

New Brunswick's Labour Force and Skills Development Strategy

2013-2016

rebuilding
NEW BRUNSWICK



New Brunswick's Labour Force
and Skills Development Strategy
2013-2016



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2013-2016

Province of New Brunswick

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Message from the Minister



In May 2012, Premier David Alward released *Growing Together, New Brunswick's Economic Development Action Plan 2012-2016*. This action plan lays down the foundation for economic growth in New Brunswick and identifies government's role in supporting and stimulating a prosperous economy.

Government is working diligently to ensure New Brunswickers have the skills necessary to capitalize on emerging opportunities and have a welcoming environment for newcomers.

A key component in rebuilding New Brunswick and its economy is our human resources. We must ensure the availability of a skilled and globally competitive labour force.

We are proposing a strategy that is about more than just potential - a strategy that rises from a sense of mutual responsibility of government, industries, businesses, educators, workers and potential members of the labour force. Our approach is straight-forward and action oriented. It is shaped by the core principles of partnership between various government departments and agencies, and partnership between government, communities and industry. We need to get the economic components aligned for developing the skills of our workforce with achievable and measurable actions.

This document offers an approach that is a more optimistic alternative to the strategies deployed in the past. We cannot afford to be complacent. We need a strategy that understands that one economic component alone is insufficient to have the collective impact that we require. It is also necessary to develop a positive narrative concerning economic development that builds on itself and begins to take on a life of its own.

New Brunswick's Labour Force and Skills Development Strategy 2013-2016 reflects the priorities of stakeholders, capitalizes on existing programs, incorporates Government's new Innovation Strategy and focuses future initiatives on meeting the labour force needs, not only of today, but also for tomorrow.

Danny Soucy

Minister

Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour

Introduction

While Canada and the rest of the world continue to recover from the downturn, it has become clear that growth will come, not from looking outside, but from the ingenuity and innovation of our New Brunswick people and businesses (*New Brunswick's Speech from the Throne, November 2012*).

New Brunswick has a proud history of innovation and national and international leadership. We have flourishing multinational companies and thriving small- and medium-size enterprises.

New Brunswick is, however, facing challenges that cannot be solved quickly, amongst them: a median population age that is older than all other provinces, a shrinking youth age group, a decreasing birth rate, and an adult literacy rate that limits employment options for some. We have to continue to ensure that our industries have access to the needed skilled labour force to prepare themselves for increasing global competitiveness and for adopting new technologies.

To meet these challenges facing the Province, strong, collaborative partnerships are required not only within government, but with communities, industry, businesses, educators, and labour to ensure that New Brunswick has the human resource capital to meet the needs of the labour market. As well, our economic success is dependent upon a strong, responsive and educated workforce since most jobs today require a post-secondary education. Industry, big and small, along with all available workers must regain confidence in the economies of our Province.

Planning for today's and tomorrow's needs is at the heart of *New Brunswick's Labour Force and Skills Development Strategy*.

We must maximize the skill sets and ensure full participation in the labour market for all who are able to play an even greater part in New Brunswick's economic development.

New Brunswick must continue to invest in its greatest resource: its people. Through this strategy, government aims to provide focus to its activities on the six priority sectors identified in the Province's economic development strategy, *Growing Together*,



New Brunswick's Economic Development Action Plan 2012-2016. These are:

1. Value-added Food;
2. Value-added Wood;
3. Information and Communication Technology;
4. Industrial Fabrication;
5. Biosciences; and
6. Aerospace and Defense.

The energy / mining and the oil / natural gas sectors represents close to three-quarters of New Brunswick's total exports and will continue to be a significant driver of our economic future. These sectors also merit attention given the nature of their highly skilled and trained workforce. A number of mineral exploration companies are actively exploring the feasibility of expanding, re-opening, or creating new operations throughout the province. Companies in the region in the oil and gas sector are exploring ways to bring western oil into Eastern Canada for processing, exporting natural gas to European markets and extracting shale gas safely.

This document reflects the role of government, fulfilling the goals and building upon the actions outlined in *Growing Together*. It focuses on three strategic themes and sets out priority actions under each:

Strategy # 1: Support K-12 / PSE Systems to Adequately Prepare Students for Labour Force Needs

Strategy # 2: Support Learning and Skills Development

Strategy # 3: Retention and Attraction of Highly Skilled Individuals.

Strategy # 1

Support K-12 / Post-Secondary Education Systems to Adequately Prepare Students for Labour Force Needs

Input from key stakeholders indicates that the K-12 system and pathways to Post-Secondary Education are critical.

Early childhood development and public education lay the foundation for building a culture of post-secondary participation and attachment to the labour force. In order to become more competitive in the global economy, it is essential that more of New Brunswick's population obtain a higher education as it is a prerequisite to success in the 21st Century knowledge-based economy.

Our economic future is dependent on the confidence in our classrooms that a future exists in our Province for our youth.

