

**Nova Scotia Office of Immigration
Annual Accountability Report
for the Fiscal Year 2009-2010**

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Accountability Statement

The accountability report of the Office of Immigration for the year ending March 31, 2010, is pursuant to the Provincial Finance Act and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Office of Immigration business plan information for the fiscal year 2009-2010. The reporting of the Office of Immigration outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgements and opinions by the Office of Immigration.

We acknowledge that this accountability report is the responsibility of the 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 Office of Immigration business plan for the year.

The Honourable Ramona Jennex
Minister

Margaret MacDonald
Deputy Minister

Message from the Minister

Immigrants have an important place in the delicate equation of expanding the economy while living within our means. Immigrants not only bring social and economic benefits to the province, they promote openness to new ideas, experiences and creativity, creating a stronger Nova Scotia.

When immigrant families come to Nova Scotia, their incentive to succeed is very high. They work hard to succeed at their jobs and many set up their own businesses, creating jobs for other Nova Scotians. Others provide international contacts that lead to more business for their employers. Having a diverse society has the power to open minds and influence the future in positive and exciting ways.

Nova Scotia's Nominee Program is alive and well and open for business. In 2009, we issued 362 nomination certificates to people from around the world, an increase of 53 nominations over the previous year. The provincial nominee program typically represents about one-third of all immigrants coming to Nova Scotia, with each nominee bringing an average of 2.5 family members.

While our provincial nominations increased last year, the total number of immigrants coming to Nova Scotia decreased slightly to 2,424. This was not unexpected as the impacts of the global economic slowdown were still being felt.

A significant effort is required to make sure newcomers are welcome and have the supports necessary to start a new life in a new country. The Office of Immigration invested \$4.3 million in 2009 to help our newcomers integrate and settle in their new home province. This included \$2.3-million in settlement funding and \$2-million for employment-related programs through the Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement.

Nova Scotia's workforce is getting older with about one thousand people turning 65 every month. In fact, Nova Scotia already has more seniors than youth. With our working age population expected to decline there will soon be more jobs than workers. We need qualified workers so businesses can expand and help grow the economy. Increasing immigration to our province is one way to help address this demographic challenge.

During the latter part of 2009 and the early months of 2010, the Office of Immigration engaged in discussions with hundreds of its stakeholders and partners as part of the process in developing a new immigration strategy for Nova Scotia. The main goal of the new strategy is to significantly increase immigration to the province as one way to ensure that communities thrive and the economy grows. New resources for marketing and the nominee program will be added to help achieve this goal.

We will continue to work with our immigration colleagues in Atlantic Canada to ensure a coordinated approach to immigration recruitment for the region. This collaboration provides opportunities to ensure the region and Nova Scotia are profiled as an immigration destination of choice among potential newcomers overseas.

I am very proud of the staff at the Office of Immigration. Together they represent eight ethnicities and speak a dozen different languages. Some are immigrants themselves. Thank you for your dedication and professionalism.

I am pleased to present the Office of Immigration's 2009-2010 Accountability Report, which reflects the progress and success in meeting the goals and priorities of the business plan for the fiscal year.

Thank you.

Ramona Jennex
Minister

1. Introduction

This accountability report is a measure of the Office of Immigrations actions in response to the goals, priorities and performance measures identified in the 2009-2010 Business Plan.

In January 2005, Nova Scotia released its Immigration Strategy. The Strategy provides the framework for the direction and actions of the Office of Immigration and contains the ambitious goals of:

- Achieving a 70% retention rate for the 2006-2011 census period.
- Attracting 3,600 immigrants per year by 2010

In 2008, the number of arrivals was 2,651 with more than 800 arriving through the Nova Scotia Nominee Program. This continued an upward trend in total immigrant landings in Nova Scotia and is a 75% increase over 2003 landings (prior to the implementation of the nominee program).

In 2009, Nova Scotia experienced slight decrease in arrivals with 2,424 immigrant landing in the province. This was not unexpected considering the closure of the Nova Scotia Nominee Program's (NSNP) Economic stream and with most of these Economic nominees already arriving.

As immigration numbers are increasing, efforts to provide settlement support so that newcomers are able to stay and succeed, are also increasing. To this end the Office of Immigration allocated more than \$2.3 million in settlement funding to approved programs in the 2009-2010 fiscal year. We also allocated approximately \$2.0 million for employment related programs for immigrants through the Labour Market Agreement.

Historically, Nova Scotia has had one of the lowest immigrant retention rates in Canada. Consequently, the province through the Office of Immigration is focused on attracting immigrants with the backgrounds and experiences that the province needs and who are likely to succeed in Nova Scotia. According to an Atlantic Metropolis analysis of the 2006 census, our retention rate of immigrants increased to 63%, up from 38% in 2001.

