

# A CLOSER LOOK AT CANADA'S MINING SUPPLY SERVICES SECTOR



# RH MINING INDUSTRY HUMAN RESOURCES COUNCIL

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# Introduction

The Mining Supply Services sector, an essential part of Canada's mining industry, is largely under analyzed due to its overlap with other mining subsectors. To better appreciate and understand this critical area of mining, this report examines the leading occupations that comprise the sector and highlights several key labour market trends related to the sector's workforce characteristics.

# What is Mining Supply Services?

*Mining Supply Services* describes the businesses that support Canada's mining industry by providing a wide range of essential mining-related services and activities. Their roles encompass everything from mining construction and engineering advisory services to several other specialized tasks crucial for the industry's ability to function. This sector typically encompasses independent contractors, small business owners and self-employed professionals that contribute to Canada's mining exploration and development.

## **Defining the Sector**

The Mining Industry Human Resources Council's (MiHR) definition of the Mining Supply Services sector is mostly aligned with Statistics Canada's North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code for Support activities for mining, and oil and gas extraction (NAICS 213):

This subsector comprises establishments primarily engaged in providing support services, on a contract or fee basis, for the mining and quarrying of minerals and for the extraction of oil and gas. Establishments engaged in the exploration for minerals, other than oil or gas, are included. Exploration includes traditional prospecting methods, such as taking ore samples and making geological observations at prospective sites.

While this industry code supplies a useful data source for examining the Mining Supply Services sector, NAICS 213 contains notable issues and is not a perfect representation of the sector.

First, Mining Supply Services roles naturally overlap with conventional mining roles, making the sectoral definition blurred and difficult to define. The services sector represents a type of employment arrangement (i.e., self-employed contractor) as much as it involves specific roles in the mining industry (i.e., engineering services). Given the linkage to conventional mining, where feasible this report compares Mining Supply Services with *Mining and quarrying (NAICS 212)*.

Second, Support activities for mining, and oil and gas extraction (NAICS 213) contains services for Canada's oil and gas sector. This inclusion is significant as oil and gas workers represented two thirds of the category in Canada in 2022 (54,635 out of 81,800).<sup>1</sup> The data is also skewed toward Alberta (and to some extent Saskatchewan) due to the province's sizable petroleum industry. Alberta alone represents roughly 58% of workers in Support activities for mining, and oil and gas extraction (NAICS 213). Given these challenges, this analysis uses data from the Canadian System of National Accounts (SNA) to report employment numbers for the sector. This data set offers an industry code that separates the oil and gas services sector from the mining services sector, *Support activities for mining (21311B)*. However, this industry code is commonly unavailable for several labour market indicators.

Where the SNA data is lacking, this analysis uses the NAICS 213 industry code, but excludes Alberta and Saskatchewan to offset the biases caused by the oil and gas component of the sector. In this report, the adjusted industry code will be labelled *Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*)*.

The aim is to provide a clearer picture for the activities that are critical to mining development in Canada. In spite of certain issues with the available data, *Support activities for mining, and oil and gas extraction (NAICS 213)* offers the best foundation for analyzing and understanding Canada's Mining Supply Services sector.

<sup>1</sup> Canadian System of National Accounts (SNA) (Table: 36-10-0489-01).

# Who is in this sector?

The Mining Supply Services sector is best understood by examining the types of occupations it comprises. MiHR explores two key metrics in this regard: (1) the occupational composition of the sector and (2) the occupational specificity to the sector.

## **Occupational Composition of the Sector**

The occupational mix reveals which roles are most utilized by the Mining Supply Services sector. *Figure 1* reports the top 30 most prevalent occupations that make up *Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*)*. Collectively, these occupations represent 65% of the sector. The list covers diverse functions that support the mining industry, including Underground production and development miners (NOC 83100) (9.8%), Geoscientists and oceanographers (NOC 21102) (4.5%) and Transport truck drivers (NOC 73300) (4.2%), among others. Most of the prominently featured roles are also common to Mining and quarrying (NAICS 212), showing the overlap between these two sectors.

However, some occupations are relatively more prevalent in Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*), such as Drillers and blasters - surface mining, quarrying and construction (NOC 73402), Geoscientists and oceanographers (NOC 21102), and Construction trades helpers and labourers (NOC 75110). These examples highlight which occupations are used more intensively in the Mining Supply Services sector than in Mining and quarrying (NAICS 212).

