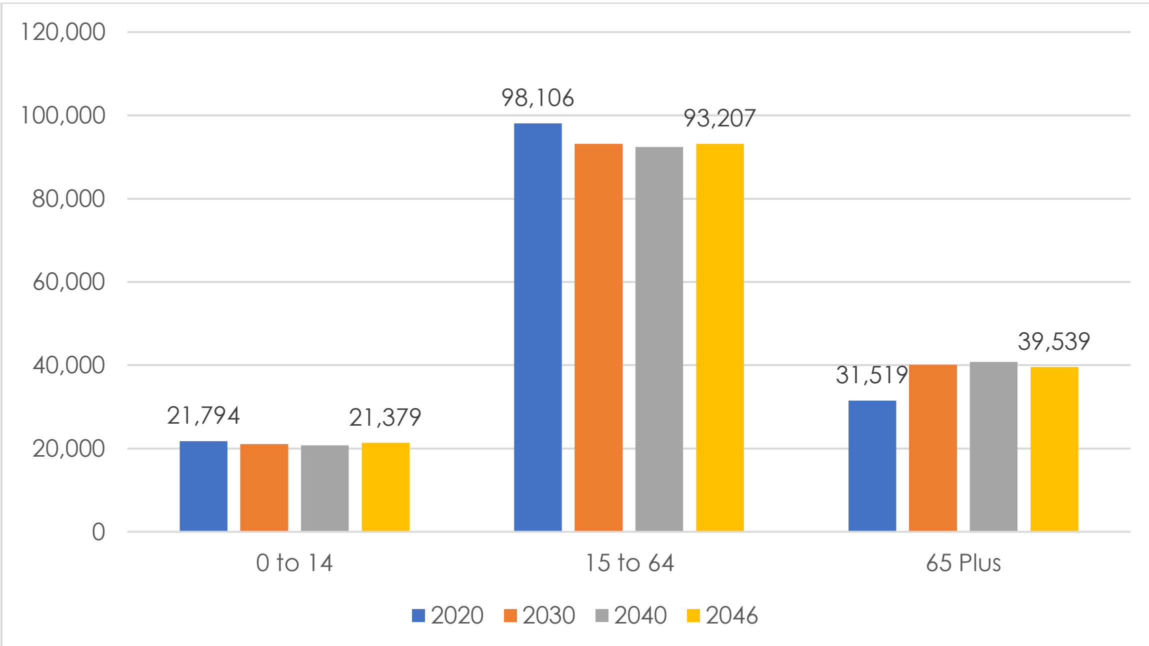


Source: Author calculations, Statistics Canada for 2020 and Ontario Ministry of Finance projections (Spring 2021), Population projections by age and sex for the 49 census divisions.

Figure 10 below illustrates population projections for the District of Thunder Bay broken down by three age groups. In the working age population (15-64) there is a tiny increase between 2040 to 2046 while those aged 65 will experience a small decline during that same period. One potentially troublesome observation is the small size of the youth cohort (0-14). As those in the workforce reach retirement age and are no longer participating in the labour force, this will mean many jobs in demand for people.

When taking a closer look year-over-year, the data shows that the working-age population and young dependents (0-14) gradually decline in the early 2020s, but then are back up in the mid to late 2030s. The number of seniors (65+) experiences a gradual incline starting in 2020s, levels off in the 2030s and then experiences a slight decline starting in the 2040s. It is likely a portion of that 'scoop' near the late 2030s for the 15-64 age cohort reflects the youth that are entering the labour force.

Figure 10: Population Projections for Thunder Bay District by Age, 2020-2046

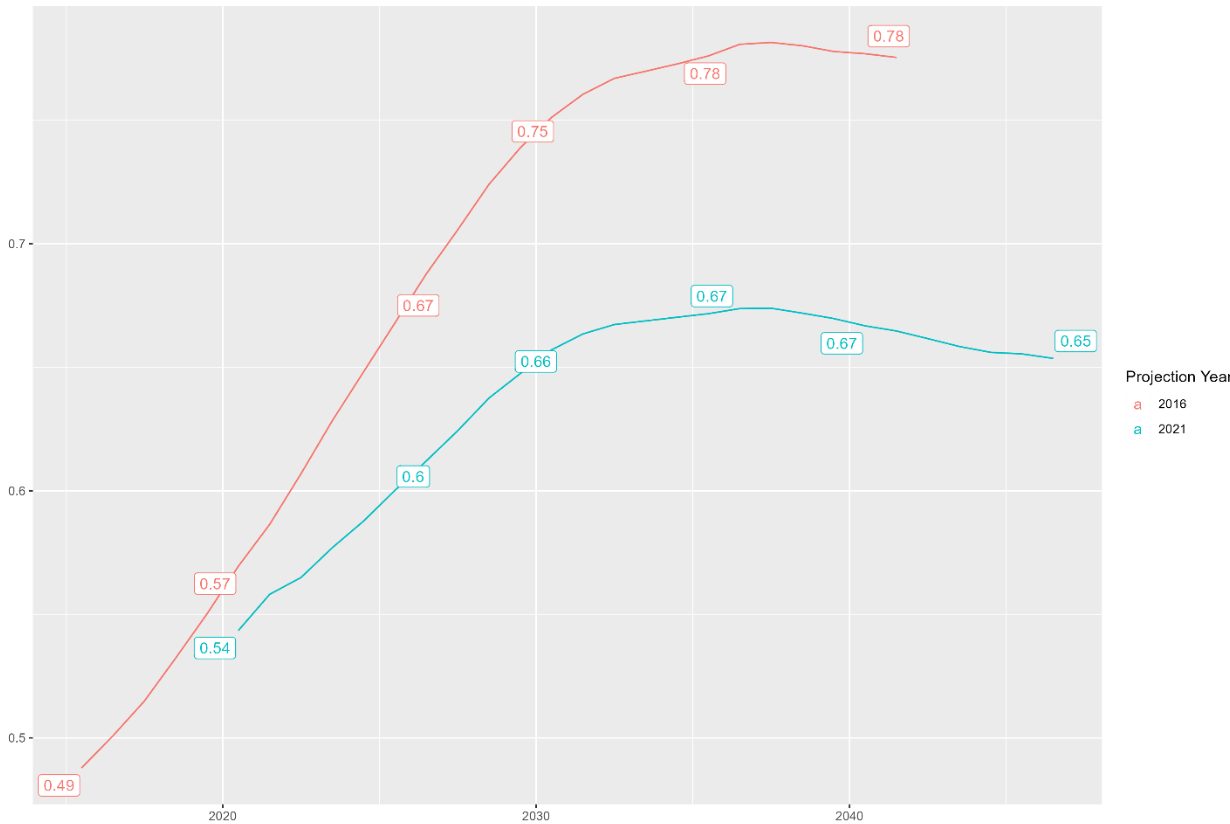


Source: Author calculations, Statistics Canada for 2020 and Ontario Ministry of Finance projections (Spring 2021), Population projections by age and sex for the 49 census divisions.

One of the reasons it is important to understand age groups within the population is to measure the burden on those in the workforce. This 'burden' is what is known as the demographic dependency ratio (DDR). As outlined earlier, an ideal scenario would be two workers per one dependent. When there is a higher ratio of dependents, it can put a strain on those in the workforce to fund services like public education or health care services.

Figure 11 shows that compared to the 2016 projections, the DDR estimates for the District of Thunder Bay have lowered significantly when working from the latest 2021 population data. If immigration can return to levels prior to the pandemic, this could be an influencing factor on the DDR projections.

Figure 11: Demographic Dependency Ratio Projections in Thunder Bay District, 2016 vs 2021 projections



Source: Author calculations, Statistics Canada for 2020 and Ontario Ministry of Finance projections (Spring 2021), Population projections by age and sex for the 49 census divisions.

LABOUR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

Armed with an understanding of the current and projected population estimates, this portion of the report will outline a range of characteristics of the labour force. To start, Table 3 illustrates the number of individuals within the labour force as well as the participation, employment, and unemployment rates for the census metropolitan area of Thunder Bay. Unfortunately, this annual data is not made available for all municipalities or the entire District.

The number of individuals in the labour force since 2006 has fluctuated within a few thousand people or so, recently dipping in 2020. As well, we would naturally see an increase in unemployment due to COVID19.

Table 3: Labour Force Statistics, Thunder Bay Census Metropolitan Area, 2006-2020

	2006	2011	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Population	104,000	104,500	104,700	104,800	104,800	104,700	104,300
Labour force	66,200	64,800	64,500	65,200	67,100	65,400	62,700
Not in labour force	37,800	39,700	40,200	39,600	37,700	39,400	41,700
Participation rate	63.7	62	61.6	62.2	64	62.5	60.1
Employment rate	58.8	57.7	57.4	58.7	60.8	58.9	55.1
Unemployment rate	7.6	6.8	6.8	5.7	5.1	5.5	8.3

Source: Author calculations, Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, annual, inactive Table: 14-10-0096-01.

Tables 4 and 5 below outline total full- and part-time employment in the census metropolitan area of Thunder Bay over the past 20 years, as well as numbers broken down by sex. In two of the selected seven years below, the number of females employed has been greater than men – but not by much. For the most part, employment between sexes tends to be roughly the same. Females tend to be found more in part-time employment positions compared to men. As noted elsewhere in this report, COVID19 has had a significant impact on females given that they have typically been found in public-facing occupations (see Figure 14 for a breakdown of occupations by sex).

Table 4: Employment Status Statistics, Thunder Bay Census Metropolitan Area, 2001-2020

Employment	2001	2011	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Employed	61,600	60,300	60,100	61,500	63,700	61,700	57,500
Employed (Males)	32,900	30,900	30,000	30,100	32,300	31,600	29,200
Employed (Females)	28,800	29,500	30,200	31,400	31,400	30,200	28,300
Full-Time Employment	48,200	46,500	46,600	47,400	49,500	49,300	46,100
Part-time Employment	13,400	13,800	13,500	14,100	14,200	12,500	11,400

Full-Time as a % of all Employment	78.2	77.1	77.5	77.1	77.7	79.9	80.2

Source: Author calculations, Statistics Canada Labour Force Characteristics by Census Metropolitan Area, Annual Table 14-10-0096-01.

Table 5: Employment Status by Sex, Thunder Bay Census Metropolitan Area, 2001-2020

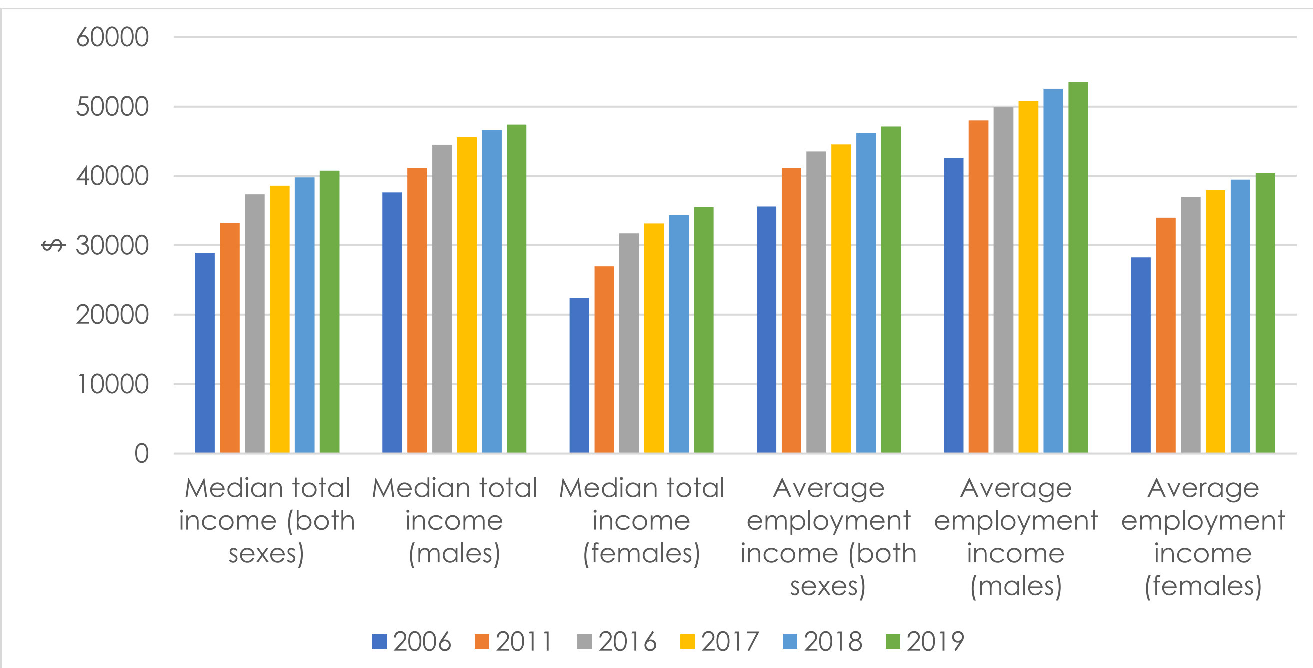
Employment	2001	2011	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Full-time Employment (Males)	28,700	26,700	25,400	25,600	27,200	27,400	25,400
Full-Time Employment (Females)	19,500	19,900	21,200	21,900	22,300	21,900	20,800
Part-time Employment (Males)	4,200	4,200.0	4,500	4,600	5,100	4,200	3,800
Part-time Employment (Females)	9,200	9,600	9,000	9,500	9,100	8,300	7,500
Males as a % of Full-time Employment	59.5	57.4	54.5	54.0	54.9	55.6	55.1
Females as a % of Full-time Employment	40.5	42.8	45.5	46.2	45.1	44.4	45.1
Males as a % of Part-time Employment	31.3	30.4	33.3	32.6	35.9	33.6	33.3
Females as a % of Part-time Employment	68.7	69.6	66.7	67.4	64.1	66.4	65.8

Source: Author calculations, Statistics Canada Labour Force Characteristics by Census Metropolitan Area, Annual Table 14-10-0096-01.

According to Figure 12, total incomes for both males and females have been increasing since 2006. Another noticeable observation is that the income of females is lower than that of males. This difference can be attributed to a variety of factors such as part-time vs full-time work, occupation, industry, education, and demographics, to name a few (Pay Equity Office n.d.). While the wage gap has steadily declined since 1998, females still earn 89 cents to every dollar earned by a male (ibid n.d.).

In a 2019 study by Statistics Canada, it was found that when considering the factors that explained why the wage gap shrunk from 1998 to 2018, the entire gap could not be explained (Pelletier et al 2019, 7). This can be due to "the impact of any measurable wage-related characteristics that were not able to be included in the particular study"[6], as well as unobservable wage-related characteristics such as gender-based wage discrimination, work motivation, societal expectations, etc. (ibid 2019, 6).

Figure 12: Median and Average Total Income by Sex, Thunder Bay Census Metropolitan Area, 2006-2019



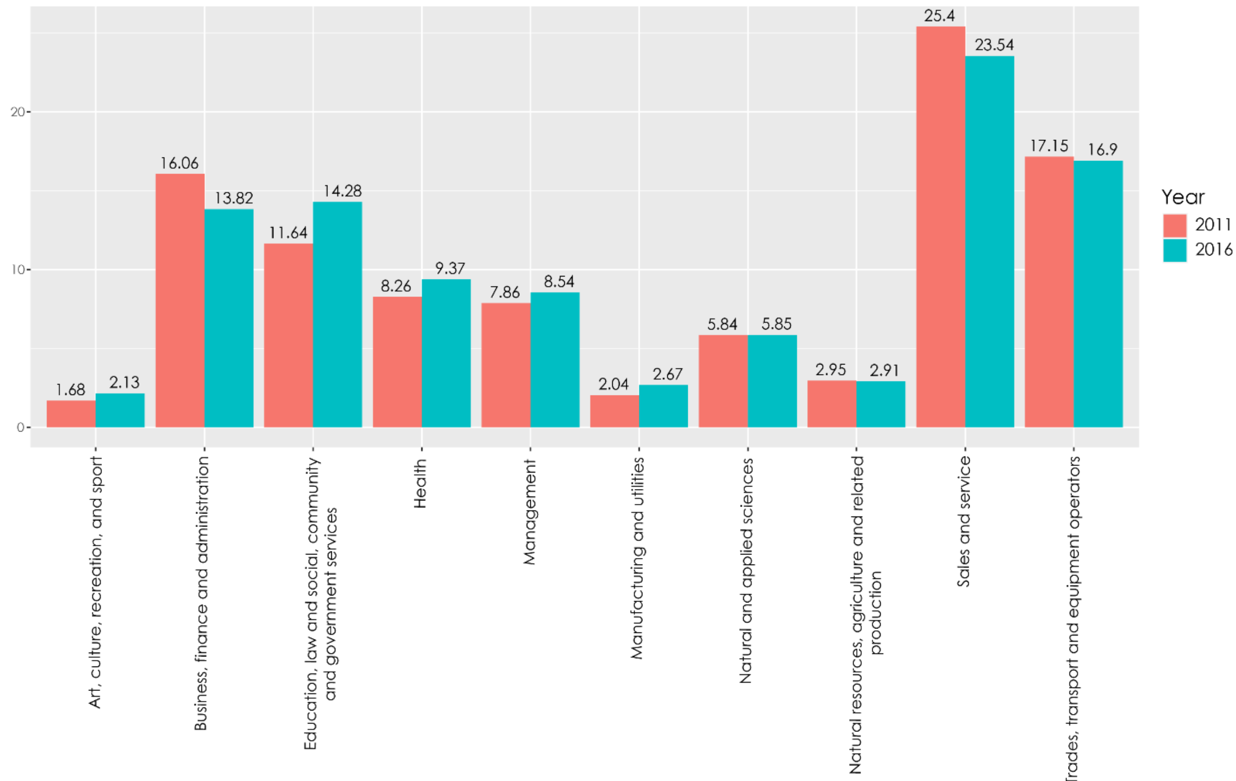
Source: Author calculations, Statistics Canada Labour Force Labour Income Profile of Tax Filers by Sex, Annual. Table 11-10-0031-01.

