



NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR'S  
**VitalSigns**<sup>®</sup>

A province-wide check-up of quality of life in  
Newfoundland & Labrador communities for 2016.

A collaboration between the Community Foundation of Newfoundland & Labrador  
and Memorial University's Harris Centre.



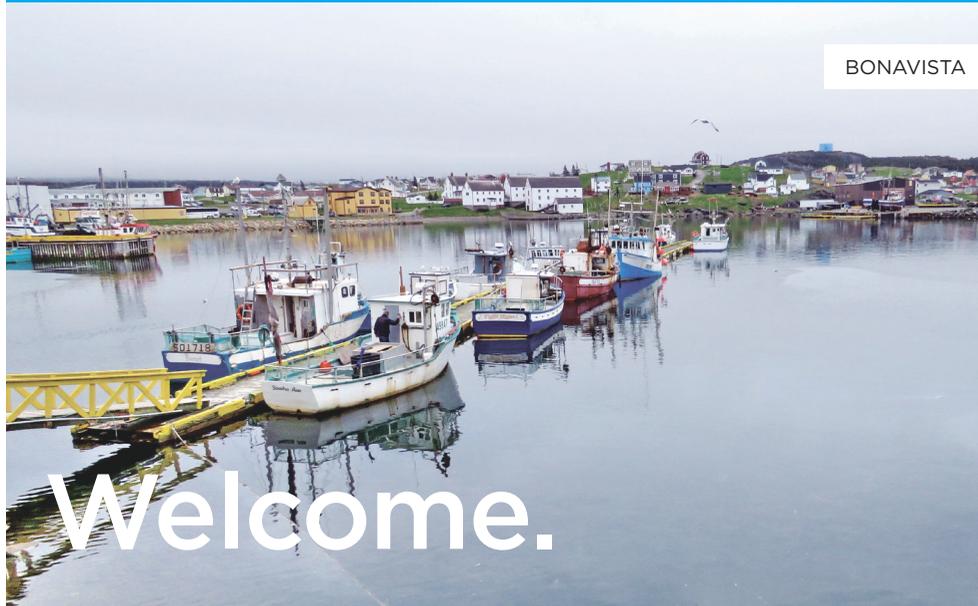
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF  
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR



MEMORIAL  
UNIVERSITY



THE HARRIS  
CENTRE  
Memorial University



*From Paul McDonald, Chair, Community Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador and Rob Greenwood, Executive Director, Harris Centre.*

**W**elcome to Newfoundland and Labrador's 2016 Vital Signs report. Vital Signs is an annual check-up on quality of life in our province that looks at how our communities are faring in key areas like wellness, housing, and the economy.

Over the past two years, as we've spoken to community members about what they

would like to see us cover in future reports—what questions they would want answered—one topic that keeps coming up over and over is the difference between rural and urban Newfoundland and Labrador. When we look at topics like the economy, health, and housing on a provincial level, we can miss some of the important ways those issues differ if you're living in Cartwright

instead of Corner Brook, Parson's Pond instead of Paradise.

So in this year's report, we're focusing on what it means to live in both urban and rural areas of this province. To dig deep into the differences between these types of communities, we've enlisted the help of Alvin Simms and Jamie Ward, whose work on functional economic regions gives us a way to break the province down based on population and how far residents have to travel for services. You may be surprised to learn where your community fits in and what other places you have the most in common with: your community's population size and distance from major centres may mean that you have more in common with a town on the other side of the province than the one next door.

Vital Signs is a national program of Community Foundations of Canada (CFC). This year, 32 foundations across Canada and around the world will participate in Vital Signs, tackling issues that matter to their communities. CFC will also be releasing a national Vital Signs report. Part of a three-year look at sense of belonging in Canada,

the 2016 national report explores how Canadian communities make their members feel included and what we can do to build strong and lasting relationships with our neighbours. Visit [vitalsignscanada.ca](http://vitalsignscanada.ca) to download the national report.

How we as a country understand and promote belonging is all the more important as we invite new Canadians to our shores. On page 14 of this report you'll find a story of what one region is doing to make Syrian refugees feel at home and how they see welcoming new immigrants as an important investment in the future for rural parts of the province.

We would like to thank TC Media, our media partner, for making the publication of this report possible. With their support, NL's Vital Signs is published in every major newspaper in the province. Vital Signs is also made possible by the generous contributions of our sponsors, listed on the back page of the report, and by the participation of people like you. This report is just a starting point. We hope that it will inspire you to start conversations, learn more, and take action in your communities. ♦



## THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

The Community Foundation of Newfoundland & Labrador promotes and sustains healthy communities across our province by providing grants to a wide range of community organizations. CFNL combines a broad, province-wide reach with a grassroots focus on small organizations that can have a major impact in their local communities. The foundation's goal is to address community problems and to enrich the lives of community members.

## THE LESLIE HARRIS CENTRE OF REGIONAL POLICY & DEVELOPMENT

The Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy & Development is Memorial University's hub for public policy and regional development issues. The Centre links Memorial faculty, students, and staff with groups across Newfoundland & Labrador, supporting active community engagement. Working with all units at Memorial, the Harris Centre builds connections, encourages informed debate, and supports collaboration to enhance the province through mutually beneficial partnerships.

## HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

### START CONVERSATIONS

Use the information in this report to talk about how our province is doing and where we should go from here.

### PASS IT ON

Share this report and the information in it with friends, colleagues, family, or elected officials.

### FIND OUT MORE

Learn about the organizations and individuals in our province working to improve things, and ask how you can help.

### CONTACT US

If you are looking for ways to make a difference, we can help connect you.

### TAKE ACTION

If you're moved by what you read, use this report as a starting point for action.

## SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

What do you think of the statistics in this year's report?

Do you have a story to share about life in rural or urban Newfoundland and Labrador?

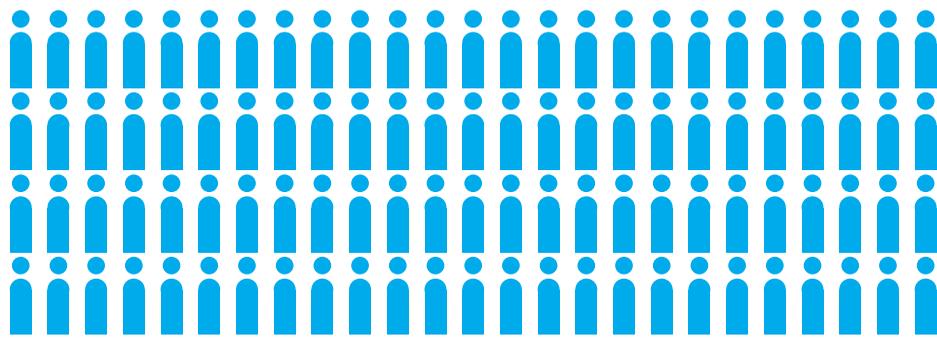
Share your ideas with us online using the hashtag #VitalSignsNL.

## LOOKING FOR MORE COPIES?

We produce Vital Signs each year in the hope that it will be a valuable resource for everyone in our province. If you would like more copies of the report for your organization, business, or classroom, please contact CFNL at (709) 753-9899 or the Harris Centre at (709) 864-3143