In 2012, 50 percent of persons in New Brunswick 45 years of age and older had a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree, whereas 67 percent of persons between the ages of 25 and 44 had one. This indicates improvement, but there is more work to be done.

Government will introduce students to Labour Market Information (LMI) to ensure that every grade 9, 10, 11 and 12 student is informed of the many occupations associated with the priority / growth sectors for potential career opportunities and post-secondary education requirements.

LMI assists individuals in making informed decisions related to their education, training and career path. Knowing what skills are needed in order to pursue a career path is essential in preparing to enter the labour force in a timely manner. It should also be used by education/training institutions to ensure that graduates are meeting the education and skill requirements of current and future labour force needs.



Action 1: In coordination with other partners, Government will develop labour market information products to assist with selecting relevant post-secondary education and employment opportunities in New Brunswick.

Action 2: Employment counsellors will visit students beginning in middle school and again in high school to provide awareness of occupational forecasts and related skills requirements.

Action 3: Government will facilitate Career Fairs with post-secondary education institutions and the public school system.

Action 4: Government will work to expand successful pilot projects in schools throughout the province, such as the Teen Apprenticeship program in Saint John. *This is led by Irving Oil, Jacobs Industrial, the New Brunswick Building and Construction Trades Council and Simonds High School and other pre-apprenticeship programs in conjunction with School Districts. These projects bring together industry, educators, government, communities, and students. It offers trades exposure to secondary school students, whereby students graduate high school with significant credit toward an applicable apprenticeship program.*

Action 5: Government will expand the pre-apprenticeship trades' orientation program currently offered in some schools. *Selected high school students receive seven weeks of theory training at a community college for specific trades and seven weeks of on-the-job training with an employer. Credit mechanisms have been established for this project as well.*

Action 6: Government will provide information sessions for high school students to ensure they are aware of student financial assistance support so they are able to consider post-secondary education regardless of their financial situation.



Government participated in a Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation study, called *Future to Discover*, to determine if barriers to post-secondary education can be removed through career development and financial incentives. The final report demonstrated positive impacts on high school completion and entry into post-secondary education. The Province of New Brunswick is continuing the tracking of these 4,400 New Brunswickers through postsecondary education and into the labour. The outcome of this 10-year longitudinal study will continue to

inform policies and practices to ensure New Brunswick has the skilled workforce its economy requires.

As graduating students prepare to move from high school to post-secondary education, it is incumbent that planning occurs to ensure greatest success. This should take into consideration the many facets of the life of a student with diverse needs, including information on university and college programs, apprenticeship programs, community participation, skills for independent living such as financial planning, social awareness and procedures for applying for employment. Among others, these skills will allow students to set life-career goals, make informed decisions in order to reach them and to contribute to a changing, productive and prosperous province.

Action 7: Government will work towards ensuring that all high school students have a transition exit plan prior to graduation.

Government will work with the early childhood education sector to strengthen the sector's capability to administer high-quality programming by its members for the benefit of young children.

Action 8: Government will develop and implement a two-year program for early childhood education with increased training requirements for child care staff in new Regulations proposed under the *Early Childhood Services Act*.

Graduates must enter the labour market ready to undertake the tasks for which they were trained. They must be ready to respond to current needs and to help our businesses and our public sector innovate.

Government will continue to facilitate access to Post-Secondary Education and support academic success.

Action 9: Government will review student financial assistance programs to ensure that they better assist students with financial need to attend post-secondary education.

It is important to increase the labour-force preparedness of graduates from public and private post-secondary education institutions by fostering entrepreneurship and industry experience in all programs of study and by increasing co-op and internship opportunities for youth.

Action 10: Government will increase the number of post-secondary education programs that offer some form of

Our post-secondary education institutions are at the heart of the economic development of our Province.

experiential learning in order to:

- Provide on-the-job experience with New Brunswick companies before graduation;
- Strengthen the job readiness of students;
- Help New Brunswick companies grow;
- Create a single-window for experiential learning within post-secondary education institutions; and
- Ensure that student and employer expectations are known and realistic.

In March 2012, the New Brunswick Credit Transfer Portal was launched. This new Webbased portal helps students, including apprentices, transfer their academic credits between and among universities and colleges based in New Brunswick (<http://portal.nbcats.ca>).

Government will continue to expand the portal within New Brunswick by and from New Brunswick only institutions to outside the Province. This will facilitate a faster transition into the labour market and attract former New Brunswickers to return to the Province to pursue their education.

Action 11: Expand and promote the New Brunswick Credit Transfer portal to the public school system, post-secondary education institutions and student councils.

By working cooperatively with our Atlantic partners, we will enhance apprenticeship opportunities and help address our regional labour market challenges. Changes and improvements could include training schedules, curriculum, certification requirements, exams and other related matters.

Action 12: Aggressively pursue the development of a regionally streamlined Apprenticeship program through the Atlantic Workforce Partnership.