The Nova Scotia Nominee Program is used to select immigrants who can directly and positively impact the province's economy, based on industrial and economic priorities and labour market conditions. The program also recognizes the importance of encouraging the development of rural, Acadian and Francophone communities.

The Nova Scotia Nominee Program (NSNP) is open to skilled workers, international graduates, immigrant family businesses and other immigrants who meet labour market needs. These immigrants are nominated by the province to the federal government, who then conduct security, criminality and medical checks before giving final approvals and issuing Canadian permanent resident visas.

2. Department Progress and Accomplishments

2.1 Progress and Accomplishments 2009-2010

Core Business Area: Attraction and Recruitment

Manage the NSNP, the province's primary immigrant attraction tool, and use it to address Nova Scotia's economic and labour force needs.

Met with employers and professional organizations to promote the economic and social benefits of immigration in the workplace and to provide practical information about hiring immigrants and temporary foreign workers. Among these groups the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration (NSOI) met with organizations representing employers (e.g., small business organizations, chambers of commerce, Regional Development Agencies), and organizations focusing on specific sectors (e.g., health sector, aerospace, human resources), as well as with settlement agencies and immigrants.

Participated on the Comité directeur pour l'immigration francophone on a recruitment, attraction and retention strategy in the Acadian and francophone communities of Nova Scotia and bilingual staff was available in the office to provide an array of services in French.

Supported Acadian organizations and their various immigration initiatives through the NSOI Immigration Settlement Program Funding and the Labour Market Agreement Funding for Immigrant Programs.

Promote and market Nova Scotia, in partnership with communities, as an attractive immigrant destination.

Participated in immigration fairs, including Francophone recruitment fairs, in England, Ireland, Scotland, Germany, the Netherlands, France and Belgium.

Attended Destination Canada recruitment fairs in Francophone countries and actively participated on the Comité de l'immigration francophone en Nouvelle-Écosse to better attract French-speaking immigrants to Nova Scotia in partnership with Acadian and Francophone organizations and employers.

Developed promotional materials and a marketing plan in partnership with Atlantic Provinces and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, under the auspices of the Council of Atlantic Premiers. The "Canada's East Coast" brand was used at immigration recruitment fairs in Spring 2009.

In the 2009-2010 Business Plan, the Office of Immigration identified marketing as an important focus, including the development and implementation of a marketing plan to better promote the Nova Scotia Nominee Program both in Nova Scotia and internationally. These activities were not undertaken.

However, in the 2010-2011 provincial budget, funding was specifically allocated for marketing projects. The following items, included in the 2009-2010 Business Plan, will be addressed in 2010-2011:

Implement a marketing strategy aimed at attracting qualified workers to meet current and future skill shortages, by promoting the skilled worker, international graduate and family business categories of the nominee program.

Enhance the novascotiainmigration.com website to include better information on finding employment, working, and starting a business in Nova Scotia and to provide specific information about living in Nova Scotia to potential and existing Francophone immigrants.

Core Business Area: Integration and Retention

Partner with existing funders and community agencies to support delivery of settlement and integration programming so that newcomers have better access to timely and quality information and services upon arrival.

Strategically invested \$2.24 million in settlement and retention programs and services with a primary focus on employment, enhanced language and outreach programming. Funding for programs delivered outside of the Metro-Halifax region totalled \$1.5 million.

Allocated \$2 million of funding under the Labour Market Agreement to assist unemployed immigrants with finding jobs in Nova Scotia.

Funding was provided to Acadian and Francophone organizations to facilitate the integration of Francophone immigrants to the Canadian labour market and workplace and to organize a forum for employers and stakeholders on economic immigration in the province's Acadian regions.

Participated in multi-stakeholder groups working to address credential recognition issues in specific occupations such as teachers, health professionals, engineers, lawyers and the skilled trades.

Organized and participated in a Job Fair for Immigrants with more than 350 job seekers and 35 employers participating.

Also included in the 2009-2010 Business Plan was the following item:

Begin work to develop an immigrant job strategy to assist immigrants with entering the labour market. This would take into consideration employment specific language training, upgrading of education, and recognition of international credentials.

The new government of Nova Scotia has made the commitment to develop an immigrant job strategy. The components of this job strategy will be presented later in 2010 in the new provincial Immigration Strategy.

Raise awareness and educate the public about the importance of immigration to Nova Scotia's future.

Co-hosted a Welcoming Communities Symposium with the Atlantic Metropolis Centre which focused on the attraction and retention of immigrants in Nova Scotia from the perspective of 1) federal, provincial and municipal governments; 2) non-governmental organizations and the private sector; and 3) diverse communities.

Met with community groups and professional organizations to promote the economic and social benefits of immigration through out Nova Scotia. Among these groups NSOI met with organizations representing immigrant women, Acadian and francophone communities, employers, chambers of commerce, Regional Development Agencies, the health sector, aerospace, human resources, settlement agencies and immigrants.