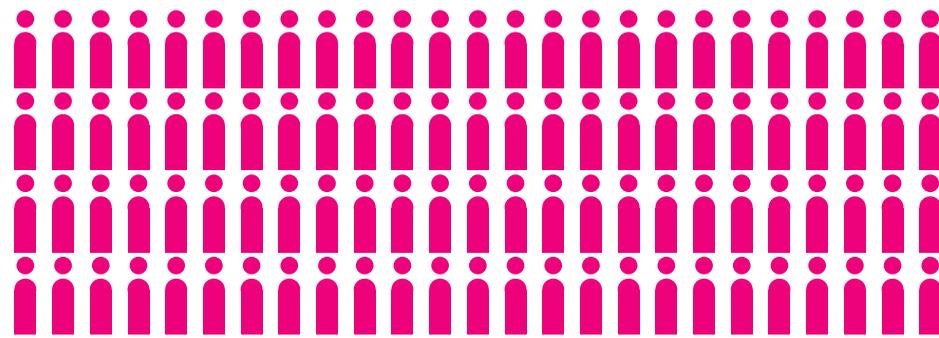
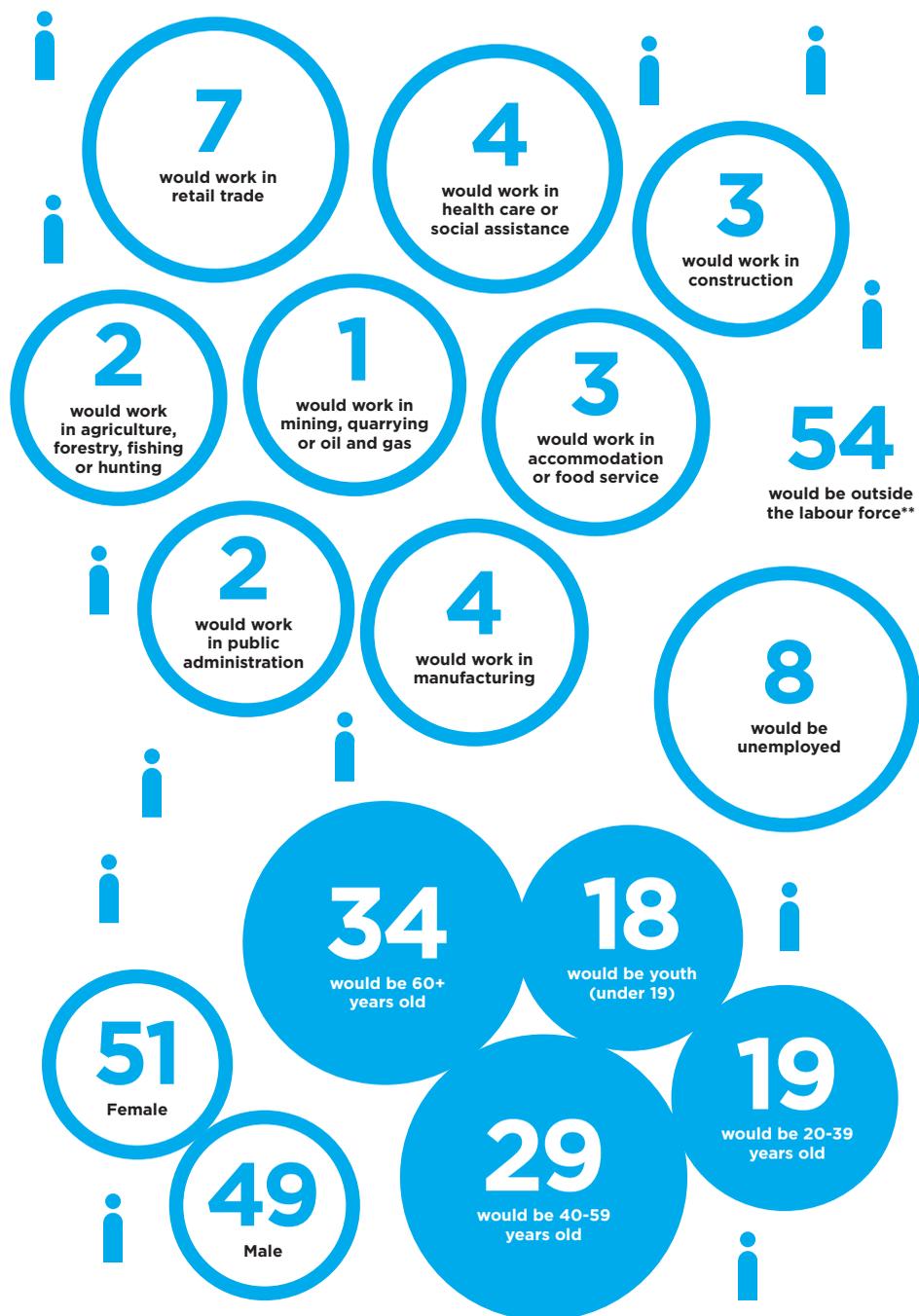
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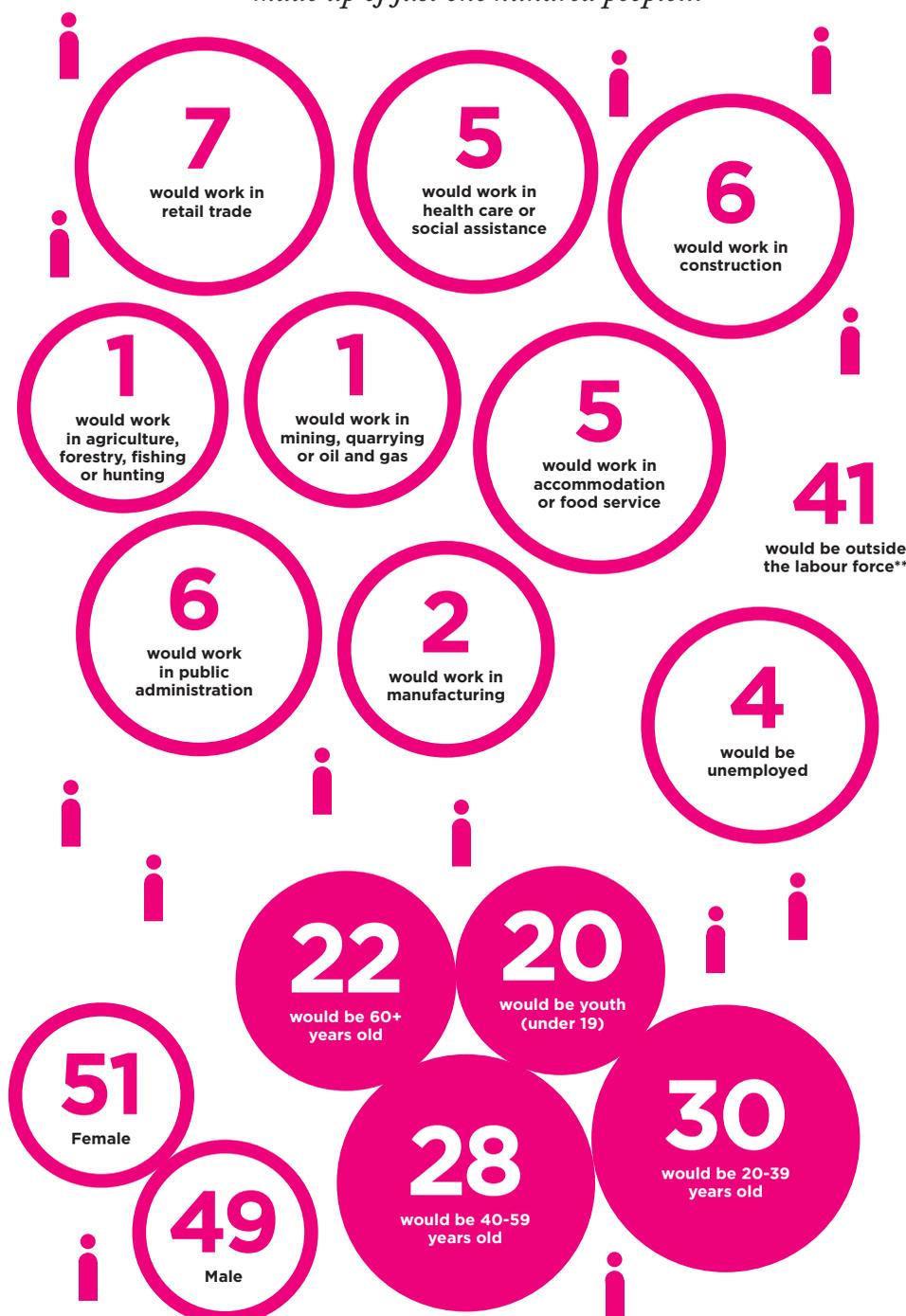
# Village of 100

If the population of Newfoundland & Labrador outside the St. John's area was made up of just one hundred people...\*



# City of 100

If the population of the St. John's area was made up of just one hundred people...\*



\* Each person represents approximately 1 per cent, and numbers have been rounded. Not all industry categories are listed here. "St. John's area" here refers to the St. John's CMA (census metropolitan area) which includes St. John's, CBS, Mount Pearl, Paradise, Portugal Cove-St. Philip's, Logy Bay-Middle Cove-Outer Cove, Pouch Cove, Flatrock, Bay Bulls, Witless Bay, Petty Harbour-Maddox Cove, and Bauline. All data from Statistics Canada.

\*\* "Labour force" is the total number of unemployed and employed persons. People who could be outside the labour force include youth, retirees, full-time students, stay-at-home parents, people unable to work, and others.

# Connected And Working Together

For most of us, the only commuting pattern that matters is the one that leads from our front door to our place of work. But when we examine thousands of workers' daily activity patterns, we can gain valuable insight into a region's economy. By looking at how people in an area move around for work and how an area's industries are interconnected, researchers Alvin Simms and Jamie Ward at Memorial University have come up with a method to divide the province into Functional Economic Regions.

These clusters of communities are already naturally linked but have great potential to work together to compete economically with larger centres.

## Regional Type

Although each region is distinct, regions can be grouped into these types.

### URBAN

Very high industrial diversity, and a relatively diversified economic structure. Has a comparative advantage over smaller regions.

### CITIES AND REGIONAL TOWNS

These areas include at least one town that operates as a focal point for public services for its region and for adjacent smaller regions. Some of the regions in this category are quite distant from urban areas. High industrial diversity.

### FIRST LEVEL RURAL

First Level Rural regions have populations ranging from 2000 to 8000 spread across a sparsely populated area and have small service centres for retail and government services for local residents. Some industrial diversity.

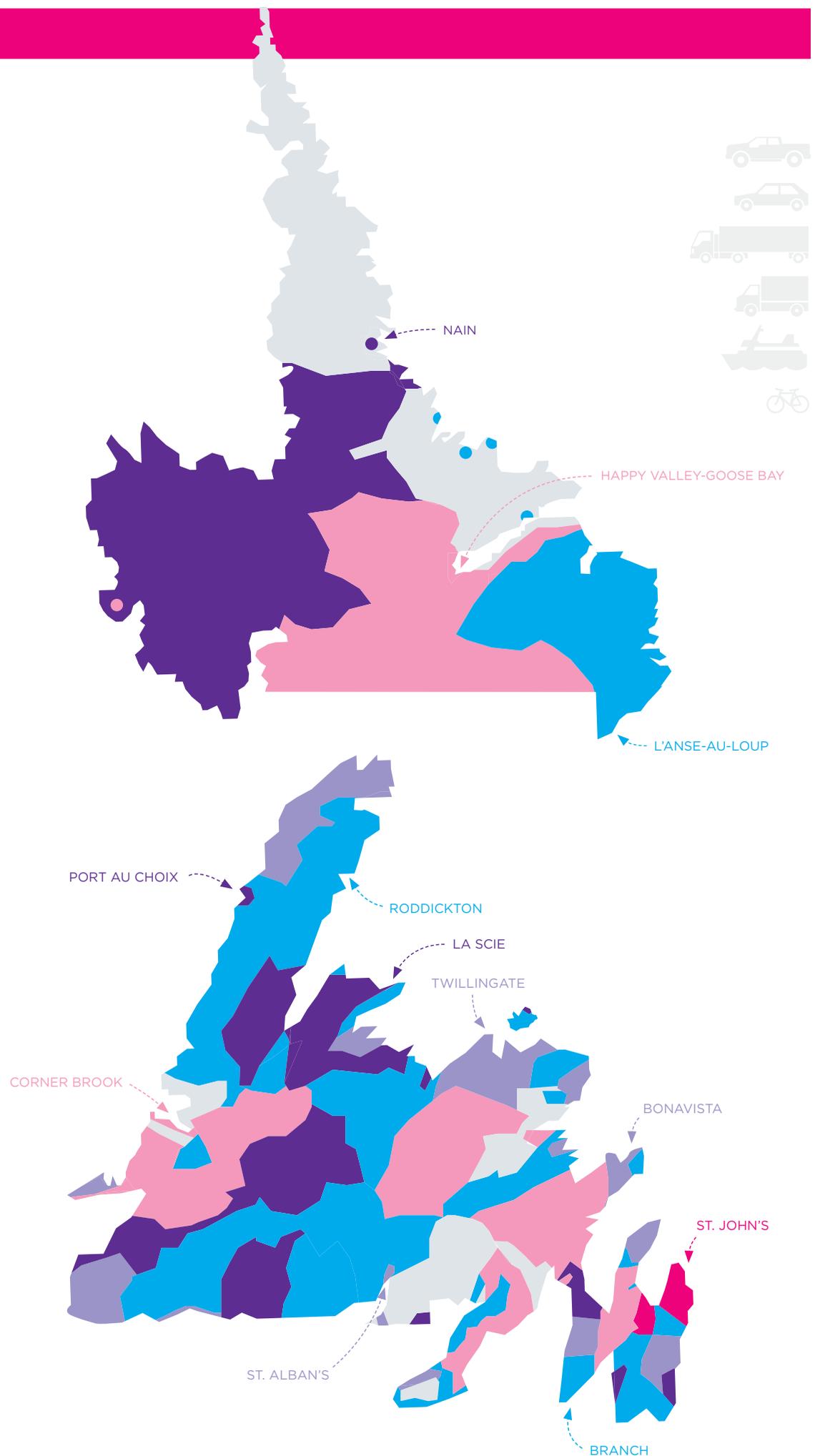
### SECOND LEVEL RURAL

In many cases these are sparsely-populated regions centred around single-industry towns, with limited connections between communities. The population of these regions ranges from more than 600 to less than 2000. Industrial diversity is somewhat lower in these areas. People have to leave their region for most public services and larger purchases.

### THIRD LEVEL RURAL

A majority of these places are considered remote and are made up of areas with populations between 45 and 600 people. Residents in these regions don't typically travel outside the region for work (unless they are part of the long-distance commute workforce) but do travel to get most goods and services because very little is available locally. These regions have very low industrial diversity.

