Newfoundland Labrador

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WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ROUNDTABLE
Discussion Guide

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Photos courtesy of the Department of Business, Tourism, Culture & Rural Development

Introduction to the Population Growth Strategy

The **Population Growth Strategy** is the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's plan to grow the province's population by creating conditions favourable to in-migration and increased birth rates. The **Population Growth Strategy** is a call for partnership between the Provincial Government and all stakeholders.

On June 25, 2015, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador released four five-year action plans focused on the workforce, families, communities and immigration as part of the **Population Growth Strategy**. In 2020, a second series of action plans will be released.

Mission of the Population Growth Strategy
"By 2025, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador will create an environment conducive to population stability and growth by introducing supports for workforce development, families, communities, and immigration."

Strategic Directions related to Workforce Development
The Strategy's implementation will be guided by the following strategic directions:

Inform • People within and outside Newfoundland and Labrador of the opportunities in the province.

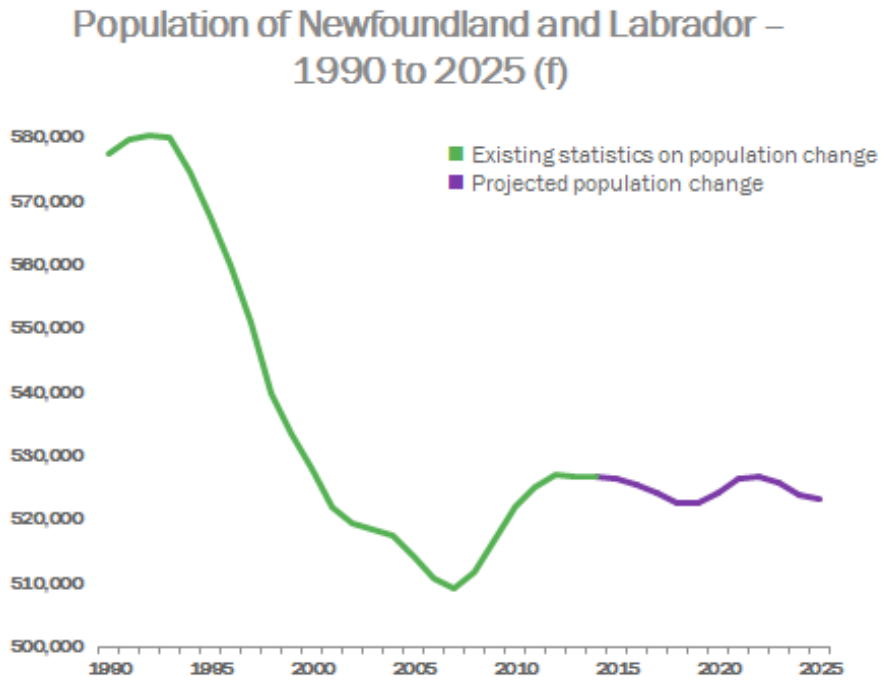
Attract • People to choose Newfoundland and Labrador as their workplace of choice, whether they were born here or elsewhere.

Develop • An educational and training system that assists individuals to develop skills needed to attach to the labour force and maintain that attachment.

Create • Conditions to maximize the ability of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to participate in the labour market by removing barriers to employment.

Respond • To evolving labour market demands and the differing labour market needs of residents by designing flexible Provincial Government programming.

