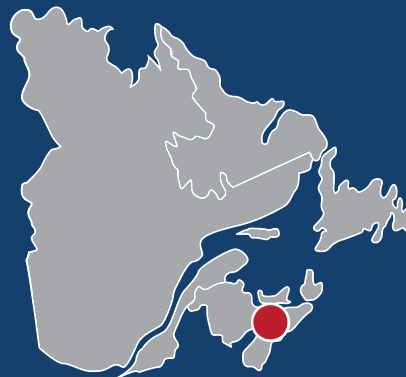


# Securing Canada's FISH + SEAFOOD Work Force

## REGIONAL SPOTLIGHT

A detailed look at the labour supply and demand in

### Pictou Region Nova Scotia



**FPSC**

FOOD PROCESSING SKILLS CANADA    COMPÉTENCES TRANSFORMATION ALIMENTAIRE CANADA



SECURING CANADA'S  
FISH + SEAFOOD  
WORKFORCE

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The opinions and interpretations in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada.

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# SUMMARY

## REGIONAL OVERVIEW

The Pictou Region is located in Nova Scotia, along the Northumberland Shore. A key fishing and seafood processing town located in the region is the Town of Pictou.

## LABOUR MARKET OVERVIEW

The region's population is expected to remain stable at 42,000 over the forecast period, with average annual growth of just 0.1%. Minimal population growth over the next decade can be attributed to low in-migration of 1,700 individuals and natural population decline (more deaths than births). Aging demographics are expected to cause the region's unemployment rate to fall from 9.5% in 2017 to just over 6.0% by 2030, reducing labour availability for all employers in the region. Currently, median hourly wages for shellfish/fish labourers and plant workers are slightly below the provincial average, and higher than a number of other lower-skill level occupations (C and D level) available in the region.

Seafood processing employment in the Pictou, Nova Scotia region is expected to decline slightly from 330 workers in the near-term before increasing to 350 workers by 2030. Local processors will likely need to hire a total of 170 additional workers between 2017 and 2030, predominantly due to the need to replace workforce retirements and deaths. This figure does not include turnovers which can add significantly to total annual recruitment demands.

Regional labour market analysis suggests that after accounting for labour requirements in other sectors, regional labour supply is projected to meet both average and peak seafood processing employment demands over the next five years. However, the region's declining labour force and rising demands from competing sectors will constrain the available workforce, resulting in labour supply falling below peak demand by 2023 and average demand by 2030. Supply constraints are expected to be more acute among lower-skill workers, as regional labour supply is not projected to meet even average seafood processing employment demand in any year during the forecast period.



POPULATION  
**41,550**



LABOUR FORCE  
**21,914**



# LABOUR MARKET TIGHTNESS

The labour market tightness, a measure calculated by estimating labour requirements in other sectors in Pictou Region and subtracting those requirements from the total labour force estimates, reveals substantial challenges facing this industry.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	AVERAGE 2021 TO 2025	AVERAGE 2026 TO 2030
TOTAL	1	1	1	1	2	3
LOWER SKILL	3	3	3	3	3	3

1 = Regional labour force meets seafood processing employment demand at annual average and peak employment levels

2 = Regional labour force meets seafood processing employment demand at annual average levels only

3 = Regional labour force does not meet seafood processing employment at annual average or peak levels

# 2

## SEAFOOD PROCESSING ESTABLISHMENTS



# 2<sup>1</sup>

## SEAFOOD PROCESSING EMPLOYMENT



# 332<sup>2</sup>

1 The number of establishments is based on 2016 data from Statistics Canada's Business Register.

2 Seafood processing employment is estimated based on 2016 Census data for the Southern (NS) economic region.

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report is one in a series of 12 regional reports developed to provide detailed labour market information (LMI) for the fish and seafood processing industry in Atlantic Canada. The regionally focused LMI is one component of a broader study undertaken by Food Processing Skills Canada (FPSC) in collaboration with the Employment and Social Development Canada, and various provincial and industry partners entitled *Securing Canada's Fish and Seafood Workforce: Real Challenges, Practical Solutions and Fresh Perspectives*.

The aim of the overall study is to identify the scope of human resource (HR) challenges for the Atlantic fish and seafood processing sector, and compile HR best practices that would help employers meet their labour force current and future needs. One important aspect of understanding HR challenges in the sector, some of which are region specific, was to gather detailed information and profiles of areas that rely heavily on fish and seafood processing for their local economies. Twelve regions across the four Atlantic provinces were selected for specific focus based on the amount of processing activity, and proportion of labour force working in the industry. Pictou Region in Nova Scotia was selected as one of these regions for detailed focus.

The initial sections of this report provide overviews of the Pictou Region, fish and seafood processing overall in the province of Nova Scotia, and specifically in the Pictou region. This is followed by sections that provide an overview of the region's labour force, and the specific findings for the labour supply and demand, current and future.

## THE STUDY METHODS USED TO DEVELOP THESE DETAILED REGIONAL PROFILES INCLUDED:

- ✓ Two robust econometric models that provide detailed quantifiable projections for both labour demand and supply at the regional level. This is the first time that these numbers have been produced at the regional, provincial and Atlantic levels for the fish and seafood processing industry;
- ✓ A broad survey of fish and seafood processing facilities (n=100) across the Atlantic provinces covering approximately 69% of the industry workforce; and
- ✓ Qualitative information focused on themes and issues collected through site visits and interviews with plant managers, employees, unions and community stakeholders.

**REAL  
CHALLENGES,  
PRACTICAL  
SOLUTIONS  
AND FRESH  
PERSPECTIVES**

## 2.0 OVERVIEW OF THE PICTOU REGION

### 2.1 GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

The Pictou Region is located in Nova Scotia, along the Northumberland Shore. A key fishing and seafood processing town located in the region is the Town of Pictou.



## 2.2 POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

The population of Pictou Region is ageing, and not expected to grow substantially over the next decade. Compared to the province overall, the population has proportionally lower levels of immigrants, visible minorities, non-Canadian citizens, and people identifying as Aboriginal (according to Census definitions).

The overall population for the region in 2017 was 41,550. According to Census 2016 profiles, the proportions of immigrants (3.2%), visible minorities (1.8%), non-Canadian citizens (1.3%), and those who identify as Aboriginal (2.6%) are lower than those overall for Nova Scotia (see Table1).

