



Atlantic Canada's Energy Workforce

Regional Labour Market Outlook
to 2035

Photo courtesy of Enbridge

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Canada

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Key Insights



Fundamental shift in global energy economy

Geopolitical conflict has highlighted the fragility of global energy supply and elevated energy security as a priority, reinforcing Canada's potential role as a reliable supplier of diverse energy sources. Atlantic Canada's crude oil production already reaches international markets, including Europe, the Eastern US and the Gulf Coast. It is well-positioned to supply energy to markets seeking alternatives to their traditional suppliers.



Geopolitical conflict highlights the region's vulnerability

Atlantic Canada's vulnerability to US market dynamics and policy decisions has prompted a re-evaluation of the opportunities for domestic supply, especially in natural gas, and of greater collaboration among provinces. Irving Oil Refinery, Canada's largest, has been forced to look for new supply options as the war in the Middle East disrupts shipments from Saudi Arabia.



Atlantic Canada's energy economy has potential to draw strength from diverse sources

Atlantic Canada has the opportunity to expand the domestic use of low-carbon energy and is uniquely positioned to export due to its proximity to Europe. The region currently has biomass-based fuel production and a large-scale low-carbon hydrogen project that draws on wind power, both of which are projected to advance.



Significant hiring demand to 2030

Atlantic Canada is projected to add 3,570 energy jobs from 2026 to 2030. Offshore oil development is the primary driver of new jobs, with low-carbon hydrogen projects also creating employment opportunities. Beyond 2030, employment growth in low-carbon hydrogen is expected to help offset a gradual decline in oil and gas employment.





Indigenous participation is central to energy development

As Atlantic Canada seeks to expand both low-carbon and traditional energy industries, Indigenous partnerships are increasingly important for improving project certainty, supporting responsible development and advancing economic reconciliation and regional prosperity.



Workforce impacts beyond industry activity

Industry is producing more with fewer workers. Productivity gains have been realized by technology adoption. An increasingly complex business, regulatory and geopolitical environment is shaping evolving skill requirements.



Monitoring leading indicators of industry activity

As Canada approaches a potential generational shift in its global energy role, Careers in Energy (CIE), along with industry collaborators, continues to monitor policy, regulatory and investment conditions that influence energy production and workforce needs.

A single scenario for Atlantic Canada's energy workforce outlook

To provide a timely update on significant changes in Canada's energy landscape since 2024, CIE evaluated a single scenario to project potential workforce requirements through 2035. This streamlined approach delivers an up-to-date labour market outlook to inform near- and medium-term workforce planning. This outlook establishes a benchmark for Atlantic Canada's energy labour market and identifies key indicators to monitor that may signal significant shifts in future workforce needs.



Current Measures

Based on investment and development leading to energy production most likely to occur based on announced plans, policies and programs as of **March 2026**.



By the numbers

Direct employment



8,800

people are **directly** employed by Atlantic Canada's energy industry



6 integrated Canadian energy sectors are included in this outlook:

conventional exploration and production (E&P), energy services, pipelines, petroleum refining, low-carbon hydrogen, and biomass-based fuels



81 occupations

are included in Careers in Energy's labour market modelling system



-1,000

direct jobs are projected to be lost between 2026 and 2035



2,400

energy workers are **eligible to retire** over the forecast period



1,400

net hiring requirements projected over the forecast period, if Atlantic Canada's energy industry fills all job openings created by industry activity and retirements



2.2x

higher average total compensation in the energy industry compared to the Canadian average

Indirect employment



11,000

indirect jobs across Atlantic Canada are sustained annually to support industry's operations supply chain



5,400

jobs are created across the economy for every \$1 billion spent on developing and constructing energy infrastructure projects



The Growing Importance of Canada's Energy Industry in Global Energy Security



Canada, as a net energy exporter, is in an enviable position relative to countries that rely on imported oil and natural gas. These countries are increasingly looking to Canada as a reliable source of energy and other critical commodities.

Atlantic Canada's energy industry has a long history of being a globally traded commodity. It has adapted and evolved through the technology and equipment deployed, and the skills, experience and knowledge of a diverse workforce. The industry continues to respond to shifting political, economic and market conditions, reinforcing its role as a dynamic part of Canada's economy.

Atlantic Canada's energy industry **directly employs approximately 8,800 people**—5% of the country's total energy workforce. Beyond direct employment, an estimated 11,000 indirect jobs are sustained annually in support of the industry's operations supply chain. For every \$1 billion invested in capital projects, an additional 5,400 jobs are generated across the broader Canadian economy.¹

For the purpose of this report, Atlantic Canada's energy industry includes New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

Fundamental shift in global energy economy

Russia's invasion of Ukraine made energy security a central global concern, exposing the fragility of global energy systems and how quickly reliable, affordable energy supplies can be disrupted. Today's geopolitical environment—particularly the conflict in the Middle East—has further intensified these concerns. Some analysts describe the situation as a full-fledged energy crisis, which has fundamentally shifted supply and created significant gaps across the energy supply chain.² Repairing these disruptions will take time, as fighting has caused widespread damage to critical energy infrastructure.

Atlantic Canada's crude oil production already reaches international markets, including Europe, the Eastern US, and the Gulf Coast. It is well-positioned to supply energy to markets seeking alternatives to their traditional suppliers.



Geopolitical conflict highlights the region's vulnerability

While the geopolitical conflict has elevated energy security as a priority and reinforced Atlantic Canada's potential role as a reliable supplier of diverse energy sources, it has also exposed its vulnerabilities.

Irving Oil Refinery, Canada's largest, has been forced to seek new supply options as the war in the Middle East disrupts shipments from Saudi Arabia. This includes seeking permission from federal regulators to use a foreign-owned ship to transport crude oil from Newfoundland's offshore fields to Saint John in southern New Brunswick.

The 2026 Iran conflict has resulted in the most significant crude oil supply disruption in recent history, with far-reaching implications for global production, shipping, refining, and energy security. In this context, it is essential for our customers, for our business, and for the broader energy security of Atlantic Canada that we have the ability to use foreign crude oil tankers to access Canadian crude oil.³ – Irving Oil's application to Transport Canada (March 13, 2026)

Strained relations with the US have highlighted Atlantic Canada's vulnerability to US market dynamics and policy

decisions, prompting a re-evaluation of the opportunity for domestic supply and greater collaboration among provinces.

We can see how volatile gas prices have become with global uncertainties. While demand for energy is going up, we have a wealth of natural resources. I'm having conversations that are paving the way for responsible, safe development that can boost our economy and energy security while providing reliable, high-paying jobs for Nova Scotians.⁴

– Tim Houston, Premier, Nova Scotia

Atlantic Canada's energy economy has potential to draw strength from diverse sources

Atlantic Canada is well-positioned to expand the domestic use of low-carbon energy while leveraging its strategic proximity to European markets to become a significant energy exporter. The region currently has biomass-based fuel production and a large-scale low-carbon hydrogen project that draws on wind power, which is projected to advance.

