

NEWSLETTER

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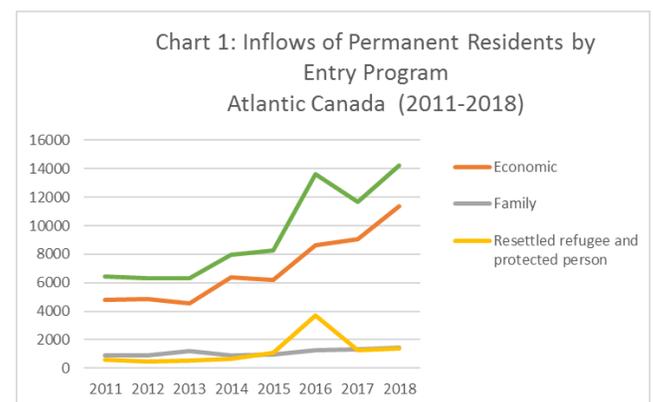
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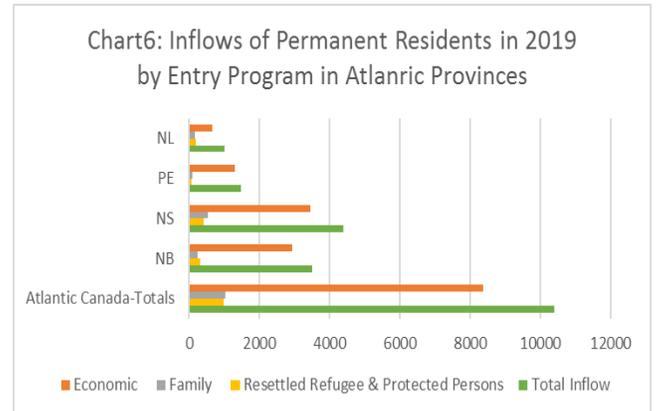
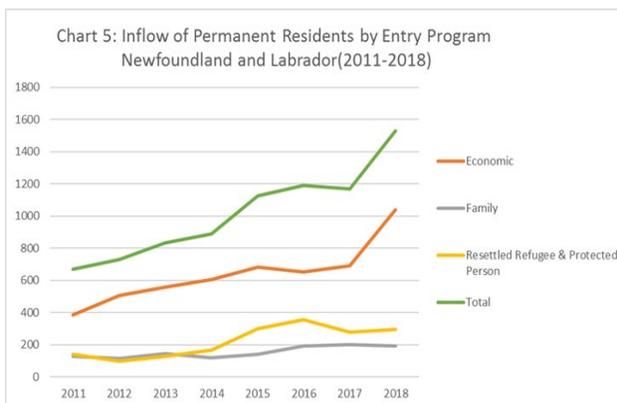
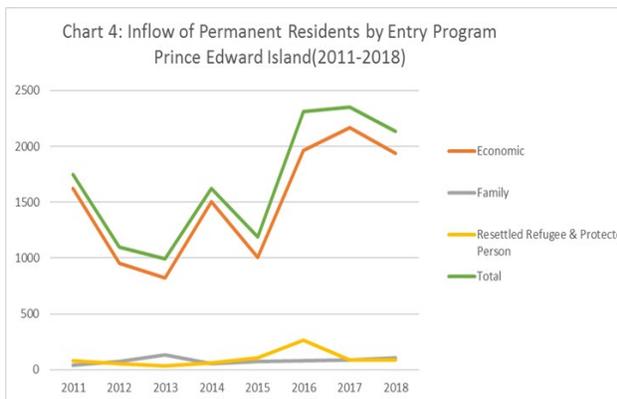
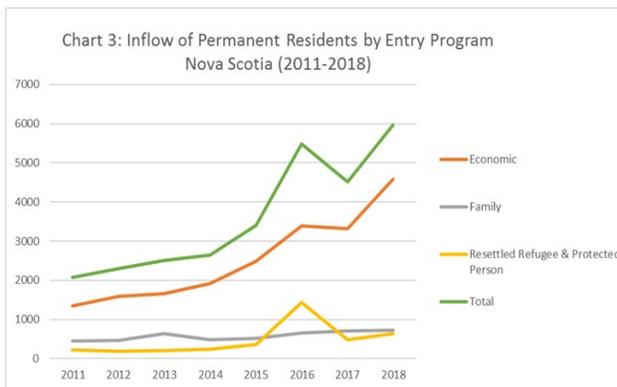
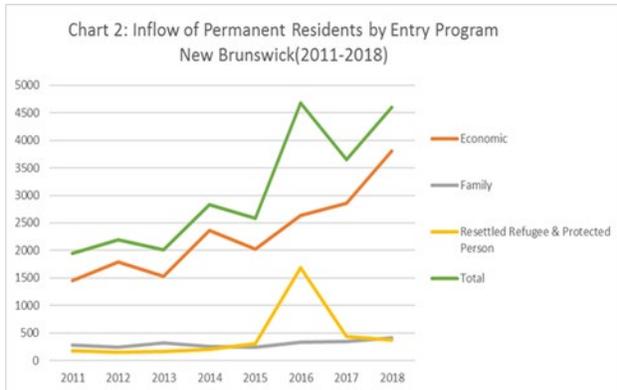
Immigration Trends in Atlantic Provinces (2011-2018)