# FIGURE 1 Top 30 Occupations by Share of Employment in Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*) and Mining and quarrying (NAICS 212) (2021)

	Share of Sector Employment							
	0	)% 2'	%	4% 6	%	8%	10%	12%
Underground production and development miners	1						0 9.8%	011.6%
Supervisors, mining and quarrying	2			0 4.9%	0 6.4%			
Drillers and blasters - surface mining, quarrying and construction	3	0.3%		0 4.6%				
Geoscientists and oceanographers	4	0	1.8%	0 4.5%				
Transport truck drivers	5			0 4.2% 4	.5%			
Underground mine service and support workers	6		0	3.2% 3.4%				
Heavy equipment operators	7		0 :	3.4%			0 9.9%	6
Construction trades helpers and labourers	8	0 1.0%	G 🔿 3	.3%				
Managers in natural resources production and fishing	9		0 0 2	7% 3.2%				
Seniors managers - public and private sector	10	0 1.19	% 🔿 2.7%					
Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	11		0 2.3%	0 5.2	%			
Geological and mineral technologists and technicians	12		O 2.2% 2	.3%				
Heavy-duty equipment mechanics	13	(	2.1%	0 4.4%				
Mine labourers	14	0	<b>1.6% 2.</b>	3%				
Welders and related machine operators	15	OC	) 1.6% 1.9%	5				
Administrative officers	16	0 0.5	<mark>% 1.3%</mark>					
Financial auditors and accountants	17	() 1.0	<b>% 1.1%</b>					
Contractors and supervisors, heavy equipment operator crews	18	0 0.2%	0.9%					
Accounting and related clerks	19	0.6%	0.8%					
Mining engineers	20	0 0	0.8% 1.8%					
Accounting technicians and bookkeepers	21	0 0.2%	0.8%					
Industrial electricians	22	0.8%	0 2.5%					
Administrative assistants	23	0.5%	0.8%					
Human resources managers	24	0.5% 0	.6%					
Steamfitters, pipefitters and sprinkler system installers		0.2% 0	.6%					
Automotive service technicians, truck and bus mechanics and mechanical repairers	26	0.5% (	.6%					
Material handlers		$\bigcirc$ $\bigcirc$ $\bigcirc$	.6% <b>1.5%</b>					
Financial managers	28	() 0.4% 0.	5%					
General office support workers	29	0.5% 0	5%					
Procurement and purchasing agents and officers	30	0.5% 0	6%					
◯ Mining & quarrying (N/	AICS	212) 🔿 S	upport activ	vities for minii	ng (NAICS	213*)		

## **Occupational Specificity to the Sector**

Occupational specificity measures how exclusive an occupation is to a sector. To the extent that an occupation is concentrated in one sector, it plays a more specialized and vital role for the sector to which it is attached. An occupation can be relatively small in numbers but also be highly sector specific. Therefore, this measure provides an alternative means for identifying relevant occupations.

*Figure 2* illustrates how an occupation's total workforce is distributed between *Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*), Mining and quarrying (NAICS 212)* and all other industries combined. The occupation with the greatest concentration of workers in *Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*)* is shown to be *Drillers and blasters* - surface mining, quarrying and construction (NOC 73402), with 28% of all workers employed by the sector. Other sector-specific occupations include Underground mine service and support workers (NOC 84100) (with 21%) and Underground production and development miners (NOC 83100) (with 19%).

Most of the occupations listed are more specific to *Mining and quarrying (NAICS 212)*, highlighting that these occupations are commonly found in both overlapping sectors. Conversely, there are few occupations with a greater share of workers in *Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*)*, such as *Drillers and blasters - surface mining, quarrying and construction (NOC 73402)*.

# FIGURE 2 Top 30 Occupations with Greatest Share of Workers in Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*) and Mining and quarrying (NAICS 212) (2021)

			Share of Occupation Emplo	yment	
Drillers and blasters - surface mining, quarrying and construction	1	28.2%	<mark>6.6%</mark>	65.3%	
Underground mine service and support workers	2	21.3%	63.4%		15.3%
Underground production and development miners	3	18.6%	69.5%		11.9%
Mine labourers	4	16.4%	71.9%		11.7%
Supervisors, mining and quarrying	5	15.9%	% 66.3%		
Geoscientists and oceanographers	6 1	.0.8% 13.3%	13.3% 75.9%		
Water well drillers	7 1	0.3%	89.7%		
Managers in natural resources production and fishing	88	.3% 21.9%	<b>21.9%</b> 69.7%		
Geological and mineral technologists and technicians	9 7.	.6% 25.2%		67.2%	
Mining engineers	10 6.3	3% <mark>42</mark>	.9%	50.8%	
Other professional occupations in physical sciences	11 1	<mark>9</mark> % 3.7%	94.4%		
Heavy-duty equipment mechanics	12 <mark>1.</mark>	. <mark>2% 7</mark> .9%	90.9%		
Industrial instrument technicians and mechanics	13 <mark>1.</mark>	<mark>2%</mark> 5.1%	93.7%		
Supervisors, logging and forestry	14 1.	1% 2.3%	96.6%		
Geological engineers	15 1.	<mark>1%</mark> 5.2%	93.7%		
Heavy equipment operators	16 1.	<mark>0% 9.</mark> 4%	89.5%		
Industrial electricians	17 <mark>0.</mark>	<mark>9% 9.</mark> 5%	89.6%		
Non-destructive testers and inspectors	18 0.	9% 0.3%	98.7%		
Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	19 <mark>0.</mark>	<mark>9%</mark> 6.5%	92.6%		
Boilermakers	20 0.	9% 0.5%	98.6%		
Central control and process operators, mineral and metal processing	21 0.9	9% 32.4%	66.7%		
Water transport deck and engine room crew	22 <mark>0</mark> .:	8% 1.1%	98.2%		
Steamfitters, pipefitters and sprinkler system installers	23 <mark>0</mark> .8	8% 0.9%	98.3%		
Other trades helpers and labourers	24 <mark>0.</mark> 8	8% 1.7%	97.5%		
Land surveyors	25 <mark>0.</mark> :	7% 2.1%	97.2%		
Construction inspectors	26 <mark>0</mark> .(	6% 1.0%	98.5%		
Occupational health and safety specialists	27 <mark>0.</mark> 0	6% 2.3%	97.2%		
Technical occupations in geomatics and meteorology	28 <mark>0.</mark> (	6% 0.4%	99.0%		
Metallurgical and materials engineers	29 <mark>0.(</mark>	<mark>6%</mark> 6.6%	92.8%		
Other technical trades and related occupations	30 0.0	6% 0.2%	99.2%		
Support activities for mining	ng (NAI	CS 213*) 🗧 Mining	& quarrying (NAICS 212)	Other Industries	