Provided funding and support to the Greater Halifax Partnership's Hire Immigrants campaign which includes the Halifax Connector Program and advice to employers on hiring and integrating immigrants into the workplace.

Core Business Area: Leadership and Policy Development

Develop partnerships with key stakeholders to leverage existing and new resources and create synergies to achieve our common goals.

Began the development of a new immigration strategy in support of the Government of Nova Scotia's commitment to increasing the province's immigration targets and creating an immigration job strategy. This strategy will be finalized in 2010-2011.

Collaborated with federal and provincial governments in the Atlantic region under the Atlantic Population Table to more strategically market Canada's East Coast as an immigration destination in Canada and better share resources among the Atlantic provinces.

Provide advice and support in policy, planning, research, interdepartmental coordination, and intergovernmental relations as they relate to immigration.

Participated in federal/provincial/territorial working groups to address significant policy matters related to the development of a National Vision for immigration, federal immigration levels planning, the Federal Skilled Worker backlog, occupations in demand, temporary foreign workers, and international students.

Detailed data and demographic information has been collected in preparation for a national and provincial evaluation of the Provincial Nominee Program.

Also included in the 2009-2010 Business Plan were the following items:

Finalize negotiations and sign a Annex Agreement on Temporary Workers, which would allow the province and Canada to work together to address the labour market and economic needs of the province by using the temporary foreign worker program.

This Annex has been finalized but will be signed in 2010-2011.

Human Resource Strategy

The Office of Immigration is committed to representing the population in which it serves and will continue to be diligent in hiring the most qualified candidates, while valuing diversity, linguistic capacity and the benefits they bring. This also serves as an example to employers throughout the province that the Nova Scotia Public Service is committed to hiring immigrants. A nominee officer position has been designated as Francophone to better serve our Acadian and Francophone communities, immigrants and potential newcomers.

Staff have also attended mandatory diversity and human rights training in order to ensure cross-cultural competency when meeting with NSOI clients and the public.

The Office of Immigration has committed to assisting its employees with developing career and performance plans. This includes making funds available for training programs and courses to support these plans.

Financial Results

Budget Context

OFFICE OF IMMIGRATION		
	2009-2010	2009-2010
	(\$ thousands)	
	Estimate	Actual
Operating Costs	937	596
Grants and Contributions	2,248	4,575
Salaries and Employee Benefits	1,506	1,402
Gross Expenses	4,691	
Less: Chargeable to other departments	--	2,244*
Total Program Expenses	4,691	4,329
**Recoveries	260	211
Funded Staff (FTE's)	20	19.18

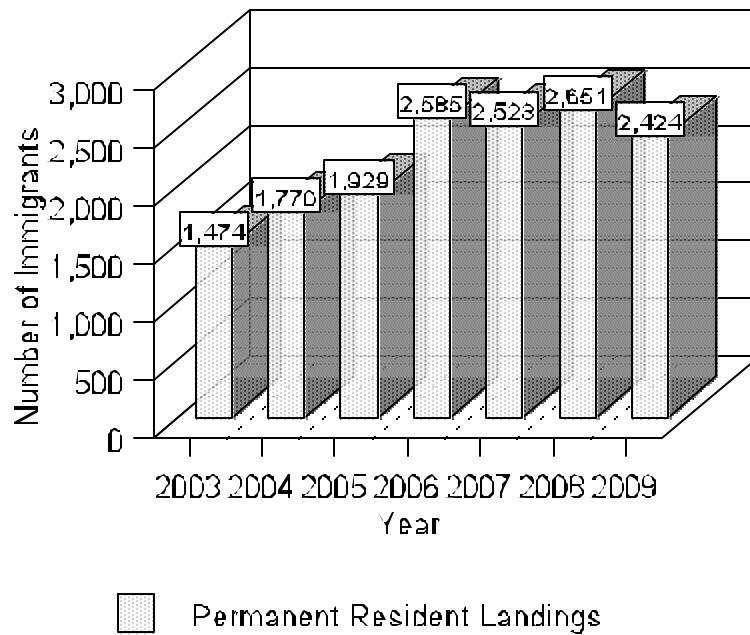
*Labour Market grant money recovered from Labour and Workforce Development

** Recovery from Citizenship and Immigration Canada for Destination Canada and Web Portal Development

4.0 Performance Measures

IMMIGRANT ATTRACTION

One of the goals outlined in the 2005 Nova Scotia Immigration Strategy is to increase the number of immigrants who choose to settle in Nova Scotia to 3,600 by 2011 in order to address population and skilled workforce needs. As the following chart indicates, the total number of landings has increased since 2003 and remained steady at the 2400-2600 range.