[6] In the study by Statistics Canada, they point to the example of total work experience. The authors state that females experience more work interruptions due to caregiving responsibilities, which they note is "an important component of gender differences in annual or lifetime earnings and has been shown to partially account for differences in hourly wages" (Pelletier et al 2019, 6).

Figure 13 illustrates the share of the workforce in the NSWPB region in ten occupational categories. The national occupational classification, or NOC for short, is a way to categorize occupations based on the type of work involved. For example, a nurse falls under the "Health" category. Any health occupation will start with the number "3" so a nurse's NOC is 3012. These codes are also associated with skill levels from 0 to D, with 0 usually tied to management levels positions. D level occupations do not typically require higher education. A nurse would fall under skill level A, which usually calls for a university degree (Government of Canada 2022). Understanding the codes and the associated skill levels can help decision makers plan for current and future labour market needs.

In the NSWPB region, 23.5 percent of the workforce is in sales and service-related occupations, followed by trades, transport and equipment operators. When thinking back to the consultation discussions and the displacement of workers in some occupations, we may see a shift when new census data is released in 2022.

Figure 13: Share of the Workforce by National Occupation Classification, NSWPB Region, 2011-2016

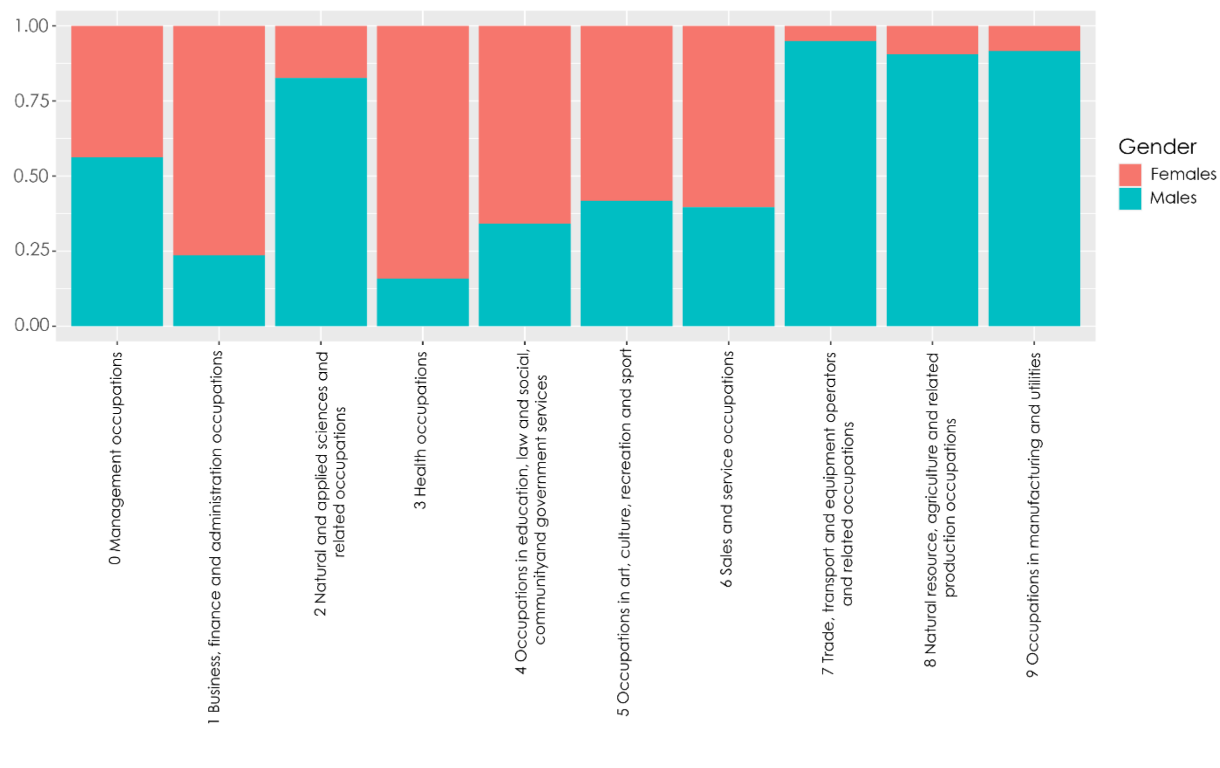


Source: Author calculations, 2011 National Household Survey: Data tables Place of Work Status (5), Industry - North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) 2007 (102), Sex (3) and Age Groups (11) for the Employed Labour Force Aged 15 Years and Over, in Private Households of Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations, 2011 National Household Survey Catalogue number: 99-012-X2011030; Data tables, 2016 Census Place of Work Status (5), Industry - North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) 2012 (21), Occupation - National Occupational Classification (NOC) 2016 (11) and Sex (3) for the Employed Labour Force Aged 15 Years and Over in Private Households of Canada, Provinces and Territories, Census Divisions and Census Subdivisions, 2016 Census - 25% Sample Data Catalogue number : 98-400-X2016321

A few observations can be made about Figure 14. The first, and most obvious, is that males are overwhelmingly found in trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations, followed by manufacturing and utilities occupations, and natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations. Natural and applied sciences and related occupations come in at fourth place. There are, of course, programs and supports in Ontario and Canada that are working to encourage women into occupations such as the trades and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics).

On the other side of the coin, women are more often found in occupations such as health, business, finance and administration, as well as education, law and social, community and government services. Furthermore, it is notable that when it comes to management occupations, while there are slightly more males than females, it is somewhat close to 50 per cent between the two sexes.

Figure 14: Sex Breakdown of Occupations, NSWPB region, 2016



Source: Author calculations, Place of Work Status (5), Industry - North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) 2012 (21), Occupation - National Occupational Classification (NOC) 2016 (11) and Sex (3) for the Employed Labour Force Aged 15 Years and Over, in Private Households Source: Table 98-400-X2016321.

In terms of industry, Table 6 illustrates that three of the five biggest industries by number of jobs have not changed between 2001 and 2016. One industry that dropped dramatically was that of manufacturing going from 9,500 in 2001 to 3,975 in 2016.

Table 6: Thunder Bay District Jobs by Industry, 2001-2016

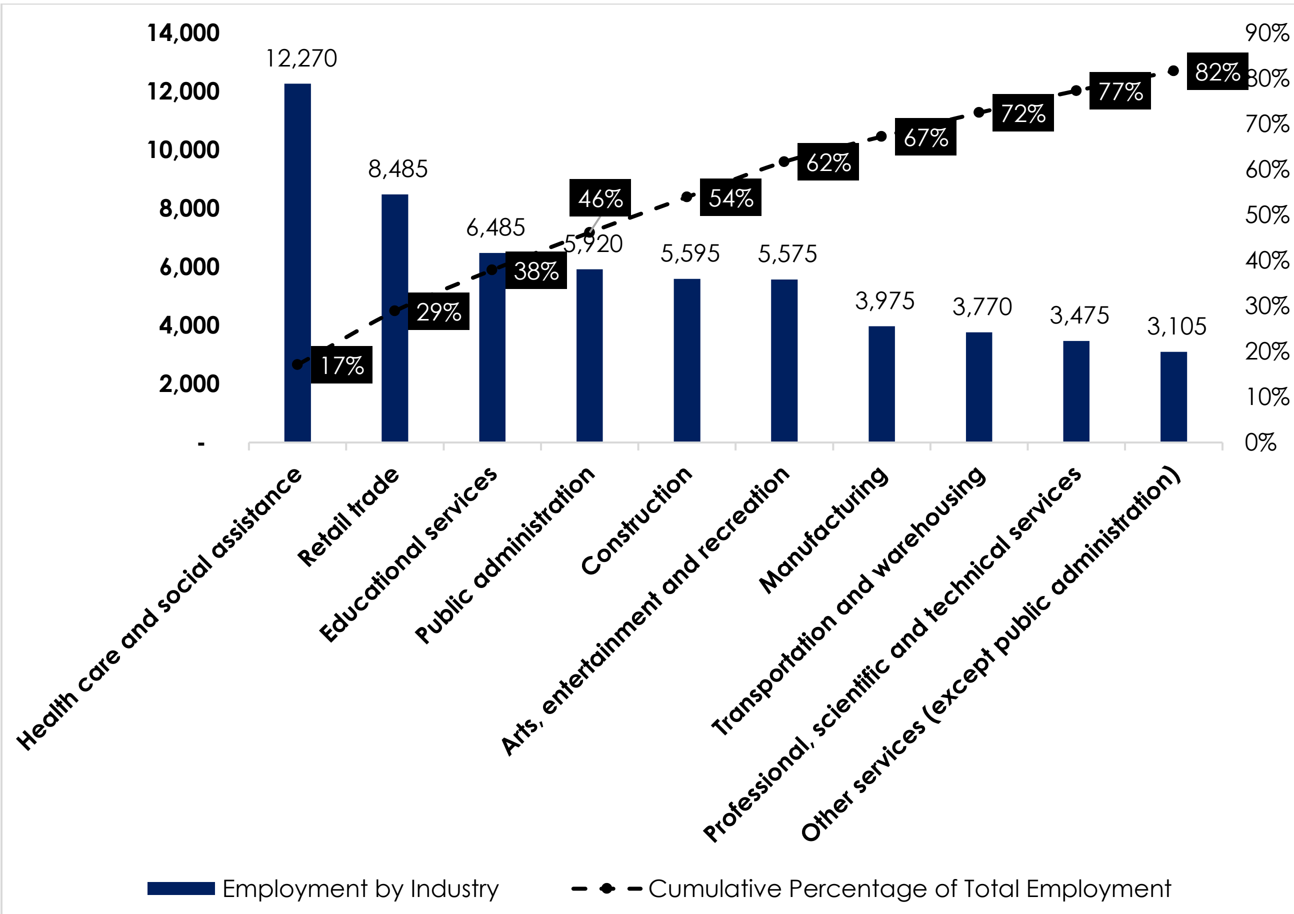
Jobs by Industry	2001	2011	2016
Health care and social assistance	**9,560**	**11,110**	**12,270**
Retail trade	**8,685**	**8,620**	**8,485**
Educational services	**5,785**	**6,540**	**6,485**
Public administration	5,360	**7,450**	**5,920**
Construction	4,220	4,830	**5,595**
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	**5,985**	**5,545**	5,575
Manufacturing	**9,545**	3,745	3,975
Transportation and warehousing	5,075	4,000	3,770
Professional, scientific and technical services	2,670	3,475	3,475
Other services (except public administration)	3,570	3,265	3,105
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	2,495	2,200	2,205
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	1,785	2,035	1,770
Wholesale trade	2,075	1,870	1,700
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	2,800	1,505	1,685
Finance and insurance	1,750	1,865	1,520
Accommodation and food services	1,435	1,580	1,330
Information and cultural industries	1,470	1,365	1,315
Real estate and rental and leasing	1,190	1,065	895
Utilities	820	820	760
Management of companies and enterprises	20	10	20
Total	**76,295**	**72,895**	**71,855**

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2001-2016.

As shown in Figure 15 below, ten industries account for 82 per cent of total employment in the Thunder Bay District. With this in mind, let's compare against future in demand occupations. According to a 2020 report for the City of Thunder Bay, several occupations in the health care sector were predicted to experience a high rate of job growth between 2018 and 2026 (physicians, dentists, optometrists, and other health diagnosing/treating professionals), as well as some science related occupations (Ross 2020, 10).

In terms of occupations that are projected to experience the highest estimated retirement rates between 2016 and 2026, they include managers in transportation as well as contractors and supervisors, industrial, electrical and construction trades and related workers (ibid 2020, 11).

Figure 15: Top 10 Employers and their Cumulative Employment in Thunder Bay District, 2016

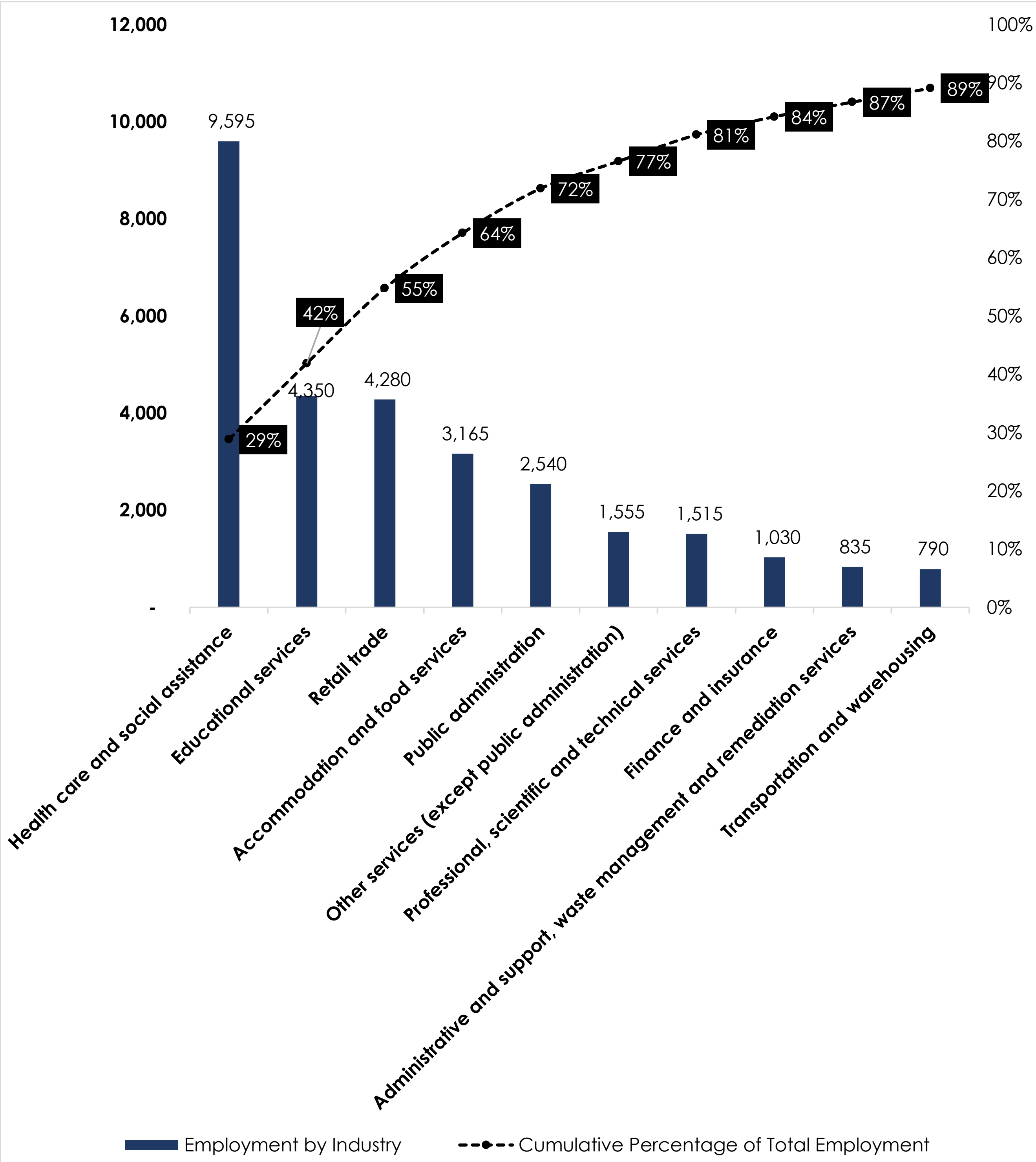


Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016.

When comparing the top ten employer industries in Thunder Bay by sex, we can see that seven out of the ten sectors are shared between both cohorts. Additionally, where health care and education are the top two industries for females, they rank lower for males. Another observation is that there is a significant difference between the number of females employed in health care and education – 9,595 to 4,350 respectively. From there, employment totals in the remaining industries gradually decreased.

