

**Connect • Accept • Recognize • Empower**

**The Integration of Immigrants into the  
Newfoundland and Labrador  
Workforce**

**Final Report**

**Prepared by  
Association for New Canadians  
Newfoundland and Labrador**

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Primary Researchers  
Heidi Coombs-Thorne  
Mark Warren

April 2007



The Association For New Canadians

The Association for New Canadians  
Newfoundland and Labrador

P.O. Box 2031, Stn. C  
144 Military Rd.  
St. John's, NL  
A1C 5R6  
Tel: (709) 579-1780  
Web Site: [www.anc-nf.cc](http://www.anc-nf.cc)



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## List of Acronyms

ACAS	Academic Credential Assessment Service
AECENL	Association of Early Childhood Educators of Newfoundland and Labrador
ANC	Association for New Canadians
APL	Assessment of Prior Learning (Ireland)
APT	Access to Professions and Trades
CAOT	Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists
CAPL	Centre for Assessment of Prior Learning (New Zealand)
CAPLA	Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment
CCNI	Coordinating Committee on Newcomer Integration
CIC	Citizenship and Immigration Canada
CNA	College of the North Atlantic
CMTNL	College of Massage Therapists of Newfoundland and Labrador
CPSNL	College of Physicians and Surgeons of Newfoundland and Labrador
CSAT	Clinical Skills and Assessment and Training Program
ESL	English as a Second Language
FAS	Foras Aiseanna Saothair (Training and Employment Authority, Ireland)
FCR	Foreign Credential Recognition
HNL	Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador
HRSDC	Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
IMG	International Medical Graduates
MUN	Memorial University of Newfoundland
MPNP	Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program
NCSD	Nova Central School District
NEB	National Energy Board
NLCP	Newfoundland and Labrador College of Physiotherapists
NLDB	Newfoundland and Labrador Denturist Board
NLOTB	Newfoundland and Labrador Occupational Therapy Board
NSCC	Nova Scotia Community College
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPS	Ontario Public Service
PEGNL	Professional Engineers & Geoscientists Newfoundland and Labrador
PLAR	Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition
PNP	Provincial Nominee Program
REDBs	Regional Economic Development Boards
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SINP	Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TRIEC	Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council
WMRH	Western Memorial Regional Hospital
WSB	Western School Board - Newfoundland

## Executive Summary

With increased labour shortages in a number of employment sectors, the issue of immigrant retention and integration into the Newfoundland and Labrador labour market has gained increased significance. The province has a steady stream of immigrants arriving every year and the number of international students, in particular, has almost doubled since 1999. Still, the province is often unable to fully benefit from the resources of internationally trained individuals because of barriers to labour market integration.

In an attempt to address some of the barriers to greater immigrant employment across the country, on 25 April 2005 the Government of Canada launched the *Internationally Trained Workers Initiative*, an integrated, comprehensive strategy in which over fourteen (14) federal departments work together to address employment barriers for internationally trained workers.<sup>i</sup> One of the key components of the initiative is the *Foreign Credential Recognition (FCR)* program, aimed at facilitating the assessment and recognition of foreign qualifications for both regulated and non-regulated occupations.<sup>ii</sup> This study is a part of the FCR program, albeit with a somewhat larger scope that encompasses a variety of issues surrounding the integration of immigrants into the Newfoundland and Labrador labour market. The study also builds on the new provincial immigration strategy, *Diversity – Opportunity and Growth: An Immigration Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador*, by providing suggestions and recommendations for higher retention numbers and better workforce integration of immigrants.

FCR is a set of procedures which help verify that the education and job experience obtained in another country are equal to the standards established for domestically educated and employed workers. These procedures are necessary for employment in regulated trades and professions, and even in some informal employment areas. However, these procedures can be challenging, complex and time-consuming, especially for people whose first language is not English and who are not familiar with the Canadian employment culture. One of the main purposes of this study is to contribute to easier and more efficient assessment of internationally acquired education and work experience.

The objectives of the study are to:

- Identify the main barriers to employment encountered by immigrants in Newfoundland and Labrador;
- Identify the barriers employers see limiting greater integration of immigrants into the Newfoundland and Labrador work force;
- Identify potential incentives for better integration of immigrants into the local work force.

There has been extensive research conducted on FCR and the lack of efficient and meaningful integration of immigrants into the Canadian work force. This research has been thoroughly utilized for the purposes of informing this study. The academic community recognizes the existence of barriers to employment when it comes to new Canadians, and it identifies four main theories to understanding the labour market integration of recent immigrants to Canada: Human Capital theory, Cultural Capital theory, Institutional theory and Systemic Discrimination theory. This report is based mostly on the Institutional Theory, which essentially blames systemic factors, such as institutionally required skills, qualifications and experiences of receptor countries for difficulties in integrating. The study also takes into consideration elements of Cultural Capital, in that many local immigrants do not have established social or professional networks to help them find a job in their field. Systemic Discrimination is a more academic approach and perhaps more difficult to identify by host societies, and requires much more in-depth analysis than we have provided in this report.

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<sup>i</sup> Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), “Government of Canada Announces Internationally Trained Workers Initiative,” <http://www.cic.gc.ca/ENGLISH/press/05/0513-e.html>, accessed on 25 April 2007.

<sup>ii</sup> Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), “Foreign Credential Recognition,” <http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/cs/comm/hrsd/news/2005/050425bb.shtml>, accessed on 25 April 2007.

The quantitative and qualitative research is based on the experiences of local employers and all classes of immigrants, including international students throughout the province. The project team reviewed the relevant statistics; conducted two major surveys with local employers and immigrants focusing on employment barriers and incentives for hiring immigrants; and conducted interviews and focus groups with immigrants, international students, and key informants from government, educational institutions, community, businesses, and regulatory and non-regulatory bodies.

The study argues that the barriers to employment integration, including, but not limited to, the non-recognition of foreign credentials, must be eliminated in both formal and informal contexts so that immigrants and employers can come together in a way that helps immigrants use their skills and abilities and also helps employers meet their employment needs.

## **Key Findings**

As a result of both quantitative analysis of survey data and qualitative analysis of material collected through interviews and focus groups, this study reveals the barriers to employment that are most commonly encountered by employers and immigrants in our province. This study also discovers that there are various incentives local employers are willing to implement to encourage the hiring of internationally trained workers.

- According to both qualitative data and quantitative results of the immigrant survey, the non-recognition of the foreign credentials is the most significant and most commonly encountered barrier to workplace integration in Newfoundland and Labrador. Economic conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador is the second most significant employment barrier for immigrants. Sufficient knowledge of English language, which includes occupation-specific language skills, did not rate high as an employment barrier for immigrants; however, as the employer survey shows, language skills are a great concern for local employers. Other important employment barriers for immigrants include: Canadian workplace practices; Canadian work experience and lack of mentoring, internships and apprenticeships; information for employers; information for immigrants before arrival; access to labour market information, retraining costs and financial requirements; cultural differences; supportive community; service external to the workforce; current living conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador; family; and racism/discrimination.
- In contrast to the results of the immigrant survey, employers rated English language as the most significant barrier to immigrant employment. However, language as a barrier is both actual and perceived for both immigrants and employers, and the challenge lies in identifying what form the barrier takes in individual situations. Employers also consider economic conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador a barrier to successful and meaningful employment of immigrants. The non-recognition of foreign credentials, which is the most significant barrier from the immigrants' perspective, is ranked third by employers as a barrier to employment. Employers are not usually involved in foreign credential assessment procedures, so the fact that they recognize FCR as a barrier is a significant finding of this study.
- Results of the qualitative analysis demonstrate that key stakeholders are unanimous in recognizing the necessity of incentives to help raise employment levels for immigrants and to improve the conditions of immigrant employment. Encouraging the employment of highly qualified and trained individuals through the strategic implementation of incentives is a joint responsibility and, if successful, will also benefit the entire community. The incentives that are considered the most beneficial to employers, and to immigrants, are: occupation-specific language training, skills matching database, sponsored internships or mentoring programs, occupations information prior to arrival, creation of an Atlantic assessment centre, wage-subsidy, assistance of regulatory bodies with FCR, and advertising campaigns.

Most of these incentives would contribute directly to the removal of the above-mentioned barriers and they would follow similar and already established programs across the country.

The report provides recommendations to improve the integration of internationally trained individuals into the local work force, specifically focusing on breaking down the barriers to the recognition of internationally acquired education and work experience. Removing these barriers could lead to meaningful employment and contribute to the economic development of the province.

In particular, the report recommends that:

- Government, regulatory and non-regulatory bodies, educational institutions, service providers, community and employers need to work together to assist immigrants in making their transition to the new society successful. The provincial government immigration strategy, *Diversity – Opportunity and Growth: An Immigration Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador* provides excellent groundwork for the further development of programs and initiatives regarding successful integration of immigrants in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Considering that both immigrants and employers find economic conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador a major employment barrier, the strategic matching process of immigrant skills and competencies with local labour market demands should be encouraged and intensified prior to arrival to Canada. Labour market trends are usually widely forecasted, and so the needs for specific professions and occupations could be determined and clearly demonstrated in advance. This would contribute to better matching of internationally trained and educated workers to the jobs that are available, and it would remove the perception of unfavourable economic conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador. This particular initiative would require close collaboration of businesses, municipalities and rural communities, and the provincial government, especially the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment (HRLE) and the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development (ITRD). The government of Newfoundland and Labrador has already taken a step forward in optimizing the effectiveness of the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) through the newly created Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism.
- Occupation-specific language training would increase a candidate's chance of success in the workforce.
- Host societies could be more active in assisting immigrants find and understand the correct information about the labour market and professional requirements.
- Settling in Newfoundland and Labrador is about building a lifestyle rather than just making money. Immigrants need assistance with finding the right information about employment opportunities and developing positive attitudes about building that lifestyle.
- All the relevant players must work to build a stronger alignment between what happens nationally, regionally and provincially on matters relating to Foreign Credential Recognition, to improve and expedite immigrant labour market integration across the country.





# 1.0 Introduction

Every year, Newfoundland and Labrador welcomes some of the most educated and qualified immigrants in Canada, but their skills remain an underutilized resource in this province. The barriers to workplace integration and the low employment outcomes of immigrants have been explored by numerous academics and policy-makers in both a Canadian and an international context. This study has been informed by that literature and explores the barriers that immigrants face in Newfoundland and Labrador as they attempt to enter the job-market. In addition, this report builds on two previous studies (from 2005) that highlight employment-related issues among immigrants in this province: *A Survey of Attitudes of Employers in Newfoundland and Labrador Toward the Recruitment and Employment of New Canadians and Immigrant Workers* by Wade Locke and Scott Lynch and *Retention and Integration of Immigrants in Newfoundland and Labrador – Are We Ready?* by Goss Gilroy consultants.

*A Survey of Attitudes* assesses the receptiveness of local business towards hiring immigrant employees. Locke and Lynch suggest that there is little contact between recent immigrants who are looking for employment and the local firms who may need the skills and experiences that immigrants have to offer. This disconnect is complicated by the fact that employers do not perceive a labour cost advantage to hiring immigrant employees. Furthermore, there are perceived disincentives with hiring immigrants because a majority of employers believe that immigrant employees would only stay in the local labour market for a short period of time before transferring to a larger urban centre in Canada. However, almost three-quarters of employer respondents agree that a multicultural workforce enhances creativity in the workplace and improves global exporting opportunities. Local employers would hire immigrant employees if there were incentives in place.<sup>1</sup>

*Retention and Integration* compliments the findings of Locke and Lynch but focuses more on the immigrant rather than the employer perspective. Gilroy identifies four areas in which immigrants face barriers to successful integration and retention in Newfoundland and Labrador: 1) orientation and matching before immigrating, 2) lack of access to work, 3) support services, and 4) social inclusion. Our current study explores the Gilroy four categories of barriers in more detail and in relation to the receptiveness of local employers to hiring immigrant employees. While this study focuses on the employment barriers that immigrants face as they integrate into the local workforce (the Gilroy “lack of access to work” category), barriers to integration cannot be understood in isolation. In fact, social, professional and cultural barriers often intersect on a daily basis for immigrants who are trying to establish themselves in their new home. As a result, this report considers all barriers that may impact an individual’s access to, and opportunity for, successful integration into the local workforce of this province.

*Retention and Integration* concludes that “[t]he greatest challenge in Newfoundland and Labrador is the reality of our labour market – many immigrants do not have access to the work they desire.”<sup>2</sup> However, this statement simplifies the complicated process of integration and retention in this province. It implies a fatalist attitude towards the provincial economy and blames the labour market for the low retention rate of immigrants. This report argues that it is not a “reality” of the labour market that is the greatest challenge to successful integration; rather, it is the disconnect between labour market demand and supply. There is a breakdown in communicating the demands of the labour market and the requirements of occupational positions to potential immigrant candidates. Immigrants can find success in Newfoundland and Labrador if they have the right information, are willing to adjust their abilities to meet local needs, and invest their energy into the process.

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1. Wade Locke and Scott Lynch, *A Survey of Attitudes of Employers in Newfoundland and Labrador Toward the Recruitment and Employment of New Canadians and Immigrant Workers*, prepared for the Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development, Memorial University, April 2005.

2. *Retention and Integration of Immigrants in Newfoundland and Labrador – Are We Ready?* prepared by Goss Gilroy Inc. Management Consultants for Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and the Coordinating Committee on Newcomer Integration, May 2005, 64.

While there are current and anticipated shortages in specific occupations in this province, there are also hundreds of skilled immigrants who could fill those gaps, but who face barriers in accessing the labour market – such as language differences, lack of Canadian work experience and the non-recognition of foreign credentials. Foreign credential recognition procedures are necessary for employment in regulated trades and professions, and even in some informal employment areas. But these procedures can be cumbersome and complex, especially for people whose first language is not English and who are not familiar with Canadian culture.

## 1.1 Thesis

This study argues that the barriers to employment integration, including, but not limited to, the non-recognition of foreign credentials, must be eliminated in both formal and informal contexts so that immigrants and employers can connect in a way that helps immigrants use their skills and abilities and also helps employers meet their employment needs.

## 1.2 Conceptualization

This research project was conceptualized according to three main factors related to the employment outcomes of immigrants in Newfoundland and Labrador:

- 1) **Skills** – What kinds of education, credentials, skills and abilities do immigrants have and how can the recognition of their abilities be streamlined?
- 2) **Barriers** – What are the barriers to the successful integration of immigrants into the Newfoundland and Labrador labour market and how can those barriers be addressed?
- 3) **Employment** – How can employers be encouraged to hire immigrant Canadians?

This “three-pronged” approach provides a holistic view of the situation facing newcomers in the job search process and their employment success rates in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Employers in Newfoundland and Labrador are less inclined to invest in addressing the barriers that immigrants face if the supply of local workers exceeds the demand. However, employers are inclined (and sometimes eager) to invest in addressing barriers when there is a local skills-shortage in their profession, trade or sector. As a result, this report suggests that the best way for immigration to help grow the economy in Newfoundland and Labrador is for the province to target those professions, trades and sectors where the demand for workers exceeds the supply – where immigrants can find satisfying employment in areas of skills shortages that would not threaten the employment of local workers.

## 2.0 Project Description

### 2.1 Methodology

#### 2.1.1 Quantitative Research Method

**Immigrant Survey:** The immigrant survey was designed to investigate several key factors that influence how successful immigrants are in integrating into the Newfoundland and Labrador workforce [Appendix J]. In particular, the survey contained a number of questions about employment status and job satisfaction, access

to the local labour market, perceptions of major employment barriers and future settlement plans. The survey was administered between 10 December 2006 and 14 March 2007. In total, seventy-one (71) respondents completed the survey.

**Employer Survey:** The employer survey was designed to explore local employers' perspectives on the barriers that immigrants face in the Newfoundland and Labrador workplace and their opinions on proposed incentives associated with hiring immigrant employees [Appendix I]. The survey focused on businesses that have employed immigrants in the past and was administered between 16 January 2007 and 27 March 2007. Potential respondents were initially contacted by telephone and invited to participate in the study. Upon their verbal consent, the research team provided the respondents with a web-link to the survey online or mailed a hardcopy to their business location. Sixty-five (65) businesses completed the survey, yielding a response rate of 64%.

### 2.1.2 Qualitative Research Methods

**Key Informant Interviews:** Fourteen in-person or telephone interviews were conducted between 16 January 2007 and 23 March 2007 with individuals who have a specialized knowledge of either immigration policy or of labour market conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador. The list of individuals who were interviewed can be found in Appendix A and the lists of interview questions in Appendices C-G.

**Standardized Interviews:** Thirty one in-person or telephone interviews were conducted between 18 January 2007 and 23 March 2007 with representatives of all levels of government, policy makers, regional economic development boards, the professions and trades, sector councils, and educational institutions. Interviews were conducted in centres across the province, including St. John's, Corner Brook, Grand Falls-Windsor, Gander, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Labrador City, Stephenville, Clarenville and Carbonear. The list of individuals who were interviewed can be found in Appendix B and the lists of interview questions Appendices C-G.

**Focus Groups:** Six focus groups were conducted between 2 February 2007 and 9 April 2007. They included:

- Three focus groups with international students – two with students in St. John's, at the Marine Institute and Memorial University of Newfoundland, and one with students in Corner Brook at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College. A total of 17 students participated in these group discussions.
- Three focus groups with immigrants who are permanent residents of Canada. These focus groups were held in St. John's and included a total of 27 participants.

**Other Consultations:** During the course of the research project a number of individuals and organizations were contacted in order to obtain additional information relevant to the current project. A list of these consultations can be found in Appendix H.

### 2.1.3 Limitations of the Research

This study is intended to provide insight into a number of factors that influence how successful immigrants are in integrating into the Newfoundland and Labrador workforce. Separate surveys were administered to employers and immigrants in order to obtain their perspectives on employment issues. However, these surveys were not administered by random sample, but rather by convenience sample – the research team targeted employers who have hired immigrants in the past and immigrants who have been in Canada for ten years or less. Therefore, care should be taken when generalizing results.

## 2.2 Classes of Immigration

**2.2.1 Skilled Worker Class:** The majority of immigrants arrive in Canada through the Skilled Worker Class. Skilled workers are assessed according to six factors: education, language skills, experience, age, arranged employment, and adaptability. These factors are designed to determine which applicants will become economically independent in Canada. Whatever the outcome of these factors, Canadian immigration officers have the discretion to accept or refuse an applicant.

**2.2.2 Business Class:** Business class immigrants include self-employed immigrants, entrepreneurs, and investors and represents approximately 8% of the immigrant population.

**2.2.3 Provincial Nominee:** Most Canadian provinces have an agreement with the Government of Canada which allows them to play a more direct role in the selection of immigrants who wish to settle in their province. Individuals who would like to immigrate as a provincial nominee must first apply to the province where they intend to settle and must have a job offer within their nomination province prior to their application assessment. Provincial Governments typically base their acceptance decisions on criteria such as language skills and the ability of newcomers to contribute to the economic and social goals of the province. Once a nominee has been selected by a province under the PNP they must then submit a separate application to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC).

**2.2.4 Family Class:** As part of family reunification, Canadian citizens or permanent residents who are at least eighteen (18) years of age may sponsor family members or close relatives who want to settle in Canada. Family Class applicants could be a spouse or common law partner, parents or grandparents, brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews or grandchildren (under eighteen years old and unmarried), or dependent children (including adopted children). The sponsor agrees to support the applicant, as well as their dependents, for a period of three (3) to ten (10) years, and help them settle in Canada.

**2.2.5 Refugee Class:** There are three classes of refugees in Canada: 1) Convention Refugees Abroad Class – individuals who are outside their country of origin and are unable or unwilling to return because of fear of persecution or discrimination; 2) Country of Asylum Class – individuals who are outside their country of origin and have been seriously affected by civil war, armed conflict, or human rights violations (these individuals must be privately sponsored); and 3) Source Country Class – individuals still in their country of origin who have been seriously affected by civil war or armed conflict, who have been deprived of the freedom of expression, the right of dissent or the right to engage in trade union activity and have consequently been imprisoned, or who fear persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a social group.<sup>3</sup>

**2.2.6 Temporary Worker:** Foreign workers who want to work temporarily in Canada must usually have a job offer and a work permit before they arrive. A temporary work permit is only valid for a particular job and employer, and a specific time period. An immigration officer also evaluates the application for health and security requirements.

**2.2.7 International Student:** An international student is individual who has been admitted to Canada for the purpose of formal education, such as being enrolled in a school, college, or university. The application is usually approved at an overseas Visa office and the permit specifies the length of time that the student may study in Canada.

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3. CIC, "Who is Eligible for Selection?" <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/resettle-who.html>, accessed 8 May 2007.

## 2.3 Definitions

**2.3.1 Regulated Professions:** A regulated profession is an occupation that requires extensive training and mastery of specialized knowledge and usually has a professional association, a code of ethics, and a process of certification or licensing. The professional association sets entry requirements and the standards of practice for the occupation and in order to work in a regulated profession, individuals must be certified or registered with the association (or regulatory body). Entry requirements for regulated professions can differ from province to province, but usually consist of minimum academic criteria or confirmatory examinations, supervised work experience, as well as language ability. Certain professions can be regulated in one particular province, but not in another.

**2.3.2 Non-Regulated Occupations:** Non-regulated professions do not require special certification and are not restricted by legal requirements. Applicants for non-regulated professions present their experience and training to potential employers in order to acquire employment. In some cases, even if a profession is non-regulated, an employer may still require applicants to be registered or licensed with an applicable professional organization. For example, in the tourism sector, food preparation personnel must have a safe food handling certification.<sup>4</sup>

**2.3.3 Formal Qualifications:** Formal qualifications are those acquired through organized, systematic curricula, which leads to graduation with particular credentials, such as a degree or diploma.

**2.3.4 Informal Skills:** Informal skills are developed through life experiences, rather than formal learning programs at educational institutions. Informal skills are obtained through employment, volunteer work, life events, travel or hobbies.

**2.3.5 Foreign Credential Recognition:** Foreign credential recognition is a procedure that involves the evaluation of formal credentials from other countries and comparing them to the standards of education that are recognized in Canada. Foreign credential assessment can be conducted to assist in general employment, professional licensing, educational admission, and to transfer credit.

**2.3.6 Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition:** Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is a procedure that involves assessing and recognizing informal skills that have been acquired through life experiences, such as employment, volunteer work and hobbies. The key to a high-quality PLAR process is the ability to establish a clear measurable criterion. There are a variety of methods that can be used to assess prior learning, including written tests, demonstrations, structured interviews, and presentations.

**2.3.7 Integration:** Integration involves acknowledging and respecting cultural differences, and ensuring that individuals can preserve aspects of their own culture, while actively participating in Canadian life through cultural, social, political and economic spheres.

**2.3.8 Labour Market Integration:** Successful labour market integration is a “process toward accessing employment commensurate with one’s qualifications within a time-frame equivalent to that of Canadian-born of similar qualifications.”<sup>5</sup> (E. Tastsoglov and B. Midema)

**2.3.9 Retention:** Retention refers to the long-term settlement of immigrants in the community where they first arrived in Canada. There is no fixed definition on the amount of time a newcomer has to stay in an area to become ‘retained’.

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<sup>4</sup> Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC), “Preview of foreign credential recognition research projects,” Commissioned by the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council, November 2005.

<sup>5</sup> Evangelia Tastsoglou and Baukje Miedema, “Working Much Harder and Always Having to Prove Yourself: Immigrant Women’s Labour Force Experiences in the Canadian Maritimes,” *Advances in Gender Research* 9 (2005): 209.

**2.3.10 Regionalization:** Regionalization is the idea of attracting immigrants to regions of Canada that are outside the ‘first tier’ cities – Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, which is where the majority of the immigrant population settles. Many provinces, as well as municipalities, are attempting to attract immigrants through regionalization strategies.

**2.3.11 Social Inclusion:** Social inclusion is the capacity and agreement of our society to keep all groups of people within reach of what we look forward to as a society. The “social commitments and investments necessary to ensure that socially and economically vulnerable people are within reach of common aspirations, common life and its common wealth.”<sup>6</sup>

**2.3.12 Rurality:** There is no agreement on the definition of rural in a Canadian context. The Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education defines rural by default – a community population of 5,000 or higher is designated as urban, and anywhere else is rural. But defining urban and rural by population alone is not always helpful or appropriate because there are different degrees of rurality. Other factors that should be included in understanding the concepts of urban and rural are proximity to services and degree of remoteness.<sup>7</sup> For the purposes of this study, rurality should be understood according to distinct categories: 1) adjacent, 2) non-adjacent, and 3) remote. Adjacent communities are rural areas that are located within an hour of an urban area. These smaller centres continue to grow and while the population may be less than 5,000, residents have access to the services of the urban area. Non-adjacent communities are typically resource-based and face challenges associated with the nature of dispersed populations. Remote communities are those that are isolated or are the farthest away from urban centres and face the greatest challenges in terms of attraction and retention of population.<sup>8</sup>

## 3.0 Literature Review

### 3.1 Barriers to Employment and Labour Market Integration

In 1967, the federal government introduced a point-based selection process to its immigration policy. Although the “point-system” has undergone some changes since its inception, it remains the primary assessment tool through which immigrants are admitted into Canada under the Skilled Worker Class. The system emphasizes “human capital attributes and flexible skills” and awards candidates points according to six selection factors: 1) education, 2) official languages, 3) experience, 4) age, 5) arranged employment in Canada, and 6) adaptability.<sup>9</sup> The point-system attempts to gauge the potential of a candidate to successfully integrate into the Canadian labour market.<sup>10</sup> It also assumes that the higher an individual’s education, work experience and official-language abilities, the faster and easier will be their transition into the Canadian workforce. Through the point-system, Canada has welcomed many highly skilled people into the country. However, due to barriers such as those related to the non-recognition of foreign credentials, many of those people cannot find employment in their fields of expertise. As a result, Canada has a surplus of highly qualified and highly skilled immigrants who are unemployed or under-employed because their internationally-obtained education is not recognized by local employers.

This situation has been described by Andrew Brouwer as a “mismatch between the skills and education of

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<sup>6</sup> *Retention and Integration*, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Consultation C2, 19 October 2007.

<sup>8</sup> Interview I14, 13 February 2007.

<sup>9</sup> Erin Tolley, *The Skilled Worker Class: Selection Criteria in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, Metropolis Policy Brief, (Ottawa: Metropolis Project, 2003), online at [http://www.canada.metropolis.net/research-policy/policy%20briefs/selection\\_r.pdf](http://www.canada.metropolis.net/research-policy/policy%20briefs/selection_r.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> Alan G. Green and David A. Green, “The Economic Goals of Canada’s Immigration Policy: Past and Present,” *Canadian Public Policy*, 25 (4): 431.

foreign-trained professionals and trades-people and their actual occupations once in Canada.”<sup>11</sup> However, Evangelia Tastsoglou and Baukje Miedema have interpreted the non-recognition of foreign credentials as more than a “mismatch,” but rather as a class-based process in which “[c]ontrol of entry to the professions by Canadian professional associations, lack of state accreditation programs and resulting organizational gate-keeper assumptions about the inferiority of foreign degrees have been causing systematic exclusion and occupational disadvantage for immigrant professionals.”<sup>12</sup> There are four main approaches to understanding the labour market integration of recent immigrants to Canada.

1) The first is the **Human Capital Theory**, which argues that work opportunities follow credentials. This theory attributes responsibility to immigrants for the difficulties they face integrating into the workforce as it assumes that immigrants do not have “appropriate marketable skills in the receiving society.”<sup>13</sup>

2) The **Cultural Capital Theory** attributes responsibility for failure to integrate on limited access to social and professional networking.

3) The **Institutional Theory** assumes that human capital is institutionalized (“culture specific and anchored in specific contexts”<sup>14</sup>) and that immigrants trained in one cultural context are mismatched in another. This theory blames systemic factors for difficulties in integrating, such as the institutionally required skills, qualifications and experiences of receptor countries.

4) the **Systemic Discrimination Theory**, favoured by Tastsoglou and Miedema, which blames the social construction of racialized and gender identities and class discrimination for difficulties in integrating.

The non-recognition of foreign credentials poses a significant challenge to the successful integration of immigrants into the Canadian workforce, especially in view of the fact that “immigrants are more numerous, possess higher skills and credentials, and are more concentrated in certain occupational groups and source areas than in previous decades.”<sup>15</sup> There has been an abundance of academic and policy-related research on foreign credential recognition and the discounting and/or underutilization of immigrant skills in the Canadian labour market.<sup>16</sup> In her 1988 study, *Barriers to Recognition of the Credentials of Immigrants in Canada*, Kathryn McDade found that the credentials of internationally-trained candidates in the trades were often considered inferior or unacceptable; and in many professional fields the candidates were required to have more experience or meet more stringent standards than Canadian-born candidates in order to attain certification.<sup>17</sup>

These barriers to the trades and professions have also been identified by many subsequent academics and policy-makers. They have been described as “structural” barriers in which the “control of entry to the professions has caused systematic exclusion and occupational disadvantages for professional immigrants.”<sup>18</sup> Naomi Alboim, Ross Finnie and Ronald Meng suggest that the discounting of immigrant credentials “is an information problem whereby employers do not know what immigrants’ education and work experiences are truly worth in the Canadian labour market.”<sup>19</sup> In a more theoretical interpretation, Shibao Guo and Per

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<sup>11</sup> Andrew Brouwer, *Immigrants Need Not Apply*, (Ottawa: The Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 1999), 4.

<sup>12</sup> Tastsoglou and Miedema, 209.

<sup>13</sup> Tastsoglou and Miedema, 208.

<sup>14</sup> Tastsoglou and Miedema, 208.

<sup>15</sup> Philippe Couton, “Highly Skilled Immigrants: Recent Trends and Issues,” *ISUMA: Policy Research*, 3 (2).

<sup>16</sup> For early research on this issue, see for example, R.S Abella, *Equality in Employment: a Royal Commission Report*, (Ottawa: Supply and Services, 1984) and The Government of Canada, *Equality Now: Report of the Special Committee on Visible Minorities in Canadian Society*, (Hull: Minister of Supply and Services, 1984).

<sup>17</sup> Kathryn McDade, *Barriers to Recognition of the Credentials of Immigrants in Canada*, (Ottawa: Institute for Research on Public Policy, 1988).

<sup>18</sup> Gurcharn S. Basran and Li Zong, “Devaluation of Foreign Credentials as Perceived by Visible Minority Professional Immigrants,” *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 1998 30(3).

<sup>19</sup> Naomi Alboim, Ross Finnie and Ronald Meng, “The Discounting of Immigrants’ Skills in Canada: Evidence and Policy Recommendations,” *IRPP Choices*, 11 (2): 3.

Andersson describe the non-recognition of foreign credentials as an “epistemological misperception of difference and knowledge,” arguing that “[t]he knowledge possessed by immigrants is deemed inferior because their real and alleged differences are claimed to be incompatible with the ‘traditional’ cultural and social fabric” of Canada.<sup>20</sup> Accordingly, it is within this protectionist context that internationally-obtained credentials are devalued and immigrants are effectively excluded from the professions and trades.

Canadian sociologist Jeffrey G. Reitz has been particularly active in exploring the employment experiences of immigrants in Canada especially in terms of the emerging knowledge economy. Within the knowledge economy there has been an increase in professional and managerial occupations that require high levels of education. Reitz points out that while immigrants are arriving in Canada with more education than ever before, there is a downward trend in their employment and earnings. He argues that this trend is due in large part to the increased education levels among native-born Canadians in an increasingly competitive workforce.<sup>21</sup> While native-born Canadians can apply their university education to a variety of non-professional and managerial occupations, immigrants with foreign credentials face more limitations if their education is devalued in the knowledge economy. When foreign-trained candidates are denied access to the knowledge occupations commensurate with their university education, they find it difficult to access employment elsewhere in the labour market because of greater competition in lower-level work. As a result, highly-educated immigrants are often relegated to the least-skilled occupations, such as driving a taxi.<sup>22</sup> Reitz points out that the more rigorous credential-assessment processes of the professions has resulted in relative success for internationally-trained candidates in professional fields – “skill validation in the most professionalized settings promotes more effective consideration of the foreign-acquired credentials of immigrants.”<sup>23</sup> In the meantime, some of the greatest challenges to the integration of immigrants into the Canadian workforce exist outside the professions where assessment processes are less formal.

### 3.2 Regionalization of Immigration

According to current statistics on immigrant settlement patterns, almost three-quarters of recent immigrants to Canada live in the three largest cities – Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver.<sup>24</sup> There has been much academic and policy-related research conducted on the pervasiveness of immigrants to settle in the gateway cities and the implications that such settlement patterns have on the population growth and economic development of Canadian regions. Many scholars have attempted to explain the gateway city phenomenon according to the group affinity hypothesis, which suggests that pre-existing ethnic communities have a strong influence on attracting and retaining immigrants. In particular, Jennifer Hyndman and Nadine Schuurman have argued that immigrants are attracted to cities with large immigrant populations and that

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<sup>20</sup> Shibo Guo and Per Andersson, “Non/Recognition of Foreign Credentials for Immigrant Professionals in Canada and Sweden: A Comparative Analysis,” Working Paper 04-05, (Edmonton: Prairie Centre for Excellence in Research on Immigration and Integration, 2005-06), 17.

<sup>21</sup> For example, Reitz argues that “in the period 1991-96, the rise in educational levels among native-born Canadians accounts for about one-half of the decline in the earnings of new immigrants.” Jeffrey G. Reitz, “Tapping Immigrants’ Skills: New Directions for Canadian Immigration Policy in the Knowledge Economy,” *IRPP Choices*, 11 (1): 5. See also, Jeffrey G. Reitz, “Immigrant Success in the Knowledge Economy: Institutional Change and the Immigrant Experience in Canada, 1970-1995,” *Journal of Social Issues*, 57 (3): 579-613.

<sup>22</sup> Reitz, “Tapping Immigrants’ Skills,” 7. This has been described as the “taxi driver phenomenon” of recent immigrants. See Eden Nicole Thompson, “Immigrant Occupational Skill Outcomes and the Role of Region-Specific Human Capital,” Working Paper 00-04, (Vancouver: Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis, 2000), 3.

<sup>23</sup> Jeffrey G. Reitz, “Occupational Dimensions of Immigrant Credential Assessment: Trends in Professional, Managerial and Other Occupations, 1970-1996,” Revision of a paper presented at a conference on Canadian Immigration Policy for the 21st Century, John Deutsch Institute for the Study of Economic Policy, School of Policy Studies, Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario, 18-19 October 2002, 23, available online at <http://www.utoronto.ca/ethnicstudies/credential.pdf>. School of Policy Studies, Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario, 18-19 October 2002, 23, available online at <http://www.utoronto.ca/ethnicstudies/credential.pdf>.