*The light grey regions have insufficient data to model as Functional Economic Regions due to low population.*



# Driving Regional Economies

Here, industries are sorted not by revenue, but by how much other industries in the region rely on them for business—how interconnected they are. As you can see, fishing, seafood processing and aquaculture are the cornerstone industries of many of the province's rural economies.



## ST. JOHN'S REGION

### URBAN

- 1 Conventional oil and gas extraction
- 2 Provincial government services
- 3 Non-residential building construction
- 4 Oil and gas engineering construction
- 5 Residential building construction



## CORNER BROOK REGION

### CITY OR REGIONAL TOWN

- 1 Seafood product preparation and packaging
- 2 Pulp, paper and paperboard mills
- 3 Oil and gas engineering construction
- 4 Residential building construction
- 5 Air transportation



## HAPPY VALLEY-GOOSE BAY REGION

### CITY OR REGIONAL TOWN

- 1 Air transportation
- 2 Residential building construction
- 3 Aboriginal government services
- 4 Transportation engineering construction
- 5 Support activities for mining



## TWILLINGATE REGION

### FIRST LEVEL RURAL

- 1 Seafood product preparation and packaging
- 2 Hospitals plus nursing and residential care facilities
- 3 Fishing, hunting and trapping
- 4 Residential building construction
- 5 Forestry and logging



## BONAVISTA REGION

### FIRST LEVEL RURAL

- 1 Seafood product preparation and packaging
- 2 Residential building construction
- 3 Hospitals plus nursing and residential care facilities
- 4 Food and drinking services
- 5 Fishing, hunting and trapping



## ST. ALBAN'S REGION

### FIRST LEVEL RURAL

- 1 Aquaculture
- 2 Electric power generation, transmission and distribution
- 3 Seafood product preparation and packaging
- 4 Residential building construction
- 5 Textile and textile product mills



## NAIN REGION

### SECOND LEVEL RURAL

- 1 Aboriginal government services
- 2 Residential building construction
- 3 Hospitals plus nursing and residential care facilities
- 4 Municipal government services
- 5 Grant-making, civic, and professional and similar organizations, plus other non-profit institutions serving households



## LA SCIE REGION

### SECOND LEVEL RURAL

- 1 Fishing, hunting and trapping
- 2 Support activities for transportation
- 3 Residential building construction
- 4 Electric power engineering construction
- 5 Municipal government services



## PORT AU CHOIX REGION

### SECOND LEVEL RURAL

- 1 Seafood product preparation and packaging
- 2 Fishing, hunting and trapping
- 3 Residential building construction
- 4 Support activities for transportation
- 5 Electric power generation, transmission and distribution



## RODDICKTON REGION

### THIRD LEVEL RURAL

- 1 Residential building construction
- 2 Support activities for transportation
- 3 Fishing, hunting and trapping
- 4 Forestry and logging
- 5 Banking



## L'ANSE-AU-LOUP REGION

### THIRD LEVEL RURAL

- 1 Seafood product preparation and packaging
- 2 Residential building construction
- 3 Fishing, hunting and trapping
- 4 Truck transportation
- 5 Non-residential building construction



## BRANCH REGION

### THIRD LEVEL RURAL

- 1 Fishing, hunting and trapping
- 2 Animal production (except aquaculture)
- 3 Municipal government services
- 4 Seafood product preparation and packaging
- 5 Support activities for transportation

## Regions Grouped By Type\*

FOR URBAN, SEE ST. JOHN'S REGION ABOVE.

### LABRADOR ALL CITIES OR REGIONAL TOWN REGIONS

- 1 Iron ore mining
- 2 Repair plus other engineering construction
- 3 Residential building construction

### LABRADOR ALL SECOND LEVEL RURAL REGIONS

- 1 Seafood product preparation and packaging
- 2 Residential building construction
- 3 Aboriginal government services

### LABRADOR ALL THIRD LEVEL RURAL REGIONS

- 1 Seafood product preparation and packaging
- 2 Fishing, hunting and trapping
- 3 Municipal government services

### NEWFOUNDLAND ALL CITIES OR REGIONAL TOWN REGIONS

- 1 Petroleum refineries
- 2 Oil and gas engineering construction
- 3 Seafood product preparation and packaging

### NEWFOUNDLAND ALL FIRST LEVEL RURAL REGIONS

- 1 Seafood product preparation and packaging
- 2 Residential building construction
- 3 Aquaculture

### NEWFOUNDLAND ALL SECOND LEVEL RURAL REGIONS\*

- 1 Copper, nickel, lead and zinc ore mining
- 2 Seafood product preparation and packaging
- 3 Non-residential building construction

### NEWFOUNDLAND ALL THIRD LEVEL RURAL REGIONS

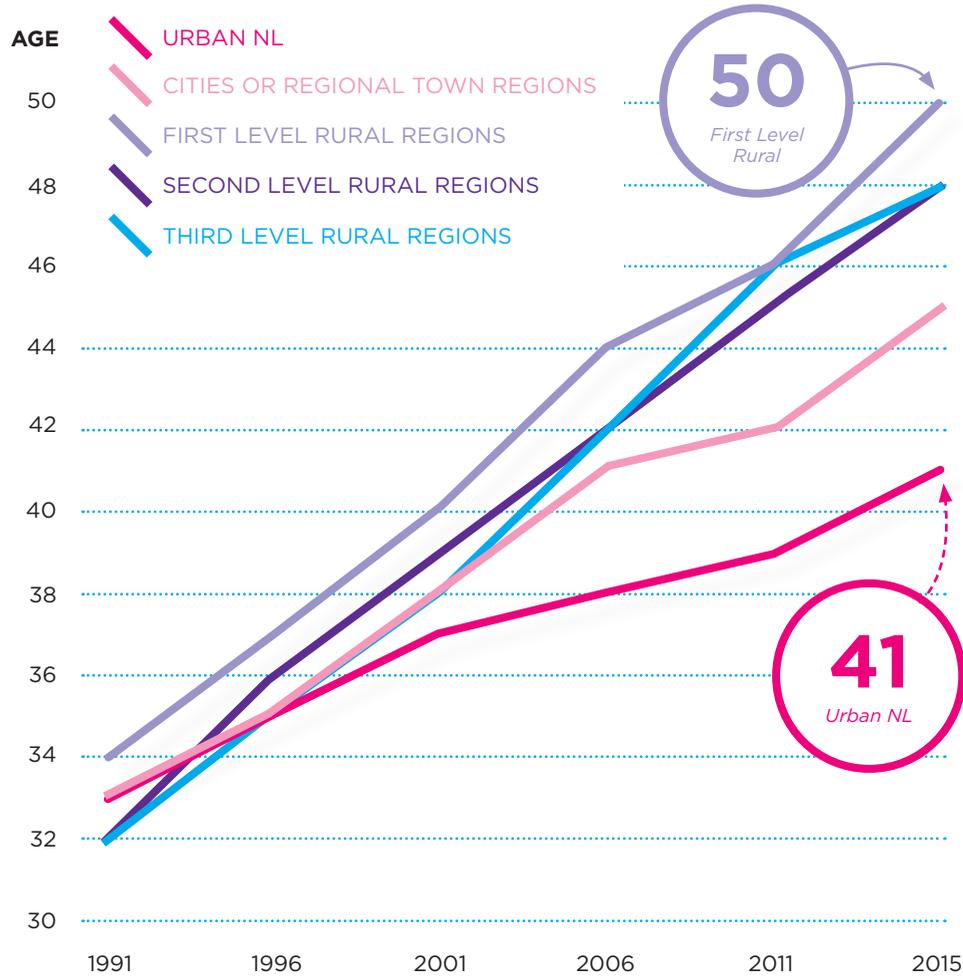
- 1 Seafood product preparation and packaging
- 2 Fishing, hunting and trapping
- 3 Residential building construction

\* Because regions are grouped together here by type, single industries with a large impact can overshadow industries in other regions of the same type. In NF Second Level Rural Regions, for example, high prices at the mining operations in Baie Verte affected the outcome here for all NF Second Level Rural Regions.

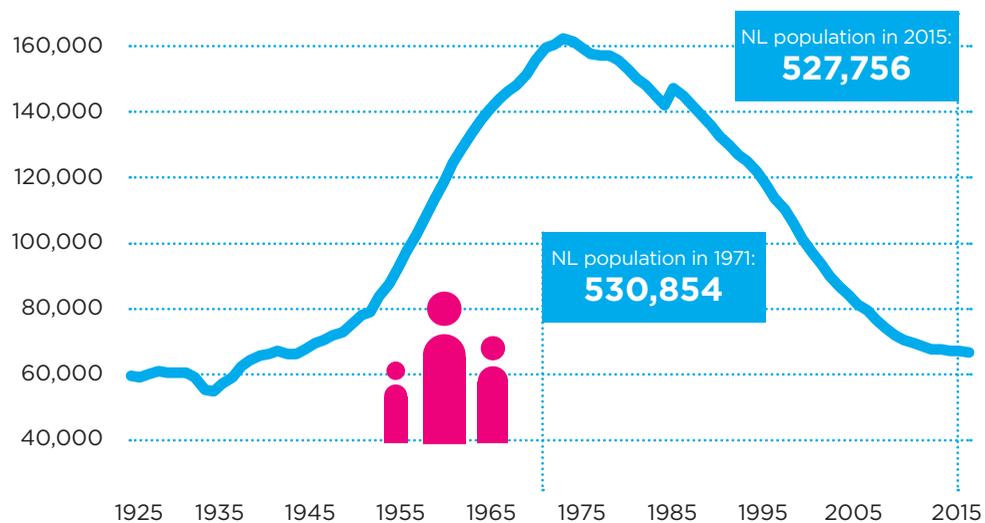


## AGE IN NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

The population of Newfoundland & Labrador is the oldest in the country, and it is aging quickly. This chart shows the weighted average age for each group of functional economic regions (See page 4). First Level Rural areas showed the sharpest recent increase. For reference, the median age in Canada in 2015 was 40.5. (Statistics Canada)



## K-12 SCHOOL ENROLMENT IN NL FROM 1925 TO 2015



Other signs of age: Newfoundland and Labrador K-12 school enrolment peaked at 162,818 students in 1971 when provincial population was 530,854. In 2015 there were 66,800 students enrolled even though the NL population was 527,756. (NL Statistics Agency)

# A Living At Home

*Finding year-round work is an obstacle for many young people hoping to live in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, but for some in the Coast of Bays, aquaculture is the solution.*

**M**ove home. It's the last step in the standard five-year plan for Newfoundlanders working in Alberta.

"Not a lot of people get to do that," says Pamela Willcott.

Willcott is the Human Resources and Payroll Coordinator at Northern Harvest Sea Farms, a salmon farming operation presently employing almost 200 people in the Coast of Bays region. She's based out of their office in St. Alban's, the town in which she grew up.

Willcott moved to Alberta with her partner, now her husband, shortly after finishing college. They put in their time, as she describes it, and at the end of their five years, they took a

huge risk and moved back to Newfoundland and Labrador with no jobs to come home to. All they knew was that they wanted to raise their kids in their home province.