Hydrogen has attracted particular attention because Atlantic Canada's wind resources, available land, and port infrastructure align well with growing European demand for low-carbon fuels for hard-to-decarbonize sectors such as shipping, heavy industry, and power generation.



Photo courtesy of Irving Oil



Energy is the hidden foundation of Atlantic Canada's competitiveness—essential to everything from traditional industries like forestry and agriculture, to emerging opportunities in clean fuels, and electrified manufacturing. Consider the marine economy; ocean sectors are being transformed by the same global forces shaping energy—decarbonization, digitalization, and demands for sustainable inputs. Clean fuels like hydrogen and ammonia are critical to decarbonizing marine shipping. Biofuels and marine bioproducts have export potential. Electrification of port infrastructure can reduce emissions and boost trade competitiveness.⁵ – Michelle Robichaud, President, Atlantica Centre for Energy

Indigenous participation is central to energy development

Indigenous partnerships are increasingly integral to energy development in Atlantic Canada. Across the region, Indigenous communities are moving beyond consultation toward equity ownership, project leadership and long-term participation in energy projects. These partnerships can improve project certainty, support responsible development and create lasting economic benefits and regional prosperity through employment, business opportunities, revenue sharing and community investment.

Indigenous leadership is foundational for energy development

Indigenous communities across the region are increasingly positioned as owners, partners and leaders in the energy system. Any credible approach to regional collaboration must embed Indigenous leadership as a foundational governance principle, shaping decision-making and value-sharing from the outset.⁶

Monitoring leading indicators of industry activity

With Canada on the cusp of major growth opportunities, the objective of this outlook is to establish a baseline for workforce requirements across established and emerging energy sectors.

Amid significant uncertainty in the global energy system, CIE, in collaboration with industry partners, continues to monitor factors influencing Canada's energy production and workforce requirements.

For Atlantic Canada, this means monitoring updates to the Clean Fuel Regulation that could set the stage for growth in biomass-based fuels through production incentives, targeted amendments and a long-term growth strategy.

Assessing results from research and exploration for onshore natural gas and from recent bids for offshore oil and natural gas exploration licences. Project approvals from the federal Major Projects Office and final investment decisions by individual companies to expand energy infrastructure to meet domestic and export demand could significantly affect Atlantic Canada's energy workforce needs.

Finally, data centres necessary to enable the rapid deployment of artificial intelligence (AI) have the potential to be among the largest infrastructure buildouts in Canada's digital economy. They drive massive demand for energy, and Canada has the potential to meet that need through connectivity to low-carbon hydroelectricity, nuclear energy and abundant access to affordable, cleaner-burning, natural gas-generated power.

Labour market modelling system

This report provides an overview of the energy workforce projections for Atlantic Canada from 2026 to 2035, driven by investment in the region's established and emerging energy sectors.

CIE undertook a significant expansion of its labour market modelling system in advance of producing its

2024 national and regional labour market outlooks. To accurately reflect changes in Canada’s energy system, the model was expanded beyond the established oil and gas industry

An integrated energy system

A key insight from the model expansion work was the extent of integration between the established and emerging sectors. These sectors work interdependently to provide low-carbon energy solutions, which contribute to a more robust and dynamic job market in Canada (Figure 1).

Occupational scope

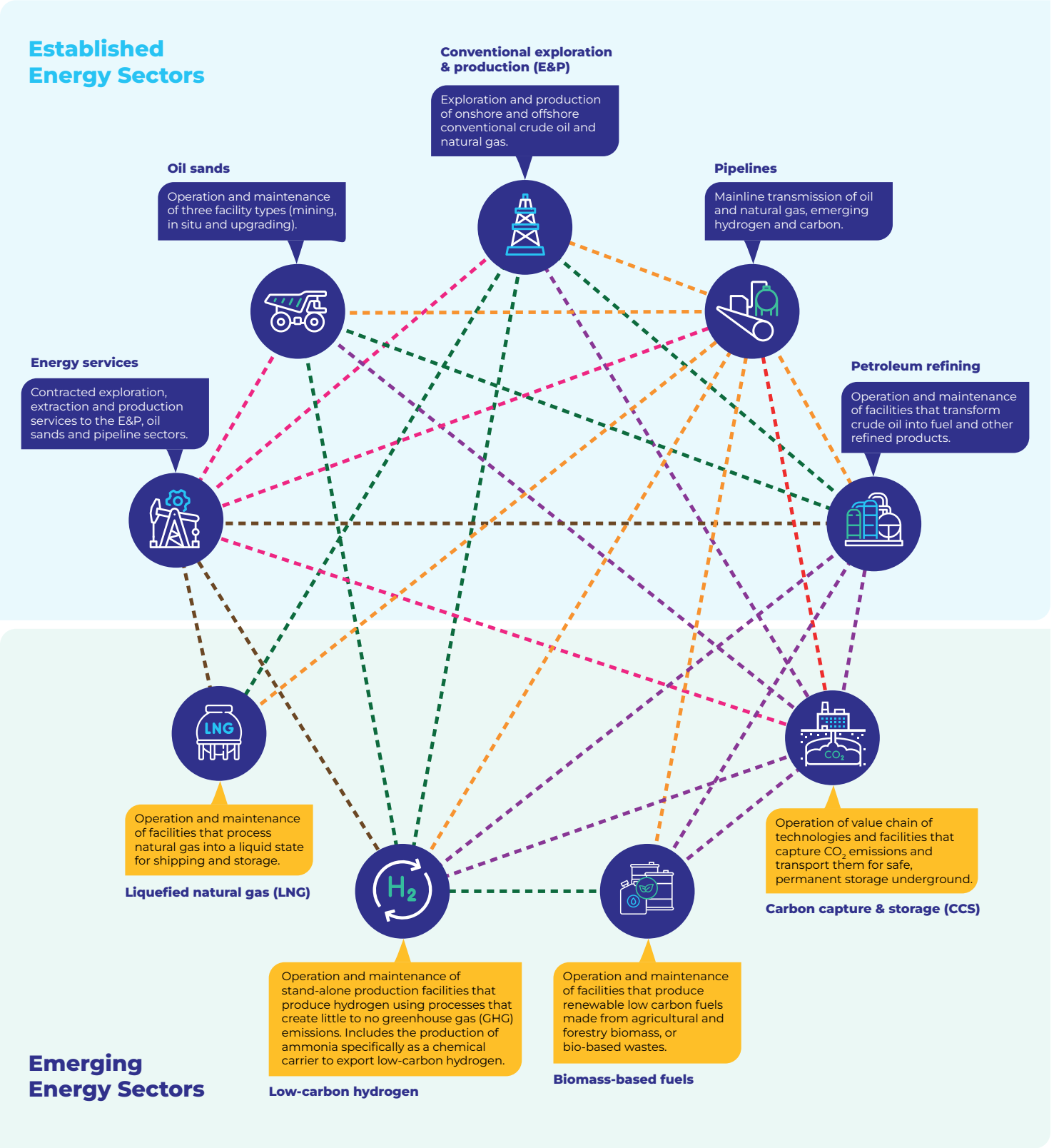
CIE’s labour market modelling system covers 81 occupations, as defined by the National Occupational Classification (NOC)⁷ system. Workforce projections focus on individuals directly employed by companies⁸ involved in the forecasted production, operations and maintenance activities of in-scope sectors.⁹

National and other regional reports available

This report complements the *National Labour Market Outlook to 2035* and regional reports; Central Canada and Western Canada.



