

ARE FORMER B.C. POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS MOVING TO ALBERTA?

Tracking Employment Mobility with
BC Student Outcomes Surveys

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Contents

Contents	2
Acknowledgments	2
Background.....	4
Research Objectives and Scope.....	6
Methodology	6
Overall Mobility of Respondents.....	8
Gender.....	11
Age.....	12
Programs	13
Other Demographic Characteristics.....	16
Prior Post-Secondary Education.....	17
Employment Outcomes	17
Conclusion	19
References.....	21

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List of Tables

Table 1. Number of movers by survey type.....	8
Table 2. Trends in mobility to AB.....	11
Table 3. Gender ratio for all respondents, Movers, and Movers to AB by survey.....	12
Table 4. Employment characteristics of BGS respondents by their mobility status (moved, moved to AB, did not move).	18
Table 5. Employment characteristics of DACSO respondents by their mobility status (moved, moved to AB, did not move).	18
Table 6. Employment characteristics of APPSO respondents by their mobility status (moved, moved to AB, did not move).	19

List of Figures

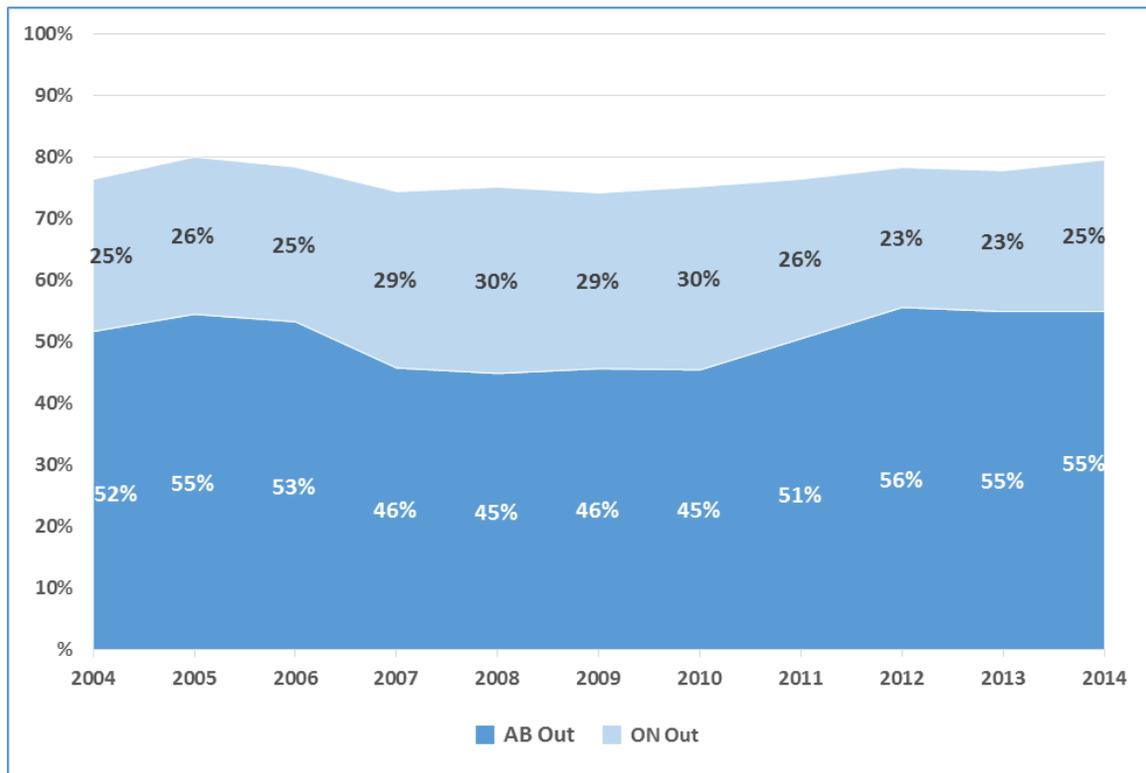
Figure 1. Out-migration from B.C. to AB and ON (Percent of total).....	4
Figure 2. B.C. net migration to AB and ON	5
Figure 3. Destination regions of baccalaureate respondents from four B.C. study regions	9
Figure 4. Destination regions of diploma, associate degree, and certificate respondents from four B.C. study regions.....	9
Figure 5. Destination regions of apprenticeship respondents from four B.C. study regions.....	10
Figure 6. Mobility to AB (DACSO and APPSO 2012 – 2014; BGS 2011 – 2013)	10
Figure 7. Age group distribution (%) of Total Cohort (All respondents), Movers, and Movers to AB by survey	13
Figure 8. Percentage of movers by CIP cluster among baccalaureate respondents (2011 – 2013)	14
Figure 9. Percentage of movers by CIP cluster among diploma, associate degree, and certificate respondents (2012 – 2014).....	15
Figure 10. Percentage of movers by Trade Program Grouping among apprenticeship respondents (2012 – 2014)	16
Figure 11. Percentage of movers, by Aboriginal identity and survey	17

Background

The recent plan to expand trades training in British Columbia (B.C.) emphasizes the projections of jobs related to liquefied natural gas and other extractive industries (WorkBC 2014). However, the Business Council of British Columbia (BCBC) has voiced concerns about educating a workforce which may move to work in the mining and oil and gas sectors in neighboring Alberta (AB) after receiving B.C. post-secondary training. BCBC estimates that interprovincial employees who *commute* to AB for work constitute 1.2% of all labour in B.C. (BCBC 2014). This is topped up by those who *move* to AB for employment. Over 50% of the interprovincial workers are under the age of 35, and in 2012/13 the B.C.-to-AB out-flow was most significant for the 15-24 and 25-34 age groups (BCBC 2014).

AB has been the most prominent destination for interprovincial out-migration from B.C., followed by Ontario (ON) (BC Stats 2014b). These two provinces have been drawing the highest numbers of all out-bound migrants from B.C. over the last decade (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Out-migration from B.C. to AB and ON (Percent of total)



