



Business Plan

2021–22

Immigration and Population Growth



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Departmental Business Plans
Finance and Treasury Board
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Contents

Message from the Minister 2

Mandate, Vision and Mission 3

 Vision:..... 3

 Mission:..... 3

 Mandate:..... 3

 Core Functions 3

2021-22 Initiatives and Programs 4

 Attraction and Recruitment 4

 Selection Programs 4

 Integration and Retention 5

 Policy and Advocacy..... 5

 Program Integrity..... 5

Performance Measurement..... 7

Departmental Financial Summary 11

Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the 2021-22 Business Plan for the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration and Population Growth (NSIPG).

In adding Population Growth to the name of the Immigration Department, it reinforces that retention, interprovincial migration, and international immigration leading to a growing population are essential to the future of our province.

Nova Scotia's focused efforts on immigration have shown strong results over the past several years. In 2019, 7,580 people immigrated to the province and in July 2020 Nova Scotia's population of 979,351 reached a record high.

While COVID-19 impacted mobility, particularly due to restricted access to visa offices, immigration services and travel during 2020, I am proud to say that NSIPG was able to continue to respond quickly to the immigration needs of the province.

NSIPG prioritized applications, including those working in essential services, such as health care professionals including Continuing Care Assistants, Nurses and Physicians. In fact, in 2020 NSIPG exceeded the number of applications processed through the Nova Scotia Nominee Program and the Atlantic Immigration Pilot in 2019. These applicants and their families are expected to arrive over the next few years when travel and border restrictions ease and as the federal government processes their cases.

In 2021-22, NSIPG will continue to focus on increasing immigration to address chronic labour needs and support the province's economic recovery. Through research and working with partners, and other government departments, we will focus efforts on understanding the shifts in the regional labour market due to COVID-19 and how immigration and population growth from elsewhere in Canada can support the labour needs of the province. We will continue to work closely with employers to understand their specific labour needs and how immigration can support their business development. We will also explore new ways for international attraction and stakeholder engagement, as well as attraction of newcomers from elsewhere in Canada, that involve online tools and virtual platforms.

In 2021-22, we will work closely with the federal government and the other Atlantic Provinces on the development and implementation of a permanent Atlantic Immigration Program. We are working to improve application processes for the AIP to ensure the new program is efficient and effective.

We will work to support all newcomers as they integrate and settle in the province, ensuring they feel welcome and connected as Nova Scotia becomes their permanent home. At 71%, Nova Scotia has the strongest immigrant retention rate in Atlantic Canada. We will continue to work closely with the province's settlement service provider organizations to promote inclusive and welcoming communities and ensure that settlement programs meet the needs of newcomers across the province.

As we look toward economic recovery, NSIPG is well positioned to support essential sectors and employer labour needs as well as the retention and integration of new immigrants, setting the stage for population and economic growth for years to come. I look forward to continued partnerships and innovation in 2021-22.

The Honourable Lena Metlege Diab, Q.C,
Minister

Mandate, Vision and Mission

Vision:

Our vision is a welcoming province that sees greater numbers of immigrants and newcomers each year and recognizes the important contributions they make to Nova Scotia.

Mission:

To attract, integrate and retain immigrants and newcomers to the province by taking a lead role in engaging and working with partners to ensure Nova Scotia is well-positioned for growth.

Mandate:

In order to achieve the vision and mission, the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration (NSOI) will work to:

- Market the Province as an attractive immigration and newcomer destination and promote all immigration pathways to Nova Scotia;
- Select immigrants through the Nova Scotia Nominee Program and Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program who fulfil a labour market need and who will contribute to Nova Scotia's economy;
- Strengthen immigration and settlement planning, policy and programming in the Province in order to encourage integration and retention;
- Work with other departments and partners to promote Nova Scotia to the rest of Canada as an attractive destination in which to live and work and
- Promote welcoming communities, including raising awareness and understanding of immigration and diversity issues.

Core Functions

- Attraction and recruitment of immigrants to Nova Scotia.
- Strong and responsive selection programs.
- Integration and retention of immigrants and their families.
- Marketing Nova Scotia as a work destination to other Canadians
- Policy, advocacy and research to advance provincial immigration priorities.
- Supporting immigration program integrity

2021-22 Initiatives and Programs

Phased in Population Growth to Nova Scotia

In 2021-22, NSIPG will focus on growing the number of immigrants and newcomers to our province to address labour needs, particularly in essential services, and support the province's economic recovery. Below are key initiatives and programs for 2021-22.

