

# 3: REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO PROFILE



# Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Profile

Located in the heart of British Columbia and home to 8 unique municipalities, 7 electoral areas, and 14 First Nations, the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (RDBN) boasts extraordinary natural beauty, vibrant small town culture and exciting business opportunities.

Residents of the RDBN enjoy the natural splendor of snow-capped mountains in winter, refreshing lakes and rivers in the summer, and abundant and diverse wildlife. A wealth of community events, and all-season recreation create an abundance of activities for the outdoor enthusiast. Quality of life is highly valued; the natural amenities of the region and family values are an integral part of life in the RDBN.

Culture and history are an important part of life in the RDBN, where vibrant First Nations and a strong agricultural heritage and natural resource economy are the foundations of our welcoming, family friendly communities. Cultural experiences enjoyed by residents include charming local museums, and historic sites, inspiring First Nations events and artwork, galleries, theatres, a thriving music culture, and unique small businesses.

## The Regional Profile

The RDBN Regional and Community Profiles bring together current and detailed demographic data as well as information about workforce, transportation, energy, utilities, local government and quality of life. This information about the region is intended to inform potential investors, support decisions to establish or expand a business and provide opportunities to future residents. The Community and Surrounding Rural Area profiles provide the complete picture of each Electoral Area, as well as insight into why residents love to work, live and play in the RDBN.

Northern BC is used as a comparative area in many of the profile graphs. In this case, the area of Northern BC is defined as the seven northern regional district electoral areas in the province, including Bulkley-Nechako, Skeena-Queen Charlott, Fraser-Fort George, Peace River, Kitimat-Stikine, Cariboo and Northern Rockies.

More information about the businesses and organizations listed in this document is available on the Bulkley-Nechako Directory.

# DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

## Population Growth

Population growth in the RDBN and Northern BC, 2006-2016

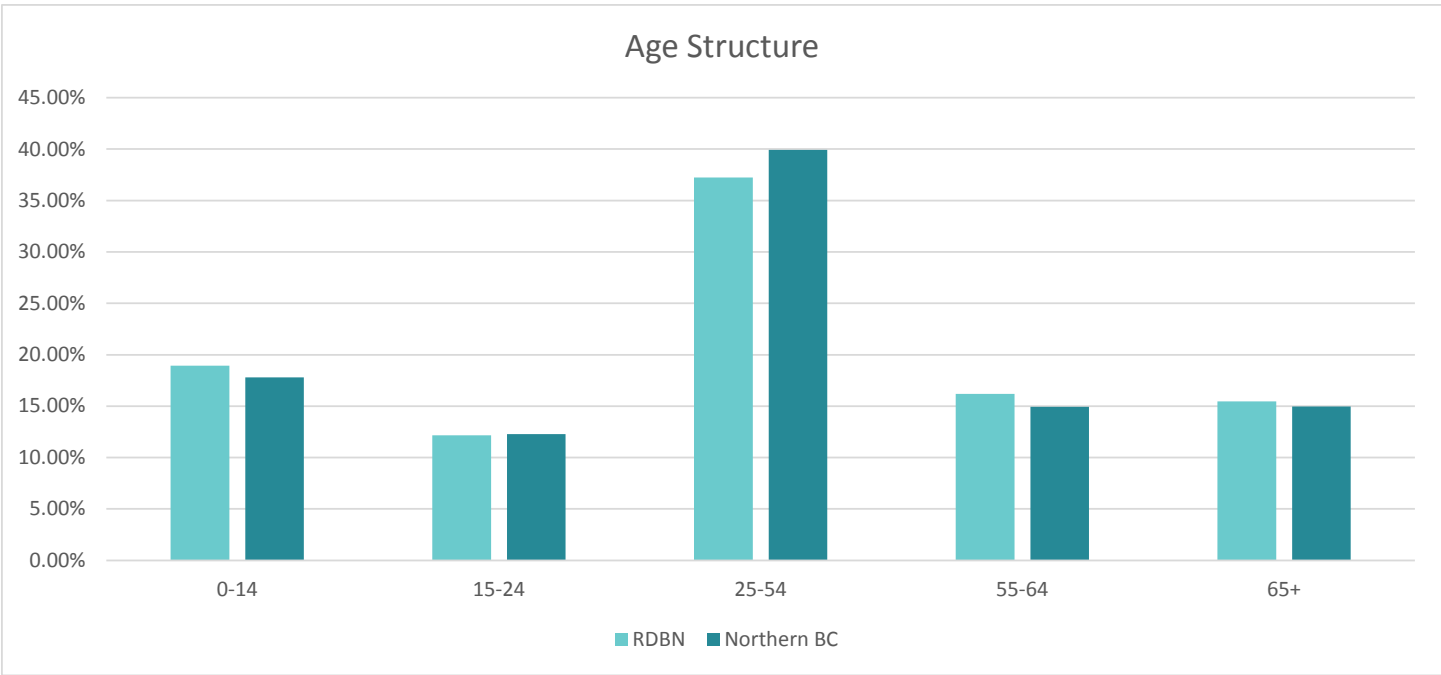
POPULATION GROWTH	2006	2011	2016
Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako	38,243	39,208	37,896
Northern BC	314,771	315,284	318,225

Sources: Statistics Canada. Census Profile from 2006-2016

The population of the RDBN was 37,896 in 2016, a decrease of 3.35%.

