



FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT LABOUR MARKET ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Brief submitted to the *Commission de l'économie et du travail*

Specific consultations and public hearings on Bill °70

Dominique Normand, artiste de souche Malécite



**A positive
contribution to the
development of
Québec**

February 2016

**An Act that permits a better balance
between training and employment and
promotes employment integration**



THE COMMITTEE

PERMANENT MEMBERS

Ralph Cleary, First Nations Human Resources Development
Commission of Québec, FNHRDCQ, President, FNILMAC

Velma Stanger, Algonquin Nation-Human Resources and Sustainable Development, AN-
HRSD, Vice-President, FNILMAC (Mandatory)

Solange Loiselle, Kativik Regional Government, Vice-President, FNILMAC

Louisa Saganash, Cree Nation Government, Vice-President, FNILMAC

ASSOCIATE PARTNERS

Louis Volant, Institut TSHAKAPESH

Niva Sioui, First Nations of Québec and Labrador Health and Social
Services Commission, FNQLHSSC

Céline Charpentier, Comité Sectoriel de Main d'œuvre Économie Sociale Action
Communautaire, CSMO ÉSAC

Larry Imbeault, Association des Employés du Nord québécois (Cree
School Board and Kativik School Board,) AENQ

Claudie Paul, Regroupement des centres d'amitié Autochtones du Québec, RCAAQ

Alana Boileau, Québec Native Women Association (QNWA)

Jean-Yves Couture, Steelworkers Quebec

OBSERVER MEMBERS

Marc Larivière, Direction du développement des compétences et de l'intervention sectorielle,
Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale, MTESS

Stephanie Valentin, Service Canada

Mathieu Faucher, Direction des Services aux Autochtones et développement
nordique, Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, MEES

Julien Lépine, Direction générale des relations avec les Autochtones et des initiatives
économiques, Secrétariat aux Affaires Autochtones, SAA

RESEARCH, DESIGN, EDITING

Ralph Cleary, Claudie Paul, Solange Loiselle, Niva Sioui, Alana Boileau, Céline Charpentier

Réal Martin, coordinator

FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT LABOUR MARKET ADVISORY COMMITTEE

65 Richelieu suite 12,
St-Jean Richelieu, Québec J3B 6X2
Internet web site : www.ccpnimt-fnilmac.com



This brief was prepared through financial support from the Commission des partenaires du marché du travail

TABLE OF CONTENT

1.	The Advisory Committee.....	4
2.	Portrait of the First Nations and Inuit of Québec.....	6
3.	Challenges.....	12
3.1	Recognition of the resources of the Aboriginal employment and training centres.....	13
3.2	Pre-employability, a phase in the employment objectives	13
3.3	Participation at the CRPMT table	14
3.4	Objectif Emploi	14
3.5	A seat at the CPMT table for Advisory Committees.....	15
3.6	Implementation of an Indigenous ministerial strategy by the MTESS.....	15
4.	Recommendations.....	16



THE FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT LABOUR MARKET ADVISORY COMMITTEE

This brief was written and presented by the four agreement holders of the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) and its associate partners with regard to employment. The Commission des partenaires du marché du travail had endorsed the creation of the First Nations and Inuit Labour Market Advisory Committee in December 2009 and the committee has been in operation since February 2010. The committee is comprised of *four permanent members, organisations invited to sit as associate partners and governmental and para-governmental agencies.*

- The four permanent members' agreement holders of the Aboriginal Skills employment and training strategy (ASETS) are: the Cree Regional Authority (CRA), the First Nation Human Resources Development Commission of Québec (FNHRDCQ), the Kativik Regional Government (KRG) and the Algonquin Nation Human Resources and Sustainable Development.
- The present associate partners have the right to vote and are comprised of: the Tshakapesh Institute, the Steelworkers union affiliated with the FTQ, the Regroupement des Centres d'Amitié Autochtones du Québec (RCAAQ), Québec Native Women's Association (QNWA), the Association of Northern Québec Workers (AENQ teachers and support staff, members of the CSQ), the First Nations of Québec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission (FNQLHSSC), Comité sectoriel de main d'oeuvre Économie Sociale Action Communautaire (CSMOESAC).
- The present observer members are: the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'enseignement supérieur (MEES), the Secrétariat des Affaires Autochtones (SAA) and Service Canada. The Commission des Partenaires du Marché du Travail (CPMT) also sits as an ex-officio observer member and manager of the Committee.
- Basically, the four jurisdictional groups of the First Nation and Inuit provide labour market programs and services to all First Nations and Inuit communities of Québec. They are the experts in job creation for Indigenous people. Québec urban natives receive these same programs through the federal government's Urban Strategies program which is the responsibility of the FNHRDCQ. The First Nations and Inuit communities also provide additional funding to serve their respective urban population.