Share of Occupation Employment

# **Employment in Mining Supply Services**

Employment in the Mining Supply Services sector has trended upward since the turn of the millennium. In *Support activities for mining (21311B),* the workforce has grown from roughly 7,965 workers in 1999 to 27,165 workers in 2022 (Figure 3). This translates to a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.5% over the last two decades.

The sector's trajectory roughly parallels that of *Mining and quarrying* (*NAICS 212*) over the same period, highlighting their close-knit relationship. Even so, the share of mining workers in *Support activities* for mining (21311B) has been increasing. From 1999 to 2022, the supply services sector's share of the joint mining workforce climbed from 13% to 25%, with a temporary peak of 37% in 2012 (*Figure 4*). With nearly a quarter of the workforce, this result suggests that the mining industry is increasingly reliant on the supply services sector in its operations.

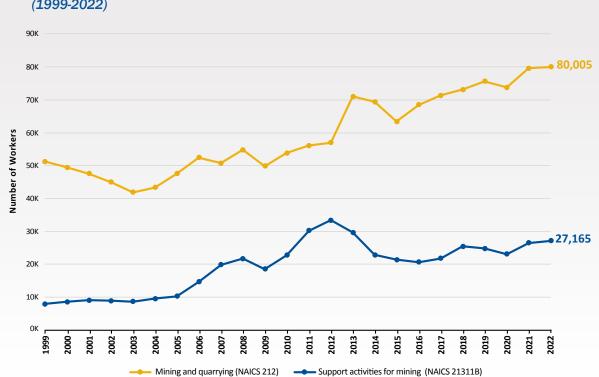


FIGURE 3 *Employment in Support activities for mining (NAICS 21311B) and Mining and quarrying (NAICS 212)* (1999-2022)

Source: Mining Industry Human Resources Council, A Closer Look at Canada's Mining Supply Services Sector, 2024; Statistics Canada, Canadian System of National Accounts (Table 36-10-0489-01), 2024.

### FIGURE 4 Share of the Mining Workforce\* in Support activities for mining (NAICS 21311B) (1999-2022)



Source: Mining Industry Human Resources Council, A Closer Look at Canada's Mining Supply Services Sector, 2024; Statistics Canada, Canadian System of National Accounts (Table 36-10-0489-01), 2024.

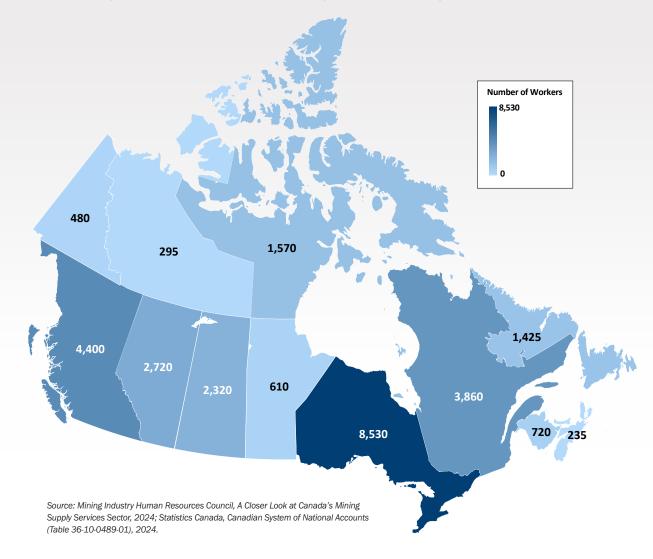
\* Mining workforce includes Support activities for mining (NAICS 21311B) and Mining and quarrying (NAICS 212).