## Age Structure

Age structure in the RDBN and Northern BC in 2016

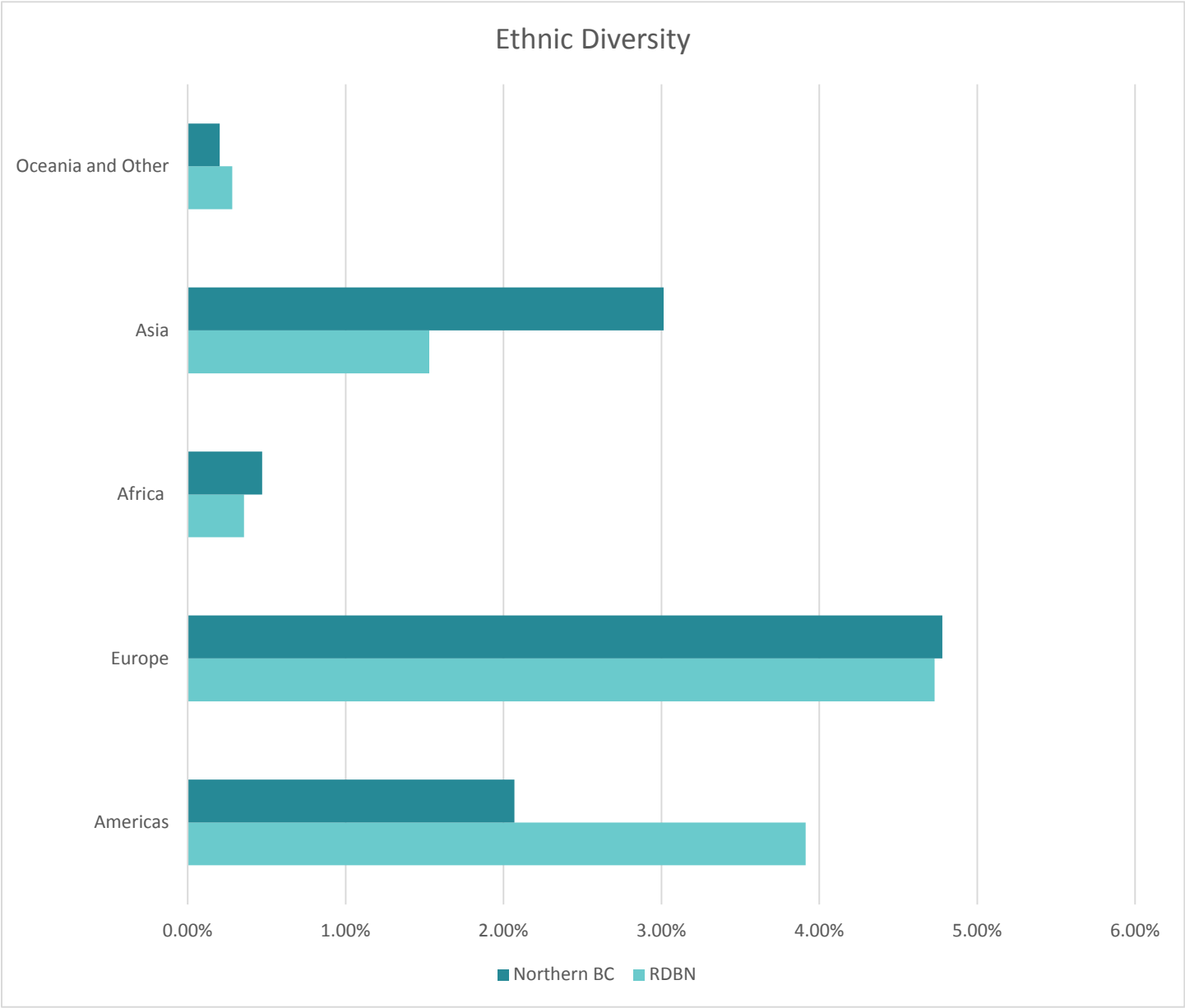


Sources: Statistics Canada. National Household Survey 2016

Residents of the RDBN had a median age of 41 in 2016, while Northern BC had a median age of 40 for the same period. The age structure of the region reveals that the RDBN had a higher youth population (ages 0-14) when compared to Northern BC. A lower portion of the RDBN's population was between the ages of 25-54 as compared to Northern BC.

# Ethnic Diversity

Place of birth summary in the RDBN and Northern BC in 2016



Sources: Statistics Canada. National Household Survey 2016

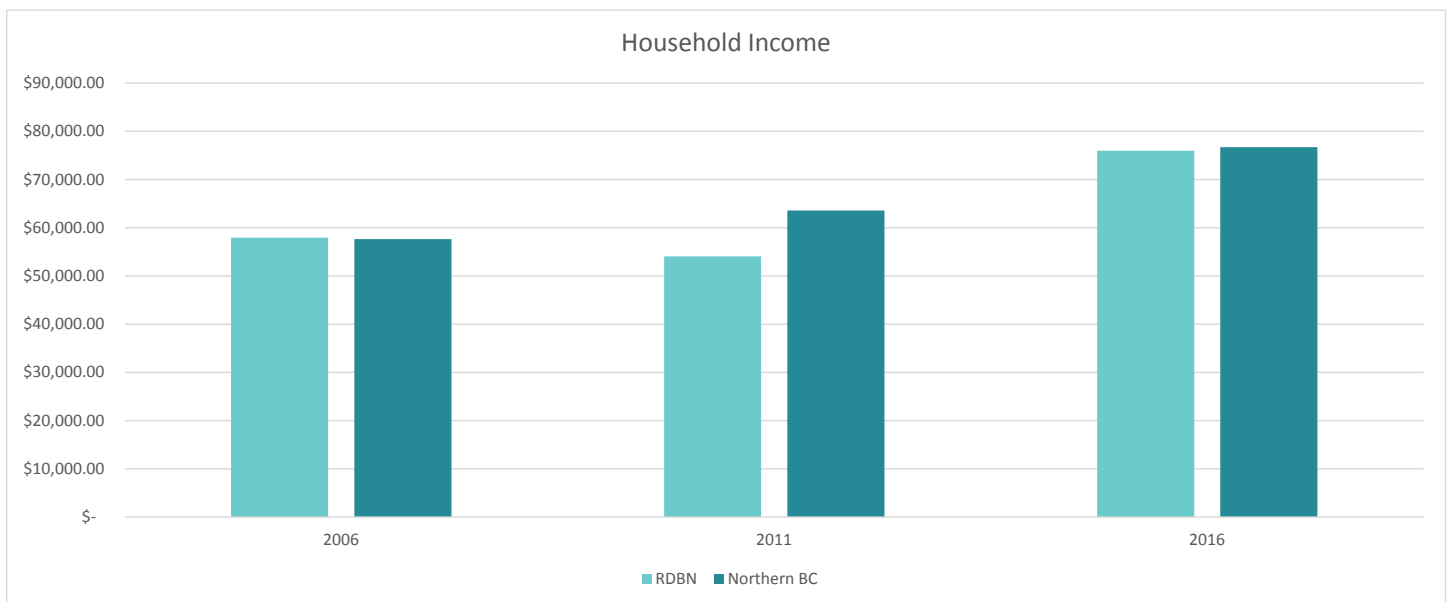
In 2016 Northern BC and the RDBN had roughly the same percentage of residents of European ethnicity. The RDBN had a higher percentage of residents from Asia or the Americas.