<sup>24</sup> According to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) figures, approximately 50% of immigrants settle in Toronto, 13.6% in Vancouver and 12.9% in Montreal. See CIC, *Facts and Figures 2001: Immigration Overview*, Catalogue No. MP43-333/2002E, (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2002).



they “consistently choose to settle in areas where they find the people, livelihoods and quality of life they seek.”<sup>25</sup> The *critical mass* of people of the same ethnic origin has been important for many newcomers in establishing a comfort zone in their new country and it has been suggested that for immigrants outside the gateway cities the issue is “not a lack of jobs or services, but the absence of a comfort zone: there [are] too few people from the same country.”<sup>26</sup> In a similar fashion, *linguistic enclaves* in the mega-cities provide immigrants with the opportunity to avoid the stress of learning English and integrating fully into Canadian society. The group affinity hypothesis, along with critical mass and linguistic enclaves, emphasizes the importance of the social networks and institutional resources available in the large ethnic communities of Canada’s gateway cities.<sup>27</sup>

In his well-known *Globe and Mail* article, “Why Atlantic Canada Remains White and Poor,” John Ibbitson argues along a similar fashion, that “[half] of all immigrants who settle in Toronto cite the presence of family and friends as the chief reason they select that city. About a quarter say the availability of work was the motivating factor.” Accordingly, immigrants do not want to move to Atlantic Canada because there are “too few jobs and too few immigrants.”<sup>28</sup> However, Ibbitson does not cite the source of his figures and presents a rather simplified interpretation of the determinants of immigrant settlement patterns. Among academic circles, there is more debate as to the importance of group affinity, critical mass and linguistic enclaves in determining the settlement patterns of recent immigrants. Feng Hou has examined the initial settlement and subsequent geographic dispersal of immigrants in Canada and argues that immigrant communities developed in the gateway cities because of the economic and non-economic opportunities present there and that “the size of the pre-existing immigrant community does not have an independent effect on increasing the geographic concentration of immigrants when location fixed effects are controlled for.”<sup>29</sup>

J.S. Frideres has compared the large mega-cities with second- and third-tier cities in Canada and found significant differences in the labour force participation of immigrants. Although there is economic opportunity in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, there is also higher unemployment and lower income levels among immigrants in these cities than in the rest of Canada – “data suggest that immigrants who live outside the major urban centres have the lowest unemployment rates while those who reside in the three largest cities face the greatest challenge in finding work.”<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, the gateway cities tend to operate a “one size fits all” model for accommodating immigrants, while the smaller cities and towns develop more effective strategies for assisting with immigrant integration. Frideres concludes that recent immigrants *are* interested in settling in smaller urban areas of Canada and that immigrants are more successful in integrating into these areas than in the gateway cities.<sup>31</sup> Similar arguments were made by Margaret Walton-Roberts. In her comparison of immigrant integration in small- and medium-sized urban centres in British Columbia, Walton-Roberts found that the population size of a town/city was not necessarily an indicator of more successful immigrant settlement and retention. It was actually in the smaller communities that immigrants experienced more success with settlement due to the greater economic opportunities available there.<sup>32</sup>

The theory that economic opportunity may be a stronger determinant of immigrant settlement patterns

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<sup>25</sup> Jennifer Hyndman and Nadine Schuurman, “Size Matters: Attracting New Immigrants to Canadian Cities,” Working Paper 02-19, (Vancouver: Centre for Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis, October 2004), 15.

<sup>26</sup> “Regionalization of Immigration,” Metropolis Conversation Series 9, (Ottawa: Metropolis, 2003), 9.

<sup>27</sup> See for example, June Marie Nogle, “Internal Migration for Recent Immigrants to Canada,” *International Migration Review* 28 (1): 31-48.

<sup>28</sup> John Ibbitson, “Why Atlantic Canada Remains White and Poor,” *Globe and Mail*, 20 August 2004.

<sup>29</sup> Feng Hou, “The Initial Destinations and Redistribution of Canada’s Major Immigrant Groups: Changes over the Past Two Decades,” Analytical Studies Branch Research Paper Series # 254, (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2005), 23.

<sup>30</sup> J.S. Frideres, “Cities and Immigrant Integration: The Future of Second- and Third-Tier Cities,” *Our Diverse Cities* Summer 2006 (2): 6.

<sup>31</sup> Frideres, 3-8.

<sup>32</sup> Margaret Walton-Roberts, “Regional Immigration and Dispersal: Lessons from Small- and Medium-Sized Urban Centres in British Columbia,” Working Paper 04-03, (Vancouver: Centre for Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis, February 2004), 25.

provides hope to current federal and provincial policy-makers who are interested in a regional approach to immigration in Canada. In May 2001, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) released a special study on the settlement trends of newcomers in Canada and recommended a regionalization of Canadian immigration policy. Recognizing the nationwide demographic imbalance caused by the concentration of immigrants in the gateway cities, the study called for “a more balanced geographic distribution of immigrants” in second- and third-tier cities as well as rural and remote areas.<sup>33</sup> The idea of using immigration to encourage economic development in regions outside the mega-cities is not new.<sup>34</sup> But in recent years, provincial and federal governments have increasingly been interested in a more even distribution of refugees and economic immigrants as a means to address population decline and regional economic disparities.<sup>35</sup> The debate continues in academic and policy circles as to whether economic opportunity or group affinity is the stronger determinant of immigrant settlement patterns in Canada, but the possibilities and benefits of a regional approach to immigration is increasingly being explored. Instead of pitting economic opportunity against group affinity, perhaps the answer lies more in a combination of the two – for immigration to succeed in the smaller cities and regions of Canada there must be both economic opportunity and a strong, supportive ethnic community.

## 4.0 Jurisdictional Review: Effective Practices of Others

As immigration becomes an important file for every Canadian province and municipality, there are numerous initiatives, strategies and policies being implemented both within Canada and other jurisdictions world wide. Most immigration strategies focus on attraction, better integration, retention and employment of immigrants, and they all offer fresh and useful perspectives to be considered in creating and developing new, effective immigration initiatives.

This review of the best practices of others will focus on several Canadian provinces, namely Atlantic provinces, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Ontario, as well as several recent international immigration strategies. More precisely, the review will cover different initiatives in breaking down the barriers to successful labour market integration of immigrants.

Smaller jurisdictions, like Newfoundland and Labrador, and smaller communities face a clear challenge when competing with large population centres to attract new immigrants. In addition, they are facing consistent out-migration, aging populations, and labour shortage problems that require the creation of comprehensive strategies and distinctive advantages when it comes to settlement, integration, skills recognition and employment of immigrants. It is a common perception that because of their homogenous make-up, smaller cities may also be forced to confront racism and xenophobia before they even start providing settlement services to newcomers. However, some studies and practices suggest that smaller communities actually offer greater economic opportunities and a more welcoming environment for immigrants, leading one to believe that effective immigrant settlement outside of the largest metropolitan regions is not just about the size of the urban region.<sup>36</sup>

In Canada, there are a number of provincial population and immigration strategies, as well as municipal immigration strategies, which include specific employment and skills recognition initiatives.

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<sup>33</sup> Citizenship and Immigration Canada, “Towards a More Balanced Geographic Distribution of Immigrants,” Catalogue No. CI51-109/4-2002E, (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2001).

<sup>34</sup> For an early discussion of encouraging immigration outside Ontario and Quebec, see Freda Hawkins, “Canadian Immigration: A New Land and a New Approach to Management,” *International Migration Review* 11 (1): 77-93.

<sup>35</sup> Harvey Krahn, Tracey M. Derwing and Baha Abu-Laban, “The Retention of Newcomers in Second- and Third-Tier Cities in Canada,” Working Paper 01-03, (Edmonton: Prairie Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Integration, May 2003), 18. For a discussion on how immigration can be targeted to offset population decline in Atlantic Canada see Government of Canada, “Atlantic Forum on Rural Repopulation: 'Challenge - Reflect - Apply' – Rural Dialogue Summary Report,” (Moncton 2005).

<sup>36</sup> Walton-Roberts, 2.

## 4.1 Atlantic Provinces

In the past few years, the Atlantic Provinces, including Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island (PEI), have all presented new approaches and initiatives to the integration and retention of immigrants.

### 4.1.1 Nova Scotia

#### **Nova Scotia's Immigration Strategy 2005**

As a part of the overall provincial strategy on immigration, Nova Scotia established the objective to increase the retention rate of immigrants to seventy percent (70%) for the 2006-2011 census period. The two major focuses in the process of reaching this objective are, 1) Labour Market Attachment and 2) International Credential (Qualification) Assessment and Recognition.

*Labour Market Attachment* includes:

- Improving access to labour market attachment services so immigrants can find meaningful employment or business opportunities.
- Working closely with employers to ensure that they are aware of the advantage of hiring internationally skilled labour.

*International Credential (Qualification) Assessment and Recognition* includes:

- Building on the work started by organizations that provide settlement services to establish a credential assessment service with Maritime partners.
- Marketing and promoting the credential assessment service.
- Developing bridging programs that would fill gaps in sectors experiencing labour market shortages.
- Engaging professional associations, education and training institutions, industry, labour organization, and employers to ensure recognition of credentials that have met the credential assessment test.<sup>37</sup>

#### **Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition (PLAR) - Nova Scotia Community College**

In an effort to make the recognition of formal and informal education, training or experience more effective, the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) administers Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition services to anyone who requires formal recognition of their education, skills and competencies. If it is possible to demonstrate that a person's prior learning is equivalent to what would normally be acquired through formal courses in the chosen area of College study, then credit is granted.<sup>38</sup>

### 4.1.2 New Brunswick

The most recent initiatives regarding immigrant integration into society in New Brunswick come from the municipalities of Saint John, Fredericton and Moncton. Enterprise Fredericton, a community economic development agency, has embarked on the Tri-Region Immigration Traction Project with Enterprise Saint John and Enterprise Greater Moncton to address issues surrounding immigration in New Brunswick. They are joining efforts in improving the economic conditions of their regions and the province by investing more time and resources into attraction, retention, integration and employment of immigrants.

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<sup>37</sup> Government of Nova Scotia, *Nova Scotia's Immigration Strategy, January 2005*, available online at <http://www.novascotiainmigration.com/en-page9.aspx>, accessed on 27 April 2007.

<sup>38</sup> Nova Scotia Community College, "Recognizing Prior Learning," <http://www.nsc.ca/Services/PLAR/>, accessed on 27 April 2007.

Woodstock, a rural community of 30,000 in New Brunswick, is a great example of immigrant retention and integration. The community has been active in recruiting highly skilled workers for their local food processing plant. Woodstock now has 300 immigrants representing 28 nationalities in this community of 30,000.<sup>39</sup>

### 4.1.3 Prince Edward Island (PEI)

PEI developed a Population Strategy in 2000 and recently initiated The People Project, which focuses on retention and repatriation of islanders and attracting and retaining immigrants.<sup>40</sup>

#### PEI Provincial Nominee Program

The Prince Edward Island Provincial Nominee Program is a shared responsibility whereby the province recruits, selects and nominates qualified immigrant applicants, with the federal government completing security and health background checks and giving final approval. The significant point about this program is that it is equivalent to an “immigrant class” and so it is delivered according to the provincial rather than federal rules.<sup>41</sup>

The Prince Edward Island PNP program is similar to that of Newfoundland and Labrador, having a similar Skilled Worker stream and two Immigrant Entrepreneur Streams. PEI added two additional options: the Immigrant connections stream, where recent successful PNP applicants sponsor other potential candidates for PNP, and the Skilled Worker-Self Employed Stream.<sup>42</sup>

## 4.2 Manitoba

Manitoba was the first province other than Quebec to have a federal-provincial immigration agreement, the **Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement (CMIA)** in 1996. It also has a unique Settlement Services Agreement (SSA), signed in 1998, which gives the province control over design, administration, and delivery of settlement services.

The most successful program however is the **Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program (MPNP)**, introduced in 1998. The MPNP is an economic program which selects skilled workers who have the training, work experience, and language ability to be employed in Manitoba and make a positive contribution to the provincial economy. The program has made a very significant impact on smaller municipalities and their economic development.

The Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) can also be seen as a type of regionalization policy. PNP agreements allow provinces some flexibility in selecting immigrants according to their economic needs and interests.<sup>43</sup>

#### Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program (MPNP)

- Manitoba established a provincial nominee program in 1998, as the first province to make the agreement with the federal government.
- The Province of Manitoba sees the MPNP as a way to fill impending skill shortages and to add to population growth in Winnipeg, but even more importantly in rural areas. In order to meet these

<sup>39</sup> *Retention and Integration*, 40-41.

<sup>40</sup> *Retention and Integration*, 41.

<sup>41</sup> Government of Prince Edward Island, “Prince Edward Island Provincial Nominee Program,” <http://www.gov.pe.ca/immigration/index.php3?number=1014385&lang=E>, accessed on 27 April 2007

<sup>42</sup> Immigration Canada, “Prince Edward Island Immigration,” <http://www.immigration.ca/permres-pnp-pej.asp>, accessed on 27 April 2007.

<sup>43</sup> *Regional Immigration and Dispersal*.

short-term economic and long-term demographic goals, it is essential that applicants are well matched with Manitoba's labour market needs, and that they are good candidates for successful settlement and integration.

- The MPNP has directly contributed to high immigration levels and population growth figures for Manitoba. In 1998, Manitoba received 2,993 immigrants, a figure that made the province's goal of bringing in 10,000 newcomers by 2006 seem realistic. At this time, the province is approaching that goal as the total number of landings in 2005 reached 8,089 immigrants.<sup>44</sup>
- The MPNP has also directly stimulated population and economic growth in Manitoba's rural communities. Since 1998, 3,500 people – mostly Russian Mennonites from Germany - have come to southwestern Manitoba via the PNP, settling in rural towns like Winkler and Steinbach. Winkler alone has received 2,000 immigrants through the MPNP, contributing the city's healthy economy. New and skilled immigrants have revived businesses which had been limited by the lack of workers. Winkler serves as an encouraging example of what may be achieved in a rural immigration initiative when there is close collaboration between business, city officials and Manitoba Labour and Immigration.<sup>45</sup>

### **Bill 24 - The Fair Practices in Regulated Professions Act**

On 18 April 2007, Labour and Immigration Minister Nancy Allan introduced legislation that would provide a framework to break down barriers for internationally-educated or out-of-province individuals seeking work in their fields of expertise. The proposed legislation would build on the qualifications recognition policies and programs developed over the past few years in Manitoba. Working in close collaboration with regulators, educational institutions and employers, a number of successful initiatives have been implemented such as alternative assessment and licensure processes, bridge training, communications and employment entry programs.<sup>46</sup>

## **4.3 Saskatchewan**

### **Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program (SINP)**

The Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program (SINP), which operates under agreement with the federal government, can provide an alternate and quicker means of entry into Canada. This program allows Saskatchewan to nominate applicants, who qualify according to criteria established by the province, to the federal government for landed immigrant status. The SINP offers:

- The ability to select applicants whose skills and abilities best fit the province's needs.
- Consideration of applications that may not qualify under federal immigration criteria.
- Application processing times that are faster than other federal immigration classes.
- Assistance from Provincial Immigration Officers who are readily available to explain program requirements and processes.

SINP eligibility criteria reflect the specific needs of Saskatchewan's labour market and economy. The SINP currently has seven categories for nomination: Skilled Workers, Family Members, Long Haul Truck Drivers, Health Professions, Entrepreneurs, Foreign Students, and Farmers.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Government of Manitoba, "Manitoba on pace to reach 10,000 immigrants; 24-per-cent increase in first four months of 2006," 29 May 2006, <http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/press/top/2006/05/2006-05-29-01.html>, accessed on 27 April 2007.

<sup>45</sup> Brandon University, Rural Development Institute, <http://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/publications.asp>, accessed on 27 April 2007.

<sup>46</sup> Government of Manitoba, "Fair Registration Practices Legislation Improve Qualification Recognition," <http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2007-04-01&item=1479>, accessed on 27 April 2007.

<sup>47</sup> Government of Saskatchewan, "Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program," <http://www.aec.gov.sk.ca/immigration/sinp/>, accessed on 27 April 2007.

## 4.4 Ontario

Ontario, as the most populated province in Canada, is arguably the country's economic centre. The majority of immigrants prefer to settle in Ontario – the province welcomes more than 125,000 newcomers each year, which is more than half of all immigrants to Canada. The abundance of jobs and the concentration of major manufacturers and industries create numerous and immediate employment opportunities which are the main reason for settlement in that area. Even with such an attractive environment, the province of Ontario keeps promoting new and concrete programs and services to attract skilled and educated newcomers in the future.

There is a variety of already established programs and services in Ontario which contribute to immigrant integration into society, as well as labour market integration in particular. Among other provincial government's promising practices are Access to Professions & Trades (APT), Bridging Programs, Career Bridge, Career Maps, and Guide to Working in the Professions and Trades, and others.

The Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) was established in September 2003 to address immigrant career and employment issues in the Toronto Region. To effectively break down any potential barriers to immigrant employment, TRIEC ensures that its members represent employers, labour, occupational regulatory bodies, post-secondary institutions, assessment service providers, community organizations, and all three levels of government.<sup>48</sup>

In the last three years, TRIEC and its partner programs have made a significant difference in helping immigrants integrate into the local labour market by:

- Placing 380 immigrants in Career Bridge internships with over 140 Toronto Region employers, which resulted in over 80 per cent finding full-time employment in their field of expertise.
- Matching nearly 1,070 skilled immigrants in Mentoring Partnership relationships with established professionals who share the same occupation. Of those who completed the four month program, over 75 per cent found full-time employment.
- Engaging over 370 employer contacts through [hireimmigrants.ca](http://hireimmigrants.ca), increasing their awareness of the issue of immigrant integration, and formalizing their role as part of the solution.<sup>49</sup>

In an effort to further break down the barriers that prevent newcomers from working in their field, the province has recently launched new initiatives.

### Ontario Public Service (OPS) Internship Program

- One of the more recent and innovative initiatives is **Ontario Public Service (OPS) Internship Program**, Canada's first provincial government internship program which helps internationally trained professionals get work in their fields. The OPS Internships last six months, and to qualify for them, newcomers have to have a minimum of three years international work experience, to be permanent residents and to have some knowledge of the English language. Since the fall of 2006, 72 internationally trained individuals have been placed in fields such as finance, chemistry, environmental and health studies and business administration.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC), "Overview," <http://www.triec.ca/index.asp?pageid=1>, accessed on 27 April 2007.

<sup>49</sup> TRIEC, <http://www.triec.ca/index.asp?pageid=1>, accessed on 27 April 2007.

<sup>50</sup> Government of Ontario, "McGuinty Government Building Opportunities for Newcomers: Canada's First Provincial Government Internship Program Helping Internationally Trained Professionals Succeed," <http://www.premier.gov.on.ca/news/Product.asp?ProductID=955>, accessed on 27 April 2007.

## Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act, 2006 (Bill 124)

- **Bill 124**, passed in December 2006, requires Ontario's regulated professions to ensure that their licensing processes are fair, open, transparent and objective, and that assessment of credentials for internationally trained professionals occurs in a timely manner.<sup>51</sup>

## Other Initiatives

- The first-ever **Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement**, increasing federal spending on language training and settlement services by \$920 million over five years to front-line service providers.
- Launch of **Global Experience Ontario**, an Access and Resource Centre for the Internationally Trained.
- More than doubling the investment to \$53 million in IMGs (international medical graduates) this year – up from \$16 million in 2003. An additional 750 foreign trained doctors are practicing in the province with another 470 enrolled in training and assessment.
- Support for a **Foreign Trained Professionals Loan Program** providing up to \$5,000 per person to cover assessment, training and exam costs.
- Launch of an immigration web portal, [www.OntarioImmigration.ca](http://www.OntarioImmigration.ca), to support newcomers both in Ontario and abroad, prior to arrival.<sup>52</sup>

Another effective way of providing useful and timely information is the **211** telephone number and **211Ontario.ca** online database. These services have been offering easy access to information about education, job skills, housing, child care, health services and much more. Both the call number and online service are available to everyone – from individuals, families and professionals to community agencies and people facing barriers due to poverty or personal difficulty.<sup>53</sup>

## 4.5 Effective International Practices

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has recently conducted studies on the labour market integration of immigrants and their children in several member countries. Several studies have been completed and will be published this year. Here are some of the new initiatives and examples in overcoming barriers to successful integration of immigrants in the local labour market in Sweden, Denmark, Ireland and New Zealand.

### 4.5.1 Sweden

#### Local initiatives in favour of integration – Lysekil

Lysekil is a small centre of about 15,000 persons on the northwest coast of Sweden, about 8% of whom are foreign-born, a high proportion for a town of this size. Local industry includes marine research, energy, port facilities and tourism. The population of Lysekil peaked at 15,550 in 1994 and has declined steadily to reach 14,792 in 2001, an almost 5% drop over seven years. Both natural increase and net migration have been largely negative over this period. On the other hand, 2002 saw positive net migration slightly exceeding a significantly negative natural increase. Most of the positive net migration could be

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<sup>51</sup> Government of Ontario, Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, "McGuinty Government Recognized for Innovative Internship Program for Newcomers," <http://ogov.newswire.ca/ontario/GPOE/2007/02/23/c3739.html?match=&lang=e.html>, accessed on 27 April 2007.

<sup>52</sup> "McGuinty Government Recognized."

<sup>53</sup> 211Ontario.ca, <http://www.211ontario.ca/vision.htm>, accessed on 27 April 2007.

attributed to migration from outside the country. International migration thus provides the opportunity of making up for unfavourable demographics and departures of local residents.

For this to succeed, however, arriving immigrants need to find lasting employment and a role within the local society. The municipality of Lysekil has put in place a pilot project which invests intensively in immigrant reception, with a view to ensuring that immigrants find work and remain in Lysekil. The project involves a number of features, including in-depth identification of qualifications, job matching tied to immigrant aspirations, real-life (rather than classroom) language instruction, employment support based on the individual and social networks of instructors, contacts and mediation with employers and subsidised apprenticeships. The pilot incorporates an evaluation (forthcoming) and identification of the successful features of the project, so that they can be implemented downstream in a cost-effective manner.

In a situation in which labour market integration of immigrants is proving difficult nationally, it is clear that the prospect of reversing the demographic decline of smaller centres can prove a powerful motivating force for putting in place local initiatives aimed at facilitating the integration of immigrants and their longer term settlement.<sup>54</sup>

#### 4.5.2 Denmark

##### **Municipal integration activities – the example of Århus**

One example of municipal integration efforts is the city of Århus, which established a formal municipal integration policy in 1996. Self-sufficiency of immigrants through better labour market integration is considered, along with language mastery, to be the most important prerequisite of integration. The city formulates clear, measurable two-year objectives to reach its integration goals in five main areas (employment, language skills, attitudes, residential issues, leisure and culture). With respect to employment, for the 2001-2002 period, for example, an increase in the proportion of immigrants among the permanent employees of the municipality from 6% to 7% was envisaged. Similarly, concrete objectives have been formulated with respect to qualifying or employing previously unemployed immigrants. As many smaller municipalities have had only limited experience with integration in the past, the Ministry of Integration has established a special integration consulting service for municipalities to disseminate experiences and advise on good practices.

##### **Integration through club networks: “From the Bench to the Pitch”**

The project *From the Bench to the Pitch* was created in 2002 by one of the largest football clubs in Denmark, Brøndby IF, in co-operation with the Municipality of Brøndby and the Ministry of Integration. The aim of the project is to establish contacts between young people with a migration background and the club's network of about 350 sponsor firms. The club thereby acts as an intermediary. Brøndby IF has currently about 1200 amateur players, about 30% of whom have a migration background. Nevertheless, the project is also open to young people who are not part of the club.

The advantage of this mediation is that the club tends to have some knowledge about the strengths' and weaknesses of the young people involved, while at the same time having access to high level company representatives who have taken a commitment to support the club and its activities. A job consultant from

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<sup>54</sup> Georges Lemaître, *The Integration of Immigrants into the Labour Market: The Case of Sweden*, Social, Employment and Migration Working Paper 48, (Paris: OECD 2007), <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/28/8/38164205.pdf>.



Brøndby IF studies the abilities, qualifications and desires of every interested young person through interviews and then tries to find out opportunities for that person. The initial contact with the consultant is often established through the weekly training. This training also allows for a continuous informal check on the labour market integration process. The hands-on approach also limits red tape, as little paperwork is involved for the companies. Employers appear to trust the recommendations of the club, and the responsibility to maintain the reputation of the club is also seen as motivating the young people who receive a job offer to perform well. More than 130 young people with a migration background have been placed into apprenticeships or regular employment since 2003, and the project is continuously expanding as it is opening towards non-sponsors and people who did not initially have close links with the club. Since 2003, other football clubs in Denmark have established similar initiatives, including Århus and Odense.<sup>55</sup>

### **Mentoring programmes – a nationwide approach**

Mentorship has a variety of advantages, as it helps to overcome information asymmetries and provides immigrants with access to personal networks and tacit knowledge about the functioning of the labour market. Such programmes are appealing to governments since they are relatively low cost for the budget, while at the same time involving the civic community. Therefore, mentorship programmes are increasingly popular among the integration measures of the OECD countries that have participated in this first round of reviews.

In most cases, mentorship programmes in Denmark are rather small-scale and confined to a certain municipality or region. A remarkable exception to this is the Kvinfo mentorship programme, which is run nationwide through four regional branch offices and co-ordinated by Kvinfo, an independent institution under the Ministry of Culture aimed at the dissemination of knowledge on gender issues. The project is mainly financed by the Integration Ministry, from which it has received funding of about 20 million DKK for the period 2003-2009. Further funding is provided by the municipalities involved.

The approach taken by the Kvinfo mentorship programme, which started in 2003, is to bring immigrant women, in particular refugees, together with native-born women who have experience in the labour market. In order to achieve an appropriate match, interested potential mentees and mentors are first interviewed and their name subsequently filed in a database. With the help of this database a matching between mentors and mentees is done according to the mentees' needs and wishes, with a view of contributing to the integration into the Danish labour market. The mentor is expected to share her experiences, to advise the immigrant and open her network to the respective mentee. The primary objective is to get the mentees into employment. Accordingly, among the issues discussed in the mentorship relation are the writing of job applications, information about job interview practices, and establishing contacts with potential employers and professional networks. Nevertheless, there are generally a variety of barriers to be overcome until labour market integration is achieved, and further education – assisted by the mentor's advice – is often a first step towards the more distant goal of adequate employment. The mentorship relation is originally established for a fixed period of time by means of a formalised agreement, generally lasting from six months to one year. After that, the formal mentorship period ends, although the relation often continues as an informal friendship.

There are currently about 900 mentees and a roughly equal number of mentors involved in the project, and the programme has become so popular that a waiting list for the preliminary interview had to be established. An assessment of the outcomes is currently under way. Available figures show that about 160 previously unemployed women (including some women working in jobs that did not match their

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<sup>55</sup> Thomas Liebig, *The Labour Market Integration of Immigrants in Denmark*, Social, Employment and Migration Working Paper 49, (Paris: OECD 2006), <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/8/28/38195773.pdf>.

education level) have gained employment through the network activities in the first three years of establishment, but it is not yet possible to analyse the programme's effectiveness on the basis of these preliminary figures.<sup>56</sup>

### 4.5.3 Ireland

#### **“Bottom-up” or local initiatives**

In Ireland there have been a number of pilot experiences in the recognition of prior learning developed as a result of a demand for access/entry to education and training and for certification of skills. Assessment of Prior Learning (APL) responses have been devised to respond to the needs of industries experiencing organisational change. FAS, the training and employment authority worked with the Irish Electricity Supply Board in an accreditation programme for semi-skilled linesmen who were all experienced workers. These workers were fast-tracked through an electrical apprenticeship and were credited for prior experience as part of the process.

Failte Ireland (the tourism development authority) has APL procedures available for workers in the tourism, catering and hotel industry who have acquired experience in the workplace and who have no formal recognition. Candidates apply to Failte Ireland, are appointed a mentor and prepare a portfolio of evidence which is submitted to Failte Ireland. They are then interviewed by an APL committee and awarded a certificate if they achieve the standards. In this initiative there is no written examination.<sup>57</sup>

### 4.5.4 New Zealand

#### **“Bottom-up” or local initiatives**

The Otago Polytechnic established the Centre for Assessment of Prior Learning (CAPL) in 2000. There are now five CAPL centres in Polytechnics and Institutes of Technology in New Zealand, all established with the support of the Otago centre. Candidates may apply to have their prior learning, gained from formal education, life, and work experience assessed against the learning outcomes of qualifications. Using a facilitated process, CAPL candidates are given support to prepare evidence to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes for which they want recognition. A variety of assessment methods are used. Professional dialogue led by the candidate is the preferred method for higher qualifications at Otago CAPL. Other assessment forms include undertaking practical assessments, providing a portfolio of file evidence and/or an attestation by an individual or group that the candidate has demonstrated defined skills and understandings. An appropriately qualified assessor with relevant subject knowledge assesses the candidate. A team of assessors is sometimes used. Employers may also access this service in order to have the skills of their employees fully recognized and to assist them in gaining industry-relevant qualifications. Candidates, or employers pay a set administration and an assessment fee (encompassing facilitation support) that is determined by the amount and nature of support and assessment required.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Liebeg.

<sup>57</sup> Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, “The Role of National Qualifications Systems in Promoting Lifelong Learning: An OECD Activity,” Report from Thematic Group 2, Standards and Quality Assurance in Qualifications with Special Reference to the Recognition of Non-Formal and Formal Learning, (OECD 2007), <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/57/27/34376318.pdf>.

<sup>58</sup> “The Role of National Qualifications Systems.”

## 5.0 Immigration in Newfoundland and Labrador

### 5.1 Demographic Change

In 1993, the population of Newfoundland and Labrador entered a period of sustained population decline precipitated by the combination of negative population growth and increased provincial outmigration. While outmigration rates have slowed since the 1990s, young people are still leaving rural communities and according to the 2006 Census the province's population continues to drop.<sup>59</sup> Several factors are contributing to this decline, including:

- low fertility rates: Newfoundland and Labrador's fertility rate is the lowest in Canada,
- negative natural population growth: Newfoundland and Labrador recorded more deaths than births in 2006,
- outmigration from rural areas, and
- a population that is aging at a rate faster than any other province in Canada.<sup>60</sup>

The situation is direst in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, where urbanization and youth outmigration is creating an aging population and contributing to significant inter-regional population shifts. As a result, the province is facing two major demographic challenges – aging and regional shifts in population – that will change the expectations, needs and demands of the population and require alterations in government policy.<sup>61</sup>

On an economic level, concerns have been raised about the negative effects of a declining population on the provincial economy, the fiscal capacity of the province and the calculation of federal transfer payments in support of service delivery and infrastructure.<sup>62</sup> International immigration has been identified as one means by which the province can counter-balance the negative economic and demographic impacts of a declining and aging population.

The importance of immigration as a growth strategy for the province has recently been formalized by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador with the launch of *Diversity – Opportunity and Growth: An Immigration Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador*. The strategy is intended to “foster economic development” and “to help address demographic challenges faced by the province.”<sup>63</sup> Accordingly, the provincial government has recognized the importance of an increase in immigration to the economic, social and cultural growth of Newfoundland and Labrador.

### 5.2 Profile of Immigrant Community

The majority of people currently living in Newfoundland and Labrador are the descendants of people who came from other countries through centuries of informal immigration. While immigration numbers declined through the twentieth-century, the province continued to attract highly educated professionals and entrepreneurs. As a result, Newfoundland and Labrador has a small but vibrant multicultural population, especially in the city of St. John's.

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<sup>59</sup> Government of Canada, “Population and dwelling counts, for Canada provinces and territories, 2006 and 2001 censuses – 100% data,” available online at <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/popdwell/Table.cfm?T=101>, accessed 10 April 2007.

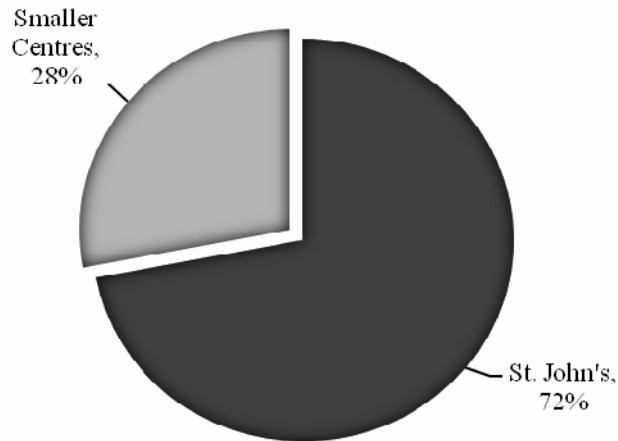
<sup>60</sup> Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, “Demographic Change – Issues and Implications,” (St. John's: Department of Finance, October 2006), available online at <http://www.economics.gov.nl.ca/pdf2006/demographyupdate.pdf>, accessed 13 April 2007.

<sup>61</sup> “Demographic Change.”

<sup>62</sup> Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, “An Immigration Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador: Opportunity for Growth, Discussion Paper,” June 2005, 15.

<sup>63</sup> Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, *Diversity - 'Opportunity and Growth': An Immigration Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador* March 2007, 3, available online at <http://www.hrle.gov.nl.ca/hrle/immigration/pdf/strategydoc-mar07.pdf>.

**Figure 1: Immigrant Population in St. John's and Smaller Centres, 1997-2006**



Source: Citizen and Immigration Canada

Almost three quarters of Newfoundland and Labrador's immigrant population lives in St. John's. The province's smaller centres and rural communities face challenges in attracting an immigrant population because of limited employment opportunities and the lack of a large multicultural community. This discrepancy between urban and rural settlement is also shown at the national level – where the majority of immigrants settle in urban rather than rural areas. However, there are many current initiatives across Canada towards the regionalization of immigration and it is evident that smaller centres can succeed in attracting an immigrant population.

