



# 2026-2029

LOCAL LABOUR MARKET PLAN REPORT

**FOR THE**  
Kenora and  
Rainy River Districts

**NORTHWEST TRAINING  
AND ADJUSTMENT BOARD**

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### VISION

Engage all regional stakeholders and partners with valuable workforce information.

### MISSION

To improve our local workforce.

**“A JOB FOR EVERYONE,  
SOMEONE FOR EVERY JOB.”**

### LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Northwest Training and Adjustment Board's Directors and staff recognize that we gather on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe and Métis Peoples within the Kenora and Rainy River Districts. It is our hope that the information that is gathered and shared through the work of the Northwest Training and Adjustment Board will assist in the process of truth and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and augment the intended sharing of resources that these lands provide to its residents.

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*"The material contained in this report has been prepared by the Northwest Training and Adjustment Board using the most current data available at the time of analysis from Statistics Canada, Taxfiler, Canadian Business Counts, other publicly available sources, and local consultations and applied labour market intelligence. Findings are influenced by data availability, collection cycles, confidentiality requirements, and geographic limitations. While the information is drawn from sources considered to be reliable, no representation or warranty, express or implied, is made as to its accuracy or completeness. In providing this material, the Northwest Training and Adjustment Board assumes no responsibility or liability for its use or interpretation."*

# 2026-2029 LOCAL LABOUR MARKET PLAN REPORT

## KENORA & RAINY RIVER DISTRICTS

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Northwest Ontario Training Board has issued an annual Local Labour Market Plan for more than a decade. Last year's report issued early in 2025 was the final installment of a 3-year Action Plan supporting workforce development in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts. The year 2025 has been a year of marked change. We continue to witness change in global and national trends like trade changes, tariff shifts, supply chain issues, increasing use of generative artificial intelligence, federal and provincial policy updates, inflation, cost of living pressures and significant government investments. It seems especially fitting that our new 3-year Action Plan launch in 2026.

Community consultations conducted in 2025 confirmed our five priorities continue to be valid. However, we used the opportunity to further expand on each:

1. External Forces and Workforce Sector Shifts
2. Population Dynamics and Workforce Enablers
3. Skills, Training, and Learning Pathways
4. Entrepreneurship and Local Business Growth
5. Inclusion, Equity and Workforce Participation

The following indicators have been used to assess changes in labour market demand and supply over the past year:

### LABOUR MARKET DEMAND

- There were 210 new businesses operating in the Kenora District between June 2023 and June 2025 or 5%. However, a significant number of these were owner-operated enterprises with no employees. The number of businesses with employees grew by a net eight businesses or 0.4%. The Rainy River District experienced similar growth in the business community. There were 81 new businesses operating in the area during the same time period; however, only one new business with employees.
- There were 1,608 online job postings issued by Kenora District employers between Nov 1 2024 and Oct 31 2025. The great number occurred in the Retail Trade; Manufacturing; Educational Services; Accommodation and Food Services and Health Care and Social Assistance sectors. The Rainy River District employers issued 824 job postings during the same period with the greatest number observed in Retail Trade; Manufacturing; Finance and Insurance and Health Care and Social Assistance.
- Employment concentration in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts is greatest in Public Administration, Health Care and Social Assistance and Educational Services. The Kenora District has a high employment concentration in Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting as well as Mining, Quarrying, Oil and Gas Extraction and Transportation and Warehousing. High levels of employment concentration in the Rainy River District is evident in Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting; Mining, Oil and Gas Extraction and Utilities sectors.
- Recognizing the current economic interest in critical minerals and mining and the importance of the construction industry to its development, a closer look was taken into these two sectors. Ontario is the largest mineral producer in Canada with \$15.7 billion in mineral exploration in 2023. At that time there were 4,200 people employed in Northwest Ontario's Mining, Quarrying and Oil and Gas sector with more than 75% of these employed specifically in mining. The Kenora District is abundant in critical minerals like nickel, copper and cobalt while further exploration

for lithium, platinum group metals, gold and graphite. These minerals are key to defense and clean energy technology. The World Bank Group predicts that the production of minerals such as graphite, lithium and cobalt could increase by nearly 500% by 2050, in order to meet the growing demand for clean-energy technologies. The industry is an important component of Canada's strategy for economic security, reduced reliance on other nations, stable supply chains and economic diversification.

- Key barriers to growth of the mining industry are the lack of infrastructure including roads, rail and power as well as workforce challenges driven by an aging workforce and chronic skilled labour shortages as well as workforce attraction and retention.
- Of the 18 occupations making up the mining industry in the Kenora District, ten had 20% or more workers age 50 and older as of the 2021 Statistics Canada Census. In the Rainy River District five of the nine key occupations were comprised of workers age 50 years old or more.
- Both the development, launch and operation of a mine as well as the development of surrounding infrastructure creates jobs in the construction sector. A “representative” mine can generate almost 2,000 construction jobs.
- However, as with mining, the construction sector is impacted by labour and skills shortage as well as an aging workforce. As of 2021, there were 40 occupations in the Kenora District's construction sector and eleven in the Rainy River District that employ ten or more people. Of these, more than 55% or 21 construction occupations in the Kenora District and five in the Rainy River District that were comprised of workers age 50 and older.
- The application and implementation of Generative Artificial Intelligence varies between occupations. Any occupation requiring the processing of significant amount of data is most at risk while those involving human interaction, social perception and instruction are less vulnerable. Rather than eliminating entire occupations, generative artificial intelligence will more likely alter the composition of work activities within occupations. Significant variations also exist across industries and regions. In regions like the north, industries like mining, construction and manufacturing will likely be impacted to a greater degree because of significant investment in equipment combined with ongoing workforce challenges. Any training should incorporate digital literacy as well complementary skills like critical thinking, problem solving and leadership.

## LABOUR MARKET SUPPLY

- At 4.6% the annual unemployment rate for 2025 in Northwestern Ontario has remained stable since 2022.
- Participation rate is a calculation of the percentage of people who are either working or looking for work. At 61.1%, participation in the labour force in Northwestern Ontario is higher than other areas of the North.
- Despite economic challenges nationally, for the second year in a row, the number collecting regular Employment Insurance benefits in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts remained stable. There were 40 more individuals in the Kenora District collecting benefits in October 2025 as compared to October 2024 while in the Rainy River District there were 20 fewer.
- An increase in net in-migration continues in both the Kenora and Rainy River Districts. There was a significant net increase of 745 people moving into the Kenora District and 450 into the Rainy River District.

## LOCAL LABOUR MARKET INSIGHTS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Through ongoing individual engagement in the community and two broader consultants, NTAB received the following feedback:

- Challenges to Newcomer and Resident Attraction and Retention
- Misalignment of Job Requirements and Worker Skills
- Challenges to Transitioning Workers to New Industries
- Entrepreneurship and Local Business Growth
- Rural Immigration Pathways and Labour Market Impacts

## EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO PROGRAM 2024-2025 RESULTS

The year 2024-2025 was one of transition of Employment Ontario employment service providers as they moved to the Service System Manager delivery model.

- Employment Services and Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) client numbers remained largely stable in 2024-2025 as compared to the previous year. The number of Employment Service participants decreased by 32% while the overall number of LBS trainees remained stable. In most cases, approximately 50% of both Employment Services and LBS participants were dependent on Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program benefits or had no income at all.
- Participation in Employment Services in Northern Ontario increased by 8% and but decreased 47% in Ontario. Participation in LBS decreased 2% in both Northern Ontario and Ontario overall.
- The number of new apprentice registrations in both the Kenora and Rainy River Districts increased in 2024-2025 and there are now 360 active apprentices in the Kenora District and 150 in the Rainy River District. Fifty-six Certificates of Apprenticeship during 2024-2025 were issued in the Kenora District and 29 in the Rainy River District.
- Youth Job Connection participation increased by 34% in the Kenora District while Youth Job Connection Summer experienced a decrease of 13%. In the Rainy River District, participation in Youth Job Connection decreased by 12% while Youth Job Connection Summer participation increased by 12%.
- The Canada Ontario Job Grant and Better Jobs Ontario initiatives continue to be underutilized in the region.

# INTRODUCTION

Established in 1997, the Northwest Training and Adjustment Board is one of a network of 25 workforce development boards across Ontario. Our mandate is to engage communities and community partners in local labour market development. By conducting and analyzing local labour market research, trends and planning processes, we work to develop community partnerships to find solutions to local issues.

Each year, NTAB releases a Local Labour Market Plan for the Kenora and Rainy River Districts summarizing the most recent labour market data available; independent research; and consultations with employers, economic developers, educators and employment service providers that have taken place over the past year. This qualitative and quantitative foundation results in a compilation of actions supporting local workforce development focused on five key priorities. These priorities continue to be valid, but in order to provide more clarity and better reflect the new action items and themes we've been hearing from employers and community leaders, our team has expanded on each priority.

Key Priorities for workforce development in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts:

## 1. EXTERNAL FORCES AND WORKFORCE SECTOR SHIFTS

The economies of the Kenora and Rainy River Districts continue to shift, and many of these changes begin with external pressures that sit far beyond local control. Volatile tariffs, supply chain disruptions, global market swings, and shifting federal and provincial priorities all influence how industries expand or contract in the region. Manufacturing and forestry are particularly sensitive to policy changes and international demand, while construction, health care, and mining respond more to long-term investment cycles. These pressures create an environment where sector stability is uneven and employers must adjust quickly to conditions that change year to year. Some industries experience periods of growth driven by new projects or public investment, while others stall because timelines for major developments stretch across many years. Employers and community stakeholders describe the challenge of planning for a future shaped by forces they cannot predict or influence, even as communities work to build local capacity and respond to emerging opportunities. These realities shape the challenges industries face, but also point to the ways communities are adapting through local studies, targeted supports, and efforts to strengthen the regional labour pool.

## 2. POPULATION DYNAMICS AND WORKFORCE ENABLERS

Communities across both districts are working hard to attract and retain people in the core working-age population, but long-standing challenges continue to influence who stays and who leaves. Youth out-migration remains significant, shaped by limited housing options, fewer postsecondary pathways, and a sense that opportunities are stronger elsewhere. Families point to gaps in childcare, transportation, and health-care access, while newcomers and returning residents describe difficulties settling because basic supports can feel inconsistent or hard to find. Local stakeholders repeatedly raise concerns about the negative narratives circulating about the region, which influence how people view their future here. At the same time, community groups and employers point to ongoing revitalization efforts, infrastructure development, and the creation of new economic opportunities, all of which give communities more tools to support long-term stability.

### **3. SKILLS, TRAINING, AND LEARNING PATHWAYS**

Skills and knowledge are becoming increasingly important as workplaces adopt new technologies and expectations, shaping how youth and workers access the education and training they need. Employers point to gaps in foundational skills such as literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, and communication, and note that emerging jobs require workers who can adapt quickly. Smaller communities often lack exposure to global labour market trends, and many residents are unaware of the training and education options available to them. A shortage of specialized instructors limits the ability to promote new careers, and apprenticeship opportunities remain constrained by the lack of facilities, in-school training capacity, and available journeypersons. In response, many stakeholders are broadening career development activities, improving in-class learning, and expanding flexible education and micro credential options so youth can make more informed career decisions and workers can upskill in ways that reflect changing workplace needs.

### **4. ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND LOCAL BUSINESS GROWTH**

Entrepreneurs and small and medium businesses continue to play a central role in job creation and local innovation. Many owners describe a landscape that holds real potential but is also shaped by practical challenges. Starting a business often requires navigating high start-up costs, limited financing options, and the pressures of competing in broader digital markets. Some communities lack adequate commercial space, and new owners can become overwhelmed by bylaws, permits, and compliance requirements. Workforce shortages and rising wages add extra strain. Local stakeholders also note that entrepreneurs benefit from steady guidance and long-term support to help them move beyond the early stages of business development. Across the region, more seminars, training opportunities, grant programs, pitch events, and incubator supports are beginning to give new and existing business owners additional avenues to build confidence and capacity. These pressures and corresponding efforts ultimately affect how confidently small businesses can build, expand, and contribute to local job creation.

### **5. INCLUSION, EQUITY, AND WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION**

A strong labour market depends on the participation of all community members, yet many people continue to face barriers that limit their access to stable employment. This is felt most by groups who experience persistent inequities, including Indigenous and racialized residents, newcomers, youth, older adults, and people navigating complex social or economic circumstances. Affordable housing, transportation, work-appropriate clothing, and reliable technology remain out of reach for some residents, particularly in rural and isolated areas. Individuals who want to upgrade their skills often have trouble accessing programs because of strict eligibility rules, short recruitment timelines, or limited local delivery. Employers note that job roles are not always designed with flexibility in mind, which affects workers who need accommodations or different entry points into the workforce. Community stakeholders emphasize that many people who would benefit most from training do not hear about opportunities in time or do not see themselves reflected in available pathways. To help alleviate some of these barriers, communities are working to make learning and employment supports easier to reach, offering residents more options as they navigate the labour market.

As we move into 2026, we find ourselves at a time of unprecedented geopolitical, social and technological change. Fundamental changes like the shift from free trade to the enactment of tariffs, supply chain disruptions and the implementation of generative Artificial Intelligence have introduced economic instability, increased employee stress and will likely require workers to adapt their skills. New government policies focused on domestic production and trade diversification has put a focus on natural resources like the critical minerals abundant in Northwestern Ontario. The recent shift to lower immigration targets may lead to a tighter labour market and put more pressure of employers.

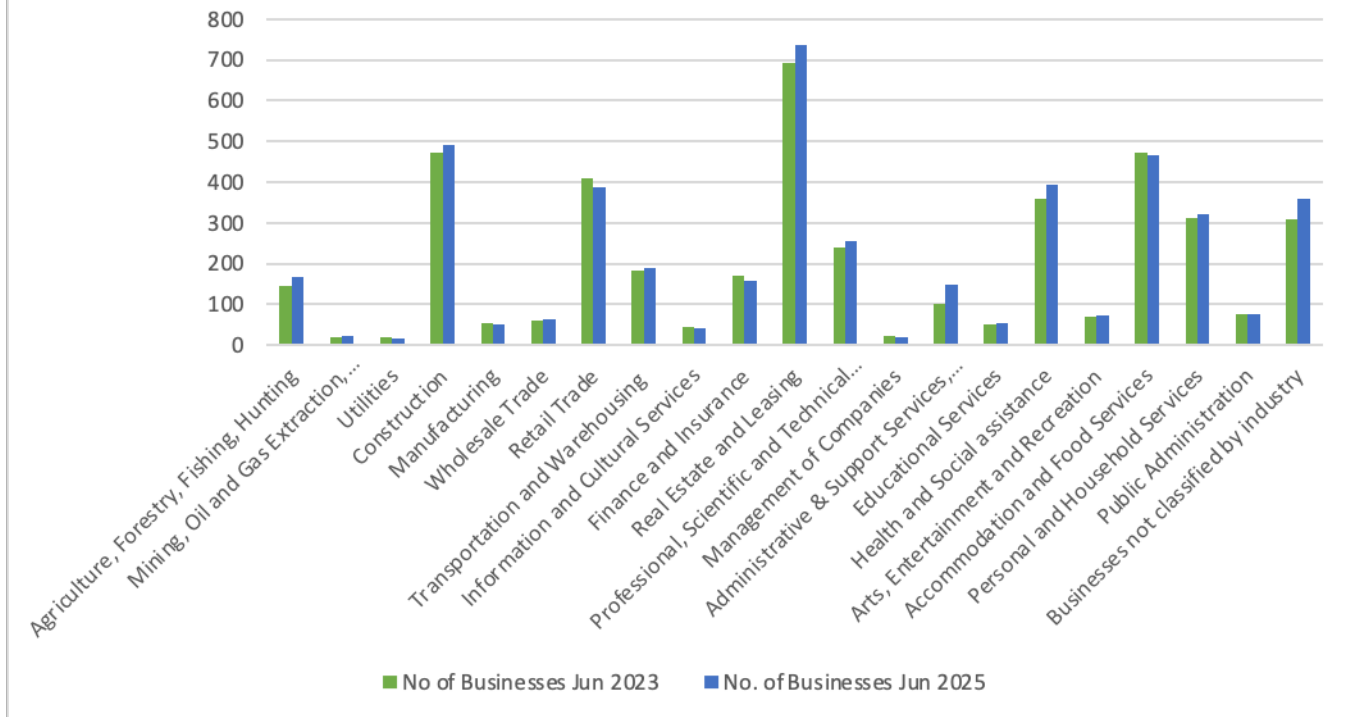
## LABOUR MARKET DEMAND

One of the first measures that provides some insight into activity in the region's economy is Canada Business Counts data, released by Statistics Canada semi-annually. Table 1A compares the number of businesses operating in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts in June 2025 with the number operating in June 2023. It must be noted that some changes in the numbers of businesses operating in each sector may be caused by changes in the assignment of postal codes within Census Divisions by Statistics Canada.

Table 1A: Change in Number of Businesses June 2023 to June 2025 – Kenora District				
Sector	No of Businesses Jun 2023	No. of Businesses Jun 2025	Absolute Change	Percent change
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting	144	168	24	16.7
Mining, Oil and Gas Extraction, Quarrying	21	24	3	14.3
Utilities	19	17	(-2)	(-10.5)
Construction	474	492	18	3.8
Manufacturing	54	51	(-3)	(-5.6)
Wholesale Trade	59	64	5	8.5
Retail Trade	411	389	(-22)	(-5.4)
Transportation and Warehousing	182	188	7	3.3
Information and Cultural Services	44	43	(-1)	(-2.3)
Finance and Insurance	170	157	(-13)	(-7.6)
Real Estate and Leasing	693	738	45	6.5
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	241	254	13	5.4
Management of Companies	24	21	(-3)	(-12.5)
Administrative & Support Services, Waste Mngmt.	100	147	47	47
Educational Services	50	55	5	10
Health and Social assistance	360	394	34	9.4
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	71	74	3	4.2
Accommodation and Food Services	473	465	(-8)	(-1.7)
Personal and Household Services	313	322	9	2.9
Public Administration	77	75	(-2)	(-2.6)
Businesses not classified by industry	308	360	52	16.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,288</b>	<b>4,498</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>4.9</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Canada Business Counts, June 2023 and June 2025

### Change in Number of Businesses by Industry, Kenora District (June 2023 to June 2025)



Source: Statistics Canada, Canada Business Counts, June 2023 and June 2025

The increase in the number of businesses operating in the Kenora District over the past two years is noteworthy. With 47 additional businesses, the greatest increase by both number and percentage took place in the Administrative and Support Services and Waste Management industry. This sector groups two distinct industries under a single sector. Administrative Support includes services like office support, human resources recruiters, and security. Waste Management involves the collection, treatment, and disposal of waste and includes remediation services. Significant growth also took place in the number of businesses operating in the Kenora District's Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting; Mining; Construction and Health Care and Social Assistance sectors.

