

LIVE HERE WORK HERE BELONG HERE

Implementation Framework

for the Newfoundland and Labrador Population Growth Strategy, 2015 – 2020



**LIVE HERE
WORK HERE
BELONG HERE**

Implementation Framework

for the Newfoundland and Labrador Population Growth Strategy, 2015 – 2020

Note: The Strategy documents refer to statistical data noting economic, demographic, and other information. Data used in the Strategy Framework, Action Plans, and Implementation Framework was the most recent available at the time of publication.

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Population Growth Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador,
PO Box 8700, St. John's, NL, A1B 4J6
www.gov.nl.ca/populationgrowth

Please e-mail populationgrowth@gov.nl.ca if you require this document in an alternative format.

Copyright: Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
ISBN 978-1-55146-569-2

Table of Contents

1	Introduction
1	The Province’s Population Challenges
5	What Others Have Said About Population Change
6	Responding to Input from Stakeholders
7	Building on Public Investments
8	A Call to Action
10	Background Information on the Workforce Development Action Plan
23	Background Information on the Families Action Plan
35	Background Information on the Communities Action Plan
50	Background Information on the Immigration Action Plan
57	Population Growth Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador: A Summary of Strategic Directions
59	Population Growth Strategy: Actions At A Glance
67	Marking Progress: Accountability to the Public
68	Conclusion
69	Endnotes



Message from the Premier

As Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, it is my pleasure to present **Live Here • Work Here • Belong Here: A Population Growth Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador, 2015 – 2025**.

This **Strategy** lays out a path to the future for our province, and encourages people to come to Newfoundland and Labrador to work, live and raise families. Growing the population is an important step to securing a sustainable future for everyone in our province. The **Population Growth Strategy** is guided by the principles of choice, inclusion, accountability, diversity and partnership. It will serve as a cross-departmental guide for all future population-related initiatives within the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The **Population Growth Strategy** spans a 10-year timeframe with a review in 2019-20. An annual report will be issued to update the public and provide details on progress on actions of the four pillars of population growth – 1) workforce development, 2) families, 3) communities and 4) immigration.

This **Strategy** is an undertaking that involves everyone – individuals, communities, businesses, and municipalities. It is a collective effort, which will help us all reap the benefits of a sustainable population for generations to come. Working together, we will continue our partnerships with community organizations and businesses to meet the needs of our children, our families, our seniors, and all of our residents.

Newfoundland and Labrador has a diverse economy full of opportunities, a skilled and educated population, welcoming communities, and a picturesque lifestyle that is the envy of many. Our vision for this **Strategy** is for individuals within the province, across Canada, and in other countries to choose to **Live Here • Work Here • Belong Here** in Newfoundland and Labrador.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Davis".

Honourable Paul Davis
Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador



Message from the Minister

As Minister of Advanced Education and Skills, I am pleased to join the Premier in presenting **Live Here • Work Here • Belong Here: A Population Growth Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador, 2015 – 2025**.

This Provincial Government strategy, which includes the participation of all departments, comprises four five-year action plans that introduce new, and strengthen existing internal and external initiatives and partnerships that will assist in creating better conditions for population growth throughout our province. These action plans focus on supporting our workforce, families, communities and immigration.

Through this **Strategy**, we will position our beautiful province as a home of choice for people around the world and entice others to come and see what makes us the perfect home for their families. The development of the **Strategy** was guided by consultations with individuals, community organizations, businesses and other stakeholders. Public consultations were held during fall 2013, which led to workshops in communities throughout our province. Discussions were summarized in our **What We Heard** document released in July 2014, which is available on our website at www.gov.nl.ca/populationgrowth

Guided by the **Population Growth Strategy**, we will continue to take steps to decrease outmigration, stabilize our population and increase the number of people choosing Newfoundland and Labrador as their home.

The **Strategy** will promote the economic and lifestyle opportunities available for individuals in this province. It provides families, residents, students and people living outside the province with the right information about our communities, our supports and our labour market to help them make informed decisions about their home of choice – Newfoundland and Labrador.



Honourable Clyde Jackman
Minister of Advanced Education and Skills



Introduction

Newfoundland and Labrador is home to people of many different backgrounds. Improving the personal, family, economic and community well-being of residents is a priority of **Live Here • Work Here • Belong Here: A Population Growth Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador**. The **Strategy** comprises four five-year Action Plans introducing initiatives and partnerships that will assist in creating better conditions for population stability and growth. The second round of Action Plans, covering 2020 to 2025, will be released in 2020 and will be informed by public input.

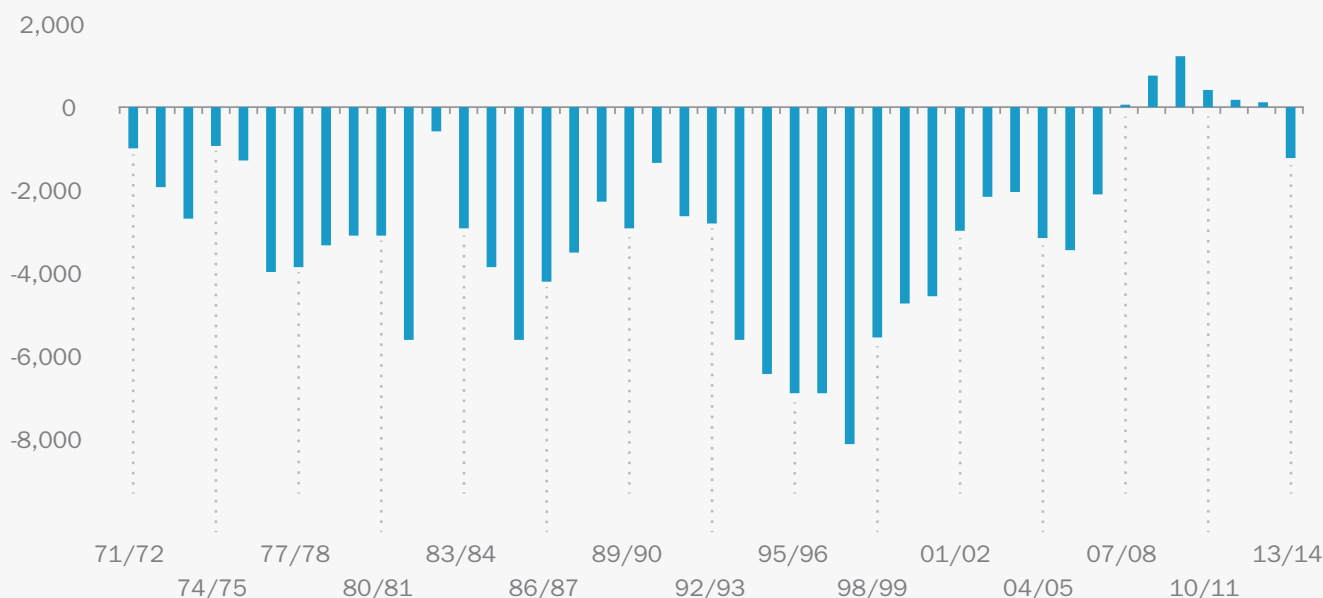
This **Implementation Framework** is complementary to the **Strategy** and the four accompanying Action Plans. This **Framework** is intended to provide additional information on each of the actions Government will pursue in support of population stability and growth. This **Implementation Framework** comprises four separate sections focusing on 1) **workforce development**, 2) **families**, 3) **communities**, and 4) **immigration**.

The Province's Population Challenges

Newfoundland and Labrador is facing significant demographic challenges due to historic youth out-migration, an aging population, and a decline in fertility rates. Most Canadian provinces and territories are facing similar challenges of slowing population growth. Without an intervention, these demographic challenges would create an increasing financial challenges, which would place pressure on Government programming and services.

Fig. 1: Youth (15 to 34 years) net migration from Newfoundland and Labrador, 1971-72 to 2013-14p*

Source: Demography Division, Statistics Canada; Department of Finance



*2013-14 data is preliminary.

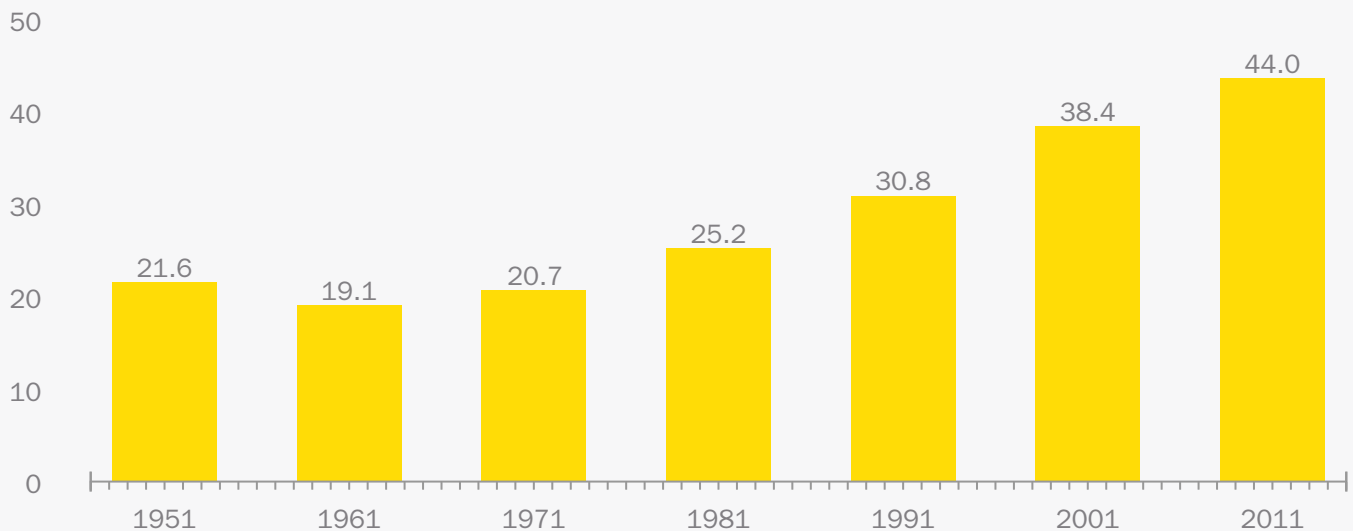
Youth net migration has been estimated by the Department of Finance, Economics and Statistics Branch.

Youth Migration

In terms of individuals aged 15 to 34 years,¹ the province has generally experienced a net loss of people. While the youth age group tends to experience some of the most significant migration losses, the size of the losses have been trending down since the late 1990s.² In fact, over the last seven years the overall youth net migration is estimated to have resulted in a **gain of about 1,500**, the best performance since at least the 1970s.³ With a declining working age population, Newfoundland and Labrador needs to build on the positive youth net migration numbers in recent years in order to meet future labour demand.

Fig. 2: Median age in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1951 to 2011

Source: Census, Statistics Canada



Aging Population

With a median age of 44.6 in 2014, which is the highest in the country, Newfoundland and Labrador has one of the most rapidly aging populations in Canada.⁴ As a result, the provincial working-age population (15 to 64 years old) is projected to decline by 15.6 per cent between 2014 and 2035.⁵

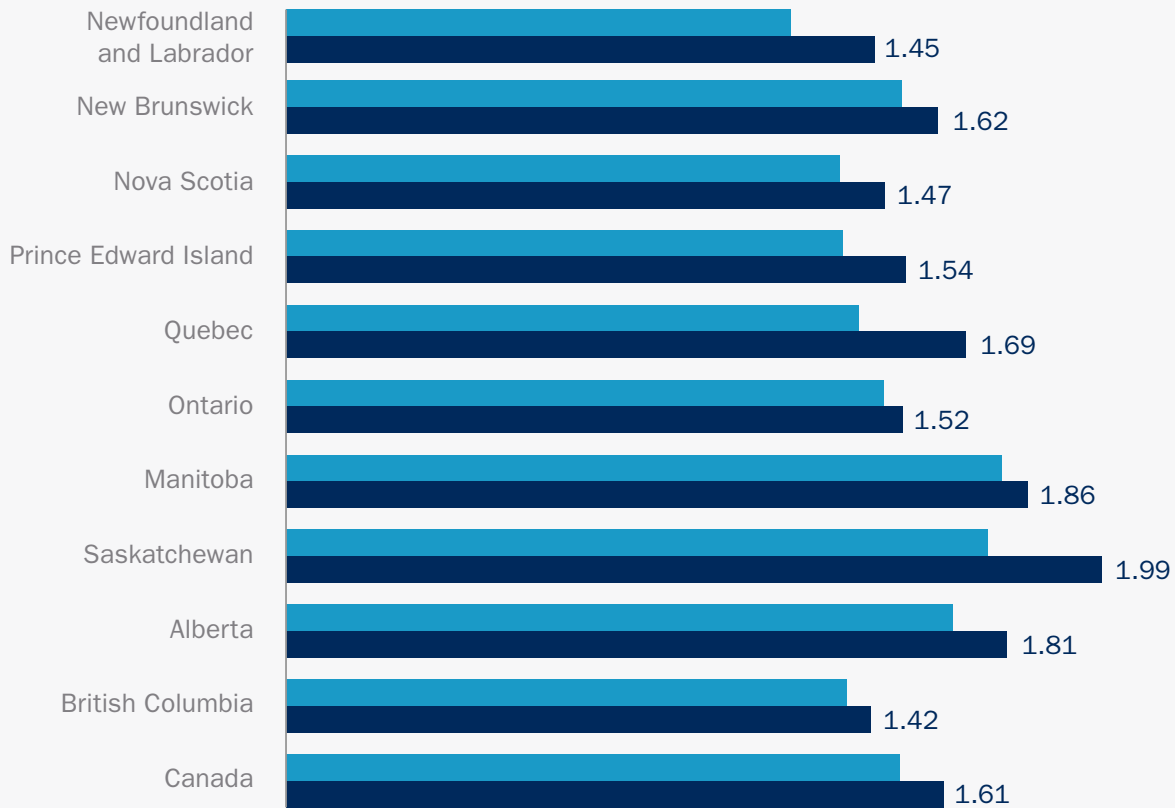
Students exiting the K-12 education system, although shrinking in number, will continue to be the primary source of new labour supply in this province over the next decade. As a result, it is important that people have access to good information on the occupations in demand throughout the province. Supporting and assisting local businesses and employers, in collaboration with industry groups and employer associations, to find the labour they require will be important for economic growth.



Photo courtesy of Supported Employment Newfoundland and Labrador

Fig. 3: Fertility rates across Canada, 2000 and 2011

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 102-4505



Fertility rates refer to the average number of children born to a woman over a lifetime.

Government will also look to improve productivity to address a shrinking labour force, and encourage employers to provide more flexible work schedules and arrangements to encourage and accommodate broader labour market participation.

Fertility Rate and Births

Fertility rates are a product of complex economic, social and cultural factors that only change slowly over time. In order for births and deaths to balance over the long-run, Newfoundland and Labrador would require a replacement fertility rate of 2.1 children for each woman of child-bearing age. In 2011, the fertility rate in Newfoundland and Labrador, or the average number of children born to a woman over a lifetime was 1.45 children, which was second lowest in Canada, after British Columbia at 1.42.⁶



Photo courtesy of Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism

Untapped Labour Sources

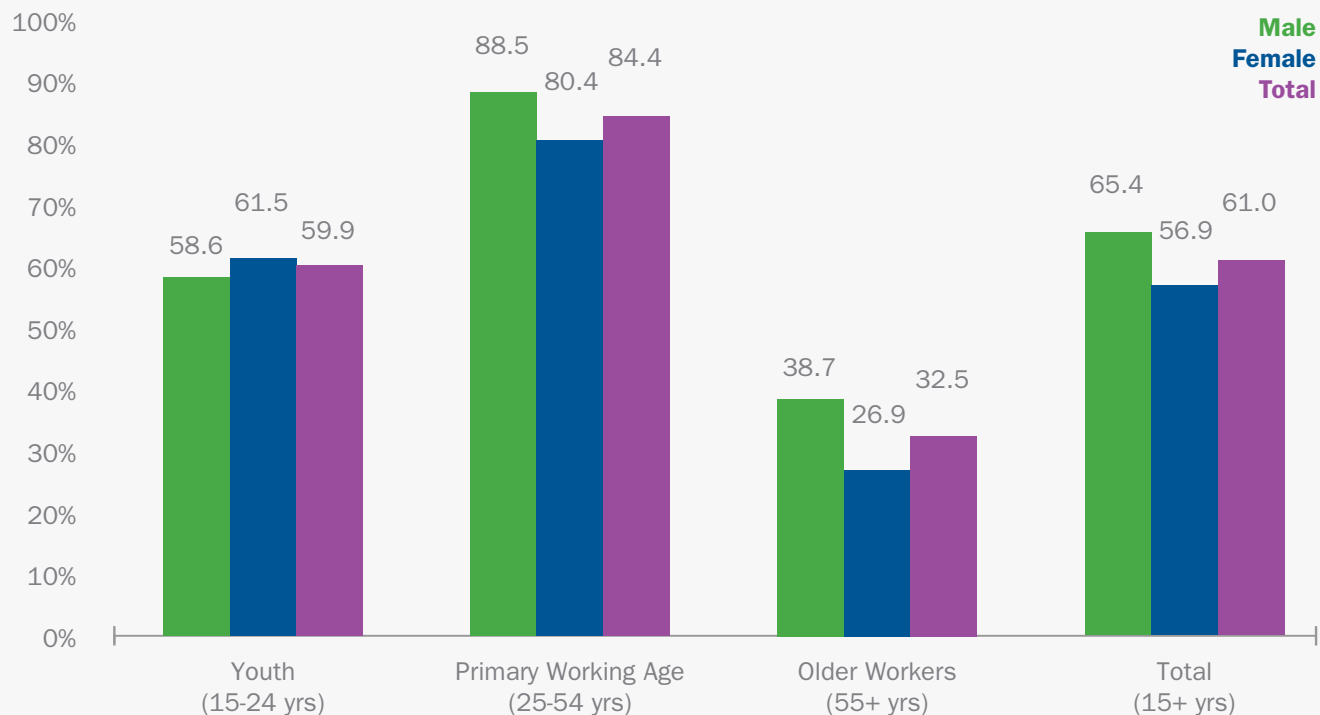
According to 2014 Labour Force Survey annual data, labour market participation rates (the number of people employed, or unemployed and looking for work) for certain groups in the province are lower than others, which creates an untapped labour pool.

- In 2014, the unemployment rate for older workers (55 years and over) was 14.8 per cent and for individuals aged 15 to 24 was 16.3 per cent, as compared to the overall unemployment rate of 11.9 in 2014.
- Further, 61 per cent of the population over the age of 15 in this province participates in the labour force.
- However, the 2014 participation rate remained lower for women (56.9 per cent) and for individuals 55 years of age or older (32.5 per cent) than the participation rate of the overall population.⁷
- In contrast to the provincial rate, the 2012 Canadian Survey on Disability showed a higher unemployment rate for persons with disabilities (14.6 per cent), and the 2011 National Household Survey showed a high rate of unemployment for Aboriginal people (21.6 per cent).

The **Population Growth Strategy** is being released at a time when employment and population changes in the near-term (2015 to 2020) will reflect the downside of a significant construction project peak in the province. In addition, a number of other factors will likely affect economic and demographic expectations in the short-term.

Fig. 4: Participation rate by age and gender, Newfoundland and Labrador, 2014

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Table 282-0002



The period since late 2014 has demonstrated the volatility in commodity markets as evidenced by impacts on near-term oil industry investment plans, government revenue, and royalty streams. While some new major projects such as Alderon's Kami iron ore project and Husky's West White Rose Expansion project have experienced delays, they are expected to continue once prices rebound. A number of other projects, already underway in the province will continue, which will lessen the impact of delays related to the start of new projects.