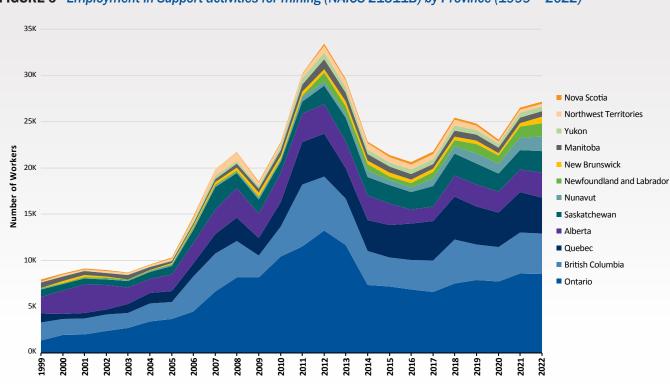
# **Geographical Distribution**

Mining operations span every province and territory in Canada, which naturally involves the Mining Supply Services sector. Figure 5 shows how the workforce in *Support activities for mining (21311B)* is distributed across the country. In 2022, Ontario had the largest workforce (8,530 workers) followed by British Columbia (4,400 workers) and Quebec (3,860 workers). Collectively these three provinces accounted for 62% of the sector. Among the regions, Nunavut experienced the largest expansion over the past two decades, growing from 30 workers in 1999 to 1,570 workers in 2022 (a +5,133% increase) (*Figure 6* and *Table 1*).



FIGURE 5 Employment in Support activities for mining (NAICS 21311B) by Province (2022)





## FIGURE 6 Employment in Support activities for mining (NAICS 21311B) by Province (1999 – 2022)

Source: Mining Industry Human Resources Council, A Closer Look at Canada's Mining Supply Services Sector, 2024; Statistics Canada, Canadian System of National Accounts (Table 36-10-0489-01), 2024.

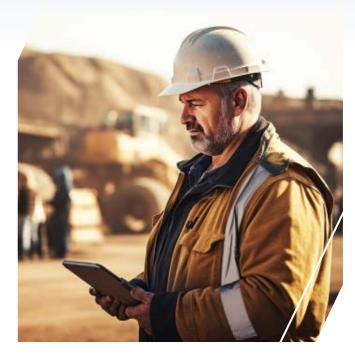
#### **TABLE 1** Employment in Support activities for mining (NAICS 21311B) by Province (2022)

Province/Territory	Employment in 2022	Change in Employment (Since 1999)	% Change	Growth (CAGR)
Ontario	8,530	+7,165	+525%	8%
British Columbia	4,400	+2,435	+124%	4%
Quebec	3,860	+2,915	+308%	6%
Alberta	2,720	+905	+50%	2%
Saskatchewan	2,320	+1,510	+186%	5%
Nunavut	1,570	+1,540	+5,133%	19%
Newfoundland and Labrador	1,425	+1,340	+1,576%	13%
New Brunswick	720	+680	+1,700%	13%
Manitoba	610	+60	+11%	0%
Yukon	480	+405	+540%	8%
Northwest Territories	295	+220	+293%	6%
Nova Scotia	235	+25	+12%	0%
Canada	27,165	19,200	+241%	5%

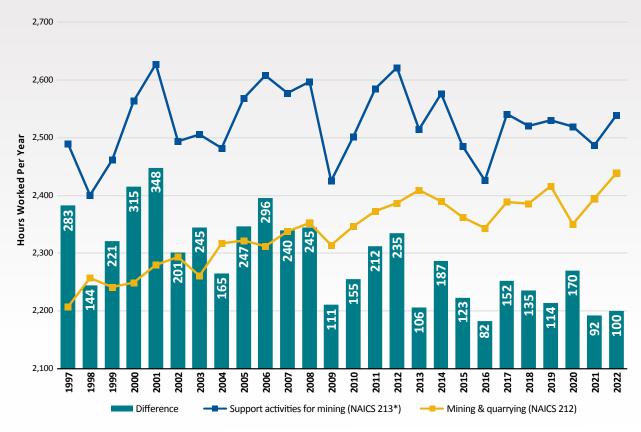
Source: Mining Industry Human Resources Council, A Closer Look at Canada's Mining Supply Services Sector, 2024; Statistics Canada, Canadian System of National Accounts (Table 36-10-0489-01), 2024.

# **Average Hours of Work**

Hours of work provide an important measure of both the labour input and productivity within an industry. The average number of hours worked per employee is generally higher in Support activities for mining (NAICS 21311B) compared to Mining and Quarrying (NAICS 212), although the gap has been narrowing over time, from 283 hours in 1997 to 100 hours in 2022 (Figure 7). The current gap between sectors translates to roughly 12.5 more working days per year (using eight-hour days as the benchmark). This divergence is largely due to the occupational mix within sectors. Given that Mining Supply Services workers have historically had relatively higher work hours, their hours have not grown substantially. For workers in this sector, average annual hours have expanded from 2,490 hours in 1997 to 2,539 hours in 2022.







Source: Mining Industry Human Resources Council, A Closer Look at Canada's Mining Supply Services Sector, 2024; Statistics Canada, Canadian System of National Accounts (Table 36-10-0676-01), 2024.