WHAT DOES THE MEASURE TELL US ?

This measure shows the progress we are making in attracting newcomers to the Province of Nova Scotia and what the positive impact of the Nova Scotia Nominee Program has been since its inception.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

The above tables show that the number of immigrants choosing to make Nova Scotia their home since the creation of the nominee program and the Office of Immigration has been on the increase. The total number of immigrants that came to Nova Scotia in 2008 increased by 75% over 2003. This increase can be directly attributed to the increasing number of persons selected by the province under the Nova Scotia Nominee Program. In 2008, 868 newcomers in Nova Scotia arrived through the nominee program. The remainder came through federal immigration streams. This number includes both the principal applicant and his/her family.

In 2009, a slight decline of immigrants occurred. This was not unexpected due to the closure of the Economic stream of the NSNP in 2006. This 2-3 year time lag between nomination, approval by CIC and landing is not unusual. With increased marketing and public awareness, we are confident that this number will continue to rise.

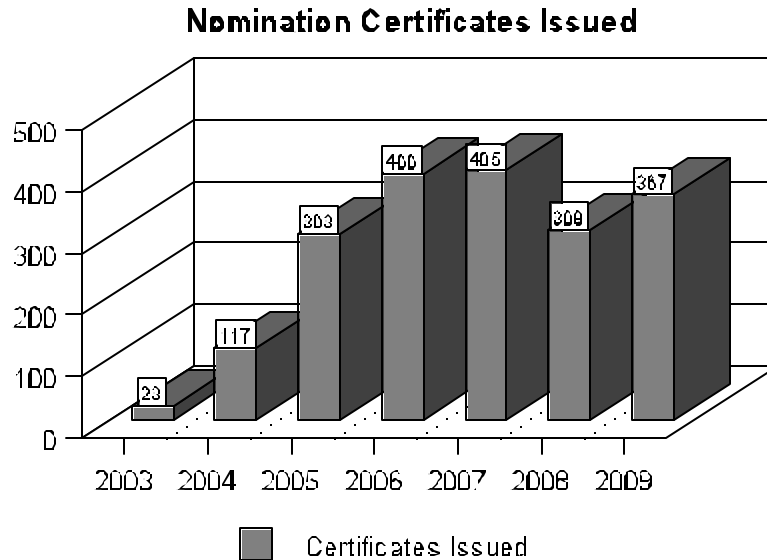
Our newcomers have come through various federal streams including Skilled Worker, Business Class, Family Class, and the Refugee Class as well as the nominee program. We are not overly dependent on any one of these categories. Of course, the nominee program is the main selection tool available directly to the province

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

A new target will be announced in a new immigration strategy to be released later in 2010.

NUMBER OF NOMINATION CERTIFICATES ISSUED

In the 2009-2010 Business Plan, the Office of Immigration had projected that 400 nomination certificates would be issued in the 2009 calendar year. With the postponement of the development of the marketing plan, the Office of Immigration amended its nomination target to 350. By the end of 2009, 367 nomination certificates had been issued.



WHAT DOES THE MEASURE TELL US ?

This measure shows the progress we are making in attracting newcomers to the Province of Nova Scotia and what the positive impact of the Nova Scotia Nominee Program has been since its inception. In 2008, a decline in the number of certificates was due to the closure of the economic stream, the lack of a recruitment strategy, and limited international marketing, the latter two of which were delayed as a result of other office pressures. This number is back on the increase in 2009.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

It was anticipated that with the signing of the new Provincial Nominee Annex agreement, which removed any limits on the number of nominations that could be issued per year, and the hiring of additional nominee officers, it is predicted that the number of nominations issued in 2010 will be 500.

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

The Office of Immigration will now be able to focus on marketing the nominee program with the aim of increasing the number of people applying to it, thereby increasing the number of nominations. Our target in 2010 is 500 nominations with plans for further increases to be outlined in the upcoming new immigration strategy.

IMMIGRANT RETENTION

One of the goals outlined in the Nova Scotia Immigration Strategy in order to address population and skilled workforce needs is to increase the retention rate of immigrants who choose to settle in Nova Scotia. According to the 2001 Census, this rate was approximately 37%. The Immigration Strategy goal is to increase this rate to 70% by the 2011 Census year.

WHAT DOES THE MEASURE TELL US ?

This measure shows the progress we are making in attracting and keeping newcomers to the Province of Nova Scotia and what the positive impact of the Nova Scotia Nominee Program has been since its inception.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

According to the 2006 Census, the retention rate has increased to 63%. This increase can be attributed to the increased focus on providing settlement and language training programs. The Office of Immigration has provided \$2.3 million in funding to programs that directly assist immigrants in integrating into Nova Scotia life.

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

Our target for this measure is retain 70% of our immigrants by the 2011 Census.