Her husband's father worked in aquaculture towing sea cages. "He was always pushing me to put a resume in, put a resume in," she says. So she did. Willcott and her husband were living in St. John's when she got a call from Northern Harvest in St. Alban's.

"Young people are leaving rural Newfoundland because they want full-time, year-round work," says Alvin Simms, a Geography Professor at Memorial University and lead on the Harris Centre's Regional Analytics Lab. "They don't want to be on employment insurance for large parts of the year and they want jobs that allow them to use their education."

Jobs like those are hard to come by in rural Newfoundland and Labrador. Fishing

and fish processing still reign as the driving forces for smaller towns, but neither provides much full-time work.

Aquaculture, on the other hand, is different. The farms operate year-round, require year-round staff and provide opportunities to advance. As a result, Northern Harvest is bringing a lot of younger people and their families back to the Coast of Bays Area.

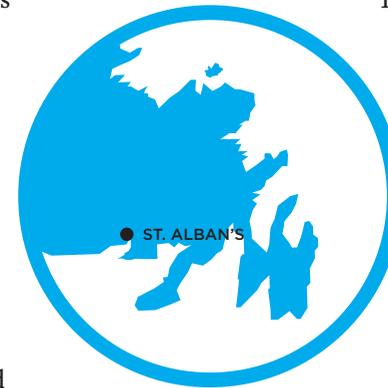
"I do payroll for about 108 people, and a lot of those are young people," says

Willcott. "I know from doing interviews with them they're tired of traveling back and forth to Alberta for work. They just want to be home. A lot of them are so happy to be able to have their families at home."

The sector is not without controversy: the province is presently facing a lawsuit from St. John's lawyer Owen Myers for its decision to release Grieg NL Seafarms, a Norwegian company planning one of the biggest aquaculture operations in the country in the Placentia Bay area, from continuing environmental assessment. The Atlantic Salmon Federation is also appealing the decision.

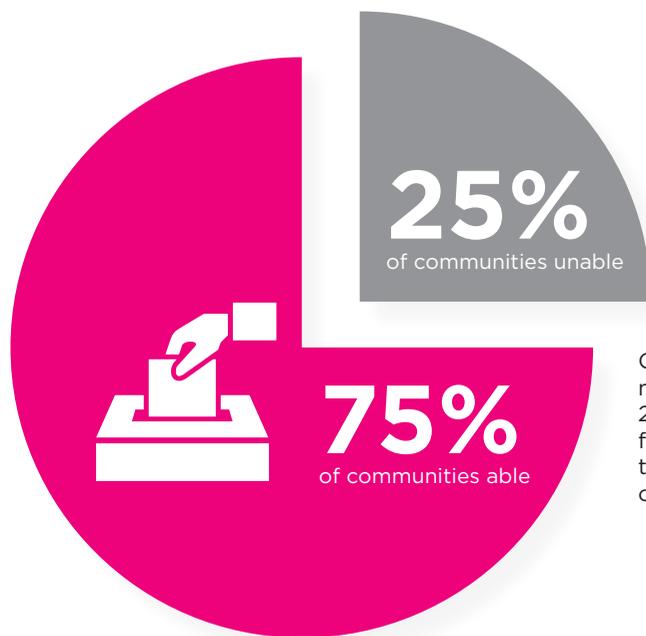
But the jobs versus environment debate is an inherent part of the economic history and health of a resource-based economy. Right now, proponents of aquaculture say jobs could help stem the outmigration and relieve drastic population decline in rural areas.

"We're lucky enough that my husband and I have two full time jobs, we're home every night, we live where we want to live in a small rural town," says Willcott. "I feel like I've won the lottery." ♦





### MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS ABLE TO ELECT OR ACCLAIM A FULL ROSTER OF COUNCILLORS IN 2013



Out of the 267 active municipal elections in 2013, 25% were unable to fill all of the positions on their council. (Department of Municipal Affairs)



According to the Department of Municipal Affairs, 10% of people in Newfoundland and Labrador live in unincorporated areas or local service districts, which means they don't have a local council overseeing their services and are often paying contract fees for services like fire and garbage collection. This June a house burned down in Piccadilly, an unincorporated area, because the homeowner didn't have a contract with the fire department in nearby Lourdes, and firefighters had to drive 30 minutes from Cape St. George to tend to the blaze.

## Age & Democracy

*Municipalities NL says Newfoundland and Labrador's changing demographics are taking a toll on municipal governance.*

Until August of 2016, Michael Pike was the province's youngest town councillor.

Pike is from Pinware, Labrador, a town of just under 100 people on the Gulf of St. Lawrence between L'Anse-au-Loup and Red Bay. He campaigned for Yvonne Jones in the 2013 federal by-election for Labrador and was inspired by her success.

Pinware had been without a town council for two years, with lone councilwoman Joanne Dorey acting as de facto mayor. Pike approached Dorey and current mayor Didier Naulleau, and they set up an election in June 2014. Six people were set to run but one dropped out, and the council was appointed by acclamation. Pike was deputy mayor. He was 19.

According to the Department of Municipal Affairs, there were 267 active elections

in the province's 2013 municipal races. Of those, only 75 per cent were able to elect or acclaim a full complement of councillors.

"A council can't operate in a democratic way if all you're doing is limping along with two or three people," says Craig Pollett, CEO of Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador. "There's just no way to do the work to engage the community and do the kind of consultation that needs to happen."

Pollett says the aging rural population in the province, combined with outmigration of its young people, means that older council members are retiring and there aren't many younger people to take their place.

Council members in rural towns are also volunteers. Pollett suggests this affects how people see a commitment to a coun-

cil. "Councillors are all committed, but being committed as a volunteer for a local organization is different than running for council—the responsibility and amount of work is much deeper on council."

Pike officially resigned from his post on August 1st, his birthday. He wants to get an education and a good job in medicine, so he has to move away. He's going to Corner Brook for general studies and then on to St. John's.

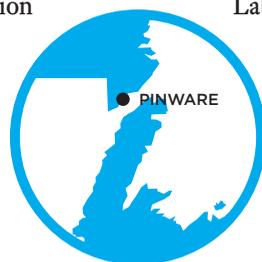
"I can see myself coming back and working here at the clinic in Forteau, which will allow me to live home again. But I can see myself being gone for the next 20 years," he says. "I'm glad to be able to leave my home town and meet new people and start a life for myself, but I'm also going to miss my friends and family here and the people that I worked with on council. It's a mixed feeling, but I am excited to be leaving."

With just over a year before the next municipal elections, Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador are working with Equal Voice to encourage more women to run—only 34 per cent of the province's councillors are women. They're also working with the provincial government to encourage young people to run.

"The gender balance is not great, but it's stupendous compared to the age balance.

Something like 3.5 per cent of all councillors are under the age of 35."

Pike agrees that it's time for young people to get involved. "Young people have to step up," he says. "You can't shy away from anyone that doubts you because of your age, you've got to prove to them you're a leader." ♦



Mike Pike, former town councillor of Pinware, Labrador, with his town behind him.

"I came here because a friend told me about this traditional music festival called Good Entertainment. I was blown away going bar to bar, seeing great bands in every one."

**Rick Page**  
Finish carpenter and former promoter

"I came for a job at Memorial. I thought I'd bounce right out of here after a couple of years, but, by the time I'd settled into my office, I could never imagine leaving."

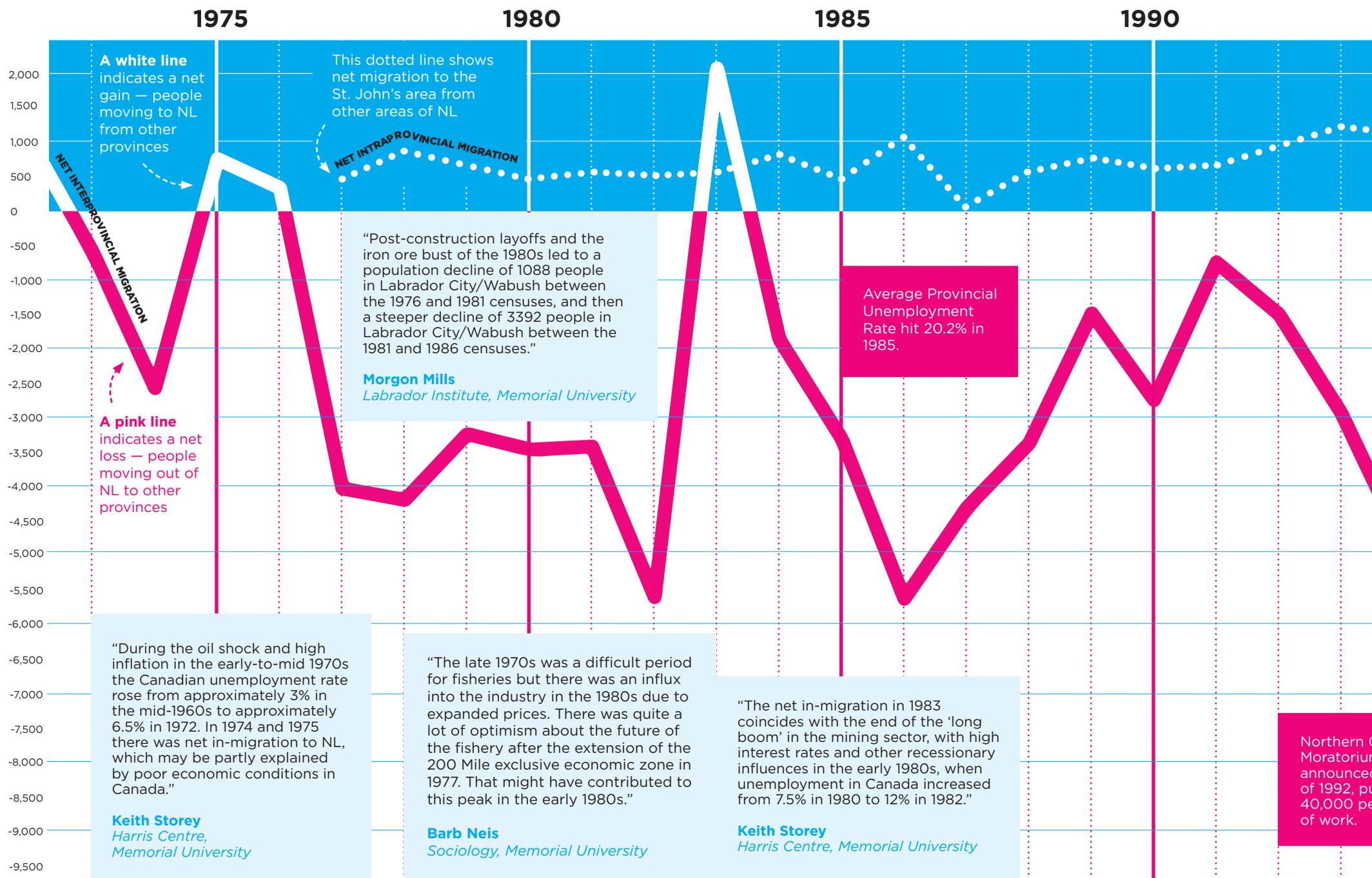
**Noreen Golfman**  
Provost & Vice President (Academic),  
Memorial University

"I left for work and opportunity. Nearly everyone I knew was leaving—it was an adventure, but very much a necessity. I suspect my daughters will have to leave for the same reason I did."