Figure 1: Sector scope of Careers in Energy’s labour market modelling system



Legend	Transport product: required to transport product to customer	Transport CO ₂ : specific to CCS	Feedstock: produces raw materials required for energy source production	Feedstock production: key role in producing feedstock	Emissions reduction: energy source or technology that support reducing emissions	Contracted service: equipment, technology and workforce required for production process
	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■



Outlook Scenario: Current Measures



To provide a timely update on significant changes in Canada's energy landscape since 2024, CIE evaluated a single scenario to project potential workforce requirements through 2035.

This streamlined approach delivers an up-to-date labour market outlook to inform near- and medium-term workforce planning. This outlook establishes a benchmark for Atlantic Canada's energy labour market, while also identifying key indicators to monitor that could signal significant shifts in future workforce needs.

- The **Current Measures** scenario is based on investment¹⁰ and development leading to energy production most likely to occur based on

announced plans, policies and programs as of March 2026 (Figure 2).

Scenario assumptions report available

Find detailed information on CIE's scenario approach and underlying assumptions online at [CareersinEnergy.ca](https://careersinenergy.ca)



Photo courtesy of Saint John LNG



Figure 2: Atlantic Canada's production by energy sector, Current Measures, 2025 and 2035

In thousands of barrels of oil equivalent per day (MBOE/day)



Atlantic Canada scenario assumptions

Production forecasts for conventional oil and natural gas

Oil production in Newfoundland and Labrador continues to play a significant role in the province's economy. Suncor Energy's Terra Nova floating production, storage, and offloading (FPSO) vessel, ramping up production offshore Newfoundland and Labrador, contributed to a 15% increase in Atlantic Canada's oil production in 2025.¹¹

But once again, oil is the economic driver, with \$2 billion in royalties forecasted for the coming fiscal year. That's 19 per cent of the province's revenues, second only to taxation.¹² – Craig Parry, Finance Ministry, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

Looking out to 2035, new oil production comes from Cenovus' West White Rose project, with first oil expected in 2026, and the Bay du Nord project, projected to come online in 2031. While there is a net increase in production between 2026 and 2035, the new projects included in the Current Measures scenario are not forecast to offset production declines from other maturing offshore oilfields in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The vast majority of Atlantic Canada's natural gas supply is imported. Domestic production is limited to a small amount of seasonal output in New Brunswick. Atlantic Canada's dependence on imported supplies is increasingly seen as an energy security issue. Recent uncertainties caused by war and tariffs have prompted a reevaluation of the potential for onshore and offshore natural gas production.

***A lot of the focus has been on oil here, and that is still a key focus. But as the world needs natural gas, it's great that we've now turned our attention to that.*¹³**

– Charlene Johnson, CEO, Energy NL

Since the potential for natural gas production in Atlantic Canada is in the early exploration stage, it has not been included in the Current Measures scenario. It is a factor CIE will monitor closely for future labour market outlooks.

Atlantic Canada's refining production remains stable

Production at Irving Oil, Canada's largest oil refinery and located in New Brunswick, is forecast to remain stable until 2035.

Like other Canadian refining companies, Irving Oil is focused on reducing emissions by upgrading equipment, improving waste heat recovery and reuse, using renewable natural gas and deploying low-carbon hydrogen¹⁴

Biomass-based fuel competitiveness impacted by US policy

Atlantic Canada's most significant liquid biomass-based fuel production is the Braya Renewable Fuels plant based in Newfoundland and Labrador. It imports its feedstock from a variety of global sources. The region also leverages its abundant forestry sector to produce solid biofuels for local use in industrial heating and electricity generation, including the transition away from coal, as well as for export.

***NB Power is advancing plans to transition the Belledune Generating Station from coal to sustainably sourced biomass to comply with the federal clean electricity regulations, which restrict abated coal generation beyond 2030.*¹⁵** – Tracey Stephenson, manager of communications, NB Power

Currently, the liquid biomass-based fuel sector is highly integrated with the US and has experienced substantial disruption stemming from US policy changes, most notably the expiration of the US federal Blenders Tax Credit and the Inflation Reduction Act's Section 45Z Clean Fuel Production Credit. This incentive has strengthened the competitiveness of US-based biofuel production, placing Canadian producers at a disadvantage in shared markets. These policies caused the Braya Renewable Fuels plant to temporarily shut down in 2026.¹⁶

Under the Current Measures scenario, biomass-based fuel production in Atlantic Canada is projected to remain largely flat through 2035. However, Europe is a potential growth market as the European Union mandated a minimum of 2% sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) as of January 1, 2025, and an increase of 6% by 2030.¹⁷

Looking ahead, CIE will continue to monitor opportunities for market diversification within Atlantic Canada's biomass-based fuels sector and the effects of upcoming amendments to the Clean Fuel Regulations. Key areas of focus will include the regulations' ability to improve domestic competitiveness, support industry expansion and contribute to future workforce requirements.

Low-carbon hydrogen for domestic and international markets

Federal and provincial governments, along with the European Union, are working together to develop Atlantic Canada's low-carbon hydrogen industry.

***Atlantic Canada has one of the strongest areas for hydrogen development, with its clear shipping lanes to Europe and more predictable regulatory framework than the U.S. where the Trump administration has been pulling approvals for wind farms.*¹⁸**

– Charlene Johnson, CEO, Energy NL

The Current Measures scenario projects one sizable wind-to-hydrogen-to-ammonia project to advance. This type of project demonstrates Atlantic Canada's integrated low-carbon energy potential, with wind generation, grid infrastructure, and green fuels production as interconnected yet independently viable stages. In addition to supplying domestic markets, it also targets exports. This project is expected to add just over 0.20 MTPA (approximately 12 MBOE/day) of low-carbon hydrogen to Atlantic Canada's energy mix.

Workforce impacts beyond industry activity

There are a range of other forces that shape both how many energy workers are needed and what skills they require.

Technology and equipment advances are improving labour productivity

A wide variety of technologies and advanced equipment are being deployed across the energy industry. The breadth and depth of deployment depend on several

factors, including company size, asset diversity, complexity and organizational maturity.

Company consultations indicate that sentiment is also a regulating factor in the pace and integration of AI and automation. Safety is key, and a longer-term view of the potential impact on the ability to attract workers and sustain the social license to operate is also a consideration.

CIE's labour market model can be adjusted for sector-level productivity. The workforce and occupational impacts of AI, automation and robotics were specifically explored during industry consultations.