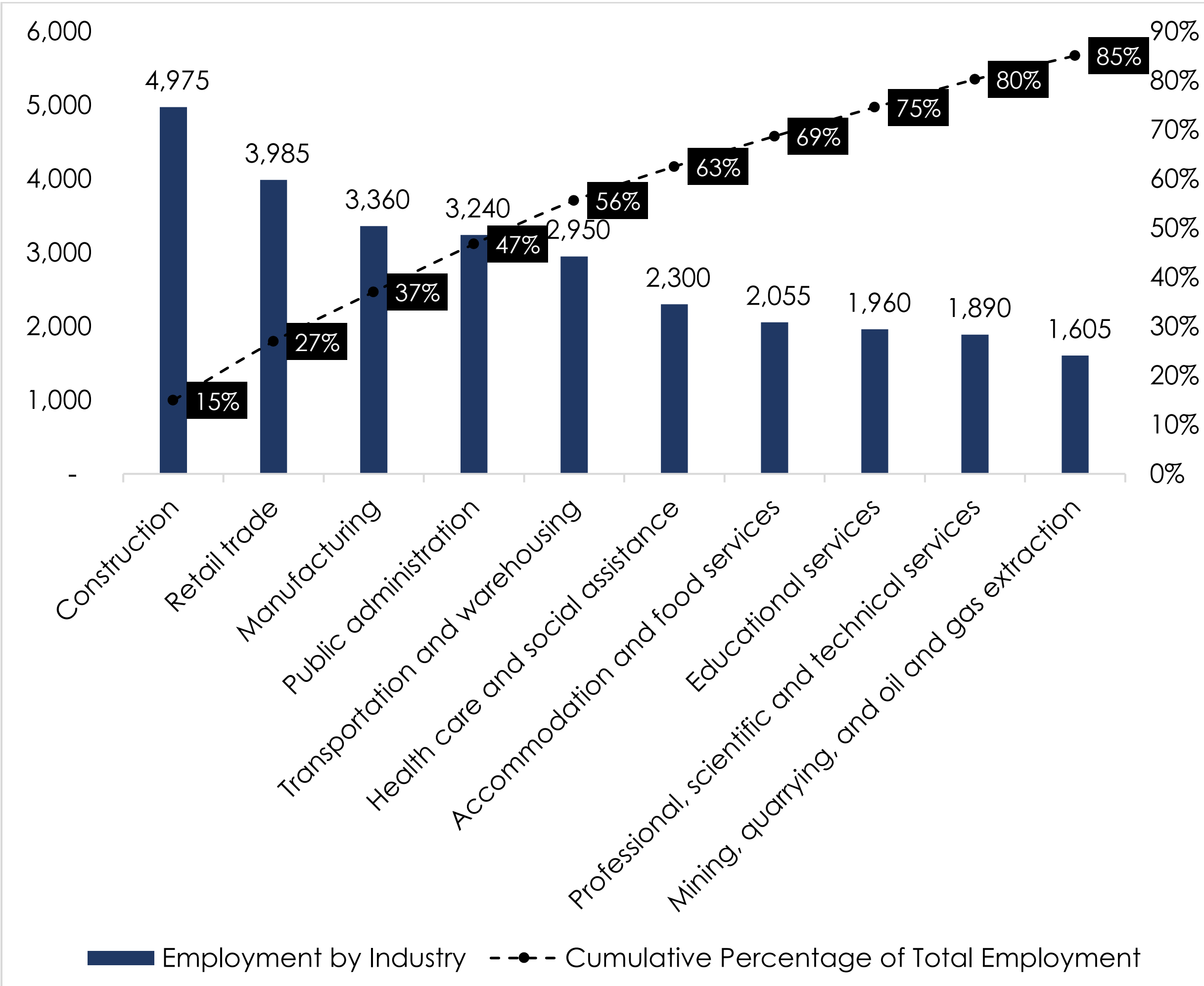
For males, mining is one of the top ten employing industries. As previously noted, the labour market consultations outlined that there are growth opportunities in this industry. Indeed, in a 2021 report by S&P Global Market Intelligence, it is anticipated that the metals and mining industry will see a continuation of encouraging demand conditions into 2022 (Ferguson et al 2021, 3). Furthermore, a survey by KPMG stated that nearly two-thirds of surveyed Canadian and global mining companies maintain positive attitudes about their ability to grow as the pandemic winds down (KPMG 2021, 4).

Figure 16: Top 10 Employers and their Cumulative Employment in Thunder Bay District by Sex (Females), 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016.

Figure 17: Top 10 Employers and their Cumulative Employment in Thunder Bay District by Sex (Males), 2016

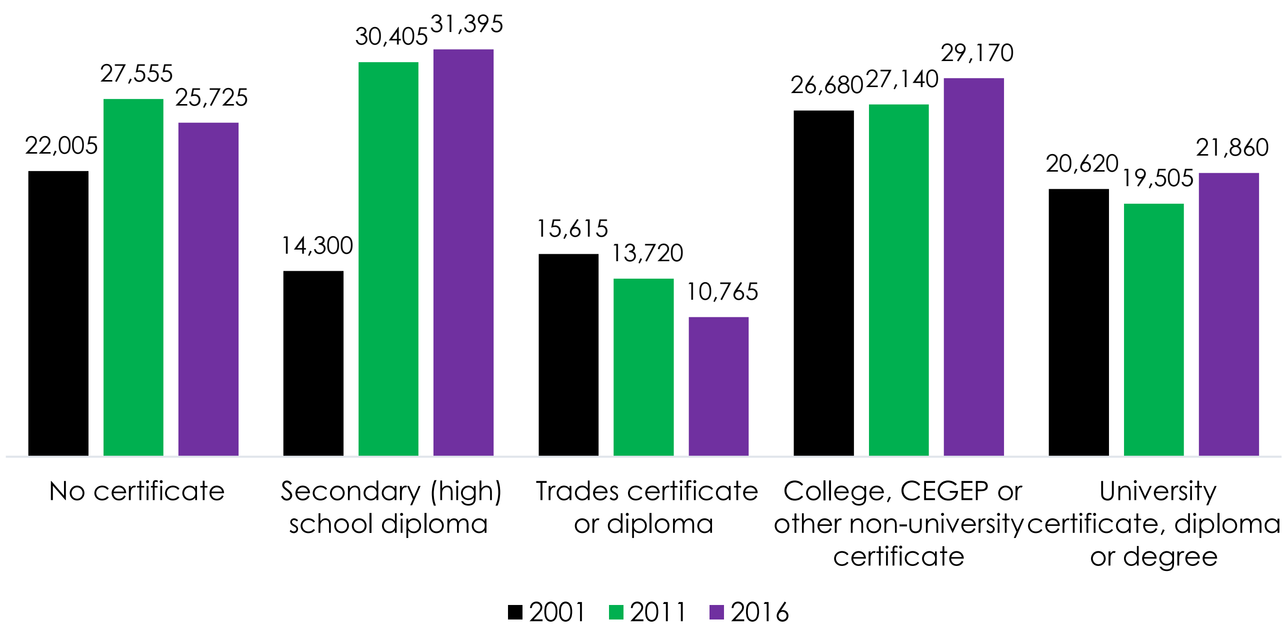


Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2016.

Finally, Figure 18 shows the level of education attained. More people have some sort of post-secondary education. While those with college or university credentials has increased, the trades have declined since 2001. These trends are important to watch, especially as the census data comes out and our economy continues to shift to one that is more knowledge-based. By 2031, there will be a significant demand for individuals with post-secondary credentials (Moazzami 2019, 24). Additionally, educational levels are tied to human capital, which is "the stock of knowledge, skills, and abilities embodied in individuals that directly affects their level of productivity. Human capital includes skills and knowledge acquired through education and experience." (ibid 2019, 23).

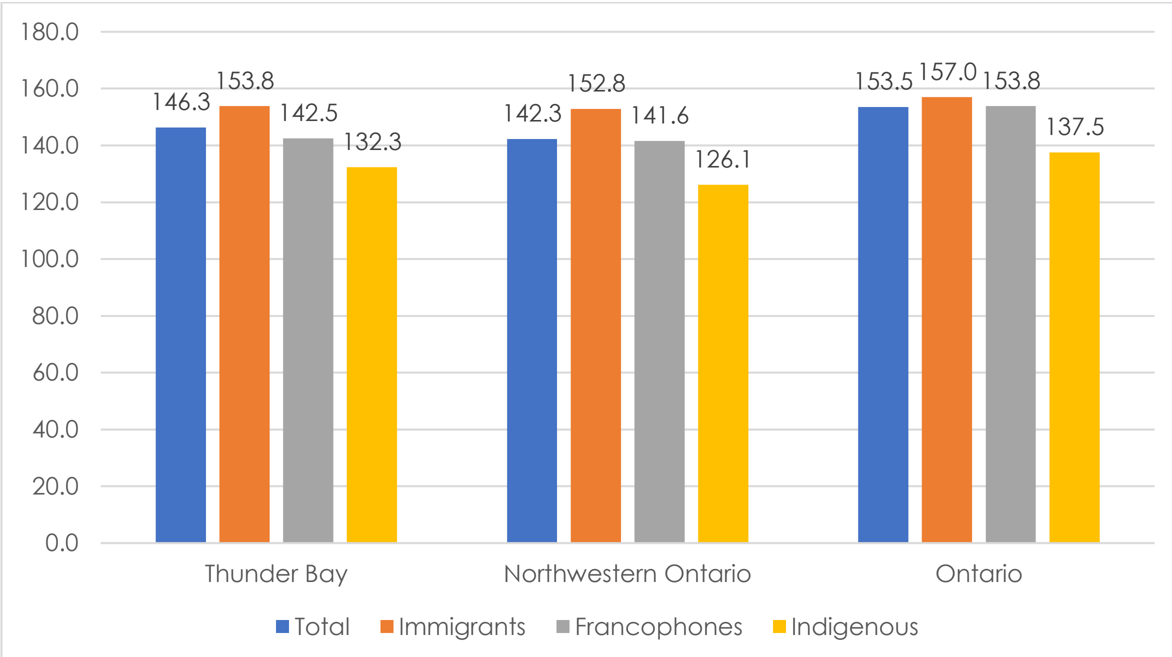
As shown in Figure 19, the human capital levels in Thunder Bay are slightly higher than in Northwestern Ontario as a whole, but still lower than the province. Of particular concern are the human capital scores for Indigenous peoples. These levels are the lowest across all three geographies compared to the other groups and reflects lower education levels (Moazzami 2019, 24; see also NSWPB 2021, 44). These results reinforce one of the points to come out of the consultations, that is the importance of supporting Indigenous training and education.

Figure 18: Educational Attainment in Thunder Bay District, Aged 15 and above, 2001-2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2001-2016.

Figure 19: Human Capital Index in Thunder Bay District, Northwestern Ontario, and Ontario, 2016



Source: Graph recreated and modified from Moazzami (2019).

EMPLOYER CHARACTERISTICS

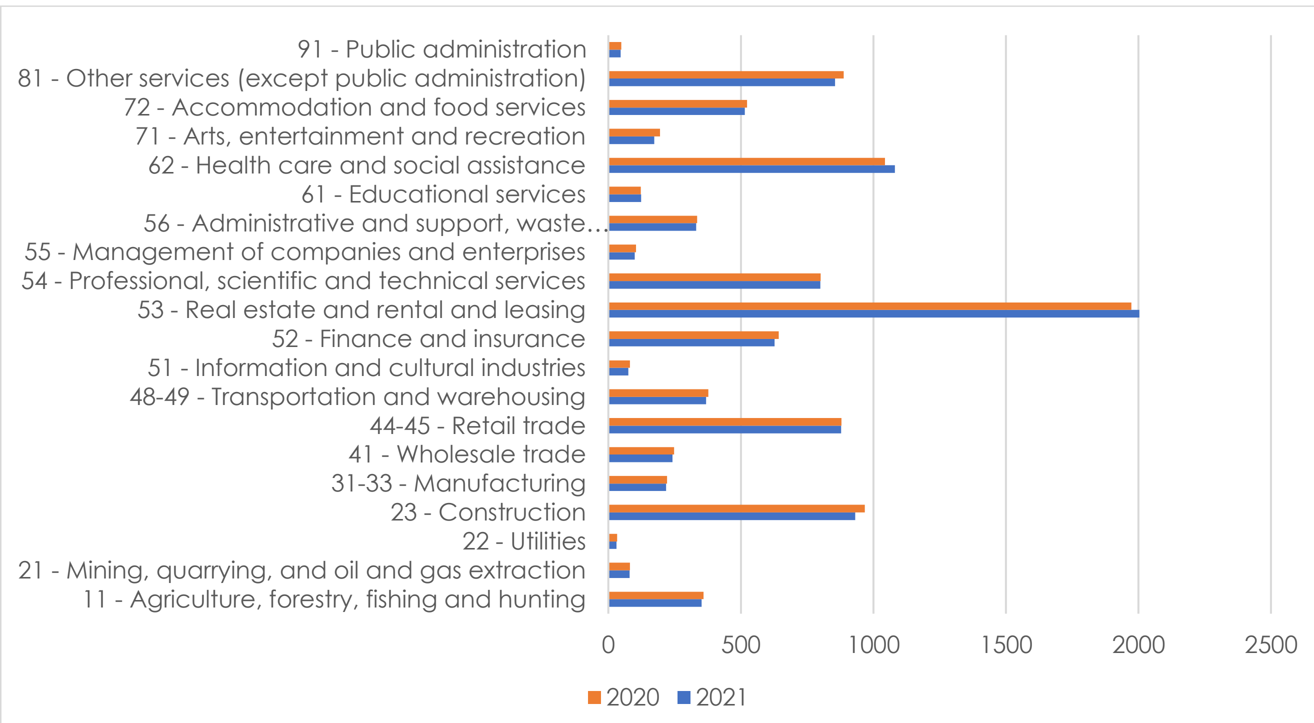
The last two years have been a shifting landscape for employers. Some businesses had the ability to switch to a work-at-home set up while others such as restaurants, grocery stores, and other retailers have had a different experience. For example, in a business survey conducted in April 2021, the majority of respondents stated that COVID19 poses some level of negative strategic risk to the long-term prospects of their business (Champaigne 2021, 8). These results are similar to those first provided in April of 2020, however, from May to November, the percentage of respondents who indicated 'highly negative' declined (ibid 2021, 8).

Unfortunately, the tables included in this section of the report do not reflect updated COVID19 realities. However, surveys measuring the impact of COVID19 on Northern Ontario businesses are available.[7]

[7] North Superior Workforce Planning Board, the Far Northeast Training Board and the Planning Board for Sudbury and Manitoulin are some of the boards in Northern Ontario that have released COVID19 business impact surveys.

Figure 20 below depicts the number of businesses in Thunder Bay in June of 2020 and 2021. Overall, we see there have not been any drastic changes from one year to the next, with some industry sectors seeing a small increase in 2021. According to the April 2021 business survey conducted in the Thunder Bay District and wider NSWPB area, very few respondents had to close permanently between May 2020 and April 2021 (Champaigne 2021, 11). This could be due to supports during this time such as the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS). In the April 2021 survey, nearly 60 per cent of business respondents stated that they have or were going to access CEWS (ibid 2021, 15). Of course, not all respondents were eligible for the support programs available, or have simply not accessed them. For example, 47.1 per cent of respondents stated they were not eligible for the Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (ibid 2021, 15).

Figure 20: Business Counts in the Thunder Bay District, June 2020 and June 2021



Source: Statistics Canada Canadian Business Counts, June 2021 via Community Data Program.

Note: Data based on location counts.

Indeed, there are not many large employers in the Thunder Bay area – in fact, most businesses under 100 employees tend to operate with just the owner. Understanding the size of businesses can help decision makers and organizations like the NSWPB plan for appropriate business supports and strategies moving forward.

Table 7: Counts of Employers by Number of Employees, Thunder Bay District, 2017-2021

	0	1 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 19	20 to 49	50 to 99	100 to 199	200 to 499	500+	Total
2017	6,404	2,019	951	726	442	151	64	19	13	10,789
2018	6,595	2,011	924	758	445	148	65	21	12	10,979
2019	6,621	2,052	940	751	460	159	66	22	14	11,085
2020	6,439	1,986	925	740	465	162	65	21	13	10,816
2021	6,533	1,982	917	672	442	142	66	20	12	10,786

Source: Table modified from NSWPB (2021) plus additional author calculations, Statistics Canada Canadian Business Counts, June 2017 to 2021 via Community Data Program.

Note: Data based on location counts.