In terms of provincial and national levels, Newfoundland and Labrador has a much smaller proportion of immigrants compared to the national average. The following table outlines immigration in the province and in Canada, 1997–2006:

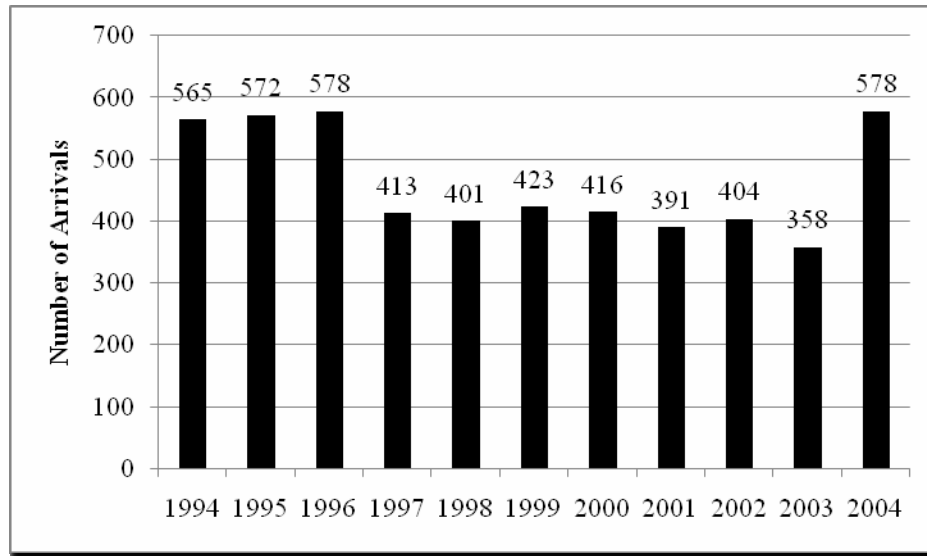
**Table 1: Population and Immigration Levels 1997-2006**

	Canada	NL
Total population in 2006	32,777,304	508,548
Percentage of Canadian Population	100%	1.6%
Immigrant population in 2001	5,448,480	8,025
Percentage of Total Population	18.3%	1.7%
Number of new immigrants 1997-2006	2,258,270	4,402
Percentage of New Immigrants	100%	0.2%

Source: Census 2006, and Citizen and Immigration Canada

Newfoundland and Labrador constitutes 1.6% of the Canadian population but it receives only 0.2% of immigrants to the country. One reason for such a low proportion of immigrant population is the low retention rate in this province, which Statistics Canada has reported as 36%. Evidently, there is plenty of room for growth in the immigrant population of this province and one means in which growth can occur is through an increased retention rate of immigrant arrivals. Figure 2 portrays immigration levels in Newfoundland and Labrador during the past decade.

**Figure 2: Immigrant Landings in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1994-2004**



Source: *Retention and Integration*

While immigration numbers dipped during the late-1990s, immigration is on the upswing in this province. This is perhaps due to an increased use of such programs as the PNP and increased awareness of the benefits of immigration to the province.

The following table outlines the numbers of immigrants Newfoundland and Labrador receives in terms of their class of arrival, and compares those numbers with the Canada as a whole.

**Table 2: Classes of Immigrants 1994-2004**

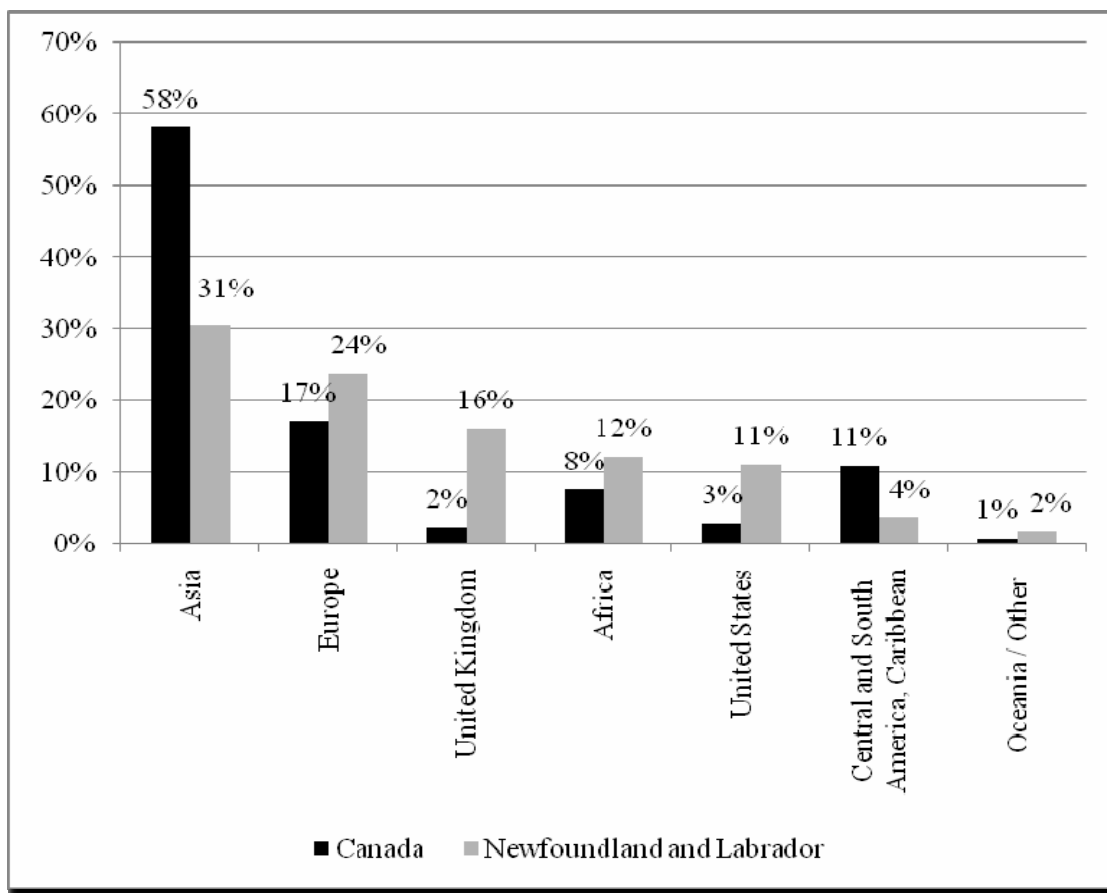
Class	Canada	Annual Average	Percent	NL	Annual Average	Percent
Economic Class	1,354,723	123,156	56.4%	2,404	219	47.1%
- Skilled Workers	1,126,850	102,441	46.9%	2,010	182	39.4%
- Entrepreneurs/Investors	173,085	15,735	7.2%	102	9	2.0%
- Provincial Nominees	15,796	1,436	0.7%	281	26	5.5%
- Live-in Caregivers	38,992	3,544	1.6%	11	1	0.2%
Family Class	731,835	66,530	30.5%	971	88	19.0%
Protected Persons Class	287,616	26,146	11.9%	1,667	152	32.8%
- Government Assisted Refugees	86,838	7,894	3.6%	1,232	110	23.8%
- Privately Sponsored Refugees	32,219	2,929	1.3%	44	4	0.9%
- Protected Persons in Canada and Dependents Overseas	168,559	15,323	7.0%	411	37	8.1%
Humanitarian/Other	28,057	2,551	1.2%	57	5	1.1%
Total	2,402,231	218,384	100.0%	5,099	464	100.0%

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada

As the above table illustrates, the pattern of immigration in Newfoundland and Labrador differs from that of Canada. In particular, the province attracts fewer immigrants in the Economic Class compared to Canada except in the PNP category, which demonstrates the importance of the PNP to the regionalization of immigration in the country. Newfoundland and Labrador also attracts fewer immigrants in the Family Class, which may be related to the low retention rate in the province because many immigrants do not stay long enough to sponsor overseas family members. Finally, Newfoundland and Labrador attracts significantly more immigrants in the Protected Persons Class than the Canadian average. This is largely due to the annual allocation of Government Assisted Refugees that arrive through Citizenship and Immigration Canada. With such a high proportion of protected persons, any local initiatives that assist immigrants with employment and settlement must be sensitive to the unique challenges facing a refugee population.

Figure 3 details the country of origin of immigrant arrivals in Newfoundland and Labrador and compares the provincial figures with the national average.

**Figure 3: Country of Origin, Immigrant Arrivals 1991-2001**

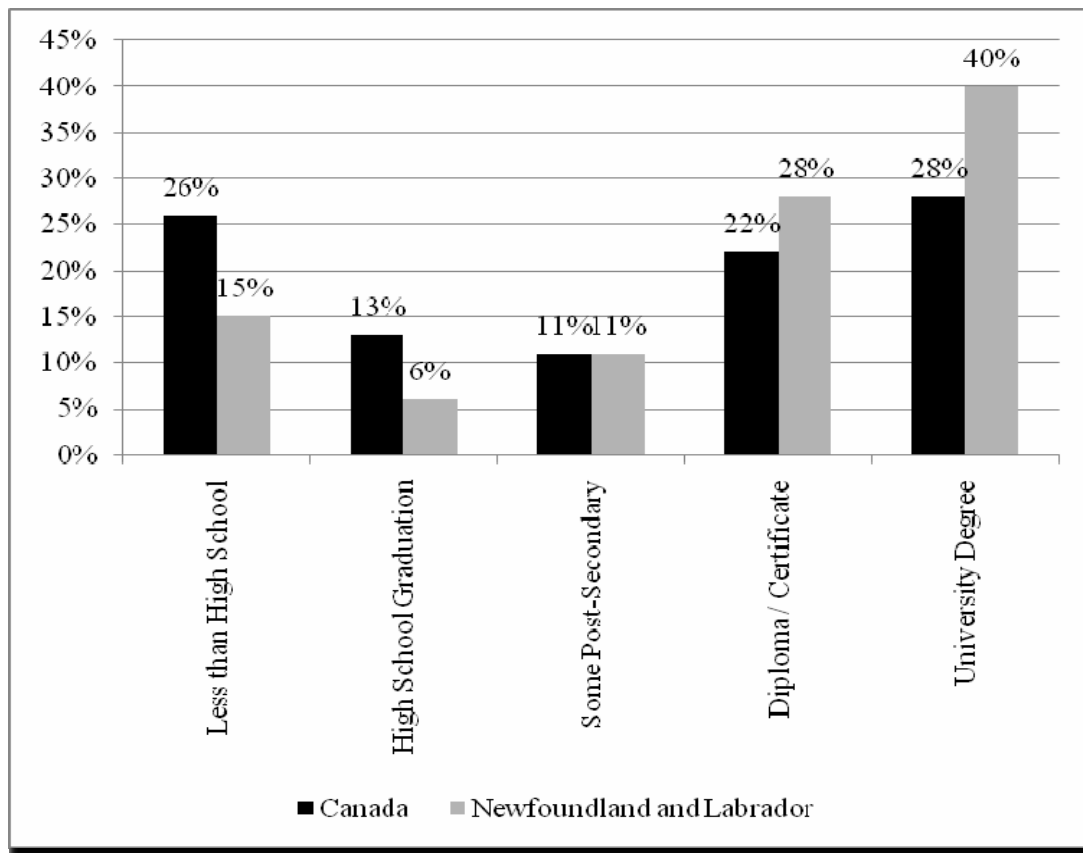


Source: Census 2001

Immigrants from Asia constitute the single largest group of recent immigrants to Newfoundland and Labrador, which corresponds with Canadian trends. However, the proportion of people from Asia within the immigrant community of this province is much smaller than the proportion in terms of the national average. Newfoundland and Labrador receives proportionally more immigrants from Europe, the United Kingdom, Africa and the United States compared to Canadian as a whole. The province maintains strong ties to English-speaking countries, perhaps because of the predominant use of English in the workplace, and also to European countries since the North Sea is an important source region for certain skills needs in the provincial offshore oil sector.<sup>64</sup>

Figure 4 compares the education levels of immigrants (15 years and older) who arrived in Canada from 1991-2001.

**Figure 4: Education Levels of Recent Immigrant Population**



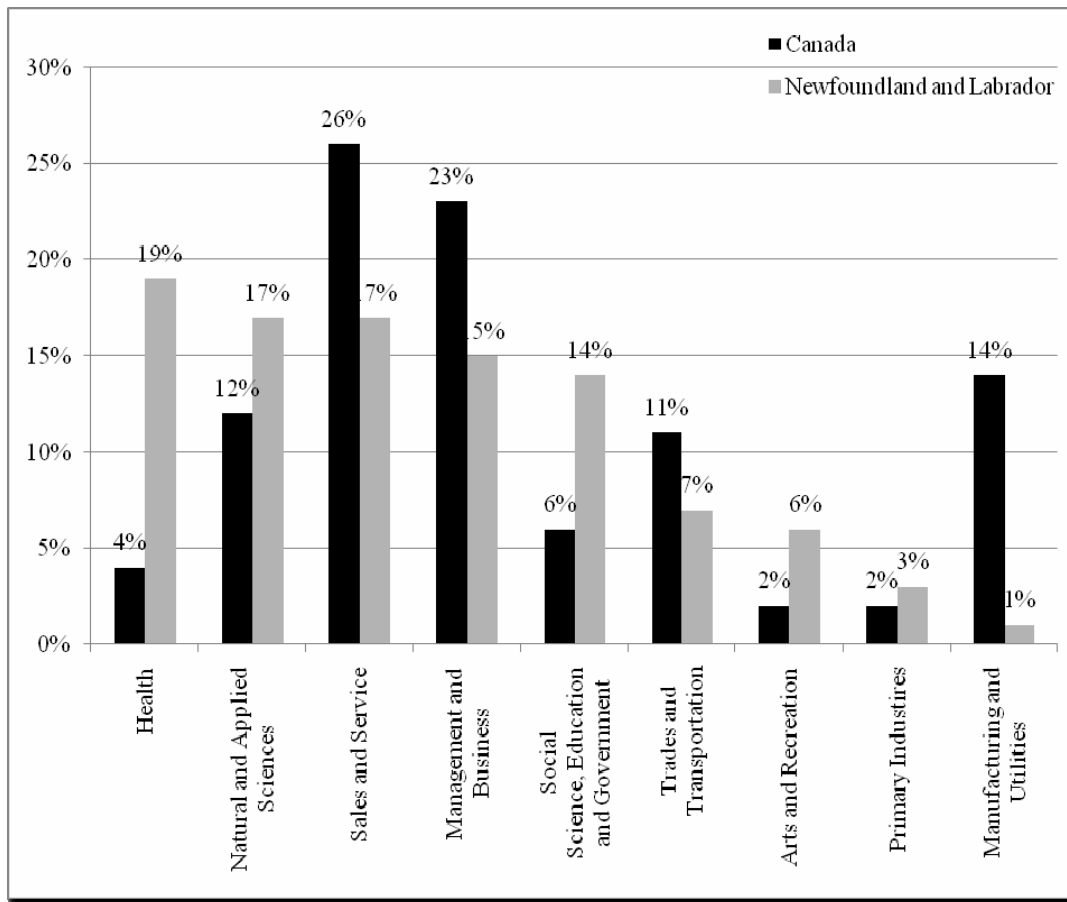
Source: Census 2001

The numbers demonstrate that immigrants to Newfoundland and Labrador tend to have higher education levels than the Canadian average. This is partially due to the large proportion of economic immigrants employed in the medical, education, and oil sectors of this province.

<sup>64</sup> *Retention and Integration*, 10.

Figure 5 illustrates the predominance medicine and education as employment areas for immigrants in Newfoundland and Labrador.

**Figure 5: Occupational Profile of Immigrants**



Source: *Retention and Integration*

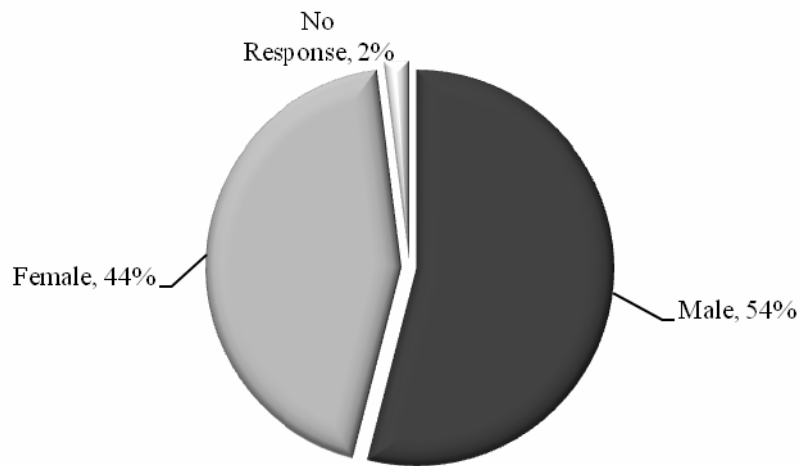
The employment trends for immigrants in Newfoundland and Labrador are significantly different from trends in Canada more generally. In particular, significantly more immigrants in this province are employed in the field of health care than the Canadian average. Other strong employment areas for immigrants in Newfoundland and Labrador include the professional areas of natural and applied sciences, management and business, and social science, education and government. The province also employs immigrants in the sales and service sector, but unlike the Canadian average, this is not the major employment area for immigrants.

### 5.3 Description of Immigrant Survey Sample

The immigrant survey was administered to seventy-one (71) individuals in Newfoundland and Labrador. An effort was made to ensure that the immigrant sample contained a balanced representation of respondents according to gender and age at time of arrival in Canada. As shown in Figure 6, the survey sample contained a reasonable gender representation, with slightly more men surveyed than women (54% and 44%, respectively).

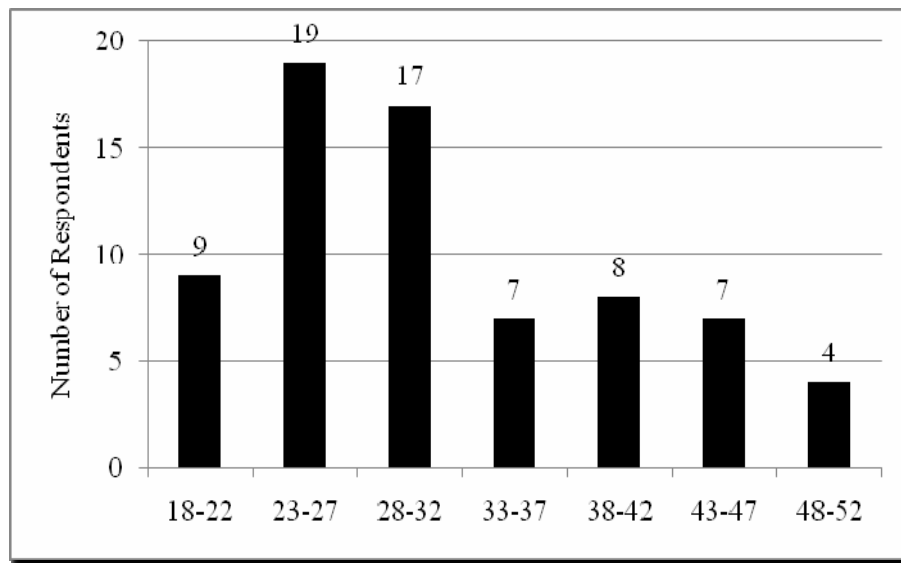


**Figure 6: Distribution of Immigrants Surveyed by Gender**



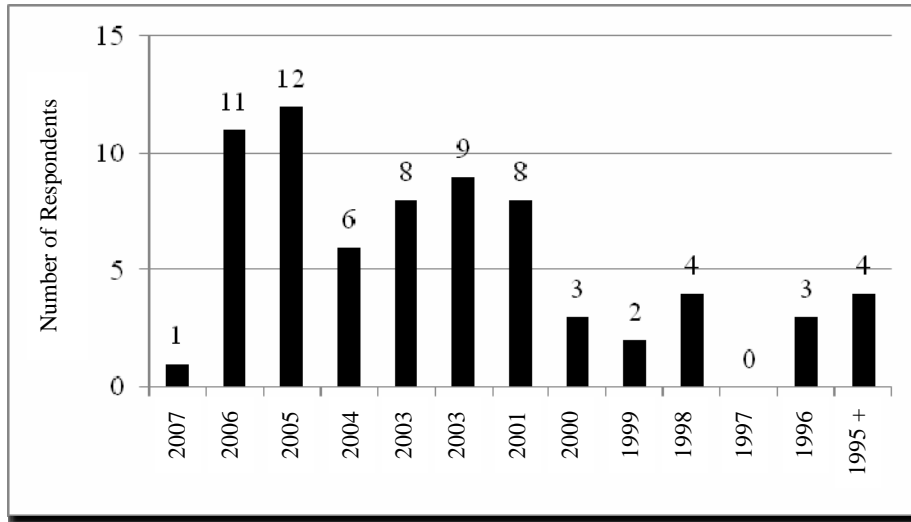
As illustrated in Figure 7, approximately 63% of respondents (45/71) reported that they were between the ages of 18 and 32 upon arriving in Canada, while 37% were between the ages of 33 and 47.

**Figure 7: Age at Arrival in Canada**



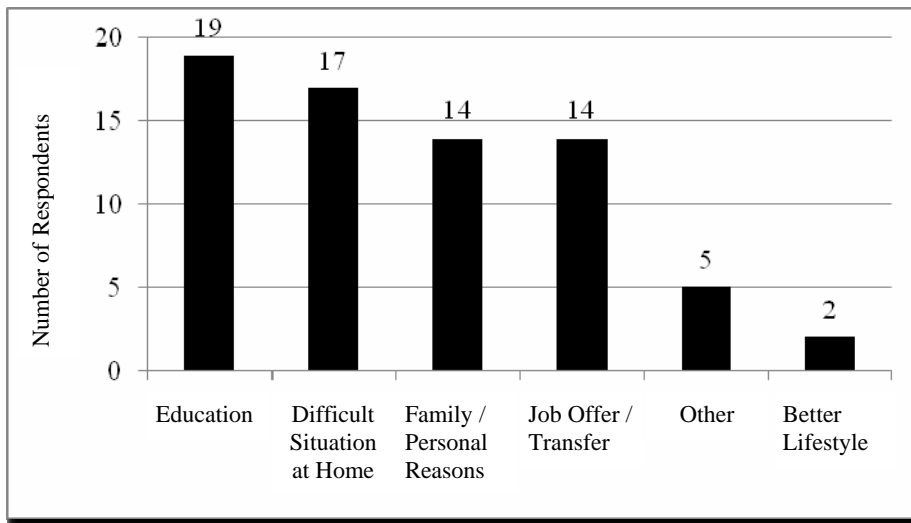
In order to obtain the most relevant information concerning the current issues faced by immigrants during their integration into both the local workforce and into Newfoundland and Labrador society in general, an effort was made to ensure that the immigrant sample contained primarily individuals who immigrated to Canada within the last ten (10) years. The majority of respondents 76% have been in Canada for ten (10) years or less. Many of those individuals arrived in 2005 and 2006 [Figure 8].

**Figure 8: Year of Arrival in Canada**



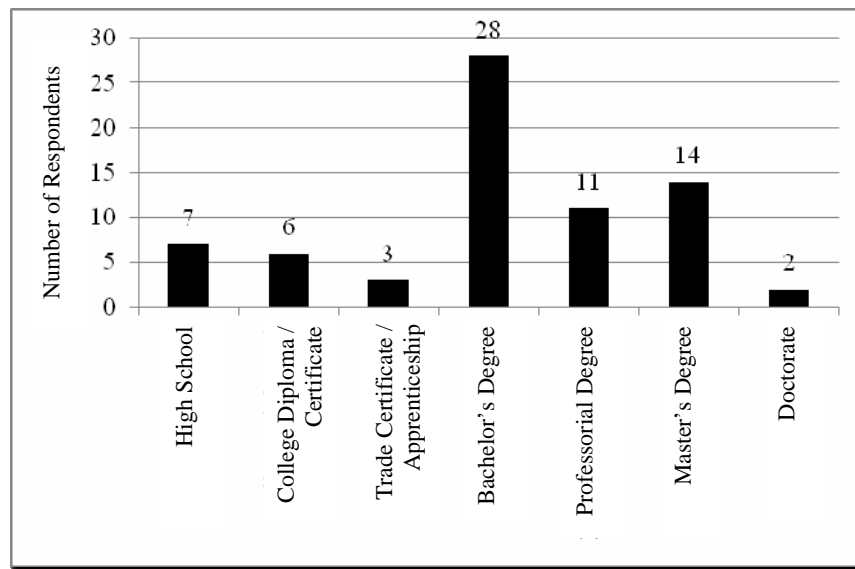
When asked why they moved to Newfoundland and Labrador, the majority of respondents indicated the following reasons: to pursue educational opportunities (27%); to escape a difficult situation in their home country, (24%); to accept a job offer/transfer (20%); and for family or personal reasons (20%) [Figure 9].

**Figure 9: Reasons for Moving to Newfoundland and Labrador**



Finally, as shown in Figure 10, the immigrants who completed the survey were well educated.

**Figure 10: Highest Level of Education**



Specifically, 77% of respondents (55/71) indicated that they completed educational training at a university. Of those, 51% completed a Bachelor degree, 20% completed a Professional degree, and 29% completed at least one graduate degree.

## 5.4 Immigrant Perspectives on Employment

One goal of the current research is to describe a number of issues related to job satisfaction and employment opportunities in Newfoundland and Labrador from an immigrant perspective. The survey asked individuals about their current employment situation – 61% responded that they were employed and 39% that they are not employed. However, these statistics must be interpreted in context because a wide range of immigrants were enlisted for the survey, including a significant number of international students who may or may not be employed outside school.

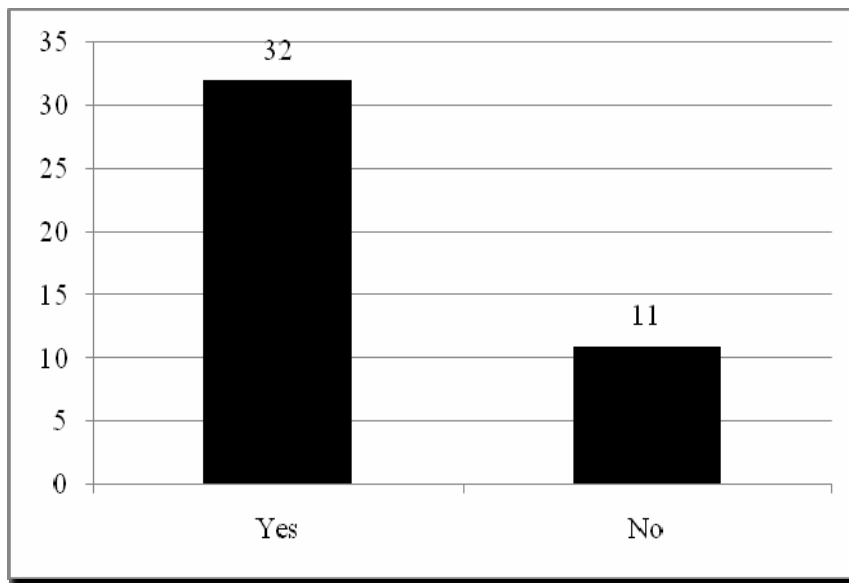
The survey results provide insight into the work situation of those respondents who are employed. In particular, Figure 11 demonstrates that 60% of immigrants who are currently working are employed in their area of academic training or specialization.

**Figure 11: Immigrant Respondents who are Working in their Area of Specialization**



According to Figure 12, 74% of immigrant respondents (32/43) who are currently working are satisfied with their jobs.

**Figure 12: Immigrant Respondents who are Satisfied with their Current Jobs**



In order to improve working conditions for immigrants in Newfoundland and Labrador, it is important to determine the negative experiences of those individuals who are not satisfied with their current jobs. Thus, respondents who reported they were not satisfied with their jobs were asked to indicate why this is the case. The results are described in Table 3.

Eleven individuals responded to this survey question and they were permitted to select more than one

response. The main reasons selected were: a lack of advancement and development opportunities (55%), poor pay (45%), and the job is not in their desired profession (45%).

**Table 3: Reasons why Immigrant Respondents are not Satisfied with their Jobs**

Reason	Number of Respondents	Percent
Lack of Advancement and Development Opportunities	6	55%
Job is not in Desired Profession	5	45%
Poor Pay	5	45%
Lack of Job Security	3	27%
Position not in Area of Specialization	2	18%
Inconvenient Work Location	2	18%
Not Enough Work Hours	1	9%
Poor Physical Conditions	1	9%
Difficulty Adapting to Work Culture/Co-Workers/Supervisor	1	9%
Problems with Workload/Responsibilities	1	9%
Note: Eleven (11) individuals responded and they could select more than one response.		

In order to investigate immigrant accessibility to the Newfoundland and Labrador labour market, respondents were asked a number of questions about their experiences in seeking employment. As illustrated in Figure 13, regardless of whether they are currently employed, the majority (58%) of respondents indicated they are looking for a job or another job.

**Figure 13: Immigrant Respondents who are Currently Looking for Employment**



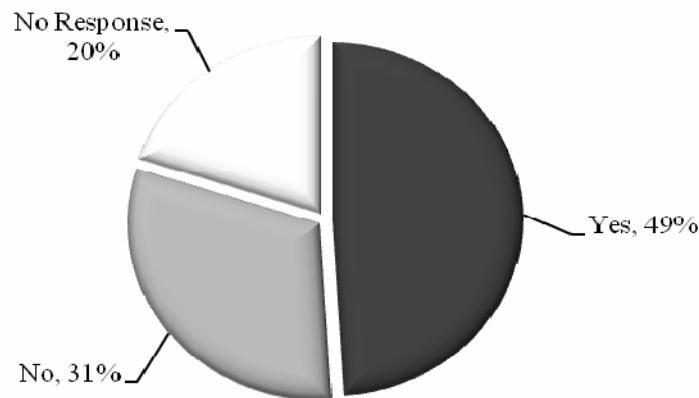
According to Table 4, the most frequent reason given by respondents for why they are looking for a job is to obtain employment in their area of specialization (response rate of 73%). Respondents also identified access to more advancement and development opportunities in the workplace and better pay as reasons why they are searching for a/another job.

**Table 4: Reasons why Immigrant Respondents are looking for another Job**

Reason	Number of Respondents	Percent
Obtain a Position in Area of Specialization	30	73%
Better Advancement and Development Opportunities	21	51%
Better Pay	20	49%
Obtain Better Job Security	12	29%
Change in Career	8	20%
Work in Better Physical Conditions	5	12%
Better Work Culture	5	12%
Find a More Convenient Work Location	5	12%
Obtain More Work Hours	4	10%
Obtain More Appropriate Workload/Responsibilities	4	10%
Obtain a More Convenient Work Schedule	4	10%
To Avoid Discrimination	2	5%
Obtain Less Work Hours	1	2%
Other	6	15%
Note: Forty-one (41) individuals responded and could select more than one response.		

Approximately 49% of respondents indicated that they have experienced difficulties finding sector specific employment [Figure 14] and Table 5 outlines the reasons for such difficulties.

**Figure 14: Immigrant Respondents Cannot Find Sector-Specific Employment**



**Table 5: Reasons why Immigrant Respondents Cannot Find Sector-Specific Employment**

Reason	Number of Respondents	Percent
Lack of Canadian Work Experience	24	69%
Foreign Work Experience Not Accepted	21	60%
No Connections in the Job Market	19	54%
Foreign Credentials Not Accepted	17	49%
Lack of Employment Opportunities Available	17	49%
Not able to Find Job in Chosen Field	15	42%
Language Problems	11	31%
Lack of Canadian Job References	11	17%
No Family or Friends Available to Assist in Job Search	5	14%
Not Knowing how to Find a Job	4	11%
Unfamiliarity with City or Town they are Living in	3	9%
Transportation Problems	3	9%
Cannot Find/Afford Childcare	3	9%
Discrimination	1	3%
Note: Twenty-two (22) individuals responded and could select more than one response.		

Respondents considered lack of Canadian work experience (69%) and difficulties having foreign work experience accepted by employers (60%) as the most significant reasons why they are experiencing problems obtaining a job. They also identified the lack of connections in the labour market (54%), the lack of employment opportunities in Newfoundland and Labrador (49%), and the non-recognition of foreign credentials (49%) as important issues. These barriers are also cited within the academic and policy-related literature as being among the top employment barriers facing immigrants in the Canadian workforce.

Immigrants may be experiencing difficulty finding employment in their chosen fields because of a mismatch between how immigrants are looking for jobs and how employers publicly advertise job openings. As shown in Table 6, the majority of respondents who completed the immigrant survey reported that they were searching relevant websites for job availability (66%).

**Table 6: How Immigrant Respondents Search for Labour Market Information**

Method	Number of Respondents	Percent
Searching Internet Websites	27	66%
Through the Association for New Canadians	15	37%
Searching Through Friends or Relatives	15	37%
Contacting Employers Directly	13	32%
Placing/ Answering Newspaper Ads	11	27%
Through an Employment Agency	5	12%
Searching Through Co-Workers	4	10%
Being Referred by Another Employer	2	5%
Note: Respondents could select more than one response.		

Other methods that immigrants identified as part of their job-search process include checking through the ANC (37%), through friends or relatives (37%), and by contacting employers directly (32%).

In the meantime, employers identified their most frequent methods of advertising job positions – placing newspaper advertisements (83%), advertising through internet websites (63%), and advertising on their company websites (46%) [Table 7].

**Table 7: How Employer Respondents Advertise for Job Openings**

Method	Number of Respondents	Percent
Newspaper Advertisements	54	83%
Other Internet Websites	41	63%
Company Website	30	46%
Employment Agency	21	32%
Other Employers	10	15%
Association for New Canadians	7	11%
Other	10	15%
Note: Respondents could select more than one response.		



Although the vast majority of employers advertise in local newspapers, only 27% of immigrants use local newspapers as a job search tool – therefore, there appears to be a slight discrepancy between where employers advertise opportunities and where immigrants search for opportunities. However, this discrepancy should not be overemphasized because many immigrants have access to job advertisements (newspaper and other media) through contact with the ANC. While only 11% of employers advertise their job openings with the organization, the ANC makes every effort to learn about job opportunities and pass the information on to immigrant candidates. As such, the ANC is an important liaison between local employers and the immigrant community.

## 5.5 Future Plans

In terms of whether respondents are planning to settle permanently in Newfoundland and Labrador, 49% reported that they are undecided [Figure 15]. This is not unusual considering the nature of immigrant populations and the fact that the vast majority (77%) of respondents have only been in the province since 2001 – they are very recent arrivals and constitute a transient population. As such, many respondents are still exploring the possibilities for their new lives in Canada.

Of those respondents who *have decided* on their future plans, 78% indicated that they are settling permanently in Newfoundland and Labrador while 22% are planning to leave.

