

# **Office of Immigration**

**Business Plan**

**2007-2008**

**March 23, 2007**

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## **Message from the Minister and Deputy Minister**

Immigrants enrich us as a province, a community, as individuals. They provide much-needed skills and generate market opportunities for our businesses. They increase our competitiveness, create jobs for our youth, add diversity to our neighbourhoods, and build our communities.

Newcomers help us create the winning conditions necessary to secure Nova Scotia's future growth.

The Immigration Strategy introduced in 2005 reflects this understanding and outlines a five-year plan for increasing the number of immigrants to our province and helping them settle here successfully.

The 2007-2008 Business Plan for the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration (NSOI) outlines new initiatives to continue the immigration strategy's implementation building on the successes of the previous two years.

In 2006, there was a 34 per cent increase in the total number of newcomers landing in Nova Scotia over the previous year. Much of this increase is attributed to the Nova Scotia Nominee Program (NSNP), a tool that allows the province to nominate individuals, who meet our economic and labour-market needs.

During the upcoming fiscal year, we will continue to build on these numbers by negotiating a new nominee agreement with the Government of Canada. The existing one expires in August 2007. Given our success in attracting new immigrants through the program, we will also aim to eliminate the federal numeric level now in place on the nomination certificates we are allowed to issue.

In 2006-2007, we introduced a *Family Business Worker* stream to help immigrant entrepreneurs bring in family members with needed skills for their business. We will continue to expand the program by implementing another stream – an international graduates' category – which would allow international students, who have graduated from Nova Scotia post-secondary institutions and who have related employment, apply for permanent residency.

Of course building relationships with our partners and community stakeholders remains a priority. Special thanks and congratulations to them – settlement organizations and service providers, business and economic development groups, our colleagues at all levels of government, and immigrants themselves – for their good work.

By working together, we can ensure Nova Scotia has a strong voice at the national level – a voice that reflects immigration realities across our province.

With our partners, we will continue to leverage the resources necessary to support the delivery of settlement and integration programs so that new immigrants have access to the information and services they need upon arrival.

A special thank you also staff for their dedication and commitment to ensuring we move ever forward in reaching our immigration targets on behalf of all Nova Scotians.

We want and need new immigrants. In part, our province's ability to grow economically, socially and culturally depends on it.

Our progress will be reported in the province's accountability report.

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Honourable Carolyn Bolivar-Getson  
Minister of Immigration

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Rosalind Penfound  
Deputy Minister of Immigration

## Mission

To take a lead role in engaging and working with partners to attract, integrate, and retain immigrants, recognizing the important contributions they make to our social, economic, and cultural fabric.

## Link to the Corporate Path

The Nova Scotia Nominee Program (NSNP), under the Government of Canada’s Immigration and Refugee Protection Act - Economic Class, is a tool that allows the province to nominate potential immigrants for permanent residency to meet Nova Scotia’s economic and labour-market needs. Newcomers through the program provide much-needed skills, help businesses and organizations seize market opportunities and remain competitive in the global arena. In short, newcomers help us, all Nova Scotians, create the economic climate necessary to secure Nova Scotia’s future growth.

<b>(1) Creating Winning Conditions</b>	<b>(2) Seizing New Economic Opportunities</b>	<b>(3) Building for Individuals, Families and Communities</b>
1.1 Globally Competitive Business Climate	2.1 Leader in Information Technology	3.1 Healthy, Active Nova Scotians
1.2 Globally Competitive Workforce <i>- re-negotiate Nominee Agreement to allow NS to nominate more people per year</i> <i>- add categories to the NSNP</i> <i>- attend immigration fairs to recruit internationally trained skilled workers to immigrate to Nova Scotia</i> <i>- recognition of international credentials</i> <i>- fund enhanced language and employment focused settlement programs</i> <i>- promote benefits of hiring immigrants to employers</i>	2.2 Leader in R&D and Innovation	3.2 Accessible Services
1.3 Globally Competitive Connections	2.3 Leader in Clean & Green Economy	3.3 Safe Communities 3.4 Vibrant Communities <i>- recruit Francophone immigrants</i> <i>- promote community involvement focussing on the opportunities brought by immigrant</i> <i>- capitalize on international contacts that immigrants have to expand trade in new markets</i>

## **Planning Context**

An aging population and slowing population growth may have serious implications for our province including lost economic opportunities, declining communities, growing fiscal pressures, and potential labour market shortages. Immigration can help reverse current trends by bringing new people, new skills and new ideas to help grow our population, expand our global connections and grow our economy.