Our provincial labour force preparation must be aligned with the needs of changing skills requirements and anticipated demand associated with capital projects in the region.

Research and innovation are key to increasing productivity. Over the next five years, government has committed to investing \$80 million, some of which will be directed to initiatives such as a graduate scholarship fund to increase talent in key disciplines, increase in support to encourage the hiring of research technicians and assistants, early stage incubation/co-op initiatives in postsecondary education institutions to increase student interaction and exposure to a wide array of disciplines, and mentorship/acceleration initiatives in innovation for non-government organizations.

Action 13: Through a multi-departmental approach with private sector and the New Brunswick Innovation Council, position research and development investment to create high value jobs, increase the value of exports and sales and encourage business start-ups leading to priority sector growth.

Strategy # 2

Support Learning and Skills Development

Increasing literacy, skills training and educational attainment of New Brunswick's labour force is critical to economic growth and prosperity.

Input from key stakeholders indicates labour market predictability / projection as the number one priority. They also recognize the importance of lifelong learning and the role of government in supporting it.

However, providing the right training opportunities to equip New Brunswickers to fill current and future labour market demands in a changing, knowledge-based economy is challenging.

Our role as a government is to build a culture of continuous learning for all our citizens regardless of age. We must ensure access to post-secondary education programs that respond to the needs of our Province and the employment-related interests of learners.

Government cannot do this alone. Industry also needs to step up and support employees in their continued professional development. For example, the Provincial Forum on Learning held in November 2012, brought together the private sector, the community, academic institutions, government and others to discuss proposed actions that could form a learning agenda for New Brunswick.

With higher levels of skills needed and fewer available workers, New Brunswick also needs to concentrate on those populations which are currently underrepresented.

Industry has indicated that shortages are occurring in both high-skilled and low-skilled occupations. Occupations traditionally thought of as low-skilled still provide valuable work experience (team, social, people, customer service and literacy skills) and are a viable option / opportunity for entrance into the labour market and act as a stepping stone to further employment.

Addressing labour market predictability challenges is a key priority. Government and Future NB, supported by the New Brunswick Business Council, are leading an initiative to engage the business community and other stakeholders to improve the quality and timeliness of labour market information in the Province. Leveraging participants from post-secondary education institutions, ACOA, Conseil Economique and the New Brunswick Information Technology Council, this group is working to identify the best way to collect data on New Brunswick's current labour market demands in order to inform program decisions and private sector communication efforts.

Action 14: Government will implement a “Wanted Analytics” tool by fall 2013. *It is a web-based tool that brings together electronic job postings from a variety of sites to help identify trends in demand for workers within various industrial and occupational sectors.*

Action 15: Government, with leaders of the private sector, will conduct labour market research on each of the six strategic sectors, as well as the energy, mining and oil and natural gas sectors to assist in identifying which occupations are experiencing labour market imbalances today and forecast the positions required for the future.

Action 16: Government will develop a plan to ensure that labour market information is packaged and disseminated in a manner that facilitates access and ease of use.

Action 17: Government will provide access to and promote LMI to high schools, postsecondary education institutions, employers, employees and those looking for work to provide focus on the labour market opportunities and skills requirements within the province.

The *Workplace Essential Skills* program (WES) service delivery model has been fully implemented. It is aimed at helping adults who are employed or seeking employment and who require additional essential skills to succeed.

By providing enhanced supports to pursue training opportunities, it is anticipated that a greater number of people with employment barriers will be able to pursue or continue their education with the goal of increased labour force participation. Programming designed specifically to meet the needs of these clients will be provided throughout the Province to allow for combined training and employment opportunities.



Action 18: Government will expand the number of employers with whom it works to customize on-site Workplace Essential Skills training for employed individuals to improve their skills to perform tasks in the workplace.

Action 19: Government will continue to expand the Workplace Essential Skills program to meet the needs of First Nations adult learners.

Action 20: The Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour (PETL) will continue to work with the Department of Social Development to increase the number of Workplace Essential Skills employable initiatives targeted for social assistance clients.

As a government, we cannot stimulate the economy alone; we need a strong partnership with the business community. We want to rebuild confidence in our economy and show New Brunswickers and the world that New Brunswick is still the best place to work, grow and prosper.

To assist in the creation of jobs for recent post-secondary graduates within the Province, the Workforce Expansion program guidelines are being revised to promote and foster their hiring by New Brunswick businesses. Employers, under the One-Job Pledge initiative, will be provided with a one year (52 week) wage subsidy if they hire a recent post secondary graduate for a permanent full-time position (40hrs/week) at a minimum salary of \$14/hour. The program would reimburse employers for 70% of the salary to a maximum of \$10/hour.

Action 21: Government will aggressively promote the One-Job Pledge initiative to employers, post-secondary education institutions, student groups, Chambers of Commerce, etc. using a variety of means including employment regional offices, job fairs and public libraries.