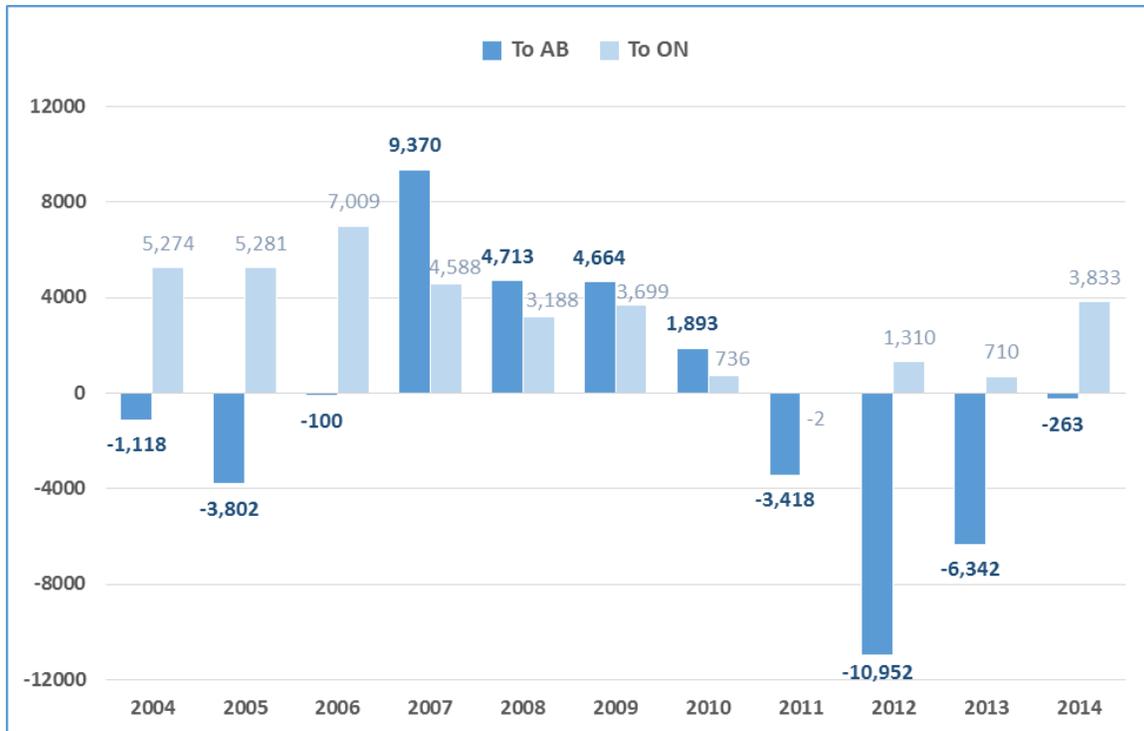
Source: BC Stats 2003 – 2014 mobility data (BC Stats 2014b).

The biggest demand in AB has been for workers in the oil and gas sector. Although the volatility of oil prices influences labour demands and labour migration, for example low oil prices in 2014 may have resulted in smaller negative net migration B.C. to AB (Figure 2), the demand for workers in AB is likely to continue to impact B.C.'s economy. Milke (2014) reported that although the B.C. net migration of young adults (age 25 to 34) was positive¹ from 2003 to 2012;

¹ Positive net migration implies that in-bound migrants outnumber out-bound migrants. Negative net migration occurs when more people leave a region than move to it.

the years following the economic recession (2008 – 2012) evidenced a negative net migration in B.C. for the 25 to 34 age group. AB and Saskatchewan provided most appeal for this age group in terms of opportunity to earn income and receive higher wages (Milke 2014).

Figure 2. B.C. net migration to AB and ON



Source: BC Stats 2003 – 2014 mobility data (BC Stats 2014b).

Students in degree programs in AB and Saskatchewan were also found to be most likely to move outside their province after graduation, unlike B.C. students who were the least willing to move of all Canadian provinces (Usher et al. 2014). Degree graduates were attracted to regions with greater “access to good jobs, healthcare services, and a low crime rate” (Usher et al. 2014; p. 15). Similar findings were discovered by the Conference Board of Canada (2014). The AB labour force has grown 1 to 3% more per annum than employment in B.C. for the last decade with the exception of 2005 and 2010 (BC Stats 2015). The labour force is attracted by higher wages in AB: the average weekly wage rate in December 2014 was \$1,082 in AB vs. \$880 in B.C., and the average hourly wage rate was approximately \$3.5 greater in AB than in B.C. in 2013 (BC Stats 2014a).

The mobility of the workforce between provinces has been facilitated by several agreements:

- The Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT): The document governs recognition of certificates of qualification (rights to practice, licenses, etc.) issued by any Canadian jurisdiction (Canadian First Ministers 2009). This recognition applies to fully certified or licensed individuals.
- The Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA): TILMA is an agreement similar to AIT between British Columbia and Alberta (TILMA 2009a). TILMA removes barriers to mobility for more than 100 occupations. However, TILMA lists 127 occupations that are regulated only in B.C., and 72 professions that require license or certification only in AB (TILMA 2009b).

- The New West Partnership Trade Agreement (NWPTA): The Agreement is an accord between the governments of B.C., AB, and Saskatchewan which further builds upon the AIT and TILMA (Canada's New West Partnership 2010).
- The Federal Red Seal Program: The Program covers over 50 skilled trades which constitute more than 80% of the Canadian Trades workforce. The Red Seal endorsement informs employers and the general public that the trades person has passed the standardized test applicable across provinces.

Following the concern over possible shortages of skilled labour in B.C. and skill drain to other provinces, the current project aimed to provide insights into B.C. graduates' inter- and intra-provincial mobility to policy makers, administrators, and institutional researchers at post-secondary institutions.

Research Objectives and Scope

The goal of this study was to attempt to track B.C. post-secondary graduates' mobility by utilizing BC Student Outcomes survey data.

(<http://outcomes.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/AnnualSurveys/AboutAnnualSurveys.aspx>)

The study questions included the following:

- Are there significant differences in employment outcomes between those who move and those who do not (i.e. in employment rates, hours of work, wages)?
- Which credential types show higher mobility rates?
- What broad program categories show relatively more mobility within B.C. or to AB?
- What age groups are relatively more mobile?
- Which region of B.C. shows relatively more mobility internally or to AB?
- Is there evidence of growing numbers of B.C. graduates moving to AB for employment?

Methodology

The aggregated data from three surveys (2011 – 2013 Baccalaureate Graduates Survey (BGS) and 2012-2014 Diploma, Associate Degree, and Certificate Student Outcomes (DACSO) Survey and Apprenticeship Student Outcomes (APPSO) Survey) were used for this purpose. The aggregated tabular data were analyzed to track the mobility of recent graduates from B.C. to AB from four B.C. Study Regions: Lower Mainland, Vancouver Island, Northern B.C., and Interior and Kootenays. Within-B.C. mobility between these regions was also explored. All baccalaureate graduates, diploma, associate degree certificate, and apprenticeship graduates were considered in this analysis. Graduates' mobility to AB was assessed specifically to investigate its potential appeal due to higher wages and more employment opportunities.

Throughout this report, the following definitions were used:

Aboriginal Identity – BC Student Outcomes survey respondent that self-identified as being an Aboriginal person (First Nations, Inuit, or Métis).

APPSO (Apprenticeship Student Outcomes Survey) – a BC Student Outcomes survey aimed at assessing graduates of apprenticeship programs who have completed the final year of their apprenticeship technical training at B.C. post-secondary institutions. The survey is

conducted approximately a year and a half after the former apprenticeship students completed their in-school training.