Alberta and Saskatchewan are facing challenges similar to Newfoundland and Labrador. As a result, information gathered to date suggests a negative impact on the economic outlook for the next two to four years, which will impact Newfoundland and Labrador residents traveling to work in those parts of the country.

The **Workforce Development Action Plan** offers solutions to respond to both peak demand and to respond to times of more modest growth, contraction, and adjustment. It is through responsive supports and services that Government is assisting the people of the province in maximizing the employment opportunities available in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Economic and demographic challenges facing Newfoundland and Labrador are significant. Government's response through the **Population Growth Strategy** is comprehensive and integrated, involving community, employer, educational, labour and government partners.

What Others Have Said About Population Change

Monitoring and predicting demographic trends for the province has been ongoing for over 20 years.⁸ This information continues to inform a broad range of policy and planning, including the **Population Growth Strategy**. A number of other research organizations in Canada have also recently released documents on elements of the province's demographic situation. This research has included analysis and recommendations from organizations such as **Leslie Harris Centre for Regional Policy and Development, Memorial University**; the **Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives**; the **Strengthening Rural Canada Initiative**, and the **Conference Board of Canada**. These and other reports have been reviewed and considered in the development of the **Strategy**.



Photo courtesy of the Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development

Newfoundland and Labrador's Vital Signs, a collaborative report by the Community Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Harris Centre, analyzed demographic change and how communities in the province are performing in certain quality-of-life areas.

The report acknowledges that there should be a direct correlation between the number of supports, from both an employment and social perspective, and successful immigration and retention of individuals. As part of the **Immigration Action Plan**, Government will streamline the application process for potential immigrants, and provide supports that will help new citizens more effectively integrate into both the labour market and communities.

Local engagement, belonging, and leadership were identified by the Harris Centre report as being instrumental to retention of individuals, including both current citizens and immigrants. The **Strategy** includes action items premised on collaboration between Government and stakeholders. As part of the **Communities Action Plan**, engagement efforts will be made at the local level to inform effective policy development on local, regional and provincial levels.

In January 2015, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives released a report, **Great Expectations – Opportunities and Challenges for Young Workers in Newfoundland and Labrador**, that noted employment opportunities and affordable education as important to youth retention. As part of the **Workforce Development Action Plan**, Government will undertake

initiatives such as supporting apprenticeships and paid internships related to a graduate's post-secondary education, and providing programming to help prepare youth for their first job.

From an economic perspective, the Conference Board of Canada has pointed to Newfoundland and Labrador's strong natural resource base and economic position, but has noted concerns related to the demographics of the entire Atlantic region.⁹ The Conference Board recommends improving productivity based on innovation, attracting more immigrants, and streamlining the delivery of Government policy and services as key actions to address the demographic situation. Government will focus on immigration, increasing innovation and streamlining access to programs and services as part of the **Population Growth Strategy**.

In February 2015, the **Strengthening Rural Canada Initiative** released a report on rural Newfoundland and Labrador. Titled **Fewer and Older: The Coming Population and Demographic Challenges in Newfoundland and Labrador**, the report notes many of the demographic changes discussed in the **Population Growth Strategy** discussion paper, released as a component of the public consultations, and the **Strategy** itself. The report also notes that both the urban and rural populations in the province are facing similar demographic challenges – while out-migration of residents has defined the demographic challenges of rural Newfoundland and Labrador, the urban population in Newfoundland and Labrador has also been experiencing challenges, and has been rising at a declining rate. The report suggests that a focus on employment, economic development, and on the challenges of skills mismatches will begin to address the demographic challenges and slowing growth.¹⁰

The development of the **Population Growth Strategy** was informed by public input from residents living throughout the province, especially in rural parts of Newfoundland and Labrador. The **Strategy** will include enhanced supports for unemployed residents in rural parts of the province, as well as establish regular engagement with rural residents to jointly address challenges facing communities.

Responding to Input from Stakeholders

Fig. 5: Population Growth Strategy consultations



Government has also committed to respond to the needs of stakeholders as a strategic direction for the **Population Growth Strategy**. The province's demographic reality has been an area of focus for many stakeholders in recent years. Government has listened to what stakeholders are saying publicly about the demographic context and determinants of population stability and growth. This input has been taken into consideration in the drafting of the **Strategy**. While there were extensive consultations conducted as part of the **Strategy**, some of the comments that were presented include:

- The **Fédération des parents francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador** urged Government to focus on early childhood learning to support population growth;
- The **Newfoundland Aboriginal Women's Network** noted that keeping tuition fees affordable is the best way to encourage women to enter the workforce;
- The **Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Social Workers** recommended Government place special attention on promoting employee recruitment and retention;
- **Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador** suggested Government emphasize the importance of immigrant attraction and retention, including increasing immigration to the province;
- The **Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour** recommended that Government align labour market development policy closely with its work on population growth;
- The **Canadian Federation of Independent Business** suggested Government increase immigration to the province and make improvements to the apprenticeship system; and,
- The **St. John's Board of Trade** recommended that Government improve immigrant retention, including international students and graduates, take steps to retain current residents, and invest in up-skilling to improve productivity.

Building on Recent Public Investments

Public submissions have been summarized in **What We Heard: A Summary of Comments, Suggestions and Ideas on Population Growth in Newfoundland and Labrador**, released in 2014. Common themes noted by participants include policies to help educate, attract and retain talented and skilled workers; increase immigrant retention; support family friendly policies; and continue investment in rural development. This input informed the decision to develop four Action Plans in the **Population Growth Strategy**.

Government has already taken important steps to support population stability and growth, including:

- Announcing the launch of full-day kindergarten to commence in September 2016;
- Making 7,851 regulated childcare spaces available throughout the province, representing a 70 per cent increase since 2003;
- Obtaining a 67 per cent increase in the number of immigrants Government can nominate annually to immigrate to the province under the **Provincial Nominee Program**: an increase from 300 in 2014 to 500 in 2015 and beyond;
- Receiving an additional 550 immigrant annual **Express Entry** nominations, providing an additional 550 individuals the opportunity to immigrate to Newfoundland and Labrador under the Federal Government's recently launched **Express Entry** system for economic immigration, which includes a portion of Provincial Nominees, beginning in 2015; and,
- Providing parents with the **Progressive Family Growth Benefit** (\$1,000 upon birth or adoption of a child) and **Parental Support Benefit** (\$100 per month for the first 12 months following birth or adoption) since 2008.

The **Population Growth Strategy** has been designed to build on these initiatives and support the people, families, businesses, and communities of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Fig. 6: Population Growth Strategy background

The development of the **Population Growth Strategy** has also been informed by ideas presented by residents throughout the province during the public consultations. The **Strategy** is augmented by current Government strategies, which support the province’s population, such as:



The **Strategy** development was also informed by legislation and various agreements supporting residents in the province:



The **Strategy** will coordinate and support the efforts of these existing and other forthcoming initiatives focusing on improving the health, well-being, and employment prospects of residents throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

A Call to Action

Over the next 10 years, **Live Here • Work Here • Belong Here: A Population Growth Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador**, through four five-year Action Plans, will focus on: promoting the opportunities in the provincial labour market; finding innovative ways to match jobseekers with employers; attracting and supporting businesses, employers, and entrepreneurs; and, ensuring residents are informed of, and have access to, the training and education they need to avail of employment opportunities in this province.

In addition, the **Strategy** will strive to create the conditions that enable employers in the province to succeed, and attract businesses and employees from Canada and beyond. The **Strategy** will focus on helping individuals and families balance personal and professional obligations, while allowing them to pursue career and family ambitions. Finally, the **Strategy** will work to ensure Newfoundland and Labrador communities are attractive to residents and newcomers alike, both for pursuing professional aspirations and for creating and raising families. The **Strategy** comprises four Action Plans:

- 1. Workforce Development Action Plan** – This Action Plan supports job growth and assists people in finding jobs, and employers in finding employees. The Plan focuses on attaching unemployed and underemployed people to the opportunities available in the province and utilizing the skills of individuals in the labour market. The Plan also supports individuals by providing current information on in-demand occupations to facilitate securing employment in the province. This approach is essential in reducing out-migration.
- 2. Families Action Plan** – This Action Plan helps break down barriers for families who want to, or already have, children. Government efforts will support foster, adoptive, and birth parents alike. The Plan focuses on creating a province that puts families first, where families are respected, supported, and encouraged, whether they comprise seniors, children, adult dependents, or residents without children. Beyond that, the Plan seeks to support individuals who care for adult family members. This approach is essential to creating conditions favourable to an increased birth rate.
- 3. Communities Action Plan** – This Action Plan places a strong emphasis on economic development throughout all regions in the province. The Plan will foster communities that have activities for residents of all ages, services for people with differing needs, supports for families and children, expanded settlement assistance for increased immigrant retention, and a focus on welcoming diversity. The Plan supports businesses operating in the province so they can grow and thrive. This approach is essential to foster economic growth.
- 4. Immigration Action Plan** – This Action Plan focuses on increasing the attraction and retention of immigrants by actively promoting the economic and lifestyle opportunities available throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. The Plan calls on employers to partner with Government to utilize immigration to fulfill unmet local labour market needs. The **Strategy** supports welcoming communities and diversity and makes expanded investments in immigrant settlement and retention services. This approach is essential to increase the number of immigrants moving to and remaining in Newfoundland and Labrador.



Photo courtesy of the Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development

A key tool in implementing the **Strategy** is a targeted multimedia campaign, which will reach local, national, and international audiences. The multimedia campaign will focus on encouraging individuals to choose Newfoundland and Labrador as their home of choice and retaining current residents by highlighting the benefits of living, working, and raising a family here.

This approach will include video, web, and social media elements, including **Facebook**, **Instagram**, and **Twitter**, and will raise the profile of Newfoundland and Labrador as a place to call home.

This multimedia campaign will build on the success of the provincial tourism campaign and responds to calls Government heard during public consultations, of a greater need to market Newfoundland and Labrador as a desirable place to live.

The tables at the end of this document outline and explain the strategic directions, and summarize the implementation plan over the next five years.

Background on the Workforce Development Action Plan, 2015 – 2020



A Strong Workforce Supports Population Growth

Employment is a key consideration for people when determining where to make their home. The **Workforce Development Action Plan** outlines steps to attract and retain people in Newfoundland and Labrador through employment opportunities and matching employers with the right people with the right skills. In 2014, employment levels reached 238,600, close to the 2013 historic employment levels of 242,700.¹¹ Between 2002 and 2014, our average weekly wage rate has increased by 62.7 per cent.¹² Since 2012, Newfoundland and Labrador's average weekly wage rate has been second among all provinces after Alberta.¹³ For example, in 2014, average weekly wages in Newfoundland and Labrador were \$991.11, second among provinces only to Alberta at \$1,149.35.¹⁴ Monthly data from 2015 reveals Newfoundland and Labrador has maintained this second place position among provinces after Alberta.¹⁵

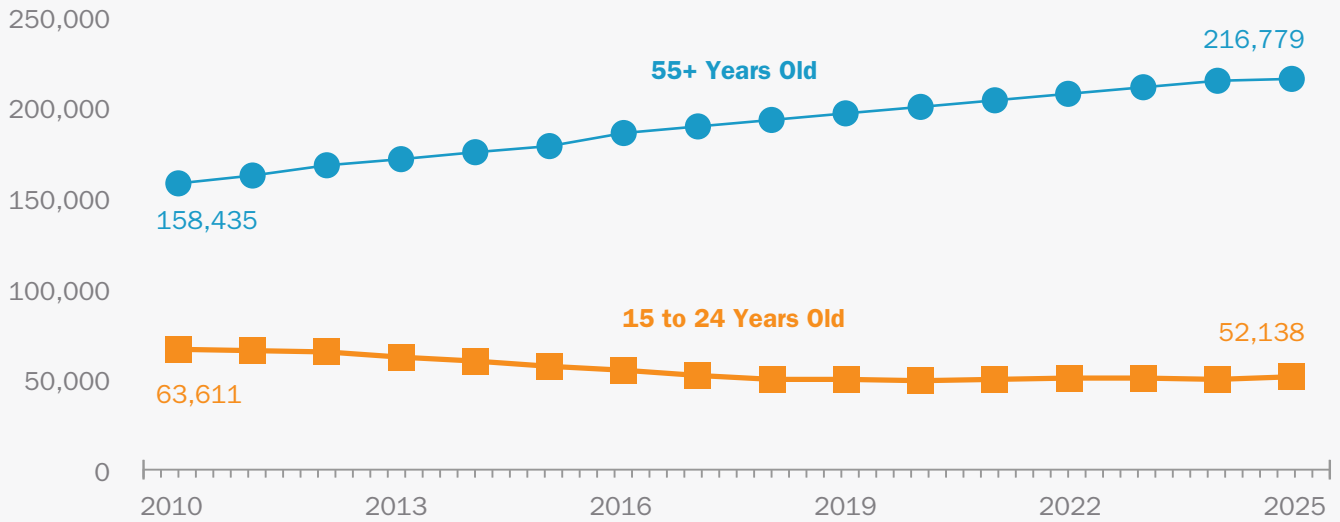
At the same time, the province has an aging workforce and pockets of high unemployment. Despite recent labour market improvements, some individuals and families have not fully benefited from recent economic growth. According to the Labour Force Survey, the annual average unemployment rate for youth 15 to 24 years of age in 2014 was 16.3 per cent. The 2014 participation rate remained lower for women (56.9 per cent) and for people 55 years of age or older (32.5 per cent) than the participation rate of the overall population (61.0 per cent). In contrast to the provincial annual unemployment rate in 2014 (11.9 per cent), the 2012 Canadian Survey on Disability showed a higher unemployment rate for persons with disabilities (14.6 per cent) and the 2011 National Household Survey showed a high rate of unemployment for Aboriginal people (21.6 per cent) in Newfoundland and Labrador.

By 2020, when compared to 2014, it is expected that the number of people 65 years of age and older will have grown by 25 per cent to 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 2020.¹⁶ Retaining the province's youth, and attracting other young people to live and work in the province has informed the policies behind the **Workforce Development Action Plan**.

Newfoundland and Labrador has recently experienced significant capital spending on major projects and the economy is cooling after a sustained period of considerable growth. The **Workforce Development Action Plan** offers solutions to respond to diverse and varying needs of the labour market and provides flexible Government supports and services to assist the population in maximizing employment opportunities. It also offers solutions to respond to times of modest

Fig. 7: Number of younger and older residents, 2010 to 2025

Source: Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Finance, Population Projections (Medium Scenario), 2014



economic growth, decline and contraction, and positions Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to succeed in the economy and its considerable opportunities.

The Action Plan has been informed by extensive initiatives aimed at fostering and supporting the province's workforce that have been undertaken to date. These include:

- In 2007, Government released **All the Skills to Succeed: Report of the Newfoundland and Labrador Skills Task Force**, which was aimed at addressing gaps in the skilled trades labour force, and meeting the needs of current and future large-scale development projects.
- In 2009, the **Youth Retention and Attraction Strategy** paved the way for the **Population Growth Strategy**, as it focused on supporting youth through economic, social, educational, recreational, and cultural development initiatives in the province.

The **Workforce Development Action Plan** will build on the province's youth retention efforts.

An Action Plan by the People of Newfoundland and Labrador, for the People of Newfoundland and Labrador

The development of the **Workforce Development Action Plan** was informed by public input garnered from an extensive consultation process with residents, employers, community organizations and stakeholders. **What We Heard: A Summary of Comments, Suggestions and Ideas on Population Growth in Newfoundland and Labrador**, released in 2014, summarizes discussions and ideas for workforce development in the province. Participants noted the need for more employment opportunities, improved compensation, and greater supports for training and education.

Existing Workforce Development Supports

At present, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has a number of programs designed and deployed to help strengthen the labour market. Government will build on these programs, services and initiatives. Some of the key components of the current toolkit for workforce development include:

Initiative	Purpose	Outcomes of Success (YTD)
Skills Development Supports	This funding supports individuals who need short-term, post-secondary, apprenticeship, or Adult Basic Education to find employment.	In 2014-15, 9,740 individuals received funding.
JobsNL Wage Subsidy	This subsidy supports employers in creating employment opportunities for unemployed or underemployed individuals.	In 2014-15, 947 individuals and 652 businesses availed of wage subsidy funding.
Apprenticeship Wage Subsidy	This subsidy assists apprentices in gaining work experience needed to reach journeyman status. Through Budget 2015, the program will be converted to a grant-based program to assist more apprentices.	In 2014-15, 556 subsidies were provided to apprentices.
Student Summer Employment	This program consists of funding to hire high school and post-secondary students for the summer.	In 2014-15, 1,510 employers received funding to hire 1,862 students.
Job Creation Partnerships	These partnerships support employment opportunities on community-based projects.	In 2014-15, 277 projects were funded that provided 1,354 individuals with work experience.
Self-Employment Supports	Financial assistance, training and guidance to help start a business.	In 2014-15, 17 organizations were funded and 310 individuals received financial support to start a business.
Community and Labour Market Partnerships	This project-based funding addresses sector or community-wide labour market issues.	In 2014-15, over 200 organizations received funding to assist individuals.
Canada-NL Job Grant	This grant provides an opportunity for cost-shared funding for employers to train new or existing employees.	In 2014-15, 41 applications were approved, for a total funding of \$798,105 to train 225 participants.
Targeted Initiative for Older Workers	This project-based funding supports unemployed older workers to reintegrate into employment.	In 2014-15, six projects were approved that had a total of 66 participants.
Getting the Message Out program (GMO)	This program is designed to help youth learn about entrepreneurship, career planning and civic engagement.	In 2014-15, GMO visited 98 junior high and high schools, three post-secondary schools, one Community Youth Network and two YMCA events, resulting in a total of 264 presentations to 7,060 participants.

*Some of the data reported in this table includes carryover data from previous years.

Government also provides in-person assistance through an extensive network of 27 employment centres throughout the province, telephone assistance through a toll-free telephone number (1-800-563-6600), and online assistance by e-mail and web-based workshops to any residents interested in programs and services to gain entry to the labour market in Newfoundland and Labrador.

New Supports for Workforce Development

Government will build upon strong labour market partnerships with industry and community groups to create meaningful employment opportunities, safe and productive workplaces, and a skilled and innovative labour force. Government will do this under five strategic directions in the **Workforce Development Action Plan**:

Inform

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

Attract

People to select 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 Government programming.