With the One-Job Pledge initiative, we are investing in New Brunswickers and working to rebuild the economy. We are investing in our youth by helping them stay in our Province and become great citizens of New Brunswick.

To ensure an adequate skilled labour force is available to meet the needs of New Brunswick's key sectors, appropriate training and workplace experience opportunities need to be in place.

The Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour employment supports will be enhanced for identified sector specific programming to encourage participation in training and workplace experience programs.

Implementation of the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour employment programming designed specifically for under-represented groups to participate in group education, training and employment opportunities will allow them to access programming tailored to their specific needs. Enhanced

levels of supports, where appropriate, may be utilized to ensure participation of under-represented groups in training and skills development opportunities.

Action 22: Increase awareness of the type of program and services available to New Brunswickers through a variety of means including:

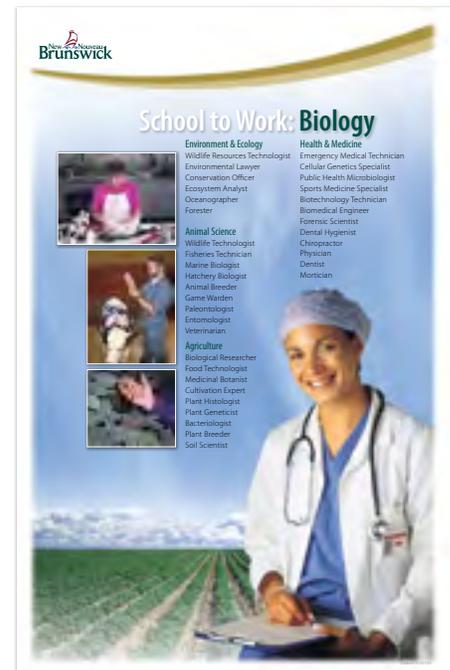
- **Marketing Campaign** - utilizing radio, television and print media;
- **Career Week** - two career weeks will be promoted in 2013 with events in every Region to highlight the value of planning a career, utilizing the services available in the community and training opportunities; and
- **Labour Market Development Officers** - five positions will be created within the five economic development district offices to work with employers and stakeholders to develop labour market opportunities.

Action 23: Implement changes to the Training and Skills Development program including:

- **Priority Sector Training** - reduce the eligibility criteria for participation in training programs associated with government's priority sectors from three years to two years out of high school to increase participation; and
- **Review client living support payment levels** to ensure adequate funding to assist clients in successful completion of training interventions.

Action 24: Introduce new employment programs:

- **Group Based Training** - will assist eligible individuals to obtain the skills they need for employment, ranging from basic to advanced, through participation in group training activities delivered under a project-based training model.
- **Upskilling** - will provide training assistance to employers, with a focus on priority sectors that would result in additional skills development for employees such as increased levels of certification, new transferable skills or the upgrading skills of existing employees.



Not all New Brunswickers are being utilized to their full potential. Going forward, every effort will be made to ensure that all New Brunswickers, in particular women, First Nations people, persons with disabilities, those receiving social assistance, youth, and older workers are provided an opportunity to be included in the workforce and reach their full potential.

Action 25: Government will implement enhanced employer wage incentives for priority group clients to assist in securing labour force attachments and opportunities.

Action 26: Government will work to develop and implement a “Women in Trades” program, which will target job-ready women who are interested in pursuing training and/or employment in the trades. *The intent would be to provide the program twice over a twoyear period. As part of the awareness-building efforts, information relating to “Women in Trades” would also be provided to secondary school students.*

Effective engagement of our First Nations communities is key to the sustainable development of our province’s energy, mining and oil and natural gas resources. These sectors were highlighted in the November 2012 Speech from the Throne as key economic development priorities for the Province.

Action 27: Government will continue to engage the First Nations Communities to encourage participation in the New Brunswick employment market through partnerships with government, community and industry.

Action 28: Government will fund a First Nations coordinator who will facilitate linkages and augment access to literacy, essential skills and apprenticeship services on First Nations communities.



Government is committed to assisting persons with a disability make the transition to employment and was an active participant in the development of the new *Employment Action Plan for Persons with a Disability*, released in May 2012, in consultation with disability stakeholders and employers.

Action 29: Government is developing an implementation plan that will assist persons with disabilities to transition to employment.

Action 30: The Departments of Social Development and Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour will jointly review and implement new initiatives, as appropriate, related to career development and employment counselling services to reduce systemic and client barriers which prevent transition to the labour force for Social Development clients. *For example, Government has recently implemented changes to provide living support funding, as well as to provide 75% of the cost of tuition for all Social Development clients attending training.*

A systematic approach is required to ensure strategies and programs are inclusive and meet the needs of all members of the New Brunswick labour force and those institutions that develop skills and provide education.

Action 31: Government will develop a coordinated approach across departments and in partnership with Future NB, community colleges and universities, to ensure that all parties entrusted with growing the economy, work together and are aware of each others strategies and programs.