And, our immigration numbers are growing.

In the last three years, the number of new immigrants arriving in Nova Scotia increased: 1,770 in 2004; 1,929 in 2005; and, 2,580 in 2006 (preliminary numbers). According to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) data, our provincial nominee program has contributed to this increase as more than 850 permanent residents (including family members) arriving in Nova Scotia in 2006 were selected through the NSNP.

Our program is making a difference.

On July 1, 2006, NSOI implemented changes to the NSNP. The province, through NSOI, assumed full administrative responsibility for the program, eliminated application fees in two categories, and planned a review and redesign of the third, also with the aim of eliminating fees. A redesigned economic stream will be completed in this calendar year (2007).

The past fiscal year, we introduced a *Family Business Worker* stream, to help immigrant entrepreneurs who have family members with much needed skills apply for permanent residency in Nova Scotia.

In 2007-2008, we will continue to improve our nominee program by implementing and making operational additional streams for international graduates and for persons wishing to operate businesses in the province.

We will also continue to connect with business and labour to promote the benefits of hiring immigrants and having a diverse workplace, to provide information that streamlines the process for employers wanting to use the NSNP, and to identify potential barriers to immigrant recruitment.

Immigration is an area of shared responsibility with the Government of Canada. Through CIC, NSOI will work to ensure that the policy perspectives of the province are effectively communicated to policy makers in Ottawa.

Attracting immigrants to our province by providing opportunities and welcoming communities is critical if we are to ensure that future generations of Nova Scotians can live and thrive here.

## **Strategic Goals**

The immigration strategy will guide us for the next four years with each year building upon the success of the previous years. By opening up lines of communication with our many stakeholders through the development of the strategy, our goals and targets were formulated and supported, and constitute the underpinning of NSOI's activities.

Our targets are to retain 70% of immigrants during the 2006-2011 Census period and increase the number of immigrants choosing Nova Scotia as their home to 3,600 per year by 2010.

The 2007-2008 strategic goals of the Office of Immigration are to:

- Market Nova Scotia as an attractive immigration destination
- Increase the number of skilled worker immigrants arriving in Nova Scotia each year to help meet labour market and economic development needs that will keep our businesses globally competitive
- Help immigrants integrate into Nova Scotia society by supporting settlement and language programs that will enable them to live, work, and succeed in Nova Scotia.
- Encourage immigrants to stay in Nova Scotia by working with business, labour and other partners to address barriers to social and economic inclusion that prohibit them from finding meaningful work and making Nova Scotia their permanent home.

## **Core Business Areas**

The core business areas, which form the backbone for all NSOI activities, are attraction and recruitment, integration and retention, and leadership and policy development. The related core business functions are identified for each of these areas below.

### **Attraction and Recruitment**

This core business area is integral to meeting our goal of increased numbers of immigrants choosing to make Nova Scotia their new home. By providing information about the province, and the tools to immigrate, more people from around the world will begin to realize the benefits of living and working in all areas of Nova Scotia.

The functions of this core business area are to:

- oversee the NSNP, the province's primary immigrant attraction tool, and use it to address Nova Scotia's economic and labour force needs.
- promote and market Nova Scotia, in partnership with communities, as an attractive immigrant destination.
- align with business, industry and labour to better utilize the NSNP to meet skill shortages.

## **Integration and Retention**

This core business area focuses on helping newcomers settle successfully, find employment and create a new life in Nova Scotia, therefore, working to meet our retention goals.

The main activities to be undertaken in this area are to:

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

## **Leadership and Policy Development**

Since its inception, NSOI has met with numerous community, business and cultural organizations, providing critical information about the importance of immigration and of the province's immigration targets. This information, along with our strategy, goals and policy positions, have also been communicated to our government partners in other provinces and at the national level, to CIC.

The priorities of this core business area are to:

- develop partnerships with key stakeholders to leverage existing and new resources and create synergies that achieve our common goals within Nova Scotia.
- provide advice and support in policy, planning, research, interdepartmental coordination, and intergovernmental relations as they relate to immigration.

## **Priorities**

The following are the priorities for NSOI in 2006–2007, as they relate to each core business area. Many of the following priorities are multi-year initiatives.

