LIVE HERE
WORK HERE
BELONG HERE

A Population Growth Strategy
for Newfoundland and Labrador, 2015 – 2025
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
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.

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.

Clyde Jackman
Honourable Clyde Jackman
Minister of Advanced Education and Skills
Global Competition for People

People are Newfoundland and Labrador’s greatest resource.

In order for a province to sustain its current population level through natural change, it must have a fertility rate of 2.1.

Newfoundland and Labrador in 2011 had a total fertility rate of 1.45, meaning mothers in Newfoundland and Labrador will have an average of 1.45 children in their lifetime.

By comparison, the national fertility rate was 1.61.

![Photo courtesy of Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism, © Barrett & MacKay Photo](image)

**Live Here • Work Here • Belong Here** is the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador’s 10-year strategy for supporting individuals and families who choose Newfoundland and Labrador as their home. In support of this **Strategy**, Government is releasing four five-year action plans for the period of 2015 to 2020 covering the key contributors to population growth – workforce, families, communities and immigration. In 2020, Government will release a second series of five-year action plans to outline additional steps to support population growth.

Globally, fewer children are being born and populations are aging in many countries, which has fueled a competition for people, both in Canada and around the world. The United Nations estimates that, globally, the fertility rate for women has declined from five children per woman in 1950 to 2.5 in 2010. At the same time, the number of people over the age of 60 has tripled over the last fifty years and it is expected that by 2050, this number will more than double from the current level.¹

Developed countries have been most affected by fertility decline. In 2011, Australia released its own population strategy, as part of its focus on preventing and mitigating the challenges of demographic change. Immigration plays an important role in maintaining demographic growth in Australia’s strategy. Germany, a country with one of the most extensive and generous social service systems in the world, has also focused on immigration in response to declining fertility rates (the average number of children to whom a woman will give birth in her lifetime).

Within Canada, seven provinces – 1) Nova Scotia, 2) New Brunswick, 3) Prince Edward Island, 4) Ontario, 5) Manitoba, 6) Saskatchewan, and 7) British Columbia – have launched initiatives focused on population growth with particular emphasis on workforce development and immigration. As developed countries and Canadian provinces have been seeking to attract more immigrants, the global competition for people has intensified. The Population Growth Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador, 2015-2025 is one of the most comprehensive of all approaches identified.

Demographic change in Canada has also prompted increases in the national immigration intake. In 2010, Canada welcomed more immigrants than ever before. Since 2001, only one-third of Canada’s population growth has been attributed to births, while two-thirds has been owing to immigration. It is estimated that by 2030, immigration will account for 100 per cent of Canada’s population growth due to the number of deaths outpacing the number of births.2

The Population Growth Strategy is the roadmap for Government’s investments to encourage individuals to choose Newfoundland and Labrador as their home and workplace of choice, and to build strong communities.

The Population Growth Strategy Live Here • Work Here • Belong Here is also a call for everyone in the province to play a role in responding to our demographic situation. In response to these challenges, Government will invest in the workforce and the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, support family-friendly communities, support economic and community development, and grow the population through immigration and in-migration.

Why a Population Growth Strategy is Needed

Newfoundland and Labrador experienced sustained population loss over the 15 years following the northern cod moratorium in 1992. The province’s population was approximately 530,900 in 1971, peaked in 1992 at about 580,100 people and declined to 509,000 in 2007.

While a period of solid economic growth began in 1998, population growth did not resume until 2008. Between 2008 and 2013, the
Population grew by 19,000 people. This growth is largely attributed to in-migration from elsewhere in Canada and international migration.

Preliminary data released by Statistics Canada indicates that the population of the province on July 1, 2014 was 526,977. This is a decrease of 0.2 per cent compared to one year earlier, as seen in Fig. 3. This population decline was due to both natural population decrease (more deaths than births) and net out-migration.

Population decline and a shifting composition of the age structure of our population has an impact on the labour market. The chart titled “Labour Market – New Entrants, Deaths, and Retirements” (Fig. 4) provides a visual summary of the changing demographic situation and its impacts on the labour market from 1990 to 2026. In 1990, the number of young people entering the labour market exceeded those leaving the labour market by a ratio of 2-to-1. However, the province is now at a point where the number of people leaving the workforce each year through retirement or death is exceeding the number of young people entering. Over the next 10 years this gap is expected to widen.

Net provincial migration is one of the main factors determining population change. Newfoundland and Labrador experienced significant loss of young adults to out-migration over the past four decades, but this trend has reversed in recent years.