Table 8: Top 10 Business Counts by 3-digit NAICS, Thunder Bay District, June 2021

	Number of Businesses	% Distribution	Ontario rank
531 – Real estate	1,936	19.7	1
621 – Ambulatory health care services	849	8.6	3
541 – Professional, scientific and technical services	800	8.1	2
238 – Specialty trade contractors	516	5.2	4
523 – Securities, commodity contracts, and other financial investment and related activities	459	4.7	5
722 – Food services and drinking places	320	3.3	9
813 – Religious, grant-making, civic, and professional and similar organizations	317	3.2	10
561 – Administrative and support services	315	3.2	7
236 – Construction of buildings	290	2.9	8
811 – Repair and maintenance	264	2.7	13

Source: Author calculations, Statistics Canada Canadian Business Counts via Community Data Program, June 2021.

Note: Based on location counts.

Overall, we see positive developments such as total incomes increasing, population growth, steady employment for both men and women, and continued strength in industries such as health care, education, retail, and public administration. Of course, the analysis also highlighted some items to watch for such as the majority of females accounting for a high percentage of part-time jobs, lower human capital levels for Indigenous peoples, the decline in individuals with trades education, etc. As census datasets are released in 2022, we will be able to see the impact COVID19 has had on local individuals and communities.

Employment Ontario Data Review

There is no silver bullet to job success; nor is there a "regular" client profile. There are not only multiple external factors that can influence an individual's successful participation in the labour market, but there is a diversity of client needs and experiences. This range is demonstrated in the following section, which outlines client indicators across several Employment Ontario (EO) programs in the NSWPB region from 2016 to 2021.

The data was verified in a consultation with several EO providers and the like. The focus group participants were asked a series of questions about current client and service/program delivery challenges and their organizational priorities going forward.

The EO programs are Apprenticeship, Canada-Ontario Job Grant (COJG), Employment Services (ES), Employment Assistance (EA), Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS), Second Career (SC), and Youth Job Connection (YJC). Primary focus will be on ES, LBS, and Apprenticeships.

CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES

If one thing was made clear in the EO consultation, it was that COVID19 has impacted not only the clients, but the operations of the EO service providers as well. For some clients, this meant limited access to services, and vaccination requirements hindering an unvaccinated person's ability to secure employment. These challenges can come on top of reoccurring hurdles clients can face such as limited digital and/or transportation access.

For the service providers, there were noted coordination challenges. For some providers, there has been staff turnover and job hopping, which can impact the flow of referrals between agencies. Staff who job hop do so for a variety of reasons such as better pay, an opportunity to work in a field they went to school for, family, less stressful work environment, etc. Additionally, staff mental health was noted.

Given the challenges above, the EO consultation participants were then asked what their short- and medium-term priorities are going forward. Alongside internal stabilization and support of staff, another stated they are focusing on helping and working with as many jobseekers and employers as they can, given the current limitations. Finally, another organization outlined that their priority was to not only support the capacity building and recovery of agencies, but also strengthen the network connection between agencies that was lost due to COVID19.

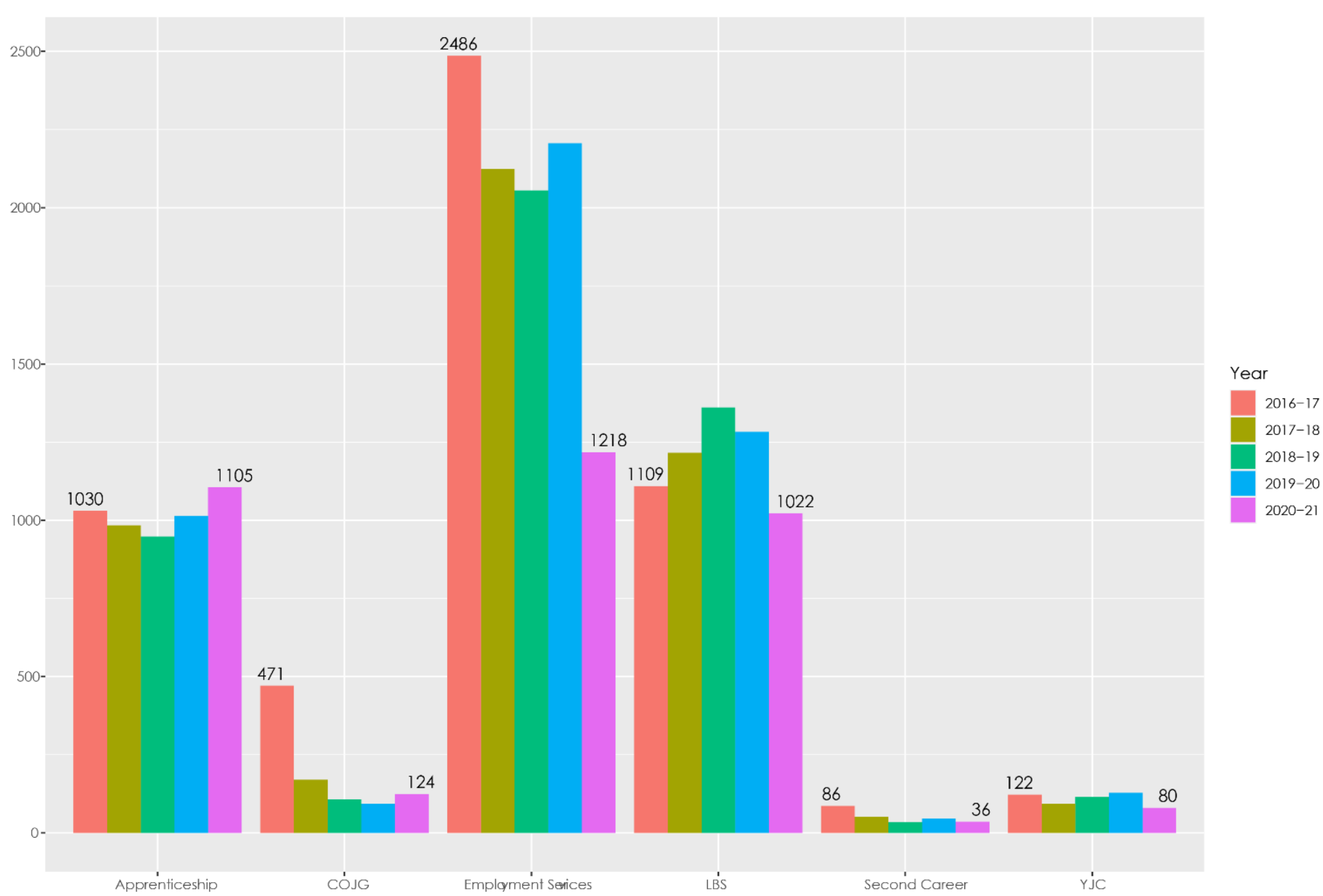
Overall, while the ability of what service providers can do during the pandemic has changed depending on the limitations put in place by the Province, the goal at the end of the day remains the same: client success.

ALL EO PROGRAMS

Figure 21 shows the number of clients accessing the Employment Ontario programs within the NSWPB region. From 2016-2017 to 2020-2021, some of the programs, such as Employment Services and COJG, have experienced significant shifts while the other programs have stayed fairly steady. For COJG, LBS and ES, it was stated in the consultation that the pandemic has played a role whether it be the availability of the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit or due to safety limitations put in place that have disrupted provider operations. It was also noted that it is taking longer to secure jobs as clients tend to be lower-skilled workers.

For COJG, possible reasons there was a sharp decline starting in 2017-2018 was a ministerial push in the previous year, followed by a drop due to a reduction in ministerial staff, or that the catchment areas for clients were divided. For LBS, a similar situation occurred where ministry investments from 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 helped to push numbers upward.

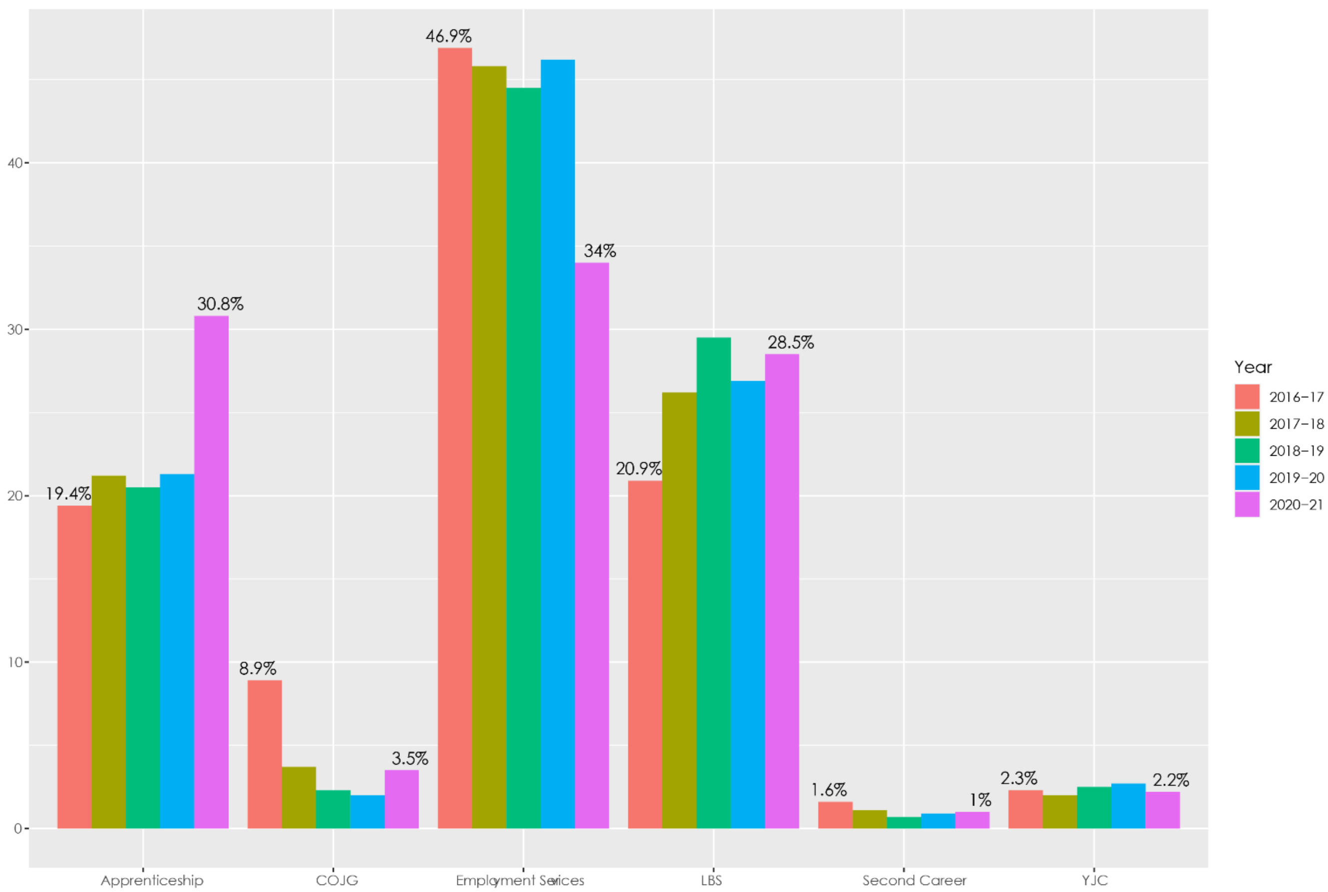
Figure 21: Number of Clients in EO Programs in NSWPB Region, 2016-2021



Source: Author calculations, OneHub.

Figure 22 below illustrates the proportion of client enrolment by EO program. One notable item is the increase in Apprenticeship within the last year.

Figure 22: Proportion of Client Enrolment by EO Program in NSWPB Region, 2016-2021

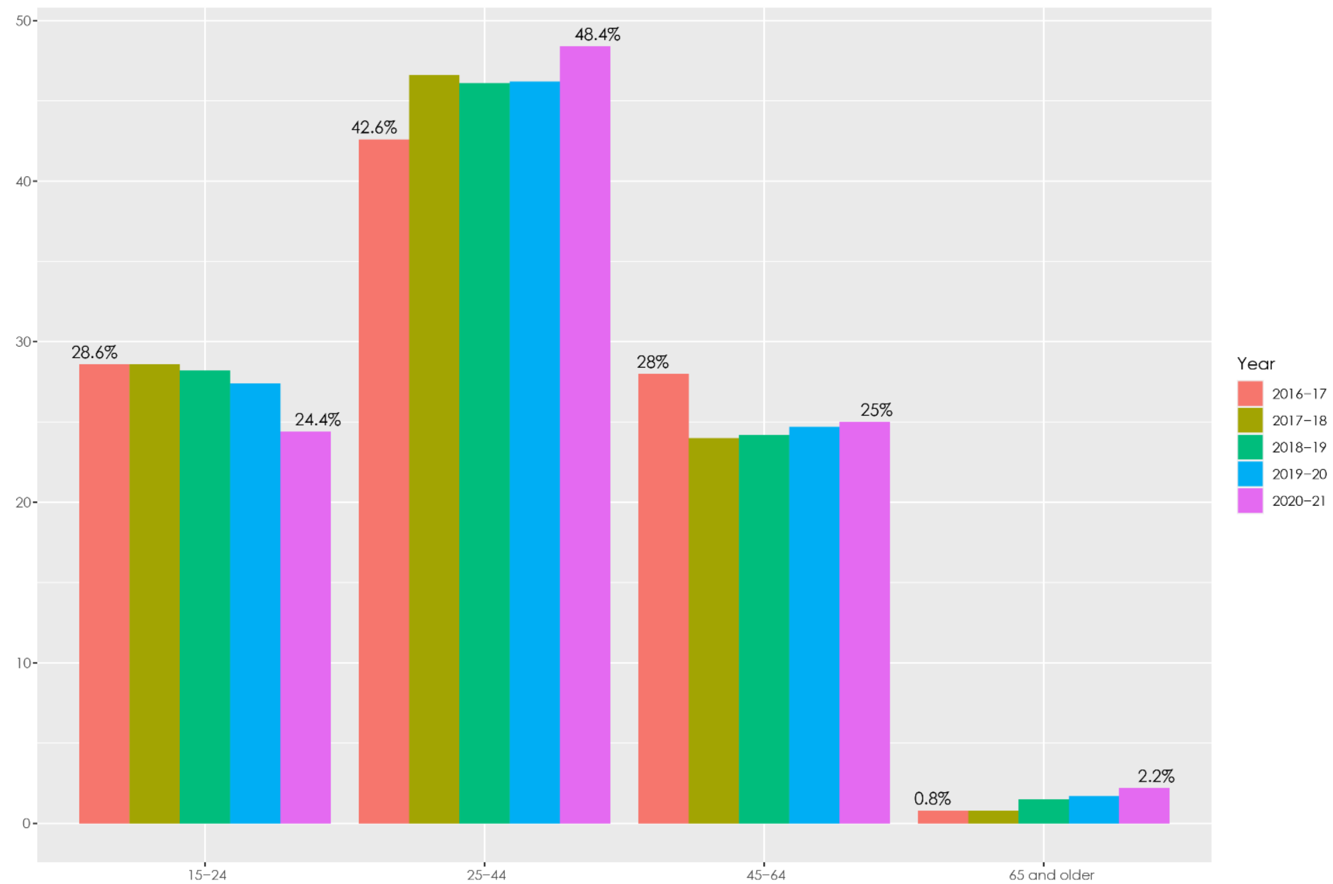


Source: Author calculations, OneHub.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

In terms of employment services, for the most part, the age cohort sizes in the NSWPB region have held steady over the years. The majority of clients tend to be between 25 to 44 years of age. One interesting item was the slowly rising percentage of those 65 years and over seeking employment services. This rise could be due to retirees returning to the workforce, whether it be for financial reasons or younger individuals not wanting the work. Other reasons provided in the EO consultation were the inability to travel, and succession planning. For the latter, older individuals are coming back to jobs because they have the background and experience, however, they require upgraded skills such as digital skills.