## Household Income

Median household income in the RDBN and Northern BC from 2006-2016



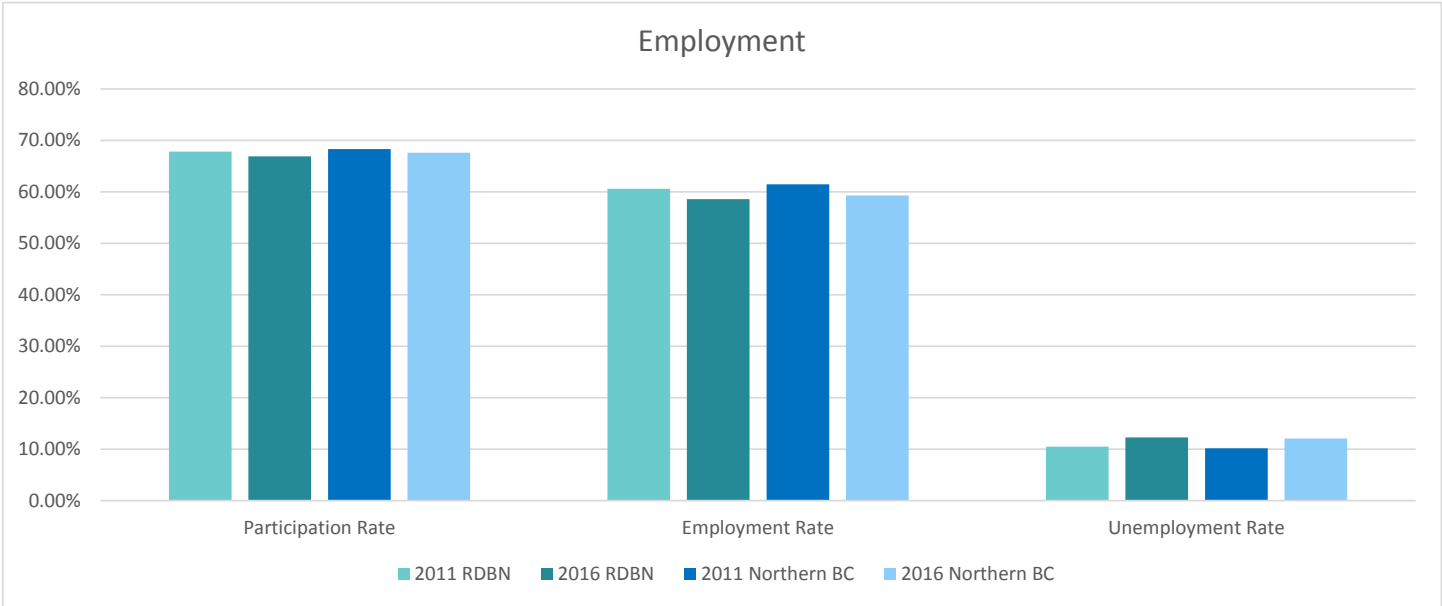
Sources: Statistics Canada. 2016 National Household Survey, Census Profile 2006-2016

The median household income in the RDBN has generally been similar to Northern BC with the exception of 2011 where it was slightly higher.

# WORKFORCE PROFILE

## Employment

Employment data in the RDBN and Northern BC from 2011-2016



Sources: Statistics Canada. 2016 National Household Survey, Census Profile 2016

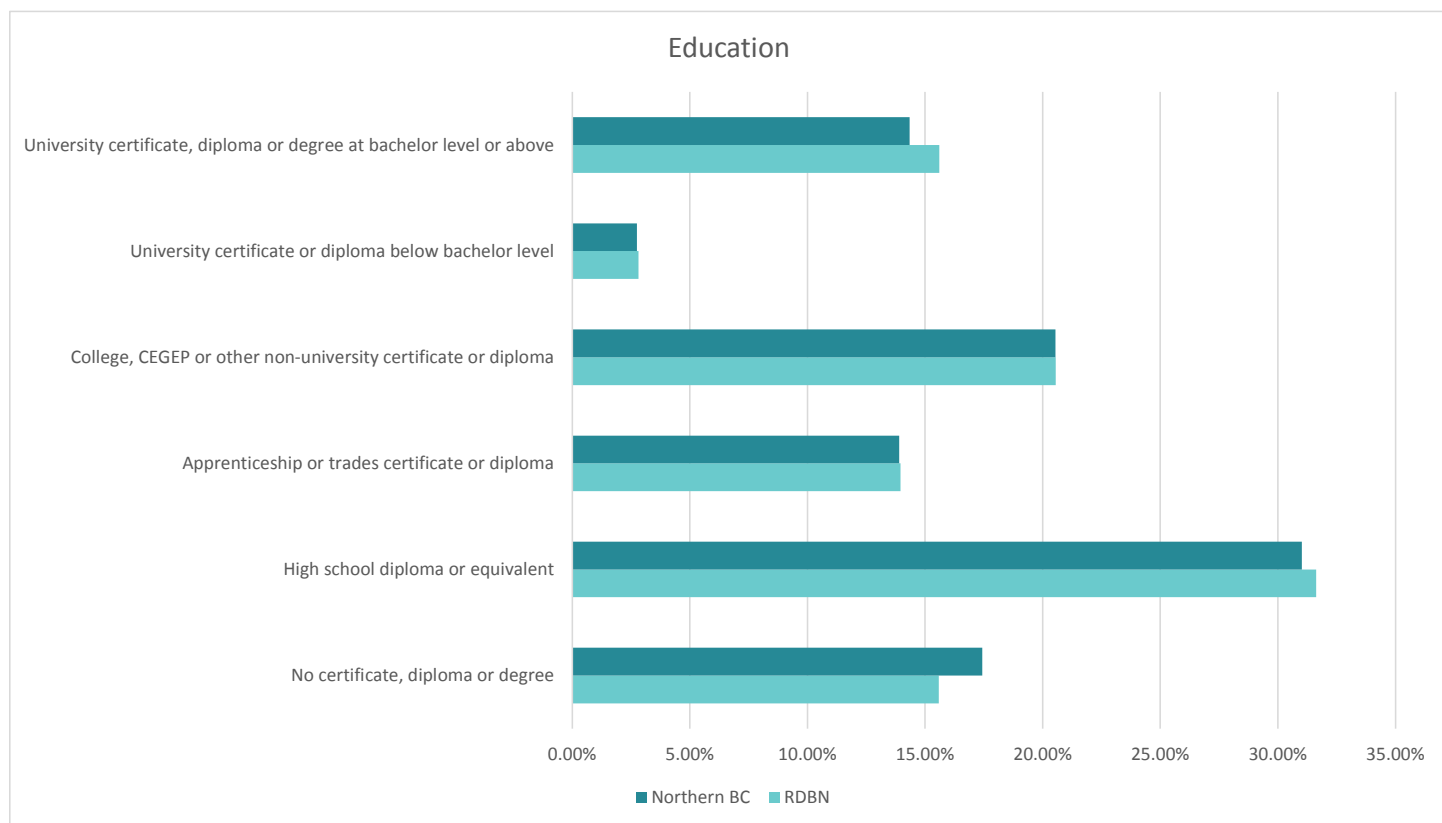
The RDBN employment rates were similar to the Northern BC Benchmark group for 2011 and 2016. The unemployment rate was 0.2% higher than the Northern BC rate.