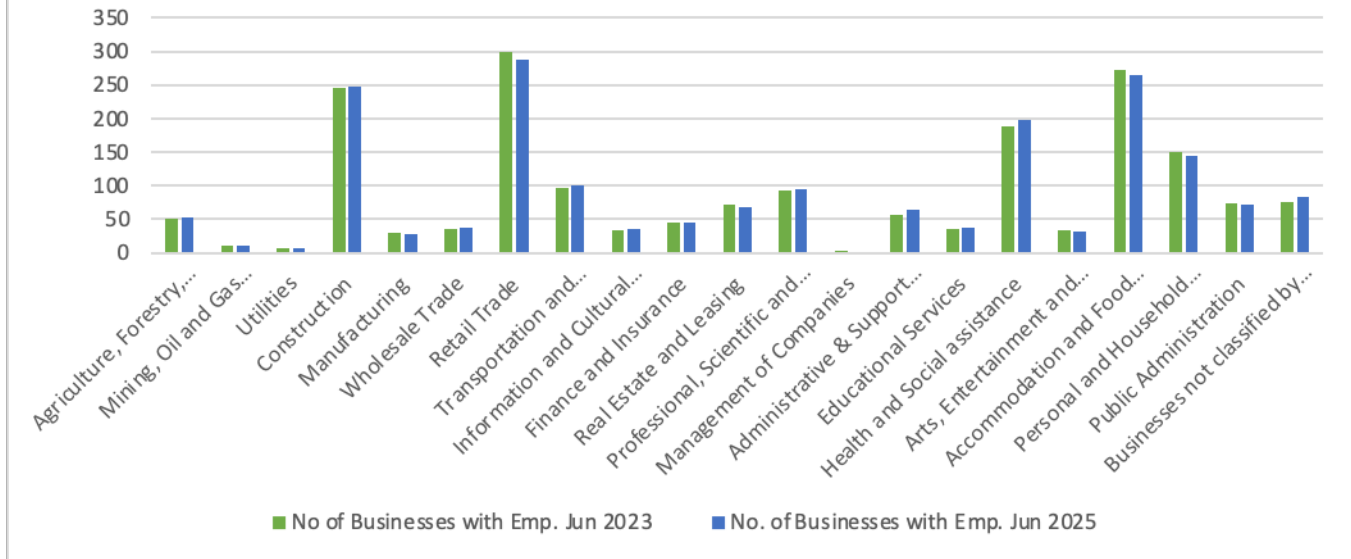
In the Kenora District, 57.5% of all businesses are operated by individual entrepreneurs with no employees while 1,910 or 42.5% are businesses with at least one employee. As most workers, jobseekers and graduates work in the local labour market as employees, it's worthwhile to examine changes in the number of businesses with employees and the sectors in which they operate. Table 1B highlights much more stability in the growth of the number of businesses with employees with an increase of 8 businesses (0.4%). The greatest increase took place in the Health Care and Social Assistance and Administrative Support and Waste Management sectors. The greatest decrease took place in Retail Trade.

Table 1B: Change in Number of Businesses with employees June 2023 to June 2025 – Kenora District

Sector	No of Businesses with Emp. Jun 2023	No. of Businesses with Emp. Jun 2025	Absolute Change	Percent change
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting	50	53	3	6
Mining, Oil and Gas Extraction, Quarrying	10	10	0	0
Utilities	6	6	0	0
Construction	245	248	3	1.2
Manufacturing	29	27	(-2)	(-6.9)
Wholesale Trade	35	38	3	8.6
Retail Trade	299	288	(-11)	(-3.7)
Transportation and Warehousing	97	101	4	4.1
Information and Cultural Services	33	36	3	9.1
Finance and Insurance	46	45	(-1)	(-2.2)
Real Estate and Leasing	71	68	(-3)	(-4.2)
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	93	94	1	1.1
Management of Companies	3	2	(-1)	(-33.3)
Administrative & Support Services, Remediation	57	64	7	12.3
Educational Services	36	37	1	2.8
Health and Social assistance	188	198	10	5.3
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	33	31	(-2)	(-6.1)
Accommodation and Food Services	272	265	(-7)	(-2.6)
Personal and Household Services	150	145	(-5)	(-3.3)
Public Administration	74	71	(-3)	(-4.1)
Businesses not classified by industry	75	83	8	10.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,902</b>	<b>1,910</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0.4</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Canada Business Counts, June 2023 and June 2025

### Change in Number of Businesses with Employees by Industry, Kenora District (June 2023 to June 2025)



Source: Statistics Canada, Canada Business Counts, June 2023 and June 2025

Finally, Table 1C identifies the sectors with largest companies employing 100 or more as of June 2025.

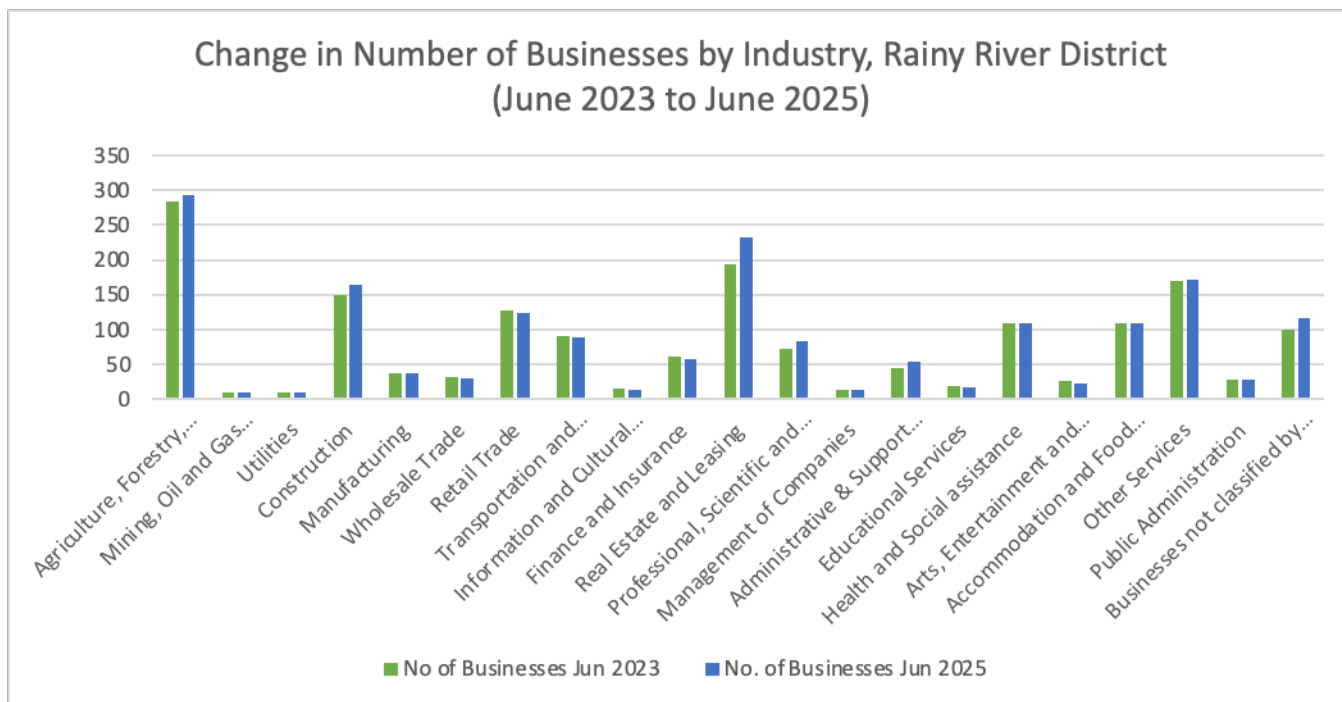
Industries	Employee Size Range	Employee Size Range	Employee Size Range
	100-199	200-499	500+
Agriculture	1		
Mining		1	1
Construction	1	1	0
Manufacturing		2	1
Retail	4		
Transportation and Warehousing	2		
Management of Companies and Enterprises			1
Administration and Waste Management	1		
Educational Services	2	1	2
Health Care and Social Assistance	11	4	4
Other Services	1	0	0
Public Administration	18	8	1

Source: Statistics Canada, Canada Business Counts, June 2025

Table 2A shows that the number of total businesses in the Rainy River District also increased significantly over the past two years. As of June 2025, there were 1,788 total businesses operating in the area, an increase of 81 businesses (4.7%) from 2023. The greatest growth took place in the Construction and Real Estate and Leasing sectors.

Sector	No of Businesses Jun 2023	No. of Businesses Jun 2025	Absolute Change	Percent change
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting	284	292	8	2.8
Mining, Oil and Gas Extraction, Quarrying	11	10	(-1)	(-9.1%)
Utilities	10	10	0	0
Construction	149	164	15	10.1
Manufacturing	37	37	0	0
Wholesale Trade	32	30	(-2)	(-6.3)
Retail Trade	127	124	(-3)	(-2.4)
Transportation and Warehousing	91	89	(-2)	(-2.2)
Information and Cultural Services	15	14	(-1)	(-6.7)
Finance and Insurance	62	57	(-5)	(-8.1)
Real Estate and Leasing	194	233	39	20.1
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	73	83	10	13.7
Management of Companies	14	14	0	0
Administrative & Support Services, Remediation	45	54	9	20
Educational Services	19	17	(-2)	(-10.5)
Health and Social assistance	110	110	0	0
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	27	23	(-4)	(-14.8)
Accommodation and Food Services	109	110	1	0.9
Other Services	169	172	3	1.8
Public Administration	29	29	0	0
Businesses not classified by industry	100	116	16	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,707</b>	<b>1,788</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>4.7</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Canada Business Counts, June 2023 and June 2025



Source: Statistics Canada, Canada Business Counts, June 2023 and June 2025

As in the Kenora District, the increase in the number of businesses with employees in the Rainy River District has been much more stable over the past two years. Table 2B shows there are 680 businesses with employees operating in the area as of June 2025, compared with 679 in 2023 (0.1%). The greatest increase took place in the Construction sector; the most significant decrease took place in the Other Services sector which includes personal and household services such as automotive repairs, hairstyling and laundry services.

Sector	No. of Businesses Jun 2023	No. of Businesses Jun 2025	Absolute Change	Percent change
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting	52	49	(-3)	(-5.8)
Mining, Oil and Gas Extraction, Quarrying	3	2	(-1)	(-33.3)
Utilities	7	7	0	0
Construction	76	84	8	10.5
Manufacturing	18	19	1	5.6
Wholesale Trade	17	15	(-2)	(-11.8)
Retail Trade	86	83	(-3)	(-3.5)
Transportation and Warehousing	42	43	1	2.4
Information and Cultural Services	9	9	0	0
Finance and Insurance	19	21	2	10.5
Real Estate and Leasing	23	24	1	4.3
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	36	34	(-2)	(-5.6)

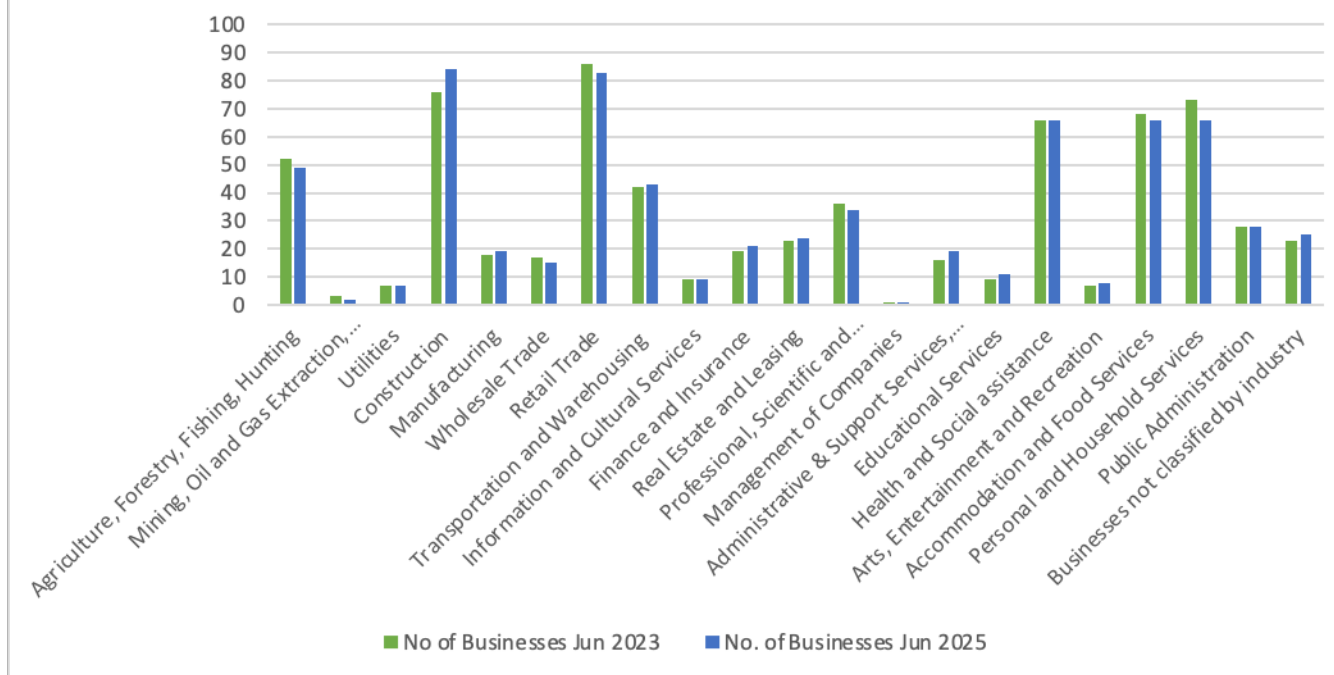
Source: Statistics Canada, Canada Business Counts, June 2023 and June 2025

Table 2B: Change in Number of Businesses with Employees - June 2023 to June 2025 – Rainy River District

Sector	No of Businesses Jun 2023	No. of Businesses Jun 2025	Absolute Change	Percent change
Management of Companies	1	1	0	0
Administrative & Support Services, Remediation	16	19	3	18.8
Educational Services	9	11	2	22.2
Health and Social assistance	66	66	0	0
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	7	8	1	14.3
Accommodation and Food Services	68	66	(-2)	(-2.9)
Personal and Household Services	73	66	(-7)	(-9.6)
Public Administration	28	28	0	0
Businesses not classified by industry	23	25	2	8.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.1</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Canada Business Counts, June 2023 and June 2025

Change in Number of Businesses with Employees by Industry, Rainy River District (June 2023 to June 2025)



Source: Statistics Canada, Canada Business Counts, June 2023 and June 2025

Table 2C identifies the sectors where the largest companies employing 100 or more operate in the Rainy River District as of June 2025.

Table 2C: Number of businesses with 100 or more employees operating in the Rainy River District

Industries	Employee Size Range	Employee Size Range	Employee Size Range
	100-199	200-499	500+
Utilities	1		
Manufacturing	2		
Retail	2		
Administration and Waste Management	1		
Educational Services		1	1
Health Care and Social Assistance	5	1	
Accommodation and Food Services	1		
Public Administration		4	

Source: Statistics Canada, Canada Business Counts, June 2025

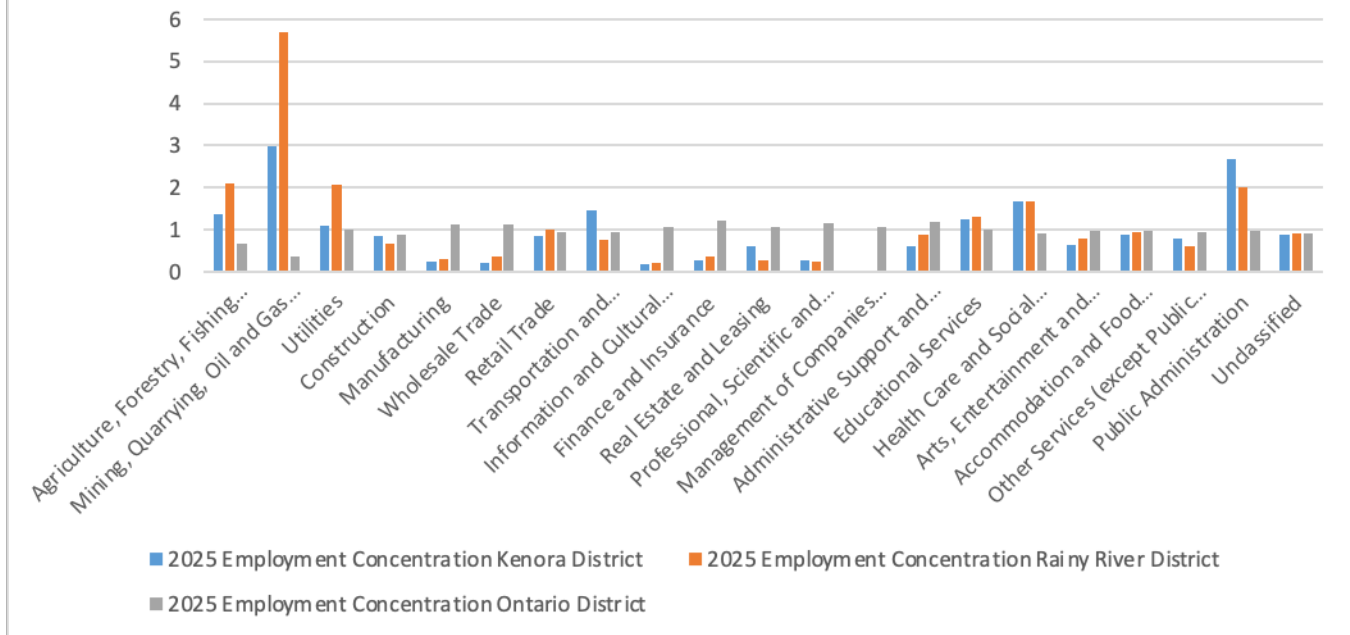
Lightcast Analyst data provides a calculation of the concentration of local workers within each industry relative to the national average. With Canada set at 1.0, Table 3 identifies the employment concentration in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts as compared to Ontario and Canada (at 1.0).