The Advisory Committee is fully aware of the constraints and needs of the at-risk underemployed individuals and are therefore better placed to provide notices and recommendations to the CPMT, the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale and the Emploi-Québec agency regarding strategies, measures and services to provide or develop so that First Nations can improve their situation and employability to access and maintain employment.

This brief is within the mission framework and responsibilities of the four jurisdictional organizations of the advisory committee.

As an indication the framework document of the Commission des partenaires du marché du travail indicates that the Advisory Committee is also the spokesperson for promoting the interests of their First Nation and Inuit clients who are isolated from the labour market, by their views and proposals, integration, reintegration and job retention of those people or sustainability through notices and recommendations. This specific clientele requires public employment services, intervention or social solidarity services due to their personal situation regarding the labour market, the existence of obstacles or limitations, the social conditions of the individual, the requirements and conditions of the labour market, the individual's social development, the available resources and the accompaniment necessary to reintegrate the labour market. In this respect, the committee can:

- Propose new action pathways, strategies, attempt or implement initiatives in the various manpower and employment areas.
- Propose sub-groups requiring the assistance of the public employment services according to their issues.
- Participate in the follow-up and evaluation of the various intervention methods utilized.

Publications :

FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT POSITION ON THE PARALELLS BETWEEN TRAINING AND JOB MARKET NEEDS

June 2011 <http://www.ccpnimt-fnilmac.com/publica/fr3.pdf>

PORTRAIT OF FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT IN THE QUEBEC LABOUR MARKET

January, 2013 <http://www.ccpnimt-fnilmac.com/publica/fr1.pdf>

FORMAL OPINION ON THE RELEVANCE OF DEVELOPING A MINISTERIAL STRATEGY FOR THE SOCIOPROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION OF FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT PEOPLE

June 2013 <http://www.ccpnimt-fnilmac.com/publica/fr2.pdf>

NOTICE OF RELEVANCE TO SUPPORT THE SOCIOPROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION OF FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT CRIMINALIZED WOMEN OF QUEBEC

September, 2015 http://www.ccpnimt-fnilmac.com/publica/avis_insertion_femme_judiciarisees.pdf



PORTRAIT OF FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT OF QUÉBEC

First Nations and Inuit population of Québec

Although Québec society is based on values of openness, it must be noted that little has been done with regard to the full participation of First Nations and Inuit into the labour market.

- ▶ In view of the major challenges for First Nations communities in Québec regarding employment integration,
- ▶ In view of the need for economic development of First Nations communities,
- ▶ In view of the limitations of existing workforce development programs,
- ▶ In view of the needs related to a labour shortage risk in Québec,
- ▶ In view of the barriers faced by Indigenous people to actively participate in the labour market and the importance of standardizing employment services to render them more accessible to urban Indigenous people.

It is necessary to develop a concerted and specific strategy in response to the needs of First Nations and Inuit individuals in order to promote the development of the Indigenous people of Québec.

The First Nations and Inuit demographic boom in Québec also requires immediate action by Québec actors in order to avoid further deterioration of their situation in the labour market.

For many Indigenous people, access to the labour market remains fraught with obstacles that can be very difficult to overcome. If we want to solve the problem, we have to first of all recognize it and address the structural barriers that are causing this situation.

The employment rates for Indigenous people are much lower than those of the Québec population whereas the unemployment rate is much higher. The situation is worse for populations living in communities or individuals involved with the law.

▶ The unemployment rate:

The unemployment rate for FNI in Québec (15.1%), which is more than doubled that of the rest of Québec (7.2%), signifies an important gap of almost 8 percentage points.

First Nations people living off reserve have seen their employment and activity rate grow during this period (2006-2011) where the reverse has occurred for First Nations living on reserves. Unemployment continues to affect twice as many First Nations living on reserve (22.9% in 2011) than those living off reserve (10.1%). The situation has progressed very little since 2006 (22% compared to 10.3% in 2006). The fact remains that these individuals who live in the city are confronted with specific problems such as discrimination in hiring.

▶ Demography: recent and expected development in Québec

The demographic growth within First Nations (26.6%) was quicker than within the Inuit population (14.7%). First Nations have seen their population expand by 17,335 persons, from 65,090 persons in 2006 to 83,435 in 2011.