**Figure 15: Immigrant Respondents who are settling in Newfoundland and Labrador**

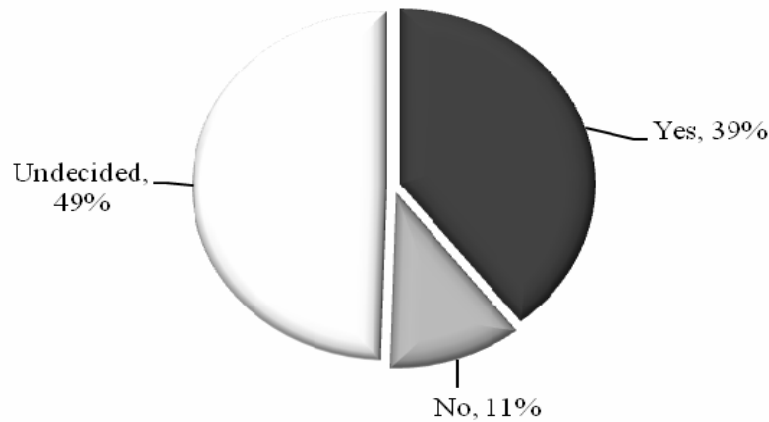


Table 8 lists the reasons why immigrants have chosen to settle in this province.

**Table 8: Reasons for Settling in Newfoundland and Labrador**

Reason	Number of Respondents	Percent
Good Quality of Life	19	68%
Feel Welcome Here	17	61%
Proximity to Family and Friends	13	46%
Political/Religious Freedom in NL	10	36%
Improve Future for Family	9	32%
Good Social (Health) System	7	25%
Good Job Opportunities	6	21%
Good Working Conditions	4	14%
Good Business Climate	3	11%
Other	3	11%
Note: Twenty-eight individuals responded and could select more than one response.		

Most respondents are planning to settle in Newfoundland and Labrador because there is a good quality of life (68%), they feel welcome here (61%), and they are close to family and friends (46%). Areas that need improvement for encouraging immigrants to settle in the province are mostly associated with the economy and job opportunities.

Table 9 lists the reasons given by respondents for not settling permanently in Newfoundland and Labrador. It should be noted that only eight individuals (out of seventy-one) responded that they are not planning to settle in the province.

**Table 9: Reasons for Not Settling in Newfoundland and Labrador**

Reason	Number of Respondents	Percent
Better Job Opportunities Elsewhere	5	63%
Salary/Pay Better Elsewhere	5	63%
Proximity to Family and Friends	4	50%
Quality of Life Better Elsewhere	4	50%
Improve Future of Family	3	38%
Better Access to Education Elsewhere	3	38%
Working Conditions Better Elsewhere	1	13%
Social (Health) System Better Elsewhere	1	13%
Note: Eight (8) individuals responded and could select more than one response.		

The most frequent reasons given by respondents for why they are not planning on staying in Newfoundland and Labrador relate to the labour market in this province. Five (5) out of eight (8) respondents indicated that both better job opportunities and higher paying jobs can be found elsewhere. Taking into consideration the demographic change in Newfoundland and Labrador and increased provincial out-migration [Section 5.1], the number of immigrants leaving the province in search of better job opportunities is comparatively low.

## 6.0 Labour Market Profile in Newfoundland and Labrador

### 6.1 Labour Market Information

In the last decade Newfoundland and Labrador has experienced a significant economic growth thanks mainly to the development of the oil and gas industry. As a result of an increased economic activity, as well as the increased number of retirees, there are numerous new jobs and openings created in this province. (According to the latest population forecasts, by 2019 there could be almost two retirees for every one new entrant into the labour market.)<sup>65</sup> Even though the province still maintains the highest rate of unemployment in the country, Newfoundland & Labrador Statistics Agency's most recent labour market statistics shows an important decrease in the unemployment rate from 16.9% in 1999 to 14.3% in March 2007 [Table10].

**Table 10: Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Force Information**

Labour Force Characteristics, March 2007	
	(thousands)
Population	425.7
Labour force	254.0
Employment	217.7
Full-time	187.6
Part-time	30.1
Unemployment	36.3
Participation rate	59.7%
Unemployment rate	14.3%
Employment rate	51.1%
Source: Statistics Canada, 2007	

### 6.2 Current Labour Market Conditions by Industry

When analyzing recent employment trends and current labour market conditions, the Department of Human Resources Labour and Employment in *A Summary of Regional Perspectives on Labour Market Trends in Newfoundland and Labrador* stresses that the “examples of current or emerging skills shortages were cited in industries such as health care, oil and gas, mining, marine industries, fishing and retail and food service, as well as the not-for-profit sector. Occupational shortages were also occurring in the skilled trades, human

<sup>65</sup> Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, News Release, “Initiatives will increase access to information about jobs and workers,” (St. John’s: Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment, 10 May 2005), available on-line at <http://www.releases.gov.nl.ca/releases/2005/hrle/0510n08.htm>, accessed on 13 April 2007.

resources and highly skilled technological positions, in general.”<sup>66</sup> At the moment, there are major recruitment and retention challenges faced by the employers in the province due to several factors: strong competition for workers from other national and international jurisdictions, lack of competitive wages, lack of promotion and availability of information about the province and others.<sup>67</sup>

The most significant changes in the employment by industry since 1999 have occurred in the service-producing sector, management, administrative and other support, educational services, and health care and social assistance. These are the industries that are also most likely to experience growth in the future. At the moment labour shortages are most evident in the retail and foods service sectors, traditional entry points to the Canadian workforce.

**Table 11: Employment by Industry (NAICS), Newfoundland and Labrador  
1999-2006 Annual and Current Month**

Industry (Thousands)	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Feb. 2007
All Industries	201.0	198.0	203.8	207.2	212.3	214.3	214.1	215.7	203.0
Goods-Producing Sector	46.8	43.0	43.7	42.6	42.2	47.7	49.0	49.1	36.8
Agriculture	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.5	1.3	2.2	1.9	1.0
Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil, & Gas	14.5	14.4	14.0	13.8	14.5	15.6	15.2	16.4	14.3
Fish Harvesting	8.3	8.3	6.8	7.6	7.9	8.3	8.8	8.2	6.8
Utilities	2.2	1.6	2.4	2.5	2.1	2.0	2.4	2.2	1.5
Construction	11.4	10.9	10.5	9.3	9.5	11.7	12.4	12.9	9.2
Manufacturing	17.5	15.2	15.8	16.0	14.6	17.2	16.8	15.7	10.8
Fish Processing	8.1	6.0	6.9	7.2	6.0	7.8	7.0	6.7	2.1
Services-Producing Sector	154.2	155.1	160.0	164.6	170.1	166.6	165.0	166.6	166.3
Trade	34.4	35.3	38.3	37.9	36.5	39.0	38.5	37.7	37.4
Transportation and Warehousing	10.6	11.1	11.8	10.4	12.3	12.0	11.2	11.6	9.9
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, & Leasing	7.8	7.4	7.7	7.4	7.9	8.1	7.6	6.5	6.8
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	6.0	6.6	6.8	7.7	7.4	6.7	7.1	6.7	7.5
Management, Administrative and Other Support	4.1	4.8	5.9	8.4	7.7	7.2	7.4	8.5	7.3
Educational Services	16.4	16.0	16.7	17.3	15.8	16.7	16.8	16.6	21.2
Health Care & Social Assistance	28.3	28.1	28.7	29.3	31.3	29.7	29.4	30.1	30.6
Information, Culture, & Recreation	5.6	6.9	7.4	7.4	7.6	7.9	7.2	8.8	7.5
Accommodation & Food Services	11.5	12.4	11.8	11.9	13.6	12.9	13.5	13.4	12.3
Other Services	12.1	10.9	9.4	10.7	12.7	10.9	11.5	11.3	9.2
Public Administration	17.4	15.6	15.6	16.2	17.1	15.4	14.7	15.3	16.6

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, March 2007

<sup>66</sup> Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, “What We Heard: Regional Labour Market Information Workshops, Fall 2005 – A Summary of Regional Perspectives on Labour market Trends in Newfoundland and Labrador,” Strengthening Partnerships in the Labour Market, Report #1, (St. John’s: Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment, 2005), available online at <http://www.hrle.gov.nl.ca/hrle/publications/pdf/RegionallMIWorkshops.PDF>.

<sup>67</sup> “What We Heard.”

### 6.3 Employer Survey Sample

In terms of the sample of employer respondents, the research team made every effort to ensure a reasonable representation of the various business sectors found in Newfoundland and Labrador.

As demonstrated in Figure 16, 26% of businesses surveyed were in the professional, scientific, and technological services sector. Retail trade and accommodations and food services sectors received high representation in the sample (14% and 12%, respectively). The other businesses were more or less spread equally over the other eleven sectors.

Figure 16: Type of Business

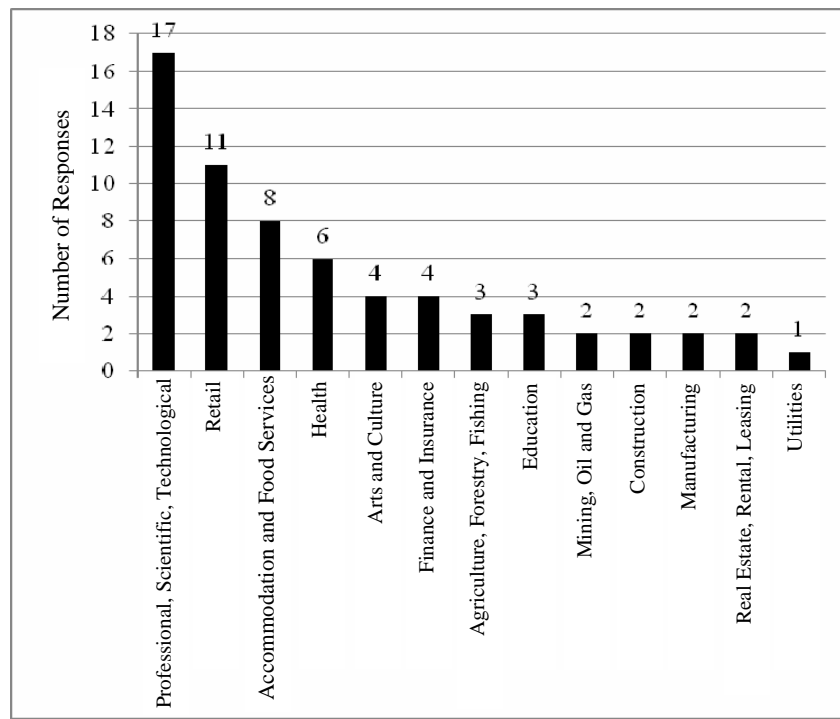
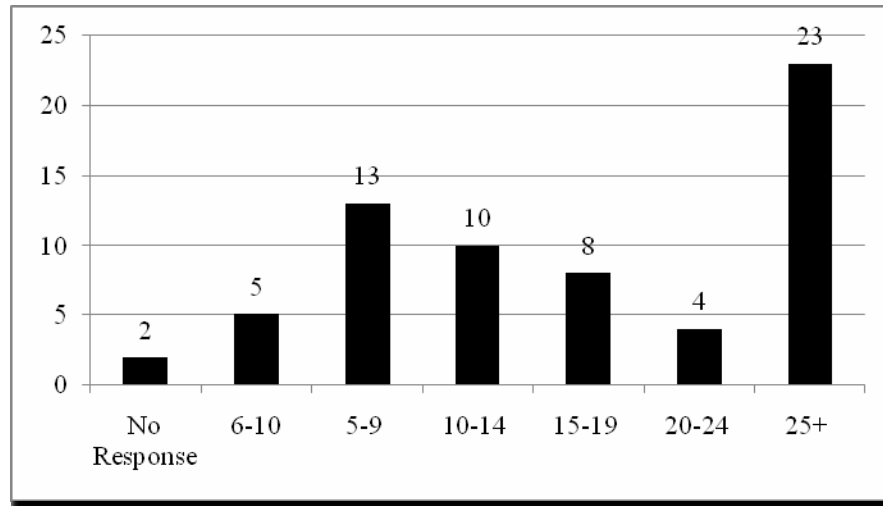


Figure 17 outlines the distribution of respondents by how many years they have been in operation. The majority of employers are well-established, with ten or more years in business.

**Figure 17: Years in Operation**



Approximately 62% of employers who completed the survey have been in operation for less than 25 years, while 35% have been in operation for at least 25 years. The sample contains a reasonable representation of businesses that are more or less established in the province.

Figure 18 portrays the distribution of respondents according to their number of employees. The majority of businesses (71%) had more than twenty (20) employees.

**Figure 18: Number of Employees**

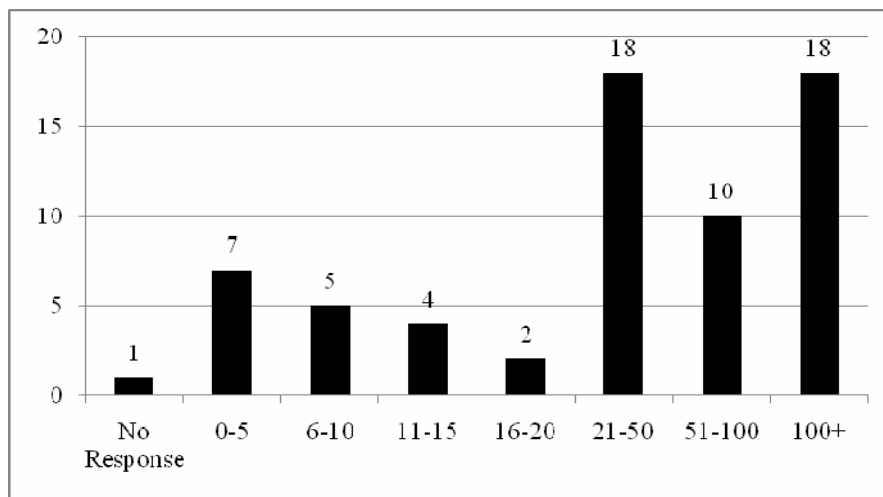
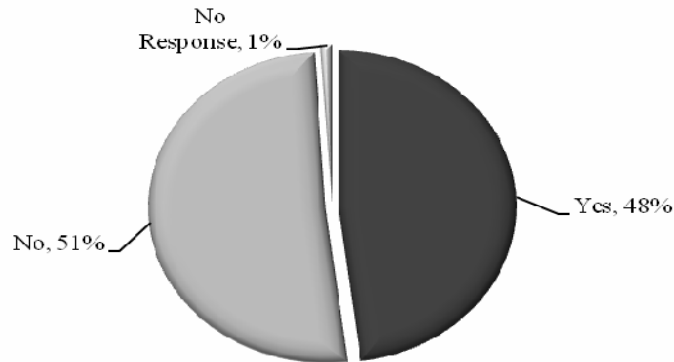
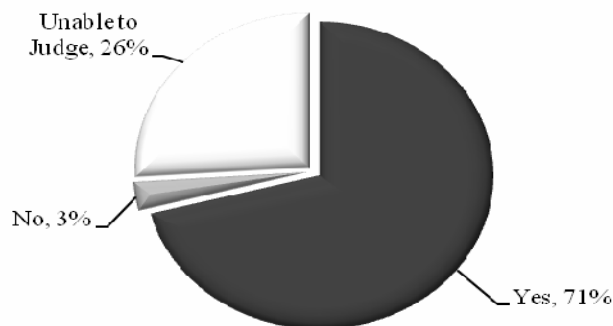


Figure 19 shows that almost half of the employers surveyed (48%) regularly received job applications from immigrant candidates.

**Figure 19: Regular Applications from Immigrant Candidates**



It is evident in Figure 20 that the majority of employers (71%) reported that their experience with hiring immigrant employees has been positive. Only 3% of respondents indicated that their experience was negative.



**Figure 20: Positive Experience with Immigrant Employees**

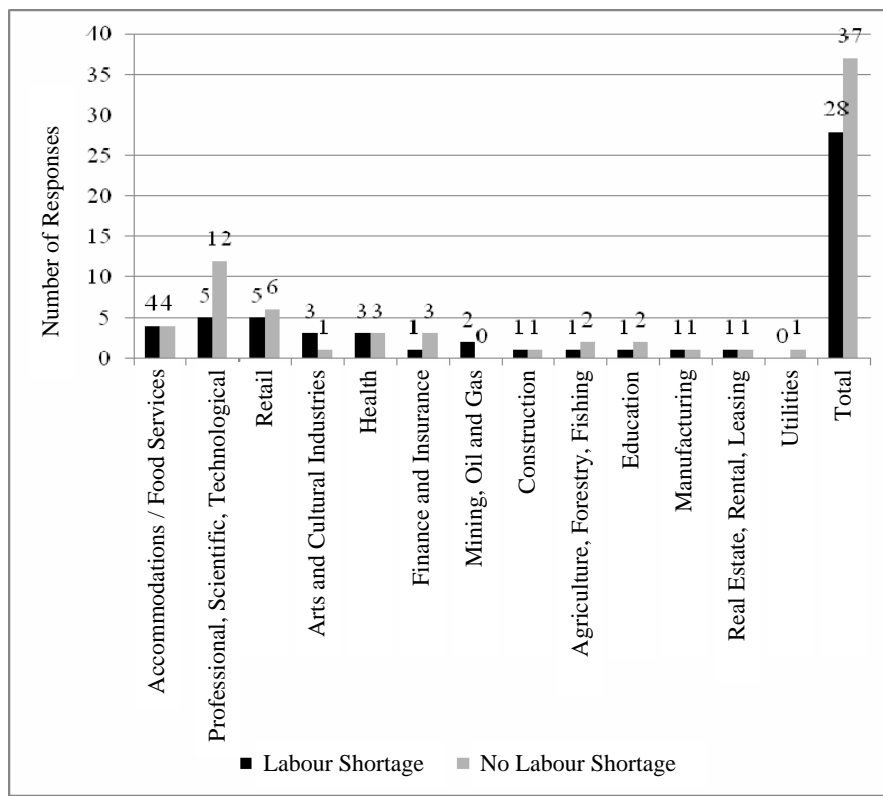
## 6.4 Employer Survey Findings on Current Labour Market Conditions

The current research project investigates areas of skills shortages across the various employment sectors in Newfoundland and Labrador and examines how employers plan to deal with these shortages. Forty-three percent (43%) of employers surveyed experienced a labour shortage within the *last* five years.

Figure 21 details labour shortages in the *last* five years by industry sector. Shortages were reported by representatives of all employment sectors, to varying degrees, with the exception of Utilities (However, it should be noted that there was only one respondent from the Utilities sector, making it much less a representative sample compared to, for example, the Professional, Scientific and Technological Services

sector which had seventeen respondents.

**Figure 21: Labour Shortages in the *Last* Five Years by Sector**



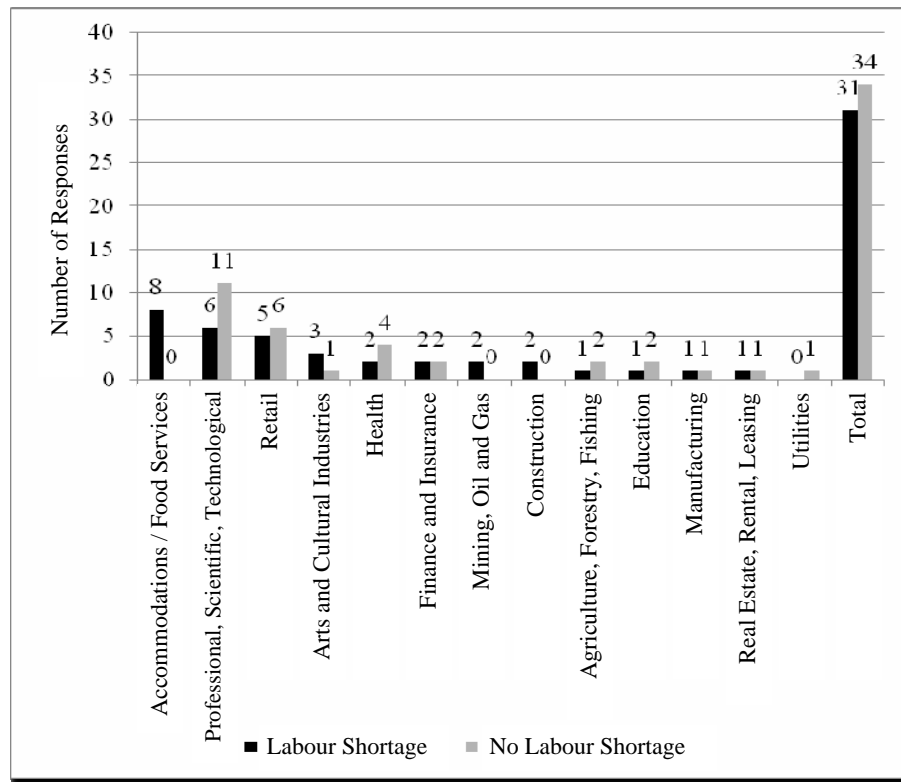
Most shortages were reported in the areas of Professional, Scientific and Technological Services, Retail Trade, and Accommodations and Food Services. However, one must be cautious when interpreting these figures because these sectors were over-represented in the survey sample. Furthermore, while more employers in Professional, Scientific and Technological Services experienced skills shortages in the last five years compared to the other occupational groups, even more employers in this sector did *not* experience a shortage.

Industry sectors in Newfoundland and Labrador are increasingly expecting labour shortages in the future. Fifty-two percent (52%) of employers predict a labour shortage within the *next* five years.

According to Figure 22, labour shortages are predicted in the next five years within all business sectors, except Utilities (again, there was only one respondent from the Utilities sector). For example, more businesses in the Accommodations and Food Services sector are expecting a labour shortage within the next five years than they reported in the last five years (four respondents experienced a shortage and four respondents did not – Figure 21).



**Figure 22: Anticipated Labour Shortage in the Next Five Years by Sector**



However, there are also respondents in most sectors who do not expect labour shortages in the near future. The only sectors where all respondents unanimously predict a labour shortage are: 1) Accommodations and Food Services, 2) Mining, Oil and Gas, and 3) Construction. The dramatic numbers in Accommodations and Food Services is significant in the context of this study because many immigrants in Canada turn to this sector for employment if they cannot gain recognition for their internationally-obtained education and experience.

In an effort to determine how employers are planning to deal with future labour shortages, respondents were asked to rate a number of human resource strategies on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (least effective) to 6 (most effective) on their effectiveness in addressing future workplace needs. The results are presented in Table 12.

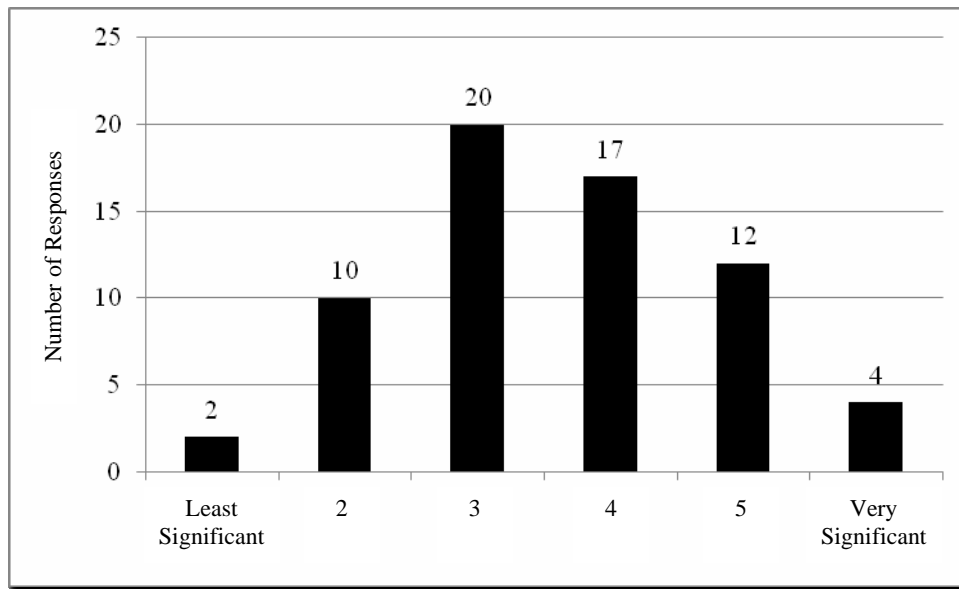
**Table 12: Favoured Strategies for Addressing Future Workplace Needs**

	More Effective	Less Effective
Retention of Current Employees	88%	12%
Upgrade Skills of Current Employees	80%	10%
Employ Youth	55%	45%
Hire Immigrants	51%	49%
Attract Employees from Other Organizations	49%	51%
Repatriate NL-Born Worker	49%	51%
Hire Retired Individuals	40%	60%
Recruit from Other Provinces	32%	68%
Relocate Work to Fulfill Needs	18%	82%

Employers overwhelmingly consider the implementation of measures to increase the retention of current employees and to upgrade the skills of current employees as the most effective ways to deal with their future workplace needs. Employing youth, immigrants, individuals from other companies, and repatriated Newfoundlanders and Labradorians figured as effective potential strategies for approximately half of respondents.

Of particular interest for the current research is the fact that 25% of employers gave “hiring more immigrants” a 5 or a 6 on the effectiveness scale [Figure 23].

**Figure 23: Favourability of Hiring Immigrants for Addressing Future Workplace Needs**



Most respondents consider “hiring more immigrants” as a moderately effective strategy for addressing future employment needs.

## Discussion and perspectives on the local labour market

The random employer sample in the survey section of the study is not representative of the provincial labour market, as all the employers who completed the survey operate in the St. John's area. Additional information regarding the employers in other parts of the province was gleaned through informant interview and analyzed in the qualitative section of the study. There are many other sectors and industries across the island and in Labrador experiencing shortages in labour. Also, the employment rate in the St. John's metro region is much higher than the one for the rest of the province. Most of the rural Newfoundland and Labrador is currently dealing with large out-migration and the loss of skilled workforce.

The new provincial Immigration Strategy argues that “increased immigration will foster innovation, create new businesses, and help to address current and projected skills shortages”.<sup>68</sup>

## 7.0 Barriers to Employment

### 7.1 Quantitative Results

#### 7.1.1 Employer Survey

In order to determine what employers believe to be the major barriers that prevent immigrants from successfully integrating into the local workforce, respondents were asked to rate twelve potential barriers on 6-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (issue is *not a significant* barrier) to 6 (issue is a *very significant* barrier). Their responses are presented in Table 13.

**Table 13: Employer Perspectives on Immigrant Employment Barriers**

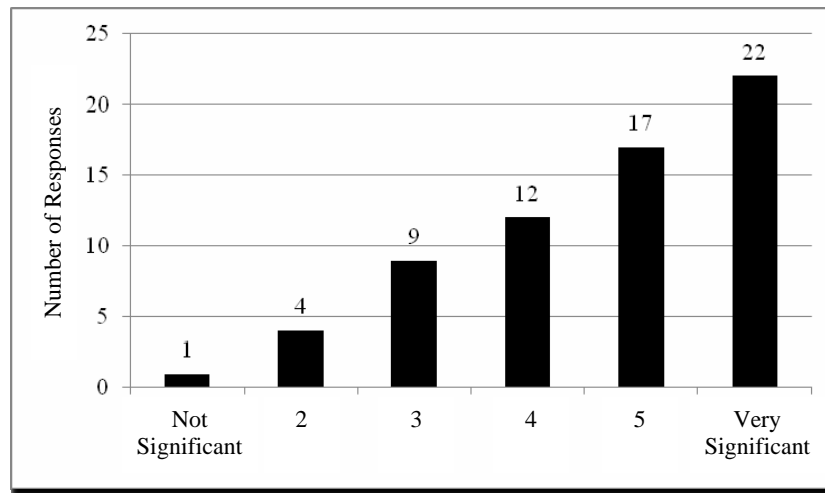
Barrier	More Significant	Less Significant
English Language	78%	22%
Economic Conditions	65%	35%
Foreign Credential Recognition	60%	40%
Access to Advice, Support, Mentoring	58%	44%
Information for Employers on Finding Immigrant Candidates	57%	43%
Knowledge of Canadian Work Practices	55%	45%
Canadian Work Experience	55%	45%
Potential Training Costs	48%	52%
Access to Labour Market Information	46%	54%
Access to Services Outside the Workforce	45%	55%
Cultural Differences in Job Application Process	42%	58%
Racism and Discrimination	20%	80%

<sup>68</sup> *Diversity – Opportunity and Growth*, 1.

Seventy-eight percent (78%) of employers consider English Language abilities to be a significant employment barrier facing immigrants in this province. Economic Conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador (65%) and Foreign Credential Recognition (60%) also rank as significant employment barriers. It is interesting to note that Racism and Discrimination is considered a significant barrier to employment by only 20% of employers. These figures are similar to the results of the Immigrant Survey, in which 24% consider Racism and Discrimination to be a significant barrier to employment [Table 14].

Figure 24 provides a more detailed breakdown of English Language as a barrier to employment according to employer responses on the Likert scale.

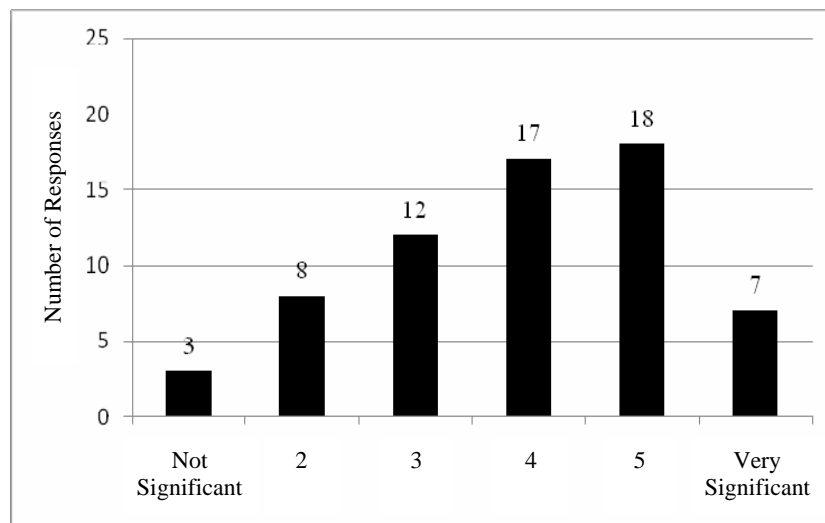
**Figure 24: Employer Perspectives on English Language as a Barrier to Employment**



Most employers consider English Language to be a very significant barrier to immigrant employment. In fact, there is more agreement among employers on English Language as a barrier to employment than any other barrier.

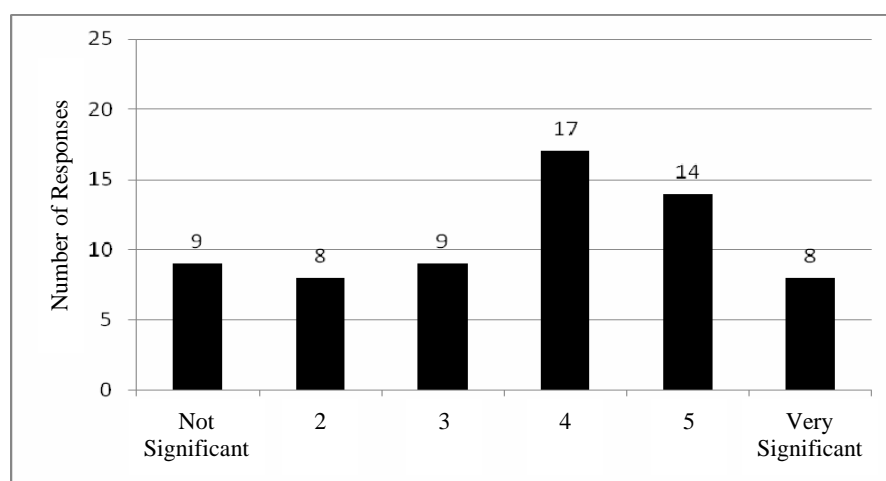
Figure 25 outlines the employer perspectives on Economic Conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador as a barrier to employment according to their responses on the Likert scale.

**Figure 25: Employer Perspectives on Economic Conditions as a Barrier to Employment**



And Figure 26 details employers' responses on the significance scale of FCR as a barrier to employment.

**Figure 26: Employer Perspectives on FCR as a Barrier to Employment**



These barriers are discussed in more detail in Section 7.2.

### 7.1.2 Immigrant Survey

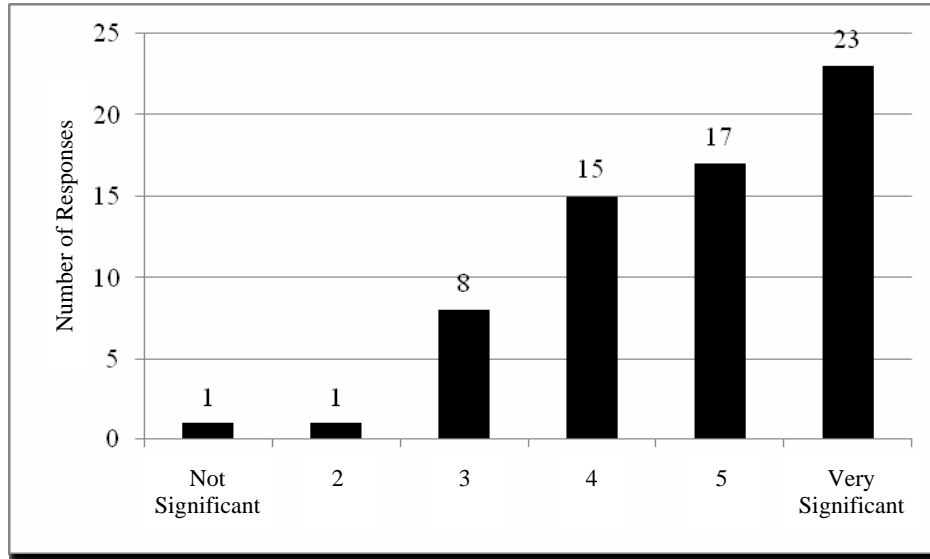
In order to obtain an immigrant perspective on the major barriers or obstacles that may prevent them from successfully integrating into the Newfoundland and Labrador workforce, they were asked to rate sixteen potential barriers on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (issue is *not* a significant barrier) to 6 (issue is a *very significant* barrier) [Table 14].

