



ATLANTIC RESEARCH GROUP  
*on* ECONOMICS *of* IMMIGRATION,  
AGING *and* DIVERSITY

## **Immigration in Nova Scotia: Who Comes, Who Stays, Who Leaves and Why?**

A Research Project Report prepared for

Nova Scotia Office of Immigration  
Government of Nova Scotia

By

Ather H. Akbari  
Saint Mary's University

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## **Executive Summary**

The main purpose of this research was to investigate why immigrants choose Nova Scotia as their destination in Canada, and why some stay in the province and others leave. The first project report used 2016 Canadian Census data to study general mobility patterns of Nova Scotia immigrants. The second report presented a literature review on mobility motivations of individuals and their location choice. This third and final report analyzes the results of an online survey of immigrants who arrived in Canada during 2011-2018 with either the intention to go to Nova Scotia or who lived in Nova Scotia at some point during the eight-year period.

### **About the survey**

Findings presented in this report are based on a survey of 2,815 respondents who represent 28,760 identified by Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) as either staying in Nova Scotia currently, or having lived in and left the province. In compliance with the *Privacy Act*, IRCC distributed the survey invitations to potential respondents to ensure the protection of personal information. No personal information or individual-level administrative data was shared by IRCC. All estimates are expected to be correct with 95 percent confidence within 1.8 percent for the entire sample, 2.0 percent for the sample of stayers and 3.5 percent for the sample of those who have left. Some focus groups were held in conjunction with the survey. Answers to some descriptive questions have been quantified.

## **Sources of information used by immigrants**

Immigrants choose Nova Scotia based on the information they receive from multiple sources. About 85 percent use government sources (government officials, websites, literature and other types of information). More than 70 percent also use personal contacts (friends or family) along with other sources that include potential employer contacts, job fairs, lawyers and consultants.

About 65 percent of immigrant were satisfied with the accuracy of information they had received about the province prior to arrival while a quarter of them were neutral in their rating. Some of those who were not satisfied implied in their written comments, and in focus groups, that the information sources they used portrayed a too positive picture of the province.

## **Factors in destination choice**

Based on the information they obtain, several economic and non-economic features of Nova Scotia influence their decision to move to the province. More than 40 percent base their choice on economic factors including job opportunities for themselves and their spouse, and the cost of living (including housing). The remaining immigrants base their decision on a variety of social factors including safe communities, a good place to raise children, communities without discrimination, and quality of life. In their ranking of the importance of these factors in their decision, employment opportunities, quality of life and safe community received the highest ranking, while access to local community services and language training were the least important.

## **Immigrant stayers and leavers**

About 74 percent of immigrants who had arrived during 2011-2018 were still living in the province (21,210 in total). However, based on their intentions expressed in the survey, it is possible that in addition to the 26 percent who have left the province an additional 10 percent could also leave over the next five years. The top three reasons these respondents gave for having left the province, or for their intention to leave, were to seek better employment opportunities, seek better wages and lower taxes, and trying to find better health care. Some also complained of discriminatory workplaces.

The gender composition of immigrants who have left (leavers) and those who have stayed (stayers) is the same, about 54 percent male. Leavers are younger, less likely to be married and have about the same composition of university education as stayers. About 91 percent in both populations have the ability to communicate only in one official language, English. However, less than half in each population prefer to speak English at home. Leavers are more likely to be from India and China than are stayers and about 40 percent of them had lived elsewhere in Canada before arriving in Nova Scotia, compared to only 27 percent of stayers.

## **Satisfaction with destination choice**

Nova Scotia resident immigrants gave safe community and quality of life their top satisfaction ratings, each above 4 on a scale of 1 to 5 expressing their satisfaction with these services. These two features of Nova Scotia were also rated highly by leavers. In the case of stayers, satisfaction ratings of these two features were followed by better educational opportunities for children and building a better life for children, both of which

were rated lower by leavers for whom a community without discrimination and education opportunities were more important in destination choice. However, both of these features were rated lower in satisfaction by them than by stayers. Health care and employment opportunities, which were very important in immigrants' decision to move to the province, received the lowest rating by stayers. Leavers were more dissatisfied with employment opportunities than stayers. They were more satisfied than stayers with health care in Nova Scotia. This is an important finding as it is based on their actual experience with health care in other provinces.

### **Accessing settlement services and satisfaction with them**

More than half of leavers and about 42 percent of stayers did not use any Nova Scotia settlement services. Refugees are the most likely users followed by economic and family class immigrants. Descriptive responses indicated many were not aware these services existed, they were not offered in their area of residence (often outside Halifax) or the service providers were too busy to give them an appointment. Employment counselling, language training and pre-arrival services were used the most while entrepreneurship support and credential recognition services were used by less than 10 percent in each population.

Both populations are neutral in terms of their satisfaction with most Nova Scotia settlement services (neither satisfied nor dissatisfied). Pre-arrival services and credential recognition were rated slightly higher by leavers. But leavers were dissatisfied with entrepreneurship support service, giving it a very low score of 2.

## **Engagement in social, cultural and religious activities**

Participation is low (not exceeding 34 percent) in all social, cultural and religious activities. Higher percentages of stayers are involved activities than are leavers in their current province of residence. Stayers are generally older and are likely to have stronger links to their religious or ethnic communities which explains their greater participation in religious organizations. Younger and single people are more likely to be involved in sports and recreation which is reflected in the data for leavers who are younger. More than 30 percent of stayers do not engage in any of these activities. About 40 percent of leavers also do not participate in these activities in their current provinces of residence. While this result could be due to a lack of availability of such opportunities where they live it may also reflect a general issue of social integration of immigrants in Canada that can be investigated in greater detail.

## **Comparing Nova Scotia with other provinces**

Stayers and leavers view Nova Scotia to be worse off in terms of economic factors including wage rate, tax rate and job opportunities. Although access to quality health care is also viewed as worse by stayers, leavers are neutral in their rating. Both groups rate cost of living, safety of community, quality of accommodation and lack of discrimination to be better in Nova Scotia than in other provinces. The ratings provided by leavers are instructive as they are based on their own experiences in their current province of residence.

## **Immigrants in labour markets**

Immigrants who have left Nova Scotia are more likely to be employed and work in their preferred occupations than those who are living in Nova Scotia. They are less likely to hold multiple jobs.

## **Conclusion**

Survey data presented in this report indicate that economic opportunity is the most pervasive factor that encourages immigrants to remain in Nova Scotia. Many immigrants who leave Nova Scotia mention economic opportunities as the main reason they left, although some mention, in their written responses, that they took the decision reluctantly and miss many social and other aspects of living in the province.

Opportunities are mainly related to finding a job but also extend to finding the right job, or one that fits their level of education, skills and experience. The census 2016 data, presented in the first background report of this project showed that those who came as economic class immigrants had the least retention rate in the province, when compared to family and refugee class immigrants. It is recommended that immigrant attraction should focus economic immigrants who come with their families. For their settlement and integration, employer involvement such as in the Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program, is an important step taken at federal and provincial levels. Initiatives to strengthen immigrants' social connectedness by encouraging volunteering, sports and recreation activities can also help in raising their and their family's satisfaction with living in Nova Scotia.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

This is the third report of the project *Immigration to Nova Scotia: Who Comes, Who Stays, Who Leaves and Why?* The first report provided background and contextual information by presenting evidence, mainly based on the 2016 Canadian Census, on the socio-economic and demographic profiles of immigrants who came to Nova Scotia between 2011 and 2016, and of those who have stayed in the province longer. Inter-provincial movements of immigrants and non-immigrants were also investigated. The second report reviewed current literature to identify the possible reasons for an individual's decision to migrate and for location choice in general. It also discussed some broad characteristics, based on the census, of those who came to Nova Scotia, those who stayed and those who left for other parts of Canada or elsewhere.

The main purpose of this report is to investigate the motivation behind mobility decisions of immigrants. It is based on a survey of 2,815 immigrants representing 28,760 immigrants who are either currently living in Nova Scotia or lived in the province in the past and left. They became permanent residents in Canada at age 18 years and over from 2011 to 2018, were destined for Nova Scotia or lived in Nova Scotia but did not

declare Nova Scotia as their intended destination<sup>1</sup>. About 74 percent of the respondents were living in Nova Scotia at the time the survey was launched, while others had moved to other provinces or left the country. The survey was conducted with the approval of Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board (REB). This was granted for one year on April 10, 2018 and then extended to April 10, 2020 (REB # 18-184).

Detailed survey methodology is presented in the technical appendix at the end of the report.

### **Organization of the report**

Chapter 2 discusses some selected demographic and human capital characteristics of the survey's immigrant population, their immigration journey to Nova Scotia, the reasons why they chose Nova Scotia as their destination and where they settled in the province. The following two chapters discuss demographic and human capital characteristics and mobility motivations of those who were residing in the province (Chapter 3) and those who had left (Chapter 4) at the time the survey was conducted. Chapter 5 provides a comparative analysis of the two populations and also discusses some conclusions. Chapter 6 discusses some policy implications and also provides some ideas for future research.

Two supplements to this report have been provided to NSOI in the form of Excel spreadsheets that contain frequency distributions of answers for each question, based on raw data, separately for English and French respondents.

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<sup>1</sup> Those who have lived in Nova Scotia but did not declare Nova Scotia as intended destination at arrival in Canada are identified if they received settlement services in the province or indicated in Global Case Management System as living in Nova Scotia at some point.

## Chapter 2

### **An overview of immigrant population: Who comes and why?**

The survey conducted for this study represents a population of 28,760 permanent residents who arrived at age 18 years and over during 2011-2018, were destined to Nova Scotia but may have come to the province or may not have, or were destined to another Canadian province or territory but lived in Nova Scotia at some time over the period<sup>2</sup>. In this Chapter we discuss their selected demographic and human capital characteristics, their immigration journey to Nova Scotia, the reasons why they chose Nova Scotia as their destination and where they settled in the province. All estimates in this Chapter are expected to be correct within 1.8 percent range, 19 times out of 20.

#### **Some demographic and human capital characteristics**

Table 2.1 presents some demographic and human capital characteristics of the immigrant population that is the focus of this study. About 55 percent of immigrants are men; 80 percent are 44 or younger; 66 percent have had university education before arriving in the province; 91 percent have the ability to communicate only in one of the two official languages, English; about 45 percent are represented by five source countries with India being the largest source, followed by China, the Philippines, United

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<sup>2</sup>Only 75 of the 2,815 survey respondents (in unweighted sample) answered the questionnaire administered in French language. From them, 71 were living in the province while four had left. The 75 French respondents to the survey represent a population of 345 French language speakers.

Kingdom (and its territories) and the United States; and 30 percent have lived elsewhere in Canada before arriving in Nova Scotia.

Table 2.1: Characteristics of immigrant population under study

Characteristics	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>	
Male	54.7
Female	45.0
Prefer not to answer	0.3
Total	100.0
<i>Age distribution in years</i>	
18-29	17.4
30-44	61.1
45-59	16.8
60+	4.7
Total	100.0
<i>Educational attainment at time of arrival</i>	
High school or less	10.2
Some or completed trade, certificate diploma college	11.7
Some or completed university	66.2
All other	12.0
Total	100.0
<i>Ability to communicate in official languages</i>	
English only	91.1
Other*	8.9
Total	100.0
<i>Source countries</i>	
India	15.3
China	9.2
Great Britain	7.4
Philippines	7.0
United States	5.8
Other	54.9
Total	100.0
<i>Lived elsewhere in Canada before arriving in Nova Scotia</i>	
Yes	29.5
No	70.5
Total	100.0

Source: Derived from survey data. \*Less than 1% can speak in French only. Rest can speak both.

## Immigrant status at the time of arrival in Nova Scotia

Table 2.2 shows that about 57 percent of immigrants arrived as permanent residents in the province. A lower percentage of immigrants arrived as temporary foreign workers or foreign students.

Table 2.2: Immigrant status at the time of arrival  
*Respondents were asked, "What was your status when you arrived in Nova Scotia?"*

Status	Percentage
Permanent Resident	56.8
Temporary Foreign Worker	18.1
Student	13.3
Other (please specify)	11.8
Total	100.0

Other responses to the survey questionnaire indicate 6.3 percent came on visitor visa, 1.4 percent on tourist visa and 1.2 percent on work permit (including graduate work permit) and the remaining were not classifiable.

## Migrants from other provinces

Of the nearly 30 percent of immigrant arrivals who lived in another province before arriving in Nova Scotia, most lived in Ontario, followed by British Columbia and Alberta. Quebec and New Brunswick were source provinces of nearly 10 percent and 8 percent of immigrants respectively (Table 2.3). These migration patterns closely match those found in the 2016 Census for interprovincial migrants during 2011-2016 (Table 9 of the first background report).

**Table 2.3: Province of residence prior to arrival in Nova Scotia**

*Those respondents who had lived elsewhere in Canada before arriving in Nova Scotia were asked, “In which province / territory did you live when you first arrived in Canada?”*

Provinces and Territories	Percentage
Ontario	53.1
British Columbia	10.1
Alberta	10.0
Quebec	8.8
New Brunswick	8.4
Other Atlantic provinces	5.2
Other	4.3
Total	100.0

N=8,480.

### **Immigration journey**

This section discusses what sources of information potential immigrants to Nova Scotia use when considering immigration to the province, why they choose to move to the province and where they settled in the province when they first arrived.

#### *Finding Nova Scotia*

Several pull and push factors play their role in individual decisions to move from their home country or province in Canada. These include both economic and non-economic factors and were reviewed in the previous report. The first step in the immigration process is to obtain information about what the potential destination has to offer. Immigrants may use various sources in addition to exploiting their own personal contacts at their preferred destination. Information about Canadian provinces is available to prospective immigrants through various sources; a list was provided to survey participants (Table 2.4). Understanding the role of this information can be useful

for a smaller province like Nova Scotia in its promotion as a destination for prospective immigrants.

Table 2.4: Main source of information used by immigrants to find out about Nova Scotia as immigrant destination

*Respondents were asked, "How did you first become aware of Nova Scotia as an immigrant destination?"*

Information source	Percentage
Family or friends	45.6
Government information (such as Canadian or Nova Scotia website or literature)	13.6
Employer representative	6.6
Lawyer or consultant	5.3
Education representative	5.1
Government official (such as Canadian, Nova Scotian or foreign embassy)	4.0
Other (please specify)	19.9
Total	100.0

Other prominent responses included: through job offer, being a student in Nova Scotia, internet and job fairs. One answer mentioned a job fair in Ireland and another Destination Canada forum in Paris. The rest were thinly spread over other sources of information.

Most immigrants use family or friends as their primary source of information on Nova Scotia as a destination province. Information provided on federal and provincial government websites is the second most popular information source. Immigrants may also use multiple sources. Most include family or friends and government information sources (Table 2.5).