TABLE 1: PICTOU REGION POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

CHARACTERISTIC	PICTOU REGION	NOVA SCOTIA
FEMALE	20,355	476,715
SHARE OF POPULATION	50.6%	51.6%
IMMIGRANTS	1,285	55,680
SHARE OF POPULATION	3.2%	6.1%
NOT CANADIAN CITIZENS	520	29,925
SHARE OF POPULATION	1.3%	3.3%
VISIBLE MINORITIES	720	58,650
SHARE OF POPULATION	1.8%	6.5%
ABORIGINAL IDENTITY	1,025	51,490
SHARE OF POPULATION	2.6%	5.7%

Source: Census 2016

According to projections, the population levels are expected to remain relatively stable over the upcoming 13 years (41,550 in 2017 and then 41,871 by 2030). Although the total population will remain stable, it will be an ageing population with the proportion of the age cohort 65 years or older rising from 22.6% in 2017 to approximately 30.6% by 2030 (see Figure 1). The population median age of 48.4 years in Pictou County is higher than the median age in Nova Scotia of 45.5 years and greater than the national median age of 41.2 (Census, 2016). While population growth will be negatively impacted by the continued ageing of the population and increased number of deaths, this will be countered to some extent by a predicted continuation of a pattern of net in-migration of 1,700 individuals by 2030 will contribute to the population remaining somewhat stable (see Figure 2).



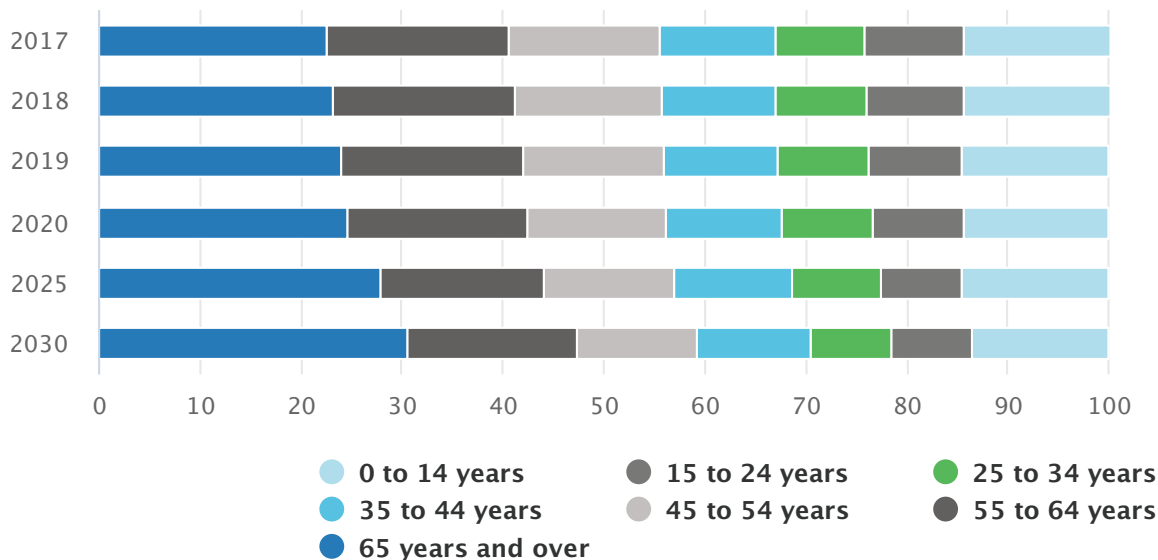


FIGURE 1: POPULATION BY AGE GROUP (%) (2017 TO 2030)

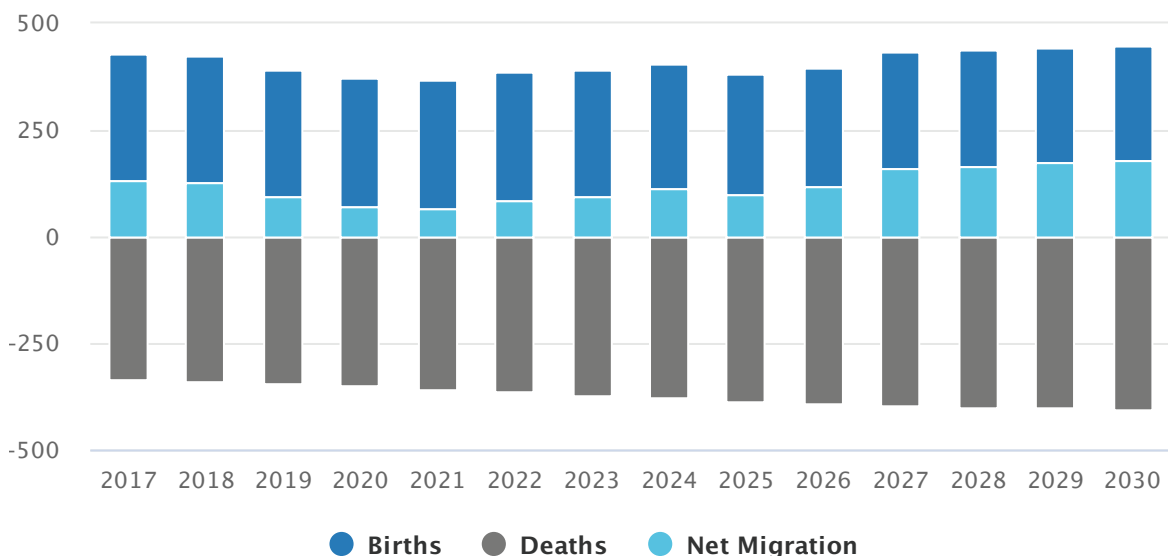
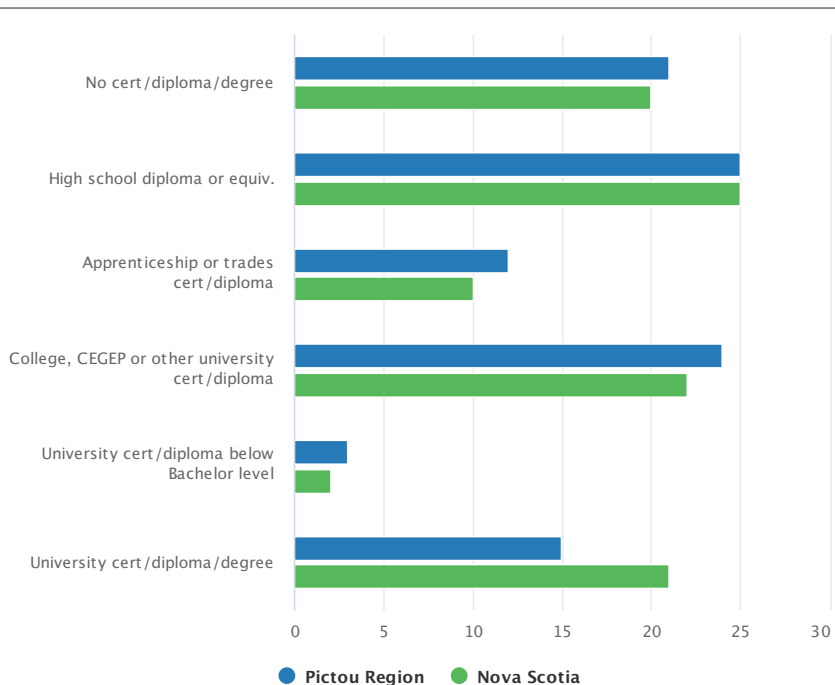