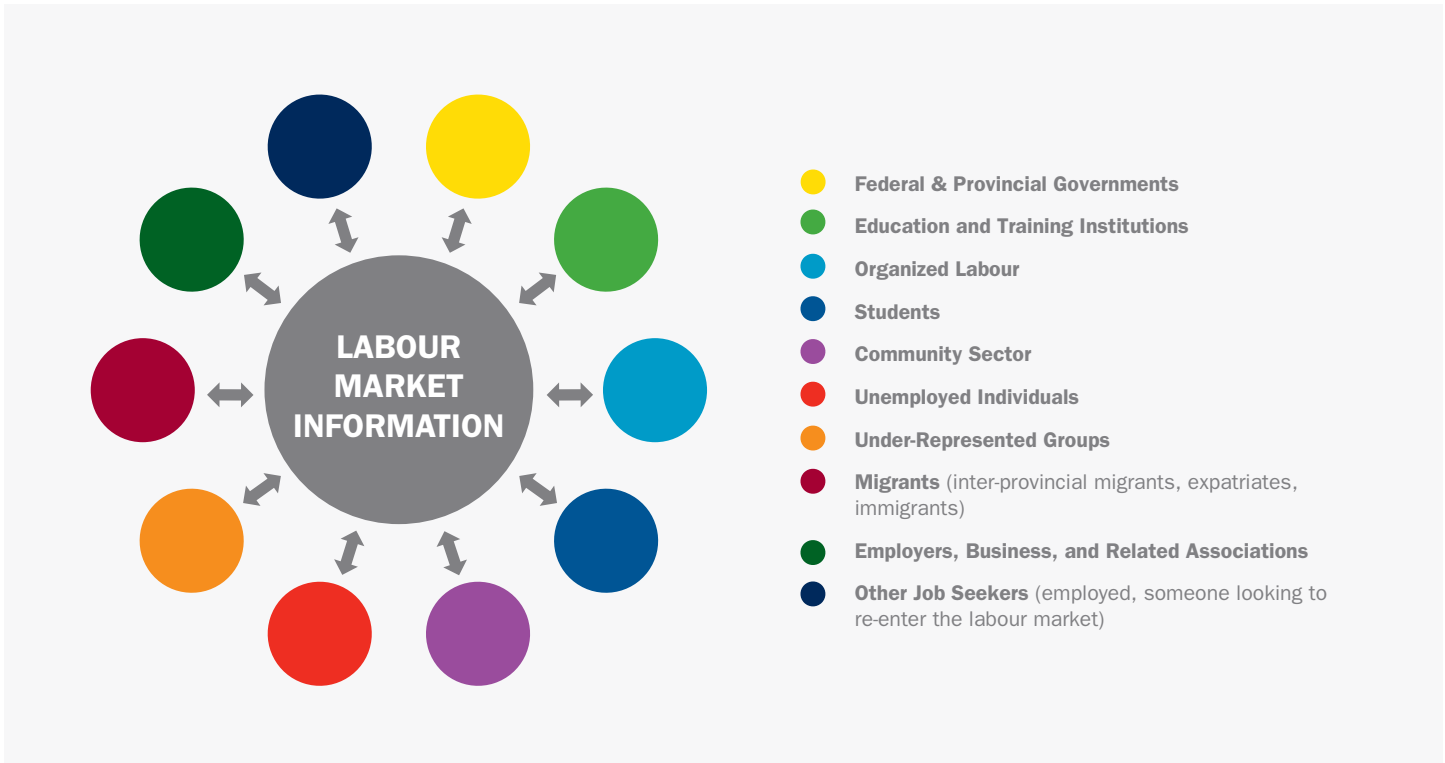
The five strategic directions of the **Workforce Development Action Plan** link to the **Population Growth Strategy** guiding principles by:

- Supporting **choice** through the provision of information regarding the range of labour market opportunities available in the province;
- Supporting **inclusion** through the removal of barriers to maximize the ability of all individuals to find meaningful employment;



Photo courtesy of the Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development

- Supporting **accountability** through responsiveness to an evolving labour market and provision of flexible Government programming;
- Supporting **diversity** by attracting people to choose Newfoundland and Labrador as their workplace of choice; and,
- Supporting **partnership** through work with educational and training institutions to support individuals to develop in-demand skills needed to attach to the labour force.



Inform

Strategic Direction 1

Inform people within and outside Newfoundland and Labrador of the employment opportunities in the province.

Objective 1.1: Increase the timeliness and accessibility of labour market information.

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 in this way 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.

An effective labour market information system requires employers, educational and training institutions, unions and other stakeholders to share information about labour supply and labour demands. Partnership with external stakeholders in collecting and disseminating labour market information helps ensure the data is current and relevant. The diagram above itemizes key players in the labour market information network.

Government commits to working with labour market stakeholders to produce and disseminate comprehensive labour market information and forecasts about future labour supply and demand, so that:

- Individuals can make informed career pathway decisions;
- Educational and training institutions can align course offerings with labour demand;
- Employers have the information required to plan and execute their workforce plans; and,
- Government can use data to help inform its policy and program decisions.



Photo courtesy of the Association for New Canadians

Government has developed a new occupational demand and supply forecast for the province and will release annual occupational updates to provide the latest information to individuals, businesses and other employers, industry associations, local governments, community groups, organized labour, and educational and training institutions.

Policy Action 1: Create a labour market forecasting model that enables occupational updates annually on the labour market needs of the province.

In addition to annual occupational forecasts, Government will utilize the labour market forecasting model to compile and disseminate a series of other labour market information tools for stakeholders. This toolkit will include the establishment of a labour market information web portal, which will include:

- Occupational profiles on in-demand occupations;
- Information on hard-to-fill positions;
- Industry profiles that will be prepared in collaboration with external stakeholders;
- Regional labour market profiles; and,
- Job vacancy monitoring.

Policy Action 2: Develop a labour market information toolkit and web portal to help individuals, students and businesses plan for forecasted workforce opportunities, including occupational profiles, information on hard-to-fill occupations, industry profiles, regional profiles, and job vacancy monitoring.

Data gathering and consolidation of relevant labour market information will not be limited to Government sources but will also include partnerships with external stakeholders. In 2013, Memoranda of Understanding between Government, and the **Resource Development and Trades Council**, and individual operators of major resource development and construction projects in Newfoundland and Labrador were signed to support integrated labour market information. The purpose of these agreements is to support Government's efforts to create and maintain an accurate and shared understanding of projected aggregate labour requirements for large-scale projects. Government will pursue other partnerships with additional external stakeholders to collect labour supply and demand data.

Policy Action 3: Implement services to help match job seekers and employers looking for new recruits.

JobsinNL.ca is the province's online job hosting website. In partnership with the National Job Bank, Government will implement an online job matching service to help connect individuals seeking work with employers looking for their skills.¹⁷

Policy Action 4: Establish enhanced information-sharing processes with educational and training institutions, labour organizations, licensing and regulatory bodies, major project owners, large employers, employer organizations, chambers of commerce, boards of trade and industry associations to improve the collection of labour supply and demand information.



Photo courtesy of the Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development

Objective 1.2: Tailor labour market information to meet the needs of junior high, high school and post-secondary students.

Research conducted by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador suggests that approximately 40 per cent of youth obtain post-secondary and career-related information through guidance counselors. Nearly 25 per cent of youth receive that guidance through their high school teachers, and just over 10 per cent of youth receive post-secondary and career-related information online. Government will continue to assist youth in their career decision-making by using existing tools such as Career Cruising and through the provision of timely, accurate and easily understandable labour market information.

It is essential that labour market information focus on the diverse needs of youth in various decision-making stages in life. To that effect, Government will take a number of measures to support young people with career planning and decision-making:

- Government will develop a guide to help youth choose high school courses wisely, based on the student's interests, and potential career path and field of study;
- Government will also develop a guide to help university and college students obtain their first job, by identifying employers and industries that hire graduates in their field of study;
- In addition, for students who choose to pursue direct employment after high school, Government will develop an **Orientation to Your First Job Program**, that will include information on job search, employment readiness, occupational health and safety, and labour standards; and,
- Government will also collaborate with School Districts to hold career fairs in high schools to help match youth to employment opportunities in their community.

Policy Action 5: Create a Pathways to Careers and Further Study Guide to help junior high and high school students and youth map their way to their chosen career.

Policy Action 6: Create a Career Pathways Guide to outline the range of career options possible upon completion of post-secondary degrees, diplomas, or certificates.

Policy Action 7: Develop an Orientation to Your First Job program and collaborate with School Districts to hold job fairs in high schools throughout the province.

Attract

Strategic Direction 2

Attract people to choose Newfoundland and Labrador as their workplace of choice, whether they were born in Newfoundland and Labrador or elsewhere.

Objective 2.1: Encourage people to remain in Newfoundland and Labrador to work, live, and raise their family.

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 resources strategies, and flexible accommodations.

Given the current demographic context and projected job vacancies, the need to align the demand and supply sides of the labour market equation in Newfoundland and Labrador to connect employers to workers has never been more pronounced. Labour and skill shortages, and recruitment difficulties, are being expressed by employers in several sectors of the economy, yet with pockets of unemployment, opportunities exist to help employers find needed workers within the province.

Government requires partners to attract people to work in the province. Currently, through the Labour Market Partnerships program, Government provides funding to employers, employer or employee associations, community groups and communities to develop and implement initiatives to meet labour requirements. Under the **Workforce Development Action Plan**, a public request for **Labour Market Partnerships** proposals will be issued each year to fund partners to help increase the attractiveness of Newfoundland and Labrador as a place to live and work.



Photo courtesy of the Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development

Policy Action 8: Provide support to employers, employer and employee associations, community groups, and communities to undertake projects designed to help match labour supply and demand in all regions of the province, and decrease unemployment rates.

In light of a declining population between the ages of 15 to 64, the labour force requires a robust workforce that is inclusive of individuals of all ages. Older workers bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the workplace and they require a range of considerations such as flexible work schedules, reduced or alternate work hours, training, and the adaptation of physical workplaces. Government will provide supports to employers to ensure businesses utilize best practices for attracting and retaining older workers.

Policy Action 9: Provide supports to employers to create more age-friendly workplaces.

Objective 2.2: Drive job growth by focusing on creating sustainable opportunities for individuals throughout Newfoundland and Labrador in the small and medium-sized businesses that comprise the largest share of employment in the province.

Government is committed to entrepreneurial and business development in Newfoundland and Labrador. The ongoing **Business Retention and Expansion** (BR&E) program is an internationally-recognized economic development approach, under which existing local businesses are visited and interviewed to identify issues that may be limiting retention and expansion. Businesses work one-on-one with provincial Economic Development Officers to look holistically at their business operations, and uncover issues and opportunities that may impact future plans and overall growth and success. Under the Action Plan, Government will build on this program by providing additional supports for businesses to address human resources, productivity and succession planning needs.

Policy Action 10: Work with small and medium-sized employers to support human resources, productivity and succession planning needs.

Develop

Strategic Direction 3

Develop an educational and training system that assists individuals to gain the skills needed to attach to the labour force and maintain that attachment.

Objective 3.1: Align early learning, primary and secondary school systems, post-secondary training systems and adult learning opportunities with the labour market to support successful transitions to meaningful employment.

The foundations of the primary and secondary educational system – reading, writing, mathematics - set the groundwork for developing skills that are in demand in the workplace later in life. Alignment between the province's early learning, primary and secondary school systems, and post-secondary and training systems is vital to support successful transitions to higher learning and meaningful employment. Such alignment is essential to increase the career consciousness of children and youth, to enhance parents' awareness of labour market opportunities, and to provide youth with an educational foundation that helps them succeed in the labour force.

In 2011, Government made a commitment to develop a provincial strategy for early childhood learning to provide opportunities for community-based, universal and accessible early learning opportunities for families with young children, including take-home resources. The **Power of Play** media campaign was launched as part of the **Learning from the Start** strategy to increase awareness about the importance of learning through play.

Further, in Newfoundland and Labrador, all high school students are required to complete a mandatory course in career development to assist with their transition to post-secondary education and employment. Students also have the option to explore industrial trades through the **Futures in Skilled Trades and Technology Program**. Government will build upon these initiatives and create a comprehensive **Early Learning to Career Plan** to provide children and youth with a clear roadmap to the vast opportunities available to them in the province's labour market.

Policy Action 11: Develop an Early Learning to Career Plan to align public educational investments with supports that enable young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to succeed in the labour market.

Along the continuum of education, there is also a pronounced need to call on post-secondary education and training institutions 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 and experiential learning assists in developing the skills demanded by employers. Government will work with the public and private post-secondary system to support students to develop the skills needed to fill in-demand jobs.

Policy Action 12: Work with the College of the North Atlantic, Memorial University, and other post-secondary training providers to continue to align course offerings with labour market needs.

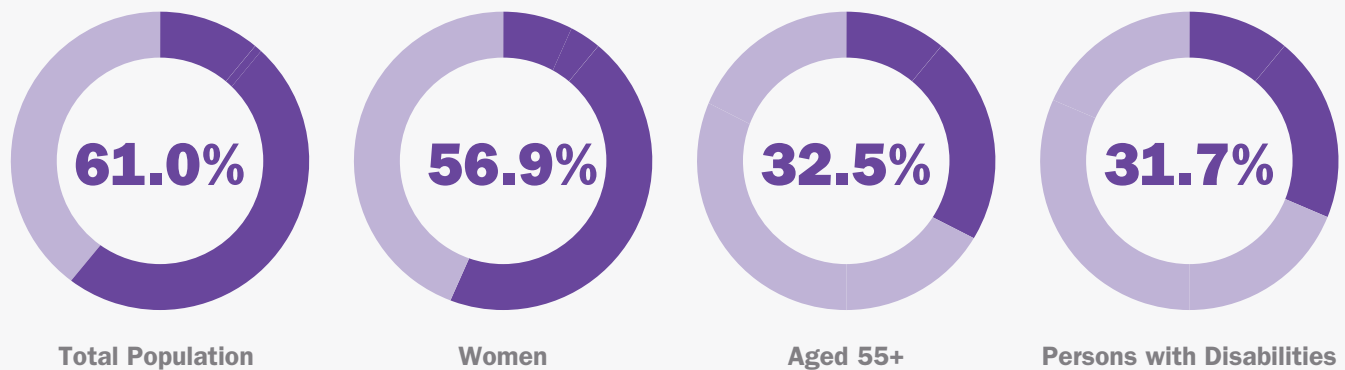
Create

Strategic Direction 4

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

Fig. 8: 2014 Labour force participation rates in Newfoundland and Labrador (15+ years of age)

Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Table 282-0002



Objective 4.1: Implement supports to assist under-represented groups to find and maintain employment.

The **Workforce Development Action Plan** prioritizes the removal of barriers to employment to increase the participation of under-represented groups in the labour market. For example, 61 per cent of the population over the age of 15 in this province participates in the labour force.¹⁸ However, the 2014 participation rate was lower for women (56.9 per cent) and individuals 55 years of age or older (32.5 per cent) than the participation rate for the overall population (61.0 per cent). In addition, the 2012 Canadian Survey on Disability showed that persons with disabilities also have a lower participation rate (31.7 per cent).

The 2012 Canadian Survey on Disability showed that persons with disabilities in Newfoundland and Labrador (aged 15 years and over) had an unemployment rate of 14.6 per cent, compared with a rate of 13.9 per cent for those without a disability. Meanwhile, the 2011 National Household Survey noted that persons in this province with an Aboriginal identity had an unemployment rate of 21.6 per cent, compared to a rate of 14.1 per cent for those of non-Aboriginal identity.

The Labour Force Survey results also noted that the provincial unemployment rate in 2014 was 11.9 per cent, while the annual average unemployment rate was higher for youth aged 15 to 24 (16.3 per cent). Supporting under-represented groups, including youth, with their employment-seeking efforts is a priority for the **Workforce Development Action Plan**. These efforts will foster increased labour market participation of Aboriginal Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, of persons with disabilities, and of youth.

For some individuals, a lack of relatively low-cost supplies or equipment can be a barrier to employment. To foster diverse and inclusive workplaces, this action will re-focus the current **Employment Development Supports** program. This program assists individuals with job search activities and personal expenses related to obtaining a job (e.g. clothing, transportation, tools, fees and certificates, etc.), and with training and expenses related to participation in training, including literacy, Adult Basic Education, short-term training, or job readiness training.

Policy Action 13: Assist in breaking down barriers by introducing greater program flexibility to support individuals seeking employment, such as the purchase of adaptive technologies and work supplies.

In partnership with employers, Government will place a targeted effort on matching graduates from under-represented groups to paid internships in their field of study. Employers will be called on to identify opportunities to create paid internships and mentoring programs for individuals under the age of 25, long-term unemployed individuals, older workers Aboriginal people, women, visible minorities and persons with disabilities. Government will cover the cost of wages for these internships and mentoring programs.

Policy Action 14: Support youth under 25 years of age, long-term unemployed individuals, Aboriginal people, women, older workers, visible minorities and persons with disabilities to gain to employment through work experience programs and paid internships in positions related to their field of study or occupation of interest, in partnership with employers and community-based groups, in an effort to reduce high levels of unemployment among segments of the population.

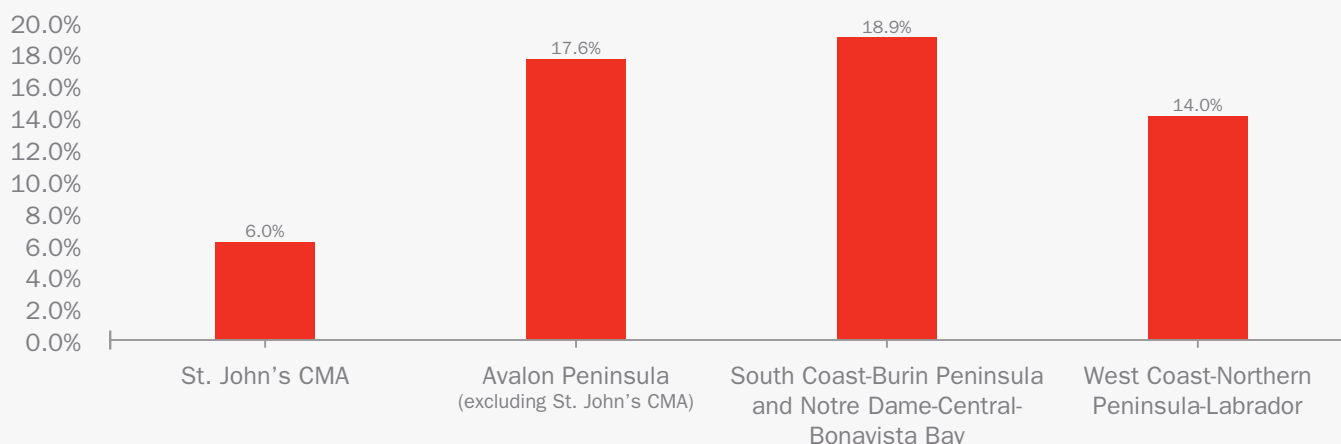
Government currently provides educational and job coaching supports for persons with developmental disabilities. Government will review this approach to determine whether there are alternate models that can be adapted to enable persons with other types of disabilities to secure employment. These actions will support the goals of **Access. Inclusion. Equality: Provincial Strategy for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Newfoundland and Labrador**, which was launched in 2012.

Policy Action 15: Review supports for persons with disabilities to access employment.

Unemployment rates vary by regions of the province as noted in the chart below. During the public consultations, transportation was cited as a barrier to employment for some individuals. In collaboration with partners, Government will launch a pilot project to mitigate commuting and transportation challenges for unemployed individuals who need to commute to accept employment within the province.

Fig. 9: Unemployment rates in Newfoundland and Labrador regions¹⁹: 2014

Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada (CANSIM Tables 282-0123 and 282-0129)



Policy Action 16: Pilot supports to assist unemployed individuals living in areas with limited job opportunities with the cost of commuting to employment within the province.

Objective 4.2: Remove barriers to obtaining formal credentials needed to succeed in the workplace.

In 2014, 41 per cent of publicly posted job vacancies in the province required a university or college-level education.²⁰ In 2014-15, Government invested \$167.8 million in skills development, work experience, and employer-sponsored training to assist more than 7,500 individuals in obtaining college-level training and an allocation of \$1.15 million in financial support for employer-sponsored training under the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Job Grant.

In recent years, apprenticeship and skilled trades have been identified as an area where greater supports are required to help apprentices reach journeyman status. Government has committed more than \$100 million over the past seven years to support apprentices. The number of individuals reaching journeyman status annually has doubled from 340 in 2007 to 756 in 2014.

To continue this work moving forward, Government will be refocusing its approach to apprenticeship policies and programming. Currently, an apprentice must be laid off by their employer to be able to return to school to undertake required advanced (block) or specialized journeyman training. For some employers, this requirement disrupts the productivity of the business and reduces the earnings of the apprentice.