Table 2.5: Other sources of information used by immigrants to find out about Nova Scotia as an immigrant destination

*Respondents were asked, "What other sources of information did you use to learn about Nova Scotia as an immigrant destination, select all that apply."*

Information source	Percentage
Family or friend	71.4
Government Information (such as Canadian or Nova Scotia website or literature)	64.1
Government official (such as Canadian, Nova Scotian or foreign embassy)	19.3
Lawyer or consultant	12.7
Employer representative	12.1
Education representative	9.4
An event held in my home country (e.g., job fair)	6.2
Other (please specify)	23.0

Prominent answers among those who chose "other (please specify)" along with the other listed reasons included online or internet resources, immigration forum, university websites, CBC news, social media, being a student in the province and employment opportunity.

### *Satisfaction with accuracy of information received about Nova Scotia*

Using various information sources while trying to find out about Nova Scotia is only one part of the process. Recipients' satisfaction with the information they received is important because they will be frustrated if they find that it is not correct, which could affect their perspective of Nova Scotia. It is also important for the information providers to know if recipients are satisfied with the information they provided because its main purpose is to help in the settlement of new arrivals. We noted above that more than half of incoming immigrants use sources besides personal contacts to find out about Nova Scotia. These include government sources, education or employer representatives, events held overseas (job fair and other events), lawyers and consultants.

As Table 2.6 below shows, on a rating scale of 1 (extremely dissatisfied) to 5 (extremely satisfied), immigrants gave an average score of 3.8 to the accuracy of information they received about Nova Scotia prior to arrival, higher than the neutral score of 3<sup>3</sup>. About 65 percent were satisfied to extremely satisfied, giving scores of 4-5, while about a quarter were neutral (neither dissatisfied nor satisfied).

Table 2.6: Satisfaction with the accuracy of information received about Nova Scotia  
*Respondents were asked, "How satisfied were you with the accuracy of information received about Nova Scotia prior to moving here, on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being extremely dissatisfied, 5 being extremely satisfied."*

Scale	Percentage
Extremely Dissatisfied (1)	2.9
2	7.6
Neutral (3)	24.9
4	38.7
Extremely Satisfied (5)	25.9
<b>Average score</b>	<b>3.8</b>

Respondents were also asked, in an open-ended question, to provide reasons for their satisfaction or dissatisfaction. These answers were coded by the principal investigator, a project team member and two members of the survey company.

About 61 percent of those who were dissatisfied, or neutral, with the information they had received, wrote their answers. About the same percentage of satisfied population responded. Their answers can be divided into three broad categories: adequacy of information, inadequacy of information and other mentions. The data have been reported in Table 2.7.

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<sup>3</sup> This type of scale is also called Likert scale named after its inventor Rensis Likert. See Likert, Rensis. 1932. "A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes". *Archives of Psychology*. **140**: 1–55.

Table 2.7: Reasons for satisfaction or dissatisfaction with accuracy of information received prior to arrival in Nova Scotia. In an open-ended question, Respondents were asked, “*Explain why you were satisfied or dissatisfied with the accuracy of infoamrion you received prior to arrival in NovaScotia.*”

Reason provided in written comments	Unsatisfied or Neutral	Satisfied
Percentage response	61.0	59.9
<i>Adequacy of information</i>		
Information was accurate/mostly accurate	5.2	18.6
Plenty of information available online/Did the research myself	2.8	4.7
Information helped with employment, accommodation, education, relocation and healthcare	-	4.5
Met my expectations/satisfied	-	4.1
Total	9.9	31.9
<i>Inadequacy of information</i>		
Misleading/conflicting/inaccurate information	17.8	5.9
Lack of jobs/opportunities/low wages/past experience & qualifications are not recognized	17.2	4.7
Wasn't provided enough information - Services available, support upon arrival, basic info.	4.6	-
Experienced discrimination/racism - Not informed about the level of racism/discrimination	3.2	-
Total	42.7	11.7
<i>Other*</i>		
Quality of life-quiet, safe, nice people, beautiful,. Low cost of living	-	6.6
Family/friends provided information	-	5.0
Miscellaneous mentions	4.8	-
Total	8.4	16.4

\*Includes mentions of quality of life and low cost of living; information provided by family and friends; have been to NS before and miscellaneous mentions.

Data below 3% are suppressed. Answers to question 22 and 23 were cross tabulated to generate this table. A small percentage (5 percent) mentioned they did not collect any information and did not know about Nova Scotia before coming here.

It is noted that over 40 percent of respondents are satisfied with the adequacy of information they had received. This includes ten percent of those who were either dissatisfied or neutral overall. About 55 percent found the information to be inadequate, which included 43 percent of the respondents who had indicated they were generally unsatisfied or were neutral.

Upon reading their narratives, it was clear that those who were not satisfied had mostly used non-personal sources of information. They indicated that based on the information they had received from government and other nonpersonal sources about the province, they had better expectations of job prospects, especially of the availability of professional and technical jobs, health care, community reception and schooling for children. Some of their comments also implied that the information sources portrayed too much of a positive picture of the province.

### *Why come to Nova Scotia?*

Once immigrants have information about the potential destination, several factors could influence the final decision to move there. These could include economic factors (such as employment, wages, cost of living and taxes), accessibility to services and facilities, environmental quality, social connectedness, community identity and perceptions of crime and safety.

What factors matter to immigrants the most when considering Nova Scotia as their destination? Table 2.8 outlines the most common factors respondents could choose from. While mostly economic factors are cited in research literature as determining location choice, Table 2.8 data indicate other reasons also play a part. Some 70 percent of new arrivals in Nova Scotia chose the province as their destination in Canada for reasons other than employment opportunities for themselves. The top five responses include employment opportunities for themselves, quality of life, friends and family close by, building a better life for children and educational opportunities. Each of the other options that was provided on the list to them was chosen by three percent or less,

totalling 9.1 percent and included access to good quality accommodation, education opportunities for children, health care, language training, safe community, a community without discrimination, availability of culturally related products and services, organizations helping with access to services and local community services. These are combined with “other” which also include descriptive answers provided by 9.6 percent. Descriptive answers included province requiring no prior connection to Canada, prior job offer and being a student before obtaining permanent resident status.

Table 2.8: Primary reason for choosing Nova Scotia as a destination province  
*Respondents were asked, “What was your primary reason for choosing to immigrate / move to Nova Scotia, rather than to another Canadian province or territory”*

Reason for choosing Nova Scotia	Percentage
Employment opportunities for myself	28.5
Quality of life*	14.9
Family or friends close by	9.7
Building a better life for my children	8.3
Employment opportunities for my spouse	7.5
Education opportunities for myself or spouse	7.4
Affordable cost of living	5.0
Other choices**	18.7
Total	100.0

\*Examples include: Recreation, public transportation, natural beauty, uncrowded, wide-open spaces. \*\*Discussed in the text above.

When each respondent ranked their reasons, on a scale of 1 (not at all important) to 5 (extremely important), safe community received the highest average ranking in the decision to move to Nova Scotia, followed by quality of life (Table 2.9). Employment opportunities were ranked as the third most important reason. Affordable housing and access to good quality accommodation were also included in the top five rankings.

Table 2.9: Relative importance of each factor in decision to immigrate or move to Nova Scotia

Respondents were asked, "How important were the following factors in your decision to immigrate or move to Nova Scotia? Rate on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all important and 5 is extremely important."

Reason	Score					Average score
	1	2	3	4	5	
	Not at all important percent	percent	Neutral percent	percent	Extremely important percent	
Safe community	4.5	2.0	9.6	24.7	59.2	<b>4.3</b>
Quality of life*	5.1	3.6	12.6	30.0	48.8	<b>4.1</b>
Employment opportunities for myself	8.1	5.3	12.7	18.5	55.5	<b>4.1</b>
Community without discrimination	9.0	5.5	14.2	23.9	47.4	<b>4.0</b>
Health care	7.4	6.6	17.2	23.4	45.4	<b>3.9</b>
Affordable cost of living	6.0	5.7	19.2	28.7	40.4	<b>3.9</b>
Access to good quality accommodation	7.6	5.7	19.6	32.0	35.2	<b>3.8</b>
To build a better life for my children	21.2	3.6	9.5	16.1	49.6	<b>3.7</b>
Employment opportunities for spouse	20.4	6.0	13.2	18.6	41.9	<b>3.6</b>
Education opportunities for my children	23.0	4.3	11.8	17.3	43.5	<b>3.5</b>
Recognition of my credentials	16.7	7.5	18.6	22.5	34.8	<b>3.5</b>
Education opportunities for myself or/ spouse	18.9	10.2	18.6	21.0	31.4	<b>3.4</b>
Organizations that help with access to services or the, government, etc.	18.6	12.6	21.5	23.9	23.5	<b>3.2</b>
Availability of culturally related experiences, products and services**	18.0	12.4	27.0	23.1	19.5	<b>3.1</b>
Family / friends close by	27.0	11.2	18.5	17.5	25.8	<b>3.0</b>
Local community settlement services	23.9	13.1	22.9	20.3	19.9	<b>3.0</b>
Access to language training	41.0	11.5	16.8	14.3	16.5	<b>2.5</b>

\*Example: Recreation, public transportation, natural beauty, uncrowded, wide-open spaces.

\*\*Example: Language, religion, food, clothing, entertainment.

## *Settling in Nova Scotia*

Halifax is the largest urban centre in the province and most immigrants settle there. Due to a shortage of professionals and skilled workers elsewhere in Nova Scotia, specific initiatives are being undertaken at provincial and community levels to attract immigrants to other locations, including rural areas and small towns. Immigrant settlement and integration programs are offered through 17 settlement service providers spread across the province. These also include some post-secondary institutions and public libraries. Provincial government contributes a major part in funding of many of these settlement providers. Some are run through private funds.<sup>4</sup>

Table 2.10: Destinations of immigrants in Nova Scotia  
*Respondents were asked, "Where did you first settle when you arrived in Nova Scotia?"*

Initial destination in Nova Scotia	Percentage
Halifax (includes Dartmouth, Bedford, Sackville and other towns)	75.6
Cape Breton Regional Municipality (including Sydney and other towns)	3.7
Other*	20.7
Total	100.0

\*Some other choices included Truro (2.5 percent), Bridgewater (1.6 percent), Kentville (1.3 percent), New Glasgow (1.1 percent), Yarmouth (0.7 percent) and Amherst (0.2 percent). Some open-ended choices were distributed thinly across rest of the province including Antigonish, Windsor, Wolfville, Digby and Sydney among the more prominent ones.

Based on the 2016 Census, it was reported in the first report of this project that although most new arrivals settle in Halifax, some choose to live in rural areas or smaller towns, although they are thinly distributed. The present survey also found that while most settled in Halifax when they arrived in Nova Scotia, a quarter settled outside Halifax with Cape Breton being a distant second (Table 2.10).

<sup>4</sup> A complete list of settlement service providers is available at: <https://data.novascotia.ca/Immigration-and-Migration/Settlement-Service-Provider-Directory/7t4h-ktpk/data>

Survey estimates also indicate about 74 percent of immigrants who arrived during the survey period were still living in the province. The rest had moved either to other Canadian provinces or have left Canada. Chapter 3 focuses on immigrants who are currently residing in Nova Scotia. Chapter 4 focuses on those who have left.

## Chapter 3

### Immigrants in Nova Scotia: Who stays and why?

The survey estimates that about 74 percent of immigrants who arrived during the eight-year period ending in 2018 were living in Nova Scotia (an estimated number of 21,210). Understanding their demographic profile, preferences, reasons for continuing to stay in the province and labour market activities can help policy makers assess the impact of immigrant retention and integration initiatives. All estimates presented in this Chapter are expected to be correct within a range of 2 percent, 19 times out of 20.

#### Year of arrival of immigrants

Table 3.1 shows that more than half of immigrants who arrived since 2015 were living in the province at the time of this survey.

Table 3.1: Year of arrival in Nova Scotia  
 Respondents were asked, "What year did you arrive in Nova Scotia?"

Year of Immigration	Percentage
Before 2011	7.9
2011	6.8
2012	9.3
2013	8.6
2014	10.3
2015	11.6
2016	16.3
2017	13.5
2018	15.7
Total	100.0

Data on their initial destination in the province revealed 76 percent went to Halifax followed by a distant three percent who went to Cape Breton. Others were thinly distributed across the province. About 90 percent did not leave their initial destination.

### **Mobility within the province**

Table 3.2 reveals Halifax is the main destination of the 10 percent residents who move within the province. Rest of the movers scattered around the province in small numbers.

Table 3.2: Destination of movers within the province

Halifax (includes Dartmouth, Bedford, Sackville, etc.)	65.8
Truro	4.3
Kentville	3.8
Bridgewater	3.5
Cape Breton Regional Municipality (Sydney, etc.)	2.6
Other Community in Nova Scotia	20.0
Total	100.0

N = 2,184.

Table 3.3 provides selected characteristics of immigrants resident in Nova Scotia<sup>5</sup>. More than half are men; 76 percent are 44 years of age or younger; 81 percent are married or common law; 66 percent had some, or completed, university education when they arrived in Canada; 91 percent can communicate in English only while the rest include speakers of both official languages or French only speakers who were less than one percent; their top five source countries are India, China, Great Britain, the Philippines and the United States, representing 46 percent of all arrivals during the period and 26 percent moved to Nova Scotia after having lived elsewhere in Canada.

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<sup>5</sup> They were in the province at the time of the survey conducted in this study.

Table 3.3: Selected characteristics of immigrants in Nova Scotia

Characteristics	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>	
Male	54.0
Female	44.1
Prefer not to answer	1.9
Total	100.0
<i>Age distribution in years</i>	
18-29	16.2
30-44	59.8
45-59	18.5
60+	5.5
Total	100.0
<i>Marital status</i>	
Married or common-law	80.6
All other	19.4
Total	100.0
<i>Educational attainment at time of arrival</i>	
High school or less	8.7
Some or completed trade, technical school or college	12.5
Some or completed university	65.9
Other	12.8
Total	100.0
<i>Ability to communicate in official languages</i>	
English only	91.0
Other*	9.0
Total	100.0
<i>Source countries</i>	
India	14.2
China	8.5
Great Britain	8.3
Philippines	7.7
United States	7.1
Other	54.2
Total	100.0
<i>Lived elsewhere in Canada before arriving in Nova Scotia</i>	
Yes	26.5
No	73.5
Total	100.0

\*Include those who can speak either in both official languages or only in French, the latter being less than one percent.

## Language spoken at home

While immigrants may report being able to communicate in an official language commonly used at work, how well they can communicate in that language is an important determinant of their labour market success. One indirect indicator of their fluency in an official language is if they speak that language at home. Table 3.4 reveals that just under half of Nova Scotia immigrants speak English at home. The second most common language is Arabic which is at a distant seven percent.

Table 3.4: Language spoken at home.

*Respondents were asked, "What language do you prefer to speak at home?"*

Language spoken at home	Percentage
English	47.0
Arabic	7.1
Mandarin	6.3
Tagalog	4.5
Russian*	3.7
Spanish	2.8
Hindi*	2.5
Other**	26.1
Total	100.0

\*Was not provided in the list accompanying the question on language (question 74). Answer was coded separately. \*\*Includes descriptive answers (24.4%) and all other languages in the provided list each of which were 2 percent or under.