Complexity of the business environment driving skills and knowledge requirements

Geopolitics, energy transformation, the regulatory and policy environment, and the importance of stakeholder and Indigenous engagement all drive the need for skills and knowledge. While the number of occupations focused on strategy and guiding the industry into the future is relatively small, their importance is immense.



Energy industry characteristics differ across the Atlantic region

Workforce requirements for the Atlantic provinces are dependent on the characteristics of their energy industry. This outlook assumes each province will leverage and build upon its strengths.

New Brunswick produces small amounts of onshore natural gas and is home to Canada's largest petroleum refinery, the Irving Oil Refinery, in Saint John. There are five wood pellet plants in the province that produce solid biomass-based fuel, mainly used for power generation as a replacement for coal and for heating. Approximately 90% of production is exported to Europe through the Ports of Belledune and Halifax. An LNG import facility operates on the province's East Coast, but for the purposes of this outlook, it is not in scope.

Newfoundland and Labrador currently has four offshore oil production facilities—Hebron, Hibernia, Terra Nova and White Rose. A fifth, Bay du Nord, is projected to move into production during this outlook's forecast period. The province is also home to Braya Renewable Fuels, a petroleum refinery in Come-By-Chance that has been converted to produce renewable diesel and sustainable aviation fuels using corn oil, soybean oil and animal fats as feedstock. Onshore and offshore wind power are being

explored to produce low-carbon hydrogen via electrolysis, in addition to electricity generation.

Nova Scotia has not produced crude oil, crude oil equivalents, or offshore natural gas since 2018 and has no refineries. However, the provincial government has contracted with Dalhousie University to lead a research and exploration program to better understand the nature and location of the province's onshore natural gas.¹⁹ Efforts are also being made to reignite the province's offshore natural gas sector.²⁰ There is also significant potential to produce low-carbon hydrogen by leveraging the province's onshore and offshore wind power, coupled with electrolysis technologies.

Prince Edward Island has no significant oil or natural gas production and relies heavily on imported fuel and electricity from other Atlantic provinces. It also uses renewable electricity sources that are outside the scope of this outlook. The Wind Energy Institute of Canada is located on Prince Edward Island, offering an opportunity to leverage research, demonstration, and testing expertise as the region looks to expand its onshore and offshore wind electricity capacity.



Atlantic Canada Labour Market Outlook to 2035

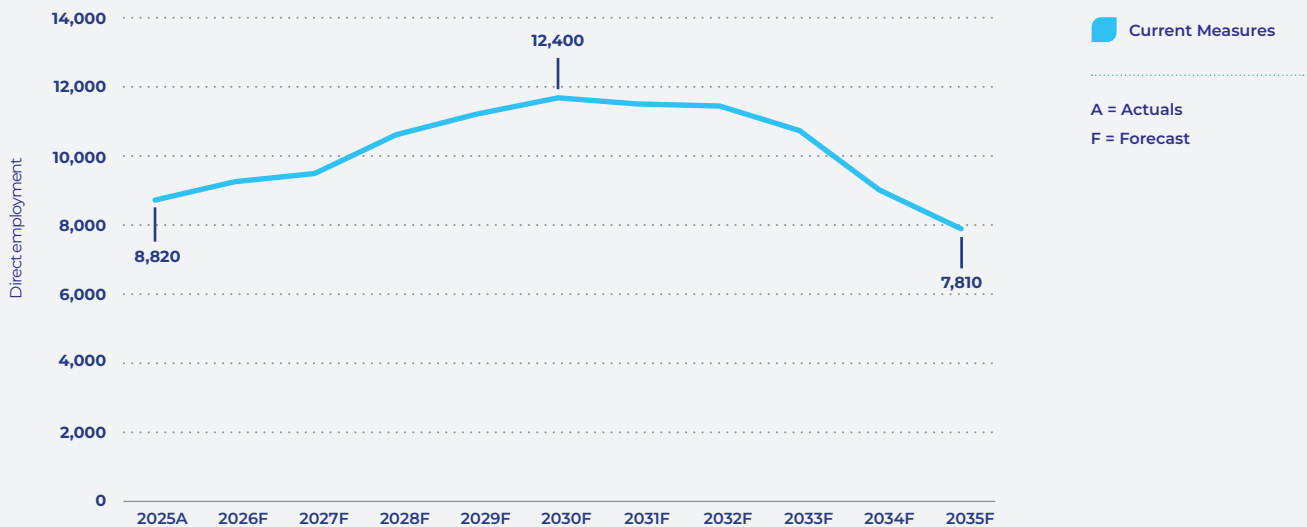


Atlantic Canada's energy industry workforce is projected to peak in 2030 based on current industry investment and activity assumptions.

In 2025, the baseline year for this outlook, in-scope sectors accounted for 8,820 direct jobs across Atlantic Canada. Under the Current Measures scenario, employment is projected to grow significantly to 2030, adding over 3,500 positions, to support the ramp-up of

new offshore oil and low-carbon hydrogen production. The employment decline after 2030 reflects a potential reduction in production from the region's established offshore oil fields. (Figure 3)

Figure 3: Atlantic Canada direct employment by year, 2025-2035



region attracts investment to extend existing energy projects or develop new ones, including offshore.

Table 1: Atlantic Canada direct employment and change in employment by sector, 2025 and 2035

	Sector	Employment in 2025A	Estimated employment in 2035F	Change in employment (% change)
	TOTAL	8,820	7,810	-1,010 (-11%)
Established energy sectors	Conventional E&P (offshore)	3,160	2,570	-590 (-19%)
	Energy services	2,850	2,420	-430 (-15%)
	Pipelines	200	170	-30 (-15%)
	Petroleum refining	1,800	1,800	minimal*
	Sub total	8,010	6,960	-1,050 (-13%)
	Emerging energy sectors	Biomass-based fuels	810	810
Low-carbon hydrogen		minimal	40	40 (all new jobs)
Sub total		810	850	40 (+5%)

* Direct employment is projected to remain flat.
Numbers may not add up due to rounding