From 2006 to 2011, the FNI population (24.9%) grew six times faster than the entire Québec population (4%), going from 76,045 persons in 2006 to 94,995 in 2011, an increase of 18,950 persons in 5 years.

Meanwhile, the total Québec population had increased by 296,615. The FNI, who represent 1.2% of the total Québec population in 2011, had contributed more than their share to this boom for they represent 6.4% of this overall increase (18,950 out of 296,615).

¹⁴ Bougie, E., Kelly-Scott, K., et Arriagada, P., *Expériences au chapitre de l'éducation et de l'emploi des Premières Nations vivant hors réserve, des Inuits et des Métis*, novembre

Interethnic mobility (intra generational and intergenerational) is raised by Statistics Canada (91-552-X, p. 6) in a survey by Malenfant and Montmorency. People changing their ethnic identification over time or different identification of children in relation to their parents.

► Urban population:

With regard to First Nations, the on-reserve population in 2011 increased at a slower pace from 2006 to 2011 (15.6%) compared to that of First Nations living off-reserve (38.2%) Since the off-reserve population is growing faster, it now forms the majority of the FN population: 53.2% (43,819 out of 82,425 persons).

Indigenous individuals who lived off-reserve in 2011 (43,810) were found mainly in large urban centres with populations exceeding 100,000 inhabitants (21,525).

The others find themselves in urban centres (11,200) or rural areas (11,090). However, it is in communities where individuals have difficulty integrating the labour market, notably because of the lack of mainstream resources, as much in the social sector as in the funding of development programs, consequently in job creation. Also noteworthy is the fact that the situation in the various communities can differ greatly.

As previously stated, many Indigenous people live in urban centers. When leaving their communities, the young people hope to improve their chances by having access to more resources and support. However, once arrived in the city, many have a difficult time to find housing because of limited funds, racism and discrimination.

They must be lodged with an acquaintance and often only temporarily. They often move which creates instability and can be problematic to maintain employment or complete an employment assistance program or training activity. This situation can render some individuals homeless.

Moreover, when Indigenous people arrive from their community, culture shock is significant. They are confronted with different values, different methods of cooperation and of working. They are far from home. They are isolated, which for vulnerable people, can represent a serious risk in turning to drugs, alcohol, etc.

Language for many is also an additional obstacle and remains a serious problem with regard to First Nations and Inuit integration into the labour market or into training.

¹¹ Malenfant, E. C. et Morency, J.D., *Projections de la population selon l'identité autochtone au Canada, 2006 à 2031*, Statistique Canada, 91-552-X, tableaux A3.1 à A3.5, pp. 45 à 49.

¹² "For instance, Québec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia had the greatest share of First Nations living on reserve", selon Gulati, Sonia, *A Demographic Overview of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada*, TD Economics, May 2013.

► Language:

First Nations and Inuit present a distinct portrait in their relation with language according to First Nations and Inuit communities. For First Nations, the FN language is not dominant (38.4%) whereas the situation is the reverse for the Inuit (85.8%).

First Nations use the French language as a dominant first language (47.7%) and only a small portion indicate English as a first language (12.6%).

With regard to knowing either the French or English language, the portrait is as nuanced in each community. More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of First Nations populations know French (76.7%) whereas the percentage among the Inuit is much lower (29.3%). The English language is much more widespread among the Inuit (74%) than with First Nations (51.7%).

Another element to consider is the capacity or the knowledge of Indigenous languages by each community. First Nations know a FN language at a rate of 41.7% where the Inuit know Inuktitut at a rate of 88.1%.