## Immigrant status at arrival, nature of application and entry class

Table 3.5 shows that about 60 percent of immigrants who were living in Nova Scotia and arrived during 2011-2018 arrived as permanent residents, 75 percent were primary applicants and 45 percent came as provincial nominees, followed by 22 percent who

came under another economic class and 23 percent who came under family class.

Those who came as resettled refugees and protected persons were at a distant eight percent.

Table 3.5: Immigrant status at arrival, nature of application and entry class

Status	Percentage
<i>Immigrant status when arrived in Nova Scotia</i>	
Permanent Resident	60.2
Temporary Foreign Worker	17.2
Student	9.2
Other (please specify)	13.5
Total	100.0
<i>Whether primary applicant</i>	
Yes	75.0
No	25.0
Total	100.0
<i>Immigrant entry class</i>	
Provincial Nominee Program	45.2
Family (i.e., sponsored by family member)	23.1
Other Economic Program (Federal Skilled Worker, Canadian Experience Class, Federal Skilled Trades, Immigrant Investor, AIPP)	22.0
Resettled Refugee and Protected Person	7.8
Other	1.9
Total	100.0

Earlier, Table 3.3 showed that 26 percent of immigrant residents in Nova Scotia had moved in from elsewhere in Canada. Table 3.6 reveals 52 percent of them came from Ontario, followed by British Columbia, New Brunswick, Quebec and Alberta. Only a small share came from the rest of Canada.

Table 3.6: Which other Canadian province have current immigrant residents of Nova Scotia come from?

*Respondents who indicated they have lived elsewhere in Canada were asked, “In which province or territory did you live when you first arrived in Canada?”*

Province	Percentage
Ontario	52.3
British Columbia	10.7
New Brunswick	9.4
Quebec	9.1
Alberta	7.6
Other Atlantic provinces*	6.2
Manitoba	3.2
Other	4.7
Total	100.0

N=5,600. \*Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland & Labrador.

### **Immigrants’ decision to stay in the province**

In this section, we analyze immigrants’ decision to stay in the province in two ways.

First, we provide a numerical analysis of their satisfaction with their decision to move to Nova Scotia by considering various factors as identified in literature. Second, we discuss their answers to an open-ended question that asked about their reasons for staying.

#### *Satisfaction with decision to immigrate or move to Nova Scotia*

Factors that determine an immigrant’s choice of Nova Scotia as a destination, and their relative importance, were considered in Chapter 2. How satisfied immigrants are with their experience in Nova Scotia for each decision factor can be a determining factor whether they stay or leave. Important factors, as identified in Chapter 2, were employment opportunities for self, quality of life, friends and family close by, building a

better life for children and educational opportunities. Besides these, several other factors were also rated by respondents in order of their importance in their destination choice. Table 3.7 presents data on the level of satisfaction with those factors on a scale of 1 (extremely dissatisfied) to 5 (extremely satisfied).

Safe community and quality of life received top ratings, each above 4. These were followed by better educational opportunities for children and building a better life for children. Health care and employment opportunities, which were very important in the decision to move to the province, received the lowest satisfaction ratings.

Table 3.7: Level of satisfaction of immigrant residents with their decision to move to Nova Scotia  
 Respondents were asked, “How satisfied are you with the following features of Nova Scotia, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is extremely dissatisfied and 5 is extremely satisfied?”

Feature	Score					Average score
	1 Extremely Dissatisfied	2	3 Neutral	4	5 Extremely Satisfied	
	percent	percent	percent	percent	percent	
Safe community	0.3	1.5	11.0	36.2	51.0	<b>4.4</b>
Quality of life*	2.1	4.6	17.1	37.5	38.7	<b>4.1</b>
Building a better life for my children	3.3	4.5	19.0	36.9	36.4	<b>4.0</b>
Education opportunities for my children	3.1	6.4	20.8	34.1	35.7	<b>3.9</b>
Access to good quality accommodation	2.1	6.5	23.8	41.2	26.5	<b>3.8</b>
Community without discrimination	4.5	8.1	18.8	36.5	32.1	<b>3.8</b>
Access to language training	5.4	7.9	29.1	32.4	25.2	<b>3.6</b>
Education opportunities for myself / spouse	4.9	9.5	28.7	32.5	24.5	<b>3.6</b>
Organizations that help with access to services, government, etc.	5.3	11.0	26.2	33.1	24.4	<b>3.6</b>
Family / friends close by	7.1	12.4	25.0	26.2	29.3	<b>3.6</b>
Availability of culturally related experiences, products and services**	4.5	12.5	30.3	34.8	18.0	<b>3.5</b>
Local community settlement services	5.1	11.7	33.5	30.2	19.5	<b>3.5</b>
Affordable cost of living	5.8	14.6	32.1	31.3	16.2	<b>3.4</b>
Employment opportunities for spouse	9.8	16.5	25.2	26.4	22.2	<b>3.4</b>
Employment opportunities for myself	12.0	14.6	24.8	26.3	22.3	<b>3.3</b>
Recognition of my credentials	12.6	13.5	24.2	29.0	20.8	<b>3.3</b>
Health care	12.9	15.4	25.8	25.0	21.0	<b>3.3</b>

\*Examples include: recreation, public transportation, natural beauty, uncrowded, wide-open spaces.

\*\*Examples include: language, religion, food, clothing, entertainment.

Note: The option “Not applicable” is excluded in the above table for brevity.

### *Reasons for staying in the province*

In an open-ended question, the survey respondents were asked, “Why do you continue to live in Nova Scotia?” Their responses were coded and included in the main dataset for analysis. In Table 3.8, these responses have been grouped as economic reasons, quality of life reasons, social reasons, lack of choice and all others. As shown, close to two-third of the respondents included the quality of life for their reason to stay in Nova Scotia (“Like it here”; “Natural beauty, children’s education”; “I love the slower life and nice respectful people”), followed by economic reasons (“affordable housing, gainfully employed”; “I have a professional job and I feel that I am growing professionally and personally”; “Job”), and social reasons (family and community ties”; “kids in school”)

While having a job is the economic reason most frequently given for staying, there were others mentioned in the narratives too, such as the perceived opportunity for business success in the province. These reflect the general level of optimism that is often a part of the immigrant psyche.

About one in five cited family reasons for staying, including various family members being in school. This is taken to mean some kind of family tie or commitment in the province, and includes some responses that appeared to be a little reluctant. In many cases, however, these family reasons are an extension of the quality of life responses relating an overall satisfaction with the location choice. This can also be combined with access to a supportive community, which gives a degree of comfort for newcomers in what could otherwise be a strange and unfamiliar place. Many respondents combined these dominant reasons as primary influences on their decisions to stay in Nova Scotia.

However, a few feel “stuck”, and would like to move away or feel they have to stay here until their “contractual arrangement” under the nomination process has been completed. These indicate that a move is being contemplated but for various reasons was not possible at the current time; lack of money is one reason given for this. These accounted for less than one in ten responses. A residual sum of responses are given as “other” in the table, each component of which was answered by less than 3 percent respondents. By and large, less-than-positive responses are far outweighed by the general level of satisfaction with coming to live in Nova Scotia.

A more detailed analysis of the answers to open-ended question pertaining to this section, not pursued in the present report, can break down the above results by immigrant entry status and program of entry.

Table 3.8: Reasons why respondents were staying in Nova Scotia. Respondents were asked “*Why do you continue to stay in Nova Scotia?*”

<b>Description</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<i>Quality of life</i>	
Like/Love it / happy here	17.9
Settled here/It’s home/Bought a house	10.9
It’s a nice/safe/beautiful place	10.2
Friendly people/place	9.1
Environment/Beautiful/Scenic outdoors/Ocean	8.4
Quality of life/lifestyle	5.7
Family friendly/good place to raise kids	4.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>66.5</b>
<i>Economic</i>	
Employment opportunities	31.3
Affordable housing and cost of living	3.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>35.0</b>
<i>Social</i>	
Community/Family/Friends are here	18.2
Education/kids in school	7.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>25.4</b>
<i>No choice/can’t move/stuck/waiting to move*</i>	4.5
<i>All other (Weather, Choice/Preference, Waiting for PR/Immigration requirement, Easy commute/Little traffic, Miscellaneous mentions)</i>	8.9

Based on descriptive answers to an open-ended question that were coded and added to the dataset. Percentages in all categories do not add up to 100 because respondents could provide multiple answers.

\*Waiting to move” means awaiting PR status before leaving the province.

### **How likely are recent Nova Scotia immigrants to stay in the province and what is their next destination province?**

Past research has shown that about 30 percent of immigrants who arrive in Nova Scotia tend to leave within the first five years. As time passes, greater percentages of them would leave the province. Immigrants who have arrived over the survey period are fairly new in the province and may not be sure if they will stay or leave. It is important to know how many in their current population are considering staying in the province and of those who are planning to leave, what their reasons are.

Table 3.9 shows close to 8.5 percent of current Nova Scotia immigrants are very likely to move out of the province over the next five years, about the same percent are somewhat likely to move and about 35 percent are undecided. About 57 percent are more likely to stay. For the 2011-2018 cohort under study, this suggests that the province is very likely to lose about 10 percent more immigrants over the next five years in addition to the 26 percent who have already left.

Table 3.9: Immigrants' likelihood of staying in Nova Scotia  
*Respondents were asked, "How likely are you stay in Nova Scotia for the next five years?"*

Likelihood of staying	Percentage
Will definitely stay	27.5
Extremely likely to stay	29.2
Somewhat likely to stay	26.6
Somewhat unlikely to stay	8.2
Very likely to leave*	8.5
Total	100.0

\*Includes those who stated they will definitely or are extremely likely to leave.

When asked about their main reason for considering to leave Nova Scotia, 27 percent stated being unable to find employment (Table 3.10). Seeking better health care was the second most popular reason chosen by 8.7 percent. About 17 percent chose to answer "other (please specify)."

Table 3.10: Immigrants’ main reason for considering leaving Nova Scotia  
*Respondents who indicated they were going to leave or may leave the province were asked, “What is the single most important reason why you are considering leaving Nova Scotia?”*

Main reason for considering to leave	Percentage
Unable to find employment for myself	26.8
Seeking better health care	8.1
Seeking more affordable cost of living	7.8
Unable to find employment for my spouse	6.4
To be in a more welcoming community	6.2
Seeking better quality of life (such as, e.g., recreation, public transportation, natural beauty, uncrowded, wide-open spaces)	6.0
To be close to family or/ friends	5.5
Seeking better education opportunities for children	5.1
Seeking better access to culturally related experiences, products and services (such as, e.g., language, religion, food, clothing)	4.5
Seeking better education opportunities for myself and spouse	3.9
Credentials not recognized in Nova Scotia	3.1
Other (please specify)	16.6
Total	100.0

N=3,530.

The “other (please specify)” answers were coded numerically and are presented in Table 3.11. The most common reason for considering leaving was economic. This included seeking better wages, jobs that fit their qualifications and lower taxes. Seeking better government services was another top reason. Those who gave “quality of life” reasons very often did not like Nova Scotia’s weather, but also wrote that it was harder to get to other places from Nova Scotia. Family- or community-related reasons often seemed to be from single people who were having difficulty establishing a social life, and were lonely. A few were disappointed in their Nova Scotia experience, feeling perhaps they had been misled by the information they received before arrival. A very small number (only two among the survey respondents) implied they had encountered racism in everyday life and in the workplace.

Table 3.11: Reasons for considering to leave Nova Scotia as provided in written responses.

Reason given	Percentage*
<i>Economic</i>	
Seeking better employment / career opportunities	8.4
Seeking better wages/salary	7.5
Seeking lower taxes	3.6
Total	15.9
<i>Other (weather, social issues including poor government services, racism and discrimination)</i>	3.3
<i>Miscellaneous mentions</i>	3.0

\*Expressed as a percentage of all those who are considering leaving Nova Scotia (N=3,530). Percentages do not add up to 100 because some have provided multiple reasons. (101 written responses were received in the survey).

More than half of those who were planning to leave the province were considering Ontario to be their next province of residence in Canada, followed by a distant choice of British Columbia. About 18 percent were unsure of which province they will move out to (Table 3.12).

Table 3.12: Likely destination of those considering leaving Nova Scotia. Respondents who indicated they were going to leave or may leave were asked, "*Which province are you most likely to move to?*"

Province	Percentage
Ontario	52.9
British Columbia	17.2
Alberta	6.5
Quebec	3.2
Other	2.6
Don't know / not sure	17.8
Total	100

An open-ended question was asked from those intending to leave Nova Scotia for another province to understand their choice of that province. Almost 200 people offered comments in the survey. Their weighted responses, representing the population, are in

Table 3.13. Economic reasons were chosen by 85 percent respondents. Once again, this highlights the importance of economic security in location choice by immigrants, as perhaps the critical deciding issue. A significant proportion (27.5%) addressed more cultural diversity in their location choice, combined with less discrimination. Quality of life mattered to 16.4 percent. The pull of family and friends was mentioned in 11.7 percent of comments, Better education and better healthcare were also considerations of close to 10 percent of leavers.

Table 3.13: Immigrants' destination choice.  
*In an open-ended question, those living in another province were asked "What specifically attracts you to that province?"*

Description	Percentage
<i>Economic reasons:</i>	
Better employment and career opportunities	57.3
Better wages / salaries	13.9
Cost of living / lower taxes	13.8
Total	85.0
<i>Social / cultural reasons</i>	
Better access to culturally related experiences, products and services (e.g., language, religion, food, clothing, etc.)	18.4
A more welcoming community	5.0
Fewer, better managed social issues – governance, racism, discrimination	4.1
Total	27.5
<i>Quality of life reasons</i>	
Weather	6.9
Better standard/quality of living	4.8
Other (scenery/landscape, infrastructure-travel, transport, roads, etc.)	4.7
Total	16.4
Close to family and friends	11.7
Better education	9.7
Better healthcare	8.8
Miscellaneous mentions	3.0

## **Access to settlement services and the level of satisfaction with them**

The Immigrant Settlement Funding Program of the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration (NSOI) assists community organizations, other public or non-governmental organizations and language schools to provide services that facilitate successful integration and retention of immigrants (including refugees) in Nova Scotia. Information on the use of settlement services by newcomers and on their level of satisfaction with those services can be useful to assess the efficacy of settlement programs and for their future development and design. Separate information from those who have left and those who are staying in the province is important because satisfaction with settlement services can be an important determinant of integration and retention. In this section we focus on those who are currently living in the province while data on those who have left will be analyzed in the next chapter.

Less than 60 percent of stayers in Nova Scotia have used immigrant settlement services. Most heavily used among them is the employment counselling service. Language training and pre-arrival services are second and third in terms of their use. Entrepreneurship support services are the least used (Table 3.14).