**Table 14: Immigrant Perspective on Employment Barriers**

Barrier	More Significant	Less Significant
Foreign Credential Recognition	82%	18%
Economic Conditions	72%	28%
Knowledge of Canadian Work Practices	68%	32%
Access to Advice, Support, Mentoring	66%	34%
Canadian Work Experience	63%	37%
Information for Employers on Finding Immigrant Candidates	61%	39%
Access to Labour Market Information	60%	40%
English Language	60%	40%
Financial Services	60%	40%
Cultural Differences in Job Application Process	59%	41%
Supportive Immigrant Community	54%	46%
Potential Training Costs	53%	47%
Access to Services Outside the Workforce	49%	51%
Living Conditions	40%	60%
Racism and Discrimination	24%	76%

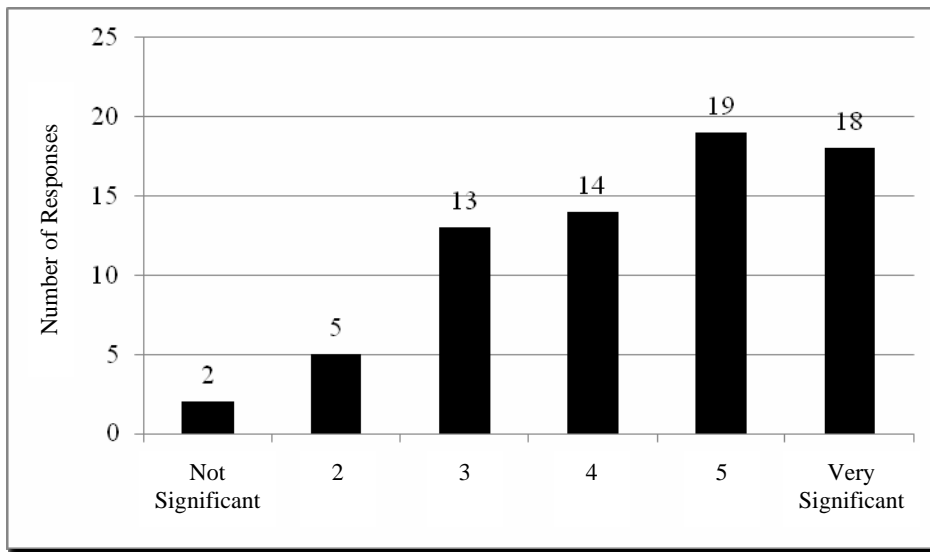
According to Table 14, 82% of immigrant respondents consider Foreign Credential Recognition to be a significant barrier to their employment in Newfoundland and Labrador. Figure 27 provides a detailed breakdown of responses according to the Likert scale.

**Figure 27: Immigrant Perspectives on FCR as an Employment Barrier**



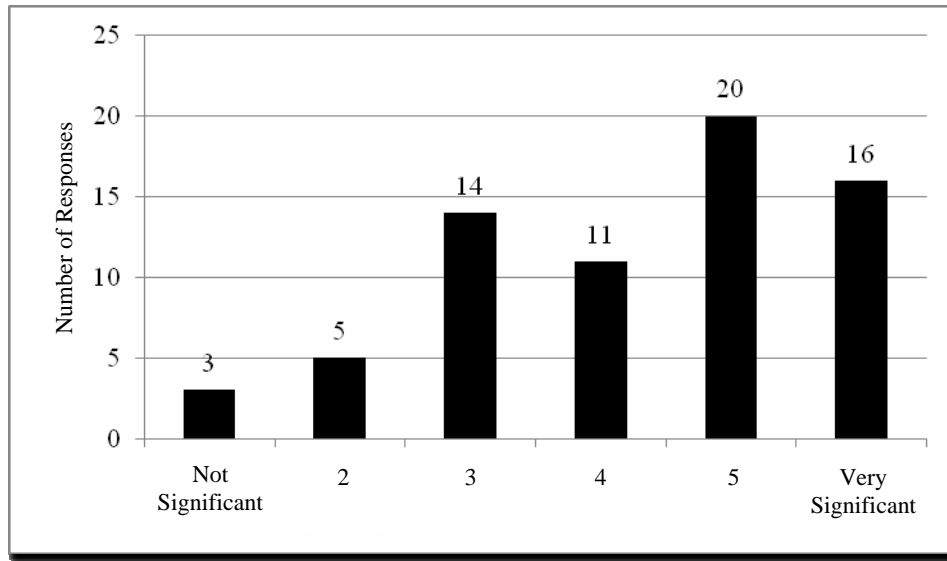
Seventy-two percent (72%) of respondents view the current economic conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador as another significant employment barrier [Table 14]. For details on results of the Likert scale see Figure 28.

**Figure 28: Immigrant Perspectives on Economic Conditions as an Employment Barrier**



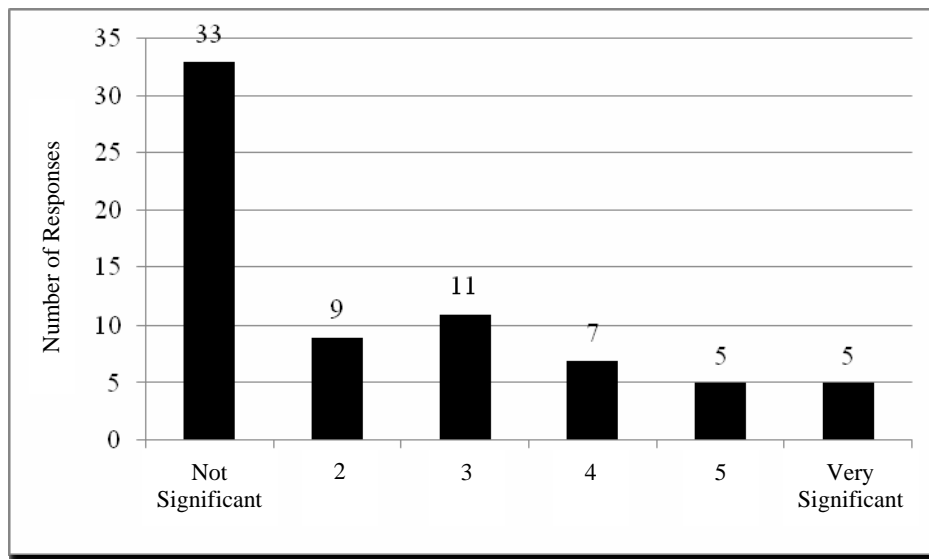
Respondents consider immigrant knowledge of Canadian work practices as another significant employment barrier, at 68% according to Table 14. Figure 29 specifies the ranking for this barrier on the Likert scale.

**Figure 29: Immigrant Perspectives on Knowledge of Canadian Work Practices as an Employment Barrier**



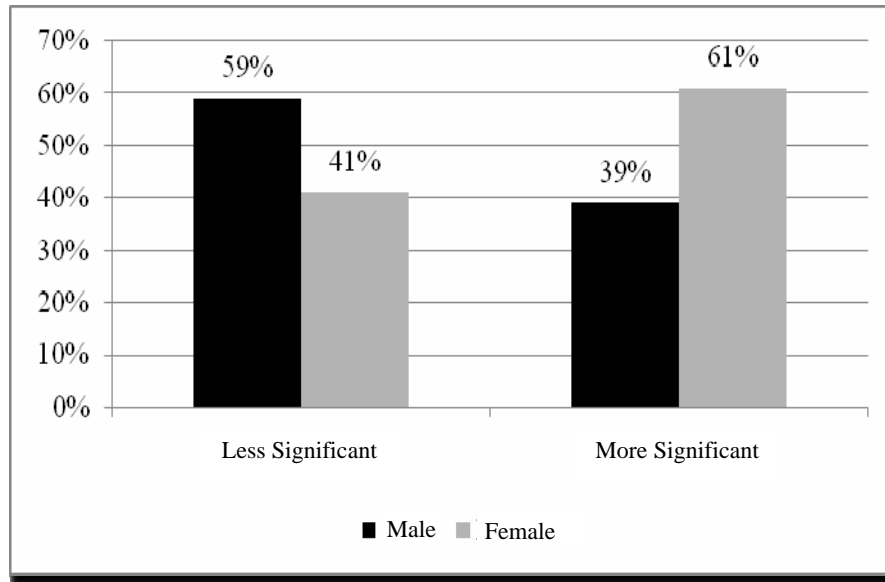
At least half of all immigrant respondents consider all of the categories to be significant barriers to employment, with the exception of Racism and Discrimination (24%), Living Conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador (40%), and Access to Services outside the Workforce (49%). Detailed results from the Likert scale are presented in Figure 30.

**Figure 30: Immigrant Perspectives on Racism / Discrimination as an Employment Barrier**

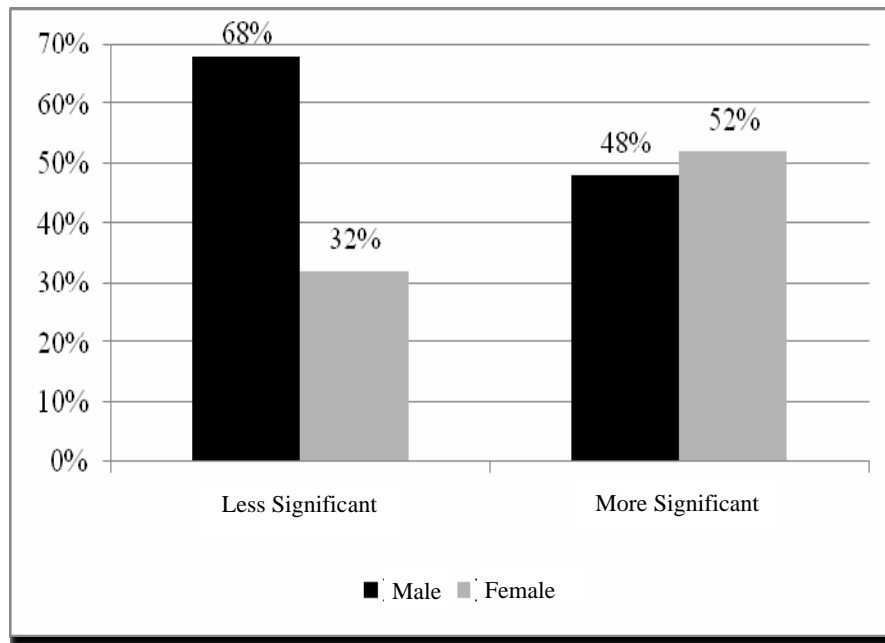


There is an interesting gender dimension to the barriers of Access to Services and Living Conditions. The majority of women rated both of these categories as more significant barriers to employment, while the majority of men rated them as less significant barriers to employment [Figure 31 and Figure 32].

**Figure 31: Gender Dimension of Access to Services External to the Workforce as an Employment Barrier**



**Figure 32: Gender Dimension of Living Conditions in NL as an Employment Barrier**



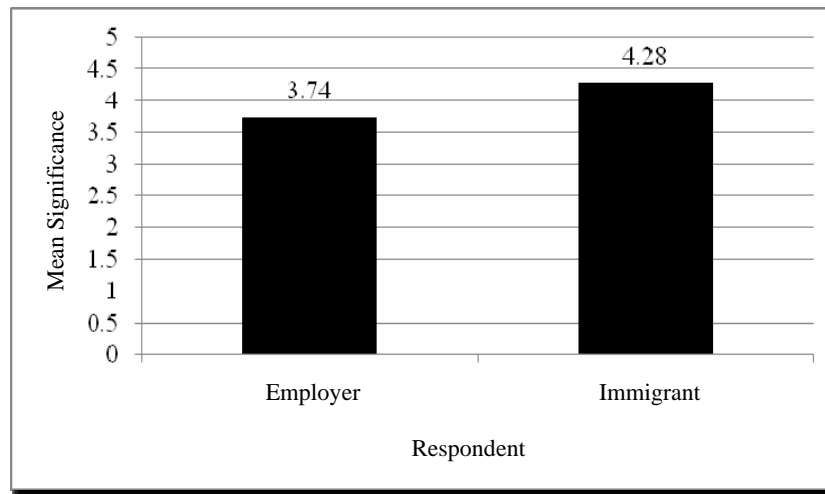
These gender dimensions are discussed in detail in Section 7.3



### 7.1.3 Statistical Comparison

In order to investigate whether employers and immigrants differed in their views regarding the major employment barriers, an independent measures *t*-test analysis was conducted on each of their responses to the twelve barriers that were rated by both groups. The results of this analysis revealed that there were significant differences between the two groups for three of the potential employment barriers. As seen in Figure 33, immigrants surveyed rated knowledge of Canadian business and work practices as a more significant barrier than did employers,  $t(132) = 2.67, p < .05$ .

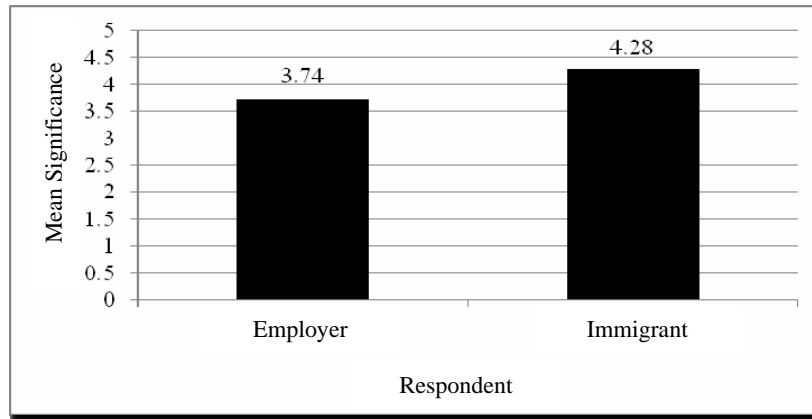
**Figure 33: Comparison of Employer and Immigrant Mean Significance Scores on Knowledge of Canadian Work Practices as an Employment Barrier**



The difference in the degree to which employers and immigrants consider work practices as a barrier to employment highlights the perspectives from which both players approach the workplace in Newfoundland and Labrador. Employers are very familiar with Canadian and local work practices since that is the context in which their business operates. At the same time, they may be unaware that the workplace operates differently in different countries and in different cultural contexts. Therefore, employers are somewhat unfamiliar with the challenges that adapting to a Canadian workplace presents to immigrant employees.

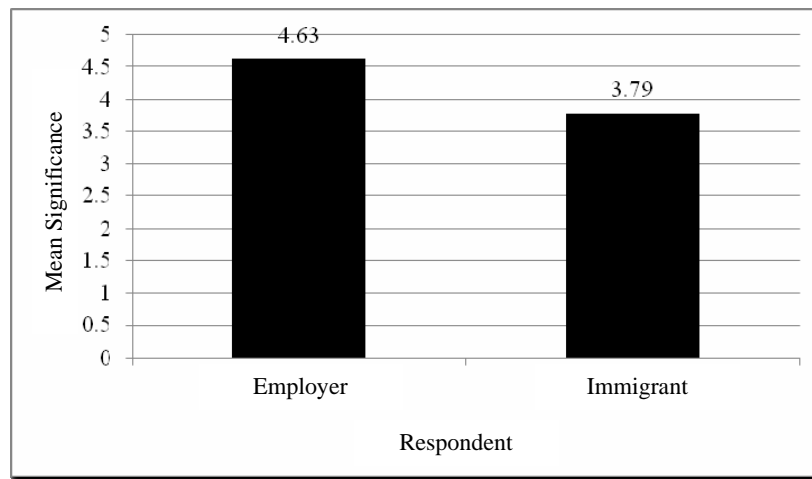
According to Figure 34, immigrants also rated the recognition of foreign credentials as a more significant barrier than employers,  $t(130) = 4.00, p < .05$ . Employers are much less familiar with the processes of foreign credential recognition than immigrants, since most assessment procedures are conducted by educational institutions and professional associations rather than by employers. Therefore, employers have less exposure to foreign credential recognition as a barrier to employment.

**Figure 34: Comparison of Employer and Immigrant Mean Significance Scores on FCR as an Employment Barrier**



Finally, as described in Figure 35, employers rated language as a more significant barrier than did immigrants,  $t(133) = -3.18, p < .05$ . English language is recognized as more of a barrier by employers than immigrants because it is the one most easily identified by English-speaking residents, it is the barrier with which they have the most experience and it is the barrier that they have to make the most effort to deal with. On the other hand, immigrants may sometimes overestimate their own English language abilities and not realize that speaking conversational English is different from having strong occupation-specific language abilities.

**Figure 35: Comparison of Employer and Immigrant Mean Significance Scores on Language as an Employment Barrier**



The above mentioned differences are analyzed in more detail in Section 7.2.

## 7.2 Major Barriers in Detail

### 7.2.1 Foreign Credential Recognition

Canada's immigration process for Skilled Workers is based on a point-system in which candidates are evaluated according to "human capital attributes and flexible skills,"<sup>69</sup> such as education, work experience and official-language abilities. Through this system, many highly qualified people enter Canada each year hoping to establish a career in their fields of expertise. However, educational credentials and work-experience from other countries are often not recognized by local employers and professional associations. As a result, many highly qualified immigrants are unemployed or under-employed – a situation that is frustrating and discouraging for them, and counter-productive for Canadian employers who are not benefiting from the skills of immigrant candidates.

According to the quantitative results of the immigrant survey, respondents rate the non-recognition of foreign credentials as the most significant barrier to workplace integration in Newfoundland and Labrador. These figures are not surprising considering the rigorous processes that individuals with internationally-obtained credentials have to go through in Canada to have their education and work experience recognized. There are many players involved in foreign credential recognition, including all levels of government, professional associations, regulatory boards, academic institutions, credential assessment services, immigrant settlement agencies, non-profit organizations and sometimes non-regulated occupations. And these players all have different agendas – for example, professional associations have mandates to ensure the best interests of the public, while immigrant settlement agencies assist candidates through the tedious process of credential recognition. Assessment procedures are multilayered and complex and it is often difficult for candidates to understand the process, especially if their first language is not English.

Respondents of the employer survey also ranked the non-recognition of foreign credentials as a significant barrier to immigrant employment. In fact, FCR ranks third in significance according to the results of the employer survey. This is a meaningful finding because many employers do not have direct experience with credential assessment procedures. This has been conducted primarily by educational institutions and professional associations. The fact that 60% of employers identified FCR as a barrier to immigrant employment suggests that employers are familiar with the problems that FCR creates for immigrant candidates.

A special point must be made here with regards to the results of the immigrant survey. While the non-recognition of foreign credentials was ranked the top barrier facing immigrants' integration into the workforce, when asked whether they have checked with a person, organization, educational institution or employer to see if their foreign credentials would be accepted in Newfoundland and Labrador, 45% said they had not checked while 55% said they had [Figure 36].

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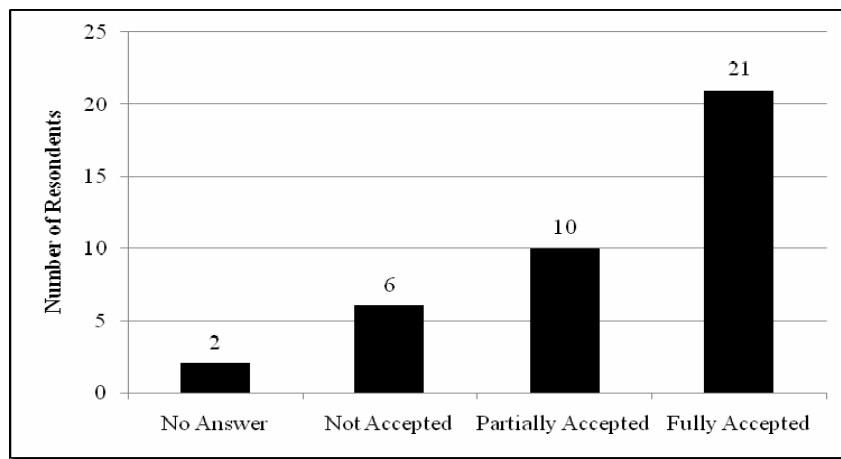
<sup>69</sup> Tolley, *The Skilled Worker Class*, available online at [http://www.canada.metropolis.net/research-policy/policy%20briefs/selection\\_r.pdf](http://www.canada.metropolis.net/research-policy/policy%20briefs/selection_r.pdf).

**Figure 36: Immigrant Respondents who have checked to see if their Foreign Credentials would be accepted**



Of the respondents who answered yes, 54% had their credentials fully accepted, 26% partially accepted and 15% were not accepted [Figure 37].

**Figure 37: Distribution of Immigrants by whether their Credentials were accepted**



These figures suggest that many respondents did not attempt to have their credentials recognized. We hypothesize that immigrants may not have tried to have their credentials recognized because the process is so time-consuming, complex and discouraging for them. Perhaps they perceived that there would be little chance of a successful outcome, and so decided it would not be worth the time and effort. In fact, many participants of the focus groups and interviews preferred to go back to school here and gain Canadian credentials rather than go through the process of getting recognition for their foreign credentials.<sup>70</sup> Educated immigrants in Newfoundland and Labrador often have to “start at zero”<sup>71</sup> when they arrive, even when they have been working in a certain field for many years – in the words of one focus group participant, “Sometimes you feel that what you did in your own country is not appreciated.”<sup>72</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Focus Group #4, 27 March 2007; Interview I33, 9 March 2007.

<sup>71</sup> Interview I36, 15 March 2007.

<sup>72</sup> Focus Group #4, 27 March 2007.

For those respondents who did attempt to have their credentials recognized, the majority were fully or at least partially successful. This suggests that for those respondents who see the value of their own credentials to the point that they are willing to go through the credential recognition process there is a good chance of success, albeit sometimes requiring upgrading or bridging. It should also be pointed out that most of the professions have extensive credential-assessment processes which, according to Jeffrey Reitz, results in relative success for immigrants in professional fields.<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, in areas where there have been high demands for qualified professionals, regulatory bodies have been active in creating bridging programs to assist immigrant candidates contribute to the field. For example, the Newfoundland and Labrador College of Veterinarians issues Conditional Temporary Licenses for internationally-trained candidates to practice. The individual is not considered a full veterinarian and they must work under supervision, but the program does provide a crucial bridge between foreign training and the local workplace.<sup>74</sup>

In Newfoundland and Labrador, the College of Physicians and Surgeons (CPSNL) has been a leader in providing bridge-training for candidates with foreign credentials. Part of the reason for such accommodations is that there has been a sustained need for physicians in this province, especially in smaller centres and rural areas. The CPSNL has developed a rigorous assessment process for evaluating International Medical Graduates. For those candidates who do not meet CPSNL requirements, there is a Clinical Skills Assessment and Training Program (CSAT) which provides individualized training. The training program is based on a two-day assessment followed by a report that outlines the candidate's strengths and weaknesses and makes specific recommendations for training.<sup>75</sup> An IMG with a provisional license is permitted to practice without passing the Medical Council examinations or completing Canadian post-graduate training as long as certain conditions are met and the physician agrees to practice within a specific geographical location in the province.<sup>76</sup> CSAT has proven to be a worthwhile mechanism for the provision of medical services in Newfoundland and Labrador, and indeed the province (along with Saskatchewan) relies on IMGs more than any other province in Canada, with over half of the physician workforce being internationally-trained.<sup>77</sup>

Some of the greatest challenges to the integration of immigrants into the Canadian workforce exist outside the professions, where assessment processes are less formal. In these situations, Prior Learning Assessment Recognition (PLAR) is a useful mechanism that provides individuals with an opportunity to receive credit for both formal and informal prior learning that has been acquired in a variety of ways. As such, it can assist immigrants who have worked in certain areas to prove themselves and gain credit for their abilities. PLAR usually involves the administration of a challenge exam, a demonstration, an interview and a portfolio of the candidate.<sup>78</sup> PLAR recognizes learning outside of school and increases the transferability of skills.<sup>79</sup> In Newfoundland and Labrador, the College of the North Atlantic (CNA) provides PLAR services that include the challenge exam, some portfolio development, and apprenticeship for trades.<sup>80</sup> It is not a program

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<sup>73</sup> Jeffrey G. Reitz, "Occupational Dimensions of Immigrant Credential Assessment: Trends in Professional, Managerial and Other Occupations, 1970-1996," Revision of a paper presented at a conference on Canadian Immigration Policy for the 21st Century, John Deutsch Institute for the Study of Economic Policy, School of Policy Studies, (Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, October 18-19, 2002), 23, available online at <http://www.utoronto.ca/ethnicstudies/credential.pdf>.

<sup>74</sup> Interview I13, 9 February 2007.

<sup>75</sup> Canadian Information Centre for International Medical Graduates, "IMG Routes to Licensure in Newfoundland," available online at <http://www.img-canada.ca/en/provinces/newfoundland/img-training-programs.html>.

<sup>76</sup> Rick Audas, Amanda Ross and David Vardy, "The Role of International Medical Graduates in the Provision of Physician Services in Atlantic Canada," prepared by the Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development and the Faculty of Medicine, (Memorial University of Newfoundland, December 2004), 35.

<sup>77</sup> Rick Audas, Amanda Ross and David Vardy, "The Use of Provisionally Licensed International Medical Graduates in Canada," *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 173 (11): 1316; see also, Interview I1, 16 January 2007; Interview I12 9 February 2007; Interview I19, 22 February 2007; and Interview I42, 22 March 2007.

<sup>78</sup> Alan Thomas, Monica Collins and Lynette Plett, "Dimensions of the Experience of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition," (Toronto: New Approaches to Lifelong Learning OISE/UT, 2001), 13.

<sup>79</sup> Sandi Howell, "Recognizing Prior Learning: Manitoba Supports Workforce Skills Development," presentation to the Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Market Symposium, St. John's, October 2006.

<sup>80</sup> Interview I11, 8 February 2007.

specifically for immigrants, but it is a program that provides assistance to any individual seeking formal credit for informal abilities and considering the range of informal experience that immigrants may possess, they should have access to this service.

The greatest barrier facing immigrants in terms of the non-recognition of foreign credentials concerns the complexity of the process and the number of players involved with recognition. It is difficult and discouraging for immigrants to be shut out of the professional or occupational field in which they worked in their country of origin. To make matters worse, even before any foreign credential assessment takes place it is up to the candidate to find the correct information regarding the field they want to enter, gain an understanding of what is required of them, obtain the necessary documents from their country and sometimes provide English translations of those documents, and then start the formal assessment process. A lot of time and energy is spent on finding and understanding the correct information, which is something that the host society could be active in communicating.

### **Recommendation**

Steps should be taken by a number of players in addressing the problems immigrants face with the non-recognition of foreign credentials. Immigrant-serving agencies are often the primary point of contact between immigrants and their new home. As representatives of immigrants and their needs, these agencies could work with federal counterparts to ensure that the new federal referral agency for credential recognition will fill critical gaps and strengthen capacity to improve effectiveness of FCR processes in this province.

Regulatory bodies and sector councils can develop a more consistent and effective approach to the assessment and recognition of foreign credentials by developing comprehensive, national assessment tools that assess and verify the unique training, skills and experience of immigrants at a similar assessment level of Canadian workers. This should involve research into existing assessment methods as well as the possibility of developing competency based assessment testing techniques in which candidates could demonstrate their competencies as part of the hiring process. Regulatory bodies and sector councils should work with all levels of government, immigrant agencies and industry to streamline immigrants into appropriate training and employment.

The provincial government can assist regulatory bodies, sector councils and immigrant-serving agencies in addressing the problems of foreign credential recognition by encouraging the formation of occupational-specific multi-stakeholder working groups that would create workable solutions to competency assessment processes in all regulated and non-regulated occupations. The government can also ensure that all stakeholders are informed about specific sector demands, which would facilitate the integration process of internationally trained workers into the workplace in a timely manner. Under the auspices of the recent Immigration Strategy, the province can be a leader in developing a strategic long term plan to facilitate the recognition of prior learning and experience, in partnerships with post secondary institutions, professional associations, licensing/regulatory bodies, sector councils and settlement serving agencies.

### **7.2.2 English Proficiency**

According to the *Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada* from Statistics Canada, language constitutes one of “the most serious difficulties immigrants [experience] when entering the labour force.”<sup>81</sup> From the employers’ point of view, the quantifiable survey data of this study supports this assertion: employers in Newfoundland and Labrador overwhelmingly consider English language to be the major barrier facing immigrants entering the workforce. In fact, there is a significant margin between English language as the top-rated barrier (with a mean response of 4.63 / 6) and the other potential barriers, including the second-rated

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<sup>81</sup> Tina Chui, *Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada: Process, Progress and Prospects*, Catalogue No. 89-611-XIE, (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2003), 34.

barrier of economic conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador (with a mean response of 3.92 / 6). These figures underline the perception among employers that English language skills constitute the greatest barrier facing immigrants integrating into the workforce of this province.

However, the English language barrier ranked significantly lower among respondents of the immigrant survey as the ninth barrier out of twelve, compared to the first barrier out of twelve for employers. Through an independent measures *t*-test analysis, the quantitative analysis demonstrates a significant difference ( $t(130) = 4.00, p < .05$ ) in the evaluation by immigrants and employers of English language as a barrier to employment.

We hypothesize that the reasons for this discrepancy are based on the respective perceptions of employers and immigrants. The English language barrier can be categorized as both an *actual* and a *perceived* barrier, but from opposite points of view. For employers, the language barrier is the one most easily identified by English-speaking Newfoundlanders. It is also the barrier with which they have the most experience and that they have to make the most effort to deal with. When employers meet a candidate whose first language is not English, or he/she has a distinctive accent, they may *perceive* that there would be a language barrier for that candidate, when in actuality that person may possess effective and appropriate language skills. Such a perception, or pre-conceived notion, could potentially hamper the candidate's opportunity to enter and integrate into the workforce.

For immigrants, they may perceive that their own English language skills are effective and appropriate when it is an *actual* barrier for them. Some immigrants may potentially overestimate their English-speaking abilities, especially in terms of occupation-specific language. Perhaps they can converse in English on a daily basis but this may not translate as easily into the workplace. Furthermore, some individuals may have conversational language skills but might not be able to read English.<sup>82</sup>

English language as a barrier for immigrants emerged within the qualitative data as well. In fact, some interviewees stated that they did not think there were any barriers in Newfoundland and Labrador for immigrants integrating into the workforce, except sometimes language.<sup>83</sup> Many stakeholders and employers identified language as a major barrier for immigrants in the local workforce. But they also expanded on this theme in some enlightening ways. One interviewee suggested that job definitions can sometimes be misunderstood because of language barriers.<sup>84</sup>

From the immigrants' perspective, one interviewee mentioned that language sometimes poses a greater barrier to women who, because of their cultural background, might be embarrassed if they cannot speak perfect English or if they have a strong accent.<sup>85</sup> This is especially challenging for people who live in smaller centres and rural areas of Newfoundland and Labrador where there is no English language training.<sup>86</sup> Many International Medical Graduates who are practicing in smaller centres find it difficult to settle if their spouse has inadequate English and there is no language training or assistance there for them.<sup>87</sup>

It is evident from both quantitative and qualitative data that English language does constitute a significant barrier to the integration of immigrants into the local workforce. However, language as a barrier is both actual and perceived for both immigrants and employers and the challenge lies in identifying what form the barrier takes according to individual situations. In any event, the introduction of advanced or occupational-specific language training would serve to enhance an individual's chance of success in the workplace.

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<sup>82</sup> Interview I11, 8 February 2007.

<sup>83</sup> See for example, Interviews I24, 21 February 2007; and Interview I34, 14 March 2007.

<sup>84</sup> Interview I35, 6 February 2007.

<sup>85</sup> Interview I33, 9 March 2007.

<sup>86</sup> Interview I21, 23 February 2007.

<sup>87</sup> Interview I12, 9 February 2007.

## Recommendation

Addressing English language as a barrier to the integration of immigrants into the workforce will require the collaborative efforts of the provincial government, regulatory bodies, employers, labour unions and immigrant service providers. As a starting point, immigrant service providers can work with employers and government to investigate the viability of developing on-site workplace language programs and sector-specific language testing for immigrants that need additional language training. All players can work together to promote workplace language programs for the benefit of immigrant workers and for the productive functioning of the workplace. With the support of all orders of government, immigrant service providers should increase promotional activities for employers to highlight the advantages and benefits of assisting immigrants with workplace language programs.

### 7.2.3 Economic Conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador

According to the results of our surveys, both employers and immigrants rank the current economic conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador as the second most significant barrier to labour market integration in this province. However, these results must be interpreted in context. For the employer survey, 43% of those respondents state that they had experienced a labour shortage in the last five years and 52% predict a labour shortage in their sector within the next five years [Section 6.4]. So the question arises – if there have been recent labour shortages and more than half of respondents predict a labour shortage in the future, why do respondents feel that economic conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador are such a significant barrier to labour market integration?

Respondents of the immigrant survey also rank economic conditions as the second most significant barrier to workplace integration in Newfoundland and Labrador. However, 61% state that they are currently employed while 39% are not employed [Section 5.4]. It should be noted that the survey was administered to a range of immigrants including full-time students, which may account for *some* of the unemployed. Of the respondents who are employed, 60% are working in their area of specialization [Figure 11] and 74% are happy at their current job [Figure 12]. The survey results do not describe an ideal employment situation for immigrants in this province, and there is obvious room for improvement. However, it does suggest that for many immigrants it is possible to find meaningful employment. Again, the question arises – why do immigrants consider current economic conditions to be such a significant barrier to labour market integration when the majority of them are working and happy with their jobs? We can only speculate as to why there seems to be this discrepancy within the survey results. Perhaps the high ranking of this barrier is based more on the process that respondents had to go through to obtain meaningful employment, rather than the general availability of jobs. This interpretation complements the fact that survey respondents ranked foreign credential recognition as the most significant barrier to employment.

However, the more likely explanation is that for both employer and immigrant respondents, economic conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador are *perceived* to be a barrier to employment rather than an actual barrier. As we detailed in Section 6.1 of this report, the economic situation of this province has been improving over the past decade and there are already skill shortages in several employment areas. Certain growth centres around the province are forecasting economic development in a number of sectors. For example, in the Clarenville area there are current shortages in the service industry, especially related to tourism, the fishing and mining industries as well as agriculture. Furthermore, there are upcoming shortages of potentially 400 positions in fur-farming and 3000-4000 in the construction sector.<sup>88</sup>

Perhaps we found “economic conditions” to be a barrier in the results of this study because we were looking for it as a barrier. There is a prevalent negativity towards the employment situation in this province, perhaps

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<sup>88</sup> Interview I38 / I39, 16 March 2007.



as a result of our history of economic underdevelopment. And it is easy for people in general (Canadian-born and immigrant) to *blame* economic conditions for the choices that they make.<sup>89</sup> By including “Economic Conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador” in our list of potential barriers, we perhaps bought into a myth that this province is unique in its economic constitution. However, Newfoundland and Labrador is no different from anywhere else – there are few employment opportunities in some areas and more employment opportunities in other areas.