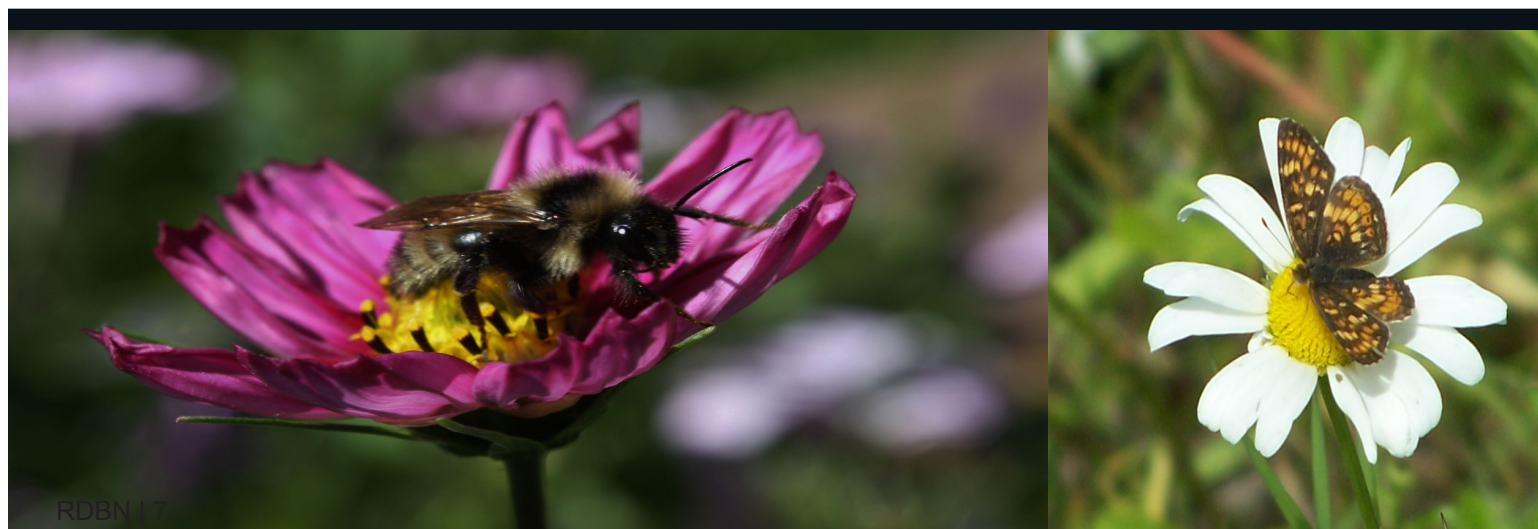
# Education

## Educational attainment in the RDBN and Northern BC in 2016



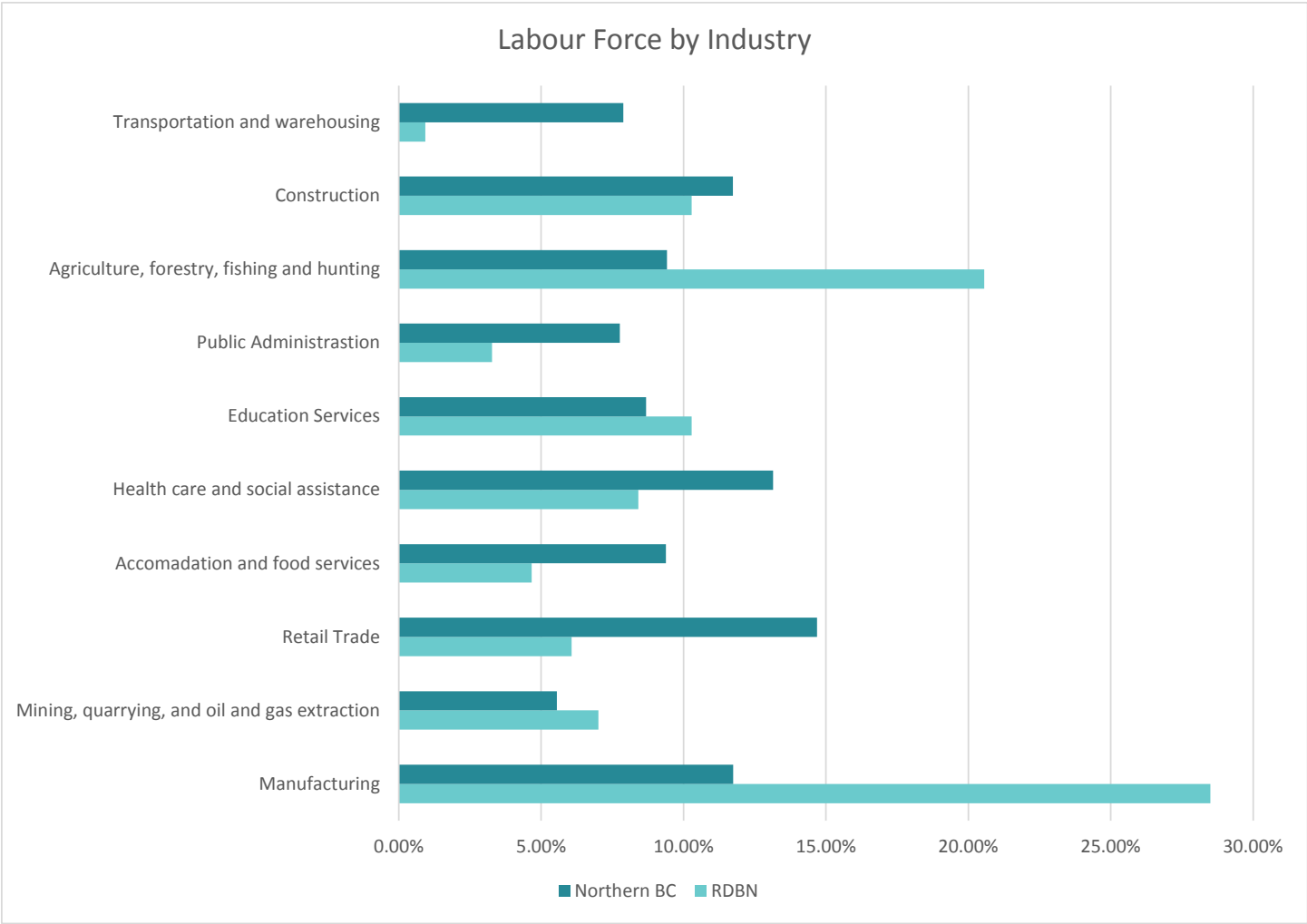
Sources: Statistics Canada. 2016 National Household Survey.

