



# Nova Scotia Francophone Immigration Action Plan

2019-2021

*Nova Scotia Office  
of Immigration  
and  
Nova Scotia Office  
of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie*

*March 2019*

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# Message from the Minister

Nova Scotia has identified immigration as crucial to addressing our declining and aging population, revitalizing our communities, helping employers fill persistent labour gaps as well as growing our economy.

As Minister of Immigration as well as Acadian Affairs and Francophonie, I see the importance of francophone immigration in furthering the mandate and mission of both portfolios.

The Nova Scotia Office of Immigration (NSOI) strives to attract, integrate, and retain immigrants to the province by taking a lead role in engaging with partners to ensure Nova Scotia is well-positioned for growth.

The Nova Scotia Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie (OAAF) focuses on building relationships between government and the community to strengthen the Acadian and francophone communities in the province.

Francophone immigration plays an important role in supporting francophone and Acadian communities as well as increasing the number of immigrants to the province to address provincial labour market and economic needs.

The time is right for an Action Plan to enhance the efforts and explore new opportunities for francophone immigration.

The Nova Scotia Francophone Immigration Action Plan is a partnership between NSOI and OAAF and outlines the strategic direction for furthering francophone immigration. The Action Plan builds on existing work and identifies new opportunities. The Plan includes directed efforts on:

- ▶ Stakeholder Engagement
- ▶ Marketing
- ▶ Attraction
- ▶ Retention and Integration
- ▶ Research and Measuring Progress

NSOI will leverage our work with employers and other stakeholders to help attract and retain French-speaking and bilingual candidates that meet labour needs in the province.

I look forward to working closely with francophone community partners, employers, and settlement organizations, including Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse, Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse and Université Sainte-Anne, to build and strengthen francophone immigration in Nova Scotia.



Lena Metlege Diab, QC  
*Minister of Immigration*

# Background

## The Numbers

The proportion of Nova Scotia's population indicating that French is their mother tongue has remained between 3% and 4%. In 2016, Statistics Canada reported that 3.2% of Nova Scotia's population indicated that French was their mother tongue<sup>1</sup>.

Nationally, the percentage of francophones outside of Quebec has been declining and the decline is projected to continue. In 2016, 3.8% of the population outside of Quebec were French-speaking<sup>2</sup>. Statistics Canada projects that by 2036 this figure will decline to 2.7%<sup>3</sup>.

Nova Scotia welcomed more immigrants in 2018 than any previous year.

A total of 5,970 new permanent residents came to Nova Scotia, exceeding the 2016 record year high of 5,485. More than 65% of the total permanent resident landings were approved through provincial economic programs and the Atlantic Immigration Pilot.

A small proportion of immigrants coming to Nova Scotia, just over 300 in the five years from 2013 to 2017, are French-speaking.

**Federal Context** The Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) ministers and the federal government have recently announced plans that include a focus on francophone immigration.

On March 2, 2018, FPT ministers of Immigration and the Canadian Francophonie launched the FPT Action Plan for Increasing Francophone

Immigration Outside of Quebec. The plan includes ten collaborative actions to implement the following three strategies:

1. Championing francophone immigration
2. Collaborating on employment, accessible services and inclusive communities
3. Reporting on progress

The federal government's Investing in our Future Action Plan for Official Languages 2018-23 contains a commitment to increase the proportion of French-speaking immigrants outside of Quebec to 4.4% of all immigrants by 2023. The Action Plan includes increasing investments by \$40.8 million over five years to support francophone immigration. The plan includes the following:

- ▶ IRCC Francophone Immigration Strategy
- ▶ Francophone Immigration Policy Hub
- ▶ Increased availability and reduced cost of French language tests required for economic immigration
- ▶ Increased availability and accessibility of official language training adapted to the needs of French-speaking immigrants
- ▶ Consolidated Francophone Integration Pathway to support the retention and integration of French-speaking immigrants and build capacity in the francophone settlement sector
- ▶ A new Welcoming Francophone Communities Initiative

As well, over the past few years the federal government has introduced changes to immigration programming to support francophone immigration. Changes to Express Entry allow applicants more points for strong proficiency in French. The Mobilité Francophone program helps employers outside of Quebec hire French-speaking temporary workers. Also, the federal government supports francophone immigration recruitment marketing events like Destination Canada and Mobility Days.

## **Nova Scotia**

In Nova Scotia's French-language Services Act, the Province commits to the development and enhancement of its Acadian and francophone community and to maintaining the French language for future generations, contributing to the enhancement of life in Nova Scotia. Francophone immigration is part of supporting Nova Scotia's francophone communities.