Table 3.14: Access to settlement services by Nova Scotia immigrants  
*Respondents were asked, "Which of the following Nova Scotia settlement services have you accessed? Select all that apply."*

Service	Percentage
Did not access settlement services	42.1
Employment counselling	32.6
Language training	23.7
Pre-arrival settlement services	22.2
Work experience program / Bridge to work	13.3
Credential recognition	9.6
Entrepreneurship support	6.2
Other (please specify)	5.1

Although only five percent chose to answer “other (please specify)”, their descriptive answers were very instructive in understanding why a large percentage, 42 percent, never used settlement services. Some of them were not aware of the availability of settlement services in Nova Scotia. Some who had come and lived as temporary residents thought settlement services were only for those who came as permanent residents. Some complained of the non-availability of settlement services where they lived (usually outside Halifax). Some reported they found service providers too busy. Those who used other services mentioned the Halifax Partnership’s Connector Program, Access Nova Scotia, city-specific information courses such as those relating to health care, general taxation and road safety. They also attended training and job fairs and sought help in filing tax returns.

As noted above, less than 60 percent immigrants use settlement services. This raises the question as to who uses them. Table 3.15 below reveals that family immigrants are the least likely to use settlement services, perhaps because of their family connections

in Nova Scotia, while refugees are the most likely to access these services. Those who come under economic programs are in the middle. This may be because they are more likely to have attained higher level of education and probably find their way around by themselves.

Table 3.15: Access to settlement services by Nova Scotia immigrants by their entry program.,  
*Respondents were asked, "Which of the following Nova Scotia settlement services have you accessed? Select all that apply."*

Service	Entry program		
	Economic	Refugee	Family
Did not access settlement services	38.7	6.8*	63.9*
Employment counselling	35.0	56.8*	17.8*
Pre-arrival settlement services	27.8	25.0	5.0*
Language training	20.7	77.3*	14.8*
Work experience program / Bridge to work	13.2	27.3*	8.9*
Credential recognition	10.7	11.4	5.8*
Entrepreneurship support	6.2	9.1	5.5
Other (please specify)	5.1	6.8	4.7

\*Statistically significantly different from economic program 19 times out of 20.  
 Table is arranged in descending order of economic program.

In sum, data collected in this study indicate demand for settlement services is high in Nova Scotia as immigrants approach various organizations for help with various aspects of life as the need arises. The fact that some are not aware of the availability of different kinds of settlement services and that some find them harder to access needs to be addressed.

One measure of the success of settlement services is the satisfaction level of the recipients. When asked to rate the settlement services according to their level of satisfaction, all services averaged between 3.1 and 3.8 on a 1 (extremely dissatisfied)

to 5 (extremely satisfied) scale (Table 3.16). In other words, immigrants are either neutral or marginally satisfied with these services. Language training received the highest average score approaching 4. Satisfaction with credential recognition service was the lowest rated with 60 percent respondents ranking it neutral to below neutral, which was also true for work experience program. The low scores highlight the need for a continued evaluation of these services and finding ways to improve them.

**Table 3.16: Satisfaction with immigrant settlement services**  
*Respondents were asked, "How satisfied were you with each of the following Nova Scotia settlement services, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is extremely dissatisfied and 5 is extremely satisfied."*

Service	Scale					Average score
	1 Extremely Dissatisfied	2	3 Neutral	4	5 Extremely Satisfied	
	percent	percent	percent	percent	percent	
Language training	3.0	7.3	23.8	39.6	26.4	<b>3.8</b>
Pre-arrival settlement services	6.1	9.2	26.8	30.1	27.9	<b>3.6</b>
Employment counselling	9.2	14.8	29.5	28.1	18.4	<b>3.3</b>
Entrepreneurship support	8.4	16.0	37.4	21.6	16.7	<b>3.2</b>
Work experience program / Bridge to work	13.4	15.1	28.1	24.9	18.6	<b>3.2</b>
Credential recognition	14.6	16.2	29.1	23.3	16.9	<b>3.1</b>
Other	8.6	11.1	34.0	30.6	15.6	<b>3.3</b>

Note: The "Not applicable" option is not reported in the above table.

### **Social and cultural participation**

Community engagement is an important part of settlement and integration. One survey question attempted to capture participation of survey members in social, cultural and

religious activities as a measure of their integration in their community and also in the larger Canadian society. Greater involvement in these activities indicates stronger social connectedness, which could help establish roots in the community resulting in long-term commitment to the province. Table 3.17 shows about two-thirds of Nova Scotia immigrants participate in religious, social and cultural activities (such as sports and recreation). Nearly 34 percent are also volunteers. The nearly one-third who do not engage in any of these activities may still be adjusting to life in Nova Scotia and may not the availability of social, cultural and religious organizations and are trying to find their way around. Limited availability of public transportation in some areas may also be a factor for a lack of their participation. These suggestions can be investigated in a future study.

Table 3.17: Social, cultural and religious participation  
 Respondents were asked, “Are you active in the following in your community? Select all that apply.”

Activity	Percentage
Volunteering	33.7
Sports & recreation	29.0
A religious organization	28.0
Social organization	25.4
None of the above	31.5
Other (please specify)	4.0

### **Perceptions of immigrant Nova Scotians about Nova Scotia relative to other provinces**

Perceptions of newcomers of Nova Scotia in relation to other provinces can also play a role in their decision to leave for other provinces or stay. These perceptions are formed through experience and more information gathering. When comparing Nova Scotia to

other Canadian provinces, on a scale of 1 (much worse) to 5 (much better), immigrants view safe communities as the best feature of the province, providing it a score of higher than 4 (Table 3.18). Tax rates are perceived to be worse in Nova Scotia, receiving an average score below 2. Wage rates, job opportunities and access to quality health care also received low scores. Higher taxes and access to health care are also often the focus of general public debate in Nova Scotia.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>For example, for taxes being high in Nova Scotia, <https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/nova-scotians-the-most-taxed-in-canada-provincial-report>. For access to health care: <https://nationalpost.com/pmnn/news-pmn/canada-news-pmn/nova-scotia-needs-improved-access-to-health-care-in-2019-opposition>

Table 3.18: Comparing Nova Scotia with other provinces

Respondents were asked, “To the best of your ability, rate the following features of Nova Scotia relative to other provinces you are familiar with, how does Nova Scotia compare, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is much worse, 3 is about the same and 5 is much better?”

Feature	Scale					Average score
	1 Much worse	2	3 About the same	4	5 Much better	
	percent	percent	percent	percent	percent	
Safe community	0.7	2.3	24.9	34.0	38.1	<b>4.1</b>
Cost of accommodation	4.4	10.7	22.9	28.3	33.8	<b>3.8</b>
Communities without discrimination	4.8	9.2	34.0	27.8	24.3	<b>3.6</b>
Local community settlement services	3.5	9.9	41.6	23.5	21.4	<b>3.5</b>
Quality of accommodation	3.6	12.8	38.7	25.2	19.7	<b>3.5</b>
Access to quality education for my children	4.6	14.5	39.8	19.5	21.6	<b>3.4</b>
Access to quality education for myself	4.5	14.6	45.6	20.2	15.2	<b>3.3</b>
Access to quality education for my spouse	4.9	14.0	48.3	18.1	14.8	<b>3.2</b>
Cost of living (besides housing)	11.6	27.5	25.6	19.8	15.4	<b>3.0</b>
Access to quality health care	20.3	25.5	31.1	12.2	10.9	<b>2.7</b>
Job opportunities	23.5	36.7	18.1	12.4	9.4	<b>2.5</b>
Wage rates	29.4	42.0	19.0	6.5	3.1	<b>2.1</b>
Tax rates	47.1	33.4	12.5	5.0	2.0	<b>1.8</b>

## Labour market activities of immigrant residents in Nova Scotia

Success in the labour market is an important factor that can cause new arrivals to stay.

As one participant of a focus group in Mississauga, Ontario pointed out:

*“I can live with any difficulties (absence of social and cultural environment, lack of community support, discrimination, and other problems), but I cannot live without a paying job. I have to pay my bills.”*

About 76 percent of stayers were employed, 16 percent held more than one job and 70 percent were working in their preferred occupations. These immigrants would be expected to stay in the province (Table 3.19)<sup>7</sup>.

Table 3.19: Labour market status

Status	Percentage
Currently employed	
Yes	77.0
No	23.0
Total	100.0
Holding multiple jobs*	
Yes	15.4
No	84.6
Total	100.0
Working in preferred occupation*	
Yes	70.2
No	29.8
Total	100.0

\*Applies to those who are currently employed.

Professional, scientific and technical service industries are the major employers of immigrant residents in Nova Scotia (18 percent, Table 3.20). This is followed by health

<sup>7</sup> Data to be presented in the next chapter (Chapter 4) will show that most immigrants who left Nova Scotia left reluctantly because they were unable to find jobs in the province. Hence, we expect those who are currently employed are less likely to leave.

care and social assistance (14 percent) and finance and insurance (10 percent). The remaining 60 percent are spread across other industries in small percentages (each under 10 percent).

Table 3.20: Industry of main employment  
*Respondents who were employed were asked, "In which of the following industries is your main employment?"*

Industry	Percentage
Professional, scientific and technical services	17.6
Health care and social assistance	13.7
Finance and insurance	9.8
Educational services	7.5
Manufacturing, construction, real estate, rental and leasing	6.6
Wholesale and retail trade	5.3
Arts, entertainment, culture and information industries	5.3
Accommodation and food services	4.2
Primary industries (agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting; mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction) and utilities	3.6
Other (please specify)*	26.4
Total	100.0

\* Top three industries included information technology, hospitality and health services. Industries on the list provided in the survey questionnaire that had less than 3 percent immigrant employment were also merged with this group.

Table 3.21 shows that 47 percent of immigrant residents in Nova Scotia work in professional jobs that usually call for a university degree, such as accountants, computer programmers or registered nurses. About one quarter work in managerial and technical jobs. Less than 10 percent are in low-skill jobs. These results reflect that a majority of immigrant residents hold a university education, which is partially due to the selectivity inherent in the Provincial Nominee Program.

Table 3.21: Occupation in main employment

*Respondents who were employed were asked, “What is your occupation in your main employment?”*

Occupation	Percentage
Professional jobs that usually call for a degree from a university (such as accountants, computer programmers, registered nurses)	47.0
Technical jobs and skilled trades that usually call for a college diploma or training as an apprentice (such as mechanics)	13.9
Intermediate jobs that usually call for high school and/or job-specific training (such as retail sales persons, transport)	11.0
Management jobs (such as such as restaurant managers, financial managers, health care managers)	10.4
Labour jobs that usually give on-the-job training (such as cashiers, cleaners, agricultural labourers)	8.2
Other (please specify)*	9.5
Total	100.0

\*Those choosing other options were thinly spread over several occupations. Administrative positions, owners of own business and finance positions appeared more prominently among them.

The top three occupations of employed immigrants were also the preferred top three occupations of immigrants who were not working in their preferred occupations (Table 3.22).

Table 3.22: Preferred occupations of immigrant residents

*Those not working in preferred occupations were asked, “What is your preferred occupation?”*

Preferred occupation	Percentage
Professional jobs that usually call for a degree from a university (such as accountants, computer programmers, registered nurses)	52.6
Management jobs (such as such as restaurant managers, financial managers, health care managers)	19.0
Technical jobs and skilled trades that usually call for a college diploma or training as an apprentice (such as mechanics)	14.5
Other (please specify)	13.9
Total	100.0

N=4,890. Other responses were thinly divided. More noticeable included, teaching (more so at university level), law enforcement and in entertainment (including arts and media). They also included intermediate and labour jobs.

## Chapter 4

### Immigrants in Nova Scotia: Who leaves and why?

The survey estimates that about 26 percent of immigrants who arrived in Nova Scotia during 2011-2018 have left the province (an estimated number of 7,550). In this Chapter, data related to these immigrants are presented. All estimates are expected to be correct within 3.5 percent range, 19 times out of 20.

In Chapter 5, these data are compared with those who are still living in the province.

#### Year of departure from Nova Scotia

Table 4.1 shows about 40 percent left during 2017-2018.

Table 4.1: Year of departure from Nova Scotia  
 Respondents were asked, "What year did you first leave Nova Scotia?"

Year	Percentage
2011	5.5
2012	7.1
2013	8.5
2014	11.8
2015	12.7
2016	13.9
2017	20.0
2018	20.5
Total	100.0

Survey data also indicate 73 percent went to Halifax when they first arrived in Nova Scotia while the rest were thinly distributed across the province.

Another survey question revealed that about 85 percent of leavers have left the province permanently. Among the 15 percent of temporary leavers, about half return to visit family and friends, about 15 percent still maintain a residence in Nova Scotia while 13 percent still have business engagements in the province (Table 4.2). About 40 percent of these temporary leavers who also chose “Other (please specify)” as their answer to the survey, provided a variety of reasons which included missing the natural beauty of Nova Scotia, quality of life, future intention to settle and retire. Some also stated that if they had a job opportunity in the province they would return to stay. The same theme emerged in a focus group interview held in Calgary with nine immigrants who had left the province permanently and were living in Alberta. They all missed the lifestyle, natural beauty and welcoming environment. These results highlight the importance of economic factors in mobility decisions of immigrants and that many decide to leave reluctantly.

Table 4.2: Immigrant leavers who return to Nova Scotia  
*Respondents who indicated they did not leave the province permanently were asked, “Why do you return to Nova Scotia? Select all that apply.”*

Reason to return	Percentage
To visit family and/or friends	48.9
Still maintain a residence in Nova Scotia	15.2
To conduct business	13.3
Other (please specify)	40.9

N=1,111.

## Destinations of leavers

Table 4.3 presents data on destinations of immigrant leavers from Nova Scotia. Most of those who have moved within Canada are currently living in Ontario, followed by Alberta, British Columbia and Quebec. Four percent are living in other Atlantic provinces, and about eight percent are living outside Canada.

Table 4.3: Where do immigrants from Nova Scotia go to?  
 Respondents were asked, "Where do you currently live?"

Destination	Percentage
Ontario	49.3
Alberta	18.2
British Columbia	11.8
Quebec	6.8
Other Atlantic provinces	4.0
Other*	9.9
Total	100.0

\*Includes 8% living outside of Canada with 3% in the United States; the remaining were small numbers (less than 3%) spread in other countries and Canadian provinces.

## Some selected characteristics of immigrant leavers

More than half of immigrants who left Nova Scotia were men, 86 percent were under 44; 62 percent were married; 38 percent had children when they left; 67 percent had some, or had completed, university education when they arrived; 91 percent had the ability to communicate in English only, rest can speak in either both official languages or in French only, with the latter being less than one percent; the top five source countries were India, China, Iran, the Philippines and Great Britain and nearly 40 percent had already lived in other provinces before they arrived in Nova Scotia (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Selected characteristics of immigrants who left Nova Scotia

Characteristics	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>	
Male	55.0
Female	44.0
Prefer not to answer	1.0
Total	100.0
<i>Age distribution in years</i>	
18-29	20.7
30-44	65.1
45-59	11.6
60+	2.6
Total	100.0
<i>Married or common-law when left</i>	
Yes	62.0
No	38.0
Total	100.0
<i>Had children under 18 when left</i>	
Yes	38.5
No	61.5
Total	100.0
<i>Educational attainment at the time of arrival</i>	
High school or less	14.2
Some or completed trade, technical school or college	9.3
Some or completed university	67.0
Other	9.5
Total	100.0
<i>Ability to communicate in official languages</i>	
English	91.2
Other*	8.8
Total	100.0
<i>Source countries</i>	
India	18.2
China	11.9
Iran	5.4
Philippines	4.9
Great Britain	4.0
Other	55.6
Total	100.0
<i>Lived elsewhere in Canada before arriving in Nova Scotia</i>	
Yes	39.0
No	61.0
Total	100.0

\*Include speakers of both official languages and of French only (less than one percent).