Government's investment in Elementary Literacy Inc., a non-profit foundation, will support the *Elementary Literacy Friends / Communauté-littératie-enfants-francophones* volunteer tutoring programs. This private-sector led initiative was created to raise literacy levels among children in elementary schools across the Province. Volunteers provide one-on-one literacy mentoring to elementary school children struggling with reading by working with a student for one hour, twice a week, for 10 weeks outside regular classroom hours.

Action 32: Continue to support the *Elementary Literacy Friends / Communauté-littératie-enfants-francophones* volunteer tutoring programs.

The International Adult Literacy Skills Survey (IALSS) definition of literacy is "*the ability to understand and employ printed information in daily activities at home, at work and in the community, to achieve one's goals and to develop one's knowledge and potential.*"

Research shows that adults with higher literacy skills work more, experience less unemployment, earn more and rely less on government transfers. Although

New Brunswick youth aged 16-25 years of age have the highest rate of literacy (62.4%) among its working age population 16-64 years, we need to continue to ensure our youth are functionally literate and more.

In the workplace, companies have consistently reported the benefits from improved literacy skills of employees: increased ability to undertake training, improved labour relations, improved quality of work, increased output, fewer errors, better health and safety records and better employee retention. These all contribute to greater productivity and ultimately, economic competitiveness and success.

Action 33: The Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour will develop literacy and essential skills programs and services that target youth 19-25 years of age. Specifically, PETL will work with the Departments of Education and Early

Literacy is the foundation for learning and students who do not develop basic literacy skills by the end of Grade 2 may struggle in other subjects.

Childhood Development and Social Development to ensure that literacy and essential skills opportunities meet the needs of youth. Program/service options will be developed in 2013-14 and implemented in 2014-15. For example, building on youth's connectivity with technology, PETL is currently reviewing and revising the General Educational Development (GED) Online program to provide a quality and effective computerbased learning opportunity that includes a supported approach to virtual learning.

Job seekers need to know what job opportunities are available within the Province and the types of skills needed should training or up-skilling be required. As well, enhanced Job Alerts for Employment Insurance (EI) claimants will ensure that New Brunswick-specific employment opportunities will be delivered directly to job seekers twice a day.

Action 34: Government will increase the amount of province-specific information available to people wishing to work in the province through enhancements to the "Working in Canada" website and the New Brunswick Job Bank.

Action 35: Government will work with employers to increase their knowledge of the benefits and opportunities surrounding posting of jobs on the Job Bank and assist them in developing job and position descriptions.

Action 36: Government will introduce a pilot project, in partnership with Human Resources and Skills Development Canada that enables employment counselling staff to directly contact Employment Insurance claimants to ensure that they are aware of the job search and support programming available.

Strategy # 3

Retention and Attraction of Highly Skilled Individuals

Stakeholders indicate immigration, repatriation and retention are part of the solution to ensure a labour force that meets the needs of industry.

A declining and aging population has repeatedly been identified as a significant challenge facing New Brunswick. These population trends, if unchanged, will have profound ramifications on the Province's economic, social and cultural well being.

Immigration, repatriation and retention of skilled workers are important factors in meeting future labour market requirements.

The Province has responded to these realities by increasing the promotion of New Brunswick as a destination of choice for Canadians and for immigrants. It has increased its recruitment of newcomers within Canada, the United States and overseas and has significantly increased recruitment of francophone immigrants and promotion of the Province in francophone markets.

Action 37: Government will develop and implement a talent recruitment model that will involve participation by employers, industry sectors and post-secondary education institutions. As well, this model will involve collaborating with successfully established immigrants, to act as provincial ambassadors during recruitment and promotional events.

Action 38: Government will revitalize the Population Growth Strategy for fiscal 2013-2014. This new strategy will seek to expand upon existing efforts in immigration, repatriation and retention, while also recognizing the changing economy, labour market and regulatory environment with respect to immigration.

Action 39: Government will develop a marketing strategy that includes hosting targeted repatriation events to attract both newcomers, as well as Canadian expatriates, looking to move to New Brunswick. These events will be launched with the support of New Brunswick employers and other stakeholders under the "My New Brunswick" brand and cooperatively with the involvement of our Atlantic partners under the "Canada's East Coast" brand.

Action 40: Government will develop a Francophone Immigration strategy by fall 2013 that recognizes government's commitment to maintaining New Brunswick's unique linguistic duality and the importance for balanced attraction efforts with the goal of augmenting our workforce.

Over the last five years, the Government of New Brunswick has invested approximately \$8 million to strengthen settlement infrastructure in strategic areas of the province. The Province also manages a five-year \$10 million federal fund to promote and recruit the province to Francophone immigrants, as well as establish and augment settlement services and integration programming for Francophone newcomers.

