

# A POPULATION GROWTH ACTION PLAN

for New Brunswick

2019-2024





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# FOSTERING GROWTH BY INVESTING IN PEOPLE

New Brunswick now has a renewed population growth strategy, *New Beginnings: A Population Growth Strategy for New Brunswick 2019-2024* with a focus on growing the population, balancing the effects of outmigration and enhancing our immigration efforts. The objectives within the strategy are focused on encouraging conditions for a stable and diverse population to support the social, economic and cultural needs of the people living in New Brunswick. This action plan will build on the objectives and initiatives outlined in the strategy by detailing specific actions that will help New Brunswick in achieving its immigration targets.

By implementing the actions below, the province will be better positioned to work with all communities to make this province the best place for New Brunswick families to grow, prosper and succeed. Achieving this and retaining both New Brunswickers and newcomers is a joint effort that requires a chain of services between provincial government departments, the federal government, local governments, immigrant-serving agencies and other community stakeholders. This will help us succeed together to grow our population, encourage a welcoming and diverse society, support our labour market needs and foster a strong demographic foundation. New Brunswick businesses and industries will be better able to recruit and retain talent, allowing them to continue to invest and grow throughout the province. In all of this, New Brunswick's regional realities, both official language communities and newcomers' settlement needs must be taken into account.

Furthermore, this strategy's objectives, initiatives and actions will build directly off the successes of the *New Brunswick Population Growth Strategy 2014-2017* and companion *Francophone Immigration Action Plan 2014-2017*, which included action items aimed at growing New Brunswick's population through targeted immigration, settlement, multiculturalism, francophone immigration, entrepreneurship and retention activities. Many of the actions found throughout this action plan will also complement the work found within the *Atlantic Growth Strategy* and the *New Conversations Post-Tour Report* and the initiatives undertaken by the province's Long-Term Integration Committee.

The actions outlined in the previous Francophone Immigration Action Plan have now become an integral component of the department's goals and have been entrenched within all immigration operations. As such, francophone immigration actions will be incorporated throughout the objectives, initiatives and actions of this action plan. Specifically, the objectives, initiatives and actions of this plan pertain to both English and French communities, which supports the department's continued aim to maintain the unique linguistic balance of New Brunswick.





## ACHIEVING OUR NEW BRUNSWICK IMMIGRATION TARGETS

This action plan will work to position the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour (the department) to meet the targets outlined in the strategy. In particular, the department will work to grow the New Brunswick population by increasing the economic immigration target over time, welcoming up to 7,500 newcomers annually by 2024. This will bring New Brunswick's annual immigration intake to about one per cent of the provincial population<sup>1</sup>. This target includes all newcomers settling in our communities through federal and provincial immigration programs and will help to ease our demographic challenges and meet the labour market needs of New Brunswick employers. To achieve this, the department will implement actions focused on supporting provincial employers, partnering with the federal government to promote New Brunswick immigration and engaging community partners to foster local initiatives targeting population growth.

To ensure population growth goals are achieved over the next five years, the department is also refocusing its efforts on the retention of newcomers settling in New Brunswick. The department will target 85 per cent retention of newcomers by

2024 to align with the national retention average. To achieve this target, the department will engage employers and other key partners to support the attachment of skilled newcomers to the provincial labour market and create more diverse and welcoming communities. The retention of newcomers and New Brunswickers is a joint effort that requires the cooperation from multiple government departments, local governments, immigrant serving agencies, Aboriginal communities and other community stakeholders.

In addition to these targets, the department will also continue to work towards the francophone immigration target originally established in the *New Brunswick Francophone Immigration Action Plan 2014-2017*. In 2018, the department reached 31 per cent French-speaking newcomers through the Provincial Nominee Program, and 19 per cent across all provincial programs. The department will continue to target a two per cent annual increase in French-speaking nominations to reach 33 per cent by 2024. After reaching this target, the department will implement efforts to maintain this level of francophone immigration to New Brunswick on an ongoing basis.

Cooperation with all partners will be important in meeting these targets, particularly collaboration with the federal government.

