

# **Office of Immigration**

**Business Plan**

**2008-2009**

**April 29, 2008**

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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.

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 2008-2009 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.

On September 19, 2007, the first *Agreement on Canada-Nova Scotia Co-operation on Immigration* was signed between Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and the Office of Immigration. This Agreement contained a renegotiated Provincial Nominee Annex which has eliminated the federal numeric level on the nomination certificates we are allowed to issue. This will allow the province to continue to meet the growing need for skilled workers and entrepreneurs.

In 2008, a new Nominee Program stream aimed at attracting Entrepreneurs will be introduced. This Entrepreneur stream will be marketed to immigrants who wish to come to Nova Scotia and start their own or purchase an existing business. This new option will be attractive to immigrants who have operated their own businesses in the past and wish to continue this type of enterprise.

For the fourth consecutive year, the Province will continue to provide funding to settlement service providers, to ensure that newcomers have access to the necessary supports to help them settle, integrate and contribute to Nova Scotia. A focus on developing outreach settlement services will help ensure that newcomers settling in rural areas will have access to these necessary services.

The Office of Immigration, in 2008, will continue to work with the Department of Education and other stakeholders to ensure fair access to professions for those internationally trained and educated.

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.

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.

original signed by  
Honourable Len Goucher  
Minister of Immigration

original signed by  
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 New Nova Scotia)

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 who 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 can help Nova Scotia create the economic climate necessary to secure it’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>- negotiate Temporary Foreign Worker Agreement with CIC</i> <i>- add Entrepreneur category to Nominee Program to attract new business investment to the province</i> <i>- partner with employers to identify labour shortages and attend immigration fairs to recruit internationally trained skilled workers to immigrate to Nova Scotia</i> <i>- work with stakeholders to help address recognition of international credentials issues</i> <i>- fund enhanced language and employment focussed 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  <i>- capitalize on international contacts that immigrants have to expand trade in new markets</i>	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 immigrants</i> <i>- promote the value of cultural diversity</i>

## Planning Context

An aging and slow-growing population 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 Nova Scotia, to help grow our population, expand our global connections and grow our economy.

Between 2004 and 2006 the number of new immigrants arriving annually in Nova Scotia increased from 1,770 to 2,585. The Nova Scotia Nominee Program (NSNP) has made significant contribution to this increase, as more than 850 permanent residents (including family members) arriving in Nova Scotia in 2006 were selected through the NSNP.

Preliminary landing numbers from Citizenship and Immigration Canada show a slight 2.4% decrease in total landings, from 2,585 in 2006 to 2,523 in 2007.

In 2007-2008 the Office of Immigration undertook a number of improvements to the Nova Scotia Nominee Program to increase our ability to attract and retain skilled immigrants who will make vital contributions to Nova Scotian society.

For instance, during the past fiscal year, we introduced the residency refund option, a second post-landing option for economic nominees.

In 2008-2009 the Office of Immigration will continue to build on past progress and work with the Auditor General to implement appropriate improvements to the operations of the Nova Scotia nominee program.

We will continue to improve our nominee program by implementing and making operational an *Entrepreneur* stream for the Nova Scotia Nominee Program, aimed at people who wish to operate a business in Nova Scotia.

Following consultations, it is expected that the entrepreneur stream will be launched in the spring. Given that all applications under the economic category have been processed, and that there will be a time lag in reviewing applications for the new entrepreneur stream, it is anticipated that there may be a reduction in the number of landings in the coming year.

The Office of Immigration will 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 and attempt to resolve potential barriers to immigrant recruitment.

Attracting immigrants to our province by identifying opportunities and welcoming communities is critical if we are to ensure that Nova Scotia can continue to grow and thrive.

## **Strategic Goals**

The Nova Scotia Immigration Strategy provides the guiding policy to the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration, and will guide us for the next two years with each year building upon the success of the previous. By consulting 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 2008-2009 strategic goals of the Office of Immigration are to:

- Launch Entrepreneur stream to attract experienced business men and women who wish to invest in and operate a business in Nova Scotia.
- 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 Scotian 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 prevent them from finding meaningful work and making Nova Scotia their permanent home.
- Develop on-line content on Office of Immigration website to provide in-depth information to potential immigrants and newcomers on the application and settlement process.
- Work with Acadian and Francophone communities to increase immigration of French-speaking individuals.

## **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:

- manage the nominee program, the province's primary immigrant attraction tool, and use it to help 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 nominee program 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 Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC).

The priorities of this core business area are to:

- develop partnerships with key stakeholders to leverage existing and new resources, to 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 2008–2009, 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 2008-2009 include:*



Launch Entrepreneur stream of the Nominee Program, to attract experienced business owners and managers who wish to establish a new business or invest in and actively manage in an existing business in Nova Scotia.

Form strategic alliances with business, industry, labour and ethno-cultural organizations to better align recruitment efforts of the nominee program with labour market needs, with a specific focus on the employer driven streams of the nominee program.

Better attract French-speaking immigrants to Nova Scotia in partnership with Acadian and Francophone organizations and employers.

### **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 2008–2009 include:***

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.

Develop an international marketing strategy to promote Nova Scotia and the Nominee Program, especially the entrepreneur category to potential immigrants abroad.

Participate in immigration fairs and trade missions, which provide maximum opportunities to promote NS as an immigration destination. This will include participation in Francophone Immigration Recruitment Fairs.