*Note: New Entrants refers to individuals entering the labour force for the first time. High School Seniors refers to students in Grade 12 or in their fourth year of high school.
From 2008 to 2013, strong economic conditions and high demands for labour reversed the historical out-migration trend and resulted in significant net in-migration to the province. Annual net in-migration averaged roughly 3,000 over this recent period. However, economic conditions softened in 2014, and preliminary data from Statistics Canada indicates that the province once again experienced net provincial out-migration of 817 individuals last year.

As noted in the table, “Percentage Change in Population by Region” (Fig. 5), the demographic situation of the province varies by region. Currently, the only region with population growth between 1992 and 2014 is the St. John’s Census Metropolitan Area (CMA), and growth in population between 2014 and 2035 is forecast in only three regions – 1) Labrador, 2) Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour, and 3) the St. John’s CMA.

The forecasted figures above refer to expected changes in population without the intervention of a Population Growth Strategy.
Declines in fertility rates have been one of the factors behind population decline in the province. Newfoundland and Labrador experienced a significant decline in fertility rates from the mid-1960s to the late 1990s, a decline also seen in other parts of the world. However, over the past 15 years, fertility rates have stabilized and even rebounded slightly.

In 2011, the fertility rate for the province was 1.45, which is below the replacement rate of 2.1 required over the long-run to balance out births with deaths. Fertility rates are a product of complex economic, social and cultural factors that only change slowly over time.

The **Population Growth Strategy** is being released at a time when employment and population change in the near-term (2015 to 2020) will reflect a slowdown in construction following a significant project peak and volatility in commodity prices. Consequently, the direction of many of the indicators showing the demographic situation in the province is forecast to be negative in the near term. In 2015-16, it is likely that the population forecast will be lowered by evolving economic circumstances. However, the current economic environment only heightens the need for Government to take action to address the demographic situation of the province.

The actions under the **Population Growth Strategy** are focused on developing conditions to stabilize and grow the population, and support continued social and economic needs of the people living in Newfoundland and Labrador. The **Strategy** has been developed with consideration for the needs of residents living in all parts of the province, including rural and remote areas.
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:

- Caring For Our Future: Provincial Strategy for Quality, Sufficient, and Affordable Childcare in Newfoundland and Labrador, 2012-2022
- Active, Healthy Newfoundland and Labrador: A Recreation and Sport Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador
- Achieving Health and Wellness: Provincial Wellness Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador
- Improving Health Together: A Policy Framework for Chronic Disease Prevention and Management in Newfoundland and Labrador
- Healthy Aging Policy Framework
- Learning from the Start: A Provincial Early Childhood Learning Strategy
- Poverty Reduction Strategy

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

- Adoption Act, 2013
- Human Rights Act, 2010
- Labour Standards Act, 1990
- Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Market Development Agreement
- Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Job Fund Agreement

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.
Vision Statement

Newfoundland and Labrador has a vibrant labour market, a skilled and educated population, and is family-friendly and inclusive.

In seeking to have conditions in place to grow the population of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Population Growth Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador, 2015 – 2025 is guided by the following principles:

Government will collaborate and engage with partners to pursue efforts to foster communities that are homes of choice for current residents and newcomers.

Government recognizes that people choose to live in a place that allows them to pursue the lifestyle they seek out for themselves and their loved ones.

Government recognizes that the inclusion and equity of all persons in the province is integral to the efforts in the Strategy.

Initiatives pursued to achieve the vision will be evidence-based to ensure the best investments are made for Newfoundland and Labrador. By regularly reporting on the Strategy, Government will strive toward excellence in accountability to the public.

Gender, cultural, and other forms of diversity are essential to Newfoundland and Labrador’s social, cultural, and economic growth, and represent a fundamental principle of the Strategy.

**Fig. 11 Weekly wage growth in Newfoundland and Labrador from 2001 to 2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Weekly Wage Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>121%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information &amp; cultural industries</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, scientific &amp; technical services</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation &amp; warehousing</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation &amp; food services</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational services</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, entertainment &amp; recreation</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care &amp; social assistance</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trade</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mission Statement

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

Photo courtesy of Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism

The mission of the Population Growth Strategy is to coordinate and build on the work of numerous Provincial Government departments and agencies, and to partner with Federal and Municipal Governments, employers, industry, labour and community associations, the general public and other stakeholders to help make communities in Newfoundland and Labrador attractive and desirable places for current residents and newcomers to live, work, and raise families.