BGS (Baccalaureate Graduates Survey) – a BC Student Outcomes survey aimed at assessing graduates of baccalaureate programs at B.C. public post-secondary institutions. The survey interviews former students both two and five years after graduation.

CIP Cluster – a grouping of educational programs, based on Canadian Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) of 2011.

DACSO (Diploma, Associate Degree, and Certificate Student Outcomes Survey) – a BC Student Outcomes survey aimed at assessing former students who took diploma, associate degree, and certificate programs at B.C. public post-secondary institutions. The survey is conducted when former students have been out of their programs for approximately 9 to 20 months.

Destination Region – a region of a BC Student Outcomes survey respondent's current location, as identified by the respondent's postal code.

Graduate – a person assessed by a BC Student Outcomes survey (i.e., BGS, DACSO, or APPSO). Note that not all respondents to the DACSO survey have official status as graduates. Those who did not have official graduate status had completed most of the requirements for a credential.

Mobility – inter- and intra-provincial migration of BC Student Outcomes survey respondents.

Mover – a BC Student Outcomes survey respondent whose Study Region and Destination Region differ.

Study Region – a B.C. region, where a graduate's post-secondary institution is located.

Several caveats need to be taken into consideration when interpreting the results of this analysis. Some non-response bias may be present in the study, as it was more difficult to contact those graduates who had moved. Thus, the movers may comprise a larger percentage than identified in this analysis. Even if survey responses were received, some portion of responses did not contain information about the respondents' location at the time of the survey (destination region). For example, one in five baccalaureate graduates did not provide this information, and their responses were excluded from the analysis. It is possible that, if this information had been available, a higher percentage of movers could have been identified. Although it was not possible to rule out that the B.C. respondents commuted out-of-province to work, the fact that their destination region was B.C. (as identified through their postal code) implied certain ties with the province.

Another caveat is the inability to specify the driver for mobility: some mobile graduates may be returning home from their post-secondary studies in B.C. or another B.C. region. The timing of the survey assessment may also have an impact on the results: baccalaureate graduates are surveyed at least two years after graduation, while most diploma, associate degree, certificate, and apprenticeship respondents reply to the survey within a year and a half after leaving their studies. This earlier assessment may identify fewer movers than an assessment of similar timing.

Overall Mobility of Respondents

The greatest mobility was observed among BGS respondents—based on both the largest percentage of respondents who moved from their study region, and the largest percentage of respondents who left B.C. (Table 1, Figure 3). Baccaalaureate graduates appeared to be more mobile than diploma, associate degree, and certificate graduates, and apprenticeship graduates. This was consistent with the earlier findings that B.C. out-migration of university graduates after graduation was higher than the out-migration of college graduates after graduation (Statistics Canada and CMEC, 2009).

Table 1. Number of movers by survey type

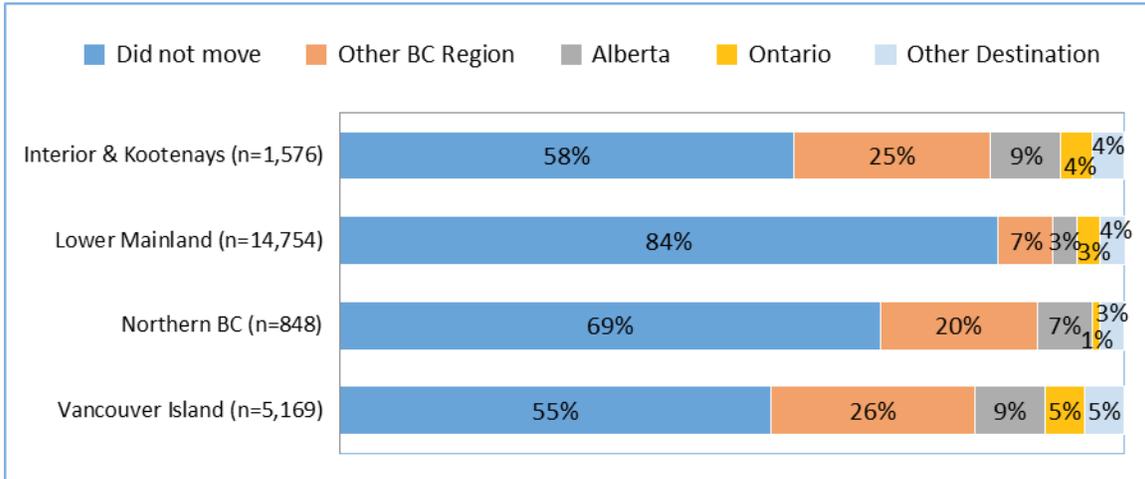
	BGS 2011-2013	DACSO 2012-2014	APPSO 2012-2014
Respondents with known destination region	22,347	42,915	9,842
Movers	5,655	5,198	1,689
% of respondents	25%	12%	17%
Movers within B.C.	2,965	3,416	1,425
% of respondents	13%	8%	14%
Movers to AB	1,075	942	188
% of respondents	5%	2%	2%
Movers to ON	736	292	-
% of respondents	3%	1%	-
Movers to other non-B.C. locations	879	548	76*
% of respondents	4%	1%	1%*
Non-movers	16,692	37,717	8,153
% of respondents	75%	88%	83%

*Notes: The number of APPSO Movers to ON was too small to report separately. The number of APPSO Movers to ON was included into APPSO Movers to other non-B.C. locations.

The analysis of mobility of respondents from the four B.C. study regions (Interior and Kootenays, Lower Mainland, Northern B.C., and Vancouver Island) revealed that the majority of respondents remained in B.C. after completion or graduation (88% of baccaalaureate respondents, 96% of diploma, associate degree and certificate respondents, and 97% of apprenticeship respondents) (Figures 3 to 5). Moreover, a large percentage stayed in their study region (75% of baccaalaureate; 88% of diploma, associate degree, and certificate; and 83% of apprenticeship respondents). Apprenticeship respondents showed the lowest tendency to move outside of the province.