Table 3: Employment Concentration within Sectors

Industry	2025 Employment Concentration		
	Kenora District	Rainy River District	Ontario
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1.37	2.10	0.66
Mining, Quarrying, Oil and Gas Extraction	2.97	5.70	0.36
Utilities	1.09	2.06	0.99
Construction	0.85	0.67	0.89
Manufacturing	0.23	0.29	1.13
Wholesale Trade	0.22	0.37	1.12
Retail Trade	0.84	1.00	0.95
Transportation and Warehousing	1.46	0.76	0.95
Information and Cultural Industries	0.18	0.21	1.07
Finance and Insurance	0.28	0.37	1.22
Real Estate and Leasing	0.59	0.26	1.07
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	0.28	0.23	1.15
Management of Companies and Enterprises	0.00	0.00	1.05
Administrative Support and Waste Management	0.59	0.89	1.17
Educational Services	1.25	1.32	0.99
Health Care and Social Assistance	1.66	1.67	0.92
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	0.64	0.80	0.97
Accommodation and Food Services	0.87	0.94	0.96
Other Services (except Public Administration)	0.78	0.59	0.94
Public Administration	2.67	2.01	0.98
Unclassified	0.87	0.91	0.91

Source: Lightcast Analyst

### Employment Concentration within Industries, 2025 Kenora District, Rainy River District, and Ontario



Source: Lightcast Analyst

With a significantly greater rate than both Ontario and Canada, the Kenora and Rainy River Districts have a high concentration of employment in public administration as well as in Health Care and Social Assistance and Educational Services. The Kenora District has a high employment concentration in Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting; Mining, Quarrying and Oil and Gas Extraction; and Transportation and Warehousing. Employment concentration in the Rainy River District is also observed in Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting and Mining, Quarrying and Oil and Gas Extraction as well as Utilities.

Job postings are always a clear indicator of labour market demand. Table 4 identifies the number of online job postings by industry posted between November 1, 2024 and October 31, 2025.

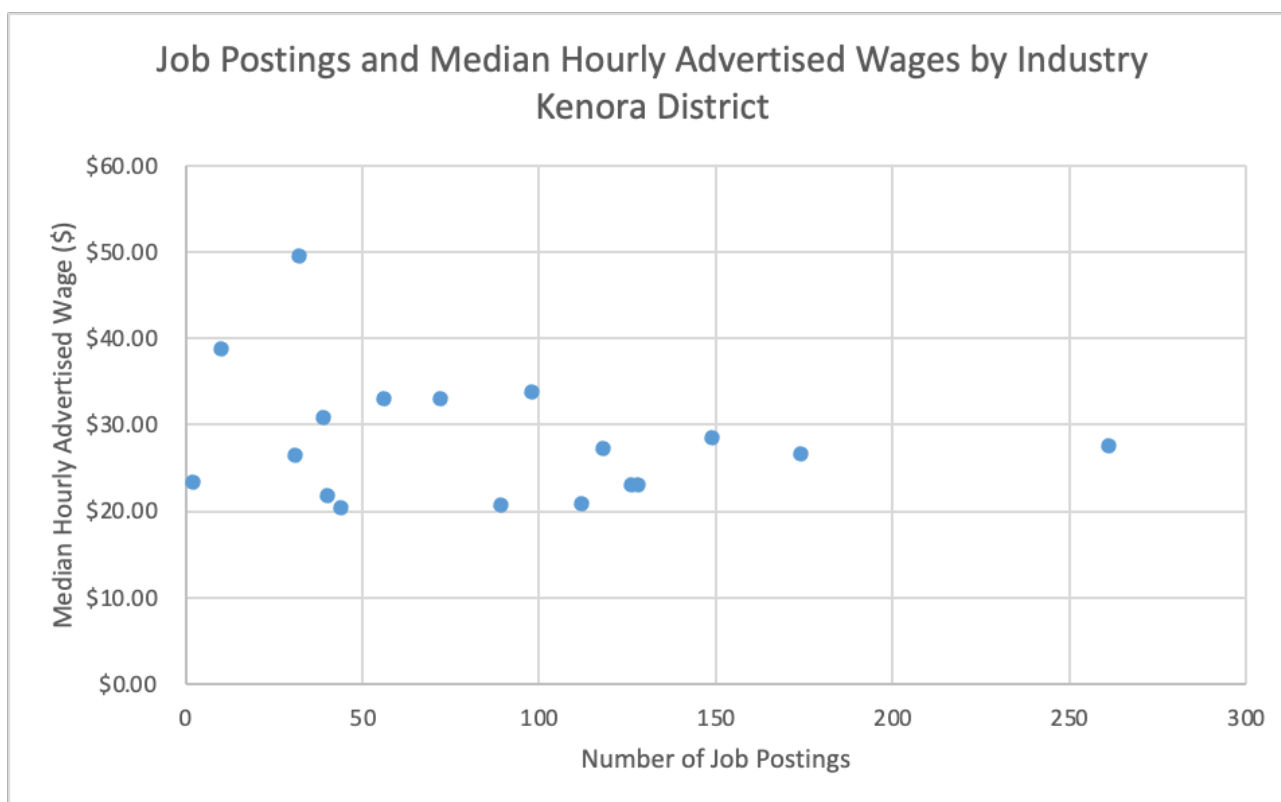
Industries	Kenora District		Rainy River District	
	No of Postings	Median Hourly Advertised Wage	No of Postings	Median Hourly Advertised Wage
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	32	\$49.60	Insuf. Data	Insuf. Data
Mining, Quarrying, Oil and Gas Extraction	27	n/a	n/a	n/a
Utilities	10	\$38.77	6	\$55.02
Construction	56	\$33.11	16	\$40.33
Manufacturing	174	\$26.58	95	\$30.28
Wholesale Trade	44	\$20.37	23	\$20.37
Retail Trade	261	\$27.57	122	\$24.98

Source: Lightcast Analyst

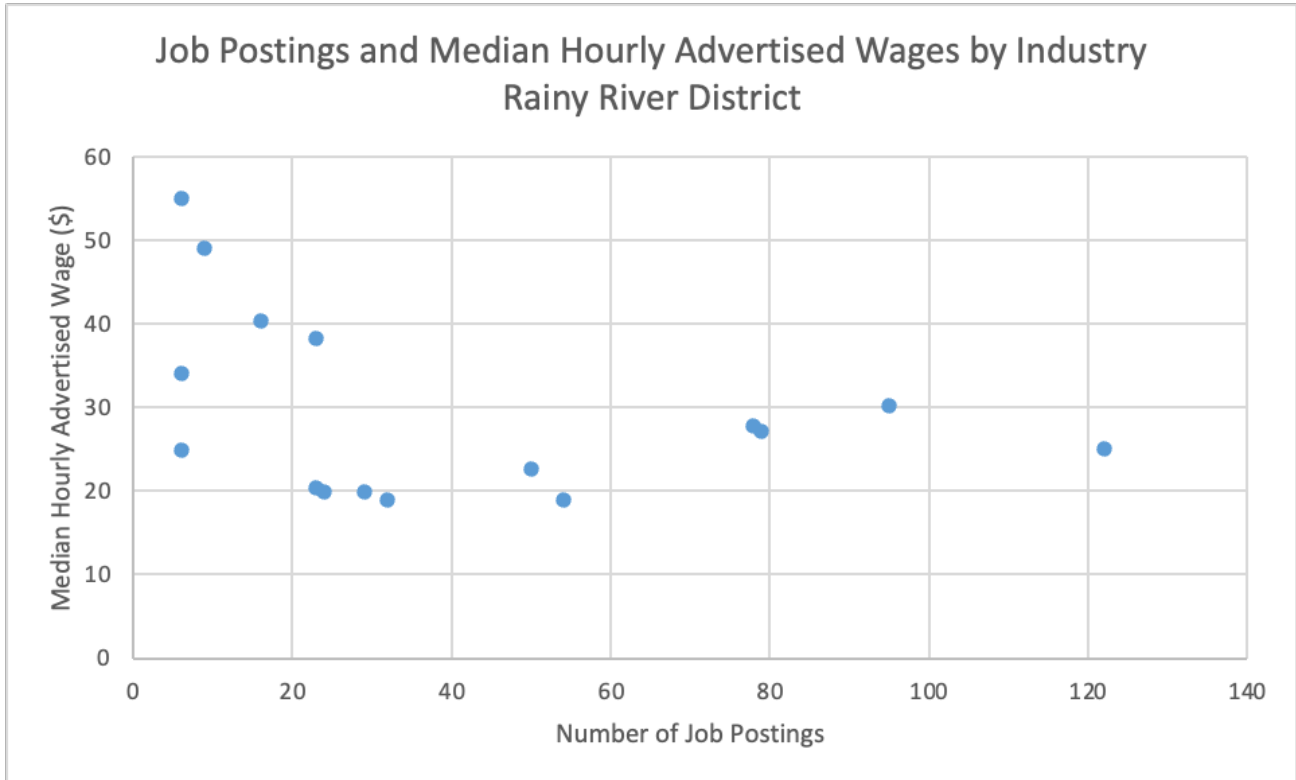
Table 4: Number of job postings and median hourly advertised wage by industry in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts

Industries	Kenora District		Rainy River District	
	No of Postings	Median Hourly Advertised Wage	No of Postings	Median Hourly Advertised Wage
Transportation and Warehousing	112	\$20.92	29	\$19.94
Information and Cultural Industries	39	\$30.89	9	\$49.00
Finance and Insurance	118	\$27.20	79	\$27.20
Real Estate and Leasing	40	\$21.90	24	\$19.94
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	72	\$33.11	32	\$18.95
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2	\$23.45	6	\$34.09
Administrative Support / Waste Management	89	\$20.80	50	\$22.65
Educational Services	149	\$28.55	3	Insuf. Data
Health Care and Social Assistance	126	\$23.08	78	\$27.82
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Accommodation and Food Services	128	\$23.02	54	\$18.95
Other Services (except Public Administration)	31	\$26.46	6	\$24.86
Public Administration	98	\$33.85	23	\$38.28
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,608</b>	<b>\$28.00</b>	<b>824</b>	<b>\$25.05</b>

Source: Lightcast Analyst



Source: Lightcast Analyst



Source: Lightcast Analyst

Clearly, there is demand across all sectors of the economy; however, as previously noted, recent geopolitical events have put an added focus on natural resources particularly mining and critical minerals such as lithium, cobalt, platinum group metals, gold and graphite, necessary for both defense and clean energy technology. They have become an important component of Canada’s strategy for economic security, reduced reliance on other nations, stable supply chains and diversification. Within a challenging global economy, mining offers opportunity to diversify exports and build economic resilience.

Both the Kenora and Rainy River Districts are home to many of these important resources. The Kenora District contains critical minerals like nickel, copper and cobalt, the primary focus of the Kenbridge nickel project located within the Kenora District mining area. Current mining and mineral exploration activity includes two gold mines, one dimensional stone operation, fourteen active advanced stage projects and monitoring of over one hundred mineral exploration projects. The Rainy River District is home to the Drayton-Black Lake gold project and Rainy River mine. Further exploration is underway for lithium, platinum group metals, gold and graphite.

However, there are some key barriers to mining in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts including inadequate infrastructure (roads, rail, power) and workforce challenges including an aging population and chronic skilled labour shortages as well as talent attraction and retention. The Ontario government estimates that a large project like the Ring of Fire will result in 70,000 jobs over 30 years. Heavy construction jobs will be generated to build the necessary infrastructure but then continue as construction miners, heavy equipment operators and drillers are required to build, maintain and repair the physical infrastructure of the mine site. Jobs within the mine itself range from skilled technical roles like mining engineers, metallurgists and blasting technicians to mine labourers.

Considering the short and long-term importance of the mining and construction sectors, the NTAB team decided to examine both sectors further.

## THE MINING SECTOR IN THE KENORA AND RAINY RIVER DISTRICTS

Ontario is the largest mineral producer in Canada with \$15.7 billion in mineral exploration alone in 2023. There are currently 36 active mining operations in Ontario including 17 gold mines, 9 base metal mines and various others. As of 2023, there were 4,200 people employed in the Mining, oil and gas and quarrying sector in Northwest Ontario with more than 75% of these employed specifically in mining.

Investment is expected to lead to moderate growth in employment in mining in Ontario in the next decade and beyond.<sup>1</sup>

Canada's Job Bank projects that "international efforts to decarbonize the economy and reduce reliance on fossil fuels will lead to greater demand for the metals and minerals needed for a green economy such as copper, nickel and lithium, all of which are mined in Ontario. Additionally, a report from the World Bank Group found that the production of minerals such as graphite, lithium and cobalt could increase by nearly 500% by 2050, in order to meet the growing demand for clean energy technologies".<sup>2</sup>

The Ontario Mining Association reports that currently the sector directly employs approximately 22,000 people in Ontario and, as of 2023-2024, 12% of the workforce is indigenous.<sup>3</sup> The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) found that as of 2020 income for Indigenous Peoples are 16% higher in mining sub-regions in Northern Ontario than in non-mining sub-regions.<sup>4</sup> However, with 21% of workers age 55 and older, workforce shortages present a challenge to current operations and projected growth.

Lightcast Analyst data allows us to identify the occupations that comprise an industry. Tables 5A and B provide a breakdown of the occupations that employ ten or more people in the mining sector in the Kenora and Rainy River District.

NOC	Occupation	Employed in Industry (2024)	Percent of Total Jobs in the Industry	Median Hourly Wage*
83100	Underground production and development miners	330	28.2%	\$41.54
72400	Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	80	6.9%	\$39.55
72401	Heavy-duty equipment mechanics	52	4.5%	\$38.09
73400	Heavy equipment operators	51	4.4%	\$33.24
72201	Industrial electricians	50	4.3%	\$43.19
82020	Supervisors, mining and quarrying	40	3.5%	\$62.31
22101	Geological and mineral technologists/technicians	35	3.0%	\$28.34
73300	Transport truck drivers	33	2.8%	\$25.47
84100	Underground mine service and support workers	30	2.6%	\$40.07
83101	Oil and gas well drillers, services, testers & related	21	1.8%	\$48.58
72106	Welders and related machine operators	17	1.5%	\$31.04

\*Median wage is provided for the Northwestern Economic Region which includes the Kenora and Rainy River Districts and Thunder Bay

1 Canada Job Bank, Employment Outlook, <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis/job-market-reports/ontario/sectoral-profile-mining>

2 Ibid

3 Ontario Mining Association, Ontario Mining, Economic Contribution, <https://www.oma.on.ca/ontario-mining/economic-contribution>

4 OECD 2025, Mining Regions and Cities in Northern Ontario, Canada, OECD Rural Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/d3676159-en>

**Table 5A: Numbers employed by occupation in the Kenora District's mining sector**

NOC	Occupation	Employed in Industry (2024)	Percent of Total Jobs in the Industry	Median Hourly Wage*
72500	Crane operators	16	1.4%	\$37.27
80010	Managers in natural resources production & fishing	13	1.2%	\$73.56
21102	Geoscientists and oceanographers	13	1.1%	\$51.12
93100	Central control/process operat's, mineral & metal	13	1.1%	\$48.65
21300	Mining engineers	12	1.0%	\$49.29
94100	Machine operators, mineral and metal processing	11	0.9%	\$33.20
75100	Construction trades helpers and labourers	11	0.9%	\$29.18
93101	Central control/process operators, petroleum & gas	11	0.9%	\$54.96
72020	Contractors and supervisors, mechanic trades	10	0.9%	\$42.60
22100	Chemical technologists and technicians	10	0.9%	\$29.40

\*Median wage is provided for the Northwestern Economic Region which includes the Kenora and Rainy River Districts and Thunder Bay

**Table 5B: Numbers employed by occupation in the Rainy River District's mining sector**

NOC	Occupation	Employed in Industry (2024)	Percent of Total Jobs in the Industry	Median Hourly Wage
83100	Underground production and development miners	180	31.9%	\$41.54
72400	Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	41	7.3%	\$39.55
72401	Heavy-duty equipment mechanics	28	4.9%	\$38.09
72201	Industrial electricians	26	4.7%	\$43.19
73400	Heavy equipment operators	24	4.3%	\$33.24
82020	Supervisors, mining and quarrying	21	3.8%	\$62.31
22101	Geological and mineral technologists/technicians	19	3.4%	\$28.34
84100	Underground mine service and support workers	16	2.9%	\$40.07
73300	Transport truck drivers	14	2.4%	\$25.47

Source: Lightcast Analyst

Table 6 further examines these occupations to identify the potential impact of an aging workforce along with the employment outlook for 2024 to 2026 issued by Canada Job Bank.

**Table 6: Mining occupations affected by an aging workforce in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts**

NOC	Occupations in Mining	Percent Age 50+ in the Kenora District	Percent Age 50+ in the Rainy River District	Employment Outlook in North West Ontario ER*
21102	Geoscientists and oceanographers	25	100	Moderate
21330	Mining engineers	0	n/a	Good
22101	Geological and mineral technologists and technicians	0	n/a	Moderate
72201	Industrial electricians	28.6	0	Moderate

\* Median wage is provided for the Northwestern Economic Region which includes the Kenora and Rainy River Districts and Thunder Bay

n/a = Not applicable

Source: Statistics Canada Census 2021; Canada Job Bank Employment Outlook

**Table 6: Mining occupations affected by an aging workforce in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts**

NOC	Occupations in Mining	Percent Age 50+ in the Kenora District	Percent Age 50+ in the Rainy River District	Employment Outlook in North West Ontario ER*
72400	Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	41.7	21.1	Moderate
72401	Heavy duty equipment mechanics	46.7	13.3	Moderate
72500	Crane operators	0	n/a	Undetermined
73300	Transport truck drivers	61.4	45.3	Moderate
73400	Heavy equipment operators	43.6	45.7	Moderate
75110	Construction trades helpers and labourers	16.8	n/a	Moderate
80010	Managers in natural resources production and fishing	60	n/a	Undetermined
82020	Supervisors, mining and quarrying	42.9	33.3	Moderate
83100	Underground production and development miners	36.7	0	Moderate
83101	Oil and gas well drillers, servicers, testers & related	0	n/a	Undetermined
84100	Underground mine service and support workers	22.2	0	Moderate
93100	Central control process operators, mineral and metal	0	n/a	Undetermined
93101	Central control process operators, petroleum and gas	0	n/a	Undetermined
94100	Machine operators, mineral and metal processing	0	n/a	Undetermined

\* Median wage is provided for the Northwestern Economic Region which includes the Kenora and Rainy River Districts and Thunder Bay

n/a = Not applicable

Source: Statistics Canada Census 2021; Canada Job Bank Employment Outlook

The Canada Job Bank calculates the Employment Outlook for an occupation based on several factors including the number of projected new positions, the age of the current labour force and the current number of unemployed workers in the occupation. This three-year outlook is based on the 2024-2026 timeframe.

In the case of mining occupations in the North West Ontario Economic Region the following factors were identified:

- Employment growth will lead to a moderate number of new positions.
- Several positions will become available due to retirements.
- There are a moderate number of unemployed workers with recent experience.