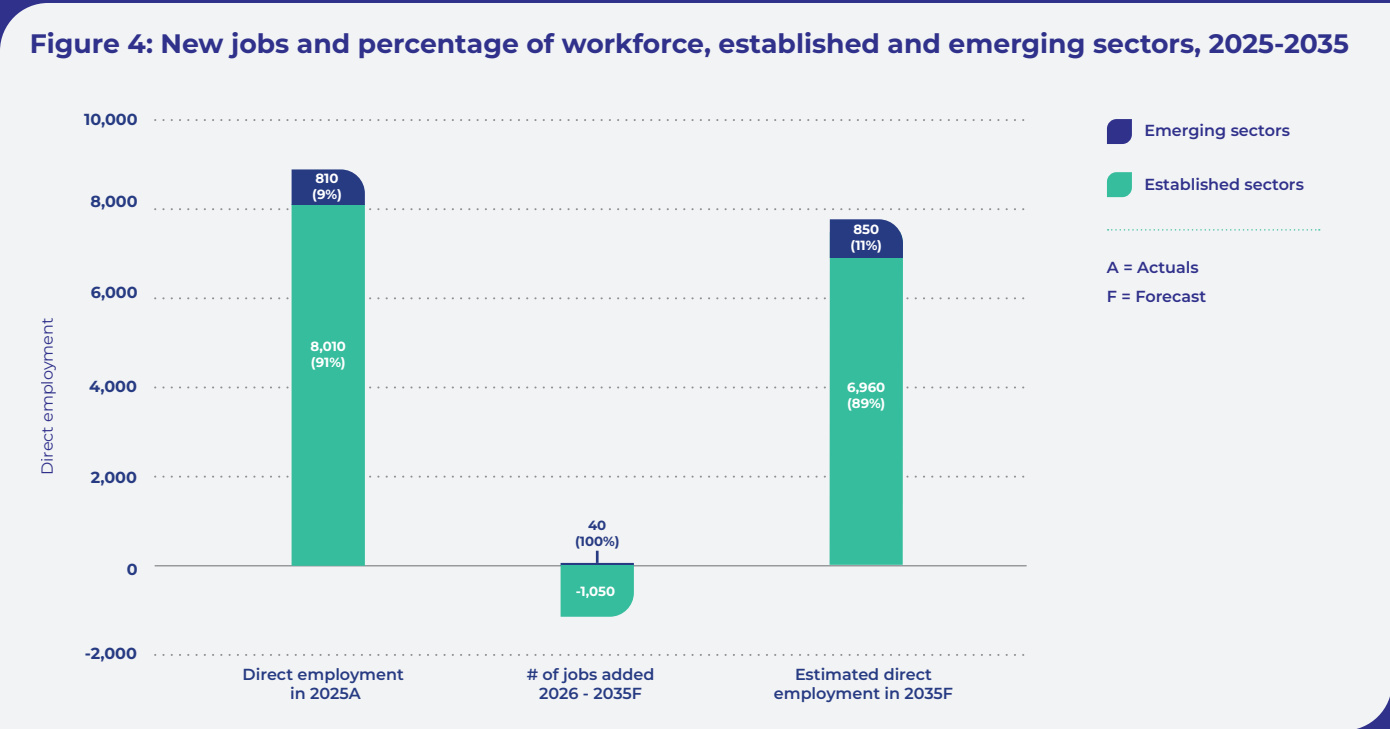


Employment in emerging sectors more stable

Over the forecast period, employment in Atlantic Canada’s biomass-based fuels sector is projected to remain stable, while employment in low-carbon hydrogen increases as the region’s first large-scale production facility comes onstream.

Based on industry investment and activity assumptions included in the Current Measures scenario, employment

in the emerging sectors accounts for all the new energy jobs and, as a percentage of the total energy workforce, is projected to increase. This is mainly a function of projected job losses in the established sectors, and the actual number of new jobs in the emerging sectors is small. (Figure 4).



Significant hiring demand to 2030

While energy worker demand in Atlantic Canada is relatively flat over the 2026 to 2035 outlook period, significant hiring demand is expected through 2030. Energy employment in the Atlantic region is projected to increase by 3,570 jobs (40%) between 2026 and 2030 (Table 2).

Industry activity in the offshore oil sector is the primary source of energy job growth. The development of low-carbon hydrogen is also expected to create employment opportunities by 2030. Beyond 2030, the low-carbon hydrogen sector is projected to continue expanding its workforce, while oil and gas production and employment are expected to decline under CIE's Current Measures scenario.

In the near term, there is confidence that the Atlantic region can meet hiring requirements.²¹ However, labour market pressures are expected to intensify as multiple large projects across the power, mining, and defence sectors move into construction at the same time and the workforce continues to age. According

to NL Trades, the average age of trades workers in Newfoundland and Labrador is 53.²² Canadian offshore energy projects compete internationally for workers.

Some of Atlantic Canada's announced industrial projects could be transformational for the region's economy and labour market. Bay du Nord and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador have signed a life-of-the-field agreement that ensures employment benefits for the province beyond the development phase.²³ In Nova Scotia, defence spending related to new submarines is estimated to bring 30 to 50 years of work to the region, spanning initial infrastructure and submarine construction through long-term maintenance.²⁴ This may require energy employers to adopt a more strategic, long-term approach to attracting and retaining talent, invest in succession planning, and place greater emphasis on talent pipeline development, including Indigenous talent.

Table 2: Top 10 occupations with greatest hiring due to industry activity, 2026–2030

Occupation (NOC)	# of new jobs added (% change)
TOTAL	3,570 (40%)
Energy drilling, servicing and related supervisors, labourers, workers and operators (82021, 83101, 84101, 85111)	540 (68%)
Transport truck drivers (73300)	170 (61%)
Managers in natural resources production (80010)	140 (80%)
Heavy equipment operators (73400)	140 (40%)
Central control, process and plant operators (9210, 9310)	120 (13%)
Procurement and purchasing agents and officers (12102)	100 (69%)
Trades helpers and labourers (7511)	60 (46%)
Heavy-duty equipment mechanics (72401)	60 (53%)
Welders and related machine operators (72106)	60 (48%)
Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics (72400)	60 (32%)



Attracting Atlantic Canadians back to the region is one potential solution

Among Newfoundland and Labrador's 14,000 trade workers are between 7,500 and 8,000 transient workers who maintain local roots and addresses but seek work on a variety of projects wherever they appear across the country.²⁵

These are Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who are taxpaying residents with local area codes who are travelling the country chasing work. They would be wanting to work at home instead of getting on an airplane.²⁶ – Corey Parsons, Deputy Director, Trades NL



Energy jobs are quality jobs

Energy employment in Canada aligns strongly with Statistics Canada's Quality of Employment framework, which assesses several dimensions, including income and benefits, employment stability, working conditions and skills and training.²⁷ Across these indicators, energy jobs consistently outperform the Canadian average. The industry is characterized by a high share of full-time, permanent employment and a strong concentration of skilled trades, technologists, engineers and professional occupations, supported by ongoing training and certification. As a result, energy workers are more likely to receive employer-provided medical and dental benefits, paid vacation leave and paid sick leave than workers in part-time or temporary jobs.

While some energy work can involve non-standard schedules or remote work arrangements, these are offset by significantly higher compensation and sustained demand for specialized skills. In 2024, the average total compensation in Canada's established energy sectors²⁸ reached \$171,100—more than double (2.2×) the Canadian average of \$78,100²⁹—reinforcing energy's role as a source of high-quality, well-compensated employment.

Across Atlantic Canada, average total compensation levels remain elevated, led by Newfoundland and Labrador at \$172,600, with New Brunswick (\$131,300) and Nova Scotia (\$115,100) also reflecting the strong earnings potential of specialized energy-related work.