<sup>1</sup> This number includes principal applicants and their families.

# AN ACTION PLAN FOR POPULATION GROWTH

Based on stakeholder consultations, the department will aim to achieve the following to grow New Brunswick's population over the next five years:

- **Attract** a skilled workforce that aligns with our labour market needs;
- **Recruit** entrepreneurs that encourage sustainable economic growth;
- **Create** an environment where newcomers and their families can settle and succeed; and
- **Engage** communities to foster a more diverse and welcoming province.

To achieve these objectives, the department has developed this companion action plan to outline the specific actions under each initiative that will be implemented over the next five years.

## **ATTRACT a skilled workforce that aligns with our labour market needs.**

*Foster engagement by New Brunswick employers with immigration processes through strategic partnerships, communication materials and quality education and awareness services.*

### **ACTION 1**

Implement an Employer Human Resource Support Services process across the department to ensure New Brunswick employers find the local, national and international skilled labour they need to fill jobs.

### **ACTION 2**

Create a suite of tools and resources that will educate, inform and aid New Brunswick employers in their use of immigration to meet their workforce needs and build foundations for a changing workplace culture, being mindful of both linguistic communities, regional realities and newcomer needs.

*Support employers with the recruitment of workers by connecting them with individuals already in the province, other parts of Canada or through international recruitment.*

### **ACTION 3**

Support employers, through the department's Regional Employment Offices, to fill available job opportunities by hiring workers already in the province.

### **ACTION 4**

Partner with the federal government and federal agencies, including the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), to help New Brunswick employers find the skilled labour they need to fill available jobs.



### **ACTION 5**

Work with other provincial government departments that are supporting business growth in New Brunswick to link skilled labour to businesses in the province.

### **ACTION 6**

Develop a process to consider the employability of applicants' spouses.

### **ACTION 7**

Engage with New Brunswick employers in key sectors to help fill jobs by organizing and participating in international recruitment and promotion missions.

### **ACTION 8**

Participate in domestic recruitment missions to encourage expatriate New Brunswickers, secondary migrants (immigrants' subsequent relocation after reaching their initial destination) and other Canadians to work and settle in the province.

### **ACTION 9**

Partner with the other Atlantic provinces to participate in three international recruitment missions annually, including one focused on francophone immigration.

### **ACTION 10**

Improve provincial immigration processes using technology, including developing a new IT system for provincial immigration applications.

*Engage with New Brunswick's Aboriginal communities, including Tribal Councils and organizations, as well as the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to support the attachment of the Aboriginal population to the provincial labour market.*

### **ACTION 11**

Continue to support Aboriginal economic development organizations and services.

### **ACTION 12**

Conduct collaborative research with Aboriginal partners to better understand labour market participation and employment challenges for Aboriginal people.

### **ACTION 13**

Assess current provincial programming and resources offered to Aboriginal New Brunswickers to ensure it is addressing the barriers and gaps identified.

*Enhance the New Brunswick brand in key markets for potential skilled immigrants through marketing, promotional activities and leveraging technologies.*

### **ACTION 14**

Build on the new brand for New Brunswick immigration by updating the New Brunswick immigration website to reflect this brand in a user-friendly manner.

### **ACTION 15**

Identify target markets where the department will focus its promotional efforts using this brand.

### **ACTION 16**

Enhance online pre-arrival tools and resources for foreign nationals looking to immigrate to New Brunswick.

### **ACTION 17**

Support the province's francophone immigration targets by promoting provincial immigration programs in key francophone markets.

*Support projects that attach international students to job opportunities in New Brunswick both during and after studies.*

### **ACTION 18**

Work with New Brunswick post-secondary institutions to support the recruitment and increased enrolment of international students within their study programs.

### **ACTION 19**

Engage with international students throughout their degree program to promote New Brunswick as the top choice for employment and immigration after graduation.

### **ACTION 20**

Develop resources, including online resources, to help international students integrate into the community and connect with employment opportunities.

### **ACTION 21**

Identify and promote second language training initiatives to assist international students to learn another official language that will help them find employment in New Brunswick.