Ather H. Akbari (Saint Mary’s University)

Immigration in Atlantic Canada more than doubled during the seven-year period. Nova Scotia saw the highest increase (3 times), followed by New Brunswick (2.4 times), Newfoundland and Labrador (2.3 times) and Prince Edward Island (1.2 times). Charts 1 through 5 present immigration trends by entry program, overall for Atlantic Canada and also separately for individual provinces.

Most permanent residents entered as economic immigrants and their share in overall inflows has risen over the period, except for PEI where there was only a slight decrease in their share. About 91 percent of all immigrants arrived there as economic immigrants in 2018 as compared to 93 percent in 2011. New Brunswick welcomed 83 percent of its immigrants under economic class in 2018 as opposed to 75 percent in 2011, while Nova Scotia welcomed 77 percent in 2018 as compared to only 65 percent in 2011. The corresponding percentages for Newfoundland and Labrador province were 68 percent in 2018 and 57.5 percent in 2011.





In the first seven months of 2019 for which data are available, Nova Scotia received the highest number of immigrants arriving in the region followed by New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador. Their composition by entry program remained the same as before in each province (Chart 6 above).

The Francophone Immigrants in L'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick: Some Issues and Challenges in Welcoming Them

Mario Paris (École de travail social, Université de Moncton)

Leyla Sall (Département de Sociologie et de Criminologique, Université de Moncton)

Elda Savoie (École De Travail Social, Université de Moncton)

Introduction

A symposium on The Francophone Immigrants in L'Acadie Du Nouveau-Brunswick was held on February 25, 2019 at the Université De Moncton campus with focus on three main areas: i) Aging population and immigration; ii) Immigration and

jobs; iii) Inclusion and sense of belonging. The event attracted 70 participants.

The proceedings of the symposium are summarized in the following sections.

Aging Population and Immigration

Francophone immigration in Francophone minority communities and in the l'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick is viewed as a means to address some of the issues related to an aging population. Does l'Acadie have institutional and political resources that facilitate the means to address population aging issues through immigration? What contributions can newcomers offer in order to improve the quality of life of elders? Are immigrant elders confronted with the same issues as local Acadians elders?

Three presenters provided their perspectives on the above questions.

Mario Paris (Université de Moncton) is an academic expert on social Gerontology. According to him, immigrant elders are socially invisible. They also face language barriers to communicate their needs, which affect their dignity.

This invisibility of immigrant elders is a consequence of our immigration policies which consider immigrants as a mere workforce. Hence, we do not have separate enough research and data on aging immigrants. Most of the focus has been on immigrants who are young and expected to fill the labor shortage gaps by taking up jobs. Mario Paris insisted on the fact that while immigration in New Brunswick and l'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick can contribute to the increase of the population, it cannot reverse the age pyramid because its level is so low. In order to reverse the population from aging, there is a need of significantly increasing the number of newcomers choosing to settle in our francophone communities.

