



Accountability Report 2019–20

Immigration



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Accountability Report 2019–2020

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Accountability Statement

The Accountability Report of the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration for the year ending March 31, 2020 is prepared pursuant to the *Finance Act* and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration Statement of Mandate for the fiscal year just ended. The reporting of the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments and opinions by Nova Scotia Office of Immigration management.

We acknowledge that this Accountability Report is the responsibility of Nova Scotia Office of Immigration management. The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration 2019-2020 Business Plan.

Nova Scotia Office of Immigration

Original signed by

Lena Metlege Diab, QC
Minister

Original signed by

Kelliann Dean
Chief Executive Officer

Message from the Minister of Immigration and Chief Executive Officer

We are pleased to present the 2019-20 Annual Accountability Report for the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration (NSOI).

2019 was another record year for immigration in Nova Scotia. We welcomed 7,580 immigrants to the province, surpassing the goal set out by the Nova Scotia Commission on Building Our New Economy of 7,000 immigrants per year by 2024. Immigration is a key contributor to the province's population growth, economic growth, and strengthens the diversity and resilience of our communities. These landings are supported by the province's economic immigration programs, with 67% of new arrivals coming through our Nominee Program or the Atlantic Immigration Pilot helping to find candidates with the skills employers need.

The Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program (AIPP) was created in 2017 to address labour shortages and test new ways of doing immigration. Communities across the province experienced considerable immigration growth as a result of this program. Recognizing the value of the AIPP for Nova Scotian employers, in 2019-2020 we began the process of working with Atlantic provinces and the federal government to design a permanent AIP program that will be implemented in 2022.

The Nova Scotia Nominee Program (NSNP) continues to be a strategic way for NSOI to respond to regional and provincial labour needs. One important example is how immigration is helping address labour shortages in the health care sector. The NSNP Physician Stream was launched in 2018 and to date, a total of 54 physicians were nominated to work in communities across the province. In May 2019, we launched the Occupations in Demand stream. This stream allows us to target intermediate-skilled occupations that are in high demand due to local labour shortages. Currently, we are targeting Continuing Care Assistants and transport truck drivers.

NSOI collaborates with businesses and community partners to promote immigration pathways, support employers to navigate immigration and market Nova Scotia as an immigration destination. In 2019-20 we promoted the province and our programs at 14 international recruitment events in the UK, Ireland, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Portugal, Senegal, USA, Morocco, Lebanon, and UAE.

NSOI is also focused on retaining immigrants in Nova Scotia. In 2019-20, NSOI invested approximately \$6.4 million dollars in settlement services across the province, ensuring successful community integration and retention of immigrants. As we welcome more immigrants to our province, Nova Scotia's six-year retention rate has remained stable at 71%, the highest in Atlantic Canada. We continue to collaborate with service provider organizations across the province to provide newcomers with the support they need to successfully settle in Nova Scotia communities.

2019-20 was a successful year for immigration in Nova Scotia. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have adjusted our business practices and remain committed to supporting new immigrants and maintaining strong public confidence in the integrity of these programs.

Finally, we would like to thank all of our partners, but particularly Settlement Service Provider Organizations and Nova Scotian Employers, whose flexibility and responsiveness allowed for the continuation of key services with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. We appreciate your collaboration and support.

Original signed by

Lena Metlege Diab, QC
Minister

Original signed by

Kelliann Dean
Chief Executive Officer

Financial Results

	2019-2020 Estimate	2019-2020 Actuals	2019- 2020 Variance
Program & Service Area	<i>(\$ thousands)</i>		
Departmental Expenses:			
Office of Immigration	10,217	9,764	(453)
Total: Departmental Expenses	10,217	9,764	(453)
Additional Information:			
Ordinary Revenue	0	0	0
Fees and Other Charges	0	0	0
Ordinary Recoveries	0	13	13
Total: Revenue, Fees and Recoveries	0	13	13
TCA Purchase Requirements	0	0	0
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)	38	37.2	(0.8)
<p><u>Departmental Expenses Variance Explanation:</u> Variance due to temporary vacancies and operational savings.</p> <p><u>Revenue, Fees and Recoveries Variance Explanation:</u> Variance due to financial recovery from partners in support of priority research projects.</p> <p><u>TCA Purchase Requirements Variance Explanation:</u> N/A</p> <p><u>Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs) Variance Explanation:</u> Provincial funded staff were 0.8 FTEs lower than budget due to temporary staff vacancies.</p>			

Measuring Our Performance

Attraction and Recruitment

Outcome	Measure	Base Year	Annual Target: 2019	Results
Immigration activities address Nova Scotia's economic and labour market gaps.	Number of new immigrant landings* per calendar year.	2003: 1,474	4,200	7,580 NSOI surpassed its 2019 target of 4,200 landings.