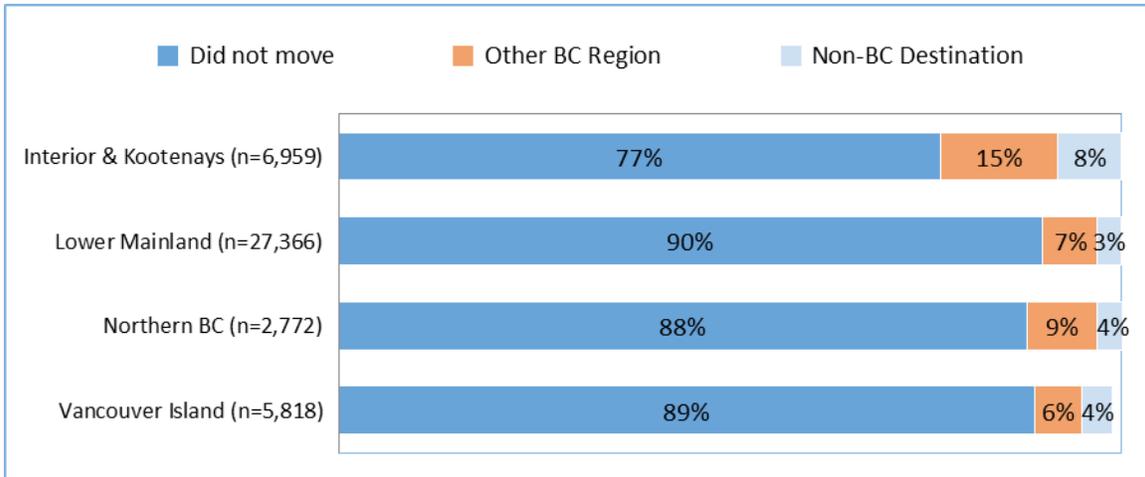
Respondents from the Interior and Kootenays study region were the most mobile (Figures 3 to 5). The percentage of respondents who remained in this study region after completion or graduation was the lowest among all study regions for apprenticeship, diploma, associate degree and certificate graduates (77% for both DACSO and APPSO), and third lowest for baccaalaureate respondents (58%). Among baccaalaureate respondents, only the Vancouver Island study region retained fewer graduates at 55% (Figure 3). In general, among all study regions, the respondents of the Interior and Kootenays study region were more likely to move out of B.C. (16% of BGS respondents, 8% of DACSO respondents, and 5% of APPSO respondents).

Figure 3. Destination regions of baccalaureate respondents from four B.C. study regions



Notes: The data do not include the respondents with unknown destination region (20% of all respondents).

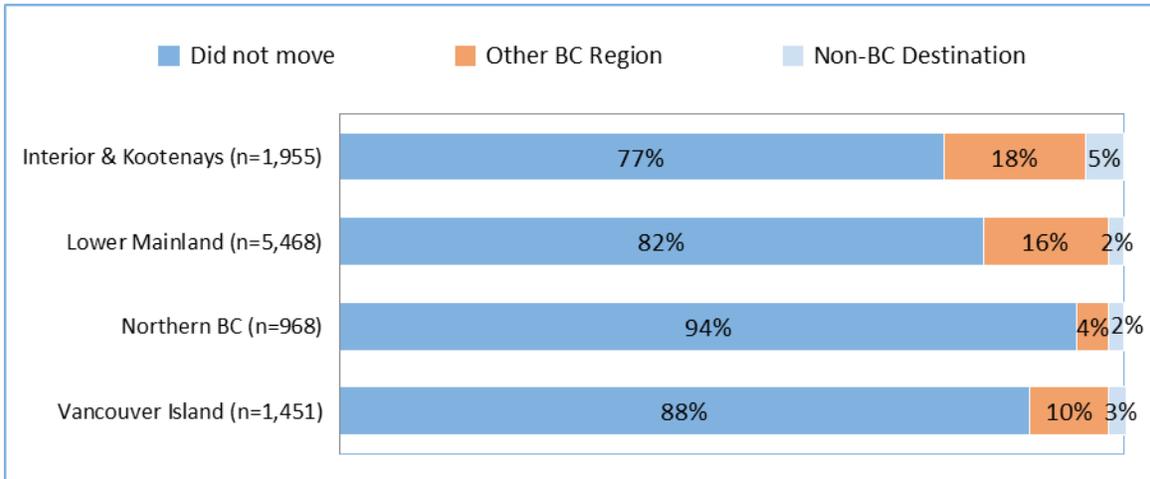
Figure 4. Destination regions of diploma, associate degree, and certificate respondents from four B.C. study regions



Notes: The data do not include the respondents with unknown destination region (5.3% of all respondents).

For all three surveys, a high percentage of respondents from the Lower Mainland study region remained in the region, especially baccalaureate graduates (84%) and diploma, associate degree, and certificate graduates (90%), less so for apprenticeship respondents (82%). Apprenticeship respondents from Northern B.C. had the lowest mobility: 94% of respondents remained in the study region (Figure 5). Northern B.C. as a destination region drew 10% of apprenticeship respondents who studied in the Interior and Kootenays region and 5% of apprentices from Lower Mainland.

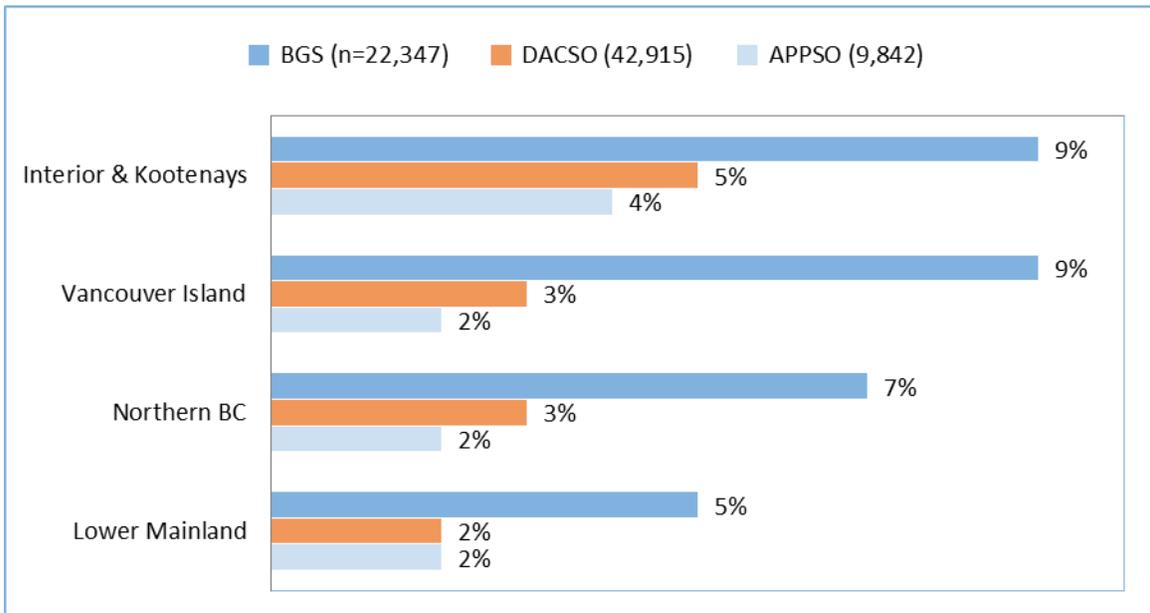
Figure 5. Destination regions of apprenticeship respondents from four B.C. study regions



Notes: The data do not include the respondents with unknown destination region (3.8% of all respondents).