Net Hiring Requirements



Based on annual age-related attrition rates, approximately **2,400 energy workers are eligible to retire** by 2035, helping offset potential job losses in the industry.

Age-related attrition drives hiring in Atlantic Canada

Job vacancies due to age-related attrition significantly outpace those generated by industry activity in the region and are projected to be the key driver of hiring across Atlantic Canada's energy industry.

If Atlantic Canada's energy industry replaces all job openings created by age-related attrition, **net hiring requirements** will total approximately **1,400 jobs** over the forecast period. (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Atlantic Canada net hiring requirements forecast, 2026-2035



Near-term risk of an aging workforce in some sectors and occupational groups

The number of job vacancies that could be created within the pipelines, petroleum refining and biomass-based

fuels sector by energy workers eligible for retirement is substantial (Table 3).

Table 3: Atlantic Canada's net hiring requirements (NHR) by sector, 2026-2035				
	Sector	Industry activity	Age-related attrition	NHR
	TOTAL	-1,010	2,380	1,370
Established energy sectors	Conventional E&P (offshore)	-590	910	320
	Energy services	-430	700	270
	Pipelines	-30	60	30
	Petroleum refining	minimal*	500	500
	Sub total	-1,050	2,170	1,120
Emerging energy sectors	Biomass-based fuels	minimal*	200	200
	Low-carbon hydrogen	40	10	50
	Sub total	40	210	250

Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

*Direct employment is projected to remain flat.



Table 4 lists the impact of age-related attrition and potential net hiring requirements on Atlantic Canada’s energy occupational groups. Several companies report that energy workers are staying in the industry beyond retirement eligibility. Some companies express greater concern about the loss of mid-career talent, with a portion of individuals leaving not only their roles but, in some cases, the industry.

Organizations report taking a strategic approach to workforce planning for vacancies created by retirements, carefully evaluating whether the role should be refilled, redesigned to better align with evolving operational needs, or eliminated.

Occupational groups projected to experience the greatest net hiring requirements include:

- > **Facility operations occupations** are responsible for operating complex facilities, using state-of-the-art processing technologies and transportation

- infrastructure across established and emerging energy sectors. Specific occupations include:
- o Manufacturing and utilities managers
 - o Facility operation and maintenance managers
 - o Petroleum, gas and chemical processing and utilities supervisors
 - o Central control, process and plant operators
 - o Utilities equipment operators and controllers
 - o Processing, manufacturing and utilities labourers
- > **Trades occupations** ensure all energy-producing offshore and onshore facilities and pipelines operate efficiently and safely. Specific occupations include:
- o Plumbers, pipefitters and gas fitters
 - o Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics
 - o Industrial electricians
 - o Industrial instrumentation technicians and mechanics

Table 4: Atlantic Canada’s net hiring requirements (NHR) by occupational group, 2026-2035

Sector	Industry activity	Age-related attrition	NHR
TOTAL*	-1,010	2,380	1,370
Facility operations	-100	440	340
Trades	-130	290	160
Technical sales, procurement, supply chain and logistics	-70	210	140
Energy drilling, servicing and field operations	-160	290	130
Transportation and heavy equipment operators	-80	170	90
Engineers	-90	180	90
Technicians and technologists	-40	100	60
Business and operations support	-60	120	60
Information technology	-30	70	40
Geoscientists	-20	40	20

Numbers may not add up due to rounding.
 * Includes “other occupations” hired directly by in-scope energy sectors.

➤ **Technical sales and procurement occupations** are needed to diversify customers for Atlantic Canada's energy production and develop new supply chains to produce biomass-based fuels and low-carbon hydrogen. Specific occupations include:

- o Technical sales
- o Materials handlers
- o Supply chain logistics, tracking and scheduling coordination occupations

➤ **Energy drilling, servicing and field operations** are required to increase and sustain offshore oil production as projected for the forecast period. Specific occupations include:

- o Managers in natural resources production
- o Contractors and supervisors, oil and gas drilling and services

- o Oil and gas well drillers, servicers, testers and related workers
- o Oil and gas well drilling and related workers and services operators
- o Oil and gas drilling, servicing and related labourers

➤ **Transport truck drivers** operate large commercial vehicles to safely and efficiently move goods and materials across the Atlantic region, supporting energy production.

➤ **Engineers** continue to play a vital role in designing and delivering sustainable energy production, as well as in implementing emissions-reduction initiatives. Specific occupations include:

- o Engineering managers
- o Chemical engineers
- o Mechanical engineers

CIE's consultation with industry indicates that energy companies are implementing technology, equipment and process improvements to help mitigate risks associated with an aging workforce, in addition to realizing operational efficiency and driving down costs. It is also important to consider situations where hiring talent is the only viable response to age-related attrition:

- **When technology, including AI and automation, cannot be scaled fast or safely enough.** Deploying technology and shifting equipment fleets are expensive and time-consuming. In these cases, scaling usage is likely to be slow and phased, rather than a widescale ramp-up.
- **When complexity outpaces standardization.** Technology works best in repeatable, controlled environments. When operations are less predictable, such as in emerging energy sectors, more specialized oversight is likely required.
- **When human judgment remains critical.** Certain roles involve troubleshooting, safety-critical decision-making and establishing and maintaining relationships with partners, including Indigenous partners. In these cases, technology can augment the work but not replace the context and accountability needed for success.
- **When replacing workers with technology does not garner social acceptance.**

