

LIVE HERE WORK HERE BELONG HERE

A Communities Action Plan

for Newfoundland and Labrador, 2015 – 2020



LIVE HERE WORK HERE BELONG HERE

A Communities Action Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador, 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 978-1-55146-573-9



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



Strong Communities Support Population Growth

Fig. 1 Community growth rate between 2001 and 2014



St. John's CMA witnessed an average yearly **growth rate** of **+1.4%** in population.



The rest of Newfoundland and Labrador saw an average yearly population **rate decline** of **-0.7%**.

Fig. 2 Population growth and decline between 1991 and 2011



Strong regional and economic development is essential to maintain and increase the province's population. Communities must offer sufficient employment, social, cultural, and leisure opportunities to enable people to choose Newfoundland and Labrador as their home of choice. Communities are more than places where residents live and work. Communities are places where residents can be themselves, where they have the freedom to explore the outdoors through a wide range of trails and parks, engage in cultural activities and other outdoor attractions, and attend educational and social events.

Between 2008-09 and 2012-13, more people moved to Newfoundland and Labrador than left the province.

Two central realities are impacting Newfoundland and Labrador communities. The first is the challenge associated with out-migration to other places in Canada or other countries, and the second relates to the movement of people from smaller communities to larger centers within the province. Between 2008-09 and 2012-13, more people moved to Newfoundland and Labrador than left the province. However, in 2013-14, 817 more people left the province than moved to the province.¹



Photo courtesy of Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism

More individuals and families are moving to urban centres or regional hubs to be closer to family members, and to access educational opportunities, employment, services and amenities such as health care, transportation, and age-friendly housing options. For example, since 2001-02, 16,345 people have moved from other areas of the province to the St. John's Census Metropolitan Area (CMA).²



Photo courtesy of Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism

Consultations

Promoting wellness and inclusion, and creating spaces for families and individuals to socialize were some of the suggestions made during the consultation process to improve communities throughout the province. **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 during public consultations.

The **Communities Action Plan** captures the input of residents, builds on initiatives undertaken to date and strives to address population challenges by assisting communities in seeking ways to stabilize and grow their population through economic development opportunities and government service delivery enhancements. The **Communities Action Plan** is about creating an environment of economic prosperity in communities across the province for current and future generations of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. Government will strive to create communities that can compete to attract and retain people and businesses.

Fig. 3 Average number of residents per square kilometre



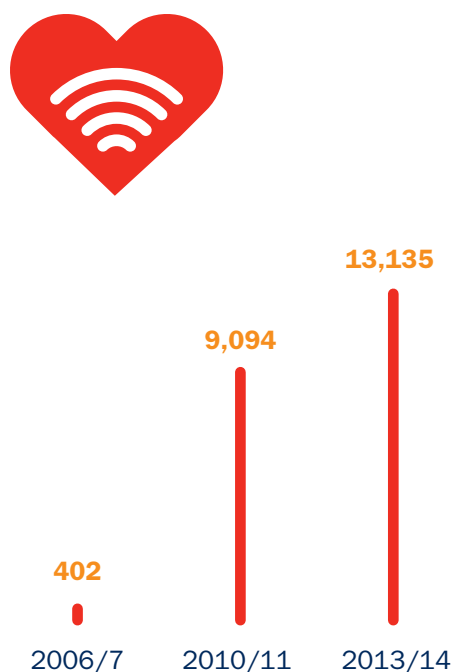
Canada
3.7



Newfoundland and Labrador
1.4

Fig. 4 Uptake of Telehealth services

Newfoundland and Labrador residents living in rural and remote areas of the province may avail of the Telehealth service, which allows them to access specialized and critical health care services without leaving their communities.



Strategic Directions

The Action Plan builds on existing investments Government has made in promoting health and wellness, community activities, and recreation. It will focus the work through five strategic directions:

Inform

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

Attract

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

Develop

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

Create

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

Respond

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



Photo courtesy of the Disability Policy Office, Department of Seniors, Wellness, and Social Development

Supporting Communities

To support communities, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador will undertake a series of key steps outlined below. These steps include launching new initiatives; highlighting recently announced initiatives, or forthcoming, previously committed actions to support communities; and, committing to update existing Government strategies that contribute to creating conditions favourable to growing the population.

Through the development of the **Population Growth Strategy**, it was evident that actions committed as part of other Government strategies and Action Plans, such as the **Healthy Aging Policy Framework**, **Agri-foods and Agriculture Strategy**, the **Provincial Wellness Plan**, and the **Sports and Recreation Strategy** are supportive of Government's goal to have the conditions in place necessary to grow the province's population.