Of the 18 occupations comprising the Kenora District's mining sector, ten had 20% or more workers that were age 50 and older as of the Statistics Canada Census conducted in 2021 or more than 55% of the sector's occupations. In the Rainy River District, five of the nine occupations comprising the sector or more than 55% also had 20% or more workers age 50 and older as of 2021.

More than 86% of the workforce in the mining sector is male as compared to 52.6% of Ontario's total workforce. Almost 98% of the workers in the sector are employed full-time and almost one-half have a post-secondary certificate or diploma compared to 32% of the labour market as a whole.

## THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR IN THE KENORA AND RAINY RIVER DISTRICTS

Mining generates a number of construction jobs during both the development and operational phases of the mine. These jobs include specialized roles within the mine itself as well as broader infrastructure development in the surrounding area. A typical or “representational” mine in Ontario can generate nearly 2,000 jobs annually during its construction phase.<sup>5</sup>

Canada’s Job Bank projects that “Ontario’s non-residential construction sector will likely continue its trajectory of growth, supported by investments in infrastructure and industrial construction. The non-residential sector is projected to grow and peak by 2027 and sustain a strong growth trend until 2029.”<sup>6</sup>

Tables 7A and B identify the occupations that comprise the Construction industry employing ten people or more in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts.

Table 7A: Numbers employed by occupation in the Kenora District’s construction sector				
NOC	Occupation	Employed in Industry (2024)	% of Total Jobs in the Industry	Median Hourly Wage*
75110	Construction trades helper and labourer	212	11.8	\$29.18
72402	Heating, refrigeration & air conditioning mechanics	110	6.1	\$39.95
72310	Carpenters	86	4.8	\$34.62
72200	Electricians (except industrial and power systems)	74	4.1	\$36.35
72021	Contractors/supervisors, heavy equipment operators	68	3.8	\$43.09
73400	Heavy equipment operators	65	3.6	\$33.24
70010	Construction managers	60	3.4	\$53.76
72300	Plumbers	60	3.3	\$35.24
72500	Crane operators	53	2.9	\$37.27
73200	Residential/commercial installers and servicers	51	2.9	\$25.72
73300	Transport truck drivers	50	2.8	\$25.47
72013	Contractors and supervisors, carpentry trades	38	2.1	\$40.91
72320	Bricklayers	30	1.7	\$43.01
72301	Steamfitters, pipefitters, sprinkler system installers	29	1.6	\$51.20
72401	Heavy equipment mechanics	29	1.6	\$38.09
22303	Construction estimators	29	1.6	\$35.48
72011	Contractor/Supervisor, electrical/telecommunication	28	1.6	\$50.46
72406	Elevators constructors and mechanics	28	1.6	\$51.73
72204	Telecommunications line and cable installers	27	1.5	\$38.55
72203	Electrical power line and cable workers	25	1.4	\$47.92
72102	Sheet metal workers	25	1.4	\$47.40
73112	Painters and decorators	24	1.3	\$27.69

Source: Lightcast Analyst

\* Median wage is provided for the Northwestern Economic Region which includes the Kenora and Rainy River Districts and Thunder Bay

5 Peter Dungan and Steve Murphy, *Ontario Mining: A Partner in Prosperity Building - The Economic Impacts of a Representative Mine in Ontario*, December 2007

6 Canada Job Bank, <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis/job-market-reports/ontario/sectoral-profile-construction>

Table 7A: Numbers employed by occupation in the Kenora District's construction sector

NOC	Occupation	Employed in Industry (2024)	% of Total Jobs in the Industry	Median Hourly Wage*
72106	Welders and related machine operators	22	1.2	\$31.04
73102	Plasterers, drywall installers, finishers, lathers	22	1.2	\$31.19
72014	Contractors/supervisors, other construction trades	18	1.0	\$40.98
12200	Accounting technicians and bookkeepers	17	1.0	\$26.70
72400	Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	17	1.0	\$39.55
73113	Floor covering installers	17	0.9	\$27.11
72205	Telecommunications installation/cable tv service	16	0.9	\$35.32
21300	Civil engineers	14	0.8	\$43.08
72020	Contractors and supervisors, mechanic trades	14	0.8	\$42.60
62100	Technical sales specialists - wholesale trade	14	0.8	\$35.21
72501	Water well drillers	13	0.7	\$35.14
72105	Ironworkers	13	0.7	\$48.62
72321	Insulators	12	0.7	\$35.69
72012	Contractors and supervisors, pipefitting trades	12	0.7	\$54.72
72201	Industrial electricians	11	0.6	\$43.19
13110	Administrative assistants	11	0.6	\$27.75
73101	Tilesetters	10	0.6	\$29.86
14200	Accounting and related clerks	10	0.6	\$25.67

Source: Lightcast Analyst

\* Median wage is provided for the Northwestern Economic Region which includes the Kenora and Rainy River Districts and Thunder Bay

Table 7B: Numbers employed by occupation in the Rainy River District's Construction sector

NOC	Occupation	Employed in Industry (2024)	% of Total Jobs in the Industry	Median Hourly Wage*
75110	Construction trades helper and labourer	43	11.5	\$29.18
72402	Heating, refrigeration & air conditioning mechanics	25	6.8	\$39.95
72310	Carpenters	17	4.6	\$34.62
72200	Electricians (except industrial and power systems)	17	4.5	\$36.35
73400	Heavy equipment operators	16	4.2	\$33.24
70010	Construction managers	15	3.9	\$53.76
72500	Crane operators	14	3.8	\$37.27
72021	Contractors/supervisors, heavy equipment crews	14	3.7	\$43.09
72300	Plumbers	14	3.6	\$35.24
73200	Residential/commercial installers and servicers	13	3.5	\$25.72
73300	Transport truck drivers	12	3.3	\$25.47

Source: Lightcast Analyst

\* Median wage is provided for the Northwestern Economic Region which includes the Kenora and Rainy River Districts and Thunder Bay

Table 8 further examines these occupations to identify the potential impact of an aging workforce in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts as well as the employment outlook issued by Canada Job Bank.

Table 8: Construction occupations affected by an aging workforce in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts				
NOC	Occupations in Construction	Percent Age 50+ in the Kenora District	Percent Age 50+ in the Rainy River District	Employment Outlook in North West Ontario ER*
12200	Accounting technicians and bookkeepers	70.0	n/a	Very Good
13110	Administrative assistants	41.9	n/a	Good
14200	Accounting and related clerks	45.3	n/a	Moderate
21300	Civil engineers	0.0	n/a	Good
22303	Construction estimators	40.0	n/a	Undetermined
62100	Technical sales specialists - wholesale trades	0.0	n/a	Good
70010	Construction managers	18.8	0.0	Good
72011	Contractors and supervisors - electrical trades	45.5	n/a	Moderate
72012	Contractors and supervisors - pipefitting trades	0.0	0.0	Undetermined
72013	Contractors and supervisors - carpentry trades	40.0	0.0	Moderate
72014	Contractors and supervisors - other trades	40.0	0.0	Moderate
72020	Contractors and supervisors - mechanic trades	30.0	0.0	Moderate
72021	Contractors and supervisors-heavy equipment crews	48.0	40.0	Moderate
72102	Sheet metal workers	0.0	0.0	Moderate
72105	Ironworkers	0.0	0.0	Undetermined
72106	Welders and related machine operators	29.2	0.0	Moderate
72200	Electricians (except industrial and power systems)	30.0	0.0	Moderate
72201	Industrial electricians	28.6	0.0	Moderate
72203	Electrical powerline and cable workers	0.0	0.0	Good
72204	Telecommunications line and cable installers	20.0	0.0	Moderate
72205	Telecommunications equipment installers	0.0	0.0	Moderate
72300	Plumbers	31.6	0.0	Good
72301	Steamfitters, pipefitters & sprinkler systems installer	0.0	0.0	Moderate
72310	Carpenters	24.7	33.3	Moderate
72320	Bricklayers	0.0	0.0	Undetermined
72321	Insulators	0.0	0.0	Undetermined
72400	Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	41.7	0.0	Moderate
72401	Heavy duty equipment mechanics	46.7	0.0	Moderate
72402	Heating, refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics	0.0	0.0	Moderate
72406	Elevator constructors and mechanics	0.0	0.0	Undetermined
72500	Crane operators	0.0	0.0	Undetermined
72501	Water well drillers	0.0	0.0	Undetermined

\* Median wage is provided for the Northwestern Economic Region which includes the Kenora and Rainy River Districts and Thunder Bay

n/a = Not applicable

Source: Statistics Canada Census 2021; Canada Job Bank Employment Outlook

**Table 8: Construction occupations affected by an aging workforce in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts**

NOC	Occupations in Construction	Percent Age 50+ in the Kenora District	Percent Age 50+ in the Rainy River District	Employment Outlook in North West Ontario ER*
73101	Tilesetters	0.0	0.0	Undetermined
73102	Plasters, drywall installers and finishers	0.0	0.0	Undetermined
73112	Painters and decorators	66.7	0.0	Undetermined
73113	Floor installers	0.0	0.0	Undetermined
73200	Residential and commercial installers and servicers	0.0	0.0	Undetermined
73300	Transport truck drivers	61.4	45.3	Moderate
73400	Heavy equipment operators	43.6	45.7	Moderate
75110	Construction trades helpers and labourers	16.8	40.0	Moderate

\* Median wage is provided for the Northwestern Economic Region which includes the Kenora and Rainy River Districts and Thunder Bay

n/a = Not applicable

Source: Statistics Canada Census 2021; Canada Job Bank Employment Outlook

Of the 40 occupations comprising the Kenora District's construction sector, 21 had 20% or more workers that were age 50 and older as of the Statistics Canada Census conducted in 2021 or more than 52% of the sector's occupations. In the Rainy River District, five of the eleven occupations comprising the sector or more than 45% also had 20% or more workers age 50 and older as of 2021.

Canada's job bank reports that the average hourly wage of workers in the mining, quarrying and oil and gas sector in Ontario is \$43.91 as of 2023. This was higher than the provincial average of \$29.18. More than 86% of the workforce is male as compared to 52.6% of Ontario's total workforce. Almost 98% of the workers in the sector are employed full-time and almost one-half have a post-secondary certificate or diploma compared to 32% of the labour market as a whole.

And, mining is not the only area of growth placing demand on the construction sector. In the Kenora District, for example, the geological repository for used nuclear fuel to be located on the Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation and the Town of Ignace, the All Nations Hospital project in the Kenora District and residential housing demand will create 100's of construction job and put further pressure on labour market demand. Similar demand exists in the Rainy River District generated not only by large scale mining projects, but by transportation infrastructure upgrades through the Northern Highways Program and major projects to be undertaken in the education sector combined with needed residential housing.

## THE IMPACT OF GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) are artificial intelligence systems that are capable of creating new content, such as text, images, music or computer code. Research conducted by the Institute for Research on Public Policy (Canada), "Harnessing Generative AI: Navigating the Transformative Impact on Canada's Labour Force", one of the most recent studies on the impact of Artificial Intelligence, identified three dimensions of impact on work and the workforce:

1. The impact of AI varies substantially across different types of skills and work activities. Clerical and any occupation requiring the processing of a significant amount of data are most at risk while those involving human interaction, social perception, and instruction demonstrate markedly lower vulnerability.

2. Rather than eliminating entire occupations, generative AI is more likely to transform the composition of work activities within jobs resulting in a moderate automation risk or partial rather than complete automation.
3. Significant variations exist across industries and regions. They project that regions like the north and industries like mining, construction and manufacturing are more at-risk of automation as there is a greater share of high-risk employment.<sup>7</sup>

The top five industries with the highest share of high-risk occupations include transportation and warehousing (56.4%); manufacturing (51.9%); construction (50%); mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction (47.7%); and agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (36%). In sectors like transportation, warehousing, manufacturing and construction, generative AI can optimize workflows, analyze data, generate schedules and support customer service. In sectors like mining, key applications include enhancing prospecting and deposit analysis, optimizing mining methods, improving worker safety and environmental monitoring and increasing operational efficiency throughout the supply chain.<sup>8</sup>

Resource-based industries like mining, quarrying, oil and gas are vulnerable to automation to almost 67 percent in remote northern areas. “The manual aspects such as equipment operation and fieldwork will likely require significant investments in specialized equipment and technology. These investments may only be feasible where considerable capital has already been committed.”<sup>9</sup> It must be remembered, that “real-world adoption also depends on economic factors, business incentives, and investment costs.

And, crucially, while generative AI may be technically feasible, AI talent and an AI ready workforce are key barriers to implementation.<sup>10</sup>

To address this skills bottleneck, researchers at the Institute for Research on Public Policy recommends the implementation of digital literacy instruction at the secondary and post-secondary levels as well as complementary skills like critical thinking, problem-solving and leadership. They also recommend that the government facilitate work-based learning programs providing hands-on experience in AI. Apprenticeships and internships are effective at connecting education to real-world industry needs.

Because the rate of implementation varies by industry and region, workforce strategies should be tailored to the specific economic contexts of the specific geographic area.<sup>11</sup>

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7 Oschinski, Matthias and Walia, Ruhani, *Harnessing Generative AI: Navigating the Transformative Impact on Canada's Labour Market*, Institute of Research on Public Policy, May 2025, p. 3

8 Corrigan, Caitlan C. and Ikonnikova, Svetlana, *A review of the use of AI in the mining industry: Insights and ethical considerations for multi-objective optimization*, 2024

9 Oschinski, Matthias and Walia, Ruhani, *Harnessing Generative AI: Navigating the Transformative Impact on Canada's Labour Market*, Institute of Research on Public Policy, May 2025, p. 19

10 *Ibid.*, p. 32

11 Oschinski, Matthias and Walia, Ruhani, *Harnessing Generative AI: Navigating the Transformative Impact on Canada's Labour Market*, Institute of Research on Public Policy, May 2025, p. 32-

# LABOUR MARKET SUPPLY

Since 2022, we have used the Statistics Canada Census conducted in 2021 to identify changes in the general population as well as the employed labour force. The next national Census will be conducted by Statistics Canada in May 2026. It will introduce several changes to questions related to the labour force including allowing respondents to identify themselves as retired and show a hybrid arrangement as their workforce. There are also changes to the duration of college education. Employment information gathered by the Census is used to assess the economic conditions of communities and specific populations such as Indigenous people and immigrants. Industry and occupation information is used to forecast job opportunities. Results of the May 2026 census will begin to become available late in 2026 or early in 2027.<sup>12</sup>

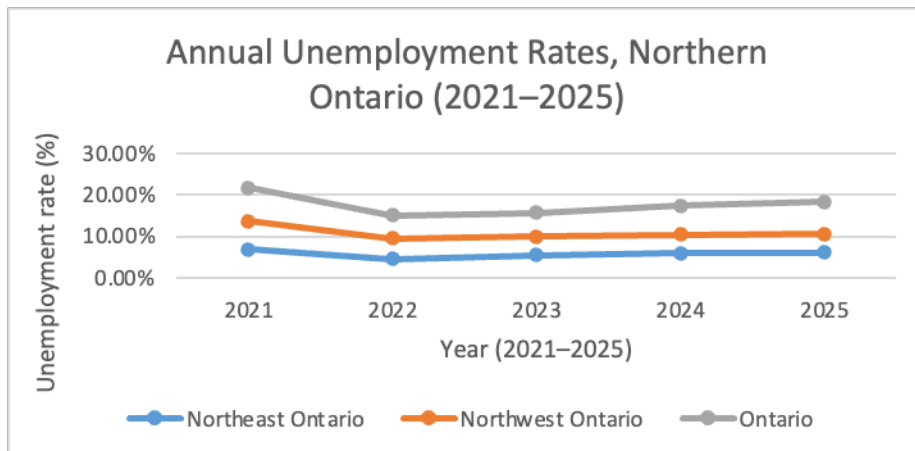
While the census is conducted every five years, the Labour Force Survey is conducted monthly by Statistics Canada monthly. This survey, administered randomly to approximately 65,000 Canadian households, provides key economic data on labour force demographics, employment, unemployment, hours worked, industries and occupations. While the Census provides data for small geographic areas such as census amalgamations and divisions, the Labour Force Survey data is produced for larger geographic areas such as economic regions.

## LABOUR FORCE STATUS

Table 9 provides the annual unemployment rate for the past five years by economic regions. While the rate of unemployment began to climb in the past two years in both North Eastern Ontario and Ontario overall, unemployment in Northwestern Ontario has remained stable at 4.5% to 4.6%. This is a clear indicator of significant and ongoing labour market demand in the region.

Geography	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Northeast Ontario	6.8%	4.5%	5.4%	5.9%	6.0%
Northwest Ontario	6.8%	5.0%	4.6%	4.5%	4.6%
Ontario	8.1%	5.6%	5.6%	7.0%	7.7%

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0464-01, Labour force characteristics by province, territory and economic region, annual



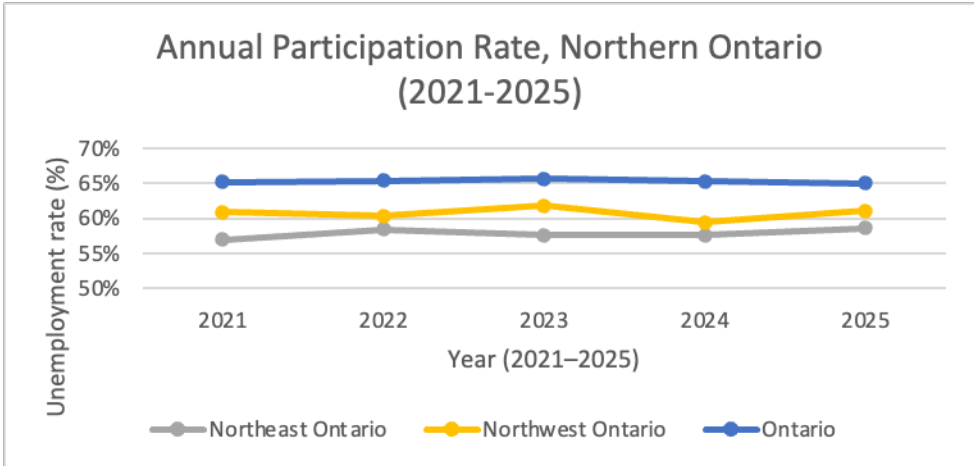
Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0464-01, Labour force characteristics by province, territory and economic region, annual

12 <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2026/road-enroute/index-eng.cfm>

Table 10 looks at the participation rate in the North as compared to Ontario. Participation rate is a calculation of the percentage of people who are either working or looking for work. While the participation rate in northwest Ontario is higher than other areas of the region, boosting participation would alleviate demand.