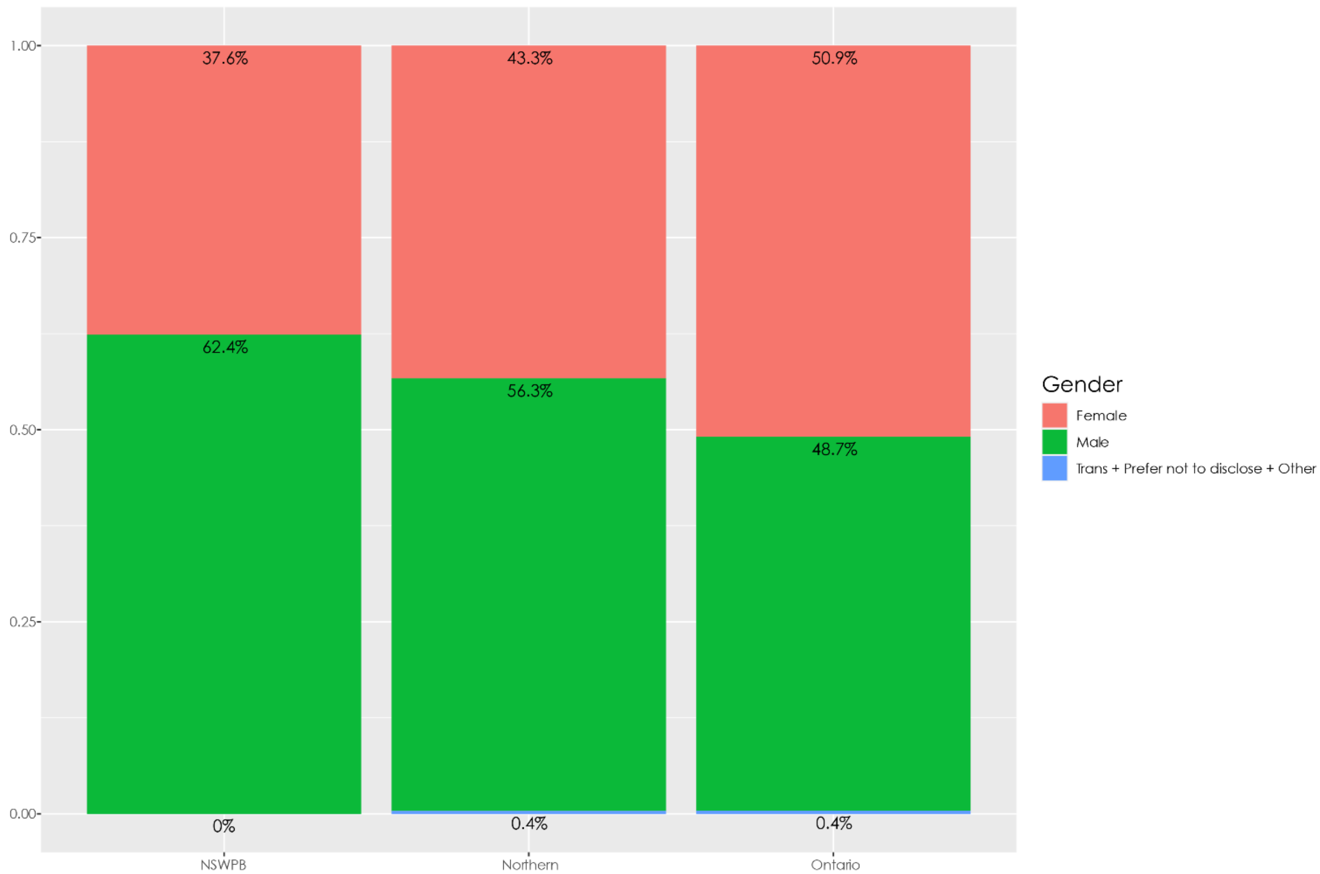
Figure 23: Age Cohorts as a Share of Employment Services Client Load in NSWPB Region, 2016-2021



Source: Author calculations, OneHub.

So not only are we seeing that most clients are between 25 to 44 years of age, but the most clients identify as male in the NSWPB region. This is in line with Northern Ontario in general. This distribution is also similar to that of 2019/2020 (NSWPB 2021, 60). It was stated in the consultation that many women tend to be the primary homecare providers and that day care is a major issue.

Figure 24: Gender Distribution of Employment Services Clients in NSWPB region, Northern Ontario and Ontario, 2020/2021

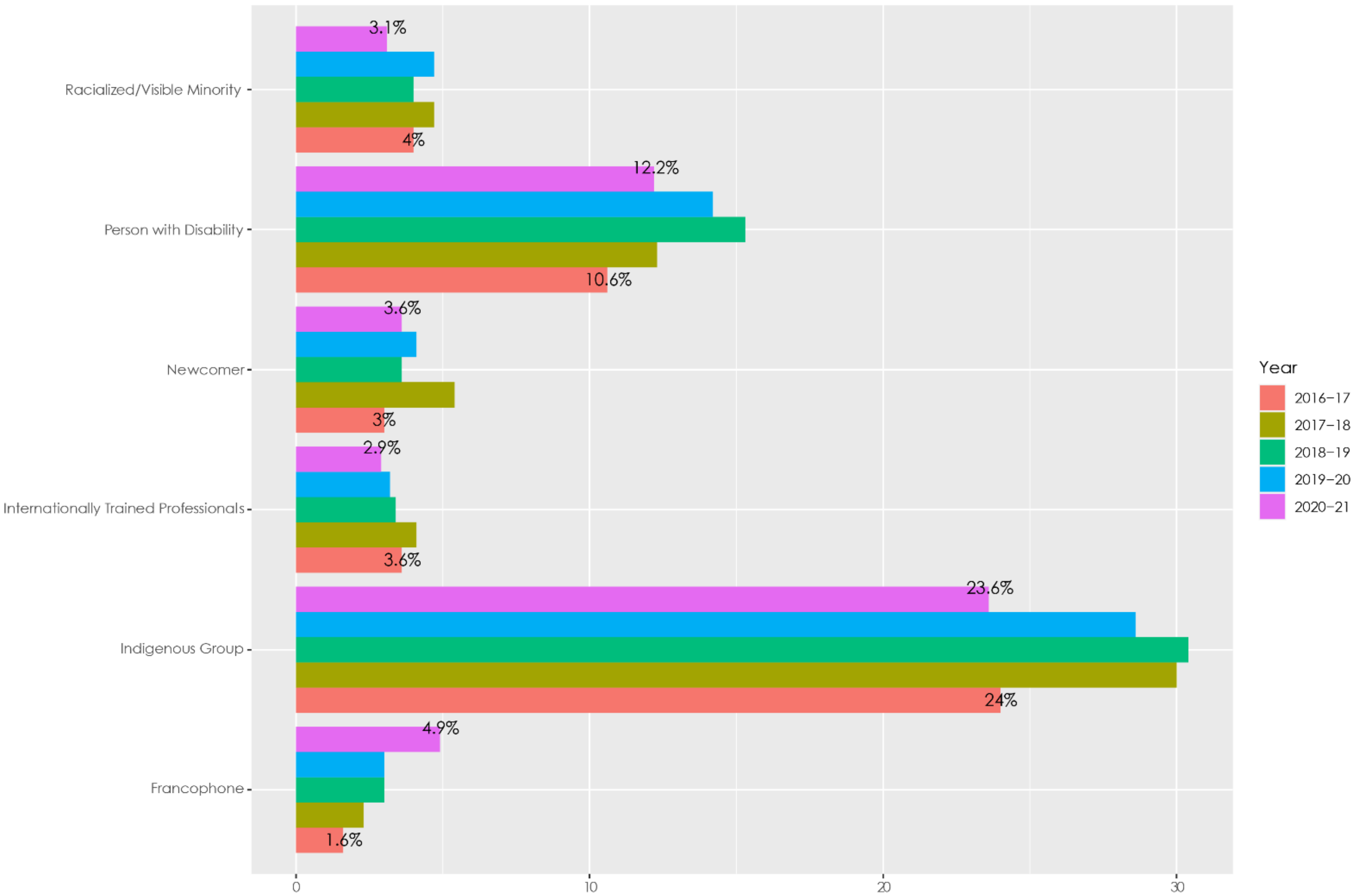


Source: Author calculations, OneHub.

Breaking down the ES clients by designated group, individuals with disabilities and those who identify as a First Nations, Métis, or Inuit individual make up a significant percentage of clients. This breakdown is like the LBS client data, which will be illustrated later in the report. Figure 25 below also reveals that most groups have experienced a decline in client percentage proportions within the last year, while Francophone clients have seen an increase. While no definitive answer as to why there was an increase in Francophone clients, feedback from the EO consultation regarding the decline in Indigenous peoples could be due to targeted federally funded programs that are available. Another possible reason why there has been a decline for most of the groups is the impact of COVID19 on service operations.

When asked about client referrals, participants noted that it does occur, but the system could be better. The process needs ongoing referral protocols and coordination because programs and people change.

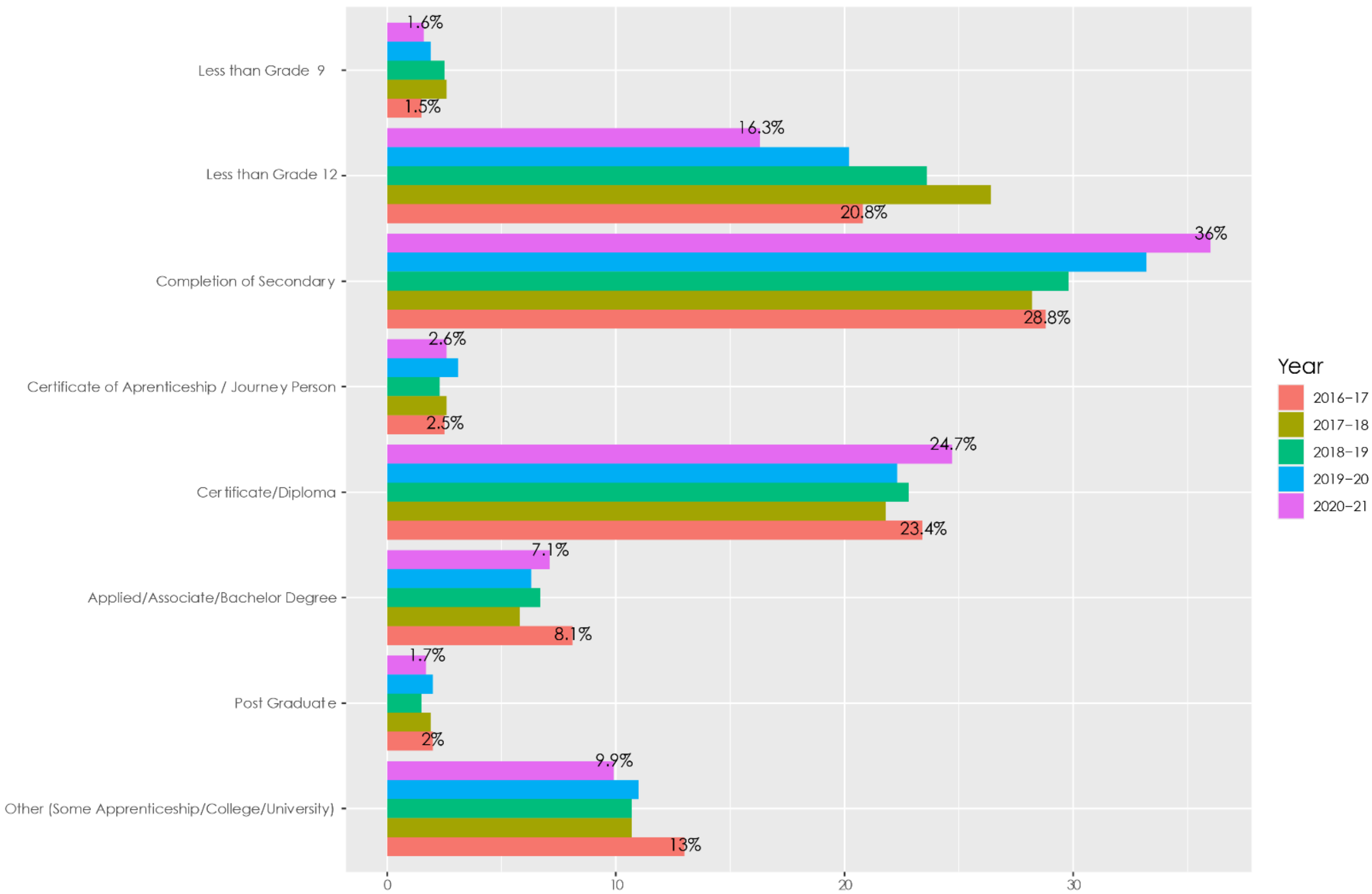
Figure 25: Proportion of Employment Services Clients by Designated Group in NSWPB Region, 2016-2021



Source: Author calculations, OneHub

In terms of education credentials of ES clients, we see an increase in those who have completed high school and a steady decline in those with less than a grade 12 education. Most other groups have held steady over the past five years. In the consultation it was stated that online learning/access to internet was a factor here as not everyone has access.

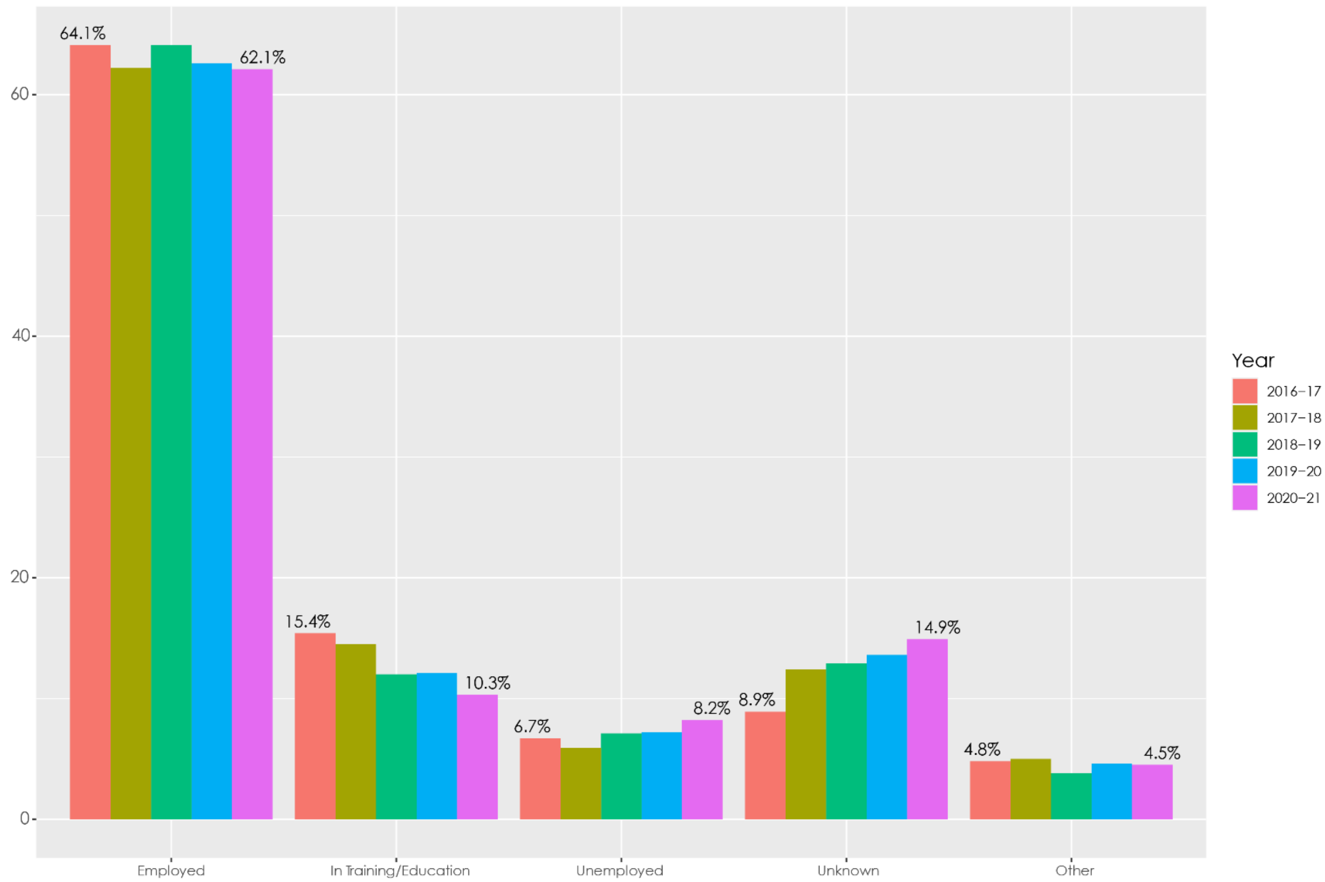
Figure 26: Education Credentials of Employment Services Clients in NSWPB Region, 2016-2021



Source: Author calculations, OneHub.

Finally, in terms of client outcomes, most individuals are able to secure employment. One curious trend was the increase in the unknown category of employment from 9 per cent in 2016-2017 to 15 per cent in 2020-2021. Discussion revealed that not only is the pandemic a factor as people are focused on trying to get by and are unable to check in, but vulnerable clients have limited data on their phones and therefore it was difficult to contact them.

Figure 27: Outcomes of Employment Services Clients in NSWPB Region, 2016-2021



Source: Author calculations, OneHub.