## Language spoken at home

To obtain some idea of how well they can communicate in English language, we consider the incidence of non-English communication at home. Only 42 percent speak English at home (Table 4.5). The literature review presented in the second report of this project showed that cultural community can be a factor in immigrants’s destination choice in their host country. Table 4.3 showed most immigrant leavers live in provinces of Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. These provinces have larger communities of immigrants from the source regions of leavers that were identified in Table 4.2. Greater interaction within the community, lowers the motivation to learn English.

Table 4.5: Language spoken at home.  
*Respondents were asked, “What language do you prefer to speak at home?”*

Language spoken at home	Percentage
English	42.1
Mandarin	9.8
Arabic	5.5
Persian (Farsi)	4.6
Russian*	3.6
Other**	34.4
Total	100.0

\*Was not provided in the list accompanying the question on language (question 74). Answer was coded separately. \*\*Includes descriptive answers (22.5%) and all other languages in the provided list each of which were 3.5 percent or under.

## Immigrant status at arrival, nature of application and entry class

Table 4.6 shows 47 percent of those who left Nova Scotia came as permanent residents; one in five came as a temporary foreign worker and a quarter as students; more than 80 percent were primary applicants; about 37 percent came as provincial

nominees and about the same percentage in other economic programs, which included a tiny percentage of those who came under the Atlantic Immigrant Pilot Project (AIPP) and about 12 percent came as resettled refugees and protected persons.

Table 4.6: Immigrant status at arrival, nature of application and entry class

Status	Percentage
<i>Immigrant status when arrived in Nova Scotia</i>	
Permanent Resident	47.1
Student	25.0
Temporary Foreign Worker	20.6
Other (please specify)*	7.3
Total	100.0
<i>Whether primary applicant</i>	
Yes	82.2
No	17.8
Total	100.0
<i>Immigrant entry class</i>	
Provincial Nominee Program	35.4
Other Economic Program (Federal Skilled Worker, Canadian Experience Class, Federal Skilled Trades, Immigrant Investor)	36.9
Family (i.e., sponsored by family member)	14.1
Resettled Refugee and Protected Person	11.9
Other	1.7
Total	100.0

\*Some reported having arrived as visitors for different purposes, many giving personal reasons such as visiting spouse and family members; some had come on a work visa and others came on a post-graduate work permit (which can be counted as students). All others provided a variety of reasons, some including the ones listed in the table (a duplication of answers), that cannot be grouped into significant sizes.

### **What were they doing when they lived in Nova Scotia?**

About 34 percent of immigrants who left the province were employed full-time in their preferred occupation when they lived there (Table 4.7). Others were either not

employed full-time in their preferred occupation or were working part-time. One in five was unemployed when they lived in Nova Scotia and about 30 percent were students.

Table 4.7: Labour market activities of ex-Nova Scotia immigrants while they lived in Nova Scotia

*Respondents were asked, "What were you doing in Nova Scotia? (Check all that apply)."*

Activity	Percentage
Employed full-time in my preferred occupation	34.5
Studying	28.9
Not employed and looking for work	20.6
Employed full-time but not in my preferred occupation	13.9
Employed part-time in my preferred occupation	5.8
Not employed and not looking for work	5.4
Employed part-time but not in my preferred occupation	5.1
Other (please specify)*	7.7

Top three other answers included volunteering/trying to find volunteer job, caring for children, accompanying spouse.

### **Reasons for leaving Nova Scotia**

As well as being unable to find work for self and spouse, major reasons leavers gave for leaving Nova Scotia also included to be close to family and friends, seeking a better quality of life and better access to culturally-related experiences, products and services (Table 4.8).

Table 4.8: Reasons for leaving Nova Scotia  
 Respondents were asked, “Why did you leave Nova Scotia? Select all that apply.”

Reason for leaving	Percentage
Unable to find employment for myself	45.8
To be close to family/friends	26.1
Seeking better access to culturally related experiences, products and services (such as language, religion, food, clothing, entertainment)	21.5
Unable to find employment for my spouse	21.2
Seeking better quality of life (e.g., recreation, public transportation, natural beauty, uncrowded, wide-open spaces)	20.2
Seeking better education opportunities for myself	13.5
Credentials not recognized in Nova Scotia	9.6
Seeking more affordable cost of living	9.6
Seeking better health care	9.2
To be in a more welcoming community	9.2
Seeking better education opportunities for children	6.5
Seeking better education opportunities for spouse	5.8
Other (please specify)*	26.0

\*Discussed in the text.

In their written response (provided by more than a quarter of survey respondents to this question), the most frequent reason for leaving was to seek better employment opportunities with better wages (about 62 percent of those who answered “Other please specify”). Many cited the high taxes on lower wages as a barrier to staying in the province. One respondent stated that they are leaving in order:

*“To find a place where I can make more wages and spend less on living expenses and where the taxes are way lower unlike Nova Scotia.”*

Besides searching for better work opportunities, many respondents also identified several interacting factors, although thinly, that influenced the decision to leave such as low wages, high costs of living and opportunities to advance personal or spouse’s

career. Others identified discriminatory practices in the workplace as reasons for leaving<sup>8</sup>.

Further insights to the out-migration decision of immigrants can be obtained by assessing how satisfied they were with the features of Nova Scotia that first attracted them to the province (Table 4.9). Employment opportunities for self, which had received a rating above 4 in their destination choice on a scale of 1 to 5, received the lowest rating (below 3) in terms of satisfaction. This rating also corroborates the data on reasons for leaving Nova Scotia where the largest percentage of respondents cited “unable to find employment for self.” Employment opportunities for spouse was also rated the same. Survey respondents were the most satisfied with their choice of Nova Scotia as a safe community followed by quality of life, community without discrimination, access to good quality accommodation, affordable cost of living, building good life for their children and their educational opportunities.

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<sup>8</sup> This also came up in some focus group discussions.

Table 4.9: Immigrants' level of satisfaction with the features of Nova Scotia that caused them to move to the province  
 Respondents were asked "How satisfied are you/ were you with the following features of Nova Scotia, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is extremely dissatisfied and 5 is extremely satisfied?"

Feature	Scale					Average score
	1 Extremely Dissatisfied	2	3 Neutral	4	5 Extremely Satisfied	
	percent	percent	percent	percent	percent	
Safe community	-	-	12.8	36.1	48.0	<b>4.3</b>
Quality of life*	3.0	8.2	16.9	32.4	39.5	<b>4.0</b>
Community without discrimination	6.1	9.9	16.8	32.1	35.1	<b>3.8</b>
Education opportunities for my children	4.0	7.9	27.6	27.2	33.2	<b>3.8</b>
Access to good quality accommodation	4.2	9.0	23.0	37.2	26.6	<b>3.7</b>
Affordable cost of living	4.3	9.8	27.3	31.1	27.6	<b>3.7</b>
Health care	6.4	11.8	23.1	23.2	35.5	<b>3.7</b>
Building a better life for my children	6.5	7.7	28.2	30.1	27.7	<b>3.7</b>
Organizations that help with access to services, government, etc.	7.4	11.6	25.0	27.8	28.2	<b>3.6</b>
Education opportunities for myself / spouse	7.7	9.6	23.4	29.9	29.4	<b>3.6</b>
Access to language training	7.5	10.6	22.6	31.7	27.5	<b>3.6</b>
Local community settlement services	6.7	13.8	25.8	26.5	27.2	<b>3.5</b>
Availability of culturally related experiences, products and services**	8.3	12.8	29.2	28.0	21.7	<b>3.4</b>
Recognition of my credentials	13.0	11.7	26.5	25.5	23.4	<b>3.4</b>
Family / friends close by	10.0	15.1	24.6	22.4	27.9	<b>3.4</b>
Employment opportunities for myself	28.1	20.6	17.9	16.9	16.6	<b>2.7</b>
Employment opportunities for spouse	27.4	19.1	24.4	12.9	16.2	<b>2.7</b>

\*Examples include: recreation, public transportation, natural beauty, uncrowded, wide-open spaces.

\*\*Examples include: language, religion, food, clothing, entertainment.

Note: The option "Not applicable" is excluded in the above table for brevity.

To understand better how satisfied they were with their decision to move to another province in Canada, survey participants were also asked to rate Nova Scotia relative to other provinces in Canada, on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being much worse, 3 being the same and 5 being much better), to the best of their ability (Table 4.10). All factors received an average ranking below 4. Safe community and cost of accommodation in Nova Scotia received the highest average ranking while wage rate, tax rate and job opportunities received the lowest ranking (all under 2.5). All other factors were ranked about the same or slightly better than other provinces.

Table 4.10: Comparing Nova Scotia to other Canadian provinces

Respondents were asked, “To the best of your ability, rate the following features of Nova Scotia relative to other provinces you are familiar with. How does Nova Scotia compare, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is much worse, 3 is about the same and 5 is much better?”

Feature	Scale					Average score
	1 Much worse	2	3 About the same	4	5 Much better	
	percent	percent	percent	percent	percent	
Cost of accommodation	2.6	10.0	23.8	21.6	42.1	<b>3.9</b>
Safe community	1.0	3.2	34.3	25.5	36.0	<b>3.9</b>
Quality of accommodation	1.8	12.4	39.9	23.4	22.5	<b>3.5</b>
Communities without discrimination	6.7	13.6	33.7	19.4	26.6	<b>3.5</b>
Local community settlement services	6.1	10.7	41.4	20.5	21.2	<b>3.4</b>
Cost of living (besides housing)	8.7	18.0	29.3	19.1	24.9	<b>3.3</b>
Access to quality education for myself	6.3	16.7	44.6	18.0	14.4	<b>3.2</b>
Access to quality education for my children	6.8	13.2	47.5	16.2	16.3	<b>3.2</b>
Access to quality health care	10.9	16.0	40.3	16.5	16.4	<b>3.1</b>
Access to quality education for my spouse	6.2	17.8	45.3	18.3	12.5	<b>3.1</b>
Tax rates	33.6	27.6	24.8	7.2	6.8	<b>2.3</b>
Wage rates	33.0	33.1	21.6	6.1	6.2	<b>2.2</b>
Job opportunities	45.4	26.8	12.2	7.4	8.1	<b>2.1</b>

Note: “Don’t know” option is not reported.

## Current labour market status of leavers

Further insights into the out-migration decision of immigrants emerge from analyzing the economic outcome of their decision to migrate. As was shown in Table 4.9, close to 70 percent of out-migrant immigrants said not being able to find a job for themselves or their spouse was their main reason for leaving Nova Scotia. When they were asked about their own current labour market status, 84 percent responded they were employed, 13 percent were holding multiple jobs and 85 percent were working in their preferred occupations (Table 4.11).

Table 4.11: Current labour market status of immigrants who have left Nova Scotia

Status	Percentage
Currently employed	
Yes	83.7
No	16.3
Total	100.0
Holding multiple jobs*	
Yes	12.8
No	87.2
Total	100.0
Working in a preferred occupation*	
Yes	85.3
No	14.7
Total	100.0

\*Applies to currently employed.

Among the employed, one in five had their main employment in professional, scientific and technical service industries, followed by 18 percent in health care and social assistance. Just under 10 percent were employed in finance and insurance (Table 4.12). The rest of the distribution is thin across industries with less than five percent employed in each industry.

Table 4.12: Industry of main employment

*Respondents who were employed were asked, "In which of the following industries is your main employment?"*

Industry	Percentage
Professional, scientific and technical services	20.8
Health care and social assistance	17.5
Finance and insurance	9.4
Accommodation and food services	7.5
Primary industries (agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting; mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction) and utilities	6.9
Construction, real estate, rental and leasing	5.8
Educational services	4.5
Wholesale and retail trade	4.1
Arts, entertainment, culture and information industries	3.7
Transportation and warehousing	3.5
Manufacturing	3.2
Other*	13.3
Total	100.0

N=6,139. \*Mostly included information technology. Some were also in aviation and hospitality.

Nearly 72 percent of respondents were working in managerial positions and in professional occupations requiring a university degree. About 13 percent were involved in technical jobs and skilled trades occupations (Table 4.13).

Table 4.13: Occupation in main employment  
*Respondents who were employed were asked, “What is your occupation in your main employment?”*

Occupation	Percentage
Professional jobs that usually call for a degree from a university, (such as accountants, computer programmers, registered nurses)	57.7
Technical jobs and skilled trades that usually call for a college diploma or training as an apprentice (such as mechanics)	13.3
Management jobs (such as restaurant managers, financial managers, health care managers)	11.9
Intermediate jobs that usually call for high school and/or job-specific training (such as retail sales persons, transport)	5.2
Labour jobs that usually give on-the-job training (such as cashiers, cleaners, agricultural labourers)	4.4
Other (please specify)*	7.5

N=6,136. \*Other top 3 answers included: program assistant (in education), support workers, occupation in health care (including dentist and chiropractor).

### Participation in social, cultural and religious activities

Analyzing this aspect of settlement for immigrants who have left Nova Scotia is also important as many immigrants gave non-economic reasons for leaving, including social and cultural factors. Table 4.14 shows that about 23 percent of Nova Scotia immigrants who now live in other Canadian provinces are actively involved in religious and social organizations while 30 percent are involved in sports and recreation activities, perhaps a reflection of the fact that more of them are young (aged 18-44) compared to those who have not moved, and about the same percentage in volunteering. However, close to 40 percent are not involved in any of these activities.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup>Table 3.3 and 4.4 show that stayers and leavers aged 18-44 are 76 and 86 percent, respectively.

Table 4.14: Social, cultural and religious participation of survey leavers  
*Respondents were asked, “Are you active in the following in your community? Select all that apply.”*

Activity	Percentage
Sports & recreation	30.9
Volunteering	29.4
Social organization	25.8
A religious organization	22.7
None of the above	40.0

### **Use of settlement services while in Nova Scotia**

Among those who have left the province, less than one half had accessed settlement services when they were living in Nova Scotia (Table 4.15). Employment counselling was the dominant reason sought by these users, followed by work experience programs. Entrepreneurship support service was the least accessed.

Table 4.15: Settlement services accessed by respondents  
*Respondents were asked, “Which of the following Nova Scotia settlement services have you accessed? Select all that apply.”*

Service	Percentage
Did not access settlement services	54.7
Employment counselling	26.7
Pre-arrival settlement services	17.0
Language training	16.9
Work experience program / Bridge to work	12.1
Credential recognition	7.4
Entrepreneurship support	3.4
Other (please specify)*	5.3

\*Top 3 other answers included: attended YMCA classes, cultural events, did not know settlement services existed.