# **Hourly Wage Rates**

On average, the wage rate in Mining Supply Services is consistently above other industries. In 2022, *Support activities for mining (NAICS 21311B)* paid \$48.15 per hour on average, while all industries paid \$38.35 per hour (Figure 8). Note that these wage rates encompass a variety of roles, responsibilities and experience levels.

Wage inflation in the sector also has kept pace with other industries. Since 1997, *Support activities for mining (NAICS 21311B)* wages have grown by 3.12% (CAGR), close to the 3.09% (CAGR) observed across all industries.

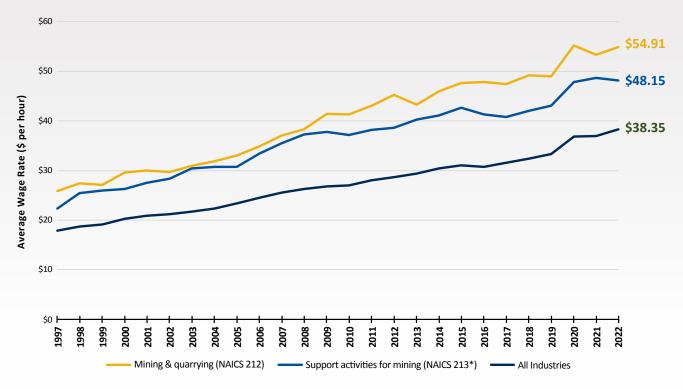
The average wage rate is comparatively higher in *Mining and quarrying (NAICS 212)*, with an annual growth rate of 3.07% (CAGR) since 1997, resulting in an average wage rate of \$54.91 per hour in 2022. Further investigation is needed to understand why

this difference persists. There are various factors at play, which include the business cycle, demographic trends and occupational mix, among others.



#### **FIGURE 8**

Hourly Wage Rates in Support activities for mining (NAICS 21311B) and Mining and quarrying (NAICS 212) (1997 – 2022)



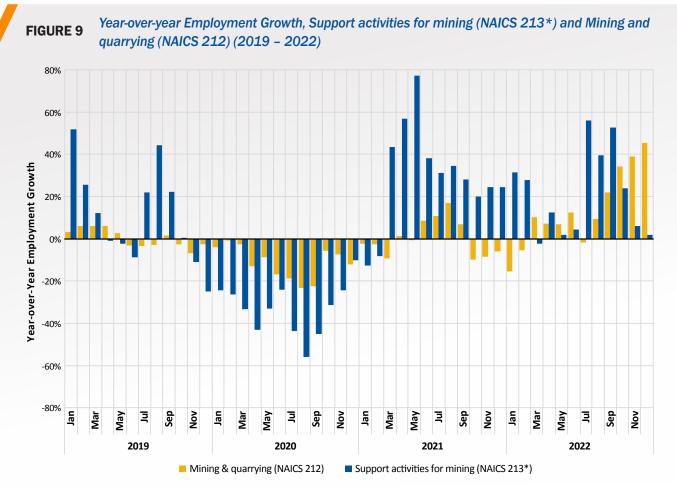
Source: Mining Industry Human Resources Council, A Closer Look at Canada's Mining Supply Services Sector, 2024; Statistics Canada, Canadian System of National Accounts (Table 36-10-0676-01), 2024.

# Volatility in Mining Supply Services

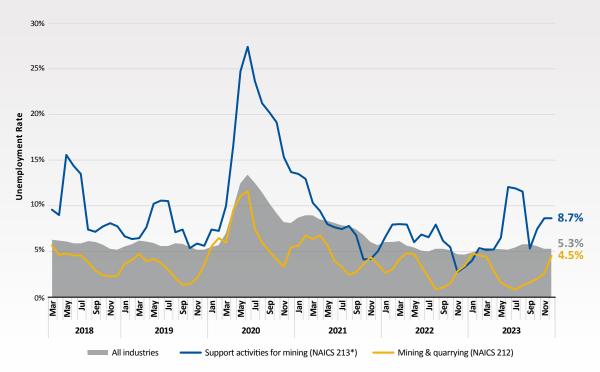
The mining industry experiences regular cycles that expand and contract the workforce over time. Aside from seasonal fluctuations, mining employment is affected by medium- and long-term macroeconomic trends (e.g., metals and minerals prices). The business cycle affects both conventional mining and Mining Supply Services, though to different degrees. *Figure 9* shows year-over-year changes in employment for both subsectors, with *Support activities for mining* (*NAICS 213\**) displaying much higher volatility in the growth and contraction of its workforce.

Mining Supply Service providers offer flexibility to mining employers as they expand or contract their operational needs and capacity. For this reason, employees in the supply services sector are more sensitive to the business cycle than their mining and quarrying counterparts. This is evident in *Figure 10*, which shows that the *Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*)* sector generally has a higher unemployment rate than *Mining and quarrying (NAICS 212)*. For instance, the 2020 pandemic period highlighted a severe uptick in the unemployment rate, which was felt much more intensely in Mining Supply Services.