LITERACY AND BASIC SKILLS

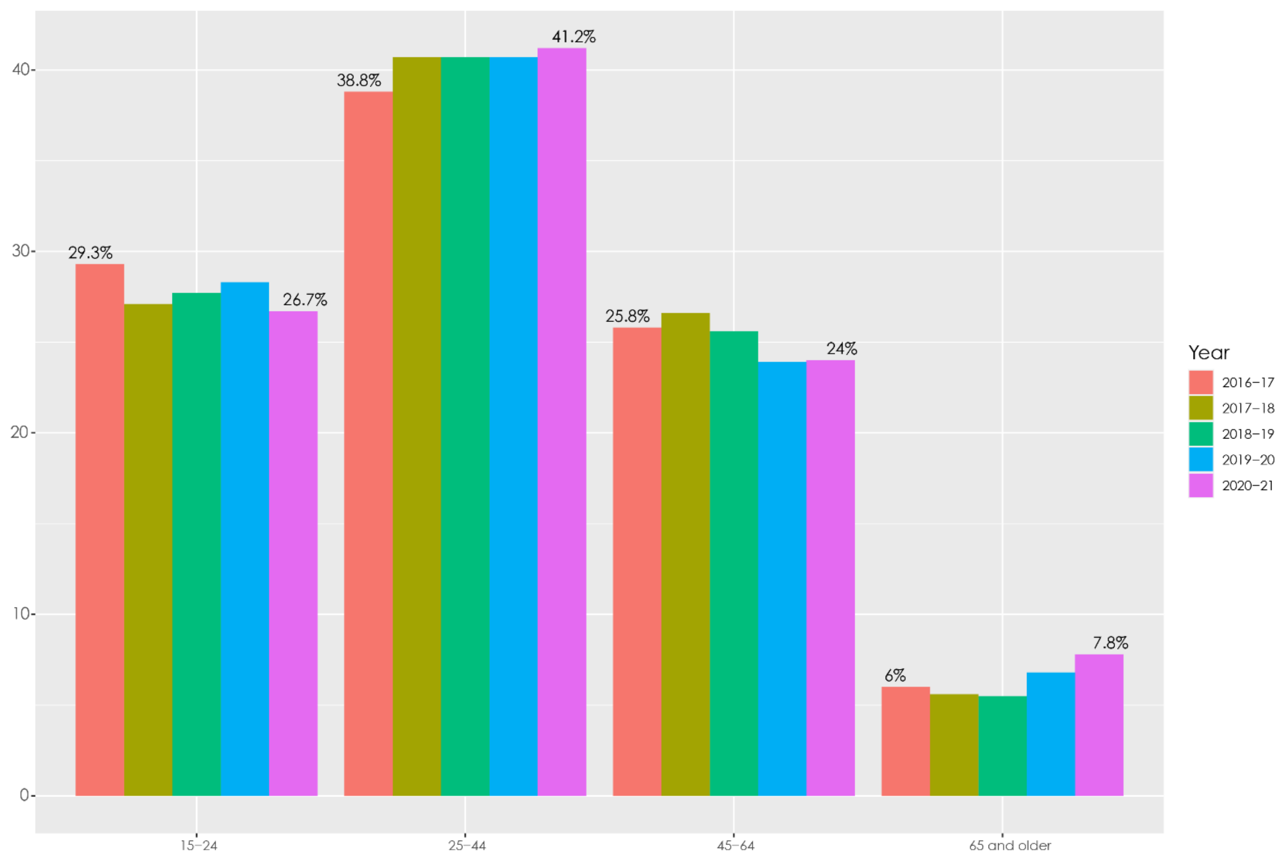
When comparing the demographic profile of ES clients to those accessing LBS programs, there are strong similarities on several indicators. For example, the 25 to 44 age cohort is a significant client group (proportionally speaking). One interesting difference is that the proportion of those who are 65 and older is larger compared to ES.

When reviewing the data from the EO consultation, participants stated that the 45 to 64 age category is the priority of the provincial Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development. As such, LBS agencies receive credits for maintaining clients in this age category. The issue, however, is that a higher percentage of LBS clients tend to be in the 25-44 or 15-24 age groups. As such, the priority of the ministry does not align with the client realities on the ground.[8]

[8] For ES service providers, on the other hand, priority is based on barriers.

Another item that was discussed was the suitability requirements, which designate that LBS clients are supposed to be 19 and over. As such, LBS agencies can't help those under 19 even if they are eligible for the workforce.

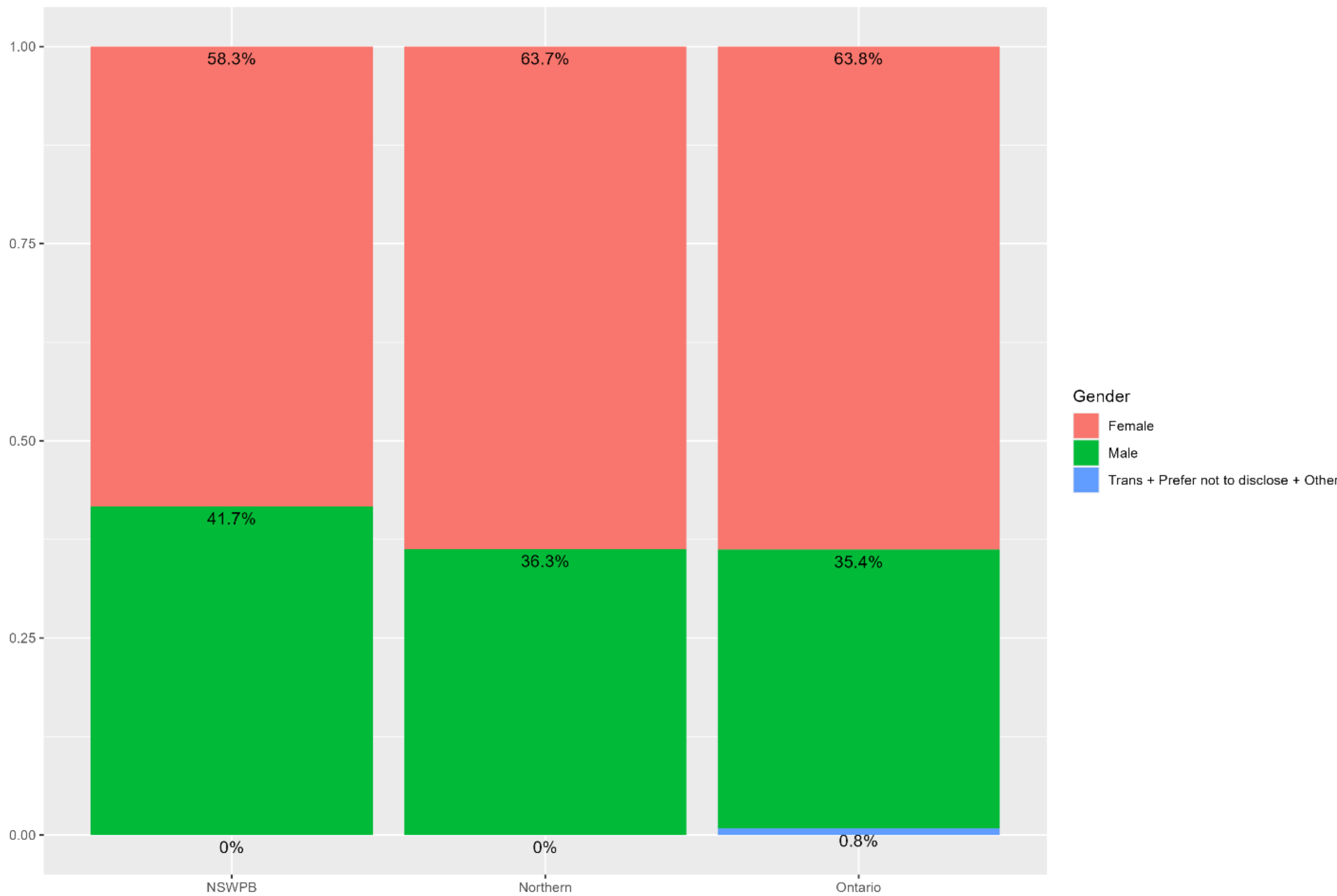
Figure 28: Age Cohorts as a Share of Literacy and Basic Skills Client Load in NSWPB Region, 2016-2021



Source: Author calculations, OneHub.

Unlike ES clients, the majority of LBS clients in 2020-2021 identified as female, which is in line with the Northern Ontario and Ontario distributions. Furthermore, compared to 2019-2020, the percentage of female LBS clients shot up across all three geographies, the largest difference taking place in the NSWPB region (NSWPB 2021, 64). In 2019-2020, 51.7 per cent of LBS clients identified as female while in 2020-2021, the percentage was 58.3 per cent. In 2019-2020, Northern Ontario and Ontario sat at 59.6 and 61.4 per cent, respectively (ibid 2021, 64). One item that was noted in the consultation was that group-specific programming can have an influence on statistics. For example, if an agency offers several programs for women, a higher proportion of women is going to be seen in the data. On that note, one participant noted that they don't offer youth programs, but hope to.

Figure 29: Gender Distribution of Literacy and Basic Skills Clients in NSWPB region, Northern Ontario and Ontario, 2020/2021

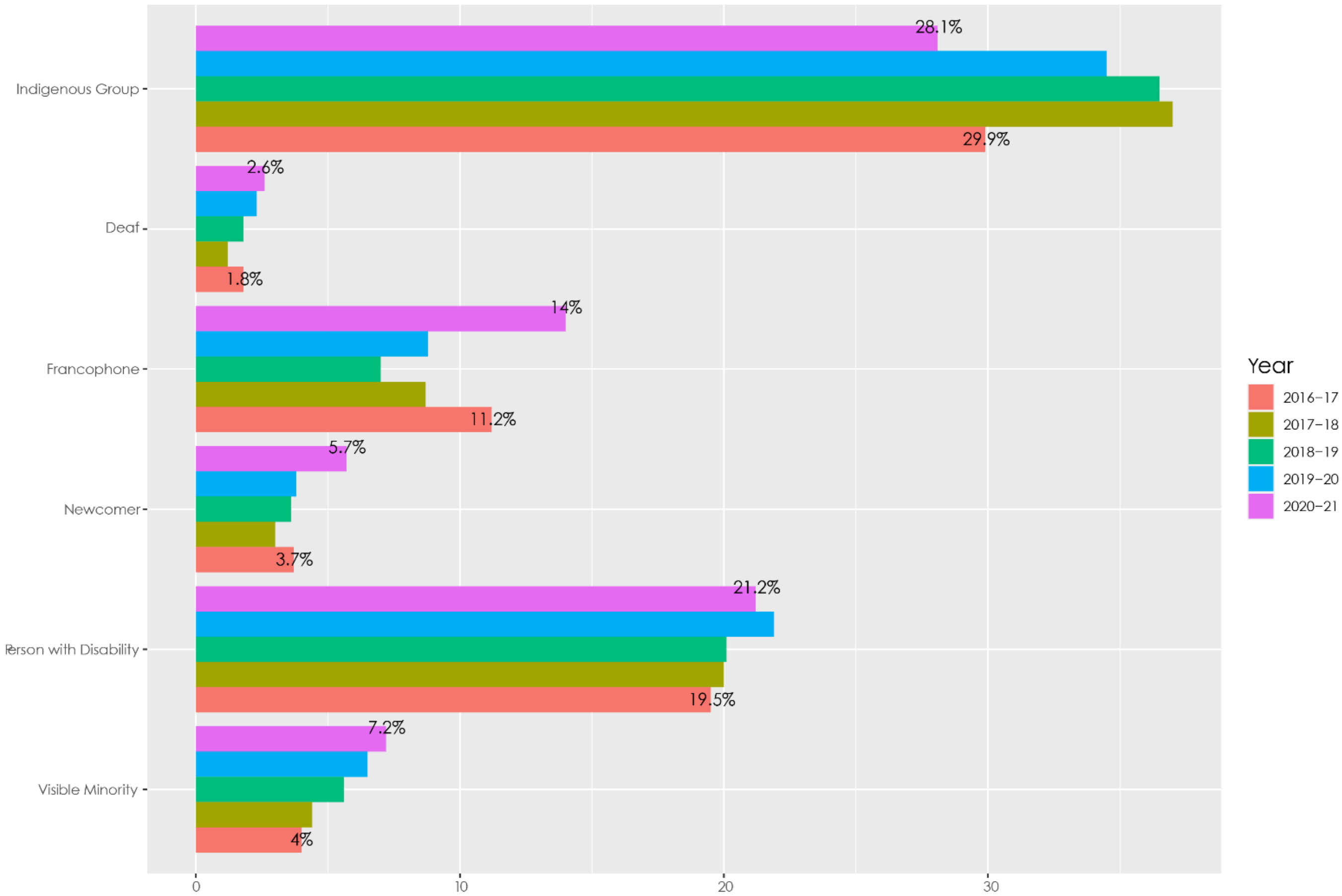


Source: Author calculations, OneHub.

Like ES clients, the two largest LBS client groups are individuals with disabilities and those who identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit. Furthermore, Figure 30 below illustrates that, besides these major groups, the proportion of all other designated groups has seen an increase in numbers over the last several years. However, in the EO consultation, it was stated that the number of those who identified as Indigenous is bounding upward again.

As well, it was noted that one possible reason for the increase in newcomers is because a newcomer who is accessing English as a Second Language programming or LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) can transition into an LBS program. This ability to transition was not communicated clearly before but has since changed.

Figure 30: Proportion of Literacy and Basic Skills Clients by Designated Group in NSWPB Region, 2016-2021

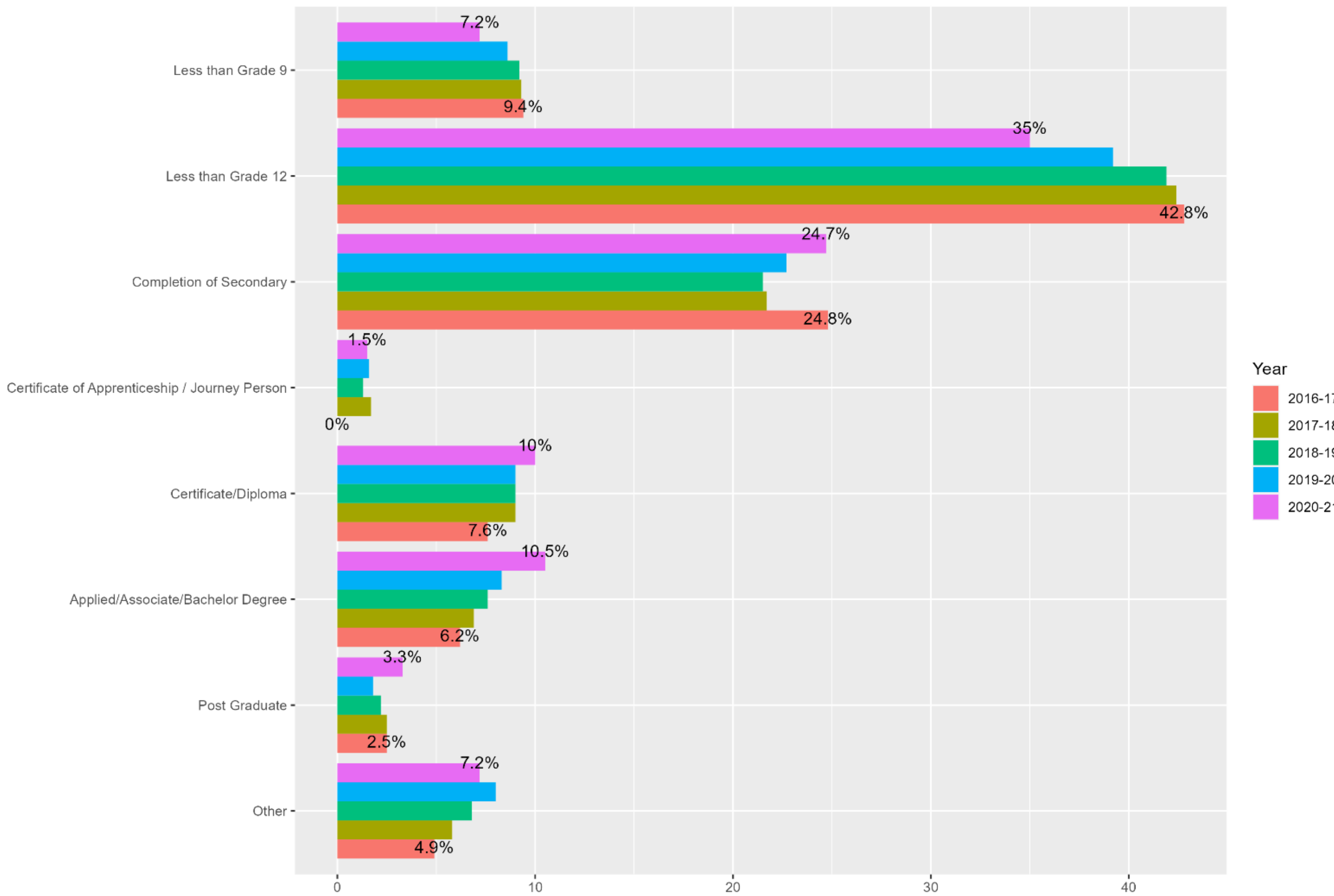


Source: Author calculations, OneHub.

As shown in Figure 31, while the percentage of clients with less than a grade 12 education is higher than other groups, there has been a gradual decrease since 2016-2017. A gradual decline can also be seen in those with less than a grade 9 education. The percentage of individuals with an applied/associate/bachelor's degree, and those who have completed high school, have increased in recent years.