FIGURE 2: COMPONENTS OF POPULATION CHANGE (2017 TO 2030)

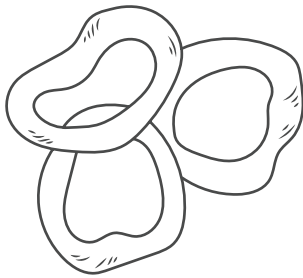


### FIGURE 3: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT - PICTOU REGION AND NOVA SCOTIA

The overall education level of the region's residents is slightly lower when compared with Nova Scotia overall (see Figure 3). Although a very similar proportion in the region (21%) do not have a high school diploma compared to the province (20% of working age population), 15% have a university certificate/diploma/degree (vs. 21% for the province). In addition, those with an apprenticeship or trades certificate/diploma (12% vs. 10% for the province) or other college diploma (24% vs. 22% for the province) are slightly higher than the province overall.



# 3.0 OUTLOOK OF NOVA SCOTIA FISH AND SEAFOOD PROCESSING



## 3.2 NOVA SCOTIA SEAFOOD PRODUCT OUTLOOKS

The growth of real gross output for prepared fish products is expected to accelerate over the forecast period from 1.4% on average over 2018-21, to 2.1% over 2022-26 and 2.2% over the 2027-30 (see Table 2). There are many reasons for the improvement in overall real output. There is expected to be slight gains in overall consumption from 0.1% in 2018-21, to 0.3% in 2022-26 to 0.5% over 2027-30 as consumer demand for prepared fish products improves. International exports are expected to rise slowly over the forecast period as trading partner market growth is modest and as trade agreements encourage market penetration in the European Union and in the members of the TPP trade pact. Interprovincial exports are expected to improve modestly as consumer demand in other provinces gain from the trend toward more processed fish consumption. Interindustry demand also improves as the demand for prepared fish inputs rises, primarily as a result of increased provincial food production.



## 3.1 OVERALL PROVINCIAL ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

The Nova Scotia economy expanded by 1.2% in 2017, led by accelerating growth in private services and continued strength in manufacturing. Over the whole 2017-21 period, real GDP growth is forecast to average 1.1%. Manufacturing is forecast to average over 4% growth in the medium term, with growth over 8% in 2021, as shipbuilding for the Department of National Defense is scheduled to begin. Private services are expected to be an important driving force in the provincial economy. GDP growth is expected to average 1.1% during the 2021-26 period then slow to 1.0% on average over the 2027-30 period, as stagnant population and labour force limit potential growth.

TABLE 2: NS PREPARED SEAFOOD END MARKET GROWTH (ANNUAL AVERAGE % CHANGE)

END MARKET	2013-2017	2018-2021	2022-2026	2027-2030
Consumption	-0.6	0.1	0.3	0.5
International Exports	36.5	1.1	2.0	2.1
Interprovincial Exports	-0.3	0.3	0.6	0.8
Interindustry Demand	0.5	2.6	1.6	1.6
Imports	-0.6	0.1	0.3	0.5
Total End Market Demand	36.3	1.4	2.1	2.2

### 3.3 SEAFOOD PROCESSING EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK FOR NOVA SCOTIA

Average annual seafood processing employment in Nova Scotia is expected rise steadily from 6,400 in 2017 to 6,700 by 2030. Production labour (processing and plant workers) constitute nearly 5-in-10 (46%) jobs. Labour productivity (GDP per hour worked) is forecast to average 1.1% over the projection period. Average hours worked per employee is forecast to rise by 0.4% on average over the projection period, which leads to the total number of jobs falling by 0.1% over 2018-21, and then rising by 0.7% over 2022-26 and 0.7% over 2027-30.

Replacement demands (deaths and retirements) are expected to total 3000 between 2017 and 2030. Taking account of both replacement and expansion demands, the industry will likely need to need to hire just over 3,400 new workers, or (53%) of the current workforce over the next 13 years. These hiring requirements are net numbers of new workers and do not include annual hiring requirements due to turnover.



# 4.0 PICTOU REGION FISH AND SEAFOOD PROCESSORS

## 4.1 EMPLOYERS

The region hosts two seafood processors.

Overall, there are two fish and seafood processing establishments in the Pictou Region<sup>3</sup>.

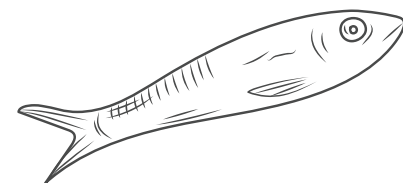
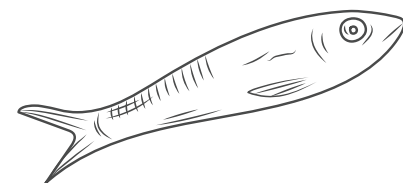
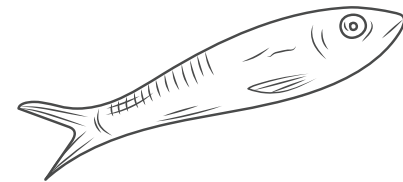
**THE CURRENT INDUSTRY WORKFORCE IS APPROXIMATELY 440 WORKERS AT PEAK SEASON WITH APPROXIMATELY ONE-HALF BEING LABOURERS AND PLANT WORKERS.**



## 4.2 WORKERS

### 4.2.1 WORKFORCE SIZE & OCCUPATIONS

The estimated total number of individuals employed by the sector in the Pictou Region in 2017 was 332 on average and rising to 437 at peak season<sup>4</sup> (see Table 3). Over one-half of all employed at the peak season (53%) were labourers (NOC 9618) or plant workers (NOC 9463).



<sup>3</sup> Number of establishments is based on the 2016 data from Statistic Canada's Business Registrar.

<sup>4</sup> Average employment refers to average monthly employment over the calendar year, while peak employment is the average number employed during the month with the highest employment during the year.