Furthermore, we cannot compare economic opportunities in this province with those of other provinces, like Ontario and Alberta – their situations are very different. Perhaps it is easier to find unskilled employment or jobs that require less of an investment of time and effort. But there is also a trade-off with regards to living expenses and lifestyle – more access to unskilled employment but also higher housing and transportation costs. People can find success in Newfoundland and Labrador if they have the right information, are willing to adjust their abilities to meet local needs, and invest their energy into the process. Immigrants are building a lifestyle when they invest their efforts towards settling in this province.

### **Recommendation**

The answer to economic conditions as a barrier to employment lies in all players having a positive attitude and the correct labour market information to make informed decisions. In this way, this barrier is strongly linked to the barrier of access to labour market information [Section 7.2.7]. To overcome the perception or the reality that economic conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador is a major barrier to employment, representatives of government, labour, industry and other appropriate organizations must work together on an annual basis to identify skill shortages in the province and to communicate those shortages to potential employees.

There are already mechanisms in place that could provide opportunities for collaboration and communication of skills shortages and other economic opportunities. In particular, the Leslie Harris Centre for Regional Policy and Development could partner with the provincial government to dialogue and promote economic opportunities for the province through presentations at the Public Policy Forum. Mobilizing rural communities and Regional Economic Development Boards to incorporate immigration strategies into their long range development framework for rural Newfoundland and Labrador would be advantageous. The Provincial Nominee Program can be promoted as a tool for employers in search of immigrant employees and also to encourage entrepreneurial development throughout the province. Finally, creating business initiatives to develop strong intensive competition in urban centres could serve to promote increased economic growth in those areas.

### **7.2.4 Canadian Workplace Practices**

Respondents of the employer and immigrant surveys both identified Canadian workplace practices as a barrier to integration into the labour market. This barrier also emerged within the qualitative data and constitutes a range of workplace activities and behaviours. Even before an immigrant obtains an employment position, there are cultural differences in the initial job search process. Volunteering with a local organization is a useful way for immigrants to obtain Canadian work experience, meet people in their field and demonstrate their abilities to potential employers. However, many immigrants do not understand the value of volunteering and consider it to be a waste of time.<sup>90</sup>

There are also different cultural approaches to resume-writing and the interview.<sup>91</sup> For example, while being interviewed for a position with a local company, one immigrant candidate, who had the highest marks in her

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<sup>89</sup> Interview I33, 9 March 2007.

<sup>90</sup> Focus Group #4, 27 March 2007.

<sup>91</sup> Interview I15, 13 February 2007; Interview I24, 21 February 2007.

class at a local college and was academically qualified for the position, kept her head down and would not make eye-contact with the interviewer. This behaviour was based on the culture in which the woman was raised and did not reflect any lack of ability or motivation. However, the woman did not get the position and wondered if her culture-specific behaviour was interpreted by the interviewer as a negative characteristic in terms of lack of assertiveness.<sup>92</sup>

In terms of the workplace more specifically, one focus group participant stated that compared to the firm he worked with in his country of origin, the firm he works with here in St. John's operates "totally different."<sup>93</sup> Some interviewees emphasized the importance of workplace orientation for immigrants to help them understand how the workplace functions and to learn about workplace and/or professional conventions.<sup>94</sup> For example, in some occupational areas a recently hired employee may be "bumped" from their position by another employee who has more seniority, but people from other countries might not understand this process – or "the system."<sup>95</sup> It is also important for employers and immigrant employees to use the same definitions of work and the workplace, which may sometimes be complicated by language barriers.<sup>96</sup> Immigrant employees in Newfoundland and Labrador need to have an appropriate understanding of the local workplace and the system in order to succeed.<sup>97</sup>

Some focus group participants expressed concern about integrating into the Canadian workplace because of cultural differences in daily social behaviour. Getting along with co-workers in general can be challenging in the workplace; but this can be compounded by genuine cultural differences in manners and behaviours by immigrant and Canadian-born employees alike.<sup>98</sup> There were instances where participants felt excluded from workplace socializing and office congeniality because, for example, they do not watch Hockey Night in Canada or have a favourite hockey team.<sup>99</sup> These cultural differences may arise in general for immigrants trying to settle in Newfoundland and Labrador. However, in the close environs of the workplace they can potentially be more pronounced.

## **Recommendation**

When it comes to Canadian workplace practices, for immigrants, everything is different from their country of origin, from the initial job search processes to social behaviour in the office. Solutions to the barrier of Canadian workplace practices lie in the building of awareness and understanding for employers and all employees, perhaps in the form of workplace orientation and cultural sensitivity workshops. Furthermore, assisting immigrants through the job search process, encouraging them to volunteer and helping them understand "the system" is crucial to their sustained success in the Newfoundland and Labrador workplace.

Government, employers and immigrant service agencies should work together to provide immigrants with assistance in understanding the Canadian workplace, perhaps in the form of sector-specific workplace orientation or short courses involving workplace safety training and orientation. These players must also identify "best practices" in the area of cultural awareness in the workplace and explore opportunities to make this type of information and training more available to both Canadian workers and potential immigrant workers.

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<sup>92</sup> Interview I11, 8 February 2007.

<sup>93</sup> Focus Group #4, 27 March 2007.

<sup>94</sup> Interview I33, 9 March 2007.

<sup>95</sup> Interview I6, 30 January 2007.

<sup>96</sup> Interview I35, 6 February 2007.

<sup>97</sup> Interview I32, 8 March 2007.

<sup>98</sup> Interview I35, 6 February 2007.

<sup>99</sup> Focus Group #4 and Focus Group #5, 27 March 2007.

### 7.2.5 Canadian Work Experience and Lack of Mentoring/Apprenticeships

In its presentation to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration: *Consultations on the Recognition on the International Experience and Credentials of Immigrants* in May 2005, the Association of Canadian Community Colleges made the following statement:

Canadian work experience is a requirement for the completion of licensing/certification in many regulated fields, additionally it is frequently deemed as a requirement by Canadian employers. Thus, the provision of work placements, coaching and mentoring approaches has become a critical element in bridging to the workplace programs - yet all too rare. Of course, as the Committee knows, there are real limitations in the capacity of the Canadian workplace to provide the clinical or work experience components.<sup>100</sup>

This statement quite accurately sums up the findings of our study through both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Lack of Canadian work experience and subsequently the lack of mentoring or apprenticeship programs to provide that much needed experience are regarded as equally significant barriers to immigrant employment by both employers and immigrants. International students in particular find attaining Canadian work experience a major obstacle in securing work and settlement in Canada [Section 7.4]. However, some university programs provide internships and work terms for international students, which gives them direct advantage over internationally highly-trained, experienced professionals arriving to Canada as independent or government sponsored immigrants. The latter group of potential employees quite frequently finds themselves in a situation where they cannot obtain Canadian work experience without having any previous Canadian experience. Prior Learning Assessment Recognition (PLAR) for both education and experience can provide assistance with some professions and trades in particular, but it is still limited in terms of its scope and accessibility [Section 7.2.1].

When the lack of Canadian work experience becomes an obstacle in utilizing the skills of internationally highly-trained individuals who are selected by the immigration program, in many cases they end up working in jobs normally held by less skilled persons from the native-born population, and their skills are practically wasted.<sup>101</sup>

In an attempt to try to rectify this problem, representatives from community groups, professional associations, educational institutions and the government all encourage creation of bridging programs or so called “gap training”.<sup>102</sup> These include mentoring and apprenticeship programs, as well as paid internships and work placements. Programs like these give immigrants an opportunity to demonstrate their skills and competencies. Furthermore, considering advances in technology and a fast-pace economy where jobs are changing rapidly, they also have a chance to upgrade and remove any potential gaps in their work experience.<sup>103</sup>

While there are numerous examples of bridging programs in Canada and internationally [Section 4.0], Newfoundland and Labrador is still falling behind in supporting its highly educated and skilled immigrants. Some of the cited reasons for the lack of mentoring programs and apprenticeships are insufficient numbers

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<sup>100</sup> The Association of Canadian Community Colleges, “Valuing the Knowledge, Skills and Experience of Canadian Immigrants,” presentation to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, *Consultations on the recognition of the International Experience and Credentials of Immigrants*, May 2005, [http://www.accc.ca/ftp/briefs-memoires/immigration\\_brief\\_0505.pdf](http://www.accc.ca/ftp/briefs-memoires/immigration_brief_0505.pdf), accessed on 20 April 2007.

<sup>101</sup> Jeffrey G. Reitz, “Immigrant Skill Utilization in the Canadian Labour Market: Implications of Human Capital Research,” Centre for Industrial Relations and Department of Sociology, University of Toronto, October 2001, [http://www.utoronto.ca/ethnicstudies/Reitz\\_Skill.pdf](http://www.utoronto.ca/ethnicstudies/Reitz_Skill.pdf), accessed on 20 April 2007.

<sup>102</sup> Consultation C26, 18 January 2007; Interview I11, 8 February 2007; and Interview I36, 15 March 2007.

<sup>103</sup> Interview I11, 8 February 2007.

of immigrants in certain professions, for example in massage therapy, or the lack of demand in a particular field, like occupational therapy.<sup>104</sup> The Professional Engineers and Geoscientists Newfoundland and Labrador (PEGNL) do have a mentoring program but there is not sufficient demand within the industry to support a program like Manitoba's, which encompasses on-the-job work experience. We can assume from this that mentoring programs may not be offered for two reasons: a) if there is demand for a certain profession and not many candidates, it is easy to secure employment right away, or b) the recognition process of internationally gained education and experience is too complex, arduous or long for those professions, that immigrant candidates do not even attempt to get positions in their fields.

Even so, most professional associations have high regard for internships and mentoring programs. For example, Newfoundland and Labrador College of Physiotherapists offers mentoring programs to newcomers and considers them an essential part of their integration into the workplace and society.<sup>105</sup>

## **Recommendation**

It is clear that job mentoring, coaching and shadowing are highly valued as they provide much needed experience. In the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, as demand for certain professions and services increases, so does the need for more highly-trained and experienced professionals. Recognizing and utilizing internationally trained individuals requires more and better infrastructure and resources.<sup>106</sup> In addition, there needs to be more flexibility on the part of the regulatory bodies. In today's global economy with a highly mobile workforce, there should be interest in job related experience in general, rather than exclusively Canadian work experience.<sup>107</sup>

The best way to overcome the barrier of the lack of Canadian work experience is for government, regulatory bodies, sector councils, labour unions and employers to collaborate and introduce internships and mentoring programs for immigrant candidates. Professional associations that already have active internship programs can evaluate the effectiveness of their programs and suggest areas for expansion. For example, the CPSNL could explore the possibility of providing a *specialist physician bridging program* for IMGs similar to that being offered in Ontario. In the meantime, immigrant service providers can increase promotional activities for employers to highlight the advantages and benefits of assisting immigrants in accessing internships and mentoring programs.

### **7.2.6 Information for Employers**

According to the results of our quantitative data, employers and immigrants agree that the lack of information for employers constitutes a barrier to employment in Newfoundland and Labrador. Some participants of our focus groups acknowledged that employers might have reservations about hiring someone from a school that they are not familiar with, but they need to be more informed and understand what immigrants can contribute to the company if given the opportunity.<sup>108</sup>

From the employer's perspective, the biggest challenge for immigrants integrating into the workforce comes from smaller companies that do not have human resource departments.<sup>109</sup> Their main concern in hiring an employee is that they have the skills necessary to perform their duties and that they are committed to the position. Some employers may assume that if they hire an immigrant who does not have strong ties to the

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<sup>104</sup> Interview I5, 22 January 2007; Interview I7, 30 January 2007; and Interview I8, 1 February 2007.

<sup>105</sup> Consultation C26, 18 January 2007.

<sup>106</sup> Interview I11, 8 February 2007.

<sup>107</sup> Interview I36, 15 March 2007.

<sup>108</sup> Focus Group #5, 27 March 2007; and Interview I36, 15 March 2007.

<sup>109</sup> Interview I32, 8 March 2007.

local community, that person might only stay in the position for a few months and then leave for a larger city on the mainland where society is less homogenous.<sup>110</sup> Armed with little cultural sensitivity or information on the value of immigrant employees, many employers might be inclined to take “the easiest route” and hire someone with familiar credentials and with strong local ties.<sup>111</sup>

## **Recommendation**

Employers need to have the tools, resources and knowledge necessary to embrace a multicultural workforce in terms of cultural sensitivity, awareness, understanding and appreciation. They also need to know where to find immigrant candidates who may have the skills and education to fill their employment needs. Regulatory bodies and sector councils should ensure that employers have the most up-to-date information available for their fields. In terms of general promotion and building awareness, immigrant service providers should partner with the provincial government to disseminate knowledge about the tools and resources that are already available for employers and other stakeholders, especially in terms of accessing the talented pool of internationally trained workers in this province and expediting their labour market attachment. Government must continue to collaborate with employers to seek out innovative ways to showcase the benefits of hiring immigrant employees.

### **7.2.7 Access to Labour Market Information**

Access to labour market information is closely associated with the perceived barrier of Economic Conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador [Section 7.2.3] and is based on the Cultural Capital Theory of integration into the local workforce. Many immigrants arrive in the province without knowing where to find the right labour market information, and they often do not know many people in their new home who could assist them with this information. Social and professional networking is important to the job search process in Canada, and presents a real challenge to immigrants.<sup>112</sup> When people do not know where to find labour market information and feel that they do not have access to the information, they may become disillusioned with the employment situation here. They might assume that there are limited opportunities for them in this province, when in actuality there are opportunities but they are not aware of them because they do not have the information. Host societies must be more active in assisting immigrants find and understand the correct information about the labour market and employment opportunities.

## **Recommendation**

The primary reason why access to labour market information is a barrier to immigrant integration is because of a breakdown in communication, which re-emerges as the foundation of many of the barriers discussed in this report. Immigrants must have the correct labour market information if they are to succeed in finding and retaining employment in this province. As a result, the government, sector councils and representatives of industry and other appropriate organizations must work together to identify skill shortages in the province and communicate those shortages to potential immigrant employees and immigrant service providers. The provincial government, together with educators, post-secondary institutions, employers and immigrant service providers should work together to communicate accurate career information and work opportunities for high school and international students. Immigrant service providers could develop strategic partnerships with employers and post-secondary institutions to assist in establishing innovative bridging programs to assist immigrants in finding employment in Newfoundland and Labrador.

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<sup>110</sup> Interview I3, 18 January 2007. This theme also emerged in *A Survey of Attitudes*, 2005.

<sup>111</sup> Interview I6, 30 January 2007; Interview I32, 8 March 2007.

<sup>112</sup> Interview I35, 15 March 2007.

### 7.2.8 Financial Requirements and Potential Retraining Costs

For immigrants who arrive in Newfoundland and Labrador who want to have their credentials assessed, there are often monetary requirements associated with the process that add pressure to the individual's financial situation. This is especially problematic for refugees, who urgently left their homes and possessions in their country of origin and have limited resources when starting their new life in Canada. In addition to assessment fees, there is also a cost associated with the translation of documents into English in an official manner.<sup>113</sup> For some occupational areas, the very nature of the employment presents financial challenges to immigrants. This is especially true for private practices such as massage therapy. Therapists have to build up a clientele – establish a network and become recognized as health care providers – which is a challenge for anyone starting out. Income may be insecure at first while the therapist is building up a clientele and it may be financially difficult for them to establish their practice.<sup>114</sup>

#### Recommendation

Financial requirements and potential retraining costs do not have to be enormous to create insurmountable barriers to immigrants in this province. For example, a candidate may require a license that costs two-hundred dollars (\$200) in order to practice in their field, but if they left their country in haste and without their worldly possessions, their resources may be too limited for this sum. In light of the recent Immigration Strategy, the provincial government could take the lead in this area. A small loan program should be established to assist immigrants with licensing fees, professional examination requirements and assessment costs dealing with the accreditation system in acquiring licensure and entry in practice. They could also allocate additional resources and/or retraining for IMGs to address retention issues in smaller centres, where there is a demonstrated shortage of health professionals. From the perspective of the immigrant service providers, as the primary point of contact for immigrants in this province, all orders of government should ensure sustained funding for these services and provide intensive strategic services to support the integration of immigrants into the local workforce.

### 7.2.9 Cultural Differences

Cultural Differences can sometimes prove to be a barrier to the successful integration of immigrants into the workforce and society of Newfoundland and Labrador. For many people who are new to Canada, there is a feeling of “difference,” which is perhaps exacerbated by the homogenous and insular social constitution of this province. One focus group participant stated that you could be living here for many years, well-established and raising a family, but people will still ask you where you are from.<sup>115</sup> Many participants and interviewees expressed feelings of being disconnected here – isolated because of cultural differences and because of the strong family ties in this province. From the immigrants' perspective, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are very friendly but they rarely embrace you as their own. For example, people are often more inclined to go for coffee with a family member rather than their neighbour or co-worker. This is not a malicious exclusion, but it is a block against the immigrants who are trying to socially integrate.<sup>116</sup> Social isolation can sometimes be more acute for immigrant seniors, who are in a new environment, may not know many people and therefore stay at home by themselves;<sup>117</sup> and also for immigrants in smaller centres and rural areas of the province, where there is less of a support network for them and cultural differences may be more pronounced.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Interview I4, 22 January 2007.

<sup>114</sup> Interview I8, 1 February 2007.

<sup>115</sup> Focus Group #4, 27 March 2007.

<sup>116</sup> Interview I36, 15 March 2007.

<sup>117</sup> Consultation C35, 20 March 2007.

<sup>118</sup> Interview I21, 23 February 2007.

## Recommendation

The solution to the barrier of cultural differences lies in increased exposure to multiculturalism for *everyone* – immigrants and Canadian-born alike. The Multicultural Group in Grand-Falls-Windsor is a model for true multiculturalism in that it includes people from all local cultures – including those born in the area. It may ease their own processes of integration if immigrants receive an orientation of North American culture, so that they can be informed participants in the local culture if they wish.<sup>119</sup> On the other hand, Canadian-born Newfoundlanders and Labradorians must learn to *appreciate* rather than *tolerate* multiculturalism – we must “celebrate diversity!”<sup>120</sup>

This is an area in which the provincial government, immigrant service providers and local multicultural groups can take the lead – increasing exposure to multiculturalism for everyone. This can be accomplished in a number of creative ways. For example, the government can develop a multi-faceted publicity campaign about the benefits of an ethnically diverse population. In fact, the province has already started on that track with the publication of “Diversity – Opportunity and Growth: Profiles of Immigrant Entrepreneurs in Newfoundland and Labrador,” which profiles twenty-two immigrant entrepreneurs who have established successful businesses across this province. In keeping with the spirit of the “Diversity” publication, the government could also launch a series of public service advertisements, similar to the Canadian Heritage Minutes, about the contributions immigrants make to the culture, economy and society of Newfoundland and Labrador. A competition for a provincial logo and slogan about immigrant friendliness and/or immigrant success stories in the province could be explored. The long-term success of multiculturalism in Newfoundland and Labrador lies in the development of multicultural values among children, the leaders of tomorrow. With this in mind, the possibility of creating and providing multicultural educational materials for children, free to schools and youth organizations should be explored.

### 7.2.10 Supportive Community / Family

Much of the critical literature on immigration in Canada discusses the importance of a supportive ethnic community for integration and retention.<sup>121</sup> Indeed, the lack of a supportive community sometimes presents a barrier to immigrants who are trying to integrate into the workforce, especially for those people who have children or other dependents. Support in the community also increases the likelihood that immigrants and their families will settle and integrate into the province. Some interviewees noted the importance of immigrants building relationships with people, both within the multicultural and the Canadian-born populations.<sup>122</sup> Focus Group participants noted that before they became involved with the ANC, they usually only interacted with family and friends from their own country of origin and that they did not know about local multicultural groups.<sup>123</sup>

We did not specify “family” as a barrier in the immigrant survey, but it emerged as a barrier within the qualitative material. Some interviewees stated that recent immigrants may feel pressure from family and friends to find employment in a specific field – maybe the field in which they worked in their country of origin.<sup>124</sup> But it is not always possible for immigrants to find employment in their area of specialization, especially considering the problems associated with the non-recognition of foreign credentials. Furthermore, additional pressures are placed on an immigrant when he/she has a spouse who is unemployed or unhappy – the family’s chance of settling here becomes compromised when a spouse is disconnected from the community. For example, if a physician is practicing in a rural community and his/her spouse is unemployed

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<sup>119</sup> Focus Group #5, 27 March 2007.

<sup>120</sup> Interview I32, 8 March 2007.

<sup>121</sup> See the Literature Review, Section 3.2 Regionalization of Immigration for discussion of the debate as to whether immigrants are motivated more by employment opportunities or the presence of a critical mass ethnic community.

<sup>122</sup> Interview I33, 9 March 2007.

<sup>123</sup> Focus Group #4, 27 March 2007.

<sup>124</sup> Interview I31, 7 March 2007.

or unhappy, the family will likely have difficulty settling. On the other hand, if the couple has children attending a local school and making friends, there is a good chance they will settle into the community.<sup>125</sup> Some employers have already recognized the importance to their employees of their spouses finding local employment. For example, the Iron-Ore Company of Canada has partnered with the local employment centre in Labrador City to help ease the transition of their employees' spouses into the workforce.<sup>126</sup> The province's PNP program focuses on employment of the principal applicant but does not address the applicant's spouse or other family members who may wish to be employed in the province. If a spouse or family is feeling unfulfilled, there is less chance that they will integrate into the local workforce and society. However, with the launch of the Immigration Strategy, PNP is transferred to Human Resources Labour and Employment and will be taking a more holistic approach to family integration and will include both the initial employment/retention of the principal applicant and also address the employment/retention of a spouse and dependents.<sup>127</sup>

### **Recommendation**

In order to overcome the barrier of lack of supportive community / family, two areas must be addressed: 1) the needs of immigrant women (both working women and unemployed) and their families, especially during recent arrival, and 2) the awareness and involvement of the local community in general. With the support of the federal and provincial governments, immigrant service providers should establish outreach and networking opportunities to assist women, such as the wives of IMGs, and their families integrate into the smaller centres. One step in this direction would be for government and immigrant service providers to collaborate on creating full-service satellite offices in strategic rural areas to accommodate the needs of newcomers in these areas.

In terms of the awareness and involvement of the local community in general, immigrant service providers could engage current and former immigrants to act as *Ambassadors* in helping newly arrived immigrants integrate into society. The communities themselves could establish *Community Retention / Action Committees* and work with immigrant service providers and other partners to welcome immigrants and support their social and economic inclusion. They could identify and formalize the role of those responsible for immigration in their community and outline processes which would positively impact the stages of immigrant arrival, settlement and integration. They could also involve immigrants in community activities that directly involve them and their families, such as special events, sports programs, school councils and various groups/activities. Local schools could provide a great opportunity for connecting immigrant parents with Canadian-born parents and encourage the social integration of the entire family in a holistic manner.

#### **7.2.11 Services External to the Workforce**

Services External to the Workforce was identified as a barrier by women more than men, according to the results of our Immigrant Survey [Section 7.3].

### **Recommendation**

Immigrants with children and/or other dependents have needs outside of the workforce that directly affect their ability and their availability to work. There is a strong connection between services external to the workforce and the presence of a supportive community as barriers to the integration of immigrants into the local workforce, especially as it pertains to immigrant parents whose work situation is often complicated by the lack of immediate family to assist with childcare. Therefore, the provincial government, in collaboration with immigrant service providers and other community organizations, should evaluate the current resources that are in place to assist immigrant parents with the care of children and dependents, and suggest ways in which their needs can be met.

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<sup>125</sup> Interview I23, 20 February 2007.

<sup>126</sup> Interview I27, 26 February 2007.

<sup>127</sup> Interview I45, 23 March 2007.



### 7.2.12 Pre-arrival Information for Immigrants

Another area in which lack of information, or inappropriate information, causes a barrier to successful integration is in terms of the information immigrants receive before they arrive in Newfoundland and Labrador. Individuals come to Canada with unrealistic and high expectations – but the streets here are not lined with jobs. In fact, the job search is a very competitive process and immigrants have little preparation for that process before they arrive. Sometimes a person’s job title has little meaning – for example, to be an engineer in this province means having a designation from the Professional Engineers and Geoscientists Newfoundland and Labrador, but in other countries the term “engineer” is sometimes used much more loosely and do not necessarily mean a professional designation. Having unrealistic expectations can cause frustration for immigrants and it can be a challenge letting go of what they *knew* and accepting what is *new* in Canada. According to one interviewee, the biggest problem with having unrealistic expectations is that, “when you have a certain expectation you don’t see the other opportunities.”<sup>128</sup>

#### Recommendation

Immigrants coming to Newfoundland and Labrador need the right information and the right attitude/expectations before they arrive, because those who succeed in the workforce here are open and flexible - they “build on what they have and move it in other directions.”<sup>129</sup> The federal and provincial governments, along with immigrant service providers, could assist in overcoming this barrier by ensuring that immigration officials have the correct information about employment and settlement in this province and that they communicate the correct information to immigrant candidates.

### 7.2.13 Current Living Conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador

Current Living Conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador was identified as a barrier to employment integration, especially from the perspective of women, and is discussed in more detail in the Gender Analysis [Section 6.3] of this report. However, in terms of the classes of immigration to this province, refugees in particular arrive in search of a better life but they are dependent on income-support services. While they are grateful for this and for all the assistance they receive from the government, they are sometimes inadvertently ghettoized in areas of the city.<sup>130</sup> We must improve the quality of life that refugees initially receive when they arrive in Newfoundland and Labrador and ensure that they do not become socialized as “low-income,” so that they can have every advantage for meeting their full future potential.

#### Recommendation

Current living conditions is closely associated with the barriers of services external to the workforce and the presence of a supportive community, and potentially affects immigrant mothers more than single women or men. It is the barrier most closely associated with appropriate housing for the family, the running of a household and the management of children and their activities. The best way to overcome this barrier to employment integration and retention is for local governments to assist with services such as public transportation as well as maintaining affordable and appropriate housing.

### 7.2.14 Racism / Discrimination

Racism and Discrimination was not considered by either employers or immigrants to be a major barrier to employment, and in fact was rated the least significant barrier on both surveys of this study. However, it did emerge as a theme in interviews and focus group discussions. Racism and Discrimination is another barrier

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<sup>128</sup> Interview I35, 15 March 2007.

<sup>129</sup> Interview I35, 15 March 2007.

<sup>130</sup> Interview I30, 16 March 2007.

that is both perceived and actual, but the distinction between what is perceived and what is actual discrimination is often difficult to distinguish. Some recent immigrants felt that they had been discriminated against in a work environment or by an employer. But to what extent was that actual versus perceived discrimination?<sup>131</sup> One immigrant interviewee expressed concern that sometimes recent immigrants automatically feel discriminated against for no obvious reason. Perceived discrimination can be a self-imposed barrier when it affects an individual's confidence or discourages them from taking a chance on an opportunity.<sup>132</sup> At the same time, despite the fact that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are friendly people, it is entirely likely that actual racism and discrimination does exist in this province. Smaller centres of the province, in particular, can be susceptible to insensitivity if they have not had the opportunity to welcome multiculturalism in their communities.<sup>133</sup> However, exposure to multiculturalism enriches our society and helps us all become individually and communally more broad-minded. It presents us with the opportunity to learn *about* other people, cultures and countries and also to learn *from* other people, cultures and countries.

### Recommendation

Racism and Discrimination is unfortunate and unacceptable in today's society, but is sometimes difficult to identify on a daily basis. Therefore, the best way to combat racism and discrimination is through education and building awareness. A public awareness campaign must be initiated to build awareness among local communities about the benefits of immigration. In addition, outreach services should be promoted for smaller centres and rural areas, especially in terms of welcoming immigrant residents. Employers must also identify best practices in the area of cultural awareness and explore opportunities for sensitivity training for Canadian-born employees. This report, in conjunction with the recent provincial Immigration Strategy, encourages all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to appreciate and embrace worldliness and the global village.

## 7.3 Gender Analysis

Many discussions of immigrant integration into the workforce assume that the problems experienced by men are universal to women as well. However, recent scholarship has challenged this assumption and explored the gendered dimensions of immigrant women's experiences. In particular, Evangelia Tastsoglou and Baukje Miedema have identified gendered elements of *systemic* and *personal* barriers that women face while trying to integrate into the Canadian labour market.

Systemic barriers include racism, sexism, language, accent discrimination, age discrimination, and the non-recognition of foreign credentials. While these barriers may be pertinent to men as well, they create particular challenges for women in the context of balancing work and family life.<sup>134</sup> For example, in a recent Round Table for immigrant women in Nova Scotia it was revealed that many women "lag behind their husbands in sorting out their credential recognition issues" because they have the responsibility of taking care of their children.<sup>135</sup>

Personal barriers include a husband's opposition to his wife's employment and a woman's lack of confidence in her own abilities in the Canadian environment. Some personal barriers are also caused by systemic

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<sup>131</sup> Focus Group #4, 27 March 2007.

<sup>132</sup> Interview I33, 9 March 2007.

<sup>133</sup> Interview I21, 23 February 2007, and Interview I17, 21 February 2007.

<sup>134</sup> Evangelia Tastsoglou and Baukje Miedema, "Working Much Harder and Always Having to Prove Yourself: Immigrant Women's Labor Force Experiences in the Canadian Maritimes," *Advances in Gender Research*, 9(2005): 201-233.

<sup>135</sup> Government of Nova Scotia, "2nd Nova Scotia Immigrant Women's Round Table - A Summary Report," (Office of Immigration, July 2006), 10, available online at <http://www.novascotiainmigration.com/en-page9.aspx>, accessed 5 April 2007.

<sup>136</sup> Tastsoglou and Miedema, 228.

barriers, such as traditional gender roles, and “systemic absences resulting in barriers,” such as financial support and other mechanisms for facilitating adjustment.<sup>136</sup> It is within this academic context of gender analysis that we have examined the results of our own quantitative and qualitative data.

According to an independent measures *t*-test analysis, significant gender differences exist in the evaluation of two potential barriers to employment:

- 1) the amount of Canadian work experience employers expect immigrants to have prior to their arrival in Newfoundland and Labrador ( $t(66) = -2.98, p < .05$ ); and
- 2) the current living conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador ( $t(66) = -2.46, p < .05$ ).

The challenge of having Canadian work experience also emerged as an important theme within the qualitative data, especially in terms of the professions and trades. At our focus group of local immigrant women, participants cited the difficulty in attaining Canadian work experience, which is a prerequisite for many careers in this province. The urgency to find work often drives women to take domestic jobs related to housekeeping or kitchen work, and results in a “cul de sac effect” of being stuck in unfulfilling employment. In many cases, women caught in such transitional employment lose the professional confidence they had in their original field of expertise.<sup>137</sup>

The second barrier that demonstrated a significant difference in value to immigrant women and men was the current living conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador. Again, the qualitative data supports the results of the immigrant survey in rating this as an important barrier to women. The question of living conditions on the survey was the barrier most closely associated to the running of a household and the handling of family needs. According to the traditional role of the “female nurturer,”<sup>138</sup> women are affected more than men by such factors as appropriate housing for the family, care of the children and management of their activities. For immigrant women in Newfoundland and Labrador, domestic responsibilities are compounded by the lack of supportive resources provided by a family network.<sup>139</sup>

## 7.4. International Student Barriers

Most Canadian universities are increasingly looking to internationalize their campuses by recruiting more students from abroad. Similarly many educational institutions in this province, together with the Newfoundland and Labrador government, are focusing on bringing more international students to our schools. The number of international students in the province has risen from 484 in 2001 to 1099 for 2005-06 period.<sup>140</sup> This represents a 144% increase in international student enrolment within five years.

International students play an important role by bringing new and fresh international perspectives and cultural diversity to the classroom. As well, there are significant economic benefits for both the educational institutions and local communities. The latest Newfoundland and Labrador Immigration Strategy, *Diversity - Opportunity and Growth*, highlights the importance of international student immigration, pointing out that it helps to maintain “a high-quality, comprehensive post-secondary education system in our Province, despite declining domestic demographics”.<sup>141</sup> Furthermore, international students create a potential pool of educated and skilled workers with easily recognized credentials. These future employees possess qualities that are potentially useful in sectors with impending labour shortages.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Focus Group #6, 9 April 2007.

<sup>138</sup> For discussion of the effects of this traditional ideology on immigrant women’s experiences in Canada, see Tastsoglou and Miedema, 218.

<sup>139</sup> Focus Group #6, 9 April 2007.

<sup>140</sup> Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Education, Annual Report 2005-06, 21.

<sup>141</sup> *Diversity – Opportunity and Growth*, 17.

<sup>142</sup> *Diversity – Opportunity and Growth*, 18.

Our research focuses specifically on retention and employment barriers faced and perceived by international students studying at local educational institutions.

In an effort to overcome barriers to international student employment during and after their studies, Citizenship and Immigration Canada has recently allowed international students to work off campus after obtaining a valid work permit. The work permit authorizes them to work up to 20 hours per week during regular academic sessions, and full time during scheduled breaks (winter or summer holidays and spring break). After graduating, the students have 90 days to find employment in their field of study in order to continue living and working in Canada.<sup>144</sup> Even though these regulations significantly improve the chance of finding employment, the qualitative data from our study shows that students may need more support when it comes to finding employment in our province.

We identified several prominent and reoccurring themes regarding barriers to international student employment and retention that emerged during our focus group sessions.

- a. The majority of students recognize the importance of acquiring Canadian work experience in order to find employment. Some university programs offer work terms which contribute to accumulating work experience in Canada. However, our focus group participants almost unanimously stated that even when provided work terms, there is a great difficulty in attaining Canadian work experience.<sup>145</sup> This becomes a major barrier to employment. Not all international students find work terms, and many programs do not offer work terms or internships at all. While the students try to focus on their studies as much as possible, there is an impending employment issue that puts more pressure on finding work during their studies. If work terms are not provided as a part of their program, students are left with little opportunity to gain much needed experience. From the students' perspectives, they would like to have more assistance from their educational institutions when it comes to obtaining work permits or securing work terms.<sup>146</sup>
- b. Another significant problem that emerged in all conducted focus groups was the length of time given to international students to find employment upon graduation in order to stay in Canada. Almost all participants agreed that 3 months does not provide enough time to find work in their field of study and apply for a work permit.<sup>147</sup> Without having an employer to work on their behalf, the students cannot apply for a work permit, and so they have to leave the country.
- c. Closely related to the previous issue, focus group participants also cited the lack of opportunity to network, market their skills and competencies, meet with potential employers and find out more about the local labour market during their studies.<sup>148</sup> These opportunities would give them a better chance to find employment upon graduation in a designated period of time. Several participants mentioned that they would like to see more job fairs, as these provide a great opportunity to make connections.<sup>149</sup>

Among other issues mentioned at the focus groups were cultural differences, financial requirements, proficiency in English language, “a glass ceiling” for particular groups of immigrants, and the lack of easy access to comprehensive information on labour market trends and employment opportunities. These issues also seem to have a significant effect on retention, integration and employment of international students in our province.