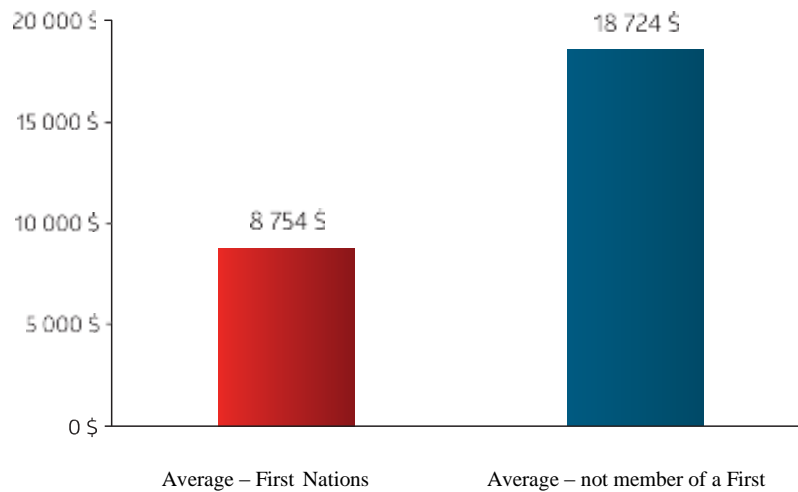
¹⁶ Bougie, E., Kelly-Scott, K. et Arriagada, P., *Expériences au chapitre de l'éducation et de l'emploi des Premières Nations vivant hors réserves, des Inuits et des Métis : certains résultats de l'Enquête auprès des Peuples autochtones de 2012*, Statistique Canada, n° 89-563-X-001, novembre 2013.

► Socio-economic conditions:

The sometime precarious socio-economic conditions in certain communities can be explained in great part by the presence of a specific legislative environment (Indian Act, self-government, the jurisdictions on reserve, off reserve, with regard to education; Agreement and non-agreement First Nations holders, courts and the justice system, litigation, land rights, specific and cultural claims, land ownership on reserve, economic funding, the rights to natural resources, etc.) which in itself represents major obstacles to economic development and increases the hardship on the population when participating in the job market.

Furthermore, “despite all the difficulties that Indigenous people face, the total amounts spent by all levels of government per Indigenous person is less than half of what is spent on a non-Indigenous person. This disparity does not favor the integration of First Nations and Inuit within the socio economic development of their respective regions”.

Total funding per person and from every level of government, 2010



* Sources : Statistique Canada, revenus et dépenses consolidés au niveau fédéral, provincial, territorial et local, 2009; population par province et territoire, 2010.

** Sources : Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada, prévisions 2009-10; population d'Indiens inscrits (estimation).

Source: Statistics Canada, revenue and consolidated expenditures at the federal, provincial, territorial and local levels, 2009; population per province and territory, 2010

Source: Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2009-2010 projections; registered Indian population (estimate)

The lack of control by First Nations over their own lands can cripple economic development. Many First Nations people see themselves obliged to leave their communities because there are no job prospects, especially in communities far away from urban centres.

Generally speaking, one of the major obstacles to employment integration is the low educational level of Indigenous people. It is impossible for First Nation students to pursue higher education without having to leave their community. Moreover, the chronic underfunding of community schools ensures that the quality of education is not equal to that in other schools across Québec, notably because of this underfunding and personnel turnover, and programs that are not culturally relevant and the lifestyle of many First Nations. Moreover, the painful Indian residential school period has also contributed to the disenchantment with regard to the importance of an education.

Finally, for First Nations and Inuit searching for employment, the prejudices, discrimination and racism are obstacles stemming from a misunderstanding of the Indigenous values and culture by the employers and the Québec population in general.



THE CHALLENGES

Bill 70 will apply specifically to FNI who receive provincial social assistance therefore, Indigenous people living in urban areas (off reserve) and Inuit regardless of where they reside.

First Nation and Inuit communities do not have the financial means to implement measures similar to those that can be introduced with the approval of Bill 70. The social development programs are clearly underfunded and the national policy on income assistance only requires that the Federal government (IANDC) answer the basic needs of Indigenous people living on reserves.

With its dissuasive approach, Bill 70 stigmatises the poor (83.1 *Objectif-Emploi*) rather than offer an incentive measure. An integration program should never be a substitute for basic financial assistance. Social assistance should be an unconditional program. Moreover, we don't see how beneficiaries, who are having a difficult time to make ends meet, will have the means to begin the process.

Once the many irritants of this program are resolved, it will be important to ensure that FNI benefit from this program. To achieve this, adapted measures for our clients that respect the cultural aspect and their insecurities must be provided. Without special attention, the program is destined to fail and many of our Inuit and urban clients will find themselves out in the street.



The FNILMAC is of the opinion that the Minister has an obligation to include First Nations and Inuit in the consultation process. We have once again been forgotten since we were the only clientele who were not initially invited to the public hearings.