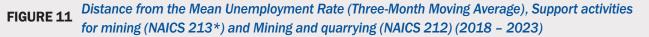
Figure 11 shows to what extent unemployment rates tend to stray from their average in Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*) and Mining and quarrying (NAICS 212). Mining Supply Services exhibit not only a higher average unemployment rate, but also wider fluctuations.

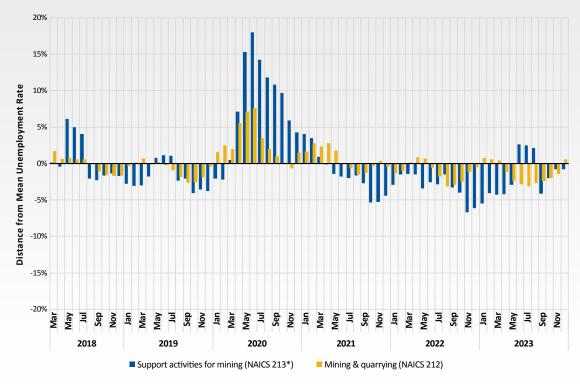






Source: Mining Industry Human Resources Council, A Closer Look at Canada's Mining Supply Services Sector, 2024; Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (Custom Data). \* Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*) removes Alberta and Saskatchewan due to biases caused by the oil and gas component of the sector.

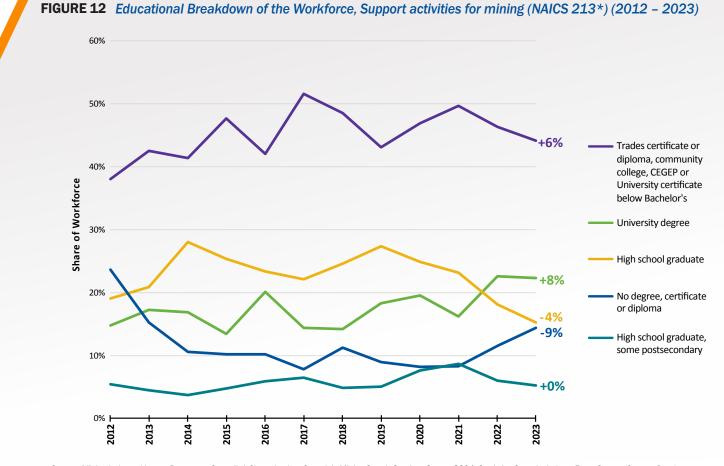




# **Educational Mix**

The mining industry employs individuals from a wide range of educational backgrounds. In 2022, workers with a trades or college certificate represented the greatest share (44%) of Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*), followed by workers with a university degree (22%) and a high school diploma (15%) (Figure 12). Over the last decade, the education mix has broadly trended toward workers with a postsecondary education certificate (i.e., university, college and trades), though in recent years there has been a slight resurgence in the percentage of workers without a high school diploma or certificate. Nevertheless, as mineral extraction techniques advance, it is expected that the workforce will shift towards higher levels of education and training to meet evolving demands.

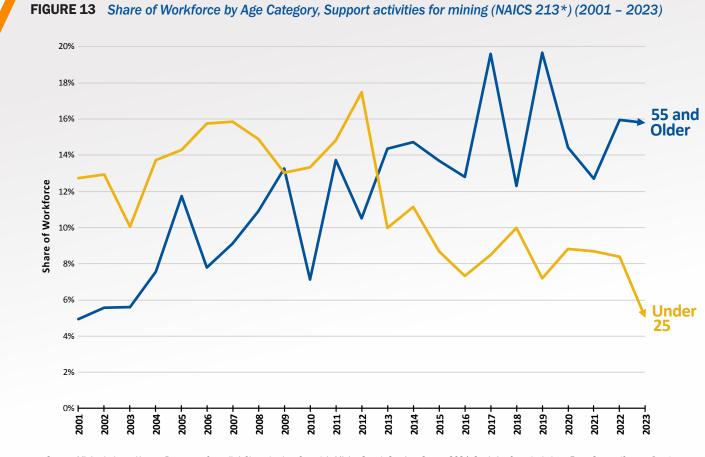




# **Age Trends**

An aging workforce continues to be a concern for many industries, and the Mining Supply Services sector is no exception. Over the last decade, *Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*)* shows a widening age gap, as the share of workers under 25 years old has declined from 17.5% to 5%, while the share of workers 55 years and older has climbed from 10.5% to 15.8% (*Figure 13*). MiHR has found a similar pattern in other mining-related sectors. The shift towards an older workforce has the potential to lead to labour shortages; as older experienced workers enter retirement, a skills gap may emerge in the succeeding generations.