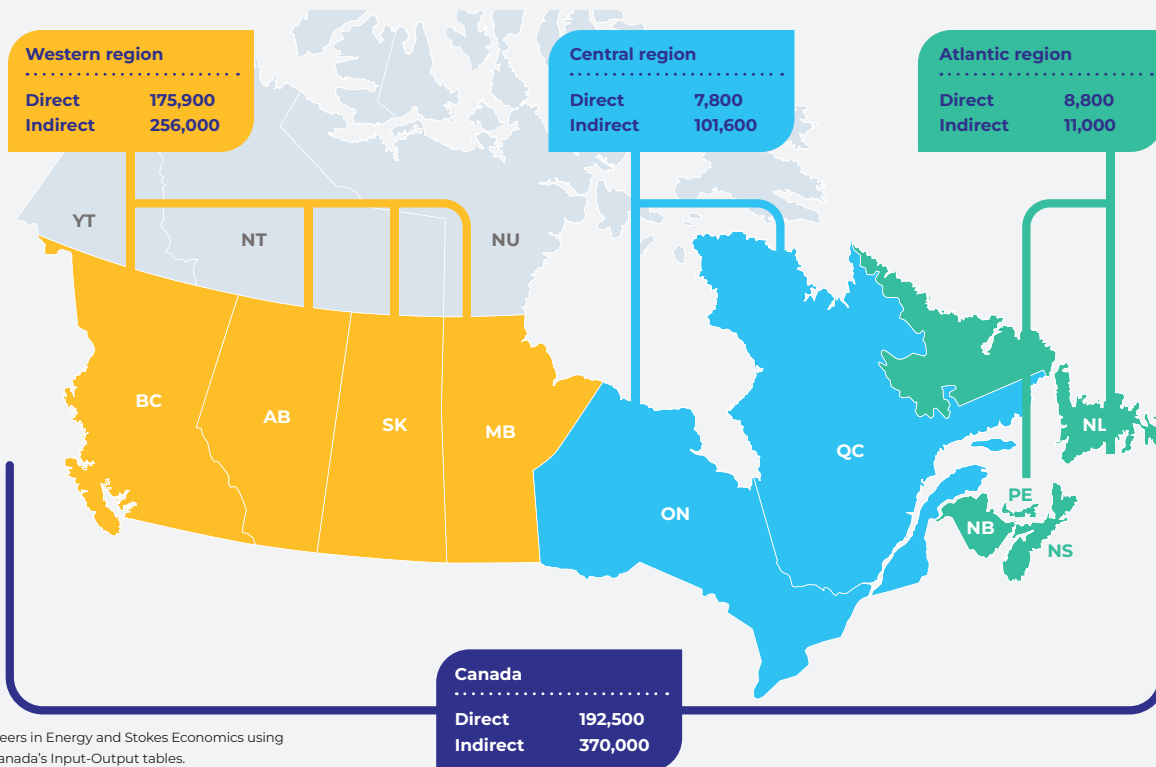


Indirect Employment



In addition to the jobs directly hired for production, operations and maintenance of CIE's in-scope energy sectors, **over 11,000 jobs are generated across the Atlantic Canadian economy** in sectors that provide goods and services to the industry's operations supply chain and capital projects.

Figure 6: Direct employment and estimate of indirect jobs supported by established energy sector operational spending in 2025



These opportunities, referred to as the energy industry's indirect jobs, are significant in numbers. In 2025, an estimated **11,000 indirect jobs** were generated in Atlantic Canada from operational spending by the established energy sectors. These jobs are in sectors that provide a broad range of goods and services required to sustain ongoing operations in conventional E&P, oil sands, energy services, pipelines and refining. As the energy industry expands as projected in this outlook, the number of indirect jobs required to sustain operations is also expected to increase.

This estimate does not include induced jobs, which are generated by workers' spending of income earned through direct and indirect jobs. For example, when energy workers spend their earnings on groceries, housing, restaurants, transportation, or entertainment, that spending supports additional jobs across those sectors.

Energy-related construction drives jobs

An additional **5,400 engineering, manufacturing, construction and support services jobs** are created for every **\$1 billion invested in developing and constructing energy infrastructure projects**.³⁰ These jobs are generated over the multi-year time frame required to plan, construct and commission new energy infrastructure. Sectors that see the greatest employment benefit from the energy industry's capital project spending include:

- > Oil and gas engineering construction
- > Legal, accounting and architectural, engineering and related services
- > Wholesale trade
- > Machinery and fabricated metal manufacturing

Life-of-field benefits agreement

Bay du Nord is the first life-of-field benefits agreement for an oil and gas project, ensuring a focus on benefits throughout the project's life, not just during development. This will result in over 31 million person-hours of work over 25 years. A key part of the agreement is \$200 million in fabrication funds, which will facilitate long-term fabrication trades jobs and expand the province's capacity for offshore and maritime fabrication and maintenance. The project commits to fabricate a minimum of 95% of the subsea components in Newfoundland and Labrador. Other significant benefits include a \$100 million contribution to research and development and a minimum of 1.9 million person-hours of professional work in project management, procurement management and engineering.³¹



Photo courtesy of Irving Oil



Labour Supply and Demand Analysis



Labour and skills shortages are projected for Canada's energy industry as early as 2027.

Canada's immigration policy has shifted noticeably over the past few years, from rapid expansion after the COVID-19 pandemic to a more controlled approach. Starting in 2025, targets were scaled back in response to rising inflation, higher housing costs and high unemployment, particularly among youth, and are expected to be managed more tightly in the medium term. Given that immigration was a key source of growth in the national labour market, the extent of this policy shift is likely to become clearer in the coming years.³²

From the Canadian energy industry's perspective, factors that improved labour productivity in 2025, specifically consolidation due to M&As, meant there was a qualified talent pool readily available in the labour market.

A full labour supply and demand analysis can be found in the *National Labour Market Outlook to 2035* online at [CareersinEnergy.ca](https://careersinenergy.ca)



Conclusion and Call to Action



Photo courtesy of Enbridge

Looking ahead to 2035, Atlantic Canada will remain a significant producer of refined petroleum products and expand its low-carbon fuels production to include low-carbon hydrogen. It is uniquely positioned to export energy to European markets—enhancing regional economic growth while contributing to a more secure global energy supply.

This underscores the need to attract and retain talent to fill job vacancies resulting from age-related attrition in the energy sector and the sectors that support it.

Research consistently shows that talent migrates toward organizations and sectors that offer **purpose, mobility, learning, quality work and inclusion**. To attract and retain talent, Canada's energy industry needs to continue focusing on:

- > **A strong, credible sense of purpose:** Purpose is now a primary driver of attraction and retention, particularly among younger workers and highly skilled professionals. Energy employers must continue to link roles, not just corporate messaging, to emissions reduction, affordability and energy security outcomes in a way that employees can see and feel in their day-to-day work.
- > **Clear career mobility:** Workers are more likely to stay when they see multiple future pathways, even if they don't remain in one role or sub-sector. The industry must continue investing in cross-sector

mobility, role transparency and clarity of progression to keep workers engaged in the energy industry, rather than losing them to adjacent industries.

- > **Ongoing upskilling aligned with digital and systems transformation:** Retention risk increases when workers feel their skills are becoming obsolete. Attraction alone is insufficient; energy employers must continue prioritizing supported upskilling and reskilling pathways, especially for mid-career workers.
- > **Job quality, working conditions and flexibility:** Job quality—including stability, safety and community connection—is a key determinant of workforce retention. The energy industry must continue to improve work design, not just wages, particularly in field-based, remote, and project-driven roles.
- > **Diversity, equity, inclusion and Indigenous participation:** Addressing barriers to equitable inclusion of diverse talent pools, including Indigenous talent, is a structural solution to workforce shortages. Inclusive hiring, regional training partnerships and Indigenous-led workforce development improve both attraction and long-term retention.

This *Regional Labour Market Outlook to 2035* is one of a number of tools and resources developed by CIE to build a roadmap for a robust energy industry in the decades to come.



Careers in Energy: Providing Value



Value across the energy workforce ecosystem

Navigating the complexity of Canada's evolving energy industry requires reliable data, clear insights and accessible career guidance. CIE brings clarity by connecting people and organizations to trusted labour market intelligence, practical tools and resources that support informed workforce planning and confident career decisions, across the energy ecosystem.