### **ACTION 22**

As part of the *Atlantic Growth Strategy*, continue to participate in the study and stay program.

*Work to address foreign credential recognition issues.*

### **ACTION 23**

Collaborate with key partners as they work to improve foreign credential recognition in the province, including considerations for alternative career pathways and ensuring capacity in both official languages.

### **ACTION 24**

Identify barriers to certification for in demand trades in New Brunswick.



## **RECRUIT entrepreneurs that encourage sustainable economic growth**

*Collaborate with partners to promote New Brunswick as a great place to do business.*

### **ACTION 25**

Promote existing provincial initiatives and economic and cultural opportunities for doing business in New Brunswick to entrepreneurs domestically and internationally.

### **ACTION 26**

Support other government departments and partners who help link immigrant and secondary migrant entrepreneurs to business opportunities identified through succession planning initiatives in New Brunswick, including succession planning for businesses in rural communities.

*Attract newcomer entrepreneurs who will invest, establish and operate a new or existing business, while creating job opportunities, in New Brunswick.*

### **ACTION 27**

Organize and participate in international recruitment missions on an annual basis to attract immigrant entrepreneurs.

### **ACTION 28**

Review the Entrepreneurial Applicant Category of the Provincial Nominee Program to ensure it best allows new arrivals to start businesses and succeed.

### **ACTION 29**

Monitor and evaluate the suite of services available to newcomer entrepreneurs to ensure they provide value and meet the needs of business immigrants.



## **CREATE an environment where newcomers and their families can settle and succeed**

*In partnership with community leaders, local governments, francophone organizations and other provincial government departments, enhance collaboration, explore research opportunities and share information on pre-arrival, orientation, settlement supports, immigration processes and provincial programming.*

### **ACTION 30**

Partner with the New Brunswick Multicultural Council to build capacity to offer cultural competency training throughout New Brunswick communities, taking into account communities' unique needs.

### **ACTION 31**

Continue to partner with key stakeholders to focus on the recruitment, settlement and retention of newcomers to New Brunswick.

### **ACTION 32**

Provide other provincial government departments with the information they need to better understand immigration processes and newcomer settlement needs in New Brunswick.

### **ACTION 33**

Coordinate and plan with other government departments, particularly those that directly impact newcomer settlement

in the province, including the Departments of Health, Social Development, Education and Early Childhood Development, Public Safety and Service New Brunswick to better meet newcomers' needs, ensure their welfare and retain them in New Brunswick.

### **ACTION 34**

Partner with research bodies to better inform provincial immigration processes, employer engagement and the province's settlement and retention efforts.

### **ACTION 35**

Work with local governments as they implement or develop their communities' own population growth strategies or regional immigration plans.

*Continue to support settlement services for newcomers across the province, including in rural communities, taking into account local needs and the continued increases in immigration.*

### **ACTION 36**

Support immigrant settlement services across the province to ensure they provide the necessary services for successful newcomer settlement in New Brunswick, in both official languages, taking into account the increased demand for immigration and employer involvement.



### **ACTION 37**

Explore opportunities to enhance the infrastructure of settlement services in New Brunswick, including through the use of technology, satellite offices in rural communities or by diversifying services for skilled immigrants and entrepreneurs.

### **ACTION 38**

Support employers, immigrant-serving agencies, local governments and other partners in the recruitment, settlement and retention of newcomers to offer consolidated tools and resources that promote newcomer integration, including foundations for a changing workplace culture.

### **ACTION 39**

Increase access to second language training for francophone newcomers in New Brunswick to enhance their employability and support our bilingual workforce.

*Implement new and innovative mechanisms to offer pre-arrival and orientation services to newcomers, in both official languages, for those abroad and recently arrived in New Brunswick.*

### **ACTION 40**

Develop an asset map of pre and post-arrival settlement services currently available in New Brunswick to identify successes and areas in need of improvement.

### **ACTION 41**

Utilize technology, such as webinars, for newcomers abroad and in other jurisdictions to deliver information on immigration programming and New Brunswick living prior to their landing, including a webinar on the education system in New Brunswick.

