

FNREEES: Did You Know?



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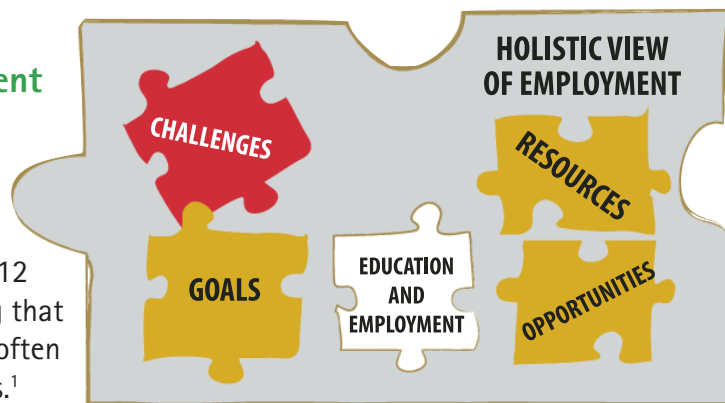


The FNREEES Did You Know? feature data from the First Nations Regional Early Childhood, Education and Employment Survey (FNREEES). Providing an unprecedented perspective on life in First Nations communities, the FNREEES helps fill data gaps in the areas of early childhood education and development, youth employment and education, and adult employment and labour force conditions.

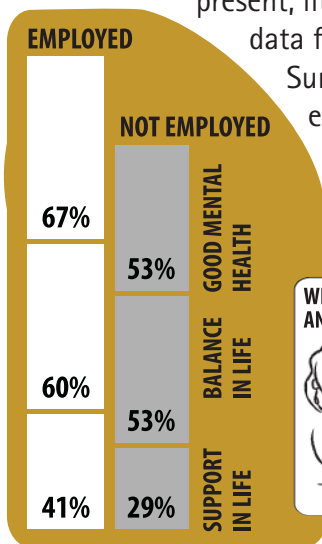
This series brings FNREEES national findings to bear on pressing policy questions in areas the survey addresses. Its purpose is to help ensure that the collective views and experiences of First Nations people, as expressed in the FNREEES, point the way to positive change.

PROMOTING EMPLOYMENT FOR FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE: Employment Experiences in First Nations Communities

The Public Health Agency of Canada cites employment/working conditions as one of 12 key social determinants of health, stressing that unemployment and underemployment are often associated with poorer health in Canadians.¹ Noting the gap in employment rates between First Nations people and non-Aboriginal Canadians, the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) called for a joint federal/Aboriginal strategy to address the issue.²



An employment gap between First Nations people and other Canadians has long been noted,³ but at present, little else is known about the First Nations labour force. National preliminary data from the First Nations Regional Early Childhood, Education and Employment Survey (FNREEES) provides an unprecedented holistic glimpse into First Nations employment data that could inform a joint First Nations/federal employment strategy.



Employment Important to Well-being



Consistent with social determinants of health research, the FNREEES found that employment is an important contributor to First Nations people's well-being. National preliminary FNREEES data shows that employed First Nations adults reported having physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual balance in life at a higher rate (60%) than those who were unemployed (53%). Employed First Nations adults (41%) also reported higher levels

¹ Public Health Agency of Canada, "What Makes Canadians Healthy or Unhealthy?" Available at www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ph-sp/determinants/determinants-eng.php#employment.
² Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action. Call #7. Available at http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf
³ Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, "Fact Sheet – 2011 National Household Survey Aboriginal Demographics, Educational Attainment and Labour Market Outcomes," [NEED SOURCE].



of support from family and friends they could count on in times of trouble than their unemployed counterparts (29%). Likewise, more than two-thirds (66%) of employed First Nations adults reported excellent or very good mental health compared to 53% of those who were unemployed.

First Nations Labour Force

According to the FNREEES, the majority of First Nations adults (76% among men; 65% among women) were either working, or were actively looking for work when the survey took place. Nearly half First Nations adults (48% of men and 49% of women) reported being employed. Of those participating in the labour force, 37% of First Nations men and 25% of First Nations women were unemployed. Unemployment was highest for young adults aged 18 to 24 and decreased with age. These findings suggest a need to focus on employment strategies aimed at First Nations youth and young adults.

Place and Type of Employment

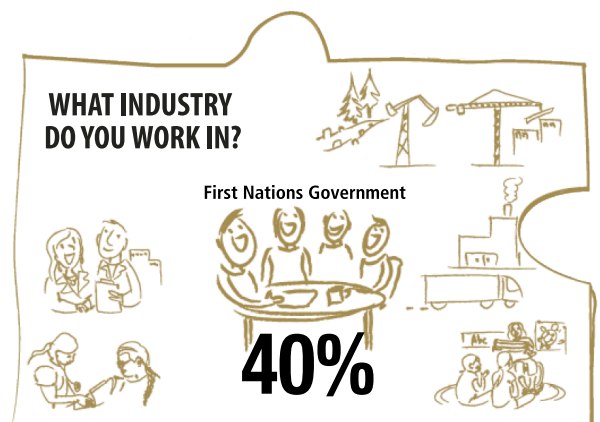
Nationally, nearly 4 in 5 (78%) employed First Nations adults worked in a First Nations community and about 1 in 5 (22%) worked outside of one. According to the FNREEES, First Nations governments were major employers in communities, where 40% of First Nations adults reported working in a First Nations government or organization.

Of employed First Nations adults, the majority (86%) worked full-time. Yet for 2 in 5 First Nations men (42%) and 1 in 3 First Nations women (35%) their work was only temporary (casual, term or contract) or seasonal. In addition, 1 in 5 (20%) employed First Nations adults worked more than one job. These data suggest that a significant percentage of First Nations people, though working, do not have stable long-term employment.

Summary

The FNREEES has contributed unprecedented new data that could inform a future First Nations/federal employment strategy. The majority of First Nations adults are either working or seeking work, but stable full-time employment is scarce. Where First Nations governments and organizations are the major employers in communities, an employment strategy might also need to promote economic development as a path to further job creation. Finally, the

FNREEES suggests that youth and young adults are an untapped portion of the First Nations labour force. Their employment experiences will require special consideration in any joint strategy developed.



For more information about the FNREEES & FNIGC, please visit FNIGC.ca