Table 4.16 provides access data on settlement services by their entry program.

Table 4.16: Access to settlement services by Nova Scotia immigrants by their entry program.

*Respondents were asked, "Which of the following Nova Scotia settlement services have you accessed? Select all that apply."*

Services	Entry program		
	Economic	Refugee	Family
Did not access settlement services	56.2	25.0*	71.4*
Employment counselling	27.3	37.5	14.7*
Pre-arrival settlement services	14.5	45.9*	6.2*
Language training	14.5	41.7*	9.1
Work experience program / Bridge to work	11.9	16.6	9.7
Credential recognition	6.2	16.6*	5.6
Entrepreneurship support	2.8	8.4	2.0
Other (please specify)	4.9	12.5	0.8

\*Statistically significantly different from economic program, 19 times out of 20.

Table arranged in descending order of Economic.

As in case of stayers, refugees were the heaviest users of settlement services when they lived in Nova Scotia, while family class immigrants were the least likely to have used these services.

When asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the services they have accessed, on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is extremely dissatisfied while 5 is extremely satisfied, the average scores ranged between 2.9 and 3.8. In other words, leavers were neutral to just about satisfied with the settlement services they had accessed in Nova Scotia (Table 4.17). Chapter 5 will provide a comparison with those who have stayed in the province.

Table 4.17: Respondents' level of satisfaction with settlement services accessed in Nova Scotia

*Respondents were asked, "How satisfied were you with each of the following Nova Scotia settlement services, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is extremely dissatisfied and 5 is extremely satisfied."*

Service	Scale					Average score
	1 Extremely Dissatisfied	2	3 Neutral	4	5 Extremely Satisfied	
	percent	percent	percent	percent	percent	
Pre-arrival settlement services	4.9	8.8	22.1	31.7	32.5	<b>3.8</b>
Language training	4.8	7.3	21.0	38.0	28.9	<b>3.8</b>
Credential recognition	14.6	9.0	27.3	31.2	17.9	<b>3.3</b>
Employment counselling	12.4	14.7	28.4	25.8	18.7	<b>3.2</b>
Work experience program / bridge to work	15.2	17.7	24.5	24.9	17.7	<b>3.1</b>
Entrepreneurship support	20.3	12.9	33.0	22.8	11.1	<b>2.9</b>
Other	7.1	5.7	31.7	29.3	26.3	<b>3.6</b>

Note: The "Not applicable" option is not reported in the above table.

In summary, results of present survey (both quantitative and qualitative components) and focus group interviews indicate economic reasons to be the most important factors determining whether immigrants to Nova Scotia actually stay there or leave. This can take a variety of forms, the simplest being an inability to find a job for self or spouse. But variations on this also extend to not finding work in a chosen profession or perhaps only finding work which does not fit the amount of education an immigrant has. Their narratives also indicate that some have left with reluctance and miss aspects of their lives in Nova Scotia. Many who have left have found work in professional services and health care. They are younger than non-movers and less likely to be married which means they had greater flexibility in mobility decisions. Satisfaction with settlement

services is, at best, average or slightly above average, and in some details falls far short of this.

Chapter 5 compares immigrant residents of Nova Scotia with those who have left and also provides some conclusions.

## Chapter 5

### **A comparative analysis of stayers and leavers and some conclusions**

This study was based on a survey of 2,815 of 28,760 immigrants across Canada who have either lived in Nova Scotia in the past or are currently living there. Its purpose was to analyze immigrants' motivation for coming to this province, their decision to stay there, or to leave. Mostly quantitative data were collected with some descriptive information for further insights. Some focus group sessions with immigrants, both living in Nova Scotia and elsewhere, also provided inputs to the survey questionnaire and in understanding the results.

The survey data show that a significant percentage of immigrants obtain information about the province through personal sources (friends or family). Other information comes from government sources, provincial web sites and job fairs.

Although employment opportunity was the main reason given for new arrivals choosing Nova Scotia, about 75 percent of new arrivals also gave other reasons for choosing the province as their destination in Canada. The top five reasons include employment opportunities for self, quality of life, friends and family close by, building a better life for children, and educational opportunities. Only a few considered credential recognition as a factor in their choice.

A better understanding of mobility decisions can be gained from a comparative analysis of immigrants who are currently living in the province and those who have left. This can

help explain what pulls immigrants to the province and what pushes them out. For this purpose, summarized data on the two populations, as obtained from Chapters 3 and 4, appear in the following sections and comparisons are made by conducting statistical tests of significance of the difference between responses provided by the two populations. All features and characteristics marked by an asterisk in the tables indicate a statistically significant difference in the two populations for that characteristic, with 95 percent confidence (or 19 times out of 20)<sup>10</sup>. For convenience, stayers are referred as stayers and those who have left as leavers.

#### *Comparing selected demographic and human capital characteristics*

Table 5.1 indicates no statistically significant difference in the gender composition of the two populations. A higher percentage of leavers is under 44 years of age, 85 percent compared to 75 percent for stayers, and is not married. This finding corroborates the finding of the first report which showed a higher retention rate among family class immigrants in the province. Family members mostly move together, especially if there are young children involved, so the monetary cost of further movement is higher for them. The interests of family members could also conflict and hence may deter further migration, especially after having already moved once from elsewhere to Nova Scotia.

Those who arrived in the province with high school or less education comprise a larger percentage in the population of leavers. However, the composition of university-educated individuals in the two populations is more than 65 percent and is statistically the same. This supports the premise that the more education you have the more likely you can move to where opportunities appear better. This is one of the major reasons

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<sup>10</sup> All data presented in the present chapter are from Chapters 3 and 4.

immigrants come to Canada in the first place, seeking better opportunities and lives for themselves and their families.

On the other hand, a higher percentage of stayers has attended trade, technical school or college. The reason for greater retention of this population can be further investigated by obtaining data on job openings and subsidized training offered at this level.

More than 90 percent in each population are able to communicate in English but not in French. Immigrants from India and China comprise a higher percentage in the population of leavers while those who came from Great Britain and the Philippines form a higher percentage in the stayers' population. Immigrants from Great Britain are likely to have greater social connectedness through longer historic ties with the province or through friends and families. Many from the Philippines may be working in domestic service, where they may be bound by formal and informal contracts that make moving difficult.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> The caring industry in Canada is dominated by Filipino workers. The Live-In Caregiver Program, a stream that brought in nannies and care-workers for children and the elderly, was consistently more than 90 per cent Filipino. The stream was terminated in 2014. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/the-philippines-now-canadas-top-source-of-immigrants/article573133/>

Table 5.1: Selected demographic and human capital characteristics, country of origin, prior stay in Canada and initial stay in Nova Scotia

Characteristics	Stayers (%)	Leavers NS (%)
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	54.0	55.0
<i>Age distribution in years</i>		
18-29*	16.2	20.7
30-44*	59.8	65.1
45-59*	18.5	11.6
60+*	5.5	-
<i>Marital status</i>		
Married or common-law*	80.6	62.0
<i>Educational attainment at the time of arrival</i>		
High school or less*	8.7	14.2
Some or completed trade, technical school or college*	12.5	9.3
Some or completed university	65.9	67.0
Other*	12.8	9.5
<i>Ability to communicate in official languages</i>		
English	91.5	91.2
Others**	8.5	8.8
<i>Source countries</i>		
India*	14.2	18.2
China*	8.5	11.9
Great Britain*	8.3	4.0
Philippines*	7.7	4.9
Other	61.3	61.0
<i>Lived elsewhere in Canada before arriving in Nova Scotia</i>		
Yes*	26.4	39.0
<i>Initially settled in Halifax</i>		
Yes	76.4	73.1

Note: 1. US was also one of the top five source countries of stayers. Iran was also among the top five source countries of leavers.

2. \*Indicates statistically significant difference between stayers and leavers, 19 times out of 20 (p-value <0.05).

3. Where applicable, table is arranged in descending order of stayers.

\*\* Less than 1% speak only French, rest speak in both official languages.

A higher percentage of leavers had come to Nova Scotia from other provinces. There is no statistically significant difference among those who had initially stayed in Halifax.

Hence, immigrants' initial location does not affect their decision to stay or leave the province.

*Language spoken at home*

As was shown in Tables 5.1 more than 91 percent of immigrant stayers and leavers are able to communicate in only one of the two official languages - English. Some light can be shed on their English language skills by considering what language they prefer to speak at home. Table 5.2 provides a comparison of the two populations.

Table 5.2: Language preferred to use at home

Language	Stayers (%)	Leavers (%)
English*	47	42.1
Arabic	7.1	5.5
Mandarin*	6.3	9.8
Russian	3.7	3.6
Other	35.9	39
TOTAL	100	100

\*Statistically significantly different between the two groups, 19 times out of 20.

Although English speakers dominate both groups, less than half speak English at home. Arabic is the second most commonly spoken language of stayers followed closely by Mandarin which is the second most commonly spoken language of those who have left. Stayers and leavers differ, statistically significantly, only in the composition of English and Mandarin speakers.

*A comparison of their immigrant status at arrival, application type and entry program*

Higher percentages of leavers had arrived in Nova Scotia as temporary residents (temporary foreign workers or students, Table 5.3). They also included more arrivals in economic programs other than PNPs, which form higher percentages in the resident population along with family class immigrants. Refugees also figure more prominently among leavers.

The percentage of immigrants who arrived as students is three times higher in population of leavers. International students want to stay in Nova Scotia but have to leave because they cannot find jobs.<sup>12</sup> Their retention through various schemes is a part of overall immigrant retention strategy of the province.

A larger percentage of the leavers is primary applicants who may be the primary decision maker. Survey data (not presented here) also revealed that women are 40 percent in each group of immigrants. A multivariate analysis of the mobility decision of primary applicants could also investigate the role of gender in migration.

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/why-international-grads-are-choosing-to-stay-edunova-1.4240895>

Table 5.3: Immigrant status at arrival, applicant type and entry class

	Stayers (%)	Leavers NS (%)
<i>Immigrant status when arrived in Nova Scotia</i>		
Permanent Resident*	60.2	47.1
Temporary Foreign Worker*	17.2	20.6
Student*	9.2	25.0
Other (please specify)*	13.5	7.3
<i>Whether primary applicant</i>		
Yes*	75.0	82.2
No*	25.0	17.8
<i>Immigrant entry class</i>		
Provincial Nominee Program*	45.2	35.4
Other Economic Program (Federal Skilled Worker, Canadian Experience Class, Federal Skilled Trades, Immigrant Investor, AIPP)*	23.5	37.8
Family (i.e., sponsored by family member)*	23.1	14.1
Resettled Refugee and Protected Person*	7.8	11.9

\*Indicates statistically significant difference, 19 times out of 20. Table is arranged in descending order of stayers.

### *Satisfaction with the decision to move to Nova Scotia*

Rating scales were used for stayers and those who have left the province, (see Tables 3.7 and 4.9), to express their levels of satisfaction with the various features of Nova Scotia they considered while choosing to move to the province. Based on these ratings, it is possible to categorize the data into three groups: dissatisfied with the feature (scores 1 and 2 combined), neutral (score 3) and satisfied with the feature (scores 4 and 5 combined). Table 5.4 presents the statistical significance of the difference in the two populations in their dissatisfaction and satisfaction with the choice of Nova Scotia based on the features presented to them in the survey questionnaire. A feature when marked with an asterisk indicates that the two populations differ from each other in their

rating of that feature, 19 times out of 20 (95 percent confidence). Data on the percentages of satisfied population (combined score of 4 and 5) in each group are also presented for each feature<sup>13</sup>.

More than 80 percent of both populations are satisfied with Nova Scotia as a safe community. Higher percentages of stayers were satisfied with the quality of their lives in Nova Scotia, opportunity to build a better life for their children, having friends and family close by, and employment opportunities for themselves and their spouse. The lowest percentage of leavers expressed their satisfaction with employment opportunities in Nova Scotia, indicating it is mostly for economic reasons that immigrants leave the province. Higher percentages of leavers were satisfied with the cost of living and health care offered in Nova Scotia. It was noted in Chapter 4 that health care was one of the features about which leavers complained in their descriptive answers and in focus groups. The higher percentage who are satisfied with health care in the quantitative data may be reflecting a Halifax bias, which is where most have lived and where there is a better health care access than in many smaller or more remote places. This possibility can be further investigated.

There was no statistically significant difference in the percentages of those who expressed their satisfaction with other features of Nova Scotia.

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<sup>13</sup> For issues involved in a direct statistical comparison of scores obtained from a rating scale, please refer to: Derrick, B; White, P (2017). "Comparing Two Samples from an Individual Likert Question". *International Journal of Mathematics and Statistics*. **18** (3): 1–13

Table 5.4: Percentages of immigrants who are satisfied with features of Nova Scotia chosen by them to move to the province (combined result for scores 4 and 5, on a scale of 1 to 5, obtained from Tables 3.5 and 4.8)

Feature	Satisfied population	
	Stayers (%)	Leavers (%)
Safe community	87.1	84.1
Quality of life*	76.1	72.0
Building a better life for my children*	73.3	57.7
Education opportunities for my children	69.8	60.4
Community without discrimination	68.7	67.2
Access to good quality accommodation	67.7	63.8
Access to language training	57.6	59.2
Organizations that help with access to services, government, etc.	57.5	56.1
Education opportunities for myself / spouse	57.0	59.3
Family / friends close by*	55.5	50.2
Availability of culturally related experiences, products and services	52.7	49.7
Recognition of my credentials	49.8	48.9
Local community settlement services	49.7	53.7
Employment opportunities for myself*	48.6	33.5
Employment opportunities for spouse*	48.5	29.1
Affordable cost of living*	47.5	58.6
Health care*	45.9	58.7

\*Indicates statistically significant difference in the two populations, 19 times out of 20, for both dissatisfaction and satisfaction with the feature they chose to move to Nova Scotia. Table arranged in descending order of stayers.

### *Immigrant settlement services*

Table 5.5 shows more than half of leavers had not accessed any settlement services when they were living in Nova Scotia. About 43 percent of stayers had also not accessed these services at the time of survey. Some respondents who provided descriptive answers indicated they had not heard these services existed, did not find them in their area of residence, or found the service provider organizations to be too busy to contact.

Employment counselling service was the most accessed service in both populations; pre-arrival services and language training services were also among the top three services used. These results indicate immigrants' desire to enter the job market as soon as they arrive. Entrepreneurship support programs were the least accessed.

Table 5.5: Access to settlement services in Nova Scotia

Service	Stayers (%)	Leavers (%)
Did not access settlement services*	42.1	54.7
Employment counselling*	32.6	26.7
Language training*	23.7	16.9
Pre-arrival settlement services*	22.2	17.0
Work experience program / Bridge to work	13.3	12.1
Credential recognition	9.6	7.4
Entrepreneurship support*	6.2	3.4
Other (please specify)	5.1	5.3

\*Indicates statistically significant difference between the two populations 19 times out of 20. Table is arranged in descending order of stayers.