### **ACTION 42**

Partner with local governments to create pre-arrival integration resources in their communities.

*Support settlement and long-term integration efforts for the entire family unit, including spouses and children.*

### **ACTION 43**

Assist immigrant settlement agencies in offering the settlement services required to meet the needs of newcomer spouses and children.

### **ACTION 44**

Improve access to employment for newcomer spouses and other dependents in New Brunswick, while considering barriers such as language skills and credentialing.

### **ACTION 45**

Invest in newcomer programs that help young immigrants better integrate and become leaders in their community.

### **ACTION 46**

Work with ethnocultural associations, enhancing their role in the attraction and settlement of newcomer families to help with community integration.

*Help more international students stay in New Brunswick following their studies.*

### **ACTION 47**

Conduct focus groups and surveys with international students to engage them in discussions on the challenges, including the specific challenges of francophone international students, and opportunities of settling in both rural and urban communities.

### **ACTION 48**

Collaborate with key partners to support projects that allow international students to better experience New Brunswick in a way that encourages them to remain and settle in the province.

### **ACTION 49**

Work with immigrant settlement agencies and other partners to encourage the integration of international student spouses and dependents.





## **ENGAGE communities to foster a more diverse and welcoming province**

*Enhance the products and resources available to create awareness and public engagement around becoming a more welcoming New Brunswick community.*

### **ACTION 50**

Support public engagement efforts that break stereotypes or misconceptions with a focus on the demographic realities in the province, the benefits of immigration and the importance of welcoming communities.

### **ACTION 51**

Leverage the federal *Action Plan for Official Languages 2018-2023* and the *National Action Plan for Increasing Francophone Immigration* to develop resources that support a diverse and welcoming environment in rural communities in New Brunswick.

### **ACTION 52**

Develop a welcoming community tool kit, which can be accessed online, that local governments and communities can use to become more welcoming towards newcomer families, with consideration for the regional and linguistic realities of the province.

*Leverage partnerships with local governments, communities and employers to welcome and retain principal applicants and their families.*

### **ACTION 53**

Engage with local governments and community stakeholders to support a process around exploratory visits for newcomers.

### **ACTION 54**

Collaborate with community partners on immigrant recruitment events to promote New Brunswick communities where employers are actively recruiting skilled workers.

*Encourage greater diversity and inclusion throughout the workforce.*

### **ACTION 55**

Promote the use of cultural competency training to New Brunswick employers.

### **ACTION 56**

Support the establishment of a Government of New Brunswick Diversity Champion to ensure the New Brunswick public service embraces diversity and is reflective of a changing, more inclusive environment.

*Promote the success stories and contributions of newcomers, and employers using immigration in New Brunswick communities.*

### **ACTION 57**

Capture and promote the success stories of newcomers and their families to New Brunswick through various methods and resources to better educate and engage New Brunswickers on the benefits and misconceptions of immigration.

*Establish government policies that encourage the attraction and retention of immigrants to New Brunswick.*

### **ACTION 58**

Explore the development of a mechanism to ensure government policies, programs and services are responsive and adaptable to immigration and the needs and interests of newcomers to New Brunswick.

### **ACTION 59**

Support the establishment of a Government of New Brunswick position statement on diversity and inclusion to ensure understanding, consistency and common leadership across government departments and programs.

### **ACTION 60**

Leverage the work being undertaken by the Long-term Integration Committee to support and implement government policies that encourage the attraction and retention of newcomers in the province.



# CONCLUSION

New Brunswick now has a renewed population growth strategy. The objectives, initiatives and actions articulated throughout the strategy and this companion action plan will help to make this province the best place for New Brunswick families to grow, prosper and succeed by growing our population through targeted immigration, domestic recruitment, secondary migration, settlement, retention and welcoming community efforts.

*Work has already begun to move these actions forward.*

The success of this strategy over the next five years requires the active participation of stakeholders and partners. Achieving our targets, implementing strategic population growth priorities and retaining New Brunswickers is a joint effort that requires a chain of services between provincial government departments, the federal government, local government, immigrant serving agencies and other community stakeholders.