Geography	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Northeast Ontario	57.0%	58.4%	57.6%	57.6%	58.6%
Northwest Ontario	60.9%	60.3%	61.8%	59.4%	61.1%
Ontario	65.2%	65.4%	65.6%	65.3%	65.0%

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0464-01, Labour force characteristics by province, territory and economic region, annual



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0464-01, Labour force characteristics by province, territory and economic region, annual

Table 11 compares the number of people collecting Regular Employment Insurance benefits in October 2024 with October 2025 by age and gender. Despite economic challenges nationally, for the second year in a row, the number collecting these benefits remained stable. Data for Ontario and Canada offers context for our local results. In many cases, the number receiving benefits locally decreased. In the Kenora District, 410 males and 290 females received Employment Insurance as of October 2025 as compared to 420 males and 240 females in October 2024. In total, there were 40 more individuals collecting regular employment insurance benefits in the Kenora District in 2025 as compared to the previous year, an increase of 6%.

In the Rainy River District, there were 90 males collecting regular employment insurance benefits in 2025 as compared to 100 in 2024 and 70 females collecting benefits compared to 80 in October 2024. In total, there were 160 people in the Rainy River District receiving benefits in October 2025 or 20 fewer than the previous year. This is a decrease of 11%. For context, there were 15% more people in Ontario collecting regular employment insurance benefits in October 2025 as compared to October 2024. It must be noted that in April 2025, the government of Canada made changes to the eligibility to collect Employment Insurance benefits.<sup>13</sup>

13 Additional information about changes to Employment Insurance benefits eligibility, please visit <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2025/03/the-government-of-canada-introduces-new-employment-insurance-measures-to-support-canadian-workers-impacted-by-foreign-tariffs.html>

Table 11: Employment Insurance Recipients (Regular Benefits) in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts

EI Recipients - Regular Benefits	Kenora District			Rainy River District			Ontario	Canada
	Oct 2024	Oct 2025	Percent Change	Oct 2024	Oct 2025	Percent Change	Percent Change	Percent Change
<b>Males</b>								
Age 15 to 24	60	50	(-16.7%)	20	10	(-50.0%)	7.7%	9.5%
Age 25 to 54	260	230	(-11.5%)	50	60	20.0%	12.5%	13.8%
Age 55 and older	100	130	30.0%	30	20	(-33.3%)	16.7%	14.2%
<b>Females</b>								
Age 15 to 24	20	40	100.0%	10	10	0.0%	7.5%	9.7%
Age 25 to 54	150	170	13.3%	40	30	(-25.0%)	26.5%	23.1%
Age 55 and older	70	80	14.3%	30	30	0.0%	33.1%	23.4%

Source: Statistics Canada Table 14-10-0323-01, Employment Insurance beneficiaries by Census Division, monthly, unadjusted for seasonality

Statistics Canada Taxfiler data measures the number of people moving in and out of our region. From 2013 to 2019, there were more people leaving the Kenora and Rainy River Districts than moving to the area. However, since 2020, the situation has changed with in-migration exceeding out-migration. Between 2019 and 2024, there was significant net in-migration into the Kenora District of 745 people – more than double the in-migration of 209 between 2018 and 2023. The net in-migration of 450 people into the Rainy River District 2019 and 2024 was very close to double the 249 experienced between 2018 and 2023.

Table 12: Migration in and out of the Kenora and Rainy River Districts

Kenora District – 2019 to 2024			
Age Range	Total In-Migration	Total Out-Migration	Net Migration
0 to 17	1,938	2,061	(-123)
18 to 24	1,348	1,132	216
25 to 44	4,174	3,181	993
45 to 64	1,510	1,429	81
65 +	452	874	(-422)
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,422</b>	<b>8,677</b>	<b>745</b>
Rainy River District – 2019 to 2024			
Age Range	Total In-Migration	Total Out-Migration	Net Migration
0 to 17	606	471	135
18 to 24	335	389	(-54)
25 to 44	1,150	849	301
45 to 64	485	378	107
65 +	219	258	(-39)
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,795</b>	<b>2,345</b>	<b>450</b>

Source: Statistics Canada Taxfiler data, 2024

# LOCAL LABOUR MARKET INSIGHTS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Labour market information comes in two forms. Statistical data, also known as quantitative data, provides valuable insight into population demographics, historical patterns, and evolving trends. Data gathered through engagement with employers, employer associations, educators, service providers, and members of the general public provides qualitative, or real-time, information related to opportunities, challenges, and future potential.

In addition to regular engagement with community partners throughout the year, the Northwest Training and Adjustment Board conducts two sessions dedicated to gathering planning feedback. The first session provides employment service providers with an opportunity to discuss service outcomes from the past year and identify opportunities for collaboration. The second session seeks feedback from businesses and the broader community.

Several themes emerged through these consultations:

## **CHALLENGES TO NEWCOMER AND RESIDENT ATTRACTION AND RETENTION**

Whether a newcomer to Canada or a long-time Canadian resident, people are often unaware of what life in the North is like. Many are unprepared for the vastness of the region and the need to travel longer distances to get to work or access essential services such as child care. Youth who leave the region and later return are valuable assets, and continued attention should be paid to both attraction and retention. This is further complicated by the limited availability and high cost of rental housing.

Northern communities, like many communities across Canada, continue to work through challenges related to diversity and cultural awareness. Experiences of discrimination and exclusion were raised by participants across age groups and backgrounds, often linked to limited exposure to different cultures rather than ill intent. There is a need for more welcoming community environments, along with increased opportunities for cultural understanding and awareness. A multi-cultural facility and broader awareness initiatives were identified as potential supports. Newcomers to Canada, in particular, require stronger social supports, and there is a noted lack of cultural and religious amenities in many communities.

## **MISALIGNMENT OF JOB REQUIREMENTS AND WORKER SKILLS**

Difficulties between employers and workers, including those with post-secondary education, were commonly raised during consultations. Industries that require a high degree of customer service, such as retail and hospitality, continue to face challenges. Youth, many of whom have grown up in highly digital environments, were described as less interested in frequent in-person interaction and more likely to seek flexibility in areas such as scheduling or hybrid work arrangements. Employers noted concerns related to reliability and wage expectations, while workers expressed frustration with working conditions. In many cases, neither side feels well positioned to compromise.

A range of factors, including parenting approaches, the influence of social media, and the impacts of pandemic-related disruptions, were identified as contributing to gaps in problem-solving, resilience, and confidence among some youth. Participants noted that setbacks can discourage repeated attempts, limiting opportunities to build these skills. Employers also

identified gaps in practical, day-to-day workplace skills, such as keyboarding or using voicemail. While teaching these skills is viewed as important, it is also time-consuming, and employers reported being less engaged in training than in the past. Greater awareness of the value of transferable skills, including those traditionally emphasized within Indigenous knowledge systems, was identified as a potential area for improvement.

## **CHALLENGES TO TRANSITIONING WORKERS TO NEW INDUSTRIES**

Consultation participants identified a lack of training programs tailored to the specific needs of workers transitioning into new industries. Universities were described as underutilized and in need of being more accessible and flexible in order to respond to evolving labour market needs and offer faster pathways to advancement. Participants emphasized that skilled trades pathways should receive the same level of attention as university-based options, along with improved interprovincial recognition of skills certifications and licenses. Workers facing career transitions may fear change and are often unaware of available supports. Barriers such as limited transportation, child care availability, and a high cost of living can further restrict participation in training and employment opportunities.

Experiential learning was consistently identified as a valuable approach, particularly when paired with subsidies to support employers in covering on-the-job training costs and temporary reductions in productivity during training periods. This type of learning was viewed as beneficial for both youth and transitioning workers. On-the-job learning allows individuals to demonstrate not only technical skills, but also attributes such as reliability, personal responsibility, cultural competencies, and work ethic.

While online training presents additional opportunities, participants noted that completion rates can be low. Challenges related to digital literacy remain, and access to computers and reliable internet, including through libraries, is not consistent for all individuals.

## **ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND LOCAL BUSINESS GROWTH**

Entrepreneurs in the region face a range of challenges, including labour market shortages, limited access to start-up capital, and an aging cohort of business owners who are seeking pathways to transition ownership to younger entrepreneurs. Employers reported ongoing difficulty attracting entry-level workers, along with the high cost of employing and retaining staff. While programs exist to support small business development, consultation participants noted that these supports are not always being accessed. There is a recognized need for retail and hospitality businesses to sustain vibrant communities; however, fewer programs and resources are available to support growth and stability within these sectors.

Economic developers in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts provided additional insight into business opportunities and labour force challenges. Economic Development Kenora identifies key sectors of the local economy, including health care, tourism, and manufacturing, and provides supporting data that informed these priorities. The Rainy River District Community Futures Development Corporation offers detailed community profiles that further contextualize regional conditions. Both organizations confirmed continued growth in the mining and construction sectors. They also highlighted shortages of early childhood educators, which can act as a barrier to workforce participation, as well as current and anticipated shortages in the health care sector driven by an aging population and the development of new facilities.

## **RURAL IMMIGRATION PATHWAYS AND LABOUR MARKET IMPACTS**

Small businesses in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts that were eligible to participate in the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot (RNIP) expressed concern regarding its discontinuation. In these communities, the program helped address ongoing shortages of entry-level workers while providing immigrants who wished to live and work in the North with a pathway to permanent residency.

With the program now replaced by the Rural Community Immigration Pilot, newcomer attraction has become more centralized within fourteen larger, more urban communities across Northern Ontario, including Thunder Bay. As a result, more rural areas may once again face challenges related to labour shortages and reduced access to immigration pathways. Economic developers continue to advocate for local businesses to regain access to these supports, as well as for increased northern-specific placements through the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (ONIP). The Francophone pathway was identified as a particularly promising opportunity.

# EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO DATA 2024-2025

Over the past several years, Employment Ontario data has been shared annually with the Northwestern Ontario Training and Adjustment Board to provide further insight into service use and encourage collaboration to address local labour market demand and supply. The following analysis examines service usage in 2024-2025 compared to the previous year, 2023-2024. However, it must be recognized that employment services in Northwestern Ontario were transitioning to the Service System Manager model of service in 2024-2025 which may affect the year-to-year comparison.

## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

In the Kenora District:

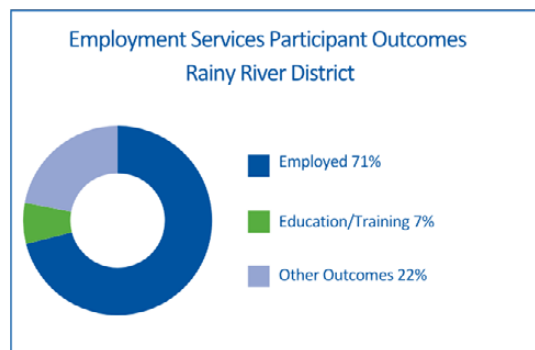
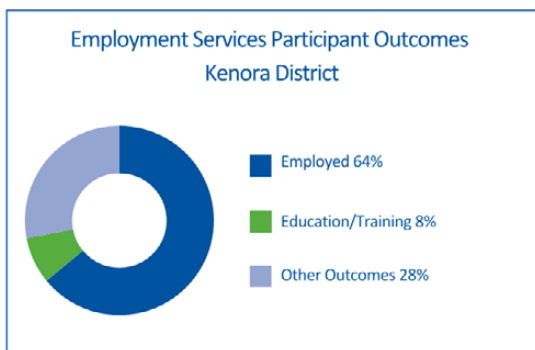
- 357 people received Assisted Employment Services in 2024-2025, slightly more than the 362 people who accessed the service in 2023-2024. An additional 69 participants were recorded as participating in Integrated Employment Services.
- The number participating in Unassisted Services fell by more than 50% but can largely be attributed to the transition.
- 48% of Employment Services clients were indigenous in 2024-2025 while 19% were living with a disability
- 265 participants (73%) relied on Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Services Program or had no source of income.
- 64% of participants secured employment. 8% continued on to education or training.

In the Rainy River District:

- 387 people participated in Employment Services in the Rainy River District in 2024-2025. This is a drop of 178 participants (-32%) since 2023-2024. An additional 61 individuals participated in Integrated Employment Services.
- 3,064 were identified receiving unassisted services. This is a decrease of 20% from the previous year.
- 51% of clients in 2024-2025 were indigenous; 24% were people living with a disability
- 71% of participants secured employment. 7% continued on to education or training.

In Northern Ontario and Ontario:

- Participation in Employment Services in Northern Ontario increased by 8%. Participation across Ontario overall decreased by 37%.
- The number of Northern Ontario Employment Services clients securing employment decreased by 10%. In Ontario overall, the number employed decreased by 47%.



## **LITERACY AND BASIC SKILLS (NOW GET SET (SKILLS, EDUCATION AND TRAINING))**

In the Kenora District:

- 306 new learners participated in LBS in 2024-2025 as compared to 358 in the previous year—a decrease of 52 new learners (-15%). The number of carry-over learners increased by 53.
- The number of new plus carry-over learners increased by one learner (0.2%)
- Three of every four participants are indigenous.
- Three of every four participants relied on Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program or had no source of income.
- 4% of learners continued with education or training. Nine percent secured employment.

In the Rainy River District

- 171 new learners participated in LBS in 2024-2025 as compared to 218 in 2023-2024 – a decrease of 22%. The number of carry-over learners decreased slightly from 91 in 2023-2024 to 88 in 2024-2025 (-3%).
- The number of new plus carry-over learners decreased by 50 or 16%.
- 35% of learners are reliant on Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support program benefits or have no income at all.
- 57% of learners secured employment at the conclusion of the program.

In Northern Ontario and Ontario:

- The number of new and carry-over LBS learners in Northern Ontario in 2024-2025 decreased by 2%.
- The number of new and carry-over LBS learners in Ontario overall decreased by 3%. The number of new and carry-over e-learners decreased 2%.

## **APPRENTICESHIP**

In the Kenora District:

- There were 132 new apprenticeship registrations in the Kenora District during 2024-2025 as compared to 92 the previous year, an increase of 44%.
- The number of active apprentices also increased from 313 in 2023-2024 to 360 in 2024-2025 (15%).
- There were 56 Certificates of Apprenticeship issued in 2024-2025, 24% more than the previous year.
- 466 Modular training registrations took place in 2024-2025 as compared to 461 in 2023-2024.

In the Rainy River District:

- There were 48 new apprenticeship registrations in the Rainy River District or 17 more than in 2023-2024. This is an increase of 55%.
- In 2024-2025, there were 150 active apprentices in the Rainy River District compared to 136 in 2023-2024 – an increase of 10%.
- Twenty-nine Certificates of Apprenticeship were issued in 2024-2025 compared to 18 the previous year (a 61% increase).
- 203 modular training registrations took place in 2024-2025 as compared to 265 in 2023-2024. This is a decrease of 62 registrations (-23%)

In Northern Ontario and Ontario:

- The number of new apprentice registrations increased in Northern Ontario by 7% but decreased by 3% in Ontario overall.
- The number of active apprentices increased by 11% in Northern Ontario and by 7% in Ontario in 2024-2025.
- The number of Certificates of Apprenticeship issued in 2024-2025 increased by 13% in Northern Ontario and by 3% in Ontario.
- Modular training registrations decreased 4% in Northern Ontario but increased in the province overall by 13%.

Apprenticeship Data Infographic  
Kenora District



Apprenticeship Data Infographic  
Rainy River District



## CANADA ONTARIO JOB GRANT

In the Kenora and Rainy River Districts:

- As in the previous year, fewer than ten companies participated in COJG in both the Kenora and Rainy River Districts.
- The number of workers benefitting from training decreased from 16 in 2023-2024 to 13 in 2024-2025. In the Rainy River District participation was stable year-to-year. Sixteen participate in training in 2024-2025 as compared to 15 in 2023-2024.
- Employer feedback on the value of the training was not provided.

In Northern Ontario and Ontario:

- The number of employers in Northern Ontario participating in COJG decreased 12% in 2024-2025 from 194 in 2023-2024 to 170 in the past year. 100% of employers indicated the training contributed to worker productivity and that the training met their needs.
- The number of Northern Ontario workers benefitting from training decreased from 444 in 2023-2024 to 439 in 2024-2025 (-1%).
- In Ontario, 2039 employers took advantage of the COJG program in 2024-2025 or 308 fewer (-13%) than the previous year. 94% of employers indicated the training contributed to worker productivity and 97% believed the training met their needs.
- The number of workers across Ontario receiving training through COJG decreased by 826 sliding from 8,706 in 2023-2024 to 7,880 in 2024-2025 (-10%).

## BETTER JOBS ONTARIO

In the Kenora and Rainy River Districts:

- Since 2019, fewer than ten individuals participated in Better Jobs Ontario in both the Kenora and Rainy River Districts.

In Northern Ontario and Ontario:

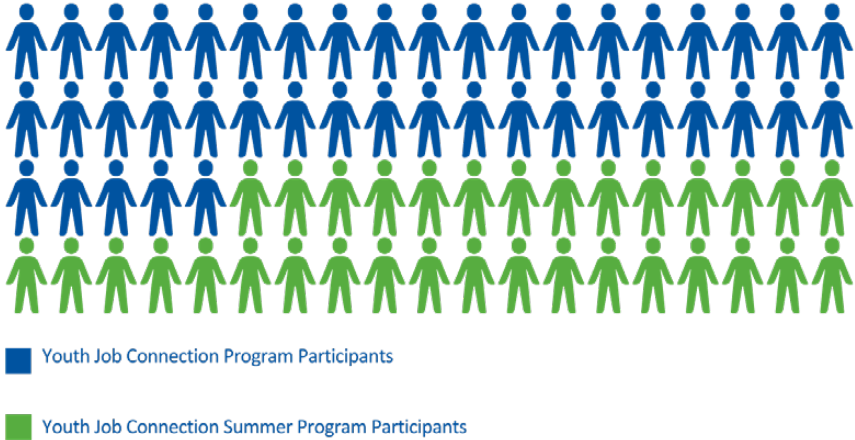
- Participation in the program increased slightly by 3% in 2024-2025 from 244 in 2023-2024 to 277 participants in 2024-2025.
- Across Ontario, participation in Better Jobs Ontario increased by more than 700 to 4,111 (21%).

### YOUTH JOB CONNECTION (YJC)

In the Kenora District:

- 43 youth participated in the Youth Job Connection program in 2024-2025 compared to 32 in 2023-2024, an increase of 34%.
- Participation in Youth Job Connection Summer decreased from 38 to 33 (-13%) in the past year.