**Carolyn R. Parsons**  
Writer

"I moved back from Montreal in 1990 because I met my husband, a Newfoundlander, at the Monhegan Festival. After courting long and hard, he persuaded me to move home. I did. I have stayed ever since."

**Mari**



**1975** The end of a five-year term of resettlement in rural Newfoundland. The first resettlement partnership between the provincial and federal government was in 1965.

**1975** 9th provincial election. Frank Moores and the Progressive Conservatives are returned to office.

**1976** Canada extends its east coast fisheries to 200 miles.

**1978** Brian Peckford of the PCs becomes premier in the provincial election.

**1979** Oil was discovered offshore on the Grand Banks at the Hibernia site.

**1980** The Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council established.

**1980** The provincial government issues Managing All Our Resources, a plan for economic development focusing on improving provincial control over resource development.

**1982** The oil rig Ocean Ranger is lost.

**1984** The Mi'kmaq of Conne River are recognized as status Indians by the federal government.

**1984** Three struggling fishing companies are amalgamated into Fishery Products International Ltd.

**1985** The Atlantic Accord on managing and developing offshore oil and gas is signed. The Accord made the provincial and federal governments equal partners in the management of offshore developments.

**1985** Brian Peckford's PC party wins provincial election.

**1987** The Peckford government partners with Philip Sprung to develop the hydroponic Sprung Greenhouse.

**1989** Sprung project abandoned.

**1989** Clyde Wells, new leader of the Liberal party, is elected premier.

**1990** Newfoundland legislation rescinds its 1988 approval for the Meech Lake Accord.

**1990** Mount Cashel Orphanage following sex abuse charges closes.

**1990** A Statement of Principles to develop the Hibernia oil field.

**1991** Provincial government implements strong budget cuts.

**1992** Moratorium on northern commercial fisheries announced.

**1994** Food fishery closes.

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**Wadden**  
Journalist

“I left for what I thought would be the best university for me. I never really had a big plan, just followed opportunities, which eventually led me to BC via Ontario and California.”

**Robert Bridson**  
Research Scientist

“I moved to Fort McMurray after finishing school. I felt I had to leave to obtain work experience. Most of the other young people I knew then had headed out west.”

**Pamela Willcott**  
Human Resources and Payroll Coordinator,  
Northern Harvest

“I left Northwest River in 2009 to pursue my Master’s degree in painting. Currently I am living in Vancouver as an assistant professor at Emily Carr University of Art and Design.”

**Mark Igloiliorte**  
artist

“I left on New Year’s Day, for work and adventure and self-actualization. I think I will always come and go from Newfoundland. It’s my permanent safety net and backup plan.”

**Dana Cooper**  
Subsea Project Specialist, oil industry

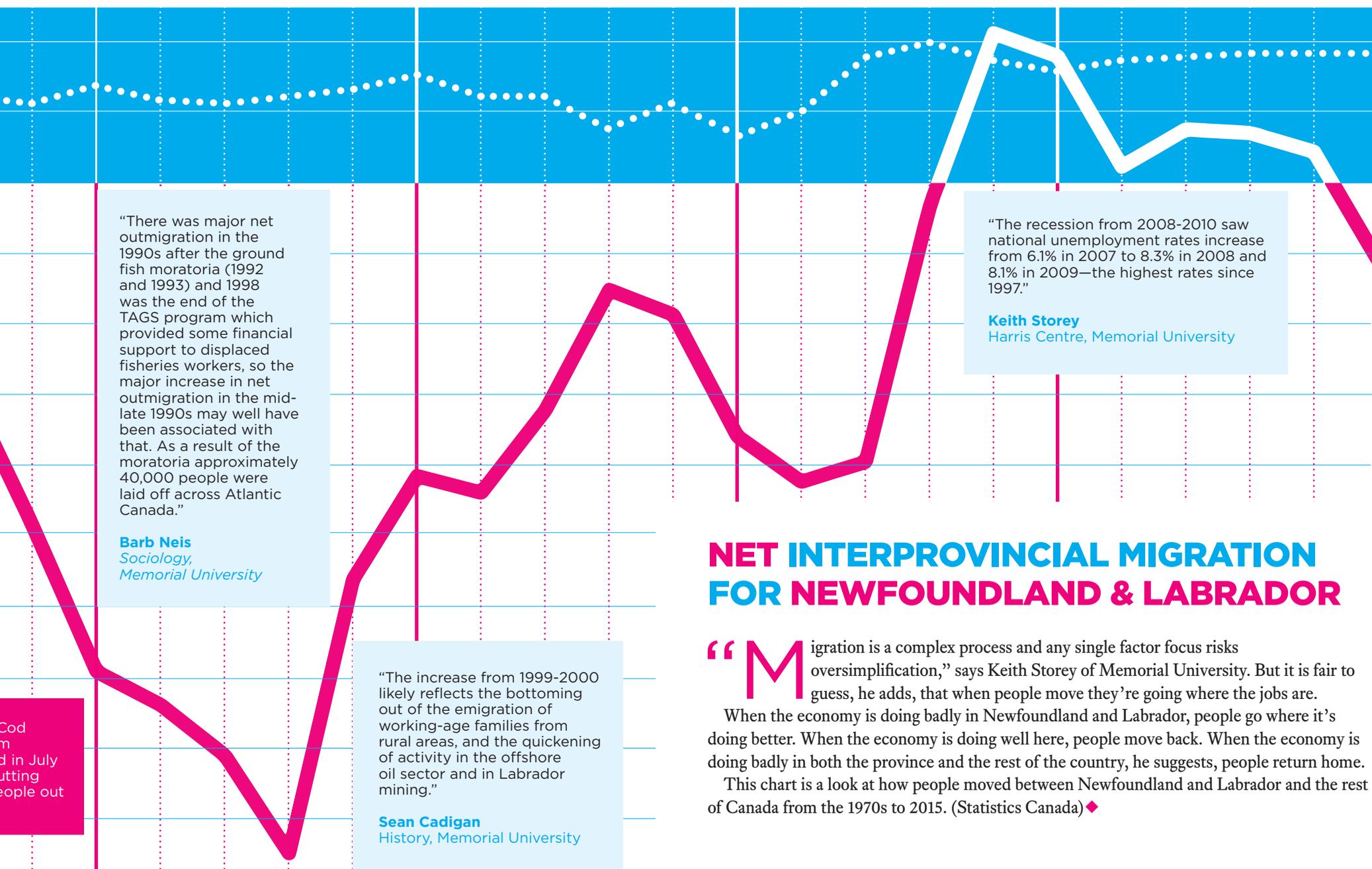
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**1995** Nickel deposits discovered at Voisey’s Bay.

**1996** Brian Tobin of the Liberal party wins general election.

**1996** Provincial government reaches an agreement with oil companies to develop the Terra Nova oil field.

**1997** Hibernia produces its first oil.

**1998** Income relief program for people dependent on the fishery, TAGS, runs out.

**1999** Brian Tobin’s Liberals re-elected.

**2001** Name of the province changed officially from “Newfoundland” to “Newfoundland and Labrador”

**2001** Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement-in-Principle signed.

**2002** Inco signs agreement to develop the Voisey’s Bay nickel deposits.

**2002** White Rose offshore oil development is approved.

**2003** The PC Party under Danny Williams wins the provincial election.

**2004** Approximately 20,000 public-sector workers go on strike.

**2005** The federal government signs an amendment to the Atlantic Accord to allow 100% of oil revenues for an eight year period to go to the province, and a \$2 billion up-front payment is made.

**2007** Exxon Mobil and the province sign agreement to build Hebron — a \$14 billion project.

**2008** NL becomes a ‘have’ province, meaning it pays into the Federal Government equalization program instead of receiving money from it.

**2009** Agreement to establish Qalipu Mi’kmaq First Nation signed.

**2011** Kathy Dunderdale’s PC Party wins provincial election.

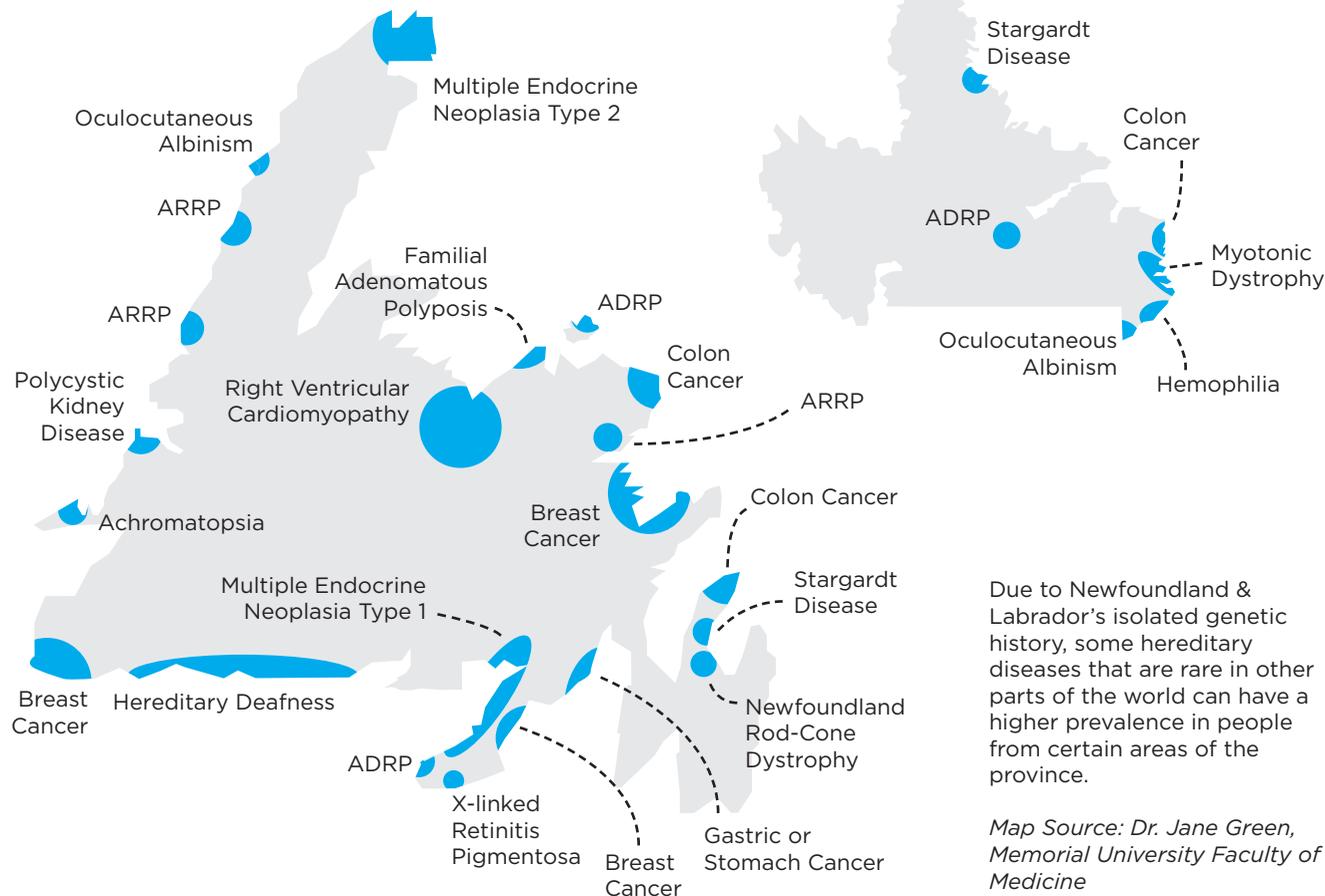
**2013** Construction begins on the Muskrat Falls Generation Facility.