Currently, NSOI and OAAF support francophone immigration and retention in many ways including:

- ▶ NSOI provides funding support to three provincial organizations: Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse (FANE), Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse (CDENE), and Université Sainte-Anne to deliver immigration settlement services to French-speaking immigrants.
- ▶ OAAF also financially supports CDENE and FANE.
- ▶ NSOI participates on provincial and Atlantic committees for francophone immigration to coordinate immigration efforts and share information.
- ▶ NSOI and OAAF partner on international recruitment in French-speaking countries. NSOI also participates in recruitment and attraction events for francophone immigration within Nova Scotia.
- ▶ Three positions within NSOI are designated bilingual, including one stakeholder liaison officer and two program officers.

# Opportunities and Challenges

The opportunities available in advancing a new approach for francophone immigration include the following:

- ▶ Highlighting to employers the benefits of bilingual employees and the ability to offer services in French and English
- ▶ Maximizing immigration programming, including the NSNP Labour Market Priorities Stream, to strategically select French-speaking candidates who have a desire to live in Nova Scotia
- ▶ Maximizing use of employer-driven immigration programming (specifically the Atlantic Immigration Pilot and NSNP Skilled Worker Stream) to assist employers and francophone community partners address labour and economic needs
- ▶ Explore federal funding opportunities including:
  - ▶ Action Plan for Official Languages 2018-2023: Investing in Our Future that has increased investments by \$40.8 million over five years to support a consolidated francophone integration pathway and coordinated francophone immigration policies and programs
  - ▶ Agreement for Cooperation and Exchange Between the Government of Quebec and the Government of Nova Scotia with Respect to the Francophonie that offers matching funding for French-language exchanges and cooperative activities between community organizations in Nova Scotia and Québec
  - ▶ Canada-Nova Scotia French Language Services Agreement that includes funding opportunities for Departments and other designated public institutions to help Nova Scotia develop and deliver French-language services

Advancing this Action Plan must be pursued in the context of the existing immigration environment, both federally and provincially. Challenges may include:

- ▶ Distinct federal and provincial responsibilities for immigration in Canada
- ▶ Resources, both human and financial, needed to implement the activities identified in the plan
- ▶ Competing priorities between francophone immigration efforts and other immigration efforts
- ▶ Francophone community organizations receiving funding from a number of sources and being funded to fulfill specific mandates that may not directly support this action plan

# Stakeholder Engagement

**OBJECTIVE:** To engage and communicate with francophone immigration stakeholders and partners.

**ACTIONS:**

1. Engage and communicate with employers to increase their participation in the recruitment of francophone immigrants. This will include:

- ▶ Regular communications and outreach to employers in both French and English on labour market business opportunities, successes, and challenges
- ▶ Identifying new opportunities where NSOI and OAAF can increase employer awareness and use of immigration programming
- ▶ Identifying barriers for employers to participate in francophone immigration recruitment

2. Work with stakeholders and settlement service provider organizations to maximize existing immigration programs and streams to support francophone immigration, including:

- ▶ Targeted selection through the Labour Market Priorities Stream
- ▶ French-speaking skilled workers under Mobilité Francophone
- ▶ Provincial immigration pathways, including the Nova Scotia Nominee Program and the Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program

3. Examine ways to increase engagement with francophone settlement service provider organizations, including CDENE, FANE, and Université Sainte-Anne, such as participating in Annual General Meetings, strategic planning meetings, consultations, and regular committee meetings.

4. NSOI and OAAF to routinely engage and communicate with provincial francophone organizations to build collaboration and support for francophone immigration more broadly.

5. NSOI to ensure continued engagement with provincial, Atlantic, and national stakeholders and partners, including:

- ▶ Provincial stakeholder committee: Réseau en immigration francophone
- ▶ Atlantic stakeholder committee: Comité atlantique sur l'immigration francophone
- ▶ Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada

6. Continue to work with Nova Scotia universities and the Nova Scotia Community College, to increase understanding of immigration pathways for international students who want to stay in the province after graduation and to identify new opportunities for French-speaking student engagement.

# Marketing

**OBJECTIVE:** To have current and relevant promotional materials and communications plans that promote and increase awareness of opportunities for prospective French-speaking applicants to immigrate to Nova Scotia.