The population of Northern BC had a similar level of education to the RDBN in 2016. Although a higher proportion of the RDBN population held a college or university diploma or degree, or an apprenticeship or trades certification compared to Northern BC, the differences are not substantial.



# Labour Force By Industry

Labour force by industry in the RDBN and Northern BC in 2016



Sources: Statistics Canada. 2016 National Household Survey.

In 2016, the RDBN manufacturing, agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting sectors were the leading sources of employment. These two major sectors both employed at least double the portion of the labour force compared with Northern BC.



Some of the major employers in the RDBN include the following:

NAME	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	LOCATION
School District No. 91	725	Regional
Canadian Forest Products - Houston Sawmill	343	Houston
Canadian Forest Products – Plateau Mills	317	Vanderhoof
West Fraser – Fraser Lake Sawmills	300	Fraser Lake
School District No. 54	270	Smithers
Pacific Inland Resources	240	Regional
Sinclar Group Forest Products	200	Vanderhoof
St. John Hospital	200	Vanderhoof
Hampton Affiliates Babine Forest Products	200	Burns Lake
Hy-Tech Diamond Drilling	171	Smithers
Apollo Forest Products	156	Fort St. James
<b>Northern Health</b>	150	Regional
Bulkley Valley Credit Union	100	Regional
<b>College of New Caledonia</b>	100	Burns Lake
DH Manufacturing	60	Houston

## Post-Secondary Education Facilities

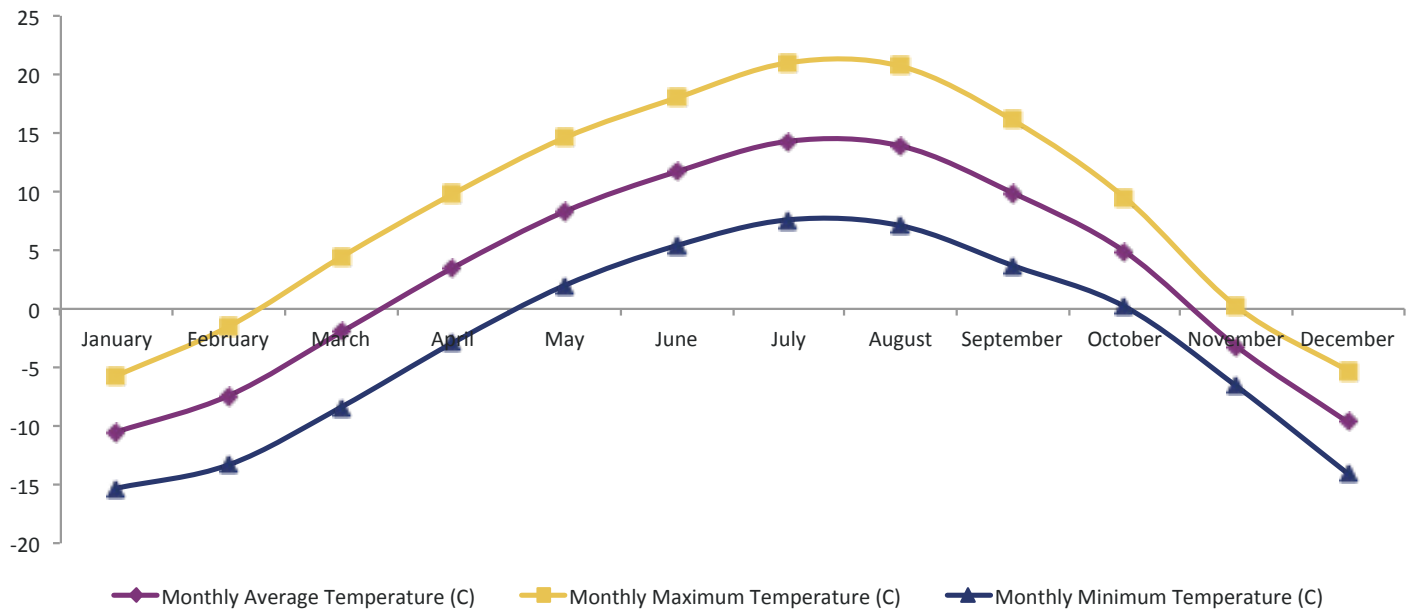
In the RDBN, post-secondary educational facilities are conveniently available in many communities.

POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTION	CAMPUS
<b>Coast Mountain College</b>	Smithers, Houston
<b>College of New Caledonia</b>	Fort St. James, Vanderhoof, Burns Lake, Fraser Lake

# CLIMATE

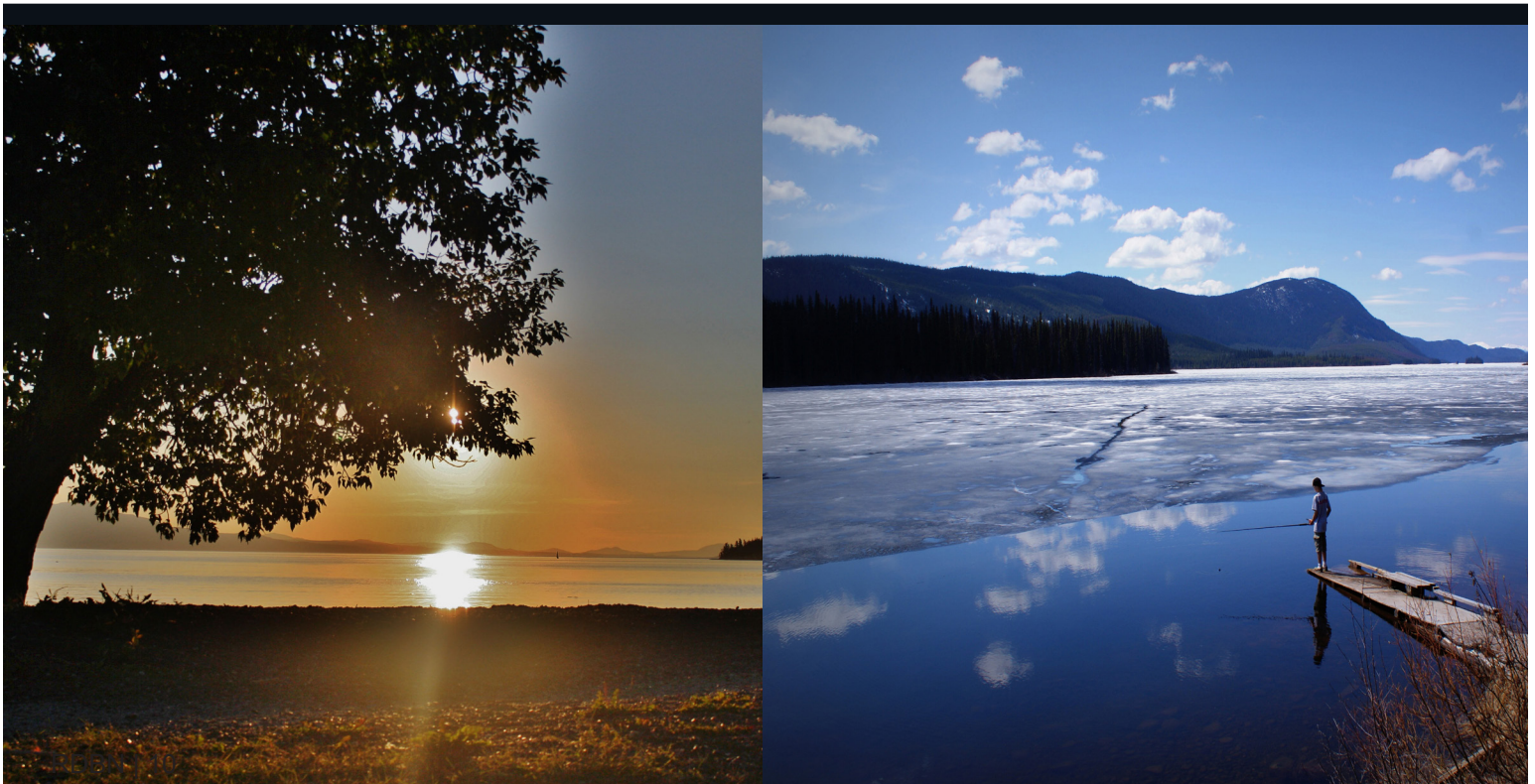
## Monthly Temperature

Monthly temperature in the RDBN in 2010



Environment Canada: 1981 to 2010 Canadian Climate Normals

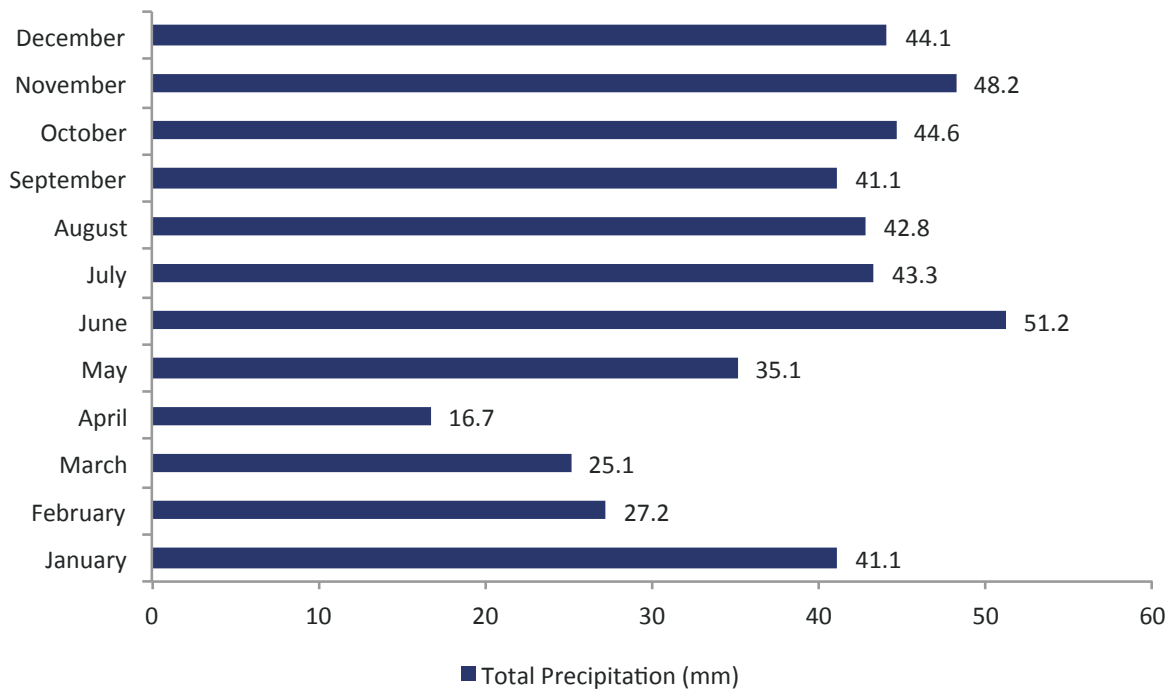
The warmest months of the year in the RDBN are between June and August, when temperatures reach above 20°C. The coldest months of the year occur between December and January, when temperatures drop below -15°C.