**2013** According to a federal Department of Finance briefing document, nearly 6% of all employment income reported this year in NL was actually earned in Alberta.

**2015** Dwight Ball’s Liberal party wins provincial election.

**2016** The oil industry hits deepest downturn since the 1990s, with prices dropping below \$27 USD a barrel.

# Some Hereditary Diseases in NL



Due to Newfoundland & Labrador's isolated genetic history, some hereditary diseases that are rare in other parts of the world can have a higher prevalence in people from certain areas of the province.

Map Source: Dr. Jane Green, Memorial University Faculty of Medicine

**Achromatopsia**  
A non-progressive and hereditary visual disorder

**ADRP**  
Autosomal dominant retinitis pigmentosa causes decreased night vision and progressive side vision loss

**ARRP**  
Autosomal recessive retinitis pigmentosa causes decreased night vision and progressive side vision loss

**Familial Adenomatous Polyposis**  
An inherited cancer predisposition syndrome in which polyps form in the large intestine and may progress to colon cancer

**Hemophilia**  
A bleeding disorder that slows the blood clotting process

**Hereditary Deafness**  
Inherited hearing loss

**Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia Type 1 & 2**  
A group of disorders that affect the body's network of hormone-producing glands

**Myotonic Dystrophy**  
A type of muscular dystrophy with childhood or adult onset

**Newfoundland Rod-cone Dystrophy**  
A rare eye disorder characterized by night blindness in infancy and progressive vision loss

**Oculocutaneous Albinism**  
Severely impaired sharpness of vision and issues with depth perception

**Polycystic Kidney Disease**  
A genetic disorder that causes cysts to form in the kidneys that can lead to kidney failure

**Right ventricular cardiomyopathy**  
A disorder of the myocardium, the muscular wall of the heart

**Stargardt Macular Dystrophy / Juvenile Macular Degeneration**  
A genetic eye disorder that causes progressive central vision loss

**X-linked Retinitis Pigmentosa**  
An eye disorder that causes decreased night vision and progressive side vision loss

# Code to Newfoundland

*NL biotech company says our genetic code could unlock new treatments — and bring big changes to the province's healthcare.*

**D**r. Tyler Wish is asking 100,000 Newfoundland and Labradorians to spit in a tube.

He's the Founder and CEO of Sequence Bio, a local biotechnology company looking to sequence the genes of 100,000 people from the province.

Sequence Bio is hoping to generate a complete set of data linking participants' genetic information to their phenotypic information or, in other words, information about whether

a person's genetic disposition actually resulted in the physical trait the genes code for. The data will be used to help companies develop better drugs and medications.

Wish says Newfoundland's history led to unique genetic characteristics.

"You had a group of about 20,000 founders arrive mainly from just two places in Western Europe: from southwest Ireland, and southwestern England." Over the next 300 years, he says, these people married,

had kids, and formed settlements. Overall, they tended to stick close to home.

"What happened is the initial 20,000 founders carried with them elevated genetic risks for different diseases," he adds. "And those risks propagated throughout the population over those 300 years and now affect our current population."

The result is that certain areas of the province have particular genetic dispositions. The genetic predisposition for oculocutaneous albinism on the Northern Peninsula is a good example of this.

When Sequence Bio gets your sample, they'll sequence your genetic pattern. With your permission, they'll also look at your health records to see if your genetic pattern resulted in the particular physical traits your genes have coded for.

Sequence Bio will give everyone who volunteers their saliva free access to their genetic information, and Wish hopes this will change our healthcare system.

"Say you participate and you receive this information and you see you are at risk for

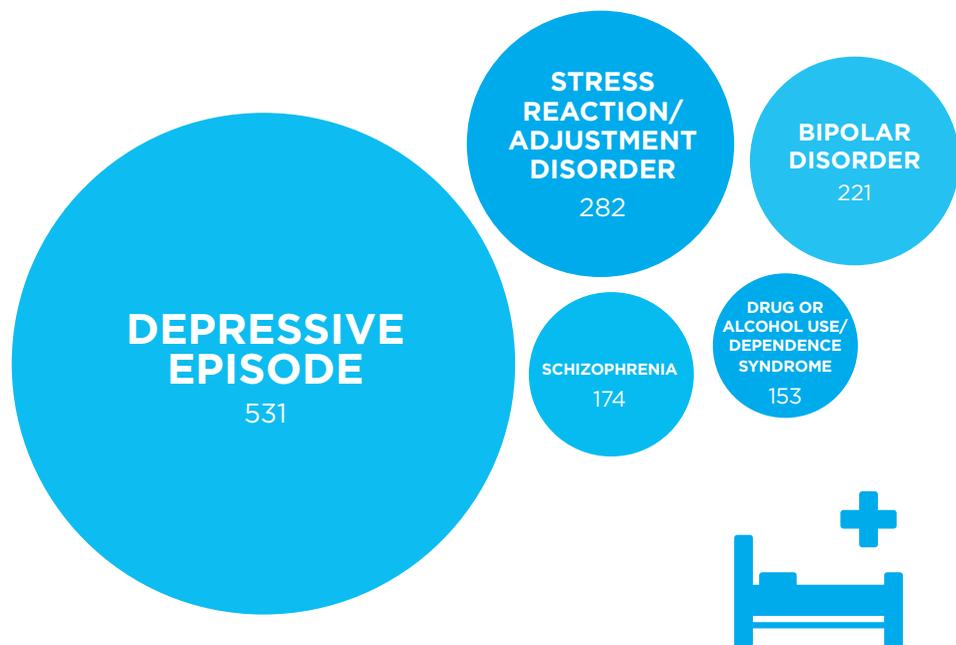
breast cancer," he says. "Now what are you going to do? There need to be resources for you to potentially have genetic counselling, to see the right specialist, and to then make a decision with some advice from your healthcare provider team."

He's hoping Sequence Bio will create a bigger demand for these services, a demand that policy makers will have to answer to.

A dramatic increase in accessibility to genetic testing is already prompting policy changes on a national scale.

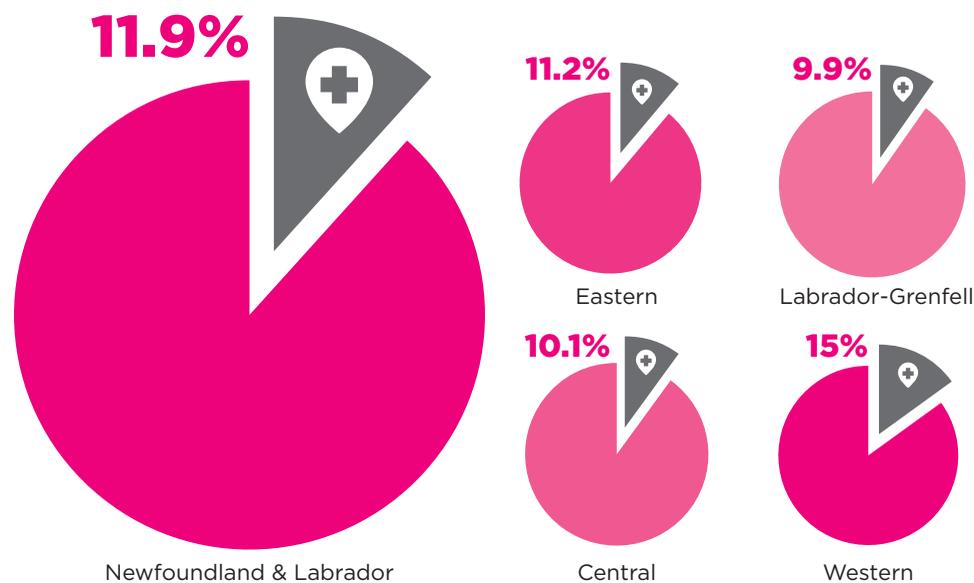
Right now, Canada is the only G7 nation without laws protecting people from genetic discrimination: health insurance providers, for example, can ask for a client's genetic tests and make policy decisions based on the results. Senator James Cowan has introduced a bill, S-201, which would make any genetic discrimination illegal, and prevent insurers and employers from demanding genetic tests or test results. The Bill made it to the House of Commons this May. ♦

**NL MENTAL ILLNESS AND ADDICTIONS HOSPITALIZATIONS**



Depressive Episode is the highest-ranked mental health and addictions category of hospitalization for all Regional Health Authorities. (NL Centre for Health Information 2012-2013).

**30-DAY MENTAL HEALTH/ADDICTIONS READMISSION RATES**



Inpatient care for people living with a mental illness aims to get acute symptoms under control. Once they are, patients are released and subsequent support is ideally given through clinics and community programs to prevent relapse or complications. If someone is readmitted to a hospital within 30 days for a certain mental illness or addiction, it would be counted here. (NL Centre for Health Information 2012-2013)

# Opening Up Inside

*The reopening of the Canadian Mental Health Association regional office in Stephenville is good news to a representative of the West Coast Correctional Centre.*

**A**fter a year-long closure, the Canadian Mental Health Association's (CMHA) regional office in Stephenville is open and running again.

It's great news for the West Coast Correctional Centre.

The CMHA offers a six-week Life Skills Group to the Centre's inmates. The program has been instrumental in creating awareness and acceptance around mental health issues, says Blair Fradsham, the facility's assistant superintendent.

"It's worked magnificently here in this institution, and it's been a great thing for corrections as a whole. It made us all aware that we can talk about it."

The program covers topics like anger management, self-awareness, and the role mental health plays in overall wellness, and it gives inmates a venue to talk about their own mental health issues. Fradsham says the program helps inmates better understand themselves and each other.

"There are isolated cases where the other offenders pick on someone who has a mental health issue. Sometimes they ignore the person with mental health issues. But by having people like the CMHA come in, those barriers are starting to come down."

The program has also helped the corrections officers relate to the inmates, he says.

"People that aren't used to it, if they see an offender who is awake all the time and

just staring out the window, a lot of staff didn't know how to deal with that."

"But with this resource, and because [mental health] is starting to get more out in the open, they know how to approach that person and talk to them."

Fradsham saw so many positive changes with the increase in mental health awareness that he asked the CMHA to put together a post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) seminar for his staff.