In an effort to address this concern, Government will introduce a pilot in 2015-16 to allow apprentices and journeymen in select trades to undertake training without requiring layoff through part-time and online training options. Government will also encourage apprentice hiring on Government procurement projects to help individuals secure the work experience required to reach journeyman status.

Policy Action 17: Test alternative funding approaches for apprentices and journeymen in select trades, whereby apprentices and journeymen can complete their training without having to be laid off.

Policy Action 18: Work with contractors on Government tendering and procurement projects to encourage the hiring of apprentices.

In April 2014, Atlantic Premiers signed a Memorandum of Understanding to harmonize apprenticeship training and certification requirements across the four Atlantic provinces for 10 trades between 2014 and 2016. This harmonization will enable apprentices to undertake training in any of the four provinces, which will improve apprentice mobility and increase apprenticeship completion rates.

Policy Action 19: Pursue further apprenticeship harmonization to improve the labour mobility of apprentices and increase completion rates.

Without a recognized degree, diploma or certificate, some individuals face a barrier to obtaining employment, despite having considerable work experience. Currently, the process for formally assessing and recognizing prior learning varies by post-secondary institution. This variation can result in differences in the level of additional training required to achieve certification. In partnership with post-secondary institutions, Government will undertake a review of existing processes in an effort to make improvements to prior learning assessment and recognition. This review will be used to develop a Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition policy framework for the province.

Policy Action 20: Develop a Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition policy framework to help individuals attach to the labour market and gain credentials that reflect their work, life, and educational experience.

Respond

Strategic Direction 5

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

Objective 5.1: Engage employers, residents, labour, community groups, educational and training institutions, and other stakeholders on a regular basis to discuss matters regarding workforce development.

Government will host annual **Roundtables on Workforce Development** to solicit stakeholder feedback on labour market trends, and educational, training and staffing needs throughout the province. Participants will represent a range of industries, sectors, occupations and regions. The information collected will be used to inform further Government workforce investments, gauge the current and emerging challenges facing individuals and employers in the labour market, and convey labour market information to participants. Government will begin outlining these sector-specific approaches in 2015-16.

Policy Action 21: Host annual Roundtables on Workforce Development to provide information on the employment and human resources needs and challenges throughout the province.

The workforce and labour market needs of individual industries and communities of the provincial economy vary. In partnership with industry and employer associations, labour, employers and employees, sector-specific approaches to address recruitment and retention needs will be developed.

Policy Action 22: Work across Government and with stakeholders to develop initiatives that address the needs of key in-demand sectors now and in the future, beginning with strategies focused on the human resource needs of sectors that have labour supply and demand challenges, such as:

- **Health Care**
- **Fisheries and Aquaculture**
- **Agriculture and Agri-foods**
- **Retail**
- **Accommodations and Food Services**
- **Marine and Road Transportation**
- **Housing**
- **Mining and Energy**
- **Other sectors as required**



Photo courtesy of the Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development

The **Workforce Development Action Plan** is a foundational component of the **Population Growth Strategy**. It represents efforts to support the labour market through a range of initiatives focused on increasing participation rates, aligning education with the labour market and improving the employment situation of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Existing Supports for Families

There are a series of programs and services designed to support families in the province. The Action Plan builds on these initiatives. Some of the key components of the current family supports toolkit include:

Initiative	Purpose	Outcomes of Success*
Childcare Services Subsidy Program	This program provides funding for eligible families to decrease the costs of availing of regulated childcare.	From April 1, 2014 to December 30, 2014, 6,704 children received the subsidy.
Early Learning and Childcare Supplement	This Supplement supports Early Childhood Educators, Program Operators, and regulated Family Childcare Providers to attract qualified individuals to work in regulated childcare settings.	In the first three quarters of 2014-15, 2,728 quarterly payments were made to an average of 682 Early Childhood Educators per quarter.
Early Childhood Education Bursary Programs, including the Summer Institute Bursary and the Trainee Bursary Program	These programs provide funding to improve recruitment and retention of qualified Early Childhood Educators in regulated childcare by reducing student debt.	Between April 1, 2014 and January 31, 2015, 24 individuals received the Early Childhood Bursary Program . From April 1, 2014 to January 31, 2015, 11 students received the Summer Institute Bursary . From April 1, 2014 to January 31, 2015, 40 individuals received the Trainee Bursary based on successful completion of up to two Early Childhood Education courses per year.
Support for Early Childhood Education Distance Learning and Online Training	This represents financial investment provided to offer the Early Childhood Education Program through distance learning and online training.	In 2014-15, \$97,029 was allocated to the College of the North Atlantic .
Family Childcare Initiative	This initiative comprises start-up grants for family childcare providers and monthly stimulus grants for family childcare providers who offer services only for infants.	From April 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014, 26 infant care providers received the Infant Stimulus Grant . From April 1, 2014 to January 31, 2015, 44 infant care providers received at least the first installment of start-up grants.
Childcare Capacity Initiative	This initiative provides funding support to provide start-up and operating grants for non-profit community-based organizations to help create more regulated childcare spaces.	In 2014-15, \$1.8 million was allocated to the Childcare Capacity Initiative . Since 2006, the Childcare Capacity Initiative has created a total of 21 regulated childcare centres throughout the province representing 465 additional childcare spaces. A number of others are presently in development or under review. Others are presently in development or under review.

Initiative	Purpose	Outcomes of Success*
Voluntary Operating Grants	The grants provide operational funding provided to regulated childcare centres to assist in making childcare affordable for more families.	Budget for 2014-15 was \$9.7 million; 2015-16 is \$10.6 million.
Family Resource Centres	Funding is provided to support family resource centres in providing a variety of community-based activities and resources for children and families that emphasize early childhood development and parenting support.	In 2014-15, the provincial budget for Family Resource Centres was \$6.6 Million. As of January 2015, there were 30 hubs and 123 satellites offering programs and services to 153 communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. Hubs are main Family Resource Centres, while satellites offer outreach services of the main site.
Parental Support Benefit	This allocation is a \$100 monthly benefit available to residents of the province for the 12 months after the child's birth, or the 12 months after an adopted child is placed in the home.	In 2014-15, approximately 4,454 individuals received the benefit.
Home Heating Rebate Program	This rebate is available to residents of the province whose adjusted family income in 2013 was \$40,000 or less and have directly incurred costs to heat their home.	In 2014-15, an estimated 57,900 households received the rebate.
Low Income Seniors' Benefit	This benefit is a refundable tax credit for low income seniors.	In 2014-15, approximately 43,200 individuals/couples received the benefit.
Newfoundland and Labrador Child Benefit	This tax credit is intended for families whose income is less than \$24,688 and determined by the number of dependent children under 18 years of age.	From July 2014 through March 2015, 10,900 families and 17,400 children received the benefit.
Newfoundland and Labrador Childcare Tax Credit	This non-refundable tax credit is related to childcare expenses paid to have someone look after an eligible child so that an individual could earn income from employment; carry on a business, or attend school.	In 2014-15, there were an estimated 12,595 claimants for the tax credit.
Mother Baby Nutrition Supplement	This monthly financial benefit assists low income pregnant mothers and families with children under the age of one.	In the March 2015 payment, 958 families and 975 children received the supplement.
Progressive Family Growth Benefit	The benefit comprises a \$1,000 lump sum payment to residents of the province who give birth to a baby or have a child placed with them for adoption on or after January 1, 2008.	In 2014-15, an estimated 4,454 individuals received the benefit.
Birth to Three²⁴	<p>The Early Literacy Foundations Program promotes partnership with families to foster a child's early literacy development through everyday play-based activities in public libraries and other community settings where families gather.</p> <p>Parent Resource Kits are bags or boxes of early learning materials and resources for children ages two, four and six months, and 12 and 18 months, given at child health clinics.</p>	<p>Between January and December 2014, 126 families and their children (age birth to three years) participated in the Early Literacy Foundations Program. There have been 31 pilot program offerings in 21 communities.</p> <p>From March 2012 –March 2015, a total of 45,313 Parent Resource Kits have been provided to child health clinics located throughout the province distributed to parents of children birth to age 18 months.</p>

Initiative	Purpose	Outcomes of Success*
KinderStart	This is a school transition program that offers up to 10 in-school orientation sessions for children in their pre-kindergarten year. This includes a bag of learning resources.	In 2014-15, approximately 5,500 resources bags/resources materials were implemented at a cost of \$184,000. Also in 2014-15, 1,086 children in 26 schools across the province were involved in a pilot program updating the KinderStart Program Guide . Approximately 98-99 per cent of all four-year old children eligible to attend are enrolled in KinderStart/Bon départ program annually. KinderStart/Bon départ resources bags and resource materials are provided each year to all children enrolled in the KinderStart program and KinderStart teachers, respectively.
LEARN Program/ English as a Second Language (ESL)	The primary goals of LEARN are to provide students with the literacy and numeracy skills necessary to be able to integrate successfully into an age-appropriate setting and to also prepare students with the literacy and numeracy skills required for their daily lives. The program, available in select schools, is designed for students who are newcomers to the province who are also presented with major gaps in literacy and numeracy achievement.	There are 32 students and one teacher (and one school). There are 12 ESL teachers allocated to the English School District.
Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (CDLI)²⁵	CDLI fosters the development and delivery of senior high school distance education programming to students attending high schools in rural, remote and isolated regions of the province, the development and delivery of online teacher professional development, delivery of free online tutoring to intermediate and senior high school students, and the oversight of K-12 technology integration initiatives.	CDLI offers 38 courses to students attending 103 schools across the province, supporting over 1,000 students in over 1,750 course registrations and tutoring in 10 subject areas; On average, 30 students in grades seven to 12 access tutoring services every night.
Provincial Libraries	There are 95 public libraries located throughout the province, with some located in school buildings. All libraries offer a number of programs and services for families, including internet access, training and information sessions, book clubs and children's story times.	In 2014-15 the province's libraries received an allocation of \$10,317,900; 88 per cent of the province's population had direct access to a public library (within 15km); the remainder has access through Books by Mail or E-library services; 26 per cent of the population are registered users.
Inclusive Education	Government promotes the basic right of all students to attend their neighbourhood schools with their peers, and receive appropriate and quality programming in inclusive school environments, which involves much more than just student placement. It embraces all students – not just those with identified exceptionalities – and involves everything that happens within the school community: culture, policies, and practices.	To date, 205 schools have received professional learning in inclusive education practices.

*Some of the data reported in this table reflects carryover data from previous years.

Government has also taken steps to streamline access to services for families. Opportunities to link related services through a service bundling approach have also been initiated, such as the **Birth Bundle**, which provides parents of newborns with automatic enrollment (with their consent) in related programs, such as registration for the Medical Care Plan (MCP), Social Insurance Number, and Child Tax and Parental Support benefits, through a single birth registration application.

Government has also made a number of recent legislative changes to support families. For example:

- Amendments have been made to the province's **Labour Standards Act** in December 2014 set out provisions for critically ill childcare leave, that provides up to 37 weeks of unpaid leave for the parent of a critically ill child to provide care or support to that child.
- Other changes to the **Act** support families that have experienced unfortunate circumstances, such as crime-related child death or disappearance – the amendment allows a parent to take up to 52 weeks of leave for a child who disappears as a result of a probable Criminal Code offence, and up to 104 weeks of leave for the parent of a child who dies as a result of a probable Criminal Code offence.
- These changes complement existing supports, such as the Compassionate Care Leave provision in the **Labour Standards Act**, that allows eligible employees to receive up to eight weeks of unpaid leave to provide care to a family member who has a serious medical condition and a significant risk of death.



Photo courtesy of Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism

Assisting in the educational, social and recreational involvement of parents, children, and extended family members will be at the forefront of the Government efforts to assist families across the province, through the **Families Action Plan**.

An Action Plan by the People of Newfoundland and Labrador for the People of Newfoundland and Labrador

The development of the **Families Action Plan** was guided by suggestions and ideas discussed during an extensive consultation process with residents throughout the province on how best to support families. Alleviating family expenses on childcare, supporting them in work-life balance efforts, and the impact of cost of living on deciding when to begin a family, such as student debt and housing costs, were some of the issues facing families that were brought forward in consultations. **What We Heard: A Summary of Comments, Suggestions and Ideas on Population Growth in Newfoundland and Labrador**, released in 2014, summarizes discussions and ideas for supporting families in the province.

Building on Family Supports

The **Families Action Plan** aims to stabilize and grow the population through supports for families raising children and caring for dependents or relatives.

Government, employers, labour, community organizations, municipalities, and individual residents all play a role in supporting families by being understanding, respectful, and accommodating to employees and community members with dependents and children. Government will focus its work through five strategic directions:

Inform

Inform more residents of Government programs and services for families, and of family-friendly employer best practices.

Attract

Attract greater participation of parents and individuals in the workforce.

Develop

Develop supports to assist families in Newfoundland and Labrador from early childhood learning to post-secondary education.

Create

Create supports for healthy family development.

Respond

Respond to challenges facing families in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The five strategic directions of the **Families Action Plan** will link to the **Population Growth Strategy** guiding principles by:

- Supporting **choice** through opportunities for families to have work-life balance;
- Supporting **inclusion** through actions intended to assist families in the workplace and the community;
- Supporting **accountability** through a review of programs to ensure that the needs of families are being met;
- Supporting **diversity** by accommodating all families in Newfoundland and Labrador; and,
- Supporting **partnership** through collaboration with employers and community organizations to assist families across the province.

Inform

Strategic Direction 1

Inform more residents of Government programs and services, and of family-friendly employer best practices.

Objective 1.1: Raise awareness of existing Government programs and services for families.

Families are essential to the province's social and economic growth. Government will support families through focused efforts to promote existing initiatives, resources, and benefits.

As noted in the overview of current services on the preceding pages, the Provincial Government has a suite of family-related programs and services in place through different departments and agencies. In public consultations, participants recommended that Government increase efforts to improve awareness of existing programs and services for families.

A combination of improving the organization of information resources and exploring opportunities for combining access to relevant services could help address the need for the public to be better informed about existing Government programs and services. Placing the information online means making it accessible to more than 98 per cent of residents in the province who have access to high speed internet. To ensure all residents have access to Government programs and services, telephone and walk-in-services will continue to augment online services.

Policy Action 1: Enhance the organization of information on the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador website regarding programs and services available to the province’s residents, particularly those relevant to families. In addition, explore opportunities for bundling related programs and services to streamline and improve access for individuals and families.

Objective 1.2: Increase the number of employers that provide work-life balance and other family-friendly work options.

Research shows that workplaces where employers accommodate employees with family responsibilities are more likely to have higher employee retention and workplace satisfaction, and less likely to have chronic absenteeism and turnover.²⁶

Family-friendly policies improve the lives of residents and their families. Such policies were consistently highlighted as essential steps to population growth during the public consultations.

Government will recognize and support the role employers can play in supporting population stability and growth through family-friendly policies, work-life balance, and other non-financial incentives to help retain employees. Government will also utilize the existing **NL HR Manager** platform (www.NLHRManager.ca) to develop new content focused on family-friendly policies.²⁷

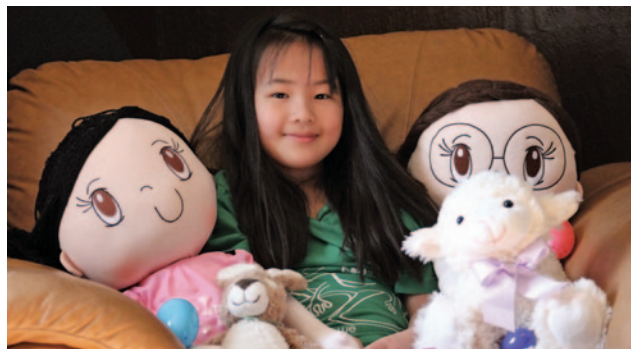


Photo courtesy of Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Policy Action 2: Establish a provincial award to recognize employers that create a positive work-life balance environment, in partnership with the employer community.

Policy Action 3: Develop supports for employers to implement family-friendly workplace policies.

Childcare is only one of the provisions needed to support parents in balancing their work and childcare responsibilities. Throughout the workday, parents have to balance their employment-related duties with other responsibilities, such as children’s medical appointments. Government will lead by example in this area and will encourage other employers to do the same.

Policy Action 4: Lead by example and continue to support Government of Newfoundland and Labrador employees through the use of work-life balance arrangements, such as:

- **Supporting the provision of space for childcare at Government complexes;**
- **Facilitating flexible work schedules;**
- **Providing paid and unpaid leave options to support employees needs and priorities outside the work environment; and,**
- **Developing a workplace wellness strategy.**

Attract

Strategic direction 2

Attract more parents and individuals to the workforce.

Objective 2.1: Increase access to quality affordable childcare for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

During the **Population Growth Strategy** community workshops throughout the province, participants noted the importance of quality, sufficient and affordable childcare. Some participants noted that childcare was a key determinant of young families' decisions to move to and live in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Assisting families with child care is a priority for the **Population Growth Strategy**. It marks a progression in Government's continuous commitment to supporting families:

- **Caring For Our Future: Provincial Strategy for. Quality, Sufficient and Affordable Child Care in Newfoundland and Labrador** is a key complement to the **Population Growth Strategy**.
- In December 2014, Government announced the launch of a new voluntary **Operating Grant Program** for licensed childcare centres.

Through a total investment of \$9.7 million in 2014-15, and \$10.6 million in 2015-16, an annual operating grant will be given to licensed childcare centres that choose to participate to help offset some of the costs associated with providing childcare. The program requires participating centres to lower parent fees to current subsidy rates, which improves affordability for families.



Photo courtesy of Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism

Additionally, as part of the 10-year childcare strategy, **Caring for Our Future**, an investment of \$9.4 million has been made in the **Childcare Services Subsidy Program** to decrease the costs of regulated childcare for eligible families. This helps families with low incomes with regulated childcare costs.

Childcare rates are subsidized for families who meet the eligibility criteria of the subsidy program. Full subsidy is provided to eligible families with an income of \$27,840 per year or less, with a declining subsidy thereafter. The **Childcare Services Subsidy Program** is being reviewed to ensure streamlined and effective processes for both the parents availing of the service, and childcare centres and family childcare homes in receipt of subsidy.

Setting a rate structure in centres participating in the operating grant program, and subsidizing families with lower incomes, combined with existing federal and provincial benefits, will assist in making childcare more affordable for families.

Policy Action 5: Identify communities without regulated childcare options and work with local residents to develop options for creation of regulated childcare centres or family childcare homes.

Develop

Strategic Direction 3

Develop supports to assist all families in Newfoundland and Labrador from early childhood learning to post-secondary education.

Objective 3.1: Keep education affordable for Newfoundland and Labrador post-secondary students.

Supporting students in Newfoundland and Labrador is a Government priority. In the K-12 system, Government covers the cost of textbooks and school fees for students throughout the province.

At the post-secondary level, substantial improvements have been made to the province's **Student Financial Assistance Program** and continued improvements, including actions to reduce student debt, are important to support increased enrolment in educational institutions for those students that otherwise could not afford to attend. Newfoundland and Labrador is the only jurisdiction in Canada that has committed to completely eliminate provincial student loans and replace them with upfront provincial grants. Domestic undergraduate tuition fees in Newfoundland and Labrador are the most affordable in Canada. In 2014-15, undergraduate fees were approximately 44 per cent lower than the Canadian average.



Photo courtesy of Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism

In the same year, international undergraduate students paid approximately 56 per cent less in tuition fees than the Canadian average, and international graduate students paid approximately 80 per cent lower than the Canadian average, to receive an education in Newfoundland and Labrador. Government will further expand on its efforts to keep education affordable by providing non-repayable grants to working individuals enrolled in part-time post-secondary studies.