Newfoundland and Labrador's Demographics



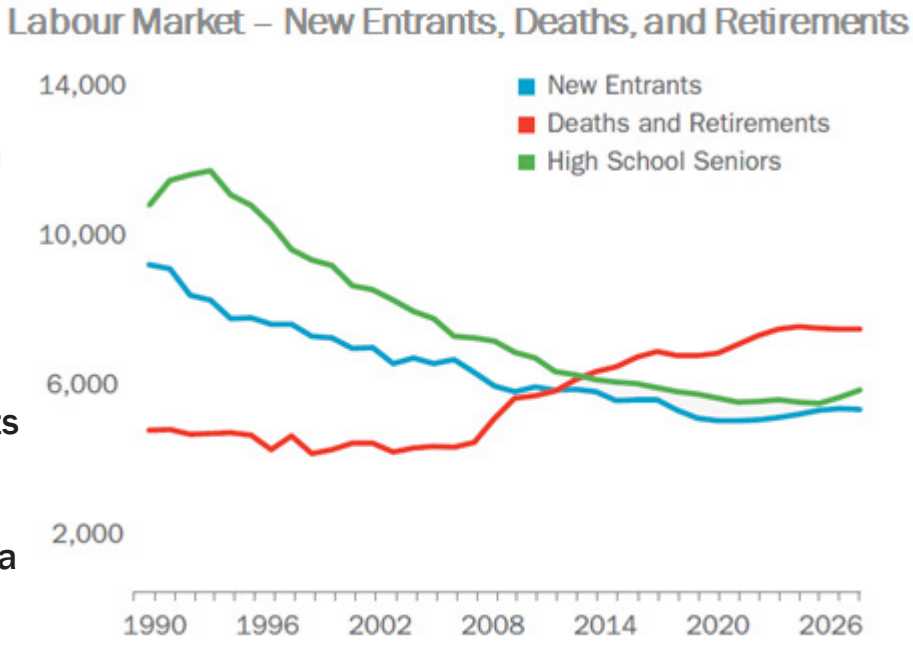
Source: Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Finance, Research and Analysis Division

Between 2008 and 2013, the population of Newfoundland and Labrador grew by 19,000 people after a long period of population loss following the Northern Cod Moratorium in 1992.

Preliminary data from Statistics Canada indicates that in 2014, the province's population declined by 0.2 per cent, reaching 526,977 people.

The province's population is anticipated to fluctuate over the next decade, with years of gain and loss that reflect the cyclical labour market demands of major project cycles. The above noted forecast does not take into account the positive impacts of the Population Growth Strategy, but is rather provided as a baseline to show what is anticipated to happen if no action is taken.

In addition, the province's population is aging and the number of people exiting the labour market is now larger than the number of young people available to replace them. Accordingly efforts are required to ensure young residents of the province have the right educational and training supports to succeed here. Furthermore, immigration and attracting people from elsewhere in Canada will be required to meet labour market demands.



Source: Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Finance, February 2015

Workforce Development Roundtables

Employment opportunities are a key consideration for people when deciding where to live, and whether to stay in the province. In 2013, employment was at a historic high of 242,700 persons, a growth of 15.2 per cent over the last decade. While employment decreased to 238,600 in 2014, this is still 13.2 per cent higher than levels in 2003.[1]

By 2020, when compared to 2014, it is expected that people 65 years of age and older will represent 26 per cent of all working-age people (those 15 years and older). In comparison, 15 to 24 year-olds will represent just 11 per cent of the working-age population in 2020.[2] This projection indicates there will be more people over 65 years of age exiting, and fewer working-age people entering the labour force. This requires Provincial Government to help prepare residents and communities for the changing labour market. It means aligning the K-12 and post-secondary education systems with the labour market, and encouraging businesses to look at the entire province when deciding where to operate. It also means offering assistance that will help people access employment and career development supports to fill these vacant positions.

The Workforce Development Action Plan responds to the varying and complex labour market conditions found throughout the province. This document is a plan not only to support major projects and peak employment, but also to address high unemployment and skill shortages, and to foster both advanced education and entry-level skills development. It is also a plan to support residents throughout the province, whether they are residents already in the workforce, youth and others seeking advice on future education and training, or other residents who face challenges in their efforts to join the workforce.

Types of actions Provincial Government will take include:

- create a labour market forecasting model which enables occupational updates annually; improve access to labour market information for youth in: K-12, post-secondary education and training, and other people in the province;
- provide supports to employers to help match labour supply and demand, create more age-friendly workplaces, and improve their human resources, productivity and succession plans;
- align early learning, primary and secondary school systems, post-secondary training systems, and adult learning opportunities with the labour market;
- create paid internships, grants, and programming to facilitate labour market attachment for under-represented groups, and support skills development; and
- host roundtables throughout the province on the needs and challenges facing Newfoundland and Labrador, and work to address the needs of key in-demand sectors in the province.

1 Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 282-0002
2 Department of Finance, Economic Research and Analysis Division, Population Projections, April 2014

Workforce Development Roundtables continued...