The Province is currently negotiating an Immigration Framework Agreement with the Government of Canada. This new agreement will include restructured Provincial Nominee and Temporary Foreign Worker programs, as well as a General Provisions document to guide the scope of the agreements. These agreements with the Federal Government will form the basis for a new provincial legislative and regulatory framework for immigration.

Action 41: Partner with the Federal government to develop an Immigration Framework Agreement to facilitate and support immigration to New Brunswick.

Action 42: Develop a Regulatory and Legislative Framework to support the Province's immigration activities.

Significant progress has been made in the development and enhancement of settlement services and capacity building. Several new settlement agencies have been created to better serve Francophone newcomers, as well as immigrants in rural and northern New Brunswick. New settlement programs have been established to target the unique needs of both business immigrants and skilled workers and settlement programs have been comprehensively expanded in other immigrant-serving agencies to increase language skills and employability.

Action 43: Government will coordinate international recruitment efforts by targeting specific markets where we have the highest retention rates based on internal evaluations. Attraction and promotion efforts will be re-focused on new, undertargeted markets in Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

Like many jurisdictions, New Brunswick recognizes the importance of international students to its economy, to its educational system and as a source of new immigrants. In 2010, international students contributed more than \$93.5 million to the provincial economy and contributed to more than 1,000 jobs in the overall education services sector in the Province.

New Brunswick has implemented a number of initiatives in recent years to recruit and retain highly qualified international students to secondary, college and university programs that are rooted in industry needs and priority sectors.

Action 44: The Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour will collaborate with New Brunswick's post-secondary education institutions to organize coordinated international recruitment tours beginning in 2013.

Through the above initiatives, government's goal will be to increase the immigration retention rate.

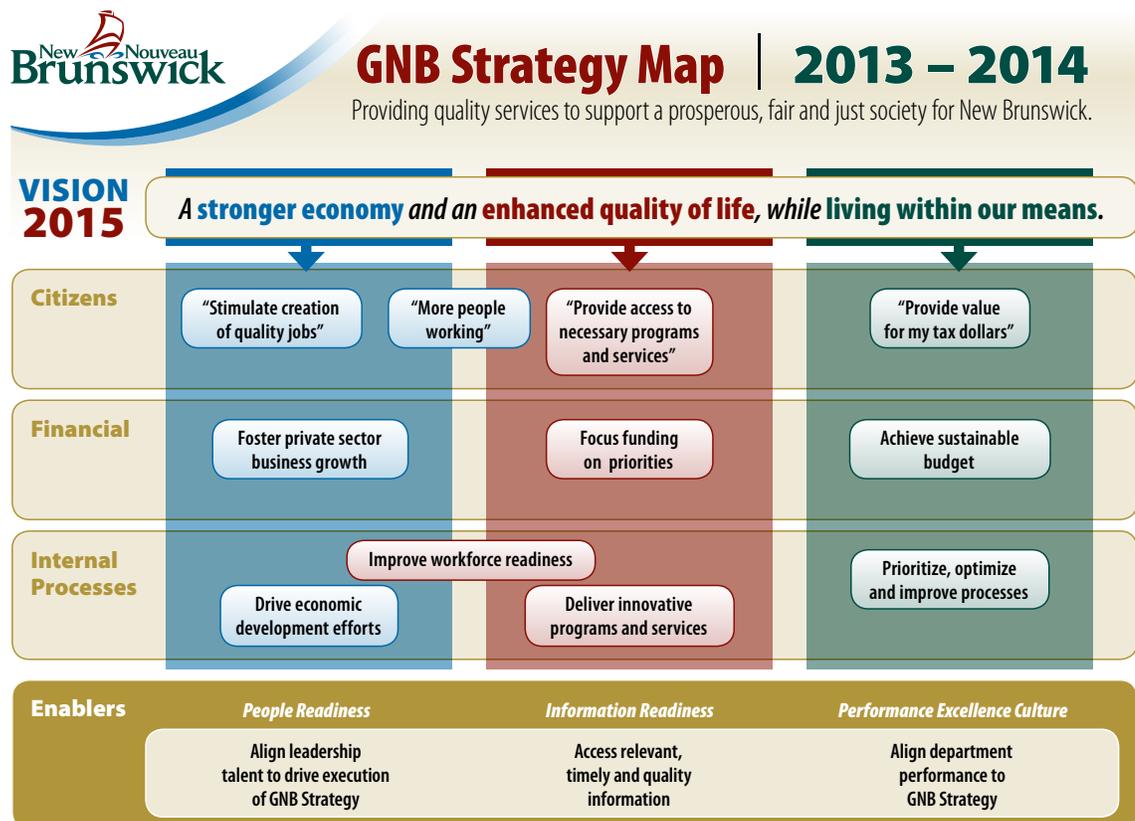


Conclusion

Government's vision of a stronger economy and an enhanced quality of life, while living within our means is depicted in government's Strategy Map below. It requires that all working-age New Brunswickers and newcomers have an opportunity to participate in the labour market and that they have the rights skills to match provincial labour market needs.