Proximity to AB could be a factor driving in the highest percent of movers from Interior and Kootenays regions to AB (Figure 6): 9% of baccalaureate respondents, 5% of diploma, associate degree, and certificate respondents, and 4% of apprenticeship respondents indicated AB as their destination region. Among the three surveys, baccalaureate respondents show the highest mobility for each study region and overall, implying that baccalaureate graduates were most mobile. Though we are unable to estimate from the available data, it is possible that the proximity to the B.C. Interior and Kootenays region could be a factor in driving students from AB to study there, as the region is close to the border, so a number of those graduates could be returning home.

Figure 6. Mobility to AB (DACSO and APPSO 2012 – 2014; BGS 2011 – 2013)



On average, a smaller percentage of apprenticeship respondents (2%) and diploma, associate degree, and certificate respondents (2%) moved to AB compared to bacculaureate respondents (5%). Although there was a slight increase in the mobility to AB among diploma, associate degree, and certificate respondents and bacculaureate respondents (less than 1% per year for diploma, associate degree, and certificate respondents, and for bacculaureate graduates), apprenticeship respondents' trend for AB movers appeared relatively stable (Table 2).

Table 2. Trends in mobility to AB

Year	APPSO		DACSO		BGS	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
2011	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	332	4%
2012	60	2%	288	2%	330	5%
2013	75	2%	336	2%	413	5%
2014	53	2%	318	2%	n/a	n/a
Total	188	2%	942	2%	1,075	5%

It is very difficult to identify the reason for mobility. About one in five (21%) of diploma, associate degree, and certificate respondents had relocated from their home community to attend their post-secondary program. An even greater percent of apprenticeship respondents relocated to attend their post-secondary studies (28%). The BGS survey does not ask respondents whether they needed to relocate for their bacculaureate studies, and the percent of respondents “returning home” was not possible to estimate. Thus, the fact that some of the respondents may have returned to their home region or province after completion or graduation adds to the difficulty of categorizing movers and non-movers and of establishing the driver for mobility.

Gender

The proportion of females who moved to AB was smaller than the proportion of all respondents for the diploma, associate degree, and certificate survey (50% vs. 55%) (Table 3). The exception was female apprenticeship respondents, where female proportion of movers to AB was higher (14%) than for all respondents (10%) and movers in general (10%), implying that females are slightly more mobile to AB than males among apprenticeship respondents.

Table 3. Gender ratio for all respondents, Movers, and Movers to AB by survey

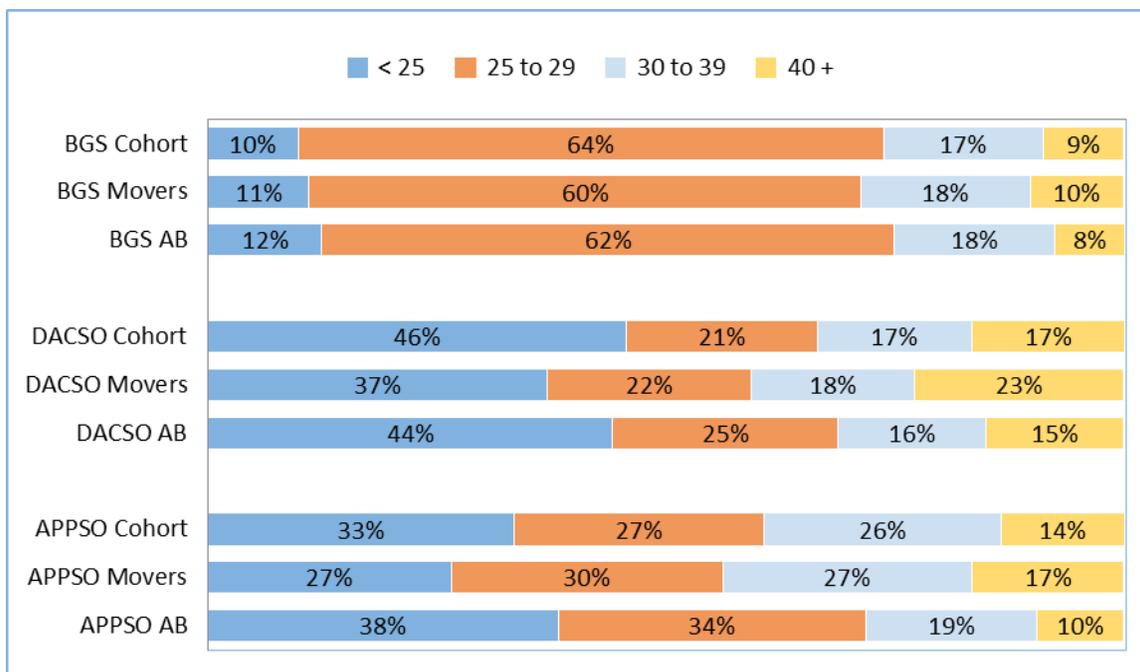
	n	F	M
Baccalaureate			
Respondents	22,347	62%	38%
Movers	5,655	63%	37%
Movers to AB	1,075	61%	39%
Diploma, Assoc. Degree, Certificate			
Respondents	42,898	55%	45%
Movers	5,193	53%	47%
Movers to AB	942	50%	50%
Apprenticeship			
Respondents	9,825	10%	90%
Movers	1,683	10%	90%
Movers to AB	188	14%	86%

Age

The analysis of the respondents' demographic characteristics also revealed that the age group distribution of baccalaureate movers to AB as well as diploma, associate degree, and certificate movers to AB were more comparable with the age group of the all respondents (movers and non-movers combined) for each survey (i.e., BGS and DACSO). On the other hand, all graduate movers in the 30 plus age group had a higher combined percentage than either all respondents or movers to AB (Figure 7). Thus, movers to AB for each of the three surveys were younger than movers in general for that survey. The percentage of younger age groups (under 25 and 25-29 groups combined) was the highest for the movers to AB.

Given the differences in the duration of respondents' post-graduate studies (i.e. baccalaureate graduates vs. diploma, associate degree, certificate, or apprenticeship graduates), there were more respondents under 25 for diploma, associate degree, and certificate, and apprenticeship respondents than for baccalaureate respondents. This characteristic is also presented in Figure 7.