Breakdown of Landings* – NSOI Principal Applicants and Dependents vs Exclusively Federal Pathways												
Category/year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Nominee Program	865	795	630	780	955	1,205	1,400	1,395	2,590	2,735	3,470	3,515
Atlantic Immigration Pilot	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	15	375	1,570
NSOI Total	865	795	630	780	955	1,205	1,400	1,395	2,590	2,750	3,845	5,085
NSOI % of Landings	33%	33%	26%	36%	41%	48%	52%	41%	47%	61%	64%	67%
All Other	1,785	1,595	1,765	1,360	1,385	1,320	1,270	2,010	2,895	1,765	2,120	2,495
% Other Landings	67%	67%	74%	64%	59%	52%	48%	59%	53%	39%	36%	33%
GRAND TOTAL	2,650	2,390	2,395	2,140	2,340	2,525	2,670	3,405	5,485	4,515	5,965	7,580

*Landings measure all immigrants who arrive in Nova Scotia (and are granted Permanent Residency), including provincial and federal candidates, and their families.

Notes:

- Landing numbers in 2016 were higher than usual as 1,425 refugees arrived in Nova Scotia as part of our response to the Syrian refugee crisis.
- The introduction of the Atlantic Immigration Pilot in 2017 has led to an increase of Nova Scotia landings year over year.
- Each year, NSOI maximizes every opportunity to bring in newcomers, including working with the federal government to increase annual allocations. In 2012 NSOI's allocation was 500 nominees, and by 2019 this was increased to 2,723 nominees and endorsements.

Integration and Retention

Outcome	Measure	Base Year	Annual Target: 2019	Results
Nova Scotia’s immigration policies and settlement activities support immigrants and their families to successfully settle and integrate in their new community.	Percentage of all tax-filing immigrants arriving in Nova Scotia in a six-year period remaining in the sixth year.	2008 IMBD: 69%	70% or better retention rate (2017) *.	71% NSOI has re-committed to maintaining a 70% or higher retention rate. This is the highest rate of retention in Atlantic Canada.

*NSOI uses tax filer data from the Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) to calculate retention rates. There is a two-year lag in the availability of data from IMBD; the latest available data is for the 2017 tax year.

Policy Development and Advocacy

Outcome	Measure	Base Year	Annual Target: 2019	Results
Increase the number of annual provincial nominations.	Number of NS Nominee Program certificates issued per calendar year.	2003: 23	1,350 NSNP Nominations	1,610 NS exceeded its annual target of 1,350 NSNP nominations in 2019.

Outcome	Measure	Base Year	Annual Target: 2019	Results
Increase Nova Scotia's use of the Atlantic Immigration Pilot.	Number of designations* in the Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program.	2017: 277***	Increased designations from previous year	1,140
	Number of endorsements** in the Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program per calendar year.	2017: 201***	792 AIP Endorsements	1,208 Nova Scotia exceeded its target of 792 AIP endorsements.

*The number of designations through the AIP is the number of employers taking part in the AIP—unlike nominations and endorsements it is cumulative. The current year includes all previous years' designations.

** The number of endorsements through the AIP is the number of job offers that were approved by NSOI each year.

*** 2017 measures are partial year measures as the AIP was launched in March 2017

Strategic Initiatives and Additional Results

In 2019-20, NSOI undertook several strategic initiatives to further improve the quality of NS immigration programs, support continued immigration growth, and support the wellbeing of newcomers and their families. This work was critical to advancing NSOI's core mandate and strategic outcomes.

International Attraction and Recruitment

In 2019-20, NSOI's external relations team promoted our immigration programs and services to employers, sector organizations and the broader community at 175 events around the province. This included increased engagement with international students at information sessions, events and career fairs. There has been growth in the number of international students immigrating to Nova Scotia. Six hundred international students chose to stay and work in Nova Scotia through NSOI programs in 2019, up from 35 in 2014.

NSOI attends, plans, and coordinates skills recruitment missions internationally to promote immigration to the province and support Nova Scotian employers recruit international talent. NSOI participated in 14 international recruitment events in 2019-20.