Policy Action 6: Building on the decision to transition from provincial student loans to non-repayable grants, keep education affordable for working individuals in Newfoundland and Labrador students by providing a financial incentive to engage in part-time studies.

Create

Strategic Direction 4

Create supports for healthy family development.

Objective 4.1: Enhance local resources for families with children aged 0-6 to engage in social and recreational activities.

Family Resource Centres are invaluable to parents, children and other residents. These community-based organizations deliver programs to promote positive parent-child interactions, improve child development and increase community involvement to support families. This includes opportunities for parents to meet other parents, for children to interact with other children, and for youth and other residents to engage in recreational, educational and other activities while meeting other members of the community. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador provides funding to support community-based **Family Resource Centres**. As of January 27, 2015, there were 30 hubs (main **Family Resource Centres**) and 123 satellites (outreach services) offering programs and services to 153 communities throughout the province. Government will continue to support **Family Resource Centres** across the province in their work to organize valuable educational, social and recreational activities for families.

Policy Action 7: Support Family Resource Centre programming to ensure the needs of communities are met.



Photo courtesy of Winnie Healey

Keeping active is essential to healthy living and important for workplace productivity, but more importantly, for chronic disease prevention, as noted in **Improving Health Together: A Policy Framework for Chronic Disease Prevention and Management in Newfoundland and Labrador**. The significant number of natural spaces and parks in Newfoundland and Labrador offers opportunities for outdoor activities. Opportunities for exploring the outdoors include hiking the East Coast Trail, the forthcoming International Appalachian Trail, and the Labrador Pioneer Footpath, as well as visiting the world-renowned Gros Morne National Park, the Torngat Mountains National Park, and the Terra Nova National Park. Newfoundland and Labrador also offers a wealth of organized sports and recreational opportunities.

However, financial barriers exist for some families to participate in sports and other recreational activities. In keeping with the key directions in **Achieving Health and Wellness: Provincial Wellness Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador** and the key direction of recreation programming, as outlined in **Active Healthy NL: A Recreation and Sport Strategy**, Government will support families across Newfoundland and Labrador to engage in physical activity. This includes supports for indoor and

outdoor recreational opportunities.

Policy Action 8: Work across Government to ensure existing and new programs are designed to encourage partnerships to support families to engage in physical activity.

Policy Action 9: Enhance policies and activities related to parks and the outdoors throughout the province, with a view to increasing outdoor family recreation and interest in provincial parks and protected areas, by:

- **Examining legislation, regulations, and policies such as the hunting age for big and small game, and the Disabled Hunter and Angler Program;**
- **Assessing parks and natural areas programming in other jurisdictions to determine their suitability for Newfoundland and Labrador, such as the Learn to Camp outreach program; and,**
- **Continuing to work with the Newfoundland T’Railway Council to maintain the T’Railway Provincial Park, a significant recreational asset for residents of the province.**

Objective 4.2: Increase the availability of affordable housing in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Quality, affordable, and accessible housing is key to individual and community well-being. Access to suitable housing is frequently a determinant of a resident’s decision on where to live. For example, living in an urban centre may not be an option due to the higher costs involved; however, living in rural areas may mean longer commuting times to work or recreation and other services.

During the public consultations on population growth, quality and affordable housing was raised as an important consideration for newcomer attraction and resident retention. Recent indicators suggest that housing availability has increased in urban centres of the province.²⁸ For example:

- In April 2013, rental vacancy rates in Newfoundland and Labrador were experiencing a historic low rate, at 1.7 per cent. However, in October 2014, the rate had improved to 4.1 per cent, as more rental properties became available.
- In Corner Brook, where there were no rental vacancies in October 2013, the vacancy rate has increased to 3.7 per cent in October 2014.
- In Grand Falls-Windsor, the rate went from 2.2 per cent in October 2013 to 3.3 per cent in October 2014.
- In St. John's, the apartment availability rate grew from 3.2 per cent in October 2013 to 4.6 per cent in 2014, indicating greater availability of rental apartments.

While rental availability rates may grow, the cost of housing can be a significant challenge, particularly to residents on fixed and low income.

To alleviate the cost of accommodation for youth and students in the province, Government has been making strategic investments in housing initiatives, such as the newly-constructed student residences at **Memorial University's** St. John's and Grenfell campuses, and residences at **College of the North Atlantic** campuses in Bay St. George, Burin and Happy Valley-Goose Bay. Further, the **Strategic Internationalization Plan for Memorial University**, which was released in February 2015, envisions increasing the level of integration supports for international students, particularly in the area of dedicated housing, residential space, and family-based housing.²⁹



Photo courtesy of Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

In addition to investments in affordable housing for post-secondary students, Governments has also focused on enhancing housing supports for other residents:

- On November 28, 2014, the Provincial Government, along with the Government of Canada, announced a combined investment of more than \$68 million over five years to help more individuals and families access affordable housing and renovate their existing homes through an extension to the **Investment in Affordable Housing Agreement**. This funding will be used to invest \$27 million to construct approximately 450 new affordable housing units throughout the province.
- In addition, \$41 million will be invested in the **Provincial Home Repair** program, which provides financial assistance for renovations and repairs for low-income households, thereby enabling families to remain in their own homes longer. This funding will also support development of affordable rental housing by the private, public and non-profit sectors, with a priority focus on rental housing for persons with complex needs, persons with disabilities, seniors, and people who require support to live independently in the community.
- By 2019, the Provincial Government will have constructed a total of 1,500 new affordable homes under the **Investment in Affordable Housing Agreement**. This work is an important component of population growth, as access to quality, affordable housing was noted as a challenge for some families and individuals in the province.

Policy Action 10: Construct more affordable housing units, including a priority focus on housing for individuals and families with complex needs, persons with disabilities, seniors and people who require supports to live independently in the community.

Respond

Strategic Direction 5

Respond to challenges facing families in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Objective 5.1: Create additional supports for adoptive families.

Adoption is a legal and social process through which a child becomes a part of a new family. At the end of the 2014 calendar year, 30 adoptions were finalized and 30 children placed in adoptive homes; 90 applicants were being processed for an adoption; and 60 applicants were approved to adopt. These numbers include domestic, interprovincial and inter-country adoptions.

In order to ensure the safety of children involved in an adoption, there are many processes that are put in place. To assist families who are interested in adopting and to ensure more timely permanence for children, it was recognized that there were legislative and policy measures that could be undertaken to streamline and expedite the adoption process. The **Adoption Act, 2013**, which came into effect in June 2014, is assisting in making the adoption process more efficient for potential adoptive parents across Newfoundland and Labrador.

Government will also work to assist families who may be interested in adoption by developing partnerships with organizations who have expertise in the adoption of older children, sibling groups and children with complex needs.

Policy Action 11: Streamline adoption processes to make it easier for families to adopt through the implementation of the *Adoption Act, 2013*, which came into effect in June 2014.

Policy Action 12: Undertake partnerships to encourage the adoption of older children, sibling groups and children with complex needs, which commenced in July 2014.

Objective 5.2: Create additional supports for seniors.

Seniors are increasingly becoming a larger segment of the provincial population. Government's newly created Department of Seniors, Wellness, and Social Development works to support people as they age so that they can live healthy, productive and meaningful lives. This responsibility is shared between multiple government departments and agencies and public partners.

Policy Action 13: Work across Government departments and agencies to ensure programs support seniors to engage in physical activity, recreation, and other healthy living activities.

Policy Action 14: Focus on the needs of seniors by consulting them to ensure their views and their needs are reflected in Government's policies and priorities, and involving seniors in the design of programs and services intended to meet their needs.

This Action Plan provides a comprehensive framework of initiatives and policies that support families in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Action Plan includes steps to support birth and adoptive parents and their children, as well as support seniors in the province, and foster efforts to promote a family-friendly work culture.

The **Families Action Plan** is a foundational part of the **Population Growth Strategy**. It represents efforts to support Newfoundland and Labrador families through a range of initiatives focused on improving the awareness and availability of Government programs and services and community supports.

Background Information on the Communities Action Plan, 2015 – 2020



Strong Communities Support Population Growth

For the purposes of the **Communities Action Plan**, a community is defined as a group of people living in the same geographic location. Regions, municipalities and neighbourhoods are all communities. Government must support strong community, regional and economic development in order to maintain and increase the population. The **Communities Action Plan** takes steps to ensure communities offer sufficient employment, social, cultural, and leisure opportunities so that Newfoundland and Labrador's towns and cities can thrive.

Out-migration, regional population shifts and an aging population are realities facing many communities. To respond to these realities, Government will develop partnerships with municipalities, community groups and the private sector to stimulate the economy to create jobs needed to attract and retain existing and new residents, and to deliver services in an efficient manner.



Photo courtesy of Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism

Between 2008 and 2013, more people moved to Newfoundland and Labrador than left the province.³⁰ However, in 2013-14, this trend reversed with more people leaving than arriving: preliminary estimates note 7,755 people moved from other provinces and territories to Newfoundland and Labrador, and 9,960 people moved to another province or territory from this province. In addition, 1,388 people moved from other countries to Newfoundland and Labrador in 2013-14. In total, the overall net migration level in 2013-14 (including interprovincial and international) led to 817 fewer people in the province.³¹ Investment in communities is one way to reverse this statistic.

In addition to out-migration to other provinces, regional population shifts are also affecting the sustainability of some communities. Between 1991 and 2011, the St. John's CMA (Census Metropolitan Area) grew by 25,000 people, while the population of the rest of the province declined by 79,000 people.³² Similarly, between 2006 and 2014, the Central Newfoundland-Grand Falls-Windsor census area has grown by an average of 4.1 per cent, while the Notre Dame Bay-Lewisporte census area declined by an average of 7.9 per cent.³³ This dramatic shift of population from rural communities to regional centres presents challenges related to program and service delivery in smaller communities with declining populations.

The population of Newfoundland and Labrador is aging faster than many other parts of Canada. Between 2004 and 2014, the share of people 40 years of age and older has grown from 50 per cent to 56.4 per cent.³⁴ Similarly, the share of people 19 years of age and younger has decreased from 23 per cent to 19.7 per cent.³⁵ This reality is more acute for some regions than others. Most notably, the St. Anthony-Port Aux Choix region and the Burin Peninsula are anticipated to see the proportion of people under 19 decrease by almost 10 percentage points between 2004 and 2029, while their proportion of residents 40 years of age and older is forecasted to increase by almost 20 percentage points.³⁶ Meanwhile, the Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour, Labrador, and the Northeast Avalon regions are forecasted to age at a slower rate. For example, the number of people on the Northeast Avalon 19 years of age or younger is expected to decrease by only 2.7 per cent by 2029.³⁷

The **Communities Action Plan** is designed to help respond to these challenges.

Existing Supports for Communities

Government has a number of programs designed to make communities attractive places to live, work, study, and do business. **Live Here • Work Here • Belong Here** will build on these programs, services and initiatives. Some of the existing components of the communities' toolkit includes:

Initiative	Purpose	Outcomes of Success
Rural Broadband Initiative	This initiative was developed to expand high speed internet access to communities throughout the province.	By 2014-15, Government exceeded the goal of having 95 per cent of the population covered by broadband access, reaching 98 per cent following the implementation of the broadband projects announced in 2014-15.
Supplier Development Program	This program promotes increased knowledge of supply opportunities among Newfoundland and Labrador firms through Government support, specifically in relation to large-scale industrial projects and large purchasers of goods and services.	In 2014-15, 14 supplier development information and networking events were held with 644 companies.
Business Investment Program	This program provides loans for small and medium-sized businesses.	In 2014-15, for commercial repayable term loans, Government reviewed and approved 22 proposals, valued at \$3.3 million.
Business Development Support Program	This funding assists with productivity improvements, knowledge development, market development and professional technical advice.	In 2014-15, for commercial non-repayable contributions, Government made 204 approvals valued at \$2.3 million.
Business Retention and Expansion	This program conducts a of businesses to identify issues limiting retention and expansion, and steps to address these challenges.	Over 70 companies underwent the Business Retention and Expansion diagnostic process in 2014-15, with individual business action plans developed to address opportunities and overcome challenges.
Community Capacity Building (CCB)	CCB is funding for training to assist with regional economic planning and development for community and employer groups and municipalities.	In 2014-15, 67 sessions were approved under the CCB program, including 1,300 participants.

Initiative	Purpose	Outcomes of Success
Cultural Economic Development Program to Artists (CEDP)	This program provides financial support to professional arts organizations for events or projects that stimulate sustainable economic development of the province's cultural resources.	In 2013-14, CEDP provided support to 126 heritage organizations and 48 major arts initiatives.
Park Operations	Government oversees a total of 13 camping parks, 7 natural and scenic attractions, 10 park reserves, 18 ecological reserves, one public reserve and one special management area.	In 2014-15, 62,913 camping nights were sold. In total, there were 183,610 campers in 2014 in the province.
Air Foodlift Subsidy	This Subsidy ensures nutritious, perishable food is available in Labrador's coastal communities.	In 2014-15, 23 retailers availed of the subsidy.
Inclusion Grants*	These grants assist non-profit, community-based organizations to enhance the participation of persons with disabilities through building retrofits, installation of accessibility features and provision of disability-related accommodations and supports.	In 2014-15, 14 grants were dispersed.
Accessible Vehicle Funding*	This funding assists individuals to adapt personal vehicles for accessibility or to cover additional costs of new or used vehicles that have been made accessible.	In 2014-15, 24 grants were dispersed. 2 grants were dispersed for taxi accessibility.
Community Healthy Living Fund	<p>Government is realigning its healthy living, recreation and wellness grant programs to be administered in 2015-16 under a streamlined program called the Community Healthy Living Fund.</p> <p>This fund replaces the Seniors Recreation Grant Program, Provincial Health and Wellness Grant Program, Age-Friendly Organization Grant Program and Community Recreation Support Program (which included the Capital Grant, Physical Activity Equipment Grant and Community Recreation Development Grant).</p>	<p>The Community Healthy Living Fund will serve as the single entry point for grant applications.</p> <p>\$2.2 million in funding will be available through the Community Healthy Living Fund in 2015-16.</p>
Age-Friendly Organization Grants*	These grants support seniors' organizations, retiree groups, Aboriginal governments or communities to develop and expand their ability to contribute to the creation of an age-friendly community.	Since 2010, 75 fifty-plus clubs, retiree groups, and other organizations assisting seniors have been supported throughout the province. This program is included in the Community Healthy Living Fund for 2015-16.
Age-Friendly Community Grants*	This funding is intended to support municipalities, Aboriginal governments and organizations throughout the province to apply an age-friendly lens to their programs, services and supports.	Since 2010, 45 municipalities have been supported throughout the province. This program is included in the Community Healthy Living Fund for 2015-16.

Initiative	Purpose	Outcomes of Success
Age-Friendly Transportation Grants*	This funding assists in identifying creative and sustainable transportation solutions for seniors and individuals with mobility challenges.	Through this three-year pilot established in 2013, five pilot projects are running throughout the province.
Community Capital Grants*	These grants range from \$5,000 to \$15,000, and are available to retrofit and renovate existing facilities that citizens use for recreation and sport. Funding is also available to support capital costs that increase use, lower operating costs, improve safety and increase accessibility.	In 2014-15, 67 towns and groups have received funding. The Community Capital Grant program has an ongoing intake of applications throughout the fiscal year. This program is included in the Community Healthy Living Fund for 2015-16.
Physical Activity Equipment Grants*	Through these grants, up to \$3,000 in funding is available to non-profit organizations, groups, and schools to support the purchase and repair of equipment that promotes physical activity. Applicants are required to be incorporated and/or registered as non-profit.	In 2014-15, 97 grants have been awarded to communities, recreation commissions and other organizations. The Physical Activity Equipment Grant program has an ongoing intake of applications throughout the fiscal year. This program is included in the Community Healthy Living Fund for 2015-16.
Community Recreation Development Grants*	Under these grants, municipalities and incorporated Recreation Committees (in areas where no incorporated municipalities exists) with a population of less than 6,000 are eligible to receive funding to develop recreation programs in their communities.	In 2014-15, 92 communities received funding. This program is included in the Community Healthy Living Fund for 2015-16.
Wellness Grants*	Community-based organizations and communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador can avail of funding, in the form of a contribution toward the cost of a project which supports healthy living and wellness.	In 2014-15, 82 groups and organizations received funding. This program is included in the Community Healthy Living Fund for 2015-16.
Financial Support for Communities and Related Organizations	Communities and related organizations can avail of various financial supports which may include Municipal Operating Grants, Special Assistance Grants , Partial Rebate of the Provincial Portion of the HST (administered by the Department of Finance), Sharing of Provincial Revenue from Gasoline Tax (excluding other forms of fuel), Capital Works Programs , the Provincial Waste Management Strategy , and the Community Enhancement Employment Program .	<p>In 2014-15, 262 communities benefited from approved Municipal Operating Grants.</p> <p>In 2014-15, 185 Special Assistance Grants were approved.</p> <p>In 2014-15, 222 projects were approved in 108 communities under the Municipal and Multi-Year Capital Works Programs.</p> <p>In 2014-15, four projects were approved in three communities under the federal Building Canada Fund-Communities Component.</p> <p>In 2014-15, 22 projects received funding in support of the Provincial Waste Management Strategy.</p> <p>In 2014-15, 250 projects were approved under the Community Enhancement Employment Program.</p>

Initiative	Purpose	Outcomes of Success
The Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program (NLPDP)	This program provides financial assistance for the purchase of eligible prescription medications.	Coverage is provided for over 7,000 drug products to 135,000 residents.
Dental Programs	<p>The Children's Dental Health Program provides universal access for eligible dental services received within the province for children age 12 years and under.</p> <p>Limited coverage is available for youth age 13 to 17 years whose families are in receipt of income support benefits or families eligible under the NLPDP Low Income Access Program.</p> <p>The Adult Dental Program provides basic services and a denture component (both with a cost cap) for clients enrolled under the Foundation Plan, Access Plan and the 65Plus Plan of the NLPDP.</p>	<p>Universal dental coverage for children 12 years and under.</p> <p>Investment of \$5.7 million in 2015-16 for coverage related to assisting adults.</p> <p>Effective July 2, 2015, under the Adult Dental Program, the annual cap for basic dental services will be increased from \$200 to \$300 and the annual cap for dentures will increase from \$750 to \$1,500.</p>
Newfoundland and Labrador Healthline	The Healthline is a toll-free 24/7 service that provides telephone access to nurse triage and health information from anywhere in the province.	Over 37,000 calls per year with an investment of over \$3 million in 2015-16.
Home Support Program	This program provides assistance with the activities of daily living. Financial subsidies are available for individuals who meet the criteria following a functional and financial assessment. There is also a paid family caregiving program for home support clients who qualify.	In 2014-15, Government invest over \$170 million and assisted approximately 9,000 home support clients.
Bursaries and Incentives	These initiatives represent Government efforts for effective recruitment and retention of health professionals, including nurses and physicians.	<p>Over 6,300 Registered Nurses and about 125 Nurse Practitioner licenses, among highest per capita in Canada.</p> <p>Approximately 1,180 physicians in Newfoundland and Labrador, the highest number of physicians ever.</p>
Provincial TeleHealth Services	The Telehealth program provides communication between a patient and their specialist – both geographically distant from each other for select services.	In 2014-15, approximately 14,000 remote consults were conducted.
Turn Back the Tide.ca	This website provides a one-stop shop for user-friendly and authoritative information on climate change and energy efficiency.	In 2014, the Turn Back the Tide campaign won a series of awards focused on excellence in business communications, digital marketing and government communications. 35 "What's New" articles have been posted on the site in 2014-15.