Figure 7. Age group distribution (%) of Total Cohort (All respondents), Movers, and Movers to AB by survey

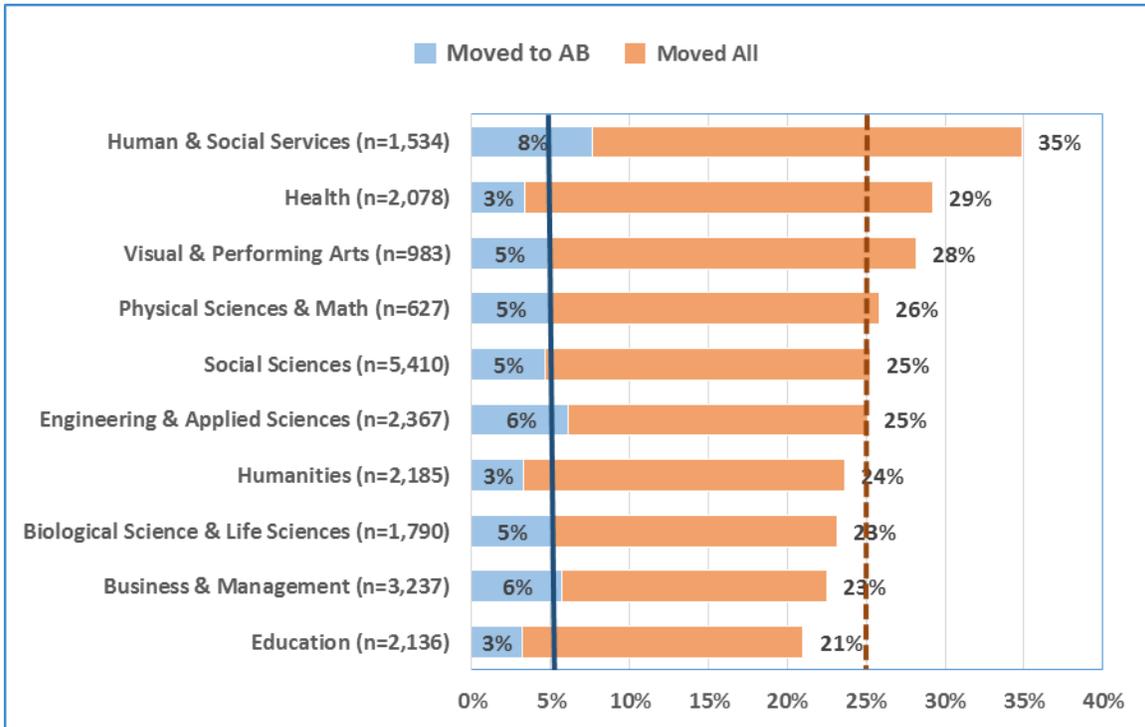


Programs

Differences in programs among the respondents prompted separate analyses for all three surveys (Figures 8-10). In the figures, solid vertical lines show overall percent for movers to AB and dashed vertical lines show overall percent of all movers by survey.

Baccalaureate mobile respondents in “Human and Social Services” (35% of all respondents), “Health” (29%) and “Visual and Performing Arts” (28%) programs were most likely to have moved (Figure 8). Mobility to AB results indicated that respondents who completed “Human and Social Services” programs had the highest mobility (8% of all respondents in the program area), followed by “Engineering and Applied Sciences” (6%) and “Business and Management” (6%). Graduates of programs in Education, Health, and Humanities moved to AB the least (Figure 8).

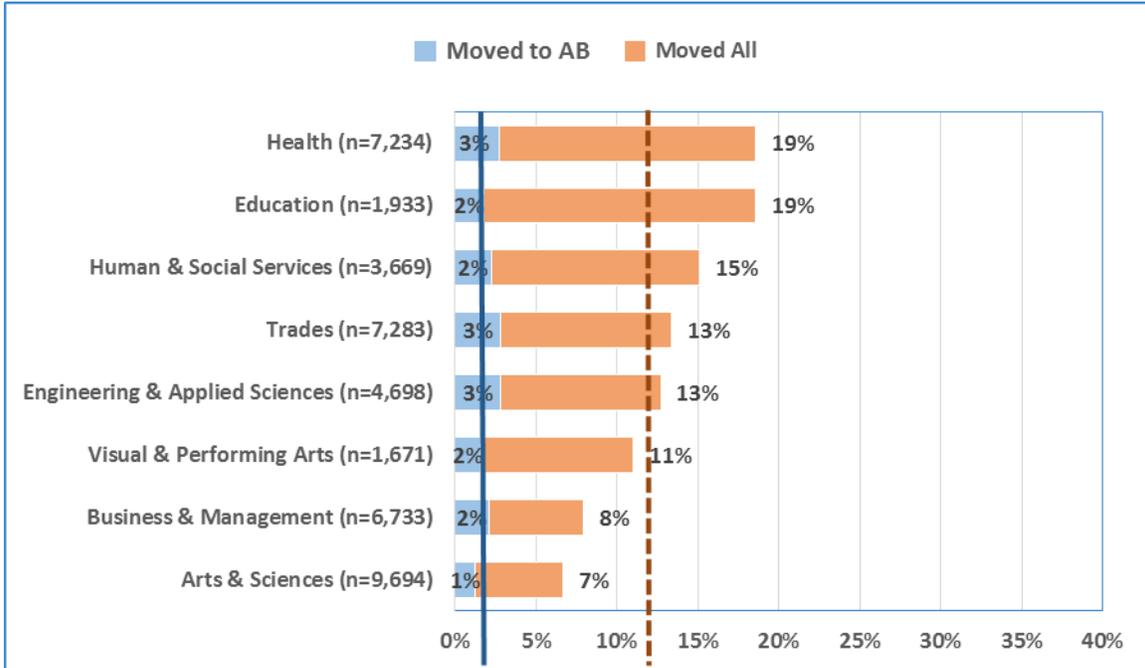
Figure 8. Percentage of movers by CIP cluster among baccalaureate respondents (2011 – 2013)



Notes: Solid vertical line shows the overall average percentage for movers to AB, and dashed vertical line shows overall average percentage for all movers.

For diploma, associate degree and certificate mobile respondents, the percentage of respondents from those programs who moved after studies were highest for “Health” (19%) and “Education” (19%) programs. Among the respondents, those who graduated from Trades programs moved and also moved to AB at a relatively larger rate than graduates in other program areas (13%, more than the overall average of 12%; and 3% of Trades programs moved to AB, which is above the AB average of 2% for all programs). The next most frequent programs for movers to AB were “Health” and “Engineering and Applied Sciences” programs, both at 3% mobility to AB (Figure 9).