"It's a pretty stressful environment, and things do happen that are pretty traumatic. With people not knowing what PTSD is, you want to be open about it and help them get their feelings across. So it was a way to have the CMHA discuss with us what the signs may be, how you can cope with it, and what resources are available should it happen."

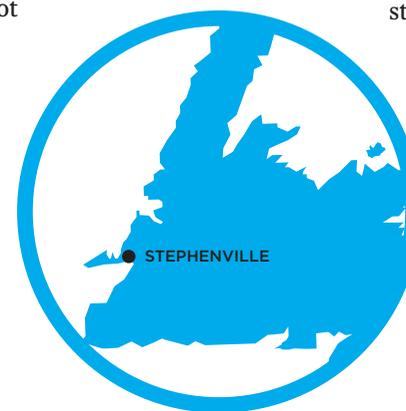
Overall, he says these programs are building awareness, familiarity and comfort with mental health issues for

*"I think it does help. Some cases it's like anything, they have a relapse and they go back to their old habits. But this program gives them opportunities to think differently so they can lead a more productive life."*

everyone at the Corrections Centre. He also thinks they are helping inmates stay out of the facility once their time is up.

"I think it does help," he says. "Some cases it's like anything, they have a relapse and they go back to their old habits. But this program gives them opportunities to think differently so they can lead a more productive life."

He hopes the CMHA office in Stephenville will stay open. ♦



**AVERAGE SINGLE-DETACHED NEW HOUSE PRICE**



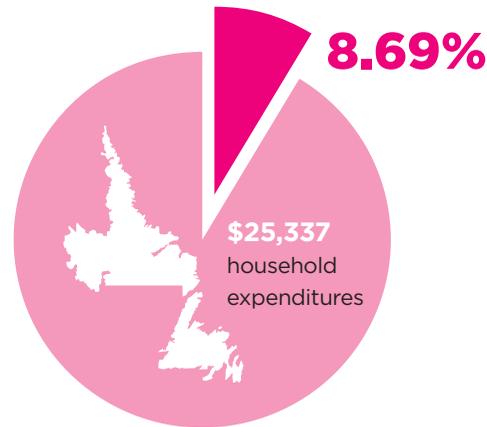
St. John's new house prices were the highest overall in 2015, with Happy Valley-Goose Bay close behind. (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) 2015)

**PROPORTION OF HOUSEHOLD SPENDING ON UTILITIES**

Partly due to higher energy prices in the province, people with lower income levels spend a greater share of their money on utilities than those with higher incomes in both Newfoundland and Labrador and Canada. Here in NL people in the lower income bracket spend more than 8% of their income on utilities for their homes. (Statistics Canada 2014)

**Lower Income**

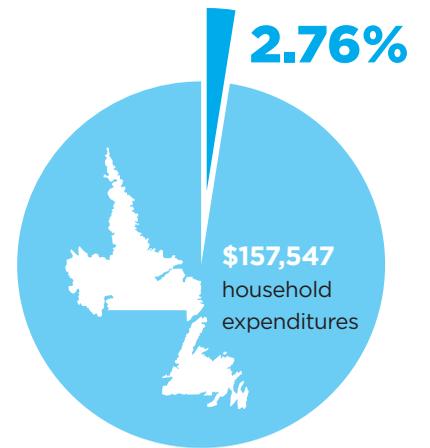
Lowest 20% in Household Spending



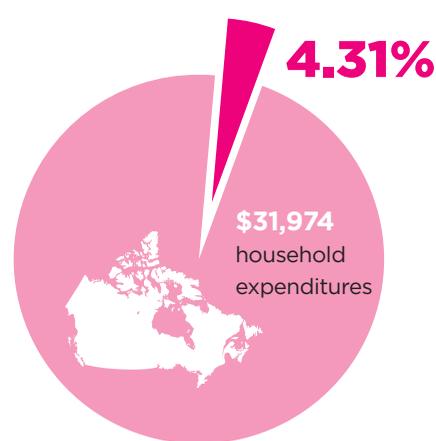
NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

**Higher Income**

Top 20% in Household Spending



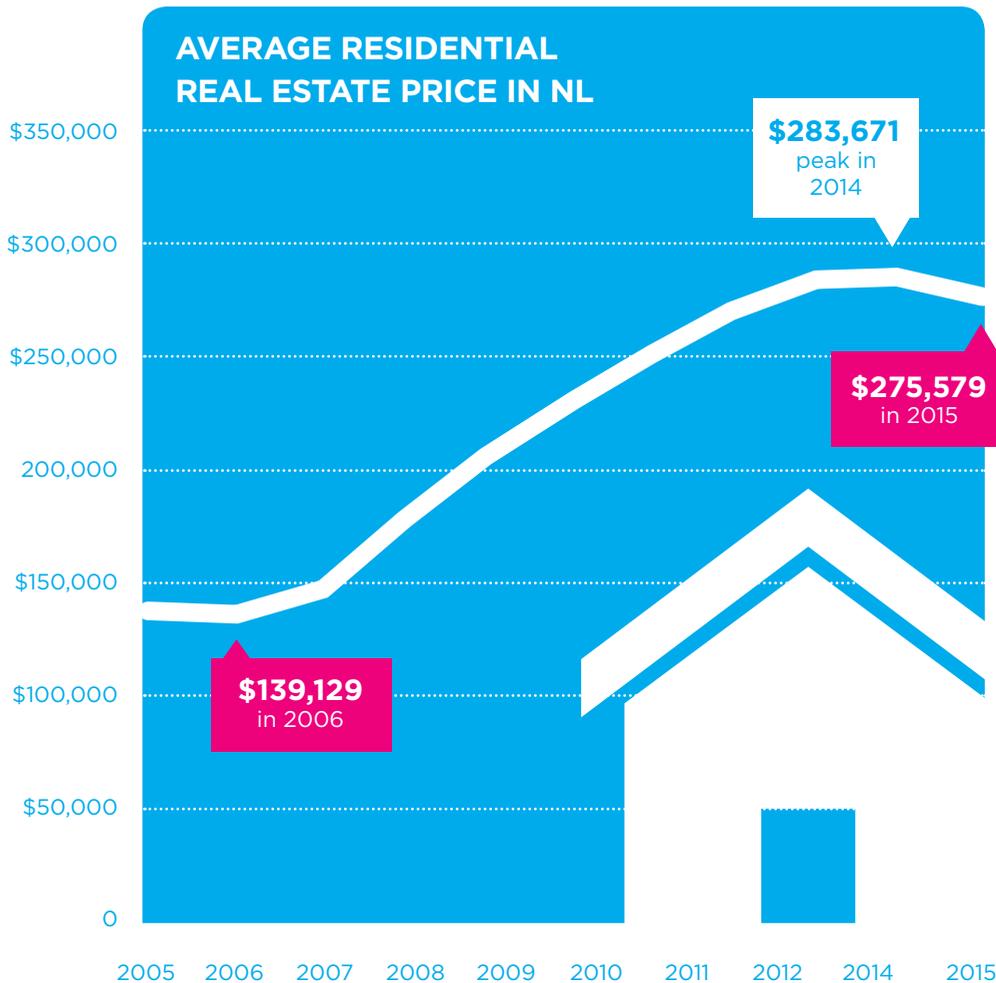
NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR



CANADA



CANADA



The average price of residential real estate had been on an upward trend in the province from 2006 to 2014 but fell by 2.9% in 2015. (MLS / NL Association of Realtors 2015)

**UNDERGROUND ECONOMY**

Statistics Canada says that the underground economy in 2013 amounted to \$45.6 billion in Canada, or about 2.4% of gross domestic product (GDP). In Newfoundland & Labrador they say it was at 1.7% of GDP in 2013. The Canadian Homebuilders Association estimates the cash deal economy in construction in Newfoundland & Labrador was worth just over \$70 million in 2013.

**\$45.6 billion**

Underground economy in Canada in 2013



**\$12.7 billion**

was in residential construction

## CREATING AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE

Some people with disabilities require accommodations to make a workplace more suitable. Canada's human rights legislation actually requires employers to accommodate the accessibility needs of people with disabilities, provided that doing so does not cause undue hardship. These accommodations can include modified work hours, specialized chair or back support, or modified or different duties. The majority of people with disabilities don't require any accommodation.

### ACCOMMODATIONS

**58%**



of employed people with disabilities did not need any changes to make their workplace more accommodating for them. (Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability 2012)

### ATTENDANCE

**86%**



of employees with disabilities rate average or better in attendance compared to people without a disability. (Deloitte, The Road to Inclusion 2010)

### EMPLOYMENT RATE

The employment rate for Canadians 25 to 64 with disabilities is just

**49%**



compared with 79% for Canadians that age without a disability. This suggests potential for increasing the labour force. (Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability 2012)

### DISABILITY AND AGE

**16.7%**



of people in NL between 45 and 64 report having a disability, compared with 7.7% of people between 25 and 44. The prevalence of disability increases with age. (Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability 2012)



# Able to Work

*The number of people who self-identify as having a disability is rising, and InclusionNL is helping businesses welcome them.*

“We’ve got close to 60,000 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians with disabilities who are at working age,” says Kathy Hawkins, Empower, The Disability Resource Centre’s InclusionNL Manager. “That’s an untapped labour pool businesses need to learn more about.”

She’s going to help them do just that.

Last year, Empower launched the InclusionNL: Employer Supports Services program, a free program that helps employers become more confident hiring people with disabilities or, as Hawkins puts it, increases

employers’ disability confidence.

“I’ve been working with businesses for a long time and lots of people believe that businesses have negative attitudes around hiring people with disabilities,” she says. “I’m the first one to say that’s not the case. Businesses don’t have any negative attitudes around hiring folks with disabilities, they just don’t know how to go about doing it, and go about doing it in a respectful way.”

Hawkins and her team work with employers to ensure their job advertisements are inclusive and help them produce materials in braille and large print. They show employers how to think about different ways

a job’s tasks might be completed by people with different abilities.

InclusionNL also helps businesses become more accessible to people with disabilities.

Hawkins visits the establishment to figure out what’s already accessible and help improve any feature that isn’t. She’ll even train staff to better serve customers with disabilities.

Hawkins has taken the InclusionNL program on the road and met with companies across the province. Last summer she was up along the northern coast of Labrador training the Nunatsiavut Marine crew working on The Northern Ranger.

“During that partnership, I would train their crew on board the ferry in the morning and then when we would stop in the communities, I would meet with people that have disabilities and share with them some of the accessibility features of the ferry.”

Recognition for an employer’s efforts to increase their disability confidence is a key part of the program. Hawkins wants consumers with disabilities to know which

*“Businesses don’t have any negative attitudes around hiring folks with disabilities, they just don’t know how to go about doing it, and go about doing it in a respectful way.”*

establishments are investing in them.

“Our pilot partnership was with Rocket Bakery,” she says. “On St. Paddy’s Day, we sent a crew into Rocket to hand out brochures outlining all the work Rocket Bakery had done over the number of weeks we worked with them.”