### **Attraction and Recruitment**

#### **Nova Scotia Nominee Program**

***Manage the NSNP, the province's primary immigrant attraction tool, and use it to address Nova Scotia's economic and labour force needs. The major actions to be taken in 2007-2008 include:***

Negotiate a new *Canada-Nova Scotia Agreement on Provincial Nominees* with CIC, with an aim of removing the numeric limit on the nominations that can be issued each year.

Make operational an *International Graduates'* category aimed at international students, who have graduated from Nova Scotia post-secondary institutions and have related employment in the province.

Re-design the Economic stream and implement a nominee category targeting business owners and managers, who wish to create a business or invest and actively manage an existing business in Nova Scotia.

Form strategic alliances with business, industry and labour to better align NSNP recruitment efforts with labour market needs.



## Promotion and Marketing

*Promote and market Nova Scotia, in partnership with communities, as an attractive immigrant destination. This is a multi-year initiative. The major actions to be undertaken in 2006–07 include:*

Participate in immigration fairs and trade missions, which provide maximum opportunities to promote NS as an immigration destination.

Continue to enhance and upgrade the novascotiainmigration.com website to promote the benefits of living in Nova Scotia and to highlight employment, credentials, and settlement services.

Core Business Area: Attraction and Recruitment					
OUTCOME	MEASURE	DATA	TARGET 2007-2008	ULTIMATE TARGET	STRATEGIC ACTIONS
<b>Increased Number of New Immigrant Landings in NS</b>	Number of new immigrant landings	<b>Base Year: 2003</b> 2003: 1474 2004: 1770 2005: 1929 2006: 2580 (preliminary)	<b>Target: 2007</b> 3,000	<b>Ultimate Target 2010</b> 3,600	<b>Strategic Actions</b> - Participation in immigration fairs - Introduction of new NSNP streams - Better information and increased promotion of programs - Better alignment of NSNP with labour market needs
<b>Increased number of nomination certificates issued</b>	Number of certificates issued	Base Year 2004: 117 2005: 303 2006: 400	500* in 2007 calendar year * pending results of agreement negotiations	2009: 800	<b>Negotiation with CIC re new agreement</b>

## **Integration and Retention**

### **Settlement and Integration**

*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.* This is a multi-year initiative. In 2007-2008, NSOI will:

Work with the departments of Education and Health on initiatives to support the recognition of international credentials and qualifications.

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

Strategically invest in settlement and retention programs and services with a primary focus on employment integration, enhanced language and outreach programming.

Work with the Acadian community to recruit, attract and retain French-speaking immigrants.

Implement action items identified through CEO immigration forums hosted in 2006-2007, designed to address some of the barriers businesses and labour face as they relate to hiring immigrants.

### **Public Awareness**

*Raise awareness and educate the public about the importance of immigration to Nova Scotia's future.* In 2007-2008 actions planned to implement this initiative are to:

Promote the benefits of immigration and demonstrate to employers and communities how demographic and future labour market challenges may be precluded by hiring and attracting immigrants and demystify the process of recruiting immigrant skilled workers.

Promote the business mentor component of the NSNP, and recruit more qualified Nova Scotia businesses to help new economic immigrants gain Canadian work experience and develop their business networks in Nova Scotia.

Promote community involvement (focusing on the economic, social and cultural benefits and opportunities brought by immigration) by conducting presentations to municipalities, regional development authorities, and other community organizations in regions outside the Halifax Regional Municipality.

Core Business Area: Integration and Retention					
OUTCOME	MEASURE	DATA	TARGET 2007-2008	ULTIMATE TARGET	STRATEGIC ACTIONS
<b>Outcome</b> Client Interaction via Settlement Programs	<b>Measure</b> Client enrollment in SPO programs	<b>Base Year: 2005/06</b>  1,900  2006-2007 data not yet available	<b>Target: 2007/2008</b>  2,800	<b>Ultimate Target 2010-11</b> 3,600	<b>Strategic Actions</b>  - Effectively manage settlement programs - Augment CIC and other sources of settlement funding
Increased retention rate	# of immigrants staying in Nova Scotia	1996-2001 37%	data will not be available until census data is released by Statistics Canada	2011 Census: 70%	- investment in enhanced language and employment readiness programming - strategically aligning NSNP recruitment with labour market needs of the province

## **Leadership and Policy Development**

### **Leadership**

*Develop partnerships with key stakeholders to leverage existing and new resources and create synergies to achieve our common goals. Priority 2007-2008 actions to help accomplish this longer term initiative are to:*

Utilize federal-provincial and interdepartmental working committees with government partners in Nova Scotia to ensure good communication, collaboration and coordination on corporate initiatives that have cross-departmental jurisdiction.