TABLE 3: PROFILE OF WORKERS BY OCCUPATIONS FOR PICTOU REGION - 2017 (AVERAGE & PEAK)

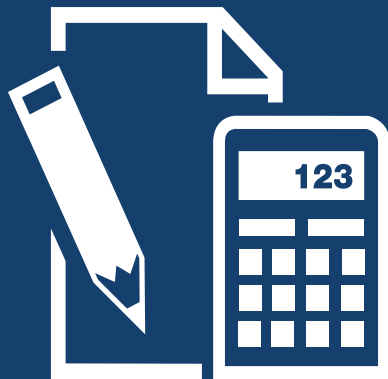
	<b>AVG 2017 (#)</b>	<b>AVG 2017 (%)</b>	<b>PEAK 2017 (#)</b>	<b>PEAK 2017 (%)</b>	<b>EXTRA NEEDED FOR PEAK</b>
<b>Total Employment</b>	332	100%	437	100%	105
<b>FOUNDATIONAL (NOC 9618)</b>					
Shellfish Processing Labourer	56	17%	83	19%	27
Fish Processing Labourer	40	12%	60	14%	20
<b>INTERMEDIATE (NOC 9463)</b>					
Shellfish Plant Worker	34	10%	52	12%	18
Fish Plant Worker	25	8%	37	8%	12
<b>SUPERVISORY (NOC 9213)</b>					
Supervisors	11	3%	11	3%	0
<b>MANAGEMENT (NOC 0911; 0016)</b>					
Management	13	4%	13	3%	0
<b>OTHER CATEGORIES</b>					
Maintenance	10	3%	12	3%	2
Skilled Trades	24	7%	29	7%	5
Quality Control Technician	6	2%	6	1%	0
Office Staff	24	7%	24	5%	0
Other Occupations	87	26%	108	25%	21

\* this includes occupations in areas such as transport, logistics, material handlers that do not fall within the main NOC codes identified above.



**440**

**AVERAGE NUMBER OF WORKERS EMPLOYED IN  
THE SEAFOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY IN 2017**



## 4.2.2 WAGES

Median hourly wages for shellfish/fish labourers and plant workers are below the provincial average, and higher than a number of other C and D level occupations available in the region.



The median hourly wage for shellfish/fish labourers (NOC 9618) in the North Shore Region<sup>5</sup> of Nova Scotia in 2017 was \$13.32/hour (see Table 4). The median wage for shellfish/fish plant workers (NOC 9463) was lower at \$11.28/hour. These wage rates are both lower than the provincial median rates (\$14.50/hour and \$13.50/hour respectively) for these occupations. To provide some context, the minimum wage in Nova Scotia in 2017 was \$10.85/hour.

When compared with other C&D Level Occupations in the same region, the median wages for shellfish/fish labourers were generally higher by approximately \$2.00/hour. The one exception was for a farm worker which provided a higher median hourly wage (\$14/hour). Median wages for shellfish/fish plant workers were generally higher by approximately \$0.30/hour.

TABLE 4: WAGE LEVELS FOR SELECTED OCCUPATIONS - 2017 (\$/HOUR)

	Low Wage (10th percentile)	Median Wage (50th Percentile)	High Wage (90th percentile)
<b>Shellfish/Fish Processing Labourer (NOC 9618)</b>			
North Shore Region (NS)	11.00	13.32	19.45
All Nova Scotia	12.00	14.50	20.00
Southern Region (NS)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Halifax Region (NS)	12.00	14.50	20.25
<b>Shellfish/Fish Plant Worker (NOC 9463)</b>			
North Shore Region (NS)	11.00	11.28	12.50
All Nova Scotia	11.40	13.50	21.00
Southern Region (NS)	12.50	13.90	21.00
Halifax Region (NS)	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Other C&amp;D Level Occupations (NS)</b>			
Farm Worker (NOC 8431)	11.00	14.00	20.30
Deckhand, Fishing (NOC 8441)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Retail Sales (NOC 6421)	11.00	12.50	22.00
Food Services (NOC 6711)	11.00	11.00	16.00
Cashier (NOC 6611)	11.00	11.00	13.94

Source: Employment and Social Development Canada – Job Bank – Labour Market Information

5 The Southern Region of Nova Scotia includes the Pictou Region as well as some additional areas. Reliable wage data was only available for this slightly larger region.



# 5.0

## REGION'S LABOUR FORCE

THE REGION'S LABOUR FORCE NUMBER IS APPROXIMATELY 23,000. APPROXIMATELY ONE-THIRD OF THE ADULT POPULATION WORKED IN A FULL-YEAR, FULL-TIME POSITION IN 2015.



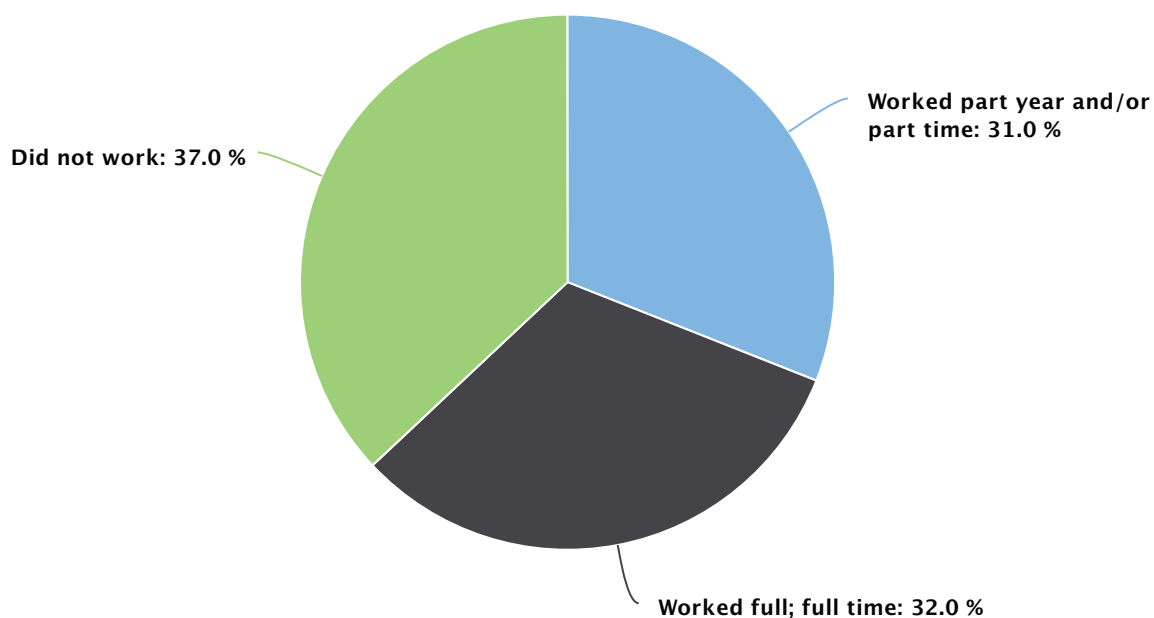
### 5.1 OVERVIEW OF LOCAL LABOUR FORCE

#### 5.1.1 SIZE OF LABOUR FORCE, MAIN SECTORS AND WORK PATTERNS

The overall size of the labour force for the region in 2017 was estimated at 21,914 (out of a total population of 41,550). The largest proportions of the labour force for the Pictou Census Division of Nova Scotia work in retail trade (19% of the labour force), health and social services (15%) and manufacturing (10% - includes fish and seafood processing) (Census, 2016).