Initiative	Purpose	Outcomes of Success
Hotshots	This initiative is aimed at providing students and teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador with resources about energy conservation. All resources are available in both English and French, and include fact sheets about where energy comes from in this province, why saving energy is important, and how students can take action.	In 2014-15, HotShots resource packs were distributed to all 263 public schools in the province. In 2014-15, over 150 presentations were delivered in over 40 schools, reaching more than 4,200 students.
Energy Conservation in Homes	This project is seeking to determine how and if individuals in the province change their electricity consumption behavior when provided with real-time information about their electricity use.	In 2014-15, the Home Energy Monitoring Pilot Project was launched, with 750 households participating across the province and 500 households receiving real-time electricity demand feedback devices.
Greening Government Operations	These actions aim to improve the environmental sustainability of Government operations.	In 2014-15, Government released a Greening Government Action Plan , with 46 commitments across five strategic objectives involving 10 government entities.
Climate Portal	This portal is intended to provide better climate data to inform community land-use planning, infrastructure development and emergency services.	In 2014-15, Government launched the New Climate Information Portal on the Community Accounts website, which includes over a million points of data from over 70 Environment Canada weather stations throughout NL. It provides temperature, wind and rainfall data from 1909 to 2013, with data available at the community, regional and provincial level.
Bonne Bay Marine Station	This partnership promotes awareness of climate change impacts on the marine environment.	Partnership between Government and the Bonne Bay Marine Station, a world-class research and teaching facility on the west coast of Newfoundland and Labrador that sees over 11,000 visitors each year, including families, tourists and students. An information kiosk and custom-built downloadable digital application have been developed demonstrating how climate change is impacting the marine environment, with information and examples specific to Newfoundland and Labrador.
Grants to Youth Organizations	This program is available to youth-serving organizations in Newfoundland and Labrador who engage youth in areas of self-reliance, leadership and citizenship development.	Since 2012-13, 2.1 million dollars has been provided to 48 youth-serving organizations.
Funding for Community Youth Networks	Community Youth Networks were created to help decrease barriers to education and/or employment, and improve the quality of life for young people across the province.	There are 34 Community Youth Networks throughout NL. In 2014-15, 2.5 million dollars in funding was committed to CYNs and another 2.5 million has been committed for 2015-16.
Grants to the Community Sector Council	Community Services Council's mission is to strengthen and promote the essential role that voluntary and non-profit, community organizations play in building healthy and prosperous communities.	In 2014-15, the Community Sector Council received a grant of \$201,200.

*The Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development is currently undertaking a review of its various grant programs, which may result in changes to these programs.



Photo courtesy of Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism, © Barrett & MacKay Photo

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is committed to providing programs and supports to assist in the social and economic development of communities across the province. Going forward, it may be worthwhile to explore opportunities for partnerships or co-location of provincial and municipal services, especially in smaller communities, to enhance access and efficiencies for both levels of government.

The development of the **Communities Action Plan** is informed by existing initiatives, as well as public consultations on population growth, held in communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

An Action Plan by the People of Newfoundland and Labrador for the People of Newfoundland and Labrador

Promoting wellness, inclusion, and spaces for families and individuals to socialize were some of the suggestions made during consultations. **What We Heard: A Summary of Comments, Suggestions and Ideas on Population Growth in Newfoundland and Labrador**, released in 2014, summarizes discussions and ideas for supporting communities. The development of the **Communities Action Plan** was guided by suggestions and ideas discussed in public consultations.

Building on Supports for Communities

The **Communities Action Plan** aims to stabilize and grow the population through economic development opportunities and service delivery enhancements. The Action Plan is about creating economic sustainability in communities throughout the province for current and future generations of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and about investing in service delivery improvements to meet the needs of residents throughout the province. Government will strive to foster communities that can compete to attract and retain people and businesses. The Provincial Government will focus its work through five strategic directions:



Photo courtesy of the Association for New Canadians

Inform

More Newfoundland and Labrador residents and newcomers of the demographic changes, and social, economic and cultural opportunities in the province.

Attract

People and businesses to communities to support sustainable growth and diversification in the economy.

Develop

Local service delivery frameworks that meet the needs of residents now and into the future.

Create

Opportunities for social and cultural development and interaction in communities across Newfoundland and Labrador.

Respond

To challenges facing communities by designing flexible Government programming that places a continued emphasis on community sustainability.



Photo courtesy of Karen Warren

The five strategic directions of the Community Action Plan link to the **Population Growth Strategy** guiding principles by:

- Supporting **choice** through the provision of information to newcomers and residents of the demographic, social, economic, and cultural context in the province;
- Supporting **inclusion** through opportunities for social and cultural development and interaction in communities across Newfoundland and Labrador;
- Supporting **accountability** through responding to challenges facing communities by designing flexible Government programming;
- Supporting **diversity** by attracting people and businesses to communities to ensure sustainable growth and diversification; and,
- Supporting **partnership** through development of local service delivery frameworks which meet the needs of residents now and into the future.

Inform

Strategic Direction 1

Inform more residents and newcomers of the demographic picture and social, economic and cultural opportunities in the province.

Objective 1.1: Promote information on moving to a new community in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Relocating to a new town, city, province or country can create uncertainty for individuals and families. The **Guide to Relocation to Newfoundland and Labrador** provides links on finding a home and a job, obtaining licensing and permits, availing of local services, education, health care, families, leisure and immigration.³⁸ Government will enhance this

website by broadening its focus beyond youth to include all segments of the population, and to allow those looking to move to the province to search amenities and services by town or city. Government will also explore translating the Guide into French, and eventually, other languages.

Policy Action 1: Enhance the Guide to Relocation to Newfoundland and Labrador by developing a web portal on moving to the province.

Objective 1.2: Inform discussions on regional development through evidence-based research.

Governments and residents alike need to continue to be aware of population changes in communities and regions to inform policy and programming decisions. Monitoring and reporting on the demographic context of different regions in the province will allow all stakeholders to remain informed of ongoing population changes in the province.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is committed to regularly updating demographic information on the province's regions in order to ensure timely, responsive action on population change in the province's communities. While information on the provincial demographic landscape is currently published on a regular basis, Government will release regular updates that can be easily understood by members of the public. This will be combined with the annual update on implementation of the **Population Growth Strategy**.

Policy Action 2: Release an annual update on the demographic changes in the province, which will be included in the Population Growth Strategy annual update.

Attract

Strategic Direction 2

Attract people and businesses to communities to support sustainable growth and diversification in the economy.

Objective 2.1: Foster sustainable and diversified economic growth.

Communities play a significant role in stabilizing and growing the population. Creating opportunities for economic development is contingent on all community stakeholders, including the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, municipal governments, community and non-profit organizations, businesses, unions, and individual residents.

Government will build on prior investments by developing a new **Innovation Action Plan** to enable individuals and business to participate in the modern economy, regardless of where they live. This would include the adoption of new processes and communication technologies, and the development of management practices that capture and capitalize on the creativity of the workforce. It would promote partnership and collaboration between innovation ecosystem stakeholders in support of applied research and commercialization.

Policy Action 3: Build on investments in innovation through the development of a new Innovation Action Plan that enables individuals and business to participate in the modern economy, regardless of where they live. The plan will encourage:

- **The adoption of new process, information and communication technologies;**
- **The development of management practices that capture and capitalize on the creativity of the workforce;**
- **The growth of the province's green economy, including the development and deployment of green technology and knowledge;**

- **The enhancement of innovation in important and emerging sectors of the economy, including ocean and other advanced technology industries; and,**
- **The promotion of partnership and collaboration between innovation ecosystem stakeholders institutions in support of applied research and commercialization.**

In recent years, Government has made significant investments to ensure a productive and competitive environment for business growth and investment and to help transition Newfoundland and Labrador's economy into one that is diversified, sustainable and internationally-focused.

These investments have helped solidify local firms' competitive edge in the global marketplace, improve productivity while creating a local business environment that offers exciting entrepreneurial and employment opportunities for both current and future residents in traditional, new, and emerging industries. Government's message to the international business community is that the province is open for business.



Photo courtesy of Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism

Government plays a prominent role in developing policies and programs to assist businesses and its clients, all leading to a vibrant business community and ultimately, wealth generation. Whether it is counseling business owners through the **Business Retention and Expansion** services, assisting a local firm on a trade mission, or providing direct investments to grow innovative ideas into competitive businesses, Government's long-term commitment is to provide sustainable business development in all regions of Newfoundland and Labrador while attracting new business from around the globe.

Policy Action 4: Continue to pursue opportunities to diversify regional economies by identifying and supporting traditional, new, and emerging sectors.

Government is one of the province's largest operators of tourism, culture and heritage facilities, including the **Arts and Culture Centres, Provincial Historic Sites** and **Visitor Information Centres**. Many of these facilities are located in rural areas of the province. These facilities provide important sources of employment, act as regional tourism anchor attractions, and are centres for community outreach, engagement, and development. In this province, rural economic development has been significantly fueled by tourism development and Government continues to partner with stakeholders in this sector to create new business and employment opportunities.

Policy Action 5: Continue to recognize and support artists and the cultural community through strategies that recognize arts and culture as a key component of the province's social and economic life.

Succession planning for small business owners is an important consideration to ensure services continue to be available throughout the province. The number of business owners and operators between the ages of 55 to 64 in Newfoundland and Labrador is among the highest in the country and the percentage of entrepreneurs between the ages of 25 to 34 and 45 to 54 is much lower in the province than in the rest of Canada.³⁹

Without the identification of a successor, more business owners are choosing to close their business once they reach an age of retirement, which is leaving service gaps in communities. Building on prior investments in succession planning resource development, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador will support economic development through entrepreneurship by partnering with community stakeholders to support individuals to make connections to entrepreneurial opportunities in the communities where they exist.

Policy Action 6: Continue to support economic development through entrepreneurship by partnering with community stakeholders to support individuals to make connections to entrepreneurial opportunities in communities where they exist.

Develop

Strategic Direction 3

Develop local service delivery frameworks which meet the needs of residents now and into the future.

Objective 3.1: Address the fiscal, governance and service-delivery challenges facing municipalities.

Municipalities have an important role in providing local programs and services for residents in communities across the province. In April, 2015, a **Community Sustainability Partnership** was put in place to respond to community input, following consultations and discussions with municipalities and stakeholders. Government has heard the concerns facing communities and is committed to responding. Government will support municipalities in their efforts to provide the best possible services to the residents in Newfoundland and Labrador communities.

Policy Action 7: Change the way municipal services are delivered, paid for, and shared to better position local governments in Newfoundland and Labrador to meet the needs of residents now and into the future through the implementation a recently announced Community Sustainability Partnership, which includes:

- **Over \$46 million in additional funding provided to communities over the next three years, annualized at approximately \$25 million thereafter;**
- **A partial rebate of the provincial portion of the Harmonized Sales Tax for municipalities and local services districts;**
- **Sharing of provincial gas tax revenues with municipalities;**
- **A three-year commitment to municipal operating grants at the level of \$22 million annually;**
- **Exploring options for a new regional governance model;**
- **Working with a consultant and communities to investigate and devise a plan to eliminate long-term boil water advisories; and,**
- **Working with three regional service boards in providing regional water and wastewater operator services to a pilot group of communities, to provide much needed assistance to water system operators in the immediate term, and help operators gain a stronger knowledge base and build capacity within communities.**

Food security has become an increasingly prominent issue globally and in the province. Residents require safe, healthy, and affordable food choices.

Currently, Newfoundland and Labrador imports approximately 90 per cent of fresh fruits and vegetables and Government relies heavily on a marine transportation system for food shipments.⁴⁰ Access to fresh and nutritious food is essential to ensure the health and well-being of communities and residents, yet challenges such as unseasonal temperatures and weather conditions have made it difficult to ensure an adequate supply of such food to rural and remote regions in recent years. This requires Government to respond to support residents in the province.

Policy Action 8: Provide support for a sustainable food supply through a renewed Agri-foods and Agriculture Strategy which focuses on increasing local food production and supply, designating land for agriculture and agri-food usage, and ensuring succession planning for the agriculture industry.



Objective 3.2: Improve settlement and integration services and provide multiculturalism supports for newcomers across Newfoundland and Labrador.

Government will support immigrants and their families in their transition to life in the province. Assisting immigrants to integrate in Newfoundland and Labrador society may increase the likelihood that they will choose to continue to live and work in the province. Immigrants will help strengthen the workforce, invest in the province, provide global connections, and grow roots and contribute to new generations of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians that will continue to enrich the province’s culture and society for years to come. The **Community and Immigration Action Plans** focus on the importance of supporting immigrants in the province.

Photo courtesy of the Association for New Canadians

Through collaboration with service providing organizations, municipalities, regional committees, employers, and other stakeholders, Government will launch a renewed **Newfoundland and Labrador Settlement and Integration Program**, which will provide funding to non-profit community organizations and non-governmental organizations, through a Request for Proposals process, for the delivery of settlement and integration services and supports to immigrants.

Policy Action 9: Create a new Newfoundland and Labrador Settlement and Integration Program that will provide funding to non-profit community organizations and non-governmental organizations to deliver settlement services and supports to immigrants to meet the priority of increased retention.

For immigrants new to St. John’s who may need assistance in upgrading their English skills, educational institutions and the Association for New Canadians offer language courses. Due to limited availability of **English as a Second Language** (ESL) programming outside of the St. John’s area, some ESL students are enrolling in other programs that do not address their specific needs. Through collaboration with the Association for New Canadians, Government will facilitate the expansion of ESL programming to other regions of the province based on demand.

Policy Action 10: Expand English as a Second-Language programming to more sites throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

Objective 3.3: Protect the province’s natural heritage to conserve wilderness, wildlife and biodiversity, and a clean environment for future generations.

Government will continue to work towards development and assessment of potential protected areas and to reduce the adverse impacts of human activities on the environment. The province’s wilderness and ecological reserves play an important role in protecting the province’s natural heritage and providing outdoor venues for learning, research and enjoyment. Government designates wilderness and ecological reserves under the **Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act** and will work in close collaboration with the **Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council** on the establishment of reserves. Government will work with communities throughout the province to pursue stewardship agreements and continue work to reduce waste being created in the province and dumped in landfills.

Policy Action 11: Collaborate to protect the province’s natural heritage and conserve the environment by:

- Working with communities and the **Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council** on the establishment of reserves; and,
- Working with communities on **Stewardship Agreements**.

Policy Action 12: Enhance efforts in the environmental protection of land, air and water in the province.

Create

Strategic Direction 4

Create opportunities for social and cultural development and interaction in communities.

Objective 4.1: Support initiatives to help increase opportunities for residents to interact socially.

Newfoundland and Labrador covers a vast geography and the distance between communities is often significant. In the province's communities, the presence of accessible, inclusive and cutting edge facilities is important to allow for meaningful recreational, cultural, social and other exchanges between residents. The **College of the North Atlantic, Memorial University** and private training institutions have campuses located throughout the province. There are also K-12 public schools across the province in the **English School District** and the **Conseil scolaire francophone provincial de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador**. These facilities offer spaces that can be used for local community events.

Government will strive to identify opportunities where educational facilities throughout the province can serve as education and training hubs, as well as communal spaces that can be used by all community members for social, recreational, cultural and other activities.

Policy Action 13: Work with the College of the North Atlantic, Memorial University, private training institutions, as well as school districts to identify opportunities where facilities can be used as communal spaces for social and recreational activities.

Children, youth, and adults across Newfoundland and Labrador regularly engage in recreational and sports activities in pursuit of a healthy lifestyle, to meet other peers, or to pursue a new pastime. As municipalities engage in supporting community members in sports and recreational activities, Government will assist them in their work through the **Wellness Plan, Sports and Recreation Strategy**, and other resources that will help municipalities strengthen their focus on sports and recreation. Recreation infrastructure is now an eligible category under the new, 10-year **Federal-Provincial Gas Tax Agreement**, providing additional opportunities for funding activities that promote healthy lifestyles in the province.

Policy Action 14: Through the provincial Wellness Plan and the Recreation and Sports Strategy, support the emerging recreational and social development focus of municipalities and the new ability to fund recreational infrastructure under the Federal-Provincial Gas Tax Agreement.

Objective 4.2: Foster diversity and inclusion in Newfoundland and Labrador communities.

In 2007, Government released the **Healthy Aging Policy Framework**. Healthy aging refers to a lifelong process of optimizing opportunities for improving health, wellness and quality of life. The Framework focuses on creating a more age-friendly province through the recognition of older persons; celebrating diversity; developing supporting communities; improving financial well-being; supporting health promotion initiatives, and health and well-being; and focusing on the impact of an aging population on facilitating opportunities for employment, education and research. The next steps in implementing this vision are to improve access to transportation, health and wellness for seniors.

Policy Action 15: Provide support to communities so they can create increasingly age-friendly environments.

Government, in partnership with **Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador**, has funded a public awareness campaign during the province's last three municipal elections, to encourage citizens to consider running for municipal council. New Canadian citizens will also be encouraged to engage in the municipal democratic process through activities planned for the next municipal election in September 2017. Government will promote these opportunities to new Canadian citizens to support municipal governance and assist new citizens in taking ownership of their communities.

Policy Action 16: Work with Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador to encourage new Canadian citizens to participate in the municipal process by voting and running for local office, as part of the Make Your Mark campaign.

Objective 4.3: Create safe communities where residents can thrive.

Safe communities and public safety are a key priority for Government. With the establishment of the **Premier's Advisory Council on Crime and Community Safety** in 2015, Government has engaged representatives from academia, policing, and the legal, Aboriginal, and mental health and addictions communities to examine crime prevention and control strategies in other jurisdictions in an effort to propose new approaches to serving the needs of victims and offenders, and promoting safety and security throughout the province. The continuation of this work is an important component of the **Population Growth Strategy**.

In addition, Government will continue to focus its efforts on addressing organized crime, drug trafficking, and child exploitation. This will be done through the ongoing operation of an integrated policing initiative between the **Royal Newfoundland Constabulary** and **Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit of Newfoundland and Labrador** (CFSEU-NL). Further, Government is committed to continuing to support the **Intimate Partner Violence** (IPV) initiative, a joint, province-wide law enforcement effort of the **RNC** and **RCMP**. Under the **IPV** initiative, police agencies are building on existing work, and enhancing responsiveness to intimate partner violence.



Photo courtesy of the Disability Policy Office

Policy Action 17: Emphasize public safety in Government's commitment to supporting communities, including:

- **Supporting the work of the Premier's Advisory Council on Crime and Community Safety; and,**
- **Making supports available for vulnerable residents through continued investments in law enforcement agencies.**

Protecting human rights is vital to achieving the **Population Growth Strategy's** principles of inclusion and diversity. In Newfoundland and Labrador, the **Human Rights Act, 2010** sets out rules that ensure the protection of individuals from discrimination and harassment. In recognition that the overall principles and objectives of this **Strategy** cannot be achieved solely through Government action and that partnership with individuals and stakeholders is essential to support everyone living in Newfoundland and Labrador, Government will continue to work with and support individuals or groups that promote, protect or further human rights efforts in the province.

Policy Action 18: Enhance the focus on human rights promotion as a means of furthering human rights efforts in the province.

Respond

Strategic Direction 5

Respond to challenges facing communities by designing flexible Government programming that places continued emphasis on community sustainability.

Objective 5.1: Design flexible government programming that ensures a continued emphasis on population and economic growth.

Newfoundland and Labrador communities face demographic challenges. Collaboration in the sharing of expertise, promising practices, and other resources has the potential to assist individual communities and the province. Government will seek solutions to community challenges by working with municipal and community leaders, residents, businesses and other employers, labour and other stakeholders.