Seek input from business, labour, immigrants and community leaders on immigration matters to shape future program and policy decisions.

Collaborate with federal and provincial governments in the Atlantic region to develop and implement an Atlantic population strategy to address population challenges facing this region.

### **Policy Development**

*Provide advice and support in policy, planning, research, interdepartmental coordination, and intergovernmental relations as they relate to immigration. Actions in 2007-2008 to accomplish this longer term initiative will be to:*

Finalize negotiations and sign a *Canada-Nova Scotia Immigration Agreement* that would develop structured consultation mechanisms and identify areas of partnership.

With CIC and our colleagues in the other Atlantic provinces, develop terms for a new settlement allocation model to ensure that immigrants in Nova Scotia have better access to services.

## Human Resource Strategy

The Office of Immigration is committed to representing the population in which it serves and this is demonstrated through the hiring process undertaken in 2005-2006. We will continue to be diligent in hiring the most qualified candidates, while valuing diversity, linguistic capacity and the benefits it brings. This also serves as an example to employers throughout the province that the Public Service is committed to hiring immigrants. 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.

Due to the size of the office, an OHS committee is not required, however, a staff member has been assigned responsibility to help coordinate the development of our occupational health and safety plan.

In support of the Corporate Human Resource strategy, in 2007-2008 the NSOI will:

### Corporate HR Plan Goals and Department Objectives:

<b>Goal #1: To make a difference through a skilled, committed, and accountable public service</b>				
<b>Department Priority</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy/Action</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Measures</b>
Implement comprehensive performance management system	Develop performance and developmental plans for all employees	Utilise performance management.  Work with each employee to develop personal and job related goals.	Staff motivated to progress and work together.	All staff have a completed performance plan and review.  Personal and organizational goals are met.

<b>Goal #4: To be a diverse workforce</b>				
<b>Department Priority</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy/Action</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Measures</b>
Access French-language training for staff	Improve the French-language abilities of employees	Allow employees to enrol in French-language training and provide the time during the work day to attend classes	French-language ability for all staff members interested in developing capacity in this area.	Services provided to the public are responsive to needs in both official languages
Diversity training for all new staff	An office with strong cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity to newcomers	Ensure that all new staff enroll in, or have taken, mandatory diversity training	Team that recognizes the benefits of diversity and treats all people equally	All staff have this training
Maintain or grow existing diversity composition of staff	Ensure that NSOI represents the clients it serves	Hire the most qualified candidates and encourage eligible former immigrants to apply for vacant positions	A stronger, multicultural, multilingual office that recognizes the benefits of diversity	Office composition data

<b>Goal #5: To be a learning organization</b>				
<b>Department Priority</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy/Action</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Measures</b>
Implement plan for staff training	Employees have access to training opportunities to improve their skills	Employees to self identify through performance management, gaps in skills that they would like to address	Staff who are engaged in their employment growth and are engaged in self-directed career path management	Staff know about, and take advantage of, training opportunities, and are able to take courses without worrying about work load
Team Development Plan	To work together as a strong team where all perspectives are valued	Hold a staff retreat and team building sessions	Staff who are engaged in the development and growth of the Office of Immigration	Staff who are enthusiastic about the work we do and continue to provide input in to initiatives

## Budget Context

<b>OFFICE OF IMMIGRATION</b>			
	2006-2007	2006-2007	2007-2008
	(\$ thousands)		
	Estimate	Forecast	Estimate
Gross Expenses	\$3,290	\$3,212	\$3,728
Operating Costs	667.1	372	650.6
Grants and Contributions	1798.6	1,840*	1,792.6
Salaries and Employee Benefits	825.3	1001	1,279.8
<b>Net Expenses</b>	<b>\$3,290</b>	<b>\$3,213.5</b>	<b>\$3,728</b>
Funded Staff (FTE's)	13	13.64**	18

### Notes:

\* The NSOI was able to spend more in grants and contributions due to savings in operating costs.

\*\* The additional staff in 2006-2007 can be accounted for as follows:

- In June 2006, 2 staff members were added to the Minister's office
- In October 2006, a Financial Manager was hired to manage the NSNP Trust Fund account