Key tools and supports:

- > National and regional labour market outlooks, projecting hiring demand, replacement needs, retirements and demographic trends
- > Complimentary employer support services, providing valuable information specific to an organization's unique needs
- > Career profiles, detailing role requirements, skills, wages and work environments
- > Interactive career pathways, helping individuals understand the knowledge, education, skills and attributes required at each stage of a career
- > Transferable skills insights, showing how experience can apply across established and evolving energy sectors or roles
- > Recruitment and retention toolkits, offering information and guidance on workforce recruitment, retention and best practices
- > Interactive data dashboards, allowing users to customize data insights on current employment trends, job posting trends, workforce demographics and labour market outlooks
- > Diversity, equity and inclusion webinars and resources, supported by a panel of energy leaders and experts on important topics that impact the industry and its workers
- > Workforce attraction and industry promotion, playing a sector-wide attraction role promoting energy careers to youth and students, career switchers and underrepresented groups at various events across the country
- > Shareable content, including energy worker stories, labour market visuals and career explainers
- > Virtual reality experiences, enabling users to explore the diverse work environments and worksites across various energy sectors





Value to employers and industry

Attracting, retaining and planning for talent

CIE provides employers and industry with evidence based workforce insights and tools to attract, retain, and plan for talent in a changing energy landscape.

- Support workforce planning and decision making
- Improve recruitment and retention practices
- Provide insight into real-time labour demand
- Strengthen talent pipeline development
- Support diversity, equity and inclusion efforts
- Enhance workforce attraction efforts
- Increase engagement and awareness of energy careers
- Leverage innovative technology for attraction and education
- Align education and training with industry needs

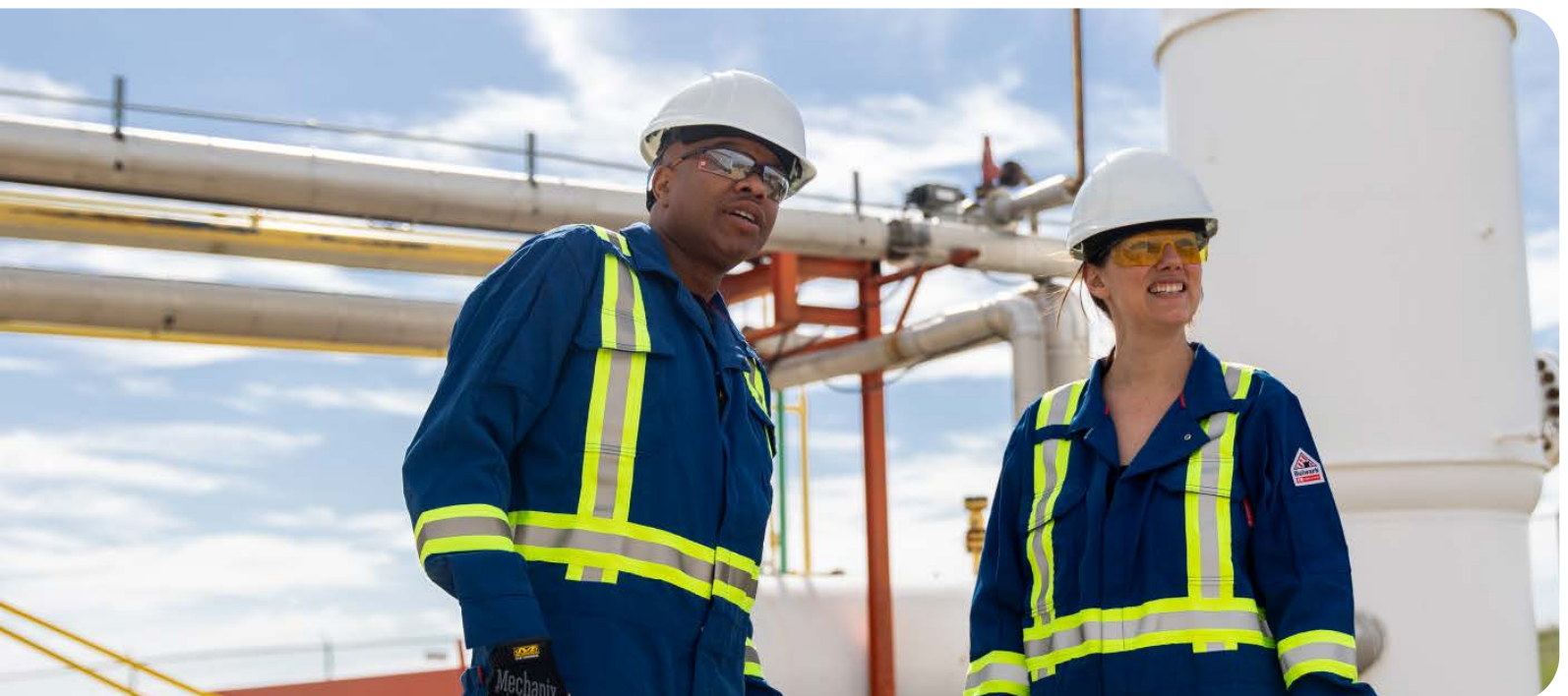


Value to job seekers and career practitioners

Career clarity, confidence and mobility

CIE supports career clarity, confidence, and mobility by translating labour market data into practical guidance for job seekers and career practitioners.

- Clarify career options in established and emerging energy sectors
- Support informed career decisions
- Make labour market data accessible to individuals
- Enable career planning and progression
- Highlight transferable skills
- Support employment advising and coaching
- Improve job readiness and career confidence
- Increase awareness of opportunities beyond job postings
- Engage and inspire through storytelling
- Support inclusive career navigation
- Equip career practitioners with trusted resources





Value to educational and training institutions

Aligning education supply with industry demand

CIE supports educators and training institutions with labour market insights that align programs with industry demand and improve learner employability.

- > Inform program and curriculum design
- > Align training with industry demand
- > Support future focused planning
- > Improve student and learner outcomes
- > Enable stackable and modular learning
- > Support career guidance and advising within institutions
- > Enhance learner engagement and career awareness
- > Incorporate real-world industry context



Value to governments and policymakers

Evidence-based workforce and economic policy

CIE supports governments and policymakers with credible, industry validated workforce intelligence to inform evidence based policy, planning and funding decisions.

- > Enable evidence-based workforce policy
- > Assess workforce impacts of policy and investment choices
- > Support funding and program decisions
- > Identify regional and sector-specific workforce pressures
- > Align workforce development with economic strategy
- > Improve policy relevance and effectiveness
- > Support collaboration across systems
- > Increase transparency and confidence in analysis



Value to the energy system as a whole

Integration, credibility and long-term resilience

CIE's unique contribution is its system-level perspective.

- > **Connecting** employers, workers, educators and governments using a shared evidence base
- > **Reframing** Canada's energy workforce as integrated and adaptable, not fragmented
- > **Enhancing** public understanding of energy careers and their societal value
- > **Strengthening** Canada's competitiveness by improving workforce alignment



**To access all the tools and resources
CIE has to offer, visit [CareersinEnergy.ca](https://careersinenergy.ca).**



Endnotes

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