Fig. 12 Provincial natural change (difference between births and deaths)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971/72</td>
<td>+9,477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981/82</td>
<td>+6,271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991/92</td>
<td>+3,138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001/02</td>
<td>+510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/14*</td>
<td>-400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*preliminary data
Strategic Directions

In seeking to foster population stability and growth in Newfoundland and Labrador, the Population Growth Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador, 2015 – 2025 will act through five strategic directions:

Inform people of the lifestyle, cultural, economic and employment opportunities available in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Attract newcomers from elsewhere in Canada and around the world to move to Newfoundland and Labrador, and encourage Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to remain in the province.

Develop partnerships, public supports, services, and initiatives to enhance incentives that make living, working, and raising a family in Newfoundland and Labrador attractive.

Create opportunities for people, families and communities to thrive and pursue personal, professional, and collective ambitions.

Respond to current demographic, community, and labour market realities by designing flexible Government programming that ensures a continued emphasis on population and economic growth.

Fig. 13 Provincial age breakdown in 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;14</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-29</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-44</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-59</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-79</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80+</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 14 Population of Newfoundland and Labrador in 2014

49% MALE
51% FEMALE
A Strategy from the People of Newfoundland and Labrador, for the People of Newfoundland and Labrador

In 2013, Government held public consultations on how best to grow the population throughout the province. This included in-person consultations with the general public and interested parties, one-on-one meetings with stakeholders, and online and mail submissions. As summarized in What We Heard: A Summary of Comments, Suggestions and Ideas on Population Growth in Newfoundland and Labrador, discussions focused on the labour market, family-friendly policies, immigration, and community well-being. The suggestions, comments, and ideas that were heard from the public and stakeholder groups have guided the development of the Population Growth Strategy and its first set of five-year Action Plans for 2015 to 2020.

The first five-year Action Plans are focused on what Government and external stakeholders can do together to address population stability and growth. For the next round of Action Plans for 2020 to 2025, Government will be calling on partners to identify further actions they will take to support the population of the province. The second phase of the Population Growth Strategy will again be developed through extensive consultations with residents throughout the province, as well as by encouraging web input from residents throughout the first five years of the Strategy. This approach reflects the importance of community engagement in the implementation of the Strategy.

Fig. 15 Median age

**Median age in Canada in 2014**

In 1971, Newfoundland and Labrador had the **lowest** median age in Canada.

In 2014, Newfoundland and Labrador has the **highest** median age in Canada.
In support of this process, Government will utilize social media to engage and connect with the people on the Population Growth Strategy, which will enable Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to discuss the steps municipalities, businesses, education and training partners, labour, community groups, other stakeholders, and individuals can take to stabilize and grow the province’s population.

Government will use the input and debate from those discussions to develop the second phase of action under the Population Growth Strategy. Government has begun by establishing a Facebook presence for the Strategy at www.facebook.com/populationgrowth.nl. This approach reflects the guiding principle of partnership for the Strategy.

A Call to Action

Over the next 10 years, the 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 job seekers 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 allow 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 building 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 our province and utilizing the skills of individuals Newfoundlanders and Labradorians in our labour market. The Plan also supports individuals by providing current information on in-demand occupations to facilitate securing employment in the province. This approach will be 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 will be 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 communities 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 succeed. This approach will be essential to foster economic growth.

4. **Immigration Action Plan** – This Action Plan focuses on increasing the attraction and retention of immigrants and people from elsewhere in Canada and around the world by actively promoting the economic and lifestyle opportunities available throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. The Plan calls on employers to partner with Government to utilize economic 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.
To complement the four Action Plans, Government will build on the success of the provincial tourism campaign by launching a multimedia campaign focused on:

- Retaining current residents by highlighting the benefits of living, working, learning, raising a family and doing business here; and,

- Encouraging individuals currently living elsewhere to choose Newfoundland and Labrador as their home of choice.

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 respond to feedback and input Government heard during public consultations, of a greater need to market Newfoundland and Labrador as a desirable place to live.

Additional information on each of the actions that Government will pursue in support of population stability and growth, including timelines and details as to why there is a need to act and how, can be found in the Implementation Framework and accompanying Action Plans. The Implementation Framework comprises four sections focusing on 1) workforce development, 2) families, 3) communities, and 4) immigration.
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 to update the public on completed activities and progress on the five-year Action Plans.

The demographic situation in the province will be continually monitored, and demographic information will be reported 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.

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 under-represented groups;
• Fertility rate; and,
• Average child-bearing age.

Where possible, gender disaggregated breakdowns of the above data will be provided in annual reporting.
Conclusion

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.

In achieving the Population Growth Strategy vision and mission, carrying out the strategic directions and meeting the objectives, Government will consider competitiveness key to success – competing with other places for people means seeking new, innovative ways to be at the forefront as Government encourages people to live, work and belong in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Endnotes