Successful implementation of *New Brunswick's Labour Force and Skills Development Strategy* is the mutual responsibility of government, industries, businesses, educators, workers and potential members of the labour force. It will require deliberate and focused sector-based strategies with strong industry engagement (and partnerships).

New Brunswick's Labour Force and Skills Development Strategy 2013-2016 supports government's vision and specifically links to the objectives "more people working" and "improve workforce readiness", which in turns supports the creation of quality jobs, private sector business growth and economic development efforts.



NB PUBLIC SERVICE VALUES: COMPETENCE – IMPARTIALITY – INTEGRITY – RESPECT – SERVICE

As indicated in *Growing Together*, government has put in place key indicators or measurements of success that will allow New Brunswickers to track how and where economic progress is being made. The actions identified in this strategy will contribute to the province's success and the progress reported to New Brunswickers over the coming years.

Measures of Success

Working-age population

- Indicates more working-age people contributing to economic growth.
- Measures the growth of the tax base.
- This ratio in New Brunswick has decreased in each of the last three fiscal years and is expected to decrease in 2012-13.
- The goal of this target is to increase the working-age population.

Base (2011)	2015 target
1.872 working persons/dependants	1.7484 working persons/dependants

Strategic Indicators

Data related to core economic indicators are published annually, but data for the strategic indicators is published more frequently, allowing for quarterly, and in some cases, monthly monitoring of New Brunswick's progress. There are seven indicators identified as appropriate for tracking our economic success:

1. Ratio of Full-Time to Part-Time Jobs
2. Ratio of High-Paying to Low-Paying Jobs
3. Private Sector Employment
4. GDP Growth in Priority Areas

- 5. Return on Taxpayer Investment
- 6. Proportion of Population with Post Secondary Education
- 7. Literacy: Grade 7 Reading (English) / Grade 8 Reading (French)

Objective	Indicator	Base year
Stimulate creation of quality jobs	Job Quality Index (composed of weighted combination of full time to part time, high paying to low paying and paid to self employed)	
More People working	Private sector employment	0.2% decline
Drive economic development efforts	Investment and Trade	
	Return on taxpayer investment	\$1.07/ \$ invested
Improve workforce readiness	Proportion of the population (25-64) with Post-secondary education (PSE)	56.5% of population with PSE
	Provincial literacy assessment: Grade 7 (A) / Grade 8 (F)	69.4% (Anglophone sector) 72.9% (francophone sector)

Finally, Government will release an annual progress report for each of the three years covered by this strategy indicating the incremental implementation of the 44 actions.

Summary of Actions

Strategy # 1: Support K-12 / Post-Secondary Education Systems to Adequately Prepare Students for Labour Force Needs

Action 1: In coordination with other partners, Government will develop labour market information products to assist with selecting relevant post-secondary education and employment opportunities in New Brunswick.

Action 2: Employment counsellors will visit students beginning in middle school and again in high school to provide awareness of occupational forecasts and related skills requirements.

Action 3: Government will facilitate Career Fairs with post-secondary education institutions and the public school system.

Action 4: Government will work to expand successful pilot projects in schools throughout the province, such as the Teen Apprenticeship program in Saint John.

Action 5: Government will expand the pre-apprenticeship trades' orientation program currently offered in some schools.

Action 6: Government will provide information sessions for high school students to ensure they are aware of student financial assistance support so they are able to consider post-secondary education regardless of their financial situation.

Action 7: Government will work towards ensuring that all high school students have a transition exit plan prior to graduation.

Action 8: Government will develop and implement a two-year program for early childhood education with increased training requirements for child care staff in new Regulations proposed under the Early Childhood Services Act.

Action 9: Government will review student financial assistance programs to ensure that they better assist students with financial need to attend post-secondary education.

Action 10: Government will increase the number of post-secondary education programs that offer some form of experiential learning in order to:

- Provide on-the-job experience with New Brunswick companies before graduation;
- Strengthen the job readiness of students;
- Help New Brunswick companies grow;
- Create a single-window for experiential learning within post-secondary education institutions; and
- Ensure that student and employer expectations are known and realistic.

Action 11: Expand and promote the New Brunswick Credit Transfer portal to the public school system, post-secondary education institutions and student councils.

Action 12: Aggressively pursue the development of a regionally streamlined Apprenticeship program through the Atlantic Workforce Partnership.

Action 13: Through a multi-departmental approach with private sector and the New Brunswick Innovation Council, position research and development investment to create high value jobs, increase the value of exports and sales and encourage business start-ups leading to priority sector growth.

Strategy #2: Support Learning and Skills Development

Action 14: Government will implement a “Wanted Analytics” tool by fall 2013.

Action 15: Government, with leaders of the private sector, will conduct labour market research on each of the six strategic sectors, as well as the energy, mining and oil and natural gas sectors to assist in identifying which occupations are experiencing labour market imbalances today and forecast the positions required for the future.