Stakeholder engagement and international recruitment are complemented by digital marketing activities and tools that promote Nova Scotia as an immigration destination as well as inform on the immigration pathways available. The Nova Scotia Room brand highlights the province's work and lifestyle opportunities.

Nova Scotia's Francophone Immigration Action Plan was launched in March 2019 and is a joint initiative with NSOI and the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie. In 2019-20, NSOI advanced the action plan with targeted engagement with francophone partners, francophone marketing tools and international attraction events. Since implementing the Action Plan, the proportion of French speaking applications supported by NSOI for immigration to the province has increased from below 1% to 8% in 2019.

Immigration Programs

Last year, the province supported 2,818 skilled workers and their families to be endorsed or nominated for Permanent Residency through the Atlantic Immigration Pilot (AIP) and the Nova Scotia Nominee Program (NSNP).

The Federal government has committed to making the AIP a permanent program by January 2022. Currently, NSOI is working with the Atlantic provinces and the federal government on the design and development of a permanent AIP program.

In 2019-20, immigration was an important tool for improving access to primary health care in the province. There was growth in the number of physicians, registered nurses and continuing care assistants immigrating to Nova Scotia through NSOI programs like the NSNP Labour Market Priorities stream, Physician Stream and the Atlantic Immigration Pilot. As well, the newly launched Occupations in Demand Stream, for in-demand intermediate-skilled occupations is targeting continuing care assistants and transport truck drivers.

Maintaining integrity and public confidence in immigration programs is a priority for Nova Scotia, and across Canada.

Supporting Settlement and Integration

Settlement services play a vital role in helping newcomers adapt to their new life in Nova Scotia and integrate within their communities. In 2019-20, NSOI issued a Call for Proposals for settlement services across the province, that resulted in two-year funding agreements with 15 Settlement Service Providers. NSOI will provide \$6.375 million each year in immigrant settlement services supporting integration and retention, including language training, employment bridging programs and support for welcoming communities, providing critical support to newcomers arriving in Nova Scotia. This funding will help immigrants and their families to settle successfully in communities across the Province. To ensure newcomers have access to settlement support wherever they decide to live in our province, NSOI partners with a network of organizations across the province. Together with our settlement partners, employers and communities, we are growing our population and strengthening our economy through immigration.

Immigration Research Findings

In 2019-20, NSOI completed some foundational research projects on the impact of immigration in Nova Scotia. Working with the Department of Finance and ACOA, the Conference Board of Canada completed research for NSOI on the economic impact of immigration in Nova Scotia. This research confirms that increased immigration to the province supports economic growth, strengthens the provincial labour force and builds a stronger tax base to support provincial programs.

A second research project focused on the economic outcomes of immigrants in Nova Scotia. This research showed that overall immigrants to Nova Scotia are doing well. Most are working and earning incomes at or above the average for immigrants in Canada.

NSOI also engaged in research to examine immigration and retention drivers, looking at why immigrants choose Nova Scotia, as well as why they choose to stay or why they choose to leave. Results of this work will help NSOI to market the province more effectively, improve program design to attract candidates, and build settlement services to support newcomers to stay in Nova Scotia.

NSOI participates in the Atlantic Quarterly Survey, a survey of Nova Scotians, to assess public opinion on immigration in the province. The February 2020 survey found that the majority of Nova Scotians (84%) believe that immigration is important to the provincial economy and 89% of Nova Scotians are in favor of immigrants coming to the province. These results are consistent with previous years' surveys.

Public Interest and Wrongdoing Act

The *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* was proclaimed into law on December 20, 2011. The Act provides for government employees to be able to come forward if they reasonably believe that a wrongdoing has been committed or is about to be committed and they are acting in good faith. The Act also protects employees who do disclose from reprisals, by enabling them to lay a complaint of reprisal with the Labour Board.

A Wrongdoing for the purposes of the Act is:

- a) A contravention of provincial or federal laws or regulations
- b) A misuse or gross mismanagement of public funds or assets
- c) An act or omission that creates an imminent risk of a substantial and specific danger to the life, health or safety of persons or the environment, or
- d) Directing or counselling someone to commit a wrongdoing

The following is a summary of disclosures received by the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration:

Information Required under Section 18 of the Act	Fiscal Year 2019-2020
The number of disclosures received	Nil
The number of findings of wrongdoing	
Details of each wrongdoing	
Recommendations and actions taken on each wrongdoing	