In the EO consultation, one reason given for an increase in those with at least a bachelor's or related degree is the result of individuals going back to school, particularly those over 45 years of age. Another possibility could be skill upgrading, such as learning how to use digital platforms, especially in the age of COVID19. At the same time, those with a bachelor's degree or equivalent, and who are familiar with digital platforms, may be utilizing an e-channel as opposed to physically coming into access program services. The ability to access this training from home is more attractive.

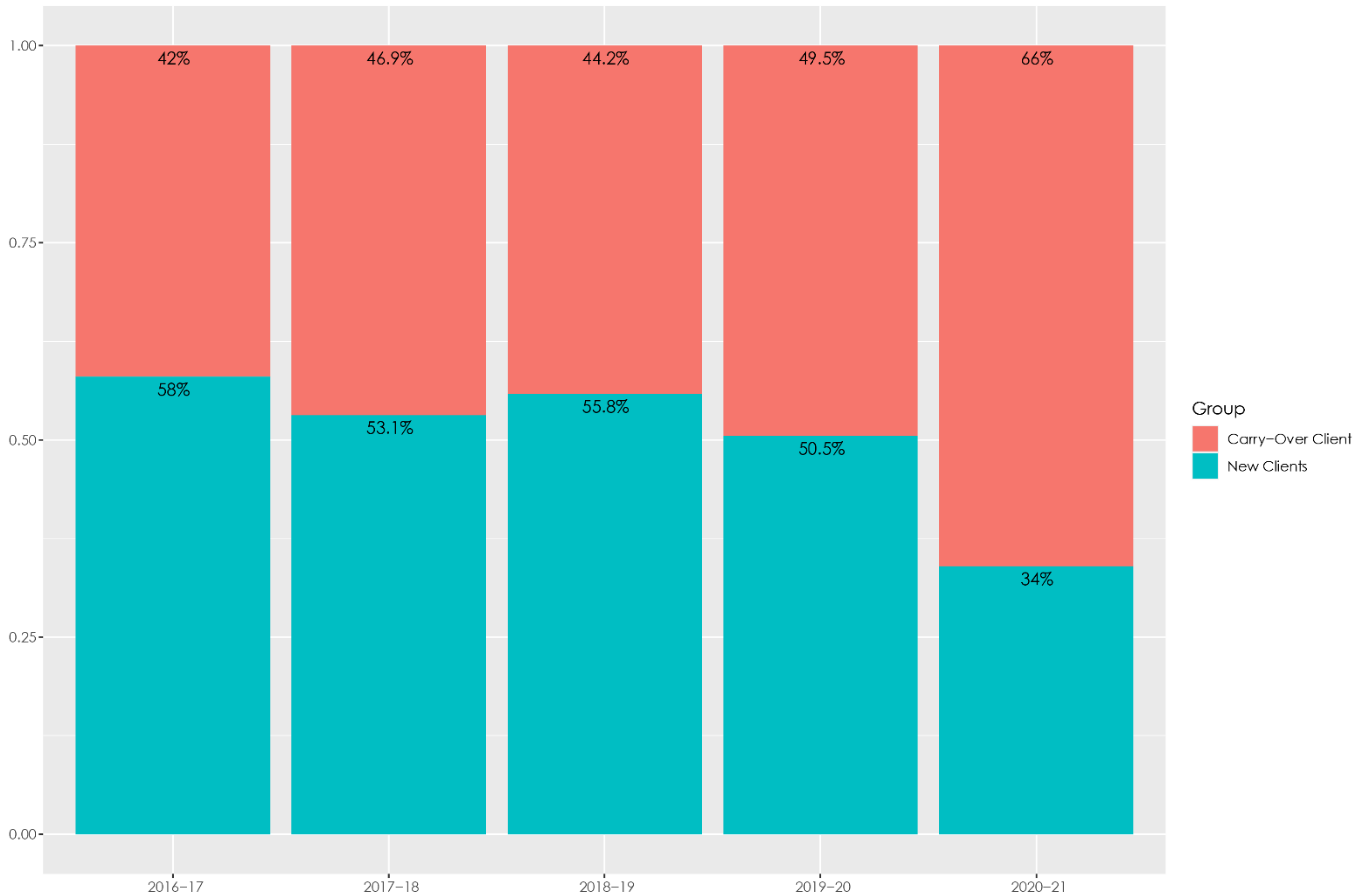
Figure 31: Education Credentials of Literacy and Basic Skills Clients in NSWPB Region, 2016-2021



Source: Author calculations, OneHub.

The proportion of clients who are accessing LBS programs continually was consistent between 2016-2017 and 2019-2020, however in 2020-2021, there was a 16.5 per cent jump in carry-over clients. It was stated in the EO consultation that this increase could be due to the pandemic as people signed up for the program, but the program was paused or safety limitations were put in place, thereby making access more difficult.

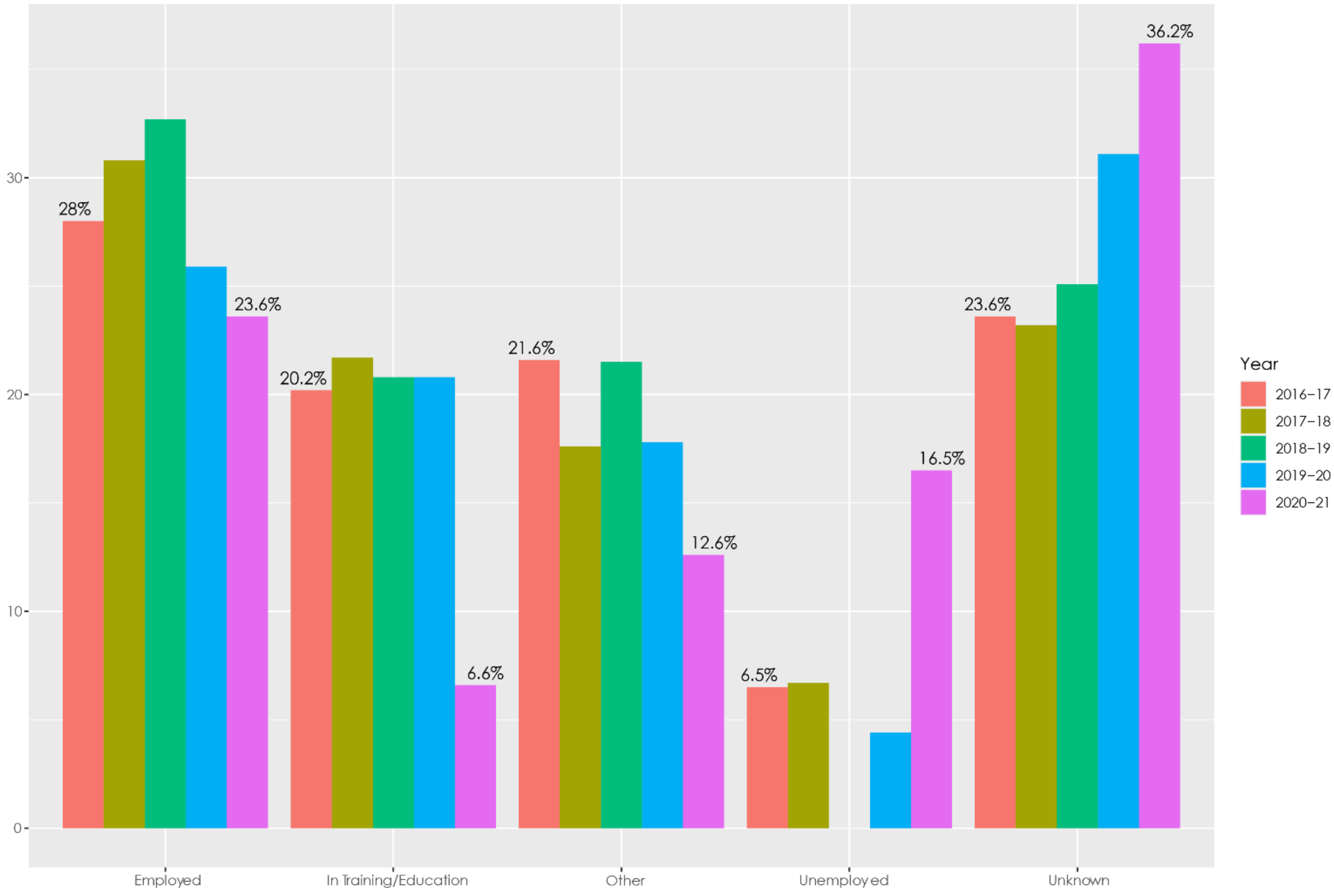
Figure 32: Distribution of New and Carry-Over Literacy and Basic Skills Clients in NSWPB Region, 2016-2021



Source: Author calculations, OneHub.

Finally, in terms of LBS client outcomes, the number of those who secured employment or were in training/education has declined. Meanwhile, those who said they were unemployed increased dramatically last year while clients whose outcome is unknown has increased significantly. Similar to what was said for ES clients, the pandemic has made follow-ups challenging, and that is over and above the vulnerable individuals who don't have cellphones or access to data. This is not to say LBS agencies do not try to connect with their clients. COVID19 limitations have made it more challenging.

Figure 33: Outcomes of Literacy and Basic Skills Clients in NSWPB Region, 2016-2021

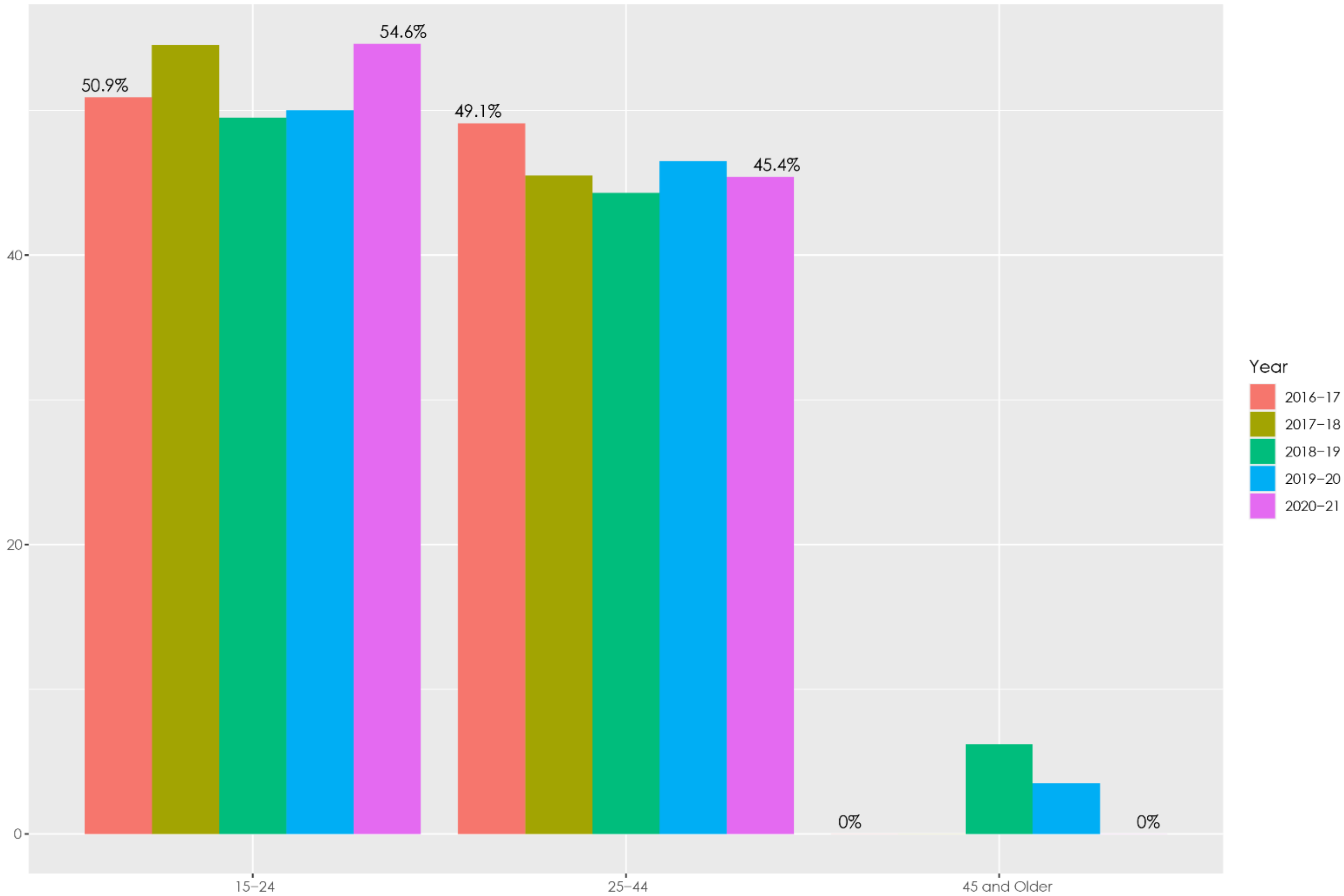


Source: Author calculations, OneHub.

APPRENTICESHIPS

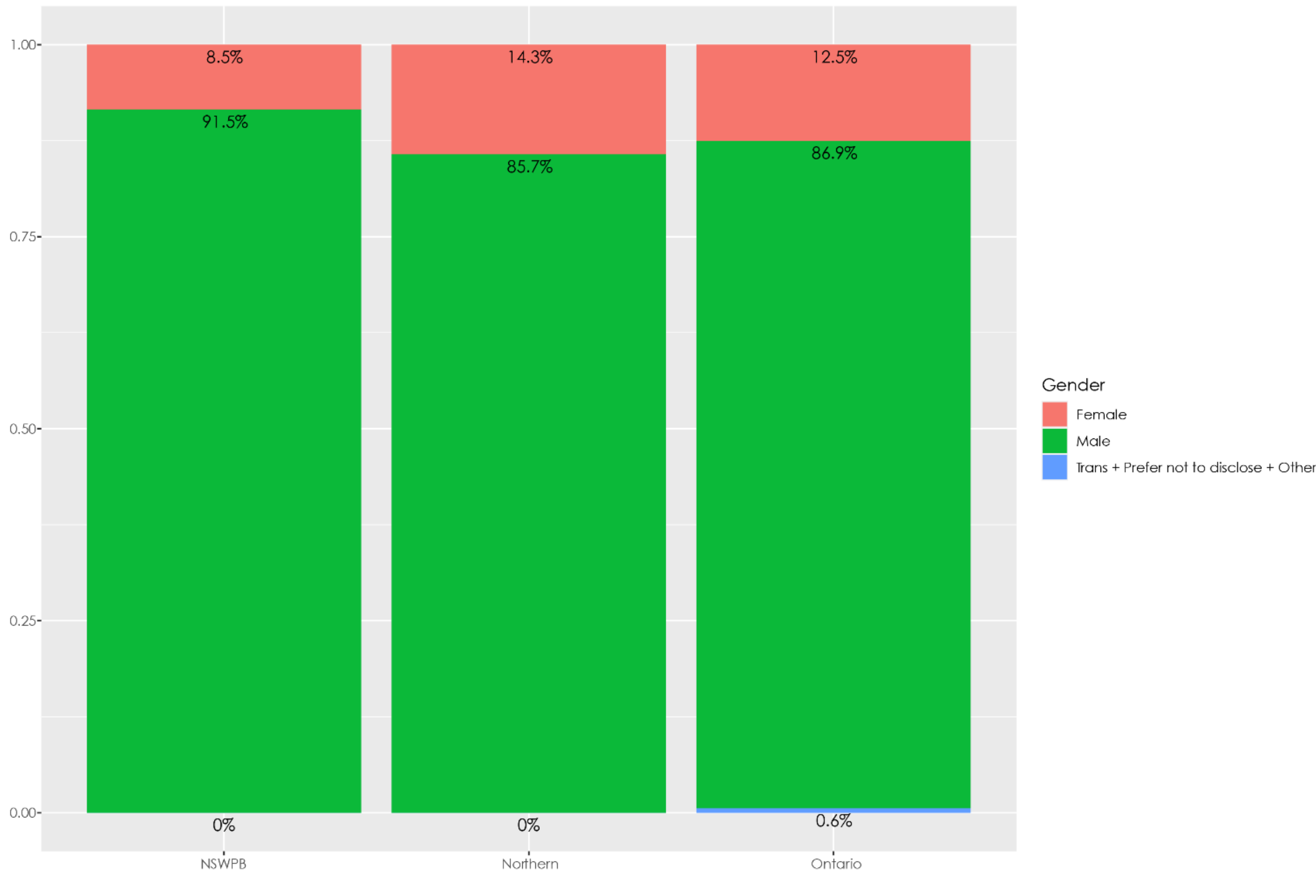
Based on Figure 34 below, most apprenticeship clients in the NSWPB region tend to be younger than 45 years of age. There was an uptick last year in those who are within the 15 to 24 age cohort. Furthermore, Figure 35 illustrates that most clients identified as male, which aligns with the experience of Northern Ontario and the province in general. Compared to 2019-2020, there was a small increase of those who identified as male in the NSWPB region and the province (88.9 and 85.6 per cent, respectively) (NSWPB 2021, 74).