That could prove to be very valuable advertising. Statistics Canada’s Participation and Activity Limitation Survey estimates that with the province’s aging population, 21 per cent of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians will self-identify as people with disabilities by 2023.

That’s a lot of customers, and a lot of potential employees. ♦

# Newfound Home

*Central Newfoundland communities are eager to welcome refugees — both to lend a hand and to help bring new life to the region — but encouraging a sense of belonging is not an easy task.*

It takes a minute to figure out how to add Omar Alsayed Ali as a friend on Facebook without an Arabic keyboard. He figures it out first, adding us with his English keyboard.

Originally from Aleppo, Syria, Ali and his family live in Gander. They arrived in June, from a refugee camp in Lebanon, and live on a residential street in a bright bungalow where they serve us Turkish coffee and try to make their kids sit still.

They see hope in Gander, and Gander sees hope in them.

“We want them to stay,” says Carolyn R. Parsons, who is part of the Lewisporte Refugee Outreach Committee and the Gander Refugee Outreach Committee. “We want them to become part of the community. We need population growth here, and these are wonderful people.”

“People don’t see rural the way it really is sometimes, they think people are out here and nobody’s working,” she adds. “There’s actually a shortage of workers. The population has declined, towns are losing schools because there are no students. We just brought three kids to the school in Gander, and we’re bringing in four kids to the school in Lewisporte. That adds up.”

By Parsons’ estimate, Central will be welcoming 10 refugee families. Lewisporte has already welcomed Talika Morjan, a grandmother from Syria, and they’re waiting for the rest of her family who are caught in bureaucratic limbo in Lebanon. Lewisporte is also expecting a family from Iraq.

Five families have been confirmed for Gander—the second arrived in August, greeted at the airport by Ali and his family

*“We want them to become part of the community. We need population growth here, and these are wonderful people... If we can break the language barrier and we can communicate we have a better chance of creating that sense of belonging.”*

and a large contingent from the Lewisporte and Gander Refugee Outreach Committees. Bishop’s Falls was matched with a Syrian family in late August.

The communities are working together to help these families feel welcome. They share interpreters, language resources, and strategies, and they pooled resources to furnish the families’ houses and find them toys, bikes and clothes. The Lewisporte group even hosts regular Arabic lessons so locals can share the language burden.

“If we can break the language barrier and we can communicate we have a better chance of creating that sense of belonging,” Parsons says.

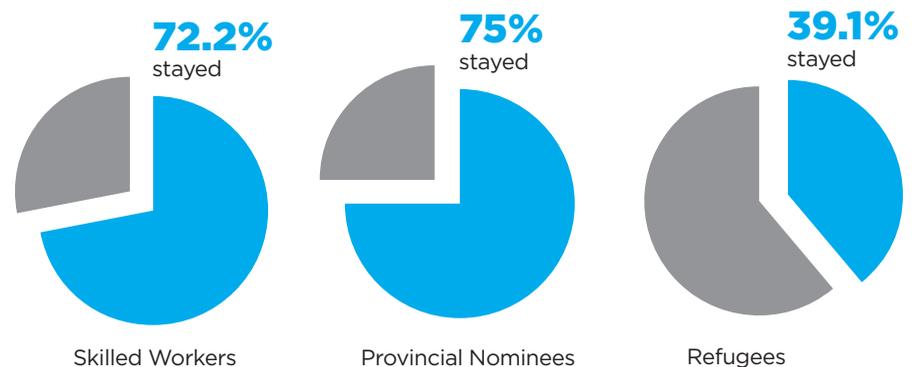
Parsons is confident the refugee families and the people of Central will find a lot of common ground.

“I find that Syrians are a very traditional people, which of course, we are. They are very attached to their heritage and culture, which of course we are. And now they’ve had to leave their homeland—for very terrible, terrible reasons of course—and a lot of us did too,” she says. “We’re not so different.” ♦



Omar Alsayed Ali, Soaad Maasri and their three children outside their Gander home.

## THREE-YEAR IMMIGRANT RETENTION RATES FOR NL



Although Newfoundland and Labrador is eager to attract immigrants, there is room to improve our retention rates for refugees. These pie charts show the percentage of immigrants who arrived in the province in 2010 and were still living here in 2013. (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) 2013.)

# First Look

*A new exhibit at The Rooms Provincial Art Gallery marks the first major exhibition to look back through Nunatsiavut’s rich artistic history.*

“**S**akKijajuk” is a Labrador Inuit term meaning “to be seen.” It’s also the name of the first nationally touring exhibition of Nunatsiavut art and craft.

Curated by Heather Igloliorte, an Inuk from Labrador and Assistant Professor of Aboriginal Art History at Concordia University, *SakKijajuk: Art and Craft from Nunatsiavut*, features 80 pieces — paintings, sculptures, prints, photographs, video art and much more—from 45 Nunatsiavut artists, covering 60 years of Labrador Inuit art history. It’s the first major exhibition to attempt a comprehensive history of art from Nunatsiavut.

“It’s huge,” says Igloliorte, laughing.

Inuit artists from Labrador have been struggling to be seen since confederation, when the province’s Terms of Union with Canada made no consideration for the aboriginal population of the province, explains Igloliorte.

“You don’t see the word ‘aboriginal’ anywhere,” she says.

This means they were excluded from federal funding and programs, like those available through the Indian Act.

“So unlike Inuit everywhere else in Canada who were federally recognized, it was like the Inuit in Labrador didn’t exist,” she says.

Until 1991, they were also excluded from the Igloo tag system.

“That was a little brown sticker invented by the Canadian government in the middle of the 20th century meant to inform the public about which works were real Inuit art,” she explains. “Labrador Inuit weren’t allowed to use it. They were treated like they were inauthentic.”

“It really speaks to the resilience of Inuit artists in Labrador that we still have such

a long history of art and craft under such extraordinarily poor circumstances,” she adds.

*SakKijajuk* evolved out of the Mobilizing Inuit Cultural Heritage Project. As part of the Project, Igloliorte helped organize an exhibition of work by Inuit artists from all over Labrador in Goose Bay. It was the first exhibition of its kind, and she traveled all over Nunatsiavut to find artists for the show.

“We had 120 self-identified artists on our list, and those were just the ones that wanted to participate in the community exhibition,” she says. “Out of a population of about 6,000 Inuit in Labrador! That’s an amazing statistic.”

The community exhibition was a way for Nunatsiavut artists to connect, display their work, and see what other artists were doing.

“But in terms of changing the way people think about Labrador Inuit art, that’ll happen with this show at The Rooms,” she says.

*SakKijajuk* features new pieces made by twenty-five artists selected from the Goose Bay community exhibition alongside selected works borrowed from institutions like the Nunatsiavut Government and from private lenders.

Igloliorte organized the show around four generations of artists in the region, from elders to the next generation.

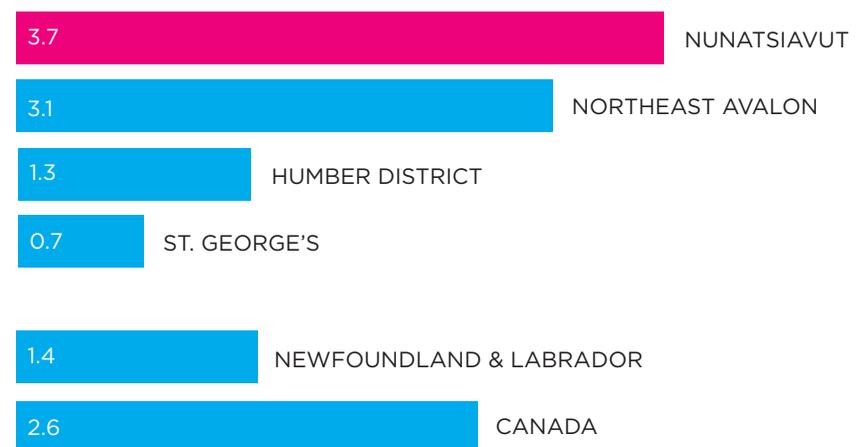
“Some of the artists in this exhibition have never exhibited their work before,” she says. “All of a sudden, they’re in a major exhibition that’s going across Canada.”

*SakKijajuk: Art and Craft from Nunatsiavut* will be at The Rooms until January. It will then head across the country to Ontario, Manitoba, and Prince Edward Island. ♦



*Diamond Komatik Box — Mark Igloliorte*

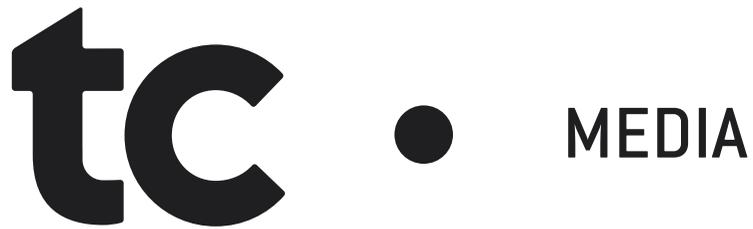
## NUMBER OF CREATIVE & PERFORMING ARTISTS PER 1,000 PEOPLE



Within the province, Nunatsiavut has the highest proportion of people working as creative and performing artists. (Statistics Canada 2011)



**MEDIA PARTNER**



**THANK YOU**

- |                    |                   |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Alison Coffin      | Kerri Neil        |
| Alvin Simms        | Mark Graesser     |
| Angel Osmond       | Mark Igloliorte   |
| Annette Powell     | Mike Pike         |
| Barb Neis          | Morgon Mills      |
| Blair Fradsham     | Moses Tucker      |
| Carolyn Parsons    | Nicole Snow       |
| Chris Janes        | Omar Alsayed Ali  |
| Craig Pollett      | Pamela Willcot    |
| Emily Christy      | Sean Cadigan      |
| Heather Igloliorte | Sheila Fitzgerald |
| Jamie Ward         | Soaad Maasri      |
| Jane Green         | Tia Morris        |
| Karen Beresford    | Tyler Wish        |
| Kathleen Parewick  | Victoria Belbin   |
| Keith Storey       |                   |

**REVIEW PANEL**

- Chris Janes  
 Craig Pollett  
 Eleanor Dawson  
 Judy Tobin  
 Kathy Hawkins  
 Kimberly Dawson  
 Meghan Eibner  
 Ray Bollman  
 Reg Winsor  
 Tony Fang

**FUNDING PARTNERS**



**PROJECT TEAM**

- Ainsley Hawthorn  
 Cathy Newhook  
 Eleanor Swanson  
 Elling Lien  
 Halina Sapeha  
 Lisa Browne  
 Rebecca Cohoe  
 Rob Greenwood  
 Sarah Smellie  
 Zaren Healey White

**CONTACT US**

**Community Foundation of Newfoundland & Labrador**  
 Suite 209,  
 31 Peet Street,  
 St. John's, NL A1B 3W8  
 (709) 753-9899  
 info@cfnl.ca  
 www.cfnl.ca

**The Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development**

Spencer Hall 1003  
 Memorial University  
 of Newfoundland  
 St. John's, NL A1C 5S7  
 (709) 864-3143  
 harriscentre@mun.ca  
 www.mun.ca/harriscentre

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