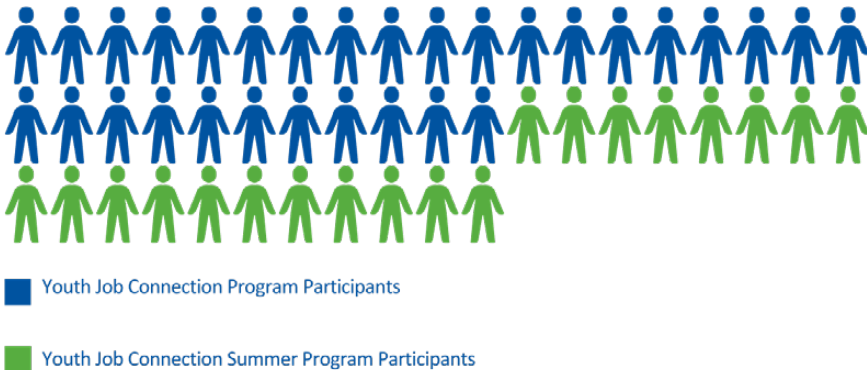
Youth Job Connection Participants  
Kenora District



In the Rainy River District:

- Participation in YJC in the Rainy River District decreased from 34 in 2023-2024 to 30 in 2024-2025 or a decrease of 12%.
- An additional 19 youth participated in YJC Summer compared to 17 in 2023-2024—an increase of 12%

Youth Job Connection Participants  
Rainy River District



## ACTION PLAN 2026

The Northwest Training and Adjustment Board uses the Action Plan to highlight workforce development activities taking place across the Kenora and Rainy River Districts. The actions presented reflect initiatives led by community partners and stakeholders throughout the region and are organized in relation to the workforce development priorities identified through labour market analysis and community engagement. Together, they illustrate how community partners are responding to ongoing challenges, addressing gaps, and working to strengthen conditions that support workforce participation and economic stability.

Actions are organized by Key Priority and presented alongside information related to timeframe and progress, as well as intended outcomes and key partners involved. Brief summaries preceding each set of actions provide context based on community input and highlight how the initiatives connect to identified workforce development themes.

### KEY PRIORITY #1 – EXTERNAL FORCES AND WORKFORCE SECTOR SHIFTS

The economies of the Kenora and Rainy River Districts continue to shift, and many of these changes begin with external pressures that sit far beyond local control. Volatile tariffs, supply chain disruptions, global market swings, and shifting federal and provincial priorities all influence how industries expand or contract in the region. Manufacturing and forestry are particularly sensitive to policy changes and international demand, while construction, health care, and mining respond more to long-term investment cycles. These pressures create an environment where sector stability is uneven and employers must adjust quickly to conditions that change year to year. Some industries experience periods of growth driven by new projects or public investment, while others stall because timelines for major developments stretch across many years. Employers and community stakeholders describe the challenge of planning for a future shaped by forces they cannot predict or influence, even as communities work to build local capacity and respond to emerging opportunities. These realities shape the challenges industries face, but also point to the ways communities are adapting through local studies, targeted supports, and efforts to strengthen the regional labour pool.

KEY PRIORITY #1 – EXTERNAL FORCES AND WORKFORCE SECTOR SHIFTS	
<b>Kenora Weyerhaeuser Job Fair in Ear Falls</b>	
Action	On October 17, 2025 the Ear Falls Interfor Sawmill announced the indefinite closure of its facility. U.S. tariffs, combined with a flat market, have been cited as the reasons behind the indefinite shutdown, which will result in approximately 160 lost jobs. With an additional 10 per cent tariff put in place the week prior to the announcement, total duties and tariffs for softwood lumber are now at nearly 45 per cent, according to the Ontario Forest Industries Association (OFIA).
Outcomes	Targeted, direct, and rapid reemployment assistance offered to eligible and qualified Ear Falls affected workers.
Partners*	Weyerhaeuser's Trus Joist® TimberStrand® mill in Kenora
Timeframe	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<b>This item is new to the 2026 Action Plan:</b> Kenora's Weyerhaeuser's Trus Joist® TimberStrand® laminated strand lumber (LSL) mill held a Job Fair in Ear Falls at the Ear Falls Legion on Wednesday, November 5, 2025 to directly assist with those job losses noted above.

KEY PRIORITY #1 – EXTERNAL FORCES AND WORKFORCE SECTOR SHIFTS

**Feasibility Study for East-West Pipeline (Ring of Fire Development)**

<b>Action</b>	The Ford government has begun work on a proposed pipeline and energy corridor through Northwestern Ontario to move oil and gas from Western Canada. The corridor could also support all-season roads into the Ring of Fire and other mineral-related infrastructure. Fuels would be transported to refineries in southern Ontario and to new ports planned for James Bay, Hudson Bay, and the Great Lakes.  Alberta and Saskatchewan’s premiers expressed support for the initiative, building on a July memorandum of understanding among the three provinces to collaborate on advancing critical minerals and western Canadian energy in response to U.S. tariffs and trade tensions.
<b>Outcomes</b>	A contract has been awarded for a feasibility study to be completed next year, which will examine route options, potential sites, and project costs. The government says it will fulfill its duty to consult Indigenous communities as planning progresses and emphasizes the importance of First Nations participation and economic opportunities in major development projects.
<b>Partners*</b>	The feasibility study will be carried out by a consortium of firms—GHD Limited, EY Canada, Mokwateh, AtkinsRéalis Group, Wood PLC, and Turner & Townsend Limited—with Infrastructure Ontario serving as commercial advisor.
<b>Timeframe</b>	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input type="radio"/> Long Term
<b>Updates</b>	<b>This item is new to the 2026 Action Plan.</b>

**Regional Tariff Response Initiative**

<b>Action</b>	The Regional Tariff Response Initiative (RTRI) is a federal program delivered in Northern Ontario by FedNor, to help small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) impacted by tariffs. The initiative provides non-repayable funding for projects that boost productivity, strengthen domestic supply chains, and support market diversification to mitigate the impacts of trade volatility.
<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Eligibility and Objectives</b> The program is open to SMEs, Indigenous-owned businesses, and non-profits that support affected sectors and can demonstrate negative impacts from tariffs, such as increased costs, supply chain disruptions, or loss of market access.  The objectives are to help businesses achieve the following by investing in projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Boost productivity and competitiveness</li> <li>» Reduce costs</li> <li>» Strengthen domestic supply chains</li> <li>» Support market diversification</li> </ul>
<b>Partners*</b>	FedNor
<b>Timeframe</b>	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input type="radio"/> Long Term
<b>Updates</b>	<b>This item is new to the 2026 Action Plan:</b> Project Timeframe: Projects must be completed no later than March 31, 2028, and cannot start before March 21, 2025.

**Summary of Ontario’s Proposed Overhaul of Provincial Pathways to Permanent Residence (Dec 3, 2025)**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Overview:</b> Ontario is proposing a two-phase redesign of the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP) to streamline and modernize its nominee selection process for permanent residency. The changes aim to address labor shortages, prioritize skilled and entrepreneurial immigrants, and align with provincial economic and healthcare needs.  These proposed changes follow the suspension of the Express Entry Skilled Trades Stream and are supported by new authorities granted through Bill 30.
<b>Outcomes</b>	The redesign would recognize excellence in areas such as research, culinary arts, and entrepreneurship, consolidating the three Employer: Job Offer streams into one program with separate TEER 0-3 and TEER 4-5 pathways, and it proposes to replace all remaining OINP streams with three new ones: a Priority Healthcare Stream, a redesigned Entrepreneur Stream, and an Exceptional Talent Stream.

KEY PRIORITY #1 – EXTERNAL FORCES AND WORKFORCE SECTOR SHIFTS

Summary of Ontario's Proposed Overhaul of Provincial Pathways to Permanent Residence (Dec 3, 2025)

Partners*	Ontario Ministry responsible for immigration and the OINP; Government of Canada (Immigration Levels Plan and PNP allocations); Ontario employers; Unions; Professional regulatory bodies; Post-secondary institutions
Timeframe	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<p><b>Update or Points of Interest:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Nov 14, 2025: OINP Express Entry Skilled Trades Stream intake suspended; all pending applications to be returned due to systemic compliance, misrepresentation, and fraud concerns.</li> <li>» Nov 27, 2025: Bill 30 receives royal assent, giving the minister more direct authority to create, change, or close streams and return applications earlier.</li> <li>» As of December 10, 2025; Stakeholder consultations are in progress; detailed regulations, timelines, and treatment of in-progress applications are still to be finalized.</li> <li>» Charles Cirtwill, President and CEO of the Northern Policy Institute, November 28, 2025:</li> <li>» "In a bold move, Ontario paused the skilled trades stream of its Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP)... Ontario should be bold again and immediately expand the Regional Economic Development through Immigration (REDI) pilot."</li> </ul> <p><b>Overview of REDI Pilot:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» The Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP) launched the Regional Economic Development through Immigration (REDI) pilot, a one-year initiative that ran from January 2, 2025 to December 31, 2025.</li> <li>» The new initiative used the OINP to target skilled labour that was not available locally to help fill labour market needs of employers in four pilot communities: Lanark County, Leeds and Grenville, Sarnia-Lambton, and Thunder Bay</li> <li>» The REDI pilot offers a pathway to permanent residence for skilled foreign workers with a job offer who want to live and work in a pilot community.</li> <li>» <a href="https://www.ontario.ca/page/regional-economic-development-through-immigration-redi-pilot">https://www.ontario.ca/page/regional-economic-development-through-immigration-redi-pilot</a></li> </ul>

Better Jobs Ontario

Action	Better Jobs Ontario provides unemployed individuals with financial support for skills training to help them find employment in high-demand occupations with demonstrated labour market prospects in Ontario. The program provides participants with up to \$28,000 for skills training and living costs including tuition, books, other instructional costs, transportation, and basic living allowance. Additional funding may be available for dependent care, disability-related supports, living away from home, and Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) and/or language upgrading training.
Outcomes	The intention of the Better Jobs Ontario program is to help eligible individuals rapidly attach to employment by the most cost-effective path.
Partners*	Employment Ontario Service Providers
Timeframes	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<p><b>Update or Points of Interest:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Better Jobs Ontario aims to help people rejoin the workforce quickly. The program focuses on training programs that take 52 weeks or less to complete, including micro-credential programs.</li> <li>» If participants want to attend training longer than one year, they can apply to the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) for a mix of grants and loans to help pay for postsecondary education.</li> <li>» Since 2019, fewer than 10 individuals participated per year in Better Jobs Ontario in both the Kenora and Rainy River Districts. Participation in Better Jobs Ontario in Northern Ontario increased slightly by 3% in 2024-2025 from 244 to 247 participants.</li> <li>» Across the province, participation in Better Jobs Ontario increased by more than 700 to 4,111 (21%).</li> <li>» While growing in Ontario, participation in Better Jobs Ontario in Northern Ontario continues to decline.</li> </ul>

\* Acronym Glossary follows. Short-term, Mid-Term (2 Years), Long-Term (3 Years)

**KEY PRIORITY #2 – POPULATION DYNAMICS AND WORKFORCE ENABLERS**

Communities across both districts are working hard to attract and retain people in the core working-age population, but long-standing challenges continue to influence who stays and who leaves. Youth out-migration remains significant, shaped by limited housing options, fewer postsecondary pathways, and a sense that opportunities are stronger elsewhere. Families point to gaps in childcare, transportation, and health-care access, while newcomers and returning residents describe difficulties settling because basic supports can feel inconsistent or hard to find. Local stakeholders repeatedly raise concerns about the negative narratives circulating about the region, which influence how people view their future here. At the same time, community groups and employers point to ongoing revitalization efforts, infrastructure development, and the creation of new economic opportunities, all of which give communities more tools to support long-term stability.

KEY PRIORITY #2 – POPULATION DYNAMICS AND WORKFORCE ENABLERS	
<b>Atikokan Revitalization Initiative</b>	
Action	Resolute Forest Products in Atikokan, Ontario, is crediting Atikokan Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) with helping the company grow its sawmill operations. Having exhausted the limited supply of local labour, the forestry company sought to bring in Ukrainian nationals who were fleeing their war-torn country. The challenge was finding local accommodations, and that’s when it turned to the Atikokan Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) for help.
Outcomes	Working in partnership with Resolute Forest Products, AEDC quickly assembled a team to prepare the empty Atikokan Hotel for occupancy. The renovations included electrical and plumbing upgrades, a thorough cleaning, safety inspections, and the addition of laundry and gym facilities. Six weeks later, it welcomed its new residents. Through the program, chefs were hired in the hotel kitchen to provide Resolute’s newest employees and their families with three meals a day. Recognizing that the Ukrainian nationals needed additional support, the move was endorsed by the sawmill’s union.
Timeframe	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<b>This Item is new to the 2026 Action Plan:</b> The revitalization initiative helped Atikokan’s largest employer meet its labour needs and support the company’s expansion plans. More importantly, it assisted with a humanitarian crisis. As of February 27, 2025, more than 73 people settled in Atikokan; 52 Ukrainians and 21 other ethnicities. The Atikokan Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) received the Community Futures Ontario Award of Excellence for Community Economic Development for its Ukrainian Support project. This item also has some overlap with <b>External Forces &amp; Workforce Sector Shifts</b> , since global conflict indirectly shaped local labour supply.
<b>Ontario Supporting Community Infrastructure and Business Development Projects in the Rainy River District</b>	
Action	Province investing in community improvements, business expansions and internship opportunities in Fort Frances and beyond.
Outcomes	Through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC), the Ontario government is providing more than \$1.8 million to 10 economic development projects and more than \$607,000 to 19 internships in the Fort Frances region. These investments will build cultural spaces for First Nations communities, expand company operations, and bring innovative business solutions to Northwestern Ontario.
Partners*	NOHFC; Rainy River District Communities
Timeframe	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<b>This item is new to the 2026 Action Plan:</b> The NOHFC fosters economic growth, job creation and workforce development throughout the North, benefiting communities of all sizes, both rural and urban, including Indigenous communities. The Ontario government’s improved NOHFC programming supports more projects in rural northern communities and makes it easier for more people and businesses to apply. The programming targets existing and emerging markets, provides more work opportunities for Indigenous people and addresses the skilled labour shortage in the North.

KEY PRIORITY #2 – POPULATION DYNAMICS AND WORKFORCE ENABLERS

**Ontario Investing in Community Development and Skills Training Opportunities in the Dryden Region**

Action	Province investing in community improvements, business expansions and internship opportunities in Dryden and area. The NOHFC, Northern Development Offices and Small Business Enterprise Centres are available to support northern communities, businesses and other stakeholders in identifying economic development opportunities and assist in accessing government funding programs.
Outcomes	Through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC), the Ontario government is providing \$56,530 for a community development project in Machin and \$260,038 for eight internship opportunities in Dryden. These investments will improve municipal infrastructure, create jobs and develop career skills in Northwestern Ontario.
Partners*	NOHFC; Dryden Area Communities
Timeframe	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<b>This item is new to the 2026 Action Plan:</b> The NOHFC fosters economic growth, job creation and workforce development throughout the North, benefiting communities of all sizes, both rural and urban, including Indigenous communities. The Ontario government’s improved NOHFC programming supports more projects in rural northern communities and makes it easier for more people and businesses to apply. The programming targets existing and emerging markets, provides more work opportunities for Indigenous people and addresses the skilled labour shortage in the North.

**Ontario Supporting Economic Development Opportunities in Fort Frances Region**

Action	The Ontario government is providing more than \$1.4 million through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) to five economic development projects in the Fort Frances region.
Outcomes	This investment will improve municipal infrastructure, promote tourism and recreation, expand company operations and create jobs in the Northwest.
Partners*	NOHFC; Fort Frances Area Communities
Timeframe	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<b>This item is new to the 2026 Action Plan:</b> The NOHFC promotes economic prosperity across Northern Ontario by providing financial assistance to projects—big and small, rural and urban—that stimulate growth, job creation and skills development. Since June 2018, the NOHFC has invested more than \$759 million in 6,233 projects in Northern Ontario, leveraging more than \$2.3 billion in investment and creating or sustaining over 9,590 jobs.

**Ontario Investing \$894,305 to Build Training Centre in Mishkeegogamang Ojibway Nation**

Action	The Ontario government is investing \$894,305 through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) to help Mishkeegogamang Ojibway Nation build a modular training centre in their community. This funding aligns with the government’s priority to protect and strengthen Ontario’s workforce by connecting Indigenous peoples to training opportunities that will prepare them for in-demand good-paying jobs.
Outcomes	A workforce development centre in Mishkeegogamang Ojibway Nation will make it easier for Indigenous job seekers to gain relevant skills and for Indigenous workers to enhance their knowledge and adapt to industry trends. The new building will have seven multi-purpose rooms to enable training, workshops, events and meetings, and includes a kitchen, washrooms and storage spaces. This modern centre will help reduce labour shortages by offering programs, such as youth and elder traditional outdoor learning, adult work training programs and advanced project management classes.
Partners*	NOHFC; Mishkeegoga-mang Ojibway Nation
Timeframes	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<b>This item is new to the 2026 Action Plan:</b> Announced in June 2025, the Ontario government is refocusing the NOHFC to prioritize investments that protect northern industries and jobs, mitigate the impacts of U.S. tariffs and trade disruptions and secure new opportunities for the long-term prosperity of Northern Ontario.