Luc Doucet (l'Association des aînés francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick)

Mr. Doucet is the director of l'Association Francophone des aînés du Nouveau-Brunswick (AFANB). The association consists of 7,000 members. In his presentation, he asked the public how his organization might mobilize immigrant elders who have specific needs and who face cultural barriers. In his own view, the association can be more inclusive towards newcomers by putting in place some intergenerational activities. Mr. Doucet pointed towards the diversity of challenges elders face depending on their gender, place of residence status (urban/rural) and the fact that they are immigrants. In addition, being Anglophone or Francophone also matters. He concluded his presentation by emphasizing that elders want to be independent and have attachment to their homes. They would want to stay in their homes as long as possible instead of being obliged to reside in long-term continuing care facility.

Francis Veil is an immigrant from France. He arrived in 1961. He used to live in Nova Scotia before moving to Moncton as a professor of Mathematics. He presented his experience as an immigrant working for inclusion and equality in Moncton community. He plays father Christmas every year in the Welcoming Center of Newcomers in Moncton. He feels strong positive emotions every time he sees Muslim Children who sit on his knees (he is a Jew) enjoying discussing and laughing with him. As an elder, his role is to facilitate the integration of newcomers and make them feel at home in the Université de Moncton, in the Synagogue and in the community at large.

Immigration and Jobs

The integration of Francophone newcomers is complex whether it be social, cultural or economic. However, economic integration is by far the most important as it may be the main determinant of whether people stay or leave. In l'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick, Francophone newcomers have to be fluent in English in order to integrate in the labour market. What strategies are in place to enable them to learn English? There is a small labour market for Francophone newcomers in l'Acadie. What kind of opportunities exist for them in the labour market?

Professor Sall (Université de Moncton) presented the main results of his study on the economic integration of Francophone newcomers in l'Acadie. He conducted 73 interviews for his study. Many of them come as international students. Two main source countries are Belgium and Congo. Each type and source country of immigrants has its own characteristics and faces specific challenges with respect to its integration in the labour market. These challenges are huge, partly because of the institutional incompleteness of their host society. Professor Sall identified three job niches for Francophone newcomers:

- 1) The structural niche of jobs (call centers, nursing home for elders, seafood processing industries) in which they can find jobs very easily.
- 2) The circumstantial niche of jobs (banks, insurances) in which diversity is considered as a source of profit by employers.
- 3) The niche education and healthcare systems, which potentially can integrate a significant number of Francophone newcomers but do not because of racial discrimination and multiple barriers.

Alfred Bessawa (an entrepreneur from Cameroon) was an international student when he immigrated to Canada. He graduated from community college in the field of Logistics and Transport. After his internship, he found a job in his field of specialization. He loves connecting with people and showing his African style of dressing. He and his friend from Africa created an online business selling clothes. While working hard to develop his business, he also promotes inclusion in schools where immigrant children face intimidation and racial discrimination.

Matar Niang (an entrepreneur from Sénégal) discussed his experience as an entrepreneur. He arrived in Moncton in 2012 as an international student. As a Francophone, he was confronted with linguistic barriers. Therefore, it was not easy for him to find a job. He holds a master's degree in Biochemistry but works in a call center. He began selling Senegalese food in the call center. This allowed him to gather economic and social capital that allow him to open a restaurant. For Matar Niang, networking is the key to success for newcomers.

Charles Fournier (Centre d'Accueils Francophone pour les Immigrants, CAFI) works with CAFI in southeast New Brunswick for economic integration of Francophone immigrants. He presented data that shows 142 newcomers received support in his organization. CAFI held 14 workshops in order to facilitate the integration of Francophone newcomers in local labour markets. Fournier's work includes providing newcomers information on labour market and help them find jobs that match their academic qualifications and past job experiences. Fournier offers intercultural trainings to local employers in order to facilitate communication between them and their employees who are newcomers to community.