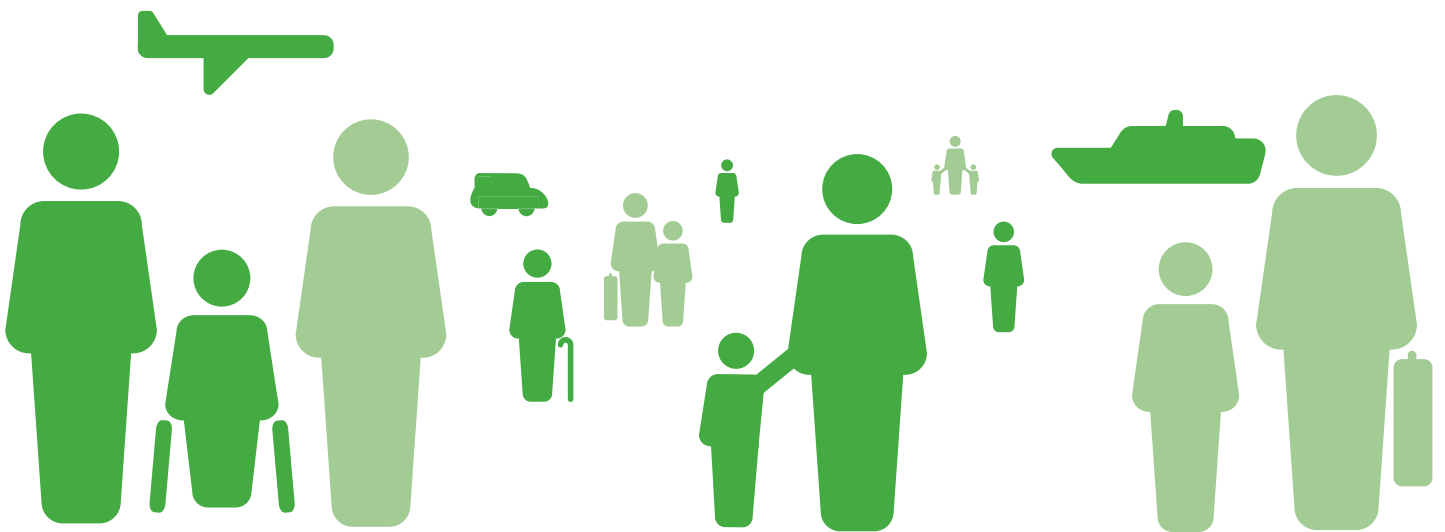
The **Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development** at **Memorial University** has been researching changes in the traditional approach to regional planning and development. Historically, policy planning and development has been based on administrative regions (municipal boundaries, school districts, postal codes) but the **Harris Centre's** recent research titled, **Local Labour Markets as a New Way of Organizing Policies for Stronger Regional Economic Development in Atlantic Canada** suggests an alternative planning model may be needed to address the complex needs of regions. The Centre is currently exploring planning and policy development based on a **Functional Economic Region Model**, which is built upon how people actually live their lives: commuting patterns, work, shopping, and access to services and recreation.

By understanding economic regions as they are created daily by people and employers taking advantage of the actual economic activity in their region, there will be a better understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. Under the **Communities Action Plan**, this research will be utilized to support new ways of organizing policies for stronger, more effective, regional development.

Policy Action 19: Utilizing the Functional Economic Regions research undertaken by Memorial University, undertake engagement at the local level to inform effective policy development at local, regional and provincial levels.

The **Communities Action Plan** is a foundational part of the **Population Growth Strategy**. It represents efforts to support the vibrancy of our communities through a range of initiatives focused on fostering economic, social, and cultural development for newcomer attraction and resident retention.

Background Information on the Immigration Action Plan, 2015 – 2020



Immigration Supports Population Growth



Photo courtesy of the Department of Advanced Education and Skills

Immigration is an important contributor to population growth. Between 2008 and 2014, net international migration accounted for 38 per cent of the overall increase in the province's population, compared to the Canadian average of 69.3 per cent. Preliminary data estimates that 1,000 immigrants came to the province in 2014.⁴¹ More than 50 per cent of these new immigrants came to Newfoundland and Labrador through the Provincial Nominee Program. Immigrants are settling in a variety of communities and centres across Newfoundland and Labrador. The **Immigration Action Plan** will support immigrants in both rural and urban parts of the province.

Beginning in 2015, Government has received an additional 200 nominations under the **Provincial Nominee Program**, for a total of 500 nominations annually. In addition, under the new federal **Express Entry** system of economic immigration, the Provincial Government will be able to nominate another 550 immigrants, resulting in the ability to nominate up to 1,050 immigrants annually.

Combined with other Federal Government immigration categories, the **Immigration Action Plan** provides the province with increased opportunity for people from around the world to choose to live and work in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Existing Supports for Immigration

Government supports a number of programs and services designed to facilitate immigration. The Action Plan builds on the 2007 **Diversity, Opportunity and Growth: An Immigration Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador**. The current provincial immigration toolkit includes:

Initiative	Purpose	Outcomes of Success
Provincial Nominee Program	This program allows the Provincial Government to make nominations of potential immigrants whose skills are deemed critical to the operations of Newfoundland and Labrador businesses.	In 2014-15, 317 individuals and their families were nominated for Permanent Residency. Government held seven sessions at Memorial University on the Provincial Nominee Program , attended by approximately 250 international students.
Settlement and Integration Grants	This program allows the province to make nominations community organizations in delivering settlement and integration services, including workforce development, language training, and other employment supports.	In 2014-15, funding assisted 222 English as a Second Language learners, and 300 international students, Permanent Residents, Provincial Nominees and family members with career-related advice and assistance. Further, in 2014-15, approximately 2,000 people were reached through multiculturalism initiatives.
Immigration Recruitment Fairs and Missions	Attendance at immigration recruitment fairs and missions ensures the province is promoted as a place to live and work with the objective of increasing immigration to Newfoundland and Labrador and to assist employers with challenges hiring locally.	In 2014-15, seven Newfoundland and Labrador employers were represented at the international fairs and missions, and 35 job offers were made to immigrants who attended international fairs.
Immigration Web Portal	The web portal provides information for immigrants with information about living and working in Newfoundland and Labrador.	In 2014-15, 24,000+ unique users accessed information to assist with their decision to immigrate and settle in Newfoundland and Labrador.

An Action Plan by the People of Newfoundland and Labrador for the People of Newfoundland and Labrador

During the consultation process, participants noted the importance of increasing immigration to grow the population. Foreign qualification recognition and immigration settlement services were noted as key areas of focus. **What We Heard: A Summary of Comments, Suggestions and Ideas on Population Growth in Newfoundland and Labrador**, released in 2014, summarizes discussions and ideas for immigration in the province. The **Immigration Action Plan** was developed in response to the suggestions and ideas discussed in public consultations.

Building on Supports for Immigration

The Action Plan supports stabilizing and growing the population through immigrant recruitment and retention. The Plan positions the province to compete with other provinces and territories in Canada and internationally for high-skilled immigrants.

The Action Plan outlines measures to attract and retain more immigrants to Newfoundland and Labrador. Government will focus efforts through five strategic directions:

Inform	More newcomers and potential immigrants about life in Newfoundland and Labrador.
Attract	More immigrants to Newfoundland and Labrador.
Develop	An enhanced immigration program that meets the needs of potential immigrants and employers.
Create	Opportunities for immigrants to successfully integrate into life in Newfoundland and Labrador.
Respond	To the immigration needs of employers.

The five strategic directions of the **Immigration Action Plan** link to the **Population Growth Strategy** guiding principles by:

- Supporting **choice** through the provision of information to potential newcomers and immigrants regarding the lifestyle available in Newfoundland and Labrador;
- Supporting **inclusion** through the creation of opportunities for newcomers and immigrants to successfully integrate into life in Newfoundland and Labrador;
- Supporting **accountability** through the development of an immigration program that is streamlined and meets the needs of potential immigrants and employers;
- Supporting **diversity** by positioning Newfoundland and Labrador as a preferred destination for newcomers and immigrants; and,
- Supporting **partnership** through collaboration with local partners and stakeholders.

Inform

Strategic Direction 1

Inform more newcomers and potential immigrants about life in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Objective 1.1: Increase the online accessibility of information about living and working in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Accessing information on Government and other services in communities is integral to immigrants' positive settlement and integration experiences. Knowing more about Government services is important for immigrants who settle in the province. Government will create a single portal for immigrants to Newfoundland and Labrador.

Policy Action 1: Develop a new Immigration Portal that will link to information supports for individuals, communities, and employers.

Objective 1.2: Align Government's international activities.

The Action Plan sets out a Government-wide approach to immigration planning. Government will create an alignment between immigration and international activities promoting all aspects of the province's interests. An inter-departmental committee will work together to develop an approach that will support the international efforts of relevant departments and agencies.

Policy Action 2: Establish a coordination mechanism to identify mutually beneficial opportunities to collaborate on Government's various international activities, including immigration, international student recruitment, innovation, export development, and air access.

Attract

Strategic Direction 2

Attract more immigrants to Newfoundland and Labrador.

Objective 2.1: Focus on retaining international students.

Memorial University released the **Strategic Internationalization Plan 2020** in February 2015, with one of the recommendations noting the need to aggressively strengthen all structures and processes for attracting and retaining international students, faculty members and other personnel.⁴²

Under its Plan, the University aims to diversify its cohort of international students. Other key actions profiled in the Plan include enhancing student advising support resources for international students at all campuses, and contributing to the population growth of the province through strong post-graduation transition programming and support for welcoming communities initiatives. Government welcomes this approach by **Memorial University** and will partner with the University to help achieve these objectives.



Photo courtesy of the Association for New Canadians

The **Immigration Action Plan** will support international student retention by establishing a Government presence at **Memorial University** to encourage international students to consider remaining in the province by informing them of the workforce and immigration options available to them. Government will also work with the **Centre for Career Development and Experiential Learning** at **Memorial University** to provide labour market information and assistance to international students in obtaining employment.

Policy Action 3: Establish a Government presence focused on immigration and workforce development at Memorial University to provide on-site services in an effort to encourage international students and graduates to remain in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Objective 2.2: Undertake targeted international recruitment activities.

Government will work to recruit internationally for hard-to-fill positions. In recent years, Government has undertaken a series of international recruitment events in countries such as the United Kingdom, Ireland, France and Belgium. Since 2007, Government officials and employers have participated in 28 fairs and missions, resulting in people moving to the province to fill positions in sectors such as health care, information technology, engineering, and education.

Government will engage employers in the planning of and participation in these events and release an annual immigration recruitment calendar of events. Government will also prioritize efforts on occupations for which Newfoundland and Labrador employers are facing skill shortages. However, Government's first priority will remain matching unemployed and underemployed Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to employment opportunities in the province, as reflected in the **Workforce Development Action Plan**.

Policy Action 4: Release an annual calendar of domestic and international recruitment events for employers that will lead and encourage employers in using immigration as a means to address unmet labour demand.

Develop

Strategic Direction 3:

Develop an enhanced provincial immigration process that is streamlined and meets the needs of potential immigrants and employers.

Objective 3.1: Advance the Provincial Government's relationship with the federal and municipal governments on matters related to immigration.

To achieve the full benefits of immigration, collaboration is required between all levels of government. The Provincial Government will continue to collaborate with the federal government and municipalities. At the federal level, Government will continue to participate in the **Federal-Provincial-Territorial Immigration Forum** to highlight provincial concerns and interests at a regional and national level. Government is also currently negotiating the **Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Immigration Agreement** with the federal government, which will position the province to maximize the benefits of immigration to Newfoundland and Labrador.



Photo courtesy of the Association for New Canadians

Policy Action 5: Advance the provincial-federal relationship on immigration-related matters, including a new *Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Immigration Agreement*.

To meet labour demand throughout the province and create strong cultural communities to assist with immigration settlement, including increasing Francophone immigration, Government will work with municipal governments and regional stakeholders.

Policy Action 6: Work with municipal leaders and regional stakeholders to identify in-demand occupations and countries from which to recruit immigrants.

Objective 3.2: Facilitate enhanced awareness and access to provincial immigration programs and supports.

Government will also work with federal departments on the **Express Entry** model of immigration, which was launched January 1, 2015. **Express Entry** is a system for managing the intake of immigration applications by creating a pool of potential immigrants who have been pre-screened to determine their suitability for immigration. Immigration of candidates will be fast-tracked once they receive an offer of employment from a Canadian employer, are selected by the federal government or receive a Provincial Nomination.

Newfoundland and Labrador will have an additional quota of 550 nominations, called **Express Entry** nominations, that can be selected from this pool of candidates. Newfoundland and Labrador will utilize these nominations, based on local labour market needs and will work with **Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada, and Service Canada** to promote and provide the required supports to employers who are interested in recruiting from the **Express Entry** candidates. In order to maximize the benefits of this program for the province, Government and employers in the province must ensure that the **Express Entry** quota is utilized to its full potential.



Photo courtesy of the Department of Advanced Education and Skills

The **Provincial Nominee Program** is a provincial immigration program made possible through an agreement with the federal government. The program allows the province to select and nominate qualified skilled workers from around the world for immigration to Newfoundland and Labrador. The **Provincial Nominee Program** has provided the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador an opportunity to assist employers experiencing hiring challenges, while increasing immigration to the province. In 2013, a record high of 825 new immigrants settled in Newfoundland and Labrador. The growth in overall immigration numbers is a primary result of the **Provincial Nominee Program**. Over 50 per cent of these new immigrants came to Newfoundland and Labrador because they were selected and nominated by the Provincial Government.

Policy Action 7: Increase awareness of immigration programs among employers to assist in recruiting for hard-to-fill positions and individuals interested in moving to the province.

Government will increase the level of regional services available to support immigration throughout the province, including staff training on the **Provincial Nominee Program** and the new **Express Entry** system.

Policy Action 8: Create a regional presence for immigration support throughout the province.

Municipalities are key providers of many of the services and supports that are vital to the settlement and integration of newcomers in this province. Working with these communities through **Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador** to develop **Welcoming Communities** initiatives will create an environment to which immigrants are attracted, as well as one in which they want to stay.

Policy Action 9: Explore a partnership between Government and Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador to support the establishment of Welcoming Communities.

To enhance access to immigration-related programs and services, Government will introduce case management technology and a new, online application system.

Policy Action 10: Introduce improved case management technology, including an online immigration application process.

Create

Strategic direction 4

Create opportunities for immigrants to successfully integrate into life in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Objective 4.1: Make it easier for immigrants to have their credentials recognized in Newfoundland and Labrador, increasing opportunities to obtain employment related to their education.

One of the barriers to immigrant retention and attraction is foreign credential recognition. To better attract and retain qualified immigrants, foreign qualification recognition for regulated occupations will be improved. Government will assist immigrants to have their education and experience recognized through a two-year agreement with the Government of Canada to make systemic improvements to foreign qualification recognition. Regulatory bodies will be encouraged to apply for financial supports to assist with foreign credential recognition processes. To inform this work, Government will hold a series of engagement forums throughout the province.

Policy Action 11: Provide financial supports to Newfoundland and Labrador occupational regulators to assist individuals with having their foreign credentials assessed and recognized to allow them to seek work related to their occupation in the province.

Respond

Strategic Direction 5

Respond to the immigration needs of employers.

Objective 5.1: Address recruitment needs in high-demand sectors of the economy.

Government will facilitate increased immigration by working with the Federal Government to introduce a **Labour Market Demand Stream** for the **Provincial Nominee Program** that is responsive to key in-demand sectors of the economy. This approach will include working with employers to identify priority nominations and using the annual labour market forecast outlined in the **Workforce Development Action Plan** to identify priority sectors for immigration.

Policy Action 12: Identify key in-demand sectors of the economy and provide priority nominations for the Provincial Nominee Program.

The **Immigration Action Plan** is a foundational part of the **Population Growth Strategy**. It represents efforts to support growing the province's population through a range of initiatives focused on recruiting and retaining immigrants from other countries to the province.



Photo courtesy of the Association for New Canadians

Population Growth Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador: A Summary of Strategic Directions

Workforce Development

	Theme	Types of action Government will take
Inform	Inform people within and outside Newfoundland and Labrador of opportunities in the province.	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.
Attract	Attract people to choose Newfoundland and Labrador as their workplace of choice, whether they were born here or elsewhere.	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.
Develop	Develop an educational and training system which assists individuals to develop skills needed to attach to the labour force.	Align early learning, primary and secondary school systems, post-secondary training systems, and adult learning opportunities with the labour market.
Create	Create conditions to maximize the ability of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to participate in the labour market and remove barriers to employment.	Create paid internships, grants, and programming to facilitate labour market attachment for under-represented groups, and support skills development.
Respond	Respond to evolving labour market demands and the differing labour market needs of residents by designing flexible Government programming.	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.

Families

	Theme	Types of action Government will take
Inform	Inform more residents of Government programs and services and of family-friendly employer best practices.	Raise awareness of existing Government programs and services for families; increase the number of employers who provide work-life balance and other family-friendly work options.
Attract	Attract greater participation of parents and individuals in the workforce.	Increase access to quality affordable childcare for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.
Develop	Develop supports to assist all families in the province from early childhood learning to post-secondary education.	Keep education affordable for Newfoundland and Labrador post-secondary students.
Create	Create supports for healthy family development.	Enhance local resources for families throughout the province to engage in social and recreational activities, and provide increased housing supports.
Respond	Respond to challenges facing families in Newfoundland and Labrador.	Create additional supports for adoptive families and seniors.

Communities

	Theme	Types of action Government will take
Inform	Inform more residents and newcomers of the demographic changes and social, economic and cultural opportunities in the province.	Promote information on moving to a new community in Newfoundland and Labrador; release an annual update on the demographic changes in the province.
Attract	Attract people and businesses to communities to support sustainable growth and diversification in the economy.	Foster sustainable and diversified economic growth; identify and support new and emerging sectors in the economy.
Develop	Develop local service delivery frameworks that meet the needs of residents now and into the future.	Improve municipal service delivery and food security in the province; enhance immigrant settlement and integration supports throughout the province; and protect natural heritage.
Create	Create opportunities for social and cultural development and interaction in communities across Newfoundland and Labrador.	Work with school districts and post-secondary institutions to identify opportunities where facilities can be used as communal spaces for social and recreational activities; and foster safe communities.
Respond	Respond to challenges facing communities by designing flexible Government programming that places a continued emphasis on community sustainability.	Engage residents across the province in conversations on tailoring government programming to local circumstances.

Immigration

	Theme	Types of action Government will take
Inform	Inform more newcomers and potential immigrants about life in Newfoundland and Labrador.	Promote Newfoundland and Labrador as a destination of choice for immigrants through a new immigration portal; align Government's international activities.
Attract	Attract more immigrants to Newfoundland and Labrador.	Encourage international students to remain in Newfoundland and Labrador, and make employers and the community aware of upcoming domestic and international immigration recruitment events.
Develop	Develop an enhanced provincial immigration process that is streamlined and meets the needs of potential immigrants and employers.	Disseminate information on provincial and federal immigration programs and develop a regional presence for immigration services.
Create	Create opportunities for immigrants to successfully integrate into life in Newfoundland and Labrador.	Improve the foreign qualification recognition processes in the province.
Respond	Respond to the immigration needs of employers.	Provide priority nominations for the Provincial Nominee Program based on the key in-demand sectors of the economy.

Population Growth Strategy Actions at a Glance

The four five-year action plans in the [Population Growth Strategy](#) for Newfoundland and Labrador contain a combined number of 61 actions noted in the table below. While many of the actions will be launched in the first few years of the [Strategy](#), they will continue in later years.