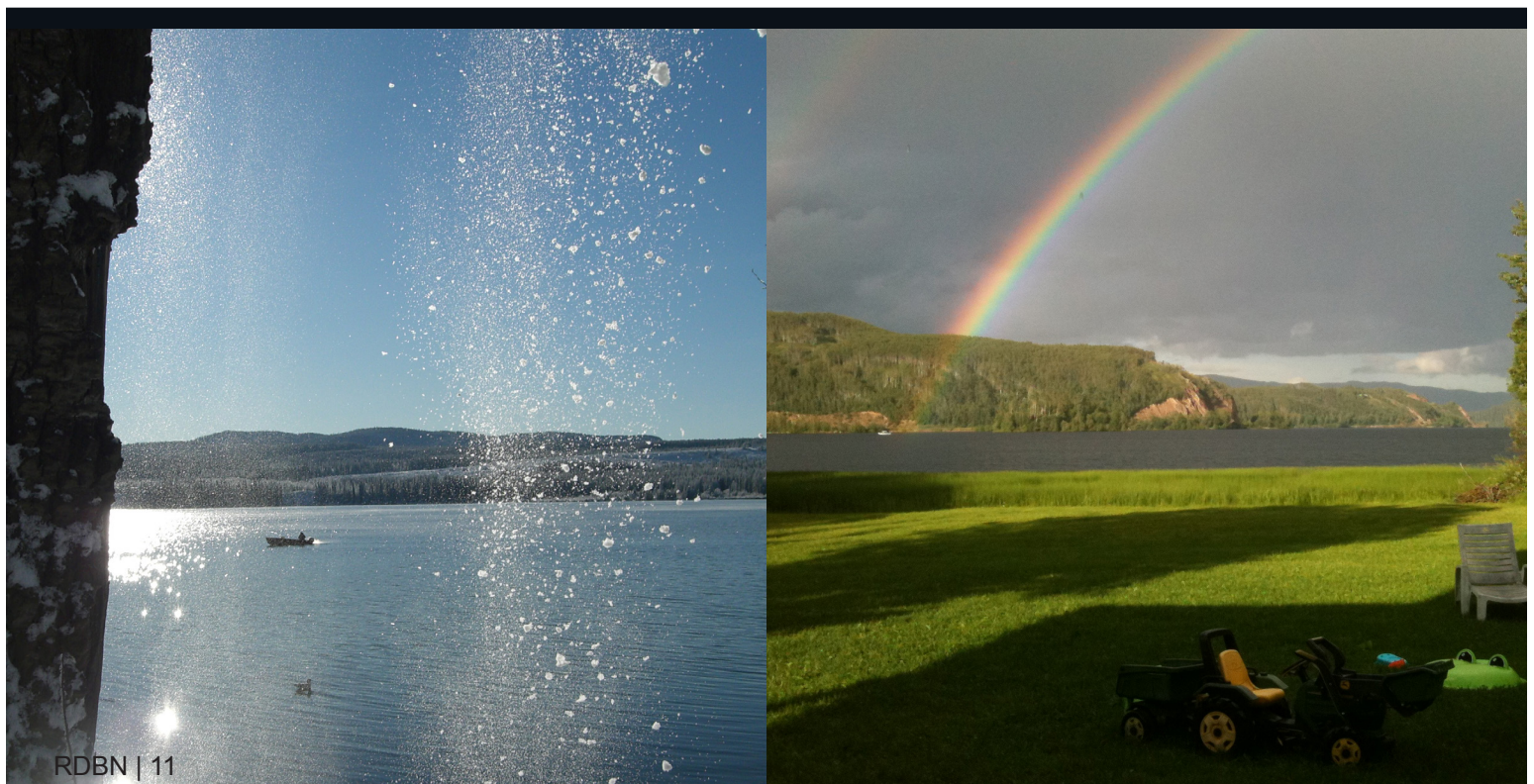
# Precipitation

## Precipitation in the RDBN in 2010



Source: Environment Canada, 1981 to 2010 Canadian Climate Normals

The RDBN experienced the lowest amount of precipitation during the months of February to April in 2010, as little as 17mm per month. In contrast, the most precipitation fell during June and November, surpassing 50mm per month.





# TRANSPORTATION

## Road

Highway 16 is the main paved transportation route running east to west through the RDBN. Highway 16 is the transportation route for goods being shipped in and out of the region.

The following provincial highways connect communities to the Highway 16 corridor:

- Highway 27 to Fort St. James from Highway 16 (Vanderhoof)
- Highway 35 to Francois Lake/Southbank from Highway 16 (Burns Lake)
- Highway 118 to Granisle from Highway 16 (Topley)

## Rail

The Canadian National Railway follows the Highway 16 corridor from Prince George to Prince Rupert, with service through the RDBN. Prince George, to the east of the RDBN, is the regional trading centre for Northern BC, where CN Rails Intermodal Terminal is located. The Intermodal terminal is designed to support customers shipping to and from Asia through the Port of Prince Rupert.

VIA Rail operates ‘The Skeena’ passenger train, running from Jasper to Prince Rupert and back again, with stops in many of the communities within the RDBN. Passengers are able to disembark and take in the splendor of the communities on route. The journey passes through some of Canada’s most scenic areas.