Inclusion and a Sense of Belonging

By becoming a host society for Francophone immigrants from overseas, L'Acadie of New Brunswick emphasizes inclusion of, and sense of belonging for, newcomers. Three presentations focused on measures that can be taken in this regard.

According to Isabelle Violette (Professor, Université de Moncton), societies and communities set out criteria of belongingness that allow them to recognize insiders and outsiders. Being a minority, L'Acadie du Nouveau Brunswick is not an exception.

Therefore, in order to be more inclusive, L'Acadie needs to transition to a post-immigration community that will erase barriers such as skin color, religion and accent and also give Francophone immigrants the rights to identify as new Acadians.

Lamine Kamano (Université de Moncton) views immigration as offering an opportunity for teachers to learn about people that come from different parts of the world and are very different. Inclusion of immigrants' children needs special emphasis. There is a lack of resources to handle diversity of the student population in schools. There is also an educational challenge related to teaching of French and class management. Some teachers are not trained to deal with diversity in their classes. One solution is pairing of local and immigrant families in order to help the latter to adapt more efficiently in schools.

Farzaneh Sadatian (student, Université de Moncton)

As an international student, Sadatian experienced a cultural shock when she arrived and felt very isolated because of it. She returned to Iran for a 4-month vacation and came back to Moncton with a new strategy: connecting with people and students that are younger than she is in order to improve

her French. She had a job at the university library, succeeded in being accepted by her peers and socializes well with her neighbors.

Conclusion

Immigration poses several economic, identity, and cultural policy issues for a community. During the symposium, there were different presentations on immigration and aging populations, immigration and economic integration, sense of belongingness and collective identity. It is important to facilitate successful integration of immigrants in Acadian society. Ethnic barriers should be overcome for a successful inclusion of Francophone newcomers and for the emergence of a more progressive Acadian society.

Immigration in Prince Edward Island

Jim Sentance (University of Prince Edward Island)

Over the past several years, Prince Edward Island has stood out among its fellow Atlantic Canadian provinces in terms of its economic and population growth. In some respects, it has rivalled the performance of the healthiest economies in the country. There are probably a number of factors that have contributed to this performance, but one that stands out is the contribution that high levels of international immigration has made to PEI's population growth, and by extension, the PEI economy.

According to the 2016 census, international immigration to PEI grew at a faster rate than any other province over the previous decade. While this growth rate has tapered off in recent years (see the introductory article in this issue), its per capita rate of immigration remains the highest in the country. This goes a good way towards explaining why over the past several years PEI's population has grown at a rate faster than the Canadian average, and faster than most other

provinces. Not entirely surprisingly, this has coincided with a period in which the Island's GDP growth rate has been among the highest in the country.

As the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council and others have pointed out, however, not all is entirely positive on the immigration front. While the province has been successful in attracting immigrants, it has also been losing them to other provinces. Both short and long term, PEI has among the lowest retention rates in the country, in particular among economic class immigrants. This is generally considered to be a policy failure – suggestions have been made about the immigration policies in place and for additional programs to be put in place to work with immigrants to keep them here.

An alternative view is that a low retention rate is not necessarily a bad thing; it certainly should not be a surprise, and one might argue that the entry of far more immigrants that are likely to stay may actually be a positive element in attracting and retaining more immigrants.

Prince Edward Island may have a growing economy, but that does not alter the reality that it is one of the poorest provinces in the country. Average wages are the lowest in the country. The industrial/occupational profile of the province is relatively limited. To put it bluntly, there is opportunity here, but not for everyone. Lack of opportunities is the reality that immigrants to Prince Edward Island face. Some will find opportunity and stay. Many will probably not, and will leave for major cities like Toronto where opportunities are wide enough spread that pretty well everyone can find something. Anyone with any knowledge of Prince Edward Island's demographics will understand that this is not a reality that only immigrants face – it is the same reality that our children have been facing for decades as they complete their education and training and head out into the world to look for

work. Why should we expect immigrants to be able to find a fit and stay more readily?