**ACTIONS:**

1. Increase awareness of Nova Scotia through the development and distribution of marketing materials under the new “Room” brand:

- ▶ Develop marketing tools (print, web, video, imagery) to increase awareness and use of immigration programs and services
- ▶ Review and update NSOI website to incorporate relevant content for francophone immigrants
- ▶ Develop success stories and testimonials on francophone immigration including stories related to businesses who have hired French-speaking immigrants and francophones who have settled in Nova Scotia
- ▶ Promote Nova Scotia and employment opportunities through targeted advertising and social media campaigns

2. Develop a communications plan for promoting francophone immigration:

- ▶ Communicating the importance of francophone immigration on key dates such as Francophone Immigration Week (November) and Reflection Day on Francophone Immigration (March)
- ▶ Making use of existing vehicles for promoting francophone immigration such as NSOI and OAAF social media and Vivre en Acadie webpage and social media
- ▶ Key messages on life in Nova Scotia and the benefits of hiring immigrants
- ▶ Key messages on Francophonie in Nova Scotia and opportunities for francophones to settle in Nova Scotia
- ▶ Process for translation of necessary communications related to this action plan

# Attraction

**OBJECTIVE:** To attract francophone foreign nationals to immigrate and settle permanently in Nova Scotia.

**ACTIONS:**

1. Continue to participate in international recruitment efforts for francophone immigrants including:

- ▶ Destination Canada (organized by Embassy of Canada in France)
- ▶ Destination Acadie
- ▶ Semaine canadienne / Canadian Week (organized by Embassy of Canada in France)
- ▶ International webinar presentations (organized by Embassy of Canada in France)
- ▶ Virtual Job Fair (organized by RDÉE Canada and coordinated provincially by CDENE)
- ▶ Explore new opportunities in partnership with community stakeholders and employers
- ▶ Work closely with other levels of government on francophone attraction

2. Ensure continued participation in recruitment efforts and explore new opportunities for recruitment of francophone immigrants, including:

- ▶ Campus outreach presentations, including to Université Sainte-Anne campuses (organized by NSOI and IRCC)
- ▶ Presentation(s) to Temporary Foreign Workers / work permit holders currently in Nova Scotia (organized by Nova Scotia’s settlement service provider organizations)
- ▶ Promote Nova Scotia’s immigration programs at Canadian institutions with large francophone international student populations

## Retention and Integration

**OBJECTIVE:** To support the retention and integration of French-speaking immigrants in Nova Scotia through access to services and programming.

**ACTIONS:**

1. In partnership with settlement service provider organizations and other government departments, explore ways to strengthen services for French-speaking immigrants.
  - ▶ Meet with francophone settlement service provider organizations to better understand the strengths and opportunities related to settlement services for francophone immigrants
  - ▶ Work with provincial and federal government departments to identify programming needs and priorities including services for international students and graduates and programs for school-aged children
  - ▶ Identify barriers to access and awareness of settlement services for French-speaking immigrants to support social integration and community connections
2. Explore funding options and other resources for initiatives targeted to French-speaking immigrants including:
  - ▶ Federal Action Plan for Official Languages that includes increasing availability and accessibility of official language training for French-speaking immigrants, a consolidated francophone integration pathway, as well as a new Welcoming Francophone Communities Initiative
  - ▶ Opportunities for partnering with Atlantic provinces through the Atlantic Workforce Partnership's Atlantic Attraction and Immigration Table (AAIT)
  - ▶ Existing agreements like the Canada-Nova Scotia Agreement on French-language Services and the Agreement for Cooperation and Exchange Between the Government of Quebec and the Government of Nova Scotia with Respect to the Francophonie

## Research and Measuring Progress

**OBJECTIVE:** To track and measure progress on francophone immigration in Nova Scotia including the number of francophone immigrants coming to Nova Scotia, their labour market outcomes, settlement and retention.

**ACTIONS:**

1. Develop performance indicators and track progress, including:
  - ▶ Immigrants to Nova Scotia who identify as French-speaking
  - ▶ Employment rate and source of income of French-speaking immigrants
  - ▶ Settlement patterns and retention of French-speaking immigrants
  - ▶ Retention of francophone international students
  - ▶ Employers engaged in NSOI programs and services who are hiring French-speaking foreign nationals
2. NSOI will work with partners within government and in the community to better understand the labour market needs of francophone communities in Nova Scotia and the need for French-speaking labour across the province.
3. Research best practices in francophone immigration programming to inform NSOI programming options.
4. NSOI and OAAF will meet with key stakeholders, CDENE, FANE, and Université Sainte-Anne, annually and as needed to review the progress of the Francophone Immigration Action Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Nova Scotia Department of Finance [https://novascotia.ca/finance/statistics/archive\\_news.asp?id=13089&dg=&df=&dto=0&dti=3](https://novascotia.ca/finance/statistics/archive_news.asp?id=13089&dg=&df=&dto=0&dti=3)

<sup>2</sup> Statistics Canada. English French and Official Language Minorities in Canada. August 2017. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/as-sa/98-200-x/2016011/98-200-x2016011-eng.cfm>

<sup>3</sup> Investing in Our Future 2018-2023 Action Plan for Official Languages; Federal Government, 2018