Promote the benefits of living in Nova Scotia and to provide information on employment, credential recognition, and settlement services through enhancements to the [novascotiaimmigration.com](http://novascotiaimmigration.com) website.

Undertake strategic recruitment efforts in partnership with Atlantic Provinces and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, under the auspices of the Council of Atlantic Premiers.

Provide more information to potential immigrants so that they better understand the benefits of living in Nova Scotia and have be prepared for what to expect upon landing in the province.

<b>Core Business Area: Attraction and Recruitment</b>					
<b>OUTCOME</b>	<b>MEASURE</b>	<b>DATA</b>	<b>TARGET 2008-2009</b>	<b>ULTIMATE TARGET</b>	<b>STRATEGIC ACTIONS</b>
<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: 2585  2007: 2523	<b>Target: 2008</b>  2,600*	<b>Ultimate Target 2010</b>  3,600	<b>Strategic Actions</b>  - Participation in immigration fairs - Introduction of new NSNP streams - Better on-line 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 2007: 408	2008 - 500	2009: 800	

\* with the closure of the Economic category it is anticipated that a slight drop in intake will occur

## 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 2008-2009, NSOI will:*

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

Expand availability of settlement services in rural areas of Nova Scotia, so that the benefits of immigration are equally distributed throughout the province.

Develop legislation to address fair access to regulated professions in partnership with related government departments and other stakeholders.

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

Support welcoming communities initiatives within French-speaking regions of the province.

Support immigrant entrepreneurs by exploring how small business loan programs at financial institutions can better serve their needs.

### **Public Awareness**

*Raise awareness and educate the public about the importance of immigration to Nova Scotia's future. In 2008-2009 actions planned to implement this initiative are to:*

Promote the social, cultural and economic benefits of immigration through the development and implementation of an intensive awareness campaign aimed at both communities and the general public, and employers.

Demonstrate to employers and communities how hiring and attracting immigrants can assist in meeting workforce and economic challenges.

Core Business Area: Integration and Retention					
OUTCOME	MEASURE	DATA	TARGET 2008-2009	ULTIMATE TARGET	STRATEGIC ACTIONS
<b>Outcome</b> Client Interaction via Settlement Programs	<b>Measure</b> Client participation in funded programs	<b>Base Year:</b> <b>2005/06:</b> 2,992*  <b>2006/07:</b> 5,387*  2007 : data not available yet.	<b>Target:</b> <b>2008/2009</b> 5,500	<b>Ultimate Target 2010-11</b> 6,500	<b>Strategic Actions</b>  - Effectively manage funding to settlement service providing organizations - Augment CIC and other sources of settlement funding
Increased retention rate	# of immigrants staying in Nova Scotia	1996-2001 37%  Atlantic Metropolis economic domain study shows that between 2001 and 2006 Nova Scotia had a retention rate of approximately 63%.	Not applicable as target is based on Census data.	2011 Census: 70%	- investment in enhanced language and employment readiness programming - strategically aligning NSNP recruitment with labour market needs of the province - Work with stakeholders to address credential recognition issues

\* number of client interactions as reported by settlement service providers.

## **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 2008-2009 actions to help accomplish this longer term initiative are to:*

Establish a Minister's Immigration Advisory Council to provide strategic advice to the Minister of Immigration on immigration related policies and programs in Nova Scotia.

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.

Continue to 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.

Strategically partner with stakeholders to improve services to immigrant entrepreneurs in Nova Scotia.

### **Policy Development**

*Provide advice and support in policy, planning, research, interdepartmental coordination, and intergovernmental relations as they relate to immigration. Actions in 2008-2009 to accomplish this longer term initiative will be to:*

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.

Conduct detailed data and demographic analysis of Nova Scotia's provincial nominees and of all immigrants coming to the province.

## 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 2007-2008. 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 Nova Scotia 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 2008-2009 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	Utilize performance management.  Work with each employee to develop personal and job related goals.	Staff motivated to work together and achieve outcomes.	All staff have a completed performance plan and review.  Personal and organizational goals are met.

<b>Goal #4: To be a diverse workforce</b>				
Department Priority	Objective	Strategy/Action	Outcomes	Measures
Offer French language services to clients	An office that is able to serve clients in English and French.	To hire and designate a French speaking nominee officer position	A nominee officer who is able to serve French-speaking clients	Services available in French
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 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>				
Department Priority	Objective	Strategy/Action	Outcomes	Measures
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
Access French-language training for staff	Improve the French-language abilities of employees	Encourage employees to enrol in French- language training and provide the time during the work day to attend classes	French-language ability for staff members interested in developing capacity in this area.	Services provided to the public are responsive to needs in both official languages
Code of Conduct training for staff	Ensure that employees understand provincial code of conduct policies	Distribute code of conduct to staff, and hold training and discussion session	Staff who are knowledgeable of code of conduct policies	

## Budget Context

<b>OFFICE OF IMMIGRATION</b>			
	<b>2007-2008 Estimate</b>	<b>2007-2008 Forecast</b>	<b>2008-2009 Estimate</b>
Program and Service Area	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)
<b>Total Program Expenses:</b>			
Office of Immigration	\$3,728	\$3,652	\$4,998
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>	<b>\$3,728</b>	<b>\$3,652</b>	<b>\$4,998</b>
Provincial Funded Staff (FTE's)	18.0	16.4	22.0