One response to this has been to suggest that PEI should target its immigration policies more specifically to try to attract immigrants that are more likely to find something here. While that sounds good in theory, it is more than a leap of faith to suggest it would work much better in practice. Governments do not really have a great track record when it comes to figuring out what economic opportunities exist, and I believe their ability to match any thoughts in that regard to the talents and abilities of those wishing to come here might be even more limited. The narrowness of the possibilities Prince Edward Island offers makes that somewhat efficient matching even less likely than in other jurisdictions. As one of my students, Wanyi Shangguan, has pointed out to me; the greater flow and stock of immigrants has improved the efficiency of matching immigrants to jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities. With a larger group to consider, Island employers are more likely to find candidates who had better suit their needs, and a better fit for the employer is probably a better fit for the employee as well. On the entrepreneurial front, a greater volume of initiatives again increases the likelihood that some successful enterprises will be established. The Island, we have to remember, is quite limited in the scope of opportunities it presents and many of those opportunities are quite idiosyncratic. A larger pool of potential employees increases the odds of good matching.

The other approach often suggested is to work on non-economic factors that will increase retention of those who do come. Support systems, settlement services and better access to language training are ideas being worked on through initiatives like the Atlantic Immigration Pilot project.

Perhaps counter-intuitively, the large numbers of immigrants recruited, even those that leave, might actually help contribute to those efforts.

One area most analysts point to, with respect to increasing retention, is the existence of a community of similar individuals, people who share their culture, beliefs, cuisine and so on. In that respect Prince Edward Island historically is a wasteland compared to the cultural diversity of somewhere like Toronto. Building up the kind of diverse communities that would be more welcoming for immigrants can be a slow process, but bringing in large numbers of immigrants and international students, as PEI has done, might in effect jump-start the process, increasing the stock of immigrants to something closer to the threshold needed, even if it means a large outflow initially. The larger stock of internationals has changed the face of PEI, Charlottetown in particular, eliciting a change in cuisine and foodstuffs available and social and cultural opportunities that might have taken much longer to develop if we had taken a more targeted approach to immigration, at the lower levels per capita that we have seen in the rest of Atlantic Canada.

Yes, it would be great if a larger number found that great fit here and did not move on – a low retention rate seems like such a wasted opportunity. However, as I mentioned before, that is probably unreasonable to expect, given the narrowness and idiosyncrasy of the opportunity the Island presents. There are elements of the Island's immigration programs that I have had some issues with, but maintaining a high volume of inflow through immigration and refugee programs and with the recruitment of international students is an element I am quite comfortable with, as I am also with the low level of retention we have experienced.

ARGEIAD Member Updates

(Note: Member updates are solicited before the publication of newsletter and are published as provided by the members).

Ted McDonald (University of New Brunswick)

Internal Mobility of Immigrants in Canada: a comparison of the strengths and weaknesses of alternative data sources. Conference: Informing Migration Policy through International Experience and Evidence at Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario. October 3rd and 4th, 2019.

Events Organized by ARGEIAD

ARGEIAD co-hosted with Canadian Research Data Centre, conference in Halifax Advancing the Health and Well-Being of Canadians: From Survey and Administrative Data to Sound Policy (October 24 & 25, 2019). Please find program details here <https://smu.ca/centres-and-institutes/arg-events.html>

Upcoming Events

ARGEIAD is cohosting a conference with Stephen Jarislowky Chair in Intercultural Studies at Memorial University of Newfoundland on Productivity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship: The role of immigration and workforce diversity, November 25-26 in Saint John's: <https://smu.ca/centres-and-institutes/arg-events.html>

Media mentions

Impact of immigration on house prices in Canada (with Yigit Aydede)

- [Financial Post](#) (2019-06-27)
- [Ottawa Citizen](#) (2019-06-27)
- [Vancouver Sun](#) (2019-06-27)
- [Commentary on above](#) (2019-07-19)