To ensure the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is responsive to the labour market needs of the province, the Workforce Development Action Plan committed to host a series of annual Workforce Development Roundtables to connect with employers, stakeholders and the public on emerging opportunities, and to identify local challenges and appropriate solutions.

In 2015, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has launched the first series of Workforce Development Roundtables. Over the next five years, the Provincial Government will annually engage the public on labour market issues, using a consistent format, to measure success and any changes in input.

Information gathered throughout these roundtables will be used to inform program priorities. Accordingly, a summary of the public input will be provided in the annual report of the Population Growth Strategy. Further, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador will provide feedback to stakeholders at subsequent roundtables on how the previous year's input has been used to inform policies and investments.

The strategic directions of the Population Growth Strategy – inform, attract, develop, create and respond – provide the framework for the roundtables. At each session, participants will be asked a series of questions related to these strategic directions. The questions posed will be consistent across the province. The questions are located at the end of this document.

Questions for Consideration

Inform

Labour market information refers to all qualitative and quantitative knowledge and facts about the workforce, such as measures of employment, unemployment, job vacancy rates and forecasted labour supply and demand. Producing and communicating timely, accurate, and easily understandable labour market information requires reliable data collection and sound statistical analysis, as well as a network of key labour market players who share information on human resource and labour needs.

- What labour market information do you currently use when making business and human resource decisions?
- Are there any gaps in labour market information that is currently available? What information would be of benefit to you?
- What human resource challenges have you been experiencing, if any and why?

Attract

By 2020, the baby boom generation will range in age from 55 to 74. As these individuals retire, job openings will become available. Newfoundland and Labrador will require a robust and vibrant labour force to meet these demands. To prepare to meet this demand, residents, particularly young people, need to be encouraged to remain in Newfoundland and Labrador to live and work. Employers will also need to enhance inclusionary practices within the workforce to help increase participation rates among traditionally under-represented groups, to recruit and retain employees from outside the province, and to improve human resource practices to become employers of choice by designing responsive compensation and benefits packages, human resource strategies, and flexible accommodations.

- What role do you see immigration playing in your business or community?
- What types of jobs in your communities may have to be filled by immigration in the short and long term?
- Have you encountered any challenges with workplace integration of internationally educated individuals, such as matters related to culture or language? If yes, what are some potential supports that could help address these matters, and foster professional success for these individuals?
- What steps do you recommend to foster a welcoming community for newcomers?

Questions for Consideration continued...

Develop

Post-secondary education and training institutions need to continually adapt program offerings and curriculum design to labour market needs. To complement formal credentials, employers are also seeking well-rounded people with strong communication, project management and organization skills. Co-operative education assists in developing the skills demanded by employers. Provincial Government will work with the public and private post-secondary system to support students to develop the skills to fill in-demand jobs.

- What are your current and anticipated training needs? Short-term? Long-term?
- What do you see as some of the main challenges in your area related to training and skills development? Do you have ideas on how to overcome these challenges?
- Are the College of the North Atlantic, Memorial University and Private Training Institutions meeting the education needs of potential employees and preparing them for the labour force? Are the programs offered by these institutions aligned with labour market needs?
- Is the apprenticeship program in Newfoundland and Labrador responsive to labour market needs? Do the current components of the apprenticeship program allow for apprentices to acquire the skill sets required by employers?

Create

Provincial Government is prioritizing the removal of barriers to employment. This will create conditions that maximize the ability of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to participate in the labour market.

- Does your organization take any specific steps to hire individuals from under-represented groups, such as persons with disabilities, Aboriginal people or older workers?
- How can Provincial Government work with employers to foster more inclusive work places?
- What barriers exist to full labour market participation for individuals from under-represented groups?

Providing Input

The Workforce Development Action Plan was guided by and developed through public input during consultations throughout the province.

The Provincial Government is committed to leading initiatives that address the needs and challenges experienced by the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador. Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are encouraged to send ideas, comments, and suggestions through a number of methods:

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Facebook

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To learn more about the Population Growth Strategy, including the Workforce Development Action Plan, please visit:
www.gov.nl.ca/populationgrowth

Notes

Newfoundland Labrador