Action 16: Government will develop a plan to ensure that labour market information is packaged and disseminated in a manner that facilitates access and ease of use.

Action 17: Government will provide access to and promote LMI to high schools, postsecondary education institutions, employers, employees and those looking for work to provide focus on the labour market opportunities and skills requirements within the province.

Action 18: Government will expand the number of employers with whom it works to customize on-site Workplace Essential Skills training for employed individuals to improve their skills to perform tasks in the workplace.

Action 19: Government will continue to expand the Workplace Essential Skills program to meet the needs of First Nations adult learners.

Action 20: The Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour will continue to work with the Department of Social Development to increase the number of Workplace Essential Skills employable initiatives targeted for social assistance clients.

Action 21: Government will aggressively promote the One-Job Pledge initiative to employers, post-secondary education institutions, student groups, Chambers of Commerce, etc. using a variety of means including employment regional offices, job fairs and public libraries.

Action 22: Increase awareness of the type of program and services available to New Brunswickers through a variety of means including:

- Marketing Campaign - utilizing radio, television and print media;
- Career Week - two career weeks will be promoted in 2013 with events in every Region to highlight the value of planning a career, utilizing the services available in the community and training opportunities; and
- Labour Market Development Officers - five positions will be created within the five economic development district offices to work with employers and stakeholders to develop labour market opportunities.

Action 23: Implement changes to the Training and Skills Development program including:

- Priority Sector Training - reduce the eligibility criteria for participation in training programs associated with the government priority sectors from three years to two years out of high school to increase participation; and
- Review client living support payment levels to ensure adequate funding to assist clients in successful completion of training interventions.

Action 24: Introduce new employment programs:

- Group Based Training - will assist eligible individuals to obtain the skills they need for employment, ranging from basic to advanced, through participation in group training activities delivered under a project-based training model.
- Upskilling - will provide training assistance to employers, with a focus on priority sectors that would result in additional skills development for employees such as increased levels of certification, new transferable skills or the upgrading skills of existing employees.

Action 25: Government will implement enhanced employer wage incentives for priority group clients to assist in securing labour force attachments and opportunities.

Action 26: Government will work to develop and implement a “Women in Trades” program, which will target job-ready women who are interested in pursuing training and/or employment in the trades.

Action 27: Government will continue to engage the First Nations Communities to encourage participation in the New Brunswick employment market through partnerships with government, community and industry.

Action 28: Government will fund a First Nations coordinator who will facilitate linkages and augment access to literacy, essential skills and apprenticeship services on First Nations communities.

Action 29: Government is developing an implementation plan that will assist persons with disabilities to transition to employment.

Action 30: The Departments of Social Development and Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour will jointly review and implement new initiatives, as appropriate, related to career development and employment counselling services to reduce systemic and client barriers which prevent transition to the labour force for Social Development clients.

Action 31: Government will develop a coordinated approach across departments and in partnership with Future NB, community colleges and universities, to ensure that all parties entrusted with growing the economy, work together and are aware of each others strategies and programs.

Action 32: Continue to support the Elementary Literacy Friends / Communauté-littératie-enfants-francophones volunteer tutoring programs.

Action 33: PETL will develop literacy and essential skills programs and services that target youth 19-25 years of age.

Action 34: Government will increase the amount of province-specific information available to people wishing to work in the province through enhancements to the “Working in Canada” website and the New Brunswick Job Bank.

Action 35: Government will work with employers to increase their knowledge of the benefits and opportunities surrounding posting of jobs on the Job Bank and assist them in developing job and position descriptions.

Action 36: Government will introduce a pilot project, in partnership with Human Resources and Skills Development Canada that enables employment counselling staff to directly contact Employment Insurance claimants to ensure that they are aware of the job search and support programming available.

Strategy # 3: Retention and Attraction of Highly Skilled Individuals

Action 37: Government will develop and implement a talent recruitment model that will involve participation by employers, industry sectors and post-secondary education institutions.

Action 38: Government will revitalize the Population Growth Strategy for fiscal 2013-2014.

Action 39: Government will develop a marketing strategy that includes hosting targeted repatriation events to attract both newcomers, as well as Canadian expatriates, looking to move to New Brunswick.

Action 40: Government will develop a Francophone Immigration strategy by fall 2013 that recognizes government's commitment to maintaining New Brunswick's unique linguistic duality and the importance for balanced attraction efforts with the goal of augmenting our workforce.

Action 41: Partner with the Federal government to develop an Immigration Framework Agreement to facilitate and support immigration to New Brunswick.

Action 42: Develop a Regulatory and Legislative Framework to support the Province's immigration activities.

Action 43: Government will coordinate international recruitment efforts by targeting specific markets where we have the highest retention rates based on internal evaluations.

Action 44: The Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour will collaborate with New Brunswick's post-secondary education institutions to organize coordinated international recruitment tours beginning in 2013.

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