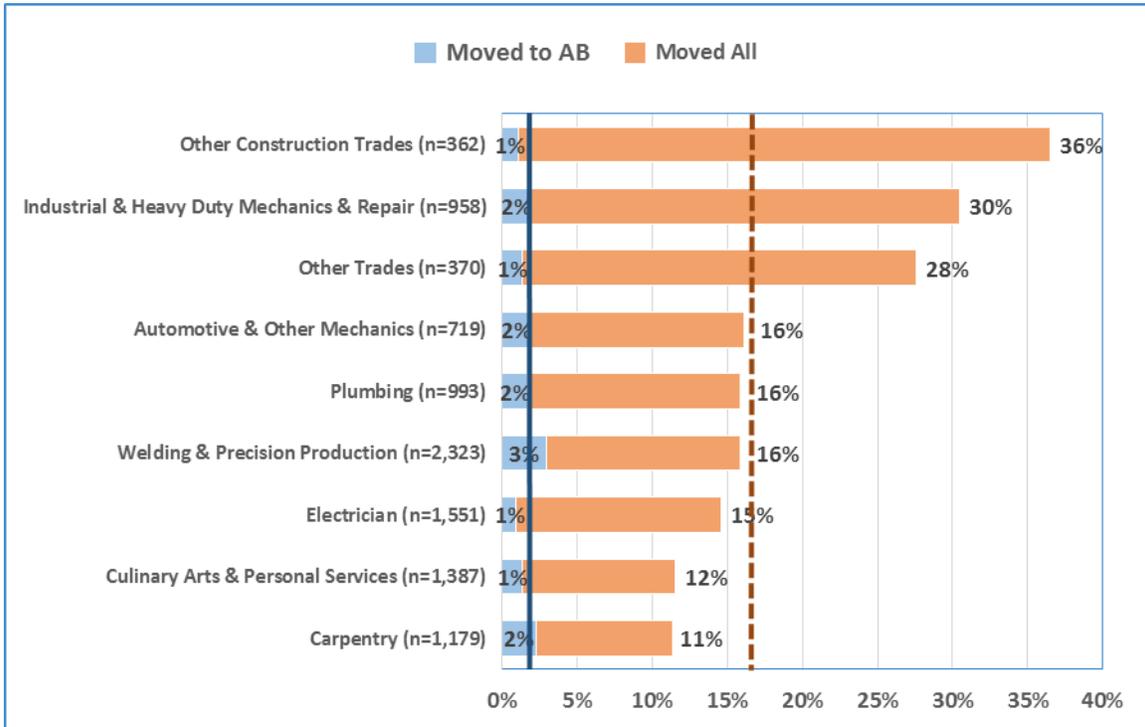
Figure 9. Percentage of movers by CIP cluster among diploma, associate degree, and certificate respondents (2012 – 2014)



Notes: Solid vertical line shows the overall average percentage for movers to AB, and dashed vertical line shows overall average percentage for all movers.

The Trades Program Grouping of apprenticeship movers to AB may indicate greater demand for certain trades, such as Welding and Precision Production (3% moved to AB), and Carpentry (2%) among all other program groupings (Figure 10). Electricians (1%) and other construction trades professionals (1%) moved to AB the least. Although “Other Construction Trades”, “Industrial and Heavy Duty Mechanics and Repair” and “Other Trades” had the highest percentages of movers, the relatively low number of respondents in those programs did not speak to a widespread mobility trend.

Figure 10. Percentage of movers by Trade Program Grouping among apprenticeship respondents (2012 – 2014)

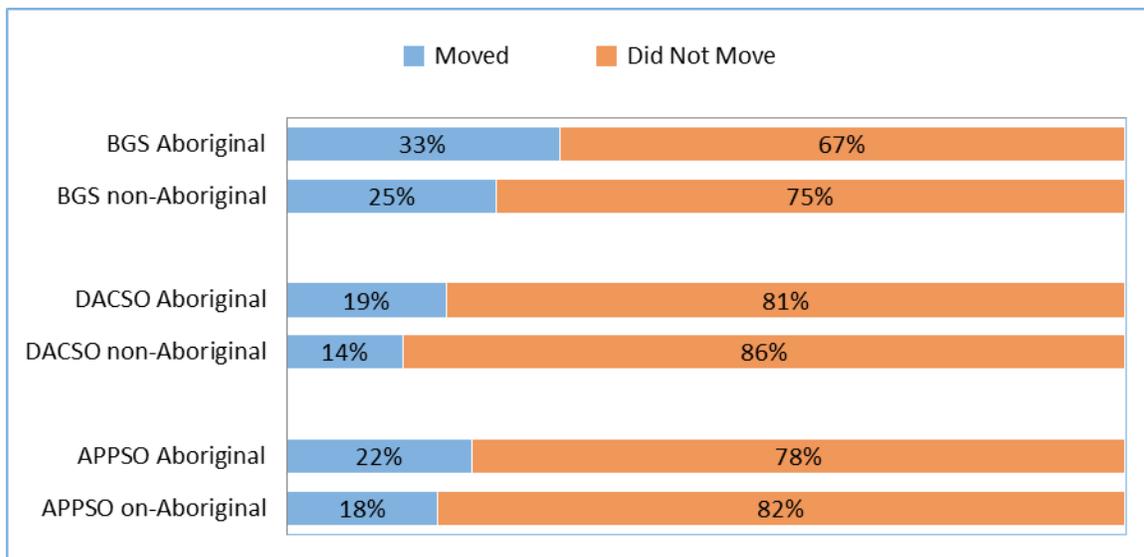


Notes: Solid vertical line shows the overall average percentage for movers to AB, and dashed vertical line shows overall average percentage for all movers.

Other Demographic Characteristics

Respondents with Aboriginal identity were more likely to move compared with other respondents: 19% vs. 14% of DACSO mobile respondents, 33% vs 25% of BGS mobile respondents, and 22% vs. 18% for APPSO mobile respondents (Figure 11). The opposite was true for diploma, associate degree, and certificate respondents with Aboriginal identity who moved to AB: only 2% of Aboriginal respondents moved to AB, while for non-Aboriginals the percent was higher (3%). The non-Aboriginal movers' percentage was also higher for baccalaureate respondents who moved to AB: the percentages were 3% (Aboriginal) vs 6% (non-Aboriginal).

Figure 11. Percentage of movers, by Aboriginal identity and survey



Prior Post-Secondary Education

Some graduates had had post-secondary education prior to enrolling into their most recent program. Respondents who attended multiple post-secondary programs can belong to a generally more mobile group of graduates. Diploma, associate degree, and certificate mobile respondents were more likely to move if they had taken some post-secondary education prior to graduating from their last program (14% vs. 10% for non-movers). The same was found if the respondents received a previous post-secondary credential (16% movers vs. 11% non-movers). The types of previous credentials included trades citations (entry-level credentials that formally recognize a specific area of study), certificate or diplomas; non-trades certificates, diplomas or associate degrees; and bachelor and graduate degrees.

