

The Newcomer

A Quarterly Newsletter on Immigration in Newfoundland and Labrador



Hon. Paul Shelley, Minister

Welcome!

As Minister for Human Resources, Labour and Employment, it is a pleasure to introduce the first issue of "The Newcomer", a newsletter on immigration in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The purpose of this newsletter is to build awareness of the benefits of immigration and population diversity, to increase readers' knowledge of immigration matters, to feature success stories, and to highlight current events and activities relating to immigration.

As you are no doubt aware, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is currently in the process of developing a provincial immigration strategy which we plan to launch later this year. I hope you enjoy this newsletter and join with me in welcoming all newcomers to our province. Together we will work for a bright future in this special place that we are proud to call home.

A New Direction for Newfoundland and Labrador

We are a land of immigrants. Newfoundland and Labrador, like other parts of Canada, had its beginnings largely through immigration from countries such as England, Ireland, Wales, Scotland and France. For most of us, our ancestors were immigrants from one of these countries.

Yet, in recent times, immigration has not played a major role in our province. In fact, although our province has 1.6% of the Canadian population, it attracts less than 0.2% of all immigrants to Canada. Also, many of those who initially arrive move on to other parts of Canada within a short period.



New beginning for our New Canadians

In May 2005, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador announced its intention to develop an immigration strategy. On June 28, 2005, a discussion paper entitled "An Immigration Strategy for Newfoundland and

Labrador: *Opportunity for Growth*" was released, inviting feedback from members of the general public.

During September and October 2005, 14 stakeholder consultations sessions were held throughout the province, with special sessions for business, education, and women's groups. In January, a session was held with the Francophoné community stakeholders.

Without exception, in each session there was general support expressed for an immigration strategy. There was also a sense of optimism about the future and how increased immigration will contribute to our growing prosperity.

We are known for our distinct culture and friendly people with open hearts and open doors. That's a strength on which we can build. Let's join together and welcome our newest citizens and celebrate our growing diversity together.

Definitions

Immigrant: Immigrants are people who choose to leave their countries voluntarily to make a new life elsewhere. They can return home at any time, and can still count on the protection of their own government.

Refugee: Refugees are people who have had to escape from their homes in times of war or persecution. They cannot return home and cannot count on their government to protect them or provide their basic needs.

Refugee Claimant: Refugee claimants are people who make their way to Canada on their own. They apply to the Government of Canada for protection once inside Canada, to determine if they qualify for refugee status.

Provincial Nominee Program: A program offered by the provincial Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development that recruits immigrants who have specialized occupational or entrepreneurial skills. Through an agreement with the Government of Canada, the provincial government is able to nominate, for permanent residency, immigrants who can contribute to the economic and social goals of the province.

(source: <http://www.anc-nf.cc>)

Immigration by the numbers 2005

Preliminary numbers from *Citizenship and Immigration Canada* for 2005

Total number of immigrants to Canada	262,126
Number of immigrants to Newfoundland	494
Percentage share	0.18%



A Success Story...

Sophy Dacanay came to Newfoundland and Labrador in June 2002 from the Philippines to work for Central Health Authority. Sophy is employed as a nurse in the Baie Verte Peninsula Health Care Centre, a community that she has called home since her arrival. Her decision to come to Canada was one based on opportunity. She had heard so many wonderful stories about Canada and thought it would be a great place to live and work. Her decision was also a difficult one. When she was offered the opportunity to work in Newfoundland and Labrador, she knew she would be coming without her husband and her one year old daughter. "It was difficult" she says, "but I felt it was the right choice for us."

In 2003, Sophy decided that she wanted to remain in Baie Verte and bring her family over from the Philippines. In March of that year, she was nominated by the provincial government through its Provincial Nominee Program. In December, Sophy received a wonderful Christmas present as her husband and her daughter Nicole arrived in Canada to join her. Sophy credits the Provincial Nominee Program for speed-



ing up her immigration to Canada. "The assistance I received from the Provincial Nominee Program was great" she says, "and it really helped me and my family."

Sophy continues to work in Baie Verte where she and her family have resided for the past three years. "This is a very welcoming community," she says, "and the people here are friendly. I have been made to feel at home since the day I arrived." The Dacanay family are very involved in

community life, volunteering with the local Catholic church and the family resource centre. Nicole is now in kindergarten and loves to figure skate. Her husband, who is a trained physician, is currently studying for his Canadian license and enjoys his weekly recreational basketball game. Sophy admits that the weather took a little time to adjust to but "now it's normal and Nicole loves the snow."

Sophy's in-laws have immigrated to Toronto. She and her family make annual visits to Ontario, but they are very content to live and work in Newfoundland and Labrador. "I like Toronto but this province is the right choice for us. It is the best place to raise a family."

Community News



On December 15, 2005, the Foyer of the West Block of the Confederation Building was filled with the sounds of "New Canadian Voices." Minister Shelley welcomed the choir which consisted of 65 newcomers to the province from 21 different countries. They

are students in the English as a Second Language program offered by the Association for New Canadians. Participating in a choir is one means of helping to learn the language.

The choir sang a number of traditional Christmas songs in beautiful harmony, as well as their own creation, which gave the message that newcomers have a lot to offer and they are very appreciative that Canada has given them a new, safe home.

Many government employees dropped by to hear the choir and appreciate the beautiful blend of voices of the adults as well as the children. Thank you "New Canadian Voices." We look forward to hearing from you again next year.

Newfoundland and Labrador welcomes its newest Canadians

On Wednesday, February 15, 2006, the Lieutenant Governor, Hon. Edward Roberts, presided over a Citizenship Ceremony at the D.F. Cook Recital Hall, Memorial University.

In conjunction with National Flag Day, 32 immigrants from 14 countries took the oath of citizenship.

Minister Shelley brought greetings to our newest citizens on behalf of the provincial government.



Did you know?

The Provincial Nominee Program has played a key role in increasing immigration to Newfoundland and Labrador.

There is a Tool Box of Ideas for Smaller Centers who are interested in attracting and retaining immigrants.

The province has a new website that will promote Newfoundland and Labrador as a destination of choice for immigrants.

Our local settlement agency is recognized nationally for their quality service and has received a citation for citizenship.

Canada is recognized worldwide for having a progressive immigration system.

Web Links

<http://www.nlnp.ca>

<http://www.integration-net.cic.gc.ca>

<http://www.hrle.immigration.nl.ca>

<http://www.anc-nf.ca>

<http://www.cic.gc.ca>

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Visit us on the web:

www.gov.nl.ca/hrle/immigration