Photo courtesy of the Association for New Canadians

Key Actions



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



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

Fig. 5 Community services

In province-wide consultation on the Community Sustainability Partnership, participants noted:

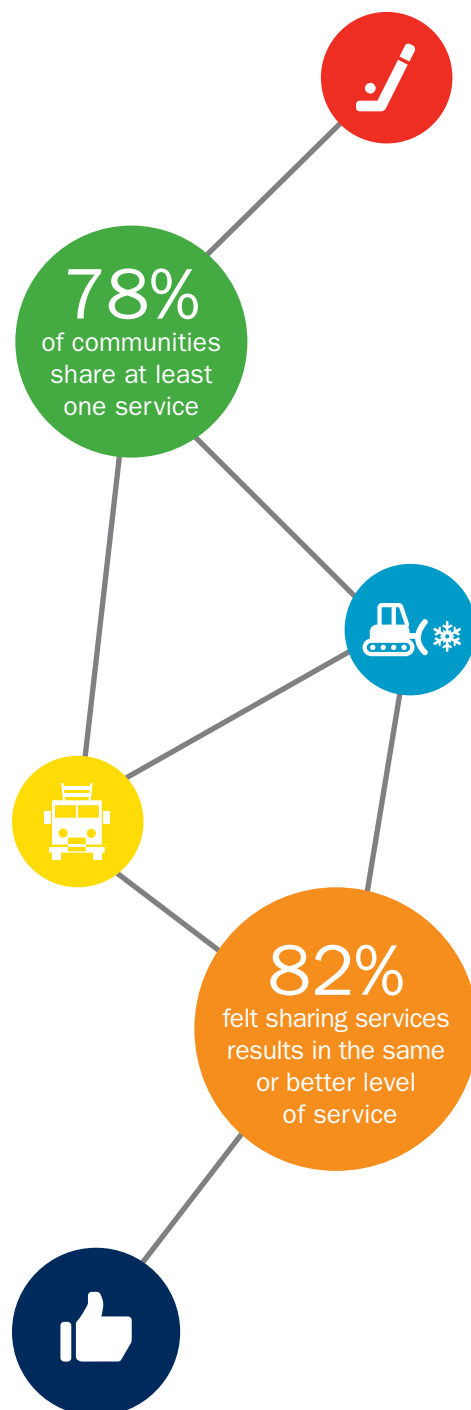


Fig. 6 Average stress rates in 2013



Canadian average for experiencing **high stress** is **23%**



Newfoundland and Labrador's average for experiencing **high stress** is **15.2%**, the lowest percentage reported in the country



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 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.



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



5. Continue to recognize 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.



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.

Key Actions (Cont'd)



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:

- 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.



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.

Fig. 7 In 2014, residents in Newfoundland and Labrador travel by road, sea, and air



Fig. 8 Newfoundland and Labrador's diverse Aboriginal population



Five Inuit communities in coastal northern Labrador

Rigolet, Makkovik, Postville, Hopedale, and Nain

Two Labrador Innu First Nations

Mushuau Innu First Nation in Natuashish, and Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation in Sheshatshiu



Mi'kmaq of the Miawpukek First Nation
Conne River



Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation

Landless band, with members across the province

NunatuKavut Community Council, Inc.

Aboriginal people who self-identify as Southern Inuit and assert Aboriginal rights on that basis



Photo courtesy of Karen Warren



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.



10. Expand **English as a Second Language** programming to more sites throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.



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.



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

Key Actions (Cont'd)



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.



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**.



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



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.



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.



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

Fig. 9 Distribution of the population in Newfoundland and Labrador



90% live in a **municipality**



7% live in **local service districts**



3% live in **unincorporated areas**



53% of **municipalities** have fewer than 500 people



92% of **local service districts** have fewer than 500 people



98% of **unincorporated areas** have fewer than 500 people

Data sources for graphics

- Fig. 1 Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency, Population Estimates, July 1, 2001 to 2014, Census Divisions and St. John's Census Metropolitan Area (CMA), Newfoundland and Labrador; Statistics Canada, Census 1991 and 2011.
- Fig. 2
- Fig. 3 Statistics Canada, Population and dwelling counts, for Canada, provinces and territories, 2011 and 2006 Censuses.
- Fig. 4 Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information.
- Fig. 5 Department of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, What We Heard: Fiscal Framework Review, 2014.
- Fig. 6 Statistics Canada, Health indicator profile, annual estimates, by age group and sex, Canada, provinces, territories, health regions (2013 boundaries) and peer groups, CANSIM Table 105-0501.
- Fig. 7 Department of Transportation and Works, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Fig. 8 Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs Office, Executive Council, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Fig. 9 Department of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Endnotes

- 1 Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 051-0004.
- 2 Statistics Canada, CANSIM Tables 051-0057 and 051-0063.



19. Utilizing the **Functional Economic Regions** research undertaken by **Memorial University**, undertake engagement at the local level for long-term collection of local labour market data and supply capacity to inform effective policy development on local, regional, and provincial levels.
-