Desired consideration for matters concerning:

3.1 Accreditation and utilisation of resources and First Nations and Inuit employment and training centres.

- Bill 70 should include the flexibility to recognize the multiple ways to intervene with FNI clients. The present bill 70 does not allow for resources outside of the Department to make decisions with regard to the clients that it serves. It is our wish that official accreditation be granted for the resources and for employability and training services offered in urban service centres of the FNHRDCQ, the Québec Friendship Centres and the Ivirtivik centres (in Montreal and Inukjuak) .
- For the Inuit, Bill 70 must comply with the agreements signed within the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement, specifically article 29.0.4 that transfers all the responsibility for employment programs and services to the Kativik Regional Government, including the Sivurnimut agreement (global funding agreement).

The Kativik Regional Government must make decisions concerning the eligibility of Inuit clients requesting social assistance to not penalize them. Outside agents do not understand the culture and problems related to living in the North, in Nunavik. Additional funding will be necessary to offer services to the population of Nunavik and urban Inuit that are similar to those offered to the general Québec population.

3.2 Pre-employability, a step to integrate First Nations and Inuit employment objectives.

The effect and application of the Objectif-Emploi program should be inclusive. Pre-employability is an essential phase to be integrated. The present bill will cause a deterioration of the situation in terms of poverty and socio-professional integration for the Inuit and for First Nations living off-reserve.

- FNI clients are often too far away from the labour market to be able to participate in the Objectif-*Emploi* program, particularly for social assistance recipients. These clients are difficult to get moving and resources to support them are limited. For example, our clients who pass essential skills competency tests often find themselves at the bottom of the ladder.
- In fact, there are few culturally developed tools to improve their employability. Our clients are almost all vulnerable and need pre-employability to take control of their lives. The present government attitude concerning vulnerable clients would be very damaging.
- In Nunavik, we must include an additional challenge which limits access to large scope economic programs or major projects because the MEES requires proof of funding from the Federal government prior to investing in job creation or training projects. FNI are the only clients in Québec who must satisfy this prerequisite. This practice is discriminatory and unfairly attacks our clientele who are further from the labour market.

3.3 The CPMT and the CRPMT

In this Bill, we acknowledge that the *Commission des partenaires du marché du travail* (CPMT) will be relegated to an advisory position. We believe that this is a step backwards since this meeting place which contributes to the distinct identity of the Québec government is recognized throughout Canada as being the model to emulate. Support from the CPMT was necessary for the approval of a First Nations and Inuit ministerial strategy.

- We hope that the law will allow First Nations and Inuit to acquire a seat at the CRPMT table in major regions of concern for FNI as requested in the notice of relevance for a FNI ministerial strategy.
- We welcome the idea that the *Commission de la construction du Québec* will be part of the CPMT. We hope that training funds for construction workers will be available, something that was systematically refused for many years under the pretext that we must use professional development funds from the CCQ (*Commission de la construction au Québec*), and even if this fund can only be used for workers who already have a regular apprenticeship card in their communities.

3.4 Objectif Emploi.

Many of our members leave their communities to live in urban centres. They do this to improve their living conditions. They therefore need time and support to adapt to their new surroundings.

By forcing some of them to find employment in a distant place without support, we are asking these clients, who are already destabilized, to adapt once again to a new environment. This is impossible and doomed to failure.

The arrival of a new kind of client who is angry or disappointed or who sees his rights being violated or feels discriminated against will produce adverse conditions for developing a feasible action plan.

- Within the context of budget cuts with our federal partners, the clients penalized by the law will be seeking our services. We must therefore assume the minimum of their benefits. If a candidate is penalized and sees his benefits reduced, our top-up contribution must be higher in order to reach the maximum. We do not have the funds to do this.
- Certain definitions and clarifications must be identified rapidly because they will have a direct impact on the operationalization of the law, for example “suitable employment”, “beneficiary is obliged to accept employment far from home”, “appeal”, etc.
- The 12 month period is too short for a client who lives far from the labour market.

- 50% of our clients do not speak French. This is a barrier to significant employment. Language courses should be recognized as being part of a client's intervention plan. (*Aboriginal people's survey of 2012*, Statistics Canada, n^o 89-563-X-001, November 2013)
- The decisions will be made by resources that are little or no knowledge about First Nations and/or Inuit. The connection with the client will not be done. It is doomed to failure. It is important that our counsellors establish close ties with their clients so that they can offer them, among other things, the freedom to choose a career that will reflect their needs and personal abilities.
- If all the changes are put into place, the *Objectif-Emploi* program could very well be implemented for our clients in urban areas to promote their professional integration.

3.5 A seat at the CPMT table for Advisory Committees.

The client advisory committees have asked on numerous occasions to have a seat at the CPMT table; these requests have always been denied. We wish to take advantage of the reorganization of the CPMT to propose the addition of a seat Client Advisory Committee which will allow for representation from all of the advisory committees within the board of directors of the CPMT.