Attraction and Recruitment

International Attraction and Stakeholder Engagement

NSIPG will continue efforts in international attraction and stakeholder engagement. Due to COVID-19, international events have moved on-line and stakeholder engagement is primarily by phone and through web platforms. In 2021-22, NSIPG will explore more ways to use technology to promote Nova Scotia, including virtual international attraction tools and activities and engagement through webinars and on-line platforms. In coordination with employers and other government partners, we will focus our immigration presence in select international markets through strategic marketing and virtual recruitment events.

NSIPG staff will continue to work closely with employers to build their understanding of immigration as a tool to meet their labour needs, encourage their participation in immigration and help with the process. Targeted sector engagement based on labour market information will be pursued. NSIPG will maximize all opportunities to engage with international students to support their retention in the province. In 2021-22, NSIPG will implement a Customer Relationship Management tool to more effectively manage and use stakeholder contacts.

Increase Francophone Immigration

NSIPG, in partnership with the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie, will further the objectives and goals of the 2019-21 Nova Scotia Francophone Immigration Action Plan. In our last year of the action plan, NSIPG will focus on collaborative work with the federal government and regional francophone partners and continue our strategic approach to immigration selection programs. In 2021, NSIPG will consider future options to continue to support francophone immigration beyond the Action Plan.

Increase the number of Newcomers from elsewhere in Canada

NSIPG, in partnership with the Department of Inclusive Economic Growth and other provincial departments, will develop a coordinated strategy aimed at encouraging more people from elsewhere in Canada to come to Nova Scotia to live and work.

Selection Programs

Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program

The federal government has committed to making the AIP a permanent program. In 2021-22, in collaboration with the other Atlantic provinces, NSIPG will continue negotiations with the federal government on a permanent Atlantic Immigration Program. The pilot has been an important contributor to the recent growth in immigration to the province and expires December 31, 2021. Through the AIP, NSIPG will continue to advance provincial priorities to address the needs of employers, as well as the regional labour and economic needs of the province.

In 2021-22, we will continue work on improving efficiency and effectiveness of application process as well as seamless service delivery in preparation for the new permanent AIP program.

Maximizing Opportunities

In 2020, the province approved 3,517 applications, up 25 per cent over 2019. The 2021-23 Federal Immigration Levels Plan includes growth in the Provincial Nominee Program as well as the Atlantic Immigration Program. The Office will advocate for, promote, and administer a Nova Scotia Nominee Program that targets the persistent and emerging labour needs of employers, sectors, and regions in the province. We will continue to be innovative and responsive in creating options that work for employers in the province, as well as immigrants looking to make Nova Scotia their home.

Integration and Retention

Settlement and Retention

The settlement and retention of immigrants and newcomers who come to Nova Scotia is an important part of NSIPG's mandate. Access to settlement services and programming is key to supporting the retention of immigrants. Settlement programming will continue to include language training, employment bridging and readiness programs, employer liaison, labour market information, business start-up and development support, and welcoming community programs. NSIPG's settlement funding supports programming delivered by service provider organizations (SPOs) across the province.

The delivery of settlement programming has shifted since COVID-19. In 2021-22, NSIPG will focus on working with SPOs to understand and support this shift in programming. NSIPG will also build on recent research on the factors that influence retention of immigrants to Nova Scotia. In response to the research findings, NSIPG is working with partners to strengthen the ways we communicate and inform newcomers of settlement programming.

Further, NSIPG will work with other departments to understand and support the needs of newcomers, arriving in Nova Scotia to work from elsewhere in Canada.

Policy and Advocacy

Research and Evaluation

Evidence-based decision making based on research and data are important to ensure NSIPG's programming is targeted to immigrants with the right skills needed in the province and to provide access to the settlement supports needed to help them succeed. A key focus for research in 2021-22, will be working with other departments, levels of government, and community partners to build understanding of the regional labour market and how labour needs have changed since COVID-19.

Program Integrity

Immigration programs in any province, territory or country are vulnerable to abuse and fraud. The growth in the NSNP and AIP requires increased monitoring of program compliance, as well as investigating and preventing potential fraud. To support the continued success and integrity of our programs, strengthening compliance and investigation capacity within the Office is a priority.

Human Resource Development

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Anti-Black Racism, and Workplace Mental Health are priorities for NSIPG in 2021. Opportunities for learning and engaging in discussions will be made available to NSIPG staff through in house programming and supports from the Public Service Commission. In addition, we will continue to focus on employee engagement and on responding to the results of the

“How’s Work Going?” survey with improved communication and opportunities for engagement and learning.