# **Diversity in the Mining Supply Services**

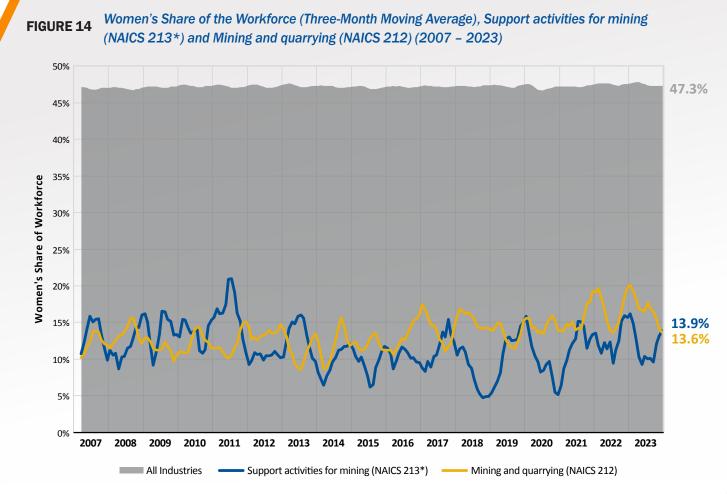
The mining industry's challenges with inclusion and diversity are well-established and have been explored in previous MiHR publications.<sup>2</sup> Prior studies have found that certain equity-deserving groups (notably women and immigrants) are significantly underrepresented in the mining industry compared to other sectors in the economy. The inability to tap into specific segments of the labour pool exacerbates labour market tightness and compromises the industry's ability to respond to periods of growth. These challenges also extend to the Mining Supply Services Sector.

2 For example, see MiHR's 2024 report: Equity Deserving Groups in Canada's Mining Industry

## Women

At roughly half of Canada's overall workforce, women represent a sizable group with the potential to fill the industry's labour and skills shortages. From 2007 to 2023, women's representation in *Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*)* averaged about 11.7% (*Figure 14*). This result tracks closely that of *Mining and quarrying (NAICS 212)*, with both sectors exhibiting low representation and a flat trendline over the years. Still, *Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*)* shows a wider variance, with women's representation ranging between 4.7% and 21%.



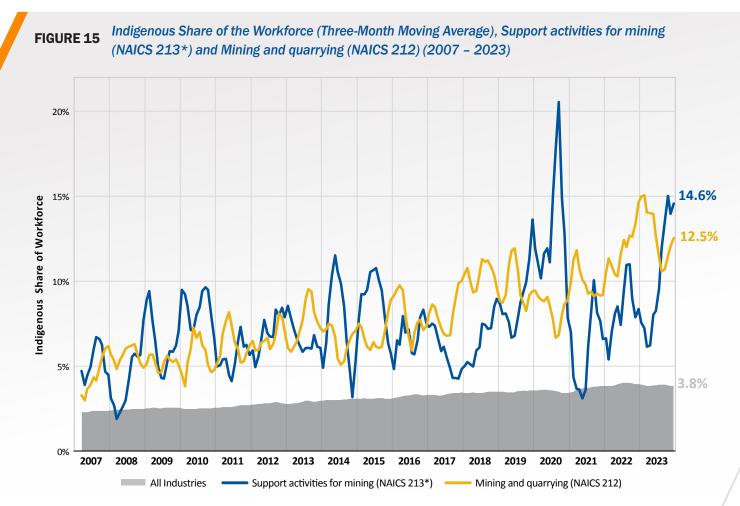


# **Indigenous Peoples**

Mining stands as one of the major employers of Indigenous peoples in Canada, consistently surpassing other industries in terms of representation within its workforce. In *Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*)* Indigenous representation was about 14.6% in 2023, and roughly comparable to the numbers observed in *Mining and Quarrying (NAICS 212) (Figure 15)*. Furthermore, representation in mining has grown considerably for Indigenous workers in the Mining Supply Services sector.

As with other indicators shown in this report, the sector has been characteristically volatile, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic beginning in 2020. In that period, Indigenous representation fluctuated between 3.4% and 20.1%.





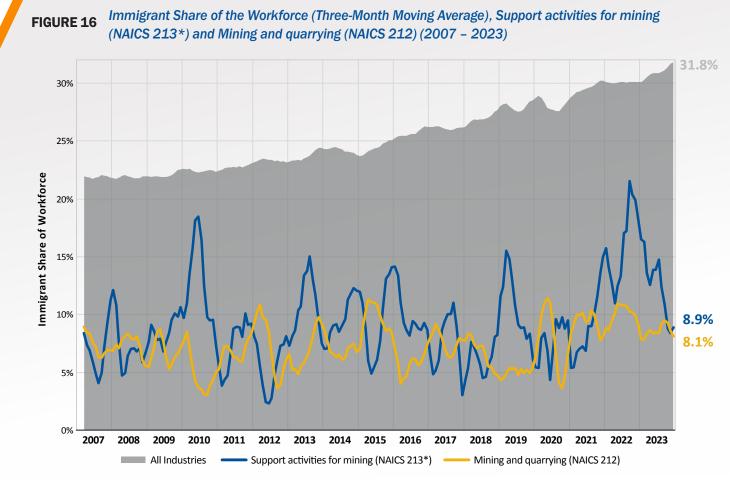
# **Immigrants**

As the main driver of Canada's population growth, Immigrants present a significant opportunity to alleviate labour shortages. However, representation among immigrants in the mining industry is growing at a much slower pace compared to other industries.