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<sup>143</sup> CIC, “Work Opportunities for Foreign Students,” <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/work-opps.html#offcampus>, accessed on 24 April 2007.

<sup>144</sup> “Work Opportunities for Foreign Students.”

<sup>145</sup> Focus Group, # 2, 7 February 7 2007.

<sup>146</sup> Focus Group, # 1, 2 February 2 2007

<sup>147</sup> Focus Group, # 1, 7 February 7 2007.

<sup>148</sup> Focus Group, # 1, 7 February 7 2007.

<sup>149</sup> Focus Group, # 1, 7 February 7 2007.

## 8.0 Incentives

### 8.1 Quantitative Results

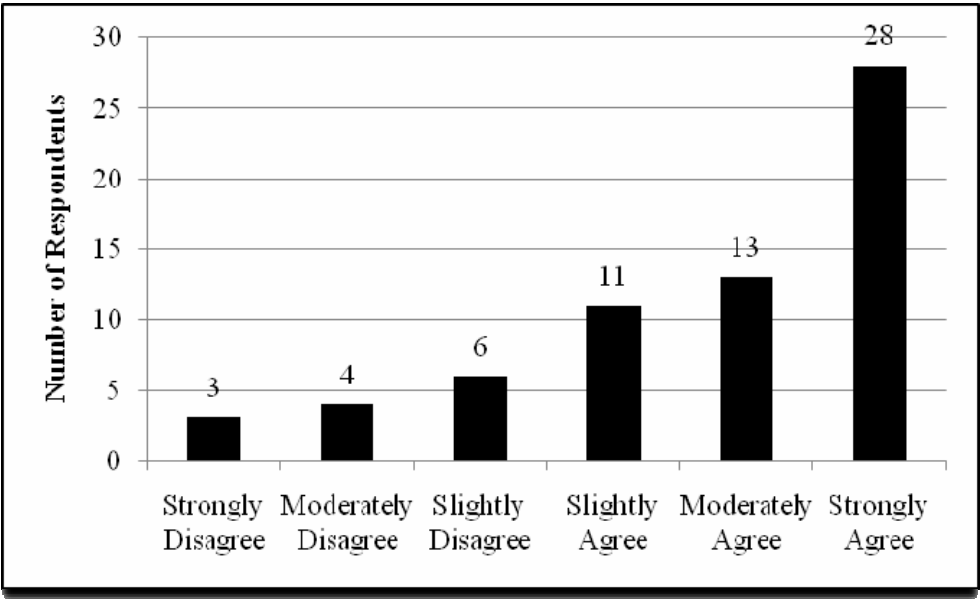
The employer survey provided respondents with the opportunity to evaluate a number of potential incentives which relevant stakeholders could implement in order to encourage employers to hire immigrants. Specifically, employers were asked to rate their level of agreement with the implementation of 14 possible incentives on 6-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). In order to gauge how receptive employers are to each proposed incentive, their responses to each item were combined into either agreement or disagreement with that item. The results are presented in Table 15.

**Table 15: Employer Perspectives on Proposed Incentives**

Proposed Incentives	Agree	Disagree
Advanced or occupation-specific <b>language training</b> for immigrants	52 (80%)	13 (20%)
Create a <b>Skills Matching Database</b>	52 (80%)	13 (20%)
Sponsored <b>internships</b> for immigrants in their chosen fields	50 (77%)	15 (23%)
<b>Workshops</b> to encourage cross-cultural sensitivity and understanding	50 (77%)	15 (23%)
Create a Provincial or <b>Atlantic credential assessment centre</b>	49 (75%)	16 (25%)
More occupational <b>information</b> for immigrants <b>prior to arrival</b>	48 (75%)	16 (25%)
Implement a <b>wage subsidy</b> for hiring immigrants	45 (69%)	20 (31%)
Implement an <b>advertising campaign</b> on the benefits of immigration	45 (69%)	20 (31%)
Streamline <b>credential assessment</b> processes	44 (69%)	20 (31%)
Create <b>Industry Outreach Officers</b>	44 (68%)	21 (32%)
Implement a <b>tax credit</b> program for hiring immigrants	37 (57%)	28 (43%)
Provide <b>free advertising</b> to employers re: employment of immigrants	36 (55%)	29 (45%)
Pay for the <b>upgrading of skills</b> for employees including immigrants	31 (48%)	34 (52%)
Include an <b>extra week of leave</b> per year for training	29 (45%)	36 (55%)
Note: Percentages are placed in parentheses. $N = 65$ .		

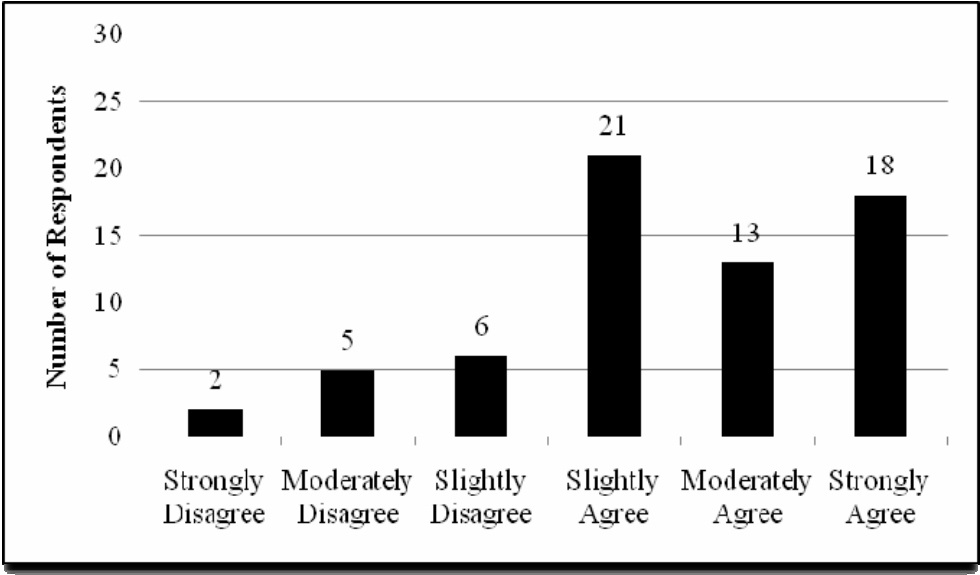
Employers were receptive to the proposed incentives for promoting the hiring of immigrants. In particular, Table 15 indicates that 80% of respondents agreed that relevant stakeholders should provide advanced or occupation-specific language training for immigrant employees at no cost to the employer. Figure 38 details employer perspectives based on the six-point Likert scale. Employers viewed this incentive most favourably as 43% of respondents *strongly agreed* with implementing this incentive.

**Figure 38: Employer Perspectives on Occupation-Specific Language Training for Immigrant Employees**



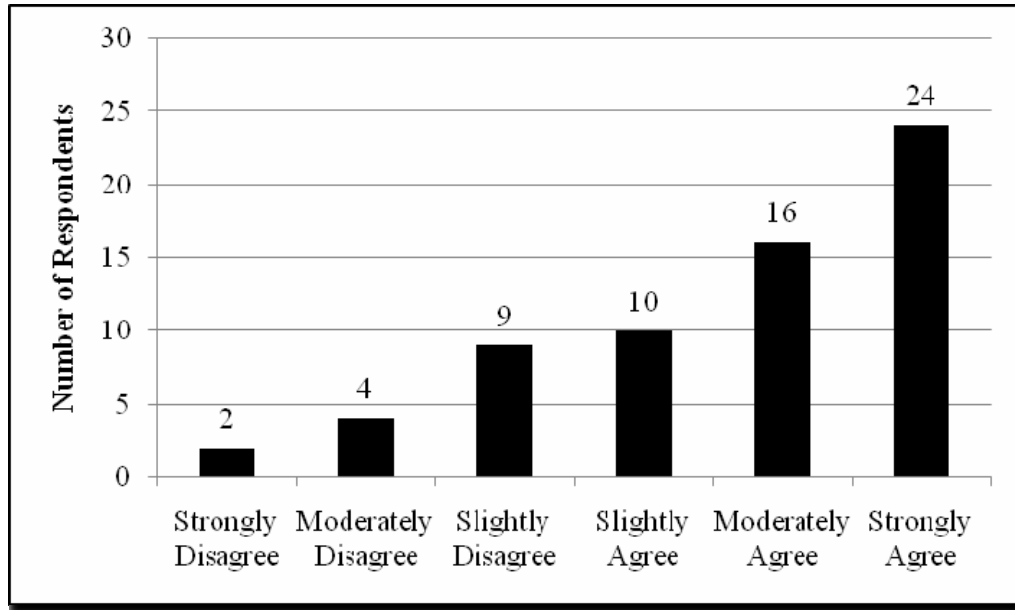
Eighty percent (80%) of employers also agreed that relevant stakeholders should work towards creating an immigrant Skills Matching Database to help match employer needs with immigrant skills [Table 15]. Responses based on the significance scale are outlined in Figure 39, indicating that 28% *strongly agreed* with this incentive.

**Figure 39: Employer Perspectives on an Immigrant Skills Matching Database**



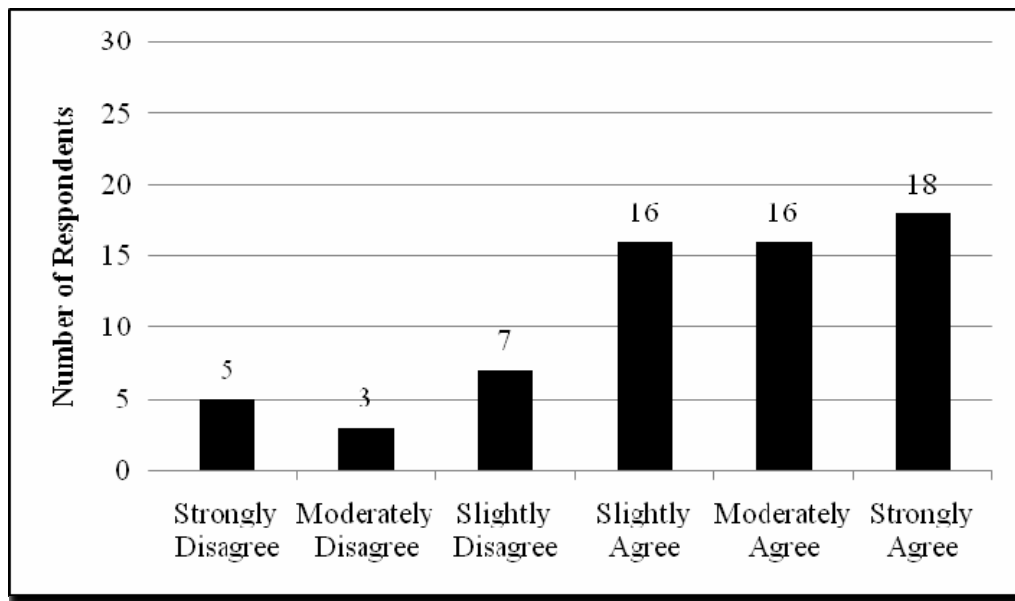
Seventy-seven percent (77%) of employers supported the creation of internships for immigrants in their chosen fields [Table 15]. While this incentive received slightly less support than the creation of a Skills Matching Database, more respondents *strongly agreed* with the internships (37%) [Figure 40] compared to the creation of a database (28%) [Figure 39].

**Figure 40: Employer Perspectives on Internships for Immigrants in their Chosen Fields**



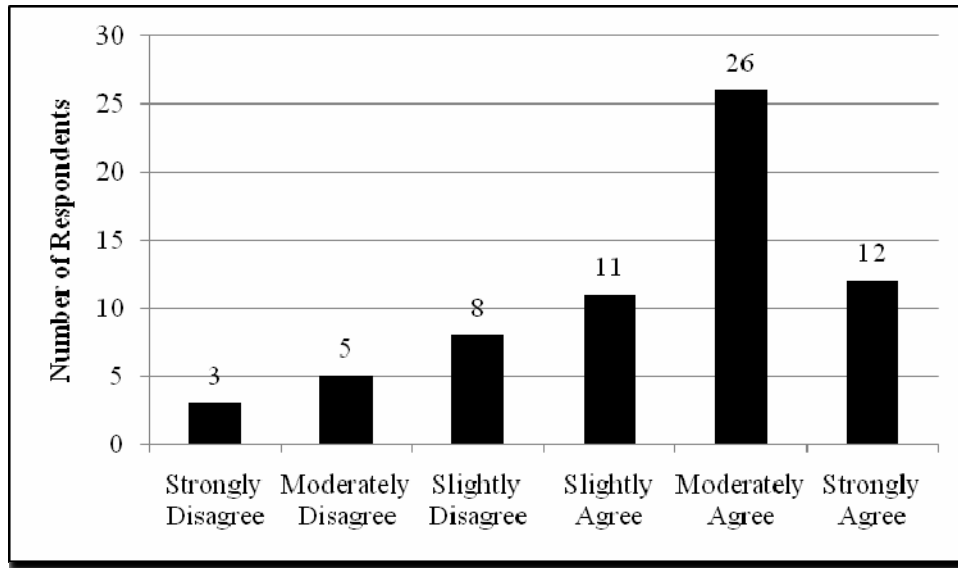
Seventy-seven percent (77%) of employer respondents also supported the development of programs and workshops to encourage cross-cultural sensitivity and understanding [Table 15]. However, fewer respondents *strongly agreed* this incentive (28%) [Figure 41] compared to the creation of internships (37%) [Figure 40].

**Figure 41: Employer Perspectives on Programs / Workshops for Cross-Cultural Sensitivity**



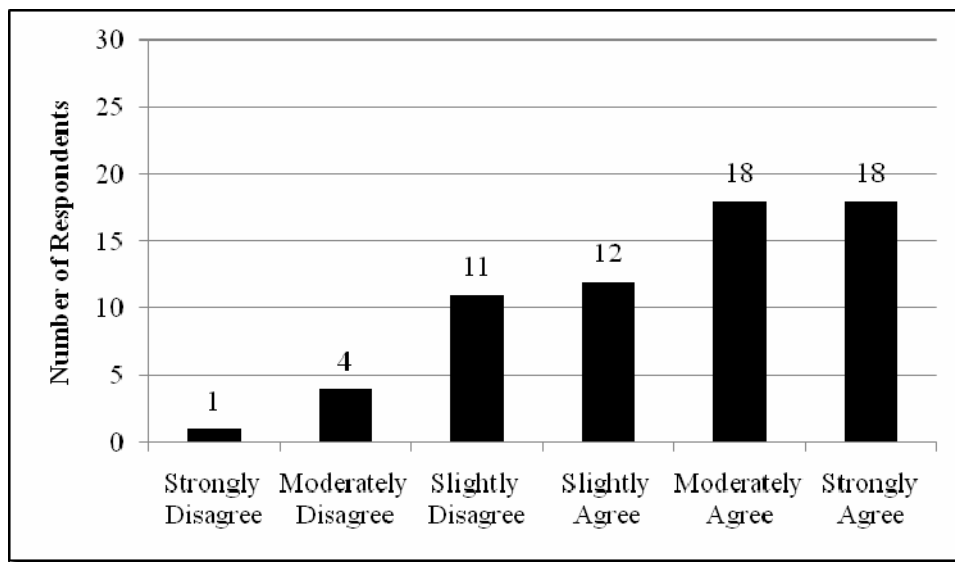
According to Table 15, 75% of respondents supported the creation of a provincial or Atlantic organization to provide credential assessments for immigrant candidates. A breakdown of Likert scale responses is presented in Figure 42. Eighteen percent (18%) *strongly agreed* and 40% *moderately agreed* with this incentive.

Figure 42: Employer Perspectives on a Provincial / Atlantic Credential Assessment Centre



Seventy-five percent (75%) of employers also supported the idea of providing more occupational information and services to immigrants prior to their arrival in Canada. However, fewer respondents *strongly agreed* this incentive (28%) [Figure 43] compared to the creation of an Atlantic credential assessment service (18%) [Figure 42].

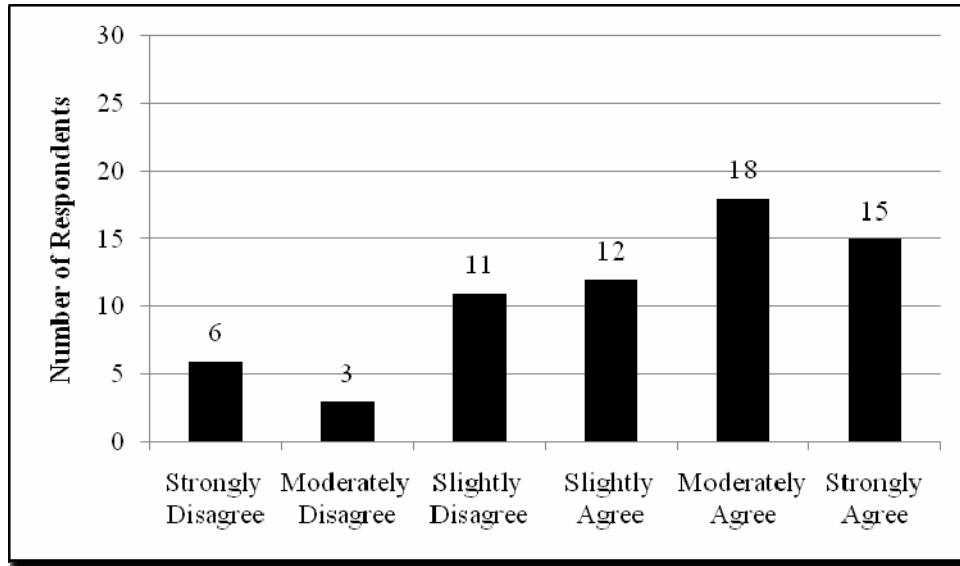
Figure 43: Employer Perspectives on Information Prior to their Arrival in Canada



As indicated in Table 15, 69% of respondents agreed that developing a wage subsidy program for hiring immigrants in order to offset financial costs to the employer and implementing an advertising campaign to create public awareness regarding the benefits of hiring immigrants would be helpful in encouraging the hiring of immigrant employees. Figure 44 provides significance breakdown of responses to the wage subsidy proposed incentive.

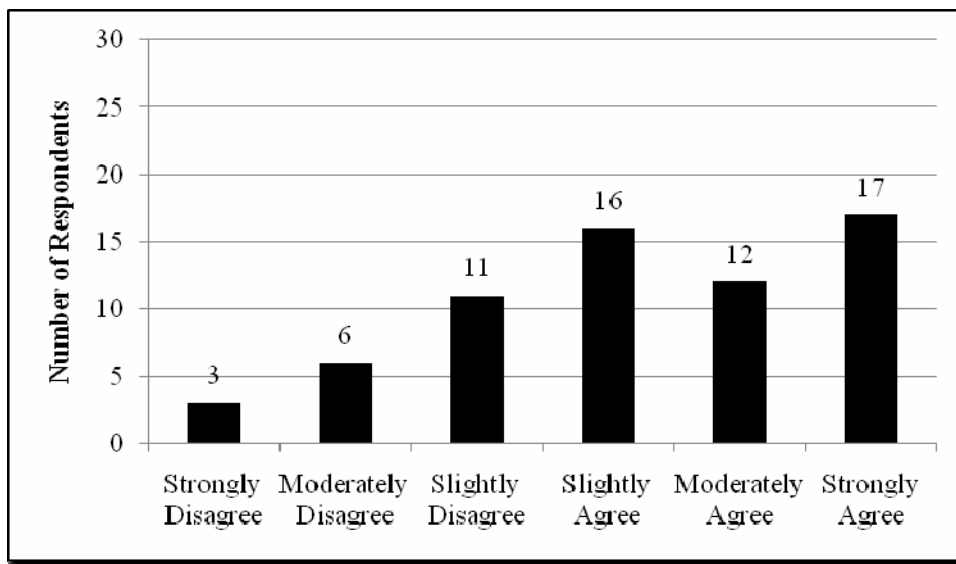


Figure 44: Employer Perspectives on a Wage Subsidy Program for Hiring Immigrants



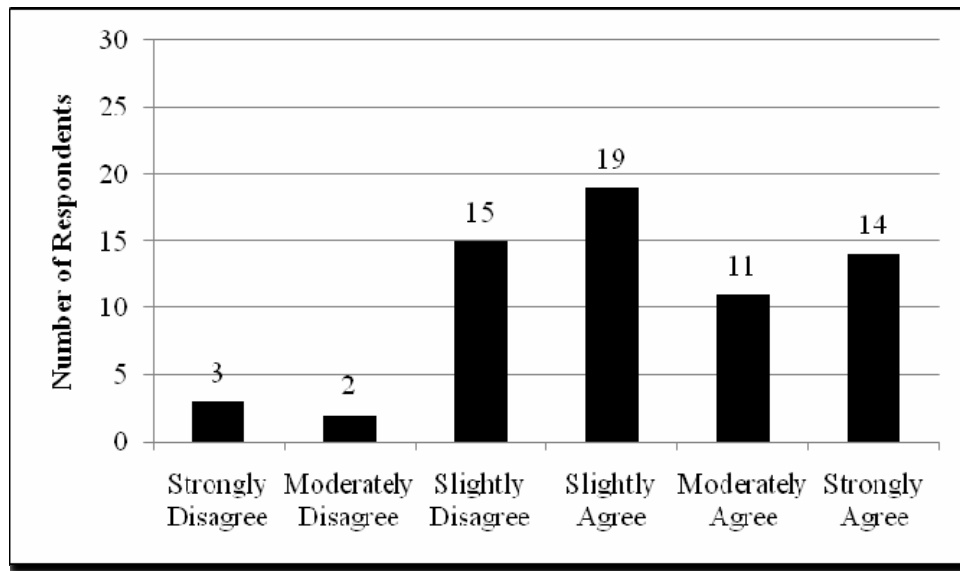
Support for these three incentives were comparable, with only slight variations between each in terms of the Likert levels of agreement. Figure 45 details employer support of an advertising campaign as a means to educate the public on the benefits of hiring immigrant employees.

Figure 45: Employer Perspectives on an Advertising Campaign on the Benefits of Hiring Immigrant Employees



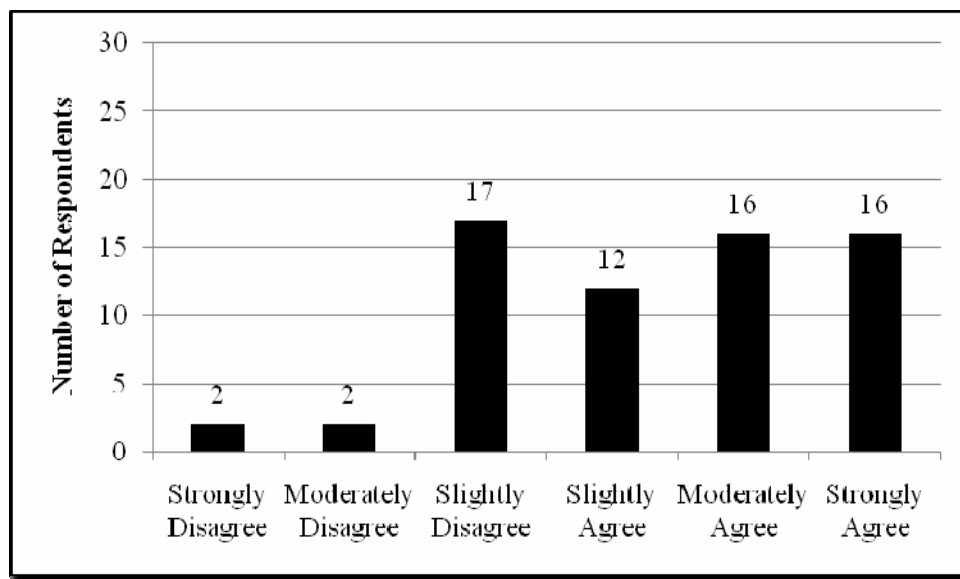
It is also worth noting that 69% of employers recognize the importance of streamlining credential assessment processes for immigrant candidates. This is significant considering the fact that employers do not usually conduct assessment procedures and may be unfamiliar with the magnitude of FCR as a barrier (which would account for the high numbers of responses in the mid-range categories of *slightly disagree* and *slightly agree*) [Figure 46].

**Figure 46: Employer Perspectives on Streamlining Credential Assessment Processes**



Sixty-eight percent (68%) of respondents agreed that in order to encourage more employers to hire immigrants, relevant stakeholders should work to create Industry Outreach Officers who could help employers better understand the benefits of hiring immigrants [Table 15]. Figure 47 details the employer responses according the significance scale.

**Figure 47: Employer Perspectives on Industry Outreach Officers to help Employers Understand the Benefits of Hiring Immigrants**



Other proposed incentives highlighted in Table 15 include: implementing a tax credit program as a financial incentive for employers who hire immigrants (57% agreed), providing employers with free advertising concerning their employment of immigrants (55% agreed), investment in the upgrading of skills for employees at no cost to the employer (48% agreed), and providing an extra week of leave per year for employees to access training (45% agreed).

## 8.2 Qualitative Analysis

Successful integration of immigrants into the local labour market and their subsequent contribution to the economic development of our province depends largely on the joint effort of a variety of stakeholders including employers, labour, occupational regulatory bodies, post-secondary institutions, assessment service providers, community organizations, and all three levels of government. Each of these groups is in a position to offer suggestions and ideas for potential incentives to improve immigration conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador and to act on them in the future. Compared to the rest of the country, as of yet our province has not fully tapped into the pool of potentially beneficial incentives for immigrant employment.<sup>150</sup>

There are a number of proposed ways to make immigrant career transitions easier, bearing in mind the labour market trends in our province. Each sector bases its propositions on its particular demands. With the recent employment shortages in certain areas, some businesses do not require additional incentives to attract immigrants, which is especially true for jobs in the food and retail service sectors. Other businesses, with the steady demand in their sector, have consistently and successfully relied on the immigrant workforce in the past, one of the examples being Western Memorial Regional Hospital.<sup>151</sup>

The most attractive and beneficial incentive for many local employers is a financial incentive in the form of wage-subsidy.<sup>152</sup> However, the same incentive is also the most disputable one among the rest of the stakeholders. Considering the already distinct character of the targeted group of potential employees, there is a general belief that the wage-subsidy could create reverse discrimination.<sup>153</sup> Other already present factors supporting this belief would be the out-migration of the local population and low employment rates in the province. Furthermore, putting in place financial incentives exclusively for immigrants would not contribute to their integration into society, as “immigrants do not need any more distinction as underprivileged.”<sup>154</sup> Most proponents of wage-subsidies suggest some restrictions in implementation, such as ensuring that there is a career path associated with the incentive or have “targeted wage-subsidies”, a “top-up” of wages, or wage-subsidies just for professional positions.<sup>155</sup>

In an effort to provide alternatives to wage-subsidies and create an “equal playing field” when it comes to immigrant employment, a number of new, fresh incentives emerge. The focus of these incentives is to help immigrants compete equally with the native-born by recognizing their skills and potential, and giving them tools to secure employment for themselves. Putting more resources into language training, more specifically on-the-job language training, is one of the more commonly mentioned incentives.<sup>156</sup> This suggestion is supported by the findings earlier stated in our report, where the English language barrier is both an actual barrier for immigrants and a perceived barrier for employer.<sup>157</sup>

Providing internships, mentoring programs, job fairs for immigrants, and investing resources into the accreditation process are all proposed ways to make immigrants more visible to employers.<sup>158</sup> There are numerous examples of similar initiatives across Canada and internationally, such as the Ontario Public Service (OPS) Internship Program, where internationally trained professionals get an opportunity to gain Canadian experience in their fields.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> See Jurisdictional Review, Section 4.0.

<sup>151</sup> Interview I23, 20 February 2007.

<sup>152</sup> Interview I18, 22 February 2007; Interview I32, 8 March 2007; Interview I15, 13 February 2007.

<sup>153</sup> Interview I34, 14 March 2007.

<sup>154</sup> Interview I35, 15 March 2007.

<sup>155</sup> Interview I30, 6 March 2007; Interview I15, 13 February 2007; Interview I36, 15 March 2007; Interview I34, 14 March 2007.

<sup>156</sup> Interview I35, 15 March 2007; Interview I26, 21 February 2007; Interview I22, 20 February 2007; Interview I24, 21 February 2007.

<sup>157</sup> See English Language, Section 6.2.2.

<sup>158</sup> Interview I34, 14 March 2007; Interview I32, 8 March 2007; Interview I4, 22 January 2007.

<sup>159</sup> See Jurisdictional Review, Section 4.0.

In Newfoundland and Labrador in particular, where the numbers of immigrants are still quite low, there is an additional responsibility to promote this particular group of potential workers to communities and local employers outside of the major centers. Considering a more homogenous demographic in rural areas, most stakeholders propose investing in the incentives such as cultural sensitivity training workshops, raising public awareness, information sessions for employers, all this in order to help employers and communities learn what they can gain by hiring immigrants.<sup>160</sup> Similarly, in the Immigration Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador, *Diversity – Opportunity and Growth*, released 21 March 2007, the provincial government is encouraging creation of Welcoming Communities comprised of locals who are “helpful to newcomers, open to new ideas and customs, and recognize the contributions that newcomers make”.<sup>161</sup>

Immigrant employment is an important factor in the future economic development of our province. Still, this particular group of potential employees remains underutilized. Even though there are different propositions in how to encourage local employers to tap the immigrant workforce pool, the provincial stakeholders are unanimous in recognizing the necessity for the incentives that would improve the conditions of immigrant employment.

## 9.0 Conclusion

This report has been prepared as part of the *Foreign Credentials Recognition* (FCR) initiative exploring the barriers to labour market integration that stretch beyond the recognition of formal foreign credentials. The report summarizes the key themes that emerge regarding immigrant retention, integration and employment in Newfoundland and Labrador. It also identifies potential employment barriers, effective incentives for hiring immigrants, and suggests actions required to break down these barriers.

At the time of preparation of this report, the provincial government launched a new immigration strategy, *Diversity – Opportunity and Growth*, which outlines the most important steps in improving the contribution of immigration to the economic development of our province. The strategy highlights the need for better integration of immigrants into the local workforce. This report supports the provincial initiative by providing suggestions and recommendations for improving the path to higher retention numbers and better workforce integration of immigrants.

Newfoundland and Labrador receives a steady inflow of new immigrants every year. However, the retention rate remains low as immigrants relocate elsewhere in Canada, often in search of meaningful employment. The issue of immigrant retention in the province gains more importance as Newfoundland and Labrador experiences steady decline in population, both through a decreased birth rate and continued out-migration. The results of this study show that there are numerous immigrant employment barriers to be addressed in order to attract new immigrants and increase the retention rate.

One of the major barriers identified by both immigrants and employers is the recognition of foreign credentials. Highly educated and trained individuals often cannot utilize their skills due to the complex processes of credential recognition. If credential recognition was better regulated and made easily accessible, individuals with internationally acquired education and experience could contribute towards the achievement of high-level goals of employment, skill enhancement, equality, social inclusion and active citizenship.

English language skills can be, and quite often are, a barrier to employment, as discovered through both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Employers seem to be more concerned about the level of English language, since they rate it the most important employment barrier. Immigrants do not consider the

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<sup>160</sup> Interview I34, 14 March 2007; Interview I9, 6 February 2007; Interview I4, 22 January 2007; Interview I8, 1 February 2007.

<sup>161</sup> *Diversity – Opportunity and Growth*, 7.

knowledge of English language to be as significant an employment impediment as employers. This difference of opinion highlights the subjectivity of assessing English as a second language, which may cause misunderstandings between immigrants and employers. Furthermore, perceived English language abilities, or lack thereof, may create perceptions of pronounced cultural differences or create other additional barriers to successful employment.

Both immigrants and employers perceive economic conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador as a major employment barrier, which can be further interpreted as a lack of demand in the labour market, hence no job availability. However, through the same sources of information this study discovers that there are current skills shortages in various employment sectors, as well as a large number of immigrants employed in their fields of expertise. In other words, some immigrants are finding employment in the province while others claim that there are no jobs. This discrepancy may require additional research. It also shows that unfavourable economic conditions may just be perceived as a barrier, rather than representing a real obstacle to meaningful employment.

Other significant barriers found through this study include: Canadian workplace practices; Canadian work experience and lack of mentoring, internships and apprenticeships; information for employers; information for immigrants before arrival; access to labour market information, retraining costs and financial requirements; cultural differences; supportive community; service external to the workforce; current living conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador; family; and racism/discrimination.

The study subsequently attempts to identify ways in which all the key stakeholders could contribute to greater immigrant employment. As the survey results and the qualitative analysis show, the key stakeholders are unanimous in recognizing the necessity for incentives that would raise the numbers and improve the conditions of immigrant employment, even if proposed incentives vary. Strategic implementation of incentives can provide a platform for both immigrants and employers to utilize knowledge and skills needed to launch a successful career and fulfill employment needs respectively. Encouraging employment of highly qualified and trained individuals through strategic implementation of incentives is a joint responsibility, and if successful and fruitful, it will also benefit the whole community. Incentives considered most beneficial to employers, but also to immigrants, are: 1) occupation-specific language training, 2) an immigrant skills matching database, 3) sponsored internships or mentoring programs, 4) employment information prior to arrival, 5) qualification assessment services suitable to Atlantic Canada, 6) wage-subsidy, 7) assistance to regulatory bodies for streamlining FCR, and 8) promotion. Most of these incentives would contribute directly to the removal of many barriers, and they would follow similar and already established programs across the country.

It is recommended that all the relevant players work towards making for stronger alignment between what happens nationally, regionally and provincially on matters related to Foreign Credential Recognition, and all this to improve and expedite immigrant labour market integration across the country.

## **Moving Forward**

This final report provides the groundwork for further research on the subjects of foreign credential recognition and integration of immigrants into the local workforce. Through knowledge mobilization and dissemination of the information gathered through this study, this work will continue to evolve and remain relevant, effective, and up-to-date with other similar initiatives and research programs. The Association for New Canadians has already outlined a number of concrete follow-up projects, which include: education and promotion, presentations, workshops, forums, internships for immigrants, development of a skills-matching database for immigrants, on-line discussions, and more. To be truly effective, it is also essential to keep encouraging new and nurturing already existing working relationships with other important stakeholders, and making new knowledge readily accessible to all the groups involved.