- This seat will allow for better cohesion within the advisory committees of the expectations and new mandates of the CPMT.
- This seat will allow the advisory committees to convey the information to the committees on the ongoing discussions and orientations within the CPMT.
- At a time when the CPMT wants to put emphasis on a better balance between training and employment, our clients constitute a precious asset and a workforce for the future. The expertise of the advisory committees would then be recognized.
- This seat would allow us to advocate by indicating the work currently being done in each committee and to inform the committees of the ongoing discussions and orientations within the CPMT.

3.6 Implementation of an Indigenous ministerial strategy with the MTESS.

Following the tabling of a notice of relevance for the development of a First Nations and Inuit ministerial strategy on the integration of FNI into the labour market, obtaining support from the CPMT and the Department, we are currently working with *Emploi Québec* to develop and implement a First Nations and Inuit ministerial strategy that will recognize the specificities and difficulties encountered by FNI. We hope that this strategy is not diminished by a restrictive law.



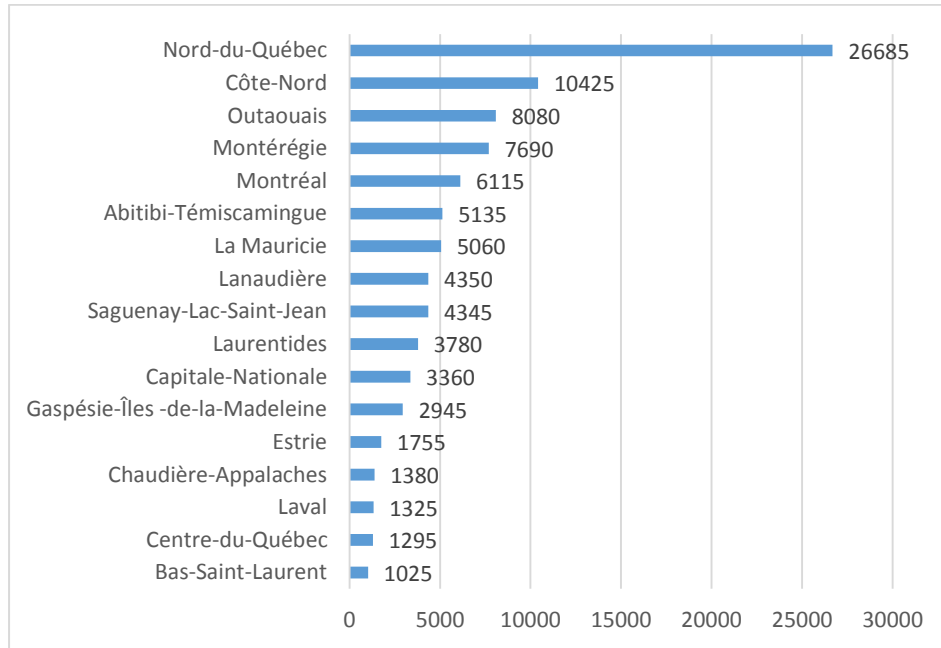
4. Recommendations

- ▶ We wish to obtain accreditation for our employment and training centres recognized by our respective organizations (FNHRDCQ, Ivirtivik, ARK and the RCAAQ) for managing programs and services, including the *Objectif Emploi* program.
- ▶ Complementary to the Federal agreements, new agreements should be signed in order to allow our organizations access to additional funding for a service structure and delivery of adequate services that takes into account our knowledge and know how abilities.
- ▶ We wish to actively participate in the elaboration of criteria and objectives that will be contained in the *Objectif Emploi* program.
- ▶ This should include employability and pre-employability programs and the eradication of all irritants listed in section 3.4. The activity period should be increased to at least 24 months.
- ▶ To support the implementation of a ministerial strategy based on the 23 recommendations as proposed by the First Nations and Inuit authorities of Québec.



We hope that a seat will be allocated to First Nations and Inuit representatives (Employers-Institutions-Organizations involved in employability-Economic development) within the CRPMT in regions where FNI are present and in accordance with our Notice of relevance for a FNI ministerial strategy.

Figure 1. Classification of regions according to FNI population, Québec, 2011



Allocate a seat at the CPMT table for representation of the five advisory committees.

Dominique Normand, artiste mérité de souche



Commission
des partenaires
du marché du travail

Québec 