Workforce Development			
Action	What	Who	Launch year
1	Create a labour market forecasting model that enables occupational updates annually on the labour market needs of the province.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
2	Develop a labour market information toolkit and web portal to help individuals, students and businesses plan for forecasted workforce opportunities, including occupational profiles; information on hard-to-fill occupations; industry profiles; regional profiles; and, job vacancy monitoring.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
3	Implement services to help match job seekers and employers looking for new recruits.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
4	Establish enhanced information-sharing processes with stakeholders such as: educational and training institutions, labour organizations, licensing and regulatory bodies, major project owners, large employers, employer organizations, chambers of commerce, boards of trade and industry associations to improve the collection of labour supply and demand information.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
5	Create a Pathways to Careers and Further Study Guide to help junior high and high school students and youth map their way to their chosen career.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills, and of Education and Early Childhood Development	2016-17
6	Create a Career Pathways Guide to outline the range of career options possible upon completion of post-secondary degrees, diplomas, or certificates.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2017-18
7	Develop an Orientation to Your First Job program and collaborate with School Districts to hold job fairs in high schools throughout the province.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills and Labour Relations Agency	2015-16
8	Provide support to employers, employer and employee associations, community groups, and communities to undertake projects designed to help match labour supply to labour demand in all regions of the province, and decrease unemployment rates.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
9	Provide supports to employers to create more age-friendly workplaces.	Department of Seniors, Wellness, and Social Development	2015-16

Workforce Development

Action	What	Who	Launch year
10	Work with small and medium-sized employers to support human resources, productivity and succession planning needs.	Departments of Advanced Education and Skills and of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development	2015-16
11	Develop an Early Learning to Career Plan to align public educational investments with supports that enable young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to succeed in the labour market.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills, and of Education and Early Childhood Development	2017-18
12	Work with the College of the North Atlantic, Memorial University , and other post-secondary training providers to continue to align course offerings with labour market needs.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
13	Assist in breaking down barriers by introducing greater program flexibility to support individuals seeking employment, such as the purchase of adaptive technologies and work supplies.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2016-17
14	Support youth under 25 years of age, long-term unemployed individuals, Aboriginal people, women, older workers, visible minorities and persons with disabilities to gain employment through work experience programs and paid internships in positions related to their field of study or occupation of interest, in partnership with employers and community-based groups in an effort to reduce high levels of unemployment among segments of the population.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2016-17
15	Review supports for persons with disabilities to access employment.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills, and of Seniors, Wellness, and Social Development	2016-17
16	Pilot supports to assist unemployed individuals living in areas with limited job opportunities with the cost of commuting to employment within the province.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2016-17
17	Test alternative funding approaches for apprentices and journeypersons in select trades, whereby apprentices and journeypersons can complete their training without having to be laid off.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
18	Work with contractors on Government tendering and procurement projects to encourage the hiring of apprentices.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
19	Pursue further apprenticeship harmonization to improve the labour mobility of apprentices and increase completion rates.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
20	Develop a Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition policy framework to help individuals attach to the labour market and gain credentials that reflect their work, life, and educational experience.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2016-17

Workforce Development

Action	What	Who	Launch year
21	Host annual Roundtables on Workforce Development to allow for exchanges regarding the employment and human resources needs and challenges throughout the province.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
22	Work across Government and with stakeholders to develop initiatives that address the needs of key in-demand sectors now and in the future, beginning with strategies focused on the human resource needs of sectors that have labour supply and demand challenges, such as: Healthcare, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Agriculture and Agri-foods, Retail, Accommodations and Food Services, Marine and Road Transportation, Housing, Mining and Energy, and other sectors as required.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills, in collaboration with relevant departments and agencies	2015-16

Families

Action	What	Who	Launch year
1	Enhance the organization of information on the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador website regarding programs and services available to the province's residents, particularly those relevant to families. In addition, explore opportunities for bundling-related programs and services to streamline and improve access for individuals and families.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills, Service NL, Office of Public Engagement and Office of the Chief Information Officer, in collaboration with other relevant departments	2016-17 2017-18
2	Establish a provincial award to recognize employers that create a positive work-life balance environment, in partnership with the employer community.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
3	Develop supports for employers to implement family-friendly workplace policies.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2016-17
4	Lead by example and continue to support Government of Newfoundland and Labrador employees through the use of work-life balance arrangements, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the provision of space for childcare at Government complexes; Facilitating flexible work schedules; Providing paid and unpaid leave options to support employees needs and priorities outside the work environment; and, Developing a workplace wellness strategy 	Various Government Departments and Agencies	2015-16
5	Identify communities without regulated childcare options and work with local residents to develop options for creation of regulated childcare centres or family childcare homes.	Departments of Education and Early Childhood Development, and of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16

Families

Action	What	Who	Launch year
6	Building on the decision to transition from provincial student loans to non-repayable grants, keep education affordable for working individuals in Newfoundland and Labrador by providing a financial incentive to engage in part-time studies.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
7	Support Family Resource Centre programming to ensure the needs of communities are met.	Department of Education and Early Childhood Development	2015-16
8	Work across Government to ensure existing and new programs are designed to encourage partnerships to support families to engage in physical activity.	Department of Seniors, Wellness, and Social Development	2015-16
9	Enhance policies and activities related to parks and the outdoors throughout the province, with a view to increasing outdoor family recreation and interest in provincial parks and protected areas, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examining legislation, regulations, and policies such as the hunting age for big and small game, and the Disabled Hunter and Angler Program; Assessing parks and natural areas programming in other jurisdictions to determine their suitability for Newfoundland and Labrador, such as the Learn to Camp outreach program; and, Continuing to work with the Newfoundland T’Railway Council to maintain the T’Railway Provincial Park, a significant recreational asset for residents of the province. 	Department of Environment and Conservation	2015-16
10	Construct more affordable housing units, including a priority focus on housing for individuals and families with complex needs, persons with disabilities, seniors and people who require supports to live independently in the community.	Newfoundland Labrador Housing Corporation	2015-16
11	Streamline adoption processes to make it easier for families to adopt through the implementation of the Adoption Act, 2013 , which came into effect in June 2014.	Department of Child, Youth, and Family Services	2015-16
12	Undertake partnerships to encourage the adoption of older children, sibling groups and children with complex needs, which commenced in July 2014.	Department of Child, Youth, and Family Services	2015-16
13	Work across Government to ensure programs support seniors to engage in physical activity, recreation, and other healthy living activities.	Department of Seniors, Wellness, and Social Development	2015-16

Families

Action	What	Who	Launch year
14	Focus on the needs of seniors by consulting them to ensure their views and their needs are reflected in Government's policies and priorities, and involving seniors in the design of programs and services intended to meet their needs.	Department of Seniors, Wellness, and Social Development	2015-16

Communities

Action	What	Who	Launch year
1	Enhance the Guide to Relocation to Newfoundland and Labrador by developing a web portal on moving to the province.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills, and Office of Public Engagement	2016-17
2	Release an annual update on the demographic changes in the province, which will be included in the Population Growth Strategy annual update.	Departments of Advanced Education and Skills, and of Finance	2015-16
3	Build on investments in innovation through the development of a new Innovation Action Plan that enables individuals and business to participate in the modern economy regardless of where they live. The Plan will encourage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The adoption of new process, information and communication technologies; • The development of management practices that capture and capitalize on the creativity of the workforce; • The growth of the province's green economy, including the development and the deployment of green technology and knowledge; • The enhancement of innovation in important and emerging sectors of the economy, including ocean and other advanced technology industries; and, • The promotion of partnership and collaboration between innovation ecosystem stakeholders in support of applied research and commercialization. 	Department of Business, Tourism, Culture, and Rural Development	2016-17
4	Continue to pursue opportunities to diversify regional economies by identifying and supporting traditional, new, and emerging sectors.	Department of Business, Tourism, Culture, and Rural Development	2015-16
5	Continue to pursue and support artists and the cultural community through initiatives that acknowledge arts and culture as a key component of the province's social and economic life.	Department of Business, Tourism, Culture, and Rural Development	2015-16

Communities

Action	What	Who	Launch year
6	Continue to support economic development through entrepreneurship to support individuals to make connections to entrepreneurial opportunities in communities where they exist.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
7	Change the way municipal services are delivered, paid for, and shared to better position local governments in Newfoundland and Labrador to meet the needs of residents now and into the future through the implementation of a recently announced Community Sustainability Partnership , which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over \$46 million in additional funding provided to communities over the next three years, annualized at approximately \$25 million thereafter; A partial rebate of the provincial portion of the Harmonized Sales Tax for municipalities and local services districts; Sharing of provincial gas tax revenues with municipalities; A three-year commitment to municipal operating grants at the level of \$22 million annually; Exploring options for a new regional governance model; Working with a consultant and communities to investigate and devise a plan to eliminate long-term boil water advisories; and, Working with three regional service boards in providing regional water and wastewater operator services to a pilot group of communities, to provide much needed assistance to water system operators in the immediate term, and also to help operators gain a stronger knowledge base and build capacity within communities. 	Department of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs	2015-16
8	Provide support for a sustainable food supply through a renewed Agri-foods and Agriculture Strategy that focuses on increasing local food production and supply, designating land for agriculture and agri-food usage, and ensuring succession planning for the agriculture industry.	Forestry and Agri-foods Agency	2015-16
9	Create a new Newfoundland and Labrador Settlement and Integration Program that will provide funding to non-profit community organizations and non-governmental organizations to deliver settlement services and supports to newcomers to meet the priority of increased retention.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
10	Expand English as a Second Language programming to more sites throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2017-18
11	Collaborate to protect the province's natural heritage and conserve the environment by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with communities and the Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council on the establishment of reserves; and, Working with communities on Stewardship Agreements. 	Department of Environment and Conservation	2015-16

Communities

Action	What	Who	Launch year
12	Enhance efforts in the environmental protection of land, air and water in the province.	Department of Environment and Conservation	2015-16
13	Work with the College of the North Atlantic, Memorial University , private training institutions, as well as school districts, to identify opportunities where facilities can be used as communal spaces for social and recreational activities.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills; Education and Early Childhood Development; and, Seniors, Wellness, and Social Development	2016-17
14	Through the provincial Wellness Plan and the Recreation and Sports Strategy , support the recreational and social development focus of municipalities and the new ability to fund recreational infrastructure under the Federal-Provincial Gas Tax Agreement .	Department of Seniors, Wellness, and Social Development, and of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs	2015-16
15	Provide support to communities so they can create increasingly age-friendly environments.	Department of Seniors, Wellness, and Social Development	2015-16
16	Work with Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador to encourage new Canadian citizens to participate in the municipal process by voting and running for local office, as part of the Make Your Mark campaign.	Department of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs	2017-18
17	Emphasize public safety in Government's commitment to supporting communities, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the work of the Premier's Advisory Council on Crime and Community Safety; and, Making supports available for vulnerable residents through continued investments in law enforcement agencies. 	Department of Justice and Public Safety	2015-16
18	Enhance the focus on human rights promotion as a means of furthering human rights efforts in the province.	Human Rights Commission, Department of Justice and Public Safety	2015-16
19	Utilizing the Functional Economic Regions research undertaken by Memorial University, undertake engagement at the local level to inform effective policy development on local, regional and provincial levels.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16

Immigration

Action	What	Who	Launch year
1	Develop a new Immigration Portal that will link to information supports for individuals, communities, and employers.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2016-17
2	Establish a coordination mechanism to identify opportunities to collaborate on Government's various international activities, including immigration, international student recruitment, innovation, export development, and air access.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills, and of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development	2015-16

Immigration

Action	What	Who	Launch year
3	Establish a Government presence focused on immigration and workforce development at Memorial University to provide on-site services in an effort to encourage international students and graduates to remain in Newfoundland and Labrador.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
4	Release an annual calendar of domestic and international recruitment events for employers, and encourage employers in using immigration as a means to address unmet labour demand.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
5	Advance the provincial-federal relationship on immigration-related matters, including a new Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Immigration Agreement .	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2016-17
6	Work with municipal leaders and regional stakeholders to identify in-demand occupations and countries from which to recruit immigrants.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
7	Increase awareness of immigration programs among employers to assist in recruiting for hard-to-fill positions and individuals interested in moving to the province.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
8	Create a regional presence for immigration support throughout the province.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2016-17
9	Explore a partnership between the Provincial Government and Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador to support the establishment of Welcoming Communities .	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
10	Introduce improved case management technology, including an online immigration application process.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2016-17
11	Provide financial supports to Newfoundland and Labrador occupational regulators to assist individuals with having their foreign credentials assessed and recognized, to allow them to seek work related to their occupation in the province.	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16
12	Identify key in-demand sectors of the economy and provide priority nominations for the Provincial Nominee Program .	Department of Advanced Education and Skills	2015-16

Marking Progress: Accountability to the Public

Live Here • Work Here • Belong Here: A Population Growth Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador, 2015 – 2025 will span a 10-year timeframe with a review in 2019-20 focusing on progress and implementation of the first four five-year Action Plans.

To ensure transparency and accountability on the performance of the **Strategy**, information and performance data will be continually collected and analyzed. An annual report will be issued every year to update the public on completed activities and progress on the five-year Action Plans. The demographic changes in the province will be continually monitored, and demographic information will be reported on in the annual report, with indicators such as:

- The number of employment opportunities in the regions and province;
- The number of employed Newfoundlanders and Labradorians;
- Gender and age breakdown of employed Newfoundlanders and Labradorians;
- Regional age breakdown and its projected trend over the medium to long-term;
- Population;
- Deaths;
- Natural change;
- Inter-provincial in- and out-migrants;
- Net regional population change;
- Net inter-provincial migration by province;
- Net international migration;
- Median age;
- Youth net migration;
- Youth and senior population;
- Life expectancy;
- International student recruitment rates;
- Number of Provincial Nominations in support of Permanent Resident applications;
- Annual immigration to the province;
- Number of regulated childcare spaces in the province; and,
- Number of births.



Photo courtesy of Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism, © Barrett & MacKay Photo

In some instances, data is not collected on an annual basis. For example, Census and National Household Survey data is collected every five years. Some indicators will not be updated on an annual basis, but will be provided as data becomes available:

- Languages spoken in the province;
- Full-time and part-time employment among women and under-represented groups;
- Fertility rate;
- Average child-bearing age; and,
- Where possible, gender disaggregated breakdowns of the above data will be provided in annual reporting.

Demographic change can be a challenge to control – there are many aspects of population growth, such as changes in fertility rates, longevity, immigration, that cannot be accurately predicted into the long-term future. Government levers such as policies that support families, residents of all ages, and immigrant integration support population growth, but it is important to note that decisions regarding family planning and the choice of where to live and work are very personal, individual decisions. The **Population Growth Strategy** represents efforts to create conditions that support residents in the decisions they make, whether those decisions involve choosing to have or adopt more children, to lead a healthy lifestyle, pursue employment opportunities, and settle in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Conclusion

Live Here • Work Here • Belong Here: A Population Growth Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador is a Government of Newfoundland and Labrador initiative intended to support the economic development of the province through a series of actions focused on workforce development, immigration, families, and communities. The **Strategy** is guided by principles of choice, inclusion, accountability, diversity, and partnership to maximize efforts towards population stability and growth in Newfoundland and Labrador.



Endnotes

- 1 In the Strategy, youth are defined as residents 15 to 34 years old. Where possible, statistical data on youth refers to residents 15 to 34 years old. However, in some data sources, varying definitions of youth are used, such as 15 to 24 years old, or youth 15 to 29 years old. Differences have been noted throughout the Strategy text.
- 2 Department of Finance, Economics and Statistics Branch, Interprovincial Migrants By Age Group, 1971-2014.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 051-0001.
- 5 Department of Finance, Economic Research and Analysis Division, *Population Projections (April 2014)*.
- 6 Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Birth Database and Demography Division (population estimates), CANSIM Table 102-4505.
- 7 Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Table 282-0002.
- 8 See the Economics and Statistics Branch, Department of Finance website: http://www.fin.gov.nl.ca/fin/department/branches/divisions/economics_statistics.html
- 9 Conference Board of Canada. "How Atlantic Canada can Raise its Game," Glen Hodgson, op-ed, *Globe and Mail*, 27 August, 2014.
- 10 Strengthening Rural Canada. *Strengthening Rural Canada - Fewer and Older: The Coming Population and Demographic Challenges in Rural Newfoundland and Labrador*, February 2015. Available at <http://strengtheningruralcanada.ca/file/Strengthening-Rural-Canada-Fewer-and-Older-The-Coming-Demographic-Crisis-in-Rural-Newfoundland-and-Labrador1.pdf>
- 11 Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Table 282-0002.
- 12 Statistics Canada, Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours, CANSIM Table 281-0027.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Statistics Canada, Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours, CANSIM Table 281-0026.
- 16 Department of Finance, Economic Research and Analysis Division, *Population Projections (April 2014)*.
- 17 For more information on JobsinNL, visit <http://www.jobsinnl.ca>
- 18 Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Table 282-0002.
- 19 The regions identified in this chart are defined by Statistics Canada.
- 20 Department of Advanced Education and Skills, Job Vacancy Monitor 2014.
- 21 Statistics Canada, Demography Division, Census families by size and structure, Canada, provinces and territories.
- 22 Statistics Canada, Canadian Vital Statistics, Birth Database and Demography Division (population estimates), CANSIM Tables 102-4505 and 051-0001.
- 23 Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 102-4505.
- 24 Funding for the Birth to Three initiative was announced in Budget 2011 to advance development of **Learning from the Start**, a provincial early childhood learning strategy, with an initial focus on birth to age three years. In Budget 2015, funding was announced for continuation of these initiatives. For further information on birth to age three early childhood learning initiatives, see <http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/earlychildhood/initiatives.html>
- 25 For more information on the wide range of programs and services provided through the Center for Distance Learning and Innovation, visit <https://www.cdli.ca/>.
- 26 Hudson Highland Group, Inc., "In the Game of Hiring, Flexible Employers Win," Press Release, February 12, 2008, Available at <http://us.hudson.com/documents/us-hudson-index-release-021208.pdf>; Ellen Galinsky, James T. Bond, and E. Jeffrey Hill, "When Work Works: A Status Report on Workplace Flexibility. Who has it? Who wants it? What difference does it make?," Families and Work Institute, 2004, pg. 21, Available at <http://familiesandwork.org/3w/research/downloads/status.pdf>
- 27 For more information on NLHRManager, visit www.NLHRManager.ca.
- 28 Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. *Rental Market Report: Newfoundland and Labrador Highlights*, Fall 2014.
- 29 For information on the Memorial University Strategic Internationalization Plan 2020, please visit http://www.mun.ca/vpacademic/SIP_2020_Final.pdf .

- 30 Department of Finance, Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency. Estimates of Demographic Components, 1971-72 to 2014-15.
- 31 Department of Finance, Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency (obtained from Statistics Canada, Demography Division).
- 32 Statistics Canada, 1996 and 2011 Census.
- 33 Statistics Canada, CANSIM Tables 051-0056 and 051-0062.
- 34 Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 051-0001.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Department of Finance, Economic Research and Analysis Division, *Population Projection*, April 2014.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 *Guide to Relocation to Newfoundland and Labrador* is available at <http://www.nlyouth.ca/resources/RelocationGuide.html>.
- 39 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, *Newfoundland and Labrador Report 2013*, pg. 29.
- 40 Quinlan, James A. *Building Agricultural Capacity in Newfoundland and Labrador*, Report for the Harris Centre, Memorial University, 2012.
- 41 Statistics Canada, Demography Division, CANSIM Tables 051-0001 and 051-0004.
- 42 For information on the Memorial University Strategic Internationalization Plan 2020, please visit http://www.mun.ca/vpacademic/SIP_2020_Final.pdf.

Notes