According to Census 2016 data, roughly one third (32%) of the population 15 years or older worked full-time for the full-year (see Figure 4). A similar proportion worked part of the year and/or part-time (31%), while a larger proportion (37%) reported not working in 2015.

FIGURE 4: WORK PATTERNS (15 YEARS OR OLDER) – PICTOU REGION



Source: Census 2016





**THE AVERAGE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR THE REGION IN 2017 WAS 9.5%, WITH CONSIDERABLE MONTHLY FLUCTUATIONS GIVEN THE SEASONALITY OF MANY OF THE INDUSTRIES.**

TABLE 5: AVERAGE MONTHLY EI CLAIMANTS FOR PICTOU REGION – 2014 TO 2016<sup>6</sup>

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Total (All Occupations)</b>	1,730	1,673	1,660	1,597	1,260	1,007	1,310	1,297	1,170	1,210	1,390	1,613
Skill Level C & D*	1,000	983	970	957	747	560	730	733	667	683	793	930
Food Processing**	93	100	117	117	73	23	63	77	70	50	70	67

\*includes intermediate jobs that usually call for high school and/or job-specific training (Skill Level C) & labour jobs that usually give on-the-job training (Skill Level D)

\*\*includes the following occupations: manufacturing managers (NOC 0911); bakers (6,332); retail salespersons (6,421); material handlers (7,452); food and beverage processing supervisors (9,213); industrial butchers and meat cutters (9,462); fish and seafood plant workers (9,463); food and beverage processing labourers (9,617)

Source: Employment and Social Development Canada 2017

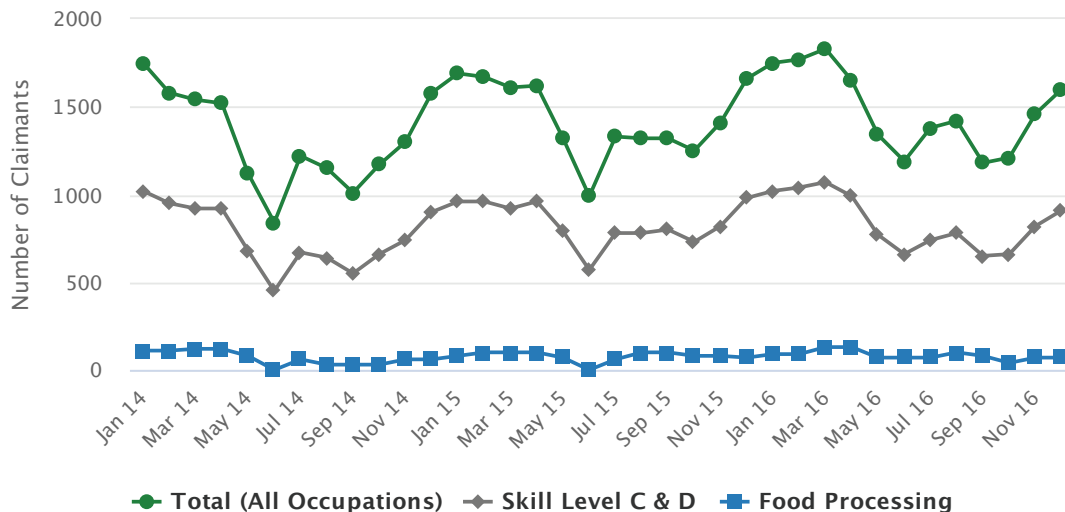
6 Monthly EI beneficiaries as reported in the table represent the average number of beneficiaries in the month between 2014 and 2016.

## 5.1.2 UNEMPLOYMENT

The unemployment rate for the region in 2017 was 9.5% on average, but monthly the rate experiences considerable fluctuations from a low of 3.5% to a high of 17.4%. According to Census data, approximately one-tenth (11%) of the population 15 years or older who had income received regular Employment Insurance (EI) payments at some point in 2015.

According to EI data provided by ESDC for the region, the average monthly number of EI claimants in food processing sectors across three years demonstrates the seasonality of the number of EI claimants ranging from an average low of 23 in June to over 115 in the months of March and April (see Table 5). Figure 5 also demonstrates the seasonality of the number of EI claimants with the cyclical pattern illustrated to be similar across the three years of available data (2014-2016) with similar numbers of claimants occurring each of the three years (+6.3% change for overall claims on an annual average for this period; 12.3% for food processing).

FIGURE 5: MONTHLY EI CLAIMANTS FOR PICTOU REGION – 2014 TO 2016









# 6.0 CURRENT AND FUTURE LABOUR DEMAND VS. SUPPLY

## 6.1 LABOUR MARKET TIGHTNESS

THERE IS CURRENTLY SUFFICIENT LOCAL LABOUR FORCE TO MEET THE REGION'S LABOUR REQUIREMENTS (FOR ALL INDUSTRIES). HOWEVER, THE LABOUR MARKET TIGHTENS OVER THE PROJECTION PERIOD, WITH THE RESIDUAL LABOUR FORCE FALLING WHILE EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS IN THE INDUSTRY INCREASE, THUS RESULTING IN A TIGHTER LABOUR MARKET BY 2026. FOR THE FISH AND SHELLFISH PROCESSORS, THIS PROJECTED SHORTAGE IS MOST SEVERE DURING THE PROCESSING PEAK SEASON WHICH UNFORTUNATELY TENDS TO COINCIDE WITH MANY OTHER COMPETING SECTORS' PEAK SEASONS.

TABLE 6: POPULATION AND LABOUR FORCE OUTLOOK SUMMARY – PICTOU REGION – 2017-2030

	2017	2018	2019	2020	AVG 2021-2025	AVG 2026-2030
Total Population	41,550	41,637	41,685	41,707	41,756	41,871
<i>Avg. Annual Change (%)</i>		0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
Total Labour Force	21,914	21,975	21,921	21,841	21,429	21,494
<i>Avg. Annual Change (%)</i>		0.3%	-0.2%	-0.4%	-0.5%	0.3%
Total Employment	19,835	19,864	19,920	19,873	19,694	20,052
<i>Avg. Annual Change (%)</i>		0.1%	0.3%	-0.2%	-0.2%	0.6%
Unemployment Rate	9.5%	9.6%	9.1%	9.0%	8.1%	6.7%

The model projections indicate that taking into account the trends in out-migration, and ageing population, the Pictou Region will remain fairly stable within the period under study (2017 to 2030) (see Table 6). These factors will also contribute to a relatively stable labour force of approximately 22,000 between 2017 and 2030. As a result, unemployment rates are expected to decline from an average of 9.5% to 6.7% based on increased opportunities, and a slightly smaller labour force.