Figure 34: Age Cohorts as a Share of Apprenticeship Clients in NSWPB Region, 2016-2021



Source: Author calculations, OneHub.

Figure 35: Gender Distribution of Apprenticeship Clients in NSWPB region, Northern Ontario and Ontario, 2020/21



Source: Author calculations, OneHub.

The number of active apprentices has stayed relatively steady over the last five years. Certificates of apprenticeship and new registrations peaked in 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, respectively. There was a significant decline in both between 2018-2019 and 2020-2021.

One of the participants in the EO consultation stated that they often assist with registrations but recently it has been slow due to the pandemic. As well, it was noted that employers in the trades were not hiring as much, and the number of jobseekers was low.

These are developments to watch as data from Figure 18 reveals that there is a slowing number of individuals with a trades diploma compared to an increase in those with college or university certifications. Additionally, one of the top occupations for males was in trades, transport and equipment operators. Finally, if mines are a key part of recovery for some, as stated in the consultations, it will be important to ensure those with trades education are being connected into mining opportunities. As well, advertising trades opportunities within mining to people who are looking at trades education as an option could be useful.

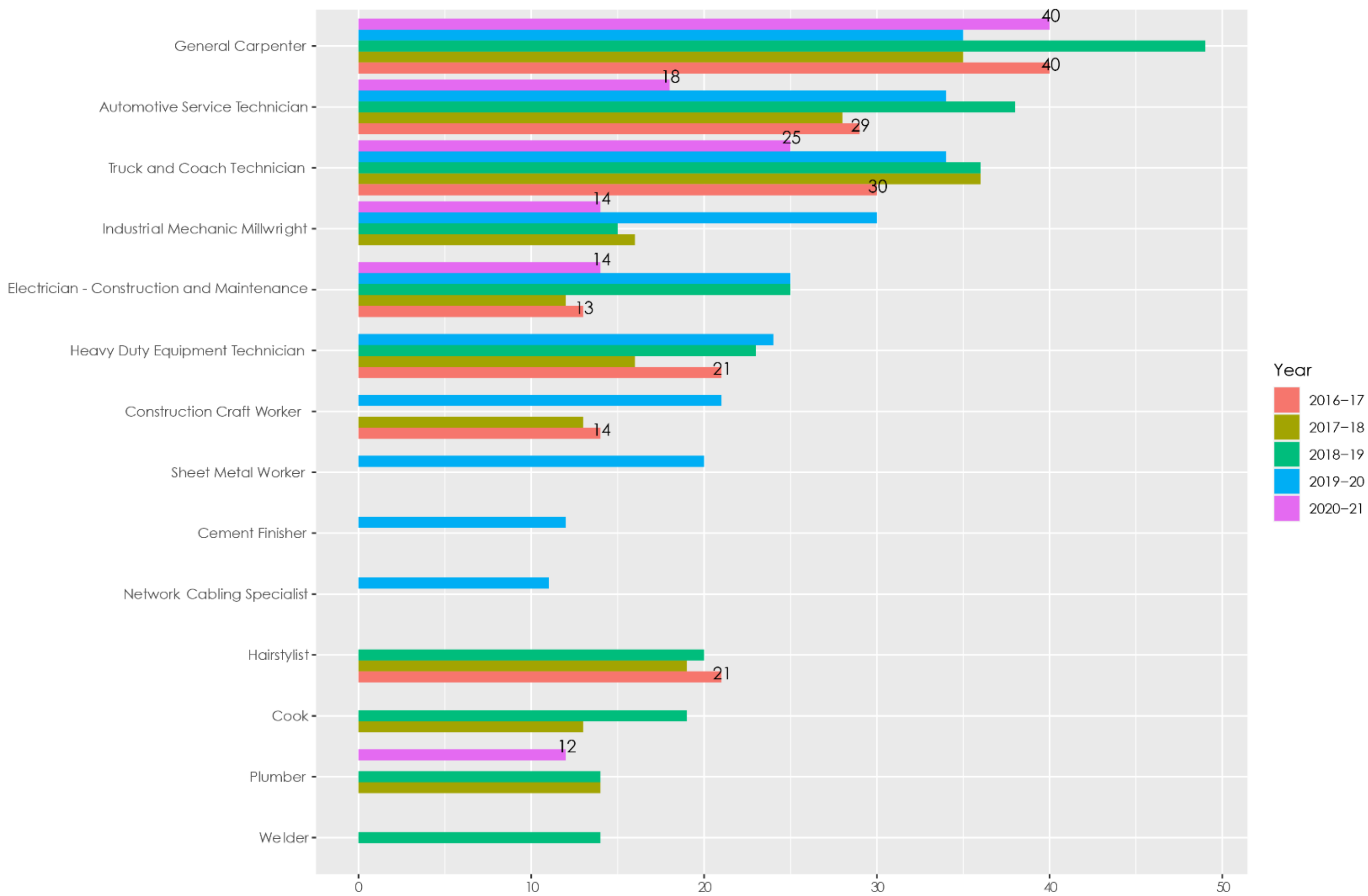
Table 9: Apprenticeships in NSWPB region, 2016-2021

	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	16/17 to 20/21 actual change
Active Apprentices	1030	984	948	1014	1105	75
Certificates of Apprenticeship Issued	99	130	154	125	60	-39
New Registrations	279	285	325	342	214	-65

Source: Author calculations, OneHub.

Finally, when looking at the number of registrants in the trades, we see there are several occupations that individuals tend to gravitate toward. Figure 36 below illustrates that several occupations have experienced a decline from 2019-2020 to 2020-2021 such as automotive service technicians, truck and coach technicians, industrial mechanic millwrights, and construction and maintenance electricians.

Figure 36: Number of Registrants in Trades in NSWPB Region, 2016-2021



Source: Author calculations, OneHub.

Service providers are one of the gateways to labour market participation. As stated earlier, consultation with EO providers and the like have revealed troubling trends such as staff turnover and coordination issues. Ensuring this pathway for individuals is accessible is critical.

Action Items

At the end of the day, the goal of the North Superior Workforce Planning Board (NSWPB) is to support the labour market and economies of local communities. This work involves providing evidence-based research, engaging with and connecting key players, and developing programs and tools. Building off last year's Local Labour Market Plan, below are the action items for the NSWPB over the next year.

DATA AND RESEARCH

1. Support decision-making and planning by **generating, collecting, analyzing, and sharing evidence-based data and research on the characteristics, trends, barriers, and opportunities of the local labour force**.
2. **Identify data and research gaps** in the local workforce and economy, and work to fill those knowledge gaps.

ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

3. Engage and collaborate with individuals and organizations that support and contribute to the development of the local workforce to **support economic recovery and identify growth opportunities in specific industries or occupations.**
4. Engage and collaborate with individuals and organizations that support and contribute to the development of the local workforce **to identify and mitigate barriers that prevent individuals from appropriately participating in the labour market**.
5. **Identify areas of alignment** between individuals and organizations that support and contribute to the development of the local workforce. Where possible, **act as a connector** so that these actors can maximize their impact, leverage resources, and develop partnerships.
6. **Build and strengthen partnerships** with individuals and organizations that support and contribute to the development of the local workforce.

PROGRAMS AND TOOLS

7. **Continue to showcase current programs and tools** such as WorkSCAPE Northwest, Northwest Connector, Employment Calculator, and specific industry employment projection timelines.[9]
8. As needed, **create and showcase programs and tools that will inform decision-making and planning** for the NSWPB and for other individuals and organizations that support and contribute to the development of the local workforce.

Conclusion

While we may not know with absolute certainty what 2022 will bring, whether it be pandemic-related or not, the NSWPB is armed with the knowledge of experts in the field and accompanying data that can guide their steps forward. As more data rolls in and research continues to be gathered and analyzed, the NSWPB will work with others to ensure that local communities are poised for growth.

[9] See Appendix D.

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Appendix A: Communities in the NSWPB region

As identified in last year's Local Labour Market Plan, three Métis communities have been added to the communities in the NSWPB service region. Although the three Métis of Ontario (MNO) Community Council offices listed are situated in established non-Indigenous municipalities, they are not within these municipalities' governance or representation. Métis Community Councils represent distinct communities within wider geographical areas.

Census District	Common Community Name	Census Subdivision Name, Type
Thunder Bay	Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinaabek (Lake Nipigon Ojibway First Nation)	Lake Nipigon, IRI
Thunder Bay	Aroland First Nation	Aroland 83, IRI
Thunder Bay	Biigtigong Nishnaabeg (Ojibways of the Pic River First Nation)	Pic River 50, IRI
Thunder Bay	Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek (Rocky Bay First Nation)	Rocky Bay 1, IRI
Thunder Bay	Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek (Sand Point First Nation)	
Thunder Bay	Conmee	Conmee, TP
Thunder Bay	Dorion	Dorion, TP
Kenora	Eabametoong First Nation (Fort Hope)	Fort Hope 64, IRI
Thunder Bay	Fort William First Nation	Fort William 52, IRI
Thunder Bay	Gillies	Gillies, TP
Thunder Bay	Ginoogaming First Nation (Long Lake #77 First Nation)	Ginoogaming First Nation, IRI
Thunder Bay	Greenstone, Municipality of	Greenstone, MU
Thunder Bay	Greenstone Métis Community[10]	
Thunder Bay	Kiashke Zaaging Anishinaabek (Gull Bay First Nation)	
Thunder Bay	Lac des Mille Lacs First Nation	Lac Des Mille Lacs 22A1, IRI
Thunder Bay	Long Lake #58 First Nation	Long Lake 58, IRI
Thunder Bay	Manitouwadge	Manitouwadge, TP
Thunder Bay	Marathon	Marathon, TP
Kenora	Marten Falls First Nation	Marten Falls 65, IRI
Thunder Bay	Neebing	Neebing, MU

[10] Geraldton Council office covers the Municipality of Greenstone.

Kenora	Neskantaga First Nation (Landsdowne House)	Lansdowne House, S-E
Kenora	Nibinamik First Nation (Summer Beaver)	Summer Beaver, S-E
Thunder Bay	Nipigon	Nipigon, TP
Thunder Bay	O'Connor	O'Connor, TP
Thunder Bay	Oliver Paipoonge	Oliver Paipoonge, MU
Thunder Bay	Pawgwasheeng (Pays Plat First Nation)	Pays Plat 51, IRI
Thunder Bay	Pic Mobert First Nation	Pic Mobert N/S, IRI
Thunder Bay	Red Rock	Red Rock, TP
Thunder Bay	Red Rock Indian Band/Lake Helen First Nation	Lake Helen 53A, IRI
Thunder Bay	Schreiber	Schreiber, TP
Thunder Bay	Shuniah	Shuniah, MU
Thunder Bay	Terrace Bay	Terrace Bay, TP
Thunder Bay	Superior North Shore Métis Community[11]	
Thunder Bay	Thunder Bay	Thunder Bay, CY
Thunder Bay	Thunder Bay, Unorganized	Thunder Bay, Unorganized, NO
Thunder Bay	Thunder Bay Métis Community[12]	
Kenora	Webequie First Nation	Webequie, IRI
Thunder Bay	Whitesand First Nation	Whitesand, IRI

[11] Terrace Bay Council office covers the North Shore of Lake Superior.
[12] Thunder Bay Council office covers Kakabeka to Nipigon.

Appendix B: EO and non-EO Employment and Training Service Providers

Organization Name	Website
Anishinabek Employment and Training Services (AETS)	https://www.aets.org/
Canadian Hearing Society (Northern Literacy and Lifeskills Program)	https://www.chs.ca/service/literacy-and-basic-skills
Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) – Thunder Bay	https://cmha.ca/
Centre de Formation Manitouwadge Learning Centre	NA
Centre de formation pour adultes de Greenstone	http://www.cfag.ca
Community Living Thunder Bay	http://www.cltb.ca
Confederation College	www.confederationcollege.ca/
Fort William First Nation (FWFN)	https://fwfn.com/
Frontier College	https://www.frontiercollege.ca/
Independent Living Resource Centre Thunder Bay	http://www.ilrctbay.com/
Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment & Training Services (KKETS)	www.kkets.ca/
Lakehead University – Student Success Centre	https://www.lakeheadu.ca/current-students/student-success-centre
Literacy Northwest	https://www.northernliteracy.ca/
March of Dimes Canada	https://www.marchofdimes.ca/
Métis Nation of Ontario	www.metisnation.org/
Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO)	www.metisnation.org/
MTW Employment Services	https://www.mtwjobassist.ca/
Northwest Employment Works (NEW)	www.northwestworks.ca/
Novocentre (Alpha Thunder Bay)	https://novocentre.com
Ontario Native Women's Association	www.onwa.ca/
Oshki-Pimache-O-Win (OSHKI) Education and Training Institute	www.oshki.ca/
PARO Centre for Women's Enterprise	www.paro.ca/
Réseau de soutien à l'immigration francophone du Nord de l'Ontario	http://reseaudunord.ca/
Seven Generations Education Institute	http://www.7generations.org/
St. Joseph's Care Group – Employment Options Program	http://www.sjcg.net/services/mental-health_addictions/housing-employment/employment.aspx
Superior North Adult Learning Association	NA
The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB)	https://www.tbdssab.ca/
Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre	https://tbifc.ca/
Thunder Bay Literacy Group	https://www.tblg.org/

Thunderbird Friendship Centre	NA
YES Employment Services	www.yesjobsnow.com/

Appendix C: Glossary of Acronyms

AETS	**Anishinabek Employment and Training Services**
CDO	Chief Data Office
CERCA	Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance
CEWS	Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy
CMHC	Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
COJG	Canada-Ontario Job Grant
DDR	Demographic dependency ratio
EA	Employment Assistance
EO	Employment Ontario
ES	Employment Services
ICTC	Information and Communications Technology Council
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
LBS	Literacy and Basic Skills
LINC	Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada
Mbps	megabits per second
MLS	Multiple Listing Service
MLTSD	Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development
NAICS	North American Industry Classification System
NOC	National Occupational Classification
NOSM	Northern Ontario School of Medicine
NSWPB	North Superior Workforce Planning Board
PGSNO	Prosperity and Growth Strategy for Northern Ontario
SC	Second Career
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math
TFWP	Temporary Foreign Worker Program
YCJ	Youth Job Connection

Appendix D: NSWPB and NPI Labour Market Tools, Programs, and Reports

NSWPB

- **Northwest Connector:** The Northwest Connector Program helps talent discover opportunity by putting trained job seekers directly in touch with local businesspeople, civil servants, and community leaders so they can grow their professional networks, tap into Northwestern Ontario's hidden job market, and successfully integrate into the Thunder Bay area.
- **WorkSCAPE Northwest:** WorkSCAPE (Skills, Careers, Assets, and Programs Explorer) Northwest is a suite of labour market tools that provides an extensive representation of the labour market in the NSWPB region. It aggregates job postings from 25 sources along with a host of community resources, a career pathway explorer and more into one central location that the public can access. WorkSCAPE Northwest will simplify the way people look for work, while also enhancing knowledge of the local labour market by generating timely reports on labour supply and demand data.

NPI & NSWPB PARTNERED PROGRAMS AND TOOLS

- **Baakaakonaanan Ishkwaandemonan (BI):** This program focuses on identifying current best practices and promoting existing resources available for supporting the hiring of newcomers and Indigenous job seekers. The goal of the BI program is to recognize the efforts made by employers to create inclusive workplaces and encourage employers to understand the value and benefit to hiring newcomers and Indigenous job seekers.
- **Community Accounts:** Community Accounts is an innovative information system providing Northern Ontarians with a reliable source of community, regional, and provincial data on key economic and social indicators. This resource aims to encourage information sharing and provides communities with a greater understanding of their local area and Northern Ontario as a whole. Community Accounts provides users with a single comprehensive source of data that would normally not be readily available, too costly to obtain, or too time consuming to retrieve and compile.
- **Employment Calculator:** Just as all politics are local so too is all employment. In census years we can secure a great deal of information about local communities throughout the Thunder Bay region. In between census years, it is very difficult to measure changes in those smaller northern communities. It is possible, however, to estimate those changes. This is what the Employment Calculator does. Using historical trends, we have developed community specific formulas to estimate workforce indicators in the years ahead and before the next census data is released.

North Superior Workforce Planning Board

Related Research:

On the Road to Recovery: Becoming A Superior Workforce post COVID-19
2020-2021 Local Labour Market Plan

Thunder Bay Human Capital Report 2019
Dr. Bakhtiar Moazzami

Assessing Labour Market Shortages in the City of Thunder Bay
Alex Ross

April 2021 Business Impact Survey Results
Lindsey Champaigne

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