Performance Measurement

Attraction and Recruitment

Outcome	Measure	Base Year	Annual Target: 2021	Trends - Subsequent years	Strategic Actions
Immigration activities address Nova Scotia's economic needs and labour market gaps	Number of new immigrant landings per calendar year.	2003: 1,474	7,000*	2020: 3,505 2019: 7,580 2018: 5,970 2017: 4,513 2016: 5,483 2015: 3,402 2014: 2,672 2013: 2,528 2012: 2,339 2011: 2,143 2010: 2,396 2009: 2,388 2008: 2,651 2007: 2,532 2006: 2,587 2005: 1,931 2004: 1,771	Maximize all pathways to immigration (including the NSNP and the AIP) by working with business, industry and labour to address skill shortages. Targeted international attraction and recruitment initiatives. Targeted stakeholder engagement focusing on key sectors, regions in the province and international students.

* Landings will be impacted by federal processing and national travel and border restrictions.

Breakdown of Landings – NSIPG* Principal Applicants and Dependents vs Exclusively Federal Pathways

Category / Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
NSIPG total	629	779	958	1,203	1,400	1,394	2,590	2,749	3,845	5,090	2,335
<i>NSIPG % of landings</i>	<i>26%</i>	<i>36%</i>	<i>41%</i>	<i>48%</i>	<i>52%</i>	<i>41%</i>	<i>47%</i>	<i>61%</i>	<i>65%</i>	<i>67%</i>	<i>67%</i>
All federal	1,767	1,364	1,381	1,325	1,272	2,008	2,893	1,764	2,125	2,490	1,170
<i>Federal % of landings</i>	<i>74%</i>	<i>64%</i>	<i>59%</i>	<i>52%</i>	<i>48%</i>	<i>59%</i>	<i>53%</i>	<i>39%</i>	<i>35%</i>	<i>33%</i>	<i>33%</i>
GRAND TOTAL	2,396	2,143	2,339	2,528	2,672	3,402	5,483	4,513	5,970	7,580	3,505

* NSIPG includes the Nominee Program and the Atlantic Immigration Pilot

Integration and Retention

Outcome	Measure	Base Year	Annual Target: 2021	Trends: Subsequent years	Strategic Actions
Nova Scotia's immigration policies and settlement activities support immigrants and their families to successfully settle and integrate in their new community.	<p>Percentage of all tax-filing immigrants arriving in Nova Scotia in a <u>six year-period</u> remaining in the sixth year.</p> <p>This measure was originally created using a baseline of 37% from the 2001 national census. However, the discontinuation of the long-form census in 2011 meant a gap in the availability of census data. This led to the development of the tax-filer method to measure retention, calculated using data available in the Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB).</p> <p>The reinstatement of the long form census in 2016 means there is one more method to measure retention. Each method has benefits and limitations. The most recent IMDB and Census data are included in this report.</p>	<p>2001 Census: 37%</p> <p>2008 IMDB: 69%</p>	70% or better retention rate.	<p>IMDB 2017¹ - 71%</p> <p>Census 2016: 79%</p>	<p>Focus on attracting immigrants with job offers or with skills and experience aligned with provincial labour and occupational needs.</p> <p>Fund an integrated province-wide approach to settlement services to maximize settlement programming and resources that support successful settlement of immigrants, including to the Francophone community.</p>

¹ There is a minimum two-year time lag in the availability of data from the IMDB. The latest available data is for the 2017 tax year.

Policy Development and Advocacy

Outcome	Measure	Base Year	Annual Target: 2021	Trends			Strategic Actions
				Nominations	Endorsements	Designations	
Increase the number of annual provincial nominations and allocation for the Atlantic Immigration Pilot	Number of NSNP certificates issued annually per calendar year.	2003: 23	2300 NSNP nominations	2020: 1,900 2019: 1,610 2018: 1,400 2017: 1,451 2016: 1,375 2015: 1,355 2014: 717	2020: 1,617 2019: 1,208 2018: 872	2020: 296 2019: 402 2018: 460	Develop a shared understanding of immigration with stakeholders and influencers to advocate for a greater number of nominee certificates and AIP endorsements for Nova Scotia. Leverage our partnerships with key stakeholders to achieve our common immigration goals for Nova Scotia.
	Number of Endorsements through the Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program per calendar year.	2017: 201	1557 AIP Endorsements	2013: 630 2012: 725 2011: 525 2010: 500 2009: 367 2008: 309 2007: 405 2006: 400 2005: 303 2004: 117			

Departmental Financial Summary

Departmental Expenses Summary			
(\$ thousands)			
<u>Programs and Services</u>	<u>2020-21 Estimate</u>	<u>2020-21 Forecast</u>	<u>2021-22 Estimate</u>
Office of Immigration and Population Growth	\$10,217	\$9,108	\$10,209
Total - Departmental Expenses	<u>\$10,217</u>	<u>\$9,108</u>	<u>\$10,209</u>
Ordinary Recoveries	---	---	---
<u>Funded Staff (# of FTEs)</u> Department Funded Staff	39.0	37.3	42.8

Note:
 For Ordinary Revenues, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 2
 For TCA Purchase Requirements, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 1