Tables 3.14 and 4.17 had revealed that both stayers and leavers gave an average satisfaction score of 3 to 4 to each of the settlement services they accessed in Nova Scotia. This indicates most recipients were either neutral or just about satisfied with the settlement services they received in Nova Scotia. By comparing their ratings, Table 5.6 below shows there was no statistically significant difference in the percentages of the satisfied and unsatisfied population of residents and leavers for any settlement service they used in the province. In other words, the two populations of immigrants had similar experiences with these services. Most satisfaction was for language training, followed by pre-arrival settlement services and employment counselling. Only language training

and pre-arrival settlement services had close to 60 percent or more satisfied users.

Entrepreneurship support had the lowest percentage of satisfaction (it was rated poorly, below 3, by leavers as was seen in Table 4.17).

Table 5.6: Percentages of immigrants who are satisfied with settlement services accessed by them in Nova Scotia (combined result for scores 4 and 5, on a scale of 1 to 5, obtained from Tables 3.10 and 4.15)

Service	Satisfied population	
	Stayers (%)	Leavers (%)
Language training	66.0	66.9
Pre-arrival settlement services	58.0	64.2
Employment counselling	46.5	44.5
Work experience program / Bridge to work	43.5	42.5
Credential recognition	40.2	49.1
Entrepreneurship support	38.3	33.9
Other	46.4	55.5

Note: Table is arranged in descending order of stayers.

### *Social connectedness*

About 30 percent of stayers and 40 percent of leavers do not engage in any of the social, cultural or religious activities included in the list that was presented to them in the survey (Table 5.7).

In each of the social activities where there is statistically significant difference in participation, higher percentages of stayers are engaged than are leavers, in their current province of residence. Volunteering is the most popular activity among stayers, although participation is quite low at 34 percent. It is the third choice among leavers in their current province. Volunteering is the time devoted to strengthen community and improve the quality of life of others as well as self. Volunteers make contacts, develop

skills and gain experience that can help them socially and economically. Both of these aspects of volunteerism help with community integration.

Stayers have the same level of participation as leavers in sports and recreation activities, hovering around 30 percent. Participation in sports and recreation activities is necessary to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle. It also increases interaction with the community. Initiatives to increase their participation can have beneficial social and economic outcomes by promoting a healthier population.<sup>14</sup>

Stayers are generally older, and may have stronger religious beliefs and hence greater participation in their religious organizations (Table 5.7).<sup>15</sup> Finally, a quarter of both populations is also involved in social organizations.

Table 5.7: Participation in religious, social and cultural activities

Activity	Stayers (%)	Leavers (%)
Volunteering*	33.7	29.4
Sports & recreation	29.0	30.9
A religious organization*	28.0	22.7
Social organization	25.4	25.8
None of the above*	31.5	40.0
Other (please specify)	4.0	2.5

\*Indicates statistically significant difference between the two populations, 19 times out of 20. Table is arranged in descending order of stayers.

<sup>14</sup> Outdoor recreation provides an excellent opportunity to increase exercise. A 2001 US study reveals that the availability of recreational facilities in a location impacts the amount of physical activity in which residents participate. [https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/795/files/health\\_benefits\\_081505.pdf](https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/795/files/health_benefits_081505.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Some studies in literature find greater participation of seniors in religious activities. For example, a US study found that 90 percent of elderly identify themselves to be religious / spiritual. Please see Merck and Co. Religion and Spirituality in Older People. Merck Manual. Retrieved from <http://www.merckmanuals.com/home/older-people%E2%80%99s-health-issues/social-issues-affecting-older-people/religion-and-spirituality-in-older-people>.

### *Comparing Nova Scotia to other provinces*

Nova Scotia stayers and leavers view the province to be worse off in terms of economic factors including wage rate, taxation and job opportunities (each receiving average rating scores of less than 3, Tables 3.16 and 4.10). In Table 5.8, a feature marked with an asterisk was viewed different from other provinces (worse and better than other provinces) by stayers and leavers, 19 times out of 20. Data on the percentages in each population that view Nova Scotia better than other provinces with respect to each feature are also presented.

Table 5.8 data show 72 percent of stayers in Nova Scotia rank the province better than other Canadian provinces in offering a safe community environment. Only 61 percent among leavers have this perception, although the difference is not statistically significant.

More stayers view the province better in terms of communities without discrimination, and job opportunities (although only about 22 percent). Fewer view the province better in terms of cost of living, access to quality health care, wage rates and tax rates.

Table 5.8: Percentages of immigrants who rated Nova Scotia better than other Canadian provinces on selected features (combined result for scores 4 and 5, obtained from Tables 3.12 and 4.9)

Feature	Better in Nova Scotia	
	Stayers (%)	Leavers (%)
Safe community	72.0	61.4
Cost of accommodation	62.0	63.6
Communities without discrimination*	52.0	46.0
Quality of accommodation	44.9	45.8
Local community settlement services	44.9	41.7
Access to quality education for my children	41.1	32.5
Access to quality education for myself	35.4	32.4
Cost of living (besides housing)*	35.3	44.0
Access to quality education for my spouse	32.9	30.8
Access to quality health care*	23.1	32.9
Job opportunities*	21.8	15.5
Wage rates*	9.5	12.3
Tax rates*	7.0	14.0

\*Indicates statistically significant difference in the two populations, 19 times out of 20, for those who rated NS worse (scores 1 and 2) and those who rated NS better (scores 4 and 5). Table arranged in descending order of stayers.

### *Labour market status*

A higher percentage of those who have left the province have found jobs and are working in their preferred occupations. There is no statistically significant difference in the percentages of those holding multiple jobs (Table 5.9).

Table 5.9: Labour market status

Status	Stayers (%)	Leavers (%)
Currently employed		
Yes*	77.0	83.7
No*	23.0	16.3
Holding multiple jobs		
Yes	15.4	12.8
No	84.6	87.2
Working in a preferred occupation		
Yes*	70.2	85.3
No*	29.8	14.7

\*Indicates statistically significant difference between the two populations at 0.05 level of significance ( $p < 0.05$ ).

Economic opportunity is the most pervasive factor that persuades immigrants to remain in Nova Scotia. This is as basic as finding a job, but can also extend to finding the right job, one that fits their level of education, skills, and experience. Many immigrants who have left Nova Scotia mention this as the main reason they left, although quite a few took the decision reluctantly and report that they miss many non-economic aspects of living in the province.

## Chapter 6

### Some policy implications and directions for future research

The current research was the first for Nova Scotia using microdata based on a survey of immigrants who either live in the province or have left. The research made use of descriptive tools of statistical analysis. Survey weights were applied so that estimates for the target population can be obtained. Margin of error statistics were calculated to provide a range of estimates with 95 percent confidence. Some statistical tests of significance were conducted when comparing the populations of stayers and leavers.

There is little doubt that immigrants for the most part find Nova Scotia an attractive place to live. This survey has shown that, although 46% of the leavers said they left because of lack of employment opportunities, 54% of them left for other reasons. One-in-five said seeking better access to culturally related experiences, employment opportunities for spouse and seeking better quality of life were important. However, when they rank different features of Nova Scotia, quality of life is ranked second from the top. When compared to other provinces, cost of accommodation, safe community, communities without discrimination and quality of accommodation in Nova Scotia are

the top four features that are ranked better. These aspect of Nova Scotia's attractiveness need emphasis in immigrant attraction.

The next step in this research could be to pursue some detailed multivariate analyses which could not be conducted within the scope of the present project. Such analyses can provide a better understanding of the role of individual demographic factors in the mobility decisions of Nova Scotia immigrants. This can be modelled as a logistic or probit model with factors such as age, gender, education, country of origin as explanatory variables. The impact of some contextual variables such as unemployment rate, provincial per capita health care expenses, wage rates, tax rates, accommodation costs in Nova Scotia and the current province of residence of leavers from Nova Scotia can be assessed in such a model.

On the one hand while the shortage of skilled workers in the province is well known and immigrants are recruited to help meet these shortages, many leave due to lack of employment opportunities. Do new immigrants face employment barriers? Do potential employers need more convincing to hire newcomers? These questions can also be answered in a similar multivariate analysis as suggested above.

Increasing the social connectedness of immigrants is important for their integration and retention in the province. There is a need to encourage their participation in volunteering, sports and recreation activities because these activities increase interaction with larger community. However, deficiencies in language ability, Canadian experience and social networks may be creating barriers to volunteering. At the same time, while it is easier to engage in outdoor sports and recreation activities during

Summer, it is harder in Winter when such activities take place indoors and the cost to participate in them is higher. Transportation may also be an issue if these activities are not available closer to place of residence. All these barriers need careful attention by policy makers. Current research shows only about 34 percent of stayers participate in volunteering and 30 percent in sports and recreation activities. For those who have left the province, these percentages are 29 and 32 percentage, respectively. A more detailed future analysis could uncover more reasons for this lack of participation and will be instructive for immigrant retention policy.

Immigrants bring skills, great energy and enthusiasm, a determination to build new and better lives for themselves and their families. They can bring knowledge of business networks and markets in their countries of origin, offering new opportunities for trade. While a PNP can place an individual in a job, immigration policies and programs need to look beyond this, to a system that offers more effective supports to members of the new immigrant's family and non-PNP immigrants, for example. Skilled immigrants often are accompanied by spouses and children with their own skills. A focus only on the nominee can overlook these assets.

The above indicates that the province's settlement services may need a review: How well is the current system doing? Can more be done within existing resources? Are more resources needed? Can better services be spread beyond Halifax? Can more locally-based groups, including volunteers, be engaged in this process? The present research has shown that different settlement services are rated differently by immigrants in terms of their satisfaction level. A more detailed study could investigate if there is a relationship between an immigrant's decision to stay or leave and their

satisfaction with some particular settlement programs such as employment counselling or other work-related services? Why is the entrepreneurship support program so little used? What can be done to strengthen these services and increase their accessibility? Are they optimally deployed with sufficient resources? Such a study could begin with a review of literature that examines the impact of public programs on individual decisions. Controls for immigrants' demographic and human capital characteristics and country of origin can also be introduced in a multivariate framework.

The present research has also shown that gender composition of primary applicants for immigration is the same in those who are still in Nova Scotia and those who have left, about 40 percent are women. Primary applicants are more likely to be the major decision makers in a family. Separate probability analyses of mobility decisions for men and women can help draw a comparison of the impact of each determining factor of mobility on their decision to move. These factors can also vary by country of origin as cultural backgrounds impact participation of women in the labour force.

A more diverse, sustainable and robust economy is a critical component if Nova Scotia is to attract and retain more immigrants. Economic activity needs not only to be across various sectors, but also distributed around the province. Much of the policy needed to promote this falls outside immigration initiatives, which do however have an important role to play in support of overall development. Provincial Nominee Programs are designed with this in mind, matching new immigrants with labour market needs.

Finally, based on survey responses on the accuracy of pre-arrival information, it is important that lawyers, consultants and government officials maintain a balance in

informing newcomers about what the province has to offer. While it is important to highlight the positive features of Nova Scotia, newcomers should also be aware of some of the challenges they could face (including social, cultural and economic) while going to their new homes and be advised on what to do to overcome such challenges. They should also be made aware that similar challenges could be faced while living elsewhere in Canada.

## Appendix A

### Technical Appendix

#### A.1 Survey methodology

Analysis presented in this report is based on a survey that represents all those immigrants who became permanent residents in Canada at age 18 years and over from 2011 to 2018, were destined for Nova Scotia or who have lived in Nova Scotia but did not identify Nova Scotia as their intended destination<sup>16</sup>. Most of the survey respondents, about 74 percent, were living in Nova Scotia at the time the survey was launched, and some had left for other provinces or other countries. The survey was conducted with the approval of Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board (REB). This was granted for one year on April 10, 2018 and then extended to April 10, 2020 (REB # 18-184).

The survey was distributed by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Several meetings were held between IRCC, the principal investigator, and officials from Nova Scotia Office of Immigration (NSOI) to determine a secure process to administer the survey without disclosing personal information. From its database, IRCC identified a universe population of 28,760 immigrants who landed in Canada from 2011 to 2018, were aged 18 and over at landing and were destined to Nova Scotia or lived in Nova Scotia but did not identify Nova Scotia as their intended destination. From that total, 27,126 had an email address on file with IRCC. Almost 4,000 of these email addresses were found to be invalid or from

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<sup>16</sup> Lived in Nova Scotia is defined as having received settlement service in that province or having indicated in Global Case Management System living in Nova Scotia at some point.

immigration consultants. Consequently, the final count used for the survey mailout was 23,362 across Canada.

To develop the survey questionnaire and for compilation of survey data, the services of a Halifax company, Group ATN (GATN), were contracted. To develop the questionnaire, inputs were solicited from several stakeholders including academics (national and international), federal and provincial policymakers and settlement organizations both inside and outside Nova Scotia. In addition, two focus groups were held within the province, one in Halifax and one in New Glasgow, in cooperation with the Immigrant Settlement Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS) and the YMCA of Greater Halifax and Dartmouth. The focus groups comprised new immigrants who shared their experiences of their immigration process and their opinion on different aspects of living in Nova Scotia. Their experiences and opinions were incorporated in the survey questionnaire. The principal investigator also held a workshop under the auspices of 20<sup>th</sup> National Metropolis Conference in Calgary held in March 2018, where discussions with participants were fruitful in designing the questionnaire. Finally, the expertise of GATN also helped in proper organization and wording of the questionnaire for the ease of interpretation by respondents. Before launching the questionnaire, two sessions were held with immigrants to test its accuracy, at ISANS and the YMCA. Comments provided by the participants were duly incorporated.

The questionnaire was administered online in both official languages and was posted on a secured platform by GATN on March 29, 2019. Respondents were made aware their participation in the survey was voluntary and that they also had the option to leave the survey without completing it at any time. They could send an email to the principal

investigator with any questions or concerns and could also contact GATM for any technical difficulty in accessing the questionnaire. They were also provided a chance to win a one-in-five prize draw of \$150 each if they finished the questionnaire.

The questionnaire had 21 sections, with 79 questions. However, the number of questions answered depended on whether the respondent was currently living in Nova Scotia or in another province. The average completion time of the survey was 20 minutes<sup>17</sup>.

A link to the survey website was provided in the email invitations sent out by IRCC in compliance with the *Privacy Act*. The first batch of emails was sent on April 10, 2019 and the last batch on April 15, 2019. The survey ended on May 29, 2019. In all, five percent of emails were undelivered. Two reminder emails were sent during this time. In all, 5,129 responses to the survey were received, with 75 in French. Out of the 5,129 responses to the survey, some had to be filtered out. They included those who refused to participate in the survey (after reading the introductory letter that appeared as the first page on questionnaire), early terminations due to being in the out-of-scope population (never lived in Nova Scotia, outside of defined arrival timeframe) and voluntary withdrawal<sup>18</sup>. We also arbitrarily filtered out those who provided less than five percent response to the survey. After the filtering process, we were left with 3,385 survey respondents from which we identified 2,110 respondents currently living in Nova Scotia and 705 respondents living outside the province. The remaining survey participants exited the survey before answering

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<sup>17</sup> Questionnaire available from author on request. Please contact [Ather.Akbari@smu.ca](mailto:Ather.Akbari@smu.ca)

<sup>18</sup> It will be instructive to identify the reasons for why some immigrants who were destined to Nova Scotia did not immigrate there. Responses received from 321 survey respondents are discussed in Appendix C.

questions on their current location. Hence the sample size for this study is 2,815 which is 9.8 percent of target population<sup>19</sup>.