## LABOUR MARKET TIGHTNESS EXPLAINED

Specifically for this project, the analytic team developed an approach to demonstrate the “tightness” of the labour market in supplying the employment demands from seafood processing in the identified regions.

This was calculated by estimating labour requirements in other sectors in the region (non seafood-processing labour requirements) and subtracting those requirements from the total labour force estimates. This difference results in an estimated “residual” labour force for the region from which seafood processing needs to draw. Not all of the seafood processing workers come from the residual pool, as the sector actively competes with other sectors for workers; however, the “tightness” measure indicates where shortages are likely occurring for not only the seafood processing sector but likely other sectors drawing from the same labour supply. Using this approach, the current and future labour market tightness was calculated to determine the extent to which the region’s labour force can meet the labour requirements of all sectors (both non-seafood processing and seafood processing).

As illustrated in Table 7 and Figure 6, the Total Seafood Processing Employment (Annual Average and Peak) is lower than the Residual Total Labour Force. This suggests that there is currently (2017) sufficient local labour force to meet all of the region’s labour requirements. However, the labour market tightens over the projection period, with the residual labour force falling while employment requirements in the industry increase, thus resulting in a tighter labour market by 2026.

The analysis outlined in Table 7 and Figure 6 describes the labour market context within which the fish and seafood processors are operating with respect to finding sufficient numbers of workers from the local labour supply. Within this competitive labour market, the industry employers have had some success recruiting. For example, in peak season in 2017, the seafood processing industry was able to recruit and employ 437 within a labour market that had a residual total labour force of only 469. This means that the seafood processing industry was likely recruiting workers from other industries, and potentially recruiting workers from outside the local region. While the industry did experience vacancies, these would likely have been substantially higher had it not been successful in recruiting labour external to the region, and/or competing with other industries in recruiting workers.

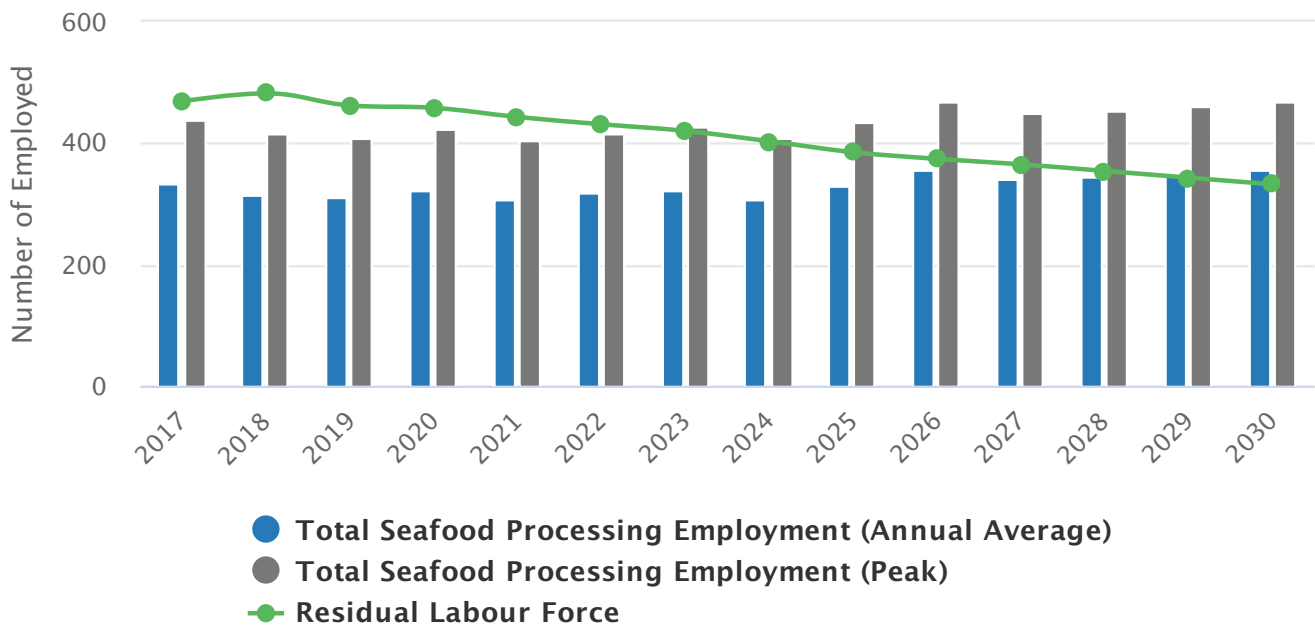




TABLE 7: TOTAL LABOUR MARKET TIGHTNESS – PICTOU REGION – 2017-2030

	2017	2018	2019	2020	AVG 2021-2025	AVG 2026-2030
<b>Total Labour Force <sup>7</sup></b>	<b>21,914</b>	<b>21,975</b>	<b>21,921</b>	<b>21,841</b>	<b>21,429</b>	<b>21,494</b>
<b>Total Non-Seafood Processing Labour Requirement <sup>8</sup></b>	<b>21,445</b>	<b>21,492</b>	<b>21,459</b>	<b>21,382</b>	<b>21,012</b>	<b>21,160</b>
<b>Residual Total Labour Force<sup>9</sup></b>	<b>469</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>354</b>
<b>Total Seafood Processing Employment (Annual Average)</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>350</b>
<b>Total Seafood Processing Employment (Peak)</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>460</b>

FIGURE 6: TOTAL SEAFOOD PROCESSING EMPLOYMENT AND RESIDUAL LABOUR FORCE – PICTOU REGION – 2017-2030



- 7 The labour force includes all individuals who are either employed or unemployed and actively seeking work. The unemployed would include those on regular EI claims along with those receiving other sources of income (e.g., social assistance) who are actively looking for employment.
- 8 Non-seafood processing labour requirement consists of employment demand from other sectors with an allowance for typical levels of sector-specific unemployment.
- 9 The residual labour force is the difference between the labour force and the non-seafood processing labour requirement.