## 10.0 Next Steps

Through the results and key-findings of this research project, the researchers have identified three important next steps that will contribute to the integration of immigrants into the Newfoundland and Labrador workforce. These next steps will constitute a proposed Phase II of this *Foreign Credential Recognition* initiative, project title: “Taking Action: Connecting Immigrants with Opportunities in Newfoundland and Labrador.”

1. **Knowledge Mobilization:** Through the course of this research project, the researchers learned that many local residents are unaware of the economic, social, and cultural opportunities that immigration creates. A significant amount of information, quantitative data and qualitative material was gathered and analyzed for this project and presented in the final report. Knowledge Mobilization will involve activities related to building public awareness about the project, such as press conferences and website information. It will promote the benefits of immigration throughout Newfoundland and Labrador and help the public gain an appreciation for the contributions that immigrants make economically, socially and culturally.
2. **Skills-Matching Database:** Two more barriers to the integration of immigrants into the local workforce include 1) the lack of information for employers on finding qualified immigrant employees, and 2) access to labour market information for immigrants who are looking for employment. There should be a stronger link between employers and immigrants in the context of the Newfoundland and Labrador economy. A Skills-Matching Database would provide this link and open a path of communication between the needs of the workforce and the qualifications of immigrant candidates.
3. **Internships and Mentoring Programs:** According to the results of the research project, many immigrants consider their lack of Canadian work experience and Canadian workplace norms to be significant barriers to their integration into the local workforce. At the same time, the vast majority of employers agreed that sponsored internships and mentoring programs for immigrants in their chosen fields would be two useful methods for overcoming these barriers. These methods can also assist immigrants with access to employment-related advice and support and also with understanding cultural differences in the job application process. Internships and Mentoring Programs must be seriously explored and initiated in Newfoundland and Labrador to provide that necessary bridge for qualified immigrants so that they can contribute to their chosen fields.

## 11.0 Targeted Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the findings from this study.

### 1. Foreign Credential Recognition (FCR)

Internationally trained immigrants perceive the Canadian credentialing/assessment/licensing/ certification process as a web with multiple layers. At any stage in this lengthy process, these individuals could encounter unforeseen challenges such as additional language requirements, document translations, prohibitive costs related to additional examinations, and a lack of required Canadian work experience. Adopting a collaborative approach and forging strategic alliances with key stakeholders such as governments, business and industry, educational organizations, regulatory/licensing bodies, sector

councils, unions, and immigrant serving agencies is paramount to planning a coherent vision leading to the advancement of FCR and prior learning, training, and experience.

This study clearly indicates that immigrants placed high priority on the importance of recognizing and streaming internationally obtained education, skills and abilities.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended by key stakeholders that the Province work towards a comprehensive local approach to streamlining Foreign Credential Recognition, keeping in mind regional and national considerations. This would involve developing partnerships with professional associations, corporations, regulated and non-regulated occupations, post-secondary institutions and other key community groups. This initiative would map out a needs-based model to create workable solutions to credentialing and competency processes and to facilitate the process of integrating internationally trained workers in regulated and non-regulated occupations. This would address such key areas as: specific labour sector demands, mobilizing and increasing employer confidence, regulatory practices, assessment tools, engagement of national regulatory bodies, and building increased capacity at the local, regional and national level.

## **2. Perception of Economic Conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador**

From the research conducted, economic conditions in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador registered as a key barrier among those immigrants surveyed. First and foremost, the answer to this perceived or real barrier may require all players to have a “positive attitude”, set realistic expectations, and have access to accurate labour market information in order to make informed decisions. Strategic matching of immigrants’ skills and competencies with local labour market demands should be encouraged and intensified prior to coming to Canada. There are mechanisms in place such as the federal initiative *Going to Canada* web portal, where immigrants can readily access current and comprehensive information. The new Federal Referral Agency Office will also be beneficial in assisting immigrants to quickly find appropriate regulators and self assessment tools and to access relevant services.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that representatives of governments, labour, industry, and post-secondary organizations work together, on a regular basis, to identify skill shortages in the province and to communicate these shortages to potential employers and immigrant-serving agencies.

It is further recommended that the ANC take the lead in working with the above mentioned groups to develop and maintain a comprehensive employer/employee matching database for immigrants.

## **3. English Proficiency**

Employers who participated in this study considered a lack of English language skills, including sector specific language skills, as a major barrier facing immigrants who are entering the workforce and might need additional language training.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the ANC partner with employers and governments to investigate the feasibility of providing a pilot on-site workplace language program and sector specific language assessments for those internationally educated and talented workers who require additional training.

#### 4. Canadian Work Experience

It has been demonstrated that job-shadowing, coaching and job-mentoring have definite value as they provide much needed Canadian work experience. Recognizing and utilizing the education, skills and experience of foreign trained workers requires additional resources and improved infrastructures. In the local economy, as the demand for certain professions trades and services increases, so will the need for more highly trained and experienced professionals. Given today's competitive global markets and a very mobile work environment, the focus should be on job-related experience rather than exclusively Canadian experience. No doubt immigrants will bring these global perspectives to local situations. To expedite these transitions, it is timely for all stakeholders to look for solutions.

##### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that key stakeholders, governments, licensing bodies, sector councils, professional associations, post-secondary institutions, employers, the ANC and other organizations collaborate to increase mentorships and internships and to establish bridging programs to expedite labour market attachment for prospective immigrant workers.

It is further recommended that professional organizations that have programs in place explore the possibility of introducing additional programs or expanding those already in place.

#### 5. Canadian Work Place Practices

For immigrants, Canadian work place practices are often very different from those in their former countries and pose real challenges for them as they start a new job, and for the employer and other employees. These differences range from the initial job search to job acquisition to social and workplace norms. Assisting and supporting immigrants through these processes, encouraging them to volunteer, and helping them understand the Canadian system is critical to their success in the Newfoundland and Labrador workplace.

##### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the ANC work with key stakeholders to increase promotional activities that highlight the advantages of hiring immigrants and the benefits of assisting immigrants in accessing internships, mentorship programs and workplace training programs.

It is recommended that governments, employers, the ANC and community agencies work together to provide immigrants with assistance in understanding the Canadian workplace through sector specific workshops involving workplace orientation and safety training. These programs and services could be made available on-site or through distance learning.

It is further recommended that these players identify "best practice" in the area of diversity training and cultural understanding in the workplace and make information and training available to both Canadian and potential immigrant workers.



## 6. Employer Information

Employers need to have the tools, resources and knowledge necessary to embrace a multicultural workforce in terms of diversity training and organizational change. As well, they need to know how and where to access immigrant candidates who have the skills and education to fill their employment needs.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the ANC partner with governments to disseminate knowledge about the tools and resources that are already available for employers and other stakeholders particularly in terms of accessing the talented pool of internationally trained workers who are presently in the province and expediting their labour market attachment.

## 7. Financial Assistance

Financial requirements relating to assessments, registrations, licensing examinations and retraining costs often create challenges for immigrants to our province. Many professions such as Engineering and Medicine may require additional resources for retraining. A small loans program should be established to assist immigrants with fees and assessment costs dealing with the certification system in acquiring licensure and entry into a professional practice or skilled trade.

### **Recommendation**

In light of the success gleaned in other provinces regarding financial support for immigrants, it is recommended that the province initiate an Immigrant Small Loan Fund Program of up to \$5000 to help internationally trained professionals, such as nurses, teachers, accountants, doctors, engineers and others, complete their certification requirements.

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## APPENDIX A List of Key-Informant Interviews

Nellie Burke	Director - Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism
Jeannette Christopher	Program Coordinator – Clinical Skills Assessment and Training Program
Andom Gebru	Program Officer - Citizenship and Immigration Canada
Dr. Robert Greenwood	Director – The Leslie Harris Centre for Regional Policy and Development, Memorial University of Newfoundland
Scarlet Hann	Provincial Physician Recruitment Coordinator – Newfoundland and Labrador Health Boards Association
Heather Joyce	Human Resources Manager – Bell Group of Companies
Gary Noftall	Program and Policy Development Specialist, International Education Division – Corporate Planning and International Education, Department of Education
Dr. Andrew Peacock	Registrar – Newfoundland and Labrador College of Veterinarians
Louise Pinsent Parsons	Registrar and Director of Administration – Professional Engineers and Geoscientists Newfoundland and Labrador
Debbie Sheppard	Administrative Officer Physician Services – Eastern Regional Integrated Health Authority
David Touchings	Assessment Services Coordinator – College of the North Atlantic
Dave Vardy	The Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development, Memorial University of Newfoundland
Joan Walsh	Provincial Manager – Citizenship and Immigration Canada
Dr. Robert Young	Registrar – College of Physicians and Surgeons Newfoundland and Labrador

## APPENDIX B List of Standardized Interviews

Richard Alexander	Employers' Advisor – Newfoundland and Labrador Employers' Council
Dr. Lawrence Alteen	VP Medical Affairs – Central West Health Corporation; Member of the Council – CPSNL
Joe Arruda	Assistant Director of Personnel – Western School District
Louise Beaton	Registrar – Newfoundland Labrador Occupational Therapy Board
Victoria Belbin	Executive Director – Newfoundland and Labrador Regional Economic Development Association
Monica Brake	Western Memorial Regional Hospital
Herb Brett	Deputy Mayor – Arnold's Cove; Former President – Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Municipalities
Mary Bungay	Grand Falls Anglican Church Sponsorship Committee
Dale Burton	Manager of Human Resources – College of the North Atlantic
Bea Courtney	Registrar – College Massage Therapists of Newfoundland and Labrador
Jessica Courture	Corner Brook Pulp and Paper, Human Resources Department
Lisa Currin	Human Resources – Memorial University of Newfoundland
Claude Elliott	Mayor – Town of Gander
Paul Fisher	Executive Director / Registrar – Collage Licensed Practical Nurses Newfoundland and Labrador
Rod French	Executive Director – Exploits Valley Economic Development Corporation
Mary Gosse-Prowse	Registrar – Association of Early Childhood Educators of Newfoundland and Labrador
Jeff Green	Executive Director – Discovery Regional Development Board
Alison Highsted	Professional Development Coordinator – Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador
Dr. Michael Jong	President – Society of Rural Physicians of Canada; Vice President of Medical Services – Labrador-Grenfell Regional Integrated Health Authority; Associate Professor of Medicine – Discipline of Family Medicine (Labrador Health Centre, Goose Bay), Memorial University of Newfoundland
John Kamara	Volunteering Project Coordinator – Department of Political Science, Memorial University of Newfoundland
Bonnie McCarthy	Nova Central School District
Paul Morris	Director – Trade and Investment Corporate Office Staff, Innovation Trade and Rural Development
Kerry Murray	Director of Economic and Social Policy – Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour
Maria Murray	Admissions Manager – Registrar's Office, Memorial University of Newfoundland
Dr. Paul O'Brien	Registrar – Newfoundland Dental Board
Robert Parsons	Registrar – Department of Education
Gayla Rose	Economic Development Officer – Discovery Regional Development Board
Boyd Rowe	Chief Executive Officer – Labrador-Grenfell Regional Integrated Health Authority
Debbie Sheppard	Program and Policy Analyst, Immigration Policy – Labour Market Development and Client Services, Human Resources Labour and Employment
Wayne Smith	Member of the Executive – Association for New Canadians
Stephanie St. Marie	Iron Ore Company of Canada
Gary Vey	Chief Executive Officer – Gander International Airport Authority

## **APPENDIX C Interview Questions: Employers**

1. What are your current employment needs? Are you dealing with a skills shortage?
2. Have you hired immigrant employees in the past and would you consider hiring immigrants to help meet your employment needs?
3. Do you have assessment procedures in place to recognize foreign credentials? Is there anything in place to help offset the cost of the assessment process?
4. Do you have bridging programs for those who do not meet assessment criteria? If not, is this something you would consider encouraging in the future? Would you be willing to collaborate with relevant stakeholders to assist with this?
5. Are there currently paid internships available for people with international education/experience? If not, is this something you would consider initiating?
6. Do you think that immigrants / new Canadians would be valuable as employees? Why or why not?
7. What do you see as some potential barriers or problems that may prevent immigrants from successfully integrating into the NL workforce? How would you address these issues?
8. Can you suggest any possible incentives to encourage employers to hire immigrant workers?

## **APPENDIX D Interview Questions: Human Resources**

1. What are the current labour market shortages in Newfoundland?
2. What is your connection with immigrants in Newfoundland – first-hand experience?
3. What are the current labour market shortages in the province?
4. How do HR representatives value foreign education and experience?
5. Have you dealt with people who have had foreign credential assessments? If so, how do their assessments compare with their competencies? Is there a gap between their assessments and their competencies?
6. What are your views on Prior Learning Assessment – is there value in stepping up PLAR programs at the colleges and university?
7. How critical are communication skills in the workplace, particularly for people from other cultures?
8. What are your views on workplace orientation for new workers?
9. What do you see as the barriers to employment for immigrants?
10. What incentives, if any, could be offered to employers to encourage them to hire immigrant employees?

## **APPENDIX E Interview Questions: Policy**

1. We have very educated immigrants in NL, what do you think of the assessment process that they have to go through to get work?
2. Do you see much collaboration among stakeholders in terms of credentialing? What can be done to improve collaboration?
3. What do you see as the barriers that immigrants face finding employment and settling in NL?
4. Should incentives be offered to employers to encourage them to hire more immigrants?
5. What about services to integrate newcomers – is that something that can grow? Do we need more resources in that area?
6. How can we promote immigrants as potential employees?
7. What can we do to increase the retention rate of immigrants in NL? A multi-stakeholder approach?
8. What can we do to increase the attraction of immigrants to NL?
9. Should there be an escalation of efforts about attracting immigrants? What would be needed?

## **APPENDIX F Interview Questions: Smaller Centres in Newfoundland and Labrador**

1. What do you know about the province's plan for rural regeneration?
2. How can immigration help with the rural revitalization of Newfoundland?
3. What are stakeholders currently doing to attract immigrants to rural areas?
4. What is working and where are the weaknesses?
5. How important is the Provincial Nominee Program to the growth of rural Newfoundland?
6. What do you see as some potential barriers or problems that may prevent immigrants from successfully integrating into the NL workforce? How would you address these issues?
7. Can you suggest any possible incentives to encourage employers to hire immigrant workers, particularly in rural areas?
8. Are you familiar with the upcoming Immigration Strategy?
9. Are you familiar with the services provided by the Association for New Canadians?
10. Do you think settlement services for immigrants outside St. John's, like a branch of the Association for New Canadians, would help develop the immigrant population in rural areas?

## APPENDIX G Interview Questions: Regulatory Bodies

1. Do you recruit new job applicants?
2. Do you receive many applications from potential immigrant workers? Are there very many individuals employed in your profession/trade/sector who have international credentials?
3. Do you conduct your own assessment procedures for recognizing international credentials or do you contract to a third-party? Why?
4. What are the key components of your assessment procedures for recognizing international credentials?
  - a. What components of your assessment procedures cause the most stumbling blocks?
  - b. How could your assessment procedures be improved?
  - c. How could your assessment procedures be made more open and transparent?
  - d. Have you considered partnering with other regulatory bodies in terms of developing tools to assess internationally-obtained credentials?
5. Do your assessment procedures allow for inter-provincial mobility? If not, are you currently working towards this?
  - e. Are you connected with regulatory bodies in other parts of Canada especially in terms of international credential assessments?
  - f. Do you hold annual meetings at the national level?
  - g. Are you “in sync” with other regulatory bodies across Canada?
6. Do you have any bridging programs in place for those who do not meet all of the assessment criteria? Why or why not? If not, are you thinking of initiating any bridging programs in the future? Would you be willing to collaborate with relevant stakeholders to assist with this?
7. Are there currently paid internships available for new workers? If not, is this something you would consider initiating?
8. Are you aware of any programs, services or initiatives designed to help immigrants gain meaningful employment in NL?
9. Is there anything in place for prospective employers/employees to help offset the cost of the assessment process?
10. Do you think that immigrants / new Canadians would be valuable as employees in your profession/trade? Why or why not?
11. What do you see as some potential barriers or problems that may prevent immigrants from successfully integrating into the NL workforce? How do they rank in importance? How would you address these issues?
12. Can you suggest any possible incentives that relevant stakeholders can implement in order to encourage employers to hire immigrant workers?

## APPENDIX H List of Other Consultations

Dr. Ather Akbari	Professor – Department of Economics, Sobey School of Business, Saint Mary’s University
Dr. Godfrey Baldacchino	Canada Research Chair in Island Studies; Associate Professor – Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Prince Edward Island
Esther Banfield	Assistant to Dr. Justice Arthur – Peninsulas Health Care Corporation, Burin
Robin Bartlett	General Manager – Merit Contractor’s Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
Perry Bingle	Executive Director – The Humber Economic Development Board
Harry Bown	Chair of Education and Training – Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Association
Margret Butler	Newfoundland and Labrador College of Physiotherapists
Dr. Rosemary Clews	Professor – Department of Social Work, Saint Thomas University
Melanie Cochrane	Manager of Staffing Services – Strategic Staffing, Public Service Commission
Clarice Cole	Program Coordinator – Seniors Resource Centre
Conrad Collier	Economic Development Officer – Coast of Bays Corporation
Mark Crocker	Manager of the Statistical Survey Unit, Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency – Economics and Statistics Branch, Department of Finance
Pat Curran	Executive Director – Irish Loop Development Board
Dana Feltham	Policy and Research Analyst – Newfoundland and Labrador Oil Industry Association
Dr. John Flint	Assistant Professor – Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, Dalhousie University
Bettina Ford	Coordinator – Voluntary Resources Centre Community Services Council Newfoundland and Labrador, Gander
Heather Hawkins	Director of Registration Services – Association of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador
Dr. Ian Henderson	Registrar – Newfoundland and Labrador Optometric Board
Juanita Hennessey	Student Affairs and Services – Memorial University
Kathy Hogan	Association for New Canadians
Alton Hollett	Director of the Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency – Economics and Statistics Branch, Department of Finance
Sonja Knutson	International Student Programmer – Memorial University



Madeline Lefebvre	University Librarian – Saint Mary’s University
Dr. Wade Locke	Professor – Department of Economics, Memorial University
Jim Miller	Mayor – Town of Trinity
Dr. Dennis Mulcahy	Professor – Faculty of Education, Memorial University
Gerry O’Connell	Executive Director – Newfoundland and Labrador Newfoundland and Labrador Chamber of Mineral Resources
Dr. Susan O’Leary	Newfoundland and Labrador Chiropractic Board
Judy Pardy	Executive Director – Southeastern Aurora Development Corporation
Felvita Perez	Multicultural Women’s Organization
Echo Pittman	International Student Coordinator – Marine Institute
Linda Randell	Executive Director – Nordic Economic Development Corporation
Dr. Jeffrey G. Reitz	R.F. Harney Professor of Ethnic, Immigration & Pluralism Studies – Department of Sociology, University of Toronto
Susan Rowe	Business Service Centre
Aubrey Smith	Multicultural Association Grand Falls-Windsor
Christine Snow	Executive Director – Capital Coast Development Alliance
Kim Thompson	Executive Recruiter – Newfoundland Personnel Inc.
Pamela Toope	Director of Labour Market Development – Labour Market Development and Client Services, Human Resources Labour and Employment
Dr. Susan Walsh	Professor – Faculty of Education, Mount Saint Vincent University

## APPENDIX I                      Letter of Introduction for Surveys

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of the Association for New Canadians, a non profit agency dedicated to the provision of immigrant settlement and integration services. We are currently undertaking a research project in order to study the integration of immigrants into the local workforce with particular attention to Foreign Credential Recognition procedures. This is a province wide project and is funded by Human Resources and Social development Canada (HRSDC).

This survey will help us access information regarding the kinds of credentials, skills, and abilities newcomers have and how the recognition of their abilities can be streamlined. The findings will be used to reduce barriers to newcomer integration in the Newfoundland and Labrador labour market, and to encourage employers to hire more newcomers.

Your participation in this study would be greatly appreciated as the information gleaned will help us identify current labour market integration priorities for skilled newcomers. Indeed, this research initiative will assist the Association for New Canadians and interested stakeholders in developing a strategic and operational response that will enhance job opportunities for newcomers and serve to grow the Provincial economy.

Thank you again for participating in this important piece of research. Should you need further information regarding the survey, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to hearing your views.

Sincerely,

Eileen Kelly-Freake  
AXIS Career Services Manager  
The Association for New Canadians  
ekf@nfld.net  
Tel: (709)579-1780  
Fax: (709)579-1784

## APPENDIX J Immigrant Survey

1. Gender: M / F
2. Country of birth: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Year of arrival in Canada: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Age at arrival: \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the main reason you moved to Newfoundland and Labrador?
  - a. Job offer / transfer
  - b. To look for work
  - c. Education
  - d. Family / personal reasons
  - e. Better lifestyle
  - f. Difficult situation in my home country (such as political or religious problems)
  - g. Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Where did you look for information about immigrating to Newfoundland and Labrador? **Circle all that apply.**
  - a. International embassy or consulate officer
  - b. Non-governmental organization representative
  - c. A relative or friend
  - d. The media (such as newspaper or television)
  - e. Citizenship and Immigration Canada website
  - f. Newfoundland and Labrador provincial government website
  - g. Association for New Canadians website
  - h. An immigration consultant
  - i. An immigration lawyer
  - j. Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
7. What kinds of information did you receive (either before, during, or after arriving here) about living in Newfoundland and Labrador? **Circle all that apply.**
  - a. How to find housing
  - b. How to look for a job
  - c. How to access medical services
  - d. How to obtain language training
  - e. How to access educational services (schools, colleges, universities)
  - f. How to get prior education / credentials assessed
  - g. How to obtain Canadian equivalents for international qualifications
  - h. How to access basic needs and services such as food and clothing
  - i. How to contact immigrant agencies such as the Association for New Canadians
  - j. Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
8. What is the *highest* level of formal education you have obtained?
  - a. No formal education
  - b. Elementary school completed
  - c. High school completed
  - d. Trade certificate or apprenticeship completed
  - e. College diploma or certificate
  - f. Bachelor's degree
  - g. Professional degree (e.g. Medical, Law, Dentistry)
  - h. Master's degree
  - i. Doctorate degree
9. In what country or countries did you receive this education?: \_\_\_\_\_
10. Do you *currently* have access to language training?: Yes / No

11. Excluding language training, do you plan to continue your education or training?:  
Yes / No
12. If **yes** to question 11, why do you plan to further your education or training in the future? **Circle all that apply.**
- Career advancement or development / prepare for a career change
  - Required by employer
  - Required for recognition of diploma, certificate, or degree
  - Seeking credit towards a program certificate / diploma / degree
  - For personal development and fulfillment
  - Pursuing a hobby or interest
  - Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
13. Are you currently employed in Newfoundland and Labrador? Yes / No
14. If **yes** to 13, are you happy at your current job? Yes / No
15. If **no** to 14, why are you not happy with your current job? **Circle all that apply.**
- Poor pay
  - Not enough hours of work
  - Too many hours of work
  - Poor physical conditions (i.e. bad ventilation, too noisy)
  - Sexual harassment
  - Personal conflict with employer
  - Discrimination
  - Lack of opportunities for advancement / promotion / development
  - Difficult adapting to work culture / co-workers / supervisor
  - Problems with workload / responsibilities (not enough, too much)
  - Position is not in area of specialization / expertise
  - Job is not desired profession
  - Lack of job security
  - Location is not convenient (too far from home)
  - Inconvenient work schedule (e.g. shift work)
  - Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
16. Are you currently looking for a job or another job?: Yes / No
17. If **yes** to 16, why are you looking for a job or another job? **Circle all that apply.**
- Better pay
  - More hours of work
  - Less hours of work
  - Better physical conditions (i.e. better ventilation, less noise)
  - To avoid discrimination
  - Better advancement / promotion / development opportunities
  - To find a position in my area of specialization / expertise
  - To find a preferred job (change in career)
  - Happier work culture / co-workers / supervisor
  - More appropriate workload / responsibilities (not enough, too much)
  - Better job security
  - More convenient location (Closer to my home)
  - More convenient work schedule
  - Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
18. If **yes** to 16, how are you looking for another job? **Circle all that apply.**
- Contacting employer(s) directly
  - Through friends / relatives
  - Through co-workers
  - Placing or answering newspaper ads

- e Consulting with employment agency
- f Being referred by another employer
- g Searching the internet
- h Being referred by a union
- i Association for New Canadians
- j Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

19. Since arriving in Newfoundland and Labrador have you had difficulties finding

- a. Qualified employment? Yes / No
- b. Non-qualified employment? Yes / No

20. If **yes** to 19, what problems or difficulties have you had in finding work? **Circle all that apply.**

- a Language problems
- b Not knowing how to find a job
- c Not knowing the city or town in which you are living
- d Qualifications earned outside of Canada were not accepted
- e Job experience from outside Canada was not accepted
- f Not having enough job experience in Canada
- g Not having job references from Canada
- h Not having family or friends who could help
- i Lack of employment opportunities
- j Not being able to find a job in your field
- k Not having connections in the job market
- l Discrimination
- m Transportation problems
- n Not being able to find / afford childcare
- o Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

21. Have you checked with any person, organization, educational institution or employer to see if your credentials would be accepted in Newfoundland and Labrador? Yes / No

22. Where or with whom did you check?: \_\_\_\_\_

23. Were your credentials *fully* accepted, *partially* accepted, or *not* accepted by the person, organization, or employer mentioned above?

- a Fully accepted
- b Partially accepted
- c Not accepted

24. What is your area(s) of education and/or training?: \_\_\_\_\_

25. Are you currently working in your area(s) of education / training? Yes / No

26.	To what extent do you perceive each of the following as possible <b>BARRIERS/ PROBLEMS</b> to the successful integration of immigrants into the Newfoundland and Labrador workforce? Please <b>circle</b> a number between 1 and 6 where <b>1</b> indicates the issue is <i>not</i> a significant barrier and <b>6</b> indicates the issue <i>is</i> a significant barrier.	Not Significant						Very Significant
a.	Amount of information available for immigrants regarding labour market conditions (i.e. what jobs are available)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
b.	Racism and discrimination towards immigrants in Newfoundland and Labrador	1	2	3	4	5	6	
c.	Amount of information available for immigrants regarding the immigration process both before and during immigration	1	2	3	4	5	6	

d.	The amount of Canadian work experience employers expect immigrants to have prior to their arrival in Newfoundland and Labrador	1	2	3	4	5	6
e.	The current economic conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador	1	2	3	4	5	6
f.	Employer perceptions of potential training costs associated with hiring immigrants (retraining, upgrading)	1	2	3	4	5	6
g.	Cultural differences in the job application process (resume writing, interview process, job competition process)	1	2	3	4	5	6
h.	Amount of information available for employers to aid in locating immigrant candidates for potential employment	1	2	3	4	5	6
i.	Access to services such as childcare, counselling, transportation, schools/education for children	1	2	3	4	5	6
j.	The current living conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador	1	2	3	4	5	6
k.	Access to financial services to help pay for education	1	2	3	4	5	6
l.	Knowledge of Canadian business and work practices	1	2	3	4	5	6
m.	Amount of expert advice and support available through mentoring programs, apprenticeships, work terms	1	2	3	4	5	6
n.	Employer recognition of credentials such as diplomas, certificates, or degrees obtained internationally	1	2	3	4	5	6
o.	Number of immigrants living in your area who can provide support for future immigrants	1	2	3	4	5	6
p.	Differences in language and communication	1	2	3	4	5	6

27. Do you plan to settle permanently in Newfoundland and Labrador?:  
Yes / No / Undecided

28. If **yes** to 27, why are you planning to settle permanently in Newfoundland and Labrador? **Circle all that apply.**

- a. To be close to family and friends
- b. Good quality of life in Newfoundland and Labrador
- c. Improve the future for the family
- d. Good job opportunities in Newfoundland and Labrador
- e. Good salaries in Newfoundland and Labrador
- f. Good working conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador
- g. Good business climate (free market) in Newfoundland and Labrador
- h. Newfoundland and Labrador's social system (health care, social programs)
- i. Political or religious freedom in Newfoundland and Labrador
- j. I feel welcome in Newfoundland and Labrador
- k. Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

29. If you responded **no** to number 27, why are you planning to leave Newfoundland and Labrador? **Circle all that apply.**

- a. To be close to family and friends
- b. Quality of life is better elsewhere
- c. Improve the future for my family
- d. Access to education is better elsewhere
- e. Job opportunities are better elsewhere

- f. Salary / pay is better elsewhere
- g. Working conditions are better elsewhere
- h. Business climate is better elsewhere
- i. Social system is better elsewhere (health care, social programs)
- j. Political or religious conditions elsewhere
- k. Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX K List of Countries Represented by the Immigrant Survey**

Afghanistan	Lebanon
Bangladesh	Libya
Bulgaria	Malaysia
China	Mexico
Colombia	New Zealand
Congo	Pakistan
Cuba	Romania
Croatia	Russia
Denmark	Sierra Leone
Egypt	South Africa
England	Sudan
France	Thailand
Greece	Uganda
India	Ukraine
Iran	USSR
Iraq	Yugoslavia
Italy	

## APPENDIX L Employer Survey

1. Community where business is located: \_\_\_\_\_
2. How long has your business been in operation? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Total number of employees: \_\_\_\_\_
4. What type of business or sector is your company engaged in? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Does your company regularly receive applications from new Canadians or international workers? Y/N
6. Has your experience with employing new Canadians or international workers been positive? Y/N
7. If **no** to question 6, what were the negative experiences? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Where do you publicly advertise new job openings that become available within your company? **Circle all that apply.**
  - a. Employment agency
  - b. Newspaper ads
  - c. Your company website
  - d. Internet websites (i.e. HRDC job bank, Career Beacon, etc.)
  - e. Other employers
  - f. Association for New Canadians
  - g. Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Do you have an explicit human resources strategy? Y/N
10. Have you experienced a labour shortage within your company in the last 5 years? Y/N
11. Do you expect a labour shortage within your company within the next 5 years? Y/N
12. *On a scale of 1 to 6, 1 being least effective and 6 being most effective, do you see the following as ways to address your future workplace needs:*
  - a. Upgrade the skills of your current employees
  - b. Implement measures to increase retention of current employees
  - c. Employ more young people
  - d. Employ more workers from other provinces
  - e. Employ more New Canadians and international workers
  - f. Relocate work to fulfill needs
  - g. Attract workers from other organizations
  - h. Repatriate Newfoundland and Labrador-born workers from other provinces
  - i. Hire local retired individuals
13. *To what extent do you perceive the following to be potential barriers to integrating immigrants into the workforce? Please use a scale of 1 to 6 where 1 indicates the issue is not a significant barrier while 6 indicates the issue is a very significant barrier.*

		Not					Very
		Significant					Significant
(a) Amount of access immigrants have to labour market information (i.e. what jobs are available)	1	2	3	4	5	6	
(b) Racism and discrimination towards immigrants in NL	1	2	3	4	5	6	
(c) Amount of Canadian work experience immigrants have upon settling in your area	1	2	3	4	5	6	



- |     |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (c) | Amount of Canadian work experience immigrants have upon settling in your area  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| (d) | Economic conditions in NL  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| (e) | Potential training costs associated with hiring immigrants (i.e. retraining, updating skills)  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| (f) | Cultural differences in the job application process (i.e. resume writing, interview process)   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| (g) | Amount of information available for employers to aid in locating immigrant candidates for potential employment                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| (h) | Immigrant access to services external to the workforce (i.e., child care, transportation, community support)                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| (i) | Amount of knowledge immigrants have of Canadian business and work practices  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| (j) | Immigrant access to expert advice and support through mentoring programs, apprenticeships, work terms, etc.                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| (k) | The current procedures in place for your occupation concerning the recognition of credentials such as diplomas, certificates, or degrees | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| (l) | Language issues (i.e. level of English proficiency and occupation-specific knowledge of technical language)                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| (m) | How have you addressed or how would you address these barriers?  |   |   |   |   |   |   |
- 
- 
- 

14. *Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements, using a scale of 1 to 6 where 1 indicates you strongly disagree and 6 that you strongly agree. To encourage employers to hire immigrants, relevant stakeholders should:*
- |     | Strongly Disagree |   |   |   |   |   | Strongly Agree |
|-----|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| (a) | 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |                |
| (b) | 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |                |
| (c) | 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |                |
| (d) | 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |                |
| (e) | 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |                |
| (f) | 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |                |
| (g) | 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |                |
| (h) | 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |                |
| (i) | 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |                |
| (j) | 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |                |
| (k) | 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |                |
| (l) | 1                 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |                |

- (m) Implement an advertising campaign to educate the public on the benefits of hiring immigrants 1 2 3 4 5 6
- (n) Create programs or workshops to encourage cross-cultural sensitivity and understanding, at no cost to the employer 1 2 3 4 5 6
- (o) Can you think of other possible incentives to encourage employers to hire immigrant workers? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX M Questions for Focus Groups: Newcomers**

1. The first thing we are going to talk about is credential recognition. A lot of you have first-hand experience with getting employers to accept your credentials. Can we have your feedback on what the experience has been for you?
2. What were some of the positive things that you experienced in getting and keeping your job? Did you have any negative experiences finding employment?
  - a. Language
  - b. Canadian work-experience
  - c. Workplace culture
3. What things are in place, and what things could be put in place, to assist newcomers with employment? Do you see opportunities for upward mobility in your workplace?
4. Are there any incentives that could be put in place to assist newcomers with employment?
5. What could we put in place to assist newcomers with integration in terms of:
  - a. The government?
  - b. Employers?
  - c. The community at large?

## **APPENDIX N Questions for Focus Groups: Women**

1. What are the critical issues/barriers facing immigrant women?
2. What services can be put in place to assist you and your families to better adjust and integrate into the community?
3. How has the ANC or other organizations assisted you?
4. Did you receive information about working in Canada prior to your arrival? What kind of information?
5. Do you see specific training gaps that need to be addressed in order to work in your field?
6. What other things might you suggest?

## **APPENDIX O Questions for Focus Groups: International Students**

1. What programs are you all taking?
2. What were some of your reasons for choosing the program/school?
3. Are you planning to return home after your program, move to another province or country, or stay and find employment in Newfoundland?
4. Do you know what the job prospects are for your field in Newfoundland?
5. Have your programs involved any work-terms or internships to help you get experience in your field?
6. Have you had the opportunity to network or meet local employers in your field?
7. What do you see as some of the barriers to finding employment in Newfoundland in your field?
8. Do you have any suggestions for overcoming these barriers to employment?
9. What could be done to bring more international students to Newfoundland?
10. Does anyone have any final comments or questions?