Finally, some questions in the questionnaire were open-ended questions and some questions gave respondents an “other please specify” choice which required them to provide some explanations. With the help of survey company, these answers were given numerical codes and added to the main dataset (in SPSSX format). A detailed explanation of the method used by the company in this process is provided in Appendix B. As per the requirement of NSOI, answers to questions 6, 23, 31, 33 and 75 were analyzed by the principal investigator and a project team member and matched with the results of the frequency distributions based on the main dataset.<sup>20</sup>

### *Survey weights*

Ideally, the sample should represent the entire target population. However, this is usually not the case in survey data for two reasons. First is non-response, which may cause some groups to be over- or under-represented. Second is self-selection that typically relates to an online survey. This arises because not all respondents may have access to the internet. In the presence of these problems, reliable conclusions cannot be drawn from the analysis of a survey data. Hence, to overcome the sample representation bias, a weighting adjustment is applied to the data, which assigns a value higher than one to respondents in the under-represented groups and lower than

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<sup>19</sup> To sum up, out of the 23,362 survey invitations sent, the overall response rate was 22 percent, effective response rate was 14.5 percent and usable responses for the purpose of this study were 12 percent.

<sup>20</sup> A combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis is referred as mixed methods approach in literature and is discussed in Creswell, J. and J. Creswell. 2018. Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches Sage edge, 5<sup>th</sup> edition.

one to respondents in the over-represented groups. This adjustment is needed so that the survey data reflect the target population. Two auxiliary variables were chosen for this, by paying attention to the study's policy focus, to create a two-dimensional weight variable. Each of these variables was based on mandatory questions in the survey, hence all respondents in the filtered survey have answered these two questions. One was the immigration entry category variable. Immigration attraction initiatives in Nova Scotia have been directed more towards economic immigrants in recent years. As a result, this category of immigrants dominates among inflows. At the same time, the immigration attraction schemes introduced by the province (such as different streams under the Provincial Nominee Program, PNP) have attracted newcomers not only directly from outside Canada but also from within Canada, which may not have been the result of deliberate attempts by the province. Immigrant retention rates are higher when calculated by accounting for those who came to the province from other provinces.

As Table A1 shows, those who came to Nova Scotia as provincial nominees dominate the population as well as the survey sample. However, among those who came under other economic programs, migrants from other provinces are under-represented in sample data while those who came directly are over-represented. Refugees are greatly under-represented in the sample perhaps due to the language barrier, inability to appreciate the importance of the survey and lack of access to internet. Among sponsored family immigrants, those who came directly to the province are over-represented in the sample. Immigrants in all other programs are over-represented in the sample perhaps because of their inability to describe the program under which they came to Canada. Those who came under the Atlantic Immigration Pilot Project (AIPP)

are represented as one group due to non-availability of population data on those who came from other provinces. Their composition in the sample is similar to their population. Also, resettled refugees and protected persons are considered as one group due to a very small number of those who arrived from other provinces during the period covered by the survey; only eight in this group in the survey data had lived elsewhere in Canada before arriving in Nova Scotia. They are highly under-represented in the sample.

There are, therefore, significant differences in the composition of each immigration program in total inflows, except for provincial nominees. The sample is also under-represented by those who came to Nova Scotia from other provinces. Overall, there are 30 percent such immigrants in the province, but the sample comprises only 20 percent of such immigrants. By creating a two-dimensional weight variable and weighting the sample by these two variables, these differences are largely removed. The survey weights applied in this study make the survey data representative of immigrant entry classes and of their distribution between those who arrived directly in Nova Scotia and those who came from the other provinces or territories.

Table A1: Calculation of survey weights

Entry class	Lived in Canada before	Population data		Sample data (unweighted)		Survey weights*
		Frequency	Percent in total	Frequency	Percent in total	
PNP	Yes	1,795	6.2	166	5.9	10.8
	No	10,445	36.3	1,028	36.5	10.2
AIPP	NA	391	1.4	41	1.5	9.5
Other economic	Yes	4,390	15.3	173	6.2	25.4
	No	3,059	10.6	476	16.9	6.4
Resettled Refugee and Protected Person	NA	2,540	8.8	68	2.4	37.4
Sponsored family	Yes	1,880	6.5	137	4.9	13.7
	No	4,085	14.2	539	19.2	7.6
All other programs	Yes	70	0.2	45	1.6	1.6
	No	105	0.4	142	5.0	0.7
Grand total		28,760	100.0	2,815	100.0	10.2

\*Calculated as the ratio of population to survey data. NA=Not Available.

Source: Population data were provided by IRCC. Breakdown of AIPP data were not available from IRCC source and were provided separately from rest of the data. "Other economic" class includes business class and worker program from whose total AIPP number was subtracted. Sample data are based on the online survey. A very small number (only 8) of resettled refugee & protected persons who had lived elsewhere in Canada participated in the survey so they appear together.

### *Margin of error*

All results in this study are estimates based on the weighted sample. The sample margin of error (m.o.e.) is calculated at a 95 percent confidence level using the following formula:

$$\text{m.o.e} = Z_{\alpha} \sqrt{\frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})(N-n)}{n(N-1)}}$$

where  $\alpha = 0.05$  for 95 percent confidence interval,  $p$  = sample percentage response (assumed at 0.5),  $n$  = sample size and  $N$  = population size.

The margins of error are calculated for the entire sample and separately for population estimates of stayers and leavers. Results are reported in the following table. It can be concluded with 95 percent confidence that the estimates of the entire in-scope population, as presented in Chapter 2, are within the interval of +/- 1.8 percent. Likewise, estimates of the stayers population reported in Chapter 3 and of the leavers population reported in Chapter 4 are within 2.0 percent and 3.5 percent of their value, respectively.

Group	Unweighted sample size (n)	Weighted sample size (N)	Margin of error
Total sample	2,815	28,760	1.8 percent
Stayers	2,110	21,210	2.0 percent
Leavers	705	7,550	3.5 percent

In Chapter 5, to conduct the tests of significance of the difference of percentages between the populations of stayers and those who have left, the null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant difference of percentages between their two populations was tested, allowing for a 95 percent chance of rejection<sup>21</sup>. The estimated

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<sup>21</sup> In other words, there is a 19 out of 20 chance that the percentage difference between the two populations is not zero.

percentage values were first converted into proportions  $\hat{p}_1$  and  $\hat{p}_2$  for stayers and those who have left, respectively. Then a Z-value was calculated using the following formula:

$$Z = \frac{(\hat{p}_1 - \hat{p}_2) - 0}{\sqrt{\hat{p}(1 - \hat{p}) \left( \frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2} \right)}}$$

The numerator in the formula is the difference between the two estimated proportions and denominator is the standard error of the sampling distribution of difference between the two estimated proportions. The calculated Z-value was then compared with the critical value of Z, 1.96, to obtain the p-value which, if below 5 percent, led to a rejection of null hypothesis with 95 percent certainty.

## **A.2 A summary of method used in coding of descriptive answers provided by respondents**

Coding of descriptive answers was done in Excel by two coders. A codebook was created using the first 50 open ended responses for each question. Thematic coding groups responses of similar content, themes or words. Where 3 or more open ended responses contained the same theme a code was created. Following creation of the codebook the codes were reviewed and approved to ensure agreement between coders before coding continued. The codebook was used to categorize the remaining open ended responses. New codes were created as needed through the coding process, if previously unidentified themes emerged. Following coding, 5% of the open ended data was spot checked for quality control to ensure that responses had been coded correctly. New variables were created and added to the data file for each new code that was created. For example, the open ended responses to Q23 were categorized into 16 themes, 16 new variables were created for the data file to represent these codes. A value of 1 would be entered for each code variable that represented a theme that was present in a respondents open ended comment, for all code variables that represented themes not present in a respondent comment a value of 2 (not selected) was entered. Frequencies were run on each coding variable for a question to identify the percentage of responses than contained each theme.

## **Appendix B**

### **Immigrants' reasons for not immigrating to Nova Scotia**

Following the methodology described in Appendix A, immigrants who were destined to Nova Scotia but decided not to immigrate to the province were filtered out of the survey. A question was asked about their reason for not immigrating to the province. An analysis of their reasons will be instructive for immigration policymakers and is provided below.

There were 321 responses to this question, 52 of which were judged to be “other” or unusable. The most common group of responses (31.8%) was that other locations offered more opportunity, a better future, or simply offered a job somewhere else.

Personal economic circumstances and opportunities once again come to the foreground. The second and third most frequent comments, almost equal in occurrence (17-18% each), were that the respondents were still in Nova Scotia, and liked it there; or that there were family and friends elsewhere. The former of these indicates some confusion with the questionnaire, the latter the importance of having some kind of personal support structure in place when moving to a new and strange place, and how important this is in influencing immigrant decisions. One respondent stated simply: “I have no one in Nova Scotia”.

A fourth group catches a diverse range of comments, which indicates some uncertainty or obligation that limited location decisions. This went from “didn’t know” through “by mistake” to the obligations posed by PNP rules and regulations in other provinces (probably before Nova Scotia had its own PNP). Some said acceptance into a university

course determined where they went. Some responses suggested that rules and regulations in other provinces offered faster pathways towards citizenship. Sample comments include: “We did not know there is a province named Nova Scotia at that time”; and “Received Ontario Provincial Nomination”.

A final significant group simply said there was no reason, or that Nova Scotia simply did not figure in their plans. Lack of knowledge of the province, or perceived lack of community support structures, were aspects of these responses. The “other” responses included a small number that indicated concern with health care in Nova Scotia compared with other parts of the country, and a desire to live near mountains.

Responses to this question indicate that immigrant location decisions are heavily influenced by some kind of support structure at the intended place (family or otherwise), and that immigrants consider economic opportunity as a key factor.

**Table B1: Reasons for not immigrating to Nova Scotia**  
*In an open-ended question (question 6), respondents were asked, “Why did you decide not to immigrate to Nova Scotia?”*

Reason given	Number	Percent
More opportunity elsewhere	102	31.8
Still in Nova Scotia	57	17.8
Family or friend ties	55	17.1
Don’t know/by mistake/rules and regulations	39	12.1
No reason/never lived there/not the plan/no community	16	5.0
Other/unusable	52	16.2
Total	321	100.0

Drawn from the unweighted survey of 5,129 respondents.

## Appendix C

### An analysis of additional comments solicited from survey respondents

At the the end of the survey, respondents were asked “*Taking into account all of your experiences as an immigrant in Nova Scotia, is there anything else you would like to add?*”. More than 1400 responded. Of these, 267 simply said “no further comment” or words to that effect. These were left out of this analysis. A further 100 or so were judged unusable, or expressed sentiments that only occurred a few times. These included complaints about the weather, lack of international transportation link, bad roads and streets, too much garbage along roadways, and scruffy towns. Slightly more common were complaints about lack of public transport, in rural areas especially; lack of international transportation links; and lack of cultural diversity.

Other than these, the biggest set of comments concerned economic opportunity in the province, which was cited by 464 respondents (40%). This covered a range of issues, from no suitable job (79) difficulties with credential and experience recognition (also 79), to general economic conditions (201). This last usually included low wages, high taxes, and a high cost of living. A further 89 qualified their responses by saying they left the province reluctantly for reasons of personal economic circumstances, and some were angling to find a way back eventually. One comment combines several sentiments (quoted *verbatim*): “Halifax is a beautiful place with higher quality of life and lower cost of living with all available amenities, but lack of jobs. I could not find job there. If I would have find a job there , I would not have moved to Ontario. In future I would like to shift in

Halifax with my family again when it seems to be developed in the field of earning resources.”

Another comment was: “I wish me and my husband could find good jobs in NS because we would love to move back here.” The message here is that Nova Scotia has much to offer in the way of a good place to live, but a stronger economy would help greatly, especially when new immigrants arrive with education and experience, plus a great desire and energy to build a better life. Channelling this energy to promote further economic growth and diversification is a challenge. Quite a few respondents were impressed with the range of business opportunities on offer, and appeared willing to take advantage. This, once again, suggests that immigrant expectations are often high, which can only lead to disappointment when these expectations are not met entirely.

On a more positive note, some 213 (18.6%) respondents said they liked being in Nova Scotia, and found the people friendly and welcoming. Almost 150 said the province needed better settlement services, or had complaints about the immigration system, particularly the path to citizenship or difficulty in getting family members to join them. The former of these falls within the power of the province to address, the latter is largely a federal responsibility, although changes could be built into a modified PNP. Having access to settlement services outside Halifax was specified several times.

More than 100 comments addressed quality of public services as an issue. Health care was by far the most prominent amongst these, usually expressed as difficulty in finding a family doctor. Education and other public services were also mentioned. These are issues that are not confined to immigrants, but to the public at large, although

immigrants will very often find it harder to resolve issues due to obstacles posed by language or lack of familiarity with how things work in their new home.

Fifty-six respondents were ambivalent or disappointed in their decision to move to Nova Scotia, or were planning to leave or had already left. The same number (56) cited racism or discrimination in their general lives, but especially when looking for work. One comment was “Bitterly disappointing. Suffered mistreatment and racism. Few opportunities outside HRM, healthcare is broken. Will be leaving as soon as possible.” There is a perception that many employers prefer to hire “known” or familiar people rather than take a risk on someone who is less known, despite education, skills, and experience.

Table C1 tabulates the frequencies for population (using weighted data on question 75).

Table C1: Additional comments solicited from survey respondents.\*  
 Respondents were asked “Taking into account all of your experiences as an immigrant in Nova Scotia, is there anything else you would like to add?”

Description	Percentage
<i>Economic</i>	
Need to improve job opportunities	24.5
Recognise foreign credentials/ease integration into workforce	13.3
High taxes/cost of living	11.8
Need to improve infrastructure - roads/airports/public transit/internet	5.4
Low wages and poor economy	6.2
Total	61.2
<i>Social</i>	
Improve immigration/settlement process	13.4
Friendly people	5.3
Racism/discrimination/need for more diversity	4.7
Total	23.4
<i>Public Services</i>	
Need to improve healthcare	10.6
Need to improve governance and social services	4.1
Education	3.2
Total	17.9
<i>Environment</i>	
Positives -Like/Love Nova Scotia/Happy/Thank you	27.2
Beautiful/peaceful place, weather	8.2
Total	35.4
<i>More/improved communication</i>	3.0
<i>Miscellaneous mentions</i>	13.2

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