As noted in the description of the occupations, over one half of the occupations in the industry in this region are in the “C” and “D” levels which are often referred to as “lower-skill level” occupations, not requiring post-secondary education. As well, these occupations are noted among plant managers as the most challenging with respect to recruitment and retention. Given much of the focus is on the lower-skill level labour force, the study also analysed the “tightness” of the lower-skill level labour market (see Table 8 and Figure 7). The tightness of lower-skill level labour market is higher than the overall market. For example, in peak season in 2017, the seafood processing industry was able to recruit and employ 262 workers within a labour market that had a residual total labour force of only 143. This means that the seafood processing industry was likely recruiting workers from other industries, and potentially recruiting workers from outside the local region. This level of tightness suggests that many of the industries that rely on a lower-skill level labour market are also experiencing labour shortages in this region.



TABLE 8: LOWER-SKILL LABOUR MARKET TIGHTNESS – PICTOU REGION – 2017-2030

	2017	2018	2019	2020	AVG 2021-2025	AVG 2026-2030
Lower-Skill Labour Force <sup>10</sup>	8,208	8,231	8,211	8,181	8,027	8,051
Lower-Skill Non-Seafood Processing Labour Requirement	8,065	8,072	8,057	8,025	7,878	7,948
Residual Lower-Skill Labour Force	143	159	154	156	148	135
Lower-Skill Seafood Processing Employment (Annual Average)	199	189	186	194	190	210
Lower-Skill Seafood Processing Employment (Peak)	262	249	245	255	251	276

<sup>10</sup> The lower-skill labour force is the portion of the total labour force with no education beyond a high school diploma.

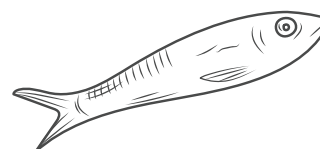
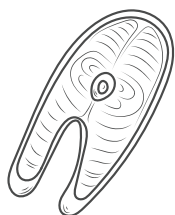
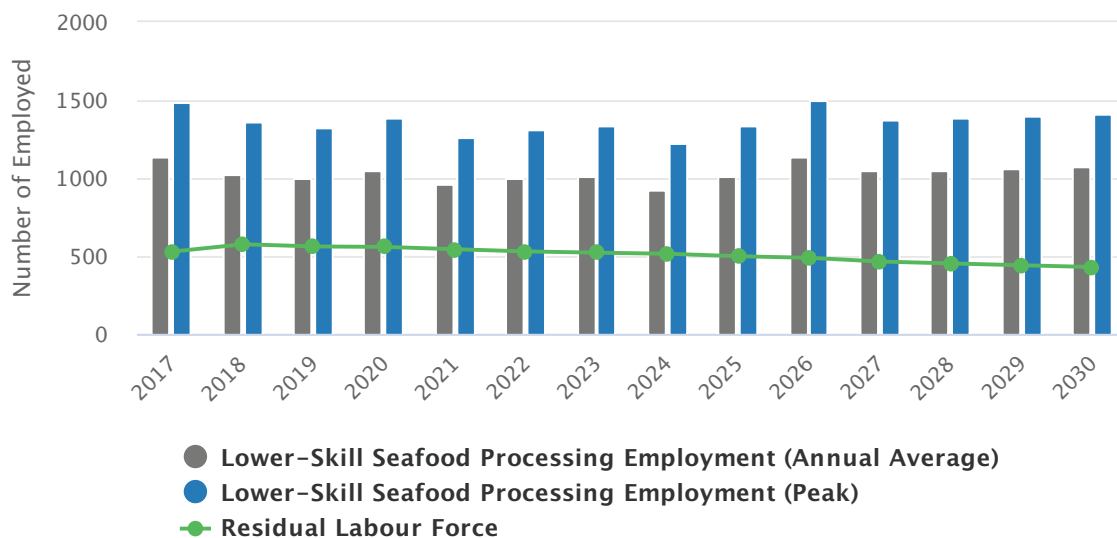


FIGURE 7: LOWER-SKILL SEAFOOD PROCESSING EMPLOYMENT AND RESIDUAL LABOUR FORCE – PICTOU REGION – 2017-2030



The overall summary of the labour market tightness as modeled for the Pictou Region (Table 9) demonstrates that the local labour force is unable to meet the employment requirements of employers in the area at average or peak levels for lower-level skill workers. However, between the period of 2017-2022, the labour market meets overall employment demand for both peak and average levels. These levels are then expected to decline between 2023-2028, meeting only annual average employment levels within this period. The results assume similar industry employment demand (e.g., no new major employers arriving or leaving the area), and no major changes in net migration patterns.



TABLE 9: SUMMARY OF LABOUR MARKET TIGHTNESS – PICTOU REGION – 2017-2030

	2017	2018	2019	2020	AVERAGE 2021 TO 2025	AVERAGE 2026 TO 2030
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>LOWER SKILL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

- 1 = Regional labour force meets seafood processing employment demand at annual average and peak employment levels
- 2 = Regional labour force meets seafood processing employment demand at annual average levels only
- 3 = Regional labour force does not meet seafood processing employment at annual average or peak levels

## 6.2 NUMBER OF WORKERS REQUIRED

Within a very tight labour market, projections indicate that the Pictou Region employers will need to attract approximately 166 new workers to the fish and seafood processing industry by 2030. This is equivalent to approximately 50% of their current annual average workforce. This requirement is due to replacement of anticipated retirements over this period, while considering projected industry growth and labour productivity gains. Unfortunately, this recruitment will be occurring within the context of a very tight regional labour market that is currently experiencing severe labour shortages which are predicted to continue during this period. This tightness in the labour market is contributing to the high number of current vacancies experienced by employers in seafood processing (estimated at 12% in Atlantic Canada), and to some degree the higher turnover rates in the industry as workers have more employment opportunities from which to choose, particularly in the lower-skill level occupations (estimated turnover rate of 40% for Atlantic Canada in seafood processing industry). All of these factors contribute to the substantial challenges facing Pictou Region seafood processors in their attempts to recruit enough workers to replace retirements, fill ongoing vacancies, work to address turnover rates, while also trying to grow, remain competitive and increase productivity.

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Overall, it is anticipated that while there will be some shedding of jobs in the short term (2018) due to negative industry growth, but as of 2019, there will be a need for increased numbers of new hires, due to the need for replacements due to anticipated retirements and deaths among the workforce (see Table 10). Overall, this results in the need to attract 166 new workers to the industry between 2018 and 2030. This equates to replacing approximately 50% of the 2017 average seafood processing workforce in the region.



TABLE 10: HIRING REQUIREMENT OUTLOOK – PICTOU REGION – 2017-2030

	2017	2018	2019	2020	SUM 2021-2025	SUM 2026-2030
<b>Net Hiring Requirement<sup>11</sup></b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>82</b>
Industry Growth	-8	-17	-5	12	7	26
Retirements and Mortality	11	11	11	11	53	56

The employment outlook according to occupation is detailed in Table 11 (Annual Average) and Table 12 (Peak).