## Airport

Airports are an integral part of the RDBN economy. Air services support the region’s economic drivers of forestry, mining, tourism, and agriculture. Charter, passenger, and cargo services are available. The following airports operate within the region:

NAME	LOCATION	OPERATOR
Smithers Regional Airport	Smithers	Town of Smithers
Vanderhoof Airport	Vanderhoof	District of Vanderhoof
Baker Airport	Burns Lake	Lakes District Airport Society
Fort St James Perison Airport	Fort St. James	District of Fort St. James
Fraser Lake Airport	Fraser Lake	Village of Fraser Lake
Houston Airport	Houston	District of Houston

The Smithers Regional airport is located 5 kms north of the Town of Smithers. This airport is the only airport in the region with scheduled passenger flights. Three commercial passenger airlines operate at the Smithers Airport:

- Air Canada—Daily service to Vancouver.
- Central Mountain Air—Service to and from Terrace, Prince George, Kamloops, and Kelowna.
- Northern Thunderbird Air

# ENERGY AND UTILITIES

## Electricity and Gas Service Providers

The following businesses provide electricity and gas services:

- [BC Hydro](#)
- [Pacific Northern Gas](#)

## Commercial and Residential Rates for Electricity and Gas

### BC Hydro electricity rates:

(The electricity and gas providers are the same throughout the RDBN)

BC Hydro residential rates are listed as follows:

- 6.90 cents per kWh for the first 1,350 kWh
- 10.34 cents per kWh after first 1,350 kWh

BC Hydro commercial rates are listed as follows:

SERVICE RATE	BASIC CHARGE	ENERGY CHARGE	MINIMUM CHARGE
Small General Service Rate	\$0.3645 per day	\$0.1253 per kWh	\$0.3645 per day (equal to the Basic Charge)
Medium General Service Rate	\$0.2673 per day	\$0.0968 per kWh	Equal to 50% of the highest Demand Charge during the previous November 1 to March 31 period. The basic Charge, Energy Charge, and Demand Charge are replaced by the minimum Charge if their sum is less than this amount.
Large General Service Rate	\$0.2673 per day	\$0.0606 per kWh	Equal to 50% of the highest Demand Charge during the previous November 1 to March 31 period. The basic Charge, Energy Charge, and Demand Charge are replaced by the minimum Charge if their sum is less than this amount.

Small General Service (SGS) accounts have an annual peak demand less than 35 kW.

Medium General Service (MGS) accounts have an annual peak demand between 35 kW and 150 kW and use less than 550,000 kWh of electricity per year.

Large General Service (LGS) accounts have an annual peak demand equal or greater than 150 kW or total annual energy usage of at least 550,000 kWh.

## Pacific Northern Gas: Residential and Commercial Gas Rates

	BASIC MONTHLY CHARGE	DELIV- ERY CHARGE	COMPA- NY USE RIDER	RSAM RIDER	INTERIM RATE AD- JUSTMENT RIDER	TOTAL DELIVERY CHARGE	COMMODI- TY CHARGE	GCVA RIDER	TOTAL COMMODI- TY CHARGE	DELIVERY + COMMODITY CHARGE
Rate Class	\$/Month	\$/GJ	\$/GJ	\$/GJ	\$/GJ	\$/GJ	\$/GJ	\$/GJ	\$/GJ	\$/GJ
Residential	10.75	12.159	0.098	0.327	0.000	11.930	2.274	0.013	2.261	14.191
Small Commercial	25.00	10.259	0.098	1.327	0.000	10.030	2.260	0.013	2.247	12.277
Large Commercial	150.00	8.247	0.098	N/A	0.000	8.345	2.260	0.013	2.247	10.592
Small Industrial	410.00	3.699	0.098	N/A	0.000	3.797	1.740	0.013	1.727	5.524





# BUSINESS AND WORKFORCE SUPPORT SERVICES AND FUNDING PROGRAMS

## Business Support Services

The following business support services are available for businesses and residents located within the RDBN:

ORGANIZATION	DETAILS
<b>Community Futures Nadina</b>	Assistance with Building a Business Plan, Startup steps, or planning for existing businesses
<b>Community Futures Stuart Nechako</b>	Business Start-up Assistance
<b>Burns Lake Native Development Corporation</b>	Technical Services Including Business Plan Assistance, Training and Project Development Assistance
<b>Small Business BC</b>	Business Start-Up / Growth Assistance
<b>ThriveNorth</b>	Support for Young, Emerging Business Owners

## Business Funding and Tax Credit Programs

ORGANIZATION	DETAILS
<b>Community Futures Nadina</b>	Small Business Loans
<b>Community Futures Stuart Nechako</b>	Business Loans Program
<b>Burns Lake Native Development Corporation</b>	Small Business Loans Program
<b>Northern Development Initiative Trust</b>	Capital Investment and Training Rebate Program
<b>Northern Development Initiative Trust</b>	Competitiveness Consulting Rebate
BC Hydro	PowerSmart Programs for Business
Investment Agriculture Foundation	Funding to support innovative projects that support the Agri-food industry in British Columbia.

## Regional Employment Service Providers

The following employment service providers are available within the RDBN.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES	MUNICIPALITY
<b>Community Living BC</b>	Smithers
<b>Smithers Community Services Association</b>	Smithers
<b>WorkBC Fort St. James (PESL*)</b>	Fort St. James
<b>WorkBC Vanderhoof (PESL*)</b>	Vanderhoof
<b>WorkBC Burns Lake (PESL*)</b>	Burns Lake
WorkBC Fraser Lake (Outreach**)	Fraser Lake
<b>WorkBC</b>	Smithers
<b>Skilled Trades Employment Program (BCCA)</b>	Region Wide

\* Progressive Employment Services

\*\* Contact WorkBC Vanderhoof office

# Local Economic Development Services

Visit [Local Economic Development Services website](#) for information on:

- [RDBN Business Forum](#)
- [RDBN Start-up Business Contest](#)
- [Grant writing services for nonprofit organizations](#)
- [Visit Bulkley-Nechako - Tourism Site](#)
- [Regional Skills Gap Analysis](#)
- [Industrial Land Inventory Reports](#)

Visit [opportunities.bc.ca](#) for information on:

- Regional Skills Gap Analysis
- Industrial Land Use Inventory Reports

For any further assistance with local economic development services please contact the Regional Economic Development Department:

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