KEY PRIORITY #2 – POPULATION DYNAMICS AND WORKFORCE ENABLERS

**FSET’s Four Day Work Week Pilot**

Action	<p>Since January 2024, FSET has been piloting a 4-day work week through 4 Day Week Global. Incorporating the shortened work week model, they are pleased to report that their results have been overwhelmingly positive.</p> <p>Their pilot program involves a 32-hour work week, with no reduction in pay or benefits for their employees. In their experience, not only has this led to happier, less stressed employees, but it has also resulted in consistent productivity.</p> <p>Their pilot has demonstrated that workers can be more productive in a shorter work week, reinforcing the fact that longer hours do not necessarily equate to higher output. This shift has allowed their employees to enjoy a better quality of life, with more time for personal pursuits and family commitments.</p>
Outcomes	<p>In recent years, the traditional five-day work week has been challenged by the rising trend of the 4-day work week. There has been a clear transition towards emphasizing employees’ well-being, productivity levels, and work-life balance.</p> <p>FSET has always been dedicated to creating an environment that encourages innovation, collaboration, and the well-being of its employees. The belief is that the change could significantly enhance employees’ work-life balance and satisfaction. Their goal is to leverage the benefits of the 4-day work week to improve their services and continue to deliver top-quality solutions.</p>
Partners*	FSET Kenora
Timeframe	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<p><b>Update or Points of Interest:</b></p> <p>As they continue with their 4-day work week pilot, they remain committed to monitoring its impacts and adjusting their approach as necessary to ensure their workforce’s ongoing well-being and productivity. Their experience has shown that a shorter work week is beneficial on multiple fronts, highlighting the potential for such a model to become the new standard.</p> <p>FSET has provided Implementation Tips for Leaders: <a href="https://fset.inc/switching-to-a-4-day-work-week/">https://fset.inc/switching-to-a-4-day-work-week/</a>                  FSET is proud to be certified as an Ontario Living Wage employer since 2022.</p>

**Air service feasibility study; Dryden, Fort Frances, and Kenora**

Action	Three municipalities in northwestern Ontario are working together in hopes of attracting a new commercial air carrier to the region following the departure of Bearskin Airlines from the communities in May of 2024.
Outcomes	Dryden, Fort Frances, and Kenora are now collaborating on an air service feasibility study, as well as a stakeholder survey, to make the business case for why a new air passenger carrier is needed.
Timeframes	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input checked="" type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<p><b>This item is new to the 2026 Action Plan:</b></p> <p>The study, which is being funded by FedNor, is being conducted by InterVISTAS Consulting Inc. and is expected to be completed by the end of the year.</p> <p>Announcement December 4, 2025: North Star Air to provide daily flights from Kenora to Thunder Bay in 2026. Starting January 15, 2026 there will be one flight a day from Kenora to Thunder and one flight from Thunder Bay to Kenora.</p>

**Quetico Lodge and Conference Centre**

Action	The owners have expanded relationships with First Nations and various <b>Indigenous Training Organizations</b> that have contracted their services. Norcat continues their work offering forestry and surface mining programs concurrently at QLCC.
Outcomes	The intent of these programs and collaborations is to provide training to participants with all the necessary certifications and skills needed to competently operate a variety of forestry used during the harvesting of trees as well as heavy equipment associated with surface mining. Training also provided that is directed toward trainees gaining related certifications and include hands on experience actually operating various types of heavy equipment.
Partners*	AEC; AEDC; QLCC; NORCAT

KEY PRIORITY #2 – POPULATION DYNAMICS AND WORKFORCE ENABLERS

Quetico Lodge and Conference Centre

Timeframe  Completed  Short Term  Mid-Term  Long Term

Updates

**Update or Points of Interest:**

Quetico Lodge and Conference Centre continues to expand its operations capitalizing on both their tourism customers and promoting their services to trainers who are searching for a suitable location to complete training. Specifically, campground operations and cottage/house rentals continue to increase and the onsite restaurant and dining hall was regularly opened to users and the general public. Norcat continues with holding Training Courses at Quetico Lodge and Conference Centre, however their onus has shifted from logging to Surface Mining Certification. Participants get hands on experience with heavy equipment and have the opportunity to acquire a driver's license. Quetico Lodge and Conference Centre is ideally positioned to provide services in the coming year related to a power line Construction Project – Waasigan Power Line being built in partnership with area First Nations, Valard Construction LP and Hydro One. It is hoped that ongoing program development takes place over long term to further create programs designed meet regional skills needs. NORCAT has received a Skills Development Fund (SDF) grant to provide training services and enters into privately funded contracts to provide training services.

\* Acronym Glossary follows. Short-term, Mid-Term (2 Years), Long-Term (3 Years)

**KEY PRIORITY #3 – SKILLS, TRAINING, AND LEARNING PATHWAYS**

Skills and knowledge are becoming increasingly important as workplaces adopt new technologies and expectations, shaping how youth and workers access the education and training they need. Employers point to gaps in foundational skills such as literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, and communication, and note that emerging jobs require workers who can adapt quickly. Smaller communities often lack exposure to global labour market trends, and many residents are unaware of the training and education options available to them. A shortage of specialized instructors limits the ability to promote new careers, and apprenticeship opportunities remain constrained by the lack of facilities, in-school training capacity, and available journeypersons. In response, many stakeholders are broadening career development activities, improving in-class learning, and expanding flexible education and micro credential options so youth can make more informed career decisions and workers can upskill in ways that reflect changing workplace needs.

KEY PRIORITY #3 – SKILLS, TRAINING, AND LEARNING PATHWAYS

Career Development Practice

**Action** Shooniyaa Wa-Biitong partnered with Career Development Professional Centre (CDPC) to hold a four-day training session for Treaty #3 members who work with clients in Employment, Ontario Works, or as an Employment Advisor.

**Outcomes** The training offered participants a time to connect, reflect, and develop their skills with other workers in employment and training, career development, and/or income assistance. The training will help service providers guide their clients in making informed career choices and finding the right path forward.

**Partners\*** Shooniya Wa-Biitong; Career Development Professional Centre

Timeframe  Completed  Short Term  Mid-Term  Long Term

Updates

**This item is new to the 2026 Action Plan:**

The training was held from October 27 to 30, 2025 in Fort Frances.

KEY PRIORITY #3 – SKILLS, TRAINING, AND LEARNING PATHWAYS

Highway Twinning Project & Training

Action	<p>The Niiwin Wendaanimok (Four Winds) Partnership is an Indigenous-owned and operated corporation dedicated to providing construction, contracting, and environmental monitoring services in Treaty 3 territory. With a mandate to employ Anishinaabe workers and assets in construction and development projects, the Partnership is committed to rebuilding their economy, being a major part of the regional economy and ensuring Anishinaabe laws and voices are respected throughout development processes within Anishinaabe territory.</p> <p>The Niiwin Wendaanimok Partnership is comprised of representatives and experts from four Nations—Wauzhushk Onigum Nation, Washagamis Bay First Nation, Shoal Lake 40 First Nation and Niisaachewan Anishinaabe Nation.</p>
Outcomes	<p>The work to twin the first 6.5 km stretch of the local highway starting at the Manitoba border began back in June 2022, thanks to a partnership between the provincial government and the Niiwin Wendaanimok (Four Winds) group, which is an organization formed by four local First Nations – Niisaachewan, Shoal Lake 40, Washagamis Bay and Wauzhushk Onigum – to help their community members find gainful employment.</p>
Partners*	Niiwin Wendaanimok
Timeframe	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<p><b>Updates or Points of Interest:</b></p> <p>The Niiwin Wendaanimok Partnership and Moncrief Construction have completed Phase 1 of the highway twinning project. Phase 2 is scheduled to start in late 2025.</p> <p>Phase 2 will be double the size and scope. It will require a significant amount of labour to complete the project.</p> <p>The Niiwin Wendaanimok Partnership supplied 30% of labour and equipment to the first phase and is looking to increase its share in phase 2.</p> <p>The Niiwin Wendaanimok Partnership aims to build a training facility in Kenora to help fill the labour gaps and boost the local economy. Over 120 people are trained annually, which will increase to 420 with the construction of a training facility. *Kenora-Rainy River MPP Greg Rickford says he is feeling confident that preliminary work to continue twinning Highway 17 west of Kenora will resume in the fall, followed by more serious road construction work in Spring 2026. (*Kenora Miner and News – July 2025).</p>

In-Class Enhancement Fund

Action	<p>Ontario Investing More Than \$60 Million in Skilled Trades Apprentices</p> <p>The In-Class Enhancement Fund will protect Ontario workers by training up to 12,000 apprentices for in-demand jobs.</p> <p>As part of a broader strategy to address the need for skilled trades, the Ontario government is also examining ways to increase apprenticeship hiring on publicly funded infrastructure projects and construction sites. In addition, the government is working with Skilled Trades Ontario to expand testing, allowing apprentices to book Certificate of Qualification exams at certified testing centres closer to home, choosing the date, time and location that works best for them. This means less travel, less time away from work and more opportunities for apprentices to get certified and advance their careers.</p>
Outcomes	<p>This investment, through the In-Class Enhancement Fund (IEF), will create up to 4,000 new training seats each year, helping apprentices access in-class training faster while covering their \$10-per-day Level 1 classroom fees.</p> <p>The IEF is part of the \$159.3 million commitment announced in the 2025 Budget: A Plan to Protect Ontario to strengthen skilled trades programs. It builds on the government’s broader strategy to train and attract workers for in-demand jobs.</p> <p>Since 2020, Ontario has invested over \$2.1 billion in the skilled trades. This includes investments in skilled trades related projects under the Skills Development Fund Training Stream.</p>
Partners*	MLITSD
Timeframe	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input type="radio"/> Long Term

KEY PRIORITY #3 – SKILLS, TRAINING, AND LEARNING PATHWAYS

**In-Class Enhancement Fund**

Updates	<p><b>This item is new to the 2026 Action Plan:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» New apprenticeship registrations in Ontario increased by over 7.3 per cent to 28,875 in 2024-2025 – the highest in a decade. This includes an increase of over 13.5 per cent to 16,412 among youth aged 15 to 24 in 2024-2025.</li> <li>» About one in eight job openings in Ontario are forecast to be in skilled trades-related occupations by 2029.</li> <li>» One in three workers in Ontario with an apprenticeship certificate as their highest credential are nearing retirement.</li> <li>» In August, 2025, the government announced an investment of \$75 million to create up to 7,800 additional construction and urban planning seats at colleges, universities and Indigenous Institutes in Ontario, further strengthening the province’s pipeline of homegrown and highly skilled construction workers.</li> </ul>
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**eCampusOntario Micro-credentials**

Action	<p>eCampusOntario is a leading platform in Canada launched in 2021 to enable users to discover microcredential programs tailored to workforce needs. eCampusOntario is funded by the Government of Ontario and leads a consortium of the province’s 53 publicly-funded colleges, universities, and Indigenous Institutes to develop and test online learning tools to advance the use of education technology and digital learning environments. This initiative reflects a shift toward microcredentials in education. It is aimed at workforce development by aligning educational offerings with market demand.</p> <p>The portal lists more than 2500 microcredentials offered by Ontario’s colleges, universities, and Indigenous institutes.</p>
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Outcomes	<p>Programs offer information about access to short, flexible, and industry-relevant training programs that target key sectors such as healthcare, manufacturing, social assistance, information technology, and manufacturing with the goal to help individuals reskill or upskill efficiently.</p> <p>Programs listed at the portal are accessible online, on-campus, or in hybrid formats, to enable a variety of delivery modes to meet the needs of diverse users including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Students seeking to enhance employability.</li> <li>» Professionals looking to upskill or reskill in emerging fields.</li> <li>» Employers seeking tailored training solutions for workforce development.</li> </ul>
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Partners*	<p>eCampusOntario; Participating employers; Participating post-secondary institutions; Ministry of Colleges and Universities</p>
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Timeframe	<p><input type="radio"/> Completed    <input type="radio"/> Short Term    <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term    <input checked="" type="radio"/> Long Term</p>
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Updates	<p><b>Update or Points of Interest:</b></p> <p>Key Features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Short Duration: Programs typically last under 12 weeks.</li> <li>» Affordability: Costs are significantly lower than traditional degrees or diplomas.</li> <li>» Industry Collaboration: Microcredentials are co-developed with employers to ensure relevance and alignment with current job market needs.</li> <li>» Flexibility and Accessibility: Many programs are eligible for financial support through Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP)</li> </ul> <p>The portal uses tools like labor market data integration and the Conference Board of Canada’s OpportuNext matching algorithm to personalize program recommendations. Recently, eCampusOntario introduced SkillsFinder.ai, a generative AI-powered tool that leverages user input to identify skills gaps and match learners with relevant microcredentials.</p> <p>This June, eCampusOntario announced the publication of its Micro-credential Toolkit, a how-to guide to help institutions develop micro-credential programs that meet the needs of learners and fill the skill gaps in the current and future labour market.</p> <p>The toolkit is a frame of reference that covers topics such as the seven phases of the micro-credential lifecycle, tools to support employer-educator partnerships, how to involve learners as co-creators, and pathways for integrating micro-credentials into academic programming.</p>
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KEY PRIORITY #3 – SKILLS, TRAINING, AND LEARNING PATHWAYS

**Healthcare Lab Spaces**

Action	New healthcare lab spaces have been installed in all Seven Generations Education Institute Campuses; including Fort Frances, Sioux Lookout, and Kenora.
Outcomes	High tech equipment will improve learning outcomes and experiences for healthcare students.
Partners*	SGEI
Timeframes	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<b>Update or Points of Interest:</b> Seven Generations Education Institute delivers accredited college and university level programming at their campuses throughout Treaty Three and in First Nations communities, upon request.

**Seven Generations Education Institute (SGEI)**

Action	To assist organizations with a better understanding of Anishinaabe culture, identity, history, inherent and treaty rights. Offered; custom training, engagement and information sessions for schools and organizations.
Outcomes	Indigenous cultural engagement, awareness, and sensitivity.
Partners*	Seven Generations; Local Businesses & Organizations
Timeframe	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<b>Updates or Points of Interest:</b> This includes topics such as (but not limited to): Culture, Identity, History, Treaty and Inherent Rights, Education, Residential Schools, Cultural and Language Revitalization, and leadership.

**Skilled Trade & Tech Days: Skills Ontario**

Action	Skills Ontario is proud to present a series of Skilled Trade & Tech Days (formally Career Exploration Events) once again for young women in senior elementary and secondary school.
Outcomes	These events provide young women the opportunity to explore a variety of skilled trade and technology careers through hands-on workshops while networking with women in the skilled trades. Hosted across the province, young women will have the opportunity to gain practical experience and valuable information to make informed decisions about their future.
Partners*	Skills Ontario Young Women’s Initiative
Timeframe	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input checked="" type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<b>Updates or Points of Interest:</b> Completed September 9, 2025 in Dryden. Attended by Dryden High School Students. During the event, young women: » Gained an understanding of what skilled trade and technology careers are out there and why they are important; » Learned about different careers in the skilled trades and technologies; » Learned about and try different day-to-day activities preformed in a skilled trade and technology career while participating in a variety of hands-on workshops.

KEY PRIORITY #3 – SKILLS, TRAINING, AND LEARNING PATHWAYS

**Confederation College Remote Campuses**

Action	The remote campuses offer a wide variety of programs to meet the education and training needs of Northwestern Ontario. On November 27, 2025, NTAB along with many community stakeholders attended a regional consultation session to help shape their next Strategic Plan. They were seeking insights and experiences as these are vital in guiding how they continue to serve our learners, employers, and communities across northwestern Ontario.
Outcomes	Programs range from full-time postsecondary diploma programs, full-time and part-time certificate programs, continuing education courses, and other education training opportunities.
Partners*	Confederation College
Timeframe	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<b>Updates or Points of Interest:</b> Students can study and stay in their home communities.

**Seven Generations Education Institute (SGEI) and college partnerships**

Action	SGEI will continue to have a strong Trades presence as they continue to offer Carpentry, Welding, Hairstyling, and Esthetics. They started Business programs in 2021 and is continuing.
Outcomes	Training offered locally keeps students and graduates in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts.
Partners*	SGEI; Participating Colleges
Timeframe	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<b>Updates or Points of Interest:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» All programs, with the exception of hands-on trades, healthcare labs, and experiential learning, transitioned to an online delivery through both synchronous and asynchronous learning activities.</li> <li>» SGEI has supported its students and staff with a variety of resources including training, technical help, mental health supports, accessibility and ongoing social engagement through digital technology. As they strive to maintain the health and safety of their staff and students, we continue to look for new and innovative ways to enhance and diversify the learning experience both within and outside of the classroom.</li> <li>» SGEI has continued to build on online learning support specialists, telepresence rooms, new software including Office 365 access, student wellness initiative, and several cultural learning opportunities for faculty and staff.</li> <li>» 2025 Report Numbers – Training for Employment provided a variety of workplace and employment readiness programs and registered 616 participants; there were a total of 85 Post-Secondary Graduates in 2025.169 students were enrolled in Post-Secondary Education in Fall 2025.</li> </ul>

**Canada-Ontario Job Grant Program (COJG)**

Action	Provides opportunities for employers, individually or in groups, to invest in their workforce, with help from the government. The COJG provides direct financial support to individual employers or employer consortia who wish to purchase training for their employees. It is available to small, medium and large businesses with a plan to deliver short-term training to existing and new employees.
Outcomes	Employers with 100 or more employees need to contribute 1/2 of the training costs. Small employers with less than 100 employees need to contribute 1/6 of training costs. For employer groups who want to apply for training supports the government offers a COJG Consortium Stream.
Partners*	MLITSD; Employment Ontario Service Providers; Local Businesses
Timeframe	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input type="radio"/> Long Term

**KEY PRIORITY #3 – SKILLS, TRAINING, AND LEARNING PATHWAYS**

**Updates**

**Updates or Points of Interest:**

The training has to be delivered by an eligible, third-party trainer. This program best suits employers with a particular skills demand. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis.

Northern Community Development Services of Fort Frances received a new contract in 2025 to provide the program to the Rainy River District and the Kenora District.

As in the previous year, fewer than 10 companies participated in COJG in each of the Kenora and Rainy River Districts. The number of workers participating in the Kenora District fell from 16 to 13. In the Rainy River District, 16 people participated in COJG sponsored training in 2024-2025, stable with 15 in 2023-2024.

Employer feedback on the value of the training was not provided. The number of the Kenora and Rainy River District companies participating in COJG continues to be stable but very limited. The same is true of the number of trainees getting the benefit of training. Where training does take place, it is largely provided by a private trainer and employers report that the training met their employees’ needs and contributed to the productivity of their workforce.

\* Acronym Glossary follows. Short-term, Mid-Term (2 Years), Long-Term (3 Years)

**KEY PRIORITY #4 – ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND LOCAL BUSINESS GROWTH**

Entrepreneurs and small and medium businesses continue to play a central role in job creation and local innovation. Many owners describe a landscape that holds real potential but is also shaped by practical challenges. Starting a business often requires navigating high start-up costs, limited financing options, and the pressures of competing in broader digital markets. Some communities lack adequate commercial space, and new owners can become overwhelmed by bylaws, permits, and compliance requirements. Workforce shortages and rising wages add extra strain. Local stakeholders also note that entrepreneurs benefit from steady guidance and long-term support to help them move beyond the early stages of business development. Across the region, more seminars, training opportunities, grant programs, pitch events, and incubator supports are beginning to give new and existing business owners additional avenues to build confidence and capacity. These pressures and corresponding efforts ultimately affect how confidently small businesses can build, expand, and contribute to local job creation.

**KEY PRIORITY #4 – ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND LOCAL BUSINESS GROWTH**

**How to Start a Business**

**Action** The Rainy River Future Development Corporation offered a seminar at the end of October and early in November 2025 on how to start a business.

**Outcomes** Topics discussed included:

- » Assess yourself for business
- » Research your potential market
- » Make a business plan
- » Plan your finances
- » Choose your business structure
- » Register your business name
- » Business banking
- » Business location
- » Hiring staff
- » Promotion
- » Soft openings

**Partners\***

**Timeframe**  Completed  Short Term  Mid-Term  Long Term

**Updates** **This item is new to the 2026 Action Plan:**  
This seminar was offered in Chapple, Fort Frances, and Rainy River.