In 2023, immigrants represented roughly 9% of *Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*)*, which is comparable to *Mining and quarrying (NAICS 212)* at 8% (*Figure 16*). Although the two mining sectors have similarities, *Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*)* displays a greater degree of volatility, as representation has reached as high as 21.5% and has fallen as low as 2.3%.



Both sectors show relatively stagnant levels of representation and only a slight positive trend by contrast, immigrant representation across all industries has gained roughly 10 percentage points since 2007.



# **Summary of Key Findings**

This analysis examined several key metrics related to the Canadian Mining Supply Services sector's workforce and labour market characteristics. The main findings are as follows:

#### Not a sector easy to define:

Given its wide range of roles and functions within the mining industry, Mining Supply Services is a sector that is difficult to define. Leading data sources, such as those employing the NAICS system, also encounter specific challenges when describing the sector. This report describes the sector using *Support activities for mining, and oil and gas extraction* (NAICS 213)<sup>3</sup> as the primary foundation.

#### Occupational mix overlaps with conventional mining:

The occupational mix reveals which roles are being utilized the most by the Mining Supply Services sector. Underground production and development miners (NOC 83100) (9.8%), Geoscientists and oceanographers (NOC 21102) (4.5%), and Transport truck drivers (NOC 73300) (4.2%) are among the most prevalent occupations in Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*). Not only do these occupations cover a wide range of diverse functions that support the mining industry, but they also overlap with the common roles found in other mining sectors.

#### Few occupations are highly specific to the sector:

For most occupations that are relevant to Mining Supply Services, there is a larger contingent of workers also found in Mining and quarrying (NAICS 212). Nevertheless, certain occupations are more specific to *Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*)* including *Drillers and blasters* - *surface mining, quarrying and construction (NOC 73402),* Geoscientists and oceanographers (NOC 21102), and *Construction trades helpers and labourers (NOC 75110).* 

3 See Section 1 for a description of the sectoral definitions used in this report for Support activities for mining (21311B) and Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*).

#### Growing reliance on the sector:

Employment in Mining Supply Services has trended upward since the turn of the millennium. In *Support activities for mining (21311B)*, the workforce has grown from roughly 7,965 workers to 27,165 workers in 2022. Additionally, the sector's prevalence within the mining industry has climbed from 13% to 25%, an indication that the industry is increasingly reliant on the supply services sector in its operations.

#### Wide geographical distribution:

The Mining Supply Services sector spans across every region in Canada. In *Support activities for mining (21311B)*, Ontario had the largest workforce (8,530 workers) followed by British Columbia (4,400 workers) and Quebec (3,860 workers) in 2022. Collectively these three provinces accounted for 62% of the sector's employment.

#### Working more hours on average:

The average number of hours worked per employee is generally higher in *Support activities for mining* (*NAICS 21311B*) relative to *Mining and Quarrying* (*NAICS 212*), although the gap has narrowed over time – from 283 hours in 1997 to 100 hours in 2022. The current gap between sectors translates to roughly 12.5 more working days per year (using eight-hour days as the benchmark).

#### Higher average wage rate:

On average, the wage rate in Mining Supply Service is consistently above other industries. In 2022, *Support activities for mining (NAICS 21311B)* paid \$48.15 per hour on average, while all industries paid \$38.35 per hour. At the same time, the average wage rate in *Mining and quarrying (NAICS 212)* has outpaced *Support activities for mining (NAICS 21311B)* with a rate of \$54.91 per hour in 2022.

#### Greater employment volatility and sensitivity to business cycles:

The business cycle affects both conventional mining and Mining Supply Services, though to different degrees. *Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*)* displays much higher volatility in the growth and contraction of its workforce. Unemployment rates show a similar trend, as employees in the supply services sector are more sensitive to the business cycle than their mining and quarrying counterparts.

#### Most frequently hold a Trades or college certificate:

The mining industry relies on people from a wide range of educational backgrounds. Workers with a trades or college certificate represented the greatest share (44%) of *Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*)*, followed by workers with a university degree (22%) and a high school diploma (15%). Altogether, the education mix has trended toward workers with a post-secondary education certificate (i.e., university, college, and trades).

#### The aging workforce:

Like other mining sectors, the Mining Supply Services sector has an aging workforce. Over the last decade, *Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*)* shows a widening age gap, as the share of workers under 25 years old has declined from 17.5% to 5%, while the share of workers 55 years and older has climbed from 10.5% to 15.8%.

#### Familiar challenges with diversity:

Certain diversity trends observed in Canada's mining industry extend to the Mining Supply Services sector. Like *Mining and quarrying (NAICS 212)*, both women and immigrants are underrepresented in *Support activities for mining (NAICS 213\*)*, while Indigenous peoples have significantly increased their participation in the sector over the past decade.