TABLE 11: EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK (ANNUAL AVERAGE) – PICTOU REGION – 2017-2030

	2017	2018	2019	2020	AVG 2021-2025	AVG 2026-2030
<b>Total Employment</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>350</b>
Shellfish Processing Labourer	56	53	52	54	53	59
Fish Processing Labourer	40	38	37	39	38	42
Shellfish Plant Worker	34	33	32	33	33	36
Fish Plant Worker	25	24	23	24	24	26
Supervisors	11	11	11	11	11	12
Maintenance	10	10	10	10	10	11
Skilled Trades	24	23	23	24	23	26
Quality Control Technician	6	5	5	6	5	6
Management	13	13	12	13	13	14
Office Staff	24	23	23	24	23	26
Other Occupations	87	83	82	85	84	92

<sup>11</sup> Net hiring requirement does not include hiring required as a result of turnover (i.e. hiring workers to replace individuals who quit or are fired from their positions). The imputed turnover rate (total number of people workers hired as a share of the total number of workers) for Atlantic seafood processors is 40%.

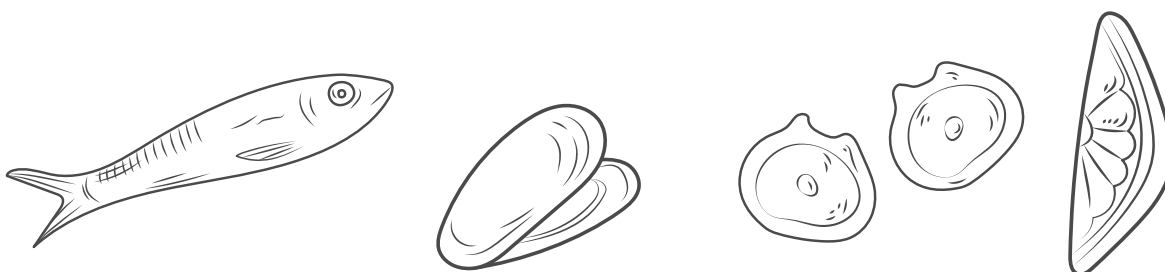


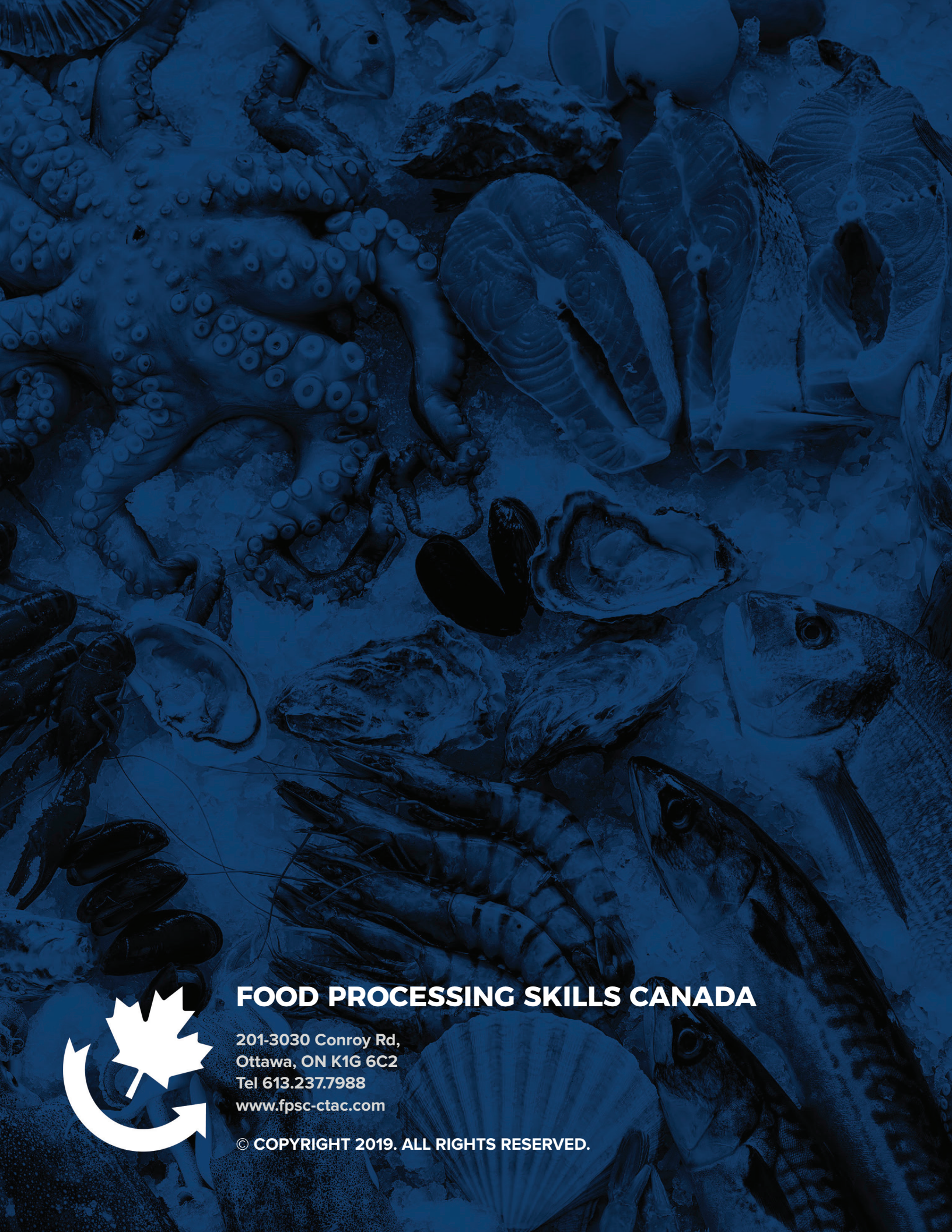


TABLE 12: EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK (PEAK) – PICTOU REGION – 2017-2030

	2017	2018	2019	2020	AVG 2021-2025	AVG 2026-2030
<b>Total Employment</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>460</b>
Shellfish Processing Labourer	83	79	78	81	80	88
Fish Processing Labourer	60	57	56	58	57	63
Shellfish Plant Worker	52	49	48	50	49	54
Fish Plant Worker	37	35	35	36	36	39
Supervisors	11	11	11	11	11	12
Maintenance	12	11	11	12	12	13
Skilled Trades	29	28	27	29	28	31
Quality Control Technician	6	6	6	6	6	7
Management	13	13	12	13	13	14
Office Staff	24	23	23	24	23	26
Other Occupations	108	103	102	106	104	114







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