KEY PRIORITY #4 – ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND LOCAL BUSINESS GROWTH

**Starter Company Plus**

Action	Starter Company Plus is a Government of Ontario funded program and delivered by the Northwest Business Centre designed to create sustainable jobs for its residents through entrepreneurship. Participants will get one-on-one guidance, training to complete a business plan and the opportunity to apply for a \$5,000 grant.
Outcomes	The program has delivered positive outcomes and positions businesses for success when applying for loans, the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund or other opportunities.
Partners*	Government of Ontario; NWBC; City of Kenora
Timeframe	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<b>Update or Points of Interest:</b> The NWBC’s Starter Company Plus program is recognized across the two districts as the starting point for business success, expansion, and purchase. 19 grants of \$5,000 were awarded in 2025 and 37 people applied for the business training.

**Northwest Ontario Pitch It 2025**

Action	The fourth annual NWO Pitch IT event saw Entrepreneurs from the Northwestern Ontario Region Pitch their business ideas to a panel of Judges and Investors for the chance to win prizes starting at: 1st Prize - \$5000, 2ND Prize - \$3000, People’s Choice - \$2000.  Held April 27, the event featured entrepreneurs from the Kenora and Rainy River Districts pitching their business ideas to a panel of judges, which chose first and second place winners to take home a cash prize and in-kind support.
Outcomes	Entrepreneurs are the future of our districts’ business industry. Supporting new Entrepreneurs is of high importance to allow our small communities to grow and prosper. Entrepreneurs gained valuable skills, knowledge and support to move forward with their business start-up.
Partners*	BDC; The Standard Insurance; NTAB; Northern Ontario Angels; City of Kenora; NWBC; NOIC; PACE; Northern Credit Union; tbaytel; LOWBIC; Futurpreneur; City of Kenora; RRFDC; City of Dryden; Fort Frances C of C; Dryden C of C
Timeframe	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input checked="" type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<b>Updates or Points of Interest:</b> The event was held on April 27, 2025 in Kenora. The event saw entrepreneurs from the Kenora and Rainy River Districts pitch their business ideas and proposed business expansions for a chance to win \$10,000 in cash prizes and \$1,000 in vouchers for IP support. Over 178 people watched the event and over 790 people voted for people’s choice. The Finalists: » 1st Place: Stephanie Verplaetse, Northern Airworks (\$5,000 prize) » 2nd Place: Sara Brunner, Sara Brunner Nutrition & Consulting (\$3,000 prize) » People’s Choice Award: Ali Crandall, Stella Apothecary (\$2,000 prize)

**PACE Sioux Lookout Incubator Program**

Action	On August 13, 2025, PACE started to accept applications to the 18-months Incubator Program.
Outcomes	The Incubator Program is designed to help entrepreneurs grow strong, sustainable businesses with hands-on support, affordable space, and expert mentorship.
Partners*	PACE; FedNor
Timeframe	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<b>This item is new to the 2026 Action Plan:</b> The PACE Sioux Lookout Incubator offers: Reduced Downtown Rent in a visible, central location, Business Mentorship from experienced professionals, One-On-One Support in marketing, finance, and operations, and A Collaborative Environment to build confidence and capacity.

KEY PRIORITY #4 – ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND LOCAL BUSINESS GROWTH

PARO Centre for Women’s Enterprise-Canada welcomes Federal Budget 2025 as a Plan for Renewal, Resilience, and Shared Prosperity

Action	<p>*PARO Joins Women’s Enterprise Organizations of Canada (WEOC) in advancing women entrepreneurs as partners in Canada’s renewal.</p> <p>PARO welcomes the 2025 Federal Budget as a plan focused on fiscal stability, competitiveness, and generational prosperity. The organization joins the Women’s Enterprise Organizations of Canada (WEOC) in affirming the importance of responsible stewardship and investment in women-led businesses as a cornerstone of Canada’s economic renewal and long-term strength.</p>
Outcomes	<p>Through WEOC’s national loan fund and the network of women’s enterprise centres and organizations, including PARO, more than \$25 million in loans have supported over 560 women-owned businesses over the past three years. In Ontario, 303 women-owned businesses have been aided by the WEOC National Loans Fund, providing 143 Business Expansions and 160 Start-Ups with \$12,862,855.00 in funding to date. This illustrates how targeted financing and wraparound support help women start, grow, and scale businesses that anchor communities.</p>
Partners*	PARO; Women’s Enterprise Organizations of Canada (WEOC)
Timeframes	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<p><b>This item is new to the 2026 Action Plan:</b></p> <p>PARO welcomes measures that support innovation, small-business productivity, and trade diversification, and encourages attention to equitable access for rural, Indigenous, newcomer, and under-represented women.</p> <p>*Announced November 4, 2025.</p>

\* Acronym Glossary follows. Short-term, Mid-Term (2 Years), Long-Term (3 Years)

KEY PRIORITY #5 – INCLUSION, EQUITY, AND WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION

A strong labour market depends on the participation of all community members, yet many people continue to face barriers that limit their access to stable employment. This is felt most by groups who experience persistent inequities, including Indigenous and racialized residents, newcomers, youth, older adults, and people navigating complex social or economic circumstances. Affordable housing, transportation, work-appropriate clothing, and reliable technology remain out of reach for some residents, particularly in rural and isolated areas. Individuals who want to upgrade their skills often have trouble accessing programs because of strict eligibility rules, short recruitment timelines, or limited local delivery. Employers note that job roles are not always designed with flexibility in mind, which affects workers who need accommodations or different entry points into the workforce. Community stakeholders emphasize that many people who would benefit most from training do not hear about opportunities in time or do not see themselves reflected in available pathways. To help alleviate some of these barriers, communities are working to make learning and employment supports easier to reach, offering residents more options as they navigate the labour market.

KEY PRIORITY #5 – INCLUSION, EQUITY, AND WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION

**Demystifying Immigration Pathways Seminar**

Action	City of Kenora hosted a Demystifying Immigration Seminar on March 24, 2025 with the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Followed by individual meetings with employers.
Outcomes	The sessions provided an opportunity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Discover federal and provincial immigration programs to help you attract, hire and retain skilled foreign workers</li> <li>» Learn how to tap into pools of global talent in Canada and abroad</li> <li>» Find out more about the work permit process</li> <li>» Connect with resources to help find foreign skilled workers faster</li> <li>» Learn how your organization can leverage the OINP to retain or hire foreign skilled individuals to contribute to your workplace</li> <li>» Ask questions and get answers from experts on the programs (in English and French)</li> <li>» Network with other employers and partners</li> </ul>
Partners*	City of Kenora; IRCC; Ministry of Northern Development
Timeframe	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<b>This item is new to the 2026 Action Plan:</b>

**Rainy River First Nations Training**

Action	Rainy River First Nations along with New Gold, SGEI, and Shooniyaa Wa-Biitong have started a partnership to implement training programs for local Indigenous people with a focus on Mill and Drill Operations.
Outcomes	The goal is to re-engage with the communities and increase the number of Indigenous employees at New Gold which has identified the Mill and Drill Operations as areas where new, trained personnel will have an opportunity for a career with progression.
Timeframe	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<b>This item is new to the 2026 Action Plan.</b>

**FSET Digital Empowerment**

Action	FSET believes in innovation empowering people. They are dedicated to transforming connectivity for remote communities through Starlink technology, ensuring that even the most isolated regions have access to dependable internet.  Through their collaborative partnership with SpaceX, using Starlink technology, they bring cutting-edge connectivity solutions to life through advanced high-speed internet service provided by satellites in Low-Earth orbit (LEO). These artificial constellations are capable of transmitting broadband signals to ground-level receivers, offering wire-free technology that not only addresses the limitations of fiber optics for remote Northern communities but also meets their longstanding connectivity needs.
Outcomes	FSET believes that reliable internet is not a luxury; it is a necessity. FSET ensures that even the most remote communities can access dedicated, rapid, reliable and cost-effective internet connections.  At their core, they prioritize community-driven projects, specializing in installations tailored for community needs. While their focus primarily revolves around community deployments, they extend resources for self-installation and offer specialized residential solutions in Northwestern Ontario.  » As of January 2025: 4,661+ Starlink Kits installed and 110+ Communities Served.
Partners*	FSET Kenora; SpaceX
Timeframe	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<b>Updates or Points of Interest:</b> On March 4, 2025, Ontario Premier Doug Ford announced the cancellation of the \$100-million Starlink contract in tariff response. Premier Doug Ford also stated that the cancellation of the Starlink contract is permanent, even if all tariffs are removed. The Starlink contract cancellation is part of a larger procurement freeze by the province, which will no longer sign deals with US companies.

KEY PRIORITY #5 – INCLUSION, EQUITY, AND WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION

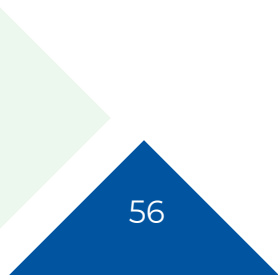
**Dryden Urban Indigenous Homeward Bound**

Action	The Homeward Bound Program is a comprehensive, wrap-around support initiative designed to help urban indigenous single mothers & their kids to build stable, independent futures. The program provides safe housing, academic upgrading, employment training, and individualized case management to support long-term success.
Outcomes	Participants receive on-site support, including access to life-skills programming, mental health resources, childcare assistance, Day Care, and community partnerships that strengthen their personal and professional development. The program’s goal is to remove barriers, empower women to pursue education or employment, and create a pathway toward sustainable independence.
Partners*	KDSB; DNFC; OAHS; Confederation College; Dryden Literacy; DDC; Woodgreen; OFIFC; OTF
Timeframe	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<p><b>Update or Points of Interest:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Applicants to honour a four to five-year commitment.</li> <li>» The program aims to foster a safe, inclusive, and culturally supportive environment where women can focus on healing, growth, and achieving their long-term goals.</li> </ul>

**Youth Job Connect Program**

Action	<p>The Youth Job Connection program serves youth aged 15 to 29 who experience multiple and/or complex barriers to employment by providing more intensive supports beyond traditional job search and placement opportunities.</p> <p>Supports include: Paid pre-employment training to promote job-readiness; Job matching and paid job placements, with placement supports for participants and hiring incentives for employers; Mentorship services; and Education and work transitions supports.</p>
Outcomes	Upon participating in an initial intake, participants will complete pre-employment training. Course work focuses on increasing work-related knowledge, improving life skills and certifications marketable to local employers. Once completed a designated number of hours or pre-employment training, participants begin work in a training placement with an actual local employer. This allows them develop on-the-job skills in a real work environment with the support of the employer and employment specialists.
Partners*	Employment Ontario Service Providers; Local employers
Timeframes	<input type="radio"/> Completed <input type="radio"/> Short Term <input type="radio"/> Mid-Term <input checked="" type="radio"/> Long Term
Updates	<p><b>Update or Points of Interest:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» 43 people participated in YJC in the Kenora District in 2024-2025 compared to 32 in 2023-2024. An increase of 34%.</li> <li>» Participation in the Kenora District Summer YJC decreased from to 38 to 33 (-13%) in the past year.</li> <li>» Participation in YJC in the Rainy River District decreased from 34 youth in 2023-2024 to 30 in 2024-2025. A decrease of 12%.</li> <li>» An additional 19 youth participated in YJC Summer in the Rainy River District compared to 17 in 2023-2024. A decrease of 12%.</li> </ul>

\* Acronym Glossary follows. Short-term, Mid-Term (2 Years), Long-Term (3 Years)



# ACRONYM GLOSSARY

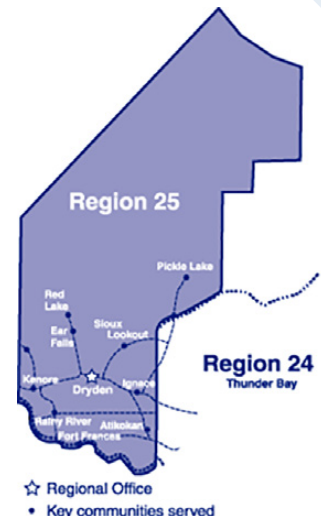
<b>AEC</b>	Atikokan Employment Centre
<b>AEDC</b>	Atikokan Economic Development Corporation
<b>AFNOO</b>	L'Association des Francophones du Nord Ouest de l'Ontario
<b>C of C</b>	Chamber of Commerce
<b>CCDC</b>	Chukuni Communities Development Corporation
<b>CEDC</b>	Community Economic Development Commission
<b>CFDC</b>	Community Futures Development Corporation
<b>CIRNAC</b>	Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
<b>Con College</b>	Confederation College
<b>DDC</b>	Dryden Development Corporation
<b>DNFC</b>	Dryden Native Friendship Centre
<b>EOSP</b>	Employment Ontario Service Providers
<b>FC</b>	Friendship Centre
<b>KDSB</b>	Kenora District Services Board
<b>KHA</b>	Kenora Hospitality Alliance
<b>LEAP</b>	Lake of the Woods Employment Action Project
<b>LOW</b>	Lake of the Woods
<b>LOW BrewCo.</b>	Lake of the Woods Brewing Company
<b>LOW Dev Com</b>	Lake of the Woods Development Commission
<b>LOWBIC</b>	Lake of the Woods Business Incentive Corporation
<b>MLITSD</b>	Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development
<b>MNDMF</b>	Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, and Forestry
<b>MNO</b>	Metis Nation of Ontario
<b>NADF</b>	Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund
<b>Ne-Chee FC</b>	Ne-Chee Friendship Centre
<b>NNC</b>	Nutrition North Canada
<b>NOIC</b>	Northwestern Ontario Innovation Centre
<b>NODN</b>	Northwestern Ontario Development Network
<b>NOHFC</b>	Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation
<b>NTAB</b>	Northwest Training and Adjustment Board
<b>NWBC</b>	Northwest Business Centre
<b>OAHS</b>	Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services
<b>OFIFC</b>	Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres
<b>OSSD</b>	Ontario Secondary School Diploma
<b>OTEC</b>	Ontario Tourism Education Corporation
<b>OTF</b>	Ontario Trillium Foundation
<b>PACE</b>	Patricia Area Community Endeavours
<b>QLCC</b>	Quetico Lodge and Conference Centre
<b>RAIN</b>	Rural Agri-Innovation Network
<b>RR</b>	Rainy River
<b>RRDSAB</b>	RR District Social Services Administration Board
<b>RRDSB</b>	Rainy River District School Board
<b>RRFDC</b>	Rainy River Futures Development Corporation
<b>SGEI</b>	Seven Generations Education Institute
<b>SLAAMB</b>	Sioux Lookout Area Aboriginal Management Board
<b>SWB</b>	Shooniyaa Wa-Biitong



## GEOGRAPHIC AREAS

The data presented in the Labour Market Conditions, Data and Analysis section is based on different sources of information from Statistics Canada relating to the Census Divisions for the Kenora and Rainy River Districts.

Statistics Canada defines Census Divisions as: “groups of neighbouring municipalities joined together for the purposes of regional planning and managing common services (such as police or ambulance services). These groupings are established under laws in effect in certain provinces of Canada. For example, a census division might correspond to a county, les municipalités régionales de comté or a regional district. In other provinces and the territories where laws do not provide for such areas, Statistics Canada defines equivalent areas for statistical reporting purposes in cooperation with these provinces and territories.”



The following lists detail the communities in the Kenora and Rainy River Districts:

### RAINY RIVER DISTRICT

Agency 1 (Indian reserve)	Fort Frances (Town)	Rainy Lake 18C (Indian reserve)
Alberton (Township)	La Vallee (Township)	Rainy Lake 26A (Indian reserve)
Atikokan (Township)	Lake of the Woods (Township)	Rainy River (Town)
Big Grassy River 35G (Indian reserve)	Long Sault 12 (Indian reserve)	Rainy River, Unorganized (Unorganized)
Big Island Mainland 93 (Indian reserve)	Manitou Rapids 11 (Indian reserve)	Sabaskong Bay (Part) 35C (Indian reserve)
Chapple (Township)	Morley (Township)	Saug-a-Gaw-Sing 1 (Indian reserve)
Couchiching 16A (Indian reserve)	Neguaguon Lake 25D (Indian reserve)	Seine River 23A (Indian reserve)
Dawson (Township)	Rainy Lake 17A (Indian reserve)	Seine River 23B (Indian reserve)
Emo (Township)	Rainy Lake 17B (Indian reserve)	

### KENORA DISTRICT

Attawapiskat 91A (Indian reserve)	Lake Of The Woods 37 (Indian reserve)	Shoal Lake (Part) 39A (Indian reserve)
Bearskin Lake (Indian reserve)	Lansdowne House (Indian settlement)	Shoal Lake (Part) 40 (Indian reserve)
Cat Lake 63C (Indian reserve)	MacDowell Lake (Indian settlement)	Shoal Lake 34B2 (Indian reserve)
Deer Lake (Indian reserve)	Machin (Township)	Sioux Lookout (Municipality)
Dryden (City)	Marten Falls 65 (Indian reserve)	Sioux Narrows - Nestor Falls (Township)
Eagle Lake 27 (Indian reserve)	Muskrat Dam Lake (Indian reserve)	Slate Falls (Indian settlement)
Ear Falls (Township)	Neskantaga (Indian reserve)	Summer Beaver (Indian settlement)
English River 21 (Indian reserve)	North Spirit Lake (Indian reserve)	The Dalles 38C (Indian reserve)
Fort Albany (Part) 67 (Indian reserve)	Northwest Angle 33B (Indian reserve)	Wabaseemoong (Indian reserve)
Fort Hope 64 (Indian reserve)	Osnaburgh 63B (Indian reserve)	Wabauskang 21 (Indian reserve)
Fort Severn 89 (Indian reserve)	Peawanuck (Indian settlement)	Wabigoon Lake 27 (Indian reserve)
Ignace (Township)	Pickle Lake (Township)	Wapekeka 1 (Indian reserve)
Kasabonika Lake (Indian reserve)	Pikangikum 14 (Indian reserve)	Wapekeka 2 (Indian reserve)
Kee-Way-Win (Indian reserve)	Poplar Hill (Indian reserve)	Wawakapewin (Long Dog Lake) (Indian reserve)
Kenora (City)	Rat Portage 38A (Indian reserve)	Weagamow Lake 87 (Indian reserve)
Kenora 38B (Indian reserve)	Red Lake (Municipality)	Webequie (Indian reserve)
Kenora, Unorganized (Unorganized)	Sabaskong Bay (Part) 35C (Indian reserve)	Whitefish Bay 32A (Indian reserve)
Kingfisher Lake 1 (Indian reserve)	Sabaskong Bay 35D (Indian reserve)	Whitefish Bay 33A (Indian reserve)
Kitchenuhmaykoosib Aaki 84 (Big Trout Lake) (Indian reserve)	Sachigo Lake 1 (Indian reserve)	Whitefish Bay 34A (Indian reserve)
Lac Seul 28 (Indian reserve)	Sachigo Lake 2 (Indian reserve)	Wunnumin 1 (Indian reserve)
Lake Of The Woods 31G (Indian reserve)	Sandy Lake 88 (Indian reserve)	



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