APPSO respondents who received another Certificate of Qualification (20% mobile vs. 17% non-mobile), as well as a trades diploma, certificate, or citation (18% vs. 16%) in a different field were more likely to be mobile. Those APPSO respondents who had taken pre-apprenticeship training were more likely to stay: 15% mobile vs. 18% non-movers. On the contrary, smaller percentages of those who previously had a baccalaureate degree (16% vs. 17%) or post-baccalaureate certificate or diploma (10% vs. 17%) were mobile.

Employment Outcomes

A recent CIBC analysis noted a decline in overall employment quality (Tahl 2015). The BC Student Outcomes survey responses provide insight on different aspects of employment quality. Overall, the employment quality of all mobile respondents and of movers to AB appeared higher than for those who did not move. These results were found for the following employment quality criteria: lower unemployment for movers (except for BGS respondents), being employed, being employed full-time, being a paid employee, the permanency of the position, and wages (mean and median wages for DACSO and APPSO, and median annual income for BGS) (Tables 4,

5, and 6). The results for movers to AB were more strongly associated with employment quality than those for movers overall.

Table 4. Employment characteristics of BGS respondents by their mobility status (moved, moved to AB, did not move).

	BGS (n=22,347)*					
	Moved		Moved to AB		Did not Move	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Unemployed	5,644	6.8%	1,072	5.2%	16,645	6.6%
Employed full-time	4,324	85.5%	857	90.9%	13,129	81.8%
Main job related to training	4,414	76.2%	872	78.4%	13,517	71.5%
Salary	5,644	\$	1,072	\$	16,645	\$
Median Annual Income		\$53,500.00		\$60,000.00		\$46,000.00
Full-time Main Job						

*Note: “n” denotes the total number of respondents by survey. The number of responses for each survey question varies.

The jobs of diploma, associate degree, and certificate mobile respondents as well as baccalaureate mobile respondents were more often related to their training than their non-mobile counterparts (80% mobile vs. 68% non-mobile for DACSO, and 76% mobile vs. 71% non-mobile for BGS). The percentages of mobile and non-mobile apprenticeship respondents did not show much difference—for both groups around 90% of respondents had jobs related to training.

Table 5. Employment characteristics of DACSO respondents by their mobility status (moved, moved to AB, did not move).

	DACSO (n=42,915)*					
	Moved		Moved to AB		Did not Move	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Unemployed	4,544	8.3%	822	5.2%	32,062	10.2%
Working at a job or business	5,187	80.3%	942	82.7%	37,599	76.6%
Employed full-time	3,936	86.5%	753	91.0%	27,030	74.5%
Main job related to training	4,160	80.4%	778	76.9%	28,736	68.1%
Permanent position	3,907	83.7%	733	85.9%	26,747	80.2%
Paid employee	4,158	95.0%	777	95.5%	28,721	94.7%
Same/similar job before or while attending PSE	4,157	31.1%	778	20.7%	28,727	35.0%
Wages	2,903	\$	589	\$	17,049	\$
Mean Wage		\$25.09		\$26.31		\$20.57
Median Wage		\$22.99		\$23.00		\$19.01

*Note: “n” denotes the total number of respondents by survey. The number of responses for each survey question varies.

Some apprenticeship respondents' results stood out from other survey findings. Fewer apprenticeship respondents who moved to AB were employed in a job related to their training than APPSO non-movers or movers to other locations (86% vs. 90%) (Table 6). For diploma, associate degree, and certificate mobile respondents, 31% mobile vs. 35% non-mobile respondents returned to jobs they had had before or while attending post-secondary education (Table 5).

Table 6. Employment characteristics of APPSO respondents by their mobility status (moved, moved to AB, did not move).

	APPSO (n=9,842)*					
	Moved		Moved to AB		Did not Move	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Unemployed	1,628	8.00%	179	6.7%	7,795	8.7%
Working at a job or business	1,687	88.7%	188	88.8%	8,143	87.4%
Employed full-time	1,457	97.9%	N/A		6,850	96.4%
Main job related to training	1,496	90.2%	167	85.6%	7,109	90.4%
Permanent position	1,416	92.7%	160	93.1%	6,688	91.1%
Paid employee	1,494	95.0%	167	95.8%	7,102	94.8%
Same/similar job before or while attending PSE	479	85.6%	52	76.9%	2,380	78.7%
Wages	1,346	\$	158	\$	6,233	\$
Mean Wage		\$32.03		\$32.57		\$27.47
Median Wage		\$31.00		\$31.04		\$27.00

*Note: "n" denotes the total number of respondents by survey. The number of responses for each survey question varies.

Conclusion

This study attempted to track the inter- and intra-provincial mobility of post-secondary graduates through the responses to BC Student Outcomes surveys—DACSO, APPSO, and BGS. While some data caveats are to be considered, such as the difficulty to define movers in some cases, the inability to specify the driver for mobility—some mobile graduates may be returning home from their post-secondary studies in B.C. or another B.C. region—and the inability to reach some mobile graduates to respond to the survey, the analysis indicates that the scale of respondents' mobility out of the province was small. Baccalaureate degree recipients were the most mobile of the three survey respondents in both inter- and intra-provincial movement. Among the B.C. regions, Interior and Kootenays respondents were least likely to stay in their study region, specifically for apprenticeship respondents (77%) while apprenticeship respondents from Northern B.C. were most likely to stay in the region (94%).

The gender ratio of the movers typically did not differ more than 2% of all respondents (both movers and non-movers), but the movers to AB had a higher proportion of females than the all respondents for APPSO, while DACSO movers to AB showed an opposite trend. Younger age groups among movers were only found for APPSO respondents; for BGS and DACSO, the movers

to AB age group distributions were similar to all respondents. The highest percent of mobile respondents was found in educational programs under “Human and Social Services” (BGS), “Health” (DACSO), and “Other Construction Trades” (APPSO) groupings. For DACSO and APPSO, mobile respondents with Aboriginal identity comprised larger percentages than the percent of movers who were non-Aboriginal. Previous post-secondary education or credential were characteristic for mobile DACSO and APPSO respondents; less so for non-movers (no BGS data were available).

Overall, higher wages and greater job security continues to be attractive characteristics of the AB labour market; however, the volatility of oil prices and their effect on related industries and associated labour challenge the appropriateness of reliance on a single industry sector in a balanced economy. With the changing oil prices, Exarhos (2015) reports a 1% drop in AB employment in the first quarter of 2015 and predicts a higher unemployment in AB later in 2015. The scale of B.C. former post-secondary students’ mobility to AB was rather small (less than 5% of survey respondents), and the insecurity of the Albertan oil and gas sector may reduce the scale of B.C. out-mobility even further. The prevalence of intra- provincial mobility among BGS, DACSO, and APPSO respondents supports the notion that the diverse B.C. post-secondary system continues to meet the diverse needs of British Columbians.

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